THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY REVIEW

A Journal of Regional Studies

MARIST

The Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is supported by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Hudson River Valley Review (ISSN 1546-3486) is published twice a year by the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College.

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Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Subscription: The annual subscription rate is $20 a year (2 issues), $35 for two years (4 issues). A one-year institutional subscription is $30. Subscribers are urged to inform us promptly of a change of address.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Hudson River Valley Institute, Marist College, 3399 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

From the Editors

We've looked forward to presenting an issue on the Hudson River Valley's landscape legacy for a long time, both to share information about some of its treasures and to honor those who have dedicated their lives to preserving them. The region holds a unique place in the history of our nation's landscape architecture: it's where the art was first imported from Europe and where it began to evolve—alongside the works of Hudson River School painters and Transcendentalist writers—into something distinctly American. An excerpt from Robert Toole's new book, *Landscape Gardens on the Hudson: A History*, provides a succinct overview of this evolution and its far-reaching impacts. Peter Manning illustrates how these concepts were translated by the Smiley family to create the carriage roads and other popular plein air amenities so popular today in the Shawangunks. Following the further development of the country's outdoor ethic, we republish Benton MacKaye's 1921 call for an Appalachian Trail. Returning to the domestic landscape, Robert Toole also offers an article on Thomas Cole's Cedar Grove, discussing the relationship between painting and landscape architecture at the artist's Catskill home. Thom Johnson's photo essay on Bannerman's Castle presents another legacy, tracing the history and precarious present circumstances of the iconic structures on Pollopel Island. Our History Forum introduces the South Road History Trail, which will serve to connect many important landscapes in Poughkeepsie, and continues with essays on Kykuit and Wilderstein before arriving at the Bard Arboretum, a curatorial landscape architecture project encompassing the grounds of several historic estates on the college campus.

We're especially pleased that this issue coincides with the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area's celebration of landscape architecture at eleven nationally significant sites across our region, the first in a series of events to celebrate and elaborate the Heritage Area's themes of Nature and Culture.

In J. Michael Smith's article in issue 26.2, the Bill of Sale on page 71 includes a transcription error; the name of 1st signer Minsam (carried over from an earlier translation) should be Ninham. On page 75, Figure 1 appears courtesy of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum. In the lower right corner of Figure 3 on page 83, in the South Precinct, the two "Gorelands Patented 1761" tract labels were reversed; the smaller tract is 221 acres, the larger 4,402. Lastly, in Figure 4 on page 89, Nimham the Grandfather's dates were transposed; his correct dates are 1696-1744.

This issue of The Hudson River Valley Review has been generously underwritten by the following:

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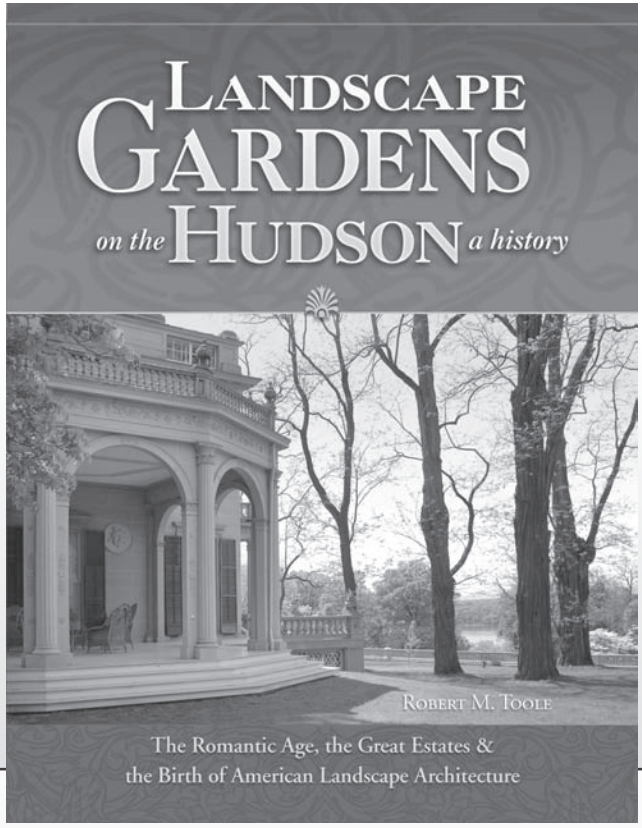
H. TODD BRINCKERHOFF

Founding Chairman of the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, whose inspiration and vision not only made HRVI a reality but helped to develop it into one of the premier regional study centers in the United States.



Landscape Gardens on the Hudson — a history

The Romantic Age, the Great Estates &
the Birth of American Landscape Architecture

Robert M. Toole

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- "Landscape architect Robert Toole, with his specialty in Hudson Valley historic landscape study and restoration, has the professional perspective and the onsite experience to guide us on this journey." ***Waddell Stillman, President, Historic Hudson Valley***

Soft cover, 8 ½" × 11", 192 pages, 142 illustrations,
ISBN 9781883789688, $24.95

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The mission of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Program is to recognize, preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant cultural and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley for the benefit of the Nation.

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To contact the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area:
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Call for Essays

The Hudson River Valley Review is anxious to consider essays on all aspects of the Hudson 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 analysis.

Submission of Essays and Other Materials

HRVR prefers that essays and other written materials be submitted as two double-spaced typescripts, generally no more than thirty pages long with endnotes, along with a computer disk with a clear indication of the operating system, the name and version of the word-processing program, and the names of documents on the disk. Illustrations or photographs that are germane to the writing should accompany the hard copy. Otherwise, the submission of visual materials should be cleared with the editors beforehand. 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.

HRVR will accept materials submitted as an e-mail attachment (*hrvi@marist.edu*) once they have been announced and cleared beforehand.

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. Endnotes rather than footnotes are preferred. In matters of style and form, HRVR follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Contributors

Mary M. Flad has worked as planning consultant and advisor with historic sites and non-profit organizations throughout the Hudson Valley for three decades, and was a founder of the Maple Grove Restoration Project. She lives in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Thom Johnson is an artist, photographer, educator, and lifetime resident of the Hudson Valley. He is one of the founders of the Bannerman Castle Trust, one of its first tour guides, and coauthor of *Bannerman Castle*. In addition to his ongoing documentation of the castle, he is working on a second book that will present the story of Francis Bannerman VI, the man behind the castle ruins.

Benton MacKaye (March 6, 1879–Dec. 11, 1975) was a forester, planner, and conservationist. A graduate of Harvard University (B.A., 1900; M.A. School of Forestry, 1905), he worked for the U.S. Forest Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the U.S. Department of Labor. MacKaye was the author of *The New Exploration: A Philosophy of Regional Planning* and *Expedition Nine: A Return to a Region* as well as the originator of the Appalachian Trail.

Peter Manning is the Regional Planner at the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development. He is a graduate of SUNY New Paltz (Geography) and Cornell University (Master of Landscape Architecture). He is a volunteer trail-maintainer and writes a column about place in a weekly newspaper.

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Robert M. Toole is a landscape architect practicing in Saratoga Springs since 1975. He has completed landscape studies for numerous historic sites and has written extensively on the topic. He is the author of *Landscape Gardens on the Hudson—a History: The Romantic Age*, *The Great Estates* and the *Birth of American Landscape Architecture* (Black Dome Press, 2010).

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The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York
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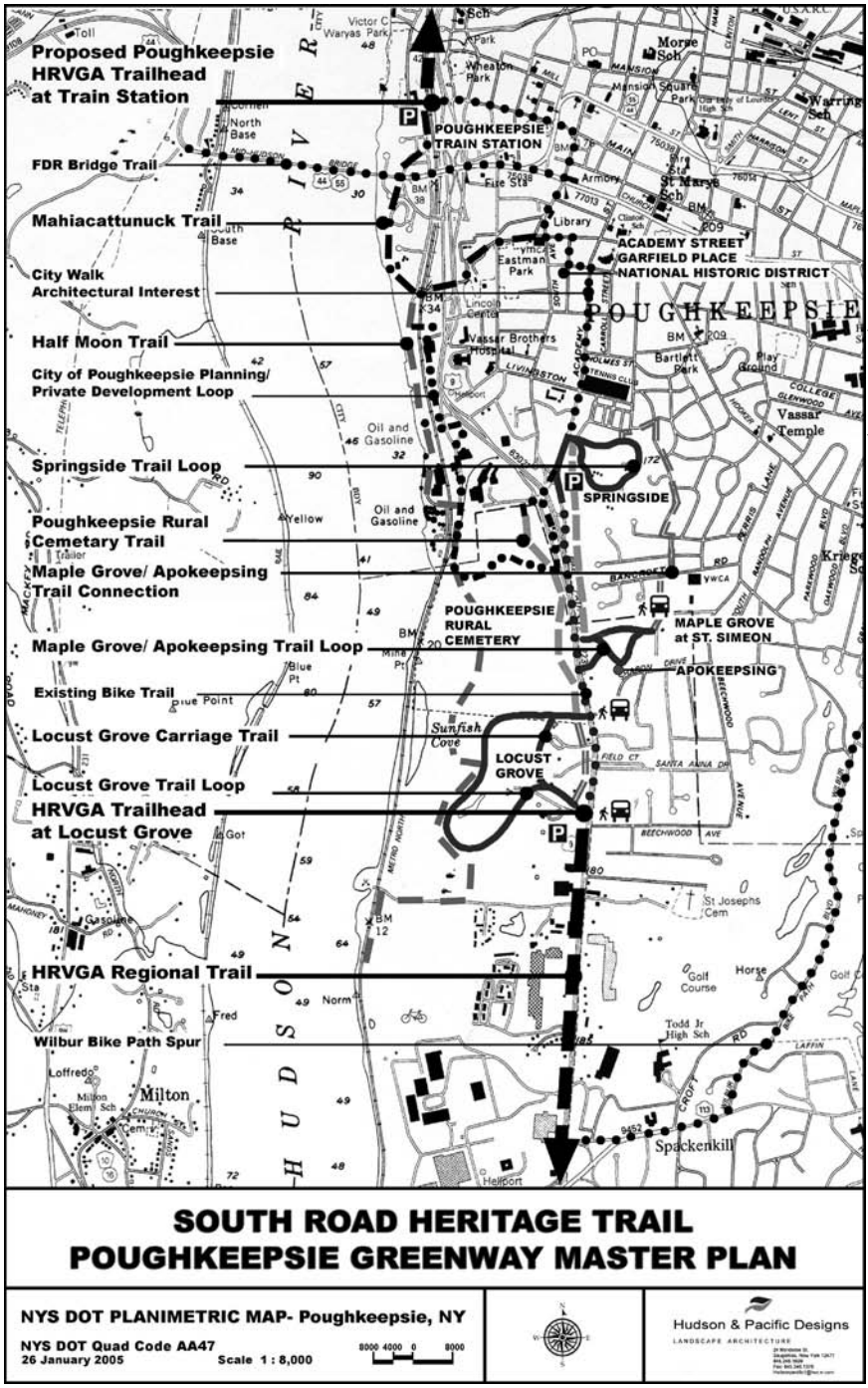

