

UNITED STATES LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

9005 Point No Point Rd. NE * Hansville, WA 98340 * 415-362-7255 * www.uslhs.org



STAMP FLASHES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE USLHS PASSPORT CLUB



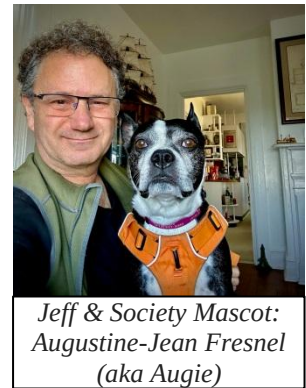
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Website: www.uslhs.org/fun/passport-club

Email: passportclub@uslhs.org

20 Years in the Lantern Room: Celebrating Jeff Gales and the U.S. Lighthouse Society

This year the U.S. Lighthouse Society has more than one reason to celebrate. Not only did we mark our 40th anniversary, but Executive Director Jeff Gales reached his 20th year at the helm. Two decades may not sound like much in lighthouse years, but in nonprofit years, it's a remarkable run—one that reflects resilience, stability, and a steady course through changing times. From the very beginning, Jeff has had his hand in nearly every aspect of the Society's work. Membership growth and retention, the flourishing Passport Program, the launch and consistency of the Light Hearted podcast, the expansion of tours, and the success of our preservation grants are all part of a broader story: how the U.S. Lighthouse Society has grown into one of the most trusted lighthouse nonprofits in the country. While many nonprofits have spent recent years scrambling to modernize, stabilize, and adapt, the Society has been quietly ahead of the curve. Lighthouse keeper personnel files have been preserved and the Society's website, including the J. Candace Clifford Research Catalog, continues to be transformed into an accessible, user-friendly resource for historians and the public alike. And, in a moment that perfectly captured our mission, the Society relit the original Fresnel lens at Point Wilson Lighthouse—a beacon made bright again, not only for history's sake but for generations still to come.



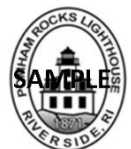
Jeff & Society Mascot:
Augustine-Jean Fresnel
(aka Augie)

Of course, Jeff hasn't walked this path alone. His wife, Melissa Eck, and his brother, Richard Gales, have both worked alongside him at the Society for these same 20 years. Together, the three have given the organization an anchor of continuity rare in the nonprofit world. It's no exaggeration to say their teamwork has helped the Society weather storms that might have capsized others. Also, he has a gift for motivating others - staff, volunteers, donors and members - to see themselves as part of the larger picture. And for those who know Jeff personally, you also know he balances dedication with humor. Ask him about the quirks of lighthouse design, and you'll probably hear a crack about spiral staircases being "the original nonprofit exercise program." It's this blend of seriousness and lightness that makes him so respected within our community. Twenty years is a milestone for one man, but it's also a milestone for the Society he has guided. In a nonprofit landscape where resilience and adaptability often mean the difference between fading and flourishing, the U.S. Lighthouse Society continues to shine brightly—thanks in no small part to Jeff Gales, and to the many hands he has inspired to keep the light burning. So Happy Anniversary to the Society (40), Jeff and his team (20) and, by the way, Happy Birthday Jeff (60)!

Stamp Updates

New Design - Pomham Rocks, RI

The Pomham Rocks Lighthouse stamp has a new look. The stamp remains at the lighthouse but now reads "Riverside, RI" replacing Narragansett Bay/E. Providence, RI as the location. They also have a 150 year anniversary stamp which was highlighted in a previous Stamp Flashes.



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New Stamp - Brant Point Lighthouses, MA

After being absent from our stamp list for several years, a stamp depicting both Brandt Point Lighthouses is now available. The Old Brant Point lighthouse which is now part of the Coast Guard Station was built in 1856 and deactivated in 1900. The smaller nearby Brant Point light is the second oldest lighthouse station in the U.S. and has been rebuilt at least 8 times. The current tower was built in 1901 and was automated in 1965. Both lighthouses can be seen from the ferries coming to Nantucket. The stamp is available at the Nantucket Shipwreck and Life Saving Museum



Additional Stamps - Lakeshore Keepers, MI

The Lakeshore Keepers (previously known as SPLKA) has a new logo type stamp for each of its five lighthouses. This includes Big Sable, Little Sable, White River, Ludington Pier and Manistee Pier.



New Location - Squirrel Point, ME

A Squirrel Point Lighthouse stamp is now available at the lighthouse itself when open. It is the same design as the stamp available at the Maine Maritime Museum.



New Stamps - Bar Harbor Whale Watch Company, ME

Bar Harbor WW has added two new stamps to their collection of stamps available on their many lighthouse cruises. The latest stamps are for the Browns Head and Monhegan Island Lighthouses.

Anniversary Stamp - Owls Head, ME

The 200th anniversary of the Owls Head Lighthouse was celebrated by creating a special anniversary stamp. Built in 1825 for \$2,707, its first keeper was Isaac Sterns who served for 13 years. The anniversary stamp is added to the other seven stamps available at the Owls Head Interpretive Center & Gift Shop.



New Stamps/New Location - Wood Island Life Saving Station, ME

The completely restored Wood Island Life Saving Station near Kittery, Maine is a new location for the Passport Program and they have four new stamps. Their stamps include one for the station itself as well as one for the Portsmouth Harbor and Whaleback Lighthouses both of which are visible on trips to the island. A fourth stamp is for a rare artifact at the station, the key post from Appledore Island.

What is a life-saving station key post?

