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Preserving Our History For Future Generations

Historic Light Station Information **CALIFORNIA**

ALCATRAZ ISLAND LIGHT

Location: ALCATRAZ ISLAND / SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Station Established: 1854

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1909

Operational? Yes

Automated? Yes, 1963

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: Masonry

Construction Materials: Reinforced concrete

Tower Shape: Octagonal pyramidal

Height: 84-feet

Markings/Pattern: Natural w/black lantern

Characteristics:

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Third Order, Fresnel, 1854

Foghorn: Dismantled; was an electronic Klaxon but originally was a bell.

Historical Information:

- The name of this lighthouse is derived from "alcatrazes" the Spanish word for pelican. However, this island is best known as the home of Al Capone and other notorious criminals. A federal penitentiary is also on the island. This light is the oldest major navigational light on the West Coast. For over 50 years, the lighthouse survived prison breakouts, riots and burning.
- 1906: The great San Francisco earthquake of 1906 severely damaged the original lighthouse.
- 1963: The light was automated in 1963.
- 2000: The lighthouse is now a museum and can be toured.

ANACAPA ISLAND LIGHT

ENTRANCE TO SANTA BARBARA CHANNEL

Station Established: 1912



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Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1932
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1968
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: REINFORCED CONCRETE
Construction Materials: BRICK/CONCRETE
Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK TRIM
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1932

Historical Information:

Anacapa, a native-American word meaning "ever changing", was first discovered by Gabrillo in 1542. The islands were called Las Mesitas or the Little Tables by De Portola in 1769. Captain George Vancouver renamed them Anacapa from the Canalino Indian name of Enecapah. Anacapa Island is really a chain of three small islets extending four and a half miles from east to west. The easternmost island is one mile long, a quarter of a mile wide, and rises 250 feet above the water. Middle Island is one and a half miles long, a quarter of a mile wide and 325 feet at its highest point. The western, and largest island of this group, is two miles long by six tenths of a mile wide, and rises to a peak of 930 feet.

Anacapa's 40-foot lighthouse tower and adjacent foghorn building are located on East Anacapa. Her radiant 1.1 million candlepower light beacon, her bellowing foghorn and beeping radio signal have guided ships safely through the coastal channel since 1932, the date of construction. Prior to that an unattended light placed on the island in 1912 served as a guiding beacon for sailing vessels. A one tenth second of white light, 11-9/10 second of darkness, one-tenth second of light, 11-9/10 second of darkness, one tenth second of light, 35.9 seconds of darkness. This is the visual voice of Anacapa Island Light Station. The foghorn, a diaphragm-type horn, groans one two second blast then is silent for two seconds, blasts again for two seconds and then completes the cycle with 14 seconds of silence during low visibility. Electronic equipment sends out a continual radio beacon signal with a range of 12 miles. The Coast Guardsmen and their families of the light station resided in the four large Spanish style white stucco houses with red tile roofs before the light station was automated in December, 1968.

The station in its entirety was transferred to the National Park Service in December, 2008. The light remains as an active aid to navigation.



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ANGEL ISLAND LIGHT

Location:
Station Established:
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:
Operational?
Automated?
Deactivated:
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials:
Tower Shape:
Markings/Pattern:
Relationship to Other Structure:
Original Lens:

AÑO NUEVO ISLAND LIGHT

Location:
Station Established:
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:
Operational?
Automated?
Deactivated:
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials:
Tower Shape:
Markings/Pattern:
Relationship to Other Structure:
Original Lens:

BALLAST POINT LIGHT

Location:
Station Established:
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:
Operational?
Automated?
Deactivated:



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Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Historical Information:

By Harmon Lougher, Photographer's Mate First Class

Ballast Point is a tiny peninsula extending from Point Loma into the channel entrance to the harbor of San Diego. The point derived its name from the fact that the early Yankee skippers would have stones gathered from Ballast Point to serve as ballast in their vessels during their returns around the Horn to their home town, Boston.

Cabrillo sailed from the Port of Navidad in 1542 and, after bucking head winds and seas for five months, sighted the Coronado Islands. As he continued on, the headland of Point Loma rose from the sea. Working his way past the kelp beds he dropped anchor in the quiet waters inside the present Ballast Point on September 28th, 1542. Cabrillo tarried for six days in this spacious harbor which he named San Miguel. Sixty years passed before the placid waters around Ballast Point were again disturbed by deep-sea keels, when Sebastian Vizcaino anchored on November 10th, 1602. He renamed the harbor San Diego in honor of that Saint's day. In 1769, Spain decided to occupy the vast territory by converting the Indians to the Catholic faith and teaching them domestic pursuits. By this time little transports were coming with supplies on a haphazard schedule, and when the Clipper ship *Aranzaya* arrived in 1795, she brought three workmen and the necessary timber to build a fort at Ballast Point, or as it was known at that time, Point Guizarros.

Up to the late eighteen forties, the bay was a favorite resort for whales during the calving season. Shore whaling was a natural for the people in this area since the whales reversed the usual procedure and came to the whaler. The carcasses were towed to Ballast Point where the blubber was boiled in 150-gallon try pots.

In 1890, Ballast Point Lighthouse was constructed. The original buildings consisted of two dwellings and a light tower which was part of the keeper's quarters. The light was a fifth order fixed classical lens with a green shade, inside a brass and glass lantern with a focal height of 34-feet. The tower itself was a white square tower.

In June of this year, the old dwellings were torn down leaving the tower free standing; however, during repairs to the tower it was found to be unstable due to failure of the



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brick and mortar foundation. It was decided to relocate the light on top of the fog signal building and demolish the tower. The Cabrillo National Monument, National Park Service, requested the lens and light for their museum soon to be built. Arrangements have been made for that Service to remove the lantern and lens prior to the demolition of the tower. The new light is a standard 375MM lens with storm panes, which will be an occulting white, six—second light, three—seconds off, three seconds on.

The old light used a 120—volt, 300—watt lamp, giving 1700 candlepower. The new light, even though it uses a slightly smaller lamp, 32-volt, 250—watt, will give 9000 candlepower, due to the increased efficiency of the filament and the removal of the green shade. The fog signal is a single tone diaphone which emits 1 blast every 15 seconds. In the event the diaphone becomes inoperative, the men on station are required to ring a large bell by hand, with one stroke every 15 seconds. As a matter of interest it is noted the diaphone has never been inoperative since installation in 1926. Adjacent to the light structure are located a new three-bedroom and a four-bedroom duplex type dwelling, completely furnished which house resident personnel and their families. The new light has been shown from its new location since 5 August, and the demolition of the old tower is presently being accomplished. Ballast Point was the last lighthouse displaying a fixed light on the Pacific Coast.

BATTERY POINT (CRESCENT CITY) LIGHT

Location: BATTERY POINT ISLAND

Station Established: 1856

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1856

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1953

Deactivated: 1965-1982

Foundation Materials: NATURAL/EMPLACED

Construction Materials: BRICK TOWER/GRANITE HOUSE

Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL ON SQUARE HOUSE

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL 1856

CAPE MENDOCINO LIGHT (OLD)



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Lighthouse Name: Cape Mendocino Light

Location: California Coast at Cape Mendocino, now at Shelter Cove near Point Delgado, CA

Station Established: 1868

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1868

Operational? No

Automated? Yes, 1951

Deactivated: 1970s

Foundation Materials: Concrete

Construction Materials: Cast Iron

Tower Shape: Pyramidal 16-sided

Markings/Pattern: White

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: First Order Fresnel

Historical Information:

- The light at Cape Mendocino was activated on December 1, 1868.
- The 43 foot tower was one of the highest in the U.S. at 422 feet above sea level.
- The light was automated in 1951 and then abandoned in the 1970s. The first order Fresnel lens was moved in 1948 to Ferndale, California where it sits in a replica tower at the entrance of the Humboldt County Fairgrounds.
- In 1998 a group of volunteers dismantled the lighthouse and reassembled it in Mal Coombs Park in Shelter Cove, California.
- The light now belongs to the Cape Mendocino Lighthouse Preservation Society.

