



PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE

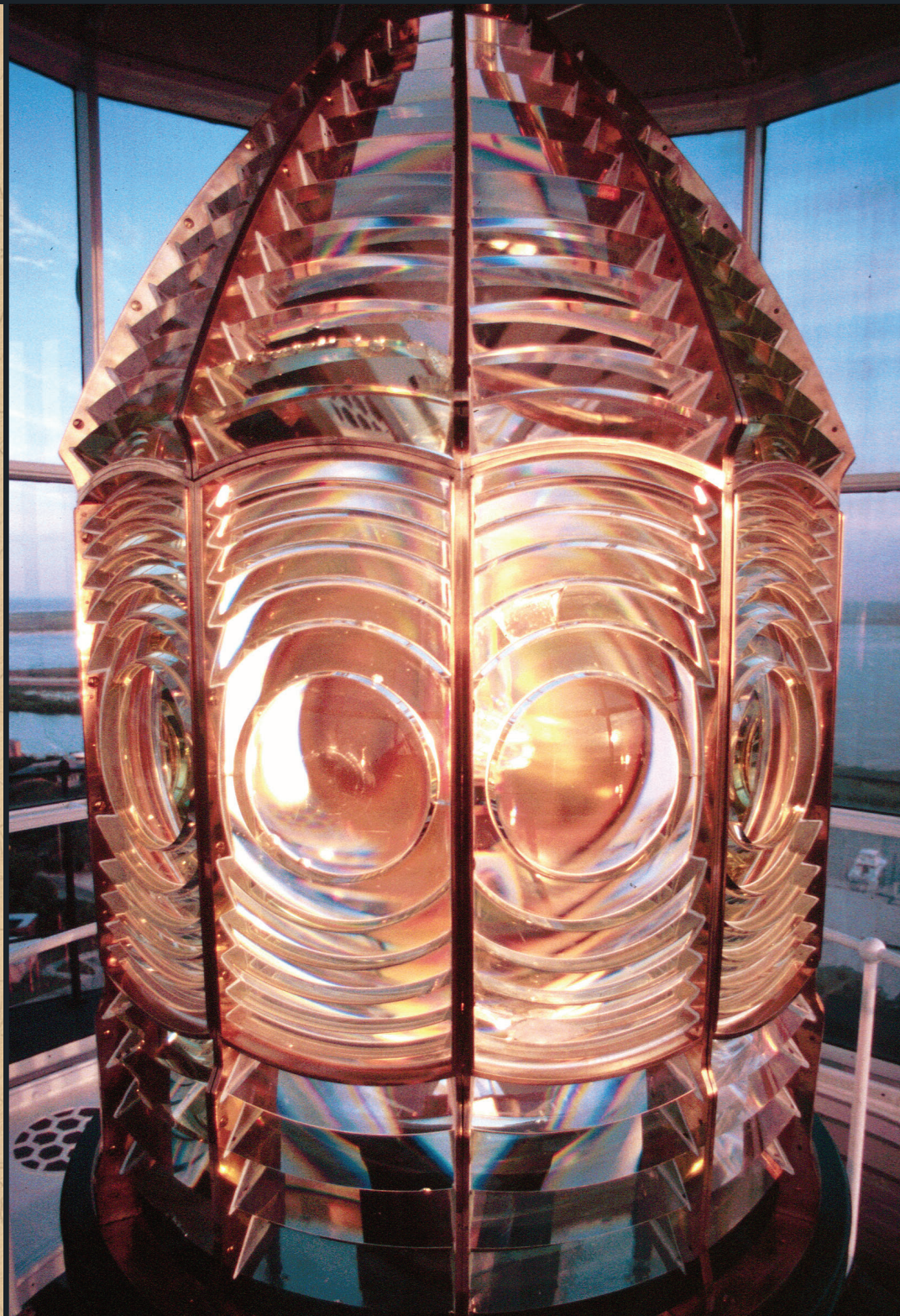
ILLUMINATIONS

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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Dear Members,

I hope this issue of *Illuminations* finds you happy, healthy, and well. The months of April through June are always active at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse as tourists flock to Daytona Beach from far and wide to soak in the Florida sunshine, enjoy the World's Most Famous Beach, and participate in the area's many annual events. Be sure to visit us on Saturday, April 23rd for Florida Lighthouse Day. Held annually, this important event celebrates Florida's rich maritime and lighthouse history. On-site activities will include guided tours of the light station, kids crafts, and numerous family-oriented workshops. Please refer to the Calendar of Events on page six for more information regarding these and other scheduled offerings in the coming quarter.

The Association is happy to announce the recent restoration of four of the five Cuban rafts currently on outdoor display at the museum. These important reminders of the plight of the Cuban people under communist rule and their desire for freedom were acquired by the museum between 1989 and 2016. Time and the natural elements took their toll on the rafts over the years resulting in the need for intensive conservation. Restoration of the rafts was completed by volunteer docents Mike Revak and Steve Welhoelter in collaboration with the museum's curatorial department. The completion of this project will allow the museum to continue its interpretation of this important period in both Cuban and American history for many years to come. I invite you to visit the museum in the near future to see in person, the exceptional job completed by Mike and Steve. You can learn more about the Cuban raft restoration project on page 12.

It is my honor to welcome Terry Revak and Lisa Sixma to the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association's Advisory Committee. The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees comprised of eleven Ponce Inlet residents who are committed to the ongoing preservation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. The Board is assisted in its endeavors by an all-volunteer Advisory Committee made up of like-minded Town residents drawn from the general membership. Together, these two groups guide the ongoing operations of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum.

I am pleased to announce that the museum's programs department is operating at full-capacity once again after a long hiatus due to COVID-19. Museum staff and volunteer docents have been actively engaged in developing exciting educational offerings for young and old alike and delivering these meaningful programs to receptive audiences here at the lighthouse and throughout the local Volusia County region. One of the department's most recent endeavors was Volusia County Indigenous Peoples Heritage Day, which was hosted at the lighthouse on February 13, 2022. This important event was a truly collaborative effort attended by representatives from many museums and cultural sites throughout the Central Florida region. Additional events such as this are currently being planned for the months ahead. We will keep you informed regarding their scheduled dates as they are developed. For those who missed Volusia County Indigenous

Peoples Heritage Day in February, be sure to attend the museum's next Native American Heritage Day in November when it will be held as an annual event during Native American Heritage month.

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is a non-profit corporation that currently receives zero tax-funded support at either the federal, state, or local levels. As a self-sufficient historic preservation group, the Association derives 100% of its annual operating budget solely through private donations, admission and merchandise sales, and annual membership dues. As such, the Association relies heavily on the generosity of donors like you to continue its ongoing mission to preserve and disseminate the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse.

