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Overnight Stay at Frying Pan Shoals Light Station

by Jason Jennette

A weekend spent on the Frying Pan Tower is an adventure not to be taken lightly or on a whim.

Richard Neal bought the lighthouse in a government auction in 2010 and has slowly been working on converting the former lighthouse into a bed and breakfast. This normally wouldn't be a dramatic undertaking except that the steel tower is perched eighty feet over the ocean and 23 miles from the coast of Bald Head Island, near Wilmington, NC.

There are two ways on and off the tower. It is a swift ten-minute helicopter ride or a bumpy two and one-half-hour boat ride from Southport, NC. Weight restrictions create a limit on what you can carry by helicopter. Weather and sea conditions influence a trip by boat. On my trip in July, I was given the unique opportunity to ride out on a boat and fly

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The Frying Pan Tower, as it is now called, was purchased via bid by Richard Neal. He is climbing the ladder up a steel piling of the structure after just having arrived by boat — a 23-mile trip from the Wilmington/Southport area. He will then turn on a generator that operates a wench to raise supplies and guests to the deck area.

Photo by Jason Jennette





A helicopter ride to the Frying Pan Tower is the ideal way to reach the light station. Richard Neal can arrange for a boat trip for guests or a chartered helicopter flight for guests. A helicopter can land on top of the deck at the heliport. Transportation is an added expense to the nightly fee to stay because many take their own boats to get to the station. The hand at left belongs to Richard's daughter. What memories she will have later in life to share with those who can only dream of such an adventure, or having a light station in the family.

home on the helicopter, so I got a taste of both.

When riding out on the boat you do not really have a limit on what you can take out. Guests regularly take diving and fishing gear for the unique weekend. The ride to the light station reminds me of a ride on the “Log Flume” at Six Flags. It is quite bumpy, and you and everything on board get a little wet. I advise that you take motion sickness pills starting 24 hours before you leave. At a minimum, you should double-bag in large garbage bags whatever you take.

If you go by helicopter, there are mandatory weight limits for people and supplies. As it was explained to me, a helicopter can only carry a set amount of weight and it must carry people, fuel and luggage. Since you can't really skimp on the fuel, it becomes a choice of people or luggage. You really need to pack light.

The extra benefit (or drawback) to boat travel is the eighty feet between the water and the tower. After Richard climbs up the leg of the light station (see picture front page) and unlocks the tower, he turns on the generators and starts lifting people one at a time along with heavy duty canvas “lift bags” filled with the supplies for the weekend. On my trip, my ride up

was via a bosun's chair attached to a steel cable. It creaked and it spun. It spun a lot. Closing your eyes does not help. I think that the motion sickness pills I had been taking for 2 days prior to the boat ride kept me from getting sick on the five-minute ride up to the deck. Sometime following my trip to the tower, the old wench has been replaced with a much faster wench and the trip now takes about one minute. Unloading the boat took perhaps an hour on my trip, but with the faster lift it should go much more quickly in the future.

The tower itself is basically a big metal box on very tall legs. There are walkways around the outside on the living level and also the helicopter landing level above. The west side of the living level is divided into about six bedrooms all with ocean views. There is a large kitchen with stove, oven, microwave, and refrigerator. Since the generators are turned off when no one is on the tower, the refrigerator takes a while to cool down, but Richard has recently upgraded to a new fridge so it should cool faster.

There are actually three different generators on the tower. Depending on the time of day and power needs, Richard will switch between the different generators. Running the wench, oven, and hot water

Completed in 1969, the Frying Pan Shoals Light Station, as it was originally named by the U.S. Coast Guard, marked the shallow area surrounding the tower. Automated in 1979, the light was left to deteriorate and was allowed to go dark. Offered for sale, Richard Neal took on the challenge, gathered a band of volunteers and has created an entirely new future for the abandoned light by restoring it into a B&B and allowing adventurous souls to enjoy its setting and environment. Slowly but surely, the tower is being "retrained" in its purpose for modern-day survival. Each sunrise and sunset with no land in sight is an adventure of a lifetime.



heater requires the large generator, and it is only run as needed. During the day, the medium-sized generator provides for lights and power outlets. At night, the small generator is enough to keep the lights on. On my trip I helped Richard install battery powered, motion-activated lights in the halls and in the bathroom. I suggest you bring a flashlight anyway.

There is also a large living/dining room and play area that still has the original furniture and pool table. Currently the tower does not have central air conditioning but with the windows and doors open the cool sea breezes keep things comfortable. Richard is currently working on getting heat installed in the tower so that people can visit your round.

