



The Lighthouse Log

Winter 2013

The quarterly Newsletter of the BLMA

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Message From The Editor

President Stewart Morgan experienced a setback in his recovery from the cycling accident. He is at the Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center working “overtime” as is his custom and hopes to be home soon.

The visitors to Beavertail Point are few in number these days. Birders seem to be the largest group. Lots of well insulated clothing and hats over the ears.

A good deal of museum work continues at locations up and down the coast.

In Saunderstown, David Smith And Alex Brincko are working to bring the latest in technology to our exhibits. The Compurized kiosk will have access to the shipwreck database being developed by Jim Jenney. The AIS (Automatic Information System) will allow the visitor to identify shipping passing by the light station or anchored at nearby locations. The touch screen table will be less subject to manipulation by well meaning little fingers. In Charlestown, R.I. Richard Sullivan has established a partnership with the CG Heritage Museum in Barnstable. This relationship will have long term benefits for both organizations.

In Vero Beach, FL Varoujan Karentz has been reworking storyboards from the Lens Room with assistance of Richard Sullivan and the Exhibit Committee. Updating these original museum exhibit boards will give a fresh look and considerable new information for the frequent visitor.

Watch for the special opening this spring of the expanded museum. The doorway into the electrical room and the tower should be finished. There will be a number of tower openings this upcoming season. Even if you are a seasoned tower climber, you will want to see the restoration of the original entrance from the Keeper house.

A long talked about fund raising initiative is in the final planning stages and will be announced soon. Watch your mail.



Fresnel Lens

Holiday Open House

The annual holiday open house took place December 8th. A small group of dedicated decorators, George and Linda Warner, Suzi Andrews, Joan Vessella, Betty Gulley and JoAnn Dunn had spent hours earlier in the week arranging greens, ribbons, holly and sea shells in a most attractive fashion. Candles were in every window and, for the 3rd year, George and Guy Archambault placed a lighted wreath on the tower.



Suzi Andrews enjoying a well deserved moment to sit.

Suzi, Joan and Betty made sure that Directors and Officers took responsibility for contributing a favorite recipe for the pastry table.

If you have not had the opportunity to attend an open house please put December 7, 2014 on your calendar. You will not be disappointed.



Joan Vessella and Betty Gulley overseeing a delightful assortment of seasonal pastries.

RES ■

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD SEASON

This spring as in past years the Craig Armington Memorial Scholarship fund will award two \$1000 scholarships to deserving Jamestown residents who are graduating high school and going on to postsecondary education. At a time when college education costs are at historic highs, every financial aid source needs to be explored by students and their families.

Applications will be available at the BLMA website as well as at the Jamestown library. The due date will be available at the BLMA website and will be published in the Jamestown Press.

A gift to support the fund is most welcome and fully deductible.



RES ■

MUSEUM EXPANSION UPDATE

While closed for the season, museum structural changes continue as does new exhibit development and renewing of existing exhibits. Members and seasoned visitors alike will be pleased with the changes that will be evident this spring.

Interactive Display Room

The new interactive display room opened last spring introduced an innovative touch screen table which provided museum visitors with a selection of



The interactive table will sport a new

historical information modules and videos.

The winter months

allowed refinement and improvement to its operation. Computer savvy docents David Smith and Alex Brincko worked with the manufacturer to solve some operational and design flaws and develop a simplified user interface. Visitors this year will find the touch table “user friendly” and less likely to “lock up”.

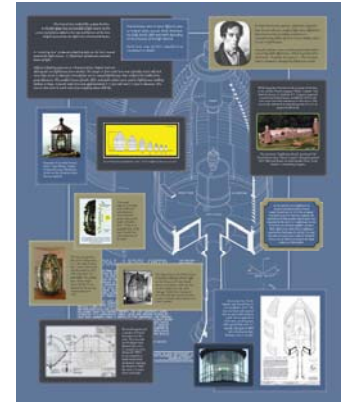
A new added feature in the room will be a dual station touch screen Kiosk built by Varoujan Karentz. This kiosk is dependent on an Internet connection. Again, David and Alex experimented with wireless connection options and selected a new Verizon Wireless hot spot router to provide the site with both an Internet connection and telephone service. The internet connection will feed one display with selectable ship traffic information around Beavertail Light. The other display will provide both weather data and to retrieve historian Jim Jenney’s data base shipwreck information using David Smith’s custom designed search engine.

The shipwreck panel display from the lens room will be improved and relocated to the center panel

in the Interactive Room.

Lens Room

Our museum’s static lens room panels are getting a face lift after many years of use. Over the winter months five historical wall panels have been completely redesigned into dimensional visual information story boards. These panels, similar to layout with those in the hallway have been updated and a new panel highlighting Fresnel lenses, their creator and how they work will fill a much needed void in visitor information about lens technology.



The impact of the Fresnel lens on maritime safety cannot be overstated. For the first time illumination to guide mariners could be seen at great distances.

