



# 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.

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SEPTEMBER 2017

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## **INTERIOR RESTORATION TO BEGIN THIS FALL**



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## **THE END IS IN SIGHT**

### **A Restoration Update**

July 24, 2017, was a momentous day in the life of Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. At noon, in the office of our pro-bono Project Manager, Gilbane Building Company, the sealed bid of Abcore Restoration Company, Inc., was accepted by The Friends as the winning bid to complete the restoration of the interior project of the Lighthouse. Including several optional expenses, the cost of the interior project will be approximately \$325,000.00. Many of you will recall that Abcore was the contractor who did the restoration work on the exterior of the Lighthouse back in 2005. We are delighted to reconnect with an old friend.

Thanks in part to our \$150,000.00 grant from Rhode Island Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission, and our membership capital drive that has netted approximately \$60,000.00, much of the cost of the project has already been met. We have arranged for a line of credit with a local lender that has agreed to make up the difference at minimal interest rates. The line of credit will be paid back in late 2017 and early 2018 as fundraising efforts continue.

The interior work is expected to start in early October and be completed by late December, though adverse weather conditions could push the completion date back to early January of 2018.

It is an exciting time for all of us. We have labored hard over the years to get to this point – and we have nothing but smiles on our collective faces as this final piece of the puzzle gets put in place. In a few short months, we fully expect Pomham Rocks Lighthouse to be completely restored, following which it will stand tall as one of the Jewels of Narragansett Bay.

Although there will be appropriate ceremonies in the spring of 2018 to celebrate the completion of the restoration effort, it is not too early for me to say thank you to both those who have been working on the firing line for the past 14 years to turn a dream into a reality, and to our membership that has supported us with volunteer help, dollars and encouragement for what seems like such a long time. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

Stay tuned – we are almost there! The end is indeed in sight!

Nate Chace  
Director of Development

### POMHAM GETS NEW OPTIC

As volunteers for a work party approached the lighthouse one day this past July, we noticed the lantern room looked somewhat empty. Our old light, which was a 250mm Marine Lantern, has been replaced with a new Marine LED beacon. In Pomham's 146-year history, the lantern room has only had 4 optics. It was first lit on December 1, 1871 with a 6<sup>th</sup> Order Fresnel Lens. Then in 1935 the 6<sup>th</sup> Order was replaced with the 4<sup>th</sup> Order Fresnel Lens, which is now on display at the Custom House Maritime Museum in Newburyport, MA. In 2006, the lighthouse was relit using the 250mm Marine lantern that was removed by the Coast Guard this past July. Over the past century, Pomham gained quiet a rich history in the evolution of lighthouse beacons.



*Pomham's 250mm Marine Lantern*



*The new LED Marine Beacon now in use at Pomham Rocks Lighthouse*



*Pomham's 4<sup>th</sup> Order Fresnel Newburyport, MA*



### GROUNDS REPORT

The grounds around the lighthouse have seen major improvements over this season of work parties. This was all thanks to the numerous members that have answered the calls for volunteers as seen in these past three newsletters. Each work party has averaged about 6-7 members who come fully dedicated to improving the grounds here at the lighthouse. While maintaining the grounds is a daunting, never ending task, the lighthouse seems a bit happier with all the care that has been shown in recent months.

Along with the regular maintenance of the island, grounds projects over this summer have included, removal of the growth outside the fencing, repainting of the retaining wall, installing new fencing, restoring the flowerbeds, repairing damaged walk paths and restoring the old bell foundation. Many thanks to all that have volunteered this year:

Nate Chace	Paula Muggleton
Alex Dias	Will Howarth
Pat Estrella	Andrew Niemann
Don Paiva	Dave Kelleher
Ed Frey	Leah Huntely
Adam Dias	Carolyn Conti
Mary Chace	Dennis Tardiff
Jim Joiner	Denise Caron
Joe Estrella	Andy Valerio
Andy Leddy	Kathy Turbitt
Carlene Joiner	Amanda Andsager
Don Paiva	Louise Paiva
Adam Paiva	Chris



### NEW FENCING

Phase One of the installation of a matching green chain link fence and gate on the north side of the island that picks up where the existing fence left off is in progress. Pomham Rocks personnel had to jackhammer into ledge in order to install and cement the vertical support poles. The fence will run for over 100 feet to tie into the dock area and make the north side of the island safer for visitors, especially children. Phase two of the chain link fence installation project will continue after the contractors are done with interior renovation this fall and winter so that the fence will not be in the way of offloading materials onto the dock.

Phase Two will continue the fence installation from the dock area, stretching across the east side of the island to tie into the existing chain link fence at the southeast corner of the cement seawall. A large gate will be installed on this east side fence run to facilitate access to the island beyond the fence enclosure area.



### WORK IN PROGRESS.

As reported in the June 2017 newsletter, we were waiting for approval from the Rhode Island Preservation and Heritage Commission before sending water to the second-floor bathroom. We are happy to report approval was given and installation of water lines and a new 1.2 gallon per flush toilet was completed by Pomham Rocks personnel. This included replacing approx. 80% of the bathroom drain lines to the existing operating septic tank and clearing a major clog in the underground drain line.