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

CARQUINEZ STRAIT LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Carquinez Strait Light

Location: Approximately 20 miles inland from the mouth of the San Francisco Bay near Vallejo, CA

Station Established: 1908

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1910

Operational? No

Automated? Yes, 1963

Deactivated: Yes, 1951

Foundation Materials: Wood pier



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Construction Materials: Wood
Tower Shape: Square
Markings/Pattern: Cream colored
Relationship to Other Structure: Integral
Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel

Historical Information:

- The Lighthouse Board relayed to Congress the need for a lighthouse between the San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento River. On January 15, 1910 the Carquinez Strait Light was lit.
- The lighthouse stood at the end of a 1.5 mile pier and was attached to a three-story residence.
- While in operation this site was used to test the vertical mushroom trumpet fog signals.
- The lighthouse was deactivated in 1951. An automated beacon and fog signal were placed on the pier at that time.
- After years of neglect, which included the smashing of the lens by vandals, the building was saved by investors who moved the residence to the Glen Cove Marina in Vallejo, California.
- The residence, without the tower, is used as the marina office and yacht sales showroom.

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

Additional Information (taken from a 1966 USCG Press Release):

Carquinez Strait Light Station is an automatic light station located at Vallejo, California between Suisun Bay and San Pablo Bay. It was first placed into operation on January 15, 1910. The original structure, a 28-room light house weighing 150 tons, was used until abandoned by the Coast Guard in 1951. New family quarters were constructed on top of the bluff overlooking San Pablo Bay and the entrances to Carquinez Strait and Mare Island Strait. On August 6, 1955, the original structure was taken off its pilings and put aboard a barge. It was then successfully towed two miles to its new location at Elliott Cove and converted into a resort. The new buildings were constructed in 1951 on top of the bluff. The main family dwelling consisted of two 3~bedroom and two 2 bedrooms. The men assigned maintained and operated the light at the end of the breakwater and an automatic fog signal. In addition, the unit was responsible for providing emergency repairs on five aids to navigation in the vicinity of the station. A 24-hour lookout was maintained. On June 3, 1963, the Coast Guard personnel were transferred from the station and the light and fog signal were automated. (December 1966)



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EAST BROTHER ISLAND LIGHT

Location: Off Point San Pablo, San Francisco Bay

Date Built: 1874

Type of Structure: Square buff colored wood tower attached to keeper's house a two story Victorian placed on a blasted away 1-acre rock. It also had an assistant keeper's house, equipment building, cistern, and water tank. The water cistern was also blasted to a depth of 30 feet and is capable of holding 50,000 gallons of rain water.

Height: 48 feet with height of focal plane 61 feet

Lens: fourth order Fresnel lens

Automated: 1969, now FA 251

Foghorn: Wood fog signal building originally steam whistles

Status: Operational, active aid to navigation, bed and breakfast inn

Historical Information:

- U.S. Lighthouse Service ran the lighthouse operation until 1939, when the U.S. Coast Guard took over the Lighthouse Service.
- Large families occupied the lighthouse, having to light the original lens wick filled with whale oil; on many foggy nights, they'd have to fire up the steam boilers to drive the foghorns, hauling coal up the long ramp from the boat.
- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

Keepers: Samuel M. Farran (1874-1880), Charles F. Winsor (1880-1887), P.J. Quinlan (1887-1894), John O. Stenmark (1894-1914), John P. Kofod (1914-1921), Herbert Luff (1921), J. Dunn (1921-1922), Williard Miller (1922-1942), J.S. McGrath (1942-1944), E.P. Perry (1944-?), Mickey Edward Thurman (Coast Guard, c. 1944-1947); First Assistants: John Cawley (1874-1881), Joseph M. Page (1881-1883), Albert Tippet (1883-1886), Charles A. Paulson (1886-1888), Charles McCarthy (1889-1890), Martin Haave (1890-1893), James Anderson (1893-1901), Oscar Sellman (1901), Charles A. Paulson (1901-1902), John W. Astrom (1902-?), Andrew Szarnecker (1908-?), C.E. Clark (1909-1918), E.C. Easton (1918), D. O. Kinyon (1918-?), W. Monette (1919-?), A.H. Joost (1921), T.F. Brown (1921-?), F.L. Pike (1922-1926), Roy L. Murphy (1926-1928), Frederick S. Cobb (1928-1930), J.H. Sylvia (1930), W.J. Atkins (1931-1936), Earl Snodgrass (1936-1943), Frank Dacosta (1943-?); Second Assistants: F. Moran (1874-?), James Rankin (c. 1878), William McCarthy (1878-1880)

Researched and written by Catherine (Kitty) Price, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.



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FARALLON ISLAND LIGHT

Location: SOUTHEAST FARALLON ISLAND

Station Established: 1855

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1855

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1972

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: BRICK

Construction Materials: BRICK

Tower Shape: CONICAL W/OUT LANTERN

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, FRESNEL 1855

Historical Information:

This lighthouse, on the highest peak of the southeast Farallon, was built in 1855 in the busy days which followed the gold rush, when clipper ships and other sailing vessels were sailing in to San Francisco in large numbers. That there was need for a light on these dangerous rocks is evident when clippers like the *Golden City* which sailed from New York in 1852 reported that she was detained 5 days off the Farallons in fog. Stone for the construction of the lighthouse was quarried on the island and inside this masonry was a lining of brick. The extremely sharp slopes of the island and the jagged nature of the rock were serious obstacles to construction work. The bricks used in the tower were carried up the rock in bundles of four and five on the backs of men. After the completion of the tower a mule was kept on the island for years to carry supplies between the various parts of the station. At one time this mule was the oldest inhabitant. A number of years ago the gathering of birds' eggs, which were sold on the San Francisco market, was carried on here extensively and seals were also hunted commercially. These practices were finally terminated by the Federal Government. The Farallon Light Station was equipped with a radiobeacon as well as with a powerful light and fog signal.

FORT POINT LIGHT

Location: Entrance to San Francisco Harbor, directly beneath the south anchorage of the Golden Gate Bridge; nearest Town or City is San Francisco, California



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Date Built: 1853

Type of Structure:

- 1855: Cape Cod style structure with a lantern on the roof that was destroyed in 1855 to make room for the fort.
- 1863: Two-story wooden structure was demolished in 1863 to allow corrections to the seawall.
- 1864: Present white cast iron tower, nine-sided, located on fort with foundation of Brick and granite third system fortification.

Height: 27 feet with height of focal plane at 110 feet

Characteristics: Alternate white & red flashes 5 sec, 30 sec revolution

Lens: 1864 had a fourth order Fresnel lens

Foghorn: Originally bell, later fog trumpet in concrete for signal building built in 1904

Status: Deactivated in 1934; discontinued because of the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge because the bridge would block off a major part of the light from the site.

Historical Information:

- National Register of Historic Places part of listing Reference #70000146. Fort Point National Historic Site added to list in 1970.

