

Loxahatchee River Historical Society Quarterly

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The Loxahatchee River Historical Society (LRHS) is the 501(c)3 non-profit organization that operates Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum.

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Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, 1963 (colorized).

A Museum Building with a History of its Own

For decades the two-story building at the northeast end of the US 1 bridge was simply known as the old Coast Guard barracks. The true origin of the structure was largely unknown until research prior to the building's 21st century restoration. New information about the building during nearly 80 years of existence is still being uncovered through staff research and by people reaching out to our historical society to share their connection to the building's past.

The US Navy first established a "wireless telegraph" station at Jupiter in 1905 and the radio station grew over the following decades. As World War II loomed, Naval Radio Station Jupiter became Station J and gained a new role: high frequency direction finding (HF/DF or "Huff Duff"). Radio transmissions, especially those from German submarines, were intercepted with their contents recorded and a bearing taken on their source. Combined with bearings from other stations, the location of the transmission could be triangulated.

In mid-1941, the Navy contracted Jack S. Willson of West Palm Beach to construct a six-apartment "Married Men's Quarters" (MMQ) at Station J for senior married radiomen. Each apartment had 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, a kitchen / dining room, a living room with a fireplace, and access to a screened porch facing the Loxahatchee River. The building was used for its intended purpose throughout the war.

On July 15, 1945, the Navy transferred Station J to the Coast Guard where it became DF Station Jupiter. The Coast Guard used the

station's direction finding capabilities primarily to locate the sources of distress calls, helping direct ships and planes during peacetime rescue operations. The MMQ continued to be used for family housing during this time.

The US Air Force used this building from 1951 to 1954 as part of Jupiter Auxiliary Air Force Base. This was a tracking station that monitored missile tests from Cape Canaveral. The tracking equipment was mostly located on the north side of the lighthouse reservation (now Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area), but several former naval radio station buildings were also used by USAF personnel. This included the Married Men's Quarters which served as a mix of family housing, bachelor barracks, and classroom space. The USAF contracted range operations to PanAm in 1954, with use of the former radio station buildings continuing until at least 1958.



The Married Men's Quarters as it appeared during use by DF Station Jupiter (1945-1947). Photo by CWO Otto Freytag, station commander.

A Museum Building... continued



The Married Men's Quarters in 1950. The abandoned tennis court in foreground was built for Navy and Marine Corps personnel during World War II. (Coast Guard Historian's Office)

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard pondered what to do with the former naval radio station. In 1961, as they devised plans for the new Loran Station Jupiter, Coast Guard planners considered remodeling the MMQ into 4 larger apartments or demolishing the building entirely to make way for new single-family housing along the riverfront. Fortunately, the building was spared, but it sat shuttered, unused, and occasionally vandalized for much of the 1960s.

Jupiter Mayor-turned-County Commissioner Robert F. Culpepper and Mayor Robert J. Nichols lobbied the Coast Guard to lease property along US 1 to the Town of Jupiter. An agreement was finally reached in 1968, creating the 22-acre Lighthouse Park, including the former Married Men's Quarters. The Coast Guard condemned the building and prepared to demolish it prior to the lease agreement being finalized, but Culpepper and Nichols were successful in their efforts to have the building saved and repaired. A few years later they also successfully opposed a proposal to sell the building

to Chapman's School of Seamanship. Starting in 1969, the Town of Jupiter began subleasing the six former apartments to various local civic groups.

The east wing of the building was originally used as the offices and dispatch center for the North County First Aid Squad. This volunteer ambulance squad moved to a new building on Seabrook Road in Tequesta in 1973. Then a senior club, The Pacers, used the space for their meetings. The Lighthouse Visitor Center opened in the east wing in 1994 when the Loxahatchee River Historical Society began offering lighthouse tours under a lease with the Coast Guard.

