

## Here's What's Been

### Happening At

### YOUR Museum!

### BOARD MEETINGS

For 2015

January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12, September 9, October 14, November 11, and December 9

### Museum Visitors

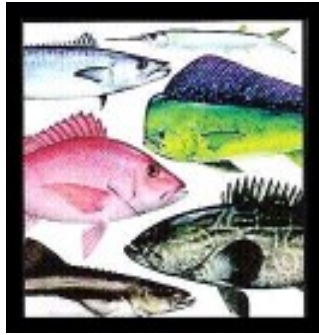
2006: 2,095  
2007: 3,527  
2008: 4,561  
2009: 5,804  
2010: 6,368  
2011: 7,131  
2012: 8,396  
2013: 8,036  
2014: 7,647

January to June 2015  
4,529 visitors

June 2015  
1,055 visitors

### Tours & Offsite Events

- ◆ April 11– Kiwanis Tour
- ◆ April 17—Kathy Blue on WEAR-TV with Laura Hussey & Jared Willets at AJ's about the Museum
- ◆ May 5—Kathy Blue spoke at FWB Kiwanis
- ◆ May 28—Copial County Ministerial Alliance Tour



# Destin History & Fishing Museum

Volume 9

Issue 4

April to June

2015 Newsletter

### From the Staff

G.B. Stern said, "Silent gratitude isn't much use to anyone." and I agree. The Museum wants to shout our thanks to a community that have supported us 200% and shared their expertise, time, materials, and money to create our Museum Historic Park Complex. We salute the 2015 Destin Forward Class, Baker Metal Works, City of Destin, DAG Architect Jack Baker, Destin Chamber of Commerce, Kerry & Kevin Veach, Mike & Brad Shoults, Hodges Bros. Lumber, Howard Group, John Gordon Roofing, Matt Ronk, Milton Truss Co., and Underground Inc.– Mike Buckingham. Drive by the museum and you will understand why! Inside the museum, our AV Presentation Room which will feature the Destin Fishing Rodeo is impressive! You can plan to utilize this room for meetings. Visit to check it out! June brought record breaking attendance to the museum with many "first time to Destin" visitors. The Museum received the 2015 TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence Award and very gracious online reviews. We look forward to a great second half to 2015 and will celebrate our 10th Anniversary on October 1st! Come visit the museum and help us continue to grow. We welcome your support as members, business sponsors, and volunteers.

Many thanks to our wonderful Museum Board of Directors for the continued support in all our endeavors!

Kathy

### Calendar of Events

April 7

Miss Destin Contestant's  
"Soda Party"

May 2

Founder's Day  
Rechristening of the Primrose  
Dedication of new Museum Historic Complex

May 14

Blessing of the Fleet

October 1

Museum 10th Anniversary  
Free Admissions

October 2, 3, & 4

Destin Seafood Festival  
Museum Fundraising Concessions  
Harry T's Booth &  
AJ's Parking Concession

December 13

29th Annual Holiday on the Harbor  
Boat Parade & Fireworks

January 30, 2016

Gumbo Contest & Silent Auction

The Destin Fishing Rodeo held their Miss Destin Contest Kickoff "Soda Party" at the Museum April 7th. It was an opportunity for the future representative of the Rodeo to learn about the history of Destin and the Rodeo. **Congratulations to Alyssa Bettinger who was crowned the 2015 Miss Destin on April 24th.**

### 2015 Miss Destin "Soda Party"



2014 Miss Destin Kira Moraca with the 2015 contestants: Adelle Adamson, Alyssa Bettinger, Lakin McKenzie Devaux, Alexandria Dougherty, Jesi Harrell, and Haylie Nicole Starr.



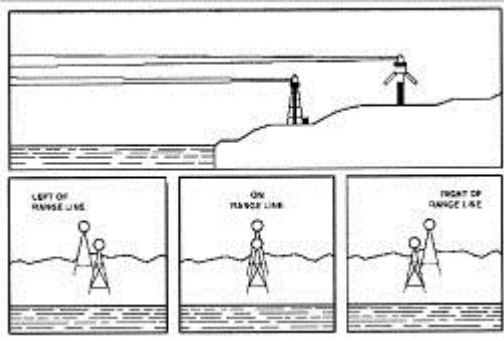
### New Additions to the John Destin Exhibit

Larry Anchors recently donated many items to the museum collections. Included were: two small hand-carved cedar sailboats, one large 5-sail hand carved schooner, a small hand-carved replica of a seine net reel with net, photos of Uncle John, autographed copy of Destin Log cover done by Sally Christensen of Uncle John, a handmade wooden tray and a large 50"X55" original painting done by Uncle John. The painting is unique to his work as it depicts men on board catching Red Snapper.