A life-saving station key post served two important purposes for the U.S. Life-Saving Service. First, it acted as a fixed reference marker along the beach, allowing patrolling surfmen or local residents to report the exact location of a wreck so rescue crews could quickly bring their surfboat or breeches buoy equipment to the right spot. Second, it functioned as a checkpoint for the surfmen on patrol. Each man carried a watchman's clock and at every key post there was a metal key secured in a box or attached to the post. The surfman had to insert the key into his clock to stamp the time and location, creating a record that proved he had completed the patrol and was not shirking his duty. This dual role made the key post an essential tool for both coordinating rescues and maintaining discipline in the dangerous, lonely work of beach patrol. In 1910, the US Coast Guard established a life-saving station on Appledore Island, the largest island of the Isles of Shoals. The Key Post from that station is now displayed at the Wood Island Life Saving Station which opened to the public this year.

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Collector Profile: Sharon Mills, Kittery, ME

We continue our series of collector profiles with one of our dedicated stamp program volunteers, Sharon Mills. We especially enjoy hearing interesting stories about how others became interested in lighthouses. Sharon certainly has one of those stories.

I've lived in southern Maine most of my life not far from the well-known and often photographed Cape Neddick (also known as Nubble) lighthouse. As a child my parents took me there and I saw a few other lighthouses in the Maine, NH, Massachusetts area through the years, but didn't get really interested in lighthouses until I found out about a book written by the wife of a lighthouse keeper who lived in the area. Her name was Connie Small and she wrote the book "The Lighthouse Keeper's Wife" at the age of 85. I met her and we became friends. She greatly influenced my love of lighthouses and the importance of their place in history and the importance of restoring those that are still standing. I went to Cape Cod in 1998 with my husband and we visited as many lighthouses as possible even though none of them were open. One of the first lighthouses I ever climbed was the Statue of Liberty on July 4th of 1999 along with a few in Massachusetts, but as my interest in lighthouses grew and we visited more of them, we expanded where we went. In July of 2000 I saw for the first time and bought my first Passport stamp book while visiting and climbing the Montauk Lighthouse on Long Island, New York. Back then there were not anywhere near the number of stamps available as there are today, but I sent for the listing of what stamps were available and from then on vacations were planned to visit lighthouses on the East Coast and as far west as the Great Lakes especially those that had stamps. It took me until April of 2002 to complete my 1st Passport stamp book and send for the patch.

Collecting stamps was a great way for me to remember my light house adventures with a low cost souvenir of my visit to all the lighthouses along with helping with restoration in a small way. Since then I became involved as a Volunteer at a lighthouse in my area, joined multiple lighthouse groups including USLHS, often went on Cruises that went past multiple lighthouses, so several stamps were available. I have continued learning about the rich history of lighthouses in my state of Maine and all over the world. I believe it is important to teach the history of lighthouses and their importance to the younger generations so that their place in history is not lost. I have been collecting stamps for over 25 years now, but am still excited when a stamp for a "New" lighthouse that didn't previously have one comes out. I especially love to climb lighthouses that have been restored and open to the public after years of not being open. Although I have multiple stamp Passport books, I've also made copies of my stamps and have them displayed in a large loose leaf notebook in alphabetical order by state and then lighthouses. I encourage anyone who is not a passport stamp collector, to join the club and start helping in the quest for keeping these special icons restored and able to be visited.

Sharon Mills

Stamp Collecting Tips from James Hill aka. The Stamp Ferret

Have you ever visited a lighthouse only to find that it's unexpectedly closed or the passport stamp is nowhere to be found? You planned, you traveled, and you brought your USLHS passport book to be stamped only to experience the disappointment of not being able to collect that coveted passport stamp? The two options available are to return at another time or request the stamp by mail. While those options work, they do take time. Interested in saving time and increasing the likelihood of collecting more stamps? Create your own passport stamp kit. Customizing your personal passport stamp kit should include some of the following items:

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- Post-it notes: I place notes on self-addressed stamped envelopes (SASE) and leave a donation inside the envelope. I leave the envelopes where docents are sure to locate them, usually in their mailbox or in a doorway. Adding tape to your kit is an option.
- Form Letters: An alternative to Post-it notes. The letter should state when you visited a lighthouse and would like to request their passport stamp. Leave a space to write in the name of the lighthouse and the time and date of your visit. I've discovered that this option can end up in collecting multiple stamps from one location.
- Self-addressed stamped envelopes: These are vital. Depending on how many lighthouses you're planning to visit will determine how many you may want to include in your kit.
- Cash: Essential for leaving donations and those gift shops. Be sure to make a donation for each copy of each stamp you receive
- Stamp pads: Unfortunately, many locations have stamp pads that are quite old and worn out. Therefore, I never leave on a lighthouse trip without having freshly inked stamp pads. I suggest black, red, blue, and green pads. Yellow, purple, and orange are out there but extremely rare. I also suggest an oversized black stamp pad for those oversized stamps you will discover.
- Index cards / Elmer's glue sticks: I travel with 3x5, 4x6, and 5x8 index cards. I prefer to stamp index cards and then glue them into my passport books. This prevents ink bleeding through the pages. In addition, index card stamp copies make trading with other enthusiasts much easier. Note: do not travel with scissors.
- Pens/Pencil: Essential for exchanging phone numbers and emails. Many lighthouses are remote and do not have cell phone service. Therefore, if you want to collect more passport stamps and get new stamps in the field, have the USLHS contact information readily available.

A personal passport stamp kit can save you time, disappointment, and result in collecting a multitude of additional stamps you may not have been expecting. Traveling with a passport stamp kit signals to docents that you're serious about passport stamp collecting. Moreover, passport stamp kits create an opportunity to educate docents and novice enthusiasts about the USLHS passport program. Go prepared and don't be surprised when you end up trading stamps with others during your lighthouse visits.

Safe travels and happy hunting.

The Stamp Ferret