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# PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE ILIUNIALIST AND ALOUSE 491 Suth Peninsula Drive - Ponce Inder, Florida 32127 - www.ponceinlet.org - (380) 761-1821 - Lighthouse@ponceinlet.org

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#### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### Dear Members,

I hope this issue of *Illuminations* finds you happy and well. As many of you know this time of year is always active at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse as travelers flock to the greater Daytona Beach area from far and wide in search of sunshine and sparkling beaches. In addition to our regular daily offerings, the Preservation Association hosts numerous events throughout the summer season.

Be sure to visit us on Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> for the museum's Independence Day Celebration before heading to your favorite fireworks show. Held annually, this important event celebrates our nation's birth with many activities including guided tours of the light station and numerous family-oriented workshops. A complete listing of scheduled events in the months of July, August, and September can be found in the Calendar of Events on page six.

The association hosted its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet on the evening of March 3, 2018. This important event honored the dedicated men and women of the lighthouse volunteer corps which provides direct support to the museum's programs department. This unique group of individuals shares the association's dedication to the ongoing preservation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of the Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station. You can read more about this important event and its honorees on page 13 of this issue of *Illuminations*.

I am pleased to announce that the 2-position Carlisle & Finch lamp changer located in the heart of the tower's historic 3<sup>rd</sup> order Fresnel lens has been successfully retrofitted with new lamp bases and electronic components. Previously designed to burn 1000-watt incandescent bipost bulbs similar to those used in stage lights, the lamp changer is now configured to burn a Coast Guard approved 1000-watt bayonet style halogen bulb. This conversion was necessitated by discontinuation of the incandescent bi-post bulb in 2016. Installed in the tower in May the newly restored lamp changer will continue to serve as the beacon's light source for many years to come.

It is my duty to report the passing of Rae Harris on the morning of May 1<sup>St</sup>, 2018. The wife of long-time lighthouse volunteer Gerry Harris, Rae was a truly wonderful woman who could always be found at Gerry's side as he entertained and educated children at the lighthouse. Rae was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother who loved motorcycling, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, and dining out. Married for more than 58 years, Gerry and Rae were lifelong companions who raised three wonderful children together. She is survived by her husband Gerry, her son Stephen, her daughters Victoria and Susan, her sister Susan, her brother David, 5 grandchildren, and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and in-laws. On behalf of the staff, Board of Trustees, and Advisory Committee I offer Gerry and his family the lighthouse's deepest condolences.

I am also sad to inform you that Wilda Hampton, one of the association's longest serving Trustees and former Board President, passed away on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Wilda was active in many of Ponce Inlet's community organizations and an important advocate in the preservation of this National Historic Landmark. She will be missed. Please refer to page 22 of this issue of *Illuminations* to learn more about this wonderful woman and her many contributions to the Town of Ponce Inlet and the Lighthouse Preservation Association.

In closing, I would like to wish you an entertaining and joyful summer and look forward to seeing you at the historic Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse and Museum in the coming months.

With Warm Regards,

Ed Gunnlaugsson

Ed Gunnlaugsson Executive Director Ponce Inlet Lighthouse

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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**

May 28, 2018 – Sept 3, 2018 Open Daily from 10:00 am until 9:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 8:00 pm)

SCHEDULED TOWER CLOSURES

JULY 27, 2018 (FRIDAY) Tower closed from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm Museum and Gift Shop open until 9:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 8:00 pm) August 26, 2018 (Thursday) Tower closed from 6:45 pm until 9:00 pm Museum and Gift Shop open until 9:00 pm (Last Museum Admission Sold at 8:00 pm)

Open Daily from 10:00 Am until 6:00 pm

(LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 5:00 PM)

SEPT 4, 2018 - MAY 26, 2019

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

JULY 16, 2018 (MONDAY) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING (OPEN TO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP)

AUGUST 20, 2018 (MONDAY) BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING (CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP) SEPTEMBER 17, 2018 (MONDAY) BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING (CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP)

## CLIMB TO THE MOON SCHEDULE

## CLIMB TO THE MOON

July 27, 2018 (Friday) 7:30 рм – 9:00 рм August 26, 2018 (Sunday) 7:15 pm - 8:45 pm

SEPTEMBER 24, 2018 (Monday) 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

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 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.

to Gladys Meyer-Davis Founding Board Member born at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse July 4th, 1920



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## JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2018,.....INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND AT THE LIGHTHOUSE SATURDAY-WEDNESDAY, 12:000 TO 2:00 PM

# Celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse & Museum! Discover the fascinating story of this important National Historic Landmark as you climb 203 steps to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse and explore one of the most complete and authentic historic light stations in the county. Examine turn-of-the-century artifacts visit with Mrs. Patrick O'Hagan to learn

authentic historic light stations in the county. Examine turn-of-the-century artifacts, visit with Mrs. Patrick O'Hagan to learn what it was like to raise a family on this once isolated light station, tour the lighthouse gallery deck with one of the museum's knowledgeable docents, and talk with the "Old Lighthouse Keeper" in the keeper's office to learn how a historic light station was maintained and operated in the early 1900s. All activities are scheduled from 12:00 pm until 2:00 pm during this five day event.

