New London Landmarks received a grant for $6,982 from Connecticut Humanities to support a community program titled “Built on Blubber.” Landmarks partnered with Flock Theatre, New London County Historical Society, Custom House Maritime Museum, and New London Main Street to coordinate a calendar of events to be held in New London when Mystic Seaport’s Charles W. Morgan whaling ship comes to town in May.

The “Built on Blubber” program tells the story of the city’s whaling history through walking tours of downtown New London, exhibits at both the Custom House Maritime Museum and Shaw Mansion along with Flock Theatre’s production of Eugene O’Neill’s “Ile,” a play about a sea captain stuck in the Arctic during a whaling expedition.

The lively Jibboom Club Parade will delight all ages with its reenactment of an annual parade held by the Jibboom Club Society. Jibboomers were men who sailed on at least one whaling expedition and who met socially throughout New London including the top floor of The Exchange on Bank Street. The Ancient Mariners fife and drum band and actors from Flock Theatre portraying Jibboomers will be among the parade participants. It will be followed by the New London Maritime’s Society Annual Chowda Fest at the Custom House. The parade will be held on Saturday, May 31, at 11:00 a.m. and will march down Bank Street to Water Street and end at the Custom House.

The exhibits will be at the Custom House, Shaw Mansion, and Lyman Allyn Art Museum. The Nathan Hale Schoohouse, Hempstead Houses, and Monte Cristo Cottage will also be open for tours. There will be two whaling themed concerts when Geoff Kaufman and Rick Spencer perform “A Song of Whales and Men” at Fort Trumbull on May 29th and The Barrouallie Whalers hold a concert at the Custom House on June 11th.

Most events will take place when the Charles W. Morgan is open to the public on May 24, 25, 31, and June 1st. Walking Tours lead by city historian Sally Ryan will be held at 4:00 p.m. on the weekends. All programs are free or have a minimal fee. There will be an information booth on the City Pier for these programs and a full schedule can be found on the New London Landmarks website.

See website for more details:

www.newlondonlandmarks.org
In 2013 a group of concerned citizens rallied to save an 1829 Greek Revival home, built by Isaac Thompson, on Ocean Avenue. After deciding to turn the site into a parking lot for his restaurant, Ocean Pizza, Sam Vafidis worked with the community to save the building. He was very patient as the community undertook this project. Many people were instrumental in disassembling this historic structure: Richard Humphreville, Bruce Elliot, Armand Beaudette, Dan Solomon, and Ann Pierson, along with volunteers from Old Lyme, Ledyard, Stonington, and Norwich.

A corporator of New London Savings and Loan, Isaac Thompson founded a women’s academy in New London. Thompson built the house on spec and later sold it to a carpenter. The timber-frame building was 1-1/2 stories with a 21.5’ x 20.5’ foot print; it had no saw marks. An addition, built shortly after its construction, was not saved, as it had no special features, significance to the structure, or aesthetic value.

The house was taken apart and stored in 2013. Everything was labeled and detailed. Saved were the frame, original sheathing, roof, and sides. A number of the original doors, including the front door, were salvaged. The banister is beautiful and has unusual joints. The trim was also saved but not the clapboards. Stone (cut granite) from the exposed portion of the foundation was salvaged by using leverage and pulleys. The summer hearth and chimney were not original, so only the opening was kept. Sadly, the rear fireplace was missing and some modifications had been made; therefore, the opening may need to be adjusted when the house is rebuilt.

The saving of the Ocean Avenue house was not the first such rescue for Richard Humphreville. He had dissembled an 1836 house on Bank Street and reconstructed it on Pequot Avenue next to the Lighthouse. He also moved what is now the Planned Parenthood building (built in 1892) on Franklin Street from the nearby Palmer Estate. Dick also helped move the New London Trolley Station to its current location and the pre-1750 Paymaster’s House from Blackhall Street to Robinson Street. He also initiated the relocation of a French Mansard cottage from the Shaw Street circle to Blydenburg Avenue. This house, originally part of the Pequot Colony, had been moved on a barge to Shaw Street.

This past year, Dick has been restoring and/or replacing needed parts for the 1829 Greek Revival, as some were damaged due to termites, carpenter ants, and powderpost beetles. For example, the joints near the sill had to be partially restored. In this process, original techniques were used, such as in the splicing of joints. Timbers were cut at Fred Latham’s saw mill in Lyme.

94 Ocean Avenue was built by Isaac Thompson
In 1828
Possibilities for the rescued building include residential, commercial, or non-profit uses. Suggested functions include a coffee shop in Fort Trumbull or a venue for craft demonstrations, such as rug weaving, furniture building, etc., on the city waterfront. The prime need is for land. Leasing property is a possibility. If property were donated, the community would reconstruct the house with free labor and sell the property. Any profit would go towards a fund to save future endangered buildings.

