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Spring 2013

SGLA Hosts Annual Membership Meeting at Lighthouse

SGLA members who attended the Annual Meeting on May 11 heard upbeat reports about the continuing success of the lighthouse, and enjoyed a lunch of hot dogs expertly grilled by VP Jim Kemp.



SGLA Directors and Officers: Dennis Barnell, Kristy Branch Banks, Vito Bell, Jim Kemp, Terry Kemp, Richard Saucer, and Phyllis Vitale-Lewis. Absent were Bud Hayes and Fred Stanley.

President Dennis Barnell recapped a successful year marked by steady climbing revenue and increased Gift Shop sales. Current projects include the search for a third order Fresnel lens to display in the museum, and the replacement of the polycarbonate lantern room windows with glass, which is scheduled to happen in September, after the summer season.

Lighthouse Keeper Stanley Colvin reported that 73,560 lighthouse enthusiasts have climbed to the top of the historic structure since reconstruction was completed in December of 2008.

SGLA now has about 400 members, according to Secretary Terry Kemp, who said that the renewal campaign continues, and encouraged members who have not yet renewed to do so. She welcomed new Lifetime Patrons Susan and Mark Baldino, Dawn and Richard Radford, Sherri and Eric Roberts, and Mary and Tom Slocum.

Director Vito Bell highlighted By-Laws changes which include term limits for officers and directors, creation of standing board committees, and a reduction in the maximum number of board members from 12 to nine.

Officers elected for the coming year are Dennis Barnell, President; Jim Kemp, Vice President; Terry Kemp,

Thank You, Joe and Doug

SGLA thanks our two retiring Directors, Joe Bacher and Doug Brandt, for their dedicated service to the Lighthouse Association.

Joe Bacher is a founding Director of SGLA and was one of the first on board when the discovery was made in late 2004 that the reinforced lighthouse foundation was crumbling. He and his wife, Charolette, organized and hosted many fundraisers to "Rescue the Light," including our first major event featuring Jim Morris, and the first Cinco de Mayo fundraiser on the island. SGLA President Dennis Barnell credits Joe with helping to "lead the rescue effort from the despair of collapse to the extraordinary success we enjoy today."

Doug Brandt, Director from 2010 to 2013, will be remembered most for organizing our Full Moon Climbs, a successful source of revenue for SGLA. Doug was an innovator who helped us transition our focus from a reconstruction project to a business-like enterprise.

Joe and Doug will be honored with pavers in Lighthouse Park.



Secretary; and Phyllis Vitale-Lewis, Treasurer. In addition to the officers, members of the Board of Directors are Vito Bell, Kristy Branch Banks, Bud Hayes, Richard Saucer, and Fred Stanley.

The board welcomed new member Kristy Branch Banks, and extended best wishes and appreciation to retiring board members Joe Bacher and Doug Brandt.



Annual Meeting participants enjoyed hot dogs with all the fixins'.

Florida Lighthouse Day Celebrated on April 20

The Cape St. George Light celebrated Florida Lighthouse Day on Saturday, April 20, with the offer of free climbing to the top of our historic lighthouse. Assistant Lighthouse Keeper Jim Dunkin reported that 207 climbers took advantage of the opportunity!

Among them was a woman who was nearing completion of her quest to climb all the lighthouses in the United States, and a retired Army helicopter pilot who told the story of returning to base at Fort Rucker, Alabama to discover three bullet holes in the aircraft's tail apparently inflicted by some inhospitable Alabama or Florida moonshiners.

But the best story of the day is that of a father and son who came to climb the lighthouse. The boy, maybe 10 or 11 years old, had cerebral palsy and the man wanted to carry him up the stairs so that

he could experience the lighthouse without delaying other climbers. For safety reasons, our keepers don't allow children to be carried up the 92 stairs, so Keeper Dunkin worked with the boy until he felt comfortable climbing on his own. Father and son climbed all the way to the top, with other climbers encouraging and assisting. As they came back down, the boy took a gleeful hop off the last stair, happy and proud of his accomplishment. Keeper Dunkin shook his little hand and congratulated him, and his smile was as bright as the lighthouse beacon. The "I climbed the Cape St. George Light" sticker that the keepers give to the children who climb has never been worn with more pride.

