



The Toggle Iron

Park Bids Farewell to Celeste Bernardo

On July 29, park staff, partners, volunteers, friends, family, and members of the greater New Bedford community gathered at the Corson Maritime Learning Center to wish Celeste Bernardo “fair winds and calm seas.” After three and a half years at the helm in New Bedford, Bernardo accepted a position as the Deputy Superintendent at Boston National Historical Park (NHP) and Boston African American National Historic Site.

Acting Superintendent Jennifer Gonsalves said, “It is fitting that Celeste’s going away party took place in the Corson Maritime Learning Center, a tangible reminder of Celeste’s legacy here at the park. More important, however, are the relationships and connections that Celeste has nurtured in the community—partnerships that nobody else could have come in and fostered as closely as she has. These are the things that will carry this park forward and help us to continue meeting our mission.” (Continued on page 2)

From the Superintendent

Nothing endures but change. Fall’s early bronze colors are starting to replace the lush green of summer. The days are getting shorter and are starting to have a crisp, cool feel to them. Families have retreated to home in anticipation of school starting making way for the traditional international and senior New England fall visitors. And the park’s seasonal staff has gone back to school, both as teachers and students. As we move through the change of seasons here in the northeast, the park is also going through a period of transition.

This past year, we opened the Corson Maritime Learning Center, we bade farewell to the park’s second superintendent, Celeste Bernardo, and introduced several new interpretive programs. Our partners, too, are going through transition—with changes in leadership, the installation of new exhibits, structural improvements, and the addition of new staff members. It is a very exciting time in New Bedford and at the park, and I am honored to be but a small part of all that is going on around me. Change is inevitable. Change is future-oriented. Change is good. *Nothing endures but change.*

Jennifer Gonsalves
Acting Superintendent



After three and a half years at the helm in New Bedford, Celeste Bernardo recently accepted the Deputy Superintendent position at Boston National Historical Park.

“I’m going to miss this city, I’m going to miss my staff, and I’m going to miss all the different communities that we have here. This is like leaving a family. We have a great history here, a history that touched the world. I know you know that. We just have to make sure that everyone else knows it.”

Celeste Bernardo

(Continued from page 1)

This sentiment was echoed by all of the supporters who showed up to offer warm wishes and who brought small pieces of New Bedford to remind Bernardo of her tenure in the whaling city. While New Bedford chowder, speeches, original songs, and gifts weren't enough to entice Bernardo to stay at the park, City of New Bedford Mayor Scott Lang threatened to "make a call" to the Director of the National Park Service to ensure Bernardo stayed in New Bedford. As much as she has meant to this park and this city, the park is thrilled to see that the stories and resources of the events leading up to the American Revolution, and preserved at Boston NHP, are in good hands.

Celeste started in her new position on August 4, reuniting her with the park and staff she formerly worked with from 1995-2001. Of her departure, Bernardo said, "I'm going to miss this city, I'm going to miss my staff, and I'm going to miss all the different communities that we have here. This is like leaving a family. We have a great history here, a history that touched the world. I know you know that. We just have to make sure that everyone else knows it."



Right: Celeste Bernardo with City of New Bedford Mayor Scott Lang

Below: Park staff present Bernardo with an illustration of the Corson Maritime Learning Center on behalf of attendees.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park was established in 1996 to help preserve and interpret America's nineteenth century whaling history. The park encompasses a 13-block National Historic Landmark District and addresses the history of the whaling industry and its influence on the economic, social, and environmental history of the United States.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Temple Toggle-Iron: The most successful harpoon ever made. Invented by Lewis Temple, an African American whalecraft-maker of New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1848, and at first called "porpoise iron" and "Temple's gig," it became the universal whale iron, and has never been improved upon. (From Clifford W. Ashley's, **The Yankee Whaler**)



Volunteer Coordinator Emily Prigot (right) sings an original song she wrote for the occasion.



