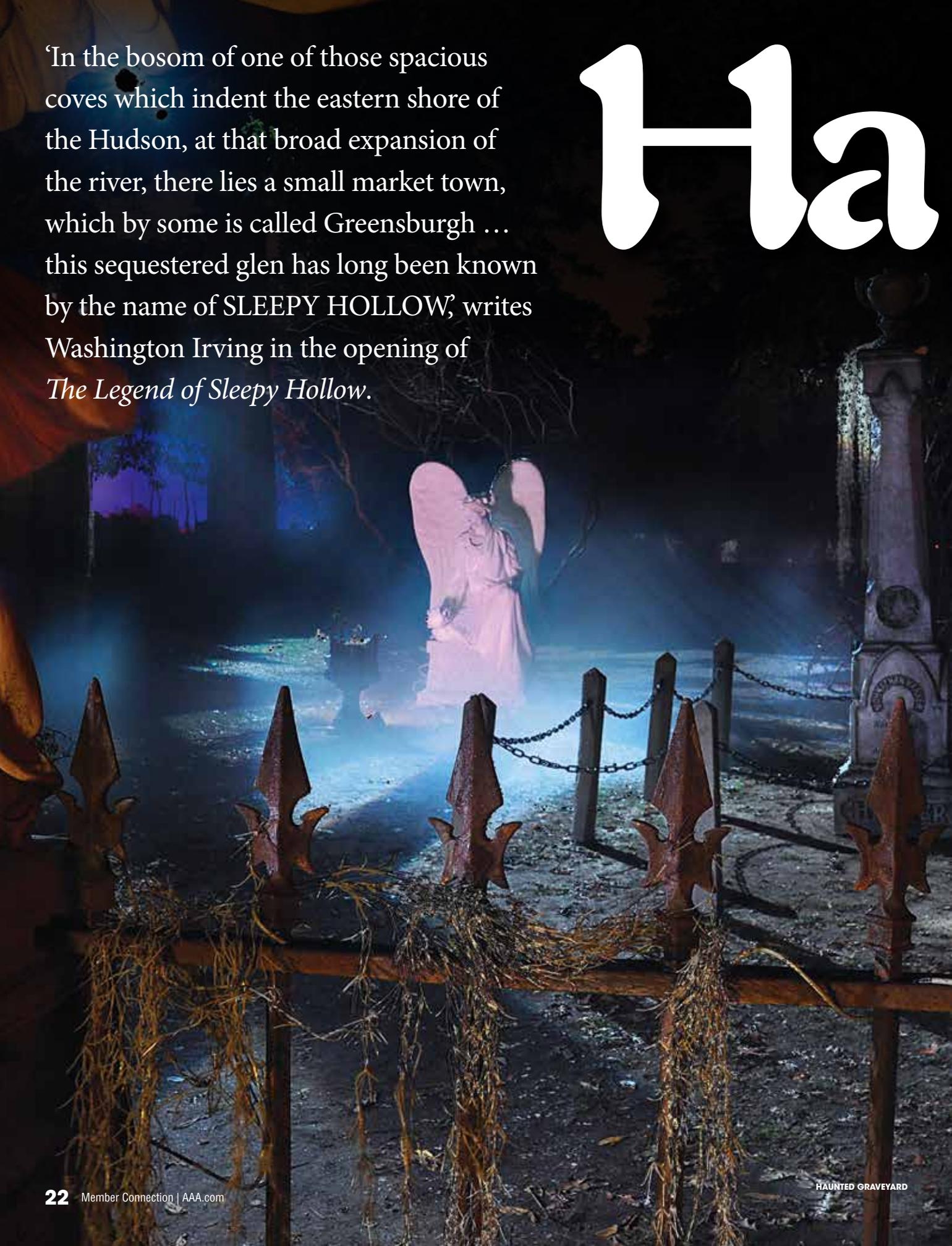


‘In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river, there lies a small market town, which by some is called Greensburgh ... this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW,’ writes Washington Irving in the opening of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

# Ha



# Halloween

## in the Hudson Valley

By Dave Parfitt

When I was a kid, I always loved Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," but I figured the sequestered glen was a fictitious setting. Imagine my excitement when I learned the Village of Sleepy Hollow actually exists in Westchester County, about an hour north of New York City, and embraces its namesake tale for Halloween.

Suffice it to say, Halloween is prime season for the region. Featuring more than 5,000 hand-carved pumpkins, the nationally renowned Great Jack O' Lantern Blaze, which last year drew more than 100,000 visitors, and Horseman's Hollow, which features more than 40 "undead creatures," are just two offerings from Historic Hudson Valley, a private, non-profit education and preservation organization that offers a full roster of Sleepy Hollow Country activities at its various historic sites.

From early October to early November, Historic Hudson Valley celebrates its spooky side not only with Blaze and Horseman's Hollow, but Irving's "Legend," and The Legend Behind the "Legend" as well.

