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# LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

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Summer 2007

## *A Real History Lesson*

# Southport's Fourth Grade Visits Old Baldy Thanks to Donation by Lighthouse Group

*By Ann Mills, Exec. Dir. Old Baldy Foundation*

All 4th grade students in North Carolina study state history including lighthouses. On a recent visit to Southport Elementary School, the staff of the Old Baldy Foundation discovered that a vast majority of the students in Southport never visit Old Baldy Lighthouse. They can see the lighthouse from Southport across the mouth of the Cape Fear River, so it seemed like a good opportunity for the Old Baldy Foundation to share this wonderful resource with these students. Thus, the Lighthouse Learners Program was implemented in November 2004.

Over the past three years various individuals have donated money to help pay for the ferry fee. Bald Head Island Ltd., provides a special ferry due to the large number of passengers.

*Story text continued on page 2*

*Southport Elementary School's fourth graders can see Old Baldy everyday across the Cape Fear River. Thanks to the Lighthouse Learners Program begun by the Old Baldy Foundation and this year's sponsor, The Smoky Mountain Flame Keepers, these future preservationists got to visit the historic lighthouse up close and personal. Each year a sponsor is sought to fund the program to enable more than 300 students to ride the ferry to Bald Head Island and learn of its history and natural beauty.*



# Old Baldy

(Continued from Page 1)

This year the Smoky Mountain Flame Keepers, a group of lighthouse collectors from Jefferson City, Tennessee., provided the money for the ferry. Over 140 children and adults visited the Old Baldy Lighthouse on April 19. It was the largest school group we have hosted in my three years at the Old Baldy Foundation.

The large group was divided into three smaller groups and they visited the new walkway on the walls of Civil War Ft. Holmes, ate lunch and climbed the lighthouse. Maureen Dwyer, Director of Education from the Bald Head Island Conservancy made a special presentation to the group about the natural beauty of Bald Head Island.

This lighthouse belongs to these children and we hope that by seeing the light they will share our vision to maintain and restore Old Baldy for future generations. With the help of other lighthouse enthusiasts they were able to come again this year. A big thank you was sent to the Smoky Mountain Flame Keepers from the students at Southport Elementary in the form of letters and pictures.

**Editor's note:** *One of the courtesies that the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society provides the greater lighthouse community is to network those with resources with those in need. The Tennessee group contacted us for advice as to how to donate their assets as a closure for their organization. We called Ann at Old Baldy and the rest is history. Next year, OBLHS will sponsor this outstanding project.* ✎

## Membership Report . . . .



The Outer Banks Lighthouse Society is going strong, with 644 memberships. We have members from thirty-nine states. The top five states with their membership numbers and percentage are: North Carolina (203 Memberships, 31.52%); Virginia (100, 15.6%); Pennsylvania (47, 7.33%); Ohio (38, 5.93%); and Maryland (30, 4.68%)

I would like to take this time to welcome our newest members:

**Jeanne Bragg & Michelle Cox (VA); Patricia Young (NC); Jamie Bernard (NJ); Nellie Booth (PA); John & Mary Leigh Copeland (NC); Tamra Szewczyk (PA); Thomas E. Crosby Jr (SC); Daryl Simpson (NC); Ginger, Timothy & Anthony Ellis (NC); Joan & Lawrence Papes (OH); Dennis Courtney (CT); Michael Devall (NC); and Burney Goodwin (TX).**

Keep those membership renewals coming in! It is very helpful when you send them in early and on-time. **Don't know when your membership expires?** Check the mailing label ~ it has your membership expiration date printed on it.

**Don't know what to do with all those pesky renewal envelopes?** Pass them on to someone you know that may be interested in becoming a member of the **Outer Banks Lighthouse Society!** New members will receive, in their initial mailing, the current edition of *Lighthouse News*, a membership card, Certificate of membership, and a logo sticker.

As always, if you have any questions about your membership, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Additionally, OBLHS is partnering with **OUR STATE** Magazine to help raise funds for the lighthouses of North Carolina. **OUR STATE** will make a \$5.00 donation to OBLHS for every subscription that we sell. Each subscription includes the annual Lighthouse and Coastal issue that is put out each May. See the enclosed insert for all the details!

Due to the delay in processing subscriptions, though, your subscription will not include this years Lighthouse issue. (Don't worry, though, you will get the 2008 copy.) However, if you mail your subscription form and payment to OBLHS (at the address below), I will send you this years copy! Hurry, I only have a very limited supply. We must have 20 new and renewing subscribers to OS to qualify!

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Robert DaVia, Membership Chair • PO Box 2141 • Winterville, NC 28590 • (252) 439-0776 • [membership@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:membership@outerbankslighthousesociety.org) or • [rdavia@seathelights.com](mailto:rdavia@seathelights.com)



# LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

*Updates on the area lighthouse events & schedules*



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<http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org>: News & articles. VISIT & JOIN US!

Contact [info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org). Renew your membership or give a gift membership — PayPal payment is available.

Also on NCOB at <http://www.outer-banks.com/lighthouse-society>; [society@outer-banks.com](mailto:society@outer-banks.com).

**Currituck Beach Lighthouse** is owned by the Outer Banks Conservationists, Inc. It re-opened April 3rd for the 2007 climbing season. The light station's summer hours of operation are 10 am to 6 pm daily until late October. The cost to climb is \$7 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. For further information, email [info@currituckbeachlight.com](mailto:info@currituckbeachlight.com) or call (252) 453-8152. Keepers Meghan and Luis are enjoying family life at the lighthouse with two children now!

**Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse (reproduction)**, located in Manteo, is an exterior reproduction of an 1877 screwpile light that was originally located near Wanchese. It is open from 9-5, Tuesday-Saturday with exhibits, free of charge. The lighthouse is located on Manteo's charming waterfront. For info, contact Barry Wicker, curator, N.C. Maritime Museum on Roanoke Island at [obxmaritime@earthlink.net](mailto:obxmaritime@earthlink.net) or call (252) 475-1750.

