

SEA HISTORY

GAZETTE



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Cutty Sark Tall Ship Race Honors

As the new year begins, it is important to review the most important tall ship race of 1990, the Cutty Sark Tall Ship races.

The Chilean barque *Esmeralda* came away with Class A honors on the 473-mile first leg of the race. She was followed by the Russian four-masted barque *Sedov*, and then the Bulgarian barquentine *Kaliakra*. In Class A, Division II, the Irish brigantine *Asgard II* prevailed, followed by the British brig *Royalist*. The seamanship prize went to the Lowestoft smack *Excelsior* which broke her bowsprit during a gale in the Bay of Biscay.

The second leg of the race ran from Bordeaux to Zeebrugge, 527 miles. *Esmeralda* won the class A again, followed this time by the Russian four-masted barque *Kruzenshtern* and then *Kaliakra*. The *Royalist* won the Division II and the Polish brigantine *Henryk Rutkowski* was second.

The spirit of the race of course is the comradeship of the sea. The Cutty Sark Trophy is awarded to the ship which contributes most toward international cooperation and friendship, as voted by the captains. This year the trophy went to the crew of the 85-ft Danish ketch *Jens Krogh*. Built in 1899 she was also the oldest vessel in the races. She is owned and operated by the Aalborg Maritime Division of the Danish Youth Organization. Watch the *Gazette* for updates on the next Cutty Sark Tall Ship Races.

Young Mariners League

Interest in the traditions and future of sailing in the USSR is culminated in the newly-formed Soviet Young Mariners League. It includes ninety-six Young Mariners clubs, various

shipping companies, yacht and history-of-the-fleet clubs, associations of submarine activity and veterans of the fleet council. The League is supported by various official and private sponsors.

Presently, the League is building sailing ships for international sail training programs like the 1992 international expedition celebrating the quincentennial of the discovery of America. Work is also underway to build a replica of the frigate *Pallad* in Vladivostok in the Soviet Far East. The League, which is organizing a Young Mariners Camp from June 28-July 29, 1991 on the Black Sea side of Northern Caucasus, is looking to expand their international contacts and encourage participation in this program. For further information write the *Gazette*.

Oyster Sloop *Christeen*, Connecticut's Flagship

Ben Clarkson of Tradewinds Education Network in Essex CT informs the *Gazette* that oyster sloop *Christeen* may become Connecticut's official flagship to OPSAIL '92. State Representative Sidney Holbrook and State Senator Lawrence Bettencourt have drafted a resolution for the Connecticut General Assembly to be introduced during the 1991. Tradewinds, which is currently restoring the 1883 Long Island Sound oyster sloop, reports that the resolution asks that the vessel be officially recognized "as an example of Connecticut's glorious past and its historic oyster industry," and that "as the oldest surviving Long Island Sound oyster sloop, be allowed to carry the flag of the State of Connecticut to Op Sail '92 at New York Harbor in the summer of 1992."

Ben says that his organization, and crew of the *Christeen*, is very

proud to represent the state. NMHS members would have seen *Christeen* at their 1990 annual meeting in Essex at the Connecticut River Museum and Ben asks all NMHS members living in Connecticut to write within the next 30 days and encourage their local state representatives in support of this resolution. For further information contact Ben at (203) 434-3890. (TEN, PO Box 642, Essex CT)

Unions Support US Merchant Mariners

The Transportation Trades Department (TTD) of the AFL-CIO has lent their support to the cause of rebuilding American maritime industry. District No. 1-MEBA/NMU, the union of the American Merchant Marine, and the National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Associations will help develop the TTD's legislative agenda along with the other maritime branch of the Department, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union.

The Transportation Trades Department is the AFL-CIO's only department dealing solely with those issues facing workers in the nation's varied but increasingly linked transportation industry. Airlines, trucking and transport, and the rail unions are all represented under the umbrella of TTD. By organizing transportation unions together, merchant marine unions hope to give a shot in the arm to America's merchant marine and overhaul the nation's transportation industries. (MEBA/NMU 444 N. Capitol St. NW, Ste. 800, Washington DC, 20001)

Raise the Gunboat!