## August 18-19, 2018, ..... International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend Saturday & Sunday, 10:30 AM to 2:30 PM

Be part of a day that promotes public awareness of historic lighthouses and lightships and their need for preservation and restoration. Children will have the opportunity to make their own mini lightship craft and participate in other family-oriented activities including touring the historic light station, exploring the museum, and climbing to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse!

*Visit us online at www.ponceinlet.org to learn more about these and other upcoming scheduled events at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum.* 

ATTENTION READER: Unless otherwise noted, all scheduled events and activities at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse are provided free of charge to participating guests with the price of regular admission with no advanced reservations required. Additional information regarding scheduled can be found online at www.ponceinlet.org under the Calendar of Events tab. Those wishing to learn more may contact Programs Manager Mary Wentzel by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18, or via email at mwentzel@ponceinlet.org for additional information.

## The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Receives the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's 2018 Award for Outstanding Achievement in Educational Programming/Media

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse is pleased to announce its selection as the 2018 recipient of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's Outstanding Achievement in Educational Programming/Media Award. This prestigious honor was given to the lighthouse in recognition of its Science of Light and Lighthouse Illumination educational outreach program.

Melissa Wyllie, Executive Director of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, stated in her letter of notification that, "The Science of Light and Lighthouse Illumination program is a creative answer to complement and support the on-going, in classroom teaching of the scientific principles of light by using the development of lighthouse illumination from simple bonfires to the breakthrough Fresnel lens which has been heralded as the beginning of modern optics. Once again, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse not only works to protect Florida's extraordinary history and

## THE SCIENCE OF LIGHT & LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINATION

Explore the fascinating history of light and discover how lighthouse illumination has evolved from simple bonfires to the Fresnel lenses of the 19th & 20th centuries. Learn the fascinating history of lighthouses and discover how mariners used these beacons to navigate the unforgiving sea. Developed by the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association, this unique program will help young and old alike develop an appreciation for our nation's historic lighthouses.



heritage, but to innovatively promote and support the education and dissemination of that history."

The *Science of Light and Lighthouse Illumination* is the most significant scholastic endeavor ever completed by the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association. Inspired by the STEAM initiative and the need to preserve lighthouse and maritime history, the award-winning program is a multi-faceted, mixedmedia educational workshop that centers on a 45-minute interactive video that allows ample time and opportunity for group discussion, concept exploration, and experimentation. Narrated by a voice-over, question and answer dialogue between a lighthouse keeper and a young lighthouse visitor, the program uses animation,

#### Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Receives Award

computer graphics, and hands-on manipulatives to illustrate, explain, and explore scientific theories and historic facts that many students, and quite a few adults, find difficult to fathom.

Conceived and developed by Ponce Inlet Lighthouse staff and volunteers, *Science of Light and Lighthouse Illumination* is the culmination of more than two years of research and development coupled with a considerable amount of trial and error. It replaces an earlier program that relied heavily on lecture and the need for the program facilitator to possess a deep understanding of complex scientific concepts.

Typically presented by a trained volunteer dressed as a historic lighthouse keeper, this unique program has been used in more than half of Volusia County's elementary and secondary schools, in addition to schools in both Flagler and Seminole counties. Science teachers who have utilized the program report that its content and instructional model have helped them introduce and reinforce the principles



of the science of light to their students at many levels across the curriculum. As with all of the preservation association's educational offerings, the *Science of Light and Lighthouse Illumination* is provided free of charge to all public and private schools, youth groups, and community organizations.

Director of Operations Michael Bennett accepted the award on behalf of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse during the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's Annual



Awards Ceremony on May 19, 2018.

"We are honored to accept this award from The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, and thrilled to hear from so many teachers about how eagerly and positively their students responded to our Science of Light program, our classroom presenters, and our hands-on classroom activities," stated Executive Director Ed Gunn, who concluded by saying, "The positive feedback provided by these teachers and students is as important to us as the recognition we received from a jury of our peers. This award further reinforces our belief that preservation and education go hand in hand."

## **SAVED BY A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER!**

Since colonial times, the loss of ships and lives all along the American shores had been of great concern. Lighthouse keepers were often the first to become aware of coastal shipwrecks, and many keepers were quite willing to go to the aid of victims who were within reach. As willing as a keeper might have been, going to the rescue was not always possible. Some lighthouses did not have small boats as part of their equipment, and no keeper could leave a light unattended, even to make a rescue.

Effective methods of saving the lives of shipwrecked persons made their way to the United States all the way from China where the Chinkiang Association for the Saving of Life was founded in 1708. Eventually, the Chinese established both government-sponsored and private services devoted to life saving, and life-saving stations were built along navigable inland waterways. These stations were staffed with crews who used specially designed rescue boats. The British adapted these ideas and began life-saving operations in 1774. Their rescue boats were manned by volunteer crews who were paid for each rescue, and special emphasis was placed on the treatment of persons who appeared to have been drowned.

The British system influenced life-saving efforts in the United States, and the Massachusetts Humane Society was formed in 1786 with the goal of saving human lives that might otherwise have been lost at sea. The Society constructed small buildings called humane houses along the coast. These huts were stocked with supplies and were intended to provide shelter and survival necessities for shipwreck survivors who managed to reach shore. Between 1807 and 1871, a series of lifeboat houses were also constructed, and volunteer crews used the lifeboats to reach wrecks and/or pull shipwreck victims from the water. The state and the federal government paid for each rescue and provided medals or awards for heroism.

