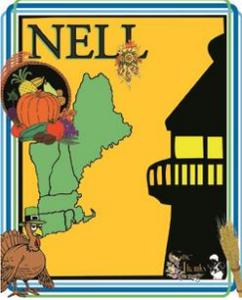


CHAPTER CHATTER



November/December



Happy Thanksgiving

-

Happy Hanukah

-

Merry Christmas

LightHouses Hot Chocolate & You 2016



Lighthouses, Hot Chocolate and You will be held on Saturday, 16 January 2016. Having about run out of winter-friendly places in New England that we haven't visited in the past few years, we will be focusing on the northern Atlantic coast of New Jersey, visiting Sandy Hook, Twin Lights of Navesink, and Sea Girt. The hot chocolate social event will likely be held at Sea Girt. More details to come.

Note: there will not be an official group hotel for the event. We have found that for the hassle of arranging the group rates, we often don't save anything considerable over the rack or AAA rate. As we don't need any kind of event room this event (we will do the event at Sea Girt Light), we also don't need to arrange a hotel's meeting room. Recommended towns in NJ to look around for hotels: Hazlet, Eatontown, Long Branch, and Wall. Let's try this out and we'll see what we all think at the end of the trip for future trips.

Questions...email Greg at seagirtlight@gmail.com. (And yes, I'm especially excited about one of the lights on this trip!)

Important membership dues notice

It is time to renew your NELL membership dues for 2016.

Your membership runs from January 1 through December 31, 2016.

If you plan to attend LHHCY (Lighthouse Hot Chocolate and You) your dues must be paid by December 31, 2015.

Single membership is \$18 and dual membership is \$30.

Make out your check to "NELL" and send it to:

Kathy Santucci, 38 Lime Kiln Rd., Tuckahoe, NY 10707.

If your address or email has changed, please notify me. Walt Mills, Membership

Meet the new Mr. NELL



Congratulations to John Donovan the new Mr. Nell.

John is the creator and Web Master for our new web site. www.newenglandlighthouseovers.org

The title and paddle were past from Doug Scott at the NELL 2015 Fall meeting.

Lighthouses in the News



BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — The 193-year-old Black Rock Harbor Lighthouse, which survived a one-two punch by Tropical Storm Irene and Superstorm Sandy, will soon receive much-needed restoration work, thanks to a nearly \$439,000 federal grant approved by the National Park Service. Word of the funding, a Disaster Relief Assistance Grant administered through the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office, came at the September unveiling of a new memorial to Kate Moore, the longtime 19th-century lighthouse keeper.

The city's Parks and Recreation Department began opening bids on the project on Oct. 1 and work will likely begin later this year or in early 2016, said Steve Hladun, the department's special projects coordinator.

Members of the Black Rock Community Council, a neighborhood organization that supports the lighthouse at the mouth of Black Rock Harbor, said recent storms have removed some of the large rocks that protect the base of the lighthouse, leaving its foundation within a few feet of the water at high tide.

"It was already compromised, but after Sandy it was really compromised," said Phil Blagys, former BRCC president who encouraged the city to apply for the grant.

Stuart Sachs, who leads the BRCC's Lighthouse Committee, said much of the restoration work will involve "shore armoring" in the harbor channel. An extensive amount of rock will be placed on an angle to stabilize and create a wider rocky area to protect the lighthouse in both storms and normal high tides. The plans also include a new steel door for the lighthouse.

"The work, primarily, will be done in the water," Sachs said. "We're losing the ground on the north and northwest side to the point where the foundation is exposed to wave action." The work will require approvals from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, he said. Blagys and Sachs said the lighthouse is both a safety marker for boaters and an emblematic symbol of Bridgeport's rich history.

Built in 1822 to replace an 1808 wooden lighthouse that blew over in 1821, it is the third oldest lighthouse in Connecticut, after New London Harbor Light (1801) and Faulkner's Island Light (1802).

International Lighthouse News



The Oct. 9, 2015 photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency shows a lighthouse in the disputed South China Sea.

Vietnam on Wednesday 14th October 2015 slammed China over its construction of two lighthouses in the disputed South China Sea, saying the move violates Vietnam's sovereignty and escalates tensions.

Chinese state media reported last week that a completion ceremony was held for the lighthouses on Cuateron Reef and Johnson South Reef in the Spratly islands.

The state-run Vietnam News Agency quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Le Hai Binh as saying the construction "seriously violates Vietnam's sovereignty ... complicates the situation and escalates tensions." He said Vietnam has protested China's actions.

Xinhua says the lighthouses will help improve navigation in the area. China has launched a massive land reclamation project on reefs in the South China Sea over the last 18 months, raising concerns in the region and in the United States.

