

# FLASH

FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION

Look for FLA on Facebook and Instagram!

May 2018

## President's Message - Keep Our Lights Bright!

I have the pleasure to report we have awarded a record \$196,000 in Preservation / Restoration grants since May of last year! These grants helped fund desperately needed maintenance for seven of our iconic lighthouses. Our License Plate grants subsidized replacement of support beams, turnbuckles, and protected a lantern roof. Our Operating Fund grants financed repair of walkways, building museum displays, and erected fences to keep the public off of contaminated soil (allowing the lighthouse to finally re-open!)

We should all be proud of our Florida Lighthouse Association support. Since 2005, we have awarded \$720,000 in grants financed by your donations and license plate sales. Amazing what like-minded and caring lighthouse people can accomplish!

Enough gushing about accomplishments - all of our lighthouses still need, and will need, a great deal of repairs and stabilization. In days long gone, each lighthouses had a least one full-time keeper, and some up to five, whose duties included cleaning, scraping, painting and replacing the metal and wood. Unfortunately the keeper and families are things of the past. We must rely on our lighthouse organizations to recognize needs, develop plans, secure needed resources and reach out for assistance when needed.

Nothing is forever - especially in our Florida climate. Paint fades and deteriorates quickly under our tropical sun. Iron and wood are no match for the salty air along our coasts. Fresnel lenses need regular upkeep through cleaning, stabilization and re-glazing. Though we no longer have keepers, we do have FLA members caring for our maritime history and are willing to step up and provide our lighthouse organizations the needed monetary and moral support.

I look forward to seeing all of you in June at St Marks Lighthouse. Speakers are scheduled to explain the St Marks lighthouse restoration followed by a rare opportunity to climb the lighthouse.

Safe travels and keep our lights BRIGHT!

*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://csapp.800helpfla.com/cspublicapp/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.



## Spring Meeting—St. Marks Lighthouse—June 8 & 9, 2018

**Registration Deadline - June 1, 2018**

[Click Here for On-Line Registration](#)

[Click Here to Download Registration Form](#)

St. Marks is the second oldest Lighthouse in Florida, having been built in 1842. During the Civil War the lighthouse sustained damage, and after the war it was rebuilt and raised to its present height of 73 feet with a focal plane of 82 feet above sea level. A fourth order Fresnel lens was also installed at this time. Due to renovations, the lens was removed in November 2014, restored by Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, and returned in March 2015. It is now on display in the St Marks Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center.

In 2000, the Coast Guard spent \$150,000 to repair and stabilize the lighthouse. In 2006 Congress passed an act to transfer the lighthouse and surrounding eight acres from the Coast Guard to the Fish and Wildlife Service. However, the transfer was delayed until October 10, 2013 as lead contaminated soil around the lighthouse had to first be removed. Phase I of the restoration, restoring, waterproofing, and painting the lantern room, was completed in 2016. Phase II, focusing on the keeper's dwelling and tower, will be completed prior to our meeting.

**No one has been able to climb the tower since before April 2010 due to unsafe wooden steps, which have now been replaced, SO NOW WE CAN CLIMB THE TOWER!!**



Activities will start on Friday June 8, 2018 and will be at the Magnuson Hotel Crawfordville [Map](#). At 2:00 PM we will conduct training for Lighthouse representatives on developing and running Lighthouse Education programs for school children. Committee meetings will be held at 4:00 PM, followed by the FLA Board meeting at 5:00 PM. At the completion of the Board meeting we will have our Friday night Social with heavy Hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

Saturday we will have our membership meeting at the Wakulla County Community Center [Map](#) starting at 9:00 PM. Our guest speaker will be Carol Rippee, the general contractor for the Phase II Construction.

Lunch will be served around 12:00 and will consist of Fried Bone in Chicken, Fried Shrimp, Boiled shell on Shrimp, Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy, Green Beans, Cheese Grits, Cole Slaw, Tea and water. After Lunch we will visit and **climb** the St Marks Lighthouse [Map](#).

Cost for this event will be \$55.00 for members and \$85.00 for non-members, which includes a 1 year membership. Since FLA must take out insurance for this event **ALL ATTENDEES MUST BE MEMBERS OF FLA**. The fee includes all of the meetings, the Friday night Social, Lunch on Saturday plus a donation to the Friends of the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge. Also, the refuge entrance fee is being waived for FLA members, which helps keep your cost down.