Track Lighting

With the hustle and bustle last year in opening up the Keepers house as part of the expanded museum, installing track lighting was delayed until fall after the last visitor had left. New lighting in four rooms and the hallway is now completed with LED lamps, a guarantee of almost a lifetime of light.



The doorway between the Keeper house and the Electrical room is being “uncovered” by one of David LaMontain’s employees.

Tower Electrical Room

A portion of last year’s van Beuren grant was earmarked for the reopening of the original doorway from the Keeper House hallway into the light tower electrical/battery room. There have been delays due to rerouting and relocating some electrical boxes. The USCG Aids to Navigation Unit in Bristol is now on the job. The boxes are being moved and the

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doorway opening should be completed before the season begins.

Scheduled open days for climbing the tower will be posted in the museum and the BLMA website.

Work is expected to start in the spring and be completed in time for opening day. Donations to help pay for the BLMA \$12,975 match can be mailed to:

BLMA Fog Signal Building Fund
P.O. Box 83
Jamestown, RI 02835

VK ■

Fog Signal Building Restoration

After several attempts to find funding sources, BLMA received a \$12,975.00 matching grant from the Champlin Foundations for the external repair and restoration of the Fog Signal building. Built after the 1938 hurricane, this structure was used by the U.S. Coast Guard until 1972 when the fog signal was automated and moved across the road. After that time the building was used by DEM and more recently adapted as a Naturalist Center and Aquarium during the summer months. It is a popular destination for children with its touch pool and fish tanks.

The red roof building requires extensive repair of cracked brick, rusted and deteriorated steel window frames, missing window blocks, peeling and chipped parge coat. While there is also much to do inside the structure, bringing this building's exterior back to its original condition will add much to the beautification of the light station.



Once completed, the exterior of all buildings of the light station will have been renewed. It is one of the most photographed light station facilities on the east coast.

Watch the mail

There are four important events in the planning stages for spring

Docent Brunch

Museum and Grounds Cleanup

Grand Reopening

A very special fund raising activity will be announced in the next few weeks. This promises to be a wonderful way to memorialize or honor loved ones, recognize valued friends or show your support for the mission of BLMA.



Watch the mail

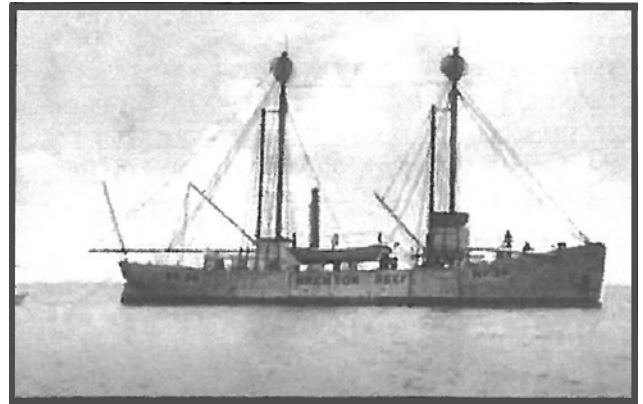
Ed. Note: Jim Jenney, our shipwreck Historian, has been supplying articles describing shipwrecks and other maritime incidents in local waters for over four years. An accident precludes Jim's ability to email one for this issue. I have chosen an incident from Jim's book, Naval Disasters in Rhode Island: 300 years of Military Misfortune.© 2012.

New York Times – August 27, 1905

IOWA SMASHES A LIGHTSHIP

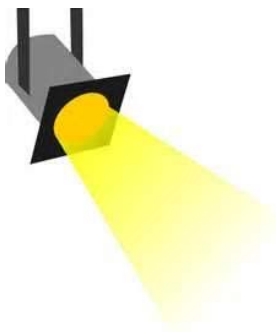
Battleship in Collision at Brenton's (sic) Reef Station, Keeper Reports

Newport, R.I. Aug. 26 – *The battleship IOWA poked her nose into the Brenton's Reef Lightship while making her way this harbor last Thursday, it was learned today. That probability, it is inferred, is that the big warship was dangerously near running aground. After running into the lightship, according to the keeper, the IOWA drew away and made at once for the harbor. The damage to the lightship was reported by Capt. Fogarty on his regular visit to shore. It will be necessary, he thinks, for a relief ship to take the station for a while. The collision with the lightship was the second mishap following the run out to sea this week of the battleship squadron of the North Atlantic fleet for maneuvers. The dense fog which hung off the coast interfered with the plans of the warships. The KEARSARGE on her return trip ran into the oil schooner N.S. Gallup and towed her into port after taking off her crew. Capt. Fogarty says his vessel had a narrow escape from being sunk by the IOWA. It was 5 o'clock on Thursday afternoon and fog was so dense that it was impossible to see a ship's length ahead. The density of the fog obviously killed all sound for those on the lightship heard no warning whistle from the battleship. It is believed that the battleship did not hear the lightship's bell, which was being struck repeatedly, or her fog whistle, which was sounding continuously. The IOWA was going about five knots an hour. The battleship struck the lightship on the bow and carried away the stem seven feet above the water line. The head stay and part of the rail and deck were torn away. The blow was fortunately a glancing one, for the weight of the battleship had she struck head on, even at five knots speed, would have sunk the signal vessel. After clearing from the lightship the IOWA headed toward the entrance to Newport Harbor, and was soon out of sight and hearing. Capt. Fogarty said he reported the matter to Washington.*



