

Keeper Log Excerpts 2015

Volunteer Keepers of DeTour Reef Light are requested to write in the Lighthouse Log Book. Excerpts from some of these entries from last summer are copied below. DRLPS already has reservations for the summer of 2016. We encourage potential keepers to make their application early, so they get the weekend they desire. Keepers can extend their stay extra nights at half the weekend rate and minors (under 18) are always half price.

“Great experience – a time to strengthen both family ties and fried ties. Grandson learned much about early life of Great Lakes. Had time to just stop and breathe, meditate and “go within” to strengthen my personal life. Excellent Facility and program .” Rudy Edel. Gaylord, MI

“Great 3 days – Very laid back and peaceful with no TV. Time to visit with old navy friend and his progeny. Will return next year with them. Good accommodations.” Louis Hagenbruch, Collinsville, IL

“What a place! ... I can't believe that we get this place to ourselves for a whole week! ...The solitude of this place is like nowhere we've ever been before. ... 'So glad we came here. ... We ended up on top of the lighthouse for the local fireworks display – Words cannot describe how amazing that was and I know I for one will never look at fireworks again without remembering the sight from last night [July 4th]! ... Chris likes blowing the fog horn at freighters. One actually honked back yesterday. We have had a few of the smaller boats come by and greet us from the water. Everyone seems so nice. Love, love, love this place! ... Another marvelous morning on the light! ... We have pretty amazing lives – great jobs, 3 grown sons and 3 grandchildren with one on the way. I love our lives! But I really love being here – This is an experience of a lifetime and one I would recommend to anyone. ... I can tell you – we will be back! ... I teared up several times throughout the day as we had our last supper, last sunset, last view of the stars and night ships.... The memories we made while here will be burned on our minds and hearts forever! We will return as this is an experience we have found nowhere else. Thanks a million to DRLPS and everyone who made this possible xxoo. ... A week is too short but we are one day closer to our next visit here. “ Chris and Belinda Nelson, Sioux Falls, SD.

“What a great weekend out here at DeTour Reef Light! As a family of four...we enjoyed getting away and slowing down a few days. Some of the highlights of our stay included gorgeous sunsets, grilling on the deck, playing games together as a family, watching freighters pass and blowing the beloved foghorn. ...Overall the stay was great and something we will remember forever. Thanks to all who have restored Detour Reef Light, and god bless all the ones lucky enough to stay here in the future.” The Vandenboom family, Markle, IN.

“There are no enough words in the world to explain how great of an experience being on this lighthouse is. This is my family second trip up here, we have so much fun coming up here, watching the sun rise and set never gets old. The view is incredible, especially at th ttop. When you're up there you feel like you're on the top of the world. ...Coming here will always be one of my family favorite memories. I hope that this won't be our last journey up here, this is an amazing the we got to do.” The Olender family, Grand Rapids, MI

“Second trip and just as amazing as the first time we stayed. Many more memories were made. New friends, and old friends were able to share the beautiful sunsets, sunrises and the peaceful atmosphere this gem has to offer. Thanks.” Debbie and Mark, Livonia, MI

"We came with friends and met two new ones! Together we cooked and prepared delicious food. Our diets can begin again when we return home! Being on the lighthouse was a time to be festive and celebrate. Together we saluted ships both large and small. The blast of the horn put smiles on the boaters faces. ...Sometimes when you plan a vacation months ahead, the anticipation is more fun than the actual trip but not this time! The weekend was wonderful and better than what we anticipated it to be. Thank you." Michael and Lorie Loos, Northville, MI

"It was always a dream of mine to be a lighthouse keeper. My dream finally came true and I was able to have this beautiful experience with the love of my life (Paul). We have made new memories at DeTour Reef from watching the sunset together, looking for falling stars to lighting sky lanterns." Paul and Cindy, Commerce, MI

"Very restful, peaceful quiet afternoon watching ships come and go—an awesome day. ...We will be sad to leave tomorrow. It has been an uber great experience. Great group of keepers. ...An awesome time had by all." Ceil, Ric, Jim, Dave, Ally & Sully. Okemos MI, Madison WI, Northville MI

"It is so quiet and peaceful here. It is very soothing to the soul! ...A great day in a great place. ...Last night the wind howled like we were in a horror movie. Around 5am the wind was blowing so much the waves didn't know which way to lap. They just danced in place, jumping to the sky and wagging in all directions. They were having a grand party! ... The moon rise was beautiful. As it was a full moon, one of us had to howl at it! It looked superb through our binoculars." Karen Cote, Plainwell, MI

"End of a truly wonderful stay. ...We also got adventurous and went swimming. We blew up a couple of floating lounges and braved the cold water. ...Had a fantastic dinner—a finale: steak baked potatoes, caramelized onions and prosecco! I'm already starting to pine—we leave tomorrow! This is such a gem and I am so honored to have had the opportunity to come again. Sincerely, Yolanta Motte" Plainwell, MI

"We arose feeling a bit depressed, as today we have to leave this wonderful place. ...The time here goes so fast, I swear the lighthouse must be in some kind of time warp bubble. It has been another great weekend in a fantastic location with wonderful company. I am truly blessed. Respectfully submitted, Karen Cote lighthouse keeper."

"...ready for 2 tours starting at 10:30am. Ann is a great tour guide, tours included delightful children and a family from Brazil! ...continued our long euchre tournament – scanning many vacations. Then the fog rolled in. so thick you could hardly see the railings. The freighters were just ghost-like lights passing by. I was 'pea soup.'...Lots of great pictures to remember a fantastic weekend" Mike & Cathy Horton, Kathleen and Jimmy Johnson, Livonia MI

In Their Own Words --- 2014 Excerpts from the DeTour Reef Light Keeper's Log

The experience of a life time! Great Food, great people, great fun (Anna Baker).

