



## LIGHTHOUSE AMBASSADOR

Fifteen years ago in June, Carol Mumola, our gift shop manager, heard an odd little noise coming from the bushes near the museum's gift shop. For three days the noise remained a mystery until a small black and white cat revealed himself. Being a dedicated cat lover and a good judge of the feline character, Carol knew right away that the snuggly little animal loved people and would quickly adapt to life at the lighthouse. A few days later TC could be found snoozing on the gift shop counter where he could be sure he would get petted. Even the four cats that already lived at the lighthouse came to accept him as part of the family.

TC, or Top Cat, has had a distinguished career as our lighthouse ambassador. Since 1991 he has personally greeted almost every visitor to the museum. Some visitors return year after year to see him. He has appeared in a book and several films, and you can still see him every day in our current Woodshed Theater introductory film.

In the last week of May, TC was clearly not himself, and in early June he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. On Monday, June 5, 2006, TC died peacefully in the arms of the woman who found him fifteen years ago. Bon voyage, TC! We were proud to know you.

**Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse  
Preservation Association, Inc.**

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Ponce Inlet, Florida 32127  
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www.ponceinlet.org

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# PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHT STATION

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association, Inc.

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## ELECTRICITY AT THE LIGHT STATION

In 1883, General Orville E. Babcock, chief engineer for the construction of the newly proposed Mosquito Inlet Light Station, suggested that the beacon be electrified. The technology was certainly possible at that time but due to Mosquito Inlet's remote location it was decided that it was simply not feasible to keep a generator running reliably at the site. The decision was made to fit the tower with a kerosene lantern instead, a system that was considered to be a fairly advanced technology for its' day.

The first actual electric system at Mosquito Inlet Light Station was the keeper's call bell. An order for this device appears in the original cost estimates for the Station. These small, doorbell style calling devices were usually located in each keeper's dwelling and Light Station journals confirm that this was the case at Mosquito Inlet. The bells were operated by a 6 or 12 volt battery and used to signal a keeper when the person in the tower needed assistance or at the change of a four-hour watch. Little information remains about these systems and few still exist. In the Principal Keeper's Dwelling you can still see a



*This is a Hemingray Glass Company petticoat style insulator, patented in 1893. It was used to insulate telegraph or telephone wires and was found on the grounds of the Light Station.*

ceramic tube in the floor of the keeper's bedroom through which the bell wiring could pass.

The keepers' logs mention the call bells fairly often. It was typical for lightning strikes to disable the system, as was the need to repair or replace the wiring several times a year. One of the last entries to refer to the call bells states that the Second Assistant Keeper bell required repair. After August 20, 1928, the call bell system is not mentioned again.

Another early electrical device was the battery powered telephone. Installed in the fall of 1917, the phone connected the lighthouse to other lighthouses and Coast Guard facilities along Florida's east coast. (The keeper's log of May 1907 states "received telephones". No further mention of these phones or information about their use is documented over the next decade.) In 1917, a phone was installed in the Principal Keeper's office and later (September, 1918) in the tower.

In 1923, the Lighthouse Service decided to electrify the keepers' dwellings, and a Fairbanks Morse lighting plant was ordered. The plant itself was expensive at \$350. The gasoline/kerosene engine cost \$100, and the electrical cable and fittings another \$200. With additional materials, shipping, and labor the cost for electrifying these homes was a whopping \$809, a large sum indeed for the mid-1920s according to a December 11, 1924 cost estimate. Electrification

represented a major modernization for the Ponce Inlet Light Station since keepers had been relying on kerosene lanterns for most of their lighting needs since the tower was completed in 1887.

The Lighthouse Service justified this expense and effort as necessary to renew the Station's water pumping plant. The Fairbanks Morse system would provide power for a new electric water pump as well as the lights for the keepers' homes. The engine would charge a series of 16 glass batteries that would provide 32 watts of direct current. A fuel allowance of 35 gallons per month was established for the generator. The plant could only run about 30 hours per week since the engine consumed one gallon of kerosene or 3.5 gallons of gasoline every three hours. It was not long before the engine, fueled by the ever-present kerosene, began to foul and subsequently fail due to carbon build-up and engine-knock. As a consequence of these maintenance problems, the keepers requested to switch to gasoline even though it would cost an additional \$30 per year to do so. Engine problems ceased when the switch to gasoline was completed.

