

Crooked River Lighthouse

Carrabelle Lighthouse Association

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Jan - 2015

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President's Report:

Thank you all for your generous support of Crooked River Lighthouse. You make our work possible.

I am very happy to report that our light is fully functional again. We owe a big thank you to our Historian John Canetta for arranging our meeting with Gary Knappenberger of Jacksonville, FL. Gary spent two hot days taking apart our lighthouse lens mechanism, cleaning and oiling the bearings and fixing the motor and chain drive. Our own Don Rider assisted Gary and learned how to do future maintenance. John Canetta helped out on the first day and took some nice pictures so we could all see what was done. We were delighted to have it all done in time for our Lantern Fest celebration.

Speaking of which, Joan Matey put together another great Lantern Fest event on Oct. 25. As usual, she had lots of help from a large and enthusiastic group of local volunteers. Special thanks to Jim and Anita Smith for their work on our "Clothesline Cafe" which featured an array of desserts as well as coffee, tea and hot chocolate. Another new addition was our lighthouse song writing contest. Tom Mason won with his "Shine, Crooked River, Shine" (a very catchy tune) and there were three runner-ups who also wrote great songs. Debi Jordan and Susan David were here to entertain us with their lighthouse songs and more. Thanks, ladies!

Our pre-festival lantern workshops featured some very colorful Buddhist lanterns made with craft sticks and tissue paper as well as some origami star and column lanterns. We will tell you more about the festival in our article later in this newsletter. Kathy Swaggerty has been working on a cool Lantern Fest video for our web page and Facebook, so keep an eye out for it.

We have made a start on our path system. Soon we will add some rustic bird watching benches. If you have suggestions or maybe a native plant you would like to contribute to the park please let us know.

I have it on good authority that we can expect the next Florida Panhandle Lighthouse Challenge to be in April of 2016. Visit all five lighthouses and get a bag full of goodies, plus have a great time and meet some new lighthouse friends. I can't wait!

We were open for New Years and had a great day. It was a busy week and we really enjoyed all of our visitors. I hope that it bodes well for 2015.

Come visit us soon,
Delores Hardin



New Billboard

We finally have a new, eye-catching billboard just west of the Carrabelle bridge! In the same location as the first, it is at once more arresting and pleasing to behold. A real eye-catcher, with its clever design and look-back-again phrasing, we have had many comments about it since its installation, indicating that it is indeed getting attention, and serving its purpose of helping visitors find us.



Farewell, Caulin; Hello again, Gerald!

Sunday, August 8 was a bittersweet day for those of us who keep the gift shop and museum open at the Crooked River Lighthouse; we were losing our intern Caulin Sheridan, who has worked with us for over three years. Caulin performed whatever task we gave him, from sweeping sidewalks and raking the parking lot to transcribing old newspaper articles and stuffing envelopes. Caulin aged out of the library program that had placed him with us, but most importantly, he was off to college! We couldn't be prouder of this accomplishment, and we had a little goodbye party and some small gifts to help him with his new life.

The following week, we were happy to get a "new" intern, Gerald Messer. Gerald had tried out the internship briefly two years previously, but at the time, it did not work out. This time, it has. Gerald reports to work on Saturdays, attacks the chores with willing hands, and provides a cheerful escort to the top of the tower when needed. We are happy to have him with us again.

FL Department of Forestry Visit

On August 26, Forester Daniel Stevens and administrator Marti Miller met with CLA president Delores Hardin and volunteer Lesley Cox to share advice on the maintenance of the natural areas of the lighthouse property, and proposed usage by means of walking paths throughout.

One of the concerns was the presence of invasive plant life, and Forester Stevens pointed out at least two, Japanese Climbing Fern, that we were already aware of, and camphor trees, which we were not. The climbing fern problem had been discovered by Lesley Cox some time ago, and she had been attempting to get rid of it by use of herbicides. Stevens said that herbicides were the only effective

way of killing the fern, adding that care must be used, and that eradication of the fern was the only use we should make of herbicides of any kind. The camphor trees will be cut down later this year.



A Few Words of Thanks

We've had a lot to be thankful for this year, not the least of which are the helpful volunteers and others who have helped us with maintenance and important publicity.

The TDC (Tourist Development Council) included us in their Franklin County insert in the Forgotten Coast Line, and resulted in increased circulation and exposure; thanks to Chuck Spicer for giving us a great deal on our ads!

Chester Reese quickly and cheerfully replaced a rotten board in the ramp, one that was located in a potentially dangerous spot. Most of the ramp is showing signs of deterioration, and will need more attention soon. He also installed the new double-sided wash house sign.