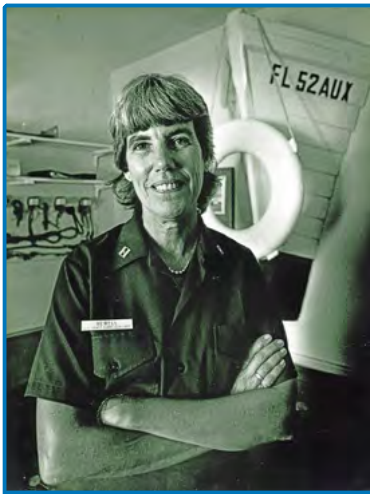
The west wing was originally used as meeting space for the local Jaycees (Junior Chamber) civic organization. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Charles Derderian taught karate there. The classes were offered by donation, and most of the students were teenagers. Many locals still have fond memories of "Sensei Chuck."

A Museum Building... continued



Chuck Derderian's karate dojo in the 1980s.
Photo by Bob Shanley.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 52 was one of the longest tenants of the building. Formed in 1961, Flotilla 52 used the west upstairs section for meetings and boating safety classes. The organization now meets in Burt Reynolds Park, continuing their important boater education mission.



Diane Newell, Flotilla 52 Commander in the late 1980s, poses in front of the mounted boat bow that was a prominent feature of the Auxiliary's meeting space.
Photo by Bob Shanley.

The upstairs east section was first used by the Izaak Walton League (IWL) Loxahatchee River Chapter for meetings and offices. Led by Bill Lund and Harry Kuck, this group worked to preserve the Loxahatchee River and at its peak was among the largest IWL chapters in the country. In 1981, this

section became the offices and meeting space for the Loxahatchee River Historical Society.

The downstairs center-east section was originally used by the Jupiter-Tequesta Athletic Association (JTAA) to store sporting equipment. However, the downstairs center sections, and the long porch facing the river, were primarily used by the Jupiter Inlet Marine Science Center. This environmental center was one of several established by the Palm Beach County School District in the late 1960s along with Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton, Pine Jog Environmental Center in West Palm Beach, and a center in Belle Glade. In addition to field trips for elementary and middle schools and science labs for high school students, the Jupiter center held weekend programs and summer camps. It offered a variety of fun and educational activities including touch tanks, cast and dip netting, snorkeling, lifesaving lessons, and arts & crafts.

The Jupiter Inlet Marine Science Center was founded by John C. Beakley in 1968, assisted by Mary Webb, a Jupiter High School science teacher. When Beakley died in 1972, Webb succeeded him as the marine center's director for the next seven years.



Mary Webb shares the sound of a seashell with Christopher Hollis at a summer camp in 1974.
(Palm Beach Times)

A Museum Building continued



A summer camp scene at Jupiter Inlet Marine Science Center in the mid-1970s. Courtesy of the Webb Family.

Christine Dague Webb praised Helen, her mother-in-law, as “an amazing lady devoted to family, passionate about her work, and loved by everyone who knew her.” Helen wrote school science curriculum, contributed articles to the journal of the Florida Association of Science Teachers (FAST), and served on the boards of several science education associations.

Later directors of the Marine Science Center included Steve Bass, Pamela Brasch, Russ Counter, and Nicole Pucciarelli. Eleanor Fletcher, the famed “Turtle Lady of Juno Beach” and founder of what is today Loggerhead Marinelife Center, would stop by to teach children about sea turtles. Local teachers worked at the summer camp. Among them was Red Shirar, a history teacher at Jupiter High School, who gave water safety lessons in the Loxahatchee River as part of the center’s offerings. When Red later volunteered at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum he was met on more than a few occasions by visitors who would proudly declare “You taught me to swim here!”

When the Palm Beach County School district struggled with funding in the 1990s, the Loxahatchee River District stepped in with financial support. The Marine Science Center closed in 2004. It reopened in Burt Reynolds Park in 2008 as the Loxahatchee River Center, now operated entirely by the Loxahatchee River District.

