

HRVI June Newsletter



Hudson River Valley Institute

Teaching the Hudson Valley (THV) has geared up for their 8th annual THV conference held at the Home of FDR National Historic Site Hyde Park, New York. The events are scheduled to take place over the course of three days, from July 26 to 28. The theme this time around is “Place & the Digital Native: Using Technology and Social Media to Teach the Hudson Valley.” It will focus on bridging the gap between digital natives – the youth who grew up and works comfortably with technology – and their technologically challenged educators. As society changes, so does the way things are under-

stood. Conventional teaching methods are struggling to survive in the modern world. Both students and their teachers must adapt during this transitory phase. Technology and social media will be applied to “place-based education.” putting THV’s slogan into practice: “Explore a place. Discover your world.”

Place-based education emphasizes using the natural beauty and opportunity that the expansive Hudson River Valley has to offer, from natural landscapes and resources to extravagant architecture to historic sites and museums. Dina

Strasser’s Tuesday morning keynote presentation will explore the relationship between place-based education and technology. Strasser, a Fulbright Scholar, is a middle school English teacher and maintains an award-winning blog, [The Line](#). She’ll share her thoughts on technology in place-based education, beginning with the question, “Would the Lorax or FDR Tweet?”

Day two of this summer’s conference will boast field experiences at several great sites that are experimenting with using tech-

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- [Olana Tours](#)
- [Battlefield Serenity](#)
- [Meet the Interns](#)

Hudson
River
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Institute

Olana Sunset Curator's Tour Series

This summer at Olana, the Persian inspired home of American artist Frederic Edwin Church, will be a season long tour series every third Thursday of the month. Four events beginning June 16th, July, 21st, August 18th, and ending on September 15th have their own unique theme connecting the views of Olana to each other.

"The Sunset Curator Tour Series explore over arching themes at Olana of composition, influences and framing," said Evelyn Trebilcock, Curator at Olana. "They are wonderful opportunities for visitors to engage in conversations with us about how these themes can be seen in the house, the landscape and in the collections."

For "Framing the View," the first event held on June 16th, curators guided guests on tours of the house and landscape and dis-



Photo courtesy of Olana website

cussed how Church purposefully designed the property with the Hudson River Valley in mind; which inspired many of Church's famous works.

July 21st will hold the second event, "Decorative Elements." This tour features the influences different regions of the world, such as South America and the Middle East, had on Church and how he used these for 40 years to develop Olana.

"Creating a Composition" is the third entry and will delve deeper into Church's greatest work by high-

lighting the artistic arrangements created both inside and outside the Olana mansion and how they influenced artistic compositions.

Finally, the series ends with "Influences on Design" and will address the regional influences that combined with American architecture and period landscaping practices to allow Church to express himself and make Olana into what it is today, a living three dimensional work of art.

A maximum of 24 attendees is allowed and the costs are \$40 for members of the Olana Partnership and \$50 for non-members. Those interested can call (518) 828-0135 x 103 for more information and must reserve a spot by the preceding Thursday of each event.

By: Matt O'Brien

Words, Words, Words



Picture courtesy of Maplegroveny.org

This coming Sunday, June 26, is the first session of "Words Words Words" at Maple Grove. This series of authors' reading from their work is now in its fourth season. The program

starts at 3 p.m., and this week's list of authors includes Nina Shengold and Jennifer May's wonderful book "River of Words," poet Molly McGlennen's "Fried Fish and Flour Biscuits," as well as novelists Ken Wishnia and Heinz Insu Fenkl.

Walter Effron of The Three Arts will be at the program with books for sale. Admission is free, and donations to the Maple Grove Restoration fund are always welcome! Entrance to Maple Grove is at 24 Beechwood Avenue in Poughkeepsie. For detailed direc-

tions, and information about future programs, check the [Maple Grove website](#). The other "Words Words Words" programs this summer will be held on July 31 and August 28 - both Sundays, both at 3 p.m.

