



What's Out There[®]

Rhinebeck & the Mid-Hudson Valley



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Welcome to *What's Out There*® Rhinebeck & the Mid-Hudson Valley, organized by The Cultural Landscape Foundation® (TCLF).

This guidebook provides photographs and information about more than two dozen examples of the region's rich cultural landscape legacy, many of which were featured in *What's Out There Weekend Rhinebeck & the Mid-Hudson Valley*, September 30 – October 1, 2023, a weekend of free, expert-led tours.

Shaped for centuries by the Algonquin peoples, the region was hardly untouched when Henry Hudson first encountered the valley and tidal river that now bears his name. By the late seventeenth century, it was controlled by the British, who named the colony the Province of New York. Valued as a strategic location, agricultural hub, and trade route, the Hudson Valley was vehemently contested during the Revolutionary War, leading George Washington to refer to the region as the “key to victory.”

Throughout the nineteenth century the area inspired artists, writers, and designers who promoted the region's uniqueness, influencing national taste and making it a destination for both residents and tourists. André Parmentier introduced the European Picturesque style to an American audience, while Andrew Jackson Downing inaugurated a landscape gardening approach that promoted the benefits of less formal design, which he described as the “Beautiful” and “Picturesque.”

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, robber barons and their heirs transformed riverfront properties, siting palatial mansions atop riverfront bluffs and knolls. By the late 1920s, more than 30 such residences dotted river bluffs, primarily on its eastern shore, often accompanied by formal gardens. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a lifelong resident of the region, advocated for the democratization of Hudson Valley landscapes. He was instrumental in the acquisition and designation of the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site and gifted his home to the federal government after his death. He and his wife, Eleanor, carried on a tradition of civic duty, deeply rooted in landscape patronage that took hold in the region, as evidenced in its public parks, historic sites, commemorative landscapes, and academic institutions such as Vassar and Bard Colleges.

Building on this legacy, an array of cultural landscapes conceived in the last half of the twentieth and early 21st centuries such as Innisfree Garden, ‘T’ Space Reserve, and Long Dock Park, continue to remind us that artists and designers see the world in a different way, and that the tradition of exploring the relationship between art and landscape is ongoing.

This guidebook is a complement to TCLF's online digital *What's Out There Cultural Landscapes Guide to Rhinebeck & the Mid-Hudson Valley*, which includes a history of the region, more than 40 site profiles, along with overarching narratives, maps, historic photographs, and biographies. This print guidebook and the digital guide dovetail with TCLF's web-based *What's Out There*, the nation's most comprehensive searchable database of cultural landscapes. Profusely illustrated and carefully vetted, the searchable database currently features more than 2,600 sites, 13,000 images, and 1,100 designer profiles. It has been optimized for mobile devices and includes *What's Nearby*, a GPS-enabled feature that locates all landscapes within a given distance. A special word of thanks is owed to all who participated in the creation of the guidebook and online guide. We are likewise grateful to the site stewards, volunteers, sponsors, and other friends of TCLF who made the guidebook and tours possible. We appreciate your interest in the *What's Out There* program and hope you will enjoy experiencing the region's unique and extraordinary landscape legacy.

Sincerely,



Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
President and CEO, The Cultural Landscape Foundation

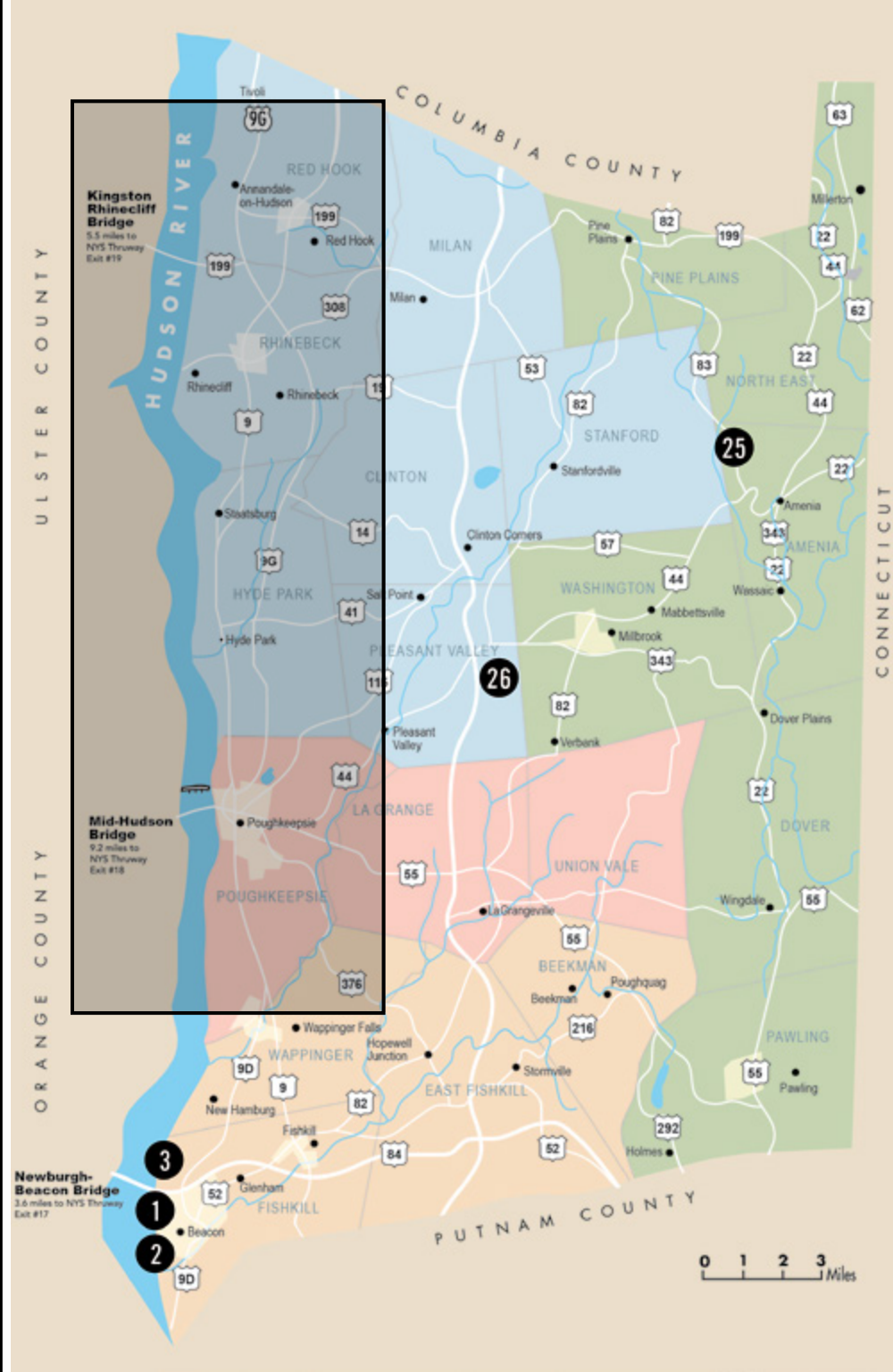


The Cultural Landscape Foundation® (TCLF)

TCLF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded in 1998 to connect people to places. TCLF educates and engages the public to make our shared landscape heritage more visible, identify its value, and empower its stewards. Through its website, publishing, lectures and other events, TCLF broadens support and understanding for cultural landscapes. TCLF is also home to the *Cornelia Hahn Oberlander International Landscape Architecture Prize*®.

