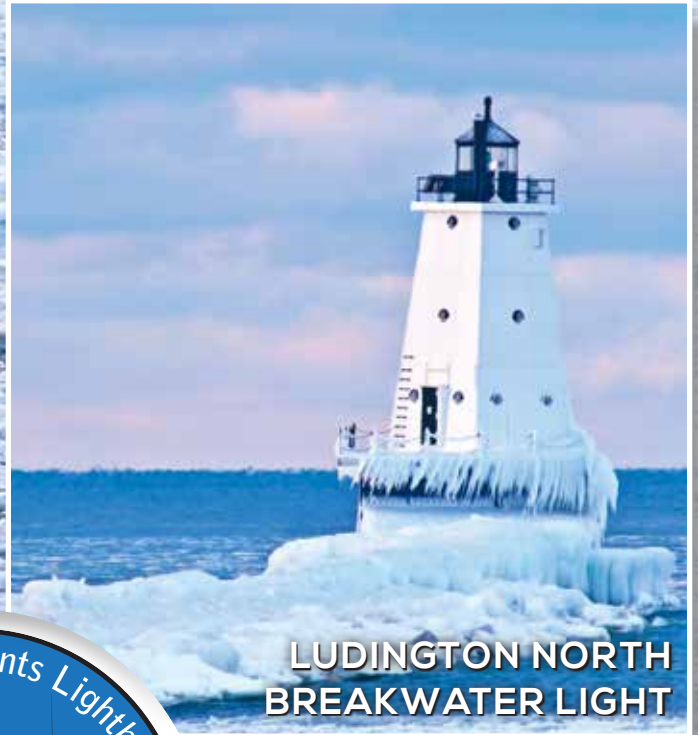


Sable Points BEACON

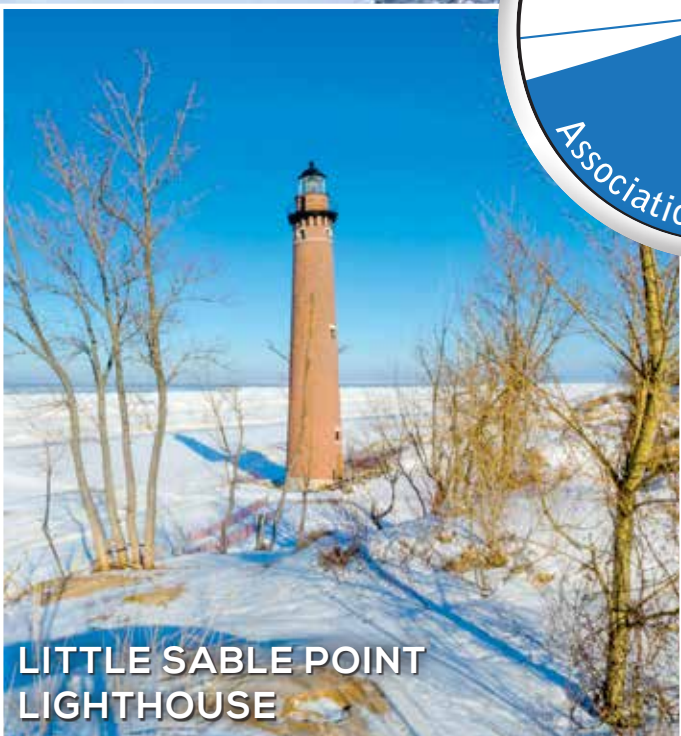
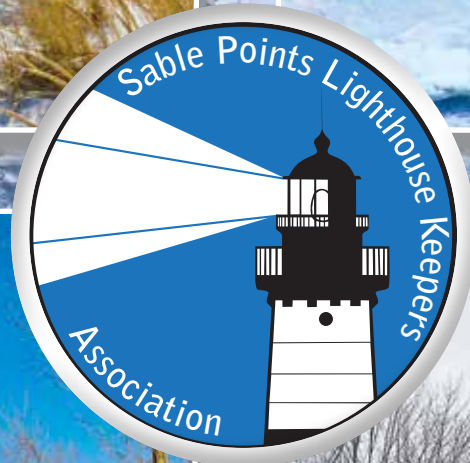
NEWSLETTER • JANUARY 2016



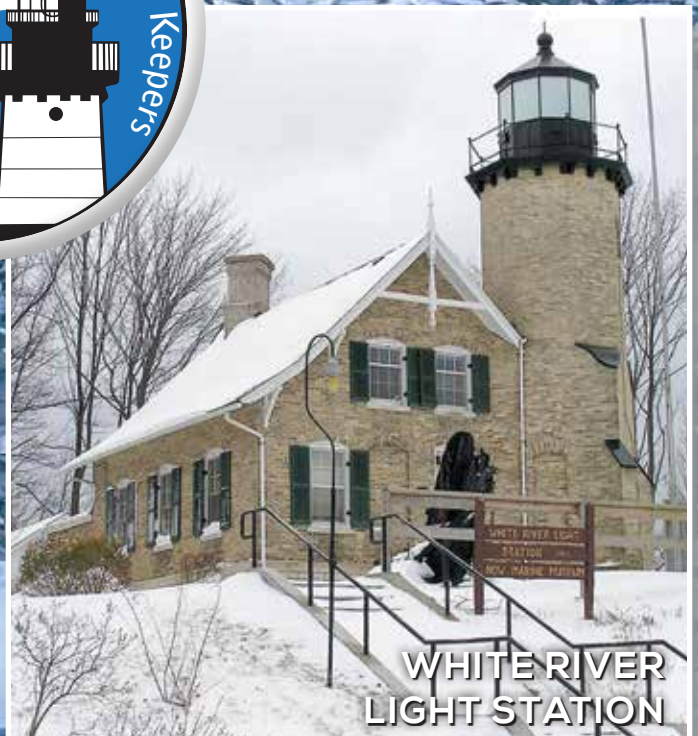
BIG SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE



LUDINGTON NORTH
BREAKWATER LIGHT



LITTLE SABLE POINT
LIGHTHOUSE



WHITE RIVER
LIGHT STATION



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lenore Janman
PRESIDENT

Sue Ann Schnitker
VICE PRESIDENT

Doug Bulkema
TREASURER

Shelia Meeusen
SECRETARY

Roger Pashby
DIRECTOR

Robert Baltzer
DIRECTOR

John Truxell
DIRECTOR

STAFF

Peter Manting
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Matt Varnum
WRLS CURATOR

Rachel Bendele
OPERATIONS
MANAGER

Jim Hardie
RESTORATION/
MAINTENANCE
SUPERVISOR

Shirley Mitchell
BOOKKEEPER

Priscilla McBeth
GIFT SHOP MANAGER

Cherie Hockenberger
INTERIM OFFICE
MANAGER

Letter from the President

Dear SPLKA Members and Friends,

Another season has come to an end, the doors are locked, windows secured but the beacons continue to light the waters of Lake Michigan. We have had an outstanding season in 2015. Our staff have worked in harmony and tirelessly to maintain our lights and residences, keep the gift shops stocked, and volunteers working to help us fulfill our mission. We have had visitors from all over the United States visit our lights this year and twenty visitors from Germany and fifteen from Canada. Thanks to our staff and to YOU, the volunteers that manned the lights and shared our history with the thousands of visitors that came to climb the towers this season.