**Bodie Island Lighthouse – Good news:** The lighthouse has been prepped for the work on the tower. Emergency repairs will begin May 25th and take 3 weeks; at time of printing, the Park is waiting on the fabrication of the stairs and the belt that will go around the tower to stabilize the lantern area. Part of the delay of these repairs is due to the Park's merging two projects to economize. Along with work on the tower, sections of the stairs are being tested and replaced. The Park plans to re-open the base of the tower to the public this summer. Federal funds are needed for complete restoration, estimated at over \$2 million. Whether funds will be granted for FY '07-'08 or if the Cape Hatteras National Seashore will have to wait for monies from the President's Centennial Initiative is yet to be determined. The Centennial Challenge (Initiative) is a matching-grant program that relies on public and private sources to spruce up parks nationwide in preparation for the centennial celebration of the National Park Service in 2016. The grounds are open all year; the visitors center and bookstore are open from 9 am - 6 pm in summer, 9 am until 5 pm the rest of the year and are a **must see!** Bodie Island Visitor Center (252) 441-5711. John Gaskill is greeting visitors at the lighthouse already this year! Visit with him and hear some of his great stories about growing up at Bodie Island Light Station as a keeper's son. Thank you, John!

**Bodie Island Life-Saving and Coast Guard Station** are located on Highway 12 in south Nags Head near MP 22. Stabilization of the buildings will begin in June in preparation for their relocation. The structures are currently in danger of destruction by the ocean. Final assessment of the archaeologist survey is to be completed for the relocation of the Coast Guard Station and the Life-Saving Station. The complete relocation of both structures is planned to be completed by September 30th to ensure preservation of these historic structures.

**Cape Hatteras Lighthouse** is located in the village of Buxton off NC 12. The Hatteras Island Visitor Center (bookstore and exhibits) remains open all year (except Dec. 25) from 9 am to 6 pm in summer (Memorial Day through Labor Day) and 9 am to 5 pm the rest of the year. The lighthouse re-opened to the public for climbing April 20th and will remain open through Columbus Day, October 8th. Climbing fees for the lighthouse will be \$7 per adult, and \$3.50 for children under 12 and senior citizens. Lighthouse grounds are open year-round with the nearby Hatteras Island Visitor Center and Museum of the Sea open every day except for Christmas. Supt. Mike Murray stated, "Climbing tickets are available on a first come/first served basis and can only be purchased in-person at the site on the day of the climb. There are no advance ticket sales. Ticket sales begin at 8:15 a.m. Climbing tours will begin at 9 a.m. and will run every 10 minutes with a limit of 30 visitors per tour. Ticket sales close at 4:30 p.m. in the spring and fall, and at 5:30 p.m. the Friday of Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. Ticket holders should arrive at the lighthouse gate five minutes prior to their ticketed tour time. The lighthouse may close at any time if weather conditions are unsafe." The keepers' quarters have been painted, roofs replaced, new windows and floors refinished, and the lighthouse will be painted this year.

**The Dare County Visitors Bureau** is opening the Hatteras Weather Station June 1st as a welcome center. The Weather Station is located in Hatteras Village just off of Hwy. 12.

**Cape Hatteras National Seashore** has put in a bid for \$10 million to take advantage of grants for the National Park Centennial (2016). The Park can potentially gain matching funds for 20 separate projects for the entire Park (this includes the Wright Brothers National Monument, Bodie Island Light Station, Cape Hatteras Light Station, and Ocracoke Light Station. Requests for these funds are separate from the funds that have already been requested for the restoration of the Bodie Island Lighthouse, slated to be voted on this spring/summer and is predicted to pass.





# LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

*Updates on the area lighthouse events & schedules*

**Cape Lookout Lighthouse** is part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. This Park bids farewell to Superintendent Bob Vogel who will be missed. Bob is leaving Cape Lookout to assume duties as Deputy Superintendent at Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. Connie Backlund, Supt. of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site in Flat Rock, NC, will be Acting Supt. at Cape Lookout National Seashore until a new superintendent reports for duty.

The *new and improved* **Harkers Island Visitor Center** (Cape Lookout National Seashore headquarters) has an expanded Eastern National bookstore and features a new theatre, a new film narrated by Meryl Streep, comprehensive displays, and a discovery room for young visitors.

Meanwhile, **at the lighthouse** and grounds on Core Sound Banks Island, the new Keepers' Quarters Museum has opened to the public. Three rooms are devoted to information about the U.S. Life-Saving Service, the U.S. Lighthouse Service, and Cape Lookout National Seashore. The fourth room presents a shorter version of the new Park film. New wayside displays are scattered throughout the light station and along the new boardwalk to the ocean. The new light station visitor center, public restrooms, and shade shelter opened last summer, making this historic site more visitor-friendly while interpreting the rich history of the area.

**WANT TO CLIMB Cape Lookout Lighthouse?** Here's the scoop: **Lighthouse Open House dates: You must make reservations on the designated date. For reservations, call on that special day (about 3 weeks ahead of the climbing date) (252) 728-5766. June 16, 2007 - Reservations accepted on Wed. May 30, beginning at 9:00 a.m. August 4, Reservations accepted on Wed. July 18, beginning at 9:00 a.m. November 3, 2007 Reservations accepted on Wed. October 17, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** If you would like to become a Volunteer-in-the-Park, contact the park at (252) 728-2250 and Richard Meissner, Volunteer Coordinator. Private funding through partnerships to restore the lighthouse can sponsor stair repairs and possible opening of the tower for climbing on a more frequent basis that the four special days each year. For more info: (252) 728-2250 or see <http://www.nps.gov/calol/>.

**Ocracoke Lighthouse** is part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Ocracoke's base is open when volunteers are available—usually in the summer months. The NPS visitor center is located near the Ocracoke-Cedar Island ferry terminal near the village (not at the lighthouse) and has an Eastern National bookstore and restroom facilities. It is open all year: Memorial Day–Labor Day 9:00 am to 6:00 pm; after Labor Day 'til Memorial Day 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Ocracoke Preservation Society helps oversee repairs to the keepers' quarters. It looks great with its new coat of paint. Some of our members reported that the light was out recently. The Park reported that a generator malfunctioned for a brief period and has been repaired.

**Oak Island Lighthouse** is owned by the Town of Caswell Beach with ongoing cooperative efforts with the Friends of Oak Island Lighthouse. Take a look at the Friends of Oak Island's new website at [www.oakislandlighthouse.org](http://www.oakislandlighthouse.org). Find out how to join at <http://www.caswellbeach.org/lighthouse.html>. Contact Friends of Oak Island Lighthouse, 1100 Caswell Beach Road, Caswell Beach, NC 28465 or email [lighthouse@caswellbeach.org](mailto:lighthouse@caswellbeach.org). General tours will be offered every Wednesday and Saturday beginning May 30th - September 6th from 10:00 am until 2 pm. Tours will take visitors to the 2nd level only. Tours must be prearranged and are based upon volunteer availability. Please check <http://www.oakislandlighthouse.org/tours.htm> for details.

