

THE FERRYMAN

DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



CELEBRATING THE HUDSON- FULTON-CHAMPLAIN QUADRICENTENNIAL

Four hundred years ago, Henry Hudson explored what he called the "River of Mountains," the river that today bears his name. In commemoration of that momentous voyage and the activities of two other historic discoverers, Robert Fulton and Samuel de Champlain, communities throughout New York State are celebrating the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial. The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society has exciting plans to join with other village organizations for
 _____ *—a day of historical commemoration and celebration at Riverfront Park on August 16th.*

See later article in this issue.

Other nearby activities will include a Flotilla Watch at Dobbs Ferry riverfront on June 6 to wave on the flotilla of commemorative boats as they proceed up river. On June 7, the society will be part of a day long celebration at Lyndhurst in Tarrytown. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. visitors will take part in "A Hudson River Quest" treasure hunt, hear lectures and explore the proposed layout for River Walk.

To highlight this celebration The Ferryman offers this glimpse into the lives of these three great explorers.



Henry Hudson (c.1565-1611)

Henry Hudson was born in London, went off to sea as a cabin boy and became an expert mariner and eventually captain of his own ship. In an era of fierce competition over trading rights, he was hired by various joint-stock companies to explore and develop lucrative trading routes. The Muscovy Company of England employed him to find a northern passage to Asia—an assignment he failed.

Directors of the Dutch East India Company, however, were aware of Hudson's navigational skills and in 1609, they hired him to seek the northwest passage. Having heard from the English Captain John Smith that the native people of Virginia described a great water route across North America, he sailed his ship, the Half Moon, west and moved up and down the Atlantic Coastline. Finally, on September 3, 1609 he ventured into New York harbor and began to make his way up the mighty river. Most of what we know of this voyage comes from the Journal of his mate, Richard Juet because only fragments of Hudson's own log remain.

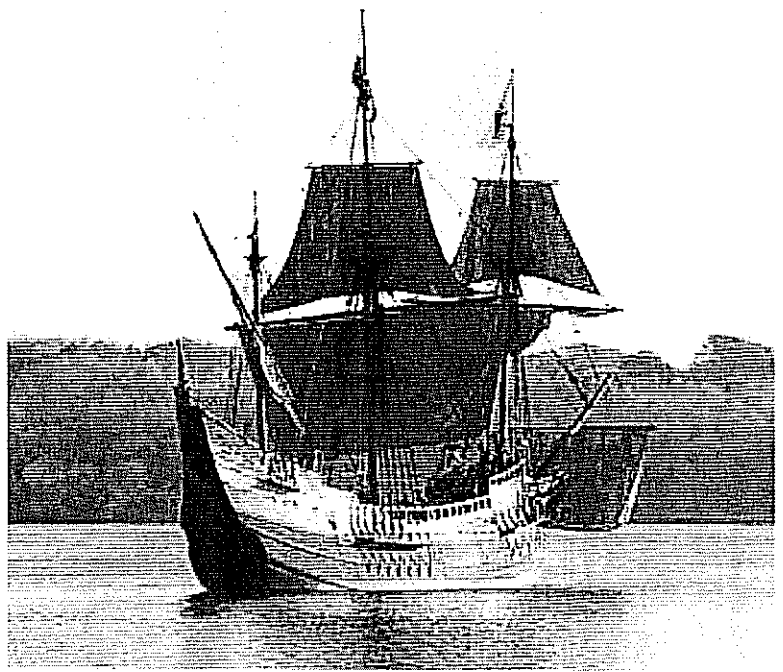
A few notes about events mentioned in Juet's account:

September 11 – When Hudson anchored off the northern tip of Manhattan, twenty-eight canoes, filled with native men, women and children approached the ship. The crew feared this party and would not allow them to board the Half Moon, but they did buy food from them, particularly oysters. (*Dobbs Ferry residents are familiar with the native American's preference for oysters because the largest oyster shell midden along the Hudson is located here.*)

The Half Moon continued north, with Hudson claiming the land alongside the river for the Dutch. When they moved into the wide space that appeared to be an interior sea (*the Tappan Zee*), Hudson was certain he had found the passage he sought. But then the river narrowed and became more shallow.

