

# the FLA FLASH

A quarterly publication of the Florida Lighthouse Association, Inc.  
www.floridalighthouses.org

## QUARTERLY MEETING TO BE AT ST. JOHNS RIVER LIGHTHOUSES!

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This has been quite a winter and spring! Our Annual Appeal Campaign for the St. Marks Lighthouse was successfully launched, and we have already met our initial goal for our fund-raising, although we will continue to seek more funding for Florida's second-oldest lighthouse.

The meeting at Sanibel was a tremendous success, and this was matched by the wonderful choreography of the Cape Canaveral Meeting. George Diller is to be congratulated for that great piece of coordination. It was the largest meeting of our members to date (the July, 1997, meeting at Hillsboro included the general public), and it was amazing that we got nearly 140 people up the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse in about 2 hours!

Then, the "Voyage to the Dry Tortugas" capped off a great spring when we visited seven lighthouses or lighthouse sites in 24 hours.

### CONTENTS

<i>Letter from the President</i> . . . .	1
<i>Quarterly Meeting</i> . . . . .	1
<i>April Meeting</i> . . . . .	2-5
<i>Dry Tortugas Tour</i> . . . . .	6-10
<i>The St. Johns Lighthouses</i>	10-11
<i>Special Articles</i> . . . . .	13-16
<i>New Members</i> . . . . .	16

### THE JULY 15 MEETING

Members of the FLA will be privileged for our next meeting to meet at the Mayport Naval Station, near Jacksonville, and tour two historic lighthouses: the 1859 St. Johns River (Mayport) Lighthouse, and the 1954, St. Johns Light Station, the last manned lighthouse built in Florida, courtesy of Andy Liliskis, President of the Mayport Lighthouse Association, the U.S. Navy, and the United States Coast Guard.

Our event hotel is only only two miles from the Naval Station at the Comfort Inn-Mayport, where a block of rooms will be available for FLA members at a special rate. Call (904) 249-0313 for reservations.

We will be meeting at the Ocean Breeze Officers' Club on the Mayport Naval Air Station. Enter at the Main Gate on Mayport Road, tell them you are attending the FLA meeting and the Ocean Breeze Officers' Club and follow directions.

Because of the summer heat, we will reverse our normal schedule of events and will visit the lighthouses in the relative cool of

the morning with the meeting and program in an air conditioned room in the afternoon.

Registration will begin at 8:00 AM, and the busses for the lighthouses will leave at 9 AM. We will return to the Ocean Breeze Officers' Club for lunch, followed by the membership meeting at 1:00 PM. (SEE DETAILED DIRECTIONS ON THE ENCLOSED REGISTRATION FORM!) During the meeting, we will auction off the beautifully framed print of the St. Marks Lighthouse donated to us by artist/author Roger Bansemer. This print appears on pages 112-113 of *Bansemer's Book of Florida Lighthouses*. This is an original print signed by the artist. After the meeting, David Fisher, Cullen Chambers, and John Hairr, author of the new book *Florida Lighthouses* will speak. After the programs, a Board of Commissioners meeting will be held.

A registration form for this event is enclosed with this newsletter and must be completed and returned to Alice D'Amicol at the indicated address no later than FRIDAY, JULY 7TH.



The *FLA FLASH* is a quarterly publication of the FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION, INC., and is a benefit of membership in the organization. The FLA is a non-profit Florida corporation which promotes the preservation of Florida's lighthouses and interprets the history and significance of those lighthouses and of Florida's unique maritime heritage. For information, contact:

Florida Lighthouse Association  
4931 S. Peninsula Dr.  
Ponce Inlet, FL 32127  
Phone: (904) 761-1821  
Website:

www.floralighthouses.org  
e-mail: fla@ponceinlet.org

#### OFFICERS

Tom Taylor, President  
Richard P. Schulze, Executive V-P  
Hib Casselberry, Membership V-P  
David & Alice D'Amicol, Meeting V-P  
Peggy Glover, Fund Raising V-P  
George Diller, Treasurer  
Richard Johnson, Secretary  
Neil E. Hurley, Historian  
Ann Caneer, Past President

#### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Allyne Askins  
Bob Baker  
Harold Belcher  
George Blanck  
David Butler  
Ann Caneer  
Hib Casselberry  
George Diller  
Kathy Fleming  
Chief Thomas Hensler, USCG  
Marilyn Hoeckel  
Richard A. Johnson  
Charles LeBuff  
Dianne Levi  
Andy Liliskis  
John Lee  
Lt. Col. Michael Newberry, USAF  
Lee Niblock  
Kevin O'Brien  
Danny Raffield  
Barbara Revell  
Perry Smith  
Bill Trotter  
Jerry Wilkinson  
*FLA FLASH*  
Tom Taylor, Editor,  
Paul Bradley, Graphic Artist

## CAPE CANAVERAL MEETING

Weather and everything favored us as the membership met at the Holiday Inn, Titusville, for our April 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

President Tom Taylor made comments while waiting for registration to be completed, including a brief discussion of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse. He went on to introduce George Diller, FLA Treasurer and organizer of our visit to the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse. Diller thanked the Holiday Inn for their hospitality to our members, and introduced Debbie Page-Wright of Holiday Inn. He also thanked Delaware North, the tour concessionaire at Cape Canaveral, who added a third bus for our tour at no charge.

President Tom Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:20 AM. He introduced the officers. Barbara Revell, incoming Commissioner for the Fourth District, could not be present, as her husband had undergone emergency surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery.

The invocation was offered by Rev. Bud Schroeder, Key Biscayne Community Church, the church where the Founding Meeting of the FLA was held.

It was moved, seconded, and passed to defer the reading of the minutes of the last meeting.

Treasurer Diller, submitted the following report:

The Annual Appeal has raised \$4,654.01 to date. Income for the last period was \$2,599.89, and expenses were \$1960.77.

The bank balance is \$20,922.66,

including the Annual Appeal funds, and not including the Appeal, it is \$16,268.65

President Taylor reported on the death of Keeper Bob England, the last civilian light keeper at Sanibel Island Light, which occurred on March 30, 2000. A moment of silent prayer was taken. The Board and Members of the FLA extend their sympathy to his family.

Barbara Revell has been appointed the new District Commissioner for District Four. Commissioner Revell is the founder of the Carabelle Lighthouse Association, which has gained support from the Carabelle Town Council, and made arrangements for a 99 year lease of the lighthouse property from the GSA. The FLA has been a supporter of this effort to save the Crooked River Lighthouse.

Taylor reported that the first draft of the *Florida Lighthouse Trail* book is in hand for review. It is still hoped to publish the book by October. FLA Historian Neil Hurley, Elinor DeWire, Love Dean, and several members have all contributed to the book.

