



## Upcoming HRVI Events in April

This month, the Hudson River Valley Institute will be sponsoring two events highlighting Hudson River Valley history and the current work as it serves as the central hub of information about our region.

### Patriots Weekend



On April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, the Hudson River Valley Institute will be sponsoring "Cease Fire – The War Ends, 1783" at the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site in New Windsor, NY. The New Windsor Cantonment was the last encampment made by General Washington's Continental Army before the end of the war. On October 28, 1782, a year after the American victory over the British at Yorktown, Virginia, General George Washington moved his troops to New Windsor for the winter. Some 500 women and children (camp followers) accompanied his 7,000 troops. They transformed 1,600 acres of forests and meadows into a substantial military enclave or

"cantonment."

By late December 1782, they had erected nearly 600 log huts.



The army would remain until furloughed in June 1783. On April 19th, General Washington issued his proclamation to the Continental Army declaring an end of the hostilities with the

### Walkway over the Hudson

Also this month, on Saturday April 26th from 10:00 AM to 3:00PM at Marist College, the Hudson River Valley Institute will be hosting an Open House, focusing on our current project devoted to the history of the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge in the Lowell Thomas Gallery. HRVI will present their work-to-date and meet with prospective participants from the community who want to share their bridge-related stories.

Interns and staff from the Hudson River Valley Institute will be available during the day to



British at the door of the Temple. The event will highlight the history of cantonment with presentations, reenactments, and activities for the whole family.

conduct interviews of those interested. Refreshments will be provided throughout the day. Please visit our web page for further details.

Jess Boyle

Read about Bridge Trivia on page 3.

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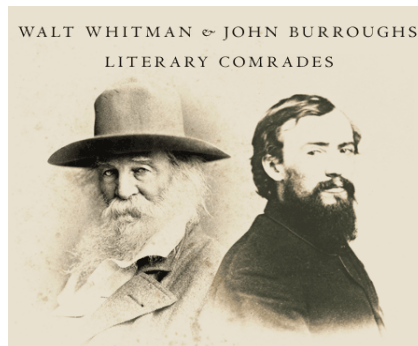
### Special points of interest:

- Discover interesting facts about the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge on pages 3 & 4.
- Meet more of HRVI's current interns on page 5

## Feature Website — Vassar College Library Special Collections

Vassar College has an extensive collection of rare books and special collections in its library that can be accessed via the internet. The Vassar College Library's website features links regarding general information about the Vassar Library and its history, their collections and digital collections, exhibits and other resources for research.

Since January 2008, Vassar has been highlighting Nature Writing with their impressive collection of John Burroughs and Walt Whitman in an exhibit called "[John Burroughs and Walt Whitman: Literary Comrades](#)" and will continue to show the collection until June 2008. The collection features over 50 of Burroughs's journals, 100 books from his library, manuscripts, sketchbooks, and other various materials from 1876 to 1921. The online portion is limited in nature but visitors will not be disappointed.



The online collection allows users to sample photos of Burroughs and Whitman as well as digital images of their work. The online collection also allows users to read highlighted articles about Burroughs and Whitman. The exhibit and online contents are being presented to lead up to the 5<sup>th</sup> annual [John Burroughs: Nature Writing and Nineteenth Century Science Conference](#).

The conference, held June 15th to the 19th, will explore areas such as: Burroughs' per-

sonal and professional relationships; his contribution to science; and his development of conservation organizations through the sharing of academic papers.

There will also be a variety of guest speakers and various adventures in nature. The keynote speaker will be Charlotte Zoë Walker, a professor from College at Oneonta who has recently edited two books on John Burroughs and is writing a book about women nature writers. For anyone interested: the deadline for registration is May 31<sup>st</sup> and more information can be found on the Vassar College website.

The Autumn issue of The Hudson River Valley Review will include a forum about John Burroughs including essays by conference presenters.

