As the Holiday season approaches I reflect on two recent events I experienced on the west coast of Florida.

I stood with the d'Amicol family on Seahorse Key dock as they spread David's ashes and said goodbye. David was a huge supporter and advocate for the Cedar Key Light Station and left us well before his time. It was fitting for David to become a part of the island he loved and treasured.

The next day I was at the Discover the Island event on Egmont Key. We had FLA volunteers drumming up interest and hopefully new members for our organization. The weather was beautiful and turnout was great for the two-day event. True, we didn't get many people actually joining that day but they took away some FLA tokens and one lucky drawing winner received a one-year membership.

My reason for talking about these events is one day we said goodbye to a lighthouse friend and I still ask myself who will replace him? The next day, I was part of a group telling visitors about FLA and encouraging them to join and/or buy a license plate. It was interesting to hear folks say they didn't know we exist or how much we support Florida lighthouses. Most came away with a bit more knowledge and hopefully a lot more interest in our organization. I now realize the answer to my question just might be one of the people we speak with at our membership-drive events.

During this season, I am thankful for our greatest gifts; our members, supporters and volunteers. I look forward to a bright and successful 2017.

Happy Holidays & Happy New Year!

Chris Belcher
Florida Lighthouse Association President

Thank you! Your support makes it possible to preserve and restore Florida’s lighthouses!

The Florida Lighthouse Association’s mission is to safeguard Florida’s remaining lighthouses for future generations by supporting community based restoration, preservation and education efforts.

FLA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, funded by philanthropic gifts and memberships from individuals. Florida’s "Visit Our Lights" license plate sales provide additional funding for preservation and restoration grants to local lighthouses.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION (CH8757) AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES ON THEIR WEBSITE AT https://esapp.dos管理制度.com/espublicapp/giftgiversquery/giftgiversquery.aspx OR BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.
January Winter Meeting—Egmont Key Lighthouse—January 28, 2017

Egmont Key is an island located off the southern tip of St Petersburg, Florida and guards the entrance to Tampa Bay; it is only accessible by boat. In 1848 a 40 foot lighthouse was built, but this lighthouse was damaged by a hurricane and lightning. In 1858 it was replaced by a new lighthouse at a cost of $16,000, which would withstand ANY storm. The light was a third order Fresnel lens with a focal plane of 86 feet. This lighthouse survived the Civil War, the Spanish-American War and numerous storms, but in 1944 the lantern room was removed due to water damage and a Double Head DCB-36 rotating beacon (later replaced with a DCB-24) was installed on top of the capped tower. About 85% of the lantern room has been located in a wooded area about 100 feet from the lighthouse. It is hoped that the lighthouse can be restored to its 1858 appearance, and that the 1858 Keeper’s dwelling can be rebuilt.

The island of Egmont Key has a lot of history besides the lighthouse. Between 1828 and 1858, a time of Indian Wars and relocation efforts, a stockade was build for the Indians that were being relocated to Oklahoma. During the Civil War Egmont Key was under Union control, and was the home base for the East Gulf Blockading Squadron; Union sympathizers also went to Egmont Key to escape from the Confederate forces. During the Spanish-American War, Fort Dade construction was started on the island, and by 1911 had over 70 buildings and a population of 300. Fort Dade was deactivated in 1921, and over the years the wood buildings either burned down or were destroyed by storms; only the brick roads can be seen today.

Due to the Gasparilla Festival in Tampa our boat trip to the island is not available on Saturday, so we have modified our schedule. We will have our meetings on Saturday and go to the island on Sunday. The meetings on Saturday will be at Tampa Bay Watch and will start with the committee meetings at 11:00 AM followed by the Board meeting at 12:00 PM. The membership meeting will begin about 1:30 PM with an Italian late lunch/early dinner around 3:30 PM. The program will end about 5:00 to 5:30 PM, when we will have time to socialize, and have our raffle and auction. There will also be a Wine Tasting of Egmont Key wines during this time.

We will have two speakers, the first will be Candace Clifford, Historian for the U.S. Lighthouse Society and the leading researcher and expert on the Coast Guard Archives. The second speaker will be the Egmont Key Park Ranger for the last 15+ years, Tom Watson.

