

KEEPER'S KORNER

Tidbits and Editorial Comments from the Tower

BY KATHLEEN FINNEGAN-HARRISON



Heceta Lighthouse B&B Hosts the 28th Annual Victorian Christmas Open Houses!

Heceta Head Lightstation celebrated 28 years of its Annual Victorian Christmas Open Houses December 2024. The Queen Anne-style Keeper's House will be adorned with festive Victorian decorations from December 6 to January 2. Local performers, Santa plus cookies, warm drinks, holiday raffle, and a magical walk to the lighthouse were highlights! For more information about the lighthouse, visit www.HecetaLighthouse.com or contact the Heceta Lighthouse B&B at (866) 547-3696 or keepers@HecetaLighthouse.com (Photo from 2018 courtesy Heceta Head Lighthouse)



Tybee Island Lighthouse Restoration Complete

Two years after a routine assessment, it was determined that the Tybee Island Lighthouse needed essential repairs. The total project took about 10 months and \$1.9 million to complete. The initial estimates called for repairs to the Fresnel lens, roof, and masonry. But once they got started, they discovered more things that needed to be replaced, such as the roof at the top of the lens room that needed to be re-seamed and the red roof on the anteroom; plus, some additional non-major work that they weren't expecting. The original estimate was for \$1.6 million to be done in seven months, but the lighthouse was finally completed despite of being a little over budget in time and money. (Photos courtesy Tybee Island Historical Society)



Hurricane Debby leaves Lighthouse Beach Park submerged in sand



Hurricane Debby pounded Southwest Florida and Sanibel's Lighthouse Beach Park. The park, which has had a rocky two years post Ian, was now once again closed due to the effects of Hurricane Debby.

The chain link fence that typically surrounds the Sanibel has toppled and is buried in the sand. And a bicycle rack is also almost fully buried. According to the Sanibel Chamber of Commerce, other parks and parking lots were also closed due to high water. No word yet whether Hurricanes Helene and Milton have caused more damage. (Courtesy Fox 4 Southwest Florida)



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Easternmost Lighthouse Restoration

Work at the West Quoddy Lighthouse has finally begun after long delays in getting the work approved. This photo, taken on September 16, 2024, is just the beginning of the restoration work on West Quoddy Lighthouse. The lighthouse tower will have masonry work done and its famous daymark repainted. Also scheduled is work on the entryway room, the map room, with hopes of expanding the museum with informative displays once it is completed. (Photos by Terry Harrison)



Piedras Blancas Light Station Restoration

Restoration at the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse has begun to bring it back to life. The Piedras Blancas Light Station Association has partnered with the Bureau of Land Management to restore the lighthouse and stabilize the tower so it is safe for earthquakes. The engineering work is done so now they are working on the fundraising to complete the project. The estimated cost is expected to be \$10 million to \$20 million. The light station gets around 10,000 to 15,000 visitors every year. (1962 press photo Piedras Blancas, *Lighthouse Digest* archives)



Coast Guard Boston Fast Response Cutter Pier

The Coast Guard has completed a \$35 million recapitalization of current Coast Guard facilities at Base Boston and acquisition of six new Fast Response Cutters (FRC) at a cost of \$380 million. The FRCs are the Coast Guard's newest cutter class replacing the Legacy Island Class Patrol Boats and will operate throughout the Coast Guard's First District from New York, to the Canadian border. These cutters are designed for missions including search and rescue; fisheries law enforcement; drug and migrant interdiction; port, waterways, and coastal security; and national defense. In addition, the Coast Guard will increase personnel presence in the area with 222 new Coast Guard members to crew and maintain the cutters.



Pemaquid Point Repairs

The bell house building at Maine's Pemaquid Point Light was nearly destroyed in a series of storms in January 2024. But thanks to the Town of Bristol, it is back to its former glory. (Photo courtesy of Bristol Parks & Rec Department)



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Solution to the crossword on page 43

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Frankfort Lighthouse Crowdfunding

The Frankfort North Breakwater Light in Michigan, built in 1912, is in need of sandblasting, painting and some interior restoration. It is being restored to its 1932 appearance, the year the lighthouse was moved and placed on a 20-foot base on the 1932 north breakwater pier. The last time the lighthouse was sandblasted was in 1984 and then painted in the 1990s. So far, they have raised about \$72,000 towards the restoration which is estimated to be about \$1.1 million. You can make a much-needed donation to <https://givebutter.com/c/5ToYa3>



East Point Lighthouse

The Maurice River Historical Society, which cares for the East Point Lighthouse in New Jersey has lost its lease. The group, which was formed in the 1971, has restored the historic lighthouse from a mere shell of a structure to a working lighthouse. After over 5 decades of work, they have now been denied access to the lighthouse. Once restored, the lighthouse has become a living history museum with many events throughout the year. We can only hope that they are going to be able to resolve this situation quickly.



East Point Light in the early 1970s, after a fire took most of the structure. (Photo by Bruce Lippincott)

New Exhibits at Admiralty Head Lighthouse

Admiralty Head Lighthouse at Fort Casey State Park in Olympia, Washington, updated its exhibits in time for the 2024 season. The lighthouse on Whidbey Island which attracts over 50,000 visitors a year, opened in 2024 with “museum-quality” interpretive panels that provided improved readability and new ways to interact with the two Fresnel lenses on display.



NJ Lighthouse Society Holds Final Meeting

As most people know, in nearly every nonprofit organization 10% of the volunteers do 90% of the work. And when that 10% is no longer able to do that work, it is hard to fill the gaps. Such is the case at the NJ Lighthouse Society which recently voted to dissolve the nonprofit after 30 years. Formed originally as a chapter of the US Lighthouse Society and incorporated in 1994, they were at one time the largest regional lighthouse group in the United States. We truly hope that a new group will come forward to fill in the void.



After a storm in 2018. (Photo by Nancy Patterson)