

Views From The Veranda

"The Shingle Style in Montclair, Glen Ridge, and the Watching Range"

Monday, March 21st at 7:30pm**

Montclair Women's Club~82 Union Street~Montclair, NJ

Architect and historian Mark Wright, AIA of Wright & Robinson Architects will present "*The Shingle Style in Montclair, Glen Ridge, and the Watching Range.*" This informative program will show how the Shingle Style developed out of preceding architectural fashion, and what it was like at its best. Several fine buildings in and around Montclair will be featured, including the oldest surviving house of one of the pivotal



Harry Fenn house in Montclair, NJ
Photo courtesy of Wright & Robinson

cultural figures of the 19th century, architect Charles Follen McKim. Mr. McKim was founder of the American Academy in Rome, and of the prominent architectural firm *McKim, Mead, & White*. In addition to his Shingle Style masterpieces, his buildings include the demolished New York City Pennsylvania Station and the Morgan Library on 36th Street.

Mr Wright will also include remarks about his firm's recent porch restoration at the historic Harry Fenn house located on North Mountain Avenue in Montclair. In 2015, the *Montclair Historic Preservation Commission* recognized the project with its *Bricks and Mortar Preservation Award*.

Come out for a fun evening and learn about the Shingle Style!

*Meetings of The Victorian Society in America, Northern New Jersey Chapter are normally held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 8pm at the Montclair Women's Club 82 Union Street - Montclair, NJ. Meetings are free for members - Non-members \$5 - Yearly membership only \$25! If your last name begins with the letters **E, F, G, & H**, please bring refreshments to the next meeting. Any questions please contact Christina at 973-744-5916 or email Christina.mayer@fmglobal.com.*



Our March meeting also features our much-anticipated **Annual Silent Auction!**

Please donate your gently used treasures, and have fun bidding on other great finds in our annual fundraiser! The national VSA scholarship fund provides for qualified candidates to participate in the VSA internationally acclaimed summer school programs in Newport, Chicago, or London. These are in-depth studies of the multifaceted architecture and culture of the nineteenth century. Visit the national website at www.victoriansociety.org for more info.

****Please note the time change for this month's meeting!!! - Come early!!!**



Greetings From the President

Dear Members:

It was disappointing that the bad weather caused the cancellation of our February meeting. Dr. Linda Epps is looking forward to giving her presentation at a future date. March is the month we have our silent auction to raise funds for the VSA National Summer School Scholarship. So round up all the things around your house you no longer love and donate them to the auction. It's also a worthy opportunity to get rid of any Christmas presents you did not like.

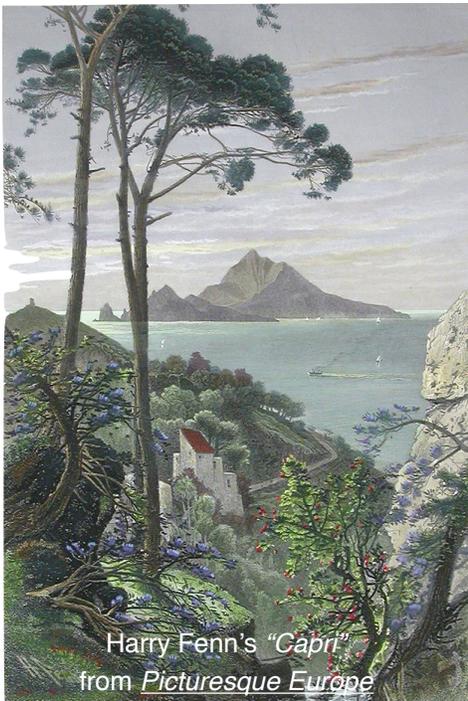
Plans for our May Bus trip to Connecticut are finalized. It is going to be GREAT!!! Hill-Stead is set on top of rolling hills. The house is filled with French Impressionist masterpieces collected by the original owner. There is a delicious lunch planned followed by a visit to the New Britain Museum of American Art.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

-Jane 

In The Limelight: Harry Fenn (1837-1911)**

Harry Fenn was an English-born American illustrator, landscape painter, etcher and wood engraver. From 1870 to around 1895 he was the most prominent landscape illustrator in the United States.



Harry Fenn's "Capri"
from *Picturesque Europe*

Fenn started as a wood engraver in London, but soon turned to drawing and watercolor painting. In 1857 he traveled to the U.S. to see the Niagara Falls, and settled in New York. He moved to in Montclair, NJ around 1865. Fenn is best known for the engravings he contributed to *Picturesque America (1872-74)*. Fenn and his family lived in England from 1873 to 1881 while he worked on *Picturesque Europe* and *Picturesque Palestine*. He was a much sought-after illustrator when he returned to the U.S. in 1881. He was commissioned to illustrate landscape throughout the world and the U.S. as well as to produce depictions of architecture and plant life.

Fenn died on April 22, 1911, at his home in Montclair, where he had lived since 1881.

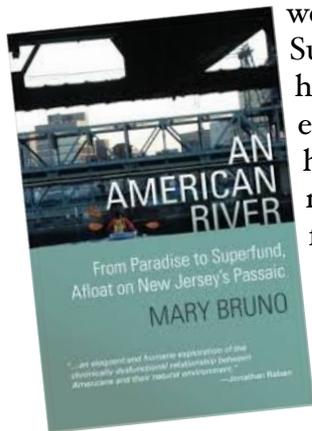
Author Sue Rainey wrote in her book *Creating a World on Paper: Harry Fenn's Career in Art*: "Fenn's dynamic and appealing compositions set a high standard. They built pride in America's scenic landscapes and urban centers, informed a curious, increasingly cosmopolitan public about foreign lands, and fostered an appreciation of printed pictures as artworks accessible to a growing middle class."



