Dear National Lighthouse Museum Family,

If you are reading this newsletter right now, you are considered part of this “special” family of supporters. We are most grateful for contributions in your time, your talents and/or your financial support, always working toward enhancing our mission to preserve and educate on the maritime heritage of lighthouses, light ships and the stories of their keepers for generations to come!

During these difficult times, we are hopeful you and your loved ones are staying safe and weathering this storm during unprecedented circumstances.

The Museum is certainly trying to keep its head above water, re-opening to visitors on August 26. We have pivoted on many of our public programs, scaling back attendance, modifying events, using virtual platforms, and creating new and innovative events to achieve our mission.

Most memorable was the only boat tour we were able to launch during the season, with a scaled back attendance, a magnificent day and a trip through the Raritan Bay over to Sandy Hook Light. Upon return, we were greeted in the distance with two whales breaching right behind the Romer Shoals light...

In addition, in lieu of our annual Lighthouse Point Fest, we morphed into resurrecting our Great Staten Island Lighthouse Hunt. This event proved to be a “super-fun”, socially distanced day of participants discovering new and interesting locations and valuable history about Staten Island and its vast network of lighthouses on and offshore. This program certainly helped to confirm why Staten Island had been chosen to be the home of the National Lighthouse Museum.

Coming soon, we have several wonderful lectures planned in 2021 as well as the introduction of a Staten Island Young Adult Film Fest, with a maritime themed focus. We are also contemplating the re-scheduling of HRH/Princess Anne to visit us. Please note, Her Royal Highness has formally agreed to become the Honorary Chair of our Campaign for Illuminating Future Generations.

In trying our best to keep the Museum moving forward, despite all financial obstacles, we are hoping to build our base of paid memberships or renewals if at one time a member. These memberships are a crucial funding base for the Museum to move forward in the future. Please take the time to complete the Form in the back of this newsletter and support us, while enjoying the Museum benefits.

Our Five-Year Appeal is still available so if you have not stepped up to the plate to make this pledge toward Illuminating Future Generations, now is the time to take the lead!

Please try your best to have a happy holiday season, despite the many restrictions we are currently under. Remember, there is that shining light at the top of the tower and we are slowly getting up there, do not let your guard down now - STAY SAFE. Let the beacon of hope become your shining star...

Sincerely,
Linda
Great Staten Island Lighthouse Hunt

Sunday, October 25th, 2020 10am-3pm

The Great Staten Island Lighthouse Hunt was held on Sunday, October 25th, 2020 from 10am-3pm. The event enabled families and friends to learn about the history of lighthouses on Staten Island while social distancing. Participants had the option to travel via car or motorcycle and snap photos of the lighthouses they spotted along the way using our map as a guide. They also collected stickers at each check point. Afterwards, they posted photos for all to enjoy!

**Lighthouse Hunt Raffle Winner: Jessica Contrada**

“As a Staten Island native, I only knew of one existing lighthouse (Lighthouse Hill). It was very interesting to learn about the other lighthouses and specifically their importance to Staten Island. The staff at each location were all very friendly and super knowledgeable. We had such a fun day exploring, taking pictures, learning new things and visiting the museum. This impromptu experience became a great day and I’m so happy we did it...”

Here are just a few of the kind words we received following the event:

“What an adventure! A nice fall day to meander around Staten Island. Knowledgeable volunteers sharing the history of the 10 lighthouses made this an interesting and very enjoyable day!”
- Carol Manager

“Just wanted to let all know...the Hunt...was a complete joy in which to participate... Every volunteer we came across was cheerful, helpful and just overall upbeat. It was a great event and a spectacular day!”

Lighthouse Sticker Page

Once participants visited each lighthouse on the sheet, stickers were handed out at each site.

Participants stop at a check point during the Lighthouse Hunt

Arrr Matey.... Shiver me Timbers...

Photo Credit(s): Lighthouse Hunt Photographer - Carole Manager
...That the amazing Administration building was constructed as a fire safety measure.

The three-story granite and red brick Second Empire style building was designed by the legendary American architect Alfred Bult Mullett. Mullet was an advocate of the popular French Second Empire Style of Architecture. During his tenure as Supervisor of the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Architecture, he oversaw the design of many similar structures including the old State, War, and Navy Department Building located next to the White House in Washington, D.C.

