“YOU HAVE TO GO OUT, BUT YOU DON’T HAVE TO COME BACK”

THE UNITED STATES LIFE-SAVING SERVICE

A CURRICULUM-BASED PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 4-6
The Life-Saving Service was founded out of necessity. With more goods and people traveling along the eastern seaboard of the United States, thousands of people and many tons of cargo were lost in storms or when ships ran aground. People realized that there needed to be a system of rescue for these ships and their cargo to prevent the loss of life and property.

The Life-Saving Service was officially created in 1871 and was led by a young lawyer from Maine named Sumner Kimball. It was under his supervision that the service grew and became a staple of shoreline rescue. Life-Saving Stations were placed between 3 and 5 miles apart along the eastern coast of the United States as well as locations throughout the Great Lakes, the Pacific coast and the western coast of Florida. These stations were manned by a station keeper and about 6 individual Surfmen. These Surfmen would live on site at the station and could go weeks without seeing anyone but their fellow surfmen. Some of the Life-Saving Stations were on small, remote barrier islands, keeping the men isolated for months at a time.

The surfmen would take turns patrolling the beaches every night to be on the lookout for a shipwreck. Surfmen would walk from their station to a midway point, where they would meet with another surfman, exchange a “check,” a small badge which proved that they had completed their patrol and walk back. If they saw a shipwreck, the surfman would light and wave a red flare, signaling to both the troubled ship and the Life-Saving Station that a rescue would need to take place.

The surfmen were a very busy group. Ship wrecks did not happen every day, so to pass the time and to keep their skills sharp, the surfmen had a very strict schedule they followed to make sure that they were always ready for action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duty Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Surfmen would practice the Beach Apparatus Drill and make sure that all of their gear was in working condition and safe to use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Surfmen would practice their rescue boat drills. They would row into the surf, capsize their boat, right it and start again.</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Surfmen would practice signal drills such as semaphore and wig wag, which were forms of communication with flags.</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Surfmen would repeat the Beach Apparatus Drill and any other Monday duties.</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>Surfmen trained in “Restoring the apparently drowned” which was like an early form of CPR.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Surfmen performed maintenance and chores like cleaning the Life-Saving Station and grounds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Surfmen had the day off to go into town or relax. Regular patrols still occurred at night.</td>
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Objective:
Students will clearly articulate the role of the United States Life-Saving Service in relationship to the history of Lewes. Students will be able to discuss the necessity of the Life-Saving Service, the duties they performed, and the accomplishments made by the Surfmen of the United States Life-Saving Service.

Activity and Discussion
Invite students to gather for a class discussion. Ask if any of the students have been to a beach and seen a life guard on duty. If so, have students define the responsibilities of a lifeguard. Next, ask students if they have ever seen a boat while they were out on the beach. Once they answer, ask them if they know whose job it is to watch the boats and help them if they are in trouble. Explain to students that today, the United States Coast Guard is responsible for rescuing people who are in trouble on the water. Today the Coast Guard uses modern equipment, such as radios, power boats, and even helicopters to perform rescues.

Ask students to think about how rescues would have been done about 150 years ago. There were no cell phones, no radios, and no helicopters to rescue anyone who was in trouble at sea. Take a few moments to gather the students’ ideas. Once you feel that the students are able to move on, begin to share the story of the U.S. Life-Saving Service. You may read the story to the students, or photo copy and allow each student to read on their own. Once students have finished, invite them together for the scaffolding activity.

Making a KWL Chart - Scaffolding Activity
This activity provides students with additional scaffolding and will help establish exploration goals for the trip to the U.S. Life-Saving Service Station at the Lewes Historical Society.

A KWL chart is a chance for the class as a whole to articulate what they know about the Life-Saving Service after the initial lesson (K), what they would like to know about the Life Saving Service that they haven’t learned yet (W), and at the conclusion, what they have learned about the Life-Saving Service (L). This chart will assist students in the culminating activity of the unit and provide them with a classroom based reference for their work on their final project.
THE BEACH APPARATUS DRILL
PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY 2

Objective:
Students will understand the rescue procedure known as the Beach Apparatus, or Breeches Buoy. Students will articulate learned vocabulary in the description of the rescue procedure and will be able to identify several components used within the rescue. Students will be drawing upon this information during the final activity.