To me the biggest selling point for a visit to the tower was time spent up on the helicopter pad. Since you are 23 miles from shore, there is no land in sight in any direction. You get to see sunrise and sunset every day. Every evening on the tower we would take lounge chairs out on the landing pad and sit back and relax as the sun dipped below horizon and painted the sky with beautiful colors.

Other fun can be had on the tower including flying a kite in the steady wind, skeet shooting, and

driving biodegradable golf balls from the landing pad. If you like to fish, the tower is a dream location. You are never more than ten steps from a great fishing spot. The down side is reeling in the extra 80 feet of line—but casting is almost unnecessary. Black sea bass, barracuda, and sharks are everywhere, and amberjack are in the area, if you can reel them in.

A weekend on the tower is currently \$500 for three days and two nights. This includes basic food but you are encouraged to bring food to supplement the hamburgers and hot dogs and sandwiches. Everyone joins in to help with the cooking and cleaning for meals.

The \$500 fee does not include transportation since many people use their own boat to get there. Richard can help you arrange transportation if you like. I also suggest following the tower on Facebook as Richard will occasionally have last minute openings (often at a discount) and he announces these via Facebook. You do need to be very flexible and ready to go as you will likely only get one day's notice.

<http://www.fptower.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fryingpan.tower>

Photos by Jason Jennette



Bodie Island Lighthouse Keepers' Descendants Homecoming

Hundreds stood to applaud and commemorate their keeper-ancestors

By Cheryl Shelton-Roberts

Under the lighthouse with people at railing. One of the offered activities Saturday afternoon during the homecoming was the chance to climb the recently restored lighthouse. Some lucky people who were fortunate to be visiting the light station that day not only got to ascend the steps to the top but they also had the opportunity to talk with descendants who told stories of their keeper ancestors.

Photo courtesy of John Havel

Less than 24 hours before the Homecoming event began October 18, event planners were still in Plan B mode to hold the event in the only space that could accommodate over 300 attendees: the Comfort Inn Oceanfront South in Nags Head. Due to a 16-day government shutdown, the National Parks were closed including the Bodie Island Lighthouse, the site of Saturday's and Sunday's homecoming events. But, in answer to many prayers, our National Park Service point of contact, Cyndy Holda, called me at home in Morehead City one hour before I was to leave for Nags Head to begin preparations for the event weekend on Thursday and said, "We are back at work. Let's move it [the homecoming] to the lighthouse Saturday." We were fortunate that Chad Miller at Atlantic Ocean Rentals still had our tent, tables, chairs, linens, and a stage reserved for us. He made a round of emergency phone calls to his crew, many of them out surfing, to report asap and get the tent up by Friday early afternoon. Chad even threw



(Above) Part of the opening ceremony was the ancient sound of bagpipe music. Patrick Unrein played "Going Home," in memory of Bodie Island keepers. As each of us will surely cross the bar from descendant to ancestor, we must make sure we pass on memories to our younger generations.

Photo courtesy of John Havel



(Above) A gathering of keepers' descendants is a significant event. News media recorded and interviewed descendants all weekend long. NC News Channel 14, Ken Mann representing UNC-TV, and Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Lane DeGregory and photojournalist Melissa Lyttle representing Our State North Carolina magazine will create articles and videos on the event.



(Left) Bob DaVia read the 38 keepers' names. After each name was read, four-year old Jeremy Jennings rang his own brass ship's bell with assistance from his mom, Tammy Holton Jennings, both Joe Holly Tillett direct descendants.

Photos courtesy of John Havel

in extra tables and chairs, which we made good use of the entire weekend.

Before heading to Nags Head, I immediately emailed 300 people and told them to spread the word. And they did. Friday night's registration/social was a huge hit. This was due to several well planned components of the registration evening: exhibits prepared by Outer Banks Lighthouse Society's (OBLHS) hard-working volunteers, huge family genealogy wall charts prepared by Sandy Clunies, excellent food by BJ's Café, and wonderful welcome

bags prepared by Diana Chappell. Several volunteers were on hand to help each person with any questions. Judy Moon and Kelly Waller manned OBLHS's keeper's store and attendees bought generously.

Bright and early that beautiful Saturday morning, we gathered at the lighthouse to get ready for the day's programs. Linens were spread on the tables, Virginia Howell and Diana put table centerpieces together, and Mabry O'Donnell and I sorted through the certificates to be awarded that

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day. And our multi-talented John Havel's presence was everywhere from exhibits to playing our roaming photographer.