Senate Bill 2582, sponsored by State Senator Jack Latvala, would direct the Department of Community Affairs and the Bureau of Historic Preservation to study the lighthouses of Florida and plan for funding responsibilities for their preservation. This bill does not currently have a State House sponsor, so it is unlikely to pass this year. President Taylor appealed for help in finding House support next year. We need to find



state representatives in various parts of the state, both Democrat and Republican, to help sponsor Latvala's bill in the House. Taylor also reported that there is increasing support in the US Congress for lighthouse preservation.

The FLA granted a Research Grant for \$200 to Chief Warrant Officer Joe Cocking of the US Coast Guard for research on the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse lens by Candice Clifford at the National Archives. Joe is working up his final report and may be able to present his findings at the Jupiter meeting in October.

The Mayport Lighthouse Association also requested a grant from the Board of Commissioners for funding to complete the wall exhibit in their new museum. There is \$1500 budgeted for grants of this sort. Taylor mentioned the historic highway marker sign project, which may provide markers for Crooked River and several other lighthouses.

Executive Vice President Richard Schulze reported that we have over 9500 signatures on the license plate petitions, out of the required 15,000. Once the signatures are in hand, the FLA will find financial support for the required funds necessary to initiate the legislative process. Sales of the front license plate are continuing. The new order of license plates has been delivered.



Virginia has now joined the states with lighthouse specialty plates. The new plate, which should now be available, is seen above.

Vice President Schulze also reported on the special St. Marks Lighthouse program in February which a number of dignitaries attended. Tom Taylor spoke at the program, and Hib Casselberry also helped represent the FLA. A new roof has been installed on the keeper's quarters, and the access road has been improved and paved.

Vice-President for Membership Hib Casselberry reported the FLA presently has over 400 members, variously family and individual members, including honorary lightkeepers families. Taylor then introduced the lightkeeper's children from Cape Canaveral Lighthouse who were with us, Fred and George Stone and Harriet Simons, children of Assistant Keeper Ben Stone.



Vice-President for Fund-Raising Peggy Glover reported on the progress of the Annual Appeal Campaign. As of the meeting time, the Appeal had brought in \$5,784! Roger Bansemer has donated a print of his painting of St. Marks to auction off at the July Meeting.

A Fund-Raising Committee has been established. Any member interested in participating, please advise Vice President Glover by e-mail at:

MBG800@aol.com.

Vice President Glover reported on several fund raising plans.

a) Special Programs, sponsored by Ponce Inlet Lighthouse as a benefit for the FLA have been scheduled. (See CALENDAR OF EVENTS later in this Newsletter.)

b) Sales Items, including a Florida Lighthouse Passport, FLA shirts, patches, and hats. The Passport and shirts should be available by the Mayport meeting. The membership favored golf-style shirts with pockets over regular "tee"-shirts.

Vice-Presidents for Meetings and Special Events Alice and David D'Amicol reported on upcoming-events:

May 20, 2000: Tour of the Dry Tortugas Lighthouses. The boat is presently full but names are being accepted for a waiting list. Some cancellations are coming in as people learn of the difficulties of landing on Loggerhead Key.

July 15-16, 2000: St. Johns River (Mayport) Lighthouse. Dawn Lundt, of the Mayport Lighthouse Association, announced that they hope to open their visitor's center that weekend. They are organizing tours of the lighthouse and other tours. More information will be announced as planning goes forward. The Mayport Lighthouse Association is looking forward to having the FLA visit.

October 15, 2000: Annual Meeting at Jupiter Inlet.



October 21-22, 2000: Cedar Key Open House Informal Fall Tour.

George Diller covered the logistics of the tours at Cape Canaveral.

In the interest of time, the lighthouse reports will be deferred to the next newsletter.

Tom Taylor presented certificates to the following people for their support of the Florida Lighthouse Association Annual Appeal Campaign: Hib and Martha Casselberry, Diana Hayden, Mark McCullen, Ken and Lisa Fagin, Jean and Harry Pettit, John and Nancy Samson, Raymond and Ann Steward, Younger and Associates, Past Vice President Kathy Fleming for setting up the St. Marks Annual Appeal, and a special certificate for Ann Caneer, Founding President of the Association. The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Next, Neil Hurley of the United States Coast Guard and Historian for the FLA presented his outstanding "power-point" program on "The History of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse."

At Lunch, Tom and Darlene Chisholm of Albion, Michigan, won the Mini-Vacation Raffle. This Mini-Vacation of three days and two-nights at the Sands Harbor Hotel and Marina in Pompano Beach was donated to the FLA by Mr. Charles J. Seitz, the general manager. We thank him for his wonderful donation and congratulate the Chisholms on their winning. Kay Wright won the \$25 Publix gift certificate which was donated to us by Publix as part of the Annual Appeal Campaign.

The tours of the Cape Canaver-

al Lighthouse were spectacular with Neil Hurley interpreting the original site of the lighthouse, Andrew Ellingwood, William Berry, and Elías García of the Coast Guard helping out at the tower itself, and Rose Woolley interpreting the home and gravesite of Keeper Mills Burnham. Thanks go to George Diller for coordinating all of this and also to Robert Merrilees and the other volunteers who assisted and interpreted on the three busses as well. Thanks also go to Debbie Page-Wright of the Holiday Inn and Coast Guard Chief David B. Justice who provided us with the access to the tower.



It certainly was a great day to remember!



That evening, the Board of Commissioners met. Dawn Lundt of the Mayport Lighthouse Association presented an application for a grant of \$2,000 for the completion of their new museum exhibits. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to grant \$1,500 to the Mayport Lighthouse Association for the exhibits. This was the entire amount available for interpretive/preservation grants in our 2000 budget. John Leben of Michigan also made a presentation to the Board on behalf of a video project that he would like to do in collaboration with the Florida Lighthouse Association, but no action on this project was taken by the Board.

The appointment of Barbara Revell as our District Commissioner for the Fourth (Northwest Florida) District was confirmed.

It was approved by the Board that the membership year for the association be changed from an annual to a calendar year with all memberships now due on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This move will make it more cost effective and simpler to effect renewal notices as it will now be able to do it simply through the September newsletter. All memberships which are now due or coming due, and all new members between now and October 1<sup>st</sup> will be made renewable as of October, 2001. Thus, those joining now or renewing now will receive a few months of free membership. New members after October 1<sup>st</sup> will pay for their first year on a pro-rated basis, the details of which will be



worked out at the next Board meeting. It was also moved and adopted to have all lighthouse organizations pay at least a nominal fee for membership in the Florida Lighthouse Association.

