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Winter 2011

KEEPER'S HOUSE MUSEUM UPDATE

A hive of activity continues to buzz around the Lighthouse Keeper's House at the Cape St. George Light.

The Keeper's House is almost ready for final inspection, which should result in a Certificate of Occupancy within the next few weeks. Construction of the back stairs has been completed, thanks to Dennis Barnell, Mason Bean, Jim Dunkin and Jim Kemp, and only uncooperative weather is keeping the handrails from being built and installed.

A brick enclosure for the electrical panel has been constructed of antique bricks donated by Ernest McDonald. Mr. McDonald donated two pallets totaling about 400 bricks that came from a historic building in Valdosta, Georgia.

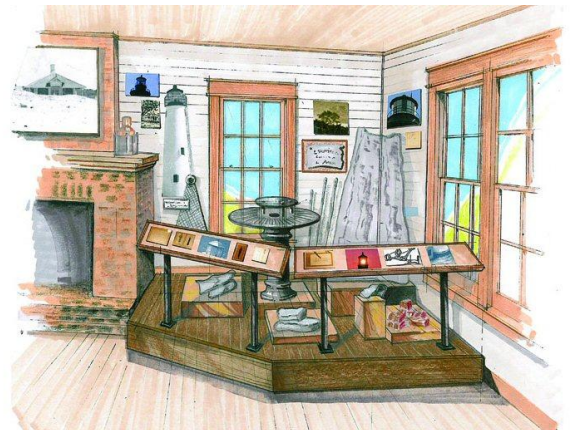
Two flood lights which illuminate the Cape St. George Light and the Keeper's House have been equipped with a timer, so that the Light Station is magnificently lighted from 6:30 p.m. to midnight (in non-turtle nesting months). It is quite a spectacular sight as you cross the bridge onto St. George Island!

Cabinets for the conference room and lavatory are being constructed by the Shop Class at the Franklin County School under the direction of W.K. Sanders. Dennis, Fred Stanley, and John Olander have built sturdy tables for the conference room, and additional volunteer help will soon be needed to stain and finish all this woodwork.

Temporary display cases for the gift shop have been donated to us by the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve from their old location in Apalachicola, as they vacate that site and move to their new headquarters on the bay in Eastpoint. ANERR has also donated a small collection of artifacts collected at the old lighthouse location on Little St. George Island. Items include pieces of an iron wood-burning stove and sewing machine, nails, hardware, and pottery shards.

Creation of museum displays is underway, and is an evolving process as decisions are made about how to best tell the story of the Cape St. George Light.

Add a little touch-up painting on the entrance doors, and the Keeper's House will soon be ready to welcome visitors!



Preliminary sketch of History Exhibit with pieces of the 1852 lighthouse.

Florida Lighthouse Day

Florida Lighthouse Day will be celebrated this year on Saturday, April 16.

The day will be observed at the Cape St. George Light with music, food, and other activities in St. George Lighthouse Park.



Jim Wolfram and Marty Ray will prepare BBQ chicken dinners.

The lighthouse will be open for climbing at no charge from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Many of the other 30 standing Florida lighthouses will be offering special activities on this annual day set aside to commemorate the important role that lighthouses played in the maritime history of our State. Within an hour drive of the Cape St. George Light are the Cape San Blas Lighthouse to the west, and the Crooked River Lighthouse and the St. Marks Lighthouse to the east. Somewhat farther away, but worth the drive, is the Pensacola Lighthouse, which will be offering living history exhibits and historic crafts throughout the day.

More information on Florida Lighthouse Day activities will be posted on the Florida Lighthouse Association website at www.floridalighthouses.org.

FLA Visits Cape Canaveral and Ponce Inlet Lighthouses

The St. George Lighthouse Association was well-represented at the January 2011 meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association by officers Jim and Terry Kemp and Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal. The two-day meeting offered the special opportunity to climb partially up the tower of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse on Saturday, and a visit to the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse on Sunday.

Climbing the recently restored Cape Canaveral lighthouse was a special treat since the lighthouse at the Cape Canaveral Air Station is not generally open to the public. Sunday's trip north to the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station began with a climb up the 203 stairs to the top of Florida's tallest lighthouse and a tour of the three keeper's residences and outbuildings. Also included were presentations on restoration techniques and challenges, educational outreach to students, and maintenance of the magnificent Fresnel lenses in Ponce's Lens Exhibit Building.