Keepers: B.F. Deane (1855-?), J.C. Frachey (?), George D. Wise (1860), Henry Hickson (1860-?), John D. Jenkins (?-1863), George W. Omev (1863), Scott Blanchard (1864-1866), R.S. Martin (1866-1869), Frank Thompson (1869-1871), J.T. Hule (1871-1878), James Rankin (1878), Assistants: Ephrin Sohn (1856-?), Return J. Henter (1857-1859), George D. Wise (1858-1860), D. Dennison (1860), G.W. Thomas (1860), James Gormley (1860-?), James Jenkins (1860-?), James Heron (1860-?), C.H. Warren (?), G.W. Omev (?-1863), G.A. Braley (1863), J.J. Wickersham (1863-1865), Ann Blanchard (1865-1866), William Ferry (1866-1867), Mrs. Rachel L. Jones (1867-1868), Theresa Welch (1868), F.B. Morehouse (1868-1869), Mrs. Mary Thompson (1869-1871), Sophie Hule (1874-1878), John Riley (1878-1879), H.P. McKeever (1879), Frank P Stanyan (1879)

Researched and written by Catherine (Kitty) Price, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

LIME POINT LIGHT



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Location: Entrance of the San Francisco Bay, adjacent to the north end of the Golden Gate Bridge, Sausalito, California
Station Established: 1883
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1900
Operational: NO
Automated: YES 1961
Deactivated: 1961
Characteristics: Fixed White
Fog Signal: Steam boilers & whistles
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials: BRICK
Tower Shape: SQUARE BRICK TOWER MOUNTED ON THE WALL OF FOG SIGNAL BUILDING
Markings/Pattern: WHITE
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL
Original Lens

Historical Information:

- This sight was originally a fog station established in 1883.
- A square brick tower was added to the fog signal building in 1900.
- The keeper's house was razed in 1961 after the light was deactivated in 1961.
- The site is still an active aid to navigation.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

LONG BEACH LIGHT

Location:
Station Established:
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:
Operational?
Automated?
Deactivated:
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials:
Tower Shape:
Markings/Pattern:



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Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Historical Information:

Old Salts scratch their heads in amazement at the sight of Long Beach Harbor Light. It looks about as much like the accepted version of a lighthouse as a square looks like a circle. Labeled the "robot light" when established in 1949, it is completely automated and was the forerunner of the new version of 20th-century lighthouses on the West Coast. The 42-foot high white, rectangular tower with a columnar base, features a 36-inch airway-type beacon and is controlled by the ANRAC system from Los Angeles Lighthouse. The three-story facility, of monolithic design, is built of concrete supported on six cement columns cast into six pockets of a crib. It does about everything automatic but walk. In its commanding position in San Pedro's middle breakwater, the lighthouse was considered an uncanny mechanical wonder when first established, but in our day of automation, it no longer gets the "ooh's" and "ahhh's" it was once accorded. The Latest navigation light of importance in the Long Beach area was erected atop the pilot station at the Port of Long Beach in 1968. Marking the harbor entrance channel, the light is accompanied by one of the Coast Guard's new radar scanners.

LOS ANGELES HARBOR LIGHT

Location: SAN PEDRO BREAKWATER - ANGELS GATE

Station Established: 1913

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1913

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1971

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: ROCK BREAKWATER W/CONCRETE SLABS

Construction Materials: STEEL/CONCRETE

Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL

Markings/Pattern: BLACK STRIPES (VERTICAL)

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL 1913

Historical Information:

Though battered by seasonal storms and an occasional passing ship, the U.S. Coast Guard's Los Angeles Harbor Light has faithfully guarded the port's busy gateway since 1913. As early as 1907, plans were being made to include a lighthouse in the Los



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Angeles Breakwater project. The light was to occupy a 40-foot-square concrete block at the end of the west breakwater. A temporary light was established on the block with the completion of the breakwater in 1910. The present lighthouse was completed in 1913 at a cost of just under \$36,000. Originally designed to be a dormered, square wooden building with the lens sprouting from the roof similar to Southampton Shoals and Oakland Harbor Lights on San Francisco Bay, the Los Angeles Light ended up looking more like a Roman fantasy. It is the only lighthouse ever built to this design. The light was firmly anchored to the concrete block and built of steel reinforced concrete.

Heavy construction proved to be a godsend when a furious five-day storm assaulted the light a few years after opening. The steel and concrete stood fast as angry seas broke against the walls. A wooden structure would probably have been carried away and the keepers killed. However, the light did not escape unscathed. When the storm ended, keepers complained of difficulty walking one direction in the building. A plumb line dropped from the tower revealed that the concrete block had settled during the storm, giving the lighthouse a pronounced shoreward list. The lean could not be corrected and did no harm except to annoy the keepers. Other scars were put on the lighthouse one dark night when a keeper was thrown to the floor by a tremendous blow to the tower. Running to the window, the amazed keeper saw the silhouette of a huge battleship which had blundered into the breakwater. The ship continued on its way with only scratches and the incident was marked "confidential" and buried deep in Navy files for many years.

The Navy again came into the history of Los Angeles Harbor Light during World War II. New construction added a degaussing station, a radio direction finding calibration unit and a barracks for the Navy personnel who worked this equipment. More changes were made in 1959. The old deep-throated two-tone fog horn, affectionately known to locals as "Moaning Maggie", was replaced by a higher-pitched single-tone horn. The new horn was called "Blatting Betty" and was disliked by local mariners for years. The saddest change for the Los Angeles Harbor Light came on February 1, 1973, when the station was automated and the keepers departed. Today, the 217,000 candle-power light is monitored and maintained by personnel from Coast Guard Base Terminal Island.

MARE ISLAND LIGHT

Location: North shore of San Pablo Bay at the entrance to Carquinez Strait; nearest Town or City is Vallejo, California

Date Built: 1873

Type of Structure: Square tower attached to dwelling

Construction Materials: Wood and Iron



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Height: 76' above mean high water

Characteristics: Fixed White

Lens: Fourth Order

Foghorn: Gamewell fog bell striking apparatus No. 2 machine; automated in 1916

Appropriation:

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Status: Deactivated in 1917

Historical Information:

- The lighthouse was razed in the 1930s.
- This lighthouse was very similar to San Francisco's East Brother Lighthouse

Keepers:

- Kate McDougal (1881-1916)

Researched and written by Catherine (Kitty) Price, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

MILE ROCKS LIGHT

Location:

Station Established:

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:

Operational?

Automated?

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Historical Information:

This lighthouse was completed in 1906, after considerable difficulty caused by the heavy seas and strong currents occurring at this point. The rock upon which the lighthouse is built measured only 40 by 30 feet at high water. The base of the tower is a



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large block of concrete protected by steel plating. Steel and concrete in the foundation alone weighed 1,500 tons. The superstructure is of steel, and houses the fog signal apparatus and the quarters for the keepers, with the lantern above. It was on this rock that the *Rio Janeiro* was wrecked shortly before the building of the lighthouse. One hundred and twenty-eight persons out of a total of 209, lost their lives when the *Rio Janeiro* went down on February 2, 1901. The wreck has never been found. In 1966, the tower was removed, and the light automated.