The Charleston SC *News and Courier* reports on November 22, 1990, that a Civil War-era gunboat has been found

at the bottom of the Tennessee River, and she appears to be in relatively good shape. John Latham and his nonprofit group, Raise the Gunboats, Inc., discovered the boat and have identified her as the *Undine*. *Undine* was the largest of four sunk in 1865 by Union forces after Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest closed in on the Union military depot of Johnsonville. Latham and his group hope to raise the gunboat for use in a museum.

The site is in forty feet of water, marked off by bouys. Although the *Undine* was set afire when scuttled, divers believe the damage was confined to the top deck. The rest of the ships wooden frame seems to be intact and in good shape. Some white oak was brought up from off the boat—"You could nail into it," commented Latham.

Raise the Gunboats continues to search for the other three gunboats sunk with *Undine*—*Key West*, *Tawah* and *Elfin*—and will be looking for support for their plans for a gunboat museum in the area.

Yachting History Symposium

Mystic Seaport gears up for their fourth Annual Yachting Symposium, March 22 through 24 with keynote speaker Olin Stephens. Stephen's contribution to American yachting is legendary, being one of the founders of the yacht design company Sparkman and Stevens and having designed five successful America's Cup defenders, among many other accomplishments. Stephen's topic is "Yacht Design: From the Intuitive to the Analytical."

The purpose of this annual symposium is to enhance and enlarge public understanding of American yachting, and this year's focus will be on the evolution of the yacht in the twentieth century. Other speakers are Henry Scheel, naval architect from Rockport, Maine who will address the development of motorsailers; Jim Brown, designer, on the development of sailing multi-hulls; David Martin, powerboat designer, on sportfishermen and sedan cruisers; and John Deknatel on "The Genius and Genesis of Ray Hunt's Designs." The symposium, which runs from 7:30PM on Friday until noon on Sunday, will also feature talks and discussions on Saturday. (Mystic Seaport, Mystic CT 06355)

Maritime Travelling Shows Wanted

The builders of a new waterfront hotel in Boston would like to hear from maritime museum curators, marine art galleries and others with maritime exhibits that could be shown in the hotel's proposed "Shipwatching Station." The hotel, with views overlooking Boston harbor, will open in 1992 and Tracy Osbourne of Gunwyn & Co, is eager to hear from anybody interested in exhibiting. Fees will be paid to exhibitors. Contact Tracy at Gunwyn & Co, 47 Thorndike Street, Cambridge MA 02141.

Protecting Naval Battlesites

On October 27, the US House of Representatives passed bill HR 2570, authorizing an initial \$500,000 to fund the American Battlefield Protection Program, reports *Confederate Naval Historical Society Newsletter*, (October 1990). Initial plans included only land battle sites, but after discussions with the officers of CNHS it became clear that naval sites including parts of the St. James River below Richmond VA also need to be protected (see *Sea History* #52, "NMHS Commentary," p. 9). CNHS has been asked to oversee the resurveying of the designated battlefields of Ft. Fisher and Mobile Bay to include relevant areas of naval action and the possible naval artifacts that lie within them. The Historical Society will continue to serve as advisor to this project. (CNHS, 710 Ocran Rd., Whitestone VA, 22578)

Briefly Noted

The Dubuque County Historical Society has received a \$35,000 grant from the State of Iowa's Historic Resource Development Program to develop an indoor and outdoor exhibit of small vessels and boatbuilding technology. The Society, which is the parent organization of the National Rivers Hall of Fame, will put the "Boatyard" in the waterside building now occupied by the Hall of Fame. The National Rivers Hall of Fame will move to the new Welcome Center and museum complex now under construction on the north bank of the Dubuque Ice Harbor. (NRHF, PO Box 305, Dubuque IA 42004; 319 583-1241)

On January 26, the Labor Archives of San Francisco State University and Bay Area Labor History Work-

shop are sponsoring a public conference on traditions of west coast maritime culture, both ship and shore at ILWU Ship Clerks' Hall, 4 Berry Street, San Francisco, 9AM-5PM. Speakers at "Waterfront Soundings" include:

Bruce Nelson, Dartmouth College historian and author

Tom Green, retired shipwright and folklorist

Bill Bailey, former marine fireman and longshoreman and clerk

For information, call 415 775-0533.

The America 500 project, organized by World Cruising of London England, is gaining interest and momentum as the 1992 deadline to sail approaches. This massive sail will start from Spain in August 1992 and arrive on the coast of North America for Quincentenary Celebrations.