September 18 – Hudson accepted an invitation to dine with the natives. His own description of that event remains:

"I sailed to the shore in one of their canoes, with an old man who was the chief of a tribe consisting of 40 men and 17 women. These I saw there, in a house well constructed of oak bark, and circular in shape, so that it had the appearance of being built with an arched roof. It contained a great quantity of maize or Indian corn, and beans of the last year's growth; and there lay near the house, for the purpose of drying, enough to load three ships, besides what was growing in the fields. On our coming into the house, two mats were spread out to sit upon, and some food was immediately served in well-made red wooden bowls. Two men were also despatched at once, with bows and arrows in quest of game, who soon brought in a pair of pigeons, which they had shot. They likewise killed a far dog and skinned it in great haste, with shells which they had got out of the water. They supposed that I would remain with them for the night; but I returned, after a short time, on board the ship. The land is the finest for cultivation that I ever in my life set foot upon, and it also abounds in trees of every description. These natives are a very good people; for when they saw that I would not remain, they supposed that I was afraid of their bows; and, taking their arrows, they broke them in pieces and threw them into the fire."



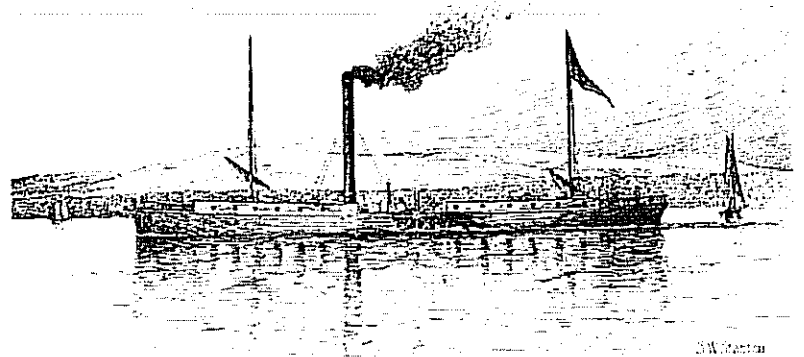
The Half Moon attempted to sail further north, but after running aground several times, turned and made its way back down the river. On October 4th, it left New York harbor and returned to Holland. He subsequently made one more attempt to discover the northern passage but met his death in 1611, a victim of mutiny.

Robert Fulton (1765-1815)

Robert Fulton was a renaissance man—painter, engineer, inventor, businessman. Born in Pennsylvania, as a young man, he traveled to Paris to study painting. There he soon found himself in the midst of acquaintances who were experimenting with steam power. He was particularly interested in naval uses for steam engines and actually invented a submarine. However, his attempts to find financial support to manufacture his invention continually failed.



While in Paris, he met the American ambassador, Robert R. Livingston and later married his niece, Harriet. He and Livingston experimented with various hull shapes for a steamboat and eventually built a working model in France. Returning to America, they developed a larger vessel. On August 17, 1807 that ship, the North River Steamboat left New York City and made its first successful voyage up the Hudson to Albany—in just 32 hours. By

