

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Academic Arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

The Mid-Hudson Bridge

Soaring gothic arches adorn the sky, and an ever-changing rainbow of light bulbs illuminate the night, sparkling in the river below the Mid-Hudson Bridge in Poughkeepsie. Over 35,000 vehicles pass over the span every day, making the bridge the definition of utilitarian artwork. And the Mid-Hudson Bridge offers the only walkway across the river within the sixty miles from Newburgh to Hudson, giving pedestrians and bikers a chance to view this inimitable New York landscape from a unique perspective.

But before 1930, before the bridge was constructed, all this did not exist. When Governor Alfred E. Smith signed the bill authorizing construction of the Mid-Hudson Bridge in 1923, there was no fixed Hudson River crossing south of Albany that was open to automobile traffic.

When it was built, the Mid-Hudson Bridge was the sixth-largest suspension bridge in the world. A decade and a half after it acquired the bridge from the New York State Department of Public Works in 1933; the newly-formed New York State Bridge Authority widened the east approach to the bridge to ease the flow of rush hour and weekend traffic. It added a third lane to the road as well as a third toll booth. A new toll plaza, which opened in the late sixties, boasted a new electro-mechanical toll collecting equipment that was connected to the accounting system in the headquarters building. The early eighties saw the introduction of a new traffic flow



<http://images.colorkinetics.com/showcase/images/midhudsonLG.jpg>

system, which employed the extra lane moving in the direction of the heaviest rush-hour traffic. And these days, the technology of EZPass has nearly eliminated the 12- to 18-minute waits that used to plague the tolls during heavy traffic.

Not only motorists benefited from the Bridge Authority's improvements to the bridge. New sidewalks and railings on both sides of the bridge were installed, along with a sidewalk ramp on the eastern side. This meant that pedestrians and bikers could access the bridge from a local street in Poughkeepsie and completely avoid crossing the busy vehicle ramp.

The night sky of summer 2001 was brought to life when the Bridge Authority

installed necklace lighting on the bridge. Perhaps its most beloved feature besides its beautiful design, the lighting system uses 142 energy-efficient LED fixtures, comprising over 27,000 red, green, and blue light-emitting diodes. The system can create over 16.7 million colors and color-changing lighting effects. The Mid-Hudson Bridge is actually the only suspension bridge in the world with necklace lighting installed on its main cables capable of changing colors and set in motion. July fourth will of course bring red, white and blue, but when an Alzheimer's convention was held in town, it was all purple, and when Marist College has a home game, it blinks the school colors.

~Kate Giglio

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Special points of interest:

- A list of the new interns at the Hudson River Valley Institute can be found on page 4
- Check out our new featured column, "Meet the Historian" on page 2.

Meet the Historian - Stan Mersand



An average day for Stan Mersand includes reading, researching, teaching, grading papers, checking historic sites online and then doing more research.

After almost 15 years

with out one, Mersand was appointed the Dutchess County Historian in January of 2006.

Mersand has spent over 35 years working in the field of history; although he began as a historian for the village of Pawling, his career has also involved teaching. He taught high school history, as well collegiate level courses at Dutchess Community College, Ulster Community College, and Western Connecticut State University in Danbury. He currently works as an adjunct professor at Marist College. Although Mersand wanted to be a historian his entire adult

life, as a child he had other dreams. All through school he wanted to have a career as a professional football player. Although this aspiration did not come true he said he enjoys his job, “my background in history gave me an appreciation for local history” said Mersand. He believes that local history gives us a better comprehension of national history.

Mersand said that he enjoys being a historian, “I am charged by state of New York to preserve, interpret, write, and inform those who want to know about the history of Dutchess County.” The only thing that he would change about it his job is that he needs “lots more funding.”

As the Dutchess County historian, there are many projects that Mersand is working on. Some of these projects include the Dutchess County 325th Birthday which will take place in 2008, the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadcentennial for 2009, the history of automobile making and protests

during the colonial period.

Mersand also has the opportunity to visit many historical sights. He said that his favorite historical site in the area is the John Kane house located at 126 East Main Street in Pawling. Mersand said that he loves to visit any old residential homes with beautiful architecture.

