Conover Beacon - Preservation Committee News

by Tom Laverty

The Preservation Committee is off to a rousing start! After being formed by the Chapter in June, 1993, the committee set out to establish goals and projects. Tom Laverty, the committee chair, established three regions in the state to coordinate the chapter’s preservation activities. Each region has a coordinator who helps identify, organize and serve as liaison for projects relating to the preservation of lighthouses. The regional coordinators are: Fred Theis, for Southern New Jersey, which includes the lighthouses at East Point, Hereford Inlet, Cape May, Tinicum, and Finns Point; Alvin Brown for Central New Jersey and the lighthouses at Absecon, Barnegat and Sea Girt; Ted Panayotoff for Northern New Jersey, which has Twin Lights, Sandy Hook, Conover, and offshore lights in the approaches to New York Harbor.

Once the regional coordinators were in place the committee quickly selected some priority preservation projects. High on the priority list were East Point Lighthouse and the Conover Beacon. Fred Theis has been coordinating chapter manpower to assist the folks at East Point Lighthouse with their work days. The next work day is scheduled for Saturday, June 18, 1994. Any chapter member interested in helping should contact Fred at (609) 564-2451 for further information.

The committee also wants to launch efforts to preserve the Conover Beacon in Leonardo. Ted Panayotoff took on the job of tracking down ownership of the light. After many letters and phone calls it was determined that the Coast Guard still owned the beacon and Middletown Township owned the parcel of land surrounding the lighthouse.

The Coast Guard indicated to Ted that they would be happy to give the New Jersey Chapter ownership of the lighthouse, if the chapter could give them a plan for how the lighthouse would be preserved and maintained over the years. Ted also received assurances from the Coast Guard that they will contact the chapter if a decision regarding the lighthouse is made prior to the chapter making a formal request for ownership.

Conover Beacon, (a.k.a. Chapel Hill Front Range Light), Leonardo, New Jersey.

Photo by Ted Panayotoff

Ted made a report to the Preservation Committee following the general meeting in March. The consensus of the committee was that the chapter should make an effort to preserve the Conover Beacon. The question was: How? Several alternatives were discussed, such as trying to approach Middletown Township about putting up a fence and making the area into a park. However, it was felt that parking and other visitor amenities would be difficult due to the neighborhood that surrounds the lighthouse. Ted Panayotoff and Tom Laverty have both looked at the
lighthouse and found it to be in a deteriorating condition. Much of the metal structure has rusted due to the corrosive salt air. Flooding from Sandy Hook Bay during the last couple of years has not helped. Vandals have ripped away pieces of iron work, and graffiti is everywhere. There is evidence that local youths have been building bonfires in the base of the tower. Sitting where it does, the Conover Beacon has little protection against nature and unsympathetic individuals.

A second alternative, moving the lighthouse, seems to be the best solution. For some time, the committee members have wondered if the lighthouse could be moved to state marina property, a few blocks away, in Leonardo. It was decided to pursue this option. Ted was asked to arrange a meeting with state officials and the Chapter. On April 28, 1994, Ted, Chapter President Jack Granger, and Tom Laverty, Chapter Vice President/Preservation Committee Chairman, met with the Supervisor for State Marinas and the Superintendent of the Leonardo Marina. The state officials were very interested in our proposal. They even suggested a site where the lighthouse could be placed on marina property. The only catch is that we will have to plan how to move the lighthouse to state property by ourselves. Due to the state's budget difficulties, there is no way the state marinas can financially assist the chapter.

Our next step is to contact someone with experience in moving buildings to see what steps need to be taken. If any chapter members have that expertise or know of someone who would be willing to meet Ted and Tom at the Conover Beacon to give us an idea of what is involved, please let us know. Ted can be reached at (908) 876-4831 and Tom Laverty at (908) 872-1814 or (908) 872-2966. Cost will be a major factor in the move. The chapter may have to solicit donated services, apply for grants and/or launch a major fund-raiser. A new cement pad would have to be built at the marina as a base for the tower. The tower will have to be stripped of old paint and repainted and security concerns will have to be addressed. We will have our work cut out for us.

Once we have an idea of what is needed to move the lighthouse and decide if the chapter can undertake the responsibility, we will make a proposal to the Coast Guard for ownership. This will be a long process. Stay tuned!