Another option would be for an individual to buy land; volunteers would then build the house for them. The house would be a shell composed of framing, siding, and roof. The inside would need to be designed and built by the new owner. To date, the community has raised $1,000 for the house; this has been spent to repair damaged material. Repairs are almost complete, but depend on more funding. Money to bring electric and sewer to curbside is needed. The rest of the decisions, such as power options, would be left up to the buyer.

Donations may be made to New London Landmarks for the special Ocean Avenue House Fund. Your contributions are greatly appreciated, tax-deductible, and will be used for the restoration process.
The Shaw Mansion on Blinman Street, home to the New London County Historical Society, was the site of New London Landmarks’ annual meeting on March 6. It is not every day that an organization as young as 38 years old gets to hold its annual meeting in a building that has hosted countless meetings, social gatherings and famous guests, such as George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette. So it was with great appreciation that we gathered in the parlor and introduced new board member Deborah Donovan who also has agreed to become the treasurer. Other officers of the board will continue in their present positions. This was also the first Annual Meeting organized by Constance Kristofik, the new Executive Director, appointed in September 2013.

Awards were presented to several people for their service to Landmarks and their support of historic preservation in New London. James and Kathy Díaz-Saavedra received the Restoration Award for their work on the restoration of the Jabez Whipple House at 19 Rosemary Street, built in 1851, and they were presented with a New London Landmarks “whale” plaque in appreciation of their work. Joseph Marino was given the Volunteer Award in recognition of his research in the “whale” plaque program. Former Landmarks board member Mary Beth Baker was given the Clifford Stone Award for her staunch support of historic preservation in New London for many years. A Special Recognition Award “whale” plaque was presented to Josh Stoffel of the Office of Sustainability at Connecticut College, for the “Steel House”, a prefabricated house erected on campus in 1933 and restored in 2013 rather than being torn down.

Elizabeth Venuti, a Connecticut College senior and Architectural Studies major, presented a view of her research on houses in the historic Coit Street neighborhood, done as her internship project at Landmarks. Most of the houses in this neighborhood are very old and many architectural styles are represented. The results of her work will be used to inform the plans of developer Tony Silvestri as he restores many of the buildings in the neighborhood as part of a condominium project named “City Flats.”
ANNUAL FORUM: MARCH 26, 2014

Heritage tourism was the focus of the New London Landmarks Annual Forum held on March 26 at the Fort Trumbull State Park Conference Center. Everyone agrees that New London, with its beautiful waterfront location, transportation hub, historic buildings, museums and good restaurants, should be a natural draw for tourists. But somehow tourism has never quite gotten off the ground. In the past there have been many efforts to develop a tourism industry in New London but it has not been an “easy sell,” perhaps because there have been too many small organizations working alone and because there has not been a good overall strategy for making it happen. Under the guidance of Carolyn Brackett, Senior Field Officer of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the attendants at the forum, representing many local organizations and businesses, spent the day exploring the steps and strategies for building successful heritage tourism partnerships in New London.

The program began with a panel composed of local experts who provided perspectives on tourism in New London, past and present. They included: Senator Cathy Cook, Coast Guard Museum; Barbara Neff, New London Waterfront Coordinator; Annah Perch, New London Main Street; Barbara Nagy, Hempstead Houses; Steve Sigel, Garde Arts Center; Deborah Donovan, Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region; Penny Parsekian, Avery-Copp House; and Susan Tamulevich, New London Maritime Society. The planned Coast Guard Museum will draw many people to New London when it opens in 2017 but that alone will not bring visitors to other parts of our historic downtown.

After the lunch, catered by Thames Greenery, a panel of officials provided valuable information about the many state resources that are available to heritage tourism programs, and they are eager to support our local efforts. The speakers included: Stuart Parnes, Connecticut Humanities Council; Helen Higgins, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation; and Sheryl Hack, Connecticut Landmarks. Then, with the help of Ms. Brackett, the audience broke into small groups to discuss planning for heritage tourism collaborations in New London. She also provided detailed examples of how organizations in other communities, such as Guilford, Connecticut, have collaborated to create strategic plans for heritage tourism programs. Many interesting ideas came out of this workshop and there are plans to follow it up with another workshop next year.

