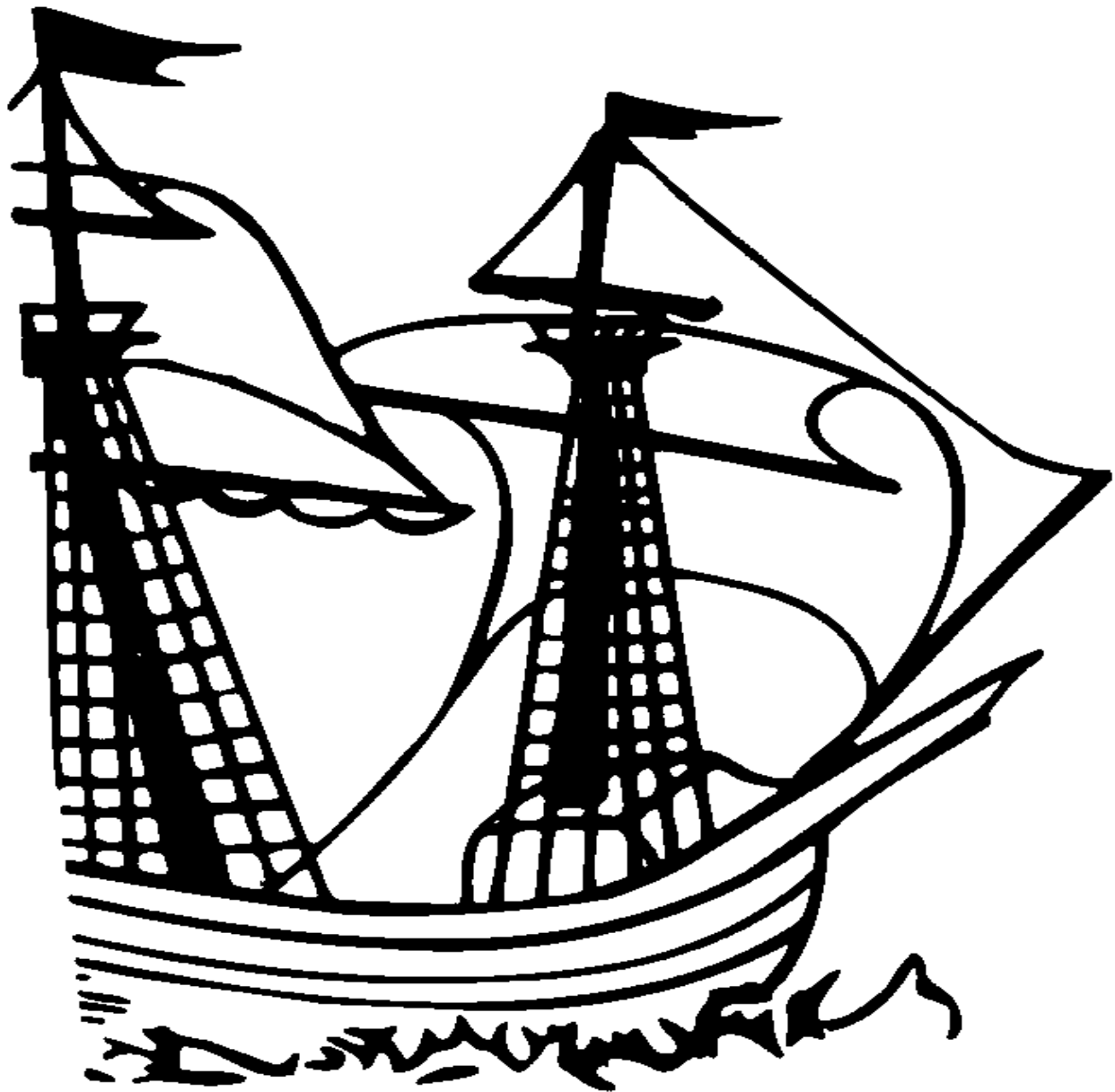


ARGONAUTA



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Editorial

This inaugural online version of *Argonauta* contains a continuation of a debate on the future of maritime history by Lincoln Paine, Josh Smith, and Kelly Chaves. The first part of this debate appeared in *Coriolis* volume 2, no. 2 (2011). Paine reminds us that while the tools have changed, the historian's task of explaining history to the public has not. Smith focuses upon relevance. Maritime history is a part of the larger field of history. Real world connections and inter-disciplinary work will help those at the peak of their careers contribute to keeping maritime history relevant in the twenty-first century. Chaves reminds us of the importance of recruitment. Her call for associations to provide more electronic resources and to co-locate maritime history conferences with other history conferences echoes the thoughts of others. Our debaters do not present opposing views. While their arguments emphasize different priorities, upon reflection, they also support and sustain one another in important ways.

There is no question that the *world wide web* and electronic resources are key tools for scholars which will enable historians to reach a larger audience, to develop new real world connections, and to undertake their traditional task of explaining history. The recent *Perspectives on History* (November 2012) notes the assignment of student-created websites for historical research in lieu of traditional papers and the training of doctoral students with the American Historical Association's Archives *Wiki*. How wonderful that Keith A. Erikson asked his students to meet with archivists as a part of this *Wiki* assignment, noting the importance of their knowledge and contributions to doctoral work. Do web developments and electronic resources replace books, people, and personal connections? Many historians insist upon the primacy of the monograph as a sustained, cohesive, analytical work of scholarship. Some traditionalists continue to emphasize the manifestation of monographs in print form for intellectual as well as sentimental reasons.

Certainly there is a vast difference between consulting a book quickly for a single fact or several key pieces of information and a careful thoughtful reading of it over time. However, a print copy does not guarantee the latter nor does an electronic copy force the former.

The transfer of scholarly journals into electronic media is more widely accepted, but still worrisome to those who associate electronic media with less scholarly, less authoritative work. Yet electronic journals are undoubtedly keeping their old audiences and gaining new ones as scholars locate relevant articles which they might miss in unfamiliar journals located on library shelves. New tools allow us to find new resources and to make new connections. In this light, we sincerely hope that the on-line version of *Argonauta* will reach all members and also appeal to some new members. Remember that *Argo* may be downloaded, printed, and enjoyed with a cup of tea, your daily ration, or saved and read at your convenience.

We would also like to call attention to Tavis Harris' announcement on the Hamilton Naval Historical Trust. We hope to remain relevant to your interests, to announce events of local importance, and to promote personal connections important to you.