We are a non-profit organization that is growing stronger each year. We have seen an increase in memberships this year and we have recruited new volunteer keepers that are anxious to be a part of our mission. We are well on our way in fund raising for our Capitol Campaign and have experienced increased visibility for our Association due to the public relations efforts of our Executive Director.

The Board of Directors and staff have revised our strategic plan which will direct our focus for the next five years as we continue to fulfill our mission.

Thanks to each of you for being a part of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association.

We couldn't do it without you!

See you at the lights,
Lenore Janman
President



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association annual membership meeting was held on Friday, September 11 at the Lincoln Hills Golf Club in Ludington. Despite the change from a Saturday night to Friday night we had a good turnout. We recognized our bookkeeper Shirley Mitchell and thanked her for fifteen years of service to our organization. Shirley is retiring at the end of year. We also recognized two outgoing board members, Doug Buikema and Bob Baltzer. Doug and Bob both have served on the board of directors for six years, Doug has been treasurer for our Association and Bob has served as vice president of the board.

Two new individuals, Kim McDaniel and Kirk Lindquist, were

elected to the board of directors for three year terms. Kim has worked at all of our lights and she stated in her board member application, "It is my time to give back to a program that has given so much to me." Kirk Lindquist was on the BSPKLA board of directors from 1996-2002. He has been very involved with lighthouse preservation at the state level and was founder and President of Michigan Lighthouse Fund from 2002-2009 and member of the Michigan Lighthouse Project from 2000-2009. He is interested in continuing to help us preserve and promote our lights.

A third board member, Roger Pashby was elected to a three year term. Roger has been on the board the past two years filling out the remaining term of a board

member that resigned and is now elected to his first term on the board. Roger states, "It has been a great experience to work with those who have given so much of themselves to the preservation of our lights." He is looking forward to continuing to work towards our mission.

Our program for the annual meeting was Kirk Lindquist who gave us an historical and political perspective on what has been happening with lighthouse preservation in the state of Michigan.

If you were unable to attend this year's Annual Meeting be sure to mark your calendar for **Saturday, September 17, 2016** for next year's event and watch for further details.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

At the November Board of Directors meeting the following board members were elected to board positions for the year 2016.

Sue Ann Schnitker was elected President, Kirk Lindquist was elected Vice President, Shelia Meeusen was elected Secretary and Roger Pashby was elected Treasurer. They are joined by Directors Lenore Janman, Kim McDaniel and John Truxell. We once again want to thank Bob Baltzer and Doug Buikema who are retiring from the board for their many years of service. We also want to thank Lenore Janman for her leadership and service as President. SPLKA is very fortunate to have Lenore continue as a Board member.

THE MICHIGAN LIGHTHOUSE FESTIVAL WILL TRAVEL TO LUDINGTON IN 2017

Mark your **2017** calendars for the dates of August 25, 26 and 27!

The Michigan Lighthouse Festival has announced that Ludington will be the site of the 2017 Michigan Lighthouse Festival.

Founder Marge Ellenberger, publisher of the Michigan Lighthouse Guide, states that this exciting festival is sure to thrill lighthouse enthusiasts everywhere. The festival travels to a new lighthouse destination every two years. The festival was introduced to the public in June of 2015 in St. Ignace Michigan. Marge was happy with the turn out and stated that attendees had

many unique opportunities to explore the lighthouses that are around that area and shop with the many lighthouse and nautical vendors that attend as well. One of the featured sponsors for this event will be *Pure Ludington.org*.

The festival will highlight Big Sable's 150th birthday and SPLKA's other three lighthouses as well. We are very excited as this will continue to meet our mission to promote, preserve and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all. Look for more upcoming information at these web sites:

michiganlighthousefestival.com
pureludington.org
splka.org

Notes FROM YOUR DIRECTOR, Peter Manting



by Peter Manting
SPLKA Executive Director



Our Mission is to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all.

WOW, WHAT A YEAR!

2015 has been a wonderful year. SPLKA has seen a few personnel changes this year. Matt Varnum took on his new role as the SPLKA Curator of the White River Light Station. He moved from the downtown office to Whitehall to take on this new responsibility. Matt is also continuing to pursue his Master's degree at Central Michigan throughout the winter months. We do miss Matt in the office and many said they miss seeing him at the lights but he is doing a great job at the Light Station. This was Shirley Mitchell's final year as bookkeeper of SPLKA as she is joining her husband Bill in retirement. For over 12 years she has been doing the financial business for SPLKA. We will miss her stories of the years past at our staff meetings. We will see Shirley around as she will continue to work as a volunteer keeper when assigned and she will be hosting one of our bus days this coming summer as well. Most of you know that our office manager Debbie Dyer has been battling cancer since diagnosed last November. She is back to work on a limited basis, working a few hours a day. Priscilla McBeth is back for a second year as gift shop manager. What a wonderful job she continues

to do for us. She continues to bring her expertise as a keeper/mom/grandmother to this position. New additions to the staff include Cherie Hockenberger who has been filling in for Debbie but has cemented a place on our staff making sure that our media, such as Facebook and our e-blasts are up to date. Rachel Bendele stepped in early this spring to replace Matt as operations manager. What a great job bringing new/fresh ideas for signage and operations to the position. Last but not least Jim Hardie joins the staff as our Restoration/Maintenance Supervisor. Just looking at our lighthouses this summer you can see Jim's handy work and talent all around. From new paint to extensions on flag poles to a new steel Coast Guard door fabricated for Big Sable, Jim continues use his talent to improve the condition of the lighthouses.

What have we been up to this Year? New this year was our "Night at the Lights" events. These were a series of concerts and events that took place at Little Sable, Big Sable and the White River Light station. It involved musical groups from the area and around the country. The evening concerts at Little Sable averaged over 100 people in attendance while events at White River saw crowds from 15 to over 75 people to enjoy the different events. Night at the Lights welcomed The Ghosts of the American Road from Texas, Sweet Wednesday from the Boston area, Ark Harbor an Old Town Chicago 60's folk group who reunited once again to play at our lights, Eric Engblade from Grand Rapids and Ruthie Eilers from the Hart area. This also included some afternoon events

such as our dulcimer event and morning Yoga on the lawn of White River. We hosted 6 bus days out to Big Sable for the summer guests and the folk group Ark Harbor came out and entertained at one of the July bus events.