Celeste holds up a photo of the restored Whaling Museum cupola, presented by Acting Chief Executive Officer John Garfield on behalf of the museum.

Corson Maritime Learning Center Opens



Newly renovated Corson Maritime Learning Center



The Rum Soaked Crooks provided a festive atmosphere by playing traditional maritime music at the ribbon cutting ceremony.



National Park Service Regional Director Dennis Reidenbach with Superintendent Celeste Bernardo

Over 250 people, including politicians, historic preservation advocates, community members, park staff and volunteers attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Corson Maritime Learning Center on May 16, 2008. The event was the culmination of an 11 year, \$6.4 million project.

The Corson Building, which is located next to the park visitor center, consists of two three-story brick structures built in 1875 and 1884. For many years the Corson Building housed Moby-Dick Marine Specialties on its first floor, a popular shopping stop for visitors to the historic district. In 1997, a devastating fire ripped through the building. The Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE), a non-profit preservation organization, came to the building's rescue after the fire, acquired the building through a donation from the Piva family, and secured the funds for its stabilization. WHALE, in turn, donated the building to the National Park Service in 2004.

Senator Edward Kennedy, the keynote speaker of the event and instrumental in the

creation of the park in 1996 remarked, "Today, we celebrate New Bedford's history and reaffirm our commitment to build on the great legacy of those who came before us, such as Herman Melville and Frederick Douglass, to build a strong future for this unique city, a city that Melville called the 'dearest place to live in, in all New England.'" In addition to Senator Kennedy, Congressman Barney Frank and State Representatives Mark Montigny and Antonio Cabral were present to offer their congratulations on the National Park Service's great achievement in preserving the historic structure and creating a multi-purpose learning center.

The Corson Maritime Learning Center includes an entire floor dedicated to educational activities, office space for staff, a conference room, an archives room, new exhibits and a 55-seat theater used, primarily, to show the park's orientation film.



Left to right: Superintendent Celeste Bernardo, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, State Representative Antonio Cabral, NPS Northeast Regional Director Dennis Reidenbach, and Congressman Barney Frank cut the ribbon at the Corson Maritime Learning Center's dedication ceremony (not pictured, Senator Mark Montigny).



Volunteer Spotlight



Park volunteers Iivonne Domange Yensen (left) and Jessica Andrews (right).

Name: Jessica Andrews

Age (optional): 25

City/Town you live in: New Bedford, MA

Occupation: Photographer/sales clerk

Special Interests/Hobbies: Photography and knitting

How long have you been a volunteer at the visitor center? 4 months

Why did you decide to become a volunteer?

I have volunteered at various places throughout my life because I enjoy giving back to the community while learning new things at the same time.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering at the visitor center?

Watching other people discover the amazing things this city has to offer. There is so much culture and history in the area and I feel privileged to share these with newcomers.

What is the most interesting thing that you've done in your life?
I have been to the highest point in 21 states and plan to conquer them all!

What is the one thing that you'd like to do or try?
Skydiving.

What is your favorite thing about this area?
I love wandering around the harbor on gray, stormy days when the smell of the sea is overpowering and the color of the ships is muted.

Name: Iivonne Domange Yensen

Age (optional): 58

City/Town you live in: Valparaiso, Chile

Family: Two daughters, one grandchild

Occupation: Professor of Sociology and French/Business Consultant

Special Interests/Hobbies: Poetry, literature workshops, playing musical instruments, compose and record children's music, dancing (salsa and tango)

How long have you been a volunteer at the visitor center? 5 months

Why did you decide to become a volunteer? When I first arrived in this country, I knew almost no one. I needed to buy a hairdryer and stopped at the Visitor Center to ask for help. My English was not so good at that time and I had difficulty to explain my problem. The volunteers were very kind with me. That Sunday, I read a National Park Service notice seeking volunteers. It was the memory of my first warm experience that led me to return to offer my efforts. To be a volunteer, in any place or capacity, is an experience that always gives me more than I can offer; it makes me more human.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering at the visitor center?

