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From the Editors

Henry Hudson was welcomed ashore with open arms by the Indigenous peoples of the region. The path of a public works project as essential as the original Croton Aqueduct was inevitable, determined by engineers considering geology and geography as they calculated the most effective and efficient route. Government and industry understand the importance of keeping the Hudson River free from pollution: After all, many communities rely on its water. The mysteries of the Cornish Estate, whose ruins sit on the flank of Breakneck Ridge, are as unsolvable as the building of Machu Pichu. Each of these statements should appear naïve, to say the least. However, when such sentiments and assumptions have been written and painted into the historical record, they can persist for generations before someone exposes them through the light of critical inquiry.

Each article in this issue reminds us that history is ever-evolving: new resources, new inquiries, and new perspectives help us to reconsider the past. Patrick Landewe takes a closer look at an inconsistency in the journal of the *Half Moon's* voyage through our region that has been observed but ignored for four centuries. J. Keith Doherty delved into the archives to discover the political intrigues and bureaucratic machinations behind the first Croton Aqueduct, delivering water from Westchester County to Manhattan. Marcel Dijkers has translated the 1870 travelogue of a Dutch tourist, making it available in English for the first time. Elise Stiefel traces a long-running festival that played an essential role in educating and energizing people to protect the Hudson from pollution. Finally, Thom Johnson and Rob Yasinsac illustrate – in images as well as words – how the results of inquiry (and a bit of luck) can build upon themselves to solve the unsolvable in the Hudson Highlands.

Correction: The article "A Fine Prospect: Charles Edward Townsend's Catskill Mountains from Barclay Heights, Saugerties, New York," by Bruce Weber (Volume 42, Number 1) erroneously dated a photograph of Vernon Benjamin and Professor Harvey Flad examining the Townsend painting in Saugerties' Village Hall. The photo was taken by Mary McNamara on May 17, 2021. A reference to the photo on page 61 repeats the erroneous date.

On the cover: View of High Bridge and the Harlem River, 1844, William James Bennett, I. N. Phelps Stokes Collection of American Historical Prints. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library.

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The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival

Elise Stiefel

Pete Seeger, World Telegram & Sun photo by Fred Palumbo, 1955. The New York World-Telegram and the Sun Newspaper Photograph Collection, Library of Congress

This Revival means many things to Clearwater. Here we raise funds which will enable us to protect and defend the river; provide legal intervention against the construction of a nuclear power plant at Cementon; stop the Army Corps of Engineers' scheme to withdraw almost a billion gallons of water a day from this river; find an answer to the devastating problem of toxic wastes; and help to restore the river's important fishing industry. Here we expose new people to Clearwater and the entire environmental movement. Most importantly, here we rest and celebrate.

— Message from Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.,
in the 1978 festival guide

In the early twentieth century, when the Hudson River Valley was slowly succumbing to industrialization, it faced worsening pollution and a deteriorating natural environment. While corporations continued building factories on the Hudson's shores, folk musician and political activist Pete Seeger began working to restore and protect the region's environment. Along with other concerned residents, he established Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, an organization dedicated to environmental activism and education that reached the public primarily through its historic sloop. For four decades it also hosted an annual folk festival that highlighted the organization's three missions — promoting environmental responsibility and sustainable practices, educating people about the need to protect the Hudson River, and building community through music. The folk festival brings all three missions of Clearwater together in one weekend.

Born in 1919 in New York City, Pete Seeger was raised to believe that music was intrinsically tied to activism. His father, Charles Seeger, taught music at the University of California, Berkeley. During World War I, Charles's outspoken opposition to the war caused him to be fired from his post. With his political advocacy and love for music, he instilled a deep admiration for folk music in his children. While on a trip with his father, Pete Seeger first heard a banjo, inspiring a lifelong passion for the instrument he helped to make synonymous with folk music. Seeger briefly attended Harvard University, but dropped out to focus on politics and music. In 1941, he formed the Almanac Singers with Millard Lampell and Lee Hays. The group focused on improving workers' rights. Seven years later, Seeger and Hays, along with Ronnie Gilbert and Fred Hellerman, formed the Weavers, writing and performing songs to raise political awareness and connect to global heritage. Although the Weavers led the early 1950s folk revival alongside musicians like Woody Guthrie and Burl Ives, the group disbanded by 1952, when they were blacklisted during the McCarthy era.

The early folk music scene was closely related to social activism. Included in the Weavers' repertoire was the union folk song "Which Side Are You On?" and Seeger and Hays' "The Hammer Song." In 1949, Seeger was scheduled to open for renowned musician and civil rights activist Paul Robeson at a concert in Peekskill benefitting the Civil Rights Congress, a labor organization raising funds for Black Americans' legal defense. However the concert was shut down due to an escalation in racial tension, leading to a violent mob attack before Robeson even arrived. The concert was rescheduled and proceeded, although rioters afterward shouted racist and antisemitic slurs and hurled rocks at the cars of evacuating concertgoers and performers. More than 140 people were injured. In 1955, Seeger was called to testify about his political affiliations in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Declaring his First Amendment right, he refused to speak.

Living not far from the Hudson River in Beacon, Seeger and his wife Toshi saw firsthand the pollution corrupting the natural landscape. Decades of unregulated

Pete Seeger entertaining at the opening of the Washington, D.C. labor canteen, 1944. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt can be seen in the audience. The Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Photograph Collection at the Library of Congress

industrial practices had severely impacted the river's health. With a General Motors plant in Tarrytown pumping paint byproducts straight into the river and the looming threat of a Con Edison power plant being constructed on Storm King Mountain, activists began uniting to prevent the Hudson's continued contamination. Scenic Hudson, one environmental organization formed in response to the power plant, declined Seeger's offer to hold a concert to raise funds due to the political implications of his public perception.[1] This did not stop Seeger from using his music to help the Hudson River. On his 1966 album *God Bless the Grass*, he released "My Dirty Stream (The Hudson River Song)," which summarizes the causes of pollution and iterates his hope that it will one day "run clear."[2] Inspired by Scenic Hudson's efforts, Pete Seeger's interest in the environmental protection of the Hudson River increased.

1 Forbes, Linda C. "Pete Seeger on Environmental Advocacy, Organizing, and Education in the Hudson River Valley: An Interview With the Music Legend, Author and Storyteller, Political and Environmental Activist, and Grassroots Organizer." *Organization & Environment*, 17, no. 4 (2004): 513–22. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26162405.

2 Seeger, Pete, "My Dirty Stream (The Hudson River Song)," recorded June 1965, Columbia Records, track 14 on *God Bless the Grass*, 1966.

Pairing education and first-person experience, he believed, were necessary to empower residents to care for and act in its behalf.

The sloop Clearwater at the 2008 Hudson River Clearwater Festival, photo by "Jim, the Photographer" from Springfield, PA. Image from Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic

In 1963, Vic Schwarz, one of Seeger's friends, lent him the book *Sloops of the Hudson*, by William Verplanck and Moses Collyer, to convince him that the river once was filled with ships carrying 70-foot long booms. The book recounted the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the Hudson River acted as a major trade route through the use of these single-masted vessels of Dutch origin. Roused by the book, Seeger wrote a seven-page proposal to Schwarz to recreate of one of these historic vessels.

Seeger conceived the idea of a sloop sailing along the Hudson to reconnect the community to the present-day river: "We are giving this boat to the people of the Valley to help them learn to love their river again," he said.[3] Originally, he envisioned the sloop as a communal space where people could sail for one week, with

3 Bryant, Nelson. "Wood, Field and Stream; Restoration Plans for River Sloops Gets Fast Start in Hudson Valley." *New York Times*, Jul. 14, 1968.

ownership shared by hundreds to offset costs. Ultimately, the sloop became a living museum focused on environmental consciousness. From conception to realization, Seeger's sloop project took just three years, from 1966 to 1969. In order to fund the vessel's construction, he and fellow folk musicians put on a series of concerts, called Hudson Valley Folk Picnics. Along the way, Hudson River Sloop Restoration, Inc. (later renamed Hudson River Sloop Clearwater) struggled with differing viewpoints among its organizers. One of their preliminary debates centered around the sloop's name — *Heritage* in recognition of its historical significance or *Clearwater* to further environmental awareness. Eventually, as co-founding Clearwater member Hal Cohen said, "it became obvious that we couldn't be a historical restoration when we were sailing in a sewer… Are we a floating museum? What about all that garbage in the river?"[4] The organization settled on the name *Clearwater.*

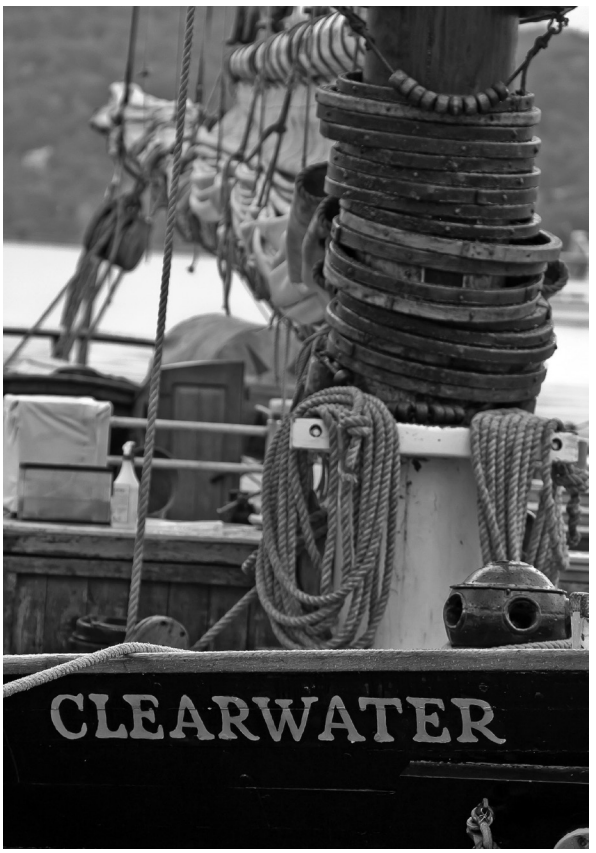
From the time of the sloop's 1969 maiden voyage from Maine, where it had been built, to New York City, the organization was focused on education and environmental activism. For the inaugural Earth Day in 1970, the *Clearwater* sailed to Washington, D.C., where Seeger and the crew gave speeches and sang songs to increase knowledge of the Hudson River's pollution. They even performed in front of Congress, encouraging members' support for the Clean Water Act. At the time of the act's passage in 1972, the organization began publishing Clearwater Polluter Reports, which tracked the Hudson's primary polluting culprits and what they dumped into the river. To support this green focus, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater amended its articles of incorporation to emphasize environmental concerns. Its purpose was to connect people with the river flowing past their communities, hoping that education could foster love.

