

# custom house

## MARITIMES

SUMMER 2012



New London native, artist Mark Shasha will exhibit his work at the Custom House this summer. Moonjellies and Daydreams - The Art of Mark Shasha, opens July 14.

## SUMMER ON THE SOUND

It's Summer, again, and things are falling into place. For us, the season begins right off, with a special **Celebration of Four Exhibitions** on **Thursday, July 5**, from **5 to 8 PM**. The evening is really a **Summer Block Party**, with openings down Bank Street -- at the **Hygienic, Expressiones** and next door, too, at **Studio 33**. Our four exhibitions include two shows about contemporary boat builders: ingenious small boats by **David McCulloch**, of Old Lyme, displayed in our new Pop-Up gallery (across the street in the former Modern Electric space); meanwhile, back at the museum, we're showing **Edward Hellenbrecht's** photographs, which document the building of a cutting-edge racing sailboat, a **GP-26**. The boat was (& still is) being built in **Kevin Farrar's** Monte Cristo Garage, in New London, and hopes to launch this summer. NLMS librarian **Brian Rogers** has curated an exhibition from the museum's **Frank L. McGuire Library** out of an archive on the War of 1812 assembled in the 1970s by **Waterford historian Robert Bachman** and presented to us by his niece, **Ruth Reluga**. Adding to that exhibition are special loans of two precious 1812 artifacts from our members, including a period military hat from **Siro Toffolon**, of Old Lyme. Finally, the July 5 Celebration marks the closing of **Sgott MacKenzie's** winsome watercolor and sculpture show, the **Further Adventures of the Giant Squid and the Seagull**, featuring illustrations from Sgott's two books for young people.

**July 5**, from **5 to 8 PM**, is also a special **Members' Appreciation Party**, and we hope you will attend. In addition to the exhibitions, the fun & the refreshments, it's an opportunity to learn about how to become more involved at the Custom House. The thing is, with your encouragement, we've taken on *a lot* this year: more programs, an expanded Museum Shop, a Pop-Up gallery across the street, regular tours of New London Harbor Light, and three Lighthouse Weekends this summer! We're even investigating taking on ownership of Race Rock Lighthouse. Most of us find the community at the Custom House a friendly refuge from the rest of the world. You might well find you like it here, too.

**OpSail - SailFest 2012** is the exciting start to New London's summer. You won't want to miss the activities both downtown and at Fort Trumbull on **July 6 and 7**. This year, we are again partnering with the City of New London to bring back **Nimble Arts Circus**, and with the **Ledge Light Foundation** to expand on last year's **Lighthouse Weekends**. New London native, artist **Mark Shasha** will bring his work to the museum in mid July. September brings a **Robert Hauschild** retrospective in partnership with **Studio 33**. Thank you all for your interest in and support of the Custom House. Keep tuned to our website [www.nlmaritimesociety.org](http://www.nlmaritimesociety.org) for the many events that won't fit in these pages.

.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

### summer exhibitions

Opening July 5, 5-8 PM

**Small Boats Designed and Built by David McCulloch** in our new Pop-Up gallery - the former Modern Electric space across the street.

Brian Rogers curates an exhibition on the 1812 theme: **Fragments of an Unwritten Book: Robert Bachman's Archive of the War of 1812 in Long Island Sound**, from the NLMS Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library.

**Kevin Farrar's GP-26: A Very Fast Sailboat** -- an exhibition about the boat's design and the construction process.

Opening July 6, 2012

**The Rockets' Red Glare: The War of 1812 in Connecticut** (at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum). Developed in partnership with Mystic Seaport Museum, the Stonington Historical Society, the New London Maritime Society, and the New London County Historical Society.

Opening July 14, 2012

**Moonjellies and Daydreams - The Art of Mark Shasha.**

on view through July 8, 2012.