At 10 a.m. sharp, Presentation of Colors by the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Field Office (SFO) Cape Hatteras kicked off the special day's events. Mind you, all this came together within a day's notice.

Following Presentation of Colors, Tish Daniels sang "America the Beautiful" and the "Star Spangled Banner." Ken Mann of OBX-TV and UNC documentaries fame delivered a lovely, warm prayer in memory of all keepers. Ken is also pastor of the Mt. Carmel Methodist Church in Mann's Harbor.

After a brief introduction by Master of Ceremonies James Charlet of Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station, Dare County Commissioners Chairman Warren Judge welcomed all descendants and other friends in his usual kind and humorous way.

Next, Cape Hatteras National Seashore Superintendent Barclay Trimble spoke to descendants about how fortunate it was that we could be in attendance at the lighthouse. His glowing remarks about the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society are greatly appreciated. Everyone was grateful for the park's efforts to hold the event at Bodie Island Light Station and to arrange things on a moment's notice.

The entire focus of the Bodie Island Lighthouse Keepers' Descendants Homecoming was on the keepers and their families who had lived and worked there during the years 1847–1940. Fittingly, great grandson of Bodie Island Keepers Benjamin and Peter Gallop, USCG Captain George Bonner IV, addressed his fellow keepers' descendants and spoke of his admiration for his keeper-ancestors. Part of the history of the U.S. Lighthouse Service is that it was absorbed by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1939–40; further back in history, the Revenue Cutter Service and U.S. Life-Saving Services had merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard. Many keepers' descendants joined the life-saving service or coast guard or other military services. Although keepers worked as civilians for the government, their jobs were under the scrutiny of the government and inspectors were military officers.

All of us were there that day, October 19, to pay tribute to the faithful keepers who saw that the Bodie Island Light Station was kept in top running condition and that the light was on just before sundown and extinguished just after sunrise. Passing mariners depended on each keeper to do the job well.



USCG Captain George Bonner IV, the great-great-grandson of Benjamin and Peter G. Gallop, spoke to the hundreds in attendance about his keeper-lineage. Capt. Bonner is exemplary of many keepers' descendants who continued their keeper-ancestor's tradition of community work by serving in the U.S. Life-Saving Service, U.S. Lighthouse Service, and various branches of military service.

Photo courtesy of John Havel

AWARDING OF SUPERLATIVE CERTIFICATES

We had a great time giving certificates to descendants who deserved the honor of special recognition. The keeper to whom each is related is in parentheses:

Having traveled more than 1,000 miles to attend the Bodie Island Lighthouse Descendants (BOLD) Homecoming: Frank A. Wall Jr. (Julian Austin Sr.) from Palmer, Alaska; Bethany Wescott Becker of Vancouver, British Columbia (John B. Etheridge); Mary Ann Basnight Wolf from Rancho Santa Re, California (Ephraim Meekins); Michele Talley Hardy of Grand Junction, Colorado (Joe Holly Tillett and Loren E. Tillett); Betsy Basnight Anderson of Fosston, Minnesota (Ephraim Meekins); Brenda Ray of Clifton, Colorado (Joe Holly Tillett and Loren E. Tillett); and William G. Basnight from Crosby, Texas (Ephraim Meekins).



An opportunity to listen to our attending keepers' children was offered when they were invited to the stage to talk. At left is Loren Tillett Jr. who spoke eloquently of the time he spent with his father and mother, Keeper Loren Tillett Sr. and Esmerelda, at Currituck Beach Light Station. His father served briefly at Bodie Island before Loren Jr. was born. To his left is Kathy Meads, granddaughter of Keeper Julian Austin Sr.

Photo courtesy of John Havel



Certificates were awarded to several attending descendants deserving superlative recognition. In attendance was the youngest keeper's descendant, one-month old William "Grant" Capps, held by his mother, Morgan Capps. Both are part of the four generations in attendance for Keeper Julian Haywood Austin Sr. Morgan exhibits the great joy created by the homecoming event.

Photo courtesy of Bruce Roberts

A certificate for our oldest descendant: 98-year-old Muriel Sterling Green Daniels (Benjamin Gallop, Peter G. Gallop).

And the youngest: William Grant Capps (Julian Austin Sr.).

These descendants received a certificate for having four Bodie keepers in their lineage that include Benjamin Gallop, Peter G. Gallop, Ephraim Meekins, and C.C. "Lum" Midgett: Paula Greene Mann; Robin Greene Etheridge; Annie Lupe Etheridge.

