



TROY'S WASHINGTON PARK TO BE FEATURED IN THE 6th ANNUAL HUDSON RIVER VALLEY RAMBLE

Thousands to “Ramble” Through 10 Counties from NYC to Albany
Visit www.hudsonvalleyramble.com for a Complete Ramble Guide

The Washington Park Association is offering a walking tour of Troy's Washington Park and select homes on September 17 from 1 to 3 pm as part of the Sixth Annual Hudson River Valley Ramble on September 17-18 and September 24-25. This year's Hudson River Valley Ramble will feature more than 150 events throughout the ten counties of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area which extends from Westchester and Rockland to the Capital Region. The Ramble is sponsored by the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the Hudson River Valley Greenway and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Hudson Valley Ramble participants will enjoy a 2-hour walking tour of Washington Park, one of only two privately owned urban ornamental parks in New York State. Laid out in 1840, the park is rimmed by elegant row houses, once the homes of the Gilded Age magnates of Troy, an industrial center in the late nineteenth century. So like the fashionable homes of the wealthy in New York City, it provided the "old New York" backdrop in Martin Scorsese's *Age of Innocence*. Conducted by Washington Park Historian Peter D. Shaver and Park Association president Lynn M. Kopka, the walking tour will give ramblers a chance to see the interiors of several historic homes. The open houses will range from gutted shells currently undergoing transformation to graciously restored homes. Peter Shaver will discuss the history of the Park and some of its noted residents throughout its 170 year history. A donation of \$5 is encouraged to benefit the capital campaign to restore the historic 1840's Belgian block pavers of Washington Place.

Over two weekends, participants will have the opportunity to explore the Hudson River Valley and Hudson River Estuary on foot and by boat through a variety of guided walking, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, and biking experiences that highlight nationally significant historical, cultural and natural resources of the Valley. Several event series offer an in-depth exploration of Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area themes such as the Revolutionary War, the Hudson River School of Art, the Great Estates and the Hudson River Estuary. With a record number of events, turnout for this year's Ramble is expected to exceed last year's attendance of 26,000 participants.

Mary Mangione, Acting Director of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area (HRVNHA) and the Hudson River Valley Greenway, expressed enthusiasm about sponsoring the sixth consecutive year of the Hudson River Valley Ramble, and stated, "The Ramble represents a unique opportunity for residents and tourists alike to experience the scenic, natural and historical riches of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. The continued ability of the Ramble to attract both regional and national visitors demonstrates its significance as an effective tourism initiative for the Hudson River Valley."

All Ramble events are led by naturalists, ecologists, geologists, historians and trained volunteers from participating groups, which include nearly 100 environmental, land conservancy, trail and historic preservation organizations, such as Scenic Hudson, Inc., the Open Space Institute, The Nature Conservancy and The Riverkeeper. Many New York State historic sites and parks, as well as the National Park Service, also participate. Events are offered for every ability level and most are free.

A few examples of "rambles" offered this year include the *Full Moon Coyote Ramble* where ramblers will hike through the fields of the Greenport Conservation Area at nightfall, practicing their 'howls' along the way. During the *Sand Dune Ramble* at the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, participants will enjoy a two-hour hike over ancient sand dunes and will learn about the unique Pine Barrens habitat. Ramblers who sign up for the *RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary Paddle* will explore a prehistoric-looking landscape in the largest tidal swamp in the Hudson River estuary by canoe or kayak. At Croton Point Park Nature Center, an archeology hike lets participants take part in a practice dig, and several hands-on seining adventures give people a close-up look at creatures that live in the Hudson River. Other "rambles" that focus on significant events in Hudson Valley history include *In the Footsteps of the Hudson River Artists Hike*, the *Underground Railroad Tour*, the *Arnold-Andre Conspiracy Trail Tour* and walks of the landscapes of eight historic estates.

For a complete listing, visit the Ramble website at www.hudsonvalleyramble.com. The site groups events geographically by region -- Lower Valley, Middle Valley, Upper Valley -- and by county, and has a map that allows a "rambler" to locate events in a given area. The site also offers information on tourism and lodging, making it easy to plan a Ramble excursion. For a print copy of the Ramble program guide, call 1-800-453-6665, or e-mail ramble@hvc.rr.com. For Hudson Valley tourism information, call for a free Hudson Valley Travel Guide at 1-800-232-4782, or visit www.hudsonrivervalley.com for information about heritage sites, restaurants and overnight accommodations.