I would like to thank all our members for their continued support and to express my appreciation to those who have made financial contributions or contributed their personal time to the Preservation Association this fiscal year. Your generosity will help ensure our organization's success of preserving this National Historic Landmark for future generations. Please feel free to contact me at edgunn@ponceinlet.org or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 15 for more information.

Have a wonderful spring and summer season!

With Warm Regards,



Ed Gunnlaugsson
Executive Director

LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION STAFF

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HOURS OF OPERATION

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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REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION

MAY 30, 2022 - SEPT. 5, 2022

OPEN DAILY FROM 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM

(LAST ADMISSION SOLD AT 8:00 PM)

SEPT. 6, 2022 - MAY 28, 2023

OPEN DAILY FROM 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

(LAST ADMISSION SOLD AT 5:00 PM)

Note: Hours of Operation are Subject to Change According to COVID-19 Conditions.

SCHEDULED TOWER CLOSURES

JUNE 14, 2022 (TUESDAY)

TOWER CLOSED FROM

7:15 PM - 9:00 PM

(MUSEUM & GIFT SHOP OPEN UNTIL AT 9:00 PM)

Note: Scheduled Tower Closures Subject to Change According to COVID-19 Conditions.

SPECIAL HOURS OF OPERATION

Memorial Day Weekend

May 28-29, 2022

(Saturday - Sunday)

MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP OPEN FROM

10:00 AM - 7:00 PM

(Last Admission at 6:00 PM)

Note: Special Hours Subject to Change According to COVID-19 Conditions.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

April 18, 2022

(Monday)

**Board of Trustees &
Membership Meeting**

(Open to General Membership)

May 16, 2022

(Monday)

**Board of Trustees
Meeting**

(Closed to General Membership)

June 20, 2022

(Monday)

**Board of Trustees
Meeting**

(Closed to General Membership)

Note: Meeting Schedule Subject to Change According to COVID-19 Conditions.

CLIMB TO THE MOON SCHEDULE

Treat your significant other, family, friends, coworkers, or simply yourself to breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, World's Most Famous Beach, Ponce Inlet, and inland waterways under the golden glow of the setting sun and silvery light of the rising moon. Climb to the Moon is offered once a month on the night of the full moon. Ticket availability for each event is limited to only 30 guests and typically sells out quickly. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are sold on a first come first serve basis. Please contact the museum's administrative assistant by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 10 or via email at admin@ponceinlet.org for additional information. Prices are \$35 for non-members and \$30 for members.

CLIMB TO THE MOON EVENT DATES

April 16, 2022

(Saturday)

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

May 15, 2022

(Sunday)

7:15 PM - 8:45 PM

June 14, 2022

(Tuesday)

7:45 PM - 9:15 PM

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS (APRIL - JUNE, 2022)

APRIL 23, 2022 Florida Lighthouse Day (SATURDAY) ; 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

Discover the fascinating history of Florida's 29 surviving historic beacons on Florida Lighthouse Day! Explore the Ayres Davies Lens Exhibit, Climb 175 feet to the top of Florida's Tallest Lighthouse, and enjoy family-oriented activities including live demonstrations, historic reenactors, hands-on workshops, kids-crafts, and more as you tour the world-famous Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum during this special one-day annual event. Scheduled activities are provided free of charge to all museum guests with their regular admission between the hours of 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM.

MAY 5, 2022 Spring Homeschool Day (THURSDAY) ; 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

Calling all homeschool parents and students! Join the staff of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum on Thursday, May 5th for a fun-filled day of educational activities focusing on the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and local Florida region. Participate in a guided tour of the lighthouse and museum along with five *STEAMING through Lighthouse Illumination* workshops during your day-long lighthouse adventure. All workshops and activities offered on this unique day of learning were specifically developed for K-12 students by certified teachers and former education professionals and are aligned with Florida's current learning standards.

Advanced reservations are required. Registration commences promptly at 1:00 on April 1, 2021. To register, visit us online at www.lighthouselocker.org. Select the Events tab and click on Homeschool Day under event options. This unique program is open to the first 100 students who register. Please contact the museum's programs manager Zach Hopple via email at zhopple@ponceinlet.org, or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18, for more information.

MAY 28-30, 2022 Memorial Day Weekend at the Lighthouse (SATURDAY & SUNDAY : 10:00 AM TO 7:00 PM) (MONDAY: 10:00 AM TO 9:00 PM)

Visit the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum on Memorial Day Weekend and discover the fascinating history of one of the largest and best-preserved light stations in the country. Climb 175 feet to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse and participate in special on-site offerings between the hours of 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM. In recognition of their sacrifice, all former and active duty military personnel will be provided free admission on May 30th with proof of service.

JUNE 11, 2022 Flag Day (SUNDAY) ; 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

Join us at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum on Sunday, June 11th in celebration of Flag Day! Scheduled activities include learning how Semaphore flags were once used by mariners to communicate at sea, family-oriented workshops focusing on turn-of-the-century life at the Ponce Inlet Light Station, kids crafts, and more! All special activities are scheduled between the hours of 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM.

JULY 4, 2022 Independence Day Celebration (MONDAY) ; 10:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

Celebrate our nation's birth at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum before heading out for an evening of fireworks! Special on-site offerings including family-oriented workshops, kids crafts, and other hands-on activities designed for young and old alike will be provided to all museum guests between the hours of 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM.

Attention Readers: All activities are included free of charge with regular admission and without advanced reservations unless otherwise noted. Please contact Programs Manager Zach Hopple at zhopple@ponceinlet.org or see the museum's Calendar of Events online at www.ponceinlet.org for more details.



SHARKS!

Some records of fatal shark attacks in the United States go back as far as Colonial times, but these are few. More records have been gathered from the 1800s and early 1900s, but the reporting and record-keeping improved considerably after the establishment of the Internet. The types and habits of sharks were definitely not well-known by the American public in the late 1800s. The largest sharks were feared by many as ferocious man-eaters, and yet just as many saw sharks as mainly small and mostly cowardly. But the fact that some sharks were indeed man-eaters could not be completely denied, and these sharks were active in Florida.

In the late summer of 1845, a fisherman named Nickerson was seized by a shark near Pensacola. Captain George Jacob Hanscheldt, sailing off the coast of Fernandina Beach, was knocked overboard and killed by a shark in 1853 or 1854. At Fort Pickens, near Pensacola, the son of a boat captain fell overboard and was heard to scream. The boy's body was located, but the head was missing, and a shark attack was presumed. Orville Babcock, the chief engineer of the proposed Mosquito Inlet Lighthouse, was drowned in the inlet in 1884 when his small boat capsized. Several other men also drowned in the incident, and one man's body showed evidence of a shark attack when it was retrieved with one leg bitten off.

