

# CHAPTER CHATTER



July/August

Happy4<sup>th</sup>

Don't Forget – National Lighthouse Day – 8<sup>th</sup> August

The National Lighthouse Museum's  
8th Annual National Lighthouse & Lightship Recognition Weekend  
August 3-5, 2018

**Friday, August 3, 2018**

Light Keeper's Gala. Harbor cruise, open bar, hors-d'oeuvres, dinner, dancing in the moonlight.

**Saturday, August 4, 2018**

Presentations, panel discussions. free tours and public events at Museum site. 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
Free Admission.

**Sunday, August 5, 2018**

Lighthouse Weekend-Celebratory Lighthouse Boat Tour

It's Lighthouse Weekend, we're celebrating! Lighthouse Weekend is an annual event commemorating the signing of the Lighthouse Act by George Washington, August 7, 1789. Join the party and cruise the New York Harbor and Raritan Bay passing at least 10 lighthouses, most not visible from land. We'll see the NLM site, Fort Wadsworth at Battery Weed, Coney Island Light, West Bank, Old Orchard site, Romer Shoal, Great Beds, Prince's Bay Light, Staten Island Range Light, Elm Tree Light, Robin's Reef, and the most famous lighthouse in the world, the Statue of Liberty!

This season we will be yachting on the ***Majestic Princess*** which features climate-controlled interior spaces with large windows as well as ample outdoor space to fully enjoy the "yachting experience." As for food items, the Majestic Princess offers lunch and snack items as well as a bar for "adult beverages." We're happy to report that this yacht also features a wireless sound system for all decks!

Refreshments are available on board but feel free to bring your own snacks. Tickets are \$60 Adults, \$40 Children (under 10yrs.), \$50 Military and Seniors (62+).

The boat leaves promptly at 11:am, ***rain or shine***, from the World Financial Center Pier located on the Hudson River at Vesey & North End Ave.

Contact: National Lighthouse Museum - (718) 390-0040 - [info@lighthousemuseum.org](mailto:info@lighthousemuseum.org)

## John Donovan Accepts Donation from Norwalk Maritime Aquarium



Norwalk Maritime Aquarium hosted John Donovan (Board Member and WEB Keeper) on their Central Long Island Sound Lighthouse Cruise and presented him with a cheque for NELL with monies they collected from their US Lighthouse Passport Stamp Program.

John's pictures of the lights he saw.



Penfield Reef



Pecks Ledge



Greens Ledge



Black Rock Harbor (Fayerweather)



Sheffield Island



Stratford Shoal

NORWALK — The Old Orchard Shoal Light shone into the shrieking wind off the Staten Island shore: 12 seconds on, three seconds off, the same pattern it had followed for 119 years.

Then, a surge preceding Superstorm Sandy funneled down the bay between New York and New Jersey, amplified by a high tide and full moon. When it reached the lighthouse, the wave didn't part, but instead washed into and through the aging structure, which was no longer watertight, according to Alex Pettee. Like a watery hand, the surge lifted the light from its foundation.

It must have seemed, for a moment, like a ship finally pulling up anchor after over a century of guiding the way for others. Then, it capsized. When the storm cleared, all that was left were the rocks, known as riprap, surrounding a broken foundation and a few bricks.

The Old Orchard Shoal Light was an example of a type of lighthouse fondly referred to as a “spark plug” because of its shape, which extends above and below the waterline. Spark plugs were built by dropping giant cast-iron caissons shaped like upside-down bells onto underwater ledges, then filling them with concrete like a self-contained foundation upon which the upper structure is built. Out of the 41 built in the United States, only 33 are left, according to Pettee. A spark plug Norwalkers might be most familiar with is Greens Ledge Light, which dominates views of the Sound from Rowayton and Darien.

“Old Orchard... was the closest cousin to us, in terms of design,” said Pettee, a board member of Greens Ledge Light Preservation Society. On a recent morning, he stood outside Greens Ledge Light with his father, Tim Pettee, who serves as the society’s president, and Travis Mingo and Nicki Rosenfeld of the Maritime Aquarium. Rust was eating through the caisson, and the cast-iron plates casing the foundation had begun to push out. One piece was missing entirely, showing the brick wall of the basement within.

