

# PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE ILIUNINA ALODONS 4931 South Peninsula Drive · Ponce Inlet, Florida 32127 · www.ponceinlet.org · www.lighthouselocker.org · (380) 761-1821 · Lighthouse@ponceinlet.org

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### Dear Members,

The story of the Ponce de Leon (formerly Mosquito) Inlet Lighthouse as an active aid to navigation dates to November 1, 1887, when Principal Keeper William Rowlinski officially lit the beacon's oil lamp for the first time. Numerous events have occurred on these grounds in the 132 years that have passed since that memorable night including the arrival (and later departure) of more than 50 lighthouse keepers, many with families that came to consider the light station home. Children were born here, couples wed here, and several souls have left the surly bonds of Earth here. The history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse is rich with technological innovation, personal sacrifice, triumph, tragedy, success, failure, and more.

However, this fascinating chronicle extends far beyond the perimeter of the light station's white picket fence. It also encompasses the journey of every ship that has relied on the lighthouse to navigate Florida's treacherous coastline, every life that has been saved by its beacon, and the story of every man, woman, and child who lived in its shadow.

It is my privilege to announce that the Lighthouse Preservation Association is currently under contract to purchase the historic Pacetti Hotel that is located directly across Peninsula Drive from the lighthouse. Commonly referred to as the Pacetti House, Pacetti Hotel, or Pacetti Boarding House, the history of this 135-year-old structure, the land it sits on, and the family that built and operated it, is inexorably linked to that of the lighthouse, its keepers, and the families who once called the light station home.

The three-acre parcel on which the hotel rests was originally part of a 175-acre Spanish land grant given to Antonio Pons II in 1803. The original 175-acre land grant was inherited by descendants Bartola and Gomecindo Pacetti in 1858.



After the Civil War, Bartola Pacetti constructed a small two-room house for his wife Martha on the north bank of Mosquito Inlet. Bartola and his brother Gomecindo were successful fishing guides and word began to spread among sportsmen that Mosquito Inlet was a place to visit. Bartola and Martha welcomed boarders. The idea to turn their enterprise into a hotel came from an itinerant artist



The Pacetti Hotel

named William Aiken Walker who often camped on the Pacetti's property. Walker reportedly urged Bartola and Martha to build a hotel that catered to the region's growing tourist trade, believing the rich fishing grounds less than a stone's throw from the Pacetti's front porch would draw sportsmen and tourists in ever-greater numbers.

The opportunity to construct this hotel finally presented itself when the US Light-House Establishment offered to buy ten acres of land from the Pacetti family for a new light station at Mosquito Inlet. The Pacetti's sold the acreage to the US Government in 1883 for \$400. From the sale of this land, Bartola and Martha Pacetti transformed their boarding house into a hotel.

Although the \$400 earned from the sale of the ten acres proved to be a financial windfall for the Pacetti family, the transaction was not without negative consequences. Bartola and Martha's son Henry was seriously injured while working as a laborer for the lighthouse construction crew. While moving building materials from the river bank to work site, a load of bricks fell and crushed the young man's leg. The damage was severe and doctors were forced to amputate the limb. Complications from the procedure eventually cost Henry his life in 1886. Bartola followed his son to the grave in 1898 at the age of 76.

On a happier note, Bert Pacetti, one of Martha and Bartola's sons, married Bertha Rowlinski, daughter of William Rowlinski, the first principal keeper at the new lighthouse.

The popularity of the Pacetti establishment continued to grow. Travelers and outdoor enthusiasts from across the country flocked to the world-famous fishing resort, attracted not only by the establishment's knowledgeable fishing guides, but also by Martha's reputation as an excellent cook.

Martha Pacetti died in 1917. Following her death, the popularity of the Pacetti Hotel declined, and the hotel fell into a state of disrepair. Olivia Gamble, daughter of James N. Gamble, acquired the property in 1936. Olivia is credited with saving the historic structure by financing extensive repairs to the hotel that she later used as a guest house for her family and friends. Cincinnati socialites Carl



The Pacetti Hotel being restored by Olivia Gamble in 1938

Louis Nippert and his wife Louise inherited the Pacetti property from Olivia Gamble after her death in 1961. Heirs to the Gamble fortune, the Nipperts frequented the Pacetti Hotel on many occasions and were considered



The Pacetti Hotel today

warm, welcoming, and well-respected members of the local Ponce Inlet community.

The Preservation Association's first Executive Director and founding member Ann Canneer served as the property's caretaker from 1968 until 2012. Ownership of the Pacetti Hotel was transferred to the charitable 501(c) (3) Greenacres Foundation shortly after Louise Nippert's death on July 23, 2012. The property has remained vacant ever since.

The Preservation Association's Board of Trustees views the purchase of the Pacetti Hotel as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The acquisition of this cultural site will not only save one of Volusia County's most endangered historic places, but will significantly enhance the museum's ability to interpret the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station in more meaningful detail. The closing date for this real estate transaction is October 7, 2019.

Those who are interested in helping us acquire, stabilize, and restore this important historic site either financially or with in-kind-services are encouraged to contact the lighthouse at their earliest convenience. You may contact me directly by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 15 or via email at edgunn@ponceinlet.org for more information regarding this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you and wish you a joyful holiday season and a happy new year.