Visit our website for more information—

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



## The Need For 21st Century Lighthouse Keepers by Josh Liller

I climbed the lighthouse, stepped out onto the gallery deck, looked up, and sighed at what I saw: the underside of the lantern gallery, rusty and in need of care. This wasn't just Anclote Keys Lighthouse at our January meeting. I've climbed more than 40 lighthouses in six states during the last five years and Anclote's condition is all too common. Our beloved lighthouses face a persistent maintenance problem: we restore them then all too often fail to properly maintain them, and soon they have to be restored again.

The revered men and women who kept lighthouses weren't actually rendered obsolete by electricity and automation vastly simplifying operation. Remember that maintenance was half of their job, and one only a little easier today than it was a century or two ago. Windows don't wash themselves, rust doesn't scrape itself, paint doesn't brush itself. In coastal Florida the sun, salt, sand, and humidity (and the occasional tropical storm or hurricane) wage a constant war of attrition against the brick and iron of our beloved lighthouses and no paint yet invented can stand against them indefinitely.

*We still need lighthouse keepers!*

Obviously, funding is an issue. Lighthouses owned by the government often struggle for adequate funding. Many non-profit groups can afford little or no staff. Some maintenance will always remain the territory of staff or contractors; few volunteers are willing to climb onto a lighthouse roof or hang off the side of a tower on a scaffold. The liability for most organizations is probably too great anyway. Tower exteriors will always need to be repainted, as they did historically. Storms will cause damage that good maintenance couldn't have prevented and some issues will simply sneak by the most vigilant eyes.

But think smaller and closer at hand. Stairs, handrails, doors, windows, interior walls (within reach of the stairs), gallery railings, the underside of the lantern gallery, and the interior of the lantern can all be maintained without leaving your feet. Loving care, elbow grease, and time - preventative maintenance that can keep small problems from becoming major issues.

There are surely retired contractors, construction workers, and handymen who love lighthouses. Even some volunteers with little or no experience would be willing to learn. We all know people who can't sit still and always need to have a project. Even if they don't love lighthouses (yet!), they will surely love the challenging and rewarding work. Much of the regular maintenance is not complicated. For example, minor rust problems are treated with a simple three step process: scrape off the existing rust, apply the appropriate chemical to prevent further rust, and soon thereafter apply fresh paint to the exposed metal. With attention to detail, the right materials, and a little instruction almost anyone in good enough physical shape to climb a lighthouse can do this work. Simple maintenance keeps a lighthouse looking better, and lasting longer, and it can potentially save hundreds of thousands of dollars per lighthouse per decade.



## January Meeting Recap ~ Anclote Key by Josh Liller

FLA met in New Port Richey and Tarpon Springs north of Tampa to celebrate the reopening of Anclote Keys Lighthouse. Due to boat availability, this event departed from the usual schedule and instead featured all meetings on Friday followed by the lighthouse visit on Saturday.

Jon Hill (Pensacola) gave a presentation to FLA's lighthouse representatives about finding grants. Josh Liller (Jupiter / Grants Chair) walked everyone through the FLA Grants process.

St. Marks Lighthouse received a \$14,475 Tom Taylor General Fund Grant for exhibits in the newly-restored keepers quarters there. FLA will get to see the restored lighthouse and dwelling at St. Marks for June's meeting.

New FLA members are recognized at each meeting, but particularly noteworthy at this meeting were lighthouse researcher Candice Clifford, lighthouse contractor Anthony Hollis (Razorback LLC), and lighthouse metalworker Alex Klahm. All three have worked on many important projects for Florida lighthouses over the years and we welcome them to FLA.

Eric Sharp provided a short recap of the history of Anclote Keys Lighthouse.

Architect Ken Smith gave a presentation on the original restoration of Anclote Keys Lighthouse in 2003. The lighthouse's lantern had to be lifted off the tower during the project, such was the extent of the repairs needed.

Saturday featured two boat trips out to Anclote Key. The boat crew were friendly, knowledgeable, and entertaining. The ride out featured two osprey nests, countless pelicans and cormorants, and at least one porpoise sighting. A long boardwalk led from the state park's dock to the lighthouse. The morning boat trip marked the official reopening of the lighthouse to climbers.

