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# LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

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## Members' Donations to Help Bodie Island Lighthouse Society Will Donate \$10,000 to Bodie

### History of Bodie Island Light The Light That You Don't Want to Miss

By Cheryl Shelton-Roberts

*Entering the Cape Hatteras Seashore from Highway 12 near Nags Head, one of our first impressions of this park is catching sight of a tall, slender structure on the sound side of the island at the park's north end. This classic coastal lighthouse was part of the valued network of navigational aids that guided mariners along an otherwise featureless and tricky coastline of North Carolina. The Bodie Island Light Station represents the overall story of the U.S. Lighthouse Service and the struggle to illuminate America's shores.*

*If a captain missed this light on his way southward, he was in for a huge disappointment because forty miles to the south lingered Diamond Shoals, the cradle of the Graveyard of the Atlantic. A south flowing current bugs the coastline at Bodie Island; therefore, ships played a risky game of running close to shore. Bodie Island Light warned these ships on their way to Hatteras, "Swing east!" If the light were missed or the warning ignored, the ship became just another wreck statistic.*

*Story text continued on page 2*

Tourists will once again be able to enter the Bodie Island Lighthouse and view the stairs and tower from the inside -- if all goes well this spring and funding can be obtained.

The National Park Service (NPS), Cape Hatteras National Seashore, is putting together approximately \$100,000 to make repairs to the cast iron belt course of the Bodie Island Lighthouse. The Park has more than half the amount secured and is searching for other funds. The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society will contribute \$10,000 to the project. The OBLHS board of directors approved of the gift from the Bodie Island Fund.

Repairing this ironwork on the outside of the tower just below the lantern room will allow the base of the lighthouse to reopen for visitors this summer. Pieces of the old iron have been falling off the tower, forcing its closing.

The iron belt course, essentially a "collar" that sits on the brick under the lantern room, is in bad shape. Two adjacent pieces of the belt course fell off the BILH on Monday, August 9, 2004. From a Park report: "The pieces of cast iron belt course and brick and mortar packed behind the belt course fell on the east (ocean) side of the tower with little or no damage to the tower, although some pieces apparently struck the granite base of the tower before landing on the ground within the wooden safety fence around the tower."

Missing pieces of exterior lighthouse parts means intrusion of salt water hitchhiking on wind-driven rain. Results? More deterioration as well as an increasing safety hazard for anything within the perimeter of the tower's base.

*Story text continued on page 5*

# The Light That You Don't Want to Miss

(Continued from Page 1)

Soon after turning into the Cape Hatteras National Seashore's north entrance on NC Highway 12 in Dare County, our eyes are treated to unmatched beauty as the road ribbons through long stretches of uncluttered beaches, estuarine marshland, and glistening waters of Croatan and Pamlico Sounds. To the west, a tall tower rises starkly from the sand. The Bodie Island Lighthouse, once spelled "Body's Island" in old U.S. Lighthouse Service records, perhaps as namesake for the original landowner, is one of three lighthouses that have stood guard over this part of the North Carolina coast. On close inspection, and like a fine painting, its details are fascinating and reveal a larger story in this work of art.

## Erosion and poor planning destroyed the first light

Congress asked for a light to be built on or near Bodie Island as early as 1838. Its importance lay in the fact that southbound ships needed a point of reference to indicate when to leave the shore-hugging cold current and swing eastward to avoid Diamond Shoals 40 miles to the south, one of the most dangerous areas to gain clear passage on the East Coast. Northbound ships for Norfolk and Baltimore needed a light after Cape Hatteras to keep a bearing well off the coast to take advantage of the north flowing Gulf Stream.

Collector of Customs, Thomas H. Blount, was assigned the task to purchase land for the site; however, it proved more easily said than done to find land with a clear deed. By 1843 worries aplenty existed due to the number of ships and amount of cargo being lost in the vicinity of Bodie Island.

Delayed by deed problems and procuring materials to be delivered to the site, nearly ten years passed before the first light at Bodie Island was completed in September 1847. Builder Francis A. Gibbons erected the 57-foot tower that housed 14 Argand lamps which were fueled by whale oil and 21-inch silver reflectors. However, trouble lay ahead.

During a three-decade stretch that lasted until 1852, all business of the Lighthouse Service, then known as the U.S. Lighthouse Establishment, remained under the auspices of the Fifth Auditor of the U.S. Treasury, Stephen Pleasonton. Pleasonton who made his historic distinction when he rescued the Declaration of Independence and other valuable documents from burning during an 1812 British raid on Washington, D.C. But, he was a frugal bureaucrat and he frequently sacrificed quality and beauty in lighthouse construction in the name of economy. For instance, he would not pay for a proper foundation for the first Bodie Island Light. Without solid support on sand, the first tower leaned until the revolving chandelier of lamps was thrown out of sync and was rendered useless; moreover, erosion took what tentative footing the tower managed.

## A new era and a second Bodie Island Lighthouse

In response to mariners' complaints that a light was critical at Bodie Island, the newly-organized U.S. Light-House Board (1852) kept its promise to build only the finest structures in its quest to make the U.S. Lighthouse Service the best in the world. In 1859, a 90-foot-white tower was completed from the finest materials available and housed a third order Fresnel lens. Unfortunately, tragedy occurred shortly after the start of hostilities between the North and the South and this second lighthouse was struck down before its time like a young Civil War soldier. After Union troops had landed and taken control of the Outer Banks in 1861, retreating Confederates, who had earlier removed the prized Fresnel lens, then destroyed the lighthouse, thus depriving the Union of a light to aid its naval patrols or a lookout tower from which to watch military action on Roanoke Island. Again, this stretch of perilous coast became embraced by darkness each night. Additionally, erosion claimed the site—just as it did the first one—and both are underwater at what is now the east entrance to Oregon Inlet.

### NOTICE TO MARINERS.

(No. 23.)

### LIGHT-HOUSE

ON

### BODY'S ISLAND,

COAST OF NORTH CAROLINA.

### REVOLVING LIGHT.

Information has been received at this office from Capt. L. Sitgreaves, Corps of Topographical Engineers, Engineer Fifth L. H. District, that the Light-house at Body's Island, North Carolina, has been rebuilt.

The tower is a frustum of a cone. It is built of brick, is colored white, and the height from its base to the focal plane is 86 feet. The height of the focal plane above the level of the sea is 90 feet.

The illuminating apparatus is a revolving lens of the third order of the system of Fresnel, showing a bright flash every 1½ minutes, which should be visible in ordinary states of the atmosphere from a distance of 15 nautical miles.

The position of the light-house is as follows:

Latitude . . . . . 35° 47' 21" North.

Longitude . . . . . 73° 31' 20" West of Greenwich.

The new light will be exhibited for the first time at sun-down on Friday, the first day of July next, and will be kept burning during that and every night thereafter.

By order:

W. B. FRANKLIN,

Secretary.

