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Fall 2011

Smart Santas Shop at the Keeper's House Gift Shop!

When you begin your gift shopping this holiday season, be sure to visit the Keeper's House Gift Shop at the Cape St. George Light. You will be delighted at the great selection of gift items that we have to offer.



Carol shows a sea glass jewelry set to customer Dave Raney of Panama City Beach.

Gift Shop Manager Carol Talley invites SGLA members and friends to come see the "well-priced collection that includes items customized with the image of the lighthouse, as well as jewelry, hostess gifts, books, and educational children's games that will be sure to delight everyone on your holiday list."

There are hand-painted wine glasses featuring the Cape St. George Light as well as sea turtle, sailboat, and dolphin designs. Appetizer plates shaped like the starfish that frequently show up on island beaches and silver dip spreaders and wine tags depicting island sea

life make lovely hostess gifts. Ceramic black and white pearl salt and pepper shakers sitting on an oyster shell dish are a fitting commemoration of the bounty of Apalachicola Bay and would be a wonderful addition to your holiday table.



Starfish plates highlight an assortment of ideal hostess gifts.

Ladies will love the great selection of jewelry including earrings, necklaces, and bracelets by Apalachicola artist Caty Greene. Graceful necklaces and earrings crafted from sea glass in fish and turtle images and necklaces of shell and turquoise are also offered, as is a special selection of pet-lover jewelry.

The book section features the recently-reprinted novel by Apalachicola author Alexander Key, "Island Light," and the favorite book by lighthouse keeper's son Bill Roberts, "Lighthouses & Living Along the Florida Gulf Coast." A number of editions about lighthouses, sea

turtles, and the natural environment of barrier islands are available.



Plush animal purses represent a variety of local wildlife.

The children's area includes games that have won awards such as the prestigious "Mensa Select" medal for their educational as well as entertainment value. Also offered are children's books, handcrafted shell necklaces by island artist Marty Ray, and kid's binoculars. Whimsical plush animal purses depicting wildlife including flamingoes, fish, and frogs will delight the little girls on your gift list.



Hand-painted wine glasses in several designs.

The extensive selection of lighthouse caps and t-shirts (short-sleeve, long-sleeve, and tanks) in an assortment of colors are great gifts that support the maintenance of the historic lighthouse. Polo shirts and waterproof nature guides and lighthouse maps will appeal to the men on your gift list. A distinctive black mug with an image of the Lighthouse and Keeper's House will be available before Christmas.

"Almost all of our items are priced at less than \$30.00, with many selections at a lower price point," Carol pointed out. And the Gift Shop accepts Visa, MasterCard, and Discover Card. So come visit Carol and sales assistant Adele Colston and let them help you with your holiday shopping while helping preserve the historic Cape St. George Light!



Sales Assistant Adele Colston behind the jewelry counter.

Top 5 Reasons to Shop at the Keeper's House Gift Shop

#5—Combine shopping and learning by visiting the Lighthouse Museum and the adjacent Gift Shop!

#4—Carol and Adele are entertaining as well as helpful!

#3—Merchandise is "priced right."

#2—The Gift Shop is non-profit; all proceeds go to the preservation of the lighthouse and keeper's house.

And the #1 reason to shop at the Keeper's House Gift Shop is that you can get there in less than 10 minutes from anywhere on St. George Island!

A Loving Farewell to Bill Roberts

The Cape St. George Light has lost one of its dearest friends.

Bill Roberts, son and grandson of lighthouse keepers at Cape St. George, passed away unexpectedly on November 18 due to complications from a fall.

Bill was many things to Cape St. George: a supporter when we were first thinking of rebuilding the light; a cheerleader when he and his wife Verner frequently came to check on the progress of the reconstruction; a storyteller who delighted in talking about his childhood days at the lighthouse to a spellbound audience including at times SGLA officers and staff Dennis, Elaine, Stanley, Jim, Skip, Terry and any visitors who were lucky enough to be around when he visited; a speaker who mesmerized the crowd at the ceremony for the laying of the first brick in the reconstruction; a benefactor who brought us many of the artifacts that are now part of the Roberts Family Collection at the Keeper's House Museum; an author who wrote about "life at the light," including rides in a goat cart and chores at the lighthouse, which is the basis for our favorite museum exhibit; and a lifetime member of the St. George Lighthouse Association.