St. Marks and Other Florida Gulf Coast Lighthouses

By Ted and Jo Panayotoff

A visit to Tallahassee, Florida, last Christmas gave us the opportunity to visit several lighthouses along the Gulf Coast of the Florida panhandle. There are no lighthouses accessible without using a boat north of Gasparilla Island until you reach the St. Marks Light, south of Tallahassee. The lighthouses north of Gasparilla Island at Edgmont Key, Anclote Key and Seahorse Key are all on offshore islands. Between St. Marks, Florida, and Port St. Joe, Florida, to the west, there are four accessible lighthouses and one offshore light at Cape St. George. We visited the four on the mainland. The one remaining Florida lighthouse, further west at Pensacola, we left for another trip south.

The St. Marks Lighthouse

About 22 miles south of Tallahassee, Florida, is the
small town of St. Marks. In pre-Civil War days this was a very active port with a railroad – the first in Florida – connecting it with the state capital at Tallahassee.

Due to the importance of the town as a port, the citizens of the area petitioned Congress to erect a lighthouse to mark the mouth of the river. The project was approved and the St. Marks lighthouse was completed in 1829 by Winslow Lewis. There was an immediate problem however: the lighthouse tower walls were hollow, not solid as specified in the contract, and the District Superintendent would not accept it. Another contractor, Calvin Knowlton, was hired to rebuild it correctly with solid walls and he finished the job in January, 1831. The first keeper, Samuel Crosby, was appointed in 1830 and served 9 years.

Mr. Knowlton’s skill as a lighthouse builder must have been satisfactory, because, when it was decided to move the tower to a more secure location in 1841, he got the contract. Further testimony to Mr. Knowlton’s skill and integrity was evident in September, 1843, when a major hurricane hit the area and destroyed all the structures at the site except the lighthouse. The keeper at that time was J.P. Mungerford, he and his family survived in the tower, but others who sought refuge in the keeper’s house were drowned. The destroyed house was replaced by the present attached house the same year.

The 80 ft. tower, which was converted from Argand type reflector lamps to a single lamp Fresnel lens prior to the 1860’s, survived an Indian scare during the Seminole Indian Wars and an attack by a Federal gunboat during the Civil War. In March. 1865, Confederate troops guarding the lighthouse were forced to retreat inland by Union troops which had landed to attack Tallahassee. The Confederate troops tried to destroy the tower by blowing it up but failed, thanks again to Mr. Knowlton. They didn’t give up however, and in order to disable the light the lens is supposed to have been buried nearby. The scratches and nicks that one can see on it today are said to be the result of that activity. The tower was repaired and the lighthouse returned to operation in January, 1867.

After the Civil War, the area gradually changed, with the cotton and sugar plantations being replaced by timber and related industries. The railroad eventually closed down and in 1931 much of the surrounding area became the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. One family witnessed all those changes and supplied keepers for the St. Marks lighthouse from 1892 until 1959. Charles Fine began as keeper in 1892, and was followed by his wife, Sara, in 1904. One of the Fine’s daughters, Lela, married John Y. Gresham, at the St. Marks lighthouse in 1909. John Gresham first worked on the railroad but then joined the Lighthouse Service and was assigned to another Florida lighthouse at Cape San Blas. In 1918, J.Y. Gresham and his family moved to the St. Marks lighthouse. Mr. Gresham served as the keeper until his death in 1957. He was replaced by his son Alton for 18 months, until the light was finally automated. J.Y. Gresham raised a family of eight, six girls and two boys, at the lighthouse. During our stay in Tallahassee, we had the unique opportunity to spend several hours with Mrs. Vera Roberts, one of the Gresham’s daughters. We have described that visit in a separate article (page 6).

The St. Marks lighthouse, with its attached four room keeper’s house, is located at the end of Rt. 59 on the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge. Until the road was built in 1936, the Greshams had to go by boat to St. Marks to leave the station. The St. Marks light is still active under the supervision of the Coast Guard ANT (Aids to Navigation Team) at Panama City, Florida.

The keeper’s house is used as the headquarters of Flotilla 1-2 of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. It was through the generous hospitality of these two organizations that we had access to the lighthouse and keeper’s house during our visit. Our hosts were Petty Officer Quenien Mills, who is the “Lighthouse Keeper” at ANT Panama City, and Flotilla Commander Leroy Means of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. We had full access to the very well maintained tower and keeper’s house. We were able to climb the wooden stairs of the tower to the watch room and go up the short iron ladder to the lantern to see the original lens made by Henry La Paute — A. Paris. The attached keeper’s house has four rooms which were all in a row. Attached to the tower was a living room, followed by two bedrooms and a kitchen on the far end. There is also a small oil “room” at the base of the tower which is unusual because oil storage areas were usually in a separate building. The walls of the masonry tower are four feet thick at the base and taper to 18 inches at the top. The foundation extends down 12 feet and is said to consist of material taken from an old Spanish fort at St. Marks. The lighthouse was electrified in 1935 and automated in 1960. The base of the tower now has an emergency generator which P.O. Mills tested during our visit.

