

October 2019



# *on the Move*

*Local maritime news, events and history from the Chicago Maritime Museum*

## CMM Selected Again for Open House Chicago Architecture Tour

---



On October 19 and 20, the Chicago Architecture Center opens 350 architecturally significant sites located all over Chicago to the public. Participants are invited to tour free of charge, including the Chicago Maritime Museum. We are hoping to exceed our attendance from last year of 828 visitors.

Come see us on the River Level of the Bridgeport Art Center 1200 W. 35th Street on SAT., OCT. 19: 10am - 5pm and SUN., OCT. 20: 10am - 4pm. Free parking available in the north lot adjacent to BAC.

# Rescue of the Charles Howard by N.K. Fairbank

*On a cold December night in 1856, the lumber schooner **Charles Howard** went ashore on Chicago's lakefront in a strong gale. A quickly assembled group of rescuers, including my great grandfather, N.K. Fairbank, was able to remove the crew. The following is N.K.'s narrative account of the event, published in **The Story of Chicago**, by Joseph Kirkland. Just 27-years-old at the time, he had arrived in Chicago barely a year before as the representative of David Dows & Company of New York. He was living at the Tremont House—the best hotel in Chicago, it was said. As indicated in the account from his diary, he knew where the saloons were – “where sailors congregate o’ nights.” He was like the other young men of energy and daring who were populating Chicago in 1850s.*

**—Ked Fairbank, CMM Executive Director**

On the night of December 2, 1856, I came into the Tremont House about nine o’clock, and found a group of men quite excited over a message that a vessel had run ashore—that she had struck on the bar, so far out that no assistance could be rendered by the people on shore. The sea was making a clean break over her: her crew were in the rigging. It was a very cold night and a severe storm of rain, sleet and snow was raging.

I started out at once with Mr. C.L. Bissell to see if we could not send a lifeboat and crew to their rescue. We first found Colonel Joseph Stockton who put one of his large gucks, with a good four-horse team and several men, at our disposal.

I then went round to several saloons on South Water Street where sailors congregate o’ nights, and called for volunteers to man the lifeboat. I soon had a good crew.

We first tried to get the government lifeboat, but found it unfit for use—no oars, etc. I then went to a propeller lying at the dock, roused the captain and



**NATHANIEL K. FAIRBANK, Chicago.**  
Born at Sodus, Wayne Co., N. Y., 1829. Educated in the common schools and located in Buffalo in 1855; later came to Chicago as representative of David Dows & Co. of New York City; in 1885 the present firm of N. K. Fairbank & Company was incorporated; retired from active business in June, 1891.

told the story and asked for his lifeboat, which he willingly gave us. We quickly loaded it on the truck and started them off for the scene of the wreck.

Meanwhile I procured a good supply of whisky, brandy, etc., and a quantity of clothing and blankets, and followed the truck. We found 100 people gathered on the shore. We had great difficulty in launching the boat, as there seemed to be no one among the sailors who was

a “captain”. The boat was swamped several times, as the water was shoal and the seas very heavy. They would launch her on a big wave, and before she caught the next one, she would strike the bottom and roll over. I finally called for volunteers and took command. I put twelve men on each side of the boat and we went into the surf and out far enough and held her steady until they could catch a wave which we thought big enough to float them on to the next as she rose to the top of that. I shouted “let go” to my men and “give way” to the crew, and she caught the next wave without striking in the trough. This was only accomplished after several attempts, so that we were all in the water up to our necks about half an hour; in fact the final wave that floated her off lifted us off our feet and washed us ashore.

The boat carried out a line which I had brought out, and with it reached the vessel. Making the line fast to the wreck and a tree on the shore, we had a good rope ferry established and landed them all safely. Blankets and brandy soon made us warm, and we returned to the city none the worse for our adventure, though if that wreck had been on a prohibition coast, I doubt if any one of her crew or participators in the rescue would have been left to tell the tale.