Oh Holy wah! I never, ever tire of coming to the Light. What a wonderful experience (Candis Collick)

Rose at 5:15am to see a beautiful sunrise. A little bit chilly but well worth it. Lots of fishing boats and quite a few freighters already. (Nancy Adesso).

We are having fun looking up the info on each freighter pat passes. We grilled dinner and enjoyed a beautiful sunset. Woke up at 10:30pm to the sound of foghorns as two big ships passed -- looked like two moving cities they were so lit up (Mary Everts).

There is nothing like sleeping with the whistling wind and waves ... (Jody Scott).

Keepers Log Star date -308508.396. An amazing final (last) morning on the Light. Foggy until about 10:30 with freighters in abundance sounding their horns in the mist. Thank you DRLPS for the unforgettable journey (Don & Mary Everts, Jody and Peter Scott).

We had a wonderful time on the lighthouse! Fantastic views! It was most memorable experience and would like to experience it again sometime (Ann Brenner, Sharon Batten, Joyce Rodriguez, Liz Rowse).

Great weekend! Recommend for anyone (Clair Welborn).

It was an amazing experience. Watching the freighters pass was the highlight – especially when it was foggy and they had to use their foghorns to navigate. The kitchen has everything one would need (Joyce Welborn).

A great weekend. Our co-workers/guests were wonderful companions. ...The views are marvelous and the solitude impressing or thought provoking. Lots of freighters. We have sounded the foghorn...and ended up one for seven in getting freighters to return our foghorn blast. (Jerry Nechal, Rick Vanker).

Our time is up, sad to go. We had a wonderful time, a unique and amazing experience. Thank you, and everyone who was instrumental in saving this light and continues the preservation. Magnificent job! ...Good bye Detour Light – may you stand many more years (Tom & Julie Moylan).

A perfect weekend! Our fourth visit and we will continue  (Todd and Sheri Stepien).

This was our first time as keepers and it won't be our last. ...We enjoyed watching the freighters go by; we saw a total of 16 today. The highlight of all the freighters was seeing the Paul R. Tregurtha (the largest freighter on the Great Lakes at 1,013 feet) go by at nighttime all lite up like a Christmas tree. Enjoyed a great dinner. ...As we settled in for our first night on the light it was so peaceful listening to the waves. It was a bit eerie this morning hearing the boats but not being able to see them. There were lots of boat horns going!! ...Another great day on the lighthouse ...ended with a beautiful sunset. The stars at night are awesome—had a great time viewing them. ...A big thanks to all at the DRLPS that have volunteered many man-hours to help preserve such an important part of our history for generations to come. And thanks for leaving the light on for us to come and enjoy this lifelong dream – something to cross of my

bucket list. Until next time – may the light continue to shine for years to come. (Ron and Ronda LaGrois).

A lazy morning talking with wonderful company – Cristi, Jane, Karen and myself. It's so sad to leave this awesome light – so peaceful with million dollar views. And we had this all to ourselves for 3 days with a small interruption of one tour. So grateful Karen invited me! Hope all appreciate this incredible treasure. Sincerely, Yolanta Motte.

I am so accustomed to the “throb” of the large ships that in the peaceful lighthouse it is possible hear them approach. ...Woke the girls up with a blast of the F2T horn! ...Shutting up light. ... Great time, Great place. We enjoyed our time. (Captains Julie and Brett Tyren, daughters Lindsey and McKenna)

May God bless...the Light and all of us whose lives have touched by the DeTour Reef Lighthouse. Until next year. God willing. (Ron Barkley).

2013 Keeper Comments excerpted from the DeTour Reef Log Book:

June 21-23: "It's been a great weekend"

June 27-28: "It has been very peaceful and quiet, a nice and relaxing place to spend some quality time with someone. We wish the weather was a little more clear, but we still enjoyed our experience. Now we will head to the top of the lighthouse for one last spectacular look around.Thanks DRLPS for the upkeep & maintenance of this lighthouse – it truly is a unique experience you provide."

June 28-30: From a 13 year old girl -- keeper of DeTour Reef Light: "Not many people get to say they actually stay a few days on a lighthouse J, but I am so glad my family and I got to do this truly amazing thing. ...While we were watching the sun[set] a freighter passed us (Paul Tegrutha I think) so we blew the foghorn and did a salute. And the freighter gave a response!! J Yey we were so super happy. ...All I can say now because we're leaving soon is this was one of the best vacation experiences I've ever had! I hope someday my family and I can experience this once again truly amazing thing. This is a place I will never forget!"

June 28-30: "What an incredible stay at DeTour Reef Lighthouse.[A] truly unique experience ... We all enjoyed an amazing three days. ... The accommodations are most comfortable and our keeper duties were what made the experience feel so personal. ... I will be back next summer with my sister and niece."

July 5-7: "Went up to the light to enjoy a beautiful sunset. ...Movies, coloring and popcorn commenced for the remainder of the evening. ...Ann went for her morning swim around the lighthouse..."

July 12-14: "We enjoyed our afternoon out in the sun, watching freighters and fishing boats. We played a lot of bridge.Last Day. How quickly it passed! Elaine won our 15 rounds of officially audited scores. We will probably play a few unofficial rubbers this morning. A large freighter sailed down river this morning and enthusiastically saluted us four times. Of course we responded with equal enthusiasm. We have really enjoyed our stay... Thank you for this amazing opportunity."

July 17-19: Kris Parcels group on light – no log entries.

