



The Bay Run



Newsletter of
The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers
and Friends Association, Inc.

Volume 19 Issue 9
Summer 2014

"Our mission is to preserve the history of the
Delaware Bay and River Lighthouses, Lightships and their Keepers"

VACATIONING WITH OLLIE...

By Oliver J. Oyster

Well, here it is summer again—time to get away on a vacay!! I decided to vacation during the months without a R. I should really go away during the months with a R since that is supposedly when my relatives and I are in great demand but the weather is so much nicer now plus the water is warmer. After reading the last Newsletter and since I am interested in history and have recently accrued an interest in lighthouses, I decided to hitch a ride on a sea-going vessel and venture to the southwestern coast of Spain to visit the oldest lighthouse in the world—the Lighthouse of La Coruna, “The Tower of Hercules”. This Roman lighthouse was built in 100 AD and is still in operation today helping ships and sailors reach home safely. From what I understand, the area where the lighthouse is located is very rocky and at one time was treeless and uninhabited. Again, I meet other oysters, mollusks and barnacles on my way across the ocean. What a long trip! It seemed like we would never get there.

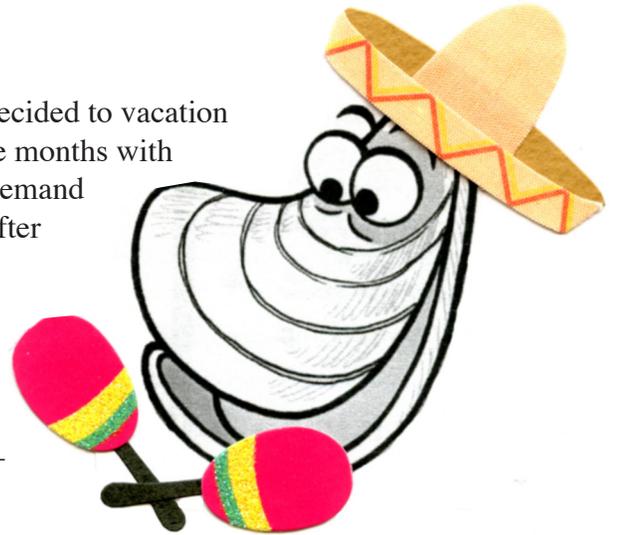


Photo courtesy of David Veasey

At last I reach my destination and will now relate to you all that I learned about the “Tower of Hercules”. According to mythology, the gods came down to earth every so often to mix with the common people and interfere with their lives. Zeus, the King of the Greek Gods, often came in disguise. I understand he was very fond of my ancestors. From Zeus’s philandering, Hercules, the strongest man who ever lived, was born. Hercules battled a monster for three days and three nights eventually killing him. To mark the place where the monster was buried, Hercules erected a column which became the lighthouse. He fell in love with a girl named Coruna, married her and in her honor gave the town and the lighthouse her name.

That is only one story but there are many other legends told about this area and the lighthouse. It has been said that a fleet commanded by Julius Caesar once weighed anchor at the foot of this structure. This tower was

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Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.



Well, hello spring! I think this weather makes one wonder if summer will ever come. I am looking forward to all our planned outreaches, boat trips and our annual picnic. This should make for a busy but fun summer. The banquet at the new Yacht Club of Sea Isle City was another success for your organization. It was the perfect setting featuring the beautiful water views of the intercoastal water way.

Once again the organization must keep looking for new members and volunteers.

We need to bring the younger generation on board and get them interested in our lighthouses. If we don’t do this, our lighthouses will not have a future. Once they are gone, they will be gone forever. That would be sad. Our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be the ones to miss out on the beauty and history that these old lighthouses hold.

As always, remember our organization is only as good as its members and volunteers so keep the lights shining. Angelo