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Image courtesy the Library of Congress.



Long Dock Park

Photo by Andy Tumulo, courtesy Reed Hilderbrand.

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Long Dock Park

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
Neighborhood Park
Waterfront Development

Landscape Style:
Postmodernist

Designed By:
Architecture Research Office
Reed Hilderbrand
George Trakas

Related Landscape:
Denning's Point

Once utilized by numerous industrial operations in the twentieth century, this nineteen-acre parcel was designated a brownfield site before it was acquired by Scenic Hudson in 1996. Situated between railway tracks and the eastern shore of the Hudson River, the site incorporates an artificial, two-pronged peninsula that extends approximately 1000 feet into the tidal waterway, framing a harbor. From 2004 to 2019 Reed Hilderbrand landscape architects remediated and redesigned the property.

From the main entrance, visitors descend west along an access road that splits, leading to parallel, east-west oriented linear drives and parking areas. The two drives frame lawns, an arced path, and a picnic pavilion. The upper drive serves as the central spine of the northern peninsula, framing crested turf earthworks, and terminating at a level platform overlooking the river. The lower drive proceeds past deciduous trees including sycamore, cottonwood, and oak, leading to a plaza paved with concrete slabs found on site, a pavilion designed by Architecture Research Office, and a harbor. A path connects to the southern peninsula, which features a boardwalk and lawn edged with sycamores. The boardwalk affords expansive views of the river and the Hudson Highlands, and is structurally reinforced at its western end by a site-specific installation, *Beacon Point*, by George Trakas. The terraced artwork serves as a functional waterfront deck and reveals the changing levels of the tidal river.

From the boardwalk and lawn, arced paths lead southeast, traversing a restored wetland and a meadow planted with native goldenrod, switchgrass, and little bluestem. Additional earthworks or “upland buttresses” buffer inland areas from flooding while framing borrowed river and mountain views. One earthwork features a curved, amphitheater-like seating area, which serves as an outdoor classroom. The paths collectively connect to the Klara Saur Trail, linking the park to Denning's Point to the south. The project received the American Society of Landscape Architects' Award of Excellence in the General Design Category in 2015.



Photos © James Ewing.



Photo © Sahar Coston-Hardy.

Photo © James Ewing.



Denning's Point

Historical Name:

The Island in Fishkill Bay
de Peyster Point
Presqu'île

Landscape Category:

Designed Landscape
Vernacular Landscape

Landscape Type:

Public Park –
State Park
Institutional Grounds

Designed By:

William Denning II
Gensler
Homer Ramsdell
Margie Ruddick
WRT Design

Related Landscape:

Long Dock Park

This 64-acre peninsula, dominated by second-growth deciduous forest and dotted with industrial remnants, juts out from the eastern bank of the Hudson River, extending south for more than half a mile, paralleling the shore. Once an island, the landform was inhabited by Native peoples through the seventeenth century and was used as a landing during the Revolutionary War. In 1821 William Denning II purchased the site and established a causeway at the island's northern end, connecting it to the river shore. In 1872 a portion of the property was acquired by Homer Ramsdell, who established the Denning Point Brick Works (DPBW) in 1881, capitalizing on the site's rich clay deposits. The causeway was widened, and the point's western shore became a popular recreational amenity. After the brickyard closed in 1939 the property passed between corporate interests until it was acquired by the state and incorporated into the Hudson Highlands State Park in 1988.

Trails, including the riverside Klara Saur Trail that connects to Long Dock Park, meet at a gravel drive, providing access to the point. The drive leads to a vernacular brick building rehabilitated in 2007 by Gensler to host Clarkson University's Rivers and Estuaries Center (now Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries). The institute is complemented by a landscape designed by Margie Ruddick of WRT Design in 2008. A meadow east of the building is shaded by cottonwoods, and to the south, paths navigate through beds planted with flowering shrubs and ferns, leading to gathering spaces. Southeast, the drive leads visitors to a cove, framed by the point and the river's eastern shore. A footpath leads west, into the thickly vegetated forest, and becomes an approximately one-mile, looped trail providing access to the western shore, defined by stretches of brick beaches. The southernmost, rocky portion of the peninsula affords sweeping views of the river and the Hudson Highlands, including Storm King Mountain.



Photos by Allan Greller.

Mount Gulian Historic Site

Historical Name:

Mount Gulian

Landscape Category:

Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:

Garden and Estate –
Colonial Garden

Landscape Style:

Colonial Revival

Designed By:

James F. Brown
Daniel Crommelin Verplanck
Mary Anna Verplanck
Samuel Verplanck
Virginia Eliza Verplanck

Tucked behind a residential neighborhood, this property incorporates 44 acres east of the Hudson River and features a reconstructed Colonial fieldstone house and garden, set atop a sloping lawn. The lawn, which is bordered by wooded lots to the north and south, offers borrowed western views of the river and opposite shore. The original house, built by Samuel Verplanck (circa 1730), served as the Continental Army headquarters of General Friedrich von Steuben during the Revolutionary War. In 1783 patriot officers gathered at von Steuben's headquarters and founded the Society of the Cincinnati.

In 1804 Daniel Crommelin Verplanck and his daughter Mary Anna established a garden on relatively level lawn south of the house. The garden was managed from 1828 to 1866 by master gardener James Brown, who was born into slavery in Maryland and later manumitted by the Verplancks. Beginning in 1880, the garden was maintained by Virginia Eliza Verplanck.

A peony border marked the northern edge of the four-acre, rectilinear garden, which was aligned with the south façade of the house. Formal beds of ornamental flowers flanked the garden's northeast entrance, with a modest pear orchard west of the entrance screening the garden beyond from view. Rows of beds planted with vegetables and fruits were separated by gridded, axial grass and gravel paths, with a pergola shading the path that led to the largest bed at the garden's rear.

The house burned in 1931 and was reconstructed in 1975. Beginning in 1995 the garden was rehabilitated and now includes formal beds configured according to a plan provided by Virginia Eliza Verplanck in her 1913 publication, *Every Day in My Garden*. Plant materials include boxwoods, ornamental grasses, as well as reintroduced yuccas, roses, and peonies propagated from extant specimens. Mount Gulian was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.



Photos by Allan Greller.

