



Newsletter of the Faulkner's Light Brigade

February 2002

Below are some articles from our newsletter for February 2002. The name "The Octagon" refers to the shape of the historic lighthouse on Faulkner's Island.

If you [become a member](#) of the Faulkner's Light Brigade you will receive The Octagon each month. Each issue has current news, a calendar of events and features about the island's fascinating history.

[Plans Underway for Bicentennial](#)

[Open House Draws Large Crowd](#)

[Coast Guardsman Returns](#)

[A Kimberly Comes Back to Faulkner's](#)

[Capital Campaign Donation](#)

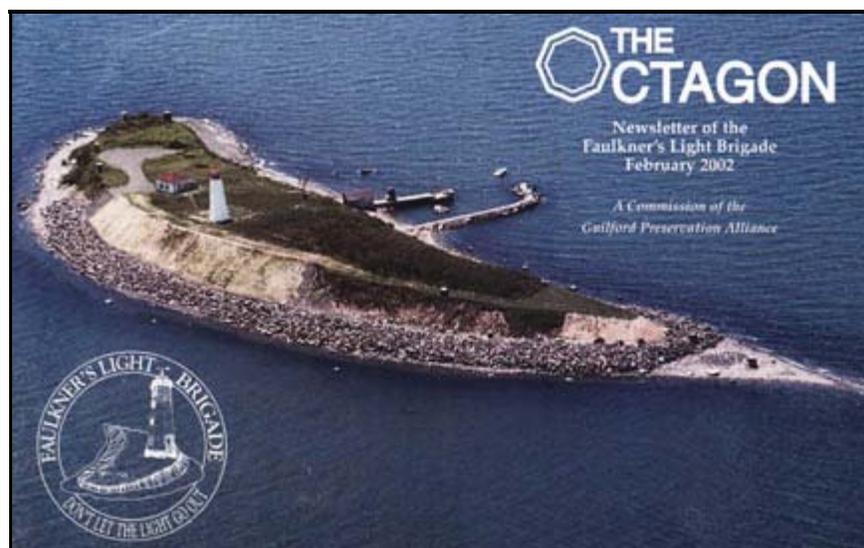
[Au Revoir \(but not really\)](#)

[Farnsworth Accepts Nomination](#)

[New walkway](#)

[Faulkner's Fashions](#)

[Prehistoric Faulkner's Island](#)



This aerial view of Faulkner's Island from the south shows the new stone revetment and resloped eastern bluff just after the completion of Phase I of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers erosion control project. The photograph was taken by Bill Seekamp on a flight provided pilot and aviation historian Ev Cassagneres.

Plans Underway for Bicentennial

A special Bicentennial Celebration Committee under co-chairpersons Ginny and Charlie Baltay is planning a host of activities to celebrate the 200th birthday of Faulkner's lighthouse.

There is much to celebrate for just a few years ago, the lighthouse, built in 1802, was suffering from years of neglect and continuing erosion was eating away at the nearby steep slope and threatening to topple it into Long Island Sound.

The committee wants to create a series of events and activities in which all of the people of Guilford and its shoreline neighbors can participate. Already, agreement has been reached with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for an Open House on the island on September 7 and 8. Because boat access to the island limits attendance, the committee wants to provide an opportunity for everyone to enjoy the birthday of this treasured landmark.

To do this, the committee plans a giant celebration on Jacobs Beach in Guilford following the Open House on Saturday, September 7, with September 8 as a rain date. This gala event will include a family picnic, a boat parade, special soundings of the Faulkner's fog horns, which haven't been heard for more than 25 years, and an array of musical entertainment. All this will be capped off with a fireworks display.

A special year-long exhibit is planned for the Henry Whitfield Historical Museum. The thrilling history of the lighthouse will be depicted with displays featuring a 4th order Fresnel lens, artwork, historic photographs, maps, a special video presentation, and a 26-star United States flag (c. 1837-45) flown over the island by light keeper Captain Eli Kimberly.

The 200th birthday celebration culminates with the 2002 Guilford Citizen's Day Parade. There is much for volunteers to do to help make these events happen. Call the Baltays at (203) 458-2899 if you would like to help.

