

custom house  
**MARITIMES**  
 AUTUMN 2019



*Tree in Salt Marsh #1 (detail), 2015, photographic monoprint, Denny Moers*

## What's up at the Custom House

**We're hoping** to bring in quite a treat this fall.

Public tours have resumed at Harbor Light and we're working on a new landscaping plan -- we want the walk from the street to the waterfront to be as exhilarating as the experience out at the light!

With your support, an architectural team examined Race Rock in mid July and is preparing a plan to guide historic preservation work going forward. And here, below, is latest news about Ledge Lighthouse. ■

### Progress at Ledge Lighthouse – Compliments of the Coast Guard

In an effort to improve energy efficiency and reduce maintenance costs, the USCG Research and Development Center (RDC) located in New London has been developing and testing LED technology to replace the current incandescent light technology in all lighthouses that remain in use. This work continues today with the RDC's LED laboratory being one of the most advanced sites in the USA. For New London Ledge Lighthouse, this upgrade has been recently completed. This is 3rd generation technology that will continue to be a beacon of safety for mariners entering the Thames River.

In 1909 when the lighthouse was commissioned, the state of the art was a 4th order Fresnel Lens. Using a whale oil lantern as the light source, the Fresnel lens magnified the unique intermittent white/red flashing beacon. The original Fresnel lens is currently on display at the Customs House Museum.

The second generation light source was installed in 1987 using a 33 watt incandescent bulb that operated 7/24. The Ledge Lighthouse Foundation is currently working with the Coast Guard to acquire that light technology for display.

The new LED was designed, unlike previous technology, to require no magnification. In addition, unlike incandescent or florescent lighting, LED lights never "burn out" but simply begin to lose their luminosity (brightness) over a long period of time. Chartered tours to the Ledge Lighthouse Museum can be arranged through the Ledge Lighthouse Foundation by calling 860-391-3364. Information for smaller tours is available at [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org). --Bruce Buckley, president LLF

*Come on!* Support our stewardship & *have fun* at the GALA CELEBRATION August 7.

## Join Us for the Holidays - Dec.

Wednesday, August 7, 6 - 9 PM, \$100 per person, to benefit the stewardship of our three lighthouses. Call 860.447.2501 or [nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com). *Left:* Our lovely GALA Squad: Carolyn Leuze, Alice Houston (our leader), Margaret Palmer, Olga Bush, Marie Twomey (missing is Barbara Dixon).



*From top,* It only took six days for the number of viewers of our NL HarborCam to reach 100,000! It was installed on the Custom House roof by an imaginative anonymous donor; the granddaughter and great-grandson of maritime painter Lars Thorsen pose with the painting donated to NLMS by Citizens Bank; Kevin Blacker & family created & donated a stand for our ship's wheel -- itself a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Augustin Bourneuf. Thank you, all.





Wanna go?! Climb up inside the lantern room at Ledge Light. We have all kinds of lighthouse tours -- by boat & by land -- to bring you inside our local beacons. Go to [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org) to register.



## SUMMER 2019 highlights - for full listings, go to [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org)

Tickets to most events can be purchased online at [BrownPaperTickets.com](http://BrownPaperTickets.com), search 'New London'.

ONGOING PROGRAM: **JIBBOOM CLUB #1**, meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month, April through November. Sponsored by the Maco Family Fund, the gatherings are *FREE* and open to all. Upcoming dates are **August 20 - Captain Todd Moore**, Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine Base New London, **September 17**, and **October 15**. Please come and bring a friend.

### ONGOING PROGRAM: Lighthouse & Boat tours run through October!

Tickets can be purchased online at [BrownPaperTickets.com](http://BrownPaperTickets.com), search 'New London'.

Boat tours include trips to visit *inside* Ledge Lighthouse, visit *inside* Race Rock Lighthouse, Sunset toasts from the lantern at Ledge Lighthouse, Sunset and Full-Moon New London harbor tours. Tours *inside* Harbor Lighthouse are by land. Stop in Saturday afternoons to take a trip to New London Harbor *Pequot* Lighthouse. 860-447-2501.

- July 31, Wednesday, 7 PM. **An Evening of Song (& Desserts) with Mustard's Retreat** -- a fund-raiser for the New London Maritime Society. Michigan-based folk duo *Mustard's Retreat* has been delighting audiences for 40 years. They are witty, insightful, fun, and profound, as well as accomplished songwriters and musicians. Concert tickets are \$20 each, \$15 NLMS members, and are available online or by calling 860-447-2501. (Remaining tickets will be sold at the door.) [BrownPaperTickets.com/event/4293120](http://BrownPaperTickets.com/event/4293120)

- August 4, Sunday, 4 & 6:30 PM. **Nimble Arts Circus** (see opposite page) with 2 free performances on Parade Plaza. Co-sponsored for the 10th year by New London Maritime Society. *FREE*

- August 7, Wednesday, 6-9 PM. **GALA DINNER CELEBRATION** (see page 1) fundraiser & silent auction at the Custom House. Come and support our stewardship of three lighthouses. \$100. Call 860-447-2501 or email [nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com) for information and tickets.

