

under your direction.

*With consideration I am
your devoted servant
A Hamilton*

custom house
MARITIMES
AUTUMN 2018

Above and page bottom, a 1794 letter to the Collector of New London from Alexander Hamilton is among the treasures in the NLMS Frenk McGuire Library



The Collector of New London

Top, Brian Rogers, Laurie Deredita & Eugene MacMullan; Elizabeth Enders, Ted McGuire, Lisa and Morgan McGinley; the McGuire Library's 20th anniversary reception.

from our executive director

2018 is a year of anniversaries: the 185th of the Custom House building, the 35th for New London Maritime Society, the 20th of the McGuire Library, and my 10th as director. It seems an appropriate time to step away and reflect on the state of our shared enterprise, the maritime society, and specifically here on the Frank L McGuire Maritime Research Library.

My job interview took place in the library – at that time in March 2008 a room unused except to closet bags of holiday decorations. The whole museum, in fact, was like Sleeping Beauty's castle – there was so much here that was neglected yet poised to be-brought back to life. There was, too, a core of dedicated people who truly loved the museum – ever-faithful docent Bill LaRoue and architect and past-president Ben Martin foremost among them. What a challenge; I said yes.

Ben Martin had arranged for a high-level USCG reception to be hosted at the Custom House that spring so we started in by cleaning like crazy. And 2008 was the 175 anniversary of this historic building, so I decided to hold a two-day Robert Mills Symposium that fall – in the library.

With that symposium we coaxed back Brian Rogers, the founding librarian – first as a library volunteer, then as our official librarian. Brian brought librarian Laurie Deredita, and we soon had Eugene MacMullan, a paper conservator, joining the library 'staff'. Periodic volunteers, like Dirk Langeveld, who transcribed a remarkable group of manuscripts, and Gretchen Van Der Lyke, who scanned the postcard collection, also have made significant contributions.

New London Maritime Society is a complex organization with a number of large moving parts: four buildings; education, rental and exhibition programs; a museum shop; in looking back over that last ten years, every part has its own individual sine wave pattern of peaks and valleys. I'm very pleased to say, that for the library the curve has only been on a steady rise.

We got back our librarians. Made several remarkable collections purchases. Have been entrusted with donations of books and manuscripts. One gift I particularly love is our 'library' of ship miniatures from the late EB engineer Bob Stewart; the small-scale 20th-c steamship models created over more than a decade appear to have been designed for our narrow Library shelves. The library space has become a lively partner to overall museum operations, with exhibitions that compliment and expand upon museum shows, and often housing our cartooning classes, woolie workshops, receptions, and occasional Sea Scout gatherings. What's more, as you will read on page 3, Brian and Laurie have begun to get the library collections online.

And I have not even mentioned the library-related annual Reid MacCluggage Black Maritime History Scholarship competition, nor the Archibald Chester Reading Room on the museum's lower level, which just this spring became accessible to the public for 1st time.

Thank you to the McGuire and Martin families, who founded the library; to our dedicated library staff, and to the steadfast volunteers at NLMS. One last bit of news – with your help in October we met our Ben Martin match of \$15,000!

Local Friendly Authentic – we're not just any maritime museum, we are your maritime museum -- & library!

– Susan Tamulevich

AUTUMN 2018 - Here's what's up next at the CUSTOM HOUSE!

▪ For the 2nd year, the Custom House is a TOYS FOR TOTS collection site, through December 18.

ONGOING PROGRAM: **JIBBOOM CLUB**, meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month, April through November. The original Jibboom Club #1 was founded in New London in 1870 by officers on whaling vessels, who had bonded on their long voyages across the seas. When the men retired, they founded the club as a place to gather, play cards, sing, tell stories, and most importantly keep the traditions of their seagoing years alive. Formally organized in 1891, the Bylaws, Section 1, Article I, declared that "This Club is formed for the purpose of social enjoyment and the promotion of good fellowship amongst its members." Section 2 said that "no one who has not seen sea service for at least two years shall be eligible to membership." Revived by the Maritime Society in 2009, today's Jibboom Club presents a monthly speaker's program April through November, good conversation & coffee. Sponsored by the Maco Family Fund, the gatherings are *FREE* and open to all. Please come and bring a friend.