And we had one special descendant with five keepers in her lineage that include John W. Ward, C.C. "Lum" Midgett, Ephraim Meekins, Joe Holly Tillett, and John B. Etheridge: Andrea Tillett McConnell.

There were three family groups with four generations present: The Julian Haywood Austin Sr. family; the Loren E. Tillett Sr. family; and the Alexander A. Midgette family.

SPECIAL ATTENDING DESCENDANTS

And one of the most special certificates went to our attending keepers' children: Loren Tillett Jr and his sisters, Merle Tillett Hale and Lioma Tillett Johnston, (Loren Tillett Sr.); Erline Gaskill White (Lloyd Vernon Gaskill); Hilda Austin Williams (Homer T. Austin); Marilyn Austin Meads and her sister Verna Austin Wall (Julian Austin Sr.). Erline, Marilyn, and Verna earned a second award for being one of our attending keepers' children who lived at Bodie Island Light Station during the 1920s and '30s. It was an honor to have all of these keepers' children with us!

A SPECIAL CERTIFICATE IN MEMORIAM...

I had the honor to award a special certificate in memory of John Fillmore Gaskill, son of Keeper Lloyd Vernon Gaskill Sr. John had wanted very much to attend the homecoming as his last trip home to

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Wanchese and Bodie Island, but he crossed the bar just before the homecoming event while living at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, MS, on September 27 at the age of 97. John gave countless hours as an Outer Banks Lighthouse Society volunteer and then later as a NPS volunteer at the lighthouse. He shared stories of growing up at the light with thousands of visitors for many years. John's daughter, Joan Wyndham-Davis, accepted the certificate.

Bett Padgett, OBLHS President, played her guitar and sang "Life at the Lighthouse." Over the years after hearing/reading stories from the Austins and Gaskills, Bett wrote a song that summed up perfectly what keepers and their families experienced at one of America's premier lights.

READING OF KEEPERS' NAMES

And the moment came we had all been waiting for. Outer Banks Lighthouse Society Membership Director and Media Manager, Bob DaVia, read each keeper's name. After each name was read aloud, Jeremy Gene Jennings, four-year-old great-great-great-grandson of Keeper Joe Holly Tillett, rang a big brass bell. The bell just happens to hang in Jeremy's bedroom at his home in Manteo and he rings it every day. As he struck the bell during the event, descendants for each keeper stood and applauded. If no descendants were present for a certain keeper, we all applauded.

Following the reading of the names, Gage Clawson played "Taps" on a bugle. Then faintly in the background, a bagpipe could be heard. Patrick Unrein approached the tent as he played "Going Home" and continued to the stage and finished the memorable piece. He later played inside the lighthouse for descendants who climbed. Many thought that the bell ringing and bagpipe music made for some of the most memorable moments of the special weekend.

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At right, Sandy Clunies, certified genealogist, greeted registered descendants and presented each with a personalized family chart. Untold hours were spent correcting and adding to these charts with help from family members. She then created wall charts for display. Sandy said of this photo, "My favorite one of myself that weekend is this one as it shows how delighted I was to finally meet the 'keeper kin!' And I so appreciated the help of Kim Gotsball there to find the individual charts for everyone." Kim was a part of a group of volunteers from the Old Baldy Foundation. Great teamwork!

Photo courtesy of Bob DaVia



Above are Lioma Tillett Johnston and sister Merle Tillett Hale, daughters of Keeper Loren E. Tillett. Both represent the last direct contacts with our North Carolina lighthouses, and their presence was a valued gift reflecting the importance of this gathering.

Photo courtesy of John Havel



Pictured above are Diane King, Tammy Jennings and Lorraine Tillett, all direct descendants and great-granddaughters of Keeper Joe Holly Tillett. Diane is one of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society's newest members. All were great supporters of the homecoming event.

Photo courtesy of John Havel





Above is the Keeper Julian Austin Sr. family of descendants, one of the four-generation groups attending the homecoming. Left to right are Sarah Winslow, Verna Austin Wall, Rachel Lankford, Frank R. Wall, and Haley Winslow. Below is the grand Gallop group of descendants of Keepers Benjamin and Peter G. Gallop.

Photos courtesy of John Havel



A BREAK FOR LUNCH

BJ's Carolina Café served a wonderful lunch to the crowd. OBLHS volunteers quickly and efficiently gave out the lunches, drinks, and desserts. Some families went to climb the tower, some had group pictures taken, others talked endlessly to family members they hadn't seen in decades while even more met family members they had never met.