**Price's Creek 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. This small light played a big role during the Civil War as a blockade runner signal station.

**Old Baldy Lighthouse & Smith Island Museum** is one place all lighthouse enthusiasts must visit. For information, call (910) 457-7481 or see <http://www.oldbaldy.org>. The Old Baldy Foundation owns, maintains, and staffs this historic lighthouse. Ann Mills, Executive Director and Keeper, announced spring hours beginning March 16: open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday 11 am to 4 pm. *Closed on Mondays.* A **Wrecks Log Book** was donated in fall 2006. It is an account of the Cape Fear Life-Saving Station headed by Dunbar Davis before he went to Oak Island Life-Saving Station. It has been transcribed into a legible form by Kim Gotshall and the original will be placed in a glass case for its display. It will be a new exhibit in the museum before summer.

**Roanoke River Lighthouse (reproduction)** is located on the town of Plymouth's beautiful waterfront about halfway between the northern and southern Outer Banks. Call (252) 217-2204 for hours open or to arrange a group visit. Doward Jones reported, "We are in the process of redesigning our billboards and web site to include the 'Gateway to the Outer Banks' theme. Visitors will be greeted by a display and brochure rack ready for support materials from the Outer Banks lighthouses. OBLHS will play a strong supportive role. We've recently acquired a light keeper's utility box that held wicks and various tools—a rare artifact. The box is inscribed with USLHE and we are looking for tools to display with the utility box. See our new website at <http://www.roanokeriverlighthouse.org/> that includes a link with the OBLHS site. We have a visitor section where they can post their photos from their visit. Each year we will have a vote on the favorite photo and it will be used on a T-shirt with a share of the proceeds going to the photographer. So bring your cameras!" The dedication of the lighthouse will be September 15, 2007, and the OBLHS will strongly participate. The town wants to put together a big show. That evening "Cowboys on the Water" an evening of shared stories, fellowship and good food.



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**Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum** is located by the ferry docks at the southern tip of Hatteras Island. Basic hours are Mon-Fri 9 am to 5 pm thanks to volunteers. For more information please see <http://www.graveyardoftheatlantic.com/> or call (252) 986-2995 or 2996. The National Park Service loaned the original pedestal of the Cape Hatteras 1854 first order Fresnel lens along with panels of prisms in park possession to the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum.

**Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station** is located in Rodanthe, just north of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse at Mile Post 39.5 and is a **must-see!** 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 are offered during summer months. The site is open from mid-April through November. **The Beach Apparatus Drill Reenactment is back!** USCG Station Oregon Inlet and USCG Station Hatteras Inlet have each created two drill teams comprised of station personnel who perform the Drill Reenactment, a tradition begun in 1871, and takes place every Thursday at 2 p.m. June, July, and August. **Plan to attend Heroes' Day September 8th, 10 am-6pm. Exhibits, children's activities, USCG drills, and much more!** **Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving boat house has been restored and the buildings have been lifted to guard against flooding.** The main house is next to be restored to the 1904-15 period and is still under repair in many stages.

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

MEMBERSHIP correspondence and donations: Bob DaVia, OBLHS MEMBERSHIP Chair  
PO BOX 2141  
WINTERVILLE NC 28590

OBLHS Life-Time Memberships (\$500) are now offered by OBLHS. Call (919) 787-6378.

**\*\*\* PLEASE READ:** We are using a mailing service and bulk rate permit. Each envelope we mail with your newsletter must weigh *exactly* the same. Therefore, **each of you get a return envelope with your newsletter, but this doesn't mean your membership fees are due! Look at the expiration date on your address label!**

**Do you have a new email address?** Please send it to a [info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:info@outerbankslighthousesociety.org) And, please update your information when using your return envelope!

*Donations were received from Edna Lennon, Michael Flynn (Cp.Hatteras Fund), and two donations from OBLHS Charter Members Wallace & Peggy Grant. Thank you, members and friends! You are helping to save history.*

## OBLHS's October 2007 EVENT!

Mark your calendar and arrange for a weekend to join us for one of the most special weekends ever planned by OBLHS! This is all for you! OBLHS's special weekend October 12-13, we will visit Ocracoke Lighthouse, take a ghost walk, visit Cape Hatteras, and Chicamacomico for a tour and special presentations, a beach bonfire, and a visit to the old North River Lighthouse, now known as the Rodanthe Community Center. Don't miss it! Visit [www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org](http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org) events page for more details and registration forms OR write Bett Padgett, 1213 Dixie Trail, Raleigh, NC, 27607 or phone (919) 7876378. email: [bett@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:bett@outerbankslighthousesociety.org)



# Meet “Jeremy” Smith through Archived Civil War Letters

## A USLHS Clerk Restored NC Lights During the War Between the States

By Bruce Roberts

*A few years ago when Cheryl and I were doing research at the National Archives for our North Carolina Lighthouse book we started making copies of letters by a man who sometimes signed his name “J.P. Smith” and sometimes “Jere P. Smith” while writing to Rear Admiral William B. Shubrick, Chairman of the Light-House Board in Washington, D.C (collectively known as the U.S. Lighthouse Service, or USLHS). Researcher Sandy Clunies accompanied us on some of our marathon research trips and has surmised that his full name is likely “Jeremiah.” We searched through the seemingly endless piles of correspondence in Record Group 26 on several occasions. Seeing his correspondence turn up in many volumes of preserved letters, some burned badly at the corners and water-splotted from extinguishing the fire, gave us a feeling that we were running into an old friend. When the Civil War started in 1861, Smith was a 29-year-old clerk in the office of the Fifth Lighthouse District in Philadelphia, which at the time included all of North Carolina. He signed his letters “Clerk,” but in the 1860 Census he was listed as “superintendent” of that office. That was just the first of many questions that came with his letters.*

We got a bit diverted from our original purpose of research and started following our pal, “Jeremy,” as we have nicknamed him. Researchers in St. Louis at the National Personnel Records archives are looking for his service data and one day we hope to get more into his personal life. For now, we’ll give you a glimpse at a compassionate, non-judgmental man who did a job with little help and made the Union more successful here on the coast of North Carolina.

