

# custom house

## MARITIMES

WINTER 2012



Detail of New London's Wyland Whale Wall.

## WHALE'S EYE VIEW

The surprising success of last year's innovative, collaborative programs, such as *Sentinels on the Sound* - our lighthouse heritage weekend, and the *One Big Table* community dinner, is making us rethink how we define ourselves and our partners. The lesson here perhaps is to keep trying out new things. Success can be found in the most unlikely places.

The Custom House Maritime Museum documents both our maritime history and the city's living waterfront, with a strong community component thrown in. While we will continue to partner with area heritage organizations--this summer's *Rockets Red Glare* - War of 1812 exhibition being a prime example--increasingly we realize the museum is much more than simple history. Our partners are fairly wide-ranging, depending upon the program. For *One Big Table*, some of our greatest supporters were the city's restaurants, among them *Chaplin's*, *Tony D's*, *Mangetout* and *Mambo*, each of whom provided us terrific ethnic-New London dishes just for the fun of it. *Sentinels on the Sound* pulled us farther afield, with partnerships extending from Stonington to Norwalk. With our new focus on lighthouses and marine conservation, we've started thinking in even broader terms, to include water-based organizations bordering all of Long Island Sound and beyond.

At its height in the 19th century, when New London was the world's second-leading whaling city, our 'neighborhood' extended across the globe. We should not forget that perspective today. And, in fact, we don't.

This is all by way of a lead-in to our **29th Annual New London Maritime Society Founders Day Luncheon**. Celebrating imaginative & resourceful 'founders'--local and global, who took the initiative in times of crisis, this March, we celebrate NLMS founder **Lucille Showalter**, and the **United States Coast Guard International Ice Patrol**. The Founders Day Luncheon takes place **Sunday, March 25, 2012, from 12:30 to 2:30 PM** at the USCGA Officers Club. NLMS member donation is \$35, non-member donation is \$40. **Please call 860-447-2501 to reserve your spot. Cont... page 2.**

January through March, our hours are Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday from 1 to 5 PM, or by appointment. April through December, the Custom House is open Tuesday through Sunday (closed Monday), from 1 to 5 PM. New London Maritime Society, Custom House Maritime Museum, 150 Bank Street, New London, Connecticut, 860-447-2501

## upcoming events

### MARCH

- 2 Reid MacCluggage Black Maritime History Scholarship entries due.
- 8 Our Wild Neighbors, with Kim Hargraves, 6:30 PM.
- 10 Shore Birds & Water Fowl of the Thames River, with Maggie Jones, 2 PM.
- 13 Cartooning for Kids, for Kids 7 & Up, with Jon Buller, 4 weeks, 4-5:15 PM.
- 20 Jibboom Club GAM. 1-4 PM
- 25 29th Founders Day Luncheon 12:30 PM
- 26 Showing Gratitude to Donors seminar, Harriet Grayson



WINTER CALENDAR go to [www.nlmaritimesociety.org](http://www.nlmaritimesociety.org) for more events & the latest updates

SPECIAL EVENTS

**March 8, Thursday, 6:30 PM reception, talk at 7. *Our Wild Neighbors***, with educator **Kim Hargraves**. Learn about being good stewards to the wildlife in our neighborhoods, including what to do if you find injured wildlife. *FREE* for DPNC & NLMS members, \$7 all others.

**March 10, Saturday, 2 to 4 PM. *Shore Birds & Water Fowl of the Thames River***, Bird Walk with **Maggie Jones**, director of the Dennison-Pequotsepos Nature Center. Join Maggie at Fort Trumbull, Ocean & Waterford Beaches. \$7 for DPNC and NLMS members, \$10 all others.

**March 25, Sunday, 12:30-2:30 PM**, New London Maritime Society 29th Annual Founders Day Luncheon, \$35 members, \$40 all others

EVERY MONTH

**Third Tuesdays, 1-4 PM, Jibboom Club #1 Gams** - Reviving Jibboom Club #1 with maritime talk, good friends & cookies.

**Wednesday, 5-6 PM**, catch our TV show **CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MATTERS**, on New London Metrocast cable, channel 25.

