



The Bay Run



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

Volume 29 Issue 15
Winter 2016

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

CHRISTMAS ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCED

We are happy to announce the engagement and upcoming nuptials of Oliver "Ollie" J. Oyster and Shelley Mollusk. The couple met in the Cape May Canal where Shelley was participating in a reef restoration project for the State of New Jersey. The future groom is working for the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey constructing a new reef off Reeds Beach in Middle Township. "Ollie" just happened to be vacationing at the Canal when they met; he is originally from Bivalve, NJ. They have been dating for a couple of years and have finally decided to become attached. "Ollie" is planning on surprising his future bride with the presentation of a rare Cape May Diamond this Christmas. He had thought about presenting her with a pearl engagement ring but knows she is quite capable of forming her own. The afore mentioned Cape May Diamonds can be found at one of the East Coast's most unique beaches, Cape May Point, located at the end of Sunset Boulevard, on the very tip of South Jersey "where the land meets the Delaware Bay". This area is well known for its beautiful sunsets.



History states that Cape May Point was once the tribal headquarters of the Kechemeches Indians, who were the first to find the beautiful translucent stones. These gems were held in high esteem by the Indians, who believed the gems to be possessed with supernatural powers, influencing the success, well-being and good fortune of the owner. Bonds of friendship and lasting good will were often sealed with the gift or exchange of these gems.

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Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.



It’s that special time of the year once again when families and friends gather together to celebrate the holidays. Speaking of family, we are pleased to announce a new member in our household whose name is Ed. He was rescued (one of many) by our granddaughter, Kylie, who lives in Sinking Spring, PA. When he could no longer be hidden in her bedroom, Ed was transferred to our home. A curious 6 month old orange cat with large green eyes, he is always busy checking out the area and getting into anything and everything throughout our house (See page 8). Ed and Rusty (our Chihuahua) now have a great time chasing each other all around the house. Fortunately

our other two Chihuahuas don’t seem to care what these two characters get into.

All three Christmas trees are up and the house decorated. Our daughter, Roxanne, spent five days helping us get the house glowing once again. The outside lights and yard displays are finished. Now it’s time to sit back, enjoy the lights and watch our grandchildren smile as they play with the trains and various animated figurines.

Our next lighthouse association meeting will be held January 7 at the Anglesea Fire Department in Anglesea, NJ. A round table discussion featuring some of the area’s lighthouse representatives, will take place. We are looking forward to a very informative meeting. Check our Peggy’s Corner in the Newsletter for further details. We hope you come out and participate in this gathering as we always enjoy getting together.

Remember to keep the lights shining. Buon Natale!!!

Angelo

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The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. (DBLHKFA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit preservation and educational organization.

FROM THE LOG OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

by Bill Geilfuss



It's hard to believe another year is coming to an end. Time to put away the bathing suit and get out the snow shovel. Unfortunately, due to some health problems, Katie and I did not get to travel much this summer. With the help of Tony Giletto and his daughter, Melissa, we were able to attend the NJ Lighthouse Society's managers meeting where we helped to plan a very successful 2016 Lighthouse Challenge. Once again the Delaware Bay keepers were well represented at the Hereford Maritime Days, the National Lighthouse Day and other activities. Our summer bay cruises were well attended and profitable. On the downside of the news is the sad loss of two of our long time members who "crossed the bar" – Jim Gardner and Ron Simmons. They will be greatly missed.

2017 is shaping up to be a busy year. We will be doing all of our usual outreach programs which include: National Lighthouse Day, our cruises and the Challenge... don't forget our annual banquet. Some of our sister organizations are planning activities you might want to look into; the Maryland Challenge is on again this year; another event is the Anchor Drop on the Overfalls Lightship on New Year's Eve. Katie and I are going on the New Jersey Lighthouse Society's Lake Havasu trip. Who knew lighthouses existed in Arizona and Colorado?

