

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

John Shaloiko, Executive Director, SENYLRC or
Tessa Killian, Manager of Technology and Administrative Services, SENYLRC
P: 845-883-9065
E: shaloiko@senylrc.org
killian@senylrc.org

PRICELESS HUDSON RIVER VALLEY HERITAGE
DIGITIZED AND ACCESSIBLE

DEBUTS JUNE 9th

**Southeastern New York Library Resources Council Spearheads
The Collaborative Digital Effort of the Hudson River Valley Heritage**

HIGHLAND, NY (MAY 23, 2006) – What if residents from the Hudson Valley can easily look back to the past to their community’s history and heritage – real photos, old newspapers, postcards, maps, etc.? Or if students can easily research their community’s historic documents from their schools and homes? What about the serious researcher having the ability to access pictures, documents, maps, sound and video bytes that portray the rich heritage of the communities that comprise the Hudson River Valley? What if someone can search the region’s historic newspapers – searching for period articles, birth and death notices, and other interesting tidbits as reported by the press in the 19th and early 20th century?

On June 9th at Locust Grove, The Samuel Morse Historic Site in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., librarians, archivists, legislators and special guests will witness the public debut of a new resource featuring the extensive and diverse heritage of the Hudson River Valley. Called the **Hudson River Valley Heritage (www.HRVH.org)**, artifacts and documents are accessible and searchable through the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week for researchers -- academics, history teachers, students or browsers. The Hudson River Valley Heritage (HRVH) is a powerful new resource that allows libraries and cultural heritage organizations from the region to digitize, organize, and showcase a wide range of historic collections of the Hudson River Valley region -- from precious photographs and maps to multimedia clips, newspapers, postcards, documents, manuscripts and other memorabilia -- along with searchable labeling or metadata. Further, the online collections at **www.HRVH.org** will continue to grow as more and more organizations join this regional digital archiving collaborative.

-- more --

The Southeastern NY Library Resources Council (SENYLRC) is spearheading this significant regional information technology initiative comprised of computer hardware, a regional license to digital access management software called CONTENTdm™, and many organizations committed to offering the region's history through the Internet. The Hudson River Valley Heritage, established in 2004 when three organizations tested the capabilities of the software, is dedicated to creating and administering the unique resource for unlimited online access to the repository of digital historic materials about the Hudson Valley Region -- Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, and Ulster Counties of New York State. HRVH funding comes from federal funds, NY State funding for library systems, competitive grants and annual membership dues.

“This is an exciting collaborative initiative between SENYLRC and libraries, historical societies, museums and other cultural heritage organizations of the region,” said John Shaloiko, Executive Director of the SENYLRC. “Such priceless contributions today at **www.HRVH.org** will endure for generations, providing unlimited, online educational value and search capabilities for many inside and outside our communities.”

This collaborative regional information technology initiative is a fast, scalable and cost-effective way to build, manage, and share digital collections on the Web at **www.HRVH.org**. It circumvents the need for organizations to seek individual and costly archival solutions. Several organizations in the Hudson Valley River area began testing the capabilities of the new initiative in 2004. Marlboro Free Library, Vassar College and Wilderstein Preservation were already identifying and archiving valuable artifacts and materials for their own collections. Now, their efforts of preserving and sharing the essential heritage of the Hudson River Valley have been digitized and are accessed and shared internet wide.

In addition to the three pilot organizations, these other organizations now have collections residing on HRVH: Bard College, Chester Historical Society, Consortium of Rhinebeck History, Hudson River Valley Institute, Huguenot Historical Society, Library Association of Rockland County and Woodstock Public Library. Seventeen other organizations soon will be contributing digital objects as part of a federally-funded Library Services & Technology digital training grant awarded to SENYLRC by the New York State Library.

The HRVH is now seeking additional affiliate organizations within the Hudson River Valley to digitize unique and valuable collections to assure tomorrow's unlimited, historic information access at **www.HRVH.org**. Participation allows member organizations to use their own computer hardware and high-speed Internet access, or to use

SENYLRC's digital lab, which contains the computer hardware and software to simplify the digitizing processes to create, store and catalog (metadata) the collections. SENYLRC also offers on-site individual and group training for organizations' staff members to properly and accurately digitize collections, as well as, facilitate interaction among contributing organizations via user groups and a listserv.

For Hudson Valley River organizations interested in becoming archival contributors, contact Tessa Killian at the SENYLRC, 21 S. Elting Corners Rd., Highland, NY 12528-2805; phone: 845-883-9065 or e-mail:

killian@senylrc.org. No matter the level of sophistication, researchers can visit **www.HRVH.org** to explore the new online historic resource debuting on June 9.

###

The **Hudson River Valley Heritage (HRVH)** is a collaborative, digital access and archiving initiative between the Southeastern New York Library Resource Council (SENYLRC) and libraries, historical societies, museums and other cultural organizations of the Hudson Valley Region – Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Ulster, Sullivan, Rockland, Orange and Putnam Counties of New York State. At **www.HRVH.org**, researchers, students, instructors and website voyageurs are granted unlimited online access to the repository of digitized historic materials – photos, postcards, letters, newspapers, diaries, scrapbooks, manuscripts, memorabilia, maps, ephemera, and audio and video clips – about the Hudson Valley Region. The online digital repository is administered and hosted by SENYLRC, one of nine reference and research library resources councils in the state. HRVH funding comes from federal funds, New York State funding for library systems, special grants and annual membership dues. For complete details, visit the website **www.HRVH.org** or call 845-883-9065.

###

The **Southeastern NY Library Resources Council (SENYLRC)**, chartered by the NY State Board of Regents in 1967, is one of nine state-funded regional library consortia. SENYLRC's mission is to support its members in the Mid Hudson Valley in order to enrich their services and enhance access to information for their users. Located in Highland, NY, SENYLRC targets services to over 70 governing member libraries of all types – college, special, business, hospital, law and large public -- to help them improve their library services to medical, technical, scholarly and professional library users. Through recent initiatives like HRVH, SENYLRC now touches over 500 cultural heritage organizations and public and school libraries and library systems in the region. Visit SENYLRC at **www.senylrc.org**.

###