By the summer of 1862, General Burnside had occupied most of the Outer Banks and Federal forces were roaming Eastern North Carolina from Beaufort to New Burn and north to Elizabeth City and Plymouth. There was a critical need to get the lighthouses relighted; the Union troops needed supplies, which for the most part were shipped by water via NC’s sounds and rivers. The operation of the lights was critical to the Union effort to control the coast and, thus, mainland ports. The big problem for Adm. Shubrick was that the Confederates had stolen not only the Cape Hatteras Fresnel lens, but every Fresnel lens in North Carolina. The Confederate Lighthouse Service had ordered all lenses be removed and taken to places further inland for safekeeping until the war ended. Neither Union nor Confederates believed the war would last long and both planned to be back in charge of things including re-instating the lights with the prized Fresnel lenses.

The letters for the Fifth Lighthouse District at the National Archives are preserved in bulky volumes and listed by dates. The books are wheeled out to reading tables from deep recesses of the archives where public access is denied, so you are never quite sure that the right volumes will be found. A book of letters for summer 1862 arrived at our table and we found Adm Shubrick had sent Jeremy to North Carolina to get the lights working again.



*Rear Admiral William B. Shubrick, circa 1860-65, was born in 1790, George Washington’s inaugural year as President. He was 71-years-old when the Civil War began, but distinguished himself as Chairman of the Light-House Board. He supervised all lighthouse operations during the war and was J.P. Smith’s superior; dozens of personal letters between the two men allow us to follow incidents during the conflict involving lighthouses and the reclamation of the highly prized Fresnel lenses taken by Rebels.*

Picture courtesy of the Library of Congress

A temporary 2nd order Fresnel lens had been put in the Cape Hatteras tower by lighthouse engineer W.J. Newman. But the other lights were dark: Bodie Island was not only dark but blown-up by retreating Confederates; the Bogue Banks Range Lights at Fort Macon that guided ships in Beaufort Harbor were also destroyed; Ocracoke, Bald Head, and the sound and river lights were dark and without lenses or even oil.

This was the first of many trips to the North Carolina lighthouses for Jeremy. A former lighthouse tender named *Lenox* was put at his disposal and his title changed from Clerk to Acting Lighthouse Engineer—quite a jump in rank. Sitting at a table on the fifth floor of the National Archives building, we looked about and realized there is none to answer all our questions—all we could do was turn to the next letter and read.

And the next letter revealed a secret. Jeremy wrote Adm. Shubrick on August 2, 1862 that the 3rd order revolving Bodie Island Fresnel lens had been packed away in crates at the lighthouse warehouse in Philadelphia, apparently recently arrived, perhaps brought there on the *Lenox* when he returned from North Carolina. No details are given about its recovery. Since this letter indicated the first good news Shubrick had received of any Fresnel lens in North Carolina being recovered, it is curious that there is no reference as to how the lens got back into Federal hands.

Kevin Duffus in his fascinating book *The Lost Light, The Mystery of the Missing Cape Hatteras Fresnel Lens* followed the path of the Bodie Island Fresnel from its removal from the lighthouse to the Customs House at Elizabeth City months before the tower was destroyed. After that, the path gets murky. Confederates hearing of Burnside's troops approaching Elizabeth City apparently removed Fresnel lenses with hopes of getting them safely to the capital at Raleigh. Duffus said in his book, "The Federal soldiers searched not only the Custom's house but everywhere else in Elizabeth City but found no Fresnel lenses." (Sherman's troops found a number of Fresnel lenses stored in the Capitol building when they reached Raleigh in the closing days of the war.)

The Bodie Island lens wasn't found because somehow Jeremy had already recovered it and had it safely moved to his Philadelphia office. It is possible that Federal gunboats on the Roanoke River may have intercepted it as Rebels tried to move it to Raleigh. No details as to how it got to Philadelphia. See Jeremy's letter dated August 25th, 1862.

In October Jeremy was back in North Carolina on the *Lenox* and wrote Shubrick that he had given Abraham Farrow an appointment as keeper of the Cape Hatteras Light Station, signed by Secretary of the Treasury. On November 5th he administered the Oath of Office to Ellis Howard at Ocracoke and put him in charge as keeper after installing a new fourth order Fresnel lens and putting the lighthouse back in good condition. Jeremy, once former "Clerk," became "Acting Lighthouse Inspector" and seemed to be in charge of all lights

in North Carolina. Was it his recovery of the Bodie Island Fresnel that gave him a grand promotion? A century of time separated us from anyone who could answer that question.

On December 1st, 1862, Jeremy wrote Shubrick about the poor condition of the Cape Hatteras Light and trouble with the burners inside the Fresnel lens. On Dec. 11th he wrote again about Hatteras and was worried that sand was blowing away from the base of the tower and that brush needed to be placed to trap the sand.

By February he moved down to Cape Lookout and installed a 3rd order Fresnel lens in the empty tower. He told Shubrick it would be lighted for the first time on March 1st and every night thereafter. It was a fixed white light and covered an arc on the horizon of 288 degrees (not the recovered Bodie Island lens which was a revolving 3rd order); Jeremy continued by stating that the dwelling part of the old tower has been repaired and made comfortable for the keepers. In other letters he asked the Light-House Board for food rations and a boat for the keepers at Cape Lookout since it was impossible to grow vegetables on the island. This was only one of several of Jeremy's letters that were full of concern for all keepers' welfare.

There are some missing letters from March to June; likely, Jeremy was working on smaller sound lights during this time.

On June 23rd, on board the *Lenox*, anchored in Pamlico Sound near Buxton, Jeremy wrote Adm. Shubrick some good news a week before the battle of Gettysburg. For the first time in more than two years, a first order Fresnel lens was shining in the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, sending a beam of focused light out 19 nautical miles to sea reaching beyond the dreaded Diamond Shoals. Jeremy had replaced the temporary 2nd order lens with a much larger 1st order Fresnel. A week later Vicksburg fell and the Mississippi River belonged to the Federals. The tide of war was shifting away from the South.

Letters from July 1863 to April 1864 were missing from the records we had found, but probably Jeremy spent that time working on the lights in Pamlico, Albemarle, Croatan, and Bogue Sounds, which were coming back into service.

