

TO THE POINT

Published by the Point Fermin Lighthouse Society

Guardians of the Light

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

501(c) (3) Non-Profit

Winter 2023

GATHERING OF VOLUNTEER ROYALTY



Ann Barnett accepts the crown for Numero Uno in Volunteering at the Point Fermin Lighthouse with trepidation



Grand Duke Steve Thomas and Duchess Cheryl



Ann & Mike are TOP ROYALTY for their most hours of service!!!

On Saturday, January 21st, at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Event, the Point Fermin Lighthouse Society celebrated the hard work and dedication of its volunteers in 2022 at the Redman Lodge. The fun morning of food and friends allowed the volunteers to co-mingle and reconnect with fellow volunteers they don't often see because of different volunteer schedules and due to the long stretch of COVID restrictions. The spectrum of volunteer contributions was acknowledged by Mary Lou Fournane, Volunteer Coordinator.

The theme for the day was a "Royal Gathering". One of Mary Lou's many talents is her ability to turn a phrase. She creates memorable expressions of delight in her striking poems. And she did not disappoint.

Mary Lou's Royal Tribute:

Some royalty may reside in palaces far away
But ours are at our lighthouse -
where we hope they'll always stay
As royalty we thank you and are treating you as such
By honoring you in this small way
to thank you very much
You share your time and talents
wherever there's a need
And this is the reward for your every act and deed
Without you we could not exist -
we simply couldn't go on
To give our tours and greet our guests -
it's you we rely upon
And fund raisers and special events
would not be getting done
Without the contributions of each and every one!
So today we honor you as our most Royal volunteers
And thank you for your service
with a great big round of cheers!

This past year (2022) 36 volunteers put in a total of 1,650 hours welcoming 6,816 guests. In calculating the worth of volunteers [at an estimated cost of \$29.95 / hour (in California)] it would be equivalent to \$49,417.50 !

A royal brunch of grand fare- ham, salads, rolls, and beverage of Royal Crown Cola, plus royal chocolate cake was served!

Program also included:

- Host Mary Lou Fournane bestowing volunteers as dukes, duchesses, barons, etc with royal name-tag book marks.
- Martha Austin McKinzie welcomed all as "treasures of the lighthouse programs"
- Followed by Curator, Kristen Heather presenting custom made bottle opener gifts to the volunteers in thanks
- Lastly, the ROYAL Proclamations and Dubbings recognizing outstanding volunteers' service (see photos)

A longtime garden volunteer, Cheryl Hovard Walker commented on the day's festivities: "It was a lovely event today! It was so nice to relax, sit and chat with friends! It was also great to see folks I haven't seen for a while.

My thanks to all the folks who created such a great volunteer recognition event!"

A Point Fermin Lighthouse Volunteer gives the gift of their energy and their self. Additional assistance is important, and needed, to continue keeping the lighthouse accessible to the community, maintain the gardens, and to provide a link in its historical continuity. The time donated is vital in keeping Point Fermin tours, programs, and activities afloat.

You can help by volunteering and/or encouraging others to volunteer:

- o Garden (from pulling weeds to pruning roses)
 - o Gift Shop (selling; inventorying; pricing items; ...)
 - o Docent (full LH or individual floor tours; garden tours; ...)
 - o Social Media (Instagram; write articles for newsletter; ...)
 - o Decorate the Lighthouse for Holidays (Halloween, Christmas, 4th of July)
 - o Special Events (planning; researching; preparing for; ...)
- [Events include : Spring Tea; Lighthouse Day Event; Fund Raisers; LH Birthday Celebration; ...]
- o Maintain Society Membership records

Why not invite a friend to join you and attend the next New Volunteer Training Sessions. (See specifics in article inside.)

Point Fermin Lighthouse Society

AN INFLATION FIGHTER!!

As you know, the “guardians” or “friends” group that supports the best interest of the Point Fermin Lighthouse is the Point Fermin Lighthouse Society, that’s YOU! We have adjusted our membership period to be January through December.

So, renew your Point Fermin Lighthouse Society Membership NOW for this year at the SAME rate it has been for 20 years!! OMG!! Yes, we have not increased membership and keep adding to the little perks of membership that we can!!

Please use the envelope provided in this newsletter. [Make checks payable to: Point Fermin Lighthouse Society and mail to P.O. Box 742, San Pedro 90733.]