The Board of Commissioners received with thanks a no-interest loan from William Trushel of Pensacola which will enable the association to purchase FLA logo shirts for sale. The loan will be paid back over the course of one year from the proceeds from the sales of the shirts. Some shirts could be ready as early as the Dry Tortugas Tour. We wish to thank Mr. Trushel for his very generous assistance to us! Other FLA sales items, such as pins, patches, and hats will be approved later when the new budget is approved in October. It was approved to place the sale of the stamp cachets on the Internet site E-Bay for auction. Hib Casselberry will work on this project.

As an expression of thanks to the Holiday Inn Titusville for all that they did for us at this meeting, it was approved by the Board to grant them a free one-year corporate membership in the association.

#### KSC BUS TOUR

On Sunday, April 30, a busload of us enjoyed a very special tour of the Kennedy Space Center

given by none other than our own George Diller. George is the top public information specialist at KSC and is known to many of us as "The Voice of NASA." It was a rare treat for us to be able to visit many places which even the public who "get closer" cannot visit. A regular tour leader came to assist George with the tour, and he said it all when he declared that it had been a rare treat for him also to be aboard for a tour with "one of the masters." We certainly agree!

THANKS GEORGE!



George Diller, the "master" at NASA.



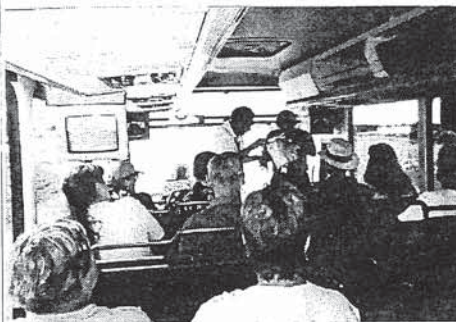
Hib Casselberry preparing for a "launch" at one of the early bunkers.

#### MICHIGAN COUPLE WIN THE MINI-VACATION IN POMPANO BEACH

by Hib Casselberry

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Chisholm from Albion, Michigan won the mini-vacation at Sands Harbor Marina & Hotel in Pompano Beach. Extending their Florida trip a few days, the Chisholms enjoyed the amenities at the resort and did their daily walking on Pompano's north beach up to the inlet. Both are good photographers, Darlene in print form while Tom prefers his slide camera with 300 mm zoom along with a digital camcorder.

They also enjoyed the local shops, particularly "Nautical Treasures," run by Harry and Julie Cushing, who are also FLA members. Hib and Martha Casselberry took the Chisholms to dinner at Cap's Place, an island restaurant steeped in Florida history and famous for seafood since 1920. With special arrangements with Art Makenian, USCG Auxiliary, and his volunteer crew, the Chisholms toured and climbed the Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse. This lighthouse is also rarely open for tours.



The Chisholms at the Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse.



## VOYAGE TO THE DRY TORTUGAS!

By Dave Butler, Hib Casselberry, and Tom Taylor

It is not often that a person gets to ride on a state-of-the-art high-speed catamaran seventy miles into the ocean to see a series of historic lighthouses and lighthouse sites, but that is exactly what nearly a hundred FLA members did on Saturday, May 20th.

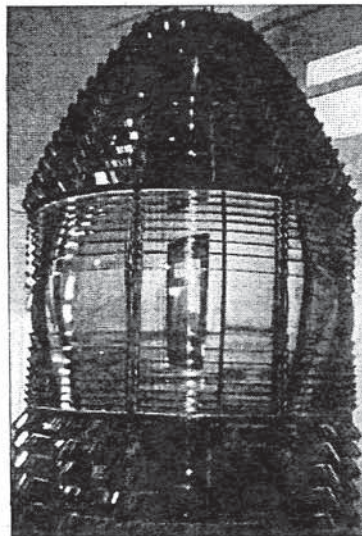
For this adventure, we were joined by an international dignitary, Mr. Frans la Poutré, Secretary of the Dutch Lighthouse Association. Mr. la Poutré brought along postcards showing Dutch Lighthouses and brochures of his lighthouse organization. We will be keeping in touch with Mr. la Poutré and the Dutch Lighthouse Association, and perhaps in coming years, we can work out an exchange program with them to introduce members of their association to our Florida lighthouses and our members to their lighthouses.



*Frans la Poutré, Secretary of the Dutch Lighthouse Association and welcome guest on our Voyage to the Dry Tortugas.*

The evening before, we met at 6 PM and enjoyed a wonderful and sumptuous reception and visit at the Key West Lighthouse, courtesy of the Key West Art and Historical Society. This reception, and indeed the voyage to the Dry Tortugas, had been planned as part of the National Lighthouse Conference back in October, but Hurricane Irene came just in time to spoil our fun. This time, however, the weather was perfect, and so was the kindness and courtesy shown to us by everyone involved.

A buffet had been set out with drinks and light food by the Key West Art & Historical Society. The FLA members were free to explore the gift shop, step inside the lens of the Sombrero Key Lighthouse on display, then go into the Keeper's dwelling which has been beautifully restored, and of course climb the lighthouse. There were many on the lantern balcony when the sun set over Key West. It was a unique experience to view the changing light and the city from that height.



Those visiting the Keeper's dwelling before dark marveled at the beautiful Dade County pine walls and flooring as well as the many artifacts on display. Those visiting after dark had a different experience. The dwelling is lit with kerosene lamps converted to electricity. The bulbs are small flame-shaped ones which closely simulate the light from kerosene lamps. It gives you a good feeling of how dark buildings were before electricity. Reading a book would be difficult, and it was easy to understand how night life in town was very limited.







On Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, we left Key West at 7:30 AM (while the roosters were still crowing) on board Sunny Days Catamarans' *Fast Cat*, the swiftest vessel in Key West, launched just a year ago with everything that modern technology can supply. Our seventy-mile, two-hour voyage would be a far cry from that of the old lighthouse keepers from the Dry Tortugas who faced a two-three day trial in rough seas, and heavy head-winds, in a small sailing craft on its way to the closest civilization at Key West!



Our first lighthouse "visit" was to the screw-pile ruins of the Northwest Passage Lighthouse. Built in 1855 to replace a light-ship which had been driven 60 miles from its site during the hurricane of 1846, this lighthouse

marked the northwestern end of a 12-foot deep channel which led into Key West from New Orleans and other points west. The lighthouse consisted of a small wooden lighthouse on iron piles. The dwelling section of the structure was prefabricated in Philadelphia, and shipped down to the site for assembly. The wooden part of the lighthouse was replaced in 1879. Soon after 1911, the light was converted to acetylene gas and the station unmanned. The light continued in operation until around 1921. In 1971, the structure was destroyed by fire, and today only the iron pilings remain.

