



Fall 2005

Life Lines

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association

Hurricane Katrina has Created a Nightmare in the South

From <http://www.cgfdn.org/main.html>

Coast Guard personnel, many of whom are now homeless themselves and have lost everything, have rescued over 3,000 people in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, working around the clock to bring as many people as possible to safety. As the service members work non-stop, they can only hope that their own families are well and that someone will be there to help them.

The Coast Guard Foundation has established a Disaster Relief Fund that will be used to assist Coast Guard personnel and their families in the affected areas and bring relief to them as they work hard to relieve the suffering of others.

The Coast Guard is conducting dramatic search-and-rescue missions, assessing damage in the air and on the water and flying in badly needed supplies. Crews are working round-the-clock, despite knowing all they have left is the uniform on their back.

Please help us support these brave men and women and their families.

You can contribute to the Coast Guard Foundation Disaster Relief Fund via fax at: (860) 535-0944 or by calling us at (860) 535-0786.

or you may send a check to:

Disaster Relief Fund
Coast Guard Foundation
395 Taugwonk Road
Stonington, CT 06378

<http://www.cgfdn.org/main.html>

USLSSHA Members Help Open New Museum of Coast Guard Heritage on Cape Cod

At long last, the Trayser Museum of Coast Guard Heritage has opened in Barnstable, Massachusetts.

Past USLSSHA Presidents Maurice Gibbs and Dick Boonisar, members John Manning and Jim Walker, and executive director John Galluzzo helped with the planning, layout and initial operations of the museum, with Manning taking the lead role. Many of the artifacts on display come from the private collection of Boonisar, with others coming from the Nantucket Life-Saving Museum and several private collections from around Cape Cod.

The museum commissioning ceremony took place on Friday, August 12, with Adm. David Pekoske presenting the keynote lecture. Watch for more on the Trayser Museum of Coast Guard Heritage in *Wreck & Rescue Journal*.

What's inside...

* *USLSSHA recognized for 10 years of work in preservation, p.4*

* *Federal grant rescues Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, p. 6*

* *Coast Guard Memorial Unveiled in Rhode Island, p. 6*

* *We have a quilt winner! p. 7*



Heritage Association

Life Lines

Issue #28

Newsletter of the
United States Life-Saving Service
Heritage Association
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A Note from the Producer of *Storm Warriors: Heroes of the Shipwreck Coast*

“I wanted to let you know the latest on *Storm Warriors: Heroes of the Shipwreck Coast*.

“Not only has the documentary been picked up by American Public Broadcasting and shown coast to coast (from MD to CA, from MI to FL) on various PBS stations, but it has also been accepted for screening at the Bluegrass Independent Film Festival in Louisville, KY and the Great Lakes Independent Film Festival in Erie, PA — both in September 2005. This may be ‘old hat’ for some of you, but, this being our first documentary, its all very exciting for Scott and me.”

Sincerely,
Ginger Scott-Erlinder
Producer, Seiche Entertainment, Ltd.

Preservation Updates: Quick Hits from around the U.S.

New London, Connecticut

The Coast Guard is in the process of selecting a site for the proposed new National Museum of the Coast Guard on the Fort Trumbull peninsula. While at least one member of the House of Representatives has voiced concern about having the museum built on land taken by eminent domain, members of the museum association will continue to discuss site selection issues and fundraising strategies.

Rockland, Maine

One hundred hand-picked attendees celebrated the unofficial opening of the new Maine Lighthouse Museum in Rockland, Maine, on June 24, 2005. The party feted “Mr. Lighthouse” Ken Black for his longtime dedication to the preservation of lighthouse and Coast Guard history through his Shore Village Museum. The following morning, the lighthouse community celebrated the official opening of the museum.

Whitehall, Michigan

An oar once belonging to the White River Life-Saving Station on Lake Michigan has been returned to the Friends of the White River Light Station, according to their latest newsletter. The station, moved by developers, still stands today. Thanks to member Jeff Shook of Fenton, Michigan, for sending in this report.

Newburyport and Barnstable, Massachusetts

Separate museums dedicated to the history of the United States Coast Guard have concurrently opened in old customs houses in Massachusetts, one on Cape Cod, the other on the North Shore of Boston. Watch upcoming issues of *Wreck & Rescue Journal* for Museum Spotlights on each of these new museums.

