

A Quick Guide to the Hudson River Valley

This guide provides brief descriptions of four absolutely must-see sites in the Hudson River Valley. The guide will help establish links between the historic preservation and environmental conservation of these sites, which was a central theme of our class.



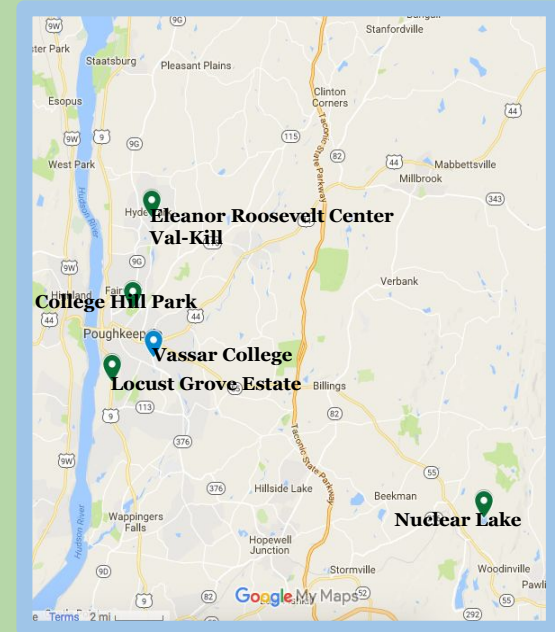
Class portrait

Top Row (left to right): Elizabeth Liza Garrity, Gabrielle Pollack, Anna Beeman, Pedro Millard

Bottom row (left to right): Kaela Akina-Magnussen, Joan Krickellas, Haley Kardek, Josean Melendez

Locust Grove, a National Historic Landmark estate located on US 9 in the Town of Poughkeepsie, New York.

4 Awesome Places to Visit in the Hudson Valley



This pamphlet was created by ENST- 291, Vassar College Field Experiences in the Hudson Valley. Over the course of six weeks, we researched and visited places in the Hudson Valley to learn about the intersections of environmental and historical preservation. This map locates four of our favorite sites!

If you want more information on any of these sites or any additional sites that we visited in the Hudson Valley, you can visit our class blog at <http://pages.vassar.edu/historicenvironments/>

Val-Kill

Located in Hyde Park, NY, Val-Kill is the only National Historic site dedicated to a First Lady. It was the part-time home of Eleanor Roosevelt who is remembered as a pioneer of human rights and author of the Declaration of Human Rights. The property once served as the location of Val-Kill Industries, a manufacturing company started by Roosevelt and some friends to supplement the income of nearby farming families.

The house is full of Roosevelt family history and artifacts. Official tours take you indoors, but not to the upstairs which some rangers believe to be haunted by Eleanor's ghost. Outside, there is a creek, garden, and expansive grounds with trails for walking when the weather is beautiful.



Nuclear Lake



Just over 17 miles south-east of the city of Poughkeepsie, NY and 26 miles north-east of Newburgh, NY, the national and world-renowned foot-path, the Appalachian Trail, passes Nuclear Lake. A stunningly serene small lake with a rocky forest as its frame, Nuclear Lake namesake is tied to its history. Previously owned by United Nuclear Corporation to experiment with bomb-grade uranium and plutonium, in December of 1972, a chemical explosion blew out two windows in the plutonium facility near the shore of the lake, spraying plutonium dust into the general area.

Subsequent decades would lead to clean up efforts and eventually the area was removed from the National Radiation Commission list of contaminated sites. Now deemed safe, this area and lake remains a peaceful and enjoyable place to hike, boulder, picnic, or simply go for a nice stroll through the arcane woods and around the placid lake, and it is, moreover, quiet, especially on rainy days.

College Hill Park

Looking for a nice, quiet place to relax on your lunch break with expansive views of the town of Poughkeepsie and an interesting old pavilion? Well, look no further than College Hill Park, just one minute up the hill from College Hill Golf Course. As one of the largest open space parks in Poughkeepsie, it tells the story of an interesting past. The hill was originally home to a school called the Collegiate School, dubbing the land "College Hill". At the end of the school's era, the building was repurposed into a hotel. This hotel business soon puttered out and John Guy Vassar, the nephew of Matthew Vassar, planned to turn the area into an orphanage. His plans were never carried out, and the area eventually became a public park, with a pavilion reminiscent of the Parthenon constructed at the top to commemorate the park's history as a college. The park is not very widely used today, but it's a wonderful place to relax, whether rain or shine.



Locust Grove

Conveniently located on route 9 in Poughkeepsie, Locust Grove is a must see Hudson Valley destination. Samuel Morse, inventor of the telegraph, originally acquired this land along the Hudson river in 1847. Here he hired famous architect Alexander Jackson Davis to build a mansion, which is still standing today. After Morse's death, the estate was acquired by the Young Family, a prominent Poughkeepsie name, and remained in the family until 1975. Although originally marketed as the historic home of Samuel Morse, there has recently been an effort to focus the interpretation of Locust Grove on the lives of the Young family, as well as the natural beauty of the site. Come to Locust Grove to learn about life on a 19th and 20th century Hudson Valley estate, enjoy miles of hiking trails, and experience beautiful views of the Hudson River.