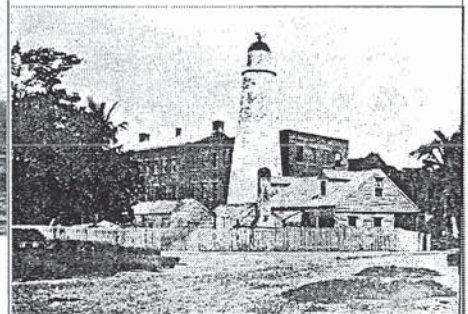


We arrived at Fort Jefferson on Garden Key at about 10 AM and gathered around the foundations, inside the fort, of the original Dry Tortugas Lighthouse.



Here, Supervisory Ranger Paul Taylor welcomed us on behalf of the National Park Service. This

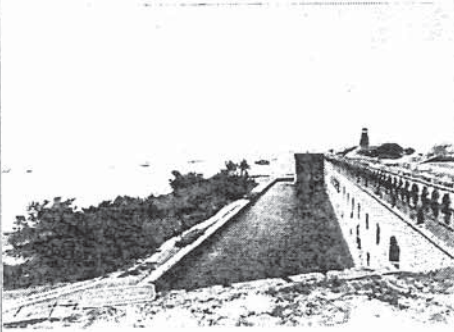
original lighthouse was one of the first authorized to be built in Florida by Congress in 1822. Construction was not completed until April, 1826, making it the fifth lighthouse completed, and it shined forth for the first time on July 4, 1826, the day that Thomas Jefferson died! No one who built and named Fort Jefferson was probably ever aware of that unique and mystical connection! The lighthouse was downgraded to the Tortugas Harbor Lighthouse in 1858 when the new Dry Tortugas Lighthouse on Loggerhead Key was completed. The old brick tower stood until it was severely damaged in a hurricane in 1873.



A new iron tower was completed on the parapets of the fort in 1876, and the old tower was soon torn down so it would not further obstruct the fort's parade ground. Fortunately for us, this site, one of the birthplaces of Florida's lighthouses, has been preserved, and the foundation is readily observable within the fort.

Our party split up into two groups. One toured the fort with David Samuels, a knowledgeable guide from Sunny Days Catamarans.





During the fort tour, we were taken onto the parapets for a great view of the lighthouse and into the dungeon cell of Dr. Mudd, the physician who set the broken leg of John Wilkes Booth the day after Booth killed Lincoln.

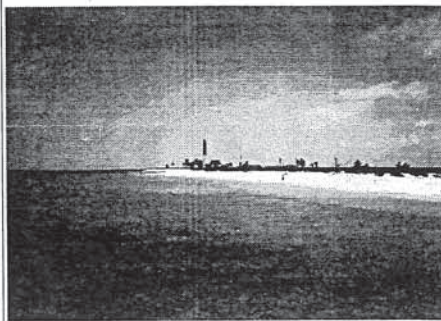
The other group toured the lighthouse, courtesy of Ranger Paul Taylor. This iron lighthouse was first lighted on April 5, 1876 (exactly fifty years after the first lighthouse had been completed!) and it served faithfully for many years, until it was switched to automatic operation and eventually discontinued in 1921. It has been very nicely restored by the National Park Service and is today in excellent condition.



After our tours of the lighthouse and fort, Sunny Days Catamarans treated us to a wonderful picnic lunch complete with all the trimmings.

By noon, we were back aboard the *Fast Cat* for a slower voyage over to Loggerhead Key, towing two

Zodiac dinghies. Because public use of the National Park Service dock is not permitted we had to land on Loggerhead Key by use of the dinghies. Seas were running a little choppy on the east side of Loggerhead, so Captain Sonny Eymann took us over to the west side to land. Unhappily, that side is ringed by hard and dangerous reefs, and the only place where we could come ashore safely was at the extreme southwest end of the island, making for a small hike to the lighthouse, located in the center of this truly tropical, deserted island.



The new Dry Tortugas Lighthouse was completed on Loggerhead Key and was first lighted July 1, 1858. The first-order Fresnel lens was maintained by a keeper, his family, and two assistant keepers, who were the only residents of the mile long island. Hurricane winds in 1873 caused the tower to vibrate so badly that the top of the lighthouse was nearly blown off. Plans were made to replace the entire tower with a stronger, all iron one, but temporary repairs held through another hurricane and the plan for a new tower was abandoned. A 1909 thunderstorm killed thousands of migra-

tory birds on the key, and left the newly painted lighthouse "literally plastered with brilliant feathers." The next year, a hurricane in 1910 blew windowpanes out from around the lens. After the storm, bits of wind blown seaweed were found at the top of the tower, more than 150 feet above sea level. That year, the destroyed first-order classical lens was replaced by a second-order bivalve which served until 1984. That lens is today preserved at the Coast Guard Aids to Navigation School in Yorktown, Virginia. The large, mercury float pedestal, however, remains in the tower! The modern optic is a solarized Vega unit.

From 1904 until 1939, the lighthouse keepers shared Loggerhead Key with scientists of the Carnegie Marine Biological Laboratory. The lab conducted some of the first research on coral reefs and mangroves in the western hemisphere and also took the first ever black and white and color underwater photographs.





During World War II, the Coast Guard posted additional people at Loggerhead Key to act as coastal lookouts. One of these lookouts may have been responsible for the accidental fire that destroyed the two-story brick keepers dwelling in 1945.

Today, the lighthouse continues to be operated by the U.S. Coast Guard but the buildings and island are maintained by the National Park Service as part of Fort Jefferson National Monument.

Boatswain's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sam Hill, USCG, was our guide to the lighthouse. The Loggerhead Light was our steepest climb, 204 steps, but the view from the top was breathtaking.

With our visit at Loggerhead Key over, we returned to Garden Key to pick up some castaways we had left behind (were they really on Gilligan's Island?) And headed for home.

On the way, we sailed past the location of the Rebecca Shoal Lighthouse. This was the last and



most difficult to build in the Florida Keys. Located 43 miles west of Key West, the lighthouse was located in very turbulent waters.

Efforts (usually unsuccessful) to construct a day-beacon here began in 1854, but it was not until 1886 when the lighthouse was finally constructed. The new house-style lighthouse was a screw-pile lighthouse which sent out a light that flashed alternately red and white.