On Sunday we will go over to the island. The boat will depart Fort DeSoto Park Bay Pier (this is not the exact location of the Bay Pier BUT it is close) at 9, 10, and if we have over 95 attendees, 11 AM with return trips at ,1, 2 and 3 PM. **ON THE RESERVATION FORM PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PREFERRED TIME TO GO TO THE ISLAND AND I WILL TRY TO ACCOMMODATE ALL REQUESTS.**. The Egmont Key Alliance will conduct ½ hour tours around the island. There will be Hot Dogs and water available for sale on the island. **THERE ARE NO RESTROOMS**, so plan accordingly. There is a $5 per car fee for Ft DeSoto Park so you may want to car pool.

The cost for the event will be $60 for members and $85 for non-members, which includes a 1
AMERICAN SHOAL LIGHTHOUSE AT TRENTON, NJ

One of the requirements for newly constructed iron lighthouses, was that they be assembled at their initial fabrication site before the government would accept the work. In the case of American Shoal Lighthouse, constructed by the Phoenix Iron Company of Trenton, NJ that meant that the lighthouse stood for a short while on the shores of the Delaware river in the summer of 1879, before it was disassembled and shipped to Florida.

I haven’t been able to locate any photos of the lighthouse there (if you should find one, please let me know!), but I have been able to uncover some real surprises in newspaper articles of the time.

Perhaps the biggest surprise to me was that tourists were allowed to climb the lighthouse while it was still being assembled.

In July 1879, it was reported “Visitors to the American Shoals Light House now standing in the yard of the Phoenix Iron Works, are becoming numerous since the service room has been placed on the top of the structure, a great many of them being ladies, who clamber up the stairways with the greatest bravado.

The architrave and floor of the service room have been placed in position at the top, and form an elegant platform on which visitors may stand with perfect safety and get one of the grandest views of the scenery around Trenton that it is possible to get at any other point with the same advantages.

The gentlemen having the structure in charge are very courteous, and persons who can climb at all will miss something if they do not embrace the opportunity to get above their neighbors. In these hot days it is really worth the journey to get the bracing air that comes up from the river. “

A few weeks later, another article mentions that the tower was closed to visitors just before the final coat of paint was applied to it: “It is not desired that the new paint be frescoed o’er with the illustrious names of some of the rising generation of our city.” In other words, they were concerned about graffiti and vandalism even before the lighthouse was moved to Florida.
FLA Turns 20 at Ponce Inlet

The Florida Lighthouse Association turned 20 in October, having come a long way from when a small group of lighthouse preservationists met in Miami in 1996.

Hurricane Matthew did some damage to the Daytona area, including temporarily closing 2 of the 3 hotels where meeting attendees were scheduled to stay. FLA made travel arrangements at another hotel. Ponce Inlet Lighthouse’s only real damage was a wooden pump house, itself a replacement for several previous pump houses that had been knocked down by other storms over the lighthouse’s history.

Both Friday night’s board meeting and social and Saturday’s main meeting were held in the Ponce Inlet Community Center a few miles north of the lighthouse. The board meeting included a spirited debate on the subject of the FLA license plate. The final decision was to go forward with a redesign of the plate to make it more artistic and appealing to the public than the current plate, and also changing the tagline from “Visit Our Lights” to “Protect Our Lighthouses” (or something similar) which better reflects FLA’s mission. The FLA membership also approved the election or reelection of several FLA Board Members.

Saturday’s main meeting included welcomes from Ponce Inlet’s mayor and Ed Gunn (Director of Ponce Inlet Lighthouse), a brief recap of FLA’s history by Harry Pettit (Governance Chair), and lighthouse architect Ken Smith recapping the many lighthouse restoration/preservation projects he has worked on in Florida. Beverly Oakes showed off a massive quilt featuring Paul Bradley’s lighthouse artwork as patches.

After the regular meeting, Ponce Inlet Lighthouse staff and volunteers put on several special activities including a maintenance demonstration on Fresnel lens chariot wheels, living history lighthouse keepers, a presentation of some recent collections acquisitions, and a social at the lighthouse to wrap up the day. Major donors were treated to a private tour by Curator Ellen Henry.

Josh Liller
Historian and Collections Manager
Loxahatchee River Historical Society
Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and Museum

More Photos can be found on the FLA Facebook page!
Lighthouse News

DRY TORTUGAS ~ Dry Tortugas Light at Loggerhead Key has not had much movement lately. The repairs and relighting have been bogged down in a review process lately but that project should be moving forward as a priority soon.

The bulk of what is happening is at Garden Key with the Harbor Light.