Websites to Watch

Sent in by our Surfing Members

Be sure to check out the following websites pertaining to the Coast Guard and its history:

www.uscgstormwatch.com

Sent in by Executive Director John Galluzzo. All the latest news on Hurricane Katrina and the Coast Guard's efforts during and in the aftermath of the tragedy.

www.bareproductions.com

Sent in by FS1 James Swenson, USCG. Charlie Bare, a cadet at the USCG Academy in New London, produces his own series of short videos of life at the Academy, including presentations of the USCG sports teams at play. [Editor's note: Be sure to also check out Swenson's www.CGclips.com.]

www.cg36500.org

Sent in by member Richard T. Ryder. Learn the history of this storied 36-foot motor lifeboat, and help support the Orleans Historical Society's drive to keep it afloat.

<http://cgmix.uscg.mil/IIR/Search/IIRSearch.aspx>

Sent in by Richard Hiscock.

This page provides reports for investigations of reportable marine casualties investigated by the U.S. Coast Guard from November 2002 to present.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Member Dies in Iraq

Army Private Kevin Scott Wessel of Newport, Oregon, also a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, died on April 19, 2005 in Baghdad when a car bomb detonated near him while he was on foot patrol. U.S. Defense Department Spc. Jacob Pfister of Buffalo, New York, was also killed by the same explosive. Wessel was a member of Flotilla 69, in Yaquina Bay.

What's New at the Coast Guard Historian's Office

Go to www.uscg.mil for more...

Pages From A Scrapbook: an incredible collection of photos from the scrapbook of BMC-L Ira Lewis, who served at small boat stations on Long Island for over twenty years, from the late-1930s to the late-1950s. His photos document life at these unheralded stations. See what it was like to fire a Lyle gun, capsize a lifeboat on purpose and drive a "Duck" right into the surf!

The oral history of LCDR W. E. Prindle, Jr., a Coast Guard aviator (CG Aviator #144; CG Helicopter Pilot #24) during World War II: read all about LCDR Prindle's exploits flying Coast Guard seaplanes and helicopters!

The Journal of ENS W. E. Prindle while aboard the USCGC *Marion* in 1942 while on escort duty. Read a first-hand account of the deadly months after Pearl Harbor, when the Navy did not have enough escort vessels and Coast Guard cutters ably filled that gap and challenged Hitler's U-boats!

CGC *Kukui*'s official Cruise Report of her voyage through the western Pacific supplying the LORAN stations.

Captain David W. Sinclair's memoir. Captain Sinclair has provided us with his memoir of his Coast Guard career that stretched from 1935 through his retirement in 1969. He describes life as a cadet in the Coast Guard Academy's Class of 1939, life aboard a Treasury Class cutter just prior to the U.S. entering World War II, his service in World War II, including the Greenland Patrol, flight training, and aerial patrol duties. He then goes on to describe his post-war Coast Guard career. Find out about what the Coast Guard was all about during Captain Sinclair's career!



USLSSHA Recognized for 10 Years of Work in Preserving Coast Guard History

In a complete surprise to the planners and attendees of the 2005 USLSSHA Annual Conference, Congressman Thaddeus McCotter (R-Michigan) sent a member of his staff to meet with the conferees at the Elberta/Frankfort Life-Saving Station and thank them for a decade of work in preserving the history of the United States Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard. The Congressman also sent along a framed copy of HR 750, "Recognizing the 130th anniversary of the creation of lifesaving stations on the Great Lakes, which became part of the United States Life-Saving Service, and for other purposes," here gratefully accepted by USLSSHA's third president, Fred Stonehouse.

Congressman McCotter specifically sent along his thanks for ten years of work in "preserving the stations, history, boats and equipment" of the Life-Saving Service and early Coast Guard.

108th Congress H. Res. 750[108]: "Recognizing the 130th anniversary of the creation of lifesaving stations on the Great Lakes,..."

Introduced: Jul 22, 2004

**Sponsor: Rep. Thaddeus McCotter
[R-MI]**

In the House of Representatives, U.S., November 16, 2004.

