

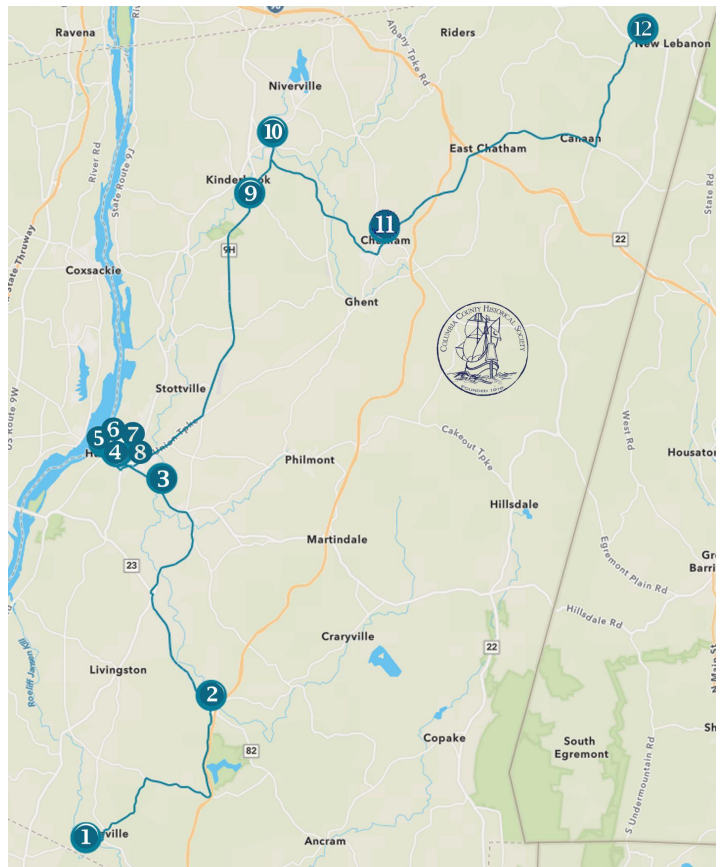
# Lights, Camera, Road Trip:

## *Historic Movie Moments in Columbia County*

We may be 2,852 miles from Hollywood, but Columbia County has long been a favorite of filmmakers. From Martin Scorsese to Ang Lee, some of cinema’s greatest legends have given our neck of the woods a starring role in their movies. Others, including producer James Ivory, have even made Columbia County their home.

Explore our historic movie moments on this self-guided **Drive Through History** tour.

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Hudson  
Detail:



## 1 Elizaville Diner

573 West Kerleys Corners Road, Elizaville

First up: a classic country diner that played a big role on screen in Jim Jarmusch's satirical zombie comedy *The Dead Don't Die* (2019). Starring Bill Murray, Adam Driver, Chloe Sevigny, Danny Glover, Tilda Swinton and other A-List stars, the film used exteriors of the Elizaville Diner for the fictional Centreville Diner, where much of the blood-spattered zombie action takes place. The film opened the Cannes International Film Festival in 2019, and Upstate Films in Rhinebeck later hosted a red carpet premiere.

***Head northeast on Kerleys Corners Road. Slight left onto County Road 2. In a half-mile, slight left onto County Route 10/County Route 19. Turn right onto Snyderville Road and travel for 2.7 miles, then turn right onto County Route 8. In 2.5 miles, slight left onto County Road 15. In 3.5 miles, turn right onto NY-82. The destination will be on your right.***



Photo: [Flickr](#)



Still from *The Dead Don't Die* (2019)

## 2 West Taghkanic Diner

1016 NY-82, Ancram

Jarmusch definitely had his pick of diners in Columbia County—so much so that he selected not one, but two to create the diner in his film. According to a *Spectrum Local News* article from April 2019, the cast and crew of *The Dead Don't Die* spent about a week shooting scenes at the West Taghkanic Diner. The rest of the film was shot on the other side of the Hudson River, in the town of Fleischmanns.