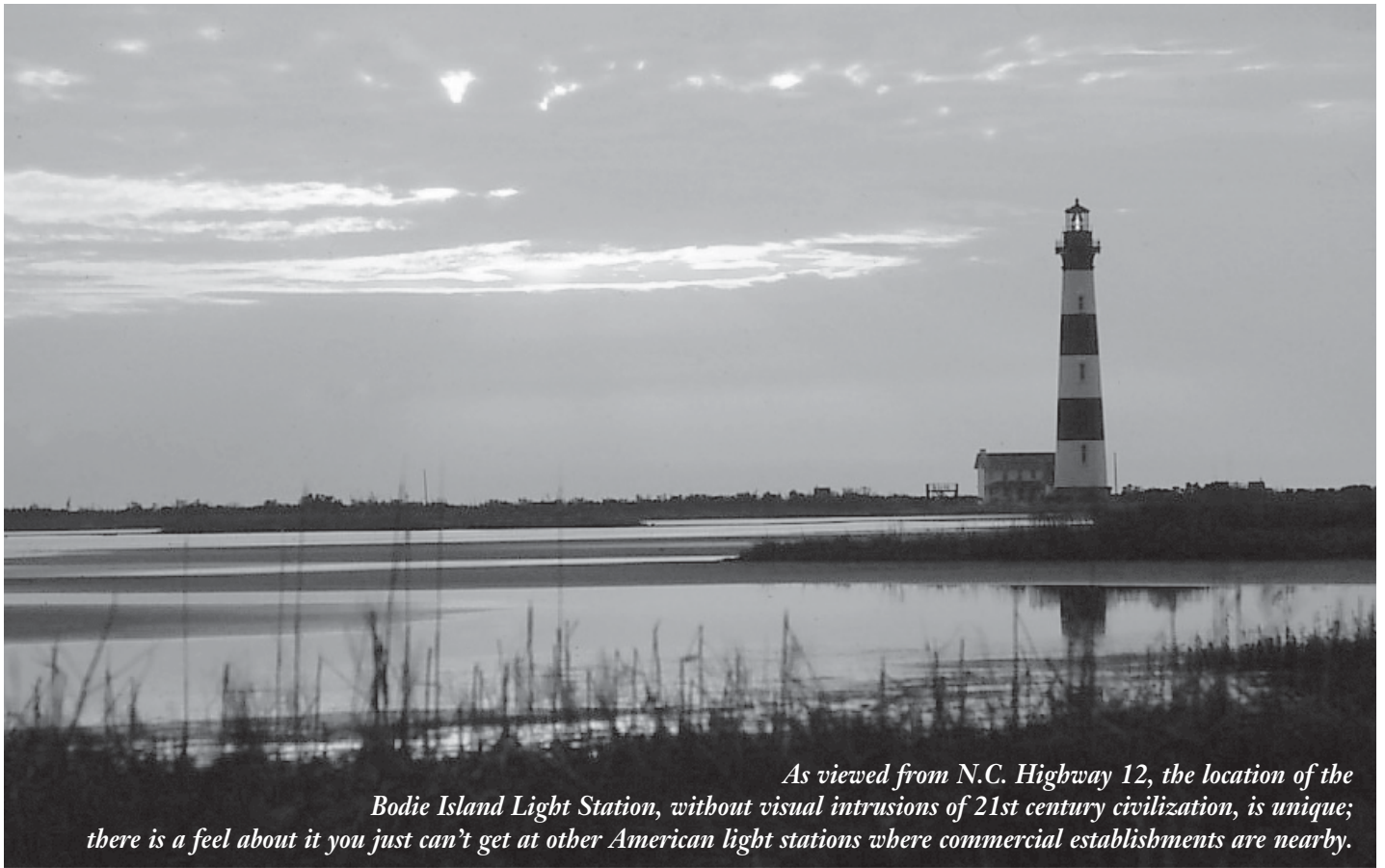
NAVY DEPARTMENT,

Office Light-house Board,

Washington, D. C., May 12, 1859.

*The 1859 Light-House Board Notice to Mariners announced a new light at Bodie Island, the second lighthouse to mark this area.*





*As viewed from N.C. Highway 12, the location of the Bodie Island Light Station, without visual intrusions of 21st century civilization, is unique; there is a feel about it you just can't get at other American light stations where commercial establishments are nearby.*

## Three times a charm

The golden era of lighthouse construction had begun before the war during the 1850s introducing double-wall construction that allowed a lofty height of at least 150 feet and holding a first order Fresnel lens; indeed, these tall coastal lights were called “lighthouses of the first order.” These beautiful lenses from Paris, France, were prized devices that intensified and focused a light 20 and more nautical miles seaward. The Civil War had halted new lighthouse construction with incomplete plans left on architects’ drawing boards April 1861. Following the war, Congress helped the healing process of a battle-worn country by getting back to the business of repairing and rebuilding lighthouses to boost the nation’s unsteady maritime economy.

The third Bodie Island Lighthouse, safely located midway between ocean and sound, utilized a timber and granite foundation, dressed granite accents, marble floors, brick walls, and ornate ironwork. It remains one of the few lights in America with its original first order Fresnel lens. Its lambent, amber light greets us when crossing the Bonner Bridge from Hatteras Island and its soaring beauty continues to charm us.

## The new light

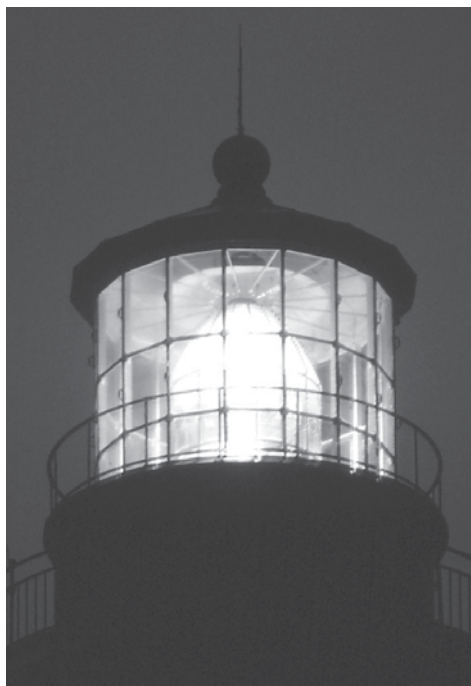
Expert workmanship is built deeply within this enduring lighthouse and is the reason we can still admire it in the twenty-first century. Some of the key people involved in its design and

construction were: Major George Elliot, Engineering Secretary and architect; Capt. Peter C. Hains, Fifth District Lighthouse Engineer and director during erection; and Dexter Stetson, superintendent of construction who had recently finished the successful building of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

As we look at the lighthouse today, its quiet beauty belies the tremendous efforts that were expended in its creation. Just getting the materials to the remote site was a struggle. Stetson, had broken down the workhouses at Cape Hatteras in June 1871 and moved these and left over brick to an area that became known as “Stetson’s Channel” on the sound side of the island near the lighthouse. A small railway, called a “tram,” was built, horses pulled the cars, and laborers finished the job by hauling materials to the building site. A good portion of the deliveries were made by the U.S. Lighthouse Service tender *Tulip*. The ocean route was too rough and caused a high risk of losing precious materials and time. Stetson was delayed for three months because materials didn’t arrive on time and there was a constant threat of mosquito-borne illnesses that dogged the building crew.