Activity and Discussion:
Share Image of the man in the breeches buoy. Ask students to take a few moments to think about what it may have been like to be rescued in a device as simple as a rescue ring with attached breeches and some rope. Next, explain to the students that this was the Beach Apparatus Drill that surfmen would practice each week and that this was one of the methods of rescue used by the Life-Saving Service.

As you share the story with the students, have them use the worksheet to write down some of the important tools that were used during the rescue.

The surfmen would be alerted that there was a wreck by a red flare. This signaled it was time to man the beach wagon, wheel it to the beach nearest the wreck and begin the Beach Apparatus Drill.

Once the wagon was at the proper location, a hole was dug to place the sand anchor in. This helped to anchor the hawser, or thick line, that would be used to pull the victims to shore. Once this was set up, line from the faking box, or a box with wooden pins that were used to keep the line from tangling, was fastened to a shot that was placed in the Lyle gun, which was a small cannon-like object. The Lyle gun was fired, sending the shot and the line to ship.

Next, the line was attached to the hawser which was then pulled to the vessel. Two tally boards acted like instruction manuals and were pulled onto the wreck. Tally boards were written in both English and French, the two most prominent maritime languages of the day. These instructions told survivors to tie the hawser to the highest point on the mast to start the rescue process. The hawser was then set into a crotch, or a large wooden X on the shore. This helped to keep it off the ground and allow for the breeches buoy to be pulled back and forth. The breeches buoy would be pulled to the ship where a passenger would climb inside and be pulled to shore by the surfmen. This would be repeated until all of the passengers from the shipwreck were pulled to safety. Once all the passengers were safe, the hawser would be cut and pulled back to the cart and clean-up would begin.

United States Coast Guard has created a video series that illustrates the Beach Apparatus Drill. It can be found at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmskcEFFBQ

Key to Worksheet: 1. Breeches Buoy. 2. Lyle Gun. 3. Crotch. 4. Hawser. 5. Shovel
The Beach Wagon

To quickly set up for the Beach Apparatus Drill, surfmen would keep a beach cart ready to haul all of the equipment they would need to perform a breeches buoy rescue. Can you name all of the tools you can see on this beach wagon and share how each tool is used in the Beach Apparatus Drill?

NAME ___________________________ DATE ___________________________

THE BEACH WAGON

To quickly set up for the Beach Apparatus Drill, surfmen would keep a beach cart ready to haul all of the equipment they would need to perform a breeches buoy rescue. Can you name all of the tools you can see on this beach wagon and share how each tool is used in the Beach Apparatus Drill?

NUMBER 1

NUMBER 2

NUMBER 3

NUMBER 4

NUMBER 5
SUFFICIENT FOR LIFE-SAVING

DESIGNING YOUR OWN LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS AT THE HISTORIC LEWES LIFE-SAVING STATION

This unique site-based activity will allow your students to use their critical thinking skills to collaboratively create their own Life-Saving apparatus. Students will have the opportunity for an in-depth discussion with one of The Lewes Historical Society’s trained docents and will have the chance to see all of the components of the Beach Apparatus Drill, located in the Lewes Life Saving Station.

Students will have the chance to feel the weight of a Lyle Gun shot, the rough and weathered hawser and take a peek inside the Society’s own Francis Life Car as well as a restored self-righting surfboat.

Students will then discuss some of the best and worst ideas for life-saving devices. Not all devices that were created were suitable for rescue practices. Only a select few methods and devices were chosen by the United States Life Saving Service.

Your class will have the chance to design and build their own life-saving apparatus. Students will be placed in small groups and be given a variety of materials that will allow them to create an apparatus that they feel would be “Sufficient for Life-saving.”

Once students have had the chance to create their apparatus, they will have several minutes to talk in their groups about the strategies they have discussed in the creation of their apparatus. Students will be asked to develop a scenario about the reason their apparatus was used how it works, how many people it can save at a time, how long they think it will take to build, how many people it will take to use and create a cost.

After all of the groups have had a chance to talk, they will have the opportunity to try and “sell” their apparatus to the rest of the class, who will be taking on the role of the United States Life-Saving Service. Students will be able to describe their apparatus, how it works, and share their thought processes about creating a rescue apparatus.

