

A Visit to the Whaling Museum Research Library



by Edward
C. Dugan

The New Bedford Crawler Series: New Bedford as seen by the people who live and work there.

As I stepped out of my car on a fall morning in downtown New Bedford, I was drawn by the strong salty smell of the ocean and the omnipresent cry of the local seagulls.

I was looking forward to my interview with Stuart Frank. As curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, I thought that he might have an interesting perspective on local history. After all, isn't whaling what New Bedford's history is all about?

I was not to be disappointed.

Stuart's office is in the New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, located at 791 Purchase Street. His day is filled mainly with research, writing and meetings. He feels that this schedule, only partly accomplished at the museum library, might be atypical for a museum curator and he enjoys the opportunity to spend so much time on writing. Curator Frank also does lectures on subjects such as scrimshaw. Part of Mr. Frank's job is to distinguish between the artwork made by whalers and the artwork made about them. It is the former which he values most.



The New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library is located on 791 Purchase Street.

Due to the extensive collection of whaling records, the library is used by scholars from all over the world. Museum members (and the general public for a small fee) can use the library to research local history, whaling logs and follow up on family genealogy. "We try to shame them into it," Frank chides, noting the value of the library records to collectors in particular.

When Americans started whaling in the 17th century, Europe, Korea and Japan had already been whaling for 5,000 years. But soon New Bedford became such a strong hub in the US whaling industry that, according to Frank, when a whaling ship arrived in New Bedford half of its crew would be made up of local residents. New Bedford also had a strong influence on other U.S. whaling ports such as those in California.

Being a writer himself, Stuart was able to easily hit on and clarify his most important points. "The museum isn't about killing whales, it isn't even about whales, it is about people and whales, but mostly about people," according to Frank. "Frankly, I am not that interested in [the science of] whales, I am interested in people."



Stuart Frank, curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum.

"I have personally met half-a-dozen people who were born on whaling ships. It was normal for a person from New Bedford to have been to Africa, the South Pacific, New Zealand or the Coast of Alaska and Japan." Frank notes the sophistication encountered in some countries such as New Zealand and similar cosmopolitan qualities found in the New Bedford population as a result of worldwide travel.

"New Bedford and Nantucket in the late 18th century and through the 19th century were the only places in the world, and the first places in human history, where there were black people in charge and white people working for them. This included actual African immigrants, not just slaves. The Portuguese population from the Cape Verde islands imparted a whole different flavor than anyplace else in the U.S. This was a place where people of color, including immigrants from foreign countries and those who spoke foreign languages, could come and get a job for the same pay as a white guy and eventually become the boss. This is something that we generally haven't [as a country] quite fully achieved in the 21st Century."

"I dispute the notion that New Bedford was part of the underground railroad. New Bedford was a destination of the underground railroad. If a black person got here, they could

get a job. Until the Fugitive Act was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1854, New Bedford was the only place that a black person, a person of color [or someone of a different religion than the current majority at the time] had the opportunity to live the American Dream. It was whaling and the industry surrounding whaling that made all of this possible.”



Display case with historical whaling artifacts

Stuart went on to tell of the first African-American capitalist, Paul Cuffee, who was from Westport, Massachusetts. He started out as a sailor and boat builder, and from that he “built himself a little empire.” Before he died in 1817, he had been a correspondent with President Madison and a leader in the Back to Africa Movement.

“Twenty-one years later in 1838, by the time that Frederick Douglass got to New Bedford, he couldn’t get a job because the owners of shipyards were afraid that if they hired a black guy, the white guys wouldn’t work. By the time Frederick Douglass made his reputation as an orator and moved to Rochester, New York in 1841, there were plenty of black guys working in the shipyards.”

Stuart Frank is also a musician and music historian. “You needed 35 guys on a whale ship, because you had to hunt whales at some point, but to manage the ship you only needed 12 or

14. So they wrote poems and journals. They sang songs. My interest is in the songs.”



An inside view of the
Whaling Museum Research
Library

Mr. Frank founded the Sea Music Festival at Mystic Seaport and the Mystic Seaport Sea Music Festival symposium.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum was founded in 1903 as the Old Dartmouth Historical Society. The museum library's Kendal Collection was added ten years ago to an already extensive local inventory. According to Stuart, the combination is a “knockout.”

