

CAPE ANN MUSEUM

ART HISTORY CULTURE

Cape Ann Museum receives NEH Grant for planning reinterpretation and reinstallation of its fisheries collection

GLOUCESTER, Mass. (September 9, 2016) – The Cape Ann Museum is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to assist in planning the reinterpretation and reinstallation of its permanent exhibition on Gloucester’s offshore fishing industry during the heyday of sail (1840–1930). NEH is an independent federal agency created in 1965 and one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. Its grant program is highly competitive and the Cape Ann Museum’s success in securing funding speaks to the compelling nature of the story it has to tell and the organization’s ability to share that story with the public.



From the Collection of the Cape Ann Museum (left to right): Fresh rope for the boat. Lecture slide from the Fishermen’s Institute, c.1921; Crew of the schooner *Lottie G. Merchant*, built in Essex, 1901; Unidentified fisherman, Gloucester, MA.



Photographs by Jim Hooper from the Museum’s 2014 *Working Waterfront* exhibition. (left) William “Bill” Murphy and his son Daniel “Dan” Murphy; (center) Nina Randazzo, Carlo Randazzo and John Randazzo; (right) Paul Beal, Vito Seniti, Anthony Augustine and Clark Sandler. Photographs from the collection of the Cape Ann Museum.

The Cape Ann Museum is fortunate to have one of the regions most extensive and comprehensive collections of objects related to New England’s fishing industry of the second half of the 19th century. Actively collecting since the 1920s, the Museum’s holdings include examples of fishing tools and equipment that were once common and are now rare; a broad range of ship models that document the evolution of the famed Gloucester fishing schooner over time; an extensive archive of historic images, audio and visual recordings and fisheries related account

books; and an important collection of artwork that visually documents the industry and the people involved in it. An important goal of the NEH funded project will be to incorporate these objects into a new exhibition that moves beyond the mechanics of fishing to explore three broad themes: 1) how the fisheries, like many other industries, were a gateway to new lives and new opportunities for immigrants from around the world; 2) how technological innovations impacted the people employed in the fishing industry and the natural resources of the region; and 3) how man's struggles with nature have become part of our collective national identity.

Joining the staff of the Cape Ann Museum in this project will be a distinguished group of scholars with expertise in the area of late 19th and early 20th century social, economic and art history. Additional participants will include museum educators, media consultants, an exhibit designer and an exhibition and audience evaluation firm. The success of this project will hinge on the Museum's ability to design an exhibit that engages audiences of all ages and demographics.

"NEH provides support for projects across America that preserve our heritage, promote scholarly discoveries, and make the best of America's humanities ideas available to all Americans," said NEH Chairman William D. Adams. "We are proud to announce this latest group of grantees who, through their projects and research, will bring valuable lessons of history and culture to Americans."

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The Cape Ann Museum celebrates the art, history and culture of Cape Ann – a region with a rich and varied culture of nationally significant historical, industrial and artistic achievement. The Museum's collections include fine art from the 19th century to the present, artifacts from the fishing & maritime and granite quarrying industries, textiles, furniture, a library/archives, and two historic houses. For a detailed media fact sheet please visit www.capeannmuseum.org/press.

The Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00 adults, \$8.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors and students. Youth (18 and under) and Museum members are free. For more information please call: (978)283-0455 x10. Additional information can be found online at www.capeannmuseum.org.

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