



## EXPLORE 175 FEET OF HISTORY ONE STEP AT A TIME

The days when resident lighthouse keepers tended the lens and kept watch for ships in distress are gone forever, yet their lighthouse remains. Completed in 1887, the Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station has guided mariners safely to their destinations for more than 135 years.

During the 1800s, shipwrecks along the east coast of Florida were increasing at an alarming rate. The United States Light-House Establishment (USLHE) determined that a new lighthouse was needed between St. Augustine and Cape Canaveral. The US Lighthouse Board recommended Mosquito (now Ponce De Leon) Inlet, which was known for its strong currents and shifting sandbars, as the prime location for the new lighthouse.



Begun in 1884, the design of the 175-foot tall lighthouse was modification of the USLHE's standard plan for tall masonry towers. First activated on November 1, 1887, the lighthouse was illuminated by kerosene lantern located within a fixed first-order Fresnel lens that was manufactured in Paris, France, by Barbier et Fenestre. In 1933, the tower was electrified and the beacon's characteristic was changed from fixed to flashing by replacing the original first-order lens with a 1905 rotating third-order Fresnel lens.

We invite you to step back in time and discover the fascinating story of the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse, US Lighthouse Service, and more, as you climb to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse, explore the station's historic buildings, and tour the Association's renowned lighthouse museum. Recognized as one of the best-preserved and most-complete lighthouse facilities in the country, the Ponce Inlet Light Station was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1998.



## DISCOVER OVER 140 YEARS OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Located along the Halifax River directly across from the lighthouse, the historic Pacetti Hotel was built by Bartola and Martha Pacetti in 1881. The cost of the hotel's construction was partly-funded with \$400 that the Pacettis earned by selling ten acres of land to the US government for use as a new light station. The hotel quickly earned a reputation as one of the region's best destinations for outdoor enthusiasts and anglers alike thanks to the resort's knowledgeable fishing guides and Mrs. Pacetti's excellent cooking and well-known hospitality. The Pacetti Hotel remained a popular fishing destination until Mrs. Pacetti's death in 1917.



Ownership of the hotel changed hands several time following Martha's passing and was eventually purchased by Olivia Gamble, daughter of James N. Gamble of Proctor and Gamble fame, in 1936. Ms. Gamble renovated the property in the 1930s and used the hotel as a place to host social events and provide lodging for her friends and family. The Pacetti Hotel was inherited by Ms. Gamble's nephew Louis Nippert and his wife Louise following her death in 1961. The Nipperts used the hotel as a summer getaway for many decades and frequently opened its doors to family, friends, and associates including members of the Cincinnati Reds professional baseball team which they owned.

Mrs. Nippert died in 2012 and ownership of the hotel was assumed by the Green Acres Foundation, the Cincinnati-based non-profit organization she had founded. The Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association purchased the property in 2019 and spent more than four years restoring the hotel and transforming it into a public museum. The Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum opened to the public in the summer of 2024. Come on in and explore its fascinating history.

## 1 MAIN ENTRANCE BUILDING & GIFT SHOP

Inspired by plans originally drawn in 1883 for a multi-family dwelling that was never built, the Main Entrance and Gift Shop was constructed in 1992. This building contains public restrooms, a water fountain, the museum's gift shop, and a conference room on the second floor. Admission tickets for both the Lighthouse Museum and Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum can be purchased inside.

## 2 WOODSHED VIDEO THEATER & PRIVY EXHIBIT BUILDING

Firewood and other supplies were kept in this building by the second assistant keeper and his family. It is now home to a theater where you can watch a 20-minute introductory video about the history of the Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station. You will also find a restored privy on the north side of the building.

## 3 CUBAN RAFT OUTDOOR EXHIBIT AREA

It is not unusual for Cuban refugee rafts to come ashore near the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. The rafts in our collection date from 1989 to present. These fragile vessels were built with whatever materials were available to the refugees who used them to cross more than 90 miles of open sea between Cuba and Florida.