"Fair winds and following seas"

Bill

2016 NEW JERSEY LIGHTHOUSE CHALLENGE



Signing up the challengers (Bill and Tony)



Loyal volunteers (A. Rigazio, K. Moser, B. Geilfuss and T. Giletto)



Time out for a pose (Melissa Small, Maxine Mulligan and Katie Moser)



Angelo Rigazio and Rod Mulligan take a break

Photos courtesy of Bill Geilfuss



The nation's first lighthouse celebrated 300 years off the Boston coast in September and is "manned" by Sally Snowman. Following 69 male keepers, Snowman is the first female keeper. The original tower was built in 1716 and blown up by the British in 1776; a new tower was built in 1783, guiding ships with a light powerful enough to be seen from 27 miles away. It is now fully automated making her job of maintaining the grounds, giving tours and managing 90 volunteers a little easier. Snowman dresses in period outfits adding further interest to the tours.

Ms. Snowman stated she always wanted to be part of the history of the Boston Light since she was a child. "How could I forget that day when I came to visit the island with my dad, stepped off the dingy onto the beach, looked up to this 89 foot tower and exclaimed, 'When I grow up, I want to get married out here'". She eventually did get married at the light and started volunteering in 1994. When the Coast Guard civilianized the light station in 2003, Sally was officially designated as Keeper of the Boston Light. She says being a keeper for the 300th anniversary is way beyond her wildest dreams.

(Around the Nation, September 2016)

TWO NEW JERSEY LIGHTS MAKE NATION'S TOP TEN

The "Lighthouse Digest" ran an election entitled, "What's Your Favorite Lighthouse?" Here are the results. Congratulations to East Point and Barnegat, two of New Jersey's lights that made the Top 10. The lighthouses are listed in order of their popularity:

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 1. | Cape Neddick, Nubble Light, Maine | 6. | Pemaquid Point Light, Maine |
| 2. | Cape Hatteras, North Carolina | 7. | St. Augustine Light, Florida |
| 3. | Portland Head Light, Maine | 8. | EAST POINT LIGHT, New Jersey |
| 4. | West Quoddy Light, Maine | 9. | Marblehead Light, Ohio |
| 5. | Split Rock Light, Minnesota | 10. | BARNEGAT LIGHT, New Jersey |



Saturday, January 7, 2017 (Snow date January 14) Winter meeting at Anglesea Fire Department. Guest speakers will be taking part in a Round Table Discussion on area lighthouses and a life saving station: Steve Murray representing Hereford Inlet Lighthouse, Rich Ciemengo from Cape May Light, Nancy Patterson Tidy from East Point and Bill Lehman and Dick Pike representing the Tatham Life Saving Station located in Stone Harbor.

Sunday, April 9, 2017 Annual Keepers Banquet at Sea Isle City Yacht Club. Please reserve the date!! The banquet buffet menu will be listed in the next newsletter. Speaker TBA.

(NOTE: Is there a guest speaker or a topic you would like to learn more about?
Send suggestions to mspegstapleford@windstream.net)

CROSSED THE BAR

Remembering Jim Gardner and Ron Simmons












Member Jim Gardner, a retired machinist, was a 70 year member of the Boy Scouts of America serving in various capacities including Scout Master at South Vineland UMC from 1978 to 1985. He also volunteered for approximately 50 years putting in countless hours at East Point Lighthouse. Jim served on the Board of Directors for The Maurice River Historical Society and The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association. A dedication at East Point Lighthouse will be made in his memory.



Member Ron Simmons, a veteran of the Vietnam Conflict, was stationed in Japan. A registered nurse by profession, he had formerly been employed at Englewood Hospital in NJ. Ron was an active volunteer with the Bayshore Project at Bivalve and worked on the AJ Meerwald, setting a volunteer record of 6,331 hours. He also was an active member of The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association. The Touch Tank at the Bay Shore Project has been dedicated in his memory.

Their contributions to society and our organization will long be remembered by their family, friends and all those whose lives they touched along the way. Their footprints are deeply etched in the sands of time. We will miss them both.

DID YOU KNOW?

