

# THE OCTAGON

Newsletter of the  
Faulkner's Light Brigade  
Spring 2007



This June 2005 photo, taken from the top of the lighthouse, shows the boathouse, pier, basin and jetty. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hopes to begin repair work in this basin soon. Additional photo page 2 (Photo by Fred Farnsworth)

## Exciting News! Safe Access to Faulkner's Island Planned and Funded

In September the Board of Directors of the Faulkner's Light Brigade made the difficult decision to cancel the 2006 Open House on Faulkner's Island.

The U.S. Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit in Providence, R.I. had raised a number of concerns about safety issues on the island, including the poor condition of the main docking area, the vertical wooden ladder and the boathouse. The Coast Guard engineers recommended that no "tour groups" visit Faulkner's until repairs were made.

The plans and the funding for those repairs are now in place. As soon as the Army Corps of Engineers approves the last necessary permit, and weather permits, the work can be done.

"We are really close," said Sara Williams, wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). "We have had our final federal coastal consistency review and been approved. We have a water quality certificate from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. The last piece to put in place is the permit from the Army Corps and we expect approval soon."

The project will cost \$322,637 and has been approved within the federal budget.

The work includes removal of the existing wooden dock with its pilings, installation of a steel bulkhead around a concrete pier, temporarily removing rocks at the base of the concrete pier and replacing them after the bulkhead installation, dredging the boat basin, and construction of a floating dock with four pilings.

To provide a safe access to the island, three timber piles will be

driven to secure a new floating dock comprised of a 6-foot-by-20-foot finger dock and an 8-foot-by-20-foot access dock. A dolphin consisting of two piles will be installed to keep moored boats off the pier and rocks. The floating dock will be attached to the pier by a 3-foot-by-20-foot gangway.

This is all a major improvement over the current conditions at the island's boat basin – the conditions the Coast Guard engineers found unsafe months ago.

Currently, as many Light Brigade members and guests know from earlier visits, Faulkner's can only be accessed within a three-hour high tide. The shallow depth and rocks within the basin risk damage to propellers and boat hulls. FWS personnel and Light Brigade volunteers can attest to several close calls. Stabilizing the jetty and pier with rip-rap will prevent rocks from falling into navigable waters in the future.

Perhaps most exciting, dredging will also allow FWS staff and the public to visit the island during any tidal stage. In the application for the federal funding, FWS said, "A safe landing at Faulkner's Island is essential in the expansion of public opportunities and the operation of the Annual Open House."

With the Army Corps approval in hand, the project must be finished by April 1, Williams said. If needed, work could be continued after September 1. Of course, no work will take place between April 1 and September 1 to prevent possible disturbance to more than 2,500 pairs of breeding common terns, a state species of concern, and 62 pairs of roseate terns, a federally endangered species.

# Announcing the 2007 Faulkner's Light Brigade Lecture Series

*For more than a dozen years, the Faulkner's Light Brigade Spring Lecture Series has drawn audiences from up and down the shoreline to learn more about lighthouses and their history, or the roseate terns and their habitat, or the history of sailing along our coast, and much more. This year's series promises to be just as interesting and entertaining.*

## Meet Captain Chris Sinnett, the current and 25th Commanding Officer of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Eagle*.

Captain Sinnett reported to *Eagle* after completing two years on the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area Staff in Portsmouth, Virginia. He is a 1983 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London with a bachelor of science degree in marine engineering. He also holds an MBA from Florida International University and an MA in National Security & Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.

The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Eagle* is known as "America's Tall Ship." It is the largest tall ship flying the Stars and Stripes, and the only square-rigger in U.S. government service. The ship was built in 1936 in Germany, one of three sail training ships operated by the pre-World War II German Navy. At the close of the war, the ship was taken as a war reparation by the United States, recommissioned as the *Eagle* and sailed to New London, its only homeport since.

Meet Captain Sinnett and learn about the *Eagle* Tuesday, March 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Faulkner's Light Brigade Annual Meeting at the Greene Community Center.



Captain Chris Sinnett, current 25th Commanding Officer of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Eagle*.

## Learn a bit about America's great age of sailing while listening to the Chanteymen of the Ancient Mariners.

The Ancient Mariners Fife and Drum Corps brings America's naval history to life as the Chanteymen use words and music to tell the tales of the everyday life of the common sailor. Sea chanteys have a long and honored history and Guilford's own Ancient Mariners are renown for keeping this important tradition alive. They are also fun.

