

# Editorial

## Michael Moir

*The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* has been a collaborative endeavour of the Canadian Nautical Research Society and the North American Society for Oceanic History since both organizations reached a memorandum of understanding in August 2006. The partnership soon led to a double issue devoted to articles that began as presentations at NASOH conferences held from 1999 to 2005, which were published as volume 18, numbers 3 to 4 (July–October 2008). Almost two decades later, we commemorate this relationship with another double issue, this time featuring the work of seven authors who won NASOH’s Clark G. Reynolds Student Paper Award for their presentations at its conferences between 2013 and 2025. The issue is a celebration of the breadth and significance of original research undertaken by students exploring maritime history and underwater archaeology in the United States, and the importance of sharing this work with the broader scholarly community.

Both the CNRS and NASOH have long recognized the importance of encouraging students, since their involvement in our activities contributes toward a future for both societies. Funding is offered to promote student participation in conferences, and as Alicia Caporaso recounts in her “Introduction” to this issue, NASOH has recognized the best written version of a student presentation at its annual conference with the Reynolds Award since 2008. One of the perks of the award is the support offered by the selection committee in submitting the manuscript for publication in our journal, but this has happened only thrice between 2010 and 2023. A lot of significant work by student presenters was at risk of being lost among the fading memories of conference delegates, a situation discussed by several NASOH members at the 2025 conference held in Natchez, Mississippi. The proposal for a special issue devoted to past winners of the Reynolds Award was brought forward by Evan Wilson, a member of the journal’s Editorial Board, in May 2025. Christina Bolte, Kevin Grubbs, and Penelope Hardy – all previous winners of the Reynolds Award – volunteered to serve as editors for the issue. They did excellent work recruiting contributors and undertaking the first round of edits. Prose was polished and important questions addressed to bring clarity to the

manuscripts. Thanks to their initiative and dedication to the project, there was sufficient high-quality content on hand by the end of the year to fill a double issue.

As I undertook the second round of editing, a couple of important points became clear. The first is the importance of digital resources to the work of graduate students and independent scholars. At a time when travel and accommodation is becoming prohibitively expensive for researchers, especially those with little or no institutional support, digital repositories such as HathiTrust, the Internet Archive, and the online collections of public archives, as well as commercial packages of digitized primary sources subscribed to by academic and public libraries, provide remote access to primary sources that are essential to exploring our maritime past. Most of the early publications and several of the archival documents referenced in this issue can be found using these electronic resources, reflecting the importance of digitization projects to providing a foundation for maritime history and archaeology. Many of these organizations, however, are facing financial pressure, and it is important that readers express support for initiatives providing online access to unique cultural resources when cuts are proposed or projects cancelled.

Secondly, editing this issue led me to reflect on the nature of research and scholarly publishing. While books are often regarded as definitive statements on a particular topic, the articles, research notes, commentaries, and review essays that make up this journal are more of a conversation. Each entry adds to our understanding of the maritime world and can provoke a dialogue where data and analysis are challenged or built upon by others. It is important to engage students and early career researchers in these conversations, for they often bring fresh perspectives that expand the scope and depth of our disciplines. The purpose of this issue is to highlight the achievements of these seven authors in the hope of inspiring future generations of students to follow their path of publishing and engage in this conversation since there is still so much to explore. I express my thanks to Christina Bolte, Kevin Grubbs, and Penelope Hardy for getting this issue underway, and to all the authors for completing the transformation of their work from conference presentations to published articles. It is a significant achievement, and it sets the stage for ensuring that articles by winners of the Reynolds Award are a regular feature of the journal going forward.