



Photo By: Gary Ennis

Point Betsie is Gearing Up for Another Great Season!

A Letter from Board President Nancy Weir:

The trees are blooming, the grass is growing, and the birds are singing. That means the staff, Board, and volunteers at Point Betsie are gearing up for the season. Grass is being cut, windows are being washed and new merchandise is being unpacked and marked, all in anticipation of another busy summer season!

Welcome back to Maryellen Paull, Ruth Paris and Denise Russell from our previous staff. Dan Smith, our manager, will not be returning this season. We wish him well and thank him for the leadership he demonstrated these past two seasons in moving us forward.

In addition, we want to welcome our three new Board members, Genie Wolfson, Gayle Brown, and Mike Perry. They bring much talent to the Board and we look forward to working with them. We also want to remember our two Board members who passed away recently, Mike Quinn and Gregg Johnson. They are both greatly missed by all of us and we appreciate their many contributions to Point Betsie.

Thanks to a generous donation from Joe and Beth Fitzsimmons, there will be a new video soon on display featuring Jon Hawley and Bill Herd detailing some of the Lighthouse's "story." We expect it will entertain you and enhance your visit. Many new items have been added to our displays. We hope you enjoy them all.

While we are lucky to have an outstanding staff, our volunteers add much to our visitor's experience. We hope that you might consider joining our team this summer. Volunteers work in 2 ½ hour shifts once a week, or every other week. If you would like to join us just give us a call and we will provide the training. (231) 352-7644.



Photo By: Kristina Lishawa

Mission

To support Benzie County in the restoration and maintenance of the Point Betsie Lighthouse facility through advocacy, fundraising and volunteers. Our goal is to promote related educational opportunities for the benefit of all, while maintaining the historical and environmental integrity of the site.

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The Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse

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In Memory of Gregg Johnson, Point Betsie Board Member

The Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse mourn the recent loss of one of their newer Board members, Gregg Johnson. Gregg, 55, was looking forward to taking a larger role at Point Betsie and to applying his extensive knowledge, energy, and talents, particularly in technology. "Gregg combined his wide range of skills with a real enthusiasm and warmth, all of which we will really miss," said Dick Taylor, Board vice president and long-time friend of Gregg's. "He had a lot to offer not only to the Friends of Point Betsie, but to everyone around him." Gregg had a long and successful engineering career in the auto industry. A resident of Royal Oak, he was instrumental in establishing the OnStar program at General Motors and had many ongoing entrepreneurial pursuits. Gregg was looking forward to spending much more time "Up North" at his Watervale home. Gregg leaves behind his wife Susan, three daughters, a son, and three grandchildren. He will be missed by all.



Gregg Johnson

In Memory of Mike Quinn, Architect and Friend of Point Betsie

In 2001 the Lighthouse Advisory Committee members at Benzie County were trying to get our arms around how we were going to address the restoration and operational challenges we would have if Point Betsie was acquired from the Bureau of Land Management. We were passionate but had limited knowledge so decided to contract with a Historic Architect to prepare a Feasibility Study to assist us. We were choosing among three excellent firms when Bill Herd (on that committee at the time and now a Friends Board member) said that "when the Park Service wants something done regarding historic restoration they call in Mike Quinn of Quinn Evans Architects." With a resume that included Michigan's State Capitol and the Smithsonian that was good enough for the rest of us and thus began a long and trusted relationship with Mike and his architectural firm.



Mike Quinn (left) with Amy Ferris (then President of the Friends) and Chuck Clarke (then County Administrator) at the transfer ceremony on June 5, 2004.

Mike and Quinn Evans went on to prepare the Feasibility Study and Historic Structures Report for Point Betsie. Among their other accomplishments were completing architecture plans for the restoration of the exterior of the lighthouse, storage buildings, interior, exterior, and handicapped access for the Fog Signal Building, barrier free lift to the lighthouse, new Boathouse building, restored driveway, and the concept plans for the road end and parking project. Even the interior job, where he was not the low bid, Mike came by and made a suggestion on a long lasting insulation product which we implemented.