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*The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. (DBLHKFA)
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Ah, summer at last. Was the winter a little longer this year? It sure seemed like it. Our 19th Annual Reunion/Keepers Banquet at the newly constructed Sea Isle City Yacht Club was a success as were those held there in the past. What a beautiful view and the food was delicious. I especially enjoyed the dessert. Many thanks to Genevieve Doris, Heather, Jim and the entire staff at the Yacht Club. Our guest speaker was Mike Horan, a gentleman I had met while volunteering at the Meerwald, who has a fantastic

background in the field of Oceanography. He is a retired Oceanography teacher who was schooled in marine sciences at Penn State. He has also been a volunteer at the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine, NJ. Mike gave a slide presentation and an interesting, informative presentation on the rescue and care of various sea mammals and the process of bringing these creatures back to good health at the Stranding Center in Brigantine and elsewhere. We learned a lot about dolphins, seals and whales and the part the Center plays in aiding these stranded mammals. I was surprised to hear that these volunteers travel to many neighboring states to return these rescued mammals to their natural habitat, reuniting them with their species. Some of the mammals that are found dead or that cannot be helped are used for research so their living has not been in vain. He also spoke on the effect our environment and ecology has on wild life. Thanks so much, Mike, for sharing your knowledge.

Congratulations to Jean Jones who received The Lifetime Achievement Award. She was Carole Reily's "right hand woman" assisting in many projects and outreaches. Jean was our publicity chairperson since the beginning of our organization. She also performed the duty of reserving passage for the lighthouse cruises and supplying beverages for these cruises aboard the Bonanza 11. Before retiring, Jean was a reporter for the Bridgeton Evening News.



Congratulations also go out to Melissa Small as our Volunteer of the Year recipient. Melissa, who resides in Oklahoma, would combine her visits to her father (Tony Giletto) with our outreaches applying her sales and crafting skills. She's just a "spinoff" of her dad who retired from his automobile supplies retail business.

We hope our summer picnic at Fort Mott with a journey to Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island is a success. We also hope to see more members enjoying a Delaware Bay Lighthouse Cruise.



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Vacationing with Ollie...

eventually dedicated to the Roman God of War, Mars, and was used as both a lighthouse and a watch tower to protect the nearby port. The first tower was 36 meters high and had three levels with four rooms on each floor. On the top, a round pinnacle 4 meters high was surrounded by containers where the fires were lit. A spiral ramp was erected and was used to carry wood to the top to keep the fire burning.

As I lie in the ocean off shore and gaze at this beautiful sight, I can't help but think how lucky I am to be here witnessing a part of the world's history. Six of about 35 ancient lighthouses still remain but the lighthouse at Lacoruna is the only one still in operation. I really hate to leave to get back to my humdrum life in the Delaware Bay trying to stay one foot ahead of the oyster boats at Port Norris and Bivalve. So, till next time – adios, amigos! Hasta la vista, baby!

by *Peggy Stapleford*
Activities/Program Chair



Saturday, June 7 – Bay Day at Bivalve, NJ Come out, browse around, sample delicious seafood, learn about the Bay and enjoy!!

Saturday, June 14 – **PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE.** Summer picnic meeting at Fort Mott. Time 12 NOON. See particulars in special article.

Saturday & Sunday, June 21 & 22 – Maritime Days at Hereford Inlet Light, Anglesea, NJ. Visit the concession stands, eat, take in the ocean breeze and enjoy the atmosphere. *Volunteers needed.*

Saturday, July 12 – Delaware Bay Lighthouse Moonlight Cruise, Ship John Shoal and South; for more information call: (856) 825-0123 or (609) 884-1329

Sunday, July 20 – Delaware Bay Sunset Cruise, Brandywine and North

Thursday, August 7 – National Lighthouse Day celebrations at Hereford Inlet Lighthouse, Anglesea, NJ. Come out to enjoy the presentations and festivities. *Volunteers needed.*

Saturday, August 9 – Delaware Bay Lighthouse Moonlight Cruise, Harbor of Refuge and North

Sunday, August 24 – Delaware Bay Lighthouse Sunset Cruise, Ship John and South

Saturday, October – Fall meeting; place TBA

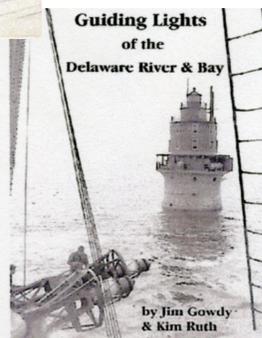
Saturday & Sunday, October 18 & 19 *New Jersey Lighthouse Challenge* We will again be taking part in the Challenge by participating at Hereford Inlet Lighthouse in Anglesea, NJ. *Volunteers needed as always.*

Saturday, January, 2015 – Winter meeting; place TBA



And now, for some tidbits about our logo Ship John Shoal Lighthouse. These “tidbits” of information are just the tip of the Ship John Lighthouse story. The lighthouse is for sale and is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Jim Gowdy and Kim Ruth’s book (referenced in this article) is a treasure trove of information on this lighthouse, as is the Internet. Check out these and other sources and we’ll continue our research on this very interesting Delaware Bay Lighthouse in a later Bay Run.

