



BEAVERTAIL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

The Lighthouse Log

Fall 2010

*The quarterly Newsletter
of the BLMA*

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Log Editor

Guy Archambault

Layout Design

Lanette Macaruso

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**Beavertail Lighthouse
Museum Association**

PO Box 83

Jamestown, RI 02835

Tel: (401) 423-3270

E-mail:

info@beavertailight.org

website:

www.beavertailight.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I reflect on the BLMA's accomplishments of the past two years under Richard Sullivan's leadership, the adages *hard act to follow* and *big shoes to fill* spring to mind. During Richard's presidency, BLMA launched the current successful capital campaign to restore the lighthouse structures, expand the museum, develop new educational programs to relate the history of Beavertail Light Station to our public. In the process, BLMA has been awarded several grants and has been recognized for its efforts to restore and sustain the lighthouse museum.

BLMA stays in the public consciousness through sponsorship of events like June's *Paint Beavertail*, wherein 75 artists created images of the lighthouse and its glorious setting during a 3-day *plein aire* followed by a silent auction enabling art lovers to buy their favorite works. This summer, families came to the lighthouse grounds for RI State Parks' *Great Outdoors Pursuit* and its recreational and educational events. Dorrie Linn headed up BLMA's *T-Shirt Design Contest* which resulted in youth T-shirts emblazoned with the winning design a popular item in our gift shop.

The tower was opened for tours several times this year, thanks in good measure to experienced tour leaders George and Linda Warner. Hundreds of visitors found the climb well worth the small suggested donation and the stair-and-ladder ascent to the catwalk's stunning vistas.

My apprehension about taking the helm after Richard's record of achievements is tempered with the knowledge that I am working with dedicated, knowledgeable officers and directors in helping achieve important goals for the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum and historic site. I look forward to working with them and our many constituents to bring new knowledge to the public about the devices, operations, beauty and elegance woven in the history of Beavertail Light Station. Working together with such rich resources, we can significantly advance our mission in 2011.

I hope you enjoy reading the news inside on BLMA projects, events, and awards. Please come visit us at the *Holiday Craft Fair* and *Open House* the first weekend in December. **To each of you of you I wish a happy holiday season.**

- Guy Archambault

Vote Today to Help Beavertail!

Just in Time: Our building repair needs doubled last week! The installation of new baseboards in the museum revealed significant water damage in the walls. You can help fund the repair work - and it will cost you nothing: All you need do is *click!* Beavertail Lighthouse is 1 of 3 Rhode Island landmarks competing to win volunteer labor and financial support from the **Hampton Inns Save Landmark Program**. So please visit the website, www.hamptonlandmarks.com, click on *Vote for 2011 Landmarks*, then click on *Rhode Island*, then click on *Beavertail Lighthouse* to cast your vote before the deadline of November 30!

BLMA BOARD ELECTIONS

Members elected new officers and two new directors during the September 15th Annual Meeting. Incumbents completing their terms included Richard Sullivan (President), George Warner (Vice President), and Paula Florentino (Secretary).

2011 Officers:

Guy Archambault-President
 Varoujan Karentz-Vice President
 Joan Vessella-Secretary
 Richard Koster re-elected Treasurer

BLMA BOARD ELECTIONS

We extend a hearty 'Welcome Aboard' to Anne Maxwell Livingston and Stewart Morgan, recently elected to the BLMA Board of Directors.

Anne Livingston became a Jamestown resident soon after graduating from Connecticut College. She is also a graduate of Boston College Law School. She worked as a corporate lawyer in Providence and Worcester, MA. She devoted the last 18 years to raising her children and serving on the Boards of Directors of several non-profit organizations, and, more recently, preparing tax returns on a volunteer basis. Anne enjoys fundraising and politics. When not at work or pursuing those interests she plays golf, tennis and bridge. She is married to Bruce Livingston, a retired Colonel in the United States Marine Corps.

Born in New York State, Stewart Morgan is a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He served more than four years on active duty, first aboard Search and Rescue vessels in the Boston- Gloucester area and then as Commanding Officer of the Yap Island Loran Station. He left active duty and briefly worked on the Manned Orbital Laboratory in the aerospace industry. He then began a career in healthcare, holding positions in quality assurance, research and development, regulatory affairs and strategic marketing, retiring as Global Vice President of Quality Assurance/ Regulatory Affairs with Novartis Company. He then founded Loch Ada Group, Inc., a consulting company. He and his wife Martha moved to Jamestown in 2008. They have two daughters and three grandchildren.

