

AUTUMN 2019

# THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

*A Journal of Regional Studies*

MARIST



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## From the Editors

Certainly everyone in the Hudson River Valley is aware that 2019 is the fiftieth anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival. In June, The Hudson River Valley Institute held a conference commemorating the festival, and our cover article was presented there as part of a panel on Civil Rights and Black Power in the 1960s. Ty Seidule presents an episode of empowerment for black cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point, illustrating both the result of the progressive thinking of the 1960s and the ongoing nature of our struggle to evolve as a society.

While the Woodstock Festival eventually landed in the town of Bethel, the organizers named it after the town that had been home to artist colonies since 1902. The Woodstock Artists Association was founded by a diverse group of artists in 1919 and is celebrating its centennial this year. Karen Quinn's article on the Arthur C. Anderson Collection is a useful introduction for anyone unfamiliar with that original cast of artists and colonies; Bruce Weber's discussion of their "quest for harmony" reminds us that even intentional communities have to work at it.

The artists of the original Woodstock colonies and the musicians and artists who attended the Woodstock Festival had a common love of nature, whether it was *plein air* painting in the Catskills or dancing in the mud on a Bethel farm. Years before either of them, Alfred B. Street roamed the woods of Sullivan County and wrote about their wonders; Andrew Higgins introduces us to this now-obscure champion of the Catskills and Adirondacks. Likewise, Jeanne Haffner introduces Edith Gifford and the role that she and the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs played in saving the forests of the Palisades and creating the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) in 1900. The PIPC went on to create many more parks throughout New York, establishing Highland Lakes State Park in 1970; Spencer Hogan attests to the silent history that remains there under field, forest, and trail.



This issue of *The Hudson River Valley Review* is dedicated to the late  
Brigadier General Patrick J. Garvey, Jr., New York Naval Militia, Retired  
(Colonel, United States Marine Corps Reserves, Retired)  
and a founding member of the *Hudson River Valley Institute* Advisory Board.

Pat served in senior development roles at the Foreign Policy Association and Rockefeller University and was the post commander at Camp Smith in Peekskill, New York, for the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs. Upon retirement, he became the city manager of Peekskill and then president of the National Maritime Historical Society.

We remember him for his service to the Hudson River Valley Institute.

Semper Fi.



**On the cover:** The photos from a two-page paid "advertisement" that appeared in the 1976 *Howitzer*, the yearbook of The United States Military Academy at West Point.

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## Highland Lakes State Park: From Settlement to Silence in Under Fifty Years

*Spencer Hogan, Marist '20*



Common sights along the park's hiking and mountain-biking trails. Photo by Spencer Hogan

Just minutes from Middletown, New York, a regional commercial hub near the center of Orange County, sits a plot of land that appears unremarkable to many passersby. Highland Lakes State Park is undeveloped but encompasses numerous forgotten sites and stories. Its return to natural form in recent decades effectively obscures the grand assortment of people and groups that once called this land home. This former neighborhood once included a short-lived nudist colony, the chateau of a wealthy French dancer, and even a storied YMCA summer camp for boys. Each, it seems, came here in pursuit of seclusion



and serenity, possessing a degree of pioneering spirit. That spirit lingers in those with connections to the land's past.

For a site described by the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation as consisting of more than 3,000 acres of “undeveloped woods and lakes,” the property’s past is not just unexpected, but unknown even to most local residents.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 2018, I began formally investigating its local lore—including the notable YMCA Camp Orange it once contained—through newspaper records, maps, the now-defunct *Scotchtown Highlander* history website, and interviews with past residents and explorers of the land.<sup>2</sup> What started as a personal quest blossomed into a web of narratives on what this land once contained and those who cherished it as their own before it came to belong to all of us.<sup>3</sup>

This presently uninterpreted landscape once was partly associated with Scotchtown, a place that has shifted from an independent community into a neighborhood in the Town of Wallkill, losing much of its own history and identity in the process. Today, Scotchtown is thought to be no more than an unincorporated neighborhood filled with near-identical bi-level houses on planned streets. For most locals, Scotchtown signifies little more than a Presbyterian Church, a few eateries, and the roads that bear the name. Given the richness of the area’s history, it is surprising how much has been forgotten by all but a few remaining past inhabitants and their descendants. Historian Samuel Eager wrote in 1847 that, even in his time, “we cannot learn from any of the present inhabitants at what time this region was first settled,” meaning that a lack of historic continuity is no new issue for this area.<sup>4</sup>

The great curiosity, though, is how the park, once an agrarian offshoot of Scotchtown with a diverse assortment of former inhabitants, diminished into sleepy woodlands where the wanderer would be surprised at any given time to



The Scotchtown Presbyterian Church, pictured in 2017 as the local Boy Scout troop volunteered at the site.

Photo by Spencer Hogan

1 “Highland Lakes State Park” New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, <https://parks.ny.gov/parks/5/>

2 *Scotchtown Highlander* can be accessed through the “Wayback Machine” web archive at [archive.org](https://archive.org/), by typing “www.scotchtownhighlander.com” into the search box and selecting any date among the options prior to 2012 on the archive calendar.

3 By the time this proper research on the park began, close to three years had passed since the discovery of the first of these stories through archives at the YMCA of Middletown.

4 Samuel Eager, *An Outline History of Orange County with an Enumeration of the Names of its Towns, Villages, Rivers, Creeks, Lakes, Ponds, Mountains, Hill and Other Known Localities and the Etymologies or Historical Reasons Therefore; together with Local Traditions and Short Biographical Sketches of Early Settlers, Etc.* (Newburgh, New York: S.T. Callahan, 1847. Reprinted, Goshen, NY: Orange County Genealogical Society, 1995).

find more than one or two others exploring the land, whether by foot, mountain bike, or horseback. Ruth Swyka, one of the last property owners to move out to make way for the park, kept records and wrote on the topic. Her narrative serves as the only fully traceable account of “what happened.” Her assistance helps tell this mostly forgotten history.

### “This Most Quiet Corner of Orange County”

In the 1960s, a community of just under fifteen families lived mostly along Pufftown Road off Scotchtown Collabar Road. They sought serenity in “this most quiet corner of Orange County,” and enjoyed exactly that.<sup>5</sup> Yet, the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC), a joint instrument of New York and New Jersey with park authority, was on a mission to procure 1,600 acres to create a park in the region. Unfortunately for the Swykas and their neighbors, their land was soon to become Highland Lakes State Park. While “Highland” could be seen as an homage to the roots of nearby Scotchtown’s first settlers, the mostly unsentimental name chosen for the site begs the question: What if the community heritage and history of that land was intended to be forgotten?

Between 1964 and 1970, when the last of the personal property was sold by the Swyka family, the process of amalgamating the land consumed the PIPC, just as the fight to prevent it occupied many residents. The first notice of the park’s creation that residents received was via an article in Middletown’s *Times Herald Record* in January 1964. It stated that over \$500,000 had been designated for a park in their area.<sup>6</sup> Soon after, PIPC appraisers began contacting the residents—to the surprise and dismay of most—that their property would be appraised for the park.<sup>7</sup> Ruth Swyka wrote in May of 1964 on the appraisal process taking place at her household: “Mr. Cornelius Callahan, the negotiator, explained to me that our home was to be acquired. He requested that we set a price on our home. The fact that our home was not for sale made no difference. When we have set our price we will see how it tallies with the appraisal.”<sup>8</sup>

Through the spring of 1964, the fight against land acquisition by the PIPC was regularly reported by the local press. In a less-than-optimistic report from April of that year, one resident on Pufftown Road, Mrs. Herbert DeGraw, was resigned to the fact that residents would have to move out eventually, as “park officials have not been receptive to our request for a change in boundaries.”<sup>9</sup> Robert Redgate and his wife, the noted artist Gloria Calamar, expected to lose at least half of their farmland and have their remaining property surrounded by the park. Thus, they were advised to try to get the PIPC to buy their property outright.<sup>10</sup>

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5 Ruth Swyka, “Majority Requirements Versus Minority Rights” (Undergraduate Research, Orange County Community College, 1964).