During this time, Clearwater made a commitment to educate Hudson Valley residents. Instituted in 1971, the organization's "On-Board Education Program" acted as a way for local students to become familiar with the river's history and ecology. Fifty students at a time board the *Clearwater* and for four hours learn about the vessel, assist with sailing it, and gain a greater understanding of the river's ecology and the need to protect it. This program has been so successful that Seeger funded a second, smaller sloop, the *Woody Guthrie*, for the Beacon Sloop Club. From 1983 through 2018, the Clearwater organization also rented a schooner to accommodate students in schools spanning from New York City to north of Albany. Programs are tailored for students from the fourth grade to graduate school, with on-land options for those too young to board. Clearwater has extended this program to a

4 McDermott, Amy. "Seeger's Legacy Lives on Aboard Sloop Clearwater." State of the Planet. Columbia Climate School, 13 May 2014. https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2014/05/13/seegers-legacy-lives-on-aboard-sloop-clearwater/.

general audience with its Public Sails. As of 2022, over half a million people have participated in these programs.[5]

In line with Seeger's musical passion, he helped establish the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus, which offers land-based accessible performances alongside a seven-foot replica of the sloop. A coffeehouse, the Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse of White Plains, was founded in 1989 to provide a permanent stage for the chorus.[6] Furthermore, Clearwater has implemented several sloop clubs in Hudson Valley cities, continuing Clearwater's commitment to environmental action in local communities. The clubs range from Brooklyn and New Jersey to the North River Friends of Clearwater based in Albany.



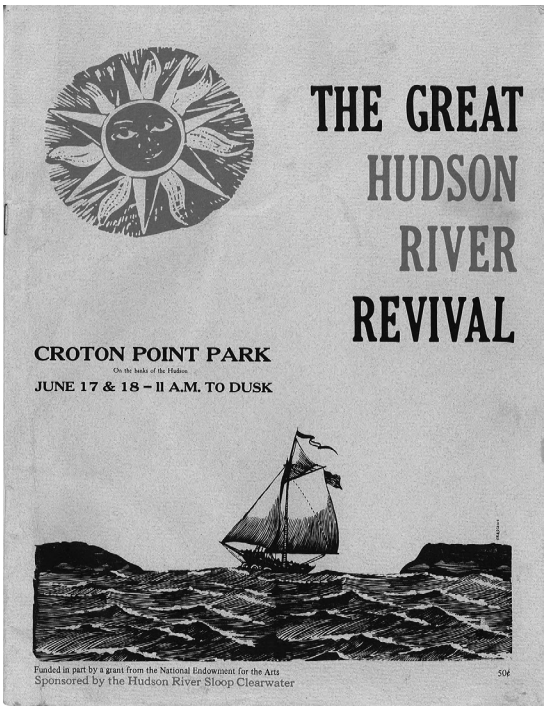
Close-up of the Hudson River sloop *Clearwater*, 2012, photo by Econosmith, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

Following *Clearwater*'s construction and maiden voyage, the folk picnics continued to finance the organization's operations. Passing a hat while he and other Hudson Valley musicians performed, Seeger laid the foundation for what would later become the Great Hudson River Revival Festival. The Festival premiered on the shore of the Hudson River at Croton Point Park in 1978. Initially planned to support the *Clearwater*'s maintenance, the festival grew to become a way of raising awareness of various musical heritages as well as the natural environment. Over its forty-year lifespan, the revival became a model for promoting environmental activism. While increasing financial support and acting as a music exposition, it also emphasized the importance of world cultures, folk crafts, diversity, accessibility, activism, and community.

5 2022 Annual Report. "Publications and Financials." Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. https://www.clearwater.org/about/publications-financials/.

6 While both the chorus and coffeehouse have changed over the years, they remain today. Learn more about both at www.walkaboutchorus.org.

1978 Revival Festival



Cover of the program book for 1978 Clearwater Festival, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

In June 1978, the folk picnic festivals formalized into the inaugural Great Hudson River Revival Festival. The first festival, held in Croton Point Park along the Hudson River, was directed by Phil Ciganer, proprietor of the Towne Crier, a music venue in Dutchess County. More than forty artists performed works representing nearly two dozen musical folk heritages. In addition to the broad genres of music, the festival also hosted twenty-eight craft stands and presentations, focusing on "traditional craft techniques."[7] By showcasing the talents of local artisans, the festival not only helped to uplift these artists, but also educated festivalgoers on sustainable crafting practices. The Festival attracted 27 sponsors ranging from the National Endowment for the Arts, to Clearwater's own sloop clubs, to the philanthropy of Laurance Rockefeller and Texaco. Over the course of two days in June, supporting the community, fighting pollution, and educating attendees on environmental activism became a singular music festival.

With 40 performers at this Festival across four stages, cultural diversity transcended the various genres. Considering that Pete Seeger led the shift of the American folk music scene from exclusively English and Irish songs to a global diversity, it follows that the festival would reflect this inclusiveness. While it included performances by English and Irish folk musicians like the Glinside Ceili Band and Louis Killen, it also showcased musical traditions ranging from the Indigenous Americas to Japan. Tahuantinsuyo, a New York City-based band, contained members hailing from Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador performing on instruments like the *charango*, *tarko*, and *pingullo*. The Thunderbird American Indian Dancers offered traditional dances and music from the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Oceti Sakowin (Sioux), Ho-chunk (Winnebago), Hopi, and Pueblo tribes. Romancero Judeo Español performed Sephardic Jewish music with lyrics in Ladino, a hybrid language between

7 1978 Festival Program. "Program Books." Clearwater Festival. Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. https://www.clearwaterfestival.org/program-books/.

Spanish and Hebrew. Fusako Yoshida played the *koto*, a traditional thirteen-string harp from Japan. Dancing in traditional Caribbean styles, the Big Drum Nation Dance Company focused on the traditional dances of the formerly enslaved people of Grenada, whose roots traced to the cultures of Sierra Leone, Nigeria, the Congo, Benin, and Ghana. Across its four stages, the festival also spotlighted folk music in line with Pete Seeger's repertoire, with performances by Arlo Guthrie, Utah Phillips, and Seeger himself.

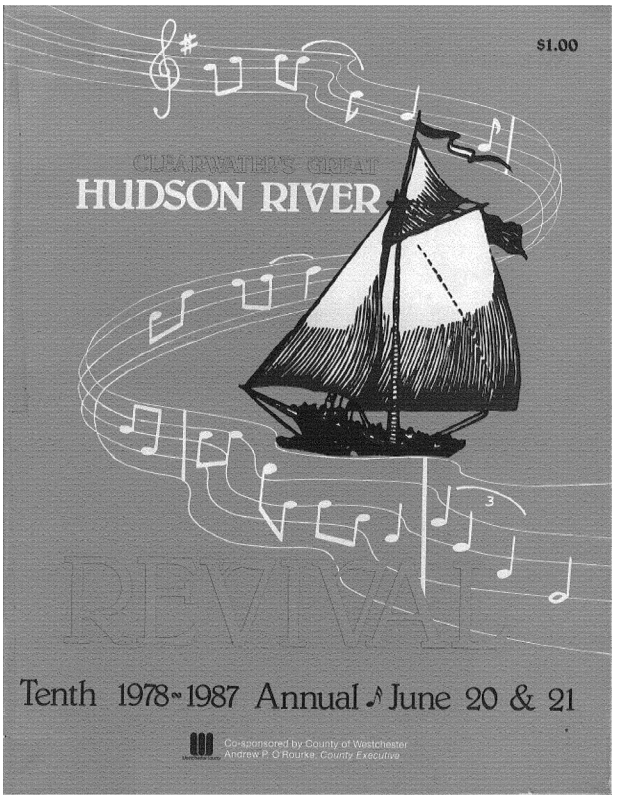
As for the 28 craft exhibitions at this inaugural festival, seven also included demonstrations in wood carving and turning, papermaking, Raku pottery, blacksmithing, basketweaving, letterpress printing, and guitar making. (Raku pottery is a traditional Japanese technique used for tea bowls that quickfires the piece and then submerges it in sawdust, leaves, or snow.) Blacksmith Paul J. McMahon focused on nineteenth-century practices like iron forging without welding. Other craft exhibitors displayed carved leather, various musical instruments, quilts, pottery, furniture, jewelry, and paintings.

In order to fund the initial festival, Clearwater garnered financial support from a wide variety of sponsors. Eight were closely related to the Clearwater organization, including the sloop clubs of Beacon, Haverstraw Bay, and Poughkeepsie. Both the Brooklyn and New York City Friends of Clearwater also provided sponsorship. Other folk festivals, such as the Mariposa Folk Festival and Fox Hollow Festival, were highlighted in the festival program, as was Ciganer's Towne Crier Café. Many of the advertisements are hand-drawn or made with elementary computer programming and design.

Maintaining Clearwater's dedication to environmentalism, the 1978 festival program also featured articles educating attendees on a variety of issues around alternative energy and the environment as well as an update on the plan to convert the landfill that sat atop much of Croton Point into a county park.

The First Decade

Over the next decade, the Great Hudson River Revival Festival became a staple of the folk scene, attracting 20,000 attendees over a two-day weekend at Croton Point Park. Beginning in 1982, Clearwater introduced activist tables where attendees could learn more about local, national, and global issues and the organizations associated with them, including Salgary Energy Corp., a New Paltz-based solar energy company, and Greenpeace, the international environmental organization. Clearwater also implemented solar power to run portions of the festival, demonstrating its commitment to alternative energy sources, and provided features to accommodate hard-of-hearing and physically disabled attendees. In response to growing interest, the number of stages expanded from four to eleven.



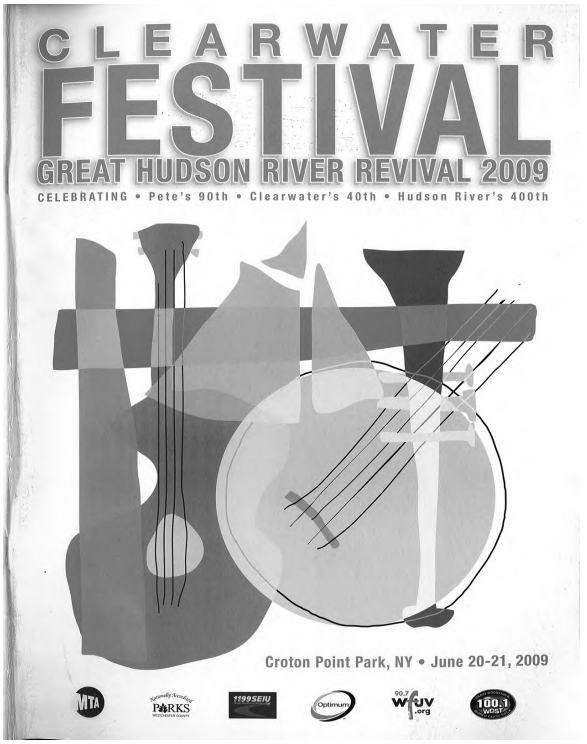
Cover of program book for the 1987 Clearwater Festival, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

In 1987, Clearwater celebrated the festival's tenth anniversary with a lineup of seventy-two individual performers and groups including singers, dancers, jugglers, and storytellers. Among these were Richie Havens, John Cephas & Phil Wiggins, and the Hudson River Sloop Singers. Peter Cook & Kenny Lerner and Debbie Rennie gave poetic performances specifically for the hard-of-hearing community. The Georgia Sea Island Singers played traditional folk music from the Gullah Geechee community off the coast of Georgia, heavily influenced by African and other Creole cultures. A greater emphasis on storytelling included presentations of Indigenous lore, American tales, Irish legends, and Spanish folktales.