The houses were fitted with knob and tube wiring, some of which still remains in place today. Coming

*cont'd on page 4 >>*



*Exide brand glass battery*

### SUMMER HOURS OF OPERATION:

As of Memorial Day (May 29th) Ponce Inlet Lighthouse hours of operation will be from 10:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Sunday through Saturday. Last admission will be at 8:00. Our regular hours of operation (9:00-6:00) will resume after Labor Day, September 4, 2006.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Jul. 12, 2006 Budget Finance Committee Meeting  
8:30 a.m. in the Gift Shop Conference Room
- Jul. 17, 2006 Board of Trustees and Quarterly Membership Meeting  
7:30 p.m. in the Gift Shop Conference Room
- Aug. 21, 2006 Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m. in the Gift Shop Conference Room
- Sept. 18, 2006 Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m. in the Gift Shop Conference Room

Meetings are open to the public, and we welcome your attendance and participation.



The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association is dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of the maritime and social history of the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station.

2005 Board of Trustees

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Lighthouse Ambassador: T.C.

The Light Station is published quarterly by the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association, Inc.

Subscription is a benefit of membership in the association. The Light Station welcomes letters and comments from our readers.

MEMBER:

- AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY
FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past season has been one of discovery and growth at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station. The staff have not only worked diligently over the past several months to maintain the appearance of the station's grounds and historical exhibits, but they have also been engaged in numerous projects that will increase our understanding of the areas' unique history, and the every-day lives of past keepers.

The excavation of the Principal Keeper's privy, which began mid-January, concluded in April. As one can imagine, the findings from the privy dig revealed many interesting facts about the day-to-day life of the keepers and their families and their dietary habits prior to the introduction of indoor plumbing in 1921(yes folks, it was that type of privy). Among the artifacts discovered were the remnants of a women's silk stocking, a belt-buckle,



Magneto discovered during privy excavation

and a variety of buttons of assorted sizes. Finding a magneto typically used in telegraphs of the early 1900s created quite a stir with staff since no evidence has been found indicating one was ever employed at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station.

Staff explored, drained, cleaned, and inspected the historic cisterns that supplied water to each of the keepers' dwellings in May. An assessment of each cistern's condition was made and several artifacts were discovered in the process including several bottles and an antique fire extinguisher. Conservation of these historic structures will be completed as needed in the coming months.

We would like to thank Cathedral Stone and Chuck Spitznagel of Maryland who flew down to train the staff in the proper technique for re-pointing our aging masonry work. With Chuck's guidance the staff quickly learned how to best remove and/or stabilize deteriorated mortar. Thanks to his help, we are now engaged in conserving and restoring the eastern wall of the Principal Keeper's dwelling. Please see the article about Chuck's visit on page 6 for more details.

We are quite excited to announce two of the station's newest acquisitions. We were fortunate enough to purchase an extremely rare Light House Establishment Banjo Clock No. 5 and an E. Howard & Company, Boston Regulator Clock No. 70 in April. Both time pieces are extremely rare and only a few are known to exist in any collection within the United States. Be sure to come and see them after they have been put on display. More information about these rare and beautiful clocks will be provided in future newsletters.

In financial news, we are happy to announce that the Ponce de Leon Lighthouse will received \$41,199 as a result of our Cycle 18, General Operating Support Grant application which was submitted to the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Historical Museums Grants-in-Aid Program, in December, 2005. The grant was defended in March, 2006 and we can look to begin encumbering the funds in July, 2006, pending state legislature approval.

The association submitted the final report for last year's Cycle 17, GOS Grant at the end of June, 2006. The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse was awarded \$39,246.00 for Cycle 17 (July 27, 2005 through June 30, 2006). These funds were utilized to help meet the financial demands required to operate the light station during that time period.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Historical Grants-in-Aid Program through the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs. Although we are fortunate enough to rely largely on admissions, gift shop purchases, and our continued member support for a predominant portion of our operating and development budget, the GOS grant funds help us cover regular operating costs such as utilities, office expenses, and advertising. Please encourage your local and state representatives to continue to support appropriations for historical sites and museums.