After all of the groups have had the opportunity to present, the class will spend a few minutes discussing the merits of each of the designs and decide as a group which one they feel will be sufficient for life saving.

When the students are finished the docent will introduce them to the Blizzard of 1888 which they will then use in the classroom for their final activity.
Passengers must lie down in order to be pulled ashore.

Sample Materials
- Pencils
- Craft foam
- Drinking straws
- Clay
- Yarn or twine
- Felt
- Scissors
- Cork
- Wood bits
- Plastic cups
THE GREAT WHITE HURRICANE POST-TRIP ACTIVITY

Objective:
Students will create their own “front page” news report detailing the work of the surfmen during the blizzard of 1888. Students will utilize learned vocabulary from previous lessons and be able to clearly convey the incident of the blizzard and the skills and rescue methods used by the United States Life-Saving Service.

Activity and Discussion:
Gather the class for a debriefing of their trip to the Lewes Life-Saving Station. Invite them to share some of what they had learned and use their responses to complete the W section of the KWL Chart. Once the chart has been completed, hang in a location where students can use it as a reference for the remainder of the activity.

Ask students what they remember about what the docent shared about the Blizzard of 1888. Once students have shared, distribute the article for them to read. This packet includes scans of the original document as well as an excerpt from the article so students can see the layout of the article as well as explore some of the descriptive language used to tell the story of the blizzard.

After students have completed the article, explain to them that they will now be assuming the role of a newspaper reporter who was present for the rescues in the blizzard. It is their job to create a detailed and exciting account of what they observed the surfmen doing during the storm. Encourage students to generate a list of descriptive words that detail the weather conditions as well as the bravery and dedication of the surfmen.

Once students have had the opportunity to create their article (this may take several class periods or be used as a homework extension activity), have students take some time to draw their interpretation of what happened during the storm.

When the students have completed their stories and their pictures, encourage them to create an attention-grabbing headline. This will be used at the top of their front page. Students will then add their drawing and their story to create a full scale newspaper sized story.

After all of the students have finished, invite students to share the front page news stories they have written. You can also set up a classroom exhibit displaying all of front pages the students designed.

Alternate Activity
Students may elect to create a comic depicting the events that occurred in the Blizzard of 1888. Using the excerpt and what they learned from their trip, students will draw and write the copy for the comic strip. A sample comic about the Life-Saving Service is included in this packet.

STANDARDS
Common Core Standards
C.C.4-6.R.I.3
C.C.4-6.F.S.4
C.C.4-6.W.3
C.C.4-6.W.4
C.C.4-6.S.L.4
C.C.6.8.R.H.2

Next Generation Science Standards
4-ESS3-2

Delaware State History Standards
Geography 4.4-5a
History 1.4-5a
History 3.4-5a

MATERIALS
11x17 paper
Pencils
Black markers
Scrap paper
when the hurricane struck they then were parallel and battered against the heavy pelting rain and the great blast of wind which made them for some time of no use whatever. The southwest side was heavily damaged, though it was able to resist the pressure. The northeast side was less affected, but the roof was blown off. The east side was completely destroyed, and the west side was also severely damaged.

The second hurricane, which occurred on the 24th, was even stronger. It lasted for several days and caused widespread destruction. The houses were damaged beyond repair, and many were completely destroyed. The hurricane also caused extensive damage to the crops, which had just begun to grow. It was a terrible blow to the farmers, who had worked hard to prepare for the harvest.

The third hurricane, which occurred on the 27th, was the most devastating of all. It lasted for several weeks and caused widespread destruction. The houses were completely destroyed, and the crops were completely destroyed. The hurricane also caused extensive damage to the infrastructure, including roads and bridges. It was a disaster for the region, and it took many years to recover.

The fourth hurricane, which occurred on the 30th, was the final one. It was shorter and less intense than the others, but it still caused significant damage. The houses were damaged, but they were able to withstand the pressure. The crops were affected, but they were able to grow again. The hurricane also caused some damage to the infrastructure, but it was not as severe as the previous hurricanes.

