



# History of the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society

By Jeri-Baron Feltner, Founding Director Emeritus  
DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society  
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In his 1937 book, legendary longtime commissioner of the U.S. Lighthouse Service, George R. Putnam stated: "The building of the station at DeTour was the result of a conference I had at Detroit with marine representatives who were asking that a lightship be placed at the north end of Lake Huron, better to guide the immense Lake Superior traffic passing in and out of the St. Marys River. I proposed instead a lighthouse built on the submerged reef, close to the edge of the channel. This station was built and has proved most valuable to shipping; it is more reliable and less expensive to maintain than a lightship would have been. One of the members of the distinguished Stevenson family of Scottish engineers, who for a number of generations have built the remarkable light towers of that wild coast, made a tour of the lighthouse systems of the United States and Canada a few years ago. When I visited the DeTour Reef Lighthouse a year later, I ran across this entry which Alan Stevenson had made in the station log: 'Delighted to visit the most up to date lighthouse I have ever seen.' I was told, however, that he added orally, 'But oh, how extravagant!' I expect he was referring to the bathtub and electric lights provided for the keepers' quarters!"

After ten years of dedicated volunteer effort and support from the general public and government agencies, the DeTour Reef Lighthouse received major restoration in 2004 with over one million dollars in grant funds obtained by the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society (DRLPS) to be enjoyed for generations to come. Guided public tours and overnight keeper programs have been offered at the lighthouse since 2005. Mr. Putnam would be proud.

## BUILDING THE SOCIETY

Well-known lighthouse preservationist **Dick Moehl** (President of the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association) was made aware of the U.S. Coast Guard's excessing of the DeTour Reef Light. In August 1997, he contacted **Bob Jones** and **Jim Charles** of DeTour Village and they (along with Dick's wife Margaret, son Mike and a Coast Guard Sault Ste Marie crew) took a boat ride out to the lighthouse to investigate its condition. Dick and Bob inspired some people from the community to come together for a common cause to save the lighthouse; and, in January 1998, the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society was formed as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization to restore and preserve the lighthouse.

Founding members of the Board of Directors included **Bob Jones** (President), **Jim Charles** (Vice-President), **Jeri Baron Feltner** (Secretary), **Dick Moehl**, and **Barb Snider** (Treasurer). Other past board members included **Bob DenBoer**, **Bruce Glupker**, and **Sherry Vermeulen**. Sadly, our founding President Bob Jones passed away in 2002, and our founding Vice-President Jim Charles passed away in 2007. Bob and Jim were passionate about preserving the lighthouse and dedicated themselves to this work and we'll keep the Light on for these two good men.

Current members of the Board of Directors (as of April 2008) are **Denny Bailey** (1998); **Dave Bardsley** (2002) Vice-President, Keeper Program Chair (Past-President 2004-2006); **Chuck Feltner** (1998) Treasurer, Chief Historian, (Past-President 2001-2004, Past Restoration Chair, 2000-2006); **Jeri-Baron Feltner** (1998) Founding Director Emeritus (Founding Secretary 1998-2004); **Ann-Method Green** (2006) Public Relations Chair; **Don Gries** (2007) Preservation Chair; **Clif Haley** (2000) Grants Chair, Legal Advisor, Stars Co-Chair; **Glenn Lahti** (2004) Secretary; **Dick Moehl** (1998) Founding Director Emeritus; **Russ Norris** (2004) President, Youth Program Chair; **Jim Woodward** (1998) Honorary Director; and **Sandy Wytiaz** (2007) Memorabilia Co-Chair.

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Other committee chairpersons and key team members include **Paula Bardsley** (2002) Membership Chair and Database Manager; **Joyce Buckley** (2005) Stars Co-Chair; **John & Sunny Covell** (1998) Tour Program Co-Chairs 2008; **Dawn Gibbons** (2003) Accountant; **Mike Spears** (1998) Special Grant Projects; Matt Sawyer (2005) Webmaster; **Sheila Sawyer** (2005) Newsletter Editor; **Anne Stafford** (1998) River Cruise Chair 2005; and **Dotty Witten** (2001) Memorabilia Co-Chair, Annual Ornament.

Retired team members include **Sis Bailey** (Stars 1999-2000); **Candis Collick** (Newsletter Editor 2005-2007); **Barb Gusfa** (Memorabilia 1998-2000), **Sheryl LaMotte** (Webmaster 2003-2007), **Carol Melvin** (Finance 1998-2000), **Mary Rogers** (Membership 1998-2007), **Anne Westlund** (Special Projects 2000-2001).

The success of the DRLPS is based on the unfailing dedication and determination of the volunteers and the loyal support of the constituency, the State of Michigan, and the Federal government. The people have persevered and are preserving the lighthouse for all to enjoy.

## **PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY**

The purpose of the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society (DRLPS) is to establish, support and promote efforts in the preservation and restoration of the DeTour Reef Light; to achieve the safe keeping of the building, artifacts and records; to educate and inform the public on lighthouse and regional maritime history; to enhance public awareness of the value this lighthouse and its keepers brought to our nation's development; to make the DeTour Reef Light a premier tourist attraction in Michigan's Upper Peninsula as the best example of a faithfully restored offshore lighthouse in the Nation; to provide the public safe access to the lighthouse; to raise awareness about the importance of volunteers in maintaining and preserving the DeTour Reef Light and the DRLPS for all present and future generations.

## **PUTTING TOGETHER THE ORGANIZATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE**

Starting with developing a team of dedicated, hard working volunteers from the two local communities, reams of paperwork had to be prepared to develop our successful organization. This included: *Articles of Incorporation* (for the State of Michigan which state our intended purpose); *Bylaws* (rules governing the internal affairs of the organization); obtained an *EIN* (Employer Identification Number from the IRS required for all corporations); we applied for nonprofit tax-exempt status from the IRS (*501c3 application*) in January 1998 which was approved on April 1998; developed a logo, stationery, brochure, newsletter (*Passages*), memorabilia, and a website. A computerized database was developed to keep track of members, donors, and marketing sources. Regular monthly Board Meetings were held.

We did persistent PR with regular press releases distributed to publications around the country. Slide presentations were given to local and state-wide groups. Notices and sign-up sheets were placed in local communities. A "Wish List" was developed and published and many businesses and individuals donated items for use at the lighthouse and for auction fundraisers. We attended local and state functions to promote the DRLPS. Membership developed steadily with 424 members garnered at the end of our first year in 1998, with over 1,000 people nationwide from 25 states who have signed up since 1998 to preserve the lighthouse. Membership renewals are requested annually. DRLPS utilizes a double-entry accrual based financial system using Quick Books software producing monthly reports to the Directors to keep them up-to-date on our financial position and to provide the proper reporting of IRS tax forms.

DRLPS has established a very strong and widely-recognized and respected membership-based volunteer preservation organization along with a strong leadership team and active talented volunteers; and as a consequence, was recognized by the State as the "poster child" of Michigan lighthouse volunteer preservation groups. The *Governor's Award for Historic Preservation* presented to DRLPS in 2005 states: "*Presented to the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society for the determination, cooperative spirit, and perseverance of its members, who took up the challenge of rehabilitating one of Michigan's picturesque, yet remote, off-shore lighthouses and put it back into service as a tourism destination.*" DRLPS is proud!

