



Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.

Where History and Nature Meet at the Door!

Founded in 2007

Forum: Spring 2024

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Membership Form

FOPPI *Forum* back issues can be found at the Washington Island Archives, WI Marine Historical Society, WI Maritime Museum, Egg Harbor Public Library, Sturgeon Bay Public Library, and the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

Hello, Friends,

A friend of mine posted this quote, written by Steve Jobs, on her Facebook page: "You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward." I pondered on it a bit and realized that that is exactly what the Friends are doing on Plum and Pilot Islands! Part of FOPPI's mission is to restore and preserve the historic maritime structures on the islands to help tell the stories of the brave men and women who came before us. These folks felt a call to pack up their meager belongings and travel to a pair of remote islands in the northern part of Lake Michigan to offer their assistance to others in peril. I am thankful that I've never been put to that test, and I am overly thankful that there are those who feel that's part of their calling. Who were these people? What did they do to own their fear? How did they do it? What secrets will we find once we begin to restore the inside of the buildings? I'm looking forward to the time when we can answer these and many other questions about the heroes who walked these grounds.

With that in mind, I want to share with you that we will be launching a capital campaign to restore the historic boathouse this season. As the building is on the National Register of Historic Places, we have a responsibility to follow the Federal Historic Preservation laws, regulations, and orders set by our government. Thankfully, through our partnership, we work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Regional Historic Preservation Officer and Archaeologist, James Myster, to interpret the Federal building requirements to us mere humans. In a nutshell, we need to restore this building and all the others on the register to what they may have looked like during their "period of interpretation." For the boathouse, that time period is 1939-1969. This was a time when lumber was harvested from old-growth forests. The challenge in replacing such a material "like for like" is real, but in some cases there is a slight bit of wiggle room when the replacement material is no longer available. We continue to learn and invite you to share in the journey with us by following our website www.plumandpilot.org.

On another note, the contractor has confirmed that he and his team will be landing on Plum Island in early June to begin mobilization of the Rear Range Light Restoration Project, Phase 2. This phase is for lead paint remediation and disposal and repainting of the section yet to be completed. The structure will once again be shrouded to protect the environment from contamination. The Coast Guard will be replacing the day marker board at the same time to make it clearer for mariners to align when coming into the shipping channel.

Thank you once again for believing in our mission and supporting us as we connect the dots.

—Mary Beth

Refuge Manager's Corner

Well, everyone, spring is here, and with it comes many changes in nature. Not only is it a time of renewal and excitement for the summer field season at the refuge, but this spring brings changes to the refuge's staff as well. It's with bittersweet excitement that I share the news that I have been officially selected to become the Regional Internship and Fellowship Coordinator (IFC) for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Mountain/Prairie region.

In this new position I will work with the national IFC team on Service-wide efforts, bring together our regional programs and partnerships for interns and fellowships, and establish new processes that will support career discovery and recruitment efforts across the region. I will be stationed at the Denver, Colorado, regional office, and my start date is June 2, 2024.

I can't say enough how grateful I am for being able to say I've worked these years at the helm of Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuges, especially alongside the dedicated refuge volunteers, Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands board, committees, and members, community partners, congressional staffs, and more.

While my departure is coming quickly, I can assure you that we are in very good hands with a strong transition plan to support the refuge's mission. Through the dedication of our remaining staff of the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge Complex, we will continue to manage upcoming contract work to paint the rear range light at Plum Island, monitor our wildlife and habitats to conserve and protect them, plan for upcoming work to the Plum Island boathouse, and more. USFWS staff and I will be out for spring site visits across the refuges, and I'm most excited for our spring special events!

For Memorial Day weekend The Ridges Sanctuary in Baileys Harbor will be putting on the Door County Festival of Nature, and we are participating in this celebration of the wonderful natural world that draws people to Door County. This annual festival is a series of events coordinated by The Ridges Sanctuary and other area partners in conservation to encourage visitors, residents, members, and friends to explore and celebrate the natural beauty of the Door Peninsula. Each year, they organize several field trips throughout the county and special events that allow you to experience the county with field trips intimately involved in protecting and preserving these natural spaces and educating our community on their importance.

For example, the USFWS is partnering with FOPPI to provide special tours of Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuges aboard the trusty *M/V The Shoreline*. You can sign up for one of three sailings on either Friday, May 24, or Sunday, May 26, to ride along with knowledgeable volunteer guides who will help you understand the natural history of the islands and why they are such important places to preserve.

On Saturday, May 25, refuge staff and volunteers will be host a special event at Plum Island, "Discover Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge." Once again, FOPPI's *M/V The Shoreline* will be called into action to ferry visitors from Gills Rock to Plum Island for a few hours of guided and self-led discovery of the island. We'll help visitors learn more about the fish, wildlife, plants, and the habitats that we conserve and protect for future generations, and also leave plenty of time for walking the trails to take in the sights and sounds that make so many of us fall in love with being out at the refuge. To learn more about this wonderful festival, or to purchase your tickets, visit DoorCountyFestivalOfNature.org, or contact The Ridges Sanctuary at 920-839-2802.