“The caisson, or foundation, needs immediate attention. And if we don’t address that, we may not have a light,” Tim Pettee said. “There’s a real sense of urgency we feel.” None of this year’s many nor’easters rolled into the perfect storm the way Sandy had for Old Orchard, but he fears the possibility.

“I think it’d be a calamity, it’d be a scar on this community if this came down,” he said.

In 1971, it almost did — the Coast Guard announced plans to demolish Greens Ledge Light and replace it with an aluminum tower to save labor and maintenance costs. The resulting outcry saved the structure, and eventually the Coast Guard changed gears. In 2005, the first U.S. lighthouse was sold under an act meant to preserve historic lighthouses. Lighthouses that had fallen into disrepair began being auctioned off to parties who agreed to maintain and care for them while allowing the Coast Guard to keep equipment on premises, essentially privatizing maintenance.

Tim Pettee bought Greens Ledge Light in 2016 and donated it to a nonprofit founded by Brendan McGee, the Greens Ledge Preservation Society. The society and other new owners of lighthouses were left to answer the question of how to pay for often extensive repairs. Goose Rocks Lighthouse in Maine and Borden Flats Lighthouse in Massachusetts solved the problem by renting out the lighthouse for overnight stays, then using the funds for renovations. The Middle Ground Lighthouse was bought by a family of engineers, who fixed up the structure themselves as a family retreat.

The Greens Ledge Preservation Society settled on what Alex Pettee called the “keeper model,” creating a nonprofit to oversee the preservation and calling on the community to invest in its restoration.

“Darn it if people didn’t respond,” Tim Pettee said.

So far over roughly \$1.5 million has been raised, enough to cover the structural stabilization and install a dock. The stabilization will include placing three metal bands around the caisson to help alleviate outward pressure and removing some of the smaller rocks in order to patch wherever possible.

And the society is poised to act quickly. Tim Pettee said they hoped to complete the first phase this year, pending various approvals.

And as an osprey called from its nearby nest and the surf slapped against the rocks below (fun fact: the 30,000 tons of stone shoring up the lighthouse came from the construction of Radio City and were shipped north to the site), the Pettees walked the Maritime Aquarium staff through the lighthouse’s seven floors, sharing the vision for each: a solar-powered kitchen, a small museum, a bedroom sleeping up to six and more.

“Now it gets fun,” Tim Pettee said. “Every time we do this, everyone has different ideas for what to do with the different levels.” The historical restoration of the interior would be the final phase of the society’s preservation plan, following the stabilization.

While no official partnership between the aquarium and lighthouse has been formed — “It’s still very early in the process,” said Maritime Aquarium Spokesperson David Sigworth — Rosenfeld and Mingo instantly saw the possibilities.

“The obvious thing would be a lighthouse cruise,” Rosenfeld, the aquarium’s education manager, said. “It would be really cool to open to the public.”

“We would probably do a Norwalk-Sheffield,” brainstormed Mingo, captain of the Maritime Aquarium’s research vessel, Spirit of the Sound, which also gives lighthouse and history tours. “Go down and see Peck, come around, see Sheffield, and this would be the finale. I’m thinking four hours.”

The lighthouse could also be a post for the aquarium’s water quality monitoring.

The group paused on the deck, which offered a panoramic view of the Sound. Manhattan’s skyline stood out clearly against the horizon, and Tim Pettee recalled the last Fourth of July, when he came out to the lighthouse and could see firework shows along both the Connecticut and New York shorelines. “You could almost hear New York,” he said.

“That’s another thing you could sell tickets to,” Rosenfeld suggested.

“Yeah,” Pettee agreed. He already had a name. “Fireworks at the Light.”

## Lighthouse News

### Canyon Lake, CA



Major changes are happening with the iconic 50-year-old lighthouse on the lake. Crews have been refurbishing the lighthouse by replacing the aged top with a new blue top that matches the main gate entry lighthouses. There are also other aesthetic repairs being made to the structure to restore its prestige.