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## FUNDING

Since 1998, the DRLPS has taken a very active approach to developing and maintaining a dedicated membership from around the country with annual dues and annual donations from a core group of individuals supporting much of the cost of operating the Society. Additionally, money has been raised from several annual successful fundraising and social events which include: benefit dinners, auctions, boat cruise to the lighthouse and up the St. Marys River and through the Soo Locks, an elegant *Evening Under the Stars* dinner on Drummond Island, major raffles (a 2000 Freighter Ride Raffle raised over \$12,000 in 2005, and \$15,000 from a raffle of a handcrafted Peapod boat raised \$7,000 in 1999), and memorabilia logo items that are sold on a regular basis at several DRLPS functions, on the lighthouse, and local businesses as well as on our website DRLPS.com.

Matching grant funds were generously donated by the Plym Foundation (\$15,000 in 2000), Rob Block (Philo-B-Leonard boat donation value of \$40,000 in 2000), and Bruce Glupker of DeTour Passage Marina (\$10,000 value of usage of dock slip). The lighthouse tours and overnight keeper programs have become a major source of funding.

We have raised over \$150,000 from all of all these sources since 1998. DRLPS has established an endowment for assuring the availability of funds for maintenance of the lighthouse into perpetuity. The most substantial source of funds for restoration has come from grants.

## GRANTS AWARDED

Since its inception in January 1998, the DRLPS has applied for and received several grants that have helped the DRLPS succeed in its goal to restore the lighthouse and to share the history of the lighthouse with the people. Total historical and restoration grants awarded from state, federal and private agencies to the DRLPS to date total \$1,087,287 matched by \$124,463 in donated (in-kind service) labor, and \$61,786 in cash from fundraising efforts.

Our major exterior and interior restoration grants were state funds from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality – Clean Michigan Incentive (MDEQ-CMI) for \$705,000, and federal funds from the Michigan Department of Transportation – Transportation Equity Act (MDOT-TEA21) \$241,500. These grants required substantial matching share of funds (MDEQ-CMI \$235,000 and MDOT-TEA21 \$80,500), and we were very fortunate as it was determined that federal grants could be used to match state funds and visa-versa. The MDOT-TEA21 grant funded the majority of the cost of the exterior restoration and providing essential program resources that were required to obtain the MDEQ-CMI grant that funded the architectural and engineering services, a portion of the exterior restoration and the majority amount of the costs for the interior restoration. The DRLPS volunteer grant team has included Dave Bardsley, Chuck Feltner, Jeri Feltner, Don Gries, and Clif Haley.

**Following is a chronological listing of the grant funds DRLPS has received to date:**

1. *Michigan Coastal Management Program* (Department of Environmental Quality) historical grant of \$10,000 (matched by \$10,000 in volunteer services) was submitted by Jeri-Baron Feltner and awarded in 1999 to produce an educational historical display, seven oral history videos with past keepers, and a builder of the lighthouse – Alfred Lemieux, Floyd Colvin, Bob Soldenski, Jim Williams, Glen Shaw, Ron Freels, Jim Woodward (from the USCG Cleveland), and a full color DRLPS brochure. This grant was completed in 2000 by Chuck & Jeri Feltner and Mike Spears with historical documents from Jim Woodward. The project included a trip to the National Archives in Washington DC to do research on the DeTour Point Light and the DeTour Reef Light by Chuck & Jeri Feltner. Architectural and engineering drawings of the lighthouse were obtained from Jim Woodward of the USCG Cleveland, the USCG Sault Ste Marie, and the National Archives. Chuck Feltner studied each of the 87 drawings and prepared a spreadsheet with annotated notes, and this document became an important attachment to our grant applications. The display is currently located at the Drummond Island Historical Museum and includes 120 interpretive panels of pictures and drawings describing the history of the *Lighthouses of DeTour Passage*. Chuck Feltner and Jeri-Baron Feltner were project managers.

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2. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* (State Historic Preservation Office) restoration grant of \$20,000 (matched by \$10,000 in DRLPS cash and \$10,000 in volunteer services) to restore a deck crane on the lighthouse that was submitted by Jeri-Baron Feltner and completed in August 2001 by L&B Builders of Drummond Island. Chuck Feltner was project director. Large pieces of the original crane and the builder's plate were discovered underwater near the lighthouse by divers Mike Spears, Chris Pemberton, Garey Eilertson, and Dock Borth and were used in the construction of the new crane. While salvaging the crane parts, the divers also made an engineering video of the underwater pier deck which documents the stability of the lighthouse foundation. DeTour High School students assisted in computer design drawings of the crane along with their teachers Brian Nettleton and Russ Norris.
  3. *National Trust for Historic Preservation* grant of \$1,700 (matched by DRLPS cash of \$1,700) for an existing conditions video was submitted by Jeri-Baron Feltner and awarded in 2001 produced by Ric Mixer of Airworthy Productions with Chuck Feltner as grant coordinator and Anne Westlund of DRLPS as project assistant.
  4. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* restoration grant of \$20,000 (matched by \$10,000 in DRLPS cash) for window restoration was submitted by Chuck Feltner and awarded in 2001 and completed in the fall of 2003. Chuck Feltner was project manager.
  5. *Michigan Department of Environmental Quality - Clean Michigan Initiative* (MDEQ-CMI) restoration grant of \$705,000 (matched by \$235,000 with DRLPS cash, donated property, and other grant funds) for lighthouse restoration and visitor access development was submitted by Clif Haley & Jeri-Baron Feltner (with input from Chuck Feltner on the restoration plan, budget, and schedule) and awarded in 2001 and completed in 2004. As part of the local match, DRLPS member Rob Bloch donated DeTour Village area's historic tug *Philo B Leonard* valued at \$40,000, and Bruce Glupker donated use of a boat dock slip at the DeTour Marina valued at \$10,000. This grant is conducted in partnership with the Drummond Island Township and was used mainly for interior restoration and engineering services. Chuck Feltner was grant coordinator and project manager with Dave Bardsley assisting.
  6. *Michigan Department of Transportation – Transportation Equity Act* (TEA21) 2002 restoration grant funding of \$241,500 (matched by \$80,500 of DRLPS cash and other grant funds) submitted by Clif Haley and Jeri-Baron Feltner (with input from Chuck Feltner on the restoration plan, budget, and schedule) was awarded in 2001 and completed in 2004. This grant is conducted in partnership with the Village of DeTour and was used mainly for exterior restoration. Chuck Feltner was grant coordinator and project manager with Dave Bardsley assisting.
  7. *Plym Foundation* cash award of \$15,000 in 2000 in memory of Glen Bailey for restoration used as part of the MDEQ-CMI grant match.
  8. *Michigan Coastal Management Program* historical grant of \$8,500 (matched by \$8,500 in volunteer services) was awarded in October 2001 and completed in 2003 to reproduce lighthouse logbooks, and correspondence from the National Archives, and transcribe previously recorded oral history videos. The grant was coordinated and managed by Jeri Feltner with Chuck Feltner and Chris Pemberton. DeTour High School student volunteers transcribed the oral history video tapes and built two bookcases to house the logbooks at the DeTour Village Public Library.
  9. *Michigan Coastal Management Program* historical grant of \$10,000 (matched by \$10,000 in volunteer services) was submitted by Jeri Feltner and awarded in March 2003 to produce a video of the DeTour Reef Light being produced by Ric Mixer of Airworthy Productions with Dave Bardsley as project manager. An additional \$5,000 (matched by \$5,000 in volunteer services) was obtained for this grant in 2004. The video includes historical and restoration documentation along with oral history interviews of past lighthouse keepers.
  10. *Michigan Coastal Management Program* historical grant of \$9,000 (matched by \$9,000 in volunteer services) was submitted by Jeri Feltner and awarded in October 2003 to create a five module collection of historical material entitled "Lighthouses of DeTour Passage: A Collection of Historical Material." This project included logbooks, government correspondence, architectural and engineering drawings, historical

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photographs and oral history videos of interviews with former keepers. Chuck Feltner was grant coordinator and project manager with Mike Spears and Chris Pemberton assisting.

11. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* (State Historic Preservation Office) grant, submitted by Chuck Feltner, and awarded April 2004 for lighthouse cabinetry and molding rehabilitation with \$32,387 MLAP funds and a 50% DRLPS match of \$16,193. Project began June 1, 2004 and ended September 30, 2005. Steel & Sons of DeTour Village was the contractor. Chuck Feltner was the grant coordinator and project manager.
12. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* (State Historic Preservation Office) grant, submitted by Chuck Feltner, was awarded February 2005 for lighthouse deck skylight installation with \$4,200 MLAP funds and a DRLPS match of \$2,100. Pro-Builders (Gerald Ellis) of Drummond Island was the contractor. Chuck Feltner was grant coordinator and project manager.
13. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* (State Historic Preservation Office) grant awarded March 2007 for fabrication and installation of the second deck crane for \$30,000 which requires DRLPS matching funds of \$15,000. The grant application was prepared and submitted by Clif Haley with assistance from Chuck Feltner. Don Gries is the project manager with assistance from Dave Bardsley.
14. *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program* (State Historic Preservation Office) grant, submitted by Don Gries, was awarded March 2008 for installation of the original F-2-T diaphone, replication of air storage tanks and piping, fabrication of non-functional diaphone, and moisture control surrounding amplifier cones. MLAP funds of \$20,000 matched by DRLPS funds of \$10,000. Don Gries is the project manager with assistance from Chuck Feltner.

The grant funding process has been a challenging, yet exciting and rewarding effort of applications, negotiations and operations. The grant agencies have been a pleasure to work with, and the DRLPS is very grateful for the funding received. There were some learning curve challenges encountered with our initial involvement with MDOT for DRLPS restoration chairman Chuck Feltner involving lots of red tape with the contract approval process. DRLPS ended up getting state government representatives and lawyers involved in helping us solve the problem.

Because we are restoring an offshore lighthouse, weather, waves and winter ice severely limit our working season, and time was of the essence in getting the contract approved and restoration completed before the grant deadline. It took over four months of effort (and legal expense) to negotiate a legal and financial agreement that DeTour Village (the official applicant) and MDOT, as well as the DRLPS Board of Directors, would find acceptable. It was a learning process for both the DRLPS and the government agency. Hopefully the DRLPS experience helped pave the way for other lighthouse preservation organizations with their grant agency encounters. DRLPS has developed an excellent working relationship with the grant agencies including SHPO's Brian Conway, Bryan Lijewski, and Denise Sachau; Jacqueline Shinn of MDOT, and Jami Harrington (formerly of MDEQ-CMI, and their staffs.

Note that the DRLPS was not the official recipient of either the MDEQ-CMI grant or the MDOT-TEA21 grant. Both grants required that a local government agency be the official applicant and recipient of the grant. To meet this requirement, DRLPS got Drummond Island Township and DeTour Village (the two local communities adjacent to the lighthouse) to be the official "local agencies" for the MDEQ-CMI and TEA grants, respectively, with DRLPS preparing the applications and agreeing to carry out all of the work. An important element to the success of the restoration grant funding was the cooperation of the local governments as the sponsoring agencies for the grants.

The MDEQ-CMI and MDOT-TEA21 grant applications was acquired by Jeri-Baron Feltner and prepared by Clif Haley and Jeri in 2001. Chuck Feltner developed a detailed restoration plan, work schedule and budget for the applications. Engineering services contractor Ken Czapski of U.P. Engineers & Architects of Marquette, with help from Chuck Feltner and Dave Bardsley, assembled the restoration details and worked with state and federal officials to get the required approvals.

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## LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION

Crucial to the success of our restoration program was the obtaining of historical documents including photos and original architectural/engineering drawings, the preparation of an existing conditions report, and the formulation of a restoration plan, work schedule and detailed budget, and acquiring a twenty-year lease of the lighthouse from the U.S. Coast Guard in 1999.

DRLPS first restoration project was the manufacturing and installation of one of the lighthouse deck cranes utilizing an MLAP grant. Major lighthouse exterior and interior restoration work was accomplished with the MDEQ-CMI and MDOT-TEA21 grants and a second MLAP grant used for window restoration. For the major exterior and interior restoration of the lighthouse, DRLPS hired restoration project manager Ken Czapski of U.P. Engineers & Architects (UPEA) of Marquette in January 2002. Frank Mihm of Mihm Enterprises from Hamilton, Michigan, was selected as the general contractor in May 2003. DRLPS volunteers Chuck Feltner and Dave Bardsley were overseeing the project and have provided invaluable service to the restoration effort.

The first part of the major restoration effort was undertaken in mid-2002 on the preparation of Engineering drawings and a breakdown of the work processes. In 2003, exterior work began by setting up tons of scaffolding. The first thing that was done was repair of the roof on the lantern, along with scraping and painting the ventilator ball and dome. All the windows were removed from the lantern, the frames were cleaned and refinished, and new windows were installed. The exterior of the watch room walls were scraped and repainted along with the decking railing and ladder. A new flag pole was put in place, and a new smoke stack installed. All of the windows on the upper and lower towers were refurbished, repaired, repainted, and new glass was installed where necessary. The upper tower had all of the paint removed by hand scraping, and was then air blasted with walnut shells, primed and painted. The same thing is true of the lower tower. Portions of the new chain rail on the outer edges of the pier deck were also installed. Interior work included demolishing of some interior walls that needed replacement, along with cleaning and repainting of the inside walls of the upper tower which included the area outside of the cylinder tower that encases the staircase. At the end of 2003, DRLPS spent \$379,915 and the program was 38% complete. By September 2004, the remainder of the restoration work was completed. A final inspection was held for State and Federal government authorities on September 15, 2004, and the restoration project passed with flying colors!

The total amount spent on this single restoration project is \$1,068,703 all of which has come from grant money with the exception of \$51,200 which came from private funds raised by the DRLPS, and the value of donations of a boat from Rob Bloch (\$40,000) and usage of a boat slip from Bruce Glupker (\$10,000). Utilizing a Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP) Grant matched by DRLPS funds, construction and installation of cabinetry (Steel & Son of DeTour Village), fabrication and installation of metal trim molding (Mihm Enterprises), and installation of the deck lights (Pro Builders/Gerald Ellis of Drummond Island) have been completed.

Current restoration projects include restoration of the second deck crane, and getting the foghorn that was put back on the lighthouse blowing again (Project director is Don Gries).

Future projects that are not yet funded, include clean, patch and repair concrete pier vertical surfaces; interpretative displays and furnishings; safety signage; and installation of a video security system and "River Watch" web cam that will provide 24-hour viewing on the DRLPS web page of boat traffic passing the lighthouse; and development of an onshore viewing station.

## MAINTENANCE

Every spring since 2005 a group of volunteers called "Ladies of the Light" go out to the DeTour Reef Light for a weekend stay of camaraderie and cleaning to get the lighthouse ready for the season's tours and overnight keeper programs. Weekend keepers keep the place in ship shape throughout the summer. In the fall, the "Men of the Light" do required maintenance and shut down the lighthouse for the long winter's rest.