We were proud to host Family Fun Friday, Volusia County Teachers Workshop, and the Girl Scouts Day and look forward to future events that celebrate the rich history of the light station and its' ongoing role in the community. We invite you visit the light station and say hello. While you're here, be sure to stop and see our newly improved navigation exhibit in the Principal Keeper's dwelling along with the recently updated Beach Racing exhibit in the 2nd Assistant Keeper's dwelling. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,
Ann Caneer
Executive Director

JOIN THE PONCE DE LEON INLET LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

A general annual membership includes:

- Free admission to the museum and lighthouse during regular hours of operation
10 percent discount in the museum gift shop and online store
One subscription to The Light Station quarterly newsletter
Invitations to special events
Volunteer opportunities

Membership categories:

- General \$20 - The benefits listed above for one individual
Senior \$10 - All privileges of General Membership for one individual 62 years or older
Student \$10 - All privileges of General Membership for one individual 12 years or older with a valid student identification
Family \$40 - All privileges of General Membership for the immediate family. Immediate family is limited to one or two adults and your children under age 18. Grandchildren are not eligible. You will be issued one membership card for each parent, and each card will list the names of your children. Child under 12 must be accompanied by an adult



Please complete the entire form to enroll, or join online at www.poncelighthousestore.org.

Select type of membership:

- General \$20
Senior \$10
Student (submit copy of ID) \$10
Family \$40
Gift Membership From:
Renewal
2nd Assistant Keeper \$100
1st Assistant Keeper \$200
Principal Keeper \$500
Corporate Lampist \$500

Name:
Address 1:
Address 2:
City: State: ZIP:
Phone: ( ) -
E-mail:

Office use only
Begins Ends

- 2nd Assistant Keeper \$100 - All privileges of General or Family Membership, Recognition of your membership in the newsletters' New Keepers List
1st Assistant Keeper \$200 - All privileges of 2nd Assistant Membership, Two gift General Memberships
Principal Keeper \$500 - All privileges of 1st Assistant Membership, Personal guided tour of the Light Station, Exhibit sponsorship recognition
Corporate Lampist \$500 - All privileges of General or Family Membership for up to five company principals, Use of the Light Station's conference room for one meeting with up to twenty attendees. This meeting will include a personal guided tour of the Light Station, Recognition of your companies support in the newsletters' New Corporate Lampist List, Exhibit sponsorship recognition



20% discount not valid towards purchase of previously reduced priced items. Limit one coupon per member quarterly. Coupon not valid after September 30th, 2006. Please present coupon to cashier at time of purchase. Discount limited towards 1 item only. For more information regarding memberships please see gift shop staff.

For a family membership, you may list an additional adult and the names of all children:

Adult:
Children:

(List any additional names on a separate sheet.)

We will contact 1st Assistant Keeper, Principal Keeper or Corporate Lampist members to obtain gift membership and company principal information.

Membership enclosed: \$
Donation enclosed: \$
Total enclosed: \$

Please charge my: (check one)

- Visa
MasterCard

CC#:

Exp. Date:

Signature:

Or, make check payable to:

Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association, Inc.
4931 S. Peninsula Dr., Ponce Inlet, FL 32127

Thank You for Your Generous Support!



## VOLUNTEER AND EDUCATION NEWS

Program Manager Bob Callister provided 10 Ponce Inlet Lighthouse volunteers with a special treat April 12th with a trip to the St. Augustine Lighthouse. The group was given a special tour of the light station by Beverly Henry, Head Docent at St. Augustine Lighthouse. The tour, which included both the grounds and the tower itself, proved to be as enjoyable as it was informative. Our thanks go out to the St. Augustine Lighthouse's Volunteer Coordinator Debe Thompson for arranging the tour and Paul Wenglowky, Director of Education, for sharing his knowledge and experience regarding tour procedures. The Saint Augustine Light Station's hospitality was happily reciprocated at the end of May when they came to Ponce Inlet to tour our facility and learn about our volunteer and tour programs.



Volunteer Trip to St. Augustine Lighthouse- Program Manager Bob Callister along with St. Augustine Lighthouse' Head Docent, Beverly Henry, pose with the group of volunteers and spouses who participated in the "field-trip" to the Saint Augustine Lighthouse in April, 2006.

Our "Climb with the Keepers" program, introduced several months ago, has provided visitors with the opportunity to examine our original 1930s 3rd order rotating Fresnel lens "up close and personal". Participants are provided with the opportunity to immerse themselves in our light station's history by climbing all 213 steps to the lantern room (normally restricted to visitors). Dressed in reproduction 1930s keeper uniforms, the tour guides provide their visitors with the unique opportunity to step back in time and learn about the past technology of our historic light station. This unique experience is limited to only 8 participants in order to ensure each person has the opportunity to interact with the keepers and learn as much as possible about the 3rd Order Fresnel beacon atop our tower.



