

Portland Breakwater Lighthouse

Buglight

Fact Sheet

The little lighthouse sitting at the corner of Portland Harbor is both unique, and an important piece of South Portland history. A lighthouse has occupied that corner protecting Stanford's Ledge since 1855.

Portland Breakwater Lighthouse sits at the end of a 1,190 foot man-made breakwater constructed of granite. It was designed after an ancient Greek structure, the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates in Athens. It stands 24 feet high from the base to the ventilator ball. It is 11 feet, 10 inches in diameter and is constructed of brick with a cast iron shell. The exterior is ornamented with six Corinthian columns with palmette, and the top is ringed with acroteria. The interior consists of three stories. The second story has six portholes to view the harbor. The cast iron lantern has ten panes of glass.

Chronology of Important Dates

- 1836 Breakwater Construction Begun
- 1855 Wooden lighthouse erected with fixed Red Light
- 1875 Breakwater Completed
- 1875 Old wooden lighthouse removed
- 1875 Present Lighthouse Built
- 1878 Fixed Light Replaced with a flashing red light
- 1889 Two room keeper's dwelling connected to tower
- 1900 Two more rooms and attic added around the first of century
- 1934 Electricity installed, Light controlled from Spring Point
- 1935 (?) Keepers Quarters removed
- 1940 Edwin Turner inspired to design City Seal
- 1941 Stanford's Point filled in to make room for WWII Liberty Ship Shipyard
- 1942 Light extinguished in war effort
- 1943 Bug Light officially abandoned as an active light
- 1989 Renovation by Rotary Club, City of South Portland, Lighthouse Bicentennial Funding
- 2002 Lighthouse re-commissioned as private aid with flashing white light

What a great moment for this little lighthouse, the City of South Portland, and the Rotary Club of South Portland-Cape Elizabeth. Bug Light has a new lease on life, it will shine as the crown jewel of Bug Light Park.

Every now and then a person gets an opportunity to be part of something really special. Until it comes to pass you don't always fully appreciate it. As a Rotarian I am extremely proud of my Club's contributions, both now and over the years, to make this day a reality.

This lighthouse is so much more than stone and iron. It is living history. There are families here today who's parents and grandparents worked and were born in the keeper's quarters. This Lighthouse has stood the test of time for 127 years. With loving care it will be here for another century and beyond.

This is where I get to tell you about Rotary, who we are and what we do, but I'll be brief.

Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

The main objective of Rotary is service – in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world. The Rotary motto is Service Above Self.

When you purchase a Christmas tree from us at Millcreek Park, become a sponsor or participate in our Road Race, proceeds this year to go to the Maine Cancer Foundation, or assist our efforts no matter what it might be you help us help the community. All money raised by Rotarians goes back to the community, all labor is donated by members.

In South Portland we purchased the first lights for Millcreek Park, donated the sign for City Hall, provide the seed money to restore the dams at Hinckley Park, and yes, have put in over \$17,000 to this lighthouse and park. We give scholarships every year to graduating seniors, - you get the picture.

Recognize Sr. Chief Tommy Dutton

Thank you so much for your on-going support. We hope you enjoy the light.

Lily Conley – Great great great granddaughter of William T. Holbrook who was the lighthouse keeper between 1909 and 1919. Mother - Kim

Show of hands from Rotarians



Photo by Jack Roberts