In conclusion, while hurricanes are a natural part of the region, they are a constant threat to the area and the people who live there. It is important for the community to be prepared for the next hurricane and to have a plan in place for recovery. The government and the community must work together to ensure that the area is ready for the next hurricane.
THE GREAT STORM IN LEWES HARBOR

Perhaps no memory can reach to such a storm upon our Atlantic seaboard as that which swept in upon Sunday and Monday, March 11th and 12th, blocking traffic, prostrating telegraph and telephone wires, and completely isolating by banks and walls of snow most of the cities and towns from Maine to Georgia. But though the great hurricane probably exceeded in extent and violence any of which the district visited has direct record, comparatively little damage was done the shipping off the coast. Fortunately the worst part of the storm blew from the northwest, so that vessels were driven off instead of upon the net-work of bars and shoals which line our sandy Atlantic shore. But that very circumstance, which thus proved the salvation of the many, proved in another case equally the destruction of a few who

The Atlantic beach of the lower part of the State of Delaware, which for a distance runs in a straight line in a nearly northerly and southerly direction, terminates abruptly at the mouth of the Delaware Bay in the sharp hooked point of Cape Henlopen. Within the low sand-spur of the cape and its adjacent dune of gray desolate sand, wherein stands perched the white tower of the light-house, lies the beautiful curve of Lewes Harbor—a smooth, even segment of white beach as unbroken as though circumscribed by the point of a gigantic compass. To the east and north of this haven lie two massive stone piles, built by the government for the further sheltering of the shipping resting within the protecting arm of the cape—the great sea-wall or breakwater to the east and the ice-breaker to the north. Within these natural and artificial shelters, hitherto considered well-nigh storm-proof, fifty vessels (mostly large coasting schooners, but with a sprinkling of a few ocean sailers, banks, barkentines, and brigs) rode at anchor during the afternoon and evening of Sunday, March 11th. While a stiff half-gale of wind blowing from the southeast brought with it a phenomenally heavy sea, that, rolling its headen weight around the point of the Cape, dashed thundering and roaring against the massive granite face of the ponderous sea-wall. Fifty vessels rode at anchor: twenty-four hours saw all but fifteen of them either aground or sunk.

Such are a few of the incidents that happened in Lewes Harbor during that terrible forty-eight hours—a few fragments of the story of trial, privation, suffering, of heroic effort made and no less heroic endurance borne by that class of our human family than which there is no nobler generation—the sailor. Upon such occasions as this, when one sees these rugged human beings, tasting bitter of the honest salt-water, blown thus together by an ill wind, one can better judge what noble specimens the brine breeds. I doubt that a finer body of men could be found than those hardy weather-beaten coasting captains that gathered together in the quaint hotel at Lewestown, filling the air with thick clouds of tobacco smoke—a silent, gloomy, despondent company, but ready upon the instant with a blunt, honest, half-joking response to any address directed to them. I doubt if any finer specimens could be found than the broad-shouldered young Vikings—Yankee, English, and Norse—that looked helplessly about the streets, clad in indiscriminate toggs and patches of apparel. I made some remark as to what fine stalwart fellows they were.

"Yes," was the answer; "we don't have many invalids at sea."

"It is not so much their big bodies," said I, "as their intelligent faces."

"Oh, as for that," said the other, "it would be strange if a man's wits weren't sharpened by such spells of weather now and then as we have just passed through."

There was something infinitely pathetic in the request of the captain of one of the poor ice-bound craft, which we boarded for the purpose of making a picture, that we should make ourselves at home. It was as hospitable an invitation as though a glass of grog and a warm fire were down below in the ice-coated cabin. Poor fellow! I pitied the grim, half-humorous view he took of his own misfortunes, it was so characteristically American.

But, after all, it is most oftentimes misfortunes that breed heroes, and it is then that we best appreciate them.

HOWARD PYLE.
COMIC STRIPS

Comic strips are a form of popular media that can range from silly jokes to serious topics. In this comic strip, you can see how the artist and the author worked together to tell the story of the United States Life-Saving Service through pictures and in short phrases.

You can use this comic strip as sample for when you create your own about the Blizzard of 1888.
Around 1960, a local newspaper columnist named Marjorie Virden wrote several articles for the local papers lamenting the fact that many of Lewes’ fine eighteenth century buildings were rapidly disappearing. Particular attention was called to the plight of the David Rowland House on Front Street, which carries in its foundation a cannonball memento of the War of 1812 and the Bombardment of Lewes in April of 1813. Over the years, the house had been so neglected that the interior brick nogging was visible through missing shingles.

