



The Bay Run



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

Volume 33 Issue 15
Winter 2017

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



LIGHTING THE WAY SINCE 1849

The beautifully refurbished East Point Lighthouse was the setting of our fall meeting. Nancy Patterson-Tidy, Curator of the Lighthouse, was the guest speaker. She stated that East Point is heading into its final phase of restoration; she could witness "the fruits of their labor" even though it still continues to be a "work in progress". The Army Corps of Engineers is scheduled to begin work next year.

A temporary berm has been installed to protect the lighthouse from storm damage and other natural occurrences. The carpenters are almost finished with their projects. Historic and generational pictures hanging on the walls are used to tell the history of the building. Plasterers, whose ancestors once graced the structure, helped to bring about the authenticity by using tools similar to those used by their forefathers.

The lighthouse is climate controlled; without this feature the walls and furniture would be extremely wet. Speaking of furniture, some original pieces have been donated by the families of former keepers whose genealogy has been carefully and thoroughly researched. As Patterson-Tidy stated, "It was a 'labor of love' involving many people including her husband, Carl, and members of the Maurice River Historical Society. Everyone worked together to bring this preservation project to fruition." She was quick to give credit to all those (*continued on page 6*)



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Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.



The turkey is gone; our three trees are up and trimmed and I am hoping Ed (our cat) will not attempt to become a living decoration in any of the trees this year. Our outside decorations and lights are almost complete. The new projectors that shine lights on the house sure make decorating much easier. All this was accomplished a month before Christmas. It seems like we start earlier every year.

I hope everyone is following the story concerning the takeover of Hereford Inlet Lighthouse by the North Wildwood Mayor, Patrick Rosenello. (See inserts) The mayor has stated he is trying to stop Steve Murray from looting the lighthouse which is totally absurd and a lie. No one has been more dedicated or worked harder to see this lighthouse prosper than Steve Murray. The gardens are growing beautifully and the lighthouse has become very popular with tourists. I have attended many lighthouse events there and have always heard only positive comments from anyone who visited. I wonder what the real reason is behind this decision by the city politicians. Hopefully the fight to save this lighthouse, keeping it free from political issues, will be won by the Friends of Hereford Inlet Lighthouse. Let us continue supporting Steve Murray and the volunteers so they can win this battle.

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a wonderfully holiday and a joyous New Year. See you all in January at our meeting. Till then, keep the lights shining. Buon Natale!!

Angelo

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*The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. (DBLHKFA)
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FROM THE LOG OF THE VICE PRESIDENT (AND KATIE)

by Bill Geilfuss and Katie Moser



The 2017 Maryland Lighthouse Challenge's mission is to educate those interested in Chesapeake Bay area lighthouses. The challenge is to visit 10 lighthouses plus 3 bonus lights during one weekend. At each light, a coaster with the picture of the light is given as a souvenir.

Bill and I arrived in St. Michael's, Maryland, Friday September 15. We were volunteers at the Hooper Strait Lighthouse Saturday and Sunday from 8 AM to 6 PM. Hooper Strait Lighthouse, now standing on Navy Point, was originally built in 1879. It was moved to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum grounds in 1966. The first lighthouse was destroyed by ice in 1877. If you would like more information on this light, contact: cbmm.org The "early-bird special" was on Friday for specially selected Eastern Shore Lights. Kyle Roberts and Dan Boyer, from the Chesapeake Chapter of the US Lighthouse Society, were our coordinators. Their sense of humor and enthusiasm was contagious and made this event not only an educational experience but lots of fun! Our "challenge" display was eye catching. Friday we saw 185 cheerful challenge participants, Saturday 189 and Sunday 183. The weather was very cooperative—sunny, breezy and hot with lovely puffy clouds--perfect for that "Kodak moment". Our friends, Sandee and Jim Coyle rounded out our wonderful group of volunteers.

One night Bill and I went to "Awful Arthur's" in St. Michael's for dinner. We had a delicious meal—it wasn't awful at all!! We stayed at the Holiday Inn Express and each evening there were warm chocolate chip cookies and coffee waiting for us—yummy!! All in all we had an exciting adventure meeting lots of interesting people and working with dedicated "lighthouse lovers".

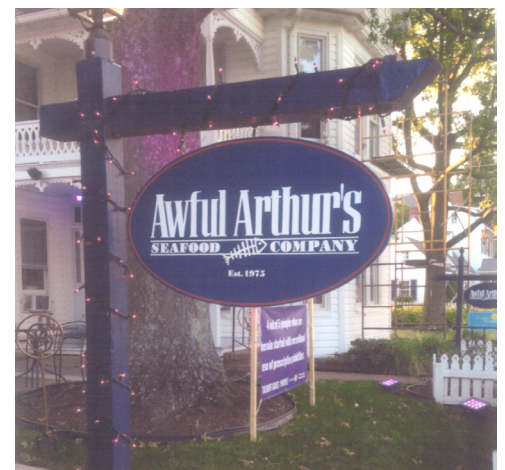
(Editor's note: It is with heavy heart that I announce that our Vice President and friend, Bill Geilfuss, passed away December 3. As of this publishing, arrangements have not yet been finalized. Our sincere condolences to Katie and his family. He will be greatly missed by all of us.)