Finally, your membership renewal form is on the last two pages of this online edition. It is also possible to renew your membership online at http://www.cnrs-scrn.org/membership/index_e.htm We strongly recommend this option as it saves paper, time, and best of all, it works! The membership page of the website also contains a pdf version of the membership renewal form.

Fair winds, Isabel and Colleen.

President's Corner

by Maurice Smith

I have just finished reading a piece by Richard Ouzounian in the Toronto Star about Peter Sellars, not to be confused with the other guy (Sellers) who wanders into a nudist colony with a guitar strategically placed. No this Peter is an opera director who is currently in Toronto to produce *Tristan und Isolde* for the Canadian Opera Company. Now before you wander off, Mr. Sellars is a serious student of history. He had to be before directing *Dr. Oppenheimer* and *Nixon in China*. His methodology is the same as many of you. He tackles the historical literature, learns in depth about the period and then engages in a monumental collaboration with creative folk. Open the doors, the people come and then leave hours later, delighted, introspective, and amazed.

As you might expect, Mr. Sellars is thoughtful character. "In this life on earth," he says, "The things we care about are not industrial strength. At every moment, the things we care about the most deeply are being threatened by the world we live in and so we must keep caring for them. It's like your kids. You have to feed them three times a day. You can't say, 'Oh yeah, I fed them last week.' You must stay with them."

And that is my belaboured point. The Canadian Nautical Research Society, such an accomplished group with an extraordinary track record is now under threat. Last fall members of your Executive Committee met in Picton, analysed the financial reports and potential strategies. It was an emergency meeting. Malfeasance or just plain stupidity is not a part of this problem. In fact many members of Council and volunteers are giving their time freely to

organize a conference, produce *The Northern Mariner* and *Argonauta*, get the publications to press and then into your hands.

Our costs are going up and our revenue stays, essentially the same. In this instance, Mr. Peter Sellars is right. We are being, “threatened by the world we live in and so we must keep caring for them”. This is not an excuse - just a fact of existence in what is for many arts, heritage and history organizations in North America, and a very hostile world.

And why is it not an excuse? Simply because we still have options. We are, at least in the western world a major force in promoting history at many levels, since 1984. The Executive Council will be meeting again, near the end of February. And what do we need? We need your ideas and participation. We need your engagement to help us make the best of a difficult situation. Please send me and other Executive members your suggestions on how to improve our finances. If you have the e-mail addresses of potential donors or new members, please send us those and do not be shy about approaching people who you think might help CNRS. We need to build our organization.

Maurice D Smith

Minutes of the Special Emergency Meeting of the CNRS/SCRN at The Naval Marine Archive, Picton, Ontario, 7, November, 2012.

Present:

President: Maurice D. Smith

Past President: Paul Adamthwaite

Treasurer: Errolyn Humphreys

Membership Secretary: Faye Kert

Chair of the Editorial Board: Richard Gimblett

Co-Editor, *Argonauta*: Isabel Campbell

This meeting was called in response to the Society’s declining financial assets. Because the Society had been forced to dip into its reserves to pay the last printing bill for TNM/LMN and was facing a similar situation with the printing of the October 2012 issue, an emergency meeting was called by the President to determine survival strategies that will permit the CNRS to continue to fulfill its role in promoting nautical research.

1. Maurice opened the meeting with a discussion of our recent shortfall and a review of the Financial Status Overview to October 29, 2012 prepared by Errolyn for the meeting. At that point the Society had \$443 in assets and was looking at a deficit of roughly \$4,000 for the year. With nearly \$13,000 in the CNRS reserves, if membership remains static and spending continues at the same rate as 2012, the Treasurer’s forecast would allow for 1 ½ to 2 years of operation.

An analysis of 2012 spending indicated that overall expenses were about \$1,000 higher this year, but no real extraordinary spending had occurred:

- bank and credit card charges were down slightly – probably due to fewer memberships
- prepaid postage was slightly increased

- printing costs increased marginally, TNM/LMN up a few hundred dollars and *Argo* up @\$200.
- prizes had increased to \$2,550 but not all were awarded for 2011.

Paul had also prepared a useful historical financial summary that revealed the narrow survival margin each year and the society's declining income since 2000. Faye reported on delinquent and declining dues payments as members retire, down-size or die, and institutional members lose funding. A third notice will be sent out to remind members who are still overdue.

2. A lengthy discussion followed as participants offered suggestions to cut costs and increase revenue.

- Argonauta* could be published as a PDF on-line and realize about \$2,500 savings
- the annual prizes offered by CNRS could be certificates, rather than cash, for a saving of \$2,500
- reviews could be published on-line immediately, and publishers and authors receive their tear-sheets by PDF for a reduction of \$200 per year.
- the journal could be published on-line and password protected for members at a saving of printing costs of \$8,500 for CNRS members, \$5,500 for NASOH, or, with mailing, a net saving of @\$15,500.

Revenue streams were discussed.

1. Membership = \$8,000 (if no increase)
2. Donations = \$1500/yr
3. Conference = \$0 (revenue neutral)
4. NASOH = could possibly charge \$1,000 for services
5. Canadian Publishing Grant (Paul offered to investigate but subsequently discovered that the Society does not print the necessary volume. He will investigate an alternate option.)

Immediate action:

Since several society members have offered their services, Isabel suggested getting more people involved and helping with revenue generation or other ways of promoting the society, especially to students.

Errolyn advised setting short-term goals and working towards them first, such as putting *Argo* on-line and by mid-2013 and leaving producing an on-line journal for a later date. Faye agreed to send out reminders to members who had not renewed.

3. The third item of business was the upcoming renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between NASOH and CNRS. Maurice had spoken with NASOH President, Warren Reiss, and NASOH wished to extend the MOU. Proposed changes to the existing publishing policy were discussed in terms of their effect on the MOU, but since very few subscribe to *Argo* and are already accustomed to receiving the NASOH newsletter electronically, that decision was not seen to be critical to the extension. It was agreed to advise NASOH of any changes in the cooperative spirit of the MOU. Maurice agreed to discuss an increase of \$1,000 in NASOH's share of the production with Warren based on

estimates of a 20% increase in administration costs including postage, supplies, printing, etc. NASOH has not paid any charges previously, but it is now necessary to cover additional expenses and consider a periodic review of the ongoing costs of producing the journal for both societies.

MOTION: Paul moved that we continue with the renewal of the MOU with NASOH
2nd : Faye **Carried**

MOTION: Paul moved to support Maurice in his request for 20% increase in NASOH's administration costs. 2nd: Errolyn **Carried**

4. **New Business**

Following further discussion over lunch, it was agreed to move forward with several key financial steps.

