

OVER A CENTURY CRUISING ON THE HEADWATERS OF THE SUSQUEHANNA

The Chief Uncas is a classic 1912 electric-powered boat built by the Electric Launch Company (ELCO) in Bayonne, NJ for Adolphus Busch, co-founder of the Anheuser-Busch beer



dynasty of St. Louis, MO. Busch acquired the boat for use at his family's summer estate on Otsego Lake near Cooperstown, NY. The new electric launch replaced a 1910 gas-powered ELCO, also named Chief Uncas, which was damaged by an engine fire.

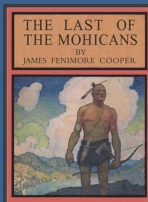
The Chief Uncas is 55 feet long with a 9.5 foot beam and 2.5 foot draft, displaces 12 tons, and is constructed of mahogany planking with white oak ribs and frames. After repowering with gas engines in the 1950s, the most recent Busch family owner, Mr. Lou Hager, a 4th generation descendent of Adolphus, restored electric propulsion to the boat for its 100th anniversary in 2012. The Chief Uncas is now powered by two 4-hp electric motors and sixteen 12-volt batteries that propel the boat at 8 mph with an endurance of 8-10 hours.

The Chief Uncas has cruised its entire 108-year lifetime on Otsego Lake, the headwaters of the Susquehanna River, where this ancient, scenic waterway begins its 444-mile journey to the Chesapeake Bay. After hosting public tours for 20+ years, the boat returned to private Busch family use in the early 2000s. The Chief Uncas is in fine condition and ready for a 2nd century cruising the waters of the Susquehanna.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The Chief Uncas was named for a character in James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans*. Cooperstown was founded by the author's father and many local landmarks honor his literature. The Uncas name was likely derived from the Mohegan Sachem Uncas, a 17th century Indian leader in what is now Connecticut. The real Uncas guided his native people through the many changes and

conflicts that ensued after English and Dutch colonizers invaded their homeland in the 1600s. Adolphus Busch's naming of the boat for Cooper's fictional Uncas reflects the common appropriation and romanticizing of Indian culture and leaders in early 20th century America.



SUSQUEHANNA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
River Discovery Tours

HISTORIC CHIEF UNCAS
1912 ELCO ELECTRIC MOTOR LAUNCH



Acquisition of the Chief Uncas was made possible through a major gift by Ann B. Barshinger of Lancaster, PA and generous donations from Doug Hoke and George & Bambi Long of York, PA.



Lloyd's Register of American Yachts
550 Chief Uncas Wood K TC ScwL 55-010-01 81-6 Elco Company 2-4 Elco Company 1912 Electric Motors Adolphus Busch Est. Cooperstown N. Y.



A HISTORIC & ECO-FRIENDLY FLAGSHIP FOR SNHA'S RIVER DISCOVERY TOURS

In 2021 SNHA completed our third season of free Susquehanna River pontoon boat tours from the Zimmerman Center for Heritage funded with federal and state grants. The success of the tours led us to seek a bigger, U.S. Coast Guard-certified boat to offer more trips, carry more passengers, and generate ticket revenue to sustain this popular program. Antique, reproduction, and new boats were considered, including larger pontoon boats and "green" electric-powered vessels.



With its well-documented family heritage, eco-friendly power, and historic association with the Susquehanna River at its source, the Chief Uncas is a fitting vessel to showcase SNHA's mission and focus on history, environment, and the river. Though its size and age present unique challenges, the boat's classic design, elegance, and quiet cruising character offer a distinctive appeal worthy of the extra effort needed for its operation and stewardship.

Given these qualities, SNHA purchased the Chief Uncas as our flagship river tour boat in July 2021. After completion of initial USCG-required improvements in Cooperstown, transport to Pennsylvania, and final USCG certification as a passenger vessel, SNHA will launch public river tours with the boat in 2022.

FUNDING FOR THE CHIEF UNCAS

SNHA has secured private gifts and public grants for acquisition and start-up costs of the Chief Uncas. Income from tours, charters, sponsors, and donations will fund annual operating expenses and maintenance. Your gift will help ensure the long-term care of this unique and historic vessel.

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Grant funding for the Chief Uncas project has been provided by the National Park Service and PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation & Conservation, Heritage Areas Program.