



Amateur Radio



Lighthouse Society

Newsletter • Vol. 1 • No. 3

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Special Events

NLW

National Lighthouse Weekend

Aug 5 & 6, 2000



ILLW

International Lighthouse

Lightship Weekend

Aug 19 & 20, 2000



See the **ARLS** Newsletters

Issue 1: Event Guidelines

Issue 2: Participating Stations



Ship John Shoal, Delaware Bay, NJ/DE
Photo by Carole Reily, "The Lighthouse Lady"

Ship John Shoal — Special Event W2S

This interesting light is located in the southern part of the Delaware River, which begins in New York and flows southward to separate the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, then Delaware and New Jersey. Ship John Shoal is south of Philadelphia, PA, and Wilmington, DE —near the beginning of what is called Delaware Bay, and the light is located close to the mouth of the Cohansey River in New Jersey.

It was named after the ship *Ship John* that was wrecked in 1787 near the present site. The superstructure, made of iron, was a part of the lighthouse exhibit at the 1876 International Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. It was brought to the site and placed in position in 1877. The beacon was automated in 1973 and is today still serving as an active aid to navigation. [Continued on p. 4]

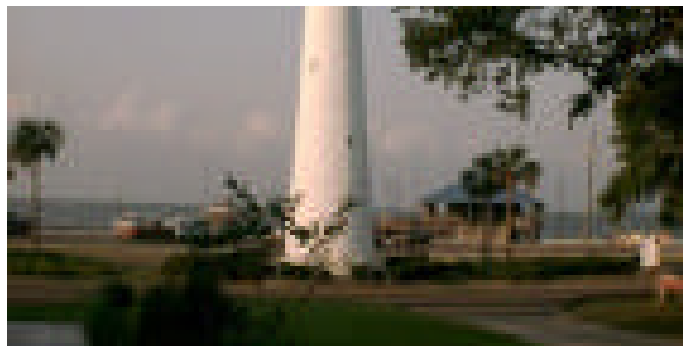
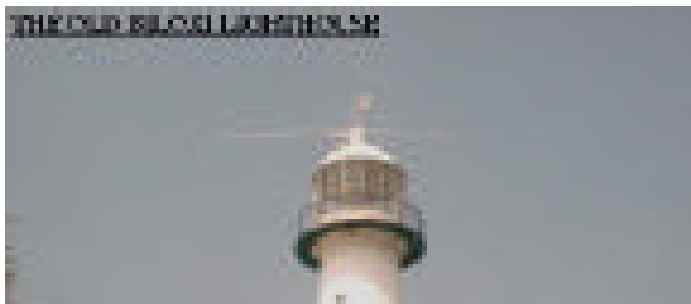


Ham Radio Station W5B

It all started with an innocent E-mail that I picked up one morning just before I started out to get my coffee and biscuits at the local watering hole. I read it and did not think too much about it until I read it for the second time. I then logged onto Jim Weidner's (K2JXW) web site (<http://www.waterw.com/~weidner/lh-ham.htm>) and read some more information about a ham radio lighthouse special event and decided to investigate further.

I discovered that there were lots of lighthouses involved in this event. I then said to myself, "Self, this would be a good event to get into because Old Biloxi Lighthouse is right down the road." The ball was in motion. Of course it does not take too much to get me rolling on anything to do with Ham Radio.

The first thing on the agenda was to locate the persons in charge of the lighthouse. After several local calls, I was directed to Mr. Bill Raymond, the Director of Special Events for the City of Biloxi, Miss. Right away he was interested in the idea. The ball was now in full swing. Bill contacted the city Mayor, A.J. Holloway, and later informed me that the green light was on. I was given a personal tour of the lighthouse and at that time decided where we were



Biloxi Lighthouse, Biloxi, Mississippi

going to put the antennas and place the operating station.

It was an ideal location — power, antenna site at 60 feet, plenty of parking, a view of the ocean, a nice cool breeze, and plenty of exposure. The lighthouse is located in the median on Highway 90, a four-lane stretch of road that extends across Mississippi's beaches. There are about 26 miles of beaches along the coast between Gulfport and Biloxi.

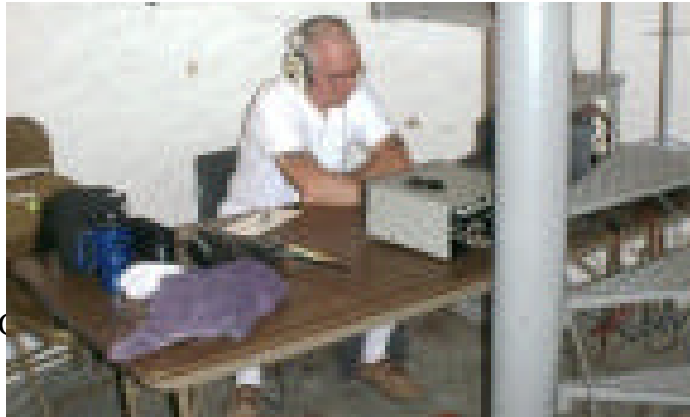
I did not want this to be a one man show; so I contacted my radio club, West Jackson County ARC, and asked them if they would like to support the effort. The members all voted to support the special event. I also needed one thing that lots of hams forget: Club Insurance or just insurance.

