

New England Lighthouse Lovers - NELL

NELL FALL TOUR - AVERY POINT

GROTON / NEW LONDON, CT

SEPTEMBER 24 - 25, 2005

THE WEATHER WAS FANTASTIC !!!!

In keeping with my long standing policy of providing a variety of weather for our NELL adventures, after our January snowstorm, and hurricane Nantucket, it was time for a beautiful early fall weekend. And so it was. :)

Our gang began arriving Friday evening at the Groton Inn, but since we have SO MANY Connecticut members, there were numerous commuters who didn't arrive until the business meeting on Saturday morning. I will defer to the Secretary's minutes for the meeting details but will mention the high points.

The membership approved the expenditure of \$3,000 to the Friends of Rockland Breakwater, ME, and 2 requests from ALF for the Little River Light, ME totaling another \$5,800 for preservation efforts at those lighthouses. That left about \$4,000 in the preservation fund and the membership deserves a big THANK YOU for raising another \$1,600 at this meeting, not counting merchandise sales.

During this meeting I also brought to the membership the plight of a lighthouse friend and NELL member Seamond Roberts of New Orleans. Her letter which I subsequently shared by e-mail shows how much hurricanes Katrina and Rita really impacted their lives. I am pleased to announce that as of Sept. 29 NELL members collectively donated \$600 which will be forwarded to Seamond along with any additional contributions. Keep those cards and letters coming. Her current address is PO Box 395, Libuse, LA (with corrected zip code) 71348.

The membership also re-elected, by acclamation, the nominating committee of

Marguerite MacDonald, Lee Hall, and Cyne Bosse, who will have their work cut out for them with next year's elections.

Cyne and Norm Bosse were also BOTH appointed as Mr. and Ms. NELL. This is the first time a couple has won, and without any collaboration by the outgoing members. I can't think of more dedicated and deserving recipients. We all wish you CONGRATULATIONS !!

Members Ellen Granoth, Alan Ells, and Jean Zunda volunteered and were appointed as the new audit committee. Be careful what you volunteer for.

I discussed possible LHHC&Y options as well as prospective tours for next year. I will be working on the southern Maine lights for this winter's tour. Hopefully the snow won't be too deep and we will be able to access Cape Elizabeth this year.

There seemed to be interest in the Hudson River lights so maybe we will do that in the Spring, and Maine or the western CT off shore lights for next Fall. Stay tuned.

Thanks again to MJ Foster for the NELL mailing labels, and to Ron Foster for the great tour buttons depicting the Avery Point Light, Ledge Light, and the USCG Eagle. This is the best button ever and will command a high price on the secondary market. If anyone wants one, you can call me at....

Following the meeting we all gathered at the USCG Academy Museum and were given a tour by retired Captain Bob Getman. He made it so much more interesting than if we just browsed the exhibits. Several members mentioned returning so they could spend more time. The first order Fresnel lens on display from Thacher's Island, MA is the "highlight" of the museum. From there half of us visited the Maritime Museum at the New London Custom House while the others took their turn on the Project Oceanology tour to the New London Ledge Light. The Custom House features the original third order Fresnel lens from the Ledge Light. It was acclaimed the "best on the tour" and we all spent much time viewing, rotating, and photographing this most unusual lens, red glow to the clamshell side and three white bull's-eyes. A possible piece from Harbour Lights some day?

Many of our group then stopped by Avery Point Light with its recently ;delivered lantern room sitting on the ground next to the the scaffolding encased tower. We searched the walkway for familiar names on the memorial bricks and watched as the Mystic Highland Pipe Band marched and played by the tower as part of the UConn "Festival by the Sound" weekend.

The scientists from Project "O" were great tour guides at Ledge Light from the basement desalination and waste water treatment room up 4 flights to the lantern room. Ernie, the ghost of Ledge Light, quietly allowed us to climb throughout his eternal home, but we got some spooky shots of the writing on the mirror, the "ghost" in the sunny window, the creeky stairs, and the the dark image of the light against the ominous sky as we departed.

OOOooooo !!! Lee Hall's dancing with the tour guide lifted everyone's "spirits". :)

Did I mention the spectacular day on Sunday for our cruise? It was spectacular. The SeaPony was a very comfortable boat with AC downstairs, a small bow deck, but sitting areas with windows that open for photography, mirrored

ceilings, great pastry, and a friendly crew. A very knowledgeable Captain Tom narrated the cruise and gave interesting as well as humorous commentary about all the lights on a crystal clear sound system. The early "Oktoberfest" was appreciated by many as well. "It was after 5:00 PM somewhere".

