

The Time for Environmentally Sustainable Shipping is Now!



Since ancient times the Hudson River's primary use has been the transport and trade of locally sourced products and food. It has since become a multiple use waterway with international stature as a recreational, industrial, commercial, cultural and environmental resource. Commercial transportation continues to be one of the major uses of our magnificent Hudson River. Once carried on by manually powered craft and later by the fleet of legendary Hudson River sloops and followed by steam powered vessels. Commercial traffic, today is almost exclusively done by diesel powered ships

and barges with much of the former river cargo having shifted to diesel truck transport.

Recently there has been renewed interest in shifting some of the movement of goods to more environmentally sustainable or "carbon neutral" methods of transport. Many of these efforts have been documented in Boating On The Hudson, such as Solar Sal and the Vermont Sail Freight Project. A new venture focusing on reviving the concept of moving locally produced products using sound and sustainable modes of transportation has been launched beginning with a re purposed 1946 65' steel sailing vessel named Apollonia. This small group of men and women each with a unique and complimentary



background have come together led by Hudson resident Sam Merrett, captain and co-owner of the Apollonia. Sam is the founder and operator of Full Circle Fuels an eleven year old company that converts vehicles and other diesel powered machinery to run on used vegetable oil. Holding a USCG 50 ton masters license, he is also one of the captains working for Hudson Cruises, operating the cruise vessels Spirit of the Hudson and Marika, as well as the Hudson/Athens ferry. Sam is also a founding member of the Hudson Sloop Club, an organization dedicated to helping underprivileged children, as well as the general public experience the Hudson River.

The Apollonia team consists of an eclectic group of talent including but not limited to sailors, mechanics, filmmakers, rescue workers, entrepreneurs, artists, riggers, fabricators, teachers, carpenters and journalists. The crew of the Apollonia is working to transform the vessel into the Hudson Valley region's largest environmentally sustainable and economically feasible merchant vessel with the most carbon neutral footprint possible. This is not a living history project that is attempting to relive history, or chase a romantic vision of the past. The Apollonia and her team are

part of a growing movement committed to making wind powered and other forms of earth friendly transportation a viable and profitable reality. Their plan includes having Apollonia earn enough income to pay the crew members a living wage and earn enough to sustain the vessel long term.

In addition to transporting goods, the Apollonia will increase the value of her cargo by adding their trademark logo signifying that the locally produced products you will buy have been brought to you using sustainable transport. This concept is similar to the way goods designated as fair trade, or certified organic increase the value of the products they are associated with. The business model also includes stops at riverfront

towns between Albany and New York City during the sailing season to display, sell and promote the products they carry to waterfront visitors. This will provide additional value to the companies that produce the ship's cargo, as well as create awareness for the concept of environmentally friendly shipping.

The Hudson River is the right place to demonstrate this model - an historic thoroughfare connecting upstate producers to one of the world's largest

markets New York City. The trip to NYC will take 3-5 days and each night the vessel will tie up at waterfronts along the way. These stops are part of the program and will be designed as community gatherings where the crew will partner with local organizations to both promote the products they carry and bring people down to the waterfront to support local attractions. Towns and cities up and down the river are reinvesting in their waterfront and we are seeing more activity than ever. The Schooner Apollonia will draw people down to add to the economic growth and development.

Producers of various products such as sea salt, nuts, beer, maple syrup, crafts and more have expressed interest in this venture. Nine Pin Cider of Albany, award winning brewers of hard cider from apples grown here in the Hudson Valley, has expressed interest in being the first cargo for the Apollonia. The fact that a locally produced product can be transported and promoted by sustainable mena adds great promotional value to their product, with special appeal to the environmentally conscious Hudson Valley and New York City residents.

The Apollonia is currently hauled out at Rondout Landing Marina where the crew is busy preparing her for her new

mission. It goes without saying that the refitting of a vessel this size requires a substantial amount of money. The Apollonia team has been successful in generating the funds necessary to purchase the vessel, bring her to our Hudson Valley and install the propulsion machinery, (now being converted to run on used vegetable oil). The recycled sails have been obtained and re cut to fit Apollonia's sail plan. The booms and gaffs were found, half finished at Scarano's Boat Builders in Albany, left over from a project started years ago that was canceled. The plan for this coming winter is to obtain the masts and the standing and running rigging needed to have Apollonia hauling cargo by next spring.

The Apollonia's team has held a series of public meetings where they displayed their progress and screened a very well produced informative video documenting the story of Apollonia and making the case for economically viable and sustainable carbon neutral shipping. They are actively seeking to add more sponsors for the project as well as businesses interested in having their products transported and promoted by the Apollonia.

For more information or to reach out to the Apollonia crew, visit their web site www.schoonerapollonia.com or their facebook page Schooner Apollonia.



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