I love to meet people, to understand them and to help them. I have enjoyed improving my English and learning about life in New Bedford and the United States.

What is the most interesting thing that you've done in your life?

Everything that I do is interesting for me. I love to work with young people, to teach, and to write.

What is your favorite thing about this area?

The seagulls that provide their wonderful daily music, so familiar to me from my city of the southern Pacific coast, Valparaiso.

Park Crew List

Park Welcomes Preservation Specialist



In March, Janine V. da Silva was selected as the Preservation Specialist for the park. She is the first person to fill this newly-created position. In making the announcement, Superintendent Celeste Bernardo said, “Jan brings much experience in preservation

planning and restoration. Also, her background in history and knowledge of the New Bedford area make her well suited for this position working with the remarkable cultural resources within the park.”

Most recently da Silva worked as a Preservation Planner for the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Prior to that position, she worked as a preservation consultant in the city of New Bedford.

On accepting the new assignment, da Silva said, “I am happy to return to New Bedford to work with the National Park and the preservation community. I have always been impressed by the quality and quantity of cultural resources found in this coastal community. The architectural diversity of the city cannot be found in other places and makes New Bedford a unique place to work and live. I look forward to meeting the park partners, staff and volunteers on a variety of preservation issues.”

Ms. da Silva began working in the preservation field in 1999, serving as a preservation consultant to the city of New Bedford and the New Bedford Historical Society. da Silva has also worked with local historian Kathryn Grover, co-authoring a National Park Service funded Historic Resource Study on the 19th century African American population living on Beacon Hill. She then transitioned to the Massachusetts Historical Commission to work as a Preservation Planner in the Grants Division. This position enabled her to hone her skills as a preservationist, ensuring that grant recipients adhered to the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. A native of Brooklyn, New York, da Silva holds a BA in History from Princeton University, and a BS in Historic Preservation from Roger Williams University. Ms. da Silva lives with her partner, Ira Joseph, in New Bedford.

Four Local Seasonal Employees Join Crew



Top row left to right: Lucy Bly and Cheryl Viveiros, bottom row left to right: George Ripley V and Jerrel Burgo.

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park has hired four seasonal park rangers, all with ties to the local community. The new staff members are: Lucy Bly, Jerrel Burgo, George Ripley V, and Cheryl Viveiros.

Lucy Bly is a teacher of foreign languages at Dartmouth High School and a New Bedford native. A product of New Bedford Public Schools, she is a graduate of Smith College and the University of Hamburg, Germany. She started as a volunteer with the city of New Bedford in 1990 and continued her service with the park when it was established in 1996. During her tenure as a volunteer, Lucy staffed the information desk, gave walking tours, and served on the park’s Volunteer Council. As a park ranger, Lucy is still providing front-line visitor services but is also using her extensive background in education to help formulate programs for the new Corson Maritime

Learning Center including the development and implementation of the park’s first living history program. Ms. Bly comments, “I love my city and its heritage, and I enjoy sharing it with our visitors. The added opportunities presented by the opening of the Corson Maritime Learning Center have allowed me to combine my passion for teaching and my city.”

Born and raised in New Bedford’s downtown, Jerrel Burgo represents the city of New Bedford with pride wherever he goes. A graduate of New Bedford High School, he currently attends Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island where he majors in History with concentrations in Anthropology/Sociology and Portuguese. In regard to the park’s significance, Jerrel explained, “New Bedford is certainly a city to be proud of and the park is an accurate and (Continued on page 8)

New Programs Enhance Summer Season

Downtown New Bedford is an exciting place to be during the summer months. Locals and visitors alike have come to expect the vast array of cultural events, festivals, and interpretive programming that take place in and around New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park from June through September. However, with the completion of the Corson Maritime Learning Center and the addition of front line staff, not only has the park expanded its facilities but also increased its slate of programming for the 2008 season.