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With the extreme temperature changes in northern Lake Huron, a major maintenance issue is peeling paint for which a solution is being developed.

## **PUBLIC ACCESS**

Safe public access to the offshore DeTour Reef Light requires special ingenuity with a deck 20 feet above the water and significant wave action (both wind created and freighter wakes) against vertical sides. Transfer from a boat to the lighthouse requires agility and the strength to climb the 20-foot recessed ladder steps. Past keepers of the lighthouse have advised us that they did not climb the ladder, but remained aboard a 26-foot launch as it was lifted to and from the water and the deck boat cradle by the massive lighthouse cranes.

First ever public guided tours and overnight keeper programs were offered by DRLPS in July 2005. This proved to be a very popular and successful venture and these programs continue to be well-received. Dave Bardsley is the Chair of the Keeper Program, and John & Sunny Covell are Co-Chairs of the Tour program. Visitors to the historic lighthouse take a 10 minute charter boat ride from Drummond Island to the lighthouse where they climb a 20-foot vertical ladder to the pier deck. Each visitor is fitted with a full body safety harness while climbing the ladder to walk in the footsteps of the former lighthouse keepers. Tours last for about 2 hours, and the overnight keeper program is a two-night unique and enjoyable offshore experience not offered anywhere else on the Lakes, which includes magnificent views of scenery and freighters.

## **MAJOR DRLPS MILESTONES**

Several significant developments have evolved since 1998 that contributed to the success of the DeTour Reef Light. They include:

- In 1997, Dick Moehl, President of the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association, learns of U.S. Coast Guard's (USCG) excessing of the DeTour Reef Light and takes a trip on a USCG vessel to access the lighthouse conditions with his wife Margaret, son Mike, the USCG Sault Group, Bob Jones, and Jim Charles in August 1997. Right after that visit, Dick and Bob rally local citizens to form a society to save the lighthouse.
- Dick Moehl, Barb Snider and Jeri Feltner met at Weber's Restaurant in Ann Arbor on December 5, 1997 to discuss formation of a society to preserve the lighthouse. Dick brought along a heap of 501c3 application forms and instructions for Jeri to prepare.
- On January 4, 1998, the first official meeting of the Board of Directors of the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society was conducted in DeTour Village at the Fogcutter Restaurant with Dick Moehl, Bob Jones (President), Jim Charles (Vice-President), Barb Snider (Treasurer), and Jeri Baron Feltner (Secretary). Dedicated volunteers and members Chuck Feltner and Mary Rogers also attended.
- DRLPS nonprofit IRS tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status applied for (application prepared by Jeri-Baron Feltner) in January 1998 and approved in April 1998.
- DRLPS website established in May 1998 with Iceberg Computers via a connection with the websites of Drummond Island Tourist Association and the DeTour Village Chamber of Commerce. Jeri-Baron Feltner then contacted Dan Sirinne of the Woodmoor Resort who entered the DRLPS data into these websites. Mike Jamroziak, of the Resort, worked on the website in 2000-2001 and provided very creative substance. Jeri set up the domain name [www.DRLPS.com](http://www.DRLPS.com) with Network Solutions on December 13, 2000. Russ Norris and his talented students, including Jennie Dreves, set up many new features on the website. Sheryl LaMotte worked as webmaster 2002-2006 with help from Dave Bardsley. In 2006, Matt Sawyer volunteered to be webmaster and is working with Chuck Feltner, website content editor, on development. The first version of the new website was launched on March 30, 2008 and is constantly being revised.
- Historical documentation, architectural and engineering drawings, and photos acquired by Jeri & Chuck Feltner during 1998-2001 from various sources including local residents, a visit to the National Archives in Washington DC, the U.S. Coast Guard in Sault Ste Marie, and Jim Woodward of USCG-Cleveland.

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- A replica of the solid oak dining room table used at the lighthouse was handcrafted by Eddie McGregor of Oxford, Michigan, and donated to the DRLPS in 1998.
  - National recognition was received by the DRLPS in 1998 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in naming Michigan's historic lighthouses, exemplified by the DeTour Reef Light, to its 1998 *List of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places* (the first time a lighthouse was included on this prestigious annual list!). First Lady Hillary Clinton made the announcement on June 15, 1998.
  - A painting of the DeTour Reef Light by Leo Kushel appeared on the cover of the *Beacon* with an article on the DRLPS in the fall 1998 issue.
  - Previous lighthouse keepers and a person who built the lighthouse were located by Jeri-Baron Feltner in 1998 after placement of an ad in local newspapers that was answered by DeTour Village resident Dan McInnis listing previous lighthouse keepers Floyd Colvin, Ron Freels, Bob Soldenski, and Jim Williams; and Alfred Lemieux (who help build the DeTour Reef Light in 1930-31). These people were subsequently interviewed by Jeri-Baron Feltner and filmed by Mike Spears as part of a historical grant project in 1999 and 2000.
  - The original foghorn from the DeTour Reef Light was discovered by Jeff Laser at the Great Lakes Historical Society warehouse in Cleveland in March 1998. The GLHS donated it to the DRLPS and Jeff completely restored the 475-pound foghorn to working order. It was on display at the Drummond Island Historical Museum and is now back on the lighthouse as part of the restoration program.
  - Chuck Feltner was interviewed about the lighthouse on NPR radio program "All Things Considered" June 15, 1998. He ends the conversation with "now remember – we'll keep the light on for you!" - Thus establishing the DRLPS logo statement.
  - DRLPS Secretary Jeri-Baron Feltner prepared and gave a presentation on *Building a Successful Lighthouse Preservation Society* at the first State of Michigan Lighthouse Project "Lighthouse Preservation Workshop" held in Lansing in November 1998. Jeri also gave the presentation at a second state conference held in Mackinaw City in May 2001, and she and Chuck Feltner gave a presentation *Forming and Sustaining a Volunteer Nonprofit Lighthouse Preservation Organization* at the third lighthouse conference held in Traverse City in June 2004.
  - A four-foot scale model of the lighthouse was lovingly handcrafted by Bob Jones and Jim Charles in 1999 and displayed on a trailer driven in the local July 4<sup>th</sup> parades of DeTour Village and Drummond Island, and displayed at other events including the local school.
  - Scott McLeod of DeTour Village composes words and music and CD draft of song *Shine On* as a tribute to the DeTour Reef Light in 1999.
  - DRLPS is featured in a major article in *Lighthouse Digest Magazine* January 1999.
  - DRLPS Board of Directors at a board meeting featured in a video produced by Equity Studies in 1999 and widely-distributed to government and nonprofit organizations, and shown on regional television programs.
  - Local school children completed drawings in 1999 of the lighthouse (displayed at local businesses), made a lighthouse gingerbread house, and collected pop cans to raise over \$500 for the DRLPS.
  - Raffle of handcrafted Peapod boat made and donated by Jim Ross raised over \$7,000 in 1999.
  - Raffle of a Freighter Ride donated by the Interlake Steamship Company raised over \$12,000 in 2000.
  - Coast Guard removed damaged lead paint and encapsulated the plaster which contains asbestos at the lighthouse in 2000 at a cost of \$66,000 (taxpayer's money) to prepare for the DRLPS to obtain a long-term lease. An Asbestos Management Plan was prepared by Environmental Testing, Inc. for DRLPS to give to the Coast Guard as a condition of the lighthouse lease.
  - Cullen Chambers (of Tybee Island, Georgia), nationally-recognized lighthouse preservation consultant, contacted Jeri-Baron Feltner in 1999 to inquire about preservation of the DRL, and subsequently volunteered his services to the DRLPS and conducted a significant two-day existing conditions survey on the lighthouse in June 2000. He prepared an outstanding 185-page extensive *Assessment Survey and Recommendations Report*



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for the Society that outlined recommendations for restoration and preservation, and this significant document became the foundation of our restoration plan and grant applications.

