



PROCLAMATION

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

- WHEREAS:** On October 18, 2008, a rededication ceremony was held to mark the return of an historic flagpole with a long history to the Navesink Light Station, better known as the Twin Lights. After several months of refurbishing and restoration, the Twin Lights flagpole returned to the spot where it has stood for more than a century, and
- WHEREAS:** The flagpole rededication features a talk on the Pledge of Allegiance, which was recited for the first time as America's national oath at the Twin Lights in Spring 1893. The inaugural reciting of America's national oath was the most patriotic event held on the East Coast during the 1890s and probably the largest prior to the tall ships in 1976, and
- WHEREAS:** The Light Station, which became known as the Twin Lights of Highlands to those who used its mighty beacons to navigate, was located within Middletown's borders in 1893. Present day borders place the Light Station in the Borough of Highlands, and
- WHEREAS:** The idea to officially recite the national oath at the Twin Lights was the brainchild of Newark Businessman William Osborne McDowell. He wanted to erect a flagpole at the highest point of land on the Atlantic coast in the continental United States. The Twin Lights fit the bill as it is located 200 feet above sea level. He wanted the Liberty Pole to be the first sight to greet immigrants and travelers as they approached New York harbor, and
- WHEREAS:** McDowell worked with a popular magazine, *The Youth's Companion*, to achieve his goal. The magazine published the pledge, authored by Francis Bellamy, in July 1892. Using *The Companion's* considerable influence with the nation's public schools—and capitalizing on the rising tide of patriotism in the run-up to the Chicago World's Fair—the publisher's nephew, James Bailey Upham, was able to introduce the American flag along with the pledge itself into countless classrooms, and
- WHEREAS:** On April 25, 1893, a robust crowd peppered with national and local dignitaries watched the flag rise to the top of a Liberty Pole, a massive 135-foot flagpole that seemed to dwarf the flanking light towers. A review of naval vessels from all over the world, invited by President Grover Cleveland, filled the horizon as it joined the U.S. Navy in providing a glorious backdrop to the proceedings, and
- NOW
THEREFORE** Be it proclaimed on Monday, October 20, 2008 that I, Mayor Gerard P. Scharfenberger, and the Middletown Township Committee wishes to take this opportunity to thank the curators of the Twin Lights Museum for bringing this monumental event to the forefront of our minds. We are very proud that such a patriotic moment in time is a part of Middletown's history.