

## **GOT SHIPS? LIVING HISTORY INTERPRETATION IN MARITIME SETTINGS A Transferable Model**

Given at Eighth Annual Maritime Heritage Conference, San Diego CA 10/9/07  
by David Hirzel, Volunteer General Coordinator, Hyde Street Pier Living History Players  
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park  
650-757-6604 <sfmaritime1901@sbcglobal.net>

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tall ships, historic ships, ship museums—in one way or another, these are all educational complexes. They help us understand who we are today and who we might become by providing that tangible link to our past, through a deeper understanding of our own history. They offer to the public at large a glimpse of man's place in that part of the world—the watery part—that is by nature remote, alien, inaccessible.

Man has always been drawn to the water's edge, to look out over the far horizon and wonder what lies beyond. It is this urge that first prompted him to venture offshore in flimsy reed boats and dugout canoes. This urge propelled him onward to the discovery and exploration of all the world's shores, but the vessels, the ships, the essence and scope of his evolving technological capacity, enabled such discovery, and, in its wake, trade and commerce. The ships are the tangible artifacts of this drive, the impulse to know the earth and its seas made manifest.

The ships are the link that joins us all, whether we come from inland farmland or urban cityscape or the crowded shores where most of the earth's populace make their homes almost within sight of the water. They are the link of commerce over the blue water between continents today, and the bridge between us and the past that has, through trade and discovery and warfare, shaped the world in which we live.

For those who are not already members of this community of ships, they may continue to be, like the water upon which they float, remote, alien, inaccessible. Museums take particular care to provide exhibits which will guide the visitor through his experience, and docents who can knowledgeably explain the various fascinating aspects of the artifacts of maritime technology in view. Historic ships, docked at piers or in the earth in urban 21<sup>st</sup> century environments, provide a static view of the physical existence of the ship, often combined with self-guided tours of exhibits of explanation. Tall ships, often government-sponsored for the invaluable training of sea cadets which is their primary mission, and the graceful showing of the flag which is their secondary mission, are frequently off-limits to the general public.

All these missions are vitally important to the core principle of maintaining a sense of our continuing heritage to the sea. But, without care, they may be missing a vital, intimate, human connection, which says *this ship is your ship, its past is your past*. This connection can be made, and reinforced, with the careful use of Living History.

## LIVING HISTORY

The term Living History is variously applied, in museum and historical educational environments, to middle-school “Age of Sail” programs, re-enactments of historical events, theatrical re-creations of the lives of famous people, costumed docents in museum settings performing routine tasks of bygone days. In larger, full-immersion environments such as Plimoth Plantation with its *Mayflower* and Jamestown Settlement with its *Discovery*, *Godspeed*, and *Susan Constant*, Living History programs may offer paid positions to re-enactors. While the term may be used to describe any of these facets of historical interpretation, in this paper Living History refers to costumed docents acting out, in first person characterization, roles demonstrating crafts and processes how and as they were performed in some specific period of the past.

A Living History Program need not be elaborate or expensive to be effective. At a number of maritime museums around the country host informal, ad-hoc groups of enthusiastic volunteers who come in period costume to engage visitors with their enthusiasm and knowledge. In San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park at Hyde Street Pier (hereafter in this paper called “the Park”), the Living History Players portray—in effect, become—the sailors, officers, citizens, tradesmen, and travelers found populating Hyde St. Pier in the year 1901. The organization of this group provides a model for a simply created and inexpensively run Living History Program that may be easily used at any Maritime Heritage Museum or Site.

## SHIP AS COMMUNITY

The Park, with the ships on display in its collection, constitutes a museum—a place of exhibits and placards, artifacts and reproductions of artifacts. Each historic ship in its collection is a surviving artifact of human ingenuity and commerce as understood and practiced in a bygone era, and rendered obsolete by the evolving uses of technology.

The ships can also be seen as a self-contained communities governed by hierarchy and interdependence, driven by shared effort by specialists and generalists in the maritime arts alternating with shared leisure. Museum-ships themselves were once members of a larger maritime community of vessels pursuing their destinies in warfare as well as commerce and exploration.