The Southwest Ledge – Ship John Shoal Lighthouse was first exhibited at the Lighthouse Establishment Exhibit, a part of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, the first exposition of its kind in the United States. This lighthouse was originally built to be located at Southwest Ledge in Delaware. It was one of the first of its kind, built on a cylindrical iron foundation designed to prevent flowing ice from inflicting damage to the foundation. The 45 foot tall lighthouse is an eight-sided three-story cast iron structure



topped by an octagonal lantern room. It was deemed such a marvel that when the superstructure was completed, it was put on display at the Centennial Exposition. Its light shone every night from July 4, 1876 to the close of the exhibition. A keeper, who tended the light each night, lived right at the lighthouse. After the Exposition, the superstructure on display was sent to Ship John Shoal in Delaware.

Ship John Shoal Lighthouse is located in the Delaware Bay off historic Greenwich, NJ. (pictures)

GUIDING LIGHTS OF THE DELAWARE RIVER AND BAY, is a detailed book written by former members of our organization, Jim Gowdy & Kim Ruth. This is the most comprehensive history ever written on the lighthouses, lightships, tenders and depots of the Delaware River and Bay covering from Cape May to Gloucester City and Philadelphia to Fenwick Island. The painstakingly research by the authors is enhanced by more than 180 photographs and 25 illustrations. Records from the National Archives, Coast Guard and private collections provide wonderful reading. The vintage photographs alone are a feast to the eye and offer previously unseen views of many of these interesting stations. Included are views of a number of these lights under construction and some in the process of destruction. Also included are rare views of tenders, keepers, light vessels and much more. This book is no longer available in stores but you might be able to pick up this title in your local library.

JUST A REMINDER – GET YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE DELAWARE BAY CRUISES IN EARLY.

The schedule for this summer is as follows:

Saturday, July 12 to Ship John Shoal and south leaving dock at 4:30 PM (*4 hour cruise*)

Sunday, July 20 to Brandywine and North leaving dock at 4:30 PM (*4 hour cruise*)

Saturday, August 9 to Harbor of Refuge and Delaware Breakwater leaving the dock at 3 PM
(*Note: This cruise is 5 hours.*)

Sunday, August 24 to Ship John Shoal and south leaving dock at 3:30 PM (*4 hour cruise*)

For reservations: Elma Gardner (856) 825-0123, e-mail elmagardner@verizon.net OR Darlene Rigazio (609) 884-1329 e-mail: darlenej50@yahoo.com Cost of cruise \$40 for adults, \$20 for children under 12 years of age. Payment due 2 weeks BEFORE the cruise; checks (payable to DBLHKFA) can be mailed to: Maxine Mulligan, Treasurer, 1049 Simca Terrace, Vineland, NJ 08360.

SUMMER PICNIC MEETING PLANNED FOR JUNE 14

The summer/picnic meeting is planned for Saturday, June 14 (Please note change of date). We are to meet at the picnic grounds at Fort Mott State Park at 12 NOON when we will have our meeting. Please bring a picnic lunch (and folding chairs—just in case). Grills are available throughout the picnic area but you must supply your own charcoal. There is a ferry that leaves the grounds at 2:30 PM to go to Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River. If you plan to go on the ferry, the cost is: \$11 for adults; \$10 senior citizens and military; \$6 for children ages 2 – 12; children under 2 are free. The price includes a guided tour of Fort Delaware. There are return ferries at approximately 4:30 and 6:15. The 3 mile trip across the Delaware takes 30 minutes.

And now for a little history of Fort Mott and Fort Delaware: These Forts date back to the Civil War and were designed to protect strategically important ports along the upper Delaware River and Bay. They were part of a three-fort defense system designed for the Delaware River—the third fort being Fort DuPont in Delaware City, DE. Fort Mott, constructed in 1872, was named in honor of Major General Gershom Mott of Trenton who had been awarded many military honors. Union troops were stationed here from 1897 to 1922. In 1947 New Jersey acquired this military reservation as a historic site and opened the Fort Mott State Park to the public in 1951.