The annual 1868 report by the Lighthouse Board to the Treasury Department indicates that the planning for an office building was already in the works. It states that...

a fireproof building for offices, and for the preservation of archives, should be built after the design long since approved as part of this establishment.

Until the Administration Building was completed the Establishment offices, and archives shared space in the 1864 Inspectors Warehouse. This was a less than desired arrangement, since it placed both equipment and irreplaceable paperwork at high fire risk.

The 1868 report also indicates that...
...the foundation has been laid, and the walls carried up to the water table, where the work will probably stop for a year, unless an appropriation for its continuance is specifically made, as it is not thought the general fund for the support of the Light-House establishment during this year and the next can afford a larger draft upon it than that required for the completion of the workshops.

For the next three years work continued on the structure. Some delays occurred due to funding issues until it's final completion in 1871. As is noted in the Annual report for that year...

Building for offices - The work on this building having been suspended for more than one year for want of funds, has been resumed, and the structure will be completed and ready for occupation by November.

The structure was expanded in 1901 when two wings were added on to the original design. In 1980 the building was designated as a landmark by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. The building is currently scheduled for restoration to its former grandeur and will be repurposed for new use in the near future.
Seventy-six years have passed since Allied Forces launched the world's largest land, sea and air invasion in history in order to liberate France from Nazi control. On the eve of WWII, improved Irish-British relations would enable a meteorological station, operating from the remote Blacksod lighthouse, situated upon the Mullett Peninsula of Blacksod Bay, 760 miles northwest of Normandy, to play a determinant role on behalf of the achievement of this Allied victory.

Our purpose here is threefold: first, to detail some of the intriguing history of this lighthouse, secondly, to explain briefly how, with WWII fast approaching, the establishment of workable relations between Ireland and Britain proved to be critical to the gathering and dispensing of accurate meteorological data at Blacksod Lighthouse as well as other weather stations in Ireland, and, thirdly, to describe the critical role played by an employee of the Blacksod meteorological station, Maureen Sweeney.

The D-Day Invasion:

“Operation Overlord”, or, as it is more commonly known: the D-Day Invasion of June 6th 1944, embraced immense, indeed unfathomably complex logistical details involving, for instance, the amassing of intelligence concerning German troop strength throughout France, the existence and disposition of its fortified positions, a determination of what constituted the most vulnerable targets upon which to launch the invasion, vast and intricate planning involving the use of 6,939 ships, (the largest armada ever assembled up to that time) the deployment of 156,115 US, British and Canadian troops, and the utilization of massive aircraft: 2,395 planes and 867 gliders. A further, no less important issue concerned the gathering of accurate weather information to help determine the best day this extraordinary air, land and sea operation could be successfully launched.

Blacksod Lighthouse:

One of the North Atlantic’s best locations for a weather station, in view of its position as the westernmost point of Ireland is Blacksod Bay, site of Blacksod Lighthouse. Blacksod Bay, (Cuan an Fhóid Duibh), translated in Irish as “sea of black fodder,” is situated in North County Mayo, Ireland. The bay itself is 9.9 miles long and 5.0 miles wide. County Mayo is the third largest county in Ireland bounded on its western side by the Mullet Peninsula. Its eastern side includes Kiltane Parish. The Lighthouse is situated at the southern end of the Mullet Peninsula at Erris at the entrance to Blacksod Bay.

The lighthouse was built by Bryan Carey, a leading merchant of Belmullet. It was fashioned from granite blocks believed to have come from Termon Hill, a nearby isolated outcrop of very high quality granite. Blacksod Lighthouse comprises a stalwart square block, an unpainted granite formation on which the only painted portion concerns the white conical lantern that extends to a height of 39 feet. The Keeper’s residence is an unusual two story square shaped building containing distinctive architectural highlights. Chance Brothers and Company of Spon Lane, Smethwick, in the West Midlands, formerly Staffordshire, won the right to provide its Fresnel light in a bid with Messrs. Wilkins and Company. Since the respective bids of each company came in at an identical 340 pounds, the Chance Brothers secured the contract by winning a drawing after which the renowned British glass manufacturer installed a 3rd Order Diatropic light apparatus.
Improved Irish-British Relations in the wake of Ireland’s war for independence from 1919-1921

The 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, commonly known as “The Treaty,” between Britain and the newly independent Irish Free State, stipulated that the British would continue to control three Irish Free State deep water ports: Lough Swilly, Berenhaven and Spike Island.