By far the largest community of ships that once sailed the blue ocean was that engaged in commerce. The community of commerce is epic in scale, global in scope, universal in its reach. One has only to turn in a 360 degree circle—in *whatever place one happens to be*—to set eyes on something that has arrived there from a foreign land, by ship. Today’s ships will appear somewhere, as tomorrow’s Maritime Museums.

The ships, by their overwhelming infusion into the fabrics of our lives, can be used as teaching tools. They can reveal as few other museums can how we are all engaged in a community, each playing a specialized role of inherent value to that community. Visitors become aware of the fact that the concerns of our daily lives are the same wherever and whenever we may have lived. These concerns--how and what do we require for daily food and shelter, how do our loved ones fare in our absence, what do we do for a living,

what is the value and reward for our efforts, how will we get along when this job is over and the next not yet begun, how will we provide for ourselves in our dotage—have changed but little since the ancient rise of mankind.

### BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS

Since the ship is considered to be a microcosmic community, the Living History Players need to relate to it and to each other as practitioners of various maritime arts. However, in this they may be separated from the visitor to the Park by a barrier of “otherness”, i.e. “*I am a sailor splicing a line in 1901, you are a visitor from 2007, watching me do it*”. The environment, the craft, and the costume are alien too, because they are radically different from, the casual visitor’s everyday experience.

It is the very essence of Living History, to break down that alienation, that barrier, separating the present from the past. It is that first-person characterization, that one-to-one conversation between citizen and working person 1901, and citizen and working person 2007, concerning their everyday lives, about making one’s living, about making one’s way in the world, that connects the two worlds together. We are all, no matter whether we live in 1776, or 1901, or 2007, consumed with the process of living our lives out in the world in which we have been born. We have more in common with each other, no matter what the era of our lives, than many would believe. Living History, at its best, reveals to everyone how the human condition, with its aspirations and its liabilities, does not change as the centuries roll along.

### HISTORY COMES ALIVE

History—we study it in textbooks during our public education, because we are required to. We ponder pages upon pages of text with captioned photographs and maps and lists of questions at the ends of each paragraph, all seemingly overly concerned with the names of people and places, and dates describing notable events. For many people it remains lodged in that format.

We in the maritime history community have been lucky enough to find a larger scope. We have chosen ships and their extended human families as personal fields of study. We are already blessed with a vision of a larger sphere, the interwoven nature of human endeavor and commerce. Our mission as Living Historians is to make this vision apparent to all who come—to the casual park or museum visitor, to scholars of many disciplines, to schoolchildren in their sailing-ship overnights and day sails, to the Patrick O’Brian reader who boards a historic topsail schooner for an adventure sail.

In the best of situations, Living History re-enactors go about their interpretive business in an overall physical environment where everything in view—all buildings, artifacts, even the cobbled paving of the streets—is consistent with that of a re-created world of a bygone day. The visitor may be transported to that a universe where the only evidences of his twenty-first century life are the clothing he wears and the digital cameral around his neck. Such a full-immersion environment is of inestimable value in establishing a context for Living History, but for most ship museums the ships themselves are berthed

where modern piers and facilities in an urban setting where reminders of present-day life are inescapably in view.

#### ENTERING ANOTHER WORLD

However, once a visitor passing over the gangway has crossed the water and boarded a historic ship, he has by that act crossed over into a world entirely different from that of his shorebound life. The deck beneath his feet is subtly alive with the gentle motion of the harbor's low waves. The ship's rail serves as a visible manifestation of an invisible shield separating his new, maritime, historic setting from that time and place he has just departed. Below decks, the illusion is even more complete; everything in view, from the ship's frames and, the beams overhead, the artifacts of sea-life that have been carefully positioned by the museum, to the mobile view from a porthole, serves to enhance the impression he has entered another world.

