

World Lighthouse Society

SUMMER 2004 NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 2

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

First, I'd like to thank all of the members who sent warm words of encouragement and approval in regard to the publishing of my first issue (Spring 2004) as WLS Newsletter Editor. It's always helpful to know when one's efforts are appreciated.

Since joining the WLS and taking on the responsibility of editor, I have found that one of the best parts of being a member is corresponding with people from all over the world, and the new friendships that are being made. The other, of course, is making whatever contributions I am able toward the preservation of lighthouses and maritime history. Many thanks to those who offered to provide guided tours of lighthouses if I am visiting in their area. You can count on me to take advantage of your kind offers!

Unfortunately, my first attempt at editing was not as error-free as I would have liked. I've learned that one of the hardest editing tasks to control is to persuade the many photos included to cooperate, and not move around on the page as if they've a mind of their own. Case in point: last issue's 'Then and Now' article, on page 12. My apologies to Paul Howard, the author, for the gremlins who switched the photos around for Race Point. The first photo is of Race Point c.1975, and the second photo is of Race Point c.1890.

However, I can't blame gremlins for the incorrect caption for the photo of the Sambro Island light included in the article on page 15 regarding the NSLPS 10th Anniversary. The caption should have read: The NSLPS was born on Sambro Island in the summer of 1989 and officially incorporated in 1994. My apologies to the NSLPS and Kathy Brown, who submitted the article.

With that said, it's time to move forward to this, the Summer 2004 issue. Inside these pages you will find a report on the Annual General Meeting held in Hoek van Holland, Netherlands in April on page 3, and highlights of the Dutch lighthouse tours for meeting attendees on page 4. Don't miss this issue's Members' Profile of new members Pat & David Gumbrell of England on page 6, and the second installment of Tom Tag's column about 'Lighthouse Builders & Inventors' on page 12. Also included are articles featuring lighthouses and lightships from Bermuda, Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Finally, please take a moment to note the new email addresses in the list of Contacts on page 2.

[Donna Suchomelly \(United States\)](#)

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Those of you with Internet access will have noticed that we have a Forum on the website where questions and replies can be posted. As this is currently an open forum, would you please not post any queries relating to internal WLS matters, but address them to the relevant Officer. Many thanks for your cooperation.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

You will by now have received a summary of the Annual General Meeting held on 25th of April in the Hook of Holland, Netherlands. Less than a year ago, at the AGM held on the 30th of June 2003, the World Lighthouse Society Constitution was officially adopted, thus validating the Society. In total, the Society has still only been in existence less than 2 years. Given that all duties are carried out voluntarily by members in their spare time, which is sometimes in

very short supply, much has been achieved already due to their enthusiasm and dedication.

Progress may seem to have been slow in some areas, adopting a logo being one of them, but communicating on a global basis is inevitably a slower process than at local, regional or national level. Those members who attended the AGM and took part in the lengthy and, at times, animated discussions on the logo, will appreciate how much time can be spent on arriving at a decision on something this important, which will become the recognised image of the Society. Many justifications can be given for any design, including the logo agreed by a majority vote at the AGM. Inevitably, there will be members who favour, dislike or feel indifferent about the chosen design, but at least now we have one! Many thanks to all those who submitted ideas and designs, especially Wayne Wheeler who submitted the chosen logo and Rusty Nelson, the designer.

The Working Groups have experienced differing levels of success to date. The Optics Working Group has produced an excellent Glossary of Optics Terminology and although the Glossary is still being finalised and therefore wasn't ready in time for the AGM, as hoped, it will be available very soon. Many thanks to Egbert, the Group Co-ordinator, and his Group members for all their hard work and time given to this project.

We still need Co-ordinators for the Fog Signal and Architecture Working Groups. The Working Groups perform one of the most important roles of the WLS – to research and document information related to different aspects of lighthouses, light vessels and maritime heritage on a worldwide basis, of interest at present and essential for the future. So much information and numerous maritime artefacts have already been destroyed or lost forever. Please help if you can. The success of the Society is entirely dependent on its members.

Since one of the aims of the Society is to raise awareness for the need to preserve our maritime heritage worldwide, a future strategy should be to target those who are still unaware as well as involve those who are already aware.

In his Chairman's report last year, Danckert said in the future the Society would want to co-operate with other international organizations such as IALA, ICOM (the International Board on Museums) and ICOMOS (the International Board on Monuments and Sites). One very exciting development recently was the request from IALA for Danckert to give a presentation, at a meeting in Paris, of the WLS and to indicate areas and possibilities for IALA and the WLS to work together. Whilst I feel we are not yet at a stage to co-operate in joint ventures such as workshops and seminars, it is very encouraging indeed that IALA made this approach to the WLS, resulting in the appointment of Danckert Monrad-Krohn by IALA as the liaison between IALA and WLS.

Having initially taken on several tasks in order to get the Society established, I decided last autumn that the time had arrived for some of these to be handed over to other members due to the amount of time required to carry out all the duties and to actively involve other members, not lack of enthusiasm or interest on my behalf! You will know that Donna Suchomelly has taken on the Editorship of the Newsletter and I'm very pleased to report that Kim Fahlen (US) agreed at the AGM to take on the role of Publicity Officer. Marie Anne Merk kindly agreed to assist Kim, so many thanks to these two ladies. Marie Anne is the wife of Frans la Poutré, the WLS Webmaster.

The Chairman's Working Group has been re-formed following the AGM, comprising the previous members, to maintain consistency, with plans to hold two meetings during the coming year.

Having been Chairman for the last 11 months and Vice-Chairman for the previous 9 months, I feel very privileged to be given the opportunity to play a significant role in the preservation of our maritime heritage on a world wide basis. The Society has a potentially very exciting future. Let us all continue working together to make sure the Society goes from strength to strength, always bearing in mind our objectives and continually assessing if and how we are actively furthering the preservation of our maritime heritage.

As always, many thanks to all members who have contributed in any way to the Society.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)
Chairman](#)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 25 APRIL 2004

The 2004 Annual General Meeting was held at De Torpedoloods, Hoek van Holland, Netherlands, on 25th of April. Frans la Poutré very kindly made all the arrangements for the meeting and accommodation for attendees of the AGM as well as arranging lighthouse tours for Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th April.

An Annual Report was presented to the meeting in the form of separate reports from the Chairman, Treasurer, Working Group Co-ordinators, Publicity & Communication Officer, Membership Secretary and the Webmaster, covering events since the 2003 AGM.

It was reported that WLS member Danckert Monrad-Krohn had been approached by IALA to give a presentation on the WLS at a meeting in Paris the weekend prior to the AGM, with a suggestion that WLS and IALA should co-operate on some future projects. Jo van der Eynden reported that he had since spoken to Danckert who has agreed to act as liaison between WLS and IALA.

25 nominations were received for re-election of the present 4 Officers - myself (Chairman), Esbjörn Hillberg

(Vice-Chairman), Jürgen Tronicke (Secretary) and Peter Williams (Treasurer). There were no other nominations for these 4 positions and therefore these 4 Officers were re-elected for the forthcoming year.



[Peter Williams \(left\) and Rosalie Davis Gibb](#)

In addition to nominations for present members of the Executive Board, 3 additional nominations were received - Jo van der Eynden (Norway), Kathy Brown (Canada) and John Ibbotson (Australia). Danckert Monrad-Krohn had previously decided not to stand for re-election due to other commitments.

The new Executive Board comprises:

Rosalie Davis Gibb (England)
Esbjörn Hillberg (Sweden)
Jürgen Tronicke (Germany)
Peter Williams (Wales)
Jo van der Eynden (Norway)
Kathy Brown (Canada)
John Ibbotson (Australia)
Gerry Douglas-Sherwood (England)
Patricio Caceres (Chile)
Wayne Wheeler (US)
Frans la Poutré (Netherlands)

You will see the Executive Board is represented by 10 different countries.



