



[www.stgeorgelight.org](http://www.stgeorgelight.org)

Summer 2011

## Presenting ... The Lighthouse Museum and The Keeper's House Gift Shop!

*This issue of "Light Reading" celebrates the opening of the Lighthouse Museum and the Keeper's House Gift Shop in the Lighthouse Keeper's House. The late August opening explains why the Summer 2011 edition is a little late arriving. (Technically it is still summer, even though the families and children who crowded the lighthouse in June and July are long gone back to school!)*



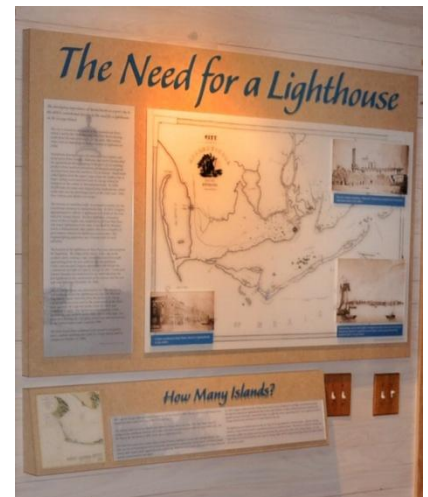
The Welcome Kiosk includes photos of the original and the current Keeper's House.



Pieces of the 1852 Lighthouse are on display.

After months of research, writing text, searching for photos, identifying artifacts, proofing, re-proofing, and re-proofing yet again, the truck carrying the exhibits for Phase 1 of the Lighthouse Museum rolled onto the island late in the day on Wednesday, July 27.

Several SGLA members helped unload the truck, ostensibly in an attempt to beat the rain, but really because we couldn't wait to see how the displays looked! We were not disappointed. Murphy & Orr Exhibits of Forest Park, Georgia did a wonderful job of capturing the spirit of the Cape St. George Light and its history. Jerry and Antonio Murphy spent the next several days installing the exhibits in the first floor west room of the Keepers House, leaving us ready for a "soft opening" of the museum on August 1.



The success of Apalachicola as a cotton port created the need for a lighthouse on SGL.



Stan Farnham's keeper's uniform.



The history of the 1852 Lighthouse is told in words and pictures.



The Timeline display honors SGLA member Penny Angel.



Items used by Keeper Walter A. Roberts, Jr.

Many of the artifacts in the museum were donated by Bill Roberts and his family. Bill's father and grandfather were both Keepers at Cape St. George. Bill's generous donation not only honors the Roberts family, but also helps museum visitors understand the life of the Lighthouse Keepers.

Once the museum was open, it was time to focus on the Gift Shop. For the next several weeks, Gift Shop Manager Carol Talley worked tirelessly to get the shop ready to open on Sunday, August 21. Mornings and nights were spent ordering merchandise and designing display areas, while afternoons were spent guiding visitors through the museum and determining adjustments to be made before Opening Day.

On Thursday, August 18, volunteers moved lighthouse merchandise from the Visitor Center to the Gift Shop. Volunteer Adele Colston folded t-shirts to be displayed in the new "cubbies" constructed by SGLA Director Fred Stanley with the assistance of VP Jim Kemp.

Visitor Center volunteers helped Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal create displays on the history of St. George Island to replace the lighthouse artifacts that had moved to the Keeper's House.



The "Keeper's Corner" depicts the life of the Keeper at home and at work.



The Keeper's desk in the Lighthouse watchroom.



The Roberts Family Collection



The Damascus sewing machine used by Keeper's wife Bessie Roberts.

On August 21, it was SHOWTIME -- and we were ready!

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped make the Lighthouse Museum and the Keeper's House Gift Shop a reality!



## Visit the Keeper's House Gift Shop

The Keeper's House Gift Shop is filled with unique and delightful items that commemorate the historic lighthouse and the beautiful beaches of St. George Island.



