



The Lighthouse Log

A publication of the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association
Members of the New England Lighthouse Association
Spring 2007

**Beavertail Lighthouse
Museum Association
PO Box 83
Jamestown, RI 02835**

E-mail:
info@Beavertailight.org

Web Address
Beavertailight.org

Phone:
(401) 423-3270

Officers

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George Warner**

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CHARLOTTE RICHARDSON



Dear Beavertail Friends,

Another year has gone by. My how time flies. The Memorial Day Weekend will be here before we know it. As always there is much to do, cleaning and painting to spruce up the Museum for our visitors. Last season more than 20,000 people from throughout the U.S. and many foreign countries, came to enjoy the Museum. We hope that they left with a greater understanding of Beavertail and the other lighthouses in Rhode Island. Our docents are encouraged to interact with our visitors, making their visits both educational and enjoyable.

It is with a great deal of sadness that we report the loss of three individuals who were instrumental in the operation of the museum in past years. Eric Armour was president of BLMA in 1999. He played the bagpipes at our 250th anniversary service. Jim Filkins was our gift shop buyer in 2003-2004. He brought many new ideas to the operation of the shop. He also served as a docent and entertained many a visitor with his stories about the light. Tony Faria was president of BLMA in 1996-1998. He worked very hard to build the BLMA in the early years of the association.

There has been a great deal of planning being done this year on the future of the Museum. You will read more about these plans later in this newsletter. Varoujan Karentz, head of the acquisition Committee, has been instrumental in moving these plans forward.

Our docent committee, headed by Rita Antine, will be calling all those who have been docents in the past, as well as those who have expressed an interest in doing so in the future. Please give Rita a call if you can devote a little time to this very worthy and enjoyable activity. You do not have to commit to a weekly schedule, in fact we would be pleased to have you, even if it is only once or twice during the season. Don't forget, you get a chance to enjoy the view every time you serve.

Looking forward to seeing you at the museum this summer.

George

IN MEMORIAM

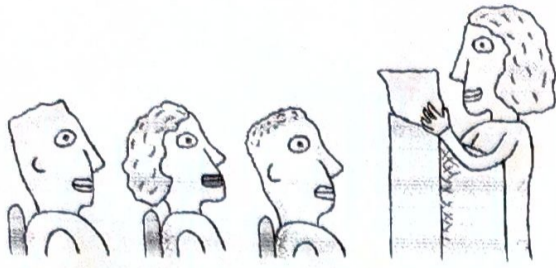
Anthony Faria, Past President, 1996 -1998

Eric Armour, Past President, 1999

James Filkins, Gift Shop Buyer, 2004 - 2005

Elizabeth Clem, Historian for many years.

The world has lost some very special people.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Last year we had many group tours at the Lighthouse. They included: School classes Scout groups, Elderhostal tours, Bus tours (one from Oklahoma), War College families and an R.V. Tour.

One bus tour has already been scheduled for May and we expect to host many more throughout the season. An educational program, in cooperation with the Jane Pickins Theater, is also in the planning stages. BLMA Past President, Linda Warner has been invited to take part in an educational outreach day at Jamestown's Lawn Avenue School. She will be speaking about lighthouses to groups of students in grades 5-8.

Mark you calendar for these important dates

CLEAN UP DAY

Thursday, May 10, 2007 – 10:00 a.m.
(Rain Date, Friday, May 11, 2007 10:00 a.m.)

DOCENT ORIENTATION

Saturday, May 12, 2007 – 11:00 a.m.

2007 SCHEDULE

**Weekends Only,
May 26, 2007 – June 17, 2007
12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.**

**Daily
June 18– September 3, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Open Weekends Only –
September 16 – October 8, 2006
12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Classified Ads

Lighthouse Keeping:

We are looking for a few good volunteers to prepare Beavertail Lighthouse for the upcoming summer season. No experience necessary.

Call 423-2678

If you'd like to help with clearing away the winter debris, come on down to the

Lighthouse on Saturday, May 10, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

Brooms, mops, rakes, hoes, etc. etc. etc. are

WELCOME!