In 2004, the Town of Jupiter received a land patent to Lighthouse Park, contingent on its continued use for recreation. Shortly thereafter the Town of Jupiter funded an extensive restoration of the former Married Mens’ Quarters. The building reopened on December 7, 2006 as part of Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum, operated by the Loxahatchee River Historical Society (LRHS). In 2008, the park was included within the designated boundaries of Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA). LRHS plans for the historic World War II building to eventually become a dedicated local military history museum, once other facilities are constructed at ONA to house the LRHS offices, archives, gift shop, and exhibit space for non-military history.

Thanks to the Webb Family, Bobby Culpepper, Brad Mayo, and Bob Shanley for their contributions to this article. Other information comes from the LRHS Freytag, Lund, and Courier Collections, and research conducted by LRHS staff at the National Archives and Air Force Historical Research Agency and in the Palm Beach Post digital archives.

If you can share photos, memories, or other information about the history of this building please contact LRHS Historian Josh Liller at jliller@jupiterlighthouse.org

Shuey's Inn (1936-1958)

Frank McGinnis opened McGinnis' Fishing Camp in 1930, probably only the second such local establishment, after the DuBois Fishing Camp.



In 1935, McGinnis sold most of the property to Otto "Shuey" Schumacher. However, Frank retained the fishing pier with its associated charter boat operations and fish market until around 1941. Schumacher renamed the restaurant Shuey's Inn, expanded the menu, and added cottages. By 1940 he'd also added a trailer court, decorative garden, and Texaco station – all of which he promoted through a series of postcards.

Circa 1940 a 3 bedroom, 2 bath cottage at Shuey's cost \$4.50/day. Breakfast averaged 35-cents and dinner 50-cents.



Shuey's Inn (1936-1958) continued

During part of World War II, Marine Corps guards assigned to Naval Radio Station Jupiter (Station J) resided in Shuey's cottages due to a lack of housing at the station.



John and Jennie Ziegler purchased Shuey's after Otto Schumacher died in 1945. They kept the name, but the restaurant and cottages closed in 1958. Shuey's Trailer Park lasted until 1976.



The former Shuey's property is now occupied by several office buildings and part of Jupiter Cove condos. Some of the dock pilings remained visible until their removal as part of the US 1 bridge replacement project.

Postcard images
courtesy of the
LRHS Gladwin
Family Collection.

Jupiter's Mackay Radio Station

A quarter-mile dirt road that still bears the name "Radio Road" and part of the commercial building at 400 Toney Penna Road are the remnants of a commercial ship-to-shore wireless station that once operated in Jupiter.

Silver baron John William Mackay first entered the telegraph business in 1884. His son, Clarence, founded the Mackay Radio & Telegraph Company in 1925. Although most radio communication companies by this point were using voice transmissions, Mackay continued to use only Morse code, much like modern Ham radio enthusiasts.

In 1929, Mackay purchased 20 acres at what was then the south end of Jupiter. Construction began late that year at a cost of \$100,000. The station consisted of two 300-ft steel towers 700 ft apart, with a 50x100 ft one-story concrete building centered between them. The Virginia Bridge Company manufactured the prefabricated antennas. The operations building was designed to be hurricane-proof and contained four transmitters. To access the station a road was built due west from Old Dixie Highway along the

south edge of the Pine Gardens subdivision. It would later be extended further west to the fringes of Jones Creek slough, providing access to a few private residences. (Military Trail was not in use at that time.) The road was given the obvious moniker Radio Road.

The Jupiter Mackay Radio Station began operation on 28 Feb 1930. The station had a chief and three assistants; none lived on site. Telegraph wires along Old Dixie Highway connected the wireless station to the Postal Telegraph Company, a Mackay subsidiary. VP/GM A. Y. Tuel and Chief Engineer Haraden Pratt traveled from New York to Florida to dedicate the new station which had the callsign WMR.