6 Robert Van Fleet, “Orange, Ulster, Sullivan park plans unveiled.” *The Times Herald Record*, January 22, 1964.

7 Personal Interview with Ruth Swyka.

8 Swyka, “Majority Requirements Versus Minority Rights.”

9 Budelman, Richard J., “Opposition to park fades in Town of Walkill.” *The Times Herald Record*, April 21, 1964.

10 Redgate, Robert, “Park procedure questioned.” *The Times Herald Record*, April 11, 1964.

Of all of the writings left by those who resisted the park, none were more poignant than those of John Hallaren, published in a letter to the editor in the *Times Herald Record*:

I first saw this land in 1908 when I was a young fellow. I rode my first horse, milked my first cow, tramped, hunted, fished, worked and played throughout my entire boyhood on this property.

In 1926 I brought my bride there and luckily for us she fell in love with the country. We built a house that was to be ours in our old age, and year after year we added something to it. We saw our children grow up, play and love it as we did.

Each week and weekend it is an open house and a happy one, with any number of relatives and friends enjoying themselves. It is a park. Are we not entitled to it? I have not asked anyone to pay for my park.

His letter goes on to relate how the state condemned and took his mother's house in Brooklyn, built by his father, in proceedings "for progress." Later, a commercial property owned by Hallaren also was taken by the state "for progress." He questions what more they could take, asking finally: "If this final piece of property of mine is seized by you, will you *please* find someone that can tell me a safe place for me to live." <sup>11</sup>

While Hallaren was writing about his own property in the letter, his neighbors, including those on Pufftown Road, were facing the same fate.

One family whose mark remains on the land, even with the park's current "Highland Lakes" name, is the Youngberg-Swykas. Albin Youngberg excavated and formed a number of the lakes on the property (something that may surprise those who have explored the lakes; just over half a century after their creation, they appear native and natural). The approximately seventy-six acres the Youngbergs owned were all eventually absorbed by the park. Albin Youngberg and his wife sold their land early in the process, but their daughter, Ruth Swyka, and her husband held out until 1970, when they became the last to give up their property to the PIPC. Among those who responded to their concerns was Benjamin Gilman, then a state Assemblyman and Middletown resident who went on to serve for thirty years in the U.S. House of Representatives. In a letter to the PIPC, he references the "irate" constituents who complained of unrealistically low valuations on their land, in the sum of \$100 to \$600 per acre, as compared to the regional standard of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per acre. He also questions why the PIPC would ask for the removal of residents so quickly, and requests that homeowners be allowed to remain as tenants until the park is actually ready for development. His final request, easily the most significant to any preservationist, is consideration for protecting the older homes on the property. Gilman's legacy of deep investment in the concerns of his Hudson River Valley constituents is

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<sup>11</sup> Letter by resident John Hallaren to be published as a newspaper editorial. From the personal collection of Ruth Swyka.

on full display in this 1968 letter. However, by that time the remaining residents were resigned to their land's fate as a park. They only requested a fair deal.<sup>12</sup>

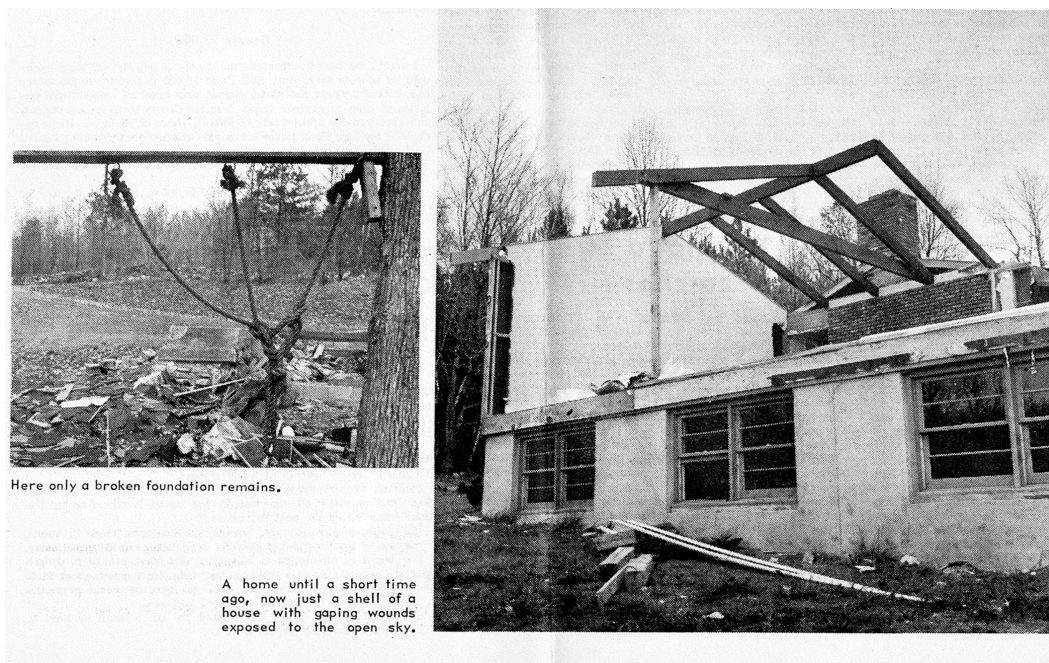


Image from the November 7, 1964, *Middletown Times Herald Record*

In this heated period of land acquisition at the future site of Highland Lakes State Park, the core question was whether the state should be taking the land in the interest of the “majority” (the thousands who could potentially enjoy the land) at the expense of the “minority” (the property owners who were being uprooted). This was the central theme of Ruth Swyka’s 1964 term paper for a class at Middletown’s Orange County Community College. She accepts the park’s inevitability and even agrees with the need for a park, though the fact that the park had to disrupt her community is where her views diverge from those of park officials. Her concluding words should help clarify her thesis on the matter: “we must make the best of the situation and accept the fact that whether we like it or not, progress is going on all over the country and inconveniencing the minority for the good of the majority.”<sup>13</sup>

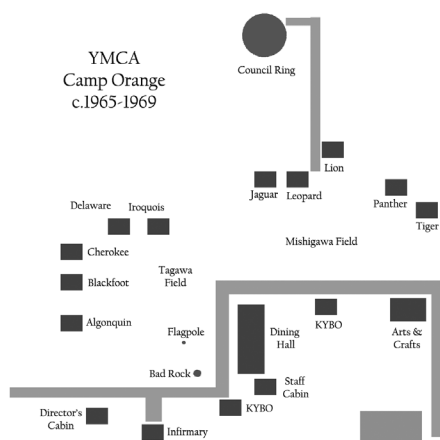
By 1970, the last residents had moved away, some even moving the homes they had built and placing them on plots outside the park. Less than a decade after bureaucrats entered this “most quiet corner of Orange County” on a mission, the new park was a clean slate for developers to craft as they wished.

