



The Bay Run



Newsletter of
The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers
and Friends Association, Inc.

Volume 16 Issue 6
Fall 2013

"Our mission is to preserve the history of the
Delaware Bay and River Lighthouses, Lightships and their Keepers"

DISCOVERING DELAWARE

by *Oliver J. Oyster*

I've been resting lazily in the oyster beds since my last report. It was a joyous summer, busy spawning, carrying out nature's assignment of helping to increase the oyster population here in the Delaware Bay. I am feeling very adventurous after my long rest and am seriously considering taking a trip across the Bay to see what's happening on the other side. I decide to hitch a ride on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry along with some other barnacles. Leaving early in the morning, I enjoy the scenic 17 mile, 85 minute trip while chatting away with my newly found friends.

Shortly after passing Harbor of Refuge and Delaware Breakwater Lights, we dock. I decide to book a ride on one of the shuttles patiently waiting outside the terminal to take tourists to their destinations. One of the first road signs I see directs us to Cape Henlopen State Park where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Delaware Bay; why not check it out? I find out that there is a nature center there that features five 1,000 gallon tanks full of marine life. Hopefully I will be meeting up with some long lost relatives. But I also hear that this Park is haunted!!

It seems that a paranormal research group claims to have had conversations with the spirits of men from the barracks of Fort Miles, now a part of Cape Henlopen State Park. They also had a map that listed seventy-five ships that were lost in this area. Ghost ships have reportedly been seen on the ocean, spirits were seen walking the beach and voices were heard when there was no one around. Needless to say, I didn't stay long.

On to "The First Town in The First State," Lewes. I am told that Lewes was first settled by the Dutch in 1631. It was originally named Swanendael, which means "Valley of the Swans." Lewes has much to offer including the Zwanendael (and other) Museums, the renovated Mispillion Lighthouse (now a private home); it is a quaint village with many shops. The Overfalls Lightship, one of only 17 remaining lightships, is docked along the Lewes Canal. I scurry quickly by a seafood restaurant offering "Oyster Specials of the Day."

On to Milford where I decide to drop in on my cousin, Pearl. She is currently living in the Mispillion River along which there is a beautifully landscaped brick walkway. It provides residents and visitors with a peaceful, picturesque walk alongside the historic river. I notice a couple of guys fishing. Pearl is one of those fresh water oysters who easily filters to her environment. She loves history and proceeds to inform me that Milford was named for all the grist mills that were once in this area. We stop in at the Milford Museum which was established in 1983 in the original Post Office building.



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A BEAM FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

Angelo S. Rigazio, Jr.



I would like to begin by saying our annual summer picnic meeting was another success story for this organization. A huge thank you must go out to retired Navy Commander Timothy Dring for sponsoring our group and providing the meeting location at the Cape May Coast Guard Base. Thanks also to 1st Class Boson’s Mate Periea; the tour of the Base and the Search and Rescue Station was very informative. Everyone had a great time.

Now that summer is coming to an end, it’s time to reflect on the happenings of the year. As most of you know, our boat trip up the Delaware River to see the Lightship Barnegat was cancelled as well as the sunset cruise scheduled for July 28 since we did not have enough people sign up. As of this date, the final cruise scheduled for August 17 is completely sold out. This sounds like another great time for all on board the Bonanza II.

There was a time when we scheduled and filled six cruises each summer. In the last two years, we have only had one successful cruise each year due to low turnout or weather that did not cooperate. This has always been one of our best fund raising events. Hopefully we can get back to two or three cruises a season beginning next year.

I want to thank everyone for volunteering at Hereford Inlet Lighthouse on Maritime Days, July 20 & 21 and again on National Lighthouse Day on August 7. Maritime Days were two very hot days. National Lighthouse Day was well received with a lot of lighthouse enthusiasts in attendance. We will continue to keep Carole’s memory alive and will not let the light go out.

Till then, keep the lights shining. Angelo

THE BAY RUN is the official publication of The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. and is published quarterly throughout the year. A subscription to the newsletter is included with the cost of membership, Annual Membership dues are \$20.00 for the calendar year beginning March 1st. Back issues are usually available for members joining mid-year. Materials are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without permission of the DBLHKFA, Inc.

