



NEW LONDON HARBOR LIGHT

*the 4th lighthouse in North America, first on Long Island Sound,
& ONLY one owned by Us!*

On October 8, 2009, New London Maritime Society assumed ownership of New London Harbor Light. Established in 1761, it was the fourth lighthouse built in North America and the first on Long Island Sound. The light was rebuilt in 1801 as an 89-foot octagonal brownstone tower and was described by Lieutenant George M. Bache in 1838: *(The light) is situated on a rocky point to the westward of the entrance to the river Thames, and is two miles from the town of New London; it is of great importance as a leading light for vessels going in and out of the harbor of New London, which, on account of its position and security, is much resorted to during the heavy gales of winter...and so it is to this day.*

The U.S. Coast Guard will continue to operate the lighthouse as an active aid to navigation. Meanwhile, your New London Maritime Society will make the repairs necessary to open the tower to the public on a strictly limited basis—possibly as soon as this summer. The Society is pleased to announce that a generous gift from the Kitchings family will be used to establish a lighthouse endowment. This fund will ensure the light's permanent care. Additional contributions to the lighthouse fund may be made to: New London Harbor Light Fund, c/o New London Maritime Society, 150 Bank Street, New London, CT 06320.

Find out more about the lighthouse at www.nlmaritimesociety.org

special events

JANUARY

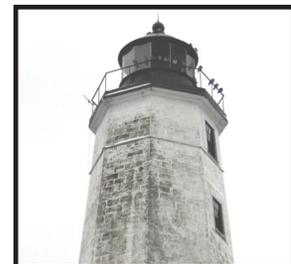
- 21 Maggie Jones talk:
Winter Birding.
- 23 Birding Trip with
Maggie Jones on
the Thames River.

FEBRUARY

- 18 Mark Monroe talk:
Shipwrecks.

MARCH

- 13 Oyster trip with Don
Bell & John Kochiss.
- 16 *Cartoon Basics* with
Jon Buller.



The Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library: A Progress Report

by Brian Rogers

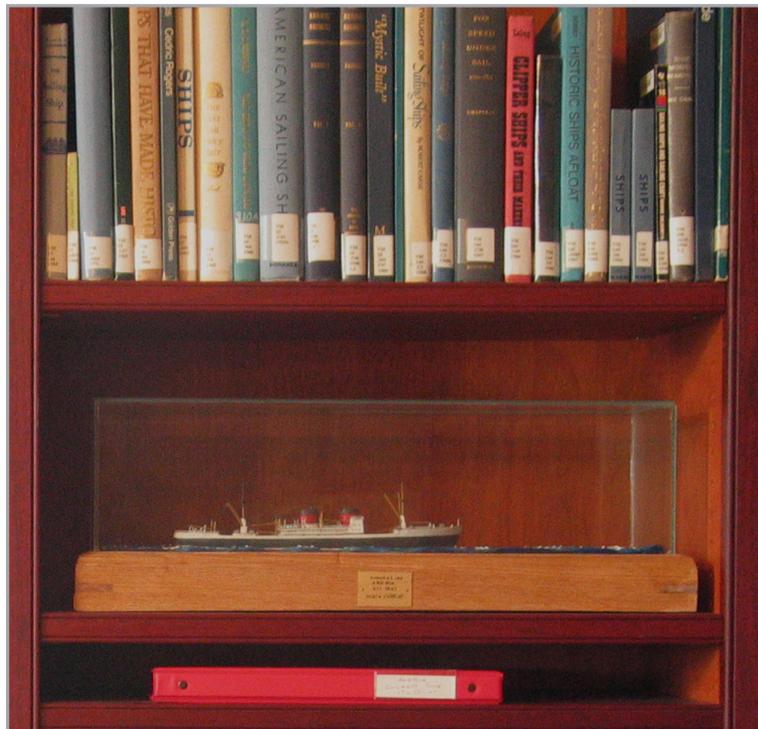
Our growing library has seen some important changes in recent months. The most visible of these is the influx of donated book collections from Robert Bachman of Waterford and the estate of Dan Wolverton, and a notable collection of ship models and books from Robert Stewart of Mystic. Archie Chester continues to donate useful books, while more recent donors include Jennifer Hillhouse, Roger Clements, Oliver Porter, Stan Gaby and the planning office of the City of New London. We have also bought a number of choice titles from Bill Abt of Mystic, a dealer in nautical books. This welcome activity has called for some adjustment of the shelving so that the new material, well over 650 volumes, could be accommodated while awaiting cataloging. This project will begin early in 2010 with two new library volunteers. Among the many nautical topics represented in the new material are U.S. and British naval history (including the War of 1812,) marine art, the great age of sail, polar exploration, yachting, fishing schooners, liners and merchant ships, and submarines.

