



# The Bay Run



Newsletter of  
The Delaware Bay  
Lighthouse Keepers



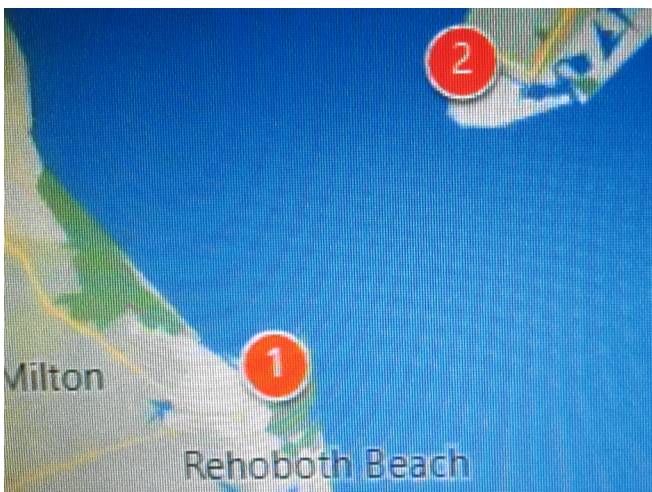
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“Our mission is to preserve the history of the Delaware Bay and River Lighthouses, Lightships and their Keepers”

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES LEWES, DELAWARE & CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom...” Located on the shore of the Delaware Bay, Lewes is proudly known as “the first town in the first state”. It was the first European settlement in Delaware and Delaware was the first state to ratify the US Constitution. Named after the town of Lewes in Sussex County, England, it was founded by the Dutch in 1621. Cape May, located where the Delaware Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean, was first settled by the Kechameche Indians and later named for the Dutch Captain Cornelius Mey who explored the area from 1611 to 1614. Both areas suffered devastating fires in their early years. Lewes was destroyed by the English in 1664 and burned again by a group of Maryland colonists in 1673. The town of Cape May had to be rebuilt numerous times after enduring several fires.

Lewes was primarily involved in the whaling industry and was also a trading post for the settlers. Both cities are well-known tourist areas. Cape May is one of the country’s oldest vacation resort destinations. The area began hosting vacationers from Philadelphia in the mid 18th Century. Still a popular resort, the last census reported a population of 3,607 during Cape May’s “off” season. This number expands to a population of 40,000 -50,000 in the summer thanks to all the tourists and other visitors. Both Cape May and Lewes have a humid subtropical climate and great beaches.



Due to their geographic location, both cities played an important part in various wars. During the War of 1812, the British Royal Navy vessels bombarded Lewes. There is still a cannonball lodged in the foundation of the Cannonball House serving as the town’s maritime museum. There were several military facilities on both sides of the Delaware Bay. The Pilots Association for the Delaware River and Bay was founded in 1896 and is one of the oldest in the nation. There were many forts in Delaware used for defense in several wars: Fort Christina, Fort Delaware, Fort DuPont, and Fort Saulsbury. Fort Miles, a US Army World War II installation near Lewes officially opened in 1941. Cape May also had military installations including a bunker (Battery 223), and a world War II Lookout Tower, which was built in 1942 and is located at Cape May Point. *(Continues on page 5.)*

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*Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.*



Our current year is quickly coming to an end; Thanksgiving is over and we are busily preparing for the December holidays. It is now the time to reminisce, looking back at the past year; and hoping that 2023 will be a better year for all.

Your organization sponsored two successful cruises, one in July and one in August with the Bonanza II full for both trips. The passengers were excited to see and learn about the Bay lights; “and a good time was had by all”. Even the weather cooperated which added to the enjoyment. Thanks to all who helped make these cruises a success.

Looking ahead, we are planning our first meeting of the new year at East Point Lighthouse in January; check out page 4 for details. I feel it will be another challenging year for everyone and hope to see many of you at some of our meetings and other events. Inflation has had many negative effects so hopefully we can get together, socialize, learn, forget about these things for a while and just enjoy being together. As we grow older each year, it is becoming harder to keep the promise we made to Carole Reily, our founder, and maintain her dream while moving forward. We are doing our best. Our members are a valuable asset to our association; we appreciate each and every one of you. I am looking forward to seeing you at our January meeting. Hopefully 2023 will be a good year for everyone. Buon Natale and remember to “keep the lights shining”.

