



# PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINATIONS

4931 South Peninsula Drive • Ponce Inlet, Florida 32127 • [www.ponceinlet.org](http://www.ponceinlet.org) • [www.lighthouselocker.org](http://www.lighthouselocker.org) • (386) 761-1821 • [lighthouse@ponceinlet.org](mailto:lighthouse@ponceinlet.org)  
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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 4th 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.

During your visit, be sure to stop by the Ayres Davies Lens Exhibit Building to examine two of the museum's most recent acquisitions; a rotating sixth-order clamshell Fresnel lens manufactured by Barbier, Benard & Turenne (BB&T) between 1901 and 1905, and a classical beehive-style sixth-order fixed lens produced in 1882 by Barbier et Fenestre. Acquired overseas by the museum in 2016, both lenses were restored and preserved by lighthouse staff prior to being put on display.

I would also encourage you to visit the small bedroom in the Second Assistant Keeper's dwelling to admire two original works by renowned American watercolorist Fredrick Cozzens; *Running by Sandy Hook Light* (1911), and *Three Racing Yachts* (1882). Donated to the museum by Beth Jacobsen, daughter of longtime donors Jacques and Marion Jacobsen, both paintings are wonderful additions to the museum's collection.

As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees. These selfless men and women dedicate themselves to preserving and disseminating the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Light Station.

In addition to the Board, the Association also benefits greatly from the contributions of its Advisory Committee. Like the Board, the Advisory Committee is also comprised of a select group of men and women who share the Association's passion and commitment to preserving this National Historic Landmark. Many on the committee eventually become members of the Board of Trustees where they continue to serve the lighthouse with great distinction. I am pleased to announce the recent election of local Ponce Inlet residents John Butterfield and Phyllis Campbell to the Preservation Association's Advisory Committee.

This year marks the 130th anniversary of the lighthouse's activation on November 1, 1887. The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association cordially invites you to help celebrate this milestone in the light station's history by attending its 130th Anniversary Gala on the evening of November 10, 2017. Enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres, a catered dinner, wine, spirits, and more as you listen to live entertainment and socialize under the stars and the tower's brilliant beacon!

Tickets for 130th Anniversary Celebration are only \$50 per person. All proceeds raised during this event will benefit the ongoing preservation, restoration, and interpretation of the Ponce Inlet Light Station. For planning purposes, we respectfully ask that you RSVP by email at [rsvp@ponceinlet.org](mailto:rsvp@ponceinlet.org) or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 10 at your earliest convenience. Tickets may also be purchased online at [www.lighthouselocker.org](http://www.lighthouselocker.org).

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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FRONT COVER GRAPHICS AND *ILLUMINATIONS* LAYOUT AND DESIGN BY MICHAEL BENNETT

## REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION

**May 29, 2017 – Sept 4, 2017**  
OPEN DAILY FROM 10:00 AM UNTIL 9:00 PM  
(LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 8:00 PM)

**Sept 5, 2017 – May 27, 2018**  
OPEN DAILY FROM 10:00 AM UNTIL 6:00 PM  
(LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 5:00 PM)

## SCHEDULED TOWER CLOSURES

**JULY 9, 2017 (SUNDAY)**  
TOWER CLOSED FROM 7:15 PM UNTIL 9:00 PM  
MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN UNTIL 9:00 PM  
(LAST MUSEUM ADMISSION SOLD AT 8:00 PM)

**AUGUST 7, 2017 (MONDAY)**  
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)

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**JULY 17, 2017 (MONDAY)**  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND  
QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
(OPEN TO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP)

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 (MONDAY)**  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
(CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP)

**AUGUST 21, 2017 (MONDAY)**  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
(CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEMBERSHIP)

## CLIMB TO THE MOON SCHEDULE

### CLIMB TO THE MOON

<b>July 9, 2017</b>	<b>August 7, 2017</b>	<b>September 6, 2017</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
<b>7:45 pm – 9:15 pm</b>	<b>7:30 pm – 9:00 pm</b>	<b>7:00 pm - 8:30 pm</b>

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 Karen at (386) 761-1821 ext. 10. Prices are \$25 for non-members and \$20 for members





**The Connection**

Harvey & Connie Bach  
Ponce Inlet, FL

**Brian & Kasey Layman  
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Associates**

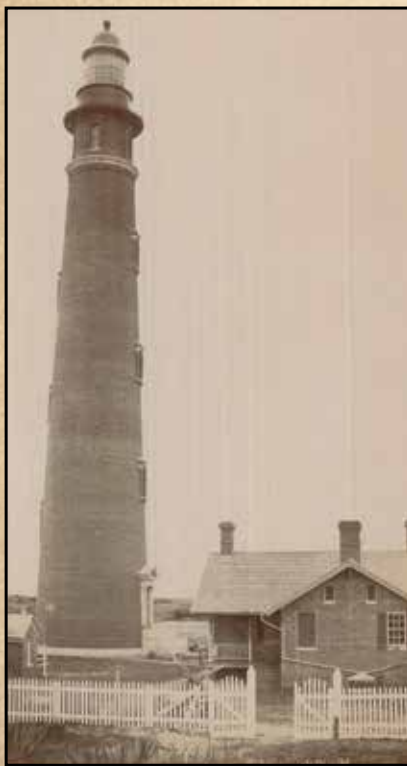
Ponce Inlet, FL  
*(Endowment Fund Donor)*

**Racing's North Turn**

Walt & Rhonda Glasnak  
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*(Endowment Fund Donor)*

**Rue & Ziffra, PA  
David Sweat**

Port Orange, FL



***Mosquito  
(now Ponce de Leon)  
Inlet Lighthouse  
circa 1906***

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*(Endowment Fund Donor)*

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Mountain View, CA  
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**JULY 1ST – 4TH, 2017 ..... INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND AT THE LIGHTHOUSE**

**SATURDAY – MONDAY, 12:00 PM TO 2:00 PM**

Celebrate the 4th of July at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and museum! Climb to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse and discover the history of the US Light-House Service, the Ponce Inlet Light Station, and the local area as you explore one of the largest and most authentic lighthouse facilities in the country. Interested in learning about the science of archaeology? If so, be sure to join us for one of our scheduled hands-on archaeology workshops where you will be given the opportunity to examine artifacts uncovered on the light station's grounds and learn how archaeologists dig for and interpret these fascinating clues of the past.

**AUGUST 5, 2017, SATURDAY, 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM ..... NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE DAY**

Founded on August 7, 1789, the US Light-House Establishment was responsible for maintaining and operating the nation's system of lighthouses, beacons, buoys and public piers. In 1988, Congress officially declared August 7th as National Lighthouse Day in honor of this historic event. Join us at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and museum on August 5th and celebrate the founding of the US Lighthouse Establishment by exploring the historic light station, climbing Florida's tallest lighthouse, and participating in kid's crafts and other educational activities.

**AUGUST 13, 2017, SUNDAY, 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM ..... SPIRIT OF 45 DAY**


Visit the lighthouse and capture the spirit of 1945, when the United States' involvement in WWII ended. In 2010, Congress voted unanimously in support of this day, coinciding with August 14, 1945, the day President Truman announced that WWII was over and US assumed the leadership in rebuilding the postwar world. Eleven service members attached to US Coast Guard Station Ponce Inlet will be on site at 1:00 PM to perform a flag raising ceremony.

