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August 31, 2012

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Dear Roma,

Hello Friends!

As summer comes to a close, in this issue we have an accounting of a trip to Great Brewster and Boston Light, some info on upcoming trips and events, and notice about the loss of a member.

- Trip to Little Brewster notes
- Upcoming Rainsford Island Trip (previous trips sold out!)
- Upcoming Northern Lighthouse Trip
- Fall Harvest Festival at Worlds End
- Death of member Pearl Lang - raising funds for a Memorial Picnic Table on Lovells Island
- Thank you to Boat Trip Volunteers

Two additional events on the harbor:

- September 29 annual Boston Harbor Educators Conference sponsored by the Mass. Marine Educators which is a great group. Registration is open to the public. <http://www.massmarineeducators.org/pdf/BHECflyer2012.pdf>
- September 29 is the annual Boston Harbor Islands Regatta.

Thank you for reading, and thank you most of all for your support. The Friends are primarily supported by your membership. Our office Coordinator sends Membership Renewal Letters approximately 4 weeks before your membership expires. You can respond by mail/check, or you can renew easily on our [web page](#) - it's instant! If you're on the harbor this summer and would like to write an account of your experience, please send it to me for an issue of Tidings. We may print your story for all to see!
ChairmanFBHI@gmail.com

Thank you!



Walter Hope, Co-Chair
PO Box 121020, Boston MA 02112 for personal notes, and stories...

Little Brewster Island and Boston Light, August 2012

PHotos and text by Fred Langa (note - a few photos are presented here, others are referred to but are available on the Fred's web page).

I'm a native New Englander, but only recently moved to Boston proper: a one year experiment in urban living. It's been great: I've enjoyed walking the whole of Olmstead's "Emerald Necklace," section by section. And the Harbor Islands, especially, have been a revelation: green, clean, cool and breezy, with nice nature trails, and stunning --- jaw-dropping! --- views of the city.

So far this summer, I've been to Spectacle Island three times, and George's once. And from the start, I'd been planning to take the tour of Boston Light, on Little Brewster Island.

Boston light has a fabulously rich history: It's the oldest light station in America, first lit with beeswax candles in 1716, and funded by a penny-a-ton tax on shipping through Boston Harbor.

The light --- a major colonial maritime asset --- was hotly contested during the Revolutionary War, and was ultimately blown up by the British when they were forced to evacuate Boston by the cannon placed on Dorchester and Roxbury Heights by General

Washington.



PHOTO: Not something you see every day --- a 215-year-old warship sailing under its own power through the waters of Boston Harbor. Spectacular!

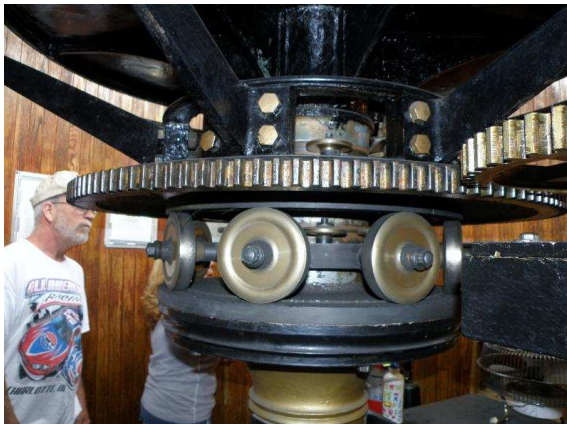


PHOTO: This rotating assembly slowly spins the lighthouse lenses, which are in the room above.



PHOTO: Here's the view from the top of the lighthouse, looking back towards Boston. As you can see, Little Brewster Island deserves its name: It's tiny!



PHOTO: On the way to Little Brewster, looking back at Boston, with the stone Nixes Mate day marker in the midground

Boston Light was rebuilt and relit in 1788. But in the meantime, a lighthouse at Sandy Hook, NJ, was built; so it claims the title of "oldest lighthouse" in America. That's why the Coast Guard refers to Boston Light as America's oldest "light station" --- the oldest location of a lighthouse --- and not the oldest "lighthouse." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Light

The trip would have been worthwhile on any day, but August 19, 2012, turned out to

offer a unexpected extra: It was the 200th anniversary, to the day, of a battle off Nova Scotia; part of the War of 1812; in which the USS Constitution earned its nickname, "Old Ironsides." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Constitution

In commemoration of the battle, the Navy decided to allow the 215-year-old Constitution to free sail --- sail unassisted --- for only the second time in over 100 years.

So, I signed up for the August 19th outing to Boston Light --- to visit (and climb) the historic lighthouse, and to see the Constitution's free sail. The trip was nicely narrated. Along the way, we heard the history of the docks and islands we passed, as well as some other highlights, such as the lighthouse on Long Island Head, and the day marker on the shoals at Nixes Mate --- where an infamous criminal was hanged and gibbeted (left exposed and displayed after death) in 1726! http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nixes_Mate

Little Brewster is far out in the Harbor; about a 45 minute boat ride. Our vessel was owned by UMASS Boston; it had indoor and outdoor seating, and was equipped with a small maritime toilet, or "head." Once on the island, we were given a brief history, orientation, and safety lecture, with a preview of the coming (optional) tower climb.