With Warm Regards, Ed Gunnlaufsson

Ed Gunnlaugsson Executive Director Ponce Inlet Lighthouse

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Ellen Henry Curator

Mary Wentzel Programs Manager

Felipe De Paula Registrar/Assistant Curator

Angel Wuest Admin Assistant/Bookkeeper

John Mann Lead Docent

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- Deborah Banks Dorothy Senne Donna Doan
- Antje Nordman Jennifer Stewart
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The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station.

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*ILLUMINATIONS* is published quarterly by the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association, Inc.

Subscription is a benefit of membership in the Association. *ILLUMINATIONS* welcomes letters and comments from our readers.

## **REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION**

SEPTEMBER 3, 2019 – MAY 24, 2020 Open Daily from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 5:00 pm) May 25, 2020 – September 7, 2020 Open Daily from 10:00 am until 9:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 8:00 pm)

DECEMBER 25, 2019 (WEDNESDAY)

MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP CLOSED

WINTER HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

DECEMBER 26, 2019 (THURSDAY)

DECEMBER 12, 2019 (THURSDAY)

DECEMBER 16, 2019 (MONDAY)

(CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP)

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING** 

TOWER CLOSED FROM 4:30 PM TO 6:00 PM

(LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 5:00 PM)

MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN UNTIL 6:00 PM

MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN FROM 10:00 AM

TO 7:00 PM (LAST ADMISSION SOLD AT 6:00 PM)

CHRISTMAS DAY

## SPECIAL HOURS OF OPERATION

THANKSGIVING DAY NOVEMBER 28, 2019 (THURSDAY) MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP CLOSED

THANKSGIVING GIFTS AT THE LIGHTHOUSE NOVEMBER 29, 2019 (FRIDAY) MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN FROM 10:00 AM TO 7:00 PM (LAST ADMISSION SOLD AT 6:00 PM)

CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24, 2019 (TUESDAY) MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN FROM 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM (LAST ADMISSION SOLD AT 3:00 PM)

## SCHEDULED TOWER CLOSURES

October 13, 2019 (Sunday) Tower Closed from 5:45 pm to 6:00 pm Museum and Gift Shop open until 6:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 5:00 pm)

NOVEMBER 12, 2019 (TUESDAY) TOWER CLOSED FROM 4:30 PM TO 6:00 PM MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN UNTIL 6:00 PM (LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 5:00 PM)

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

October 21, 2019 (Monday) Board of Trustees and Annual Membership Meeting (Open to general membership)

NOVEMBER 18, 2019 (MONDAY) BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING (CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP)

CLIMB TO THE MOON SCHEDULE

October 13, 2019 (Sunday) 6:15 pm - 7:45 pm

CLIMB TO THE MOON November 12, 2019 (Tuesday) 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Dесемвег 12, 2019 (Thursday) 5:00 рм – 6:30 рм

Journey to the top of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and experience this National Historic Landmark in all its glory. Join the *Old Lighthouse Keeper* on a personal tour of lighthouse and lantern room, and enjoy breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, Ponce Inlet, and scenic inland waterways.

Toast the setting sun with a sparkling beverage and enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres by the light of the full moon with your significant other and friends. Offered only on the eve of each full moon, this special event is limited to 25 participants only. Tickets must be purchased in advance by calling Angel at (386) 761-1821 ext. 10. Prices are \$35 for non-members and \$30 for members.



## Keeper Listing



The Connection Harvey & Connie Bach Ponce Inlet, FL In Memory of Earl Davis (Endowment Fund Donor)

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6 October 2019 • Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station

## 

Take a scenic ride down South Atlantic Avenue to visit one of Biketoberfest's favorite destinations -the world famous Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum! Climb to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse, tour the historic light station, and explore one of the largest lighthouse museums in the country. On display during the Biketoberfest event will be an exhibition chronicling the history of Motorcycles on the Beach.

## 

Visit the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse this Veteran's Day and help us honor our men and women in uniform! Climb to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse, explore one the nation's largest and best preserved historic light stations, and discover the fascinating history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and local region as you tour the museum. Active duty military personnel and veterans will be admitted free of charge on this day with proof of service.

# November 14, 2019, ..... Fall 2019 Homeschool Day Thursday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Marine Science Center will join forces on November 14, 2019 to provide a special day of activities for homeschooled students. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to participate in hands-on educational activities at the historic light station. Advanced reservations are required for this event. Online registration will begin at 12:00 pm on October 16th at www.lighthouselocker.org. This special event is limited to only 50 participants.

## 

Looking for something to do on Black Friday other than holiday shopping? Join us at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum for our annual Thanksgiving Gifts event. Visitors will have the opportunity to tour the historic grounds, climb the tower, visit with the "Old Lighthouse Keeper," and learn about turn-of-the-century life at historic Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. Participants will create holiday ornaments that were handmade by families over 100 years ago.

## DECEMBER 26, 2019, ..... WINTER HOLIDAY CELEBRATION THURSDAY, 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season by visiting the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum on December 26th! Enjoy a fun-filled day of family-oriented activities as you explore the historic light station, tour the museum, and climb to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse. Journey into the past and talk with the "Old Lighthouse Keeper" about what it was like to live and work at the light station 100 years ago.



Jiving Tuesday

Bright Light Challenge of Giving for Historic Education & Preservation

Giving-Tuesday is a global day of giving that harnesses the collective power of individuals, to encourage giving and to celebrate generosity worldwide. Please support our mission to preserve and disseminate the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse by making an Online donation to the Preservation Association on Tuesday, December 3rd, 2019. Donations may by made Online at **www.lighthouselocker.org.** 

ATTENTION READERS: All activities are included with regular or member admission and without advanced reservations unless otherwise noted. Additional information regarding upcoming events can be found online at www.ponceinlet.org under the Calendar of Events tab. Individuals wishing to learn more about these and other museum offerings may contact Programs Manager Mary Wentzel by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18, or via email at mwentzel@ponceinlet.org for additional information.