As Mariner Historian Howard Hornstein explains, "Chanteys were used by sailors to lighten certain backbreaking tasks and to enliven hours." Today's Chanteymen promise to enliven an audience's evening.

For a historic and musical good time, join the Light Brigade Wednesday, April 25 at 7:30 p.m. at the Greene Community Center.

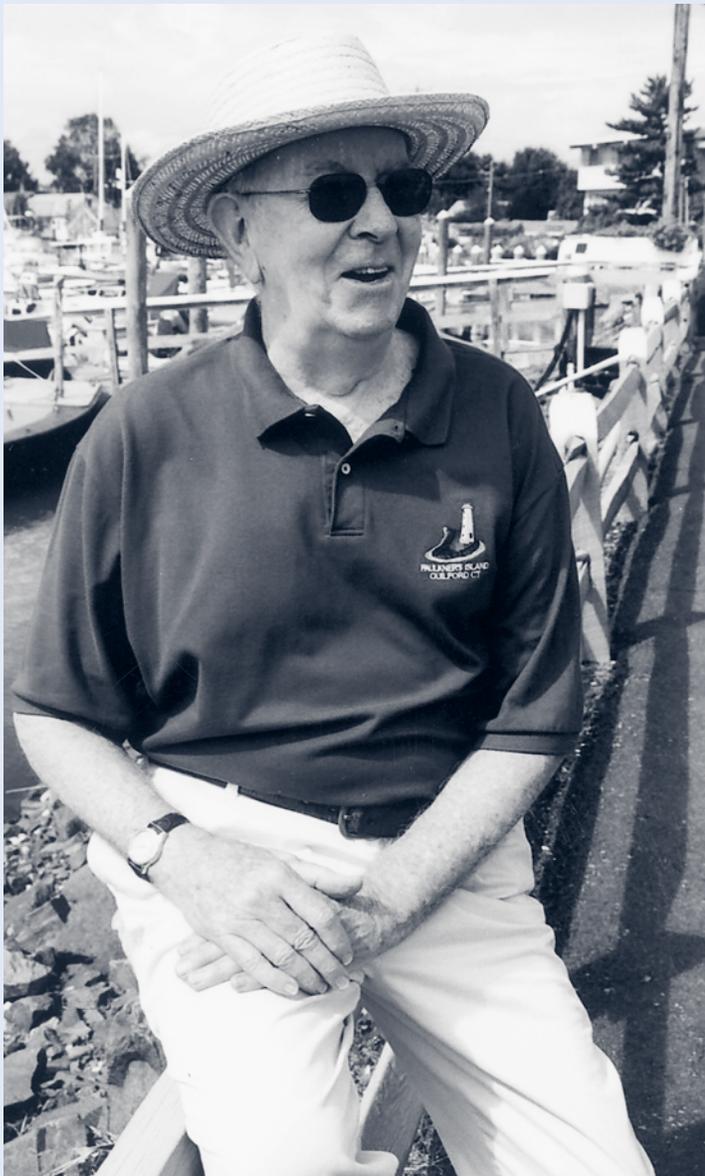


This photo of the pier and ladder shows the difficulty of accessing the island. When the federally-funded repair project is complete a new and safer bulkhead and floating dock will provide better, safer access.

Photo: Jeremy D'Entrement

## Edward (Ned) J. Cosgrove

July 28, 1924 – September 2, 2006



**Ned Cosgrove, on the day of the island open house, September 14, 2003.**

*Photo: J.E. Helander*

The Faulkner's Light Brigade's esteemed treasurer, Ned Cosgrove, died on September 2, 2006 after a difficult illness. Ned was truly one of the pioneering administrators of our organization, coming on board as membership chairman in September 1993 and then assuming the role of treasurer in August 1995, where he served faithfully until the Fall of 2005.

There was a solid streak of blue water sailor in Ned Cosgrove. He believed with all his heart in the Brigade's campaign to rescue a historic lighthouse in the waters of Long Island Sound. It was, in the beginning, an almost unthinkable campaign – to think that a local cause could be carried to the halls of the U.S. Congress. It was!

The campaign has been successful because of the contributions of people like Ned. He sat on our Board for twelve years, most of those years as treasurer and, in the end, as financial advisor. We remember Ned as the highest class gentleman of the "old school," seemingly mild-mannered, almost laconic and, according to the newspaper, sardonic. But don't let that last characterization fool you.