Stuart will be curating an exhibition that will open less than a year from now currently titled “Seven Seas and Seven Continents.” He also has books coming out including a new song book which will be named “Jolly Sailors Bold.”

So after my visit with Stuart Frank, curator, writer, historian, musician and scholar, I realized that my biggest problem was getting all of our interview down to a short story and a few related photos. As Stuart mentioned during the interview, “You can't do it all.” The notion seemed a bit ironic, coming from someone who has come quite close to doing just that.

To be continued I am sure.

Check out Ed's previous spotlight on Joe Jesus.

Saluting Our Veterans: Chris Moniz



by Nate
Winkler

This is the latest installment of Saluting Our Veterans, where we will spotlight local Southcoast residents who have honorably served in the military. You can read our first interview with Pete Despres [here](#).

Name: Chris Moniz

Branch of Service, (Active/Reserve): USMC Active Duty

Years of Service: 4 (Aug. 1993 – Dec. 1997)

Primary Military Occupational Specialty: CH53E Helicopter Mechanic (6113)

Nate: What was the motivating factor for you deciding to serve your country by joining the military?



Chris Moniz

Moniz: I grew up in New Bedford and really lacked direction or a plan. The summer before my senior year of high school I went to talk to the military recruiters, and the Marine recruiter was impressive, both in what he had to offer and his relentless pursuit of getting me to sign on that dotted line. I bought what he was selling and entered the delayed entry program.

Nate: Briefly describe your career/service path (Boot Camp, Duty Stations, Etc.)

Moniz: I shipped out to Parris Island, South Carolina for Basic Training the day after my 18th birthday. From there it was Marine Combat Training at Camp Geiger, North Carolina, then onto Millington, Tennessee for Basic Helicopter School. I then completed schooling at Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, California and was assigned to a squadron on the same base, HMM-465 helicopter. I was deployed to the South Pacific on several occasions, including Okinawa, South Korea, and Thailand, as well as shipboard service on the USS Belleau Wood as part of a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

Nate: Which duty station/deployment were you most fond of and why?

Moniz: Being stationed at Tustin, which is nestled nicely between Los Angeles and San Diego, was a dream. It was unlike anything I had experienced in New England on many levels, and I adapted quite nicely. My brief stay in Thailand was also a memorable experience.

Nate: Did you participate in combat operations? If so could you describe?



The CH53E "Super Stallion" is used for long-range mine sweeping and heavy-lift for the Navy.

Moniz: No, although we were given a Warning Order while I was on the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) for a relief mission in Cambodia. We later stood down.

Nate: Which individual from your service stands out as the one who had the biggest impact on you and why?

Moniz: My Squadron Sergeant Major of HMH-465, SGT. MAJ Donald Franklin, was a man's man. Tough and firm, but was always fair and treated us with dignity and respect. He was the senior enlisted Marine in our squadron for the duration of my time there, and I couldn't imagine having a better leader of Marines.

Nate: How did your military service affect the way you have approached your life and career?

Moniz: The Marine Corps instilled the discipline and "get it done" mentality in me. Things aren't always going to go your way, you just have to fight through it and get the job done. I think in today's world, where so many people expect things to be handed to them, having that mindset is definitely an advantage.

Nate: If you had it to do all over again, would you still have

decided to serve? Would you encourage or discourage your children from joining the military?

Moniz: I absolutely would do it again, I have no regrets whatsoever. As for my children, I would want them to make the best decision for them, but if they had well thought out plan that included military service and learning a trade courtesy of Uncle Sam, I'd have no problem supporting them 100%

Nate: Thank you, Chris for serving our country and for taking the time to share your story with us. "Semper Fidelis", from one Marine to another.