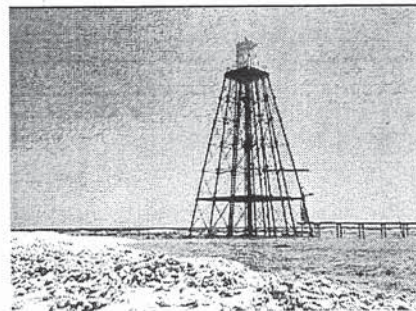
This lighthouse went through many severe storms, and because of its extreme remoteness, tragic things sometimes happened. In 1925, the Rebecca Shoal Light was automated by the acetylene gas system, and keepers no longer had to risk their lives there. Deterioration and vandalism took their toll on the structure, and in 1953, the house was removed. In 1985, the entire structure was replaced, and today, the Rebecca Shoal Lighthouse is an automated beacon mounted on a new iron pile foundation.

With our schedule about an hour behind schedule as we approached civilization at Key West, we still had one more lighthouse to see: Sand Key. Located nine miles south-southwest of Key West on a small, white sandy islet that often changes shape and sometimes disappears completely, this lighthouse was built in 1853, replacing a hurricane-destroyed 1825 masonry tower and a lightship. The tower was designed and built by George Gordon Meade.

Although it has survived a century and a half of storms, what almost destroyed the Sand Key Lighthouse was a devastating fire in 1989, during the beginnings of a restoration project.

Renovation took ten years, but, sans stairwell and keepers house, the Sand Key Lighthouse still stands and once again functions as an essential lighted aid to navigation.

Our trusty band of mariners



finally arrived back at the dock at Key West at about 6:30 PM and scattered to the four winds in a very short time. In only 24 hours, we had visited seven lighthouses or lighthouse sites, including Key West, Northwest Passage, the first Dry Tortugas Lighthouse, Tortugas Harbor Lighthouse, the new Dry Tortugas Lighthouse, Rebecca Shoal Lighthouse, and Sand Key Lighthouse. Surely it was a day which could find no equal! But there are more adventures to come!

In gratitude for this very special and unique experience, we thank Alice and David D'Amicol and their daughter Christina; Kevin O'Brien and his staff at the Key West Art and Historical Society; our crew from Sunny Days Catamarans -- Captain and owner Sonny Eymann, Colleen Collins, Captain John McCandless, Darrin Smith, David Samuels, and Vanessa Crossgrove; NPS Supervisory Ranger Paul B. Taylor, Boatswains Mate First Class Sam Hill,



and those in the background who assisted us in getting the proper permits to visit the lighthouses – Everglades National Park Superintendent Richard Ring, Acting Chief Ranger Kristin A. Stoehr, Ranger Deborah Nordeen; Captain Larry Jaeger, Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Seventh District, Miami; Captain D. P. Rudolph, Commanding Group Key West, Commander S. A. Buschman, Acting Commander, Group Key West, and Chief Charles Pantelakos. As you can see, it took many people acting together to put this very special one-day experience together!

MR. RICK INGERSON,  
ATOCHA DIVER,  
TO PRESENT PROGRAM TO  
BENEFIT FLA

As a fund-raiser for the FLA, Mr. Rick Ingerson, one of Mel Fisher's top divers will give a slide presentation and display *Atocha* artifacts at a special program to be held at the Port Orange, FL, Library at 2:00 PM on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ingerson recovered the "Bishop's Cross," one of the most valuable artifacts ever found on a shipwreck. Although the original is in Mel Fisher's Key West Museum, Ingerson will display a replica along with a number of other authentic artifacts. The Library auditorium can hold 150 people, but as this will be a very popular program, please arrive early to ensure a seat. Admission to this program will be \$5, all of which will go to benefit the FLA. The Library is located at 1005 City Center Circle off Dunlawton Avenue in Port Orange.

HISTORY OF THE ST.  
JOHNS RIVER  
LIGHTHOUSES  
By Andy Liliskis

At the mouth of the St. Johns River, where the strong and turbulent currents of river and ocean meet, the traveler can find two lighthouses in an area of Jacksonville historically known as Mayport. Located a mile apart and built a century apart, they represent examples of Florida's earliest and latest lighthouse construction and technology.

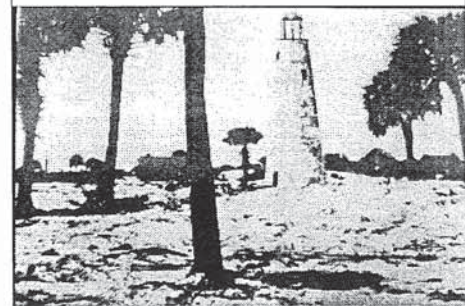
The two lighthouses are as different as the centuries in which they were built. The older tower, the St. Johns River Lighthouse, was built in 1859. It is a traditional, gently sloping, conical tower. A picturesque iron lantern, typical of that era, tops the brick structure. In contrast, the newer lighthouse, the St. Johns Light Station, is an angular, concrete, monolithic structure. A small, non-traditional, cylindrically shaped lantern topped it until 1998 when this small lantern was removed and a modern Vega optic took its place. While the older lighthouse appeals to the nostalgic perception of lighthouses, both are examples of a vital service to the mariners who navigated the entrance to the St. Johns River.

Before these sentinels were built, the forces and currents of the river and ocean that fashioned hazards for ships also shaped the location and destiny of two towers that lighted the river entrance between 1830 and 1858. The first lighthouse was

built in 1830 in the vicinity of the present day south jetty. In a matter of a few years, erosion undermined this tower and the Atlantic Ocean eventually claimed the site.



Its replacement was built in 1835. The new lighthouse was located a mile upstream in what today is the western part of the Mayport Naval Station's ship basin. Eventually, this structure also succumbed to the shifting sands and erosion caused by the river and ocean.



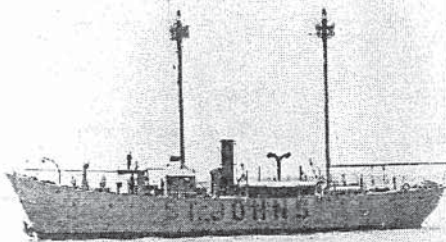
In an attempt to avoid the fate of the previous lighthouses and locate it on its own reservation, the St. Johns River Lighthouse was placed a little further up-river. It began operation on January 1, 1859. The structure and technology was representative of lighthouses built at that time.

The third-order lens atop the 80-foot tower was illuminated by





lard oil and turned by a counterweight system similar to a cuckoo clock. At the turn of the century, an incandescent oil vapor lamp was installed, which in turn was replaced by an electric system in 1920. That light was turned off in 1929, and the lighthouse was abandoned. A lightship replaced it to better mark the treacherous river entrance.