# **NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED**



The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is pleased to announce the launch of its new and improved website at www.ponceinlet.org. The development of the new site was almost a year in the making and a genuine collaborative effort between the museum's administrative staff and Z-Graph Inc. of Daytona Beach.

The Association's decision to develop the new website was motivated by several factors including the limited functionality and antiquated design of its predecessor, the significant shift in advertising from print to digital marketing, and the meteoric rise in smartphone use in the past ten years. Smartphones were relatively new when the old website was originally launched in 2009, with only 90 million (or 30%) of US residents owning one. That number has since grown by 300%, transforming the way people search the internet today. The following statistics illustrate how mobile device use has evolved in the United States.

#### Smart Phone and Mobile Computer Use in the U.S. Today

- Approximately 207 million Americans own smartphones
- 52% of the nation's population own a mobile device
- The average American spends 5 hours a day on a smartphone
- 80% of the US population use mobile devices to search the internet
- Smartphones and other mobile devices drive 52% of all website traffic
- 80% of all consumers use their smartphones to shop online
- 90% of travelers plan their vacation activities using smartphones
- 88% of all Americans share their experiences on social media platforms using mobile devices
- People own more smartphones worldwide than toothbrushes

Lighthouse staff worked closely with Z-Graph's design team to develop a state-of-the-art website featuring a layout and overall functionality well-suited for both computer and smartphone use while maintaining an overall aesthetic that embraces the light station's designation as National Historic Landmark. The website's content includes information related to planning your visit, experiencing the lighthouse and museum, discovering the history of the lighthouse and the museum's educational offerings, and supporting the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association.

Although filled with useful and exciting information, the new website functions as much more than an online platform for the interpretation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. It is also serves as a highly effective advertising tool designed for contemporary life. The museum's administrative staff will be working closely with Z-Graph's marketing department in the coming months to ensure the new website achieves its full potential by maximizing its online presence through optimization, social media, Google ads, and more. It will not only inform the public about the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum but entice them to visit and support this important National Historic Landmark as well.

We invite you to explore the new website at your convenience by logging on at www.ponceinlet.org. Enjoy the journey.

# Lost in History: Part 1 An Assortment of Articles About the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse

In 1835, an ill-fated lighthouse was built on the south side of what was then called Mosquito Inlet. In the nearly two centuries since that original lighthouse was first erected, the population of the United States has grown by over three-hundred million, the number of states has doubled, dozens of presidencies have gone by, wars have been fought, technology has advanced, and so on. We have gone from horse-drawn carriages and whale-oil lanterns to central air conditioning and self-driving cars. There has been an unfathomable number of historical events that have occurred in this time period. Some events, like mankind's first steps on the moon, will be immortalized forever. Other moments, inevitably, have been lost throughout the decades gone by.



Modern stories of the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse, now known as the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, are well-documented and preserved. They are in our quarterly newsletters, in our archives, in our social media posts, in the innumerable pictures taken by our many visitors, and they are in our memories. Some of us have only ever been to the lighthouse recently while others have been visiting for decades. We all contribute to the collective memory of this National Historic Landmark. But what about the stories that are not so modern—the ones that no one alive today can vividly remember? These stories can be found in old photographs, letters, postcards, government records, and other documents.

The stories in this series come from newspaper sources. From construction updates to travel tourism pieces to random articles about our lighthouse keepers, these newspapers show us moments in the history of our illustrious lighthouse and its surrounding areas. Specifically, this article is the first part of the *Lost in History* series. It will cover all the available newspaper stories from the early nineteenth century up until our tower's initial illumination was announced to mariners in 1887. In recounting these tidbits, it is the hope of the Preservation Association that they do not become lost in history like countless other stories have been, and can instead be shared and enjoyed by generations to come.

### **Before the Lighthouse**

Before we look at the stories pertaining to our lighthouse, there is a set of newspaper reports that partially explain why erecting this new lighthouse was necessary. These newspaper reports are of shipwrecks, and there are several dozens of them directly involving ships that wrecked in Mosquito Inlet. A high number of shipwrecks implies that there was a constant flow of goods around Mosquito Inlet. Just imagine the stories of all the wrecks that did not end up in newspapers; they are potentially lost in history forever.

This high amount of oceanic traffic around Mosquito Inlet was caused by two factors. First was the amount of lumber produced in the surrounding areas. Second was the fact that shipping was the most effective method of transporting that lumber to states like Massachusetts and New York. We can see this traffic in shipping reports from the 1870s, when the South entered its period of reconstruction and economic growth following the devastating impact of the Civil War.

SCHE MINNEHAHA. Douglass, of New York, now at New Bedford, has been chartered to transport men and stores to the Live Oak station at Mosquito Inlet, Fla.

The New York Herald, 1872



Lumber produced from Southern live oak trees was highly desired for its strength and durability. Ships like the USS Constitution, also known as "Old Ironsides," were built with live oak because of these useful qualities. This picture of a grove of Southern live oak trees was taken by photographer E. G. Harris near Mosquito Inlet, c1900.