***Collegiate volunteers shine their light on Beavertail***

On Saturday, October 16, twelve wonderful Providence College student-volunteers involved with PC's service program, Building Bridges, beautified Beavertail Lighthouse. The students set right to work helping BLMA volunteers on hand in weeding and trimming the brickwalks, building wood panels for the oil shed interior, and polishing the handrail going up the tower stairs. A great big THANKS from BLMA to these fine students.



BLMA WINS A "RHODY AWARD"

BLMA received an award for restoring the exterior facades of our light tower and the two Keepers' houses. The award, given by Preserve Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) was presented this past October at the recently restored Casino Theatre at the Newport Tennis Hall of Fame. A separate "Artisan Award" was presented to Keith Lescarbeau of ABCORE Restoration, Inc. He was the contractor responsible for the Beavertail work.

BLMA was recognized for developing a preservation plan for the two keeper's houses, built in 1856 and 1898, and has assumed significant financial and administrative responsibilities by securing funding from Champlin Foundations, RIHPHC, and private contributions. BLMA hired the highly respected ABCORE to carry out the work, which was meticulously done. The project entailed 10 months of effort and now allows visitors to ascend the light tower and enjoy the view 60 feet above the bay

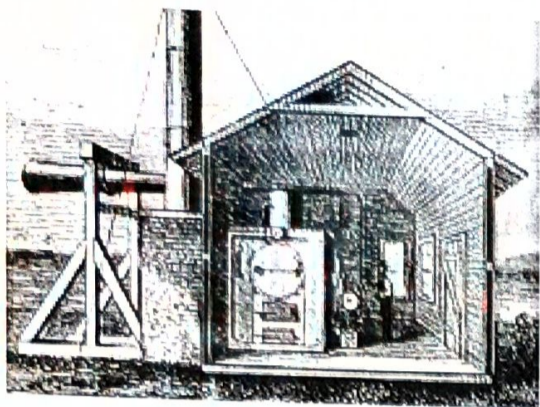
BLMA Receives Major Grant

BLMA is the appreciative recipient of a \$99,250 grant from the Champlin Foundations. The funding will be used to update antiquated electrical service to both the Keeper's and the Assistant Keeper's Quarters and to restore 34 multi paned windows sorely in need of extensive repairs.

Varoujan Karentz, a dedicated member of BLMA, is responsible for the successful submission of the request. Work is expected to be completed during the winter and early spring.

Keith Lescarbeau receives Artisan Award

While BLMA as an organization was the recipient of a 2010 Little Rhody Award for historic preservation, the individual recognized for the outstanding quality of work in refurbishing the buildings and tower exterior is Keith Lescarbeau. As head of ABCORE Restoration Company, Inc., Keith has contributed to the state's most impressive landmarks in addition to his work at Beavertail. In recognition of his achievements as a master preservation carpenter who carefully restored a large number of Rhode Island's historic landmarks, Keith received the 2010 Stephen J. Tyson Artisan Award from the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission. It is a well-deserved honor to a person who ensures that his projects receive a first-rate effort every step of the way. Congratulations to Keith!

Keeper's House the setting for history sessions

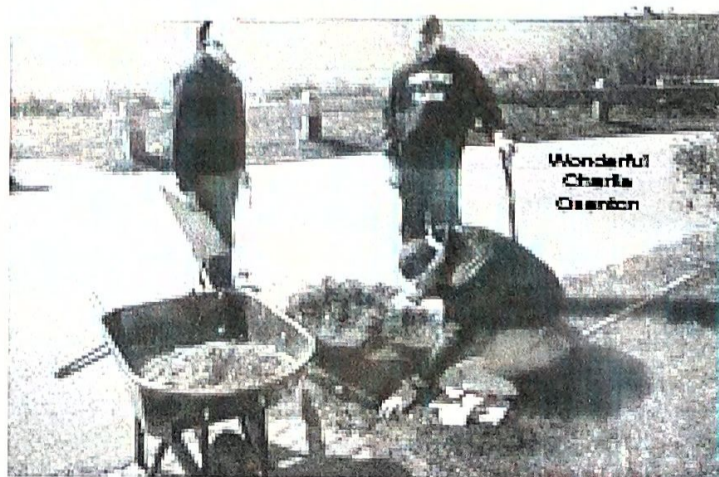
If you are intrigued by lighthouse history, you will probably want to take part in the Beavertail Lighthouse History Sessions now being planned winter, 2011. Course content will be drawn from accounts of people involved with lighthouse devices and functions in the towers, engine rooms, keeper's houses, and, yes, even the administrative offices of the United States Lighthouse Service! Course developer Lanette Macaruso says she hopes that those who attend the sessions will see connections between the saga of life in and around 18th, 19th, and 20th century lighthouses and the benefits and struggles of devices and systems touching our lives today.