**THE TALL SHIPS ARE COMING!!!
THE TALL SHIPS ARE COMING!!!**

Being a docent at Beavertail Lighthouse Museum will give you the BEST seat in town for this spectacular event - plus oh so many beautiful days. Time to start summer scheduling of docents. During the next month we plan to call or email all former docents about your time slot selections. If you have any special requests, questions or know anyone wishing to become a docent, please contact:

Rita Antine
423-2378
ajantine@hotmail.com

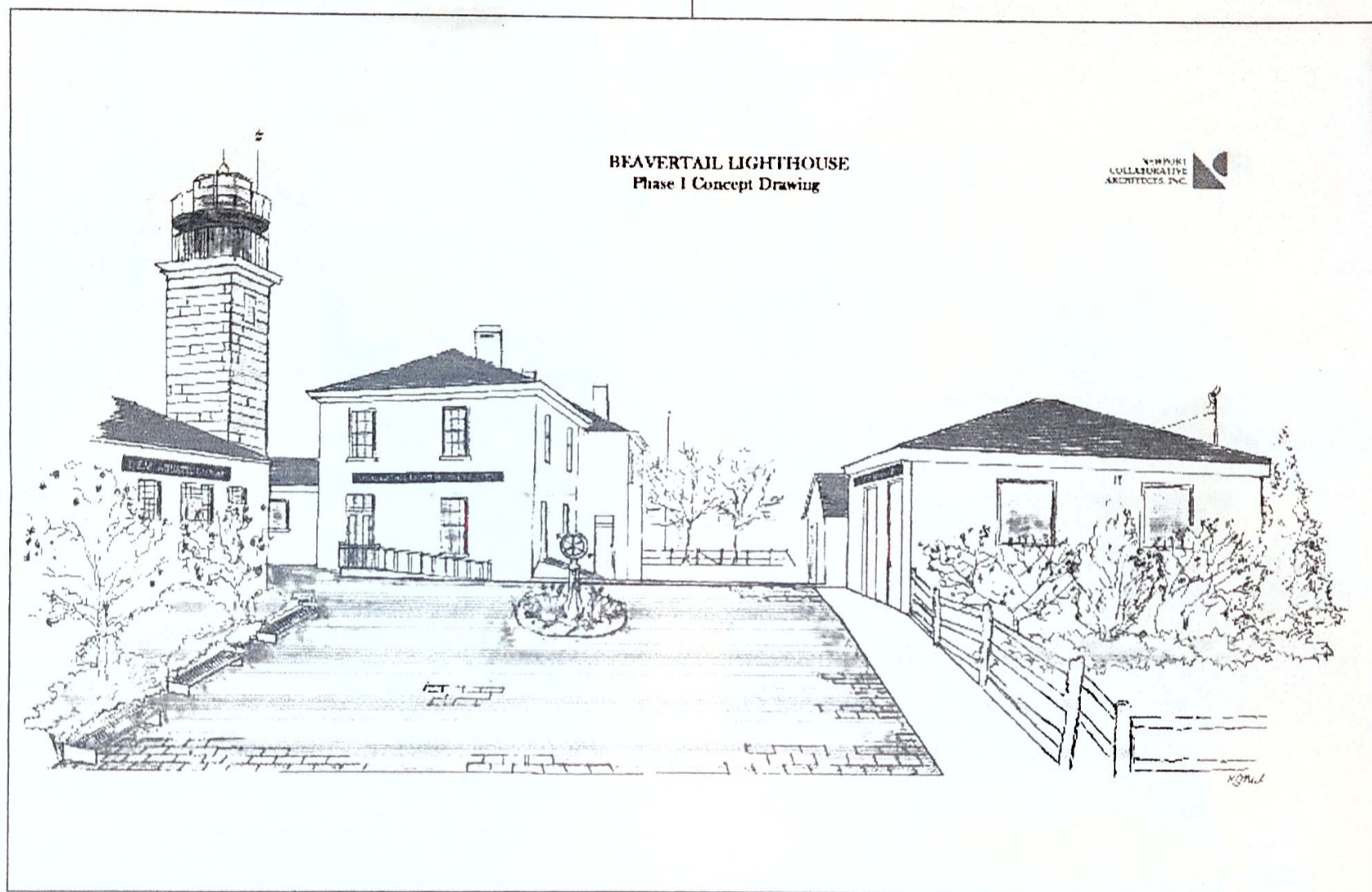
or
Joan Vessella
423-0208
joany73@aol.com

Prospective docents can volunteer for weekly, bi-weekly, daily schedules or be added to the substitute list.



Thank you in advance, for all your hard work to make Beavertail Lighthouse Museum possible.

Rita Antine
Joan Vessella
Docent Committee



Lighthouse Gets New Master Plan

Under a matching federal grant program from the "US National Trust for Historic Places", BLMA engaged Newport Collaborative Architects (NCA) of Newport to develop a Beavertail site study plan. The plan details the best use of all the buildings on the light station and recommends how the museum can be expanded into the Keeper's quarters with a much needed enlarged museum gift shop to be located in a renovated garage behind the fog signal building. The custodian quarters will be

moved up into the second floor of the Keeper's house.