[Back to top](#)

Open House Draws Large Crowd

Some 850 hardy visitors braved choppy waters to land on Faulkner's Island for the September 8 and 9th 2001 open house jointly hosted by Faulkner's Light Brigade, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. Among the visitors were more than 50 brave adventurers who paddled to the island in kyacks and dinghies.



Hundreds wait for an opportunity to take in the superb views from atop Faulkner's light. Photo by Bill Seekamp.

While the water was rough, the skies were bright and clear and visitors enjoyed superb views from the lantern gallery of the proudly refurbished lighthouse. The large turnout provided ample proof that the two-day format best meets the needs of the crowds who want to see and enjoy the island. The enthusiastic response also underlines the urgency of plans to rehabilitate the landing wharf to alleviate congestion and enhance safety.

Among the visitors were Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, State Representative Patricia Widlitz, Guilford First Selectman Sam Bartlett and Selectman Gene Bishop. Bartlett said that he was impressed with the work done to control erosion. "The island looks natural and it was because of volunteer help that the lighthouse and island are no longer in danger," he said.

Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Aids to Navigation team conducted tours of the lighthouse, while Refuge Manager Bill Kolodnicki of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and his staff introduced visitors to the unique features of the island and Dr. Jeff Spendelow of the U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center presented an educational exhibit on the colony of endangered roseate terns that use the island as a summer nesting place.

The event provided the first opportunity for the public to see the result of Phase I of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers erosion control project completed in April. The project consists of an armor stone revetment that wraps the north point of the island and continues for some 700 feet along the eastern shore to provide protection to the most critical erosion areas adjacent to the lighthouse. The revetment has a crest height of about 20 feet above mean low water. Armor stones weighing 4,500 to 7,500 pounds were placed in two layers at the base of the slope totaling seven feet. Upper slope stabilization consists of compacted stone fill placed on the resloped surface and stabilized with geocell material covered with soil and seeded with native grasses. A moratorium lasting two nesting seasons will allow researchers to assess the impact of Phase I on nesting terns and to evaluate potential design changes for Phase 2.

Faulkner's Light Brigade thanks the Guilford dockmasters, the Guilford Volunteer Fire Department Marine Patrol and the Madison Police Marine Patrol for their support as well as Captain Bob Milne, proprietor of the water taxi, "Charley More" and all the many volunteers who helped make this possible. Many of those who were unable to attend watched the event, thanks to the efforts of Peter Van Strum of Madison Community Television, who videotaped it.



Some 50 kayakers braved choppy waters to reach the island for the September 8 and 9 open house. Photo by Joel Helander.

[Back to top](#)

Coast Guardsman Returns

Among the open house visitors was former Coast Guardsman Steve Martin who spent more than three years living on the island from 1966 to 1970. Martin, who now lives in Moscow, PA, enlisted in the Coast Guard in May of 1966. After completing his basic training, he was assigned to Faulkner's Island, where he spent the remainder of his hitch working the lighthouse, the fog horn and radio beacon with three other men.

Last year, Martin's wife Jeanette tried searching the internet for Faulkner's Island. She found the web site created by Jeremy D'Entremont (<http://www.lighthouse.cc/faulkners/index.html>). Martin's curiosity prompted him to follow up with a phone call to Faulkner's Light Brigade, reaching Joel Helander to whom thirty years earlier Martin had given a

tour of the island. At that time, Helander was a high school student researching the island for an article he was writing.



Faulkner's Light Brigade chairman Joel Helander welcomes former Coast Guardsman Steve Martin back to Faulkner's Island 31 years after Martin served on the island tending the lighthouse, the fog horn and radio beacon. photo by Jeanette Martin.

Helander immediately recognized Martin and invited him to the open house on September 8. Jeanette said that she had rarely seen her husband as thrilled as when he stepped foot on Faulkner's Island for the first time in more than 30 years.

Martin enjoyed island duty. He and his companions each spent three weeks on the island and then got one week of unrestricted shore leave. On the island they operated self-sufficiently, generating their own electricity and doing their own cooking in the kitchen of the two-story, 11-room house that had been built in 1871 adjacent to the lighthouse. The light keeper's house burned to the ground in 1976 and the lighthouse was automated shortly thereafter.

