



FLASH

FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION

St. Johns River/Mayport Lighthouses

Meeting

Details of our most special meeting June 17-18

Page 1 & 4

Climbing my Grandfather's

Remote Lighthouse

by Betty Lowe Phelps

Page 3

Report of the Jupiter Meeting

A wonderful night climb and most interesting membership meeting

Pages 6 & 7

St. Johns River/Mayport Meeting June 17-18, 2016



The St. Johns Lighthouse (Mayport Lighthouse) is located about a mile South of the St. Johns River. The construction is of concrete block and the unique art deco styling make it distinctive. The 64-foot tower has never had a lantern room but originally a Plexiglas dome protected the beacon. This lighthouse was built on a hill giving it a focal plane height of 80 feet.

The elaborate pulley system we see on the interior of the tower was the system used to lower the originally beacon for cleaning and maintenance.

Construction of the third St. Johns River/Mayport lighthouse began in the winter of 1857-58. The brick structure was originally 74 feet tall. The third-order Fresnel fixed lens was first lit January 1, 1959. A little over two years later Civil War broke out. The St. Johns River lighthouse remained in service for much of the war until an unnamed Confederate sympathizer shot out the lens in 1864. A new third-order Fresnel lens was lit July 4, 1867.

On May 5, 1930, the lighthouse was extinguished, having been replaced by the lightship "St. Johns", which was anchored seven miles off shore.





A NOTE FROM FLA's PRESIDENT, CHRIS BELCHER

What happened to Spring? Already 80+ degree days here in north Florida!

Below is information about various things of interest to lighthouse preservationists in Florida. Hopefully one or more of these are located close to you and you can enjoy these films.

Lighthouses of Florida documentary. Kevin Brislin is a high school teacher at North Port High School in North Port, FL, where he teaches video production. He is a member of FLA. His Digital Video Production II class has been working on a documentary about the lighthouses of Florida, starting with the West Coast lighthouses. They did a production trip in March to the lighthouses from Pensacola to St. Marks. It is their intention to not only talk about each lighthouse as they visit it but to interview people that know about the lighthouses to supplement the footage. They plan a trip to Cedar Key, Anclote Key, and Egmont this Summer with separate one-day trips to Gasparilla/Boca Grande and Sanibel. Their goal is to create a series of 24 minute shows about the trip to each lighthouse. If you would like to support Kevin and his class, please contact him at Kevin.Brislin@sarasotacountyschools.net

The Cape San Blas lighthouse documentary -- "DOODER & THE LIGHTHOUSE" premiered at the Gasparilla International Film Festival in Tampa Bay, followed by a screening at the Palm Beach International Film Festival in West Palm Beach. Festival programmers called the film a "nuanced portrait of different people with different agendas, wishes, and dreams. By hearing all of these various stories, the film meditates on fighting city hall, age, mortality, and the ways of life on the Gulf Coast, ways of life that are in the process of vanishing." View the film's trailer at: www.dooderthemovie.com

I look forward to seeing all of you in June at our Mayport/St Johns meetings.

Chris

Climbing My Grandfather's Remote Lighthouse

...thanks to the Florida Lighthouse Association
by Betty Lowe Phelps

Climbing Loggerhead Key Lighthouse was a bucket list item for me because my grandfather, Benjamin Howard Lowe, had served there as an assistant lighthouse keeper for about four years in the 1930s. This was the second of his four lighthouse assignments in south Florida from 1929 – 1944. Back in June 2003, I had signed up for a similar FLA trip to the Dry Tortugas along with six other Lowe family members. It was not until we arrived at the dock in Key West for the 70 mile trip that we learned the disappointing news... the trip was cancelled due to engine failure the previous day on the Fast Cat's return trip from the Tortugas. Parts would need to be shipped down from the northeast.

Twelve years passed before another opportunity to get to Loggerhead Key came along. There is regular ferry service from Key West to Fort Jefferson on Garden Key. But the National Park Service does not provide daily shuttle service to Loggerhead Key. And getting permission to climb Loggerhead lighthouse is indeed a special feat!