SPLKA continued to be involved in many community activities such as the Friday Night live downtown events in Ludington. Our new Lighthouse bean bag toss game built by Jim was a huge hit at the Friday Night events. We participated in Chamber business promotions, the Live Well Lighthouse Challenge which was a joint effort with the State DNR and the Mason County Health Department. The contest involved visiting all four lighthouses and getting your picture taken at each light and posting them on the Mason County Health Department Facebook page. The contest was won by a family from Illinois. They already have come back and cashed in their two night stay in the suite at Big Sable. We also had a joint venture with White Pine Village as we hosted Terry Pepper a noted great lakes lighthouse historian who spoke to us regarding Fresnel the man and the lens. It was a wonderful way to spend a Saturday evening with many maritime enthusiasts.

We are continuing to receive small grant funding from the Mason County and Oceana County Community Foundations, Oxy Chemical, DTE Energy, West Shore Bank and Sanders and Czapski Architects. These grants were used to fund our Night at the Lights programming and our children's educational activity booklets which we give away to our younger guests who visit us at the lights.

Notes

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR, cont.

The activity booklet has been a great success. To see the excited faces of children after they have climbed the lighthouse, light up even more when our keepers handed them this activity booklet as reward for their climbing accomplishment is priceless. We had 3,000 printed last fall and by June they were gone. We have had a second printing of 10,000 booklets which we ran out of the last week in August and we have had 10,000 more printed to help get us through the winter season. Teachers from around the state have been calling the office wanting to get a copy or copies for their classrooms. A large thank you to all of the members who put in hours of effort to make this happen.

AT the 2014 Annual meeting we introduced our New Capital Campaign Fund which is located at the Mason County Community foundation. This fund is to help us fund the repairs that we need at all four of our lighthouses. We originally kicked this off with the selling of the new personalized walkway boards that make up the walkway around Big Sable. This was our Leave a Print in the Sand Campaign. We have sold 230 of these boards that are imprinted and make the new walkway out to the seawall from Big Sable. After

the initially transferred \$5,000 from our Big Sable Point Fund to start this separate fund our new Capital Campaign fund has grown to over \$55,000.00. This is a great start on our \$175,000 goal. Trex boards are still available for purchase and we are looking forward to installing the new boards before our summer season kicks in.

We are actively seeking new donors through the internet. We have set up a GO FUND ME account for each of our lights. These are specific projects that the funds raised through this effort will go to. Big Sable we are looking for funds for a new roof, Little Sable needs repair and repainting on the catwalk, the breakwater light needs ceiling repair on the third level and the White River Light we are seeking extra funding for new displays and how we display artifacts at the light. If you are our Facebook friend you will be well aware of our internet campaign to get these funds up and running. We need your help to share this to your Facebook friends so that the word will spread. This Go Fund Me campaign will reach lighthouse enthusiasts around the globe and they will all be able to contribute online. Since we have launched these accounts in August we have received over 5,500.00 in

donations to the projects.

Completed is our historic Structures report for the Little Sable Lighthouse. This was a 60,000.00 study done by the architectural firm Sanders & Czapski out of Marquette, MI. It details a lot of history of the light; it provides a working blueprint for maintenance items and provides exact locations of the no longer existing structures that surrounded the lighthouse. It is an item that is critical to have if you want to obtain major grant funding. This report took three years to produce. We have applied for another MLAP grant to help us fund the Historic Structures Report for the Big Sable Lighthouse.

Our castles on the Lakeshore have great stories that continue and need to be told. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work for you as your executive director. I continue to tell everyone that I meet that SPLKA has the best volunteer base that I have ever been a part of. You, the members take a real pride in our mission to preserve, promote and educate the public and make our lighthouses accessible to all. Thank you for working with me and our fine staff as we keep the lighthouses, the legends and stories alive for future generations.

AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM

Amazon Smile is a simple way for you to support the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association every time you shop at no cost to you. When you shop at **smile.amazon.com** you'll find the exact low prices, vast selection and the same convenient shopping experience as *Amazon.com* with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase



price to SPLKA. Already have an Amazon account? Use the same account on *Amazon.com* and **AmazonSmile.com**, your shopping

cart, wish list wedding or baby registry and other account settings are also the same. Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. Sign up today at AmazonSmile and specify your charitable giving be given to Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association.

We thank you for this!

DEAR MEMBERS

We are off to a great start in filling up with volunteers for next season but there are still openings at all 4 lights. We can use your help so if you are interested in volunteering please get your application in so we can get you on the schedule for next year. To be a resident keeper you must be a member of the organization. The application to be a member and to volunteer can be found on our website; www.splka.org along with the expectations and guidelines sheet which also must be filled out and sent in. If you have any questions please contact Rachel at: 231-845-7417 or email: splkaoperations@gmail.com

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With 2015 coming to an end, we here at SPLKA would like to take the time to thank the local keepers of the Ludington North Breakwater (Breakers), Little Sable Point (Seekers) as well as our resident keepers for their continued dedication and support in helping keep the lighthouses open to the public and in educating them. Without the assistance of members like you it would be impossible for SPLKA to not only have the lighthouses open to the public but also to preserve these castles on the lake.

Again, THANK YOU so much for your help this year! We look forward to seeing you again next year.

~ SPLKA Staff

ATTENDANCE FOR 2015 AT THE LIGHTS		
BIG SABLE	ADULTS	CHILDREN
May	668	247
June	1,943	939
July	3,819	1,407
August	3,660	1,382
September	1,659	390
October	1,019	254
Total	12,773	4,619
Big Sable Grand Total: 17,392		
LITTLE SABLE	ADULTS	CHILDREN
May	786	326
June	3,342	1,993
July	7,869	3,883
August	7,051	3,159
September	2,390	629
Total	21,438	9,990
Little Sable Grand Total: 31,428		
LUDINGTON NORTH BREAKWATER LIGHT	ADULTS	CHILDREN
May	204	86
June	1,242	705
July	2,072	1,145
August	1,758	772
September	502	182
Total	5,778	2,890
LNBL Grand Total: 8,668		
WHITE RIVER LIGHT STATION	ADULTS	CHILDREN
May	234	38
June	653	132
July	1,263	337
August	1,036	294
September	1,015	96
October	689	56
Total	4,890	953
WRLS Grand Total: 5,843		
TOTAL ATTENDANCE FOR ALL 4 LIGHTS THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2015: 63,331		

Leave a print in the sand

“Leave a Print in the Sand” is a fundraising initiative started in July 2014 by the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association (SPLKA) to raise money for the ongoing repairs that need to be done at the Big Sable Lighthouse. SPLKA’s mission is to “preserve, promote, educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all.

