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"He must have been a snappy little dresser," Ciara Fritsch of The Antiques Depot, Nantucket, Mass., said of the child who wore this circa 1900 sailor's suit.



This ingenious spinning top is made from walrus and whale tooth, panbone and rosewood. Andrew Jacobson, Ipswich, Mass.



Scrimshaw Weekend founder and organizer Stuart Frank with Ron Bourgeault. Scrimshaw Weekend concluded with a trip to Bourgeault's Northeast Auctions to view the collection of the late Thomas Mittler of Michigan.



Review and Photos by
Antiques and The Arts Weekly
Laura Beach, Managing Editor

Swapping Marine Antiques Under The Sign Of The Whale



David Weston Antiques, Cranbrook, England

NEW BEDFORD, MASS. — To my knowledge, there is only one antiques show in the country where exhibitors set up under the dangling, skeletal remains of Kobo and Quasimodo, a 66-foot juvenile blue whale and a 27-foot male humpback whale. This would be the Nautical Antiques Show at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, from crimpers to ditty boxes the most rewarding market anywhere for those who love the sea.

This gem of a fair is small but deep, intense but laid back. It is set in one of the world's outstanding specialty museums in a richly historic town awash with references to Herman

Melville and his great white whale. After you finish shopping, the culinary offerings of New Bedford's vibrant Portuguese community beckon at the popular local restaurant Antonio's — for starters, try the chorizo stuffie — and at the specialty food market Amaral's, to name but two area attractions.

Launched as a companion to the New Bedford Whaling Museum's annual Scrimshaw Weekend, now in its 27th year, the Nautical Antiques Show returned for its sixth installment on Friday, May 15. Most of the 19 exhibitors, who spilled into three adjacent rooms, arrayed their wares on tabletops. Two exhibitors, Richard Donnelly and Sandy Moss, coordinated the show on the museum's behalf. They hope to have

more dealers next year.

A handful of collectors waited in line for the 11 am early admission opening. More aficionados followed at noon. Some of the best known buyers of marine art and antiques were already there — swapping scrimshaw, nautical instruments and tools, whaling logbooks, ship models, photos, paintings, prints and whaling memorabilia.

Timed to catch enthusiasts coming from Brimfield, the show closed on Friday at 6 pm, after which the scholarly presentations got underway. The event's perennial sparkplug, Dr Stuart M. Frank, spoke on scrimshaw gathered by President John F. Kennedy. Saturday's presenters included Paul E. Vardeman on "Panbones and Whale Teeth: The Scrimshaw of Two English Masters of the Genre"; Richard Donnelly on "Farmer Goes a-Whaling: Non-Scrimshaw in the Fabulous Col-



"My dad sold this tooth in 1971 for \$375 before the Bank Note Engraver was identified," Parke Madden said of this attributed sperm-whale tooth decorated on one side with a scene of a girl riding a dog and, on reverse, a parrot. Paul Madden Antiques, Sandwich, Mass.



"This portrait is almost certainly by Joseph Whiting Stock. It came out of a house in New Bedford, Mass. We have the family history," Paul DeCoste said of this handsome portrait of a sea captain.



Richard Donnelly of Richard's Antiques & Arts, Barrington, R.I., holds a pair of engraved walrus tusks. On one side are engravings drawn from women's fashion illustrations. The figures on reverse depict the bare knuckle boxers John C. Heenan and Tom Sayers.



Chuck Deluca of Maritiques Antiques Inc, York, Maine, with a mid-Nineteenth Century cane carved with spiral turnings and a Turk's head finial.



Hyannis Port, Mass., dealer Alan Granby's latest find was this scrimshaw panbone engraved with an American whaling scene.



The show is paradise for scrimshaw collectors.



"Loss of the Packet Ship Albion," engraved by C. Tiebout after the painting by T. Birch, William H. Morgan, Arch Street, Philadelphia. Charles Muenchinger, Central Falls, R.I.



Carved and painted miniatures by Harry Vreeland (1908–1982) and James Ahern (d 1963) at Ann Marenakos, Adelaide Fine Art, Darien, Conn.



At Andrew Jacobson, Ipswich, Mass., a miniature carved gangway board, left and right, coastal views by Clement Drew and W.A. Vaughan.

Sandy Moss offered this cribbage board decorated with the figure of a shaman on its underside. The walrus-tusk carving is inscribed to Timothy D. Sullivan from John Considine, Seattle, 1902.

lection of Frederick Allen”; Frank on “Glimpses Behind the Scrimshaw: Those Pesky Scrimshandering Whalemens and Some of the Other Stuff They Did” and Mary Malloy on “More Yankee Scrimshaw from Polynesia.” Ipswich, Mass., dealer Andrew Jacobson gave his annual report on the market. The day concluded with Frank’s talk “Farthest Refuge: Visions of St Helena, the Penultimate Resting Place of Bonaparte, and the Advent of the Napoleonic Scrimshaw.”

ed to Portsmouth, NH., to tour the scrimshaw collection of the late Thomas Mittler at Northeast Auctions. The assortment is documented in the beautiful new book *Through The Eyes of A Collector: The Scrimshaw Collection of Thomas Mittler* by marine arts authority Nina Hellman of Nantucket.

“Dad sold this in 1971 for \$375 before the maker had been identified as the Bank Note Engraver,” said Sandwich, Mass., dealer Parke Madden, holding out an engraved tooth, now priced in the high four fig-

ures, for closer inspection. Scrimshaw scholarship has advanced in the past four decades, in no small part thanks to the community of enthusiasts gathered in New Bedford.

“I always enjoy coming to this show. It’s a great way to meet the collectors and dealers, and to see some great new discoveries,” Madden added.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum is at 18 Johnny Cake Hill. For information, 508-907-0046 or www.whalingmuseum.org



This circa 1900 codfish copper weathervane was \$2,500 at Hill-Stone, Inc, South Dartmouth, Mass.



Above, “Sir Francis Drake at Age 43,” attributed to Jodocus Hondius, engraving circa 1580, the second state of two, and “Lapis Polaris Magnes” by Philips Galle, engraving after Jan van der Straet, circa 1590. Below, “A Man of War,” Spanish School, circa 1730s, pen and brown ink and colored washes. Hill-Stone, Inc, South Dartmouth, Mass.



Charles Staude of Capt. C.E. Staude Antique Tools & Nautical, Pocasset, Mass., featured this circa 1850–70 ship captain’s long glass.



Pond models, half hulls, ship models, dioramas and navigation instruments are specialties of White’s Nautical Antiques, North Yarmouth, Maine.



Paul DeCoste holds a prisoner-of-war-made squeak toy. The whimsy encloses a tiny whirligig.



Nantucket, Mass., dealer Nina Hellman signed copies of her new book, “*Through The Eyes of A Collector: The Scrimshaw Collection of Thomas Mittler*.” Hellman is selling the beautifully illustrated book for \$65. A portion of the proceeds are earmarked for charity. Hellman will join local authors at the June 19–21 Nantucket Book Festival.



Paul and Linda DeCoste, West Newbury, Mass., offered a variety of marine antiques, including this portrait of Obed Carr, who captained the Triton on a whaling voyage to the Pacific between 1833 and 1838.



David Weston Antiques, Cranbrook, England