In October of 1887, an unlucky mail carrier named James Edward Hamilton disappeared while trying to cross Hillsboro Inlet in his small boat. A fisherman who witnessed the incident claimed that Hamilton's boat was being attacked by sharks, and the mail carrier tried to fight them off with his oars until he was knocked from the boat and disappeared. Some accounts claimed that his body was

discovered at the inlet, minus its head and limbs, and other reports stated that no body was ever recovered. In 1899, young Eddie Roe was swimming with a group of other boys at Fernandina Beach when a shark delivered a serious bite to his calf. He bled out before medical help arrived. And in 1896, a man who was swimming ashore from a filibustering ship en route from Florida to Cuba was taken by a shark as reported by the two other men who were with him. The location of this incident and the name of the filibustering vessel were not recorded. In August of 1899, a 15-year-old boy named Delano Wood was killed by a 10-foot shark while swimming in the Trout River near Jacksonville.

The early 1900s were not much kinder. A person canoeing at Mosquito Inlet (date unknown but prior to 1902) was swept out to sea by the powerful current and his boat was capsized. His body was found later with the limbs bitten off by sharks. Ianthe Bond Hebel, an historian and long-time resident of the Daytona area, wrote a comment about sharks in her memoirs. In 1903, she was living in Ponce Park and serving as the teacher for the one-room school. She recalled regular rides in the mail carrier's boat traveling from New Smyrna to Ponce Park. "I remember crossing the inlet in that tiny boat only a few inches out of the water with a shark bigger than the boat circling about us." Fortunately, sharks never tried to capsize the boat during these trips. A less lucky soul was John C. Williams, whose mutilated body was found off Marathon in the Florida Keys on May 10, 1908. The next year, William Craug was killed by sharks after falling overboard from the *Halcyon*, a fishing schooner working off the coast near Pensacola. In 1911, in approximately the same area, a ship's pilot was killed after falling overboard, again into the mouths of waiting sharks.

A May 9, 1908, newspaper story written by Marshall Morgan in the *Nashville Banner* gave a somewhat more light-hearted shark report involving the Pacetti family at Mosquito Inlet. "The incident occurred at Mosquito Inlet, Florida. This is the mouth of the Halifax River, some 125 miles beyond Jacksonville. A Mr. Pacetti of that place set a line with a heavy hook attached to a wire leader, baited with mullet, and on returning to it the following day, found a shark to be caught. This shark weighed in the neighborhood of 100 pounds. Upon opening the shark, he found in its maw, the hook penetrating all of them, three fish heads nested one within the other, just as you would nest a pile of boxes. In other words, a small fish first took the hook and was later eaten by a second, who became impaled only in turn to meet a similar fate, being eaten by a bass."



A shark at the Pacetti Hotel dock;
collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Assoc.

Reports of shark attacks were daunting enough, but the real shark panic, the one that led to today's televised "*Shark Week*" every summer, began on July 1, 1916, when 23-year-old Charles Vansant, a guest at the Engleside Hotel, was attacked while swimming off-shore at Beach Haven, New Jersey. Vansant was pulled from the surf but died at the hotel as his father (a doctor) and Dr. Joseph Neff struggled to save him. The shark had severed his femoral artery in an attack so determined that the shark was actually still clinging to the leg as the victim was pulled onto the beach. Five days later, Charles Bruder, also in his 20s and the bell captain at the Essex and Sussex, another New Jersey resort hotel, confidently strode into the ocean for his daily swim. He was one of a handful of marathon swimmers at a time when few people knew

how to swim, and he was keen to maintain his place as the most elite of these men. Bruder knew about the death of Charles Vansant but was heard to have stated that sharks were harmless and Vansant could not have been killed by one. Charles Bruder was, unfortunately, incorrect. He was pulled from the water by surfmen in a rescue boat. Before he died, Bruder identified the shark that had bitten off both his legs as a "big gray fellow, and rough as sandpaper."

A few days later, on July 11, 1916, another New Jersey shark attack was reported, this time from an inland waterway named Matawan Creek near the town of Matawan. The first sighting of the shark came about a mile from the mouth of the creek as a group of boys were splashing in a swimming hole. One of the boys, Rensselaer Carter, was bumped by the shark whose rough skin cut and scraped his chest. Carter jumped from the water as did his companions, but the other boys had not seen the shark and eventually went back to swimming while Carter departed to get his wounds treated. On July 12, the next victim was Lester Stilwell, age 11, who was enjoying a swim in another Matawan Creek swimming hole. The shark, propelled by rising tide in the creek, was attracted again by splashing swimmers and quickly snapped up young Lester. While trying to recover Stilwell's body, Watson Fisher, age 24, was also attacked and killed. The Matawan Journal reported that "the sight of Mr. Fisher being brought to shore was sickening, to state it mildly." A half hour after the Stilwell and Fisher tragedies, another boy, Joseph Dunn, was attacked, also in Matawan Creek. His injuries were grievous, but he was saved and eventually recovered. These attacks were now undeniably understood to be the work of a single creature, possibly a bull shark or a juvenile great white or perhaps even a killer whale, and definitely a dangerous rogue.

Whatever was doing the killing, tourists and residents along the entire east coast were increasingly fearful of visiting beaches and entering the water, the tourist industry of New Jersey was deeply impacted, and something had to be done. Could the killer be identified and destroyed? Could swimmers be protected? Would the brand-new United States Coast Guard be part of the solution, and what about the Lighthouse Service?

DEATH OF MAN AND BOY DUE TO SHARK'S ATTACKS

In Matawan Creek on
Wednesday.

SEARCHING FOR SHARK

SHARK CAUGHT AT BELFORD.

Bathers Should Not Venture Beyond
the Life Lines.

A nine-foot man eating shark was
caught by Herman Tarnow, a Belford
fisherman, on Tuesday. The shark had

SHARK'S VICTIM FOUND.

Body of Stilwell Boy Came to Surface
of Matawan Creek This Morning.

The body of Lester Stilwell, who was
killed by a shark Wednesday, was found
at 5:15 this morning by Harry Van
Clief, an engineer on the New Jersey
Central Railroad, and William B. Clay-
ton, Jr., who were on the Matawan
Creek bank when it arose to the surface.
The body was taken in charge by Ar-
rowsmith Bros., undertakers, after the
consent for removal was obtained from

Keyport Weekly, Keyport, New Jersey;

July 14, 1916, page 1

The Coast Guard's captain commandant, E. P. Bertholf, issued a bulletin stating that the shark attacks would normally be a matter for local remedy, but the Coast Guard, in its mission to protect lives and property, had begun an investigation led by an officer with many years of experience. Captain G. L. Carden's report contained the following information:

- The shark attacks were not confined to the open ocean and sharks had even entered inland waterways and killed people there. It would be impossible to rid the coasts of sharks.
- Swimmers could best be protected by the erection of fencing to create "swimming pools" in the sea, at and close to the shore. In unprotected areas, beach goers should not go out beyond the surf line.
- Such fencing would consist of heavy wire with a mesh no greater than 4 inches. This fencing would be secured by 5-inch-diameter galvanized iron pipes spaced about 30 feet apart and sunk into the bottom by 8 feet and strongly guyed to anchors; or oak poles from 10 to 14 inches in diameter would also be suitable. To keep the net from floating upwards, heavy chain could be attached to the bottom of the netting. Even better than a single fence, two such screens should be set up around each side of the "swimming pool."
- This report ended with a further caution about entering the sea in unprotected areas.

U. S. WAR ON SHARKS

Wilson and Cabinet Make Plans
to Prevent More Tragedies.

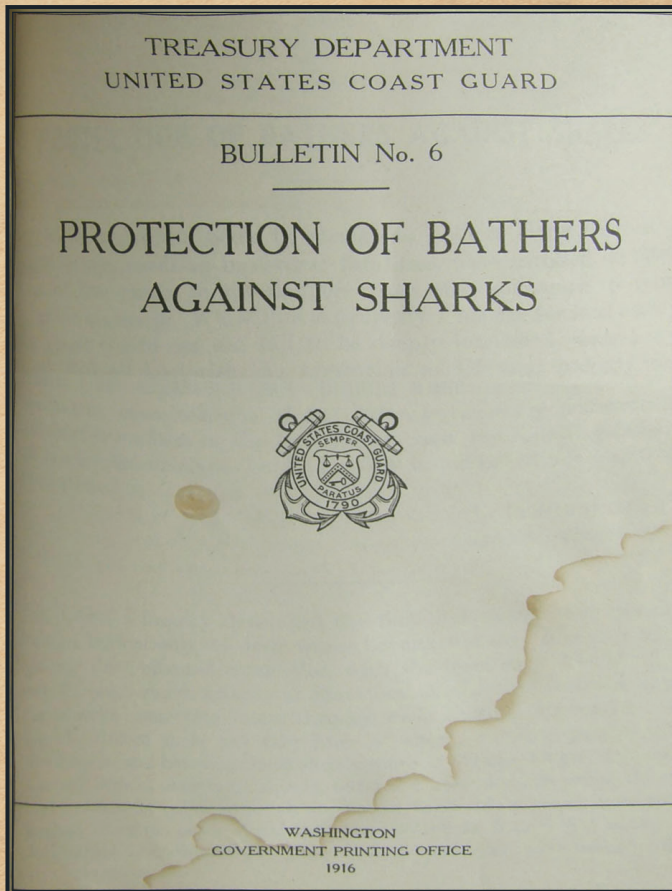
COAST GUARDS TURN HUNTERS

Federal Cutters Also Are Ordered to
Fish for the Monsters.

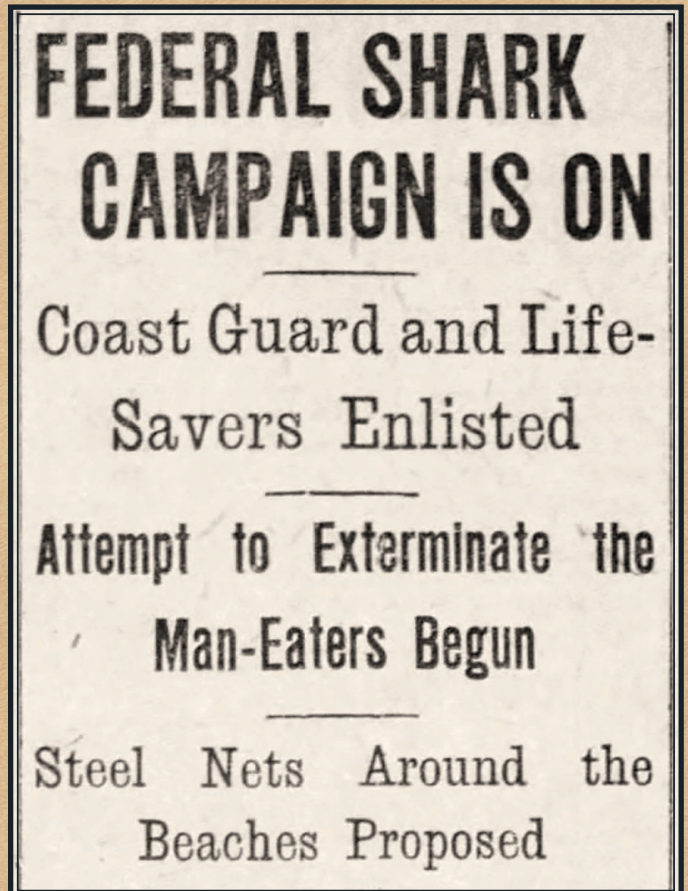
Bureau of Fisheries Issues Warning,
but Admits Inability to Prevent
Attacks—Bacharach Asks Congress
for \$5,000 to Aid the Campaign.
Theories of Scientists for the Pres-
ence of Maneaters on the Coast.

Washington Post, Washington D.C.

July 15, 1916, page 1



Treasury Department Bulletin, 1916;
collection of the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Assoc.



Boston Globe, Boston, Massachusetts
July 15, 1916, page 9

The Coast Guard had been formed in 1915 and was, therefore, relatively new. The experienced and knowledgeable persons consulted during its investigations were keepers of life-saving stations and lighthouses, along with volunteer life-savers, beach managers, and coastal city officials. The Life-Saving Service was, by 1916, part of the newly-formed Coast Guard, but the Lighthouse Service still retained its status as an independent service, and lighthouse keepers along the Atlantic coast were called upon to observe the nearby waters for sharks, help in exterminating sharks, and make reports concerning what they saw.

People in general were also quickly affected by the publicity generated, the president's war on sharks, and by a \$100 bounty that was being offered by the mayor of Matawan to anyone who could kill the monster. The hunt for the killer shark, or virtually any shark, was on. Along the creek, men were using dynamite in an attempt to force the shark to the surface. Others were shooting rifles at every shadow in

the water. One enterprising man actually purchased a large shark from a fish company and presented it as the man-eating shark which he claimed to have killed. The bogus shark was put on display and could be seen for a dime. The presumptive shark killer took the bounty, and the real shark got away.

