



## **AT HURST      AUTUMN 2013 NEWSLETTER**

The Association of Lighthouse Keepers (ALK) had a very busy year as it celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday in April, along with the opening of a second museum room at Hurst Castle.

Hurst Castle has become the primary site for ALK artifacts, many of which have been in storage there since the closure of the Trinity House Museum in Penzance in 2005. In 2010 the Castle management offered the ALK a further space in one of the gun casements and, after two years of work by an enthusiastic and skilled team of volunteers, the second museum room was opened in April this year. It has been a huge success with visitors and was given a conservation award and grant by the Solent Protection Society.



***No 2 Room Opening Day***

Finally, the Association's 2013 AGM was held in September at Southwold Sailing Club, the very place where it all began 25 years ago. Our Chairman, Neil Hargreaves, and the instigator of it all, still can't believe how it has grown and how many people are really interested in lighthouses and their history.

***Donna and husband Jeff at Hurst***

Nearby Keyhaven Yacht Club was the venue for the 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday Dinner which was attended by founder members and a special guest, Esbjörn Hillberg, Chairman of the Swedish Lighthouse Association.

In June, Hurst had another overseas visitor. Donna Suchomelly from the USA, Editor of the World Lighthouse Society Newsletter, called in during her tour of UK lighthouses. Having visited some four years previously, she wanted to see what improvements we had made and was very impressed indeed.



So – what next?

In 2014 Trinity House celebrates its 500<sup>th</sup> Birthday and, over the winter months, the Trinity House Room at Hurst, also in the West Wing, will be refurbished and new exhibits installed. There are also finishing touches to be made to the second museum room and a bit of housekeeping to keep the first museum room up to scratch. We are looking to provide some more 'child-friendly' items, including possibly the lantern from the Nab Tower, and perhaps do some fund-raising events to help pay for future projects. Watch this space!

And – a bit about the ALK. It was formed by three Trinity House employees facing the end of their work as lighthouse keepers, due to the ongoing programme of automation, but who wanted to keep alive memories of a unique way of life. The Association has grown to over 700 members nationwide and abroad and it has become the place to go for anyone with an interest in lighthouses, lightships and maritime aids to navigation. With an already extensive archive of documents and collection of artifacts, members keep a close eye on what is happening to lighthouses all over the United Kingdom and use their best efforts to preserve artifacts and, on occasion, advise on an alternative use for a decommissioned lighthouse or lightship.



### ***Our local 'High Lights'***

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 representative 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.