Thoughts from the Executive Director

It has been an amazingly stressful year for all of us, but we worked tirelessly, weathered this storm and survived!

The Museum was officially re-opened to the public on August 26, 2020 with 25% capacity. We have officially returned to 100% capacity. As we emerge from this COVID-19 "storm" we are excited to acknowledge that our “TEAM,” made up of our generous donors, docents, volunteers, trustees and dedicated staff - all helped us to safely navigate those dangerous waters in which we found ourselves.

I would like to offer my heartfelt appreciation to a number of key funders that were there for us during our darkest hours. Most importantly, I should like to recognize The Staten Island Foundation, which, recently lost their esteemed and very dedicated leader. Betsy Dubovsky. Betsy believed in the enormous potential and value of the NLM from the outset of its creation. Betsy’s ongoing efforts on our behalf will be forever remembered at the Museum, and, we will honor her memory with the Wind In Our Sails Award during our upcoming 11th. Annual Light Keepers Gala on Saturday, August 7 on land at the recently renovated Pavilion on the Terrace. We are also indebted to Achelis Bodman Foundation, Con Edison; Humanities NY, the US Lighthouse Society and to Bill Baker whose incredible generosity helped us to remain on a steady keel.

Moving forward, we are very proud of the wonderful programs planned for this year: numerous informative lectures, our exciting seasonal boat tours that launched on May 22nd. We can assure everyone that as we continue to follow CDC Guidelines, our Museum staff have put all the necessary Policies and Procedures in place to insure a safe and pleasant experience for everyone visiting the building, attending one of our public programs, or joining one of our scheduled boat tours.

During these unpredictable times, we have never lost focus regarding our primary mission: to educate the public about the history of our lighthouses, lightships and other navigational aids while preserving the heritage and legacy of keepers, crew and workers.

The recent, highly successful Great Staten Island Lighthouse Hunt exemplifies our effort in this regard. Our wonderful education programs help reinforce the critical importance of aids to navigation, and the tremendous role that Staten Island’s General Depot played in the maritime history of our nation.

As always, we deeply appreciate whatever help you are able to provide in support of our mission. We welcome you to assume an active role by coming aboard one of our boat tours, attending one of our lectures, our upcoming August Gala, joining us for a round of Golf on October 1, or perhaps volunteering your time during our annual Lighthouse Point Fest scheduled this year on October 3.

We are always on the look out for new members. You can further help us by spreading the word to your family, friends and neighbors about all that we do.

As we continue to work diligently towards securing a brighter and more exciting future for the NLM, we hope you will enjoy a great summer and above all, stay safe!

All the best, Linda
Today when most people think of Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, the image of a lighthouse rarely comes to mind. Twenty years after 9/11, the mindset of most Americans associate this magnificent deep water bay and region occupying the southernmost portion of Cuba with orange jump suit clad terrorists imprisoned here after their capture, many serving long term or life sentences in a range of high security prisons with names like: Camp X-Ray (now closed), Camp Delta or Camp-5.

Though the number of detainees or inmates occupying this prison complex has been substantially reduced in recent years, Gitmo or (GITMO) the slang nickname given to these prisons, continues to house a number of the world’s most violent and heinous criminals in a highly controlled maximum security environment. Gitmo’s remote location in southern Cuba, and the highly restrictive rules and regulations it places upon potential visitors, has succeeded in limiting access to it by the media.

With this said, our purpose here is not to elucidate facts surrounding the contemporary Gitmo facilities, but to familiarize us with some history of Guantanamo Bay, and, in the process, provide details about one of America’s lesser known lighthouses: Windward Point, which, adjoins Gitmo. This is an American Lighthouse situated upon Cuban soil. Winward Point Lighthouse’s history is inextricably linked to the Spanish American War, to the rise of American Naval power, and, to the emergence of the United States to a position of global preeminence during the 20th century.

The place-name Guantanamo, was formed by the indigenous Taino people, who once dominated the southern and eastern portions of Cuba. Their civilization was very nearly eradicated by waves of Spanish conquistadors who made life for the Taino people a living hell.