The man-eater did not keep its freedom for long, and it was captured and killed almost by accident shortly after the Matawan incident and even before the president's so-called war on sharks could unfold. On July 14th, a big-game hunter and animal tamer for the Barnum and Bailey circus named Michael Schleisser was out fishing in a small motor boat with his friend John Murphy. They were dragging a net behind their boat in Raritan Bay when a shark became entangled. It was actually pulling the boat backwards in its attempt to get away. Schleisser tried to cut the net to free the shark, but the shark reacted by jumping into the boat. Schleisser grabbed a broken boat oar and began to pummel the shark as it tried to attack him. Amazingly,

he was able to kill the fish before it swamped their vessel.

When the men returned to shore, Schleisser cut the shark open to retrieve the contents of the stomach. These appeared to be human flesh and bones. Several examinations proved to be somewhat inconclusive as to the nature of the body parts found, but these were identified with certainty as human remains. And the shark was identified as a young female great white. Schleisser added the shark's body to his taxidermy collection, took the collection on tour, and eventually the shark disappeared for the last time.

The general public, convinced that sharks are dangerous, has continued to fear and avoid them. But the fascination with sharks has also continued, inspiring some to do everything from hunting and killing them to deliberately diving with them or, more productively, devoting themselves to researching the role of sharks in the marine ecosystem and educating the public about the need for sharks in the ocean.

The events of 1916 were, of course, the inspiration for *Jaws*, the 1975 award-winning film directed by Steven Spielberg. Those events also inspired the modern and much less lethal version of shark week which had its origins in 1988, the brain child of the Discovery Channel's Tom Golden. Premiering on July 17, 1988, the program has evolved from a focus on marine conservation and misconceptions about sharks to the wildly popular annual event known as *Shark Week* which in turn inspired the *Sharknado* series of comedy science fiction films.

Even though the 1916 shark attacks were centered around New Jersey's coastline, the area around Ponce Inlet and New Smyrna Beach on Florida's east coast is unofficially considered the Shark Attack Capital of the planet, having more attacks in proportion to population than any other spot on the globe. According to the University of Florida's *Shark Attack File*, Florida is the number one shark attack state and within the state, Volusia County and the Ponce Inlet area lead the way. In 2020, eight attacks were reported near Ponce Inlet, accounting for 14% of the world's total of reported bites. By September of 2021, 10 unprovoked attacks had occurred. Fortunately, fatal

attacks are rare, and, as of today, no known fatal attacks have ever occurred in Volusia County in modern times.

The waters in and around Ponce Inlet continue to attract sharks partly because the inlet's strong tidal flow leads to large numbers of bait fish in the area. The waves around the inlet attract surfers whose activities arouse hungry sharks, and beach goers, even in shallow water, can be a tempting target.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has some tips on how to avoid adding yourself to the list of victims: swim in a group since sharks prefer to attack solo swimmers; don't swim during twilight and after dark when sharks are most active; avoid wearing shiny jewelry or bathing suits as these suggest fish scales to hungry sharks; don't swim in areas where people are fishing or places known to be good fishing spots – sharks are also fishing; stay close to shore where it is easier to get help quickly; don't let pets in the water; be careful when surfing or paddle boarding as these activities are involved in a majority of shark incidents; be wary around sandbars or near steep drop-offs as these are favorite shark hang-out spots; and the best advice of all - swim only near a lifeguard.

For further reading about the New Jersey shark attacks, try *Close to Shore: The Terrifying Shark Attacks of 1916*, by Michael Capuzzo.



Taken by local photographer Kem McNair, this image shows several surfers unaware of their nearby competition. Photo courtesy of Kem McNair

VOLUNTEERS OF THE QUARTER TAKE ON CONSERVATION OF THE CUBAN RAFTS

Between 1966 and 1995, anyone who fled Cuba and reached the United States was allowed to pursue residency one year after their arrival. Many Cubans left the island in small boats and rafts, hoping to reach international waters where they might be picked up by the US Coast Guard and brought the rest of the way to freedom.

A 1995 revision of the Cuban Adjustment Act changed this policy. The United States would no longer admit Cuban refugees found at sea but would admit - and allow to qualify for permanent resident status - any refugee who was able to get onto shore or arrive here via a dry land route such as through Mexico. Refugees intercepted at sea would be returned by the Coast Guard to their place of origin. This came to be known as the "wet foot, dry foot" policy. With this change, the construction of many refugee rafts became more substantial in anticipation of having to cross under their own power the approximately 90 miles of open water between Cuba and Florida.

President Barack Obama discontinued the wet foot, dry foot policy in 2017, hoping to normalize relations with Cuba. The Trump administration disagreed with these changes and restricted US travel to Cuba as well as immigration by Cubans to the United States. Many refugees were sent to detention centers, especially after the appearance of COVID, as Cuba would no longer allow them to be returned. The Biden administration is making some efforts to reestablish more normal relations with Cuba while voicing concerns about apparent human rights violations and political oppression in that country. Meanwhile, Cuban rafts continue to provide a means of escape for those willing to risk it all to live in a democratic country.

The museum currently has five Cuban refugee rafts in its collection. Refugee rafts are typically abandoned in the water by either by their occupants or by the Coast Guard and left to float ashore wherever the currents take them,

and sometimes they land along the coast of Volusia County. We have had the opportunity to acquire some of these rafts, and all five of our rafts are currently on display. They will eventually disintegrate, but our aim is to keep them on view as long as possible, using conservation and restoration methods.

The two oldest rafts in the collection are the "canvas" raft and the "inner tube" raft. They made the journey from Cuba towards Florida before the era of wet foot, dry foot. The canvas raft landed in Volusia county in 1989 and the inner tube raft in 1994, and their small size and fragile construction made it apparent that the occupants hoped and believed that they would be spotted by the Coast Guard, rescued, and brought to the United States. Collection notes indicate that the canvas raft had eight occupants! An orange Coast Guard life preserver was attached to the raft, indicating that the occupants had been picked up and were safe. Some early photos of the inner tube raft show an orange life vest, but the collection documents make no mention of this raft being found with a Coast Guard life vest on board.



The canvas raft and the inner tube raft in 1999;
collection of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Assoc.

Both time and exposure to the extremes of the Florida climate have not been kind to these rafts. Canvas and rubber have hardened and cracked. Wood has rotted away and metal elements have rusted through. And Styrofoam, popular with raft builders for its flotation properties, has disintegrated into tiny bits. Both rafts had unique problems, and the inner tube raft had become little more than a jumble of puzzle-pieces.



The inner tube raft before restoration;
collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Preservation Assoc.



The canvas raft before restoration;
collection of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Assoc.