A new brick covered central courtyard is envisioned between the garage, the fog signal building and the Keeper's house. The courtyard with benches and will provide space where visitors can sit to enjoy the surroundings and provide a waiting area before entering the museum or a visit up into the light tower. The first floors of all the buildings will be equipped for handicapped accessibility.

The new Master Plan by NCR is in two phases based on the light station being turned over to the partnership made up of the State of Rhode Island, the Town of Jamestown and the BLMA who will manage the expanded museum. Phase I would take place soon after the site is made available and Phase II which includes a Visitor Interpretive Center at some future date

Included in the plan are cost estimates to rehabilitate, preserve and stabilize all the buildings on the site including the granite light tower which needs much repair work to provide visitor access to the top of the tower.

The new plan is still under review by your BLMA Board of Directors and will be available for public information in April..

National Historic Site Plaque Installed



While Beavertail Light has been registered as a "National Historic Site" since 1975, it took 32 years to commission a commemorative bronze plaque. Visitor's, as they enter the museum now know we really do have a US national significance.

1749 Stone foundation

BLMA is still examining options to preserve the original 1749 lighthouse stone foundation. Successive storms keep undercutting the remains and as yet no preservation plan has yet been approved. BLMA is working on gathering more information about the stone

base and examining the underground beneath and around the structure by the possible use of nondestructive radar imaging techniques. Using innovative new technology on a 258 year-old stone ruin may tell us what to do.

New USCG License Amendment.

The newest license amendment from the USCG to the town of Jamestown significantly changes BLMA's role at Beavertail. The license change now opens the tower, previously restricted, to allow visitor access up to and including the outside catwalk but excludes the lantern room where the rotating light beacon is located. Previously, the only time visitors could climb the tower were during special openings requested by BLMA with USCG personal on site. Under the new rules a USCG "approved supervisor" must be present. *(It should be noted that iron staircase and the outside iron catwalk first needs repair for safe use by visitors ascending the tower)*

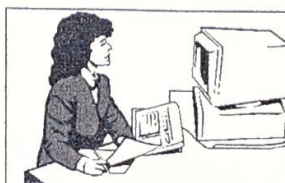
The license also authorizes BLMA to expand the museum and "to enter into a cooperative agreement with the State of Rhode Island to manage and restore the licensed property". Previous to this new amendment, BLMA operated the museum only under agreement with the Town of Jamestown.

Beavertail Lighthouse Acquisition Committee
Varoujan Karentz, Chair

DO YOU KNOW?

In 2007 Beavertail Lighthouse celebrates its 258th anniversary (1749-2007) of a light at Beavertail Point, Jamestown, Rhode Island.

Beavertail Lighthouse has a long an illustrious history and you can see it son our museum and on our website.



Beavertaillight.org

Forces as they left after the Revolutionary War, rebuilt several times and is punctuated with the wear and tear of time, and yet she shines on, a beacon of hope and safety for all those who enter the waters of Rhode Island.

A great many lighthouses across our nation will soon be excessed as obsolete primarily because of the invention and easily operated Global Positioning Systems.

Lighthouses by the thousands have been closed and deserted, abandoned and forgotten, to become lost to the ages, taking with them wonderful tales of bravery and service.

For many years, the Flying Santa flew in and dropped Holiday gifts to lighthouse-keeping families, a program that was started to express gratitude to the keepers and their families for the great service they rendered to sea and air travelers. According to the record they visited Beavertail Light in the past.

You can become member of the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association, and join us in our mission is to keep alive the history and the structure that is Beavertail Lighthouse for future generations. And in so doing you can work with many, many others to keep alive our programs of Preservation and Education.

(Look for an application blank, elsewhere is this communication).

For many years Beavertail Lighthouse was identifiable to ocean travelers by its six-second interval fog horn and corresponding light beam sweep, recently changed to nine-second intervals.

As many as 20,000 people per summer travel from all over our nation and the world to Beavertail Lighthouse to visit its museum and gift shop.

The general consensus of all who visit Beavertail Lighthouse, believe that its surrounding vistas are comparable to the best the world has to offer.

The Tall Ships are coming again from around the world to visit Newport; and if you happen to be sitting on the sun-warmed rocks at Beavertail Park, looking to the east, you'll have an unobstructed and rare peek into history. Those magnificent replicas of ships of old, will pass in review before your very eyes; while behind you, perhaps sounding its intermittent whistle, will stand Beavertail Lighthouse, now, as it was 258 years ago— a solitary sentinel of the sea.