LV-39

The Brenton Reef (LV-39) spent almost sixty years in service before being retired in 1935. After retirement she served in several capacities including being a floating restaurant for a time. Her end came in 1975 when a century old and enroute to a shipyard in Beverly, MA. she foundered and sank.



THE SPOTLIGHT SHINES ON . . .

Whenever a task is to be undertaken at the light station you will most likely find George Warner in the middle of it. For many years he has served as Chair, Buildings and Grounds Committee. The man with the keys.

Replacing light bulbs, checking on sump pump operation, installing Christmas lights in the houses and a wreath on the tower, fixing broken latches on screen doors and countless other repairs, renewals and updates has been one dimension of George's BLMA involvement. He has served as a Director as well as President.

For years he and Linda have led tours for groups of all ages. From elementary children studying local history to senior citizens on an outing from an assisted living facility, each group receives a detailed presentation tailored to their needs. Others who have assisted George and Linda include Rose and Varoujan Karents and Teddy and John Leyon.



Getting ready to take the holiday greens to the dumpster.



George is repairing the panel for a renewed story board.

On occasion, George's granddaughter Jessica has provided very well received assistance.

George has been actively involved in tower openings and helped develop the protocols that have made tower opening a great success for all folks over four foot tall having two unencumbered hands.

Marshall Electric was George's employer for 30 years.. Imagine the commute from Jamestown to the west side of downtown Providence before routes 4 and 95 were as we know them today. He installed commercial kitchen appliances in restaurants throughout southeastern New England.

Ski trips to New Hampshire, sailing Narragansett Bay and canoeing Rhode Island's rivers and lakes were enjoyed for many years.

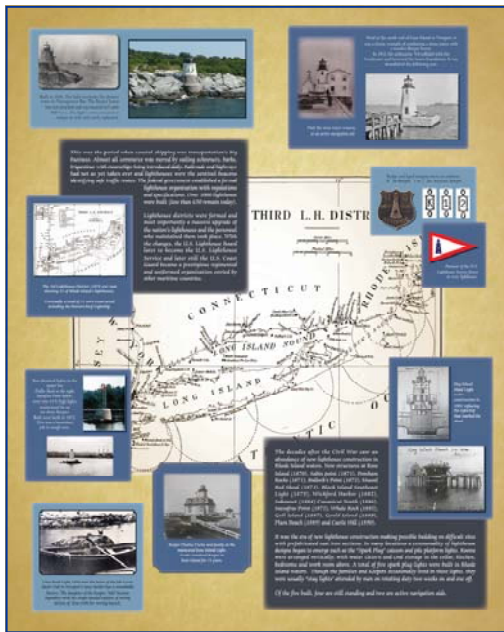
George has 3 children, Wendy and Melissa living on Jamestown and son Christopher in Maryland. There are 5 grandchildren who keep him busy between trips to Beavertail.

RES ■

A PREVIEW OF LENS ROOM CHANGES

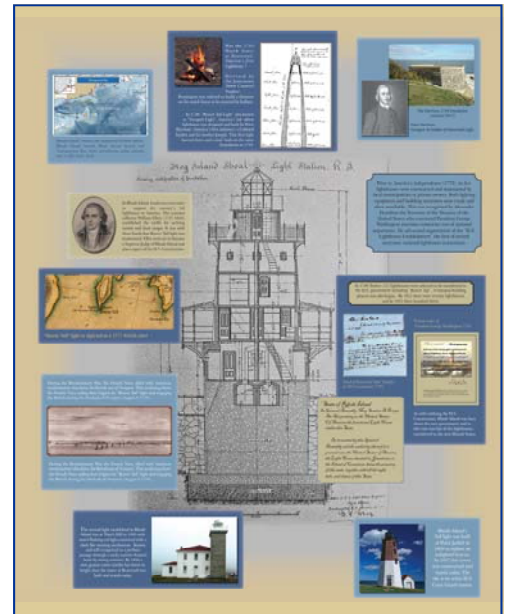
The research is complete, material selected and layout finally finished. The original concept of Sarah Gleason and William "Mac" Woodward has been refreshed and updated.

Using Beavertail Light and other Rhode Island lights to highlight American lighthouse history, the information within each theme is designed to highlight important light station developments occurring throughout the country.



The Golden Years

RES



The Early Years



The Decline



Preservation



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