1. MOTION: Paul moved that Errolyn be authorized to transfer up to \$5,000 from the CNRS reserve to the current account in a timely manner to ensure payment of the upcoming costs of publishing. 2nd: Faye **Carried**

2. MOTION: Errolyn moved that beginning January 2013, *Argonauta* would be posted on the CNRS website, at the same times as the book reviews for Vol. XXIII, No. 1, and that the CNRS prizes would no longer have a cash value.

- this motion was discussed in terms of student travel support to allow students to travel to the annual conference to present a paper. It was thought this could be handled by the conference organizing committee.
- the small loss anticipated through no longer being able to charge NASOH subscribers for their copies of *Argo* (@\$300) was felt to be offset by rising mail and printing costs.
- Maurice agreed to provide Paul with the text for insertion in the issues of *Argo* about to be mailed out alerting members that, due to financial issues, *Argonauta* would be moving to a digital format in the new year.

2nd : Paul **Carried**

3. As part of the ongoing discussion regarding digital publishing, Paul referred to the recent transition of the newsletter produced by the *Mariner's Mirror*. Renamed *Top Mast*, it is published on-line and in colour, but is not easily printed.

After the meeting Isabel had two well-known web experts verify that the current (Autumn 2012) *Argo* pdf meets all standard web requirements and is also easily downloadable and easily printable from any standard web site. She received positive appraisals from both and anticipates no difficulty for our members in this regard.

Paul also mentioned the additional publishing costs of centennial issue for the *Mariner's Mirror* as part of their rising production costs. In addition, the *Mirror* had brought in an outside publisher to assist with publications, distribution and managing the web-site. A survey of their membership regarding willingness to receive their journal on-line, however, indicated a majority of subscribers preferred paper. TNM/LMN may find the same sentiment among members.

When the *Mariner's Mirror* published their 5-CD set of back issues, they made them accessible to those with passwords, but Paul noted that this is hard to manage because nothing prevents a member from giving the password to non-members.

Paul also raised the issue of the CNRS agreement with EBSCO which, after 4 years, has resulted in only 9 issues being put on-line, in no particular order. As a result, CNRS has never received a payment for use, since payments are only issued once usage reaches \$100 or more. If CNRS intended to publish the journal on-line on its own, and make it available to institutional members who would pay the society rather than EBSCO, it would then need to cancel or at least, re-negotiate the EBSCO contract.

While the Society considers its options regarding digital publishing and cost-savings, and since *The Northern Mariner* is already published on the CNRS web-site after a two-year blackout, Paul proposed preparing the issues for posting as he sets them up for printing, so that if the decision to go digital is made, the initial work will already be done

With everyone on a short deadline, the meeting concluded at 3 p.m. On behalf of the CNRS, Maurice thanked Paul and Betty Ann Anderson for hosting the meeting at the Naval Marine Archive on such short notice.

MOTION: Errolyn moved that the meeting be adjourned.

2nd: Paul

Carried

Prepared by Faye Kert, Membership Chair, Book Review Editor, very occasional secretary.
Nov. 19, 2012.

Announcements

Liverpool to stage last Battle of the Atlantic commemoration

The public will be able to visit ships berthed in Albert and Canning Dock complex, Liverpool Cruise Terminal and Bootle docks. Centrepiece will be the service at Liverpool Cathedral on May 26, with representatives of all denominations.

This will be followed by a veterans' parade led by the Band of the Royal Marines and HMS Eaglet guards, along Hope Street to the RC Metropolitan Cathedral. Royal Marines Band concerts will be held at the Philharmonic Hall on May 25 and with a '40s theme at St George's Hall, May 27.

The Royal Navy will stage a Battle of the Mersey with the Royal Marines and helicopters on three days. Liverpool and Bootle Town Halls will stage displays and a conference on the conflict will take place on May 22-24. The fleet will disperse en masse on Tuesday, May 28.

Calling all holders of the Atlantic Star

The organizers of the Battle of the Atlantic 70th Commemoration next year are appealing for any holder of the Atlantic Star medal to get in touch so they can be formally invited to the event. Commodore Richard Baum said: "The real VIPs at this anniversary are

those who served in the conflict. Without their efforts we wouldn't be here today. "We need all recipients of the Atlantic Star, who served in any area of the conflict – RN, RNR, MN, RFA, RAF, Army or wherever – to come forward and get the attention they deserve."

Veterans wishing to be involved in the event, or if they want tickets to attend the Liverpool Cathedral service on May 26, 2013, should contact the Royal Navy Regional HQ at tel: 0151 707 3402.

Top job for Wirral admiral

VICE Admiral Phil Jones, from Bebington, Wirral, has been appointed as Fleet Commander and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff. His job is to provide ships, submarines and aircraft ready for any operations required by the government. Vice Admiral Jones, who is married with three children and graduated from Mansfield College, Oxford, takes over from outgoing Fleet Commander, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, who continues as Commander Maritime Command NATO. Addressing Royal Navy personnel Vice Admiral Jones said: "It's an immense privilege to be invited to take up the role". In December 2008, he commanded the European Union's first naval task to protect shipping in the waters off Somalia.

Read more: Liverpool Echo <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/liverpool-news/in-the-mix/2012/12/05/liverpool-to-stage-last-battle-of-the-atlantic-commemoration-100252-32363796/#ixzz2GqXAf9CY>

[submitted by • by Peter Elson, Liverpool Echo • Dec 5 2012]

Hamilton Naval Historical Trust

by Tavis Harris

I would like to start off this month's review by wishing *Argonauta* readers a happy New Year. 2012 was an exciting and fruitful year for me and I look forward to the many milestones 2013 will bring. I sincerely hope everyone had a relaxing and enjoyable holiday season and is ready for another twelve months of exciting research.

Rather than the usual literature review, I will be using this space to bring an organization (and opportunities) to the attention of *Argonauta's* dedicated followers. As many of you know, I am an active naval officer in the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and take a deep and abiding interest in the unit and formation's history. To that end, in mid 2012 the Hamilton Naval Historical Trust was founded in an effort to preserve and promote the area's rich naval heritage. The Trust is a continuation of an earlier organization which lapsed due to a series of factors.

With new interest, and strong ties to both HMCS STAR and the Friends of Haida, the Hamilton Naval Historical Trust has taken on the task of collecting, preserving and publicly displaying naval/maritime artifacts from throughout Hamilton's history. The Trust already maintains a relatively large collection for its small size, but new and interesting items are

always welcome. The Trust is also looking for volunteers to assist with varying tasks including cataloguing items and setting up displays. There is a substantial amount of work that needs to be done, and extra sets of hands are always welcome.

