



# South Fox Island Review

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Fall 2016 Fox Island Lighthouse Association – FILA, P.O. Box 851, Traverse City MI 49685

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



## SAVE THE DATES

**Saturday, June 17, 2017**

8am – 5pm

**Lighthouse Celebration Day**

### Celebrating:

- 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of South Fox Island Light Station
- 165<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Grand Traverse Light Station
- Reunion of keepers & descendants from both stations

**Saturday, Aug. 19, 2017**

**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Pancake Breakfast and Lunch at the Lighthouse**

### Location for both events:

**Grand Traverse Light Station and Leelanau State Park grounds**

Note: A recreation passport is required for entry



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*On Nov. 1, 1867, the light, equipped with a flashing red 4th order Fresnel lens, was lit by first lighthouse keeper, Henry J. Roe.*

Please join us throughout 2017 as we celebrate the sesquicentennial of this moment in history. Preserving history is integral to understanding our future. The station has been renewed with visitors and restoration activity and will continue to thrive, thanks to all who have supported and continue to support the process. Stay up to date by visiting our web site or on Facebook!

### Young Women in STEM Chicago Yacht Club visit station aboard Inland Seas

On Aug 14-18 2016, Ben Hale, Captain S/V *Inland Seas*, guided a group of Young Women from the Chicago Yacht Club STEM program on a 3-day research trip that included a stop at the station. They were greeted by Keepers Eric and Lorinda Maki and were given a personal tour through the buildings. This is a program for high school students with a strong interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). On each trip 10 participants eat, sleep, and work aboard the schooner while deeply exploring the functioning and health of the Great Lakes. For more information, visit <http://schoolship.org>





## 2016 Season by the Numbers

- 1 spring (3rd week of May) work team
- 7 restored window sash returned
- 2 additional work “day” trips
- 2 Camper Keeper teams, one from Texas, one from Michigan
- 6 weeks the station was open to the public with guided tours from the Camper Keepers.
- 1 joint National Park Service/DNR materials delivery via landing craft
- 2 pallets of historic brick, 800 lbs delivered for 1867 Lighthouse repairs
- 600 board feet of tongue & grove hemlock delivered
- 7 winter window covers built for 1867 Lighthouse & installed
- 2 “lean to” steel doors installed with dead bolt locks
- 2 buildings painted
- 1 kitchen herb garden restored
- 1 boathouse rear small door installed
- 5 Assistant Keeper’s window sash removed for restoration over winter
- 4 chairs delivered for future “host” quarters in lean to
- 1 40’ extension ladder delivered
- 4 different volunteer boats utilized to deliver people and supplies
- Over 70 Island day visitors from 5 states

### First Sighting! Rusty Blackbird found on South Fox!



On Oct 13, 2016 **Tom Funke** was the first to identify the Rusty Blackbird on the island.

Rusty Blackbirds have experienced one of the most significant declines ever documented among North American birds in recent times: a staggering 85-95% since the mid-1900’s.



Doors Installed and Locked on lean-to.



**Assistant Keepers Building:** Erik Maki chipping out window stops in order to remove the lower damaged window sash for restoration over the winter.

## Camper Keepers have a great season...

**Bruce and Kathy Rollins** from Bullard, TX joined us again this year manning the station from July 19 through August 13. Per Kathy, “We were delighted with how many more visitors we received this year, and with how much more fun it was to show off the 1867 lighthouse! Having good sunlight and ventilation from the new windows makes it possible to understand how the keepers lived and worked.”

Our visitor log recorded visitors from 5 states. A visitor from Empire commented: “Wonderful surprise to take the lighthouse tour. Thank you – we loved it.” Another from Leland: “Wonderful day with amazing trip in time!” And from California “This place is heaven!”

In between visitors and lighthouse tours, Bruce and Kathy still found time to paint, continue brush removal, replant the kitchen garden and begin work on the new winter window covers.

**Eric and Lorinda Maki**, from Goodrich, MI relieved them for a two week stay in August. After a visit from Inland Sea Education Association’s Tallship early in their stay, they had a bout of windy and wet weather. But they still got a lot done, installing the two “lean to” doors, re-installing the small boathouse door, completing the window cover project, removing additional window sash and helping close up the station for the season. Lorinda said “Staying on the island gave me a whole new understanding of what life was like for the keepers and their families. You don’t really understand until you experience it yourself.” For more keeper photos, visit our Facebook page!

## The National Park Service does it again.

On August 8, the National Park Service, in coordination with the DNR, again provided us a delivery with their landing craft. They delivered two pallets of historic brick, 600 board feet of tongue-and-grove paneling and a number of tools.

In addition, they took along a number of DNR personnel involved in the loading and unloading of materials plus FILA vice president, Cathy Allchin, who was hosting a DNR team evaluating reconstruction of the Lighthouse Dock.