# Snapshots from the Past

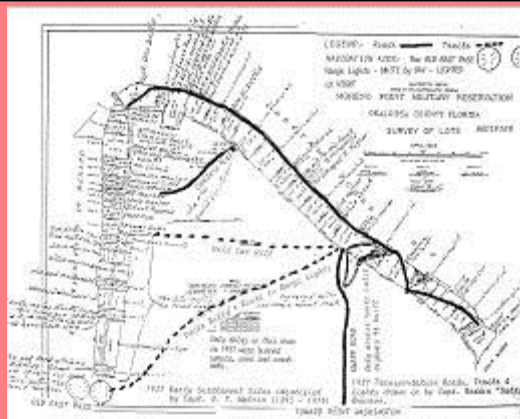
## Destin Range Lights



Range Light Diagram



Howard Marler's diagram of the Destin Range Lights  
*Lines & Leisures* Volume 4, Issue 29, 1993  
 "Kerosene Beacons Guided Ships to Destin's Safety"



Moreno Point Military Reservation Survey  
 Showing "Uncle Billy's" route to the Range Lights  
 Vivian Mettee's "Roots Run Deep" p.44-48

Leading lights (also known as range lights) are a pair of light beacons, used in navigation to indicate a safe passage for vessels entering a shallow or dangerous channel. At night, the lights are a form of leading line that can be used for safe navigation. The beacons consist of two lights that are separated in distance and elevation, so that when they are aligned, with one above the other, they provide a bearing. At night, when viewed from a ship, the two lights only become aligned vertically when a vessel is positioned on the correct bearing. The first set of range lights in the United States were privately established in Massachusetts in 1788.

Captain Howard Marler drew a map to show where the kerosene beacon lights were located for Old East Pass and in Choctawhatchee Bay near Destin. In the August 25, 1989 and March 11, 1993 "Lines & Leisures" article "Kerosene Beacons Guided Ships to Destin's Safety", Captain Marler tells of his firsthand experience in his youth helping to tend the range lights. He and Ben Marler would help William T. Marler on his weekly rounds to tend the wooden slatted pile structure beacons which held the kerosene lanterns. Kerosene was shipped by freight boat from Pensacola to W.T.Marler's dock on the Bay. There was a little house at the two land beacons where the kerosene was stored. The beacons would have to be lowered from their perch to clean the glass chimneys, trim the wicks, and fill them with kerosene. Then they would be lifted to be set back in place. The supplies would have to be taken over the sand trail from WT's house on the Bay to the beacons on the Gulf side of the peninsula. The higher rear light was located in the vicinity of where the "Green Knight" used to stand and where CVS Pharmacy is today. The front light was located down below the bluff by the beach. Howard and Ben would wear harnesses with a hole cut to fit around their necks, resting on their shoulders, with a can of kerosene hanging from each side. W.T. Marler took on this task in 1902. In addition to the two range lights on the high sand dunes, he also had to row to the other buoyed range lights. These two lights were named the West Channel and North Channel range lights. After serving the Coast Guard in this capacity for 34 years, he finally worked up to a salary of \$29.50 a month. The Lighthouse Service merged with the Coast Guard in 1939.

After his retirement, W.T.'s son, Captain Edwin M. Marler took over the duty of keeping the flame of guidance burning bright. At that time, the Marler responsibility was for the Destin lights only. The Santa Rosa Sound lights for this section were in the hands of the Brooks family of Fort Walton Beach and the Boggy Bayou lights were in the hands of the Wallace Spence family. When Captain Edwin Marler's health prevented him from boarding and climbing the buoys and structures, his son, Eugene Marler took over this important job.

In 1960, Eugene Marler took over the Santa Rosa lights from the Brook Family and the Boggy Bayou lights from the Spence Family in 1962. The responsibility now covered a total of 36 lights. Captain Eugene bought the 30 foot gasoline propelled craft the "Three Boys" from Jewell Melvin as a light tender. The "Three Boys" was built in 1958 by local boat builder Lum Thompson. To tend all of the lights was a full days run from Destin and literally took "from dark to dark" to complete. He completed this task every two weeks, not counting the extra trips that were required when a light was reported out. His job as a civilian lamplighter came under the Treasury Department and his immediate superior was the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. All of the supplies, lights, batteries, motors, etc. were supplied by the Coast Guard and all reports were filed with the maintenance with the district office of the Coast Guard. This was a proud heritage of keeping that light burning bright for the seafarer. No more welcome sight ever greets the homeward bound mariner as he heads in from the sea, than the beckoning glow of the harbor light. This important job was handled in this manner until modern technology relieved the lamplighter from his burden.