Built in 1867, Big Sable Lighthouse first fell into disrepair in the late 1970’s. SPLKA came into being when a group of local businessmen and women donated their time, materials and money to save the structure from total destruction due to vandalism and high Lake Michigan water levels. Since that time, the association has grown to over 660 current members. SPLKA has always been a responsible caretaker of this precious Lighthouse and the surrounding property. The tower and keepers’ quarters have been maintained and many minor repairs have kept the structure in perfect “picture quality”. Time and weather are once again taking a huge toll on the tower and keeper’s quarters. Both are in need of major repairs. This is a part of our newly launched Capital Campaign Fund to raise the \$250,000.00 for needed repairs such as filling/repairing over 135 rusted sections on the towers steel cladding, repainting the tower,

**Help us preserve
Big Sable Point Lighthouse
and Tower by purchasing a
Trex® board. These boards
will become the new walkway
around Big Sable Point.**



replacing the roof on the entire structure, completing a window repair and restoration project and finally replacing over 700 original

(deteriorated) bricks on the keepers quarters and then repainting the keepers quarters.

Help us preserve Big Sable Point Lighthouse and tower by purchasing a Trex board. These boards are becoming the new walkway around Big Sable Point Lighthouse. The cost of the engraved boards will be \$100.00 each. Each Trex board can be engraved with up to 25 characters on one line, including commas and spaces with a two line maximum. Included with this letter is the order form for these walkway boards. This fund raiser has already raised over \$20,000.00 which was added to our Capital Campaign fund.



Purchase a Trex® board to recognize a special event, or just for the love of lighthouses!

Most of you have fond memories of being keepers at the Big Sable Light and the long 130 stair climb to one of the most spectacular views in the area. What better way to remember your time spent there than to donate a board or two. These also make great Christmas, birthday or to recognize a special event gifts. Also share this with those in your circle of friends who love lighthouses as well. Brochures are available for downloading and printing on our web site.

Join the 230 individuals and families who have already purchased a Trex boards and “Leave Your Print in the Sand.”



SEEING THE LIGHT

Big Sable Point Light Station

Researched and written by Terry Pepper • Copyright photographs & illustrations by Terry Pepper



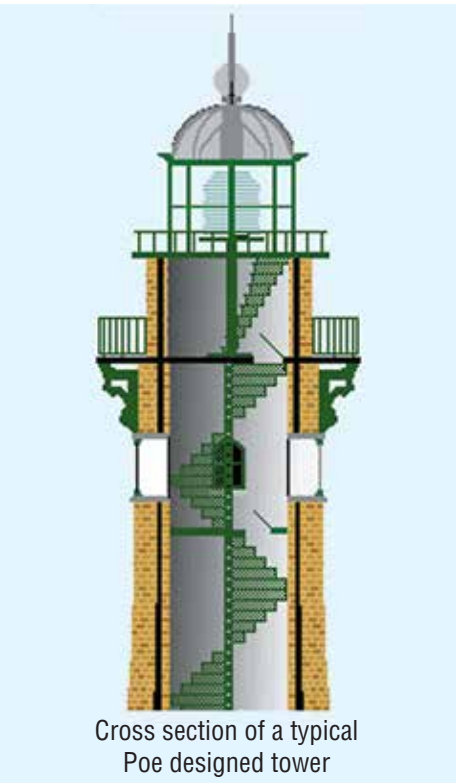
Finding this Light: Take US 10 West into Ludington, and head west toward the Lake. Turn right onto Lakeshore Drive (also known as M116), and head North approximately 6-1/2 miles to the entrance of Ludington State Park. When registering at the Park, ask for information on the lighthouse, and you will receive a single page hand-out which includes a map of the park. The mile-long trail to the lighthouse begins at a yellow gate located on the West side of the campground.



In its' report to Congress in 1865, the Lighthouse Board presented the case that "the interests of commerce demand that Grand Point Au Sable be suitably lighted" Congress responded favorably on July of the following year with an appropriation of \$35,000 on July 28 of the following year. The State of Michigan responded by providing the Federal Government with fee deed to nine hundred and thirty-three acres for the station later that year.

Construction began in early 1867 with the arrival of Lighthouse Board and Army Corps of Engineers workers, who immediately began the construction of a dock at which to unload the necessary supplies for the project. Next, a temporary cofferdam was constructed to keep water from entering the foundation, which consisted of tightly fitted cut stone blocks beginning a depth of six feet below grade and extending three feet above.

structures. Without an air lock of some type, air rises rapidly through such structures, and a strong updraft would cause havoc with the all-important flame in the lantern room. By ensuring that one of these two doors was closed at all times, the chimney effect was eliminated. Keepers spent many hours on the watch room gallery, which circled the outside of the watch room, keeping vigil over the shores.



Cross section of a typical Poe designed tower

On this sturdy foundation, the skilled masons began to raise the tower. Constructed of cream city brick, the walls were laid five feet thick at the foundation, tapering to a thickness of two feet thick immediately below the gallery. Within the tower, a circular inner wall, eight feet in diameter supported the cast iron spiral staircase. On its' vertical climb, the stairway passed through three landing areas.

The lowest was known as the Service Room, and consisted of an enlarged landing area containing a built-in cabinet for the storage of wicks, lamp chimneys and other supplies. The second area was known as the Watch Room, and consisted of a full floor and ceiling with closable trap doors to the stairs above and below. The trap doors served a vital role in eliminating the "chimney effect" that exists in such tall



Big Sable in an undated postcard.

Finally, the trap door in the ceiling led to the lantern, where the fixed white Third Order Fresnel lens was displayed. The lantern room itself was a decagonal cast iron structure, and featured a small door below the windows through which keepers would crawl to clean the windows from the small gallery that encircled the base of the lantern room. This lantern room gallery was significantly narrower than that encircling the watch room, and

to increase the margin for safety, the astragals of the lantern room were fitted with hand-holds, which the keeper's could hold or tie onto while cleaning the windows.

Standing one hundred and twelve feet from grade to the top of the ventilator ball, construction of the tower was complete, and the masons turned their attention to the keepers dwelling.

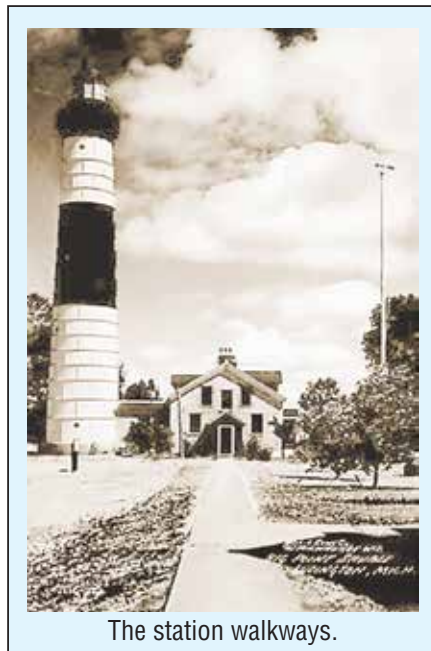
Cream city brick was also used in the construction of the story-and-a-half dwelling with full basement. Designed as a duplex, the head keepers quarters took up the entire first floor and consisted of an oil storage room, kitchen, living room and a single bedroom. The Assistant Keeper's quarters on the second floor were made up of two bedrooms, a kitchen and living room. The roof gutters fed into an underground cistern for the collection and storage of water. Outfitted with two-way valves, the downspouts could be directed to discharge either onto the ground or into the cistern. Thus, prior to diverting water into the cistern, the keepers would allow the water to run to the ground to ensure that all debris was washed from the roof, before allowing the water to flow into the cistern.