Gift Shop Manager Carol Talley helps a customer.  
(Photo by Eric Roberts)

Gift Shop Manager Carol Talley has created a distinctive boutique that features the work of local artists as well as traditional lighthouse t-shirts, pins, and patches. One highlight is the extensive selection of jewelry, including handmade necklaces and earrings by Apalachicola artist Caty Greene, scrabble tile jewelry featuring the photographic images of SGLA members Lou and Betsy Kellenberger, and hand painted oyster shell necklaces by island artist and SGLA member Marty Ray.

Baskets woven by SGLA member Dee Grinenko and hand-painted lighthouse wine glasses by Cecilia Harris make wonderful gifts or keepsakes of a visit to St. George Island. "Island Petroglyphs" by Marty Ray are a unique remembrance of a special place. If you are wondering what an island petroglyph is, you will have to stop by and see for yourself!

A children's corner offers books, pirate cups, puzzles, finger puppets, and toy duckies in an assortment of costumes.

Among the adult book selections are signed copies of *Lighthouses & Living Along the Florida Gulf Coast* by Bill Roberts, *Lighthouse Keepers* by Cape San Blas Lighthouse historian Beverly Mount-Douds, and the newly reprinted edition of Apalachicola author Alexander Key's *Island Light*.



Children's Corner

Signed and numbered prints by Ed Tiley and Sam Lyons are available, as are photographs by Rusty Amos and unique prints of the architectural plans for the reconstructed lighthouse.

So be sure to visit the Keeper's House Gift Shop when you are on St. George Island, and find that special treasure for someone special -- or for yourself!

## Coming Soon ....

### First SGI Beach Home Tour

*February 3 & 4, 2012*

The first ever Beach Home Tour of St. George Island will be hosted by SGLA in February. The tour will feature about 10 homes, from the Plantation to the East End, plus the new Plantation Club House and the Lighthouse Keepers House. The event will begin with a reception and presentation Friday evening, and will conclude with the tour all day Saturday. Stay tuned for more details.

### Florida Panhandle Lighthouse Challenge

*April 21 & 22, 2012*

The very popular Lighthouse Challenge returns in 2012! The Challenge will again include the four Forgotten Coast Lighthouses – Cape San Blas, Cape St. George, Crooked River, and St. Marks – with the possible addition of the Pensacola Lighthouse as a bonus. Participants will receive a prize for visiting each lighthouse, with an additional prize for visiting all of them. More information to come.

**Both events are partially funded by grants from the Franklin County Tourist Development Council.**

**The Lighthouse Challenge was recently awarded a grant by the Florida Lighthouse Association.**

# Bill Roberts Honored at Museum Opening



**Bill Roberts with SGLA Secretary Terry Kemp, Vice President Jim Kemp, and President Dennis Barnell at the opening of the Lighthouse Museum and Gift Shop.**

The St. George Lighthouse Association honored one of our best friends and benefactors at the opening of the Lighthouse Museum on August 21.

William C. Roberts is the son, grandson, and brother of Lighthouse Keepers, and spent many days at the Cape St. George Light with his dad, Keeper Walter A. Roberts, Jr. In honor of his family and their long association with our lighthouse, Bill has generously donated to the museum a number of items used by the family when they lived at the light station.

Among the items on display at the museum are the 1925 Damascus Grand Sewing Machine used by Bill's mother, Bessie Roberts, to make clothes for the family when they lived on what is now Little St. George Island. Also included in the "Roberts Family Collection" is sister Betty's small rocking chair, a glass oil lamp, a Perfection kerosene heater, and the adult rocker in which Bessie rocked young Bill when he suffered from whooping cough.

Among the tools used by Keeper Roberts and now on display in the museum are a set of brass binoculars, a Very flare pistol, a roofing tool, a Coleman lantern, an oil can, a spoke shave, a blow torch, a barometer, and a pair of oars from the lighthouse skiff. Pins and medals earned by Keeper Roberts are included in the Keeper's uniform display kiosk.