TOP: National Park Service teams up with DNR to deliver a load of material and guests to station. BOTTOM: L to R: Catherine Allchin (FILA), Colin Hassenger, (Edgewater Resources), Thomas Pawlowski, (DTMB), Annamarie Bauer, (DNR)



## Camper Keeper Positions Still Open for 2017

If you are interested in spending several weeks camping at the South Fox Island Lighthouse, surrounded by pure nature, providing occasional visitors with information about the Light Station and FILA, and doing some volunteer work according to your skills, please contact Phil von Voigtlander at [philvov@chartermi.net](mailto:philvov@chartermi.net)

We're looking for helpers in several areas: **Finish carpenter to frame two windows on the "lean to". The openings are rough framed and we've restored the window sash but we need someone to build the frames.**

**Team leader for steel tower lantern room window project. We have an approved project to replace missing windows with Plexiglass but need someone to figure out how to secure them, size them and lead the restoration effort, which includes clearing ground cover under steel tower.**

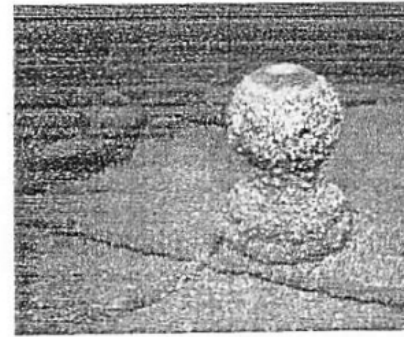
Are YOU up for the adventure?



## Fun Fact

### Where is the light now?

**1959:** The last crew leaves the light station. The equipment of the lantern room including the 4th order Fresnel lens of the old (1867) tower is moved to Old Presque Ile Light on Lake Huron to replace the vandalized lantern of that light station.



Bronze Bollard recovered from shipwreck.

## Artifact recovered from South Fox Shipwreck

A ship bollard has been recovered from the **Hiram W. Sibley**, a wooded prop freighter 221', built in 1890. On Nov 26, 1898 enroute from Chicago IL to Detroit MI with cargo of corn, the boat was stranded Nov 26 on northwest corner of South Manitou Island during a blizzard. The tugs PROTECTOR and SWEEPSTAKES were dispatched for assistance but the SIBLEY re-floated herself during the following night, headed north and then began to sink again. She was put ashore on South Fox Island to save her but broke in half; then completely broke up during a gale on Dec. 7 1898. The item will be cataloged and eventually FILA will maintain care and display of this amazing recovery!

## Looking forward....

The DNR has set up a **GIVING GUIDE** web site for Friends Groups that allows supporters to choose a gift of support. Currently we have the following items on our 'wish list'. *Thank you for your help!*

**2017 Camper Keeper Transportation sponsor - \$1000**

**Sash locks and handles for 1867**

**Lighthouse windows - \$400**

**2017 "Spot" Communications Safety Device sponsor - \$149**

**Solar Rechargeable Lantern for volunteer keepers - \$60 ea.**

**Asst Keeper's Window Covers (materials) - \$350**

**1867 Lighthouse Window Covers (materials) - \$350**

**Newsletter sponsor - 2 @ \$150 each**

**Lighthouse Celebration Day sponsor - \$250**

visit [Michigan.gov/dnr](http://Michigan.gov/dnr) (Donate/ Giving Guide) for more info

or contact John Wells

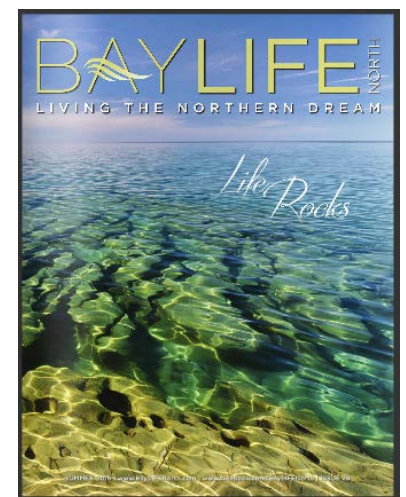
[kjwells@speednetllc.com](mailto:kjwells@speednetllc.com)



FILA Annual Meeting

**Sat. Dec 10, 1:00–3:00 p.m.**

Traverse Area District Library  
610 Woodmere St.  
Traverse City, Michigan

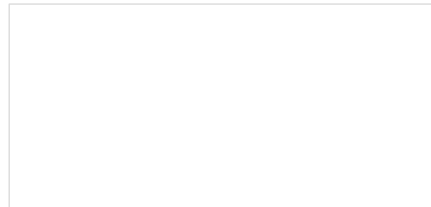


Check out the online **SUMMER 2016** issue of Baylife North Magazine for a 7-page article on the station  
[https://issuu.com/baylifenorth/docs/bln\\_july\\_ugust2016\\_digital](https://issuu.com/baylifenorth/docs/bln_july_ugust2016_digital)



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PO Box 851 Traverse City MI 49685



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## Connect with us



Keep up to date on our Facebook page. Always an interesting tale or two to read about.

**BONUS:** Online documents including oral histories, photo archives, keepers logs and more can be found at



<https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/99591>

\*search: fox island lighthouse

Or visit our web page:  
[www.southfox.org](http://www.southfox.org)

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renew \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

General Membership \_\_\_\_\_ \$25

Supporting donation: \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Membership includes issues of "South Fox Island Review" Newsletter and the opportunity to join work crews on the island, participate at festival events, as well as knowing that YOU are a part of preserving this historical treasure. Thank you! President John McKinney 231-947-1926

**Mail to: FILA, PO Box 851 Traverse City MI 49685**

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