Adapted by:

Peter Rottenbacher.

Battlefield Reflections

During the month of April, I had the pleasure of visiting Gettysburg, Pennsylvania as part of my Civil War and Reconstruction course here at Marist College. The three-day trip culminated a semester long academic journey back to the infamous Civil War that resulted in the death of 625,000 Americans. Leading our contemporary charge back to the Gettysburg battlefield were Professor Mark Morreale, Chair of the English Department, Professor Nicholas Marshall, Associate Professor of History, and Professor Stephen Mercier, Professor of English. The joint trip, which also included students from Professor Morreale's Seminar in American Literature course, turned out to be a memorable experience.

During our journey to Gettysburg we visited the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center, the battlefield, various military cemeteries and landmarks of the town. For the duration of the trip, Professor Morreale provided us with remarkable insight and information on the battles and the commanders of the Gettysburg campaign. The most memorable portion of the trip was visiting the actual battlefields. What struck me most was the massive amount of terrain traversed; the battlefield itself stretches for miles. While there, we walked the route General Reynolds' army took, climbed up Little Round Top and peered over the battlefield, and finally walked the last quarter mile of Picket's Charge. This helped to provide context to what we read in various novels and textbooks for

class. I found the entire battlefield experience particularly awe inspiring. It reminded me of the sacrifice the Hudson Valley made when I saw the monuments honoring the 150th and 124th NY Regiments. Walking on such hallowed ground where thousands of Americans, both from the North and South, lost their lives provided me with new perspective on the battle and the war.

The experience in Gettysburg was truly memorable. John Maricivec, a senior at the time of the trip, summed up his experience to me by saying, "It's one thing to read about Gettysburg in *Killer Angels*; it becomes totally different once you walk on the same fields where Union and Confederate soldiers once fought and died." In a similar fashion Gianna D'Ambrosca, a junior at the time of the trip, stated, "This battle didn't just happen in some isolated field but through the small town itself. We were able to grasp its scope and magnitude by physically being there ourselves." My class and I stressed the importance of this trip to us as historians

By: Sean Vitti



Teaching the Hudson Valley, cont.

nology and social media to reach more people, including teachers and students. [The Hudson River Valley Institute](#) (HRVI) is proud to have developed the field experience at [Mills Mansion Staatsburgh State Historic Site](#) in Staatsburg, New York. It was developed in part by, Dr. Ron Coleman of Marist College, who worked with HRVI to develop the Digital Pathfinder. Digital Pathfinder is a software program for a PDA device that gives a GPS-guided landscape tour of the majestic river-side estate.

On days one and three, participants can choose from nearly 20 workshops to suit their interests. Topics span from using Google Earth to blogging about history. Facilitators include professors, librarians, classroom

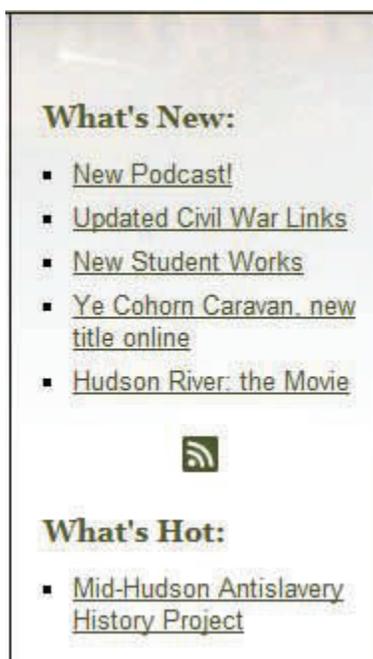
teachers, scientists, and more. The conference isn't just for newcomers to technological teaching tools, however. Different workshops serve different purposes. Some will introduce available tools, while others will explore methods to maximize their potential.