After the pioneering developments in Massachusetts, other states began to provide similar services, but several years of disastrous winter storms in the northeast proved that not enough had been done to provide adequate help. A system to oversee life-saving and to salvage the cargoes of wrecked vessels was needed. The unmanned humane houses were falling prey to theft and vandalism, and the volunteer crews of lifeboat stations were not always well-trained and well-equipped. The winter storms and resulting shipwrecks of 1870-1871 pushed the unofficial system to the breaking point, and Congress was at last ready to fund a government-run life-saving system, a system whose motto would become, "You bave to go out; you don't have to come back." The United States Life-Saving Service was organized in a manner similar to the Light-House Establishment and effectively carried out its mission until 1915 when it merged with the Revenue Marine and other government services to form the Coast Guard. As effective as it was, the Life-Saving Service could not cover every inch of coast line, and lighthouse keepers were often called on to make rescues in the years after the establishment of life-saving stations.



Some of the most daring rescues made by lighthouse keepers were made by women, and one of the most famous of these women was Ida Lewis. She was born in 1842 and was the daughter of Captain Hosea Lewis of the Revenue Marine, which was a precursor of the modern Coast Guard. Captain Lewis transferred to the Light-House Establishment and was appointed keeper of the Lime Rock Light in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1854. His family joined him in living at the lighthouse in 1857. Shortly after that, Captain Lewis had a disabling stroke, and Ida began taking over the lighthouse duties of tending the light and maintaining the equipment. The Lime Rock Lighthouse was surrounded by water, so the only way to the mainland was by boat, and Ida soon became adept at handling the keeper's rowboat. She also had the reputation of being the best swimmer in Newport. Her first rescue was actually made not long after her father became a lighthouse keeper. She was only 12 years old when she came alone to the aid of four men whose boat had capsized. During her career at Lime Rock she was known to have saved between 19 and

>> CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



25 lives, and stories about her exploits frequently appeared in magazines and newspapers. She was hailed as "the bravest woman in America." Ida Lewis-themed merchandise was produced during her lifetime, and thousands of admirers came to the lighthouse to see this amazing woman. She died in 1911 at the age of 69.

Why were rescue services always so

essential? Couldn't

some persons simply

swim to shore from a

shipwreck, especially

Ida Lewis Courtesy of the United States Coast Guard. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ida\_Lewis

along the Florida coast where there were shallow waters and few dangerous rocks? The skill of swimming had a long history, extending back into ancient times. Stone Age cave drawings depict swimmers. Swimming pools exist at sites such as Mohenjo Daro in India, and, although it was not an Olympic sport, the ancient Greeks built swimming pools and were scornful of those who could not swim. In Rome, Julius Cesar was known as a good swimmer. Medieval knights were taught to swim and even trained for swimming while

dressed in full armor. The Chinese were versed in swimming and developed methods for the resuscitation of drowning victims. Despite this lengthy history, swimming was not so commonly known in the United States and Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. If a person were shipwrecked, death by drowning was the likely outcome. Weighed down by clothing that most people were too modest or too panicked to remove, and hampered by lack of knowledge of swimming skills, the majority of people could neither stay afloat long enough to be rescued nor could they reach shore on their own. At Mosquito (Ponce) Inlet, the truth of this was demonstrated by the drowning of Light-House Establishment engineer Orville Babcock and several of his companions as they attempted to enter the inlet in a small boat prior to the construction of the lighthouse.

One of the most famous rescues performed at the Mosquito (Ponce) Inlet Lighthouse was not made by a keeper at all but by the lighthouse tower itself. On December 31, 1896, a steam tug named the *Commodore* set sail from Jacksonville in rough seas, loaded with 15 tons of arms, ammunition, and supplies for rebels in Cuba. Having run aground twice before reaching the open Atlantic, the crew soon found that the ship was taking on water. Unable to stem the flow, the captain ordered his crew to abandon ship. By early morning the survivors watched as the *Commodore* sank approximately 12 miles offshore from Daytona Beach.

Among the crew was the famous writer Stephen Crane, author of The Red Badge of Courage. Traveling as an undercover correspondent for the New York Press, Crane found himself in a ten foot dinghy with Captain Edward Murphy; the ship's cook, Mr. Montgomery; and a crewman named Billy Higgins. The small band of men spent over 30 hours struggling to reach shore near Daytona. Crane immortalized his shipwreck experience and the lighthouse that saved him in the short story "The Open Boat," wherein he describes moving towards the only thing visible on the vast horizon, the lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet. "At the top of another wave the correspondent did as he was bid, and this time his eyes chanced on a small, still thing on the edge of the swaying borizon. It was precisely like the point of a pin. It took an anxious eye to find a lighthouse so tiny." Most shipwreck victims during these years did not expect to survive. A shipwreck was truly a desperate situation, and without the lighthouse to guide them, the men in the little boat would have been doomed. As it was, seven men had drowned during the sinking.