About 70 members departed New London City Pier at 9:00 AM and cruised past the Barque Eagle at the same dock, past Fort Trumbull, and out of the harbor. Our first stop was a water view of Avery Point, followed by the very beautiful Morgan Point with the white Adirondack chairs on the green lawn. The stop at Stonington was not worth the time because you could only see the lantern room from the west side.

Next we cruised around three NY lights at Latimer Reef with its distinctive red stripe, then on to North Dumpling, the home of the Segway entrepreneur, with his navy landing craft, windmill power plant, and "wind whistling" Stonehenge, and then rocked and rolled around Race Rock photographing it from all possible angles while the boat bobbed in the heavy seas of "the race".

Finally it was back to CT waters where the Captain tried to tell us how much work had been done in the Ledge Light but we reminded him that we "just toured it yesterday" :) and look forward to helping them finish the project.

Last stop was a close up of New London Harbor Light, which the CG was reluctant to open for us to climb on this tour. :(

All good things must come to an end and our day finished as we departed the SeaPony and gathered for a group photo before boarding the huge white tall ship Barque Eagle, flagship of the CG with its distinctive red, white, and blue stripe. All who board are now restricted to the main deck but cameras were clicking as members posed at the ship's helm and up into the masts. Commemorative photos and coins were given to members. A good time was had by all.

Please share your photos from this tour by sending them to Penny Miller at web13keeper@nell.cc who will add them to this story on our website: www.nell.cc.

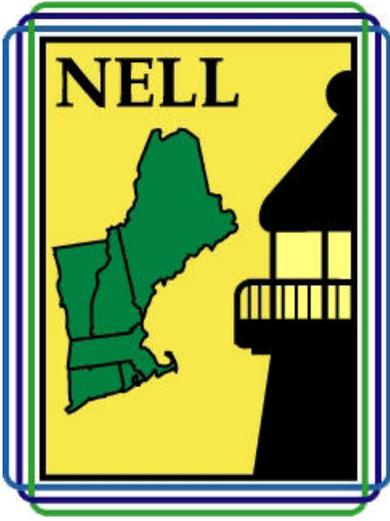
Postscript:

Some of us returned to Groton on Friday Sept. 30, 2005 when the lantern room was hoisted to its proper place atop the tower. A few of us even got to climb it to inspect the fastening of the cupola to the base. The media was present as well as Steve Jones who replicated the lantern room, and the Tripani family from ALF, so look for a photo story in the Lighthouse Digest soon.

The focus of this tour was to have been the relighting of Avery Point which now looks to be planned for May 2006 for the anniversary date of its original lighting. So stay tuned for more information as the tower is completed and hang on to your directions because NELL will return in May to be a part of this historical event.

See you at LHC&Y in January.

Tom



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Thanks Ron for these wonderful photos of the Fall 2005 meeting/tour



Bob Taylor Passes Title of Mr. NELL to Norm Bosse



Mr. and Mrs. NELL (Norm and Cyne Bosse)



Lexis Foster checks out the 1st order Fresnel at the USCG Museum



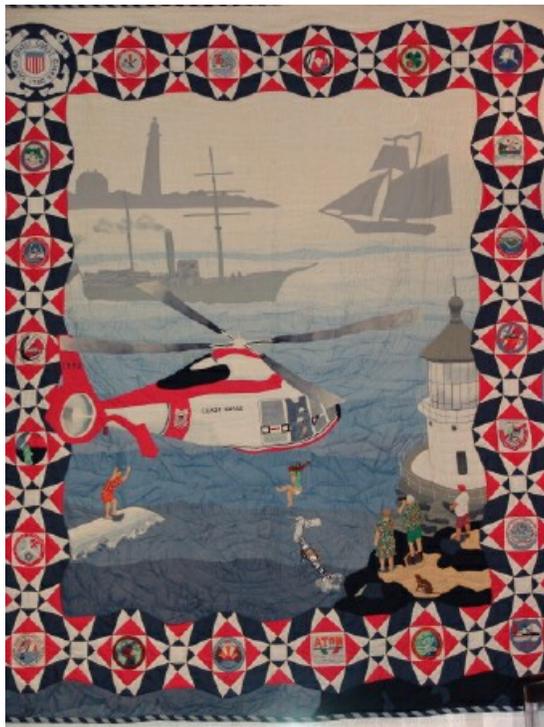
Ships Figurehead on display in USCG Museum