The light was finally exhibited October 1, 1872. The tower was painted with black and white bands in 1873 to serve as a clear daymark for mariners and North Carolina had added another pearl to its string of classic lighthouses.

*(Story text continued on page 4)*



*The first order Fresnel lens in the Bodie Island Lighthouse is one of the few in use on America's East Coast today. Nearly all other lenses have been removed and displayed elsewhere or stored out of public view*

(Continued from Page 3)

For unknown reasons other than a tight economy in 1872, only one house was built for three keepers and an assistant and their families. The house was designed with two sides that mirror one another and, before the National Park Service took over the property, each half had its own entrance and stairway to the second floor. Downstairs, each side housed a kitchen, office/sitting area, and a living room. Upstairs were two bedrooms and a small area for a bathroom, though it was never used for such. Each keeper's bedroom faced the lighthouse so he could keep an eye on the light at all times.

## Bodie Island needs our help

The enormous presence of these gentle giants still captivates us. But, after more than 130 years of service, the Bodie Island Lighthouse needs restoration. While global satellite positioning has taken over their duties, local, state, and federal entities as well as nonprofit groups have assumed the care of our lighthouses. Restoration expenses are tremendous, the work prodigious, and the rewards tremendous. With funds from HGTV and its Save America's Treasures matched by the state of North Carolina, all NPS reports are complete and restoration will begin after funding is provided by Congress in FY '08,

At Bodie Island Light Station, we can savor an extra surprise from those precious minutes experienced briefly at sunrise and sunset. At the opening and closing of a day, there is fire in the trees, sky, and water. The lighthouse is quiet as the day begins, and then comes back to life as the first order Fresnel lens pierces the darkness with its warm, amber light. It's the light you do not want to miss. Keeping the lighthouse preserved and strong, it's the light that none of us *have* to miss. ✎

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# Timeline Bodie I

**1838** Congress asked for a light to be built on or near Bodie Island or Pea Island (then spelled Body or Body's) \$5,000 appropriated; difficulty getting a clear deed to land for lighthouse site

**1847-48** 1st Bodie Island Lighthouse, 50-foot-tall, completed after additional \$12,000 appropriation; 14 Argand lamps were installed; date light was first displayed is not clear, sometime between January 22, 1848 and March 13, 1848

**1848-58** Erosion and the lack of a foundation caused the first light to tilt and rendered the light useless and beyond repair; \$25,000 appropriated for new tower

**1859** 2nd Bodie Island Lighthouse, a 90-foot-tall tower, was completed May 14 from the finest materials available to the U.S. Light-House Board; housed a third order Fresnel lens; exhibited its light July 1

**1861** Retreating Confederates, who had earlier removed the prized Fresnel lens, destroyed the second tower

**1871** (June 13) - 15 acres were purchased from John B. Etheridge and wife for \$150 to rebuild the destroyed Bodie Island Lighthouse

**1872** (October 1) - 3rd lighthouse's beacon exhibited by a first order Fresnel lens; a duplex keepers' house was completed; five ships wrecked while it was built; 3 appropriations totaling \$140,000 for construction, five times the amount originally expected



**Looking up from the bottom of the 1872 Bodie Island Lighthouse, the stairs appear to spiral into infinity.**



# Island Lighthouses

**1874** 2nd assistant keeper's job eliminated, then held by one of the keeper's wives

**1877** Lightning struck the new tower and caused minor vertical cracks; at this time, the spiral stairs served as the lightning conductor

**1884** After a keeper was shocked on stairs when lightning struck, Light-House Board installed a cable outside tower connected to a grounded cast iron plate

**1895** For safety, oil removed from the tower and stored in a sheet metal building nearby

**1898** Telephone installed to connect light stations to Coast Guard stations as part of a national defense program

**1912** An incandescent oil vapor lamp was introduced increasing the candlepower over five times in brightness

**1932** A generator charged banks of batteries to power the flash controller that turned an electric light bulb off and on; the fixed (steady) white light changed to its present-day flash characteristic: 2.5 seconds on, 2.5 seconds off, 2.5 seconds on followed by 22.5 seconds eclipse (dark) for two cycles each minute

**1939** Lighthouse transferred from the U.S. Lighthouse Service to U.S. Coast Guard

**1940** Lighthouse became officially unmanned

**1953** Bodie Island Light Station acquired by newly-formed Cape Hatteras National Seashore

**2000** (July 13) - Lighthouse transferred from U.S. Coast Guard to National Park Service

**2003** (July) - Station listed on the National Register of Historic Places

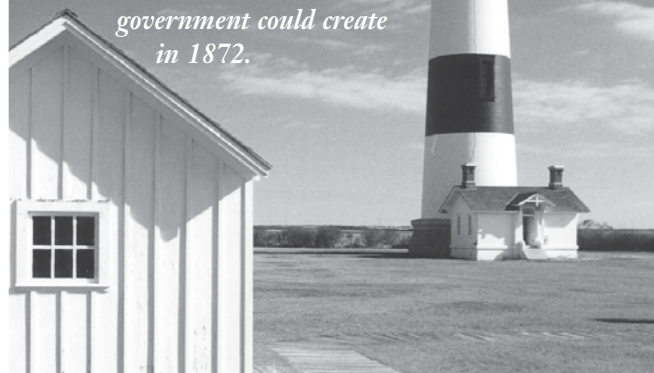
**2004** (April 30) All structural reports complete for restoration with matching funds from state of NC and HGTV and Save America's Treasures; event held at light station

**2005** (April 25) - USCG transferred the Fresnel lens and the operation of the lamp as an active aid to navigation to the NPS

**2006** All studies and planning needed for restoration planning now completed. The restoration project is in line for FY 2008 construction funds; Outer Banks Lighthouse Society commits \$10,000 from its special Bodie Island Fund to restoration that will enable the lower portion of the tower to re-open to the public in summer.

*Bodie Island is a remarkable piece of maritime history. Its marble floors, granite foundation and entryway steps, decorative iron spiral stairs and lantern room, including the hand-fitted iron plates and railings of the gallery deck are representative of the best architecture the U.S.*

*government could create in 1872.*



## \$10,000 to Bodie Island Lighthouse

*(continued from page 1)*

A safety fence was installed around the base of the tower about 1997 following an assessment made by the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society.

The Park reported, "There are 16 cast iron pieces that surround the tower and comprise the belt course. A condition assessment was made of the lighthouse in 2002 with funding from the Save America's Treasure grant that was matched by the State of North Carolina. The condition assessment identified two pieces of belt course as being in poor condition and those are the same two sections that pieces of iron fell from. Of the remaining 14 sections, 4 were identified as being in fair condition and ten were in good condition."