FILM PROGRAM: FEBRUARY 6, 2014

Is a historic building that has been completely rebuilt still a historic building? This was the big question that emerged from the viewing of From the Ashes: The Life and Death of Tick Hall on February 6, in the auditorium of the B.P. Learned Center. The one-hour film documents the rebuilding of Tick Hall, a shingle-style house erected in 1879 in Montauk, Long Island, by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White. The house burned to the ground in 1997 and owners Dick Cavett and his wife Carrie Nye chose to rebuild it down to the last detail of the original, a process that took three years working without the original architectural plans. The film has many interviews with the Cavetts and their friends. The viewing was followed by a lively discussion led by Rick Gipstein and filmmaker Scott Morris.
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS

Through a solid membership program and other fundraising means, New London Landmarks is able to offer year-round programming and to make strong historic preservation efforts within the city. Monetary contributions are valuable but so is your time. With the help of dedicated volunteers, we can bring preservation to a higher level in New London. We hope you will consider joining our volunteer team and contribute to the many interesting projects in New London. Membership details are below along with a list of the types of help we need. Hours are flexible and some tasks may be done independently. We are grateful for your support and look forward to you joining our team!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Photographer
- Photograph Landmark events and programs
- Photograph historic houses in New London for Facebook postings and archives

General Office Help
- Label and stamp mailings (i.e. event postcards, annual appeals, newsletters)
- Data Entry (update mailing lists)

Plaque Research
- Conduct deed research in City Clerk’s Office (must be done during day hours)

Program Committee
- Help plan and execute events and programs

Graphic Designer
- Design postcards and marketing material for events and programs

Event Volunteers
- Help with set-up and clean-up
- Admissions / Usher

Archivist
- File newspaper clippings, magazine articles, photographs of historic buildings and places

Research
- Research buildings, preservation issues, neighborhoods and open spaces

David Bishop House
- Help with garden clean-up and house maintenance

Please contact Constance Kristofik at New London Landmarks for further information by calling 860-442-0003 or emailing constance@newlondonlandmarks.org

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Our 2014 Membership drive began in Spring and we hope everyone who receives this newsletter will renew or join New London Landmarks and support all our activities.

Membership Benefits:
- The Preservationist, New London Landmarks’ newsletter
- Advance notice of all New London Landmarks events, and reduced member fees
- Satisfaction for helping to support New London’s rich architectural heritage

Please Join New London Landmarks:

- Individual $25
- Family $35
- Contributor $75
- Patron $100
- Business Heritage Supporter $100
- Business Heritage Partner $200
- President's Circle $500

Make checks payable to “New London Landmarks” or pay online via PayPal at www.newlondonlandmarks.org
New London Landmarks plaque program is a signature mark of this preservation organization. Displayed on historic homes throughout the city are plaques sporting a blue whale and the name of the original owner and the year each house was built. These plaques are scattered throughout the city, giving a sense of pride to the town and to the owners, as well as providing a tidbit of history to the community.

Volunteers from New London Landmarks make this program possible. The organization has been graced by the efforts of Heather Grigsby, a former board member who spends many long hours in the vault at the City Clerk’s office. Before Heather, Ellen Scala conducted plaque research for years.

Until recently, we had only one researcher to handle the requests. Applications have been coming in steadily over the past two years, causing a backlog. Each plaque request entails a thorough title search of the property, supplemented as necessary with details from old city directories, building surveys, and tax, water, and sewer records. The final document given to the owner includes a list of all deed transfers of the house along with notation of the corresponding volume and page from the land records. It is not a simple or quick process.

To bring us up to date on requests, New London Landmarks recently trained two volunteers in the arduous task of plaque research. Tom Couser is a retired professor from Hofstra University; Joseph Marino is an attorney who specializes in real estate appraisal. Both are Landmarks board members. Tom, Joseph, and Heather are building a solid research team to complete old applications and prepare us for new requests.

The plaque program is a favorite of New London Landmarks, and we ask for your patience as we get caught up. We look forward to learning more about your houses and adding historical documentation to our archives.

More information can be found on our website. www.newlondonlandmarks.org

### Historic Plaques Completed

**Rebecca C. Gordon**  
1890  
18 Crouch Street

**Dr. Richard I. Morris**  
1892  
64 Vauxhall Street

**Walter A. Towne**  
1890  
19 West Street

**Abel M. Rogers**  
1840  
9 Prospect Street
“At Liberty on The Morgan in the Whaling City”

Don't miss this opportunity to have a party on the 1841 wooden whaling ship listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

A fundraiser to benefit three local non-profit organizations!

**Thursday, June 5, 2014**

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

*Hot & Cold Hors d'oeuvres*

*Oysters*

*Wine and Beer*

*Entertainment by John Roberts*

**RECEPTION LOCATION:**

*Charles W. Morgan*

City Pier, New London, CT 06320

Suggested parking:

160 Water Street Garage

Boat appropriate shoes recommended.

Rain or Shine

Questions 860-442-0003

or email info@newlondonlandmarks.org

Cost: $75 per person

Write checks payable to "New London Landmarks" and mail to 49 Washington Street, New London, CT 06320

Pay online via paypal www.newlondonlandmarks.org

**Special thanks to Mystic Seaport for graciously welcoming guests of New London Landmarks, Custom House Maritime Museum and New London County Historical Society during this historic occasion.**