But most of all he was our friend, and we will miss him dearly.

We last saw Bill in October, at the Florida Lighthouse Association meeting in Port St. Joe. At the age of 88, he had driven himself to the meeting from his home in Mary Esther, and was excited to see all his lighthouse friends. Bill spent the night in the area, and was uncharacteristically late arriving for the Sunday morning meeting, causing us much concern. The Cape St. George team was making a presentation that morning, and planned to highlight Bill's generous contributions to the Keeper's House Museum. Just as we finished singing his praises, he walked into the room. Like many of us at the meeting, he had been tricked by the proximity to the time zone line and was an hour off. He laughed and proceeded to give us two aprons which his mother had sewn on the Damascus sewing machine now housed in our museum.

The memories go on and on. We are so proud of the collection of family artifacts that he donated to the museum – tools used by his father, Walter A. Roberts, Jr. as keeper at Cape St. George, and items from their home life in the keeper's house at the lighthouse. We are proud that Bill saw his family honored in the little museum, and proud that he could be with us to meet visitors and sign books on opening day in August.

One last story. One of the items that Bill donated was the rocking chair in which his Mother rocked him as a newborn baby when he was afflicted with whooping cough. We recount this story on the exhibit label explaining the significance of the chair. This summer a lady who was visiting the museum asked about the child with the whooping cough: "I hope the little boy is OK," she said, with great concern. Terry assured her that at 88 years old, Bill had survived the whooping cough and was doing just fine, and that we were looking forward to his next visit. Bill enjoyed this story, and we so regret that the ending must change.

Bill, thank you for everything. We will miss you very much.



Verner and Bill Roberts at the Cape St. George Light.

First SGI Tour of Homes Coming in February!

The St. George Lighthouse Association will sponsor the first St. George Island Tour of Homes, set for February 3 and 4, 2012. The tour will feature seven island residences on the beach and the bay and in between, from the East End to the Plantation. Also included will be the Lighthouse Keeper's House and the new Plantation Club House.

Tour weekend will kick-off with a Friday evening reception at the Jay Abbott Firehouse, featuring presentations on island architectural design and landscaping.

Saturday's tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. will include the following island homes:

Whaley House – This expansive East End beachfront home with siding, ceilings, and stairs made of Panhandle cypress has wraparound decks, a pool, and a straight path to the beach.



Whaley House

Best Ever – Filled with light and white, this six-bedroom and six-bath home in Gulf Beaches emanates spacious serenity.

Hadden House – The first wooden single-family home built on the island is a simple, cozy, and quaint get-away cottage.

Sea Wings – The soaring silhouette of this imaginative home is an island landmark, with dramatic intersecting rooflines and “flying wings” of windows.



Sea Wings

Garber House – This 5,200-square foot home in the St. George Plantation is encased in steel-reinforced concrete, and features two-story beachfront windows totally opening it to the beauty of the beach.



Garber House

Rainbow House – This Plantation home takes its name from exterior splashes of bright paint and jeweled-tone stained glass windows.

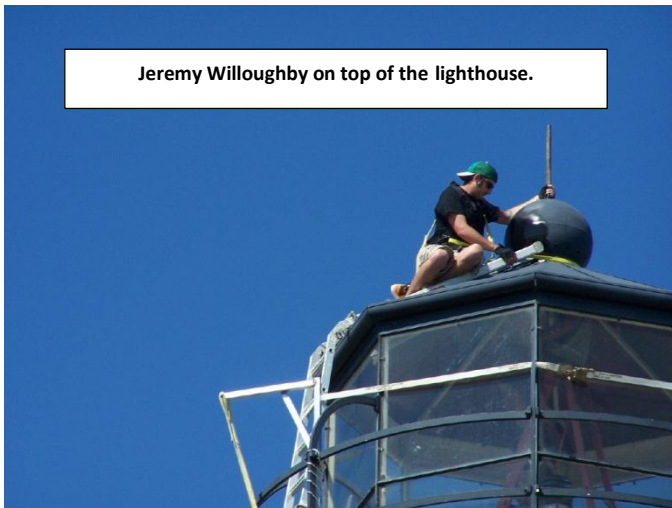
Thompson House – Nestled in one of the island's oldest oak stands, this bayside Plantation home offers three extraordinary entertaining areas and a professional kitchen.