Under normal circumstances, the lighthouse and keeper’s house are not open to the public, however, since the Coast Guard Auxiliary is active at the site, one might catch the keeper’s house open on weekends during the summer. At the Visitor’s Center on the way into the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge there is a display on the lighthouse as well as some informational pamphlets and postcards.

**Crooked River Lighthouse**

The next lighthouse going west is the Crooked River Lighthouse at Carrabelle, FL. It is located just west of the Crooked River Bridge at the end of a narrow dirt road about 100 yards north of US Rt 98. There is a small Coast Guard sign at the entrance to the dirt road. The project to build a lighthouse at Crooked River was begun in 1888, as a replacement for the offshore Dog Island Light, which had
been destroyed by encroachment and a hurricane in 1873. This latter lighthouse was the last in a series of three on Dog Island dating from 1838. The money approved to rebuild the offshore light was not spent, and after considerable delay, the Crooked River Lighthouse on the mainland was begun in 1894. It was first lit in 1895.

Cape San Blas Lighthouse

Cape San Blas is at the tip of the area that extends into the Gulf of Mexico between Apalachicola, FL, and Panama City, FL, to the west. The Cape and the shoal which extends south of it at the southern end of the St. Joseph Peninsula were constant dangers to coastal shipping.

This general location has been a very difficult one for lighthouses. Since 1847 there have been several built there. The present Cape San Blas Lighthouse is the fourth in the unlucky series. The first Cape San Blas Lighthouse was built in 1847, and lasted four years until a storm destroyed it in 1851. The second was built in 1856 and fared even worse, being destroyed the same year it was built. The Lighthouse Board was determined to conquer nature and built a third lighthouse in 1859. This lighthouse lasted 23 years despite an attempt by Confederate troops to burn it down during the Civil War. In 1882, it too fell into the sea, having been undermined by erosion. For the fourth and final lighthouse the Board chose a skeleton tower structure to facilitate future moves due to the continued beach erosion. This proved to be good planning because by 1894, the lighthouse was actually in the surf and the keeper’s house had been destroyed. Planning began for a 1 1/2 mile move north and in 1895 a new foundation and new keeper’s house were almost completed at the new site. At this point the project funds ran out and the idea of a major move was abandoned for a more modest move. By 1918,

Crooked River Lighthouse
Photo by Ted & Jo Panayotoff

Again, we owe P.O. Mills of the ANT Panama City our thanks for arranging for us to have access to the lighthouse. It is still an active light and under his care. The red and white skeleton tower puts the light at 115 feet above sea level. At one time it had a Fourth Order lens; however, it now has a modern plastic lantern.

The original light station included two single-story keeper’s houses and an oil house. Some of the foundations and walks for the keeper’s houses can still be seen. We were able to climb to the top of the tower and see some of the details of that type of lighthouse structure. One interesting feature was a series of glass view ports in the floor of the lantern room which we assume were to give a view of the light from the watch room below. The other interesting feature was that all the pieces of the central column structure were stamped on the inside with an identifying sequential number, presumably to aid in the assembly at the site.

Our visit was very enjoyable in spite of the light rain which fell the entire time. We appreciate the time spent on our behalf by P.O. Mills and the support from the Officer in Charge of ANT Panama City which made our visit to the Crooked River Lighthouse possible.
the lighthouse was moved again, this time to its present location.

The lighthouse is accessible from SR 30 which turns into SR 30E going toward the St. Joseph Peninsula. Look for an Air Force range tracking facility on your right and then bear left at the next fork. The lighthouse is located on an inactive part of the Air Force Station. We were lucky to be there when the gate was open to accommodate a crew of young men doing archeological research. They were very interested in the lighthouse and borrowed our books to take notes in exchange for allowing us access to the area to take photos.

The white skeleton lighthouse tower puts the lantern 101 ft. above sea level and is, we believe, unique of the skeleton type in that the tower entrance is above the ground level. Judging from its history this was a very useful design feature. The tower was newly painted when we were there and it appears that the original clamshell lens is still installed and operating. The site includes two two-story keeper’s houses and an oil house. Sad to say these structures are somewhat the worse for wear. The Coast Guard also operated a LORAN station at the site and was there in the mid 1970’s and possibly later. If you don’t have our luck and are concerned about trespassing on government property you can still get a good view and pictures of the lighthouse from outside the fence.