During lunch, Bett Padgett and Ken Mann played wonderful music for us all. Not only was the music delightful, but the happy looks on their faces made the entire scene festive. Ken was a busy man that day—he not only participated in the program but he also filmed the occasion that will become part of the complete story of the restoration and re-opening of the lighthouse.

The rest of the afternoon was taken at leisure all around the light station. The keepers' quarters were open to everyone to tour both downstairs and upstairs where keepers' bedrooms were located. The Austin sisters, Marilyn and Verna, as well as Keeper Gaskill's daughter, Erline, shared stores of living in these quarters. I cannot emphasize how rare this is and what a valued experience it is to hear them share stories in person.

Now, we are keepers of these stories, and as Lou Lou emphasized in her touching speech that Saturday afternoon, we must pass them on to younger generations to remember and to be remembered.



Above, Lou Ellen "Lou Lou" Daniels Quinn speaks to her fellow keepers' descendants. An experienced genealogist, Lou Lou is passionate about keeping family history and passing memories on to younger generations. She is a direct descendant of Keepers Benjamin and Peter G. Gallop. Below is the Keeper Lloyd Vernon Gaskill family. Left to right foreground: Kerry Dowd and her children, Lennon and Jonathan Barrow, Erline Gaskill White and Sharon Gaskill. In background are John Barrow and Joan Wyndham-Davis. Unfortunately, Keeper Gaskill's son, John, had crossed the bar only days earlier. But the stories he told and the memories he left will live on forever.

Photos courtesy of John Havel



What we discovered while researching for the Bodie Island Lighthouse Descendants Homecoming

By Cheryl Shelton-Roberts

Each keeper on our Bodie Island list was checked by certified genealogist, Sandra (Sandy) MacLean Clunies. All of the keepers were clearly listed on the government's official registry of keepers. But while researching for as complete a list as possible, we had four definite names to add based on documentation found by Sandy or offered by the keeper's descendant(s). The following is an explanation of the "new" names that will one day go on a plaque at the lighthouse naming the keepers. This is exciting and promises more stories to share.

On the government record that lists keepers at Bodie Island and their dates of service, we found that W.E. Daniels served as Acting 2nd Assistant Keeper beginning October 1, 1906, for an undetermined amount of time, perhaps as short as 10 days. He appears on the list again as Acting Assistant Keeper November 16, 1907, possibly for only a few weeks—we are not sure of the length of service but we are sure that he was officially employed with the U.S. Lighthouse Service. In the nearby community of Wanchese during this time, there is a man named William Ethelbert "Tucker" Daniels. We have contemplated this for a long time and Sandy has dug deep into official documents. Her genealogical work turned up a George C. Daniels, also listed as Acting 2nd Assistant Keeper beginning October 22, 1907, until just before Tucker Daniels' second tour of duty began November 16, 1907. George C. Daniels is Tucker's father.

We now feel confident that both William Ethelbert "Tucker" Daniels and his father George C. Daniels served as 2nd Assistant Keepers at Bodie Island Light Station between 1906 and 1907.

Next, on the official keeper's register, we found Wilson R. Sutton. We did manage to include him in our

"Quiet Voices" section of the commemorative book *Bodie Island Keepers: Oral and Family Histories*. Keeper Sutton was appointed an Assistant Keeper at Bodie Island on May 16, 1877, and he served until December 19, 1879. He was born in 1819 and lived into the 1880s, but we don't have further records on him to date or where he went after serving at Bodie Island.

Sandy made a huge discovery when she solved the mystery of "J.C." Meekins. The "J" is actually an "I," and we now can identify the man as Isaac Chauncey Meekins who served briefly at the 1872 lighthouse and was part of the great lineage of Meekins keepers. Isaac Chauncey Meekins saved fellow Keeper Peter Gallop from drowning and is commended in the U.S. Lighthouse Service annual reports.

Finally, the discovery of David Evans Quidley also was recently made. Born February 27, 1891, he lived until May 9, 1962. He was a career U.S. Lighthouse Service keeper and began service in 1917. He served at Bodie Island from Mar 8, 1919 until Nov 13, 1918, while serving with Assistant Keeper Bill Etheridge. Keeper Quidley's son, Lenwood Quidley, has shared hundreds of pages of his father's official records, and an in-depth article on him will appear in the spring 2014 issue of "The Lighthouse News." Grandson Lanny Quidley has helped in getting copies of these official U.S. Lighthouse Service documents and family pictures to us. In an initial perusal of his records, one immediately notes the number of times he was commended for assisting and/or saving mariners in distress.