As that event will be a bit of a farewell for me, I'm very excited to know that we already have plans set for the Door County Maritime Museum's spring Door Peninsula Lighthouse Festival as well. Running June 7-9, 2024, the festival weekend includes air, land, boat, and adventure tours that provide access to all 11 of the treasured lighthouses of Door County and three of our neighbors to the south. Many of the tour excursions are unique to the Lighthouse Festival weekends and provide visitors exclusive access to lighthouses not typically open to the public—Chambers Island, Plum Island, and Sherwood Point Lighthouses. There are tours for all levels of activity and accessibility. Boat tours depart from a variety of locations around the Peninsula, including Fish Creek, Gills Rock, Baileys Harbor, and Sturgeon Bay. There will also be the fall festival, set for October 4-6, 2024.

This year we have updated our plan a little, with similar festival tour sailings over the course of the weekend. Visitors will head out from Gills Rock aboard the *M/V The Shoreline* for two hours, including a stop on Plum Island to ascend the rear range light to take in the stunning view across Death's Door. There will also be a very special opportunity to get out for a sunset tour aboard the boat! Be sure to visit DCMM.org for more

Refuge Manager's Corner

information, to purchase tickets, and to see what else is going on during the festival weekend. What an exciting way to spend time at the refuge!

I'm also contemplating all of the amazing work that I've seen in just the last three years, and these special events in 2024 are another opportunity to show off to the public our conservation work at the refuge and our partnership.

We can celebrate other significant projects completed over just the last three years, and the great things still in store:

In 2021 the upper portion of the Plum Island rear range light, and the entire front range light, were stripped and repainted. Both look amazing!

In 2022, windows and doors of the Plum Island crew's quarters building have all been replaced or refurbished. All are operational and accurate for our period of interpretation.

Also in 2022, the corner pilasters of the Plum Island boathouse were restored by a team of volunteers, fixing rot and sealing them well from weather for years to come.

In 2023, we saw the Pilot Island lighthouse get the light tower's deck sealed from the elements, new roofing put on, and gutters repaired. That work was so good, we survived a rough and windy winter with no issues!

That same year, a hazardous materials survey was completed, so we know what lead and asbestos mitigation needs to happen in each of the buildings at Plum and Pilot Islands, engineering design created for the Plum Island east pier/dock. These "behind the scenes" projects will set the stage for how we best approach preservation and other projects across the historic Coast Guard sites.

We've put together a vision with FOPPI to move ahead on major projects on the Plum Island boathouse so it can eventually serve as the refuge's visitor contact station. By the middle of 2024 we should be moving through the contracting process to get the pilings underneath the boathouse repaired and replaced, and FOPPI will be working in earnest to fundraise for all sorts of projects, such as replacing the roof, restoring doors and windows, and getting the building electrical up and running safely.

There are probably a bunch of other projects I've missed, but what we have accomplished together at the refuge in major projects is something to celebrate! Through the dedication of our partnership with FOPPI, we are looking at a bright future for the refuge, and I'm grateful for how far we've come together.

As I close out the last few weeks of my time at the refuge, know that I'm still available to talk about the islands, share my joy in conservation at the refuge, and help find a positive path forward at these challenging and wonderful federal lands. While we at the USFWS have a vital wildlife and habitat conservation mission, we also continue to follow historic preservation law, policies, and guidelines to preserve the historic and cultural resources on these lands. Working with FOPPI and others near and far to meet both critical pieces of work has been an incredibly rewarding part of my USFWS career.

I am so very proud of how far we've come with how we work together, and it is through the best practices we've established that we get to celebrate and share with others the amazing cultural and natural histories of the islands which make up Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuges! This has been quite the exciting and rewarding experience, and I'll raise a glass to each of you for following along with FOPPI and our partnership. Thank you, sincerely.

—Joel Vos, Refuge Manager, Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge



Joel present FOPPI Board President, Mary Beth, with USFWS Volunteer of the Year award at last year's annual meeting.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead

Wisconsin Marine Historical Society (wmhs.org)
SOUNDINGS, Vol. 10, no. 2 Winter 1970-71
A GLEAM ACROSS THE WAVE

(Continued from the FOPPI Forum Winter 2024 issue.)

It was always a day of excitement at the lighthouse when the Inspector came. Some morning one of the children would come running into the house calling out "Pa! Ma! The Inspector's coming. I can see the boat away off that way," (pointing). Pa would look through the telescope to verify the youngster's announcement, although the *Dahlia* was familiar to all of them. In addition she was a steamboat that was almost smokeless. When Pa had satisfied himself that it was the *Dahlia*, he invariably remarked that if the Inspector had only waited another week, he would have been more ready for him. Ma hastily looked over her little brood; a wash cloth here, a hairbrush there, and a clean blouse for that one, a fresh apron for herself. She and big sister then made a tour of the house to see that the beds were neatly made, extra shoes lined up in a row with the toes out, all clothes hung up as they should be, and a general order of neatness prevailing. The Inspector looked into all of the corners. Pa and the assistants put the finishing touches on their chores and then donned their formal uniforms and caps.



The *Dahlia*. Photo courtesy of the Great Lakes Marine Collection of the Milwaukee Public Library and Wisconsin Marine Historical Society.

The children stood watching the lighthouse tender coming toward the island. At a certain distance offshore the engines stopped and the anchor was dropped, the chain rattling as it rushed through the iron-plated hole in the bow. They could see

the white-uniformed men as they went about their various duties on the deck. The lifeboat was swung out on the davits and lowered into the water, and the stairway was let down. The sailors came down the stairs, got into the boat and each took his place at an oar. When the Inspector started down the stairs, the oars raised precisely together, and were kept up until he had seated himself, when they came down as one oar, and the men rowed to the dock where Pa and his assistants stood at attention. The boat was fastened, the oars were again raised, and the Inspector stepped onto the dock. All was solemnity and formality until salutes had been exchanged. Then the Inspector smiled and shook hands with Martin and the assistants and everyone relaxed.