**Founders Day...cont.**

On a local level, we recognize the late historian **Lucille Showalter**. In the early 1980s, Lucille Showalter rose to become leader of the impassioned band of volunteers who established the New London Maritime Society - Custom House Maritime Museum. This happened at a moment when the fate of New London's 1833 custom house, designed by Robert Mills, the nation's first federal architect, was in jeopardy. Ms Showalter's fierce dedication to the organization will be formally acknowledged at the luncheon with the unveiling of a portrait, commissioned from artist Michael Peery by the New London Maritime Society. The portrait will then go on permanent display at the Custom House Maritime Museum

On a global level, the New London Maritime Society recognizes the achievements of the **United States Coast Guard International Ice Patrol (IIP)**. The tragic sinking of the luxury passenger liner RMS TITANIC 100 years ago this April prompted maritime nations with ships transiting the North Atlantic to establish an iceberg patrol in the area. Since 1913, the United States Coast Guard has been tasked with the management and operation of the patrol, known as the International Ice Patrol, and which is based at Fort Trumbull. The mission of the International Ice Patrol is to monitor iceberg danger near the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and provide the iceberg limit to the maritime community. Since the patrol was established, no ship heeding their warnings has struck an iceberg.

To tell the International Ice Patrol story, our guest speaker is oceanographer **Dr. Donald L. Murphy**, the Chief Scientist of the United States Coast Guard International Ice Patrol for 28 years and a native of New London. Dr. Murphy's talk is entitled, "International Ice Patrol: For the purpose of safeguarding life and property at sea."

The world needs its champions! Join us in celebrating New London Maritime Society Founder Lucille Showalter and the USCG International Ice Patrol on March 25. Call 860-447-2501 to make your reservation.



Volunteer Rachel Perry helps teach Jennings School Lighthouse Kids four basic knots.

**Director's Report**

This winter was a difficult one at the Custom House. We lost docent Ruth Nagle and artist Robert Hauschild. Even now, several of our good friends are in the process of recovering from serious medical procedures. This has been hard on us all.

I'd like to thank our loyal docents, volunteers, trustees, members, friends & supporters for their generosity to the Custom House. Four years ago, this was a very different place. There are so many things one can choose to spend their time on; I'm so happy you've chosen the Custom House. You have brought it back to life!

Susan Tamulevich



**I'M JOINING THE NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY!**



Name \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \$35\_\_\_ Family \$50\_\_\_ Contributor \$100\_\_\_ Sponsor \$250\_\_\_ Patron \$1,000\_\_\_ Life \$1,500\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Cash\_\_\_ Check\_\_\_ please make payment to **New London Maritime Society** Visa\_\_\_ Master Card\_\_\_ AmEx\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Security code \_\_\_\_\_

Benefits of membership include *free* admission, invitations to special events, discounts, and a newsletter.

Membership year begins at payment date. [www.nlmaritimesociety.org](http://www.nlmaritimesociety.org)

*New London Maritime Society's (NLMS) mission is to preserve New London's U.S. Custom House and Harbor Light and promote & interpret the maritime history of the port of New London and the surrounding region through museum exhibitions and educational programs.*

*150 Bank Street, New London, Connecticut 06320, 860-447-2501*

# NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY President's Report to the Membership

Members and Friends:

We continue to be very busy on a number of fronts involving the Custom House Maritime Museum. And we continue to need more help. There is a great deal of good will and appreciation out there regarding our organization. Try sitting at the front desk -- it's enjoyable and a good way to get to know the community.

The Founders Day event should be a real winner. Please participate, and bring a guest or two.

The Arctic Symposium to be held at the Coast Guard Academy in April is particularly gratifying to me. I have been "nudging" folks about that topic for at least a year. And I will attend.

Susan is meeting with significant success in providing leadership for coordination of the Arts/Culture scene in New London. As I have been saying for some time: the Arts/Culture scene is this City's main economic engine. Let's get it out of first gear.

The Museum Shop is a "diamond in the rough" that is now being carefully "cut". It certainly is good enough – and unique enough – to market widely and from which to derive good profit.

The Lighthouse Committee had a very productive meeting. Please see those Minutes. This is not a closed group. Please volunteer your ideas and your expertise.

George A. Spreace, M.D., J.D., President



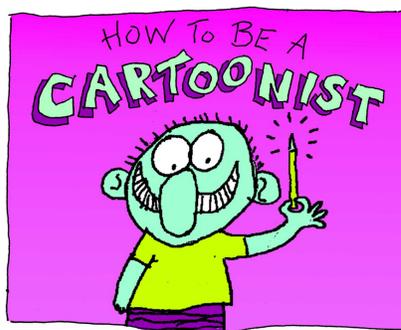
A look inside the Fresnel lens at New London Harbor Light.

## Skill-Building Workshops with Harriet Grayson

February 27, 9 am– noon, or Feb. 29, 5:30– 8:30 PM. **Art of the Ask**  
March 26, 9 AM– noon. **How to Demonstrate Gratitude to Donors**  
April 30, 9 am– noon, or May 2, 5:30– 8:30 PM. **Public-Private Partnerships: Strengthening Nonprofits**  
May 14, 9 am– noon, or May 16, 5:30– 8:30 PM. **Creating a Successful Volunteer Day**

**Harriet Gayson** is a speaker, author, fundraising consultant (previously a partner in *Focus Fundraising*) and former insurance executive and urban planner. Join her for a workshop to hone your non-profit administrator skills.

