

# LIGHT READING



## **Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2017**

**St. George Lighthouse Association**

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

## **SGLA WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KATE AGUIAR**

The St. George Lighthouse Association is pleased to announce that Kate Aguiar has accepted the new position of Executive Director of SGLA and has assumed responsibility for overseeing the activities of the organization.

Kate's unique qualifications pushed her to the top of the list that included 40 applicants from around the U.S., who were vetted by a search committee comprised of members of the lighthouse association's Board of Directors.

Kate and her husband are residents of St. George Island, having moved to the island from Tampa in 2009. She brings to her new position a combination of business, financial, and technology expertise developed over 20 years working in real estate development and with major U.S. corporations as diverse as defense contractor Northrop Grumman, information technology pioneer Unisys, and entertainment icon Walt Disney World.

Her career accomplishments reflect a focused and detail-oriented approach to business management, with specific expertise in project oversight, budget analysis, and employee development. Her most recent professional responsibility involved managing finances of companies with annual revenues ranging from \$20 million to \$675 million.

In addition to finance and management experience in the corporate world, Kate has also amassed an impressive resume of credentials working with local non-profit entities. She has been instrumental in establishing and administering the popular Forgotten Coast Fitness and Wellness Center in Apalachicola, and is chairman of the Franklin County Library Advisory Board. She is the treasurer of the Philaco Woman's Club, and a "backstage" participant in the productions of the Panhandle Players community theater group.

A graduate of Florida State University, Kate has lived in Tallahassee, Orlando, Miami, and Tampa, before settling on St. George Island. She is an avid reader and traveler, and enjoys the new experiences gained from visiting different countries and cultures.

"I am looking forward to learning more about the history of the Cape St. George Lighthouse, and am excited to join this dynamic organization that has made such an obvious mark on this community," Kate said, adding that "Growing the museum's collection, membership, and sources of funding will be welcome challenges."



And we could not be happier to have her as a member of the lighthouse family!

# USCG Helicopter Flyby at Cape St. George Light

Visitors to the Cape St. George Light on Memorial Day this year were treated to a thrilling and patriotic display. A United States Coast Guard short range recovery Dauphin helicopter did a flyby at the lighthouse after completing a temporary assignment in Apalachicola.

The striking orange military helicopter flying over the lighthouse where the United States flag flew at half-staff was a memorable tribute to the many individuals who have given their lives in service to our country.

The flyby was facilitated by retired USCG Chief Petty Officer Mark Vail, who is currently the Maintenance Director at the lighthouse. Mark hosted the Coast Guardsmen on their stay in Apalachicola and invited them to fly over the historic lighthouse in a Memorial Day salute.

Mark offered the following explanation for the USCG visit to Apalachicola:

*Memorial Day always signals the start of the summer season with schools letting out and annual vacations beginning."*

*With these activities also comes the increase of search-and-rescue requirements and law enforcement activities for the United States Coast Guard.*

*Because Apalachicola is the eastern boundary for the United States Coast Guard Sector New Orleans' "area of responsibility", in keeping with the motto "Semper Paratus" or "always ready", a satellite deployment of crews was temporarily stationed at the Apalachicola airport for quick response in a time of need. Two "ready crews" were deployed to stand rotating watches of 24 hours.*

*In addition to standing ready to assist with water-based incidents over the holiday weekend, the crews also spent time performing routine and recurrent training with United States Coast Guard vessels and small boats stationed at nearby Panama City and Destin, Florida.*

We are thankful to the men and women who spent their holiday weekend working away from home and families. We appreciate them taking time out of their busy schedule to do the flyby of the lighthouse for photo opportunities.

For upholding the finest traditions of the United States Coast Guard, we would like to specifically thank:

LCDR Neal Corbin, LT Trevor Mays, AET2 David Garman, AST2 Robert Hovey, LT James Reily, LT Andrew Breen, AET2 Kyle McClure, AST3 Josh Piasecki, AMT2 Wayne Swink, and AMT3 Maegan Miller.



And a special thank you to Mark Vail for making Memorial Day at the lighthouse so special!

*Photo by James Hargrove*



## SGLA Hosts Plein Air Reception for Visiting Artists

St. George Lighthouse Association hosted an afternoon reception on May 9, 2017 for Plein Air artists visiting the island. Four different artists were set up in Lighthouse Park with their easels, paints and brushes to showcase the different style of painting. The weather was perfect as over 60 guests attended the event and enjoyed snacks from [Sometimes It's Hotter Seasoning Company](#) along with a variety of wines, beer and sodas.



