

Steamboat Explores Delaware River History and Ecology

By Shaun Bailey, Marketing and Communications Specialist, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

Now sailing the Delaware River at Lambertville, NJ, and New Hope, PA, is a 49-passenger replica of an 1850 steamboat named "SPLASH," which stands for Student Participation in Learning Aquatic Science and History. This steam-driven paddleboat tours historic sites along the river as crew members teach lessons involving environmental education, science, American history, and social studies.

Bought in 2000, relocated from Ohio, and renovated using \$160,000 in loans, gifts and grants, this Coast Guard-certified vessel now is taking reservations for school classes, summer camps, scouts and adult groups of all kinds. The ship comes equipped with marine safety equipment, interactive activities, and instructional tools such as microscopes and science kits.

"This is an exciting, unique opportunity to experience the river and see a real steamboat in operation, while doing hands-on educational activities" said Founder, Bart Hoebel, who is also a psychology professor at Princeton University. "The river is the drinking water supply for 17 million people and provides a beautiful setting in which to learn clean-water ecology and American history."

SPLASH is available for school groups, fundraisers, birthdays, business parties and private charters between the months of May and October. The cost is \$19 per person with a minimum charge of \$695, and discounts are available for non-profit organizations. The typical trip lasts two hours, including anchoring for a party or series of educational activities.

For more information or to make a reservation, please contact Prof. Bart Hoebel, 609-921-6612, hoebel@princeton.edu, or visit www.SteamboatClassroom.org.