

# custom house MARITIMES

SPRING 2014



Above: Volunteers Margaret Palmer and Tom Kane usher passengers aboard Pat Kennedy's boat for a lighthouse tour.

## SUMMER afternoons...

**Sentinels on the Sound**, our annual celebration of New London's lighthouse heritage, doubles the fun this summer with activities taking place both Saturdays and Sundays across **seventeen weekends**, July through October, 2014. There will be lighthouse boat trips, including seven Project Oceanology 2 1/2-hour excursions to visit New London Ledge Light leaving from New London's City Pier, two Full Moon lighthouse boat tours, and special events every weekend at the Custom House Maritime Museum. A regional celebration of all things lighthouse, *Sentinels on the Sound* is recognized as a 2014 "Editors' Choice" winner for **'Best Lighthouse Tour'** in Yankee Magazine's *Travel Guide to New England*! This year's lighthouse celebration features Shennecossett Yacht Club's 1st annual SYC Lighthouse Regatta, and three day-trips to Plum Island. Visit [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org) for scheduling details and to-the-minute updates.

New this year, Shennecossett Yacht Club (SYC) of Groton, CT, will sponsor a unique sailing race on Saturday, August 2, the **SYC Lighthouse Regatta**, an Eastern CT Sailing Association sanctioned circuit race. Weather permitting, the plan is for 6 racing classes to take on a 14-mile race up and down Fishers Island Sound. The course will encompass three lighthouses; New London Ledge Light, North Dumpling, and Latimer's Reef, with views of several more lighthouses for an exciting navigator's race. SYC will donate profits from the regatta to the New London Maritime Society Lighthouse Fund.

Favorites from previous years -- **lighthouse boat tours of New London Harbor** -- will take place on the hour, from 11 AM through 3 PM, on Saturday, June 21, Friday, July 11, and every Saturday and Sunday for 17 weekends July through October (including SailFest). We also have **night-time tours** Saturday, July 19, 26, August 16 and 23, and **full-moon tours** on August 9 and 10. **Boat trips to Ledge Light**, provided by Project O, leave from City Pier every-other-Saturday at 2:30 PM: July 5, 19, August 2, 16, 30, September 13, 27. Three day-trips to **Plum Island** take to place Friday July 25, Friday August 15, and Monday September 29, 2014; and a rail-boat excursion to Norwalk's **Sheffield Island Light** (date TBD) are part of planned special events.

Purchase all tickets online at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com). Search: 'New London Lighthouse'.

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

NLMS activities are posted at [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org) click 'Sentinels on the Sound' for a lighthouse guide and on 'Calendar' for other events.



Meet the dynamic duo, *above left*: our intern from Connecticut College, Cody Chase, will manage our lighthouse events; former volunteer Tommy Soulignavong will manage our overnight 'packages' and special business offers.

**Purchase boat tour & event tickets easily online**

[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)  
Search: 'New London lighthouses'

See the full schedule at  
[nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org)





'Bending the sails' on the *Morgan* at New London's City Pier as the ship is prepared for her 38th Voyage. The *Morgan* departs New London on June 14-16, but returns later this summer, near July 31, for one more week.

## New London: A Seaport for the North and West.

**Thanks to modern** technology it's easy for a young library like ours to obtain copies of rare 19th or 20th-century books through the burgeoning reprint industry. The availability of reprints at modest cost confirms that there is a market for print on paper running in tandem with the market for e-books. A recent case in point is John Rogers Bolles's 1877 pamphlet of 25 pages that boasts this 32-word title: "New London, A Seaport for the North and West, and Outport of New York: Its Great Commercial Advantages, Convenient, Ample and Cheap Wharf Room, Manufacturing Facilities, Abundant Supply of Pure Water, Healthfulness, &C." Published in New London in 1877 by George E. Starr, Bolles's eloquent argument was a continuation of his long effort to bring the Navy to New London, which had succeeded in 1867 with an act of Congress. He was secretary of the New London Board of Trade when the booklet was published, and is interesting for at least one other reason: as a descendant of John Rogers, of the controversial Rogerene sect, he took exception to their negative treatment by Frances Caulkins, among others, and published a strong vindication in a book co-authored with Anna Bolles Williams, "The Rogerenes" (1904), readable online at the excellent Quakertown Online website.

