

## Reviews by Educators

I.

“Ocean Keeper” is exquisitely executed. The images, from the very beginning, evoke familiar memories and wondrous imagination - have you ever wished you could fly your house to another place? It combines a warm and intimate point of view with rich and detailed historic information, shading light into the day-to-day workings of the station and its keepers, as well as fascinating accounts like the Nazi incursion of June 12, 1942.

Amagansett Station is an architectural icon and a tangible reminder of the rich history of maritime traffic of Long Island and New York. Eileen Torpey, the director of the film, has not only created an engaging and invaluable record, but more so “Ocean Keeper” is an ode to a place and to the people that recognized its importance.

**- Alex Morel, Associate Professor of Photography, St. Johns University, Queens, NY**

II.

“Ocean Keeper” visually narrates the history of a landmark building in Amagansett from the voices of the family that lived there. It is an emotionally stunning portrait of how a building can serve as a container for community. Eileen Torpey has done a remarkable job of capturing the historical importance of a building that served as a US Life Preserving Station in the early to mid 1900’s, while also functioning as a home and gathering place for intellectual and creative voices of the time.

The film serves as a reminder of why we should preserve our state landmarks and honor our past. It also reminds us that history should be told from the point of view of the people involved. “Ocean Keeper” seamlessly weaves the emotional story of a family recounting the loss of its patriarch with the rich maritime history of Long Island and New York. The story of Amagansett Station is one that is beautifully told, and reaches far beyond the walls of the building that now stands in its original location, facing out to the sea.

**- Alicia Wargo, Principal, Dreamyard Preparatory High School, Bronx, NY**

## Reviews by Educators Continued

III.

“Ocean Keeper” is a trilogy within itself. It is the story of a house, it is the story of a family, and it is the story of the now-gone U.S. Life-Saving Service. The history of the house, with its simple architecture, brings us full circle and echoes the feelings of the times . . . from out with the old to historic preservation. Many buildings were either sold or replaced during the 1960s and 1970s with more modern buildings. At the end of the 1900s and the first few years of the 21st century, it seemed that people longed for the way things had been; architecture and restorations reflected that feeling.

The family, led by a powerful father, seemed to understand that the house needed to go back to its roots after having served them all well for so long. They recounted their memories as they moved from room to room and they explained the original uses of the rooms, proud to have lived there but just as proud to return their home to its own birthplace in familiar surroundings to spend the next phase of its life. It will stand guard once again but its new duty will be that of story keeper rather than the story maker of its younger days.

Many old-timers out east remember the days of the Life-Saving Service and the threats along the beaches both from nature and then from a dangerous force in Europe that slithered its way underwater to our shores in Amagansett. The service has been replaced by the Coast Guard and Homeland Security; the threats from Europe were overcome overseas and on our beaches, and “Ocean Keeper” stood steadfast through it all, even as it journeyed farther inland for a time to serve a different function.

This beautifully done film captures all three stories as this simple structure becomes the foundation for the trilogy.

***-Jack Perna, Montauk School Superintendent, Montauk, NY***