

the FLA FLASH

A quarterly publication of the Florida Lighthouse Association, Inc.
www.floralighthouses.org

Presidents Message

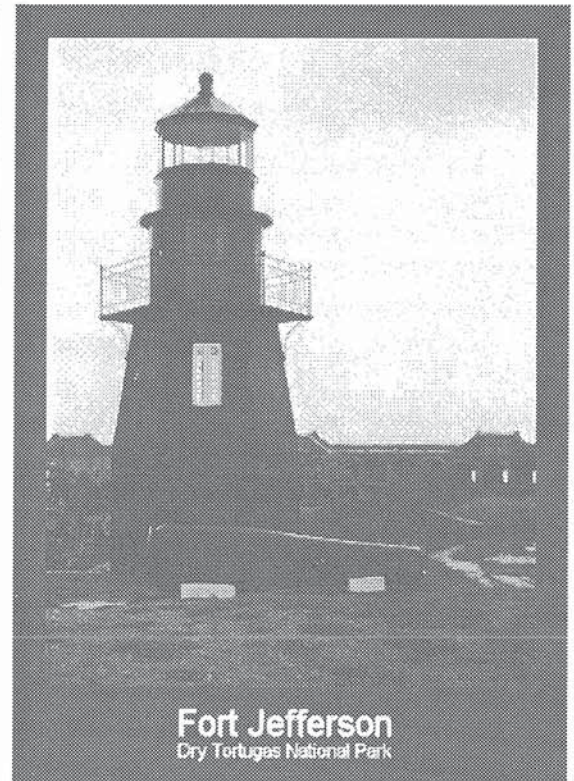
This comes with high hopes for the future and a sad note for the FLA. We have a lot of work ahead of us as an organization. Much needs to be accomplished to help save our endangered lighthouses. I look at the very precarious Cape St. George lighthouse on the brink of total destruction again. I understand there is a group who is trying to help save that light and needs our help. We also have several other lights such as Crooked River, Cape San Blas and St. Johns River lights that are in great need at this time. The Executive Board and Board of Commissioners will be evaluating the needs and presenting a NEW challenge to the membership and friends of our lighthouses. We are a non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible. Please consider making a donation to our Preservation Fund. If you have knowledge of groups or organizations that support historical preservation efforts, would you please let them know of our needs. THANK YOU FOR ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE AND SPREAD THE WORD!

Now on the sad note, Tom Taylor our immediate past President passed away suddenly on May 19th. Tom along with many others, including our founding President Ann Caneer, put their heart and souls into this wonderful organization. He will be greatly missed in the entire lighthouse world. His vast knowledge of lighthouses was impressive. He authored many books and was getting ready to release another. I did not know Tom like so many others that were around from the beginning, but I know this, he was a wonderful person who gave of himself for the betterment of all. Tom's smile and leadership will be missed.

One last thing, be sure to come to the Keys with us in July. The trip that is planned will be a great one. We will be going out to the Dry Tortugas and spending time in Key West. What a great place to get away for the weekend.

I look forward to seeing you in Key West.

Wayne Hawes,
 President



Fort Jefferson
 Dry Tortugas National Park

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A Short Tribute to Thomas W. Taylor,



Florida Lighthouse Historian and Founder of the Florida Lighthouse Association.

Dear friends of Tom,

I am deeply saddened to hear of Tom's recent passing. Tom was a great friend, and a true champion of Florida's Lighthouses.

Whenever the subject of lighthouses came up, Tom Taylor had a gleam in his eyes as bright as a first order lens. An accomplished historian, Tom's dream was to have all lighthouses beautifully restored and open to the public. In my faith I am sure that Tom has climbed the spiral staircase to heaven and is now keeping watch at the head keeper's side. God bless Tom Taylor.

As a brief remembrance of Tom, I've put together the below collection of snippets from the web as a very, very brief reminder of published works on lighthouses.