Workshops are \$65 each, two for \$100; Call 860-447-2501 to register.



**Cartooning classes** with artist **Jon Buller** return this March.

Cartooning for Kids, ages 7 & Up. Four Tuesdays: March 12, 20, 27 & April 3, 4 to 5:15 PM. Fee \$75, materials included. Call 860-447-2501 to register.

[nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org)

## News From the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library

**Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library Summer Exhibition** Thirty-six years after the American Bicentennial was celebrated with parades of tall ships in New York, New London, and other ports, the bicentennial of the War of 1812 will be celebrated this summer in similar fashion. The War of 1812 was primarily a naval conflict, even though an influx of British troops, made possible by the defeat of Napoleon, burned the White House and the Capitol in 1814. The great sailing ships were potent symbols of national power and pride in the Great Age of Sail, and their descendants inspire us yet with their functional beauty.

The War of 1812 materials in the McGuire Library will be featured in an exhibit in the Custom House during the summer months. It will complement a show being planned for the Lyman Allyn Museum in a joint project by Mystic Seaport, New London County Historical Society, Stonington Historical Society, and the New London Maritime Society. The Custom House exhibit will highlight the research archive of **Robert Bachman**, a history teacher who retired from Waterford High School a number of years ago and was planning a book focusing on the events of the War of 1812 in Long Island Sound, specifically New London, Stonington, and Essex. Mr. Bachman had assembled a large quantity of material in the early 1970s, including copies of Royal Navy documents held at England's National Maritime Museum; background material on Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, commodore of the British squadron blockading New London and one of the most famous officers in Royal Navy history; copies of pages from New London's twice-weekly newspaper, the Connecticut Gazette; information about the British and American ships at New London; and much else. He did not finish the book, but the Robert Bachman archive is a trove of information for anyone interested in his chosen topic.

The collection was presented to the library in 2010 by Mr. Bachman's niece, Ruth Regula, and also included several books on the war. We have augmented these with some recent titles resulting from the heightened interest of historians as the bicentennial looms. The latest is **1812: The Navy's War**, published last year by former Connecticut College and Wesleyan University professor George Daughan. Stonington author James Tertius de Kay will also be represented by his three books relating to the war: **The Battle of Stonington**; **A Rage for Glory** (a biography of Capt. Stephen Decatur); and **Chronicles of the Macedonian** (the British frigate captured by Decatur in a stunning action in 1812.)

\* \* \* \* \*

**The Archibald Chester Collection** We have been hard at work sorting the many documents, clippings and photographs on maritime topics that have been coming our way from **Archibald Chester**, a good friend of the Custom House Museum for many years and a faithful member of its docent staff and board of trustees. Archie has also given dozens of books to the McGuire Library, on a wide range of nautical topics. To recognize his manifold contributions, the handsome arched-brick meeting room on the lower level was named in his honor in 2010. As we put the finishing touches on the archive that will also bear his name, we want to take this opportunity to thank Archie publicly for his unstinting support for the Custom House Museum and its social and educational outreach programs. His interest and his presence have long been "Making a Difference," as the saying goes.

Brian Rogers, Librarian

**THANK YOU!** We've already raised \$24,000 towards our ANNUAL FUND goal of \$25,000.

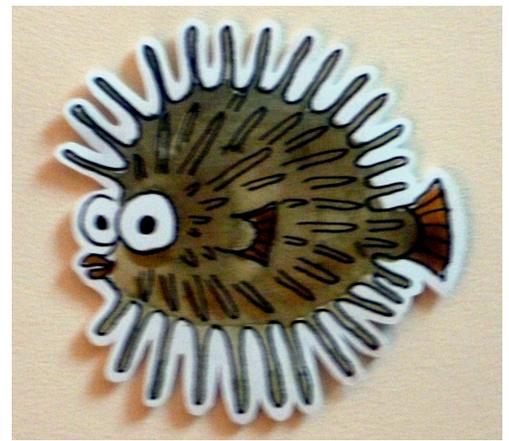
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# OPENING TO GOOD

A STORY ABOUT  
THE OCEAN,  
GRACE  
& GRATITUDE

on view through March 25



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New London Maritime Society  
 Custom House Maritime Museum  
 150 Bank Street  
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[www.nlmaritimesociety.org](http://www.nlmaritimesociety.org)



Artist Michael Peery with his portrait of museum founder Lucille Showalter..