The 1987 festival also continued Clearwater's commitment to the local crafting community and the education of festivalgoers on crafting techniques. Seven crafters demonstrated their talents, which included Angora wool, basketry, Shaker broom weaving, marionette making and performing, instrument construction, and netmaking. Fifty-two other crafters sold their creations — bone jewelry, kites, doormats, stuffed animals, leather goods, Batik eggs, Haudenosaunee sculptures, moccasins, psalteries, bookbinding, Ikat fabric, pennywhistles, stained glass, etc. Focusing on the unique products of each crafter and the meaning and creativity behind each piece, the program book indicated: "Specialization and automation normally divorce us from these processes that once were familiar to all. If it's possible to buy anything, we don't have to develop our resourcefulness. Crafts and craftspeople draw us back into the fold of mindfulness."[8] Additionally, twenty-four participants assisted in a small boat workshop, displaying their various craft and repair techniques.

Sponsors of the 1987 festival primarily consisted of other folk festivals, record labels, and local holistic businesses. The program featured "Varied Pleasures," which

8 1987 Festival Program. "Program Books." Clearwater Festival. Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. https://www.clearwaterfestival.org/program-books/.



Cover of program book for the 2009 Clearwater Festival, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

advertised fifteen businesses, record labels, publishers and publications, healing arts, and folk music clubs. Other festivals — including the Croton Craft Fair, the Festival of American Folklife, the Sisterfire Festival, and the Jewish Arts Festival of Long Island — also supported the festival. Among descriptions of Clearwater's programs, its sloop clubs were given a two-page spread, titled "Clearwater Family Album," that listed clubs and friends in Beacon, Brooklyn, Long Island, New York City, Westchester, Staten Island, Albany, Croton Point, and Monmouth, New Jersey. Other local sponsors included Homespun Tapes, Upstate Films, the Oakwood Boarding and Day School, and the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies.

Throughout the 1980s, accessibility became a main focus of the festival, building on the pioneering work of 1981 festival director Jean Stewart. Volunteers included nearly thirty sign language interpreters who enabled hard-of-hearing attendees to experience the folk music and diverse stories. A page in the 1987 festival program titled "Access Notes" provided attendees with a complete description of accessibility features, including large-print leaflets, braille maps, and extra wheelchairs. At the end of the program, multiple organizations are thanked, including Guiding Eyes for the Blind and the Westchester Office for the Disabled.

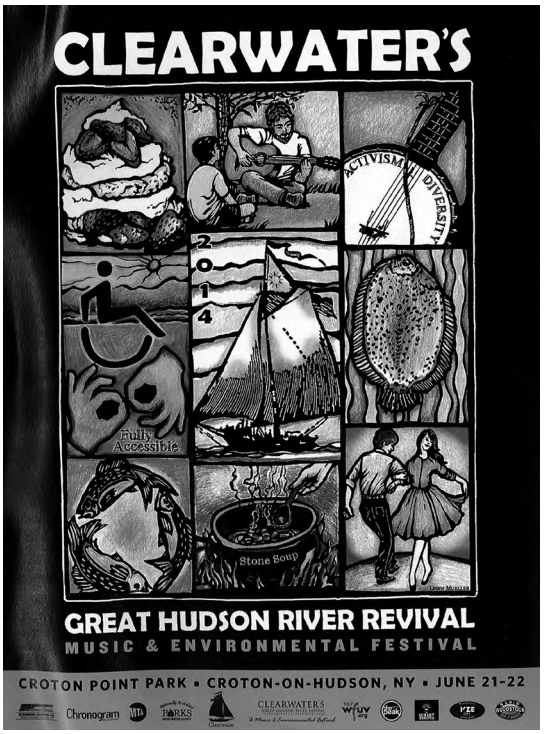
The Late 1980s and 1990s

Following the success of the 1987 revival, the Clearwater Festival faced a period of upheaval due to environmental issues related to the Croton Point landfill. The following year the festival moved to Westchester Community College in Valhalla, where it remained for the next decade. Due to construction at the college, the festival moved to Poughkeepsie's Marist College in 1998. After a multimillion-dollar renovation and complete reclamation of the landfill, Croton Point Park again became a viable option and Clearwater moved the festival back to its original location in 1999. This move coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the sloop *Clearwater.*

The 1999 revival showcased forty-seven performers across a wide spectrum of genres appearing on five stages. Barbara Aliprantis and John Basinger both told stories in sign language, continuing Clearwater's early-1980s push toward accessibility and inclusion. Puppets, clowns, and juggling were also a common feature of the 1999 festival, with performances from Arm-of-the-Sea Theater, Gould and Stearns, Paul Richmond, Roger the Jester, and Neal Glorfindel Rosenstein. Storytelling remained integral and spanned tales from Japanese, Judaic, and Indigenous cultures. Reflecting contemporary trends, ska was also present that year, performed by PErFect ThYroID in a blend with reggae and funk. Other cultural heritages represented were Dominican, Mexican, Cajun, Appalachian, Spanish, African-Apache, and the African Diaspora. Additionally, eighteen ASL interpreters helped hard-of-hearing attendees experience the full festival.

The River Stage at the 2011 Clearwater Festival, Croton Point Park, June 18, 2011. Photo by Augusto F. Menezes, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

Clearwater remained true to its educational commitment, with nearly fifty unique craft tables. (However, the 1999 festival did not include formal craft demonstrations.) Vendors sold leather, herbal products, sculptures, pottery, glass, furniture, hats, and other decorative items. Others offered massages, toys, astrology workshops, jewelry, Latin American and Russian goods, clothing, and instruments.



Cover of program book for the 2014 Clearwater Festival, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

Financially, more than fifty sponsors supported the festival's mission to educate attendees on environmentalism, demonstrating its wide impact. While these sponsors included many local businesses, they also consisted of large corporations, such as American Airlines, Bell Atlantic, and Ben and Jerry's. American Airlines stopped sponsoring the festival in 2001; by 2002, Ben and Jerry's financial involvement ended, only two years after their sale to the Unilever conglomerate. Bell Atlantic, later Verizon, followed the next year, exiting for the 2003 Festival. Other Hudson Valley and folk music organizations supporting the festival included Appleseed Recordings, WDST 100.1, *Sing Out!* Magazine, and the Randolph School. The New York Pinewoods Folk Music Club, Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, and Sandy Hook Clearwater Festival also advertised in the festival program.

The 2000s to the Present

Alongside the festival's longstanding commitment to alternative energy sources, the 2009 Revival saw the implementation of Clearwater's Zero Waste initiative, which promoted sustainable practices that benefit the environment. While this initiative reduced waste and improved recycling, its success proved complicated to track due to difficulties in collecting food waste and defining results and goals. Furthermore, as the Hudson River's pollution changed, so did the festival's purpose. In 2008, it clearly outlined Clearwater's ongoing opposition to the relicensing of the Indian Point nuclear power plant. (Clearwater's advocacy ultimately helped lead to the plant's decommissioning.) The education and advocacy elements of Clearwater Festivals then shifted focus to other ongoing environmental issues in the Hudson Valley.

In 2014, the festival celebrated the lives of Toshi and Pete Seeger, who passed away in July 2013 and January 2014, respectively. Opening the 2014 festival program was a letter from director Steve Lurie that recollected his experiences with and memories of the Seegers. Lurie emphasized Toshi's dedication to accessibility and inclusion, and he pledged to continue these efforts in her honor. Recalling Pete's dedication to

having world music at the festival, Lurie quoted his ambition that "someday music will save this rainbow-colored race." The program also includes a letter written by the Seegers' grandson, Kitama Cahill-Jackson. In it, he reminisces on the first time he realized the importance of his grandparents to the festival and provides a more intimate view of their lives. Additionally, several advertisements feature photos of the Seegers and act as a memorial to their work and dedication. Honoring their legacy, the 2014 festival hosted ninety-seven performers across diverse folk genres, fifty-six craft vendors, and fourteen ASL interpreters. It would be one of the last financially successful festivals.

The audience seen from the Rainbow Stage at the 2012 Clearwater Festival. Photo by Econosmith, courtesy of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

With nearly 100 performers, the 2014 festival was spread across seven stages and several unique cultural traditions. Hassan Hakmoun performed a blend of Moroccan and Ghanaian traditional music with contemporary Western influences, and Jesse Lége and Bayou Brew played Cajun music. Eastern European Jewish culture was represented by the Klezmatics, while MAKU Soundsystem highlighted Colombian folkloric music. Ricardo Lemvo and Makina Loca's music blended Afro-Cuban and pan-African cultures. Vanaver Caravan offered dance in the traditional styles of Appalachian clogging and flamenco. Representing various cultural heritages in the United States, twenty-one musicians and groups performed zydeco, bluegrass, gospel, Cajun, soul, and R&B. Although protest songs have always been performed at the festival, five unique performers focused on this genre including the Rivertown Kids, who sang of environmental justice. Fourteen storytellers offered Jewish, Black, Indigenous, and Irish tales. The fifty-six craft vendors remained similar to previous years. Crafts included cigar boxes, musical instruments, jewelry, bags, henna, quilts,

wooden kitchen accessories, clothes, art, sails, pottery, juggling implements, shoes, skincare products, candles, and furniture.

The 2015 festival succumbed to poor weather, ultimately leading to the cancellation of the 2016 festival. The Great Hudson River Revival returned in 2017 and continued until 2020 when it was cancelled — along with a host of other events — due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 festival was held virtually as a daylong live-stream, with all of the performances accompanied by ASL interpreters and viewers encouraged to donate what they could in lieu of fixed ticket prices. That was the last formal Revival to date. In its place, Clearwater hosts annual Clearwater Folk Picnics, in the spirit of what began the festival. The picnic is free and open to all members of the community, with five to six performers. Performers at the picnic tend to be closely related to the Hudson River Valley, continuing Clearwater's dedication to the community.

Between 1978 and 2014, the festival hosted forty to 100 performers each year and was financed by a nearly equal number of sponsors. Twenty to forty crafters showcased their talents alongside almost fifty activist groups every year. By 1987, accessibility had become a focal point of the Festival; then, in 2009, Clearwater committed to a Zero Waste initiative. In 2022, Clearwater suspended its Great Hudson River Revival Festival and returned to their original formula hosting a series of folk picnics to continue their mission of building community and awareness through music. Clearwater also supports the Kingston Earth Fair, a smaller environmental festival with music and many of the same programs as the Revival.[9]

The sloop *Clearwater* surrounded by small boats at the 2008 Hudson River Clearwater Festival, photo by "Jim, the Photographer" from Springfield, PA. Image from Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic

9 In 2025, the RiverFest FPS organization began the Hudson River Music Festival at Croton Point Park to honor Pete and Toshi Seeger. However, RiverFest is not affiliated with Clearwater. Information about the Hudson River Music Festival is available at hudsonrivermusicfestival.com.

