



Voyage anniversary brings festivals, exhibits to New York's Hudson Valley

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By Chris Carola, Associated Press Writer

ALBANY, N.Y. — When explorer Henry Hudson got as far north as he could go on the waterway that would later bear his name, he didn't stick around long or wander much beyond the riverbank.

"They did not venture far from shore," said William "Chip" Reynolds, captain of the Half Moon, a full-scale replica of the ship that Hudson, an Englishman, sailed for the Dutch during his 1609 voyage to the New World.

Hudson and his crew spent only four days at what would later become Albany, but others followed his route upriver, mainly Dutch merchants looking to trade for the fur of beavers trapped by local Indian tribes.

Those enterprising Dutchmen established Fort Orange (later renamed Beverwijck, or "District of the Beaver") 15 years after Hudson's voyage on "de Halve Maen." The English renamed the settlement Albany when they took control of Holland's New Netherlands colony in 1664, but the Dutch influence here and along the Hudson Valley lasted well into the 18th century, and plenty of remnants can still be found today.

Many communities between Westchester County and Albany are hosting festivals, concerts, exhibits and other events to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Hudson's voyage, along with a belated 200th anniversary celebration of Robert Fulton inaugural steamboat trip up the river in 1807.

Reynolds' Half Moon will figure prominently in several events, including a nearly month-long cruise recreating the river voyage that Hudson took in September 1609.

Here are some of the signature events, along with listings for museums and historic sites hosting related exhibits. For a more extensive list, check the state's Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commission website, explore400.com, or the Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau's site at hudson400.com.

- Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany — Current exhibit: Hudson River Panorama: 400 Years of History, Art, and Culture. Features hundreds of artworks, artifacts, interactive displays and rare documents from the institute's own collections. Through Jan. 3, 2010, albanyinstitute.org.

- Children's Museum of Science and Technology, Troy — Current exhibit: Horseshoes & Waterwheels: NY's Tech Valley 1800s. Explores river's importance to the development of the Hudson Valley and the nation, using photographs, historical objects and video displays. Through Dec. 31, cmst.org.

- Thomas Cole National Historic Site, Catskill — New exhibit featuring Hudson River views by the 19th century artist considered the founder of the Hudson River School, America's first art movement. May 2 through Oct. 11 at Cedar Grove, Cole's home and restored studio. A series of monthly guided hikes will be offered to the local scenes in the paintings beginning June 6 and ending Oct. 3, exploretomascole.org.

- Tulip Festival, Albany, May 8-10 — A state capital tradition now in its 61st year, the festival celebrates Albany's deep Dutch roots. Events include the crowning of the Tulip Queen, live music, food vendors, children's activities, arts and crafts, and 200,000 tulips on display, albanyevents.org.

- New Netherland Institute, Albany — Traveling exhibit: Light on New Netherland. More than two dozen panels tell the story of the Dutch colony, with period artwork by contemporary artist Len Tantillo and video featuring interviews with Charles Gehring, who has spent decades translating the state's thousands of pages of 17th-century Dutch colonial documents for the institute's New Netherland Project. Exhibit will travel from Washington, D.C. to Grand Rapids, Mich., over the next year, with stops on Long Island and Dutchess County this summer and fall, respectively. Check nnp.org for exact dates.

- Launching of the Onrust, Rotterdam Junction, mid-May — The Onrust (Dutch for restless) is a full-scale replica of the first Dutch ship built in North America. Launched off Manhattan in 1614, the original ship explored the New York and New England coasts. The replica will be launched in the Mohawk River at the 300-year-old Dutch farm where it's being built. The Onrust's launching date and schedule for 2009 are to be announced.



Enlarge By Al Novak/On Location via the Old Dutch Church

The Old Dutch Church in Kingston, N.Y., will also celebrate its 350th anniversary this year.