[Marie Anne Merk and Frans la Poutré](#)

Since I expressed the wish to relinquish the duties of Publicity & Communication Officer, Kim Fahlen (US)

has very kindly agreed to take over the position of Publicity Officer. Marie Anne Merk, wife of the WLS Webmaster, Frans la Poutré, has kindly offered to assist Kim. It had previously been agreed at the last Chairman's Working Group meeting that there is no longer a need for a Communication Officer. Egbert Koch said that in order to become more effective, the Society needs more members and should be contacting lighthouse societies worldwide. It was agreed this was very important and the new Publicity Officer Kim Fahlen agreed to undertake this task.

It was agreed an Education Officer for the WLS would be advantageous at some point in the future.

After lengthy discussion and consideration of several logo designs that had previously been submitted and considered by the Chairman's Working Group and Executive Board, a WLS logo was adopted by a majority vote.



A suggestion had been made that maybe the Newsletter should now be professionally printed, but due to the high costs involved, it was agreed the Newsletter should continue in its current format.

Discussion took place on a suggestion raised at the last Chairman's Working Group meeting that the WLS should take an active part in International Lighthouse Day (ILD), in particular the presentation of an Achievement Award on ILD. Following a short discussion it was decided that the Society is too young at this stage but an Achievement Award could be considered in the future. It was also agreed there is no need to form an ILD Working Group.

A separate issue would be to take part on ILD and information should be included on the WLS website for the next ILD on the 23rd August 2004.

Discussion took place on whether the Society would benefit from National Representatives who would be responsible for recruiting new members. It was decided this item should be addressed in the future.

Several requests had been received for date and venues of future meetings to be made known at least a year in advance. After some discussion on possible venues, it was agreed that the 2005 AGM will be held on Saturday 7th May 2005 in Hamburg, the venue to be advised. It was also agreed that the 2006 AGM will be held in San Francisco, date and venue to be decided at a later date.

A Lighthouse Poetry Working Group was proposed and it was agreed this might be something to consider for the future.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

PRE-AGM DUTCH LIGHTHOUSE TOURS

Going to annual meetings is not what most people dream of. Going to a lighthouse tour, however, makes us more enthusiastic. Combining these two facts lead to a simple and logical conclusion: the 2004 AGM was organised on the last day of a tour of some Dutch lighthouses.

Forty people started the tour on the early morning of the 23rd of April. The Americans had a short delay, as the area surrounding their hotel was preparing for a royal wedding that took place the next day. But we were finally able to pick them up to complete the group.

This day was planned for a drive southward. We made a short stop at the ancient Steenen Baak (Stone beacon), which used to be a tower with an open fire on top. Then the journey continued to Hellevoetsluis, an old fortress town. A group of enthusiastic volunteers turned one of the last Dutch lightvessels into a museum. Unfortunately the small lighthouse nearby the vessel is not maintained as well as the ship. Visiting it was too dangerous.



[Peter Williams \(Wales\), Jo van der Eynden and Klaus Olesen \(Norway\) and Claus Peter Troch, on the Noordhinder lightvessel.](#)

Next stop was at Ouddorp. The Westhoofd lighthouse near that village is relatively new. It was built in the years after the war, since the Germans destroyed the old lighthouse just before leaving the country on the very last day of the war. Mr Romke van der Veen, former head of the Dutch lighthouse service and author of the most important Dutch book about lighthouses, accompanied us the whole day and taught us a lot of technical and historical facts.

The last lighthouse visited this day was Westerschouwen, near the village of Haamstede. The red and white barbershop pattern makes it the favourite of many people. After a quick dinner, Romke van der Veen gave an interesting lecture about coastal light technique.



[In front of the IJmuiden rear lighthouse](#)

On Saturday we went up North, first to see the rear and front lighthouses of IJmuiden, at the entrance of the canal to the Amsterdam harbour. The attendees couldn't get enough of studying the very rare double optic in the rear lighthouse.



[Gerry Douglas Sherwood \(England\) and Kim Fahlen \(USA\) looking at the double optic](#)

We took the small roads back south, in order to see as many flower fields as possible. Noordwijk was the next stop. There were a lot of activities around the lighthouse, as it was also the start of the flower show. Due to some unplanned stops (when being in the Netherlands, photographing flowers is just as important as photographing lighthouses), we arrived in Scheveningen an hour later than scheduled. Fortunately, we had planned to stay a few hours there. The lighthouse itself is very interesting as it gives room to a large collection of technical and historical equipment.



[Kim Fahlen \(USA\) and Han Menting \(Netherlands\) in the Scheveningen lighthouse](#)

After a quick and efficient AGM on Sunday morning, and a lunch in a former marine building with a view on the harbour, the old Hoek van Holland rear lighthouse was the last light to visit. In one of the former newsletters I wrote an article about the lighthouse and the man that rescued it and turned it into a museum. This article can still be read at the website of the lighthouse: www.worldlighthouses.info/hoek.



[Frans la Poutré \(Netherlands\) WLS Webmaster](#)

MEMBERSHIP

We passed our first membership renewal date on the 1st of January this year. Of the original 142

members, 80 renewed their membership. All 6 Organisations renewed their memberships.

As at 31st May 2004 the World Lighthouse Society had 137 paid up members – 100 Individual, 17 Joint and 1 Family of 3, although a few Joint members have paid the Family fee by way of additional donation.

In addition to the original 6 Organisation Members, 2 from Germany, 1 from Canada, 1 from Sweden, 1 from the US and 1 from England, 2 more have joined – The Museum of Scottish Lighthouses at Kinnaird Head, Scotland and the Lighthouse Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. An application for membership has been received from the Northern Lighthouse Board.

Members represent 14 countries – England, Scotland, Wales, US, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Chile, Hong Kong, Japan and Australia.

Applications for membership are still being received although they have gradually slowed down since the beginning of the year. We perhaps need to formulate a strategy for recruiting new members, particularly organizations. Mark Lewis (England) has for some time been compiling a list of relevant magazines, journals and organizations to target with a press release.

All members, on joining or renewal, receive a copy of the Lighthouse Society of Great Britain's 'Lighthouse Encyclopaedia' CD, again generously donated by Ken Trethewey.

If you know anyone who might be interested in joining WLS, here is a reminder of the fees:

Individual membership:
Euros 25 / US\$25 / GBPE15

Joint membership (2 people at the same address):
Euros 30 / US\$30 / GBPE20

Family membership:
Euros 40 / US\$40 / GBPE25

Organisation membership:
Euros 80 / US\$80 / GBP50

Payment may be made by GBPE cheque made payable to 'World Lighthouse Society', UK banknotes, Euros, or US dollar bills; Mastercard or Visa. **PLEASE NOTE:** We cannot process any checks other than GBPEsterling cheques. Membership application and fee should be sent to:

Rosalie Davis Gibb, WLS Memberships,
The Lantern House, 63 Bacton Road, North Walsham,
Norfolk, NR28 9DS, England. Tel: 0044 (0)1692 403784.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Membership Secretary](#)
Email: memberships@worldlighthouses.org

MEMBERS' PROFILE

Pat and David Gumbrell

Patricia and David Gumbrell have only recently joined the WLS, having gone to the Netherlands for the lighthouse tours organised by Frans la Poutré on the Friday and Saturday preceding the AGM. By the day of the AGM, they had decided to join!

Patricia Gumbrell (née Hall) was born at Dovercourt, Essex, England on 27th August 1937. She is a direct descendant of the two families of Hall and Darling who have a long tradition of light keeping. The two families became linked when her great grandfather, Thomas Owen Hall, married her great grandmother, Grace



Horsley Darling, who was named after her aunt, made famous by her participation in the rescue of the survivors of the S.S. Forfarshire.