Conclusion

> *Hudson River Sloop Clearwater has demonstrated tremendous success in creating accessible informational resources and experiences for all ages, and my dream is for that to continue and expand. I would like for Clearwater to be a household name. How cool would it be for every kid in New York State to say that they've been on the sloop at least once by the time they turn 21, and for every New Yorker to have a more positive perception of the Hudson? Think of the impact. I'm sure there are countless stories of people like me who spent time on that sloop and it made them look at the world differently.*
>
> — Arielle, "Clearwater Shows that Change is Possible," Clearwater's *Generations* Archive.[10]

Although the Great Hudson River Revival in its traditional form has ended, it left an indelible mark on the folk festival scene across its forty-year history, providing entertainment and education to more than 250,000 attendees. As one of the primary fundraisers for the Clearwater organization, its also helped finance environmental causes in the Hudson Valley, protecting the Hudson River from industrial pollution and restoring its status as an accessible, living river.

Within music, the festival operated as an extension of the work Pete Seeger started with the Weavers. Folk music was not exclusive to traditional English and Celtic songs, but extended to include the music of Indigenous American, Judaic, Creole, Gullah Geechee, Mexican, Colombian, Japanese, Balkan, Chinese, and pan-African cultures, as well as American protest songs and poetry in ASL. Activism and education became ingrained with the concept of folk music. The festival helped to uplift performers, showcasing and platforming unique talents and traditions from around the world.

Primarily focused on educating the community, the festival also provided informative resources on alternative energy sources, traditional crafting techniques, advocacy organizations, waste management, and cultural heritage. Beginning in a time before the ubiquity of the Internet, it helped introduce people to new ways to get involved in their community and protect their local environment. When Clearwater began to use solar energy to power the festival, it proved the reliability of sustainable energy sources, thereby encouraging attendees to implement these practices in their own homes and businesses. Furthermore, its Zero Waste initiative demonstrated that anyone can limit waste to decrease pollution. The crafting demonstrations and vendors supported local small businesses and advocated for community instead of corporate reliance, in turn advancing Clearwater's mission for a cleaner environment.

10 This online archive of testimonials can be found on Clearwater's website at: https://www.clearwater.org/generations/.

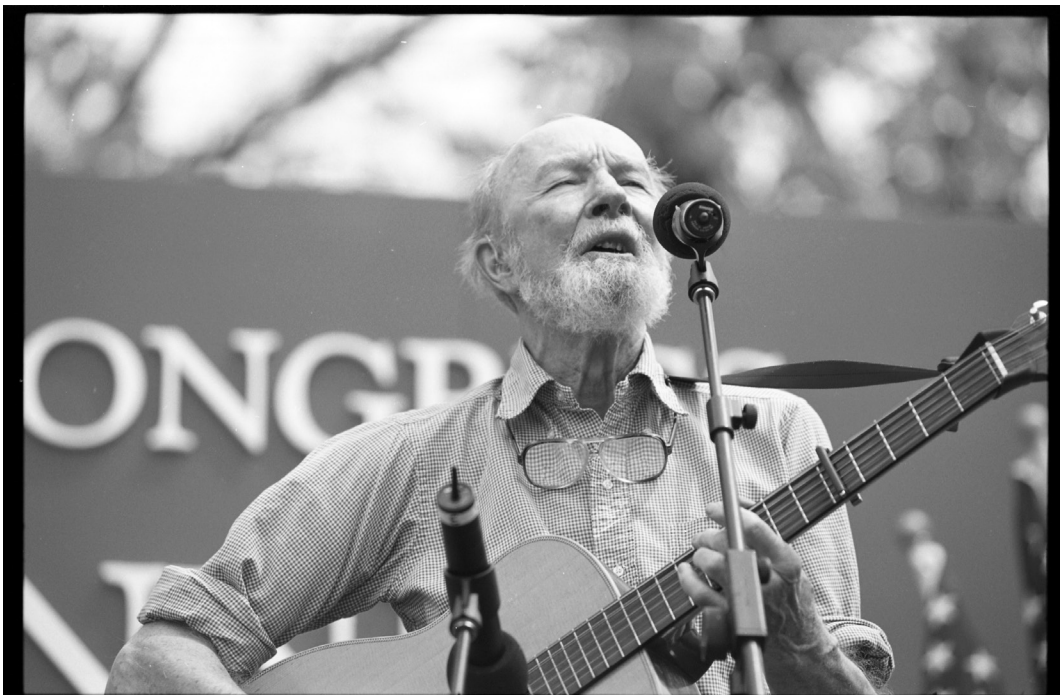
With the revival's focus on accessibility, the organization continued its commitment to creating an inclusive community for everyone.

Throughout the fifty years of the Clearwater organization, Seeger, alongside Toshi, continued working with the *Clearwater* and its subsequent projects. For his ninetieth birthday in 2009, Clearwater held a benefit concert at Madison Square Garden, with over 40 performers. Beginning with clips of the *Clearwater* and set on a stage modeled after the sloop, Seeger's passion for the environment permeated through the concert. Festival veterans filled the lineup, including Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Dar Williams, and Guy Davis. Spanning from the folk movement of the 1960s through the 1990s roots and Americana genres, popular artists celebrated Seeger for his impact in their careers and the music industry as a whole. John Mellencamp, the first of these artists to perform, sang Seeger's "If I Had a Hammer." Richie Havens played "Freedom/Motherless Child" like he did at Woodstock, followed by Joan Baez's rendition of "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" Dave Matthews, Michael Franti, Kris Kristofferson, Arlo Guthrie, and Ben Harper also performed. Actor Tim Robbins, serving as emcee, read a letter from President Obama lauding Seeger's accomplishments. Finishing the night, Bruce Springsteen took the stage, playing "The Ghost of Tom Joad" and sharing anecdotes from his performance with Seeger at Obama's inauguration earlier that year. With 19,000 people in attendance, Clearwater benefitted from ticket and merchandise sales. After the concert, the Seegers' attention turned back to the Festival, where it remained for the next few years, until their deaths in 2013 and 2014.

Every aspect of the Clearwater Festival was imbued with Pete Seeger's desire to inspire activism, education, and peace through music. To him, music was a platform for advocacy and connection. Seeger's fame allowed him to be the face of Clearwater, bringing new levels of popularity, reach, and influence to a regional environmental organization. Clearwater's impact, through both a local festival and environmental action, became greater than the size of the organization. Although Clearwater is only a regional organization, Seeger repeatedly emphasized the importance of local action on global issues. Clearwater stands apart from similar organizations because of his passion and determination: "I will sing it because I love my country and want to help make her still better."[11]

Built on Pete Seeger's philosophy of connecting communities and advocacy through music, the Great Hudson River Revival Festival ultimately was instrumental in the development of the folk music genre and the protection of the Hudson River. Providing a base for the local Hudson Valley population to gather and celebrate other cultures, it strengthened the community's ties to each other and to the environment around them. As one of the first festivals and organizations of its kind, Clearwater was

11 Seeger, Pete, Rob Rosenthal, and Sam Rosenthal. *Pete Seeger in His Own Words*. (Routledge, 2012), 96.



Pete Seeger singing at the Bicentennial celebration of the Library of Congress on the U.S. Capitol Grounds, Washington, D.C., April 24, 2000. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

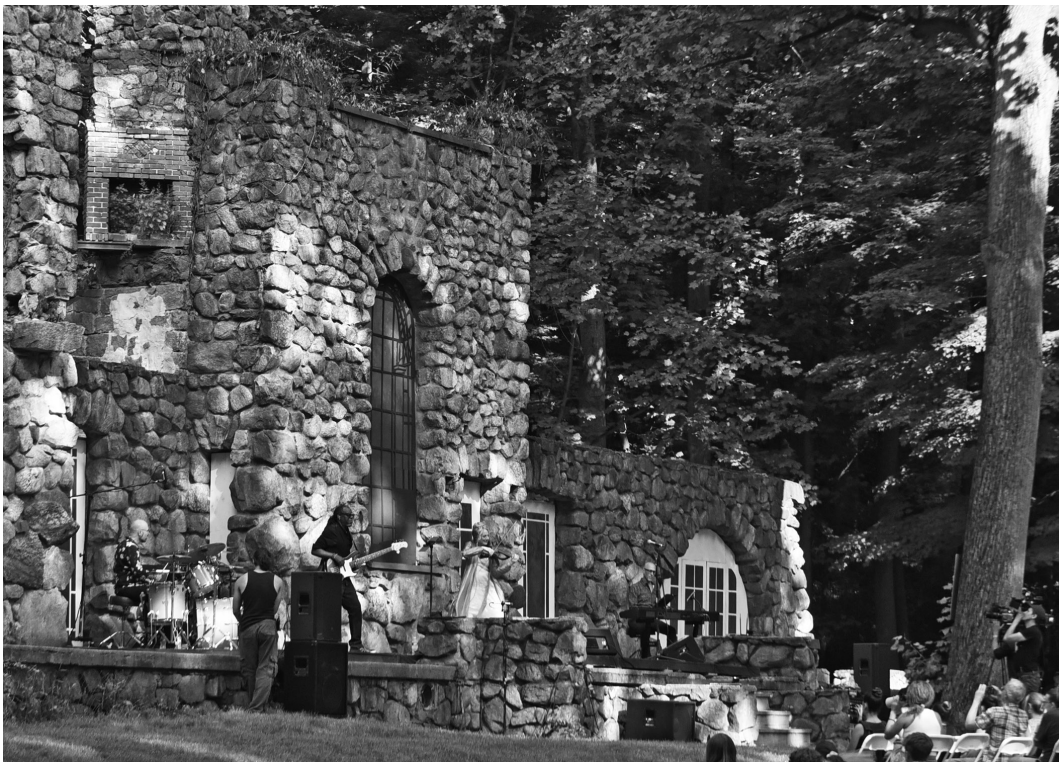
able to influence similar actions in other communities. Continuing its original mission to educate and uplift, the Great Hudson River Revival Festival has brought positive change to the Hudson Valley and remains a landmark in global environmental action and education.

For more information about the Clearwater organization and its programs, visit clearwater.org. Learn more about the Great Hudson River Revival Festival at clearwaterfestival.org, with individual program books found at clearwaterfestival.org/program-books. Read more Generations *reminiscences at clearwater.org/generations.*

Elise Stiefel, Marist '26

The Northgate Estate Revisited

Thom Johnson and Rob Yasinsac



Daisy Jopling Band, performing at Northgate, July 2024.