Emergency repairs were made by literally tying the lantern room down with heavy cables. If the belt course can be stabilized, the hazard of more falling parts will be ended and the lower portion of the lighthouse can be opened to summer 2006 visitors.

The Park expects to receive funding to begin actual restoration in fiscal year 2008. Meanwhile, the NPS will be preparing contract specifications for the restoration based on information and documentation gathered during various projects funded by the Save America's Treasures grant. The Park took ownership of the lighthouse from the USCG in 2000 and of the first order lens in 2005. The United States Coast Guard has traditionally maintained the light as a federal aid to navigation but that is now being taken over by the Park. ✎

OBLHS continues to add to its Bodie Island Fund. Your donations are welcome! OBLHS, P.O. Box 1005, Morehead City, NC 28557.

## *In Federal Court*

# Currituck Beach Lighthouse Stays in the Hands of Outer Banks Conservationists but County Plans to Add U.S. Government to Its Challenge

*During 2005, Currituck County filed suit in county court against the Outer Banks Conservationists (OBC), the non profit organization that holds the deed to the Currituck Beach Lighthouse. The county aims to take the lighthouse away from OBC. The county also filed suit against the state of North Carolina in a demand that local ordinances concerning adequate parking and rest rooms and a permit to run a gift shop were met. But there is inadequate space at the site to add parking spaces and new rest rooms, effectively preventing the group from abiding by the ordinances. The suit went to federal court. The judge's ruling follows concerning these restrictive county ordinances.*

In a decision handed down January 10, 2006, by U.S. District Judge Terrence W. Boyle, Currituck County will be in a weak position to enforce local ordinances including adequate parking spaces and bathroom facilities in order to force the **Outer Banks Conservationists (OBC)**, owners of the **Currituck Beach Lighthouse (CBLH)**, to give up the historic site to the county.

Judge Boyle ruled that the federal government retains a strong interest in the historic Currituck Beach Lighthouse as provided in a reversionary clause in the **National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act (NHLPA)** of 2000. The act was created to enable the transfer of 300 American lighthouses to qualifying entities. OBC was awarded the deed to the CBLH after two decades of preservation work.

Boyle said of the NHLPA, "The program serves dual goals: to reserve historic light stations for educational, cultural, and historic purposes; and, to maintain the light stations as homes for Federal aids to navigation."

Should OBC not be able to meet the requirements of the NHLPA, the property would revert to the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources or the federal government. Legislative precedence has always given the federal government the right to take land for its own for infrastructural improvement, lighthouses included. This reversion clause gives the federal government significant interest in the historic site and therefore overrules local and state law that would normally prevail.

One of the most important statements the judge made in his ruling concerned the county's complaints about OBC's inability to meet local ordinances. There simply is not enough room that conveyed with the lighthouse to meet today's county demands. Boyle ruled that if the county enforces parking and other ordinances, OBC wouldn't be able to keep the historic site open for education and recreation, and that would foil the federal government's intentions when it turned the lighthouse over OBC in 2003 in the first place. The defense of its deed has cost OBC more than \$350,000. Imagine how far this would have gone for lighthouse maintenance.

## As a final update late February 2006

Currituck County Manager Dan Scanlon said in a statement, just days after Judge Boyle's ruling recently, that the county would make the U.S. government a party to its challenge.

The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society continues to support the Outer Banks Conservationists in their rightfully won deed to the lighthouse that they have not only saved but also have meticulously preserved and opened to the public. Whereas OBC is deserving of national recognition for their outstanding restoration efforts over the past two decades, they are only receiving local harassment.



*Above is the Currituck Beach Light Station's Double Keepers' Quarters. At left, the house appears as it did in the mid 1980s before restoration. At right, the house appears as it does today after complete restoration by the Outer Banks Conservationists.*

**Meanwhile...work at the CBLH continues:** Meghan Agresto, who is keeper at the Currituck Beach Lighthouse along with husband Luis for the Outer Banks Conservationists, wrote, "We have been very busy here at the Currituck Beach Lighthouse. International Chimney arrived mid-January and has been replacing the glass in the lens room and scraped and repainted the ceiling in there. We had some cracked lantern room glass and have almost finished replacing it with laminated glass, for the safety of the lens and everyone below. The rotation mechanism had been painted grey at some point in its history. From tests, we learned that it had been green before and repainted it the correct color.

"Luis has been busy scraping and sanding the 214 stairs and the 9 landings. He will begin priming soon and then repaint the whole stairwell before we open on April 10th. The color will remain the same - the paint was provided by International Chimney.

"Because much of the land we have is leased from the State, we are eligible to have state prisoners help us with the grounds while the compound is closed to the public. They arrived recently and have been helping with the enormous job of mulching and helping us clear out a drain.

"Also in January we began leaving the compound open to visitors who want to be able to get close to the lighthouse and take pictures. This is a change from previous years when the compound remained closed during the off-season.

"We invite everyone to take a look at our website at [www.currituckbeachlight.com](http://www.currituckbeachlight.com), contact us by email, or call us at 252-453-8152."

Meghan Agresto

*Thanks to OBLHS president, Bett Padgett for supplying this information from Keepers Meghan and Luis Agresto*

## *Dimming the Light*

### Lighthouse Historian Dies

F. Ross Holland, one of America's foremost lighthouse historians, preservationists, and authors, passed away at age 78 at his home in Mason, New Hampshire, on September 16, 2005. He was one of the first people to thoroughly research, document, and write about America's lighthouse history, which was documented in his books including *America's Lighthouses*, *An Illustrated History* and *Great American Lighthouses*. He was a veteran of World War II and the Korean War and held numerous positions with the Department of Interior and National Park Service. In the late 1980s, he testified before a Congressional subcommittee that America's lighthouses needed help and that they must be preserved and protected. In the 1980s he joined the Statute of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation as the director of restoration and preservation. His book, *Idealists, Scoundrels and the Lady*, chronicled the campaign to save the Statute of Liberty.