Marching into Spring Events



"An American River: From Paradise to Superfund, Afloat on New Jersey's Passaic River"- ***Thursday, March 10th, 7pm*** at Lambert Castle, 3 Valley Road, Paterson, NJ. Author and New Jersey native Mary Bruno will be reading excerpts from her new book on the Passaic River, which rises in a pristine



wetland and ends in a federal Superfund site. Ms. Bruno has kayaked its length in an effort to discover what happened to her hometown river. Discover the river's flood-prone natural history and unique geology, the corrupt practices of the Newark chemical plant that produced Agent Orange and poisoned the river with

dioxin, and the lives of an unforgettable cast of characters who have lived and worked along the Passaic and who are trying, even now, to save it. Regular museum admission applies. Visit lambertcastle.org for more info.

"Movie Night Fundraisers" sponsored by the ***Friends of Barnet-Wednesday evenings March 2nd, 9th and 16th at 7pm***, at the RE/MAX office 516 Valley Road in Montclair. The relationship between the Montclair/Barnet sister cities dates back to World War II, when during the London blitz, 52 British children were evacuated to Montclair for safekeeping until the end of the war. This goodwill continues with bi-annual student and adult exchanges between the two communities. There is a group from Barnet arriving in April for 10 days. The following films will be shown: *Young Victoria*, *The King's Speech*, and *The Queen*. You are invited to bring a sandwich to the event; drinks will be provided. Suggested donation \$10.



"The Banker, the Busybody, and the Irish Coachman: A Montclair Murder Case"- ***Sunday, March 13th at 2pm*** sponsored by the Montclair Historical Society. In the summer of 1879, residents of the sleepy suburb of Montclair were shocked to learn of a deadly altercation on Orange Road, when John Armstrong, an Irish immigrant coachman, was fatally shot by his employer Joseph Blair. In the highly partisan press coverage that followed, and in Blair's subsequent trial for the murder of his coachman, the victim's Irish identity was widely discussed and hotly debated. For defenders of Joseph Blair, John Armstrong was a violent and drunken "desperado," and an Irish Catholic who was a "bad Catholic" at that. For those championing the cause of Armstrong, on the other hand, the victim was "a poor Irish boy" killed by his arrogant and bullying "parvenu employer." What did it mean to be Irish in Montclair in the latter half of the nineteenth century? And why was Blair acquitted of the murder of his coachman? Come and find out! Suggested donation \$5.

"The League of Historical Societies Spring Meeting"-***Saturday, April 9th 9am to 3pm*** Explore the history of Wildwood! \$25 includes morning refreshments, lunch, presentations, and tours of the *George Boyer Museum* and the *Naval Air Station*. Mail \$25 check payable to NAS Wildwood, and send to NAS Wildwood, Attn: League Meeting, 500 Forrestal Road, Rio Grande, NJ 08242. Please include your name, address, email, phone and affiliation (VSANNJ). Email lhs.spring@gmail.com for more info.

"Lambert Castle Victorian Tea"-***Friday to Sunday, April 15-17, 12 noon or 3pm seatings***. Make your reservations now for this lavish afternoon tea. \$45/person, reservation required at 973-247-0085 ext. 201.

Preservation Tidings: Pennsylvania Station Gone but not forgotten



Pennsylvania Station ~ 1911

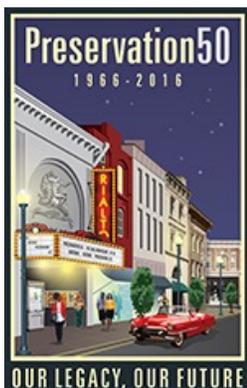


Penn Station ~ main waiting room, 1911

The original Pennsylvania Station in NYC was a marvelous piece of Beaux Arts design by McKim, Mead, & White. It was a monument of pink granite, marked by an army of 84 Greek Doric columns and 150-foot vaulted ceilings. Inside, glass and steel soared to make one of the most breathtaking train sheds ever built. Inspired by the Roman baths of Caracalla, its massive waiting area was one of the largest public spaces in the world.

But with the decline in passenger usage during the 1950s, the railroad was trying to remain solvent. Penn Station eventually fell into disrepair due to lack of maintenance. The glass-domed roof in the concourse became grimy with soot, broken windows were replaced with sheets of metal, the Jules Guérin murals became dark, colorless expanses. Outside, the pink granite had turned gray and dirty. Efforts to save Penn Station were unsuccessful. Even modern architects rushed to save the ornate building, although it was contrary to their own styles. Starting in 1963, the once magnificent monument was demolished to make room for Penn Plaza and Madison Square Garden.

This loss sparked the movement for architectural preservation in the city. Comparing the old and the new Penn Station, renowned Yale architectural historian Vincent Scully once wrote, "One entered the city like a god; one scuttles in now like a rat."



The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 sets up a system for distributing federal dollars to states, Indian tribes, and communities, to assist them in understanding and preserving their significant historic properties. A portion of this money is earmarked for local governments, many of which use the funding to help revitalize their historic downtowns and promote heritage tourism. Communities across the country are seeing economic, social, and environmental benefits from preserving their local character and reusing historic resources for contemporary purposes.



THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA

www.VictorianSociety.org

Northern NJ Chapter

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The VSANNJ is part of the only national non-profit organization committed to historic preservation, protection, understanding, education, and enjoyment of our nineteenth century heritage.

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82 Union Street is handicap accessible

VSANNJ Calendar

April 18th, 2016

*Amy Wax, International
Color Consultant*

May 16th, 2016

Preservation Program

May 18th, 2016

Spring Bus trip

June 2016

Garden Party

