



Spring Newsletter

The Maine's First Ship annual meeting on Saturday, March 21st, saw Matt Blazek, the MFS Director of Educational Operations, stepping into the role of Interim Executive Director. Former ED Alicia Witham had the opportunity to fulfill a longtime desire to become an innkeeper: she worked her last day with MFS on Thursday, closed on a midcoast bed and breakfast on Friday, and made her first breakfast for guests on Saturday morning.

The business meeting included the election of board members and officers and the passage of a change to the MFS bylaws to reduce the minimum number of board members to five and to include language regarding multiple unexcused absences from board meetings.

2026 Board Members and Officers

President - Jeremy Blaiklock
Vice-President - Michael Walton
Secretary - Matthew Goodman
Treasurer - vacant*

*Michael Walton will continue in this role until it is filled.

New Board members:

- Richard Brown
- Denise Parker

Board members 2nd term:

- Jeremy Blaiklock
- Will Neilson
- Dan Sortwell
- Michael Walton

Members heard reports regarding finances for the past year and the current budget, as well as a programming report and plans, with the biggest news being the plan for *Virginia* to participate in the Sail250 celebration in Boston in July. Fundraising for this adventure is currently underway, please see below.

Other upcoming events and volunteer needs are detailed below as well.

Find job description and application information for the position of Executive Director [here](#) . Please share if you know any strong candidates for this role.



"The year 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding in 1776—the United States of America's Semiquincentennial. For this milestone occasion, a fleet of the world's most magnificent international tall ships and military ships, in an epic peacetime gathering, will sail into the port of Boston as part of **Sail250®**."

Saturday, April 18
help *Virginia*
"Ship up to Boston"
for the
Sail Boston 250 celebration!

J.R. Maxwell & Co. are excited to host the evening ensuring your ticket purchase goes directly to support this historic opportunity for Maine's First Ship. *Virginia and MFS will be one of four ships representing Maine, helping to showcase the state's shipbuilding heritage on a national stage.*

Our room at J.R. Maxwell & Co. will open at 5:30 pm with dinner at 6:00 pm, a cash bar will be available.

Only a few tickets left as we write this!

Click [HERE](#) to check availability & purchase tickets

All proceeds support our participation in Sail Boston 250.
Thank you!

Current Volunteer Needs & Opportunities

Nautical Yard Sale Lead/Leads

We are looking for a new lead volunteer to help organize and run our Nautical Yard Sale (May 14-17). If you enjoy organizing, planning, or just love good yard sale, then this is the project for you!

Contact Matt to lend a hand:
matt@mfship.org.

If you find any likely additions to the sale while spring cleaning, please send a message to mfs@mfship.org to arrange a drop-off or pick-up.

On the other hand, if you find you need some gear, we hope you will come shop the sale in May.



Nautical Yard Sale
 details & requested
 donation items

Exhibit Build & Staging

Starting after April 11, we'll be diving into exhibit building and staging work. This is a hands-on chance to learn about the new exhibits. No special skills required, just a willingness to jump in and be part of the team.

We can discuss as a group what days work best for all.

Movie Night: *Race to Alaska*

We need volunteers to head this movie night, set up, and clean up. This event is scheduled for Thursday, April 23, 5-7:30, and would require support before, during, and after.

Gift Shop Prep : Cleaning Project

Over the next two weeks, we'll be working on cleaning out space for our new gift shop build. Many hands will make light work!

Labels for Albacore Park Exhibit

We are sending a number of items to Albacore Park in Portsmouth for a temporary display. We could use some help creating display labels and marking them with our information. They are being delivered to New Hampshire the beginning of May.

As always, whether you can give a few hours or take on something bigger, your time and energy make all the difference. **If you're interested in any of the opportunities above, just reply to this email or reach out to Matt at matt@mfship.org to get involved.**

Maintenance on *Virginia*

Virginia will be heading to Portland Yacht Services mid-April for a haul-out and to refresh her bottom paint.

Rental Support Needed

We have several upcoming rentals that need volunteer support.

If you're interested in helping in Portland or with outside events, please email Kimberly at mfs@mfship.org .

Volunteer CPR Training

We're offering a CPR training on April 22 at 5:00 PM, if you took the CPR

course offered in 2024 you do not need to take this course as long as you still have a copy of your certificate.

