

‘What Lurks Beneath’ Halloween Event 2023
Tour Guide Packet
Mystic Seaport Museum

Introduction:

Welcome to tour guiding! Contained in this packet you will find all you need to survive a night of frights (and visitors!) at Mystic Seaport Museum’s Halloween event *What Lurks Beneath*. The theme this year is all about creatures and beasts, myths and lore that surround the ocean and waters. This packet, specifically created with tour guiding in mind, includes:

- Tour Route for *What Lurks Beneath* 2023
- Crowd Control and Corralling
- Stories to tell Along the Route
- Scripted Interactions
- ‘But What Will I Wear?’
- FAQs
- And more...

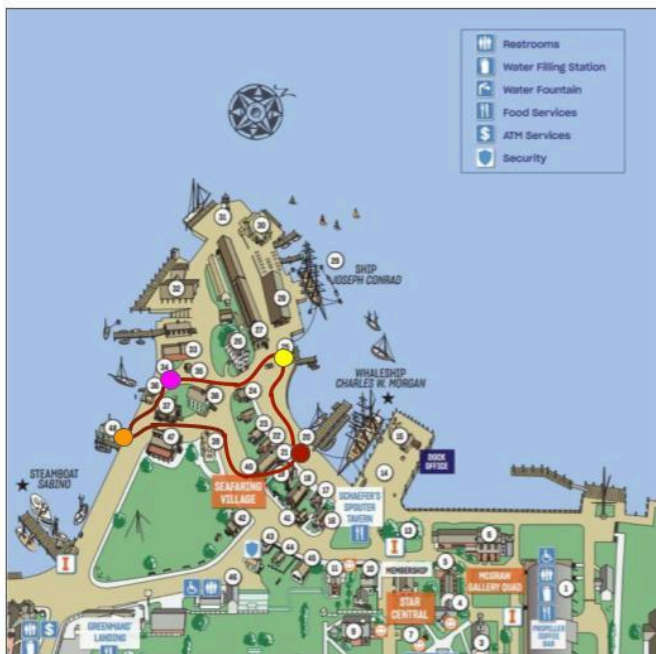
With that, let’s get started!

Each tour will last approximately 15-20 minutes, consisting of stories that you (as Tour Guide) will tell along the way as well as stops in various places to have scripted interactions with various actors portraying beasts and creatures that lurk in the shadows and waters. The goal here is not to terrify visitors so much that they never come back to the museum- it is to give them an education in what 19th-century sailor’s beliefs, superstitions, and stories were, and allowing it to come to life with the addition of the actors (and yourselves!).

Each of you will be portraying a sailor that has gotten off a ship (namely, the *Morgan*, though we are not calling it that during the duration of the tours) for one reason or another. That reason I’ll let you decide for yourself. But you have run across a band of new potential sailors, and are taking them the long way back to the ship and swapping some tall tales and myths along the way- until myths become reality. You will encounter a Siren, as well as another Sailor from your vessel who has escaped an encounter most harrowing— the Kraken. The tour culminates with you leading your group back towards the *Morgan* (which will have an impressive display of large tentacles coming off of it) and urging them to go on board and meet the beast of legends.

Tour Route:

The tour route for this year is as follows:



- You will begin at **Middle Wharf** (marked on the map by a red circle)
 - From Middle Wharf, you will turn down the alley between the **Burrows House and Print Shop**
 - Once on the other side, you will walk down the back side of the village until you are between **the front of Clift Block and the back of the Shipsmith**
 - At this point, you will turn left and make your way towards the **Lifesaving Station**, but you will **not enter it**
 - You will move around so the **Lifesaving Station is to your right**, moving towards the **Oyster House** (marked on the map by an orange circle)
- **At the Oyster House**, you will pause and tell a story; The Wreck of the *Mexico*
- Once your story is complete (and you see that any potential backups from the tour group before you have moved on) make your way out of the Oyster House **towards the alley between the Lobster Shack and the back of the Lifesaving Station**
- Once between this alley, you will come to **Australia Beach. This is where you will encounter your first actor, the Siren** (marked on the map with a pink circle)
- Here you will pause and have your first scripted interaction
- After this, you will bring your tour up Australia Beach **heading towards the Chandlery**
- You will cross in **front of the Chandlery**, bringing your tour **towards the Clam Shack/Squad Shack/Joseph Conrad**
- Once at the Clam/Squad Shack, you will have your **second scripted encounter: the Sailor** (marked on the map by a yellow circle)
- Once this interaction is finished, you will move your tour group **down Water Street** (the front of the village) **towards the Charles W. Morgan.**
- **You will end your tours at the same place you started- Middle Wharf**

