



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.

AUGUST 2022

2022 TOUR SEASON



TOURS

This year was the first time we offered public tours and they have proven to be quite popular indeed. Once the season got underway, the seats filled up fast and those lucky enough to secure a booking were treated to a very informative and relaxing tour. There are still a few spots remaining for those who still wish to book a tour this season. Our online booking service, FareHarbor, has been very easy and helpful to work with. We have attracted a lot of non-members to our organization thanks to these public tours and will definitely continue them in 2023!

THE FRIENDS OF POMHAM ROCK SUMMER PICNIC IS BACK

Join in the camaraderie of the *Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse* summer picnic! Registration is open for FPRL members and their guests. The pavilion is covered, and has picnic tables, but no side protection. FPRL will provide dessert and paper goods.

Attendees may bring their own picnics. However, according to Bristol Town policy, there will be no grills, alcohol, dogs or smoking allowed, and you must carry out what you carried in.

The beach is adjacent to the pavilion but there will be no lifeguards in September. There are toilet facilities available, as well as swing sets and other play equipment nearby.

The cost per attendee: \$5, and parking is free at this time of year.

Please send a check made out to *Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse* to:

Judianne Point, 28 Stanhope Drive,
Barrington, RI 02806.

The cost is \$5.00 per attendee – please indicate the number of attendees on your check as well.

Questions? Call Mary at 401-437-2846

ARTS FESTIVAL BOOTH A HIT WITH ALL AGES

The Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse booth at The Looff: East Providence Arts Festival in August was a great success. After years of being unable to interact with residents at community events, the festival was a welcome opportunity to share information and encourage participation and support of lighthouse activities. Young children were attracted to the Pomham Pets as they responded to sound and touch. Many festival goers purchased merchandise and tickets for the raffle. All enjoyed the seven cases of free water, donated by Coca-Cola Northeast and left over from the April Lighthouse Run. Many thanks to Mary Chase for planning and organizing the Looff booth, and to all who volunteered, including Dennis Tardiff, Louise Paiva, Paul Williams, Gregg O'Brien, Cheryl Campbell, Deb Peterson, Beth Croll, Judie Knilans, Joanne Donahue, Dave Kelleher and Anne Greene.



Enjoying the Pomham booth at the Looff

Winners were drawn at the end of the festival and selected their prizes for the On the Water Raffle. They include: Patricia Kaczorowski of North Smithfield (originally of Riverside), WaterFire Experience; Lucille Medeiros of Riverside, Seaside Dining Package; and Paula Kocon of Rumford, Cape Cod Getaway. Thank you to all who purchased tickets to help maintain the lighthouse.



Raffle Drawing

SQUANTUM AWARDS GRANT TO POMHAM ROCKS

The Squantum Association Charitable Foundation recently awarded a \$2,500 grant to the Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. It is one of the inaugural grants of the newly-formed charitable foundation. “We are grateful to the Squantum Association Charitable Foundation for their generous support that will enable us to continue our efforts to restore Pomham Rocks Lighthouse with historical accuracy,” stated Dennis Tardiff, Chair of the Friends’ Board of Directors.

“To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of our Club in 1872,” noted Squantum Association Board Member Paul Williams, “we initiated the Squantum Association Charitable Foundation. It is funded independently by our membership to support charitable and community organizations which improve the quality of

life in our state. We are happy to have one of our first donations assist FPRL, our long-time community partner,” he added.



Presentation of the Grant

This is the initial year that Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse have offered tours to the public to visit the island light station in Riverside. One of the first things many visitors do upon arrival is to sit on the white Adirondack chairs facing the river. Perched high on the island, they offer a panoramic view of the bay and a cool respite from the summer’s heat. Funding from the grant will allow the Friends to provide eight additional Adirondack chairs to accommodate guests on the tours.

The remaining funds will be used to replace the internal piping needed to restore the connections on the northern downspout of the lighthouse to the building’s cistern. The cistern, a sealed brick-walled underground water reservoir, was restored last year and is now in working order. Since

1871, Pomham Rocks Lighthouse has relied on rainwater collected from its red tile roof to furnish water for cooking, bathing and drinking. A large gutter surrounding the roof and two downspouts direct the rainwater collected by the roof into pipes which lead to the storage cistern in the lighthouse cellar. Originally the system was connected to a hand pump in the kitchen, which allowed the keeper to pump water out of the cistern as needed. The system now feeds the faucets on the first and second floors of the lighthouse and a flushing toilet. A divertor valve on the exterior piping allows the water flowing from the roof to be monitored. When the water runs clear, the divertor valve can be closed manually, allowing the clear water to flow into the cistern for future use. The downspout system on the south side of the lighthouse is currently in use. This grant will provide funding to restore to its original historic function the piping system connected to the north side of the building. Both the north and south downspouts were operational when the lighthouse was completed in 1871.