In recognition of his major contribution to the creation of the museum, SGLA officers presented Bill with a signed and numbered framed print of the Cape St. George Light by renowned artist Sam Lyons. SGLA Secretary Terry Kemp selected print number 173 in honor of Bill's birthday, July 3.

We thank Bill and Verner Roberts and all the Roberts family for their generous support of the Cape St. George Light.

## **Full Moon Climbs Continue to Sell Out**

If you haven't seen the sunset and the moonrise from the top of the Cape St. George Light, you have four more opportunities to do so this year. Make your reservations early for this popular event, which includes hors d'oeuvres and a sparkling cider toast to the full moon.

SGLA members can participate for \$10, or climb after sunset as time permits for \$5. Prices for the general public are \$15 and \$10. Call the Visitor Center at 850-927-7744 for reservations.

### Fall Full Moon Climbs

September 12 (Monday)  
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

October 12 (Wednesday)  
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

November 10 (Thursday)  
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

December 10 (Saturday)  
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

# Visitor Center Gets a Make-Over

The St. George Island Visitor Center is sporting a new look, new story boards, and new exhibits! When lighthouse artifacts and merchandise were moved to the Keeper's House, VC Executive Director Elaine Rosenthal seized the opportunity to create a fascinating display focusing on the history of St. George Island.

Five story boards researched by local historian Debbie Beard tell the story of the island from Paleoindian days to the present. Herty pots from the island's turpentine era and shards of Indian pottery are displayed, along with oyster tongs and other artifacts from early life on the island.



Vintage bottles, Indian pottery shards, and a unique oyster opening device are on display.



Visitor Center volunteer Marty Ray views the new story boards.

Items were donated to the Visitor Center by local residents Charolette and Joe Bacher, Donna and Jerry Butterfield, Tom and Betty Day, Shaun Donahoe, and Bill Spohrer. The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve provided several tools used in the turpentine industry, and the Spratt and Armistead families made available for reproduction a sketch of an old island church and an early SGI brochure.

Elaine still has room in the newly-painted center for more artwork and artifacts, so if you have any island memorabilia that you would like to add to the VC collection, give Elaine a call at 850-927-7744!

## *FLA Returns to the Forgotten Coast*

The annual meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association will be a "Lighthouse Congress" held right in our own backyard! The event from October 21 to 23 will be hosted by the Cape San Blas Lighthouse with meetings at the Centennial Building in Port St. Joe. The Congress is shaping up to be a blockbuster event, with the St. George Lighthouse Association and the Cape St. George Light prominently featured in the festivities.

Activities begin Friday evening at 8 p.m. with a Social Hour featuring PBS producer Mike Rowan, who will discuss and show his award-winning documentary, "Lighthouses of the Gulf Coast: Sand Island to St. Marks." The Saturday morning agenda includes presentations by Charlotte Pierce of the St. Joseph Historical Society on the restoration of the Cape San Blas Lighthouse, and by Danny Raffield on his 40-year quest to rescue and restore the St. Joseph Point Lighthouse.

Saturday afternoon participants will climb one of the three local lighthouses – Cape San Blas, Cape St. George, or Crooked River – and all three will be open for night climbs that evening. Sunday morning will feature presentations on the restoration of the Crooked River and Cape St. George Lighthouses, with the three lighthouses offering climbing again Sunday afternoon.

Registration for the Congress is \$80.00 for FLA members and \$95.00 for non-members, and includes hors d'oeuvres Friday evening and lunch Saturday and Sunday. Please see the FLA website at [www.floridalighthouses.org](http://www.floridalighthouses.org) for more information.



