What matters time?
from the director

Christian Fiedler captured six months of the sun’s path across the sky in a single image. at Harbor Light, his long-exposure print, above, records the scene from 25 October 2022 – 8 May 2023: 195 days. Our visits giving tours inside the lantern room during those months did not signify; the camera registered only the long view. Christian Fiedler’s Beacons through Time, will be on view at the Custom House from May 12 through July 19, 2024. His luminous pinhole prints will include Point Judith (RI), Avery Point (CT), and Montauk Light (NY), among others.

We are quickly shifting into the high season, with tours, talks, and visits out to the islands all being planned! Meanwhile, new at the museum is a small exhibition from local shipwreck diver Mark Munroe. It’s on the Volund, a 239-foot Norwegian tramp steamer which sank ‘somewhere in the Race’ in 1908.

But before we move too far ahead, let’s recognize Christina Corcoran and Ben London’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade! At the CH, we’re taking the long view, too.

--Susan Tamulevich

Photo top: Christian Fiedler hid his pinhole camera on the sill in the Harbor Light lantern room; above: we were happy to receive two large whale vertebrae in April, which formerly had been in a New London schoolyard. The city DPW delivered the bones and a crew of USCG cadets cleaned them up.

Photo, above: "Lighthouse" Boat Tours

Local Friendly Authentic
Open Thursday, Friday & Sunday, 1-5 PM, & Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM.
**Tours to climb Harbor Lighthouse** run year-round. The views at the top are spectacular! We meet at the lighthouse, then climb 116 steps to the lantern room - all the while learning about the 261-year history of Harbor Light, the oldest and the tallest lighthouse on Long Island Sound. Sign up online at https://bpt.me/299893 or send an email to schedule your tour: nlmaritimedirector@gmail.com

**Open Mic at the Museum**, meets from 6-9 PM the last Sunday of the month: Share your original music, poetry, prose, stand-up, or just say what is on your mind. Open Mic welcomes performers of all kinds. Perform, or just enjoy. By donation. **April 28, May 26, June 30, July 28.**

**Sunset Seal Watch, Saturday May 4 6 PM**, The Black Hawk is donating an exciting trip to view the seals who live off New London. View these animals in their natural environment. It’s a fundraiser for NLMS. (See back page for details.)

**Jibboom Club #1**, meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM. Join us for a talk, good company, coffee & cookies. Sponsored by the Maco Family Fund, the gatherings are FREE and open to all. **May 21 - Patrick Lynch, June 18 - John.**

**Make Music Day June 21, 11AM -7PM.** It’s the best day of the year-- and not just because it’s the first day of Summer. Plan on coming down to the Custom House. We have performers & cookies all day. It’s FREE!

**Excursions** to Ledge Light, Race Rock Lighthouse, Little Gull Island, & Fishers Island will be listed very soon. Please watch nlmaritimesociety.org for updates on all summer lighthouse tours & special programs.

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**spring highlights** - for full listings, go to nlmaritimesociety.org

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

The Custom House Maritime Museum - your local, independent, community museum - open year-round - telling the stories of New London’s waterfront.
you’ll hear soon enough

than a year we were owed a considerable amount of money. Everything is straightened out now, but it took some doing as well as the assistance of the CT Attorney General and the NBC consumer investigators. We thank them all! We wanted you to know, as the story will be on the NBC news some time in early May.

us to have several sources of income in addition to program fees. One of the most-consistent revenue producers for the museum is our wonderful gift shop.

on maritime, local history, Freedom, and lighthouse topics. We have gifts from housewares to clothing to maritime blocks. Our gifts have an extra feel good factor: when you shop with us, your purchases support the museum exhibitions & educational programs.

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, & 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.


See that roof?!

New London’s Custom House is 188 years old. But for the next 187, the roof has spelled trouble! Water leaked inside ‘in buckets’ starting in 1836.

You might remember, the roof failed dramatically in December 2022. With help from the Frank Loomis Palmer Foundation, we managed to stem the flow, gained us about three years.

New London Maritime Society is resolved to replace the roof. As John F. Kennedy said, The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining. We commissioned a new roof plan from Crosskey Architects. You can bet we’ll let you know once the New Roof campaign commences. Image: 1881 Lippincott’s engraving of the NL waterfront.
The Ellery F. Thompson Archive in the McGuire Library at the Custom House

The collection of Ellery Thompson’s paintings at the Custom House is the largest on permanent, public display. Thompson, who died in 1986, would be surprised to learn that the building which he often visited on business as a fishing boat owner - and to which he was once summoned to explain his involvement with rum-running - now houses a striking collection of his work. He would be even more surprised to learn that a collection of his papers is now preserved upstairs in the McGuire Library.

A Finding Aid for researchers has now been created listing its contents: thirteen letters, thirty published articles about him, papers of all kinds related to events in his life, and several photographs. The largest part of the collection is 370 typed pages of memoirs produced during his retirement years in Mystic. Much of their content appears in similar form in his books, Draggerman’s Haul and Come Aboard the Draggers, but a great deal does not. Plans for a third book, Draggerman’s Loot, never materialized, but much of it may be read here. Ellery spent hours with his typewriter revisiting New York’s Fulton Fish Market, the Hurricane of 1938, the golden age of passenger steamboats, his relations with women, his painting, and much else. Donated by the late Marion Krepcio, the typescripts served as the inspiration for the Library’s two online exhibitions about Thompson. The pages of the Finding Aid will be added to the exhibitions in coming weeks.

-- Brian Rogers, online exhibitions librarian

A Sunset Seal Watch
Saturday, May 4, 6 PM

environment. It’s a fundraiser for NLMS.

After a successful visit to look at the many seals who live off New London, we’ll leave from Niantic and head out to Little Gull and Plum Islands. Beginning in the 1800s, hunters harvesting seals for fur and oil virtually eliminated seals in Long Island Sound. Fishermen continued to kill seals believing they were competing with them for fish. In fact, up into the 1950s Connecticut offered seal hunters a bounty. From NOAA:

The Marine Mammal Protection Act was enacted in 1972 and established a national policy to prevent marine mammal species and population stocks from declining beyond the point where they ceased to be significant functioning elements of the ecosystems of which they are a part. Following new federal regulations, seals began returning to LIS in the 1970s.

Don’t miss this opportunity to see these animals in their natural environment. It’s a fundraiser for NLMS.

Bring your camera and binoculars. We’ll bring a drink and snack! It’s a 2 hour+ round-trip. Sunset’s at 8:15. Tickets are $35 for adults, $30 for NLMS members, and $25 for children ages 6 to 18 (the same prices as in 2020!). Call 860-447-2501 with your questions or sign up online today: https://bpt.me/6299886.

Photo: Donna Whitehouse (from our last seal watch!)