The most notable changes in the park can be found in the Corson Maritime Learning

Center. The completion of the \$6.4 million project provides the park with expanded exhibit space, a 55-seat theater, a multi-use education space, meeting rooms, and offices for the park's growing staff and increased programming. Visitors can enjoy the park's orientation film *The City that Lit the World*, go on a walking tour to discover such stories as New Bedford's role in the 19th century American whaling industry, the working waterfront, and New Bedford's Underground Railroad history, attend a Thursday evening concert or Saturday maritime craft demonstration, explore new exhibits highlighting the commerce of

whaling and historic preservation, or interact with two women from 19th-century New Bedford through the park's new Living History program.

AHA! (Art, History, Architecture) nights continue to enliven downtown New Bedford every second Thursday of the month year round and *City Celebrates*, presented by the AHA! partners and the city of New Bedford, adds the AHA! flair to every Thursday evening until the end of August. The addition of a downtown waterfront restaurant showcasing New Bedford's top-ranked fishing fleet as the backdrop as well as several new retail establishments provide something to satisfy all tastes. We invite the public to experience all that New Bedford has to offer and to discover the city that lit the world.



The park's new Living History program has been well-received by the public in its first year.



Park Ranger George Ripley V conducts a talk at the historic Seamen's Bethel.



Park staff prepare to march in the Cape Verdean parade as part of Cape Verdean Recognition Week in July.



Blacksmith Dean Rantz performs a craft demonstration as part of the park's Maritime Heritage Days .

Rehabilitation Begins on Schooner *Ernestina*

The 114-year-old schooner *Ernestina*, a National Historic Landmark, official vessel of the Commonwealth, and part of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is in the Boothbay Harbor Shipyard in Maine to begin the rehabilitation of the front of the vessel. The work will include the stem, foredeck, and temporary repairs to the main deck to halt the leaking. The work will be completed this fall and follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standard's for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects*. Harold Burnham, an 11th generation Essex Master Shipwright, is serving as the vessel's liaison with the yard and Ernestina's Executive Director Paul J. Brawley.

Funding for this initial work includes a National Park Service (NPS) \$500,000 Save

America's Treasures matching grant, a \$250,000 grant from the Office of Public and Private Partnerships administered by the Department of Conservation & Recreation, and \$130,000 from *Ernestina's* operating budget.



Starboard bow showing new inner stem and new frames.

Documentation work by the NPS Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) has already begun and will be completed by mid-September. This completed reference document will provide invaluable information that will guide future preservation decisions and ensure that *Ernestina's* historical integrity is maintained.

For more information or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact paul.brawley@state.ma.us or by calling 508-992-4900. Let's work together to keep *Ernestina* sailing! www.ernestina.org www.sailernestina.org

Whaling Heritage Symposium a Success

Over a three day period in mid-June, cultural practitioners, authors, archaeologists, historians, curators, and marine resource managers attended the first-ever whaling heritage symposium. Sponsored by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Maritime Heritage Program, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, and the National Maritime Historical Society and hosted by Mystic Seaport, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, the symposium was held in Mystic, Connecticut the first two days and in New Bedford the third day.

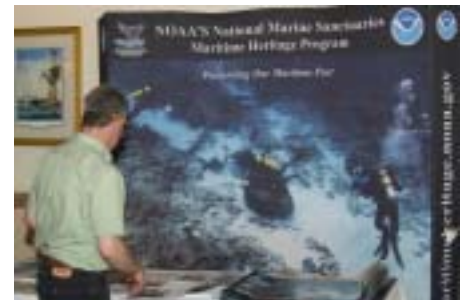
The symposium program was organized along the following themes: *History and Archeology: Where Heritage Trails Meet, Indigenous Whalers and 19th-20th Century Cultural Interactions, New Directions in Whaling Heritage Research, and Whaling Heritage: Setting the Course for Future Preservation*. Each theme included a diverse slate of sessions ranging from panel discussions to interpretive programs. One facilitated discussion examined indigenous whalers and cultural interactions. This panel included researchers currently working on an ethnographic study funded by the NPS NER