HUDSON & PACIFIC DESIGNS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, STEFAN YARABEK, ASLA

South Road Heritage Trail Master Plan conceptual map

Regional History Forum

Each issue of The Hudson River Valley Review *includes the Regional History Forum. This section highlights historic sites and resources in the Valley, exploring their historical significance as well as information for visitors today. Although due attention is paid to sites of national visibility, HRVR also highlights sites of regional significance. Please write us with suggestions for future Forum sections.*

Poughkeepsie's South Road: Its Past and Future

Mary M. Flad

Just at the south edge of the City of Poughkeepsie are a number of properties of social and architectural significance. All of them are close to "South Road," the traditional name given in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to what is now better known as Route 9; some are in the Town of Poughkeepsie and some within the city limits. Each has its own distinct historical past. Early in the last decade, a discussion began about linking them as part of a "Greenway Trail," which could then be linked to other trails and to the "transportation hub" at the Poughkeepsie railroad station. The locations, buildings, and properties that have been discussed as part of the "South Road heritage area" include the following:

- Locust Grove: the home of Samuel F.B. Morse for the last twenty-five years of his life, and one of America's first National Historic Landmarks;
- The Poughkeepsie Spring or "Apokeepsing" (shown on some early maps with the Dutch name "Rust Plaets"): tradition holds that it was an original settlement location of newly arrived European immigrants to the area;
- Maple Grove historic site: a "Hudson River Bracketed" country villa built in 1850;
- Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery: established in the 1850s, when church graveyards within the city limits were no longer used for burials;
- Springside Landscape Restoration: originally the site of Matthew Vassar's summer home, a privately maintained National Historic Landmark that is open to the public.

Because these properties are the small vestige remaining of the cultural landscape of the area fifty or 100 years ago, they are of particular interest.

The Poughkeepsie urban area has a long settlement history. The presence of European settlers is documented more than 320 years ago, while Henry Hudson's explorations along the Hudson River took place several decades earlier. Tradition says that the original settlement was named with a mutilated version of an Indian name for the locale, meaning "little reed hut by the falling-water place."[1] What is now the City of Poughkeepsie remains at the center of this place on the east side of the river, but over the last four centuries there has been constant change, and this process continues.

The north-south roadway now known as Route 9 follows the track of a road that dates from the time of the earliest European settlers, in all likelihood following the pathway defined even earlier by Indian trails; but in reality the main "highway" in this era was the Hudson River. Transportation of goods and passengers took place most easily and efficiently on the water. The road north from Broadway in New York City was known as the King's Highway (or the Queen's, during the reign of Queen Anne) until the time of independence, and then became the Albany Post Road. By the latter part of the eighteenth century, the Albany Post Road (quite literally the roadway along which the mail delivery traveled) was an important connector, linking the settlements and farms along its route, paralleling the river but generally on higher land a mile or two (or sometimes more) to the east. The *Dutchess County* volume of the American Guide series, prepared by the Federal Writers' Project in the 1930s[2], provides a vivid picture of commerce and activity along the highway in this era:

> Stagecoaches began running regularly over the Post Road from New York to Albany in 1786. The necessity of changing horses every 10 or 20 miles led to the establishment of the stage houses. In the hamlets these taverns were the centers of community life; travelers enlivened discussions with the latest news, and liquor flowed freely. De Chastellux, traveling twice through Dutchess, in 1780 and 1782, writes that he found taverns enough, but few sufficiently unoccupied to accommodate him. It is believed that by 1800 there were nine taverns in Rhinebeck alone.[3]

A few of the milestones from the era of the Albany Post Road can still be spotted along the edge of Route 9. The placement of these stones was initiated by Benjamin Franklin when he served in the role of Joint Postmaster General in the colonial period, then as the first Postmaster General of the new nation appointed by the Second Continental Congress in 1775. Taverns and places of accommo-


LOCUST GROVE

Annette Innis Young and horse-drawn carriage in front of Locust Grove (1913 photo)

dation continue to be in abundant supply, although quite different in scale and design from what could be found along the road in the late eighteenth century.

A 1799 map of Poughkeepsie reproduced in Platt's *History of Poughkeepsie*[4] shows ten houses along the stretch of the Albany Post Road south of what is now the city boundary, reaching down two miles to the Spackenkill area, all of them on the east side of the road, and most of them with the family name Freer associated with them. Small farms dotted the landscape, prosperous from growing wheat to meet the demands of New York City to the south. When the Erie Canal was completed in the 1820s, suddenly grain was coming from larger farms further west and undercutting the prices at which Dutchess County's farmers had been selling. At the same time, a wheat rust blight attacked crops in the region, and the local agricultural economy weakened. But small-scale farming and dairy herds continued to be a dominant land use in the area up into the mid-twentieth century.

The road itself was improved gradually, from the rutted carriage path of early days to a better-maintained dirt road, and then to a paved surface with a trolley track running along its edge. Some of the properties along the road progressed from being "working farms" into "country homes" with more prosperous owners, many of them also claiming another residence in New York City or within the

PHOTO BY MARY M. FLAD

Maple Grove main house and lawns

City of Poughkeepsie. This was true particularly in the years immediately after train service reached Poughkeepsie in 1850. Two of the houses in the South Road heritage area exemplify this trend.

Samuel F.B. Morse, a prominent New Yorker, purchased an old farmhouse and surrounding property in 1847. He named it Locust Grove, and hired the well-known architect Alexander Jackson Davis to redesign the house to meet his needs and taste. Morse was widely known as the inventor of the telegraph, as well as an artist and a founder of the National Academy of Design.[5] He made his home primarily at Locust Grove until his death in 1872, occasionally involving himself in social causes and politics (once he ran for Mayor of New York City, another time for Congress), as well as local philanthropy. In the twenthieth century, the property was owned by Annette Innis Young; upon her death it became a house museum and historic site memorializing Morse's career.

Maple Grove, another country house, was built by New York City banker Charles A. Macy in 1850. It changed hands more than once in the next two decades, and then in 1870 was purchased by Adolphus Hamilton, a friend of

Morse's who had been living in New York City, and who earlier had been in business in New Orleans until the Civil War threw his life there into turmoil. The Hamilton family and their descendants, the Kinkeads, owned and lived at Maple Grove for almost 120 years. In 1987 the estate of Elise Kinkead deeded the property to the St. Simeon Foundation, to facilitate the expansion of housing for the elderly, which had been built on adjacent land. Maple Grove and Locust Grove are the only remaining "country estates" of the number that had been built in the immediate area in the mid-nineteenth century, when the arrival of the railroad at Poughkeepsie made it seem the perfect location for "a house in the country."

Springside, the "summer home" of Matthew Vassar, also dates from about 1850, when the wealthy owner of a local brewery (and later founder of Vassar College) purchased a piece of farmland about two miles from his home in the City of Poughkeepsie and hired the renowned landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing to lay out a plan for the property and oversee its development.[6] Although Downing died tragically at the age of thirty-seven in 1852, the scheme that he laid out was substantially executed over the next several years. Downing described his vision for Springside as "a place which is a combination of the park-like and pastoral landscape" with "sylvan and pastoral beauty."[7] Although a private estate, Springside was a popular site of visitation for tourists and travelers, and it remained so up until 1864, when Vassar moved there permanently

PHOTO BY MARY M. FLAD

Springside rustic bench and walking path

upon retirement to spend the last four years of his life. Springside was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1969. The property was deeded to Springside Landscape Restoration in 1990; in the years since, the non-profit organization has been working on preserving and restoring the site, and developing and maintaining its walking trails for visitors.

The Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, immediately across Route 9 from Maple Grove and within about a half-mile of both Locust Grove and Springside, also dates from the same period as these neighboring properties. The development of "rural cemeteries," beginning with Mount Auburn Cemetery outside of Boston in 1831, became an essential cultural resource for an urban area. A.J. Downing himself referred to them as "the first really elegant public gardens or promenades formed in this country."[8] The Sunday visit to the rural cemetery, combining a picnic, the enjoyment of the beauty of the park-like landscape, and then tending of the gravesites of departed family members, became a popular recreational activity in every city that had this amenity. The Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery was established in 1852. Its curving drives, beautiful and varied trees, and ornately designed tombstones and burial vaults are typical of the rural cemeteries laid out across the country in the mid-nineteenth century. Just inside the gate, an elegant round brick structure (which is still standing) served as a shelter for those waiting for the trolley, giving evidence to the popularity of the cemetery as a site of visitation.

The Poughkeepsie Spring emerges from the earth off Sharon Drive in the Town of Poughkeepsie, several hundred feet northeast of the road's intersection with Route 9, in an overgrown thicket of vines, saplings, and poison ivy. From there a small stream meanders northward through an adjoining property, and then through the open meadow at the western edge of Maple Grove, past clumps of cat-tails and other wetland plants. Close to the northern edge of Maple Grove, the stream crosses Route 9 through a culvert and then makes its way down through the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery to the Hudson River. It is a very small water body, and would likely be totally ignored were it not for the legends linking it to Poughkeepsie's early settlement history. Early maps indicate that a Livingston house and mill were located close to the stream's entry into the Hudson.

Until the last few decades, the route of the Albany Post Road north into Poughkeepsie, once it reached the city limits, followed South Avenue and Market Street into the center of town, and then continued north on Washington Street until it was again outside the city and proceeding northward toward Albany. This remained the route of the highway once it was renamed Route 9 in the 1920s, when the scheme for numbering highways was adopted—odd numbers

PHOTO BY MARY M. FLAD

Trolley shelter at entrance to Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery

running north/south, even ones east/west. As automotive traffic replaced horses, stagecoaches, and trolleys, the nature of the roadway changed as well. Between 1940 and 1980, the major transformation of land use and the local economy—the building of the IBM main plant, the development of strip malls and shopping centers, the widening of Route 9 to a multi-lane highway, the laying out of an arterial roadway (now sometimes referred to as the "NASCAR speedway") to bypass the city streets—all combine to make the historic landscape of South Road almost unrecognizable. This was the challenging setting in which discussion about developing a "South Road Heritage Trail" began in 2004. With the active involvement of volunteers and staff from Springside, Maple Grove, and Locust Grove, and with input from the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery and Central Hudson (whose headquarters are another neighboring property), an application was submitted for planning funds from the New York State Greenway program, with Locust Grove acting as "lead agency" for the group. Stefan Yarabek, landscape architect of Hudson & Pacific Designs, was commissioned to prepare a conceptual plan for linking the trail resources of the South Road properties that could be drawn together to grapple with the daunting challenge of more than 53,000 vehicles a day racing through the middle of it.

The volume of traffic on a highway like Route 9, which only grows from year to year, can make it seem pointless to develop a plan for walking access through the same area. However, the unusual collection of resources in the South Road

heritage area, and the potential for a collaborative initiative to enhance their accessibility, made it possible for the planning phase of work to move forward. Locust Grove itself maintains about three miles of walking trails on its 100-acre property, and acquisition of three additional parcels of land in 2005, 2006, and 2007—previously parts of the Edgehill and Southwood estates—has expanded its potential trail resources. Former carriage paths are being incorporated into the trail system. The Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery has always been available for walking through its 165 acres of trees, lawns, and monuments. Springside Landscape Restoration's efforts over the last forty years to restore the historic landscape on its twenty-two-acre site and to improve the trails through it have drawn an increasing number of visitors. Although the Maple Grove Restoration Project has concentrated to date on the restoration of the main house on the property, walking tours during Watershed Awareness Month in 2009 and 2010, going from the house down through the allee of maple trees, to the meadow where the Poughkeepsie Spring's stream flows, have drawn dozens of interested visitors. It is hoped that, in the next few years, it will be possible to develop a disabilities-accessible trail loop on the Maple Grove land that would be part of the South Road Heritage Trail.

The Hudson & Pacific Designs' study and master plan laid out the following delineation for the South Road Heritage Trail:

- A route connecting the South Road properties
- Suggested pedestrian crossing points across Route 9
- Location of available parking areas along the proposed route
- A recommended walking path from the South Road properties, on through the historic district (Academy Street and Garfield Place) of nineteenth-century houses in the city, past the Soldiers' Fountain and the Adriance Memorial Library on Market Street, and down Main Street to the Poughkeepsie railroad station
- Access to bus routes and bus stops along the proposed route

Since the completion of the Hudson & Pacific study, Locust Grove has had further discussions with the New York State Department of Transportation about installing walk lights and road markings at appropriate locations (particularly the Sharon Drive intersection with Route 9) to provide a safe walking environment for visitors. Locust Grove has made application for such improvements to be installed the next time DOT work is undertaken on this stretch of Route 9.

The existence of a Master Plan for the South Road Heritage Trail provides a foundation to build on for developing another walking-trail resource for the

Poughkeepsie area. In 2009, Walkway Over the Hudson opened on the span of the old Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge, and sections of the Dutchess Rail-Trail have come into use, from Morgan Lake toward the southeast. The plan for a walking trail along the Fall Kill, reaching from the banks of the Hudson at Upper Landing (the site of two eighteenth-century buildings), through the city, and on northeast toward Val-Kill, the Eleanor Roosevelt Historic Site in Hyde Park, continues to evolve. Walkway Over the Hudson has taken close to twenty years to come into actuality; the Fall Kill trail plans have been underway for about a decade, and the rail trail for about the same period. During that span of time, interest in walking paths and pedestrian recreation has grown steadily.

The South Road Heritage Trail exists only on paper as of 2010, but it has gone through a significant planning process, including public meetings and review. Most of the trail network is already in place; all that is needed is the connecting links, the trail loop within the Maple Grove property, and the endorsement of it as a Greenway trail by public-sector entities, including local governments (the Town and City of Poughkeepsie) for it to become a reality. This may take another five or ten years. But that is only a short period of time in the continuing transformation of South Road.

For more information about the properties in the South Road Heritage Area, visit the following Web sites: Locust Grove, www.lgny.org; *Maple Grove historic site,* www.maplegroveny.org; *Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery,* www.poughkeepsieruralcemetery.com; *and Springside Landscape Restoration,* www.springsidelandmark.org.

Endnotes

1. Helen Wilkinson Reynolds. *Poughkeepsie: the Origin and Meaning of the Word.* Poughkeepsie: 1924.
2. American Guide Series. (Compiled by the Workers of the Dutchess County Unit, Federal Writers' Project, of the Works Progress Administration in the State of New York. *Dutchess County.* Philadelphia: William Penn Association, 1937.
3. *Op.cit.*, p.15.
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6. Harvey K. Flad. "Matthew Vassar's Springside: 'the hand of Art, when guided by Taste,' "in *Prophet With Honor: the Career of Andrew Jackson Downing 1815-1852.* Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989, p.219ff.
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8. David Schuyler. *Apostle of Taste: Andrew Jackson Downing 1815-1872.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p.190.

Annandale-on-Hudson's Historic Estates and their Landscapes

Amy B. Parrella

"A place to think"—Bard College's motto proclaims the college as an academic environment conducive to intellectual thought, exchange, and engagement. Yet if we shift the emphasis of the motto to understand Bard as a "place" in the most literal sense—a physical setting, a "landscape of learning," possibly even an "outdoor classroom"—then the awe-inspiring backdrop of the campus emerges, somewhere that can equally inspire, transport, and open minds to new possibilities and ways of thinking. Today this landscape includes 550 acres of woodlands, meadows, ravines, former estates, and rural residences. It is rich in prehistoric, historic, and modern artifacts woven together by trees, streams, and rolling topography.

In Bard's 150th anniversary year, it seems appropriate to look back on its history of place in order to look forward to explore how the land shaped us, and how we have shaped it. Additionally, next year will be the fourth anniversary of the Bard Arboretum. The campus has long been recognized for its spectacular gardens and superb collection of living trees and plants—in fact, many of the Hudson Valley's most notable trees are located there. The college's Landscape and Arboretum Program was established in 2007 with the charge of preserving and cultivating the campus's horticultural assets. The Arboretum Program formalizes the college's dedication to caring for its unique landscape and opens the door to horticultural education, outreach, and research.

Historical context of Bard's landscape and its physical development

Situated along the east bank of the Hudson River within the hamlet of Annandale-on-Hudson, the Bard campus is privileged to have sweeping views of the Catskill Mountains, spectacular gardens, and a rich natural history. Due to a host of natural features and man-made changes to the landscape, the college was afforded the opportunity to take advantage of this unique place.

After the recession of the glaciers at the end of the Pleistocene period, starting ca. 16,000 BP, the mid-Hudson Valley was covered in tundra vegetation and occupied by Pleistocene fauna (i.e., mastodon and caribou). Spruce and pine forests gradually filled in the landscape starting ca. 12,000 BP, and the warmer climate eventually brought deciduous forests to the region ca. 7,000 BP. These changes in the landscape encouraged intermittent prehistoric settlement on what today is the Bard campus. Native American inhabitants also were present during the time of the first historically documented European voyage up the Hudson River, by Henry Hudson, in 1609.[1]

Early Estates

Bard College emerged out of centuries of land ownership transferring from one family to another. Beginning around 1680, Col. Peter Schuyler, an Albany merchant and colonial government official, purchased the riverfront land at Cruger's Island (originally known as Magdalen Island) from local Native American inhabitants. This property included Bard's entire campus and most of the township of Red Hook. From this point onward, four major estates were formed—Bartlett, Blithewood, Ward Manor, and Sands.[2] These estates now create a patchwork of history spread out over the Bard College landscape.

