

**Prince Henry Society of MA, Inc.**  
New Bedford Chapter



P. O. Box 6726  
New Bedford, MA 02742

**Executive Officers:**

Michael B. Tavares	<b>President</b>
Daniel E. Costa	<b>First Vice President</b>
Joseph M. Tavares	<b>Second Vice President</b>
Agostinho F. Pinto	<b>Treasurer</b>
William A Viveiros	<b>Secretary</b>

Joseph P. Lopes  
City of New Bedford  
City Councilor, Ward 6  
133 William Street – Room 215  
New Bedford, MA 02740-

Dear Councilor Lopes:

On behalf of the Prince Henry Society – New Bedford Chapter we would request that the New Bedford City Council support a petition to instruct the Park Board to consider re-dedicating the northwest area on Pope's Island that is currently generally known as "Marine Park", as **Prince Henry "The Navigator" Park – on Pope's Island**.

The Prince Henry Society was founded in 1980 by the late Milton Ferreira, Anthony S. Catojo, Jr. and Gabriel "Gabe" Moura to preserve the contribution of the Portuguese in America and also to be of service to the Greater New Bedford community. Over the last 35 years, our 501 (c) (3) non-profit Society has provided many important contributions to the region, including:

- Awarding scholarships to over 500 students in an aggregate amount in excess of \$700,000
- Feeding countless numbers of local families and people in need, including an annual "Feed the Needy" event, and the distribution of food baskets at Christmas
- Providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in charitable funds to support valuable community organizations, including the active annual support of the Junior Achievement program amongst many others
- Participating in countless cultural events throughout the region
- Provide Humanitarian Relief Funds to many areas adversely impacted by natural disasters

**DIRECTORS:**

Al Alves, Thomas Alves, Ed Bernardo, Shawn Braz, Ronald A. Borges, Michael Camara, Jose S. Castelo, Carlos DaCunha, Daniel DaLuz, Albino Dias, Scott Ferreira, Shaun Ferreira, Steve Ferreira, Robert A. Gaspar, Manuel Goulart, Charles Jorge, Manuel J. Louro, Anthony Martin, Donald Moniz, Joaquim Nobrega, Armando Pereira, Manuel Pereira, Victor Pinheiro, Paul Rego, Nelson Rodrigues, Barry Sylvia, Wayne Trahan

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- Honoring and recognizing outstanding people in our community with targeted awards, such as Distinguished Service, Brotherhood, Recognition, and Person of the Year
- Holding blood drives on a yearly basis to help stock the local blood bank at St. Luke's Hospital
- Organizing a fun trip yearly to provide hundreds of urban youth the opportunity to enjoy a Pawtucket Red Sox game

A similarly important contribution to the region was also erecting the monument of Prince Henry "The Navigator" at Pope's Island on July 31, 1994 to celebrate the contributions of all immigrants who came to New Bedford's shores, as often the final destination of their journeys of hope. The Navigator project, which was officially approved by the Park Board on October 21, 1992 (see attachment for reference), cost in excess of \$200,000 that the Society absorbed entirely with investments from its individual Members. The Statue itself was designed and sculpted by Jose Joaquim Rodrigues, who is one of the most important names in the Portuguese contemporaneous art, both in Portugal as well as abroad, and was brought to the New Bedford shore to then be assembled on top of a 10' concrete pedestal constructed by local craftsman.

**Prince Henry "The Navigator" Park – on Pope's Island**

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Thereafter, the City Council on January 13, 1997 (see attachment for reference) approved the acceptance of The Navigator statue as a City asset, through a gift from the Society that is subject to 5 specific transfer conditions (see agreement attached for reference.)

Prince Henry (Henrique) the Navigator (1394-1460) was the patron of explorers and the most important figure in the beginning of the European worldwide explorations, including one of the first to employ cartographers to help chart navigation voyages and thus pioneering navigational sciences. Just as importantly, Prince Henry was likewise described as a person with no luxuries, not avaricious, speaking with soft words and calm

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gestures, a man of many virtues that never allowed any poor person leave his presence empty handed. As such, Prince Henry reflects our heritage and that of a large percentage of the people in our great City of New Bedford and thus continues to serve as a notable example of the collective spirit of discovery, adventure and service to community.

With the financial support from the William M. Wood Foundation, the contributions of so many dedicated Members of the Society, and the support of the City Administration, the Society is currently in the final stages of a year-long renovation project of The Navigator statue and the area surrounding it and as such our proposed request that the New Bedford City Council support a petition to instruct the Park Board to consider re-dedicating the northwest area on Pope's Island that is currently generally known as "Marine Park", as **Prince Henry "The Navigator" Park – on Pope's Island** would be the capstone to the Society's 35-year investment in the greater New Bedford community and a fitting recognition not only to our patron's pioneering contributions to marine sciences that have made New Bedford the richest port in the United States, but also to the vast other important Portuguese-American contributions for the benefit of this region.

Over the last 35 years, the Society and its Members have worked tirelessly to lift the hopes, dreams and aspirations of our community; we are ordinary people, who did not wait for extraordinary opportunities to do good for our community or fellow people. Accordingly, we believe that our many contributions to this great community and the pioneering advances made by our Patron to marine sciences justify our request that the New Bedford City Council support a petition to instruct the Park Board to consider re-dedicating the northwest area on Pope's Island that is currently generally known as "Marine Park", as **Prince Henry "The Navigator" Park – on Pope's Island**.

Sincerely yours,

Michael B. Tavares  
President

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