Pat spent the duration of the war at St. Mary's Island Lighthouse in Northumberland, England, arriving there in early 1939 and leaving July 1946. She was with her parents when they moved to the Isle of Wight (UK), Alderney (Channel Islands), St. Ann's Lighthouse in Pembrokeshire (Wales), Holyhead (Wales) and then the Isle of Wight again. Here, as a secretary at Westlands Ltd., formerly Saunders-Roe Ltd. (mainly remembered as the manufacturer of flying boats) she met her future husband David.

Pat has written a book of her and her family's reminiscences and it is hoped that the book will be published this year by Whittles of Latheronwheel, Scotland.



David Gumbrell, a retired Aeronautical Engineer, was born on the Isle of Wight to a family who have had many connections with the sea. His great uncle at the end of the 19th century married the daughter of the light keeper at Portland where, coincidentally, Pat's grandfather was serving.

[Pat and David Gumbrell \(England\)](#)
[WLS Members](#)

THE LADY AND THE LIGHT

Several months ago I spoke to a very pleasant lady who I shall call Margaret, who's employed by the Northern Lighthouse Board, Scotland.

After introducing myself and telling her my hobby was collecting and restoring lighthouse, lightship and navigational aids I asked her if, in some dark, dusty, forgotten corner of a workshop there might be some items of interest that I could restore. Margaret said she would check and get back to me. Having heard these same words from other people, I thought that would be the end of the matter and I would hear nothing further.

Just two days later I had a telephone call from Margaret saying she had had a look around and had found a mantle flasher unit made by AGA, being a three burner cluster unit. She asked if I was interested, which of course I was. There was a very small cost involved, which included delivery.

A large heavy wooden box arrived two days later, in which I found an AGA PKG 130 three-mantle cluster unit, complete with three spare mantles. I telephoned

Margaret to say the parcel had arrived and asked if she knew where it had last been in service. (Had I looked closer I would have found a tag with the name on it.) Margaret informed me it came from BAGI STACK.



BAGI STACK is situated on the extreme North West coast of the Shetland Islands, Scotland, on an island named YELL. The lantern and optic were initially mounted on the upturned body of a buoy, being first lit in 1972.

In the 1990s the light was solarised and the AGA flasher unit was removed and modernised. At the same time an aluminium structure was built, being some 48 metres tall and painted white. The range of light in good weather was 10 miles.



The flasher unit had seen better days so I decided on a complete restoration job. Every nut, bolt and part was removed, all the paint was stripped off and, as the bodies of flasher units are rough cast, all the rough casting marks were ground out. It then took about two weeks to polish all the parts to a standard that is shown in the photographs. All that was then needed was for it to be mounted on a solid English

oak plaque and the brass nameplates added.

I had kept Margaret informed of my steady progress and have sent her 'before' and 'after' photographs.

I also related the story of the Port authority that, several months ago, dumped a load of lanterns and a complete lighthouse optic into a landfill site (reported in the last issue of the newsletter). Margaret then sent out a memo to all departments asking them NOT to dispose of anything, although seemingly irrelevant and therefore designated as scrap, that might be of interest to me for spares or for complete restoration, to help preserve our lighthouse heritage.

If there were more people like Margaret we would have quite a collection to show future generations, but sadly it seems a considerable amount has thoughtlessly been scrapped. I would, therefore, like to especially thank this lady, without whose help this item would no doubt also have been scrapped.

[Jim Coleman \(England\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

LIGHTSHIP NO. XI FOR SALE IN COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Living on a lightship? A floating restaurant? Headquarter on the canals of Copenhagen? Business sessions in beautiful surroundings? One of the oldest (year of construction 1878) and best preserved lightships in the world is now for sale in Copenhagen (Denmark). It is up to you, if you live on the lightship, use its 260 qm for a holiday home or as business areas. With the Tender-Jolle, which has place for 8 people, you can enjoy a harbour round-trip through the canals of Copenhagen. The ship can be towed also to any other place, to be a unique landmark for your place of business. Purchase price: EUR 1.1 million. Please contact the owners Anette and Kurt Spalinger, phone 0041 91 791 92 93 or e-mail: bulito@bulito.ch



[Iris Klempau \(Germany\)](#)
[Light Vessel WG Co-ordinator](#)

FOG SIGNAL WORKING GROUP

We still need a Co-ordinator for the Fog Signal Working Group. This really is a very important aspect of lighthouse history and an area that WLS should be researching and documenting. If you have any expertise or have an enthusiastic interest in Fog Signals, please let me know so that we can get the Fog Signal Working Group established. If you would like more details or feel able to help further the aims of the WLS in this way, please contact me by email, telephone, fax or letter.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

PHARO-PHILATELY WORKING GROUP

Trading Surplus Lighthouse Stamps

We have had a request from members to facilitate the sale of surplus lighthouse stamps. We think the idea is great and would like to hear from all members, who are interested.

We would ask members for the information about the stamps they have for sale. So you would need to supply the following: Catalogue Number (Preferably SG, Scot and Michel), short description, is the stamp mint or used, is a scan available on request and how much would you want for it - the suggestion is to ask for 1/3 catalogue price.

When we have a reasonable list, we would then send out emails to all interested parties with the details. If you want to buy a stamp, you would have to get back to us and we would allocate the stamps on a 'first come first serve' basis.

We would then put the sellers and buyers in touch with each other to sort out payments and the sending of stamps. Of course this would mean that sellers and buyers agree that we pass their email addresses on to the respective trading partners.

If you are interested and / or have any suggestions, please get in touch with us via email:
Lighthouse.Duo@virgin.net

[Stan and Margret Butcher \(England\)](#)
[Pharo-Philately WG Co-ordinators](#)

ARCHITECTURE WORKING GROUP

Unfortunately, we no longer have a Co-ordinator for the Architectural Working Group. Would anyone be willing to take on this role please? This is a very important and interesting aspect of maritime heritage so we do hope we can get this Working Group established. Some members have already expressed interest in being part of the group once established but regrettably are not able to take on

the role of Co-ordinator. All possible assistance will be given. If you would like more details or feel able to help further the aims of the WLS in this way, please contact me by email, telephone, fax or letter.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

DUNGENESS OLD LIGHT – THE FIRST 100 YEARS

It was never there in Roman times. Sea-going vessels sailed into the Roman port of Lympne (pronounced Lim), now a mile and a half inland, and to the north of Rye the raised land at Oxney was a true island. Dungeness would have shown itself as an offshore shingle bank and a menace to ancient mariners. But time has a way of changing things.

Standing on the gallery of the 143 ft-high lighthouse at the top of that unique flat spit of shingle that slowly migrates along the South East coast of England, one cannot but help gasp in awe at the view. The French cliffs at the opposite side of the Channel overlooking the Pas de Calais are near enough for detail to be easily discerned, while to the North floriated ridges mark each successive Eastern shoreline as they march away into the hazy distance to the foothills beyond. Strewn randomly across the shingle plain lie a clutter of fishermen's cottages, sheds and holiday homes, many starting life as redundant railway carriages while, looping in a broad arc at the foot of the lighthouse, the miniature Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway supplies a constant flow of excited visitors to the Ness.



Dungeness is a truly captivating place. It is also deadly. Countless ships have foundered along its creeping shore. At an early stage fire beacons were lit to warn mariners of this treacherous natural horn jutting into the fairway. The first purpose-built lighthouse was set up in 1615, but as the shoreline retreated a replacement was erected in 1635. In 1792 yet another tower was constructed, designed by Samuel Wyatt. That structure lasted until the fourth lighthouse was opened in 1904. Designed in 1901 and built of brick, it was one of the tallest lighthouses in the UK and was fitted with the very latest in lighthouse technology, namely a mercury bath

rotating optic and an elaborate lens system for its subsidiary light.

The potential operational life of the 1901 tower was cut short in 1961 however, when Dungeness Nuclear Power Station was constructed in its back yard, effectively obscuring its light to the West. The tubular concrete tower that replaced it and that stands further east on the site of the old Low Light and fog signal station remains in operation today. It was designed for automatic operation from the beginning, but it took thirty years until 1991 for technology to eventually reach a level that ensured the lighthouse's design concept could be achieved.