Unlike its predecessors, the St. Johns River Lighthouse did not succumb to erosion; instead, the currents of human events have shaped its fate. In 1941, the U. S. Navy built Mayport Naval Station as part of the war effort in

World War II. The keeper's house was demolished, the oil room attached to the lighthouse was removed, and eight feet of fill was placed on top of the site, burying the original entrance to the lighthouse. The Navy wanted to raze the remaining lighthouse tower, but local citizens prevailed to preserve it.

Since 1941 to the present, local concerned citizens have repeatedly thwarted efforts by the Navy to destroy or move the lighthouse from its historic location. In a gesture of good will, the Navy made extensive maintenance repairs and then helped place the lighthouse on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. In 1997, a community based, preservation group, the Mayport Lighthouse Association, was formed to open the site to the public. Long term plans include the complete restoration of the lighthouse and re-creation of the keeper's house and grounds.

The modern St. Johns Light Station replaced the lightship in 1954. The 64-foot concrete tower was built on a man-made dune overlooking the beach on the eastern side of the base and was the last manned lighthouse to be



built in Florida. The lighthouse was originally equipped with a state-of-the-art Crouse-Hinds, FB-61A electric rotating beacon. This was one of only two such illuminating systems installed in the United States. This optic produced a beacon of 200,000 candlepower visible to ships at 22 nautical miles. A radio beacon and a fog signal operated at the end of the south jetty. The Coast Guard automated the lighthouse in 1967, and in September, 1998, the small lantern and its unique Crouse-Hinds optic were removed. They were replaced by a modern New Zealand-made Vega Marine Rotating Beacon which produces 40,000 candlepower and can be seen approximately 12 miles to sea.

The Mayport Naval Station has recently completed a \$66,000 repainting and window repair to the 1859 tower. The base has provided a pedestrian gate through its perimeter fence adjacent to the parking area in Mayport. The St. Johns River (Mayport) Lighthouse is a short walk from the fence.

Both lighthouses are located on the naval base, and because of military security, access is carefully monitored. The Navy has given the Mayport Lighthouse Association permission to coordinate and provide access to both sites and operate a visitors information center located next to the St. Johns River Lighthouse.

**NEW SCREENSAVER NOW AVAILABLE**

Thanks to the courtesy of FLA member Jim Krause, his Florida Lighthouse Screensaver is now



available for downloading from our website. He has also developed a new and more active screen-saver on a CD which is available. Jim has donated a number of these to the FLA which will be available for purchase at the July meeting. Thank you Jim, for your kind donation!

#### LETTERS

From Frans la Poutré, Secretary of the Dutch Lighthouse Association:

"Hi Tom:

Standing on the beach of Loggerhead Key, waiting for the dingy to take me to the catamaran, I wished myself back in Dutch rain. The warmth became a bit too much for this guy from the cooler parts of the world. Now I'm back a week and indeed we have nothing but rain and low temperatures, so I'm wishing myself back in Florida again.

I would like to thank you again for inviting me on your Dry Tortugas cruise. It was a great experience. And I appreciated our contacts and meeting the other FLA-members very much. If you ever have the opportunity to travel to Europe, know that you're most welcome here.

After the cruise I left Key West Sunday morning at 6:00. I visited the Everglades National Park, which was a magnificent experience too. Driving more than 30 miles and the only living creature I met was a turtle crossing the road. Over here 30 miles is more than the average distance between two cities, and you will pass a lot of smaller villages when driving this distance. I stayed at Fort

Myers and visited Sanibel Island before driving back to Orlando on Monday. I felt like a tourist trying to see as much as possible in the shortest time. Well, I'm glad I didn't try to find all of the lighthouses during my tour to and from Key West. Although I would have loved to see them, it would have taken too much time. Now I had some time to explore Key West and besides the driving I spent more than three hours walking around on some trails in the Everglades, seeing alligators and other animals I never saw before.

I hope we'll keep in contact and I will surely send you our magazine. The story of my Florida visit will be in the fall-volume in September).

Kind regards,

Frans la Poutré

Dutch Lighthouse Association  
<http://www.worldlights.com/users/nvv>

[nvv@worldlights.com](mailto:nvv@worldlights.com)"

Frans would very much like to have photographs of himself with the various lighthouses, so if anyone has any photographs showing Frans during our Tortugas Tour, could you please mail them to him at:

Frans la Poutré  
 De Keiperij 13  
 7437 CW Bathmen  
 Netherlands

From Tom and Darlene Chisholm:

"Dear Tom,

We won the mini-vacation at the FLA meeting in Titusville. I am writing to let you know what a wonderful time we had. We spent two nights at the Sands

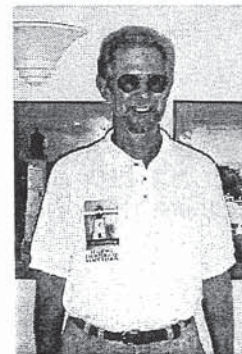
Harbor Hotel overlooking the intracoastal waterway near a draw bridge. We enjoyed the great views of passing boats from our balcony.

Hib Casselberry is a wonder! He and his lovely wife Martha took us to dinner at the fascinating Cap's Place on an island in the intracoastal waterway. We had a delightful time. Hib also made arrangements for us to visit and climb the Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse! What a view! The lighthouse is well maintained. If only all the lighthouses were so well maintained.

We'd like to thank the Florida Lighthouse Association, Sands Harbor Hotel, Hib and Martha Casselberry for a wonderful time.

Keep the Lights Burning,  
 Tom and Darlene Chisholm  
 FLA LIGHTHOUSE SHIRTS  
 NOW AVAILABLE

Thanks to the generosity of William Trushel, the FLA now has new logo shirts available. The first were sold during the Dry Tortugas Tour, and they will be available at the July Meeting. Cost is \$20 per shirt.



Other sales items will also be available such as our special National Lighthouse Conference



stamp cachets. These are real collectors' items and will be valued by any of your stamp collecting friends. Judie Trotter will have available special commemorative mugs for the St. Johns River lighthouses, part of her four-mug, millennium-year set. The special Cape Canaveral mugs and a few of the Sanibel mugs are still available. Cost is \$15 which includes a matching coaster. Any of these items will make special Christmas gifts for your favorite lighthouse enthusiast!

#### LIGHTHOUSE REPORTS

**AMELIA ISLAND:** The Amelia Lighthouse Advisory Committee to the City of Fernandina Beach City Commission is working on a of application to get the Light from the GSA. It is due by 7 July. Helen O'Hagan Sintes and Hal Belcher are on that Committee.

**ST. JOHNS:** The \$66,000 worth of work on the St. Johns River Lighthouse has been completed by the Navy, and work is nearing completion on the new interpretive museum which the Mayport Lighthouse Association is installing in a building near the lighthouse.