Guantanamo has been translated as: “land lying between the rivers.” The region possesses the largest bay of southern Cuba. When Christopher Columbus saw it during his second voyage to the Caribbean in 1494, he named it Puerto Grande. Guantanamo Bay is entered by steering past Leeward Point to the west and Windward Point to the east.

As a consequence of the Spanish-American War, a conflict that extended from April 21st 1898 to December 10th 1898, Guantanamo would be captured by the US. The bay’s prized strategic location, characterized by an enormously deep water port accommodated naval warships and other large commercial vessels. The bay is surrounded by steep hills, which, further insulates Guantanamo helping to shield it from land invasion.

The establishment of full military control over Guantanamo fully accorded with influential ideas advanced by Naval Historian and former Naval Officer, Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914). Mahan’s immensely popular lectures in the 1890’s, and in the early 20th century were derived from his book: The Influence of Seapower Upon History, (published in 1890) in which he argued that America’s security, power and its destiny could not be achieved without the establishment of a powerful Navy. Mahan’s book made reference to empires in history whose control of the sea represented the key element of their successful attainment of power. His lectures would convince Theodore Roosevelt as President to build America’s “Great White Fleet,” which, along with its commerce, trade, manufacturing, human and natural resources and stable political structures propelled the US towards global preeminence.
Coal-fueling ports had already been established by the US Navy under Commodore Mathew C. Perry in Japan in 1853 revealing an early American commitment to developing a formidable naval presence and a maritime infrastructure in the Pacific. American policies in Hawaii and in the Philippines, the latter of which is comprised of 7,640 islands, highlighted America’s rapidly advancing global approach.

Cuba is the Caribbean’s largest island with proximity to Central and South America. It plays a role as a connector linking both the Caribbean and Atlantic, and between Cuba and Haiti. It was believed in Washington that Guantanamo Bay’s size and location could serve the US as a critical bastion of American naval power in the Caribbean. From Guantanamo Bay, the US could defend its extensive business interests in Cuba, notably the production of sugar cane. In the 19th century, Cuba had emerged as the world’s largest producer of this immensely valuable commodity.

On June 10th 1898, less than two months after the outbreak of war between Spain and the US, a US Marine Battalion secured control over Guantanamo Bay. In view of the horrors to which the region’s Taino inhabitants had been historically subjected by the Spanish, those Taino that survived Spanish policies, were in 1898, especially hostile towards Spain’s four centuries of brutal imperial control over Cuba. A number of native scouts of Taino heritage would therefore assist the US Marines as guides during their military operation in Guantanamo Bay.

The deeply resentful attitude of many Cubans towards Spanish rule was further exemplified by the popular slogan and omnipresent toast: “Cuba Libre.” Lyrics of the song, Guantanamera contained ideas expressed by the popular Cuban philosopher, revolutionary poet and professor, Jose Marti. The song was actually written in America in 1891 during Marti’s visit to Haines Falls, New York. It expressed a yearning for the attainment of freedom and independence from Spain and, in common with America’s Star Spangled Banner, Marti’s lyrics were combined with the melody of a familiar Cuban drinking song. Guantanamera formed a part of the Cuban revolutionary experience and the song would be performed by a wide range of recording artists during the 20th Century.

Some advocates of “Cuba Libre” believed that the US would eventually turn over control of Guantanamo to local inhabitants once Spanish rule had been eliminated. But the naval base, replete with its vital coaling station and extensive port facilities gave the US Navy during the war, a powerful capacity to fuel ships and successfully blockade the vital port of Santiago, located just 45 miles away. Naval operations emanating from Guantanamo Bay would eventually decimate the Spanish flotilla in Santiago. Guantanamo Bay’s naval base had undoubtedly shortened the course of America’s war with Spain. It was simply too valuable a naval base for the US to relinquish.

With the signing of the Treaty of Paris of December 10th 1898, Cuba entered into a nebulous political relationship with America. Washington would come to describe Cuba as a US “protectorate.” For his part, Theodore Roosevelt also strongly believed that Guantanamo represented far too valuable a strategic asset on behalf of America’s “Big Stick” policy for it to be handed over to the newly “independent” Cuban government. The upshot of a very complicated, and for many Cubans, vexing political process led the US to lease Guantanamo Bay from Cuba “in perpetuity.”

