

## Burning of the Ships

Every year, the second Saturday in May, the Sailing Masters hosts the “Burning of the Ships” commemoration. This is a “mini-muster” to which the Corps invites area fife and drum corps to participate.

This commemoration is in remembrance of the burning of the fleet in Essex Harbor in April of 1814.

Essex was widely known for building privateer ships to harass the British fleet during the War of 1812. In April of 1814 the British rowed up the Connecticut River in the cloak of darkness and burned all the ships, cordage and sail lofts in the village. This was a devastating blow to the War effort. It became the largest naval loss the Country had experienced until the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After this disastrous event, the town of Essex rebuilt the shipyard and eventually produced more ships than before the Raid.

We come together every year to remember the loss but to also celebrate the tremendous recovery made by the town of Essex.



## Let's Keep In Touch!

Please tear and fill out the following and we can follow up with you about joining The Sailing Masters.

Sailing Master Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Sailing Masters of 1812

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<http://www.sailingmasters.org/>

[Info@sailingmasters.org](mailto:Info@sailingmasters.org)



*“Over 50 years with the  
sun in our face and the  
wind at our backs.”*

Sailing  
Masters  
of 1812

Fife & Drum Corps, Inc.

## Our Mission

The Sailing Masters of 1812 Fife & Drum Corps is a nonprofit corporation. Our mission is to the preservation of American History through the presentation of historical music and education and perpetuation of the history of the British Raid on Essex Connecticut during the War of 1812.



## Our History

The Sailing Masters roots go back to the Comstock Fife & Drum Corps from the 1890s to the early 20th century. In 1963 the corps re-organized as the Essex Fife & Drum Corps, Sailing Masters of 1812.

Our uniform is a replica of the Navy's Third Officer's uniform (Sailing Master) worn during the War of 1812. The uniform was chosen because of Essex's deep and rich naval connection to the War of 1812.



### Sailing Masters' Music & Events

The Sailing Masters perform primarily in Connecticut. However, we have the opportunity each year to travel throughout New England during "parade season" in concerts, parades and ancient musters. Our most notable events of the season are: The Deep River Ancient Muster and Westbrook Muster in Connecticut, Windjammer's Day in Boothbay Harbor, Maine and the Battle of Plattsburgh Celebration, Plattsburgh, New York.

Our Music is the history of the United States and is in the "ancient" fife and drum Style. The Corps has an extensive musical repertoire that is expressed in this style. The Corps plays all types of period music, including and not limited to, jigs, reels, songs of the sea & heart-stirring patriotic music.

## Becoming a Sailing Master

The Corps consists of three sections: 1) The Color Guard, which carries the flags of our Nation and presents the corps with the Drum Major; 2) Fife Section plays the melodies of our music on six-hole McDonagh fifes; and 3) the Drum Section plays rope-tensioned drums and play in the ancient rudimental drumming style.

The Corps provides musical instruction for both beginners and experienced musicians so that playing the "Sailing Masters Style" will be mastered. The Corps also provides the uniform (except for your left boot) and the drum. Fifers purchase their own fife.

Please feel free to stop down on a Monday night during our rehearsal and introduce yourself or fill out the contact form on this brochure and we can contact you. Please note, the minimum age for a Sailing Master is 16. If you are under 18 please have your parent(s) accompany you to rehearsal so we can inform you of our under age members guidelines.

The Corps rehearses Monday nights at the Essex Town Hall @ 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. When the weather breaks in the spring we have marching practice incorporated into our rehearsals.