It was a great Florida Lighthouse Day at the Cape St. George Light!

Museum Docents

We still need volunteers to help as docents in the museum during the summer months, so that Carol, Adele, and Dany can focus on merchandise and climbing ticket sales in the Gift Shop. Docents receive training about the museum displays and potential problem spots and can sign up for shifts of several hours or fill in when needed. It's a fun way to meet our visitors, share your knowledge about the lighthouse, and feel good about helping out. If you can help, call the Gift Shop at 850-927-7745 and your name will be given to Docent Coordinator Pam Vest.

An Adventure with Journeys

Lighthouse volunteers who serve as museum docents and work day volunteers enjoyed a break from their many hours of lighthouse work with a trip to Little St. George Island highlighted by fresh oysters and a low country boil on May 23.



The outing started out as the annual appreciation trip hosted by local outfitter Journeys of St. George Island, which is a tradition initiated by Journeys several years ago to thank SGLA's Visitor Center volunteers. The evening generally begins with refreshments at Journeys shop on the island, and evolves into a sunset cruise with oysters plucked from Apalachicola Bay along the way. This year SGLA decided to enhance the boating adventure and further honor the volunteers with a low country boil on Little St. George Island.



But Mother Nature had a different plan, as winds and seas picked up to an unsafe level late on Thursday afternoon. So the boat trip on the bay

was cancelled in favor of a land trip to the Cut and boat shuttles to Little St. George.



Once on the uninhabited island, the Journeys crew started shucking fresh oysters and Joe Brown cooked the traditional boil of shrimp, sausage, and corn -- with one small twist. The boil did not include the usual red potatoes, as the bag of potatoes was blown off Joe's boat during the trip across the churning bay!



Everyone adapted well to the modified plan and had a great time eating, drinking, and socializing on the beautiful barrier island where the Lighthouse once stood. Just as the sun was setting into the bay, more than 30 happy revelers boarded the boats for the trip back across the Cut.

Once again we say: Lighthouse Volunteers Are the Greatest! And the folks from Journeys are wonderful captains and gracious hosts.

More Signs!

Progress continues to be made on the "re-signing" of Lighthouse Park, which began with the installation of the large new street sign announcing the Cape St. George Light, the Lighthouse Museum, the Gift Shop, and the Visitor Center several months ago.

The latest additions installed by sign contractor Bob Sauls are a sign outside the lighthouse directing visitors to the Gift Shop for climbing tickets; a "Pooch Parking" sign in front of the Keeper's House; and a new sign outside the door to the Keeper's House listing open hours.

Still to come is another large sign to be installed in front of the Keeper's House to let folks know that the building houses the Lighthouse Museum and Gift Shop.



Bob Sauls of Sauls Signs in Tallahassee installed signs for Lighthouse Tickets, the Museum & Gift Shop, and Pooch Parking as part of SGLA's signage upgrade project in Lighthouse Park.

SGLA Salutes Our Lifetime Patrons!

The St. George Lighthouse Association is fortunate to have a 59 Lifetime Patrons in our membership ranks. A Lifetime Patron membership costs \$500, and entitles the member and all of his or her family to climb the lighthouse at no cost during the member's lifetime. Friends who accompany the member to the lighthouse may also climb at no charge. We thank all of our Lifetime Patrons, listed below.