These fabulous island homes certainly offer something to appeal to everyone!

Tickets will be available starting in mid-December at the Lighthouse Keeper's House Gift Shop on St. George Island; at Gardens Inc. in Apalachicola; at the Apalachicola Chamber of Commerce; or by calling the Visitor Center at 850-927-7744 or toll free at 888-927-7744. Tickets will be priced at \$15 in advance and \$20 on the day of the Tour. Because access to the Plantation will be by scheduled shuttle service, the number of tickets sold will be limited – so get yours soon and don't miss out on this great premier event!

Lighthouse Modifications Completed

Air holes were recently drilled into the base of the vent ball on top of the Cape St. George Light to help alleviate summer heat in the lantern room.



Local workmen scaled the top of the 77-foot lighthouse to perform the delicate work, as the rest of us watched nervously from below. Wire mesh was installed over the openings to help prevent intrusion by wasps, who for some reason seem to be especially attracted to lighthouse lantern rooms. Should the unwanted creatures still find their way in, SGLA Business Member Lois Swoboda of Aloha Pest Management has provided us with unique trapping devices that will enable us to capture the wasps.

When Tropical Storm Lee blew across St. George Island this summer, he dislocated one of the brackets that support the shutter bars on the lighthouse windows. As a precaution, all of the brackets have been outfitted with bolts to replace the screws that attach the brackets to the window shutters.

Your Board of Directors has been prudently setting aside a percentage of revenues each month to handle lighthouse repairs, and a portion of this fund was used to pay for these modifications.

Volunteers Needed at Lighthouse and Museum

Volunteers are needed to help out at the Lighthouse and in the Lighthouse Museum.

Like the keepers of old, Lighthouse Keeper Stanley Colvin and Assistant Keeper Jim Dunkin do not often miss a day of tending the Light for our visitors. But occasionally they must be away from the lighthouse and we would like to have reinforcements prepared to take over when necessary. We have several reliable associate keepers who fill-in when they are available, but we would like to add a few more.

When the busy season rolls around starting with spring break and extending on into the summer, we will also need volunteers to monitor the museum while Carol or Adele work with customers in the Gift Shop. These docents will offer information about the lighthouse and answer questions for visitors, while keeping an eye on things in the museum. It's a small space, and can get crowded.

We will offer a training class for volunteers and provide reference material on the history of the lighthouse. You will learn interesting history from the keeper's logs – like the accounts of shipwrecks at the Light, and the sad story of the keeper who ended his life in the original keeper's house.

If you are interested in spending a couple of hours from time to time in the historical surrounds of the Lighthouse or Keeper's House, contact Terry at 850-927-2000 or fullmoon.sgi@fairpoint.net.

Journalists Visit St. George Island and Lighthouse

When the Franklin County Tourist Development Council offered BP funds to each of the Visitor Centers to attract journalists to Franklin County, SGI Visitor Center Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal jumped at the chance to bring a unique set of publicists to St. George Island. Working with Geiger Public Relations of Tallahassee, Elaine targeted media categories focused on niche areas like kayaking, home schooling, photography, biking, and snowbird activities. She requested that journalists writing for publications that focus on these subjects be invited to spend a few days on SGI.