The Florida Lighthouse Association is a non-profit group of citizen activists dedicated to the preservation of the 30 remaining historic lighthouses that line our state's 1200 mile coastline. FLA's mission is "to preserve, restore, protect and defend Florida's lighthouse towers, along with their material culture, buildings, artifacts and records to assure that the magic of Florida's lighthouses and lighthouse keepers will be available for the enjoyment and understanding of future generations."



Elaine admires the 3rd Order Fresnel Lens at the top of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse.

FLA holds three meetings each year, generally at the location of one of Florida's lighthouses, often offering members the opportunity to climb a lighthouse not open to the public. The next meeting will be at the Anclote Key Lighthouse, a short boat ride from Tarpon Springs, on May 21.

Annual memberships in FLA are \$25 for an individual, \$35 for a family, and \$100 for a corporation. This organization does a great deal for Florida's lighthouses, and was a major contributor to the reconstruction of the Cape St. George Light. Please check out their website at www.floridalighthouses.org and give them your support!

Lighthouse Keeper Takes History to Town!

The Cape St. George Light was the highlighted topic at the January meeting of the Apalachicola Historical Society, with Keeper Stanley Colvin travelling across the bridge to delight AHS members with stories of our historic lighthouse.

Stanley's well-received presentation included facts and figures about the history of Cape St. George, as well as anecdotes taken from keepers' logs and correspondence. One such story tells the tale of the British schooner "Percler" which anchored off Cape St. George on January 28, 1923. The captain sent a crew member ashore with \$4.85, which was all the money on board, to request provisions to support the seven men on the ship in their voyage from St. George Island to Mobile, Alabama. Keeper Clairmon Brooks provided the man with \$13.00 worth of provisions, feeling that \$4.85 would not sustain seven men on a sail boat for a 200-mile journey!

On March 13, 1923 the Superintendent of the U.S. Lighthouse Service in New Orleans received a check for \$8.00 from the agents for the schooner, in payment of the balance due for the provisions. The \$8.00 was forwarded to Keeper Brooks, along with a commendation for assistance rendered, and the Percler and her crew continued on their way to Manati, Cuba.

Thank you, Stanley, for this interesting bit of history. It confirms our long-held belief that Cape St. George Lighthouse Keepers were, and still are, the greatest!

Visit the St. Augustine Lighthouse

The magnificent St. Augustine Lighthouse has recently agreed to a reciprocal arrangement with the St. George Lighthouse Association. SGLA members may present their membership cards when visiting the St. Augustine Lighthouse and climb the 219 steps to the top of the tower at no charge.

We will be welcoming a tour group from St. Augustine to the Cape St. George Light on April 7, and also invite any other members of the St. Augustine Lighthouse to visit our lighthouse at any time and present your St. Augustine Lighthouse membership card for free admission.

So plan a trip to the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Museum -- and don't forget to bring your SGLA membership cards!

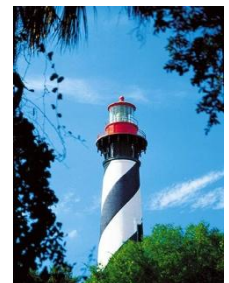
Decorate Your Vehicle with a Lighthouse Tag

Franklin County residents love their two lighthouses – Cape St. George and Crooked River – and many of them show that love on the backs of their cars and trucks!

Per capita, more "Visit Our Lights" license plates have been purchased in Franklin County than in any other county in the State. With 36 new or renewal lighthouse tags sold in the county in 2010, Franklin County vehicles sport one lighthouse tag for every 285 residents. Drivers in St. Johns County, home of the St. Augustine Lighthouse, led all counties with the purchase of 222 lighthouse tags in 2010; but given their much larger population, that's only one tag per 762 residents!

"Visit Our Lights" was the fifth most popular specialty license plate in Franklin County last year. Leading the charge was Florida State University, followed by the University of Florida, Helping Sea Turtles Survive, and Protect Wild Dolphins. We are proud that our beautiful lighthouses are holding their own alongside our alma maters and our spectacular sea life!

Funds raised by the lighthouse tag are allocated as grants by the Florida Lighthouse Association to address preservation needs at our State's lighthouses. So when time to renew your tag rolls around, consider a colorful lighthouse plate for your vehicle and help save the historic lighthouses that saved so many seafarers' lives in days gone by.



