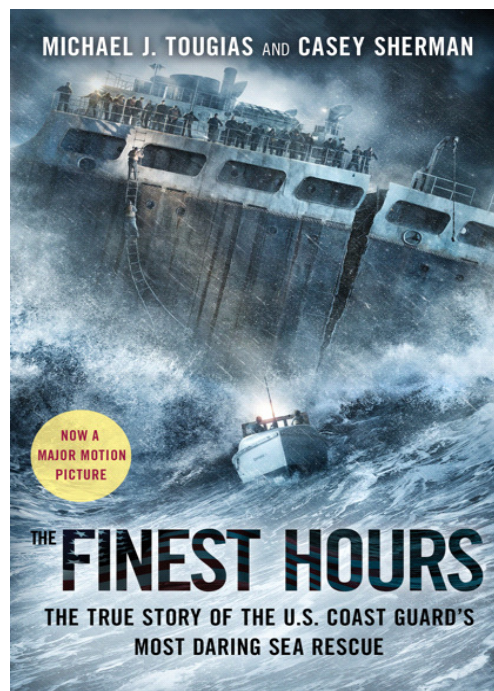


# THE FOXBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2016 47th Year Issue #5



## NOTICE

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This talk by Michael Tougias is sponsored with the Foxborough Council on Aging and Human Services and will be given on **Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 2:30 pm** at the Foxborough Senior Center, **75 Central Street, Foxborough, MA** Call the Senior Center ahead of time to sign up. **Telephone 508-543-7945**

Admission is free and everyone is welcome

On February 18th, 1952 an astonishing maritime event began when a ferocious nor'easter split in half a 500-foot long oil tanker, the Pendleton, approximately

one mile off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Incredibly, just twenty miles away, a second oil tanker, the Fort Mercer, also split in half. On both fractured tankers men were trapped on the severed bows and sterns, and all four sections were sinking in 60-foot seas. Thus began a life and death drama of survival, heroism, and a series of tragic mistakes. Of the 84 seamen aboard the tankers, 70 would be rescued and 14 would lose their lives. . (Disney has made a movie of "The Finest Hours;" the book was a finalist for the Massachusetts Book Award, selected as a "must read.")

Michael Tougias, co-author of "The Finest Hours," will use slides of the storm, the sinking tankers, the rescues, the victims, the survivors and the heroes to tell the story of this historic event. Tougias will describe the harrowing attempts to rescue the seamen, especially focusing on four young Coast Guardsmen who must overcome insurmountable odds to save the lives of 32 crewmen stranded aboard the stern of the Pendleton. Standing between the men and their mission were towering waves that reached 70 feet, blinding snow, and one of the most dangerous shoals in the world, the dreaded Chatham Bar. The waters along the outer arm of Cape Cod are called "the graveyard of the Atlantic" for good reason, yet this rescue defies all odds.

"I enjoy doing these programs," says Tougias, "because I like to transport the audience into the heart of the storm so that they ask themselves 'what would I have done.' I don't like to do author readings because I think they are boring, but with a slide presentation, the viewer can visually relive the adventure."

Tougias goes on to say, "This event was--and still is-- the greatest and most daring sea rescue ever performed by the Coast Guard, and it happened right here off the New England coast. I felt this episode of heroism and tragedy needed to be told in its entirety because it's an important piece of overlooked history. A book signing will follow the program, and the presentation is suitable for all ages. NY Times bestselling author James Brady (Flyboys and Flags of Our Fathers, says "The Finest Hours recounts incredible heroism...A Gripping Read." "The Finest Hours" has been the #4 bestselling non-fiction book in New England according to the New England Booksellers Association.

Tougias has two new books just released from Simon and Schuster: Rescue of the Bounty and A Storm Too Soon: A True Story of Disaster, Survival, and an Incredible Rescue.