In 1898, the District Inspector reported that the cream city brick used in constructing the tower was found to be flaking as a result of exposure to the elements, and voiced concern that if left as-is, the integrity of the tower would likely be compromised. This flaking grew so severe, that in 1899 a contract was awarded to the J. G. Wagner Company of Milwaukee to construct the necessary steel plates to encase the



The work crew pauses to have their photo taken in front of the tower in 1902.

tower. The plates were satisfactorily test assembled at the Milwaukee Lighthouse Depot, loaded onto lighthouse tenders and then shipped to Big Sable. With the arrival of the plates, the process of riveting the plates together around the tower, and filling the void between the brick and the plates with cement began.



The station walkways.

The construction was completed in June 1900 at a total labor and materials cost of \$4,925. In order to increase the visibility of the tower during daylight hours, the new cladding was painted white with a contrasting black band around its' middle third.

On July 12, 1909, after the installation of a fog signal to the station's inventory, a Second Assistant was authorized at the station. Rather than building a second dwelling to accommodate the additional keeper and his family,

the decision was made to undertake a complete remodeling of the existing dwelling. With the completion of this project, the station appeared much as it does to this day.

Access improved significantly when a road was built to the station in 1933. To stem increasing erosion, the Coast Guard installed a seawall around the tower in 1943.

Big Sable holds the distinction of being the last Great Lakes light to become electrified in 1949. However, electrification was always a double-edged-sword, in that it paved the way for automation, and the eventual elimination of the need for a keeper in 1968.

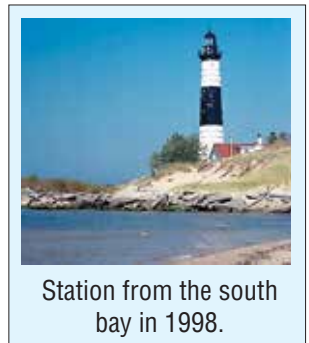
Unmanned and virtually abandoned, and well out of the eyes of public scrutiny, the buildings deteriorated rapidly due to vandalism and lack of maintenance. The 1943 seawall was breached in 1977, and waves came perilously close to undermining the tower before the seawall could be replaced.

After receiving listing number 83004296 in the National Register of Historic Places on August 4, 1983, the Foundation for Behavioral Research was granted a 25-year lease on the station in 1986. The Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association formed in 1987, and in concert the two organizations have worked to restore the station to its original glory.

While no longer equipped with its' Fresnel lens, Big Sable's 300mm plastic optic still shines proudly across the shore of Lake Michigan, a beacon to mariners, a link to Michigan's proud maritime heritage, and a memorial to the proud keepers who worked so hard to keep the light burning throughout the years.



The dwelling after the 1909 modifications.



Station from the south bay in 1998.

