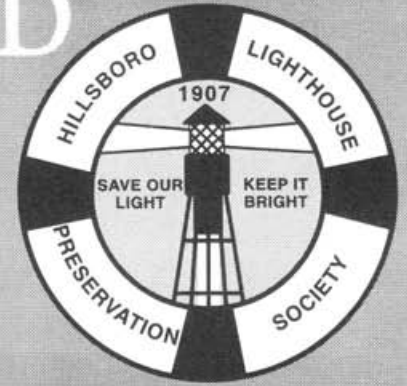


# BIG DIAMOND

Official Newsletter of the  
**Hillsboro  
Lighthouse  
Preservation  
Society**



**Fourth Year of Publication**

**Fall 2001**

## OFFICERS & BOARD

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Past President

## PIONEER DAYS 2001

The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual PIONEER DAYS celebrations were held October 6 and 7 this year at Volunteer Park in Plantation, Florida. H.L.P.S. had a booth, and our exhibits, included some of our Hillsboro Lighthouse art collection. Volunteer Park is west on Sunrise Boulevard just past NW 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It is just east of Sawgrass Mills Shopping Mall. Awards were presented starting at 3 p.m. on Sunday at the Park headquarters.

## H.L.P.S. FALL MEETING

The fall meeting is planned to display our new H.L.P.S. collection, and other exhibits. We are also planning historical talks and slide shows on the Lighthouse and shipwrecks near the Hillsboro inlet. The problem is that we must have insurance before a meeting at the Civic Center is allowed. It is taking a lot of time to get policies quoted, and details worked out. Once the policy is issued we can schedule a specific date. The Pompano Beach Civic center is on Sixth Avenue, west of Federal Highway, and close to the Pompano Beach Post Office.

## EARLY FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSES

When the United States took over Florida from Spain in 1822 there was not a single Lighthouse along the entire Florida coastline. This seems strange, since the Spanish had been losing valuable treasure and cargo ships along the Florida coastline for almost 200 years. The reason was that Florida was a "loser" in Spain's view. Valuable ports were in Havana, Cuba, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. The only significant Florida port was St. Augustine, and it was a constant drain on the Spanish treasury.

The United States moved quickly to make marine traffic safer. A Spanish Watchtower was modified and expanded into a short Lighthouse at St. Augustine. It was the first lit in April 1824. These early Lighthouses used whale-oil lamps, with reflectors, and gave very poor light.

The second Florida Lighthouse was also on the east coast....a tall brick tower on Key Biscayne (Miami) which was lit in 1825. It was attacked and burned by Indians in 1836, and remained dark until reconstruction in 1847.

## KEY WEST LIGHTHOUSE

A tall brick lighthouse was built in Key West 200 miles south of Hillsboro and lit in 1826, but this was destroyed in a terrible hurricane in 1846. The replacement was built in 1847, and still stands on Whitehead Street. Even as late as 1850, just before the Civil War, there

were only two Lighthouses in north Florida, and one covering south Florida (Miami) and one at Key West.

## BRICK LIGHTHOUSE FAILURES

There had been some terrible failures of the standard circular brick Lighthouses. The first Key West Lighthouse, and a similar structure on Sand Key 9 miles south of Key west had toppled over in 1846. A small Lighthouse at Ponce Inlet, 200 miles north of Hillsboro had toppled over 18 months after it was built.

## I IRON LIGHTHOUSES

The British pioneered in the development of iron Lighthouses for use on exposed ocean locations. The first American iron tower off Boston collapsed after only 18 months service. But we persisted, and in March 1852 the first "screwpile" Lighthouse was erected in



KEY WEST FLA.



## CARYSFORT LIGHTHOUSE

the Florida Keys off Key Largo. The eight outer wrought iron pipes were driven deep into the coral reef using a steam pile-driver. Then the horizontal beams and platforms were erected until finally the light was installed 100 feet above the seething ocean. At first it was an inefficient system of lamps and reflectors, but in 1858 a Fresnel LENS was installed. This light is still in service using a solar powered Vega VRB-25 lens mechanism.