Once the US had established full authority over Guantanamo Bay, it set out to construct aids to navigation including lighthouses and buoys designed to protect ships that constituted the basis of its critical naval operation at Guantanamo. The Windward Point Lighthouse played a key role on behalf of ships heading towards the Windward Passage. Along with its accompanying docks and its depot, this lighthouse represented a prime example of US maritime infrastructure in the Caribbean.

Winward Point Lighthouse is situated upon land at Punta de Barlovento that lay adjacent to the point where the Caribbean joins the Atlantic Ocean. The Winward Passage also separates Cuba from Haiti. Over successive decades, Cuban governments either supported or tolerated the perpetual lease arrangement between Washington and the Cuban government in Havana.

continued on next page

Windward Point Lighthouse in 1919
Photograph courtesy U.S. Coast Guard
When Fidel Castro assumed control over Cuba in 1959, the Communist leader, not surprisingly, expressed fierce resentment over what he regarded as an illegal theft of Guantanamo Bay by the US. Castro argued further that US control over the region had been achieved mainly as a result of coercion, which, violated international law. In spite of Castro's protestations, President Eisenhower continued to support the essence of the 1903 treaty: notably its stipulation that Guantanamo would remain under American jurisdiction and control, but acknowledging at the same time in a contradictory and confusing fashion that ultimate sovereignty over Guantanamo Bay would still belong to Cuba.

Construction of the Windward Point Lighthouse commenced in 1899, just a few months after the US had achieved its stunning military and naval triumph over Spain in which it also captured the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico. During the same year, 1898, while the Spanish-American War was being fought, the Hawaiian Islands were also annexed by the United States.

Winward Point initially fell under the jurisdiction of the 3rd District of the US Lighthouse Board, which, also exercised direction over the 18 acre General Depot in St George, Staten Island, where the National Lighthouse Museum is situated today.

The Winward Point lighthouse tower, is built of iron, and is cylindrical in shape. It was originally painted a light grey color and stood 75.9 feet above sea level. It contained a 4th order Fresnel lens with a fixed red light, visible from a distance of 14 miles. Initially, living quarters for the Keeper and his family consisted of a small rectangular structure made of wood, which, proved to be too small for its intended purpose. This structure would be significantly enlarged over the years. The Department of Commerce and Labor took charge of all lighthouses from the Department of the Treasury in 1903 and the US Lighthouse Board was re-named the US Lighthouse Service. In 1905, management of Winward Point Lighthouse would be transferred from the 3rd to the 7th District, which, comprised portions of Florida.

Other lighthouses were built at Guantanamo Bay in fairly close proximity: Hicacal Beach Range Lights across the Bay and Fisherman Point Range Lights located two miles from Winward Point. A total of eight Head Keepers served Winward Point lighthouse from 1905 to 1955. Arthur CE Hamblety was employed as Head Keeper during the 1910’s and is remembered for having mastered Esperanto and for earning a certification in Mechanotherapy, which, utilized hypnosis in order to improve the health and well-being of patients suffering from a wide range of maladies. In 1918, $14,000 was appropriated for the construction of a new dwelling, and, for erecting new towers to allow electric lights to replace the existing oil range lights. Both projects were completed in 1920.

Windward Point was deactivated in 1955 at which time a light was transferred to a nearby iron tower. In 2017, the lighthouse and Keepers quarters as well as the yard of its depot were completely renovated courtesy of the San Diego based Joint Task Force, Guantanamo’s Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST).

Presently, the Keepers Quarters serves as an historical museum, one that contains numerous documents and memorabilia relating to the history of Winward Point lighthouse, and to the heroic actions of individuals who fought against Spain during the Spanish-American War at Guantanamo Bay. According to Lt. JG Asron Dorian the MSST shoreside officer in charge of this most worthy project: “The lighthouse is a piece of history here at Guantanamo.....I feel we have an obligation to do our best to preserve it for future service members to enjoy.”

As with so many lighthouses located throughout the United States, Winward Point is regarded by those who live near to it as an historical, cultural and community centerpiece in Guantanamo Bay.

The recent preservation and restoration of Winward Point Lighthouse further represents a shining reminder of the inestimable improvement America’s naval base at Guantanamo made in the lives of Cuban citizens, most notably, the critical role it played towards ending four centuries of unspeakably brutal Spanish tyranny from which the Cuban people, tragically, have yet to recover.