Within these smaller, self-contained environments, ship parks and museums can make the best use of Living History to add life and vigor to otherwise static exhibits, and to illustrate the lifestyles and maritime arts of another era. The visitor has already made his interest known by coming aboard. It is the task of Living history to gratify that interest, to entertain and engage, to educate without lecturing, to instill the idea that though the realities of our lives may be different from those who have lived before, we are still much the same. In our needs for food and shelter and a means to attain them and our hopes and desires for a better world for ourselves and our children, have not changed. We live in communities where our shared lives, whether as seamen bound into a cohesive crew or as citizens of a city thriving on maritime commerce, are but links between the past and the future.

#### THE YEAR IS 1901

On the second Saturday of each month, visitors entering Hyde Street Pier are handed a flyer informing them that, on the pier, the year is 1901, and some of the people they will meet there are living the lives they led a century ago. All possible effort is made to use the actions, manners, and spoken words of the denizens of the living waterfront so that the visitor to the Park may be transported back in time. The use of first-person characterization enables one-on-one, face-to-face conversation between the inhabitants of one year and another a century later, in which the twenty-first century citizen becomes aware that, though centuries may separate the present from the past, our humanity and our travails and aspirations as human beings, remain essentially the same.

#### CASUAL ENCOUNTERS

Taking ships and their enclosed spaces as stages for first-person interpretation, any number of venues may be found for visitor-docent interaction. "Green hands" may be quickly trained in the coordinating effect of a shanty in raising a staysail. Anyone may take a peek into the Carpenter's shop or the Bosun's locker and have a chat with those worthies engaged in the pursuit of their maritime trades. Aft, the Captain and his wife hold court in the cabin, entertaining callers. In the fo'c'sle the sailors are relaxing during their off-watch, mending their gear and chatting about their remembered shore-lives and adventures at sea. During the dogwatches the sailors concertinas and songbooks make an

appearance, and visitors aboard are encouraged to join in the fun. On one of the coasters riding at anchor, the ship's cook is preparing a meal for the hands aboard. The ferry is populated with passengers en route to their workaday endeavors, or homeward bound from them. The ferry's chief engineer is giving a tour of the engine room to those who seem to have an interest in things mechanical.

Within each of these smaller environments, shielded from the twenty-first century by either the solid walls of the ships' own sides, or by the invisible barrier that arises from the rail and the separating water, the illusion of a bygone era may be completely rendered. These are the stages where Living History can make its most effective impression. All that is needed are the costumed interpreters, the Living History Players engaged in the pursuits that are mundane to their nineteenth or early-twentieth century lives.

It is in the (seemingly) casual conversations that can take place between the Living Historians and their guests aboard that a human connection can be made, and a painless education instilled, between the past and the present. If it is true that people remember 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they read, 50% of what they see, and 90% of what they do, then it is in the doing—in the engagement of these same activities and conversations—that museum-visitors come away from his experience with the most effective education. They have come with an expectation of having an existing interest enlarged and expanded, and that expectation has been fulfilled.

To attain this result, three things are needed:

1. A ship, or a maritime-centered museum environment;
2. A corps of knowledgeable volunteers who enjoy dressing-up and role-playing;
3. An institution, which will support them both.

## THE SHIPS

The ship-museums, and their enthusiastic supporters, may be found wherever maritime history exists, along freshwater inland lakes and rivers as well as saltwater ports and harbors. Those supporters, many of them volunteers with their own innate interests and fields of study, can be the raw material of Living History. Each volunteer becomes a "character" and develops a name and story built on his or her own knowledge and interests. A woman may be a sea captain's wife or widow, the daughter of the ship's owner, or a ferry passenger. Men take the more traditional roles of cooks, carpenters, able-bodied seamen, engineers, and officers. Women may also dress as men and take the role of sailors or cabin boys – as many women actually did.