"It was precisely like the point of a pin." Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

Stephen Crane's boat came ashore somewhat north of Mosquito Inlet. As the dinghy entered the surf, it capsized, and Billy Higgins was killed in the struggle to reach dry land. The remaining occupants were helped to shore by people on the beach, and these men spent the night at Lilian Place, the nearby home of the Thompson family. Other survivors of the wreck came ashore closer to the lighthouse, where Keeper Thomas O'Hagan helped them to shelter and rest until they found transportation back to Jacksonville. O'Hagan also brought the survivors' lifeboats to the lighthouse for safe-keeping. A few days later, Stephen Crane's story made the front page of the New York Press on Thursday morning, January 7, 1897. The lighthouse keepers resumed their routine duties, and Thomas O'Hagan would eventually have the task of disposing of the Commodore lifeboats he had so carefully saved.

Keeper O'Hagan recorded another interesting shipwreck, although he does not mention if lighthouse keepers were involved in the drama. A British two-masted schooner, the *Dove*, anchored in the inlet on the morning of October 2, 1900. Rough seas arose during the evening, and by 10 pm the *Dove's* master had run the ship aground in order to save himself. The ship and its contents were auctioned off a few days later.

Sometimes, the keepers gave assistance to passing ships in need of provisions. On July 5, 1904, Thomas O'Hagan gave aid to Captain Edward Altman of the schooner *Allen H. James* out of Boston. O'Hagan provided food and water plus whatever else was needed on the vessel. And, on October 21 of that same year, O'Hagan again assisted a passing ship, this time a five-masted schooner displaying distress signals. The keeper was able to arrange for a tug to tow the ship to safety.

Devotion to saving lives, like that displayed by the renowned Ida Lewis, was not unusual among lighthouse keepers. Although they were not members of the Life-Saving Service and making rescues was not part of their job requirements, life-saving was willingly undertaken at risk of life and limb by most keepers, when and if they could be spared from their primary duty of keeping the light burning. This was certainly the case at the Mosquito Inlet Light Station. From October 3, 1905 to June 30, 1924, Principal Keeper John Lindquist was noted for aiding vessels in trouble and rescuing their occupants. It was at Mosquito Inlet that Lindquist built, at his own expense, a small boat which he used for rescues. On December 28, 1919, he modestly recorded this single line in



Keeper Lindquist in his boat with the lighthouse and the station's boat house in the background.

Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

his station log: "Rescued 6 Aviators 10 miles S. E. from Sta. Wind N.W. Moderate partly cloudy."

Lindquist's first assistant keeper from 1919 to 1924 was Reinhard Heisser. Heisser and Lindquist worked well together and became famous for the rescues they made. Information about some of these adventures appeared in the Lighthouse Service Bulletin, a monthly publication of news from around the service. In the June 1, 1920, issue was this report: "On April 27, 1920, John Lindquist, keeper, and K. [sic] Heisser, first assistant keeper, went to the rescue of the yacht *James C.*, which was in a helpless condition 22 miles north of Mosquito



Reinhard Heisser in his summer uniform at Mosquito (Ponce) Inlet. Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

Inlet Light Station, FLA., and towed it to the light station." The August 1921 bulletin reported on their rescue of the crew from the Seleste. a two-masted schooner which was in distress several miles east of the lighthouse. On May 10, 1923, the daring duo rescued five people from the disabled motorboat Hyrandale under "dangerous conditions," earning them commendations from Herbert Hoover who was the United States secretary of commerce at that time.

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In July of 1924, John Lindquist ended his tenure at the Mosquito Inlet Light Station with a transfer to the lighthouse in St. Augustine. He was replaced by Charles Leslie Sisson, who, like Lindquist before him, was not shy about undertaking rescues. In October of 1924, Sisson spotted the gasoline launch Lynn Leder which was grounded in Mosquito Inlet. In his investigation of the wreck, he discovered cases of liquor which, in that era of Prohibition, were illegal. Sisson notified the Coast Guard, and their cutter Yamacraw was sent to further investigate the situation. By the time it arrived, Sisson had gone to New Smyrna on other business, so the vessel's officers set out in the cutter's launch to find the lighthouse keeper and get a report. Unfortunately, the launch broke down and Sisson and his first assistant, who was still Reinhard Heisser, took the men to the lighthouse where they were given food and lodging for the night. Sisson received a commendation from the Sixth Lighthouse District for his assistance to the Yamacraw's officers and possibly for his report on the liquor shipment.

In 1926, John Belton Butler was promoted to principal keeper at the Mosquito Inlet Light Station, where he replaced Charles Sisson. Working with him was first assistant Edward L. Meyer,



Charles Leslie Sisson Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association



Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

and second assistant Arthur Hodge. The three men formed a good team with Butler and Meyer making many rescues together, sometimes aided by Hodge when all three could be spared from the station.



Lighthouse keepers were required to know how to swim. Adults, I-r: John Lindquist, Reinhard Heisser, Billie Hodge, and Arthur Hodge

Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

One of these rescues took place on January 23, 1927. Meyer was working in the tower and spotted a power boat drifting near the inlet's bar buoy. He alerted Keeper Butler and the men jumped into the station's launch, the same rescue boat constructed by John Lindquist many years before. The craft in trouble was owned by William Fozzard of Titusville, who was one of two men on board. They had been adrift for five days and, in an effort to attract attention of a passing ship, one night Fozzard lit a gas can, an act that managed to set one side of the boat on fire. *Fozzard* was severely burned on one arm as he struggled to put the fire out. Butler and Meyer towed the boat to the lighthouse dock on the Halifax River, and Fozzard

was taken to the doctor for treatment. On the following day, the keepers towed the disabled boat to Coronado Beach where it was repaired. The Lighthouse Service Bulletin of March 1, 1927, contained a report on this rescue and the keepers were commended for their efforts. The event also served to bring attention to the fact that Lindquist's old boat needed replacing, and the Lighthouse Service provided the keepers with a new one.