**AUGUST 19 & 20, 2017 ..... INTERNATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE/LIGHTSHIP WEEKEND**

**SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, 10:30 AM TO 4:00 PM**

Calling all amateur radio buffs! Come to the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and speak with lighthouses around the world. Be a part of a day that promotes public awareness of lighthouses and lightships and their need for preservation and restoration and at the same time promote amateur radio and to foster international goodwill. Children will have the opportunity to make their own mini lightship craft. Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend is an international event when over 100,000 amateur radio operators go on the air and contact as many lighthouses as possible. All activities are included with regular admission, no advance reservations required.

*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. Additional information regarding scheduled can be found online at [www.ponceinlet.org](http://www.ponceinlet.org) under the Calendar of Events tab. Individuals wishing to learn more about these and other scheduled events may contact Programs Manager Mary Wentzel by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18, or via email at [mwentzel@ponceinlet.org](mailto:mwentzel@ponceinlet.org) for additional information.*



**INTERNATIONAL  
LIGHTHOUSE  
LIGHTSHIP  
WEEKEND**

**AUGUST 19 & 20, 2017  
10:30 AM - 4:00 PM**

**JOIN US AT THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE  
AND TALK WITH HAM RADIO OPERATORS  
AT LIGHTHOUSES AND LIGHTSHIPS  
AROUND THE WORLD!**

# THE BRICK GIANTS OF THE 1860s: RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS PART IV

## A SIX-PART SERIES ON THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICA'S LIGHTHOUSES AND THE BIRTH OF HER GIANT BRICK TOWERS.

BY MICHAEL BENNETT

In 1842, the coast of the United States was considered one of the poorest lit of any seafaring nation. Although equipped with 256 lighthouses and 30 light vessels, the quality and effectiveness of the country's aids to navigation system were poor at best. Generally short in stature, poorly constructed, and furnished with optics that were far inferior to those employed in Europe, the performance of the United States Light-House Establishment under Fifth Auditor of the Treasury Stephen Pleasonton was the subject of much ridicule within the maritime community.

By 1850, complaints regarding the country's beacons had grown so intense that the US Congress ordered that a panel of experts assess the nation's aids to navigation system. Completed in 1851, the panel's report provided specific recommendations for improvements. It was a scathing assessment that revealed just how inadequate the country's lighthouses truly were.

In 1852, Congress transferred control of the US Light-House Establishment to the newly established US Light-House Board which immediately made the construction of taller masonry lighthouses in low-lying locations one of its top priorities. Commonly referred to as "brick giants", each of these soaring structures would house a Fresnel lens capable of producing a beacon so bright that the height of the tower's focal plane was the only real factor that limited its visible range. Measuring 100 to 193 feet in height, the Light-House Board successfully constructed 30 of these "brick giants" between 1857 and 1910.

### THE CIVIL WAR INTERVENES

Beginning in 1861 with the Confederacy's firing on Fort Sumter; the American Civil War was deadliest conflict in US history. Claiming approximately 750,000 lives (north and south combined) and injuring nearly half a million more, the conflict would continue to rage for more than four years before the Confederacy finally surrendered to the Union in 1865. Fighting the war was costly and its toll on America's financial, material, and human

resources was vast. In fact, the US diverted so much of its available resources to fighting the Confederacy that lighthouse construction projects were put on hold until after its conclusion, with one major exception, the Cape Charles Lighthouse in Virginia.

### CAPE CHARLES LIGHT STATION (ESTABLISHED 1864)

Smith Island, a barrier island located near the southern tip of Cape Charles at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, has been the home of three lighthouses erected by the US government. The first light to mark the location was a 55-foot rubble stone tower housing a Winslow Lewis lighting apparatus. Completed in 1828 at a cost of \$7,400, the beacon soon proved insufficient for a location of such importance. Visible no more than 12 miles offshore in the best conditions, the lighthouse soon became the subject of numerous complaints by the mariners who relied on it to safely navigate their vessels around the treacherous cape.



*Tumbling into the sea in 1927, this image of the Cape Charles Lighthouse in the late 1800s shows the extent to which the coastline had eroded in less than 20 years. (Source: National Archives)*

Although wholly inadequate for its intended purpose, the original lighthouse remained in service through much of 1850s until beach erosion threatened to undermine the structure's foundation and topple it into the sea.

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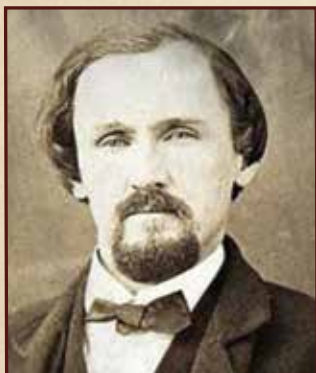
**RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)**

Recognizing the old lighthouse's days were numbered, the US Light-House Board determined the time had come to replace it with a "brick giant."

The building plans for the new Cape Charles Lighthouse called for a 150-foot tower similar in design to those recently completed at Barnegat Inlet and Pensacola Bay. The Light-House Board selected a construction site for the new light station that was located 600 feet from the shoreline and approximately one mile southwest of the original structure. Although scheduled to begin in 1858, the project was postponed by material shortages and bad weather. As a result of these delays, only half the tower had been completed when Virginia announced its intent to secede from the Union on April 17, 1861.

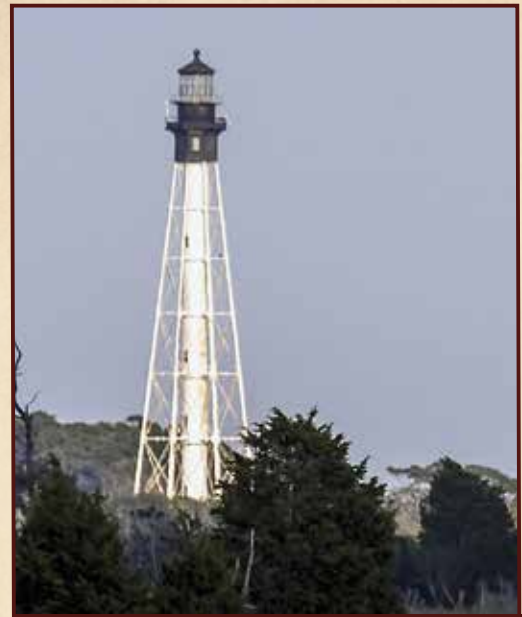
Although home to several of the south's most important harbors, maintaining control of the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay and its navigable waterways soon proved impossible for the Confederate Navy, which initially consisted of only 14 seaworthy vessels. Greatly outnumbered and unable to combat the effectiveness of the US Naval blockade that barred southern ships from entering or existing the Chesapeake, Confederate forces had little choice but to withdraw from Virginia's coastal region.

Having remained dark the entire time it was under southern control, the Cape Charles Lighthouse was relit for the first time on December 12, 1861. Maintained by keeper John S. Robins, the beacon would remain operational for nearly two more years before being destroyed by southern raiders under the command of Confederate Navy Captain John Beall. The event was documented in the US Light-House Board's 1863 Annual Report:



*Called the Yankee Scourge, Confederate Navy Captain John Y. Beall led a raiding party to Smith Island during the Civil War, destroying the old 1828 Cape Charles Lighthouse and the construction site of its replacement.*

*"Cape Charles was visited by a party of guerrillas, who completely destroyed the light; carrying away such portable articles as they deemed valuable. The new tower authorized for that station had, at the breaking out of the rebellion, progressed in*



*Built to replace the 1864 Cape Charles Lighthouse which was threatened by shore erosion, this 191-foot tall iron skeletal tower has marked the north entrance to the Chesapeake Bay since its completion in 1895.*

*construction to a height of 83 feet; the greater part of the materials to complete the tower to is proper height (150 feet) being on the ground, stored, ready for future use. During the rebel occupancy of this part of the peninsula the articles which had been thus stored were subjected to indiscriminate pilfering and spoliation, so that a new provision will have to be made."*

By 1864, the Cape Charles region was secured by Union forces and considered "safe and secure" enough to resume building the light station once again. Approved by Congress on March 14, 1864, an additional \$20,000 was appropriated to replace materials stolen or destroyed by Beall. Although the war was still raging, construction progressed quickly and the new light station was soon completed.