## THE COSTUMED VOLUNTEERS

Within the program itself, standards of costume and interaction must prevail. Costuming, to be effective, must be carefully researched and created to be period-authentic in every detail. "Old clothes" will not do. While a seaman's or longshoreman's working-class shirts and overalls remain remarkably the same over a range of decades, well-to-do attire changes with the changing world of fashion. A captain's business attire or a lady's dress of 1901 will differ noticeably different from those of 1896 and 1906. Work-boots, sea-

boots, and ordinary shoes of one era may look much like those of another, but the soles must be of leather. Modern-day eyeglasses will spoil an otherwise carefully rendered effect. Every Living History program should have a costume coordinator whose own studies on the subject will lead to knowledgeable decisions on what is or is not appropriate for an authentic period appearance to the clothing, and how best to inexpensively achieve that look for a large cast of characters.

Two other offices within the volunteer Living History Players need to be considered. A General Coordinator should be named to be the group's official liaison with the Park's administration, to ensure clear communication in each direction of all protocols and objectives. A Historian can develop timelines and fact-sheets to help avoid anachronisms and confirm the historical accuracy of language and technological usage. These offices, along with that of Costume Coordinator, can be filled by individuals who have the time and personal interest to assume the duties required.

The costumed interpreters themselves will each bring to the program their individual interest and knowledge of the maritime subject matter essential to the fulfillment of their chosen roles. The corps of volunteers already involved at ship parks reveals, by their presence, an abiding interest in ships and the sea, which can be concentrated and conveyed to visitors by Living History interaction

#### BUDGETARY MATTERS

The cost of establishing a Living History Program need not be prohibitively expensive. While a seed-money grant for initial costumes and props would be useful in launching a program, its absence does not necessarily preclude a start. If there is no funding in the institutional budget to support the program, the volunteers themselves may provide their own costumes with a very modest personal investment. Since historical re-enacting generally is an avocation pursued by thousands, an entire cottage industry supplying historically accurate costume and props already exists to serve this market. Maritime Living Historians can individually outfit their chosen characters from these sources, or make their own clothing from available historically accurate patterns. Footwear and props can be found by careful shopping at thrift stores, and vintage clothing outlets.

Historical accuracy for many periods is not difficult to document. Internet search engines are becoming more and more user-friendly. Large urban and academic libraries offer extensive resources and archives, and research materials not locally available can be obtained through interlibrary loans. Inexpensive paperbound reprints of past years' Sears Catalogue are readily available and provide a wealth of detail about commonplace items of yesteryear such as clothing, tools, and other consumer products.

The museums themselves provide the ships and working environments. They already have in place protocols for volunteer registration and liability insurance. The Living Historians themselves provide their own research material, training, costuming, and organizational documents. Other than the cost of designating a staff member to provide liaison and institutional oversight, the addition of a Living History Program need cost nothing more.

## THE INSTITUTIONS: SUPPORT AND STANDARDS

The institution's role includes a careful oversight as to the quality of interpretation proposed by any Living History program. Living History players must adhere consistently to the **Mission** and the **Primary Interpretive Themes** of the museum or ship. It is also essential that the Living History Players be carefully inducted as members of an ongoing program, and educated periodically. This may include attendance at seminar, recommended reading assignments to ensure uniform standards of interpretation and expectations of behavior. It is also essential that the museum institution value and support the interpretive mission and the people willing to volunteer their time with the Living History program.

Each Living History program must maintain a documented internal set of expectations for behavior and interaction, and must plan intensive training sessions, at least annually, to refresh each member's sense of mission, and hone his interactive skills. This document and scheduled training need not be exhaustive, or professionally written and produced, but they must be clearly presented and adopted by the group as a whole, to establish the principles under which everyone agrees to operate.

Interpretation within a museum setting can be a rather precise and academic field, beyond the scope of this paper to properly address. Each Park will have its own regulations governing staff and volunteer interaction with the public, and standards of interpretation, which must be acknowledged and understood by everyone, concerned. Many will be based on the fundamental concepts established by Freeman Tilden in his seminal work *Interpreting Our Heritage*.

### **Tilden's Six Principles of Interpretation**

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based on information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach.

Interpretation endeavors to inspire rather than teach, to express ideas and values rather than facts and figures. Too much information can smother an otherwise pleasant walk about the pier. An interpersonal relation, a seemingly casual conversation between

Living History player and visitor, will impart the whys and hows of any re-created historical activity. It is this personal connection, and with it a few easily planted details, that are likely to be remembered.