For decades, the Northgate estate in Cold Spring was one of the most mysterious sites in the Hudson River Valley. "Mysterious," for it contained quiet ruins that some hikers passed on their way to or from Breakneck Ridge. "Mysterious," not for any known presence of spirits, but for lack of information regarding the authentic history of the estate and its occupants. Who built it? When they did live there? What did the buildings look like before they were abandoned and allowed to fall into ruin? Almost none of this information existed in published books or local repositories. Following the rediscovery, beginning in 2010, of period photographs and documentation shared by members of the Stern and Cornish families, the

original owners of Northgate, we answered these questions in an article published in the Spring 2014 issue of *The Hudson River Valley Review*.

Since then, more information has come forward that we can now share, and the Northgate estate has become less mysterious, but no less fascinating and certainly more inviting. Public interest in the property has grown due to the growing popularity of Breakneck Ridge as a hiking destination, the proliferation of social media, and the accessibility of modern photography. There is increased appreciation for the ruins and further interest to know more about Northgate's history, as well as educational and artistic interest to make use of the estate grounds, which until very recently were covered in tangled vines and stubborn brambles that grew back just as fast as they were cut by volunteers with hand tools.

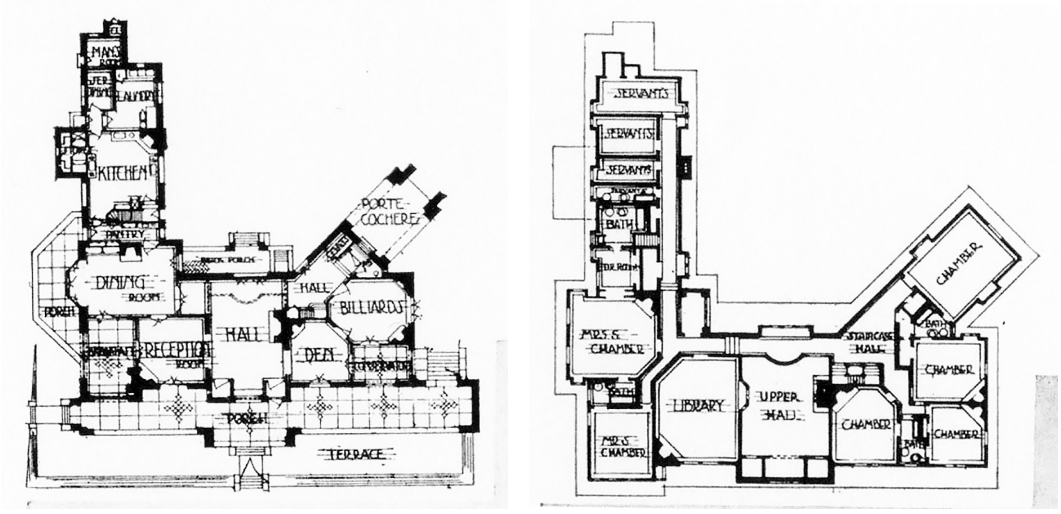
Edward Cornish with his sister, Anna Cornish Metcalf, on the Catskill Aqueduct by Breakneck Ridge in July 1922. This photograph from the collection of Victoria Rasche was shared with the authors more recently and was not part of the original set of images that they viewed in 2010.

Under the direction of Thom Johnson, staff of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Hudson Highlands State Park Manager Evan Thompson, the board and volunteers of Friends of Fahnestock and Hudson Highlands State Parks, and with generous financial support from Parks & Trails New York, the Northgate estate has undergone a transformation barely imaginable twenty years ago.

"The Approach to the Mansion" interpretive sign. It is located on the main hiking trail to or from Breakneck Ridge, for people who might otherwise not be aware of the ruins below.

In our quest to share the story of Northgate we have uncovered and been given information regarding the estate's history. On several occasions, we presented talks about the property to local organizations. Following one of these, Joe Diebbol, a collector of historical ephemera and co-proprietor of The Highland Studio in Cold Spring, shared with us an extract from the May 15, 1912, issue of *The American Architect*. It described "A House on Breakneck Mountain New York" that had been newly built.

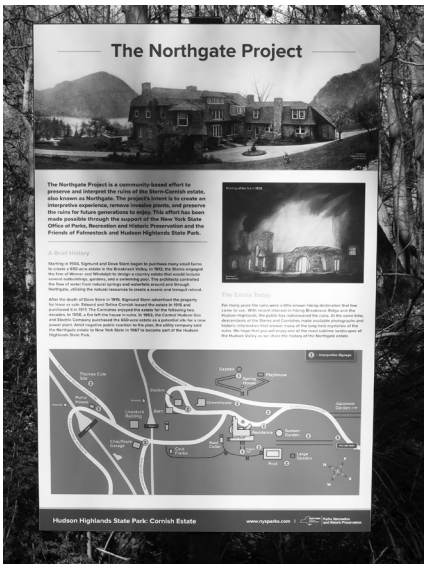
The article revealed to us, for the first time, the architects responsible for Northgate's design — "Messrs. Werner and Windolph." The firm of Harold H. Werner and August P. Windolph was active in New York City in the first decades of the twentieth century. They designed the castellated Headquarters Troop, 51st Cavalry Brigade Armory on Staten Island, a Romanesque Revival stable in New York City's West Village, the Classical Revival East 54th Street Bath and Gymnasium in Manhattan and several other public baths, as well as an Arts and Crafts-style home overlooking Long Island Sound in Douglaston, Queens. Interestingly, the firm utilized a variety of architectural styles, instead of a signature, unified theme, in the design of Northgate. The resulting appearance of rustic stonework, a half-timber and stucco gable, and an upper floor that blended Shingle style and Prairie School architecture made Northgate unique among Hudson River mansions.



Floor plans of the first and second floors of the Northgate mansion. Werner and Windolph, architects. Published in *The American Architect*, May 15, 1912. From the collection of Joe Diebbol, The Highland Studio

The article in *The American Architect* also depicted floor plans for the home's two main floors. Previously, a written description of the interior was known to us, although we did not know the specific placement of rooms. Now we can say with certainty where particular rooms were located, including "Mr. S[tern] Chamber" (the smaller bedroom, facing west) and "Mrs. S[tern] Chamber" (the larger bedroom, facing north), both at the north end of the second floor.

The rediscovery of this important historical information provided a thorough-enough story to share with the public in a permanent form. Parks & Trails New York funded the construction of twenty-six interpretive signs, designed by Fossil Industries of Deer Park, N.Y., that were installed in 2021–2022 throughout the Northgate estate portion of Hudson Highlands State Park. Along with Christopher Wilson of New York State Parks, we researched and wrote text for the signs, which include historic photographs (many of which had not been shared publicly before), a comprehensive history of the estate, and maps that help visitors understand the relationship between Northgate's various buildings and allow them to identify their present-day ruins.



"The Northgate Project" interpretive sign. It is one of three main signs orienting visitors to the property. Each sign is located at a unique entrance to the 650-acre estate.

"The West Lawn" interpretive sign. All of the signs were placed in the locations of the exact images depicted in the historical photographs for a live "then and now" comparison.

In conjunction with the installation of these interpretive signs and increased foot traffic through this portion of the park, we have worked with New York State Parks to open more of the original trails through the estate. State Parks staff utilized heavy-duty machinery to intensively clear the main lawn, which has not grown back and remains open space. This allows visitors more room to appreciate the ruins and views of the Hudson River. We also have worked with Boy Scouts to further clean and maintain the site.

Through these scout projects, three young men earned the rank of Eagle Scout: Chris Bohl researched and rebuilt the gazebo located atop a hill east of the mansion. Robbie Bohl cleared and rebuilt a culvert that went under the primary estate road located north of the mansion ruins. He and scouts from his troop also cleaned up the chauffeur's garage and part of the lawn. Finally, Dennis Mann led his troop to clean up and map the Japanese garden site. As part of his project, two benches were designed, built, and installed at the site.

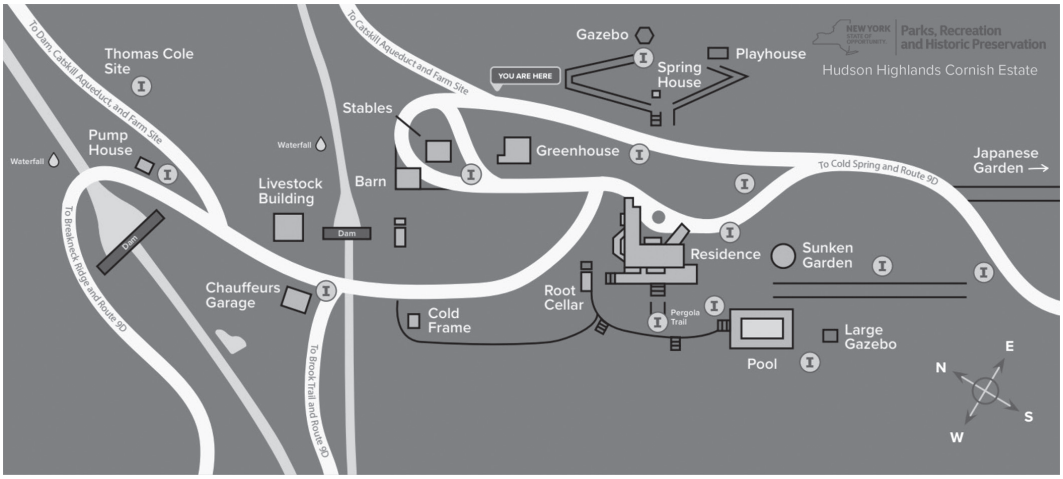
In addition, we have organized historian-led tours of the Northgate estate to audiences, including staff and alumni from the adjacent Surprise Lake Camp. Camp staff also have volunteered to help with

Author Thom Johnson (third from right) with alumni of Surprise Lake Camp

cleanup efforts. And for a number of years now, annual "First Day" hikes to Northgate have been held in conjunction with events presented by the Little Stony Point Citizens Association.

Holly Paterno performing at the Northgate ruins as part of the Daisy Jopling Foundation event, July 2024.

Other educational and artistic endeavors have been hosted at the ruins. In keeping with his previous professional career as an art teacher, Thom Johnson has led drawing classes at the site for the Putnam History Museum. A most dramatic use was a concert in July 2024 produced by the Daisy Jopling Music Mentorship Foundation, which raises money and provides support for music education and performance opportunities for young people. The mansion ruins were utilized as a stage and backdrop for Jopling and her band and dancers to perform. Jopling's accompanying narration presented the history of the site, emphasizing that both the Cornish and Stern families shared the estate with Surprise Lake Camp attendees and with local 4-H students.



Map of the main portion of the Northgate estate showing location of interpretive signs

The Northgate Project is a community-based effort to preserve and interpret the ruins of the Stern-Cornish estate, also known as Northgate. The project intent is to create an interpretive experience, remove invasive plants, and preserve the ruins for future generations to enjoy. This effort has been made possible through support of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Friends of Fahnestock and Hudson Highlands State Park.

