

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1998

# The Lighthouse Log

A publication of the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association

## Annual Meeting Report

BLMA held its Annual Meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1998 at the Jamestown Library with Peter Frazier presiding. About 30 people were in attendance to thank the outgoing officers, headed up by Anthony J. Faria and his wife Diane, whose terms were up. Gifts of appreciation were presented to both - a framed print of Beavertail Light for Tony and the Harbor Lights replica of Beavertail Lighthouse for Diane. Tony thanked all for the support given him during his tenure as President and Peter expressed the gratitude of the entire membership for the dedication and leadership that were demonstrated by the outgoing team.

Elections were held and resulted in the following:

President, Eric Armour

Vice President, Charles Auld

Treasurer, Craig Armington

Secretary, Charlotte Richardson

Hugh Bucher, Jim Munro, Richard Sullivan and Peter Frazier will join David Clem, Jean Bochen, Linda Levesque, Robert Dennis, and Susan Warsawski as members of the Board of Directors.

All are ready, willing and able to move forward into the next year and anticipating a great celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> year of service at Beavertail Point.

## The President's Message

As 1999 quickly approaches, I am confident that this association is ready to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a shining light at Beavertail. The overwhelming support of the volunteers at the recent Harbor Lights Tour promoted the fact that our museum is not only unique, but nationally recognized because of the hard work of individuals like YOU.

Over the next few months, the directors of the BLMA will be making efforts to organize several 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary events and possibly provide our decade old museum with some new additions. This will allow the museum to continue to evolve in the same impressive manner that it has since its inception. But, the directors cannot work alone. More than ever, your input, time and support of our museum is needed.

On behalf of myself, my wife Simone, and the directors of the BLMA, I'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Thanks for your support over the past year and we're all looking forward to seeing you at the light really soon.

All the best,

*Eric M. Armour, President*



## A Beautiful Day in October

Mother Nature smiled on our efforts of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, and presented us with a day to be remembered.

Not only did the expected over 700 people arrive from many states across the Nation, but swarms of Monarch butterflies chose Beavertail Point to rest a bit on their long journey southward. The sea was calm and still, peppered with sailboats that looked themselves, like butterflies adrift. The weather was warm and though at first a bit windy, our volunteer greeters were comfortable in bright sunshine, sheltered from the wind by the lighthouse buildings.

Tables were laden with our souvenir items, books, and apparel and our guests were generous with their purchases. We're told that over \$3800.00 exchanged hands on that memorable day, adding needed funds to our treasury in anticipation of the 'BIG YEAR' just ahead.

In addition to all of nature's beauty, there was ample time between bus loads for the volunteers to enjoy a leisurely, delicious picnic lunch.

Our afternoon guests and volunteers were treated to a bagpipe concert by our president, Eric. At one point, a tiny little girl visitor was obviously enthralled with the music and began to





dance. Eric played London Bridge Is Falling Down just for her. It was a very touching scene and memories were surely made in those moments.

As the event drew to a close, volunteers were pleasantly surprised to receive a tiny but perfect thumbnail replica of Beavertail Lighthouse; barely an inch in size and made especially for this visit by Harbor Lights. Each was encased in a tiny blue velvet pouch, held closed by a golden cord; a fitting and much appreciated treasure for those who volunteered to spend that special day at Beavertail. Many thanks are due to each and every one.

### Coming Events of Note.

#### DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>, 1998

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Jamestown Senior Center on Tuesday, December 1, 1998 at 6:00 pm. See back cover for details. Please attend - there are important issues to be resolved.

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DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00- 4:00 at the  
Melrose Avenue School

Conanicut Art Association  
Annual Craft Fair

Tables have been reserved  
for sale of Beavertail  
Lighthouse items and  
clothing.

### VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!!

Please call Eric Armour at  
(401)728-4043 if you can help.

Why not look over your Holiday  
Gift List with the BLMA tables in  
mind. You may find the perfect  
gift(s) to make your list complete.



*You are cordially invited*

*to attend*

*a Holiday Open House*

*to be held at*

*Beavertail Lighthouse*

*Sunday, December 6, 1998*

*1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.*

*Weather Permitting*

*Light Refreshments will be served  
and*

*Door Prizes of Beavertail  
Memorabilia will be awarded*

Please call if you can donate  
cookies, brownies, etc.

Linda Warner 423-1278

Anna Harrison-Auld 423-3443

Ann Bucher 792-7068

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### Way Back When

The first light-house built on this continent was built at the entrance to Boston Harbor, on Little Brewster Island, in 1715/16, at a cost of 2285 Pounds 17 shillings. It was erected by the order and at the expense of the general court of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, and it was supported by light-dues 1d. per ton on

all incoming and outgoing vessels, except coasters, levied by the collector of imports at Boston.

Beavertail Light was established in 1749, the act of the General Assembly of August 1749 regulating the lighthouses, followed the appointment of a construction committee of the Assembly for the purpose in February 1749. Its erection had been authorized as early as 1738 by the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, but nothing was done because of war breaking out between England and Spain. It was destroyed by fire in 1754 and rebuilt the same year. It was burned by the British during the Revolutionary War in 1779, but repaired and continue in operation until rebuilt in 1854.

