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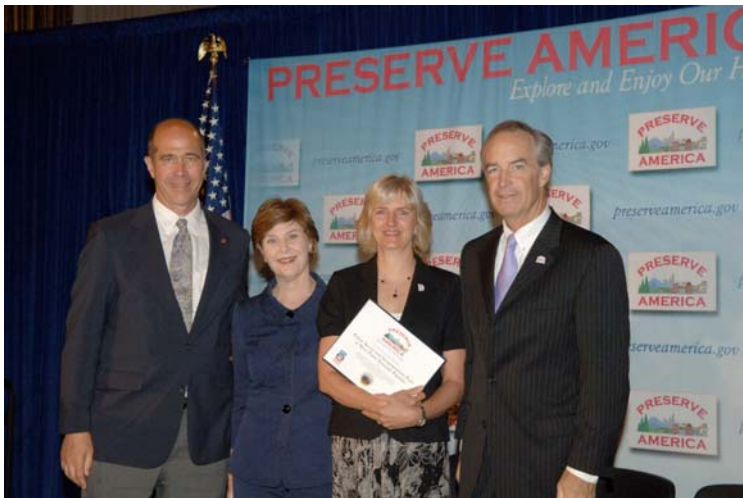


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Federal Grant Will Help Scenic Hudson Tell Exciting History of West Point Foundry



WASHINGTON, D.C.—At a ceremony in Washington, D.C., yesterday, First Lady Laura Bush presented Putnam County with a \$150,000 Preserve America Grant. The funds – the largest of 45 grants issued – will be used to complete plans for creating a world-class industrial-heritage destination at Scenic Hudson’s West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring. Senior Park Planner Rita Shaheen accepted the grant with U.S. Rep. John Hall, whose district includes Putnam County. Putnam County Legislator Vincent Tamagna also attended the ceremony.

Preserve America is a federal interagency initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy the nation’s priceless cultural and natural heritage. It recognizes and designates communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Putnam County was named one of the nation’s first eight Preserve America Communities in 2004.

“This grant not only is a testament to the significant role the West Point Foundry played in American history, but it recognizes Scenic Hudson’s efforts to preserve this important site and the role it can play in promoting tourism in Cold Spring and throughout the Hudson Valley,” said Ms. Shaheen.

Rep. Hall said, “Putnam County is a true historical and cultural treasure to the Hudson Valley and is highly deserving of this award. This Preserve America Grant will help ensure the continued success of the West Point Foundry Preserve and contribute to Putnam County’s tourism industry.”

Mr. Tamagna, who also serves as the Hudson River Navigator, American Heritage Rivers initiative, said, “Since we received the Preserve America designation, we have steadily built something that is a national model. This grant will help us achieve our plan to create a tourist destination that allows visitors to discover what made Cold Spring so special. Scenic Hudson really is a great community partner because of the quality of what they have that we can develop, promote and protect.”

(more)

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Foundry was a 19th-century technological powerhouse

A technological powerhouse, the West Point Foundry (1818-1912) was established following the War of 1812 to provide cannon, shot and shells for the federal government. It eventually grew to employ hundreds of workers manufacturing America's first steam engines, water wheels, pipes for New York City's water system, ironclad sailing ships, and stoves and ovens. Its most famous product was the Parrott gun, a rifled cannon credited with turning the tide of the Civil War. A virtual village with homes, shops, schools and churches for workers and their families, the West Point Foundry was immortalized by Jules Verne in his novel *From the Earth to the Moon*.

Since acquiring the 87-acre foundry site in 1996, Scenic Hudson has been committed to creating exciting ways to tell its history. For the last seven years, it has sponsored research by students in Michigan Technological University's industrial archaeology program. Their ongoing excavations have uncovered a wealth of information about foundry buildings, from the casting mill where Parrott guns were produced to worker housing. International experts in industrial heritage consider the foundry site unique.

Grant allows Scenic Hudson to create dynamic educational resource

The Preserve America Grant, combined with matching funds from Scenic Hudson, will enable the organization to complete the design of site improvements that will make the foundry a dynamic education-heritage resource for the public and an important link to other Preserve America sites in Cold Spring and throughout the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Gateways, gathering areas, thematic trails and innovative interpretive elements will tell the stories of this important industrial landscape and make the entire site come alive. The lead designer on the project is Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects of New York City.

More information about West Point Foundry's history and Michigan Tech's archaeological program can be found at www.westpointfoundry.org.

About Scenic Hudson

Scenic Hudson works to protect and restore the Hudson River and its majestic landscape as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors. A crusader for the valley since 1963, we are credited with saving fabled Storm King Mountain from a destructive industrial project and launching the modern grass-roots environmental movement. Today with more than 20,000 ardent supporters, we are the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. Our team of experts combines land acquisition, support for agriculture, citizen-based advocacy and sophisticated planning tools to create environmentally healthy communities, champion smart economic growth, open up riverfronts to the public and preserve the valley's inspiring beauty and natural resources. www.scenichudson.org.