Bartlett Estate

The riverfront section of the Schuyler property was purchased in 1720 by Barent van Benthuysen, but Schuyler retained rights to three prospective mill sites along the Saw Kill Creek, each of which had eight acres connected to it for harvesting timber. Van Benthuysen's slaves cleared the land and built a large house, called Van Benthuysen's Castle, along the road to Cruger's Island that was mapped in 1747. A family burying ground lay in what later became the Bartlett family meadows, not far from his house.

The van Benthuysen property gradually was sold off or lost in mortgage foreclosures. William Allen purchased the property from the van Benthuysen family at an unknown date. He built a house and later sold the property to Robert Tillotson, who lived there with his family until 1862, when he moved to Rhinebeck and sold the property to Edwin and Caroline Harrod Bartlett in early 1864. The Bartletts renamed the property Miramonte and made plans for a new mansion and landscaping.

In 1865, the new main house and stables were reportedly designed by renowned architects Calvert Vaux and Frederick Clarke Withers. Mr. Bartlett died at Miramonte in 1867; Mrs. Bartlett died in 1893. Both are buried in a stone

mausoleum opposite Bard Hall. It was erected by Mrs. Bartlett after her husband's death, also from a design by Withers. The Bartletts had no children and it is unclear who controlled the estate after their deaths. However, there are records that Miramonte was mortgaged by Mary Agnes Bartlett to Emma Forster. Mary Agnes Bartlett transferred the estate to Andrew Zabriskie in 1901. Today, ruins of the nineteenth-century Bartlett stable complex remain on the campus.[3]

Bartlett's historic vegetation: Meadows and hardwood forest now dominate the previous location of the Bartlett estate. Oak, elm, maple, beech, ash, hickory, and tulip poplar constitute the woodlands. Vegetation in meadow areas is primarily pasture grasses, timothy, clover, asters, and goldenrod and other herbs and woody plants.[4]

IMAGE FROM GOOGLE BOOKS

Blithewood engraving from an 1859 edition of *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America*

Blithewood

> Blithewood is one of the most charming villa residences in the Union. The natural scenery here, is nowhere surpassed in its enchanting union of softness and dignity—the river being four miles wide, its placid bosom broken only by islands and gleaming sails, and the horizon grandly closing in with the tall blue summits of the distant Kaatskills.[5] —*A.J. Downing*

Blithewood is currently a forty-five-acre area of the campus landscape that is associated with a historic estate comprised of a manor house, outbuildings, drives, surrounding gardens, lawns, and meadows. Situated atop a bluff on the Hudson

River, it is a majestic property that has a rich cultural landscape history.

COURTESY OF BARD COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Blithewood exterior

Barent van Benthuysen sold 200 acres of his original riverfront property to General John Armstrong Jr., a U.S. Senator (1800-1804), minister to France (1804-1810), and Secretary of War (1813-1814), and his wife, Alida Livingston, in 1795. The Armstrongs named their residence "Mill Hill," based on two mills located along the nearby Saw Kill Creek. The Armstrongs converted an existing one-and-a-half-story barn into a fifty-by-fifty-foot Federal-style residence and began planting Eastern white pine trees (*Pinus strobus*) along the driveway. Although many of these trees died over the years, several survive along today's Blithewood Avenue.[6]

In 1833, Mill Hill was sold to John Church Cruger, a wealthy New Yorker, who also owned Cruger Island, where he resided with his wife Euphemia Van Rensselaer. Two years later, Cruger sold ninety-five acres, including the riverfront bluff, to Robert Donaldson, a patron of the arts and architecture, for $19,000. Donaldson and his wife, Susan Jane Gaston, both native to North Carolina, were awestruck by the beauty of the land. Susan is credited with naming the property "Blithewood," from "blythe" (meaning "happy") wood. The Donaldsons went on to play a pivotal role in developing the property into a premiere example of American landscape and architectural design.[8]

Under the guidance of influential architect Alexander Jackson Davis, Donaldson renovated Armstrong's residence in the style that later became known as Hudson River Bracketed. Working with Andrew Jackson Downing, the noted landscape designer, horticulturist, and writer, the trio created a prototype of the Picturesque villa that integrated the landscape with the manor house.

> "Through Davis's architectural designs and Downing's prolific writings, their audience actualized. People became aware of Blithewood nationwide. Davis and Downing expressed their values in house and garden, as a foundation from which one's moral character was shaped. They believed the land was a partner in creating a life worthy of high moral character."[9]

One distinguishing feature of the renovated home was the wide-covered veranda attached to the house on three sides. It served to connect the outside world

COURTESY OF BARD ARBORETUM

The Blithewood Gatehouse

IMAGE FROM GOOGLE BOOKS

The Blithewood Gardener's Lodge and Gatehouse, from *A Treatise*….

COURTESY OF BARD ARBORETUM

The Blithewood Garden

with inside civilization. Additionally, it created a frame around the outdoors, as did the oval window on the house that looked out at the mountain scenery, creating a living picture.[10]

COURTESY OF BARD COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Elm Drive, passing the chapel

Archaeological investigations revealed that the first Gothic Revival cottage in America, the gatehouse of the Donaldson estate, was located just east of the main house. A lithograph of this design (the "Gardener's Lodge") was published in Downing's *Rural Residences* (1837). It was the first building in the United States to employ the use of board-and-batten siding. A steel engraving of Blithewood is featured in Downing's *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1841).[11] Both books were very influential, serving as pattern books for other builders.[12]

In 1853, Donaldson sold Blithewood's 130 acres to John and Margaret Bard, founders of Bard College, for $63,000. The Donaldsons moved to the Edgewater estate in Barrytown. As educational and pious philanthropists, the Bards constructed Bard Hall (1854) as a Sunday school for the local community. They also commissioned the building of the Chapel of Holy Innocents in 1856.

The Bards collaborated with Rev. John McVickar and Episcopal Bishop Horatio Potter to establish St. Stephen's College in 1860. It was founded as a training school for young men who wanted to become ministers in the Protestant Episcopal Church. John Bard donated eighteen acres and $1,000 per year to the endeavor. Together the founders "had the conviction that through education, leadership and an institution, they could improve people, communities and the nation."[13]

After the death of their son Willie in 1868, the family moved to Europe. The Annandale property deteriorated and went into foreclosure in 1897, when it was sold to St. Stephen's College for $38,444. Two years later, the college sold it to Captain Andrew C. Zabriskie, a real estate entrepreneur and active member of the National Guard, and his wife, Frances Zabriskie. She renamed the estate Blithewood. The Zabriskies tore down the Donaldson home, which had fallen into disrepair, and hired the then-prominent architecture firm of Hoppin & Koen to design the current Georgian manor house and walled Italianate garden.

Only months after his mother's death, Christian Zabriskie transferred Blithewood to Bard College in 1951. James H. Case Jr., then the college's president, is quoted as saying, "We now have one of the most beautiful campuses in the

COURTESY OF BARD COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Levy red maple

COURTESY OF BARD COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Blithewood garden

country with a wide frontage on the Hudson River and a commanding view of the Catskill Mountains." In 1956, Blithewood was remodeled as woman's dormitory; in 1987, it became the Levy Economics Institute.[14]

Blithewood's historic vegetation: Blithewood's formal garden, lawn, and woodlands contain remnants of the historic vegetation that once existed around the estate. A former New York State Champion red maple (*Acer rubrum*), known as the "All Saints" maple, still stands on the north lawn. Twin black locusts (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) on the south lawn are approximately 300 years old. Along the woodland edges, significant groundcovers of periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) and pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*) and large forsythia (*Forsythia x intermedia*) may represent plantings from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

COURTESY OF BARD ARBORETUM

Locusts in June

The elaborate formal plantings of Blithewood's garden complemented its Neoclassical design. A 1905 Hoppin & Koen garden plan shows numerous shrubs within the walled garden, evenly spaced and uniform, lining the walk from the house and encircling statuary at the path crossing in the garden, centered in garden beds. and edging the fountain basin. Evergreens were probably used here—possibly junipers, yew, and boxwoods—some of which have been replaced today. An early postcard of the garden shows roses, iris, wisteria, peonies, and maintained turf.[15]

Ward Manor

Today's north campus encompasses approximately ninety acres, including Ward Manor house (a dormitory complex), gatehouse, historic entrance drives lined by spruce and maple allees, the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, and several open meadows. Ward Manor shares a similar Picturesque setting to Blithewood, although the Hudson River is obscured by woods because of the home's inland setting.

Ward Manor sat on 400 acres that General John Armstrong Jr. purchased from the van Benthuysen family in 1790. He built a house called "The Meadows" that stood in the vicinity of current Ward Manor. Soon thereafter, he sold the property to Chancellor Robert Livingston, whose family renamed the property Almont. The main house was expanded by Col. Andrew De Veaux, a member of the British Army, who called the property De Veaux Park. De Veaux died in 1812. Part of his estate was sold to Dr. John Masten of Kingston; the remainder was acquired by Robert Swift Livingston of New York City. The main house at Almont burned in 1877 and was not rebuilt. Archaeological remains of the property's gardens and greenhouse are believed to be among the earliest found in the Hudson Valley.[16]

The Almont property was sold to Cord Meyer in 1906. He intended to harvest 200 acres of virgin forest but never did. In 1914, Louis Gordon Hamersley purchased Almont and some adjoining farm properties to its north. Four years later, he constructed an elaborate Tudor-style mansion. At the same time, the Ward Manor gatehouse was erected in a similar style. Hamersley served in World War I and rarely visited his home, preferring to live on Long Island.