**Sgott MacKenzie's Further Adventures of the Giant Squid and the Seagull.**



HIGHLIGHTS of SUMMER

- July 5, Thursday, 5-8 PM,** A Celebration for four great Custom House exhibitions. It's a **Block Party**, with openings along Bank Street! This is also an **NLMS Members' Appreciation Party** at the Custom House. Come, have fun, and learn how you can get involved. **FREE**
- July 6-7, Saturday-Sunday. OpSail / SailFest 2012,** Tall ships, street festival, music, fun both downtown and at Fort Trumbull.
- July 14-15, August 4-5, September 1-2, Sentinels on the Sound: New London's Lighthouse Weekends,** Join us for three weekends with Lighthouse-centric activities: boat trips, lectures, cakes, exhibitions, tours, chowda' -- you name it! *Please watch the website for details.* Out Lighthouse Weekends are sponsored, in part, by a generous grant from the **New London Water Authority.**
- July 14, Saturday, Nimble Arts Circus,** Smart, sophisticated, funny - performances at **4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.** on Parade Plaza. **FREE**
- Juggling Workshop with circus performers** from 2-3 PM. Only \$15, all materials provided. Space is limited. Call 860-447-2501 to register. Nimble Arts Circus is sponsored by **Don't Miss the Boat** and the **City of New London.** This small circus troupe from Vermont will surprise you with their internationally award-winning circus arts: trapeze, juggling, comedy, acrobatics. Prepare to be amazed!
- July 15, Sunday. Opening for Moonjellies and Daydreams: The Art of Mark Shasha,** The rich and varied artwork of New London native Mark Shasha will be featured at the museum. **FREE**
- August 4-5, Saturday-Sunday. Sentinels on the Sound: New London's Lighthouse Weekend** boat tours, events, see website for details.
- August 5, Sunday, 2 PM. John Mock in Concert,** a fund-raiser for New London Harbor Light. Ticket price \$15, Members \$10.
- August 18, Saturday, 10 AM to 5 PM. 3rd Annual Custom House Tag Sale,** Out back, under the tent. **FREE.** Part of USCG Appreciation Day. Stay for showing of two films about the Coast Guard by **David Wittkower, The Eagle: America's Tall Ship,** and **Guardians at the Gate.**
- September 1-2, Saturday-Sunday. Sentinels on the Sound: New London's Lighthouse Weekend** boat tours, etc., see website for details.

EVERY MONTH

- Third Tuesdays, 1-4 PM, Jibboom Club #1 Gams** - Reviving Jibboom Club #1 with maritime talk, good friends & cookies.
- NEW TIME: Friday, 5-6 PM,** catch our TV show **CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MATTERS,** on New London Metrocast cable, channel 25.



Boatbuilder/sail maker **Kevin Farrar** in his studio in the Monte Cristo garage. Visit our **GP-26** exhibit.

**Ledge Lighthouse Foundation Report, Summer 2012**

As our summer season begins, we are training tour guides (always on the lookout for more), continuing restoration work, and enhancing the Ledge Light museum. The museum includes galleries, exhibits, a theater with an orientation film, keeper's room and 'Ernie' the ghost of the light. Lots to see inside, and, of course, a spectacular view from outside. In partnership with Project Oceanology, on Avery Point in Groton, we run public tours of Ledge Lighthouse Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays July & August, and just Saturdays in September. Call 860-445-9007 or 800-364-8472 to reserve tickets. We will also be partnering with the Custom House Maritime Museum on a series of lighthouse weekends during the summer where a variety of events will celebrate our area's unique lighthouses and maritime history. Project 'O' tours will leave for Ledge Light from New London's Custom House pier Saturdays July 14, August 4 & Sept. 1. [www.LedgeLighthouse.org](http://www.LedgeLighthouse.org)

Todd Gipstein, president, Ledge Light Foundation

**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

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Let's Have A Party - For Our Members!  
Thursday, July 5, 2012, 5-8PM  
at the Custom House Maritime Museum

This will be our expression of thanks  
To you all for your support...and a call  
For your personal involvement

In our many activities:

Museum Docent classes and assignment,  
Special Events: Tag Sale; Chowda' Fest...  
Tour Guides to New London Harbor Lighthouse,  
Developers of Excursions: to Newport, RI, & beyond...  
Guests on our weekly TV show,  
Personnel for our unique Museum Shop,  
Creators of new exhibits for the Museum  
And for our new Annex across the street,  
Assistance with Grant Writing,  
And so much more....

And It's Free! See you there.

