



FLB board member Bob Walsh chats with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service officers at the 2003 Open House. This year's Annual Open House on Sep. 18-19 will include PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION to the island for the first time, but reservations are required (see p. 3).

# FAULKNER'S LIGHT BRIGADE

*A Commission of the Guilford Preservation Alliance*

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**THE CTAGON**  
 Published by Faulkner's Light Brigade  
 P.O. Box 199, Guilford, CT 06437  
 Richard S. DiNardo, Editor  
 Mary Repetti, Graphic Design  
 Lyrob Graphics, Typesetting  
 Rob Stevens, Printing

*Contributions to the Brigade are tax deductible*

Checks should be made payable to: **The Faulkner's Light Brigade** C/O The Guilford Preservation Alliance (FLB - GPA) and mailed to: P. O. Box 199, Guilford, CT 06437

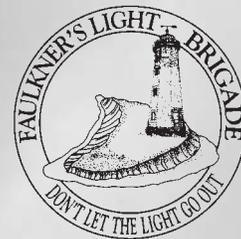


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New Membership                       Membership Renewal  
 I am interested in helping the Brigade as a volunteer.     Enclosed is my company's matching gift form.



# THE OCTAGON

Newsletter of the  
Faulkner's Light Brigade  
Fall 2004

*A Commission of the  
Guilford Preservation Alliance*

The harsh marine environment around Faulkner's Island takes its toll on the lighthouse. Schooner *Quinnipiack* passes in the distance.  
Photo by Rob Beecher

## Light Brigade Maintenance Committee Hits the Beach

Few familiar with the sea will be surprised to learn that even as we celebrated our momentary triumphs at the Faulkner's bicentennial of 2002, the tireless forces of sun, salt, and wind had already renewed their quiet assault on our island. By December 2003, nearly five years had passed since the initial restoration of the lighthouse was completed. It was clearly time for an inspection, but by whom was she to be inspected? The original Lighthouse Restoration Committee created by the Town of Guilford back in 1992 had been disbanded. The resources of the U.S. Coast Guard, which owns Faulkner's Lighthouse and maintains its beacon as a navigation aid, are strained by the demands of homeland security. This was not the optimal moment to divert their attention to historic preservation.

Concerned that a failure to keep up with required maintenance could put the decade-long effort to preserve the lighthouse in jeopardy, Faulkner's Light Brigade Chairman Fred Farnsworth and the board members felt they had to lend a hand. Over the winter they created a Lighthouse Maintenance Committee, and charged it with conducting a formal "condition

assessment" of the lighthouse structure. Noted architect and restorationist Fred Vogt of Noyes-Vogt Architects agreed to chair the committee.

On a brisk day at the end of April Mr. Vogt headed out to Faulkner's Island with Mr. Farnsworth and fellow committee members George Gdovin (Guilford Town Building Inspector), Joel Helander (FLB Chairman Emeritus), and board member Bob Walsh. They were joined by Bill Austin of Robison Construction, the firm that recently restored and solar-powered the island's generator house for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

On balance, the news was good. The exterior walls of "Chatham" brownstone (from the original name of Portland, CT whence it was quarried) are mildewed and must be painted, but the mortared joints are in excellent condition. The new pine casement windows installed in 1999 were saturated with moisture and also in need of paint, but structurally sound. The light-duty hardware holding them in place, however, had corroded in the salt air. The team removed all of the windows for repair on shore, which will include marine

*Continues on page 2*



**D-Day: The Light Brigade begins its amphibious assault against Decay.**



Roseate Terns



**Captain Mike Infantino of Stony Creek brings the inspection crew ashore aboard *Sea Mist*.**

## Committee Hits the Beach

*Continues from page 1*

brass and stainless replacement hinges specified by Mr. Vogt. The refurbished windows will be reinstalled after August 15 (once tern nesting season is over) in time for the Annual Open House (see p. 3 for details).

As for the lighthouse interior, the iron wainscoting, window glazing, and ceiling vault in the lantern gallery were found to be in superb shape. Although an ingenious venting system still exists to carry air through a hollow chamber between its exterior and interior walls, the lighthouse suffers from poor ventilation and mildew. To increase airflow, the bottom window is kept open during the warm months, secured by a stainless steel grate. The original cast-iron spiral staircase and Newell post are structurally sound, but must be repainted after the remnants of earlier lead pigments are stripped away or encapsulated. A joint on the iron ship's ladder that secures it to the base of the lantern gallery has also failed and must be re-welded.

All in all not a bad report, but the conditions cited by the Lighthouse Maintenance Committee are both necessary and costly to repair. Faulkner's Light Brigade has made a commitment to assist the Coast Guard in the long-term preservation of this magnificent lighthouse. Your membership dollars and contributions will make this good work possible in the months ahead.