Tuesday 20 Oct 2015 - China does not seek to change the existing status of territorial claims in the South China Sea with its newly built lighthouses, the Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday, arguing that Beijing already had "indisputable sovereignty" in the contested waters.

China says its lighthouses on Cuarteron Reef and Johnson South Reef in the Spratly islands will assist navigational security, but experts and diplomats call them a shrewd move to buttress Beijing's territorial claims.

China claims most of the energy-rich waters of the South China Sea, through which about \$5 trillion in shipborne trade passes every year. But neighbours Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam also have overlapping claims. On Monday, the Philippines' foreign ministry said the lighthouses were "obviously intended to change actual conditions" and that Manila would not accept China's "unilateral actions as a fait accompli".

China's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying defended the structures as "completely within China's sovereignty" and said they had no relation to "some people's" comments that China was trying to bolster its hold over the islands.

"I want to stress that China has indisputable sovereignty over the Nansha islands and surrounding waters," Hua said, using the Chinese name for the Spratlys. "We absolutely do not need to build lighthouses to strengthen our sovereignty claims." She added, "There is no issue of changing the status quo."

The United States, which has criticised China's building on artificial islands, has said it would sail or fly wherever international law allows. While the US and other navies mostly rely on electronic instruments to confirm their ships' positions, visual fixes from lighthouses are still used in certain conditions. References to the lighthouses are likely to find their way into international shipping charts and registers and the logbooks of foreign navies.

Experts say that could help China to build a long-term legal picture of effective occupation, despite any formal diplomatic objections of rival claimants.

China Responds to Lighthouse Criticisms

The next time the United States sends warships by China's man-made islands in the disputed South China, officers on board will have to decide how, if at all, they will engage with a pair of giant lighthouses that Beijing lit up there this month.

Chinese officials say the lighthouses on Cuarteron Reef and Johnson South Reef in the disputed Spratly islands will help maritime search and rescue, navigational security and disaster relief.

Experts, diplomats and foreign naval officers say, however, the lighthouses represent a shrewd move to help buttress China's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

While the U.S. and other navies mostly rely on electronic instruments to confirm their ships' positions, visual fixes from lighthouses are still used in certain conditions.

Any such moves would play into a strategy "geared to bolstering China's claims by forcing other countries to effectively recognize Chinese sovereignty by their actions," said Ian Storey, a South China Sea expert at Singapore's Institute of South East Asian Studies.

"If naval and other ships from other countries, including the U.S. would be obliged to use and log them, it could be taken as de facto recognition of China's sovereignty," Storey said.

U.S. officials have not confirmed or denied reports that the U.S. Navy will soon conduct freedom-of-navigation operations within 12 nautical miles of the artificial islands. Asked about those reports on Tuesday, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said the United States would sail or fly wherever international law allows.

China claims most of the energy-rich South China Sea, which links the Indian and Pacific Oceans. About \$5 trillion in shipborne trade passes through its strategic sea lanes every year.

EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION

References to the lighthouses are likely to find their way into international shipping charts and registers and the logbooks of foreign navies. That would help China to potentially build a long-term legal picture of effective occupation, despite any formal diplomatic objections of rival claimants.

The lighthouses reinforce Beijing's continued strategy of gradually "changing the facts on the water", Storey said.

China has extensively reclaimed seven islets and atolls in the Spratlys over the last two years. The runways and other facilities China is building on them have alarmed the United States and its partners in the region, who say they could be used for military purposes.

Washington has repeatedly stated it does not recognize any Chinese claim of territorial waters around the reclamations built on previously submerged reefs.

Both serving and retired Western naval officers say modern electronic navigation devices, including the U.S.-created Global Positioning System, mean that lighthouses are of declining value to all kinds of shipping.

But, when sailing within several miles of ocean features such as reefs, or when electronic devices fail, ships rely on them to help fix and log a position visually.

"NO IMPACT"

Commander Bill Clinton, a spokesman for the U.S. 7th Fleet, did not detail the circumstances under which U.S. ships would use the lighthouses. But, he said, they had "no impact on 7th Fleet's ability to fly, sail and operate in international waters of the South China Sea."

Trevor Hollingsbee, a retired naval intelligence analyst with Britain's defense ministry, said building lighthouses on the reclaimed reefs was a "rather cunning" move by China.

"The use of lighthouses is declining everywhere, but there will always be times when their use is unavoidable, and that goes for all mariners in the South China Sea," Hollingsbee said.

The 2014 "Sailing Directions" for the South China Sea produced by the U.S. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency gives extensive details on the Spratlys, including lighthouses, visible wrecks and lagoon entrances - but without citing who has sovereignty over them.

It declares some 52,000 square miles (135,000 sq. km) as "Dangerous Ground" due to inadequate surveys and bad weather. It also notes that sovereignty in the area is "subject to competing claims which may be supported by a force of arms."