Starting in 1904, Sigmund and Dove Stern began to purchase many small farms to create a 650-acre estate in the Breakneck Valley. In 1912, the Sterns engaged the firm of Werner and Windolph to design a country estate for the Sterns that would include several outbuildings, gardens, and a swimming pool. From natural springs and waterfalls on the estate, the architects controlled the flow of water around and through Northgate, utilizing the natural resources to create a scenic and tranquil retreat.

After the death of Dove Stern in 1915, Sigmund advertised the property for lease or sale. Edward and Selina Cornish leased the estate in 1916 and purchased it in 1917. The Cornishes enjoyed the estate for two decades. In 1958, a fire left the house in ruins. In 1963, the Central Hudson Gas and Electric Company purchased the 650-acre estate as a potential site for a new power plant. Amid negative public reaction to the plan, the utility company sold the Northgate estate to New York State in 1967 to become part of the Hudson Highlands State Park.

The Estate Today

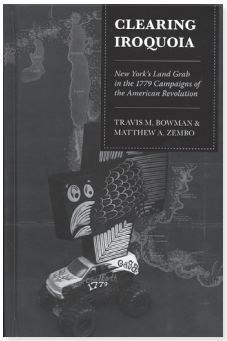
For many years the ruins were a little-known hiking destination that few came to see. With recent new interest in hiking Breakneck Ridge and the Hudson Highlands, the public has rediscovered the ruins. At the same time, descendants of the Sterns and Cornishes made available photographs and historic information that answer many of the long-held mysteries of the ruins. We hope that you will enjoy one of the most sublime landscapes of the Hudson Valley as we share the history of the Northgate estate.

With trails on Breakneck Ridge now closed for needed repairs, and with ongoing discussion of the proposed development of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail between Cold Spring and Beacon, Northgate has become ever more popular with hikers. Thousands of people visit the site on weekends from spring to fall. Many are just passing by, while others stop and want to know more about these windowless, roofless stone structures. Some visitors come specifically to photograph the ruins. As the Hudson Highlands State Park and surrounding areas grow and transform, Northgate will continue to be a source of wonder and an inspiration for artistic creativity.

Thom Johnson has researched and photographed Bannerman's Island Arsenal, the Putnam Division of the New York Central Railroad, the summer camps of Harriman State Park, and the Stern-Cornish Northgate estate.

Robert Yasinsac works at Historic Hudson Valley and co-authored Hudson Valley Ruins: Forgotten Landmarks of an American Landscape.

Book Review Essay



Clearing Iroquoia: New York's Land Grab in the 1779 Campaigns of the American Revolution
Travis M. Bowman and Matthew A. Zembo,
(Lexington Books, 2025) 326 pp. $130 (hardcover)

In 1775, about 190,000 European-Americans and African-Americans of the royal Province of New York lived within five to forty miles on either side of the Hudson River and its major tributary, the Mohawk, or on the big and little islands around the lower Hudson estuary — Long Island, Staten Island, and Manhattan. The Six Nations, the Mohawks, Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, totaling about 8,000 people, resided in clusters of villages between the Mohawk and Niagara rivers.[1] In 1800, the 589,000 citizens of New York State, many of them recent immigrants from New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, were spread west to the Genesee River and north along Lake Champlain. By 1825, the state's population was 1,615,000, and upstate New York (except the Adirondacks) was filled up with "Yankees" and "Yorkers." The authors of *Clearing Iroquoia* argue that the state's westward extension from the Hudson watershed was accomplished by "a violent campaign of expansionism and conquest designed to extend New York's boundaries past the Fort Stanwix Treaty line" (of 1768) and to "extirpate" the native inhabitants. In fact, those western lands lay within the political boundaries of the Colony of New York, which had been essentially established by 1774. The "conquest" was the Sullivan Expedition and related movements of the Continental Army in 1779. But the Six Nations were not militarily "conquered," nor were they "extirpated." Their warriors, who sided with the British, continued to raid white settlements until the end of the war. Despite the devastation, their families soon established new communities, mostly in western New York, in Seneca territory. Immediately after the war, in 1784, many people from most of the Six Nations moved to the Grand River in what is now southern Ontario. But many others remained within New York, and their descendants are here today.

During the Revolutionary War, the state and federal governments rightly considered the Six Nations to be actually or potentially dangerous enemies. Most Senecas and Mohawks, many Cayugas, and some Onondagas became allies of the British. (The Oneidas and Tuscaroras generally sided with the Patriots and some

1 I have used the contemporary term "Six Nations" to refer collectively to the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and Mohawks. Bowman and Zembo use "Haudenosaunee," but that term or any equivalent is never used in any of the British or American documents relating to the frontier war and the Sullivan Expedition.

fought with them.) Native war parties were coordinated and supplied by British officers at Niagara, and included some Loyalists. Destructive raids against frontier settlements in New York and Pennsylvania commenced in mid-1777 and greatly increased in 1778. The Senecas, by far the most populous of the Six Nations, avenged the dozens of casualties they suffered in the Battle of Oriskany on August 6, 1777. (In that engagement, the Mohawk Valley militia was decimated by British troops and Iroquois warriors under command of Colonel Barry St. Leger. He and his troops then returned to Canada after failing to capture Fort Stanwix and join General John Burgoyne's army, which was advancing toward Albany.) In 1779, the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca homelands in central and western New York were invaded and devastated by Continental troops in multiple incursions, the largest being the expedition commanded by Major General John Sullivan of New Hampshire. The military goals were to drive back the enemy by destroying their towns and crops, and thus stop their raiding of the frontiers and compel them to make peace. Aside from the destruction, the goals were not achieved. In early 1780, raiding resumed and Native lands were soon partly reoccupied. The war parties were recalled in July 1782 because peace negotiations between the American and British governments had commenced, though some raiding continued into October.

Much of *Clearing Iroquoia* describes the invasion of the enemy territory in August-September 1779 by about 5,000 Continental soldiers from New York, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts under Sullivan's overall command. The Continental Congress authorized the expedition on February 15, 1779, and Washington provided detailed instructions to Sullivan on May 31. Sullivan's troops assembled at Easton, Pennsylvania, then marched overland to the Wyoming Valley and north along the Susquehanna River. Another force under Brigadier General James Clinton (brother of New York Governor George Clinton), moved from the Mohawk Valley and down the upper Susquehanna to Tioga Point, near the New York-Pennsylvania border, there joining the main army. The combined forces advanced up the Chemung River and easily routed a force of Senecas, Munsee Delawares, and a few Loyalists in the Battle of Newtown (east of Elmira) on August 29. The Continental regiments then moved through the lands of the Senecas and Cayugas, unopposed except for one bloody ambush. Sullivan's final report boasted that "not a single settlement, or field of corn" was left after his soldiers had burned the empty towns and destroyed the harvests. (One Seneca town on the upper Genesee River and a few hamlets were missed.) Most of the inhabitants went to Fort Niagara. Concurrently, troops commanded by Colonel Daniel Brodhead moved up from Fort Pitt and destroyed Seneca and Munsee Delaware villages along the upper Allegheny River. An earlier operation in April under Colonel Gosen Van Schaick had burned the Onondaga town.

The Sullivan Expedition is very well-documented, and the authors have read the relevant correspondence of Generals George Washington, Philip Schuyler, and Nathaniel Greene; Governor George Clinton; journals of the Continental Congress and correspondence of delegates; and the numerous officers' journals published by the New York Secretary of State in 1887. Less use was made of the papers of Sir Frederick Haldimand, governor of Quebec, which include much information about British conferences with the Six Nations and their allies, and about their raiding operations. No use was made of the many newspaper reports of the expedition, which would support the authors' argument for its expansionist motive. *Clearing Iroquoia* includes succinct, lucid accounts of major raids on frontier settlements during 1778, including Cobleskill, German Flats, and Cherry Valley in New York, and Wyoming in Pennsylvania; of the counter-raids by Continental troops in autumn of that year against Tioga and Oquaga on the upper Susquehanna, staging points for enemy raiding parties; and of the expedition against the Onondaga town and the Battle of Newtown in 1779. Surprisingly, there are only references to and no description of the crucial Battle of Oriskany, though the authors remark that "the anguish of so many killed at the battle immediately turned to rage." *Clearing Iroquoia* mentions the further devastation of the frontier settlements, starting in 1780, and remarks on the increasing demoralization and passivity of the Patriot militia. The British strategy for the frontier war is well explained and aptly compared to the modern military doctrine of counterinsurgency. But the book does not mention the highly organized and effective system of war parties, usually led by Native warriors, occasionally by Loyalists, that operated out of Niagara. Nor does it discuss the many conferences during the years 1775–77 in which British officers, especially Colonel John Butler (a Mohawk Valley Loyalist) and the Mohawk Captain Joseph Brant (brother-in-law of Sir William Johnson), urged the Senecas and others to fight on the side of the Crown. (Their arguments emphasized past favors, British power, and colonial land-grabbing.) The ultimate success of that diplomacy contrasted with Philip Schuyler's diplomatic failures.

Though military actions by both sides and political maneuvers in the state and federal governments are the framework of the book, the central character is Schuyler. The wealthy scion of a prominent Dutch family of Albany, he was appointed by the Continental Congress to the board of U.S. Commissioners of Indian Affairs in the Continental Army's Northern Department in July 1775. He dominated their proceedings throughout the war. (He also served as a major general in the Continental Army until he surrendered his command in August 1777; Congress finally accepted his resignation in April 1779.) The authors provide many examples of Schuyler's inflexible attitude and adamant positions in his diplomacy with the Six Nations. For instance, he obtained promises of neutrality in a large conference at Albany in August 1775, but he demanded absolute loyalty to the Patriot cause at

a conference at the German Flats a year later and threatened retaliation if it were not forthcoming. Schuyler refused to court neutralist factions, especially among the Onondagas, which could have benefitted the Patriot cause. (Sir William Johnson, the Crown's Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had been a master of such diplomatic maneuvering.) The authors assert that Schuyler was "well-versed in Native diplomacy" (John Jay thought so too), but he actually had little prior experience in it. Schuyler was present at meetings with Oneidas in 1766 and Mohawks in June 1768, where local land disputes were at issue. He did not attend the major conference at Fort Stanwix (at modern Rome) in autumn 1768, where Johnson negotiated with the Six Nations to establish the "line of property" west of which lay Indian country. The authors rightly credit Schuyler with obtaining valuable intelligence, mostly from Oneidas, about enemy forces and operations during the war. However, practical knowledge of the interior of western and central New York was minimal. Sullivan complained in his final report that the available maps were "exceedingly erroneous" and that his guides were incompetent.