If you want to become a historian, as Mersand, his advice is, “Go to Marist College, study history and minor in public history.”

— Kelly Glynn

<http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/History/HSIndex.htm>

Featured Historic Town — Hyde Park

The Town of Hyde Park, seated comfortably on the Hudson River in the northwest portion of Dutchess County, is distinguished as a place not only rich in unparalleled beauty, but with an invaluable number of historical sites and influences in the heart of the Hudson River Valley.

Settlement of the area began as early as 1710, but it was not until over a century later that the town was designated with its name. Originally, the land had been known as *Stoughtenburgh* as a result of the Fauconnier Patent, and aptly named to honor an early colonist. Later, an addition had been acquired in 1697 through the Great Nine Partners Patent, along with current towns that include Clinton, Stanford, Pleasant Valley, and Amenia, thus expanding the area.

Dr. John Bard had declared his estate in Stoughtenburgh after Edward Hyde, a colonial governor of New York. In 1804, a local tavern keeper by the name of Miller decided to promote his business by exploiting the fame of Bard’s property, naming it the “Hyde Park Inn,” and later adopted the common practice of situating a post office at the location. The result

was the “Hyde Park Post Office,” which caused residents’ mailing addresses to be listed as “Hyde Park.” Through the years the name became more popular, and in 1812, Stoughtenburgh was renamed Hyde Park. In 1821, Hyde Park officially established itself from the Town of Clinton.

Perhaps the most notable landmarks of the Town of Hyde Park are the breathtaking estates of its many historically prominent and socially revered residents. The town is most legendary as the home of former United States president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945). His Springwood estate includes the gorgeous presidential library and museum, and is a National Historic Site. Two miles east of the FDR estate marks Eleanor Roosevelt’s home, Val-kill; a 180-acre spread of land owned by Mrs. Roosevelt that served as a private place in which she could develop her ideas and projects.

The Roosevelts were not the only celebrities residing in Hyde Park; third son of the famed New York Central Railroad tycoon, Frederick Vanderbilt (1856-1938) used his riverside estate as a lively spring and autumn home while away from his other resi-

dences in New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island. To add to the extravagance of the site, the Vanderbilt mansion was, in fact, the first home in the Town of Hyde Park to have electricity.

One of the most delectable locations in Hyde Park is the Culinary Institute of America, founded in 1946. Located on US Route 9, which runs through the town, the school is illustrious for its superior training in the culinary arts, and hosts a number of popular restaurants such as the Apple Pie Bakery Café and American Bounty.

Today, Hyde Park is the home of nearly 21,000 people. The awe-inspiring landscapes, proximity to the Hudson River, cultural and historical diversity and old-fashioned appeal make the town a gem of the Hudson River Valley. To discover more about the Town of Hyde Park, please call the town’s supervisor, Pompey Delafield, at (845) 229-5111, or visit the official website at <http://www.hydeparkny.us>.

~ Jessica Friedlander

Featured Historic Site— New Windsor Cantonment

Approximately 224 years ago, roughly 7,000 soldiers under the command of General George Washington, marched into the town of New Windsor, New York. Within six weeks, this army had cleared out roughly 1,600 acres of forest and constructed over six hundred buildings. This cantonment, a semi-permanent winter encampment, would house the Continental Army for the next nine months.

During the summer of 1782, fearing a British offensive into the Hudson Valley, Washington moved his troops into the region as quickly as possible. The Continental Army spent the summer around Verplanck's Point (modern-day Peekskill), then moved to make their winter camp at New Windsor. Safely behind the defensive positions at West Point, the army would keep a watchful eye on the British while awaiting the news of peace.

The camp was far from quiet, though Washington himself described his army as "better clothed, better fed, and better equipped" than he had ever seen it, discontent simmered in the camp. With the war winding down, the army's officers began wondering if they would ever receive the pensions they had been prom-

ised at the beginning of the war. A series of anonymous letters calling for mutiny circulated through the camp that only an impassioned speech by Washington himself, given in the camp's central meeting hall (the Temple of Virtue), prevented disaster.