This past summer Robert Stewart gave us ten exquisite models of 20th century American and British passenger and merchant vessels, each in its own display case. These are now displayed in the McGuire Library, adding to the already inviting ambience of our reading room, whose handsome floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall cherry bookcases were designed by Benjamin Martin and expertly crafted by the late cabinetmaker Bob Chalmers. In October Bob Stewart supplemented the models with his extensive book collection on ship model building and many well-illustrated books on passenger liners, merchant ships, and sailing vessels.

Our book holdings are listed in the Connecticut State Library online catalog, "iConn," a system enabling Connecticut residents to locate a book wherever it may be held in libraries across the state. The ID number of one's public library card is required to enter the system, and from there it is relatively easy to determine what libraries own a given book. Susan Tamulevich and Library Volunteer Brian Rogers attended an iConn training session in Nov. 17.

We have also made progress in organizing our non-book materials. Some of these, like Harold Cone's extensive research notes on New London history, and the glass-plate negative photographs, have been at the Custom House for many years. Other material, including New London-related articles in 19th century illustrated newspapers, historic photographs and postcards, and manuscripts of various kinds, needs to be inventoried so we can let the public know what we have. We will publicize these holdings in a new library component in our website currently being planned. In the meantime, an exhibit of selected books, newspapers and photographs from the library has been on view on the main floor this fall and will continue into January, and we will exhibit other library items from time to time in the future.

The Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library was named in memory of the late New London attorney after his death in 1990. Frank was a founder of the New London Maritime Society, working closely with the late Lucille Showalter and many others to save the landmark Custom House, rehabilitate it and turn it into a museum of New London's maritime heritage. Among other things, he was instrumental in raising nearly a half million dollars for this work. The library was re-dedicated to Frank's memory at the Maritime Society's annual Christmas celebration on December 17, 2009.



Naming of the Archibald J. Chester, Jr. Reading Room

The following announcement was made by Library Volunteer Brian Rogers directly after his remarks regarding the re-dedication of the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library at the Society Christmas Party on December 17, 2009.

One of the McGuire Library's most devoted friends for many years has been long-time board member Archie Chester. For a long time now Archie has been donating books to the collection, usually in memory of family members or ancestors. The books just appear from time to time, marked by one or another of Archie's distinctive rubber stamps that specify in whose memory they have been given. We have no idea how many books have come to us in this way, but the number is considerable.

Archie has been a loyal board member, helping to see the Museum through good times and bad. He has introduced friends to the Maritime Society and brought at least one, Bob Stewart, to board membership. He serves as a docent on a regular basis. He hosts the 2nd-Friday cribbage games in the brick-walled function room off the spruced-up Lower Level corridor. Some of Archie's book donations occupy a bookcase in that room, and a companion case was recently placed there to house Bob Stewart's collection of ship modeling books. Our grandfather clock now stands there too, under Robert Mills's graceful ceiling arches. With its red-brick walls and ceiling reminding us of its early 19th century origins, and the ship models on display, the room is one of the most characterful in the building, suitable for meetings, discussions, classes, receptions or even intimate dinner parties. As more Museum programs and exhibits take place on the Lower Level, this room will become an even more visible feature of the Custom House.

To honor Archie Chester for his manifold contributions to the New London Maritime Society over many years, and for his abiding loyalty to the Custom House Museum, I have been given the privilege of announcing that this room of which I speak is to be known henceforth as the Archibald J. Chester, Jr. Reading Room. I'm sure he will forgive us if we refer to it as the "Archie Chester Room," or even, when in a hurry, as the "Chester Room." No matter how we say it, it has a nice ring. Congratulations, Archie, and thank you! BR

A MARITIME SAMPLER: Selections from the FRANK L. McGUIRE LIBRARY - Extended through January 17, 2010.

THE AWESOME OYSTER: The Life & Times of the Oyster in Long Island Sound - What animal survives being frozen; changes gender several times over its lifetime; has no eyes, no ears, no head? Why it's the Oyster and it's awesome. What's more, it's also Connecticut's state shellfish! Based on a book by Penny Parsekian, the exhibition is illustrated with artifacts on loan from Steve Jones, Don Bell, Archie Chester, JD Diaz-Saavedra, Jennifer Hillhouse, the Whitney Library of the New Haven Museum & Historical Society, Mystic Seaport, Pine Point School, Noank Shellfish Cooperative, and from our own collection. On view through April 25, 2010.

A TRIBUTE TO CARL BRYSON & THE USS SQUALUS - January 23 through February 28. A 70th anniversary tribute to the *USS Squalus*: its sinking and the never before attempted rescue in 1939 of 33 crew members of a submarine; and to one survivor: the late Carl Bryson of NL.