Schuyler was a leading advocate of an attack on the enemy nations, starting in early 1778, and the authors assiduously chronicle his efforts. They consider him to have been "central to the whole operation." However, they concede that Schuyler's plan for westward advances from the Mohawk River was eventually rejected by Washington, on cogent advice from Greene, in favor of routes following branches of the Susquehanna, safely distant from British-controlled Lake Ontario. Schuyler is convincingly identified as the mastermind behind Van Schaick's attack on Onondaga in the spring of 1779. Quoted writings of Washington, Clinton, Schuyler, and others reveal their overly-confident expectation that the punitive invasions of 1779 would provide relief for the beleaguered frontier settlements, by destroying enemy towns and crops and driving the inhabitants away, as well as taking prisoners and then forcing the enemy to negotiate peace — which did not happen. The relief was brief. The enemy was "for the moment defeated," as the authors remark, but men, women, and children — more than 5,000 of them — hastily but safely retreated to Niagara. After great suffering and many deaths in camps along the Niagara River during the extreme winter of 1779–80, the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, and associated peoples from the upper Susquehanna Valley soon built houses and planted corn, in a few cases at old locations, in other cases at new ones, like Buffalo Creek and Cattaraugus Creek. They were not and never would be "extirpated" from New York. Even the militant Senecas faltered in their resolve immediately after the devastation of 1779, but wide-ranging raids on frontier settlements resumed in February 1780. Nearly half of the numerous targets that year were in Pennsylvania (a war zone mostly disregarded in *Clearing Iroquoia*). Gruesome statistics of raiding parties and their destruction of lives and property were compiled by Colonel Guy Johnson, Sir William's nephew and successor as superintendent of the Six Nations.

The authors are reluctant to acknowledge multiple, complex motives and objectives. Quoted documents of Washington, Clinton, Schuyler, and James Duane, a New York delegate to Congress, agree that the primary purpose of the Sullivan expedition was "rescuing the frontier from the alarms, ravages, and distresses to which it was exposed" (Washington to John Jay, August 15, 1779). Despite Patriot leaders' obvious compassion for their suffering countrymen, the authors insist that "protecting the frontier was, in fact, a mere justification for the invasion," whose real goal was "extirpation" of the enemy and "conquest" of its territory — for the benefit of New York. Yet peace was still preferable to war. As the authors note, in October-November 1779 the New York Legislature and the Continental Congress appointed commissioners to negotiate peace with the enemy nations. That was a futile gesture that elicited no response, partly because Sullivan's army had taken no captives. As hostages they would have furnished a strong incentive for negotiations. The peace initiative had a successful precedent, not mentioned in *Clearing Iroquoia*. That was the peace treaty made by Sir William Johnson in May 1765, in the aftermath of Pontiac's War, with enemy Delawares. They agreed to peace after an intimidating but non-destructive invasion of the Ohio country the previous year by British troops and Virginia militiamen under Colonel Henry Bouquet.

Clearing Iroquoia assumes, incorrectly, that New York's political boundary did not extend west of the Fort Stanwix treaty line of 1768. (That line ran south from near the fort along the Unadilla River to the Susquehanna, then due west to near Tioga Point, then westward across the Pennsylvania mountains to the Allegheny-Ohio River, then down the latter river to its mouth. The line supplanted the notional boundary established by a royal proclamation of 1763, which followed the watershed of the rivers emptying into the Atlantic Ocean.) The authors assert that "New York was eager to claim" the lands of the Six Nations west of the line, and that the "border would move" with the expedition of 1779, relying on "the oldest and most legally expedient way to circumvent murky issues of titles." That refers to the doctrine of conquest, the acquisition of sovereignty over land and people by military occupation. In fact, New York never relied on that doctrine, because there was no need to do so. The authors say that in 1779 "New York's boundaries were fluid," that the state was of "unknown size and shape," and that it "was finally ready to fix its boundaries." That is erroneous, because the state had already assumed its modern shape (with one major exception, to the northeast). New York's boundary with Quebec, the start of the 45th parallel of latitude, had been established by acts of Parliament in 1763 and 1774; its boundary with Pennsylvania, the 42nd parallel, by an inter-colonial agreement in 1774. In short, the homelands of the Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas unquestionably lay within New York's political boundaries. (The controversy over lands claimed by New Hampshire was resolved when New York recognized Vermont's independence in 1790.)

In a report to the New York Legislature in 1780, quoted in the book, Schuyler referred to the lands of the Six Nations as lying within the "Limits of the State." He rejected the theory that those lands were vested in the United States "by Right of Conquest," by the Continental Army in 1779. The authors describe the controversy in the Continental Congress over title to and control of trans-Appalachian lands, which were claimed by several of the colonies under their royal charters. New York claimed the lands of the Five Nations and extensive but undefined territory beyond, not under its Royal Charter of 1664, but by virtue of the many subsequent treaties in which the Five Nations pledged their loyalty to the Crown, and a deed of 1701 by which they entrusted to the Crown their hunting territories in the lower Great Lakes region. They claimed those lands by virtue of their military conquests of the Native peoples residing there, particularly the very populous Hurons (10,000 strong). A massive army, mostly of Senecas and Mohawks, had attacked the Hurons in 1648–49, and the survivors were absorbed by the Iroquois or dispersed as far away as Quebec and Mackinac. As the authors note, in 1781 New York surrendered to the United States its claim to those lands lying outside its established political boundaries, the first state to do so. They do not discuss the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1784, by which the Six Nations' claims to western lands were ceded to the United States, a coerced act not approved by the League council sitting at Buffalo Creek. The vague, long-dormant colonial claim of Massachusetts to jurisdiction over lands extending westward through New York was extinguished in favor of the latter state at a conference in Hartford in 1786.

As an officer at Niagara remarked, the Six Nations were "thunderstruck" on hearing preliminary reports of the terms of the Treaty of Paris, concluded in 1783. The British government recognized the sovereignty of the United States over the territory south of the Great Lakes and essentially abandoned its allies, the Six Nations residing in New York. *Clearing Iroquoia* confirms that eventual dispossession of part or all of their lands was the ultimate goal of New York's wartime leaders, but the book's discussion of the process and its purpose is incomplete and unsatisfactory. Washington, Schuyler, and Duane agreed that New York was entitled to "reasonable compensation," in the form of land purchases, for the vast damage inflicted on frontier settlements. They thought the cost of such purchases would be modest, which proved to be very true, to the great detriment of the sellers. (That clear recognition of the Six Nations' property rights confutes a central argument of the book, that the state legally acquired their lands by right of conquest.) New York proceeded to expropriate the lands of wartime allies and enemies alike. The state's Commissioners of Indian Affairs, headed by Governor Clinton, essentially compelled the Oneidas to cede all of their lands to the state at treaties held in 1785 and 1788. The Onondagas and Cayugas ceded their lands in 1788 and 1789. *Clearing Iroquoia* mentions those vast land cessions only in a note, incorrectly remarking that the

Indian reservations established by those treaties were not part of the lands ceded to New York. The Onondaga and Cayuga territories became the seat of the "Military Tract" of central New York, already designated as such by the Legislature in 1782. The lands were allotted, starting in 1790, to New York's Continental Army veterans, who were entitled to bounty lands. Native lands were the only substantial asset available to the state government, which was effectively bankrupt by the war's end. Eligible officers and soldiers were paid with grants of land that formerly belonged to the Onondagas or Cayugas.

No other book, including Don Gerlach's biography, has such a detailed account of Philip Schuyler's efforts to promote military reprisals against New York's Native enemies, to confirm the state's jurisdiction over their territories, and to expropriate their lands. That is a real contribution, which increases our appreciation of Schuyler's historical importance. And that is also ironic, because *Clearing Iroquoia* displays an animus against Schuyler. He is presented with little personal context, without nuance or sympathy, with single-minded, almost conspiratorial motives and methods to accomplish the "conquest" and "extirpation" of New York's Iroquoian peoples. Schuyler was a very able man, highly respected by his associates and in his community. He also resolutely, or stubbornly, contended against his military and political rivals. During the Revolutionary War he employed his logistical experience (obtained as a young officer during the French and Indian War) to organize the invasion of Quebec in 1775; to challenge the British advance on Lake Champlain in 1776, in the naval encounter at Valcour Island; and to impede the army of General John Burgoyne when it invaded the upper Hudson Valley in the summer of 1777, before the Battles of Saratoga. Schuyler and other Patriot leaders were convinced of the righteousness of their cause, and they were deeply suspicious of Loyalists (or "Tories"), neutralists, and Indians. All were enemies or potential enemies, all of whose property would be subject to expropriation. British and Loyalist officers exhibited a similar animosity toward the "Rebels," a disparaging term adopted by the authors. They employ a now current term, "Haudenosaunee," to refer collectively to the Six Nations. That is a nineteenth-century spelling of the Seneca version of the name for the ritual and political association of those peoples. Their ethnic self-descriptor was "Ongwe-oweh" (one of many spellings), meaning "real, genuine, native people."

Clearing Iroquoia has many well-chosen quotations from letters of Schuyler and other Patriot leaders, which reveal the positions and intentions of their authors. But it will not be easy reading for those who are unfamiliar with frontier conflict and attendant diplomacy during the Revolutionary War. While the book is well organized and quite compact, it is dense with details about conferences, correspondence, and legal controversies. Many significant people and places are mentioned without explaining who or where they were. Much more attention is given to Patriot leaders than to the able leaders on the other side, who are little more than names in *Clearing*

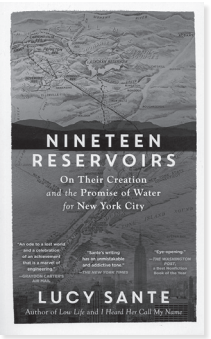
Iroquoia. Examples are Major John Butler, commander of Loyalist ranger companies; Kaieñ?kwaahtoñ ("Siengerachta" or "Old Smoke"), the preeminent Seneca war chief; Kaiûtwah?kû ("Cornplanter"), a chief warrior of the Senecas; Kayasota?, a neutralist Seneca leader; and Joseph Brant ("Thayendanegea"), the Mohawk captain.[2] (The political influence and activity of Brant's sister, Mary or "Molly" Brant, are discussed.) Unfortunately, the book has no map showing Native villages and the routes of the Continental Army expeditions of 1778–79. The chapter notes are very full, but they are occasionally duplicative and inconsistent in style. Many references in the notes are not in the bibliography. The index omits many important persons, places, and events (such as Oriskany). The text and notes have a few typographical errors and misspellings.

In his foreword to *Clearing Iroquoia*, Michael Galban, manager of the Ganondagan State Historic Site, encourages consideration of "uncomfortable truths" and "many perspectives" during the commemorations of the "American War for Independence." As the 250th anniversary of the Sullivan Expedition approaches, four older books provide more complete and dispassionate narratives: Alexander C. Flick, *The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign in 1779: Chronology and Selected Documents* (1929), a careful work of scholarship; Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (1972), a well-informed account of Iroquois society and of wartime diplomacy and operations; Joseph R. Fischer, *A Well-Executed Failure: The Sullivan Campaign against the Iroquois* (1997), an expert analysis of the Continental Army's strategy, tactics, logistics, and leadership; Max M. Mintz, *Seeds of Empire: The American Revolutionary Conquest of the Iroquois* (1999), a readable narrative (though "conquest" is debatable) that concludes with the land cessions of the 1780s. Barbara A. Mann, *George Washington's War on Native America* (2005) is polemical and factually unreliable. *Chainbreaker: The Revolutionary War Memoirs of Governor Blacksnake*, edited by Thomas Abler (1989), also available as *Chainbreaker's War: A Seneca Chief Remembers the American Revolution*, edited by Jeanne Winston Adler (2002), offers a unique perspetive on the war, the Sullivan Expedition, and warrior culture. Don R. Gerlach, *Proud Patriot: Philip Schuyler and the War of Independence, 1775–1783* (1987) remains indispensable.

