

Friends of the Kewaunee Pierhead Lighthouse

Newsletter #7, Winter 2024



The big chill week, mid January 2024

Open Weekends in 2024

The Lighthouse will be open for the Door County Festival of Lighthouses, June 7-9 and October 4-6 2024. (Days and times to be determined). It will also be open on some other Saturdays in July and August, to coincide with other local events. More details will be in our **spring newsletter**, and on the **Lighthouse webpage**, kewauneepierheadlighthouse.org. The more volunteers we have, the more days we can open the Lighthouse. We are always looking for volunteers to staff these open days, so if you would like to welcome visitors to the Lighthouse, share your enthusiasm for this historical treasure, and enjoy the spectacular views, let us know! (one shift is 3 hours).

There is a suggested donation for admission to the Lighthouse: \$5 for adults and \$3 for school age children. Members of the Friends of the Lighthouse have free admission.



Lighthouse Wine is here!

The first bottles of Kewaunee Lighthouse white wine were bottled at Thanksgiving, and you can buy it from local stores and from Cold Country Wines and Vines. It is a light, semi sweet wine, delicious for a picnic, lunch or dinner, and makes a great souvenir or gift from Kewaunee. A portion of each sale goes to the Friends of the Lighthouse. We want to send a big thank you to Jay and Kay at Cold Country for producing this wine, and to Donna Fischer of Kewaunee, who painted the picture for the wine label.



Friends' Annual Meeting

The Friends of Kewaunee Pierhead Lighthouse will hold their Annual Meeting on **Monday, February 19th**, at 5:15 pm, in the Kewaunee Public Library. All members and friends are welcome to attend. We will be hearing reports on the past year, planning for the summer open days in 2024, and electing Board members and officers. If you want to know more about becoming involved, please contact us at:

Keeper@KewauneePierheadLighthouse.org

Radio Days at the Lighthouse

Last summer was the first time the Lighthouse hosted amateur radio enthusiasts from the Green Bay Mike and Key Club. We are planning to have several days again this year, including August 7th, which is National Lighthouse Day for radio operators. Here is some history and background about the club, from Dave Catalano:

The Green Bay Mike and Key Club was established in 1939 to foster and advance Amateur Radio in Green Bay, Wisconsin and the greater northeastern Wisconsin area. As with all "hams," the club's original founders came from many walks of life and shared a common interest in communication as a hobby, as a means of technical exploration, and as a way to serve their community and nation. Over the years, GBMK members have participated in a variety of public service events, ranging from coordinating communications for walks and races to support weather spotting.

The spirit that brought together the founders of the GBMK continues today. Presently, the club has over 100 members of all ages and interests. Club members represent all available Amateur Radio license classes-- Technician, General, and Amateur Extra-- each of which carries various operating privileges and frequencies.

During this past year, we have participated in some special events.. National Lighthouse Day, August 7 was celebrated by holding two Special Event Stations... One at the Grassy Island Range Lights in Green Bay and then at the Kewaunee Pierhead Lighthouse for the first time. That was very successful, which prompted us to return for the last open house. That time was special because we were able to operate from the old Radio Room on the second floor. In anticipation of more opportunities such as this, an antenna cable was placed through the attic toward the light. A future antenna is planned in that area.

Our thanks to the Friends of Kewaunee Pierhead Lighthouse for being so welcoming and their assistance during our stays..

During the Special Events, contact is made to other Operators via Radio. Those operators send us their email address and we return a certificate with a picture of the Lighthouse with the contact information. This promotes the lighthouse activities. This has also prompted local operators to come out and visit the area as well.