Seventeen years later in 1938, a new Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1938 was signed between Prime Minister (in Irish, Taoiseach) Eamon de Valera and British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. This revised treaty facilitated the return of the three deep water ports previously occupied by Britain back to Ireland thus ensuring Ireland’s official status of neutrality during WWII.

Crucially, however, Prime Minister de Valera agreed to allow Britain ready access to data produced by well situated meteorological, “Met” stations such as the one created on Blacksod, should the need arise, as it most certainly did during the early days of June 1944.

In 1933 Edward (Ted) Sweeney was appointed Attendant or Keeper of Blacksod. Sweeney was also a member of the Irish Coast Guard so he brought considerable expertise to his role as Keeper. However it was Maureen Flavin, who can be mainly credited with making the momentous weather forecast on the occasion of her 21st Birthday at 2:00am, June 3rd 1944.

Maureen had previously lived in County Kerry when in 1943, she replied to a newspaper ad describing a post office clerk's position. She hadn’t realized, until her arrival at Blacksod for her interview, that the post office in which she would work was actually formed from out of a portion of the lighthouse complex. Much to her further surprise, Maureen’s duties as post office clerk would include weather forecasting. Blacksod was the only post office in Ireland that utilized a lighthouse building to accommodate its operation. Within that post office lay rudimentary meteorological instruments that Maureen, a novice to the field, would learn to master.
As succeeding generations familiar with the D-Day epic will readily understand, postponement of the invasion of Normandy to June 6th helped to avert a catastrophe. The number of Allied casualties on June 6th nevertheless reached ghastly proportions: 10,000 killed, wounded, and missing in action including 6,603 Americans, 2,700 British, and 946 Canadians.

According to the present day Keeper, Vincent Sweeney, the son of Ted and Maureen, who were married in 1946, it would not be until the mid-1950s, with the release of previously classified British documents, that Ted and Maureen learned just how important their station’s weather forecast had been with respect to General Eisenhower’s decision to postpone the invasion of Normandy until June 6th.


Seventy-six years after Maureen’s historic participation in WWII, an Irish National Television (RTÉ) documentary entitled: Storm Front in Mayo – The Story of the D-Day Forecast, was produced earlier this year. In the film, Maureen speaks with lively eloquence about her historic experience reminding us of the special qualities she brought to Blacksod as a 20 year old from County Kerry.

Beginning in 2021, the interior of Blacksod Lighthouse will finally be open to the public. The staff of Blacksod will endeavor to educate people about the unique and demanding life Ted and Maureen Sweeney led as Keepers, and, as operators of the Post Office, a facility that co-existed within the lighthouse complex as a weather station. The Post Office where Maureen worked as a clerk will showcase meteorological instruments that she used on June 3rd 1944 to unwittingly, but with the utmost professionalism and dedication, facilitate an efficacious outcome to the Allied invasion of Normandy.

## Maureen’s Weather Report:

At 2:00am, just two hours after the arrival of her 21st Birthday on June 3rd, Maureen observed a precipitous drop in the barometric pressure. Although it was difficult for her during those early morning hours to determine with certainty the precise direction that this gale was heading, she concluded that it emanated from the North Atlantic as “a Force 6 wind,” and this storm appeared ominous.

After submitting her meteorological data to the main British weather station in Dunstable, Maureen received repeated calls from a woman with a pronounced English accent asking her to confirm the accuracy of the data that she had previously provided. Maureen obliged each request.

When news about the extremely troubling weather report coming out of Blacksdod’s “Met” Station reached Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight David Eisenhower headquarters at Southwick House, located five miles to the north of the city of Portsmouth in Hampshire, consternation among Allied leadership was set in motion.

