



NEW BEDFORD

Friday, August 1

- Harbormaster** Paul Fonseca VHF 9 & 16 774-328-0414

- Regulations** No wake in the harbor. Zero discharge; holding tanks must be used.

- Anchorage** Anchoring is not permitted in New Bedford.

- Marinas**
 - Pope's Island Marina** VHF 9 508-979-1456
 Mix of floating and fixed piers, fixed piers are typically reserved for larger vessels over 60'. 9 ft of water at docks at low tide. Has dinghy dock.

 - Whaling City Moorings** 508-922-9046
 Located in the Pope's Island Mooring Field South located just east off the channel, between Red Nuns 6 & 8 and south of Pope's Island Marina.
 MAX LOA: 45' MAX BEAM: 16' MAX DRAFT: 12'

 - Fair Haven Shipyard** 508-999-1600
 Transient dockage for boats with deeper depth. Has fuel dock.

- Marine Services**
 - New Bedford Launch** VHF 9 508-989-1328

 - Sea Fuels Marine** VHF 11 508-992-2323
 Fully stocked marine supply warehouse with 250' fuel dock, 20' of depth.

- Dining**
 - The Black Whale Seafood & Raw Bar** 508-990-7100
 Contemporary Bar & Eatery overlooking the harbor.

 - Merrill's on the Waterfront** 508-997-7010
 Harborside restaurant serving local seafood with waterfront view.

Cisco Brewers Kitchen & Bar 774-702-4726
Live music. Restaurant/brewery serving seafood, sushi and more.

Moby Dick Brewing Co. 774-202-6961
Rustic pub with house brewed beers and outdoor seating.

222 Union Restaurant & Bar 774-762-4406
Casual Gathering place serving elevated pub-fare.

Aliança Restaurant 508-997-4142
Casual restaurant serving traditional Portuguese cuisine.

Provisioning

Family Grocery	774-510-0776
Mediterranean Fine Foods	508-217-7000
Coastal Provisions	508-264-9200

Historical Perspective

By Tim James

He was elected at 22, in 1904 – to membership in the NYYC. But even decades later Franklin Delano Roosevelt remained drawn to the world he saw as “a little boy” on visits to his mother’s family home. This was across the Acushnet River from New Bedford, in Fairhaven, MA.

Writing in 1929, in a book of Clifford Ashley drawings of whaleships, the future president -- then New York’s governor -- recalled what he had seen from “the old string-piece of his grandfather’s stone wharf.”

“Close by lay a whaleship, out in the stream another rode at anchor, and over on the New Bedford shore near the old winding wooden bridge a dozen tall spars overtopped the granite warehouses.”

By then, cotton mills “with their tall stacks had superseded the whaling industry.” But FDR, with enthusiasm “still unabated,” sorted through papers left by his mother Sara. At eight, she had sailed on a 128-day clipper voyage from New York around Cape Horn to Hong Kong, to join her father, Warren Delano II, engaged in the China trade. The records reflected, among much else, “the beginnings of American participation” in that trade, including a note “telling of the laying of the keel of a tea clipper.”

FDR treasured such “fragments.” They afforded “direct contact” with an industry that had “far-reaching results beyond the mere barter and sale of oil and bone.” For present-day NYYC members, the return to the old whaling port, last visited in 1911, should recall a bit of Cruise history.

Background

Another member, William F. Robinson, traced New Bedford's rise in his 1983 survey, Coastal New England: Its Life and Its Past. It began in the 1760s, when a Nantucketer with a license to ship whale oil duty-free to France and England made a discovery: this river port, with a "somber, clean little Quaker community" much like Nantucket's, was far better suited for deep-draft vessels than his island's shallow waters. Thus began New Bedford's rise to become "the world's greatest whaling port."

There were bumps on the way. In 1778, during the Revolutionary War, when the port became what one account called a "nest of privateers," a British force "destroyed its shipping, wharves, and stores." Of a fleet of 40-50 whalers, only two or three survived. But as Samuel Eliot Morison put it in his Maritime History of Massachusetts (1941), the shipowners then went "out after oil with a spirit and perseverance" unmatched elsewhere. "They were as tight-fisted, cruel, and ruthless a set of exploiters as you can find in American history, these oil kings of New Bedford. But they were canny as well."

Whaling's "golden age" began around 1835. At its peak in 1846, by one reckoning, the fleet totaled 680 ships and barks, 34 brigs, and 22 schooners, sailing out of 38 ports in and beyond New England. From 1820 on, New Bedford led them all, with a vessel roster that would reach 330 in 1857. By then, Robinson noted, New Bedford had long since "become a famed 'City of Palaces': great Greek revival mansions, the most opulent examples of antebellum architecture." Its avenues were "laid out with fixed regularity, in contrast to those of most seaports." The "better sections of town had flagstone sidewalks, and barrel-filled carts rumbled and clattered over cobblestoned streets."