We have set up scaffolding to provide access for our structural engineers from Robert Silman Associates to complete the structural assessment of both the exterior and interior of the light. The interior non-historic wood work was removed from the interior of the tower to expose all surfaces for assessment.

The overall condition of the light is poor. There is extensive corrosion from incompatible metals (earlier repairs) and the effects of the marine environment on the cast and wrought iron components. The plan of action at this stage is to get the lighthouse completely scaffolded from the base to above the ventilator ball and all the way around. This scaffolding will provide some bracing and block some of the direct wind effects. The park should be receiving treatment recommendations and cost estimates from the engineers and architects around the new year. At that point the NPS will have to choose a treatment pathway and then proceed. If all goes well, we would like to have a Request for Proposals out by summer for the treatment of the lighthouse.

The Tortugas Harbor Light remains closed to the public.

After the woodwork was removed there were many signatures and stamps revealed on the interior sides of the cast iron plates. Most were from the 20th Century. Additionally, we found a newspaper that was left behind from October 1976.

AMELIA ISLAND ~ Waiting for Durable Restoration to return and install the window louvers. Durable left Florida before Hurricane Matthew but have not rescheduled their nearby projects.
**Lighthouse News**

**CROOKED RIVER ~** The Crooked River Lighthouse has had another good year!

In the spring, we expanded our “open” hours to include Wednesdays. Now open Weds-Sun 12pm – 5pm.

We finally brought our Carrabella fund raising quilt raffle to a close; when Wanda Mayo stopped by to invite us to the FLA meeting in Mayo, we had her draw the winning ticket. The lucky winner was a local man, Ken Reynolds, a great supporter and frequent visitor.

This summer, we had two “firsts”.

We held our First Crab Cake Cook-Off at the Marine Street Grill, and it was a smash success! With four chefs competing, numerous items in a silent auction, and a hungry crowd, and generous donations, the Carrabella fund was fattened on crab cake!

Then, in August, the first wedding was held at the Crooked River Lighthouse. The happy couple, Deanna and Gagan Mittal, said their vows before family and friends in the conference room, then went out on the grounds for photos under the lighthouse.

Lantern Fest was a resounding success this year! The 121st birthday of the lighthouse was celebrated by our largest crowd ever, assembled to watch an original play, “1766: Shipwrecked on Dog Island.”

Produced, directed, and performed by talented local people, it is sure to return to our stage and many others.

Finally, a “Super Moon” climb drew quite a few lunar lovers to view the gorgeous orb as it rose over the Gulf of Mexico. It was a night to remember. When in Carrabelle, don’t forget to stop by!

---

**BARRIER ISLAND PARKS SOCIETY ~** What's Happening Now? Each of the historic fence bollards were hoisted so that they could be reset and stabilized with 24" x 24" x 2" pavers and cement. According to Alex, they used a laser level to set them 6' from the corner of the foundation, approximately where the original bollards were located.

New galvanized pipes will be installed between the bollards toward the end of the project.

The team continued with repairs to the I-Beams, rivets and drum repairs. They use filler made by Tnemec to fill non-structural holes that become water traps and accelerate future rusting problems. The filler is structural and resists sandblasting. At this point, they believe all the structural welding repairs are complete!

What's Happening Next? The interior sanding begins! Because the sanding is being done on the interior, the inside drum will provide containment for the debris. There will also be a few additional metal repairs once the interior sandblasting is complete and the concealed damage is revealed.

After the sanding is complete. The interior priming will begin.

Stay tuned for our next update!
Lighthouse News

CAPE SAN BLAS ~ Cape San Blas Lighthouse and Gift Shop are open. We have completed the move of the gift shop and it is back at home in the Sleeping Beauty Lighthouse Quarters. Currently, both are open on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from noon until 5 ET. If a group of 5 or more would like to climb at a time when the complex is not open, please call 850-229-8261 to schedule a climb. Renovations on the second Keepers' Quarters will begin shortly with funds provide by a state historic preservation grant. The City is currently renting the Maddox House located next to the lighthouse. For additional information call the City of Port St. Joe at 850-229-8261.

CAPE CANAVERAL ~ The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation (CCLF) and many others in the community are determined to reconstruct the site and structures that were erected at the time of the relocation of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse to its present site in 1894. The Keepers' Cottages and associated structures existed over 70 years until their unfortunate demise in 1967.