Alicia Sharp  
Robert J. Harvey

## Featured Historic Site — Washington's Headquarters

Come visit the nation's first publicly owned historic site and explore the rooms where American history was made. [Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site](#) is on Liberty Street in downtown Newburgh, New York and was built in 1750. It is several blocks from the Hudson River and enjoys picturesque views of this landmark waterway and Beacon Mountain.

In 1850, it was acquired by the State of New York and became the first publicly operated historic site in America. In 1961, because of the site's historic value, it was designated a National Historic Landmark. This historic site is owned by [New York's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation](#) (NYSOPRHP) and offers guided tours and special events. The site is open from mid-April through October, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Today, under NYSOPRHP, Washington's Headquarters is a museum furnished to re-create the conditions during the Revolu-

tionary War. It consists of three buildings: the Hasbrouck House, the longest-serving headquarters of George Washington during the American Revolutionary War; a monument named the "Tower of Victory," constructed in 1890 to commemorate the centennial of Washington's stay; as well as the 1942 museum built in this Colonial Revival style. Visitors can also observe the grave of Uzal Knapp, one of the longest-lived veterans of the Continental Army.

From April 1782 to August 1783, the Hasbrouck House served as Washington's headquarters. It was here Washington made some of the most important decisions in shaping our nation. He rejected



the idea of instituting an American monarchy; defused the threat of a mutiny among his officers; created and awarded the "Badge of Military Merit;" and finally, he ended the fighting of the Revolutionary War here.

Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site will open for the 2008 season on Wednesday April 16, 2008.

One important upcoming event for this site is "General Orders: Cease Fire!" on Friday April 18, 2008, for which visitors will find out about General Washington's plan to read orders to the Army announcing the cessation of hostilities between Great Britain and America on the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that day. For this special event, General Washington will be available at the historic site to answer any questions visitors have from noon to 4:30 p.m. For more information about Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site call (845) 562-1195 or go online to visit [Washington's Headquarters](#).

Elizabeth Vielkind

## Historic Town — Highland

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The Hamlet of Highland sits on the western bank of the majestic Hudson River. Today, it is a part of the Town of Lloyd but it was originally part of New Paltz.

In 1677, twelve Huguenots purchased approximately 40,000 acres from Native Americans in the area. The land purchased was known as the New Paltz Patent. This land included what is known today as Highland.

In 1754, Anthony Yelverton built the first house in the Highland and it is still present today. He transported lumber from Poughkeepsie and used it to build his home and sold lumber to others looking to build their own homes in town.

During the Revolutionary War, the British Navy fired cannonballs towards the shore of Highland. Two of the cannonballs were found and are displayed in the Town of Lloyd Historical collection.

In 1793, the Highland riverfront, known as the New Paltz Landing at the time, was the center of business. Noah Elting ran a ferry service that crossed the Hudson, which took its passengers to Poughkeepsie. The business was so popular at the time that many referred to the landing as Noah Elting's Landing. The ferry was large enough to transport wagons. At first the ferry was powered by slaves, in 1819 horses were used to power the ferry and later in 1830 steam was used.

Business is an important aspect of the history of Highland because the Hamlet itself was formed through the business venture of Philip Elting. During the 1820s, he established a group of businesses known as Philip's Folly which would later become known as the Hamlet of Highland.

In 1825, the Erie Canal was opened,

which increased the amount of travel on the Hudson. Often the landing would be used as a place for the boats to load and unload goods. The economic prosperity of the area, along with difficulty of enforcing laws in the large town, was an important reason why the New York State Legislature decided to divide the town into two: the town of New Paltz and the town of Lloyd.

Today, the Hamlet of Highland prides itself on the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley. Two of the Hamlet's most popular trails for hiking is on Illinois Mountain and their Rail Trail, which will eventually link to Dutchess Co. Trails over the Poughkeepsie-Highland Rail Road Bridge. The community continues to prosper as a result of its location on the Hudson River.