Text by Richard DiNardo Photos by Fred Farnsworth



**The lighthouse's exterior walls need paint, but her stonework is sound.**



**Lead paint must be removed from the spiral staircase before repainting, but the cast-iron is solid.**



**Fred Vogt and George Gdovin inspect the interior brick walls. The moisture and mildew damage is mostly cosmetic.**



**When the going gets tough...Bob Walsh, George Gdovin, and Joel Helander get to work.**



**Fred Vogt removes a window for repair on shore.**

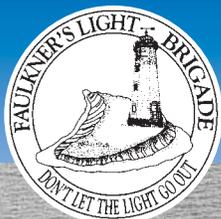


**Bill Austin lends a hand... or two.**



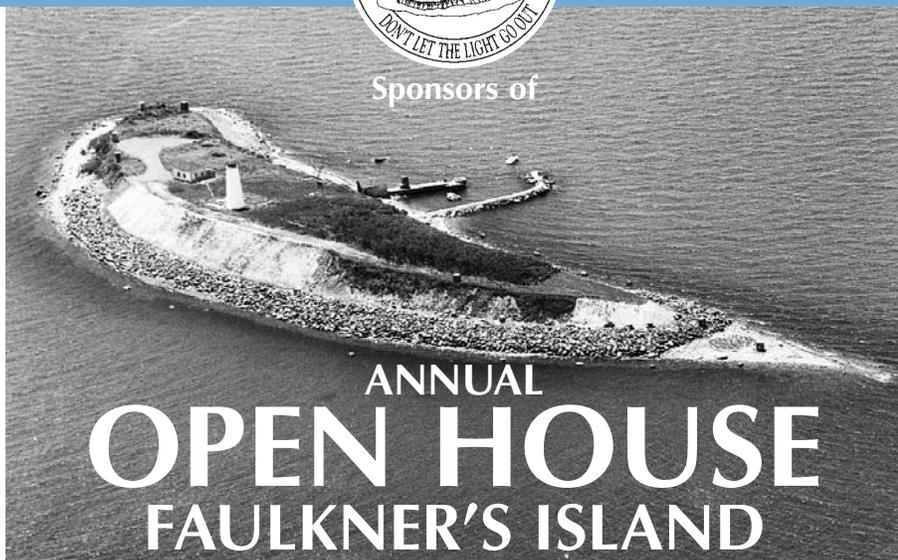
**The windows will be refitted with marine-grade hinges.**

UNITED STATES  
COAST GUARD



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# ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE FAULKNER'S ISLAND

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2004 • 10:00am – 3:00pm**



Private vessels should anchor outside (west of) the wharf basin and take their own dinghies to shore or hail the water taxi. *The Sachem*, a 21 foot, 21 passenger water taxi, will be available to transfer passengers to the floating dock on the Island for \$2.00. The Island and Lighthouse will be open to the public both days weather permitting. Box lunches prepared by the Guilford Food Center will be available for purchase on the Island.

## Public Transportation Available

**Public Transportation** will be available from the Guilford Town Marina aboard the *MV Glory*, a 40 foot, 31 passenger, former Navy liberty boat, which will make 2 trips to the Island each day. **Reservations are required and space will be limited. For more information call (203) 453-8400 and mail your \$20.00 check to: Faulkner's Light Brigade, PO Box 199, Guilford, CT 06437.**



(203) 453-8400

[www.lighthouse.cc/FLB/openhouse2004.htm](http://www.lighthouse.cc/FLB/openhouse2004.htm)

Faulkner's Light Brigade, PO Box 199, Guilford, CT 06437

## U.S. COAST GUARD ASKS FOR COAST WATCH VOLUNTEERS

Coast Watch is a community outreach program developed by the Coast Guard and FBI in Maine that encourages citizens to help protect our shores. It asks those who work, live, or play near the coast to report certain suspicious activities. For more information call 800-774-8724 in CT, 800-697-8724 on Long Island, or visit the USCG website at [www.uscg.mil](http://www.uscg.mil)

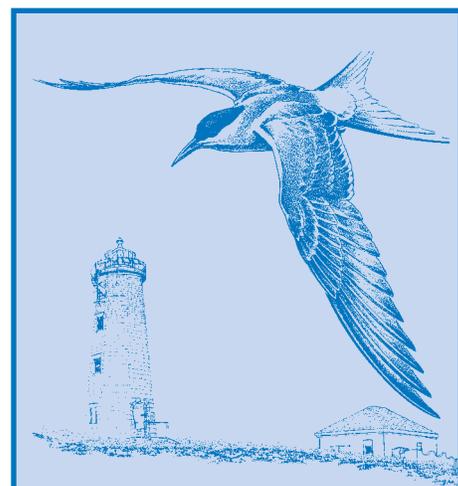


In late September, the Guilford Fire Department answered a distress call from two boaters run aground on the North Reef of Faulkner's Island. In this photo one of the victims is carried ashore at the town marina. Neither survived, and their vessel was never recovered.

Photo by Fred Farnsworth



FLB Chairman Fred Farnsworth (in the bow) gives the crew of schooner *Quinnipiack* a tour of the island at the 2003 Open House. Photo by Joel Helander



Early reports indicate that nesting pairs of the endangered Roseate Tern have increased this year after a decline in 2003