OAKLAND HARBOR LIGHT

FORMERLY AT THE ENTRANCE TO OAKLAND HARBOR, NOW IN EMBARCADERO COVE, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

Station Established: 1903

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1903

Operational: NO

Automated: N/A

Deactivated: 1966

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE PILINGS

Construction Materials: WOOD

Tower Shape: SQUARE WITHOUT A LANTERN

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Characteristic: Fixed White

Original Lens: FIFTH ORDER

Historical Information:

- The original tower was built in 1903 at the entrance of Oakland Harbor.
- The lighthouse was relocated to Embarcadero Cove in Oakland in 1951. It was sold to a private party that has maintained the structure as Quinn's Lighthouse Restaurant.
- The lantern was transferred to Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse in Santa Cruz, California.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

PIEDRAS BLANCAS LIGHT



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Location: Approximately five miles north of San Simeon Bay
Station Established: 1872
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1875
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1975
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: MASONRY
Construction Materials: BRICK
Tower Shape: CONICAL W/OUT LANTERN
Markings/Pattern: WHITE
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: FIRST ORDER (made by Henri Lapaute) 1875

PIGEON POINT LIGHT

Location: Southern approach to San Francisco Bay
Station Established: 1871
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1872
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1974
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: STONE
Construction Materials: BRICK
Tower Shape: CONICAL ATTACHED TO WORKROOM
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK TRIM
Relationship to Other Structure: ATTACHED
Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, FRESNEL 1892

Historical Information:

Pigeon Point Lighthouse is one of the most picturesque lighthouses on the Pacific coast, the 115-foot white masonry tower standing on a rocky promontory long a landmark for ships approaching San Francisco Bay from the southward. This lighthouse was built in 1872, and is equipped with a lens of the first order producing a light of 500,000 candlepower. The station also has an electrically operated fog signal. This headland, and hence the lighthouse, took its name from the ship *Carrier Pigeon* wrecked here many years ago.

"Pigeon Point Light Station is located on the coastal highway, five miles south of Pescadero, California. It is a family station operated by four men who live here in new



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ranch-style quarters completed in 1960. Pigeon Point is perhaps the most picturesque lighthouse on the Pacific Coast. The 115 foot, white masonry tower, built in 1872, resembles the typical New England structure. Because of its location and ready access from the main highway, Pigeon Point entertains a tremendous number of public visitors. As of July 1970, the unit was approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ automated." (Written in 1970).

POINT ARENA LIGHT

Location: Two miles north of Point Arena
Station Established: 1870
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1908
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1977
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: CONCRETE
Construction Materials: REINFORCED CONCRETE
Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, ROTATING FRESNEL 1908

Historical Information:

Point Arena Light Station is located at Point Arena, north of San Francisco in the Fort Point Group. The light was established in 1870, but as a result of the earthquake of 1906, the light tower was reconstructed in 1908. When first under Coast Guard control, four men were assigned to man this family station and were provided with quarters as follows: One 4 bedroom unit, three 3-bedroom units. Other buildings are the light tower, paint locker, fuel locker, bosun locker and buildings housing the fire pump, water pumps and JP-5 fueling pumps. The station had a pickup truck assigned that, among other things, was utilized to transport dependent school children to school three miles from the station. The crew was removed and the station automated in 1977.

The lighthouse was transferred to the ownership of the Point Arena Lighthouse Keepers, Inc. The light's Fresnel lens has been removed from the tower and will be displayed on the station's grounds on loan from the Coast Guard.

POINT ARGUELLO LIGHT



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Location: On Point Arguello near Lompoc, California

Station Established:

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:

Operational?

Automated?

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Historical Information:

The area of land now known as Point Arguello was originally known by the Canalino Indian name "Nocto" and was part of the territory ruled at the time of the advent of the Mission Fathers by Chief Salipuata. The Indians were part of the third people indigenous to the area, the Canalinos. In prehistoric times, a people of Mongolian stock in all probability had first settled along the Southern California coast in areas where oak trees were plentiful, from which characteristic they had been called "The Oak Tree (Grove) People". They vanished some hundreds of years before the beginning of the Christian era, and after a period yielding no archaeological remains, a second group, also probably Mongolian in origin and semi—nomadic in habits arrived. These "hunting people" gradually merged with a third race, the Canalinos, on the latter's arrival.

On August 28, 1769, the Portola expedition camped near Point Arguello, where they found a small Indian rancheria, the locale of which abounded in excellent flints, whence they named it Los Pederales (The Flints). This name continued to be used off the point on Spanish maps until the Mexican revolution. The American and European designation was Point Arguello, from the name assigned by Vancouver in 1793, in honor of Jose Mario Arguello, then Commandant at Monterey.

The history of Point Arguello during the next century, indeed to modern times, has been one of shipwrecks, the area having been termed the "Graveyard of the Pacific"; probably the most famous tragedy was the wreck of the "Yankee Blade" on the 1st of October 1854. 415 people perished when the steamship hit the rocks 200 to 300 yards offshore. She carried a fortune in gold bullion which has since been recovered.

In recent times what has been called the U.S. Navy's greatest peacetime disaster occurred off the Point; the sinking seven 4—stacker destroyers and the loss of 22 men on the same rocks that smashed the "Yankee Blade", September 9, 1923. Mariners say



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that the chief reason that so many boats have struck there is that in bad weather typical of that shoreline, sailing a boat into the channel between San Miguel Island and Points Arguello and Conception is like sailing into the eye of a needle. In 1901, the lighthouse service built a light station at Point Arguello. Between 1934 and 1938, increased in coastwise shipping necessitated the service establish a lifeboat station.

On July 1, 1939, the Lighthouse Service was combined with the Coast Guard to augment the Service by 8,000 men who took their place in forming a nucleus for our present day light stations and aids to navigation work. During the interim of World War II, the Coast Guard manned Point Arguello Light and Point Arguello Lifeboat station, as well as a newly established LORAN Station. After 12 years-operation following the War, it was deemed economical to disestablish the lifeboat station and so in 1958, Point Arguello Lifeboat Station was retired.

Point Arguello light is unique in that it is a key synoptic reporting point for national weather maps. The Loran station broadcasts navigational references to passing ships, and the light station disseminates information upon which fog and cloud conditions for Southern California are based. Facilities at the light include a 36-inch revolving beacon of 1,100,000 candle power that can be seen approximately 17 miles at sea. The light itself is 124 feet above the water. A two-tone diaphone fog signal is placed in operation when visibility is less than five miles. The diaphone when operating is synchronized with a radio beacon every three minutes for distance finding. Point Arguello presently has an allowance of 12 enlisted personnel. Accommodations are available for eight families at the unit. (February 10, 1968)

POINT BLUNT LIGHT

Location: On Angel Island, San Francisco Bay

Station Established:

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:

Operational?

Automated?

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:



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Historical Information:

Yerba Buena Group

Point Blunt Light Station, on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, was established in 1915. Point Blunt Light was originally maintained by personnel at Angel Island Light Station at Point Knox until 1960. In 1960 a new watch room was constructed at Point Blunt which afforded a view of the entire San Francisco Bay. With the new watch room, and new quarters completed in 1961 at Point Blunt, the Coast Guard moved the personnel from Angel Island Light Station and at the same time discontinued manning of Southampton Shoals Light Station. The latter structure was removed and the operation of Southampton Shoals fog signal is now controlled by personnel at Point Blunt.