- Jim Woodward (a steadfast supporter of the DRLPS!) of the USCG Cleveland conducted a *Joint Inspection of Conditions* (with Jeri and Chuck Feltner) survey in summer 2000 as a condition of the lease application.
- On September 5, 2000, the U. S. Coast Guard's twenty-year lighthouse lease to the DRLPS was signed by President Bob Jones and witnessed by director Dick Moehl at the Fogcutter Restaurant in DeTour Village.
- USCG cutter Buckthorn installs a solar panel at the lighthouse in the fall of 2000 to power the light and fog signal.
- Plym Foundation donated \$15,000 in 2000 in memory of Glen Bailey as matching funds for the restoration grant.
- DRLPS member Rob Bloch donated in 2000 a 28-foot 1947 historic tug boat, the *Philo B. Leonard*, to the Society to be used as matching funds for a restoration grant.
- DRLPS member Bruce Glupker donated use of a boat slip for ten years at the DeTour Passage Marina in the fall of 2000 to be used as matching funds for a restoration grant.
- A traveling educational display of the *Lighthouses of DeTour Passage* completed by Chuck & Jeri Feltner in 2001 utilizing a Michigan Coastal Management Program grant and is on display at the Drummond Island Historical Museum.
- Legendary Lighthouse film crew (Lloyd Fales, producer from New York) filmed the DeTour Reef Light in the fall of 2000 for a featured spot on a national PBS program on the History Channel on October 24, 2001 with their production *Legendary Lighthouses II*.
- First lighthouse restoration project of a new historically-accurate five-ton replica of a pier deck crane manufactured by Bunker Engineering of Sault Ste. Marie and installed by L&B Builders of Drummond Island, utilizing a Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grant, completed in 2001.
- Obtained major restoration grants from the Department of Environmental Quality (\$705,000), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (\$241,500) in May 2001. Application submitted in fall of 2000 prepared by Clif Haley, Jeri Feltner, and Chuck Feltner.
- Received State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) approval of our restoration Request-for-Proposal (RFP) in November 2001.
- Architectural and engineering services contract awarded in January 2002 to U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc. (UPEA) of Marquette (represented by Ken Czapski), for preliminary design and planning along with construction administration and management of the restoration project. They are doing an outstanding job for the DRLPS.
- Bob Jones, DRLPS founding president died in March 2002. DRLPS will keep the Light on for him!
- UPEA completed the exterior restoration bid document in April 2002. SHPO approves it in May 2002.
- The No-Adverse-Effect (NAE) approval letter received from SHPO June 2002. This NAE letter means that our restoration plans and specifications would have no adverse effect on this historic structure.
- Jeri-Baron Feltner, Secretary of the DRLPS, featured in *Lighthouse Digest Magazine* "Women of the Light" article in July 2002.
- A July 2002 meeting with MDOT, Village of DeTour, and the DRLPS was held in DeTour Village to discuss the MDOT-TEA21 contract. The consultant at the meeting hired by MDOT to assist them in administration of the contract insisted that procedures required for major road construction projects be applied to the restoration of the lighthouse. These inappropriate procedures caused great distress for the DRLPS and the Village. Resolution was achieved with the assistance of Jacqueline Shinn of MDOT after a personal visit to her in Lansing by Chuck Feltner with the development of a legally binding agreement between the Village and

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DRLPS which tied up our funding for maintenance of the lighthouse for twenty years. As a consequence, both DRLPS and the Village hired lawyers to work out the legal problems.

- SHPO approves the long-term maintenance schedule developed by UPEA in September 2002.
- MDEQ approves first CMI grant deadline extension request to July 1, 2004, in September 2002.
- \$250,000 line of credit established in November 2002 at a First National Bank of St. Ignace to cover restoration cash flow.
- Over 9,000 pages of original lighthouse keeper's logbooks and correspondence were located by Chuck Feltner and Jeri-Baron Feltner on a visit to the National Archives in Washington DC in 2002, and were subsequently copied by the National Archives under a Michigan Coastal Management Program grant. The documents are on display at the DeTour Village Library.
- MDOT approves exterior restoration plans and specifications in February 2003.
- Exterior restoration contract (CMI, MDOT, and MLAP) signed with DeTour Village April 2003.
- Exterior restoration contract awarded to Mihm Enterprises of Hamilton, Michigan, May 2003.
- Exterior restoration begins in June 2003.
- Mihm Enterprises awarded the interior restoration contract in July 2003.
- Second MDEQ-CMI extension request to September 30, 2004, approved in July 2003.
- Channel 9&10 News (Corey Adkins) *Michigan This Morning* program filmed and featured the DeTour Reef Light with Chuck & Jeri-Baron Feltner on August 22, 2003. It aired around Michigan showing lighthouse restoration in action.
- *Great Laker Magazine* featured a photo of the DeTour Reef Light being restored on the cover and included an excellent article by Dave Wobser in the summer 2003 issue.
- CMI interior restoration contract with Mihm Enterprises signed on October 17, 2003, at the Mainsail Restaurant in DeTour Village with Terry Nelson, Chuck Feltner, Dave Bardsley, Ken Czapski and Frank and Sharon Mihm.
- DRLPS members Fred and Linda May of Drummond Island donated in October 2003 a 50x25 foot barge to be used as a floating dock at the lighthouse
- Interior restoration begins in September 2003 and resumed in the spring of 2004.
- A 1970s vintage Ranch Oak dresser used at the lighthouse was donated to the DRLPS by former lighthouse keeper Floyd Colvin in October 2003. The dresser was actually used by the keepers at the lighthouse.
- Alfred Lemieux, the last known survivor who built the DeTour Reef Light Station, died November 23, 2003, at the age of 94. He was a major supporter and personality of DRLPS.
- Drummond Island Lions organization members Dave Bardsley, Norm Muench and Ken Walker installed 100 feet of steel tubing around the power line to the lighthouse where it enters Lake Huron at DeTour Point replacing the existing damaged ice barrier in November 2003.
- A photo of the DeTour Reef Light surrounded by scaffolding (with a head shot of Bob Jones and Chuck Feltner) appeared on the cover of the Spring 2004 issue of the *Beacon* (Great Lakes Lighthouse Association Magazine) and included an extensive story of the DRLPS by Jeri-Baron Feltner.
- *Name-That-Barge* contest won by Kaye Birkmeier of DeTour Village with the name *Alfred Lemieux* (who was the last known survivor of the team who built the lighthouse in 1931). Forty entries were submitted.
- Major restoration of the lighthouse completed September 2004.
- Final inspection of the restoration work was held on September 15, 2004. Seventeen people participated in this special event including: Brian Conway and Brian Lijewski of the State Historic Preservation Office, Jeff

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Barsch and Pete Paramski of the Michigan Department of Transportation, Susan Vincent of the Natural Park Service, DRLPS volunteers Chuck Feltner (President & Restoration Chairman), Dave Bardsley (Vice-President), Jeri Baron Feltner (Secretary), Clif Haley (Director & Grant Chairman), Dick Moehl (founding Director), Russ Norris (Youth Program Chairman); Blaine Tischer of Drummond Island Township Board, Ric Mixer of Airworthy Productions; Frank Mihm, Phil Granfors, and Al Pembrook of Mihm Enterprises; and Ken Czapski of U.P. Engineers & Architects. Lunch was served on the handcrafted donated table in the newly restored dining room. State grant authorities praised the restoration work as outstanding!