Also during 1927, the keepers went to the rescue of the cabin cruiser *Sunbeam*, which had been wrecked while trying to



John B. Butler and his wife Wilhelmina Butler. Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

enter the inlet. The boat was a total loss, but the keepers, this time including Arthur Hodge, were able to rescue the crew. At the end of the year, the keepers were again called upon to go to the rescue. Meyer was in the tower and spotted a vessel grounded on the bar at the inlet's entrance. He took the station's small boat out to the ship and discovered that it was Coast Guard Cutter No. 230. He assisted her crew in refloating the cutter and was officially commended for this with a report appearing in the February 1928 edition of the Lighthouse Service Bulletin.

Butler went on to make three more rescues in August of 1928, and nobody who knew him ever doubted that he was willing to take all necessary risks. However, in one instance he made the decision to keep the station launch at the dock. In November of 1926, a boat called the *Dante* belonging to Rex Williams and Angelo Stephan of Daytona was wrecked in the inlet's breakers. People on shore were already wading out to help those on the *Dante*, and Butler assessed the situation as being too dangerous for both the safety of the station's launch and the keepers' lives to approach the wreck by water. Williams and Stephan decided to sue the Lighthouse Service for the loss of the *Dante*, claiming that the wreck was the result of a misplaced sea buoy and that the lighthouse keepers did not come to their aid and that no help arrived until four or five hours following the accident. An investigation proved that the suit was unfounded and that the *Dante's* owners had gotten into trouble on their own and not through any negligence on the part of the lighthouse keepers.

The last recorded rescue made by John Butler took place on June 10, 1934. The keeper was in the tower when he spotted a small shrimp boat in trouble and displaying distress signals. He and his relief keeper, Alphonso Daniels, went out in the station launch and discovered that the shrimper's motor was disabled. They were able to tow the shrimp boat to smooth water where a larger shrimper took over and towed the disabled craft to New Smyrna for repair. Both Butler and Daniels received commendations, even though this was not an especially dangerous rescue.

In 1937, Edward L. Meyer became the principal keeper at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. He was, of course, already the veteran of many rescues at Ponce Inlet and at his other lighthouse posts. His tenure as the man in charge began with an "almost" rescue when he and his relief keeper, David O'Hagan, went to the aid of a boat that had lost its steering ability. Before leaving the station, Meyer contacted the Coast Guard and requested that someone come to man the tower while both lighthouse

keepers went to the disabled boat. By the time Meyer and O'Hagan reached the vessel, the men on board had fixed the problem and were able to come to shore under their own power.

The next rescue made by this duo was a bit more challenging. Meyer was escorting visitors in the tower when he caught sight of a boat ashore on the inlet's south side. It was the *Cecil*, described by the keeper as a United States Treasury vessel bound for Baltimore from New Orleans. The tide was low in the inlet and the *Cecil* had grounded firmly on



Edward L. Meyer Collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association

the sand. Meyer was able to get a line on the boat but to no avail. He did manage, however, to swing the boat around and she was able to come off the bar under her own power. This must have required some excellent boat-handling by Edward Meyer, as the *Cecil* was much larger than Meyer's little launch.

#### FEATURE ARTICLE

#### SAVED BY THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER (continued)

It was during the year 1939 that the Lighthouse Service officially became part of the Coast Guard. Lighthouse personnel were offered the chance to become part of the Coast Guard, to retire, or to remain as civilians attached to the service. Edward Meyer had chosen to join the Coast Guard and continued serving as the officer in charge at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. His next recorded rescue, another "almost" rescue, was in December of 1940, when a crewman was washed overboard from the fishing boat *Margie B* of Daytona. The victim was able to swim ashore where he was picked up by the Coast Guard and brought to the light station. He was suffering from exhaustion and cold, and Dr. Chowning of New Smyrna was called in to help stabilize him before he could be taken home. Judging from his log entries, the majority of Meyer's rescue work was much more mundane and involved digging out cars that regularly got stuck on the nearby beach, a task that was all too familiar to every man who worked at the lighthouse. An actual boat-related rescue happened in early 1943 when a patrol boat that was checking the inland waterways became grounded near the lighthouse dock. Meyer used the station's launch to help get the patrol boat back underway.

Undoubtedly, many more rescues were performed through the years by the keepers at Ponce Inlet. The details of these have been lost, primarily as a result of missing log books and correspondence, but the bravery typical of lighthouse keepers was always in evidence.