## Volunteer of the Month

Shipwreck Diver Jim Jarecki Works to Preserve Chicago's Maritime History Above and Below Water

Long time underwater archaeologist and CMM volunteer, Jim Jarecki has surveyed more than 50 Lake Michigan shipwrecks in his career. Not surprisingly, he doesn't have to travel far from the lake shore to make his dives. The lake floor around Chicago is practically littered with the remains of virtually every type of ship that has ever sailed the lakes. That's because at one time during the mid-nineteenth century, Chicago was the busiest maritime port in the world, with up to 150 commercial schooners arriving at Chicago every day to supply the city with materials to rebuild after the Great Fire.

A passionate maritime historian, Jim understands the importance of preserving these underwater relics for the rich stories they tell. Indeed, he and his team at the Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago (UASC) work to discover and preserve the history of our commercial trade through archaeological surveys and historical research.

"It is my mission to reveal Lake Michigan's secrets and to share our maritime history with others,"

says Jim, who currently manages CMM Third Friday maritime presentations and serves on the museum's collection's committee. "But before you share you must preserve. I'm glad I can help the CMM fulfill those two important missions."

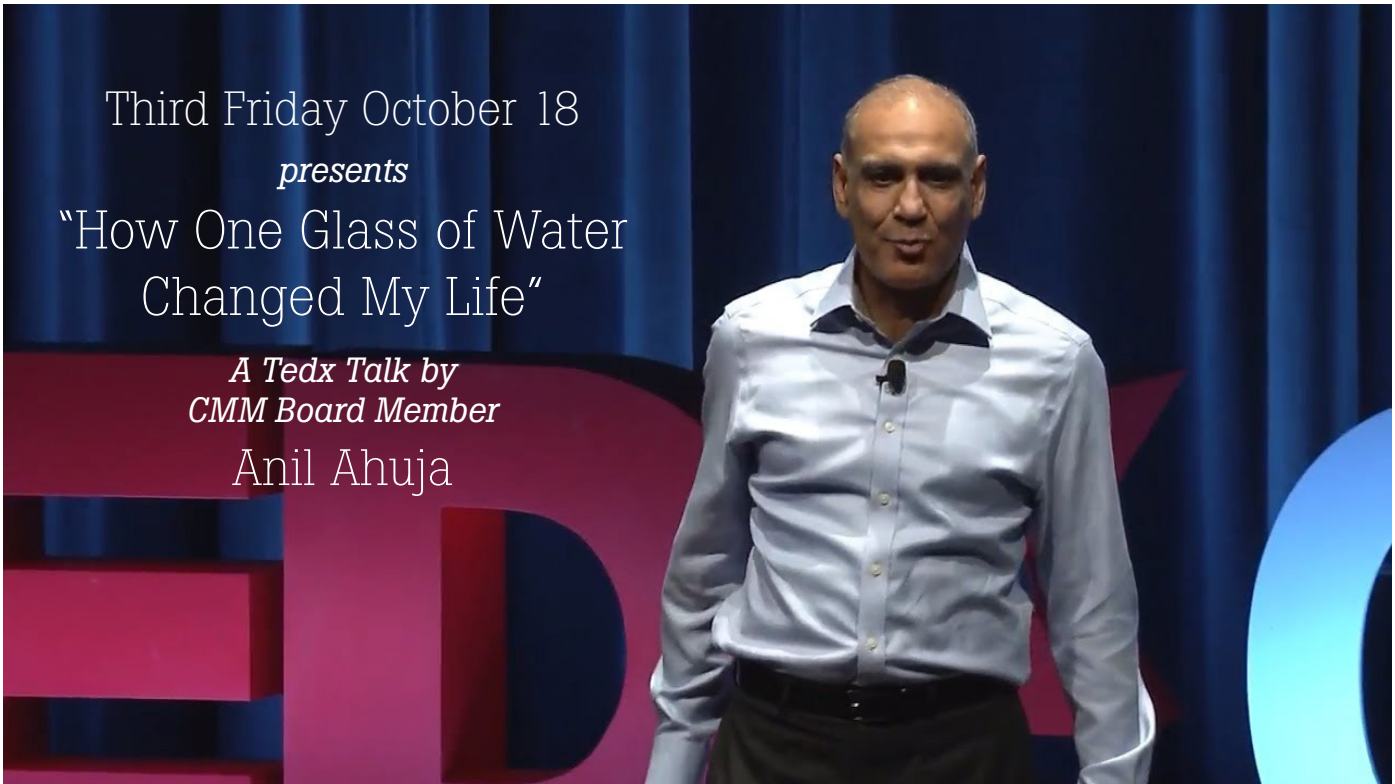
This month, CMM celebrates its 50th Third Friday presentation with new CMM board member Anil Ahuja who will present a much enhanced version of his Ted Talk entitled "How one glass of water changed my life." (More information below.) Thanks to Jim's many contacts in the Midwest maritime community, CMM has hosted a myriad of engaging speakers over the years covering such varied topics as the history of Chicago's public fountains, the origins of Chicago's Christmas Tree Ship and the legend of Grebe Shipyard.