### LIGHTHOUSE PROGRAMS

Dave Kelleher will be presenting his Rhode Island Lighthouse program to the residents of Brookdale Nursing Home up in Cumberland in October. This will be the third time that David has been requested to present his program to that nursing home over the last 4 years, as residents do tend to come and go over the years. David has also been invited to present his Rhode Island Lighthouses program to an AARP of Newport meeting in January of 2018.

**\$30,100.00 RAISED TO DATE:**

**UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP CAPITAL CAMPAIGN  
TO RESTORE INTERIOR OF THE LIGHTHOUSE  
AS OF AUGUST 15, 2017**

I continue to be impressed with the response of our membership!!! In our last newsletter, I reported that 98 of our members had contributed and/or pledged a total of \$26,445.00 as of May 20, 2017. Since then an additional 3 members have committed to help us, bringing our total gift and pledges to \$30,100.00. As you know, these gifts will be matched by our anonymous donor, meaning that as of August 15, 2017, our membership is directly responsible for \$60,200.00 being added to the restoration effort.

Thank you so very much to the following members who have contributed since May 20, 2017:

Laura McNamara

Tim Leddy

Benny Peters

If any readers have any questions regarding the campaign, I can be reached by phone at my office at (401) 453-6409 or by mail at Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, c/o Nathan W. Chace, One Park Row, Suite 300, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. I can also be reached via e-mail at [nchace@crflp.com](mailto:nchace@crflp.com)

**THANK YOU MEMBERS!!!**

Nate Chace  
Director of Development

### FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

The kick-off for our summer activities took place on June 23 at the Carousel Family Fun Night at Rose Larisa Park, which included a concert that was held at 8:00 p.m. We set up a booth with our new merchandise and chances to buy raffle tickets for a fall cruise to the Lighthouse. Thanks to Committee members Dave Kelleher, Anne Greene, Louise Paiva, Pat Estrella, Kathy Turbitt, and Lisa Dias for their participation.

The Friends set up a table at the August 1st at Police Family Fun Night (National Night Out), a community gathering at the Senior Center in East Providence organized by the EP Police Department. While no promotional materials were permitted, our booth included coloring pages and crayons, lollipops in the lighthouse cookie jar, and our lighthouse dog, Keeper, always loved by the public and checked out by their live dogs! Our participation in this event reminds East Providence that we are part of the community, even though we are “off shore.” Eileen Moser, Pat Estrella, and Kathy Turbitt represented us at this event.



### SUMMER BBQ

Our Summer indoor BBQ, which was held at Al's on the Waterfront Restaurant on August 5 turned out 62 diners with a number of non-members from the public who had responded to very good publicity in local newspapers, flyers, and our excellent website. Aside from the fact that it is always fun to gather friends and to have a BBQ (especially without mosquitos and flies), people were attracted by the boat rides given by Capt. Joe Estrella (aided by Dennis Tardiff, and Alex and Adam Dias) took passengers into the nearby waters of Green Jacket Shoal. There were also two raffles, as well as a chance to buy raffle tickets for a Fall cruise to the Lighthouse for 10, and our popular new merchandise for sale. Joe spoke about the restoration project at the lighthouse, and Nate Chace spoke about the Capital Campaign.

A huge thanks to Pat Estrella for organizing the BBQ, and procurement of merchandise - no small task; to Louise Paiva for her extraordinary organization and time orchestrating the procurement of raffle items, as well as the newspaper articles advertising our events. Thanks also to Kathy Turbitt, Anne Greene, Dave Kelleher, Lisa Dias, and Mary Chace, for their help.





## MEDIA AND THE LIGHTHOUSE

Thanks to Eileen Moser for establishing a relationship with Mike Rego of the East Providence Post. The first of what Mike plans as a series of articles based on interviews with key players in the evolution of the Friends efforts to restore our lighthouse was just published in the Post - an interview with Dave Kelleher our lighthouse history expert, who has been involved with the Friends since its inception. Along with Louise's events' articles in both the Reporter and Post, we've enjoyed some good publicity this summer.

Dave Kelleher received a phone call from Molly O'Brien of a local online group, Golocalprov. She wanted him to come to their site in downtown Providence to talk about National Lighthouse Day, which was that Monday Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>, and Rhode Island Lighthouses. Dave went to the station and had a short 9 min presentation about National Lighthouse Day and a few Rhode Island lighthouses, beginning with Pomham Rocks, of course. Carlene Joiner put the program on our Facebook Page.

## THE LOOFF

The Loeff East Providence Arts Festival, which was scheduled for August 12, almost didn't happen. Rain was predicted for early morning with showers possible during the day. But the Loeff organizers (since so many vendors were expected, and would be hard to reschedule) took a chance; the sun even made periodic appearances. Our tent, with our attractive new merchandise, photo panel, Keeper, and final sales of the Fall Cruise to the Lighthouse raffles perpetuated our presence in the Riverside community. Drawing for the cruise was held at 6:00 p.m. at the close of the event. The winner was Marilyn Smith of Johnston, RI. Congratulations!