Crowd Control and Corraling:

When you are dealing with groups of visitors numbering 20+ people, it is important to remember a few good points of information:

- Do not let them wander!
- Do not let them fall in the water!

But how does one keep the attention of 20+ visitors at all times? It is tricky, especially when there are a multitude of children around. A few reminders and tips:

- Have presence. Create a character for yourself, if that is something you enjoy! Even if you do not want to play a totally different person, having a heightened persona helps people stay engaged and focused.
- Be confident! **You** are their guide, you say where they go, when they go, and how.
- Lay out the rules for your tour at the very beginning. Things that can really add to the experience, like “Stay within the light of my lantern” or “don’t look too closely into the dark, you may not like what is looking back” are great ways to add to the ambiance of the tour while also giving the visitors rules to follow!
 - These are rules I like to use when giving tours:
 - No wandering off! Stay within the light of my lantern and we all may make it back safely
 - Try to keep as quiet as possible, so that we may all enjoy the yarns I spin. And so that we may hear anything that goes bump in the night
 - If there is someone, or *something* that I am about to *bump* into, please let me know. I, unfortunately, do not have eyes in the back of my head.
 - Oh, and one small favor. Try not to look in the windows. You may not like what is looking back at you.

With these rules in mind, above all else, make sure that you keep your tour together, moving at the appropriate moments, and that any small children are supervised by their adults. If you run into any problems with visitors in the duration of your tours, you can call:

Mack Gauthier at (860) 908-7597

or

MSM Security at (860) 572-5310

Scripted Interactions- FAQs:

Do I have lines? In short, yes, you have lines

Should they be memorized, or can I improvise? Yes, they should be memorized. The actor (whether it be Siren or Sailor) is relying on you to be their scene partner, and you should know your lines. If you forget a line, or say something totally different than what your line is supposed to be, it is possible the actor will lose their place in the scene. Please memorize the lines for your scripted interactions! You are more free to improvise (within reason) during the rest of your tour.

How many lines do I have? Not a lot! These scenes are written with the tour guide in mind. You already have to remember a great deal of information, so the scenes were written in consideration of that.

Do I need to act? Please do! Again, the actor in the scene is relying on you to be their partner, so any acting (or reacting) you can give in reference to what the actor is doing or saying is great! In the same vein, you are the bridge between the actors and your tour group, so to make it more fun for your tour, you should also have fun! Don't be afraid to get into the scene and have big reactions, as long as they make sense!

'But What Will I Wear?'

Great question! Each tour guide will be outfitted in a sailor's costume. Your list of costume items include:

- Sailor's Shirt
- Sailor's Pants
- Overcoat/Jacket
- Sailor Cap/Hat

In addition to this, we are also asking that each of our tour guides wear some makeup. There are no complicated makeup looks here, what we have settled on are pale skin and dark eye makeup. Rebecca Welles (our costumer) and I can show you how to achieve this, if you are not familiar.

With each of our costumes, you will have also signed a costume agreement or "contract" stating that you will do your best to take care of the costume you are given. If you notice any rips, tears, or wear on the costume that was not present when you received it, or you are having a problem with your costume, please email Rebecca (rebecca.l.welles@gmail.com) and cc Mack Gauthier (mack.gauthier@gmail.com) with what the problem is and where. In addition, there will be costume repair slips that you can fill out and leave with your costume.