**ST. AUGUSTINE:** Six 3-day summer camp sessions for kids will be held at the lighthouse in June and July. Tuesdays, starting June 13<sup>th</sup>, "Ghost Tours" will be offered. Call Barbara, (904) 829-0745 for details.

**PONCE INLET:** Several major projects have been going on here. The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association recently purchased about 5 acres of land immediately north of the

lighthouse to prevent development which would affect the "viewshed" of this National Historic Landmark. Five buildings of the light station have been re-roofed with historically correct wood shingles, and the new maintenance facilities and artifact storage building is under construction. International Chimney spent a couple of weeks here inspecting the brackets of the lighthouse gallery and removing one bracket so that new ones can be fabricated. The major tower restoration project will begin in late August.

**CAPE CANAVERAL:** Talks are still proceeding as to the disposition of the lighthouse to the Air Force or to NASA.

**JUPITER INLET:** The restoration of this historic tower has been completed, and on April 28<sup>th</sup>, a special ceremony was held for the re-lighting. Attended by nearly 1,000 people, it included special pyrotechnics and was a great way to re-inaugurate this lighthouse.

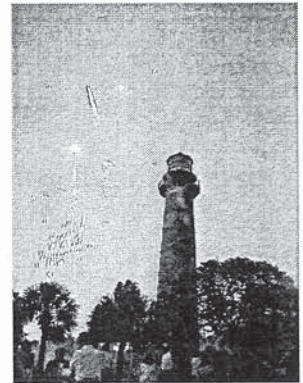


*Congratulations to George Blanck and all the staff at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse for a job very well done!*



*Tom Taylor with Joe Cocking, who restored the lens, and Burt Bender, restoration architect.*

*Pyrotechnics to celebrate the re-lighting of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, Friday, April 28, 2000.*



**HILLSBORO INLET:** According to Harry Cushing: "The latest on the replacement for the damaged bearing part is that Torrington (the manufacturer) rejected the bronze casting for the 'cage,' the part which keeps the balls in place. A new casting will add another 4 weeks plus delivery time. This happened about several weeks ago, so the earliest possible delivery time would be later in June. Assuming (and that's a dangerous thing to do) that the part arrives late June, I have requested that thorough testing of the lens rotation, with the light off, be done prior to setting any re-lighting date. I then requested at least 2 weeks to coordinate a media and membership announcement. This would probably put the re-lighting to late July. I will let you know as things progress."



CAPE FLORIDA: Elena Muratori reports from the State Recreation Area that more than 7200 visitors toured the lighthouse this past year. The lighthouse is open for tours Thursday through Monday at 10 AM and 1 PM. The tours are limited to 10 people on a first-come, first-served basis.

REEF LIGHTS: Sombrero Key and the Alligator Reef Lights have been painted and refurbished recently. Tom Taylor, Jerry Wilkinson, Jim Clupper, and Hib Casselberry have been working recently on a possible tour and meeting at these lights for next April. It already sounds exciting!



*Alligator Reef Lighthouse being painted recently. Photo by Jerry Biggs.*

KEY WEST: The FLA enjoyed a special open house and reception here on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and we deeply appreciate the wonderful hospitality extended to us by the Key West Art and Historical Society. This lighthouse is a "must-see" for anyone visiting the nation's southern-most city.

DRY TORTUGAS: The FLA made an inspection tour of these lighthouses during the special tour on May 20<sup>th</sup>, courtesy of the National Park Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. The NPS has done a beautiful job of restoring the Tortugas Harbor Lighthouse

on Garden Key, but the Dry Tortugas Lighthouse on Loggerhead Key will need some work in the near future.

SANIBEL ISLAND: This lighthouse continues under the Coast Guard, but may soon be transferred by the GSA to either the City of Sanibel or Lee County. We'll keep you posted. We noted recently the passing of Bob England, the last keeper of the Sanibel Island Lighthouse, and the FLA sent its regrets to the family.

BOCA GRANDE: Marilyn Hoeckel reports that the Museum here has been a great success, and they report more than 15,000 visitors last year. Although admission is free, they have had good earnings from their gift shop, and some funds in their donations box.

BOCA GRANDE ENTRANCE REAR RANGE: This lighthouse is also in limbo under GSA, but it appears that there is some interest in it from the local government. The State Park may also be a player in the disposition of this lighthouse.

EGMONT KEY: Cindi Para informs us that Park Manager Bob Baker will be transferring soon to the Paynes Creek State Historic Site, the site of a Seminole War fort. Bob is a charter member of the FLA and reports that he hopes to stay active in our lighthouse work. Apparently, his successor at Egmont Key has not yet been named.

ANCLOTE KEYS: Scott Keeler reports some fantastic news from the Tampa Bay area. The Anclote Keys Lighthouse has received

\$500,000 from the Florida Legislature, and this time Gov. Jeb Bush did not veto, the legislation. State Senator Jack Latvala, Republican, from Palm Harbor, Fl., was the main person behind getting the appropriations for the light. Lary McSparren of Tarpon Springs, Fl., President of the Gulf Islands Citizens Committee [and a charter member of the FLA], is the person to contact for any of the specifics concerning the light and its restoration. In addition to the approved \$500,000, the committee is seeking a \$750,000 grant from the Department of Transportation and a \$250,000 grant from the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation. McSparren was quoted in the St. Petersburg Times on May 30 saying the total restoration of the light should cost \$1.5 million. This would include rebuilding the destroyed keepers quarters to be used as a Florida park ranger station on Anclote Keys and a museum for the light. Currently, the State of Florida is building a new dock on the island for rangers and has budgeted money for a full time ranger position on the island. Things are really starting to roll for the old light. McSparren's telephone number is (727) 934-2389 in Tarpon Springs.

CEDAR KEYS: The Cedar Keys Lighthouse will be open to the public during an Open House, July 1<sup>st</sup>. Tours will leave the City Marina hourly from 8:30 AM through 2:30 PM aboard the *Island Hopper* boats. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children under 12. Advanced



reservations are advised and can be made by calling (352) 543-5904 or accessing the website at: <http://cedarkeyislandhopper.com>

Access to the lighthouse is made possible through the courtesy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the University of Florida Marine Biology Department. The FLA is also planning to go out October 21-22, during the fall Open-House.

**ST. MARKS:** Plans are still going ahead for the restoration of this lighthouse by the Coast Guard and its transfer to the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge. The FLA is assisting through its Annual Appeal Campaign, which to date has raised \$6,054!