On April 7, 1864, a letter to the Light-House board reported there was an attempt to destroy the Cape Lookout Lighthouse by a Confederate raiding party. Kegs of gunpowder placed at the base of both towers had been set off but had not destroyed the towers as had been hoped.

(Some accounts say the powder was defective, other reports indicate that there was not enough used to take down the lights. A report of the event is in the official Confederate records. Gen. Pickett, in command of the North Carolina area, sent the report to Gen Lee who reported back that perhaps some gold should be given to the brave men that made the attempt. But other pressing events prevented any action to fulfill the suggestion.)

Jeremy reported to Shubrick that he had returned to Cape Lookout and repaired the lighthouse stairs damaged in the April

4th attack. The 3rd order Fresnel lens had not been damaged. He again requested “rations” for the Cape Lookout Light Station in the same quantities provided for the screw pile sound lights “since there is no vegetation within three miles of the Cape Lookout Lighthouse.” He also asked the keepers be paid \$500 a year.

October 12, 1864, Edward Cordell, Acting Fifth District Lighthouse Inspector, and the only other lighthouse officer in North Carolina other than Jeremy, sent word to the Light-House Board that the Croatan Lighthouse has been destroyed by members of crew of the Confederate Ram *Albemarle* and the keeper had been taken prisoner. There is some irony in this event because a few weeks later the Confederate Ram *Albemarle* was blown up in a daring attack by a young Navy officer, Lt. William B. Cushing, who became famous for the accomplishment. The unfortunate, captured keeper was taken to the Confederate prison in Salisbury and wrote a letter on blue woman’s stationary laced with gold flecks. We will always remember having seen this letter in the pages at the archives—it looked strangely out of place. The keeper had apparently been lucky to find anything to write on and the letter did reach the Light-House Board in Washington with the keeper’s plea to be exchanged for captured Confederate civilians. No additional letters were in the file; we never learned if the keeper had survived the war.

In March 1865 after the fall of Fort Fisher near Wilmington, the last Southern port open to provide materials and munitions for Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia, Jeremy was on the Cape Fear River trying to get lights going again. Before the war there had been a half dozen pairs of range lights from Oak Island to Wilmington to guide ships upriver. At Orton Plantation there had been a pair of these range lights and Jeremy found the old keeper still there, barely keeping alive by fishing and planting a garden. He reported that the keepers were first told to darken the lights by Confederate authorities until it became apparent that the lights would only help blockade runners and of no help to Union ships since Confederate forts guarded both entrances to the Cape Fear. Who did the keepers work for? The only orders they received were from Confederate authorities who ordered the lights relighted until the oil ran out.

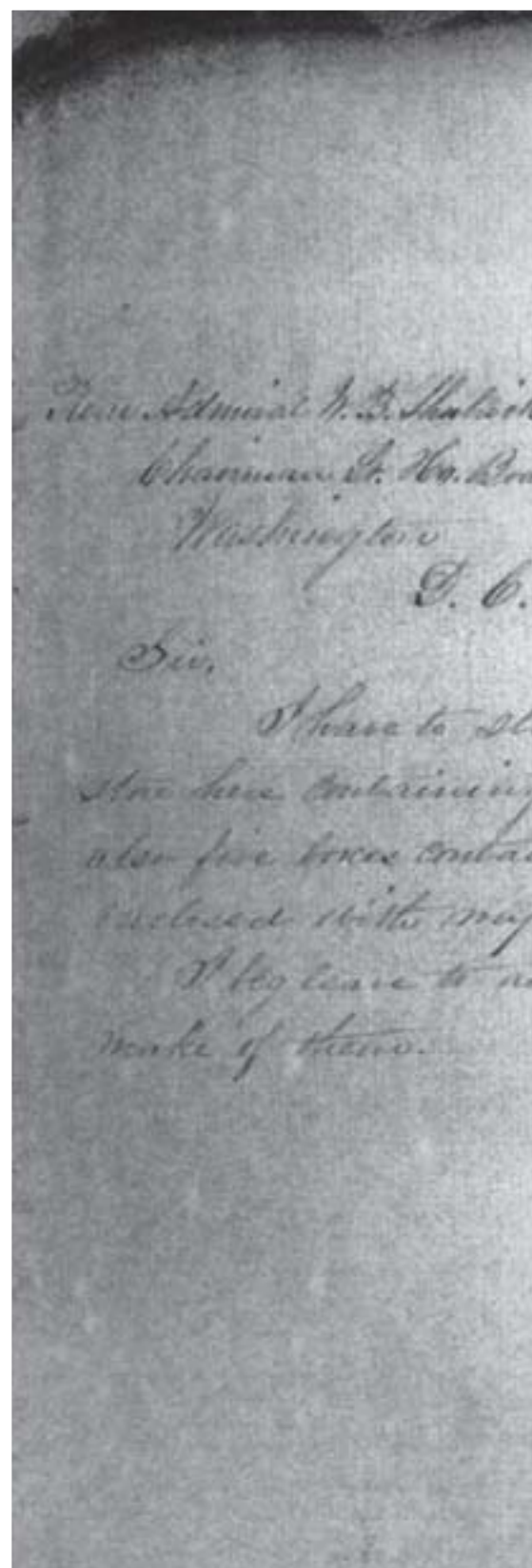
Jeremy rehired the old keepers and gave them rations, oil and lamps; however, several weeks later, he was told to dismiss them because they had served the Confederate government. Anyone who worked for the Confederates would never again work for the Union, Jeremy was informed. Seemingly a moot point, the lighthouses of the Cape Fear were never rebuilt.

So as the war ended, we found Jeremy in charge of all North Carolina lighthouses and the lights coming back on from Virginia to South Carolina. He had set up an office in Beaufort. Cheryl and I both hope to find out more about Jeremy. He installed more Fresnel lenses in North Carolina lighthouses than any other engineer. In one of his later letters, he had written to Shubrick to express his dismay in a desperate tone. Jeremy had arrived home after years of working under dangerous conditions only to find that he had been... drafted. He beseeched Shubrick to write a letter of reprieve since he felt he had completed his war duty—it was dangerous out there on the sounds and rivers during the war. Evidently he received his request because a subsequent letter was written from Raleigh while he was looking for more recovered Fresnel lenses April 6, 1865, after Robert E. Lee had surrendered. (Gen. Sherman’s quartermaster had already shipped them to Washington, D.C. and the Navy yard there.)

