



# Beginning of Summer Teaching Institutes a Success

July 11th saw the commencement of the Summer Teaching Institutes which drew together educators from across the Mid-Hudson River Valley. Conducted at Marist College, the talks concentrated on numerous themes of the history of New York and the United States as a whole.

The first workshop, conducted the week of July 11, was "Commerce, Industry, and Immigration in the Nineteenth Century: the Hudson River Valley & the Rise of the Empire State." The lectures focused on the industrialization of the Hudson River Valley in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Overviews of the time period were provided by Professor Thomas Wermuth, Dean of the Marist College School of Liberal Arts, and Professor Frederick Opie from the Marist College History Department.

These overviews were supplemented by critical discussions of

relevant texts, including Peter Bernstein's *Wedding of the Waters*, a history of the Erie Canal; L. Ray Gunn's "New York Modernizes: Economic Growth and Modernization;" and Martin Breugel's *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of A Market Society in the Hudson River Valley*.

Discussions later in the week focused on the rise of immigration and sectional tensions leading to the American Civil War. Marist College English Professor Louis Zuccarello talked about Italian immigration, while Professor Susan Lewis of SUNY-New Paltz analyzed the increasing number of roles taken up by women in the nineteenth century. Professor Opie concluded the week with his review of

North-South conflicts in the middle of the century.

The first week's activities also included a tour of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Museum in High Falls, New York. There, the teachers were able to view up-close one of the transportation improvements that made the Hudson River Valley and its surrounding areas the "corridor of commerce."

The lectures were followed by workshops that helped the teachers hone their skills using primary sources. The drive towards using primary sources in conjunction with document-based questions has been part of public education for much of the past decade. The aim is to both  
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## Workshop Conducts Walking Tour of Capital District Underground Railroad Sites

The Underground Railroad Workshop is proud to again begin its walking tours of underground railroad sites in Albany for the Summer and Fall of 2005. The Workshop, based in the Capital District Region, seeks to expand understanding of the Underground Railroad in New York.

The Underground Railroad represented a network of abolitionist and anti-slavery sympathizers who shepherded escaped slaves to the North. The work was dangerous, especially after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act (1850) com-

elled U.S. citizens to returned runaway slaves.

Due to the necessarily secretive nature of the Underground Railroad, it is often difficult for historians to compile information on  
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### Special points of interest:

- Please be sure to consult the HRVI website, as we are constantly updating our content
- A review of the 2005 Patriots' Weekend as well as other Fall Events and a full account of the Summer Teaching Institutes will be forthcoming in the August issue.

## Featured Historic Site—Schuyler Mansion

Home to one of the American Revolution's generals and New York State's most able politicians, the Schuyler Mansion today stands dedicated to the memory of this country's first precarious years.

Philip John Schuyler descended from the original Dutch settlers of Fort Orange, which is present-day Albany. In the 1760s, he began construction on the townhouse that would eventually become Schuyler Mansion.

His residency in the Mansion was interrupted by the American War for Independence. Schuyler had been involved in politics since 1768 with the New York Assembly. By the year of the Boston Massacre, he had gained a reputation for his outspoken opposition to the British government. He was elected to the Continental Congress and served until he was made Major General of the Conti-



<http://nysparks.state.ny.us/sites/info.asp?siteID=25>

mental Army, a post he held until the fall of Fort Ticonderoga. Schuyler also served in the New York State Senate. When the U.S. Constitution was ratified, he was among the first class of Senators elected to the First U.S. Congress.

Today, the public can enjoy tours of the mansion, which for so many years served as a meeting place for the political elites of upstate New York. The tours begin every hour, on the hour from 11:00am-4:00pm Wednesday through Sunday from Mid-April through October, and November to March by appointment only. For more information, please call (518) 434-0834.

~ Neil Bhatiya

## Featured Historic Website-Historic Albany Foundation

Historic buildings in Albany can count on the Historic Albany Foundation to provide their owners with the resources necessary to ensure they remain preserved at out of danger.