KEEPERS OF THE BIG SABLE POINT LIGHT STATION

POSITION	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	IN	BORN	DIED	POSITION START			POSITION END			COMMENTS
						D	M	YEAR	D	M	YEAR	
Keeper	Hyde	Alonzo Sr.		1804	1878	8	10	1867	29	01	1869	Resigned
1st Asst.	Hyde	Alonzo	W.	1838	1908	8	10	1867	29	01	1869	Promoted
Keeper	Hyde	Alonzo	W.	1838	1908	29	01	1869	22	03	1871	Resigned
1st Asst.	Hyde	Mrs. Elsea	J.	1841		29	01	1869	22	03	1871	Resigned
1st Asst.	Bird	Frank	H.			22	03	1871	7	04	1874	Resigned
Keeper	Bird	Newton	L.			22	03	1871	28	10	1873	Removed
Act. Keeper	Caswell	Burr				8	01	1874	29	09	1875	Permanant Apt.
Act. 1st Asst.	Caswell	Mrs. Sarah	M.			16	05	1874	29	09	1875	Permanant Apt.
Keeper	Caswell	Burr				29	09	1875	17	07	1882	Transferred
Keeper	Caswell	Mrs. Sarah	M.			29	09	1875	4	12	1882	Resigned
Keeper	Hansen	Hans	L.			17	07	1882	10	12	1887	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Drumb	Adelbert	L.			4	12	1882	19	06	1883	Permanant Apt.
1st Asst.	Drumb	Adelbert	L.			19	06	1883	20	08	1884	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Linder	Andrew				20	08	1884	24	03	1886	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Pierson	E.	A.			27	04	1886	9	07	1886	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Hansen	Charles				9	07	1886	9	09	1886	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Herman	John		1859	1900	9	09	1886	21	04	1887	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Gallagher	Condy				18	08	1887	23	09	1887	Removed
Keeper	Rich	James	W.			10	08	1887	8	08	1888	Removed
Act. 1st Asst.	Bailey	Thomas	J.			13	12	1887	10	10	1888	Promoted
Act. Keeper	Fountain	William				20	08	1888	10	10	1888	Removed
Act. Keeper	Bailey	Thomas	J.			10	10	1888	22	07	1889	Permanant Apt.
Keeper	Bailey	Thomas	J.			22	07	1889	1	03	1893	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Brown	Jesse	T.	1842	1924	12	08	1889	5	07	1890	Permanant Apt.
1st Asst.	Brown	Jesse	T.	1842	1924	5	07	1890	27	01	1891	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Smith	Wesley	A.			14	02	1891	21	04	1891	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Gardner	Thomas				10	06	1891	28	06	1892	Permanant Apt.
1st Asst.	Gardner	Thomas				28	06	1892	1	03	1893	Promoted
Act. Keeper	Gardner	Thomas				1	03	1893	15	08	1899	Removed
Act. 1st Asst.	Dykes	E.	H.			27	03	1893	26	04	1893	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Benjamin	Alonzo	R.			2	06	1893	6	06	1894	Permanant Apt.
1st Asst.	Benjamin	Alonzo	R.			6	06	1894	15	08	1899	Removed
Act. 1st Asst.	Backey	John				28	08	1899	31	08	1901	Resigned
Keeper	Blake	George	R.			28	08	1899	15	04	1905	Resigned
1st Asst.	Blake	Guy	M.			1	09	1901	15	04	1905	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Barnum	Earl	G.			16	04	1905	8	05	1905	Resigned
Keeper	Gagnon	Samuel				22	04	1905	2	11	1922	Resigned
1st Asst.	Leveille	Ellsworth				9	05	1905	28	02	1907	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Kendrey	Harry	J.			1	03	1907	30	04	1907	Resigned
Act. 1st Asst.	Anback	William	H.			1	05	1907	31	05	1907	Resigned
1st Asst.	Johnson	Carl	J.			15	06	1907	28	02	1910	Resigned
2nd Asst.	Allen	Frank	C.			5	07	1909	30	06	1910	Resigned
1st Asst.	Skilling	Edward	J.			1	03	1910	30	06	1910	Resigned
1st Asst.	Ferguson	Frederick	W.			1	07	1910	10	09	1910	Transferred
2nd Asst.	Roberts	John	E.			1	07	1910	10	09	1910	Promoted
1st Asst.	Roberts	John	E.			11	09	1910	7	03	1912	Resigned
2nd Asst.	Anderson	Henry	A.	1878		14	09	1910	7	03	1912	Promoted
1st Asst.	Anderson	Henry	A.	1878		8	03	1912	1	01	1915	End date unsure
2nd Asst.	Vannatter	Lewellyn	A.			8	03	1912	1	04	1918	End date unsure
1st Asst.	Norton	George				1	01	1915	1	04	1918	Dates unsure
2nd Asst.	Miller	Benjamin				1	04	1918	8	05	1923	Promoted
1st Asst.	Vannatter	Lewellyn	A.			1	04	1918	8	05	1923	Transferred
Keeper	Kimmes	Joseph				2	11	1922	24	10	1923	Transferred
1st Asst.	Miller	Benjamin				8	05	1923	23	07	1929	Retired
2nd Asst.	Smith	John	A.			8	05	1923	31	08	1923	Removed
2nd Asst.	Rydlawicz	Frank	R.	1899		31	08	1923	23	04	1927	Trsfld., promoted
Keeper	Vannatter	Lewellyn	A.			21	11	1923	30	06	1936	Retired, Disabled
2nd Asst.	Peterson	Edward	C.			14	05	1927	30	06	1927	Resigned
2nd Asst.	Bogur					1	07	1927	24	08	1927	Removed
2nd Asst.	Olson	Carl				28	08	1927	18	04	1930	Promoted
1st Asst.	Gordon	Guy	L.	1888	1949	1	08	1929	11	04	1930	Transferred
2	Fichtner	Arthur	G.	1894		18	04	1930	2	07	1949	End date unsure
1st Asst.	Olson	Carl				18	04	1930	30	09	1938	Transferred
Keeper	Rogan	George		1886		1	09	1936	2	07	1949	Retired
1st Asst.	Robinette	Roy		1891		17	10	1938	20	02	1943	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Szymanski	S.	G.			20	02	1943	25	04	1943	Transferred
Act. 1st Asst.	Kaebartowski	John				28	05	1943	1	06	1943	Removed
1st Asst.	Sauers	David	M.	1887	1956	27	07	1943	2	07	1949	Promoted
1st Asst.	Meverden	Homer	R.	1907	1988	2	07	1949	1	10	1965	Promoted
2nd Asst.	Syrewicz	Simon	R.			2	07	1949	1	10	1965	Dates unsure
Keeper	Sauers	David	M.	1887	1956	2	07	1949	1	08	1954	Retired
Keeper	Vavrina	Henry				1	01	1955	30	09	1965	Retired
Keeper	Merverden	Homer	R.	1907	1988	1	10	1965	17	04	1968	Retired Last Keeper
C.G.	Holmes	James	E.			17	04	1968	1	04	1970	Station closed

Information compiled by Phyllis L. Tag of Great Lakes Lighthouse Research



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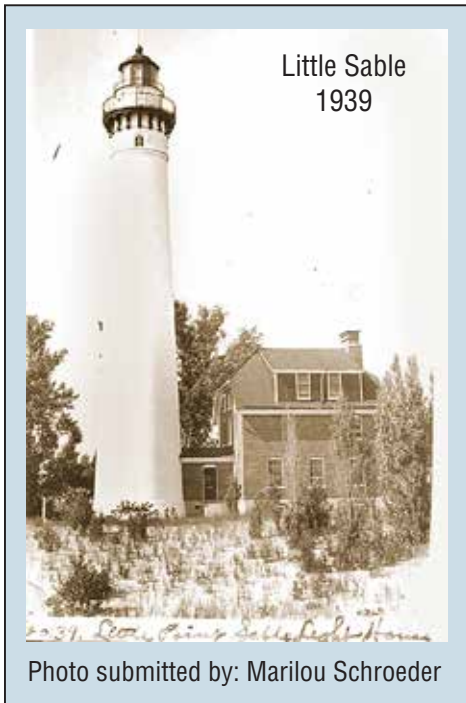
AUGUST
25, 26 AND 27
2017



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Important Visitors to Little Sable Point Lighthouse:

It is our pleasure to welcome descendants of past lighthouse keepers to the various lights. In our training with many of the volunteers we at the office encourage the volunteers to get contact information of any descendants



him. “It was wonderful meeting you on Saturday. As promised I have attached a couple of photos of the lighthouse that my family has had for a number of years. The first one is dated 1939, so my great Uncle Arthur was no longer the lighthouse keeper. The second one was taken by my great uncle John Reese in the early 1920’s. The third one was taken around 1920. My mother is the child on the left with the hat on. She remembers visiting Uncle Arthur and Aunt Gertie often. She says she use to run up the lighthouse stairs as a child. The lighthouse has always been a huge part of our family. Arthur was my great grandmother Mary Hunter Reese’s brother. They were very close. Great Grandma Mary is pictured in the Little Sable Point Lighthouse brochure. I live in Mishawaka, IN. Climbing the stairs of the lighthouse was such a thrill as I could just picture my mother as a small child running up those stairs. I just wish that the house had not been destroyed. It would have made such a marvelous museum.”

on their way to the beach and informed us that they were the descendants of the lighthouse keeper, Ray Robinette head keeper at Little Sable from 1945-1948. It was a real delight to speak with them.



who show up at the lights so at we can continue to remain in contact with the families. On August 15th of this year Marilou Schroeder and her mother came to look and reminisce regarding the LSP lighthouse. Her great uncle was Arthur Almquist 1st assistant keeper at LSP from 1924-1925 then head keeper at LSP from 1930 to 1935. Our director happened to be working that week and he asked her to jot down a few memories and email them to



George Bates was the grandsons name and with him was his son and grandson (plus wives, daughter –in-laws and other relatives.) George takes great pride in talking about his grandfather’s duties as lighthouse keeper.”

Larry included a picture as well of all of the descendants.

It is our pleasure at SPLKA to preserve these memories for us all.