Mike provided the dedication and vision that restored Point Betsie to its glory. Respect for the details and adherence to the standards of proper restoration were inherent in his makeup and became instilled in us through his efforts. Always upbeat, positive, and diplomatic, Mike became our friend as well as our architect. Amy [Ferris] and I once asked him why the lantern on the tower had to be black when people had been looking at a red lantern for 40 years. He calmly explained that it was because that was the color of the lantern during the period in which the building was being restored. Our projects continued over time and with ties to the area we would see Mike frequently and valued that association. Mike would call out of the blue to share something, not necessarily related to a job, which he thought would interested us.

Mike passed away in January from brain cancer. Indicative of how he lived, Mike pursued innovative treatment methods and survived a year longer than what would have normally been expected. See you on the other side old friend. You will forever be associated with Point Betsie.

Point Betsie Hosts Winter Photography Retreat

Mark Lindsay and Kristina Lishawa invest heart and soul in their photographs. Mark's photos show the power of the weather that comes across Lake Michigan, with the Point Betsie Lighthouse standing strong against the wind and waves like a fortress on the shoreline. Kristina's photos are softer, highlighting the beauty of our landscape, with its clear blue sky and pure white snow. In her photos Point Betsie is protective, welcoming, with her warm glowing light reaching across the water and land in an embrace. Kristina's and Mark's photographs are favorites on the Point Betsie Lighthouse Facebook page.

Earlier this year, Mark and Kristina teamed up to offer their first-ever winter photography workshops at Point Betsie. Why Point Betsie? They both feel deeply connected to the lighthouse. In fact, "there was never a question of it being anywhere else," said Kristina. Kristina and Mark both live in the Traverse City area, so Point Betsie is nearby, but the snow, wind, sky, and waves ensure that there's always something new and different to shoot. The two workshops (one in January, one in February) filled up immediately. Twenty-four new friends came from all over Michigan, from the Upper Peninsula to Detroit. **Continued on Page 3.**

Historian's Corner by Bill Herd, Friends Board Member

After a Fresnel lens and the lamp that goes in it, our next most coveted lighthouse antique is probably the five-gallon transfer can. Made of heavy brass with fine workmanship, the beautifully polished transfer can also seems to be the physical manifestation of the keeper's primary role - to keep the lamp filled and everything cleaned and polished. Perhaps this is why the presence of one of these cans frequently instigates a lighthouse myth. The keeper was required to account for all kerosene use both in the lighthouse lamp and the lamps in his personal quarters. The purpose for this was to prevent waste but more importantly as a method to ensure that the lamp in the lens was not only burning, but burning as brightly as possible.

For each type and size of lamp used in the different order of Fresnel lens, the Service knew precisely how much oil it would use per hour when adjusted to burn at its brightest. To account for the oil used each night, the keeper was provided with a set of five brass measuring pitchers: one gallon, ½ gallon, one quart, one pint, and ½ pint (also called a gill). The keeper measured the amount of oil used, recorded it each day, and sent a report to the district superintendent twice a year. Point Betsie had/has a fourth-order lens with a fourth order Funk and Heap lamp with a single circular wick. According to the Lighthouse Service records, this lamp uses 5.25 oz. of oil per hour when operating at its brightest. On a long winter night the light might be burning for nearly 16 hours and consume 84 oz. of oil, or a trifle over 5/8 of a gallon. Even on the longest winter night there was no need to haul five gallons of oil up the tower steps to refill the lamp. In fact, it was only necessary to carry a little over a half gallon the next morning to refill the lamp.