*Angelo*

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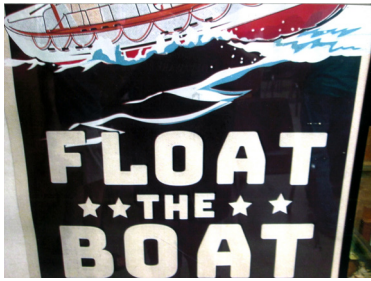
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## FROM THE LOG OF THE INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT *by Rod Mulligan*



Our summer meeting was held at the Cape May Maritime Museum in August, a really hot day—even for “cool Cape May”. Thank heavens the museum was air conditioned. Our guest speakers were interesting, their presentation followed by a lively discussion. Ed Melega, Coast Guard Boswain’s Mate (USCG ret.) gave a slide presentation on the restoration of a 36’ coast guard lifeboat—a TRS Motor Lifeboat CG36538. This boat, one of the last of the wooden life-saving boats, will honor and benefit all who serve, work, live and visit in Cape May County. There are only three known restored/seaworthy USCG-3600 series lifeboats in existence. This lifeboat is considered a unique “floating museum”. When the project is completed, the lifeboat will be registered on the New Jersey Historic Registry and eventually on the National Landmark of Historic Places. Their mission statement and objective is to “Float the Boat”. Eventually the restored lifeboat will be used for tours of the Cape May Harbor. After the slide presentation, Master Chief Boswain’s Mate Wayne Adams (USCG ret.), the last officer in charge before the boat was decommissioned and replaced by a 44 foot steel frame motor lifeboat, added more information regarding the restoration. Check this restoration out on [www.cmmaritime.org](http://www.cmmaritime.org). T-shirts are being sold to help fund the project and, yes, they do accept donations. It was an enjoyable, informative meeting to say the least.



For our fall meeting in September, we took a round trip ride on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, enjoying a beautiful fall day and an equally smooth ride. Most of the afternoon was spent discussing how we can increase our membership and get more people involved in our organization. Suggestions will be gladly accepted from anyone; i.e. increasing membership, venue, events, speakers, etc.

We lucked out with two beautiful days for the NJ Lighthouse Challenge; weather wise and otherwise. The “challengers” are always friendly and enjoy talking with us. They especially enjoy hearing and asking about President Rigazio’s experiences in the coast guard and his adventures while stationed on Harbor of Refuge Light. Our President graciously supplies information and answers their questions. This year a picture postcard of the lighthouse and another one of that lighthouse’s keeper were handed out to each challenger. Angelo’s picture was on the postcard given out for our organization; he happily autographed each request. Angelo brings his coast guard uniform to the events, jokingly telling all that only the hat still fits.

At the Challenge, we had many people sign up for our 2023 cruises to the Bay lighthouses. 1,170 people took part in the Challenge at East Point plus 55 other visitors and 22 volunteers. It was interesting meeting visitors from all over the United States including: Arizona, Texas, Kansas, Maine, South Dakota, etc. and, of course, many from New Jersey. One person who stopped by to chat was from Portugal originally, moved to Brazil and was now a citizen of the United States. There is always so much to learn from others. We hope to see you at our winter meeting to be held at East Point Light on Saturday, January 28 (inclement weather date February 11).

by Peggy Stapleford Activities/Program Chairperson



## SAVE THE DATES – Mark Your Calendars:

**Saturday, January 28, 2023**– Winter meeting scheduled at East Point Lighthouse at 1 PM. East Point Light is located in Heislerville, NJ. Guest speaker, Gil Ewing, a lifelong resident of Cape May and a Cape May historian. Topic: “Cape May, Back in the Day”. Inclement weather date Saturday, February 11, 2023. All are welcome.