**Stick around for a locavore brunch or lunch at West Taghkanic Diner, which has been spiffed up significantly since its film cameo.**

***Head northwest on NY-82 N for 4.7 miles. Turn right onto NY-23 E/NY-9H N. In 3.9 miles, turn left onto NY-23B W. In about 1.2 miles, the destination will be on your right.***



Photo: CCHS

### ③ ‘Marilyn Monroe House’

361 NY-23B, Claverack

**NOTE: This is a private residence. Please do not trespass or disturb the owners in any way.**

As you drive to Hudson, keep your eyes peeled for a white Italianate mansion on the north side of Route 23B, partially hidden behind a hornbeam hedge. Officially called the Catherine Bushnell Mansion, the house functioned as a “Pension for the Elite” during the mid 20th century. One of the guests to stay here was Marilyn Monroe, who visited in 1954 to get away from New York City—and her divorce from Joe DiMaggio. It’s been known locally as the Marilyn Monroe House ever since. Other famous former guests include Eleanor Roosevelt and actress Helen Hayes.

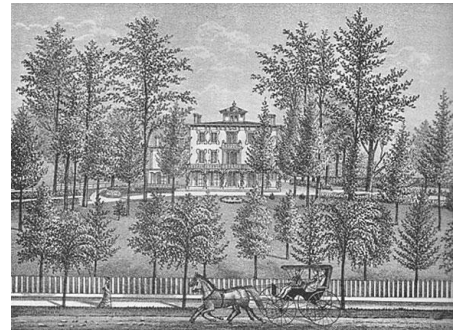
***Head northwest on NY-23B W for 1.2 miles. Turn left onto Columbia Turnpike. In .4 miles, turn left onto Prospect Avenue. Continue straight onto Worth Avenue. Turn right onto Union Street, then turn right onto S. 7th Street and the destination will be on your right.***

### ④ Governors Tavern

14 South 7th Street, Hudson

It should come as no big surprise that Hudson’s storybook streets have been used for many movie productions. The Governor’s Tavern—formerly the Iron Horse, a nod to the railroad tracks just out front—played prominently in at least two films: *Ironweed* (1987) and *Nobody’s Fool* (1994). *Ironweed* was based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of the same name by Albany writer William Kennedy. The film adaptation starred Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep, both of whom were nominated for Oscars for their performances. In *Nobody’s Fool*, the bar was the setting for the White Horse Tavern, the favorite hangout of Donald “Sully” Sullivan, a small town ne’er-do-well played by Paul Newman.

***Walk or drive northeast on 7th Street, then turn right onto Warren Street and the destination will be on your right in about 200 feet.***



Engraving: *History of Columbia County, NY* (1878)

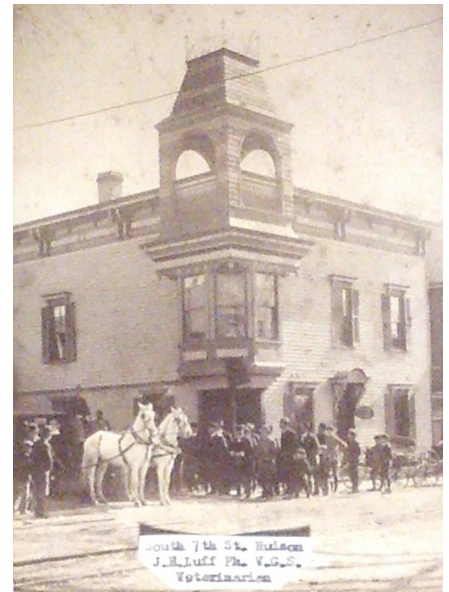


Photo: [gossipsofrivertown.com](http://gossipsofrivertown.com)

## 5 Grazin' Diner

717 Warren Street, Hudson

Jim Jarmusch isn't the only filmmaker infatuated with Columbia County's classic diners. Director Robert Benton chose the Grazin' Diner for a major filming location in *Nobody's Fool*. It makes several appearances as Hattie's Diner, the local breakfast spot for Newman's character and others in the fictional town of North Bath, New York. *Nobody's Fool* also filmed in Beacon, Fishkill, Newburgh and Poughkeepsie.