July 19-21: "As for the lighthouse...what can we say. Wow! Breathtaking! Thinking of the history the light has seen; the weather it has withstood; the beautiful sunsets...and the view! We were over-whelmed. Much time was spent in the sun, watching the ever-present waves & listening to the sounds of the light. We explored every nook & cranny, cooked & ate like kings', napped, sounded the foghorn. But mostly, we laughed a lot & thoroughly enjoyed our stay. We hope to have the opportunity to return one day. Thank you DeTour Reef Light!"

July 26-29: "As the day progressed so did the storm. Tornado warnings were issued for DeTour. We actually saw a funnel cloud forming in the southwest (got a cool picture). That was the good news – the bad news was the leaking light. ...Despite the drips peeling plaster and aroma of mold, we had wonderful day in a wonderful place with wonderful friends. [Memo: Subsequent \$90,000 project replaced roof and repaired plaster] ...Although the day was cool, we sat outside in the sun for a while. In the evening we gave up on the puzzle we started and

relaxed watching a cute movie. Another great day on the light. [Next morning] Another great day at the light!! The sun was finally shining & we enjoyed reading, relaxing and lunch outside as we watched the ships and sailboats go by. We finished the day with a grilled steak dinner. Then more relaxing & reading. ... It has been a lovely, relaxing weekend with good friends.”

July 31- Aug 2: “Relaxed out on the deck – saw many fishing boats this morning; played dominos on a makeshift table. Rain shower at 3:15pm. No visible leaks. ...playing games in dining room. Enjoyed dinner and a movie. Saw a beautiful sunset, but the stars in the night sky were the real show!! An awesome way to end our last night on DRL.”

Aug 2-4: “Stay was beautiful, extremely relaxing, and meditative. The proof of any stay is a new place is whether you will return or not. We will return in 2014. ...For two days three guys previously unknown to one another spent two days sitting on this ‘rock’, totally enjoying themselves, recording the flags and registries of ships from Japan, Bulgaria, Norway and both sides of our international border. We enjoyed each other’s lasagna, sherry cake, grapes, and Doritos, battened down the hatches, squawked back at the gull recording and tried to figure out the engineering and construction of our beacons island home. Good time had by all, with the determination to return.”

Aug 9-11: “Explored, relaxed, talked & snooped our weekend “get away” while wind picked up and temps dropped. Lighthouse is solid on its bed of rock foundation and we all felt this is exactly the place to be if out on the water when a storm brews. ...Keeper duties of sweeping, dusting and washing away seagull droppings were quickly finished. We all need time to watch more freighter, sailboats, & fishermen about the water. Even more time was needed to launch kites, read books, & take pictures. ...Fresh air, wonderful company, prime location, life is good. ...We’ll miss --- bird squawker (not!), fishermen circling the light, amazing sunsets/sunrises, drafty windows, warm beds, kites flying off top tower, stories, games, laughter and more quiet nights, foghorns, lazy reading time, stairs & spirals; judging N/S/E/W by the sun, water, water, everywhere, endless stars at night. And especially -- knowing we share a very long and time-honored tradition of keeping the light on in the magnificent Great Lakes.

Aug 16-18: Beautiful weekend, could be the best of the summer. Sunsets, sunrises, stars, freighters, good food/wine & great company. We will come again for sure. Thanks for all of the amazing work done by the DRLPS. It takes so many willing hands to make this amazing place work. This was our 2nd keeper weekend, last was in 2006. Wondering why we waited so long to come back! Amazing work by the volunteers of DRLPS—THANK YOU! [memo: This group included a medical doctor and two nurse practitioners -- one of whom has allergies and reported that she smelled no mold or mildew and that the lighthouse had no effect on her allergies.]

A Small Sample of 2012 DeTour Reef Light Keeper's Log Book Excerpts

Below are some excerpts from the log that DRLPS asks keepers to write. In 2011, DRLPS opened the keeper program to children accompanied by their parent(s) or legal guardian. Many of the comments (and art) are the reflections of young children enjoying a family vacation on DeTour Reef Light.

June 27-29, 2012: Wow!! What a unique experience! Not sure where to begin! The building itself, massive structure but with many places to feel comfortable. The attention to details restored inside and out allow us a glimpse of what living and working here in kinds of weather much have been like. ... The detour light is a great place to relax. In the two days we were there, I had the chance to finish a book and enjoy some great company. ... Beautiful place. ...I would have never thought that I would ever be here! I love it! The only part is my family is scaring me cause we are looking for ghosts (frown face). My favorite part is the old foghorn! Well whoever some over here better love it. If you don't...your crazy (heart). Best experience ever! It was all so unique and wonderful! We are looking to make it an annual event and be involved as much as possible. Keepers Norm Hamann and children Peter and Katrina, Tony Hamann and children Jacob and Kara.

June 30-July 1, 2012: Had a great tour yesterday, led by the indomitable John and Sunny. Kids were up early (with surprising little coercion) prepping for the tour. Tour was incredibly informative. ... This is one of the most unique travel experiences we've ever had. We're so grateful to the DRL Preservation Society for their efforts & their work that gave us the opportunity to be a part of history! Lighthouse Awesomeness! I had a great time. Thank you. Keepers Jackie Jones and children Alexandria and Kevin, Ann O'Neill and children Grace and Charlie.

July 6-8, 2012: ... How special it is to be able to be up here [at the top of the lighthouse]. It is awesome out here. Those that have come before know how hard it is to put into words the feeling at the lighthouse. Boy did she blow last night. What a storm. Storm started around midnight – wind, rain, lightning. Beautiful red sky this morning and sun. Gorgeous [smiling face]. ... What a wonderful time. ...What a wonderful experience for us. Looking forward to our next keeper weekend. Gary Schuen and Patti Braun.