It is with great sadness that we report the passing of lighthouse preservation pioneer and former Board of Trustees member Wilda Hampton on April 18th, 2018. Ms. Hampton was born to Leslie and Nora Elgin Anderson in Vandergrift, Pennsylvania in 1921. She is predeceased by her husband Quentin L. Hampton, and her dear friend John Finch. She is survived by her brother Ralph Anderson and his wife Mary, her two sons Mark and Don, her daughter in law Susan, her four grandchildren Jason, Jenna, Grace, and Luke, and one great grandchild, Mason.

organizations including the Ponce Inlet Community Center, Ponce Inlet Women's Club, and Art Guild. She served on the Planning Board of Ponce Inlet for over ten years and was Chairman for many of them. She took great pride in playing a role in the development of guidelines implemented by the Town during the time she served on the Planning Board. The Citizens of Ponce Inlet awarded Wilda the Citizen of the Year and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1991 in recognition of her tireless efforts.

Mrs. Hampton was a life-long supporter of historic preservation and helped make the Ponce Inlet

Lighthouse the world-class lighthouse museum that is today. Joining the Lighthouse Preservation Association less than a year after its founding in 1972, Wilda served on the association's Board of Trustees for more than thirty years, leading the organization as its Board President for many of them. Retiring from the Board of Trustees in 2005, Mrs. Hampton held the honorary title of Trustee Emerita until the time of her death. Although no longer with us, Wilda's legacy will live on at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse for countless generations to come.

Even in her absence Wilda will set an example of a long life well lived to those that knew her. She loved her family and was loved and admired by them. She will be greatly missed.

(Content Source: Daytona Beach News Journal and Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Museum Archives)

After graduating from high school, Wilda attended the University of Alabama where she met her husband Quentin and received a degree in journalism. She remained a lifelong Crimson Tide fan. The Hamptons moved to the Daytona Beach area in 1950 where Quentin established a consulting engineering firm. Wilda later attended Stetson University where she received a teaching degree. As well as being an artist in her own right, Wilda taught art at various area schools and served as a substitute teacher.

Wilda's community service spanned many years. In the early 60's she was a Cub Scout den mother, and member of the Arlington Garden Club. After moving to Ponce Inlet in 1972, she immediately became an active member of the community. Ms. Hampton was one Ponce Inlet's most active volunteers and donated a considerable amount of her time to many civic

#### From the Registrar



Early image of Herbert Bamber taken by renowned Philadelphia photographer P.E. Chillman. Photograph may have been taken during the Centennial Celebration in 1876, when Bamber was 18 years old.

In October 1885, civil engineer, Herbert Bamber arrived in Ponce Inlet (then known as Mosquito Inlet) to assume the position of superintendent of construction on the Lighthouse after the untimely drowning of the previous superintendent, General Orville Babcock in 1884.

Bamber, who had just concluded his work as inspector at the Black Island Dam on the Ohio

River, now found himself superintendent of a project that was all but stalled due to several factors that were in play even before his arrival. After General Orville's death, work resumed within the week; however, the project was delayed by a temporary lack of government funds, and a hiatus to avoid the "hot sickly season," aka summer in Florida and of course the attendant critters that come with it, namely, malaria-infested mosquitos.

Of course, as a young professional in 1885 (at the time 27 years of age) Herbert did not laze about waiting for work to continue but occupied himself and his crew with other projects until work on the tower resumed in 1886. It is during this time that Bamber developed the innovative working platform – a new scaffolding system

that increased the efficiency of construction and would be adopted by the U.S. Lighthouse Establishment on the construction of future Lighthouses.

Our picture of Bamber -an accomplished engineer, superintendent of construction, innovator and inventor is true, but incomplete. Our Object of

Highland 1884-1-4 Ponce Purk My Dean Sow and much as usual, aside from your mather, She has the sich head ache & a cold in her head She was out to meeting last evening, the are having fine Sung quinter weather, please I show, quite pleasant & augureter down to twelve below Jens the lowest & have been burns serve have reported low er & was at Mil forst the 5th

Letter written to Herbert Bamber by his father from the same period.

the Quarter, reveals that even the most interesting, skilled, and productive Letter written by Herbert Bamber to his father while supervising the construction of the Mosquito

500

(now Ponce De Leon) Inlet Light Station.

members of our society are equally fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, and sons and daughters.

This past March, the museum acquired a letter of correspondence between Herbert and his father Joseph of Highland, Michigan. These letters reveal a common parlance between fathers and sons, even from those living 130 years ago. The letter's very ordinariness, allows us a glimpse into the private world of the Bamber family. Joseph writes as a father would to his son about the weather in Highland, Michigan (Herbert's hometown), of his mother's recent head cold, and of some plats of land he's considered purchasing. Herbert, like any son, who, in a rush to get to the day's business, writes "I have not much time for a reply this morning but thought I would try and catch today's mail north." Herbert's pressing schedule reminds me somewhat of the Harry Chapin song, Cat's in the Cradle written just 86 years after these letters. A glimpse of something immemorial - a son, far away from home trying to make a name for himself and a father who likes nothing more than news from his son.

These are the types of primary sources that I truly love to find and we're happy to add these letters to our collection here at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse & Museum.

To read more about Herbert Bamber, you can find digitized copies of Volume XXXVII •Issue 1 • October 2012 and Volume XXXVIII • Issue 2 • January, 2013 on our website at ponceinlet.org/newsletter

#### Education News

According to the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), "The quality of a museum and its place within the community is dependent upon its scope of educational offerings." The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association agrees and works diligently to ensure that both its visitors and those within the local community are provided ample opportunity to participate in meaningful learning experiences throughout the year.