Equipped with a first order Fresnel lens, the new Cape Charles Lighthouse was illuminated for the first time on September 7, 1864. Assigned a security detachment compliments of the US Army, the light would continue to shine throughout the remainder of the war. Originally painted white and topped with a dark brown lantern room, the impressive 150-foot-tall conical brick tower was similar in appearance to the 1857 Cape May Lighthouse. In 1892, a 25-foot red band was painted around the tower's midsection approximately 60 feet up from the base to make it more visible during the day.

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

Beach erosion continued to plague the location and by 1883, nearly half of the original 600-foot buffer zone that had separated the tower from pounding surf had washed away. Numerous attempts were made to halt the erosion including the construction jetties, breakwaters, and piers, but all met with minimal success. Calculating that the seaward side of Smith Island was losing an astounding 37 feet of shoreline per year, the Light-House Board realized that the 1864 Cape Charles Lighthouse would eventually fall. In 1892, the decision was made to establish a new tower on the opposite side of the island about one mile west of existing light station.

Unlike the stone and brick structures that came before it, the third lighthouse to be erected on Smith Island was an iron skeletal tower. Prefabricated elsewhere and assembled on site, iron skeletal towers were economical, versatile, and (perhaps most importantly) easily relocated. Their straightforward design consisted of a hollow iron cylinder topped with modular lantern room. Access to the top of the tower was achieved by entering the base of the tower through a hatch and ascending a narrow spiral staircase that led up to a trap door in the lantern room floor. Held upright by eight iron legs tied together with cross braces, iron skeletal towers had already been built in numerous locations when construction of the third Cape Charles lighthouse was first begun.

The 191-foot tall tower's first order Fresnel lens was lit on August 15, 1895. In 1963 the lighthouse was fully automated and the first order Fresnel lens was replaced by a more powerful DCB-224 aero beacon. The Cape Charles Lighthouse now houses a modern Vega VRB-25 solar powered beacon. It remains an active aid to navigation to this day.

*Authors note: The 1864 Cape Charles brick giant finally fell into the sea in June of 1927.*

### BIG SABLE POINT LIGHTHOUSE (ESTABLISHED 1867)

Another brick giant proposed by the Light-House Board prior to the beginning of the Civil War was the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Erected as a navigational aid for ships bound for the port of Ludington on the east shore of Lake Michigan, Big Sable Point Lighthouse is one of the few Michigan lights exceeding 100 feet in height.

Located approximately halfway down Michigan's Lower Peninsula where the Pere Marquette River flows into Lake



*In this 1940s-era bird's eye view of Big Sable Point, one can clearly see how shore erosion along Lake Michigan's eastern shore threatened the lighthouse to such an extent that a replacement was built farther inland.*

Michigan, the harbor town of Ludington was a major shipping hub for Michigan's burgeoning mid-nineteenth century lumber industry. Jutting out into Lake Michigan approximately eight miles to the north, Big Sable Point represented one of the greatest navigational hazards facing mariners along the lake's notorious shoreline. Claiming twelve ships in 1855 alone, the need for a light to mark the sandy spur grew as the nation's demand for lumber intensified in early 1860s. In 1866, the US Congress appropriated \$35,000 for a lighthouse to be built at the location at the request of Michigan State Senator Charles Mears. Construction began in July of the following year.

Designed by Light-House Board Chief Engineer (and future 11th Lighthouse District Engineer) Orlando Poe, the light station's building plans called for a double-walled 100-foot brick conical tower that used eight round windows for interior illumination. Built atop a 36-foot deep stone foundation, the tower also possessed a cast iron spiral staircase leading up to a watch room, an exterior gallery deck, and a 12-foot tall lantern room. In addition to the tower, the light station would also include a one and half story keeper's dwelling attached to the lighthouse by means of a covered walkway. Built of Milwaukee cream city brick, the light station was completed in less than a year and its fixed third-order L. Sautter & Cie Fresnel lens was first illuminated on November 1, 1867. Visible from nearly 16 miles away, the newly established beacon exhibited a fixed white light.

The bricks used in the construction of the light station were made from a unique kind of clay common to several

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

regions in Wisconsin. Containing high levels of sulfur and lime, the clay's unique chemical composition produced a yellow colored brick when fired that was porous, soft, and easily damaged. The effect of these inherent weaknesses were witnessed first-hand at Big Sable Point where the harsh Michigan winters and frequent lake storms quickly eroded the exterior brickwork of the light station's tower and keeper's dwelling.



*Now fully restored to its 1940s configuration, the Big Sable Point Lighthouse continues to guide mariners around the treacherous point for which it is named.*

By 1899, the lighthouse's outer wall had deteriorated to such an extent that the decision was made to encase the tower in metal using eighteen 3/8-inch thick steel cylinders of decreasing diameter. Once the cylinders were in place, the void between the outer brick wall and the cylinders was filled with concrete for added strength and durability. When the work was completed in June 1900, the metal tower was painted white with its middle third black. Originally left unsheathed, the tower's watch room was wrapped in steel in 1905.

In addition to encasing the tower in steel plate, the light station underwent several alterations and expansions including the construction of a small brick oil house in 1903 and the addition of a brick fog signal building in 1908. In 1909, the keeper's dwelling was expanded to accommodate a second assistant to help with the increased workload caused by the fog signal. The newly renovated dwelling contained eight rooms for the head keeper in one part, and two three-room apartments for the assistants. The intensity of the light was increased on June 25, 1910 with the installation of an incandescent oil vapor lamp. A new oil house was erected the following year. Indoor plumbing and heating were installed in the

keepers' dwelling in 1953. Electrified in 1954, the light station produced its own power using a diesel generator until electrical lines could be run to it from nearby Ludington.

Operating as a manned facility for nearly 100 years, the tradition of having resident keepers maintain and operate the Big Sable Point Lighthouse ended when the light station was automated in 1968. Threatened by beach erosion, the Coast Guard constructed a new tower farther inland in 1986 in anticipation of the lighthouse's eventually collapse. Happily, the back-up light was never needed thanks to the efforts of the non-profit Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association which worked with local businesses and residents to prevent the point from eroding any further and to restore its coastline.

Transferred from the federal government to Michigan's Department of Natural Resources in 2002, the Big Sable Point Light Station has remained under the protective stewardship of the Keepers Association since the early 1990s. Restored by the Association to its 1948 appearance, the light station is open to the public during the summer months.

## ASSATEAGUE ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE (ESTABLISHED 1867)

Prior to 1833, no illuminated beacons existed between Delaware's Cape Henlopen, where a lighthouse marked the southern entrance to Delaware Bay and Virginia's Cape Charles, where a light guided mariners through the northern approach to Chesapeake Bay. Plagued with numerous shoals and other unseen hazards, this 130 mile stretch of desolate coastline bore witness to an alarming number of shipwrecks as coastal commerce steadily increased through the early 1800s. Recognizing that an aid to navigation was desperately needed between the two capes, \$7,500 was appropriated in 1831 for the construction of a new lighthouse midway between Cape Henlopen and Cape Charles. In 1832, Customs Collector Conway Whittle selected a location on the southern end of Assateague Island on which to erect the new light station. As was the norm under the leadership of Fifth Auditor of the Treasury Stephen Pleasonton, the US Light-House Establishment awarded the building contract to the lowest bidder, a man of questionable character named Noah Porter.