William Carlin White (second from left) helped build the Mackay stations in Jupiter and on Long Island (pictured here). He later put his radio knowledge to use during almost three decades as an officer in the U.S. Navy. (LRHS Carlin Collection)

Jupiter's Mackay Radio Station continued

The Jupiter station primarily communicated with civilian ship traffic in the southern Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. Another station on Long Island, New York handled radio traffic in the northern Atlantic. Stations in San Francisco, Portland, and Manila covered the Pacific Ocean. In addition to passing mundane communications, the station also broadcast weather reports and passed on emergency messages to the Coast Guard.

On many occasions the *Palm Beach Post* carried maritime news provided by the Mackay Station. In 1932 the newspaper praised the Jupiter station:

Excellent service was rendered the community by the Mackay radio station at Jupiter on Sunday and Monday in helping disseminate correct storm information. Messages on the storm from ships were used by the station in locating the path of the storm, and information was given to the Red Cross, newspapers, and other central agencies.

According to Kenneth Patterson, the station sent and received messages 24/7. Wireless operators worked 8-hour shifts. "There would be 50 to 75 messages in a busy shift," he recalled.

The station's equipment was upgraded in 1939. The following year the International Telephone & Telegraphy Company (ITT) acquired the Mackay family of companies.

The station suffered several tragedies. Swedish-born Inar Ture Blomdahl was one of the early radio operators. He married Lucy Savage of Jupiter in 1933, but early the next year Inar came down with a serious illness and died, only 32 years old. He is buried in what is now

Riverside Memorial Park. In 1942. Adolph Weik was 38 years old and had been station manager for 7 years when he committed suicide in his car in the station's parking lot. He is buried in West Palm Beach's Woodlawn Cemetery.

Oral history states that Naval Radio Station Jupiter (Station J) took over operation of the Mackay station during World War II. No primary sources have been found to elaborate on how the station operated under Navy jurisdiction.

In 1945, the Navy returned the station to the Mackay company. James H. Raby was assigned as station chief until its closure. The Raby family lived in rented cottages - first at Turner Quay and later at Southard Point (now Anchorage Point). His son, Jim, recalls being amazed at the size of the vacuum tubes used by the radio equipment.

The Jupiter Mackay station was discontinued in late 1950. The steel towers were cut down early the next year with acetylene torches, to be repurposed in Brentwood, New York. Jim Raby recalls school ending early that day so the students could make a short walk down Loxahatchee Drive to watch the towers come down. The concrete antenna foundations were still around as late as the 1970s, but were eventually removed to make way for commercial development. The concrete operations building remained and was quickly sold.

Neil DuBois acquired the former Mackay station building as one of his early real estate investments. He operated it as DuBois Hall in the early 1950s, a rental venue for hosting dances and other social events. In 1967, former pro golfer Toney Penna purchased the building and converted it for use by his eponymous golf club manufacturing company. Penna's business partners included entertainers and avid amateur

Jupiter's Mackay Radio Station continued



Gov. Claude Kirk, entertainer Perry Como, and comedian-actor Bob Hope join Toney Penna to dedicate the new golf club manufacturing facility in the former Mackay radio building in 1967. (Florida State Archives)

golfers Perry Como and Bob Hope. Como, Hope, and Gov. Claude Kirk attended the dedication on 28 Feb 1968 - 38 years to the day since the establishment of the Mackay Radio Station.

Other than its small north-south tail, Radio Road was renamed Toney Penna Drive. The section from Old Dixie Highway to Perry Avenue (now Military Trail) was realigned slightly south when the road was paved. Toney Penna Drive grew westward as Jupiter developed over the next two decades. Like Radio Road, it now serves as a reminder of a part of Jupiter's past.

LRHS has no photos of the Jupiter Mackay Radio Station. We greatly appreciate any photos or memories you can share of the station, or its later incarnations as DuBois Hall or the Toney Penna Golf Company.