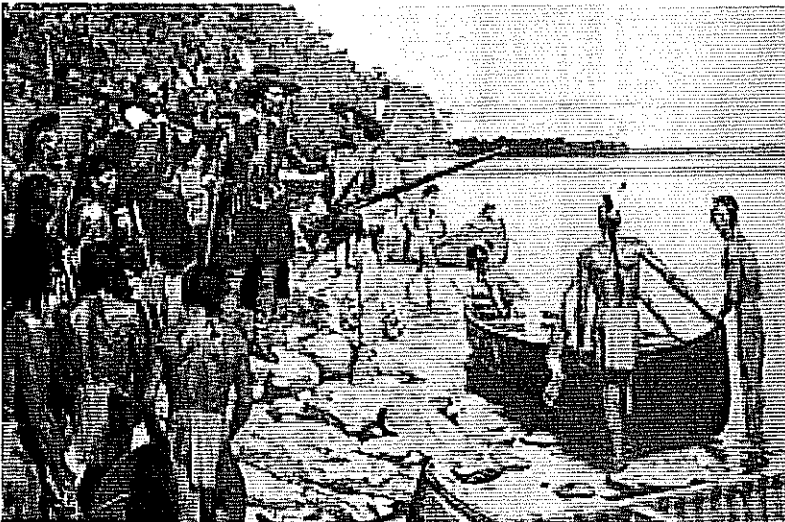


ROBERT FULTON'S FLEETBOAT, THE WORLD'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL STEAMBOAT

September, the steamboat was making regular commercial trips to Albany (one-way fare: \$7). Fulton went on to develop other ships, including the first steam-powered warship and his enterprise cemented the commercial importance of the Hudson river. He died in February 1815.

Samuel de Champlain (1567-1635)

Samuel de Champlain was born in Brouage, France. As the son of a ship captain, he was taught navigation at an early age, enlisted in the French army and eventually sailed to the West Indies. The experience whetted his appetite for exploration. In 1603, he sailed to North America and spent months exploring the St. Lawrence River. A second trip to this area in 1608 led to his establishing a colony at Quebec and becoming friendly with the Montagnais tribe. Joining them in an expedition against the Iroquois, de Champlain moved south overland and then came upon a great lake, which he named for himself. The battle he and his allies fought against the Iroquois at the lakeside began the war that would drag on intermittently for years between native Americans and their French and/or English allies.



Champlain would spend the next twenty-five years traveling between France and the New World. He married, lived for some time in the Quebec colony he founded, and constantly sought to engage French businessmen in supporting American colonization. To that end, he also explored further south along the St. Lawrence River to Lake Huron and Lake Ontario. He had returned to Quebec in 1628 when the British attacked the city. After a prolonged battle, he was captured and taken to England as a prisoner where he languished until 1632. The treaty that ended the war between the British and the French returned Canada to the French and Champlain was reinstated as governor there in 1633.

He died not long afterward in 1635.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN DOBBS FERRY?



50 years, 60 years, parents born here?

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society wants to know all about you!

The Society has set out to identify the families that make up the history of Dobbs Ferry. If you can trace your family roots back at least two generations let us know.

Do you have one of those 'Dobbs Ferry' family names? Tell us!

Email your family tree to dfhistory@verizon.net or let us help you work one up.

Have a grandma who loves to talk? We want to listen. An appointment for an interview to add to our collection of oral histories can be set up.

DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring Lecture Series

TWO FRIDAY EVENING LECTURES AT THE LIBRARY

April 17 and May 22, 2009 at 7:30PM

All are welcome.

The Dobbs Ferry Historical Society is pleased to announce that its lecture program will continue in 2009, after a series of very successful lectures last year, capped by a presentation in December, 2008, by Dr. Salvatore Primeggia, a professor of sociology at Alephi University, and an expert on the Italian-American immigrant experience. A large and enthusiastic audience attended his December lecture, which was entitled, **Tracing Italian Immigrant History to the Italian-American present.**

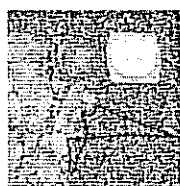
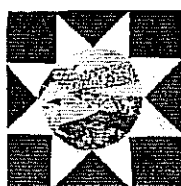
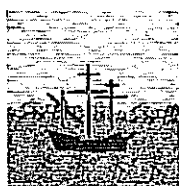
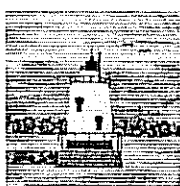
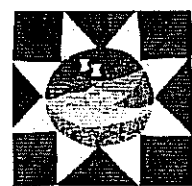
The historical society has scheduled two lectures this spring, the first on April 17 by award-winning author and journalist, Barry-more Laurence Scherer, and the second on May 22 by Dr Sherrill D. Wilson, an urban anthropologist and author of *New York City's African Slave Owners*. The Dobbs Ferry Public Library (55 Main Street) is the venue for both lectures.