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12 Letter by Benjamin Gilman to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, from the personal collection of Ruth Swyka.

13 Swyka, “Majority Requirements Versus Minority Rights.”





Adapted from map of Camp Orange,  
Drawn by Camp Alumnus Terry Murray

## Camp Orange

The local homes were not the only thing lost to the park's creation. Camp Orange, run by the region's YMCA, was situated not far from most residents who lived within this natural paradise. Even after the PIPC acquired the property, the camp continued to operate for another three seasons until a fire damaged the main mess hall. At that point, all camping was shifted to Camp Robbins in Walden. Still operated by the YMCA of Middletown, this camp is named after former Camp Orange Director E.B. Robbins.

Though it represents a more recent element of the community's history than many of the stories to come, Camp Orange is perhaps the most notable partially "forgotten history" within the property. Highland Lakes State Park contains numerous stone walls, building foundations, clearings, and trails that can be attributed to the park's forced-out former inhabitants. But the group of stone building ruins (including a large fireplace now



The "centerpiece" of the remains of Camp Orange. Photo by Spencer Hogan

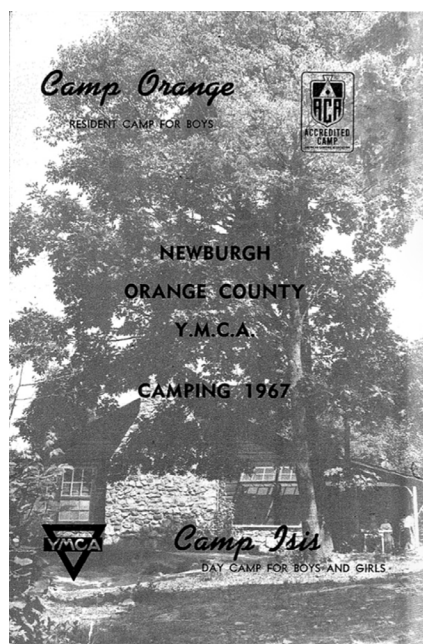
standing virtually alone) at a high point near the intersection of the former Pufftown and Camp Orange roads are the remains of Camp Orange.

While some younger local residents and unfamiliar park visitors have improperly concluded that these ruins were once a part of a now-forgotten town in the woods or even a Depression-era labor camp, records held at the YMCA of Middletown, in combination with the stories shared by former campers and staff at Camp Orange, craft a far richer narrative.

The national trend of organized camping got its start in Orange County when Newburgh's Sumner Dudley, through the local YMCA, took twelve boys camping on Orange Lake (near what is now Newburgh's Stewart Airport) for the summer. The next year, the camp was moved across Orange County to Lake Wawayanda, near Warwick. After three years, the New York State YMCA took charge of the camp and moved

it north to Lake Champlain, where it is still in operation (though independent of the YMCA) as Camp Dudley. The exact year in which the Orange County YMCA restarted a summer camp is unclear, but by 1935 it had 112 boys in attendance at Camp Orange.<sup>14</sup>

In an April 1940 edition of the *Orange County Y.M.C.A. News*, the camp is described as a safe environment for boys providing healthy summer fun, recreation, and educational activities. Features described at Camp Orange include a "fine stream" (which supplied a natural "swimming pool"), a large dining hall, screened cabins for campers, and three athletic fields in addition to extensive trails. The benefits that this camp provided to Orange County boys and those traveling from New York City (particularly in the early years) to enjoy the Hudson Valley's fresh air are made very clear in this publication. It afforded local boys the opportunity



1967 pamphlet advertising Camp Orange

to "secure the benefits of a high type camping program at a minimum cost." It can only be imagined that most summers at Camp Orange were filled with activities to keep these young men out of trouble and cultivate a lifelong sense of community and appreciation of the outdoors.<sup>15</sup>

Now, more than fifty years after some of their Camp Orange experiences, many of the campers from the 1960s have not only kept in touch, but remain close friends. They reminisce about the imposing dining hall atop the hill and the communal dining

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14 Notice of the camp's summer opening, *Middletown Times Herald*, July 1, 1935.

15 1940 YMCA of Orange County Newsletter





YMCA Camp Orange Staff, 1965  
*Top row:* Mark Israel, Program Director, Barry Schuyler, Ben Hunter, Jan Darr, nurse, Martin Sheffield, Bob Simonson, aquatic director, Gordon Cote, director, Gary Goldberg, Bill Dockstader, Steve Goldberg, unknown, Terry Murray. *Front Row:* unknown, Steve Schuyler, Bill Plapinger, Dave Schuyler, Peter Rotwein, Larry White

experiences there that made them all feel like family. They speak of the “council ring” beyond the “jaguar,” “leopard,” and “lion” cabins, and the other structures that shaped their summers—the camp store, the arts and crafts cabin, the director’s cabin, and so on. The remains of the pool, built in the early 1960s, are in surprisingly good shape, with tiles marking the deep end and a light blue paint still very evident under a layer of moss and the occasional sapling growing out of the concrete.<sup>16</sup> (Hikers beware: the pool is hidden behind brush and one could stumble into this concrete pit if not careful.)



Left: the remains of the once-popular Camp Orange pool.  
 Photo by Spencer Hogan.  
 Right: the pool pictured in 1967



Lifelong friends Roy Cuellar and Chris Phelps were able to recall even the most minute details of their Camp Orange days, because their experiences—like working with horses (something no “child of suburbia” outside of camp could enjoy) and learning to live self-sufficiently and take on some personal responsibility and independence, even

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16 Lloyd Soppe (Camp Orange Alumnus) in discussion with the Author, September 2018.

Cabins and horseback riding at Camp Orange



#### ACTIVITIES GALORE

The Orange Camper rides horseback, fires a .22 rifle, shoots arrows, swims, plays softball, badminton, volleyball, basketball and other games. He goes on hikes, sleeps out under the stars, makes things with his hands, finds interesting specimens from nature's abundance. He relaxes under a pine tree with a book, or day dreams while dangling a fishline in the pond; he watches a hawk circle lazily in the sky or a lizard sun itself on a rock. He plays capture the flag and pioneers and indians, goes on scavenger hunts and treasure hunts. He sings, tells stories and listens to them, and is warmed by the campfires of friendship. Camping is truly "Youth's Greatest Adventure."

as ten- and twelve-year-olds—were life-altering.<sup>17</sup> Cuellar and Phelps discussed being surrounded by the young staff, men they “admired” and strived to be like, and almost all of whom went on to college. This fact, which carried much more weight in the late sixties than it does today, is less a coincidence than a result of the camp’s developmental benefits to the boys of Orange County, the Hudson River Valley, and even attendees from New York City.

I asked almost all of the Camp Orange alumni I came in contact with what the experience meant to their generation of young men. Their answers proved that it provided more than a set of activities to keep them busy when school was out. The fact that their Camp Orange friendships have remained a priority tells the reader everything they need to know. In the words of camper, counselor, and later Co-Assistant Director Larry White, “The culture of Camp Orange [has] passed on from generation to generation. There are Camp Orange stories, rituals, myths and lore, music, and even a language (certain terms that I’m quite certain were native to Camp Orange only) that still carry on.”