## 4 SECOND ASSISTANT KEEPER'S DWELLING

One of the light station's three original keeper dwellings, this building once housed the second assistant keeper and his family and served as Ponce Inlet's first town hall in the 1960s. The structure is now home to multiple museum exhibits that explore the lives of the station's historic keepers and their families, beach racing, and other fascinating areas of Ponce Inlet history.

## 5 PRINCIPAL KEEPER'S DWELLING AND OUTBUILDING

The largest of the light station's three original keeper dwellings, this building was home to the principal keeper and his family. It now houses a variety of exhibits including the Keeper's Office, the 1921 Bathroom Addition, Native Americans in Florida, Filibustering to Cuba, Construction and Restoration of the Light Station, Lighthouses of the World, Reflections on Light, the US Life-Saving Service and US Houses of Refuge, and Lighthouses for Airplanes. The principal keeper's woodshed and privy, located behind the dwelling, is closed to the public.

## 6 LIGHTHOUSE TOWER

The 175-foot tall Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse is the tallest lighthouse in Florida and the second tallest masonry lighthouse in the country. The picturesque tower stands atop a 12-foot deep by 45-foot wide brick foundation and tapers from 32-feet in diameter at its base to 12-feet in diameter directly below the lantern room. The brick walls are eight feet thick at the bottom and two feet thick at the top. Including the nine granite steps at its base, visitors must climb 203 steps to reach the gallery deck high above. The tower's lantern room originally housed a fixed first-order Fresnel lens manufactured in Paris by Barbier et Fenestre. This massive optic was illuminated by a five-concentric-wick kerosene lantern that produced a steady white light that could be seen from up to twenty miles out to sea. The original first-order lens was later replaced by a rotating BB&T third-order Fresnel lens in 1933 when the tower was electrified. The rotating lens produced a unique flash pattern (characteristic) of six flashes every thirty seconds [FL(6)30sec.] The third-order rotating lens remained in operation at the top of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse until 1970 when it was removed by the Coast Guard and shipped away. The lens was later returned, restored by the museum's lens restoration team, and reinstalled at the top of the lighthouse in 2004. The lighthouse continues to operate today as a private aid to navigation.

## 7 PUMP HOUSE

In 1906, an artesian well was dug to the south of the lighthouse. The following year, a windmill and water tower were erected over the well to provide water to the keepers' dwellings. The present building was constructed in 1915 to house a gasoline-powered pump that replaced the windmill which never worked properly. Today, an electric pump provides water from this well for the irrigation of the light station's grounds.

## 8 FIRST ASSISTANT KEEPER'S DWELLING

This dwelling is named in honor of Gladys Meyer Davis, a lifelong resident of Ponce Inlet who was born in this building. Her father, Edward L. Meyer was the station's last US Lighthouse Service civilian principal keeper and its first USCG officer in charge (OIC). The building is furnished as it would have been at the turn of the 20th century including two "kitchen dressers" that were part of the original 1887 design and a table and chairs donated by the Meyer family. The building is closed to the public to protect its historic furnishings but its interior spaces are visible through the windows and viewing panels on the front and back porches.

## 9 GENERATOR BUILDING

The south part of this building was originally used as a storage shed and privy by the first assistant keeper and his family. In 1940, two electric generators were installed inside the storage shed portion of the building to provide electricity for the light station and the US Coast Guard's radio beacon. The north side of the building was constructed by the Coast Guard in 1943 to house the station's radio beacon equipment which was used to guide coastal shipping along the coast during WWII. Exhibits focusing on the First and Second World Wars, along with recreations of the generator room/tool shed and USCG radio beacon room, along with a modern weather station can be found inside this building.



## 14 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Like the gift shop, the administration building was designed to resemble the same architectural style as the multi-family keepers' dwelling that was planned for the Ponce Inlet Light Station but never built. This structure houses the museum's staff offices and maintenance shop as is closed to the public.