FRESNEL LENS COVER

If you’ve ever been up in Pomham’s lantern room on a sunny day, you know the intensity of the sunlight and the heat produced from the natural light shining through the eight glass panels in the tower. When a Fresnel lens was in the tower, from 1871 to 1974, it was imperative that

measures be taken to protect the glass prisms of the lens and to prevent the lethargy, the lead glazing putty that holds them in place, from drying out. To provide protection, the U.S. Lighthouse Service required lighthouse keepers to cover the lens. Following a night's use, the lightkeeper extinguished the lamp inside by turning off the fuel and cleaned the glass prisms with a soft cloth. Then the keeper placed a cloth cover over the lens. Curtains hung on all the window panels. They were opened when the light was burning and drawn during the day to prevent the sun's rays from discoloring the prisms of the lens or reigniting the lamp.

Pomham's fourth order Fresnel lens was returned to the lighthouse last fall. It is displayed in the Pomham Room on the first floor of the museum. The room has three windows which expose the antique lens to damaging sunlight. This past winter, a sheet was draped over the lens. Museum Committee Chair Alex Dias asked if someone on the committee could create a more authentic lens cover prior to the start of public tours. As someone who's been sewing for half a century, Louise Paiva willingly took on the project. It proved to be more challenging than expected. Having never even seen a lens cover, Louise searched the web for descriptions, drawing, photos, patterns or materials used in the past. She found only one obscure mention of a cloth cover in U.S. Lighthouse Service documents. Louise reached out to Bob

Trapani, Executive Director of the American Lighthouse Foundation, to see if he knew of any lens covers still in existence. Bob got her in touch with Bob Gray, President of the Board of Trustees of the Kittery Historical & Naval Society. Kittery is the oldest town in Maine. Bob Gray sent two photos of a lens cover on display in their museum. The description card for the cover noted that it "had to be laundered often and ironed with no wrinkles." The photos were a help, but it still felt like making a puzzle with half the pieces. After a number of calls, speaking to helpful museum members who measured the opening and the hem, described the cord, and gave Louise a general idea of the material used, she created a basic pattern for the cover. On a trip to Pomham, Alex and Louise measured the circumference of our lens at its widest point, the diameter of the top and the length from the top to the pedestal. Louise then reached out to Fred Mikkelsen, former keeper at Conimicut Light, who had used a cover on their lens, and sent him samples of material she had purchased. He identified cotton duck as what was used at Conimicut Light. With the research completed, the sewing was less daunting. The cover is constructed of three panels of unbleached cotton duck sewn together, with a casing at the top which holds a cord, tied in place, to gather the cover over the top of the lens. It was brought to the lighthouse in May for a "fitting," and thankfully, no alternations were necessary. The lens cover remains on

the Fresnel lens and is only removed when guests are on a tour. As Louise stated, “In my many years of sewing, I have stitched everything from a Santa Claus suit for a 6-foot Santa to a christening gown for a 5-pound baby. But my favorite project was a lens cover for a lighthouse from a ‘Friend.’”

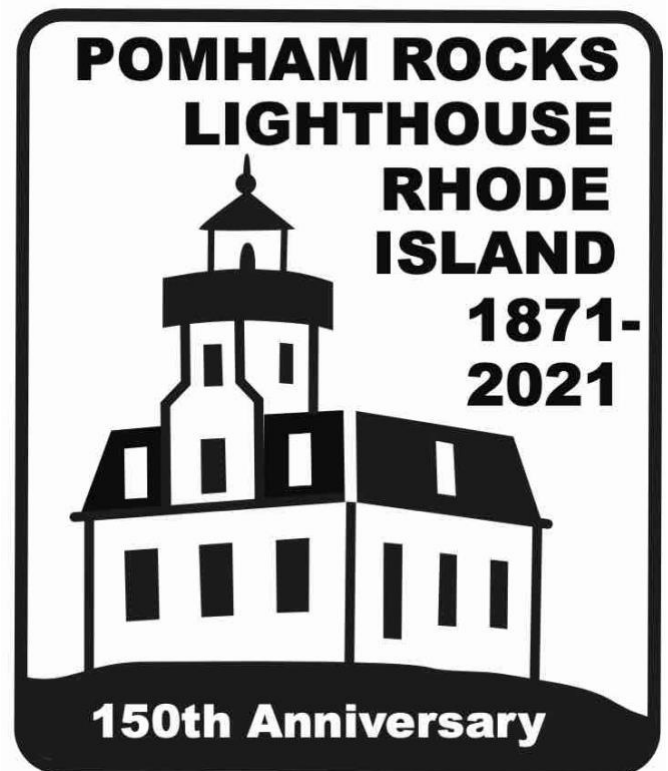


Lens Cover

COMMEMORATIVE PASSPORT STAMP

In recognition of the 150th year of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse announce a commemorative passport stamp. Designed

by local illustrator, Anne Greene, the stamp has been commissioned in addition to The Lighthouse’s existing stamp. Initiated by the United States Lighthouse Society, (USLHS), The Lighthouse Passport Program provides a fun way to track visits to light stations, while also creating an opportunity for enthusiasts to support the lighthouses visited. When visiting a lighthouse, the tour staff can provide the stamp for a small donation, which is used to help preserve and maintain the building and grounds.