PHOTO: Visitors who wish to climb the lighthouse tower are shown exactly what's in store: a 76-step metal spiral staircase, and two ladders totaling 17 steps more.

http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight056.jpg

It only took a few minutes to climb, and then we were in the gear room, facing the mechanism that turns the lens assembly. As recently as 30 or so years ago, it was a hand-wound, clockwork- type mechanism, but the gear train is now run electrically.

http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight060.jpg

The lens assembly is spectacular: a French-built series of 336 Fresnel prisms and 12 clear glass "bull's eyes" that collect the light from the central 1,000 watt bulb and send it streaming outward in 12 radiating beams.

PHOTO: The lens assembly stands 11 feet high, weighs 5 tons, and dates from 1856. It's as beautiful as any chandelier I've seen.

http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight064.jpg

The whole lens assembly slowly turns, completing one rotation every 120 seconds. Because there are 12 beams, and each rotation takes 120 seconds, outside viewers see one

flash from the lighthouse every 10 seconds (120/10), as one of the beams sweeps past. The lens was fascinating to watch: a stellar example of 19th century art and engineering. But the view looking out was pretty spectacular, too. Because space is tight at the top of the lighthouse, only a few visitors are allowed up at one time. For the rest of our visit, we were free to wander around the small island, comb the small beach, picnic on the lawn or the provided table, or view the displays in the boathouse.

PHOTO: The island was serene and beautiful when I visited. Here, numerous gulls and cormorants take a breather on the island's rocky spine.

http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket

[/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight122.jpg](http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight122.jpg)

PHOTO: The tower stands almost 100' tall, and offers handsome views from every angle.

http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket

[/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight115.jpg](http://i225.photobucket.com/albums/dd54/flanga_bucket/Boston%20Light%20and%20Constitution%20Free%20Sail/bostonlight115.jpg)

After everyone (who wanted to) had a chance to climb the tower, it was time to go. There were smiles all around --- everyone clearly had a great time.

But the day held one final treat. Although this is not a routine part of the Harbor Island tours, we were treated to the rare sight of the USS Constitution free sailing for only the second time in a century. It was history come alive!

Just as with every other excursion I've had to the Harbor Islands, I was elated at the end of this one --- the views, the history, the fresh air, the clean water, all made the day truly memorable. The Harbor Islands are truly a remarkable place.

I can't wait to go out again!

FYI: The Boston Light trip takes about 3 hours, and the tour runs all summer, through the end of September. <http://www.bostonharborislands.org/tour-lighthouse>. Join the FBHI to receive a discount on these trips.

For many more Boston Light photos, with captions and links for additional info, see Fred's free Photobucket album:

<http://photobucket.com/bostonlight>. Fred also wrote about several other Harbor Island adventures on his free blog at <http://fredlanga.blogspot.com/2012/06/exploring-boston-harbor-islands.html> and <http://fredlanga.blogspot.com/2012/07/exploring-boston-opsail-2012-full.html> .)

(Fred Langa is a professional writer and editor who currently is enjoying life in the Fenway area.)

On August 9th longtime Friends Member
Pearl Lang passed away.

A fund raising drive has begun to install a picnic bench in Pearl's memory on Lovells Island. To donate online please visit our web page:
<http://fbhi.org/in-memoriam.html> or click on [PEARL LANG](#)

The Friends are the fundraising 'lead' and we are joined with other interested organizations that work with the harbor islands.

Pearl
(for Pearl Lang)

Blackberry-hungry scout,
Spirit of Boston's islands.
You made them your islands,
Our islands.
Friend, steward, phenology-tracker,
You cleared tangles below
Henry and Henrietta hawk at
Worlds End.

And Bumpkin,
Great Brewster,
Grape,
Calf,
Webb,

Langlee,
Thompson,
Peddocks,
And always Lovells.
Alive by seascape and sun,
You befriended snails,
Secreted your power spots,
The whole Harbor your nest.

I see you smiling,
Bird-finding, ferry-tracking,
Sweating in the summer sun,
Living our dreams.

by Marc Albert



Pearl Lang

Our **web page** continues to change and is continually updated. We're attracting almost 5000 visits to our web page monthly. We're working hard so that all of our business can be performed on the internet as this is not the way of the future - but of NOW. Thank you for visiting our web site - and tell a friend about this wonderful resource!

Your ticket purchases and memberships can all be completed online (ticket purchases online provide you with a receipt which is also now your TICKET, removing the need for mailing tickets and the delay that can also create).

Coupled with our web page, we've now included information on every existing island in the harbor (see : **ISLAND INFORMATION**).

If anyone would like to provide additional information, links, or photos please

contact ChairmanFBHI@gmail.com - we must provide credit and URLs for pre-existing information. In many cases if you 'google' one of the harbor islands, our web page comes up in the first 5 items.

Fall Harvest Fest at Webb Memorial Park

Sunday, September 30th

- Childrens crafts (pumpkin painting)
- FBHI Merchandise & Books
- More!