Kimberly Maschak

## Featured Historian—Vernon Benjamin

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Vernon Benjamin has been with Marist College for the past five years teaching the course "History and Culture of the Hudson River Valley." In 1966, he received his B.A. degree in sociology from Sienna College and he obtained his Masters in Literature in 1974.

When asked why he chose to study the Hudson River Valley, he replied that it chose him. Furthermore he had an interest in local history as a writer for his area's paper the Old Dutch Post-Star. Often he wrote stories on government news and meetings for the paper's editor, Donald S. Fellows, who he greatly admired. As a way to draw people to the library, he included references in his columns.

Shortly after, he received the opportunity to write a history of the Hudson Valley by the Overlook Press. Benjamin presented an outline to the publisher stating the rea-

sons why a history of the Hudson Valley needed to be completed and, for the last 12 years, it has been his work-in-progress. His writing, "From Wilderness to Woodstock" or Woodstock II, is historic narrative explaining the Hudson Valley's rich history. Thus, the work incorporates the geography of the area as well as its prehistory, the Colonial era, the Revolutionary and Early Republic, also the Hudson River School of Art, the Civil War, the Gilded Age, World War One, the Roosevelt years, and Modern Times. The final chapter ends with American Values, loosely based on Henry Adams' writings on the Adams and Jefferson Administrations. Moreover, today, Benjamin credits his outline in helping him become well acquainted with the Hudson River Valley.

Benjamin helped bring the *Hudson Valley Regional Review* to Marist, where it evolved and became the *Hudson River Valley Review*;

this would be Benjamin's first encounter with the Hudson River Valley Institute. He admires the tenacity of the Institute in attracting many scholars throughout the region, including himself. In addition, Benjamin credits Dr. Thomas Wermuth for his continued encouragement of his work and he praises Dr. James Johnson for showing his enthusiasm about the Hudson Valley's history. He appreciates the work of the student scholars at the Institute as well.

Benjamin hopes the Poughkeepsie Bridge Project will reach its fullest potential, because he thinks about its construction and of John Burroughs and his son walking over it and he is inspired by the great benefit it will serve to the heritage of the Hudson Valley.

Paul Contarino

## Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge Factoids

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- Harvey G. Eastman a major advocate for the initial construction of the bridge. He worked feverishly to promote it along with his business college located in Poughkeepsie. Eastman went as far as

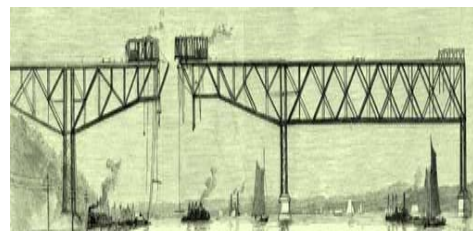
getting himself elected to the New York State Legislature to further help the project.

- Initially, the bridge was supposed to be a suspension bridge and made of iron.

- The Poughkeepsie Bridge experienced an eight-year delay from during the initial construction period from 1879 to 1886 due to poor management on part of the bridge companies.

## Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge Factoids Cont'd.

- When the last pin was installed to connect the two cantilever spans on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1888, a cannon was hauled up to the top of the bridge to mark the event.
- During the testing of the bridge, the locomotive was attached with balloons and parachutes. The theory being that if the bridge collapsed the train would fall slowly in to the water.
- Beginning in 1895, the bridge played host to the Intercollegiate Regatta for 50 years.
- Thanks to the advent of electricity, a trolley service was introduced in 1897. The trolleys provided service from New Paltz to Poughkeepsie.
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt would often watch the Regatta from his presidential yacht, *the Potomac*.
- During both World Wars and through the 1950s and 1960s, the bridge was patrolled by guardsmen, as it was a major rail link that transported soldiers and other war supplies.
- In the early 1960s, a conductor decided to walk across the top of a moving train as it crossed the Hudson River to warn the engineer to slow down for fear of derailling.
- When the rail bridge was closed in 1974, a proposal was made to turn the bridge into a toll road for cars.
- 1991: Michael Magee and Jeff Venier of Colorado proposed turning the bridge into a bungee jumping site, which was quickly blocked by the Poughkeepsie community.
- Although the Forth Bridge in Scotland is the longest cantilever, the Poughkeepsie Bridge has the highest clearance for ships.