July 13-15: Very beautiful every direction you look. ...The shift from reliance on lighthouses to GPS and automation has been of significance to this singular life of decades past. And yet it speaks of our own ability to set our own course relying n the tools given to us by God and those developed by man. The path may be clearly delineated on a map or a computer screen, by the journey is not always the same... As s State Representative, it is inspiring to see Michigan residents do dedicated to restoring and maintaining an important icon in our maritime history. Thank you to all the volunteers who made the DeTour Light restoration a reality. Amanda Price (State Representative, 89th District), Roger Price, Larry and Karen Mulder.

July 18: The lighthouse is really cool! I was really surprised. The spiral stairs were neat. ...The foghorn was pretty cool! I had fun! Nice view!. Best day ever. Everything that was cool: spiral stairs, captains room, the very top, the view, foghorn, and everything else. Kristen, Jillian and James Palmer, Jim and Barb Gusfa.

July 20-22 : ...10pm Snack time, Popcorn “yeah” yelled Beth, bed, but stargazing commended 'til wee hours in the morning. Saw: 2 satellites, 5+ airplanes, quite counting, shooting stars, white northern lights. ... Sunset party on upper deck. .. Birthday party for Ann! Lots of gifts

were opened and a UFO was spotted. Headed up to upper deck for stargazing. ...Salute[d] Coast Guard with foghorn. ... Ghost stories written. Janet Carlson, Rick Carlson, Janelle Carlson, Beth Carlson, Ann Thorne, Betty Thorne. [Editor's note -- three generations of family in this keeper group].

July 27-29: The weather has been perfect and the company most enjoyable. .. We enjoyed watching sunset and freighters and scaring boater with the foghorn. John, Dotty, Brad and Dianne Witten, Daniel and Kristine DuCharme.

Aug 3-5: Loved it at first sight! Ann and Joe Langmesser

Aug 17-19: Great weekend! ...We had a great crew, 6 nice, fun people. Will do another lighthouse next year. Foghorn-such power. For someone who never relaxes—this made me relax. Stellar photo ops., killer fog hor. 19 freighters, super people, great swimming. Fun euchre games, great storms & just a whole lotta fun! Tx DRLPS. Great time. New great friends, good memories. Tx DRLPS what a beautiful getaway. Hope to get back again. Love the foghorn—one answer from a freighter. Wonderful experience. Awesome views, Foghorn, so much fun to push the red button, & simply a great time with the most fun “keepers” that shared this weekend together. Lots of laughs, great good cooked by each set of keepers & many wonderful memories to take home. Jan Minton, Brooke Elder Schwartz, Aaron Lee, Neil Kirby, Darlene Boyles, Jan Beaver.

Aug 22-24: This has been another awesome lighthouse experience for me. The weather was perfect, enjoyed the freighters going by and also all the friendly small craft boats, even enjoyed the (from the top deck) the thunder and lightning last night. We had great food, great friends, lots of laughs, and wonderful memories. Very blessed to be able to experience these past few days. Love the foghorn. Enjoy just watching the boats & ships. These are moments that make it all worthwhile – one of the best cups of coffee I've ever had – sunrise in the lantern – rainy & misty, windy & cool – a dash of lighting here & there – what a great way to wake up. ... Many thanks to all who made their dream a reality and kept the light on for us! Bev Wentzel, Sally Grzegorzcyk, Fay Adkins, Judy Ruttan

Aug 26: Brought up sons & had a fabulous weekend watching the freighter, jumping off the pier and enjoying the sunsets. What a great place! David, Dan and Colton Frownfelter, Kevin and Erik Eikey.

Excerpts from The DeTour Reef Light Keepers Logbook

Volunteer keepers of DeTour Reef Light are requested to record some of their experiences in the light station log book. Records of ships passing, weather conditions, tours, menus and personal observations fill the many pages of the log. Below are excerpts from the log book that were recorded during the summers of 2010 and 2011. While we have faithfully copied the exclamation marks, capitalization and underlines, the many smiling faces don't exist on my keyboard. Poems, raps and songs have been saved for another time.

"A beautiful day in a beautiful place with great friends" Kirsten Clemens

"The rest of the day...was totally beautiful. We took the TV outside and watched movies sitting in the deck chairs. What a cool way to spend an evening! We topped it off stargazing. Wow! The stars were beautiful again. ... The weekend went way to fast! P.S. Total freighter count this weekend 36." Karen Cote'.

"It's a little bit of a challenge to climb the ladder with 2 artificial knees for one of us but we all made it. ...Rain showers in the night and early AM, then a beautiful sunny afternoon when we sat on deck, had wine, and watched freighters & pleasure boats. ... What a lonesome sound is the foghorn of the ships as they pass by in the fog last night. ... It's been a wonderful chance to create new friendships and renew and deepen old relationships, time to play games, tell funny stories that make us laugh until we cry, time to share, time to support each other, time to reflect. ...As I sit and reflect on this experience and weekend I can't help but have a few tears!! Tears of joy, a couple of fear, and now of sadness. As a huge lighthouse enthusiast, this has been my ultimate dream come true! How could any lighthouse experience top this? The tears of joy at the first sight of DRL [DeTour Reef Light] as the boat inched its' way closer & closer. Am I really here? Tears of joy at my new friends' stories of life and wisdom. I thank God for their openness to share a little of their lives with me. Finally, tears of sadness – to leave the light, to leave the seas, to leave my new found friends. ...Thank you to the many people who gave so much (blood, sweat, tears & \$\$) to preserve this lighthouse for me and the many people who will visit DRL!!!" --- Susan Shoemaker, Mary Ardner, Judy Pence, Janice Hesse, Judy Wojnowski

"Unpacked, settled in, dinner and then --- the storm! We watched from the deck as lightning flashed from the western, southern, and northern horizon. As the wind picked up and the waves got higher, the storm closed in. We all reluctantly moved into the living quarters to watch from every window. By this time waves were crashing on the deck, much to our delight. ... As two of us went to bed, the other four had a wave crash on the dining room window—how exciting! All too soon it was time to pack up and look for Captain Gable – another wonderful weekend at DeTour Reef Lighthouse!" Nancy Craven.