Then, the letters end and the trail turned cold and it took years to find what happened to this young man. We had grown to like (Jeremy) Smith and admired his courage while he fought on another front of the Civil War. He was kind to the keepers and did more to keep our lights shining than perhaps anyone—yet today he is forgotten. ✎

*In the letter below, Jeremy wrote to Adm. Shubrick boxes in store here [Philadelphia] containing parts of per my list, enclosed with my letter of July 25th, 1862. Fresnel lenses removed by Rebels, could this be the re honored title “Lighthouse Engineer”?*

This letter is part of Record Group 26 from the Nat





of the Light-House Board to inform him that "...there are seven of the Body Island lens and also five boxes containing chimneys as 2." Since this appears to be the first recovery of any North Carolina reason for this young man's leap from being a "clerk" to taking the

ional Archives, Washington, D.C.

no. 3 61 I

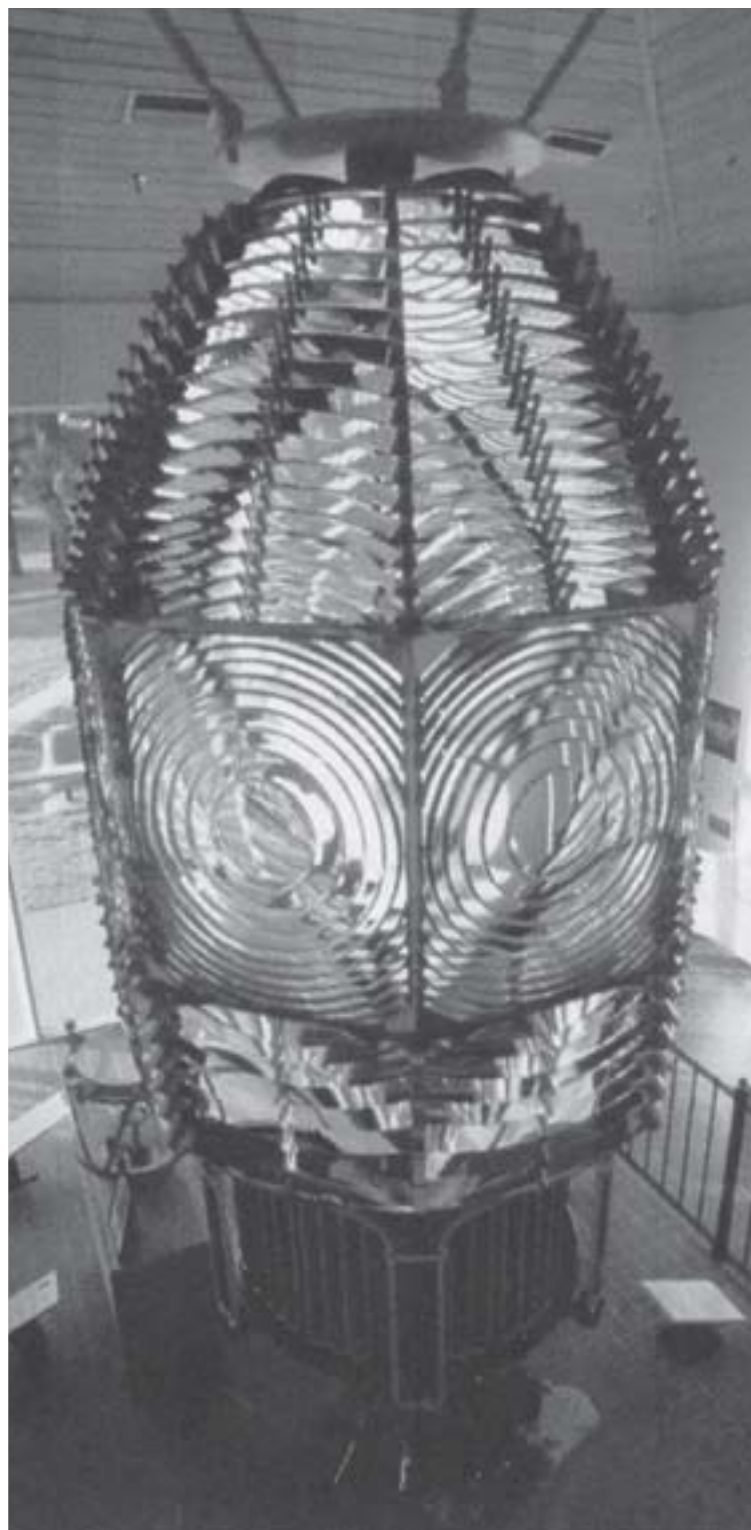
3

Engineer Office 4<sup>th</sup> St. W. East  
Philad<sup>a</sup> August 28<sup>th</sup> 1862

te, there are seven boxes in  
parts of Body Island lens  
chimneys, as per list  
letter of July 28<sup>th</sup> 1862.  
what dispositions I will

I Am, Very Respectfully  
Yours &c. &c.  
J. P. Smith  
S. H. Co. Secy.

125



Fresnel lenses were not installed in the majority of U.S. lighthouses until after the re-organization of the Light-House Board in 1852. It took years of visiting other countries and observing these lenses' superiority in magnifying light to provide bright beams of light as guides to mariners. Congress fought hard to get the lenses funded during the 1850s. Unfortunately, Southern lighthouses were some of the first victims of the War Between the States and the lenses were removed and hidden by Confederates only a few years after they had been installed. Recovering the Fresnel lenses and getting them restored was a priority for the Union.

# 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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# What's Going On?

*From OBLHS President Bett Padgett*

(919) 787-6378

[bett@outerbankslighthousesociety.org](mailto:bett@outerbankslighthousesociety.org)



Dear Members,

Emergency repairs for the Bodie Island Lighthouse for which the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society contributed \$10,000 will begin May 25th according to Cp. Hatteras National Seashore Supt. Mike Murray. (Large chunks of iron fell from the tower in August 2004, which has kept the doors to the tower closed since then) Due to work that is also being done to the staircase inside the tower, the opening of the doors to the lighthouse may be intermittent.

