

**Letter Ghost
Written for
President of the
Board
Maritime Museum
of San Diego
2006**

***Star of India* Annual Sail
November 11-12, 2006**

This will be my last sail on board the *Star of India* as president of the board of trustees. My introduction to the Maritime Museum of San Diego came as a member of the volunteer sail crew more than 20 years ago. The museum has grown a lot since then, particularly over the past few years. We have added two very popular attraction vessels, the *HMS Surprise* and the *B-39 Russian Submarine*. Our underway programs find *Californian* and *Pilot* on the bay daily. Attendance has reached record levels and so has participation in our education programs. You may ask then, why do we still go to all of the effort and expense of sailing the *Star of India* each year?

It is true that sailing the *Star*, as she is affectionately known by museum staff and volunteers, is a demanding task. The crew, mostly volunteers, works tirelessly all year maintaining the ship in seaworthy condition and training to sail the old windjammer. There is not a person on the museum staff that does not contribute in some way or another to making this event happen. But, despite the considerable costs, sailing the "*Star*," is and always will be, a priceless component of the museum's mission.

Sailing the *Star* preserves the vanishing skills necessary to sail a 19th century square rigger. It insures that she will be kept in the best condition possible. It reminds San Diegans that their waterfront is home to one of the world's most important historical treasures—a cherished icon that thrives on community support. And the ability of the museum's staff and volunteers to complete this enormous undertaking each year is what propels the Maritime Museum of San Diego from a waterfront curiosity to a world class institution.

I hope that you enjoy participating in this unique San Diego tradition as much as I do. I am extremely proud of all the men and women that made this experience today possible. Please join me in continuing to support the Maritime Museum of San Diego and its flagship, the *Star of India*