One hundred fifty boats from twenty nations have joined America 500 so far, the largest contingent being from the United States. Individual states have begun designating one boat as their official representative in this sailing venture. Recent additions to the roster have been Michigan's official entry *Yes!M!ch!gan*, Wisconsin's *Seaschelle*, and Florida's *Sea Gem*. (World Cruising, PO Box 165, London WC1B 5LA, England)

The Port Authority of New York-New Jersey has an updated guide book for 1991-92 which contains information on the facilities and services available to users of the port. New sections such as "Guide to Importing and Exporting" and the use of sixty maps illustrate the port's facilities make the new guide a vast improvement over the last edition. The new edition also contains valuable listings of other modes of transportation to move your goods from the docks, such as trucking, aviation, etc. For a free copy, Port Authority's Port Dept., Communication Division, One World Trade Center, New York NY 10048.

NMHS Advisory Chairman Frank O. Braynard announces, in the Fall 1990 issue of *Steamboat Bill*, journal of the Steamship Historical Society of America, that he intends to write a biography of the famous liner *America*. *America*, which made her maiden voyage from her builder's yard at Newport News, Virginia, to New York half a century ago, in July 1940, was

The Thames Estuary Maritime Heritage Park, a new Connecticut maritime attraction repackaging and highlighting the river's existing waterfront historical exhibits, is now in its planning stages, reports *Soundings*, January 1991. The park is the vision of former New London state rep. William J. Cibes, Jr. and has obtained \$2.6 million in funding from the state's Bonding Commission. What makes the park unique is that it will be most easily accessed by boat. Visiting boaters will chart their course along the river, and tourists who arrive by land will depart from New London's City Pier.

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*Soundings

January 1991

Park to celebrate Thames River maritime heritage

By Ebba Hierta
Staff Writer

Connecticut's newest and perhaps most unusual state park, now in the planning stages, has a special appeal for boaters. The Thames Estuary Maritime Heritage Park will feature waterfront exhibits in Groton and New London on the Thames River that focus on the region's rich maritime history.

The park will be anchored with a visitor's center in downtown New London that will feature museum exhibits and audio/visual displays. The waterfront exhibits consist of existing museums and historical sights that highlight the region's involvement in whaling, shipbuilding, yacht racing, the Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy, the Revolutionary War and other aspects of maritime history.

Visiting boaters will be able to chart their own course along the river, and for tourists who arrive by land, tour boats will depart from New London's City Pier.