Neil Hurley

From: <http://www.floridalighthouses.org/>

Tom was born in Columbus, OH, but spent 20 years in Maine, teaching sailing, restoring antique wooden sailboats, and fell in love with Monhegan Island's lighthouse. He studied in Ecuador and Mexico, and worked for 3 years on Andros Island running a marine biology field station. Tom has degrees in International Studies & Secondary Social Studies Education from Ohio State University and a masters degree in history & museum administration from University of North Carolina. He came to Florida to establish the Halifax Historical Museum in Daytona Beach. He served as a movie consultant for 3 films: Alamo: Price of Freedom, Glory and The Rose and the Jackal. He served for 7 years as historian for Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, published 2 books and directed 4 video documentaries (2 aired on the History Channel). He is one of the founders of the Florida Lighthouse Association, its past president and president of the Florida Keys Reef Lights Foundation.

A few of the books written by Tom Taylor:

Florida's Territorial Lighthouses 1821-1845 By Thomas W. Taylor. A well researched book into the detailed history of the lighthouses. A book for the true lighthouse historian.

"Florida's Territorial Lighthouses, 1821-1845,' is clearly a cut above most lighthouse books published in recent years. Author Taylor really did his homework in researching the earliest lighthouses to dot the Florida shores." -- Wayne Wheeler, U.S. Lighthouse Society.

This book (Florida Lighthouse Trail, Thomas W. Taylor editor) is for lighthouse lovers that are living in or interested in lighthouses of Florida.

The Beacon of Mosquito Inlet: A History of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, by Thomas W. Taylor (1993)

Building the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, Keepers Log, Fall 1994. Thomas W. Taylor

Monhegan Island and Its Lighthouse by Thomas W. Taylor and Infinity Publishing July, 2003

FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION, INC. PENSACOLA MEETING

I wish to thank all of you who attended the April meeting in Pensacola. I know it's a long drive for many of you as we have found out when attending the FLA meetings elsewhere in the state. My regret is that I did not have time to visit with each and every one of you, but when hosting a meeting Murphy's Law is apt to kick in and that day I was busy tackling small problems at three locations. I'm also sorry that the Friday Mobile Bay boat trip on the Coast Guard Cutter Cobia had to be cancelled due to an unexpected mission. The Sunday trip on the schooner Joshua was a wonderful, restful way to end the weekend, however. The weather was beautiful and the crew was able to get us very close to the Middle Bay Lighthouse for some great pictures. Hopefully you enjoyed the abbreviated version of the play "The Keeper". I wish there had been enough time for the entire play because there are many different aspects of the story that you were not able to explore with the actresses.

I want to thank Chief Gordon and his people at the U. S. Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Team, Pensacola and my husband Gordon for finally accomplishing a goal I have had for 10 years – a marker at the site of Pensacola's first lighthouse and Florida's first lighthouse on its Gulf Coast. Thank you for sharing this special occasion.

In closing I would like to share the following letter I received from John Ewing who attended the ceremony and had four generations of lighthouse keepers along the Gulf Coast.

"The Lighthouse Association meeting was an exciting event. Thank you for the honor to represent my grandfathers and father for their service. My grandmothers and mother were strong and sturdy mates. They too also served along side these pioneer men and bore their children. We the off springs were taught well by their love and commitment to us. The ethics taught were learned and stay with us in our lives. Eileen and I thank you for giving us the opportunity to share the day. Sincerely, John Ewing"

Dianne Levi



Monument for Pensacola's first lighthouse, 1824. The first Florida Gulf Coast Lighthouse.

L-R – Captain Pruitt CO NAS Pensacola, Dianne Levi FLA, Wayne Hawes President FLA, Chief Gordon USCG Aids to Navigation, Pensacola

Is Cape St. George Florida's most endangered lighthouse?

Several FLA members visited the Cape St. George Lighthouse on their way to the way to the April Pensacola meeting and reported the severe erosion that continues to threaten the lighthouse. May 13th I met with Roy Ogles, the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection Stewardship Coordinator for the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve. We visited the island and lighthouse area to view the situation and discuss possibilities of saving the lighthouse. Roy is in the process of applying for grant money from the Florida Dept. of Historical Resources to fund an initial assessment of the situation by a maritime engineer. Roy envisions moving the lighthouse by barge to a stable, accessible mainland site. I would hope that grants could also be secured to move the brick pier remains of the keeper's house and its chimney. The house

chimney is cracked and the top portion is slightly moved out of alignment. The remaining walls of the oil house are immediately threatened by the waves and erosion. This summer's storms could eliminate both. The lighthouse, itself, is completely surrounded by at least 6 feet of water in an area of constant strong wave action. Already much of the heavy plastic pilings supporting the concrete ledge around the tower have been washed away as well as portions of the concrete collar. The only thing that is keeping the lighthouse upright is the weight of the brick tower and the concrete added to straighten and stabilize it in 1999. FLA needs to lend their support to save Cape St. George Lighthouse.