Fortunately, the October 2015 FLA trip was blessed with mild temperatures, sunny blue skies, and calm seas. I was accompanied by my sister Toni and her husband Bryon Clinger. We were in the first group to be shuttled over to Loggerhead. Our placement near the end of the line guaranteed that most of our time on the island would be spent waiting in line to climb the lighthouse. Sure enough, they were calling us back to the boat a few minutes after we descended. We had no time to walk around and explore the island. Note: Although it was sweltering hot, the view from the lantern room at the top of the lighthouse was spectacular!! Fort Jefferson is visible 2.5 miles away, and in every direction you see gin clear water just like the water was most of the time throughout the Florida Keys when I grew up in Marathon in the 1950s and '60s. In the 1930's Loggerhead Key was larger and there were more buildings and perhaps different vegetation. But at least I stood where Grandpa Lowe once stood and gazed out on his temporary island world.

My grandfather always missed being away from his family when stationed on offshore lighthouses. But on Loggerhead he had 28 days of leave time in Key West with them every third month. And during summer when the children were out of school, the family was able to join him on the island. My father, although young at the time, fondly remembers his trips to Loggerhead and catching sharks for the Carnegie Institute which had a research station on the island at the time.

Having withstood many storms and hurricanes since it was lit in 1858, Loggerhead Key Lighthouse is sadly in need of paint and repairs. Instead of a bright black and white, it is currently a faded brown and dull white. The interior walls are deteriorating, due in part to numerous disintegrating old coats of paint. Rust is visible on the iron work in the lantern room. Nonetheless, I look forward to returning to this gem of an island and hoping her lighthouse will eventually be restored to its former beauty. The recent grant from FLA's license plate fund should be a good start.



Toni Clinger and Betty Lowe Phelps at Loggerhead Key

FLASH

www.FloridaLighthouses.orgHOTELS**Holiday Inn Express & Suites**

4791 Windsor Commons Court
Jacksonville, FL 32224
(904) 441-7000

Rate: 2 Queens or 1 King - \$99
Junior King Suite - \$109
Queen Suite - \$119
King Jacuzzi Suite - \$129
Ask for FLA rate
Cut-off date May 23, 2016

Best Western Mayport Inn & Suites

3289 Mayport Rd.
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
(904) 435-3500
Rate: Standard Room - \$99,
Ask for FLA rate
Cut-off date May 17, 2016

**Hampton Inn & Suites Jacksonville Beach Blvd/Mayo Clinic Area**

13733 Beach Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32224
(904) 223-0222
Rate: Double Queen - \$119
Ask for FLA rate
Cut-off date May 17, 2016

**Spring Meeting
Mayport/St. Johns River
June 17-18, 2016****MEETING LOCATION
AND SCHEDULE**

Friday, June 17, 2016:
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
4791 Windsor Commons Ct.
Jacksonville, FL 32224

4:30 - 6:00 PM Committee Meetings
6:00 PM Board Meeting
7:00 PM Social Hour

Saturday, June 18, 2016:
Ocean Breeze Conference Ctr
243 Baltimore St.
Mayport Naval Stations,
FL 32227

YOU MUST BE AT THE NAVAL STATION GATE BEFORE 8:30 AM

9:00 AM to Noon Membership Meeting
Noon-1:00 PM Lunch
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM Lighthouses tours

Cost is \$55 for Florida Lighthouse Association members, \$80 each for non-members, includes one-year membership
Payment must be received by June 6th. ALL the information on the registration form must be completed in order to access the Naval Base.