While little remains aside from the pool, the stone walls and chimney of the dining hall, and some foundations, the memories are strong and incredibly warm. The accounts of many campers sounded nearly identical. This was not just a place where their parents brought them to keep them off of the streets, but rather a place where they grew up, learning teamwork and leadership. Steve Schuyler and Danny Bloomer, reminiscing some

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17 Roy Cuellar and Chris Phelps (Camp Orange Alumni) in discussion with the Author, March 2019.

fifty years later, speak of the lifelong friendships that they, like so many others, cultivated during their time at Camp Orange.<sup>18</sup>

Those two, and many of their peers from those Camp Orange summers, were able to recall a property that serves as another point of interest within what is now Highland Lakes State Park—the home of Bertha DeLaVigne. The topic of late 1960s campfire lore at Camp Orange, the house coexisted with the camp, standing not far from the residences of the Youngbergs and Swykas and their neighbors.

### The French Lady's "Chateau"

DeLaVigne was born in France and came to the United States when she was three years old. At age sixteen, she became a chorus girl in the famed Ziegfeld Follies, but she quit show business at age eighteen when she developed a lung disease. She then bought the Scotchtown property and lived there alone for the next fifty-four years. When she initially arrived—with a chauffeur, nurse, maid, three limousines, and a collection of horses—she was likely seeking peace and relaxation, just like the land's other inhabitants.<sup>19</sup> After pledging in 1964 to fight the PIPC to keep her property, things took a downward turn. A Middletown newspaper report from January 27, 1965, broke the news that the seventy-two-year old DeLaVigne had been found ill inside her "tumble-down home."<sup>20</sup> She had not been seen out of the house in over a month and the hospital was unable to find any relatives. DeLaVigne passed away shortly after that newspaper notice was published, but her legend only grew as the abandoned property was observed by its many curious visitors.<sup>21</sup>

After her death, neighboring residents and boys at Camp Orange described DeLaVigne's property as looking as though "a hoarder had lived there," with the house "falling down." Their memories align with written accounts of this curious figure and her home in the woods.

### Namesake Settlers and the Evolution of their Land

DeLaVigne was by no means the first inhabitant on her plot of land. In fact, it is the estimated spot where Moses Bull, Jr., made a home for his family in 1775, shortly after his marriage. Bull (1753–1844) was one of the earliest influences on the community, bringing almost a century of local heritage with him when he settled in Scotchtown. His great-grandparents, William Bull (1698–1755) and Sarah Wells (1694–1796), are regarded as the first permanent Orange County settlers and maintain a local legacy with strong name recognition. In an account useful for understanding the park's history, "One of [William Bull's] daughters later recalled an old 'Indian path' near their land that led south along

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18 Their network of Camp Orange alumni opened the door for contact with all of the others cited.

19 Dorothy Hunt-Ingrassia, "Remembering a French Lady." *Historical Society of Middletown and the Wallkill Precinct*, January 2007.

20 Dorothy Hunt-Ingrassia

21 The same goes for the campers who would later tell a twisted version of her story by the campfire.

a stream to the Wallkill River. Part of this path may still be preserved as what is now Indian Trail Road.”<sup>22</sup> That road remains in existence, and the Bull family’s speculation on the land’s previous inhabitants surely ties into its name.

Moses Bull’s property sat near this stream, known as McCorlin’s Kill, long before the power of moving water was captured by the likes of Harvey Roe. Roe operated a sawmill at the spot by 1881, the first year for which records of his ownership exist. A lifelong resident of the Town of Wallkill, Roe earned the “universal respect” of his community. A donor and supporter of local and religious causes, he married Hannah Maria Puff, whose family are the namesakes of the still-existing Pufftown Road, where the Youngbergs and others eventually made their homes.<sup>23</sup>

As described in a local biography, Roe “efficiently served his fellow-citizens in the capacity of Poor Master and Assessor, as well as in a number of minor positions.”<sup>24</sup> While his sawmill is of note, Roe also owned more than 200 acres of “productive land,” which appears by all descriptions to have been within the boundary of Highland Lakes State Park and possibly overflows onto residential property on the outskirts of modern Scotchtown. Other mills are likely to have existed prior to the twentieth century. A descendant of the Puff family was recalled by the Swykas; this Mrs. Puff seems to have been regarded as a matriarch of her neighborhood.<sup>25</sup>

On the northern end of the park lies a plot that can be traced as far back as 1840, when the Rockafellow family held land near what is now Tamms Road. Their 216-acre estate grew to about 500 acres as the property passed from Walter and Elizabeth Rockafellow to their son William and his family by the time of the 1880 census, the last we know of them.<sup>26</sup> This property became known as the old Wickham Rockafellow estate before shifting directions in the 1930s.

From pioneering farm to pioneering leisure, this property took on a new role, as is described in an article in the *Middletown Times Herald* that seems to be written with ironic and humorous undertones: “Nudists Rollick about Big Farm at Scotchtown.” This surprising episode in regional history is virtually unknown to the area’s current residents. The reporter who investigated the property in August 1933 disclosed that the colony had been operating quietly on the site since the previous May. In a statement from the colony’s director, Camp Olympia (as it was called) was the “first American resort publicly dedicated to the practice of nudism.” The director went on to clarify that Camp Olympia should not be confused with the various sanatoria or rest cure resorts where sunbathing

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22 E.M. Ruttenber and L.H. Clark, *History of Orange County, New York* (1881), 433, 438. As quoted in Salvatore LaBruna’s *Scotchtown Highlander* web page.

23 Salvatore LaBruna. History Commentary on Highland Lakes State Park, *The Scotchtown Highlander* archived web page. Formerly at <http://scotchtownhighlander.com>.

24 Frederick W. Beers. *County Atlas of Orange, New York*. (Chicago: Andreas, Baskin & Burr, 1875) . As quoted in Salvatore LaBruna’s *Scotchtown Highlander* archived web page. Formerly at <http://scotchtownhighlander.com>.

25 Personal Interviews with Mark and Ruth Swyka.

26 Salvatore LaBruna. “The Tamm Farmhouse,” *The Scotchtown Highlander* archived web page. Formerly at <http://scotchtownhighlander.com>.



is practiced as part of a curative regimen.<sup>27</sup> The article concluded by revealing “there was no attempt on the part of any of those present to conceal themselves.”<sup>28</sup>



An old road (now hiking trail) inside Highland Lakes State Park. Photo by Spencer Hogan

After the short-lived Camp Olympia, the property and farmhouse took on the Tamm family name now known to local residents. As the story goes, after the death of Mr. Tamm, his wife sold the property to a couple who had moved from New York City to retire. The house was later abandoned. Long after becoming public parkland, the satellite buildings and barns had been demolished, but the main farmhouse remained, though abandoned. This historic structure burned to the ground one night in February 2007. More than fifty firefighters were called to the scene due to fears that the fire might spread into the surrounding woods; thankfully, it was confined to the structure itself.<sup>29</sup>