Locust Grove Estate



Encompassing 200 acres of varied topography, this property is situated between the eastern shore of the Hudson River and Route 9, including a 76-acre parcel transformed by Samuel Morse between 1850 and 1872. An Italianate residence, designed by Morse and architect Alexander Jackson Davis in 1851, sits atop a relatively level terrace on a bluff. During his tenancy, Morse transformed the estate from a working landscape to an ornamental one, returning agricultural fields to woodlands, while maintaining others as pastures and meadows.

In 1900 the property was acquired by William and Martha Young, who planted hundreds of trees, including pine and hemlock, along the property's perimeter and engaged landscape architect Daniel Langton to design a pond west of the house. Beginning in the 1920s formerly cleared areas of riverfront were allowed to return to forest. Though much second-growth forest remains, a narrow corridor has been cleared, offering a limited river view.

Open to the public in 1979, the site is accessed from Route 9, south of an extant but now gated looped entry drive. From the parking area, designed by landscape architect Robert Toole, a path skirts the shaded north façade of the visitor center, where it meets a perpendicular, crushed stone path. The path frames a rectilinear garden that includes turf paths and ordered rows of perennials and roses. An expansive lawn extends south, featuring a fenced, L-shaped garden recalling former kitchen gardens maintained by the Young family. To the north, the original entry drive encircles a lawn fronting the residence. Specimen trees, such as oak and beech, screen the residence from views of Route 9. Additional paths lead north of the house, past outbuildings and a pet cemetery established by the Youngs, meeting a five-mile network of footpaths and former carriage trails that descend through woodlands towards the river.

The site, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1964, is managed by the non-profit Locust Grove Estate and located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

Historical Name:
Locust Grove

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Alexander Jackson Davis
Daniel Langton
Samuel F. B. Morse
Robert M. Toole
Martha Young
William H. Young



Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Cemetery –
Rural Cemetery

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Howard Daniels

Now encompassing 165 acres of topographically varied land between the eastern bank of the Hudson River and Route 9, this Picturesque rural cemetery was established in 1852 by a committee, including local brewer Matthew Vassar, to alleviate crowding in local church burial grounds. Located west of South Avenue at the terminus of Academy Street, the cemetery originally included 54 acres of the former estate of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Smith Thompson, and faced Vassar's summer estate, Springside. Designed by Howard Daniels, the burial ground opened in 1853. It was expanded in 1883 with the purchase of 106 acres along its southern boundary, and again in 1914 with the acquisition of the Livingston family burial ground to the north.

The irregularly shaped cemetery is defined to the south by a sinuous woodland edge, and to the north and east by an unadorned metal fence. A pedestrian entrance is sited along the northern edge, while the primary entrance is located along South Avenue on the cemetery's relatively level, eastern side. From the primary entrance, marked by a two-story brick gatehouse, drives extend north, south, and west, forming a network of interconnected loops that circulate among organically shaped lots embellished with pine, maple, and oak trees. The northern drive proceeds through a modest pinetum, while the western drives descend towards the river.

A pond constructed in 1877 occupies the southwest portion of the cemetery and includes fountains, two small islands featuring rock outcrops, and a lawn edge planted with deciduous shade trees, including oaks and sycamores. West of the pond, an unpaved, curvilinear drive ascends a forested slope, leading to a white stone mausoleum set atop a grass hill that affords panoramic views of the Hudson River. The northern portion of the cemetery includes a mausoleum, erected in 1985, which faces west towards the river. The burial ground includes the graves of numerous notable individuals, such as Matthew Vassar, as well as lots relocated from several local church grounds.



Vassar College



Photo © Allan Greller.

Now encompassing 1000 acres, this campus was established in 1861 by Matthew Vassar on a level plain, approximately two miles east of the Hudson River. The campus includes an axial and symmetrical core, with peripheral sections that follow the site's topography. Upon its opening in 1865 the institution was housed almost entirely in a building designed by James Renwick, who also designed the surrounding circulation and plantings with input from Vassar and landscape gardener Howard Daniels. In 1896, John Charles Olmsted produced a report recommending a large central quadrangle defined by "working buildings" and, beyond that core, new dormitories laid out *en échelon* to form diagonal rows, or in a quincunx pattern. The institution implemented the central greensward quadrangle, defined on each side by structures including a chapel and library, while grouping dormitories around a secondary quadrangle to the north. The primary quadrangle is bisected by a linear entry drive, established by Renwick and Vassar, oriented on axis with the main building's western façade.

Samuel Parsons, Jr., was hired ca. 1905 and produced a general plan for the campus, including a detailed planting plan. Loring Underwood served as the campus landscape architect from 1915 to 1925 and introduced a pond (Sunset Lake) in the southeast portion of campus and an open-air amphitheater. In 1916 faculty and students created the Shakespeare Garden. In the 1920s Edith Roberts, the Chair of Botany, established an outdoor ecological laboratory dedicated to native plants. Between 1925 and 1929 the college engaged Beatrix Farrand, who successfully proposed plans for an arboretum to encompass the entire campus. Farrand's successor, Percival Gallagher, added to the arboretum, which now contains more than 200 species.

In 1955 architect Eero Saarinen proposed a campus master plan which was not fully executed. Subsequent masterplans were produced by Sasaki Associates, Inc. (1988), and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. (2011). The campus also includes a golf course, established in 1930, a 525-acre preserve traversed by a network of trails, and two structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Campus –
Quadrangle Plan

Landscape Style:
Beaux-Arts / Neoclassical
Picturesque

Designed By:
Howard Daniels
Beatrix Farrand
Percival Gallagher
Olmsted Brothers
John Charles Olmsted
Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot
Samuel Parsons, Jr.
James Renwick
Edith Roberts
Eero Saarinen
Sasaki Associates Inc.
Loring Underwood
Michael Van Valkenburgh
Associates Inc.
Matthew Vassar



Photo by Adam Jones.



Photo by Allan Greller.

Springside

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden
Ornamental Farm

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Andrew Jackson Downing
Matthew Vassar
Calvert Vaux
Walmsley & Company

One of a very few largely intact landscapes by Andrew Jackson Downing in the United States, Springside was the 45-acre ornamental farm and summer estate of Matthew Vassar, founder of Vassar College. In 1850 Vassar bought a portion of the Allen family farm as a possible rural cemetery site, and immediately began improving the property, hiring Downing and his partner, Calvert Vaux.

Springside expresses Downing's romantic landscape design ideas, articulated in his *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. He believed a formalized, geometric landscape was inappropriate for the rugged Hudson River Valley terrain, and promoted instead a scenographic landscape that was naturalistic in design. Natural drainage patterns became streams, fountains, and a biomorphic pond, and a network of paths and drives folded around the site's topography. The grounds integrated a variety of Picturesque landscape features, including meadows and woodlands, hills and dales.