Stories to Tell Along the Route:

To Begin:

You shall collect your tour group at Middle Wharf, in front of the Print Shop. Make sure your group is fully assembled before you begin moving; we don't want anyone getting left behind. While you are moving down the Print Shop alley, you might give them the rules of the tour, or any other information you deem important for them to know (i.e. Your name, or your character's name if you do not wish to go by your own name, why you are taking them on the tour [to get back to your ship and hire them on as crew], anything you deem important). You will be walking backwards almost the entirety of the tour if you can

Down to the Village:

Once behind the Village, please begin your first preamble to; The Wreck of the *Mexico*. This will be the story before you meet the Siren, so try to tie shipwrecks and storms to that upcoming scene. Below, some inspiration on how to begin- elaborate on these points as much as you like:

- A fickle thing, the sea. Sometimes calm as glass, sometimes as abhorrent as the wrath of Neptune. The sea cannot be controlled by man, not one chance of that. But even so, some men try to tame it.
- The wrath of the sea is a thing of beauty- beauty and danger. Wild, untamable, dangerous for all who dare to sail upon it. Most men (myself included) have no knowledge of swimming. We don't even want to know how. Swimming if you fall overboard is hope. And most likely that hope is false. If you fall overboard in a storm no one's coming to rescue you.
- Shipwrecks. Most happen within sight of shore, you know. So close that all the passengers on board can see the land. Just can't get to it. They dare not swim, most can't. And the shoals most shipwrecks wash up on create such a bank of waves that no one would dare send out a lifeboat.



The Wreck of the *Mexico*:

By this point, you will have gotten to the Thomas Thomas Oyster House. You can go into the house if you like, or stand in the doorway. Following this are the cold hard facts of what happened to the *Mexico*:

- The *Mexico* was a three-masted American-owned barque traveling from Liverpool, England, to New York City.
- She departed Liverpool October 1836 for New York with 112 passengers plus crew
- It wrecked off New York Harbor on January 2, 1837.
- The temperature in New York city was recorded at 5 above zero.
- The crew was suffering from frostbite, and the passengers were on day 9 of rations due to the unexpectedly longer trip.
- It was New Year's. The New York Harbor Pilots were not at their posts to guide the *Mexico* through the treacherous shoals near the entrance to the harbor.
- A storm forced the barque back towards sea, and drove it into a sandbar just 200 yards off Long Beach- the passengers and crew were within shouting distance of shore.
- Water had flooded the areas below deck. The temperature that night was 3 degrees above zero.
- Waves were reported to be "as high as a house"
- The Captain (Captain Winslow) was one of the first people to leave the ship. When rescuers rowed out, he took his sword and the ship's strongbox and got into the rescue boat with seven other crewmen. They left 115 people onboard, with no other rescue boats sent out. All 115 people froze to death.

Walt Whitman, 17 at the time, was so moved by the wreck of the *Mexico* and another ship *Bristol* that he wrote a poem, "The Sleepers". It is very long, but I will include a particularly poignant stanza here:

The beach is cut by the razory ice-wind—the wreck-guns sound,
The tempest lulls—the moon comes floundering through the drifts.

I look where the ship helplessly heads end on—I hear the burst as
she strikes—I hear the howls of dismay—they grow fainter and fainter.

I cannot aid with my wringing fingers,
I can but rush to the surf, and let it drench me and freeze upon me.

I search with the crowd—not one of the company is wash'd to us alive;
In the morning I help pick up the dead and lay them in rows in a barn

(If you would like more information about the *Mexico* please ask; I have more resources if needed)

Up to the Beach:

Now that you have finished your story, head towards Australia Beach... There is someone waiting for you. This is your first scripted encounter, with a harbinger of shipwrecks. The Siren. A small bit of inspiration for you, while you make your way there:

- Now shipwrecks are a horrid thing. That's where the Lifesaving Service comes in. But not all shipwrecks can be saved...
- Let us all move forward, shall we? We need to get back to the ship and be on our way, before the tide turns and we're stuck on a sandbar.
- Shipwrecks are one thing; the waters are a dangerous place. But the land you walk upon can also harbor creatures...