James D. Folts, Head, Researcher Services,
New York State Archives

2 Renderings of Seneca personal names are from the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (the '?' stands for the glottal stop in Iroquoian languages). C. Murphy, *Henry Hudson in Holland* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1909), 34.

Book Review



Nineteen Reservoirs: On Their Creation and the Promise of Water for New York City.
Lucy Sante (The Experiment, LLC, 2024)
198 pp. $19.95 (paperback)

In *Nineteen Reservoirs: On Their Creation and the Promise of Water for New York City*, Lucy Sante offers readers a compelling — and gorgeously illustrated — history of the building of the New York City reservoir system. While Sante does describe the technological feats that went into creating the system, her focus is on the human beings and communities impacted by the building of the reservoirs. Readers hear about people such as Mrs. Tina Lasher, of Brown's Station, a boardinghouse owner who resisted the city's efforts to take her land to the last (48–49), and Mary Brooks, of Gilboa, who left her house briefly to go to a neighbor, only to have workers set fire to her home (78). And we hear about the diverse community of people — often immigrants and people of color — who built the dams.

One of the book's real values is the many photographs of the communities displaced by the reservoirs and the construction process. For example, in the chapter on the Gilboa Dam, Sante juxtaposes a full-page 1919 photograph of the village of Gilboa with, on the next page, a full-page photograph from 1926 of the dam built on that same site. In addition, Tim Davis's photo essay of the Catskill Region in the epilogue is stunning. Other books on the reservoir system have been well illustrated, particularly Diane Galusha's *Liquid Assets: A History of the New York City's Water System* (Purple Mountain Press, 2016), but those earlier books tend to focus on the construction process of the reservoir system, whereas *Nineteen Reservoirs* contains many more photographs of the homes and businesses that were lost to the waters. In addition, the quality of photographs in Sante's book is far superior to that in earlier books.

Ultimately, though, Sante's account suffers from a tendency to romanticize the Catskill communities and the city itself. Sante tells a story of idyllic pastoral communities preyed upon by a rapacious city that is too lazy to practice basic water conservation. (New York City's failure to install water meters is an ongoing theme in the book.) Many times, Sante offers an emotionally powerful but oversimplified account of events. For example, during the discussion of the building of the Ashokan Reservoir, Sante writes about Charles Pierson, a fifty-two-year-old bachelor farmer who was bought out. Sante then surmises:

> The records do not say what became of Charles Pierson — except, presumably, to note his compensation in a long list of settlements. He may well have purchased another farm west or south of the reservoir, but this could never have been the same as what he had lost. There are no accounts of illnesses or deaths, emotional crises or suicides following the land seizures, and the term "post-traumatic stress disorder" was decades from being coined. But such sufferings must surely have been common. Each determination by the condemnation commission in effect dismantled a life — and at a cut rate." (46–47)

Were "such sufferings" common? I would not be surprised to find out they were, but the lack of evidence is telling, and a careful writer should not simply assume they happened. In fact, as David Soll explains in *Empire of Water: An Environmental and Political History of the New York Water Supply* (Cornell UP, 2013) — and Soll's title should make clear that he's no apologist of the city — initial responses of Ulster County residents to the proposed Ashokan Reservoir varied significantly, with some residents welcoming the opportunity to be free of economically marginal farmland (23).

Another aspect of Sante's romanticization is her assumption that the reservoirs were environmentally harmful: "No biologists were on hand in 1907 to count the number of endangered species or trace the deleterious effects of lost habitats" (10). Sante overlooks the widespread ecological devastation visited upon the Catskills by the logging and tanning industries in the middle and late 1800s; the Catskill reservoirs were not built on an idyllic, prelapsarian landscape, but rather on a landscape already significantly altered by human activity. Then in the chapter on the Cannonsville Reservoir, Sante laments that the proposed reservoir "would inundate 100 dairy farms" (137). Yet dairy farms can have a significant negative impact on water quality and environmental conditions in general. They produce large amounts of methane gas, and runoff from dairy farms is a significant source of water pollution. If the main environmental impact of building the reservoirs was to reduce the number of dairy farms in the region, building them may have been an environmental plus.

Despite these issues, Sante offers a heartfelt account of the way that the people of the Catskills were dispossessed of their land by a city intent on solving its growing water problems. Sante ends her story with the completion of the Cannonsville Reservoir in 1965, noting that the last legal settlement directly related to the construction of the reservoir — to the Margaretville Hospital — occurred in 1992 (151), before going on to document the long struggle to get New York City to install effective water meters, which shockingly did not happen until 2006 (156).

An unfortunate omission from the book, though, is the story of how the people in the Catskills have fought back against New York City to reclaim some control over their lands. In the late 1980s, local groups sued New York City and New York

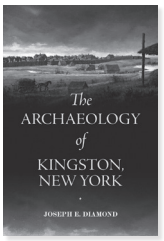
State over their management of the reservoirs and the surrounding landscapes. These struggles culminated in the 1997 Watershed Memorandum of Agreement signed by New York State, the city, and local communities, which created the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the various stream management programs in the Catskill watersheds (such as the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program).

Through these programs, New York City pumps tens of millions of dollars into the region to preserve water quality, which often results in significant environmental and recreational benefits for Catskill residents, though significant tensions remain between the Catskill region and New York City. This isn't to say that conflicts between the city and the region don't occur. I have sat in meetings with Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) officials, arguing over release protocols from the Schoharie Tunnel and their impact on the Upper Esopus Creek. Members of groups such as the Lower Esopus Working Group and the Friends of the Upper Delaware River closely monitor releases from the reservoir and often battle with the DEP over the impacts of those releases on the local communities and environment. But the relationship is not that of a colonizer and colonized, as Sante suggests (6); it is a process in which stakeholders with competing interests work to find viable solutions to complex, thorny problems. Sometimes the processes are adversarial; sometimes they are cooperative.

Ultimately, Sante's history of the reservoirs is compelling reading, and she tells an important story that should be more widely known. Readers seeking a more complete understanding of the New York City water system and its impacts on the local communities, however, should turn to Diane Galusha's meticulously detailed history of the system and David Soll's thoughtful analysis of how the changing political and legal environments shaped the building and management of the reservoirs over the course of the twentieth century.

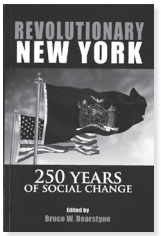
Andrew C. Higgins is Associate Professor of English at SUNY New Paltz and is vice president of the Catskill Mountains Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

New & Noteworthy Books



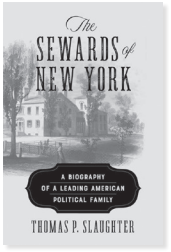
The Archaeology of Kingston, New York
by Joseph E. Diamond
(State University of New York Press, 2025) 482 pp. $29.95 (paperback)
https://sunypress.edu/

Joseph Diamond crafts a fascinating and detailed analysis of eighty-eight archaeological sites in the City of Kingston dating from the precontact period through the nineteenth century. Diamond is intentional about making his book inviting to those outside the field. Acknowledging that a significant portion of the most crucial information on archaeology in the Hudson River Valley may be lost in academic and institutional writings or in "gray literature"—archaeological site impact reports complied for government agencies—he provides extensive details and explanations, more than seventy illustrations and tables, a glossary of terms, a wide-ranging bibliography (with "gray literature" included), and chapter summaries to encourage comprehension and successfully demystify the work of archaeologists. As a result, this text is a vital resource for scholars, archaeologists, and anyone interested in the history of early life in the Hudson River Valley.



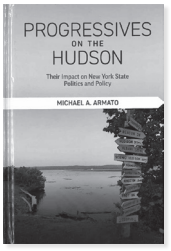
Revolutionary New York: 250 Years of Social Change
Edited by Bruce W. Dearstyne
(State University of New York Press, 2026) 308 pp. $24.95 (paperback)
www.sunypress.edu

It is an appropriate time for *Revolutionary New York*, as commemorations of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution intensify in its year of publication. Bruce Dearstyne's collection of sixteen essays from sixteen different authors centralizes the grit and persistence of ordinary New Yorkers throughout the state's history who attempted to "finish" the ideals of the revolution for persons previously excluded. Starting with the Oneida Nation during the War of Independence and new U.S. nation era to the COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent essays focus on a doctor who defended New York's western frontier throughout the War of 1812, the development of the Erie Canal, mid-1800s tenant resistance, the Lemmon case (which argued for rights for the enslaved), factory safety and health reform after the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, gay rights and women's suffrage activism, and many more instances of New York leading the way forward to progressive change.



The Sewards of New York
by Thomas P. Slaughter
(Cornell University Press, 2025) 488 pp. $37.95 (hardcover)
www.cornellpress.cornell.edu

Those familiar with the Seward name may think of William Henry Seward (1801-1872), 1860 Republican Presidential candidate, influential member of Abraham Lincoln's cabinet (featured in Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*), or the 1867 purchaser of Alaska. In his biography of four generations of the Seward family living in Auburn, New York, Thomas Slaughter takes an unexpected approach by focusing on the family as a unit instead of primarily on the man who served as Governor of New York, U.S. senator, and U.S. Secretary of State. Previously, many of the documents featured in the book had been overlooked in the voluminous William Henry Seward public papers; they were extracted and studied by Slaughter and several University of Rochester students and volunteers. (Researchers have made these documents accessible in the Seward Family Digital Archive.) The book's excerpts from the family's letters, journals, diaries, and memoirs underscore pre-Civil War era upheavals in commerce, education, transportation, and communication, and serve as a fresh lens on nineteenth-century national politics and society.



Progressives on the Hudson: Their Impact on New York State Politics and Policy
by Michael A. Armato
(State University of New York Press, 2025) 186 pp. $110.00 (hardcover)
www.sunypress.edu

As the starting point for many instances of labor, environmental, social, and public health reform, progressive activism has a rich history in New York. However, what is often celebrated, studied, and remembered is the influence of *New York City* on these movements. Instead, Michael Armato describes the strong and multilayered progressive presence in the Hudson River Valley, the numerous players who do this work, and their importance to the community and overarching political spheres. Utilizing direct testimonies, Armato argues that rural and suburban areas are just as influential as cities in moving progressive polices forward in the United States, and that advancement is achieved in a variety of ways—some perhaps unexpected. Included is an extensive list of interviewees, interview questions asked, references, and an index that further captures the expansive picture of progressive activism in the region.

Tisha Dunstan, Marist University