



CHESAPEAKE LIGHTS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER, U.S. LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

Herb Entwistle, Founding Chapter President, 1989-1997

Maryland Lighthouse Challenge

Special Edition No. 6 - 2008

Vote For Your Favorite Challenge Lighthouse

by Tony Pasek

Welcome to the 2008 Maryland Lighthouse Challenge – “Road to the Lighthouse!” We hope you enjoy Challenge weekend, whether you visit one, two, or all of the lighthouses along the Challenge route. In addition to the complimentary souvenirs you will be collecting at each lighthouse you visit, those Challengers who visit all ten of the “original” Challenge lights will earn a special “completer’s” souvenir AND the right to cast a ballot for your favorite Challenge beacon. We’ll even allow you to vote for one of the Bonus Lights (Sandy Point Shoal or Blackistone Replica) if you had a chance to visit one or both – and one of those happens to be your favorite! As you contemplate your choice and to help you decide, please review the following “biographies” of the “candidates”, listed in alphabetic order.



My name is the **Chesapeake Lightship**. I was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1930. Though I am the youngest of the “original” Challenge candidates on the ballot, I have done duty at numerous Mid-Atlantic locations, including Fenwick Island Shoal and Virginia Beach. My patriotism was evident during World War II when I was armed with two 20mm guns while serving as a harbor patrol vessel off Cape Cod, protecting the port of Boston. I “retired” in 1970 and was stationed at Hains Point in the nation’s capital. At 52, I was moved to Baltimore and was designated a National Historic Landmark at 59. Vote for me!!

My name is **Concord Point Lighthouse**. I am the oldest Challenge lighthouse and was born in 1827. Local resident John Donahoo constructed me and 12 other lighthouses on the Bay. My first keeper, John O’Neill was a hero from the War of 1812 and I was “kept” by a long succession of O’Neill family members. My present keepers – the “Friends of CPLH”- have restored me and a Fresnel lens shines on the nearby Susquehanna River. I’m also the northernmost beacon on the bay. Vote for me!!



My name is **Cove Point Lighthouse**. I was born in 1828. My builder, John Donahoo, did an outstanding job and I am ONE of only two still working lighthouses on the Challenge route. I mark a dangerous shoal near the Calvert Cliffs and my flashing white light still shines from a 5th-order Fresnel lens. In 2000, I was transferred from the Coast Guard into the very capable hands of the Calvert Marine Museum. Vote for me!!

My name is **Drum Point Lighthouse**. I was born in 1883. I was a very “family friendly” screwpile lighthouse and my keepers often kept their entire family in my cozy bedrooms. After I was deactivated, the receding waters of the bay left me vulnerable to vandals. The Calvert County Historical Society rescued me and I was moved to Solomons, MD and was carefully restored by the wonderful folks and current caretakers at the Calvert Marine Museum in 1975. Vote for me!!



My name is **Fort Washington Bell/Light Tower**. I was born in 1882, not as a lighthouse, but as a fog bell tower. After my companion lighthouse was torn down, carpenters raised my height and moved a lens into my lantern. I am ONE of only two still active Challenge lighthouses and the ONLY one located in a national park. I was the very first preservation project of the Chesapeake Chapter, USLHS. Vote for me!!

My name is **Hooper Strait Lighthouse**. I was born in 1879 at the Lazaretto Depot in Baltimore. My predecessors were several lightships and a screwpile that was carried away and destroyed by ice in 1877. After automation, I began to decline and the Coast Guard was planning to demolish me. But the young Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum saved me in 1966 and I now enjoy an active retirement in St. Michaels, MD, bringing back memories of a bygone era. Vote for me!!



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Individual membership in the
USLHS is encouraged.

Glimmerings

by Anne Puppa

Welcome to the 2008 "Road to the Lighthouse" Challenge. This year has been particularly challenging for many of us. With price increases on everything from a hot dog to a gallon of gas many of us have had to make adjustments in our lifestyles. If you are taking the Challenge this year you are truly demonstrating your love and commitment to the lights of the Chesapeake. If you're new to discovering the beauty of lighthouses, below is an explanation of the Chapter's purpose and goals.

The Chesapeake Chapter of the United States Lighthouse Society is a non-profit historical and educational organization incorporated to educate, inform, and entertain those who are interested in lighthouses, past and present.

