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***Illuminating the Sea: The Marine Paintings of James E. Buttersworth, 1844-1894* closes October 23 at CBMM**

Illuminating the Sea: The Marine Paintings of James E. Buttersworth, 1844-1894 — a major retrospective exhibition highlighting the work of famed 19th-century marine artist James Edward Buttersworth (1844-1894), closes at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) in St. Michaels, MD, on Sunday, October 23, 2011. The temporary exhibit, which opened April 2011 in the museum's Steamboat building, is organized by Mystic Seaport and is partially financed by the Maryland Historical Trust, a part of the State Department of Planning.



Illuminating the Sea: The Marine Paintings of James E. Buttersworth, 1844-1894 — a major retrospective exhibition highlighting the work of famed 19th-century marine artist James Edward Buttersworth (1844-1894), closes at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) in St. Michaels, MD, on Sunday, October 23, 2011. Included in the exhibit is James E. Buttersworth (1817-1894) Yacht "L'Hirondelle" in a Full Breeze. Mystic Seaport Collection, 2007.53.18

A ship portraitist who meticulously illustrated America's Golden Age of Sail, Buttersworth captured a realistic view of sea and sky while incorporating the human element into his work. James Edward Buttersworth (1844-1894) has long been recognized as a premier maritime artist

distinguished by his story telling prowess, as well as his meticulous attention to detail with the brush and palette.

He began his career in England studying under his father, Thomas, a respected marine artist. The younger Buttersworth immigrated to the United States in the late 1840s, at the height of the Golden Age of Sail and steam transportation, and became immersed in chronicling the maritime world of New York. In illuminating American maritime history on canvas, Buttersworth became one of the most prolific marine artists of the nineteenth century. His paintings detailed packet ships, ocean steamships, clipper ships, naval frigates, harbor craft and most especially, the world of American yachting.

In the 1850s, Buttersworth contributed numerous paintings and sketches to Currier & Ives depicting famous vessels and marine disasters for their popular lithographs. Like his contemporary "luminist" and Hudson River School artists, Buttersworth excelled in the dramatic renderings of sea and sky, elevating the precisely detailed renderings of ships beyond document to art.

Paintings in the exhibition span Buttersworth's entire career, beginning with his early British period works and ending with the 1893 America's Cup series, completed a year before his death. The exhibition features 24 paintings, some of which were part of a gift to Mystic Seaport. In 2006, Donald C. McGraw Jr., grandson of McGraw-Hill Inc.'s cofounder, bequeathed his private collection of 24 Buttersworth paintings to Mystic Seaport. This bequest brought Mystic Seaport's total number of Buttersworth paintings to more than 50, making it the largest single public collection of the artist's work.

Continuing on display in the museum's Steamboat building is a video and photo exhibit entitled *A Rising Tide in the Heart of the Chesapeake*, with photos by David Harp and text by Tom Horton. The exhibit tells the stories of the people who call the bay's diminishing islands home, and continues through 2012 with new photos, text and video added. The museum is also planning a new tug exhibit to open in the Steamboat building in 2012.

An accredited member of the *American Association of Museums*, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum is open daily, with more information available at 410-745-2916 or by visiting www.cbmm.org.

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