If you live in the Hamilton area, or are simply interested in helping out, all are welcome to join and participate. Volunteers drive the organization and I am proud to serve as director for this important and often-neglected component of Hamilton's history. If you are interested please feel free to contact me at the following: 519 577 0036 tavisharris@gmail.com

kindest Regards and Happy New Year, -Tavis

“Grace Notes on the Future of Maritime History”

by Lincoln Paine

Even without the threat of the Mayan apocalypse, which is upon me as I write, or whatever cosmic cataclysm looms ahead as you read this, anticipating the coming needs of maritime history seems a fraught exercise. It is difficult enough to make sense of the past, about which we know at least something, without having to consider the future, about which we know at most nothing. Whenever the question of “what’s next” presents itself, I retreat to the comforting paraphrase of Roche Boyle’s celebrated Irish bull, “Why should we do anything for posterity? What has posterity ever done do for us?” Let the future improvise.

Nonetheless, while I am reluctant to suggest anything so bold as a plan *per se*, I cheerfully heed Maurice Smith’s advice in *Argonauta* that “planning for a long-term healthy future involves all of us.” Riffing on a trio of essays published in *Coriolis* in 2011, in the same issue Isabel Campbell and Colleen McKee ask the provocative question, “Is maritime history best reserved for academics, or is the participation of those who wish to promote particular policies an essential and desirable contribution?” Meditating on what might or should happen next usually engages us in the realm of ideas, historiography, and intellectual focus, but we happen to live in an age that frequently cannot distinguish between tools and what we make with them. Sam McLean’s article, “Social Media,” discusses how the declining effectiveness of “the traditional university-centric processes for the creation of academic audiences or communities” is forcing academic institutions and allied organizations like CNRS to adapt new technology to reach and enlarge their audiences.¹

Taken together, these comments, questions, and observations seem part and parcel of a more general discussion about how maritime historians work. Maritime history is a public enterprise beloved of some academics, occasionally used by policymakers and their lobbyists, and pursued by historians of every kind and calibre from the family genealogist and amateur diver to the historic preservationist, the economic historian, and naval strategist. It is alive and well in books, popular magazines, and peer-reviewed quarterlies; in blogs, tweets and online forums like Marhst-L and H-Maritime; and in documentaries, YouTube clips, and CD recordings. To answer Campbell and McKee, it cannot be reserved for academics any more than it can be withheld from “those who wish to promote particular policies” for good or

¹ *Argonauta* XXIX:4 (2012): 2–3, 9–18.

ill. What, then, might be the role of the maritime historian “as a gregarious animal . . . living in flocks” like the CNRS, NASOH, or countless other societies, museums, and other organizations?² How do we shepherd the vast convoy of stakeholders with their abundance of energy, myriad interests and multiplicity of talents and keep them, if not necessarily on the same course, from running into each other.

The sheer variety of people and institutions engaged in the work of maritime history makes the idea of dispensing nostrums for this or that particular ill—or pointing to successes as exemplars to be imitated—unhelpful. A public forum like this must work at the level of generalities such as Josh Smith invokes in “Far Beyond Jack Tars.” Smith maintains that one of the problems bedeviling—or perhaps enriching—the pursuit of maritime history at the university level is the schism between “traditionalists” and “utilitarians.” This distinction applies beyond the academy, too, which is not surprising given that most people’s appetite for maritime history is whetted—and sated—outside the classroom: in museums; through professional and personal experience; by art and music; by books, including literary and historical fiction, memoirs, biographies, journalism, and history; and, increasingly, via the Internet.

Smith’s differentiation between “traditionalists” and “utilitarians” seems to refine, if not narrow, a century-old debate about whether history is “a ‘science’ for specialists” or whether it should be seen as a “‘literature’ for the common reader of books,” as G. M. Trevelyan wrote in 1913.³ Trevelyan’s greatest concern was not whether people took a more or less scientific approach to their research, but how they presented their findings—how they wrote history, whose “only purpose is educative. And if historians neglect to educate the public, if they fail to interest it intelligently in the past, then all their historical learning is valueless except insofar as it educates themselves.”⁴

Maritime historians, whether teachers, curators, or writers, whether they consider themselves utilitarians or traditionalists, must be doubly aware of the need to fulfill this educative function. In academia and museums alike, maritime history is treated more often than not from a scientific—or at least social science—perspective, and there is a disproportionate emphasis on the technology of the ship, the economics of sea trade, and naval warfare and the associated branches of military science. To a great degree this is a function of our technophilic age, with its unprecedented access to data and the development of ways to play with it, a point hinted at in McLean’s article on the use of social media, which is subtitled “Opportunities for New Conversations.” His points are sound, but we must remind ourselves that they address the infrastructure of communication and not what is communicated. The academy has been through media revolutions before: scroll to book; manuscript to printed page; post office to telephone and fax; written to recorded word; and still

2 John Ruskin, *The Harbours of England* (London, 1856), 17.

3 G. M. Trevelyan, “Clio, a Muse,” in *Clio, a Muse, and Other Essays Literary and Pedestrian* (London: Longmans, Green, 1913), 2. Whether history should be regarded as falling within the humanities or social sciences was vigorously debated on H-World in December 2012. As to whether the hard sciences want for writers of humanity and literary style, authors as diverse as physicist Richard Feynman, evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould, and neurologist Oliver Sacks are vivid proof that they do not—and of these only Sacks has the benefit of being able to put people at the centre of his narrative.

4 Trevelyan, “Clio,” 4.

to moving image. Information technology offers as many advantages to historians as it does to everyone else, but it yields a difference in degree not in kind.

To be fair, McLean does not claim otherwise, but a good deal of recent writing on maritime history relies on an almost uncritical massaging and presentation of quantifiable data. I mean uncritical not in the sense that the authors exhibit poor scholarship, rather that in embracing the facts they have let go of the people responsible for the facts and without whom history has all the narrative magic of a countinghouse ledger. “Events should be both written and read with intellectual passion. Truth itself will be the gainer, for those by whom history was enacted were in their day passionate.”⁵ The historian is the conductor of the symphony of the past, but even with every note in its place, without colour and cadence the audience is lost.

Yet some trained historians have been seduced into thinking that technology has transformed the role of the historian. The authors of a 2011 project on crowd-sourcing local history at Carleton University were dismayed to report that the technology platform they had chosen for their project seemed “to have reinforced the primacy of the historian,” and that the “digital historian” had failed to bring about “an activist role for grassroots community empowerment.”⁶ Yet crowd-sourcing is old hat for historians as far back as Herodotus, the chief difference being that the crowd didn’t go to him, he went into the crowd, as later historians enter into the crowd of archives, ruins, and other sources.