These shipments of lumber, and also the other vessels that were just passing by, were subject to the aquatic hazards of Mosquito Inlet. Through newspaper accounts, we can see just how common these hazards were. A story published in 1900 in *The Tribune*, from Pennsylvania, warned readers of the shifting tides present in the inlet. The author of the article, during his visit to New Smyrna, received some advice from a local captain:

"Hello! Are you going to cross the inlet tonight? If you are, you will likely get a good start toward the Bahama Islands."

The author goes on to mention the fate awaiting unfortunate sailors who wreck in Mosquito Inlet:

"One man who did not regard his warning was carried out to sea and his body came in with the tide next day, with both arms bitten off by sharks, which are plenty at the inlet. I saw a school of them one day of more than fifty."

Needless to say, the author heeded the warning given to him by the local captain:

"I did not cross that night, and when I do now, I generally wait until the tide is coming in." Another major hazard to mariners was recorded in 1880 by The Parsons Weekly Sun, in Kansas:

"On the approach of autumn the Floridian quakes with apprehension. It is the dread season of hurricanes. Tearing through the West Indies [the Caribbean], they often strike the coast with deadly effect. With scarcely a note of warning, houses are overthrown, sailboats blown from the water, the orange groves swept bare of leaves and fruit... A low moan comes from the ocean. Smoky clouds roll into the sky from the southeast, and a strong wind whitens the ruffled water. Every minute it increases in fury... Within fifteen minutes there is a gale, and soon the full force of the hurricane is felt. Vessels are driven ashore and sometimes many lives are lost. The Ladona, a New York steamship, went ashore twelve miles north of Canaveral in the great gale of August 23, 1871. All onboard perished. Since then many vessels have been wrecked."

Mosquito Inlet has had its share of wrecks:



The Detroit Free Press, 1879

DOVE ALMOST A TOTAL WRECK.-Jacksonville. Oct. 15.-British schooner Dove, which stranded at Mosquito Inlet, night of October 2, while bound from Bahamas for Jacksonville, is almost a total loss.

The Philadelphia Inquirer, 1900

#### MARINE.

JACKSONVILLE, Oct. 17.—The schooner Lizzie H. Smith, from New York for Tampa, was wrecked on the 11th inst. near Mosquito Inlet. Crew saved.

The Times-Picayune, 1878

And so on...

## **Construction of the Lighthouse**

With the amount of goods passing through Mosquito Inlet, and the number of wrecks happening in its vicinity, it was no surprise when a lighthouse lit up its shores in 1887. It is easy to imagine a lighthouse of such stature being built today in an era of skyscrapers and space exploration, but doing so in the nineteenth century was challenging to say the least. Through newspaper accounts of the late 1800s, we can gain a glimpse into exactly how complicated this endeavor was.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

In order to build this colossus of a beacon, money was required—and lots of it. Even the original 1835 lighthouse, the one that toppled over into the sea before its one-year anniversary, required major funding:

TERRITORY OF FLORIDA. For a light-house on a proper site at Musquito inlet on the Atlantic coast, eleven thousand dollars.

The Vermont Gazette, 1834

Notice that Florida was still a territory when the first lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet was built.

Funding was also granted for the immediate reconstruction of this doomed lighthouse. Despite this funding, Florida's involvement in the Seminole Wars and later the Civil War greatly delayed the construction of a new light:

For rebuilding and changing the location of the light-house at Mosquito inlet, seven thousand dollars.

The Pensacola Gazette, 1837



Josiah T. Walls portrait from the Library of Congress

Appropriately, another funding request for the construction of a lighthouse in Mosquito Inlet came during the Reconstruction era. Josiah T. Walls, Florida's first black congressman and one of the first African Americans to serve in Congress, petitioned for the creation of a new light at Mosquito Inlet. Unfortunately, it would be another few years before funding was actually secured for this lighthouse:

## By Mr. Walls, of Florida-For a lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet.

The New Orleans Republican, 1876

Progressively more money was requested and granted for the construction of a lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet. Even after construction had already begun, additional funding requests were granted to cover the costs of changing circumstances and unforeseen problems. Here are but some of the newspaper reports involving funding:



On motion of Bisbee of Florida, an amendment was agreed to appropriating \$30,000 for continuing work on the light-

The Natchez Democrat, 1883

house at Mosquito Inlet. Fla.

Mosquito Inlet Light Station, Fla.-For continuing the lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet, Fla., \$30,000.

The Weekly Times-Democrat, 1885

Mr. Crisp-a bill for the relief of S. E. Scarborough; by request, bills to complete the light house at Mosquito Inlet, Florida; to protect the light house at Hunting island, Florida; to establish lighthouses at Hillsboro inlet and at Auclote keys.

The Atlanta Constitution, 1886

After obtaining the appropriations necessary for the construction and completion of our magnificent lighthouse, the next step was to gather building materials. A set of advertisements went out to newspapers across the country informing suppliers of the government's needs for brick, iron, and other building materials:

### FEATURE ARTICLE





Iron was used in the construction of the lighthouse's spiral staircase as well as its balcony and lantern room. This is a picture looking upwards from the inside of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, 2019.

## TO BRICK-MAKERS.

OFFICE OF THE LIGHT HOUSE ENGINEER, FIFTH AND SIXTH DISTRICTS, BALTIMOBE, MD., JANUARY 19, 1884.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Office until 12 o'clock M. of Saturday, the 16th day of February, 1884, for furnishing 960,000 Brick, more or less, for the construction of the Mosquito Inlet Light-Honse for the coast of Florida.