Wade R. Goria is an Historian and Lecturer for all NLM Boat Tours.
2021 National Lighthouse Museum Boat Tour Schedule

Saturday, June 19
11:00 am - Encircle Staten Island

Wednesday, July 14
11:00 am - Bastille Day - A Little French Connection

Sunday, July 18
11:00 am - East River Cruise to Execution Rocks

Sunday, August 8
11:00 am - Lighthouse Weekend – Signature Tour

Sunday, September 12, 11:00 am
Hudson River Tour to Tappan Zee Bridge

Saturday, October 30, 3:00 pm
Haunting Halloween Cruise through Hell’s Gate to Execution Rocks

All Tours are scheduled for 3 hours, however, tides and currents may increase the time needed to return to dock!

$60 for adults/ $40 for children - Order tickets online at www.lighthousemuseum.org/visit/lighthouse-boat-tours/ Group rates available. Call the Lighthouse Museum for details.
Maritime History

by John Anntzen, Board of Trustee

Despite the restrictions placed on museums, churches and other gathering places, the National Lighthouse Museum has been able to continue its program of lectures on historic topics of interest during the COVID pandemic. Museum Executive Director Linda Dianto and her able staff successfully hosted two presentations on books of particular relevance to Staten Island’s rich maritime history: The Captain, The Missionary, and the Bell: the Wreck of the Steamship Atlantic by Capt. Eric Larsson and Formation of Foundations: An Illustrated Look at the Industrial Pioneers of Staten Island, New York, 1900-Present by Bruce D. Brock. These two authors share a common sense of curiosity about common objects that they, and countless others, had passed by without thought.

Captain Larsson and Mr. Brock sought answers to how and why a bell on the side of a building in Manhattan, and a formation of concrete foundations in an abandoned marsh on the north shore of Staten Island, came to be there. We are grateful that they decided to share their discoveries in their books and, most recently, in their presentations at the National Lighthouse Museum.

On Sunday December 6th, 2020, Captain Eric Larsson presented the story of how the ship’s bell from the Steamship Atlantic, a coastal passenger vessel that ran aground and sank off of Fishers Island in 1846, came to become an iconic feature on the façade of the Seamans Church Institute in Manhattan. In The Captain, The Missionary, and the Bell, Captain Larsson weaves together the story of all three, beginning with the career of the vessel’s captain, Issac “Skip” Dunstan, a member Staten Island’s venerable Vanderbilt family through the disastrous December 1846 sinking of the Steamship Atlantic.

Reverend Benjamin C.C. Parker is the missionary. The book describes Parker’s life’s work of saving the souls of seamen and protecting them from the danger and enticing vices that were offered along the Manhattan waterfront. From the start of his work above a grog shop at the corner of Pine and Cherry streets, to the Floating Chapel that eventually will become the Seamans Church Institute, Larsson’s book provides great insight into Reverend Parkers motivation and his success, and the growth of the institution that he eventually came to work.

Over time, The Bell, follows the Seamans Church, functional and performing its duty until rendered an anachronism, regarded, until now, as a mostly unnoticed architectural feature of a historic building. Captain Larsson’s investigative work brings the story of the bell and the Seamans Church in New York to our attention, and with that gives us a new understanding of the maritime history of our port city.

After his presentation, Captain Larsson fielded numerous questions from the attendees. Weaving his own life experience as a merchant seaman into the story, Captain Larsson was able to provide keen insight into the maritime world that is the setting of this interesting story.

In his presentation on Formations of Foundations on February 28th, author Mr. Bruce D. Brock described his adventurous childhood on the North Shore of Staten Island during the 1960’s, playing in an abandoned marsh strewn with huge concrete structures overgrown with trees, roots and brush. After years away from Staten Island, Mr. Brock returned and was intrigued by the formations of what he came to understand must have supported massive industrial structures on the site.