DONNA MATTHEWS COLLECTION, COURTESY OF BARD COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The manor house was converted to charitable use when William B. Ward purchased it in 1926. In 1929, the Ward Annex was added. The expanded structure was intended to "create a self-sustaining

community, emphasizing work and fresh foods in the healthful country air." Due to changing social conditions, in 1960 all but ninety acres of Ward Manor was sold to Central Hudson Gas and Electric to build a new nuclear power facility. The plant was never built; the state acquired the property in 1982, and created a nature preserve in the Tivoli Bays. Bard College purchased the remaining ninety acres in 1963.[17]

Ward Manor's historic vegetation: Ward Manor's vegetation lent itself to the site's multitude of uses as a camp, retreat, and rest home from the 1920s through the 1960s, providing fresh air and other benefits of country life to the urban underprivileged. At the time, the property was more cultivated than it is today, with an orchard, picnic grove, large vegetable gardens, a berry patch, and iris gardens along the creek to the north (today currently owned by the state). A maple allee along Manor Avenue, one of the estate's main drives, was planted during the 1950s; it gradually is being replaced by a new maple and oak allee. Mature oak groves still shade the entrance to the Fisher Center and a mature Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) allee still lines Robbins Road, another drive to the manor house. A solitary American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) with a diameter of four and a half feet stands in the east meadow. These large meadows currently contain native and introduced species of pasture grasses, timothy, clover, asters, goldenrod, herbs, and woody plants.[18]

COURTESY OF BARD ARBORETUM

American sycamore

Sands Estate

The most recent estate included in the Bard Campus is the Sands Estate. Sands House is a vernacular wood-framed farmhouse with additions that was built in 1841 by the Donaldson family. Although considerably smaller than its surrounding estates, it was built in the Gothic Revival style and served as a farmhouse. Robert Adam lived in the house and ran the farm until he sold the building and five acres to Rev. George F. Seymour in 1859. The house was then occupied by Charles Edward Sands, nephew of John Bard, and his family who most likely rented it from Seymour. (Seymour became the first warden of St. Stephen's College in 1860.) In

1864, the college sold the house and land to Mr. Sands. Both Sands and Adam are believed to have farmed the land near the house. Sands lived there until 1883, when Dr. Malcolm purchased the property. In 1904, it was acquired by Andrew Zabriskie. The present carriage house, two dairy barns (one of which is part of the Bard College Buildings and Grounds complex), and an icehouse were added to the property during the Zabriskie era. In 1951, the farm was donated to the college as part of the Blithewood holdings. The main house is used as a student dormitory.[19]

Sands historic vegetation: Due to recent construction, very little remains of the historic vegetation surrounding the Sands estate. One remnant is a short stretch of Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) lining the east side of the house. They are approximately seventy-five to 100 years old.

Bard's current landscape and arboretum

The entirety of Bard's campus is listed in the National Register of Historic Places through its inclusion within two designated Historic Districts. In 1979, the Bard College campus was listed as part of the Sixteen-Mile District; in 1990, this district was re-evaluated and its boundaries were expanded through the listing of the Hudson River Historic District. Almost all of the campus buildings built prior to 1950 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing features to this larger district. Several of Bard's archeological resources have also been deemed eligible for listing on the National Register.[20]

Since Bard's historic character is central to its image in the minds of students, faculty, staff, alumni, visitors, and the community, it is important that it be retained. As Bard continues to expand and evolve, it is critical to recognize and preserve those aspects of its history that have helped define Bard's character and identity over the years and can help guide its future.

The Bard Arboretum is fortunate to have inherited a wealth of prehistoric and historic landscape and architectural resources that coexist with modern and postmodern development. The Hudson River ravines and bluffs are considered to predate European settlement and have some of the most significant prehistoric archaeological findings in the area. The ravines and waterways are also significant for their role in the industrialization of the Hudson River Valley in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries because of the numerous mills that they powered. The four historic estates mentioned above are representational of other country estates throughout the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Blithewood, however, is nationally significant for its contribution to architecture and landscape design, both for serving as an ideal of the Picturesque landscape movement and its association with A.J. Davis, A.J. Downing, and Hoppin &

Koen. The college landscape also is significant because it provided a home for many influential families, including General John Armstrong and the Bards.

As a recipient of such historical wealth, the arboretum undertook a two-year Preservation Master Planning process, sponsored by the John Paul Getty Foundation, to study all of its historic buildings and landscapes. It explored connections between the college's past and present, and outlined a preservation approach after looking at existing campus resources. Since the completion of this study, the arboretum has become a member-based program that works to:

- Develop a comprehensive horticultural database and library, including a tree inventory that will support staff, faculty, and students as they research the college's botanical collections, track changes in the landscape, and plan appropriate maintenance, restoration, and preservation of Bard's trees and plantings;
- Support the maintenance of the historic landscapes so they can act as an outdoor classroom for courses offered across the academic curriculum;
- Utilize the preservation master plan and develop a landscape master plan to guide future growth and development that would preserve and protect the campus's natural beauty; and
- Exist as a satellite site and co-sponsor adult education classes with the New York Botanical Garden.

As the caretaker of Bard's landscape, the arboretum hopes to become a destination for individuals to understand and appreciate this nationally significant historical landscape. To learn more about the program, please visit *http://inside.bard.edu/arboretum/about/.*

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ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAXINE PRESTO

The Kykuit Estate: An Embodiment of the Intellect and Creativity of the Rockefeller Family

Kykuit is the Rockefeller estate nestled in the Pocantico Hills of Westchester County, twenty-five miles north of New York City. Appropriately named "Kykuit," the Dutch word for "lookout," the estate provides views not only of the Hudson River, but of the vast stretches of land the Rockefellers owned and carefully landscaped. Kykuit was constructed with the intention of being a safe, serene haven amid the family's political, social, economic, and philanthropic endeavors. Four generations lived in the estate; however, John D. Rockefeller Sr., John D. Rockefeller Jr., and Nelson A. Rockefeller left the most distinct individual impressions.

Since 1905, Kykuit has been an embodiment of the intellectual and creative endeavors of the Rockefeller family, changing most dramatically after Nelson obtained ownership in the 1960s. In December 1991, according to the former Vice President's will, Kykuit was bestowed to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Rockefeller estate was opened to the public as a historic site. Historic Hudson Valley provides tours, which share the historic significance of Kykuit with those interested in the Rockefeller family, twentieth-century architecture, gardens, and modern art.

The estate is the product of the intersection of intellectual and aesthetic philosophies of three generations of Rockefellers. It was built with the intention of appearing simple and dignified. Kykuit's construction began in the mind of John D. Rockefeller Sr., the founder of Standard Oil, in the late 1800s. He purchased the land in the Pocantico Hills in 1893. Construction of the house began in 1905, after a series of discussions and disputes between John D. Sr., John Jr., and the architects. Senior primarily wanted to build the estate as a comfortable domestic refuge for his family. He desired a T-shaped building, designed to take full advantage of the Hudson River and afternoon sunlight, with an office and drawing room at the entrance, a large central space, and a library, tea room, and dining room extending beyond the central living space. He envisioned the house as the focal point of the estate. Junior and his wife, Abby, wanted to build a setting for family life, but also saw the estate as a symbol of classical beauty.

The architects, Chester Holmes Aldrich and William Adams Delano, were educated at Columbia and Yale, respectively, and later went on to study at the École des Beaux-Arts in France. The Beaux-Arts style was focused on preserving the aesthetics of the Classical period. William Welles Bosworth was hired as Kykuit's landscape architect; however Frederick Law Olmsted contributed to the design as well. Bosworth, like Aldrich and Delano, was a skilled American architect who obtained his education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the École des Beaux-Arts. He also worked on the restoration of the Palace of Versailles and Notre-Dame de Reims, projects partially funded by the Rockefeller family. Although these men were well-trained and educated, they often had to concede to the artistic demands of the Rockefellers, most notably John Sr.

In 1906, Kykuit's construction was threatened by the lack of structural steel; however, John Jr., who served as the force behind initiating and carrying out the construction process—he oversaw decisions regarding heating, plumbing, and brands of appliances—contacted the president of U.S. Steel and received assurances there would be enough material. Senior and Junior were both united in their financial and emotional investments in a home that was proving difficult

***Oceanus* fountain in the garden**

Basement level of the house

to construct. Despite these difficulties, Kykuit's basic structure was completed in 1907; soon after, John Jr. and Abby began considering the interior of the house, ultimately admiring the work of Ogden Codman and Edith Wharton, authors of the influential book, *The Decoration of Houses*. Junior and Abby began working with Codman on the interior plans that same year, and purchased wallpaper, carpets, and other decorations for the home. In 1908, the first stage was finished. From 1913 to 1915, the estate underwent a series of renovations. By 1915, Kykuit was complete, embodying the tension between rigid formality and the rustic, with an overall stately appearance. The home served as a gathering place for family as well as notable political and social figures.

Nelson Rockefeller assumed ownership of Kykuit in 1961, after his father's death, and he left the most notable and lasting impression on the home, embodied by his collection of modern art. (Although John D. Rockefeller 3rd was Kykuit's rightful heir, he conceded the estate to his brother.) Upon acquiring Kykuit, Nelson had the foresight to preserve its historical integrity. He kept the original furniture and pieces of art, including a collection of Chinese ceramics obtained by his father. Portraits of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington remained on the walls, placed there by John Sr. and Jr. and representative of the historical and political legacy they most admired. In an adjacent room, a T'ang Dynasty marble bodhisattva still sits before a large window overlooking the Hudson River; the piece belonged to Nelson's mother. Meandering through the rooms reveals Kykuit's identity as an aggregation of various cultures and eras spanning from Chinese Dynasties to the nineteenth century in the United States.