One day in 1961, a group of concerned citizens including Robert Orr, Ginnie Orr, and Sarah Chambers were sailing down the canal towards Roosevelt Inlet. As they passed the Rowland House, someone remarked that despite much talk, no action had been taken to save Lewes’ historic architecture. That same evening, Mrs. Orr held a meeting at her house for dozens of concerned citizens. Soon after, a general meeting was held to organize the Lewes Historical Society. Temporary officers were selected, invitations sent - with excellent results - to prospective members, and the Lewes Historical Society was officially founded on January 19, 1962.

Later that year, a lot at the corner of Third and Shipcarpenter Streets was purchased and named the Lewes Historic Complex. Gradually, the Burton-Ingram House, Thompson Country Store, Rabbits’ Ferry House, Creamery, Necessary, Early Plank House, Blacksmith Shop, and Ellegood House were moved to the Complex and restored. Conservation efforts continue today. The neglected house of David Rowland was eventually bought by the Society and restored. Today it sits on its original site at the corner of Front and Bank Streets and serves as the popular Cannonball House Maritime Museum.

In 1989, the John Farrace Bequest enabled the Society to purchase 110 Shipcarpenter Street, then known as the Watts property, and renamed as the Hiram Rodney Burton House to honor a local physician and Delaware’s Congressman from 1901-1904. This structure houses the Society’s library, archives as well as the administrative offices of the organization. In 1991, Freddie’s Barn, the Society’s maintenance facility, was built to honor long-time historic preservationist and restoration specialist, Fred Hudson, who has worked for the Society from 1962-2008. The Doctor’s Office, previously located on Second Street, was moved to the Complex to consolidate Society properties and in 2000, it was joined by Midway School #178.

With the cooperation of the City of Lewes, the Society received a lease to the waterfront property on the canal at the foot of Shipcarpenter Street, where the Society berthed the lightship Overfalls and where the boathouse of the Lewes Life Saving Station sits. Since 1997, the Society has leased the Ryves Holt House at the corner of Second and Mulberry Streets from the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware. Located in the heart of Lewes’ thriving business district, the Ryves Holt House serves as the Society’s Visitors Center.

The Society continues to offer a rich and exciting array of activities that engage our visitors and promote Lewes' unique heritage to an ever-increasing number of seasonal guests and year-round residents of the area. From our Winter Meeting Series to the summer Antique Shows and Craft Fairs the Society offers annual programs that have become signature events of the Society. The Society has sponsored several conferences of Lewes and Delaware History, has invited numerous local, national and international scholars and dignitaries to speak at its events, and promoted the arts and cultural exploration and appreciation in Southern Delaware. As Lewes continues to grow, the Society will strive to maintain a record of the past of this special and ancient town by the sea.
BOOKING YOUR TRIP

Thank you for your interest in The Lewes Historical Society’s educational programming!

To book a trip for your students, visit our website at www.historiclewes.org.

We offer a variety of educational programs ranging from traditional historical complex walking tours to in-depth multi-disciplinary curriculum unit programs. Each of our programs meet the latest Common Core, Next Gen Science, and Delaware State History Standards.

The fee for our programs are $1.00 per child, due no later than the scheduled date of your tour.

Once the form is complete and submitted, you will receive an email receipt of your reservation.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to email education@historiclewes.org or call 302-645-7670.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Print Resources


Web Resources
The Lewes Historical Society: www.historiclewes.org

The United States Life-Saving Service Heritage Association USLSSHA.org

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Page 4: Breeches Buoy. Image courtesy of the United States Coast Guard.
Page 5: Beach Wagon, image courtesy of the Indian River Life-Saving Station
Page 7: Life-car and Capt. Donvig’s Life Saving globe, Images courtesy of the U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association
Page 8: Ship in Blizzard of 1888. 1888. LHS collections. Object Number ph.mrt.163
Page 11: Lewes Life-Saving Station Boat House. LHS 2013.
Professional Affiliations

American Alliance of Museums, American Association for State and Local History, Delaware Museum Association, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Delaware, Small Museum Association, United States Life-Saving Service Heritage Association.