

## **OLD BALDY LIGHTHOUSE & SMITH ISLAND MUSEUM OF HISTORY SCHOOL GROUP VISITS AND PROGRAMS**

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in visiting Old Baldy, North Carolina's oldest standing lighthouse. The Old Baldy Foundation is dedicated to educating school children about the Lower Cape Fear's rich maritime history and the important role aids to navigation like lighthouses played in shaping this area. There are a few things you need to familiarize yourself with before your visit to ensure an enjoyable and safe experience.

### **PLANNING YOUR VISIT**

School group visits must be reserved in advance with the Old Baldy Foundation's Tour Director, Susan Grantier (910) 457-7481. School Groups must have approximately 2 **active and participating** adult chaperones per 12 children. The larger the group, the more time it will take to tour the lighthouse and museum. A typical group visit is 3 or 4 hours, including lunch on the grounds.

Bald Head Island is accessible only by passenger ferry service based in Southport, NC. Once you have reserved your date, please contact Bald Head Island Transportation to arrange travel to and from the island, and any island transportation needs (if visiting the Bald Head Island Conservancy). Call Bald Head Island Transportation, (910) 457-5003 or email Claude McKernan, [cmckernan@bhisland.com](mailto:cmckernan@bhisland.com).

Bald Head Island Ferries run on a strict schedule. Please allow ample travel time to Southport, NC, and include time for loading and unloading buses at curbside. All children must be under strict adult supervision and must follow all instructions. There is no food or beverage allowed inside the ferry passenger cabin.

### **WEATHER AND CONDITIONS**

The weather on Bald Head Island is typical for a tropical island - mild to hot, sometimes rainy, and often very humid. Please pay careful attention to local weather forecasts and dress accordingly! **Most of your visit is outdoors, in the elements**, including the upper deck of the ferry, the walk to and from the ferry, and the grounds around Old Baldy and Ft. Holmes. We do not have indoor accommodations for more than 30 at a time. Depending on the temperature and humidity, it can become very warm inside the lighthouse. In addition to the humidity, mosquitoes are prevalent from May to October, so insect repellent is advised.

### **FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

A great way for school groups to enjoy the lighthouse and grounds is to bring a packed lunch and picnic on the grassy lawn and under the beautiful Live Oak trees. Be sure the children bring beverages and bottled water. No food or beverage allowed inside the Keeper's cottage or Old Baldy.

## **GROUP DIVISIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

After the initial greeting, overview, and explanations about rules, your group will be divided into smaller sub groups of 20-30 children plus chaperones. **Please arrange this ahead of time and be sure everyone knows which group he or she belongs to.** Each group will then do an activity, such as explore the museum, walk the Ft. Holmes trail, or climb Old Baldy. Groups rotate until everyone has done each activity, with a break for lunch. Each group will have a volunteer or staff member with them, guiding the activity. We expect chaperones to actively participate with the programs and accompany the children as they climb the lighthouse. Not every adult must climb to the top, but at least 1 adult must be supervising at all times to ensure a safe experience.