Forms of proposal and other information may be obtained on application at this Office.

The right is reserved to reject any or all bids, and to waive any defects.

O. E. BABCOCK, Major of Engineers, U. S. A. Light-House Engineer, jan 22 6t Fifth and Sixth Districts.

The Wilmington Morning Star, 1884



An estimated 1.25 million bricks were used in the construction of the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse. The surrounding buildings, such as the oil house and the three keeper dwellings, required another 75,000. This picture, taken by photographer E. G. Harris in 1886, shows the progress of the construction of the lighthouse. Notice the piles of bricks in the foreground.

### PROPOSALS.

OFFICE OF U. S. LIGHTHOUSE ENGINEER, MD., NOVEMBER 10, ISS6.-SEALED PRO-POSALS will be received at this Office until 12 o'clock M. of SATURDAY, the 27th day of November, ISS6, for furnishing the MILL-WORK, HARD-WARE, COPPER, TIN, IRON AND STONE-WORK, PLASTERING MATERIALS, PAINT, OIL, ETC., for the construction of three keepers' dwellings and other buildings at Mosquito Inlet Light Station, Florida. Specifications, forms of proposal and other information may be obtained on application to this office. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids, and to waive any defects. JAMES F. GREGORY, Captain of Engineers, U. S. A., Lighthouse Engineer. nll-4t

#### The Baltimore Sun, 1886

Shortly after these notices were published, bids were placed by different materials manufacturers until the supply contracts were secured. Newspapers then informed Americans of these updates through articles like The Baltimore Sun's informatively titled "A Brick-Carrying Contract Awarded." Despite the progress being made in securing funding and materials, the construction of the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse was tumultuous at the very least. Tragic accidents like the sinking of the Fannie W. Johnston, a vessel transporting a load of bricks to the inlet, delayed the arduous construction process even further.

## A Camden Vessel Wrecked.

The schooner Fannie W. Johnston, which sailed from Baltimore on December 16, 1885, for Mosquito Inlet, Fla., went ashore on North Beach of the Inlet on Sunday and became a total loss. Two of the crew were drowned. The schooner carried out a load of bricks for the new lighthouse at the Inlet. She was owned by Captain F. Cobb, of Bridgeton, and was a two-master, built at Cooper's Point, in 1867. She was 252 tons register, 111 feet long, 20 feet beam and 82 feet depth of hold.

#### The Morning Post, 1886

And then there was the Babcock incident. General Orville E. Babcock, veteran of the Civil War, friend and secretary to President Grant, Light-House Engineer, a well-known name to many Americans at the time, drowned in an accident while attempting to enter Mosquito Inlet. Aside from General Babcock, three others perished in that wreck. The newspapers, however, understandably focused on the death of the well-known war veteran and political figure:

## GENERAL BABCOCK DROWNED. A DISASTER OFF MOSQUITO INLET.

LEVI H. LUCKEY, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO PRESI-DENT GRANT, AND ANOTHER MAN ALSO LOSE THEIR LIVES.

The New-York Tribune, 1884



The Times, 1884

#### A CATASTROPHE IN MOSQUITO INLET.

General O. E. Babcock and Friends Said to Have Been Drowned There on Saturday Last.

WASHINGTON, June 3.

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1884



The Last News Received From Him Before the Tragedy.

The Daily Arkansas Gazette, 1884



The lighthouse tender Pharos (1868-1906). This schooner was purchased by the Lighthouse Establishment after the Civil War and regularly brought supplies to the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse. In 1884 it brought General Babcock to Mosquito Inlet where he and three others lost their lives attempting to reach land. Photograph from the National Archives.

Some newspapers focused on his career before this incident. Others focused on the incident itself. Some wrote about the other three men that drowned; others did not. Regardless of the exact subject matter and length of the article, the story of Babock's drowning was read throughout the country. There are more surviving newspaper articles about this incident than any other story involving our lighthouse.

## Feature Article



Orville E. Babcock portrait from the Library of Congress



While Babcock's body was sent north to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, the bodies of L. P. Luckey and B. P. Sutter were temporarily buried in Mosquito Inlet. The fourth body was never recovered. Photograph from the National Archives.

Because of these horrific accidents, the continuous requests for funding, the isolated nature of Mosquito Inlet, and especially the threat of malaria during the summers, it is understandable that the lighthouse took over three years to build. Contemporary newspaper accounts were less understanding:

The construction of the Mosquito inlet light-house is quite slow, as is usual with government work, only two bricklayers at work on it. The walls will be two feet eight inches thick at the base and two feet at the top, and they will require 1,000,000 brick. The light will be 150 feet above the ground.

#### The Palatka Daily News, 1886

Another article, from the Appleton Post in Wisconsin, told the story of a fisherman who went to Mosquito Inlet during the same time that the lighthouse was being built. Staying at the house of Bartola Pacetti, who had recently sold ten acres of his land to the government to be the site of the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse, Mr. G. F. Peabody had this to say:

"Near Pascettas [sic] is the location and foundation of a new first class lighthouse, in process of construction, by the government. Here is all the material, brick, stone and iron, buildings for the workmen, the massive foundation complete, but all silent and deserted, waiting for further appropriation—a costly and foolish way of doing business, it would seem."

Costly and foolish as it may have seemed, the lighthouse construction was finished in 1887. Through contemporary newspaper reports, we can track the development of this construction process:

The Mosquito Inlet lighthouse is now being built at the rate of fourteen inches per day. It will be 175 feet from base to focal plane.