Brian Rogers  
librarian, Frank L. McGuire Library, NLMS



Just one year ago, we launched our campaign to restore New London Harbor 'Pequot' Light. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our **Be Part of Something BIG** campaign and to this spring's **Ben Martin Lighthouse Fund**. All together, we've raised about \$150,000, which, with in-kind donations, will be sufficient to re-point & repaint the lighthouse! But the job is not done: To complete the exterior restoration of the ironwork and of a stone walkway, we still need to raise another \$38,000! All monies raised by our lighthouse activities support the Lighthouse Fund.

from the President

I would like to express our thanks for the present and imminent participation of our crew for the lighthouse restoration: Scott and Terri Loring, Harold Hefel, Chris Bachant and The New England Regional Council of Carpenters, Brand Scaffolding, the Painters Union, Richard Wies, Rick Gipstein; to Elizabeth and Anthony Enders and the Friends of Ben Martin Lighthouse Fund; and to Sponsors of the Lighthouse Fund: The Chester Kitchings Family Foundation, Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, Veolia Water / New London Water Authority, Loring & Son Masonry, Surveyor Jim Bernardo, Hefel Masonry LLC, Captain Scott's Lobster Dock, Ocean Beach Park, The Big House B&B, Cristifori Foundation, CTrides, New England Regional Council of Carpenters, Stone Masons Union, John Mock, David Lersch, Dave Fallon, Fishers Island Ferry, Cross Sound Ferry, Dominion Foundation, A. W. Marina, Edison Coatings, Poor Morgan, the Eschenfelder Family, Shore Line East, and the Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of Tourism. We appreciate the strong community support!

George A. Sprecace, M.D., J.D.



Composer Jin Hi Kim presents  
Cross-Cultural Music Meditation Workshops  
July 14-18, 9 to 10 AM, 6:30 to 7:30 PM

This five-day workshop exposes students to the basic aesthetics and concepts of Asian philosophy, music, and instruments through first-hand experience with music meditation and the benefits it offers to develop a calm, focused group experience. Individuals and groups (up to 10) are encouraged to register. Workshops take place Monday through Friday. Two different sessions are offered: from 9 to 10 AM, and 6:30 to 7:30 PM. Fee per participant is \$50. Scholarships are available. Call 860-447-2501 to reserve your place. *These workshops are presented with support from the Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts which also receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.*





The team going forward: from left, Michael Edison of Edison Coatings, Inc., a Connecticut company, which will supply the paint to re-coat the lighthouse at a 50% discount (Yeah!); Terry and Scott Loring, of Loring & Son Masonry of New London, who already have donated investigations into the structure of the lighthouse, will be the masons and project manager for the lighthouse restoration!



Really BIG...

It is difficult to look at the raw photo, *above right*, and *not* find New London's Harbor Lighthouse beautiful in the romantic way we envision lighthouses: stolid, stoic guardians ever-keeping watch for our brave mariners. But this spring it is we who become the guardians as New London Maritime Society--with your generous support--steps forward to perform a major restoration of the historic 1801 'Pequot' Light. In fact, there have been several changes at the lighthouse, already.

Earlier this year, FEMA aid allowed us to repair damage wrought by Superstorm Sandy. Stone mason Harald Hefel replaced a wall, restored the walkway to the lighthouse, and we added an ADA-compliant stainless-steel railing (a condition of the grant), with the idea that even people with limited mobility now have access to the ground floor of the lighthouse. (The railing is the same transparent design used on NYC's High Line.) We also will add a walkway along the wall and granite buttressing at a point where the ledge is being cut away under the lighthouse foundation. As lighthouse stewards, our responsibilities to the National Park Service require both preservation and public access.