ASEAN DEFENSE MINISTERS

China "will never recklessly resort to the use of force, even on issues of sovereignty," said Fan Changlong, one of the vice chairmen of the Central Military Commission which controls the Chinese armed forces. He was speaking to defense ministers from the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations at a security forum in Beijing.

The artificial islands in the Spratlys "will not affect freedom of navigation in the South China Sea", Fan said. The new lighthouses "have already begun to provide navigation services to all nations", he added.

Four ASEAN member nations - the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei - have overlapping claims in the Spratlys. Taiwan also claims the Spratlys.

Malaysia's Armed Forces chief Zulkefli Mohd Zin expressed concern at the security forum over "the unwarranted provocation by the Chinese over the construction on the garrisoned islands of the South China Sea".

Time will tell what China's intention is, he said. But Malaysia has to accept China's explanation that the reclamation and construction activities in the Spratlys is "for good purposes and the purposes of all human kind."

Taiwan's southernmost lighthouse completed in South China Sea



Taipei, Oct. 24 (CNA) Taiwan has finished construction of its southernmost lighthouse located on Taiping Island in the South China Sea, the Maritime and Port Bureau said Saturday, adding that the lighthouse could both improve navigational safety and assert the nation's sovereignty.

The 12.7 meter-tall lighthouse will help guard Taiwan's various national interests, said the bureau's deputy head Lee Yun-wan (李雲萬).

The Taiping lighthouse has a range of 10 nautical miles, while it will also be automated and regularly maintained, Lee said.

It is unlikely that the lighthouse will be affected by the two lighthouses on Huayang Reef and Chigua Reef in the South China Sea, which the Chinese government inaugurated earlier this year, Lee said in response to media inquiries.

The Chinese lighthouses are far away from the Taiping lighthouse, he explained.

With an area of 0.49 square kilometers, Taiping Island is the largest of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, which have been at the center of heated territorial disputes involving Taiwan, China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei in recent years.

Taiwan has improved airport facilities on the island and is also building a wharf, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year, ensuring that the island can be used for humanitarian tasks, the Ministry of National Defense said.

Just for fun....can you guess the light?



If you think you know you can e-mail me. (answer next Chapter Chatter)
September/October answer: Cape Canaveral, Florida

Happy Birthday to:

Kim Ely	11/04	Pamela DePasquale	11/07	Larry Thompson	11/10
Laurel Mills	11/13	Kathy Santucci	11/13	Norm Bosse	11/15
Bob Mills	11/15	Jim Streeter	11/15	Gary Toth	11/19
Sandra Peterson	12/03	Linda Sherlock	12/03	Carol Drogowski	12/12
Cynthia Bosse	12/12	Jim Seery	12/14	Eugene Carew	12/19
Madelene Taylor	12/22	Judy Newbloom	12/26	Cliff Olson	12/28
Hank Heacock	12/29	Barbara Kepple	12/31		

Anniversary Wishes to:

Christine & Tom Cardaci	11/02	Frank & Pamela DePasquale	11/14		
Randy & Penny Miller	12/02	Bill & Linda Grumman	12/24	David & Janice Dingley	12/30
Elinor & Jonathan DeWire	12/30				

Please Note:

We are looking for **volunteers** who are interested in serving on committees, those who have good ideas for lighthouse preservation, fund raising, suggestions on improving the operations of the club, or just getting more involved. Please contact Bill Kent: bktwo@comcast.net or 1(978) 809-7133.

The Lighthouse Digest – For each subscription, please use the subscription envelope that you can get from NELL's 2nd VP Lynne Kerber, or the form on the NELL website. Mail with check to Lighthouse Digest, ATTN: Kathleen Finnegan, P.O. Box 250, East Machias, ME 04630. Be sure to write NELL in the memo section of your check and NELL will receive \$10.00 per subscription to go toward restoration and preservation of lighthouses.

If you have any **knowledge of an upcoming event or news to share**, please send it to me: chapterchatter@outlook.com
All articles and information must be received by the 25th of the month prior to make the publication.

The NELL Beacon wants your stories too, send with pictures to Lynne Kerber: lighthousecats@comcast.net for publication. The NELL Beacon is our official club newsletter and will be published three times a year in time for our events. Deadline for the LHC&Y issue will be mid-December, for the Spring Event issue mid-April and for the Fall Event issue mid-August.

If you know of a member that needs **some cheer, get well wishes, condolences or congratulations**, please let Cynthia Bosse - Sunshine Chair know at: bossnjc@comcast.net or call 1(860) 688-7347.

Please let me know your **birthday** (month & day only) and **anniversary** so I will be able to recognize you on your special day in our monthly Best Wishes section.