

## Itinerary for a Chaperone-Led Tour

### Shoreside Industries

#### *How to Use This Guide:*

Even though interpreters are present in most exhibits, we recommend that teachers and chaperones employ strategies of “guided exploration” to arrive at conclusions to the questions listed below. By exploring the exhibits and reading labels rather than simply asking for answers from museum staff right away, students tend to interpret the information in a deeper and more integrated way. Some exhibits are quite small. To make the most of your exploration, the exhibits can be visited in any order

At Mystic Seaport Museum, our 19<sup>th</sup> century village represents an active New England maritime community. Sailors depended on industries which flourished in seafaring towns and cities to feed, clothe, house, provision, build, equip, rig and outfit themselves and their ships. Explore the following exhibits to discover how intertwined shore-side industries were with sailors, ships and cargoes from around the world.

#### *The Enduring Understanding:*

Shoreside industries including shipsmithing, chandleries, ropewalks, sailmaking, coopering, shipyards provided specialized products and services. This created a demand for skilled labor, training and employment in local communities and also enabled 19<sup>th</sup> century ships and their crews to sail further and longer than ever before. Which businesses were replaced by modern technology? Which remain?

### Shipyard (Building #2)

Visit the *Thames Keel* and the [Restoring an Icon](#) exhibit in the Shipyard Gallery.

- Why is the keel called the “backbone of the ship?”  
*The keel is the center piece around which the rest of the ship is laid.*
- What kind of specialized tools and techniques did shipwrights use to create massive wooden ships like the *Charles W. Morgan* in the days before steam power and electricity?  
*Many of them are similar to today, only hand powered: drills/augurs, saws, hammers, planers, axes, steam boxes...*
- Do any of the tools look like ones you have seen before?

### Sail Loft (#20)

- Why was a sail loft important to the shipping industry 150 years ago?  
*It would be awfully hard to make a wind powered vessel move without any sails.*
- What type of tools did sailmakers use?  
*Strong needles, palms (a partial glove to protect the hand), sailmaker’s bench and, later, sewing machines.*
- Were the sails stitched only by hand?  
*After the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sewing machines became available.*

### Chandlery (#20)

- What kind of store do we have now that sells the same type of things?  
*A ship’s outfitters.*
- List 5 items that you would bring with you for a 3 year voyage. (Remember that they have to fit inside a sea chest!)
- Notice the store display signs. What kinds of products are offered for sale?

## Ropewalk (#19)

- Why is this building shaped the way it is?  
*The longer the building, the longer the rope it could produce.*
- How long was this building in its original location in Plymouth, MA?  
*Four times the length (1,060 feet). If we didn't shorten it here at Mystic, it would stick out over the water!*
- What are two main uses for rope on a sailing ship?  
*Operating the sails; rope ladders such as ratlins.*
- What is a rope called on a ship?  
*Once a rope is put on board a ship and used, it is a line forever after.*

## Shipsmith Shop (#22)

- Why is the craftsman in this shop not called a blacksmith?  
*He makes tools and implements for ships!*
- Look up at the bellows and figure out how it effects the heat on the forge.  
*The bellows blows air up through the bottom of the fire pit, which brings more oxygen to the fire and makes it much hotter.*
- Can you find examples of the smith's work which would be used onboard a ship?  
*Harpoons, oar locks, knives, skimmers, flensing irons, dippers, killing lances...*

## Cooperage (#29)

- Why was a cooperage so important to 19<sup>th</sup> century trade?  
*In an age before plastic containers, casks could and did store almost anything: food, water, alcohol, liquids, dry goods and more.*
- What was the traditional way to become a cooper?  
*Completing an apprenticeship.*
- Would a cooper ever go to sea as part of a ship's crew? Why or why not?  
*Very often, particularly on whaleships. A cooper would be responsible for maintaining and creating casks for storage, especially whale oil storage. On voyages without a carpenter on board, the cooper, also a skilled woodworker, would have even more to do*
- From the other exhibits you have visited, name 4 items that would be stored in casks for a voyage.  
*Whale oil, water, liquor, salt pork, hardtack, rice, beans, flour...*
- Can you find the best size and design for each of the items?

## Shipcarver's Shop (#25)

- Why was it vital to the sailors that the shipbuilders, sail makers, chandlers, ropemakers, smiths, coopers and shipcarvers do their jobs well?  
*Seafaring men's lives literally depended on reliable and well-made materials.*
- Would you rather be a sailor or a shore-side craftsman?
- What is the name for carved human figures mounted on ships?  
*Figureheads.*

## Related Demonstrations

See "Today's Activities" sheet for times and locations of demonstrations related to Shoreside Industries.

## Vocabulary

**Apprentice** a young person bound to an older craftsman in order to learn a trade

<b>Cargo</b>	items being transported by ship at a price
<b>Chandlery</b>	a shop selling nautical items for boats, ships, and sailors; ship's outfitters
<b>Rigging</b>	line, wire, chain etc. used to support a ship's masts and handle sails
<b>Seachest</b>	wooden trunk containing all of a sailor's personal belongings

## **Further Reading**

Adkins, Jan. *Wooden Ship*.

Hamilton, Georgia W. *Silent Pilots: Figureheads in Mystic Seaport Museum*.

Lathan, Jean Lee. *Carry on Mr. Bowditch*.

Story, Dana A. *The Building of a Wooden Ship: "Sawn Frames and Trunnel Fastened."*