One-year membership gets you:

- 10% discount in our Gift shop merchandise,
- ‘To the Point’ newsletter throughout the year,
- Participation in ongoing efforts to preserve the Lighthouse for generations to come
- Yearly private Lighthouse Birthday Celebration,
- Annual National Lighthouse “Thank You” Picnic
- the knowledge that you are representing a group of concerned persons involved in saving its history, its heritage through education of the public and preserving the 1874 Point Fermin Lighthouse for present and future generations.

It’s the sum of our efforts that determines how successful we are, and will be, at guarding and preserving the Point Fermin Lighthouse. We have to be aware of the challenges that our lighthouse is faced with in the next few years and we demonstrate this concern through this non-profit!

THANK YOU in advance, Martha Austin McKinzie - PFLS Chair
The sesquicentennial (150th) celebration in 2024....around the corner!!!
Get a friend to join!!!

Point Fermin Lighthouse Society

501 (c) (3) non-profit educational organization dedicated to the support and preservation of the 1874 Point Fermin Lighthouse.

Board of Directors

Martha Austin McKinzie
Tom Budar
Nancy Budar
Carmen Garske
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Diane Bertelsen
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Angie Martinez

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Vice-President, CFO
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Member
Volunteer Chairperson
Member
Member
Member
Store Manager
Member

PFLS, POB 742, San Pedro, CA 90731

807 W. Paseo del Mar, San Pedro, CA 90733

Lighthouse phone no.

Museum & Site Curator

Support Staff

Tour Guide

Open Tues, Fri, Sat & Sun

Tours at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00

Newsletter Editor

310-241-0684

Kristen Heather

Polly Little

Jeannette Rodriguez

1:00 – 4:00

MJM Graphics

Garden Help Wanted

After our rainy weather, we are in dire need of extra hands to help prune the roses and to revive the garden in general.

You can help with:

- Pruning & fertilizing the roses
- o Instruction will be provided
- o Be sure to bring a pair of gardening gloves
- Pulling weeds
- o No experience needed
- Bring a friend and/or meet new ones

Contact Kristen for specifics: 310.241-0684
kristen.heather@lacity.org

LIGHTHOUSE ROYALTY AT WORK!



Point Fermin Lighthouse Society



Ma and her boyfriend

LOVE at the LIGHTHOUSE

The PBS series, “Legendary Lighthouses” is about lighthouses, and the stunningly beautiful places where they are located: “What’s not to love about a light-house? Whether it’s for their beauty, romance or usefulness – or a combination of all three – most of us would admit to a fascination with lighthouses.”

In recognition of Valentine’s Day, we thought we’d take a look at some of the romances over the years at our own Point Fermin Lighthouse.

Captain George Nichols Shaw, a Civil War veteran, was keeper at Point Fermin for over twenty years. Shaw was first assigned to the hazardous Point Reyes Light Station north of the Golden Gate and then transferred to serve as assistant keeper at the Yerba Buena Island Light Station. While stationed at Yerba Buena, he married a young San Francisco woman, Carrie Merrell.

George and Carrie Shaw moved into the Point Fermin Lighthouse in May 1882. On June 14, 1884, the Shaws’ daughter Verna was born. Verna probably attended grammar school in San Pedro, but she was sent to San Francisco for high school.

It’s said that Cupid does not have just one set of arrows, but two. One with a barbed golden tip to make people fall in love, and one with a lead, or silver, blunted tip to make someone fall out of love. George and Carrie Shaw’s marriage floundered before the turn of the century. Carrie, who was at least thirty years younger than the captain, may have spent more and more time in San Francisco with her birth family once Verna was in school, and finally decided to remain there. For whatever reason, they were divorced by 1900.



Keeper Will Austin



Martha Maria Bunce de Avila

However, Verna, their daughter, returned to San Pedro when her schooling was over. On August 6, 1903 she married a San Pedro boy, August B. Boyer, in a ceremony performed at the lighthouse. A year later they became the parents of a son. Let’s hope Cupid’s arrow allowed for Verna and August to live happily ever after.

In September 1904, Irby H. Engles was appointed to replace Captain Shaw after Shaw suffered an injury. Irby transferred from Ano Nuevo Island Light Station where he had been Head Keeper since 1903. He came to Point Fermin with his wife, Elizabeth, and ten-year-old daughter, Angelica. Light Keeping was a demanding job and a wife was not only a companion but a helpmate too. The US Lighthouse Service expected a lightkeeper’s spouse to help him with the work and Elizabeth did just that.

