

# custom house MARITIMES WINTER 2017



We're dusting off our Jibboom Club whaling ship-float for New London's St. Patrick's Day Parade. The parade takes place Sunday, March 12, at 1 PM.

from the president

## Merry new year!

I hope your holiday season was as happy and joyous as mine. It was a great time to reflect back on the journey and be thankful for all the good in each of our lives.

I look forward to the great things we will accomplish in 2017. As with our personal lives, the New London Maritime Society is poised for that championship run to be leaders in Long Island Sound Maritime History, be one of the pillars of historic tourism in Connecticut and along The Sound, and work with academic institutions to educate and excite everyone about our country's journey through the maritime channels to get to where we are today as a great nation.

Specifically, there are five goals to achieve this year, which are:

1. Grow our membership\*;
2. Resolve the New London Harbor Lighthouse access issue;
3. Repair the Custom House Roof to preserve our maritime treasures;
4. Partner with other lighthouse organizations to create a regional lighthouse association to promote lighthouse tourism as a collective unit; and
5. Be leaders in the New London Community.

There will be other smaller goals that will tie into the above big five goals. But our direction is clearly set for the shores of Long Island Sound and our rich maritime history!

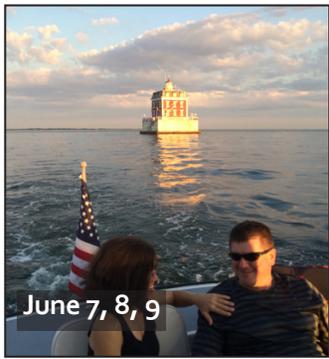
Sounds simple, right? The concepts are simple, but attainment of our goals is going to require a lot of work from our great volunteers and the board of trustees. We will listen to issues that need improvement. We are going to be collaborative in our actions. And we will preserve and grow the rich maritime history of our organization for all to enjoy!

Warmest Regards, Ed Cubanski, III, CAPT, U.S. Coast Guard Retired, & new president NLMS ■

\*in February, current NLMS members may give 'gift' memberships at 50% usual coast.



from top: Byron Huart's *City of Ships* is now on view, Long Island Sound lighthouse keepers meet in NL this April, in Feb our 3rd- grade local-history program continues with visits to both the Shaw Mansion and the Custom House.



June 7, 8, 9

January through March, the Custom House Maritime Museum is open Thursday through Sunday, from 1 to 5 PM, or by appointment. Call 860-447-2501. From April we're also open on Wednesdays. Admission is FREE for NLMS members, individuals with current military or USCG cadet ID & their families, and children under age 14 (with adult), \$7 suggested donation all others. For details, go to [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org). Register for most events online 24/7 at [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com); search 'New London'. The Custom House **MUSEUM SHOP** offers all kinds of unique gifts. We have a special section full of fun things for kids. Everybody is welcome in the shop, you don't need a museum ticket to get in.

**Our 2016 Sentinels on the Sound Lighthouse Boat Tours start up again on June 7.**

We'll post new tours as scheduled. Go to our website for details: [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org).

**Sunset and Full-Moon tours** take place across three nights of the full moon beginning **June 7, 8, 9.**

One **Plum Island excursion** will be offered this year. This trip is limited to 30, and open to NLMS members, only.



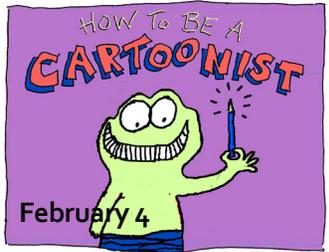
January 28

**JIBBOOM CLUB # 1** -- Jibboom Club monthly meetings resume in April. Join Rob & Russ on the 3rd Tuesday of the month for a speaker's program, coffee, cookies, and conversation. Donation for refreshments, only.

WINTER 2017 - Here's what's up next! - for all listings, go to [nlmaritimesociety.com](http://nlmaritimesociety.com)

**A Baroque Journey through the Enlightenment - Violin and Harpsichord Recital**

**January 28, Saturday, 4 PM** - Marina Fragoulis, Baroque Violin, & Aymeric Dupré la Tour, Harpsichord, perform works by Corelli, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Bach and more. Held in the intimate Crawford Gallery at the Custom House. Call 860-447-2501 or book online [brownpapertickets.com/event/2740899](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/2740899).