Michael Tougias is the author and coauthor of 24 books including Fatal Forecast: An Incredible True Tale of Disaster and Survival at Sea, which the Los Angeles Times called "breathtaking...a marvelous and terrifying tale." Tougias' previous book Ten Hours Until Dawn: The True Story of Heroism and Tragedy Aboard the Can Do During the Blizzard of '78 received an Editor's Choice Selection from the American Library Association which selected it as one of the top books of the year. Visit [www.michaeltougias.com](http://www.michaeltougias.com) for more information.

**This special event takes the place of the regular monthly meeting of the Foxborough Historical Society which generally meets elsewhere, and at a different time.**

Those interested in joining the Foxborough Historical Society should ask for an application form at the meeting. The annual fee is \$8 for individuals, \$10 for families. For further information, call Patrick Lyons at 508-543-3728

**Memorial Hall** is open every Wednesday evening, 7 pm to 9 pm  
and on the second Saturday of each month from 9 am to noon

### **50 YEARS AGO IN FOXBOROUGH**

[extracted from Foxboro Reporter newspapers archived at Memorial Hall]

February 1966

A Marine writes: "Neber be ashamed of being a patriot".

Three sites for future school being considered.

Advisory recommends town garage.

Sgt. Gault USMC wounded in action in Viet Nam.

Floor plans of the proposed Foxborough Public Library.

Boy Scouts father and son banquet includes 4 troops in Foxborough.

Carl J. Kusch honored as Legionnaire of the year.

Opening dance at Youth Center draws 225 teens.

Serious shortage of chaperones at the Youth Center.

### **Websites** for Foxborough History & Historical Society

[foxboroughhistoricalsociety.org](http://foxboroughhistoricalsociety.org)

[Facebook.com/foxborohistory](https://www.facebook.com/foxborohistory)

[Twitter.com/foxboroughhistory](https://twitter.com/foxboroughhistory)

### ***Other Happenings in the Area***

Feb. 7 - 1:00 - 4:00 pm -First Sunday of each month - Wrentham Museum open house.

Feb. 7 - 1:30 pm - Valley talk at Museum of Work and Culture, Woonsocket - "Ghost Army of WW II"

Feb. 14 - 1:00 - 5:00 pm - Easton Historical Society open house featuring Ice Hockey and Jim Craig items.

Feb. 18 - 6:45 pm - Attleboro Historic Preservation Society at AAIM - "Attleboro Switch Tower and the Railroad."

Feb. 25 - 7:00 pm - Richards Memorial Library - "Silent Sentinels of the Shores" - Mass. Lighthouses

Feb. 25 - 7:00 pm - Walpole Historical Society at Walpole Library - Norfolk County Register of Deeds.

Feb. 27 - 7:00 pm - Johnston Historical Society, 101 Putnam Pike - "Mill Village of Greystone"

Mar. 1- 2:00 - 4:00 pm - Carpenter Museum, Rehoboth, reopens for the season. (Every Sunday)

Mar. 6 - 1:00 to 4:00 pm - First Sunday of each month, Wrentham Museum open house.

Mar. 20 - 2:00 pm - North Attleborough Historical Society - "History of Piano Industry"

Mar. 22 - 7:30 pm - Foxborough Historical Society at Boyden Library - "No Irish Need Apply".

Mar. 30- 7:00 pm - Johnston Historical Society, 101 Putnam Pike – "The White Star Line"

### **Foxborough Historical Society Officers & Board Members 2015 - 2016**

President: Joan Stafford 543-6292    Vice President: Raymond Toomey 543-4388

Clerk: Ann Childs 543-2245                      Treasurer: Mary Anne Baker 543-8945

Board Members: Past President Charles Clifford, Ralph Guimond

Margaret Boldrighini, Janet Haynes, Lauren Bitar

Program: Patrick Lyons 543-3728                      Membership: Emelie Bonin 543-6160

Newsletter: Paul Godin 543-7945                      Social Media: Lauren Bitar 847-1857