

= Port of Albany ? Rensselaer =

The Port of Albany ? Rensselaer , widely known as the Port of Albany , is a port of entry in the United States with facilities on both sides of the Hudson River in Albany and Rensselaer , New York . Private and public port facilities have existed in both cities since the 17th century , with an increase in shipping after the Albany Basin and Erie Canal were built with public funds in 1825 .

The port 's modern name did not come into widespread use until 1925 ; the current port was constructed in 1932 under the governorship of Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression . It included the largest grain elevator in the world at the time . Today the grain elevator is the largest in the United States east of the Mississippi River ; the port has the tallest harbor crane in the state of New York .

The port has rail connections with the Albany Port Railroad , which allows for connections with CSXT and CP Rail . It is near several interstates and the New York State Canal System . The port features several tourist attractions as well , such as the USS Slater (DE @-@ 766) , the only destroyer escort still afloat in the United States .

= = Geography = =

The Port of Albany consists of roughly 236 acres (96 ha) , including about 202 acres (82 ha) in Albany and 34 acres (14 ha) in Rensselaer . It is 124 nautical miles (230 km) north of New York Harbor . From New York Harbor to the Federal Dam three miles (5 km) north of Albany , the Hudson River is an estuary of the Atlantic Ocean . The Hudson has a deep water shipping channel 400 feet (120 m) across , and at Albany the river is 700 feet (210 m) across with a maximum 31 feet (9 @.@ 4 m) saltwater draft and a mean range of tides of 4 @.@ 7 feet (1 @.@ 4 m) . The port is at sea level .

= = History = =

Since the founding of Albany in 1624 as a trading post , shipping has been important to its growth and prosperity . Furs (especially beaver) , timber , and farm produce were important exports while European people and goods were shipped in . The Dongan Charter , which established Albany as a city , made Albany the exclusive market town in the upper Hudson River Valley . From its beginning , the port consisted of hastily built docks built every spring and destroyed every winter by erosion , flooding , ice , and tidal action . Three city @-@ owned docks were established in 1766 , the northern and southern ones later being expanded into wharves .

Many historically significant ships used Albany as their home port . The Experiment left Albany in 1785 to become the second American ship to sail to China . In 1809 Robert Fulton 's Clermont became the first commercially viable steamboat when it left Albany and sailed down the Hudson to the city of New York . In 1825 a 4 @,@ 300 @-@ foot (1 @,@ 300 m) long and 80 @-@ foot (24 m) wide pier was constructed 250 feet (76 m) from , and perpendicular to , Albany 's shoreline . Along with two bridges the pier enclosed roughly 32 acres (13 ha) of the Hudson River as the Albany Basin . The construction of the pier and bridges cost \$ 119 @,@ 980 . The basin was located where the Erie Canal , constructed between 1818 and 1825 , met the Hudson River . The basin could accommodate 1 @,@ 000 canal boats and 50 steamboat moorings . Along the Erie Canal within the city 's North Albany neighborhood private wharves and slips were constructed for use in the lumber trade , this soon became the large and prosperous Albany Lumber District of national importance . In 1860 Albany , along with nearby Watervliet and Troy , was the largest lumber market in the state . The Maiden Lane Bridge was constructed in 1871 over the basin to connect Albany with the east side of the river , it was open to railroad traffic only .

The Albany Port District was established in 1925 under New York law Chapter 192 . This was only four years after the interstate compact that created the Port of New York Authority (later renamed the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey) . In 1932 Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt unveiled a modern port to replace the aging infrastructure of the Albany Basin and the lumber district along

the Erie Canal in the North Albany neighborhood . The port was constructed on around 200 acres (0 @. @ 81 km2) on Westerlo Island in the southern end of Albany along with approximately 34 acres (140 @, @ 000 m2) across the river in the city of Rensselaer . The grain elevator at the port , built during the original construction in 1932 , was the largest in the world and as of 2008 is still considered to be the largest in the United States east of the Mississippi River . The area of Albany 's original port (the Albany Basin) has been covered by Interstate 787 and the Corning Preserve (Riverfront Park) since the very early 1970s . In 1979 remnants of the basin wall were excavated from the preserve 's lagoon by Phillip Lord working for the New York State Museum .

A Master Plan adopted in 2000 called for the port to be transformed into a container port , which led to the purchase of the largest harbor crane in the state . In 2002 , the Port District Commission took the lead in the development of Albany 's Riverfront Park in the Corning Preserve as part of a development to enhance Albany 's access to the river . The port helped in financing the project and in the construction of two bulkheads which have seasonal floating docks attached . In a 2005 audit , the Office of the State Comptroller questioned the port 's involvement in the construction and financing . Two issues raised were the port district 's lack of authority to build docks for non @-@ commercial use and that the port would receive no income for facilities it was financing . The port received \$ 3 @. @ 3 million in 2002 to upgrade and become a member of the Inland Distribution Network , a select group of ports that are used as satellite locations for the distribution of container cargo from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey , resulting in less congestion at downstate ports and highways .