Appreciation goes to Sandy Clunies for her research on our Bodie Island Lighthouse Keepers.

The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society thanks these sponsors of the event: Eastern National, National Park Service, Wells Fargo, Outer Banks Community Foundation, Dare County Visitors Bureau, and individual donors who made this historic event possible. The modest fee charged for each attending descendant along with grants helped with expenses, but see the inserted flyer to learn how you can help further. We are an all-volunteer organization and we make every dollar work. Each donation is warmly acknowledged and can be taken as a tax deduction because we are a 501 3 (c) organization in excellent standing.

Thank you to all volunteers! You make our events successful every time!

The “Old Ones Panel”

We had the rare pleasure of having several first-generation keepers' children with us. It is a rare opportunity now to being able to talk with surviving children who lived at a lighthouse. Not all participated, but those who did participate shared wonderful stories: Loren Tillett Jr. who lived at Currituck Beach Lighthouse where his father worked after having served at Bodie Island; Marilyn Austin Meads and Verna Austin Wall. Marilyn's daughter, Kathy, Erline Gaskill White, and Keeper Vernon Gaskill Sr.'s granddaughter, Joan Wyndham Davis joined the group. In my introduction of the commemorative book *Bodie Island Keepers: Oral and Family Histories* (family histories by Sandy Clunies), I speak about how keepers' children often tamed wild kittens for their own, which took a great deal of persistence and patience. Panel members related this same story. On days when a child was without a companion at the light station, the solitary existence could prove tedious. But as the panel admitted, most of the time they had many ways to entertain themselves while learning to be alone and to like it—a valuable asset in life. Each one spoke beautifully as they were caught on film by Channel 14 (Time Warner Cable) and UNC-TV. All weekend, many of the descendants had been photographed by Melissa Lyttle and interviewed/recorded by Lane DeGregory, a Pulitzer-winning writer, who covered the event for *Our State North Carolina* magazine. Her article is scheduled for the March 2014 issue.

Continuing a focus on attending descendants, we had a special lineup of speakers. Barbara Basnight Rawl spoke on her proud heritage as a great-great-granddaughter of Ephraim Meekins and read some of a poem he wrote; Andrea Tillett McConnell spoke on her lineage of five Bodie Island keepers; Lou Lou Daniels Quinn spoke on being a member of the large family of Benjamin and Peter Gallop. Lou Lou challenged those listening to tell the “stories” of ancestors to keep the memories alive. Tammy Holton Jennings shared stories of Keeper Joe Holly Tillett of whom she is a great-great-great-granddaughter. Finally, Charlie Smith Jr. told us of his great-great-grandfather Horatio Heath who was a fine and respected keeper and boat pilot.



Above, Andrea Tillett McConnell accepts her superlative certificate of recognition for having five Bodie Island Keepers in her direct lineage. Andrea later spoke to the group about the honor in realizing multiple keepers in her ancestry. Below are Cheryl Shelton-Roberts and Barbara Basnight Rawl. Barbara is a great-granddaughter of Keeper Ephraim Meekins. She read two stanzas of a poem written by the Cap'n, “When I Am Gone.”

Photos courtesy of John Havel





Keepers' daughters Erlene Gaskill White (at left) and Marilyn Austin Meads (at right) talked with Kerry Dowd, great granddaughter of Keeper Gaskill. Just in the left-hand corner of the picture is the recording hand of Lane DeGregory making notes of the stories being passed among the three keepers' descendants.

Photo courtesy of John Havel



Hilda Austin and husband Cary Williams were in attendance at the BOLD Homecoming. Hilda is the daughter of Keeper Homer Tredwell Austin who served primarily at Currituck Beach Light Station but also at Bodie Island. Their late son's research now digitized and available online, the Gregory Williams Outer Banks Genealogy Collection, was dedicated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Dare County Library in Manteo October 21, 2013. For more information, contact Naomi Rhodes, Dare County Reference Librarian, at (252) 441-4331; nrhodes@earlibrary.org

Photo courtesy of Naomi Rhodes



A fun activity offered to all children visiting the light station during the homecoming weekend was to stick their heads through the cutouts and magically become a keeper and his wife. Kobe (left) and Kali-Jo Beasley, descendants of Keepers Benjamin and Peter Gallop, are playing the roles.

Photo courtesy of Marla Beasley



BOLD Homecoming event co-chairmen Cheryl Shelton-Roberts (left) and Diana Chappell (right) were asked to pose with Keeper Horatio Heath's great granddaughter, Bev Wright. Bev shared information and pictures on Keeper Heath for the commemorative book Bodie Island Keepers: Oral and Family Histories. Her cousin, Charlie Smith, took the picture, and he was a key speaker at Saturday's event.