Attendees got to see firsthand the fence erected at the light station by Friends of Anclote Keys State Park. The materials were purchased with a FLA Tom Taylor General Funds Grant.

Great News!

<http://www.fox13news.com/.../anclote-key-lighthouse-reopens-a...>

[#floridalighthouseassociation](#) [#saveourlights](#) [#anclotekey](#) [#fox13](#)

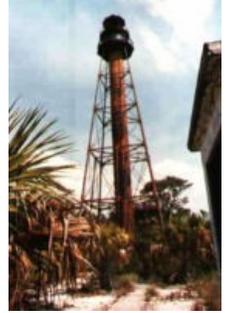




## Lighthouse News

**ANCLOTE KEY** ~ Friends of Anclote Key hosted a private climb on Wed April 25th for the US Historical Lighthouse Society . We are also having an Open House on a June 16th for the public.

Visit <https://friendsofanclotekeystateparkamplighthouse.wildapricot.org/> for more information!



**DRY TORTUGAS** ~ Design continues on the preservation of Tortugas Harbor Light on Garden Key. Headed for a summer solicitation. We have released two great animations. One a 3D fly-through and the other a virtual tour. Produced in partnership with the HABS division of the NPS Heritage Documentation Program. Check out the links here and share widely.

[Virtual Tour](#)  
[3D Fly Through](#)

We are also working with a filmmaker to document the disassembly, treatment, and reassembly of the Harbor Light.

Loggerhead Key Light progress still held up in paperwork and ownership issues.

Kelly Clark, Cultural Resources Specialist, Dry Tortugas National Park

**EGMONT KEY**~ The USCG has replaced the aerobeacon with a LED strobe. The aerobeacon was visible to 20 miles and had an interval of 15 seconds. The new light is visible to 12 miles at night and keeps the same flash interval. The new light uses batteries and has a small solar panel to keep them charged. There had been problems with the aerobeacon ever since the island flooded and wiring to the beacon got wet.



**ST. MARKS** ~ The renovation of the St. Marks Lighthouse has been completed except for some minor touch ups and we are still working on plans for an ADA ramp. Future plans include gutters and possibly a replica cistern and privy. We currently need funds to place a replica 4th order Fresnel lens in the tower. Limited openings may begin in September. We look forward to FLA visiting and climbing to the top in June.



## Lighthouse News

**CAPE FLORIDA** ~ Thanks to generous grants from the Florida State Parks Foundation, Bachelor Foundation and the Friends of Cape Florida Inc. Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park was able to purchase and install north and south facing television cameras mounted outside the watch room, and 2 large flat screen television monitors mounted at the bottom of the tower. Now visitors who can't climb, or don't feel predisposed to do so, can enjoy the view from the summit without having to climb.



**JUPITER INLET** ~ Our biggest news of the year so far is the successful launch of "Tour Your Way." For the first time in 24 years, visitors are no longer required to be on a guided tour while on our site. Docent-led guided tours are still offered at least twice daily for general visitors as well as all field trips and other pre-booked groups. As part of this new program we introduced a new Cuseum app as a self-guided tour with general and kid-friendly versions. Tour Your Way has been a big success and we will continue to expand our signage, app, and other offerings to continue to expand our visitor experience.

Our SeaFest For Kids and Wild & Scenic Film Festival annual events were both very successful, as was our first Autism Family Night at the Light. On May 8, we celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (JILONA). In 2008, Congress designated Jupiter's unusually large lighthouse reservation (120 acres) as one of only three ONAs in the entire country and the only National Conservation Lands property east of the Mississippi River. Becoming an ONA ensured the preservation of the site's historical, cultural, and natural significance in perpetuity. This designation resulted from the efforts of our organization with the support of local governments, elected officials, and residents plus the Coast Guard and Bureau of Land Management.



**AMELIA ISLAND** ~ Amelia Island Lighthouse is experiencing record tour traffic. We have increased the 1st & 3rd Wednesday tours (10am) to 35 people and still have to turn people away. The grounds are open every Saturday between 11 and 2pm. Please call the Fernandina Beach Parks & Rec department at (904) 310-3350 for questions or tour reservations.