



South Fox Island Review

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Summer 2017 Fox Island Lighthouse Association – FILA, P.O. Box 851, Traverse City MI 49685 www.southfox.org



Party ON!

We had a nice kick off to our 150th celebrations with a day of events at the Grand Traverse Light, in Northport. Starting with a delicious pancake breakfast followed by visitors, kids activities and book signing by Kathy Firestone. A delicious cherry-filled cake rounded out the day and was enjoyed by all.



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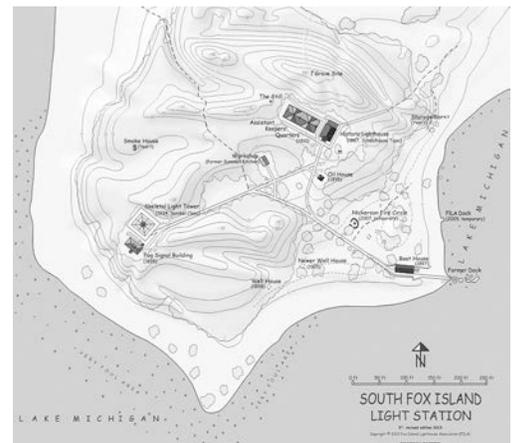
For current pics and stories about life on the station please visit us on both pages:
South Fox Island Lighthouse Association Michigan and South Fox Light



An Early Start Gets Station Ready for Keepers

Many projects were completed during our May 23 through June 2 Spring work bee. *See list on page 2. The first team of John McKinney and John and Karen Wells brought light to the Assistant Keeper’s east apartment, restoring several windows and installing an acrylic panel in the previously boarded up east door. They moved on to the 1867 Lighthouse, removing the broken and curling flooring in the kitchen and bathroom, then scraped the door and entry between the kitchen and “lean to.” A quick but satisfying project was to rebuild the historic clothes line, located on west side, to take advantage of sun and wind. Cathy Allchin and John Heneghan came onboard as Team 2.

John framed in windows, installed new doors and began task of installing tongue and groove inside lean-to. Cathy took on the daunting task of scraping peeling lead paint from the kitchen’s ceiling, cabinets, walls and woodwork. As a test, she scrubbed down several of the kitchen cabinet doors and beneath the grime, they are surprisingly white and bright! Cathy also planted a small flower bed on each side of the 1867 lighthouse entry and did planning for the island sign update project. Team 2 even got to enjoy one of Cathy’s famous fire-roasted chicken dinners!



Site layout of building at station.
*Available large format on our website

2017 Season by the Numbers

*as of July 1

- 6 trips by July 1, including a National Park Service/DNR materials delivery
- 8 volunteers “on island” over an 11 day period
- 1 additional day trip
- 40+ days volunteered on the island
- 5 restored window sash installed on AK Quarters
- 4 additional sash restored in place at AK Quarters
- 4 window frames scraped & AK Quarters
- 1 door and portico scraped & painted
- 1 portico support rebuilt & installed
- 1 “lean to” closet built
- 2 interior lean-to doors installed
- 1 window framed in on the lean to
- 2 walls paneled with hemlock tongue-and-groove
- 2 original screen doors found & assessed for restoration
- 1 pair original shutters restored & ready to install
- 1 kitchen entry scraped and painted
- 8 bags of peeling floor tile removed from kitchen & bath
- 1 bunk bed assembled
- 4 kitchen walls and ceiling scraped
- 1 internal door window replaced
- 2 entry flower beds created
- 3 Fog Signal window panes replaced/reglazed
- 1 clothes line rebuilt
- 1 huge job removing vegetation under the Tower light
- 1 outhouse delivered, moved up the hill and installed
- 2 rounds of mowing
- 1 east trail marked
- Several “no hunting” signs replaced or re-secured
- Thousands of pounds of materials & tools delivered
- 1 table delivered & assembled
- 1 wall mirror ready to hang
- 5 emergency lights available (3 crank, 2 solar)
- 1 updated first aid kit returns to the island
- 1 emergency food bucket arrives
- 1 bucket of cleaning supplies created
- 4 brooms available
- 2 dust bins added
- 1 professional evaluation of the Fog Signal Roof project



Top: New portico over doorway and one of 2 bunk beds made by Al Amons. Middle: Rebuilt clothesline and cleared base of steel tower. Bottom: Bruce Rollins clears path to west beach and Karen Wells and John Heneghan work on lean-to paneling.