# About OBLHS

## It's About Your Organization

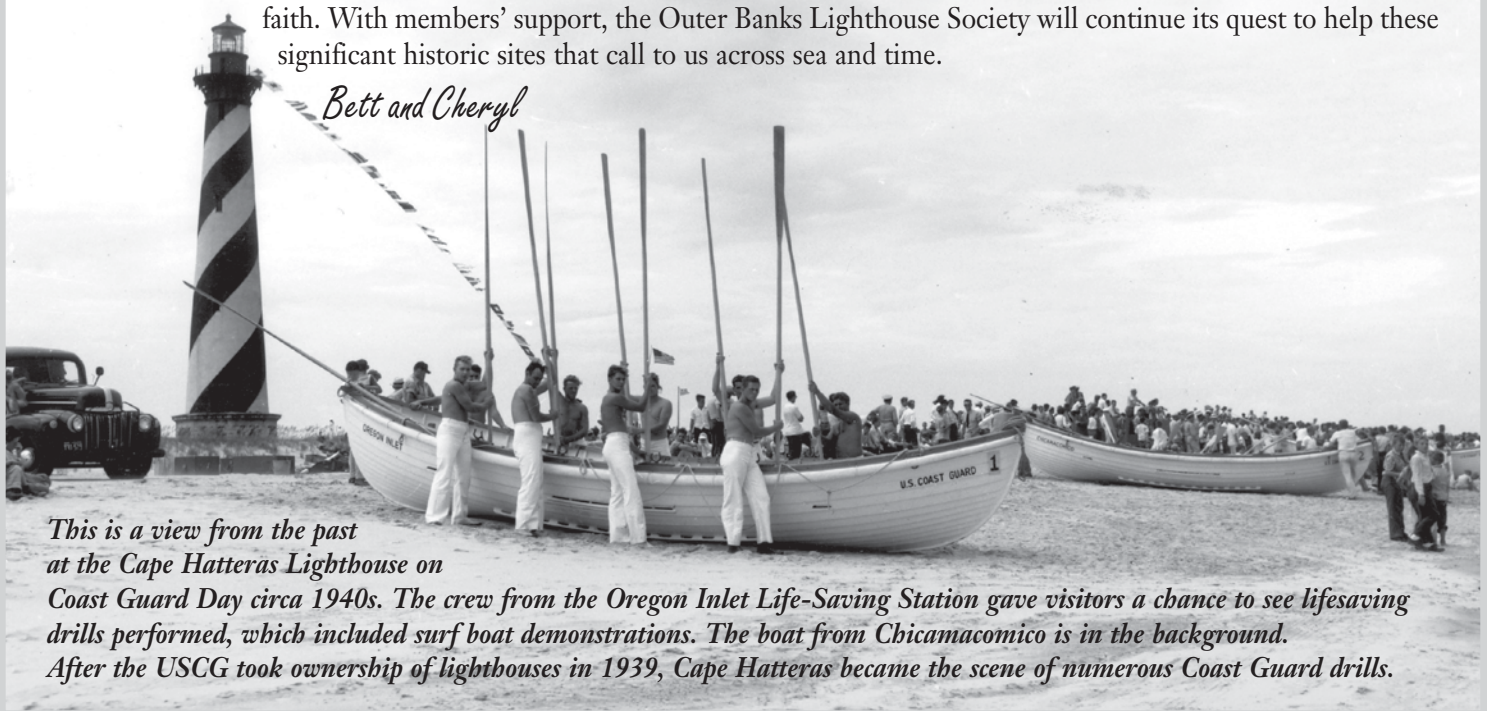
People of all ages are drawn to lighthouses for various reasons. Some because of their historical significance, some because of their majestic mystique, some for the stories within the walls of the towers, and some are seeking spiritual identity. For whatever reason, people from all over the world visit the Outer Banks of North Carolina to see the lighthouses. We all have a common interest. The members of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society share this interest and a common goal in keeping these lights shining. Our members live all over the United States and visit as often as they can.

The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society actively supports all North Carolina Lighthouses. Well-known in the lighthouse community, we are often called upon to help in various ways such as serving as consultants for educational programs including PBS, The History Channel, The Discovery Channel, and other media. The society receives dozens of monthly requests for information concerning the NC lighthouses. All projects are carried out due to the dedication of our volunteers. Our long list of achievements continues to grow.

From its inception, the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society has been a “different” organization. We do not own a lighthouse, we do not have a permanent office at a light station, we do not plaster our names all over media for our accomplishments. Our goals have always been ones of educational value. We believe that with awareness comes caring. Volunteers and members’ support have made us what we are.

We have published a book on keepers’ families, hosted the largest keepers’ descendants gathering in America, produced brochures, published an award-winning historically based newsletter for over 11 years, answered hundreds of requests from students and teachers, and held an annual event to gather our members at a North Carolina lighthouse. We’ve been in the trenches when heated debates raged for years about relocating the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. We manned our personal phones and computers to voice strong support for the Outer Banks Conservationists in their struggle to win ownership of the Currituck Beach Lighthouse. We penned dozens of letters and attended countless meetings to keep the Bodie Island first order Fresnel lens in the tower instead of being removed and lost forever. We remind the National Park Service of its commitments to take care of the lighthouses under its stewardship. These projects are what we are about.

It has been a bumpy journey at times, yes, but it also has been a great one built on camaraderie. Our group is like a family that works together in a common cause to help our lighthouses remain bright. It has taken patience, persistence, and faith. With members’ support, the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society will continue its quest to help these significant historic sites that call to us across sea and time.



*This is a view from the past at the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse on Coast Guard Day circa 1940s. The crew from the Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station gave visitors a chance to see lifesaving drills performed, which included surf boat demonstrations. The boat from Chicamacomico is in the background. After the USCG took ownership of lighthouses in 1939, Cape Hatteras became the scene of numerous Coast Guard drills.*





# LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

*Updates on the area lighthouse events & schedules*



Spring 2006 Vol. XII no. 1

<http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org>: News, articles, logo items

**VISIT US!** Join or give gift memberships/donations online at our .org site. Contact [Info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:Info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org). We continue presence on the NCOB webproject at <http://www.outer-banks.com/lighthouse-society> Contact [society@outer-banks.com](mailto:society@outer-banks.com).

**Currituck Beach Lighthouse** re-opens April 10 for the 2006 season and remains open through the weekend after Thanksgiving until November 26. The light station's hours of operation are 10:00 am to 6:00 pm daily. The cost to climb is \$6 for anyone 8 years or older, children 7 years of age and under are admitted free. Reduced rates are available to school groups, tour companies, and non-profit groups who make advanced reservations. Email [info@currituckbeachligh.com](mailto:info@currituckbeachligh.com) or call 252-453-8152.

**Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse**, located in Manteo, is an exterior reproduction of an 1877 screwpile light that was originally located near Wanchese. The lighthouse is managed and leased by the North Carolina Maritime Museum on Roanoke Island with a tri-party agreement with the Town of Manteo and Roanoke Island Festival Park. The Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm with exhibits, free of charge. The lighthouse is located on Manteo's charming waterfront. For info, contact Barry Wickre, curator, N.C. Maritime Museum on Roanoke Island at [obxmaritime@earthlink.net](mailto:obxmaritime@earthlink.net) or call 252-475-1750. Volunteers are needed for the Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse. For more information on the history of this lighthouse, please visit [www.obxmaritime.org](http://www.obxmaritime.org).

**Bodie Island Lighthouse** is one of the few lighthouses that still has its original lens in operation. The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society is making a donation to the temporary restoration that will open the lower portion of the tower during summer 2006. Meanwhile, the lighthouse is still under evaluation for repairs that will begin in 2007 or 2008. The project is proposed for FY 08 as a line item construction funding with a request for \$1,600,000. The Denver Service Center will make a 100% pre-design evaluation from which the National Park Service (NPS) will make requests for monies for needed repairs. Plans are for opening of the entire tower in 2010. Open all year 9 am - 6 pm in summer, 9 am until 5 pm the rest of the year. For information call the Bodie Island Visitor Center (252) 441-5711. For information on Bodie Island, Cape Hatteras, and Ocracoke Lighthouses, all part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, see <http://www.nps.gov/caha>. To volunteer at Cape Hatteras National Seashore, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Maggie Tyler, at (252) 995-6018 during normal working hours, or apply online at [www.volunteer.gov/gov](http://www.volunteer.gov/gov). Please designate Bodie Island, Cape Hatteras, or Ocracoke Lighthouse.