The Preservation Association delivers educational programs to thousands of children and adults each year both onsite and through its educational outreach program. Developed in 2007 in response to anticipated budget cuts within the Volusia County school system, the museum's educational outreach program has grown considerably over the years. Now consisting of a wide variety of workshops and presentations developed by former educators, staff, and volunteers, the lighthouse's outreach program provides numerous offsite educational opportunities for young and old alike to learn about lighthouse and Florida maritime history.

Award-winning outreach programs like Keeper in the Classroom, the USLHS Library Box, and the Science of Light have been the subject of numerous articles in the past. However, very little has been written about how much student actually enjoy them. It is not uncommon for the museum to receive an envelope bulging with dozens of hand-written thank-you cards from students and teachers who have recently participated in one of the museum's workshops. Often addressed to individual volunteers who have made a lasting impression on a young boy or girl; distributing these letters and pictures is one of Program Manager Mary Wentzel's favorite things to do. We are eager to share some of the best of these cards and letters in this issue of *Illuminations*. Enjoy!



Zachary penned a note personally to John Mann after John read the book *Nelly, the Lighthouse Cat* to his class. To win out over pizza is no easy task.



This Port Orange second grader captured a great likeness of the tallest lighthouse in Florida.



This is a drawing of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse with Nelly the Lighthouse Cat. Alex wrote," I like that Nelly is a nice cat and likes the kids that come to the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse."



This Port Orange second grader was able to draw the beam of light radiating from the top of our tower.



A Port Orange Elementary student shares a drawing of Nelly in a relaxing pose.

## **12th Annual Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Awards Dinner**

Staff and volunteers work hard to fulfill the Preservation Association's mission of preserving and disseminating the maritime and social history of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse by facilitating meaningful programs that educate the public about the light station's unique role in regional, state, and national history.



Volunteer Helen Magale shares a memory with dynamic duo Bob and Cindy Horn.

Each year, the Preservation Association recognizes the valuable contributions of its many docents by hosting a special dinner party. Held on March 3, 2018 at the Harbor Village Community Center in Ponce Inlet, the lighthouse's 12th Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet was a wonderful opportunity for museum staff to recognize and thank each volunteer for his/her service during the past year. In addition to the wonderful meal, volunteers and guests enjoyed the camaraderie of their lighthouse family as jokes were told and more than a few tall-tales were shared to the enjoyment of all.

Lead Docent John Mann kicked off the event with a comical presentation that offered a hilarious interpretation of regional and lighthouse history. True to John's reputation for thoroughness, the presentation included ample photographic evidence to back up his claims. Well known for his incorrigible and sardonic nature, John's oddly endearing personality quirks coupled with his well-known expertise in the dark arts of Photoshop left many questioning the vetting process employed to ensure the validity of these images. Needless to say, John's corrected history and recently "discovered" photographs left everyone rolling with laughter.

Following Mr. Mann's presentation and a wonderful dinner, Programs Manager Mary Wentzel took the reins as the event entered the awards portion of the evening. Ms. Wentzel began by thanking the museum's dedicated volunteer corps for collectively donating more than 2,721 hours of time and effort to the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association over the past year. Although valued at more than \$54,000 in labor alone, this incredible contribution of time is actually priceless when one considers the number of students who benefitted from these many hours of volunteer service and the amount of good will that was spread throughout the local community thanks to their efforts.

Ms. Wentzel continued by recognizing the contributions of each member of the lighthouse volunteer corps beginning with lead docent John Mann who has accrued more than 5,110 hours of service to date. John is Mary's right hand man and spends so much time at the lighthouse that he has his own desk and business cards. He helps Ms. Wentzel oversee many aspects of her department including both the volunteer and educational programs. When he isn't helping Mary he can often be found conducting research, communicating with other lighthouse preservation professionals, developing new and exciting educational workshops, and much more. His contributions are diverse, considerable, and appreciated by us all. Thank you John for your ongoing dedication and commitment, we couldn't do it without you!

Following Mr. Mann's award, Ms. Wentzel recognized Cathy Safarik. Mrs. Safarik is a former resident and recent retiree who hails from Long Island, NY. Cathy and her husband Rick became lighthouses volunteers shortly after relocating to Ponce Inlet in 2012. Both Cathy and Rick were

named the Peservation Association's Volunteers of the Quarter in January, 2017. In March, 2018, Mrs. Safarik surpassed 500 hours of donated service to the lighthouse. In recognition of this important achievement, Cathy was presented with a memorial brick commemorating her plus hours of 500 volunteerism during the awards ceremony. The brick is now installed in the light station's memorial walkway. **Congratulations Cathy!** 



Programs Manager Mary Wentzel congratulates Volunteer Steve Oshinski.