Are you or someone you know a military veteran that would like to be recognized? Let us know by dropping us a line at info@newbedfordguide.com. Any branch of service, wartime or peace, young or old. Every Veteran has a story worth telling.

An Interview with Camille Chu

Find out how this local woman ended up being a huge part of one of the best indie video games of 2010, Chu's Dynasty.

Interview with Tisha "The Lil' Bully" Rodrigues



by
Michael
Silvia

Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) is a brutal sport. It takes strength, endurance, toughness and a certain breed of individual to not only train, but compete in MMA fights. MMA has grown considerably as a sport around the world and Massachusetts is home to some of the best MMA gyms. UFC fighter's Kenny Florian, Marcus Davis and Joe Lauzon are legends from Massachusetts and there are gyms popping up throughout the state. As a fellow practitioner and huge MMA fan, I was pleased to conduct an interview with up-and-coming MMA fighter, mother of three and New Bedford resident Tisha Rodrigues. Check out her website and Facebook Fan Page to follow her fighting career!



What got you into Fitness?

There were a few factors that led me down the path into the fitness industry. One was that I am a very goal-oriented person. I always like to have something I am trying to accomplish, excel at, get better at and prepare for. It's easier for me to get things done that way. It was also because I struggled with anorexia and bulimia for many years and was in the process of overcoming that. I started teaching people that they didn't have to

starve themselves to try and fit the extremely high standard beauty magazines and television had set for them. You can have beautiful muscle tone on your body and be strong and fit and still eat! Actually a person can eat even more, it just has to

be the right foods. A complete healthy lifestyle change.

I also knew that through this, I could share my success story of how I was able to overcome bulimia and anorexia and make a positive change in my life. I'm not just someone saying not to do this or not to do that. I have actually been through it, I'm fighting it, and I'm winning!

And lastly, because I am a mother of three and I wanted to look and feel good again, inside and out. What better way to do this than to have a goal of competing in a fitness competition or modeling for a fitness magazine?

Why did you transition from being a fitness competitor to MMA?

That's easy. The end result was so much more worth it! At the end of a fitness competition, you didn't always come out a winner, even if you looked amazing. You sometimes had as many as 70 other women to compete against, at the end of the show, you'd get a trophy. Although, I snagged five wins in my last year and a half of competition, all the 16 week diets didn't seem worth it to me anymore. I pretty much had accomplished what I set out to do and MMA just seemed so much more gratifying personally.



As an MMA fighter you train in many different arts, having to excel at not one, but all of them to be the best. To get inside the cage after an 8-12 week fight camp and be able to showcase your talent like that is amazing. If you come out victorious, you get the trophy and the glory, for what seemed to me, so much more than just what my body looked like on stage. Two opponents step in the cage and only one steps out the winner. No one is judging my symmetry, I ate real food through my fight camp and I don't feel like I'm going to pass out under the bright lights. I don't mean this as a slight against figure, fitness or bodybuilding competitors. I had a

passion for those competitions for seven years of my life. It was just a personal decision of mine to do something that made me feel empowering, strong, and unstoppable. To me that was worth more.

To put it plainly, after a fight whether I won or lost, I really wasn't losing anything. I learn from my losses and feel great in my wins. Something that started out as a way to get in shape for my shows stole my heart and told me that now I was where I belonged.

What is your record?

2-1 as an amateur MMA fighter. I also do grappling tournaments. I won a gold medal back in May of this year, one month after receiving my Blue Belt. It was unbelievable,



What is your Ultimate goal in MMA?

To get to the top of course. I would love to be on Strikeforce or Bellator (fighting championships, similar to Ultimate Fighting Championship or UFC) someday. Everyone wants to be the best in their weight class and that's what I'm striving to be. I have many top competitors to get through in

order to get there, so I just have to stay focused and dedicated to the task at hand. I must always remember why I do this at the end of the day, and that is because I love it. I need to stay true to myself and continue to evolve as a fighter. There is never going to be a fight where I don't leave it all in the cage or a grappling tournament that I don't leave it all on the mat. If I come out guns blazing every single time, then, that's all I can do.