Dockside Safety Training

Towards the end of April and throughout May we will be scheduling safety training sessions leading up to our Dockside Attraction Test on **May 28th**. These are required training for Crew, Safety Officers, and Shipboard Docents. We will be setting dates soon.

For questions about volunteer trainings, contact Matt: matt@mfship.org .

Maine's First Ship Presents

Coastal Navigation

with

Captain Emma Hathaway



Saturday May 2nd and Sunday May 3rd. 8:00-3:00 pm.
8 students max. \$300 per person.

Join Maine's First Ship and Captain Emma Hathaway for a two day class on Coastal Navigation. Learn to navigate the coast of Maine using paper charts, compasses, dividers and navigational triangles. You can expect to learn triangulation, how to take a bearing, plot a course, dead reckoning, latitude and longitude, tides, and currents.

This class will allow you to be a confident navigator under all Maine conditions.



mfship.org/events to register
Space is limited!

REGISTER NOW for COASTAL NAVIGATION



Take a break from working on your boat and join us!
Refreshments and cash bar available.

April 11 will be the final day of the season for the Bath Farmers Market to meet inside the Bath Freight Shed.

We will be installing new exhibits this spring and not opening the visitors center until sometime in May.

We will open the doors on the evening of Thursday, April 23 for a special showing of *The Race to Alaska*. According to IMDB this "documentary shows the hardships and dangers in the Race to Alaska. Set in one of the most complex waterways in the world, many will succumb against winds, currents, whirlpools, fear and fatigue as both character and watercraft are tested."

The Summer Lecture Series is booked and ready for Wednesday evenings in June & July. We are seeking a sponsor for the series which would mean both that there is no charge to attend *and* any donations received from participants can go to support further programming. FMI connect with matt@mfship.org .



MAINE'S FIRST SHIP

Live talks at the Jane Stevens Visitors Center at the Bath Freight Shed
Wednesday Evenings 7pm -8pm, June through July, 2026

June 3 Whit Perry: Director of Maritime Preservation and Operations, Plimoth Patuxet Museums; Captain, Mayflower II
A Tour of the Mayflower II

June 10 Arista Holden: Executive Director, Atlantic Challenge
The Atlantic Challenge

June 17 Neill De Paoli: Manager, Colonial Pemaquid State Historic Site
The Hurricane of 1635 along the coast of Maine

June 24 Harald Prins: Professor of Anthropology, Kansas State University
The Wild Horses of Old Sagadahoc

No lecture on 4th of July week. Enjoy Bath Heritage Days!

July 8 Jim Nelson: Author and MFS Rigger
European Ship's Rigging During the Age of Discovery (1418-1620)

July 15 Ted South: MFS Volunteer
An introduction to the Archeology of the Popham Colony Site

July 22 Arthur Spiess: Chief Historic Preservationist, Prehistoric Archaeology,
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Native American archaeology around Casco Bay, Merrymeeting Bay and the lower Kennebec River

July 29 Jeffrey Brain
North American Indians and European Contact: Putting the Popham Colony in Perspective

Sponsored by-

SPONSOR NEEDED!

mfship.org/events/ for more information

MAINE'S FIRST SHIP
SAIL THE STORY

RAFFLE

TO BENEFIT
MAINE'S FIRST SHIP
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

WIN THE WHERRY!

YOU COULD WIN PEGASUS!
A 22 FOOT SLIDING SEAT ROWING WHERRY
BUILT BY ANDREW C. VAVOLOTIS

MFSHIP.ORG/RAFFLE/
FOR MORE INFORMATION

DRAWING ON
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1ST, 2026

\$25 PER TICKET

PEGASUS

TICKET

TICKET

TICKET

WANTED

TAX DEDUCTIBLE SUPPORT HISTORY EDUCATION MFSHIP.ORG



YOUR BOAT

FOR MAINE'S FIRST SHIP

Your tax-deductible donation will support educational opportunities at Maine's First Ship!

We are looking for boats with good resale value or requiring minimal repairs.

To donate your boat please contact Alicia Witham- alicia@mfship.org

The Virginia Project, Inc. dba Maine's First Ship is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

**CLICK HERE to BECOME
a MEMBER of Maine's First
Ship**

mfship.org