**Cape Lookout Lighthouse** is part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. Be sure to visit the National Park Service headquarters at the east end of Harkers Island. For more information call (252) 728-2250 or see <http://www.nps.gov/caloc/>. Plans are still underway for restoration of the Cape Lookout Historic Village. The Interpretation Division always welcomes volunteers to work in the Harkers Island Visitor Center (meeting the public, answering the telephone, giving programs, etc.). Contact Ranger Dave Carney at (252) 728-2250 ext. 3010. **Climbing dates for the rest of 2006:** Reservations: Wednesday, May 31, 9:00 am for the climbing on Saturday, June 17, 2006 (Honors Lighthouse transfer from USCG to NPS 2003). Reservations: Wednesday, July 19, 9:00 am for the climbing on Saturday, August 5, 2006 (National Lighthouse Day). Reservations: Wednesday, October 18, 9:00 am for the climbing on Saturday, November 4, 2006 (Honors first lighting of Cape Lookout Lighthouse, 1859). **For reservations call 252-728-5766. This number is for reservations only-- taken between 9 am and noon.** Call early for reservations as they fill up quickly! A new visitor center, bathrooms, and shade shelter has been built at the lighthouse dock. The boardwalk from the dock has been rerouted to the lighthouse side of the keepers' quarters. The keepers' quarters will be renovated during the summer as a museum that will gain new displays to be installed in the fall.

**Cape Hatteras Lighthouse** is located in the village of Buxton. The Hatteras Island Visitor Center (bookstore and exhibits) is open all year: 9 am to 6 pm in summer, 9 am to 5 pm rest of the year; Memorial Day through Labor Day 9:00 am to 6:00 pm; Labor Day through Memorial Day 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. There is a fee of \$6 to climb, children 12 and under and seniors are \$3. The NPS will replace broken windows damaged by Hurricane Isabelle with replica encasement windows to match the originals in fall '06. The project was delayed from last fall. The lighthouse re-opens for climbing Good Friday, April 14.

**Ocracoke Lighthouse** is part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore like Bodie Island and Cape Hatteras. Ocracoke's base is open when volunteers are available--usually in the summer months. The Ocracoke Visitor Center (bookstore and exhibits) is open all year: Memorial Day through Labor Day 9:00 am to 6:00 pm; Labor Day through Memorial Day 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. It's a convenient stop near the Ocracoke-Cedar Island ferry terminal and near the village.

**Oak Island Lighthouse** is owned by the Town of Caswell Beach; cooperative efforts are ongoing with the friends of Oak Island Lighthouse. Friends of Oak Island member Judy Studer reported the big news that they wrapped up the Founders' campaign with 100+ Founders at the end of January. Congratulations! The Friends group will be well-positioned to begin implementing its site plan next spring. Check out the new website at [www.oakislandlighthouse.org](http://www.oakislandlighthouse.org). You will find a good history of the lighthouse, terrific photos, directions how to get to the Oak Island Lighthouse, information on merchandise, volunteer opportunities, and more. Contact Friends of Oak Island Lighthouse, 1100 Caswell Beach Road, Caswell Beach, NC 28465 or email [lighthouse@caswellbeach.org](mailto:lighthouse@caswellbeach.org). Find out how to join at <http://www.caswellbeach.org/lighthouse.html>. When you visit Southport, stop in the Ricky Evans Gallery, as he has now set up a "Friends of Oak Island Lighthouse Gift Gallery" featuring note cards and other items designed by local artists with proceeds benefiting the Friends of Oak Island.



# LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

*Updates on the area lighthouse events & schedules*

**Price's Creek Light Front Range Light (1850 ruins)** is not open for public visitation but you can get a good look at this pre-Civil War tower, the only river light still in its original location, from the Southport-Ft. Fisher ferry. It sits on commercially owned property by Archer Daniels Midland (ADM); no restoration plans by other interested parties have been entertained by ADM. A keeper's quarters once stood behind it with a light that was at a higher elevation and served as the second light in the pair of range lights for a safe channel in the Cape Fear River as vessels headed for the Port of Wilmington.

**Old Baldy Lighthouse & Smith Island Museum** is one place all lighthouse enthusiasts must visit. For information, call (910) 457-7481 or see <http://www.ldbaldy.org>. The Old Baldy Foundation owns, maintains, and staffs this historic lighthouse. Ann Mills, Executive Director and Keeper, has updated spring/summer hours beginning March 14: open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday 11 am to 4 pm. Closed on Monday. Some events happening between now and summer on the lighthouse grounds include: Bald Head Island Artisans Show and Sale Saturday April 15, 10 am to 4 pm; Easter Sunrise Service April 16, 6:30 am. The volunteer organization is planning restoration fundraising and educational programs. A complete article on a donated logbook belonging to Dunbar Davis, keeper of the Oak Island Life-Saving Station, will be in the summer issue of *Lighthouse News* in June by Ann Mills.

**Roanoke River Lighthouse (reproduction)** is located on the town of Plymouth's beautiful waterfront about halfway between the northern and southern Outer Banks. Enough donations have been made to purchase furniture to be placed inside the lighthouse. \$225,000 is coming from DOT to build the Roanoke River Maritime Museum. There will be displays that tell the story of the river lights and many personal stories as well. The OBLHS will have a display with all NC lights in the museum. All should be finished by the end of 2006 and it is scheduled to be open in the spring of '07. A great story about downtown Plymouth is in the March issue of *Our State Magazine*. The lighthouse is open 11-3 Tuesday-Saturday; 1-4 Sunday. Special group tours can be arranged by calling 252-217-2204. A small fee is charged. Visitation continues to increase and the regional phone book has a picture of the lighthouse on its cover. Doward Jones, one of the driving forces for the lighthouse and museum stated, "Plymouth continues to grow with new businesses which is the real purpose of our efforts. We now have four eating establishments and several new retail shops. A computer company just purchased one of the more challenging buildings for office space. We had a very successful boat show and 'Cowboys on the Water' was a sellout. We're making a difference in our community while bringing to light the heritage tied to the river lights." If you haven't visited Plymouth recently, you are missing history in the making.

**Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum** is open all year. Shipwreck exhibits are in the lobby. Basic hours are Mon-Fri 9 AM to 5PM thanks to volunteers. For more information, please see <http://www.graveyardoftheatlantic.com/> or call (252) 986-2995 or 2996. See the Cape Hatteras lens exhibit in the main exhibit room! It is a memorable experience.

**Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station** in Rodanthe, just north of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse at Mile Post 39.5. For info on this beautifully restored life-saving station see <http://www.chicamacomico.net> or call the Chicamacomico Historical Association at 252-987-1552. See exhibits, artifacts, photographs, video presentations, uniforms, and displays through self-guided tours; programs offered during summer months. Special programs for 2006 include "Living Descendants of the Mirlo Rescue" (August '06) and "Heroes Day" (September '06). More programs to be announced. The site is open from mid-April through November.

**Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station** in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore is getting a facelift! At last! It is being restored to the 1904-15 period and is still under repair in many stages. By the end of this year bathrooms will be stabilized and a new roof will replace the badly needed one. Another project fund has been requested to restore the entire life-saving station with furnishings and the boathouse. The restoration is estimated to be complete in 2011.

*OBLHS has many thank you's in order:*

*Thank you to Diana Chappell* new OBLHS treasurer!

*Thank you to Beth Deese* for doing society mailings.

*Thank you to Shirin Pagels* for handling memberships.

*Thank you to Laura and Jake Smith* for a donation in memory of **Michael Thompson** who passed away in November 2005.

*Thank you to Paula and Lauren Liebrecht* for a donation to the OBLHS Bodie Island Fund in memory of their mother, **Doris Liebrecht**.

*Thank you to the Roberts* for a donation in memory of Diana Chappell's mother, **Betty Smith**, who passed away in December 2006.

*Thank you to Drs. Jim and Mabry O'Donnell* for a donation in appreciation of Cheryl and Bruce Roberts and another by Barb Kepple.





# LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

*Updates on the area lighthouse events & schedules*

**Thank you to Ralph Burroughs** who has prepared a Powerpoint presentation (converted to transparencies for simplicity) and makes presentations to civic (and other) groups that encourages lighthouse visits, and OBLHS membership. His audio tour of the Outer Banks and its lighthouses and other points of interest are available from Corporate Partner The Positive Influence, P.O. Box 5964, Winston-Salem, NC 27113. Two editions accommodate entry by way of Roanoke Island and Hwys 64/264 & Hwy 158, and the Cedar Island-Swan Quarter ferries. \$20.95 includes S&H; [www.NCLighthouseGuide.com](http://www.NCLighthouseGuide.com). Partial proceeds benefit OBLHS.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to our friends at the Chesapeake Chapter of the US Lighthouse Society. They are working tirelessly to refurbish the Thomas Point Lighthouse that will soon be open to visitors!

All correspondence to **OBLHS** should be addressed to  
**P.O. Box 1005 Morehead City, NC 28557**

Make sure we have your email address so you can receive quick updates from OBLHS president, Bett Padgett; email her at [info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org).

**Congratulations to OBLHS's first Life-Time Member** William Dowe (Bill). Born in 1929, he is a veteran. His family (formerly spelled "Dough") settled on Roanoke Island near the present-day National Park Service headquarters in Manteo. His family cemetery is still on the property. He is related to the Ethridges, Daniels, and Midgette families-- and even Aunt Lilly (we have to look her up!). A widower, Bill currently serves more than a dozen organizations and boards. He usually takes a life-time membership so that he doesn't have to write checks for memberships each year. He'd like to cut back so he can visit the Outer Banks more often from his Winston-Salem home. Welcome, Bill! Life-Time Memberships (\$500) are now offered by OBLHS. Call (919) 787-6378.

## A TRIBUTE TO A KEEPER'S SON

*Julian Haywood Austin, Jr. crossed the bar late February 2006. He spent nearly eight years of his young life growing up at the Bodie Island Lighthouse where his father was keeper between 1933 and 1940. Julian helped his father with all chores including lighting and extinguishing the lamp each evening and morning, polishing brass, painting, and even cooking for his family while his mother was hospitalized for months at a time. Julian was part of the video published by the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society "Growing Up at a Lighthouse," which recorded some rare footage of surviving keepers' children. He also participated in the society's oral histories of keepers' descendants for a reunion at Cape Hatteras in 2001. Revered by his two sisters as a surrogate father and devoted brother, Julian looked back with great fondness and respect on his life at lighthouses where his father served a sterling career worthy of the highest civilian recognition in the U.S. Lighthouse Service in the Gallatin Award. Sisters Marilyn and Verna love to talk about Julian, Jr. because he cooked for them and even changed young Verna's diapers when their mother was not at home. Julian's first memories of Bodie Island Lighthouse? The mosquitoes! And his sisters love to tell the story that Julian, Jr. has been climbing lighthouses since he was 18 months old when he escaped the supervision of his parents and climbed the Smith Island Light (Cape Charles, VA) with a shell in one hand. Somehow, he safely clomped his way to the top without falling through the steps. When these three keeper's children gathered, it was a sure thing that the conversation would be dominated by stories of their life together at Bodie Island Lighthouse.*

*Julian, Jr. was a Korean War veteran and suffered chronic illness after his duty there. We pay tribute to him for his courageous tenacity for life--just like his beloved Bodie Island Lighthouse, he stood strong in the face of overwhelming challenges. A donation has been made to the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society's Bodie Island Fund in Julian's memory.*

# OBLHS Announces Fall 2006 Event for October 13-15

**M**ark your calendar now to attend our **Annual Keeper's Dinner!** We will be focusing on a visit to the northern Outer Banks including the Currituck Beach Lighthouse, Whalehead Club, Corolla Historic Village, *and much more!* Our dinner will be at the Ramada Inn in Kill Devil Hills Saturday evening, October 14. We'll have our famous auction, prizes, awards, and more. We are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker is Sandra MacLean Clunies who will share in her entertaining way about her fascinating finds about lighthouse keepers--male and female--and their families.

Approval of the slate of board of directors (see Guidelines to Nominations page 15) is on the agenda for members. Election sheets will be in the summer issue.

Now in its 11th year, our annual event gets better and better. Come join the fun and help North Carolina's lighthouses at the same time.

For more details and information, email Bett Padgett at [bett@bettpadgett.com](mailto:bett@bettpadgett.com) or call her at (919) 787-6378. See you there! 🏠

## See our new look!

Several members have created and contributed to our new website at <http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org>.

You can get more information on NC lighthouses, find out about who we are and our accomplishments.

Let us hear from you!

**Register (Or Re-Register) for 2006**  
***It's time to Register your MVP card again!***

**Food "Lion Shop & Share"**  
**MVP Program. Help raise funds for**  
**OBLHS every time you buy groceries!**

Each time you shop at Food Lion, you can help the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society. Go to the secure on-line site at Food Lion Shop & Share (Internet Explorer works best)

<http://www.foodlion.com/IntheCommunity/ShopAndShare/default.asp> and select Register MVP Cards (if this is your first time) or Re-link Your MVP Card (if you have done so in the past).

Or you may call 704-633-8250, extension 3810 and tell the customer service representative that you would like to link your card to the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society. The folks there at Food Lion Customer Service are friendly, helpful, and efficient.

This will allow your card to earn \$ for North Carolina Lighthouses through December 2006.

Ask your Food Lion manager if s/he can help the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society gain as much credit possible.