Jason Jacondin

## Meet the Office Assistant — Meredith Scott

Contrary to what many people would think, I don't "make clothes." I am a junior at Marist College with a major in Fashion Merchandising and a Business minor. My major deals with the business side of the fashion world and I hope to become a fashion buyer in the future. Currently, I am interning at a bridal shop on Main Street in Poughkeepsie and this summer I will be interning at a high-end boutique on Long Beach Island. I will be working under the buyer, who is a former graduate of Marist. I am looking to hone my skills in this business aspect. New York City will be my next step, which will hopefully happen next fall.

I am originally from Southern Jersey, which is pretty rare at Marist. When I am not busy with school, I love skiing, cooking, running, and spending time with my Marist friends as well as my family. I have been working at the Hudson River Valley Institute since freshman year doing many secretarial tasks as well as working on the HRVI website and Review.

Last semester, I spent four months living abroad in Florence, Italy through the Marist Abroad Program. It was the most enlightening and rewarding experience of my life and I am so grateful for the oppor-

tunity. During my time abroad, I had the chance to visit many different countries and experience vast cultures. Without a doubt, I can say it has changed my life and I came out as better person because of it.



Meredith Scott

## Meet the Intern — Alicia Sharp

Born and raised along the Mohawk River, I just could not escape from the picturesque landscapes nature has to offer and now reside on the beautiful Marist College campus alongside the Hudson River. My name is Alicia Sharp, and I am completing my Junior Year at Marist.

Among the most important things to me are my education, my friends, and my family. After exploring Political Science and Advertising, I have settled on an English Education major. Until recently I was Class of 2009 President, active member in the Dance Club, and Teachers of Tomorrow. I also worked

for the Housing Office as an office aid, Resident Assistant, and Assistant to a Resident Director. Currently, I am immersed in my academics, and of course, writing. I pride myself on being honest, caring, and most of all, being enthusiastic about life!

This past semester I have had the distinct privilege of working in conjunction with the Mills Mansion in Staatsburg, New York via The Hudson River Valley Institute. The mansion is undergoing a change; the structure of the tours is being revamped in order to transport its visitors to the time period when the Mansion was bustling with guests. The tours will soon include sound clips of various guests and

the host and hostess of the mansion in various rooms throughout the attraction. My job has been to research the time period when the mansion was occupied as well as a few of the prominent women who frequented the Mills Mansion. From this experience I have gained knowledge and a better understanding about a piece of living history: the Mills Mansion.



Alicia Sharp

# Contact Us

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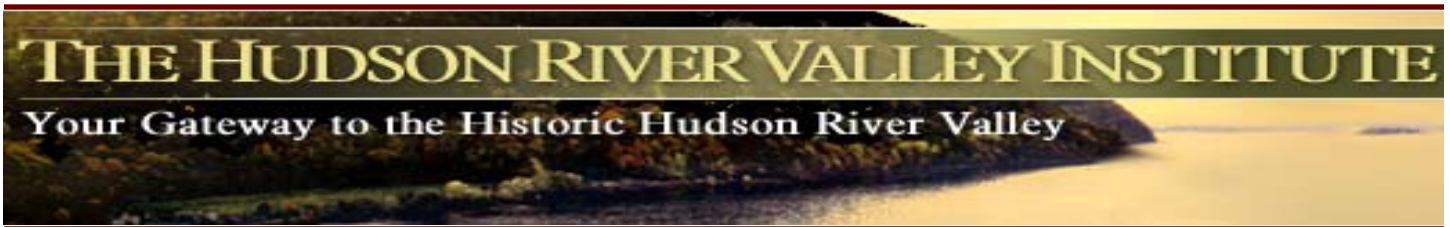
*The Hudson River Valley:  
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

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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