In addition to Southampton Shoals, personnel at Point Blunt operate their own light and fog signals and Raccoon Strait light and fog signals. The station also provides special direction finder calibration services as requested. Four family units, 3 bedrooms each, are at Point Blunt. Two units are Coast Guard owned, two are leased from the State of California. One unit is occupied by the Officer in Charge and his family. The other units are presently being utilized by the married crew members and their families. One small boat is assigned to the station. A pickup truck is assigned. Point Blunt Light Station rates a BM1 as Officer in Charge, plus one EN2, one FN, and one SN. (Written in July, 1970)

POINT BONITA LIGHT

Location: Point Bonita-San Francisco Bay entrance near Sausalito, California

Station Established: 1855

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1877

Operational? YES

Automated? 1980

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: MASONRY

Construction Materials: BRICK/CEMENT

Tower Shape: POLYGONAL ON SQUARE OIL HOUSE

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: SECOND ORDER FRESNEL LENS, 1877

Historical Information:



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- Point Bonita Light Station had the first fog signal on the West Coast. It was an Army surplus 24-pounder siege gun.
- This light is only one in America that can only be reached by crossing a suspension bridge. Of course, it is a replica of the Gold Gate Bridge.
- The original Point Bonita Light was located “too high”. While East Coast lights need to be tall to be seen, the West Coast has incredibly dense fog above 300 feet. The original light was 306 feet above sea level. The second order Fresnel lens was often cloaked in fog and was not able to be seen from the sea below.
- In 1877 the lighthouse was moved to its current location. This location required the builders to overcome many challenges, including the need for a hand carved, 118-foot long hard rock tunnel.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

POINT CABRILLO LIGHT

Location: Between Point Arena and Cape Mendocino

Station Established: 1909

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1909

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1973

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: WOOD

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL ON FOG SIGNAL BLDG

Markings/Pattern: WHITE BLDG/RED ROOF/BLACK LENS ROOM & ROOF

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1909

Historical Information:

Point Cabrillo Lighthouse was established in 1909, displaying a 3rd Order Standard Lens and Air Sirens. It is located about 1.5 miles from Fort Bragg, California. With the exception of a small barn all original buildings stand unaltered. In 1935, an air diaphone supertyfone sound signal was installed. The station was automated in 1973.

POINT CONCEPTION LIGHT



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Location: West entrance Santa Barbara Channel
Station Established: 1856
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1882
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1973
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: STONE
Construction Materials: STUCCO/WOOD/BRICK
Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL ATTACHED TO OIL HOUSE
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN
Relationship to Other Structure: ATTACHED
Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, FRESNEL 1856

Historical Information:

The history of Point Conception goes back to a period when Juan Cabrillo sailed along the California coast in search for glory and gold. On October 18, 1542, he encountered heavy winds upon rounding the Point and was forced to turn back to San Miguel Island where he died. Second-in-command Bartolome Ferrello took charge and again tried to round the Point but he was also unsuccessful. The Point was named Punta de la Limpia Concepcion by Vizcaino in 1602, who was the next Spanish sailor to venture the Pacific waters along the California coast after Juan Cabrillo.

It was here at Point Conception in 1856, that the lighthouse was built high on the sandstone cliffs, above the location of the present lighthouse. The lens and steel tower for the lighthouse were made in France at a cost of \$65,068 and was transported around Cape Horn. A report indicates that the lighthouse was severely damaged during the Fort Tejon earthquake of January 9, 1867. The lighthouse was moved in 1881 and rebuilt from the top of the bluff to a mesa midway down, 133 feet above the Pacific.

POINT FERMIN LIGHT

Location: Point Fermin-San Pedro Harbor, near San Pedro, California
Station Established: 1874
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1874
Operational? NO
Automated? N/A
Deactivated: 1942
Foundation Materials: BRICK
Construction Materials: WOOD FRAME



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Tower Shape: SQUARE

Markings/Pattern: ITALIANATE TOWER ON ITALIANATE DWELLING

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL LENS, 1874

Historical Information:

- Point Fermin Light was built in 1874 with lumber from California redwoods.
- In 1941 the light was extinguished and the lantern room and gallery were removed. They were replaced by a lookout shack that remained for the next 30 years.
- In 1972 the light was added to the National Register of Historic Places.
- The light fell into disuse and disrepair. A new lantern room and gallery were built in 1974.
- The building is now the residence of the park superintendent.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

POINT HUENEME LIGHT

Location: East entrance, Santa Barbara Channel

Station Established: 1874

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1941

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1972

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials: CONCRETE

Tower Shape: SQUARE ON FOG SIGNAL BUILDING

Markings/Pattern: WHITE ART MODERNE

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL

Historical Information:

Point Hueneme Light on the north side of the east entrance to the Santa Barbara Channel is a 48-foot high, buff-colored tower on a fog-signal building. Established in 1874, the station was automated in 1941.



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Probably the most dramatic thing that has happened in recent years within range of the light was a shipwreck over which the lighthouse had no preventive power. The veteran passenger liner *La Janelle* once removed from her role as a cruise liner, lay at anchor off Port Hueneme on April 14, 1970 awaiting plans for conversion to a floating restaurant and fun palace. The owners were attempting to cut down on moorage costs by leaving the vessel at anchor in the open ocean, directly offshore. That was a bad mistake. With only one watchman aboard, the vessel fell victim to storm-tossed seas which rose to huge activities, causing the 465 foot long ship to slip her anchor cables. In a dramatic episode of the sea, rescue parties managed to snatch the watchman from the deck, but the 40 year old vessel, like a wounded whale, was tossed unceremoniously onto the beach, a total constructive loss. The California State Lands Commission became much concerned about the problem both from the standpoint of leaking oil and a menace to navigation. They voted unanimously to have the ship scrapped, "as is, where is," and accordingly put out bids. The big steel ship still remains but is being torn apart bit by bit by human and natural elements.

POINT LOMA LIGHT (NEW)

Location: Southern end of Point Loma
Station Established: 1891
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1891
Operational? YES
Automated? YES 1973
Deactivated: n/a
Foundation Materials: CONCRETE
Construction Materials: STEEL
Tower Shape: SKELETAL W/CYLINDER
Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER W/BLACK LANTERN
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1891

POINT LOMA LIGHT (OLD)

Location: Cabrillo National Monument
Station Established: 1855
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1855
Operational? NO
Automated? NO



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Deactivated: 1891

Foundation Materials: NATURAL/EMPLACED

Construction Materials: BRICK

Tower Shape: CONICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/GREEN LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1855

Historical Information:

- One of first eight lighthouses on Pacific Coast
- Architect - Ammi B. Young — Department of Treasury; Contractors — Gibbons & Kelly, Baltimore, Maryland
- Structure completed — 1854
- Third—order Fresnel lens originally intended for Humboldt Harbor installed 1855.
- First lighted November 15, 1855.
- Cost of lens and lantern as purchased from Sautter & Co., Paris, France — \$3,810.
- Overall size of third—order lens 3.17 feet in diameter
- Height of lens — 462 feet above sea level (highest light in U.S.)
- Source of illumination — sperm oil, colza, lard oil, kerosene
- Distance visible - 28 miles
- Lighthouse deactivated — March 23, 1891 — lens removed
- Lighthouse structure restored by National Park Service — 1935.
- Fourth—order lens from Humboldt Harbor (Table Rock Light) (1.5 feet in diameter) loaned to NPS by Coast Guard in 1955. On exhibit in Old Point Loma Light 1955 — May 1981 — returned to Coast Guard, May 1981.
- Third—order Fresnel lens (from Mile Rock Light) loaned to Cabrillo National Monument, May 1981.
- Lens transfer — (off—loading from CG Cutter *Rush*) scheduled for Wednesday, May 20.
- Lens will be on display in Cabrillo National Monument Visitor Center until lighthouse tower and lantern is restored and can safely accommodate third—order lens.

"The long neck of land enclosing North San Diego Bay on the West side is known as Point Loma. The origin of the name comes from a legend of a flaxen haired little Russian girl, the sole survivor of a shipwreck, who was found wandering on shore. The local residents took her in and named her Loma and she grew up to become the cynosure of many ardent male eyes. A rejected suitor slew the girl and fled to the point where he met his rival on a narrow trail above the sea. A knife fight ensued and the men



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fell to their death on the rocks below. Legend has it that Point Loma was named after this girl. Actually the word 'Loma' in Portuguese means light.

