

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Spirit of the Holiday Season

This year's Troy Victorian Stroll marks its twenty-fifth year as the region's premier, free holiday event. This annual holiday tradition brings the streets of downtown Troy alive with holiday splendor on Sunday December 2, 2007 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nearly twenty-thousand visitors from throughout the Northeast are attracted to this event annually. According to Chamber President Linda Hillman "The Stroll is a wonderful opportunity to spend the day with family and friends, enjoying the holiday season in a historic city transformed into a winter wonderland."

Come experience the charm of downtown Troy during the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration. "Visitors won't want to miss this year's anniversary celebration, featuring special activities and surprises to mark a quarter century of this popular community event" said Linda Hillman. Visitors will be able to enjoy more than one-hundred venues offering rides, refreshments, a craft show, live music, dancing, storytelling,

theatre, costumed performances and much more, occurring against the backdrop of unique shops, storefronts and restaurants. Set in the historic beauty of Troy, the Stroll brings back Victorian holiday tradition. This event is funded privately by corporate and citizen contributions and is organized by the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce with Troy providing operational support.



A popular highlight of the Stroll is the Chamber's annual window decorating contest, open to Troy businesses and residents. This popular event is in its fifth year and those who participate are judged based on these categories: best of show-business; best of show-residential; traditional holiday spirit; most whimsical; most original; and most creative. To view past participants decorated windows or to see past winners visit: www.eventurestudio.com/eventureSites/161/optional_section2/index.cfm.

In addition to the window decorat-

ing contest, the annual holiday tradition offers keepsakes of the Stroll. For instance the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce will sell wooden Victorian toys manufactured by Rensselaer County wood turnings manufacturer W. J. Cowee, Inc, known for their quality wood products. Another keepsake being offered during the Stroll will be a pewter Troy Victorian Stroll ornament, which is the seventh collectible ornament in a series created by John Bloom of Troy's JK Bloom Jewelers.

The Troy Victorian Stroll is a popular holiday tradition for Upstate New York. To find other holiday events occurring throughout the historic Hudson River Valley region, visit:

www.hudsonrivervalley.com/. Besides the Troy Victorian Stroll, other seasonal events occurring in the Hudson River Valley include: Yuletide High Tea, which is a holiday celebration with traditional cakes, delicate open-

(Continued from page 1) faced tea sandwiches, seasonal music and a mansion

Inside this issue:

Featured Historic Website	2
Featured Historic Site	2
Featured Historic Town	3
Featured Historian	3
Digital Library	3
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 3

tour of Wilderstein; the St. Nicholas Day Celebration, which is a traditional Dutch celebration for Christmas at Philipse Manor Hall; and the Twilight Holiday Tour and Dinner at Locust Grove that includes a tour of Locust Grove Mansion at twilight as well as dinner, and many

more holiday festivities that can be found at the Hudson River Valley website provided above.

Throughout the historic Hudson River Valley, the spirit of the Holiday Season comes to life. Troy's Annual Holiday Victorian Stroll brings the streets of

downtown Troy to life with historic holiday splendor.

Liz Vielkind

Featured Website — www.columbiacountyny.com

"A look into the past while reaching for the future" is the theme for Columbia County's featured site as the county itself is one of the oldest in New York State, yet at the same time it is growing continually as well.

The site describes the history of the county and discusses how although various people had lived in the area since the 1600s, townships were not developed until 1772. Then on April 4, 1786 the legislature passed an act and established the county. At this time, the original seven towns included: Kinderhook, Canaan, Claverack, Hillsdale, Clermont, Germantown and Livingston. Through the years, other towns were added making the total 18.

Since its formation in 1786, the county has come a long way. It has grown to provide many services for its inhabitants. The main objective of the website is to promote the county. The tour-

ism section is useful. It highlights historic sites such as [Olana](#), Clarendon, and the home of our eighth president, Martin van Buren. Also, the county is home to a rather unusual place: the American Museum of Firefighting. The [FASNY Museum of Fire-](#)



[fighting](#) contains years of American firefighting artifacts. Additional museums can be found on the site's [Attractions](#) page.

Besides Historic attractions, Columbia County also attracts visitors for its [beautiful natural environment](#). It has much to offer for all types of people. The website itself states it best: "From the untamed beauty of Bash Bish Falls to cycling on quiet country lanes. From family-swimming in our state parks to leaf peeping among our hillsides of stunning reds and golds...Fresh, crisp air, boundless serenity, and exhilarating outdoor sports". The county is home to one of New York State's best DIRT & NHRA tracks: Lebanon Valley Speedway & Dragway.

Columbia County is also home to many places that support [the arts](#) as well. There are many galleries that host art exhibits, poetry readings and more.

You can visit their [site](#) for yourself to learn more.