Soon after the project began a nearby parcel was chosen for the rural cemetery, and Downing and Vaux redesigned the property as an ornamental farm, building a board-and-batten cottage and barns, an aviary, and an apiary. Vassar lived in the gardener's cottage until his death in 1868. Now reduced to 20 acres, the only intact structures on the property are the Gate Lodge and its curving sandstone walls, entrance pillars, and iron gate. Springside was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1969. In 1988 Walmsley & Company completed a Landscape Master Plan and Maintenance Plan. Two years later, the non-profit Springside Landscape Restoration (SLR) acquired the property, and is undertaking restoration of the historic landscape.



College Hill Park

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
Neighborhood Park

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Frank Berry
Horatio Nelson
Downing Vaux

Situated just over a mile east of the Hudson River, this approximately 100-acre park rises more than 100 feet from its main entrance along North Clinton Street to its summit. Once an apple orchard, the site was the grounds of the Poughkeepsie Collegiate School from 1836 until 1867. The wooded western slope of the grounds was preserved as a publicly accessible space known as College Grove, where abolitionist Frederick Douglass delivered a landmark address in 1858. After the college closed, the site served briefly as a hotel, and in 1892 the property was purchased for use as a public park. Improvements were made, including widening the curvilinear main drive, establishing a pedestrian path along the hill's western slope, and connecting the summit to the city's reservoir, built in 1872. In 1896 the park was donated to the city and Downing Vaux was engaged to further the improvements. Vaux's 1898 plan separated the park's drives and pedestrian paths, called for the addition of hundreds of trees, and set aside space for active recreation. A neoclassical collegiate building at the site's summit burned in 1917 and was replaced by a colonnaded pavilion in 1935.

The extant pavilion is accessed by steps on four sides and affords nearly 360 degree panoramic views. Its south façade is fronted by a looped drive that features a circular grass median, which includes a flagpole, two eastern hemlock trees, and a memorial bench topped with a bust of the park's founder William Smith. The surrounding sloped, oval lawn is interspersed with coniferous and deciduous trees and encircled by a road. A garden, established in 1934 by park superintendent Frank Berry as a tribute to Poughkeepsie native and rock gardening pioneer Clarence Lown, lies on the hill's eastern slope. The northeastern section of the park features a nine-hole golf course, designed by Horatio Nelson in 1932. Multiple pedestrian paths traverse the park, including a looped walk around the historic reservoir.



Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park

Historical Name:
Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
State Park

Designed By:
Bergman Associates
Thomas Curtis Clarke
Charles Macdonald
McLaren Engineering Group
Arthur B. Paine
Saratoga Associates

Related Landscapes:
Upper Landing Park
Empire State Trail

Completed in 1888, this 1.28-mile-long steel cantilever bridge traverses the Hudson River at its approximate mid-point between Albany and New York City. The crossing, formerly known as the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, stands 212 feet above the river and was designed by Charles Macdonald and Thomas Clarke to facilitate the transport of goods, particularly coal, to eastern industrial centers. When the bridge officially opened in January 1889 it was promoted as the longest in the world. Rail service was permanently discontinued in 1974 and in 1998 a non-profit, The Walkway Over the Hudson, assumed ownership of the bridge. With multiple partners, the organization worked to transform the bridge into a linear park, which opened in 2009 in conjunction with the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial.

The park's wide, universally accessible concrete deck, minimally adorned with lights, interpretive panels, and backless benches, offers nearly 360 degree panoramic views of the sky and skyline and accommodates walking, biking, and other recreational activities. Guardrails stand four-and-a-half feet tall and consist of widely spaced metal bars that allow for unobstructed views in all directions. Steep vegetated hills dominate the western view, while to the southeast, past the city of Poughkeepsie, gentle terrain extends to the foothills of the Taconic Mountains. The Catskill Mountains are visible to northeast, and the Hudson Highlands dominate the southern horizon, visible beyond the steel towers of the Mid-Hudson Bridge. Along the half-mile expanse that traverses the river itself, only a handful of added elements, including a flagpole and emergency station, interrupt the view. The park can be accessed from either of its respective ends or from the Poughkeepsie waterfront via an elevator installed in 2014. The eastern and western approaches are anchored by welcome centers. The park is linked on both sides to a path system of repurposed rail lines, components of the larger Empire State Trail. The bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.



Bellefield

Photo courtesy Beatrix Farrand Garden Association.



This site is comprised of the remaining 23 acres of a property acquired by Thomas and Sarah Newbold in 1885 and features a Federal and Colonial Revival residence and a walled garden. Constructed in 1795, the residence was redesigned from 1909 to 1911 by architects McKim, Mead & White. In 1912 Newbold engaged his cousin, landscape gardener Beatrix Farrand, to design a garden south of the residence. The linear, walled garden features a series of three rooms that descend from the home, each enclosed by hemlock hedging and traditional native stone walls. The widest section of the garden is nearest to the house and originally featured an elm tree that Farrand incorporated into the design. The other two sections become narrower as the garden proceeds south, creating the illusion of a forced perspective. Other areas featured a rose garden, a lilac and fruit-tree allée, a boxwood parterre, and a kitchen garden. Farrand also designed several gates with distinctive ornamental embellishments, including one at the garden's southern terminus.

The property was donated to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1976, after which the garden fell into disrepair. In 1994 the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association was established to restore the garden. Although the bones of the garden were intact, most of the plantings, as well as the original planting plans, had disappeared. Necessary repairs and replacements were made to the gates and other features using Farrand's original sketches, while plant selections were made following a nearby garden designed by Farrand during the same period. The former residence hosts NPS administrative offices while the garden is maintained by the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association and is publicly accessible. Since 1980 Bellefield has been a contributing feature of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site.

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Country Place Era Garden
Public Park –
National Park

Landscape Style:
Arts & Crafts

Designed By:
Beatrix Farrand
McKim, Mead & White

Related Landscape:
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt
National Historic Site



Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site

Historical Name:

Val-Kill

Landscape Category:

Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:

Public Park –
National Park

Landscape Style:

Picturesque

Designed By:

Nancy Cook
Marion Dickerman
Eleanor Roosevelt
Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Related Landscape:

Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt
National Historic Site

Known as Val-Kill (from the Dutch phrase for “valley stream”), this 181-acre site is situated approximately two miles east of the Roosevelt family’s Springwood estate and served as Eleanor Roosevelt’s country retreat. At Val-Kill Roosevelt chaired the committee that drafted the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, established a cottage industry that offered employment to local agrarian workers, wrote books and newspaper columns, and hosted diverse groups, including family, friends, world leaders, and school children.

The property was purchased by Franklin Roosevelt in 1911 and in the 1920s Eleanor Roosevelt and two friends, Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, established a retreat on the eastern shore of the property’s south-flowing creek, the Fall Kill. The modest compound is accessed by an east-west oriented drive, which bisects two large fields and is bordered to the north by a dry-laid stone wall and a spruce row. The drive follows undulating topography, becoming curvilinear as it progresses east, unveiling a fieldstone cottage set atop a graded lawn on the edge of a pond. A wooden bridge spans the Fall Kill at the southern edge of the pond, shielding a dam from view. East of the creek, the drive curves past a row of mixed conifers that partially screens a flat terrace and concrete pool, southeast of the cottage. The drive terminates at Eleanor Roosevelt’s former residence, located northeast of the stone cottage.