Commemorative Stamp

Lighthouse lovers can collect custom-designed stamps from lighthouses and lightships across the country. The stamp can

be imprinted on a piece of paper. But for more fun, a lighthouse passport with a blue vinyl cover, similar in appearance to an official U.S. passport, can be purchased from The Friends. Passports contain pages to collect 60 stamps. When the passport is complete, participants can send a copy of the stamped pages to the USLHS in Hansville, Washington to receive an official Lighthouse Passport Program patch.

If you have been to Pomham Rocks Lighthouse and would like to remember the visit with one or both stamps, send a check for a minimum donation of \$2 per stamp, made payable to Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to P.O. Box 15121, Riverside, RI 02915. If you would like to purchase a Lighthouse Passport, the cost is \$15. Tour participants who visit Pomham Rocks Lighthouse can purchase the passport or stamps in the gift shop following their tour.



Pomham Rocks Stamp

ANNUAL ROAD RACE

The Second Annual Pomham Rocks Lighthouse Run was another profitable success this year. The weather was sunny and gorgeous and our race attracted 5K and 10K runners from all over southern New England and beyond. This year we were able to hold an Awards Ceremony after the races which was a welcome addition after last year's restrictions. Winners of each age group received a copy of Jeremy D'Entremont's *The Lighthouses of Rhode Island*, and the overall winners were presented with the book as well as a gift basket including a stuffed animal version of

Tommy, our famous Lighthouse Cat, as well as a supply of Swedish fish, representing our feline hero's favorite treat from the Bay! Plans are now underway for our Third Annual Lighthouse Run in 2023, tentatively scheduled for April 22. Stay tuned!



Start of the Race

POMHAM PETS

To bring attention to the important role of Pomham's lighthouse keepers, the Friends will feature lifelike models of both Tommy and Jennifer at upcoming events, including The Looff on August 13 and Touch-A-Truck on September 24. Attendees will be able to interact with Pomham's lighthouse pets, which respond to sound and touch. The pets are part of the Joy for All Companion Pets Collection and were donated by Ageless Innovation in Pawtucket.

Life in a lighthouse, especially one on an island, could be somewhat isolated at times. To bring the companionship and comfort of home to the job, many lightkeepers had pets. At Pomham Rocks, one of the most celebrated pets was Tommy, the black and

white tuxedo cat of lighthouse keeper Adolf Aaronson, who served from 1908-1937. His unique ability brought him fame in newspapers across the country. Tommy would sit on the rocky cliff of the island and wait for a sign of fish in the water. Then he



Jennifer

would jump into the Providence River and catch the fish with his mouth and claws. He hid his catch under a lilac bush on the north side of the island until he had enough for a meal. The lilac bush still blooms to this day.



Tommy the Cat

Jennifer was the faithful companion of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse's last keeper, Dennis Tardiff. A Petty Officer in the U.S. Coast Guard, Tardiff served as keeper from 1971 to 1974. He is now Chair of the Board of Directors of Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. Staggering shifts with two other Coast Guardsmen, Tardiff often served alone for three or four days at a time. Having a loyal, canine friend by his side helped to pass the time on the isolated island. Jennifer was a tow-toned mixed-breed dog that was playful and energetic.

2022 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

I would like to sincerely thank our FPRL members who have renewed their membership for 2022. Your dues are vital to maintain our beautifully restored lighthouse as well as the maintenance our boats require. This year has been a momentous one for FPRL. It's our first year to offer combined FPRL and public tours of the lighthouse and they've been a huge success. FPRL members

enjoy a deeply discounted tour price as well as invitations to members only events. There are still a number of 2021 members who have not renewed their memberships for 2022. If you haven't already, please consider renewing for 2022 to keep your membership benefits and to help us with keeping Pomham Rocks Lighthouse maintained and beautiful for all to enjoy for years to come.

Dennis Tardiff

Chair, Friends of Pomham Rock Lighthouse

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual "Summer" Picnic

- Sunday, September 11th, 12:00 p.m.- 4 p.m.
- Bristol Town Beach, Bristol, RI - (See registration information in newsletter. Cost: \$5.)

Touch-A-Truck

- Saturday, September 24th, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Chamber of Commerce, 1011 Waterman Ave, East Providence

Annual Meeting/Lunch

- Sunday, November 6th, 12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Hillside Country Club, Rehoboth, MA. (Details tbd)

FOLLOW THE RESTORATION WORK @

www.pomhamrockslighthouse.org

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YouTube: Pomham Rocks Lighthouse

Instagram: @pomham_rocks_lighthouse