St. Joseph Bay Lighthouse

Stretching northwest from Cape San Blas, between the mainland and St. Joseph Peninsula is St. Joseph Bay. The town of Port St. Joe near the northwestern end was a thriving port in the early 1800’s. In 1838, the constitutional convention to draft Florida’s first state constitution was held there. Also, in 1838, a lighthouse was built on the northern end of the St. Joseph Peninsula to mark the opening to the bay for shipping to Port St. Joe. This lighthouse had a 50 ft. tower and 14 Argand-type lamps.

In 1841, there was a devastating yellow fever epidemic in Port St. Joe which either killed or drove away most of the inhabitants. A short while later, a hurricane did extensive damage to the town. These two blows greatly reduced Port St. Joe’s importance so that when the Cape San Blas lighthouse was lighted in 1847, the lighthouse on the St. Joseph Peninsula was discontinued. The storm in 1851 that destroyed the first Cape San Blas light also destroyed the abandoned St. Joseph Bay light.

In 1867, the Lighthouse Board started to request funds for a new light to mark the entrance to the bay but it wasn’t until 1902 that a new St. Joseph Bay Lighthouse was built; this time on the mainland west of Port St. Joe at Beacon Hill. This lighthouse operated until 1960 when it was replaced by a light on a skeleton tower.

The lighthouse was abandoned until 1979 when it was purchased for use as a private home. It was subsequently moved to Simmons Bayou east of Port St. Joe on US 98. Sadly the lantern was removed sometime during this process. This lighthouse is a two story dwelling with the watch room and lantern on the roof. The second story, with its double stairway and surrounding porch, was the living area. The first floor was used for storerooms and a large rainwater cistern, not unlike many beachfront houses today. The lighthouse was on a small hill which put the light 96 ft. above sea level. We had no trouble locating the original site of the lighthouse about 10 miles west of Port St. Joe just east of Mexico Beach, FL. The skeleton tower is quite prominent on the landward side of US 98. The original lighthouse is more difficult to spot because without its lantern it looks more like a typical Florida beachfront home than a former lighthouse. It is now located about 5 mi. east of Port St. Joe on the Gulf side of US 98 just past a fish camp (going west) at Indian Pass. If you know when and where to look, it is easily seen from the road. Since it is private property, we limited our photography to a shot from the driveway.

![St. Joseph Bay Lighthouse](image)

We would like to finish our article with another note of thanks to P.O. Mills and the ANT Panama City and the Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 1-2 for providing access to the St. Marks and Crooked River Lighthouses. We also want to thank Mrs. Vera Roberts for the time she spent with us recounting her experiences while growing up at the St. Marks lighthouse.

For further information on these Florida lighthouses and additional photos, the following references are available:
Growing up at the St. Marks Light – A Visit With Mrs. Vera Roberts

by Ted & Jo Panayotoff

Those of us who are enchanted with lighthouses often find ourselves day-dreaming about what it must have been like to live in one. This past December, we had the good fortune to meet someone who did. Her name is Vera Roberts. She is the third of eight children born to Lela Fine Gresham and John Young Gresham.

Until she was three years old, Vera lived at the light station at Cape San Blas. At that time, her father was transferred to St. Marks. I asked Mrs. Roberts what her earliest memory of St. Marks was and without hesitation she answered, "the beach." At Cape San Blas, she was not allowed to go into the water because it was too rough, but at St. Marks, with its sandy flats, she could play on the beach and wade in the water. She talked about daily life at the light station, and how each child had responsibilities. One daughter did the cooking and cleaning, the boys helped their father with the maintenance of the light station and Vera’s job was to care for her four younger sisters. Every Saturday, the older children scrubbed, rinsed and dried the white pine floors.

Many people come to visit the light and the children would give tours. While most of the visitors were duck and goose hunters, sometimes famous people came. Once Governor Carey Hardee came from Tallahassee, and the Ringlings, of the famous Ringling Brothers, would come by yacht from Sarasota.