Photo courtesy of Diana Chappell

Currituck Beach Lighthouse is owned by the Outer Banks Conservationists, Inc. Hours daily are 9AM-5PM through December 1 when the lighthouse closes for the season. The lighthouse will reopen Saturday, March 29. International Chimney will come this winter for an Inspections and Conditions Assessment. They will work on maintenance projects such as replacing the handrails and deck. Another project under consideration is adding part of the original dividing fence. For more information visit <http://www.currituckbeachlight.com/>.

Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse (reproduction), situated in Manteo, is an exterior reproduction of an 1877 screwpile light that was originally at the southern entrance of the Croatan Sound to the Pamlico Sound located near Wanchese. The lighthouse is owned and operated by the town of Manteo <http://www.townofmanteo.com/index.asp> and is located on Manteo's lovely waterfront near the Roanoke Island Maritime Museum. <http://roanokeisland.com/MaritimeMuseum.aspx>. The lighthouse is open daily, free of charge from 9AM-5PM year-round.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CAHA) and its park visitor centers are open year-round, 9AM-6PM mid-June through Labor Day and 9AM-5PM the rest of the year. For more information call (252) 441-5711 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/caha/>.

Bodie Island Lighthouse grounds are open year-round. The lighthouse closed October 14 for the season and will reopen mid-April. Information on climbing can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/caha/planyourvisit/bodie-island-lighthouse-tours.htm>.

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse grounds are open year-round. The lighthouse closed October 14 for the season and for repairs. The railing on the gallery deck was replaced in November. The lighthouse will be painted early this spring. The lighthouse will open for climbing in mid-April. Information on climbing can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/caha/planyourvisit/climbing-the-cape-hatteras-lighthouse.htm>.

Ocracoke Lighthouse grounds are open year-round. The National Park Service is working with Eastern National, their cooperating association, in efforts to purchase an undeveloped tract of land near

the lighthouse that would be utilized for additional parking spaces.

Chicamacomico Life-Saving-Station is located in Rodanthe, just north of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse at milepost 39.5. www.chicamacomico.net. The station is closed for the season and will reopen next spring.

Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum is located at the end of Hwy 12 on Hatteras Island near the ferry landing and is owned and operated by the state of North Carolina. It is open Monday-Friday, 10AM-4PM. The museum operates under the NC State holiday schedule. Visitation is free but donations are appreciated. <http://www.graveyardoftheatlantic.com/index.htm>.

Cape Lookout Lighthouse is part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. Park headquarters and the visitors' center are located on Harkers Island and are open Monday-Friday 9AM-5PM except Christmas and New Year's days. The grounds are open year-round. Visit <http://www.nps.gov/calol/> or call (252) 728-2250. The Keeper's Quarters Museum and facilities at the Lighthouse and the Portsmouth Village Visitors Center are closed for the season and will open in April. It is projected that the lighthouse will open for climbing on the previous schedules of 4 days a week beginning in May.

Oak Island Lighthouse is owned by the Town of Caswell Beach with ongoing cooperative efforts with the Friends of Oak Island Lighthouse (FOIL). Volunteers conduct tours to the top year-round with at least 2 weeks' notice. A request to climb can be made at their web site www.oakislandlighthouse.org. Children must be 9 years old to climb. Please visit their website for further information and to request a special tour.

Price's Creek Front Range Light (1850 ruins) is not open for public visitation, but from the Southport-Ft. Fisher ferry you are afforded a good view of this pre-Civil War tower, the only range light in NC still in its original location.

Old Baldy Lighthouse & Smith Island Museum: The Old Baldy Foundation (OBF) owns, maintains, and staffs this historic lighthouse. The museum

and lighthouse climbing hours are Tuesday–Saturday 10AM–4PM and Sunday 11AM–4PM. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$3 ages 3–12, under age 3 free. To learn more about OBF, see <http://www.oldbaldy.org/>.

Roanoke River Lighthouse (reproduction) is located on the town of Plymouth's beautiful waterfront about halfway between the northern and southern Outer Banks off Highway 64. Hours of operation are 11AM–3PM Monday through Saturday and by appointment. Call (252) 217-2204 to arrange a group visit. Visit <http://www.roanokeriverlighthouse.org/>. The Roanoke River Lighthouse and Museum are projects of the Washington County Waterways Commission.