***Walk or drive northwest on Warren Street to 6th Street. The destination will be on your left.***



Photo: CCHS

## 6 First National Bank of Hudson

561 Warren Street, Hudson

In 1959, Harry Belafonte shot the bank robbery flick *Odds Against Tomorrow* in Hudson. While many locations around the city were used, the climactic scenes were filmed at the c. 1922 First National Bank at 6th and Warren—now a branch of Berkshire Bank. According to a 1986 UPI article, Hudson was selected “because the bank had a side exit which was crucial to the bank robbery scene in the film.” Hundreds of locals were cast as extras. About 12 years later, Belafonte bought a rural property in nearby Chatham, which he named Day-O Farm.

***Head northwest on Warren Street, then turn left onto S. 5th Street. Make a right onto Union Street, then turn left onto Third Street. Turn left onto Allen Street.***



Still from *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959)

## 7 300-400 Allen Street

Hudson

This atmospheric city block, home to several fine Hudson mansions, seems made for movie magic. It has doubled for two very different places and time periods in at least two productions—first, as Depression-era Albany in *Ironweed*, and more recently as 1920s Alabama in *Z: The Beginning of Everything* (2015), an Amazon series about the life of Zelda Fitzgerald, starring Christina Ricci.

***Continue southeast on Allen Street, which turns slightly left and becomes W. Court Street. Turn right onto Union Street. Turn left onto S. 4th Street, then turn right onto Columbia Street. The destination will be on your left.***

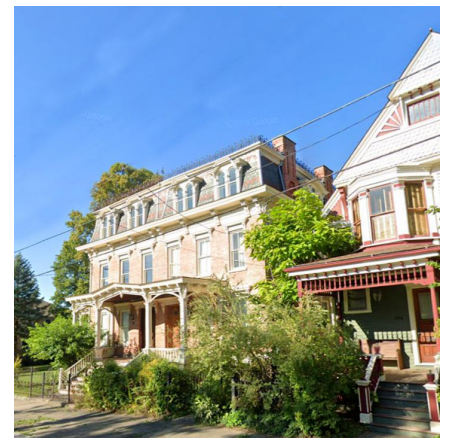


Photo: Google Street View

## 8 Time & Space Limited

*434 Columbia Street, Hudson*

While you're in Hudson, see what's screening at Time & Space Limited, one of the longtime indie film institutions of the Hudson Valley. This non-profit movie theater, gallery and community art space was founded by Linda Mussman in New York City back in 1973; Claudia Bruce joined as co-director in 1976. In 1991, the two brought TSL to Hudson, where it has since served as a beacon for the arts of every kind. So iconic are Mussman and Bruce in the art and film community that *A Bread Factory*, a 2018 film starring Tyne Daly and local actress Elisabeth Henry, was inspired by their lives and work. (It was partially filmed at TSL, too.)



Photo: [timeandspace.org](http://timeandspace.org)

***Continue southeast on Columbia Street, then turn right to stay on Columbia Street. Continue onto NY-66 N. for 3 miles. Turn left onto NY-9H. In 8 miles, the destination will be on your left.***

## 9 Luykas Van Alen House

*2589 NY-9H, Kinderhook*

One of the most enchanting places in Columbia County, the 1737 Luykas Van Alen House was the backdrop for an equally enchanting film: Martin Scorsese's *The Age of Innocence* (1993), the movie adaptation of Edith Wharton's timeless novel. In 1992, Scorsese's crew arrived in Kinderhook to film exterior scenes at the traditional Dutch farmhouse. In the film, the building serves as the exterior of the "Patroon's House," a cottage on the grounds of the fictional Skuytercliff mansion, where Countess Olenska (Michelle Pfeiffer) and Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) reveal their affection for one another. Most of the rest of the film was shot in Troy, New York.



Photo: CCHS

In the summer of 2018, contemporary artist Rachel Rose shot scenes for her video installation, *Enclosure*, at the Luykas Van Alen House and Kinderhook Farm. The work, which is set in 17th-century Europe, chronicles the economic and ecological changes brought about by the shift from feudalism to capitalism.