- Video of the DeTour Reef Light, utilizing a Michigan Coastal Management Program Grant of \$15,000 matched by volunteer services, was completed October 2004 by Ric Mixer of Airworthy Productions and DRLPS volunteer Dave Bardsley.
- Steps on the spiral staircase leading to the Light are offered for sponsorship to DRLPS members in fall of 2004. Cost is \$1,500 for each of the 32 steps and funding will be used for further restoration and preservation efforts. Initial sponsors include: Kathy Benua, Chuck & Jeri-Baron Feltner, Clif & Carolyn Haley, Anne O'Connell, Vern & Jackie Schatz (in memory of Nancy Ann Kreuger), and Richard Shoquist. (Note: Step #28 is in memory of Founding Director and President Bob Jones, and Founding Director and Vice-President Jim Charles.)
- State flag that flew over the Capitol and Certificate donated to DRLPS in 2004 by Senator Jason Allen.
- Antique 1930s GE electric stove donated to DRLPS by John & Dotty Witten of DeTour Village in 2004.
- DRLPS received a "State of Michigan Special Tribute" honoring the Society for their success in restoring the DeTour Reef Light, signed by Senator Jason Allen, Representative Scott Shackleton, and Governor Jennifer Granholm, dated November 2, 2004.
- Application for Transfer of Ownership of the lighthouse from the Federal government to DRLPS under the auspices of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act (NHLPA) was submitted to the National Park Service (NPS) on December 31, 2004. The application was extensively prepared by Dave Bardsley, Chuck Feltner, Jeri-Baron Feltner, and Clif Haley, and presented in a 3-inch binder. The NPS informed DRLPS that it was the best application they have received to date and planned to use it as the "example." The application was approved by the National Park Service in 2005, but the State bottomland ownership issue is still awaiting approval thus the transfer is not complete as of April 2008.
- Dave Bardsley elected as the third President of DRLPS January 2005.
- DeTour Reef Light placed on the National Register of Historic Places March 15, 2005 (application prepared by Dr. Dan Koski-Karrel of the U.S. Coast Guard).
- Furniture donated in 2005: 2 small refrigerators by Dick Moehl, roll top desk by Azor Sheffield, bench (made by Ric Sawtelle), microwave by Clif & Carolyn Haley, desk chair, dresser with mirror and double bed and bed frames by Dave & Paula Bardsley, box springs and mattresses by Drummond Island Resort and Conference Center, bunk beds and mattresses by Camp Grayling-Col. Dean Brown-Base Commander, bunk bed ladders made by DeTour High School students, Carving knife donated by keepers, deck chairs by Jeri-Baron Feltner and Joyce Buckley, antique double bed by Jim Charles, bathroom cabinet by Chuck & Jeri Feltner, mooring blocks by Pat Kelly, 2 bookcases by Mario Mazzuca, silverware from Dick Moehl, DVD player by Ric Mixer, antique porcelain top kitchen cabinet by Darlene & Tom Chisholm, antique porcelain top kitchen cabinet by Karen and John McClure, vacuum by John & Sunny Covell, white chairs by Karen McClure, antique wicker chairs by Tom & Lowell Williams, toaster by the keepers, puddingstone puzzle by the keepers, toaster by the keepers.
- Students from DeTour Village & Drummond Island took furnishings to the lighthouse with teacher and DRLPS Youth Chairman Russ Norris and DRLPS President Dave Bardsley on May 14, 2005, included Tim Burkey, Nathan Tiefenbach, Ellis Tarr, CJ Spohn, Lacy Woods, Matt Peterson (teacher) – using Kathy Benua's Boston Whaler.
- Received a \$15,000 contribution to the DRLPS Endowment Maintenance Fund from Paul Schaap who won a trip for four on a Lake freighter donated to the DRLPS by the Interlake Steamship Company May 2005.

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- DeTour Reef Light photo appears on the cover of the 2005 Drummond Island Business Directory June 2005.
  - Governor's Award for Historic Preservation for 2005 presented to the DRLPS at the Capitol May 19, 2005. Event was attended by DRLPS team members Dave & Paula Bardsley, Chuck & Jeri-Baron Feltner, and Clif Haley.
  - Tours and lighthouse keeper overnight stay programs at the lighthouse began July 2005. First people to sign up to Tour the Light: Clark Butterfield, Becky & Patric Farrell, Mary & Barbara Dinneweth, Pat Kipley, Ron & Pat Wells, John & Sonny Covell, Debbie Roark, Lori Brubaker, Dave Maue, Jake & Gloria Toering, Joanne Bonds & George Meyer, Rudy & Rosemary Seichter, Carl & Mrs. Copple, Troy & Bev Holland, Joanne & Mike Boedy, Debbie Roark and Gary Riemenschneider. First people to sign up to be overnight Keepers of the Light in 2005: Nancy Gertz & Robert Sperling, Matt Sawyer & Sheila Davis, Marc & Jill Vander Meulen, Greg Holcombe, Judy Mills, Andrew Mills, Ren & Gail Farley, Judy Dolney, and Mike Hershberger.
  - Presentation on restoration of the DRL made by Chuck Feltner at the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan, in June 2005.
  - Presentation on restoration of the DRL made by Chuck Feltner at the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History conference held in Tobermory, Ontario in September 2005.
  - Mooring blocks to be used at the lighthouse to secure a boat were made and donated by Pat Kelly of Kelly Excavating of Drummond Island in May 2006, and were placed at the lighthouse by Denny Bailey of Drummond Island Yacht Haven who donated his equipment and services in June 2006.
  - TV Channel 9&10 News broadcasted live from the DeTour Reef Light on June 1, 2006, for their "Michigan This Morning Show." Chuck Feltner came up with the idea of installing a video cam on the lighthouse, and he and Dave Bardsley helped make it a reality. Participating from 9&10 were Corey Adkins, Ted Halley, and Lowell Shore. A weather cam was tentatively installed on the lighthouse.
  - DRLPS received the *Superior Award* from the Historical Society of Michigan (HSM) at the HSM 2006 Upper Peninsula History Conference in Escanaba on June 24, 2006. Chuck Feltner & Jeri-Baron Feltner attended to accept the award on behalf of the dedicated volunteers of the DRLPS. The Superior Award was established in 2006 to honor historical societies, museums, and other historical organizations in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan for their efforts to preserve and promote UP history. The HSM recognized DRLPS for the local grass-roots organization's outstanding efforts to preserve and promote Upper Peninsula history exemplifying dedication and community spirit, with the restoration, preservation, and promotion of the DeTour Reef Light and advancing appreciation of Eastern Upper Peninsula maritime history. The HSM stated: "The DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society's remarkable efforts in only eight years exemplify the dedication and community spirit for which the UP is renowned."
  - Matt Sawyer appointed Webmaster in June 2006.
  - Susan Ager, Detroit Free Press reporter, visited the lighthouse as a weekend keeper and wrote an extensive article for the newspaper about her stay in July 2006. Spiders were a problem, but the DRLPS had them exterminated the next week and now do so as regular scheduled maintenance each spring.
  - Dr. Charles Feltner, Restoration Chairman and Past President of DRLPS, received the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History 2006 Award for Historic Preservation at the AGLMH annual meeting on September 23, 2006 in Alpena, Michigan.
  - Russ Norris is elected President of the DRLPS in December, 2006.
  - DRLPS receives the Old Mission Bank *Community Pride Award* on April 15, 2007 in Sault Ste Marie. DRLPS Vice-president Dave Bardsley accepted the award on behalf of the DRLPS volunteers and members. In the award letter Old Mission Bank's President and CEO, David Firack, wrote "the DRLPS's efforts to serve the needs of our citizens and to create new opportunities for our children and grandchildren to live and prosper within our Eastern Upper Peninsula community are appreciated."
  - Jim Charles, founding Director and Vice-President of DRLPS, passed away on April 11, 2007. He was a well-respected and dedicated volunteer who worked assiduously to keep the Light on.

