

Issue 40

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HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Academic Arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Lindenwald Winter Celebration

Located on Route 9H, two miles north of the Village of Kinderhook, NY, Lindenwald, the home and farm of Martin Van Buren, will be holding its annual winter celebration on December 8th and 9th. Every year, the birth of America's 8th President, is celebrated at this historic site and this December 5th marks the 224th anniversary of Van Buren's birth.



http://www.nps.gov/archive/mava/images/mi___gp1.jpg

The interior of the Lindenwald house will be beautifully decorated for the season on both days, courtesy of the members of the Kinderhook Garden Club. This weekend is one that can be enjoyed by adults and children alike.

On Friday night, the event will take place along with the annual candlelight walk in the Village of Kinderhook, which will be from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. There will be a heated tent on the front lawn of Lindenwald where visitors will be offered refreshments, provided by the Friends of Lindenwald, while they wait to be escorted into the house by the doorman. Guests will not only participate in a

guided tour, but well-known storyteller Joe Doolittle will also entertain them with stories and songs.

The celebration will continue the next afternoon with some great family-fun activities. Children can enjoy a craft activity, and can listen to the retelling of Dutch folktales, much like the ones Martin Van Buren would have enjoyed in his childhood. There are several times for parents to choose from to tour the mansion, and they may select three activities for their children. All of

Saturday's activities will take place in the heated tent.

The regular touring season of Lindenwald has ended, but tours will resume in May 2007. This celebration is a great opportunity for families and friends to gather together to honor Martin Van Buren and to enjoy this beautiful site. Those who wish to take a tour of the house do not have to pay admission, but it is essential that reservations are made during the week by phone at (518) 758-9689.

By Tricia Lynch

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Special points of interest:

- Meet more of HRVI's outstanding interns and the office assistant on page 4.

Meet the Historian — Allan Warnecke

As an English and Art major, I was a tad terrified when I was assigned to interview Putnam County Historian Allan Warnecke. No, it was not Mr. Warnecke who frightened me (in fact, after our chat, I discovered he is a terrifically pleasant man). In truth, it was the horror of the impending history lessons I'd have to face.

After contacting Mr. Warnecke, I immediately learned that Mahopac, the town in which he has claimed his life-long residence, is actually pronounced "May-HOE-pac." (History may not be my forte, but correct *pronunciation* I certainly can handle!)

A graduate of Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, Mr. Warnecke received his B.A. in chemistry, and continued as a professional chemist for IBM until retirement. His second love

of history and strong interest in genealogy led him to the tracing of his family tree, through which he surprisingly discovered his lineage to eleven Mayflower colonists and fourteen soldiers of the Revolutionary War.

Soon after realizing the close connections between his ancestors and the town's history, Mr. Warnecke said he "evolved into [the historian] position," first appointed Historian of the Town of Carmel in 1996, and after eight successful years there, advanced as the historian for Putnam County. His position requires plenty of researching, organizing the museum's archives, coordinating events, and hosting visitors interested in the local history. He established the Putnam Cemetery Committee to restore the county's 18 historic graveyards, as well as organized Putnam County's History Day

this past November 18th. Mr. Warnecke is also currently working to preserve 23 acres of farmland that once constituted the core of the Hill-Agor property, a site bound for centuries in many legal contracts – beginning with a most interesting prenuptial agreement.

For students pursuing a future in history, or even those with interests in discovering their roots, Mr. Warnecke encouraged visiting local historical societies and taking advantage of all they have to offer. "You learn in this job every-day," he said.

For more information on the Putnam County Historical Society or to visit sites in the area, contact Allan Warnecke by calling (845)278-7209, or visit <http://www.putnamcountyny.com/historian>.

By Jess Friedlander

Featured Historic Town — Ramapo

Ramapo is a town located in Rockland County, north of New York City on the southern tip of the state. Its name is from the Algonquian word that is interpreted as "round pond," "sweet water" or "sloping rocks." It is located on an early stagecoach route that travelers would take from New York City to Albany. Until 1791, Ramapo was part of Haverstraw; it was thereafter known as Hempstead until 1829.

According to Legend, Henry Hudson was the first European to have found Rockland County in 1609 when he sailed up the river, while working for the Dutch East India Company. He believed that he had found the "Northwest Passage" to India, and did not realize his mistake until he was in Albany.