"Sixteen Freighters went by today. Two groups of tours. It is wonderful to be surrounded by so much history and fortunate to be able to meet the few people who have dedicated their lives so that we could have this weekend. First and foremost, thank you for all your hard work. ... It was a very positive memory that I will never forget. ... The moon rises orange, the sunset lights the entire perimeter of the sky to create a circle of orange. No one is in a rush to pack. I will miss the tranquility of this place &

those of us here this weekend have provided. ... It has ended with Mother Nature's blessings of beautiful weather & gorgeous skies. All four of us are happy to have shared this together. Thanks again.
" --- Win Stebbins, Lille Foster, Tina Ostash, Vern Storm.

"What a fantastic weekend! Staying at a lighthouse is on Matt's bucket list, so being at DeTour Reef Light for three glorious days is literally a dream come true. ... Highlights from our time this weekend: blowing the foghorn...sitting on the top deck in the morning with a cup of coffee & the morning sun. ...being able to stand anywhere in the lighthouse & seeing only gorgeous water.... Hanging the "2010 Preserve America Steward" certificate, signed by Michelle Obama & feeling like a true piece of living history. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of the DRL & all you've done to maintain & sustain this remarkable monument. It will be a treasured experience that we'll never forget!" Matthew Swan, Chad Badger.

"Wow what a blast! We had a great group of people, ...blew the foghorn (well at least 'some' of us got carried away with that 'chore'!) ...Had a memory of a lifetime." Jerry & Sue Zaccardelli.

"I had the time of my life and I owe it all to Jerry, Sue, Ric, Scott, and Betsy. I've never felt like this before. I swear that it's true – I need to blow the foghorn AGAIN! Love Robyn – AKA Bambi." Robyn Netz.

"With my stomach full of steak & eggs, it's safe to say this experience was well worth the trip. I'll admit it wasn't as peaceful as expected with the electronic birds & foghorn happy Bambi, but my unbelievably "silent" bunk buddies made up for that. I won't name names, but someone (Ric) is a suspected cheater in the game of Uno. Even so, we are the BEST lighthouse keepers EVER!:" Betsy Davis.

"We had a blast – I slept in the lantern floor with the door open watching the stars and [light] beams of DeTour Light. AWESOME! We had gourmet food – excellent UNO competition and unforgettable freighter encounters & even participated in a [Coast Guard] search for a kayak 2 miles south of the light. Saw 5 thousand footers and the Arthur Anderson amongst dozens of other boats. Many thanks to DRLPS for leaving the light ON." Ric Mixer

"Enjoyed the sun on the deck. It has been a fantastic weekend! I am ready for more!" Rita Carleski – 2-time keeper.

"Wow. What a day. What a weekend. And we get to see yet another sunset before we have to leave tomorrow. ... This is our wedding anniversary weekend. Yes indeed, today is the last day of our 40th year together. Life is good. Sure hope we can spend more anniversary celebrations on DRL. ... foghorn is magnificent! ... The hymn "Bless this house" takes on a whole new meaning." Sunny C.

"I had so much fun at the light house. We played cards with Grandpa and daddy . I also wrote in my journal." Kaitlyn, 8 ¾ years old, Colorado.

"A privilege to live for a few days on a Great Lakes lighthouse, and to witness the waters of one of the Great Lakes, a subject enjoyed in primary (elementary) and high school in Scotland. Sincere congratulations and thanks to all volunteers of the DRLPS, without whom there would not be this wonderful lighthouse, and we could not have had this experience." Doug Fyfe (ex Scotland, now Canada).

"Thank you for wonderful time with my friends!!! I'm very happy!!!I'm just so happy!" Shiho Utsumi – Japan.

“The seven tourists included a woman, Dorothy Inhelder, who, at 85 years, may have been the oldest visitor to the lighthouse. ... She said (up on the balcony) that this was the best trip she’d had in a long time. (She was from Iowa). She was so glad she came to the lighthouse instead of going to Mackinac Island with the other members of her family... Her face lit up like a kid on Christmas when we let her blow the foghorn. ...We all got up to see the sunrise. How beautiful! What a treat to be able to take pictures of the awakening sun while you’re sitting near the top of a lighthouse out in the Great Lakes. “Life is good!” Karen Cote’

“We enjoyed a beautiful weekend here-even with the interruptions of the “Ghost Keeper”! The weather was clear and the sunsets beautiful – especially with cocktails in hand. ...it’s wonderful to be lulled to sleep by the sounds of the water and wind. I felt like we spent the weekend on a tiny private island with great food and company!” Kim Landris.

“Holy Whaa!! One long and two shorts!! According to the Locks & Ships book – page 38, that was a Master Salute! Doesn’t get any better than that! And this was a first for the DRL [DeTour Reef Light]. We blew our horn, and we got a salute. How cool is that!! It was the Stuart B. Cort.” Sunny Covell

“Yesterday was awesome!! Awoke to a beautiful sunrise and day. Seeing freighters --- wish fulfilled manifold! Even got a salute back – that is something special for a Great Lakes sailor’s daughter!! Good weather, awesome/unique accommodations, great food, and most of all great opportunity to meet some wonderful interesting people. So many stars last night!! Clear skies –you could see forever. Wonderful job that I know was hard labors of love that won’t end. Thank you and God’s blessings to all who do anything to keep this historic landmark alive!!” Mary Jo and Kent Vaughn

DeTour Reef Light 2010 Keeper Log Excerpts –

“The Seagull repeller WORKS! Those who have never been before will never know the miracle of it. Those who have been here before – Rejoice! & never forget our fight against seagulls, The battle is won! The seagull repeller is a beautiful thing. In so many ways it has decreased work & increased the quality of the lighthouse stay. (Angela Partlo – 4-time keeper).