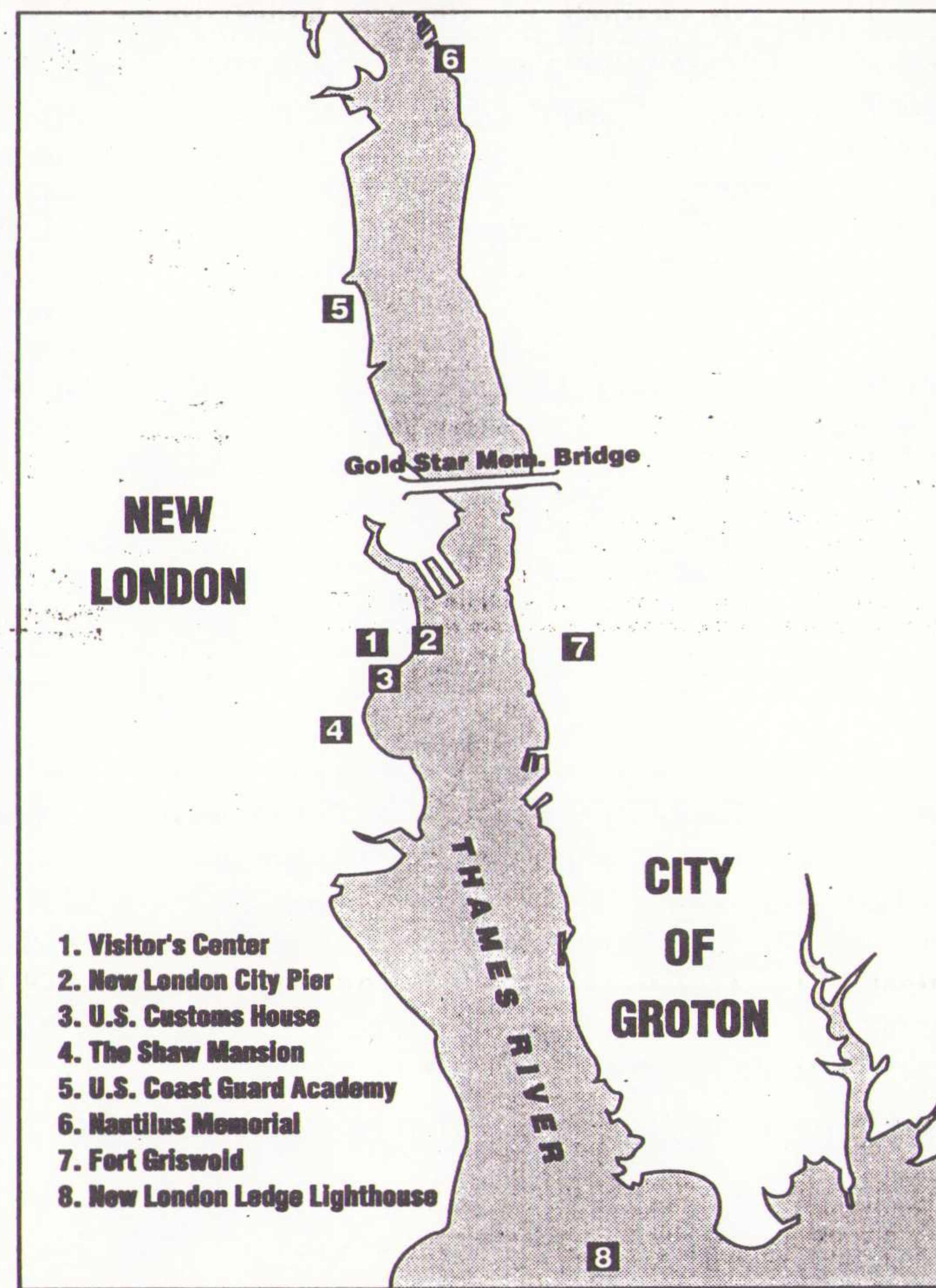
The park, a decade-long vision of former New London state Rep. William J. Cibes Jr., went from a dream to reality in October when the state's Bonding Commission agreed to borrow \$2.6 million to plan the park and build the visitor's center.

"It is our hope that this will establish New London as a primary tourist destination," said Cibes, who was recently chosen to head the state's budget office. "This is real history, not something recreated. New London has always turned its attention to the sea. It has always been our mainstay."

The list of exhibit sites is not final. But preliminary choices include the Nautilus Memorial, Fort Griswold, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the New London Ledge Lighthouse, the Shaw Mansion and the U.S. Customs House.

Joe Hickey, a state park planner with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, likened the new park to the Freedom Trail run by the U.S. National Park Service in downtown Boston.

Visitors to the Freedom Trail follow a painted line through the city streets, stopping off at various his-



WILLOW TANAKA/SOUNDINGS

toric sights. You can follow the trail yourself or take a guided tour with a park ranger. The exhibits in the Thames Estuary park are all interesting in their own right, Hickey said. But when they are all tied together in a cohesive group, he said, the result will be a dynamic look at how a New England waterfront has evolved over the years.

"It is the estuary that has really made the area what it is today," Hickey said. "For over 300 years it has been the same theme: water, water and more water, how we use

it and how we make a living by it."

The Nautilus Memorial, run by the U.S. Navy, offers tours of the first nuclear-powered submarine and a museum of submarine artifacts. Fort Griswold in Groton is the site of a Revolutionary War massacre led by Benedict Arnold.

The Coast Guard Academy in New London is home to the country's official tall ship, the U.S. Barque Eagle. The 81-year-old New London Ledge Lighthouse at the mouth of the river has been leased to a civic group that plans to open a lighthouse museum

in the 14-room house. The Shaw Mansion, home to the New London County Historical Society, has one of the area's most complete historical archives. The mansion was built in 1756 by Nathaniel Shaw, whose family commanded one of the largest fleets of Revolutionary War privateer ships.

The Customs House in New London, designed by Robert Mills and built in 1833, is the oldest continuously operating customs house in the country. The New London Maritime Society runs a museum in the building that features artifacts from noted area mariners. Included are memorabilia from George Comstock, first mate aboard the schooner *America* when it won the first America's Cup race in 1851, and his brother Andrew Jackson Comstock, who skipped winning America's Cup boats in 1870 and 1871.