Whereas in 1871 Sumner Increase Kimball was appointed as the Chief of the Revenue Marine Division of the Department of the Treasury;

Whereas in overhauling the Revenue Marine Division and decentralizing the system of lifesaving stations, Mr. Kimball recommended the establishment of lifesaving stations on the Great Lakes;

Whereas in 1874 Congress authorized the organization of the Life-Saving Service into 12 districts, including 3 on the Great Lakes;

Whereas the 8th district consisted of Lakes Erie and Ontario, the 9th district consisted of Lakes Huron and Superior, and the 10th district consisted of Lake Michigan;

Whereas in 1878 these lifesaving stations were organized with others around the Nation as a separate agency of the Department of the Treasury known as the United States Life-Saving Service;

Whereas in 1854 at the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, lifesaving capabilities were first introduced to the Great Lakes with 9 lifeboats placed on Lake Ontario, 14 lifeboats placed on Lake Erie, 23 lifeboats placed on Lake Michigan, and 1 lifeboat placed on Lake Superior;

Whereas the forgotten heroes who served at lifesaving stations contended with giant squalls, wrecked vessels, and low pay;

Whereas these men performed amazing rescues, but by far the largest amount of work for the crews revolved around drilling with the rescue

equipment, patrol and lookout duty, and general station upkeep;

Whereas the United States Life-Saving Service enabled the shipping industry to rapidly grow on the Great Lakes;

Whereas when the United States Life-Saving Service ended in 1915, 63 Great Lakes stations were in operation, including one on the Mississippi River in Louisville, Kentucky;

Whereas during the years of its operation, the Great Lakes Life-Saving Service contended with 9,763 disasters, saving 55,639 people and \$110,038,860 in property;

Whereas over the course of the United States Life-Saving Service, 20 brave employees gave their lives while performing their duties;

Whereas the organization that Mr. Kimball formed provided the basis for the new search and rescue organization of the Coast Guard;

and Whereas the constant attention to practice with rescue equipment and inspections employed by the United States Life-Saving Service is still in use today: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 130th anniversary of the creation of lifesaving stations on the Great Lakes, which became part of the United States Life-Saving Service; HRES 750 EH 3

(2) commends the personnel of the United States Life-Saving Service whose efforts saved lives and property on the Great Lakes; and

(3) acknowledges Sumner Increase Kimball for his foresight in the field of marine safety and commitment to maritime safety on the Great Lakes.

Cosponsors of HR 750:

Rep. Madeleine Bordallo [D-GU]
Rep. John Dingell [D-MI]
Rep. Vernon Ehlers [R-MI]
Rep. Mark Green [R-WI]
Rep. Dale Kildee [D-MI]
Rep. Steven LaTourette [R-OH]
Rep. Sander Levin [D-MI]
Rep. John McHugh [R-NY]
Rep. Candice Miller [R-MI]
Rep. Bart Stupak [D-MI]

Earning his Wings

**A Boy Scout Saves a Life in North Carolina
by Stan Riddle, Yadkinville, NC**

In June, 2004, Tyler, a 15 year old Boy Scout from Yadkinville, NC, was vacationing with his family in Atlantic Beach, NC. While walking the beach with his mother and grandmother, they noticed a large group of people on the beach, looking out into the surf.

There was a boy about 10 years old, who was caught in a rip tide, and was calling for help. However, no one gathered on the beach would assist.

Tyler grabbed a “boogie board” which was lying on the beach, and paddled out to the victim. He calmed the child, got him on the flotation device, and paddled him back to shore.

For his efforts, Tyler has earned the Honor Medal from the Boy Scouts of America. This medal is only presented to registered Scouts and Scouters who have performed acts of courage and bravery at substantial risk to themselves.

Tyler is 16 now, working on his Eagle rank, and plans to take BSA Lifesaving course at summer camp this Summer.

I suspect he'll pass it!

Portland Listed on National Register of Historic Places

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced on February 17, 2005, that the remains of the steamer *Portland*, lost during the gale that today bears its name, have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. *Portland* is the first wreck from the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, off Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine, to be listed on the National Register.

The Portland Gale of November 26-28, 1898, claimed the lives of approximately 500 people from New Jersey to Maine. Life-savers from the USLSS, aided by volunteers, rescued nearly 120 people during the storm.

Federal Grant Rescues Point Reyes USCG Lifeboat Station

By Ralph Shanks

Point Reyes National Seashore in California announced that they had received a long sought \$1,800,000 federal grant to restore the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station and its marine railway. Park Superintendent Don Neubacher and his staff deserve great credit for diligently working on this project over many years.

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was closed in 1968 after the nearby Bodega Bay Coast Guard station assumed rescue duties for the area. Subsequently, the entire 1927 modified Chatham-type station, complete with intact marine railway and restored 36-foot motor lifeboat, was designed a National Historic Landmark. This prestigious historic preservation status occurred in 1990 and was marked by a ceremony where park officials and maritime historians Ralph Shanks and Jim Delgado were speakers. In the ensuing years the station was restored and has been used for group activities. Douglas Brooks, boat restoration expert, also restored wooden 36-foot motor lifeboat 36542 during this time.

