



Erie Canalway
National Heritage Corridor



New York State
Canal Corporation



Lake Champlain
MARITIME MUSEUM

“Grand Canal Journey”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The *Lois McClure* “Grand Canal Journey”
Through New York State’s Erie Canalway -
1000 miles...100days...25 ports of call
Summer 2007

Albany, NY (January 29, 2007)— The spectacular 88’ canal schooner *Lois McClure*, will embark on an unprecedented “Grand Canal Journey” this summer, traveling 1000 miles in 100 days, as she sails from her home port on Lake Champlain to visit 25 historic ports-of-call along the historic and scenic Erie Canal and the New York State Canal System. The *McClure* is a full scale working replica of an 1862 canal schooner - a unique example of working vessels that carried goods throughout northeastern waterways during the 19th century.

The expedition is made possible by a partnership between the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, New York State Canal Corporation and Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, with a shared goal to educate the public about the historic and present significance of the New York State Canal System and its communities, to reinforce the canal system’s ongoing roles for transportation, recreation and tourism, and demonstrate how the *Lois McClure* and the Canalway are intimately tied together through presentations, exhibits and educational materials. Canal side communities will celebrate their distinct contribution to the canal culture by creating their own events to embrace the arrival of the *Lois McClure* at their ports. Tours of the boat and interpretive presentations, wayside exhibits and educational materials will be provided free to the public at each stop.

Frank Dean, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor characterized the event by saying; “Canal boats like the *Lois McClure* brought excitement, fortune, knowledge and growth to communities on the Erie Canal in the 1860s and shaped New York as the Empire State and New York City as the premier seaport of the world. In view of this amazing heritage, we encourage all communities to work together to make this a momentous voyage that will leave a lasting impression on the public and visitors for years to come.”

Carmella R. Mantello, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation said, "This summer's Grand Canal Journey of the *Lois McClure* will attract thousands of visitors to canal communities and help showcase the very best of New York State. The Canal Corporation is proud to help sponsor this historic event and looks forward to working with our partners throughout the Canalway Corridor as we encourage communities to rediscover the importance of the Erie Canal in shaping our great nation and the Empire State."

"The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum is looking ahead to the 2007 Grand Canal Journey with great expectations. Its other mission is to connect the public to the significant collection of shipwrecks found in all of our regional waters. Lake Champlain, the Hudson River, the Finger Lakes, Lakes Ontario and Erie, all hold vast collections of intact wooden ships that reflect on all eras of human history," commented Art Cohn,

Executive Director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. "We are looking forward to hosting the public aboard the *Lois McClure* and traveling back in time along the historically significant Erie Canal Corridor, with our interpreters engaging our visitors in a discussion of the extraordinary history and archaeology of our regions."

The *Lois McClure* will begin its grand tour in Vermont and travel to Albany, the Finger Lakes region and then to Buffalo and back—It will cover 1000 miles in 100 days and visit over 25 ports. The "Grand Canal Voyage" is as follows:

2–3 July	Ithaca, NY
7–8 July	Seneca Falls
10–11 July	Geneva
14 July	Lyons
17–18 July	Pittsford
21–22 July	Medina
24–25 July	Lockport
28–29 July	Buffalo
31–1 July/Aug.	Tonawanda
4–5 Aug.	Brockport
7–8 Aug.	Rochester
11–12 Aug.	Palmyra
17–18 Aug.	Syracuse
21–22 Aug.	Oswego
26–27 Aug.	Rome
29 Aug.	Utica
30** Aug.	Herkimer
31**–1 Aug. /Sept.	Little Falls
2** Sept.	Canajoharie
4 Sept.	Amsterdam
7–9 Sept.	Waterford Tugboat Roundup
11–12 Sept.	Albany
15–16 Sept.	Schuylerville
18–19 Sept.	Fort Edward
21–22 Sept.	Whitehall
24 Sept.	Basin Harbor, VT

****evening opening only**

"Selecting the ports was a challenge, as we wanted the schooner to hit every port within the Corridor. But ultimately, ports-of-call were based on accessibility, convenience of its location for anyone interested in visiting the vessel, safety, and the ability of ports to accommodate the prized vessel and its companion boat the tug "*Churchill*," said Lori Duell, Project Manager.

The "Grand Canal Journey" planning team, including representatives from the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, New York State Canal Corporation and the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum will work with canal communities and organizations to plan events to accompany the Summer 2007 voyage. "This voyage is a wonderful opportunity to work with communities and organizations across New York to build upon our shared canal heritage." Duell continued.

The *Lois McClure* voyage has already generated interest and excitement among communities, businesses, and local governments anticipating the arrival of the boat in their ports throughout the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. Many communities have already started planning for this colossal event!

There is much enthusiasm building around this remarkable journey. The “Grand Canal Journey” planning team has already raised \$200,000 from sponsors such as New York State Canal Corporation, Cabot Creameries, McAdam Cheese, Brookfield Power and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, but additional support is needed to meet the project funding goal of \$300,000.

For more information on the *Lois McClure* “Grand Canal Journey” or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lori Duell, Project Manager at (518) 664-9821 x 219 or email lori_duell@partner.nps.gov. Visit <http://www.lcmm.org/> for voyage schedule.

About the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission

In December 2000 Congress established the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in recognition of the canal system’s national significance to our nation’s transportation and commerce history. Congress and the Governor of New York nominate the 27-member Federal Commission to the Secretary of Interior. The Commission provides for a citizen based management approach as the communities within the national heritage corridor seek to integrate economic development and civic vitality with preservation of the best of the Erie Canals’ past, and enhance recreational and educational opportunities.

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is one of only 37 federally designated National Heritage Areas. Spanning 524 miles of the current New York State Canal System and original alignments, it encompasses 4,834 square miles in 23 counties and includes 234 communities immediately adjacent to the Erie, Oswego, Cayuga-Seneca, and Champlain Canals.

For more information on the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor program, please contact (518) 237-7000 or visit www.eriecanalway.org.

About the New York State Canal Corporation

The New York State Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority, is a public benefit corporation established to maintain, operate, preserve and promote the New York State Canal System.

The New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways, the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego and the Cayuga-Seneca Canals. Spanning 524 miles across New York State, the waterway links the Hudson River, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes and the Niagara River with communities rich in history and culture.

For more information about news and events along the New York State Canal System, please call 1-800-4CANAL4 or visit www.nyscanals.gov.

About the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

Through nautical exploration, hands-on exhibits and learning adventures for all ages, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum brings to life the stories of Lake Champlain and its people. Its mission is to preserve and share the rich history of Lake Champlain, and through its nautical archaeology research and outreach programs, that of other regional waterways.

For more information on the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum please call (802) 475-2022 or visit <http://www.lcmm.org>