Construction of the new light commenced in August, 1832, and should have taken no more than four months

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

to complete. However, Porter's performance was less than stellar and issues regarding his questionable building practices became a subject of great concern for project supervisor Richard C. Grant. In a letter dated January 19, 1833, Grant reported his misgivings about Porter to his superiors in Washington. *"Mr. Porter has tried to cheat and defraud in every possible manner... Time would fail me to tell all of his villainy... I have used every argument I am master of in order to keep him to his contract but he remains inflexible."* Despite these issues, the lighthouse on Assateague Island was eventually completed in 1833.

The new light station included a 45-foot brick tower and a keeper's residence. Equipped with a Winslow Lewis lighting apparatus consisting of 11 oil lamps backed by 14-inch reflectors, the tower's beacon was first lit in the spring of 1833. Like many of the shorter towers built during that time, the visible range of the Assateague beacon soon proved ineffective as it could not be seen beyond the dangerous Black Fish and Winter Quarter shoals that lie 14 miles offshore. Replacing the old Winslow Lewis lighting apparatus with a new third order



*Constructed atop a twenty-two-foot bluff, the Assateague Island Lighthouse was built to mark a 130-mile stretch of unlit coastline between Delaware's Cape Henlopen and Virginia's Cape Charles. This image dates to before its restoration in the early 2000s.*

Fresnel lens in 1856 did little to remedy the situation. The tower was simply too short to be of any practical use. It had to be replaced.

Congress allocated \$50,000 in 1860 to replace the aging 45-foot tower with a new "brick giant". The Light-House Board set the gears in motion to do so but before any significant progress could be made the Civil War brought all work to a halt. The building site would remain dormant for the duration of the war.

Work on the new light station resumed on March 1, 1867 with the allocation of an additional \$25,000 to complete the project. Built atop a 22-foot bluff, the 140-foot brick lighthouse was similar in design to other "brick giants" erected at that time, featuring the now familiar interlocking double walled conical tower equipped with an internal cast iron spiral staircase leading up to a watch room, exterior gallery deck, and prefabricated lantern room. An attached one story, oil storage/main entrance building provided keepers access to the tower's interior. Additional light station structures included a duplex to house the principal keeper and his assistant, privies, and storage shed.

Equipped with a fixed, first-order Barbier & Fenestre Fresnel lens, the newly completed Assateague Lighthouse was officially activated on October 1, 1867. Boasting a focal plane of 154 feet above sea level, the tower's beacon could be seen from more than 18 miles away. Coated in brick-colored cement shortly after completion, the tower would retain its original solid red tower with black lantern room daymark until 1968 when three broad horizontal stripes of white were added to its exterior, producing the red and white banded design for which it is now known.

In 1893, the duplex was gutted, enlarged, and remodeled to better accommodate the station's complement of personnel which had been increased from two to three keepers with the addition of a second assistant in 1872. A new brick oil storage house was added to the station in 1891. Electrified in 1933, the original first-order Fresnel lens was replaced with a rotating, double drum DCB beacon and the light station became fully automated. No longer needing resident keepers to maintain and operate the light, the keeper's dwelling was sold and eventually moved off-site.

In 2004, the Assateague Lighthouse was transferred from the US Coast Guard to the US Fish and Wildlife Service which manages the preserve on which the light

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RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)



*The Assateague Island Lighthouse today.*

station is located. Since the transfer, a \$1.5 million dollar multi-phase restoration project has been carried out on the lighthouse. Work completed to date has included restoration of the tower's lantern room and attached widow's walk, replacement of the badly deteriorated gallery deck, and the repointing and repainting of the entire tower. Now open to the public, the newly restored Assateague Lighthouse continues to serve as an active aid to navigation.

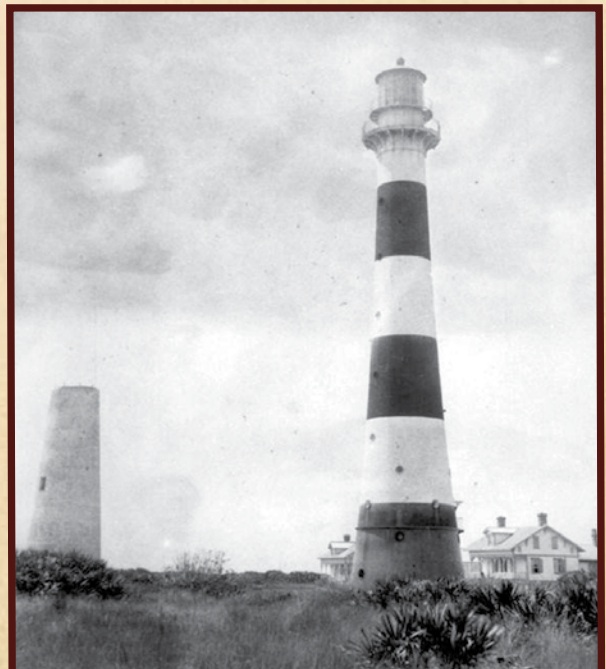
**CAPE CANAVERAL LIGHTHOUSE**  
*(ESTABLISHED 1868)*

Originally discovered by the Spanish explorer Ponce De Leon in 1513, Cape Canaveral is one of the most easily recognized geographic features on Florida's east coast. An extension of a large barrier island, the cape is the western terminus of series of shallow sandbars that stretch out into the Atlantic that include both the Hetzel and Ohio Shoals approximately 11 to 13 miles to the northeast, and Chester, Bull, and Southeast Shoals four to seven miles to the east. Rising to a depth of less than 11 feet in some areas, these treacherous underwater bars have been the cause of countless shipwrecks since the 16th century.

The first light to mark these hazardous waters was constructed by the US government in the 1840s. Located at the tip of the prominent cape not far from the water's

edge, the original lighthouse was 65 foot brick structure capped with a black lantern room that housed a Winslow Lewis lighting apparatus that consisted of 15 oil lamps, each equipped with its own 21-inch silvered reflector. First lit in 1848, the newly completed lighthouse exhibited a flashing characteristic that could be seen from approximately 12 miles away.

As with many lighthouses constructed at that time, the performance of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse was far from stellar. One captain noted in 1851 that *"the lights on Hatteras, Lookout, Canaveral, and Cape Florida, if not improved, had better be dispensed with, as the navigator is apt to run ashore looking for them."* The Light-House Board agreed with his assessment of the light at Canaveral, stating in an 1857 report, *"No navigator who is aware of the existence of these dangerous shoals would be justified in running his vessel boldly for this light, especially in bad weather, unless his vessel is of very light draft. From the deck of a vessel say fifteen feet above the water-this light (65 feet high) cannot be seen, under the most favorable conditions of weather, over fourteen miles, or within two miles of the outlying dangers."*



*Taken in the 1880s, this historic image of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse clearly shows the decapitated tower of its 1848 predecessor and the exterior staircase used to access the tower. Close examination will reveal the new keeper dwellings constructed in 1877 and 1883.*

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

The Board requested authorization to construct a new tower measuring no less than 150 feet in height at Cape Canaveral and anticipated the cost of the project at \$68,751. Congress approved the request in 1859 and plans were soon put in motion to replace the existing tower with one made of iron the following year. Selecting a site approximately 90-feet from the base of the old tower, construction of the new lighthouse had barely begun when the start of the Civil War halted all work. Extinguished by the Confederates, the light at Canaveral would remain dark until after the war.