Barbara Revell's generous donation of a dozen or so bales of hay provided the rustic seating that has become an expected feature during Lantern Fest, and afterward the bales were put to good use along our newly-established walking trail through both Cape Street lots. The shredded hay not only marks and "paves" the pathways, it acts as mulch, inhibiting (somewhat) growth of unwanted plants. Just before Lantern Fest in October, volunteer Kathleen Oman gave the lighthouse interior a much-needed, thorough cleaning from the watch room at the top right down to the entry, and everything in between! It was a huge chore, long neglected, but she did it, and we are all grateful that she did.

On Sunday, January 11, a pair of ladies came in and introduced themselves; they were Candace and Mary Louise Clifford, authors of several lighthouse books, a couple of which we sell regularly in the gift shop. Candace presented us with four new copies of

these books that they publish, adding to our available inventory. A generous gift, indeed! So thank you all for your gifts of time, expertise, and everything else! We appreciate all that you do for us.
The CLA Board Members



Cannettas Attend St. Augustine FLA Meeting

The Florida Lighthouse Association regularly travels around the state, holding their quarterly meetings at selected host lighthouses. Their June 2014 meeting was held here, at Crooked River, as reported in our last newsletter. In October, the grand old St. Augustine lighthouse was the destination. Our Historian, John Canetta and wife Patsy attended that meeting, representing the Crooked River Lighthouse and the CLA. After the business was attended to, the Cannettas enjoyed visiting the lighthouse and the many friends who were also attending. On their way home, John stopped at the gift shop and picked up our order of Florida Lighthouse T shirts, saving us the cost of shipping. Thanks John and Patsy!

Lens Mechanism Repair Work Don Rider

In late October, John Canetta and Don Rider accompanied Gary Knappenberger to the top of the tower to repair the light mechanism. It had been in a stationary position for several months, beaming directly forward, without rotation. At this time, it was



necessary to disassemble the mechanism, whereupon Gary cleaned and lubricated the bearings, replaced the drive chain and repaired the motor mount. Don observed carefully in order to learn the exact process in order to perform continuing maintenance on this important part of our lighthouse. They also noticed some slight crazing on the lens which Gary believes can be eliminated with some polishing compound. Now, with careful maintenance courtesy of Don Rider, the light should continue to shine, rotating, for many years to come. The best part of this story is that the repairs were accomplished in time for Lantern Fest!



Important Visitor Climbs the Crooked River Lighthouse John Canetta

Sunday January 11, 2015 was my day to greet climbers at the top of the lighthouse. Half way through my 1 to 4 pm shift I came down to get a jacket I had left in my car and decided to step into the Keeper's House to warm up for a few minutes. I noticed a woman introducing herself to Laurel and giving her some books. I overheard her mention the name Candace and I thought, "Could that be Candace Clifford?" (a woman who was well known as an expert on lighthouse research at the National Archives). I introduced myself to her and sure enough, it was the Candace Clifford, who soon after the CLA was formed I had exchanged several emails with. (She and her mother, Mary Louise Clifford, were spending some vacation time out on St. George Island.) I had been given contact information for Candace by the then FLA president Tom Taylor who told me about an excellent book on lighthouse preservation and that she might be able to provide a copy to the CLA. I quickly contacted her and she graciously sent us her last printed copy. (The Lighthouse Preservation Handbook is now available online.)

Candace and her mother have co-authored several books on lighthouse history and presently her company, Cypress Communications, provides research services in the National Archives. The Cypress Communication website (www.lighthousehistory.info) provides a wealth of information and finding aids for lighthouse research and a link to a blog Candace maintains. She climbed the lighthouse and at the top I enjoyed talking with her for a few minutes. Hopefully we will be able to use her services to obtain some valuable historical information about “our” Crooked River Lighthouse.



One fact that I have wondered about for the past 15 years that I have been the CLA’s historian is who actually manufactured the Crooked River Lighthouse; Candace assured me that the answer is in the National Archives and I can’t wait for her to answer the question for us.

Lantern Making Workshops

In October, our two annual lantern making workshops seemed to be gaining popularity. This year, we made folded origami-style paper “star” tea light holders, multifold globes and “tubes”, and the much-more-popular craft stick-and-tissue paper creations based upon an Indian festival lantern. The participants this year had a lot of fun with the pre-made frameworks we provided, choosing their



colors and deciding “to fringe or not to fringe.” Next October, our theme will be Halloween; the possibilities are...frightening.