If the Carletonians so thoroughly confused the work of gathering stories and the role of the historian, which is to make sense of those stories to tell new ones—but not, as these researchers sneeringly put it, to “dictat[e] historical narratives from an academic podium”—what is the public to make of us? “Hearing that history was a science,” lamented Trevelyan, the public “left it to the scientists.”⁷ And for the most part they continue to do so. Whether we are teachers, writers, exhibit designers or docents, or family bards, our primary role is to shape facts and as Pygmalion did for Galatea inspire them to life. To do this, to “breed enthusiasm,” requires not only an intellectual grasp of information, but also “human sympathy” and “imaginative powers.”⁸ In an essay that is in part an homage to Trevelyan, Barbara Tuchman amplifies this point when she writes “Without sympathy and imagination the historian can copy figures from a tax roll forever.... But he will never know or be able to portray the people who paid the taxes.”⁹ Substitute steam engine, binnacle, or nautical chart—even an entire ship—for the tax roll and you will grasp the problem facing museums.

Technology can help us ferret out information and it can help us reach larger and different audiences, but only if those audiences want to be reached. In and of itself it does nothing to make maritime history relevant or to engage the public in the real work of historians, which is to animate the dead. “Every true history must, by its human and vital

5 Trevelyan, “Clio,” 23.

6 Shawn Graham, Guy Massie, and Nadine Feuerherm, “The Heritage Crowd Project: A Case Study in Crowdsourcing Public History,” in Jack Dougherty and Kristen Nawrotzki, eds. *Writing History in the Digital Age*. Forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press. Trinity College (CT) web-book edition, Spring 2012, <http://WritingHistory.trincoll.edu>.

7 Trevelyan, “Clio,” 47.

8 Trevelyan, “Clio,” 8.

9 Barbara Tuchman, “The Historian as Artist,” in *Practicing History: Selected Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 47.

presentation of events, force us to remember that the past was once as real and uncertain as the future.”¹⁰ If we take this as our guiding principle we will have done much for ourselves and, without compromising our indifference to it, posterity.

Relieving the Watch

by Joshua M. Smith

Recently I bumped into the English naval historian Andrew Lambert at a conference in New Brunswick. I explained to him that I had published an historiographical article entitled “Far Beyond Jack Tar,” in which I posited that there were two broad categories of maritime historians: Traditionalists, who seek to engage a small audience of other academics, and Utilitarians, who seek to influence policy makers and a wider audience. His response to my explanation of my historiographical endeavour was “Oh, you’ve reached that age, have you?” This took me a bit off balance, but it may have prodded me to think about life stages more deeply. In particular I think I am observing a generational passing of the baton when it comes to maritime history, or in shipboard terms, a change of the watch. My trusty *Merchant Marine Officers’ Handbook* (fifth edition) tells me that for deck officers

Relieving the watch is serious business and should be done in a professional manner. Allow yourself plenty of time before 8 bells to let your eyes adapt to night vision. Read and sign the night orders....Look over the log and check the weather. Question the officer you are relieving. Find out if there is anything about the cargo or ballast you should know....When you are satisfied, relieve the watch by repeating the course and saying clearly, “I relieve you.”

Historians are not nearly so good at this. Scholars are hardly renowned for their situational awareness. But I think now is a time when we need to be on our toes, because academia as a whole is experiencing a sea change. We maritime historians need to be alert to avert likely storms, and the previous watch won’t be there to assist. The senior historians who have collectively done so much for maritime history are moving on; their watch is done, they stand relieved. It is the current watch, the mid-career academic historians, must take their trick at the wheel, and unfortunately there is no master to call when trouble or confusion looms.

This is a concern because of the many kindnesses I have received from leaders in the field like Skip Fischer, John Hattendorf, Marcus Rediker, and others on the verge of retirement. My worry is if there is a succeeding generation to take the baton, and if they do so, whether the race will take them: what will the challenges be for the mid-career maritime historians of today? In my mind, the challenge will be relevance.

Relevance is a popular word these days in the Humanities. Given the economic times, society is looking at the liberal arts and demanding an explanation of what skills are being imparted, and governments and accreditation agencies are looking for data from history

¹⁰ Trevelyan, “Clio,” 16.

departments that supports the claims made in their mission statements. At the same time the basic narrative of the rise of the West is becoming irrelevant to the future of our students: the resurgence of the East seems to be the big story. The devaluation of historical training, the outcomes assessment movement, and the stagnation of the West seem to have combined to create a sort of anomie among historians, including maritime ones. The OED defines anomie as “a mismatch between individual circumstances and larger social mores”; it will require considerable effort on the part of scholars to restore the connection between themselves and society. The retiring leaders of the field cannot change this trend, nor should they be much troubled as they exit. It is time for the mid-career scholars to take charge and attempt to steer this field and ensure its continuing connection to the broader human experience.

In order to remain relevant, one thing the profession should do is stay on course when it comes to international, global, and comparative world approaches. Recent experience has taken me beyond North America to consider larger contexts. This summer I was lucky enough to be invited to give the Keiichiro Nakagawa Lecture at the 6th International Congress of Maritime History held in Ghent, Belgium in July, 2012. The International Maritime Economic History Association (IMEHA) ran a charming conference, well run and with some very lively sessions, including a round-table discussion about the future of maritime history as well the next day in a session held in Antwerp. The IMEHA conference gave me some hints about the international trajectory of maritime history.

The first of these observations is that IMEHA is alive and well. While the overwhelming majority of respondents are from Europe and North America, all the occupied continents were represented. Europeans (including Britons) made up some three-quarters of the attendees, followed by North Americans at about thirty percent, with South America the most under-represented. A highlight was when Skip Fischer gave the Helge Nordvik Memorial Lecture, reminding us about Nordvik’s contributions, but also suggesting that the time had come for IMEHA to drop the “E” and become simply the International Maritime History Association (IMHA) to engage with a larger audience. There was little if any dissent, and it speaks well for the attendees that they seek a wider audience, and presumably greater relevance.