-  On October 13, a street in Rockland, Maine was named after the late CWO Ken Black, USCG founder of the Maine Lighthouse Museum and known to all as “Mr. Lighthouse”. This event was sponsored by the Sector New England Chief Petty officers Association and the Maine Officers Association. (Lighthouse Digest)
-  Beautiful jewelry can be made from the pearl-like rocks found in fishes’ ears. They are called earbones or otoliths and are associated with orientation and balance detected in the fluid-filled semicircular canals of the inner ear of fish. They are composed of calcium and are often ringed. When viewed in cross-section the number of rings can be used to estimate the age and growth of a particular fish. (John Calhoun) (Editor’s note: John makes this beautiful jewelry.)
-  Donna Elias has painted pictures of more than 300 lighthouses from Maine to California, from Florida to the Great Lakes and from all over her native New Jersey. Four years ago, Hurricane Sandy flooded her studio and ruined 400 of her original watercolors stored in drawers and files. She dried them, stored them away—the result? In October Elias hosted a “Salt Watercolors’ Exhibit” at Gardener’s Basin in Atlantic City. (Atlantic City Press, October 22, 2016)
-  The Cape May Maritime Museum and Education Center in collaboration with the NJ DEP Fish & Wildlife and the Township of Lower is planning to reconstruct a historically accurate replica of the former 1876 Life Saving Station at Cape May Point. The Station was featured at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and later moved to Sea Grove where it became operational as US Life Saving Station #40.
-  The Coast Guard’s Tamaroa, (known as the USS Zuni in WWII) was sunk off Cape May as part of an artificial reef. It survived sub infested waters of the Pacific as it towed torpedoed warships to safety and aided in the Battle of Iwo Jima. Fifty years later, it overcame gale force winds and 10 foot waves to help save seven people off the New England coast, a rescue shown in the film, “The Perfect Storm”. (The Daily Journal, October 26, 2016)
-  The beautiful, scenic 2.5 mile long Route 52 causeway accessing Ocean City, NJ is an attraction all its own. The causeway’s 10 foot wide walkway hosts a constant stream of bicyclist, runners and pedestrians throughout the day in the summer. It is truly a picturesque entrance to this shore community.
-  The Cape May-Lewes Ferry welcomed its 45 millionth passenger at 10:30 AM on August 16, of this year. The number of passengers using the ferry has increased steadily the past three years.
-  Veterans’ Day along the Delaware Bay was celebrated by honoring the veterans; especially those who helped build the reef in the spring. Those in attendance were asked to honor a veteran who influenced their life by writing the veteran’s name on a shell; at the end of the day, these shells were added to the living reef. This reef is one of five reefs the American Littoral Society and the Conserve Wildlife Foundation is building to help restore beaches along the New Jersey shore.
-  In November, a new 154 foot cutter, the “Rollin Fritch” was commissioned at the Cape May Coast Guard Base. The cutter weighs 350 tons, reaches speeds of 28 knots (which is slightly more than 32 mph) and has a 23 person crew. This new ship was named for a man who died defending his ship against a Japanese kamikaze attack during World War II. (The Press of Atlantic City, November 20, 2016)
-  It was 75 years ago on December 7, 1941, that a surprise military strike devastated Pearl Harbor. Donald Stratton, US Navy gunner’s mate third class who was aboard the USS Arizona, survived the attack, living to relate the experience in his new book, ALL THE GALLANT MEN. (Atlantic City Press, December 4, 2016)
-  Second Fridays are held at the Bayshore Center in Bivalve in the restored shipping sheds on the Maurice River. The facility offers covered wharves open to the picturesque riverfront, restored historic buildings with an ambiance of times gone by and a glimpse into one of New Jersey’s last remaining working waterfronts. Guests can dine at the Oyster Cracker Café, check out the art gallery, shop in the gift shop and visit the museum exhibits related to the area’s maritime history. (Reminder, December 7, 2016)