In addition to his work at CMM, Jim has been an active member of the UASC for 25 years and has made over 2000 dives, mostly in the Great Lakes. Jim is a frequent presenter at shipwreck festivals and historical societies throughout the US. He has been featured on radio and television and is also a popular guest lecturer at many schools.

For his day job, Jim is the owner of an industrial graphics and architectural signage company and is also a consultant to help business meet the needs of people with physical handicaps.





**H**ow much water does it take to make a hamburger? How about to manufacture a car? Having experienced growing up with limited resources living in a refugee camp in India, Anil Ahuja is leading a movement to design sustainable cities and systems that protect the earth and the people. In this presentation he focuses on water as a component to a smart city.

Over the past 14 years, Anil served as president of CCJM, a multi-disciplinary engineering firm providing infrastructure solutions to smart cities and smart building designs. Anil also recently released the book *Integration of Nature and Technology for Smart Cities*, which explores trends and paradigms in the smart building and smart city sectors and offers a new approach to green, innovative building and city design.

This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community.

The Open House starts at 7:00 pm. on Friday, October 18. Presentation begins at 7:30. CMM is on the River Level of the Bridgeport Art Center at 1200 W. 35<sup>th</sup> St.

Museum entrance and free parking are available on the north side of the building.

Museum entrance is free on Third Fridays. The presentation is \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members at the door. The Operations Board of CMM will continue supporting Third Friday Open House with a light food and beverage table.

For more information, contact the museum at 773-376-1982.

---

# 18,000 Pieces of Balloon Waste Found in Great Lakes

**I** heightened understanding of problems tied to balloon litter has led five states to limit or ban intentional releases. At least eight others are considering restrictions. Read more here:

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/06/19/balloon-litter-pollution-oceans-great-lakes/1497912001/?fbclid=IwAR25vmjHG1-wCo4dY8HhQdFPJmJ6ZoQ4XUeKPqk9DH47e3Rd-cpVjtno7Qcww>



---

# 102-year-old Chicago Man Thrives on Love of Sailing



Ed Stein's love for sailing stretches back almost a century. He's 102 years old. He began sailing as a teenager, while growing up in the South Side Beverly neighborhood. Read more here.

<https://www.fox32chicago.com/news/102-year-old-chicago-man-thrives-on-love-of-sailing?fbclid=IwAR1GFYb5Wk8xsLAyaC-FkmTLZC0vhnjK-42BQI-gE74kV4SW2HkRDV7S1254>



*Making your way to the  
Chicago Maritime Museum!*

## MARITIME EVENT CALENDAR

Check out local maritime events at the Chicago Maritime Museum website calendar page:

<http://www.chicagomaritimemuseum.org/events/month/>

Submit maritime events in the Chicagoland area to Mary Ann O'Rourke at  
[maorourke@ameritech.net](mailto:maorourke@ameritech.net).

*We hope you've enjoyed our monthly e-newsletter, On the Move.*

*If you have a Chicago maritime story idea please  
forward it to [maorourke@ameritech.net](mailto:maorourke@ameritech.net).*