Beavertail Park is just as beautiful and appealing in the cold winter snow as it is in the balmy breezes of summer. Not as comfortable, but just as beautiful, and many people visit all year long to enjoy the seasonal changes. Even Hurricanes are attractions!! This was Hurricane Fabian in 2003 and the rocks were crowded with undaunted viewers.



Photo by Vic Richardson.

An Open Invitation!

Come on down, and visit. We'll tell you all the stories and legends we've learned over the years about Beavertail Lighthouse and its surrounding areas, and we'll listen to what you've learned in your lighthouse travels. . Have a look around our small but fascinating Gift Shop that offers many treasures of the sea.



RECORD BREAKING YEAR FOR VISITORS AT THE MUSEUM

With our electronic people counter installed at the entrance door of the museum, corrected for double counts (since he or she who came in had to go out) plus a 5 % deduction from the total count to account for other variables, year 2006 recorded 22,000 visitors. This is a remarkable number when compared to Newport's "Fort Adams" which saw

30,000 this past summer. The museum was open seven days a week during July and August and only weekends during June and September. . As some docents can attest there were days when it looked like a 1000 people were in our three-room museum all at one time.

A BLAST FROM OUR PAST

Stuart Parnes, recently appointed Executive Director of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, served as a consultant for "The Light Must Be Kept Burning: Rhode Island Lighthouses, Past, Present and Future."

This project, funded by the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities was, according to Sarah Gleason, co-director, the first joint funded project of two state

agencies, DEM and R.I. Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission. This exhibit is the heart of our museum. At the time, Stuart Parnes was an exhibit designer for Mystic Seaport. Prior to his recent appointment, Parnes was the Executive Director of the Connecticut River Museum.

Richard Sullivan, Vice President

GIFT SHOP BUYERS RETIRE

BLMA has a challenge on its hands in seeking a person or couple to replace Karan and Charlie Osenton who served the Association as buyers for the Lighthouse gift shop. Although acting in that capacity for only two years, they established a new benchmark for excellence in that important assignment. The Museum gift shop sales provide a major source of operating income for BLMA. During their tenure they both drew on their extensive experience to provide the gift shop with useful, practical, attractive, yet affordable merchandise to appeal to visitors. They were innovative and discerning in their selection of items on display for sale. Of particular note were the suncatchers and framed lighthouse mirrors made available to the public. Both have received enthusiastic response from gift shop patrons. Karan, whose professional background includes sales and buying in the jewelry industry, and

Charlie, whose career included employment as assistant buyer for Shreve, Crump, and Low (a prominent Boston jewelry store) were devoted in their pursuit of unusual, interesting items for the gift shop. BLMA profited from Charlie's business acumen as national sales manager for The Gorham Company. Their performance underscores the maxim to "leave things a little bit better than you found them". Thanks to both of them for their superb contribution to BLMA. Though they relinquished their important responsibilities as BLMA buyers, Karan and Charlie, Jamestown residents, will continue to serve as docents at the assistant keeper's cottage. Thus, we are assured that these two BLMA life members will keep their practiced eyes on things. For that we are grateful!

Guy Archambault, Board of Directors

Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association

Membership Enrollment Form

I want to be an active participant of the **Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association!** I have indicated my areas of interest below:

Please Check one

New Member []
Renewal []

- Volunteer Museum Attendant
- Building Maintenance Committee
- Fund Raising Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Archives Committee
- Museum Clean-up Committee
- Group Tours Liaison
- Publicity/Newsletter Committee
- Oral History Project
- Holiday Open House
- Naturalist Program Liaison
- Other?

Membership period ending 12/31/20__

New Dues Rates:

- Individual, Life \$100.00
- Family, Life 200.00
- Individual 15.00
- Family 25.00
- Sponsor 75.00
- Student 5.00
- Donation \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mail To:
Beavertail Lighthouse Museum
Association
P. O. Box 83
Jamestown RI 02834

Suggestions:

All members will receive a 10% discount at the museum giftshop.

THE W. CRAIG ARMINGTON SCHOLARSHIP

Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association
Will award \$1000.00 scholarships to two
2007 high school graduates who are Jamestown residents.

The scholarship applications with full instructions are available now at
The Jamestown Public Library.
Applications received after the deadline, May 1, 2007
Will not be considered.

ACT NOW!

1749-2007
Located on the
Southernmost tip
of
Conanicut Island
Jamestown,
Rhode Island
Help Us Save It?
Application blank
enclosed. .



The Lighthouse Log
c/o Charlotte Richardson, Editor
PO Box 83
Jamestown, RI 02835-0083