Being sited next to the Trinity House Experimental Station, the 1901 lighthouse was used from time to time for experimental purposes. The curious auxiliary lantern in its roof once housed a prototype Xenon navigation light under test. The system was eventually adopted in the 1961 lighthouse, but suffered from questionable reliability by exploding from time to time like a small grenade.

The "Old" redundant 1901 tower was eventually sold off privately to the Stanners family, who subsequently opened it for public view. Jill Stanners, daughter to the original purchaser, still manages the tower, and it was she who conceived of a centenary party to celebrate the first lighting of the Old Lighthouse way back on March 31st 1904. Jill's invaluable assistant, Betty Downes and I volunteered our services to help spruce up the old place.

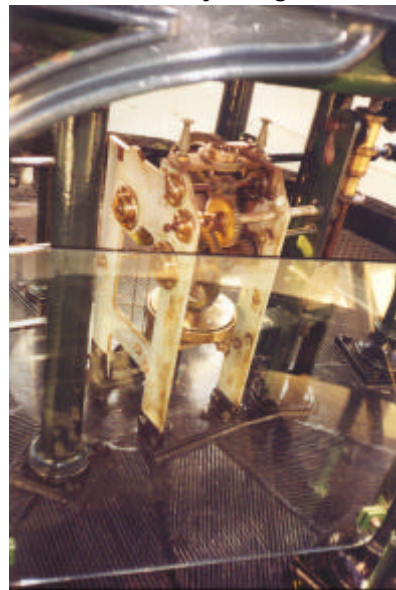
The Old Lighthouse is big, and is of the same generation as Portland Bill and the now defunct tower at Spurn Point. Any Step Counter might like to know 169 of them lead from tower to base to lantern, indicating that carrying buckets of water and all necessary cleaning equipment to the top loses its novelty appeal approximately half way up – on first ascent. A fine collection of photographs and memorabilia is displayed, including the redundant control panel from the new lighthouse. A comprehensive range of gifts and novelty items are also available.

The ten-panel, first order, mercury bath Chance Bros. lens is a gem. Sadly, however, soon after the light was decommissioned all the mercury from the lens disappeared in suspicious circumstances. The theory is that it was drained off and poured down the Service Room sink to be collected at the



bottom by person or persons unknown. The result was that the lens has ever since rested on its rollers and is seldom turned. The lens clock is complete and intact, indeed its weight and cables remain in situ. Because of prevailing conditions as to height and access, cleaning the lens proved a marathon task of over two days duration. Nevertheless, with patience and the tried and tested formula of warm water containing a dash of methylated spirit, applied with a chamois leather, the lens was slowly brought back to a Trinity House standard of sparkling cleanliness.

The multiple lenses in the Sub Light Room half way down the tower were given a similar treatment, the whole effect being completed by burnished brass work and a good sweep down.



Lens Clock

My first visit to Dungeness was in September 1970 as a Supernumerary Assistant Keeper (SAK). It was my first station. In those days the resident keepers were authorised to open the Old Lighthouse to visitors, the gratuities gathered in an upturned service cap at the entrance ensured a valuable additional income. Working there again amid methylated spirit fumes and the smell of brass polish proved highly evocative.

In March a marquee was set up next to the tower as the main reception area where, on the day, the many guests could enjoy a massive buffet lunch, complete with celebratory champagne. Dungeness was bathed in brilliant sunshine as the guests arrived. Golden streamers and bunting decorated the tower and surroundings and soon the marquee was filled with the sound of excited conversation. Two local mayors and their ladies were honoured guests, with regional press and television recording the celebrations. A handful of both WLS and Association of Lighthouse Keeper members were present.

A magnificent lighthouse cake had been produced and the past and future of the tower was toasted. People remained in conversation until late into the afternoon, by which time Jill and her helpers had declared the celebration a great success.

The Old Lighthouse at Dungeness offers some of the most spectacular views from any lighthouse in the UK. The Round House built at the base of Wyatt's tower together with the two well preserved keepers' cottages, and the new lighthouse and the remains of the Trinity House Experimental Station add specific attractions to what is already a truly fascinating area.

For further detail please contact *Jill Stanners, The Old Lighthouse, Dungeness, Romney Marsh, Kent, England TN29 9NB. Tel: 01797 321 300 Fax: 01303 851 278*

[Gerry Douglas-Sherwood \(England\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

SEVENTEEN INTERESTING YEARS OF SERVICE

At Lennard Island light, Tofino, British Columbia, Canada, the Assistant Keeper, Kathy Doyle and her husband, Iain Colquhoun, Principal Keeper, were busy with work crews. The two have been on various lights for 17 years and served at 8 different stations (3 as Relief Keepers). Most foghorns have been turned off and their light downgraded to 15-mile visibility.



[Lennard Island Light](#)

This early spring weather has enabled Kathy to begin her flower garden where 'Coco' the dog enjoys the neat lawns.

Iain just finished his Whitehall type 14ft boat that he's worked on the past couple of winters.

The proud, red maple-leaf Canadian flag at the various manned stations remains 'on guard' for the new Prime Minister's direction. "Having let Coast Guard stand on its own is a positive step for Coast Guard in general" is a light keeper's view.



After these photos were taken there are new metal roofs on at Lennard Island. "It is hoped the value of dedicated Keepers is seen in these times of world turmoil" is Preserve Canadian Lighthouses' comment.

"They may be even more indispensable in years ahead."

[Olga Belisle \(Canada\)](#)
[WLS member](#)
[Preserve Canadian Lighthouses](#)

All photos supplied by Kathy Doyle

OUR WONDERFUL SAN DIEGO LIGHTHOUSE DAY

We saw these beautiful lights on the 30th of September 2003, while on holiday in San Diego. And we had the most wonderful guide. Kim Fahlen showed us the lights and told us many facts and stories about this wonderful place. Thanks Kim!



Picture © Lighthouse Duo

[Kim Fahlen](#)

The Old Point Loma Lighthouse

Latitude: 32 deg 40 min N
Longitude: 117 deg 12 min W
Elevation: 140 meters
Fog signal: Horn at the base of the tower
Present and original optic: Third order Fresnel
First lit: 1855 operational until 1891



Picture © Lighthouse Duo

The lighthouse is part of the Cabrillo National Monument and is being beautifully looked after and maintained. Sadly when we were there, the station was not open to the public, as restoration work was in progress. This also meant that the lantern was covered with a protective hood, which was

especially sad for Kim, as one of her many duties is the cleaning of this wonderful lens and lantern room.

Built from sand stone, quarried locally, the lighthouse cost Uncle Sam a whopping \$30,000. But despite this hefty price, the building was not carried out to specification. So, when the first order Fresnel lens arrived by ship from France, it could not fit into the lantern room. Instead a third order lens had to be fitted.

Despite this less powerful lens the light could still be seen for 20-27 miles, because of the towers elevation. This elevation also led to the stations downfall. Because it was so high, the light quite often could not be seen, because it was above the clouds and fog banks. So in 1891, after just less than thirty-six years of operation, the light was discontinued in favour of the new light on a skeleton tower, built lower on the same peninsula.

After a look round the outside of this tower, we walked over to the cliff and had a look at the new Point Loma lighthouse. Sadly we could not gain access to this tower.

On our way back, we took some more pictures of the old station and while having a last regretful look at it, we spotted some people walking round very close to the lighthouse. Bob Munson and Nancy Walton were making sure all was well and checking the station etc. When they heard that we had come from so far to see the tower and that we were involved with lighthouses, they invited us in to see the building from the inside. So thanks to these two nice people we got to see the inside of the lighthouse after all!



And thanks to Kim Fahlen, we now have a picture of the light station as it looks after all the work is completed. On the 14th of February 2004 Kim re-lit the light!



Together with Kim, we managed to issue a cover to commemorate the re-lighting. Kim kindly managed to organise the cancellations and she signed the cover too. If anyone is interested in obtaining one of these covers, get in touch; we have a couple of this limited edition left.