▪ **October 28, Sunday, 4 PM, Book Talk: The Artful Dodger: The 20-Year Pursuit of World War I Draft Dodger Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, with Dirk Langeveld.**

Join author, journalist, and NLMS docent Dirk Langeveld for a discussion of his new book, *The Artful Dodger*. Shortly after he was convicted of dodging the draft in World War I, Grover Cleveland Bergdoll asked the U.S. Army to temporarily release him from prison. He had buried a valuable cache of gold during the war, he claimed, and he wanted to recover it before someone else did. Bergdoll's subsequent escape would mark the start of a 20-year standoff with the American government. Ticket with museum admission, Free for NLMS members. *See you there!*

▪ **October 31, Wednesday, 2 PM. Spirit Walk, with Roger Ryley.**

This Halloween, dowser **Roger Ryley** will lead his third walking tour, this time around New London's Post Hill Historic District. (We will carpool from the Custom House). Be not afraid! We will end our investigations before darkness cloaks our steps in witchy shadows! Register at brownpapertickets.com/event/3618300 or call 860-447-2501.

▪ **November 3, 10, 17, Saturday, 11 AM - 1 PM. Hands-On Workshop: Stitch Your Own Woolie workshops**
Learn to make your own 'woolie' embroidered picture in the style of Victorian sailors with Christina Corcoran. This 3-session class introduces the various tools and techniques used in the handcraft of embroidered maritime pictures (currently on view at CHMM.) \$45-55 brownpapertickets.com/event/3376194 or call 860-447-2501. Stop in and see the exhibition as well as examples of Christina's embroidery in the MUSEUM SHOP.

▪ **November 4, Sunday, 4PM. New London Maritime Society 35th ANNUAL MEETING.**

Program to be announced. All NLMS members are invited to please attend. RSVP. Call 860-447-2501.

▪ **November 11, Sunday, 2PM. CT Architecture: Stories of 100 Places, with author Christopher Wigren.**
This fall, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation unveils *Connecticut Architecture: Stories of 100 Places*, the first comprehensive illustrated book about the state's rich and diverse architectural heritage. We'll have the book in our MUSEUM SHOP, and we'll host Christopher Wigren at the Custom House on Sunday, November 11. \$12, \$6 NLMS members and youth to age 18. Register at brownpapertickets.com/event/3738281 or call 860-447-2501. It's a perfect holiday gift.

▪ **November 20, Tuesday, doors open at 1, program commences at 1:30 PM. Jibboom Club #1, with Tugboat Capt. Bill Borek.**

Capt. Borek will speak about his work of tugs in New York, New Haven, and New London harbors; and about the collection of photographs he recently donated to New London Maritime Society. FREE. Sponsored by the Maco Family Fund. Please come and bring a friend. Questions? call 860-447-2501.

▪ **November 24, 1 PM. Small Business Saturday - Non-Profit Marketplace at the Custom House.**
Stop by the Custom House between 1 and 5 PM to visit a holiday market featuring New London non-profit organizations. Expected to attend are representatives from NL Landmarks, NL Historical Society, NL Main Street, and the Eastern CT Symphony selling memberships, event subscriptions, and gifts.

▪ **November 25, 1 to 5 PM. Museum Store Sunday - special guests & book reading.**

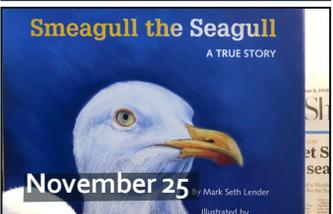
Stop by the Custom House for the opening of our *Kids Ahoy* exhibition. At 2 PM, we welcome Clinton residents illustrator **Valerie Elaine Pettis** and author **Mark Seth Lender** for a reading of the book *Smeagull the Seagull*. *Smeagull* is the story of a wild herring gull who has taken it upon himself to befriend Mark and Valerie and knocks on their door, daily, to be fed. The concept is to introduce children to Nature not through the exotic, but through the readily apparent and commonplace, the 'seagull' Gulls are wild and highly intelligent animals that make eye contact, are voluble, and can be seen (in one species of gull or another) on any day in nearly every human-inhabited place on earth. Mark Seth Lender is a producer for wildlife content, and the Explorer in Residence at *Living on Earth* (www.LOE.org) which is nationally broadcast on National Public Radio.