A note from Keeper Larry McGee on tour 20: wrote to say “He had a very interesting and enjoyable experience on Friday at LSP. A family stopped by



The WRECK in Which Poor Planning Produced a PERILOUS PREDICAMENT



Though the Great Lakes storms of November were infamous for their fury, travel on the lakes could be dangerous at any time of the year, even for an experienced captain. Though shipping in northern Michigan typically resumed in April, the icy touch of winter had not always

relinquished its grasp on the lake by then. In 1904, it was one of these early spring storms that drew the tugboat Frank Canfield and its crew of five to disaster, just offshore from Grande Pointe au Sable.

The barometer had been falling steadily for several days, and, on the cold rainy evening of April 11, it was apparent that a storm was coming. As darkness fell, the temperature dropped and the wind strengthened, turning the rain into blinding snow driven by gale-force winds.

That evening the tug Frank Canfield steamed out of the Manistee, Michigan, harbor headed south on its first trip of the season. Because preparations were made hastily, the Canfield's compasses were not adjusted, its life preservers were inaccessible underneath ropes in the hold, and it carried no anchor. The Canfield was an old tug, built in 1875, but still considered seaworthy. It was on the way to Muskegon, Michigan, to pick up a dredge to tow to Ludington, Michigan.

Shortly after the Canfield left Manistee, it began to snow hard and the wind changed to the northwest. By the time the Grande Pointe au Sable lighthouse came into view, snow flurries greatly impaired visibility. Though Captain Henry Smith lost sight of the lighthouse, he was very familiar with the area and was unconcerned until the vessel touched bottom off the point. Captain Smith quickly maneuvered the tug into deeper water, but as soon as it was back on course, the wheel rope broke. Since the Canfield was unable to anchor, the crew tried vainly to move the tiller by hand. Minutes later the wind forced the helpless vessel to hit bottom again, shortly before ten o'clock that night. It drifted southeast, blowing distress signals with the steam whistle while repeatedly striking the sand ridges parallel to the point. The Canfield finally grounded firmly on the sandbar

directly west of the lighthouse. By this time, the wind had churned up heavier waves. Because the crew knew that the pounding water would either sink the tug or break it to pieces, they continued the distress signals until the whistle rope broke. The men then frantically shouted for aid toward the nearby shore.

About the time the Canfield first touched bottom, Guy Blake, the assistant lighthouse keeper, was descending the tower steps after tending to the light. When he heard the Canfield's whistles, he hurried back up to the tower parapet with his binoculars. The snow was so heavy that he could see very little, but occasionally he spotted a light to the northwest that gradually moved southward and then stopped. He heard the men calling for help and knew the vessel was aground, so he ran down and told his brother George, the head lighthouse keeper. Guy then ran south along the beach to alert the life-saving crew. Since the wind had carried the sounds from the tug to the life-saving station, they were already aware of the Canfield's distress.

The life-savers lit a signal flare to assure the tug that help was on the way and began assembling their equipment. William Miller, a fisherman living at the point with his brother-in-law, surfman Wilmot, also heard the distress whistles and went to the station to volunteer his services. The men began laboring north with the beach cart and, as soon as they reached the ice banks along the shore, they met Guy Blake. After he informed them of the wreck's location, Keeper Lysaght asked him to help haul the cart. Lysaght went ahead with two torches and picked out the best path, but their progress was slow. Not only was the blizzard still raging, the soft beach sand was treacherous, covered with ice and logs washed in over the winter.

Meanwhile, the keeper at the Ludington Life-Saving Station, notified of the situation by Keeper Lysaght's phone call, tried to procure a tug in case it was needed to tow their boat out to the wreck. At that time, though, the Grande Pointe au Sable crew, aided by the lighthouse keepers and a fisherman, was the only hope for the five crewmen trapped aboard the Frank Canfield.

Finally, after pulling the beach cart a mile and a quarter, the life-savers came abreast of the wreck. George Blake had hauled a number of heavy planks out upon the broken ice to facilitate their work, so they quickly placed the beach apparatus in position. Keeper Lysaght requested that both Blakes and Mr. Miller build large fires to provide light for his crew and encourage the men on the Canfield. As soon as it was possible, the keeper

PERILOUS PREDICAMENT CONT. . .

used the Lyle gun to fire a shot line toward the Canfield.

Ascertaining by the feel of the line that it had not reached the wreck, he immediately prepared to fire a second shot. With the heavy snow, an intermittent light was the only visible sign of the tug, and it was hard to estimate its distance from shore. Lysaght doubled the amount of powder in the Lyle gun and, as a precaution, sent Miller and surfman Laurence back to the station for another shot line. Despite the snow and the small target, the second shot landed across the tug and it appeared that a heavier rope could be run out to save the men with the breeches buoy. The Canfield's crew pulled in the slack shot line and most of the whip line, but for reasons unknown to the lifesavers, they stopped hauling on the whip line that was needed to rig up the breeches buoy.

The two men, who went back to the station for another shot line, were returning to the scene. Upon hearing groaning, they discovered two half-frozen men aboard a life raft washed ashore amidst the drift ice; one was delirious and unable to stand without assistance and the other was unconscious. After pulling them to safety, Laurence stayed with them and Miller ran to report finding the men. Keeper Lysaght knew that immediate assistance was necessary to save the shipwrecked men's lives and instructed the crew to carry the two rescued men to the station at once. About that time, the lights on the tug went out, and the life-savers no longer heard any shouts from the wreck. They thought that the Canfield's crew had either abandoned ship, been washed off, or the tug had gone to pieces. Miller and Guy Blake patrolled the beach while George Blake kept the fires going.

After the life-savers worked on the rescued men for about two hours, the sailors started breathing naturally and began to show color in their faces. Around two o'clock in the morning, one man recovered enough to talk and said they were from the tug Frank Canfield. He was Mate Charles Smith, the captain's brother. They were aboard the tug when the shot line was fired, but the tug's crew was so cold and exhausted that they were unable to continue pulling the rope. Each of them had been washed overboard several times and pulled back on board by the others. Since they were unable to pull in the breeches buoy rope, they thought there was no chance of rescue and decided to try to make shore with the life raft. When Captain Henry Smith washed overboard and was lost, Charles Smith and one of the tug's firemen climbed aboard the life raft. The two other men aboard the Canfield, one of whom could not swim, refused to come with them.

Guy Blake and Miller then came to the station and reported hearing calls from the wreck. Having just learned that two men were still aboard the Canfield,

Keeper Lysaght knew that his crew must try to rescue them. Since the breeches buoy could not be used, the life-savers' only option was to reach the Canfield with the surfboat. Lysaght ordered the *Beebe-McLellan* surfboat placed on the wagon and hauled out of the boathouse. Since rowing that distance in the storm would be very dangerous, and large banks of ice washed in by the lake prevented them from launching the boat near the station, the surfmen attempted to haul the boat up the beach to a place with less ice. With the debris littering the beach, pulling the beach cart had been difficult, but the attempt to haul the much heavier surfboat proved impossible. Unable to move the surfboat themselves, surfman Olsen was dispatched to Lincoln to hire a team of horses to haul the boat.