Work on the tower resumed in the summer of 1867. Unlike the other “brick giants” that came before it, the design of new 151-foot-tall Cape Canaveral Lighthouse was unique in that it was composed of metal plates with a brick lining rather than interlocking inner and outer brick walls. In addition, the lighthouse was designed to accommodate the assistant keepers’ quarters consisting of a kitchen, living room, and two bedrooms in the structure’s three lower levels. An external staircase leading to the fourth landing was attached to the side of the lighthouse to allow the principal keeper, who lived in a separate dwelling; access to the top of the tower without having to walk through his assistants’ living spaces. Originally painted solid white, the tower would not receive its distinctive daymark of three white bands and three black bands until 1873. Exhibiting a white beacon produced by an immense first-order Fresnel lens, the tower was officially activated on May 10, 1868. The new light had a focal plane of 139 feet and could be seen from nearly 18 miles out to sea.

Subject to intense Florida sunlight, 100° temperatures, and high humidity, the interior of the iron-clad lighthouse became so unbearable that the assistant keepers chose to live in ramshackle sheds rather than roasting alive inside the poorly ventilated tower. These miserable living conditions were finally addressed when the decision was made to construct a new principal keeper’s dwelling in 1877. Vacated by the head keeper, the assistants lived in the old cottage until new accommodations were built for them in 1883.

By the 1880s, the shoreline in front of the tower had eroded to such an extent that only 192 feet separated it from the pounding surf. Appropriating \$80,000 to relocate the lighthouse farther inland, the Light-House Board began dismantling the tower in 1893. Over the course of the next few months the entire light station was moved one mile inland and reassembled at its current location with the addition of a new brick oil storage house. The tower was relit on July 25, 1894.



*Located within the US Air Force's Patrick Air Force Base and a stone's throw from NASA's Launch Complex, the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse has experienced the vibrations of thousands of rocket launches over the years.*

A radio beacon was established at the station in 1930, and the following October the lighthouse was electrified. The characteristic of the light at this time was a flash every 15 seconds, produced by revolving the eight-sided lens once every two minutes.

On May 11, 1949, Cape Canaveral became home to the Joint Long Range Proving Ground for rocket development. As government employees, the lighthouse keepers were allowed to remain. In 1959, the missile launch research center was transferred from the Department of Defense to the newly formed National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) which used the site as its primary launch facility, first for rocket development and later for all manned space flights. Located in the heart of the complex, the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse has witnessed not only America's first manned space flight on May 5, 1961, but all manned missions since.

Cape Canaveral Lighthouse was automated in 1967 and its keepers' dwellings were demolished. In 1993, the first-order Fresnel lens was removed from the tower when it became evident that the frequent rocket launches were shaking it to pieces. Replaced by a modern DCB aero beacon, the priceless first order lens was shipped to the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse where it was restored by museum staff and placed on display in the Ayres Davies Lens Exhibit Building.

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse became the property of the US Air Force in December 2000. The oil house, which lost its roof in the 1970s, was restored in 2003. Working closely with the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation, the Air Force began a full restoration of the tower in 2004. Completing the project with the installation of the tower's lantern room, the Air Force relit the lighthouse beacon on April 29, 2007. Due to security restrictions, public tours of the lighthouse are limited and require advance reservations.

### CAPE HATTERAS LIGHTHOUSE (ESTABLISHED 1872)

Although New Jersey's Absecon Lighthouse was the nation's first "brick giant", the actual "new era" of lighthouse construction started with the tallest of them all, the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

Jutting approximately 60 miles out into the Atlantic Ocean, North Carolina's Outer Banks represent one of the greatest hazards to coastal commerce on the east coast. Formed by a 170-mile long string of low lying barrier islands, the Outer Banks are separated from the mainland by broad, shallow sounds and numerous inlets that frequently close and open at the whim of a storm. Claiming hundreds of ships throughout the years including the Civil War Ironclad USS Monitor, the Outer Banks has more than earned its infamous title as the Graveyard of the Atlantic.



*Although the picture of peaceful tranquility on calm sunny days, frequent storms along North Carolina's Outer Banks created conditions that eroded Cape Hatteras' fragile coastline to such an extent that the lighthouse stood only feet away from the pounding surf in the late 1990s.*

Extending out from the tip of Cape Hatteras, Diamond Head Shoals have long been considered one of the greatest threats to shipping on the east coast. Plagued with shallow sandbars, strong winds, and temperamental seas that could change from calm to storm-tossed with little to no warning, the inherent dangers associated with navigating a ship along the cape was enough to turn even the most seasoned mariner's blood cold. Recognizing that a beacon was needed to mark these treacherous shoals, Congress authorized the US Light-House Establishment to erect a lighthouse on Cape Hatteras in 1794.

Made of sandstone and equipped with a lamp powered by whale oil, the 90-foot octagonal tower was located approximately two miles north of the cape. First lit in October of 1803, the range of light soon proved itself insufficient to effectively warn ships of the dangerous shoals that lay just offshore. The tower even proved itself ineffective during the day thanks to its unpainted sandstone walls which blended in perfectly with the surrounding landscape. As a result of these shortcomings, the Hatteras light became the subject of numerous complaints.

In the important 1851 document, *The Report of the Lighthouse Board to Congress*, the newly established Light-House Board, consisting of Navy officers and ship's masters and captains, stated about the 1803 Cape Hatteras tower, *"There is probably no other light on the entire coast of the United States of greater values to the commerce and navigation of the country than this. That it is not such a light as any seacoast light should be, is too apparent to require much argument; while its special requirements, having reference to the Gulf-stream, the currents and counter currents...there is no single light on the coast believed to require renovation more than this one does. An elevation of one hundred and fifty feet, and a first class illuminating apparatus, are imperiously demanded, and without any unnecessary delay."*

Based on this report, the decision was made in 1853 to extensively renovate the old 1803 lighthouse. The tower's height was increased from 90 to 150 feet by adding an additional 60 feet to the top of the existing structure, and its daymark changed from raw sandstone to red and white. Retrofitted with a first order Fresnel lens, the effectiveness of the lighthouse following these alterations was greatly improved.

Time had taken a toll on the lighthouse however. By the 1860s the list of necessary repairs had grown to such an extent that the cost of completing them far exceeded what the government was willing to invest in the aging structure. Deciding it made more sense to simply replace the old tower; Congress appropriated \$80,000 on March 3, 1868 to erect a new lighthouse at Cape Hatteras. The Light-House Board specified

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## RISE OF THE BRICK GIANTS (CONTINUED)

that only the finest materials be used and contracted with a Baltimore firm to deliver one million bricks at a cost of \$12.35 per thousand. Located about 600 feet from the old tower, the construction site was specifically chosen “to render it safe from the encroachments of the sea.” In theory at least, this was the hope.

Like many other coastal tower stations located in isolated areas, supplying the building materials to the Cape Hatteras site was more difficult and hazardous than the actual building of the lighthouse itself. Several supply vessels sank and more than 150,000 bricks were lost, in addition to granite slated for use in the foundation.

The tower’s foundation was unique. The brainchild of New England contractor and Cape Hatteras construction foreman Dexter Stetson, the foundation consisted of “interlocking” timbers topped by alternating layers of granite and rubble stone set in mortar. The lighthouse’s iconic 25-foot tall octagonal base was constructed of brick and granite and measured 45 feet in diameter. The tower featured two interlocking brick walls and was equipped with an internal cast iron spiral staircase leading up to a watch room, exterior gallery deck, and lantern room.