Rick Alexander
Rick & Sharon Anderson
Mark & Susan Baldino
Paul Bariteau
Dennis Barnell
Jackie & Vito Bell
Derith Bennett
Alice Collins
Catherine & Temp Davis
Mary & Jim Dover
Mary & Stan Farnham
Kathy & Philip Froelich
Virginia & Clarence Gissendanner
Johnny Guy
Wayne Hanson
Joanne & Jack Harmon
Steve Haverick
Sally & Frank Haynie
Mary Jean & Bob Heide
Pauline & Walter Hoch
Alane & Clint Kadel

Xenia & Gary Kemp
Terry & Jim Kemp
Angelia & Tasso Knight
Phyllis & Jimmy Lewis
Ada Long
Anneli & Jim Magee
Susan & Eric Martin
Susan & Jim McClendon
Ann & Robert McMillan
Kirk Newkirk
Roy Ogles
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Karen & Bill Powers
Dawn & Richard Radford
Chollet Ramsey & Terry Donohue
Glynda & Don Ratliff
Linda & Chuck Rawlins
Joyce & Martin Reed

Sherri & Eric Roberts
Verner Roberts
Eric Sharp
Judy Shultz
James Sineath
Betty Ann & Benson Skelton
Mary & Tom Slocum
Donna Stafford
Bob Staib
St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum
Glenn Swigart
Carol Talley & Fred Stanley
Tampa Bay Harbour Lights Collectors Club
Mark Vail
Cindy & Rex Whiteman
Penny & Lon Wilkens
Lucille Wray

We also honor two Lifetime Patron Members who are no longer with us: Harold Byrd and Bill Roberts. Both of these gentlemen were exceptionally committed to the Cape St. George Light, and we miss them dearly.

Please Patronize Our Business Members

Aloha Bugs Pest Management
BJ's Pizza
Kristy Branch Banks, P.A.
The Butler Agency
Century 21 Collins Realty, Inc.
Collins Vacation Rentals
Steve Harris, Realtor
Island Adventures
Island Outfitters

Bobby James Roofing
Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty
Resort Vacation Properties of SGI
Thomas M. Shuler, Attorney-at-Law
Survivors Bait and Tackle
St. George Island Civic Club
St. George Island Realty
Jerry Thompson, Realtor

Plein Air Artists Visit Lighthouse Park

Plein Air artists returned to St. George Island to paint in Lighthouse Park as a part of the Forgotten Coast Plein Air Invitational Paint-Out on May 7.

Artists Shelby Keefe and Nancie Mertz joined old lighthouse friends Charles Dickinson and Katie Cundiff on a breezy afternoon and set up in the park, on the beach, and in the parking lots looking for interesting perspectives on the historic structure. All four painted the lighthouse, and Nancie also completed a small pastel of a charming beach scene during the two-hour demonstration.



Artist Charles Dickinson

After completing their paintings, the artists joined their colleagues Natalia Andreeva, James Hempel, John Guernsey, and Hodges Soileau at a reception sponsored by the St. George Lighthouse Association.

Art enthusiasts who had gathered to watch the plein air demonstrations joined the artists, SGLA members, and local residents to enjoy a delicious spread of hors d'oeuvres created by Charolette Bacher of Sometimes It's Hotter Seasoning Company along with cool beverages served up by lighthouse volunteers. We offer a special thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this event a success.



Artist Shelby Keefe was a first-time visitor.

We always look forward to hosting these talented artists in this annual rite of spring in Lighthouse Park!



Artist James Hempel (left) chats with SGLA member Susan McClendon at the reception in Lighthouse Park.

"Island Light" Shines in Lighthouse Park

"Island Light," a 1950 novel by Apalachicola author Alexander Key, was reborn as "Island Light: War and Reconciliation" in a production co-presented by SGLA and local theater troupe, the Panhandle Players. The outdoor production, staged in Lighthouse Park, was our contribution to the Civil War History Weekend sponsored by the Maritime Museum with events held in Apalachicola and on St. George Island.

The play tells the tale of Maximilian Ewing, the son of a prominent Apalachicola family, who joins the Confederate navy and is captured and imprisoned by Union forces at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas. Max escapes from prison and finds his way back to Apalachicola, determined to seek revenge for his years of imprisonment. But post-war Apalachicola is a different place, and Max's quest for retribution takes him to the lighthouse on St. George Island and a temporary position as Assistant Lighthouse Keeper.