During the winter in the evenings, Mr. Gresham would teach the children their lessons. He was an avid reader and subscribed to many magazines; his favorite being "National Geographic." The children were required to read those magazines and describe to him what they had read. Mr. Gresham used flash cards to teach math and Vera remembers that she knew her times tables by the time she was five years old. They also learned from listening to "Lowell Thomas" on the radio every evening. In the summer, their father would hire a tutor from the North as he wanted them to speak "properly." He would advertise in Northern newspapers and would pay half the salary, $30 a month, while the government paid the additional half. The children’s teachers were a very important part of their childhood for they not only taught academics but they also brought a different perspective of the world beyond St. Marks. Most of the time, the teacher was a woman. She would share with them experiences like going to the movies or to parties, about having neighbors and boyfriends. She told them about things they had only read about but had never experienced. She would teach the girls about clothing styles and how to fix their hair prettily. Their teachers were equally fascinated by the way the Greshams lived at the light. The children taught them how to row and sail and fish. Learning was a shared experience for both student and teacher. One summer when Vera was thirteen years old, a young tutor, E. W. Roberts, came to St. Marks. She didn’t care for him very much at all because he was so strict. But Wilbur Roberts liked the area so much he decided to stay and took a job teaching school in town. Ten years later when Vera was twenty three, she and Wilbur Roberts were married in the living room where he had taught her and her brothers and sisters their lessons at the St. Marks Lighthouse.

Having visited the lighthouse and keeper’s quarters previous to our visit with Mrs. Roberts, I couldn’t imagine how so many people lived in those four rooms. There was a living room, followed by the two bedrooms, with the kitchen on the far end. All the rooms were sized about the same. She explained that the boys and tutor (if a man)
would sleep on bunks in the base of the lighthouse which was connected to the living room.

As I listened to Vera, I began to realize that I wasn’t hearing anything about her mother. It seems her mother found the isolation of the light station too much to bear and would go to the town of St. Marks to her sister’s to stay for long periods of time. I asked Vera if she ever felt lonely or deprived and she just came alive as she exclaimed, “No, there was always something to do, something to explore, some adventure...and we were so free.” Then she related some funny stories about what they would do when their father went to town. The two boys, Alton and J.Y., would roll the piano out the door and down the porch steps on boards to the front yard. Then they would signal with the flag to their fishing buddies who would come in and the party would begin. They would fry fish and play the piano and sing. Because of their strict Christian upbringing they mostly only knew how to play hymns.

She also told about how they would pretend to be Greek spongers. The Greek spongers from Tarpon Springs would put in at the mouth of the river to wait out the storms. They would cook their food and eat it all out of the same pot with everyone sitting on the deck around it. This of course captured the imaginations of the children and they would pretend to be Greek spongers by eating their food seated on the ground around a big pot as well.

I asked if there had been any memorable storms while she lived there and she said there were many storms but none that caused any particular damage. When there was a storm, they would all sit on the front porch where they each had their own rocker and watch the yard “breathe”. It seems that the wind would blow the giant live oak, causing the tree to sway and its roots to heave the earth, making the yard appear to breathe. She recalled stories of the war years when the Coast Guard was stationed there, and the CCC Camp boys who were there when the road that connected the St. Marks Light Station and surrounding Wildlife Refuge to “civilization”, was built in 1936. As she talked, she showed us pictures of the Coast Guard boys with whom the family kept in touch and newspaper articles written about the light and its keepers. Her soft melodic voice with just a touch of Southern accent had us mesmerized and before we realized it, we had spent over two hours sitting at her cozy dining room table.

It’s difficult to recall all the specifics, but the sense we came away with was that even though the work was hard, life at St. Marks for Vera was never boring or lonely but was wonderfully free.

Charlotte - Genessee Lighthouse

by George M. Feirer, Historian

Located on what can presently be described as the backyard of the Holy Cross Church stands a glorious remainder of lake port navigation. The current address is 70 Lighthouse Street, Rochester, New York, but when erected, the Village of Charlotte (pronounced as “shailor,” the herb that looks like an onion) held sway. Rochester in the intervening years gradually enveloped the village.

Schooners exiting the port, located at the mouth of the Genessee River, loaded down with barrels of flour, pork, whiskey and potash - and an occasional passenger - finally alerted Congress to establish the Genessee Customs District in 1805. Increasing traffic, and the formation of sand bars at the river mouth brought the need for artificial guidance into the safe port. This was first satisfied by ticing lamps to trees (then called “pilot trees”) and adding one at the top of the Commercial Hotel, which in 1810 was the tallest structure in the area.

The 1820 session of Congress responded to need and appropriated $5,000 for a lighthouse to be built “near the mouth of the Genessee.” The site chosen was Lot 28, on the west side of the river, owned by Mehitabel Hincher, a widow. She received $400 from the U.S. Government, but
only after New York's Governor DeWitt Clinton, on February 8, 1822, signed an official authorization to cede jurisdiction of the land from the state to the federal government. (Who said bureaucracy is something new?) Two weeks before, John M. Canfield, Collector of Customs at Sachet's Harbor, asked for bids for building the lighthouse, lantern, dwelling and well (There was a man with confidence). How many responses received is not known, but Ashbel Symonds got the contract in April of that year and was paid $3,301 for "doing and performing the work and finding the materials."