- Old Dutch Church, Kingston, May 30-31 — Celebration of the First Protestant Reformed Dutch Church's 350th anniversary. Presentation of plaque from U.S. Department of Interior designating site a National Historic Landmark, 11 a.m., May 30. Followed by Dutch celebration of Pinkster, or Pentecost, with re-enactors and church tours. Festival service with parishioners from 50 other Dutch Reformed churches and choir performance, 4 p.m. May 31, olddutchchurch.org.
- Hudson River Day, New York City-Albany, June 5-13 — "Relay Flotilla" assembles June 5 in New York Harbor, then heads upriver the next day, arriving June 13 in Albany with hundreds of vessels expected to retrace Henry Hudson's voyage, including the Dutch replica ships Half Moon and Onrust, and the sloop Clearwater, a Poughkeepsie-based floating environmental education classroom, hudson400.com.
- Native American encampment, Cohoes, June 6 — Held at the Van Schaick Mansion, named for the Dutch family that owned the island the home was built on in the mid-1700s. Located at the junction of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers just north of Albany, the site was a military headquarters in the 18th century. Activities include a living history program of Iroquois weapons, clothing and storytelling, vanschaickmansion.org.
- Cemetery tour, Menands, June 13 — Trolley tour of gravesites with stories told of the Albany area's first Dutch settlers. Starts 10 a.m. at Albany Rural Cemetery, final resting place of the Van Rensselaers, Schuylers, Bleekers, and other members of the area's prominent Dutch families dating back to the 17th century, albanyquadducks.com.
- West Point concerts, West Point — Continuing a tradition begun in 1817, the U.S. Military Academy Band performs alongside the Hudson. Two free concerts are scheduled, at 7:30 p.m. on June 21, and 8 p.m. on July 4, at Trophy Point Amphitheatre overlooking the river, westpoint.edu/band.
- New York State Museum, Albany — Exhibit: 1609. July 3 through March 2010. Using artifacts from the state's collection and historical images created by local artist Len Tantillo, the exhibit will re-examine Hudson's voyage, the myths that surround it, and explore the legacies of his unexpected discovery. Also, an August-September tour from Vermont to Manhattan by the Day Peckinpaugh, the museum's 259-foot, 1921 canal boat. Public tours of onboard maritime history exhibit scheduled at 15 ports, nysm.nysed.gov.
- Rip Van Winkle's Wacky Raft Race, Athens to Catskill, Aug. 16 — 6-mile race involving about two dozen non-motorized, homemade rafts vying for prizes named after old Hudson steamships that raced against one another on the river. Starts at 11 a.m. at Riverfront Park, Athens and finishes at Dutchman's Landing, Catskill, greentourism.com.
- Voyage of Discovery, Albany, Sept. 14-Oct. 8 — The replica Half Moon recreates Henry Hudson's voyage on the river, with 7th-grade students serving as the crew. Ship is open for public tours during Albany's "quad" festival Sept. 26, halfmoon.mus.ny.us or newnetherland.org.
- Walkway Over the Hudson, Poughkeepsie-Highland, Oct. 2-4 — A 1.2-mile-long, 212-foot-high former railroad bridge-turned-walkway for pedestrians, hikers, joggers and bicyclists. "Grand Illumination" of the Walkway, 7 p.m., Oct. 2., with fireworks display. Official opening, 10 a.m. Oct. 3, with rowing races, parade, fly-over by vintage aircraft from the Olde Rhinebeck Aerodrome, walkway.org.
- Steamboat Bicentennial, Germantown, Oct. 10 — Riverfront Trail grand opening and celebration at Clermont, estate of the prominent Livingston family whose members included a partner of steamboat inventor Robert Fulton. Activities include guided trail walks and re-enactments, nysparks.state.ny.us or friendsofclermont.org.
- Battle re-enactment, Kingston, Oct. 16-18 — Re-enactment of the burning of Kingston, the British attack on Oct. 16, 1777, during the Revolutionary War, when the old Dutch settlement (founded 1652) was the first capital of New York. Activities include redcoats landing in replica wooden boats, battle re-enactments, demonstrations of 18th century military camp life and colonial ball, firstulster.org.

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