On December 9 , 2003 , the Stellamare , a Dutch @-@ owned ship , capsized at the port , killing three Russian crewmembers . The ship was hauling General Electric generators when it overturned . The United States Coast Guard determined that poor communication resulting from the supervisors speaking Dutch while the crew spoke Russian , with English being used as a relay , was a contributing factor to mismanagement of ballast tanks . In the early spring of 2008 a port employee was arrested for stealing copper . This in turn led to investigations of employee theft which resulted in the arrest of an operations manager and a maintenance foreman for larceny . In 2008 the port received two awards from the Railway Industrial Clearance Association . One award was for customer satisfaction and the other for being the most improved port in the United States for handling heavy lift cargo .

= = = Future = = =

The Port of Albany is replacing 500 feet (150 m) of wharvage at a cost of \$ 7 @. @ 6 million in 2008 and 2009 . In late March 2008 a proposal for a \$ 350 million ethanol plant was approved by the Albany Port District Commission , but the project has been held up due to financing issues .

= = Governance = =

The Albany Port District Commission is a public benefit corporation created by the state of New York to develop and manage port facilities anywhere in the cities of Albany and Rensselaer . The commission has five members , four of which are nominated by the mayor of Albany and one is nominated by the mayor of Rensselaer . The governor of New York then appoints them to three @-@ year terms . The commissioners serve without pay , but are compensated for business related expenses . The commission is considered to be a unit of the city of Albany and is included in the city 's financial statements . Any deficit in the finances of the commission are assessed against both Albany and Rensselaer . In 1932 the state decided that any deficit assessment would be based on Albany owing 88 % of the total and Rensselaer 12 % . In 2005 the commission had a staff of 35 employees : eight in administrative duties , five in maintenance , and 22 as part @-@ time security .

= = Economy = =

The Port of Albany and the private companies located there bring to the Capital District 's economy

\$ 428 million in direct spending and 1 @, @ 382 jobs . The port has a U.S. Customs office as it is a port of entry . The Albany Port Customs District includes all of the following counties : Albany , Columbia , Delaware , Fulton , Greene , Montgomery , Otsego , Rensselaer , Saratoga , Schenectady , Schoharie , Warren , and Washington ; along with the parts of Dutchess , Sullivan , and Ulster counties north of 41 ° 42 ' N. latitude . The 35 acres (140 @, @ 000 m2) on the Rensselaer side of the port is site C of Foreign Trade Zone number 121 . A significant amount of the port is part of New York 's Empire Zone program , which gives port tenants breaks on state income tax along with various benefits and tax breaks from the city of Albany .

= = Connections = =

The Port of Albany is roughly 260 miles (420 km) east of Buffalo , 225 miles (362 km) south of Montreal , 175 miles (282 km) west of Boston , and 135 miles (217 km) north of the city of New York which makes it a location for regional distribution in the Northeastern United States and parts of Canada . As part of the Inland Distribution Network , the Port of Albany has a twice @-@ weekly barge service to and from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey terminals . Shipments into the port can leave through many modes of transportation , including by truck and rail . Albany International Airport is 15 minutes away with cargo facilities . Canals allow for further water transportation on barges further into the interior of North America . The port also handles commodities that are not carried on ships . Grain , molasses , animal feed , wood pulp , and steel often go from inbound trains to outbound trucks .

= = = Rail = = =

The Albany Port Railroad (APRR) , owned jointly by CSX and Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail) , has 18 miles (29 km) of track inside the port . The APRR ties into CP Rail 's Colonie Mainline and CSX 's Port Subdivision for rail traffic out of the port . Norfolk Southern has an intermodal yard at the port . CP Rail 's Kenwood Yard is adjacent to the port . The North Albany ? Erie Street Yard , also owned by CP Rail , is a few miles north of the port and still in the city of Albany . CSX owns two nearby yards : the Selkirk Yard is eight miles (13 km) south of the port , and the West Albany Yard is four miles (6 km) north .

= = = Truck = = =

Major Interstates in proximity are :

New York State Thruway , a toll @-@ road (west from Albany it is Interstate 90 to Buffalo and beyond ; south the Thruway is Interstate 87 to the New York Metro Area) ;

I @-@ 787 connects Albany to Troy , New York ;

I @-@ 87 (south of Albany it is the Thruway , to the north the Adirondack Northway then at the Canadian border becomes Autoroute 15 to Montreal) ;

I @-@ 90 (west of Albany it is the Thruway , to the east toll @-@ free until rejoining the Thruway on its Berkshire Spur and continuing to Boston as the Mass Turnpike) ;

I @-@ 88 connects Albany to Binghamton , New York .