## S SANIBEL LIGHTHOUSE

A charming lighthouse was installed on Sanibel Island in 1884. This is quite different from Carysfort, and represents a long developmental step towards the Hillsboro design. Although they LOOK very similar, Sanibel is much smaller and quite cramped inside when compared with our taller Hillsboro design.

*Dave Butler, Editor*

*Illustrations..Paul Bradley*



## SANIBEL ISLAND

### NOTE FROM DAVE BUTLER

I became President of H.L.P.S. in April 2001, when Harry Cushing resigned. Late this spring it was discovered I have cancer, and two operations over the summer have not fully solved the problem. I am now taking chemotherapy treatment. It has been necessary to resign as your President in late August to focus on the medical treatment. I will continue as your Secretary, and BIG DIAMOND Editor. We are fortunate that Hib Casselberry is able to take over as President. We have worked closely together for years and I will assist Hib every way possible. ..

**Hillsboro Lighthouse Preservation Society**  
**Post Office Box 6062**  
**Pompano Beach, Florida 33060**

Phone: 954- 942-2102

WEB SITE: [www.hillsborolighthouse.org](http://www.hillsborolighthouse.org)



*Have you renewed your membership for 2001 ? Membership expiration month & year is shown on your label.*

FIRST CLASS MAIL

## LIGHTHOUSE VISIT JULY 21,'01

A joint meeting with FLORIDA LIGHTHOUSE ASSOCIATION, "FLA", was held on July 21 at the ROYAL FIESTA restaurant in the Cove Shopping Plaza in Deerfield Beach. There were about 250 in attendance from both organizations. FLA meetings were held in the morning, then a nice lunch was served. After lunch the HLPS held our Annual Meeting, with about 125 in attendance. Some members went on tours of Hillsboro Lighthouse; others attended a panel discussion in the afternoon with former Lighthouse Keepers, and historical experts before a boat trip on the Intracoastal Waterway & view the Lighthouse from the Inlet.

### ARE YOU ON THE WEB?

Look at HLPS's website, and e-mail us.

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

E-mail [Info@hillsborolighthouse.org](mailto:Info@hillsborolighthouse.org)

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER,

**Hib Casselberry**

I, among many other HLPS members value Dave Butler's knowledge & leadership since our beginning along with the other charter members' efforts. We hope that Dave's treatments are successful and completed in a few months. Then, I am willing to step back & let Dave return to this post and I return as Vice President.

I have asked Paul Bradley & Charles Seitz to review our books & set up a budget for 2001-2. I am continuing to go forward as chairman of the Education Committee. Again we had a booth at Broward County's "Pioneer Days" Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 6 & 7. We hope YOU will help by being a volunteer on one of HLPS's committees.

You who are on the internet, explore and let your Board of Directors know what you think of it and come up with some suggestions. Thanks to Charles Seits of the Sands Hotel & Marina & his crew for setting the website up. *Hib*



# HILLSBORO LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Hib Casselberry, President  
671 S. W. Sixth Street #VT-118  
Pompano Beach, Florida, 33060  
Tel.: (954) 782-3313 Fax.: (954) 783-4044  
E-mail: [lighthouse-fl@usa.com](mailto:lighthouse-fl@usa.com)



HLPS, member of  
Florida Lighthouse  
Association, Inc.