Hooper Strait Lighthouse



Katie Moser & Bill Geilfuss



Good food

OVERFALLS OVERCOMES ODDS

The Lightship Overfalls moored at a dock in Lewes, Delaware and originally scheduled to go on a marine rail at Dorchester, NJ earlier in the fall, has finally reached her destination. She is expected to be in the Dorchester Shipyard in New Jersey about six weeks and is due back in Lewes late in December or early January. The departure had many deciding factors: a delay in receipt of the permit to dredge the sand bar that blocked the ship, then the dredge had a series of obscure problems that took six weeks to resolve; finally, the sand bar was removed. In the meantime, Hick Rowland, President of Wilmington Tug, visited Dorchester Shipyard with one of his key staff members, to finalize the arrival details for the ship. On the way back to Delaware, he was involved in a fatal automobile accident and the staff member suffered disabling injuries. Wilmington Tug was unable to tow the ship in a timely fashion since they were dealing with the details related to Mr. Rowland's death and the staff member's injuries. Northstar Marine was then contacted regarding the possibility of towing the ship. They felt that weather and tide permitting, they would be able to tow the ship on November 24. As of November 30, the Overfalls is now nestled comfortably in Dorchester, her "home away from home" for a few weeks. One of 17 remaining lightships out of a total of 179 built, the Overfalls was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2011. (*Information from David Bernheisel, Overfalls Foundation; Charles and Joanne Bolton.*)

ABSECON HONORS VOLUNTEER KEEPER BUDDY GROVER

Buddy Grover has been serving as a volunteer lighthouse keeper in the lantern room of Absecon Lighthouse since 2009. The Atlantic City native imparts his knowledge about Atlantic City, his optimism about its future and his love of the lighthouse to all visitors. Glover, who wears his authentic keeper's uniform, greets climbers and hands out "I Climbed" cards. He proudly states to tourists, "The Fresnel lens was shipped all the way from Paris and shines for 19.5 nautical miles; it has saved thousands of lives." He claims that he climbs the lighthouse for exercise. He first climbed several years ago at a celebration for the lighthouse's birthday. He figures he has climbed the lighthouse's 228 steps at least 250 times. This year his 89th birthday was celebrated at the lighthouse on September 24. The only gift he wanted was a present from his "girlfriend" Abby (aka Absecon Light). (*"Shore Local," August-September 2017 edition.*)

NJ LIGHTHOUSE CHALLENGE THE BEST EVER

People taking part in the NJ Lighthouse came in droves from all over our state, the United States and all over the world. We met people from Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Kentucky, Tennessee, California and some from France and Germany. Supplies ran out on Sunday morning as a total of 15,750 participants was recorded. Volunteers at Hereford recorded a total of 1,864 challengers, the best ever. Steve Murray commented, "This was a banner weekend." People stopped by, not only to visit the lighthouse, but to view the beautiful Hereford Gardens. The winner of the \$1,000 gift basket presented by the NJ State Lighthouse Association was a man from Aston, Pennsylvania. Congratulations to all who participated. A special thanks to Steve Murray and Betty Mugnier who help to organize this statewide event every October.

PEGGY'S CORNER – Event Calendar

by Peggy Stapleford Activities/Program Chairperson



Saturday, January 6, 2018 (*Snow date January 13*) – Winter meeting to be held at Ocean City Life Saving Station #30 located at 801 Fourth Street in Ocean City, NJ 08226

Guest Speaker: John Loeper, Chairman of the Nonprofit Restoration Project for the Life Saving Station. AGENDA: 10 AM – 11 AM Meet & Greet – join us for coffee, donuts and conversation; 11 – Noon – Meeting; Noon – 1 Lunch (Brown bag); 1 PM – Guest Speaker John Loeper, Background Information and Update on the Ocean City Life Saving Station

SAVE THE DATES:

Sunday April 8, 2018 – Annual Keepers Banquet & Meeting to be held in the Crow's Nest at Sea Isle City Yacht Club, Sea Isle City, New Jersey Guest speaker TBA

Saturday, June 2 – Summer Meeting – Location & Speaker TBA

Saturday & Sunday, June 16 & 17 – Maritime Weekend

Cruise dates for July and August TBA

Thursday, August 7 – National Lighthouse Day.