I spend a lot of my time promoting myself so that I have other avenues to venture into within the sport. When I can no longer fight for a living, I want to have something else going for me within the sport. This is important because I love it so much, I don't want to do anything else.

Any Upcoming fights?

Yes. One possible fight withing the next month or so, and one in February. I don't want to say much more than that at the moment.

You are from Rhode Island. What brought you to New Bedford?



I grew up in Woonsocket, RI. I moved to Florida in my sophomore year, finished high school down there, and then came back to Rhode Island where my friends were. I really never liked Florida. When I met my husband Mark, who was born and raised in New Bedford, we decided to settle in our first

apartment here in the city. Then we moved to Dartmouth for four years and, ironically enough, landed back in New Bedford only one street off from where we started out 14 years before that.

What advice to you have for females thinking about becoming a MMA fighter?

Oh, I have been asked this question before, but today, I'm going to answer it a bit differently. The biggest problem is that everyone wants to be an MMA fighter, much like the way every girl wants to be a model. It's so mainstream now that some parts of it are just getting out of hand. I say this because I believe women are getting into MMA for the wrong reasons. They see females like Gina Carano (a beautiful MMA fighter who has had great success) and they assume it's just that easy. They all want to be the "next" Gina Carano but, sadly, it doesn't work that way. For the women who are truly dedicated to the sport in each and every aspect it brings bad publicity.

I see women who are getting in the cage with absolutely no training at all. I have heard them say, "How hard can it be?" They want to become famous from MMA and be recognized as the pretty girl who fights. It's just ridiculous. Gina may be beautiful, but she is beautiful, extremely powerful and talented. Good looks were not winning her fights at the end of the day.

In this sport if you have good looks and talent, you will be golden, but if you think you can just step in the cage and fight and get into Strikeforce, your imagination is running ahead of you. Fighting is a job, just like any other; It's full-time. You have to learn, train, evolve, eat right, weight train and promote yourself, on top of everyday life. If you seriously want to fight, if you are ready to give 100% of yourself, say goodbye to your social life because any extra time you have will be spent training, training and training.

And if you are with the “right” fight camp, when it comes down to you actually doing your training for an upcoming fight, be prepared. A true fighter eats, sleeps, trains and repeats. I will personally fight no more than two times each year, not including grappling tourneys, because I am married with three children. I can’t train like a single fighter who can come and go and train as they please with no one that they have to take care of at the end of the day. I’m so dedicated year round and obviously more so when I have an upcoming fight, it doesn’t leave as much special family time for me as I would like. So when I’m done with a fight, I take a small timeout from training and spend lots of extra time with my kids.

My husband is my main training partner, so we are seldom apart. I’m just fortunate enough that my children are involved in the sport and training with us on most days. Plus, my fight camp, “The Boneyard,” is like second family to me, so the kids are always welcome there.

You can see why I say I would only fight about twice per year because it’s not just about the actual date of the fight, but everything leading up to it that is extremely time consuming. To make it the long haul, you have to be for real at the end of the day. Once you honestly see what it takes to fight and do something with your fighting, I’m pretty sure that alone weeds out the people who can’t handle it and leaves only serious athletes.

If you are a female who thinks they have what it takes, after all that I have just said, then go for it. Find a good school, check out some classes and give it a shot. Of course female fighters want to see more female fighters. We want a bigger pool of women to compete with and we could all use the support. We all want to see the sport grow in a positive light.

In fact, I encourage women to take up MMA as long as they

know it takes a special kind of woman to follow through and stick with it. We aren't all cut out for all things. We try some things that we know automatically are not for us, and perhaps, there is something you would be great at that you have not tried. I just want to continue to see women's MMA grow in the right direction with the right women behind it who are in it for the right reasons.

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Sara Shaughnessy Interview



by
Eric
Bayli
es

Nestled in between New Bedford and Fall River, WUMD 89.3 of UMass, Dartmouth has been broadcasting alternatives to the mainstream for roughly 40 years. I spoke to Sara Shaughnessy (radio name Shaugy) recently about the spirit of radio.