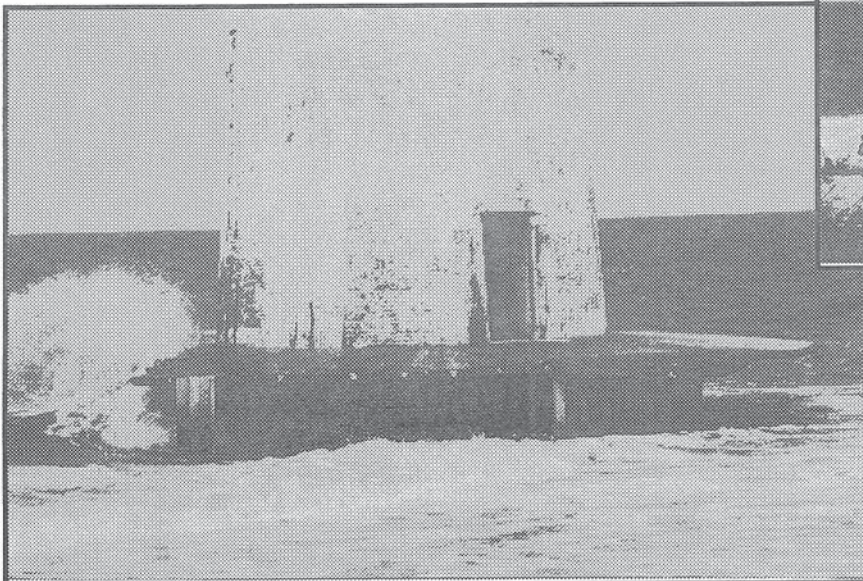
Fireplace and chimney, all that remains of the Keeper's quarters.

Photo © Gordon Levi, 2004



What was once surrounded by beach is now an island in the gulf.

Photo © Gordon Levi, 2004



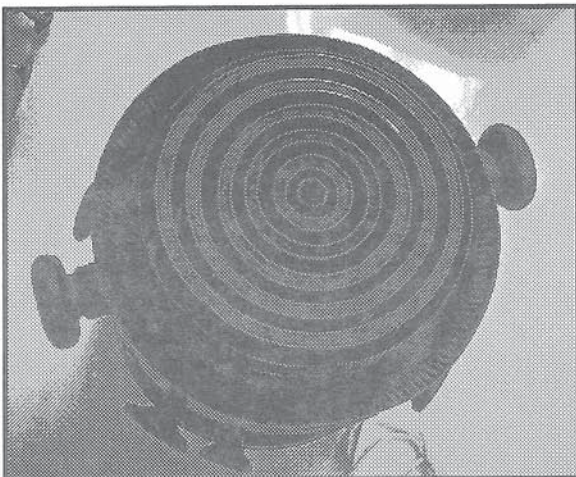
Q&A – Oil Consumption at Pensacola Light – by Neil Hurley

The question was "How many trips with 5 gallon cans of oil was needed for the Pensacola lighthouse each night?"

You said "Some lighthouses had only one 5 gallon can of kerosene at night and other references mention that there were several which the keepers took up each time they climbed the tower."

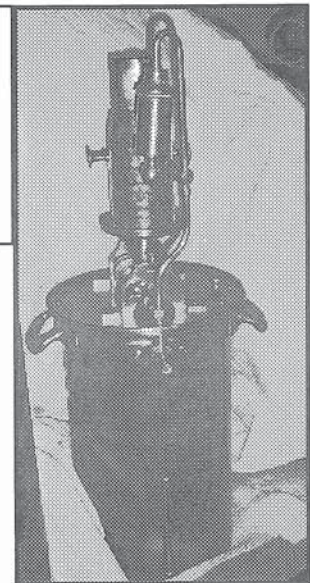
While I don't have a direct answer there's a lot I can speculate about.