▪ **November 25, 1 to 5 PM. Opening of Kids Ahoy exhibition - with special guests from the Eastern Connecticut Ballet's new production of the Nutcracker. Kids Ahoy** traces the influence of the sailor suit - in clothing, toys & entertainment - from Queen Victoria's day to the present. Costumed ballet dancers from the new Victorian-era *Nutcracker* will be on hand for selfies and family photographs.

▪ **Through December 18: We are a collection site for Toys for Tots.**

Please drop off your unwrapped presents at the Custom House Museum foyer, 150 Bank Street, New London, CT, through December 18.

Be the first to know - sign up for weekly email new blasts: nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com



SHOP



RAFFLE



RENT



IT'S THE HOLIDAY SEASON! ~ We've got all kinds of special things for you this season at the Custom House -- holiday programs, fantastic new items in our MUSEUM SHOP, a quilt raffle to run through December 21, and a 10% discount in the SHOP November 1 through December 23 (that's 20% for members!). **The MUSEUM SHOP will be open until 7 PM Thursdays and Fridays in November and December!** *Center above*, as a fund raiser, Christina Corcoran created a charming eastern Long Island Sound quilt embroidered with the three beacons leading into the historic port of New London! She will offer a three-week **Make Your Own Woolie Workshop** in November -- all materials provided. (*Above right*) Remember: you may rent the Custom House for your holiday event. We will be decked out for the season! Call Susan at 860-447-2501, nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com.

Be on the lookout for the Frank L. McGuire Maritime Library's new digital exhibits of archival collections. The first exhibit displays New London area maritime postcards dating from the 1890s to the 1950s. We have also created attractive web pages with brief illustrated histories of McGuire Library and of Robert Mills (1781-1855), architect of the Custom House and the Washington Monument, among other notable structures. More collections and web pages are in the pipeline. The exhibitions went live in September and you may now view them on your Mac or PC by clicking on "Digital Exhibits and Web Pages" in the Library section of the Society's website.

— Brian Rogers

Eugene is moving! We'd like to thank Eugene MacMullan for his beautiful work for the library over the past several years.



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.

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.

NLMS Third Grade Local-History & Landmarks Program



Above, students learn how people got their water before indoor plumbing at Hempsted Houses. Right, program director Jody Barthel leads students on an historic walking tour between sites.

For the past five years, NLMS's Third Grade Local-History & Historic Landmarks program has brought a series of history and cultural experiences to 12 New London third-grade classes -- approximately three hundred students! With visits to six+ local historic sites across the school year, students not only learn about history, but experience it.

This year, the program began in mid October with trips to partner historic sites: Hempsted Houses and the Shaw Mansion. These partners generously provide educators and admission for the 300 students. Through a series of grants, NLMS provides the overall planning, buses, and visits at the Custom House. The program is directed by NLMS educator Jody Barthel.

The third grade social studies program created by the New London Maritime Society matches perfectly with the Connecticut social studies frameworks. The frameworks suggest that third graders should be deeply engaged in the study of their own community; this is exactly what this program does. In addition, the frameworks completely support the field trips involved in the New London program. The work done by the New London Maritime Society with students should be commended. --Stephen Armstrong, Social Studies Consultant, CT Dept. of Education

We applaud **Eastern Connecticut Ballet**, which gives its classic **Nutcracker** a fresh spin this December with spectacular new scenery that celebrates SE Connecticut's seafaring past. Below, featuring tall ships in port, the Custom House, Harbor Lighthouse, and other well-known landmarks, the new scenery will transform the Garde Arts Center's stage into a wintry day in New London during the 1850s. One of the scenes even recreates the ice fields of the Arctic, where the city's ships once ventured on harrowing whaling voyages. All of the new backdrops are the creations of Fufan Zhang, some of whose research was done at the Custom House. After the performances we hope to incorporate several of the nautical **Nutcracker** costumes into our **Kids Ahoy** exhibition!

NLMS 35th ANNUAL FUND

A small gem in downtown New London, NLMS's Custom House is New London's local maritime history museum & preservation organization. We are teachers, sailors, historians, librarians, & maritime aficionados. *Please support us!*

Your donation helps keep the lights on and the museum warm as we preserve & share our authentic maritime heritage.

Visit us at nlmaritimesociety.org



New London Maritime Society

Custom House Maritime Museum

150 Bank Street, New London, Connecticut 06320

