# Tourism News

DUTCHESS COUNTY TOURISM

**For Immediate Release**

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## Two Adventurers, 500 Miles of Heritage, One Great Erie Canal, One Scenic Hudson River: British Expeditioner and Photographer Kayak across New York State May 1 to May 21, 2012*

Albany, NY (April 12, 2012) -This May, the legacy of New York State's Erie Canal and Hudson River will lure adventurers Richard Harpham and Glenn Charles to kayak an epic 500 miles from Buffalo's Historic Erie Canal Harbor on May 1, 2012 to the Statue of Liberty at the end of the month.

New York State's Division of Tourism, I LOVE NEW YORK, invited world-renowned kayaker, Richard Harpham, from the U.K. to make history while chronicling the dynamic locations along the Erie Canal and its 35 locks, before reaching Albany and joining the Hudson River. The trip continues south on the Hudson River to their iconic final destination -- the Statue of Liberty.

The journey is called "New York State's Spare Seat Kayak Expedition" as both Harpham and Charles will kayak the route in double seated kayaks, inviting members of the public and media to join them along the way. The expedition is estimated to take about a month and will highlight the heritage, culture, wildlife, landmarks, and activities along the route. As passionate conservationists, Harpham and Charles will encourage locals and visitors to get involved in New York State's preservation and ecological activities. The project will be photographed and filmed, and hosted on a dedicated website with social media feeds enabling the public to follow Harpham, Charles and all those that join them every stroke of the way.

They leave Kingston at 12:30 pm on May 17 and will arrive in Waryas Park at 3:30pm. They are welcomed there, and then depart at 4:30 pm and arrive in New Hamburg at Whites Marina at 6pm. That Thursday night, the public is invited to hear them speak informally at 8:30 pm at the Beacon Sloop Clubhouse, near the train station. http://www.beaconsloopclub.org They will also hear local outdoors enthusiasts talk about environmental and recreational happenings on the Hudson River. On Friday at 12:30pm they will depart New Hamburg for Beacon's Long Dock Park, where they will have a tour of Scenic Hudson & Mill Street Loft's River Center for the Arts and the new kayak pavilion at 1:30pm. http://www.scenichudson.org & http://www.millstreetloft.org

"The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 was one of the most spectacular and transformative public works projects of its time, and would make New York the Empire State," said Brian U. Stratton, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation. "On behalf of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Canal Corporation, I welcome Richard Harpham and look forward to paddling with him on a segment of the Spare Seat Tour."

"By bringing in a world-class kayaker and adventure photographer to explore New York State's Erie Canal and Hudson River, we can to showcase New York State's assets in an extraordinary way," said Edward Maitino, managing director, tourism for Empire State Development of New York State. "The Spare Seat Kayak Expedition also shines a spotlight on the more than 230 communities that span the Erie Canal and upstate New York."

"New York's waterways have always connected our communities but they are also the common threads that connect us to our rich history," said Mark Castiglione, acting Director for the Hudson River Valley Greenway. "Today, our historic waterways are renowned destinations for recreation and eco-tourism. We are excited that this initiative will highlight the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail and promote all the historic river towns and heritage destinations throughout the Hudson River Valley."

The Erie Canal was originally built as a major commercial waterway which shaped the development of the Empire State and secured New York City's status as America's premier seaport, commercial center and gateway to the interior of the continent. The Hudson River was also strategically important as a gateway to the American interior. Together they tell the story of the expansion of America and the growth of trade in North America. Today, in addition to continuing to attract commercial use, the Erie Canal is a recreational resource and tourism destination, while the Hudson River offers environmental and conservation experiences as well as historic, cultural and recreational opportunities for enjoyment.

"Richard and Glen will be traveling much of the same route as Governor Dewitt Clinton in 1825, when he journeyed from Buffalo to Albany to New York City via the newly opened Erie Canal and the Hudson River. The Spare Seat Voyage will demonstrate how the canal that created the Empire State nearly 200 years ago now offers world-class recreational opportunities," said Beth Sciumeca,

Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to cheer on the expeditioners and take advantage of the many events taking place along the route. Harpham and Charles will meet the communities, host talks, coach about kayaking and attend community generated events to promote local efforts to enjoy and protect New York state waterways. Experience the rich history, hometown hospitality, and numerous attractions of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and Hudson River Valley Greenway. To explore and experience the Erie Canal or the Hudson River visit: http://www.eriecanalway.org/ , http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov, or http://www.canals.ny.gov. For information on the NYS Canalway Water Trail visit: http://www.canals.ny.gov/exvac/watertrail.html.

*Travel dates are subject to change and will be determined by weather and manpower.

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About New York State New York State features 11 beautiful vacation regions. New York's attractions span from landmarks such as Niagara Falls, to the wine trails of Hudson Valley and treasures like the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Whether it's wide-ranging outdoor activities for the whole family like fishing, hiking and boating, culinary wonders and farm-to-table fresh foods, or the rich history and culture of one of the 13 original colonies, New York State offers diverse activities for all travelers. For more information, visit http://www.iloveny.com. Media can find press releases and more at thebeat.iloveny.com.

About the Erie Canalway National Heritage CorridorThe Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor spans 524 miles across the full expanse of upstate New York, encompassing the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain canals and their historic alignments, as well as more than 230 canal communities. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, in partnership with the National Park Service, collaborates with government agencies, communities and organizations to protect and promote the canal corridor for all to use and enjoy. www.eriecanalway.org

About New York State Canal CorporationThe New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways - the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga & Seneca Canals - spanning 524 miles across New York State. The Canal Corporation is the proud steward of this iconic system - a legacy that was born almost 200 years ago - dedicated to preserving the tradition of navigation, promoting the tourism and recreational opportunities and shepherding the resurgence of development in the historic communities the Canals helped to form. For more information regarding events, recreation and vacation opportunities along the Canal system, please visit www.canals.ny.gov or call 1-800-4CANAL4.

About Hudson River Valley GreenwayThe Hudson River Valley Greenway is a unique state-sponsored program established by the Greenway Act of 1991. Presently, 269 out of the 325 eligible municipalities within the Greenway area have joined the Greenway and over 740 miles of trail have been designated as part of the Greenway Trail System. The Greenway program is designed to encourage communities to develop projects and initiatives related to the criteria of natural and cultural resource protection, regional and local planning, economic development, public access to the Hudson River (as well as other regional and local resources), and heritage and environmental education. It provides technical assistance and small grants for planning, water trail and land-based trails and other projects that reinforce the Greenway Criteria. In keeping with the New York tradition of home rule, the Greenway program has no regulatory authority and participation of municipalities in Greenway programs and projects is entirely voluntary. The Greenway also manages the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, please visit www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov for more information.