Register on line at
www.floridalighthouses.org



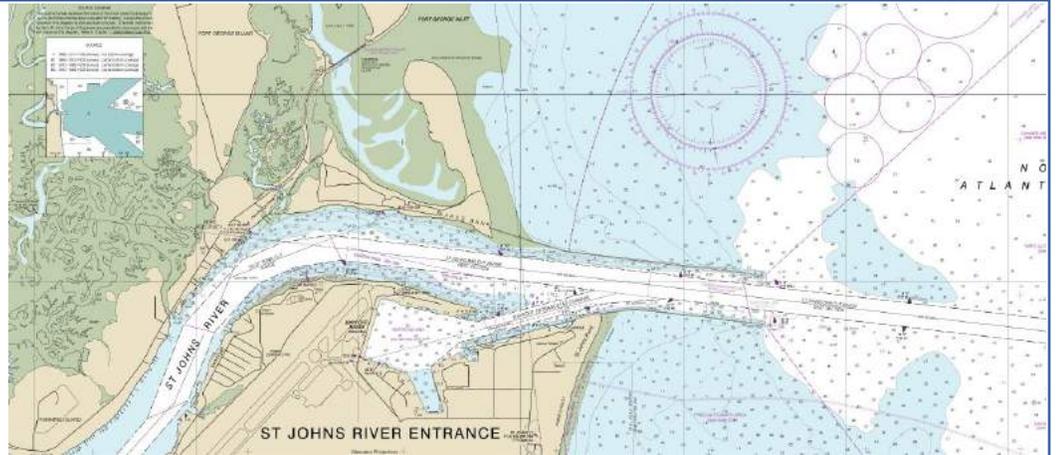
St. Johns River/Mayport third lighthouse first lit January 1, 1859



St. Johns River/Mayport fourth lighthouse first lit October 1, 1954

A LIGHT FOR THE ST. JOHNS

As this chart shows, the jetty on both sides of the St. Johns River channel goes out nearly two miles and the channel has been dredged for deep-water ships another two miles. The first lighthouse was built in 1830, just eight years after Florida became a US territory.



The first St. Johns River Lighthouse was built at the mouth of the river on the south-side. By 1835 the encroaching sea had undermined the lighthouse. It was torn down and replaced by a second lighthouse, pictured on the left. This lighthouse was built a mile inland with the hopes it would be safe from erosion. Over time, the shifting river and blowing sand had nearly buried the buildings on the lighthouse site and, once again, undermined the tower. Efforts made to save the lighthouse provide futile.

Congress approved building a third lighthouse in 1854 but problems with securing clear title to the new site, located a mile inland, delayed construction. The third lighthouse, pictured at right, was first lit on January 1, 1859. It remained lit throughout most of the Civil War intel a Confederate sympathizer shot out the lens. A new third order lens was relit on July 4, 1867 and remained in service until 1930. In the 1940's, the Navy built a runway nearby. The fill for that runway forced burying the entrance to the lighthouse.

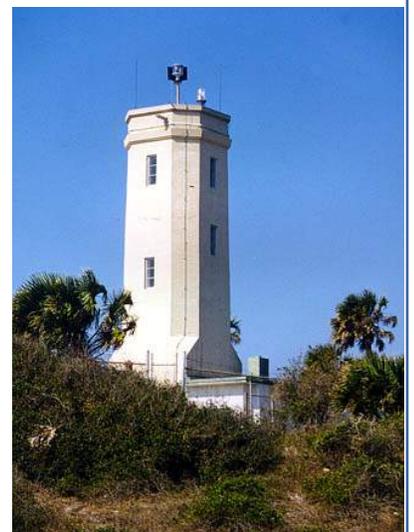


In 1929, the lightship LV-84 "Brunswick," stationed off Brunswick, GA, was renamed "St. Johns" and moved to a position seven miles offshore. The St. Johns served until 1954, when the fourth lighthouse was put into service. LV-84 was renamed "Relief" and continued to serve, being decommissioned in 1965. Renamed "Big Red," it was used as a private training vessel and later as a floating restaurant. She was sunk as part of an artificial reef in 2007.



Wouldn't this look good on your car?

The current lighthouse, Florida's youngest, was first lit on October 1, 1954. The distinctive art deco modern lighthouse continues to serve today.



The January 22-23 Jupiter Inlet meeting was another jam packed event.

Left - The Friday night social time was at the lighthouse complete with a night climb.

Right - The Loxahatchee River Historical Society (LRHS) welcomed us with a wonderful reception, complete with this cake, which was made up of dozens of cup cakes.

Right - The meeting was another information-filled event in the town of Jupiter.

Left - We were welcomed by President & CEO of LRHS, Jamie Stuve.

Right - FLA's new event tent, now in use throughout the state at various outdoor events, making new friends all over the state.

Left - LRHS Historian and Collections Manager Josh Liller shared some of the important work being done by LRHS. Josh is also active with FLA's historical and public relation efforts.

Right - Kerry Post, Deputy Secretary of Cultural Affairs, State of Florida was one of our speakers. Kerry brought us up to date with the efforts the State is making to aid organizations in their preservation and restoration efforts.