## 10 LENS EXHIBIT BUILDING

Named after Preservation Association founding member Ayres Davies, this building was constructed in 1995 to house the museum's extensive collection of historic Fresnel lenses. Inside you will find Ponce Inlet's original 1887 fixed first-order Fresnel lens, Cape Canaveral's rotating first-order Fresnel lens, and many more. Additional artifacts on display include an assortment of small navigational beacons, historic oil lamps, modern lighthouse beacons, and vintage lighthouse keepers' tools.

## 11 USLHS FOG BELL

This 1,000-pound bell was mounted to a sea buoy at the entrance to Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Bells like these were used as fog signals by the Lighthouse Service. Soon after installation, this bell sank in a storm. It was recovered by the US Coast Guard and donated to the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Museum.

## 12 OIL STORAGE BUILDING

Built with a unique double wall ventilation system for safety, this building was one of the first and largest of its kind ever built to house kerosene, which was originally stored in 504 five-gallon cans on shelves inside. The shelves were replaced in the 1920s by two large iron tanks, which remain in the building today. Partially burned by vandals in 1970, the building was restored in 1989. Today it houses examples of minor aids to navigation.

## 13 EDUCATION BUILDING

This building serves as the museum's K-12 education facility. The building is not open to the public unless planned educational activities are scheduled inside.

## 15 COASTAL HAMMOCK

Enjoy a leisurely stroll through a natural hardwood coastal hammock that is home to many species of native Florida flora and fauna. This area is an example of real Florida. Mosquitoes and other animals are present during most months of the year.

TO BECOME A MEMBER, PLEASE FILL OUT THE ENTIRE FORM OR JOIN US ONLINE AT [WWW.LIGHTHOUSELOCKER.ORG](http://WWW.LIGHTHOUSELOCKER.ORG).

### SELECT TYPE/LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP:

- GENERAL ..... \$20
- SENIOR ..... \$10
- STUDENT (w/I.D.) ..... \$10
- FAMILY ..... \$40
- 2ND ASSISTANT KEEPER ..... \$100
- 1ST ASSISTANT KEEPER ..... \$200
- PRINCIPAL KEEPER ..... \$500
- CORPORATE LAMPIST ..... \$500

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

For Family Membership: List the name(s) of a second adult (parent/guardian) and immediate children (under 18 yrs.).

Adult/Parent: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Children: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (List any additional children on separate piece of paper.)

A member of the museum's staff will contact higher level members (First Assistant & Principal Keepers and Corporate Lampist) to assist with processing gift memberships or names of corporate principals.

Membership Fee Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail Completed Form and Payment to:

Ponce Inlet Lighthouse  
4931 South Peninsula Drive, Ponce Inlet, FL 32127  
(If mailing payment, please use checks only. No cash or credit card information)

REGISTRATION #: CH137 A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITH THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

**JOIN THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION**

**A GENERAL ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:**

- Free Admission to both the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Museum and Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum during regular hours of operation.
- 10% off the retail cost of all gift shop merchandise excluding discounted items and memorial bricks.
- Subscription to the Association's journal *Illuminations*.
- Invitations to member-only events as scheduled.
- Volunteer opportunities

**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS & INCLUDED BENEFITS:**

- ◇ **GENERAL MEMBER**  
- The benefits listed above for one individual
- ◇ **SENIOR MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a General Member for one individual (Ages 62 years and older)
- ◇ **STUDENT MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a General Member for one student with ID
- ◇ **FAMILY MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a General Member for immediate family  
- Includes up to two adults and their children (ages 0-18 yrs)  
- Up to two adult membership cards with children's names  
- Children under 12 yrs. must be accompanied by an adult
- ◇ **SECOND ASSISTANT KEEPER MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a General or Family Member  
- Recognition of your Second Assistant Keeper status in the Association's quarterly journal *Illuminations*.
- ◇ **FIRST ASSISTANT KEEPER MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a Second Assistant Keeper Member  
- Two gift General Memberships  
- Recognition of your First Assistant Keeper status in the Association's quarterly journal *Illuminations*.
- ◇ **PRINCIPAL KEEPER MEMBER**  
- All privileges of a First Assistant Keeper Member  
- Personal guided tour of the lighthouse and museums  
- Recognition of your Principal Keeper status in the Association's quarterly journal *Illuminations*.
- ◇ **CORPORATE LAMPIST**  
- General Member privileges for five company principals.  
- Use of museum's conference room for one annual meeting with up to twenty attendees including personal guided tour  
- Recognition of your Corporate Lampist status in the Association's quarterly journal *Illuminations*.



**THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHT STATION AND MUSEUM & CONSTANCE D. HUNTER HISTORIC PACETTI HOTEL MUSEUM**

**MAINTAINED AND OPERATED BY**

**THE 501(c)(3) NOT-FOR-PROFIT PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.**

THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION CURRENTLY RECEIVES ZERO TAX-FUNDED SUPPORT AT THE LOCAL, STATE, OR NATIONAL LEVEL. FUNDING FOR THE ASSOCIATION'S ONGOING EFFORTS TO RESTORE, PRESERVE, AND INTERPRET THESE TWO HISTORIC PROPERTIES IS GENERATED ALMOST ENTIRELY IN-HOUSE THROUGH THE SALE OF DAILY ADMISSIONS AND GIFT SHOP MERCHANDISE, ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES, AND PRIVATE DONATIONS. GRANT FUNDING MAY BE PURSUED WHEN APPROPRIATE.

**THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.**

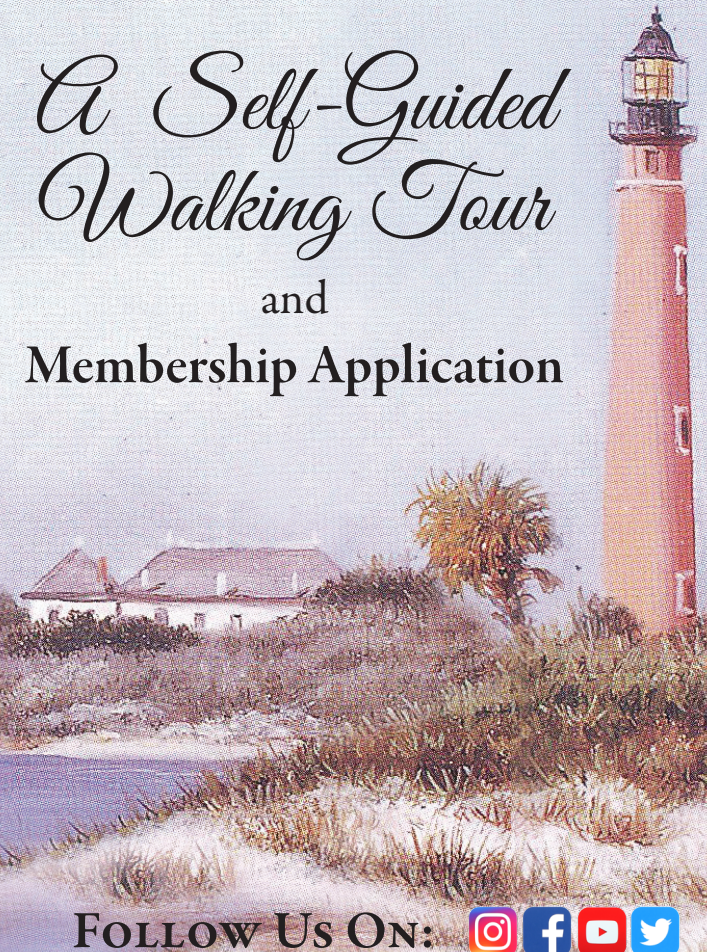
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**PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM**