As we found out, Ned was a principled man of enormous commitment to any undertaking in his charge. He was an uncommon reservoir of plain common sense, painstaking organization, and incredible accountability. Not only did Ned wield an iron hand for the Brigade's financial stability, but mentored us on everything beyond matters of finance, such as in areas of policy and management.

The Board of Directors of Faulkner's Light Brigade is grateful for Ned's long term of dedicated service. The Board extends its heartfelt sympathy to his wife Connie and her family and further extends its appreciation to the many contributors who sent memorial gifts in Ned's name. Over \$1,000 in memorial gifts have been received.

Dear Ned, Out beyond Guilford Marina and the shimmering waters of Long Island Sound, over Dear Old Faulkner's Island, across Long Island Sound, and on to the seven seas, may you find an eternal sunrise after the sunset.

— Joel Helander

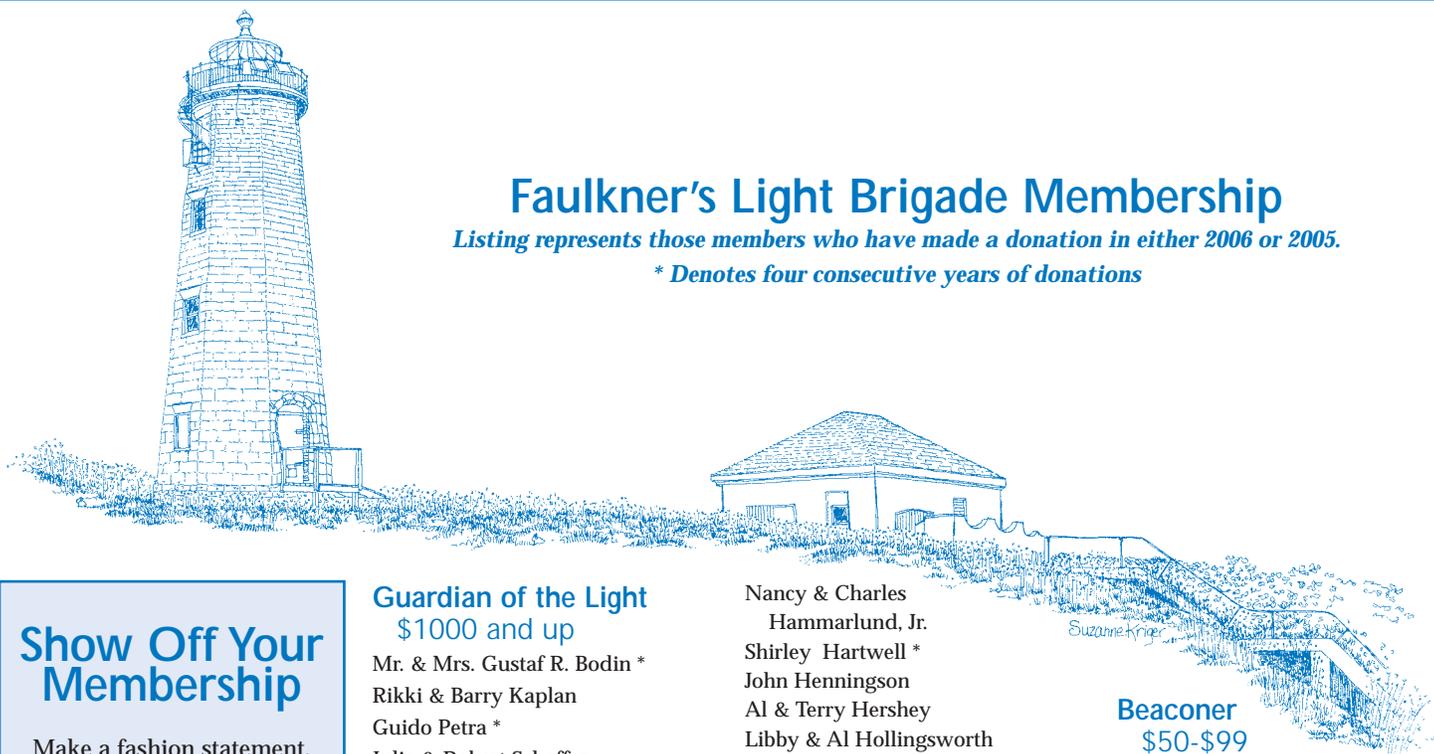
## Other News about Faulkner's Island

**Sara Williams**, wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is developing monitoring protocols for terns and predators on the island. The protocols will include everything the FWS does on Faulkner's in the summer, biologically speaking.