In the fall of 2021, it became clear that these older rafts needed restoration before they passed the point of no return. Fortunately, the museum has two highly qualified retired engineers who have volunteered their skills to us in the past and were willing to take on these difficult projects.

Steve Welhoelter graduated as a mechanical engineer and worked for Westinghouse and Siemens in the power generation business. He has been married to wife Vali for 36 years and has two daughters and two dogs. Fortunately for us, the family moved here in 2016, and Steve was looking for volunteer jobs to keep himself "off the streets." His friend, Mike Revak, the other half of our volunteer duo, introduced him to the lighthouse staff and soon both of them were working on conservation projects at the Pacetti Hotel.



Mike Revak (left) and Steve Welhoelter (right) stand between recently conserved rafts.

A native of Philadelphia, Mike Revak graduated with a degree in metallurgical engineering and also worked for and retired from Westinghouse/Siemens, spending his last 14 years in the wind power renewable energy field. He and his wife Teresa (Terry) have two children and have recently become grandparents for the first time. Terry had volunteered here and when Mike learned that we had acquired the Pacetti Hotel, he volunteered his time and talents to the conservation of the hotel's outbuildings.

When Mike and Steve finished up their work at the Pacetti Hotel, museum staff were determined to keep these two talented restorers involved and the raft conservation project seemed ideal. If anyone could bring those deteriorated rafts back from the edge, it had

to be Mike and Steve. Their conservation of the earliest rafts proved their skills, and the team quickly moved on to two of the wet foot/dry foot rafts – *Animal* and the "pontoon raft."



Conservation of *Animal* completed in Feb. 2022;
collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association.

Animal floated ashore in Ormond-by-the-Sea on September 12, 2013. The empty raft had been spotted by the Coast Guard off Key West several months earlier and they tracked the raft as it drifted up the Florida coast. When the raft finally came ashore, a number of objects on board were quickly taken away by beach-goers, but the most significant object remains on the raft. A Chinese-made Geely automobile engine (which had been sent first to the old Soviet Union) was used to power *Animal*. The engine was produced between 1987 and 1991 and is marked CCCP. The Volusia County Beach Safety Division collected the raft and agreed to donate it to our museum. Made long after the 1995 revision of the Cuban Adjustment Act, this raft was designed to bring refugees right to the coast of the USA. As long as they were able to get onto dry land, they would be allowed to stay and apply for citizenship. If they were picked up at sea by the Coast Guard, they would be returned to Cuba.

For Mike and Steve, the tricky part of conserving *Animal* was patching its canvas skin and saving the original lettering on the side which identified the raft's name and told everyone that it was number one. The team carefully attached remaining canvas to a new backing, restored the deck and, along with much other work, replaced some of the deteriorated plastic jugs that had been used as flotation devices. Thanks to their painstaking efforts, *Animal* will be on view for more years to come.



The pontoon raft was completed in March, 2022;
collection of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association.

The team's next project was the "pontoon raft." This catamaran-style raft came ashore in Wilbur-by-the-Sea on September 7, 2016. No motor or sails were found on the raft and it appeared to have been adrift for some time. The Coast Guard painted the large "OK" markings to let mariners know the raft had been observed and no passengers needed rescue.

Mike and Steve found the conservation of this raft to be fairly simple compared to their previous projects, but there was some concern about reworking the deteriorated net that hung from the center supports. The majority of the project involved cleaning and preserving the metal parts and deciding what paint to use on the twin hulls.

Their meticulous attention to detail and their knowledge of construction were clear, plus Mike and Steve never hesitated to take on new challenges. Both men enjoyed trying to determine how the rafts were made by their original designers and admired how those people were able to make the most of whatever materials were at hand. Trying to make the rafts look as they originally did was their biggest challenge, and learning about the history of the rafts (and of the lighthouse and Pacetti Hotel) was what they most enjoyed. In turn, the museum staff has learned much from these volunteers, and we are excited to see them continue with projects here for many years to come. Thank you, Mike Revak and Steve Welhoelter! (Yes, there is one more raft in our collection, but its construction makes an extensive level of conservation unlikely. We will keep you updated on the fate of the raft we lovingly call the "sandbag raft.")

PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE & MUSEUM HOSTS COLLABORATIVE HERITAGE EVENT



On February 13th, 2022, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum hosted organizations and historical societies from across the state of Florida as part of Volusia County's first Indigenous Peoples Heritage Day. More than 400 guests were treated to a day of education, remembrance, and fun. Taking months to plan, the hard-working staff of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and the guest organizations delivered wonderful presentations, educational workshops, and activities that intrigued visitors of all ages.

The Evolution of an Idea

Planning for the event was a collaborative effort within our staff. Various topics, themes, and educational activities were discussed. Enabling guests to learn more about the indigenous population that once inhabited Volusia County was the ultimate goal of this event. Research on the local indigenous groups had been performed by our staff in the past, but directing an entire event based on this research was a promising new experience for the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association.

Deep Dive Research

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse curatorial department began researching the topic late last year. Led by Registrar and Assistant Curator Felipe De Paula, who has a background in the subject matter, the topics researched included culture, language, agriculture, warfare, and the social history of early Floridian tribes. This research developed into an article in the January 2022 edition of *Illuminations*, the Association's quarterly publication.

Connecting with Other Cultural & Historic Sites

While the curatorial department was hard at work with the research necessary to make this an accurate and engaging event, the programs department set out to make connections across the county with other museums and historic sites. Our association has worked with other organizations in the past, but never with so many for a single event. Hopefully this event leads to increased cooperation between the lighthouse and other cultural organizations in the future.

Some locations were obvious connections with the indigenous peoples of Volusia County: Hontoon Island State Park, De Leon Springs State Park, and the Friends of Tomoka Basin State Parks have each done extensive research on their own locations and have created wonderful displays on the local native groups. Their involvement with the event was immediately thought of. The inclusion of the vast Sweett Collection of artifacts from the New Smyrna Museum of History was a valuable addition to the event.

Other individuals and institutions from elsewhere in the state also participated in the event. Andrew Foster, who interprets his great-grandfather Charles Henry Coe, was one of these individuals. As described by Foster, "Coe and his family moved to Florida in 1874 and settled in New Smyrna. By 1877, he started *The Florida Star* newspaper which was run from inside the family home located in Glencoe, Florida- named in honor of his father.

He was a printer by trade, later an author, and took up the fight of the Florida Seminoles' rights to stay in Florida with his book *Red Patriots* 1898. He lived for 98 years and did too many things to list". Coe, portrayed by Foster, was a perfect addition to the ever-growing event.

Making sure to have the representation of the Seminole Tribe of Florida was paramount as well. Connecting with the organizations Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage and the AH TAH THI KI Museum became the goal of the programs department. Talking with representatives of these organizations led to a plethora of opportunities. The AH TAH THI KI Museum agreed to send expert canoe-maker, Daniel Tommie, as well as a display on the Seminoles as a whole.