Founded in 1974, the Foundation has sought to "promote the preservation and appreciation of the built environment in and around the city of Albany" which it feels is important to continuing historical appreciation of the Capital Region.

The Foundation's website ([www.historic-albany.org](http://www.historic-albany.org)) features a comprehensive overview of their ongoing efforts to save historic buildings. They also provide links to their newsletter as well as outside press coverage. An events page provides an updated list of their meetings. Their most recent effort highlights the stabilization of the St. Joseph's Church (see picture at right) which is taking place during the summer.

Historic Albany's programs are divided into three categories: "preservation advocacy, education, and technical assis-

tance." Preservation advocacy involves the Foundation's constant vigilance towards historic buildings that could need protective measures.

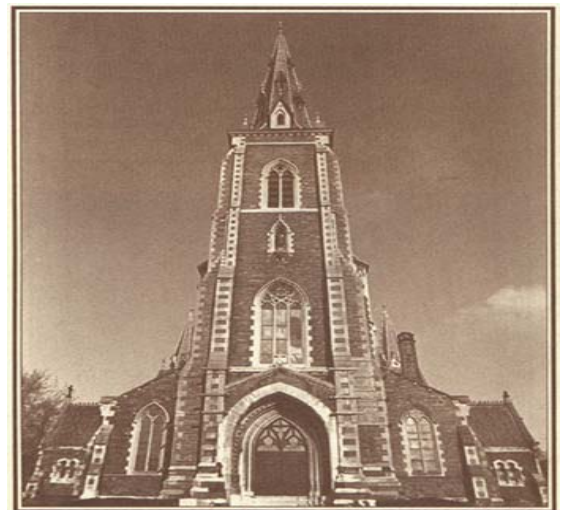
Education efforts include tours, photo collections, lectures, and fundraising programs to raise awareness and provide the funds that are so necessary for preservation work.

Building owners who hope to preserve and restore their own buildings can find aid from the Foundation's efforts in the area of technical assistance. The technical services staff handles a wide range of activities, from helping owners apply for grants from local, state, and federal governments to conducting home tours to assess what areas are in need of assistance. Historic Albany also accepts donations of parts from historic houses for resale.

The website completes their ex-

haustive offering by listing numerous links to other websites that can offer further resources to those who need them.

~ Neil Bhatiya



St. Joseph's Church. <http://www.historic-albany.org/stjoe.html>

## Featured Historic Town—Rensselaerville

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The present-day town of Rensselaerville (including the hamlets of Rensselaerville, Medusa, Preston Hollow, Potter Hollow, Cooksburg, Smiths Corners) was originally part of the Dutch settlement of New Netherlands, encompassing modern-day New York State.

The manor of Rensselaerwyck, from which the town derives its name, was owned by the Van Rensselaer family. During their lifetimes in the area, the family members were the largest landowners in the region. According to Russell Shorto, author of *Island at the Center of the World* (a history of the Dutch colonization of Manhattan), at its height the Van Rensselaer estate sprawled over a million acres cared for by nearly 100,000 tenant farmers.

The founder of the estate, Kiliaen van

Rensselaer, made his fortune in the Netherlands through diamonds, land, and farming. He used his wealth to buy into a directorship in the Dutch West India Company, which at the time was busy laying claims to land in the New World. He dispatched employees on his behalf to purchase land from the Native Americans (the majority of whom were Mahicans) in the areas surrounding Fort Orange (Albany).

He sent the first settlers to the colony and also helped to institute its first working government. The estate was rare in that though founded in the name of the West India Company, it was run entirely by Kiliaen van Rensselaer. Strangely enough, however, he would die before ever setting foot in America. It would fall to his son Jeremias to establish a

permanent family presence in the New World.

Throughout its history, Rensselaerville has been home to small farms and stores. Milling and leather goods also became important sources of income. The town, however, did not benefit as much from transportation improvements (canals, faster ships, railroads) as did other areas of the Hudson River Valley. Significantly more development characterized nearby Albany, the state capital. It remains the quintessential small town, inhabited by a handful of farm families and modern-day commuters.