George A. Spreccace, M.D., J.D., President, NLMS



## News From the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library The Archibald J. A. Chester, Jr., Archive

As we have reported in the past, the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library has long been the beneficiary of donations from our "trustee" friend, Archibald J. A. Chester, Jr., better known as Archie. The handsome meeting room on the lower level that bears his name has recently been designated a "reading room" as well, and as such it may be thought of as an outpost of the McGuire Library upstairs. Indeed, its bookcases now display a large collection of books on yachting, racing, and solo voyages given to us last year by William Lieber of Old Lyme, subjects, as it happens, of great interest to Archie from the days of his youth. At the surprise re-dedication of the room on June 9, in the presence of Archie and his extended family, I had the privilege of announcing a unique library collection of another sort that we have been acquiring in segments in recent years: the Archibald J. A. Chester, Jr. Archive.

Since his youth Archie Chester has been saving newspaper and magazine articles on maritime topics. At first this interest took the form of a scrapbook into which he carefully pasted pictures of yachts, ships, and other things that caught his fancy. As time passed, other topics were included, such as lighthouses and weather phenomena, and eventually it all outgrew the scrapbook. One day it occurred to him that the accumulated papers might form the basis of a history collection at the New London Maritime Society, complementing the valuable Harold Cone archive acquired by Lucille Showalter, which also consists primarily of information from local newspapers. Not surprisingly, much of the Chester material is directly related to New London and Groton, notably the wealth of historical information about activities of the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics, Archie's former employer. But his interests encompass much more than submarines: one of the four archival storage boxes now housing the Archive contains material about the *Grandma Sue*, the sailboat Archie's grandfather built and sailed to Florida, while another contains folders of other topics ranging from "Arctic" to "Yachting," from "New London" to "hurricanes," each filled with items of particular interest to Archie.

Among the most eye-catching items in the Archive are the entire front pages and special sections published by *The Day* at the time of major EB launchings, such as that of the *Nautilus* in 1954, christened by President Eisenhower's wife, Mamie, who had traveled from Washington to Groton by special train. A more recent event was the last "sliding" launch of a submarine in the 1990s, christened by the then-president's wife, Hillary Clinton. All large-format newspaper items have been unfolded and placed in clear, acid-free sleeves for ease of handling as well as long-term preservation. The list of subjects represented in Archie's collection is long, and as time permits we will prepare a detailed Finding Aid for the Custom House website to encourage and enable its use by all, staff and visitors alike, who might benefit from these fruits of Archie's love of history and his inquiring mind.

Brian Rogers, Librarian



Nimble Arts Circus returns with two free performances and a juggling workshop on July 14 as part of Sentinels on the Sound: New London Lighthouse Weekend / Don't Miss the Boat.

## New London Maritime Society

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**The Rockets' Red Glare: The War of 1812 in Connecticut** exhibition is on view through January 3, 2013, at Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT. Developed in partnership with Mystic Seaport Museum, the Stonington Historical Society, the New London Maritime Society, and the New London County Historical Society, the exhibition features items from the collections of the partners, as well as from other museums and private collections.

*Left*, is an object loaned by the Custom House Maritime Museum: the view of Fort Trumbull from the Custom House, watercolor, ca. 1814, from the Howard Collection at the New London Maritime Society. *Below*, Margaret Palmer delivers a donation of books, some for our library & some for our TagSale, which takes place Saturday, August 18.

### Tour Inside New London Harbor Light

*A unique opportunity to visit Long Island Sound's oldest & tallest lighthouse*

Did you know, we assumed ownership of **New London Harbor Light** in 2010! The lighthouse is now open for tours to small groups. For a donation of \$35 for adults, or \$15 for youth ages 7 - 14, visitors can learn the history of this magnificent structure, climb its 119 steps to the lantern level and be afforded spectacular views of Long Island Sound. *All proceeds go toward restoration of the lighthouse.*

Tours are given every Wednesday at 1 and 3 PM, or by appointment; they leave from the Custom House Maritime Museum. Individuals or small groups who wish to take advantage of this opportunity should call the Custom House at 860-447-2501 Tuesday through Sunday between 1 and 5 p.m to reserve their place.



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



NLMS Lighthouse Kids Sea Shanty Chorus & teacher Jody Barthel performed at Fort Trumbull in June. We thank our partners: New London Public Schools, Dominion Foundation, & the Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut.