

# The Friends of Point Betsie

# LIGHTHOUSE Beacon



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[www.pointbetsie.org](http://www.pointbetsie.org)

Spring 2016

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## 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.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As I sit here, the morning light putting a sheen on a calm Lake Michigan and the birds singing their hearts out, I can't wipe the smile off my face. To those supporters who stay here year round, this is always a wonderful time of year – a bonus for enduring a long winter season. For those of you coming from other places, hurry back.

We are excited to begin another season at Point Betsie Lighthouse. It is so much fun to share this special place with our loyal supporters, summer guests, and curious first-time visitors, young and older alike. 2016 will be another great year at Point Betsie.

I am pleased to announce that Lesa Huget, Mike Quinn and Dick Taylor have joined the Friends' Board of Directors. Many of you know one or more of them. Each is a talented and accomplished individual, and together they will no doubt make a tremendous contribution to our efforts at Point Betsie.

When you come visit us, please welcome our new manager, Dan Smith. As a retired

officer of the US Navy, Dan brings us a deep appreciation of nautical tradition along with a genuine enthusiasm for all the things we hold dear at Point Betsie. Dan and his wife Patti live in Frankfort, and are proud to call this place home.

You may also have noticed we have a brand new website. We wanted to give our visitors a better appreciation for the beauty of the Lighthouse and its setting, while showcasing the exhibits, the Gift Shop, and the Keeper's Quarters. The website works well with all devices, so our last-minute visitors should also have an easier time finding us on their smartphones.

We have some exciting events planned for the coming season. On Tuesday, August 2, we plan another large gathering at Point Betsie to promote our Beacon Endowment Fund. There will also be at least two other smaller events during the season. Watch our website for updates.

Thank you for your support of the Friends. We are looking forward to seeing you at the Lighthouse.

- Jim Radabaugh, *President*

## BEACON ENDOWMENT FOR POINT BETSIE LIGHTHOUSE



For those who wish to make a donation to The Beacon Endowment Fund, you can download a donation form on our website, under the "About" tab. If you plan to send a check to the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, please make it out to: The Beacon Endowment of Point Betsie Lighthouse. Send donation form and check to 250 E. Front Street, STE 310 Traverse City, MI 49685

## HISTORIC FRESNEL LENS UNDERGOES BIENNIAL INSPECTION

Point Betsie's fourth order Fresnel lens is one of the lighthouse's most precious artifacts, having shone from the tower for nearly a century. The lens is owned by the U. S. Coast Guard, and it is on an extended loan jointly to the County and the Friends. One of the conditions of this loan is that the lens must undergo an inspection every two years by a professional lampist, who must perform any necessary maintenance. There are only about a half-dozen lampists in the country who have the necessary skills and who are allowed by the Coast Guard to perform maintenance on these priceless artifacts.

The lens, although considered in excellent condition for its age, nevertheless shows the effects of long, hard use in the uncontrolled tower environment. Glass prisms have some small chips or cracks, but those are stable. The litharge (lead-based putty that helps hold the prisms in place) was partially dried out in a few places, and some tiny pieces were starting to flake off. If that process was allowed to continue, the tiny wooden wedges holding a prism in its elegant brass legs could loosen, and (worst case) allow a prism to fall. Since 2010, our lens has been under the professional

care of Jim Woodward, a certified lampist with 40 years of Coast Guard experience. In May, the Friends again engaged Jim to perform the biennial inspection. In a

meticulous process, Jim examined every part of the Fresnel lens. He touched up a few small sections of deteriorated litharge with a custom-formulated non-lead-based putty, because true litharge is no longer environmentally acceptable and is unavailable. Jim will certify in a written report to the Curator of the Coast Guard that the lens is being properly maintained.



*Jim Woodward performs his tasks.*

Like many other aspects of Point Betsie's upkeep, this process is very costly, unglamorous, and unseen by the public. However, as long as we continue to comply with the Coast Guard's requirements (one of many things made possible by your donations), the lens will continue to awe our visitors for years to come.

*-Roger Dewey, Construction Chair*



### NEED A GIFT FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL?

Come shop at the Point Betsie Gift Shop, now known as The Boathouse.

You'll find gifts for all occasions, for family members, hostesses, visitors and friends.

We feature clothing: socks, hats, T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, jackets and more. Many are unique to Point Betsie.

Also, there are notecards, mugs, totes, jewelry, books, children's games and souvenirs that are sure to please everyone.

We are open whenever the lighthouse is open, so check our website for times at [www.pointbetsie.org](http://www.pointbetsie.org)

## INVASIVE SPECIES AT POINT BETSIE

For the last four years there has been an ongoing battle on the lighthouse property against two of the worst invasive species, Baby's Breath and Spotted Knapweed. Although much progress has been made in reducing the number of these two invasive plants, the task continues as there have been limited attempts to control them on the properties surrounding the lighthouse. The Nature Conservancy has also been fighting the same battle on the 71 acres of the Zetterberg Preserve which are not adjacent to the lighthouse property.

Most of the control is done by either pulling the Knapweed or digging the Baby's Breath, although a

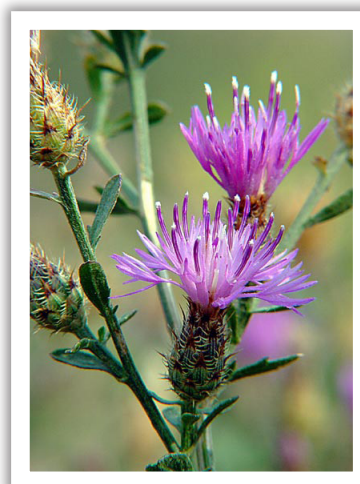
limited amount of Roundup, as recommended and used by The Nature Conservancy, is applied where damage to other native plants is limited.

Volunteers are always welcome! If you are willing to help and can spend an hour or more, please contact Dave Jahr at [dejahr@charter.net](mailto:dejahr@charter.net) or 231-352-6946. There is no set schedule at this time as it depends on the growth of the plants, but as help is needed, a call will be made or an email sent. Any amount of time will be graciously accepted and greatly appreciated!

- Dave Jahr, Buildings and Grounds Chair



*Baby's Breath*



*Spotted Knapweed*

## APARTMENT TESTIMONIAL

Brady Butzler considers staying at the Point Betsie Assistant Keeper's Apartment almost like "coming home". Brady, along with his family and extended family (which includes his grandmother), will be making his 6th stay in the apartment this summer. Erin Butzler, mother of Brady, writes:



*"We love staying at the lighthouse so much that we have returned every year. From the history to the beautiful views, we enjoy every moment of our stay."*

*Brady was 2yrs old on our first visit and he always asks, "When are we going to my lighthouse?" He loves going to the museum to do the treasure hunt, too! As a mom, I am so happy to see how excited both of my boys get when they know we are going to the lighthouse!! We usually go in September for my mom's birthday. This is her favorite way to celebrate with her family in such a lovely place."*

*We are very grateful to her and to the friends of the lighthouse who make it possible for us to have such great family memories!"*

*Brady poses in front of "his lighthouse".*



## TWO NEW EXHIBITS FEATURE LIGHTHOUSE EQUIPMENT

The Fresnel lens was the centerpiece of the lighthouse just as it is the centerpiece for Point Betsie's exhibits. In addition, the Lighthouse Service provided the keeper with a number of pieces of specialized equipment to operate the light. Two new exhibits will give visitors to Point Betsie an opportunity to view some of this equipment and, in the process, better understand the keeper's daily duties.

A year ago we were able to acquire the exact type of oil lamp used for our Fresnel lens and we have been considering the best location in which to display it. A room next to the doorway to the tower has been designated the "cleaning room" ever since the lighthouse went into service in 1858. In this room the keeper would have cleaned the lamp each morning, measured out oil and filled the lamp ready for that evening. Here, he would clean and polish all the equipment assigned to him, fill the lamps for his household, and make any repairs or adjustments to keep the lamps operating at top efficiency.

The "cleaning room" also served as the keeper's office and store room for official supplies like extra chimneys and wicks. Accurately refurnishing it would give visitors a visual glimpse into the past so they can better imagine what life was like in a lighthouse 100 years ago. While many lighthouses have refurnished rooms used by the family, just as we have with the kitchen and dining room, none (that we are aware of) have attempted to accurately refurnish the keeper's work room.

However, the original lighthouse lamp and other original pieces are both rare and valuable and require a high level of care and security. If they were placed in the keeper's cleaning room on a work table as they would have appeared on an average day, the whole room would have to be closed off with a gate at the door way!

This was an unacceptable change so we decided to do two new exhibits. The original lamps, along with other original Lighthouse Service equipment used to transport and measure oil and fill the lamp, will be exhibited in a new built-in display case near the Fresnel lens. Here, they will be visible and secure. Also, we will refurnish the keeper's cleaning room starting this summer with

reproduction equipment (or items very similar to the originals). Visitors will be able to enter the room and get a better feel for the work of the keeper. Since these are reproductions, docents will be able to handle many of the items in order to show how they worked. Some can even be taken off site to be used as visual aids for school classes and youth groups.

The historic refurnishing of the keeper's work room will proceed gradually over the next couple of years as research reveals what items would have been located there and as we are able to find suitable items. We have learned that the service provided the keeper with 10 different types of brushes for cleaning so we are on the lookout for antique brushes.

Our work continues on in an effort to provide the very best information on the life, and the work, of lighthouse keepers of the past.

- Bill Herd, *Historian*



*New acquisitions are on display near the Fresnel lens.*

### ***Are you interested...***

- ... in volunteering in the Lighthouse Gift Shop?*
- ... in volunteering in the Lighthouse as a Docent?*
- ... in renting the facilities for a small wedding?*
- ... in renting the Lighthouse Keeper's Apartment?*

***Call (231) 352-7644  
and leave a message.***

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

### In Memory of...

Beth Bordner .....	Bruce Bordner
Bill & Libby MacGreevy .....	Rep. Annie Kuether
Bob Rodgers .....	Sue Rodgers
Bonnie Warren .....	Mary & Jon Armstrong
	Marcy Day
Bud Strong .....	Karen Crossen & Jeff May
David & Joan Eldredge .....	Elizabeth Eldredge
Doris Howe .....	Darcy Howe & John Black
Dorris & Tony Belknap .....	David & Sara Belknap
Earl R. Fiene .....	Julie Lambiotte
Ed Lyon .....	Nancy Lyon
Florence & Everett Shaw .....	John S. Deeming
Frank deMonchaux .....	David MacWilliams
Glen Davidson .....	Jill Baker
Harold Armstrong .....	Cathie & Bruce Walker
Jerry Lawler .....	Connie Lawler
John C. Reid .....	Nancy C. Reid
John Romani .....	Barbara Anderson
Karl Rauschert .....	Carol Baily
Mollie & Jim Rogers .....	Rebecca & Bruce Ogilvie
Nelda Christ .....	Inge Gerber
Phil Sheridan, keeper at Pt Betsie .....	Tanya & Steve Sheridan
Phyllis Jones .....	Marian Vandenbergh
Rev. Robert F. Gibson .....	Margaret Gibson
Robert Samper .....	Marianne Samper
Stewart E. H. Bates .....	Carolyn Bates

## "IN HONOR OF" CONTRIBUTIONS

### In Honor of...

Amy Ferris .....	Mary & Bill Todt
Anita Wiley .....	Tammy Kockaya
Carol & Joe Potts .....	Virginia & Vernon Potts
Daniel Seibert's H.S. graduation .....	Shelley Leister
Kathy Fishburn .....	Edie & Bob Molumby
Nancy & Pete Weir .....	Suzanne Voltz
	Joan Stadal
Nancy Weir .....	Kristi & Tom Weir
Three Pines at Crystal Lake .....	Maureen & Bruce Kleinman & family

*A complete list of annual donors will appear in the fall newsletter.*

## ASSISTANT KEEPER'S RENTAL APARTMENT

Short term and weekly rentals are still available.  
Visit our website, [www.PointBetsie.org](http://www.PointBetsie.org),  
for pictures and details.



# The Friends of Point Betsie LIGHTHOUSE, Inc.

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Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse Beacon

SPRING 2016

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## NEW MANAGER AND RETURNING EMPLOYEES

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Point Betsie has a new Manager this year and his name is Dan Smith. Dan is a retired Navy Commander and he and his wife, Patti, live in Frankfort. Dan brings extensive organizational and business skills and experience to our operations at Point Betsie. We look forward to working with him this year.

We welcome back Maryellen Paull and Cari Howard as returning employees to Point Betsie. Maryellen will be the Assistant Lighthouse Manager and will primarily serve as a Docent. Cari will be the Assistant Gift Shop Manager and will undertake the responsibility of managing the new barcoding point of sale system we are implementing.



*Cari Howard, Maryellen Paull, and Dan Smith*