

Crooked River Lighthouse

Carrabelle Lighthouse Association



PO Box 373, Carrabelle, FL 32322
850-697-2732
Summer 2014

Visit our Website: crookedriverlighthouse.org

Email: lighthouse2@fairpoint.net

Come visit Crooked River Lighthouse on facebook

President's Message

It has been a very busy year so far! In March the City of Carrabelle finally closed on the purchase of the lot at the corner of Hwy 98 and Cape Street. That lot is now part of our park and the trailhead for the new bike/pedestrian path.



On July 23 at 11 am we will have a grand opening celebration. Come and join the party!

In mid-March we had a great group of students from Ball State University here to visit. The next week some of the folks from Big Bend Scenic Byway came to look at the site for their educational kiosk to be built in the park. Some of our volunteers worked together to make 40 of our paper Crooked River Lighthouse models, which the Scenic Byway folks took to their national tourism conference in Chicago.

The models were also a big hit at the FLA meeting



Some folks even asked me if I would design a similar model of their lighthouse.

On March 28 Kathy Swaggerty and I attended the change of command ceremony at St. Marks lighthouse. I think we can expect some wonderful changes there very soon.

Big changes are also in store for the Cape San Blas lighthouse. They announced at the June FLA meeting that the lighthouse and the buildings will be moved to Port St. Joe in July. What an exciting event that will be!

Our Curator Joan Matey sent another request for the return of our original lens to the Coast Guard, but it was rejected again. We will keep trying.

The City of Carrabelle replaced our lighthouse light changer so our lighthouse is lit again, but we are still having major problems with the mechanism that rotates the lens. It may be that we will have to replace that, too. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.

On May 18 Laurel Newman and I set up a display table at the Gulf Specimen Marine Lab Sharks and Chablis event. It was their 50th anniversary and we had a great time meeting and talking with visitors there.

On May 21 the 6th and 7th grade students from Franklin County School came for their annual field trip. We had a full crew of volunteers and everything went very well.

Our annual Coastal Blessing was on June 1 and we had four local clergy and one volunteer offer up prayers for a calm and safe storm season.

June 6-7 we hosted the spring meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association at the Franklin County Senior Center. We had a good turnout for a very successful meeting. Volunteers from the Senior Center and the City of Carrabelle were very hospitable. Our thanks to them.

Many thanks also go to the group of volunteers from the Carrabelle Lighthouse Association who worked so hard Saturday, June 7 to make our FLA visitors feel welcome.

Joan Matey worked like mad to get our historic wash house ready for our visitors. Everyone was suitably impressed. Joan also livened up the opening of the FLA meeting on Saturday.

Past CLA president Lesley Cox is working on getting us some help with developing our walking trail that will take visitors all through the park. We hope to make it a trail that tells the story of a famous Dog Island shipwreck.

I want to mention that we are very fortunate in our neighbors here. Mark and Karen Rocha (behind us on Lighthouse Road) have been great supporters ever since we did our renovation of the lighthouse. Grayson and Pansy Riner (across highway 98) are members and big supporters. In April we met Margo and Bill Blanchette who purchased a lot to our west. They are new members and energetic supporters of CLA. Our neighbors to the east (the Graf family) offered to let us use their property for overflow parking on June 7. A big THANK YOU to you all.

Please check our web page and “like” us on Facebook to keep informed on our activities and events. Thank you for helping us to keep the light shining.

Delores Hardin, President

June 6-7 Florida Lighthouse Association Meeting in Carrabelle

It was an honor for us to host the June 6-7 meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association here in Carrabelle. Chris and Ron Ecker did a fantastic job on the room, decorations, food and other arrangements. They were a joy to work with and very helpful.

The Friday Board Meeting included the usual approval of reports, but also gave us the opportunity to meet our new Executive Vice President Chris Belcher. We also approved a resolution to allow President Ken Smith to serve for another year while Mr. Belcher trains to take over the position next year.

We got a sneak peek at a potential design for the new lighthouse license plate and offered some suggestions for improvement. The design features a colorful sunset and the silhouette of the top of a lighthouse. Check the FLA Facebook page to see the designs. Only FLA members will be able to vote on them.

Future meetings:

Aug. 15-17 Board Retreat/Training at Ocala, FL

Oct. 10-11 Fall Meeting at St. Augustine, FL

Jan. 2015 Winter Meeting at Cape Florida

The grants awarded:

\$25,000 matching grant to Cape San Blas to help with the cost of moving the lighthouse and buildings.