CHRISTMAS ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCED

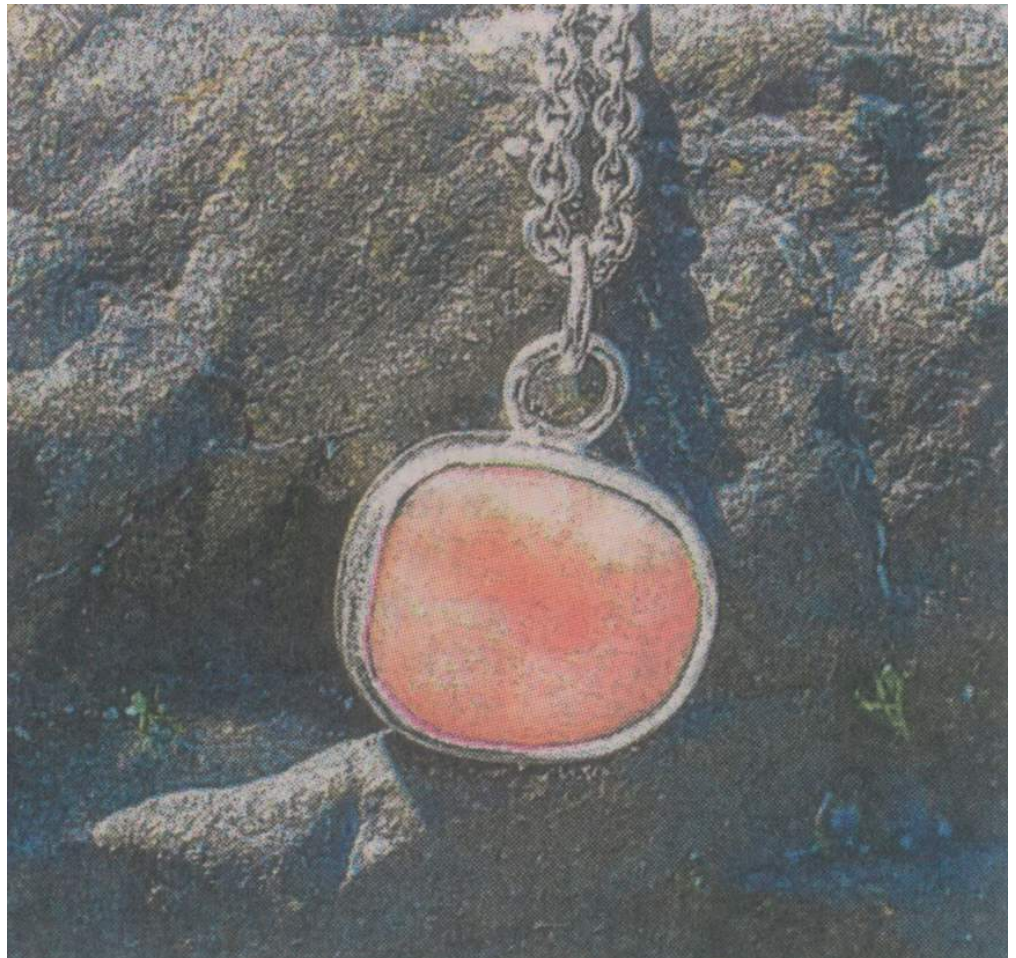
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The “Cape May Diamonds” are pure quartz crystals that have been washed up by the tides onto the beach. Their source is located in the upper reaches of the Delaware River, approximately two hundred miles upstream. For thousands of years, the swift waters have eroded away pockets and veins of quartz crystals thus beginning their long journey to the ocean. Due to the swift currents and the strong flow on both outgoing and incoming tides, these pebbles are washed ashore at the Point along with fossil sharks’ teeth and Indian arrowheads. The larger stones come ashore particularly during storms in the winter months when the surf is considerably stronger,.

The “Diamonds” come in a variety of sizes; on one occasion, a gem weighing over one pound was found. When polished or cut, these stones have the appearance of a genuine diamond. Once finished, these “diamonds” can be mounted in gold, silver, or platinum, creating beautiful jewelry items, including engagement rings (see below).

The couple has finally agreed to get tide down. Their future wedding is being planned for any month not containing a R. It is well known that oysters are perfect for romance and have long enjoyed a reputation as an aphrodisiac. Hopefully they will have a long and happy life together. We certainly wish them the best of luck. Truly, “the world is their oyster”.

(Sunset Beach brochure, Summer 2016)



This polished pink stone necklace sells for \$150.

GREETINGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Feliz Navidad

Joyeux Noel

God Jul

Zalig Kerstfeest



Nadolig Llawen

Buon Natale

Mele Kalikimaka

Blithe Yule

Frohe Weihnachten

Nizhonigo Keshmish

Kala Christouyenna

Geseende Kersfees