The inspections were thorough, and perhaps a suggestion was made here and there, but by and large the Inspector seemed satisfied and friendly, and his departure was marked with mutual good-feeling. The same procedure was followed when he left as when he arrived. Pa and the assistants stood at attention on the dock, again they all saluted, the sailors raised their oars, the Inspector got into the boat, the oars came down, and he was rowed back to the *Dahlia*. "Well," said Pa, "I guess we passed inspection all right this time, but if he had only waited another week I would have ..." At this point he was interrupted by Ma, who remarked, "Yes, yes, Martin, we know; you always say that."

Another day of pleasant excitement for all was the arrival of the *Dahlia* with the supplies for the operation of the station. The Lighthouse Department at that time had a traveling library for the benefit of the keepers and their families at the more remote and isolated stations. The books were in a little wooden bookcase, with a handle on top and two hinged doors that could be hooked together. There was quite a variety of choice. The poets and classic writers were well represented. Fiction, history, biography, and tales of adventure were there also, and a generous number of children's books. These traveling libraries were distributed by the *Dahlia* as she made her supply trips and could be exchanged for another the next time she came.

They were halcyon days, those long ago untroubled summer days on Pilot Island in the early 1890s. It was the time for visiting back and forth between the folks on Washington Island and

the family on Pilot. Big Sister Agnes often had her friends come out, and the girls slept crosswise in the bed so that they could all be together. Friends and relatives alike were heartily welcomed and enjoyed, and the hospitality returned whenever the occasion presented itself.

To one who watches the progress of the sun by day and the moon and stars by night, comes an understanding of why the poet called them “swift seasons.” Martin Knudsen, through a careful study of his almanac, had become familiar with some of the planets, stars, and constellations, and as he took his turn on watch at night, he noted the orderly progression of the heavenly bodies. Even the pleasantest of summers could not stop the celestial clock, and when September arrived, Martin felt that he must take advantage of the first calm day to get the family and livestock over to Washington Island. The three older children would be going to school and would need their mother’s care. Martin and his assistants would stay on Pilot Island, keeping the light burning and lending a helping hand to storm-tossed sailors, until the close of the navigation season.

For several winters, and until their own home was built on the farm they had purchased from Theresa’s brother, the Knudsens either stayed with relatives or rented a house. When their own home was built, the two older children sometimes took charge, and Ma and the little sister who was still too young to go to school could stay with Pa at the lighthouse until time to close it for the winter. When the navigation season was officially over, Pa put everything at the station in shipshape order, locked up the buildings, and the family was reunited on Washington Island.

Winter was the social season on Washington Island. The farmers and fishermen were just marking time, and there was plenty of energy to be spent in having a good time. There were sleigh-ride parties, candy-pulls, singing schools, church sociables, and dances.

Near the intersection of what are now known as Town Line and Main Roads, there stood in the 1890s an oblong log building called the “Powder Horn.” It was the community center of its day; there the islanders gathered for many of their good times. For those who were on culture bent a literary society was organized. It fostered the art of debating and public speaking. The Knudsen children always giggled over the memory of one of

the debates; “Resolved, that the cow is more useful than the horse.” Another remembered debate, embodying something of the abstract and introspective was “Resolved that Hope gives greater consolation than Memory.”

Sometimes the literary society went dramatic and put on an amateur play. Bo Anderson was one of the island playwrights.

Public dances were held at times in Joe Cornell’s big barn up the hill on the west side of Washington Harbor. Theresa Koyen’s brother, August, was one of those who “fiddled” and “called off” for the popular square dances. There were no saloons on the island, but sometimes a gay prankster would smuggle in a jug of whiskey. Those who imbibed were given the cold shoulder by the ladies and were not taken back in favor until they had duly repented and promised never to let it happen again. Mrs. Cornell always served hot coffee and lunch at midnight, a very welcome collation indeed before setting out on a long, cold walk home.

The social season reached its peak during the Christmas holidays. The women were busy for weeks making cakes and cookies and Christmas bread, and preparing the traditional meats which would be served to guests and family as special Christmas delicacies.

Before the Christmas vacation there was a special program at the school, to which every one was invited; and on Christmas Eve the church had an entertainment at which every child received from Santa Claus in person a tarleton sack of candies and nuts. It was not customary among the islanders, with their Scandinavian traditions, for the children to hang up their stocking, but the Christmas season was one of many out of the ordinary treats and goodies, and there were useful presents for all.

When the Christmas excitement had subsided and the new year was several weeks old, Martin would begin to feel a vague restlessness stirring within himself. It seemed to take the shape eventually of his wanting to see how things were out at the lighthouse. Theresa knew that sooner or later Martin would burst forth with: “Pack me up a lunch, Ma. I’m going to walk out and see how things are at Pilot.” In the dead of winter, with the ice solidly frozen, it was safe enough, and there was no cause for worry; but it sometimes

happened that at the first signs of a thaw, and the first slight breaking up of the ice, Martin would develop an irresistible urge to borrow a boat and make another visit out to Pilot. On a trip of this sort he would always take someone with him. They would row the boat across what open water there might happen to be but would push it up onto any fields or cakes of ice that barred their progress, and draw it along until they reached the next stretch of open water. There was great danger in this, but it was the sort of adventure that Martin loved, and his guardian angel seemed to be always close at his side.