The Savannah Morning News, 1886

The schooner E. K. Hart, of Ray's Florida packet line, left Baltimore yesterday with the last of the brick for the Mosquito Inlet lighthouse. The original contract for this work called for 800,000 brick. It is hoped the work will be completed by the close of the present season. The Orlando and Winter Park street

The Savannah Morning News, 1886

The glass for the new lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet has arrived at New Smyrna. This glass was received from France, and weighs 10,000 pounds.

The Savannah Morning News, 1887

M. Bamber, of the United States Lighthouse Construction Department, has just concluded the erection of the Mosquito Inlet lighthouse. This work has been going on more than two years, and Mr. Bamber says he has been there all the time, seldom being away more than a few hours at a time. This light will be shown for the first time on Nov. 1, everything being in readiness for the keeper. Who the keeper will be is somewhat uncertain, there being several applicants.

The Savannah Morning News, 1887

All that was left for newspaper editors to do was publish an official "Notice to Mariners" about the new light for the benefit of all.



And so the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse had been built, the public had been informed, and the stories involving the lighthouse had only just begun. This towering aid to navigation has stood proudly for over 132 years. In that time, it has been manned by various keepers, endured the harsh Floridian climate, undergone a name change, and has become an honored National Historic Landmark. While this first article has focused on the stories about the necessity and construction of the Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse, the next part of this Lost in History series will feature articles both lengthy and brief involving these keepers, their families, visitors to the lighthouse, and other local events that have appeared in countless newspapers since 1887. In presenting these stories, the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association hopes that they can be shared and enjoyed for the benefit of generations to come.



## Lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet.

This image from The Daytona Daily News is perhaps the first picture of our lighthouse to appear in a newspaper, 1905.

## **EDUCATION NEWS**

# LIGHTHOUSE HAPPENINGS

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse was very busy this summer welcoming guests and groups from all around the world. In addition to hosting summer camp groups from the combined together to create a lighthouse's unique and easily recognizable daymark.

surrounding area, the Association's volunteer provided docents incredible tours to teen groups from as far away as China, France and Brazil. The young pharologists in training explored the light station and museum, climbed to the top of Florida's tallest beacon. and learned what life was like for the keepers and families that once called the historic



Children learn about Morse code during Homeschool Day.

Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse home.

On July 13th a group of Cub Scouts from Port Orange learned about early navigation and how lighthouses are used to warn ships of unseen danger and guide them safely along their way. The scouts learned how a compass works and how each lighthouse is assigned its own unique daymark and beacon characteristic to help mariners distinguish it from all the other beacons on the coast.

A daymark is the unique shape, color, and design of a lighthouse that enables it to be correctly identified during the day. Lighthouses can be tall and skinny, or short and fat. Their design can resemble a house, castle, smoke stack, iron derrick, or something in between. They can be painted one uniform shade like the Ponce Inlet tower, or showcase a variety of easily recognizable



PAL summer camp participants learn what it was like to live and work at the light station in the early 1900s.

patterns including horizontal and vertical stripes, diagonal bands, or multiple segments of contrasting colors. Lantern rooms can be black, red, or white and feature rectangular, square, or diamond-shaped window panes. All these architectural features are by the lighthouse booth to say hello and schedule presentations for the upcoming year while those unfamiliar with the museum's offerings talked with Ms. Wenzel and Mr. Mann at great length to learn more about what the lighthouse had to offer. All were

tower's beacon A characteristic is designed help to mariners identify one lighthouse from another at night. A beacon characteristic is the distinctive appearance of the light shining from the top the tower. Some beacons emit a steady glow of white, green, or red light while others exhibit a unique pattern of flashes over a specific period of time. This unique characteristic

creates a visible signature for each lighthouse. The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse's beacon characteristic is six flashes of white light in 15 seconds followed by a 15 second eclipse. This pattern repeats itself every 30 seconds and is identified in the US Coast Guard's Light List for the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts as (Fl (6)W 30s).

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Programs Department had an opportunity to promote the museum's many educational offerings during the Volusia County School

> District's annual science and social studies subject area meetings on August 2019. Programs 7th. Manager Mary Wentzel and Lead Docent John Mann traveled to the teacher kick-off events to meet local science and social studies teachers and showcase the Preservation Association extensive portfolio of educational offerings. Teachers familiar with museum stopped the



Lead Docent John Mann talks with conference attendees during the 2017 National Docent Symposium.

appreciative of the Association's efforts and ongoing policy of providing educational services free of charge to all Volusia County school groups.

The Programs Department followed up the subject area meetings by sending a copy of its recently published *Steaming through Lighthouse History* brochure to all Volusia County K-12 public and private teachers in late August. The enthusiasm of our dedicated volunteers is the primary reason why the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association has enjoyed such a high level of success in regards to its educational endeavors within the local community.

The Programs Department has once again been invited to present a breakout session during the National Docents Symposium. Volunteer docents from museums, historical sites, botanical gardens, and other places of interests have come together at the biennial National Docents Symposium since 1981 to exchange ideas, discuss current trends in museum education, and simply socialize with like-minded colleagues from the United States and Canada. This year's event will be hosted by the Smithsonian Museums in Washington D.C. from October 24th through the 27th, 2019. More than 450 docents from major American museums like the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, San Antonio Museum of Art, St. Louis Art Museum, MOMA, The Getty, Boston by Foot, Toledo Museum, Huntington Museum of Art, Denver Museum of Art, and museums affiliated with the Universities of North Carolina, Albuquerque, and Dartmouth will be in attendance.