- August 13 and September 14, 9 AM - 6 PM. **Boat Tour to Fishers Island & the Henry L. Ferguson Museum**, Take our excursion to Fishers Island to view the 2019 exhibitions '*Against the Tide: Prohibition on Land and at Sea, 1919-1933*', and '*The English Springer Spaniel on Fishers Island*', both curated by Pierce Rafferty at the Henry L. Ferguson Museum. A light lunch will be provided. We're taking the Fishers Island Ferry from New London. \$75, \$65 NLMS members. [BrownPaperTickets.com/event/4293750](http://BrownPaperTickets.com/event/4293750)

- September 22, Sunday, 2 PM, Pierce Rafferty, director at the Henry L. Ferguson Museum. tells the story of Prohibition on Fishers Island and in New London, based on the 2019 exhibition '*Against the Tide: Prohibition on Land and at Sea, 1919-1933*', at Fishers Island's Ferguson Museum. \$12, \$10 NLMS members. Call 860-447-2501.



Don't you just love the

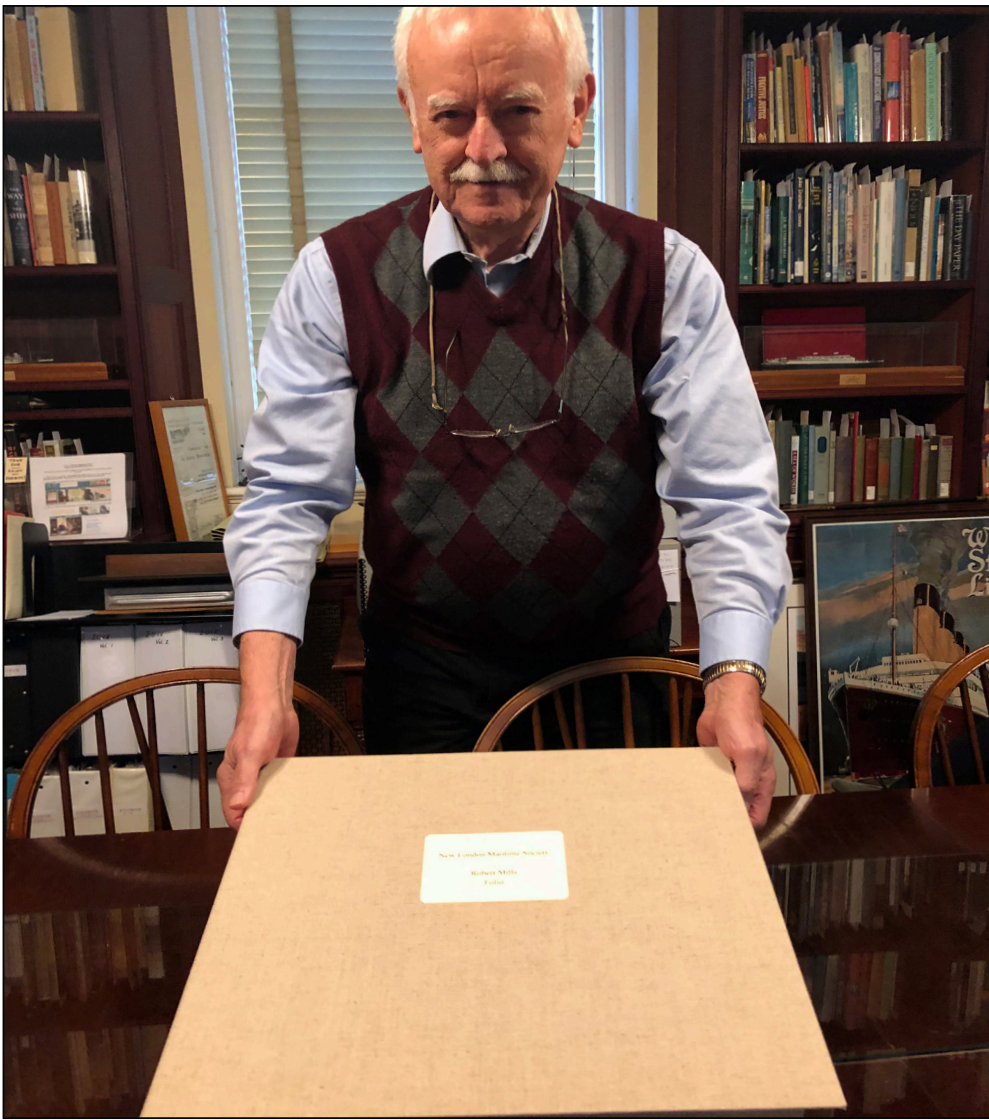
## Custom House MUSEUM SHOP

Our MUSEUM SHOP offers all kinds of wonderful things -- and you don't need a museum ticket to get in. Right now, we've got everything for SUMMER: the best books, picnic baskets, a swan float, waterproof solar lanterns for on the boat, kites, scarves, totes & more!