- Over the winter of 2006 and 2007, the DeTour Reef Light crib model was handcrafted by DRLPS volunteer John Covell in the basement of his home in Belmont, Michigan, with steadfast support from his wife and partner Sunny Covell. The idea was originally conceived by Chuck Feltner and he provided assistance to John. The wooden crib model measures 5' wide by 5' long by 2' high and was placed on display in May 2007 in the basement of the lighthouse for all to enjoy. The DRL is a unique example of the crib foundation lighthouse type. It sits atop a 60' by 60' square by 22' tall box-like wooden crib built with 180,000 board feet of lumber. The original crib was assembled onshore at DeTour Village in 1930 and towed to the lighthouse's designated location three miles from the assembly location. Once there, it was sunk onto a 75' by 75' square leveled bed of crushed rock. The crib's interior compartments were filled with rock and the outer ones with concrete. Additional concrete was poured around its base forming an apron, and rock riprap was placed on top and beyond the concrete apron to further protect the structure. Tour leader John Covell provides an excellent narration while he shows off his prideful work at the lighthouse.
- DRLPS awarded a \$30,000 2007 Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grant (with \$15,000 matching funds from DRLPS) for fabrication and installation of the second deck crane. Clif Haley prepared the application with Chuck Feltner's assistance, and Don Gries is project director, with assistance from Dave Bardsley.
- Sandy Wytiaz is appointed Director to fill vacancy May 2007.
- Don Gries is elected Director June 2007.
- Dick Moehl, Founding Director, resigns and is named Founding Director Emeritus December 2007.
- Ann-Method Green is appointed Director to fill vacancy December 2007.
- John & Sunny Covell are appointed Tour Program Co-Chairs in December 2007.
- Mary Rogers, founding member in 1998, retires as Membership Chairperson December 2007 and was presented with an award for her ten years of dedicated service to the DRLPS.
- Paula Bardsley, member since 2002, retires as Assistant Secretary and recorder of the Board of Directors meeting minutes since 2004, and was presented an award for her outstanding service at the Annual Meeting in December 2007. Paula continues as Membership Chairperson and Database Manager (and contributes so much more!).
- Sheila Sawyer appointed Passages Newsletter editor in January 2008.
- DRLPS awarded a \$20,000 grant from 2008 Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (requires \$10,000 matching funds from DRLPS) for installation of the original F-2-T diaphone foghorn, replicate air storage tanks and piping, fabricate non-functional diaphone, and moisture control surrounding amplifier cones. Don Gries prepared this application and is the project director, with assistance from Chuck Feltner.

## STATE PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The following organizations and legislative issues have supported the DRLPS and other volunteer lighthouse preservation organizations by helping them sustain the organization's activity to continue to be a strong and viable organization in order to preserve the lighthouse for generations to come.

### *Michigan Lighthouse Project (MLP)*

Established in 1998 as a result of the U.S. Coast Guard's decision to excess over 70 historic lighthouses in the State of Michigan, the MLP is made up of representatives from federal and state government agencies and other interested parties to address the fate of Michigan's historic lighthouses, to increase public and governmental awareness of lighthouse preservation issues and to ensure the long-term preservation of the lighthouses. MLP is currently working with government agencies to effect the transfer ownership of historic lighthouses under the guidelines of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act. For more information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Historical Center, PO Box 30740, 702 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing MI 48909-8240, 517-373-1630, [www.michigan.gov/hal](http://www.michigan.gov/hal).

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### *Michigan Lighthouse Alliance (MLA)*

MLA was established in 2003 and is comprised of over 50 nonprofit lighthouse preservation group stewards and interested lighthouse stakeholders. The purpose of the MLA is to: build a network of lighthouse stewards and stakeholders, provide long-term sustainability for lighthouse preservation efforts in Michigan, develop and assist new stewards for Michigan lighthouses, provide technical assistance and general information to all lighthouse stewards, establish educational and outreach programs that foster public awareness of the plight of Michigan's historic lighthouses and the purpose of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act, emphasize the critical role of lighthouse preservation to the economic vitality of local communities and to the State of Michigan, and advocate for Michigan's historic lighthouses by supporting necessary legislation, regulatory policies, and other public policies that support preservation efforts. For more information, contact the MLA email [info@michiganlighthousealliance.org](mailto:info@michiganlighthousealliance.org), [www.michiganlighthousealliance.org](http://www.michiganlighthousealliance.org).

### *Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP)*

MLAP was established by the Michigan legislature in 1999 to assist local groups in preserving and protecting lighthouses. The program arose from the efforts of the Michigan Lighthouse Project and concern about the disposal of some 70 lighthouses by the U.S. Coast Guard. Grants are available to qualified lighthouse preservation organizations and matching funds are required. For more information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at [www.michigan.gov/shpo](http://www.michigan.gov/shpo).

MLAP obtains funding from the State's sale of specialty lighthouse license plates. You can support lighthouse preservation in Michigan by purchasing a Save Our Lights specialty license plate through the Michigan Secretary of State. Introduced in 2001, it features the White Shoal Lighthouse with its striking red and white stripes set against the blue waters of Lake Michigan to symbolize the need to preserve Michigan's lighthouses.

### *National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act (NHLPA)*

The NHLPA of 2000 amends the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and establishes a national lighthouse preservation program and authorizes the disposal of historic lighthouses. It recognizes the cultural, recreational, and educational value associated with these historic resources by allowing lighthouse properties to be transferred at no cost to federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit corporations and community development organizations for park and recreation, cultural and historic, and educational uses. The program is administered through the combined efforts of the Department of the Interior's National Park Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the General Services Administration. The DRLPS prepared a transfer application in December 2004, and is currently working with the Michigan Lighthouse Project to initiate the transfer of the DeTour Reef Light to the DRLPS. For more information, contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Maritime Heritage Program, 1849 C. Street, N.W. (NRHE-2280), Washington DC 20240-0001, email: [NPS\\_MaritimeHeritage@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_MaritimeHeritage@nps.gov), [www.doi.gov/initiatives/lighthouses.html](http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/lighthouses.html).