### Today's Highland Lakes State Park

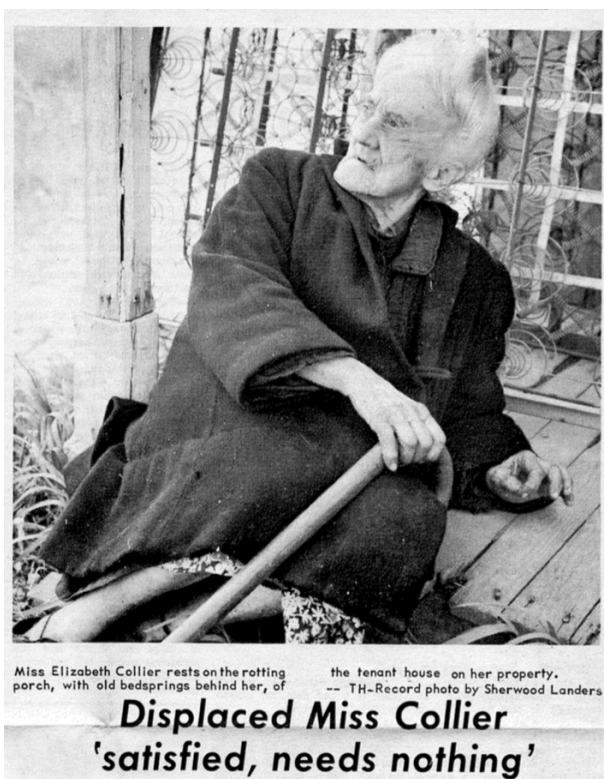
By the 1960s, when the Palisades Interstate Park Commission entered with the intention of creating a park, almost two centuries of formal history had been recorded in and around the properties. The emerging debate became whether more was lost or gained by creating the park. While the push for a new park outraged some residents, perspectives

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27 “Nudists Rollick about Big Farm at Scotchtown,” *Middletown Times Herald*, August 8, 1933.

28 “Nudists Rollick about Big Farm at Scotchtown”

29 “Abandoned Farm House Burns in Park,” *Times Herald Record*, February 18, 2007.



One of the many affected residents featured in local press reports

seem to have changed as time has passed. It is worth quoting longtime resident Ruth Swyka (Youngberg), who explained that while she and her neighbors were mostly opposed at first, “I do think in the end everyone made out alright.”<sup>30</sup> While immense amounts of history were lost, some homes were picked up and moved to plots outside the park boundaries. One couple profiled in Swyka’s writings were finally given the opportunity to unload their property onto the PIPC after having it on the market for years. Even from the perspective of one of the Camp Orange boys who spent numerous cherished summers on the land prior to the camp’s closure and the park’s creation, “I’m glad it’s a state park rather than having been developed with tons of new cookie-cutter

houses back there. It’s still much more like it was in our days.”<sup>31</sup>

As for the developed park complex filled with day trippers from New York City? It never came to be. The grandiose plans for the land were never fulfilled, but that is likely for the better. The serenity that people have sought on this land for centuries continues, only now as a public park designated by the state rather than the private retreat that former residents created for themselves. The park’s surroundings in nearby Middletown and across the region are less rural than ever before, as more residents continue to relocate here, build new homes, and demand more services. The park, though, is moving against the grain: progressing in the opposite, but a more-than-welcome, direction. With each spring’s blooms and summer’s growth, Highland Lakes State Park becomes more wild and less like its commercialized surroundings. One of the most meaningful and ironic pieces of the story is that the ruins—including sturdy stone walls, crumbling brick patios, and cracking concrete foundations for cabins—are nowhere near as dated as visitors may speculate. The deep history that many site visitors suspect the property contains does in fact exist, but they cannot see it. With multiple layers of history in the park mostly

30 Personal Interview with Ruth Swyka.

31 Personal Interviews with YMCA Camp Orange Alumni.

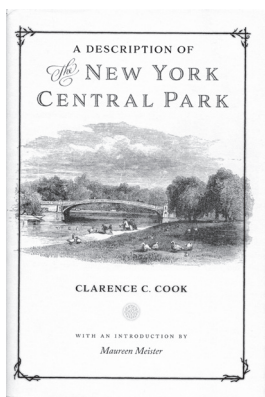


concealed by thick natural growth, this research has been done in hopes that more hidden stories on the land's past will continue to emerge.

With the park's past not yet so far removed, though, take this written interpretation of the land's history as an opportunity to explore and enjoy it, so long as we continue to protect what Ruth Swyka characterized in 1964 as this "most quiet corner of Orange County."

*The author would like to thank those who contributed with personal interviews, photographs and documents. This includes Camp Orange Alumni Steve Schuyler, Danny Bloomer, Lloyd Soppe, Larry White, Roy Cuellar, Chris Phelps, Terry Murray, as well as Mark and Ruth Swyka, Ira Besdansky and Claire Piccorelli of the YMCA of Middletown, and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.*

# Book Reviews



***A Description of the New York Central Park*, by Clarence C. Cook, originally published 1869, reprinted with an Introduction by Maureen Meister, (New York: Washington Mews Books/New York University Press, 2017) 238 pp.**

It is tempting to take New York City's Central Park for granted. These days, the park is beautiful, well-maintained, and safe, welcoming 40 million visitors a year. The Central Park Conservancy, a private non-profit entity established in 1980, raises and administers the park's nearly \$80-million annual budget.

It was not always thus. Perhaps the lowest point was in the 1970s. Conditions then were scabrously captured in Carl Reiner's black comedy *Where's Poppa* (1970), in which a dutiful son (Ron Lieberman) gets mugged, or worse, every time he rushes across the park at night to keep his brother (George Segal) from murdering his obstreperous mother (Ruth Gordon). The film was admittedly exaggerated, tasteless, and politically incorrect, but in that era the park was unsafe, poorly maintained, and a sorry sight, the great lawns described as dustbowls.

In fact, the park has had several periods of prosperity and decline. Even its earliest days were rocked by political machinations, enormous challenges, and controversies great and small.

All this is brought to life by the snarky judgments, critical asides, and pointed approvals and disapprovals in the book-length essay on Central Park written by Clarence C. Cook. The modestly titled *Description of the New York Central Park* roams virtually through the entire park as it neared completion in 1869—already 10 years in the making—but with numerous diversions to discuss the aesthetic intentions of the park's designers and the various controversies about those goals and other parties' interests. Reproduced in the same trim size as the original, this facsimile edition also includes the hundred-odd evocative engravings of park scenes drawn by Albert Fitch Bellows, a conventional but spatially subtle illustrator of the period.

The reprinted text is preceded by an insightful Introduction by Maureen Meister, an architectural historian who has published widely on the Arts and Crafts movement and nineteenth-century architecture. Meister notes that this was not the first book published on Central Park, but it “continues to be both memorable and authoritative.”

Meister's introduction provides interesting biographical details on Bellows (he had an architectural background but studied painting in Antwerp) as well as other individuals involved in its publication, including the publisher, the printer, and especially its author, who was on his way to becoming one of the country's first professional art critics. Meister's introduction is especially helpful in placing the book's origins within the context of the struggles to get the park under way and to keep it on track in the era when New York City's government was under the corrupt sway of Tammany Hall.

As advertised, Cook's text is mostly descriptive, written in a vivid and lively style that makes for enjoyable insights as the author guides us on a virtual tour, starting in the park's southeast corner, wending across toward 72nd Street, then meandering to the upper park on the east side and finally back down around its west side, with numerous asides and observations along the way. As a critic, Cook can be sharp, but he is an unwavering advocate of the expressed ideals of Central Park's designers, especially the themes of focusing on nature and being open to all levels of society. These firm priorities fuel many of Cook's more tendentious descriptions.

