

THE LECTURES:

Sunday afternoon, September 15, 2013

The Global Ocean at the turn of the Nineteenth Century: The Notorious Career of Captain Samuel Hill of Boston

Born during the American Revolution, Capt. Sam Hill went to sea as a teenager and spent more than twenty years on voyages to the West and East Indies, Africa and Asia. He was the first American to live in Japan, was in the Columbia River at the same time as Lewis and Clark, was captured as a privateer in the War of 1812, was an eyewitness to the Chilean Revolution, rescued captives of Indians and pirates, and was in Hawaii when the great King Kamehameha died and the first American missionaries arrived. He was a literate and persuasive writer—and a beastly rapist and murderer. Hill's career illustrates the first expansion of US global trade; his behavior, unfortunately, set a tone that was considered acceptable by many men who followed him.

FREE BOOK: Everyone who attends this lecture will receive a signed copy of *Devil on the Deep Blue Sea: The Notorious Career of Captain Samuel Hill of Boston* by Mary Malloy. Winner of the 2006 John Lyman Award for best Maritime Biography from the North American Society of Oceanic History, Nathaniel Philbrick called the book “a tour de force—a fascinating, highly readable, and meticulously researched portrait of an extraordinary American mariner and his age. Highly recommended.”

Sunday afternoon, October 13, 2013

Seeking Whales in Every Ocean

Whaling was an important economic enterprise in the Colonial era and quickly expanded to the Pacific after American Independence. The sheer number of Yankee ships and men involved in the industry in the 19th century gives an indication of the impact of the business on whale populations, on local cultural practices, and on island ecosystems: more than 2500 New England vessels made some 12,000 voyages to the Pacific with over 300,000 men on board. One of the best-documented U.S. industries in the 19th century, whale hunters left a record of environmental change, as well as an enduring legacy of art and literature.

Sunday afternoon, November 10, 2013

Pacific Art and Artifacts Collected by American Mariners

When Boston merchants pioneered the first US ventures around Cape Horn in 1787, the indigenous people of the Pacific were just becoming known to Europeans and Americans through the descriptive narratives of Captain James Cook and others. There was an enthusiastic interest in documenting newly encountered trading partners through the collecting of ethnographic objects, and a number of museums were founded in New England to receive the cultural souvenirs brought back by mariners. Sadly, the very presence of outsiders with new diseases led to rapid population loss among local people, and cultural practices began to change even as they were first being observed and described by Euro-American mariners. Today, collections in Massachusetts' museums represent some of the earliest surviving examples of the material culture of Polynesians and Northwest Coast Indians.

Sunday afternoon, December 8, 2013

Sustainability in Polynesian Island Cultures and Ecosystems (SPICE)

SEA takes college students to the South Pacific on an adventure with a purpose. On five islands, from low-lying atolls to high volcanic isles, students look at the relationship between people and their environments; and from the deck of the *Robert C. Seamans* study the ocean that binds them together. Incorporating cultural and historical data, the SPICE program is documented in an on-line *Atlas of Polynesia* that is rapidly becoming an important resource for a wider audience.