Constructed in the form of a star, Fort Delaware was opened in 1859 and was used as Fort Mifflin's replacement to protect Chester, Marcus Hook, Wilmington and New Castle. It was used as a Union prison for Confederate prisoners of war and noted as one of the largest prison camps during the Civil War. Most of these prisoners were captured at the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg. 33,000 prisoners were crammed into this area; so many prisoners that it had a population ten times that of Delaware City;. From these overcrowded, unsanitary conditions and various diseases, many of the prisoners died and were buried at Finns Point National Cemetery. Fort Delaware is considered to be haunted by the ghosts of these departed men. It is said that ghostly sounds seem to emanate from everywhere; ghosts are seen and felt on Pea Patch Island. You are invited to check all of this out for a truly unique experience. (NOTE: Bring bug spray just in case!)

These Forts and Finns Point National Cemetery are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

DIRECTIONS TO FORT MOTT: (*NOTE: Fort Mott is located half way between Pennsville & Salem, NJ*) If you are coming across the Delaware Memorial Bridge, get in the right lane and take the first exit in NJ to Route 49 (approx. 3.2 miles). Continue on Route 49 turning right onto Fort Mott Road. (Look for Fort Mott sign) In 2 miles, bear left around the bend past Finn's Point Light, continue 1.3 miles to road's end at Fort Mott State Park.

From the South & East: Coming into Salem from Millville on Route 49 (Broadway), stay on 49 through Salem over bridge. (From Vineland it is Route 45 Market Street – make a right onto Broadway). About 1 ½ - 2 miles there is a large brown sign on your left designating Fort Mott State Park. Make a left onto Fort Mott Road, around bend past Finn's Point Lighthouse. Road taken leads right into Fort Mott. In case you get lost, Rod Mulligan's cell phone # is: (856) 383-5780.

MOTHERS & FATHERS INVITED TO VISIT CAPE MAY HISTORIC SITES

Free

I realize our newsletter is too late for Mother's Day but you can still treat the "man in your life" to a FREE tour of two of Cape May's historic sites on Father's Day, Sunday, June 15: the Cape May Lighthouse and the World War II Lookout Tower. This offer comes as a courtesy of the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities (MAC).

Dads can enjoy a free climb up the 199 steps to the top of the beautiful Cape May Lighthouse at Cape May Point State Park. This majestic beacon has guided mariners along the NJ shoreline since 1859. In you chose not to climb, the Oil House contains a fully accessible Visitors' Orientation Center and a Museum Shop stocked with maritime accessories and lighthouse memorabilia. Regular admission price to climb the town is \$8; children ages 3-12 \$3. The lighthouse is open 10 AM to 4 PM on Father's Day.

While you are in that area, take advantage of free admission to the World War II Lookout Tower Museum and Memorial on Sunset Boulevard. This tower is New Jersey's last freestanding World War II tower, part of the immense Harbor Defense of the Delaware system known as Fort Miles. Normally admission is \$6 for adults and one child (ages 3 – 12) is admitted free with each adult (\$3 for each additional child). The Tower is open 11 AM to 3 PM on Father's Day. For more information contact skrysiak@capemaymac.org.

DELAWARE ARTIST RECREATES DELAWARE BAY LIGHTHOUSES

The widely-acclaimed local maritime artist, Jack Wiberg has created a special limited edition set of paintings depicting the Lighthouses of the Delaware Bay. Lighthouses represented in this series include: Cape May Light, Delaware Breakwater East End, Brandywine Shoal, Miah Maull Shoal, Mispillion, Fourteen Foot Bank and Ship John Shoal, spreading from locations in New Jersey to Milford, DE and points southward on the Delaware side of the bay.

Wiberg, a graduate of the University of Delaware, has been painting for more than 40 years and specializes in marine art with a focus on documented naval events, historical locations and ships. He states that he has been planning the Lighthouse Series for quite some time, noting that these buildings are notorious, beloved by locals and travelers alike. Researching the structures thoroughly, he has spent several months traveling around the bay, exploring the history and modern functionality of these water-side landmarks. These paintings took nearly a year to complete.

In order to allow admirers to enjoy and embrace the history of the Delaware Bay lighthouses, Wiberg has printed each original piece in a very limited edition of 50 signed and numbered prints on canvas, making the work, and the full set, more affordable. To view the full set of original paintings, visit the Wiberg Art Gallery, located at 20 Baltimore Avenue in downtown Rehoboth Beach, DE. His work is timeless, indicative of his extensive skill and experience. For additional information or inquiries, visit: wibergartgallery.com or the artist's Facebook page at "Jack Wiberg Art".

(NOTE: Come on a cruise and view these same lighthouses up close and personal.)

IN MEMORY OF CAROLE REILY & JIM GOWDY

Carole Reily, "The Lighthouse Lady," founder and President of this association and Jim Gowdy, a noted historian and author are remembered as the years pass. Due to their dedication and perseverance, they have given us the foundation upon which to build. This poem is dedicated to them:

"Take This Walk" (Poetry by Abundant Harmony)

Take This Walk into the Light, For you will never be alone
On the Sea of Life.
If you walk in the Light, do not focus on the cold winds
Nor the rocks or shoals.
Put your sights on the Light As you walk it will shine through you
and you will become
like the Lighthouse – A guide for others to take this Walk.

THE SS UNITED STATES – AN ELEGANT OCEAN LINER

Often compared with the elegance and grandeur of the Titanic, the SS United States sailed during the 1950's and 60's featuring such amenities as ballrooms and upscale restaurants. The United States was 900' long, 100' longer than the Titanic. Built at a cost of \$78 million, it was the largest ocean liner constructed entirely in the United States. It was just wide enough (101') to pass through the locks of the Panama Canal with 2' clearance on either side. The ship made its final trans-Atlantic trip in November 1969. Featuring first and second class accommodations and known as the fastest passenger ship of its time, it travelled from New York to London in three days and 10 hours.

Four US presidents traveled aboard the ship; it was a frequent location for Hollywood lavish parties and movie screenings. Marilyn Monroe used the ship as the backdrop for her film "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," and Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz filmed a segment of "The Lucy Show" aboard ship. The SS United States Conservancy is an organization that is attempting to save the ship to be used as a hotel or convention center. It is currently getting a below the deck make over to make it more appealing to developers who could be interested in making this massive ship into a massive dock side attraction. Proudly sporting her Blue Riband given for the highest speed record, she is presently docked at Pier 82 on the Delaware River in Philadelphia. (*Thanks to "At the Shore" and Wikipedia*)

BITS 'N PIECES FROM THE WEB SITE

Check out our Web Site from time to time. (delawarebaylightkeeper-friend.org) We enjoy reading your comments; you are welcome to send any articles, etc. regarding your coast guard experiences to me at: Memax1@juno.com. Always happy to hear from our members and others. Here are some of the comments from our "Guestbook":

"I was stationed at the Lewes Coast Guard Station in 1963 and 1964. I was a boatswain's mate and did most of my work out of Roosevelt Inlet. We were in the Search and Rescue Unit using 40 footers. I remember the lighthouses very well since we were out in the bay almost daily. We use to drop mail and supplies off to the guys and transport them back and forth whenever necessary. It was a great time in my life. Thanks for creating the website. I want to say hello to Ray Pfaff who I was stationed with in Lewes. I have a lot of great stories about my time on the bay. Thanks again." Gary Pyle

"Keep up the good work!! Love the website!" – Betsy Z., Pennsylvania

"Great job! I really like the website!" -- Raymond Pfaff, DBLHKFA member and former Keeper/Coast Guardsman

"A wonderful lighthouse cruise with a great group of people. Really enjoyed the opportunity to see and photograph Brandywine Shoal, Harbor of Refuge, Fourteen Foot and Miah Maull Lighthouses. Looking forward to future events with the club. Thank you!" -- Bill Watson

"I love the site and it has helped me get info on New Jersey lighthouses that I didn't have. I think that all of you are to be congratulated on a job well done." – H. Kent Edwards, Lighthouse Photo

"Just found this site and am interested as I was stationed on both Fourteen foot and Brandywine during 1971/1973" – Randy Alkins



Secretary, Darlene Rigazio reading the minutes



"Greeters" President, Angelo Rigazio & Sunshine/Hospitality Committee Chairwoman, Katie Moser



Activities/Programs/Historian, Peggy Stapleford giving her report



Some members attentively listening to proceedings



The Pfaffs and The Boltons enjoying the speaker



Member, Gen Doris, accepting our donation for the Sea Isle City Sailing Program from President, Angelo Rigazio



Guest speaker, Mike Horan, receiving a donation from Rod Mulligan, Chairman of the Board