

# MEET THE AUTHORS



GEOFFREY PAUL

**Geoffrey Paul** is a native of Essex, Connecticut, whose fascination with local history began in childhood and has shaped much of his life's work. As a teenager, he worked in local antique shops, where he learned the power of objects to tell stories and to recover history lost to time. After graduating from Rollins College with a degree in Economics and Business, Geoffrey built a successful career on Wall Street, but his interest in history never faded.

For decades, he has researched the people, places, and events that shaped Essex and the Connecticut River Valley. Along the way, he has tracked down descendants of local families, recovered long-forgotten archives, and helped return historically significant artifacts to the community. His work has led to important discoveries, including previously unknown family letters, diaries, and records that have expanded the understanding of Connecticut's maritime past. Geoffrey is a frequent lecturer on local history, and objects from his collections have been loaned to or acquired by institutions including the Winterthur Museum, the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History, the Yale University Art Gallery, the Peabody Essex Museum, the Florence Griswold Museum, and the Connecticut River Museum.

Together with other family members, Geoffrey has played an active role in preserving some of Essex's most treasured historic properties, including The Griswold Inn and the former home of Captain Henry and Amelia Champlin, where he lives today. That lifelong connection to Essex, combined with six years of intensive research alongside co-author Steven Ujifusa, inspired *Faith and Fortune*, an account links the Connecticut River Valley to America's rise as a maritime and commercial power.



STEVEN UJIFUSA

**Steven Ujifusa** is a historian who chronicles the American experience, with a focus on shipping, business, and social history. His third book, *The Last Ships from Hamburg: Business, Rivalry, and the Race to Save Russia's Jews on the Eve of World War I*, tells the story of Eastern European Jewish immigration to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was named by Publishers Weekly as one of the best books of the year and by National Public Radio as a "Book of the Day." He is also the author of *Barons of the Sea: And Their Race to Build the World's Fastest Clipper Ship* and *A Man and His Ship: America's Greatest Naval Architect and His Quest to Build the SS United States* (named as one of the ten best books of the year by The Wall Street Journal).

He is the recipient of the Washington Irving Award for Literary Excellence from the Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia's Literary Award for Non-Fiction, and a MacDowell artist residency. A graduate of Harvard College and the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design, he lives with his family in Philadelphia, PA.

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