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*The Delaware Bay Lighthouse Keepers and Friends Association, Inc. (DBLHKFA)
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit preservation and educational organization.*



I can't believe the summer is almost over or will be over by the time you read this. It has been a very busy year with our Annual Keepers Banquet in April, the June visit to the Cape May Coast Guard Base, the "Maritime Days" held at Hereford Lighthouse in July, National Lighthouse Day also at Hereford in August and the monthly lighthouse managers meetings Katie Moser, Tony Giletto and I attend, helping to set up the Lighthouse Challenge of New Jersey for October. The number of volunteers we had at Hereford for a rainy lighthouse day was outstanding. Thanks!! We can always use as many volunteers as we can get.

With all the aforementioned, Katie and I still managed to find the time to visit the Thousand Islands, seeking out two lights we had never seen before—Rock Island on the St. Lawrence and Tibbetts Point where the St. Lawrence meets Lake Ontario at Cape Vincent. We also had time to spend a week with some old friends there. We are now looking forward to a two-week trip up to Maine to visit Dot Black, Ken Black's widow, in September. Oh, by the way, we also traveled over to Lewes, DE. The Overfalls Lightship is looking better than ever with its new coat of pain. See you at the "Sheds" in October.

DISCOVERING DELAWARE

by Oliver J. Oyster

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Out in front of the museum is a statue of General Alfred T. Torbert. Since he is not familiar to us, we venture inside the museum to learn more. First of all, we learn that he received his education at West Point graduating in 1855 after making a creditable, if not brilliant, record. It seems that at the outbreak of the Civil War, he was asked "which way he meant to go". Torbert's reply was, "The United States Government has given me my education. I would be a pretty disgraceful pupil if I used it against the country." My kind of guy!! Sent to New Jersey to organize the state volunteers, he eventually took command of the entire New Jersey Brigade and was elevated to Major-General in honor of his meritorious service. After retiring from the service, Torbert sailed for Mexico on the ship, "City of Vera Cruz." This voyage took him into a hurricane. Attempting to reach the deck from his cabin, he was swept overboard by the heavy seas and drowned. His body washed ashore in Florida where he was buried with full military honors. Although his house in Milford no longer stands, a stone marker has been placed on the spot to mark its location and to memorialize the General. We were certainly more knowledgeable after learning all of this from our very gracious tour lady.

Delaware, "The First State," is indeed very unique. It was the first colony to ratify the US Constitution back in 1787. Delaware boasts a long line of other "firsts" that have changed the country and the world, from revolutionary inventions to historic happenings. I am sorry I didn't have time to explore the state's 96 mile length to learn more. I was hoping to get a chance to attend the NASCAR races at Dover Downs but I figure I can save that for another time. Right now Pearl and I are headed to a restaurant in Rehoboth Beach that features a rooftop deck and scenic views. We are also hoping to spend some time doing some tax-free shopping. See you next time. OLLIE

MEGHAN WREN ACHIEVES HER GOAL

On Saturday, August 3, Meghan Wren, Founder and Executive Director of the Bayshore Center at Bivalve, achieved one of the goals she had listed on her "Bucket List". She completed the 13.1 mile swim across the Delaware Bay starting her swim at 7:10 AM in Port Mahon, DE and finishing about 3:30 PM in Fortescue, NJ. The 48 year old Wren stated that she had started swimming at the age of 7 and swam competitively in high school and college and also participated in triathlons but she had not done many long-distance swims. Her 84 year old father encouraged her to swim the Bay so he could enjoy witnessing her accomplishment.

Much preparation went into the venture including contacting Rutgers Univ. to find out about currents in the channel of the Bay, charting the course, setting up food and energy drinks, combining ingredients that she would be putting all over her body for protection from the elements, having boats accompany her, scheduling EMTs and the coast guard in case of an emergency, etc.