The lighthouse's hour-long breakout session, called *Partnering with Your Schools- A Scholastic Alliance STEAM* and More, will discuss the development and growth of the exceptional outreach programs and workshops

available to public and private school students in the Central Florida area. The majority of these programs are developed and facilitated by museum staff and volunteer docents and are frequently the result of co-planning with area teachers who are looking for ways to enhance their curricular offerings.

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse's breakout session will be presented by Programs Manager Mary Wentzel, Lead Docent John Mann, and volunteer Jackie Mann. It is one of thirty breakout sessions being offered during this year's National Docents Symposium along with several general sessions. Partnering with Your Schools' maximum attendance capacity of forty participants was reached within hours of its availability being announced on the symposium's first day of registration.

We have a full schedule planned for the upcoming 2019 fall season. Events include *Biketoberfest at the Lighthouse* from October 17th thru the 20th with re-enactors on the grounds from 12:00 am to 2:00 pm, *Thanksgiving Gifts at the Lighthouse* on November 29th from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, the museum's *Winter Holiday Celebration* on December 26th from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. Please refer to our Calendar of Events on page 6 of this issue of *Illuminations* for more information.



Volunteer Allen Bestwick teaches radio direction finding to scouts during the regional Boy Scouts of America's annual kick-off event in 2019.

The Preservation Association is always looking for individuals who are interested in of becoming a lighthouse volunteer. Those wishing to learn more about current docent opportunities and volunteer training are encouraged to contact Programs Manager Mary Wentzel by email at mwentzel@ponceinlet.org or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18. You can learn more about the museum's volunteer program online at www.ponceinlet. org under the Support tab.

# **VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER: DOROTHY BEARD**

Each quarter, the Preservation Association recognizes docents who exemplify the spirit of volunteerism in their efforts to assist the museum in its many endeavors. The Preservation Association is pleased to recognize Dorothy Beard as this issue of *Illumination's* Volunteer of the Quarter. to Central Florida a short time later and Dorothy took a position with the publishing company Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich where she helped development of the historical content for fourth grade history books. She eventually moved on to work for the Volusia County

Dorothy Beard was born in Boston, Massachusetts where she attended Blessed Sacrament High School in Jamaica Plain. The school was not very big and Dorothy reports that her senior class consisted of only 33 girls. Dorothy married her first husband Joseph not long after graduation and accepted a job with AT&T which sent her to IBM to learn computer science. Her expertise in this relatively new field of technology eventually led to a position with Boeing Corp. based in Seattle, WA in the 1960s.

Dorothy and Joseph moved many times during their marriage and lived in many states including Massachusetts, Washington, New Hampshire, California, Maine, and Hawaii. Dorothy gave birth to three children along the way: Ariel, Christopher, and Holly. Ariel is a

professional photographer in Cincinnati, Christopher is a prosecuting District Attorney in Manhattan, and Holly is the project manager for Yellow Shoes Creative Disney Group in Florida.

Dorothy made the decision to enroll in college after having her three children and received a full scholarship to Wellesley College in Boston, MA. Dorothy enjoyed being a student at Wellesley and decided to stay and work at the college for an additional eight years after earning her degree.

In 1988, Dorothy married he second husband Charles. The couple visited Charles' son in Florida that same year and immediately fell in love with the Sunshine State during their stay. Dorothy and Charles relocated



Ibrary System until her first retirement. Combined with Charles's five children, Dorothy is the mother of 8, grandmother of 11, and great-grandmother of 15. Dorothy jokingly states that "more great grandchildren are sure to come."

Dorothy gave up her life of leisure after 18 months of inactivity and accepted a position with the Volusia County Parks and Recreation Department as the manager of Debary Hall. Dorothy met many colorful characters at the Hall including former Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Programs Manager Bob Callister who was quite fond of the historic site and a frequent guest speaker there. Bob jokingly suggested to Dorothy one day that she should volunteer at the lighthouse on her day off. Much to his surprise, Dorothy accepted the invitation and told him to sign her up.

Dorothy enjoys being a volunteer

at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and is always eager to help out with special events, especially Homeschool Day. Dorothy has a very good explanation on why she loves to volunteer for the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. "Volunteering is a special opportunity to connect with children, meet adult visitors from all around the world and learn their reasons for visiting lighthouses." When she isn't busy volunteering, Dorothy enjoys walking on the beach and traveling the world. She has visited 13 different countries and 44 states to date and has only recently returned from a trip to the Western Caribbean with her best friend.

We are extremely lucky to have Dorothy Beard here at the lighthouse and are proud to recognize her as this issue of *Illumination's* Volunteers of the Quarter. Thank you Dorothy for all that you do!

## Join the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

### A GENERAL ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:

- Free admission to the museum and lighthouse during regular hours of operation
- 10 percent discount in the museum gift shop and online store
- One subscription to The Light Station quarterly newsletter
- Invitations to special events
- Volunteer opportunities

#### Membership categories:

General	\$20		
The benefits listed above for one individual			

- Student.
   \$10

   All privileges of General Membership for one individual 12 years or older with a valid student identification
- Family......\$40
  - All privileges of General Membership for the immediate family
    Immediate family is limited to one or two adults and your
  - children under age 18. Grandchildren are not eligible.You will be issued one membership card for each parent, and each card will list the names of your children.
  - Child under 12 must be accompanied by an adult

Please complete the entire form to enroll, or join online at www.lighthouselocker.org.