Cook's text begins with a "glance" at the history of the park. In a sense, it all began in the Hudson Valley, with Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) of Newburgh. Cook writes that Downing "gave the first expression of the want, which everybody at that time felt, of a great public park" in an essay published in his journal *The Horticulturalist* in 1848. Rural cemeteries had established precedents—Mount Auburn near Boston started in 1831, followed by Laurel Hill in Philadelphia and Green-Wood in Brooklyn. But a non-funereal civic park, Downing argued, would "refine the national character." Downing traveled in 1850 to England, where he not only visited English picturesque parks but recruited the young architect Calvert Vaux to come to Newburgh and establish an architectural partnership. In early 1852, some months before his untimely death, Downing also hired none other than Clarence Cook! Thus, the author's advocacy for the ideals of elevating moral character through the experience of composed nature was rooted in direct contact with the charismatic Downing, whom Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted later honored as their mentor in the design of Newburgh's Downing Park, their final collaboration in 1897.

Cook recounts the missteps in Central Park's gestation. Once the principle of building a park reached wide agreement, the state Legislature established a Central Park Commission in 1851 to oversee its creation. After first considering another site along the East River, they settled on the current location (initially ending at 106th Street, later extended to 110th). Some landowners tried to change the southern boundary from 59th to 72nd Street, but the mayor vetoed that. An engineering firm prepared an initial design, which Cook calls a "matter-of-fact, tasteless affair" with no effort toward "beauty or picturesqueness." In 1857, a reconstituted commission sponsored a competition, which yielded thirty-three entries; the winner was the "Greensward" design of Olmsted and Vaux.

In the description proper, Cook guides us with vivid accounts of every section of the park, relating each area, pond, walk, or bridge to the goals of the Olmsted-Vaux design. Cook rightly praises what most succeeding commentators view as the design's most significant feature—the effective separation and minimal intersection of the park's various modes of transport: carriage roads, bridle paths, pedestrian walkways, and the transverse roads that cut across it.

The first ten years of the park's construction included several controversies and setbacks, including the departures and later reinstatement of both Vaux and Olmsted. One hot issue arose from a pair of grand ceremonial gates designed and proposed by Richard Morris Hunt—the first American architect trained at the *École des Beaux Arts*, who would later have a hugely successful career (several houses in Newport, the Biltmore estate in Asheville, the base of the Statue of Liberty, and the 1890s facade of the Metropolitan Museum that obscures the one by Vaux). The park's designers opposed Hunt's gates as being excessive, intimidating, and somehow undemocratic. Cook called them “the barren spawn of French imperialism,” and he urged the commission to “avoid everything savoring of ostentation, affectation or mere vulgar display of ornaments.”

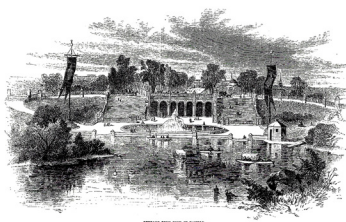
Cook objected that Hunt's gates depended “for any effect or beauty ... upon statuary,” without which they had “nothing to recommend them to an educated taste, and very little to catch even the popular eye.” The author frequently invokes his own superior taste, even while praising the park's commitment to serve people of all classes.

“The whole subject of sculpture in the park is beset with difficulties,” writes Cook. It seems that worthy citizens of foreign governments were constantly offering pieces of statuary, but “thus far there has not been a single piece ... that is at all desirable to have there.” Dismissing certain sculptures as “very unsatisfactory,” Cook suggests that there should be as little as possible of “the artificial” to detract from the park's “natural style of gardening.”

The emphasis on nature is a theme the author emphasizes repeatedly, echoing the sentiments of Vaux and Olmsted. But Cook acknowledges the irony that the “natural” effects of the park were an almost entirely artificial construction, involving tons of rock dynamited and removed, millions of trees planted, and tons of dirt shipped in from New Jersey.

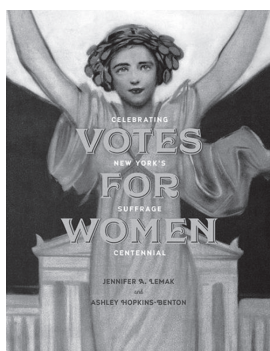
Clarence Cook makes for lively company as he guides the reader from the Sheep's Meadow through the Mall to the Ramble and on to the park's more primitive northern reaches. Along the way, he praises the work not only of Olmsted and Vaux but also other contributors, including assistant architect Jacob Wrey Mould, the entire Central Park Commission, and even Andrew H. Green, who drove Vaux crazy with micromanagement while Olmsted was serving in Washington during the Civil War. (They all seem to have

worked things out after the two designers were reinstated; Green went on to serve the city in numerous ways, including the unification of the five boroughs.)



The original publication of Cook's *Description* took a few years to complete. One advantage of this circumstance is that most of the drawings by Bellows and their engravings were already complete, allowing Cook to refer to individual images in the text. In one case, the author was able to praise Vaux's design for the Belvedere in the northern park even though it had not yet been built—the engraving was based on the architect's drawings. Even today, the illustrations enhance the experience of Cook's virtual tour, although some features have changed. Reading the *Description* “cannot fail” (as Cook would say) to give the reader a renewed appreciation for the park and a resolution to revisit it as soon as possible.

*Jim Hoekema, Newburgh Historical Society*



***Votes for Women: Celebrating New York's Suffrage Centennial***, edited by Jennifer Lemak and Ashley Hopkins-Benton (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017) 272 pp.

As New York goes, so goes the nation. In 2019 and 2020, prominent U.S. cultural institutions—including the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery and the National Archives in Washington, D.C.—and countless historical societies, state commissions, and local projects will mark the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. “Votes for Women,” the New York State Museum's recent exhibition honoring the successful 1917 campaign for state suffrage, was very much a harbinger of exhibitions to come, and its companion volume, released by SUNY Press in late 2017, represented the first major suffrage centennial exhibition to be documented in print.

Not simply a catalog of exhibited objects, but perhaps strongest as a visual record of women's activism, *Votes for Women: Celebrating New York's Suffrage Centennial* provides an introduction to more than 200 years of women's history in one elegantly-produced oversize paperback. Jennifer Lemak and Ashley Hopkins-Benton, New York State Museum curators, serve as the volume's authors and editors, and should be given much credit for not only bringing the State Museum's women's history collections to light, but also for

organizing significant loans for the exhibition from forty-five private and public collections from around the country. The more than 250 artifacts, newly photographed and reproduced in full color, play a starring role in the catalog.

*Votes for Women*, like the exhibition it documents, is organized chronologically in three sections, following a fairly traditional periodization. Its first section—"Agitate! Agitate!"—concerning the years 1776–1890, contextualizes the mid-nineteenth century era of rights conventions as legacies of the American Revolution's demands for liberty. To the curators' credit, they do not begin their story later, with the 1848 convention in Seneca Falls that Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and their woman's rights allies wrote into history with the multi-volume *History of Woman Suffrage*; in fact, as Lemak and Benton-Hopkins plainly note, "women and men had been talking, writing, and working for equality for a long time." The second section, "Winning the Vote," focuses on the state and national campaigns for suffrage between 1890 and 1920, highlighting lesser-known upstate New York reform women and the women's club movement, as well as better-known downstate activists who made Manhattan the home to the national campaign. The main text for these first two sections function essentially as a timeline of major meetings and events leading up to the successful statewide 1917 referendum for women's suffrage, and the May 1919 passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The catalog's final section, "The Continuing Fight for Equal Rights, 1920–Present," is less comprehensive. Text and images briefly document the campaigns for an Equal Rights Amendment and birth control reform after 1920, provide short biographies of notable New York State women who found a national stage for their work (including Eleanor Roosevelt, Shirley Chisholm, and Bella Abzug), and acknowledge the labor of women's history commemorations that began long before twenty-first century centennials.