Martin liked the island and lighthouse duty so much that he said that if he could have spent another three or four years there he would have reenlisted. He vows that he will not wait another 31 years before visiting again.

[Back to top](#)

A Kimberly Comes Back to Faulkner's

John Eli Kimberly, a direct descendant of Captain Eli Kimberly, the longest serving of all the Faulkner's light keepers, and his wife Marion, set foot for the first time on Faulkner's Island during the summer of 2001 on a visit there with Light Brigade Chairman Joel Helander.



Captain Eli Kimberly (1792-1872) served as lighthouse keeper on Faulkner's Island for 33 years. He retired from this position in 1851 and came ashore to live at what is now 173 Whitfield Street in Guilford. This photo from the archives of Joel Helander would have been taken during Captain Kimberly's later years.

President James Monroe appointed Guilford native Eli Kimberly to the position of light keeper in 1818. Kimberly kept the light burning on Faulkner's Island for 33 years until he retired in 1851. Capt. Kimberly often risked his own personal safety to rescue sailors who had run aground on the treacherous reefs surrounding the island. Kimberly and his wife Polly, renowned for their hospitality to mariners, raised 12 children on the island. The Kimberlys kept livestock and raised vegetables. Their children were taught by a tutor who boarded with the family.

John Eli Kimberly was born in Norwalk and grew up in Connecticut. A geologist, he moved to Texas after graduating from college. While searching the Internet, he made contact with a genealogist who put him in touch with Helander. Kimberly was looking for an opportunity to spend some time with his family within sight of Faulkner's Island and Helander helped him find a summer rent with a great view of the island.



John Eli Kimberly of Midland, Texas stands before the lighthouse tended for 33 years by his great-great grandfather Captain Eli Kimberly. photo by Joel Helander.

John Kimberly's interest in the island was prompted by a gift given to him as a child in 1948. The gift was a worn American flag with 26 stars handed down through his family from his great-great grandfather, Eli Kimberly. John Kimberly believes the flag would have flown over Faulkner's Island when Captain Eli Kimberly was light keeper. This flag will be on display as part of the Bicentennial Beacon exhibit at the Henry Whitfield State Museum in Guilford.

[Back to top](#)

Capital Campaign Donation

In November, Faulkner's Light Brigade received several checks totaling \$7000 from John Alicandri of Turner Construction Company, the largest single private donation in the history of Light Brigade's campaign for the preservation of the lighthouse and island.

During last spring's fitting-out season, Alicandri, a builder and structural engineer and a business associate, decided to compete in the 'Around Long Island Sound Race' (ALIR). The race, which starts in Far Rockaway, and goes to Glen Cove, is for sailboats from 26 feet to more than 70 feet. After securing seed fundin g from Turner Construction to

cover race expenses, they began looking for sponsors. Alicandri had been intrigued to read about Faulkner's Light Brigade efforts to battle nature and time in restoring the lighthouse and nearby bluffs on the web site created by Jeremy D'Entremont (<http://www.lighthouse.cc/faulkners/index.html>).

The companies contributing include: Forrest Electric Corporation of New York; N.Y., Island Lathe & Plastering, Inc. of Holtsville, N. Y.; W & W Glass Systems of Nanuet, N.Y. and Turner Construction Company of New York, N.Y.

Alicandri has asked that the funds be earmarked for future capital purposes. He looks forward to returning to Long Island Sound during this year's sailing season to appreciate again "the rugged and enduring beauty of Faulkner's Island and the lighthouse."

Faulkner's Light Brigade treasurer Ned Cosgrove oversees a capital account earmarked only for future capital projects on the island.

[Back to top](#)

Au Revoir (but not really)

After rounding out three full terms (plus two extra years) as FLB chairman, it is time to pass the torch; time to bring in a new leader in the continuing campaign of preservation. Fred Farnsworth has graciously and enthusiastically accepted the nomination for successor chair, to be voted by the membership at the annual meeting, March 18.