However, waves and weather took a toll on the marine railway and it had deteriorated so that it was not longer structurally sound. Obtaining this grant has been a longtime park goal. The grant will allow preservation of the lifeboat station, marine railway and motor lifeboat. All are necessary components for proper interpretation of the station's rich history.

Point Reyes National Seashore plans to restore the marine railway so that it can be used to for living history programs. The long-term goal is to be actually able to launch the 36-foot motor lifeboat from the station marine railway. The 36-foot motor lifeboat is still properly kept in its boatbay on the original marine railway carriage used to launch it. When the marine railway restoration is completed, hopefully by next year, Point Reyes may be the only place in the country where you can actually see a wooden 36-foot USCG motor lifeboat launched from a lifeboat station marine railway.

Earlier this year the National Park Service repaired fencing and access at the Surfmen's Cemetery where four of the six surfmen who lost their lives at Point Reyes are buried. The park also contains Point Reyes Lighthouse, whose first order Fresnel lens can still be operated using its original hand-cranked clockwork drive mechanism.

Park Ranger Craig Morgan spearheaded the restoration of the Surfmen's Cemetery and has coordinated annual memorial services there honoring the six lost Point Reyes surfmen.

Park Ranger Steve Anastasia has written, selected photos for and designed outdoor interpretative exhibit signs explaining the history and significance of the lifeboat station. These will be installed soon.

Point Reyes National Seashore is located in Marin County about an hour's drive north of San Francisco. Visitors should contact the park for hours and dates when the maritime structures are open and for directions. The weather at Point Reyes can be very windy and foggy so dressing in layers is a good idea even in summer.

Coast Guard Memorial Unveiled at Rhode Island Veterans Home

About seven years ago, William Camara, chief of health systems at the Rhode Island Veterans Home, began decorating the walls of the home with military memorabilia. Fred Alger, though, a Navy vet who spent twenty years with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, felt the full story was not being told. He approached Chief Bo Hause at Coast Guard Station Bristol (RI) with a call for help in locating proper Coast Guard artifacts.

Hause called out to units as far away as Cape Cod and collected items including "photos of Coast Guard cutters, a map of Narragansett and Mount Hope bays, and a rare reprint of the architectural sketches of Hog Island Lighthouse dating to 1900," according to the *Providence Journal* of August 9, 2005. The exhibit was dedicated on August 10.



Ah, Those Summer Whites...

Thanks to member Jay K. Wallace of Manorville, New York, who sent in this photograph with the following caption: “We do the beach apparatus drill every year at the Fire Island Lighthouse. I am #2 at the handles of the cart (the one without the sunglasses!)” Thanks Jay!



Show Your Support for USLSSHA and its Mission

Here's your opportunity to show off the USLSSHA logo and share the message of our mission! Each shirt costs \$38, and comes in a variety of colors, although we prefer the “stone” variety. To place an order, send a check to USLSSHA, PO Box 213, Hull MA 02045. Comes in S, M, L, and XL. For more information, contact John Galluzzo at johnjgalluzzo@hotmail.com.



We Have a Winner!

Finally, the quilt fabricated in Tennessee, introduced to USLSSHA members in Maine, and raffled off in Michigan, will be heading home to Delaware. The quilt, lovingly crafted by member Lorraine Greene of Cottage Grove, Tennessee, depicts the USLSS logo surrounded by images of stations, personalities and actions from Life-Saving Service history. Fittingly, its ultimate resting place will be in Lewes, Delaware, in the restored Rehoboth Beach Life-Saving Station, owned by Bill and Joan Reader. Joan, all smiles, on the right, is aided in displaying the quilt by member Grace Truman of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Congratulations Bill and Joan!

In the Next *Wreck & Rescue Journal*...

Watch for the next issue of *Wreck & Rescue Journal* to arrive around November 1. Volume 8, Number 3 will feature the story of the 2005 USLSSHA Annual Conference; “A Great Lakes Life-Saving Primer” by Thomas P. Ostrom; a report on the Middle Island Life-Saving Station archaeological study undertaken by the PAST Foundation this summer; book reviews, a museum spotlight focusing on the placement of the *CG 36500* on the National Register of Historic Places, *Echoes From the Surf*, and more!



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- * **New benefit.** Headed for Maine? Stay at the Quoddy Head Coast Guard Station bed and breakfast at a 10% discount, just for being a member of USLSSHA!

Send all of your membership questions to USLSSHA, PO Box 213, Hull MA 02045 or e-mail johnjgalluzzo@hotmail.com