**REMINDER:** National Lighthouse Day is celebrated August 7 every year. The New Jersey Lighthouse Challenge is always the third weekend of October.

## FROM THE LOG OF THE INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT *CONTINUED*



Top left: Lighthouse Challenge

Top right :Angelo and Darlene manning (and womanning) our merchandise

Bottom left: Child at Lighthouse Challenge

## PORTLAND BILL LIGHTHOUSE IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

(Editor's note: My pen pal, who lives in England, sent this information. He and his wife spend much of their leisure time traveling and learning about historic sites in the area.)

Trinity House maintains 60 lighthouses in the area of England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. One of these lighthouses, Portland Bill, is located on the Isle of Portland, Dorset, England. Sporting a height of 135', it is the largest functioning and most recently constructed lighthouse in this area. It replaces Old Higher and Old Lower Lighthouses which had been guiding vessels until the beginning of the 20th Century. Portland Bill was completed by 1906 and has the important job of guiding vessels thru the hazardous waters surrounding the Bell Port while also acting as a waymark (marking out a route) for ships navigating the English Channel. In 2018, a permit to remove the light from the lantern room was approved. A new LED light and an omnidirectional fog signal were installed in the lantern room the following year.

The lighthouse and former lighthouse keepers' quarters are open to the public. Visitors are invited to climb the 153 steps to the top of the tower.



## TALE OF TWO CITIES (*Continued from page 1*)

This tower is the last free standing tower in the area. It was one of 15 towers in the Delaware and New Jersey area used as an observation post to detect enemy vessels. These military facilities were known as the Harbor of Defenses of the Delaware. Other numerous naval facilities were located in Cape May in order to protect the shipping lanes of the Delaware River and Bay. The US Coast Guard Recruit Training Center located in Cape May is the nation's only coast guard training center.

Lighthouses located just off Lewes' seashore area in the Delaware Bay are Harbor of Refuge Light, Fourteen Foot Shoal and Delaware Breakwater East End Light. In 2002 a portion of the historic Mispillion lighthouse was reconstructed and incorporated in the modern replica of the lighthouse in Historic Shipcarpenter's Square in Lewes. Now this memory of Delaware's last standing wood framed lighthouse is not just limited to old photographs. The original Cape May Lighthouse was constructed in 1859. The current building is the third documented lighthouse built at Cape May Point. It was automated in 1946 and is still operating.

The Lightship Overfalls, the last lightship constructed for the United States Lighthouse Service before the service became part of the US Coast Guard, is located in Lewes and has been restored and preserved as a museum ship. The Kalmar Nyckel, the tall ship of Delaware is sometimes anchored by the Lewes Ferry Terminal; its home port is in Wilmington. If one has time, one can also visit Lewes' Zwaanendael Museum to learn more about the town's history. Cape May also offers many museums.

Both cities have much to offer both historically and recreationally. These cities played an important part in the trails and trials of the Underground Railroad. Cape May is the top bird watching area in Northeastern United States. Cape Henlopen State Park near Lewes also houses a bird sanctuary. The Lewes Historical Society offers a walking tour of the Victorian era homes in Lewes while Cape May is also known for its Victorian architecture. One can search for Cape May diamonds at Cape May Point, supposedly the buried treasure of Capt. Kidd. It seems that Captain Kidd and other pirates also visited Lewes as late as 1698. Lewes and Cape May have always been essentially seafaring towns blessed with excellent harbors. Check out the horseshoe crab migration along both shores. Take a ride on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry for an afternoon of relaxation. It can surely be "the Best of Times". (NOTE: The Cape May—Lewes Ferry Terminal area is located in Ferry Park which is now known as Exit Zero.)

## DID YOU KNOW?



The Barnegat Lighthouse, located on Long Beach Island in New Jersey, will soon be shuttered for several months as it undergoes a \$1.3 million renovation. The lighthouse will be closed to visitors according to the state's Department of Environmental Protection; the park will remain open. The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1927 and remained dark until 2009. Friends of the Barnegat Lighthouse donated the current light. This lighthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places. (Press of Atlantic City, March 2002.)