February 4

**How to be a Cartoonist, with Jon Buller**

**February 4, 10:45 AM to 12 NOON, four (4) Saturdays** You, too, can be a cartoonist! Jon Buller leads another workshops on four Saturdays. \$40, all materials included. Children ages 8 and older are welcome. Adults often sign up, too. Call 860-447-2502 or register online at [brownpapertickets.com/event/2786229](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/2786229).

**Hartford Boat Show - NLMS will be there with the Sea Scouts**

**February 9-12** at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. The show will feature 150 exhibitors, more than 250 boats, watercraft and seminars



February 12 & 25

**Build a Simple Lighthouse Model, with Elinor De Wire**

**February 25, Saturday at 1 PM** Kids, especially, will enjoy this workshop about lighthouses that includes a presentation on different types of lighthouses and culminates in a hands-on activity building a paper cup lighthouse. All materials provided. Best for ages 5 to 12. \$10. Call 860.447.2501 to register.

**St. Patrick's Day Parade in New London**

**March 12, Sunday at 1 PM** The Jibboom Club will march for New London Maritime Society. *FREE*.



March 12

**Keepers in Skirts: Women in the Lighthouse Service, with Elinor De Wire**

**March 12, Sunday at 3 PM** Join lighthouse author and historian, Elinor DeWire, for a look back at women's roles in lighthouse keeping, from Hannah Thomas, who kept Plymouth Lighthouse, Massachusetts during the Revolutionary War, to the Coast Guard's twentieth century lady lightkeepers in Maine and Washington.

**Jibboom Club #1** - the Jibboom season runs April through December.

**April 18, 1 PM** Join Russ & Rob for a speaker's program, coffee, cupcakes, and conversation. Donation for refreshments, only. Speakers will be posted at [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org).



April 24-25

**2017 Lighthouse Symposium** - for lighthouse stake holders, owners, friends groups, and historians. This is a working meeting tentatively scheduled for April 24 & 25. Check facebook page *Lighthouses of Long Island Sound Gateway* closer to the event for full program and registration details.

Volunteer at the Custom House Maritime Museum

The Maritime Museum has been very fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers, but there is always a need for additional assistance. With even a few hours of commitment, volunteers can help occasionally with fund-raising activities, mailing various correspondence, writing thank-you notes, supervising educational tours, or providing hospitality during Museum events.

Training is provided if volunteers would be interested becoming docents or substitute docents at the Museum. During summer, volunteers conduct Maritime boat tours.

Interested in how you would be able to assist?

Please contact Linda, NLMS Volunteer Coordinator, at [lroselund@hotmail.com](mailto:lroselund@hotmail.com)

from top: our award-winning boat tours commence June 7; join us for a Baroque chamber recital featuring a work by Chevalier de Saint-Georges; Cartooning with Jon Buller starts Feb. 4; author Elinor De Wire presents a program for kids and a lecture on Women Lighthouse Keepers; a 2nd annual Long Island Sound Lighthouse Symposium is planned for April.



Archie Chester, above left, with friend Bob Stewart in the NLMS Frank L. McGuire Library.

### Archie Chester's Submarine Scrapbook

Because the print holdings of a two-room library are so immediately visible - books, newspapers, maps and photographs - it's a rare day indeed when the name of the late Archie Chester doesn't pop up while we're managing the work of the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library. Archie donated dozens of books and reams of archival material on many topics over the years of his steadfast participation in the activities of the Maritime Society. One of the most interesting items is his scrapbook of newspaper and magazine pages about "atomic" submarines, from the launch of the Nautilus at to the drama of the more recent campaign to save the Submarine Base from closure. This engrossing array, now protected in large acid-free album pages, will be of interest to those wishing to learn more about, or to revisit, the dawn of the nuclear submarine age as reported in the press.