<http://www.revolutionaryday.com/usroute9w/nwindsor.jpg>

Today, New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site preserves the memory of the original encampment through living history, museum exhibits, and reconstructions of some of the camp's buildings, including the Temple of Virtue. Standard living history demonstrations include blacksmithing, cooking, 18th Century medicine and surgery, children's games, and musket firings.

For special events, such as the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, and Veteran's Day, programming has included an expanded military drill cannon firings, and performances and presentations by other historic interpreters.

The New Windsor Cantonment will also be home to the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, which opens next month. The site has a deep connection to the Purple Heart because the committee that handed out the award's predecessor, the Badge of Military Merit, met in the Temple building. After the Revolution, the award was largely forgotten until it was resurrected by General Douglas MacArthur in 1932. Knowing of the Cantonment's connection to the award, MacArthur ordered some of the first modern Purple Heart medals to be given on the site's grounds. The new museum, dedicated to all of America's combat killed and wounded, will feature rotating exhibits, interactive video interviews with Purple Heart recipients, and a "Roll of Honor," a computer database that seeks to include the stories of every recipient of the award.

~Michael Diaz

Featured Historic Website— Putnam County Historical Society

The Putnam County Historical Society and Foundry School Museum (PCHS&FSM) website <http://www.pchs-fsm.org/pchs-mainFrame.html> attempts to maintain history and local culture. The Putnam County Historical Society was founded in 1906 by prominent Philipstown, and after receiving its charter the following year, it became the first Historical Society in the county. The first members were a group of Cold Spring residents who desired to collect and preserve Historical and cultural materials pertaining to the area, and met in private homes and libraries. Today the society, through the website and onsite holdings, helps individuals research the genealogy of their families.

In 1960 the society purchased the Foundry School Building in Cold Spring, which was built in 1830. This created a

home for many local artifacts, and a workspace for the Society, which continuously provides scholarship on local history and culture.

One of the most important holdings of the museum is the artifacts of the West Point Foundry. The West Point Foundry of Cold Spring was one of the country's earliest industrial sites at the beginning of the country's industrial revolution. In operation for almost a hundred years (1817-1914), the Foundry produced domestic hardware, ship and locomotive engines, factory machinery, and iron work products.

Today the 87 acre Foundry property is protected by a Scenic Hudson land grant, and in 2001, Scenic Hudson, collaborating with Michigan Tech and PCHS & FSM, performed an archeological excavation of the site. All major holdings from this excavation are located at the PCHS & FSM.

The website for PCHS & FSM is a guide to the organization as a whole. While it provides information on the history of the society and the museum, it also provides a list of museum exhibits and events. The website features a newsletter and an educator's resource that encourages local students to get involved in local history through a contest. It also provides easy access to contact the society and aids in the planning of field trips to the site. While the Foundry School Museum is a great place to visit, the PCHS & FSM website is a gateway for introducing the many positive aspects of this important Hudson River Valley organization.

~ Tom Clancey

Meet our Development Associate—Dana Frank

Dana Frank joins the Hudson River Valley Institute this semester as the Development Associate, working specifically with the *Hudson River Valley Review*. She is focused on increasing subscriptions and retail placement, as well as the implementation of a strategic marketing plan. Frank has spent her life writing, editing and promoting non-profit ventures; she is thrilled to have the opportunity to work with a talented group on an important (and enjoyable) mission.



Originally from New Orleans, Frank earned a master's degree in English from Southern Methodist University in May 2006. While in Dallas, she was a special contributor to *The Dallas Morning News* as a dance critic as well as a freelance arts journalist. Her work has been featured in *Dance Magazine* and on online arts journals such as Ballet.co. She is also currently an Adjunct Lecturer in the English department at Marist College.

~Dana Frank

Meet the Intern — Jess Friedlander

Jess Friedlander, native to the Hudson River Valley, is ending her colorful career at Marist with a bang. A double major looking to nab degrees in both English-Writing and Fine Arts-Painting, she feels her writing internship with the Hudson River Valley Institute will offer her the perfect mix of art and literature that she craves. She is especially excited to complete her semester-long writing project, in which she will research and visit the studio of famed Hudson River Valley painter Thomas Cole, as well as answer phones, and scan lots of pictures.

