

Two New Home-Ported Schooners Offering Cruises In Yorktown

By Jen Holden

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Photo courtesy of York County Public Affairs.

YORK-Historic Yorktown is now the permanent home of two new tall ships docked at the Riverwalk Landing Piers. The Schooner Alliance II and the Schooner Serenity will navigate the waters of the York River daily while offering day and sunset sails, pirate cruises, and private charters.

York County Economic and Tourism Development hosted a ribbon cutting and christening for both ships on Tuesday, May 30.

The Alliance II replaces its namesake vessel, which was sold to an education nonprofit in Michigan in 2022. Around the same time as the sale, new owners Erik Lohse and Tyler Bullock purchased York River Cruises from Lohse's stepmother, Laura Lohse.

"It was so important to keep York River Cruises in the family because we understand the growth potential and the significance it brings to the community," said Erik Lohse in a press release. "We are incredibly fortunate to have found two boats that would allow us to carry on the Lohse legacy."

There are other reasons the owners are adamant about sustaining their business in Yorktown, the quaint atmosphere and convenience.

“When I came aboard as the ship’s captain in 2019, I was blown away by the amount of water there was and how accessible the area is,” said Bullock. “I’m so excited to be able to stay and work in Yorktown and call it my home.”

Kristi Olsen, director of York County Economic and Tourism Development, is thrilled about enhancing the on-water attractions available in Historic Yorktown.

“The Alliance II and Serenity will not only boost the economy but will also give locals and tourists the opportunity to experience Yorktown’s breathtaking landscape and learn about the significance Yorktown’s ships played in U.S. history,” said Olsen.

While aboard the Alliance II, Captains Erik and Tyler will steer guests past Yorktown Battlefield, the historic landmark where the United States won its independence. Kids will have the opportunity to steer the boat, hoist sails, and tie knots on a Pirate Adventure Cruise. Couples can enjoy a Sunset Sail as they search the York River for dolphins and sea turtles.

Day Sails and Pirate Adventure Cruises cost \$45 for adults and \$35 for children 12 and under. Sunset Sails are \$55 per person for all ages. Tours will run through Tuesday, October 31.

With a maximum of six passengers, the Schooner Serenity offers private, intimate sightseeing charters. Guests can enjoy two-hour Day Private Sails between the hours of 10am and 1pm or two-hour Sunset Private Sails. Times for private sails fluctuate through Wednesday, November 1. Day sails on the Serenity are \$500 (plus gratuity) Monday through Friday and \$550 (plus gratuity) on Saturday and Sunday. Sunset Sails are \$600 (plus gratuity) Monday through Friday and \$650 (plus gratuity) on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information about Yorktown Sailing Charters, call 757-639-1233 or visit www.sailoryorktown.com