- We have many activities designed to educate people about lighthouses. One we are most proud of is the education program directed by one of our board members – Tom Wade. Tom has been a frequent visitor to area schools when they are covering maritime history. Lighthouses helped make safe passage for thousands of people and helped commerce by allowing ships to safely navigate the bay with their goods. It is an important part of our American heritage and educating people about the role lighthouses played is one of our goals.
- We provide information via a quarterly newsletter as well as a monthly e-newsletter. We also have a wonderful information packed web site.
- The quarterly newsletter is an informative and entertaining quarterly publication. The newsletter is designed to bring you up to date on Chapter events. The Channel Marker is an insert developed to "enhance reader's knowledge about and enjoyment of lighthouse related topics." The subject matters range from the development of the screwpile lighthouse, African American Lighthouse Keepers in the Chesapeake Bay to various descriptions of lighthouse restoration efforts.
- The e-news provides monthly updates with current or late-breaking news.
- The web site has lots of information and our web master is constantly updating it with information on upcoming events both near and far to keep it fresh.
- To entertain and educate we sponsor trips, a lighthouse Challenge and a Photo Contest.
- The trips are designed to take the participants to various lighthouses in and out of the Chesapeake region. Each year there are several trips both land-based and on cruises that take people out to see, photograph, learn about and in some cases climb, the lights of the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.
- The annual Maryland Lighthouse Challenge takes visitors to all the land based lights in the state over the course of one weekend. The event has been recognized by the Bureau of Tourism for its value. In each of the recent years we have added a bonus light. This year the

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Greetings From the 2008 Maryland Lighthouse Challenge Committee

by Karen Rosage

Good Day Challengers. On behalf of the 2008 Maryland Lighthouse Challenge Committee, we'd like to welcome you to the 6th Annual Maryland Lighthouse Challenge!



We are *very* excited about this year's event and hope that you discover parts of this beautiful state you never knew existed, while exploring up-close and personal this very important aspect of the state's maritime heritage, its *treasured* Chesapeake Bay beacons. We have included all of Maryland's "land-accessible" lighthouses in our "original" Challenge route, those being: the *Chesapeake Lightship*, Concord Point, Cove Point, Drum Point, Fort Washington, Hooper Strait, Piney Point, Point Lookout, Seven Foot Knoll and Turkey Point. We believe they are as unique and diverse a group of sentinels as you'll find anywhere. For your added viewing pleasure this year, we have included two Bonus Lights. First is Sandy Point Shoal, an offshore caisson-style light to be viewed by land, representative of others that sit out in the Bay; and the **BRAND NEW** Blackistone Replica. (Please note: For those of you who may note a spelling discrepancy in lighthouse literature, some historians consider "Blakistone" to be the correct spelling of the *original* lighthouse). For history buffs, the Blackistone Replica sits in its original location on St. Clement's Island, Maryland's birthplace--marking the first colonial landing there in March of 1634. Because of the extra time necessary to visit the Bonus Lights, they are not required stops to "complete" the event (i.e. collect the completer's souvenir), but we *highly* recommend visiting them as part of your Challenge adventure if your time permits. You will find details and any anticipated fees for visiting all of the lighthouses in the 2008 Challenge Brochure.

Whether you visit just one, two or all of the Challenge lights, we hope you will enjoy this year's election year theme – campaign-style souvenir buttons; patriotic giveaways at select stops; and for those Challengers who *meet the challenge* by visiting all ten "original" Challenge lights, the ability to cast a vote for your favorite! We'll even let you vote for one of the bonus lights if that happens to be the one that you liked best!

These lighthouses are indeed a great source of pride for our Chapter and for our state. As you create your Maryland memory this weekend--climbing to the top of as many lights as you are able--you will experience first-hand what an extraordinary effort it was in many cases for the keepers to keep these lights lit. Whether it was to protect mariners from peril or welcome them safely back to shore, each one of these Bay structures has a story to tell, and the heroes of *each*, are the remarkable men and women who kept their watch!

So it is with our best wishes and "*a tip of the keeper's hat*," that we welcome you to the 6th Annual Maryland Lighthouse Challenge – "*Road to the Lighthouse!*"

Note: The Chesapeake Chapter would like to extend its sincere appreciation to the lighthouse organizations who partner with us--we could not host this event without them. These organizations are noted on the front panel of the event brochure.

Visit our web site at: <http://www.cheslights.org>
for post Challenge news and photos.

