

CHAPTER CHATTER



January/February

Happy New Year - Happy Valentine's Day

Lighthouses, Hot Chocolate and You 13th January, 2018



9am - Watch Hill Lighthouse: Grounds and Museum. The tower will not be available for climbing

10.30-10.45am - Stonington Lighthouse: Grounds and Tower will be open. The Museum may be closed for renovations.

1pm - Mystic Seaport: Many things planned including Brant Point Replica Lighthouse.

Park in the parking lot across the street from the north entrance to Mystic Seaport. We will be touring Mystic as a group. Enter the Thompson Exhibition Building where you will meet the NELL group and be given the appropriate pass.

Membership Dues Notice

It's time to renew your dues for 2018. Your membership runs from January 1 through December 31, 2018.

If you plan to attend LHHCY (lighthouse hot chocolate and you) your dues must be paid by now.

Single membership is \$20 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 you would like to pay your NELL dues by PayPal click on the link below and follow the instructions.

<http://www.newenglandlighthouse lovers.org/membership-form/>

Thank you, Walter Mills, membership

Restoring forgotten Buffalo lighthouse will create ‘heritage bookends’



Shut down in 1962, the South Buffalo Lighthouse is unknown to many, but restoring the 197-year-old structure will provide a link to the city’s maritime heritage



Think of the historic Buffalo waterfront, and your mind is likely to picture the Buffalo Lighthouse. The limestone tower built in 1833 and located across the Buffalo River from Erie Basin Marina is an impressive display on a late summer’s night. But there is another lighthouse on Buffalo’s waterfront, unknown to most.

The South Buffalo Lighthouse stands at the south entrance to Buffalo’s Outer Harbor. Its isolated location – waterside and bordered by privately owned industrial property – renders it almost inaccessible by land and makes it relatively unknown by most Western New Yorkers.

Decommissioned in 1962, the lighthouse and adjacent fog signal building may have gone forgotten by many. But it is now being reclaimed by a stalwart group of maritime preservationists.

“The building itself is a few years from collapsing,” said Mike Vogel, president of the Buffalo Lighthouse Association. “It was stripped out pretty well when they were abandoned and pretty much left to the elements for a half-century.”

On a recent visit to the 43-foot tall, iron-clad lighthouse topped with its signature black lantern and diamond-shaped glass panels, Vogel explained how he and other preservationists acquired it and what it will mean when their restoration efforts are completed.

Once restored, the South Buffalo Lighthouse and the Buffalo Lighthouse will complement each other as “cultural and heritage bookends” in the ongoing development of Buffalo’s Outer Harbor, giving the area a stamp of “historical authenticity.”

“A lot of the harbor is a blank slate,” said Vogel, who has received national honors for his efforts in lighthouse restoration. “A lot of what was there – dock facilities, seaway piers – is gone. Of all the industry once there, only a few remnants remain, like the grain elevators. They are really the bridge to the past.”

“Incorporate those remnants,” he said, “and you’ll have a unique sense of place – and not all new. It will be a much better attraction, a link to Buffalo’s maritime heritage.”

The South Buffalo Lighthouse tower’s brown base and cream-colored body led historians to call it a “bottle light” because it resembled a milk bottle.

Bill Zimmerman, president of Seven Seas Sailing School, had the “bottle light” in his sights for years before it was offered in 2008 to qualified groups through the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000.

The General Services Administration – working with the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Parks Service – handled the transfer of lighthouses, which legally belong to the U.S. Coast Guard.

Each season, Zimmerman led a small fleet of sailboats on the water surrounding South Buffalo Lighthouse. He said he must have passed the faded beauty hundreds of times.

“We’ve been chomping at the bit to dock the boats,” said Zimmerman. “What’s neat about that area is its natural gifts of water and nature. On the grounds behind the lighthouse, you will never see as many birds in your life as you do in May and June.”

Zimmerman, executive director of Maritime Activity Inter-youth Network, and Vogel each submitted a letter of interest to acquire the lighthouse. Applications followed, and while the deed for the lighthouse station was transferred to Vogel’s group, it is clear that Zimmerman is a working partner. He has, for example, engaged the University at Buffalo Department of Geology and National Geographic Society in water testing, with Seven Seas boats collecting and logging the samples.