Cp. Hatteras National Seashore (as are ALL National Parks) is taking advantage of the NPS Centennial Initiative. The current government administration is focused on getting Parks ready for the next 100 years. The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service is 2016. The initiative has three components: 1) \$100 million/year to distribute among the 391 parks to enhance park operations 2) \$100 million/year in NPS project funds to use as matching funds for partnership projects; and 3) (hopefully) up to \$100 million/year in matching partner donations for the partnership projects. Cape Hatteras National Seashore looks to the OBLHS as friends and would like for us to help in raising monies needed for the restoration of the Bodie Island lens. We'll keep you posted!

For those of you who are able to keep up with news at our website [www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org](http://www.outerbankslighthousesociety.org) and would like to renew your membership or do a little shopping online, we now have a Pay Pal account where you can quickly and easily use a credit card to do so. Visit us! **Please** keep us informed of your **updated contact information!** We have sent several emails over the last few months and bounced messages lead us to believe you may have new addresses, snail and email. Please keep us up to date!!!!

We were sorry to learn that Marc Basnight's **Lone Cedar Restaurant** in Nags Head burned to the ground May 1st. It was fortunate that it happened when the restaurant was closed. Sen. Basnight has been a friend to NC's lighthouses and to OBLHS. He says that he plans to rebuild and reopen in about one year.

Our hearts go out to OBLHS board directors Charlie and Shirley Votaw. Their granddaughter was struck by an automobile in April and has suffered head injuries, but the welcome news is that her prognosis looks good! She is in one of the best hospitals in Washington, DC and we hope for a speedy recovery. Many of you who have attended our events will remember the Votaws. If you would like to send a card, their address is: P. O. Box 615/Avon, NC 27915-0015.

We hope you enjoyed reading about our October 2006 event in the last newsletter. Details of our 2007 event are found in this newsletter and we would love to have you join us!

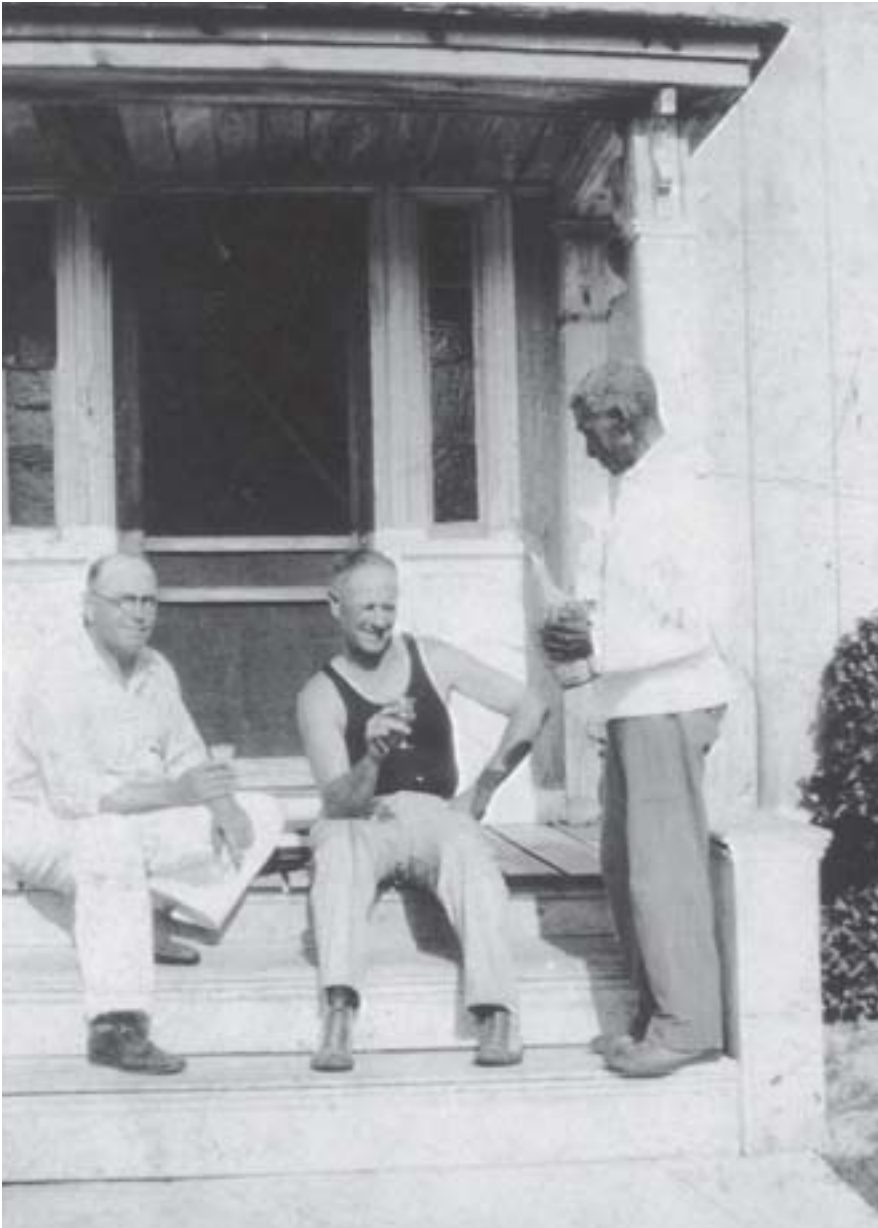
We are embarking on a new tourist season and truly hope you will visit the coast of North Carolina. There is some discrepancy of exactly where are the Outer Banks? Much of our coast is embraced with a thin strip of barrier islands; so in essence, our entire coast is paralleled by 'Outer Banks.' As you know, the lighthouses of North Carolina hug the Virginia and South Carolina borders, so wherever you may travel on the coast, you will be near a lighthouse. Come visit! They belong to you!

As always, we love to hear from **YOU**, our members! Please don't hesitate to phone or email with questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Bett Padgett

*Tom Angell lit up children's faces*

# North Carolina Lighthouse Keeper's Adopted Son Is Still Remembered As Ice Cream Man



Family information states that Keeper Nelson Paul Angell and his wife took a young black boy with them to Oliver's Reef in 1874 when Nelson took over keepership. This is noteworthy because there were few African-Americans on Hatteras Island during this time. Further, it was unique for "Tom" to have been adopted by the Angells.

