

Flotilla Flagships

by Jenna DuChene

To commemorate Henry Hudson's 1609 voyage up the river that now bears his name, a grand flotilla of ships sailed up the Hudson from Battery Park to Albany in September 2009. The following are two of the most celebrated ships that made up the flotilla.



Susan L. Shafer

The Half Moon: In 1609, the Dutch East India Company commissioned Captain Henry Hudson to explore the New World via the ship, *Halve Maen* (Dutch for Half Moon). Hudson would indeed explore the strange new land in search of a passageway between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, but rather than find this passage, he would instead discover the river later named after him. The *Half Moon* is a replica of the *Halve Maen* and was built in Albany in 1989. The ship accurately depicts the seventeenth-century ships of the Dutch East India Company, and acts as a floating museum, holding events and conducting public educational programs. Visitors can explore the ship and see the accurate flags, navigational tools and maritime paraphernalia from Henry Hudson's day. Oftentimes the crew is even found in traditional colonial dress. Volunteer crew members are given proper training dockside and, true to history, everyone aboard has an important role to play.



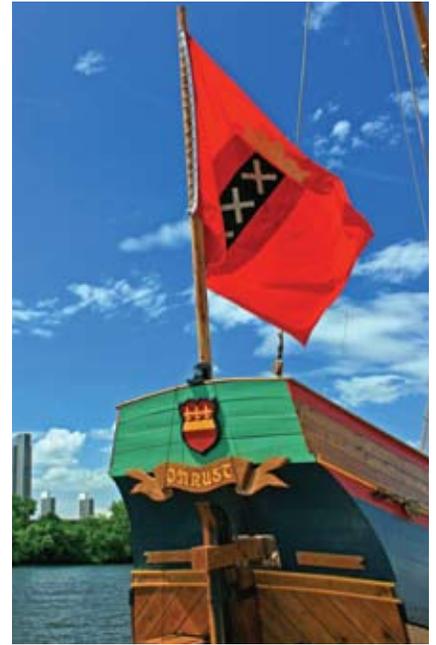
Susan L. Shafer

The ship *Half Moon*

The Onrust: Nearly four hundred years ago, Adriaen Block, a merchant ship captain, sailed up the Hudson River to explore resources discovered by Henry Hudson on his maiden voyage. However, Block and his crew were stranded after a fire destroyed their ship, the *Tyger*. Instead of waiting for a ride, though, they decided to build a new ship. This ship, the *Onrust*, took six months to build. With its completion, the *Onrust* became the first ship ever built entirely in the New World, and thus the first ever built in New York. In their new ship, Block and his crew explored much of New England, giving the area the name New Netherland. The replica *Onrust*, a member

of this September's flotilla, took three years to complete. In accordance with the non-profit group New Netherland Routes, Inc., Gerald de Weerdt, a maritime museum curator from Holland, spearheaded the build. The result is an amazing, accurate replica of Block's ship. On May 20, 2009, it was launched into the Mohawk River, and like the *Half Moon*, the *Onrust* is a floating museum where the public can learn about seventeenth-century maritime explorations.

Jenna DuChene is the staff writer of *Conservationist*.



The ship *Onrust*

