



custom house  
**MARITIMES**  
 SUMMER 2021

Above, Tours inside New London Harbor Lighthouse continue year-round. [brownpapertickets.com/event/5127942](https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5127942)



From top, new volunteer Bill Tuttle with NLMS president Christina Corcoran. Christina taught our third-grade Local History & Landmarks program this spring. Above Ruby, who was in the third grade program, & her sister visited the museum. Top of the page, Mia, also in the program, & her family visited Harbor Light!

Great to see you **HERE!**

It's **SUMMER** and the Maritime Society is back again in full swing, with all our usual programs and a few that are completely new. We still wear masks, but otherwise you will find it's pretty normal at the Custom House. Jibboom Club #1 meets the third Tuesday of the month. Tours continue to all three lighthouses (have you been yet?), and in August we'll be taking you back to Ledge Light and the Henry L. Ferguson Museum on Fishers Island.

The Custom House museum & Shop are open Wednesday through Sunday. What's new here is the *John Michael Corcoran Museum Day Fund*, which now provides free admission to the Custom House for all New London students and their families. Thanks to Governor Lamont, DECD, & CT Humanities, through Labor Day Connecticut children plus one accompanying adult can visit NL's Custom House free of charge. *We want you HERE!*

The popular *Open Mic* series resumes on the 4th Sunday of the month beginning July 25. Anyone is welcome to perform. Joe Gilbert and Christina Corcoran will be co-hosting outside in the courtyard, from 7 to 9 PM. Our new *Custom House Soirées*, programmed to coincide with the City's *Eat in the Street* events (1st Wednesdays), have sold out consistently due to pianist Aymeric Dupré la Tour's creative programming. July was *Pirates*, August is *Home Grown Composers* (featuring a work by Wesleyan's Neeley Bruce). September will explore the piano traditions of Central and South America. Themed drinks & desserts accompany each performance. We also were delighted to partner with the Connecticut Early Music Festival this Spring for two perfect concerts and hope to do more with them in the future -- stay tuned.

I would be remiss not to mention, right off, that our finances took a major hit due to the pandemic. Please become a member, browse our fantastic Shop, **attend our super-special fundraiser at New London's Lighthouse Inn on September 3**, and donate at [www.nlmaritimesociety.org](http://www.nlmaritimesociety.org), where you'll find more details.

Feels good to be back!

--Susan Tamulevich, director



# SUMMER 2021 highlights - for full listings, go to [nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org)

Tickets to most events can be purchased online at [BrownPaperTickets.com](http://BrownPaperTickets.com), search 'New London'.



## Wine Tasting at the Lighthouse Inn, & Silent Auction, Friday, September 3, 5:30-8 PM.

Join us to relaunch New London's newly renovated Inn, which was closed for over a decade. Salute its devoted champions **Alwyn Christy** and **Ned Hammond**. **Ed Cramer** of Gordon's Yellow Front Wines and Liquors presents the wine tasting as a fundraiser for New London Maritime Society. <https://lighthouseinn.bpt.me/>



### ONGOING PROGRAMS

#### Tours to climb up to the Lantern at HARBOR LIGHTHOUSE run all year!

Tickets can be purchased online at [brownpapertickets.com/event/5127942](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/5127942). custom tours: 860-447-2501.

■ **JIBBOOM CLUB #1**, meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Sponsored by the Maco Family Fund, the gatherings are *FREE* and open to all. Upcoming dates are **July 20 - Brian Rogers, *Bringing the Ships to New London: a history of the New London State Pier*, August 17 - John Henshaw, executive director of the CT Port Authority, September 21.**

■ **Open Mic**, meets the 4th Sunday of the month, 7-9 PM. **July 25, August 22, September 26.** By donation.

■ **Custom House Soirée**, with pianist **Aymeric Dupré la Tour**, two seatings -- at 6:30 and 8 PM. **August 4** hear *Home Grown Composers* (featuring a work by Wesleyan's Neeley Bruce). **September 1's** program will explore the piano traditions of Central and South America. Themed drinks & desserts accompany each performance. \$35. \$30 NLMS members. <https://chsoiree.bpt.me/>

■ **August 2 and 30**, Mondays, 9 AM-6 PM. **Boat Tour to Fishers Island & the Henry L. Ferguson Museum**, Take our excursion to Fishers Island to view the 2021 exhibitions '*Fishers Island, Naturally*', curated by Pierce Rafferty, iNaturalist photographic observations taken by Fishers Islanders & curated by educator and naturalist Murray Fisher, and '*A Closer Look: Photographs by Todd McCormack*'. A light lunch will be provided. We're taking the Fishers Island Ferry from New London. \$75, \$65 NLMS members <https://fi2021.bpt.me>

■ **August 16, Monday, 5-8PM.** Boat trip to visit inside Ledge Lighthouse. <https://ledgelight2021.bpt.me>

Don't forget to visit the **MUSEUM SHOP** for all kinds of wonderful things -- from maritime mobiles, to local history books.

## 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 Custom House. \_\_\_ Contact me about leaving a legacy.

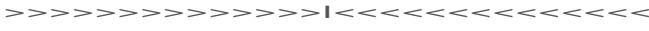
# from the Frank L. McGuire Library

When NLMS sent out a call in early January for volunteers to transcribe the pages of the manuscript Journal of the *Merrimac*, long-time Maritime Society member and supporter Craig Showalter, from Englewood, Ohio, was one of the first to respond. In all, we had 88 volunteers working on the project from as far away as Hawaii. Craig, the son of NLMS founder Lucile Showalter, grew up in New London with the Maritime Society and now keeps track of our activities through the weekly email blast.

