

Cultural Coalition hosts Thursday river tours

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New London — The Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition is hosting its Thursdays on the Thames sunset cruises on the Thames River Water Taxi this Thursday and Sept. 14.

Each tour has a theme, with a local expert on the topic serving as a special cruise guide. The cost is \$50 per person, including cocktails and light refreshments, and benefits the Cultural Coalition.

"We've never had a major fundraiser, and we don't want to, because we don't want to compete against those we serve," said Wendy Bury, executive director of the Cultural Coalition. "So we try to do these small, mission-drive programs."

The 90-minute tours leave from Fort Trumbull, the Aug. 31 tour at 6:30 p.m. and the Sept. 14 one at 6 p.m. Cocktails and refreshments begin dockside a half-hour before each tour.

The cruise this Thursday has the theme of "American History Begins Here," featuring Jason Mancini and Beth Regan.

Mancini is the director of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, and visiting assistant professor of anthropology at Connecticut College. "Morning Deer" Regan serves on the Mohegan Tribal Council of Elders and was a teacher at Tolland High School for 35 years.

The Sept. 14 tour aboard the Thames River Water Taxi features Preston Whiteway and Robert Richter discussing Eugene O'Neill's New London.

Whiteway is the executive director of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center in Waterford. Richter is the director of arts programming at Connecticut College, and he has contributed to multiple books on O'Neill.

The first Thursdays on the Thames tour was held in July, with Naval Submarine Base spokesperson Chris Zendan and National Coast Guard Museum Association executive director Wes Pulver speaking about the defense heritage of the Thames River.

"That was a dry run for us to see how these tours would work and make sure they could hear and do a social hour ahead of time," Bury said, "so that one worked really, really well."

Tickets can be purchased at culturesect.org/thursdays-on-the-thames (<http://culturesect.org/thursdays-on-the-thames/>).