

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

# Hudson River Valley Institute

## Autumn in the Hudson River Valley

There are few places in the American landscape that can match the beauty and grandeur of the Hudson River Valley during the autumn season. However, it is the events that take place in the valley that make it truly unique. One of the most notable events occurring this fall is The Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze being held at the [Van Cortlandt Manor](#).

pany its dramatic sound effects and spooky music. The Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze represents the embodiment of the American tradition and legacy of All Hallows' Eve.

[Philipsburg Manor](#) is also doing its part in living out the tradition of Halloween in its Legend Weekend Evening Event featuring the Legend of Sleepy Hollow. The manor and grounds have

landt Manor and Sunnyside is the perfect way to greet the approaching holiday season. Both sites are fully adorned in their appropriate historical styles, including the staff. Along with tours, the weekend gateway features workshops for children and the reliving of colonial holiday traditions.

The [Historical Society of Rockland County](#) is proudly displaying its newest exhibit

throughout the fall season.



*Iron! The Surprising Beauty*

Throughout the entire month of October visitors can come and be awed by a display of 4,000 hand-carved pumpkins. The carvings themselves are a sight to behold since they depict a variety of objects and creatures. The manor is also proud to have a new, professionally designed lighting display to accom-

panied by candle lanterns, bonfires, and ghostly apparitions. Visitors can roam the grounds freely and relive the 187 year-old legend of the Headless Horseman.

Moving out of the Halloween season, the [Thanksgiving Weekend Gateway](#) being held at the Van Cort-

landt Manor spotlights the rise and fall of the iron industry in Rockland County. Visitors can see and touch a wide array of iron tools and household items. The display first opened on July 15<sup>th</sup> and runs until October 14<sup>th</sup>.

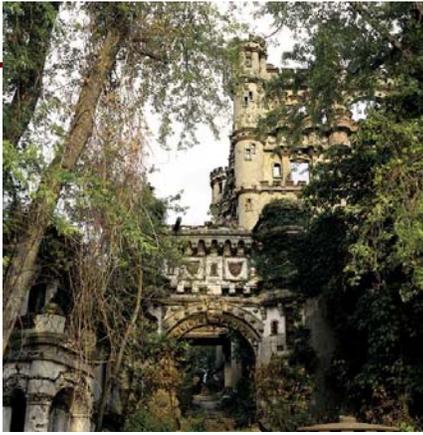
- Jason Jacondin

### Inside this issue:

Featured Historic Website	2
Featured Historic Site	2
Featured Historic Town	3
Featured Historian	3
Digital Library	4
Meet the Intern	4
Contact Us	5
Staff Listing	5

### Special points of interest:

- Meet more of HRVI's current interns on page 5
- See what's new on our Digital Library on page 4



## Featured Historic Website — Bannerman Castle

acres in size (and is commonly referred to as Bannerman Island). Pollopel Island has changes hands multiple times, primarily as a result of the island being supposedly haunted, before Francis Bannerman obtained ownership in 1900.

Bannerman Castle took 17 years to complete, an elaborate construction of Francis Bannerman's own design. Soon after the castle's completion, Bannerman passed away in 1918, but the family retained ownership of the island and castle until 1967, when it was sold to New York State. The military weaponry was removed, and the State had plans to open the island as a park. This endeavor was successful until August 1969, when a fire caused severe damage to all of the buildings on the island, including the beautiful Bannerman Castle. The island has been closed to the public since.

Today, those that wish to visit Bannerman Castle can do via a cruise tour, the Pride of the Hudson. The tours run on Saturdays and Sundays from May until October, with

vessels departing from Newburgh and Beacon. The island is otherwise too dangerous to explore. However, The Bannerman Castle Trust, Inc. is working tirelessly to preserve the castle and surrounding structures, as well as make Bannerman Island safe enough to open to the public. According to engineers and architects, five of the seven buildings of the island can be stabilized-unfortunately, with every passing winter, the island suffers more damage, therefore making the efforts of The Bannerman Castle Trust, Inc. paramount.

For information on how to become a "Friend of the Castle," a volunteer, or if you are interested in Bannerman books and merchandise that support the preservation efforts call (845) 831-6346, or write to The Bannerman Castle Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 843, Glenham, NY 12527-0843, or visit their Web Site at [bannermancastle.org](http://bannermancastle.org).

