

KEEPER'S KORNER

Tidbits and Editorial Comments from the Tower

BY KATHLEEN FINNEGAN-HARRISON



Wood Island Boat House

ALF's Friends of Wood Island Lighthouse have begun stabilization of the storm-damaged boathouse. In July 2024, FOWIL volunteers began making good progress prep-wise in advance of moving the structure back into position on the west side of the island. More to come! (Photo courtesy of Kyle Noble)



Buddy Grover Celebration

A Celebration of Life in honor of George "Buddy" Grover, the longtime and beloved lighthouse keeper who died in January of 2024 was held in June. Grover had been a volunteer at New Jersey's Absecon Lighthouse since 2009.



Dressed in his lighthouse keeper uniform, he greeted and instructed thousands of people who climbed the 228 steps to the lantern. The

celebration began with an organ concert of Buddy's favorite music played on the historic organ in the Adrian Phillips Ballroom at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. Guests celebrated Buddy's life with formal presentations and memories in his honor, followed by a reception at a local restaurant.



Oregon's Coquille River Light

The Coquille River Lighthouse in Bandon, Oregon is once again getting some much-needed attention and is beginning the process for approvals to get the lighthouse restored. Initial estimates are \$1-\$1.5 million. The approval process will take months to secure through the Oregon State Parks and Rec Department(lessee), U.S. Army Corp of Engineers(owner), plus the Coquille Native American Tribe. Visitors can still visit the lighthouse but only the first floor for safety purposes.



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Eagle Bluff Lighthouse Gets Some TLC

Wisconsin's Eagle Bluff Lighthouse in Fish Creek is getting some much-needed renovations. National Restoration began work in April 2024. They have sandblasted, replaced the glass, and painted the lantern. Then began working on brick-and-mortar repairs to the chimney. And, at press time, they were in the immediate stabilization phase – namely fixing the damage that had occurred over time. The Door County Historical Society which maintains the lighthouse, states that the restoration work is expected to be completed in 2024 and to cost around \$3.2 million. One million dollars has been raised from grants and private foundations. If you would like to help with the ongoing costs of this lighthouse, you can make a donation to the Door County Historical Society, P.O. Box 71, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235. www.doorcountyhistoricalsociety.org/donate/



Canada's Panmure Island Light to Get Painted

The Panmure Island Lighthouse Association bought the lighthouse for \$1 back in 2016. But it has a big condition attached – restore, maintain, and keep the lighthouse open to the public for a period of at least 30 years or the government can take back the lighthouse and charge the board of directors for the fair market value. Wow! That is some serious incentive to get the work done and keep it up. The lighthouse is scheduled to be repainted this summer at a cost of \$30,000. They will also replace lost shingles due to tropical storm Fiona in 2022.



Beavertail Lighthouse Gets New Owner

In 1993, the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association was formed as a volunteer organization with an understanding between the state, town of Jamestown, and museum association to co-administer the property. In June 2024, the Coast Guard officially transferred the ownership to the state of Rhode Island, made possible through the National Historic Preservation Act of 2000. (Photo by Rudy Bess)



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Old Point Loma Light Closed

The Old Point Loma Lighthouse at Cabrillo National Monument was closed through the August for restoration work. The exterior restoration, including removing failing paint, repairing masonry and metal features, and fabricating and installing replacement window sashes, will “protect the structural integrity of the building and preserve it for future visitors,” a statement from the National Parks Service read. The NPS Historic Preservation Crew will do the restoration.



New Ownership for Watch Hill Light

The ownership of Rhode Island’s Watch Hill Lighthouse was transferred from the U.S. Coast Guard to private hands. The transfer was made to the Watch Hill Lighthouse Keepers Association who has had stewardship of the lighthouse since 1986. The ownership of the road to the lighthouse, which is only open by vehicles to people over 65 and those with disabilities, is still in question. The law requires meaningful public access to the lighthouse and local residents, members of the association and government officials are currently working on a plan to ensure public access. Let’s hope a reasonable solution can be worked out.



Port Boca Grande Lighthouse Repair Work

In July 2023, the state Department of Environmental Protection signed a \$3.8 million contract to repair and restore the lighthouse and other historic structure at Port Boca Grande in Florida. The lighthouse needed extensive repairs after Hurricane Ian. Work was completed, lamps were checked, and the lighthouse reopened in February 2024.

