

Introduction

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The North American Society for Oceanic History, or NASOH, at its annual conference awards the Clark G. Reynolds Student Paper Award to the student or students whose written version of their conference paper is judged superior in originality, research merit, clarity, professionalism, and relevance to the maritime historical and/or archaeological community. First awarded in 2008, the Reynolds Award has recognized 14 outstanding graduate students¹ whose research has covered the breadth of North American and global maritime geography, time periods, and subject matter – much of which you will find in this volume.

Clark G. Reynolds was the first executive officer of NASOH and an accomplished naval historian. Among his most significant works were *The Fast Carriers: The Forging of an Air Navy* (1968), *Command of the Sea: The History and Strategy of Maritime Empires* (1974), and *Admiral John H. Towers: The Struggle for Air Supremacy* (1991). In 1978, Reynolds helped establish the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum aboard the retired World War II aircraft carrier *Yorktown*. Over the course of this career, he was a history professor at the US Naval Academy, the University of Maine, the US Merchant Marine Academy, and the College of Charleston. Reynolds died in 2005.

In addition to an annual membership to NASOH, one of the prizes for winning the Reynolds Award is the award committee's assistance in publishing the paper in *The Northern Mariner*. Until this volume, only three winners decided to pursue publication shortly after receiving the prize.² Several of the past winners in this

¹ No award was given in 2019, 2023, or 2024.

² John C. Mitcham (2008 winner), "Patrolling the White Man's Grave: The Impact of Disease on Anglo-American Naval Operations Against the Slave Trade, 1841–1862," *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* 20, no. 1 (2010): 37–56, <https://doi.org/10.25071/2561-5467.315>; Phillip Reid (2015 winner), "The Time Machine? Using Replica Analysis to Understand Merchant Ships and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1600–1800," *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* 26, no. 3 (2016): 299–316, <https://doi.org/10.25071/2561-5467.234>; and Benjamin Schaffer (2021 winner), "A 'Small Vessel of Brisk Bostoneers': The Life and Times of the Massachusetts Province Sloop *Mary*, c. 1688–1693," *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* 33, no. 1 (2023): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.25071/2561-5467.1080>. 2012 winner Michael Verney published in a different journal, "An Eye for Prices, an Eye for Souls: Americans in the Indian Subcontinent, 1784–1840," *The Journal of the Early Republic* 33, no. 3 (2013): ***The Northern Mariner / Le marin du nord* 35, no. 3-4 (Autumn/Winter 2025): 273-74**

volume now make up the Reynolds Award committee and they felt it was time and timely to gather interested unpublished past winners to develop this thematic issue to highlight the diversity and quality of NASOH student research over the past 13 years.³ Of course, none of the authors save one are still students.⁴ All are professional historians, an archaeologist, or a research librarian in the academic community, and these papers benefit from professional maturation and experience.

So, what will you find in this issue? **Roger Bailey** (Winner 2020) analyzes the role of the US Navy in the promotion and facilitation of free black emigration to Africa in the Early American Republic. **Alexander Billinis** (Winner 2025) presents the Greek merchant community in New Orleans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and their roles in the global cotton market. **Christina Bolte** (Winner 2017) discusses the Luna Colony at Pensacola as a case study in sixteenth-century disaster response and relief efforts, and how communities are shaped by disaster. **Kevin Grubbs** (Winner 2022) explores coasting vessels and the maritime communities of the Gulf of Mexico in the late nineteenth century. **Penelope Hardy** (Winner 2016) gives voice to the unrecorded people who participated in the development of the scientific understanding of the ocean, including women and people of color. **Jane McCamant** (Winner 2013) analyzes the success of loan libraries (made up of primarily religious tracts) of the American Seamen's Friend Society. And **Derek Nelson** (Winner 2014) explores the mid-nineteenth-century struggle for control of the San Francisco waterfront in the face of rapid sedimentation and shoaling. These seven papers represent the breadth of student research in North American and global naval and maritime history that we love to see at NASOH and in *The Northern Mariner*: maritime biography, maritime commerce, maritime science and technology, maritime commercial and social organizations, the "Age of Exploration," and more, covering a span of at least 400 years.

I have been a judge on the Reynolds Award committee since 2020, and I was honored to award several of these papers the prize in their respective years. They were highly deserved. This year, 2026, will be my last year judging the award. It is time to pass along that role to new professionals in the field and move on to new roles. It was a joy to read the students' papers over the last six years. I can't wait to see what the students present at upcoming conferences!

Alicia Caporaso is a maritime archaeologist and benthic ecologist. She has worked in the US Department of the Interior for the last 25 years with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. She is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Biology at Minnesota State University.

397–431. Alexander Billinis, last year's winner, is publishing in this issue.

³ The earliest winner in this issue is Jane McCamant, who won in 2013, and the most recent is Billinis, who won in 2025.

⁴ Billinis is both a PhD candidate and a full-time lecturer.