The Day of the Event Arrives

All of the pre-planning and coordination culminated on a rainy, overcast Sunday morning. The soggy conditions did not dampen the enthusiastic fervor of guests, volunteers, and presenters. Just as the event began, clear skies cut through the wet morning and the event was underway.

The wonderful Ponce Inlet Lighthouse volunteers served in many roles throughout the day, including as tour guides, running the information booth, assisting guests with navigating the day, and presenting family-oriented workshops on the Timucua language and archeology.

Student volunteers from Daytona State College, arranged by Dr. Maryann Gromoll, were also present to assist during the event. Assisting throughout the day, the student-volunteers helped to coordinate presentations, set up and take down display cases, bring necessary materials to workshops, and monitor booths while presentations took place.

Historical presentations were given throughout the day, engaging guests in displays of artifacts as well as the history of the Timucua, Seminole, Mayaca, and many other native groups. These presentations included Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Lead Docent John Mann explaining the 1835 Mosquito (now Ponce) Inlet Lighthouse and its connection to the 2nd Seminole War, Tomoka Basin State Parks President Hewitt Dupont discussing the connections of state parks to the 2nd Seminole War,

DeLeon Springs State Park Historian James Stone explaining DeLeon Spring's first native peoples, Andrew Foster giving a historical interpretation of Captain Coe, as well as a key note presentations by Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Registrar Felipe De Paula on the history and ongoing research of the Timucua people and local archaeological sites like Green Mound in Ponce Inlet.

The lighthouse staff would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for participating in the event: Hontoon Island State Park, De Leon Springs State Park, New Smyrna Museum of History, Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage, the AH TAH THI KI Museum of Florida, Friends of Tomoka Basin State Parks, Inc., Andrew Foster, Dr. Maryann Gromoll, and our wonderful Ponce Inlet Lighthouse volunteers.



The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum plans to continue hosting collaborative cultural events with local historic and cultural organizations in the months and years to come including Florida Heritage Day which occurs each year in the month of March, National Lighthouse Day in August, and Volusia County Native American Heritage Day every November. Other events will be added to the annual schedule as they are developed. Doing so provides the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum a wonderful opportunity to both showcase Florida's rich cultural heritage while helping other museums and historic sites promote their offerings to the general public in one convenient location.

If you are interested in participating in future events such as these, please contact the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Programs Department at zhopple@ponceinlet.org or (386)761-1821 ext 18 to speak with Programs Manager Zach Hopple.

SUPPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Did you know that the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that typically receives zero tax-funded support at the local, state, or federal level? It's true! Nearly 100% of the Association's annual funding is derived exclusively through private donations, admission and merchandise sales, and annual membership dues. As such, the Association relies heavily on the generosity of donors like you to continue its mission and preserve this important National Historic Landmark for this and future generations to enjoy.

SEVEN WAYS TO GIVE

1. **DONATE TO THE LIGHTHOUSE FUND:** Help fund the Association's current preservation and educational efforts by donating to the Lighthouse General Fund.
2. **GIVE TO THE LIGHTHOUSE ENDOWMENT FUND:** Help ensure the long-term financial stability of the Preservation Association by contributing to the Lighthouse Endowment Fund.
3. **MEMORIAL BRICK PROGRAM:** Help fund the historic lighthouse with the purchase of a memorial brick.
4. **BECOME AN ANNUAL MEMBER:** Join the lighthouse team by becoming a member or renewing your current membership at the same or higher level.
5. **BECOME A VOLUNTEER:** Volunteers are one of the Preservation Association's most valuable assets. Help us continue our important work as a volunteer.
6. **DONATE AN ARTIFACT:** The museum is always looking for relevant objects, documents, and images to add to its collection. Offers to donate historic items are always welcome.
7. **Help Fund the Pacetti Hotel Project:** Join the Preservation Association in its efforts to restore, rehabilitate, and develop the Pacetti Hotel into a public space, history museum, and event venue.

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

In addition to an already generous grant, the Paul B. Hunter and Constance D. Hunter Charitable Foundation

has pledged to match all third-party donations in support of the Pacetti Hotel up to a combined value of \$250,000. This offer is a wonderful opportunity for anyone looking to maximize the funding potential of their charitable contribution. Any donations made to the Preservation Association for the purpose of restoring the Pacetti Hotel will be matched one-hundred percent by the Foundation, effectively doubling the efficacy of your gift.

Your Pacetti Hotel donation will help fund the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and development of the historic Pacetti Hotel. The goal of the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is to preserve the property's historic structures indefinitely.

HOW TO DONATE

Donations can be made through various ways. You can call us at (386) 761-1821 to make a donation over the phone. Checks for the restoration of the Pacetti Hotel can be mailed to 4931 S. Peninsula Drive, Ponce Inlet, FL, 32127. Please make all checks payable to the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. Online donations can be made at www.lighthouselocker.org/lighthouse-donations. Donations can also be made in person at our gift shop located right here on our grounds.



WE WANT YOU!

-TO JOIN THE LIGHTHOUSE TEAM!-

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!



Do you have a passion for history that you would like to share with young and old alike? Are you looking for an opportunity to socialize with others while contributing to a worthy cause? Does the opportunity to learn more about local history and share that knowledge with others excite you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse is the place for you!

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is always looking for talented individuals to join its dedicated corps of volunteers and help the museum meet its annual educational programming goals. Prior volunteer docent experience is not required and comprehensive training is provided to all qualifying candidates.

The need for new volunteers has never been greater. The Preservation Association is pleased to announce that the museum's programs department is once again offering its award-winning educational programs to local school groups and the general public after taking more than a one-year hiatus due to COVID-19. Current projections indicate the number of programs scheduled for delivery in next 12 months will easily surpass the total number realized during the pre-COVID 2018-2019 fiscal year by a considerable margin. The museum looks forward to this resurgence in activity with great anticipation but needs your help to meet the educational needs of local schools and East Central Florida at large in the months and years to come.

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse and Museum offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities to choose from including general tour guides, workshop facilitators, lighthouse ambassadors, special event hosts, and even curatorial support specialists. However, interested individuals are not required to choose one specialty

only. In fact, the museum encourages its volunteer corps members to grow and develop over time by becoming certified in as many categories as they desire. The most popular volunteer opportunities currently include:

❖ **Lighthouse Ambassador:** As a lighthouse ambassador you will represent the lighthouse at the light station and beyond. Typical duties of a lighthouse ambassador include: educating the public about the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, assisting with special events, and participating in community outreach events.