*The Day's* headline for January 21, 1954, proclaimed, "World's First Atom Submarine Launched at Groton Heralding New Eras in Naval Power, Peaceful Power." Mrs. Dwight "Mamie" Eisenhower had arrived by train and christened the boat "before cheering thousands." Additional pages of photos and stories describe the momentous occasion in a level of detail that the very small font then still in use made possible (and would also likely be overlooked given the short attention spans of many readers today.) Another maritime-related article on the front page reports that the Senate had passed enabling legislation for the St. Lawrence Seaway, after voting the project down four times since 1934. More *Nautilus* photos and stories appeared in *The Day* on the 22nd, while on the 28th the *Groton Life Weekly*, acknowledging that this launch was without question a major event in the town's history, took EB to task for the tight security that prevented the taxpaying citizenry from witnessing the proceedings, and for the "Roman holiday" qualities of the event, notably the "lavish" luncheon served to invited guests that probably had cost "several thousand dollars!"

The oldest article in the Chester scrapbook is a six-page piece from *Collier's Magazine* in 1952 entitled "America's New Dreadful Weapon," with color cutaway drawings of the Nautilus already under construction in Groton. Later articles from *Collier's* and the *Hartford Courant* describe the capabilities of this revolutionary new Connecticut-based technology that would strengthen the nation's defenses in the ongoing Cold War. Other *Day* stories describe EB's last "sliding" launch (of the *Columbia* in 1994), while the paper's handsomely designed multi-page features about EB's 1999 centennial, the 50th anniversary of the *Nautilus* launch in 2004, and the success of the 2005 campaign to save the Submarine Base bring the story closer to our own time. We owe a great debt to Archie Chester for his perseverance in keeping this fascinating documentation out of the recycling bin. ■

Brian Rogers, Librarian

*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 Annual Fund. \_\_\_ Contact me about leaving a legacy.  
\_\_\_ I'm already a member and giving a **Gift Membership** at 50% (valid in February, 2017, only).



Above, an original Lighthouse Inn napkin, courtesy James Diaz.

Contribute your memories. We're planning a Lighthouse Inn exhibition for June!

Do you have photos or memorabilia from the Lighthouse Inn? Working with new Inn owner, Alwyn Christie, we're planning an exhibition to open this June at the Custom House. Call 860.447.8700 or [nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com) if you have something to share.

We have two visiting shows now on view: *City of Ships*, photography by Byron Huart, and *Plum Island* paintings by John Sargent.

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--it's a whole new year!

Below, Muralist, teacher, and NLMS Volunteer-of-the-Year Christina Corcoran gazes down at Race Rock Light, a sailing ship, and jellyfish in the mural she created with volunteer Chole Rubin at the back entrance to the Custom House. On a good day, you can see it from the New London Waterfront Park.





New London Maritime Society would like to thank the SUPER 70 local businesses & individuals who donated from \$100 to \$1,000, to cover our fees for the December 2 Peter Yarrow concert.

**Our SUPER 70 Sponsors**

UConn - Avery Point  
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 Waterhouse Salon  
 Whaling City Motors  
 Wireless Zone of New London  
 Yankee Remodeler

-- thank you, all!

**We're in this together!**

No matter how the wind blows or the snow flies, we see clear sailing ahead for our work preserving and promoting New London's maritime heritage. Please DONATE to the New London Maritime Society ANNUAL FUND 150 Bank Street, New London, CT 06320. Contact us to discuss leaving a legacy: 860-447-8700.

New London Maritime Society  
 2017 Reid MacCluggage  
 Black Maritime History Scholarship

Attention: High School Juniors & Seniors

Write an essay, short story, poem, play, movie script or novella about the African-American experience in the maritime world for the chance to win a \$1000 New London Maritime Society scholarship! The deadline is 5 PM Tuesday, February 28, 2017.