= = = Water @-@ to @-@ water = = =

The Port of Albany is just south of where the New York State Canal System begins at the Federal Dam in Troy . The Erie Canal allows for water navigation to the Great Lakes , and the Champlain Canal connects the Hudson River to Lake Champlain . The Richelieu River / Chambly Canal then connects Lake Champlain to the St. Lawrence Seaway and Montreal .

= = Facilities = =

The Port of Albany includes :

Deep water facilities located on both banks of the river ;

two wharves : wharf length on the Albany side of the river is 4 @, @ 200 feet (1 @, @ 300 m) with four berths , and on the Rensselaer side the length is 1 @, @ 100 feet (340 m) with one berth ;

10 @-@ acre (4 @. @ 0 ha) open storage yard ;

Customs and U.S. Department of Agriculture offices ;

Five transit sheds and two backup warehouses totaling 350 @, @ 000 square feet (33 @, @ 000 m²) of storage ;

13 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 US bushels (480 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 l ; 108 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 US dry gal ; 105 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 imp gal) capacity grain elevator ;

18 @-@ million @-@ US @-@ gallon (68 @, @ 000 m³) capacity bulk liquid storage between two terminals ;

Heavy lift on @-@ dock rail capability ;

Super @-@ sacking and debagging operation ;

12 @-@ acre (4 @. @ 9 ha) road salt depot ;

12 @-@ acre (4 @. @ 9 ha) scrap yard ;

a 225 @-@ short @-@ ton (201 @-@ long @-@ ton ; 204 @-@ metric @-@ ton) capacity crane and a mobile harbor crane , which is the largest harbor crane in the state of New York .

== Maritime services ==

Stevedoring operations at the Port of Albany are managed by Federal Marine Terminals , Inc. and Port Albany Ventures , LLC . The Hudson River Pilots Association handles pilotage on the Hudson River .

== Tenants ==

The rent from the 32 businesses at the port contributes \$ 2 @. @ 76 million in revenue for the port . Tenants include Global Partners LP which has a petroleum distillates terminal with a capacity of 738 @, @ 000 barrels (117 @, @ 300 m³) .

== Cargo ==

Some commodities come through the port on a regular basis , others are special cargo for a limited time . Such limited time cargo includes subway cars shipped to Albany from Brazil in 2006 for six months , and 30 @-@ inch (760 mm) diameter pipes with associated materials from Italy first shipped in May 2007 . The pipes were for a 186 @-@ mile (299 km) long natural gas pipeline and included 60 @, @ 000 short tons (53 @, @ 571 long tons ; 54 @, @ 431 t) of material in about a dozen ships . Commodities shipped to or from Albany on a regular basis include :

Animal feed ;

Cement ;

Cocoa beans ;

Grain (including corn and wheat) ;

Gypsum ;

Ethanol ;

Heavy lift items (including turbines , generators , heat exchangers , and rotors) ;

Liquid fertilizer ;

Millscale and scrap metal ;

Molasses ;

Petroleum distillates (including diesel , gasoline , heating oil , and kerosene) ;

Salt ;

Steel ;

Sugar ;

Wood pulp and logs .

= = Tourism = =

Along with commercial activities the Port of Albany has non @-@ industrial uses along the river . A ship museum and a tourism cruise ship are docked at the Steamboat Square . Steamboat Square was , until 2010 , named the Snow Dock for being where city trucks dumped into the Hudson River snow plowed from the streets . A PortFest was held in 2007 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Port of Albany @-@ Rensselaer and the 10th anniversary of the USS Slater as a museum docked at Albany . National Maritime Day is celebrated with free trolley rides of the port and free rides aboard the Dutch Apple Cruise .

The USS Slater (DE @-@ 766) , which is the only destroyer escort still afloat in the United States , sits at Steamboat Square near the foot of Madison Avenue . The ship is open from April to November to the public . The destroyer closes to the public from December to March and moves from the Steamboat Square to the port 's Rensselaer side . In August 2008 part of the Japanese film Orion in Midsummer (scheduled for release in spring 2009) was filmed on board .

Dutch Apple Cruises , a private company which gives day cruises on the Hudson River and Erie Canal , also operates at the Steamboat Square . The city of Albany has a public boat launch and boat house along the Hudson in the Corning Preserve . The boat house and launch are used by the Albany Rowing Center , a non @-@ profit rowing organization . On the Rensselaer side of the Hudson is the Albany Yacht Club . The club was founded in the city of Albany in 1873 and is one of the oldest yacht clubs in the nation . In 1954 the club moved to the Rensselaer side and since 1971 has been at its current location just south of the Dunn Memorial Bridge . Facilities are open to the public at large and not just to members .