Cape Hatteras Light, America's tallest lighthouse at 280 feet, was built in 1789 to guide ships through the "Graveyard of the Atlantic". The first known wreck in these deadly waters off the North Carolina coast occurred in 1526. Since then more than 2,000 ships have been lost in this area. (Lighthouses, Philadelphia, PA, The Running Press.)



This summer's archeological dig at the Battle of Red Bank site yielded skeletal remains of 14 soldiers. (SNJ Today, August 24, 2022.)



The \$1.4 million restoration of the AJ Meerwald, New Jersey's official tall ship, based out of the Bayshore Center at Bivalve in Port Norris, is completed. The BCB has set a goal of raising \$150,000 to complete the project. Thus far, \$143,635 has been raised. Visit <https://www.bayshorecenter.org> to donate. (The Reminder, November 23, 2022.)



Delaware River and Bay Authority has announced plans to rehabilitate the driving surface of the NJ bound span of the Delaware Memorial Bridge. Two right lanes of the northbound span will be closed until just before Thanksgiving. The project has been designed to minimize traffic delays. (SNJ Today, September 21, 2022)



Before the Ben Franklin Bridge opened in 1926, Philadelphia-bound travelers crossed the Delaware River by ferry. (SNJ Today, September 21, 2022)



Cape May Point was originally known as Sea Grove and was founded in 1875 by two Philadelphia merchants and devout Presbyterians—John Wanamaker (yes, that one) and Alexander Whilldon. (Roberts, Russell & Rich Youmans, "Down the Jersey Shore", Rutgers University Press, 1997.)



Good news! Florida's Sanibel Lighthouse is still standing after Hurricane Ian, even though the causeway leading to it has been damaged.



It has been a little over ten years since "Superstorm Sandy" (Hurricane) hit the Jersey shore in October of 2012. The formation of Sandy was fueled by the barometric pressure, storm size and the left hook of the storm. The track of the storm caused the storm surge to be so high (15.6'), it became a record storm surge in Sandy Hook and the New York City area. ("Looking Back at The Storm," The Ocean City Sentinel, 2022.)



Lucy the Elephant of Margate, NJ is the oldest roadside attraction in the US and a National Historic Landmark. (Shore Local Coastal Edition, October 2022.)



Remembering all our veterans on November 11: "Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world. A veteran does not have that problem..." Ronald Reagan



Thousands of memorial Christmas wreaths were placed at various Veterans Cemeteries across the United States. The local wreath ceremony in Cumberland County is to be held December 17.

## THE EVOLUTION OF SAILING SHIPS

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(continued from fall newsletter)

Until little more than 125 years ago, the sailing ship reigned supreme and required elaborate and specialized skills that few sailors today possess. Over thousands of years, ship designers and builders sought alternatives to traditional forms of propulsion used by ships. Enter the sail. Some of the earliest well-known sailing ships were Columbus' Santa Maria, Sir Francis Drake's Golden Hind, the aforementioned Mayflower of the Pilgrims, Charles Darwin's HMS Beagle and the USS Constitution.

The Cutty Sark is the only clipper ship of her era that has been preserved and is one of the most renowned and beloved of all British ships. With 32,000 square feet of sail she was one of the fastest of her kind and could attain a speed of over 17 knots which is equivalent to a 3,000 horsepower engine. The Cutty Sark was about 212 feet long and sported three masts that were all square-rigged. In 1869, the year she was launched coincided with the opening of the Suez Canal, therefore the sailing time was shortened which sounded the death knell for the clipper ships. The Cutty Sark is now on display in dry dock at Britain's National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.



Closer to home, we have the Sindia, the 329' long ship with a steel hull and weighing 3,000 gross ton, which was wrecked near the 16th Street beach in Ocean City, NJ, December 15, 1901. She was sailing from Japan headed for New York City carrying silks, porcelain, kerosene and other items. It seems that a raging nor'easter was the cause of the shipwreck. Rumor had it that the crew was drunk from celebrating an early Christmas; the entire crew of 33 men was rescued. This ship became a New Jersey State Historical Site in 1967 and is currently part of an exhibit at the Ocean City Community Center at 1735 Simpson Avenue.