Teaching the Hudson Valley helps educators discover, appreciate, and share the region's natural, historic, and cultural treasures with children and youth while fostering collaboration between schools and significant places, such as museums, parks, and historic sites. THV offers Explore Awards so teachers can share what they learned at the conference with their students or

pursue another trip that they're enthusiastic about. According to THV coordinator Debi Duke, "The beauty of THV's summer institute is that participants span all grades and disciplines. In addition, THV crosses the boundaries of formal and informal education so that teachers and site educators meet and get to know each other's work. If you'd like share the region's wealth with the youth of our community – or if you'd just like to learn more about the Valley, follow the link to [register](#)."

By: Peter Rottenbucher

Web Upgrades



Find this on our HRVI website

The Hudson River Valley Institute's website has made recent upgrades with all new features. Many of the additions are centered on the sesquicentennial anniversary of the Civil War as experienced in the Hudson River Valley. Two other features offer insight into the region both from the past and the present.

HRVI has several new upgrades pertaining to the Civil War. There are additions to the [annotated bibliography](#) that brings viewers information on the Civil War in the Hudson Valley. Also, essays on [The Poughkeepsie Eagle](#) newspaper's coverage of the conflict have also been put on the website. A new

also been posted and lectures, courtesy of Professor Jason Schaaf, about the Orange Blossoms and their part in the Civil War including information, facts, and statistics about those who served in the war from New York.

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Hudson River Wildlife Documentary

The Hudson River has a rich history. The regions rich biodiversity served generations of Native Americans with a means of survival prior to European arrival. It was essential in the Revolutionary War, it was key in the industrial revolution, and it houses one of the largest cities in the world at its mouth. It is also home to an array of distinct American species, from bald eagles to red ash trees. Its impressive history and excessive use came at a price, however. Animals and the natural beauty suffered, until environmentalists stepped in to restore the river. Now that a relative balance within the ecosystem is being restored, Zachary Halberd and several others have begun work on an educational wildlife documentary. It is their attempt to pay homage and forever preserve the Hudson River Valley.

What began as a solo project in December 2010 eventually turned into a large-scale group project. They went from still-shots to film, from one photographer to

many. Thanks to *Kickstarter*, a web-based donation site, [Hudson River the Movie](#) was able to raise \$20,000 in less than a month. Their goal with the film isn't to raise concern about an issue, but rather to educate. Halberd and his crew will be reaching out to schools to inspire children and get them excited about what they can find in their backyard. The movie, however, isn't just for a young audience. The captivating images combined with the in-depth and lively explanation of the river's history and biology would be intriguing for adults as well.

Filming is very time sensitive for this type of documentary. Many species, like the Striped Bass, are most easily caught on camera during their mating season. The documentary is set for completion sometime in the winter of 2012. The *Kickstarter* account has since been closed, but you may follow updates on it [here](#), or on their website linked above. They will

also be holding a fundraiser barbeque with [Barn on the Pond](#) in Woodstock, New York on July 23, 2011 where a screening of the "Lake Tear of the Clouds" segment of the documentary will take place.

By: Peter Rottenbucher



The introduction clip to their website.

Website Upgrades, cont'd.

[Hudson River: The Movie](#) is a wildlife documentary of the region and provides a blog about information of the region currently. There are some videos embedded in the website granting the viewer images of the Hudson River Valley's wildlife such as the beaver and small insight into how it lives.

There is also a book, *Ye Cohorn Caravan*, by W.L. Bowne, about the march to Fort

Ticonderoga during the American Revolution featured on the website. It offers maps and an account of the Knox Expedition during the winter of 1775-1776. The book can be downloaded from a [PDF](#) attached to the website.

HRVI is now initiating a research project on John Flack Winslow – an iron industrialist whose estate, Woodcliff, forms the north end of the Marist

College campus. Winslow served a major role in the Civil War as one of the financiers and iron suppliers for the Union Ironclad, *Monitor*, whose famous battle against the Confederate Ironclad, *Virginia* (or *Merrimac*), changed naval engagements forever. This is an exciting project and HRVI looks forward to its completion in the fall.