Notice

September 28, 2001

**To: High school (grades 9 - 12) teachers, students and their parents.**

**Re: Prize money for historical essay on Hillsboro Lighthouse due March 1,'02,  
sponsored by HILLSBORO LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY.\***

### **Broward County Lighthouse Awards include:**

1st place: \$100.00; 2nd place: \$75.00; 3rd place: \$50.00; Honorable mention: lighthouse book

### **Broward County timeline schedule for progress notices, lighthouse visit, & essay papers:**

Notification to Social Studies Coordinators in Broward High Schools = Mail postcard. Oct. 8.  
"Reference Booklet" to each High School Library (from E-mail reply notices) = Mail Oct. 15  
"Notice of Intent" to HLPS from each student planing to enter = Due Fri., Nov. 2, '01  
Seminar on Hillsboro Light & helpful information for students = Nov/Dec. (to be announced)  
Visit Hillsboro Lighthouse, participant, parents, & "teacher sponsor" = Dec. (to be announced)  
Finished papers to HLPS Education Committee for the judging = Due Monday, March 4, '02  
Public display of essay winners Saturday, March 9, '01 (Location to be announced)

To be eligible for the county prizes, the papers must explore the history of Hillsboro Lighthouse and the people and families who lived there. The lighthouse topic needs to address the 2001-2001 theme: *Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History*. The keepers of lighthouses and their families' stories are an important part of our heritage and should be researched so that we can preserve and have a better understanding of our past. Word count: 1,500 - 2,500 words, excluding notes, annotated bibliography, and title page;

For additional details see the "Reference Booklet on Hillsboro Lighthouse" that is being mailed on October 15th to high school libraries in Broward County. The booklet contains full details of the rules and how the essays will be judged, some suggested possible titles, some reference material (books, papers, articles, and people who can be interviewed) and other research resources.

Good luck to all,  
Sincerely,

Hib Casselberry, Education Chairman

\* HLPS (see revers side)

## **ORGANIZATION:**

In the Fall of 1997, the **Hillsboro Lighthouse Preservation Society, Inc.** was established and chartered by the State of Florida as a non-profit corporation. The **Florida Lighthouse Association, Inc.** held its Quarterly Meeting here and toured the **Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse Station** in July 1997 with 360 people attending. The majority were South Florida residents, proving there was enough local support for our own preservationist group. The initial and primary goal of **HLPS** was to save the Fresnel lens from being removed from the tower and to have it repaired. Local and regional citizens lobbied successfully.

**Other goals are** = At least two Lighthouse visits per year; Two meetings at other locations with related programs; Four newsletters "Big Diamond"; Establish and maintain an Internet Website; Collect, preserve, publish, and distribute the history of this lighthouse and the families who lived here; and Save this historic lighthouse and enlighten our children of their heritage. Annual dues are = Individual \$25.; Family \$35.; Business \$50.; Life \$500.+

## **STRUCTURES:**

The **Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse** itself is an octagonal, pyramidal, iron skeleton tower with a central stair cylinder, constructed in 1906-07, is the last (youngest) lighthouse to be built of this type in Florida. This type was first designed in England, and predates the Eiffel Tower in Paris. So, this 142 foot structure is Florida's Eiffel Tower.

The beauty of this tower is its lantern room, which houses the beautiful clamshell Fresnel lens. The light beam (reaching 24 miles) is the strongest one this side of Hawaii. The curved-glass exterior of this room – with curved diamond-shaped glass panels held with brass fittings -- was something quite new and elegant in 1906. Locals call this lighthouse "Big Diamond".

**Hillsboro Lighthouse Preservation Society's** quarterly newsletter is called the "Big Diamond".

**Auxiliary Historic Structures:** Two 1-1/2 story keepers' dwellings (now used for high ranking officers' and their families R&R time), crew barracks, shop-garage, and a radio building.

**Visitation** to this lighthouse station has been closed to the public for the past three decades, however the **Coast Guard and HLPS** have worked together for escorted conducted tours several times each year.

## **BEST VIEWING FROM OFF-SITE:**

(1) South end of bridge at Hillsboro Inlet in Pompano Beach's City Park east side of A1A. (2) From the South Jetty, access to beach from NE 16th Street, requires walking on the beach six blocks. Check **HLPS Website** at [www.hillsborolighthouse.org](http://www.hillsborolighthouse.org) E-mail us at [Info@hillsborolighthouse.org](mailto:Info@hillsborolighthouse.org)