Leather helmet worn by Elmer Stone NAVY CROSS RECIPIENT



Revenue Marine Service Cap



Quilt on display inside USCG Museum



USCG Musum Guide explains some history of the USCG to NELL



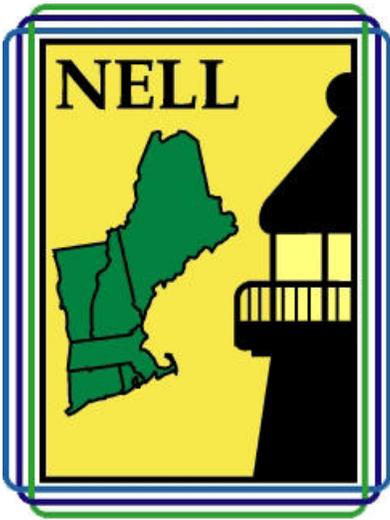
Wickies Oil Pitcher



USCG apparel display



USCG Icebreaker POLAR SEA Model



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Rick checks out one of the many models on display



Figurehead from USCG Barque EAGLE



Douglas Albert Munro Medal of Honor Recipient



Members listen to our tour guide on New London Ledge lighthouse



Display of Firearms



Lifesaving Service Display



USCG in Vietnam



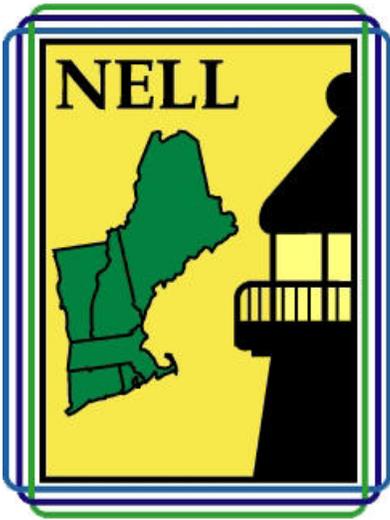
Lexis has fun with her reflection



Veronica and Lexis Foster with Bell at USCG Museum



Imma and Noreen chat on the way out to New London Ledge lighthouse



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Bob Pat Nina and Doc in the basement at New London Ledge lighthouse



Painted on an interior wall by the last USCG crew to live at the station



Steel girders fan out from the center post to strengthen the structure



Water filtration equipment in the basement



Typical modern lens for display



Joe inside the Lantern Room



The walls of one of the rooms undergoing restoration



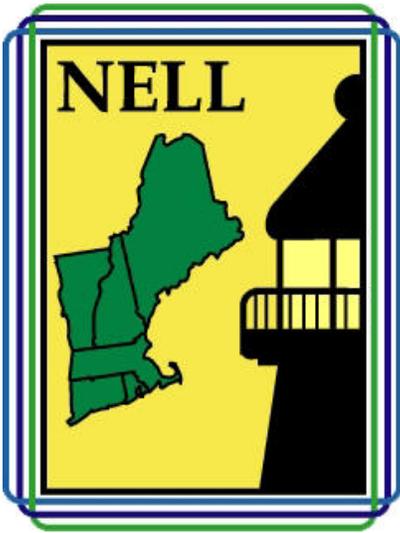
Pat inside and Stephanie outside of the Lantern Room



One red followed by three white flashes



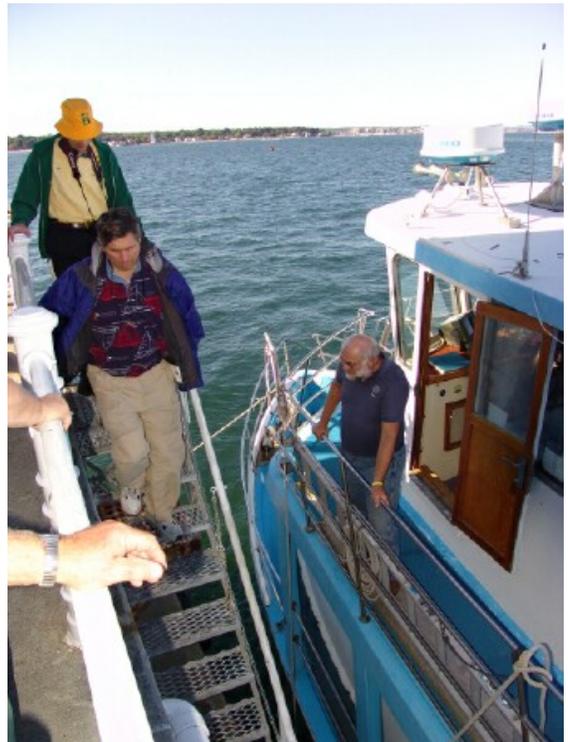
Joe, Steph, Lexis, MJ and Veronica outside lantern room with New London Harbor in background