Old Point Loma Light--the first lighthouse to be erected in Southern California as distinguished from the present Point Loma Light--was constructed in 1851 and presently being preserved as a memorial. Not used for lighthouse purposes since 1891, the old tower, was set aside by President Wilson in 1913 as a national monument and is now cared for by the U. S. Park Service. The old tower was abandoned because it was situated 462 feet above the sea. At this unusual height, the light was often obscured by high fogs. A romantic error attributes Old Point Loma Light to Spanish origin. When it was built some old Spanish tiles were used in its cellar floorings. That is the full scope of its Latin ancestry. Talk has it that the Spanish had a beacon on Point Loma in 1701, but it has never been verified.

In 1891 the current iron skeleton tower of the present Point Loma Light was built on the extremity of the point with the light only 88 feet above the water. Point Loma has a 600,000 candlepower light which can be seen a distance of approximately 15 miles. In addition to the light, there is a two-tone diaphone fog signal, which, when operating in inclement weather, is synchronized with a radio-beacon every three minutes for distance finding. The skeleton frame of the light surrounds an enclosed stairway to the tower platform, where the lantern is located. At the base of the structure is the fog signal building.

Pathways, surrounded by lush green lawns provide access to three family dwellings and one bachelor quarters. The area is enclosed by a modern concrete block wall. At present, three wives, four children, and five men live in the quarters available." [Written by Harmon Lougher, Chief Photographer's Mate, U. S. Coast Guard prior to 1973.]

POINT MONTARA LIGHT

Location: Southern approach to San Francisco Bay

Station Established: 1875

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1928

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1970

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: STEEL

Tower Shape: CONICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE



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Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL 1912

Historical Information:

A public information pamphlet published by the Coast Guard prior to 1970 noted that: "Point Montara Light Station was established in February 1875 at Montara, California approximately 25 miles south of San Francisco. Three men, including a First Class Boatswains Mate, as Officer-in-Charge, operate Point Montara Light, which provides a light and fog signal. This is a family station with quarters in a duplex constructed in 1961, which contains a 3 and bedroom unit. A house built in 1863 provides quarters with a 2 bedroom and. a separate relief keepers quarters. The station has no small boats assigned, but does have a pickup truck. Personnel and dependents at Point Montara utilize Government medical facilities, commissary and post exchange in the San Francisco area. The nearest school is within walking distance (1/4 mile) from the station."

Currently there is no Coast Guard housing at the station. The property is now a youth hostel, licensed to the California State Parks and Recreation Department.

POINT PINOS LIGHT

Location: South entrance to Monterey Bay, near Pacific Grove

Station Established: 1855

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1855

Operational? YES

Automated? 1975

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: STONE

Construction Materials: BRICK TOWER ON STONE HOUSE

Tower Shape: CONICAL ON SQUARE HOUSE

Markings/Pattern: WITE

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: THIRD ORDER FRESNEL

HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

- Point Pinos Light is the oldest active lighthouse on the West Coast. Even the original lens is still operational.



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- The first keeper was Charles Layton. After his death, the local Customs Collector sent letters and petitions from the local citizens to the Lighthouse Board in Washington to appoint Charlotte Layton, Charles' wife, head keep. Charlotte was followed by another woman Emily Fish.
- Robert Louis Stevenson visited the Point Pinos light. He wrote about the light in his book "From Scotland to Silverado".
- The light remains an active aid to navigation and is open to the public.
- The light was transferred to the City of Pacific Grove in 2006.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

POINT REYES (PUNTA DE LOS REYES) LIGHT

Location: Gulf of the Farallones

Station Established: 1870

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1870

Operational? NO

Automated? YES 1975

Deactivated: 1975

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: CAST IRON W/BRICK LINING

Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/RED ROOF

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, ROTATING FRESNEL 1870

Historical Information:

A Coast Guard public information pamphlet published in March, 1962 noted that "Point Reyes Light Station was established in 1870 at Point Reyes, Calif., 19 miles from the nearest town of Inverness. It is a family station with a complement of four men who maintain a first order light, fog signal and radio beacon. The light tower itself is a sixteen-sided structure of forged iron plate (the original tower) bolted to solid rock. The top of the lantern is 37 feet above the ground and focal plane of the light is 294 feet above sea level. To reach the light, men assigned must descend 304 steps on the headland from the plateau above the station where the family quarters are situated. The quarters are new, two-story, four-family units (four-plex) built in 1960. The four-plex contains two 2-bedroom and two 3-bedroom units. Buildings maintained on the property, in addition to the family quarters, are the fog signal building, engine room,



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pump house, paint locker, double garage and a four-car carport with adjoining office and work shop. Point Reyes is, by official records, the windiest and foggiest on the Pacific Coast. The station is frequently blanketed by week-long periods of fog and few years pass that do not see violent gales of 75 to 100 mph strike the area. Point Reyes Light Station is one of the District's outstanding tourist attractions. On fair summer weekends we often have several hundred visitors logged aboard. Escorting visitors has become a major portion of the duties of men assigned. Dependent children on the station travel three miles by station vehicle to school. Commissary and post exchange privileges are available at Hamilton Air Force Base (the nearest armed forces installation), or in the San Francisco area."

- Point Reyes Light was transferred to the National Park Service and is now part of the Point Reyes National Seashore.

POINT SUR LIGHT

Location: Moro Rock, near Big Sur

Station Established: 1889

Year Current / Last Tower(s) First Lit: 1889

Operational: Yes

Automated: 1972

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Natural/Emplaced

Construction Materials: Sandstone

Tower Shape: Square on Fog Signal Building

Tower Height: 270 feet above water

Markings/Pattern: White Tower on Sandstone Building

Characteristic: Flashing White, 15 seconds

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: First Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: Diaphone, air, group of 2 blasts every 60 seconds, blast 2 seconds, silent 1 second, blast 3 seconds, silent 54 seconds.

Historical Information:

- Point Sur has always been a navigational nightmare. After 11 years of petitioning the U. S. Lighthouse Service Board, money was allocated for the Point Sur Light in 1886 . The lighthouse was completed in 1889.
- Life on Point Sur was very lonely and isolated. Trips to Monterey were rare since the trail was long and treacherous. The keepers would receive goods and bulk



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supplies on a “lighthouse tender” boat roughly every four months. As road construction advanced, life on the Point Sur became less isolated. The light was automated in 1972.

- The light is still an active aid to navigation and is open to the public.
- Point Sur Light was transferred to the California State Parks Department.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

POINT VICENTE LIGHT

Location: PALOS VERDES/NORTH OF LOS ANGELES HARBOR

Station Established: 1926

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1926

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1973

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: CONCRETE

Tower Shape: CYLINDRICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1926

Historical Information:

The Point Vicente Lighthouse is an important landmark and beacon light relied by thousands of ships and pleasure craft. It provides a means of fixing their position, and ensuring their safe passage up and down the coast. The Point Vicente Light Station has been guiding sailing vessels to and from the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbors since March 1926. It was first operated and maintained by the U.S. Lighthouse Service for 13 years prior to being taken over by the U.S. Coast Guard, which was delegated all aid-to-navigation responsibilities in 1939. The lighthouse was manned until 1971 when it was then automated by a remote electronic aids-to-navigation monitoring system.

The cylindrical tower is 67 feet tall, and it should be noted that the masonry structure is built on the edge of a 130-foot cliff. This places the center of the lantern 185 feet above the ocean, and because of this elevation, the 1.1 million candlepower-beam can be seen twenty miles away. The most beautiful part in the lighthouse is the classical third-order rotating Fresnel Lens located in the lantern. This particular lens was manufactured



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around 1910 in Paris, France, by Barbier, Bernard and Turenne, the oldest lens making company in the world. This Lighthouse lens is made up of hand-ground prisms held in place by a cast brass frame. The prisms and frame represent an excellent example of the precision achieved by optical scientists and the lens making art in utilizing the known principles and 'properties of light.