The Foundation Board of Directors raised funds with a $6,000 grant from the Florida Lighthouse Association and a GoFundMe campaign in October for an air-conditioned and secure trailer. The trailer is located adjacent to the lighthouse for the convenience of visitors during their tour of the lighthouse. In addition to a retail gift shop, the engraved brick paver walkway project will be housed in the trailer. Visitors will now have the opportunity to select a brick with a design that can be engraved and placed in the walkway surrounding the lighthouse. The Foundation was in dire need of a facility to house its Keeper's Closet because it had outgrown its space on the first floor of the lighthouse. The Keeper's Closet and Engraved Brick Paver Walkway Project are the main fundraising efforts for the Lighthouse Foundation. We are very grateful to FLA for helping to make this project possible.

Another project that is in its infancy but is expected to increase our visibility and support in the community is taking our story to Brevard County Public Schools. This program was initiated by our Vice President, and soon to be President, Rocky Johnson.

In order to make the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse story and history come alive for Brevard County Public Schools' fourth graders, the CCLF is preparing engaging and compliant lesson plans for utilization in Brevard County's fourth grade classrooms. Lesson plans meet the appropriate Florida State Standards for fourth grade Social Studies. Helping fourth grade students better understand how the lighthouse fits into our maritime, economic, social and cultural history is a key part of the CCLF's mission, and bringing this story to Brevard's children in a manner that meets the technical requirements of the lesson plan will open the door to history for hundreds of future adults. The lesson plans will be made available to principals, teachers and faculty members within Brevard County Public Schools, along with the option to have a CCLF guest participate in the lesson. Stay tuned for more details as the program rolls out, currently targeted for spring of 2017.
The Florida Keys Reef Lights Foundation (FKRLF), led by Eric S. Martin, held their sixth annual boat trip event to take visitors out to see some of Florida’s Reef Lights up close. This year’s event on December 3-5 featured the three northernmost Reef Lights: Fowey Rocks, Carysfort Reef, and Alligator Reef.

The weekend began with a meet-and-greet event. At the event, Eric presented long-time FKRLF supporter Joyce Hager with the organization’s Meade Award, an annual volunteer award.

Other than a last minute change in charter boats, the Fowey Rocks trip went fairly smoothly. The boat went out to Fowey Rocks Lighthouse, and also passed by Stiltsville and provided a water view of Cape Florida Lighthouse. Cape Florida is the southern end of Key Biscayne off Miami and was replaced in 1878 by Fowey Rocks, located farther offshore on the Florida Reef. Fowey Rocks is named after HMS Fowey, a British ship that had wrecked there. Two more ships wrecked while the lighthouse was under construction, underscoring the need for a light there. The first order Fresnel lens was removed decades ago, but Fowey Rocks is now the only active Reef Light. The light is within Biscayne National Park and the park now owns the light.

Amy Slate’s Amoray Dive Resort on Key Largo hosted the second trip. The first stop was a water view of Key Largo Lighthouse, a private aid to navigation along one of the canals bisecting the island. The lighthouse’s lantern was originally part of the Rebecca Shoal Lighthouse (between Key West and the Dry Tortugas; other than some pilings the rest of that lighthouse is gone). The surprise for everyone was Key Largo Light sported a fresh blue checkerboard daymark. The light (and a rather elaborate accompanying pool) are a rental cottage. After that it was a long trip on some very choppy water to reach Carysfort Reef. Due to the waves breaking over the reef close to the lighthouse the charter boat could not approach as closely as was desirable, but everyone still got a great view of the lighthouse. Carysfort is now the oldest surviving screwpile lighthouse in the world. Designed by I.W.P. Lewis and built by George Meade, the wrought iron lighthouse is the most historic and most endangered of the Reef Lights.

The final day’s trip was from Robbie’s Marina on Islamorada to Alligator Reef Lighthouse. This lighthouse is only 4 miles from shore and probably the best known due to an annual swim that uses the light as a turnaround point. The reef is named for a ship that wrecked there, not for any local reptilian residents. The day’s weather was not cooperative, with a strong southeastern wind that turned the ocean into a giant turquoise wash tub and left many of the guests with various degrees of seasickness. However, the boat was able to come fairly close to both Alligator Reef Lighthouse and Hen and Chickens Shoals Beacon. The latter is a 1929 beacon light located about 2 miles off Plantation Key (Hawks Channel, northeast of Alligator Reef) that originally held a lens lantern. Of the seven beacon lights built in the Florida Keys between 1921 and 1932, Hen and Chickens is the only tripod design.