The New Point Loma Lighthouse

Latitude: 32 deg 39.5 min N
Longitude: 117 deg 14.3 min W
Character: Fl W 15s
Tower height: 21 m
Elevation: 27 meters
Visible: 22 M
Fog signal: Horn (2) 30s
First lit: 1891



The New Point Loma Light was exhibited for the first time on 23rd March 1891.

The tower is painted white, lantern and watch room black. The 2-story frame Spanish revival keeper's quarters, white with red roof, are now used as Coast Guard housing.

In 1913, a fog signal was installed at the site and a third dwelling was added to house another assistant keeper to help with the added responsibilities. Point Loma Light was automated in 1973.

Today, the keeper's quarters house Coast Guard officers, who enjoy the prime oceanfront property.

The western-most keepers' house was used in the filming of the movie Top Gun. It served as home of Mike Metcalf (Viper), the commanding officer of Top Gun. The house and surrounding area are seen when Maverick (Tom Cruise), after the crash that killed Goose, goes to the officer's house to discuss his options.

This is the only surviving tower of its type on the Pacific Coast. In 2001, the Coast Guard commissioned an

engineering firm to study the condition and future of the lighthouse.

[Stan and Margret Butcher \(England\)](#)
[Pharo-Philately WG Co-ordinators](#)

LIGHTHOUSE BUILDERS AND INVENTORS

This column will give you an insight into the people who developed both lighthouses and the equipment to support them. Each future issue of the WLS Newsletter will cover four of these important builders or inventors and give a short description of their contribution.



Blondel, Andre (1863-1938) - French Lighthouse Service engineer.



Borda, du Chevalier Jean Charles de (1733-1799) - French engineer who designed early reflector systems used in lighthouses.



Bourdelles, Leonce (1838-1899) - Inspector General and Chief of the French Lighthouse Service and inventor of the mercury float system in 1890.

Brewster, Sir David (1781-1868) - Scottish scientist who in 1811, suggested building a large lens from an aggregate of pieces of separate rings for use as a burning lens, and later suggested that this design could be used in reverse as a lighthouse illumination method.



Photos courtesy of School of Mathematics and Statistics ñ University of Saint Andrews and the Royal Gallery of Scotland.

[Tom Tag \(USA\)](#)
[WLS Founder Member](#)

UPDATE ON GIBBS HILL LIGHTHOUSE, BERMUDA

According to The Royal Gazette, dated 15 May 2004, repairs to the historic lighthouse are nearing completion. Currently four fixed lights are the temporary light for the lighthouse. The lighthouse has been undergoing extensive refurbishment over the last two months, the main projects being to install bearings underneath the light's turntable, and fix and reinstall the lens, which before the hurricane floated in mercury.

According to Michael Dolding of Marine and Ports, who is overseeing the refurbishment, 'We wanted to keep the historical look of the structure, so we replaced it (the mercury) with ball bearings. It (the lens) turns on the ball bearings just as it did on the mercury.'

According to lighthouse consultant James 'Woody' Woodward of James Woodward Lighthouse Consulting, the company hired to fix the lens, when the lighthouse was damaged from the hurricane, the mercury contaminated part of the structure. Mr. Woodward's company, from Cleveland, Ohio (USA), had been working on the replacement of the lens for two weeks. His team brought over 80 years of lighthouse experience to the job.

In February, the team disassembled the lens, and then ordered the bearings, which took 14 weeks to arrive from the manufacturer. The bearings have to be tremendously accurate, which is why there was such a delay. On the 14th, the team was finishing the replacement of the lens, which weighs nearly two tonnes, and Mr. Woodward was hoping this should be finished by the 17th. After that, the wiring needed to be installed and hopefully the light should be operational in two weeks (which should be soon!)

Over the two weeks that the men have been working, they have covered roughly three miles just

going up and down the stairs of the lighthouse. Mr. Woodward said that many people from all over the island had missed the light, which has been missing for several months now. 'Many of the lighthouses are being replaced with automated lights,' he said. 'We appreciate that the government put the money into this very specialised lens.' According to Mr. Dolding, the government has spent approximately \$250,000 on repairing the lens. 'It's important because the lens is from 1904 and it is a unique optic from that period that is irreplaceable because technology has changed.'

Marine and Ports is also working alongside Works and Engineering to repair the glass and railings in the observatory. The outside of the lighthouse will also be repainted. (This definitely needs to be done, as when I saw the lighthouse, it was not in its usual pristine condition!)

[Pat Atkin \(Scotland\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

[EILEAN GLAS LIGHTHOUSE SCAM](#)

Extracts from a report in the 'Oban Times' 6 May 2004



[Eilean Glas Lighthouse](#)

In 1984 a Hampshire couple, Robert and Brenda Ford-Sagers, purchased the Eilean Glas Lighthouse on the Hebridean Island of Scalpay, Harris (Scotland) as their second home. Falling behind with repayments on a mortgage taken out to purchase and refurbish the lighthouse, Mrs Ford-Sagers saw a way to raise funds by registering with the Charity Commission 'The Friends of Eilean Glas Trust', forging her husband's signature and adding fictitious names to the Trust. Mrs Ford-Sagers then persuaded her husband, a financial adviser, to invest monies from the estate of an Alzheimer sufferer client. The money was also used to buy premium bonds and pay for their teenage son Theodore's school fees.

Nine counts of theft totalling £82,545 were admitted by Mrs Ford-Sagers whilst her husband admitted to £48,245. Mrs Ford-Sagers also admitted supplying false information to the Charity Commission.

A spokesman for the Charity Commission described the actions as 'heartless'. The couple were sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

[Glyne Shackleton \(Scotland\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

Let us hope the Eilean Glas lighthouse will fare better in the future.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

[RADAR JAMMING AT NORTH FORELAND LIGHTHOUSE, BROADSTAIRS, KENT \(ENGLAND\)](#)

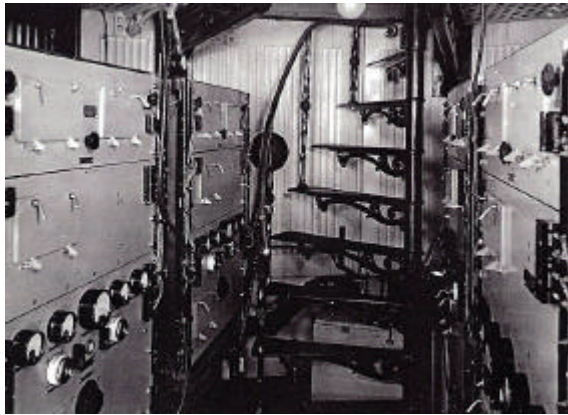
It is a sad fact of life that conflict advances technology, innovation and design at a far greater pace than in peacetime. The practicality of detecting objects at a great distance by use of radio waves, or radar (from the term Radio Detection and Ranging) had been recognized by the 1930s, and by the time the Second World War had begun plans to use the system as a tool of warfare were well advanced. The race was on.

The advanced radar systems developed in the 1930s played an important role in the Battle of Britain in 1940. The Germans had their own radar systems but the British and Americans were able to maintain technical superiority. However, from time to time the Germans gained the upper hand, and it was during such a period that counter-measures by the Allies involved the North Foreland lighthouse at Broadstairs, Kent, England.



[Radar jamming apparatus - 1940](#)

A number of powerful radar stations had been set up by the Germans in France and Holland to detect air traffic across the English Channel. Scientists in Britain soon evaluated the technical details of the system and produced a chain of radar jamming stations around the South East coast aimed at neutralising the German stations. One link in that chain was the electronic apparatus set up in the Lower Lantern at North Foreland lighthouse with a transmitter array set out round the gallery.