First lit on December 1, 1870, the completed Cape Hatteras Lighthouse measured an astounding 194 feet high, a good 20-30 feet taller than any other “brick giant” up to that time. Boasting a focal plane of 180 feet above sea level, the light cast by its first order rotating Fresnel lens could be seen from more than 20 miles away. At the time it was constructed, it was the tallest brick building in America. Initially painted white from the top of the granite base to a height of 70 feet and red to the base of its brown lantern room, the tower’s current white and spiral black daymark and the black roof were applied in 1873.

Coastal erosion has always threatened Cape Hatteras’ lighthouses. In 1919, the high water line had moved to within 120 feet of the tower. By 1935, the encroaching tide was lapping against the side of its brick base and efforts to stop or stem the erosion with breakwaters or sand replenishment proved futile. Believing the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse was doomed, a new skeletal steel tower was erected to assume the role as the primary aid to navigation and the brick tower was transferred to the National Park Service.

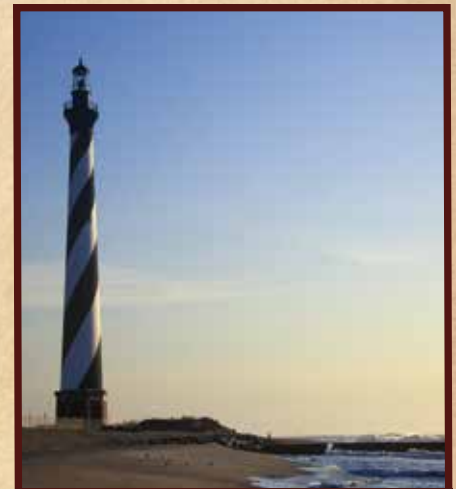
A breakthrough came when a series of wooden barricades installed along the shoreline appeared to solve the erosion issue. By 1950, the distance between the base of the tower and the high water mark had grown to nearly 600 feet and the Coast Guard recommissioned the tower as an active aid to navigation. However, the success of the wooden revetments was short lived as violent storms continued to pound the coast and slowly

eroded the fragile shoreline in front of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse again. Attempts to address the issue continued for years, but to no avail.

A group of engineers, architects, and geologists began a movement to relocate the lighthouse in the mid-1980s. According to their plan, the tower would be raised by hydraulic jacks and lowered onto rollers. It would then be moved along tracks to its new location and set atop a new foundation.

Although skeptical that the lighthouse could survive being moved, the National Park Service assessed the structure’s overall condition to determine if such a feat could actually be achieved. The brick and mortar, in fact the entire tower, was judged to be stable and in excellent shape. The Park Service slowly began to support the argument that relocation was feasible, and in 1989, issued a report which estimated the entire relocation project would cost approximately \$8,775,000 to complete.

The astonishing conclusion to the story came in 1999, when the 5,000 ton Cape Hatteras lighthouse tower was actually moved by the International Chimney Corporation from its original location at the edge of the sea to higher ground about half a mile inland. Originally estimated to take three months to accomplish, the actual move was done in 23 days. The “Move of the Millennium” was controversial at the time, with speculation that the structure would not survive. It did, and in 1998 the venerable Cape Hatteras Lighthouse was designated a National Historic Landmark.



*Threatened by continuous coastal erosion, the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse was successfully moved a half a mile inland by the International Chimney Corporation in 1999.*

Continued in the next  
issue of *Illuminations*:  
*Part IV: The Brick Giants of the 1870s.*



# SAVE THE DATE!

## PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE 130TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION NOVEMBER 10, 2017

THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION  
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO HELP CELEBRATE THE  
130TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE

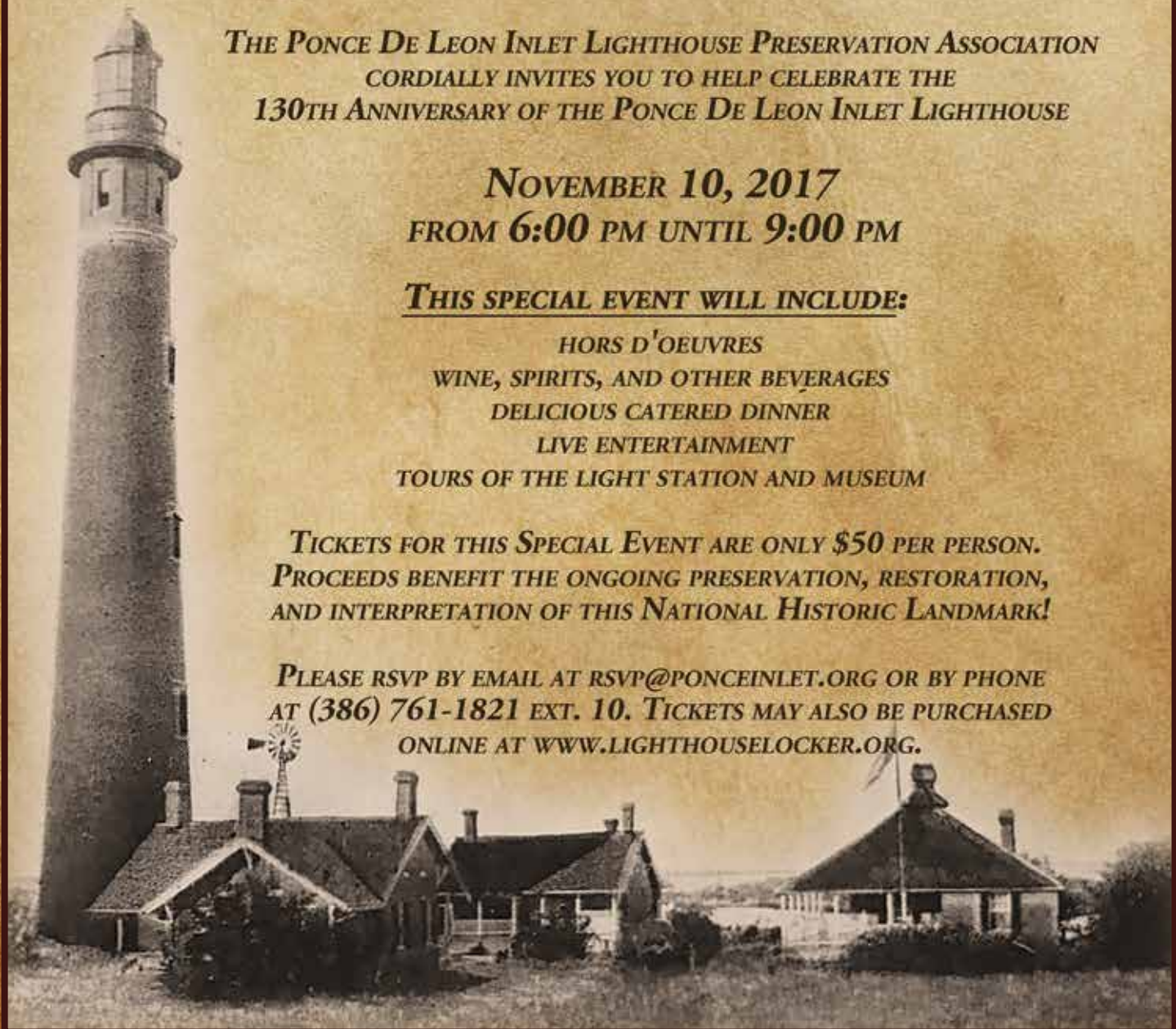
NOVEMBER 10, 2017  
FROM 6:00 PM UNTIL 9:00 PM

**THIS SPECIAL EVENT WILL INCLUDE:**

HORS D'OEUVRES  
WINE, SPIRITS, AND OTHER BEVERAGES  
DELICIOUS CATERED DINNER  
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT  
TOURS OF THE LIGHT STATION AND MUSEUM

TICKETS FOR THIS SPECIAL EVENT ARE ONLY \$50 PER PERSON.  
PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE ONGOING PRESERVATION, RESTORATION,  
AND INTERPRETATION OF THIS NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK!