#### SUMMARY

The ship-museum and its Living History players need to develop and maintain a symbiotic relationship, each recognizing the intrinsic value offered by the other. Without institutions to maintain and display, there would be no ships to board and enjoy. Without a cadre of dedicated volunteers imbued with a love of the ships and overflowing with knowledge to share, the parks would be in danger of lapsing into static institutions. The support must run with full vigor in both directions, and when it does, it is the visitor who enjoys the greatest rewards.

---

#### APPENDIX #1:

**LIVING HISTORY CHARTER** established 9/21/05, amended 4/5/06 and 2/22/07.

**This document is intended to stand as a statement of purpose and organization for the Living History Players of San Francisco National Maritime Historic Park. As such it may be amended from time to time, as circumstances dictate.**

1. MISSION:

We are an association of volunteers who function as historically costumed docents for SFMNHP to engage and educate visitors to the Park. Our intent is to act in first person as historical fictional characters, fulfilling roles unique to the year 1901, within the context of maritime environments as available on the historic ships belonging to the park.

2. CONTEXT:

Although the ships in the park operated at different times, the one year in which they all (with the exception of Hercules) could conceivably have moored at a single pier in San Francisco is considered to be 1901.

Historically in 1901, any number of people, representing a multitude of occupations, could have been present on Hyde St. Pier. The men could include seamen looking for a ship or already signed, officers, engineers, cooks and carpenters, union organizers, crimps and runners, stevedores, soldiers, reporters, warehousemen, preachers, gentlemen, individuals of any description as ferryboat passengers.

Women appearing on the pier might include wealthy matrons from Pacific Heights, shopgirls, nurses, sailors (there were indeed, though few, female ABs in 1901), ferryboat passengers of any persuasion. Ladies of the evening, though abundant only a few blocks away, would not have been permitted on the pier.

The activities of the denizens of the pier include demonstrations of various shipboard events natural to a ship in port, such as raising of sails to dry them, manning the pumps of a leaky vessel, loading cargo, ship maintenance, leisure activities during the dogwatch, a captain or a lady of the leisure class entertaining visitors, a shopgirl persuading her patrons to purchase a trinket to bring home.

Uniformed soldiers on leave stroll the boards. Gentlemen take in a breath of salt air. A fruit vendor sells apples from an improvised stand. Runners for the local crimps make small talk with unsuspecting rubes from the heartland. The recent assassination of president McKinley, and the prospects for his successor Teddy Roosevelt provide heady topics between strangers.

As will be apparent, a detailed knowledge of maritime issues, or even San Francisco, 1901, is not to be expected of ALL the above possible characters.

The possibilities are endless.

### 3. BACKGROUND:

The Living History program at SFMNHP originated in 1993, under the direction of Walter Bank, as an adjunct to the docent program. Its current philosophies and outlook are directly descended from these early efforts, as initially outlined by Mr. Bank:

- a. "The Living history Program is designed to allow visitors to directly experience maritime life at the turn of the century by observing and engaging in conversations with our living history participants as they go about "living-out" a day from 1901. The ultimate aim is to turn all of the Park into a living history stage."
- b. "The Living History actors must stay in their roles and cannot, and will not, answer questions concerning matters not relating to their roles." (The Players understand that they must, from time to time, step out of their first-person roles in order to properly respond to visitors' questions and needs).
- c. "Each of you will be developing a unique character from the early 1900's. Your memories as characters from the early 1900's should include knowledge from the preceding decades 1890's, 1880's, 1870's."

### 4. MEMBERSHIP:

The Living History Program originated as a way to bring history to life for the visitors to the park, through the words and actions of costumed docents, speaking in first person to transport the visitor back in time to 1901, and to make that year seem as current as today. This notion of first-person interaction is a vital facet of the living history program. Without it, the players are docents (a fine and respectable calling), but they are not characters from another era.