Phase 1 restoration commences June 1, with the arrival of Brand Scaffolding (a 100% donation) and project manager and contractor Loring & Son Masonry. Scott and Terry Loring will coordinate the cleaning, re-pointing, and repainting of the beacon, as well as perform the restoration work on the masonry, cast-iron lantern and seven bronze windows. Major cracks inside the watch room--the floor just below the lantern--will be cleaned out and replastered with special mortar matched by Edison Coating, which also will provide elastic paint for the exterior (at 50% discount). We are not stripping the existing paint, but cleaning it with a biocide to remove the lichen before painting. (Lichen is causing much of the present discoloration to the tower.) New England Regional Council of Carpenters volunteers will erect and dismantle the scaffolding; volunteers from the the Painters Union will do the priming and painting. Replacement bronze vents have been made to match the one original by Dave Fallon; lantern wainscotting will be replaced by David Lersch -- both donations to NLMS. The work should be completed by the end of July. What the lighthouse may loose in romance, it surely gains in longevity and accessibility. Susan Tamulevich, NLMS ex. director

## 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 \$1,500\_\_\_ (This entitles you to Life Membership)

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

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

I want to support the **Ben Martin LIGHTHOUSE FUND** \_\_\_\_\_ Please accept this donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



## Two Historic Fishers Island Leases Purchased by Henry L Ferguson Museum

It may come as a surprise to many that for much of its fabled history Fishers Island was an absentee-owned rental property. From the mid-1600s until the early 1810s, successive generations of island-owning Winthrops more often than not rented out all of Fishers Island to lessees as one undivided property, often throwing in the surrounding “hammocks”—South and North Dumpling and Flat Hummock—as extras. The lessees worked the island as a stock farm or dairy, or brought in their own subtenants to do the farming.

In March 2014, the Ferguson Museum purchased an original lease for Fishers Island from a rare document dealer that was signed on March 25, 1734, by Ann Winthrop, acting as agent and attorney for her husband John Winthrop, the Lessor and owner of all of Fishers Island. The lessees were Mary and George Havens, of Fishers Island. This particular John Winthrop (1681-1747) generally known as “John Winthrop, F.R.S.,” was the grandson of John Winthrop, Jr., the founder of Fishers Island [and of New London].

This one-year lease sheds light on how the Winthrop family managed their Fishers Island property as absentee owners and features a fascinating mixture of rights and restrictions. For the sum of 600 pounds per annum, Mary and George Havens received the use of “all the Houses, Buildings, Edifices, Barns, Stables, Workhouses, Fences of wood or Stone & all meadowland fresh or Salt, with, the Coaves Creeks & Ponds, & all Priviledges...& also such Stock of Neat [domesticated] Cattle, Sheep, Swine & Horse kind.” The lease documents that 81 Fishers Island oxen and cattle resided on the Island at the time of signing, including a pair of oxen, 42 cows and a mixture of young steers, bulls and heifers. There were eight breeding mares and 20 swine, as well as 1,350 sheep “with their Fleeces & their Lambs.” The Havens family, as Lessees, had the right to farm the island and profit from crops, dairy products, wool, and livestock, returning at the end of the lease period the livestock of the same number and value as they had received at the beginning.

Along with the lessees’ rights and privileges were a variety of restrictions that guaranteed the Lessor and his assignees ongoing access to parts of the Island and offered them several ways to receive additional income. These restrictions included the Lessor’s claim to “all Wrecks of the Sea, & Great Fish, Whales or Others, which may at any time come on Shoar.” The Lessor also reserved “the liberty to sett up any Mills, Dams, or Waterworks, & Digg any Earth, Clay or Stone, & Cull Wood or Timber on any part sd. Land; also the priviledges, Proffitts, Rights, Commodities, whatsoever of Hunting, Fishing, & Fowling &c with free Egress & Regress to what is Reserved & Excepted.”