The octagonal stone lighthouse was to be forty feet high from grade to the top of the stone walls. It was to have four windows, each with twelve panes of glass. The stone wall of the tower was to be four feet six inches thick at the foundation, reducing to two feet at the top. The base had a diameter of twenty-three feet and the top a diameter of eleven. The top deck, made of stone, extended one foot out around the rim of the tower, and upon this rested the lantern. Shaped octagonally, as was the tower, the lantern had eighteen lights in each panel and was covered by a dome-shaped roof.

Symonds, agreeing to complete the tower by September of 1822, was also directed to "fit up said lighthouse... with Patent Lamps and reflectors, in number and size suitable to the extent of the Lantern and with Tin Butts to contain the oil, the number and size as well as of the lens and Reflectors shall be determined by Winslow Lewis, and all the other necessary apparatus in the same manner as the Light Houses in the United States have been fitted up by the said Winslow Lewis..." Twelve years before, Winslow Lewis had convinced the United States Government to use his patented lamp and reflector system in all of the country's lighthouses. As principal lighthouse contractor, he not only built and equipped the nation's lighthouses, he also supplied the whale oil to light them (the Sherman Anti-Trust Act had not yet been enacted).

The first Keeper's House (no longer in existence) was a one-story stone dwelling, twenty by thirty-four feet in dimension and eight feet high at the eaves. It contained two rooms with a probable sleeping area under the roof. This did not prove adequate as the first keeper (Giles Holden, 1822-1834) saw fit to build an addition on the west side of the house. By 1863, this keeper's house had deteriorated to the point that it was no longer habitable. The new house consists of a two and one half-story main section with a one-story kitchen on the west side. This brick building rests upon a stone foundation. There are six main rooms on the first floor, a kitchen, pantry, sitting room, parlor, entrance hall and oil storeroom. The second floor has three bedrooms and the half-story attic has an additional two bedrooms. This is essentially what exists today. The only major modification was the removal of a closed passageway leading to the lighthouse tower sometime in the late 1890's.

Evolution also took place within and concerning the lantern. On November 3, 1858, an article in the Rochester Union and Advertiser tells of the alterations. The tower received an interior lining of brick, the original wooden stairs were replaced by a cast iron spiral stairway, a new cut-stone coping was installed at the top of the tower and that was surmounted by a cast iron deck plate. A new lantern was installed complete with a 4th order Fresnel Lens.

The light in the tower was discontinued in 1881 and the lens was moved to the beacon at the end of the west pier. In 1884 the entire lantern was moved to the end of the pier as well.

The lighthouse tower seemed to be on a slide to oblivion when the Coast Guard, in 1965, considered tearing it down in order to improve the radius of the railroad track at the foot of the bluff. Fortunately for all of us interested in lighthouses, the students at Charlotte High School raised a hue and cry, enlisted other local townspeople, and the plan was abandoned. In 1974, the lighthouse was placed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and was declared a City Landmark. The U.S. Coast Guard used the keeper's house as a residence for the C.E.O. of the Charlotte C.G. Station until 1982 when it outlived its usefulness and they offered to lease it to the community for a museum. The Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Historical Society was established to run the site. In 1989, the property was transferred to the County of Monroe from the Coast Guard and on February 15, 1991, the Lighthouse Historical Society signed a twenty-year lease to restore, preserve and promote the site.

The lantern has been replaced with an accurate reproduction of the one that was removed, and continuing restoration goes on. At present a 4th order Fresnel lens, on loan from the Cleveland Coast Guard Station is installed in the lantern. This is well worth a visit as the site is open to the public. The grounds are open all of the time and the museum, gift shop and tower are open during regular hours. A caretaker is in the residence, but does leave the area from time to time. I suggest that a call in advance would be worthwhile, and winter visits might be a bit uncomfortable as they would be anywhere along the lake front.

Bibliography:


Requiem for a Lightship: WLV-189's Last Journey

(Photos by Nancy Hackney)
The Lighthouse Collector

By Jo and Ted Panayotoff

As we all know, collecting lighthouse items has a tendency to expand to cover many related areas and Jo and I are also victims of that syndrome. To reflect this expanded scope we have changed our short column to "The Lighthouse Collector" and from time to time we will share information about various lighthouse collectible items that we have run across. This issue will cover Cat's Meow Village Lighthouses.

Cat's Meow Lighthouses - (l-r) Sandy Hook, Hereford Inlet, Finns Point, East Point, Barnegat, & Cape May.