Sprinkled throughout the three sections are nine short essays written for this volume by prominent local historians and a handful of new voices who take up both place-based and thematic topics. Shannon Risk, for example, draws attention to black and white suffragists on the Buffalo-Niagara frontier, terrain rarely explored by women's historians. Lauren Santangelo—whose forthcoming book, *Suffrage and the City: New York Women Battle for the Ballot* (Oxford University Press, 2019) promises to bring a critical urban studies lens to suffrage history—tells the story of the 1886 Statue of Liberty suffrage protest, an important use of public space decades before New York suffragists resorted to major public demonstrations and parades. Karen Pastorello's essay is a useful reminder of the roles men played in the state's pro-suffrage politics. And Jessica Dereleth's fascinating essay, "'These Model Families': Romance, Marriage, and Family in the New York Woman

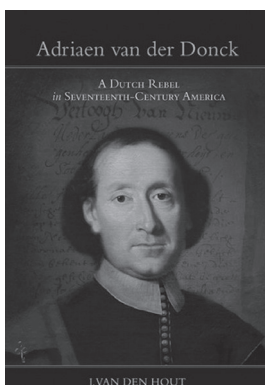


Suffrage Movement,” uncovers a different kind of public display—suffrage “baby shows” that “responded to anti-suffrage claims about the incompatibility of motherhood and politics.”

Exhibition catalogs rarely tread new ground. Together, the short essays and main text of *Votes for Women* provide a solid introduction for the general reader interested in women’s history during this centennial moment. Reasonably priced and well designed, one can imagine this volume popping up on any number of coffee tables. But for the scholar of local history or voting rights, the strength of this volume lies in its illustrations, which might be used as a women’s history checklist for any future researcher interested in New York State suffrage history. More than half of the catalog’s pages feature full-color images from the State Museum’s own collections, as well as those items loaned for research and exhibition. Collections rarely documented in print—such as the suffrage banners held by an upstate gem, the Howland Stone Store Museum in Aurora—provide a virtual roadmap for future researchers. In the third section of *Votes for Women*, the State Museum’s own growing collections of National Organization for Women posters and ephemera, along with holdings documenting New York City’s Creative Women’s Collective, truly stand out, and suggest there is much more to be written about the visual culture of women’s politics in post-suffrage America.

A handful of factual errors and the lack of robust textual citations or bibliography should not discourage readers from *Votes for Women*. The final page of the catalog—illustrated with a photograph of Susan B. Anthony’s Rochester graveside covered with “I Voted” stickers on Election Day 2016—implies that future readers have a role to play in making history. While the anniversary of the 1917 New York State suffrage referendum, and the upcoming 2020 national centennial, forces participants to make sense of more than 100 years of women’s history, “this endeavor does not end after the centennial celebration,” the authors conclude. “As the struggle for women’s equality continues,” they ask readers, “how will you help preserve this vital story?” Preserving the stories of New York’s women is its own political project, one that *Votes for Women* shows will require continued work to build upon New York State Museum’s history collections, stewarded by curators like Jennifer Lemak and Ashley Hopkins-Benton

Monica L. Mercado, Colgate University



***Adriaen van der Donck: A Dutch Rebel in Seventeenth-Century America*, by J. van den Hout (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018) 220 pp.**

As independent scholar J. van den Hout observes, “no other figure in the compelling and colorful story of the Dutch colony of New Netherland, except perhaps Petrus Stuyvesant, has attracted more interest than the young legal activist Adriaen van der Donck” (xi). Indeed, more than three centuries after his death, Van der Donck continues to fascinate scholars. Van den Hout’s cradle-to-grave biography explores Van der Donck’s short, tempestuous, and consequential life by embedding him in his times and exploring his relationships with the West India Company and the people of New Netherland.

Adriaen van der Donck was born in Breda between 1618 and 1620, likely during the Twelve Years’ Truce with Spain. That truce ended shortly after his birth, and Catholic-Protestant warfare quickly resumed. The Spanish forced Breda to surrender in 1625, which meant that Van der Donck “witnessed firsthand the inescapable inequities of war, the death and suffering of friends and neighbors, and finally, the loss of his very community” (7). Although Van der Donck’s family returned to Breda after the Dutch Republic recaptured it in 1637, he himself did not. Instead, he enrolled at Leiden University in 1638 and received “a world-class education, one designed to put him on a trajectory for a life in the spotlight” (12). Van der Donck chose to study law, but because of the relative lack of sources about the man, it is unclear how long he attended the university. However, what is clear is that he “had attended one of the world’s most progressive universities at a time when intellectual history was being made, when only four to five percent of Van der Donck’s age group went on to university studies at all” (20).

Rather than remain in the Dutch Republic, Van der Donck chose to seek his fortune across the ocean and spoke with Kiliaen van Rensselaer about opportunities in the colony of Rensselaerswyck (located near present-day Albany). Van Rensselaer saw Van der Donck as an asset to the colony, especially when Van der Donck offered to recruit families to settle in it. Van Rensselaer “must have realized that he could use someone with Van der Donck’s pedigree and education in a position of authority” (26); he offered him a position as schout, an officer of the colony similar to sheriff or prosecutor, and facilitated Van der Donck’s passage to the Americas. After his arrival in Rensselaerswyck, Van der Donck quickly ran afoul of the controlling Van Rensselaer, who attempted to manage his officials from across the ocean. Other officials in the colony complained that Van der Donck “seemed to be aligning himself with the farmers, against the council” (54). After Van

Rensselaer's death, Van der Donck traveled south; married Mary Doughty, the daughter of an English minister; cut his remaining ties to Rensselaerswyck; and purchased land for his colony of Colendonck.

Van der Donck began to get more and more involved in the politics and affairs of New Netherland. However, given the grief it caused him, perhaps he ended up regretting this decision. This was a seemingly propitious moment for New Netherland because the West India Company replaced the despised Willem Kieft, the former director of New Netherland, with Petrus Stuyvesant. Van den Hout hints that Van der Donck might have had leadership aspirations. Problematically, "just about anyone the West India Company would have sent would have felt like a corporate outsider" (75), and Stuyvesant faced the difficult task of reestablishing order and healing the wounds left by Kieft. It quickly became obvious that Stuyvesant "was that same construct of authority figure that Van der Donck had rejected in the past" (79), although the two men did not break immediately. Stuyvesant appointed Van der Donck to a board of nine men, but Van der Donck ran into trouble when he and other board members challenged Stuyvesant's authority. Many colonists rebelled against the relatively high-handed ways of the new director and disputes that had begun under Kieft combined with others than began under Stuyvesant to create an ugly cocktail of resentment and anger.

In 1649, Van der Donck returned to the Dutch Republic as one of the delegates from New Netherland. He presented to the States General the Remonstrance, a document he had likely written, which was nothing less than a formal complaint against the West India Company and the government of New Netherland. Although Van der Donck hoped the situation could be resolved quickly, the wrangling in this dispute engendered years of conflict in the Dutch Republic. Van der Donck became the voice of the colonists and, as Van den Hout notes, "it had gone beyond his desire, and become his purpose, to stand up for himself and for the people of New Netherland" (112). In the four years he spent in the Dutch Republic, Van der Donck also wrote a history of New Netherland and received a law degree from Leiden University.