***Head north on NY-9H N. Take the Kinderhook exit on the right, then turn left onto McCagg Road. In .6 miles, turn left onto Novak Road. Continue straight onto Rod and Gun Club Road. In .6 miles, slight left onto NY-203/Chatham Street. When you reach Main Street, the parking area will be on your right.***

## 10 Beaver Mill Falls Overlook

*Main Street at Chatham Street (NY-203), Valatie*

In 1921, world-famous escape artist Harry Houdini came to Valatie to film scenes for his final film, *Haldane of the Secret Service* (1923). Look down at the base of the falls and you'll see where Houdini performed a daring water wheel stunt which formed the climactic scene of the film.

Spoiler alert: He escapes.

***Head southeast on NY-203 S/Chatham Street for 6.2 miles. In Chatham, turn left onto Hudson Avenue. Continue onto Main Street. The destination will be on your left.***

## 11 Crandell Theatre

*48 Main Street, Chatham*

A classic movie palace on a small-town scale, the Crandell Theatre opened on Christmas Day 1926 with a screening of a Jules Verne photoplay. The theater was built by Walter S. Crandell, a Chatham native and banker, and designed by Glens Falls architect Louis L. Wetmore, who chose an evocative Spanish Renaissance style for the single-screen theater. Though renovations are being planned, little has changed over the years—and many locals like it that way. As the home of the FilmColumbia festival for the last two decades, the Crandell has been the scene for red carpet screenings, premieres and filmmaker appearances, bringing big-time glitz to Main Street Chatham.

**A few doors down, the People's Pub (36 Main Street) is a favorite haunt of local and visiting film pros, especially during the FilmColumbia festival.**

***Head northeast on Main Street. At the traffic circle, take the first exit and keep right to continue on Austerlitz Street. Turn left onto NY-295 E. and travel 9.3 miles. Turn left onto County Route 5. In 4.5 miles, turn right onto US-20 E. The destination will be on your left.***



Still from *Haldane of the Secret Service* (1923)



Photo courtesy [crandelltheatre.org](http://crandelltheatre.org)

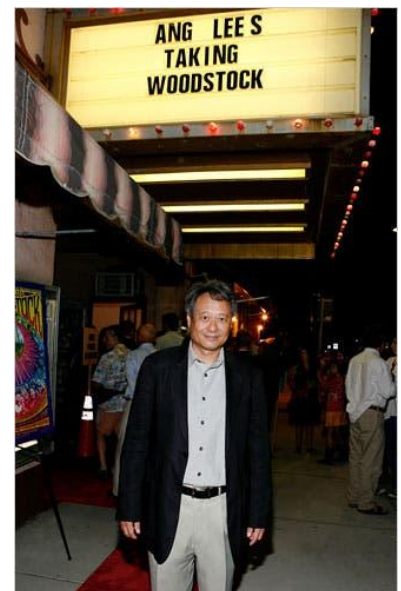


Photo: Getty Images

## 12 Former Valley Rest Motel

776 Route 20, New Lebanon

Directed by Oscar-winning filmmaker Ang Lee and written by James Schamus, a former CEO of Focus Features and a longtime Columbia County resident, *Taking Woodstock* (2009) tells the story of how the Woodstock music festival came to be. In real life, the festival happened in Bethel, New York, but Lee was drawn to New Lebanon for its hippie-era Catskills vibe. Crews gave the Valley Rest Motel a run-down, overgrown look to recreate the El Monaco Motel, which served as HQ in the planning of the famous festival. Many New Lebanon locals were hired as electricians, cooks and other roles in the production. After the film's release, Lee was present for a special screening of the film at the Crandell Theatre in Chatham (see picture on previous page). The Valley Rest has since closed.



Still from *Taking Woodstock* (2009)



Still from *Taking Woodstock* (2009)

Explore more **Drive Through History** road trips, and consider supporting the Columbia County Historical Society, at [www.cchsny.org](http://www.cchsny.org)

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