A cutting garden lies to the northeast while a southeast lawn features a rose garden, asphalt tennis court, large fieldstone fireplace, and a small, one-story playhouse. The property includes extensive woodlands and several groves of trees established by Franklin Roosevelt. In 1977 the property was designated a National Historic Site, the only such site dedicated to a first lady; it is administered by the National Park Service alongside the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site and the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site. The site is located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.



Photo courtesy the National Park Service.



Home Of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site

Historic Name:
Springwood

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
National Park
Institutional Grounds –
Cultural Institution

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Hoppin & Koen
Franklin Delano Roosevelt
James Roosevelt
Sara Roosevelt

Related Landscapes:
Eleanor Roosevelt National
Historic Site
Top Cottage

Originally inhabited by the native Wappinger peoples and developed by settlers in the mid-eighteenth century, this topographically varied land along the Hudson River was acquired by James Roosevelt beginning in 1867 and bequeathed to his son Franklin in 1900. The family residence, Springwood (expanded in 1916 by Hoppin & Koen), is situated on a relatively level terrace on the edge of an escarpment, affording expansive views of open fields, woodlands, an apple orchard, and the foothills of the Shawangunk Mountains. A linear drive bordered by a maple allée approaches the house from Route 9, bisecting a large, rectangular field, before curving southwest. Irregular plantings of spruce and maple shield the residence from the road. The grove extends south, providing an eastern backdrop for the residence's southern lawn. Between 1912 and 1944 Roosevelt enlarged the estate to encompass approximately 1,500 acres.

A kitchen garden northeast of the house was transformed into a formal, L-shaped garden in 1912, partially surrounded by hemlock hedges, featuring fourteen rows of roses and two lawns bordered by herbaceous plantings. Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt (along with their dogs, Fala and Chief), were later buried in the garden. The property opened to the public in 1946 and is the only location in the nation where a president was born, lived throughout his life, and is buried.

Established in 1939, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum occupies a sixteen-acre parcel of the property. The Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site is managed together with Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site and the Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site under the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Site. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 and is located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.



Hackett Hill Park

This park incorporates approximately 48 acres of rolling topography, dominated by naturalized woodlands and meadows, situated north of East Market Street and a U-shaped bend of the Crum Elbow Creek. The property features remnants of the New Guinea Community, also referred to as Guinea Town, a settlement of free and formerly enslaved people established around 1790. The north-south oriented Fredonia Lane, framed by extant, parallel stone walls, served as the settlement's thoroughfare, enabling access to the creek and its mills. The community disbanded in the mid-nineteenth century and in 1868 lawyer John Hackett acquired land adjacent to Fredonia Lane, establishing an earthen hill to the east, on which he sited a wood frame Victorian-style residence. The property, named Crum Elbow Farm and subsequently Hackett Hill, was deeded to the Boy Scouts of America in 1971 and was purchased by the town in 1991.

The extant former residence is accessed along an approximately 300-foot-long, looped entry drive lined with trees such as maple, pine, and cedar. The densely canopied hill is surrounded primarily by gently sloping lawn, framed by maple and hickory woodlands. The expansive lawns feature visitor and recreational amenities, including a playground and swimming pool. East of the hill is a memorial, commemorating firefighter Paul Tegtmeier and other victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The park is traversed by a network of footpaths that collectively measure more than a mile, accessed along the lawn's eastern and western edges. The footpaths provide access to a distinct rock formation, Gorilla Rock, and Fredonia Lane. In 2018 the New Guinea Community Site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Historical Name:
Crum Elbow Farm
Hackett Hill

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
Neighborhood Park
Commemorative Landscape

Designed By:
John Hackett



Photos by Allan Greller.



Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

Built in 1828 along the banks of the Hudson River, this property is one of André Parmentier's rare extant works, and one of the oldest Picturesque landscapes in the United States, predating New York City's Central Park and the Rural Cemetery movement. It features long curvilinear drives and paths in a setting that combines structured vistas of woodlands and lawns interspersed with sections of wilder native landscape. In 1835 the Langdon family purchased the property and relocated the terraced formal gardens to their present hillside location.

In 1895 Frederick Vanderbilt purchased the estate and 676 acres for a country house and extensive farm. He commissioned McKim, Mead & White to design a Beaux-Arts mansion overlooking the river, building the new structure on the footprint of its predecessor. Vanderbilt also altered the formal terraces to include a simple annual garden and formal Italianate gardens designed by James Greenleaf.

Between 1910 and 1913 Vanderbilt hired Robert Cridland to redesign the northern portion of the Italianate garden as a cherry tree lined walk. Cridland also collaborated with Thomas Meehan and Sons to expand the formal gardens with a new rose garden. The southern portion of Greenleaf's Italianate garden remained intact, with geometric perennial beds and a reflecting pool backed by a brick loggia.

Following Vanderbilt's death, 212 acres were transferred to the National Park Service. Restoration of the gardens, which deteriorated after World War II, was begun in the 1980s. The property is administered by the National Park Service alongside Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 and is located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

Landscape Category:

Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:

Garden and Estate –
Country Place Era Garden
Picturesque Garden
Public Park –
National Park

Landscape Style:

Picturesque
Italianate

Designed By:

Robert B. Cridland
James L. Greenleaf
McKim, Mead & White
J. Franklin Meehan
Thomas Meehan and Sons
André Parmentier

Related Landscapes:

Vanderbilt Mansion National
Historic Site Formal Garden



Photo by Frank, courtesy Flickr.



Photo courtesy the National Park Service.



Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site Formal Garden

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Country Place Era Garden
Public Park –
National Park

Landscape Style:
Italianate

Designed By:
Robert B. Cridland
Antonio Galli
James L. Greenleaf
Walter Langdon, Jr.
J. Franklin Meehan
Thomas Meehan and Sons

Related Landscapes:
Vanderbilt Mansion National
Historic Site

Located approximately 750 feet south of the Vanderbilt Mansion, this garden includes several steeply-banked terraces that descend towards Crum Elbow Creek to the east. The formal garden is enclosed by brick walls and feels secluded from the rest of the property despite its proximity to the estate's entrance drive. The space was originally laid out in 1875 by Walter Langdon, Jr., and evolved during the Vanderbilt tenancy (1895-1938) with the involvement of several landscape architects.

In 1902 James Greenleaf was employed to transform the two easternmost terraces into an Italianate garden, producing more than 60 plans by 1904. The linear space, approximately 320 feet long and 90 feet wide, is oriented on a north-south axis and includes a central path that gradually descends from the upper terrace at the north to the lower at the south. Each rectangular terrace is proportioned according to the golden ratio, demonstrating classically-inspired design principles. The axial path is anchored on each end by pergolas providing shade. The southern pergola frames a sculpture by Antonio Galli and is faced by a prominent reflecting pool.