❖ **Lighthouse Educator:** The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum has been nationally recognized for "*setting the standard as the leader in lighthouse education.*" Our lighthouse educators make this possible by conducting school tours, facilitating field trips, collaborating with classroom teachers in developing relevant educational materials, and visiting local schools!

❖ **Curatorial Support:** Our museum's collection is home to thousands of artifacts, documents, books, and photographs. Curatorial support volunteers assist in the digitization of records, processing of historic artifacts, transcription, and organization.

❖ **Volunteer Specialist:** The museum is always looking for people with special skill sets to help in its endeavors. Examples of current volunteer specialist opportunities include: seamstresses and tailors, professional educators, former engineers, carpenters, tradesmen, artists, gardeners, woodworkers and more.

Those wishing to learn more about current volunteer opportunities at the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, as well as scheduled volunteer training sessions are encouraged to contact Programs Manager Zachary Hopple by email at zhopple@ponceinlet.org or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18. Thank You!

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- ‡ Free Admission to the museum and lighthouse during normal hours of operation
- ‡ 10% discount on all regular-priced merchandise in the museum gift shop and online
- ‡ One annual subscription to the Association's quarterly journal *Illuminations*
- ‡ Invitations to special museum events
- ‡ Volunteer Opportunities

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

- General Member..... \$20**
‡ Includes all benefits listed above for one person
- Senior Member..... \$10**
‡ Includes all benefits listed above for one person age 65 years and up
- Student Member..... \$10**
‡ Includes all benefits listed above for one student age 12 years and up with valid student ID
- Family Member..... \$40**
‡ Includes benefits listed above for all members of the immediate family including up to two adults and all children age 18 years and under
‡ Grandchildren are not eligible for inclusion
‡ One membership card issued per family
‡ Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult

- 2nd Assistant Keeper Member..... \$100**
‡ Includes family level member benefits for everyone listed under 2nd Assistant Keeper membership
‡ Recognition in the quarterly journal *Illuminations*
- 1st Assistant Keeper Member..... \$200**
‡ Includes all benefits of 2nd Assistant membership
‡ Two gift general memberships for family & friends
‡ Recognition in the quarterly journal *Illuminations*
- Principal Keeper Member..... \$500**
‡ Includes all benefits of 1st Assistant membership
‡ A personal guided tour of the lighthouse & museum
‡ Recognition in the quarterly journal *Illuminations*
- Corporate Member..... \$500**
‡ Includes all the annual benefits of General or Family level membership for up to 5 company principals
‡ A personal guided tour of the lighthouse & museum
‡ Use of the museum conference room for one meeting
‡ Recognition of the company's support in the quarterly journal *Illuminations* including its corporate logo

FLORIDA DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION NUMBER AND DISCLAIMER:
REGISTRATION #: CH137

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



SELECT MEMBERSHIP TYPE:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GENERAL MEMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> 2ND ASSISTANT KEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT MEMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> 1ST ASSISTANT KEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR MEMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> PRINCIPAL KEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY MEMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> CORPORATE LAMPIST |

MEMBER INFORMATION:

Your Name: _____
 Additional Names: _____

 Company Name (if Corporate): _____

 Email: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____

MAILING ADDRESS:

Street: _____ Unit: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Payment Information:

(Please make checks payable to the "Ponce Inlet Lighthouse")
 Membership Cost: _____ Donation Amount: _____
 Total Amount Due: _____

MAIL COMPLETED FORM WITH ENCLOSED CHECK TO:

PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE
 4931 SOUTH PENINSULA DRIVE
 PONCE INLET, FL 32127

Note: Memberships may also be purchased online with a debit/credit card at www.lighthouselocker.org.

UNIQUE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE GIFT IDEAS!

The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse and Museum gift shop specializes in unique lighthouse and nautical themed merchandise for people of all ages. Our wide selection includes clothing, housewares, toys, games, jewelry, artwork, books, custom lighthouse curios, collectibles, and more. Be sure to view our online selection of merchandise at www.lighthouselocker.org or visit the gift shop in person seven days a week which is open daily at 10:00 AM. Members receive 10% off all regularly priced merchandise throughout the year. Please contact the gift shop via email at giftshop@ponceinlet.org or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 21 for more informations about current offerings.

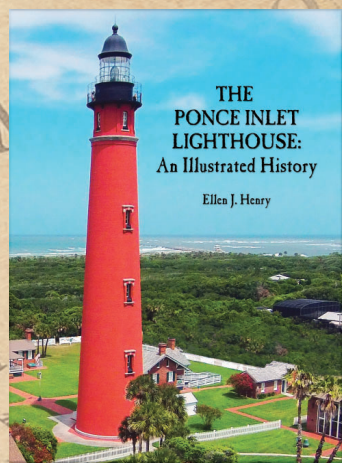


Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Memorial Brick Program

Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Memorial Bricks are a unique and thoughtful way to honor the lives of friends and loved ones or celebrate special events like weddings, birthdays, and annual family

vacations. Each laser-engraved brick features the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse logo and up to three lines of text. Each personalized brick will be installed in the light station's Memorial Walkway leading out onto the historic grounds where it will remain in perpetuity. As an added bonus, a portion of your brick purchase may be tax-deductible. Full-size and miniature duplicates are also available!

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lighthouse Memorial Brick: | Price: \$100 |
| Full-Size Duplicate Memorial Brick: | Price: \$85 (S&H Included) |
| Miniature 1"x3" Duplicate Brick: | Price: \$40 (S&H Included) |



The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse: An Illustrated History

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse: An Illustrated History is the culmination of more than 40 years of research by the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association. Written by museum curator Ellen Henry, this fully illustrated hardback volume is the definitive history of the historic Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station.

Price: \$49.95 (+S&H)



Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Mug

Relax and enjoy a hot cup of coffee, tea, or favorite morning beverage as you sip from this custom designed 12-ounce ceramic mug featuring an antique map of Florida and the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse shining brightly as the sun just begins to rise over the distant horizon. This custom mug also makes the perfect gift for any lighthouse enthusiast.

Price: \$16.99 (+S&H)

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PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE
PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.
4931 South Peninsula Drive
Ponce Inlet, FL 32127
(386) 761-1821
www.ponceinlet.org



"I Climbed" T-Shirt

Been there, done that but don't have the t-shirt to prove it? Show off your lighthouse climbing skills with this custom "I Climbed" t-shirt and let everyone know you completed the 175 ft, 203 step climb to the top! Add \$1.00 to price for size XXL.

Price: \$16.99 (+S&H)

MEMBER COUPON

20% Off Any Single Item

Limit one coupon per member per quarter. Cannot be used with any other discounts or memorial brick purchases

Expires 6/30/2022