[Radar jamming apparatus, lower lantern](#)

At the time the accompanying photographs were taken (date unknown) they would have been Top Secret. Copies came to the Association of Lighthouse Keepers' archive a few years ago and give a fascinating insight into how the obvious strategic importance of lighthouses was utilized during times of conflict.

Further information about these radar jamming stations would be gratefully received.

Photos are courtesy of the Association of Lighthouse Keepers.

[Gerry Douglas-Sherwood \(England\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

[LONG ISLAND \(NEW YORK\) CHAPTER OF THE US LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY NEWS](#)

The Long Island (New York) Chapter of the US Lighthouse Society has released its first book - "Long Island's Lighthouses: Past and Present." The 384-page book includes 24 historic lightstations and more than 150 photos and illustrations. It is available from the Chapter's web site (via PayPal) at

[Long Island's Lighthouses Past and Present](#)



[Robert G. Müller](#)

www.lighthouseociety.org. A printable order form is at Chapter President Bob Muller's site: www.longislandlighthouses.com. The book's price is \$25 (US) , plus \$5 (US) shipping and handling. All proceeds from the sale of the book benefit historic preservation and education. Bulk discounts are available for non-profit groups wishing to sell them as fundraisers.

The 1902 brick oil house at the Cedar Island, New York lighthouse has been restored. The oil house is the only remaining outbuilding at the site, and was in danger of being lost to vandals and the elements. The Chapter and Suffolk County Parks



Department, which owns the site, entered into a stewardship agreement in 2002 and has been making progress toward the restoration and preservation of the site, which was approved for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. The oil house project was funded by the Chapter, at a cost of \$16,000, approved and overseen by the Parks Department, and carried out by DeGroot Historical Restorations.

Work included replacing torn away sections of walls, replacement of roof trusses and sheathing, construction of a new standing seam metal roof, construction of a door, excavating and repairing the foundation and a thorough painting. Using documents from the era, photographs, and accounts of the last lightkeeper's grandson, the oil house was restored to the 1920s to early 1930s era. The next step in the restoration process will be an architectural assessment of the granite lighthouse, which was built in 1869, decommissioned in 1934, and gutted by fire in 1974.

[Bob Muller \(United States\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)
[President, Long Island Chapter of the US Lighthouse Society](#)

[SOLDIERS AT THE SOUTH FORELAND LIGHTHOUSE \(England\)](#)

Soldiers from the 1st Parachute Regiment based at Dover's Connaught Barracks have helped to reinstall the rotating optic at the South Foreland lighthouse near Dover, Kent. After the 200kg mechanism was lifted to the lamp room on Wednesday 26th of May, engineers reconnected cables and weights so the optic can rotate once more using the original clockwork system. Lifting the mechanism up the last part of the stairwell proved to be rather tricky since there was only about two inches clearance on either side of the machinery, with the wall on one side and the banister on the other side.

Visitors to the lighthouse will now be able to see how the weights, weighing a quarter of a tonne, have to

be wound by hand each hour and see the optic rotating as it would have done when still in use.



Records show that a light was first shown from the cliffs in 1367, to warn ships of the notorious Goodwin Sands known as 'the great ship swallower', which over the years claimed at least 2,000 vessels and many lives. The lighthouse was the first, in December 1858, to show an electrically-powered light. Forty years later, in 1898, Guglielmo Marconi transmitted a radio signal from the lighthouse to the East Goodwin Lightship nine miles offshore.

The South Foreland lighthouse is no longer operational and is run by the National Trust as a visitor centre. Since 2004 is the centenary of when the light was changed from a fixed to a rotating light the mechanism has been repaired to mark the centenary.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[WLS Chairman](#)

LOWESTOFT LIGHTHOUSE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC (ENGLAND)

Lowestoft (Suffolk) lighthouse stands guard over one of the busiest stretches of the east coast of England, having been in service since 1874 – the first built by Trinity House when they were empowered to erect sea marks by Queen Elizabeth 1.



Originally

there was a cast iron low light on the beach, which had to be moved when the Stanford channel moved. The light would be dragged to its new position by a team of horses and the houses at sea level would be given shutters so the only light visible from the sea would be that of the low light. A brazier on the cliff was the next development, followed by a tower to accommodate new mechanisms, a rotating light and mirrors.

A red light shone to the north east for a time, warning seafarers of the Scroby Sands. Today the only mains electricity used is for recharging the 12 volt batteries which are used to operate the lights and rotating optic, giving a white flash every 15 seconds which can be seen for approximately 22 miles out to sea.

Visitors to the lighthouse will be given a tour and history of the lighthouse by the Attendant, Keith Seaman, who also works as Attendant at Orford Ness and Southwold lighthouses, the latter already being open to visitors, aided by his wife Marlene. Mr Seaman's grandfather operated a wooden lighthouse on stilts in the Thames Estuary, which once caught fire with him in it!

Views from the lighthouse are stunning, which these days include the new wind farm as well as the treacherous sandbanks which claimed many lives and vessels.



Photos courtesy of Breda Wall, Trinity House and Peter Williams, WLS Member.

[Rosalie Davis Gibb \(England\)](#)
[WLS Chairman](#)

UK LIGHTHOUSES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Trinity House currently opens 11 operational lighthouses to visitors:

Alderney (Channel Islands) 01481 823077,
Flamborough (Yorkshire) 01262 678255, Longstone (Northumberland) 07744 307571, Lowestoft (Suffolk) 07767 662645, North Foreland (Kent) 01843 587765, Pendeen (Cornwall) 01736 788418/07887 514952, Portland Bill (Dorset) 01305 820495, St Catherine's (Isle

of Wight) 01983 867979, South Stack (Anglesey, Wales) 01248 724444/01407 763207, Southwold (Suffolk) 01502 722576 and Start Point (Devon) 01803 770606. The Lizard is also normally open to visitors, but not during 2004.

Information provided by Breda Wall
Trinity House, London

The Northern Lighthouse Board currently opens Mull of Galloway (Dumfries and Galloway) and North Ronaldsay (Orkney Islands), both operational lighthouses in Scotland.

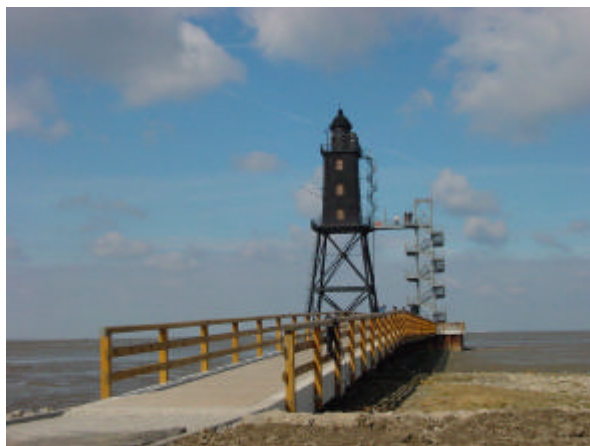
UK Lighthouses that are no longer operational are open to visitors at Dungeness (Kent), Leasowe (The Wirral), St Mary's Island (Tyne and Wear), Smeaton's Tower (Plymouth, Devon), Souter (Tyne and Wear), South Foreland (Kent) and Withernsea (Humberside) plus the *Spurn* Light Vessel at Hull Marina, Humberside.

Other lighthouse related visitor centres are Trinity House National Lighthouse Centre (Penzance, Cornwall, England), Museum of Scottish Lighthouses (Fraserburgh, Grampian, Scotland), Arbroath Signal Tower Museum (Arbroath, Fife, Scotland), Ardnamurchan Visitor Centre (Ardnamurchan, Argyll, Scotland) and Skerryvore Lighthouse Museum (Hynish, Tiree, Hebrides, Scotland).

Rosalie Davis Gibb (England)
WLS Chairman

TOURISTS MAKE A DASH FOR THE OBEREVERSAND LIGHTHOUSE

There was a big run on May the 1st, 2004 on the Lighthouse Obereversand at its new position at the Dorumer Tief. A lot of cyclists and weekend visitors came to this place - a bathing resort between Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven - to make use of the possibility to enter the lighthouse in order to see the historic premises of the lighthouse keepers. It was reported that 260 visitors were counted on the first day.