## Founder's Day 2015

### Dedication of the Old Post Office & Re-christening of the restored seine boat "Primrose"



The highlight of Founder's Day was the grand opening of the new historic park complex. The restored Primrose and Old Post Office were moved from the Community Center side of Stahlman Avenue to the Museum side. This new addition will enhance the visitor's experience and has expanded the realm of the programming that the Museum can offer the community. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Shane Moody, Mayor Mel Ponder, boat builder Matt Ronk, who helped restore the Primrose, Dave Steele the Museum Board President, Jason Belcher of the Destin Forward Class, and Museum Executive Director Jean Melvin joined in the re-christening of the Primrose program. This new amenity for the community of Destin is due to multiple donors and organizations working together for funds. These funds were used to build a new structure to house the Primrose, restore the Primrose and Old Post Office, and create a cohesive walkway around the Primrose and Old Post Office, and move them to their new home.

Jason Belcher built a case made from wood salvaged from the 2015 restoration of the Primrose. The case holds the fragments of the bottle used to re-christen the seine boat and the engraved bible that Rev. Mike Hesse read from during the ceremony. Jason and Christina Belcher made this donation in honor of Christina's parents and long time Destin residents Albert and Patricia Sperier.



The DH&FM Historical Park includes a landscaped area for memorial benches. Memorial donations made in the name of these three museum supporters have added a serene seating area to view the historic seine boat "Primrose" and the Old Post Office.



Zovak "Jerry" Najarian was a leader in all aspects of Destin's growth. He was active in many Destin civic organizations including the Destin Chamber of Commerce, Destin Community Center, Fishing Rodeo, Red Cross, Destin Water Users, and Museum. He served on the City of Destin's Planning Commission, Waterways Committee, and as a City Councilman. He received numerous awards for his services to the community. He wrote the first economic survey of the Destin and South Walton County area for the Chamber of Commerce in 1973.

Reddin "Captain Salty" Brunson was the last seine boat captain from the original old Destin days. He was a partner with Fred Jones in East Pass Marina. Locals saw Captain Salty as a living historian of the Destin Fishing Rodeo and Destin's history. He was a fisherman all his life until he retired. He was quite a craftsman and built many pieces of furniture while in his 80s and 90s. In 2004, he refurbished the seine boat, "Primrose" at the age of 91. He was an avid supporter of the Museum as well as a promoter of "The World's Luckiest Fishing Village".



Mike Long was a long time supporter of the museum from the planning days in 2003 to the opening October 1, 2005. Mike gave so much time and money to the Museum and helped create this wonderful community amenity that preserves Destin's heritage. He took active volunteer roles in every event. He helped with the initial fundraising efforts, building exhibits, and cleaning artifacts. He was always on call to work in any capacity needed. He served on the Museum Board, Executive Board, and held the offices of Vice President and President.



*Memorials*

destinhistoryandfishingmuseum.org

### Destin History & Fishing Museum

#### Museum Board of Directors

**Executive Board** President: Dave Steele Vice President: Don Rogers

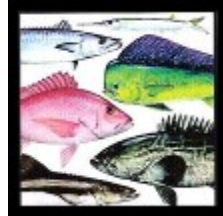
Secretary: Terry Long Treasurer: John Lefler

**General Board:** Richard Derek, Dan Empson, Norm Hall, Tina Harbuck, Terri Hensley, Dan Martin, Lloyd Taylor, Russell Wamble

**Executive Director** Jean Melvin **Associate Director** Kathy Marler Blue

**Museum Docents:** Dave Fraser and Carole Marler

**Newsletter Writer and Editor** Kathy Marler Blue



DHFM  
P.O. Box 548  
Destin, FL 32540-0548

**PLEASE MAIL YOUR DONATION TO:  
DESTIN HISTORY & FISHING MUSEUM  
108 STAHLMAN AVE.  
DESTIN, FL 32541**

Phone: 850-837-6611

**Staff E-mails**

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Kathy Marler Blue  
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Website:  
destinhistoryandfishingmuseum.org

**TAX TIME IS COMING !!!  
LOOKING FOR A TAX DEDUCTION**

*Donation Tax Receipts are available for your donations to the Destin History & Fishing Museum.*

Tuesday - Saturday  
10am to 4pm

Admission: Adults: \$5  
Seniors & Military: \$4  
Students: \$3  
Kids 6 & Under  
and Members : Free



### Join or Renew Your Membership Today

Destin History and Fishing Museum is a non profit organization whose members are dedicated to preserving, documenting, and sharing the complete history of Destin. There are limitless ways you, your friends, and associates can be part of realizing these efforts. Now more than ever we can use your support. **Your donation or membership is tax deductible.** Please fill out the form below and mail it to the museum.

### Yes, I Give My Support!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership/Amount \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ If you would like to pay by credit card please call the Museum and have your credit card ready.

**Mail to: Destin History and Fishing Museum P.O. Box 548 Destin, Florida 32540-0548**

Thank you. Without your faithful and generous donations and efforts, the museum would not exist today.