PLEASE RSVP BY EMAIL AT [RSVP@PONCEINLET.ORG](mailto:RSVP@PONCEINLET.ORG) OR BY PHONE  
AT (386) 761-1821 EXT. 10. TICKETS MAY ALSO BE PURCHASED  
ONLINE AT [WWW.LIGHTHOUSELOCKER.ORG](http://WWW.LIGHTHOUSELOCKER.ORG).





## 2017 SOCIAL STUDIES FAIR WINNER AND ANNUAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS DINNER

BY MICHAEL BENNETT & MARY WENTZEL

Each year, the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse rewards student achievement at the Annual Social Studies Fair. Consisting of a free family membership, recognition in the quarterly newsletter, a certificate of achievement, and a \$75 cash prize; this award is presented to the public or private school student who creates the most outstanding project or exhibit devoted to lighthouse history, maritime research and safety, exploration, or navigation. Students chosen for the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse award must demonstrate a firm grasp of the subject matter and effectively communicate their knowledge and research methods.

This year's Volusia County Social Studies Fair was held in the Deland High School auditorium. Nominated by each student's school of record following two rounds of judging at both the individual grade and school-wide level, each of the more than 200 elementary, middle school, and high school projects on display during this year's social studies fair focused on the theme of "Leadership and Legacy in History."

The Preservation Association is pleased to announce Timbercrest Elementary fourth grader John Rogers as the winner of the museum's Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Elementary School Award for Best Project. A student in Ms. Beth Vanderkooi's gifted class, John's project focused on the voyages of Christopher Columbus to the New World and his many contributions to the science of navigation, chart making, and maritime exploration. We congratulate John Rogers for his outstanding achievement!

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 providing meaningful programs



TIMBERCREST ELEMENTARY FOURTH GRADER JOHN ROGERS IS CONGRATULATED BY PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE LEAD DOCENT JOHN MANN FOR WINNING THE 16TH ANNUAL PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE VOLUSIA COUNTY SOCIAL STUDIES FAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT AWARD. ALSO PICTURED ARE FROM THE LEFT, VICE PRINCIPAL LONNIE TIDMARSH, AND PRINCIPAL CRAIG ZABLO.

with which to educate the public about the Light Station's unique role in regional, state, and national history.

Each year, the Preservation Association recognizes the valuable contributions of its volunteers with an annual awards dinner. Held on March 11, 2017 at the Harbor Village Community Center in Ponce Inlet, the 11th Annual Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Volunteer Awards Dinner was a wonderful opportunity for museum staff to thank each volunteer

for his/her service. 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 awards portion of the evening with a hilarious power-point presentation punctuated with numerous jokes and anecdotes that left the audience roaring with laughter. Having put a smile on the face of everyone present, Mr. Mann then handed the podium over to Director of Operations



PONCE INLET RESIDENTS AND LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEERS BILL AND HELEN MAGALE AND LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEER ARTHUR HAHN AT THE ANNUAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS DINNER

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PROGRAMS MANAGER (CONTINUED)



PONCE INLET RESIDENT AND LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEER CAROL JERSON AND LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEER JANICE LOWRY ENJOY THE EVENING.



LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEERS ALICE AND RON HOWELL SMILE FOR THE CAMERA



LIGHTHOUSE VOLUNTEERS DON AND KATY BULLOCK ARRIVE AT THE AWARDS DINNER

Mike Bennett who thanked the volunteers for their dedication and commitment to the lighthouse and museum.

Programs Manager Mary Wentzel then took over the show with the presentation of awards that recognized each volunteer for their many hours of service. The volunteers collectively donated an amazing 3,215 hours of time to the lighthouse during the past year alone. In terms of labor costs, this incredible contribution is valued at more than \$64,000!

Ms. Wentzel started by thanking John Mann for his incredible donation of 4870 hours to date. John has become such a regular figure in the administrative building that he has been assigned his own desk and issued his own business cards. Ms. Wentzel then recognized Carol Jerson and Janice Lowry for their individual contributions of more than 500 hours of service, awarding each a commemorative brick that will be installed in the volunteer section of the lighthouse's memorial walkway. In addition to John, Carol, and Janice this year's award recipients included:

Ahrend, David .....	91 Hrs.
Bestwick, Allen .....	1,659 Hrs.
Bullock, Donald .....	65 Hrs.
Bullock, Katy .....	61 Hrs.
Butterfield, John .....	213 Hrs.
Egerton, Bonnie .....	270 Hrs.
Gill, Jennifer .....	738 Hrs.
Hahn, Art .....	2,686 Hrs.
Harris, Gerry.....	670 Hrs.
Horn, Cindy .....	229 Hrs.
Horton, Jerry .....	74 Hrs.
Howell, Alice .....	33 Hrs.
Howell, Ron .....	33 Hrs.
Jerson, Carol .....	629 Hrs.
Kavanagh, Claudia.....	250 Hrs.
Kellum, Jeannette.....	197 Hrs.
Lewis, Marsha .....	629 Hrs.
Lowry, Janice .....	719 Hrs.
Magale, Helen .....	544 Hrs.
Mann, Jackie .....	602 Hrs.
Mann, John.....	4870 Hrs.
Moore, Ashley.....	72 Hrs.
Rakestraw, Clare .....	20 Hrs.
Safarik, Cathy .....	444 Hrs.
Safarik, Rick.....	180 Hrs.
White, Dawn.....	145 Hrs.
White, Tana.....	660 Hrs.
Young, Patricia.....	102 Hrs.

We have a very busy summer season planned at the lighthouse. Upcoming educational events include: Independence Day Weekend Celebration, Saturday thru Tuesday, July 1st – 4th; National Lighthouse Day on Saturday, August 5th; Spirit of 45 Day on Sunday, August 13th, and; International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, August 19th and 20th. Please contact Mary Wentzel at [mwentzel@ponceinlet.org](mailto:mwentzel@ponceinlet.org), or (386) 761-1821 ext. 18, for more information. To find these activities and much more visit our website at [www.ponceinlet.org](http://www.ponceinlet.org).

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is always looking for individuals interested in accepting the challenge and becoming a lighthouse volunteer. Those wishing to participate are encouraged to contact programs manager Mary Wentzel by email at [mwentzel@ponceinlet.org](mailto:mwentzel@ponceinlet.org) or by phone at (386)761-1821 X 18 to sign up.

## PROJECTING THE HISTORY OF A FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE

BY MICHAEL BENNETT & JAMES POWELL

The museum recently acquired this image of the Key West Lighthouse dated to circa 1890. The image is fantastic and the medium is very interesting as well. It is a glass lantern slide with maker information for the T. H. McAllister Company, 49 Nassau Street, New York City, New York.

The slide consists of a positive image of Key West Lighthouse transferred onto the surface of a pane of glass. To protect the image from scratches, wear, and other harmful effects, a second piece of glass is mounted on top of the image in manner similar to that of a prepared microscope slide. Most often, black paper tape was applied around the edges to hold the pieces of glass together. Many slides, as with this one, include information identifying the manufacturer that is either sandwiched between the panes or written on a paper label that is applied to its outer surface.

Glass lantern slides were in use from the 1850s through the 1950s and beyond. They were meant to be projected onto a large screen of some sort and were typically shown in group settings including club meetings, educational lectures, and entertainment events. Representing cutting edge technology at the time, the use of glass slide projectors were a significant improvement over viewing relatively small photographs individually. These machines were a precursor to the next great leap in image-based entertainment, motion pictures.