**A Habitat Management Plan** for the entire Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife refuge, of which Faulkner's Island is a part, is being written. A draft will be available for review this spring or summer.

**FWS** hopes to work with local Cub Scouts to help build additional roseate tern boxes for placement on the island prior to April 1, the beginning of breeding season.

**FWS** is seeking Light Brigade volunteers to assist with the repair and replacement of observation blinds at the island prior to tern season. The north blind toppled during a winter storm and needs to be erected. Several other blinds may need maintenance. FWS would like to erect a new blind on the eastern side of the island.



## Faulkner's Light Brigade Membership

*Listing represents those members who have made a donation in either 2006 or 2005.*

*\* Denotes four consecutive years of donations*

### Show Off Your Membership

Make a fashion statement. Faulkner's Light Brigade t-shirts and polo shirts are available for sale. The 100 percent cotton t-shirts carry the distinctive Brigade logo printed on the left chest. They can be ordered in two colors, ash or sand, in sizes M, L, XL, and XXL. The price is \$16 each, plus \$4.50 per order for shipping.

The polo shirt with an embroidered image of Faulkner's Lighthouse is available in navy or hunter green in sizes S, M, L, XL and XXL. The price is \$29, plus \$4.50 per order for shipping. These shirts can be personalized with a name, for an additional \$5, at the time of ordering.

Please make checks payable to "FLB" and forward to: Faulkner's Light Brigade, c/o Joseph Nugent, 423 Whitfield St., Guilford, CT 06437. If you have questions, please call Joe at 203-453-4034 and leave a name and contact number with your question.

Show your support for Faulkner's Island and the Light Brigade!

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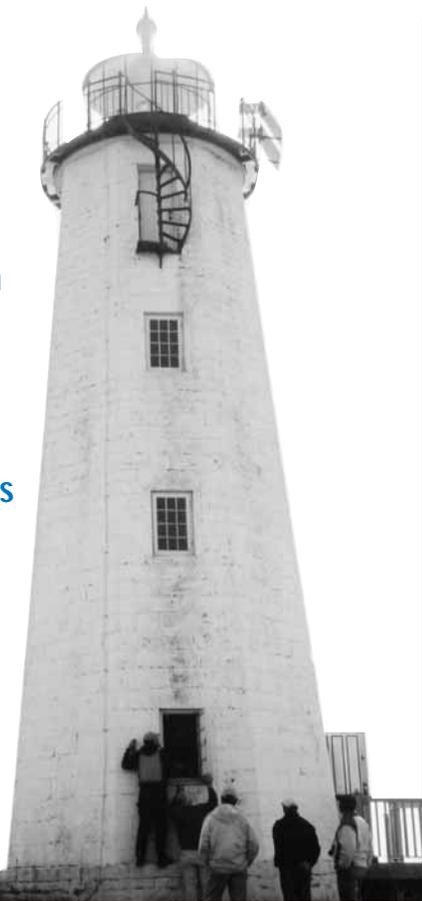
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Visit our website for progress reports, Open House 2007, US Fish & Wildlife Service repairs and renovation.



[www.lighthouse.cc/FLB/](http://www.lighthouse.cc/FLB/)

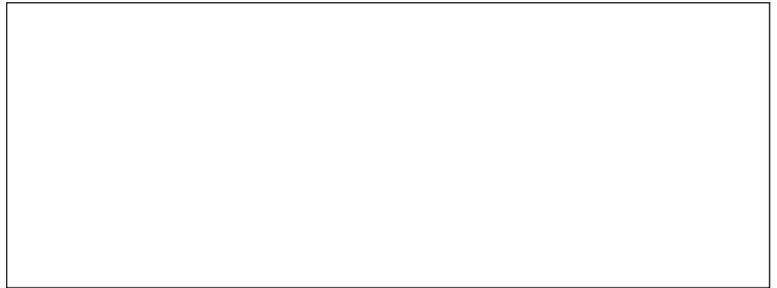
Jeremy d'Entremont is manager of the FLB website

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