In cooperation with DCR, Webb Memorial Park & FBHI

Contact: Carol Fithian - fithiancj@verizon.net



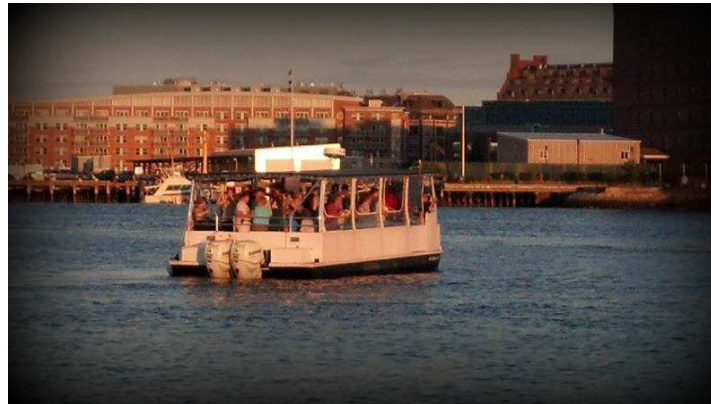
REMAINING BOAT TRIPS FOR 2012 Season

Northern Lighthouse Trip

Saturday, September 1st (Departs at 10am, returns 3pm), Boat leaves Boston Harbor Cruises at One **Long Wharf**. Boat has restrooms and a snack bar. Purchase your tickets online from FBHI.org or by mail at FBHI 30 Shipyard Drive #202, Hingham MA 02043 (at least 1 week ahead of the trip). Tickets may be purchased at the dock.

Rainsford Island Trip

Saturday, September 15th (Departs 10am, returns 2pm), Boat leaves from **ROWES Wharf**. Boat has no rest room facilities, or food provisions. Visit the once home of a boys school, quarantine hospital, farm and more. Explore the ruins and walk the beach. *Boat beaches at Rainsford Island as there is not a dock, your feet will get wet. The hike around the island is not on steady ground, please wear appropriate footwear.* Our prior trips to Rainsford SOLD out earlier this summer - **buy your tickets NOW ONLINE ([click here to go to the web page](#))** to insure you will have a seat!



Beach Cat - boat to Rainsford Island

Northern Lighthouse Trip

Saturday, September 29th (Departs at 10am, returns 3pm), Boat leaves Boston Harbor Cruises at One **Long Wharf**. Boat has restrooms and a snack bar. Purchase your tickets online from [FBHI.org](http://fbhi.org) or by mail at FBHI 30 Shipyard Drive #202, Hingham MA 02043 (at least 1 week ahead of the trip). Tickets may be purchased at the dock.

Member and boat trip participant Kevin Regal

Passed away on July 10th. The family asked that donations be made in his memory to the FBHI. For Kevin's obituary and donation information please see our web page at:

<http://fbhi.org/in-memoriam.html>



THANK YOU FRIENDS BOAT TRIPS VOLUNTEERS!

Starting on January 1, 2012 with the annual Seafarers' Island Holiday to Spectacle Island Friends boat trips volunteers have been ambassadors, tour leaders, and logistical wizards with tickets and merchandise sales on all of the

Friends boat trips.

These trips included specialty tours to the islands without docks: Calf, Rainsford and Great Brewster Islands; sunset trips to the three "Ls": Long, Little Brewster, and Lovells with a special Tall Ships Tour narrated by **David Skill**; and the ever popular five hour Northern and Southern Lighthouse Tours with Boston Harbor Cruises.



Ralph on Rainsford

Join the Friends on Rainsford Island September 15th when tour leader photo historian **Liz Carella** will take us back in time with historical photos and stories of Rainsford Island. There will be one trip departing from Rowes Wharf Water Transport at 10:00 and returning to the dock at 2:00.

On September 1st and 29th the final Northern Lighthouse five hour tours onboard Boston Harbor Cruises will take place from 10:00-3:00. Please purchase your tickets directly from the Friends so that we may receive a portion of the ticket sales for our volunteer programs.

Hats off to the 2012 FBHI boat trips volunteer team: **Rab Sherman, David Dingley, Elizabeth (Liz) Carella Nancy Martin, Stephanie Schorow, Marguerite Krupp, Charlotte Knox, Ken Stein, Bonnie Gorman, David Skill, Suzanne Gall Marsh and Val Wilcox.**

Thanks to **Steve Goyette at Rowes Wharf Water Transport** for the use of their "new" boat Waters Edge for two of the sunset adventures, as well as, his and the RWWT captains and crew efforts on all of our trips on the Beachcat.

Bob O'Connell of Camp Harbor View gave a warm welcome to our Long Island visitors and behind the scenes **Emily Krusz** was a big help.

Save January 1, 2013 for the annual Seafarers' Island Holiday to Spectacle Island.

**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR DONATE TO THE FRIENDS
ONLINE WITH A CLICK OF YOUR FINGERS**

If you haven't renewed your membership
you can do it via the FBHI web site and PayPal by clicking

HERE membership is 'instant'!

Please consider donating to the Friends. Please **click here.**

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