Immediately after receiving all the O.K.'s that I needed, I applied for and got the special event call W5B — *B* for Biloxi. Now everything seemed to be in place; so I contacted JXW's "official" lighthouse event web site and had him add the Old Biloxi Lighthouse to the "List of Participating Stations" at www.waterw.com/~weidner/LH-day-table.htm

The next meeting with Mr. Raymond was full of surprises. He told me that the city was going to

Amateur Radio. A big AI-A-BOY goes out to the City of Biloxi, MS.

With all the preparation behind us, it was time to start. On Friday, Aug. 20, in 95 degree heat, the antennas were erected on the Biloxi Lighthouse some 60 feet in the air. We had a 10, 15, and 20 meter rotatable dipole (Mosley) and a homemade 40 meter dipole made by W5OXA. After installation the antennas were checked with an MFJ analyzer and checked out "OK." The radios, amps, and computer were all tested and found to be in good operating condition. All was set and ready to go.



George, W5RLK, takes a turn at 20 meters.
We planned to start 0000 UTC on the 21 of August 1999 and we did. That was 7:00 PM local time, and 10 meters was dead along with 15 meters; and 20 was not too much better. 40 meters was the choice, and we made a few contacts before it dried up. We hung up the headset for the night. All of us were worn out after putting up the antennas in the heat.

We got back to the lighthouse about 7:00 AM on the 21st and started operating. 10 meters was still dead; so I began with 15 meters and that produced some 26



Daryl, KD5CQT, chief antenna installer

The pileups never seemed to quit. They were endless. I have been in DX countries that did not produce that kind of response. The International Lighthouse / Lightship Weekend was truly a successful event, and I can't wait until next year. I am sorry that I could not hear all the DX stations that wanted to contact the W5B lighthouse, but the conditions just were not there. Maybe next year.

By Ernie Orman, W5OXA

(This article was originally published on the ILLW web site with results of the 1999 event.)



Special Event Web Addresses:

Updated list of lights participating in the ILLW (this will be updated weekly until the editor leaves for the Chesapeake Bay on his boat for NLW/ILLW):

<http://www.waterw.com/~weidner/LH-day-table.htm>

Ham Radio Lighthouse Page:

<http://www.waterw.com/~weidner/lh-ham.htm>

Lighthouse Keeper's Log

in Massachusetts, it was under the command of Captain Folger and was carrying a cargo of glass, hollow ware, gin, iron sheeting cloth, toys, nails and window glass from Hamburg, Germany to Philadelphia. In December, 1797, it ran aground on a shoal near the mouth of the Cohansey Creek [River] off Fortesque, NJ.

The captain and about 60 German passengers, along with some of the cargo, were rescued. Heavy ice and winter storms took their toll, and theBy spring, the ship gradually settled into the sand. After the ship was sunk, a wooden lighthouse was placed there to mark the shoal, but in 1876 it too was destroyed by ice.

Welcome

Welcome to the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society, which is designed especially for the ham radio operator who enjoys communicating with lighthouses around the world. The purpose is keep members up-to-date on expeditions and lighthouse special events as they occur throughout the year. First-year dues and registration are only US\$10 (\$20 outside USA); this covers the membership certificate, an iron-onT-shirt decal of the Society's logo (with your call included if desired), and shipping. After that, yearly dues are only \$5 for each additional year and include the cost of the newsletter (issued rather sporadically). Send fees in USA funds as postal money order

rip, to ward off ice floes and protect the structure from sea action.

The light flashes white on the channel side and red on the shoal side, and is 20,000 candle-power. The lighthouse is also equipped with compressed aid fog-horns which emit a blast every 20 seconds when in use. Atop the caisson foundation sits a Victorian-style cottage, which has a copper roof and paned windows. On rip-rap next to the lighthouse are fuel tanks.

The Cumberland County Historical Society has the wooden figurehead of the *Ship John* as well as a bell from the Ship John Lighthouse.

The Cape May Historical and Genealogical Society Museum at Cape May

built by Captain Zadock Sharp. It was presented to the museum in 1930.

Look for Special Event Station **W2S** operating from Ship John shoal in the August events.



ARLS Newsletter

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