

NEW JERSEY LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

General Meeting

September 18, 1999

VFW Hall, Bellevue, Delaware

President Tom Lavery called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m. Al Smith moved, Rick Weber seconded approval of the minutes of the June 26, 1999, meeting; motion carried.

Treasurer Debbie Megonigal thanked Society members for their cards and prayers and expressed her appreciation to Bill Volpe for taking over her duties during her illness. She reported working capital of \$20,500.16, \$11,898 in the Preservation Fund and \$1409.28 in the Memorial Fund. Bill Geilfuss moved, Rebecca Colesar seconded acceptance of the treasurer's report; the motion carried.

President's Items

Tom reported that the National Lighthouse Museum to be established in Staten Island is working to acquire the Nantucket Lightship. The museum expects to take an active part in "Op Sail 2000" next July 4th. The celebration will include the largest assemblage of tall ships in the world, and Macy's will sponsor its biggest fireworks display ever.

Tom will represent both the Society and the state of New Jersey at the National Lighthouse Conference in Key West, Florida, in October.

Scaffolding has been installed at the Sandy Hook Lighthouse as it undergoes "head to toe" restoration. Although visitors are not able to climb the tower until it reopens next spring, volunteers are still there every weekend relating the history of the lighthouse and explaining the work being done there. Sales and donations are doing well, with \$590 taken in during one weekend.

The New Jersey Division of Tourism has just published a guide of the state's lighthouses. For a free copy, call toll-free at 1-800-VISITNJ or go to the division's website at www.visitnj.org.

The Ambrose light tower, which can be seen from the Twin Lights and Sandy Hook lanterns on a clear day, was to have been demolished on September 15; it will be replaced with a new structure. The National Lighthouse Museum has made a request for part of the Ambrose tower or some of its equipment.

Programs and Activities

Yvonne Miller thanked member Linda Peirson, who secured the meeting place and showed slides of the interior of Marcus Hook Lighthouse, and Bob Eldridge, who had made arrangements for our group to climb the tower. Unfortunately, the Coast Guard was too busy with work associated with Hurricane Floyd to allow us to enter the nearby lighthouse.

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Saturday, December 4, at the Spring Lake Heights Elementary School. The annual elections will take place and Sea Girt Lighthouse will be open for our members from 2-4 p.m. The spring meeting to be held in mid-March, 2000, will be in North Wildwood, with the annual photo contest and a visit to Hereford Inlet Lighthouse on the agenda.

Outreach activities to be attended by NJLHS volunteers include the re-lighting of the lantern at Absecon Lighthouse on October 3, the open house at East Point Lighthouse the same day and the annual event at the Tuckerton Baymen's Museum at the end of September. The Society will also have an exhibit at the NJ Education Association's convention in Atlantic City in November.

Carole DiNapoli reported that the October bus trip to Cape Cod is filled and that it looks like there will be a large turnout for the October 16 cruise of New York harbor out of Atlantic

Highlands. Carole is planning a cruise next May of Long Island sound, departing from Waterford, Connecticut.

Committee Reports

Ways and Means—Steve Martorano said that the Society is selling T-shirts depicting New Jersey's coastal lighthouses and hopes to have a Delaware Bay lights shirt as well. Al Smith has been working on getting a Sandy Hook Christmas ball ornament.

Absecon Lighthouse—Rich and Elinor Veit reported that the Inlet Public/Private Association is still in litigation with its insurance company, which has refused to pay a claim for the destruction of the keeper's house by arson in July, 1998. The next phase of the Absecon restoration project involves improving the grounds and making the premises secure.

Old Business

Al Smith awarded certificates to the winners of the 1999 photography contest and made some remarks about next year's competition. The rules are basically the same, except that only the first- and second-place winners in each category will be assigned to the Masters' Division for two years. At next year's exhibition and judging, a Kodak "ambassador" will give tips on how to take good pictures and point out what is good about the winning photos.

New Business

Society Elections—The Nominating Committee comprised of Joan Walton (chairperson), Mary Beth Doherty and Kim Ruth presented the following slate, all incumbents: Corresponding Secretary, Betty Jean Smith; Directors, Al Smith, Ray Vliet and Bill Volpe. Voting will be at the December meeting, with absentee ballots included in the next issue of *The Beam*.

Education Kits—Rich Veit congratulated Bill Volpe on the work he has done in putting together lighthouse educational packages appropriate for middle and secondary school students. Individuals or groups may purchase the kits for \$27 each and donate them to the schools of their choice. The kits consist of Bill Gately's book, *Sentinels of the Shore*, and the video *Eye of the Mariner*, as well as brochures and a list of lighthouse resources.

New Jersey Lighthouse Weekend—In order to increase awareness of New Jersey's light-houses, Rick Weber has been making plans to have all accessible lighthouses open to visitors on a weekend next October. He asked for volunteers to help design a brochure, to develop an attendance "token" and help at each lighthouse on the days of the event.

Suggestions—Joan Walton proposed that the Society look into getting a toll-free number with voice-mail so that members can call about meetings, etc. She also suggested having a lighthouse road rally. Both matters were referred to the Board for discussion.

Elinor Veit moved, Steve Swiencki seconded adjournment; the meeting ended at 12:17 p.m.

The winners of the T-shirt contest were: Doreen Lagattuta, Bill Schneider and Carolyn Ortiz.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Swiencki, Recording Secretary