~ Neil Bhatiya

## Summer Teaching Institutes

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introduce students to important historical documents and test their analytic and writing skills.

Throughout the lectures, Hudson River Valley Institute Interns Adrienne Harris and Lauren Santangelo were busy helping to prepare packets, and presentations, as well as fulfill other requests that arose during the week.

The week of July 18 will see the beginning of the Teaching Institute dedicated to the study of Supreme Court cases. Marist College Political Science professors Martin Shaffer and Lynn Eckert will be leading the discussions. They will focus on several categories of Supreme Court jurisprudence: Constitutional Principles in Times of Crisis; the Constitution, Industrialization, and Economic Regulation; Civil Liberties and Civil Rights; The Constitution, Race Re-

lations, and Equality; and Establishing a Strong National Government. A full review of this week of programs will be forthcoming in the August issue.

~ Neil Bhatiya



A tour of the D&H Canal Locks. Photo Credit: Adrienne Harris

## Meet the Interns—Adrienne Harris

Pursuing a history/secondary education major with a double minor in psychology and women's studies, Adrienne has just completed her sophomore year at Marist College. She is interested in American social and cultural history, particularly that of sexuality, women and other minority groups.

Although Adrienne plans to obtain a doctorate degree in history, her main career aspiration is to teach high school history in her native New Haven, CT. While some would consider these two goals an unusual combination, Adrienne hopes to make a difference in a high school community by engaging and educating students.

While she is still a student, though, Adrienne is happily a member of the Marist Women's Rugby Club, as well as (unsurprisingly) Teachers of Tomorrow and the History Club. She also



*Institute Intern Adrienne Harris*

mentors local youth through the Liberty Partnership Program. She looks forward to expanding her historical and educational knowledge through her internship with HRVI.

~ Adrienne Harris

## Underground Railroad Workshop

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where slaves were hidden during their flight north. Despite this difficulty, however, the Underground Railroad Workshop has compiled a list of sites in the Albany region tied to the operation of the Underground Railroad. It has also provided profiles of many area Abolitionists, including Stephen Meyers, William Henry Johnson, and Henry Highland Garnet. The Workshop also highlights the

contributions of the Society of Friends (Quakers). Opposition to the institution of slavery was a hallmark of the Quaker movement, and the Workshop traces their abolitionist preachings to areas such as Smith Corners, Rensselaerville, Charlston Four Corners, and Easton.

The tour itself lasts approximately one and a half hours, beginning from the Albany Visitor's Center, Quackenbush

Square. The fee is \$7 for all participants above the age of 16. Pre-registration is required. The next tour date is July 24. For more information on the walking tours and the Underground Workshop, please consult their website: [www.ugrworkshop.com](http://www.ugrworkshop.com). Their e-mail is [info@ugrworkshop.com](mailto:info@ugrworkshop.com).

~ Neil Bhatiya



<http://www.ugrworkshop.com/>



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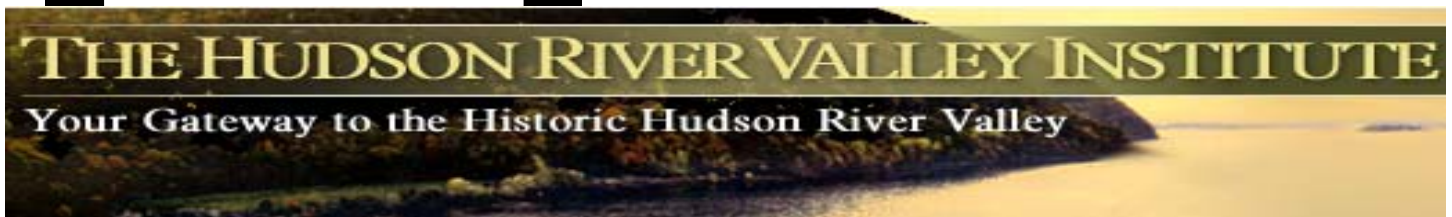
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***The Hudson River Valley—“The  
Landscape that Defined America”***

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 23 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."

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



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