Renovation efforts at the South Buffalo Lighthouse are expected to cost \$850,000, according to Vogel, who spent significant time bringing the Buffalo Lighthouse back to life. That project, still ongoing, will cost \$830,000 when completed, he said.

On the recent trip to the recently acquired South Buffalo Lighthouse, he pointed to the brown fog signal station – dwarfed by its companion lighthouse – as a catalyst for the restoration effort.

“It became the testing station for the entire Great Lakes,” said Vogel. “If anyone was putting out a new fog signal, they would first use it here. There were a lot of lighthouses, but only one fog signal testing station.”

Construction on the arch-roofed building started in May 1904, with the original fog siren powered by twin 13-horsepower engines and compressed air. The structure, with its heavily patched roof, sported a rusted 11-foot sound reflector with twin trumpets.

One could only imagine the bassoon-like alert that cut through the fog when the lighthouse beam could not. The air diaphone installed in 1934 produced a two-tone air blast of three seconds, followed by a silence for 27 seconds.

Alfred Coppola as a young boy lived in Dante Place, a housing development that in the 1940s occupied the city’s Canal District. Coppola, now 73, recalled hearing the siren’s deep wail in the middle of the night. As he stood near the fog signal station one recent night, he described the sound.

“It was like an orchestra playing in the evening,” said Coppola, the former Delaware Common Council member who is now on the board of Zimmerman’s group. “We had bigger boats in those days, more like ships. It was a beautiful sound. There was a calming to it.”

Zimmerman and Vogel have been promised \$7,000 in funding that would allow them to erect a safety railing around the perimeter of the lighthouse station.

“There was never a safety railing, and we want to make the new one as invisible as possible because we are trying to maintain historical integrity,” Vogel explained.

Fundraising for the first stage of the project, a \$185,000 stabilization and safety phase, began in 2012, Vogel said. The Niagara River Greenway Commission awarded a \$50,000 grant for the effort.

Just for fun....can you guess which lighthouse I am visiting?



If you think you know e-mail me
(Answer next Chapter Chatter)

November/December answer: Eastern Point

International Lighthouse News

Russia's last lightship opens for tourists



KALININGRAD, December 15. /TASS/. Irbensky, the last surviving lightship in Russia, was open for visitors in the westernmost city of Kaliningrad on Friday.

The lightship arrived in Kaliningrad from St. Petersburg after repair works and is moored at the World Ocean Museum. "Irbensky has become a new tourist attraction of Kaliningrad," said Inessa Zaikovskaya, the museum's spokesperson. The lightship was built in Finland in the late 1950s to assist navigation in a strait linking the Gulf of Riga with the Baltic Sea. The Irbensky's light mast is more than 17 meters tall, and its beacon can be seen at a distance of about 28 kilometers.

In 1985, the Irbensky was replaced with a lighthouse and was later stationed in the port of Lomonosov near St. Petersburg.

In 2014, the lightship was donated to the World Ocean Museum, which already owns several museum ships

Happy Birthday to:

Helene Hoffecker	1/03	Ron Foster	1/08	Debbie Heckman	1/09
Linda Grumman	1/10	Carolyn Carbone	1/13	Sharon Mills	1/17
Patrick Clark	1/18	Penny Miller	1/19	Herb Carpenter	1/24
Chris Heacock	1/26	Melody Barnhart	1/27	Greg Fitzgerald	1/28
Henry Winkleman	1/29	Mary Jane Foster	1/29		
Debbie Brew	2/06	Maureen Kitching	2/07	Al Pochek	2/08
Sandy Coates	2/09	Janice Dingley	2/11	Judy Hall	2/14
Lynne Kerber	2/17	Linda Speece	2/23	Bill Kent	2/24
Bob Taylor	2/25	Phyllis Idell	2/26		

Anniversary Wishes to:

Ron & Mary Jane Foster	1/14	Hank & Chris Heacock	1/30
Lee & Bonnie Benford	2/15	Eugene & Lori Carew	2/22

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 Ron Foster (860) 303-2986 or via e-mail: ron@foster-photo.com

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.

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.