**Put the OBLHS CD in your car, and**  
**Find All 7 NC Lighthouses**  
**Learn lighthouse lore and legend**  
**Travel Easy ... Actual routing included**  
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**Price's Creek River Range Light near Southport,**  
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**The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society**



# LIGHTHOUSE NEWS OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE OUTER BANKS LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

## PURPOSE OF THE OUTER BANKS LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

The purpose of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society is to aid in the preservation of the lighthouses of the area and to work with the National Park Service and other agencies, both government and non-profit groups, to achieve the safe keeping of the buildings, artifacts and records of the U.S. Lighthouse Service.

**The Lighthouse News is the official publication of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society.**

Editor – Cheryl Shelton-Roberts, Design-Bruce Roberts

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Email: [society@outer-banks.com](mailto:society@outer-banks.com) or write OBLHS P.O. Box 1005 Morehead City, NC 28557

## Please Check the Expiration Date on your Mailing Label! Subscribe or Renew your Membership

**\$10.00 Student Membership • \$25 Individual Membership  
\$35 Family Membership • \$20 Senior Membership (60+)  
\$30 Senior Family**

**Please make checks payable to OBLHS. Thank You**

**You will receive a color brochure on NC lighthouses,  
logo sticker, newsletter, and membership card.**

The society operates on modest membership fees and occasional donations.

If you would like to renew your membership and/or make a donation,

**please mail your correspondence to:**

**OBLHS**

**P.O. Box 1005**

**Morehead City, NC 28557**

Name

Address

City, State,

Zip +4 code

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Recipient's address

Email

## UPCOMING ISSUES OF THE LIGHTHOUSE NEWS WILL FEATURE:

**Maritime Symbols, Their Origins and Uses Today**

**The Fresnel Lens: The Revolutionary Optic and Work of Art**

**Forts and Lighthouses: In War and in Peace**

## New Visitor Center at Cape Lookout

*There is a great deal going on at the Cape Lookout National Seashore—one of North Carolina's unique roadless, bridgeless wilderness beach areas. In the picture at left is the shade shelter where visitors can wait for their ferry or a tour; the new Lighthouse Visitor Center with a bookstore is seen in the center; bathroom facilities are on the right of the photo. The lighthouse is out of the picture, behind the camera.*

*The Keepers' Quarters will re-open in fall 2006 with new exhibits. The Park Service is steward of the Cape Lookout Light Station and is spending about \$1 million to buffer over 2,400 feet of shoreline with protective sand. Hurricane Ophelia destroyed the coal shed and brought the lapping waters of Core Sound dangerously close to the historic keepers' structure.*

Picture courtesy of the NPS

# *National Park Service Appoints*

## **New Superintendent, Chief of Resource Management, and Chief of Interpretation at Outer Banks Group**

*To say that there is a great deal of change ongoing at Cape Hatteras National Seashore is to make an understatement. Look at the new administration that has arrived and is taking charge of new and ongoing programs at the three lighthouses in the National Seashore:*

### *New Superintendent*

**M**ichael Murray moved into NPS headquarters as its new superintendent of Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Outer Banks Group. The Outer Banks Group includes Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Wright Brothers National Memorial, and Fort Raleigh National Historic Site in North Carolina. A 27 year park veteran, his career began as a Park Technician at Yellowstone National Park after which he gained positions of increasing complexity and responsibility at Everglades, Yosemite, New River Gorge National River, and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. His most recent post was as Deputy Superintendent, Cape Cod National Seashore in Massachusetts. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia with a bachelor's degree in biology.

Supt. Murray is very familiar with the Outer Banks. He has fond childhood memories of wonderful family vacations to the Outer Banks where he gained appreciation for its beauty, history, and many recreational opportunities.

### *New Chief of Resource Management*

**R**obert (Thayer) Broili was recently selected as the new Chief of Resource Management position at the National Park Service Outer Banks Group. Broili is a North Carolina native with over 30 years of experience in resource and environmental management. He is a graduate of both UNC-CH and Duke University. He served as a Naval Officer during two campaigns of the Vietnam War and was based out of Norfolk, Virginia.

Broili has a lifelong association with the Outer Banks beginning in the early 1950s. Camping trips to Buxton were frequent family pastimes. During college and in his work with the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Broili had the opportunity to study and work on both scientific and policy issues in the Outer Banks area. His wife, the former Lia Waddington, was a long time resident of the Outer Banks and two of their five children are currently local business owners.

### *New Chief of Interpretation*

**M**ary Doll is the new Chief of Interpretation with the NPS, Outer Banks Group. Doll's former position was as a Management Assistant for the Outer Banks Group. She has also worked in Outer Banks Group field positions in management and interpretation at Cape Hatteras NS and Wright Brothers NMEM. She has also worked in interpretive, backcountry, and law enforcement field positions at Saguaro, Big Bend, Guadalupe Mountains and Mammoth Cave National Parks; and Bighorn Canyon, Glen Canyon and Coulee Dam National Recreation Areas. Doll holds bachelor's degrees in Outdoor Recreation Management from the University of Kentucky and Criminal Justice from Eastern Kentucky University.

The Chief of Interpretation administers the Outer Banks Group Division of Interpretation, which includes management of Group visitor centers, visitor programs, school and education programs, publications, and exhibits.







ADVOCATES FOR NORTH CAROLINA LIGHTHOUSES

## **Guidelines for Nominees to the Board of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society**

**Any member in good standing who wishes to be considered for first time membership on the Board must submit the following information.**

**Please use brief, concise answers.**

- ❶ Please indicate in 25 words or fewer your interest (or the nominator's understanding of that interest) in serving on the OBLHS Board.
- ❷ Please attach a copy of your most recent résumé. If more than two pages, please edit for appropriateness.
- ❸ Please list your present employment and field(s) of expertise.
- ❹ List the reason(s) for your interest in lighthouses.
- ❺ List other boards or committees (voluntary) on which you serve or have served with the contact information for someone who can corroborate your activities.
- ❻ What do you envision as your unique contribution to the OBLHS Board?
- ❼ Are you free to travel to the annual board meeting in May?

All nominations should be postmarked no later than May 1, 2006, and sent to:  
The OBLHS Nomination Committee  
c/o Mabry M. O'Donnell, Ph.D.  
118 Meadow Lane  
Marietta, OH 45750

***Note: Self nominations are acceptable.***

# **The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society is pleased to announce its Fresnel Prism Awards for 2005**

**Each year, the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society sponsors awards to individuals within the lighthouse community who have contributed significantly to the preservation of lighthouses and their history.**

**These awards were presented at the Annual Keeper's Dinner October 2005**



**President's Award:**

**Diana Chappell**

**Lana Beth Deese**

**Virginia Chadwick Howell**

**Ross Tracy**

**Currituck Beach Award:**

**Melody Leckie**

**Old Baldy Award:**

**Ann Mills**

**Cape Hatteras Award:**

**Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum**

**Bodie Island Award:**

**Nick Johnston**

**Cape Lookout Award:**

**Richard Meissner**

**Oak Island Award:**

**The Town of Caswell Beach**

**Founders Award:**

**In honor of our founders Bruce and Cheryl Roberts**