How did you get into radio at such a young age? What are some of the changes you have witnessed?

Sara: I got into it so that I could play all sorts of music—especially more than the music that was being played on the big stations. I have been a DJ at WUMD for approximately 12 years. College radio has changed a little bit as has all music with the accessibility of music with computers and the internet. We have been keeping up with the “Joneses”. We are

streaming online here. When I started at the station, It was 91.1 WSMU and changed in June of 2006 to 89.3 WUMD expanding the broadcast area. and boosting our wattage from 1,200 to 9,600. During my show you will hear a lot of rock, some reggae, some techno, some blues, celtic, and anything else I might be feeling frisky with at the time.



For many years you hosted the local show. You now host more of a regular show, which is fine, but how come there is no local show when there are now more bands than ever?

Sara: I do try to play a good amount of local stuff throughout the show. There is no Local Anesthesia running at this time, however I do not know sure if there are any shows specifically devoted to playing music from the local area. I believe there is a training class in session right now. The training courses usually run at the beginning of each semester.

You have been doing this since high school. How long will you continue and do you have any interest in jumping ship to a commercial station?

Sara: I don't foresee myself leaving anytime soon. I have taken time off before, so that may be a possibility in the future. I do not wish to move on to a bigger station because then I wouldn't be able to play all the great music that I have the freedom to play now. I am my own producer and I choose the playlists. On the bigger stations (the ones that pay you) you don't have that freedom. You are only allowed to play what the music director gives you- which is made up mostly of newer singles given the station by record companies. And I would probably have to sound happy all the

time.

You can catch Sara's show Tuesdays from noon to 3pm, or listen anytime for a greater variety than you will hear elsewhere locally. She has probably played more local music than any other DJ in the history of the station and now you can hear her spinning her other favorites as well. Who is the best local dj? Its Shaugy, its Shaugy, its Shaugy!

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Interview with Penny Dreadful of Shilling Shockers



by
Eric
Bayli
es

What says Halloween in New Bedford more than homegrown horror hostess Penny Dreadful? I spoke with the darling of the undead to get ready for trick or treating.

What got you into hosting a program featuring horror flicks?

Penny Dreadful: Well, I've been doing the witch thing for almost 700 years now. Roundabout 1932 I got into acting, so I decided to cut some corners and cast a spell to become a horror movie star. Unfortunately, I drank too much hemlock brew that night and the spell backfired. Instead of becoming a horror star, I became a horror host! Anyway, long story

short, I recently found a way to remove the spell, but I'm having so much fun showing the creepy movies I decided to keep on doing it.

Tell me a little about the program.



Penny Dreadful: 'Shilling Shockers' is a hosted horror movie show. I, the witch Penny Dreadful, introduce vintage horror flicks on TV every week. We've shown films like 'Crypt of the Living Dead,' 'Carnival of Souls,' and 'House On Haunted Hill.' I'm joined by my snarling darling Garou the werewolf and by Dr. Von Bulow the semi-retired vampire hunter. 'Shilling Shockers' currently airs in over 150 cities and towns on public access stations throughout New England. We are currently shooting our 8th season and have snazzy DVD box sets of earlier seasons available on our site. You can also find TV listings there to see when we're airing in your town.

What do you have coming up?

Penny Dreadful: We'll be haunting the Rock & Shock convention in Worcester on October 15, 16 and 17. On October 29th we'll be part of the Halloween Spooktacular (Part One) at Gallery X in New Bedford with the Viennagram, the Ergot Players and Carl Simmons & the Human Orchids. We'll also be premiering a new Halloween Special on TV. It's a crossover with fantastic Nashville, Tennessee horror host Dr. Gangrene and it's called 'The Dreadful HallowGreen Special.' In the special, Penny Dreadful and Dr. Gangrene team up to save Halloween. Be true to your ghou! and have a hex-cellent Halloween.

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