Colleen Ryan

Featured Historic Site — Columbia County Historical Society

[The Columbia County Historical Society](#) offers a multitude of historical museums for people of all ages. Chief among these is the Columbia County Museum. Originally built to be a Masonic Temple in 1916, the building now serves as the Columbia County Historical Society's Office and has been open to the public since 1985. Currently, it serves mostly as an area to do research, but educational programs (dealing with such topics as genealogy) are also run in the building.

Another museum the Columbia County Historical Society owns is the Luykas Van Alen House (http://www.cchsny.org/prog_links_sites_1.html). This house, which was established in 1737 and designated a National Historical Landmark in

1968, serves to show Dutch farm life from the 18th Century. The house has furniture furnished in the 18th Century style and contains large fireplaces to heat the house.

The property also contains the [Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse](#). Named after the famous schoolteacher from the Legend of Sleepy Hollow, the one-room building itself was built around 1850 and served as a schoolhouse until the 1940s. During the 1974, it was moved onto the Van Alen property and restored to its 1920s appearance.

A final museum owned by the Columbia County Historical Society is the [James Vanderpoel House](#). Established in the 1820s, the building depicts Federal period

architecture. Built for the famous lawyer and elected official which the house is named after, it shows a ritzy lifestyle for anyone living in the early 19th Century.

The three of these museums combined offer a unique opportunity to get a glimpse of the way things used to be in Columbia County. However, there is a small admissions fee for each of the buildings (with the exception of the Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse which is included in the Van Alen House tour) of \$3 for adults and \$2 for all seniors (65 and older) and students, while children under 12 are free.

Joe De Lisle

Historic Town — Philmont

Though the area was inhabited by Dutch settlers as early as the mid-17th century, the historic village of Philmont was established in 1892. Industry and the Civil War helped to fuel the population of the area, until the town was officially founded within the borders of Columbia County.

The most significant contribution to the town's establishment, however, was the construction of mills that utilized water power. Beginning with George P. Phillip in 1845, the Philmont area became a successful location for water-powered mills, and the need for additional resources and services on the part



of the millers eventually brought people

of other professions to the area as well.

At one point, Philmont was referred to as "Factory Hill," due to the tremendous number of mills and textile factories established in the village. However, the

village went through a period of recovery after many of these factories left the area for more metropolitan regions. Though this was an economic challenge for Philmont, it did allow for much of the village's architectural tradition to be maintained.

Today, Philmont is becoming increasingly popular, as it is a location that maintains its small town charm while also offering a proximity to New York

City, the Hudson River, and the Adirondack Mountains.

For more information on Philmont visit their [website](#).

Amanda Schreiner

Featured Historian— Gail Wolczanski

Located about fourteen miles northeast of Hudson, NY is the town of Chatham. Gail Wolczanski, [The Village Historical Society](#) President, is a proud resident of Chatham with five generations of family residing in its borders. When her predecessor passed the torch to Gail, she brought a lot of experience to the table. Ms. Wolczanski taught for 33 years, worked for a NY state senator, and has worked in historic museums.

The overall character and charm of the town is her favorite part of it's history. She loves being able to stroll down the

streets and look at the 19th century theater and relive her childhood memories. The railroad was a significant part of her families' life, with six different members being employed by the railroad.

Ms. Wolczanski's most current work is in the restoration of the [Blinn-Pulver Farmhouse](#). The farmhouse was built around 1811 in the Federal Style architecture. The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is in 80% original condition. Recently, roofing material was donated which has enabled work on the inside to commence. She is still looking

for help in the way of donations and volunteers.

A major upcoming event for the town is the publication of *Chatham Fare: Recipes and History of Chatham*. The book features six pages of Chatham's history, interviews, and a detailed diary of one of the town's residents.

Chatham Village Historical Society
Gail Blass Wolczanski, President
6 Shore Road
Chatham, New York 12037
(518) 392-3676

- Jason Jacondin

Digital Library— Lesson Plans

The Hudson River Valley Institute is proud to announce its addition of three lessons plans to its ever growing digital library. These three sessions pertain to some aspect of the United States Supreme Court.

The [Supreme Court Vocabulary Lesson Plan](#) outlines important terminology relevant to understanding the judicial branch of the American government. These terms are then respectively applied to the courts cases, *Marbury v Madison*, *McCulloch v. Madison*, and *Gibbons v. Ogden*.

[Does the Supreme Court Affect Teens?: A Survey of Court Cases](#) is the next tutorial listed. It contains a list of important vocabulary terms crucial to the lecture about the Supreme Court. Also listed are the first ten amendments of the United States Con-

stitution (a.k.a Bill of Rights).

[Schenck v the United States](#) explores the issue of free speech in the United States. This famous Supreme Court case is known for establishing the famous phrase "clear and present danger." The online lesson includes newspaper clippings dating to the time of the case as well as the court's decision.

The Hudson River Valley Institute is also pleased to report that the Coffin Family Collection has been added to the Marist archives webpage. In his September interview with the institute, John Ansley expressed his excitement for receiving the Coffin papers. Since then, the entire collection has been carefully digitized and as of December 3rd made available for public

viewing. Ansley hopes that people will take an interest in exploring the rich history of the Coffin Family.