\$6,000 matching grant to Pensacola to help purchase an interactive lens exhibit (total cost \$18,000).

\$25,000 to Pensacola to help with cost of repairing stairs (repairs cost \$17,000 per stair-total cost \$425,000).

I had the great honor of opening the Saturday membership meeting with the assistance of Joan Matey (dressed as our lighthouse) and Richard McLean (playing the part of our lightkeeper).



After I gave a brief history of our lighthouse and reported on our more recent activities, Joan did a report on the projects she has been working on (after removing the lighthouse costume, of course).



L to R: John Canetta, Ken Smith, Barbara Revell, Delores Hardin, Joan Matey, Mary Katzer Arlene Oehler, Kathy Swaggerty

Craig Kittendorf did an interesting presentation on the condition of the St. Marks lighthouse. While working on repairs, they must take care to preserve the historic elements. Their Facebook page says they will be open on the first Saturday of most months from 1-4pm.

Wanda Mayo did a presentation on the Pensacola lighthouse and the major repairs they are working on. They had a large vertical crack in the lighthouse caused by lightning strikes and are working on repairs and repainting it. They also have some large and ornate metal stairs that are deteriorating.

Ken Smith did a slide show and report on the work going on at Cape San Blas and Port St. Joe. We are all excited at the prospect of watching the move of the entire Cape San Blas light station to a park in Port St. Joe. It is scheduled to take place in mid July.



Here is a shot of some of the attendees at the FLA meeting here.

We had a special drawing just for those who climbed our lighthouse. Ron Ecker won the beautiful Jon Johnson photograph and Lynn Shatzer won a t-shirt.

Many thanks to all our visitors for coming to Carrabelle and to Crooked River Lighthouse. We appreciate your support for all Florida lighthouses. Our sincere thanks also go to the many volunteers who made the weekend such a great success.

Coastal Blessing 2014

On Sunday, June 1, four local clergy participated in the annual service, offering prayers for the safety of the community during the present hurricane season. Pastor Ron Barks of the Assembly of God church, Mother Phoebe of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Pastor Mark Collins, from the Carrabelle Christian Center, and Pastor Byron Sherman, from the First Baptist Church, raised their various voices in praise and prayer for another year of leniency during the stormy time of the year.



Following the clergy, volunteer Dan Cox read a traditional Native American blessing, acknowledging the humility of man before the power of nature. Afterwards, while all were gathered in the meeting room for refreshments, a new neighbor, Jeanne Van Pelt, arrived to tell us how much she enjoyed hearing the prayers and blessings, along with the music. She and her husband have rented the Rocha house directly behind the property, and she had a great view of the proceedings from the upstairs balcony! Another hurricane season has begun; may the calm prevail.

Field Trip Fun

On Wednesday, May 21, the Franklin County School's 6th and 7th graders returned for their annual field trip day at the Crooked River Lighthouse Park.

This year's volunteers enjoyed sharing the history, science, and sheer fun of the lighthouse park with the students. Charles Curran had the "top of the tower" watch, while Jim Smith ably directed traffic below.



Delores Hardin's lighthouse- model-making table in the pavilion was very popular, as always, with the youngsters, whose color schemes for our lighthouse are frequently daringly creative.

In the museum, Joan Matey handled the history lesson, while Lesley Cox directed the students' attention in the science room.

Rodney Reeves demonstrated the principles of



refraction in the meeting room. Jim Newton, as roving photographer, memorialized the day in pictures. while

his wife, Jeannie showed the students how laundry was done in the historic wash house.



Our Visitors

The year started off on a happy note for CLA member Laurel Newman, who was surprised by a visit from her daughter and four grand-children on January 4.

The Thrasher children thoroughly enjoyed the park, conquering the Carabella, defending the fort, and climbing the lighthouse.



Later that same day, we had a visit from Greek globetrotter Dimitri Ploumidis, as he cycled in for a brief lunch stop. On his way to Fort Lauderdale to

seek employment on a ship traveling to Europe, he shared his plan for world travel after the initial bicycling phase. "I want to work on a boat, and then get off somewhere in Europe, where I will buy another bicycle and continue through as far as I can go," he said.

Good luck, we said.

On March 19, a group of students from Ball State University, on a research field trip, came to visit and climb the lighthouse. The young people were full of enthusiasm and curiosity, and temporarily transformed the park into their own remote "campus."