Now posted in an online website, the transcriptions sit side-by-side with the images of the hand-written pages. They provide a literal, word-for-word typed version that retains the antique spelling, odd punctuation, references to strange locations and obscure whaling terms of the original, so even the typed version can be somewhat intimidating. <https://mcguirelibrary1998.omeka.net/exhibits/show/voyage-of-the-whaler-merrimac>

After he had transcribed about half a dozen pages, Craig offered to create a "readable" version of the Journal, sort of a translation into modern American English. We gladly accepted! Drawing upon his own knowledge of maritime history he is also adding hypertext links as needed to clarify other information mentioned in the text. Craig's "readable" version of the Journal has been added to the Merrimac site.

– Laurie M. Deredita, Librarian



## ON THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDER'S BIRTH

Lucille M. Showalter was an unlikely candidate to be the savior of the US Custom House in New London, Connecticut. She was born November 2, 1920 in Norfolk, Virginia to a Kentuckian mother and Tennessean father, because that's where his service in the Navy had put them. In 1923, the Navy would put them in New London. While her father would write the newspaper to decry northern Yankee politics, Lucille grew to love the land where she lived.



Lucille Showalter, Michael Peery, 2015

Raising three sons, she became active in civic life here, especially for school and church. She was elected to serve one term on the New London Board of Education in 1961. Having been a cashier at Ocean Beach Park in 1940, the first summer it opened, she was proud to be selected to serve on the Park Board from 1964-1972. But, it was not until 1970 that she really came to her own as the historian of New London.

Building on the secretarial training she had put to use in Washington, DC during World War II, Lucille taught business education for adults in the city's public night school program. She'd been doing this since 1952. She really enjoyed working with adult students. By the mid-60's she was hankering to break out into new topics – specifically, local history. She pestered that poor program administrator until he agreed to hire her to teach a local history class. It launched in 1970.

The class was an amazing success. She was an entertaining instructor. There were costumed guest presenters. And there were a flurry of field trips. With this, she built her reputation. She got frequent inquiries about some historical tidbit or

another, to which she was generally able to provide quick and unwavering answers. By the time the American Bicentennial rolled around in 1976, she was a source for newspaper stories, and a sought-after speaker.

She got frequent inquiries about some historical tidbit or another, to which she was generally able to provide quick and unwavering answers. By the time the American Bicentennial rolled around in 1976, she was a source for newspaper stories, and a sought-after speaker. As the adult education local history class was winding down, eventually ending in 1978, she was already replicating the experience in college settings, principally at Mohegan Community College, but also some short stints at Huntington Institute, and Connecticut College.

It was no surprise then, when news surfaced that the Custom House was going to be unloaded by the federal government, that folks would turn to Lucille with the question about how it might be preserved for history. There was word that others had an interest in converting the building for a business opportunity. One notable thing about New London's history was that it did not have a stellar track record of preserving its historical buildings, and especially when it competed with the prospect of financial enterprise. All this drove her into working hard to see it saved. The rest you know. The New London Maritime Society and the Custom House Maritime Museum were both established in 1983.

We lost Lucille on May 10, 2000. Cancer had shadowed her since the mid-70's, but she was too busy to pay it much mind. Even as it had its final hold of her, she was still actively orchestrating programs at the Custom House until just a couple of days before the end. Though, there have been indications that maybe she hasn't fully left the place.

On this hundredth anniversary of her birth, there is no doubt of her pride in the success of this venture. It was a most cherished project, that she poured her whole self into. She wanted to see it be a grand location for preserving and telling the wonderful tales of New London's history. It is magnificent to see how much it has prospered and grown, and how it is still doing just that.

-- Craig Showalter, her youngest son

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

## become an NLMS member membership has perks!

**Join us!** ~ Individual (\$35) and Family memberships (\$50) receive a signed poster by Patrick Lynch.

~ Contributor (\$100) and Sponsor (\$250) memberships also receive a copy of Patrick Lynch's *A Field Guide to Long Island Sound: Coastal Habitats, Plant Life, Fish, Seabirds, Marine Mammals, and Other Wildlife* (\$24 value). (Pick up premiums at the Custom House.)

Members always receive free admission to the Custom House and invitations to special events, as well as a 10% discount on all SHOP purchases. (Application page 2)



Wanna go? Climb up inside the lantern room at **Ledge Light**. We have all kinds of lighthouse tours -- by boat & by land.

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



## Don't you just love the Custom House **SHOP!**

Our MUSEUM SHOP offers all kinds of wonderful things -- and you don't need a museum ticket to get in. Right now, we've got everything for SUMMER: local history books, alphabet blocks, a swan float, waterproof solar lanterns for on the boat, kites, scarves, totes & more!

The Museum & SHOP are open Wednesday-Sunday, from 1 to 5 PM.

Through Labor Day, thanks to the American Rescue Plan, Governor Lamont, DECD, & CT Humanities, Connecticut children plus one adult can visit NL's Custom House free of charge. NB: this state offer is for individual CT residents, not camps, troops, or schools.

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



[nlmaritimesociety.org](http://nlmaritimesociety.org)  
local friendly authentic