- From early oil use reports, I know that the first Pensacola Lighthouse used about 22 to 26 gallons of oil per month. That was with 10 lamps of relatively inefficient design -- so less than one gallon per night.
- By 1914 the lamp in the tower was an IOV (Incandescent Oil Vapor) lamp ... a design very similar to the old "Coleman White Gas" lantern. This design was also very efficient in using fuel, which was kerosene. I doubt that they needed much more than a gallon a night.
- In 1884 new mineral oil (kerosene) lamps were installed. It isn't clear if this was an IOV lamp or a lamp with a regular wick.
- The period of greatest oil usage was probably after 1867. Before that time, and certainly during the pre-civil war period, whale oil was used. This was very high grade lamp oil, and the oil from the lighthouse was highly valued during the early part of the Civil War because no lubricating oil of this quality was available in the South. By 1855 the price of sperm oil was \$2.25/gallon (almost as much as gasoline today!) By 1867 lard oil with pre-heaters was the primary oil in use because it was cheaper. Because of the high cost of oil, they were very, very careful to measure the quantities of oil used.
- I don't have any other source documents that talk about the amount of oil used at Pensacola.
- Remember that a gallon of water weighs about 8 pounds -- 5 gallons of oil = about 40 pounds.
- The lamp with the highest fuel consumption was a 5 wick oil burner (I think they also had 7 wick lamps too). I'm enclosing a photo of the top of a 5 wick lamp. These stood on top of 5 gallon oil storage containers. I doubt that you would add more oil to these things once they got going because of the heat and danger of starting a fire. SO ... based on all the info I have, I very seriously doubt that it took more than one trip with a 5 gallon oil container to fuel the light at Pensacola each night.



The top of a 5 wick lamp. It is about 5 inches across.

The complete lamp and oil storage container. It is about 3 feet tall.



FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY MEETING

Dry Tortugas National Park – July 17, 2004

The third Quarterly Meeting of the Florida Lighthouse Association for 2004 will be aboard the Sunny Days "Fast Cat II" as it returns from an exciting day of visiting Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas. We will board the catamaran at Conch Harbor located at the corners of Greene and Elizabeth Streets. For those interested, there is a public parking garage located a short walk from the pier at the intersection of Margaret and Caroline Streets.

Three Lights in one day:

The Dry Tortugas National Park is located 70 miles west of Key West and consists of seven tiny islands and the surrounding waters. Located on one of those islands, Garden Key, is historic Fort Jefferson, America's largest coastal fort. It's was used as a military prison during the Civil War with its most notable prisoner being Dr. Samuel Mudd, the physician who tended to John Wilkes Booth after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. The discounted group rate for this unique experience is \$90.00 per person. Each person will also have to pay an additional \$5.00 fee collected by the National Park Service for park entrance. Ranger Mike T. Ryan, the Lead Ranger of Dry Tortugas National Park will meet our group upon arrival and provide us with a 60-70 minute interpretive program including photographs which will also include a discussion of the Garden Key and Loggerhead Lights. He will also do a personalized tour of the fort for us which will culminate with the opening of the lighthouse for the group to climb. If our group is large enough, the catamaran will stop briefly on the waters off Loggerhead Key for the group to take photos of that lighthouse since the USCG and NPS prohibit access. In addition, we have arranged for the Key West Lighthouse to be open to our group in the evening for climbing.

For those wishing to extend their Key West experience, discount tickets/coupons will be

available for some selected attractions in Key West. Each person registering for the trip will receive a packet in the mail several weeks before the meeting containing maps, brochures of the points of interest, as well as the discount tickets and coupons.

Meeting Itinerary:

7:30 a.m. Arrive at dock for check-in
8:00 a.m. Trip departs for Dry Tortugas

What to expect:

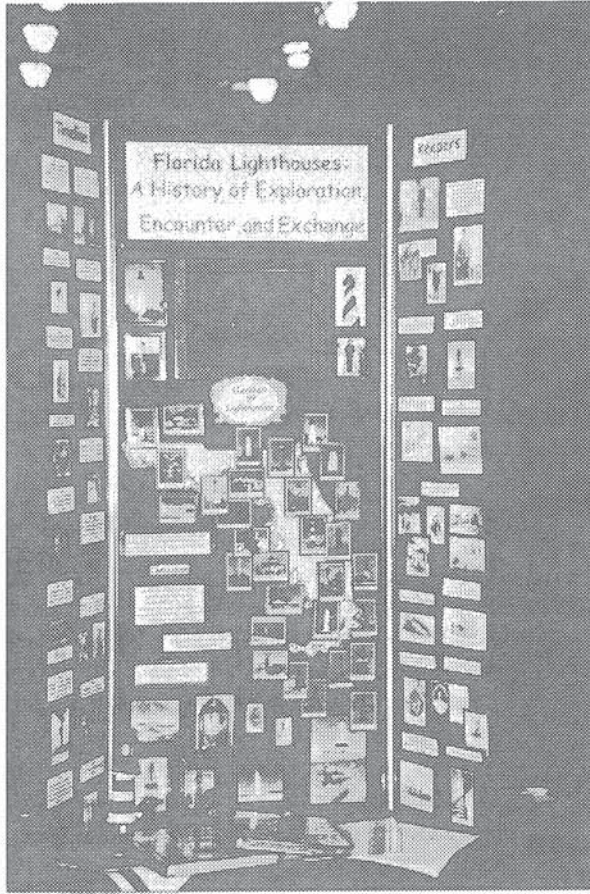
Continental breakfast upon boarding
2 hours of travel time each way
4 ½ hours at Fort Jefferson
Guided tour of the Fort and lighthouse by Ranger Mike
Buffet lunch served in the picnic area of the Fort
Complimentary soft drinks, water and iced tea
Snorkel gear
Freshwater rinse on board
3:30 p.m. FLA meeting aboard "Fast Cat II"
5:00 p.m. Return to dock
5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Key West Lighthouse open for climbing. (Gift shop also open)

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

We have arranged for participants to secure a daily rate of \$79. at a 3-star property in Key West. This rate will extend several days prior to our meeting as well as several days after the meeting for those choosing to come early or stay late. To secure this rate, call Chris at 1-877-243-2378 and tell him that you are part of the 'Florida Lighthouse Association' group. They will place us in such properties as the Radisson, Comfort Inn, or Fairfield Inn

Florida Lighthouse Notes -

STATE HISTORY FAIR 2004



The Florida History Fair was held at Florida State University in Tallahassee May 6-8th. One documentary entitled "The First Lighthouse" by Audrey Frank from the Fort Myers area was to have been presented for judging early Thursday morning. Unfortunately, Miss Frank was unable to attend. One lighthouse exhibit created by Sara Matulonis and Laura Hood from the 7th grade at Lincoln Park Academy in Fort Pierce competed in the Junior Group Exhibit. Their project entitled "Florida Lighthouses: A History of Exploration, Encounter, and Exchange" was extremely well done. The students had contacted or visited many of the lighthouses in Florida and had an outstanding

number of primary resources. Laura and Sara said that the hardest part of the project was condensing all the information they had gathered to meet the required word limit. Saturday morning at the Awards Ceremony, I presented the Florida Lighthouse Association Heritage Award of \$50 Savings Bonds to each. Laura and Sara also won a ribbon for 4th place in the Junior Group Exhibits category. Each received a copy of the "Florida Lighthouse Trails", but because Sara already had the book, her History teacher, Mr. Cliff Kelly, will present it to the school library. These two students, Laura and Sara, are so enchanted with lighthouses that they plan to do another lighthouse project next year following the 2005 theme of "Communication in History: The Key to Understanding". The support of their parents, teacher and personnel connected with Florida's lighthouses gave tremendous encouragement toward accomplishing this outstanding exhibit. Sara's Mother Carol Matulonis, said "This project has been an amazing journey for Sara and Laura. They started working on it last May (2003) and through the year have met many wonderful people and seen now a grand total of 11 Florida lighthouses! Mr. Hib Casselberry has been a great source of information to the girls. He suggested meeting Mr. Tony Ross of Mayport who was able to show Sara both lighthouses on the base. Another great contact was Ellen Henry at Ponce Inlet. She arranged for both the girls to come up for a keeper reenactment weekend. The girls have a large collection of letters, brochures, and communication from almost every lighthouse in the state. It seems the love for lighthouses is now in their blood. Our own Historical museum in Fort Pierce even had an exhibit on Florida Lighthouses which the girls were able to visit several times." Laura's favorite lighthouse is Cape St. George and Sara's is the Mayport lighthouse. Hopefully they'll be able to bring their exhibit to the October FLA meeting for all to see.

Dianne Levi

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Working to preserve Florida's Lighthouses

Welcome to our new members!

No report this edition.

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