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Pat Graham exiting New London Ledge lighthouse



Boarding for the return trip



Project O boat with Groton shoreline in the background



New London Ledge Lighthouse



Branford House Avery Point light with UCONN Festival by the Sound



U.S. Custom House New London (1833)



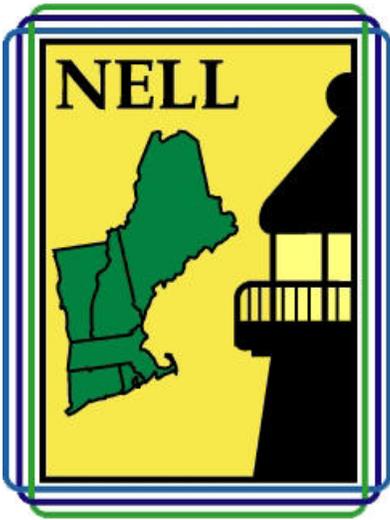
Lexis turns the original NLL light lens inside Custom House New London



Badge on display inside Custom House New London



Patch on display inside Custom House New London



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Architect of Custom House Robert Mills and wife



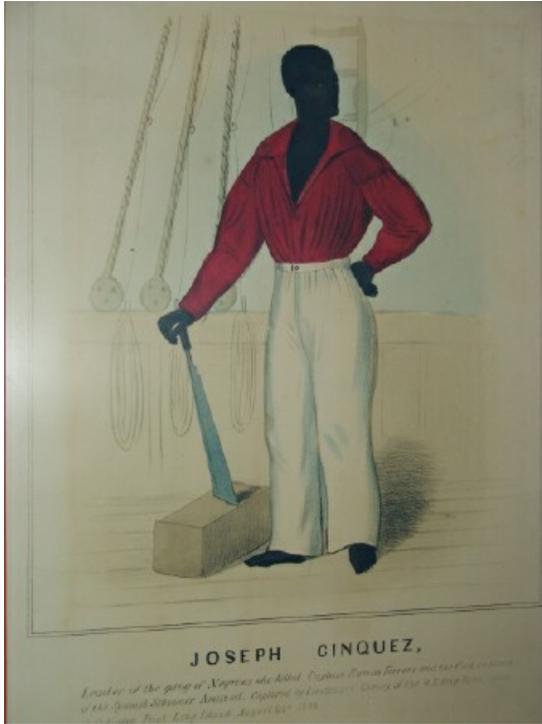
Revenue Cutter Service Officers Sword (1841)



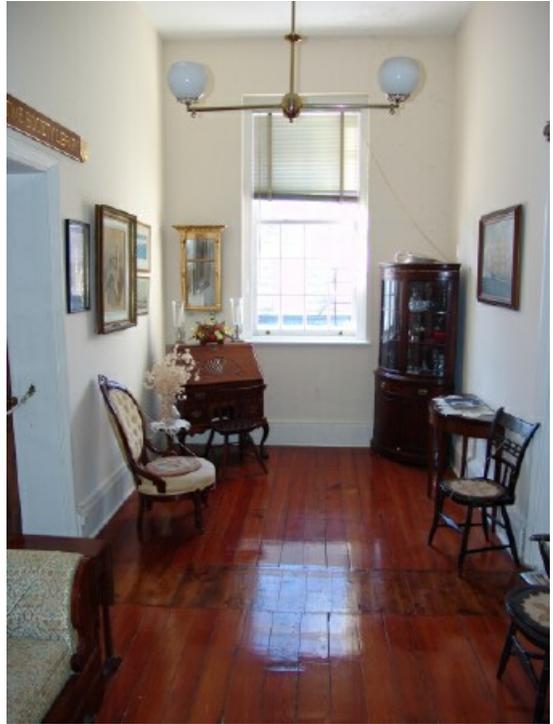
Epiplets and Hat on display inside Custom House New London



[Six of the 53 slaves aboard AMISTAD



Joseph Cinquez leader of the slaves who took over the Amistad and eventually gained their freedom