We loved the time we spent here, sunsets, stars, satellites, ships!

The gull repeller works fantastically

We stayed out watching a gorgeous sunset. Many photos were taken. Then some of us started watching the moonset and took more pictures. That led to star and satellite watching. The most amazing shooting star was witnessed! We stayed out star gazing for a long while with sleeping bags beneath us not wanting the night to end....Enjoy your time here. (Laurel Jones)

I have always loved to study history; it helps us understand our present lives and situations. But studying history and being part of it are two different things. Being here is being part of history. The water and the natural sounds, the peace and calmness, the huge ships passing in the day and nights brings persons soul into the presence of the real history of the straits and the lighthouse keeper. Role making history! The experience is spiritual and one leave with a sense of how awesome life and creations truly is. One is renewed. Thank you for the experience and thanks to all the explorers that went before and have showed us the way and are shared in this experience. (Richard Kirschling).

The bird repeller works beautifully. As long as people are on the pier, the birds stay away ... saw the “advance guard” doing a recon flight at dusk, but by then we had turned on the sound [repeller] ... they left and did not return. It would seem that party time for them will needs be elsewhere.

We have been here on the lighthouse for over 24 hours – a full cycle of the earth’s rotation. And quite a variety of scenes nature has painted on this glorious canvas. From sunny, cloudless skies to ominous looking clouds – from choppy whitecaps to relatively calm water, we have seen quite a lot in just 24 hours. Everywhere I look, I see another photo opportunity. My favorite view is from the dining room table looking off into the horizon. Every so often, I have to remind myself I am not floating on a ship, but actually stationary. (Kara Macek).

What a wonderful place! Peggy and I had a great opportunity to “slow down” a bit, which is always nice. But this was no ordinary time away from home. Relaxation, peace nature, beautiful views. We enjoyed great history and story telling. It almost seemed as though we had been here as this place was being built and restored. I will sure encourage any couple who is interested to be keepers. It is a very unique and relaxing experience. God bless! (Kevin Mason).

John Boland and St. Clair exchanging horn blasts in channel between DeTour and Drummond as Drummond Island ferry maneuvers its way across and a tugboat pushing a barge manages to pass through them all – a traffic jam, seemingly, but they all go on their ways quietly.

I had a wonderful stay, relaxing yet full of excitement from our first freighter to our last...

The final day of this time-twisting experience. Some people say that walls speak. That history is embedded in the bricks and mortar of a building. The spirits of previous inhabitants remain in the fabric and soul of a place. As you listen some of the weird clangs and clankings of your temporary home, is it “ghosts and ghoulies and long-legged beauties and things that go bump in the night” or is it your imagination...? (Eleanor Lord).

Keepers from 2007 Describe their Experience.

DRLPS is unaware of any other offshore lighthouse to offer a volunteer keeper program. We believe that the experience of staying on DeTour Reef Light is unique and unmatched. Good weather or lighting, wind and rain -- full moon or dark night with shooting stars and northern lights -- DRLPS volunteer keepers have the time of their lives. Keepers of DeTour Reef Light are asked to make log entries so their experience can be shared with others. The comments below were taken from the 37 pages of the DeTour Reef Light 2007 Keepers Log. (Underlining, capitalization and exclamation are copied as written by the keepers.) Providing this type of experience for others is what fuels the passion of DRLPS volunteers. We hope that you will decide to join these Keepers of DeTour Reef Light.

“...A great time. Really, really enjoyed this experience. What a wonderful time & what a huge undertaking this was. Kudos to the DRLPS. --Leslie Westbury, Keeper 2007

“...There is water EVERYWHERE -- and birds, and mayflies with fancy delicate wings, also far from home. There is no laundry to do, no children to take to or pickup from school, no Yankees or stock market and no piano. ...Now the children are all grown up...and I hope, I hope.. that someday they will get to come here to this wonderful place. I am so grateful to be here.” --Ellen Taylor, Keeper 2007

“...We have great admiration of the people who have so lovingly and generously restored this lighthouse to give folks like us such a unique experience. A grand time was had by all....” -- Susan Cameron, Keeper 2007

“...What a privilege it has been to be part of the “lighthouse” keepers program with a great crew for this stay. The sunrises and sunsets were spectacular. At night, the full moon shone brightly....hundreds of pictures were taken... It has been a great time -- new friendships made, beautiful weather and ever-changing sky and water colors enjoyed. A huge thank you to all who have worked hard to make this experience possible. -- Hallie Wilson, Keeper 2007.

“...It was a true vacation -- no schedules, phone or deadlines. ... This place is beautiful. I’ve valiantly tried to capture it all on my Canon Power Shot (gone through ten batteries) and I know the pictures will trigger many memories. It is an experience that cannot be replicated... The DRLPS has done a magnificent job. I feel that I know all the rooms, twists and turns of the ladder and could walk through blind folded --- it’s been wonderful to have all the time to explore and enjoy. The close-ups of the freighters, listening to the water, wind and seagulls, watching the sunsets, moon risings (and one sunrise!) talking with Hallie, Byron and sharing the experience with my wife, meeting the tour guests Have made this a weekend to remember. Thanks to all who made this opportunity possible.” -- Dave Meyer, Keeper 2007.