Visitor Amenities Grant Update

One of two DNR Partnership Grants we received this year, it provides \$5,242 toward materials for the outhouse and “lean to”, a new picnic table, pedestal grill and signage updates. We’ll be matching this grant primarily with volunteer labor.

One of our goals is to be able to use the “lean to” as lighthouse host housing. Previous “keepers” have had to camp on the island, sometimes for extended periods. While we have limited electricity and no running water, having a bunk, table, chairs and rechargeable lanterns should make volunteer service more comfortable. Other enhancements are targeted to island visitors, with better facilities and more informative signage.

No Plovers Found

South Fox Island contains federally designated nesting habitat for endangered Piping Plovers. A survey several years ago by the University of Minnesota, however, failed to find any nesting pairs. Volunteer John Heneghan did a brief survey of the station grounds this spring, again, without sighting any.





Fog Signal Building Update

Materials list has been created and this fall, work will be done to repair the roof and preserve a most unique building (only 2 left). Grounds will be cleared and steel fencing around tower removed for historical accuracy.

Camper Keeper positions

It's the experience of a lifetime.

As the accommodations improve, interest grows. If you are interested in spending from one to a few 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 philvof@chartermi.net

Fun Fact

How did the fog signal work?

A typical year for the fog signal was 1900, when it was in operation for 277 hours and consumed about five tons of coal and forty-one cords of wood. As it took about an hour to build up the necessary ninety pounds of pressure to sound the whistle, the keepers had to be good at predicting the weather.



Top: Outhouse and lumber dropped on shore. New outhouse in place. Bottom: Loading materials on National Park Service boat for delivery to station. Jerry Spears, Phil VonVoigtlander, Don Stauffer and John Heneghan push outhouse UP the hill.

THIS is Big Stuff...

After many years of a make-shift latrine, DNR staff constructed a beautiful new outhouse. The National Park Service assisted with delivery to the station and through creative engineering was successfully moved UP the hill to convenient spot beside the lighthouse. A much needed facility for volunteers and guests.

You can help without getting your feet wet!

We have many opportunities to help without making a trip to the station. Historical data still to collect, membership list to update and other research is needed. Financial support is always appreciated. Not sure what to do? Join us for a board meeting, or contact one of our members. We are a small, dedicated group looking for like-minded lovers of lighthouses. Please join us!

Board meetings are held at 5:30 on the 2nd Monday of every month at the Great Lakes Children's Museum. 13240 S W Bay Shore Dr, Traverse City, MI

For more info contact John Wells jwells8@yahoo.com

In the News

Check out Sandy Bradshaw's article on South Fox Island 150th, featured online at MyNorth.com.



See

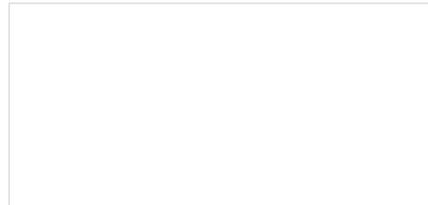
<http://mynorth.com/2017/04/299252/>

Another great article can be found in the online SUMMER 2016 issue of Baylife North Magazine. A colorful 7-page article on the station https://issuu.com/baylifenorth/docs/bln_julyaugust2016_digital



Est. 2004

PO Box 851 Traverse City MI
49685



Connect with us



For current activities visit us **Facebook** page. See pages: South Fox Lighthouse Association Michigan and South Fox Light

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>

Or visit our web page:
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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