



THE POMHAM GLOW

Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse,
A Chapter of the American Lighthouse Foundation
Mission Statement

To ensure the historic restoration and preservation of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse and to improve public awareness, appreciation and access to Pomham Rocks Lighthouse.

June 2020

**IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT FRIENDS OF POMHAM ROCKS LIGHTHOUSE
ANNOUNCES THE PASSING OF
JOSEPH ESTRELLA ON MAY 9, 2020**



**“FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS,”
JOE, YOU WILL BE GREATLY MISSED**

PASSING OF JOSEPH A. ESTRELLA

Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse has lost a longtime dedicated and invaluable member. Joe Estrella passed away after a long illness on May 9, 2020. Joe joined FPRL in 2008 and immediately began putting his leadership and construction talents to work for the betterment of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. He was responsible for the planning and execution of the installation of a new floating dock at the lighthouse, along with two new aluminum boarding ramps. Seeing that one floating dock was not enough, Joe built another one himself in his driveway. He had it trucked to a boat ramp, launched, and then towed it to the island to install.



With the safety of our members and public in mind, Joe repaired existing fencing and installed new fencing to surround the island. Seeing the need for a larger boat to transport our members and restoration materials, he sought out and found the 21' Yacht Club launch for sale that we are all familiar with. Joe then dedicated himself to the long process of obtaining a Captain's license so he could captain our launch with passengers. For many years, Joe was the only licensed captain and made hundreds of trips to the island. He became a Board

member followed by two years as Chairman of the Board of Directors of FPRL. As Chairman, Joe was instrumental in the final two stages of the total restoration of the lighthouse. Much of the restoration was done by Joe and FPRL personnel under his direction. There are too many accomplishments to list here, but some of the major projects included: new plumbing, water collecting tanks, 220-volt outlets for heaters, assembly of five heater units, kitchen cabinet restoration, installation of the first-floor bathroom and the restoration and reactivation of the main cistern. Due to his compassion and awareness for all visitors' needs, he designed and built a new stairway from the top of the dock up to the flat area of the lawn making access to the lighthouse much easier for our senior citizens. These stairs were Joe's last project on the island in the spring of 2019.

Joe's mark on the lighthouse will continue for many years to come. His enthusiastic attitude, expertise, and work ethic will be deeply missed at Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. Thank you, Joe, for all your hard work.

FPRL'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

As with many organizations, the Covid-19 Pandemic has had a major impact on FPRL's planning for 2020. This was to be the start of our first year of public tours and members tours using our new 26' launch. In addition to the fact that the new launch has not been delivered yet, we must comply with the State of Rhode Island requirements

once it is delivered. Our trips to the lighthouse on the launch falls under “Reopening Rhode Island Phase II requirements for Ferry Operation & Sightseeing Operation guidelines.” The guidelines require 6’ of social distancing on the boat as well as a major reduction in the passenger capacity among other requirements. FPRL realized that we could not realistically comply with the requirements in effect for the summer. The FPRL Board of Directors reluctantly voted to cancel our 2020 season. This includes all public and members’ tours until further notice. Some shoreside events were cancelled as well. We hope to resume our planning for the 2021 season.

FUTURE EVENTS OUTLOOK

Before our world got turned upside-down, the Pomham Events Committee was eagerly planning for the season ahead. Foremost was our summer picnic and christening of our new launch (the LadyPomham II) which was to take place at Squantum on June 7. With the cancellation of large gatherings dictated by Covid 19 control, and uncertainty going forward, this happy event has been rescheduled for Spring of 2021.

Other summer traditions, the Loeff Arts Festival, normally held in August, visits to the Lighthouse (which the Events Committee provides volunteers for) have been cancelled. It is too soon to know if any of our Fall events - Rhode Island Yacht Club visit, a speaker meeting, or our Annual Meeting will take place.

But know that many good ideas were exchanged, and that we will be ready to organize a gathering if and when we get the green light.

Meanwhile, thanks to all the Events Committee Members who joined to plan a joyful season.

And cheers to Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, which is exposed proudly in the Bay along the East Bay Bike Path, which is surging with activity, and more viewers than we could have imagined.

BOATS STATUS

In March, FPRL’s old launch, Lady Pomham, was drydocked in Barrington. Repairs, maintenance, and a U.S. Coast Guard Inspection were completed in April. The Lady Pomham was relaunched, taken to Rhode Island Yacht Club, and sold to them on May 7th. We are still awaiting the delivery of our new launch, Lady Pomham II. The delivery date of our new launch has been extended because of the impact of the pandemic on the manufacturer’s work force. In the meantime, we have access to the lighthouse using our trailered 18’ stand-by boat kept in a storage facility in East Providence.



FUNDRAISING FOR COST OF NEW LAUNCH COMPLETED

Nate Chace, Director of Development, has reported success in raising the funds to pay for the cost of the new launch. The total purchase price of the launch was \$154,166.25. The transport of the boat to East Providence and a few miscellaneous expenses relating to the acquisition have added approximately \$2,500 to this total, bringing the total cost to \$156,666.25.

At this writing, \$132,522.00 in cash has been raised from individual donors, legislative grants, a private foundation and the sale of our old launch, leaving a shortfall of \$24,144.25, which will be covered by a pending \$25,000.00 grant request to a local charitable organization that will be determined in December of this year. Nate is cautiously optimistic that the grant request will be approved. In the meantime, Nate has obtained a \$25,000.00 interest-free loan to meet the shortfall, which will be paid off in December with funds received from this grant request.

Friends of Pomham Rocks is grateful to all of the donors who have contributed to the fundraising effort. The campaign was informal in that there was no member-wide solicitation effort and no matching grant incentive was available. Individuals and entities contributed simply because they recognize Pomham Rocks Lighthouse is One of The Jewels of Narragansett Bay – and that purchasing a new launch is critical to getting the

general public up close and personal with a restored treasure.

BOAT CAPTAIN WANTED

Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse are in need of another boat Captain for our forthcoming 26' Crosby Yacht Club Launch once we resume our scheduled tours and work parties. A U.S. Merchant Marine 25 GRT Inland Waters Master license or above is required. As with all of us at Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, this is on a volunteer basis.

If you already have a Captains license or have boat operation experience and are willing to pursue a Captains license, please contact our us at pomhamrockslighthouse@yahoo.com

WORK PARTIES

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, work parties for 2020 have been cancelled until further notice. Depending on the Reopening Rhode Island Phase III requirements, we MAY be able to have abbreviated work parties. Those that have indicated they want to participate in work parties on their 2020 membership dues slip will be notified accordingly.

SAVE THE BY LIGHTHOUSE TOURS CANCELLED

Due to the virus crisis, Save The Bay has cancelled their Ultimate Lighthouse Tours for June, July and August. The following is an excerpt from the Save the Bay website: “Due to the ongoing

public health crisis and the most recent guidance coming from Rhode Island Department of Health and Governor Raimondo, Save The Bay regrets to announce that we are **canceling our lighthouse tours in June, July and August.**”

The organization will wait until later this summer to see if they can possibly have tours in September and October. These are the tours that begin in Providence at the Save The Bay campus. These tours include possible visits to Pomham and Rose Island lighthouses, these tours sail down the West Passage, round Beavertail into Newport Harbor and proceed up the East Channel back to Providence viewing 16 lighthouses. Save The Bay will notify us of their plans.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

If you have not yet paid your 2020 Friends of Pomham Rocks membership dues, please consider doing so. Despite the cancellation of our tours this summer, we still must perform maintenance and repairs to the lighthouse. Your membership dues go directly for that purpose. Thank-you.

EVENTS

- **Stay Tuned**

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