Aside from her profession as a proficient prankster, Jess is a seasoned literary and visual artist. She has dedicated these past four years to improving and expand-

ing Marist's literary magazine, *The Mosaic*, and has worked as the Literary Arts Society secretary to produce successful poetry slams, various writing contests, and help organize gynomous book drives.

Jess made history with an amazing five weeks as a member of the first Annual Summer Writing Institute, in which she had established innumerable contacts, contributed to a panel discussion on the Poetry 180 Project, and greeted poet-laureate Billy Collins, who signed her textbook. She is an active member of the Dean's Circle and the English academic fraternity, Sigma Tau Delta, as well as a Resident Assistant for a sophomore residence hall. In addition, she is a four-time recipient of the Hudson Valley Scholars award, and in

her junior year, she graced the microphone as the ceremony's student speaker.

Jess is uncertain of her future plans, though she hopes they involve dabbling in painting, editing her own art magazine, writing novels, illustrating children's stories, and creating her own comic series.

~ Jessica
Friedlander



Meet the Intern — Tricia Lynch



My name is Tricia Lynch, and I am a junior English major at Marist College. I am excited about putting my passion for writing to use as an intern at Hudson River Valley Institute. My first two years at Marist have provided me with outstanding educational opportunities and irreplaceable friendships. I have

learned more in these last two years than I ever thought possible.

I work in the Liberal Arts department at Marist, and I am a tutor in the writing center. I am also a member of the Literary Arts Society, and I am on the committee to help with editing for the *Mosaic*, which is Marist's literary art magazine that is published every semester. I enjoy spending time with my friends and my boyfriend. I love to read, cook, dance and watch football or baseball. I am also a big fan of country music, which is a rare trait to find in a girl from Long Island.

Over the years, Irish dancing has played a very important role in my life. I have

been dancing since the age of four, and it is a stress release at times. Through dance competitions, I have had the chance to travel all over the United States, and I have been to Ireland three times. This summer, I plan to take a trip to Italy in order to study literature through one of Marist's short-term abroad programs. I cannot wait to see what the Italian culture has to offer.

After I graduate from Marist, I plan to attend law school. I know it will be a challenge I can overcome and I already started studying for the LSAT exam.

~ Tricia Lynch

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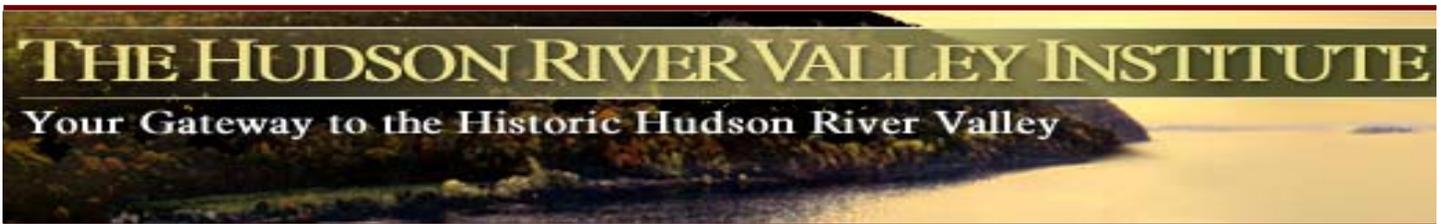
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***The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"***

| www.hudsonrivervalley.net |

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 27 Congressionally designated National Heritage Areas in the United States. As one of the most important regions in the United States, it is the fountainhead of a truly American identity. Recognizing the area's national value, Congress formed the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area in 1996 to recognize, to preserve, to protect, and to interpret the nationally-significant history and resources of the Valley for the benefit of the nation.

As the center for the study of the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) at Marist College is the central hub for information about the region. HRVI serves heritage tourists, scholars, elementary and secondary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public seeking to know more about the region that Congress called "the Landscape that defined America."



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