

News Release



For Release: Immediate

Regarding: Canal Schooner *Lois McClure* Departs for Quebec City

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Schooner *Lois McClure* Embarks for Quebec City Perkins Pier June 17, 2008 11:30 a.m.

GRAND ISLE, VT – The Lake Champlain Basin Program and the Vermont and New York Quadricentennial Commissions are pleased to announce the June 17 departure of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum’s replica schooner *Lois McClure* from Burlington, Vermont on her momentous voyage to Quebec City where she will serve as the region’s good will ambassador for Quebec’s Quadricentennial celebration in July. The Champlain Quadricentennial Commissions for both Vermont and New York will be on hand to give the schooner a send off on her two month journey, heading north along the Richelieu River to the St. Lawrence River and Quebec. The *Lois McClure* will be visiting key Quebec ports of call, with major events planned in Quebec City June 30- July 6.

“This time-traveling journey permits us to articulate the long and rich history we share with Quebec and the Hudson along our regional waterways,” said Art Cohn, Executive Director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. “Embarking for Quebec on Lake Champlain’s flagship canal schooner *Lois McClure*, we also will share the story of the rich collections of underwater cultural resources of all the region’s waterways. Our trip to Quebec will help commemorate Samuel de Champlain’s founding of Quebec City in 1608. In 2009, we will be back to celebrate his brief but profound visit to the Lake that now bears his name.”

On Tuesday, June 17, at 11:30am, Art Cohn, will join others at Perkins Pier to mark the beginning of the journey. At this ceremony, Art will receive a “crate of goods” from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the Vermont and New York Quadricentennial Commissions to bring to Quebec City as a symbol of the shared history and connection through commerce. The crate, which was made by Randall Ouellette of Vergennes, will contain goods from both sides of the Lake including apples, cheese and maple syrup. For years, this region shared cultures and goods without regard to territories or political affiliations. The simple gesture of these goods allows us to remember this connectedness and to honor the past in a way that allows today’s countries to continue to trade and work together.

Government officials from the City of Quebec invited the *Lois McClure* to be part of the city’s celebration, and will host the vessel at a new central harbor venue built especially for the celebration. While docked in Quebec City, the schooner will serve as the ceremonial vessel for dignitaries and officials, including members of the Quadricentennial Commissions from Vermont, New York and Quebec during special events. U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy and his wife Marcelle, who is the honorary chairperson of the Franco-American Heritage Committee, will

serve as hosts aboard the schooner on Tuesday July 2. Vermont Governor Douglas and Mrs. Douglas will join the Leahys in greeting guests that day.

“Marcelle and I are delighted to welcome visitors aboard the *Lois McClure*. We have a deep appreciation for Quebec and her people and the common heritage we share. We look forward to enjoying the festivities in Quebec and inviting our Canadian friends to visit the Champlain Valley in 2009 when we can return their warm hospitality,” said Senator Leahy.

“The *Lois McClure*’s trip to Quebec City provides a great opportunity to promote the Quadricentennial events planned for our region in 2009,” said Bruce Hyde, chair of the Vermont Lake Champlain Quadricentennial Commission. “The schooner will play an important role in Quebec City as the Quadricentennial torch is later passed to Vermont and New York.”

More than 50 events have already been approved for the 2009 Quadricentennial celebration in Vermont. An up-to-date calendar of events will be traveling with the crew aboard the schooner for distribution along the route. Additionally, a new resource, *Our Shared History*, a bi-lingual booklet highlighting the heritage, which we share with residents of the Richelieu and St. Lawrence regions, will be available to the public.

About the Schooner *Lois McClure*: The replica canal schooner *Lois McClure* was constructed by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in Burlington, Vermont and launched in 2004. The replica is modeled after two sailing canal schooner shipwrecks that were documented by the museum on the bottom of Burlington Harbor. Following the trip home from Quebec, the canal schooner *Lois McClure* will return to Basin Harbor, Vermont on August 22, 2008. The Quebec voyage of the *Lois McClure* received important support in a grant from the National Park Service through the efforts of Senator Patrick Leahy and New York’s Congressman Maurice Hinchey.

To see the complete schedule and a map of the voyage go to http://www.lcmm.org/our_fleet/lois_mcclure_schedule.htm. This voyage is the third long distance trip the schooner has taken in the past several years. The *Lois McClure* traveled south through the Hudson River to New York City in 2005 and west through the Erie Canal to Buffalo, NY in 2007.

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