Herman Melville shipped out of the port on the whaler *Acushnet* as a lad in early 1841, for the South Seas voyage that would inspire his early fiction. But he never forgot New Bedford's opulence. "Whence came they?" his narrator asks in Moby-Dick, speaking of the city's "patrician-like" glories. "Yes; all these brave houses and flowery gardens came from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans. One and all, they were harpooned and dragged up hither from the bottom of the sea."

Whaling faded after 1859, when petroleum was found in Pennsylvania. But New Bedford continued to flourish, as it (and nearby Fall River) became transformed into the nation's "premier mill cities." In New Bedford, that began in 1846, with the emergence of a cotton producer, the Wamsutta Mill.

Cruise History

As it happened, the following year brought an initial visit by the then three-year old NYYC, on its squadron's first foray beyond Newport into Buzzards Bay. What followed, in time, was an invitation from leading New Bedford citizens for the Cruise to return in 1856. The Club agreed to hold its Annual Regatta off the port. In a hard sou'wester, 13 starters set off on a triangle formed by mark boats off Quicks Hole and Cuttyhunk. The action was recorded by three marine artists, and stories in the Boston press. As Club historian John Rousmaniere has noted, "That may have been the first American version of the English town cup race sponsored by local officials to attract visitors."

The regatta did reinforce the young NYYC's ties with similarly-inclined New England yachtsmen. The Class 1 winner was the 79' sloop *Julia*, owned by one of the New York club's nine founders, James M. Waterbury, whose interests included distilleries and sugar refineries in Brooklyn. With him on *Julia* was Robert Bennet Forbes of Boston and Milton, MA. The ebullient "Black Ben," as he was known, had gone to sea at 13 and captained his first voyage to China at 20, and was now widely regarded as the country's leading yachtsman. Another celebrated windjammer alumni present, also like Forbes an early NYYC member, was Nathaniel Brown Palmer of Stonington, CT. He raced *Juliet*, a schooner of his own design. After a career at sea that included a seal-hunting voyage to Antarctica, where Palmer Land is named for him, in 1850 "Captain Nat" had turned to yachting; he sailed some 15 craft under the NYYC burgee.

In his newspaper account, Forbes declared that "the Club were much delighted with the handsome manner in which the people of New Bedford turned out *en masse* to entertain them."

New Bedford would become the Cruise's most-visited Buzzards Bay port – only for a while, however.

An 1891 visit drew a small fleet, attributed to "foul conditions in the river." In 1896, the New Bedford Yacht Club (formed in 1877) and the local board of trade planned a "grand reception" for the NYYC. But Commodore Elbridge Gerry decided to skip that stop and take the fleet directly from Vineyard Haven to Newport. Because of increasing industrial pollution, he said, New Bedford was "finished as a yachting center. No one goes there if it can be avoided."

The Cruise did return in 1899, with a fleet of steam and sailing yachts that included the America's Cup defense contenders *Columbia* and *Defender*. But the next appearance would not come until 1910, and there were none after 1911, when the string of 25 recorded visits came to an end.

When in 1951 the New Bedford Yacht Club issued a new invitation, Padanarum was the venue. Invitation accepted. (Through 2018, the recorded list of most-frequently visited Buzzards Bay Cruise ports is led by Padanarum [27 visits], New Bedford [25], Mattapoissett [21], and Marion [18].)

Places, People & Postscripts of Possible Interest

A Mansion for Missionaries

An imposing granite residence on County Street was the site of festivities held at the 1856 regatta's close. Built in 1831-32 to the design of Providence architect Russell Warren, the big, columned house pioneered the Greek revival style in New Bedford. The owner: Joseph Grinnell, one of nine children of a New Bedford father who went to sea in whalers and was said to have "prospered greatly" as a merchant captain, generally on voyages to north Europe.

Joseph, too, flourished, but in New York, where he and a cousin established a "mercantile firm." Initially a shipper of whale oil, it segued into the ownership or management of more than 50 vessels, eventually operating as Grinnell, Minturn & Co.

At 51, Joseph returned to New Bedford, where he would shape the city's industrial future, as organizer and first president of Wamsutta Mills. Another credit involved a long-held desire of the NYYC.

In an era in which all vessels had to clear Customs as they proceeded from port to port, John Cox Stevens, the Club's founding commodore, sought freedom for yachts to travel without such a hindrance. It was legislation that Joseph Grinnell introduced during an 1843-51 stint in the U.S. Congress that finally, in August 1848, authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to license "pleasure vessels" and those designed as "models of naval architecture" to bypass such clearances. Asked by the Secretary of the Navy to suggest a "signal" indicating private-yacht status, the NYYC in January 1849 proposed the soon-approved design -- the now familiar "yacht ensign" featuring a fouled anchor encircled by 13 stars.