“The tours were fun to “host”. I felt like a hostess welcoming guests to my home (and what a house it is!). I’m sure the smell of fresh-baked cookies was a treat to everyone! ...I was very proud of my “light”. The weekend could not have been improved upon ...same time, same people, same weather next year!” --Joan Meyer, Keeper 2007

“What a unique experience after weeks of planning we are finally here. A wonderful time was had by all. It was especially nice to share these memoirs with our best friendsThanks [DRLPS volunteers] ... for your great orientation ...for your expertise, ...for your sunny smile and

personality ...for getting us here & back safely. We had a wonderful time. MOST OF ALL THANK YOU DETOUR REEF LIGHTHOUSE FOR LETTING US BE YOUR GUESTS!!!!" -- Fred & Jan Billin, Ed & Sandy Nieuwenhuis, Keepers 2007.

"Enjoyed watching the passing freighters. The first fully lighted one passed about 10:00 – a beautiful sight. Awoke to rain and the sound of the fog signal at 05:45 ... Very heavy rain and strong winds .. Tour was cancelled due to weather at 08:00. ...Sunny and very pleasant – light breeze. ...We join keepers before us in expressing our appreciation to DRLPS for the super restoration and preservation joy. We are amazed at what you have accomplished. Thank you for the opportunity to stay here. Thank you so much." Jeannie Stephenson, Pete and Marian LeMere, Keepers 2007

"Can't believe we are doing this again. Some folks would say "been there—done that." We say "been there—done that – couldn't wait to do it again."Last night...John C. left the corner windows open to listen to the wind whistling through – Did I say whistling? More like howling! It was neat. As the ships rumbled by you could almost feel the rumbling. Sort of like a freight train in the distance. And we finally saw the Northern Lights. No noise there but they really put on a show. ... Almost unhindered view of the Mackinac Bridge and Spectacle Reef this AM...." John & Sunny Covell, Todd & Sherry Stepien, Keepers 2006 & 2007.

"The fog horn eventually ceased it's rhythmic drone in the pre-dawn hours of the day – long after the fog had lifted. We were greeted by a magnificent sunrise as several freighter passed by. ...one of them [the fishermen] pulled up to the lighthouse and kindly offered us some freshly caught and cleaned salmon. ... Awaken by the sea gulls, the day began with another beautiful sunrise. At midmorning we celebrated Mass—perhaps the first one to be celebrated here? Surrounded by the beauty of God's creation, it was a perfect setting. The remainder of our stay was quiet and restful. The traffic through the channel was busy ...Our time here was most special indeed. The DRLPS has done an incredible effort in restoration. We wish that every lighthouse on the Great Lakes has such dedicated preservationists. That you for the opportunity to serve as keepers of such a historic and beautiful landmark. Thanks for the memories!!" Theresa & Keith Kiel, Louie and Colleen Stein, Monsignor Bill Duncan, Keepers 2007.

"...Went to bed to peace and quiet. 4:00am—awakened to seagulls arguing about defecation right to the deck. Shouted an obscenity and awakened Ken, Cindy & Marjorie. ...9:00am Kenny installed plastic owl on railing to scare away seagulls. 9:05am, seagull found sitting on owl's head.7:00am – Lied to mates about having watched sunrise." Bill Tudor, Keeper 2007.

"...Windy, rough ride over... JoEllen made raspberry pie, smelled soooo good. It was yummy!!.. Lovely weather, not a cloud in the sky! ...Woke up to a ton of fishing boats – it was the annual [salmon] fishing contest. Many boats passing by and waving. ...Another wonderful day at the light. Good friends, good weather, good food, excellent wine!! So peaceful, great scenes, loved the fireworks from atop the light. ...The moon was shining and all was right with the world! No sooner had we shut our eyes and we heard a God awful scream just outside our window. I felt like Edgar Allen Poe with his fateful raven. The scream was from a seagull. My response was ###!?. It was 2:00am. ...We had a great time and hope to come as group again in the future. Awesome get a way. Loved it!: JoEllen McDonald, Susan Collins, Katherine Butler, Laura Priebe, Keepers 2007.

“Our first afternoon on the lighthouse was very relaxing. With John’s good binoculars and the freighter book we identified a couple of big freighters.Once it got dark, the stars came out. We had a fabulous light show since many shooting stars were seen. ...The sunrise was glorious as was the rest of the experience. I wish I could put into words the exceptionality of this entire weekend, but words are insufficient. I would certainly recommend it to anyone.Loved the Light—Keep it shining. ...The best renovation work I have ever seen. ... Great Memories.” Rick & LuAnn Tluczek, John & Donna Grassmid – Keepers 2007.

“...We were awakened at 0400 by lightning, thunder, rain and our very own fog horn. We were from the top to the bottom taking pictures and videoing this unique experience. Great fun!! ...Remains windy, Gorgeous sunrise.Usually mariners don’t wish for storms/foul weather, BUT – last night’s storm was great!! Love it, and this Lady stood strong thought it all – Just as I am sure that she has for many years --. ... Beautiful sun rise. Water calm.” LuAnn, Jim & Chandra Meyer, Chelsea Volz, Keepers 2007.

“...The six of us have been planning this stay since last fall. It was awesome to step onto the deck to begin. ...The winds remained strong thru the evening, We watched the sunset and the freighters from the tower. ...The stars were spectacular and the sunrise beautiful. ...We flew the kite, read and napped on the deck and enjoyed the calm day and many freighters passing by. ...The stars at night were incredible – don’t miss the shooting stars. We had a great morning enjoying the company of our friends and a beautiful sunshine day.” Sally & Arvon Byle, Jim & Margie Steller, Richard & Carole Casey, Keepers 2007.

