The American Revolution in the Hudson Valley Teacherhostel, June 27 to June 30.

Participants in the 4-day program included teachers and educators from the Bronx, Dutchess, Long Island, Orange, Ulster, Westchester, and upstate New York. The program consisted of classes at West Point and visits to American Revolution historic sites and museums including Constitution Island, Fort Montgomery, Knox’s Headquartes, the Last Cantonment, Mount Galian, Washington’s Headquarters, West Point Museum, and the Van Wyck Homestead. The classes, visits, and curriculum workshops educated the teachers on the resources available for teaching the American Revolution in the Hudson Valley while providing a first-hand perspective on where the battles actually occurred.

The plenary speaker for the program was Barnet Schecter, author of The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution. His topic at The Thayer Hotel was “REDEFINING THE BATTLE FOR NEW YORK IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.” As the title of his book suggests, he sought to remind the teachers that the American Revolution was not something which just took place in the Boston area and that Yorktown with a frozen winter at Valley Forge in-between. New York City and the surrounding areas (which often later became part of the City), played an important role in the effort to divide and conquer the colonies.

This theme was further elaborated on by Ray Raymond, former political officer in the British Consulate and current SUNY professor and by Major Jason Palmer, West Point history department, the host for our West Point visit. Prof. Raymond spoke approvingly of the American side his own ancestors had supported. At Washington’s Headquartes, he described his admiration for George Washington, the strategist over British tacticians. Raymond echoed the comments of Schecter of the significance of the Hudson Valley in the war which formed a nice segue into Major Palmer’s talk and military tour of West Point including Fort Putnam. These talks provided the framework around which one could observe the unfolding of American history as one visited the sites.

“I was enthusiastic from the moment Peter mentioned his idea of bringing history teachers together to visit the historic sites of the Hudson River Valley. My first response was as an historian, “What a lucky group to get an inside look at such an important part of American history.”

Richard de Koster
Executive Director
Constitution Island Association, Inc.
The Hudson River Art Teacherhostel, July 22-23

Teachers from Boston to Buffalo and from the Hudson Valley participated in the weekend program designed to inform them about the Hudson River Art experience by bringing them to the historic homes and sites. The educators stood where the painters once stood at various scenic venues. Despite the rains which washed out roads prior to the program and made landscape walks a challenge, the participants were able to gain insight into the Hudson River Art experience especially with lunch from the site of the Catskill Mountain House, the preeminent tourist site in America in the first half of the 19th century.

Participating organizations in the program included the Catskill Center, Mountain Top Historical Society, Olana State Historic Site, and Cedar Grove, the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. Special thanks for making the program a success despite the challenges from nature and staff departures go to: Raymond Beecher, Greene County Historian, for his talk about his involvement in saving Cedar Grove as an historic site; Aaron Bennett, Catskill Center, for informing the teachers about the ecology of the region and the related lesson plans available to them; Bob Gildersleeve, Mountain Top Historical Society, a retired teacher, for his efforts as a guide in making the local landscape come alive and for auto-graphing his book to his appreciative fans following the bus tour; Carri Manchester, Olana, for her crucial help in making the program a reality; Richard Philip, a volunteer at Cedar Grove who did a superb job picking up the ball during an interim period.

"Thank you for the wonderful weekend on the Romantic painters. The group's Romantic Ramblings covered so much more than mere painters and I came home with ideas, increased knowledge, new insights, new friends and an eagerness to do more in the Catskills/Hudson River Valley. I plan to share my weekend with my colleagues this fall and endorse your Teacherhostel offerings."

Julia Bliven
Liverpool High School

One possible outcome of the program was the recognition of a more extensive program in the future on the Catskills which brings together the ecology, art, history, and literature of the region from the Ice Age to the Tourist Age.

"Even in the pouring rain, Teacherhostel participants returned smiling and clearly affected from an extended tour of Olana's landscape to discuss their impressions of the estate and learn about its education and appreciation of human cultures from ancient times to the present through a array of student, teacher, and public programs and activities.

The Roosevelt Experience Teacherhostel, July 17-20.

Teachers from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and the Hudson Valley participated in the program designed to inform them about the Roosevelt experience by bringing them to the historic homes and sites in Hyde Park where they lived and are commemorated. Participating organizations in the program included the Eleanor Roosevelt at Val-Kill (ERVK), Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (FERI), FDR Library, National Park Service (NPS), Scenic Hudson.

Special thanks for making the program a success:
David Woolner and Chris Breslith (FERI), Susanne Norris and Fran Urbin (NPS), Jeff Urbin (FDR Library), Andy Bicking (Scenic Hudson), Cathy Collins, Jennifer Tripplet, and Lara Cifone (ERVK) and to our guest speakers, Ray Raymond and Joyce Ghee who provided contrasting insights along with David Woolner to Roosevelt the global strategist with Roosevelt the local and county historian. During the program one was constantly reminded of these two aspects of the life of Franklin Roosevelt as a leader in the global arena, who helped create institutions which continue to this very day, with his love of local history in Hyde Park, Dutchess County, the Hudson Valley, and New York. Perhaps it was his own childhood experiences and love of local history which help keep him grounded during years of the Depression and world war.

Mission Statement
The Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding the knowledge and appreciation of human cultures from ancient times to the present through a array of student, teacher, and public programs and activities.

The goals and objectives of the organization are:
1. To promote the inclusion and development of history and archaeology in the k-12 curriculum;
2. To increase the public awareness of the benefits of archaeology and history through public programs.
3. To provide history and archaeology enrichment programs at the k-12 level
4. To develop, implement, and teach history and archaeology programs for teachers by working with the schools and teacher centers;
5. To work with educational institutions of higher learning, government organization, cultural institutions, and professional archaeological and historical organizations to develop, promote, and implement archaeological and historical programs.

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