Scripted Interaction #1- The Siren:

As Tour comes between the Lifesaving Station and Lobster Shack

Siren: *(Singing, a haunting melody— should not be real words, more vocalizations)*

TG: Look sharp now! For not all creatures lurk in the depths of the waters. Their hands may not reach to us, only their voices! Do not listen! Those creatures will spellbind any man alive, whoever comes their way. Whoever draws too close and catches the Sirens' voices in the air— no sailing home for him.

Siren: *(Song intensifies— louder, higher pitch)*

Tour comes up the alley between Lobster Shack and Lifesaving Station to Australia Beach. There are wooden structures littering the beach- remnants of the Siren's last shipwreck. At the center of the beach, hunched over a body, the Tour sees a figure. The Siren jerks their head to view the Tour, stopping their song.

Siren: *(Beckoning with a hooked finger)* Come closer, come now. No need to fret. You shall listen a while longer, will you not? Why not moor your ship on our coast so you can hear our song? We have many things to share.

TG: Your voices will not charm us as they did Odysseus.

Siren: (*Smiling, upon the tour now*) Oh do listen a moment, I beseech you. Once you've heard what we know, you may sail on. It concerns a certain vessel of yours. (*Pouts*) One that may soon be a mere *wreck* at the bottom of the sea!

TG: (*On edge*) What do you know of anything?

Siren: (*In a singing rhythm*) We have heard the bending of wood and snapping of limb; the fate of your ship is looking quite grim. When she seeks berth do not look over the rail, for all her masts will be swallowed up in the gale. And aye, she floats, but do not turn back, else all will fail. The *Kraken* will come, and all shall be black— nevermore will she sail.

Now the Siren turns dark. They move between the Tour Guide and the Tour.

(*Looks to Tour Guide*) You shall heed my warning. (*To Tour*) And all of you... You seem not sailors. (*Corralling them, walking around group slowly*) Who do you think you may be to cross into *my* waters, and think to escape? *Fools!* Never has any sailor passed our shores in his black craft until he has heard the honeyed voices pouring from our lips! We know all the pains once endured on the spreading plain, the gods willed it so! And we know all that shall come to pass. (*To Tour Guide*) Your precious ship shall perish at the limbs of what lurks beneath, with not a survivor on board!

TG: What lurks beneath? You are on a fool's errand, Siren!

Siren: (*Glaring towards Tour*) We know what will come to pass. (*Drawing upright*) You shall soon see as well, and we will feast ourselves on you all! (*They begin to sing the same haunting melody as before*)

TG: Crew, cover your ears and follow me! We must remove ourselves from this foul beast!

Tour Guide and Tour move away from the Siren. The Siren follows them for a short distance, still singing that haunting melody.

Away to the Chandlery:

After escaping the Siren, you should bring your tour towards the Chandlery then on to the Clam Shack. There is not a huge bank of time between the Siren and your next encounter (a Sailor from your own ship), so keep your interlude fairly short. Some inspiration:

- Goodness that we escaped the Siren. I've heard tell that some never escape their singing. Time to get back to our ship and be on our way.

- Curse the Siren! She will not catch us, good crew! Now, let us be on our way to our ship, I'm sure the captain is waiting for us.
- We must get back to the ship, the captain will be wondering where we are. This way, we'll cut through the village.

Scripted Interaction #2- The Sailor:

Tour comes past Chandlery to meet Sailor at Clam Shack

TG: Ahoy, sailor! What keeps you from the ship so late?

Sailor: I might ask you the same- but do not report back to the ship. Ye will surely perish!

TG: What are you jabbering about?

Sailor: A beast- with limbs like you have never seen. They dogged the watches, the Captain did. No one was keeping lookout, at least not well. We were all lounging on deck. James had pulled out his banjo and had been playing— some happy tune. And Irvin had started to play that whistle of his. Everyone knows to whistle onboard is bound to bring rotten seas.

The ship was rocking back and forth, with not a wind to be found. It was almost pleasant, that stillness, until we heard a horrible sound. Timber started creaking, and— and—

TG: Spit it out man, what happened?