The Fresnel Lens was invented over a century and a half ago by the French geometrician and physicist Augustine Jean Fresnel (1788- - 1827) in 1822. Since that time Fresnel Lenses similar to the one at Point Vicente have been in service in lighthouses throughout the world.

PUNTA GORDA LIGHT

Location: TWELVE MILES SOUTH OF CAPE MENDOCINO; access by vehicle and 1½ hour hike on foot.

Station Established: 1911

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1912

Operational? NO

Automated? UNK

Deactivated: 1951

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: REINFORCED CONCRETE

Tower Shape: SQUARE

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, BULLS EYE 1912

Property now part of State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation

Occupants: None

Historical Information:

Punta Gorda originally consisted of 22 acres upon which were situated three dwellings, a small two-story concrete lighthouse, concrete oil house, a wooden fog signal building, blacksmith/carpenter-shop, three storage sheds, and a barn. In 1951 all aids-to-navigation were discontinued, the buildings boarded up and personnel was transferred. Whereabouts of the lens is unknown. The property was transferred to the Bureau of Land Management. In the late 1960's "hippies" moved into the quarters and improved them. Local authorities evicted these people and the Bureau of Land Management burned all the buildings except the Lighthouse and oil house. Punta Gorda was and is a very difficult station to reach. Most of the years it was in operation access was via



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horse, and during good weather horse-drawn wagon. After the Coast Guard assumed command a rough road was constructed (that usually washed out) and a jeep was used for transportation.

ROE ISLAND LIGHT

Location: On south point of Roe Island

Station Established: 1891

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1891

Operational: No

Automated: N/A

Deactivated: Yes, 1945

Foundation Materials: Wooden pier

Construction Materials: Wood

Tower Shape: Cupola atop a white square house

Markings/Pattern: White house; black lantern room/cupola

Height: 41 feet above water

Characteristic: Flashing white (light for 2.5 seconds, eclipse for 2.5 seconds)

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Fog Signal: Bell, 1 stroke every 10 seconds

Historical Information:

- The Roe Island Light was built on the Suisun Bay across from Port Chicago, 33 miles inland from the Golden Gate and five miles east of Benicia.
- In the 1900's a second dwelling similar to the lighthouse without the lantern were built adjacent to the lighthouse.
- On 17 July 1944 two ships, *Quinault Victory* and *E. A. Bryan* were being loaded with tons of munitions. Approximately 10:20 pm there was an enormous explosion. Over 300 men, both ships, two Coast Guard vessels and much of the train were completely destroyed.
- The explosion damaged the lighthouse which was 3,000 yards away. With changes in the shipping waterways in the area the light was no longer needed anyway so it was decommissioned in 1945 and sold. An 11 August 1944 Coast Guard report noted that the station: "consists of the light, with two keepers, with dwellings, outhouses, power house, water supply tanks, wharf, walkways, boat harbor and boatways. No fog signal is maintained. Electric current for the light and quarters is generated at the station. Water supply is from rain collected from the building roofs, augmented by supply pumped in from the tenders."



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- It was sold to a private family. The family used the station as a summer home until a fire completely destroyed it.

Researched and written by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

SAN LUIS OBISPO (PORT HARFORD) LIGHT

Location: On Point San Luis, west side of the San Luis Obispo Bay, near Avila Beach

Station Established: 1890

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1890

Operational: No

Automated: 1974

Deactivated: 1975

Foundation Materials: Masonry

Construction Materials: Wood frame

Tower Shape: Octagonal lantern on square tower

Markings/Pattern: White

Characteristic: Flashing white, 20s (3s fl)

Relationship to Other Structure: Attached

Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: 10-inch steam whistle

Historical Information:

- The lighthouse at San Luis Obispo was completed in 1890 and is a 40-foot tower attached to a Victorian style dwelling. The area was originally known as Port Harford.
- The area was very difficult to access by land. Supplies were by brought in by steamer.
- The Fresnel lens was replaced with a modern beacon in 1969.
- The light was automated in 1974. In 1976 the lens was moved to the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society.
- Restoration is under way by the Point San Luis Lighthouse Keepers with the hope of opening as a museum

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.



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SANTA BARBARA LIGHT

Location:

Station Established:

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit:

Operational?

Automated?

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Historical Information:

When Santa Barbara Lighthouse was established on December 1, 1856, it was typical of the other pioneer West Coast lights, with the tower rising through the center of the dwelling. The builder was George D. Nagle of San Francisco who received \$8,000 for his efforts. The tower lantern was fitted with a fourth order lens and originally displayed a fixed red light, which in later years was changed to fixed white.

Women lighthouse keepers were not uncommon in early American lighthouses. Santa Barbara is a premier example. When the lighthouse was officially established in 1856, Albert Johnson Williams was appointed as the initial keeper. After nine years of operating the facility he grew tired of his routine chores and handed over the duties to his wife. She proved so adept at keeping a good house that the government made it official on June 5, 1865, with the appointment receiving a great amount of publicity in the locality. Taking great pride in her work, Mrs. Julia F. Williams kept at her duties for more than 40 years during which time she was only away from the lighthouse on two nights. During her faithful vigil only one shipwreck of consequence was recorded, the cause of which was carelessness on the part of the skipper who allowed his vessel to drift on the rocks. Julia Williams was a descendant of a Maine family and she had come to California with her husband during the gold rush era. She raised three boys and two girls at the lighthouse. In 1905, her vigil finally ended when she fell from a couch and broke her hip. She was 81 years old when she was relieved by another woman, a Mrs. Jones.

On June 29, 1925, a severe earthquake jolted the area and the aging lighthouse was unable to stand against it. It was 6:45 a.m. and keeper Weeks was asleep at the time. Suddenly and rudely awakened, he rushed from the dwelling, then hurried back inside



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to rescue his mother, sister, and brother. When the cloud of dust had settled, little was left of the old structure. A temporary frame tower was erected until a new lighthouse could be built.

SANTA CRUZ LIGHT

Location: On point, west side of entrance to Santa Cruz Harbor

Station Established: 1869

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1869

Operational: No

Automated: No

Deactivated: 1941

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials: Wood

Tower Shape: Square tower on roof of dwelling

Markings/Pattern: Originally white, later changed to red

Characteristic: Gp. Fl. W., 15 s

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens: Fifth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal:

Historical Information:

- The original Santa Cruz Lighthouse had only three keepers in its lifetime. The first was A.A. Hecox. He was succeeded in 1883 by his daughter Laura Hecox who was keeper until her retirement in 1916. Arthur Anderson served until 1941 when the light was discontinued.
- Erosion became a problem and in 1878 the lighthouse was 300 feet inland.
- A fourth order lens was installed 1909. The structure was sold in 1948 and razed in May of that year.
- In 1965 a surfer named Mark Abbott drowned near the site of the lighthouse. His parents built a brick lighthouse near the site of the original. The new lighthouse, The Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse is home to the Santa Cruz Surfer's Museum. The lantern room on the new structure is from the Oakland Harbor Light.

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.



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SOUTHAMPTON SHOALS LIGHT

Location: In seven feet, on south end of Southampton Shoals, northeast of Angel Island in San Francisco Bay near Stockton.