Although Joseph was not a Club member, several other Grinnells were, among them two younger brothers who had followed him into the Manhattan firm.

One, Moses Hicks Grinnell, expanded its fleet with the purchase of a new Donald McKay clipper named *Flying Cloud*; in 1851 it set a New York-San Francisco record: 89 days, 21 hours. Moses brought his schooner, *Haze*, to the 1856 New Bedford regatta; it won no silver, but Ben Forbes gave *Haze* a hail in his race report: She "was in splendid order, clean as a lady's boudoir, and her crew in uniform."

Moses had noteworthy friends (e.g. Daniel Webster, William H. Seward) and involvements in New York, where he was elected to the U.S. Congress (as a Whig, 1839-41) and worked on the creation of Central Park. He declined election as NYYC's third commodore in 1859, but later served six years (1867-73) as president of the city's venerable Union Club.

His brother Henry, first president of the American Geographical Society, embraced Arctic exploration. Among other undertakings, he financed an 1850 search for the lost Sir John Franklin expedition. His support was saluted in the name given to territory newly discovered in that effort: Grinnell Land. (Henry Grinnell would doubtless take interest in the Arctic studies pursued by current NYYC member John Bockstoce. At the New Bedford Whaling Museum, Bockstoce was Curator of Ethnology from 1974 to 1986, when he began writing full time about the Arctic, principally its history in whaling and the fur trade. Cruise visitors may encounter *Belvedere*, the distinctive 60' cutter on which Bockstoce journeyed for 14,000 miles over six years in Far North waters; it is homeported in New Bedford, where Bockstoce still serves on a Whaling Museum committee.)

A gift from a neighbor

The Whaling Museum's main structure was given to the Old Dartmouth Historical Society in 1906. The former Bank of Commerce Building, it became the core of what is now the museum complex. But not until 1909, after his death at 69, would the donor's name be revealed: Henry Huttleston Rogers.

After a start as a Fairhaven grocery clerk, this bright, driven descendant of *Mayflower* Pilgrims headed for the oil fields of Pennsylvania. He spun early success in refining into key roles at Standard Oil and much else, including a bold venture to bring rail service to the West Virginia coal fields. His success allowed him to build, in 1895, a 35-room mansion in his beloved Fairhaven. And he could get there from his New York office via *Kanawha*, a 227' steam yacht flying the NYYC burgee (he was elected in 1897). In his early post-Gilded Age day, such indulgences brought critics. Ida Tarbell flayed Rogers "as fine a pirate as ever flew his flag on Wall Street." But his benefactions had been numerous. Just in Fairhaven, these included, beginning in 1885, a grammar school, the high school, a public water system, a library, the local Unitarian Church, the town hall, and even a manufacturing business, to provide jobs.

Said a Rogers biographer: "Pitiless in business deals, in his personal affairs he was warm and generous." Among his friends were Booker T. Washington and Mark Twain. A Twain scholar enumerated some of interests shared by the tycoon and the scribbler. "Smoking, billiards, cards, and profanity."

And, he might have added, a similar sense of dismissive humor. In one oft-quoted exchange, a proper New Bedford dowager accosted Twain while strolling down Union Street.

"Mr. Clemens," she began, "how can you be so friendly with a man like Mr. Rogers, whose money is tainted?"

"Right, madam," he responded quickly. "'Taint yours and 'taint mine."

Milestones

According to a 1972 account published for the Mystic Seaport, “the last vessel specially built for whaling” was a brigantine named *Viola*, launched in 1910 in Essex, MA. “She sailed from New Bedford on 5 September 1917 and disappeared without a trace.”

The last whaler to sail out of New Bedford was a 116’ three-masted bark named *Wanderer*. Launched in Mattapoisett in 1878 for New Bedford owners, her whaling voyages – one as long as four years – took her as far as the north Pacific and Arctic oceans. On her final outing, in 1924, she left New Bedford one day in August but soon anchored in Buzzards Bay, west of the Mishaum Ledge buoy, to await favorable winds. When a surprise gale-force nor’easter struck that night, her anchor chain parted and she wound up on the rocky Cuttyhunk shore. No lives were lost, but *Wanderer* could not be saved.

The one remaining American wooden whaleship afloat is the *Charles W. Morgan*, the 107’ three-master maintained as a National Historic Landmark at the Mystic Seaport Museum. Launched in New Bedford in 1841, she is exceeded in age by only one U.S. ship now in the water: the USS *Constitution*, the three-masted “Old Ironsides” launched in 1797 and moored at the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston.