



# The Bay Run



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

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



## MARITIME HAUNTINGS

Lighthouse keepers took their jobs very seriously. They worked tirelessly twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to keep the light burning. The keepers endured a never-ending cycle of climbing to the tower, filling, trimming and cleaning just to take care of the lamp and its lens and that was not the only work associated with taking care of the light. They had many other tasks. Even after departure from this world, many of these reliable keepers stayed around to keep check on the lights for which they were responsible.

Sandy Hook Light, located on the grounds of Fort Hancock in North Jersey has had some eerie happenings. It seems some of the soldiers have returned to the barracks and have left bodily impressions on the smoothed covers of the bunks. Visitors have claimed seeing a spectral head floating in mid-air and a pair of disembodied shoes

walking up the stairs of the lighthouse.

Buried near the base of the Barnegat Lighthouse, located in Central New Jersey on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean, are the earthly remains of unknown shipwreck victims. It is said that the beacon's catwalk harbors the ghost of General Gordon Meade, the gentleman who is responsible for designing and supervising the building of this lighthouse. Uncle Caleb, a former lighthouse keeper, has been seen sitting in a rocking chair with a carcass of a cat on his lap. The story goes that Caleb was to have rescued a cat that was clinging on a piece of driftwood after a shipwreck.

Absecon Inlet has earned the nickname "Graveyard Inlet" due to the many shipwrecked schooners in the area. The Absecon Light, located in South Jersey, also designed by General Meade, is the third tallest masonry lighthouse in the United States. The Jersey Devil has often been seen in the lantern room as other shipwrecked spirits gaze out at the sea. Another visitor is a Revolutionary War soldier who probably perished when the schooner Mermaid sank in 1779. Other signs of ghostly visitors: unexplainable scent of pipe tobacco and cigar smoke; sounds of disembodied footsteps in the tower as well as the tower door opening and closing on its own. The Atlantic Paranormal Society has investigated these claims; their camera mysteriously moved on its own and an explainable light shone in the lantern room.

The assistant keepers were killed when the Minots Ledge Lighthouse, located in Boston Harbor, was washed away in a hurricane. A ghostly figure appears before storms warning the local fishermen to "Keep Away".

Connecticut's New London Ledge Lighthouse, built in 1909, has a resident ghost, a former keeper who was forsaken by his wife and jumped to his death from the tower.

The Saint Simons Island Light, off the coast of Georgia, is said to be haunted by a former keeper killed more than a century ago in a duel with his assistant. Legend has it that he walks the tower at night.

A diligent keeper still stands watch at Point Lookout Lighthouse near St. Mary's City, Maryland where a park ranger has recounted some paranormal experiences. The ranger reported hearing doors opening and closing,

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*Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.*



One cruise down and one to go! The July 16 cruise out to the Delaware Bay lighthouses was successful. The Bonanza II was full of happy, lighthouse enthusiasts with cameras ready for all the photo opportunities. Our first stop was Ship John Shoal Lighthouse, the northern most lighthouse in the Delaware Bay. Then on to Elbow of Cross Ledge, Cross Ledge, Miah Maul Shoal and last but certainly not least, we visited Fourteen Foot Bank. Miah Maul and Fourteen Foot Bank were the two lights built in the Delaware Bay with a caisson base. Fourteen Foot was the first lighthouse built by pneumatic process in 1886.

The most interesting fact about Fourteen Foot Bank Light is not its Victorian structure but the privy on the northwest corner. That had to be a tough time for keepers stationed there during the winter months.

The return trip to Fortescue with the setting sun and light rain was the perfect ending for everyone aboard. At the dock, our passengers all commented on how much they enjoyed the cruise. The next cruise, scheduled for August 20, has a full passenger list with standbys hoping for cancellations. At that time we will cruise south in the bay to Brandywine Light keeping our fingers crossed for another sunny day and a smooth, calm bay. And that, my friends, has been the highlight of my summer.

I hope to see you all at our meeting on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry scheduled for September 24 (see Peggy's Corner). Stay cool for the remaining days of summer and remember, "keep the lights shining".

*Angelo*

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*The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. (DBLHKFA)  
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## FROM THE LOG OF THE INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT *by Rod Mulligan*

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July 16--What a beautiful day with a delightful breeze blowing and no greenheads aboard, we head out of Fortescue, NJ aboard the Bonanza II to observe the lighthouses in the Delaware Bay...our first cruise for the summer of '22. We head north to Ship John, cruising along with the tide. Heading back south, we visited Elbow of Cross Ledge, Cross Ledge, Miah Maull and last but certainly not least, Fourteen Foot Bank. We are now going against the tide and many of our passengers get wet as we forge through the waves. These historical lighthouses are badly in need of repair;

the cassions are rusty and the lighthouses need scraping and painting. Some of the lighthouses are now privately owned; the coast guard only maintains the light. These buildings are sad sights indeed. I noticed some of the lighthouses have broken windows providing a perfect nesting place and shelter for the hundreds of Cormorants perched on them. What a shame. The historic lighthouses will eventually fade away with the sands of time replaced by modern technology. August 20 we will be checking out Brandywine in the southern part of Delaware Bay. Hopefully it will be another delightful cruise.



In the meantime, I've been thinking about a long time friend, Paul Muller, an ex-marine, who volunteered with me to help renovate the US Navy Battleship New Jersey (good ol' #62). This proved to be great therapy for Paul as he was having health problems at the time. Volunteers on the NJ were made up of an alliance of veterans from various branches of the service with one purpose in mind: to help keep navy history alive for future generations to enjoy. Many of the volunteers had helped to build the New Jersey at the Sun Ship Building in Chester, PA. Other volunteers had also served aboard the vessel during WWII, Korea and/or Vietnam.

While reminiscing about my friend, Paul, I'd like to bring you up to date on some other friends, members of our lighthouse executive/board committee. Anthony Giletto, Chairperson of our Ways and Means and Scholarship Committees is currently at home with his family in Oklahoma; Peggy Stapleford, Chairperson of our Programs/Activities Committee and our Historian is close to her family in West Chester, PA and Katie Moser, Chairperson of the Sunshine Committee, is recuperating at her home in the Poconos. Just wanted to say "Hi" to let them know we are thinking of them, missing them and wishing them well.



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## DID YOU KNOW?



The Delsea Drive-In Theatre, located on Delsea Drive in Vineland, NJ is New Jersey's only drive-in movie theatre.



Built in 1881, Lucy the elephant, the six-story building of novelty architecture, located in Margate, NJ is the oldest roadside attraction in America. It was currently remodeled.



The Delaware River Region is steeped in history. George Washington and his Continental Army forces crossed the Delaware River on December 25, 1776 at Washington Crossing State Park in Titusville, NJ. (Travel Guide of New Jersey, Summer 2022.)



The New Jersey, one of the three vessels in the Cape May-Lewes Ferry fleet, is back in service for the 2022 season after a year in dry dock and a \$20 million makeover. There is now new seating both outside on the deck and inside the cabin, improved snack bar facilities and other improvements that add to the enjoyment of a bay crossing. (Vacationer of Southern New Jersey, 2022.)



Delaware is home to the largest population of horseshoe crabs in the world. (Internet – Interesting Facts about Delaware.)

### ELECTION DAY FACTS (OLD FARMERS' ALMANAC, 2021.)



On January 7, 1789, the electors were chosen for the first US presidential election. George Washington was elected president on February 4. By an act of Congress in January of 1845, Election Day was designated to be held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November.



Thomas Nast, a caricaturist and illustrator for Harper's Weekly, created and made famous our current symbols for the two major political parties—the Democratic donkey was created in 1870, the Republican elephant in 1874.

### VETERANS DAY, NOVEMBER 11



Veterans Day is dedicated as a tribute to military veterans who have served in the US Armed Forces and is celebrated on the anniversary of the signing of the armistice of World War I. In August of 2004, the United States Senate Resolution 143 passed designating the week of November 11 – 17 as National Veterans Awareness Week. The resolution called for an educational effort directed at elementary and secondary school students to be aware of the contributions and sacrifices of veterans. (Internet)

### THANKSGIVING FACTS (OLD FARMERS ALMANAC, 2021.)



Nobody is sure if turkey was served at the harvest celebration held by the pilgrims in 1621 but "wild fowl" was mentioned in some of the historical accounts. Wild turkeys were mentioned but there is no record of them being eaten. Some of the foods enjoyed were: venison, geese & duck, corn, shellfish and nuts (walnuts, chestnuts and beechnuts). Beans, pumpkins, squash, and corn (served in the form of bread or porridge) were also part of the meal thanks to the Wampanoags, who were seasoned farmers. Since wild turkeys were plentiful, the idea of early colonists hunting them caught the nation's imagination. Turkey was presented as the "big bird" at the head of the Thanksgiving table and published in many recipes.



Wild turkeys tend to have mostly dark meat because they are strong runners and also fly. Domestic, factory-raised turkeys have both white and dark meat because their muscles aren't used as often.



Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving Day a national holiday in 1863.



Every November since 1947, a "National Thanksgiving Turkey", has been presented to the US president. During an official ceremony in the Rose Garden, the president "pardons" the turkey, meaning its life is spared and it does not get eaten.

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## SAVE THE DATES – Mark Your Calendars:

**Saturday, August 20, 2022** – Sunset Cruise to the Lighthouses of the Delaware Bay. Four hour sunset cruise to Brandywine Light leaving New Jersey State Marina (Higbee's Harbor) in Fortescue, NJ at 3 PM. Call (609) 408-6692 for further information.

**Saturday, September 24, 2022** – Fall meeting scheduled to take place on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry. We will be boarding the ferry in Cape May at 1 PM. It will arrive in Lewes, DE at 2:25 and leave Lewes at 2:45 PM. Members from Delaware coming to the meeting are asked to board the ferry leaving at 2:45 PM. We will have a brief meeting on this return trip. The ferry will then arrive in Cape May at 4:10 PM. You may purchase round trip tickets as round trip foot passengers and get a military or senior citizens discount. We are looking forward to seeing everyone and enjoying a nice afternoon on the ferry. Hopefully the weather cooperates.

**CORRECTION -- Saturday & Sunday, October 15 & 16, 2022** – Lighthouse Challenge of New Jersey. Our organization will be stationed at East Point. Volunteers needed and always welcome. Join the Challenge!! How many NJ lighthouses can you visit in one weekend?

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## CAROLE F. REILY SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ANNOUNCED

We are pleased to announce Ms. Brianna Robinson as our 2022 Scholarship winner. Ms. Robinson, a resident of Del Haven, NJ and a 2022 graduate of Middle Township High School, was class president all four years and a member of the National Honor Society finishing high school with a 5.14 GPA. Taking part in several school clubs, she was also active in sports, a member of the soccer, lacrosse and basketball teams winning several awards including Most Improved Player, 4 times selected Athlete of the Week and represented her school as a Cape May County Girls Soccer All-Star.

She has been accepted to several colleges but chose to attend Stockton University and major in Health Sciences. Robinson hopes to eventually earn a Doctor's Degree in Physical Therapy. Congratulations Brianna and best of luck in the future.

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## THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

The saying "Dog Days of Summer" refers to a period of hot, humid weather during July and August in the Northern Hemisphere. These months coincide with the rising of Sirius, the "Dog Star" at sunrise, part of the constellation Canis Majoris. In ancient times, Dog Days were believed to drive men and dogs mad due to the extreme heat. The saying originated with the Ancient Egyptians who used Sirius as a "watchdog" signaling the Nile River's flood season. The appearance of the Dog Star, Sirius, was related to exceptionally hot weather and was visible in Egypt from approximately July 3 to August 11. The Egyptians believed that the energy from Sirius combined with the sun's energy produced heat waves. Sirius has nothing to do with the hot days since it is 546,000 times further from the Earth and is 23 times brighter than the sun. (Information from Internet and an appropriate entry after the sweltering summer we just experienced.)

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## A SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to extend a special "Thank You" to Kathy Beidermann, daughter of Carole Reily (our organization's founder) for her donation of pictures, articles and other items from her mother's collection. You will be seeing some of these in future newsletters.

## THE EVOLUTION OF SHIPBUILDING

The barge is defined as a broad, roomy usually flat bottomed boat used for transporting goods on inland waterways. In ancient times it was used for funeral proceedings and services for kings. The Romans used barges and inland canals for travel to expand commerce. The most famous barge in history is the one used by Cleopatra when she sailed on the Nile River to meet Mark Anthony. It is also stated that she used her barge to travel on the Nile with Julius Caesar. Speaking of Cleopatra and her barge, research shows that Egyptians used a single square sail on a vessel that relied on multiple oarsmen. A sail was used on barges to help fight the current on the Nile River.

Not to be outdone, the Vikings were highly skilled sailors and shipbuilders who were famous for their long ships. The long ship was the Scandinavian version of a galley with up to 80 oars and usually equipped with a mast. An archeological excavation revealed a Viking long ship that was seventy feet long and seventeen feet across. It was built entirely of oak with an exceptionally strong keel and overlapping planks on its sides. Leif Ericsson and his crew sailed in a similar ship to North America in 1001 AD.

Ships powered by wind and sails were much easier to navigate than those vessels using oars. It is really not known the exact year sails began to be used but it was BC. In the late 15th Century, vessels with multiple sails became common.

Ship building improved throughout the ages. The Santa Maria, accompanied by the Nina and Pinta, was used by Christopher Columbus as he initiated the Age of Discovery with his voyage to the New World in 1492. This proved to be one of the most important events in history as the voyage led to the European exploration and eventually the colonization of the Americas.



The Mayflower, a sailing ship propelled by wind, attained a special place in history when the ship successfully transported 102 Pilgrims from Plymouth, England to Provincetown, Massachusetts to establish the first permanent European colony in New England. The 180 ton Mayflower had 3 masts and 3 primary levels and was modeled on the design of a flat-bottomed merchant ship of Dutch origin. Taking 66 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean, the Mayflower has become a cultural icon in the history of the United States.

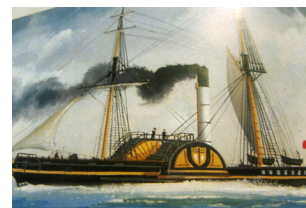


The HMS Victory, launched in 1765, was the greatest wooden warship ever built. It is best known as Lord Nelson's flagship.



For many centuries, ship designers and builders had sought a viable alternative to traditional forms of propulsion used by ships. Sail power depended on the wind; vessels propelled by oars relied on the stamina and fitness of the men rowing. Enter the steam engine. In the 1780s, the steam engine had gotten far enough along in its development to be used to propel waterborne vessels. The Charlotte Dundas was the first vessel ever to use steam propulsion for commercial purposes. It was also considered great for towing.

Built in 1837, the paddle steamer Sirius was the first ship to cross the Atlantic under continuous steam power. It sported a wooden cross-channel side-wheel paddle and was originally intended for service between London, England and Cork in Ireland.



Launched in 1797, the USS Constitution was commissioned by President George Washington. It is the oldest commissioned US Navy ship still afloat. In fact the Constitution is nearly as old as the document for which it is named. The 44 gun frigate, was fashioned



from the oak of more than 1,500 trees. The unique construction technique and materials used made it a formable and powerful ship. The impressive strong and durable hull earned the ship the nickname "Old Ironsides". (NOTE: The USS Constitution reopened to the public in the fall of 2019 by taking a trip around Boston Harbor to celebrate. The underway culminated with a 17 gun salute courtesy of the US Coast Guard. It had been closed due to the pandemic.)

*(To be continued)*

## MARITIME HAUNTINGS *(Continued from Page 1)*

people talking, and heavy sleepers snoring. He also reported hearing footsteps and the rustle of clothing, feeling the air move and the floor shake as a group of “people” walked past him in the kitchen on a tour of the lighthouse.

The daughter of one of the keepers at Old Port Grande Lighthouse on Gasperilla Island in the Gulf of Mexico has been seen playing upstairs in the keeper’s dwelling. Research has shown that one of the keeper’s daughters did die in the dwelling possibly of diphtheria or whooping cough. There is also the story of a tragic romance of a Spanish princess who sometimes walks along the beach at the end of the island searching for her lover.

A vigilant widow keeps watch at Plymouth Lighthouse on Gurnet Point near Plymouth, Massachusetts. Despite the fact that this lighthouse no longer needs a resident keeper, the keeper’s wife is still keeping watch at her lighthouse, awaiting her husband who did not return home after the war. The apparition has been seen by several visitors.

Keeper George Parris died at Old Presque Isle Lighthouse, located off the Michigan coast in 1992, but continues to light the lamp every night even though the lighthouse has been taken out of service. No power lines are connected to the tower to supply electricity for the light.

The apparition of a former keeper at Sequin Island Lighthouse, tallest and second oldest lighthouse in Maine, climbs the iron staircase, moves tools from one room to another, and even plays a game of checkers on the kitchen counter.

There are many stories regarding lighthouse keepers retaining jurisdiction over the lights for which they were responsible. The keepers were courageous and took pride in their assigned jobs. Their spirit is worth preserving and honoring. That’s just another reason groups of people work so hard to save and restore light stations across the United States, historic structures that have been left far too long to the destructive ravages of wind, waves and vandals. Spend some time reviewing the history and stories that these historic lighthouses reveal. Make arrangements to stay overnight and check out some of these hauntings and paranormal experiences. It could prove to be very interesting!!

(Elizabeth, Norma & Bruce Roberts. “Lighthouse Ghosts”, Crane Hill Publishers, Birmingham, Alabama, 1947.)  
(Macken, Lynda Lee. “Ghosts of the Jersey Shore,” Black Cat Press, Forked River, NJ, 2011.)

## GHOST SHIP HUNTING IN HEISLERVILLE, NJ

About a mile from East Point Lighthouse, on a sandbar, are the skeletal remains of what was assumed to be the Hazel Moore, (formerly The Fremont), a 1920’s fishing boat that had become detached while being towed to another destination. It was once part of a fleet, retired and brought to Dorchester Shipyard to be used as scrap. Previously, it had been discussed renovating the ship and using it as a restaurant. During the towing, the ship became stuck on a sandbar and, after several attempts, could not be dug out. The ship’s remains are located in Heislerville, NJ, a small village where the Maurice River empties into the Delaware Bay. The writer of this article,

Cheryl Ann Marino, had heard about this ship and decided to do further research on the Hazel Moore. Discovering, it could only be accessed at low tide; making it out of the area before the beach completely disappeared was a major challenge. When the adventurous group finally arrived at their destination, it was hard for them to imagine that this ship was a 110’ schooner since it looked like a lineup of wooden posts in the shape of one. Most of the apparatus was rusted or missing.

They had to be very careful since the tide was coming in and covering the adjoining sandbar. Quickly leaving the area, they were greeted on the mainland by a swarm of greenhead flies. What a great adventure.

(Editor’s note: Thanks to adventurous people like Cheryl Ann, et al, we are able to enjoy her story and check out the pictures of this “ghost ship”.)

(Marino, Cheryl Ann. “Weird New Jersey,” Volume 54, May 2022.)



## SUMMER ADVENTURES IN THE PANAMA CANAL

Shelley and I had been discussing where we could take the twins on their first “real” vacation out of our Delaware Bay area. We did some research on travel destinations and decided to attach to a ship sailing by and tour the Panama Canal or the Canal de Panama (we are hoping the twins will be bilingual). It is ranked as the “Eighth Wonder of the Modern World”; what an experience for all of us. We explain to the twins that this important waterway connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, reducing travel time for ships and dividing the continents of North and South America. According to the Corps of Engineers, it was also one of the most difficult engineering projects ever undertaken.

So we pack up and off we go attached to the hull of an ocean liner heading south that just happens to be passing by. We find it so relaxing cruising along for the first couple of days. I noticed the change in the water temperature as we cruise down the Atlantic coast, and as we get closer to Central America. The canal is known as “the waterway that fundamentally changed the course of world politics, economics and travel”. We head towards the Port of Balboa. I explained to Meryl and Pearl that they had to hold on securely to the bottom of the ship as we near the canal, since the tides between the Atlantic and Pacific vary 18’ every 12 hours and we didn’t want to lose them. Several thousand ships pass through the canal every day so we will be involved in a lot of water traffic; it’s not like the calm water off Port Norris. A Panama Canal Pilot will guide our ship. This special pilot trains 10-12 years for the job and is paid very well. As a tug boat pushes our ship alongside of the canal wall making room for other ships, we realize we will be heading towards the Pacific Ocean.



Floating through the waterway, we hear the tour guide over the loudspeaker as he explains to the other tourists that we are about to go under the bridge of the Pan American Highway that runs from Panama to Anchorage, Alaska. It is customary to kiss while passing under the “Bridge of the Americas” so Shelley and I oblige. We learn that the canal must be dredged every day. The information on the ship given by the guide is in Spanish, English and French to our delight. This exposes the twins to other languages. And into the Mira Flores Lock we go. Twenty-one million gallons of fresh water is pumped in, raising us 31’ in 8 minutes. What a ride!! We cruise towards the Pacific at night and will return towards the Atlantic in the morning.

The original cement used for the canal was from Portland, Maine. Now Panama makes its own cement. There are many other container ships in the lock with us. The canal has recently been expanded to accommodate larger ships with more cargo. (Before the canal was expanded, the Battleship NJ had only a 10” clearance as it passed through.) The largest of the container ships carries 25,000+ containers. I understand there is a charge for these containers whether they are full or not. Ships of all sizes and smaller boats use the canal. We now cruise under Centennial Bridge, so named when Panama turned 100. We are also informed that we shall presently be crossing the Continental Divide. WOW, what an experience.

Along the way, while filtering, we experienced various types of plankton and small bits of algae that was floating in the water. The Panamanian plankton was a little spicy but that was to be expected. At least the twins were exposed to a varied continental buffet on the way there and on the return trip so they received an education in many ways. The return trip was noneventful. We are happy to be back once again in our home in the Delaware Bay off Port Norris. Now we have to rest up and get ready to return to work and to school, but we feel we are all much more knowledgeable about Panama and its famous Canal. Adios, amigos. “Til next time. *Ollie*