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SIA FALL TOUR REVIEW MID-HUDSON VALLEY

The Mid-Hudson Valley Fall Tour, Oct. 8-11, explored New York's Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster counties. Underlying the SIA's varied tour itinerary was the valley's rich historical and cultural background, which was being celebrated this year upon the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's exploration of the river that bears his name.

The 315-mile-long Hudson brings fresh water from the Adirondacks to the Atlantic, but the ocean sends saltwater tides 160 miles north, to Troy. In 1609, Henry Hudson, misled by the increasing depth of the river, sailed as far as present-day Albany before realizing he had not discovered a passage to China. Following Hudson's lead, Dutch settled the region in the 17th century and were followed by the British, who seized New Netherlands from the Dutch and named the colony New York.

By the time of the American Revolution, the Mid-Hudson had become an important production center for

the cannons, cannonballs, chains, and other iron products needed for defense. When crowding spread disease in New York City during the mid-19th century, those with means retreated to the Hudson Valley. Trains increased the region's popularity and made commuting an option for prosperous New Yorkers. Some SIA members were able to arrive at the Fall Tour by taking these very same scenic Hudson River commuter lines.

A few miles from the Holiday Inn conference hotel, SIA members were welcomed with a buffet reception Thursday night at the Steel House Restaurant on Rondout Creek, a tributary of the Hudson. This Kingston restaurant is the site of the former boiler shop for the **Cornell Steamboat Co.** and later the **Millen Steel** fabrication shop. Hudson River sloops transported locally grown produce to New York City and returned here with manufactured goods. The 1828 Delaware & Hudson Canal terminated at Rondout, making the port a major transshipment point for Pennsylvania coal,

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Matt Kierstead

SIA's Fall Tour participants gather for a presentation inside the Widow Jane limestone mine at the Snyder Estate, Ulster County, N.Y.

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