Her main purpose was to draw attention to the Bay and its surrounding communities which have been overlooked by the state when handing out relief for Super Storm Sandy recovery efforts. She had set a goal of \$25,000 in donations to go towards the Bayshore Center in Bivalve.

Wren was surprised to see the hundreds of people waiting for her when she came ashore. Several TV stations were also there to cover the event. "That's just exactly what I was hoping for. I had a lot of well wishers that were thanking me for bringing attention to the Bay," Wren stated. It is believed she is the first person to accomplish this feat. Congratulations from all of us on a job well done!!

by Peggy Stapleford
Activities/Program Chair



SAVE & MARK THE FOLLOWING DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR:

Saturday, October 5 – Fall meeting at the Oyster Sheds in Bivalve, NJ 10 AM Social Hour; 11 AM Meeting; 12:15 – 1 PM Lunch on the Wharf (choose from menu provided); 1:15 – 2 PM Curator's Tour includes: orientation film and history of the oyster industry in Bivalve, story of the "A.J. Meerwald" and the "Cashier". Shopping will be available in the gift shop. (Directions to the "Sheds" also provided.)

LIGHTHOUSE REVIEW

Updates: Fourteen Foot Lighthouse – Located in the Delaware Bay about 11 miles off Bowers Beach, DE, SE of Joe Flogger Shoal. The base has a cast iron caisson with a Victorian style lighthouse structure; there is a hip roof privy by the rail on the NW side. Built in 1885/86, it was originally painted brown, then white as it is today. With a height of forty feet, it once had a 4th order Fresnel lens which was first lit in 1886 and then automated in 1972. The lens is on loan to the Cannonball Museum in Lewes, DE. In 1989, this lighthouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2007, Fourteen Foot Lighthouse was sold to Michael Gabriel, an attorney from California for \$200,000 for use as a summer home and would also be used "to make beer" (?). The lighthouse is in much need of repair. People who have seen it lately say the entire structure is rusting badly and does not appear to have any work currently in progress. Mr. Gabriel also purchased Bloody Point Lighthouse in the Chesapeake Bay in 2006 for \$100,000. There are no updates on this light at present.

Updates on these lighthouses and other lighthouses will follow in subsequent newsletters in "Peggy's Corner". If you have any information on this light or any of our other lights, please let us know.



Fourteen Foot Bank Lighthouse
Photograph courtesy U.S. Coast Guard



THE LIGHTHOUSE STEVENSONS

From 1790 to 1940, eight individuals in Robert Louis Stevenson's family were responsible for the construction of a total of 97 manned lighthouses off the Scottish coast. This included, not only the construction, but the planning and design. The family did little to publicize their hard work, feeling that their planning and help from the Almighty was the reason for their success. Stevenson, on the other hand, was proud of his relative's achievements and sought to bring recognition to them stating that their contributions far outweighed his literary work. What a debt the world owes to all the members of this remarkable family. (*THE LIGHTHOUSE STEVENSONS* by Bella Bathurst, Harper Collins, Publisher, 1999)

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

I have always been interested in etymology, word origins and how and why cities and states were named. Here are a few selections from Delaware:

The **State of Delaware** was named after an English nobleman, Thomas West, 3rd Baron De La War.

Dover – named by William Penn for Dover in Kent, England. Dover is the county seat of Kent county, capital and 2nd largest city in the state.

Fenwick Island – named after Thomas Fenwick, a planter from England

Georgetown – in 1791, this city was named for commissioner George Mitchell

New Castle – was the first capital of Delaware. It was originally named Fort Casimir, changed to Fort Trinity and then to New Amstel. In 1664 it was seized by the English who changed the name to New Castle.