Now under the protection of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mariner’s Marsh Conservancy, the “patch of green” on the Kill van Kull, was indeed the home for major industrial works in the early part of the twentieth century. Mr. Brock’s book details the rise and fall of the Milliken Brothers Structural Steel and Iron Works and the shipyards and airplane factories that followed, on what is now a protected enclave.
The massive concrete structures that fascinated Mr. Brock were indeed the foundation of the only open-hearth steel mill in New York City. The Milliken company provided steel for the earliest skyscrapers in Manhattan, including the Singer Tower, located at the corner of Broadway and Liberty Street, which was the world’s tallest building in 1908. The steel mill produced steel for overpasses that can still be found in the five boroughs and was the setting for a B-movie drama in the early 1950’s.

After the Milliken Brothers company went bankrupt, a shipyard on the site produced ocean-going cargo ships into the early 1920’s. Mr. Brock’s research also revealed that in the 1920’s and 30’s, the golden age of aviation, two factories built aircraft right on the banks of the Kill van Kull. One was successful in building cutting edge performance airplanes. The other focused on a novel design that failed at the time, but eventually evolved into features that are found on modern fighter jets today.

The lecture audiences were keenly interested to learn about these two subjects, particularly because of their relevance to Staten Island. All were very pleased with the presentations and at the conclusion had many insightful questions for the lecturers. Both authors commemorated the events by signing copies of their books for the attendees. Despite the pandemic, the National Lighthouse Museum team continues to successfully promote history by engaging the local community with programs that inform and inspire us to learn more about the history of what surrounds us and the impact it has had on the past and present world around us.

Note: Both of these events were conducted in Building 11, in accordance with New York State COVID-19 health and safety protocols. The socially distanced audience of 20 guests wore masks throughout both presentations.

A Woman’s Work is Never Done

by Dot McNamara

This virtual lecture was presented by Dr. Shauna M. Macdonald, Associate Professor at Cape Breton University in Nova Scotia, on Sunday, March 14th, 2021 by the National Lighthouse Museum. This presentation was not specifically about women lightkeepers, but instead about how women are an essential part of Lighthouse history, memory, and preservation. She gave an overview of women’s connection to Lighthouses since ancient times and noted that Hanna Thomas in the late 18th century, was one of the more recognized woman keepers but there is a long female history before that both as keepers or keepers of the home fires, etc. She cited the nuns at St. Ann’s Convent from 1200 – 1542 who kept a lighthouse on the southern coast of Ireland. Once lighthouses became standard, more reports of female keepers became known (official and non-official).

She recommended a book by Mary Levine Clifford and J. Candice Clifford called Women who Kept The Lights that speaks of specific female keepers and what they did which included not only what male keepers did but much more and they did not always get paid for it. She also recommended “Guiding Light” a new book by Shona Ridell.

Dr. MacDonald spoke of two examples of woman from the Hereford Inlet Light who were central to the legacy of the lighthouse: Temporary Keeper Laura Hedges, Dec. 1925 – Feb. 28, 1926 who minded the light after the death of her husband and Phyllis Calanno, 1964 – 2017 who, though not a Keeper, labored for the preservation of the Hereford Inlet Light.

Dr. MacDonald showed clips of her one person show about women Keepers and then spoke about how women are also history and memory keepers for preservation, and this comes in many forms – authors, curators, writing of diaries, recipes, etc. She spoke of how women today are working in various roles to preserve lighthouse history. She noted that women keepers and those keeping the history and memories are treated as a novelty, but they have been doing it for years.

Dr. MacDonald said her goal is to have people think differently about how to tell the story of lighthouses – stop treating women keepers as the exception or as a different type of woman, they have been doing this all along. Tell the stories so they will not be forgotten. If you do not represent people that are not a central part of the story you risk treating them as if they do not belong at all.

A question-and-answer period followed.
FEATURE STORY

The Night Photography of David Zapatka

With great assistance from the National Lighthouse Museum, David Zapatka visited the Staten Island Rear Range Light. The museum is now caring for the lighthouse, with the assistance of the Esposito family and Lighthouse neighbor, Donald DeRosa. The lighthouse lens still retains its original Fresnel, and it sends magnified light out into the Ambrose Channel while working in tandem with the West Bank Light. The bright beam in these photos is pointed directly at the other lighthouse, while a second smaller beam is pointed toward the Swash Channel.