In addition to the official historical exhibits that will be open for tours, Hickey said, a trip to the park will be an education in present-day maritime activities. The river is home to several ferry boat terminals, a Coast Guard station, the Electric Boat submarine shipyard, the Naval Underwater Systems Center, several shipping piers and recreational marinas.

"This is not a cute harbor scene. It's not always pretty or quaint," he said. "It's not a museum piece. Things are actually happening here. It's the real thing, a place where people always have and still do make their living at maritime activities."

The DEP is looking now for an architect to design the visitor's center and its displays, said Hickey, and opening day is still two or three years off.

New London officials are ecstatic about the new park, said Development Director Bruce Hyde. It will draw between 180,000 and 230,000 visitors into the city's downtown, he said, a boon to the merchants there.

"It's definitely going to be a real plus for boosting tourism in the area," Hyde said. "New London has so much to offer. It has all the elements of a large scale port, but on an intimate level." ■

built to the designs of William Francis Gibbs as a successor ship to the *Leviathan*, ex-German *Vaterland*, on which Braynard has published a remarkable six-volume biography. Readers are invited to send in comments, photos, memories of the ship (which is laid up as a hulk in Greek waters today) to NMHS, PO Box 646, Croton NY 10520.

After three years of planning and fundraising, the **Kendall Whaling Museum** is beginning to install a climate control system that will protect their collections from humidity and temperature.

The **Naval Historial Foundation** has awarded their 1990-91 fellowships and grants. Christopher McKee, professor of history and librarian at Grinnell College was named the fourth appointee of the Secretary of the Navy's Research Chair in History. Scholars Dennis Noble and Geoffrey L. Rosano were awarded Edwin C. Hooper Research Grants, and the John D. Hayes Predoctoral Fellowship was awarded to Jeffrey M. McKeage of the University of Illinois to support his dissertation, "Privateering During the American Revolution." The Foundation also presented its annual prize for the best project or paper in naval his-

tory to Ed Conwell, Jr. of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa for his display on the USS Monitor, entitled "The Hundred Day Wonder: A Cheese Box on a Raft." (Navy Museum, Bldg 57, Washington DC 20374)

Calendar

- January 18-26, **Annual Seattle Boat Show**, Kingdome, Seattle WA. Visit Center for Wooden Boats booth and displays. Volunteers needed. (CWB, 1010 Valley St., Seattle WA 98109)
- January 31-March 7, 7-9PM **Half-Hull Model classes**, Fee \$60. San Francisco NMHP, 415 929-0202.
- Until February 1, teenagers with family memberships can apply early for **Brilliant six-day sailing programs**, which run from June 9 to the last week in August. Education Department, Mystic Seaport Museum, PO Box 6000, Mystic CT 06355-0990
- February 6, 13, 20, 7-10PM. **Basic Celestial Navigation**. Randal Franke instructs the small boat cruiser in the basics. Fee—\$50. Center for Wooden Boats, 206 382-BOAT.
- February 16, 9AM-3:30PM, **Tool Clinic**. Bring your woodworking tools and learn how to sharpen, adjust and use them—\$35. San Francisco NMHP, 415 929-0202.
- February 16, 10-5PM, 17, 1-4PM,

Seventh Annual Modelmaker's Showcase. Demonstrations by the model builders at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia; 429-8210.

- February 19, 7:30PM, **Building Instructional Models**, a talk by Captain Andrew Rae. Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. (see above).
- February 27, 28, 7-10PM **Marine Carving** with Greg Fisher, Maine Maritime Museum, 243 Washington St., Bath ME 04530.

New and Noted

Pirates of the Pacific, Peter Gerhard (Univ. of Nebraska Press NE, 1990, 274p, index; \$9.95pb)

The Voyage of the Sabra: an Ecological Journey Through the Caribbean, Michael L. Frankel (W.W. Norton NY, 1990, 288p, illus, index; \$24.95hb)

American Mariner; A Document Biography, Herbert Paul Hahn (American Merchant Marine Museum Foundation, Kings Point NY, 1990, 270p, illus, index; \$26.95hb)

Admiral Arleigh Burke—A Biography, E.B. Potter (Random House NY, 1990, 494p, index; \$24.95hb)

Have you seen your name in the *GAZETTE* recently? Make sure that the *Sea History GAZETTE* is on your organization's mailing list.

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