- Amanda Schreiner

On a small island in the Hudson the damaged, yet still imposing, Bannerman Castle stands, a daunting edifice with a fascinating history. Originally built by Francis Bannerman to serve as an arsenal for his tremendous collection of weaponry, this beautiful Scottish-style castle has attracted the attention of countless individuals traveling alongside the Hudson River.

Bannerman Castle sits on Pollopel Island, a land mass less than seven

## Featured Historic Site — Fort Montgomery

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, [Fort Montgomery](#) will host [Twin Forts Day](#) in commemoration of the Battle of Fort Montgomery in 1777. The Fort, which is a part of Bear Mountain State Park, is located along the Hudson River near Fort Clinton. The grounds are home to beautiful views of the Hudson, as well as the remains of the 14-acre fort.

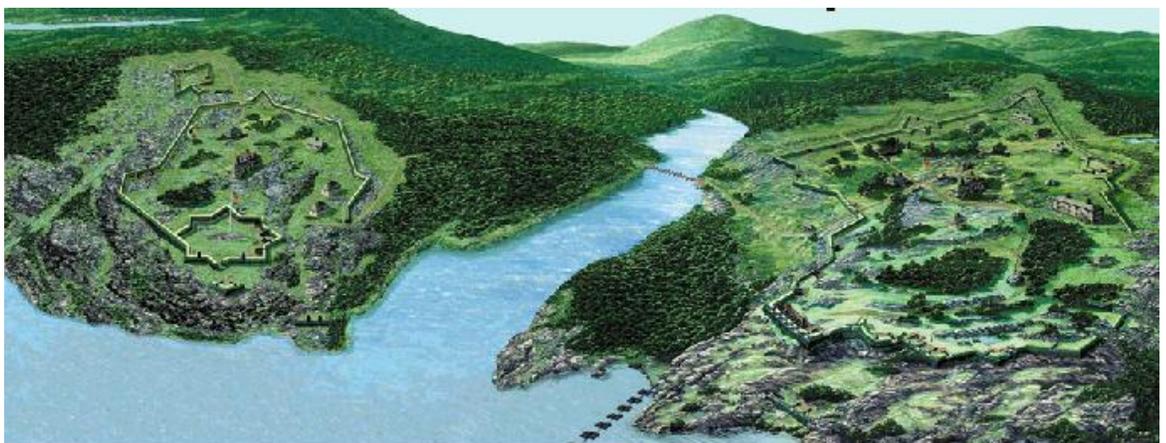
On this day, the British attacked Fort Montgomery in an attempt to gain control of the Hudson River. The Americans were outnumbered 3 to 1, and half of the Continental forces were taken prisoner, wounded, or killed. Although the numbers were not in their favor, the Americans were driven from the fort. In many respects it was

not a complete loss. The Continental forces put up a fight long enough to delay the British from supporting General Burgoyne and his forces at Saratoga. As a result, Fort Montgomery and the battle that took place there plays a crucial role in local history.

Twin Forts Day events start at 11 a.m. and will go until 3 p.m. throughout the

day there will be 18<sup>th</sup> century encampments and cannon firings. The cost for the event is \$1.00 per adult, and \$.50 for children ages 6-12. Those under the age of five are free. Parking is an additional \$6.00. For more information [on the site](#), or on the event, call (845) 786-2701 x265.

- Colleen Ryan



*Fort Clinton and Montgomery (Illustration: Jack Mead)*

## Historic Town — Woodstock

Created in 1787, Woodstock has a long history in the arts and entertainment business. However, the town was originally settled on farming, tanning, and quarrying where, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became known as a center of American artists and craftsmen. By 1905 the town was centered around art and music. During that same year, an Art Student League summer school was opened, further advancing the artistic image of the town. Due to its close proximity to New York City, it quickly became a getaway for city dwellers looking for artistic mediums of expression. In fact, the presence of the arts remains strongly relevant today, as can be easily seen with the Woodstock Film Festival.

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual Woodstock Film Festival takes place from October 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> this year in Woodstock, New York. The Festival serves as a forum for new and upcoming amateurs to display their films and play their music. Complementing the music and movies are workshops and panels. People who have participated in the event in the past include Kevin Bacon, Matt Dillon, Woody Karrison, and David Schwimmer among others.

Opening the festival will be the screening of *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* on October 11<sup>th</sup>. The two centerpiece films, *Married Life* and *Under the Same Moon (La Misma Luna)*, are scheduled to be featured on Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> before the ceremony comes to a close with *I'm*

*Not There*. Over 150 films, including documentaries will be screened along with the opening, closing, and centerpiece films.