The opening of the navigation season in the spring depended upon how soon the ice broke up in the Great Lakes sufficiently to allow the boats to move with safety. Martin and his assistants sometimes spent several weeks on Pilot Island in the spring, as they did in the fall, doing their own cooking and looking after their own comfort. But sooner or later the family and Nellie, the cow, with her sailing companions, dog, cat, and chickens were once more established on Pilot Island, with another delightful summer in prospect.

The End.



The *Dahlia* was built in 1874 and later sold in 1910 to the Hill Steamboat Line, which converted her to the passenger *Flora M. Hill*. She foundered in 1912.

Photo courtesy of the Great Lakes Marine Collection of the Milwaukee Public Library and Wisconsin Marine Historical Society.

Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.

—John Quincy Adams

Springtime is a natural beginning to the cycle of the year. More daylight means more time we can spend outside, assessing what the winter has done and preparing for the busy seasons ahead. In the spring of 1899, lighthouse keeper Martin Knudsen returned to Plum Island to prepare the Keepers' Quarters and range lights for the opening of shipping and maritime traffic through Death's Door.



At that time, the rear range light tower was only two years old, but the harsh winters of Lake Michigan had already taken their toll. Knudsen noticed a crack in the tower's north support column, near the base. Lighthouse keepers were expected to be extremely self-reliant in those days and were responsible not only for the running of the range lights, but also for their maintenance and repair. Knudsen knew that it was up to him to fix the problem before it got worse and compromised the stability of the entire tower.

He reported the damage immediately and received permission to commence with the repairs. He drilled holes in the column, attached a copper plate, and wound two layers of copper wire over the plate to hold it in place and to prevent further cracking. It is a testament to his good work and even greater ingenuity that the crack never worsened, and his repair job remains in place today, protecting the tower where he served.

In our work to restore and maintain the historic structures on Plum and Pilot Islands, we honor the courageous people who served and lived there. They cared, and they wanted their work to withstand the test of time. Your donation to FOPPI will show you care too!

The Plum Folklore of Trees by Mary Beth Volmer

Have you ever heard someone say “knock on wood” when they were warding off bad luck? I said that to my grandson after I had fixed the zipper on his jacket, and I was met with a stare of confusion. I tried to explain the magic of knocking on wood, but he wasn’t buying it, so I did what any modern grandparent does, I Googled it. I learned that “knock on wood” dates back to ancient pagan times when people believed spirits lived in trees, and touching or knocking on the tree would protect them from bad luck. In Irish folklore, touching trees was a way to thank the leprechauns for bringing good luck. But when I told my grandson that I was knocking on wood so his zipper wouldn’t get caught again, he shook his head and walked away.

Although my explanation of “knock on wood” held little interest for my grandson, I learned that the folklore of trees is deep and rather fascinating! Here are some of the mystical properties of trees on Plum Island:

Apple: To ensure happiness in your relationship, cut an apple in half and share it with your loved one.

Ash: When burned, ash wards off evil spirits.

Beech: No harm could happen to a traveler who sought shelter under the branches of a beech tree.

Birch: When burned, it aids concentration and uplifts the spirit.

Broomsticks were often made of birch to brush away evil spirits.

Cedar: Associated with prayer, healing, dreams and protection against disease.

Elm: It is believed that dreams reside inside elms. Travelers were told not to fall asleep under the elm because their dream would turn into an eternal dream, and they would never wake up.

Oak: The oak tree’s acorn is considered a symbol of immortality and to carry one will prevent illness and ensure a long life.

The next time that I’m walking the trails on Plum Island, I’ll be sure to pick up an oak tree’s acorn, brush up against a cedar tree, seek shelter under the beech tree but not fall asleep under the elm tree. And, depending on the company, I just might grab an apple.



Birch trees along the trail, Plum Island. Photo by Mary Beth Volmer.

Time spent amongst trees is never wasted time. — Katrina Mayer



Spring thaw, 2019, Plum Island.

Great Lakes Water Levels

The latest forecast from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) expects water levels on the Great Lakes to come down this summer, closer to average. Lake levels typically wane in the fall and winter and rise in the spring and summer, but lower snow totals and higher evaporation rates from record low ice levels will slow down this year’s swing.

According to the USACE’s February water level summary, Lake Michigan-Huron — counted together because the two lakes share a basin — is currently four inches above its long-term average for February.

Forecasts expect Michigan-Huron to be between 1 and 6 inches below last year’s lake levels. That would be roughly 32 inches below the record highs, and only 1 to 3 inches above the long-term average.

Lake Superior and Lake Ontario are expected to come in below long-term average levels this summer, while Lake Erie is expected to stay 6 to 13 inches above the long-term average.

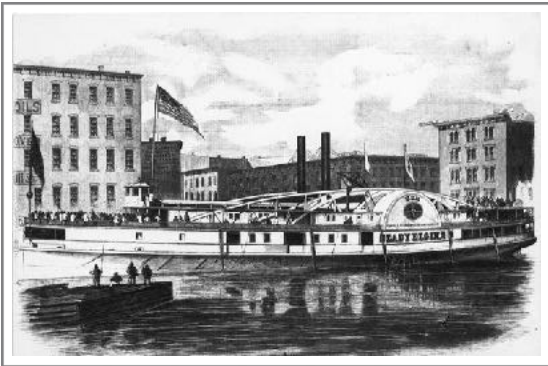


Low lake levels reveal fossils at Percy Johnson Park, Washington Island.