Station Established: 1905

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1905

Operational: No

Automated: No

Deactivated: 1960

Foundation Materials: Wooden piles

Construction Materials: Wood

Tower Shape: Square (White square wooden building on piers)

Markings/Pattern: White

Characteristic: Fl. W., 4 s (1 s fl)

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: Fifth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: Diaphone (gp of 2 blasts ev 30 s (2s bl-6s si-2s bl-20 s si))

Historical Information:

- The original lens is on display at the Angel Island Interpretive Center.
- After deactivation in 1960 the structure was moved to Tinsley Island in San Joaquin where it is now part of the Saint Francis Yacht Club.

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

ST. GEORGE REEF LIGHT

Location: SIX MILES OFF POINT ST. GEORGE

Station Established: 1867

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1892

Operational? NO

Automated? YES

Deactivated: 1975

Foundation Materials: ELLIPTICAL/CONCRETE/GRANITE

Construction Materials: GRANITE BLOCKS

Tower Shape: SQUARE

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN



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Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL
Original Lens: FIRST ORDER, FRESNEL 1892

Historical Information:

This lighthouse, built on a small rock only 300 feet in diameter, is one of the most exposed lighthouses on the Pacific coast. Extreme difficulties were encountered in constructing this tower, and 10 years were required before the work was completed. The total cost was \$702,000 making it one of the most costly lighthouses ever constructed. The light was first displayed in 1892. The base of the tower is a solid block of concrete and granite, and the tower above is also built of granite blocks. The stone was quarried from granite boulders found on Mad River near Humboldt Bay. Probably the most violent storm experienced at this lighthouse was that of 1923, when huge seas from a northwesterly direction broke on the platform of the tower, 70 feet above water, with such violence as to tear the donkey-engine house from its foundation. Several men have been injured, and several men killed in transferring to this light by small boat.

An older Coast Guard public information pamphlet noted that: "St. George Reef Lighthouse represents one of the greatest challenges in U. S. lighthouse building history. Besides being one of the most expensive ever built at that time, it took eight years to complete. Great dressed granite blocks, 1339 or them, from Mad River, were used in construction. In 1892, after a cost of \$712,000, the light went into service. It marks the site of the tragic sinking of the steamer *Brother Jonathan*. There are ever-present hazards to be encountered in the manning of St. George Reef Lighthouse, located on storm-lashed Seal Rock. A boom lifts supplies and personnel to the lighthouse. The light stands 134 feet above the sea level. It is located approximately 10 miles west of Crescent City Harbor, and is manned by a crew of six. A 1,000,000 candlepower lamp, marker radiobeacon, and a two-tone diaphone fog signal is her armament against disaster to shipping. St. George's light is displayed from one hour before sunset to one hour after sunrise."

- St. George Reef Light now belongs to Del Norte County.

TABLE BLUFF LIGHT

RELOCATED FROM HUMBOLDT HARBOR
Station Established: 1892
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1892
Operational? NO
Automated? YES 1953



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Deactivated: 1961
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials: WOOD
Tower Shape: SQUARE
Markings/Pattern: WHITE
Relationship to Other Structure: ATTACHED
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL

Historical Information:

The Humboldt Bay North Spit Lighthouse had for many years been criticized as being too low. In 1892 the Lighthouse Service constructed a light station on Table Bluff, a promontory south of Humboldt Bay, but within-view of the bay. The original station consisted of a duplex Victorian quarters, fog-signal building, and a keepers quarters with light tower attached. The quarters were redwood Italianette-stick Victorian, and the keepers quarters/ light tower were almost exactly the same as San Luis Obispo Light Station - the one at San Luis Obispo. There were also two wash houses, an oil house and a carpenter shop. In 1906 the Navy established a radio station on the property and during World War II the station was expanded to include lodging for mounted beach patrols, a coastal lookout post, and a radio compass station. During the war and immediately afterwards most of the original buildings were razed along with some of the newer structures. The quarters portion of the lighthouse was razed leaving only the tower. This and the fog signal building were all that remained of the original buildings. In 1953 the rotating 4th order lens was removed and a fixed 3 1/2 order lens installed. The 4th order optic was shipped to the Point Loma Light in San Diego which is operated as a museum by the National Park Service. The fog signal was discontinued the same year and the station automated. In 1975 the light was discontinued and the property transferred to GSA and sold. The 2 1/2 order lens was shipped to the Smithsonian.

TRINIDAD HEAD LIGHT

TRINIDAD HARBOR
Station Established: 1866
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1871
Operational? YES
Automated? YES FEBRUARY 1974
Deactivated:
Foundation Materials: STONE
Construction Materials: BRICK
Tower Shape: SQUARE PYRAMIDAL



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Markings/Pattern: WHITE
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL 1871
Current lens: 375 MM Optic
Radiobeacon, ELG 300 Electric Horn

Historical Information:

This low, square, brick tower, painted white, was built in 1871. The light is only 20 feet above ground, but the headland on which it stands gives it an elevation of 196 feet above the sea. The location is one of the most picturesque on the California coast. Despite the great height of the tower above the sea, heavy seas have been known to reach it. In 1913, the keeper made the following report: "At 4:40 p. m. I observed a sea of unusual height. When it struck the bluff the jar was very heavy. The lens immediately stopped revolving. The sea shot up the face of the bluff and over it, until the solid sea seemed to me to be on a level with where I stood in the lantern. The sea itself fell over onto the top of the bluff and struck the tower about on a level with the balcony. The whole point between the tower and the bluff was buried in water."

Trinidad Head (as of February 11, 1981)
4th Order Fresnel Lens – Fog Bell (1898)
Location: 15 miles north of Eureka, California.

The station originally consisted of the small tow-story light tower, a single Victorian residence, and a small barn. In 1898, a bell house was constructed and a 4,000 pound bell was added that was operated by weights. A second keeper was assigned at that time and the quarters were expanded to accommodate two families. In 1947, the lens was changed from 4th Order to a 375 MM and the fog signal changed to an air horn. The town of Trinidad Head constructed a facsimile of the tower in a park overlooking the harbor and installed the original lens in its structure. The 4,000 pound bell is displayed alongside the tower. In the late 1960s, the Coast Guard razed the original dwelling and barn and constructed the present triplex. The fog signal was discontinued when the station was automated in 1974. However, the complaints from the citizens of Trinidad Head were so vocal that the Coast Guard was forced to install the present ELG 300, operated by fog detector. The new fog signal is operated in the original bell house. The original tower remains basically unchanged.

YERBA BUENA ISLAND (GOAT ISLAND) LIGHT



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Location: San Francisco Bay

Station Established: 1875

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1875

Operational: Yes

Automated: 1958

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Masonry

Construction Materials: Wood frame with iron lantern room

Tower Shape: Octagonal

Markings/Pattern: White

Characteristic: Gp. Fl. W., 15 seconds (2 s fl., 1 s ec., 2 s fl., 10 s ec. 2 flashes)

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Fifth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: Diaphone: 1 blast every 20 seconds (3 s bl)

Historical Information:

- Yerba Buena Island was formerly known as Goat Island for the goats that were pastured on the island in the Gold Rush days. The name was retired in 1931 when the Spanish name was restored.
- In 1873 the Lighthouse Service moved the district's depot from Mare Island to Yerba Buena. In 1875 construction was completed on the 25 foot tower with a fifth order Fresnel lens.
- The fifth-order lens was replaced in 1913 with a larger fourth-order lens that was originally manufactured in 1886.
- It was automated in 1958.
- Even the station is in very close proximity to the Golden Gate Bridge. The lighthouse remains operational. The keeper's quarters are now the home of the Coast Guard District Commander.
- It is an active aid to navigation and not open to the public.

The above was researched and drafted by Melissa Buckler, a Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society volunteer.

Much of the historical information included on this page was provided by Ms. Anne Puppa of the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society and we are grateful for her efforts.



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