



Lighthouse Fun 4 Kids!

Featuring:
**Christmas at the
Cape Hatteras
Lighthouse**



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1803

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Issue #3

Lighthouse Fun 4 Kids



Dear Santa,
Please bring me a lighthouse
themed jigsaw puzzle for
Christmas. Here is a cookie
for you!



Make a Snowglobe!

Find a small jar. The one shown held jam. Glue a small object to the lid with hot glue. We chose a lighthouse, of course, and some fake pine. Add water to the jar, almost to the top. Add some glitter. Screw the lid on the jar tightly. Hot glue the outside where the lid and jar come together. This makes it watertight. Add a ribbon! Then turn the jar onto its lid and shake! Winter wonderland in a jar!



Inspiration for your story!

Story Starter---Get Your Pencil!

It was Christmas Eve. Santa and his reindeer flew the sleigh through the fog to Rocky Point Lighthouse. Rudolf helped them land in the deep snow next to the tower. Santa delivered gifts for the kids. When the kids woke up the next morning, they found...

Lighthouses on Christmas Cards!

Send them! Receive them!

Design your own and email them to Elinor@uslhs.org.

She'll post them online. They make the holidays really BRIGHT!!



Gotta read a book for school? Or fun? Try this one if you're in grades 2, 3, or 4.

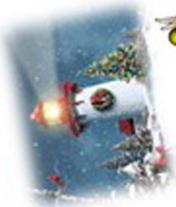


A lighthouse-trimmed Christmas tree? What a 'bright' idea! Use cut up pictures of lighthouses or lighthouses on holiday cards. You also can buy lighthouse trims or paint your own on clear plastic balls. Check out the trims in the picture at right!

Did you know?
A tessellation is a repeating image, kind of like the movement of clock hands around a clock face.

Make a lighthouse tessellation, like the one above. Use it for gift wrapping paper. Rubber stamps of lighthouses are great for making tessellations

Send us photos and scans of any lighthouse items you make—tessellations, snowglobes, holiday ornaments, puzzles, drawings. We have a wonderful spot for them on the U.S. Lighthouse Society website. We'll include your first name too!



Christmas at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, North Carolina

A Read Aloud True Story

By Cheryl Shelton-Roberts
Graphic Design By Richard Gales



It might be hard to imagine, but many lightkeepers celebrated Christmas simply by keeping a good light to guide sailors safely along dangerous coastlines. And keepers' families who lived at American lighthouses celebrated in quiet ways because each lighthouse and its work remained the most important thing no matter the time of year. Let's turn back the clock to Christmas 1930 and visit the Jennette children at the Cape Hatteras Light Station and see what is going on in the village of Buxton.

Rany (pronounced Ran'ee) Jennette's father was the longest-serving head keeper at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse during the 1920s and 1930s. Captain Unaka (pronounced Yoo-nay' kuh) was strict in some ways, but he allowed his children to play games like hopscotch, softball, foot races, and marbles. Rany's favorite thing was to ride his horse, Wildfire, one of the wild horses that roamed Hatteras Island as free as the wind.



Keeper Jennette with two of his favorite pets. Family photos courtesy of the Jennette family.

It was Christmas Eve, and he had lots to do! He had finished his chore cleaning the brass door knobs in the lighthouse, and he had to hurry to catch up with

Rany pretends to drive his brother and sisters in his father's Model T. Family photos courtesy of the Jennette family.



his family who had already left for church in Keeper Jennette's Model T. car. He put on his best shirt and knickers, combed his blonde hair, shined his shoes, pulled up his long socks and tucked them under his pants below his knees. He ran out onto the beach, whistled and clapped his hands while shouting, "WILDFIRE, COME HERE!" Rany was anxious and excited all at the same time, because he knew a surprise was waiting for him at the United Methodist Church in Buxton. Did Santa leave something for him? "Hurry

up, Wildfire, come to me!” As the dark brown horse with a white diamond on its forehead and a bouncing brown mane galloped toward him from far up the beach, Rany started running. Just as Wildfire loped past, Rany grabbed the lower left side of his mane and swung his right leg up and over the horse’s back like he’d done many times. Together, they galloped along the beach toward the village so fast that Rany’s hair whipped in the wind. A huge grin spread across his face. This was what he loved most in the world to do, and Wildfire certainly seemed to be enjoying the run! As he neared the church on Back Road, he heard singing coming from inside—he had better hurry because his mother and father would be upset with him if he came in late. He jumped down from the horse’s back and let him go to wander the island and beach. Rany wanted Wildfire with him all the time, but he couldn’t take a horse in church, now could he??!!



