

# Lighthouse News Line

## Historic Conservator Meets with SGLA



James Levy and Dennis Barnell met when James was the featured speaker at the "Lunch and Learn" program sponsored by the Franklin County Public Library. They are pictured in front of a display of Underseas Artifacts recovered in Florida. Many of these beautiful and historical discoveries can be viewed at the Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee.

recovered from the surf and sand of Cape St. George after the collapse of the historic lighthouse last year, will be submerged in a 24-foot tank filled with a solution of water and sodium hydroxide. This caustic soda solution will facilitate the passage of electricity through the water. The negative end of a DC power source will be connected to each piece of lantern room metal, with the positive end connected to a sacrificial anode consisting of a platinum wire in a PVC pipe. Hydrogen will bubble out of the lighthouse piece, and oxygen out of the anode, thus separating the rust particles, like MAGIC! When the water is drained, rust will be scraped off the metal pieces. Then the process will be restarted until all the rust is removed.

The pieces will then be sandblasted, primed, and painted with two coats of epoxy and urethane. The process is expected to take about 12 months, after which these original 1852 pieces of the lantern room will be preserved and ready for display.

James' lab has been involved with the preservation of thousands of historic artifacts found in the State of Florida, from the 50-foot canoe recently raised from the Apalachicola River in Franklin County, to the bounty from Mel Fisher's discovery of the Atocha.

James spoke to Franklin County residents at the monthly "Lunch and Learn" series sponsored by the Friends of the Franklin County Public Library. This very worthwhile series will continue on the first Monday of every month at the Eastpoint Firehouse, and all our local readers are encouraged to attend!

James Levy, Historic Conservator for the State of Florida, met with SGLA officers Dennis Barnell, Jim Kemp, and Terry Kemp on his visit to Eastpoint on October 2. Within the next two weeks, SGLA will deliver the recovered metal pieces of the lantern room to James' laboratory in Tallahassee, where the process of desalinizing and preserving these historic treasures will begin.

The fascinating electrolysis procedure will remove the salt and rust from the iron pieces of the lantern room, thus preserving them for future generations to study and enjoy. The iron lantern room components,