Based on conflicting weather reports, Eisenhower had scrupulously fixed the date of the Allied assault against the Normandy coast, for the morning of June 5th. Eisenhower now realized that this powerful storm would reach the beaches of Normandy in just a few hours. A storm of this magnitude would likely destroy any Allied effort to invade Normandy with success on the morning of June 5th. Meteorological data provided by Maureen indicated that the storm would continue to pass through Normandy on the morning of the 5th. Two cold fronts, however, would then follow, bringing clearer weather on the 6th along an arc that stretched from Blacksdod Bay to the beaches of Normandy. This heartening information encouraged General Eisenhower to move forward on his invasion plan to the morning of June 6th.

### The weather forecast behind the D-Day Invasion 65 years ago

During the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, the Allied forces stormed ashore on the beaches of Normandy, marking a turning point in World War II and the beginning of the liberation of Europe from Nazi control. The D-Day invasion was actually scheduled for June 5, but early in the morning of June 4, the mission was scrubbed based on a forecast of high winds and rain across the English Channel. The mission was in danger of being postponed for at least a month if such weather persisted through June 7. However, during the next 12 hours, meteorologists detected a major change in weather patterns and saw a window of opportunity to launch the attack. Early on the morning of June 5, during a howling gale and pouring rain, a high command convened and gave the “go” order to launch the operation based on the forecast of improving weather conditions for June 6, a forecast that proved to be correct.

### How the weather evolved

**June 4, 1944:** High winds and rain lash the English Channel. With a new storm approaching, the invasion was aborted.

**June 5, 1944:** Although the new storm intensified, it moved directly over Normandy and the invasion was launched.

**June 6, 1944:** High pressure builds into Europe. The invasion begins.

### Why June 6?

June 5–7, 1944, offered the best conditions for the invasion:

- Full moon
- Low tides
- Light winds
- Good visibility
- Clear or partly cloudy skies

### Maureen Sweeney, 96 yrs old in 2020


By Wade R. Goria, Historian and NLM Lecturer

(Above) Maureen Sweeney, 96 yrs old in 2020


(Above) D-Day Invasion weather forecast sent from Blacksdod

https://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/06/06/the-weather-forecast-that-saved-d-day/
Memorable Moments & Events

Lung Yeuen, from Manhattan, celebrating his 30th Birthday on October 19th, proudly calls himself a Dominican, as he spent his first 3 yrs of life at Beekman Hospital surrounded by Dominican nurses after setting a record of birth weight survival in NYC.

On August 26th, we reopened the Museum after our closure in March due to the Covid-19 Pandemic!

Fig Fest-9/15/20!
Held in 2 parts: 1 wine & cheese tasting & 1 virtual lecture

“A Whale of a Time”
During our Oct 3rd boat tour this year a whale was spotted!

10/22-Revolutionary Staten Island
Book signing & lecture
with council member Joe Borelli

Princess Anne, HRH, The World’s Leading Preservationist of Lighthouses made a special appearance during our Virtual Gala, held Aug 7th- in support of our Campaign: Illuminating Future Generations.

Weathering the Storm
National Lighthouse Museum 2020 Gala Production

Lian Lidra, Shaun Tsao and Adrienne Ferretti at the NLM Gala 2019

If you missed our Virtual Gala-Weathering the Storm & Princess Anne’s special message you can now view it on Youtube here: https://youtu.be/5kfWEsA7xvA
AMBASSADOR SHAUN

Shaun Tsao may live in Singapore but his heart is on Staten Island. At home in the island nation of Singapore, Shaun studies with a tutor, exercises and swims. Shaun is truly special.

He loves to go to museums of all kinds and is particularly attached to the National Lighthouse Museum on Staten Island. He enjoys the stories of the lighthouse keepers and the lighthouses that protect the waters around our harbor and those around the world.

He has been to the Lighthouse Gala on the Cornucopia Destiny in the past.

Shaun is a true ambassador for the National Lighthouse Museum. He has worn his NLM t-shirt so much in Singapore that he wore it out. So, of course, he was sent a new one to replace it. He was so happy that he sported his new NLM t-shirt for his 40th birthday celebration in Singapore.

Shaun usually travels to Staten Island every year. He enjoys traveling around the tri-state area and visiting with his Staten Island family and friends.