Sunset/Moonrise Climbs



**Take a
Picture,
Win a Prize!**

The Cape St. George Light began offering Sunset/Moonrise Climbs in November, and the enthusiastic response will probably result in these after-hours climbs becoming regular monthly events at the

lighthouse on evenings of the full moon.



Image of the Full Moon taken from the top of the lighthouse by Nick Baldwin.

The hour-long event begins about 30 minutes before sunset, and includes

hors d'oeuvres and a sparkling cider toast to the full moon. A knowledgeable volunteer leads the Climb and is on hand to talk about the lighthouse and answer questions. The cost of the Sunset/Moonrise Climb is \$10 for SGLA members and \$15 for non-members. Because of the small size of the lantern room, the Climb is limited to 10 people so advance reservations are recommended. After sunset, visitors can climb to the top of the lighthouse to view the full moon as space and time permit. Full moon climbing is \$5 for SGLA members and \$10 for non-members.

Upcoming Sunset/Moonrise Climbs are on February 18, March 19, April 17, and May 17. Please call the St. George Island Visitor Center at 850-927-7744 for reservations.

Here's a heads up for the photographers among us. The Florida Lighthouse Association will be sponsoring a lighthouse photo contest later this year, so start shooting now! While details will be forthcoming at FLA's May meeting, the advance word is that unique photos of Florida's lighthouses showing their unusual architecture and artistic beauty, taken during the day or at night, will compete for a number of terrific prizes.

It is expected that the contest deadline will be sometime in August, so there's plenty of time to get ready. Photos will have to be submitted as professional quality 8"X10" or 8"X12" prints, and will be displayed at FLA's annual meeting in the fall. So stay tuned for more details, but start capturing those special lighthouse moments now!



Please Support Our Business Members!

Please patronize our Business Members when you are visiting St. George Island:

Aloha Bugs Pest Management
Island Outfitters
Jerry Thompson, Realtor
Journeys of St. George Island

Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty
Sometimes It's Hotter Seasoning Company
St. George Island Civic Club

Con and Janet Knorr are currently on the island for the winter months. They are the owners of Knorrwood Antiques in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and are Business Members of SGLA.

Quick Blinks

- The St. George Lighthouse Association welcomes new Lifetime Patrons Bob Staib of St. George Island, and Jim and Mary Dover of Orange Beach, Alabama. Bob, known as “UPS Bob” in testament to his career with United Parcel Service, is a golf buddy of SGLA directors Vito Bell, Jim Kemp, and Richard Saucer. As always, good things happen at the golf course! Jim and Mary are long-time friends of Dennis Barnell and Jim and Terry Kemp from their days in Atlanta. The two new Lifetime Patron memberships brings the total of SGLA Lifetime Patrons to 43 individuals or families who have made a single gift of \$500 or more to the Cape St. George Light. Thank you to our new patrons, and we hope to see you at the Lighthouse often.
- Many people have been asking if the successful Forgotten Coast Lighthouse Challenge will be repeated in 2011. Please don't be terribly disappointed, but the answer is no. In the interests of keeping interest in the Challenge high and not wearing out the lighthouse enthusiasts who came to the Forgotten Coast last April from all over the country, the Challenge will not be an annual event. There WILL be another Forgotten Coast Lighthouse Challenge, but the dates have not yet been set.
- When the lighthouse story boards and artifacts now on display in the St. George Island Visitor Center are moved to the Keeper's House Museum, the Visitor Center will become home to an exhibit on the history of St. George Island. In addition to five story boards depicting a time line of the island's history, the display will include artifacts from St. George Island's past. Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal is looking for donations or loans of items to display. Ready to go are Indian and turpentine-era pottery donated by Bill Spohrer and Lynn Wilson Spohrer, and the poster shown here which is a gift from Shaun Donahoe. If you have any St. George Island memorabilia that needs relocating, call Elaine at 850-927-7744.
- The next order of brick pavers in the Pathways to the Light project will soon be submitted. If you would like to purchase a paver in St. George Lighthouse Park to commemorate a person, a pet, or a memory, please print the order form from our website (www.stgeorgelight.org) or pick one up at the SGI Visitor Center. Pavers are \$50.00. The next order of pavers should be installed in the park in late March.



A Parting Shot ...



Full Moon Climbers toast the moon from the lantern room of the Cape St. George Light.

Photo courtesy of Nick Baldwin Photography, Tallahassee.