The lessees were forbidden to “Cutt, or Suffer to be Cutt, Stripp, Peal, or Destroy any Vines, Pines, Spruce, Cedar, Walnutt, Chesnutt, Birch, Beach, Maple, Sassafrass, Ash, or Elm, or any Cherry Trees, tame or wild.” They could only cut trees for firewood used on island and for repairing fences, buildings “& Utensills of the Husbandry.” The lease made quite clear that poaching was forbidden, stating that “all the Deer, Partridges, Peacocks, Quails, Rabbitts, or any other sort of wild Creatures

with their increase are to Run at liberty, & remain there for the use of the Lessor.” As for a place to stay while visiting, “the lessor doth reserve the liberty of One Chamber in the best House for his own use only” keeping also “Ten Acres of Land on the North Hill, with Liberty of setting up Fences, Warehouses, Stables, & Outhouses...” A small number of horses and cattle were to be kept in this North Hill enclave for use by the Lessor and assignees.

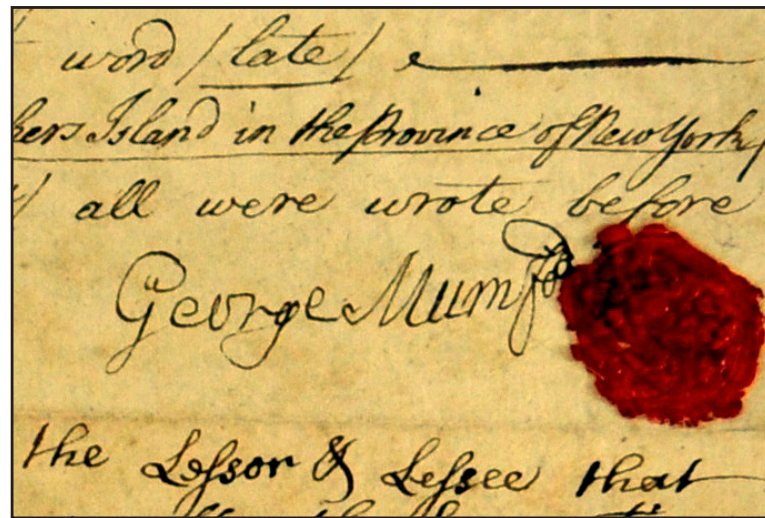


photo: Jane Ahrens

In early May 2014, the Ferguson Museum obtained a second historical lease for Fishers Island from the same rare document dealer. (These documents had surfaced in a collection of Saltonstall and Woodward family letters and documents.) Dated January 8, 1741/2, this lease was between Madam Ann Winthrop of New London (acting once again as agent for her absent husband) and lessee George Mumford “late of South Kingston in the County of Kings County now of Fishers Island in the Province of New York.” Please note that George Mumford has received considerable attention in recent decades as the owner on Fishers Island of African slave Venture Smith whose narrated life story was first published in 1798. The 1741/2 lease was “signed, sealed, delivered” by George Mumford in the presence of Joshua Hempsted, celebrated Colonial-era diarist, and Gurdon Saltonstall, Jr., minister of New London. The lease ran for four years at the price of 950 pounds per annum—a rent hike of 350 pounds since 1734! Added to the bottom of the document was a signed one year extension of the lease for the year beginning April 29, 1746 at the discounted price of 275 pounds per annum. The signers of the extension were George Mumford and two of John and Ann Winthrop’s children: Basill Winthrop and Margaret Miller. Most of the rights and restrictions in this second lease were similar to those in the 1734 lease, but its nonpayment penalty clause was considerably harsher. The Winthrop owners detailed how delinquent tenants could be expelled, removed, and cast out if the rent was just twenty days past due.

Pierce Rafferty,  
director, Henry L. Ferguson Museum



# VOLUNTEER at the CUSTOM HOUSE

Have you ever wanted to work in a museum?