Between the beautiful scenery of the Hudson River Valley, and the hundreds of people attending from around the country, the Woodstock Film Festival remains a perfect environment to see new films and people. The festival is put on by the not-for-profit Woodstock Film Festival with help from many sponsors. For more on Woodstock:

<http://www.woodstockchamber.com/>,

for more on the festival:  
[www.woodstockfilmfestival.com](http://www.woodstockfilmfestival.com).

- Joe Delisle

## Featured Historian— John Ansley

John Ansley has been head of archives at Marist College for nearly seven years now. In 1998 he earned his M.A. in Public History at North Carolina State University and later went on to earn his B.A. in Anthropology and master's degree in Library Science. Currently he is working on his PhD. in American History, focusing on the realm of twentieth century topics.

In the last year, John Ansley has done a great deal of work pertaining to the Hudson River Valley, such as his continued efforts to develop the Marist Environmental Project.

At the Northeast Document Conservation and New York Archives Conferences, Ansley lectured about the Valley's environmental past. The Marist Archives has made available its collection of environmental history pertaining to [The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater](#), Storm King Cornwall Pumped Storage Project, and [Hudson River Environmental Society Collections](#).

The Hudson River Conservation Society Collection is currently being processed because of its contribution to the Hudson Valley. Founded in 1936, the society fought hard to protect the natural surroundings and beauty of the valley. It



also helped to establish the Hudson Valley Commission which today also shares this mission of conservation.

Ansley expressed his excitement over the Sherman Collection and the Coffin Papers. The first collection was donated by Jonah Sherman. It includes manuscripts, objects, and rare books involving Poughkeepsie's history. Ansley hopes to make all of this information accessible online. The recently donated Coffin Papers consist of items dating between 1810-1859, including bills, promissory notes, receipts, bonds, and other interesting documents associated with Robert Coffin of Dutchess County.

In 2005, The Hudson River Sloop *Clearwater* Collection was donated to Marist and is accessible to researchers. This collection entails correspondence, publications, memorandums, and documents from *Clearwater* on local environmental issues. *Clearwater* is a non-profit organization seeking to preserve the Hudson River and to educate people on the envi-

ronmental concerns pressing in the Valley.

John Ansley has also been successful in securing a number of grants for Marist College. He has received funding from the State Education Department, Division of Library Development, and the Conservation Preservation Grant to complete the microfilming process of the

[Scenic Hudson Collection](#). Ansley has also been given a grant from the National Historical Publication and Records Commission for the preservation of the Lowell Thomas Collection.

Recent addendums made to the [Environmental History](#) selection, include more primary and secondary sources. Marist's archives Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA) exhibit, will soon include race results, photos, and digitized Regatta Programs. In 1894, Poughkeepsie was chosen to hold the regatta for the newly formed Intercollegiate Racing Association (IRA). Ansley hopes to have this completed by the end of next month.

To contact John Ansley, call (845) 575-5217, or to click here to find out about the [Marist College Archives](#).

- Paul Contarino

# Digital Library— Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project

The first anti-slavery protests occurred when the first African slaves were imported in the seventeenth century. The abolitionist movement did not receive national recognition until the 1830s. Those that called themselves abolitionists were able to facilitate a growing antislavery sentiment in the North. Routes of the Underground Railroad passing through Dutchess County helped fleeing slaves reach freedom in the North or in Canada.

The group that has done research on the Underground Railroad in Dutchess County and who focuses their efforts on researching the anti-slavery movement and African-American community in Poughkeepsie before the Civil War is the [Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project](#) (MHAHP). The MHAHP was created in 2006 to bring together researchers, educators, community leaders and members of the public for three distinct purposes: to conduct and synthesize research on the history of anti-slavery in the Mid-Hudson Valley (with special emphasis on the Underground Railroad); to interpret this history and share these interpretations with a wide array of residents and visitors in the Dutchess County area, with particular attention to students and youth; place

this local history in the broader contexts of racial slavery in the New World, the African-American experience, and anti-slavery legacies today.

The MHAHP began research in June of 2007 that centered on the Underground Railroad in Dutchess County. This research focused primarily on the anti-slavery movement and the African-American community in Poughkeepsie in the years leading up to the Civil War. The research included “major primary sources to create a collective portrait of the African-American community in Poughkeepsie before the Civil War, and all individuals in Dutchess County who were publicly active in the fight against slavery.” The MHAHP then created a database of almost five hundred households based on their research.