Allen Bestwick and Jerry Harris wearing 1930s era keepers uniforms discuss the rotating 3rd Order Fresnel Lens with a "Climb with the Keepers" tour group in the lantern room atop the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse.

## MASONRY CONSULTANT VISITS THE MUSEUM



Chuck Spitznagel demonstrates repointing at the Light Station.

In April, the museum was visited by Chuck Spitznagel from Cathedral Stone Products in Hanover, Maryland. Chuck provided us with two days of consultation and instruction in masonry that will enable our own staff and volunteers to carry out the repair and re-pointing of the historic brick and granite at the Light Station.

Chuck began his masonry career at the age of eight, working with his father. He is now the head mason for Cathedral Stone. He generously shared his lifetime of experience with us and taught us the correct (and safe) way to remove damaged or incompatible mortars, patch or remove broken bricks, repair cracked walls, and repoint brick and granite. We now use Jahn mortars that are completely compatible with our historic materials and

are specially color-matched to our buildings. You can see some of our progress on the east side of the Principal Keeper's Dwelling.

Cathedral Stone Company and Cathedral Stone Products were founded by Dennis Rude, whose extensive experience in masonry led him on a search for better restoration materials. This search led him to the laboratories of Heinz Jahn in Holland where research into these problems had been carried out.

Cathedral Stone has been importing Jahn mortars since 1982 that are designed to be compatible with historic materials like those used in the construction of the Light Station. Employees of Cathedral Stone are trained in Europe and the United States and are available for consultation on a wide variety of masonry problems.

If you would like to volunteer some weekday time to our masonry restoration project, please contact Ellen Henry at 386-761-1821, extension 17, or email her at ellen@ponceinlet.org. No masonry or building experience is needed and full training will be provided.



Before



After

*Volunteer News, Cont'd.* As a result of several requests, we have restructured this special tour to accommodate the seasonal visitors to the area. We are now able to offer the tour at the visitor's convenience. Reservations to "Climb with the Keepers" need to be made at least two weeks in advance to allow for appropriate scheduling. "Climb with the Keepers" tour costs are \$50.00 per person (\$45.00 is tax-deductible because it is a fund-raising activity). Payments are due at the time reservations are made and are refundable up to 2 days prior to the day of the tour. Additional information regarding this and other events/programs are available on our website at [www.ponceinlet.org](http://www.ponceinlet.org).

Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who contributed so much of themselves to the light station program. We bid farewell to all of our volunteers who are flying north for the summer (as all snow-birds must do) and look forward to their swift return in the fall.

## EVENTS CALENDAR July-Sept., 2006

- Tuesday, July 4 **Independence Day Celebration**  
11:00 a.m. Before you go off to see the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks, come over to the lighthouse for tours, entertainment, activities, and a historic character or two. Included in cost of regular admission, no advance reservations required.  
- 3:00 p.m.
- Saturday, July 8 **Canaveral Lens Demonstration**  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Meet the old-time lighthouse keepers, in the Lens Exhibit Building. Learn about the Cape Canaveral 1<sup>st</sup> Order Fresnel Lens, and the maintenance that had to be done every week. Included with regular admission; no advance registration required.
- Saturday, Sept. 16 **Florida Lighthouse Day**  
10:00 a.m. Celebrate Florida's lighthouses on this special day. There will be tours, demonstrations, entertainment and activities for the whole family to enjoy. Come and join in the fun!  
- 4:00 p.m. Included in cost of regular admission, no advance reservations required.

## NEW KEEPERS

We would like to give extra special thanks to our new Keepers:

### Corporate Lampists

**Brown and Brown, Inc.**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Boondocks Restaurant**  
Wilbur by the Sea, FL

**Brochure Displays**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Caring Cleaners**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Cobb & Cole**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Hall Construction Co Inc.**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Inlet Harbor Restaurant**  
Ponce Inlet, FL

**Inlet Harbor Realty**  
Ponce Inlet, FL

**Racing's North Turn**  
Ponce Inlet, FL

**Raymond James and Associates, Inc.**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Stewart Marchman Center**  
Daytona Beach, FL