All who would like to participate are expected to endorse this concept wholeheartedly, and by such endorsement not only enliven the visitor's day on the pier,

but create a seamless alternate world wherein the Eureka has steam up and will depart momentarily, the Ark has but to be lowered into the water and towed to Belvedere, the Balclutha is waiting for her chartered cargo to be released (and the balance of a crew to be enticed to sign).

There are two levels of participation available. There are important distinctions which separate the two.

A. Full Membership requires the following:

- Acceptance by the Park as a fully accredited docent having completed the docent training course provided.
- A commitment to participate for the entire season comprised of the second Saturday of every month from March to December.
- An ability to communicate with the public in first-person, historically accurate character.
- The development and maintenance of a particular character, who will have a consistent appearance, function, and historically accurate means of interaction with the other members of the Program.
- Detailed knowledge of the ship or station where the character normally resides, of maritime matters current in 1901, of the social and political life and mores of California and San Francisco in 1901.
- Participation in the annual character and interpretation training seminar in February.

B. Associate Membership requires the following:

- A knowledge of political and social life and mores current in the United States in 1901.
- An ability to communicate with the public in first-person, historically accurate character.
- A willingness to join with us, for a day or for a limited number of Living History days, and share and help promote our goals of educating and entertaining guests of the Park.

C. Members' Guests may participate on an irregular basis, provided they meet the following requirements:

- Invited for specific programs, or to join on a probationary level, by an existing Full or Associate Member.
- Able to demonstrate a desire to learn about, and communicate in first person, a knowledge of political and social life and mores current in the United States in 1901.
- Members' Guests must be provided by their sponsoring Member with (a) a copy of this charter, (b) a copy of the 1901 Historical Notes, and must agree to abide by the terms of the charter, to work at developing a character using the Historical

Notes, and to remain in company with, and under the direction of, their sponsoring member.

Full members are just that, members of the SFMNHP, who share and promote its goals with an ongoing sense of commitment. We recognize that there is a vibrant community of living historians whose interests and eras may overlap with ours, and whose presence on the pier would do much to enliven our Living History program.

Living History players with an existing sense of historically accurate role-playing and costuming are welcome to join us at their leisure during our regularly-scheduled programs. As you will understand, all costumes must be approved by our costume coordinator for appropriateness to the year 1901. For those whose eras may not coincide, we have an abundance of male and female costumes in our locker. It is important to note that Associate participants must be experienced in living-history role playing, and possess a fund of knowledge of turn-of-the-century life. Full membership is available on completion of the regular docent training during the late winter, the creation of a character suitable to the program's purposes, and commitment to the regular schedule.

Players should cultivate one or more skill appropriate to the year 1901, whether it is a maritime skill such as canvaswork, navigation, or cooking, or a more personal activity such as knitting on the ferry, washing clothing with saltwater, or entertaining shipboard guests.

Players are expected to interact with visitors in a friendly and professional manner, to follow Park safety requirements, to care for props and costumes responsibly, and to continue to update their skills and knowledge.

As will also be readily understood, proper behavior and interaction with the public is of paramount importance, as is historically accurate personification. Those who do not adhere to these principles will be asked to leave.

All Full and Associate Members, and Members' Guests, are required to sign in with the Volunteer Office, and complete certain administrative forms (including an Agreement for Voluntary Services) there, before beginning any participation.

##### 5. INDUCTION;

In order to participate in the Living History program, all players regardless of status are required to demonstrate a knowledge of political and social life and mores current in the United States in 1901, an ability to communicate with the public in first-person, historically accurate character, and willingness to join us in educating and entertaining guests of the Park.

In order to attain full membership, all incoming Players must complete the docent training provided by the Park, and an intensive participatory internship in company with one of the existing full members. This will provide, for those who have as yet little or no experience with the notion of Living History, hands-on experience to learn our processes and goals.

Associate membership is available to those who already have some experience as a costumed Living History player interacting with the public in first-person characterization. Experience in the period surrounding 1901, (including the last half of the nineteenth century which may be adaptable to include 1901), is desirable, and a knowledge of appropriate history current to that year. Those with some limited expertise in these areas, who have demonstrated a strong desire to learn more, are invited to participate as silent Players always to remain in the company of a Full Member while learning. This is considered an informal training, and is not intended to replace docent training. The most desirable result will be that Associate Players go on to take the docent training, become Full Members, and the program grows into the mature and dynamic Living History to which it has always aspired.