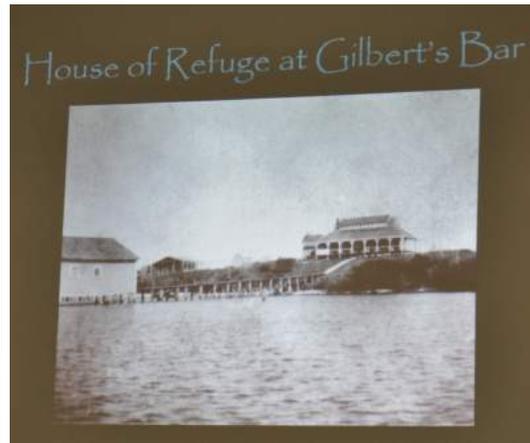




FLA continues to grow. Our new members for this meeting were welcomed with a special bag of goodies.



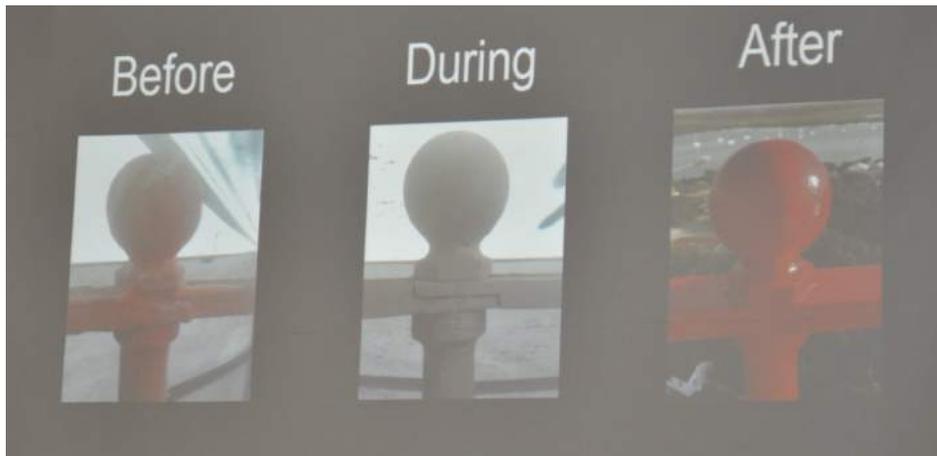
FLA President Chris Belcher (left), and Vice President Jon Hill (right) thank Kerry Post with a plaque featuring a Paul Bradley drawing of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse.



Linda Geary, Manger of the House of Refuge at Gilbert's Bar spoke on the last of the nearly dozen historic Houses of Refuge in Florida.



Past president, Ken Smith (left) and president Chris Belcher (right) present a commemorative certificate featuring a Paul Bradley drawing of the Cedar Keys Light Station to Alice D'Amicol given in memory of David D'Amicol. David is remembered for his tireless efforts to preserve Cedar Keys and all Florida lighthouses.



Barbara Holland, Administrative Projects Coordinator for the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Museum reported on their recent restoration and painting of the lighthouse. FLA participated with a Gene Oakes Lighthouse Grant. Those funds were used to sand blast the ironwork on the lens room. This above slide from her PowerPoint presentation shows the before, during and after shots of this process.





FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE
ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1676

St. Petersburg, FL 33731

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION (CH8757) AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Lighthouses played a critical role in Florida's history; making it possible to explore, settle and develop Florida by using its 1350 miles of coastline (second only to Alaska in states with longest coastline). Only 30 lighthouses remain today. A 2002 study done by the State of Florida estimates that it will take almost \$20 million dollars to preserve these towers.

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

FLA is a nonprofit organization. Financial support comes from charitable gifts, membership dues, and Florida State specialty license plate sales. FLA does not receive any government funding!

Here is how YOU can help preserve and protect Florida's lighthouses!

Your gift saves Florida Lighthouses!

The Florida Lighthouse Association's (FLA) mission is to safeguard Florida's remaining lighthouses for future generations. A 2002 study done by the State of Florida estimates that it will take almost \$20 million dollars to preserve these towers. **Gifts from individuals play a critical role in protecting, preserving & restoring Florida's lighthouses!**