Mr. Scherer's presentation, **Living in Nature's Realm: The Architecture and Décor of Historic Hudson River Villas**, launches our Quadricentennial 2009 celebration and explores the development of the country house in the beautiful Hudson Valley. Rare period photographs show how villas like "Sunnyside," "Lindhurst," and "Olana" were furnished when the region was home to the likes of Washington Irving, Jay Gould, Frederick Edwin Church, the Roosevelts and the Vanderbilts.

Mr. Scherer is a classical music and arts critic for the *Wall Street Journal* and has been a visiting professor at Sarah Lawrence College. As an independent scholar he has lectured extensively on the arts at venues including Lincoln Center Great Performers, the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., Milwaukee Art Museum, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic. Mr. Scherer writes "The New Collector" column for *The Magazine Antiques* and is author of the critically acclaimed book *Bravo! A Guide to Opera for the Perplexed*. His recent book, *A History of American Classical Music*, won *ForeWord Magazine's* Music Book of the Year Gold Award.

Dr. Wilson's May 22 lecture, **Celebrating Freedom**, will focus on formerly enslaved Africans in New York, their institutions and organizations and their celebrations of emancipation, from July 5, 1827 through the end of the Civil War. July 4, 1827, was the legal and official beginning of the emancipation of African enslaved people in New York, although some did not gain full freedom until nearly 20 years later. Prior to 1827 Africans had been enslaved in the colony of New Amsterdam and later New York since 1623, more 200 years. Church attendance, elaborate dinners and other festivities marked the celebration of freedom for over 50 years. Dr. Wilson has written extensively on the African presence in northern colonial era cities and has lectured at the Smithsonian Institute, Columbia University, the American Museum of Natural History, NY National Monument African Burial Ground and numerous other organizations and institutions, nationwide and internationally.

Dr. Primeggia's lecture in December, 2008, as well as the lectures by Mr. Scherer and Dr. Wilson, are sponsored by New York Council for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these programs do not necessarily represent those of the New York Council for the Humanities or National Endowment for the Humanities.



The Rivertowns Guild for Traditional Fiber Arts is proud to present a Quadricentennial Quilt to the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society which commemorates the discovery of the Hudson River by Europeans. The quilt was designed by members of the guild and features 25 squares that are pieced and/or appliquéd depicting historical, cultural, economic and legendary events and activities relevant to the Hudson River Valley. The quilt measures approximately 72 by 72 inches and is entirely hand quilted.

Members of the guild who have worked on the quilt since September are Dorma Barker, Mary Caruso, Soo Lan Chin, Teresa Foley, Cathy Gerard, Diane Hanges, Brenda Horrell, Helen Kendra, Jean Lucasey, Joan O'Connell and Jeanne Velonis.

The Rivertowns Guild for Traditional Fiber Arts, known affectionately to its members as Fun With Fiber, is open to all fiber artists (quitters, knitters, crocheters, weavers, spinners, etc.). The free meetings are held the first and third Saturdays of each month throughout the year at Mead House from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Refreshments are served at each meeting.

We welcome and encourage all skill levels to join this fun group

Raffle Tickets for this beautiful one -of-a-kind-quilt are \$5 each (6 for \$25)

See our website for details on how to get your ticket today!