This amount of oil could be easily carried in the lamp filler also called a lucerne. This was a brass can with a capacity of about a gallon with a long spout for filling oil lamps without spilling. If the five-gallon transfer can was not needed to haul large quantities of oil to the lantern room, what was its purpose at Point Betsie? Kerosene is much more volatile than the whale oil the Service had been using. When Point Betsie was first built, the whale oil was stored in the lower area of the tower. After the introduction of kerosene, for safety, oil storage buildings were constructed away from the dwellings. A day before more oil was needed, the keeper would go to the storage shed and fill the transfer can and return to the "cleaning room." This would give the oil in the can a day to sit so any sediment would settle to the bottom. As needed the keeper would fill the lucerne from the faucet near the bottom of the transfer can, being careful not to jostle the container and disturb the sediment. The bottom one inch of oil, which might contain any sediment, water, or other impurities, was stored in a separate container to be used in the lamps in the dwelling.

What about lamps for the larger lenses? The third-order lamp with two circular wicks, like that used at South Manitou Island, used 1.2 gallons of oil on a long winter night. A first order lamp with its four circular wicks used only slightly over three gallons on a winter night. No lamp in the U.S. Lighthouse Service needed to be refilled during the longest night, and no keeper ever needed to take more than three gallons of oil to the top of the tower to replace what had been used the night before. Lighthouse keepers certainly worked hard, but they didn't carry five gallons of oil in the middle of the night.



Meet our Newest Board Members...



Gayle Brown

Gayle Brown and husband Bob moved to Frankfort about four years ago. They both work at the Lighthouse, Gayle as a docent and Bob in the gift shop. Gayle grew up coming to Crystal with her family, and she and Bob chose it for their retirement years. Gayle graduated from University of Michigan-Flint and taught school for 27 years. After receiving her masters degree at Michigan State University in teaching and curriculum she finished her career working with the district's K-12 teaching staff. Gayle says, "I am excited to be involved with Point Betsie Lighthouse. I've discovered the best kind of learning is introduced and developed through real-life experiences. Point Betsie is a hands-on, real-life, learning lab for all ages as well as a precious resource to be managed, preserved and enjoyed by all.



Genie Wolfson

A native of Wilmington, DE, Genie Wolfson came to Michigan for college in 1971. After meeting her husband Bruce Baker, she was introduced to this very special area for the first time. Upon seeing Lake Michigan she remarked, with some astonishment, "You can't see the other side!" That's what happens when you grow up thinking that oceans are the only large bodies of water in the world, she says. Bruce's family has had a summer cottage on the south shore of Crystal Lake for more than 100 years. Every year Genie would look forward to spending one or two weeks "up north," and her annual visits always included at least one trek to Point Betsie. Thirty-eight years later, she and Bruce now have their own place on the north shore of Crystal. Genie is looking forward to being on the Friends Board, and making her own contribution to the ongoing programs at the Lighthouse. Genie holds a bachelor's degree in Latin American studies from the University of Michigan and a master's degree in Comparative and International Education from Michigan State University.



Michael Perry

Michael Perry held a number of high-profile positions during his long career in accounting and finance, including CFO of The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in New York City and Washington, D.C.; CFO of a Silicon Valley Internet company, an Internet infrastructure company, and an enterprise software company; and CFO of the A.H. Belo Corp., parent company of the Dallas Morning News. Michael holds two degrees from Michigan State University: a BA in accounting and finance; and an MBA. He and his wife Linda are both from Flint. They have a home on the north shore of Crystal Lake, where generations of Linda's family have vacationed since 1902. "Like most area residents, I have visited Point Betsie many times over the years, and have particularly enjoyed taking photographs of the boats racing in the Chicago to Mackinac races. I can also vividly remember being fogbound on the lake with my father in the 1960s, with our only point of reference being the Point Betsie foghorn," said Michael. "When my neighbor (and Friends treasurer) Chuck Clarke asked me if I was interested in participating on the Board of the Friends of Point Betsie, I eagerly accepted."

Winter Photography Retreat Continued...

One participant – a stranger to northern Michigan winters – came all the way from Florida, and not only survived our winter weather but loved it! Kristina and Mark were available even before the workshops to help participants choose cameras and equipment.

The January group was mostly beginning photographers, while more experienced photographers came to the February workshop. The workshop featured instruction on composing a photo, planning the foreground, middle, and background, handling a camera in the cold, and dressing for weather conditions before going to the lighthouse. After shooting, the groups learned how to enhance their photos using a computer.