Nelson brought the collection into the twentieth century. Instilled with a deep appreciation for art by his mother, he collected a variety of avant garde and modern pieces. According to contemporaries and scholars, Nelson's desire to

Temple of Aphrodite

Hudson River view

collect and display art was pure, in the sense that he did not do it to show off his wealth or intellect. The process of acquiring and displaying became therapeutic and was the product of his philanthropic desire to share art with the public. He often lent pieces in his collection to museums. Nelson appreciated art because of its strength and ability to evoke emotion and engage the viewer. However he did not enjoy subtlety in artwork. His collection is dominated by the work of Abstract Expressionists because he admired their boldness.

While the contents of the collection at Kykuit are astounding, the siting of the sculptures, paintings, lithographs, and etchings is just as fascinating. Nelson became consumed with placement in an attempt to ensure that each piece was properly and most effectively displayed. He was pleased when he discovered that the house's basement would be the ideal space for his collection. He also carefully analyzed and rearranged sculptures on the landscape surrounding the estate.

Kykuit's basement art gallery, which is included in the Historic Hudson Valley Classic Tour, consists primarily of paintings, etchings, and lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Marc Chagall, Andy Warhol, Henri Matisse, Fernand Leger, Wassily Kandinsky, Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell, and Mark Rothko. One corridor consists primarily of Picasso tapestries, commissioned by Nelson from 1955 to 1974 and created by Madame J. de la Baume Durrbach with the approval of the artist himself. The famous medieval Unicorn tapestries were a valued possession of the Rockefellers and may account for Nelson's interest in commissioning these modern counterparts. The Unicorn tapestries would have most likely found their place on the walls of Kykuit's basement; however, they were donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art during Nelson's childhood, exemplifying the Rockefeller family's philanthropic spirit.

The sculpture collection is one of the most visually and physically astonishing

***Torso (Blanqui Monument)*, c. 1906, by Aristide Maillol**

facets of Kykuit. Nelson collected sculptures from 1935 to 1970, and although he often gave the works to museums, 120 remain at the estate. There are ninety works in the outdoor collection, seventy-one bought by Nelson, who clearly favored Reg Butler, Gaston Lachaise, Aristide Maillol, and Eli Nadelman, each of whom have three sculptures on display. Other notable sculptors include Jean Arp, Constantine Brancusi, Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Jacques Lipchitz, Henry Moore, Louise Nevelson, and Isamu Noguchi.

Sculptures were acquired through dealers, by having casts made, and most notably through relationships that Nelson fostered and cherished with artists over the years. In 1962, Gaston Lachaise's *Dans La Nuit* and *Man* became the first two sculptures in Nelson's collection, obtained through his promotion of Lachaise's artistic endeavors. Lachaise later contributed *Woman Standing*, another famous piece. Aristide Maillol contributed *Torso* and *Bather Pulling Up Her Hair*; Moore contributed *Nuclear Energy* and *Knife Edge*, while Calder contributed *Spiny* and *Large Spiny*.

On a typical Kykuit tour, the first three sculptures encountered include Oceanus, a replica of a Florentine fountain, which stands at the house's entrance; *Bird in Space* by Brancusi; and *Woman* by Giacometti. The latter two pieces are unconventional and abstract, whereas the fountain is a classical piece. These sculptures and their proximity to one another exemplify the intersection and tension between Classic, Gothic, European, and Modern styles at Kykuit. The rest of the sculpture collection is placed carefully throughout the gardens, whose design Bosworth based on Italian and Renaissance garden models, fusing English, French, and Italian aesthetics. Together, the gardens and sculptures reflect orderliness, clarity, and definition.

The Kykuit estate is both a microcosm of the domestic and international legacy of the Rockefeller family and a unique collection of artistic expression representing the simultaneous alignment of tradition and rejection of its rigidity. Each sculpture and painting, paired with the intricate presentation of interior furniture and exterior landscape, serves as an extension and embodiment of the family's intellect and creativity. As such, Kykuit is a treasured historical resource in the Hudson Valley.

—Maxine Presto, Marist '10

Learn more about Kykuit, including hours and directions, visit www.hudsonvalley.org.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILDERSTEIN HISTORIC SITE

The restored Wilderstein mansion

Wilderstein Historic Site

It may not be the most familiar, the most discussed, or the most publicized historic estate in the Hudson River Valley, but Wilderstein is one of the region's true gems. It boasts a rich family history that extends from the middle of the nineteenth century until 1991, spanning the estate's creation, its renovation, and now its preservation as a house museum showcasing architectural and design elements as well as a family story that is tied to our nation's history.

Wilderstein's story begins in 1852, when Thomas Holy Suckley purchased thirty-two acres, primarily used for grazing sheep, on the east bank of the Hudson River in Rhinebeck. It was a prime location, offering magnificent, open views of the river. Suckley paid about $150 per acre, and immediately began plans for a home, recruiting New York City architect John Warren Ritch. The resulting Italianate dwelling was unpretentious in its design; however, it still cost $8,500. Suckley and his wife, Catharine, settled into the house in November 1853, four months after the birth of their first child, a son named Rutsen.

Established in their new home, Thomas set about transforming the grounds. He oversaw a great deal of planting—trees, fruits, and vegetables. In the process,

he changed the name of the estate from "The Cedars" to the more romantic "Wilderstein," a mock form of German meaning "wild man's stone." The change was prompted by a petroglyph of a Native American wearing a headdress that was found on the property.

In 1856, a second son, Robert Bowne, was born. The Suckleys' third and last child, a daughter named Kittie, was born four years later. For a good number of years, the Suckleys lived happily at Wilderstein, enjoying their lives on the river and traveling with ease when necessary to New York City. Tragedy struck in 1865, when Rutsen died at the age of twelve after falling from an apple tree. A somber pall enveloped Wilderstein. Though life eventually continued for the family, several years later they were struck repeatedly by heartbreak: Thomas's sister Mary died in 1872, his brother Rutsen died in 1875, and Kittie succumbed to tuberculosis in 1879. Nine months after Kittie's death, Catharine herself died of grief. After this string of devastation, only Thomas and his son Robert remained.

Thomas never fully recovered from this immeasurable loss; his only source of happiness lay in Robert. Robert himself began to spend a great deal of time in Manhattan, where he began courting Elizabeth Philips Montgomery, nicknamed "Bessie," in 1882. The couple married in October 1884. They first went to Europe, where they lived for two years and celebrated the birth of their first child, Rutsen. When they returned to the United States in late 1886, they moved to Orange, New Jersey, where their second son, Henry, was born. All seemed well until February 1888, when Thomas Suckley succumbed to either a stroke or heart attack, leaving Robert as his sole heir.

Soon after his father's death, Robert began plans to move to Wilderstein. First, however, he decided to have a grand addition and major modifications made to the house. Architect Arnout Cannon, Jr., of Poughkeepsie was contracted for the project; he set about turning Wilderstein into a luxurious Queen Anne-style mansion. The new focal point became a five-story tower erected at the house's northwest end. A carriage house and stable, as well as a boathouse were also constructed. The home's interior was completely altered as well, to designs provided by Joseph Burr Tiffany. A new plan for the landscape was created and implemented by Vaux and Company and a greenhouse constructed by Lord and Burnham. In the midst of these renovations, two more sons joined the family—Robin, born in 1888, and Arthur, born two years later. (The latter was the first child to be born at Wilderstein.) Both the family and the house were expanding at a rapid pace.

Misfortune soon struck the Suckley family again. Young Rutsen died in August 1890, after a short and sudden illness. Though this greatly affected the

Margaret Suckley at Wilderstein with her dog Button and the offspring of Button and Fala, Mac and Peggy.

household, three small boys remained to be looked after, while improvements to the house awaited completion. So the family moved forward. Three additional children eventually completed the family: Margaret Lynch (who would be called Daisy), born in 1891, and twin girls Katharine and Elizabeth (Betty), born two years later.

The family flourished in the years that followed, but their finances did not. At the beginning of 1897, they moved to Europe as a cost-cutting measure. They spent the next decade there. (Initially, they had planned on staying for only two years.) The livestock were sold and the staff at Wilderstein was reduced to the bare minimum needed to maintain the estate in the family's absence. While the children spent time in various schools throughout Europe, Bessie kept a watchful eye on their goings-on and Robert made occasional trips back to the States. The family did not gather together again at Wilderstein until October 1907.

The children reveled in their return to the estate, exploring and relearning every corner of their thirty-five-room home. The ground-floor rooms were particularly enthralling, each decorated in a contrasting style, including Flemish medieval, American Colonial, and Louis XVI. The children spent their summers outdoors; in winter they enjoyed iceboating on the river. As they grew, the boys were sent away for schooling; Daisy also went to prep school for three years and to college for two. Wilderstein would remain the Suckley nerve center as

FDR and Margaret Suckley on board the *USS Potomac*, cruising the Hudson River, March 1939

the children grew, though Robert frequently returned to Europe.

It was Daisy, however, who ultimately reigned at Wilderstein. Her brother Henry died in 1917, a casualty of World War One; her father passed away in 1921. At that point, Robin was thirty-two, Arthur thirty, Daisy twenty-nine, and twins Katharine and Betty (now married) twenty-seven. Daisy assumed the role of overseeing Wilderstein and monitoring her brothers, sisters, and mother. She took a job as the personal secretary of her Aunt Sophia Langdon to secure a steady income for the family in the midst of their ever-weakening financial situation. Later, she worked as an archivist for Franklin Delano Roosevelt, to whom she was distantly related.