At age seventeen, their daughter, Angelica Engles married Reginald Davidson, a San Pedro chemist and pharmacist. This wedding took place in 1910 at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church. (Imagine beaus coming to the lighthouse to court Keepers’ daughters.) A newspaper clipping that Keeper Engels tucked into his log book said the bride “was beautiful and becomingly costumed and looked very pretty.” Angelica and Reginald lived in Lomita and had a son in 1912, Abidie, which was noted in the lighthouse log book by his proud grandfather. For some, love may be fickle and fleeting. Unfortunately, Angelica’s first marriage ended and she remarried Frank Fulton up north in the Bay area.

In 1917, when Engels retired, he was replaced by William L. Austin. A veteran lightkeeper Will Austin took up residency at the lighthouse in 1917 with his wife of 21 yrs., Martha, and their six children, having already lost 2 children. The stories of Martha and Will’s love for each other have always been a part of Austin family stories. What began as a family -debated marriage at the Mission San Luis Obispo in 1896 of a granddaughter from the famed Avila Rancheria to a “young cowboy/buggy painter” from Lompoc, grew and matured over the years. They had difficult times trying to “make it” on their own. But their love prevailed. Lighthouse employment made their separations challenging but their love continued to bloom. While at Pt. Fermin, the family soon added another child, Paul Fermin Austin. It is said that Will called Ma every time he left home at Point Fermin and “when she heard the phone ring, she ran to answer it, scattering all the kids out of the way”! Enclosed is a picture entitled “Ma and her Boyfriend” at Point Fermin. It is noted in a family album “She (Martha) was very much in love with our dad, and he with her.” But after eight years at the lighthouse, Martha Austin died following a surgery. Two months later, Keeper Austin “who was in love with our mother, never got over her death” and he followed his wife to the grave, dying of a broken heart. Their gravestones can be found at Harbor View Cemetery – together forever.

Point Fermin Lighthouse Society



“Young love is a flame; very pretty, often very hot and fierce, but still only light and flickering. The love of the older and disciplined heart is as coals, deep-burning, unquenchable.”
—Henry Ward Beecher

The management of Point Fermin Light was handed over to the City of Los Angeles in 1927. Los Angeles City Recreation & Park Caretakers looked after the Point Fermin Lighthouse from 1927 until 2002. (In 1941, the light was extinguished due to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the military took over during the war years.) From 1979 to 2002, Julian Jimenez was the resident caretaker.

In 1995, Julian Jimenez, LA City employee living in the lighthouse met Lisa, a local San Pedro girl. Two years later in 1997, they were married on the front porch of the Lighthouse, just the right backdrop for tying the knot. A local judge and longtime family friend, Pete Mirich, performed the ceremony with a couple hundred friends and family members as witnesses. The “I do’s” were followed by real daytime fireworks (really!) and the last 5 years of love in the lighthouse before moving on so it could be rehabilitated! Then the lighthouse was opened to the public as a historic site and museum in 2003 and Lisa and Julian’s love continued!

However, Cupid has recently garnered assistance from the Point Fermin Lighthouse. For now reservations can be made for weddings (and other events). These newlyweds can look out past the lighthouse toward the Pacific and be included in the enduring power of love across the ages and the list of loves at the Pt. Fermin Lighthouse.

“We’re all a little weird, and life’s a little weird. And when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love.”
—Dr. Seuss

(Keeper family information from “Point Fermin Lighthouse Families / 1874 – 1927” by Henrietta Mosley, additions from Diane Bertelsen and Martha Austin McKinzie)



Point Fermin Lighthouse Society



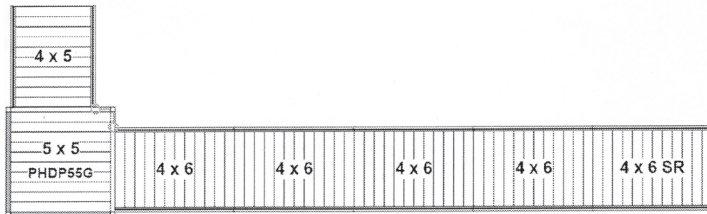
Lighthouse Elevator

For years, pretty much since its installation, there have been problems with the handicap elevator located at the end of the lighthouse porch. The Society has continually sounded off about its deplorable condition, not the least being the fact that it doesn't work. In anticipation of next year's 150th celebration, Kristen is trying to get a variety of maintenance issues addressed. On the list, is the handicap elevator.