Station Managers

1930-1935	Robert M. Hughes
1935-1942	Adolph L. Weik
1942-1945	unidentified US Navy personnel
1945-1950	James H. Raby

Other Radio Operators (incomplete list)

David L. Cawman (1930-1942)
Inar Ture Blomdahl (1930-1934)
R. L. Dinsmore (1934)
John Savage (1940-1941)
Enrique Gorbea (1946)
Kenneth C. Patterson (1946?-1950)

Plumosus City

The Town of Jupiter incorporated in 1925 and the little municipality was busy in its formative years, including a nine-man town council despite a population of less than two hundred. What it lacked in population it made up for in size: from the county line to modern Indian Creek Parkway, and from the ocean to west to modern Delaware Blvd. When the new town levied property taxes, even on agricultural land, the fern growers had enough.

In 1929, disgruntled residents successfully got a court order allowing their property to be excluded from the Town of Jupiter on the grounds it was not receiving municipal benefits. Taking its name from the asparagus plumosus ferns grown by the Pennocks and other residents, Plumosus City incorporated on May 22, 1930. The new “city” consisted of the Pennock Plantation and other land along Center Street and Loxahatchee River Road. At the time there were less than 100 residents in the breakaway municipality, including a mere 28 qualified male voters. Plumosus City was about six square miles.

The inaugural town officers consisted of: Amos E. Bassett, Mayor; Lloyd V. Minear, Town Clerk; Torrence Force, Town Marshall; Arthur Ray Roebuck Sr., Town Attorney. The town council was a Board of Aldermen consisting of Bassett, Minear, William T. Bogardus, Walter H. Stephens, and J. F. “Fred” Turner Jr. The depth of dissatisfaction is underscored by the fact that Bassett, Bogardus, Stephens, and Turner had been members of the Jupiter town council until 1930, with Turner serving as mayor!

The most important order of business was of course that the Plumosus City aldermen all agreed there would be no municipal tax and “whatever expenses are incurred are taken care of by subscription.” Plumosus City officials served without pay and there were no municipal buildings.

In 1932, the Town of Jupiter unsuccessfully filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the exclusion of property from the town limits in 1929. Jupiter’s attorney argued the residents who sought exclusion were indeed receiving police protection and that much of their property had also received electric lighting.

Fred Turner succeeded Bassett as Plumosus City’s mayor, probably in 1932, and held the position for the rest of the municipality’s existence. Plumosus City apparently held its last election 1940, with Turner and Bassett being reelected Mayor and Town Clerk, respectively. The last Board of Aldermen meeting was probably in 1934.

Plumosus City was largely forgotten until 1957 when Raymond E. Olson found himself in a dispute with the Palm Beach County Zoning Commission over his attempts to develop the Eastview Manor subdivision from former Pennock cattle pasture. County officials doubted that Plumosus City really existed. Olson developed Eastview Manor with inadequate drainage and went bankrupt before finishing the subdivision. With no developer and no municipality, frustrated county officials left trying to fix Olson’s mess.

Plumosus City continued

Early the next year a meeting was held at Olson Recreation Hall in Eastview Manor to discuss “reactivation” of Plumosus City. Mayor Turner, Clerk Bassett, Lloyd V. Minear, and Frank J. Laird Sr. were among the approximately 90 attendees. Opinions seemed mixed and a referendum was planned. The result was a petition to the state legislature to dissolve Plumosus City, and a counter-petition to reactivate it. The legislature dissolved Plumosus City on June 18, 1959.

A curious postscript: with Plumosus City’s end looming, residents of Pennock Point expressed interest in forming their own village. They included Shirley Pennock Floyd, Dr. V. D. Stone, William G. Sauter, John R. Wilson (of Wilson Palm Gardens), and Kurt Pietsch. The proposed village would have included most of the former Plumosus City north of Center Street plus the Loxahatchee River Road area up to the county line. Nothing apparently ever came of this plan. However, Pennock Point and the Loxahatchee River Road corridor remain unincorporated to this day.