#### VOLUNTEERS NEWS

The festivities continued with the presentation of awards that celebrated the achievements and contributions of each of the lighthouse's dedicated docents. The recipients included:

David Ahrend	135 Hrs.
Jennifer Ahrend	24 Hrs.
Allen Bestwick	1684 Hrs.
John Butterfield	334 Hrs.
Jennifer Gill	869 Hrs.
Art Hahn	2801 Hrs.
Harris, Gerry	670 Hrs.
Cindy Horn	408 Hrs.
Ron Howell	23 Hrs.
Alice Howell	13 Hrs.
Carol Jerson	842 Hrs.
Jeanette Kellum	211 Hrs.
Marsha Lewis	660 Hrs.
Janice Lowry	920 Hrs.
Helen Magale	564 Hrs.
Mann, Jackie	675 Hrs.
John Mann	5110 Hrs.
Steve Oshinski	20 Hrs.
Debbie Sobien	95 Hrs.
Cathy Safarik	504 Hrs.
Rick Safarik	200 Hrs.
Tana White	819 Hrs.
Patricia Young	114 Hrs.

The Preservation Association's Board of Trustees, Advisory Committee members, and staff would like to offer their sincere appreciation to all of the lighthouse's dedicated volunteers. The lighthouse would not be the same without you. Thank You!

The Programs Department has a busy summer season planned at the lighthouse. Upcoming events include:



Mary Wentzel cheeses it up with lighthouse volunteer and Advisory Committee member John Butterfield.

Independence Day Weekend Celebration, Saturday thru Wednesday, June 30th – July 4th; National Lighthouse Day on Saturday, August 4th; Spirit of 45 Day on Sunday, August 12th; and International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, August 18th and 19th. Please check our Calendar of Events in this issue of *Illuminations* for more details.

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is always looking for individuals interested in accepting the challenge of becoming a lighthouse volunteer. Those wishing to learn more about volunteer opportunities at the lighthouse are encouraged to contact programs manager Mary Wentzel by email at <u>mwentzel@ponceinlet.org</u> or by phone at (386)761-1821 X 18 to sign up.



Mary Wentzel presents Tana White with her certificate of appreciation. Tana has donated 819 hours of her personal time to the lighthouse.

## 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:

Gener	al							•			•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	\$20	)
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- 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:

General \$20
□ Senior \$10
□ Student (submit copy of ID) \$10
G Family \$40
Gift Membership From:
□ Renewal
2nd Assistant Keeper \$100
Ist Assistant Keeper         \$200
□ Principal Keeper \$500
Corporate Lampist \$500
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Address 2:
City: State: ZIP:
Phone: ( ) -

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 2nd Assistant Keeper
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 • All privileges of General or Family Membership

 Recognition of your membership in the quarterly newsletters' 2nd Assistant Keeper List

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- 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

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

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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

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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!** 

## Summer Sale! **PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE BEACH TOWEL**

Enjoy sunny summer days on the beach or pool deck with this custom 30"x60" Ponce Inlet Lighthouse microfiber beach towel featuring a full color image of the historic Ponce De Leon Inlet

Lighthouse. NOW PRICED 50% OFF! Item #: 4059 Price: \$7.50 (+S&H)



## **CUSTOM PONCE INLET TERVIS WATER BOTTLE**

Keep hydrated with this custom Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Water Bottle. Made by Tervis, this unbreakable insulated 24 ounce plastic bottle features a hinged water-tight snap lid and molded strap loop. Like all Tervis products, this dishwasher-safe custom water bottle is guaranteed for life and BPA free.

Item #: 4018 Price: \$28.99 (+S&H)

#### MEN'S PERFORMANCE T-SHIRT Enjoy the warming days of summer with this custom Ponce Inlet Lighthouse performance t-shirt featuring an attractive Ponce Inlet Lighthouse graphic that includes the coordinates of light station printed on its front and back. Made of lightweight 100% polyester and taper cut for men to ensure a more comfortable fit, this

**CUSTOM PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE** 

comfortable t-shirt is designed to wick moisture away from your skin to keep you cool and dry. Available in royal blue (pictured) and grey; sizes small though xx-large. Please indicate desired size and color when ordering. Add \$1.00 for xx-large. Item #: 5121 Price: \$18.99 (+S&H)



## CUSTOM PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE WOMEN'S T-SHIRT

Enjoy the warm days of summer with this custom Ponce Inlet Lighthouse women's t-shirt. Made of a lightweight 50/50 poly/cotton blend, this comfortable V-neck shirt features the name of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse framed by hibiscus flowers. Available in grey (pictured), tiffany blue, and berry; sizes small though xx-large. Please indicate desired size and color when ordering. Add \$2.00 for xx-large.

Item #: 5543 Price: \$14.99 (+S&H)

## **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. Best of all, a portion of your brick purchase price is tax-deductible.

Lighthouse Memorial Brick **Full Size Duplicate Memorial Brick: Miniature Duplicate Memorial Brick:** 

Item #: 0289	Price: \$100
Item #: 0290	Price: \$85
Item #: 0291	Price: \$40

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.



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PONCE INLET, FLORIDA 32127 WWW.PONCEINLET.ORG 761-1821 (386)



## PONCE INLET HAT/T-SHIRT Combo

Keep cool while showing off you love of our National **Historic Landmark** 

with this custom 50/50 poly-cotton blend ball cap and t-shirt combo featuring the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse. Hat and t-shirt color combinations include Grey & Burgundy for men and Blue & Pink (pictured) for women. Shirt sizes come in small through xx-large. All hats feature an adjustable cotton strap to ensure a perfect fit. Please add \$1.00 for xx-large.

Item #: 4053 Price: \$10.99 (+ S&H)



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 July 1, 2018 - September 30, 2018