The City is willing to remove the elevator. However, their solution is to put in an aluminum ramp – a standard city ADA accessible ramp. (A sample can be seen

at Angels Gate Cultural Center.) This might not sound too bad, but the configuration would have the ramp parallel the east side of the house. This would mean losing the flower bed (that currently exists beside the house) and the sidewalk on that side of the house. The city has offered to camouflage the ramp with a wooden fence. The impact of this would totally change the character of the lighthouse. And after almost 150 years, it just doesn't seem right.

The Society's response is that, as an historic site, this solution is not acceptable. Other historic sites in the city do not comply with this ordinance. We have been living with a non-functioning elevator for years and have addressed handicap visitors needs by providing a book showing photographs of the rooms throughout the house. [If the elevator worked, it would only allow for first floor access.] The picture album allows visibility of all the rooms.



The Society has provided the following response to the city:

- Option 1 The Board is requesting the elevator be removed with no ramp replacement because we are an historic site.
- Option 2 If replacement is required then a custom ramp should take the place of the elevator.



Volunteers Needed

Now that we are into the new year, if you never got around to making a resolution, have we got an opportunity for you !!! We will be conducting New Volunteer Training sessions on Tuesday, February 7th and Thursday, February 9th, 2023 from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the lighthouse.

The Point Fermin Lighthouse is a wonderful community treasure and a wonderful place to volunteer. We invite you to join our volunteer family. Interested in welcoming visitors to the site and sharing its rich history? Getting your hands dirty working in its lovely gardens (no experience needed)? Working as a gift store salesperson? Helping with fund raising events? Collaborating on planning a celebration for its 150th birthday (December 15, 2024)?

If you are looking for an opportunity to serve your community, make new friends in a beautiful setting, and to continue the preservation of this historic treasure, please join us on Tuesday, February 7th. Why not invite a friend or neighbor to join you. To streamline the registration process, the city has graciously offered to provide fingerprinting and vaccination authorization onsite on the 9th.

Perhaps you are a former volunteer who is ready to return on a regular basis or to help with special events? This is your opportunity to rejoin our volunteer community. Attendance Confirmation is required by texting your name to 310.293-8000 or calling the lighthouse at 310.241-0684.

2023 POINT FERMIN LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY CALENDAR JANUARY / FEBRUARY

JAN	1st	New Year's Day	LH CLOSED
	6th	Take Down Christmas Decor (Fri)	
	16th	MLK Day (Mon)	LH CLOSED
	21st	Volunteer Appreciation @ 10:30 Redman Hall	
FEB		Heritage Month (OLGUIN / OLSEN / JIMENEZ)	
	11th	John Olguin & Bill Olesen Recognition	
	18th	Julian Jimenez Rec & Park Memories	
	20th	Presidents' Day (Mon)	LH CLOSED
MAR	8th	International Women's Day Display	
		(Smith, Austin, ...)	
	12th	Daylight Savings Time Begins	
	27th?	Caesar Chavez Day Observed (Mon)	LH CLOSED
APR	1st	Easter Egg Hunt @ Lighthouse	
	9th	Easter Sunday	LH CLOSED
	5th	Passover Begins	
MAY	13th	Tea by the Sea & Boutique	
	14th	Mother's Day (Sun)	LH CLOSED
	27,28,29	Memorial Day Holiday (Sat, Sun, Mon)	LH CLOSED

Point Fermin Lighthouse Society



LIGHTHOUSE ROYALTY AT WORK!



HELP WANTED

We are in need of a person (or 2 people) who would be responsible for :

- maintaining Society membership records (Spreadsheets)
- collecting dues (usually via mail)
- distributing membership cards (via mail)
- promoting membership & its benefits throughout the year
- intermittently providing membership reports to board meetings, in person or via report

Is this something you could take on or maybe assist another person to do?

You would receive training on the current process and procedures.

The outgoing individual has organized the membership records and so they are in great shape.

This is something you could do independently, if that is appealing to you, and it would be a great contribution to the Society and thus the lighthouse.

Please direct inquiries to: Martha:
310-429-4953 • pipasmamac@mac.com