**-AND- CONSTANCE D. HUNTER HISTORIC PACETTI HOTEL MUSEUM**

*A Self-Guided Walking Tour*  
and  
**Membership Application**



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**1 CONSTANCE D. HUNTER HISTORIC PACETTI HOTEL**

Constructed by Florida pioneers Bartola and Martha Pacetti in 1881, this hotel once served as a popular fishing resort in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The property was purchased and renovated by Olivia Gamble, daughter of James Gamble of Procter and Gamble fame, in the 1930s. The building displays various characteristics of its original cracker style of architecture. The hotel was inherited by Ms. Gamble's nephew Louis Nippert and his wife Louise following Ms. Gamble's death in 1961. The Nipperts used the hotel as coastal getaway for more than 40 years. Louis and his wife Louise were well-known Cincinnati socialites and philanthropists who frequently invited family and friends to stay with them at the hotel whenever they were there. They would also invite the players and staff of the Cincinnati Reds professional baseball team, which they owned, to visit the hotel to celebrate and unwind at the end of annual spring training.

The Pacetti Hotel was purchased by Association in 2019, seven years after the death of Mrs. Nippert in 2012. The Association spent more than four years restoring the hotel and developing it into a museum.

This extensive restoration project was partially funded by a grant from the Paul B. Hunter and Constance D. Hunter Charitable Foundation. The hotel is now home to numerous museum exhibits focusing on the history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, the Pacetti hotel, the Town of Ponce Inlet, and the local Florida region.

The Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum is named in Mrs. Hunter's honor. We invite you to come inside and learn the fascinating history of the Hotel and the men and women who built it and once called it home.

**2 PACETTI HOTEL HISTORIC SEAWALL**

The concrete sea wall that now protects the hotel's shoreline was constructed by Olivia Gamble in the 1930s. It replaced an earlier seawall made from palmetto logs that was built by the Pacettis in the late 1800s. Although the original palmetto seawall no longer exists, evidence of the logs, driven vertically into the bottom of the Halifax River, can still be seen during extreme low tides.

**4 PACETTI HOTEL WATER TOWER BUILDING**

The unique frustum-shaped building once served as a water tower for the Pacetti Hotel. Originally topped with a large cylindrical wood water tank, this structure provided gravity-fed drinking water to the hotel's owners and its guests. The tank was later removed when electrical water pumps were introduced. This building was restored and rehabilitated during the Preservation Association's four-year restoration project. It now serves as the museum's ADA-compliant public restroom facility.