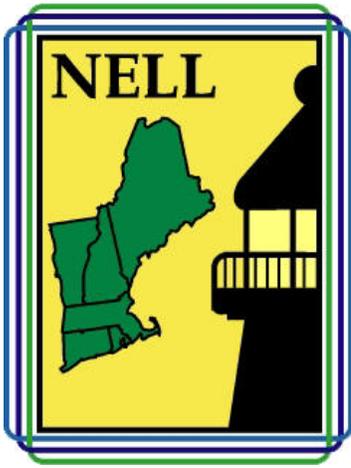
Upstairs hallway in Custom House



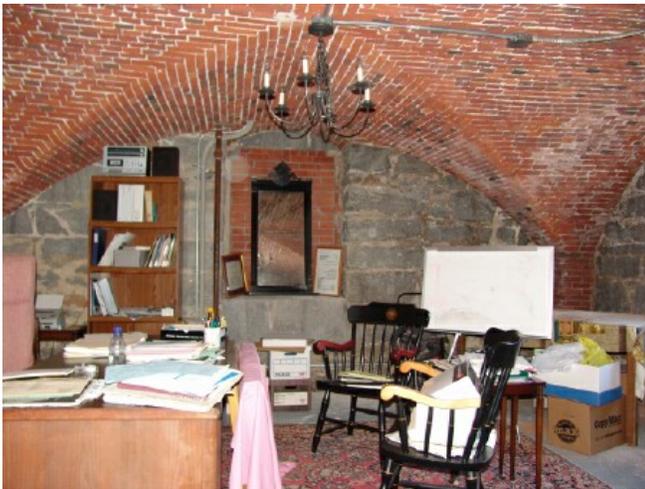
The second floor contains a nice display about the AMISTAD



1st Basement in Custom House has arched brick ceilings



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Arched brick ceilings and granite walls in 1st basement in Custom House



The second (lower) basement is mostly granite



1937 Elco Angler built by Electric Boat docked near City Pier in New London



Barque Eagle at City Pier



SeaPony awaits our arrival for lighthouse cruise



Members on deck of Sea Pony passing Fort Trumbull



Ron looks on as other capture New London Harbor Lighthouse



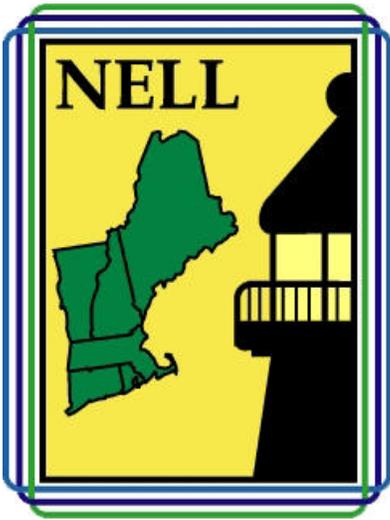
New London Harbor Lighthouse



Kayaker and two swimmers



Kayakers



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Wolfsons and Waters enjoying the cruise