*Wildfire probably looked similar to Alonso, pictured here. Wild horses have lived on North Carolina’s coast for centuries.
Photo by Bruce Roberts*

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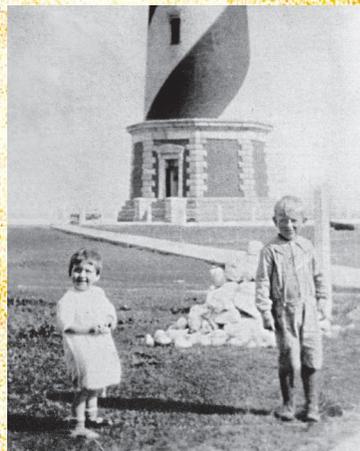
Tiptoeing quietly into the church, Rany took a seat near the back of the chapel. Village families filled the rows of pews that lined the aisles. There, near the front of the congregation, he saw his father, his mother “Miss Sudie,” brother Almy and sisters Vivian, Myrtle, Olive, Dorcas, and little Ramona. His eyes got BIG when he spotted the tree at the front of the church! There were dozens of packages hanging on the tree—oh, goodness—there were SO many gifts that some had to be placed under the tree! The church gave every child a “treat in a poke,” which was a bag that held an apple, an orange, and hard candies of different colors. This was incredibly special to youngsters because families had little money for buying gifts, and fruit in winter was hard to get.

Rany craned his neck to see if his name was on one of the gifts hanging on the tree, but he was too far away. He squirmed in his seat as he tried to wish the service would go faster. But first, everyone watched the manger play that told the story about Baby Jesus, born Christmas Day to Mary and

Rany and his sister Olive play by the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

The white “balls” are ships’ ballast stones, gathered after storms washed them up on the beach and painted white to look clean.

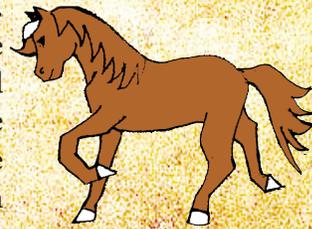
Family photos courtesy of the Jennette family.





Joseph, and a visit from the Three Wise Men and angels in their white robes wearing halos of gold garland--Rany had played an angel when he was five years old. Everyone stood and sang "Oh Come, All Ye Faithful," after which the preacher told everyone to bow their heads. He asked that the congregation say a prayer for Mr. Fulcher who had fallen and hurt his arm, and a prayer for Mrs. O'Casey who had come down with a cold and couldn't be with them this evening, and a prayer for Keeper Jennette's family dog to find his way home, missing after the recent storm. "Wow," Rany thought, "I didn't know ol' Charlie was gone; he is such a great hunting dog, and everybody loves his flag of a tail and floppy ears. Wildfire and I'll help find him for sure." Finally, the service was over, and the preacher introduced Mr. O'Neil to call each child's name as a gift was taken off the big cedar tree--it smelled so good, right out of Buxton woods near the church.

Rany didn't know whether to be excited or embarrassed...he would have to walk up to the front of the church all by himself in front of ALL those people. What if someone played a joke on him and gave him something that should be for a girl? "Well," he decided with a confident nod of his head, "I will act like a grownup and walk up there with my head held high and be happy with whatever I get." But he got nervous again as each name was called! The gifts were opened quickly one-by-one and everyone laughed and clapped. Olive got a doll; Melinda Midgett got a box of seashells to play with, Almy got a small carved ship, Myrtle loved her stuffed bear, and there were so many more that Rany lost count. Then came, "Rany Jennette!" Rany froze. He couldn't move! Everyone looked for him throughout the church, and when all heads turned his way, he sank down into his seat. "Come on, Rany! Come get your gift." He heard laughter all around him. Rany slowly rose, then started walking down the aisle toward Mr. O'Neil and the big cedar tree that only had a few gifts left hanging on it. He walked slowly, then a little faster, and then he ran! He was so excited! Santa had left a bigger package wrapped with HIS name on it! It was a little heavier than the tree could hold, so Mr. O'Neil picked it up from under the tree and held it out for Rany to take. It was heavier than he expected, and he nearly dropped it. He pulled on the string holding the plain paper wrapping around his gift, and as he tore away the layers of paper, his eyes grew bigger and bigger--it was a...HORSE. It was Wildfire, perfectly carved by someone who knew what Rany loved most in the



Rany Jennette's house is on the right; his bedroom window is on the right on the second level. The house at left was for two assistant keepers and their families. It took a lot of people to take care of this BIG lighthouse.

Photo by Bruce Roberts



world. Now, Rany could hold Wildfire any time and pretend they were always together.