From family and Civil War pension records, Keeper Nelson Paul Angell was born in Rhode Island round 1831, served in the 2nd MA Inf in the Civil War, and married Czarina "Inez" A. (Locke) (c. 1831 -1911) in Vermont before they moved to North Carolina after the war. They had one son, Louis Cushman Angell (1858-1892). Nelson served as assistant keeper at Cape Hatteras from 1871 until 1873; the next available record places him at Hatteras Inlet from 1874 until his death in 1887, while still on active duty. Family records state that Louis was a keeper at other sound lights including one of the Royal Shoal screwpile lighthouses in 1874 and then was promoted to keeper in 1885 at the NW Point Royal Shoal Light near Portsmouth Island.

Thomas, who was known as "Tom Angell" to Hatteras Islanders, stayed on Hatteras Island as an adult and took care of his adoptive mother, Inez. He even created his own business and sold ice cream to the public. Keepers' children who loved to go to Hatteras Village and visit his ice cream

*Tom Angell, right, is shown in his always-crisp-and-clean working jacket. He was adopted as a young child by Keeper Nelson P. Angell and his wife, Inez; at left is Angell's grandson. After Keeper Angell died, Tom stayed to help his adoptive mother, Inez, and retained property rights for the remainder of life after Inez's death. For years, islanders and visitors went to Tom's ice-cream parlor where he made an icy concoction from sweetened condensed milk and served it with mountainous chocolate cake.*

Photo courtesy of Bunny Angell Lundgren, Keeper Nelson Angell's great-great granddaughter



parlor still speak of Tom with great respect. Kids came from as far as Frisco and Buxton for ice cream and those visiting from the mainland made sure they got by Tom's for a frosty treat.

Thanks to Nelson Angell's great-great granddaughter, Bunny Angell Lundgren, we continue to add to our information on the Angells and their adopted African-American son, Tom. The story goes that Keeper Angell and his wife, Inez, lived in New Bern during the Civil War. Following the war, Nelson took keepership at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. Before moving to Hatteras Island, Inez saw Tom, then seven-years-old, on the streets of New Bern. She asked his parents if she could take him with them to the island and Tom's parents agreed. He then became part of the family and although he may have been in some role of servitude to the family, to what degree remains a family debate to this day. Tom was considered as much a part of the Angell's fold as any of their children and other relatives. For instance, Bunny resented that Tom was pictured in *National Geographic* in a white servant's suit and portrayed as simply that to the family. Everyone who referred to Tom always recalled that he wore a "white suit," but never referred to it as a servant's outfit. He was simply meticulous about his appearance and wore it since he often helped at various places as a cook. Stories passed down about Tom have largely been ones of Tom's integral part of the Angell family.

Tom Angell took the family name after asking matriarch Inez for permission. She told Tom he could use the family name until he disgraced it. He never did. Family members and those who remember Tom still express admiration and fondness for him. One relative recalled that Tom "...grew up with all the white boys here [Hatteras Island]...his house was the only gathering place in Hatteras. He sold ice cream and cake, and on Saturdays and Sundays he made ice cream sodas...If you ever wanted to find someone on a Saturday night or Sunday, you went to Tom Angell's and you'd find him...."

Hatteras keepers' descendants recall Tom easily and always with a smile. Imagine a hot Saturday evening after a hard day doing laundry and fishing and how delicious some of Tom's homemade ice cream and chocolate layer cake with icing an inch thick between layers would taste. And Sundays were special. After church, it was a tradition to go to Tom's for a summer's treat.

Tom was a trusted help to Keeper Angell and wife Inez. When Inez died, she left Tom as custodian of the home until he passed away. He is buried with Nelson and Inez Angell in the family cemetery, now the Foster cemetery. 🕯

*Thank you to Bunny Lundgren for this information and the selection of images from her father's and uncle's photograph albums. Her Uncle Lou Angell lived on Hatteras Island and wrote about local history for the Hatteras Monitor. Some info excerpted from Hatteras Keepers Oral & Family Histories edited by Cheryl Shelton-Roberts and family histories by Sandra MacLean Clunies, published by the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society for the keepers' reunion weekend May 2001 with info submitted by Margaret Angell Shields Volney-Huff.*

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# Friends of Cape Lookout National Seashore Have Big Plans

To date, Cape Lookout has been one of the nation's sleepers. It has been a treasure still hidden in the sand, a diamond in the rough, a gem overlooked.

But, no more.

Based on results from a Board meeting of the Friends of Cape Lookout National Seashore in April, a Strategic Plan Committee has been formed. Bruce Roberts represents the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society. Its purpose is to develop a plan to raise \$2 million over the next 2 – 3 years to match the National Park Service's Centennial Grants Program, a 10-year program that will award up to \$100 million per year for improvements to the National Parks.

The President's Centennial Initiative is a fund-matching program that intends to raise as much as \$3 billion in public and private investment for the National Park Service in preparation for the 2016 National Park Service's Centennial birthday. The Cape Lookout National Seashore with the help of its partner,

the Friends of Cape Lookout National Seashore, is dedicated to restoration and preservation of the park. The Friends have accepted the challenge to raise funds that include restoration of the lighthouse and making necessary repairs to get it open to the public on a regular basis. The Friends will continue with later projects to lend help to all parts of the park. ✈



*Friends of Cape Lookout will help restore the Cape Lookout Lighthouse.*

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## David Stick Chosen “Living Legend”

David Stick, the first to receive the newly created Living Legend Award, was feted recently at the Land of Beginnings Festival's Community Luncheon at the Pavilion at Wright Brothers National Memorial. East Carolina Bank also announced the creation of the East Carolina Bank Living Legend Endowment Fund. The fund will be set up with the Outer Banks Community Foundation which was founded by Stick.

Sen. Marc Basnight, unable to attend, sent written remarks that were read. "The condition of our community and its people, the risks we face in losing our rich heritage, the fragility of the world we all live in — David Stick speaks out about these issues because he knows that we need to pay attention before it's too late," wrote Basnight. "... David Stick is truly a giant not only in our community, but in the community of life..."

The Outer Banks History Center was built by the state of NC to house David's lifetime collection of photos, manuscripts, papers, and other research materials, the largest donation to the state to date. No one else has brought to the forefront the issues of how can we develop the Outer Banks and welcome cultural tourists without loving the Banks to death.

A supporter of the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society from its inception, David has traditionally attended our fall annual events and made the occasions all the more special. Congratulations! ✈