JANUARY

7 Cribbage: Two sessions 1:00—3:00 & 6:30—8:30 PM. Join our **Cribbage Fridays**, held the 2nd Friday of every month. Beginners welcome. *FREE* for members, \$3 all others.

21 Third Thursday 6:30—8:00 PM. Winter Birding Along the Shore. Maggie Jones, executive director of the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, will speak about winter birds on Long Island Sound. Admission \$10, NLMS members \$8. Sponsored by New London Water Authority

23 Birding Trip 2:00—4:00 PM. Birding Trip On the Thames River to Ocean Beach. Join **Maggie Jones**, executive director of the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, for a look along the shore for loons, grebes, and a variety of ducks and other waterfowl that spend the winter in southeastern Connecticut. Bring binoculars if you have them. Fee. Call to register 860-447-2501. Sponsored by the New London Water Authority.

FEBRUARY

12 Cribbage: Two sessions 1:00—3:00 & 6:30—8:30 PM. Join our **Cribbage Fridays**, held the 2nd Friday of every month. Beginners welcome. *FREE* for members, \$3 all others.

18 Third Thursday 6:30—8:00 PM. Three's a Charm. Join diver & New England shipwreck sleuth **Mark Munro** for a thrilling talk about his investigation of a shipwreck in Fisher's Island Sound. Admission \$10, NLMS members \$8.

MARCH

6 Introduction to Cartooning Basics: 10—11:30 AM. Graphic novelist Jon Buller will teach an introductory workshop on Cartooning. Ages 8—16. Fee: \$15. (Snow date March 13) Materials included. Call 860-447-2501 to register.

12 Cribbage: Two sessions 1:00—3:00 & 6:30—8:30 PM. Join our **Cribbage Fridays**, held the 2nd Friday of every month. Beginners welcome. *FREE* for members, \$3 all others.

13 Oyster Trip 10:00 AM—5:00 PM. See aquaculturist **Don Bell's** collection of all things Oyster and hear **John M. Kochiss**, author of *Oystering from New York to Boston*, on this special oyster excursion. We will take a van or carpool (depending on the number of people) to Mr. Bell's Trumbull home. Call to register 860-447-2501. Fee: \$35, \$25 for members.

18 Cartooning Workshop: Four cartooning classes Thursday, March 18, 25, April 1, 8. 4:00—5:30 pm. In this 4-session class, Jon Buller teaches the techniques necessary to create a cartoon. Class size is strictly limited to allow time for one-on-one direction. Ages 8-16. Fee: \$45, Materials included. Enrollment limited to 15 students. To register call: 860-447-2501.



I'M JOINING THE NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY!



Name _____ phone _____ e-mail _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Individual \$25 Family \$35 Contributor \$50 Sponsor \$100 Patron \$1,000 - **Membership year begins May 1**

Cash Check ~ please make payment to New London Maritime Society Visa Master Card AmEx

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

The mission of the New London Maritime Society's (NLMS) Custom House Maritime Museum is to preserve New London's U.S. Custom House and Harbor Light & promote and 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, nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com, www.nlmaritimesociety.org

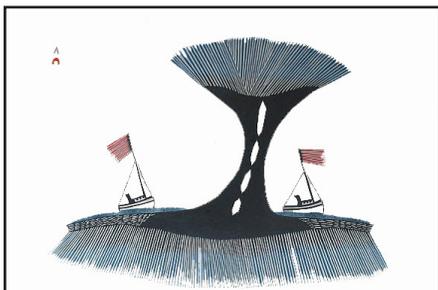
Excerpts below are from NLMS Trustee *Vincentia Belbruno's* remembrances of museum founder *Lucille Showalter* at our *Winter Celebration in December, 2009*:

I knew Lucille for almost 50 years...When you became Lucille's friend, you were her friend for life.

When the government no longer needed the 1833 Custom House, Lucille and a few others saved it from becoming a French restaurant, condominiums, or worse...The New London Maritime Society was formed from members of Lucille's former Local History class: money was raised, and the Custom House Maritime Museum, after extensive restoration, became a reality. It sounds easy, but it wasn't.

I believe it was because of Lucille Showalter's dogged perseverance that the CHMM finally became a reality. Although she died in 2000, some of us feel she is still looking out for the New London Maritime Society and the Custom House Maritime Museum. Lucille Showalter, we salute you!

This winter, the Museum received the generous gift of two Inuit prints from NLMS trustee **Alice Houston**. The gift includes *A Whaler's Dream*, Pudlo, Cape Dorset, Nunavut Territory, stoncut and stencil, 1987. Pudlo was the first Inuit artist to have a one-man show at the National Gallery of Canada.



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Custom House Maritime Museum**

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