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Historic Vessel Completes 600-Mile Voyage

Fanfare and free tours at Waterford Harbor on September 30, 2009

WATERFORD- Legislators, school children, canal enthusiasts, and community partners welcomed the historic canal motorship *Day Peckinpaugh* to her home port at the Waterford Harbor on Wednesday morning, as the vessel completed her 600-mile voyage on the Hudson River and Champlain Canal in celebration of the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial. The tour marked the 1921 *Day Peckinpaugh*'s first voyage since being retired from hauling freight in 1994.

“The *Day Peckinpaugh* is back and bigger and better than ever,” said Beth Sciumeca, Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. “This extraordinary vessel worked on New York’s waterways for more than 70 years and she will continue to serve New Yorkers in her new role as a traveling museum.”

More than 7,500 people stepped onboard for free tours at 15 ports-of-call from Plattsburgh to New York Harbor during August and September. While most visitors were familiar with the stories of the voyages of Henry Hudson and Samuel Champlain, the *Day Peckinpaugh* raised awareness of 400 years of maritime progress on New York’s canals and rivers that followed in the wake of these early explorers.

“The *Day Peckinpaugh* is a perfect textbook to get kids in touch with their heritage and the importance of New York’s waterways as the lifeblood of the Empire State,” said Captain John Callaghan, who has been instrumental in the boat’s rescue and restoration from the onset.

The *Day Peckinpaugh* was the first canal motorship ever built and is the only one that remains. Rescued from the scrap yard in 2005, the 259-foot long vessel is now the largest single item in the collection of the New York State Museum.

The voyage was organized by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, in conjunction with Saratoga National Historical Park, the New York State Museum, the New York State Canal Corporation, and tour community partners, with funding secured by Congressman Maurice Hinchey.

www.eriecanalway.org

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