More notably, Daisy became FDR's confidante and close companion. Though their relationship was largely overlooked for decades, this changed after Daisy's death in 1991. While her bedroom in the Wilderstein tower was being cleared, a worn black suitcase was discovered. It turned out to be full of letters written between Daisy and FDR. The correspondence revealed a much deeper, intimate relationship between the two, triggering questions about the depth of their bond and efforts they made to guard their connection.

The letters were published in 1995 in a book compiled by Geoffrey C. Ward. Pieced together with entries from Daisy's journals, they tell the story of her relationship with the President. The two went for long drives together on his frequent trips home to Hyde Park, while she often visited him in Washington, D.C. In his letters to Daisy, FDR revealed personal details, in direct contrast to his usual correspondences. She was responsible for giving him his beloved, well-known Scottish terrier, Fala. Together, FDR and Daisy discussed plans for spending time with one another. They even had their own spot, called "Our Hill"—a place where something allegedly happened between them in 1935 that "neither of them ever forgot," but whose specifics are unknown (Ward, 34.) They decided that "Our Hill" would be the perfect spot for a cottage, which began as a dream including them both but resulted in the reality of Top Cottage, the retirement retreat FDR built for himself in 1938. Though the relationship eventually lost its flirtatious

edge, Daisy and FDR remained close until the end. Daisy was one of four women with the President when he died in Warm Springs, Georgia, in 1945.

Daisy lived for almost fifty years after Roosevelt's death, spending the remainder of her life at Wilderstein. In 1983 she donated the entirety of Wilderstein to a not-for-profit organization established to ensure its preservation and public interpretation after her death.

Since 1980, this organization has worked to maintain the grounds and buildings at Wilderstein, as well as the staggering number of personal effects; the three generations of Suckleys who so definitively left their mark here also happened to leave behind a wealth of letters, documents, books, diaries, paintings, furniture, and the like. All serve as a testament to the lives of the Suckley family and the times in which they lived in this beautiful place beside the river.

—*Amanda Schreiner, Marist, '08*

Wilderstein Historic Site is open noon until 4 p.m. Thursday to Sunday from May through October; the grounds are open year-round from 9 a.m. until dusk. www.wilderstein.org; *845-876-4818*

Works Cited

Philip, Cynthia Owen. *Wilderstein and the Suckleys: a Hudson River Legacy. Rhinebeck, NY: Wilderstein Preservation*, 2001.

Ward, Geoffrey C., ed. *Closest Companion*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.

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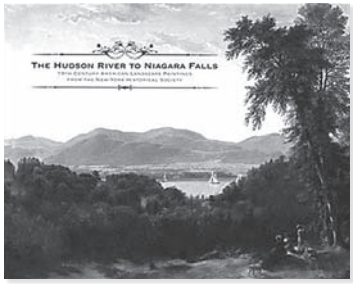
Book Reviews



***The Hudson River to Niagara Falls: 19th-Century American Landscape Paintings from the New-York Historical Society.* Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art with essays by Linda Ferber and Kerry Dean Carso. Distributed by State University of New York Press, 2009. (68 pp; with black & white and color illustrations)**

In 2009, a wide range of programming was initiated to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's historic exploration of the Hudson River. As part of that celebration, the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at the State University of New York at New Paltz organized *The Hudson River to Niagara Falls: 19th-Century American Landscape Paintings from the New-York Historical Society.* This exhibition, the third in a trilogy of shows on Hudson River imagery originally conceived by Neil Trager, Director Emeritus of the Dorsky Museum, was curated by Dr. Linda Ferber, senior art historian and now museum director emerita of the New-York Historical Society. The forty-five works displayed were all from the Historical Society's permanent collection and were painted between 1818 and 1892. While Ferber included paintings by well-known artists such as Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, John Casilear, Jasper Cropsey, and George Inness, she also included works by lesser-known but remarkable artists such as Louisa Minot, thus demonstrating the breadth and depth of the Historical Society's collection.

The corresponding exhibition catalogue includes essays by Dr. Ferber and Kerry Dean Carso, associate professor of Art History at SUNY New Paltz. Lavishly illustrated, the catalogue allows the reader to travel geographically along the Hudson River, starting in New York Harbor and proceeding up the river through the Hudson Highlands, into the Catskills, westward to Niagara Falls, and north again to Lake George and the Adirondacks.

In her essay "Landscape Views and Landscape Visions," Dr. Ferber establishes the difference between the topographical and the idealized landscape. As she notes, the "contrast is one between prose and poetry." Ferber is quick to note the balance struck by artists who employed the vocabulary of the "sublime," "picturesque," and the "beautiful" when painting the nineteenth-century American landscape. Just as the illustrations to this catalogue commence with views of New York City, Ferber begins her discussion of landscapes with the city as an active

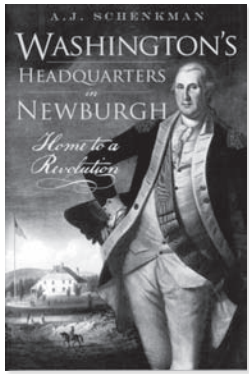
port and a popular example of an urban landscape. The impact of industrial progress is a feature of this essay as is the importance of the landscape experience to city dwellers. Ferber poignantly highlights selected paintings in which artists consciously included details of commerce and industry along the Hudson. These can be read as reflections of growth or, as was often the case with Cole and Durand, their reaction to the invasion of the railroad in the American landscape. Ferber has chosen imagery that represents the well-traveled landscape in America. Sites of wonder such as Niagara Falls were destinations for tourists—then as now.

As a complement to Dr. Ferber's insightful essay, Kerry Dean Carso contributes to the catalogue, "Temples, Castles, Villas, Ruins: The Role of Architectural Association in American Landscape Painting." Dr. Carso interprets the use of architectural forms in landscape painting as the mark of human presence in nature. She deftly selects the Gothic Revival to make her point. An architectural style replete with historical associations, the inclusion of Gothic structures or ruins may suggest a relationship to the pervasive romantic spirit or alternatively suggest a comparison to Europe's past as a means to celebrate a progressive American future. As they appear in the paintings discussed by Carso, the Gothic castles or ruins really were a part of the American landscape—at times employed to identify a popular location or to establish an American tradition of ruins.

As museums continue the trend of contextualizing the visual with the historical/cultural/social, we look increasingly to the smaller museums for truly innovative exhibition concepts and creative curatorial vision, as demonstrated by the well-written and thoughtful essays included in the catalogue *The Hudson River to Niagara Falls: 19th-Century American Landscape Paintings from the New-York Historical Society*. This exhibition and its corresponding catalogue may have been the third in a trilogy, but this reader will eagerly await future landscape exhibitions at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art. Likewise, the armchair traveler will certainly want a copy of this catalogue for their personal library.

While Drs. Ferber and Carso provide the historical context for our better understanding of how landscape painting functioned beyond pure aesthetic pleasure in the nineteenth century, there is yet a timeless appeal to these works. In her foreword, Sara Pasti, director of the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, summarizes this sentiment: "May those who gaze upon this river valley in another hundred years enjoy the same views that we now see in these paintings and in the landscape that surrounds us."

—Nancy Siegel, Towson University



***Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh: Home to a Revolution*, A.J. Schenkman. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009 (128 pp. 33 illustrations)**

As a site interpreter at Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site in Newburgh, A.J. Schenkman became fascinated with the history of the house and its place in the context of the American Revolution. He also became deeply interested in the life of its owner, a man named Jonathan Hasbrouck. This interest compelled Schenkman to tell Hasbrouck's story, and resurrect him from his position as a "footnote in the history of his home" (12).

Telling Hasbrouck's story is a difficult endeavor, though, as Schenkman honestly notes. Hasbrouck died years before George Washington established his headquarters there, and few documents or papers exist to tell the story of his life. Therefore, historians are left to fill in the holes with either family accounts or myths and legends, a problem Schenkman attempts to remedy. He tells us that we should care about Jonathan Hasbrouck because he was a major part of Newburgh's transition from a small village to a major port on the Hudson River, and he was also a major part of the American Revolution. Both of these assertions seem, at least from the evidence Schenkman presents, to be a stretch.

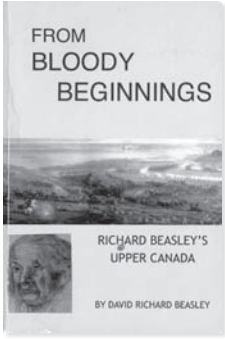
Schenkman's story begins with an exploration into Hasbrouck's upbringing as the youngest of ten children and ends with a discussion of attempts to save Washington's headquarters from demolition. In between, Schenkman discusses a plethora of different topics, from the history of Newburgh itself to religious and economic histories to the histories of colonial warfare and the Revolutionary War. In short, this is why Schenkman's book fails to accomplish the goal he sets for it. Because there are very few documents to support a book about Jonathan Hasbrouck, Schenkman is forced to explore every other facet of life during the period that Hasbrouck lived, and attempt to make a connection that is relevant, important, and interesting. This reader, at least, did not see those connections, and would side with those who asked Schenkman why we should care.

Contradictions abound throughout this work. In the first place, the front cover is dominated by the figure of George Washington, with a small portrait of his headquarters in the background, and an individual on horseback (Hasbrouck perhaps?) in the vicinity of the house. This is certainly an interesting choice, given Schenkman's effort to emphasize Hasbrouck, not Washington, in this story.