By: Matt O'Brien

Meet the Intern: Peter Rottenbacher

Peter Rottenbacher is back for his second summer at the Hudson River Valley Institute. Despite a year abroad in Madrid, Spain, the lure of the Hudson Valley remained strong. His experiences abroad have reassured him of the goals he set last summer. Still planning to live abroad, still planning to teach English, and still planning to teach Spanish, Peter has decided to apply for a Fulbright Scholarship through Marist College. He will be applying for the English Teaching Assistanship (ETA) for secondary schools in Madrid. Acquiring the Fulbright is no easy task, however. The grueling application process will hope-

fully pay off but he's got a backup plan just in case it doesn't. The Spanish government also offers scholarships to teach English and live abroad as well.

Regardless of how Peter makes his way back across the pond, he's to not only continue his Spanish studies, but also begin studying Catalan – a mixture of French and Spanish. To help facilitate learning the new language, he has begun studying French. Before any of this happens he'll be finishing up his senior year at Marist. Peter will graduate in the spring of 2012 with a double major in Spanish and History. During his

last two semesters, he hopes to intern with the Hudson River Valley Institute again, while working for the Marist Institute for Public Opinion and tutoring in English and Spanish to faculty and students. It'll be a long, ambitious year that will surely fly by.



Meet the Intern: Matt O'Brien

Matt O'Brien will be entering his senior year as a History-Secondary Education double major also pursuing concentrations in History-Education and Public History as well as a Psychology minor. Originally from Florence, Massachusetts, Matt has been interested in history since his early school years and he is most interested in the War of 1812 and early American history as well as early modern and modern European history.

After spending the spring semester with HRVI, he returns to continue a project on the Great Estates of the Hudson River Valley, a cooperative effort to create online tours. In addition Matt is beginning a research project on John Flack Winslow, whose Woodcliff estate formed the north end of the Marist

College campus. Winslow was one of the financiers and iron suppliers for the Union ironclad, *Monitor*, during the Civil War. Matt hopes that his experience from HRVI this past spring, the summer and next fall will help him succeed in his ambitions later in life once he graduates from Marist.

When back home, Matt spends time with his friend playing poker, hiking or enjoying a fire in the backyard. He also plays baseball, being one of his passions in life, as well as soccer and follows both sports adamantly in addition to hockey. His favorite teams include the New York Mets, Manchester United and the Boston Bruins.

Following Marist, Matt hopes to earn his masters in History

and decide on a career in either secondary education or public history, and adjunct at the collegiate level as well. At some point he hopes to return for a second masters in an undecided field. He would love to travel Europe and explore the rich history of the continent as well as visit famous sites from the War of 1812 such as Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland.



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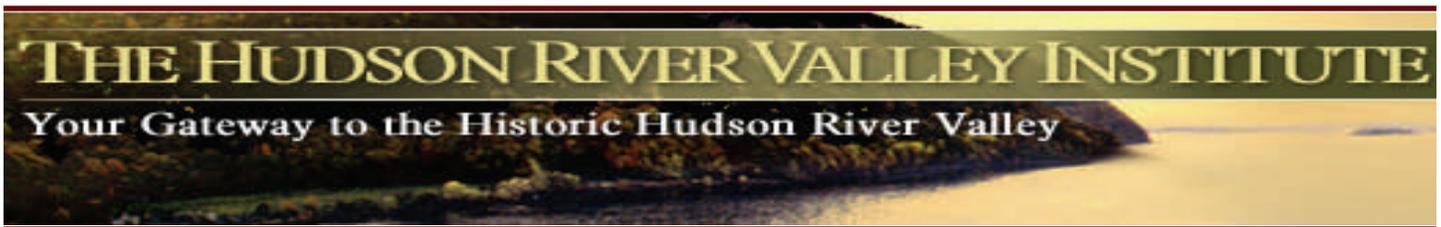
***The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"***

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 49 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



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