We are learning much about the ups and downs (and sights and sounds!) of life at our lighthouse by reading documents BLMA ordered from the National Archives. We think the content of the abundant correspondence of the times will make for both useful information and interesting vignettes of American life. One example is a letter written by Professor Joseph Henry on his way by train from Washington to Rhode Island. He writes of stopping in New York and learning from distraught people that President Lincoln had been grievously wounded by gunshot the night before. Henry was connected with extensive networks of people, including Lincoln himself, as the president's science advisor. His key role in experiments in lighthouse illumination and sound signaling shows the breadth of innovation to which the U.S. lighthouse system had access. Letters like his and other primary sources we consult allow us to weave together aspects of Beavertail's past that connect with the creation of infrastructure supporting a vast nation's maritime commerce and with those who worked within it.

BLMA plans to sponsor 4-8 of these sessions, each about 90 minutes long and will include refreshments. We will need to offset costs by charging fees for sessions, but there will be a discount for BLMA members. So, if you haven't joined BLMA yet – please do so during the January Membership Drive or via page 7 of this newsletter.

We are hoping to have the first session no later than mid-March, and we hope you will come and enjoy some or all them! Call Lanette Macaruso at 401-954-7018 if you'd like to help with the organizing effort, or just to chat. Comments most welcome!

Charlie Osenton, an upstanding member of the 'Oil House Gang' also does a magnificent level of volunteer landscaping at the lighthouse - mostly when no one is looking. Charlie was caught on camera in a random act of kindness on an October Saturday. He was assisted at that time by Providence College student volunteers. Thank you Charlie, for all that you do, and do so well!



THE BLMA ARCHIVAL PROJECT

Members **Paula Florentino** and **Ginny Saunders** have volunteered their talents to collect and collate archival materials for BLMA. Their objective is to ensure that documentation on the work of the volunteers who have built our organization over the decades is available, organized, and accessible. They will gather and sort material presently held by a variety of folks before collating and filing them on-site. The Lighthouse will serve as their workplace and central repository for the documents, files, and memorabilia they archive for us.

If you have material from any year about an effort of the BLMA's please contact Paula at (401) 423-9907.



This model of the Conanicut Light, available at the Craft Sale or through Dorrie Linn, BLMA Gift Shop Mgr.

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR AND MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE COMING UP!

Saturday, Dec 4th: 9am-4pm: The Lighthouse Museum's Gift Shop docents will again take our unique shop on the road...to the Melrose School, where BLMA will have a table, as usual, at the Conanicut Island Holiday Craft Show. Folks will find among BLMA's array of gifts articles that evoke the beauty and lore of lighthouses, including ornaments, apparel, jewelry, cards, books, wall hangings, and more charming and useful items - all presented with holiday flair at this popular crafts event.

Sunday Dec. 5th, 1-3pm: Come to the Museum for the Holiday Open House:

BLMA docents will uphold tradition by decking the halls of the Museum with the seasonal greens and pleasing motifs of a seaside Christmas. The windows trimmed in holiday sparkle framing views of the bay make for a setting that warms the heart...and pleases the tummy. Come and enjoy hot cider, or coffee and an assortment of homemade cookies and pastries. Better yet, bring some favorite cookie or treat of your own to help make our open house even tastier! The gift shop will be open and stocked with great gifts to give... or to keep for yourself as mementos of Beavertail.

Call Suzi Andrews at 423-1460 if you'd like to help with either or both of these holiday events: Decorating of the museum takes place Thursday morning, Dec. 2 at 10.

**NEW INTERPRETIVE SITE SIGNS**

Thanks to a grant received from "The Rhode Island for the Humanities" (RICH) funding is now in place to add brief external interpretive signs on each building, explaining what they are, dates they were built, and how they were used. BLMA member Jim Rugh will employ his graphic design skills to oversee the project with inputs from BLMA members. Three other signs will be designed; two as overlook descriptions of the West Passage land features and the fate of Whale Rock Light and a new, larger interpretive sign about the history of Beavertail Light Station. This sign will replace the old "Bay of Parks" concept project sign which never materialized. These signs will be funded partially from RICH and family contributions in memory of Gerard Smith.

BLMA's NEW HEATING SYSTEM IS VERY INTELLIGENT

The restoration of the heating system in both the Keeper's and Assistant Keeper's Quarters was recently completed. The work included replacement of all baseboard heaters with new, more efficient slant/fin type heaters throughout both buildings as well as the installation of a high efficiency, oil fired boiler with a hot water tank in the Keeper's House. This new boiler services the heating and domestic hot water systems in both buildings, replacing the oil fired boiler in the Keeper's House and the propane fired boiler in the Assistant Keeper's House, both of which were outdated and inefficient.