In 1910 Thomas Meehan and Sons developed a terrace southeast of the garden into a rectilinear loggia garden. Later called the Rose Garden, the space is an extension of the Italianate garden, with an upper and lower level, a central east-west oriented path, and an arced eastern terminus. Between 1916 and 1934 Robert Cridland modified the Greenleaf-designed garden's existing structures and plantings, establishing a Japanese cherry tree allée in the northern portion.

A volunteer-based non-profit established in 1984, the F.W. Vanderbilt Garden Association, maintains the garden in collaboration with the National Park Service. The garden is a contributing feature of the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site.



Mills-Norrie State Park

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
State Park

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Morgan Lewis
Hal Purdy
Calvert Vaux

Related Landscapes:
Staatsburgh State Historic Site
Hoyt House

These two adjoining yet individually managed state parks extend from the eastern shore of the Hudson River to Route 9, incorporating more than 1000 acres of topographically varied terrain. The northern Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills State Park encompasses a patchwork of former estates donated to or acquired by the state in the twentieth century. These include land purchased and developed by Revolutionary War officer Morgan Lewis in the late eighteenth century, as well as two former estates, The Point (now Hoyt House) and Hopeland, designed by Calvert Vaux. The park also includes the eighteen-hole Dinsmore Golf Course, originally developed in the 1890s. Rolling topography, punctuated by specimen trees, affords players expansive borrowed views to the west. Pedestrian trails, some purportedly laid out by Vaux, traverse the park's undulating, forested terrain. The Mills' mansion, Staatsburgh, though sited within the parkland of the Mills State Park, is individually managed as Staatsburgh State Historic Site.

The land encompassed by the southern Margaret Lewis Norrie State Park was donated to the state by Lewis and Geraldine Thompson in 1934 and was subsequently developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC established curvilinear roads, a pond, and numerous stone structures, including the extant Norrie Point Inn (1935-37). The building, which now houses an environmental center, is situated along the river in the southwestern portion of the park near a marina constructed in the 1950s. From the marina, a trail proceeds north along the shore, defined by long expanses of rocky cliffs interrupted by beaches of tumbled stone. Oak, pine, and cedar, growing along the banks, frame views of the river, the opposite shore, and the Catskill Mountains to the north.

Norrie State Park is the southern terminus of the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.



Photo by Carly Hagens.



Photos by Allan Greller.



Hoyt House

Situated within the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District and Mills-Norrie State Park, this property's three-story Gothic stone residence, made with bluestone quarried on site, and its surrounding 91-acre Picturesque grounds were designed by Calvert Vaux in 1855 for Lydig Hoyt and his wife Blanche Livingston. Vaux designed the winding nearly-mile-long (4,600 linear feet) entry drive to curve around specimen trees, affording visitors breathtaking vistas and pastoral scenery. Vaux listed the site as "Design No. 26" for his 1857 book, *Villas & Cottages*.

Vaux sited the house on an elevated sheet of bedrock 100 feet above the water with broad river views to the north and west; the grounds, however, were uneven. Rather than regrade the site, Vaux incorporated its distinct characteristics into his design for the immediate surrounding landscape. The estate, originally known as The Point, saw the addition over the decades of barns, garages, potting sheds, and other outbuildings.

In 1962 the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation purchased the property from the Hoyt heirs to consolidate a 900-acre stretch of state-owned riverfront property, now Mills-Norrie State Park. The state intended to raze Hoyt House and use the footprint to build a public swimming pool; for decades the estate was left vacant and unattended while its future remained uncertain.

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in 1998 hired Doell and Doell, Garden Historians and Landscape Preservation Planners, to produce a landscape management plan for the site, though the plan was never implemented. The Calvert Vaux Preservation Alliance formed in 2008 to undertake rehabilitation of the estate, and over the next decade, with a coalition of local and national partners, secured more than \$600,000 in funding to stabilize and repair the building.

Historical Name:
The Point

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden
Public Park –
State Park

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Doell and Doell
Calvert Vaux

Related Landscape:
Mills - Norrie State Park



Photos by Allan Greller.



Staatsburgh State Historic Site

Historical Name:
Staatsburgh

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Public Park –
State Park
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
McKim, Mead & White
Stanford White

Related Landscapes:
Mills – Norrie State Park

Nestled within Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills State Park, this estate incorporates more than 100 acres on the eastern shore of the Hudson River, west of Old Post Road. In 1792 Revolutionary War officer Morgan Lewis purchased the property and constructed a home overlooking the river. By 1890 the estate had passed to Lewis' great-granddaughter Ruth Livingston Mills, who along with her husband, Ogden Mills, engaged the architectural firm McKim, Mead & White to transform the house into a Beaux-Arts mansion. Designed by Stanford White, the monumental structure sits atop an expansive lawn that slopes downwards to the shore. The Mills family also constructed numerous outbuildings throughout the property, including an extant pump house along the river.

From the eastern end of the property, edged by a stone wall erected in 1906, visitors proceed through an ornamental gate flanked by stone pillars. A curvilinear drive, lined with deciduous and coniferous specimen trees, winds towards the mansion, skirting an expansive, undulating meadow. After ascending the rise, the drive bifurcates, leading south to the mansion and west towards the river. The westward drive, lined with maples, is accessible only to pedestrians, and borders the shore, affording borrowed views of the waterway and the Catskill Mountains beyond. At the drive's southern end, footpaths connect to a larger trail network, which leads throughout the historic site and state park.

The property has been open to the public since Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills Memorial State Park was established in 1938, and it was designated a State Historic Site in 1970. The property is located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.



'T' Space Reserve

Located approximately four-and-a-half miles east of the Village of Rhinebeck, this 30-acre property, dominated by hillocks and hollows, was acquired in 2014 by the non-profit Steven Myron Holl Foundation. The site includes densely-canopied woodlands punctuated by rocky outcrops, meadows, permanent and temporary sculptures, and structures including a house, studio, and archive, designed by Steven Holl Architects.

Visitors arrive via Round Lake Road, and proceed along an inclined drive, edged by sculptures, including Holl's *Cold Jacket* (2016). The drive meets a renovated 1940 cabin before curving east. The cabin is abutted by a structure that houses a gallery and archive, nestled into a steep hillside. The structure's northern entrance is partitioned from the drive by a masonry wall, and includes a stone slab patio that is shaded by oaks and edged by rainwater catch basins. A secondary, perpendicular drive diverges from the main drive and leads north to a studio that incorporates a former 1959 hunting lodge.

The primary drive transitions to crushed stone and terminates at a clearing featuring a guest house established in 2014, known as *Ex Of In House*, set on a relatively level ground plane. The structure is complemented by an adjacent, rectilinear pool planted with aquatic specimens. To the south, a footpath enters the forest, dominated by red maples, pignut hickories, white pines, and oaks. The one-and-a-half-mile long path, laid out by Holl in 2017, navigates the topographically varied property, passing site-specific installations by artists including Richard Nonas, Oscar Tuazon, and Arlene Shechet. The trail leads to the studio and can be navigated from either direction, each providing a unique choreographed procession.