Obereversand was opened with a flag parade. Some short speeches were held and after the chairman of

the Obereversand Lighthouse Preservation Association hoisted the Wurster flag, the lighthouse was opened to the public.

After 81 years of 'darkness' the lighthouse shall be put in service again. The association has now reached one of its biggest aims: they received permission to operate this lighthouse as a harbour light of the fishing and sport boat Port Dorum-Neufeld.

The interior has meanwhile been restored including the painting of the ceilings. All floors are now again equipped with antiques and curiosities showing the life on this lighthouse.

The association has concluded a service contract with the local community to manage and maintain this building. Furthermore, they now present their exhibition 'Life and Work of the Lighthouse Keepers at the End of the 19th Century.' The visitors have the possibility to explore this lighthouse by means of a guide.



The lighthouse is open on Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays between 13.00 hrs and 16.00 hrs until the beginning of July. It will be open more often in July and August. For more information, including the re-lighting of the lighthouse and further special events please see the website at www.obereversand.de.

Martin Focke (Germany)
Chairman Obereversand Lighthouse Preservation Society
WLS member

INTERNATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE DAY 2003

Areas of the North East coast of England are a lighthouse hunter's paradise, a fact brought home to me on International Lighthouse Day August 17th 2003. I began with Souter Lighthouse, which is now owned by The National Trust. It was designed by James Douglass, the Chief Engineer to Trinity House and was lit in January 1871. At that time it was one of the most advanced lighthouses in the world, the first to be powered by electrical alternators. The light today is powered by an automatic radio beacon.

Marsden Rock, a large rock that has become separated from the mainland by erosion from the sea

over many thousands of years, and a number of other rocky outcrops including Whitburn Steel, a dangerous submerged stretch of rocks off Marsden and Whitburn, had claimed many lives. In 1869 twenty vessels ran aground between Sunderland and South Shields. Stories abounded of local people using lights to lure ships onto the rocks to enable them to steal the valuable cargoes, so it was deemed necessary to construct a permanent light that would be recognised from the sea. The original chosen site was on Souter Point about half way between the Tyne and the Wear. In 1870 the site was altered to Lizard Point where a lower tower would be more visible and less costly. The original site lay in the pollution area from the local industries. Although the light now stands on Lizard Point, to avoid confusion with the Cornish Lizard Point lighthouse it was decided to keep the name Souter.



[Souter Lighthouse and former keeper's dwelling](#)

The tower stood 345 yards from the edge of the cliff but is now much closer to the sea because of the erosion along that coast.

The tower is a little over 75 feet high and was built by Robert Allison of Whitburn. The buildings, including a workshop, coke store, boiler and engine house and six homes for the staff were constructed behind the tower around a square courtyard with a corridor that was covered. The houses all had gardens at the front and wash houses, outside toilets and stores for fuel in the backyards. Water was required to power the boilers as there were no natural streams on the point. Douglass designed rainwater tanks into the foundations of the inner courtyard and outside the engine room capable of holding 60,000 gallons of water.



[Souter Lighthouse and foghorn](#)

Souter Lighthouse contains so many features, too many to include here. It is well worth a visit. After climbing to the lamp room and being 'allowed' to go inside the biform lenses, I then went outside to see the view. From Souter, on a clear day, it is possible to see up the coast to Whitley Bay and the white tower of St Mary's Island Lighthouse.



[Souter Lighthouse biform lens](#)

Leaving Souter I set off up the coast to Whitley Bay. A little to the north of Whitley Bay stands St Mary's Lighthouse on an island with access by a causeway at low tide. There has been a light on St Mary's since mediaeval times. Around 1090 a chapel was constructed on the north side of the island. The chapel was dedicated to St Helen and a small amount of money was paid each week to provide a light, which shone from the tower and warned sailors of the rocks. This light was known as St Mary's Light.

The present lighthouse was built by J. Livingstone Miller and was first lit in August 1898. Until 1977 the lamp used paraffin and was visible for 17 miles giving two flashes every twenty seconds. In 1979 the light was automated and finally extinguished on 30th November 1984.



[St. Mary's Lighthouse at low tide](#)

Within the compound are the keepers' cottages, now a centre for visitors and a cottage built by a Mr. George Ewen in 1855, a fisherman from Aberdeen. He and his family were evicted in November 1895. Less than a year later work began on the lighthouse.





I climbed the 137 steps that hug the wall inside the open tower to the lantern room. Views on such a clear day are spectacular up and down the coast, well worth the climb. From the lamp room you can see a concrete pillar that was built in 1914. It was used as a rangefinder for the coastal defence guns at Tynemouth Priory.

[Spiral staircase in St. Mary's Lighthouse](#)



[Range finder and rocks from St. Mary's Lighthouse gallery](#)

A nature reserve is an important part of the island; divers study the marine life and the area of the wreck the Gothenburg City that ran aground in 1891. Facing out to the North Sea is a bird hide allowing visitors to see many of the varied waders and seabirds at low tide. Also at low tide, a little way south near the rocky shore, can still be seen the remains of the California, a four-masted barque that was driven on to the rocks in January 1913.

St Mary's is now under the control of North Tyneside Council. However before the lighthouse passed to the council, it was stripped of practically all the working parts and internal fixtures, unlike Souter, which retains nearly all its' working parts and ancillary machinery.



I went on to see Blythe Pier Light and the wind farm. Blythe Pier is closed to the public, so the light has to be viewed

from the beach opposite. Returning to North Yorkshire I drove down the coast to the River Tyne at Tynemouth, where I was able to see the inner and out lights at the mouth of the Tyne.



[Inner Light River Tyne, Tynemouth](#)



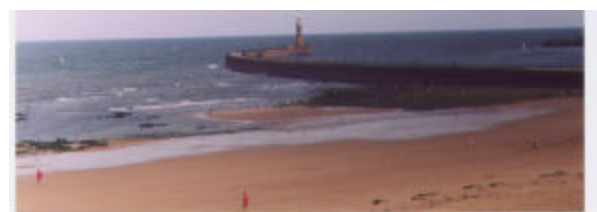
[Outer Lights on the River Tyne, Tynemouth](#)

On to Sunderland where it is possible to see the old



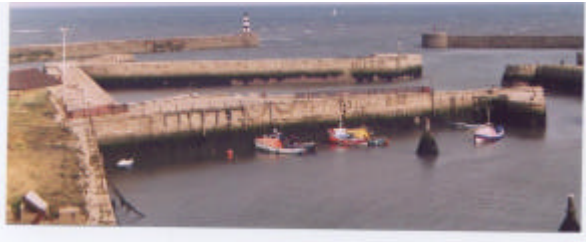
light built in 1856 on the South Pier at Sunderland. It was dismantled and rebuilt in Roker Park, Sunderland, in 1983, allowing for improvements to the harbour. The tower still looks out over the sea from its new position in the park. Further round from the park is the Sunderland Harbour with a light standing at the end of the pier.

[Sunderland Light now in Roker Park](#)



[Sunderland Lighthouse at end of pier](#)

My final visit was to Seaham, where a black and white tower stands guard over the harbour entrance. Erosion has made the cliff top unsafe, so getting down to the pier is not recommended.



[Seahaven Light](#)

International Lighthouse Day was, for me, quite a fruitful lighthouse hunting day. There are more lights on the coast not too far from my home, so this year I plan to visit Coquet and the Farne Islands lights, including Longstone, once home to Grace Darling.

[Lin Sunderland \(England\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

INTERNATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE DAY 2004

The third International Lighthouse Day, helping to raise awareness of lighthouses, light vessels and other navigational aids, will be held on Sunday 22 August 2004. Many lighthouses and places of associated interest will be open to the public, and special events will be taking place at lighthouses and light vessels around the world.