Saturday, September 22 – Fall Meeting – Location & Speaker TBA

Saturday & Sunday, October 20 & 21 – NJ Lighthouse Challenge

(NOTE: We are always looking for interesting guest speakers, topics and maritime locations. Suggestions can be sent to: mspegstapleford@windstream.net)

OCEAN CITY LIFE SAVING STATION 30

It has been six years since city officials saved Life Saving Station #30 from the wrecking ball. The circa 1885 structure will soon be open to the public to the delight of John Loeper, President of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Nonprofit. Loeper recently visited Washington, DC where he culled information from the National Archives about the 62 men who served in the US Life Saving Service. Since these men have never been honored, he is hoping to someday place a plaque on their graves. According to Loeper, restoring the place where these men worked has been a labor of love. The US Life Saving Service was a precursor to the Coast Guard. The service operated out of Ocean City's station through 1915, when it was transferred to the Coast Guard. The station's history includes its role in helping to rescue the crew of the *Sindia*, which sank off Ocean City near 15th Street in 1901. The home's garage use to be a stable for draft horses that were harnessed to boats so the boats could be quickly dragged to the surf when needed for a rescue.

Ocean City's plan to save this station, which is now listed on state and national historic registers, started about 15 years ago. Exterior renovations began in 2012. The building's color was (*continued on page 6*)

LIGHTING THE WAY SINCE 1849 *(continued from page 1)*

who helped, volunteering so much of their time and providing the expertise to make this restoration project a success.

Stop by East Point for a visit to check out the bright white lighthouse with its shiny new shutters and new red roof. A new ramp has been installed and the first level of the lighthouse is now handicap accessible. Cameras will be installed near the lantern to provide a live view via a television screen on the first floor for anyone who cannot access the upper levels.

On September 10, a rededication was held in remembrance of the original opening of the lighthouse in 1849. (The lighthouse beacon was darkened for WWII and relit in 1980.) Members of the coast guard, various dignitaries and many other visitors were present at the September event. After our meeting, we were invited to take an interactive walk through the renovated lighthouse, while outside, the Monarch butterflies were silently enjoying the newly planted flowers...pausing a moment for some refreshment on their annual trek to Mexico. Thanks, Nancy, for making this a memorable visit.

(NOTE: The lighthouse is open to the public on the 1st and 3rd weekends 1 - 4 pm year round. Admission is \$5 for adults; Age 65 and over and students \$2. Call (856)785-0349 or visit eastpointlight.com for more information.)

OCEAN CITY LIFE SAVING STATION 30 *(continued from page 5)*

changed and it was raised several inches off the ground. A cupola was added. A year and a half lapsed between finishing up the exterior renovation and the contract being awarded for the interior work. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$2.95 million. About half of this cost is being funded through grants.

The Life Saving Station is located at Fourth Street and Atlantic Avenue in Ocean City, NJ. It will become a living history museum honoring the surfmen who worked on the island from 1872 to 1938 and will bring to the public the story of the US Life-Saving Service.



*Ocean City Life Saving Station
during renovation*



The completed project



Tradition, Tradition



WHY DO WE SEND CHRISTMAS CARDS?

It seems that this custom began in 1843 in the United Kingdom. Sir Henry Cole, who was a postal clerk, wondered how the post office could be utilized by more people. He and a friend, John Horsley, who was an artist, came up with the idea of designing cards that could be sent to friends and relatives at Christmas. These cards were sold for one shilling each. The custom spread throughout Europe and in 1915 caught on in the United States. John C. Hall and 2 of his brothers created Hallmark Cards and are still one of the largest producers of Christmas cards today.

THE MISTLETOE TRADITION

Mistletoe is basically a plant that grows on trees. The tradition goes back to the ancient Druids who believed that mistletoe possessed magical powers which brought good luck to households and would ward off evil spirits. It was also used as a sign of love and friendship in Norse mythology. Thus, beginning the custom of kissing under the mistletoe.

A person was to pick a berry from the mistletoe before being kissed. When there were no more berries, the kissing stopped. The name mistletoe is derived from two Anglo Saxon words “mistel” (which means dung) and “ten” (translated to twig or stick). Therefore, mistletoe is literally translated to “poo on a stick” which is certainly not too romantic. Surely something to think about.

Mistletoe grows on trees through bird “poo” and as a parasite attaches itself to the tree, growing out of the branch. It is a great source of food for many animals. Birds rely on it and butterflies lay eggs in it and use the nectar. Bees also get pollen from mistletoe.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CANDLES AT CHRISTMAS

No one knows when this tradition actually began. During the Middle Ages before candles were used, Christmas trees were decorated with apples. One of the earliest records of using candles is also from the Middle Ages when a large candle was used to represent the Star of Bethlehem. During Hanukkah a candle is lit each night for 8 nights in a special Menorah. A special candle holder holding 7 candles (a Kinara) is also used during Kwanza.

Church services are held by candlelight on Christmas Eve. Candles were used to decorate Christmas trees until safer electric lights were invented. In Ireland it was considered tradition to have a Yule candle instead of a Yule log. We also have candlelight tours in various towns.
(All information from the Internet)



Happy Holidays to All Our Members!

FALL MEETING 2018 & THE LIGHTSHIP OVERFALLS



Members listening to presentation



Dessert — yummy "anchor" cupcakes



President Rigazio presents a donation to Nancy Poterson-Tidy of East Point



Souvenir of the 2017 NJLH Challenge



Renovated rooms at East Point Lighthouse



Leaving Lewis, DE



In the Delaware Bay



Heading to Dorchester, NJ