## **Please Patronize the SGLA 2011 Business Members**

Aloha Bugs Pest Management  
Marilyn and Mason Bean, Realtors  
BJ's Pizza  
Bobby James Roofing  
The Butler Agency  
Island Adventures  
Jerry Thompson, Realtor  
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

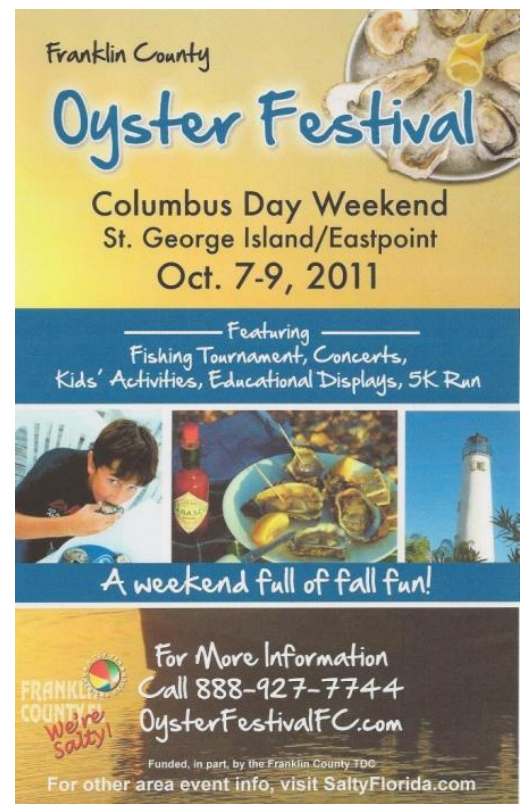
## **Oyster Festival on Columbus Day Weekend**

The Franklin County Oyster Festival will celebrate the salty bivalve from Apalachicola Bay with a three-day weekend of family fun in October.

As one of multiple venues for the event, St. George Lighthouse Park will host food vendors, educational booths, children's activities, and live music. A 5K run will take place in St. George Island State Park.

A fishing tournament and other bay-related activities like oyster shucking competitions and oystering demonstrations will be based out of the new Community Pavilion in Eastpoint.

So mark your calendars and plan to spend a beautiful fall weekend eating oysters on St. George Island!



## Quick Blinky

- **NEWS FLASH:** The St. George Lighthouse Association has been awarded a Florida Lighthouse Association grant in the amount of \$5,000 for an audio-visual exhibit in the Lighthouse Museum. Television news stories about the collapse of the lighthouse, footage on the reconstruction, and interviews with Keeper descendant Bill Roberts are a few of the topics that will be included in a series of short video productions. As mentioned previously in this newsletter, FLA also awarded a grant for the 2012 Florida Panhandle Lighthouse Challenge. Thank you, FLA!
- Nationally renowned lampist Joe Cocking recently made a presentation to the SGLA Board of Directors about the possibility of restoring the “Katrina lens.” Readers may recall that a lens very closely matching the description of our third order fixed Fresnel lens was damaged by Hurricane Katrina while on display in a U.S. Coast Guard building in New Orleans. The Coast Guard has indicated that they would consider loaning the lens for display in our museum if we would assume the expense of restoring the damaged lens. Mr. Cocking estimated the cost of the restoration to be in excess of \$200,000.
- The 2011 Photo Contest sponsored by the Florida Lighthouse Association is under way! FLA members are invited to submit new or old photographs of Florida’s 30 existing lighthouses or lighthouse-related items at any of the lighthouse sites. Photos must have been taken by the submitting photographer, and must be 8” X 12”, black and white or color, without mat or frame. Submissions are due by September 21, 2011, and awards will be made at FLA’s annual meeting in October. See [www.floridalighthouses.org](http://www.floridalighthouses.org) for more information and entry forms.
- Note to Readers: Even if your membership in the St. George Lighthouse Association has lapsed, we continue to send you the “Light Reading” newsletter with the hope that you will see something you like and be inspired to re-join SGLA. If you do not wish to continue receiving the newsletter, please let us know by emailing Terry Kemp at [fullmoon.sgi@fairpoint.net](mailto:fullmoon.sgi@fairpoint.net).

## A Parting Shot....



*Remember Inky, the Lighthouse Kitty born in the pumphouse in Lighthouse Park last summer and adopted by SGLA members Ada Long and Dail Mullins? Inky has grown into a lovely and playful young lady.... but she still keeps a few secrets under the rug!*

