

# Association of Lighthouse Keepers

## Keeping Lighthouse Heritage Alive

**AT HURST**



**CASTLE**

## **AUTUMN 2014 NEWSLETTER**

Despite the continuing lovely 'summer' weather the team at Hurst are very conscious that it will soon be the end of the Castle visitor season, the café will close (so no more bacon sarnies) and working days will become considerably shorter. On a positive side it does mean the Castle is quieter and we can make mess and noise without upsetting our visitors.

Our priority for the winter is the Nab Tower Lantern Project. The redundant Nab Tower lantern arrived here at Hurst in November 2013 and has been stored in pieces outside our workroom ever since awaiting funds to enable us to start on refurbishment. Fundraising began earlier this year when we asked for sponsors for each of the ten panes of glass that needed to be replaced. By the end of July, amazingly, we had all ten sponsors signed up. We have also had a really good response to our plea for general donations from visitors and are very grateful to everybody who has contributed in any way.



John starts work

With some money in the bank the ALK volunteers were keen to get started on the refurbishment work. We did have a big problem in that our workroom is quite small, has to accommodate tools and supplies, an office and sometimes two or three people working on different things, and the bits of lantern are quite big.

New recruit John Best, along with old hand Mat Dickson, spent a hardworking Monday tidying up the ALK Archive Store to make room for a larger workspace and, as soon as it was ready, the first bit of lantern was taken in and work began. John is also one of our sponsors and it is really nice to have him on board.

Our next fundraising effort is the ALK at Hurst 2015 Calendar which will be on sale at the Castle from 22<sup>nd</sup> September or from our Project Manager whose contact details can be found at the end of this newsletter.

We were very pleased to hear news that our plans for the redundant Nab Tower Lantern has even reached the USA, it is an item in the latest newsletter of the US Lighthouse Society.



Discussions on where the cables will go

ALK projects that had been put on hold while the Trinity House rooms were given a tidy up for the 500<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration are now starting up again. One of these is an interactive exhibit in ALK No. 2 Museum Room which will connect lamps on top of the display cabinet to push buttons on a table in the middle of the room. Each lamp will be representing a buoy in the Needles Channel and flash with the same sequence. Charts will be provided to show where the buoys are in the channel together with their flashing sequences and the buoys will be able to be seen from the West Wing roof.

We also hope to make some progress in providing a video player and screen to show the film shot at the Needles Lighthouse narrated by our President, Gerry Douglas-Sherwood, and Trustee, Gordon Medicott, who were both Principal Keepers there.

### **Other ALK News**

International Lighthouse Heritage Weekend was held over the weekend of August 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> and events were held all over the world. Here at Hurst, the lighthouse cannot be opened to the public due to Health and Safety constraints but the historic Acetylene Room was manned by several members of the ALK on the Saturday for short tours and explanations on how the acetylene gas which fuelled the lamp from 1922 to 1968 was made. On a fine day, over 80 people visited the Acetylene Room and donated more than £40 towards our Nab Tower project.



The ALK ILHW Team

Our AGM takes place in Anglesey at the end of September. This is always a great social time as lots of lighthouse related trips are arranged starting on the Friday morning with a 'Meet and Greet' right through to the Sunday morning with a last event before Members head home.

If you would like to help us in our efforts by becoming a member, or just because you like lighthouses, please pick up a leaflet or have a look at the website on [www.alk.org.uk](http://www.alk.org.uk). Or have a chat with Keith Morton, the ALK Project Manager at Hurst. He is usually at the Castle on a Monday or can be contacted on [hurst@alk.org.uk](mailto:hurst@alk.org.uk) or 01329 843883. There is also a social side to the ALK who organise events, both locally and countrywide, and also 'lighthouse themed' tours in the UK and abroad.