Ten journalists eagerly signed up for the Press Tour which took place from November 10 – 13, registering for a choice of activities that included a State Park tour, kayaking, birding, a photo expedition, history presentation, lodging tour, and a visit to the studios of island artists. The entire group convened for visits to Circle of Friends at Sometimes It's Hotter Seasoning Company, dinner at the Blue Parrot hosted by Resort Vacation Properties, lunch at Captain Snooks, a picnic and tour at the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, and a gala farewell dinner hosted by Collins Vacation Rentals.

Several journalists said that the most memorable part of the trip was the beautiful sunset climb to the top of the Cape St. George Light, accompanied by hors d'oeuvres on the Keeper's House Porch and a visit to the Lighthouse Museum and Gift Shop. SGLA Secretary Terry Kemp told the compelling story of the fall and rise of the Cape St. George Light, and Mother Nature cooperated by providing a spectacular sunset with skies of red, pink and purple that lingered far beyond the 5:46 p.m. setting of the sun.

We thoroughly enjoyed meeting these writers who came from New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and Ontario to visit our little island, and we look forward to reading about their impressions of a few days in paradise!

Please Patronize the SGLA 2011 Business Members

Aloha Bugs Pest Management
Marilyn and Mason Bean, Realtors
BJ's Pizza
The Butler Agency
Century 21 Collins Realty, Inc.
Collins Vacation Rentals
Steve Harris, Realtor
Island Adventures
Bobby James Roofing
Journeys of St. George Island
Knorrwood Antiques, Gettysburg, PA
Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty
Resort Vacation Properties of St. George Island
Thomas M. Shuler, Attorney-at-Law
Sometimes It's Hotter Seasoning Company
Survivors Bait and Tackle
St. George Island Civic Club
Jerry Thompson, Realtor

Visitor Center Volunteers Go Gallery Hopping

The fall outing for the SGI Visitor Center volunteers took the group on a fascinating tour of area art galleries. As always, Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal arranged a fun and interesting day geared toward acquainting volunteers with places and activities that they might share with island visitors.

The first stop was at our own island gallery, Sea Oats Gallery, where manager Jean Collins directed attention to artistic gift items priced below \$50 that share gallery space with beautiful works by full-time and part-time local artists.

Then it was on to Apalachicola, where the first stop was at 49 Palmetto, a renovated bungalow housing a gallery, studio space, and a rental getaway flat. Owner Anna-Maria Cannatella told stories of the featured artists whose works tend toward southern contemporary and folk art. The next visit was to the Bowery Art Gallery, where whimsical dog sculptures, mixed media pieces, and colorful crocheted apparel were among other works by local artists. The Green Door features the bright canvasses of Amy Friedman, along with unique home décor items. Richard Bickel delighted the group with the stories behind his photographs, primarily black and white prints of watermen on the Apalachicola Bay and River.

Artemis Gallery offers an extensive array of paintings, photographs, jewelry, apparel, and books again focusing on area artists.

The final stop was at Katie McFarland's shop featuring her beautiful creations in pottery.



Volunteers at Artemis Gallery in Apalachicola.

Lunch was at Café Con Leche, a cozy dining spot with a Venezuelan flair and a selection of art for sale. From Arepas with Chicken, to Cuban sandwiches, to Grilled Vegetables on Ciabatta bread, the menu was tasty and welcomed by the group of art-educated but hungry volunteers. Just in time for holiday shopping, we now know where to send visitors who are looking for that special piece of original artwork from the Forgotten Coast.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the Visitor Center can contact Elaine at 850-927-7744. It's a great way to meet our island guests and enjoy quarterly outings as well!

Winter Hours

Effective November 1 through February 28, the Cape St. George Light and the Lighthouse Museum and Keeper's House Gift Shop have assumed winter hours. Both buildings are open from noon to 5 p.m. every day except Thursday.

Extended hours from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. will be observed on the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 25 and 26; and the week between Christmas and New Years, December 26 to 30. Both the Lighthouse and the Keeper's House will close at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve, December 24, and New Year's Eve, December 31.

The Visitor Center continues to be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday; and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Like the Lighthouse and the Keeper's House, the Visitor Center is closed on Thursdays.