### *Michigan Lighthouse and Maritime Heritage Act (MLMHL)*

In November 2003, Senator Debbie Stabenow with Senator Carl Levin introduced the MLMHL Act; a Bill to promote and protect Michigan's Great Lakes history including lighthouses and maritime museums and help preserve the history of this precious natural resource for generations to come. The Bill would require the National Park Service to study and make recommendations on the best ways to promote and protect these resources. Congress would then enact the study's recommendations on how to best preserve and increase tourism to these lighthouses and maritime resources, such as creating a designated statewide trail. The study would also identify funding sources for communities to preserve and restore their lighthouse and maritime resource. In October 2003, William Anderson and Sandra Clark of the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries, presented a paper called "Positioning Michigan as a Maritime Heritage Destination." They said that it was time for Michigan to capitalize on its exceptional maritime resources and stake claim to being the center of Great Lakes maritime heritage. Thus, they are creating a Michigan Maritime Heritage Destination that pulls together the state's top maritime attractions and stories by pooling resources for marketing and publicity and creating regional clusters. For more information on this important legislation, contact Senator Debbie Stabenow, U.S. Senate, 702 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510. To see the Bill in its entirety, visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and click on

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Legislation & Records and search for S. 1850. If you are interested in supporting this legislation, please contact the Chairman of the Energy Committee, Senator Pete Domenici (U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510), to urge him to take up and pass S.1850, the Michigan Lighthouse and Heritage Act. Please share copies of your letters with Senator Debbie Stabenow.

### *Bottomlands Transfer*

The State of Michigan owns the Lake Huron bottomlands on which the lighthouse stands. In December 2002, the State Legislature passed a Bill regarding conveyance of bottomlands that offshore lighthouses rest upon. This would make it possible for organizations such as the DRLPS to enter into a lease or agreement for the use of State lands on which an offshore lighthouse is located, including the use of water over those lands immediately adjacent to the lighthouse. This Bill makes it possible for the U.S. Coast Guard to transfer ownership of offshore lighthouses to organizations like the DRLPS. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) prepared a draft "Agreement to Use and Occupy Unpatented Great Lakes Bottomlands for Lighthouse Private Purposes" dated July 1999. This controversial document is being investigated by the state and lighthouse preservation groups to incorporate a more positive position for all concerned. To learn more about the bottomlands issue visit websites [www.michbar.org/realprop/article27-3.html](http://www.michbar.org/realprop/article27-3.html), and [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq) and search for Bottomland Conveyances. The first MDEQ Application for Conveyance of Great Lakes Bottomlands was filed on August 14, 1998 by former DRLPS President Bob Jones. It was never acknowledged by the DEQ. A second Application was sent by former DRLPS President Chuck Feltner on June 18, 2004, with an acknowledgement received from DEQ's Tom Graf on October 20, 2004, stating the application was incomplete as our application for transfer of ownership from the National Park Service was pending due to the unresolved issues of conveyance of bottomland's ownership. Clif Haley, DRLPS legal counsel, is investigating the matter, and is working with state officials on a mutually agreeable outcome.

### **PAST KEEPERS OF THE DETOUR REEF LIGHT**

Research on former DeTour Reef Light keepers has been ongoing beginning in 1998 with an article Jeri-Baron Feltner placed in local newspapers asking for information about past keepers and subsequently receiving a letter from Dan McInnes of DeTour Village listing several names. Tom Tag provided DRLPS with an extensive list of names he prepared in 1999 (primarily for DeTour Point Light). Additional research was conducted at the National Archives in Washington DC, and Chuck Feltner's research with logbooks turned up several former keeper names, and Jim Woodward helped with official titles. Oral history video interviews were conducted by DRLPS (Jeri-Baron Feltner and Mike Spears) in 2000, and in 2006 and 2007 (Chuck Feltner and Russ Norris-- those shown with an x).

**JAMES P. WILLIAMS**, Engineman 1st Class (EN1), 1960-1962; **RONALD E. FREELS**, Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (BM1), 1965-1966; **ROBERT F. SOLDENSKI**, Engineman 1st Class (EN1), 1967-1968; **FLOYD L. COLVIN**, Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (BM1), 1968-1969; **xHAROLD EUGENE ANDERSON**, Fireman (FN), 1958-1959; **xMILTON V. LOVETT**, Engineman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (EN2), 1958-1959. Many other former keepers have been found by Chuck Feltner from around the country of which he will arrange oral history interviews with.

### **WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD**

The DeTour Reef Light will continue to be restored, maintained and preserved by the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society for all to enjoy now and for future generations. Our long-term plan is to completely restore the lighthouse inside and out and to equip it with period furnishings and equipment, to make it accessible to visitors with safe docking and boarding facilities, and to develop an onshore viewing and educational center.

An important goal of the DRLPS is to obtain ownership of the lighthouse. We currently have a 20-year lease (signed 9/5/00) on the lighthouse from the U.S. Coast Guard and have prepared an application for ownership of the lighthouse in December 2004, under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act that allows the lighthouse ownership to be transferred to our nonprofit organization. DRLPS will also work with the Michigan Department of Environment Quality on the legal issues with the transfer of the bottomlands that the lighthouse

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sits on. DRLPS has established a special fund for maintenance of the lighthouse in perpetuity. Other important goals include strategic planning and budgeting, and volunteer management and membership development.

Along with restoration and preservation of the DeTour Reef Light, our ongoing vision is to enhance public awareness of the history of all of the lighthouses of DeTour Passage and appreciation for the maritime heritage of this region, and to make the DeTour Reef Light a premier tourist attraction in the Eastern Upper Peninsula as the best example of an offshore lighthouse in the nation.

## **SUSTAINING SUCCESS**

Success of lighthouse preservation is based on the unfailing support of the people dedicated and committed to restoring and preserving the DeTour Reef Light and keeping the organization strong. Volunteers invest a huge amount of personal time, energy and expense in keeping the light on. It is important to insure that these individuals do not reach the burn out point. The DRLPS is confident that the lighthouse national and statewide programs and policies under development will help these individuals and organizations sustain their goals by developing potential sources of future funding to maintain the lighthouse and to help operate the individual societies.

As well-known lighthouse personality Terry Pepper stated as one of his personal team philosophies - "How far should we extend ourselves? All the way. Each challenge will bring new opportunities we never dreamed of. We must work with the conviction that *if we build it, they will come.*" This applies not only to the individual organizations but to all the national organizations that have recently been developed. We must all work together to be sure that we do not fail in keeping the light on in the spirit of George Putnam as he said in his 1917 book - "*The building and the keeping of the lights is a picturesque and humanitarian work of the nation.*"

## **JOIN THE TEAM**

The DRLPS plans to keep the light on for generations to come and will share the lighthouse with the people through safe and informative public access. It is our hope and dream that this historic lighthouse will continue to attract many visitors including lighthouse enthusiasts and boat watchers (as the deck will be a great place to take photos of the ships) to learn of the value this lighthouse and its keepers served to our nation.

The DRLPS is very grateful to state and federal agencies, and others, for the over one million dollars in grant funding to accomplish major lighthouse restoration. This funding, however, does not cover additional restoration projects, and ongoing operational expenses, including lighthouse insurance and maintenance. We appreciate our loyal individual supporters who have steadfastly offered their support to keep the DRLPS functioning. We continue to actively work at raising funds through donations, memberships and fundraising events. DRLPS is a nonprofit 501c3 organization and donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Memberships can be obtained for as little as \$30 which includes a newsletter. Please join us in this worthwhile endeavor and become a member of the DRLPS team to restore and preserve this magnificent monument to Michigan's maritime history -- and remember -- *We'll Keep the Light on for You!*

*Visit the DRLPS at their website [www.DRLPS.com](http://www.DRLPS.com) or contact, DRLPS, PO Box 307, Drummond Island MI 49726, email: [drlps@drlps.com](mailto:drlps@drlps.com), or call 906-493-6609 for more information about the lighthouse and how to join the team to preserve the DeTour Reef Light.*

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