David used three LED lights on stands to illuminate the scene, and the private residence homeowner, now living in the updated private residence quarters, was gracious with dimming most of the house lights during our time on the grounds.
UPCOMING EVENTS

2021 Presentations & Lectures

**Heroes of NY Harbor with Author, Marian Betancourt (Book-Signing Opportunity)**  
Sunday, June 13, 2pm

**Lightship Stories with Lieut. Jenelle Piche’**  
Sunday, July 11

**The Lost Cape Hatteras Light with Author, Kevin Duffus (Book-Signing Opportunity)**  
Friday, August 6, 6pm

**Overview of US Offshore Wind Industry: 30 Gigawatts by 2030!** with Mike Carr & John Arntzen, Members of NLM Board of Trustees  
Sun, September 26, 2pm

**Marine Safety Inspection Day Opening Exhibit & Presentation – USCG Lieut. Piche**  
Tuesday, October 12, 6pm

**Sea to Shining Sea with Jack Graham, Traveling Lightkeeper**  
Sunday, October 17, 2pm

**The Role of the Pilot in the Maritime Industry with Capt. Joe Ahlstrom, NLM President**  
Sunday, November 14, 2pm

2021 Special Events

**Staten Island The Musical!!! – This IZZit Productions, LLC**  
Thursday - Sunday, July 22- July 25, 7pm

**Lighthouse Weekend**  
Friday, August 6, 6pm - The Lost Cape Hatteras Light  
Saturday, August 7, 6:30pm - 11th Annual Lightkeeper’s Gala  
Sunday, August 8, 11am - Signature Boat Tour

**On the Waterfront...**  
**FREE Friday Night Films at Lighthouse Point**  
Friday, August 13, 20, 27, and September 3, 6pm

**Fig Fest**  
Sunday, September 19, 3pm

**Golf Outing - Royal Oaks Golf Course**  
Friday, October 1, 7:30am, Shotgun start

**Lighthouse Point Fest**  
Sunday, October 3, 12-6pm

What Visitors Are Saying about the Museum:

A wonderful visit! Thank you, Wade, for your wealth of information and the warmth with which it was presented.  
~ Shanna Simmons (volunteer keeper, Battery Point Lighthouse, CA)

Our family loved our visit to the museum. Our kids, aged 7 and 4, loved the history and stories Jim shared. Great place!  
~ Rob & Colleen

We have enjoyed the museum and its staff. Jim is the most wonderful and passionate guide I have seen. We will definitely come again.  
~ Alex and Alex Riga, Latvia

Very interesting to know more about beacons. We came from Colombia to see how beautiful these constructions are. Thank you!  
~ Noah & Fabio

To all the dedicated staff and volunteers of the National Lighthouse Museum we thank you for your efforts and enthusiasm to a historic and meaningful past between humankind and the sea.  
~ Bernard and Nina

From the country where the original word for lighthouses comes from, “pharos” in Greek, we really enjoyed this experience, visiting this historic site, learning about its past as well as its future! Special thanks to the unique guide, Jim, for his dedication & enthusiasm!  
~ Nina and Appellixi

Wonderful end to my trip to NYC from Chicago!  
~ Dominique
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

ALL MEMBERS ENJOY:
Free admission to the museum
10% discounts in the museum store
Members’ rates for events, programs, presentations & classes

☐ Lamplighter: $40 – Students/Seniors(65+)/Military
☐ Keeper: $50 – Individual
☐ Family Keepers: $75 – Family (2 Adults & 2 Children)
☐ Range Light: $100 – Affiliate/Not-For-Profit
Name of Organization: Link on the NLM Website
☐ Light Ship: $500 – Small Business
   (Under 10 Employees): Membership Certificate,
   Free Employee Admission with Company ID
   and Link on the NLM Website
☐ Beacon: $2500 – Corporate (24 Employees or Less):
   Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission with
   Company ID, 4 Tickets to a Lighthouse Boat Tour
   of Your Choice, Link on the NLM Website
☐ Fresnel Lens: $5000 – Corporate:
   Membership Certificate, Free Employee Admission with
   Company ID, Four Tickets to a Lighthouse Boat Tour of Your Choice, Two Tickets to the
   NLM Gala, full page ad in Gala Journal, Link on the NLM
   Website

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Get involved today!