What better place to set this dramatic tale of revenge, love, loyalty, honor, passion, and greed than in the park with the Cape St. George Light as a spectacular backdrop! The platform that once held the reconstructed lantern room became a stage for the 14 actors under the guidance of first-time director Ann Cowles.

A lively crowd of more than two hundred patrons brought lawn chairs and refreshments to the free production, which was the Players first effort at "theater under the stars" and a resounding success.

Several SGLA members appeared in the play, including Henry Kozlowsky as the Narrator, Elaine Kozlowsky as Eastpoint girl Lily Bright, and Jim Kemp as Union Captain Horatio Hornblower. Banjo interludes of period songs played by Brooks Jones delighted the audience between scenes.

Other local talent contributing to the production included Vince Bishop as Max Ewing, Michael Hatfield as Ewing's fellow prisoner Meriwether, Jeff Ilardi as Major Gaines, Torben Madson as Ewing's childhood friend Branch Clabo, Donna McCoy as Ewing's former girlfriend Bella, Tom Loughridge as Lighthouse Keeper Simon Lassaphene, Beverly Kelley as Mrs. Lassaphene, Sarah Madson as Lassaphene's niece Charlotte, and Frederic Kahler as Apalachicola attorney Cassius Drew. Jim Kemp served as stage manager, Caroline Ilardi was in charge of costumes and make-up, Elaine Kozlowsky and Terry Kemp handled props, Ed Aguiar and Eric Springer built the set, Dan Wheeler ran the lighting, and Frederic Kahler did the poster design.



"Island Light" cast members Tom Loughridge, Beverly Kelley, Henry Kozlowsky, Elaine Kozlowsky, Jeff Ilardi, Jim Kemp, Donna McCoy, Torben Madson, Sarah Madson, Michael Hatfield, and Frederic Kahler.

Lighthouse volunteers also joined with Panhandle Players supporters to contribute baked goods which were available for purchase before the play and at intermission to raise funds for the theater company.

SGLA thanks the Panhandle Players, all the actors and actresses, stage personnel, volunteers, and audience members who made our first stage adventure such a hit!

Quick Blinks

- A new climbing record at the Cape St. George Light was set on Friday, April 5, 2013, when an amazing 306 people climbed to the top of the lighthouse. Thanks to all those Spring Breakers who helped set the record!
- The lighthouse optic and spotlights in the park were extinguished on April 30 for the start of sea turtle nesting season. The lighthouse will be re-lighted on November 1.
- Lighthouse lover Derith Bennett of Valrico, Florida near Tampa has donated her collection of 169 Harbour Lights miniatures and 49 Harbour Lights and Barlow Christmas ornaments to the St. George Lighthouse Association. Derith collected the lighthouses from states that she visited, including Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, California, Oregon, and Washington. The collection includes miniature lighthouses from various special editions and Harbour Lights series, as well as historical buildings, accessories, Fresnel lens miniatures, and Little Lights of Mine. As with any items or collections that SGLA accepts, we have Derith's approval to use any of the items to raise funds for the Cape St. George Light. Our current plan is to display as many as possible in the Lighthouse Museum.
- Full Moon Climbs continue this summer and have been selling out in advance. So if you're planning a Full Moon Climb, make your reservation by calling the Gift Shop at 850-927-7745. Cost is \$10 for SGLA members and \$15 for non-members to see the sunset and moonrise. After sunset, climbers can view the full moon from the top of the lighthouse at the cost of \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members. Volunteers are needed to help with the climbs. Contact Terry Kemp at fullmoon.sgi@fairpoint.net if you can assist, even with one climb. Here's the schedule for the next few months:
June 23, 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
July 22, 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
August 21, 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

A Parting Shot



SGLA member and professional photographer Lou Kellenberger leaves his home base at the St. Marks Lighthouse to visit us at the Cape St. George Light from time to time. We always look forward to Lou and wife Betsy's visits not only because we enjoy seeing good friends, but also because we know that we can expect to see more fabulous photos of our lighthouse! This one was taken on May 26. See all Lou's amazing photos at:

www.loukellenbergerphotography.zenfolio.com.