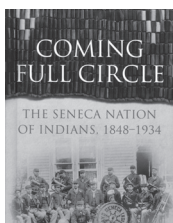
After an unsatisfying end to the legal wrangling, Van der Donck returned to New Netherland in 1653. He seemingly settled back into life, but it is uncertain how much he could have accomplished because the settlement was taken by surprise in a Native American attack on September 15, 1655. It is likely that Van der Donck perished in this attack. Less than ten years after his death, the Dutch surrendered New Netherland to the English. As Van den Hout comments, "the colony's West India Company rule had failed New Netherland. Van der Donck had predicted this too. It was a bittersweet revenge" (148). In sum, Adriaen Van der Donck played an important role in the Dutch settlement of the Americas. His publications spread knowledge about New Netherland and helped increase the population of the colony. As Van den Hout asserts, "not only does Van der Donck

deserve recognition for his role in the development of the municipality that eventually became New York, there is no denying that he is also part of the larger American story, despite the fact that much of his political battle took place on European ground” (157).

This well-written and well-researched biography makes an important contribution to the scholarly literature on New Netherland and Dutch settlement in the Americas. It will appeal to anyone interested in the subject and will work well in graduate seminars on Colonial America.

*Evan C. Rothera, Sam Houston State University*

# New & Noteworthy Books



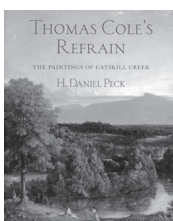
## **Coming Full Circle: The Seneca Nation of Indians, 1848–1934**

By Laurence M. Hauptman

(Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019)

294 pp. \$34.95 (hardcover) [www.oupress.com](http://www.oupress.com)

In previous works, Laurence Hauptman has chronicled New York's Seneca Nation up to the political revolution of 1848 and its history since World War II. Now, he closes the gap in chronology—covering the revolution, the counterrevolution, and the endless challenges of preserving a traditional culture and way of life in a constantly evolving environment. Basing his research on hundreds of archival records, interviews, court cases, and various publications, Hauptman presents Seneca issues regarding land, education, and governance spanning from the mid-nineteenth century through the Great Depression, setting the stage for the changes to come after World War II.



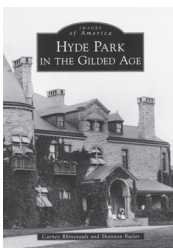
## **Thomas Cole's Refrain: The Paintings of Catskill Creek**

By H. Daniel Peck

(Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019)

200 pp. \$34.95 (paperback) <https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/>

As the recognized founder of the Hudson River School of painters, Thomas Cole had a profound influence on the generation of artists that followed in his footsteps. In *Thomas Cole's Refrain*, new attention is paid to Cole's own inspiration and motivation, specifically his paintings of Catskill Creek, which he rendered nearly a dozen times over two decades. Using full-color images of many of Cole's works, as well as a series of Catskill Mountain maps, Peck establishes a narrative that contextualizes Cole's attachment to the Hudson River Valley landscape, as well as the dismay he felt over the region's growing industrial development.



## **Hyde Park in the Gilded Age (Images of America Series)**

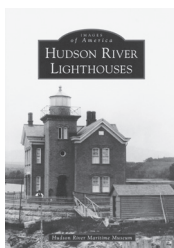
By Carney Rhinevault and Shannon Butler

(Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019)

127 pp. \$21.99 (softcover) [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

Located along the Hudson River in Dutchess County, the Town of Hyde Park afforded wealthy families an ideal setting to enjoy their riches away from the bustle of New York City while still allowing them to stay connected to their respective business endeavors. Names like Vanderbilt, Roosevelt, and Livingston brought the lifestyle and architecture of the

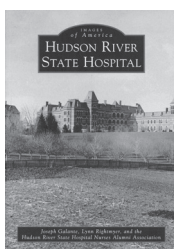
Gilded Age to Hyde Park. They constructed mansions on large estates that also supported the local economy by providing agricultural, construction, and maintenance jobs for residents. The abundant photos in *Hyde Park in the Gilded Age* offer a visual account of how both halves lived in this era, making this a comprehensive depiction of everyday life across the socioeconomic spectrum.



### **Hudson River Lighthouses (Images of America Series)**

By The Hudson River Maritime Museum  
(Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019)  
127 pp. \$21.99 (softcover) [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

The need for navigational beacons along the Hudson River dates back to the early 1800s, when steam-powered boats began turning it into a bustling commercial highway. From the Statue of Liberty north to Albany, more than two dozen lighthouses of various shapes, sizes, and materials once warned ships of nearby hazards. Through historic photos, artist renderings, and narrative text, *Hudson River Lighthouses* introduces these beacons as well as the people responsible for keeping them operational. Though all but eight of the lighthouses have been lost, community efforts throughout the region have aided in the preservation of those remaining. They sustain the legacy of the men, women, and even children who once played a vital role in making the river safe for travel.

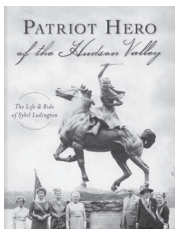


### **Hudson River State Hospital (Images of America Series)**

By Joseph Galente, Lynn Rightmeyer, and the Hudson River  
State Hospital Nurses Alumni Association  
(Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019)  
127 pp. \$23.99 (softcover) [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

At the time of its opening in 1871, Poughkeepsie's Hudson River State Hospital was in the forefront of transforming the nation's mental health care system. From Frederick Law Olmsted's landscape design to the main building by Withers and Vaux, the hospital placed an emphasis on comprehensive care that provided the greatest possible amount of patient autonomy. The book's myriad images convey a sense of community among its many employees, as well as the several thousand patients that occupied the facility at its peak. Designed to be self-sufficient, the hospital included its own fire and police departments, as well as a farm, and the book makes clear that both employees and patients were essential to its operations.





## **Patriot Hero of the Hudson Valley: The Life and Ride of Sybil Ludington**

By Vincent T. Dacquino

(Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2019)

160 pp. \$21.99 (softcover) [www.historypress.com](http://www.historypress.com)

Of the Hudson River Valley's many local legends, Putnam County's Sybil Ludington ranks among the most impressive. In 1777—at the age of just sixteen—she traveled forty dangerous miles by horse to warn a Continental Army regiment of an imminent attack by the British. Through extensive review of available sources, Dacquino provides a thorough biography of Ludington before and after her ride, while also tackling the challenges of correcting the historical record and separating documented events from longstanding regional lore.

*Andrew Villani, Marist College*

## Call for Essays

*The Hudson River Valley Review* will consider essays on all aspects of the Hudson River Valley—its intellectual, political, economic, social, and cultural history, its prehistory, architecture, literature, art, and music—as well as essays on the ideas and ideologies of regionalism itself. All articles in *The Hudson River Valley Review* undergo peer review.

## Submission of Essays and Other Materials

HRVR prefers that essays and other written materials be submitted as a double-spaced manuscript, generally no more than thirty pages long with endnotes, as an electronic file in Microsoft Word, Rich Text format (.rtf), or a compatible file type. Submissions should be sent to HRVI@Marist.edu.

Illustrations or photographs that are germane to the writing should accompany the hard copy. Illustrations and photographs are the responsibility of the authors. Scanned photos or digital art must be 300 pixels per inch (or greater) at 8 in. x 10 in. (between 7 and 20 mb). No responsibility is assumed for the loss of materials. An e-mail address should be included whenever possible.

Since HRVR is interdisciplinary in its approach to the region and to regionalism, it will honor the forms of citation appropriate to a particular discipline, provided these are applied consistently and supply full information. Footnotes rather than endnotes are preferred. In matters of style and form, HRVR follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

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