The Great Lakes saw a surge in the 2010s after setting a record low in 2013. The high levels led to widespread erosion, which meant less room on beaches. In some cases, it even meant houses or other parts of property lost to the lake. (Submitted by Jim Robinson. Photos by Nancy Hoefs Leisgang.)

The *Colonel Cook* by Mary Beth Volmer

Many ships stranded on the rocks and reefs that surround Plum Island, but none more infamous than the two-masted wooden schooner, *Colonel Cook*. The *Colonel Cook* was originally launched in 1855 as the *Augusta*. The *Augusta* was probably the most hated ship on the Great Lakes, as she was involved in a late night collision with the paddlewheel steamer *Lady Elgin* on September 7, 1860, which claimed the lives of over 300 people in what was called one of the greatest marine horrors on record.



Lithograph from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* of the sidewheel passenger *Lady Elgin* at her wharf in Chicago, 1860 (from a photograph taken on the day prior to her sinking). The sign on her side reads U.S.M., Chicago, Milwaukee, Lake Superior Line, *Lady Elgin*. Image and caption courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society.

The *Lady Elgin*, loaded with passengers, mail, cargo and livestock was heading to Milwaukee from Chicago when she was struck by the *Augusta*, which tore through the paddlewheel guards, the wheel, and into the cabin and hull. In the darkness, the *Augusta* lost sight of the *Lady Elgin* and, thinking that there wasn't much damage, continued on to Chicago where the captain reported the collision. She was absolved of any fault and continued her work on the lakes for another 34 years.

To learn more about the wreck of the *Lady Elgin*, check out these resources:

- Great Lakes Historical Society at nmgl.org/great-lakes-historical-society/
- *Lost on the Lady Elgin* by Valerie Van Heest

After an Act of Congress, the *Augusta* was repainted and renamed the *Colonel Cook* in Detroit, Michigan, on April 12, 1861, and quietly launched in the early morning hours of May 1. She often came into Milwaukee, but there grew a bitter feeling against the vessel. When learning that a mob was gathering to burn and scuttle her, the captain was given orders to ship out to the Atlantic. She continued to sail for 34 more years. In November (some sources cite October) 1880, the *Colonel Cook* stranded near Plum Island with a load of coal for Racine, Wisconsin. The tug *Welcome* pulled her off the reef and towed her to Racine to unload, then on to Milwaukee for repairs. She sank September 23, 1894, off Lorain, Ohio.

Four years after the loss of the *Lady Elgin*, Congress passed an act that went into effect September 1, 1864, setting forth rules for vessel encounters and establishing a right of way. The law required ships to post a lookout to watch for other vessels and gave rights of passage to less maneuverable schooners over more maneuverable steamers. It also required a captain to take evasive action to avoid a collision if he could not determine the intent of the other vessel. In addition to these rules, article five noted that "Sailing-ships under way or being towed shall carry the same lights as steamships under way, with the exception of the white masthead lights, which they shall never carry."

Due to public outcry over the need for better navigational aids and lifesaving services, a lighthouse was built in Evanston, fitted with the first second-order Fresnel lens on the Great Lakes.

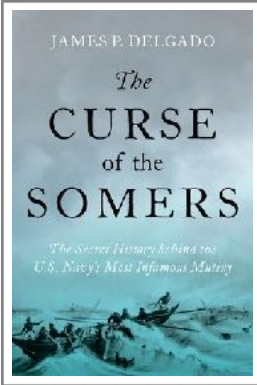
The Chicago Maritime Museum and the Bridgeport Art Center are co-hosting the Grand Opening of two new permanent exhibitions.

The exhibitions focus on the *Lady Elgin*, the deadliest disaster on the open waters of the Great Lakes, and on Captain Bill Pinkney, the first Black sailor to solo-circumnavigate the globe below the five southern capes.

When: Friday, May 17, 6-9pm

Where: Sculpture Garden space at the Bridgeport Art Center

To register: www.eventbrite.com/e/chicago-maritime-museum-debuts-two-new-exhibits



The Curse of the SOMERS
by James P. Delgado

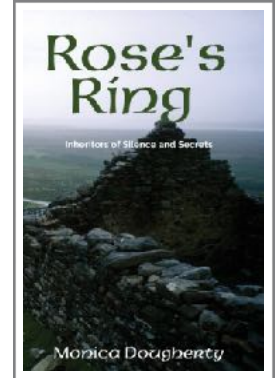
Sometimes in life we are met with a difficult decision, and regardless of the choice we make there are going to be some ramifications. We outweigh the plight and go with what feels right at that time. But what if we were wrong? What if we were right? How many others might be affected by this decision? That was the predicament that the SOMERS captain, Mackenzie, found himself in when a member of his crew was threatening mutiny and gaining support of the crew. The year was 1842, the United States was embroiled in political battles, the Civil War was looming, and humanity was in turmoil. The Navy was structured on old British ways, favoritism and nepotism was rampant, and discipline was an afterthought. Times were changing with an increased desire for religion and faith to be the means to solve social problems.

Captain Mackenzie was a fervent follower of this movement which fueled the way he ruled his ship and how he mentored the young boys that came in from the streets. Woe to those like Spencer, who didn't share in his beliefs. He made the decision, and it sent a shock wave through to the Navy. Was he right? The writer leaves the reader to pass his or her own judgment.