New London's Custom House Maritime Museum needs you!

Custom House Maritime Museum volunteers enlighten and inspire the public through the stories of our maritime forebears. Volunteers support the museum by assisting with tours, educational programs, special events, and lighthouse activities.

Interested individuals should enjoy history, be outgoing and friendly, and enjoy working with children and adults in a fun, interactive style. Volunteers must commit to a regular schedule, work well in a team setting, and be self-motivated. We are accepting applications for the following positions:

**Greeters** - welcome visitors and answer basic questions about New London Maritime Society.

**Docents** - give guided tours of the building and exhibitions if requested, in addition to the Greeters responsibilities, *above*.

**Special Event & Hospitality Volunteers** - assist in the preparation, set up, and break down of museum events including galas, receptions, and lecture series.

**Collections Volunteers** - assists staff behind-the-scenes with organizing and maintaining collections.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please send an email to [nlmaritime@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritime@gmail.com).



## Race Rock Light

On May 7, 2014, the Quit Claim Deed finally arrived, making New London Maritime Society owner of Race Rock Light. That makes two!

There will not be tours to Race Rock this season; access is too difficult. But we will begin a study to fix the landing area and begin preservation of the light.

Meanwhile, we soon will offer virtual access to the lighthouse. Beginning in July, Pierce Rafferty's 2013 Ferguson Museum exhibition, *Race Rock Light*, will move to the Custom House. The exhibition chronicles the history of this legendary light from conception to completion with a focus on the remarkable construction feat accomplished by engineer Francis Hopkinson Smith and his partner on the project, Capt. Thomas A. Scott.

*In November, 2013, in partnership with the Ledge Light Foundation, New London Maritime Society applied for ownership of New London Ledge Light. We are awaiting the decision...*



*photo: Todd Gipstein*

## Ledge Light Update

The New London Ledge Lighthouse Foundation continues restoration and museum work on Ledge Light in 2014. Our touring season begins July 1 through Project Oceanology. These tours run 3 days a week: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in July and August, and just on Saturdays in September. The tours leave at 4pm and return about 6:30pm and include a ride up the Thames River (time permitting). The trip out from Groton is only 15 minutes on a big, comfortable boat. At Ledge Light, there is a lot to see: the building itself; fantastic views of the surrounding area; our interpretive center with exhibits in every room; and an orientation film in an air-conditioned theater. Check our website [www.LedgeLighthouse.org](http://www.LedgeLighthouse.org) or [www.facebook.com/NewLondonLedgeLighthouse](http://www.facebook.com/NewLondonLedgeLighthouse) for more information and to learn about special events we hope to host aboard the light this summer season.

To book a tour to Ledge Light, contact Project Oceanology at: (860) 445-9007. More information at: [www.oceanology.org](http://www.oceanology.org). Most tours leave from the Project Oceanology headquarters at Avery Point in Groton.

The following tours are scheduled to leave from New London's City Pier every-other-Saturday at 2:30 PM: July 5, 19, August 2, 16, 30, September 13, 27. Book tickets online at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), search 'New London lighthouse'. Call the Custom House directly at: 860-447-8700 to find out about these Saturday tours.

This year, *The Mystic Whaler* will have 4 day cruises that will include a visit to Ledge Light. The dates for these very special cruises are: July 2, August 5, 12 and 19. Contact *Mystic Whaler* for information and to book a cruise. Their contacts: (800) 697-8420 or [MysticWhaler.com](http://MysticWhaler.com)

If you have never been to Ledge Lighthouse, come on out! It's an amazing building, full of history and things to see, in a spectacular location.

Todd & Marcia Gipstein  
Ledge Light Foundation

**Vision. Process. Finished Painting: the Creative Process of Tony Falcone** - on view through June 22, 2014.

**Race Rock Light** - The history of this legendary lighthouse, on loan from the Henry L. Ferguson Museum - Opens July 5, 2014.