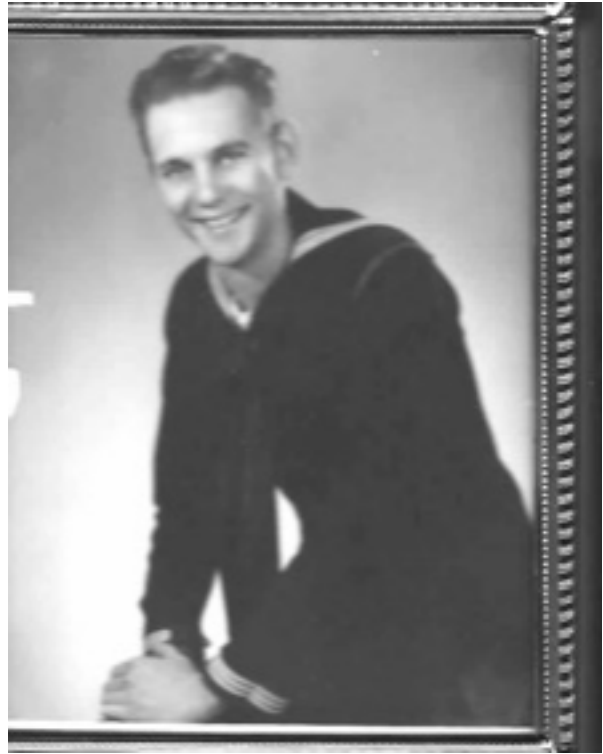


Volunteer Spotlight - Tom Schuller 1950-2023

Tom was an enthusiastic lover of history and a member of the Kewaunee's Lighthouse Preservation Committee. He contributed articles about Kewaunee's harbor and lighthouse history to the Newsletter, from his research at the Kewaunee County Historical Society. Tom was also President of the Historical Society and Curator of the Jail Museum for many years, and a member of the Marquette Historical District. A lifelong resident of Kewaunee, Tom had witnessed many changes in the city, yet he was passionate about preserving and promoting the best of Kewaunee's history for future generations. He was also generous and kind, and welcomed newcomers to the city and the Lighthouse. He loved to share his knowledge and stories of the past, including possible hauntings at the jail! Thank you, Tom.



History Spotlight



This photo is of Robert Young, who was Keeper of the Lighthouse from November 5th, 1963 until March 1st, 1965. (courtesy of his daughter)

One of the joys of volunteering for open days at the Lighthouse, is meeting all the interesting people who come to visit. Amy Degeneffe shared a story from last summer, 2023:

On Saturday, just before we were closing, three ladies came in to give us a history lesson! turns out their dad was Robert Young who was the keeper from November 5 1963 until March 1 1965. The daughters remember bringing their dad's dinner out to him, using flashlights and walking the catwalk - cannot imagine! They had more memories of the house on shore than the lighthouse, but it was absolutely fascinating talking with them.

2023 Historic Preservation Update

By Jake Heffernan

We are excited to share details of 2 projects that were completed this year!

This past spring, local company Paplahm Metals removed 6 metal plates that have been welded over 6 of the 10 window openings on the 1st floor since the 1980s. Local carpenter **Barry Nelson** worked through the winter of 2022 building 10 replica windows to replace the rotten frames in the lighthouse. Once the metal covers were removed, Barry and a crew of volunteers got to work replacing the badly deteriorated windows with Barry's beautiful replica windows. With the new windows on the inside and plexiglass storm windows on the outside, the wind and spray will be kept out while natural light is welcomed into the machinery space once again!



At the end of the window project, local electrician **Dan Jerabek** volunteered his knowledge and skill, teaming up with long-time Lighthouse Committee member Jim Schaller. The two of them installed new conduit and fixtures on the main level, and installed new fixtures in the 2nd level. The “new” fixtures on the main level were salvaged from Marquette School before its demolition. All of the lights are connected to a photocell, which turn them on and off automatically.



Both the window project and the electrical were completed by the beginning of July. On July 3rd, as the sun set before Kewaunee's annual fireworks show on the South pier, the Kewaunee Lighthouse was entirely lit up for the first time in more than 30 years! The gathered crowds hummed with conversation about the newly lit-up lighthouse, and “ooh’s” and “aahh’s” were heard even before the first fuse was lit.

The lights inside the lighthouse will continue to come on nightly throughout the entire year. The light at the top of the tower remains an active aid to navigation, managed by the US Coast Guard.

A HUGE THANK YOU to those who **donated** their specialty skills to accomplish these projects!

Barry Nelson – Carpenter
Dan Jerabek – Electrician

A smaller item of note is the installation of our “National Register of Historic Places” plaque on the lighthouse. The lighthouse and pier were accepted to the National & State Registers of Historic Places in February of 2022. If you have a specialty skill you'd like to lend to the lighthouse, or if you'd like to volunteer in general, please reach out to us! Keeper@KewauneePierheadLighthouse.org Thank you also to those who have contributed financial donations to the Friends of the Kewaunee Pierhead Lighthouse! You fund restoration projects such as these.