Early in April, descendants of the Sink family, the people who originally purchased the keeper's houses and outbuildings, came to visit. Mark Grossman, the grandson of Russell and Glova Sink, brought his own children and grand-children to the place he remembered visiting often as a child. "Your (replica) house is much brighter than the one I remember," he said. "Very nice."



Near the end of May, one of the last keepers, Lance Samples and his wife Joan, stopped by. "We were here in 1957 and '58," he said. "It sure has changed." They were pleased to see that the wash house had been returned, and shared some of their memories about that. "One year," Joan said, "the yellow flies were almost as bad as they are now, and my father was visiting.

After just two days, he left and bought me a washing machine to put in the kitchen so I wouldn't have to fight the flies. Of course, I still had to go out and hang the washing..."

Lance had his own recollection of the washhouse, "I once caught the assistant keeper making beer in there," he said. "Naturally, I had to throw it out, in case the inspector showed up."



Miss Ruth Varner

On Sunday, June 22, 2014, one of the initial guiding lights of the Carrabelle Lighthouse Association was quietly darkened, when "Miss Ruth" Varner closed her eyes and went to her rest.

In the early days of the CLA, Miss Ruth was an indefatigable membership advocate, boldly ambushing potential members and mercilessly collecting dues; her efforts provided the CLA's first solid membership roster. She was a constant source of cheer and goodwill in every aspect of her blessed, long life. We miss her.



On May 27, 2012, Miss Ruth attended the annual Coastal Blessing ceremony, and was presented with the brick the CLA made in her honor. (L-R) Lesley Cox, Pastor Ron Barks, Ruth Varner, Arlene Oehler, Mary Ann Shields.

Historic Wash House Restoration



This is what we started with...



And this is where we are now...



building restored and accessible



educational displays



and signage in progress



with more to come soon.

Our exterior signage is due to be installed soon and photos will be properly mounted and installed. Other historic items are on the way.

Visitors will soon be able to view a video of the moving of the wash house.

We want to express our sincere thanks for the support of the Florida Lighthouse Association, the City of Carrabelle, Ducky Johnson House Movers, Inc., Chester Reese and his crew from Reese Contracting, LLC, G & H Concrete & Co. LLC, Alternative Electric Co. LLC, Mary Beth Henry-Erdmann, our Curator Joan Matey and our crew of dedicated and hard working volunteers

Carrabelle Lighthouse Association Membership Application

PLEASE PRINT

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

STATE/ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

(You will receive only membership news)

HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

CELL PHONE _____

Please indicate type of membership.

- _____ \$15 / NEW MEMBER (INDIVIDUAL)
_____ \$12 / RENEWAL (INDIVIDUAL)
_____ \$25 / FAMILY _____ \$22 / RENEWAL
_____ \$100 / BUSINESS
_____ \$250 or more - GUARDIAN of the LIGHT

Please make checks payable to:
Carrabelle Lighthouse Association

Mail this form to:

CLA
P.O. BOX 373
Carrabelle, FL 32322

A membership card will be sent to you that will entitle you (as individual card bearer) to free climbs of the lighthouse for one year.

A family membership will also receive one membership card, which will entitle free climbing for one year for family members living in the same household (not to exceed 5).

A business membership will receive one membership card. Anyone with proof of their employment with your business will be entitled to free climbing for the year.

YOU can help create a brick walkway at historic Crooked River Lighthouse Park

Inscribed brick pavers, **8" X 4"**, will form a walkway at the Crooked River Lighthouse Park.

Would you like to remember a family member or a relative? A local business can express involvement in the community by placing a brick paver in its name.

For a **\$40.00** tax deductible contribution, you can have your name or the name of a friend or family member inscribed on an **8" X 4"** brick paver on the Crooked River Lighthouse Park walkway which will connect the Keeper's House Museum to the historic Crooked River Lighthouse.*

Make check payable to the Carrabelle Lighthouse Association.

Please print the inscription clearly with capital letters on the 3 lines provided. There is a 20 space maximum per line. This includes space between each word and name.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone# _____

Number of bricks ordered: _____

Total Amount enclosed: _____

Completed order forms and payments can be sent to Carrabelle Lighthouse Association, P.O. Box 373, Carrabelle, FL 32322

*There is also a 12" X 12" brick paver available for \$80.00. Call (850) 697-2732 or write to the above address to receive information regarding the 12" X 12" paver.