### Select type of membership:

à-

General \$20
□ Senior \$10
□ Student (submit copy of ID) \$10
G Family \$40
<ul> <li>Gift Membership From:</li> <li>Renewal</li> </ul>
□ 2nd Assistant Keeper \$100
□ 1st Assistant Keeper \$200
□ Principal Keeper \$500
□ Corporate Lampist \$500
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• Recognition of your membership in the quarterly newsletters' 2nd Assistant Keeper List

#### 1st Assistant Keeper..... \$200

- All privileges of 2nd Assistant Membership
- Two gift General Memberships
- Recognition of your support in the quarterly newsletters' 1st Assistant Keeper List

#### Principal Keeper ..... \$500

- All privileges of 1st Assistant Membership
- A personalized guided tour of the Light Station
- Recognition of your support in the quarterly newsletters' Principal Keeper List

#### Corporate Lampist ..... \$500

- All privileges of General or Family Membership for up to five company principals
- A personalized guided tour of the Light Station
- Use of the Light Station's conference room for one meeting.
- Recognition of your companies support in the quarterly newsletters' Corporate Lampist List

FLORIDA DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION NUMBER AND DISCLAIMER:

#### Registration #: CH137

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

For family memberships, list spouse/partner and all immediate children under eighteen years of age:

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Spouse/Partner:

Children:

(List any additional names on a separate sheet.)

We will contact 1st Assistant Keeper, Principal Keeper or Corporate Lampist members to obtain gift membership and company principal information.

Membership enclosed: \$

Donation enclosed: \$

Total enclosed: \$

## Please charge my: (check one)

□ Visa □ MasterCard 3-Digit Security

Code:\_\_\_\_\_

<u>CC#:</u>

Exp. Date:

Signature:

## Or, make check payable to:

Ponce Inlet Lighthouse 4931 S. Peninsula Dr., Ponce Inlet, FL 32127

## **Thank You for Your Generous Support!**

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## UNIQUE CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS FROM THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE!

Now is the perfect time to get an early start on all of your holiday shopping needs. Avoid the holiday rush and the hustle and bustle of malls by purchasing many of your gifts from the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Gift Shop specializes in unique lighthouse and nautical themed gifts for people of all ages. Our wide selection includes clothing, house wares, toys, and collectibles including a wide selection of custom products made especially for the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse.

## THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse: An Illustrated History is the culmination of more than 40 years of research by the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association. Written by museum curator Ellen Henry, this fully illustrated hardback volume is the definitive history of the historic Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station. Signed first edition copies of this recently published book are now available for purchase online and in the lighthouse gift shop.



Price: \$49.95 (+S&H)

# P pin o si

## PONCE INLET NANTUCKET SWEATER

Proclaim your love for the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse with this comfortable poly/cotton blend crew neck Nantucket Sweater featuring an embroidered image of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse along with its name. Available in gray or white in sizes small through XX-Large. Please indicate desired color and size when ordering.

Item #:3842 Price: \$31.99 (+S&H) - (Sizes Small – X-Large)

\$32.99 (+S&H) - Size XXL

## PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE ANNUAL GIFT MEMBERSHIP

This Holiday Season, give your family and friends the gift of history and adventure with an Annual Membership to Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse! For the cost of a scratch of lottery



ticket you can treat that special someone to a full year of unlimited access to Florida's Tallest Lighthouse and one of the most authentic historic light stations in the nation. Please see the membership enrollment form on page 19 for more details.



## PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE MEMORIAL BRICKS

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Memorial Brick Program is a unique and thoughtful way to honor friends and loved ones or celebrate special events including weddings, birthdays,

and family vacations. Each laser-engraved brick features the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse logo and up to three lines of text. Each personalized brick is installed in the Light Station's memorial walkway leading out onto the historic grounds where it will remain in perpetuity.

Lighthouse Memorial Brick: Item # 0289 Price: \$100 Full Size Duplicate Memorial Brick: Item # 0290 Price: \$85 Miniature Duplicate Memorial Brick: Item # 0291 Price: \$40

# **CUSTOM PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE ORNAMENT**

No Christmas tree is complete without a custom ornament from the historic Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. Made especially for the Preservation Association, this unique unbreakable ornament features a decoupage image of the beautiful Ponce Inlet Light Station.

Item #:2706 Price: \$9.99 (+ S&H)



PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE Preservation Association, Inc.

4931 South Peninsula Driv Ponce Inlet, Florida 32127 (386) 761-1821 www.ponceinlet.org

## *CUSTOM PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTMAS CARDS*

Send your friends and loved ones a message of holiday cheer this season with a limited edition Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Christmas Card! Each box set includes eight custom cards with envelopes designed exclusively for the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse.



ltem #: 0010 Price: \$9.99 (+ S&H)

> Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Membership Coupon 20% OFF ANY SINGLE ITEM

Limit one coupon per member. Coupon may not be used in conjunction with any other discount. Proof of membership must be shown at time of purchase. Not valid for purchase of Memorial Bricks. Good from October 1, 2019 - January 1, 2020

The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Gift Shop specializes in unique lighthouse and nautical themed gifts for people of all ages. Our wide selection includes clothing, house wares, toys, and collectibles. Customers may also shop online at LIGHTHOUSELOCKER.ORG. Please contact the Gift Shop at (386) 761-1821 ext. 21 or via email at gifthop@ponceinlet.org for more information.