We always have a lively selection of books for both youth and adults, and we have maritime-themed chocolates, toys, and hostess gifts.

The SHOP is open Wednesday-Sunday, from 1 to 5 PM.

Be the first to know - sign up for weekly email new blasts: [nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com)



## 36th Annual Meeting

In May, the first RE-ORG in the US took place at the Custom House, led by the system's guru, Canadian Simon Lambert. In Canada, many of the museums are small community museums with a one or two employees, like the Custom House.

The RE-ORG Method is a step-by-step approach to storage organization that helps to reorganize a museum's collection storage rooms, focusing on the creative, yet safe, use of existing resources.

This method was originally devised by ICCROM and UNESCO and has been used all over the world in 151 institutions and over 30 countries.

Twenty+ volunteers achieved a magical transformation of our overstuffed collections room. All the 'other' objects -- i.e. packing supplies, extra display items, items with no place else to go -- were removed from the space, as were the actual collections and collections cases. Everything was cleaned, sorted, organized, packed in storage boxes, then somehow -by 5 pm- reassembled into a room that now feels twice as large.

Conservators can spend years working on their own to preserve a single object. This project was an opportunity for volunteer-professionals to learn something new, work with colleagues, be part of a dramatic project, and do good. It was a great opportunity for NLMS.

The RE-ORG process taught us a lot, and now sets NLMS on a path to receive grants and thereby continue to improve our collections care at the Custom House. We thank Simon and his team for a job well done and much appreciated. ■

*The Custom House Maritime Museum - your local, independent, community museum - open year-round - telling the stories of New London's waterfront!*

 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\_\_\_ Sign-up 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.

*New London Maritime Society's mission is to protect, preserve, & and celebrate New London's U.S. Custom House, three area lighthouses, and Long Island Sound, and to interpret the rich maritime life & history of the port of New London and the surrounding region through museum exhibitions, educational programs, and preservation initiatives. Learn more about us at [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org).*

New London Maritime Society - Custom House Maritime Museum, 150 Bank Street, New London, Connecticut 06320 860.447.2501

**N.L.M.S.**

\_\_\_\_ I'm donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Custom House. \_\_\_\_ Contact me about leaving a legacy.

New to the collection



At this time of year, we can get a little lighthouse crazy, so it's nice to see that we're not the only ones. New to our museum collection is a postcard / fan from 1912. The scenes are all of New London -- the Old Mill, the courthouse, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on the Parade. But the predominant image here is New London Lighthouse. --Good choice!

We hosted Benny Dover Jackson Middle School Summer Camp Rotary in July and made model *Amistad* ships! NLMS hosted the group without charge. All of our NL public school programs -- including the year-long, third grade, Local History & Landmarks classes -- are funded by us, through a combination of grants and private donations, with no reimbursement from the NL Public Schools or the City of New London. It's important to do & we're happy to help.

### local - friendly - authentic

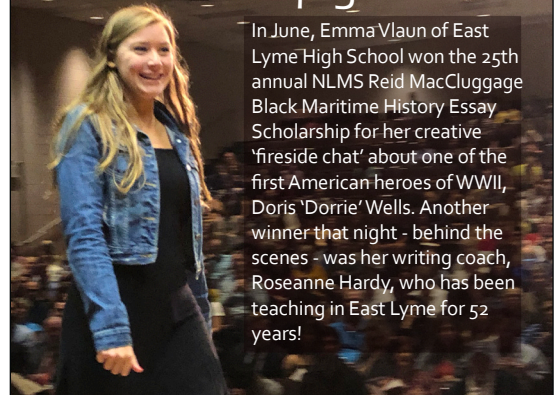
The New London Maritime Society's **Custom House Maritime Museum** is an historic gem in downtown New London. *Join us!*

We are teachers, sailors, historians, librarians, & maritime aficionados.

NLMS is independant. We chart our own course defending your access to historic sites and preserving our shared maritime histroy. **Please donate today.**

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

### The scholarship goes to...



In June, Emma Vlaun of East Lyme High School won the 25th annual NLMS Reid MacCluggage Black Maritime History Essay Scholarship for her creative 'fireside chat' about one of the first American heroes of WWII, Doris 'Dorrie' Wells. Another winner that night - behind the scenes - was her writing coach, Roseanne Hardy, who has been teaching in East Lyme for 52 years!

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