Have you read a wonderful book that you'd like to tell other FOPPI members about? We'd love to hear about it! Please send your book reviews to friendsofplumandpilot@gmail.com.

Rose's Ring
by Monica Dougherty

I've heard it said that we carry the history of our ancestors in our being. But what do we truly know about that history? How many secrets are lost to the past? Do clues to the mystery meet us where we are, when we're ready to hear them? Or does fate decide that we are ready to learn when the keeper of the story passes away? This, and more, is what Rose must consider when she finds the ring that was taken from the hand of a woman who had drowned in a tragic shipwreck. A ring that had been handed down through generations of happiness and sorrow, political and cultural change, and historical mistakes that continued to be made. A shipwreck that began a chain of events that changed maritime law, orphaned children, and may have decided an election. Rose, linked to it all, searches for understanding and to move forward to finish the story. She goes back to where it all started, walks in the steps of her ancestors, and feels her way through the generations of mystery until she finds solace in that which guides her heart.



The story encircles the worst disaster on the Great Lakes, weaving in the hopes, dreams, and history of those who perished in the shipwreck and the generational effects of lives gone before us.

The books reviewed here were recent picks of the month for the Wisconsin Marine Historical Society Book Club. The Club holds Zoom meetings on the third Wednesday of the month. For more information, email wmhs@wmhs.org.

Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours. — John Locke

Save the Date: FOPPI Annual Meeting and Picnic

Mark your calendar and plan to attend our annual meeting and picnic on Saturday, July 20, 2024—just one of the many benefits of being a member of Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands!

Weather permitting, the schedule for this fun event is as follows:*

- **9:00am:** Depart Gills Rock on the *M/V Yankee Clipper*. Please be at the dock at 8:45am.
- **9:45am:** Arrive at Plum Island.
- **10:30-11:30am:** Hold FOPPI business meeting and recognize USFWS volunteers.
- **11:30am:** Picnic lunch provided. Please bring your own nonalcoholic beverages.
- **12:30-2:30pm:** Hike the island, see the fabulous restoration work accomplished with our partnership with USFWS, shop our Boathouse Boutique, and catch up with fellow Friends, board members, and USFWS personnel.
- **2:30pm:** Depart Plum for Gills Rock.
- **3:15pm:** Arrive at Gills Rock.



The *M/V Yankee Clipper* bringing guests to Plum Island.

Attendees must pre-register to help the Committee plan food and transportation. Please register using SignUp Genius via our website www.plumandpilot.org by Friday, July 5, to reserve your spot. Guests are welcome! Space is limited to 60 passengers.



Longtime FOPPI member and volunteer Jude Kuenn preparing lunch for guests.

Transportation aboard the *M/V Yankee Clipper* is generously provided by an anonymous FOPPI member and supported by the fine folks at Voight's Marine Service.



Refuge Manager Joel Vos addressing Friends at last year's annual meeting and picnic.

A big thank you to FOPPI's donors and supporters for providing transportation and food for this annual event!

*If weather is inclement, the meeting and lunch will be held in Washington Island's Community Center Gymnasium. Transportation from Detroit Harbor will be generously provided by Washington Island Cherry Train.

This is the power of gathering: It inspires us, delightfully, to be more hopeful, more joyful, more thoughtful: in a word, more alive. —Alice Waters

Plum Island is a Leave No Trace site. To learn how you can leave no trace, visit the following websites:

- www.fws.gov/project/leave-no-trace-principles
- lnt.org/why/7-principles/

To further your knowledge of how to protect our planet, enroll in the free **Leave No Trace 101** online course at learn.lnt.org/courses/101.

Events / Volunteering / Supporting FOPPI

Volunteer with FOPPI's Official Partner: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

For those interested in becoming a volunteer with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) at the Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge, USFWS staff and FOPPI Board President Mary Beth will host quarterly virtual orientations.

You will learn about the interesting beginnings and background of the USFWS, the type of work the USFWS does on the Refuge, and how you can get involved with biological research, buildings and grounds maintenance, historic preservation projects, and acting as an interpretive guide for the unique nature and history of the Refuge. After this introduction to the volunteer process and opportunities to work with the USFWS, you can apply for available volunteer positions! To volunteer with the USFWS, you must attend an orientation annually and complete a Volunteer Service Application (OF-301) and Volunteer Service Agreement (OF-301a) form.

Each virtual orientation is from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. on the following dates:

- Saturday, June 15, 2024
- Saturday, September 7, 2024
- Saturday, December 14, 2024

Visit www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E49A9AA2CAAFBC07-47417301-2024 to sign up for a session!

Artsy? Creative? *Ideas* Person? We want YOU!

Join us in promoting our fabulous organization! We are looking for a volunteer (or volunteers!) to help us design our FOPPI merchandise. You'll be working with our awesome Merchandise Team as new items are added to the FOPPI store. Merchandise sales help us raise funds to support our mission to partner with USFWS in the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and contemporary use of the lighthouses, and other historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands, and to conserve and protect the wildlife.

Any level of experience (amateur or professional) is welcome as we plan our new merchandise! Visit the FOPPI online store at www.plumandpilot.org/store.html to view the current product line. Please reach out to us at friendsofplumandpilot@gmail.com if you are interested.

Help Wanted: Plant Lovers!

FOPPI's 2024 native plant sale will be held on Saturday, August 17, 10:00am - 2:00pm, at Stone Silo Prairie Gardens in De Pere, WI.

