

City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

The Newburgh–Beacon Ferry is a ferry service crossing the Hudson River that connects Newburgh with Beacon, New York. It carries passengers between the two cities during rush hour, primarily transporting commuters from Newburgh to the commuter train station on the east side at Beacon

By the early 20th century the fleet had grown to three 160-foot coal-fired ferries, the Orange, Dutchess and Beacon, capable of carrying 30 vehicles each. It linked the two segments of NY 52, the major east-west artery at that point.

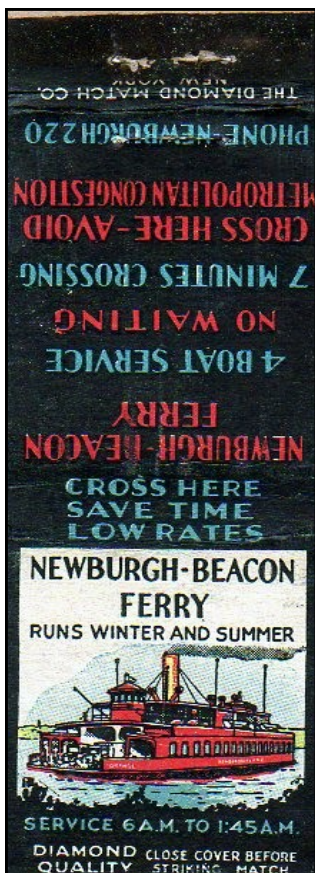
People stalled on the Newburgh-Beacon ferry, en route to work at Nabisco, Texaco or the state prisons, had difficulty getting to work whenever ice trapped their boat and they had to wait for another one to clear a path to shore. If the ice was thick enough and solid enough, they simply walked — by the hundreds — back and forth. The impetus for a bridge began with the opening in 1916 of Bear Mountain State Park. To improve access to the popular attraction, in 1924, the Bear Mountain Bridge opened — the first bridge over the Hudson between New York City and Albany and the ferry at Bear Mountain was discontinued.

The ferries were seen as past their day, due to their mounting financial and operational problems, even before the construction of the Newburgh-Beacon bridge. The last Hudson crossing to be built on the river's estuarine section below Albany, was completed and opened to traffic on November 2, 1963. By that time the New York State Bridge Authority had already had to take them over. The very next day, 220 years of ferry service passed into the region's rich history when the *Orange* and *Dutchess* saluted each other mid-river on their 5 p.m. runs.

Increasing regional growth in the 1990s led to frequent traffic jams on the bridge and swamped parking lots at the train station. Interest grew in reviving ferry service. However, plans never quite seemed to materialize despite considerable appropriations of money, and in the interim commuters had to be content with a shuttle bus across the bridge. Meanwhile, MTA began for the first time to require parking permits at Beacon, and the waiting list swelled to at least 600 more than capacity, even after the lots were enlarged in the early 2000s.

Eventually, it was able, with the help of the region's congressional delegation, to secure a \$1.1 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration to close the gap between fares and costs, along with other subsidies. Governor George Pataki announced on October 7, 2005, that ferry service would resume in 10 days. To encourage use of the new ferry, no fares were charged for the remainder of that month.

MTA moved the *West New York*, a boat which had been used to evacuate Lower Manhattan after the September 11, 2001 attacks, to Newburgh Bay to inaugurate its new service. It carries 149 passengers.



[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newburgh%E2%80%93Beacon_Ferry]