Oysters and Hams

A special feature of the hugely successful Oyster Festival on St. George Island over Columbus Day weekend was the participation of amateur radio operators from Georgia who transmitted worldwide from the Cape St. George Light.

An 11-member team from the Kennehochee Amateur Radio Club near Atlanta held their second Lighthouse Expedition at the historic Cape St. George Lighthouse and made contact with over 2,000 HAM radio stations from all over the world.

The team tied a five-foot line to the lantern room railing, and attached a wire antenna connected to a nearby high point. The primary antenna supported multiple lines that accommodated additional antennas for round-the-clock radio operations.

An operations tent was set up on the lawn next to the lighthouse and visitors were able to view the activities, listen in on the broadcasts, and learn about HAM radio communications. A 24-hour communications center was set



Oyster Festival visitors talk with HAM operator Ricky DeLuco.

up in the conference room of the Keeper's House.



Antenna wires are vaguely visible hanging from the lighthouse.

Kennehochee team leader Ricky DeLuco said, "The purpose of this event was to promote public awareness of lighthouses and lightships, to publicize the contribution they and their keepers have made to maritime safety, to emphasize the need to preserve and restore light beacons as a historical necessity, to promote amateur radio, and to foster international goodwill."

He said that thousands of HAM operators make a special hobby of "chasing lighthouses and islands." A website accessible to HAM operators included extensive historical information on the Cape St. George Light, accessible under the event call sign of K4L.

Lights On After School

Project Impact students from Apalachicola visited the Cape St. George Light on October 20 as part of the annual "Lights on After School" event. Coordinator Faye Johnson brought about 100 students and chaperones to the lighthouse to hear Keeper Stanley Colvin talk about the Light's history and to climb the historic tower. Project Impact is an after-school program for students of all ages.



Quick Blinks

- The December Full Moon Climb will take place on Saturday, December 10, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The sun will set at 5:41 p.m. and the full moon will rise at 5:55 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members, and reservations can be made by calling the St. George Island Visitor Center at 850-927-7744 or toll-free at 888-927-7744.
- The Cape St. George Light is back on as of November 1, and will remain lighted until the beginning of turtle nesting season on May 1, 2012. The historic lighthouse is a Private Aid to Navigation permitted by the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Plan to attend the 2012 Florida Panhandle Lighthouse Challenge, set for April 21 and 22, 2012. The Challenge will live up to its name by adding a fifth lighthouse to the four Forgotten Coast Lighthouses – St. Marks, Crooked River, Cape St. George, and Cape San Blas. New to this Challenge will be the Pensacola Lighthouse – which is a three-hour drive west from Cape San Blas and will present an added challenge to the Challenge! Info will soon be accessible from the SGLA website at www.stgeorgelight.org.
- Pavers in St. George Lighthouse Park make great holiday gifts! Honor a friend, family member, pet, or special occasion with an engraved paver in the park's pathways. Inscriptions can be up to three lines of 18 characters, and the pavers are priced at a reasonable \$50. Additional information is available at the Keeper's House Gift Shop or on our website at www.stgeorgelight.org.
- St. George Island will once again be aglow with lights for the holiday season. Join us for the Lighting of the Island Lights on Friday, December 2, when Santa arrives on the big SGI Ladder Fire Truck with sacks full of gifts for all children in attendance. The palms at the center of the island as well as the Keeper's House and Visitor Center will light up at dark-thirty!

A Parting Shot....



Bill Roberts in a goat cart near the lighthouse around 1930, when Bill was seven years old.

Billy the goat was found on Sand Island at the end of Little St. George by Bill and his father, Keeper Walter Roberts, Jr. Billy loved pulling the cart for the Roberts children and did so for many summers, returning to his herd at summer's end. The photo is from Bill's book, "Lighthouses & Living Along the Florida Gulf Coast" and is featured in an exhibit in the Lighthouse Museum. It was displayed at Bill's memorial service on November 21 and 22.

We include it here in tribute to our friend Bill Roberts.