Fred is the right person - - and the natural person - - for the job. During his seven years on the board of directors, Fred and myself have consistently mentored each other. He steps into the campaign as it enters a new era with lighthouse restoration and phase one of erosion control behind us. FLB faces an exciting ongoing campaign under a cooperator's agreement with the McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

To all the people with whom I have worked, whether at local, state, or federal levels, in private the or public sector, especially past and present Board members and our tireless volunteers, thank you for your patience and support. Most of all, thank you for believing in a cause!

Au Revoir, but not really. The Brigade "charge" endures and I expect to remain active at the committee level for as long as I can say that I have a love affair with Dear Old Faulkner's.

Joel Helander

[Back to top](#)

Farnsworth Accepts Nomination

Fred Farnsworth of Guilford has accepted the nomination of the board of directors of Faulkner's Light Brigade to serve as the new chairman of the organization. Farnsworth, a member of the Brigade since September, 1994, has served as membership chairman and is currently heading up the fund raising campaign for the bicentennial celebration.

Born in New Haven, he is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and holds an MBA from the University of New Haven. He was owner and president of Eastern Elevator Co., Inc. of New Haven. He currently serves as a director of Faulkner's Light Brigade and New Haven Community Investment Corporation.

He has served as a director of the New Haven Chamber of Commerce, Elevator World Magazine, Easter Seal Society for the State of Connecticut, YMCA of New Haven and as a member of the Board of Governors of the Quinnipiac Club of New Haven.

Among his many leadership positions are his service as a commissioner of the State Ethics Commission, president of the National Elevator Industry, Inc., president of the New Haven County Manufacturers Association, and president of the Kiwanis Club of New Haven. Fred and his wife Grace live on the shore and enjoy boating in Long Island Sound. The election of officers will occur at the annual membership meeting on Monday, March 18.

[Back to top](#)



A new walkway, completed in November, now connects the concrete jetty to the boathouse. A new floating dock is planned. Visitors will debark on the floating dock, then walk up a ramp to the concrete jetty and follow the new walk to the boathouse. Built by Roland Greenvall of Stony Creek, the new walk required seven days of work by a crew of three. The crew stayed overnight in the generator building during construction. Photo by Fred Farnsworth.

Faulkner's Fashions

You can now make a fashion statement as well as showing the world your commitment to preserving Faulkner's Light by wearing a distinctive Faulkner's Light Brigade tee shirt or classic polo shirt.

The tee shirt is available in ash or sand and is priced at \$16. Sizes are M,L, XL and XXL. The polo shirt comes in navy or hunter green and is priced at \$29. Sizes are S,M, L, XL and XXL.

Both are available at Fleishman's Department Store in Guilford or you can order by sending a check payable to "FLB" to Faulkner's Light Brigade c/o Dan Coraluzzi, 303 Schoolside Lane, Guilford, CT. 06437. Add \$3.50 for postage and handling. If you have any questions call Dan at 203-453-1991. All proceeds benefit FLB.

[Back to top](#)



Faulkner's Light Brigade directors (left to right) Lucien Kinsolving, Fred Farnsworth, Ginny Baltay, Bill Seekamp and Pat Clarkin march in the September, 2001 Guilford, Citizen's Day Parade. Photo by Joel Helander.

Prehistoric Faulkner's Island

by Joel Helander

Prehistorically, Faulkner's Island was under the domain of native Americans of the Algonquin linguistic group during the 10,000 years before European contact. The "contact period" occurred, 1600-1650, in New England. Did an offshore island such as Faulkner's play a role in the lives of native Americans? Did they travel there by boat? And why would they go there? While these questions may always nag us with mystery, archaeologists and historians can offer some explanations.

In 1641, Reverend Henry Whitfield and the founders of Guilford purchased Faulkner's Island from Uncas, the leader of the Mohegan tribe, as part of the transaction for land east of East River. Uncas obtained possession of this land when he married the daughter of the Hammonasset sagem, Sebequanash.

It is significant that Rev. Whitfield's earlier deed (1639) from the Squaw Sagem of the Menunkatucks was accompanied by a crude map, showing the tidal rivers and other geographic features along the shoreline. Faulkner's Island, as we know it, shows plainly with the Quinipiac name, "Massancummock," which translated, means "place of the great fish hawks." Native American language had the peculiarity of uniting various syllables of different words into one word to express a meaning.