Amateur radio operators will be transmitting from lighthouses worldwide, fostering international relations and focussing on lighthouse preservation. More than 350 lighthouses in 40 countries will be 'on air'.

International Lighthouse Day is an ideal opportunity for lighthouse groups, such as 'Friends' and Trusts, to publicise their work and involvement in the preservation of lighthouse and the history of light keeping.

A list of lighthouses taking part and more information can be found on the Association of Lighthouse Keepers' website www.alk.org.uk

If you are taking part please email Joy Adcock at joy@lighthouse.fsnet.co.uk (ALK Publicity & Press Officer and WLS member) so that your event can be publicised on the ALK website.

An Amateur Radio International Lighthouse/Lightvessel Weekend was started 6 years ago and the ALK established International Lighthouse Day 3 years ago to coincide with this event. Whilst I was Visitor Services co-ordinator at the North Foreland Lighthouse in Broadstairs, Kent, we celebrated International Lighthouse Day with the Hilderstone Amateur Radio Society based in the grounds of the lighthouse. The event was most interesting and resulted in local press coverage,

which gave us the opportunity to raise awareness of our maritime heritage.

[Rosalie David Gibb \(England\)](#)
[Chairman](#)

DISASTER HITS FORMER LIGHTHOUSE AND KEEPER'S DWELLING AT CHEBUCTO HEAD, HALIFAX (CANADA)

This was to be a good news article. Just two weeks ago (May 12, 2004), Chebucto Head Lighthouse Society obtained a one-year lease for the Chebucto Head keeper's dwelling. After almost a year of negotiations, the news took them by surprise. The group was thrilled with the prospect of restoring a building that means so much to the community. They got to work almost immediately, and had already torn the worn carpets from the house when tragedy struck.

On the evening of May 24, 2004, the building caught fire at about midnight. Dense fog prevented the blaze from being seen and the wind direction prevented smoke from being smelled in nearby Duncan's Cove. The house burned completely - only the chimney and foundation are now standing. The situation was discovered on the morning of May 25 when Department of Fisheries and Oceans technicians went out to the station to investigate a malfunction at the current concrete lighthouse. The building had been vacant since 1996 and was repeatedly vandalized over the past several years. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. Arson is suspected.



[The building that burned at Chebucto Head appears on the left. It was formerly a lighthouse with a lantern on top of the roof. The equipment shown on the roof in this photo had been moved to the new concrete lighthouse shown on the right some years before the fire.](#)

Built in 1940, the dwelling was an excellent example of architecture from an era when the lightkeeper and his family lived in the lighthouse. It marked the entrance to Halifax Harbour until 1967, for commercial traffic, soldiers and sailors, and for thousands of immigrants and refugees. The loss will be keenly felt by people across Canada.



[The Lighthouse at Chebucto Head c. 1950, later converted to the keeper's house](#)

Since the advent of lighthouse de-staffing by the Canadian Coast Guard in the 1980's many buildings like that at Chebucto Head lie vacant and deteriorating and at the mercy of vandals. Seeing this as a real threat to our marine heritage the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society has pressed the Federal government for legislation to protect lighthouses and was successful in having Senate Bill introduced in 2000. So far, though the Bill was later introduced in the Commons, the Liberal government has not seen fit to pass it into law and sadly today we in Nova Scotia see a sad consequence of their inaction.

The Chebucto Head Lighthouse Society is undaunted by this recent sad event. They met on Saturday, May 29, for a "wake" and to plan the future. They are already talking about re-building. For more about the former lighthouse and keeper's dwelling and for further news visit www.nslps.com. Under "Pick Lighthouse" choose "Chebucto Head" and click "GO." We will be placing news from the society on their section of the page.

[Kathy Brown \(Canada\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

[LETTERS TO THE EDITOR](#)

Your readers may wish to be aware that Chapter VII 'Record and Document Changes in the History of Lighthouses' is now available on the IALA Web site to be found at: www.iala-aism.org.

From the opening Web page you can click on Publications, then click on IALA Manuals. Finally, click on The IALA Lighthouse Preservation Manual, and there you will also find chapters I to V.

Other IALA publications are available there, too.

Regards,
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[REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE](#)

[Webmaster is Looking for Photos](#)

The homepage of the WLS website is illustrated with a few small lighthouse photos. I would like to change those photos frequently. Therefore, I request all members to send photos that may be used on the homepage. You will save me a lot of work if you send images with a height between 150 and 300 pixels, and as .jpg files with a compression of 5. But if this technical language sounds all abracadabra to you, just send the photos as you have stored them, keep the website attractive and mail your photos to: webmaster@worldlights.org.

[Frans la Poutré \(Netherlands\)](#)
[WLS Webmaster](#)

[WEBSITES](#)

[NSLPS LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE](#)



The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society has had a website since 1997. The beginning of the old website was designed by students at Cole Harbour High School in Dartmouth. That first year we had 3000 visitors. Last year we had about 39,000. Recently, visitor numbers have been doubling each year, an indication of the popularity of lighthouses and use of the Internet.

Our site was very popular, but it was out of date in technology and difficult to expand and update. We also had a large database, with information about every lighthouse, which was not available to the public. We are fortunate that one of our board members, Peter MacCulloch, is an IT technologist. He and I decided all the information we have should be made available and proposed a new website that would use the latest technology and roll together the

old website and the database. Little did we know what we were getting into!

NSLPS funded an initial investigation, which showed what we would gain and how the site would be built. This was crucial to the web building project and the basis for the success of the new site. The Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, and the Westaway Foundation were our major funders for a little over half the cost of the basic site. Members also contributed, and NSLPS picked up the rest of the \$15,000.

The new Site was built, beginning January 15, 2004, by Peter MacCulloch, Tower Software, and Peter Eastwood, Eastwood Design. So we now have a professionally built, easy to navigate site, with a consistent look. On April 28 at our AGM, we launched what is really the beginning of this new site. More will be added in the future. What we have now is:

- 1,590 pages,
- 351 directories
- From the database we have
- 328 different buildings
- 912 historic records

Putting all this together in such a short time was a major achievement! Every lighthouse in Nova Scotia is included, plus some that are no longer standing. Thousands of data records were checked and hundreds of photographs re-named and edited. And still the work goes on. We discovered that the old website did not easily translate to the new and we were not really rolling things together but building a whole new edifice. So we are continuing to re-arrange and add to the current pages. Just this afternoon we re-ordered and added to the Chebucto Head page so that people would get the full story of the building that burned. There is more information, and many more photographs to add. Fund raising continues because we have only placed on the site about half the information, photographs and searches that could be there.

To check the site out and watch it grow, visit www.nslps.com.

[Kathy Brown \(Canada\)](#)
[WLS Member](#)

IDENTIFY THE LIGHTHOUSE

Can you identify this lighthouse? No prizes – just to test your own knowledge and give yourself a pat on the back if you know!

One clue:
Without the intervention of local residents the lighthouse would have ceased operating several years ago.



Answer in the next Newsletter.

Last month's lighthouse:

This is Swan Island, Banks Strait, Tasmania. Built in 1845, height 30 metres, still operational but demanned in 1986. Accommodations for up to 5 people is available in the 1908 Head Keeper's Cottage. The island (but not the lighthouse) is currently up for sale for \$1,500,000. Photo from John Ibbotson's book 'Lighthouses of Australia – A Visitor's Guide.'



NEWSLETTERS

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue. Images have been kindly provided by members of the WLS unless specified otherwise.

Comments made by individuals in the Newsletter are not necessarily the views of the WLS.

Copy dates for the next 4 issues are:

Autumn 2004 – 31st August (for publication end of September)

Winter 2004 – 30th November (for publication end of December)

Spring 2005 – 28th February – for publication end of March)

Summer 2005 – 31st May (for publication end of June)

If you know of any prospective members of WLS who could be persuaded to join by receiving a copy of the Newsletter, please let me know – this has been seen to work previously!

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