Mark and Kristina met through Traverse City's camera club and have been friends for several years. Mark, who owns an auto repair business, and Kristina, a pediatrician, both find photography to be an escape from their daily routines. Kristina calls photography her "spiritual place of wellness." and Mark said we can plan on more Point Betsie winter workshops in 2019. They promote the workshop through their Facebook pages (see below) and Point Betsie reposted announcements on our Facebook page too. If you're interested in the 2019 workshops but are not on Facebook, please email pointbetsielighthouse@gmail.com and we'll put you in touch with Mark and Kristina, or visit their websites to communicate with them directly: www.marklindseycollection.com and www.kristinalishawa.com

In Memory of...

Bob Rodgers... Sue Rodgers
Bridget & Harrison Miller... Linda & Ted Hansen,
 Bonnie & Greg Kestler, Jodi & Doug Blair
Bridget and Harrison "Tip" Miller... Mike Wilson
Charlie Kehr... Linda Kehr
Cordelia Holmes... Carol & Don Wilson
Doris Nunn... Linda & Stan Nunn
Ethel Blaszcuk... Paula & Ray Nichols
Gerald Margetson... Sandra & Frank Slater
Gregg Johnson... Nancy Murray & Brad Steffens
 Lesa & Michael Huget
 Nancy & Pete Weir
Joan Stradal... Martha Stroben & Family
Joan Weir Stradel... Nancy & Pete Weir

Kristi & Tom Weir
John Armour... Keith A. O'Hara and Family
John C. & Peggy Reid... Nancy C. Reid
Libby & Bill McGreevy... Rep. Annie Kuether
Michael D. Potter... Patsy & Bill Beck
Mike Quinn... Lesa & Michael Huget
 Nancy & Pete Weir
Patricia Jehle... Jerry Jehle
Paul Wheaton... JoAnne Wheaton
Richard & Adele McLaren... Susan McLaren &
 Phil Guymont
Russell & Virginia Potts... Virginia & Vernon
 Potts
Wendy deMonchaux... David MacWilliams
William R. Olsen... Joan Olsen

In Honor of...

Amy & Jim Ferris... Mary & Bill Todt
Amy Ferris... Julia & Stephen Blakely
Frank Riggle... Andrew Deisler
Kathy Fishburn... Eileen & Denis Cannaert

Jon Hawley... Alison & John Metiva
 Anne & Bill Burleigh & Family
Nancy & Pete Weir... Rosemary Lambert
Nancy Weir... Kristi & Tom Weir

Fresnel Lamp Maintenance

Jim Woodward has the coolest job: he is a lampist – one of only three in the United States. A lampist maintains Fresnel lenses, the old glass prism lights that at one time were atop nearly every lighthouse. Jim spent several days at the Point Betsie Lighthouse before our May opening to clean our Fresnel lens – the light in our lighthouse from 1892 to 1996.

Jim learned his craft as a member of the U.S. Coast Guard, and since retirement has traveled the country to restore, clean, and maintain Fresnel lenses. He restored Point Betsie's fourth-order Fresnel lens in 2010 and has been back to clean it about every two years. For a restoration, Jim takes the lens completely apart, cleans the glass prisms and bronze frame, replaces wood shims that hold the prisms in the correct position, then re-seals the joints with litharge, a mix of linseed oil, white lead, and calcium carbonate. For a cleaning, Jim checks all the joints, cleans the glass, and uses dental tools to clean corroded screws and other metal parts.

When our Fresnel lens was removed from the lighthouse tower in 1996, it was not because anyone had developed a better system. It was because the electric engine that made the light turn gave out, and the Coast Guard decided that rather than replacing the engine, they'd replace the old lens with a lower-maintenance modern acrylic model. Our lens was returned to the restored Point Betsie Lighthouse in 2010.

Top Photo by Susan Wenzlick and Bottom Photo by Mark Lindsey





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Photos from the Winter Photography Workshops...