Some of IMEHA’s mid-career scholars there are clearly grappling with what maritime history should be in the future. For example, the Portuguese scholar Amélia Polónia recently noted that maritime history is often interdisciplinary, and asks if someday it will become a “total history” that encompasses all domains of knowledge, while her Italian colleague Maria Fusaro bemoans its “excessive pragmatism” and seeks a well-defined theoretical approach. Personally I favour Polónia’s view because I am very interested in the interdisciplinary nature of maritime history, as were all the plank-owners of *Coriolis: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Maritime Studies* is a worthy venture despite the superabundance of publishing venues in academia today. But Fusaro is in very good company: eminent scholars such as the Canadian Daniel Vickers have expressed exactly the same concern as far back as the 1990s.

If one looks at other disciplines concerned with maritime affairs one can discern the same tensions and directions. Two essay collections illustrate this point. The anthropology-oriented *Global Origins of Seafaring* centres itself around a set of three clear and important questions:

1. In which circumstances did seafaring begin?
2. What made seafaring a significant activity worldwide?
3. How can seafaring research be framed at a global scale.

These are wonderful, big questions. However, they are not the only questions. Another essay collection that emphasizes a literary and cultural approach entitled *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* also raises important questions when its editors challenge scholars to move beyond Euro-centric models and assumptions. The bad news is that while these two collections display an enviable level of analysis and novel approaches that recognize the importance of history, they don't really engage historians themselves very much. Taken together they demonstrate a tension between the need to forge important questions and the need to remain all-encompassing and diverse.

In my mind, and I am thinking about undergraduate education here, these problems are those of the historical profession as a whole. I would here note that as far back as 1989 in the first issue of the *International Journal of Maritime History* Fischer and Nordvik insisted that maritime historians always remember that they are part of the larger discipline of history. Since then, higher education has undergone at least one revolution in the shift from providing instruction to fostering student learning. This in itself should not pose a greater problem for maritime historians than any other kind of instructor, it simply means that professors can no longer assume the role of a remote authority relying solely on lectures, they must instead see themselves as guides who encourage active learning through discussions, group projects, and a variety of other activities. Linked with this movement is a demand for outcomes assessment, especially in the United States where the Department of Education has asked institutions and programs to provide evidence that they are achieving their missions by providing outcomes reports. We mid-career historians may groan that "this isn't what we signed up for!" but assessment is a reality that isn't going away. By adopting outcomes assessment and making it central to their programs and courses, maritime historians may earn the favour of their deans and other administrators: reject it and one may find one's funding cut for lack of evidence to continue support.

The problem for many maritime historians is different in that I sense a certain clubbiness in many of them in that they privilege (or at least attempt to privilege) an arcane corpus of knowledge, perhaps more than any other type of historian. But in the twenty-first century, information is everywhere thanks to the Internet. And in these economic hard times, historians as a whole are having to answer some hard questions about their relevance, and frankly aren't doing a very good job at it. But there may be hope in that the changing dynamic of West and East may make maritime history more relevant in that shifts in power almost always have an important maritime dimension that will need to be studied and understood for all sorts of sound academic and policy making reasons. Almost the same can be said for environmental and fisheries history: these are such pressing issues that they demand the deeper understanding that a humanities-based scholar can bring to them.

Mid-career historians are going to have to come up with some answers very soon. The imminence of the watch change is demonstrated in the very recently published collection of essays entitled *The World's Key Industry: History and Economics of International Shipping*. Edited by a Greek, a Norwegian, and a Spaniard, the essays strictly adhere to the subtitle

with the exception of an essay entitled “Lewis R. Fischer and the Progress of Maritime Economic History,” which rightly celebrates the influence of a North American scholar on the field: Fischer is of course a major force within IMEHA, as the long standing editor of the *International Journal of Maritime History* and the influential *Research in Maritime History* series. The *festschrift* is well earned, but I am probably not the only one mildly concerned that when Skip retires that journal and series will remove to the United Kingdom.

In sum, mid-career historians need to examine their priorities and demonstrate their importance not just as scholars, but as intelligent observers and writers who can relate the importance of maritime affairs to the actual world. Many will cry foul, that reality should not intrude on the purity of their academic research, but I think the previous watch has demonstrated that it is vital to do so. Fischer has always connected to the economics of shipping, Hattendorf to training naval officers, and Rediker to advocating social justice. These are exactly the sort of real world connections that we need to continue to make to prove our relevance. Those who will most effectively make this connection in the coming decade will likely be those who can riff off globalization, maritime policy, or environmental concerns, and I suspect that these new leaders will have a more interdisciplinary approach than past practitioners. But we need not waste time tearing down their achievements: there are night orders to sign, it looks like some dirty weather is headed our way, and the previous watch is anxious to go below.

We have our work cut out for us.

'Very Little Chance of a Ship' – The Future of Maritime History

by Kelly Chaves

“It’s an odd thing about you, Stephen,” said Jack Aubrey, looking at him with affection. “You have been at sea quite some time now, and no one could call you a fool, but you have no more notion of a sailor’s life than a babe unborn. Surely you must have noticed how glum Quarles and Rodgers and all the rest were at dinner? And how blue everyone has always looked this war, when there was any danger of peace?”

“I put it down to the anxieties of the night — the long strain, the watchfulness, the lack of sleep: I must not say the apprehension of danger. Captain Griffiths was in a fine flow of spirits, however.”

“Oh,” said Jack, closing one eye. “That was rather different; and in any case he is a post-captain, of course. He has his ten shillings a day, and whatever happens he goes up the captains’ list as the old ones die off or get their flag. He’s quite old — forty, I dare say, or even more — but with any luck he’ll die an admiral. No. It’s the others I’m sorry for,

the lieutenants with their half-pay and very little chance of a ship — none at all of promotion; the poor wretched midshipmen who have not been made and who never will be made now — no hope of a commission. And of course, no half-pay at all. It's the merchant service for them, or blacking shoes outside St. James's Park.”

Patrick O'Brian, *Post Captain* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company) p. 13-14.

I have a confession to make. Patrick O'Brian's twenty-book Aubrey-Maturin series influenced my decision to become a maritime historian.¹ O'Brian's description of naval routine intermingled with thrilling adventure in the Napoleonic era Royal Navy made me want to discover what life at sea during the Age of Sail was truly like. And so, I decided to study the ocean and the people who sailed on it. But, I soon came to realize, after having attended my first North American Society of Oceanic History [NASOH] meeting that perhaps I had fallen behind the times (again). A thirty-year old novel sang a siren song that I alone could still hear. I listened and followed it. Meanwhile, my fellow young academics paid attention to the music playing through their iPods and chose differently.² In no way, shape, or form am I chastising them for their choices. Nor am I denigrating NASOH or its fine membership. I am only trying to make the point that very few practicing members of the maritime history profession are young scholars. And even fewer are women. Why is this? Much of maritime history remains to be written, leaving plenty of academic fodder for young historians hoping to leave their mark on the discipline. It is an interdisciplinary field that combines the gamut of historical fields of study—economic history, social history, indigenous history, war and society history, gender history, political history, business history, contemporary history, legal history, environmental history, labour history, and varying nationalist histories—with archaeology, geography, biology, and cultural anthropology, which means maritime historians can traverse and network in wide professional circles both inside and outside of the discipline. Maritime history is popular with a wide audience, affording its practitioners opportunities to consult with museums, work with governmental agencies, and teach whole academic semesters on a tall ship at sea. And yet, few young scholars decide to define themselves as maritime historians.

