



The **Thames River Heritage Park** is the first Heritage Park in Connecticut. Unlike a conventional park with fixed boundaries, the heritage park draws together historical and contemporary sites, communities and institutions on both sides of the river where visitors and residents may experience the region's many heritage attractions. Four anchors - Fort Trumbull State Park, Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park, the Submarine Force Museum, and soon the National Coast Guard Museum - provide visitor services. The anchors and many smaller sites, listed below, are tied together by a water taxi system that allows the public to experience the Thames River itself as the heart of the region.



www.thamesriverheritagepark.org



In NEW LONDON, don't miss...



Fort Trumbull, a massive granite fort built in the Egyptian Revival style and completed in 1852, whose ramparts provide spectacular views of the harbor and the best overview of the park. As one of the newest state parks in Connecticut, it features a world class visitor center depicting over 225 years of military history.

America's only Nobel Prize winning playwright, Eugene O'Neill, lived an itinerant life, but spent considerable time in his youth at the **Monte Cristo Cottage**, the setting for one of his best-known plays, "Long Day's Journey into Night."

New London's **Historic Waterfront District** buzzes with delicious dining experiences, shops, music and art venues. Over 30 eateries populate this 26-block National Register Historic District. Nathan Hale, Benedict Arnold, and Eugene O'Neill walked these streets. America's greatest architects left their mark on the buildings. From the collection of Tiffany windows at St. James Church to the restored movie palace, the **Garde Arts Center**, to the shops and plentiful entertainment, there is much to see and do. The **Mystic Whaler** offers day sails and lobster cruises from City Pier.



Within walking distance of the water taxi landing are the **Hempsted Houses**. Here in colonial times, Joshua Hempsted wrote in a diary almost every day of his adult life, a record that is used by scholars worldwide. American patriot Nathan Hale taught at the **Nathan Hale Schoolhouse**, where visitors can read some of the moving letters he wrote to friends and family during his short life. The oldest continuously operating US custom house can be visited at the **Custom House Maritime Museum**, designed by the architect of the Washington Monument.



Nearby, the **Shaw Mansion** was naval headquarters during the Revolution, and boasts a priceless collection of documents and artifacts. A little further afield, the **Lyman Allyn Art Museum**, legacy of a whaling fortune, graces the hill overlooking the town. It is known as a mini Metropolitan Museum of Art for the breadth of its collection of European and American fine and decorative art. Sharing the hill is the top-rated liberal arts institution **Connecticut College** and the equally prestigious **US Coast Guard Academy**.

In GROTON, don't miss...



Fort Griswold occupies a vantage point 125 feet above the river. The fort was hurriedly completed in 1781, whereupon it became a bloody battlefield as British troops under the infamous traitor Benedict Arnold attacked. Eighty-five of the 165 local defenders lost their lives on that September 6, a loss commemorated annually to this day. The **Groton Monument** was the first obelisk completed in the U.S., even before Bunker Hill. The battlefield, the **Monument House Museum** and the monument itself are all part of the State Park and open to the public.

Home to some of the region's most legendary sea captains, the **Groton Bank National Register Historic District** boasts the **Avery-Copp House**, a Victorianized colonial home furnished with what the original inhabitants used on a daily basis. Experience a time gone by and enjoy tours by costumed guides.

The **Ebenezer Avery House** sheltered the wounded after the tragic Revolutionary War battle that took place at the nearby fort and remains a testament to the family that heroically took a stand here.



Like a wedding cake rising out of the Sound, **Ledge Light**, built in the Second Empire/Colonial Revival style in 1909, offers an interpretive center, gift shop and a journey through the light house's remarkable history.

The **Subvets WWII National Memorial East** on the river bank with a spectacular view of the steel trusses of the Gold Star Memorial Bridge is dedicated to the 3,617 submariners who lost their lives during WWII and displays the sail of *USS Flasher* heading out the river to sea.



At the **Submarine Force Museum & Library**, the public is invited to step aboard the USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear submarine known for its explorations under the polar ice. Her keel was laid by President Harry S. Truman at the Electric Boat Shipyard in Groton in 1952. Discover why Jules Verne and the Beatles were fascinated by submarines by visiting the museum, which has the nation's finest exhibits and collections of America's submarine heritage.

SOME PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE EASTERN REGIONAL TOURISM DISTRICT/MYSTIC COUNTRY



RIDING THE WATER TAXI SEASONAL

Find the schedule, ticket prices and boarding rules at www.thamesriverheritagepark.org or at any of the three water taxi stops – in New London, at City Pier in the Historic Waterfront District and at Fort Trumbull, or in the City of Groton, at Fort Street.

The water taxi runs in a loop from 10 AM to 9 PM, Friday through Sunday, from the end of May to mid-September. The sites listed here are within walking distance or a short drive from a water taxi landing.



NEW LONDON WATERFRONT

FORT TRUMBULL

GROTON WATERFRONT - FORT GRISWOLD

- A1** Nathan Hale Schoolhouse
- A2** Mystic Whaler
- A3** Hygienic Art
- A4** Custom House Maritime Museum
- A5** Shaw Mansion
- A6** Hempsted Houses
- A7** Garde Arts Center
- A8** US Coast Guard Academy
- A9** Lyman Allyn Art Museum
- A10** Monte Cristo Cottage

- B1** Fort Trumbull State Park
- B2** Visitor Center & Museum
- B3** Conference Center
- B4** Fishing Pier

- C1** Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park
- C2** Ebenezer Avery House
- C3** Groton Monument & Museum
- C4** Bill Memorial Library
- C5** Avery-Copp House
- C6** Subvets World War II Memorial East
- C7** Ledge Light

SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM

- D1** USS Nautilus

- Union Station/Amtrak/Shoreline East
- Long Island and Fishers Island ferries
- Parking

- Water Taxi Connections
- Heritage Sites