Afterward, the Jennette family returned to the lighthouse to make sure the light was working properly and doing its important job of guiding sailors at sea. The sandy road was bumpy and full of ruts; sometimes, their car got stuck and the older

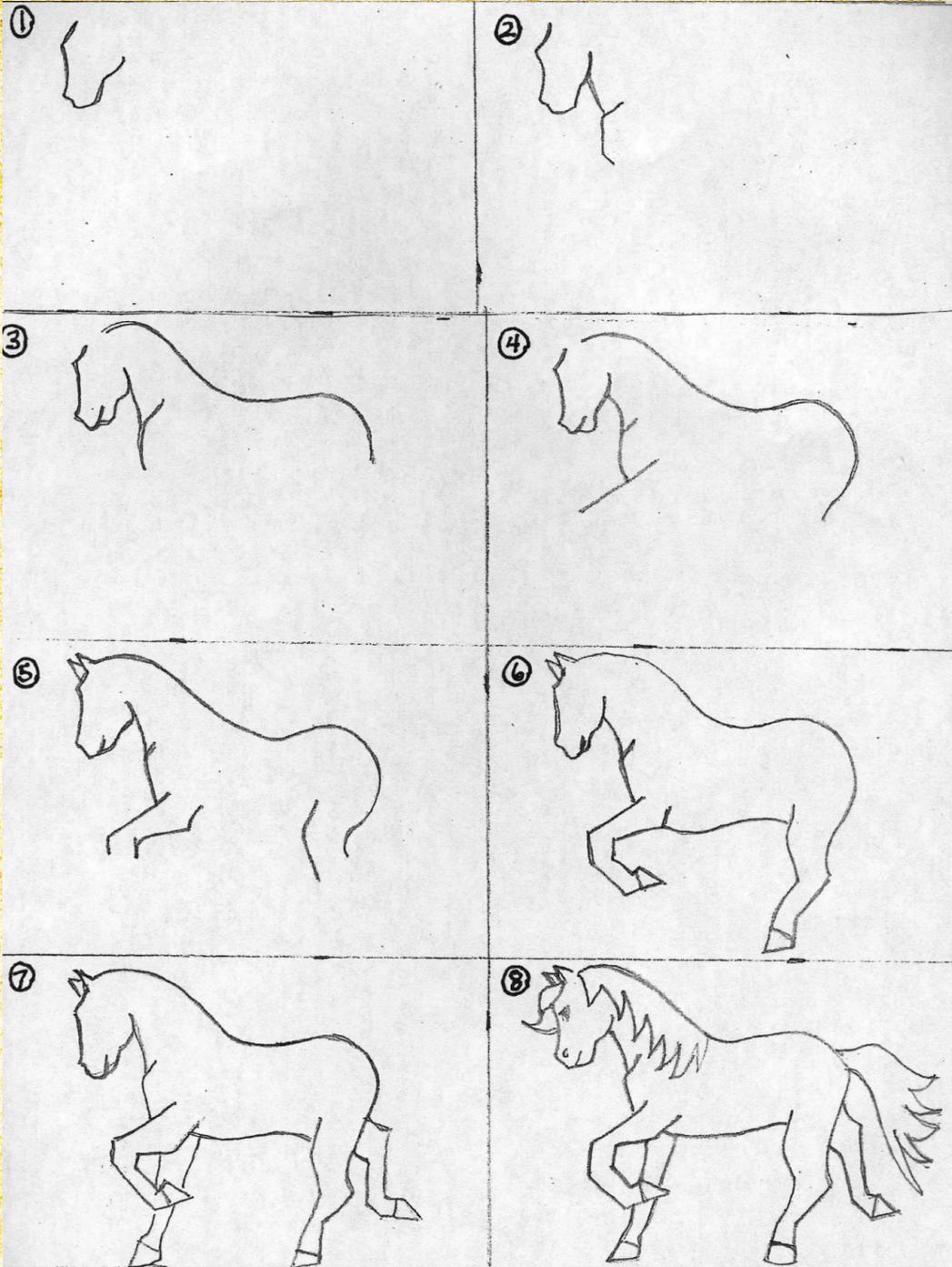
kids got out and pushed the car forward.

Rany held his carved Wildfire tightly to protect it. His mind wandered back to when his name was called to go to the front of the church and get his gift. He had no idea what he had wished for—he never thought about needing anything because he had everything: His family's food came from their vegetable garden and fish and clams and oysters from the sea; he loved to help his father keep the Cape Hatteras Light working; he had the important job to keep the wood box full to burn in the iron stove in the keeper's house for warmth and cooking and baking Mama's biscuits and cakes. And Wildfire. His Wildfire. He turned his thoughts to Christmas Eve supper: a cooked wild goose and a big slice of Mama's chocolate cake; there would be singing with his family as Miss Sudie played the piano, and then bedtime. He was tired from such a big day.

Rany put on his longjohns, jumped into his thick feather bed and hunkered down to get warm. He peeked out from under the heavy quilt to see the sweep of the Cape Hatteras Light, right outside his window, its beam slowly gliding across his bedroom wall every seven and one-half seconds, shining out from the beautiful Fresnel lens in the lantern room where his father kept watch, carving something that had a flag of a tail and floppy ears. The silent passing light on his wall put him to sleep like it had every night for the past nine years. He dreamed of his gift and wondered who carved it and about Wildfire and the next ride they would take on the beach to go treasure hunting after a big storm.



Draw Rany's Horse, Wildfire!



Created by Janet Nickle