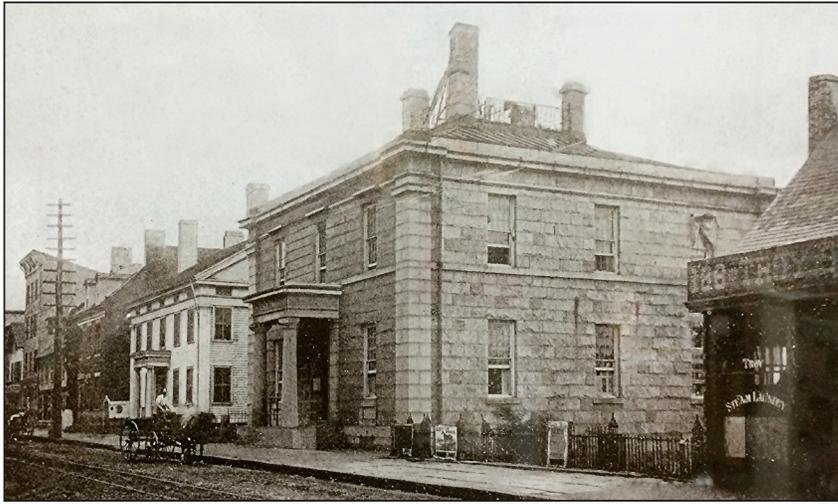
Learn more at [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org).

This January, we celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Amistad Africans' return to Sierra Leone.



Above, last year students from Colchester, CT, visited the Custom House and our Amistad exhibition. Here, above, students take a selfie with Cinque, leader of the Amistad African freedom fighters.

**Keep up with What's Up!** To receive weekly Custom House e-news, email [nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com](mailto:nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com).



At the Custom House, the roof has seriously leaked since 1836—just one year after opening. We made an emergency ten-year-fix *eight* years ago, so now it's time to address the problem, head-on. Our plan is to replace the roof as it was originally designed—complete with Robert Mills's four brick chimneys and widow's walk, elements long lost to past storms (*above left*).

Using a two-year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) nest egg, we applied to the CT Trust for Historic Preservation for matching funds to hire an historic preservation architect to study and prepare mechanical drawings for the new roof. In mid-January we learned we got the grant! With luck, by next year—and with architect's plans in hand—we'll start our capital campaign to replace the roof. Recently we have focused on preserving other aspects of the custom house. Thanks to a generous 'continuing-restoration' grant from the Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, we've just rebuilt four rotted windows on the museum's lower level; one window now doubling as an emergency exit. The change allows us to open this previously off-limits area to the public. Deschenes and Cooper built the new windows to duplicate the originals using irregular antique glass (*above right*). We like the transformation so much that we applied for additional funding to un-brick a 5th lower-level window and restore it, as well.

Despite all the construction, we are fortunate to have two touring exhibitions on view at the museum: Byron Huart's *City of Ships*, photographs of working vessels in New York harbor; and John Sargent's paintings of the natural world on *Plum Island*. *Save Plum Island's* Chris Cryder will join John for a presentation about this *de facto* nature preserve 10 miles off shore, date TBD. Our local-history program, bringing New London's 300 third graders to historic sites around town, continues on through May.

The lawsuit brought by neighbors at Harbor Light is now in its 3rd year. But both in federal court and working with New London's P&Z to secure a zoning classification, we will maintain our efforts to make this significant and beloved landmark accessible to the public. The lighthouse has been closed to all visitors since the community repainted and restored it in 2014 (at a cost of over \$500,000).

Right now, we're feeling especially appreciative of our neighbors. The Hygienic is presenting its splendid winter arts cornucopia *Hygienic XXXVIII*. Main Street New London is working with downtown partners to fill vacant storefronts with innovative artistic displays. Their *Spring Food Stroll* takes place on May 10th. New London County Historical Society's *Sub Sandwich* was so popular that they are doing it again this year on the 29th of April; for more information go to [www.nlhistory.org](http://www.nlhistory.org).

And, yes, SailFest will be back this July. And we'll be there, too, with amazing new boat tours, activities for kids, and events that will surprise you! See you on Bank Street. ■

Susan Tamulevich, NLMS executive director

*Below left*, *Ode to New London* is a collage by artist Brian McCarthy, who recently donated the piece to NLMS. *Ode* brings together the whaling, the fighting, the back-room deals, pirates, sailors, a submarine, Long Island Sound's oldest lighthouse, and sailing ships -- all of New London in one energetic *assemblage*. *Right*, new to the collection, an unsigned 19th-c oil painting of New London Harbor Light (anonymous gift).