In the preceding essay, Joshua Smith identified what he believes to be the biggest challenge of modern maritime historians as “relevance.”³ He argues that mid-career maritime historians should mix theory with practice and use their knowledge of history to contribute to important contemporary debates on “globalization, maritime policy, or environmental concerns.”⁴ Smith's advice directed towards his peer group is sound. Mid-career historians must try to navigate the field into calmer waters. But even with the steadiest of hands on the

1 In my defense, I am not the first historian who made a major career choice based on a work of naval fiction. See: Kelly K. Chaves, “From Hells Afloat to Happy Ships: Naval Fiction's Influence Upon the History of the Royal Navy during the Georgian Era,” *The Northern Mariner*, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (April 2008) pp. 1-21.

2 I also have an iPod. My playlists fall under the headings of “Sea Shanties 1,” “Sea Shanties 2,” and “Sea Shanties 3.”

3 Joshua M. Smith, “Relieving the Watch,” *Argonauta*, Vol. XXX, Number 1 Winter 2013.

4 Ibid.

tiller and the collective soul-searching of mid-career maritime historians everywhere to justify the relevance of the subject, all will be for naught if the field does not address its largest problem: **recruitment**.

To understand why maritime history fails to recruit more young historians into its waters, we must first appreciate their concerns. Of the utmost primacy, early-career maritime scholars want jobs in their chosen field. They fear that they will become like the lieutenants to whom Jack Aubrey referred, stuck on land “with their half-pay and very little chance of a ship — none at all of promotion.”⁵ Their fears are justified. In the 2012 academic job market, postings in Atlantic World history, maritime history’s distant, but wildly fashionable cousin, outnumbered maritime history jobs four to one.⁶ A debate exists as to whether Atlantic World history and maritime history are even related at all. W. Jeffrey Bolster, Danny Vickers, N.A.M. Rodgers and others have pointed out that the Atlantic World has never been very wet.⁷ Even the editors of H-Atlantic, the online listserv for that field, disavow their oceanic connection, claiming that “by its nature [Atlantic World history] focuses on the history of peoples *bordering* the Atlantic Ocean. It welcomes cross-disciplinary and non-traditional interpretations and invites participants to explore the interactions and interrelations between people and cultures *around* the Atlantic Rim.”⁸ Perhaps maritime history and Atlantic World history are at cross-purposes, but Atlantic World history has re-popularized the idea that oceans are important in the historical narrative whether they are just a means to an end or an end in and of itself, and for that maritime historians should be truly grateful.

Maritime history is actually on the rise in the United States. The field was recently recognized and profiled by the American Historical Association [AHA].⁹ H-Net, the Humanities and Social Sciences online network, added a “maritime history” category to their popular online Job Guide, which lists all of the profession’s job opportunities. In the past year, maritime history papers have been given at the 18th Annual Omohundro Institute Conference and the AHA Conference. The year 2013 looks to be no different. For the upcoming 2013 AHA Conference, held in the port city of New Orleans, three panels deal exclusively with maritime history subjects.¹⁰ Maritime history will even be represented at the Organization of American Historians Conference.¹¹ And maritime history always has a place in the American

5 O’Brian, *Post Captain*, p. 14.

6 The author compiled these job statistics by looking at job postings found on H-Net [www.h-net.org], The Chronicle of Higher Education [chronicle.com/section/Jobs/61/], and Underwater Archaeology and Maritime History jobs [underwaterarchaeologyjobs.wordpress.com].

7 Kelly K. Chaves, “Athwart the Trend: Maritime History’s position in a sea of Atlantic World Prospects,” *Coriolis: Interdisciplinary Journal of Maritime Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2 (December 2011) p. 15.

8 Peter Knapfer and Heather Hawley, “H-Atlantic Network Welcome Message,” accessed 20 December 2012, www.h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/welcomeletter?list=h-atlantic. Emphasis added by the author.

9 John B. Hattendorf, “Maritime History Today,” *Perspectives*, vol. 50, no. 2 (February 2012).

10 These panels are titled: “Chinese Piracy and the Maritime Reconsidered,” “Captives, Corsairs, and Empires: Networks of Maritime Violence in the Early Modern Mediterranean,” and “Anti-Slavery Principle and Imperial Power in the Atlantic World.” Even though the last panel title invokes the Atlantic World, the papers within the panel describe themselves as works of maritime history. See: “127th Annual Meeting Program,” accessed 20 December 2012, www.historians.org/annual/2013/2013AMProg.pdf.

11 The panel at the OAH is titled “The US at a Distance: Fixing National Borders and Imperial Ambitions in the Pacific World.” See: “OAH Annual Meeting 2013 Program,” accessed 20 December 2012, www.annualmeeting.oah.org/index.php/13program/2013-printable-program.

Society of Environmental History Annual Conference.¹² All in all, many younger scholars are *doing* maritime history; they simply refuse the label, preferring instead to cast their lots with better-known fields.

For the self identified maritime historian, many opportunities still exist. In 2012, Mystic Seaport, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities [NEH], hosted its fourth NEH Summer Seminar and Institute for College and University Teachers, which provided participants with a background in maritime history so that they could incorporate maritime history into their college or university's curriculum.¹³ Mystic Seaport also annually awards the Paul Cuffe Memorial Fellowship for the Study of Minorities in American Maritime History to scholars at any stage in their career. Likewise, the Naval History & Heritage Command offers a number of research grants, scholarships, and pre-doctoral fellowships. Even the National Maritime Museum in Great Britain provides funding to North American scholars to carry out maritime history research in their collections. Conference groups, like NASOH, annually fund graduate student travel to their conference so that these young scholars may disseminate their research. NASOH also offers a prize for the best graduate paper presented at the conference. Postdoctoral fellowship opportunities even exist for the young maritime historian. The University of London offers the Pearsall Fellowship in Naval and Maritime History, which is open to applicants of any nationality who received their Ph.D. from any accredited university worldwide. The University of California — Santa Barbara plans to award a Mellon-Sawyer Postdoctoral Fellowship in Marine Environmental History for the 2013-2014 academic year. More postdoctoral opportunities are available in the fields of Maritime Studies and Underwater Archaeology. Beyond post-docs, fellowships, and research funding, several universities have programs for maritime history and maritime studies that utilize an interdisciplinary approach to teach undergraduates about the importance of the maritime world in the past and the present. All of these institutions hire maritime historians.