Second, Schenkman continuously asserts that Hasbrouck was "respected for bravery on the frontier" (53) and a military leader in the community, yet tells us that Hasbrouck played little role in the French and Indian War and "never actually encountered any combat" (66) during the Revolutionary War. Third, though Schenkman deplores historians' attempts to fill holes, the book abounds with hole-filling stories that he says "might have," "perhaps," or "probably" took place.

In constructing this work, Schenkman undertook a monumental (and perhaps impossible) task. If, as he asserts, the documents simply do not exist, there is nothing more he could have done. This story may be as good as it gets. For serious historians of the period, that may not be good enough. But for tourists visiting Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh, this book may be a useful companion and a genuine effort to place the site in historical context.

—*Christopher Dempsey, USMA Department of History*



***From Bloody Beginnings: Richard Beasley's Upper Canada,* David Richard Beasley. Simcoe, Canada: Davus Publishing, 2008. (388 pp. 55 illustrations)**

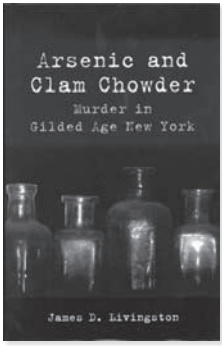
From Bloody Beginnings: Richard Beasley's Upper Canada is categorized by its author as "creative non-fiction," the well-researched and historically accurate, but fictitious, memoirs of the author's great-great-grandfather. The book focuses on the experiences of Richard Beasley, originally a resident of Albany, who eventually settled lands north of Lake Ontario, living through the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and settlement of Upper Canada. To that extent, the reader must be aware that Beasley and many of the other protagonists depicted were loyal to the British cause, and this book has a vital interest in showing that perspective on the events.

At times perhaps a bit too heavy-handedly, the author describes mass arrests of loyalist citizens, prisoners suffering in squalid jails, and others subjected to tarring and feathering. Bearing in mind that these fictionalized events were historic realities, the book offers a sympathetic perspective on the struggles of the loyalists, and presents the reader with a challenging new perspective on tumultuous events not common to the broader, largely Patriot, narrative. Yet within that narrative, this reader wished that the depiction of the main characters was a bit more complicated. Various main characters are removed from some of the harsher events of the Revolution, such as the Wyoming Massacre, by scapegoating the events upon the Native American allies.

One final point of confusion within the book is the perspective of the narrator. It presents a first-person account when relating events directly surrounding Richard Beasley, but in sections not directly involving him, it uses a third-person omnipresent narrator. However, accepting these issues, *From Bloody Beginnings* does contain a great deal of information about the lives of people in this time and presents it using an uncommon perspective. The author's website includes a list of historic sources cited in researching the book as well as more conventional histories written about Richard Beasley and Upper Canada: *http://www.kwic.com/davus*.

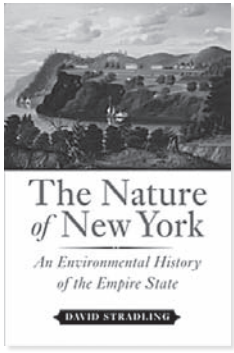
—Jason Schaaf, Dutchess Community College

New & Noteworthy Books Received



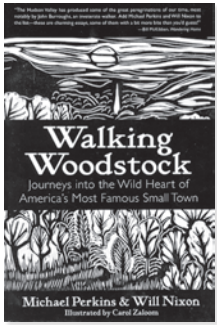
Arsenic and Clam Chowder: Murder in Gilded Age New York
By James D. Livingston
(Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010).
205 pp. $19.95 (hardcover). *www.sunypress.edu*

Set in Gilded Age Manhattan, *Arsenic and Clam Chowder* tells the story of Mary Alice Livingston, put on trial for the murder of her own mother. Using arsenic-laced clam chowder as the alleged murder weapon, Livingston drew the attention of the local papers and numerous household names of the day. Her trial, and the complications surrounding it, leads the reader to evaluate issues such as capital punishment, gender equality, and the concept of reasonable doubt. James D. Livingston sheds thoughtful perspective on this unique moment in 19th-century American history.



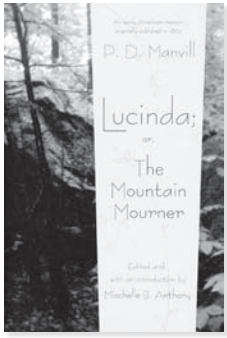
The Nature of New York: An Environmental History of the Empire State
By David Stradling
(Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010)
296pp. $29.95 (cloth). *www.cornellpress.cornell.edu*

New York State is home to a diverse natural landscape and has an abundance of natural resources. Beginning with Henry Hudson's arrival in 1609 and continuing through the present, David Stradling explores the relationship between the natural resources and the individuals who use them. Topics include the ways that agriculture, industrialization, urbanization, and transportation have impacted the state's landscape for better and worse. Stradling recognizes the role that humans have had in the destruction, reengineering, and conservation of New York's environment, and the importance of considering these consequences as we utilize the state's landscape.



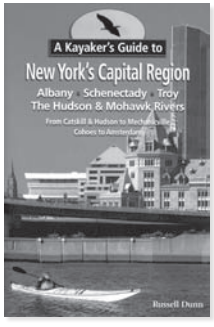
Walking Woodstock: Journey into the Wild Heart of America's Most Famous Small Town
By Michael Perkins & Will Nixon
(Troy, NY: The Troy Bookmakers, 2009).
236 pp. $18.95 (paperback). *www.thetroybookmakers.com*

In this unique walking guide to one of the Hudson River Valley's most historic and artistic towns, Perkins and Nixon provide equal parts narrative and guidebook as they recount their walking adventures on Woodstock's roads, paths, and hills. The authors display a strong appreciation for the natural landscape and clearly have benefited from the combination of relaxation and exhilaration that comes with such fundamental exercise.



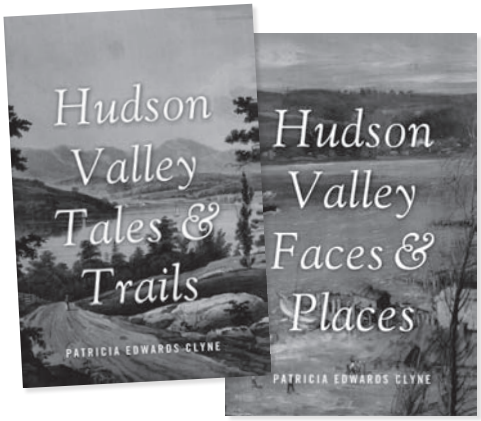
Lucinda; or, The Mountain Mourner
By P.D. Manville
(Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009)
144 pp. $19.95 (paperback).
www.SyracuseUniversityPress.syr.edu

Originally published in 1807 and written by the title character's stepmother, *Lucinda* tells the story of a young woman who becomes pregnant, is abandoned, and dies shortly after childbirth. This true story, with an in-depth introduction and analysis from Mischelle B. Anthony, provides a unique perspective of a narrative being written by a participant in the events. Anthony's introduction provides a context for both the story told within the narrative, as well as the complicated history of the narrative itself since its original publication over 200 years ago.



A Kayaker's Guide to New York's Capital Region
By Russell Dunn (Hensonville, NY: Black Dome Press, 2010)
320 pp. $17.95 (paperback). *www.blackdomepress.com*

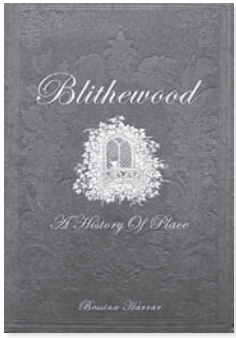
Another in the Kayaker's Guide series from Black Dome Press, Dunn divides the Capital Region up by county for both the Hudson River and the Mohawk River. All together, the guide provides access points, maps, and photographs for eight counties. Dunn also includes detailed instructions for each paddle and provides landmarks such as lighthouses and nature preserves to locate from the water. Complete with in-depth history for each of the sixty-three paddles, this guide offers something for kayakers of all skill levels.



Hudson Valley Tales & Trails
By Patricia Edwards Clyne
(New York, NY: Overlook Press, 1990)
319 pp. $19.95 (paperback).
www.overlookpress.com

Hudson Valley Faces & Places
By Patricia Edwards Clyne
(New York, NY: Overlook Press, 2005)
367 pp. $19.95 (paperback).
www.overlookpress.com

These two recently re-released titles by Patricia Edwards Clyne focus on historic sites and historic people, respectively. In *Tales and Trails,* Clyne provides a miscellany of information from different areas making up the eleven counties in the Hudson River Valley. *Faces and Places* is organized thematically and focuses on the different personalities who have left a definitive impact on the region. Both books provide a unique perspective on some of the state parks, historic landmarks, and legendary individuals who have come together to make up the vast history of the Hudson River Valley region.



Blithewood: A History of Place
By Bessina Harrar
(Bluebird Press, 2009)
102 pp. $19.95 (paperback).
www.blithewoodbook.com

The Blithewood Estate was one of A.J. Downing's favorite examples of fine taste in architecture, garden, and landscape. Harrar presents the reasons why it was then and remains today such an enchanting place, and why it is significant in our national history.

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Photos:Top, Blithwood; bottom, Hyde Park; Steve Gross & Susan Daley from their new book, Gardens Of The Hudson Valley, to be published by Monacelli Press, October 2010. Center photo: Montgomery Place, Bryan Haeffele, Courtesy of Historic Hudson Valley

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