**CROOKED RIVER:** The Carrabelle Lighthouse Association held another special event on Saturday May 27 to bring attention to the Crooked River Lighthouse. The event was held from 10AM to 2PM at the light station. Vendors participated, hot dogs were sold, and artwork featuring the lighthouse was available for purchase. There was a drawing for a beautiful replica of Crooked River light station made by a local artisan. The mayor, his wife, the city clerk, and a county commissioner were among the attendees. Barbara Revell says the event "was quite a success! Word is getting out!" The FLA is planning to have our January, 2001, meeting at Carrabelle to celebrate their receiving the lighthouse from the GSA, which should be effected by the end of the year. John Canetta has located what we believe might be the original lens, and he has inter-

viewed Mrs. Glova Sink who purchased the keepers' dwellings in 1964. This is valuable research which will help to tell the interesting story of this light station.

**CAPE ST. GEORGE:** Tom Taylor and Joe Pais met with Walt Marder and Robert Taylor of the Bureau of Historic Preservation in Tallahassee recently to discuss the problems with the Cape St. George Lighthouse stabilization project. The project has received all of the state monies which had been granted to it, but the project seems to have run out of money, and the contractor has removed his equipment, leaving the lighthouse in a precarious state. Robert Taylor, in charge of the state's special category grants for historic preservation said that the state would be sending a commission over very soon to look into affairs at Cape St. George. The possibility and various means of moving the lighthouse, even possibly to the mainland, were discussed. There has been a movement in the Apalachicola area to establish a bona fide maritime museum, and the lighthouse and a replica of the keeper's dwelling would certainly be a big draw for it. The FLA will need to monitor this situation closely and may have to take a greater role in saving this, the oldest unaltered lighthouse in the state of Florida.

**CAPE SAN BLAS:** Charlotte Pierce reports that members of the Port St. Joe Historical Society and county officials were to meet June 2 with officials from Eglin Air Force Base to discuss

future collaboration or leasing for the preservation and development of the Cape San Blas Lighthouse. Lt. Col. Michael R. Newberry, the Director of Eglin's Environmental Management office, has been appointed Eglin's officer in charge of the lighthouse project.

**ST. JOSEPHS POINT:** Danny Raffield reports that work on his replica lantern is continuing. He had hoped to have the lantern mounted by the first of the year, but forces beyond his control forced a delay. He says: "We are on our way now, you should see how great it all looks. All the steel work should be in place within the next two weeks... After the metal work is complete, then comes extensive painting, followed by installing the interior which was constructed last year, this sets the stage for installation of the glass, and finally hoisting it into place. I can see that day in the not too distant future hopefully before summer."

**PENSACOLA:** Dianne Levi reports that the Pensacola Lighthouse is now open to the public on Sundays, noon to 4, weather permitting, until October 29<sup>th</sup>. Repairs are being made to the keeper's dwelling, including exterior painting.

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

**June 24:** "Diving on the *Atocha*," by Rick Ingerson, Port Orange Library, 1005 City Center Circle, Port Orange, 2:00 PM, \$5 admission to benefit the FLA. (904) 761-1821.

**July 1:** Cedar Keys Lighthouse



Open-House, 9AM to 4PM, (352) 493-0238.

July 6: "Lighthouses of Long Island," by Robert Muller, St. Augustine Lighthouse, 7:30 PM, (904) 829-0745

July 8: "Lighthouses of Long Island," by Robert Muller, Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, 2:00 PM, \$2 admission to benefit the FLA. (904) 761-1821

July 15-16: FLA QUARTERLY MEETING, MAYPORT. (904) 761-1821.

July 20-21: "Where the Past Meets the Present: Maritime Heritage in Florida," Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, Pensacola, (850) 224-8128.

August 5: "Lighthouses of Florida," by Dr. Kevin McCarthy, Ponce Inlet Lighthouse, 2 PM, \$2

admission to benefit the FLA. (904) 761-1821.

August 24: Beverly Hirsch on Hurricane Preparedness, St. Augustine Lighthouse, 6:30 PM, (904) 829-0745.

NEW MEMBERS

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS for the Second Quarter of 2000: Gayle D. Becwar, Angel Bolton, Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Beaty, Ryland Paul Bryant, the John Burrie family, James and Margaret Campbell, Kathy and Thomas Carpenter, Stephen Cerullo, Jack and Betty Colody, Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Covey, Dr. James and Roberta Craig, Nancy and Steven Crosby, James and Suzi Daviner, Jamie and Beryl Dennis, Sandra Ellis, Weldon and Margaret Faull, Ms Mickey Friedman, the

Timothy Golly family, John E. Granger, Joyce and Mike Hager, John E. Hairr, Janie P. Hallum, Alan R. Headley, Pat Healy-Kennington, David Hickenbottom, Holiday Inn-Titusville, Lorna and Robert Keeler, Francis and BJ Kendrick, Frederick and Elizabeth Kohli, Eric Larson, Diana Locke, Helen T. Marchman, Marie Marinello, Frederick and Linda Mau, Robert and Linda Moore, National Sportswear & Emblem Co., Abbey Hilton O'Connor, Belinda Parker, Linda L. Peck, Barb Piersol, Robert Rosenfeld, Sue Sargent, Harriet Simmons, Joanne Sinatra, Doris Snyder, Captain Frederick and Susan Stone, George Stone, Jerry Strickland, Pamela Wade, Rita Waldren, Joyce Webber, Glenn and Debbie Wilson.



Florida Lighthouse Association  
4931 S. Peninsula Drive  
Ponce Inlet, FL 32127  
(904) 761-1821  
www.floridalighthouses.org  
fla@ponceinlet.org



Oct 14, 2000 ...  
Oct 21-22, 2000 Cedar Key Open House  
Jan 20, 2001 Crooked River  
April 2001 Upper Reef Light  
July 21, 2001 Hill Island

\$15 people  
\$80







## ADDITIONAL AREA HOTELS

Hotel	Prices	Phone	Distance
Sea Turtle Inn 1 Ocean Boulevard Atlantic Beach, FL	\$139.00	(904) 249-7402	6 miles from event
Holiday Sunspree 1617 North First Street Jacksonville Beach, FL	\$119.00	(904) 249-9071	10 miles from event
Comfort Inn Oceanfront 1515 North First Street Jacksonville Beach, FL	\$120.00	(904) 241-2311	10 miles from event
Best Western 301 North First Street Jacksonville Beach, FL	\$139.00	(904) 249-4949	10 miles from event
Days Inn Oceanfront 1031 South First Street Jacksonville Beach, FL	\$115.00	(904) 249-7231	10 miles from event
Courtyard By Marriott 4600 San Pablo Road, South Jacksonville, FL	\$59.00 (\$69 incl. Breakfast buffet)	(904) 223-1700	12 miles from event