**3 PACETTI HOTEL PIER AND DOCK**

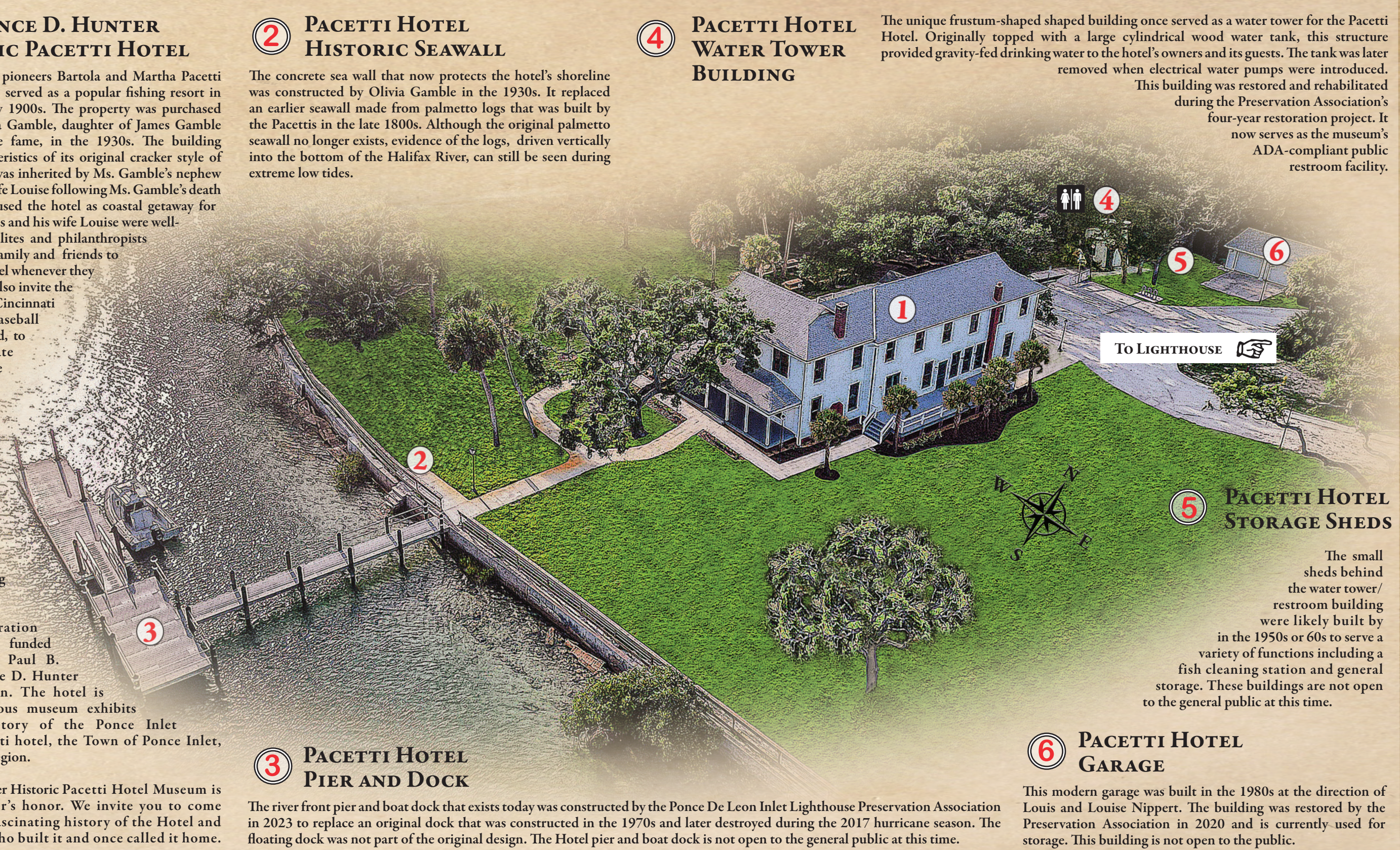
The river front pier and boat dock that exists today was constructed by the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association in 2023 to replace an original dock that was constructed in the 1970s and later destroyed during the 2017 hurricane season. The floating dock was not part of the original design. The Hotel pier and boat dock is not open to the general public at this time.

**6 PACETTI HOTEL GARAGE**

This modern garage was built in the 1980s at the direction of Louis and Louise Nippert. The building was restored by the Preservation Association in 2020 and is currently used for storage. This building is not open to the public.

**5 PACETTI HOTEL STORAGE SHEDS**

The small sheds behind the water tower/restroom building were likely built by in the 1950s or 60s to serve a variety of functions including a fish cleaning station and general storage. These buildings are not open to the general public at this time.



**DONATE TODAY!**  
DONATION BOXES ARE LOCATED IN BUILDINGS 5 & 10.  
OR  
ASK A SALES ASSOCIATE FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE GIFT SHOP.

**Support Us: Five Ways to Give**

There are many ways to support the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association and its ongoing efforts to restore, preserve, and interpret the historic Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum. Please review the following support programs to see which are the best for you. Thank you for your support.

- ◇ **BECOME A MEMBER:** Support the Preservation Association by becoming a member and start enjoying membership benefits all year long.
- ◇ **MAKE A DONATION:** Support the Association by donating to either the General Museum Fund or Lighthouse Endowment Fund.
- ◇ **VOLUNTEER:** We can't do it without you. Support the Association by becoming a volunteer.
- ◇ **MEMORIAL BRICK:** Support the Association with the purchase of a personalized memorial brick for family, friends, and loved ones.
- ◇ **COLLECTIONS DONATION:** The curatorial department collects and preserves artifacts relevant to the history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, Pacetti Hotel, and local Florida region. Don't throw that artifact or historic document/photo away. Inquire about donating it to the museum instead.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**