

Portland Breakwater Lighthouse

Bug light

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 1990 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