Sailor: Next we knew, the ship started to heel over to her port side. There was no wind, she shouldn't have had any reason to heel like that— and the groaning of her hull got worse. We couldn't figure what on earth was happening to her, and then... then we saw the tentacles reach over the rail. Like snakes, horrid horrid things, some nearly a fathom in width, suckers the size of my head— I think Randolph- someone- screamed.

By that point we'd all found our footing best we could, and we were stock-still staring at it, its limbs creeping higher and higher over the gunnels and up the masts. One of the officers called to us to pull as many harpoons and lances as we could. But none of us moved. None of us barely breathed at all. And the creaking sound of the hull kept getting louder and louder, a higher and more painful sound. It was as if the ship were screaming at us to *move*.

Then we came to our senses. Knew if any of us wanted a chance at touching shore again we'd need to fight. So we all ran to the harpoon rack. Rushed to get the irons and blades down. And took up positions, four of us each against one of the beast's tentacles. First mate told us to "hold, steady", until the thing was as high up as it would get. But the keening of the hull— it was too much. Randolph took aim with the lance he'd grabbed and darted into the foul beast... That was all it took.

The creature's limbs came down on us like hellfire. The groaning keel turned into splintering wood and shrapnel, the men lost formation and either ran or stood and tried to fight. I saw Morgan gripped by one of the beast's tentacles and thrown near fifty fathoms out into the sea. Two other men were ripped up and met the same fate. It's hold around the ship tightened, one limb wrapping around the foremast and sending it crashing to the deck.

That was when I realized we would never win. We would never be able to survive this, not if we stayed and fought. Our only hope was to escape in the boats and hope the creature was too preoccupied with the main vessel to notice us. I scrambled into one of the boats and tried to call to others nearby, but the chaos and crisis around us lost my words. So I cut myself loose from the ship and rowed away— I didn't care where I landed, only that I'd make it away from the devil. I warn you, do not go back to the ship, ye will be forsaken just as the rest of the crew was-

TG: Nonsense, we must save the rest of the crew! If we do not help, then who will?

Sailor: Very well... but ye be sending yourselves to your demise.

The Sailor shrinks into the shadows of the Clam Shack

To the Ship:

After hearing of the harrowing ordeal from your fellow sailor, you must find a way to convince your tour group that they should go back to the ship and save the rest of the men- or, hear what their ghosts have to say. You will begin to move your tour towards the Morgan, and towards where you picked them up at Middle Wharf. A bit of discussion about the Kraken or modern Giant Squid would be good here as well. The following accounts are, for all intents and purposes, real, as they were documented:

- I've heard many tales of great squids taking down full ships. Some years ago, in 1874, there was a report in the paper of a schooner tangling with a beast similarly. It took the entire ship over on her beam ends, pulling it down into the waves. Two men were sucked down with it. We cannot let the same fate occur with our vessel- we must save the crew! I would go aboard with you, but need to see if there are any men adrift in the waters. You go, all of you, and see if you can save the rest of the men! The captain will reward you handsomely for it!

- I remember seeing the tentacle of a beast in a Dublin museum some years ago. The specimen reached thirty feet from one end of the tentacle to the other. They figured the animal it came from must've been eighty feet in length. But that is nothing... nothing like this. This is horrid! I ask all of you, will you brave the beast and go aboard? Save my fellow shipmates! Do what you can for them- I must go catch my fellow sailor.
- That beast must weigh nigh over 400 pounds... The crew must have all escaped, else there would be more ruckus on board. And yet the vessel still hasn't gone down. Go aboard, if you dare- I dare not, but you may all wish to see the havoc that beast wrought. See if any still lurk among the remnants of the ship, or if all that remains are their ghosts. See what lurks beneath the deck... what lurks beneath the waves.

Drop off:

You made it! That is the end of the tour. Drop your newly acquired crew (tour group) back off at Middle Wharf where you picked them up, and see whether they adventure onto the ship. From there, wait for your next tour, and do it all over!