Special lantern slide projectors were used to display the glass slides. For the light source, earlier projectors employed an oil lamp, a 'limelight' burner, or a carbon arc lamp. By the early 1900s, later projectors employed the much safer, reliable, and convenient incandescent electric lamp.

The image shows a street view of the Key West Lighthouse and keeper's quarters. Figures stand at the top of the lighthouse, and on the front porch of the dwelling. One noticeable change from the 1890s to today is the number of plants and tall trees that currently grow around the lighthouse.

The pictured tower is the third light to be displayed at this location in Key West. The first to mark the location was a sixty-five-foot brick tower built on a fourteen-foot sand dune that used whale oil to fuel the 15 lamps comprising the Winslow Lewis lighting apparatus housed in its lantern room. Completed in 1825, the original tower successfully weathered four hurricanes before being swept away by the Great

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**PROJECTING THE HISTORY OF A FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE (CONTINUED)**

Havana Hurricane of 1846. Unfortunately, the collapsing tower claimed the lives of fourteen people who were taking refuge inside it at the time. An emergency replacement beacon, a thirty-foot tripod with a lantern, became the second light. The tripod was replaced by the present tower in 1848.

The current Key West Lighthouse originally stood only fifty feet tall. The tower's height was increased to 55 feet in 1872, and to its current elevation of 65 feet in 1895. The recently acquired image appears to depict the tower prior to its 1895 extension. A third-order Fresnel lens, now inactive, was installed in 1895 and still graces the lantern room.

We are pleased to have acquired this wonderful piece of lighthouse history and added it to our collection. As members of the Florida lighthouse community, the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association will continue its ongoing efforts to preserve the maritime and social history of not only the Ponce Inlet Light Station but Florida's other cultural resources as well.

DONOR THANK YOU

*A Grateful Thank You to  
Our Generous Donors!*

BY JAMES POWELL

This quarter we received many special donations including several items that will be added to the museum's expanding Education Collection. Providing students and visitors the unique opportunity to reach out and "touch" history, artifacts included in the museum's education collection are often utilized in hands-on demonstrations, educational workshops, and other activities.

Cynthia Horn donated several vintage tools and items including a speed square, two masonry trowels, chisel, mortar pointing tool, screw driver, center punch, plumb bob, small household light reflector, hand-made bar of soap, two small kerosene household lamps, medicine vaporizer, seamen's handbook, and several documents related to World War II and to the Merchant Marines just following WWII.

Suzanne Smith Heddy made a very special donation of a US Lighthouse Service dustpan. Ms. Heddy is the daughter of Charner Smith who served as the US Coast Guard resident keeper here at Ponce Inlet from 1945 to 1949. She confirmed that the dustpan was used here at the light station, making it an especially important donation.

John and Jackie Mann donated a vintage fountain pen and ink bottle with original box. Julie Davis donated a vintage green glass bottle. Lighthouse staff donated several books, and a vintage bottle of bed-bug poison.

Thank you to everyone who made a donation to the light station this quarter!



***Please keep the lighthouse in mind if you would like to make a donation, especially those historic items related to the light station and Ponce Inlet.***

# Volunteer of the Quarter: Gerry Harris

BY MICHAEL BENNETT & MARY WENTZEL

Committed to the ongoing preservation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station, the Lighthouse Preservation Association relies heavily on its dedicated corps of volunteers. These men and women provide quality educational programming to museum visitors and others throughout the community.

Each quarter, the Preservation Association highlights a docent who exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism. In this issue of *Illuminations* the Preservation Association is pleased to recognize Gerry Harris as its Volunteer of the Quarter.

The oldest of three brothers, Gerry Harris was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1940. After graduating high school from Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Gerry took a position with the National Cash Register Company in Baltimore, MD, where he worked as a Technical Service Representative repairing mechanical cash registers. In the 1960s the company changed its name to NCR Corporation.

Gerry was able to take a leave of absence from NCR Corp to join the United States Coast Guard Reserve. Gerry served six months on active duty, two years in the active reserves, and 6 years on inactive reserve status. "The Coast Guard is probably what sparked my interest in aids to navigation and lighthouses," Gerry notes. He humorously recounts, "As an apprentice seaman, I found out that I was a lousy navigator, so I switched to Fireman/Engineman where I was a natural fit."

In 1960, Gerry married Rae who he earnestly describes as the "love of my life." At the time of their nuptials, Gerry was a mere twenty years old and Rae only nineteen. Together, Gerry and Rae would go on to raise two girls and a boy.

Starting out in Dayton, Ohio, where Gerry worked as a Special Service Representative in NCR's home office, the couple found themselves frequently moving as promotions required Gerry to take over larger and larger service departments in such places as Clearwater Florida, Huntsville Alabama, Washington DC, and the Johnstown/Pittsburgh Pennsylvania region.

Internationally, Gerry became the Director of Field Engineering for NCR in the Middle East and Africa. If



*Gerry Harris shows children how to pump water during Homeschool Day event.*

that was not enough responsibility, the company later added Latin and South America to Gerry's job duties.

"Most of the countries I managed in were very poor and were facing massive inflation at that time, so managing those areas was a special challenge." Gerry mentions, "My international experience is what made me appreciate the challenges people in third world countries face. In spite of those challenges the people I met were great." Gerry also feels that his experiences overseas have helped him better relate to the diversity of guests visiting the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse.

Gerry retired to Florida after 35 years of service with the NCR Corporation. Gerry stated, "We had previously

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decided to retire in the Daytona Beach area where we already owned a home in Port Orange. What also made it the perfect place to retire was the fact that our son and his family, as well as Rae's sister and her family, both lived here." The couple became full-time residents of the beachside area of Port Orange in the summer of 1999.

What inspired Gerry to become a volunteer at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse? "Well, in the Fall of 2002, I read an article in the Daytona Beach News Journal about volunteers refurbishing Fresnel Lighthouse lenses at the lighthouse. The article mentioned that the lighthouse was looking for additional volunteers to work on the lenses, so I applied."

Gerry's original lighthouse volunteer interview was with Executive Director Ed Gunn. Gerry met Curator Ellen Henry shortly after this initial meeting. "After speaking with Ellen, I decided to become a tour guide at her suggestion" adding, "I did get to work on various Fresnel lenses as a volunteer along with a lot of other activities including Climb with the Keeper tours, Canaveral lens maintenance demonstrations, children and student



*Volunteer of the Quarter  
Gerry Harris with  
his wife Rae.*

workshops, and Climb to the Moon events."

When asked what he liked most about volunteering at the lighthouse, Gerry responded, "I enjoy the technical aspect of life at the lighthouse, the science of lighthouse illumination, and the Fresnel lenses the most. It's also very rewarding to work with school children during field trip tours and Home School Days."

Gerry mentions, "I haven't been as active as I would like to be over the past several years due to my care giving duties with my wife, Rae. However the best part of being a lighthouse volunteer is the interaction with people, both visitors and the lighthouse volunteers, and staff."

Gerry and Rae have two daughters in addition to their son. Their son and his family live in Edgewater, Florida, and their daughters and their families live in Dayton and Newark, Ohio. Gerry and Rae are the grandparents of four grandsons and a granddaughter.

We are very proud to recognize Gerry Harris as the lighthouse's Volunteer of the Quarter.



# 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

**Senior** . . . . . \$10

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- Recognition of your support in the quarterly newsletters' Principal Keeper List

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- Recognition of your companies support in the quarterly newsletters' Corporate Lampist List

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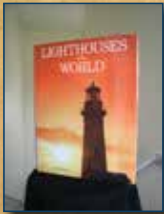
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