



ESSEX NATIONAL
HERITAGE AREA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friendship of Salem to Pilot Passenger Sails Labor Day Weekend
History comes alive as new commercial passage program begins!

For Immediate Release (Salem, MA) ... The City of Salem and its residents have a special relationship with the Salem Maritime National Historic Site and its incredible replica East Indiaman tall ship – *Friendship of Salem*. After years of exhaustive planning and training, Salem Maritime National Historic Site Superintendent Patricia Trap, her staff and volunteer crew, are thrilled that *Friendship* has passed rigorous Coast Guard sea trials, attaining certification to carry commercial passengers.

“This long-range vision, now a reality, presents a tremendous opportunity to more closely connect regional residents to their maritime past, expanding the reach of the National Park Service into new corners of the Heritage Area, while also forging a path toward financial sustainability,” explained NPS Superintendent Patricia Trap. Together, Essex Heritage, a regional advocate for the quality of life on the North Shore, and the National Park Service have been developing plans to appropriately use the ambassadorial vessel as an educational and recreational asset that will also help to defray the high cost of maintaining a wooden sailing vessel as historically integral to the Salem story as *Friendship*.

The Friendship Passenger Sails program will be piloted with its first weekend of ambassadorial voyages carrying paid passengers over the Labor Day Weekend. Essex Heritage and the Park Service are working in partnership to promote the opportunity of first passage to regional civic

groups and the general public. “This is a chance of a lifetime”, exclaimed Annie Harris, Essex Heritage Executive Director. For years, the thrill of sailing aboard *Friendship*, has been necessarily limited to a highly trained crew, restricting those that could participate in her majestic recreation of Salem’s past. With certification, Forty-five paid passengers can accompany the volunteer crew of 30 on each day of the excursion,” she added.

On Saturday, September 4th, the Rotary Clubs of the North Shore are joining forces to offer the 6-hour inaugural sail from Derby Wharf to Gloucester to their member ranks, leaving at 7:30AM from Derby Wharf. On Sunday, September 5th, the ship will provide a 6 hour day sail to participate and observe the annual Gloucester Schooner Festival. Both excursions are open to the general public. Excursion details and tickets for the Inaugural Sail are available through EssexHeritage.org.

Proceeds from the weekend excursions will benefit *Friendship* Passenger Sails program. Each ticket (\$185.00/\$250.00) will provide for a 6 hour sail, the opportunity to help sail the vessel as a volunteer and participate on supervised “watches”, interact with Park Service interpreters who will share information about the ship, life of the crew and officers and the China trade that made Salem a port of international renown. Of course there will be a delicious lunch, snacks and beverages provided by the Ship’s steward. All paid passengers will also receive a special edition *Friendship of Salem* logo’d caps with the date of the Inaugural Sail.

“We’re looking forward to an extraordinary weekend,” said Superintendent Trap. “Grab your windbreaker, some binoculars and join us for history in the making!”

[For additional information and to purchase tickets visit EssexHeritage.org](http://EssexHeritage.org)

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About the Essex National Heritage Area and Essex Heritage

Designated by the US Congress in recognition of the important role that this region played in American history and its significant heritage sites still remaining, the Essex National Heritage Area is comprised of the 34 communities of Essex County, MA. Essex Heritage is a non profit agency that manages the Heritage Area, and works in collaboration with the National Park Service to promote public/private partnerships, and develop programs that enhance, preserve and encourage regional awareness of the Area's unique historic, cultural and natural resources. For more information, visit Essex Heritage at www.essexheritage.org or call (978) 740-0444.



About Salem Maritime National Historic Site

Salem Maritime National Historic Site was designated in 1937, the first National Historic Site in the National Park Service system. The nine acre site includes the homes of merchants and mariners, the Salem Custom House in which the famous author Nathaniel Hawthorne worked, and a replica of the three-masted cargo vessel *Friendship*. Today, the rangers and volunteers of Salem Maritime NHS continue to inform and inspire visitors with the maritime history of New England and the United States. For more information, visit us on the web at www.nps.gov/sama or call 978-740-1650.