WWW.DOBBSFERRYHISTORY.ORG



You Are Cordially Invited to our Annual Spring Gala

7:00 p.m. on Saturday night, June 20th, 2009
Dobbs Ferry Woman's Club 54 Clinton Avenue Dobbs Ferry, NY

We are most delighted to present a lecture by our special guest
GET THE NAME FROM MARIA HARRIS
author of
"RIVER SOMETHING ABOUT THE RIVER"

Delicious food and beverages, a party atmosphere, and the ever-popular raffle will mark this evening. If you have never attended the Gala before, do join us this year. It will be a very special evening with plenty of time to chat with old friends and find new acquaintances who share your interest in the history of Dobbs Ferry.

Send your reservation for tickets (\$30 for each ticket) and your raffle tickets (see inside) to:
Dobbs Ferry Historical Society,
12 Elm Street,
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522.
Our space is limited so do send your reservations in early.
For further information, call 914-674-1007.

HELP WANTED:

Volunteer to help maintain our
photo archives.
No experience necessary!

We collect historic photos of Dobbs Ferry. We document their contents, determine keywords for their retrieval and archive them for posterity. This is how we make our collection available to inquiries, both from within our community and beyond.
Can you volunteer some time to help us with this project?

The Mead house is
now open on
Sundays 1- 4 pm
Come see us!

History's mysteries revealed...
HENRY HUDSON:

I used DFHS
afghans as sails
on the HALF
MOON!



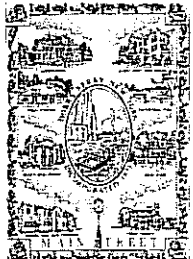
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or just an armchair traveler...
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I would like to order ___ afghan(s) @ \$45 each -plus \$10 for shipping
Enclosed is my check for \$____ Please send it to:

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Williamsburg blue Cranberry red

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DF Historical Society
12 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
Phone: (914)-674-1007
Email: dfhistory@verizon.net



**The Gala is coming up
on June 20th
Make your reservation
now!**

AS OUR PRIMARY FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR,
YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RAFFLE ENABLES
THE SOCIETY TO MAINTAIN ITS HOME AT THE
MEAD HOUSE AND PROVIDE EXPANDED
PROGRAMS FOR THE COMMUNITY
PLEASE SUPPORT US.

**Prizes include gift certificates to our local
restaurants, our popular afghan, and other
great gifts donated by our local Merchants**

Mail your completed tickets with
payment to us by June 15th at :



Or bring them to the registration
table at the gala on June 20th at:

**The DF Historical Society
12 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522**

**The DF Women's Club
54 Clinton Avenue
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522**

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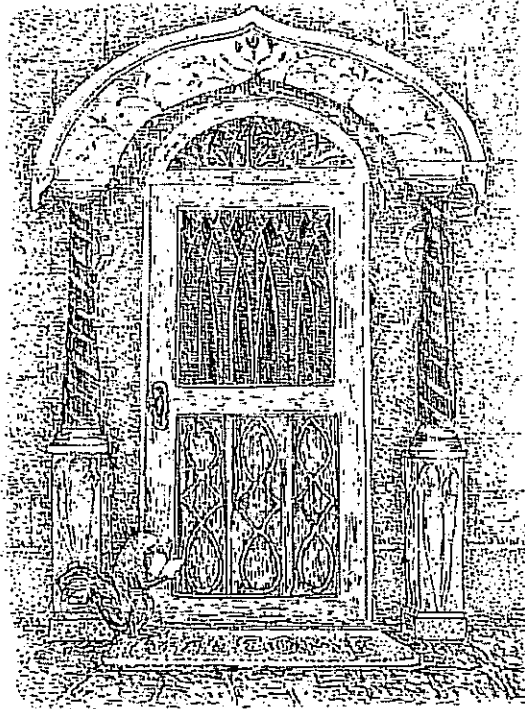
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1 - 4 PM

presented by

THE DOBBS FERRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For further information, or to attend, visit:

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914-674-1007

TICKETS

\$25 - in advance, \$30 - at the door, children 12 and under - FREE



The Mead House
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Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522
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Email : dfhistory@verizon.net

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<http://dobbsferryhistory.org>

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