SUMMER EVENTS - Maritime Days Weekend



We were kept busy the weekend of July 20 and 21 manning (and womanning) our tables at Hereford Inlet Lighthouse in North Wildwood. Saturday was really hot; we did have a slight breeze every so often on Sunday. Vendors and concession stands were busy serving the visitors; other interested people wandered through the facility enjoying the displays. White tents with handmade jewelry, crafts and other items lined the streets and the grounds of the lighthouse. Pirates and other forms of entertainment roamed the area. *“And a great time was had by all.”*

NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE DAY CELEBRATED

On August 7, we again celebrated National Lighthouse Day at the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse. Steve Murray, serving as master of ceremonies, opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, a prayer, the singing of our National Anthem and introduction of guests. The Mayor of North Wildwood, who is working to procure the life saving station next to the lighthouse to become part of this complex, was introduced. Several other dignitaries were introduced and spoke regarding the History of the Lighthouse Service, the Coast Guard and National Lighthouse Day including our own President, Angelo Rigazio and member Charles Bolton, former members of the Coast Guard and lighthouse keepers.

Peter Harp entertained by singing some sea chanteys. There were various other speakers, vendors, concessions, and entertainers. The US Coast Guard Color Guard from the Cape May Coast Guard Training Center were there looking sharp in their new dress uniforms. Veterans of Foreign War were present with their color guard. The new Coast Guard Commander spoke regarding the History of the Coast Guard and maintaining Aids to Navigation. He stated: “There are over 50 lighthouses in this district, local landmarks, each truly a unique blending of old and new revitalized by technology. Originally they were used to protect mariners from privateers and pirates.” A representative from the State Travel and Tourism Commission cited that New Jersey has hosted over 81 million visitors; that the New Jersey lighthouses are very impressive and are as diversified as New Jersey itself.

The ceremonies ended with the playing of bagpipes, the singing of “God Bless America” and Steve Murray thanking all who were involved. It was truly a very impressive day.



THE TOP 10 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT THE COAST GUARD

*From the blog of Rachel Conley**

The US Coast Guard:

1. Is a branch of the United States Armed Forces and the only military organization within the Department of Homeland Security. The Coast Guard proudly serves at all times, during times of peace and times of war.
2. Deploys to multiple locations for varying lengths of time. Many of our members deploy multiple times per year.
3. Was the first afloat armed force predating the Navy and most other federal government organizations, the origins of the Coast Guard date back to 1790.
4. Has served in all of our Nation’s wars and conflicts and has a long and distinguished history of service.
5. With approximately 42,000 Active Duty Members, is only slightly larger than the NYPD.
6. Faithfully stands watch and protects the 95,000 miles of US coastline and beyond.
7. Serves all over the world.
8. Is an incredible multi-mission military organization and federal law enforcement agency.
9. Saves lives. Last year the Members responded to approximately 20,510 Search and Rescue cases and saved over 3,800 lives.
10. Has an aging fleet; it is one of the oldest maritime fleets in the world. The operational capabilities of the older assets are a direct reflection of the hard-working, talented members who maintain them.

(*NOTE: Rachel Conley is a proud US Coast Guard spouse and the mother of two children. In addition to caring for her family, Rachel devotes her time to serving and supporting Coast Guard Members and their loved ones. – Thanks also to Joanne Bolton.)



Bayshore Center at Bivalve, NJ

Menu Selections (Prepared Fresh at the Oyster Cracker Café)

A - Cup of Oyster Chowder or Veggie Soup of the Day and Choice of Sandwich (all come with fresh Cole Slaw)

Tuna Melt • Portabella • Fried Oyster

Dessert and Beverage

B - Cup of Oyster Chowder or Veggie Soup of the Day

and Large Spinach/Fresh Greens Salad with goat cheese, pecans, craisins & reduced balsamic vinaigrette dressing

Dessert and Beverage

(Average cost is \$11 - \$15 per person per person PLUS tax and tip.)

It would be greatly appreciated that members and other guests purchase lunch at the Oyster Cracker Café. In order to prepare for lunch, please select from the above menu, fill out the form below and return it by September 25 to Rod Mulligan, 1049 Simca Terrace, Vineland, NJ 08360 OR call (856) 691-8224 with your choice OR e-mail: Memax1@juno.com You may pay for your lunch at the meeting. NOTE: Our organization will provide coffee and donuts at the 10 AM Social Hour.