Finally the individuals who were being researched were divided into three categories based on the findings of the MHAHP. The categories include: those who were or may have been freedom seekers, also known as fugitive slaves; others who were, or likely were involved in the Underground Railroad; and the leaders of the public antislavery movement in Dutchess County.”

The MHAHP recently hosted [“A History Harvest: Slavery, Antislavery and](#)

[the Underground Railroad in Dutchess County”](#) on Saturday September 15, 2007 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Congregational Church in Poughkeepsie, New York; and on Sunday September 16, 2007 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Akin Library in Pawling, New York. This two-day event was a way for the MHAHP to enhance their database from their June 2007 project further by having local residents of Dutchess County bring “documents, photographs, family stories and traditions related to the history of slavery and the Underground Railroad in the Mid-Hudson Valley.”

The “History Harvest” also displayed exhibits on the antislavery cause and African-Americans in Dutchess County pre-dating the Civil War. The MHAHP’s June 2007 project, as well as the event “A History Harvest: Slavery, Antislavery and the Underground Railroad in Dutchess County” are two ways that the MHAHP is focusing their attention and research on the antislavery movement and African-American community in Poughkeepsie. Stay tuned for more projects and events from the MHAHP in the future. To reach the MHAHP contact them at PO Box 3647, Poughkeepsie, New York, 12603.

- Elizabeth Vielkind

## Meet the Intern — Elizabeth Vielkind

Achieving academic excellence and becoming a teacher have always been important to me. My admiration for Audrey Hepburn and the impact she has had on my decision to become a teacher have helped me grow into the person I am today.

Although I do not plan on becoming a famous actress or a Good Will Ambassador for UNICEF like Audrey, I would like to be admired and respected in another way—I want to teach. From the time I first started learning history I loved it and that passion has not faded. As a teacher, I will be teaching because I want to work with adolescents and have a positive impact on their lives, so they too can fulfill their dreams. For the

past two summers, I have worked as a camp counselor at the YMCA in my town in Upstate New York. This job has given me the opportunity to bring my desire to educate children to life by allowing me to work with adolescents.

I am in my sophomore year at Marist College where my dream of teaching is beginning to become a reality. I am double majoring in History and Secondary Education, as well as minoring in Political Science. Besides being a member of Teachers of Tomorrow at Marist, I am also involved in a variety of other clubs on campus including the Marist College Dance Club, and Resident Student Council. I am also a Marist Ambassador as well as an Emerging Leader. The academic and social experi-

ences that I have had while at Marist have been amazing and this knowledge that I have accrued can only continue to grow. I hope to stay active and participate academically and socially on campus for the remainder of my time at Marist.

- Elizabeth Vielkind



# Contact Us

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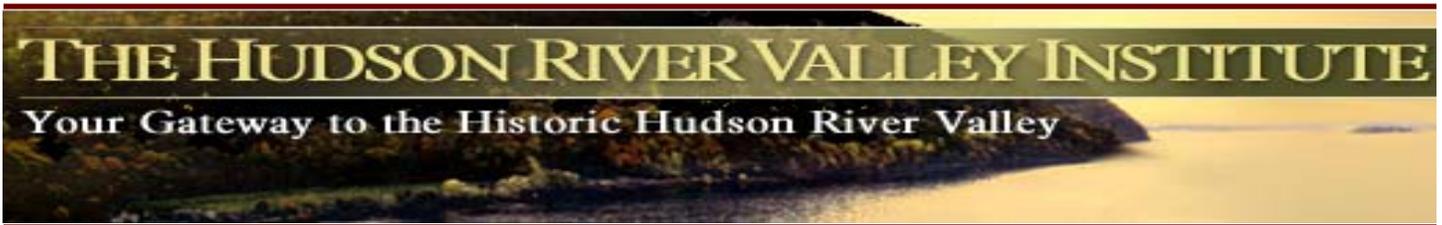
*The Hudson River Valley:  
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 37 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, preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally-significant history and resources of the valley for the benefit of the nation.

The Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) is the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Its mission is to study and promote the Hudson River Valley and to provide educational resources for heritage tourists, scholars, elementary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public. Its many projects include the publication of *The Hudson River Valley Review* and the management of a dynamic digital library and leading regional portal site.

As the center for the study of the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is the central hub for information about the region that Congress called "the Landscape that defined America."

[www.hudsonrivervalley.org](http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org)



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The newsletter is the production of the interns of HRVI

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