Photo by Ted Panayotoff

Cat's Meow Village is a series of painted wooden buildings and accessories produced for the past 12 years by F.I. Designs of Wooster, Ohio. You have probably seen these in many craft-type shops. Their "standard" product line includes 10 lighthouses and a lightship. Four of the lighthouses and the lightship are new this year. The "standard" Cat's Meow lighthouses are: Sandy Hook, Cape Hatteras, Split Rock, and Admiralty Head of the 1990 lighthouse series; Lorain Lighthouse of the 1987 nautical series (now retired) and Portland Head of the 1987 Christmas series. Due to its limited production the latter is very valuable, worth over $250. This year's lighthouses are all on the West Coast; Mukilteo, Heceta Head, East Brother and Point Pinos. The lightship is RELIEF and looks like the United States Lighthouse Society's lightship in San Francisco.

If this was the full extent of the Cat's Meow line its interest to us lighthouse buffs would be limited; however, they also produce a second line of pieces called "custom designs." These pieces are commissioned by individual dealers, are sold only by that dealer, and depict buildings in the dealer's local area. This "custom" line contains nearly 100 lighthouses, lightships and lifesaving stations. When you join the Cat's Meow Collector's Club you get a listing for all these "custom pieces" and information on the sponsoring dealer so you can get the pieces via mail order. Of local interest, there are Cat's Meow custom pieces of Barnegat, Cape May, Hereford Inlet, East Point and Finns Point. To distinguish them in the store, the custom pieces are painted on one side only with the piece name and dealer's name on the back while the standard pieces are painted on both sides.

We have joined the Cat's Meow Collector's Club and if you are interested in a specific lighthouse we can let you know if it is available. Maine, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Great Lakes are pretty well represented in the custom series.

Program Signals

By Yvonne Miller

June Meeting

NJC Summer Meeting: Saturday, June 25, 1994 — 4th Anniversary Meeting and Picnic of the New Jersey Chapter.

Business meeting to be held at 11:00 a.m. at the Trinity United Methodist Church, Route 49, Pennsville, New Jersey. We would like to introduce at that time, all members who attended the first meeting of the chapter. Charter members are encouraged to attend.

Betty Husarik has made arrangements to have Finns Point Rear Range Light open to our chapter from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

The picnic grounds (including grills) at Fort Mott State Park (1.5 miles from the range light) will be available for our use from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.

Plan to bring a picnic lunch and join fellow lighthouse enthusiasts at the Pavilion to celebrate the 4th Anniversary of the United States Lighthouse Society - New Jersey Chapter.

Scott Mauger, Superintendent of Fort Mott State Park, is making arrangements for a speaker and tour of Fort Mott.

Directions: Drive to the end of Route 295 South or the New Jersey Turnpike, then west on Route 40 to Exit 1A, Pennsville. Follow Route 49 through town. Trinity United
Methodist Church is on the right hand side. It is a large brick colonial building with parking in the rear.

See you there!

**Fall Meeting**

Saturday, October 1, 1994 - Sandy Hook National Recreation Center, New Jersey.

Meeting to be held at 11:00 a.m. in the Auditorium at Sandy Hook.

Dr. Harlan Hamilton, author of *Lights and Legends of Long Island Sound*, and Professor of English at Jersey City State College, will be our guest speaker. His presentation will cover all 41 lights on Long Island and Block Island. A short break during this 1 hour slide presentation will give an opportunity for a lunch break.

A business meeting will follow Dr. Hamilton's presentation. Arrangements are being made for the Sandy Hook Lighthouse to be open on that day.

**Other Notes**

Special thanks to Al & Jean Burgess, Herb and Annette Colt, Bill Gately, Jack Granger, Joan Walton, Bill Gelfluss and Katie Moser for their hard work, time and support at our booth during the Jersey Coast Boat Show at Monmouth Park, in February. Bill Gately and the Burgess's were manning the booth all six days. It is the dedication of members like this that keep the chapter alive and growing.

We are still looking for volunteers for the Ways and Means Committee. Please contact Jack Thomson at (908) 531-8502 if interested in serving on this committee.

