

KEEPER'S KORNER

Tidbits and Editorial Comments from the Tower

BY KATHLEEN FINNEGAN-HARRISON



Fatal Accident Aboard Maine Schooner

The *Grace Bailey* was returning from a four-night foliage trip along the mid-coast of Maine on October 9th, when Dr. Emily Mecklenburg, a doctor at a local Rockport, ME hospital, was fatally wounded from an accident aboard the schooner. The top of a mast broke and fell on the deck. Three other people were injured in the accident. A Coast Guard Station Rockland 47-foot motor lifeboat crew was dispatched to assist.

“Horrible. Really shocking,” the passenger said, who asked not to be identified.

The winds were not strong and the vessel had not made any sharp tacks, the passenger went on, when the incident occurred. The *Grace Bailey* is 118-foot long with a deck 80-foot long and can carry 29 passengers. The Maine Marine Patrol said the investigation will be done by the Coast Guard.

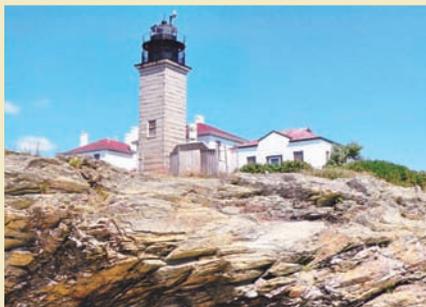
We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the victim.

This photo, taken the day of the accident provided by Kurt Schleicher, shows the schooner *Grace Bailey* with its main mast broken off. (Kurt Schleicher via AP).



Three RI Lights Get New Owners

Three Lighthouses deemed “excess property” by GSA are getting new owners. Beavertail Lighthouse in Jamestown will be turned over to the Rhode Island Dept of Environmental Management. First constructed in 1749, it was rebuilt as a 68-foot tower in 1856 after being burned down by the British in 1779. Sandy Point Lighthouse will be turned over to the Prudence Conservancy. The Sandy Point Lighthouse was originally constructed in Newport Harbor in 1823 and then moved to Prudence Island in Portsmouth in 1851. Watch Hill Lighthouse in Westerly will be going to the Watch Hill Keepers Association.



South Shields Pier Lighthouse Damaged

The South Shields Pier Lighthouse in the United Kingdom has lost its dome after waves crashed over the top of a pier and into the coastal structure on October 20, 2023.

As Storm Babet wreaked havoc across the region, cancelling events and disrupting traffic and public transport, South Shields Pier Lighthouse also fell victim to the weather as the dome from the top fell into the sea.

As winds of around 50mph hit coastal areas, the waves proved too strong for the lighthouse,

Built in 1895, the lighthouse is located on the River Tyne South Pier.

Unfavorable weather continued for several days, making immediate inspections unfeasible. (Photos by Patrick Gouldsbrough)



Maine Lighthouse Struck by Lightning

Marshall Point Lighthouse in Port Clyde, the popular Maine lighthouse that was featured in the movie “Forrest Gump” was reportedly struck by lightning on October 12th, and will remain dark and silent until further notice.

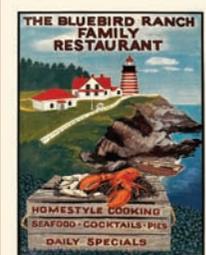
Diane Heath, who lives at the lightkeeper’s house, says that the lightning hit the lightning rod, causing damage to the light, foghorn, and all associated circuits.

There is no estimate yet on when the lighthouse will be fixed and operational. The lightkeeper’s house was not damaged.



Beacon from the Past

This menu cover from the Bluebird Ranch Restaurant in Machias, Maine from at least a decade ago features West Quoddy Head Lighthouse, the easternmost lighthouse in the United States. Shown are the tower, keepers’ house and fog signal building, which are all still present today. After 25 years in business, the restaurant, a staple in the Downeast community, closed on October 1, 2023. (Courtesy of Beth Foss)



KEEPER'S KORNER

Tidbits and Editorial Comments from the Tower

BY KATHLEEN FINNEGAN-HARRISON

Little Mark Island Monument

Ford Reiche's non-profit the Presumpscot Foundation will be applying for ownership of the Little Mark Island Monument located off Bailey Island, Maine. The Little Mark Island Monument, built in 1827, is topped by a beacon that used to help sailors navigate the Harpswell Sound. It rises 55 feet above the water and looks more like an obelisk than a lighthouse. (Photo by Ford Reiche)



National Lighthouse Day

Tony Pasek shows off the National Lighthouse Day display in their yard in Asheboro North Carolina. His wife Alma drew the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and they had the blue sign made at their local Staples store.



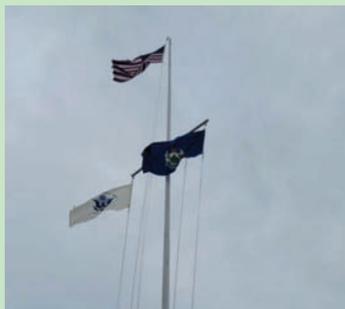
Correction

In the September/October 2023 article "Bowling Keepers Honored with Memorial Marker" we stated that the ceremony was held at the couple's graveside at the Mount Height Cemetery in Baltimore, Maryland. The name of the cemetery is the Mount Olivet Cemetery. We apologize for the error. The family has since restored the stone to its base



Lighthouse Museum Gets Boost from CMP

The flags are flying again at the Maine Lighthouse Museum thanks to the local Central Maine Power truck's boom. (Photos courtesy of Dorothy Black)



Robbins Reef Painting Closed for Winter

Robbins Reef painting project is closing down for the winter. They have about another third of the white-paneled cast iron to finish, and then will begin working on the brown lower panels. They are continuing to reach out for financial assistance. Most of the projects ahead, including access and railings, are expensive. If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution, please make it out to the Robbins Reef Lighthouse Foundation and send it to: The Robbins Reef Lighthouse Foundation, Attn: Erin Urban, 29 Eadie Place, Staten Island, NY 10301.



Helicopter stuck on Isle of Wight Lighthouse

PDG Aviation confirmed one of its helicopters experienced a technical defect while carrying out Trinity House's maintenance program. They had to leave the helicopter where it was when storm Ciaran came in. Asked if there were any fears the craft could be blown off during the storm which experienced 85 mph wind gusts, PDG officials stated that the it had been securely lashed to the helideck. And indeed, it was secure and the helo was recovered after the storm subsided. (County Press photo)