### GREAT JACK O' LANTERN BLAZE

The Jack O' Lantern Blaze is far and away the headliner of the events. Imagine the biggest, brightest, most over-the-top holiday light display, switch out Christmas lights for pumpkins, and you start to get a sense of Blaze. There are life-sized pumpkin dinosaurs, an undersea pumpkin aquarium, spider webs, monsters, and even a Tunnel O' Pumpkin Love. Not just individual carvings, many of these displays are super-sized, in which an element like a 50-foot spider web is made up of hundreds of carvings. Thousands of visitors flock to see Blaze each year, and the event sells out every night in advance without fail, so buy your tickets ahead of time.

### HORSEMAN'S HOLLOW

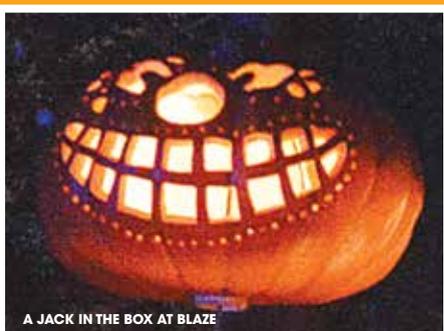
Horseman's Hollow is more along the lines of a traditional haunted house event, but set on the grounds of Philipsburg Manor, which dates to the late 1600s. During Horseman's Hollow, Phillipsburg Manor suspends its educational programming and brings in professional actors and movie effects to simply scare the pants off visitors. Once you negotiate your way through the haunted trail, you'll come face to face with the legendary Headless Horseman himself. Note:



GIANT STALKS OF CORN AT BLAZE



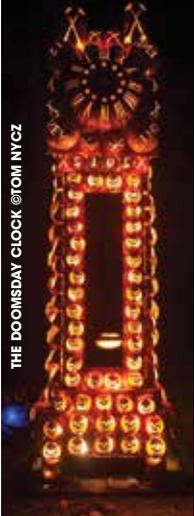
A FIEND'S LAIR



A JACK IN THE BOX AT BLAZE



JONATHAN KRUK PERFORMING AT OLD DUTCH CHURCH ©ANTHONY PELLEGRINO



THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK ©TOM NYCZ



THREE GHOULS ©TOM NYCZ

Horseman's Hollow is not for the faint of heart, and recommended for those 10 years of age and older.

## IRVING'S 'LEGEND'

For a celebration of Washington Irving's story itself, a dramatic performance of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" is re-created by acclaimed storyteller Jonathan Kruk. Named "Best Storyteller in the Hudson Valley," Kruk's performances put guests right in the middle of Irving's story. The 45-minute experiences takes place in candlelight at the Old Dutch Church (built in 1685) across the street from Phillipsburg Manor. Performances sell out, so buy in advance.

## THE LEGEND BEHIND THE 'LEGEND'

Looking for something a little less intense? Then The Legend Behind the "Legend" may be more your speed. On the grounds of Washington Irving's Sunnyside homestead is a daytime prelude to the evening activities. Storytellers and puppeteers perform around Irving's house, and objects related to "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" are on display. Daytime guided walks through the surrounding woods offer a new perspective on Irving's most famous tale.

So if you're looking for a scare this Halloween season, or perhaps a literary adventure, head to the Hudson Valley to find the sequestered glen with a schoolhouse, church and covered bridge over a millpond, and make your way to Washington Irving's Sleepy Hollow. ■

# IF YOU GO

## WHERE TO STAY

### CASTLE HOTEL AND SPA - Tarrytown Rated by AAA

This luxury inn is a member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World network and is a destination in itself. The 100-year-old landmark, also a member of the National Trust's Historic Hotels of America, features extraordinary views of the Hudson River and a new spa with Eastern influences.

### TARRYTOWN HOUSE ESTATE - Tarrytown Rated by AAA

A landmark property with a mix of historic and modern buildings, it features river views, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, tennis, an exercise facility and excellent on-site dining options.

### WESTCHESTER MARRIOTT - Tarrytown Rated by AAA

With 10 floors and 444 rooms, this large hotel is a fun place for families to stay. Amenities include casual dining plus Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, several lounges, an indoor pool, and an extensive onsite fitness center. Some rooms have direct pool access.

## WHERE TO EAT

### SWEET GRASS GRILL Tarrytown

This modern farm to table hot spot features an ever-changing menu that incorporates ingredients from more than a dozen local farms. Lots of vegetarian options.

### BRIDGE VIEW TAVERN Sleepy Hollow

A cool, upscale pub with a wide selection of draft beer, house smoked barbecue, and a variety of salads, seafood, and other tavern cuisine. Features excellent views of the Tappan Zee Bridge and the Hudson River.

### ÜMAMI CAFÉ Croton-on-Hudson

This kid-friendly spot offers basics for the young'ns but pleases adults as well with its menu of creative, internationally inspired dishes.

## AAA CAN HELP YOU PLAN YOUR TRIP.

To get started, call (800) 836-2582 or visit [AAA.com/HudsonValley](http://AAA.com/HudsonValley)