“Our arrival was uneventful, with calm waters, and we had our first sight of the Lighthouse. WOW! It is even more spectacular than we thought. ...We didn’t think we were going to have a sunset, but at the last minute it [the sky] cleared on the horizon and we watched as the sun passed between the clouds and land. It was beautiful. ... The sky was clear by sunset ...the sky stayed a wonderful orange/red long after the sun disappeared. It was spectacular.Our last day [sad face]. The weather is beautiful. Wish we could stay another couple of days. May God bless and keep you for preserving such a wonderful experience for us.” Gary & Gloria Pierce, Mary McGough, Nora Lawton, Keepers 2007.

“After a wonderful dinner we watched a beautiful sunset and the full moon rise. Two freighters passed in the night back lighted by the full moon. The wind “whistles” until after 1am. ... A beautiful sunrise and calm seas! The full moon was in the western sky. ...Many freighter today – most unusual was the Ypermachos, a salt water vessel from Greece.. A wonderful afternoon. Fished spawn off East side of Lighthouse. ... Watched the sunset from the upper deck. The moon rise was red/orange. ... Another beautiful sunrise.Thank you DRLPS for a wonderful experience. The freighter cutting in front of the full moon at night was a delight, we have the image fixed in our memory. A wonderful experience—a lasting memory to take into retirement. Many thanks to everyone who made this lighthouse such a jewel in Lake Huron!” Paul & Sandra Huber, Robert & Sue Metzger, Keepers 2007.

Keepers from 2005 Describe their Experience

(An entry in the Keeper's Logbook): "To study history is interesting, to touch history is enlightening, to live history is nothing short of amazing. Spending these couple days on this Light has been an experience I'll never forget as long as I live. There really are no words to describe this experience, but I can say that it was truly a once-in-a-lifetime event. The DRLPS has done a miraculous job with this restoration, and they should be congratulated. Thanks for the opportunity of a lifetime." -- Mike Hershberger, Elkhart, IN, 7-24-05

(An email to Dave Bardsley): "Dave: You and your colleagues did a marvelous job restoring the DeTour Light. Thank you very much for selecting us for the third keepers week-end. We had a great time and enjoyed ourselves. That was one of the most enjoyable week-ends we have spent in years." -- Ren & Gail Farley, Ann Arbor, MI, 7/27/05

(An email to Dave Bardsley): "Dear Dave and All DRLPS Members: From the ride out to the light, to the tours, to the spectacular views of the light, boats, and the sunrises and sunsets, I enjoyed my stay. The scope of what you all have accomplished is AWESOME!!! Thanks for the experience." -- Judy Mills, Coopersville, MI, 8/14/05

(An email to Dave Bardsley): "...I've got some flack from some people in describing our stay at Detour As the Holy Grail Of lighthouses. My convoluted thinking goes something like this: A picture of a LH, seeing a LH on shore, getting in to a shore LH, get to the top of a shore LH. Working on a shore LH. Staying overnight. The same sequence for a LH on an island. I've experienced all of that over the years. I've often wondered how it would feel to do the same on a crib light, knowing some of the problems involved. Never ever thought it would be available to anyone let alone me!!!!!! Your organization has made this possible; to lighthouse "nuts" it truly does not get any better. I wish there was something I could say more than THANK YOU to you and the others that made this take place." -- Robert Sperling, Holland, MI, 8/14/05

(A letter to DRLPS): "Dear DRLPS, I just wanted to say THANK YOU VERY MUCH for the wonderful and unique opportunity for allowing me to be a lighthouse keeper at DeTour Reef. This is definitely something that I will never forget! I was with the nicest people ever and it was like we knew each other forever, instead of just having met. I was sad to have to leave DeTour, and the Light "looked" almost sad as we closed up all the shutters and left. I took nine rolls of film and love sharing my experience with others, especially lighthouse lovers. Someone asked me if I would want to do this again. I said no because it was such a rare experience that if I were to be Keeper again, it might not be as magical and I might compare my stay with the first time. But...if you need someone to be a full-time seagull poop scrubber – I'd do it in a heartbeat. I might consider applying for Keeper again, but I'm not too sure.

The peacefulness, solitude and pure enjoyment of being at DeTour Light, especially sleeping there, was incredible and amazing. Our first night, we climbed up top and watched the sunset, while sharing tattoo stories. We all thought that was something that, besides enjoying lighthouses, all four of us had tattoos. There are so many memories that I can share.

We had a real treat on Sunday. Jim Schutt (charter boat captain) caught a trout while waiting for one of the tours. He filleted it and us Keepers had a delicious lunch, to say the least. The salmon was so tender and had such a delicious taste. Gail had to get creative when cooking the salmon, since we didn't have much foodstuff left. I think first, she cooked up a few pieces of ham lunchmeat, and then let the salmon sit a while in the left over red wine. She then watered

down Caesar salad dressing and put that on top of the salmon. After frying it up, we were all ready to dig in. That was the best salmon ever, especially since it was only about an hour old.

I could go on and on about my stay at DeTour Light. I'm thinking about publishing a book, primarily of photos, and sharing my experience as a Keeper. I'm not sure though, as it is probably an expensive endeavor. Who knows though!

Once again, I would just like to say thank you again for this very unique and incredible experience. (signed) Judy Dolney, a.k.a. "Tower Monkey" (P.S. Mike called me this since I would go up and down the tower constantly and clean the windows around the catwalk way up top, and went up and down the ladder to the boat with no fear.) -- Judy Dolney, Clinton Township, MI, 8/2/05