Thanks to Anne Greene, Dave Kelleher, Lisa, Alex and Adam Dias, Jean Zunda, Louise Paiva, and Mary Chace for covering this event.



*Keeper trying to convince his new dog friends to become members*



### SAVE THE BAY & POMHAM ROCKS

I have been working with Save The Bay for 5 years narrating their lighthouse tours. Together with their staff and Captain Dan Blount, I have worked to increase the number of tours per season and have built up the number of passengers that have joined us on each tour. Save the Bay donates part of the profits from these tours towards the restoration of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse as a payment for my services.

In the last two years Dan and I have worked to increase the relationship between The Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse and Save The Bay. This year we have arranged for the Northern Lighthouse tour to stop at Pomham Rocks. The people are allowed onto the grounds where I give them a short talk about the building and its history. They are then allowed inside the lighthouse and can also climb to the lantern room for the spectacular view of the bay. We have had two visits so far, June 24<sup>th</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>. Our next visit will be Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> when we will open up our new gift shop in hopes of selling some of our new merchandise. Save The Bay pays us \$5.00 per person. Maybe we will have more visits next year.

Captain Dan made a visit to a board meeting this July to discuss the future of our relationship including possible sun set cruises and having children in the Save The Bay summer camps visit the lighthouse next year.

The children visiting the lighthouse is now possible due to the great work that the work parties have done with putting up fencing around the entire island. The future looks great for Save The Bay and Pomham Rocks Lighthouse.

Dave Kelleher

### One Man's Treasure: Uncovering Rhode Island's Largest Ship Graveyard

What was thought to be an unsightly debris field off the East Providence shore line has, thanks to one dogged marine archaeologist, been discovered to be the largest collection of scuttled vessels in state waters. But should these vessels, dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries be preserved, or be removed as impediments to navigation.

Professor David Robinson, a researcher at the University of Rhode Island has been engrossed in the small shallow area called Green Jacket Shoal off Bold Point. He has found the remains of a historical dry dock and 26 wooden vessels which make up what is being deemed Rhode Island's largest ship Grave yard.

Professor Robinson will be presenting his findings and discuss his research at a meeting of the Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse on Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> in the St Brendan's Hall, on Turner Avenue, Riverside at 7:00 P.M. Hopefully you will be able to attend this most interesting visual presentation of the East Providence coast line known as Green Jacket Shoal.



*S.S. Mount Hope  
Lies in Green Jacket Shoal*

## BOATS

The launch's teak-wood railing and seats are being sanded down to bare and will be refinished with a marine grade alkyd resin to reseal the teak and restore its beauty. After that, the deck, gunnels and seating surfaces will be repainted.

On July 31st, the launch and its crew went through the annual comprehensive U.S. Coast Guard inspection, “man overboard” and casualty control drills. The Coast Guard inspector was quite informative and thorough. We are happy to report that both the launch and its crew passed the inspection.



*Captain's seat sanded down*

## CALL FOR OLD PICTURES

We are currently looking for anyone that may have pictures of the Sabin Point, Bullocks Point, Sassafras Point, Fuller Rock lighthouses and as always, any old pictures of Pomham Rocks.

The Sassafras Point and Fuller Rock lighthouses were twin lights and are unfortunately no longer standing.

The Bullocks Point Lighthouse was badly damaged in the Hurricane of 1938 and was subsequently torn down because of the damage. The Sabin Point Lighthouse, a twin of Pomham Rocks, was destroyed in 1968, leaving Pomham Rocks as the last of 5 lighthouses originally on the Providence River.

We are hoping to preserve the history of these other Providence River Lighthouses that are no longer standing. If you have pictures of either of these lighthouses and would like to donate them please send them or a copy to, P.O. Box 15121 Riverside, RI 02915, or they can be emailed to [history@pomhamrockslighthouse.org](mailto:history@pomhamrockslighthouse.org)

Thank you!



*Sabin Point Lighthouse c.1900*

## 2017 EVENTS

**September 17: Rhode Island Yacht Club Sails to the Lighthouse**

**We will once again welcome the RI Yacht Club to the Island for an afternoon picnic and socializing. We hope for Mother Nature's benevolence - calm seas and sunshine as the sailors cross the waters to our shore.**

**September 23: Northern Lighthouse Tour, sponsored by Save the Bay, narrated by our historian David Kelleher with a stop at Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. Proceeds will benefit the lighthouse. Contact Save the Bay at 401-272-3540, savebay.org for more information including time and fee. Open to all.**

**October 11: David Robinson presentation on Green Jacket Shoal (off Bold Point)  
Location: St. Brendan's Hall  
Turner Ave, Riverside, RI  
7:00pm  
Free Event  
Refreshments will be provided**

**November 25: Pomham Santa's visit to Sabin Point at 10AM  
Everyone is welcome, the event is free, and there will be refreshments.**

**December 3: Annual Banquet  
Rhode Island Yacht Club  
1:00pm  
Details to follow closer to event**