With all the opportunities that abound in the field of maritime history, how do we, self-professed maritime historians, convince new members to join our ranks? It is up to us to shake up the dowdy image that "maritime history" conveys to fellow historians in order to attract younger members. We can do this in three ways. First, the field of maritime history must establish more of an online presence. Younger scholars, and more importantly undergraduates who might potentially be budding maritime historians, utilize online articles more than print journals. Currently, *Coriolis: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Maritime Studies* is the only maritime history journal that is online. Even the Naval Record Society [NRS], one of the oldest maritime history organizations in the world, recognizes the importance of creating a content-heavy Internet presence and is in the midst of digitizing their entire book catalogue. Members of the NRS will soon be able to access a PDF of any back title. New

12 The year 2013 will be no different. Thirteen per cent of the panels at the American Society of Environmental History Conference deal with either maritime environmental history or fisheries history. See: "ASEH 2013 Conference Program," accessed 20 December 2012, www.aseh.net/conference-workshops/toronto-conference-2013/conference-sessions.

13 The NEH appears to be dedicated to the dissemination of maritime history. The 2013 NEH Summer Programs in the Humanities for School and College Educators contain five maritime history seminar topics, including: Clinton's Ditch: The Erie Canal in Western New York; Empires of the Wind: Exploration of the United States Pacific West Coast; Sailing to Freedom: New Bedford and the Undergrad Railroad; The Hudson River in the 19th Century and the Modernization of America; and The USS Constitution and the War of 1812. See: "NEH Summer Programs in Humanities for School and College Educators," accessed 20 December 2012, www.neh.gov/divisions/education/summer-programs.

books will continue to be released in hard copy, but will simultaneously be distributed in an e-format as well. Maritime history journals like the *Northern Mariner*, the *International Journal of Maritime History*, *The Mariner's Mirror*, and *The Great Circle: the Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History* need to follow the NRS' example and get with the times by either digitizing their back catalogues and posting them on their respective websites or subscribing to an indexing service, such as JSTOR or America: History and Life, which will digitize and distribute the journals for them. Secondly, maritime history professional organizations like NASOH and the Canadian Nautical Research Society [CNRS] must take an active role in promoting maritime history. Perhaps NASOH or CNRS could sponsor panels of maritime history papers at larger conferences, like the OAH and the AHA. Each organization might also contemplate providing a small travel stipend to members who attend other conferences and present maritime history papers. And, finally, each professional maritime history organization has to do some soul-searching and figure out how they can make their societies more vibrant and intellectually exciting for younger scholars, while continuing to meet the needs of their base. Then, and only then, will young scholars rally around maritime history's banner, fresh with the hope that they too "with any luck" might "die an admiral."¹⁴

CALL FOR PAPERS

CNRS 2013 Conference

"Maritime Connections"

to be held in conjunction with the

Laurier Center for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies

in Waterloo, Ontario,

May 1-5, 2013.

All CNRS and NASOH members, scholars and interested parties are invited to submit a proposal for individual papers, sessions, or panels. Proposals should include name, institutional affiliation, proposed paper title and a 250-300 word abstract as well as a short bio of the presenter(s).

Proposals can be sent electronically (PDF preferred), or by regular mail to:

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Department of Defence Studies
Canadian Forces College
215 Yonge Blvd.
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Graduate students and new scholars to the field of maritime history should indicate their desire to be considered for the George Panting Award. One such award will be given to a deserving candidate on a competitive basis. Further details about the award and eligibility are available on the CNRS website at http://cnrs-scrn.org/books_and_awards/awards_e.html

14 O'Brian, *Post Captain*, p. 14.

NASOH 2013 Conference

Maritime Borderlands and Cultural Landscapes

**The North American Society for Oceanic History
2013 Annual Conference
Alpena, Michigan
15-18 May 2013**

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries will host the 2013 Annual Conference of the North American Society for Oceanic History. It will take place 15-18 May 2013 at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, in Alpena, Michigan on the shores of Lake Huron.

The Conference theme will be "Maritime Borderlands and Cultural Landscapes."

The past two decades have seen a refocusing of scholarship in "borderlands" history with studies of physical and figurative spaces among and between states and cultures transforming our understanding of North American places and peoples. In a similar development, Maritime history and archaeology have embraced the cultural landscape as a means for understanding and illustrating human connections to coastal and marine places. Through borderlands and cultural landscapes, scholars are re-examining the past in ways that are interdisciplinary, multi-cultural, and call into question long-held assumptions of economy, empire, environmental impact, and geographical meaning.

Using the international borderlands of the Great Lakes as a backdrop, the 2013 NASOH Annual Conference invites paper and session proposals that explore maritime borderlands or cultural landscapes, or an interweaving of both to examine the meaning and processes of our maritime heritage. Suggested topic areas include cultural borderlands, race, gender, archaeology, empire, military, indigenous, environmental, public history, and parks and protected areas. Additional topics and geographic focuses are welcome for submission. Papers from graduate students and junior scholars with fresh approaches to maritime history are greatly encouraged.

Students may apply for a Chad Smith Travel Grant to assist in travel to present a paper at the conference. Additionally, the Clark G. Reynolds Student Paper Award is provided each year to the author of the best paper by a graduate student delivered at the society's annual conference. Please see the awards section of the NASOH website for details.

Individual paper proposals should include a.) An abstract, not to exceed 250 words b.) A 250-word presenter bio c.) Contact information including phone number, address, affiliation, and email. Panel proposals may also be submitted inclusive of the above information for each paper.

The deadline for proposal submission is (**New Extended Deadline!**) February 15, 2013. Please submit proposal packets electronically to the Program Committee. These should be sent to: Program Co-Chair Vic Mastone at <victor.mastone@state.ma.us>
NASOH members interested in serving as panel chairs, please send an email to the Program Committee at the above address.

Further information about the Conference can be found online at <www.nasoh.org> or by contacting Conference Chair Cathy Green at <cathy.green@noaa.gov> or at 989-356-8805 ext.

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- Argonauta, a quarterly newsletter publishing articles, opinions, news and information about maritime history and fellow members.
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