Thinking Ahead

John Canetta

It seems hard for me to believe that it has already been 7 years since the Crooked River Lighthouse has been restored. This was accomplished by the City of Carrabelle applying for and being awarded a historic preservation grant from the Florida Department of State. As you may recall work was started just after Labor Day 2007 and completed three months later. We were all very impressed with the major improvements. From photos I recently looked at, one could see that the newly painted iron surface of the lighthouse actually shined. For years we were all used to seeing the lighthouse with almost no paint remaining on the surface and many spots of rust. It was no wonder, as it was back in 1986 that the Coast Guard had last painted it. From information we received from them, they thinking about the need to repaint it in 1996, but did nothing as a decision was made to decommission it in 1995.

Last fall President Delores Hardin asked me if I could check around to see if anyone could give us a ball park estimate of what it might cost to have the lighthouse repainted when the time came. I contacted the architect, Ken Smith in Jacksonville who supervised the restoration project of the lighthouse. Ken remembered that a paint made by Wesser was used of our lighthouse and suggested that I contract the general contractor for the restoration who also sandblasted the lighthouse and painted it. I did so and talked with Joseph Worth IV, vice president of Worth Contracting in Jacksonville. Mr. Worth reviewed the work that his company had done and provided an estimate. He also told me that lighthouses generally need to be repainted every 10-15 years, depending on their condition at the time of an inspection. In addition he said there is no now available a type of paint that is supposed to last for 20 years; this paint was not available in 2007. Since our lighthouse hadn’t been painted in 21 years they had to do sandblasting in their prep work which increased the cost considerably. His estimate was \$150,000 and would include pressure washing, treating rust corrosion areas with power tools, spot coating corrosion areas, an intermediate coat, and a full finish coat.

We kicked off our "Paint the Tower" fundraising campaign with our "Clothes Line Cafe" at Lantern Fest and are working on other fundraising ideas.

Lantern Fest 2014



Our favorite candle dippers, Sid McOmie and Kathleen Oman was hard at work demonstrating how to dip your candles and keep them straight. We had some of the lovely beeswax candles for sale, too. They burn clean and don't drip. The "Clothesline Café", new this year, was a big hit. Staffed by Jim and Anita Smith, it practically sold out of the generous supply of pastries and confections supplied by our volunteer bakers!



Sally Crown delivered a big batch of her famously fabulous cupcakes for the Clothesline Cafe.



Luminous sea creatures lit up the park, along with dozens of colorful lanterns from past Lantern Fests and lantern making workshops.

The carnival games on the porch were also a big success, prompting intern Gerald Messer, who helped Delores herd the kids, to consider a career in an amusement arcade!

The highlight of this year's celebration was certainly the musical entertainment, featuring local musicians and their original songs for the song-writing contest. The 4 top ranked contestants from the Forgotten Coast Maritime Song Contest were featured with live performances from local performers Debi Jordan and Susan David (accompanied by Mershell Sherman). Recordings of two other great song



entries were heard; a beautiful ballad from Matt Gardi of the Bowery Tavern in Apalachicola and the winning tune from Tom Mason of Nashville, who has been performing a lot in the area with his pirate band, the Blue Buccaneers. Tom Mason could not join us to sing his song, but we played it and everyone sang along with the catchy tune - Shine, Crooked River Lighthouse, Shine. You will soon be able to hear it as you watch a video presentation of Lantern Fest on our web page and Facebook.



Joan Matey was the ghostly glowing Lantern Lady.

A brief play told the story of man's quest for light.



The fire seekers.



The dancers from Tallahassee Community College (above) amazed us all as usual - this year allowing time for audience members to come up and experience dancing in the dark with their totally cool glow in the dark props.



The evening ended with a laser light show that lit up the tower with bursts of color.



For their finale, they donned black suits with the glowing outline of "stick figure" people who appeared to be floating and dancing





MEMBERSHIP AND BRICK NEWS

REMINDER:

It is now the first of the 2015 year. This means that 2015 dues are now due. If you are not sure whether you have paid those dues yet, please contact me and I will let you know.

So far 2015 looks to be a great year for the Crooked River Lighthouse. We already have four new members and 10 renewals. This does not include the lifetime memberships that we approved last year. Memberships or renewals also make wonderful gifts!

Our brick memorial continues to grow. The brick campaign to honor Veterans for Veteran's Day was a success and such a wonderful tribute to several military members both past as well as those currently serving.

You will find a form on the back of this to include with your new or renewal membership. There is also a section for ordering a brick, if you choose to do so. We also hope that you will seriously consider volunteering, if only for a couple of hours a month. We desperately need volunteers!!

Please continue to support our wonderful Crooked River Lighthouse!!!!

We appreciate all of you.

Sharon Rider
VP Membership and Bricks

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