1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse in Edenton is located in Colonial Park on the downtown Edenton waterfront. The Lighthouse will be operated by Historic Edenton State Historic Site once restoration is complete. The Edenton Historical Commission has a continuing interest in the lighthouse and is a partner with the Department of Cultural Resources that has agreed to fund its furnishings, under the guidance of the Historic Sites Curator. Once completed, guided tours will be provided for the public Monday through Friday. Visit their website: www.edentonlighthouse.org.

New Gallery Railing at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse

By John Havel

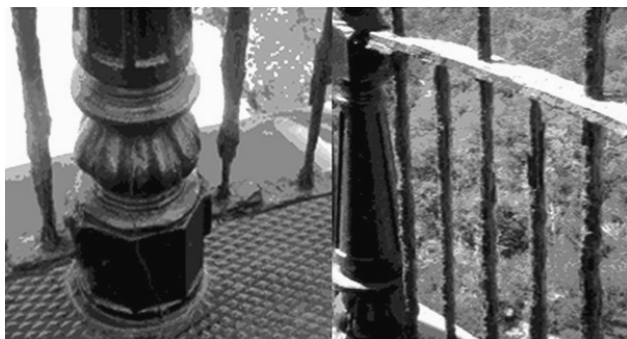
A new gallery deck railing has been installed at the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. According to Park engineer, Nelson Pendleton, the railing had been damaged during routine visitation this summer and the Park Service made expedient repairs to block off the damaged section. The damage consisted of a break in the bottom rail and in order to allow access of the public to the gallery deck, a temporary wooden railing was installed.

The gallery deck itself, and the posts which support the railing, were judged to be in good condition, but the 16 sections of railing between the posts were badly deteriorated and in need of immediate repair. Mr. Pendleton stated that the rusted material could easily crumble in the hand when squeezed and presented a hazard to the public, including small pieces of metal being blown or dropped from the gallery deck to the ground below, and potential for sharp edges of exposed, rusted metal.

During the summer of 2013 a contractor was hired, and fabrication of new railing sections took place in August and September, with the removal of the existing ironwork and installation of the new railing to begin following Columbus Day, when the lighthouse would be closed for the season. However, due to the government shutdown, the installation was rescheduled for November 6–16.

Although made of specialized, anti-corrosive metals and coatings to protect it from the harsh ocean environment, the new railing is fashioned to match the original railing installed when the lighthouse was built in 1870. The railing had been last replaced in 1992 as part of a major renovation project.

Before restoration



After restoration



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 and maritime history of North Carolina 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: lhsociety2@outer-banks.com or info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org or write OBLHS P.O. Box 1005 Morehead City, NC 28557

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

Student membership receives an e-newsletter only.

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 *membership* correspondence to:

OBLHS Membership Chairman Bob DaVia
P.O. Box 2141
Winterville, NC 28590

General correspondence: OBLHS
P.O. Box 1005
Morehead City, NC 28557

Dear Outer Banks Lighthouse Society Members and Friends,

It's hard to believe another year has come and gone. The Society has seen the relighting of the Bodie Island Lighthouse, the Bodie Island Lighthouse Descendants Homecoming and another Keepers' Weekend dinner. A lot of time, energy and hard work have gone into the planning and execution of these events. The volunteers that work behind the scenes guarantee the success of the society in their endeavors. But we can't do it without the support of the membership.

Speaking of memberships, we would like to acknowledge our LIFETIME members. These individuals recognize the important work the OBLHS does. So we'd like to say THANK YOU to our LIFETIME MEMBERS!

Wendy Brewer
Paula Liebrecht

John Howard, Jr.
Richard Meissner

Gayle Keresey
Judy Rosson

Lauren Liebrecht
Rebecca Taylor

The holidays are fast approaching. If you know someone that likes lighthouses, but are not sure what to get them, a gift membership will get their name crossed off your gift list and help the Society too!

Please check your mailing label to see when your membership expires. If it is close to expiring, please consider mailing in your renewal payment, or complete your renewal online. The website is: <http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org/join-reg-form-intro.html>

Be sure to check out our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oblhs>. We currently have more than 250 "friends" on Facebook, and would love to have you as well.

This past year, the Society has received donations from many members, as well as memorial donations in memory of Scott Lemke, Wilma Morel and John Gaskill.

As always, we love to hear from our members. Drop us an email info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org or mail us a letter: OBLHS, P.O. Box 1005, Morehead City, NC 28557

Wishing you and yours all the blessings of the holiday season!

Bob DaVia
OBLHS Membership Director and Media Manager