Keeper Lysaght then called the Ludington Life-Saving Station again to request assistance from the Ludington life-savers and a tug. Though the Ludington keeper did eventually obtain permission from the owners for a steam tug to tow the Ludington life-savers to the wreck, the six hours necessary to build a head of steam and make the tug ready prevented the Ludington life-saving crew from lending aid.

While they waited for the horses, the other Grande Pointe au Sable surfmen, along with Guy Blake and William Miller, patrolled in pairs north to the lighthouse and south to the Hamlin piers, looking for either survivors or bodies. Blake and Miller heard a call from the wreck again about three-thirty in the morning. They continued the patrol until Keeper Lysaght sent the surfmen and Miller back to the station for coffee and dry clothing, in order to be ready when the horses came. He asked George and Guy Blake to stay at the site to keep the fires going and patrol in the area.

It was five-thirty in the morning when surfman Olsen returned with three horses, and the surfmen quickly hitched the horses to the boat wagon. Even with the horses pulling and the crew pushing, it was all they could do to get the boat to the site, hoping that by the time they reached the wreck it would not be too late. When Guy Blake saw them coming, he went to help. By this time, the snow stopped and the wind abated a little, but the sea was heavier.



PERILOUS PREDICAMENT CONT. . .

After they launched the surfboat and reached the tug, the life-savers discovered that the Frank Canfield was almost entirely underwater, with only the pilot house remaining above the waves. The engine house and pilot house were partially gone, and the life-savers did not see anyone aboard. Upon returning to shore, they brought the boat and beach apparatus back to the station, arriving about eight in the morning, and then sent out patrols to search for survivors. A later investigation showed that the life-savers did everything possible.

Unfortunately, of the five men aboard the Canfield, only the two on the life raft, Mate Charles Smith and Fireman August Szusitzky, escaped death. Surfman Wilmot found the body of William Gustman, the other fireman, later that morning. That afternoon a Ludington surfman on beach patrol found the body of Captain Henry Smith. Two days later a diver, assisted by the

life-savers, discovered the drowned engineer, Charles Kupfer, in a lower compartment of the sunken tug. Had the Canfield been better prepared, perhaps the tragedy could have been avoided. With an experienced crew, familiar waters, and a short trip, no danger was anticipated, but, as this incident illustrates, such complacency could prove deadly on the Great Lakes.

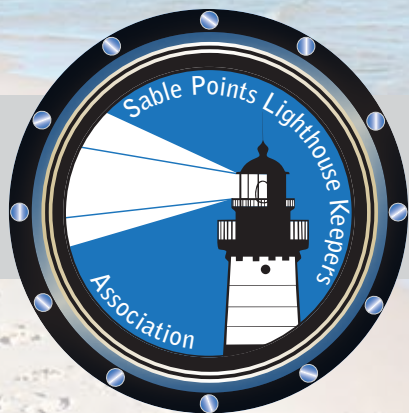


NARA - The National Archives at Chicago, RG 26, USLSS, Chicago District, Ludington, Michigan, Station Logbook, 1904.

NARA - RG 26, Wreck Reports from Stations, John E. Reinburg, 1st Lieut., R.C.S., Assistant Inspector, Investigation of Loss of Life by Wreck of Tug Frank Canfield off Grande Pointe au Sable, Michigan, April 11, 1904, Entry 241C, Box 18, 14E4, R14/10/4.

Note: Except where footnoted, all information is taken from the Grande Pointe au Sable (Big Sable Point) Life-Saving Station logbooks archived at the Chicago branch of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Excerpted by permission from Storms and Sand: A Story of Shipwrecks and the Big Sable Point Coast Guard Station, written by Stephen, Grace, and Joel Truman. This book is available from Pine Woods Press, P.O. Box 68634, Grand Rapids, MI 49516. If you mention SPLKA, 25% of the \$29.95 purchase price will be donated to SPLKA. Shipping is free.



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

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Renew your 2016 SPLKA membership today!

Your support of the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association means a great deal to S.P.L.K.A. and to the lakeshore communities. We would like to remind you that now is a great time to renew your membership for the 2016 season.

Your membership, along with hundreds of others, makes it possible for us to fulfill our important mission to preserve, promote, educate and make accessible Michigan's Maritime History to all through our lighthouses.

Advantages of being a member include being eligible to be a day keeper,(associate membership) or resident keepers,(all other membership level categories) at

three of our lights, voting privileges at the annual membership dinner meeting, membership card, window decal, semiannual newsletters, unlimited

free admission to all four lighthouses for one year and for memberships head keeper level and above merchandise discount at all of SPLKA gift shops.

Your partnership is sincerely appreciated and we couldn't do this without you. If you have already renewed your 2016 membership please consider giving the

gift of membership to a friend or relative who would be interested in joining our cause.

SPLKA membership dues for 2016

associate membership.	\$30
individual membership.	\$60
couple/family membership.	\$100
head keeper.	\$175
business/corporate sponsor.	\$250
lifetime individual membership. . .	\$750
couple/family lifetime membership . . .	\$1,000

Thank you for your continued commitment to our historic structures and our communities' Maritime History.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

To help meet the future major expense needs of preserving our four iconic Lake Michigan Lighthouses the SPLKA Board of Directors has established Capital Campaign Fund at the Mason County Community foundation to accept larger gifts given for upcoming major projects.

It is our desire that businesses as well as individual will be inclined to donate a larger sum to help spur our major lists of projects to completion.

Some of these projects include the recladding of the outside of Big Sable Tower, replacing a ceiling at the Ludington Breakwater Light, repairing and painting the inside of the tower at Little Sable Point and

making the basement water tight at the White River Light Station.

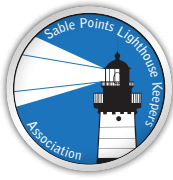
The fund is the "Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association Capital Campaign Fund". Our organization has established this fund with a deposit of \$5,000.00 from our existing funds. To date we have raised over \$55,000 toward our goal of \$250,000.

Contributions can be sent to:
SPLKA Capital Campaign Fund,
c/o Mason County
Community Foundation,
P. O. Box 10, Ludington, MI 49431.

Help us keep our four lights in First Class restored condition for future



generations and photographers to come. Please consider participating in all of our fund raising efforts. All of the money raised will go directly to fund these and other projects that the board deems worthy. They will not be used for operations of SPLKA. Don't keep this to yourself. We are asking that you also share our fund raising efforts with others in your circle of business and friends.



Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association

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SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF SPLKA FROM 2015



THANK-YOU for a Great 2015!!