Morgan Point Lighthouse



Morgan Point Lighthouse



Lexis and Veronica enjoy a game of card on the floor of SeaPony



Fishing near Latimer Reef Lighthouse



Amphibious vehicle onshore at North Dumpling Island



Latimer Reef Lighthouse



North Dumpling Island lighthouse



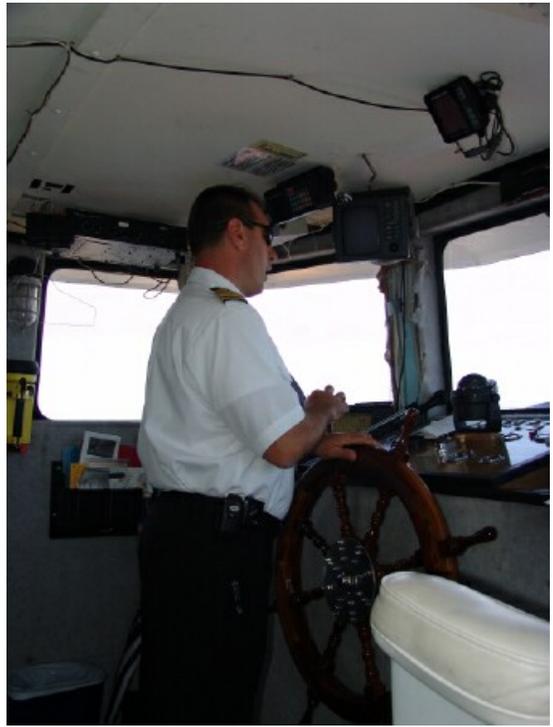
Nancy and Don enjoying the cruise



Race Rock Lighthouse



Gulls and comorant at Race Rock Light



Capt. Tom



Capt Veronica



Capt Le is



Threatening skies over New London Harbor Lighthouse



Bob and Bob speak with Eagle crewman



Eagle stripes



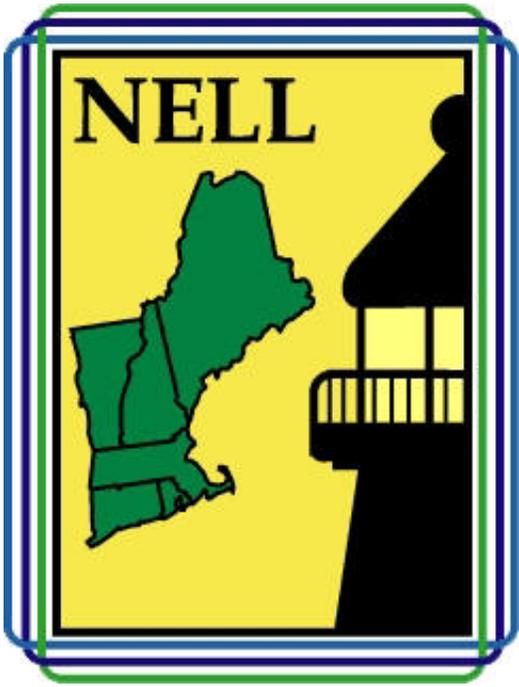
Lexis and Veronica at the helm



Carolyn checking our course



Self Explanatory



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The Wheel



Anthony on deck



Don and Nancy on deck



From the helm



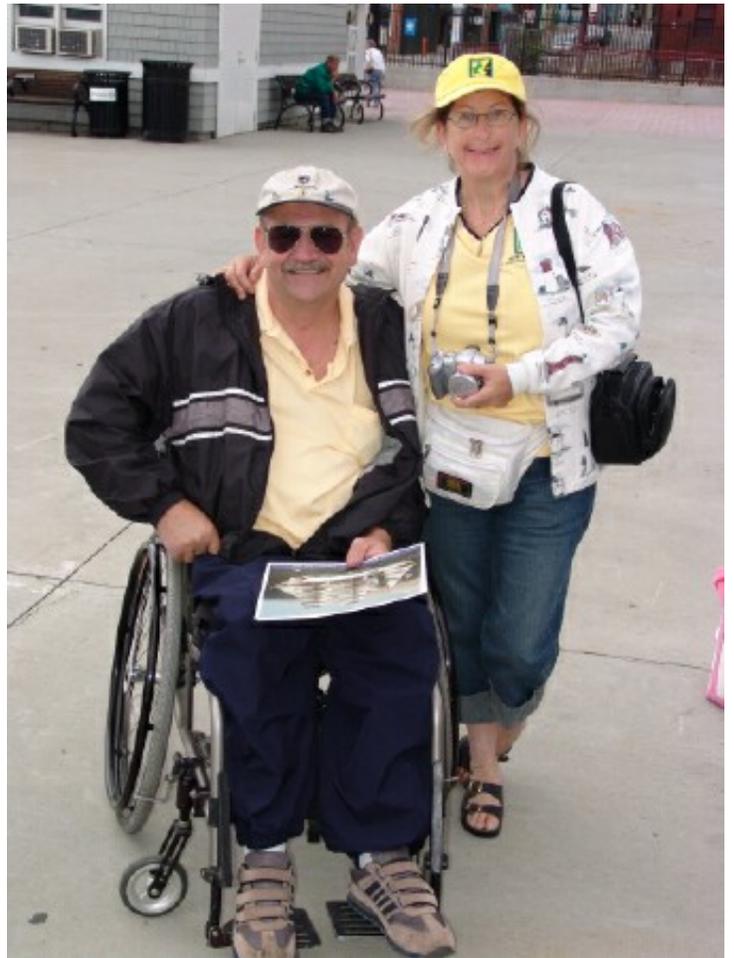
Rigging Hilari



Frank and Ron on deck



Lee shares images with Jim and Hilari



Jim and Hilari



USCG Whale Eagle



Hilary Seery image of Ron taking previous image (Tom in background)



NELL visits USCG Barque Eagle