### Beavertail light-station, R.I.

(Report of Lieut. George W. Bache.)

"Washington city, November 22, 1838.

No.2. *Newport or Beavertail light*, (stationary,) situated on the southern extremity of Conanicut Island, in latitude 41° 26' north, longitude 71° 26' west, serves to point out the entrances to Narragansett bay to the



## Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association

### MEMBERSHIP

I want to be an active participant of the  
Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Assoc.  
I have indicated my area(s) of interest  
below :

- ☐ Volunteer Museum Attendant
- ☐ Building Maintenance Committee
- ☐ Fund Raising Committee
- ☐ Nominating Committee
- ☐ Archives Committee
- ☐ Museum Clean-up Committee  
( in May or during summer)
- ☐ Group tours liaison
- ☐ Publicity/newsletter committee
- ☐ Oral history project
- ☐ Holiday Open House
- ☐ Naturalist program liaison
- ☐ Other ?

Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you again for your support.  
See you at the Museum !

Please check one

New Member ☐

Renewal ☐

for membership period ending

**12/31/99**

- ☐ Individual membership \$15.00
- ☐ Individual Life Membership \$100.00
- ☐ Family Membership \$25.00
- ☐ Student Membership \$5.00
- ☐ B.L.M.A. Sponsor \$50.00
- ☐ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Assoc.  
P.O. Box 83  
Jamestown, R.I. 02835



**To the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association**  
**Re: My suggestions for the 250th Anniversary**

**Activities:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Memorabilia and Commemorative items** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Outdoor celebrations/activities:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Attach extra sheets as needed. Thank you for your assistance.

Mail to:

Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association

PO Box 83

Jamestown, RI 02835-0083

see other side -->

eastward and westward of its position. It is elevated 98 feet above the level of the sea, and its limit of visibility is 15 3/4 miles.

The tower, from which the light is shown, is sixty-four feet in height; the masonry is of rubble-stone, of small size, roughcast on the exterior; it is ascended by an interior spiral stairway of wood, having landings at convenient distances. The oil is stored under the lower landing.

The lanterns contain fifteen lamps, with reflectors, arranged around two circular copper tables, each three feet in diameter. The lower table supports eight lamps, which illuminate every point of the horizon; on the upper table there are seven lamps, the vacant space being towards the land. These are so arranged that the axis of the reflectors in the upper circle of lights are over the spaces between the reflectors in the circle below, an arrangement well calculated to diffuse the light pretty equally in every direction, when the reflectors are in good order and properly adjusted; in this instance, however, several of the reflectors are bent from their original forms, which is probably owing to their great lightness, their diameters being 9 inches, and weight from 7 ounces to a pound;

two of them are very much worn and cracked. The light-keeper informed me that they had been furnished by the contractors on their last annual visit.

The dwelling house, which was built at the same time with the tower, being too near the water and on bad foundation, was destroyed in September, 1815. The present dwelling was erected in 1816; the walls are of rough stone of small size, and are badly laid. A portion of the masonry, being supported solely by the frame-work of the cellar windows, is cracked. Such, I was informed by the light-keeper, was the case with masonry over the windows and doors of the first floor, until proper lintels of stone were inserted. The house originally contained five rooms; a brick addition of two rooms was made in 1834. A stable and wood-house are also on the premises.

In 1829, a bell-house was built near the base of the tower, and a bell placed in it; these were removed in 1833. A portion of the wall of the house is now standing.

#### Dues are Due

You will probably recall that back last summer a dues payment extension was enacted advancing the expiration date to December

31<sup>st</sup>, 1998. Since there will not be another newsletter until after the first of the New Year, your dues renewal notice is enclosed with this issue. On the back of the dues notices, we are asking you to give us your input on what events you would like to see as a part of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary..

#### Beavertail Light will soon have a birthday and she's no spring chicken.

A lot of water has washed ashore and a lot of shore has washed away as well, since 1749. A great many events have taken place at the light and the Board of Directors want to mark this great achievement with appropriate ceremonies. But as our President mentioned, the board cannot do this alone.

We need YOUR input - What would you like to see

What kind of memorabilia should we have to commemorate this occasion?

Would you like to serve on an Anniversary Committee?

Would you like to help in some other way?

Please write your thoughts on the enclosed comment sheet and return it as soon possible along with your dues for the coming year.

*Happy Holidays to All*





## **ATTENTION BOARD MEMBERS**



**The regular meeting of the  
BLMA Board of Directors  
is scheduled for  
Tuesday - December 1st - 6:00 pm  
at the  
Jamestown Senior Center  
(Take note of location change)**

**Major topics for discussion will include:  
Details of the Craft Fair exhibition  
Details of the Holiday Open House  
Discussion of 250th Anniversary events  
Discussion of new displays for the museum  
Need for a Volunteer Coordinator.**

**Beauvertail Lighthouse  
Museum Association  
P.O. Box 83, Jamestown, R.I. 02835**