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**Welcome New Members!**

Adrian, Sandra  
Beck, Pamela  
Bender, Louis, ENC RUSCG  
Berryman, Edward & Gertrude  
Biagoti, Art & Rita  
Biss, Peter & Family  
Bondurant, Mrs. Marlene  
Boyd, Jr., Dr. & Mrs. Herbert  
Brown, Miss Judith  
Carpenter, Elizabeth  
Cartwright, Perry  
Cioccio, Dr. & Mrs.  
Cogan, William  
Conklin, Nancy  
Cooper, Alice  
Crum, Jr., George  
Darby, Emma  
DeGraw, Doris  
Dixon, Rosemary  
Dooley, Mike  
Doorn, Blanche  
Driedzie, Craig  
Edler, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur  
Edwards, Mr. & Mrs. Wayne  
Gaskill, Martha & Harley  
Givens, Ada  
Guckel, Joseph & Carol  
Hagman, Conrad  
Harlon, William  
Hardenburgh, William & Pat  
Hattinger, Tom  
Johnson, Clare  
Johnson, Tim & Family  
Jones, Stephen R. & Penny  
Kelly, Joseph & Donna  
Kramer, David  
Krausovec, Emro & Virginia  
Kukowski, Leona  
Kusma, Dauanet  
Madani, Zoe  
Madison, Frank  
Malade, Dave & Suzanne  
McBride, Jim & Nancy  
Megersig, Deborah & Harry  
Metz, Fred  
Mieczkowski, Marie  
Miller, Carole & Marsh  
Moses, Robin  
Myer, Donald  
Nelson, David  
Nelson, Joan  
Nichols, Robert & Myrtle  
Nolan, Elizabeth  
Novak, Aaron  
Pellegrin, John  
Peregrine, Capt. & Mrs. Charles  
Pontanoff, Denise  
Quinn, Margaret M.D.  
Reilly, Tom & Dorcas  
Rickert, Ken & Jeanne  
Risinger, Ruth Ann  
Roehl, Donna  
Roselli, Michael, Sandra & Paul  
Scheffler, Jr., William  
Shahwan, Joseph  
Siddall, James & Claire  
Staller, April  
Wagner, Wayne  
Whalen, John & Dolores  
Williams, Marcia  
Williams, Kilty  
Wray, Patricia  
Yahle, Elizabeth  
Young, Jr., Charles

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**Solution to last issue’s crossword**

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**Lighthouse, Sanibel Island, Fla.**
New Jersey Lighthouse Crossword
by Sharon Fitzpatrick

ACROSS

1. Lighthouse near Sea Isle City
3. Lighthouse with man's name
4. Reator's phrase for eastern room: Em w a...
9. Footwear for a horse or a South Jersey Range
11. Bierce or Texas tower light station
14. Compass point
15. Land...
16. South Jersey neighbor
18. Google, Fife or lightlouse
19. Compass point
21. Shoreline
22. Land completely surrounded by water (poetic sp.)
26. North Wildwood Lighthouse
29. Ocean
30. Tide
31. Nautical affirmative
33. Direction
34. Time when keeper's watch began (abbrev.)
37. Anatomical part of Cross Ledge Shoal
38. Edward S"ow
39. Compass Point
40. Reversal Highlands
42. Jermaine's nickname
43. McGraw or boat
44. Man the...
47. Exclamation upon seeing a beautiful lighthouse
48. Wooden structure jutting into ocean
49. Keeper's journal
50. Our favorite state (abbrev.)
51. Row of fish give direction: Their...
54. Keeper's commute
58. Town near Fines Point Lighthouse
60. Rose, author of Tides Of Barnegat
61. Our favorite fish wrap or the chapter name a letter
63. Former South Jersey Range Light
64. A bonnie lightship
65. Compass point
66. 30 foot lightship
67. Lighthouse mechanic
68. Barnegat's sister lighthouse

DOWN

1. Cliff
2. Illuminating device
3. Steer sharply away
5. King size sheets needed at keeper's house here
6. Lightship at NE end of five Fathom Bank
7. Ship...
8. Former South Jersey Lighthouse
9. Land...
10. Statue of Liberty as lighthouse: Truly Liberty...
12. Obsolete distress code
13. Power
14. Koutar or hook
17. Official name for Tucker Island Lighthouse
20. Compass point
21. Bay, NJ
22. The ebb and flow of the ocean
24. Former range north of Billingsport
25. Not lower middle, not middle...
27. Sea
28. Former range north of Pennsville
29. Lighthouse between Barnegat and Twin Lights
32. Sector... a warning!
35. Light-station with dual towers
36. Holy light-house
41. Lighthouse named after ship
42. Famous light-house engineer
45. Rear range light-house in ball field
46. SJ light discontinued in 1941
47. Compass point
43. Window
55. Former light-house - Newark Bay
56. Lighthouse at junction of Newark Bay and the Kill Van Kull
57. Triangular lens
59. Regulator
62. Nautical affirmative
63. Compass Point

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