



This is the view from "Harmony on the Hudson" bed and breakfast, opening this year in time for the canal season, in Stillwater NY between Locks C-4 and C-5.

No Cabin? Don't Despair, You CAN Take Your Open Boat to the Canals!

by **Pete Bardunias**

Senior Vice President, Community Advancement,
Capital Region Chamber

Cruising guides talk about the great inland waterways and opportunities to explore and enjoy them, but most are written from the perspective of a yacht owner. Or at least a boat with a vee berth and a porta potty. So what does the open boat owner do in order to cruise north up the Hudson to Lake Champlain or turn west along the storied Erie Canal and Mohawk River? There are ways to make that trip work, even in a boat without a cabin. Here are some tips:

It's easier than ever to reach Lake Champlain in an open boat, without camping under the stars. There are many places to stop and go ashore to use modern restroom facilities, with restaurants and other services not too far away. Waterford, Mechanicville, Schuylerville, Fort Edward and Whitehall all have such accommodations. Overnight stays need a little planning, but can easily work, thanks to some great facilities at the Schuyler Yacht Basin and a new Bed and Breakfast opening along the

river's edge in Stillwater. Stillwater, NY is a quaint, quiet village, with a larger town surrounding it that runs across most of the famous ground in Saratoga County (Bemis Heights, site of the famed 1777 battle, is in the town of Stillwater). The new BnB, called "Harmony on the Hudson", is a 2 bedroom, 1 bath plus office located between Locks C-4 and C-5 in the longest lock-free stretch of the canalized Hudson River, available between May 1 and the end of the canal season in October by boat, and all year long by land access. For more information, contact Sher Tedesco at (518) 858-8652, or email jtedesc7@nycap.rr.com.

A few miles further north, in the village of Schuylerville, is the Schuyler Yacht Basin (1 Ferry St, Schuylerville, (518) 695-3193, theyachtbasin.com). Located just steps from historic Fort Hardy Park and Hudson Crossing Park in Schuylerville (where General Burgoyne's men first crossed the Hudson, then retreated after the Battle of Saratoga to lay down their



The author and his wife Eileen enjoyed a Valentines Day seafood dinner at Max410 at the Water's Edge in Glenville, just across the Mohawk River from Schenectady. Summertime boaters can enjoy outdoor dining here and overnight accommodations at the adjacent Homewood Suites by Hilton Schenectady hotel.



An aerial view of the Homewood Suites by Hilton Schenectady, with Max410 at the Water's Edge restaurant in the foreground and the transient docks visible alongside. There is also a launch ramp next to the complex, and the road in foreground traverses across Freeman's Bridge into downtown Schenectady, bringing even more amenities within walking distance. Photo courtesy of Homewood Suites by Hilton Schenectady.

arms and march to a nearby epic surrender which shook the world), Schuyler Yacht Basin has excellent protected dockage, great restrooms with showers and laundry facilities, a wonderful waterfront restaurant, and several air conditioned "container cabins" which provide comfortable overnight accommodations for 2 with built in kitchens and bathrooms with showers. New for 2023, they have acquired a 32 foot Bayliner which will be used as a stationary overnight cabin for up to 6. So even if you have an open boat, you can stay on a cabin cruiser for the night! Continuing north, there are accommodations within walking and/or taxi distance, which means you can take your open boat through to Lake Champlain.

Westbound on the Mohawk River, there

have always been ample dockage, restaurants, fuel and showers, but overnight accommodations have been hard to find. The Homewood Suites by Hilton Schenectady (2a Freeman's Bridge Road, Schenectady NY 12302-3604, (518) 579-6727, homewoodsuitesbyhilton.com) is located right along the water, next to Max410 at the Water's Edge (max410.com), a gourmet restaurant with dockage and a poignant 9/11 memorial located on the premises. For enterprising souls, the nightlife, entertainment, additional dining and even gambling of downtown Schenectady, Mohawk Harbor and the Rivers Casino is just a brisk walk away. There are even medical facilities at Mohawk Harbor, which could be useful in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Heading west, there are motels and other accommodations within walking distance of the canal, in places like Palatine Bridge, Fort Plain, St. Johnsville and Little Falls, and all the way out to Lake Oneida. More accommodations can be reached by taxi.

The eastern Erie Canal admittedly doesn't have the riverside amenities that can be found in western NY, where some nice hotels/motels and really top notch BnBs are steps from the water, some even with their own dockage, but still its doable. And that means a lot more cruising waters lie within reach for all boaters from the Hudson Valley and beyond. So maybe this is the year to plan your open boat adventure, on the New York State Canals!

Comfortable overnight accommodations for 2 can be found in these container cabins, old shipping containers turned into excellent overnight rooms with kitchen, bath and air conditioning, at the Schuyler Yacht Basin in Schuylerville.