These sailing ships were the forerunners of what are now called "tall ships". Delaware's tall ship, the Kalmar Nyckel, is a full scale replica of the original 17th century ship that brought Swedish settlers to the New World to settle New Sweden. New Sweden is the present Wilmington, Delaware. This replica was launched in 1997, has 7,600 square foot of sale, is 141' in length and has a hull made entirely of wood. The Kalmar Nyckel's homeport is Wilmington.



The AJ Meerwald, New Jersey's tall ship, a restored oyster dredging schooner's homeport is the Bayshore Center in Bivalve, New Jersey. The original schooner was launched in 1928 and was one of hundreds of schooners built along the South Jersey Bayshore before the decline of the shipbuilding industry. The ship is 115' in length, has an oak hull and oak planks on an oak frame, a tradition of Dorchester, NJ's built vessels. In 1995, it was restored, rechristened, launched and added to the Register of Historical Places. It is currently used for public tours and also for educating school students and other groups. In 1998, Governor Christie Whitman named the Meerwald New Jersey's official tall ship.



The US Coast Guard's tall ship, the Eagle, was formerly the German-built Horst Wessel. It is a 295' barque used as a training cutter for future officers of the coast guard. It is one of only two active commissioned sailing vessels in the United States used today along with the USS Constitution. Having 22,227 square foot of sail, it reaches a speed of 17 knots when under sail. Known as America's tall ship, the Eagle is the largest tall ship flying the stars and stripes.



## MEMBER MARCUS KEMP CROSSES THE BAR

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Marcus (Marc) Kemp, a resident of Paulsboro, NJ and a member of our association, crossed the bar on November 19, 2022. After graduating from high school, he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Technology in Construction Engineering from Spring Garden Institute. Marc had a great interest in lighthouses and was a member of, not only our organization but also the Tinicum Rear Range Lighthouse Society and the New Jersey Lighthouse Managers Association. A devoted volunteer to his hometown and surrounding area, he was awarded the Community Service Award by the Greater Paulsboro Chamber of Commerce. Marc will be sadly missed by all of us.

## NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS

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There are many New Year's traditions that have existed for years and are still practiced today. Some of them feature food-like eating black eyed peas or pork and sauerkraut on New Year's Day which is a guarantee to bring one good luck during the incoming year. One of the Spanish traditions is eating 12 grapes at midnight while walking down the main street with groups of friends.

In Denmark, the Danes throw old plates and glasses against the doors of family and friends to banish bad spirits. Another custom celebrated is to stand on chairs with friends and family leaping off together designating "jumping into a new year".

A custom practiced in Greece is to hang onions on the front door as a symbol of rebirth. On New Year's Day, parents wake up their children by tapping them on the head with the onions.

In Brazil, the custom is to don new underwear most of which is red in color; this will determine what the new year will bring. This is also done in Mexico, Bolivia and other countries of Central and South America. The burning of scarecrows and old photos in Ecuador, a weird and wonderful tradition, is done to bring good luck and banish all bad future happenings and/or the bad things that have happened over the last twelve months. In Japan, the Buddhist tradition is to banish all human sins by ringing large groups of bells through the streets.

In America, we attend parties with friends or have family gatherings; sing "Auld Lang Syne" (anyone remember Guy Lombardo?); make resolutions for the new year (how long do they last?); go outside at midnight and bang on pots and pans welcoming in the new year and, along with millions of other Americans, watch the ball drop in New York City, either sitting in the warm comfort of one's living room watching it on TV or freezing along the streets of Times Square.

In Greek Mythology, Cronus was known as the God of Time. We know him as Father Time. Derived from the name of this Greek god are our words chronology, chronological, chronometer, plus a Cronus, a very expensive wristwatch. We witness the baby New Year on January 1 symbolizing the birth of a new year. Speaking of time, this child must experience and deal with all the events of the 365 days that follow, which ages him drastically.