## JUNE

**5 At Liberty on the Morgan in the Whaling City. 5:30 PM.** Fundraiser. \$75. Don't miss this opportunity to have a party on the 1841 wooden whaling ship listed on the National Register of Historic Places. *Hors d'oeuvres*, wine, John Roberts, nautical attire. Tickets: 860-447-2501.

**8 70th Anniversary of D-Day. 1 – 5 pm.** A two-venue event in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of D-Day; visit Tony Falcone's D-Day mural at the USCG Academy Museum lobby from 1 to 3 PM, then travel to the Custom House at 4 PM for an artist's tour of his exhibition and reception. Admission \$12, NLMS members \$8. Space limited, please call to reserve your place: 860-447-2501.

**15 Ben Martin Lighthouse Fund Donors Tea.** Appropriate head gear suggested. For donors of \$100+ to the fund. RSVP: 860-447-2501.

**18 Business After Hours at the Custom House,** Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT. 5:30 PM. Sponsors: Beachside Catering /Grossman's Seafood, Thames River Wine & Spirits, Chelsea Groton Bank. Tickets \$15 Chamber members, \$25 non-members. Tickets: 860-701-9113.

**21 New London In-Water Boat Show - Lighthouse Boat Tours.** Hourly trips 11 AM—3PM. Tickets [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), search 'New London Lighthouse'. \$35, \$25 children ages 6 to 12. (The In-Water Boat Show continues on Sunday, but we are not offering the trips.)

JULY through OCTOBER - *Sentinels on the Sound* Lighthouse Boat Trips, (Ticket includes admission to Custom House)

**Harbor Lighthouse Tours,** every Saturday & Sunday, 11 AM, 12 NOON, 1, 2 & 3PM. \$35. Children ages 6 to 12 \$25. Book tickets online at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), search 'New London lighthouse'. This year, we offer boat trips during SailFest: July 11, 12, 13! Small boat carries six passengers and leaves from the Custom House Pier. Meet at the Custom House 15 minutes prior to departure.

**New London Ledge Light Tour,** every-other Saturday, July 5, 19, August 2, 16, 30, September 13, 27. 2:30 PM. 2 1/2-hours. \$35. Children ages 6 to 12 \$25. Book tickets online at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), search 'New London lighthouse'. Project 'O' boat carries 50 passengers and leaves from New London's City Pier.

**Night-Time Lighthouse Tours.** Saturday, July 19, 26, August 16 and 23, and **Full-Moon Lighthouse Tours** on August 9 and 10. 9 PM. \$35. Children ages 6 to 12 \$25. Book tickets online at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), search 'New London lighthouse'. Small boat carries six passengers and leaves from the Custom House Pier. Meet at the Custom House 15 minutes prior to departure.

**Plum Island Tour,** Friday July 25, Friday August 15, and Monday September 29. 7 AM to 4 PM. \$25. Visit a naturally beautiful, historically secretive location. The tour encompasses the entire 840 acre island, including visiting Fort Terry (est. 1897). Lunch is included! Guests meet at the Old Saybrook One Harbor at 7 AM for the ferry. A federal background check must be completed, *please sign up 30 days in advance*. Contact: [nlharborlight@gmail.com](mailto:nlharborlight@gmail.com). The tour is vigorous. Please make sure you are sure footed and wear appropriate shoes (no open toed shoes or sandals). Cameras and cell phones are not permitted on the island, so leave those items behind. Pictures will be taken by tour guides at appropriate locations! \$25.

Every weekend in July & August we also will have a Special Lighthouse concert, talk, or film. Highlights include musician **John Mock**: July 20, & **Nimble Arts Circus**: August 9. Watch the Custom House website for full schedule: [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org).

New London Maritime Society  
Custom House Maritime Museum

150 Bank Street  
New London, Connecticut 06320

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

'Best Lighthouse Tour'  
Yankee Magazine



AS SEEN IN  
*YANKEE*  
NEW ENGLAND'S  
MAGAZINE