



Inaugural Column “Mariner of the Month”

It feels like family!

Yes, this is the inaugural run for the column “Mariner of the Month.” We aim to highlight various aspects of life at Hull Lifesaving Museum (HLM), and to connect readers with folks who



contribute to HLM in a variety of ways. It occurred to us that so much dedication and hard work is a story that must be told: we’re a heck of a lot more than a museum. We hope you will enjoy this column and learn more about the diverse community that is Hull Lifesaving Museum.

Almost anyone in Hull knows about “Snow Row,” “Head of the Weir,” “Harbor Illumination” – the big, splashy ones. While those public programs are exciting, the museum hosts many programs that attract folks to the museum seven days a week. Screen movies and documentaries, talks, art shows, art demonstrations, almost like an *athenaeum* that is a gathering place of study, learning, and exchange of ideas. These activities take place in our open rowing boats, at the boat house, and in the museum where we host talks of all types, both about lifesaving, lighthouses, art, *en plain air* painting (painting outdoors, e.g., Claude Monet), and lighthouse management and life. Do not miss the current exhibition – “Mary Ellen Sparrow ‘Speaking of Courage’.” Mrs. Sparrow was the wife of the keeper Captain William Sparrow; she documented life at the station in a one-of-a-kind magic lantern slide show. Spontaneous events happen here, too. For example, this morning Sally Snowman, a former, female lighthouse keeper in Boston Harbor in period dress turned up at our door to be interviewed for a documentary about women and lighthouses. Coasties (Coast Guard members) are our neighbors and used to occupy HLM until the mid-sixties; they help out

around the museum several times a year. Coasties also ensure water safety for HLM's boat races.

August's "Mariner of the Month" is **Devon Smith**, a recognizable, energetic presence at HLM. Devon is an instructor in the new Explorer Program for youth (ages 12-16.) She is also a special education teacher in Hingham and has a deep maritime background from her time around the sea and as a graduate of Massachusetts Maritime Academy. Devon has her sea captain's license and has put that to good use in Boston Harbor, piloting boats. She was "tender mate" aboard a yacht in Monaco for a number of years, where she worked alongside with a crew of 50 persons. She received her yacht power-boat license in the U.K., then received captain's license at Mass Maritime Academy, from which she graduated. She eventually came back to Hull and began teaching in Hull schools, then went on to teach special education in Hingham, where she continues to teach today.

Devon is most happy in nature where she greatly appreciates the peace and energy nature provides. She prefers boating along the shore where she links with people and compelling shore vistas. Devon was a ship captain and piloted the ferry between Long Wharf in Boston and Charlestown. She is energized by the youth she leads in the explorer program that includes young mariners from not only Hull, but also from California, New Jersey, and Virginia. When asked about the aspect of HLM that she most enjoys, she quickly responds by saying, "It's like family at the Museum!"