**Volusia Properties**  
Daytona Beach Shores, FL

**Wickersham & Bowers**  
Daytona Beach, FL

### Principal Keepers

**Frederick and Barbara Treadway**

Ponce Inlet, FL

### 1st Assistant Keepers

**Cheryl, Jim, & Shamus Cunningham**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Linda Downs**

Orlando, FL

**Anthony Girolami**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Edson Graham**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Barbara LaVelle & Family**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Eric, Mari, Neil & Dain Owen**

Marietta, GA

**Patrick and Debbie Pawling**

Hamilton, OH

**Sunshine State Community Bank**

Port Orange, FL

## 2nd Assistant Keepers

**ReRe, Brian, Ariel & Bridget Anderson**

Port Orange, FL

**Bruce & Janet Babbitt**

Danville, IN

**Command Medical Products**

Ormond Beach, FL

**Turget & Martha Dervish**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Michael, Lauren, & Lisa Elsberry**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Dennis & Zachary Engel**

Owotonna, MN

**Janice, Dana, & Alain Fredey**

Oviedo, FL

**Robert, Dianne, Robert J., & Scott Gilpatrick**

South Daytona, FL

**Cliff & Kim Greene**

Minnetonka, MN

**Lauren Grotzinger**

Kalamazoo, MI

**Mark & Karen Hudson**

Mims, FL

**Dr. Herbert & Ruth Kerman**

Daytona Beach Shores, FL

**John L. & Patricia Ann La Belle**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Lester & Tami Lewis & Family**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Bob & Brenda Lindstrom**

Woodstock, GA

**Donna Lough**

Depew, NY

**Wendy Michael**

Daytona Beach, FL

**Bill & Maralin Poth**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Alan & Mary Ann Redinger**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Philip A. Rhodes**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Robert, Margie, Robert Jr., & Tony Riggio**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**William & Alice Rippey**

Port Orange, FL

**Diane Schamay**

Ponce Inlet, FL

**Frederic Schaub**

Winter Park, FL

**Virginia Schow**

New Smyrna Beach, FL

**Karen M. Senecal**

Staten Island, NY

**Robert & Mary Ruth Trump**

Plymouth, IN

## THANK YOU

The Ponce de Leon Light Station Preservation Association would like to thank the following people and organizations for their donations of time, supplies, and historical artifacts and images:

We would like to express our gratitude to Cathedral Stone Products of Hanover, Maryland, and CEO Dennis Rude who generously provided us with two wonderful days of demonstrations and instruction by one of their representatives. Chuck Spitznagel of Cathedral Stone arrived on April 18 to show us how to properly replace historic mortar with a compatible, color-matched formula. Lighthouse staff members had the opportunity to work with a real expert, trained in both the United States and Europe, to sharpen their masonry skills and learn the proper techniques for preserving the brick and stonework of the light station. We are deeply grateful for the company's generosity.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to Ocean Design, Incorporated, of Ormond Beach. Their generous donation of office furniture has enabled us to considerably upgrade our work spaces. We would also like to thank Marilyn Meek Barnard for donations of much needed cleaning supplies.

Janice Pepple Clift of Melbourne has donated a copy of a wonderful historic photograph taken of the lighthouse tower during construction and has promised the eventual donation of the original. The photograph was done by E.G. Harris, one of Daytona's most famous early photographers.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Rick Tarrant of Port Orange who donated a rare lighthouse inspector's pennant. Thanks to Rick's sharp eye the pennant was saved and is destined to become a real museum treasure.

Jim Bruns, San Antonio, Texas, contributed to our oral history project by sharing his memories of life in Daytona Beach and Ponce Inlet from 1942-1948.

## WISH LIST

The museum staff is embarking on extensive conservation of the historic vessel, FD. Russell. The assistance of individuals with boatbuilding, engineering, or carpentry expertise who have time to volunteer for this project would be deeply appreciated. Please contact Ellen Henry as soon as possible by phone or email at (386)761-1821, extension 17, or ellen@ponceinlet.org.

As always, we need and appreciate your donations of lighthouse artifacts, antiques, documents, and photographs.

We are currently interested in collecting World War II era office items. We are in need of a desk, chair, lamp, and additional items including file boxes, file cabinets, and telephones from that era. A World War II era radio beacon transmitter is also needed for the completion of our upcoming Coast Guard radio beacon exhibit.