A Members' Guest may become an associate member simply by having attended four or more Living History programs, and demonstrated with the public a knowledge of 1901 history in a first-person character.

Docent training is an intensive class held by the park, normally covering three consecutive weekends in late winter. It covers all aspects of the park and its assets, and provides training specific to interpretation. The Living History program is only one aspect of interpretation. Its unique formation involving costume and first-person interaction, is not really a part of the docent training, and is learned hands-on in company with established members.

Each year in February the Living History Program holds an intensive one-day seminar with guest speakers, for the specific purpose of refreshing our characterization and interpretation skills. Full members are required, and associate members are expected, to attend this training seminar.

All incoming members must fill out official forms and releases with the Park Volunteer Coordinator as a requirement to do volunteer work at Hyde St. Pier.

In addition, new members must fill out an application to the Living History program detailing their present living history experience, suitable costumes and props they may be able to provide, prior to an official invitation to participate. All props and costumes must be approved by the Costume Coordinator prior to display or use on Living History days. New members will be assigned to accompany a Full member until their capacities as Players have been fully demonstrated.

## 6. OFFICERS:

The Living History Players have been and will continue to be a loose-knit association of interested volunteers, each of whom takes individual responsibility for their activities and stations within the park, and as such have no great need of outside direction. There is, however, a need for at least three designated officers to oversee two very distinct responsibilities, which affect the group as a whole. These officers, who must be Full Members, may designate proxies to act in their behalf for official capacities, and such assistants as circumstances may require.

These three officers are collectively known as the Steering Committee. Acting in committee, they may make any executive decisions deemed necessary for the overall maintenance and enhancement of the Living History Program.

- i. General Coordinator:
  1. Official Liason to the Park and the Association
  2. Overall coordination events, scheduling
  3. Induction of new members
  4. Communications generally and individually to the members of the Living History Players
- ii. Costume Coordinator:
  - Monitor inventory of costumes in the locker
  - Track distribution of costume articles and props
  - Rule on appropriateness of costumes to the year 1901 of costumes provided privately by individual players
- iii. Historian:
  - Provide from existing resources a binder or series of binders illustrating 1901 lifestyles, mores, current events, and so on, for the use of all Players to enhance consistency within our visitor interactions.

## APPENDIX 2: RESOURCES

### Websites:

<http://www.navyandmarine.org/relatedlinks/index.htm>  
<http://www.sailorschoice.com/schistory.htm>  
<http://www.maritimeheritage.net/>  
<://www.theshipslist.com/>  
<http://www.maritimemuseums.net/>  
<http://www.interpretationaustralia.asn.au>  
<http://www.interpretivesigns.qut.edu.au>  
<http://www.heritage-interpretation.org.uk/default.htm>  
<http://www.interpnet.com/home.htm>  
<http://www.pa.ash.org.au/afssse/members/aaee/43.htm>

### References:

*Past Into Present: Effective Techniques for First-Person Historical Interpretation*; Stacy F. Roth, 1992, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and Landon

*Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden, 3rd Edition, 1977, University of Carolina Press

*Environmental Interpretation - A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budget*, Sam Ham, 1992, North American Press

*The Interpreter's Guidebook - Techniques for Programs and Presentations*, Kathleen Regnier, Michael Gross, Ron Zimmerman Interpreters Handbook Series, 3rd Edition, 1994, UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc.

*Legacy - The magazine of the National Association for Interpretation(USA)*

Given at Eighth Annual Maritime Heritage Conference, San Diego CA 10/9/07  
by David Hirzel, Volunteer General Coordinator, Hyde Street Pier Living History Players  
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park

© 2008 David Hirzel  
P.O. Box 1808  
Pacifica, CA 94044  
650-757-6604  
<sfmaritime1901@sbcglobal.net>