There is unfortunately no news to report on the status of the Reef Lights. For those unaware, the five Reef Lights besides Fowey (Carysfort, Alligator, Sombrero Key, American Shoal, and Sand Key) have been deactivated and abandoned by the Coast Guard which resulted in them all being placed on Lighthouse Digest’s Doomsday List. The General Services Administration (GSA) has yet to release any of the lights for possible acquisition by FKRLF (or anyone else). There is no timetable on when this will occur, with several promised dates of release having passed. The delays are frustrating for everyone involved.
Membership Update

Throughout the year the Florida Lighthouse Association has set up an information table at 4 events in Florida: Cape Canaveral’s Lobsterfest (February), Boca Grande for Lighthouse Day (April), Egmont Key’s “Discover the Island” (November), and back where we started a year ago, St. Augustine’s Luminary Night (December). This is a new venture upon which we hope to build each year, adding new venues throughout the state.

At each event we held a drawing for a free 1-year membership in FLA. The winners this year were:

- Cape Canaveral Lobsterfest: Cynthia Bennett – Indian Harbour Beach, FL
- Boca Grande Lighthouse Day: Ellen Park – Green Bay, Wisconsin
- *Egmont Key Discover the Island: Nellie Kellogg – Clearwater, FL
- *Egmont Key Discover the Island: Penny Ebinger – Morrisville, PA
- St. Augustine Luminary Night: Kelley Poole – St. Augustine, FL

*Egmont Key was a 2-day event, so there was a winner for each day.

Through this effort, we introduce a lot of people to FLA and its purpose. They have the opportunity to enter the drawing for a 1-year FLA membership, ask questions, and many show a lot of interest in our specialty tag (“Visit Our Lights”) and how it helps lighthouses. In addition, they take home applications to fill out later, so hopefully we continue to get new members from each of these events.

A number of FLA members have been helping with the table whom we would like to thank: Chris & Sharon Belcher, Beverly Oakes and Tommy Hasty, Harry and Jean Pettit, Ed Butler, Ken and Dede Smith, Charlotte Underwood and her friend Beverly Seymour, Scott Tucker, Sherry Dunning, Ruth Bebensee, Betty Phelps, Barbara Nutting, and Russ and Sarah (Holland) Morris. I hope I haven’t forgotten anyone because we appreciate everyone who helps spread the word by supporting the FLA information table. Our goal is participate in various events around the state when possible to familiarize residents with FLA, and our volunteers are essential to accomplish this.

Also, a big Thank You to the lighthouse hosts who have so graciously welcomed us to be part of their events. At such events visitors have a built-in interest and appreciation for specific lighthouses, which opens the door to discussions about lighthouse preservation throughout the state.

So, again, a big THANK YOU to the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum, the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation, Barrier Island Parks Society (Boca Grande), and the Egmont Key Alliance! We hope to be back next year if you will have us.
The Gene Oakes Memorial License Plate Project

We want to give you the opportunity to display this beautiful art as your Florida license plate. While displaying your love of lighthouses you will be helping generate funds to restore these state treasures.

The bill authorizing the "Visit Our Lights" tag was approved by the Florida Senate on April 28, 2008 by a vote of 35-4. On April 29, 2008 the House of Representatives gave it a 118-1 approval. The bill was forwarded to the governor's office, and Governor Crist signed it on May 28, 2008. Thank all of you for your support in bringing this about. The plate became available at the local tax collectors offices throughout Florida in mid December 2008. Now we can all give our full support by purchasing these tags and proudly displaying them on our cars. $25.00 from the sale of each tag will be used for the preservation and restoration of our 29 remaining historic lighthouses.

Our late president, Gene Oakes had set as his top priority the obtaining of a specialty license plate to raise funds for the preservation of Florida's historic lighthouses. Gene's untimely death came before he was able to obtain that goal. The Association was determined to accomplish what Gene had started and in 2005 established the Gene Oakes Memorial License Plate Fund with Gene's widow, Beverly Oakes, as chairperson. Three years later that goal was accomplished.

Now, eight years later FLA is redesigning our license plate to take advantage of the latest technology in color printing and graphics. The Marketing Committee, in conjunction with the Board are also exploring changing the wording from “Visit Our Lights” to something more descriptive and meaningful to the general motoring public. Hopes are to have a more vibrant and colorful license plate and a tag-line that when searched for on the internet will point to our website.

Stay tuned, we will have more information available at the January Membership meeting!

Florida Lighthouse Association
PO Box 1676
St. Petersburg, FL 33731