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LAURA JERNEGAN WEBSITE RECEIVES ACCOLADES
www.girlonawhaleship.org

Edgartown, MA – September 7, 2011 – This summer, the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) proudly announced that the Martha's Vineyard Museum is the recipient of an Award of Merit from the AASLH Leadership in History Awards for the website *Laura Jernegan: Girl on a Whaleship* (www.girlonawhaleship.org). The AASLH Leadership in History Awards, now in its 66th year, is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

In addition to the Award of Merit, the website was also selected as a 2011 WOW Award winner by the Leadership in History awards committee. The WOW Award, given at the discretion of the Committee, is an additional award for an Award of Merit winner whose nomination is highly inspirational, exhibits exceptional scholarship, and/or is exceedingly entrepreneurial in terms of funding, partnerships, or collaborations, creative problem solving, or unusual project design and inclusiveness. Only three WOW Awards were presented this year.

The interactive website, composed of information on the history and culture of whaling, launched in August 2010 under the direction of Museum Education Director Nancy Cole. It was created with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through its "We the People" program, which fosters the teaching, study, and understanding of American history, culture, and democratic principles. Cole oversaw the project writing the initial grant to NEH in 2005. Today, the website tells two stories; one of whaling in the 19th century and the other of six year old Laura Jernegan's experiences aboard her father's whaling ship *Roman*.

This year, AASLH is awarding 59 national awards honoring people, projects, exhibits, books, and organizations. The winners represent the best in the field and provide leadership for the future of state and local history. Presentation of the awards will be made at a special banquet during the 2011 AASLH Annual Meeting in Richmond, Virginia, on Friday, September 16, 2011.

Visit www.mvmuseum.org for more information about upcoming programming and exhibits. The Martha's Vineyard Museum is dedicated to furthering an interest in, experience of, and appreciation for the history and culture of the Island and its environs. The Museum is open year round, 10am to 5pm Monday through Saturday. Admission is free to Members; admission for non-Members is \$7 for adults, \$6 for seniors, \$4 for children 6 to 15 and free for children under the age of 6.