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Institutional Ground –
Cultural Institution

Designed By:
Steven M. Holl
Steven Holl Architects
Richard Nonas
Arlene Shechet
Oscar Tuazon



Photos courtesy Steven Holl Architects.



Wilderstein Historic Site

This 40-acre estate on the east bank of the Hudson River became Thomas Suckley's family home in 1852. It was divided from neighboring Wildercliff, which had belonged to his Livingston-Beekman relatives since the days of the Dutch patroon land ownership system of the seventeenth century. Originally an Italianate villa designed by architect John Warren Ritch, the mansion was remodeled in 1888 by architect Arnout Cannon for Thomas' son, Robert, and Robert's wife Elizabeth Montgomery. The interior design was completed by Joseph Burr Tiffany, a cousin of Louis Comfort Tiffany. Ritch's Queen Anne design ornamented the gabled house with a five-story circular tower and an expansive veranda capturing borrowed views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains. The landscape commission was given to Calvert and Downing Vaux, who capitalized on the site's Picturesque qualities. Intricate networks of drives and trails were laid out with specimen trees and shrubs. Prospect points were augmented with rustic gazebos or sheltered garden seats. The outbuildings, including the gate lodge, carriage house, and potting shed, all by the Vaux firm, were intentionally eclectic in design.

Until 1991, Wilderstein was the home of Thomas' granddaughter Margaret Suckley, a close friend and companion to her cousin Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, Wilderstein became a National Historic Landmark in 1990. Today the Wilderstein Historic Site houses an extensive decorative arts collection and is open to the public as a not-for-profit museum.

Historic Name:
Wilderstein

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape
Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Arnout Cannon
Samuel Parsons, Jr.
John Warren Ritch
Joseph Burr Tiffany
Calvert Vaux
Downing Vaux



Photo by Tom McWilliam.



Edgewater

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Andrew Jackson Davis
Robert Donaldson
Richard Jenrette
John Livingston

This estate occupies an approximately two-acre peninsula along the Hudson River's eastern bank, framing the southern edge of a sheltered cove. Developed in 1824 by John Livingston for his daughter and son-in-law, the residence was one of several riverside properties owned by the Livingston family. Robert Donaldson, who had previously collaborated with Andrew Jackson Downing and Andrew Jackson Davis to transform the nearby Blithewood property, acquired Edgewater in 1853 and engaged Davis to make improvements. Davis added an octagonal library and established a terraced lawn, dotted with specimen trees including black locust and weeping beech, that gently slopes westward from a colonnaded portico toward the river. Near the water's edge, oaks, birches, and willows frame expansive borrowed river views. In 1950 the estate was acquired by the writer Gore Vidal. It was sold to Richard Jenrette in 1969.

Edgewater is accessed through a gate flanked by stone pillars and dogwoods on the north side of the cove. As the curvilinear, crushed stone drive skirts a late twentieth-century guesthouse, southern views of the peninsula and river are revealed. Proceeding south, the drive hugs the shore and is edged by curvilinear beds planted with perennials and flowering shrubs and embellished with figurative statuary. Upon arrival, visitors enter a garden forecourt framed to the east by a sixteen-foot-tall wall adorned with climbing hydrangea. The garden, bordered by boxwood hedges, features a crushed stone ground plane, a central fountain, and four symmetrical octagonal beds that each include a quince. To the south, Jenrette introduced a pool and colonnaded pool house, approached by a curvilinear stone path.

The estate and approximately 28 surrounding acres are owned and managed by the non-profit Classical American Homes Preservation Trust, founded by Jenrette in 1993. The property is a contributing feature of the Hudson River Historic District and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.



Photo by Allan Greller.



Montgomery Place

Originally a working farm, this 380-acre estate is situated on a bluff overlooking the eastern shore of the Hudson River. The property was acquired in 1802 by Janet Livingston Montgomery, who established a commercial orchard and sited a Federal-style residence at the terminus of a half-mile-long allée of deciduous trees. Montgomery passed away in 1828 and in 1836 the property was bequeathed to Louise Livingston and Coraline Livingston Barton.

In the mid-eighteenth century, architect Alexander Jackson Davis added Classical Revival exteriors to the residence, incorporating borrowed views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains. He designed surviving features including the Classical coach house, Gothic Revival farmhouse, and Swiss Cottage. Designer and horticulturist Andrew Jackson Downing featured the property in his influential 1841 publication, *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. Downing provided plants from his nursery and in the late 1840s advised on the layout of the gardens and forest walks, which lead to waterfalls located on nearby Saw Kill. Coraline Livingston Barton designed ornamental flower gardens and her husband, Thomas Barton, established an arboretum with landscape gardener Hans Jacob Ehlers. The family employed numerous gardeners including Alexander Gilson, who served as the head gardener from approximately 1835 to 1885.

During the 1920s and 1930s owner Violetta White Delafield terraced the western slopes, creating a series of garden rooms for roses, herbs, and perennials, and adding a wild garden, a hedged ellipse, as well as an aquatic garden. Delafield descendants conveyed the title to Sleepy Hollow Restorations (now Historic Hudson Valley) in 1986, and the estate opened to the public in 1988. Bard College acquired the property in 2016. Located within the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, Montgomery Place was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975.

Historic Name:
Château de Montgomery

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Picturesque Garden

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Coraline Livingston Barton
Thomas Barton
Alexander Jackson Davis
Violetta White Delafield
Andrew Jackson Downing
Hans Jacob Ehlers
Alexander Gilson
Edward Livingston
Louise d'Avezac Livingston
Janet Livingston Montgomery

Related Landscape:
Bard College



Blithewood Garden

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Country Place Era Garden

Landscape Style:
Beaux-Arts / Neoclassical
Italianate

Designed By:
Francis Hoppin
Hoppin & Koen

Related Landscape:
Bard College

Designed in 1903 by Francis Hoppin, this 15,000-square-foot, rectilinear Italianate garden is nestled into a steeply sloping lawn overlooking the Hudson River on the Bard College campus. The formal garden was intended to harmoniously complement a Beaux-Arts mansion constructed contemporaneously by Hoppin & Koen, situated atop a series of steep banked terraces. The villa and garden are oriented on the same axis and connected by a brick path that includes three separate stone flights. From the uppermost lawn terrace, which features an approximately 250-year-old black maple, visitors are afforded views of the sunken garden, the river, and the Catskill Mountains beyond. The lowest formal terrace is comprised of four turf panels and is edged by a balustraded balcony overlooking the garden.