Eastview Manor (foreground) and Penn Park under development circa 1958. Eastview Manor has since become part of the Town of Jupiter, but Penn Park remains unincorporated - part of the legacy of Plumosus City. (LRHS Carlin Collection)

U.S. 1 Bridge Project



Staff and Board Changes

Lighthouse Staff Changes

The LRHS Board voted to make **Katrina Heller** permanent Executive Director. She had been serving in an interim capacity since Jamie Stuve's retirement last fall. Katrina joined LRHS in 2015, serving as Visitor Services Manager then Director of Operations.

Kathleen Glover has retired after two decades with the Loxahatchee River Historical Society. She originally joined our historical society in 2002-2003 as Administrative Assistant and Program Coordinator before leaving for the Hibel Art Museum. Glover returned to LRHS in 2006 to be Director of Marketing, a position she held until her departure. She was also Assistant Director 2011-2018. In addition to marketing and media, Kathleen's projects have included helping develop our "Five Thousand Years on the Loxahatchee" permanent museum exhibit (with Jamie Stuve and Lynn Drake) and organizing many of our past events, especially Rock The Light fundraisers and the Wild & Scenic Film Festival. LRHS is grateful for her many contributions and wishes her well.

Kelsey Côté is now Marketing & Communications Manager, stepping up from Assistant Operations Manager & Social Media Manager. She has been with LRHS full-time since 2018. She is one of three current staff members who started as high school volunteer and later worked as summer interns, then returned as full-time staff after college.

Steve Ventimiglia has joined us as Volunteer Coordinator. Steven Morales remains with LRHS, shifting over to our Education & Programs department where he will work with Darby Brown.

Olivia Gibbs is our new Visitor Services Supervisor. That role will include managing our gift shop.

Jessica McGraw has been our part-time Development Assistant since 2018. She is leaving our staff this summer to pursue a career as a mental health therapist. We wish her the best and we're sure she will help many people. **Christina Kenny**, who was our Visitor Services Weekend Assistant in 2021, has rejoined our staff to succeed Jessica.

LRHS Board of Directors

Dr. Robin Sykes has resigned from our Board after just over a decade, including serving terms as Vice Chair and Board Chair. We thank her for her support and leadership.

The following have joined the LRHS Board of Directors during the last six months: Eric Brush, Rhonda Clinton, Troy Faby, Tom Hoban, Justin Howard, Ken Rubin.

Keepers' Update

Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum is open Tuesday-Sunday. Admission is sold each day 10AM-4PM and the Gift Shop is open until 5PM. Daily access is now through the former PX gate on the east side of the parking lot.

The **historic World War II Navy housing building on the waterfront is closed until further notice** due to the US 1 bridge project. Lighthouse Park, operated by the Town of Jupiter, remains open normally.

As a reminder to our summer visitors, **our historic lighthouse is not air conditioned.** Bringing water and sun protection is strongly advised. After climbing you can cool off in our air conditioned Keepers' Workshop while learning more about our lighthouse and keepers. Summer afternoons often bring passing thunderstorms which will require temporarily closing the site for safety.

Monthly Kids' Programs: Lighthouse Explorers Club program is on the second Saturday of each month, for elementary and middle school children. Lighthouse Storytime, for preschool-age children, takes place on third Saturdays.

The ONA South Trailhead parking lot was renovated early this year by Bureau of Land Management contractors.

On May 8, the Bureau of Land Management dedicated the **extensively renovated Quarters 1 as the Restrooms & Multipurpose Building.** The restrooms will be open to lighthouse visitors later this summer after some final work. The multipurpose room will be used as prep space for weddings, as well as programs and events such as the FPAN/FAU Field School and FPAN Archaeology Boot Camp.

Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse & Museum will be closed Tuesday July 4 for the Independence Day holiday.

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https://www.instagram.com/jupiter_lighthouse/

<https://twitter.com/JupiterLH>

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