Plein Air America's Great Paint-Out is an annual gala sponsored by the [Forgotten Coast Cultural Coalition](#). The organization recently leased a building in Port St. Joe on Reid Avenue as the FCCC continues to expand and grow. Thanks to everyone that helped organize this year's event.



*Reception guests enjoy a talk by visiting artist  
[Thomas Jefferson Kitts](#)*



*Crowds look on as Plein Air artists show off their different painting styles*



*SGLA Board member Honest Bob Heide was happy to play  
bartender for the event*



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- [Blue Heron Group, LLC](#)
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- [John & Kristen Shelby, St. George Island Realty, LLC](#)
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- [Rick & Candace Watson, Century 21 Collins Realty](#)

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## Full Moon Climbs for 2017

### 2017 Schedule of Full Moon Climbs

August 7, 2017	8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Sept. 5, 2017	7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Oct. 5, 2017	7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Nov. 3, 2017	6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Dec. 3, 2017	5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Cape St. George Lighthouse is open for Sunset Full Moon Climbs in 2017. The schedule is listed at the left, and pre-paid reservations for the sunset and moonrise portion of the climb are accepted in advance for any climb dates.

Full Moon Climbs at the Cape St. George Lighthouse include light hors d'oeuvres and a spar-

kling cider toast to the full moon. Cost is \$15.00 for the general public and \$10.00 for members of the St. George Lighthouse Association.

After sunset, others are invited to climb to the top of the lighthouse for a breathtaking view of the full moon, as space and time permit. Cost is \$10.00 for the general public and \$5.00 for SGLA members.

Parking is available in lots at either side of the park. Because space is limited, reservations are recommended. For reservations or more information, please contact the Lighthouse Gift Shop at 850-927-7745.



Photo by Cheryl Pendley Photography



# Blast From The Past on Little St. George!



Recently we were visited by Leonard Montgomery, the son of the last official lighthouse keeper at St. George Island. Pictured here (middle) with James Hargrove (right) and Larry Fox (left) friend of Leonard and Indiana historian. Mr. Montgomery lived at the lighthouse with his father (Keeper John Montgomery) and mother. He said that back then, the blue crabs were so thick, you could just scoop them up and start a crab boil on the beach.

Refrigerator? Leonard replied *"did not need one, we ate seafood"*.



*Cape St. George Lighthouse and buildings on Little St. George from the 1950s.  
Photo taken by the U.S. Coast Guard*

## Quick Blinks

- Sixty Full Moon Climbers was a new attendance record set at the April climb this year, only to be equaled by another Full Moon Climb with 60 participants in July! Almost 1300 guests have made the climb to the top of the lighthouse to enjoy the full moon since the climbs began in August of 2011.
- Kevin Newell has joined the lighthouse maintenance staff, and will be working part-time with Mark Vail to keep the lighthouse, keeper's house, and park in top condition. Welcome, Kevin!
- SGLA has once again been awarded a Sustaining Grant of \$20,000 by the Franklin County Tourist Development Council for the period from October 2017 through September 2018. The grants assist with operating expenses for organizations that help attract visitors to the county. The TDC is also proposing to add \$25,000 to Beach Clean-Up funding for bath house maintenance in Lighthouse Park. Thank you, TDC!
- Check out two great new additions to our website at [www.stgeorgelight.org](http://www.stgeorgelight.org). You can view a new Florida Channel video about the lighthouse, expertly narrated by lighthouse docent Jackie Bell. You can also take a nostalgic trip back through the years since the collapse and reconstruction of the Cape St. George Light by clicking on the [“Archive Articles & Photos”](#) tab in the [“About Us”](#) section of the website. Thanks to a very patient and persistent Billie Kinnett for porting all this material from the old website to the new!
- You still have time to renew your Lighthouse membership if you have not yet done so this year. A membership form is available on our website or you can click on the following link to be taken directly to the form [Membership Form](#). Thank you to the 400+ members of SGLA for your ongoing support!

## A Parting Shot . . .



***Two F-4 Phantom Jets from Tyndall Air Force Base flew over the Cape St. George Light in early 2005. One of the pilots took this amazing photograph of his buddy's aircraft and our lighthouse! Taken 1/1/2005***