Although the Ponce de Leon Lighthouse did not exist during the Civil War period, we are hoping to create a small exhibit about Civil War events in this area. Any Civil War era artifacts such as photographs, documents, letters, clothing, buttons, or weapons, and especially items from Florida would be most welcome additions to our collection.

Looking ahead, we would eventually like to expand our interpretation of the Seminole presence in the Ponce Inlet area. Any donations of authentic Seminole materials, clothing, related documents, and photographs would be gratefully accepted. Thank you for your continued support of the Ponce de Leon Lighthouse and for your assistance in protecting this historic light station for current and future generations.



## ELECTRICITY, CONT'D.



The Fairbanks Morse Lighting Plant

into general use in the 1880s, this earliest form of standardized wiring consisted of single insulated copper wiring and ceramic conductors running across interior walls and ceilings. Wires were passed through porcelain insulating tubes wherever necessary and were supported along their length by porcelain knob-like insulators. Conductors entering a lamp or a switch were protected by insulating sleeves. Wire connections and splices were either soldered and wrapped with cloth tape or made inside metal junction boxes. These early electrical systems were not typically grounded.

Another form of wiring, developed in 1922, was also used at the Station. Two (or more) copper wires separated by tar and wrapped in paper and woven cloth formed an electrical cable. These insulated cables could be passed through walls and floors without having to make room for the ceramic insulating knobs and tubes. There is evidence of the use of these cables in the keeper dwellings, as well as the knob and tube style wiring. Wires for both these types of "off the grid" systems were heavy because they were usually direct current and ran at a lower voltage than the alternating current provided by electrical utility companies. Samples of our early wiring are on view in the Principal Keeper's Dwelling in a room devoted to the original construction of the Light Station.

The Fairbanks Morse light plant may have finally given out in the early 1930s, or was perhaps joined



by another system. Oral history reports indicate that the Station also possessed a Delco glass battery system, a popular light plant for rural home and farm use during the 1930s. There is, however, no written evidence that a Delco system was purchased for Ponce Inlet although it is possible that some of the glass batteries used at the lighthouse were Delco brand. An original Exide brand glass battery used here at the time is in the museum collection. Produced by the Electric Storage Battery Company, the Exide glass battery first appeared in 1900 and the Keeper's Log entry for December 5, 1939, mentions that an order of Exide glass batteries was received.

In the early 1930s, the Lighthouse Service decided to electrify the Ponce Inlet tower and give it a new characteristic. Instead of having a fixed and steady light, the new beacon would have a rotating, flashing light. In order to bring reliable electricity to the tower, a new generator system would be needed. A cost estimate of April 22, 1933, lists two used LeRoi engine generators being sent to Ponce Inlet from the Lighthouse Service stock at a cost of \$471 plus labor and shipping. Previously installed at the St. John's River Light, these generators never worked very well at Ponce Inlet.

In advance of this change, the Lighthouse Service determined that substantial savings could be made by electrifying the beacon and eliminating the need for three keepers to maintain the light. An electric beacon would result in a reduced need for labor and the subsequent elimination of the Second Assistant Keeper's position. Thereafter, a Principal Keeper and Relief Keeper would man the Station. Additional funds could be garnered by leaving one keeper's dwelling vacant thus, saving on electricity and kerosene to light the building. (Apparently both lighting methods were still in use, despite the Fairbanks Morse electric plant being hooked to a light in each house.) All in all, about \$1,300 in salaries and \$139.19 in fuel would be saved by the change. This would more than offset the additional \$519 that the new electric beacon would add to the Station's expenses. Most of that cost would be fuel to run the generators.

The newly electrified beacon was a great success, and the lighthouse could now more effectively warn

ships on both the ocean and in the rivers to prepare for the dangerous waters ahead such as the Hetzel Shoals off Cape Canaveral.

Another change in electrical production at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station came after the Coast Guard took over the United States Lighthouse Service in the late 1930s. In 1938 it was determined that a radio beacon should be set up as an additional aid to navigation. Requiring sophisticated and reliable generators to power it, two Kohler power plants were ordered. One generator would run on gasoline and the other on kerosene. They would provide the power to charge batteries for the radio room and whatever other electrical needs the Station might have.

During World War II, the Light Station became a Coast Guard barracks. The threat of German u-boat attacks off the coast made it necessary to dim the beacon from 500 watts to 50 watts and for the Station to observe blackout rules within its other buildings.