The sunken garden is bound on three sides by brick walls with a grid of perpendicular gravel paths navigating richly planted, geometric beds. The garden is accessed via a pair of arched doorways within the north and south walls, while a staircase on the east serves as a central, axial path. Where the primary axial paths intersect, steps descend to a rectilinear fountain. The central, east-west path proceeds past a sundial and terminates at a semicircular, balustraded terrace with a columned pavilion. A pair of symmetrical pergolas draped in wisteria flank this terrace. The garden was rehabilitated in 2016 and is enlivened by a diverse planting palette, including flowering shrubs, perennials, and topiary boxwood, in addition to statues and marble ornaments.

The estate was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 as part of the Sixteen Mile District, and is included in the Hudson River Historic District, established in 1990.



Bard College

Historic Name:
St. Stephen's College

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Campus –
Quadrangle Plan

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
John Bard
Margret Johnston Bard
Olafur Eliasson
Frank Gehry
Frank Gehry Partners
Charles Haight
Mathews Nielsen
Landscape Architects
Laurie Olin
Olin Partnership
Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates
Rafael Viñoly Architects

Related Landscapes:
Montgomery Place
Blithewood Garden

In 1860 John and Margret Johnston Bard established an academic institution, St. Stephens College, on eighteen acres east of the Hudson River. Charles Haight developed a campus plan in 1883, but due to financial setbacks only a row of dormitories was constructed. John Bard improved portions of the topographically varied landscape in the late nineteenth century by selectively removing rocks and vegetation, planting trees, and regrading terrain. The institution became Bard College in 1934.

Over the next century the donation or acquisition of more than a thousand acres of surrounding property transformed the campus into a patchwork of designed and vernacular landscapes. The campus incorporates the distinctive scenic topography of the Hudson Valley, including meadows, farmland, bluffs, rolling hills, and ravines, as well as the 825-acre Blithewood Estate, the 380-acre Montgomery Place, and 90 acres of Ward Manor. While the campus is decentralized, expanding north and west of Annandale Road, the curvilinear thoroughfare remains the central campus spine.

Since the late 1980s development has been guided by successive planning efforts. Notable additions include a library expanded by Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates (1993) and the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts by Frank Gehry Partners (2003), with a landscape dominated by oaks and yellowwoods designed by Olin Partnership. South of the Fisher Center, across tree-lined Manor Avenue, is a permanent installation, *The Parliament of Reality* (2009) by Olafur Eliasson. The Reem and Kayden Center for Science & Computation (2007) by Rafael Viñoly Architects lies on axis with the library and is anchored by a curvilinear plaza by Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects.

Managed as an arboretum, campus collections consist of more than 600 unique species of trees and shrubs, including several specimens that are over a century old. Multiple structures are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the grounds are a contributing feature of the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, designated in 1990.



Photo by Mike Shell.



Photos by Alan Greller.



Wethersfield Estate & Garden

In 1937 Chauncey Devereux Stillman purchased two contiguous abandoned farms comprising several hundred acres for use as a summer estate. He built a Georgian-style house designed by Bancel La Farge at the highest point on the property, overlooking the Taconic Range, the Berkshires, and the Catskills. Adjacent to the house, he installed a series of garden rooms designed by landscape architect Brian Lynch that include terraces, lawns, mixed borders, a pleached bower, tea house, pergola, and rill. Between 1947 and 1989, landscape architect Evelyn Poehler expanded the gardens to three acres, creating a strong axial arrangement with various follies and statuary.

A 190-foot-long arborvitae allée runs south to north connecting a fountain with motifs from Greek mythology to an oval reflecting pool. A second axis, originating from the dining room of the house, meets the nexus of the reflecting pool and proceeds westward, moving through a formal garden room with rows of topiary. Overlooking the garden to the north is a balustraded terrace set on a shale wall. Scattered architectural features include a belvedere and a Palladian arch. Poehler also designed a seven-acre woodland garden, employing a plant palette mostly comprised of native species, in the style of an Italian Renaissance bosco. Sculptures of mythological figures by artists Peter Watts and Josef Stachura are placed along trails and carriage roads.

Maintained by the Wethersfield Foundation since 2017, the house and gardens, along with bordering agricultural fields and forests, comprise the 1,000-acre estate. The agricultural landscape includes windbreak plantings, open drains, retention ponds, and wildlife borders—all part of an extensive reforestation effort led by the New York State Conservation Department (now Department of Environmental Conservation) – beginning in the 1940s.

Historic Name:
Wethersfield Place

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate –
Country Place Era Garden
Ornamental Farm

Landscape Style:
Italianate

Designed By:
Bancel La Farge
Brian Lynch
Evelyn Poehler
Josef Stachura
Chauncey Devereux Stillman
Peter Watts



Photo courtesy of Wethersfield Foundation.



Innisfree Garden



Photo by Oliver Collins.

The result of decades of passion and dedication, this 185-acre property, surrounded by woodlands, is situated a mile east of the Taconic State Parkway. Set within a natural bowl that wraps around the 40-acre Tyrrel Lake, the property, whose name references a poem by William Butler Yeats, affords visitors a sense of seclusion and privacy. A masterpiece of Eastern influence on a distinctly American landscape, the grounds were designed by painter Walter Beck, his wife, gardener Marion Beck, and landscape architect Lester Collins.

In the 1930s the Becks established a Queen Anne-style mansion (no longer extant) on the property. Instead of surrounding the residence with typical English gardens, the Becks went on a yearlong sojourn to search for an alternative. In London, Walter Beck discovered the scroll paintings of the garden of eighth-century Chinese poet and painter Wang Wei. The paintings inspired him to create a series of self-contained landscapes using natural elements such as rocks, streams, and plants to compose and frame nature. The three-dimensional compositions, which he termed “cup gardens,” are intended to be both viewed as scenes and experienced directly. In 1938 the Becks met and collaborated with Lester Collins, who continued to shape the property over the next 55 years.

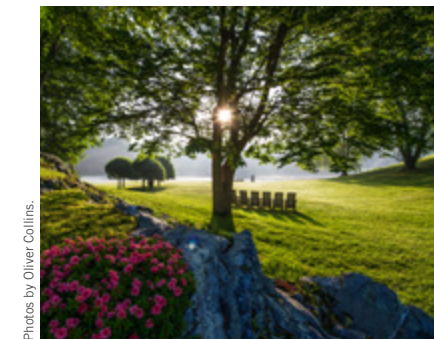
Upon Walter Beck’s death in 1954, Collins reinterpreted Beck’s work on the property. A student of the ancient Japanese gardening handbook *Sensai Hisho, or Secret Garden Book*, Collins incorporated Beck’s many cup gardens into a larger, more unified design, allowing visitors to gracefully traverse the space along paths of gravel, grass, or brick that surround the lake. Following Marion Beck’s death in 1959, responsibility for the garden transferred to the Innisfree Foundation, which was created to preserve the property and continues to maintain it today. The garden opened to the public in 1960. Innisfree was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

Landscape Category:
Designed Landscape

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate

Landscape Style:
Chinese
Japanese
Modernist
Picturesque

Designed By:
Marion Beck
Walter Beck
Lester Albertson Collins



Photos by Oliver Collins.



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