NAME: _____

SELECTION: A B NUMBER ATTENDING: _____

DIRECTIONS TO BAYSHORE CENTER AT BIVALVE, NJ

From the West: Take R49 East through Bridgeton, NJ about ¾ miles to Buckshutum Road (R 670), a short distance to R 553. Turn right on 553 going through Fairton, Cedarville, Newport, Downe Township, Beaver Dam, Dividing Creek, Port Norris. Turn right on High St. diagonally across from Newcomb's Market. The second house on the right on High Street is Hoffman's Funeral Home. There will also be an abandoned church on the left at the first intersection. Then you'll see "Old Glory" flying on the left. Make a left into the parking lot. The entrance to the museum is in the center. Handicapped parking and ramp are on the right.

From the East: R49 west to 55 South, from *North also 55 South to 47 South. Stay right after Maurice River Diner. Turn Right at traffic light R# 670 between Super WAWA and Citco Gas Station. Cross the Mauricetown Bridge. R #670 becomes R 614 at blinker light at base of bridge. Do NOT turn; continue to next blinker light. Keep going straight NJ State Police Headquarters will be on the right, road will curve to the right. There will be a sign NJ Silica Sand on the left. You will come to a stop street with an open field and brown school building on the right. Turn left on R 649 (North Ave.). After 2 – 2 ½ miles Port Norris Express will be on the left, then a cemetery and church on the left. Turn right at the stop street (R 553) Main Street; USPS will be on the right. Go past Newcomb's Market. The next street to the left will be High Street. Turn left on to High Street; go past the abandoned church on the left. Make a left into parking lot. Entrance to museum is in the center. Handicapped parking and ramp are on the right.

From the South: R 47 North to Dorchester, turn left between Super WAWA and Citgo Gas Station, *follow directions for North & East. *Any problems or for further information, please call Rod Mulligan (856) 691-8224 or (856) 383-5780.*

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Rehoboth Beach – Rehoboth is a Hebrew word meaning "broad spaces" which had special appeal for the religious founders.

Seaford – named for Seaford, East Sussex in England

Slaughter Beach – has three different origins: named after William Slaughter, a local post master; named for the horseshoe crabs that wash up on the shore and die each year; OR there is a local legend about a man named Brabeat who "slaughtered several indigenous inhabitants by cannon in order to prevent an impending massacre".

Wilmington –the largest city in Delaware was named by Proprietor Thomas Penn after his friend Spencer Compton, the Earl of Wilmington and Prime Minister in England during the reign of George II.

Pictures from Meeting at Coast Guard Base in Cape May



Preparing for Meeting



Retired Commander Bring and 1st class Boson's Mate Periea, our tour guides



Members listening to lecture



47' Search & Rescue Boat



Members on tour



Patrol Boat

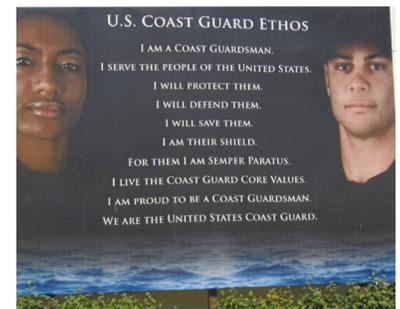


Bill Geilfuss, Angelo Rigazio, Charles Bolton & Rod Mulligan checking out the buoy tender



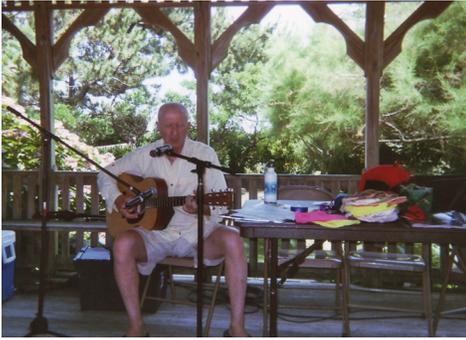
Device for Aids to Navigation

Pictures from The Coast Guard Base, Maritime Days & National Lighthouse Day



Pictures from The Coast Guard Base, Maritime Days & National Lighthouse Day

Continued



*Pictures courtesy of
Bill Geilfuss &
Katie Moser*