LEARNING THE SHIPWRIGHT’S TRADE

By MATT BARNES

O n June 15, 2014, sitting on top of a mooring in the middle of the harbor in Newport, R.I., I found myself in a moment of total amazement. Fourteen hours earlier the last wooden whaleship in the world, the Charles W. Morgan, left the dock in New London to embark on a three-month tour of the northeast whaling ports. I was tasked with the helm of her tender, the 28’ high bottom inflatable Bombardier. Now, after a long, hot trip, averaging 5 knots in an open center console, I was surrounded by hundreds of boats, staring at the Morgan’s bow trying to attach two 8” shackles while sitting atop this mooring. Then, things seem to stop. I sat back, took in what was going on and found myself amazed but not surprised. This was just another day working for Mystic Seaport.

In 2010, I graduated from the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS). Being in the marine trades since I was 12, IYRS was an inevitable path. Growing up on the water, sailing in the Thimble Islands off the coast of Stony Creek, CT, I fell in love with boats and boating. I guess I can say working with my hands is in my blood. I come from a very long line of shipwrights and being the first in my family to pursue a life of restoration on the water did not come easy.

I moved back to Connecticut after receiving a phone call from the boatyard. I worked for myself doing carpentry department for their service yard. After a year working for Morris, I moved back to Connecticut where I worked for myself doing a few restorations and building a 28’ composite powerboat hull.

My return to Mystic Seaport came in November of 2012, after receiving a phone call from shipwright Walter Ansley saying that they needed help with the Morgan. I dropped what I was doing and came to work for the Museum. I had originally been hired only until the launch of the Morgan, but now, over three years later, I feel like an intrinsic part of the Shipyard and this unique and amazing Museum.

The day-to-day life of working as a shipwright is ever changing. Given the opportunity to work on projects that I would not find anywhere else in the world, gives me the ability to learn skills from masters of the trade. Whether it is learning to swing an adz from Roger Hambidge, or how to run the 1930s circular saw mill from Scott Nosworthy, I’m always learning and always trying to absorb all that I can.

Mystic Seaport is the repository of a wealth of knowledge that only can be preserved by passing it along generation to generation. Being “young” in this field I feel obligated to learn all that I can to keep these skills and traditions alive and is imperative for Mystic Seaport to keep moving forward as well.

return immediately. Three weeks before graduation, I was hired by Morris Yachts in Bass Harbor, ME, and went to work running the carpentry department for their service yard. After a year working for Morris, I felt obligated to learn all that I can to keep these skills and traditions alive and this is imperative for Mystic Seaport to keep moving forward as well.
**Perpetuate Your Annual Fund Gift to Mystic Seaport Through a Bequest Gift to the General Endowment**

**Plan your gifts to charity to maximize impact and benefit to you**

- Rather than giving cash to a charity, consider giving appreciated securities and using your cash to replace those shares at a stepped up basis.
- Rather than giving cash to charity, consider purchasing additional life insurance with the funds and naming the charity as the beneficiary.
- If you are aged 70 1/2 and required to take a mandatory minimum distribution from your IRA, consider making a qualified gift to charity directly from your IRA and minimize your income taxes.

**Qualified Gifts to Charity (Charitable IRA Rollover)**

In December of 2015, Congress passed the PATH Act (Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes). This act contained language making permanent the Charitable Rollover Provision in the tax code. Beginning in 2016, taxpayers aged 70 1/2 and older who are required to take a mandatory minimum distribution from their IRA accounts will be permitted to directly transfer up to $100,000 to a qualified charity. Such transfers can be applied against the mandatory minimum distribution requirement but they are not counted as part of the taxpayer’s adjusted gross income. For many donors this tax treatment is more favorable than the standard tax deduction for this same gift.

As with any philanthropic decision, please consult with your own qualified financial, legal and/or tax advisor before making any decisions about your charitable giving, will or estate plans.

**Supporting the Charles W. Morgan by Melinda Carlisle**

I have been a member and supporter of Mystic Seaport since 1988. In my profession as a Mystic realtor and business owner, I am keenly aware of the important role of Mystic Seaport in our community. I have always been a champion and advocate for the Museum and often introduce my clients to Mystic Seaport when they move to town.

So, it was no surprise to me when I was invited to a meeting at the Museum in early 2011 to participate in a conversation about the ongoing restoration of the Charles W. Morgan. What was news, however, was that Mystic Seaport had decided to take the Charles W. Morgan to sea at the conclusion of her restoration and that the Museum was looking to the local community to help.

It came to pass that in the spring of 2011, I joined Mystic Seaport Trustee Searle Field as Co-Chair of the Sail the Morgan 2014 campaign. Who could ignore such a great opportunity or refuse such a unique invitation? Our goal was to lead a community-wide effort to raise awareness of the importance of the Morgan’s presence here, her history and the daring adventure in store for her when she returned to the open seas in 2014.

In November 2011, we began with a celebration of the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the Morgan to Mystic. We established “Morgan Week” with fireworks and lantern lighting, restaurant week, historical lectures, and music in the park in downtown Mystic—all designed to bring the community together in shared activities to benefit all. Several of these activities have become annual events. We conducted private group tours of the Morgan, hosted dinner parties, and invited local companies to participate in our efforts. All with the goal in mind to raise funds so the Morgan could go on her 38th Voyage.

As you all know by now, our efforts combined with those of the shipwrights, educators, advancement officers, Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers of Mystic Seaport met with success and the Morgan let slip her mooring lines from the Museum’s Henry B. duPont Preservation Shipyard to sail forth to inspire a new generation. During this voyage, her cargo was neither baleen nor whale oil, but rather knowledge and inspiration.

The job is never over, the work never done. The Charles W. Morgan requires continuous care and attention if she is to survive and inspire our grandchildren. It is with that passion for the Morgan and my belief in the vital role of Mystic Seaport in our lives and our community, then please join me and name Mystic Seaport as a beneficiary in your estate plans.

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**FRED & HELGA KERTULA**

Helga grew up on the coastline of Germany. Her father was in the German Navy and then the merchant marine. He ultimately owned and operated his own freighters. Helga says she must live by the sea and that Mystic Seaport reminds her of her youth and her family’s heritage.

When she and Fred were ready to retire, one of the reasons they chose to join the community at Stoneridge in Mystic, CT, was to be close to Mystic Seaport. Helga and Fred wish to safeguard Mystic Seaport for future generations and have provided for the Museum in their estate plans. Through this generous act of philanthropy, they are carrying forward a family legacy of passion for the sea and all things maritime. We are pleased to welcome them as members of the Charles K. Stillman Legacy Society at Mystic Seaport.

To learn how you can create a lasting legacy through your estate plans, contact the Advancement office at 860-572-5365 or go to our website at [www.mysticseaport.org/legacygiving](http://www.mysticseaport.org/legacygiving).

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**Society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.”**

—Anonymous Greek Proverb

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**HONORING A FAMILY’S HERITAGE**

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**Supporting the Charles W. Morgan through a bequest gift to the general endowment**

**IF YOUR ANNUAL FUND GIFT IS**

- $500
- $1,000
- $5,000
- $10,000
- $25,000

**PERPETUATE IT WITH AN ENDOWMENT GIFT OF**

- $10,000
- $20,000
- $100,000
- $200,000
- $500,000

Illustration assumes a 5% draw on endowment.