Ethnography program investigating the relationships between the New Bedford whaling industry and the ethnic groups engaged in whaling-related employment. Ron Brower, Sr., from the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, Alaska, gave a presentation on how native Alaskan peoples have kept old traditions and retained a unique cultural heritage through changing times. Finally, Michael Dyer, Historian and Librarian at the New Bedford Whaling Museum and Jennifer Gonsalves, Chief of Visitor Services at the park, gave an illustrated presentation featuring the ports of call, vessels, and peoples encountered by whalers as noted in their logbooks and journals from 1793 to 1870. Symposium attendees who came to New Bedford were taken on a ranger-led walking tour and were honored at a reception hosted by the Azorean Maritime Heritage Society.

The event offered both the general public and professional alike the opportunity to examine the broader cultural scope of historic whaling, the significance of specific events and geographic locations in the industry's history, and the ways we can continue to learn from our own whaling heritage."

Whaling heritage is a complex and broad topic, and there are many different directions for research and preservation. This collaborative symposium established a precedent in uniting separate fields like history and archaeology and marine mammal biology and in sharing the connections between them," remarked Hans Van Tilburg, Ph.D. Maritime Heritage Coordinator, Pacific Islands Region, National Marine Sanctuary Program and symposium organizer.

The symposium also provided an opportunity for visitors to Mystic Seaport one of the last chances to go on board the *Charles W. Morgan* before the historic ship, the world's oldest whaling vessel, is placed in dry dock in November.



Michael Dyer, librarian at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, peruses symposium materials in Mystic.

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engaging reminder of why exactly that is.” Jerrel can be found staffing the visitor center information desk, giving walking tours, assisting with special projects, and introducing the park’s Thursday evening concerts.

George Ripley V is a native to the Greater New Bedford area. Having spent nearly equal time in Dartmouth and New Bedford, he feels honored to call both home. George graduated from East Gate Christian Academy with a high school diploma and is currently enrolled at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth as a History major with a Labor Studies minor. When George was asked to comment on what he thought is the importance of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and his role at the park, he said, “I look at this park as a sort of photo album. Here at the park, we try to show people the history of the whaling industry and its impact on the city of New Bedford and her people. Basically, everyone in New Bedford has some tie to either whaling or fishing. This park helps to tell people the story of where they came from, and how they got to where they are now.” George provides front-line visitor services including staffing the visitor center information desk and partner sites, hosting special events, giving walking tours, and facilitating programs for school groups.

Born and raised in New Bedford and a product of the New Bedford Public School system, Cheryl Viveiros graduated from New Bedford High School in 1974 and went on to study at Southeastern

Massachusetts University, receiving a BA in History in 1978. Cheryl is currently a history teacher at New Bedford High School and has been conferred with a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership. She lives in New Bedford with her husband, George, and children, Derek and Kaelyn. Ms. Viveiros comments on her experience with the park, “The history of New Bedford has always been a big part of my life. Having the opportunity to teach our children is an experience that cannot be compromised. This position with the National Park affords me the ability to continue to teach and learn about a subject that is extremely important to me – the history and culture of New Bedford.” Cheryl can be found at the park visitor center staffing the information desk and working with Lucy Bly on the development of the park’s first curriculum-based education programs. She also conducts walking tours of the working waterfront and of Underground Railroad-related sites in and around the park.

“The addition of these very talented people to the visitor services team ensures that the park will continue the tradition of providing a first rate visitor experience to all who come to New Bedford,” comments Jennifer Gonsalves, Chief of Visitor Services. “The wealth of knowledge and experience that Lucy, Jerrel, Cheryl and George walked in the door with is invaluable. They know the community and its stories and, through their daily public interactions, are doing a terrific job helping the visitors to the park make meaningful connections to both.”



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