The Dutch unsuccessfully attempted to settle the land; after giving the territory to the English in



Ramapo Torne in Harriman State Park, part of the Ramapo Mountains

1664, the Duke of York (later known as King James II of England) established the area as Orange County in 1686. This included all of Rockland County and part of what is today Orange County. Haverstraw was established in 1719 when it was permitted to hold its own meetings and elect town officers; however it was not officially considered a town until 1788.

Rockland County became extremely important during the American Revolution because of its location between the North and the Southern Colonies. Many forts, battles, and even the treason of Benedict Arnold took place in this county. After the war, the county was destroyed. Homes had to be rebuilt as well as the farmland, Haverstraw and Orangetown where hit the worst.

In 2006 Ramapo was ranked 49th in the United States, and second in the Northeast, best place to live. It is the home of Harriman State Park, Kakiat Park as well as Rockland Community College. The peaceful countryside, rolling mountains, unique historic sites, contribution to America's earliest history, and its proximity to New York City make Ramapo a unique town to live in or visit.

By Kelly Glynn

Featured Historic Site—Sunnyside Estate

Situated on the eastern shores of the Hudson River at its widest portion, the Tappan Zee, is the former home of famous American author Washington Irving. Located in Tarrytown NY, his Sunnyside estate offers picturesque scenic views, recreational parks, and a unique history.

As a teen, Irving was sent by his family to vacation in the Westchester countryside, giving him later inspiration for stories like “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle.” When his families successful import business collapsed in the aftermath of the War of 1812, Irving was sent to Europe in 1815. This stay would span 17 years and would be were he published most of his successful literary works. When Irving returned to America, he sought to establish a home for himself and, remembering the land he had visited as a teen in Westchester



Irving's portrait,
© <http://www.hudsonvalley.org>

County, decided to buy land there. Irving purchased the Sunnyside estate as a ten acre property with a two room farmhouse in 1835 at the age of 52. Irving decided to design the estate by incorporating an eclectic range of romantic landscapes and architecture from England, Spain and Mediterranean countries. For instance, a Spanish tower was constructed in 1847, 10 years after the initial completion of the estate.

Irving hired George Harvey, a Hudson River School painter with building experience, to supervise the construction of the estate. When finished, the site would be self sustaining and include an orchard, farm animals, pastures, and an inlet cove of the river

used for boating and recreation. Formal gardens were omitted for free flowing plant life. Vines were planted around the house to create a natural feeling.

The estate eventually included 7 bedrooms, a high-tech kitchen, a parlor, a living room, guest houses, and an office for Irving.

Irving, called Sunnyside his home for the latter part of his life until his death in 1859. Several generations of his family continued to live there, until a charity founded by John D. Rockefeller purchased the estate and donated it to the public as a historic site.

Today the site remains largely intact, with many of Irving's original belongings. It is open to visitors and serves as a museum. Those interested in seeing the beauty of the house firsthand can visit between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays or call 914-631-8200 for more information.

By Tom Clancey

Featured Historic Website—New York State Museum

Though tiny thumbnails of such a lavish house and grounds do little to convey the true majesty of Wilderstein historic site, the organization's comprehensive Web site lures any potential visitors to plan a trip to historic Rhinebeck, New York. December certainly is one of the best times of the year to stop in; volunteers deck the mansion's halls for Christmas with historic decorations and arrangements by local florists, while visitors are invited to take self-guided tours of this paradigm of Victorian holiday cheer.

Wilderstein's website is brimming with information about the history of the house and the family that lived there, the Suckleys. In 1852, Thomas Holy Suckley purchased the riverfront land, which at the time was a sheep meadow of the adjacent eighteenth-century estate, Wildercliff. The website gives such details as the origin of the estate's name (“wild man's stone,” in reference to a nearby Native American petroglyph) and a timeline of restoration efforts.

One of the most interesting aspects of the website is its section on the library



Old family postcard; © <http://www.wilderstein.org>

and archives of Wilderstein. Those interested in researching the family or the estate itself have an excellent place to start their investigations here, as the site outlines all of the holdings in the library, including books, ephemera and pamphlets, magazines and periodicals, sheet music, and architectural, landscape and engineering drawings. Mainly focused on the family's interests and the pop culture of the time, the library has over 7,000 books on religion, nineteenth and twentieth century travel, exploration, sports, landscape, architecture, business, World War I, literature, cookery, and history. The archives in-

clude personal and business papers, photography, and maps.

