

## TIME LINE OF THE ERIE CANAL

1786

Governor George Clinton urged the New York State Legislature to improve natural waterways.

1808

State Surveyor General Simeon DeWitt and James Geddes were allotted \$600 by the state legislature to make a survey and draw maps of a proposed canal to present to the President of the United States in an attempt to secure funds for the canal. Thomas Jefferson vetoed the idea as impractical at that time.

1811

The state appointed a seven man commission to consider the matter of improving navigation within the state. Gouverneur Morris and Dewitt Clinton were members of that commission as were several wealthy landowners.

1812

The war with Great Britain began. It showed a need for an internal waterway to link the east with western lands to provide men and supplies in time of war and to increase trade and commerce during times of peace.

1816

The New York legislature's canal bill appointed a new five man commission and charged them with the task of finding ways to raise \$ 6 million dollars to finance the canal.

1817-1821 and 1825-1828

Dewitt Clinton served as Governor of the State of New York.

1817

In Rome on July 4, 1817, ground was broken for the start of the Erie Canal. It was to be 40 feet wide and 4 feet deep. About 15 miles of the canal were completed in the first year.

1820

Regulations for conduct on the canal were established and the first tolls

were levied.

1823

The first boats from the west and north went through the canal to the Hudson River at Albany.

1824

Approximately, 380 bridges over the Erie Canal were completed between Albany and Little Falls.

1825

The Erie Canal was completed. Governor Clinton traveled from Lake Erie at Buffalo along the canal to Albany where he dumps water from Lake Erie into the harbor. This was called "The Wedding of the Waters " and was symbolic of the connection between the two great bodies of water.

1835

The canal was paid for through the collection of tolls.

1836

Due to the heavy use of the canal, a project was begun to enlarge the canal to 70 feet wide and 7 feet deep. Double locks were built to speed up traffic.

1863

The enlargement was completed. Improvements continued to accommodate larger boats and the use of steam power.

1905

Construction of the Barge Canal was begun.

1917

Navigation stopped on the Erie Canal

1918

The Barge Canal was opened for travel. It is still used for transportation of materials and for recreation.