At the end of the war another major modernization took place. In October 1945, the Florida Power and Light Company was given a permit to run power lines across the Light Station. The old generators were probably still in use for quite some time, but the need for such systems was diminishing. By the early 1950s, most light stations, including Ponce Inlet, were fully electrified and automated, and the need to generate their own electricity had disappeared. Today, one of the World War II era Kohler generators, a 1935 model, still remains in the Generator Building and is still connected to some of the Station's historic buildings.

## OBJECT OF THE QUARTER

### The Lighthouse Inspector's Pennant

On June 17, 1910, Congress dissolved the United States Lighthouse Board and created the Bureau of Lighthouses. The Lighthouse Board had been essentially a military establishment and had become cumbersome with its authority split between a Navy inspector and an Army engineer. The new Bureau of Lighthouses would be led by a single Commissioner of Lighthouses, and supported by a deputy commissioner, a chief construction engineer, and a superintendent of naval construction appointed by the President.

The Lighthouse Service field administration was also restructured. A single official, the Lighthouse Inspector, would have authority over all lighthouse work in his district. The country was



divided into 16 districts, and all the inspectors were now civilians with the exception of the three river districts whose inspectors were Army Corps of Engineers officers.

In the summer of 1911, the Bureau of Lighthouses established the stars and pennants system to promote both efficiency and friendly competition between lighthouses.

Each quarter of the year, the Inspector would issue a circular with the names of all keepers in the district who had been



commended for neatness and efficiency for the preceding three months. When a station earned four commendations, the keepers were entitled to wear the Inspector's red star for the next fiscal year. If a station won the red star three years in a row, the keepers could proudly wear a blue Commissioner's star. Earning these stars led to promotions for keepers and considerations for certain duty stations.

Stations receiving the highest marks for general efficiency during an entire fiscal year also received the "efficiency pennant". The names of all the keepers earning these awards of recognition would appear in the Inspector's Annual Circular and in the Lighthouse Service Bulletin, published



Muffie Austin of Textile Conservation Service in Fernandina Beach examines the recently acquired Light House Inspector's Pennant

monthly and distributed to all personnel beginning in January 1912. Keepers at Ponce Inlet such as Thomas O'Hagan were regular winners of the stars and pennants.

The museum has received an incredibly important donation of a lighthouse inspector's pennant from Rick Tarrant of South Daytona. In a true "Roadshow" moment, Rick spotted this valuable artifact in a trash can and rescued it! He was able to identify the owner and give us valuable facts about this rare artifact's history.

Made by the Dettra Flag Company of Oaks, Pennsylvania, this wool pennant measures 2 ft. x 4 ft. and is in excellent condition. The age of this pennant is not known exactly but would probably have been made between 1912 and 1920. The inspector who used it was Robert O. Steinen. Mr. Steinen was a master machinist at the Staten Island Depot of the United States Lighthouse Service. During the summer months he would inspect light stations, bringing his family along to enjoy the journeys. Steinen's pennant will be professionally conserved and mounted by Muffie Austin, and eventually put on display in the Second Assistant Keeper's Dwelling.

## LIGHTHOUSES OF THE WORLD

### Lighthouse:

Half Moon Reef Lighthouse

### Location:

Currently located in Port Lavaca, Texas (Previously located off Palacios Point in Matagorda Bay, Texas).

### Sleep Walking Child



Half Moon Reef Lighthouse off Palacios Point in Matagorda Bay, Texas was surrounded by water; the lighthouse was an isolated island for its keepers. Perhaps that was why twice the lighthouse had a unique distinction of having a keeper and an assistant who were husband and wife.

A few children were raised at the lighthouse, but the fear of having a child unknowingly fall into the water, prompted several wives to keep a residence on land. One keeper, Stephan Hill, had a daughter named Sadie who was prone to sleepwalking. After Sadie had been discovered taking a nighttime stroll dangerously near the edge of the lighthouse, her parents decided that something had to be done. Their solution was to tie a string between Sadie's big toe and her sister's big toe each night before retiring. The string brought an end to Sadie's nocturnal adventures, though probably at the expense of several sound nights of sleep for her sister.

Given its exposed location, the lighthouse managed to weather several violent storms remarkably well. However, in 1942, its luck changed, when a hurricane tore the walkway from the lighthouse and left it sagging on its pilings. The Coast Guard decided to sell the structure rather than repair it. It was purchased, and barged to shore. After being refurbished, it is now used as a visitors' center in Port Lavaca, Texas.

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