A significant feature of the new system which will enable BLMA to reduce operating costs even beyond the benefits of new high efficiency equipment and a single technology is the installation of an Automated Energy Management System.

This provides a master control at the central system location in the Keeper's house, thereby allowing temperature regulation for both buildings from a central source. Additionally, remote controls and multi-zone controls in each building set and manage the temperature depending on occupancy and use in different areas of the buildings.

The new installation also incorporates an Outdoor Reset Control, enabling the heating system to respond to changes in outside temperature, thereby yielding even further operating efficiency with reduced fuel consumption. Overall, this new heating system is simple to operate, less complex to maintain, and, most importantly, reduces operating costs. It is an investment which will be a positive long term benefit in the operation of BLMA.

There was a whole lot of prep & clean-up to do, before and after the installation of the new heating system. Water damage to the museum walls discovered during the installation called for painting and patching by paid laborers but finished (for now) by BLMA volunteers.

BLMA folks who did some heavy lifting and cleaning include George and Linda Warner, Joanie Vessella, Warren O'Sullivan, Guy Archambault, Varoujan Karentz, Dorrie Linn and Lanette Macaruso. They helped get things out of the way or put back in the museum building and keeper's house.



George Warner and Dorrie Linn put things in order in the Gift Shop.



Linda Warner to the rescue with paint for a patched museum wall.



Warren O'Sullivan and George Warner get the museum building ship-shape again - 11/20/10

Join the BLMA!

Christmas is coming...so may we suggest a gift that brings joy to the receiver and helps keep Beavertail Lighthouse bright...and buzzing! ***Join us!*** Use the form below to make a friend a member and/or to give the gift of membership to *yourself!*

We offer the following memberships:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Annual dues</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Life	\$300
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual life	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$ 40
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 25

Name: _____

Address: _____

City State/Zip: _____

Phone _____ email address: _____

Please contact me about helping with BLMA projects and services.

Please make your checks payable to : BLMA, PO Box 83, Jamestown, RI 02835

BLMA is a 501(c)3 Tax Exempt organization

Thoughts on the construction design of the 1749 tower

by Varoujan Kareniz

The 2008 radar imaging study of the 1749 foundation stones indicate that the tower base was octagonal in shape. We therefore think it is reasonable to believe that the wooden tower itself was octagonal. A look at attributes of buildings of similar vintage, combined with our knowledge of mid-18th and early 19th century tower-building methods, show us possible commonalities, especially those between the first Beavertail tower and the Jamestown Windmill, a tall, octagonal structure.

Commonalities also abound in other, similar structures in the region, including the wooden tower of the 1809 Point Judith Lighthouse - again, *octagonal*. Destroyed in the great gale of 1815, it was rebuilt of stone in the same shape in 1816 and again in 1857. The octagonal tower standing today was constructed of brownstone block. The Prudence Island Light, transferred from Goat Island in 1842, is another example of octagonal lighthouse architecture.

Finally, there may be construction similarities between the 1749 Beavertail tower and the Jamestown Historical Society's 1787 windmill on North Road. The windmill was octagonal as well, with almost the same base diameter as Beavertail's tower. The windmill was built 28 years after the tower, and it might be that designer Peter Harrison's tower design and building plans might have been known and followed.

Interestingly, sheathed trusses and beams with scarfed joints were used in construction of wood-framed truncated buildings throughout Europe and America beginning in the early 18th century. These Photographs are of the Windmill:



Vertical Scarf Joint



Wall Truss Section



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Oct. 19, 2010:

BLMA President **Guy Archambault** presents a plaque marking the exemplary leadership of Immediate Past President **Richard Sullivan** during the past two years. Richard will continue his dedicated work as a BLMA director.

02835+1232



OIL HOUSE RESTORATION UPDATE

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated group of hard-working volunteers, the Oil House, originally erected in 1905, looks like a new building. Workers met weekly throughout the summer to remove things long-abandoned inside, power wash the interior and exterior, replace rotted wood, install new cedar wood soffits, fabricate and install new doors, upgrade electrical service, prime, paint, and top-coat, etc. More than 225 man-hours were expended on the project. All that remains to be done is to replace the concrete floor and conduct minor "touch up" work. The most challenging aspect of the project was to build and properly fit the replacement doors. The upgraded electrical system includes motion-activated lights to conserve energy.

The building will serve as a mini museum, with the first display to be focused on illumination devices used at Beavertail and other lighthouses of the times. The building refurbishment was made possible by a grant from The Newport Restoration Foundation. The determined yet cheerful nature of the volunteer crew definitely contributed to the shared sense of satisfaction with the excellent result.



Oil House restoration crew members confer
Guy Archambault, Bob Thorton
and Charlie Osenton