For those who cannot make it to Rhinebeck, the Southeastern Library Resources Council hosts an online catalog of many of the Wilderstein library's items. The bibliographic catalog includes detailed records of books and other print holdings, and the digital images catalog is a collection of images of art, sheet music, photography, and other personal and business documents.

Wilderstein also offers group tours throughout the year, and the group reservation form can be printed off the Web site and mailed in. From May until November, guests can make reservations for a sit-down lunch, dinner, or high tea. Those interested can view the menus online.

There is also a convenient map of the estate's trails on the site. There is no fee to walk the trails and the grounds are open year-round from dawn until dusk.

The site also offers driving directions, contacts at the estate, and links to several other historic sites and local organizations. It can be accessed at www.wilderstein.org.

By Kate Giglio

Meet the Intern — Chris Canale

Chris Canale is a junior at Marist and transferred from Dutchess Community College. At Marist he chose to be a history major because he developed an appreciation for history through some of his teachers and courses in high school. This is his first semester as an intern for the Hudson River Valley Institute. As an intern, his responsibilities include scanning and digitizing articles for use on the website as well as writing research papers on specific areas of information on the Hudson Valley. For his first paper for the institute which was on the history of brewing, he was very interested in researching Matthew Vassar's private letters for information on his brewery and how they were a snapshot of that specific time period. Since Canale grew up in the Hudson Valley playing on the



Great Lawn of the Vanderbilt Mansion and sleighing down the hills of Mills Mansion he said he is finally beginning to realize the significance of the area he calls home.

When Canale is not spending hours in the library studying or writing, he can be found working at the South Hills movie theatre, Silver Cinemas 8. He is also a member of the Marist Anime Society and enjoys working out in the gym. His other interests include science fiction films, music, fantasy novels, hanging out with friends and the usual video games. He said he also has a special interest in Godzilla and attends the annual Godzilla convention in Chicago. When he graduates, he hopes to find a position with a museum although he is not yet sure what exactly he wants to do.

By Chris Canale

Meet the Office Assistant — Meredith Scott

Meredith is a sophomore here at Marist and is majoring in Fashion Merchandising. She comes from South Jersey, which is pretty rare at Marist. She started working at the Hudson River Valley Institute second semester last year and really enjoys her job.

Her year and a half at Marist has not only given her a great education, but friendships that will last a lifetime. In the Marist community Meredith has been an active member of fashion club, dance club, campus ministry, and Italian club. She loves to travel and experience other cultures.

Next fall she hopes to study fashion in Italy in order to broaden her horizon. She also is eager to get an internship in New York City to make connections and gain experience and insight into the fashion world. Her other interests include her family, her roommates, dance, cooking, and skiing.

By Meredith Scott



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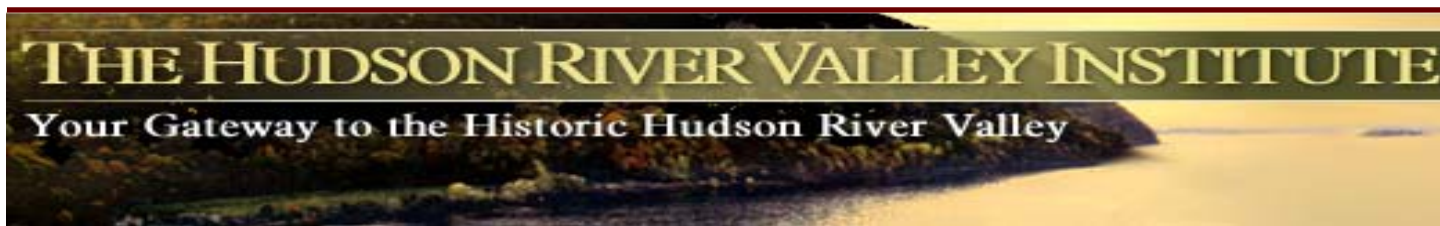
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*The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

www.hudsonrivervalley.net

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 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."



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