

THE MANHATTAN II and



the SS COLUMBIA PROJECT



by John H. Vargo, Publisher

Of all the visionaries on the Hudson River there is none more proactive than Rick Scarano and Scarano Boat Works, of Albany, NY!

This was proven once again when Rick created a trip from Chelsea Piers in Manhattan to Cold Spring, Poughkeepsie, Rhinecliff, Hudson and Albany on March 25, 2017!

Not only was his fantastic crew on board including Rick himself, but also his management team. The trip had a two-fold purpose, to promote the SS Columbia Project as well as give his team practice at stopping at various locations on the Hudson River.

He accomplished both goals with great success.

92 dignities boarded the Manhattan II at Chelsea Piers at 8:45 Am with their first stop Cold Spring arriving at 11:30 Am. While coming up river a beautiful assortment of food was offered including raw oysters, ham, salads and other entrees. The Manhattan II traveling at 17 miles and hour, with its gracefully hull design provided a smooth, comfortable ride for all.

Arriving at Cold Spring some of the group left the boat, many taking the train back to New York while

other were met by individuals who had a car ready for them.

(The beauty of this concept is that the Metro North Railroad system as well as Amtrak parallel the eastern shore providing an alternative to staying on the boat until the final destination, Albany. This is truly the "wave of the future" for travel on the Hudson River. Today's visitor to the Hudson River is far different than the old Day Liner experience of staying on the boat for 6 to 8 hours.)

The main purpose of the trip was to promote the SS Columbia Project. The SS Columbia itself rests in Buffalo, NY. To date the project has raised over \$4.3 million dollars, including \$1.25 million from New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

The individuals on board the Manhattan II met the management team, including Liz McEnaney executive director of the SS Columbia Project and her colleagues who are committed to bringing this 115-year-old National Historic Landmark boat back from the brink of extinction.



Manhattan II at the Cold Spring Dock

The goal of the SS Columbia Project is to restore the great tradition of Hudson River excursion boats that plied our waters for over a century, until the early 1970s. When Columbia is back in service she will reconnect New York City to the Hudson Valley cities and towns, bringing up to 1,500 passengers per trip and helping to spur heritage tourism at the historic waterfronts. In order to bring the boat back to operational status at least \$15 million must be raised. No one I spoke to has any illusions that this is easy to do or will be done instantly.

Yet if readers will remember Walkway Over the Hudson was merely a dream until 2007 when a new team began promoting and raising money for the reconstruction of this iconic mile long bridge in Poughkeepsie, NY. Today Walkway has had over two million individuals cross the Hudson River on it.

No doubt the SS Columbia Project is in this same category.

For more visit our website: www.sscolumbia.org.



Liz MacEnaney, Executive Director of the Columbia Project.