The original pronunciation of Mash-e-quan-auk stood as a place name relating to use of the island - - not possession. It is typical of native American names and reflects their conception of property. Seventh century European immigrants understood property in terms of ownership; native Americans did not. It is for this reason that Indian references to the land were designed to give information they needed to sustain themselves. Mashequanauk was an ecological label of sorts and described natural resources available on the island i.e. fish hawks. The large bird of prey called the osprey fits the description. The English translation to "Falcon," suggesting the presence of the Peregrine Falcon, can probably be attributed to simple ignorance.

Another example of native American sensitivity to and understanding of their ecosystem is "Menunguotuck" or Menunkatuck River (West River). The Quinipiac band that camped in Guilford adopted this name for their little clan. Translated, the word Menunkatuck derives from words denoting several species of fish, known as menhaden, alewives, and whitefish.

Most scholars used to believe that the Algonquin peoples from Southern New England were essentially farmers, tied to the land by agriculture. Professor Kathleen Bragdon of the College of William and Mary has written a definitive work, *Native People of Southern New England*, (1996), which identifies a distinct ecosystem culture that was "estuarine/coastal." The abundant natural resources of the shore, including the fresh water outlets and marshes, were attractive. Besides harvesting the rich beds of shellfish, the Algonquins captured fish of all kinds using hooks, spears and nets.

Historical evidence proves that Faulkner's Island was used by native Americans. Is there archaeological evidence? The late Herbert Greenwood of Whitfield Street, Guilford, who lived and worked on the island in the employment of the U.S. government, 1916-1919, told of finding "Indian arrowheads" in the island's vegetable garden. A gentleman living on the Guilford shore reports his discovery of "three little white arrowheads" in the eroding west embankment on the island nearly 50 years ago.

The most compelling evidence of all is the intensive archaeological survey performed by an independent laboratory in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 1997-1998, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a planning element for the erosion control project on Faulkner's Island. This reconnaissance survey was required by law under the National Historic Preservation Act (P.L. 89-665 Stat.915 U.S.C. 470) since the island is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Summary results were published in an article in the 2001 Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut, by Joseph N. Waller, Jr. and A. Peter Mair, II.

In it, the authors report on the archaeological findings resulting from their study. Limited subsurface testing was conducted by excavating 68 test pits along the upper periphery of the island's east embankment. Each pit measured 20 inches square and up to 24 inches deep. Twenty three of the pits contained native American cultural materials, typically in the form of quartz chips. The most remarkable recovery was a single quartz projectile point, otherwise known as an arrowhead. It was identified as belonging to the Squibnocket triangle variety, dating to approximately 3,000-5,000 years ago. Small refuse pits containing a snail shell deposit and bones from a small mammal and fish

were also found within the test pits. Other native American artifacts recovered include fragments of fire-cracked rock and a fragment of a grinding stone.

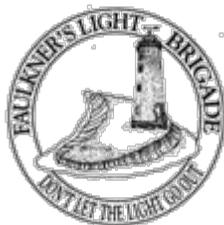
The late John P. Menta's dissertation (Southern Connecticut University, 1994) on The History of the Quinnipiac Indians is a definitive work on the subject. He observes that the archaeological evidence suggests that the prehistoric peoples of Connecticut engaged in ceremonial and religious practices, "but scholars do not know exactly what these practices were.

One of the bones found by Waléler and Mair on Faulkner's, intermingled with other prehistoric evidence, was a turtle bone. According to Joseph Bruchac, writing in Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back (1992), each of the 13 moons of the years is said to hold its own story in many native American cultures, and each is powered by the turtle, who is believed to contain the mystery of the moon in the shell of its back.

Prehistoric Faulkner's Island was used sporadically by native Americans, not for permanent campsites, but probably for short fishing and hunting trips in summertime and possibly for worship and ceremony.

[Back to top](#)

[back to top](#)



[Home](#) / [The Octagon](#) / [History](#) / [Pictures](#) / [Join](#)