Volunteers are needed to help with this event. Native plant knowledge is helpful but not necessary—the folks at Stone Silo are there to help guide customers to find the perfect plants. Our duties include the setting up of the FOPPI information booth, welcoming guests, ringing up purchases, helping carry plants to vehicles, and sharing our passion for FOPPI's mission!



Enjoy the day on the beautiful grounds of Stone Silo Gardens! This event has been a great opportunity for FOPPI to raise funds and to share our story. Contact Sally Dery at saderyrdh@gmail.com to volunteer.

More Events and Opportunities

Visit www.plumandpilot.org/events-work-days to learn about more fun events and opportunities supported and offered by FOPPI, including the following:

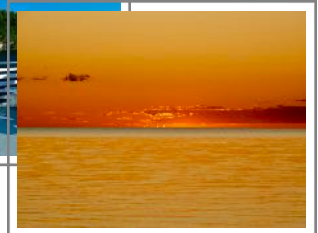
- The Door County Festival of Nature coordinated by The Ridges Sanctuary
- Photography Workshop with Door County photographer Dave Heilman
- Door County Maritime Museum Lighthouse Festivals
- Door County Classic and Wooden Boat Show

Events / Volunteering / Supporting FOPPI

Join us aboard the *Island Clipper* out of Gills Rock for our Annual FOPPI Sunset Cruise on Friday, August 2! (Rain date: Sunday, August 4.) Enjoy a tour through Death's Door with beautiful views of Plum and Pilot Islands and the awesome sounds of saxophonist Eric Schroeder! Hors d'oeuvres and non-alcoholic beverages will be served, and adult beverages will be available for sale on board. Bring your family and friends and join us for a beautiful Door County sunset!

- **Who:** The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (FOPPI), a non-profit organization partnering with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- **What:** A 2.5-hour sunset cruise around Plum and Pilot Islands in Door County's famous Death's Door passage for 75 folks.
- **When:** Friday, August 2. (Rain date: Sunday, August 4.) Departure on the *Island Clipper* from Charlie's Smokehouse Marina, Gills Rock. Please arrive by 5:30pm for 6:00pm departure.
- **Why:** To support the continued and future preservation of the lighthouses, Duluth style life-saving station, Plum's fog signal building, and docks for future generations.

Purchase your cruise tickets today at www.plumandpilot.org. Your support is appreciated!



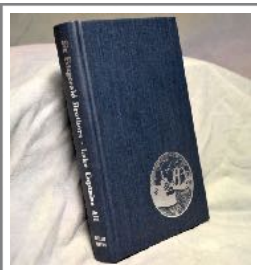
Looking for a unique anniversary, birthday, or graduation gift?

Look no further: Cruises aboard *M/V The Shoreline*

A gift card for a Death's Door cruise on *The Shoreline*, which includes a stop on Plum Island and a close-up water view of remote Pilot Island, is sure to make some waves—and some special memories! Numerous private tour options are also available: Visit Rock Island State Park and Fayette Historic State Park, or cruise by the Poverty Island and St. Martin Island lighthouses. All profits generated from the trips will be put into the continued restoration and preservation of the historic maritime structures found on Plum and Pilot Islands. Visit fareharbor.com/embeds/book/plumandpilot/items/ to buy the gift that will be remembered.



View of Plum Island in the distance from the deck of *The Shoreline*. Photo by Nancy Hoefs Leisgang.



If a cruise is not your speed...

Click over to our store at www.plumandpilot.org/store to find a variety of other fun FOPPI gifts for friends and family!

- Caps and beanies
- Tee shirts and hoodies
- Plum Island prints and cards
- And so much more, including wine and pint glasses, mugs, and even books!



Love cannot remain by itself—it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action and that action is service. —Mother Theresa

Volunteering / Supporting FOPPI

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands welcomes these new members:

- ✦ Laura, Daniel, Cassandra, and Joanna Bond, Mount Pleasant, WI
- ✦ Jack Grundmeier, Green Bay, WI
- ✦ Jamie Palmer Family - Sturgeon Bay, WI

Thank you for your support!

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc. (FOPPI) was established in 2007 to preserve the unique island ecosystems and foster partnerships to preserve their heritage for future generations.

Your membership due and charitable gifts help to restore and preserve the historical maritime structures on these island and support education in the areas of conservation, natural history, and environmental protection.

Members who receive our quarterly newsletter, *FOPPI Forum*, are invited to attend the annual meeting and to join us seasonal cleanup, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and light repair work.

Whatever your interest, there are events and projects that will benefit from your talent and support! Visit www.plumandpilot.org/foppi-volunteer to learn more.

To view FOPPI's financial records, scan the QR code below.



Follow FOPPI on social media!
Download our audio tours at
www.plumandpilot.org/audio-tour.

President's Volunteer Service Award

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is excited to announce our association with the President's Volunteer Service Award. This program is administered by AmeriCorps and Points of Light. The President's Volunteer Service Award is an opportunity for FOPPI to recognize our most outstanding volunteers. This program is open to individuals of almost all ranges and provides Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Lifetime awards based on the service benchmarks outlined below.

