

KEEPER'S KORNER

Tidbits and Editorial Comments from the Tower

BY KATHLEEN FINNEGAN-HARRISON



Lighthouse Island for Sale

Located 2.5 miles off the shores near Alpena, Michigan, is 227-acre Middle Island. The island features a fully operating United States Coast Guard 78-foot lighthouse along with a two-story, 12-room residence constructed in 1907 and a fog signal building, which has been converted into a lodge. The west side of the island offers a 380-foot break wall. Nearby are a duck hunting blind and observation tower. The island also offers an established trail system and a large private dock. A five-mile underwater electrical line provides power to the island. It is still an active aid to navigation which is owned and maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard. Check it out on Zillow.com or Realtor.com. It can be yours for \$3.9 million.



Barcelona Lighthouse gets federal funding

The Barcelona Lighthouse in New York, which was the first natural gas lighthouse, has been selected to receive \$50,000 in federal grant money for restoration work through the National Maritime Heritage Grant Program. Due to this construction beginning in 2024, there will be several grounds areas closed to the public throughout the project.



Eldred Rock Light Named Most Endangered

Alaska Preservation, the nonprofit formally known as Alaska Association for Historic Preservation has released its annual list of Alaska's most endangered properties. The organization has been publishing lists of top endangered properties since 1991. This year, the Eldred Rock Lighthouse is once again among those endangered properties. Located on a remote Southeast Alaska island near Haines, Eldred



Rock has been a part of this list since 2019. This summer, volunteers are working to restore Eldred Rock Lighthouse, which was built in 1905 and is the oldest original lighthouse in Alaska. Eldred Rock Lighthouse Preservation Association (ERLPA) has leased the lighthouse from the U.S. Coast Guard since 2020. ERLPA received about \$45,000 in matching grants from the National Park Service's maritime preservation program. Volunteers from the association and contractors are working from May through July to remediate lead paint and asbestos, repair the lantern room and halt degradation caused by decades of water intrusion and harsh conditions. The Coast Guard left the lighthouse unstaffed since 1973.



Cape Cod Highland Lighthouse Rededication

Following extensive renovations completed in 2022, the Highland Lighthouse in Truro, Massachusetts was rededicated with a ribbon cutting and ceremony on May 3, 2024. Speaking at the rededication were William Burke, Park Historian, and Jennifer Flynn, Superintendent, both with Cape Cod National Seashore; Kevin Kissling, CEO Eastern National. The lighthouse was moved back from the eroding bluff in 1996 and is currently 450 feet from the cliff.



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John Potvin Receives Leadership Award

The Maryland Historical Trust has awarded John Potvin, Lighthouse Manager at Thomas Shoal Point Lighthouse, with the "Outstanding Individual Leadership Award" for 2024. John



is being recognized for years of work preserving the Thomas Shoal Point Lighthouse, a National Historic Landmark, conducting tours and training volunteers. Our congratulations to John Potvin. (Photo by Jack Ryan)

Change of Command for West Quoddy Trustees

West Quoddy Head Keepers Association held their Annual Meeting last fall at the easternmost lighthouse to get started planning for the 2024 season and to elect new members. Pictured here are the Trustees of West Quoddy Head Lighthouse Keepers Association and the Executive Director of the Visitors Center & Lighthouse History Museum. Standing left to right: Marty Saccone, Michael Rice, Davis Pike, Gene Gaffney, Bob Trapani, Jr. (President), Larry Conrad (Secretary), Tom Dean. Seated left to right: Geri Ilg (Vice President), Linda Robinson, Sheila Huckins, and Cindy Eaton. Not pictured - Matt Schreck (Treasurer)



Burrows Island Light Station

The Northwest Schooners Society, the group that is caretakers of the Burrows Island Light Station is working with the U.S. Coast Guard who have contracted the remediation work long promised to the group. A new roof for the keeper's quarters was also added. There is still a lot more work to do and they are in need of donations. Please visit www.BurrowsIslandLighthouse.com to make a much-needed donation. Or you can send a check to: Burrows Island Light Station, Northwest Schooner Society, P.O. Box 75421, Seattle, WA 98175. (Photo courtesy of Burrows Island Lighthouse)



Lorraine Parris

A much-loved volunteer at the Great Lakes Lighthouse Festival for 25 years, Lorraine Parris (97), passed away June 1, 2024. She and her husband George were caretakers at the Old Presque Isle Lighthouse in Michigan. The lighthouse was deactivated in 1871 when the New Presque Isle Lighthouse replaced it. George and Lorraine were caretakers beginning in 1975 and they created a museum full of history and storytelling. George passed in 1992 and Lorraine stayed until 2001. Visitors were welcomed and Lorraine still corresponded up until her death with many of the visitors who quickly became her friends. Our condolences go to her family and many friends.



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Maine light off-limits due to storm damage

Rockland's harbormaster is urging people not to walk around the Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse. The two January storms and historic high tides tore off shingles, ripped off roof tiles and damaged the railing around the lighthouse. The lighthouse has received \$150,000 in federal grants which the city will have to match. You can make a donation by going to the lighthouse's facebook page. www.facebook.com/breakwaterlighthouse



Mending Fences at Cape Hatteras

The octagonal fence of stone and iron that once surrounded the nation's tallest brick lighthouse is being restored, and will include pieces of the original fence found buried on Hatteras Island. The fence is being recreated as part of the \$19.2 million project to restore the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse back to its appearance in the 1870s. (National Park Service photo)



Change of Command

Capt. Matthew S. Baker (right) relieved Capt. Amy E. Florentino (left) as Sector Commander of Coast Guard Sector Northern New England in Portland, Maine. Rear Adm. Michael E. Platt (center), commander, First Coast Guard District, presided over the event. Coast Guard Sector Northern New England executes operational missions across Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and northeastern New York in an area of responsibility that spans hundreds of miles of coastline and 11,000 square nautical miles of water. The change-of-command ceremony is a time-honored military tradition that marks the transfer of total responsibility and authority from one individual to another. It is conducted to demonstrate a continuation of trust and authority within the chain of command. (Courtesy U.S. Coast Guard).



Yaquina Bay Lighthouse Restoration

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is seeking bids for major renovation work on the exterior of the Yaquina Bay Lighthouse in Newport, Oregon. A total of \$1.4 million has been allocated for the project, which will include the repair of roof framing, chimneys, brick foundation, lantern, siding, doors, and windows with the installation of a new roof and complete exterior paint coatings. Bids for the project opened Aug. 15, with a deadline of June 30, 2025, for completion of the project. (Photo by Debra Baldwin)