On the webpage there are eleven folders containing a wide range of Coffin information such as deeds, bills as well as labor and newspaper receipts, and promissory notes. In all, this assortment of various papers totals 163 items spanning from September 1810 through January 1859. A small biographical sketch of the family is also provided. Users can now simply click on the on the collection, scroll down to the respective folder and then click on the item number itself and view the digitized material.

Paul Contarino

Meet the Intern — Jason Jacondin



“Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.”—George Santayana

Most people that I have encountered laugh or dismiss this saying. As a passionate student of history, however, I know that this saying has merit. I have zealously embraced history from a young age as I grew up listening to my grandfather’s stories about the Second World War. Consequently, by the time I entered

high school, I knew much about history that was not being taught in the classrooms.

With my passion for history, particularly American military history, many assumed I would simply become a teacher. Although I respect the teaching profession, it is not my destiny. My path lies along a different trail, a trail that leads to the shores of the Potomac. Presently, my aspiration is to work for the Federal Government, specifically, in the area of homeland security. Studying American history has left me with strong patriotic sentiments that have motivated me to serve.

As a junior at Marist College I am working feverishly to make my dream a reality. I am majoring in American Studies with a minor in Political Science and a concentration in Public History. I am involved in a number of extracurricular activities on campus including the Marist College Republicans, Campus Ministry, and the Marist Committee for American Troop Support. Recently, I have also joined the fraternal order of the Knights of Columbus. I plan to intern next se-

mester at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park. I also have future hopes of pursuing a summer internship with the Federal Government. I am confident that my experience and the opportunities given to me by Marist will undoubtedly help me in attaining my goal.

Presently, I am conducting research into the history and role of New York State Armories in the Hudson Valley for my second research assignment for my internship at the Hudson River Valley Institute.

Jason Jacondin

Meet the Intern — Joe De Lisle

Joseph De Lisle Jr. is a Political Science major and a Business minor at Marist College. He is in the middle of his junior year and remains, as in every other year, a very active member of the Marist Community. He has served the students as a Resident Senator in the Student Government Association, and is currently serving the students as the Executive Vice President. To go along with this, he is also the Chairman of the Marist College Republicans and a member of the Catholic Student Association’s planning team.

A regular member of the Dean’s List, Joe has co-authored a paper with a professor and then presented it to the New York State Political Science Association. He had the honor of being selected to serve as Marist’s lone representative to the 59th Annual Student Conference on United States Affairs (SCUSA) at the United State Military Academy,

where the delegates from around the world came together looking to solve some of America’s most pressing problems.



After growing up in a small, blue collar, family oriented town in Connecticut, Joe understands the importance of hard work, responsibility, and ethics. A devoted family member and a loyal friend, he seeks to give back to the community and help make America a better place. He never gives up, never gives anything less than his best, and will always stand up for what he believes is right.

Joe De Lisle

Contact Us

The Hudson River Valley Institute
Marist College
3399 North Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Phone: 845-575-3052
Fax: 845-575-3176
E-mail: hrevi@marist.edu

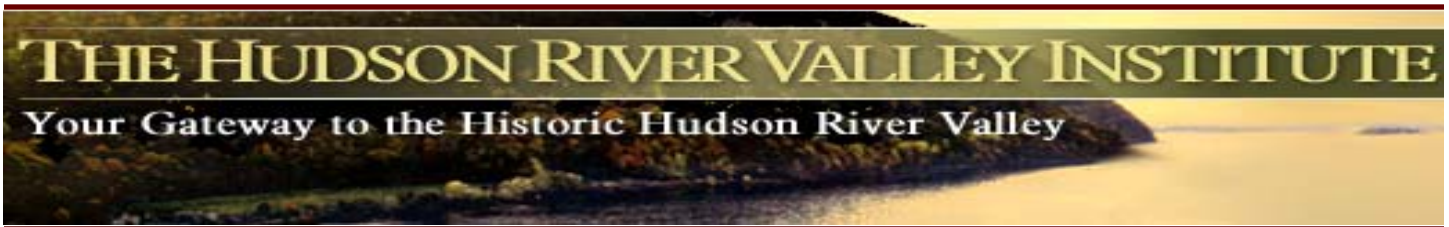
*The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

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



Staff

Dr. Thomas Wermuth, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, Director Hudson River Valley Institute

Dr. Colonel James M. Johnson (U.S. Army, ret.), Executive Director Hudson River Valley Institute

Christopher Pryslopski, Program Director

Ann Panagulias, Business Manager

Contributors to this issue:

RJ Langlois, Editor-in-Chief

Robert Harvey, Assistant Editor

Paul Contarino, Intern

Colleen Ryan, Intern

Joe De Lisle, Intern

Amanda Schreiner, Intern

Jason Jacondin, Intern

Elizabeth Vielkind, Intern

The newsletter is the production of the interns of HRVI