“Shaun is really remarkable. He’s like my best friend. We talk all the time. He is the kindest, sweetest person I know.” said his “Auntie” Dr. Adrienne Ferretti of Grasmere. (You might know her from Fig Fest and the Legendary Lighthouse Soup Contests)

This year, Shaun was supposed to be with us to celebrate his 40th birthday on Staten Island but due to the very rude Corona virus Pandemic he was unable to travel here.

That’s ok. A little bit of the NLM was sent to him in Singapore. and when the world returns to normalcy he will visit us again... and we will have a Staten Island Birthday party for Shaun.
WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE MUSEUM

11/14/20
As long as I can remember, I have always loved light houses. They bring a sense of security to me. I can’t explain it is my wish to visit as many light houses as I can while I am still able. Thank you for all you have shared with me today. It has shown me and educated me in the lighthouses I love.

Esther & Royce

11/13
Have to say, it’s more educational than what I thought.

Thank you so much Jimmy for all your information. I enjoyed the trip very much. I hope you guys keep doing it! I love lighthouses.

now.

11/14/20
LOVE THE PLACE! LEARNED SO MANY LIGHTHOUSES FACTS FROM JIM! WE ARE ALL OUR FRIENDS HERE. CAN’T WAIT TO COME BACK! - Lauren & techno

11/15/20
Is a beautiful place to visit, I love it so much. Hope can continue improving.

11/15/20
Beautiful museum! Thank you.
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Renew your NLM Membership Today
OR
Become a New Member

Membership Drive 2021
All Members Enjoy:
- Free admission to the museum
- 10% discounts in the museum store
- Members' rates for events, programs, lectures & classes

TO SIGN UP / TO RENEW ONLINE CLICK HERE
OR
FILL OUT FORM ON THE RIGHT>>

- $40 Lamplighter - Student/Senior (65+)/ Military
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

- $50 Keeper - Individual
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

- $75 Family Keepers - Family (2 Adults & 2 Children)
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

- $100 Range Light - Affiliate
  Not-For-Profit Organizations
  Link to Organization’s Website on NLM Website

- $500 Light Ship - Small Business (under 10 employees)
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
  with Company ID, link on NLM website

- $2500 Beacon - Corporate (24 employees or less)
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
  with Company ID, 4 tickets to Lighthouse Boat Tour
  of your choice, link on NLM website

- $5000 Fresnel Lens - Corporate
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
  with Company ID, 4 tickets to Lighthouse Boat Tour
  of your choice, 2 tickets to the NLM Gala,
  full page ad in Gala Journal, link on NLM website

FULL NAME

DATE

STREET ADDRESS

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☐ $40 Lamplighter - Student/Senior (65+)/ Military
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

☐ $50 Keeper - Individual
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

☐ $75 Family Keepers - Family (2 Adults & 2 Children)
  Free Museum admission, 10% discount
  at Gift Shop, discounted Lectures and Children’s Programs

☐ $100 Range Light - Affiliate
  Not-For-Profit Organizations
  Link to Organization’s Website on NLM Website

☐ $500 Light Ship - Small Business (under 10 employees)
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
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☐ $2500 Beacon - Corporate (24 employees or less)
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
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☐ $5000 Fresnel Lens - Corporate
  Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission
  with Company ID, 4 tickets to Lighthouse Boat Tour
  of your choice, 2 tickets to the NLM Gala,
  full page ad in Gala Journal, link on NLM website

CREDIT CARD NUMBER

EXP. DATE SECURITY CODE
☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX

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☐ I would like automatic annual membership renewal
CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NATIONAL LHIGTHOUSE MUSEUM
TOTAL ENCLOED $_____
MAIL TO: 200 THE PROMENADE AT LIGHTHOUSE POINT
STATE, NY 10301
PAY ONLINE: WWW.LIGHTHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG
FIND THE HIDDEN LEAF ICONS
Are you up for a challenge?
See if you can find the 6 hidden 🍁 leaf icons in this newsletter. 
(Answers are on the bottom of the page)

FALL FUN
COLORING SHEET

Happy Fall Y'all!
Have fun coloring this fall scene!

courtesy of pinterest

Grateful thanks to our generous sponsors!

NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM

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Answers: Find the 6 hidden leaf icons:
1. On the Letter from Our Executive Director page 2. In the "I" in Did you know? 3. On the Lighthouse Hunt Page

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