Age Group	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Lifetime Achievement
Teens (age 11-15)	50-74 hours	75-99 hours	100+ hours	4,000+ hours
Young Adults (16-25)	100-174 hours	175-249 hours	250+ hours	4,000+ hours
Adults (age 26+)	100-249 hours	250-499 hours	500+ hours	4,000+ hours

Award winners receive the following:

- The official President's Volunteer Service Award pin, coin, or medallion.
 - A personalized certificate of achievement and letter signed by the President of the United States.
- Please go to www.presidentialserviceawards.gov for more information. As the certifying organization, FOPPI began this program retroactively on January 1, 2023. All volunteer hours must be submitted to the FOPPI Volunteer Coordinator, Jim Schwartz, at jrschwartz@new.rr.com.

Supporting FOPPI

FOPPI is an affiliate of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (wisconsinhistory.org), members of Washington Island Chamber of Commerce (washingtontisland.com), Door County Historical Society (doorcountyhistoricalsociety.org), U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association (uslife-savingservice.org), Door County Visitor Bureau (doorcounty.com), and a partner with Wisconsin Marine Historical Society (wmhs.org).

FOPPI thanks its distinguished community and business associates!



Heartfelt thanks goes to Jeff Heal of Washington Island for assisting with FOPPI's mail pickup!



Dwarf lake iris.

Thank you, Donors!

The work done on the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge is funded in part by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands. The projects and programs we have worked on would not be possible without your financial support. Your donations and inspiration help us to preserve and restore this important part of our heritage within the Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge. Our gratitude is great.

Laura Chappell
Sally A. Dery
Great Lakes Foundation (Grant)
Jack Grundmeier
Allan D. King
Deb Logerquist & Paul Schumacher
Lisa & Carson Mettel
PayPal Giving Fund
Thrivent
Twin Cities United Way
Mary Beth Volmer
Volunteers: Lambeau Field Cleanup

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.

—Coretta Scott King

Membership Form

The mission of the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is to partner with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and contemporary use of the historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands, and to conserve and protect wildlife resources, while providing opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation.

Mail to:

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands Inc.
PO Box 61
Washington Island WI 54246-0061



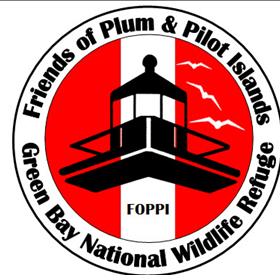
YES, the work of the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands DOES matter and here is my contribution to support their mission:
(Please indicate how you would like your donation used.)

- Environmental Education \$ _____
- Historic Preservation \$ _____
- "Float the Boat" Shoreline Donation \$ _____
- Special Events \$ _____
- Other Expenses as Needed \$ _____
- Gift Membership \$30 \$ _____
- TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ _____

The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is a 501c(3) Charitable Organization. Your gift is tax deductible as provided by law.

Please complete this section for a \$30.00 Gift Membership

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____
Your Name _____
Occasion _____



"Where History and Nature Meet at the Door!"

www.plumandpilot.org

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Name as I wish it to appear in your appreciation materials _____

Please do not list my name in your materials.

Do you have a connection to the islands? _____

Is it time to renew your membership?

Mailing label include membership expiration date above your name. If membership has expired, please renew using the form on page 15. Mail it along with your payment to: FOPPI, P.O. Box 61, Washington Island, WI 54246. If you receive the *Forum* electronically, watch for an email that tells you it's time to renew.



Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.
P.O. Box 61
Washington Island, WI 54245

Help Us Be Green!

To help save paper, printing, and postage expenses, please consider receiving your newsletter via email. Just contact Laura Chappell at coastieg1@yahoo.com.

Previous issues of the *Forum* are available on our website to download or read.



The mission of Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is to partner with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and contemporary use of the historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands, and to conserve and protect wildlife resources while providing opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation.

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.

President: Mary Beth Volmer, 2026
Vice President/*The Shoreline* Director:
Mike Repp, 2024
Treasurer: Kimberly Wells, 2026
Secretary: Karen Ellery, 2026

Board of Directors

Laura Chappell, 2026
Sally Dery, 2026
Chuck Scheckel, 2025
Jim Schwartz, 2025

Emeritus Directors

Mike Brodd	Scott Nelson
Lew Clark	Dan Olson
Amanda Danforth	Hoyt Purinton
Frank Forkert	John Sawyer
Matt Foss	Tim Sweet
Eric Greenfeldt	Gordon Vieth
Jude Kuenn	Patti Zarling

Volunteer Team Members

Environmental Education: Ginnie Harney
Fundraising: Karen Ellery*, Mike Repp, Chuck Scheckel, Jim Schwartz, Tim Sweet, Mary Beth Volmer
Governance: Open
Historic Preservation & Restoration: Jude Kuenn, Paul Kuenn, Chuck Scheckel*, Tim Sweet, Kimberly Wells
Marketing: Jake Heffernan*, Colleen Pilat
Membership: Laura Chappell*, Bob and Sue Griem, Cheryl Lenz
Merchandising: Sally Dery*, Patti Zarling
Newsletter: Sally Dery, Nancy Hoefs Leisgang*, Suzette Lopez, Jim Robinson, Mary Beth Volmer
Special Events: Sally Dery, Mike Repp, Mary Beth Volmer
The Shoreline: Sally Dery, Ginnie Harney, Todd Harris, Barb Jacobs, Kim Krueger, Nancy Hoefs Leisgang, Pete LeMere, Deb Meredith, Stiles Meredith, Colleen Pilat, Mike Repp*, Jim Robinson, Jim Schwartz, Jon Wall
Volunteer Coordinators: Sally Dery, Bob and Sue Griem, Jim Schwartz*
**Denotes team leader*