Vote for your favorite Lighthouse from page 1



My name is **Piney Point Lighthouse**. I was born in 1836 and I am one of the oldest lighthouses on the Potomac River. Master builder John Donahoo was my “dad”. I may be the shortest tower on the Bay, but my grounds were used as summer retreats by Presidents Monroe, Pierce & Teddy Roosevelt, earning me the honorable title “Lighthouse of Presidents”. After 128 years of service, I retired in 1964. In 1980, the St. Clement’s Island – Potomac River Museum became my new owners. I am especially proud of the new staircase built in 2002. Vote for me!!

My name is **Point Lookout Lighthouse**. I was born in 1830 and was one of John Donahoo’s first lighthouse projects. In 1863, a Civil War prisoner of war camp was established within my beam and I’m considered the most haunted lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay. The ghost of a lady keeper, Ann Davis has been seen on my grounds and Confederate troops still pay a nocturnal visit. I am the only integral style lighthouse on the Challenge route and though I was darkened in 1965, the U.S. Navy used my grounds for a modern tracking station for many years. Vote for me!



My name is **Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse**. I was born in 1855. I was the second screwpile built on the Chesapeake Bay and am the oldest screwpile in Maryland. I’ve been called “the red tuna can” because of my unique and durable cast-iron circular design. I am very proud of my last civilian keeper, Thomas Steinhise, who rescued the five-man crew of a sinking tugboat. In 1988, the Coast Guard donated me to the Inner Harbor of the City of Baltimore. After restoration, I was opened to the public as part of the Baltimore Maritime Museum. Vote for me!!

My name is **Turkey Point Lighthouse**. I was born in 1833. My “dad” John Donahoo did another fine job with brick and mortar. Because I sit on a 100 foot bluff overlooking the Elk and North East Rivers, I am the highest lighthouse on the Bay. My most well-known keeper, Fannie May Salter served with distinction for 23 years and was the last lady civilian lighthouse keeper in the U.S. In 1995, the Turkey Point Light Station, Inc. was started and persuaded the Coast Guard to reactivate me in 2002. I serve as a private aid to navigation and hope to have a new keeper’s house in the future. Vote for me!!



Also, please consider voting for one of these two “bonus” lights.



My name is **Blackistone Lighthouse**. I am truly the youngster and the second “bonus light” on the Challenge route. I was born in 2008, and am a faithful replica of the original Blackistone Lighthouse built by John Donahoo in 1851. You can also call me “Blakistone Lighthouse”. Though I’m only a few months old, I reside on St. Clement’s Island - Maryland’s birthplace. Josephine Freeman served as my grandfather’s keeper for 37 years. I hope you had a chance to visit me during the Challenge weekend and appreciate your vote as your favorite Challenge lighthouse. Vote for me!!

My name is **Sandy Point Shoal Lighthouse**. As a “bonus” lighthouse, I may be a true “dark horse” candidate. I was born in 1883 and am the only caisson lighthouse on the Challenge route. 16 years after my keeper left (1963), vandals entered (1979) and destroyed my priceless Fresnel lens. My beam now shines from a modern acrylic lens and I was sold at auction in 2005. You can see me from the westbound span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge – but keep your eye on the road. Vote for me!!



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newest bonus light is the recently completed replica of Blackistone Lighthouse.

- There is also a photo contest each year that allows Chapter members a chance to show off their photography skill. Shutterbugs are challenged with a new theme each year to help keep the photos interesting.
- For those interested in history, please note we have a historian who spends a lot of time researching lighthouse keepers and their kin. She is a professional genealogist and has done a lot of work for different lighthouse groups around the country. She frequently gets questions regarding the keepers of specific lighthouses in the Chesapeake region and she answers them quickly and comprehensively. She has also assisted in several reunion events for keepers’ kin.

- To preserve we have had a volunteer program since 1997 that has allowed our volunteers to get their hands a little dirty. The program has sponsored activities at many of the area lights. We have sponsored projects annually that include Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse, the *Chesapeake Lightship*, Drum Point, Cove Point, Ft. Washington Light, the Old Coast Guard Station on Assateague Island, writing histories for the Coast Guard Web Site and last but not least Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse. These projects have kept our volunteers busy every month of the year.

All these activities are performed by volunteers and there is currently far more demand than supply in this area. If you’d like to join the fun (and it IS fun) talk to one of the board members you meet along the Challenge “*Road to the Lighthouse*”. Remember there is no paid Chapter staff so you can tell the work must be rewarding, or people wouldn’t be doing it! If you haven’t already done so, why don’t you come out and join the Chapter and join the fun!