Fifty years ago, in the 1968 fall issue (Volume 1, Number 2) of the Canyon Lake News, a publication distributed periodically by the Corona Land Company, readers were told "Riverside County's first lighthouse will be making its debut shortly in picturesque Holiday Bay. The lighthouse, created more for atmosphere than a warning and guide for Canyon Lake boat navigators, soars skyward from a man-made island of Santa Ana slate 40 ft. in diameter. Enclosed at the pinnacle of the lighthouse will be a 360-degree circulating beacon that will be visible between the hours of dusk and dawn. The tower is a scale replica of the famed Nantucket Island lighthouse . . ."

Since the beginning of construction, the lighthouse has been a much-photographed landmark. It has been photographed from every angle in many types of weather and water levels.

### Climb Cape Lookout 16<sup>th</sup> May – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018



HARKERS ISLAND – From 16<sup>th</sup> May 16 to 16<sup>th</sup> September, the historic Cape Lookout Lighthouse at Cape Lookout National Seashore will be open for visitors to make the trek to the top.

Visitors can climb the 207 stairs to the top of the lighthouse from 10:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays, with ticket sales from 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The lighthouse will be open Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Tickets, \$8 for adults and \$4 for ages 62 or older and 11 and under, are available on a first-come, first-served basis and can only be purchased in-person at the site the day of the climb. There are no advance ticket sales.

Children must be at least 44 inches tall to climb and 12 and under must be escorted by a person at least 16 years old.

Climbers should bring on their visit sunscreen, bug spray, water and snacks, and plan to pack out any trash as the park is a trash-free zone. It's also recommended to check local weather ahead of time and dress accordingly. Climbing the lighthouse can be strenuous' as the climb is the equivalent to climbing a 10-story building. For more information, check the park website at [www.nps.gov/caloc](http://www.nps.gov/caloc).

## International Lighthouse News



Living in a lighthouse does not sound like many people's property dream.

But the unusual residential concept has become available in Burnham-on-Sea.

The High Lighthouse, in Berrow Road, has been put on the market for £525,000. After it was deactivated in the 1990s, it was converted into a three-bedroom home.

The grade-II listed building has eight floors, with one circular room on each tier.

The landmark was built in 1830 and is 30 metres tall.

It has maintained many original features, including glass Fresnel lenses in the lantern room and a private golden gravel driveway, with the original keeper's cottages on either side.

A polished copper domed roof allows for views of up to 22 miles on a clear day across the Bristol Channel.

In the 1950s, the lighthouse became one of the first in England to be automated.

## International Day of Light 16<sup>th</sup> May



Titanic Foundation is celebrating the Great Light located on the Titanic Walkway in #DestinationTQ.

The Great Light is a 130 year old lighthouse optic, from Mew Island (pictured below), which is one of the largest of its kind. When it was lit in 1928, the light produced was equivalent to 1.2 million candles. The light, from paraffin burners, was magnified by the huge Fresnel lenses, made in 1887.

As part of the Belfast Titanic Maritime Festival: TQ Entertainment, we'll be lighting the Great Light blue, along with Titanic Belfast, from 7pm each evening. So, make sure you head down for plenty of fantastic photo opportunities #BelfastMaritime



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



If you think you know you can e-mail me. (Answer next Chapter Chatter)  
Last edition's answer: Monhegan Island Light

**Happy Birthday**

David Schulman	7/05	Lee Olson	7/12	Tracie Carpenter	7/15
James Cope	7/17	Tom Chisholm	7/17	Odette Kent	7/24
Darlene Chisholm	7/30				
Elinor DeWire	8/03	Bill Newblom	8/04	Nancy Younger	8/09
Marguerite MacDonald	8/11	Geraldine Powell	8/12	Harry Hine	8/13
Bill Younger	8/18	Ron Bandock	8/30		

**Anniversary Wishes**

Bill & Judy Newblom	7/9	Norm & Cynthia Bosse	7/23		
Bob & Ellen Granoth	8/10	Tom & Darlene Chisholm	8/16		
Lee & Judy Hall	8/17	David & Jessica Schulman	8/20	Frank & Carolyn Carbone	8/24

**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](mailto: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 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](mailto:bossnjc@comcast.net) or call 1(860) 688-7347.