



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

## Historic Light Station Information **CONNECTICUT**

---

**Note:** Much of the following historical information and lists of keepers was provided through the courtesy of Jeremy D'Entremont and his website on New England lighthouses.

---

### **AVERY POINT LIGHT**

Location: Connecticut, on the University of Connecticut Avery Point Campus (near Groton)

Date Built: 1944 on the grounds of the Coast Guard Training Station at Avery Point, Groton, CT.

Rebuilt:

Height:

Characteristic: Ceremonial light tower - also used as an active aid to navigation from 1945 through 1967. Initially it was a fixed white light. On 3 March 1960 the characteristic was changed to flashing green as a part of a cluster of eight lights.\*\*

Foghorn: N/A

Decommissioned: 25 June 1967 when the Coast Guard moved its training facility to Governor's Island.

\*\*Information provided by the Avery Point Lighthouse Society

### **Historical Information:**

- 1940: This lighthouse was constructed as a memorial tower, a symbol of the Coast Guard's light-keeping responsibility. (It was also built, according to the Avery Point Lighthouse Society, "to fulfill a contingency of the Quit Claim deed for receiving the property from the State of Connecticut. . .It was the last lighthouse built in the state of Connecticut.")
- 1967: The light was extinguished. No maintenance or upkeep has been done since then.
- 1997: It has been placed on the "Doomsday List" compiled by the magazine, *Lighthouse Digest*, as of December 1997.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

---

## **BLACK ROCK HARBOR (FAYERWEATHER ISLAND) LIGHT**

Location: South end of Fayerweather Island  
Station Established: 1808  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1823  
Operational? NO  
Automated? NO  
Deactivated: 1932  
Foundation Materials: FIELDSTONE  
Construction Materials: GRANITE RUBBLE/BROWNSTONE BLOCK  
Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL  
Height: 40-feet  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN  
Characteristic: Fixed white light, Fifth Order, Fresnel, range is 11 nautical miles  
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: 8 LAMPS, 14" REFLECTORS  
Fog Signal: None

### **Historical Chronology:**

- 1808: First tower built.
  - 1811 & 1821: First tower survived hurricanes
  - 1823: Present tower built
  - 1824: First tower toppled by gale
  - 1932: Light was deactivated
  - 1980: Bridgeport Environmental Protection Agency along with Friends of Seaside Park, restored the light tower.
- 

## **BRIDGEPORT BREAKWATER (TONGUE POINT) LIGHT**

Location: West side of Bridgeport Harbor entrance, Bridgeport, Connecticut  
Station Established: 1895  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1895  
Operational: Yes  
Automated: Yes 1954  
Deactivated: 1966  
Foundation Materials: REINFORCED CONCRETE PIER  
Construction Materials: CAST IRON



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

Tower Shape: CONICAL  
Markings/Pattern: BLACK  
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: SIXTH ORDER

## Historical Information:

- The Bridgeport Breakwater Light is also known as Tongue Point Light and/or Bug Light.
- A keeper's quarters was not built at Bridgeport Breakwater Light. The keeper was responsible for Bridgeport Harbor and Bridgeport Breakwater.
- The lighthouse was originally built at the end of a breakwater about 500 feet offshore. In 1919, the shipping channel was widened and the lighthouse was moved 275 feet inland.
- In 1967 the Coast Guard planned to remove the lighthouse but local boater protested. The lighthouse remains an active aid to navigation.

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

---

## BRIDGEPORT HARBOR LIGHT

Location: West side of Bridgeport Harbor entrance and north side of Long Island Sound, Bridgeport, Connecticut  
Station Established: 1851  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1871  
Operational: NO  
Automated: N/A  
Deactivated: 1953  
Foundation Materials: IRON SCREW PILES  
Construction Materials: WOOD  
Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL  
Markings/Pattern:  
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL  
Characteristic: Red  
Original Lens: SIXTH ORDER

## Historical Information:



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

- An original lighthouse was built at this sight in 1851. It was an octagonal tower with a fixed red light on the top of a box light structure on iron piles. There were no keeper's quarters at the sight. The original lens was a sixth order Fresnel.
- In 1871 a replacement light was built. It was a wooden dwelling with the tower attached to the roof. The new light had a fourth order lens.
- The Coast Guard replaced the lighthouse with a skeletal tower in 1953. While dismantling the lighthouse, it caught fire and was destroyed.

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

---

## **FAULKNERS ISLAND LIGHT**

Location: Off Guilford Harbor / Long Island Sound

Station Established: 1802

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1802

Operational? Yes

Automated? Yes 1978

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: FIELDSTONE

Construction Materials: BROWNSTONE/BRICK LINING

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: 9 LAMPS, 16" REFLECTORS 1840

---

## **FIVE MILE POINT (OLD NEW HAVEN) LIGHT**

Location: Harbor entrance / Long Island Sound

Station Established: 1805

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1845

Operational? NO

Automated? NO

Deactivated: 1877

Foundation Materials: BROWNSTONE

Construction Materials: BROWNSTONE/BRICK LINING

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: 12 LAMPS, 21" REFLECTORS 1845

---

## **GREAT CAPTAIN ISLAND LIGHT**

Location: Western Long Island Sound near Greenwich, Connecticut  
Station Established: 1830  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1868  
Operational? NO  
Automated? 1970  
Deactivated: 1970  
Foundation Materials: STONE  
Construction Materials: GRANITE/WOOD  
Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE ON NATURAL GRANITE  
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL  
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL LENS

### **Historical Information:**

- In 1829 the first Great Captain Light was built on a parcel of land that was sold to the government before the site selection of where the lighthouse would stand was finalized. There was some confusion as to who owned the land New York or Connecticut. It would take fifty years before a decision was made in favor of Connecticut.
- An inspection in 1838 revealed the stone tower had been poorly constructed and the walls were already severely cracked.
- A fourth order lens was installed in 1858. In 1867 it was determined a new tower needed to be built and the new tower was completed in 1868. The original lens was installed in the new structure.
- In 1970 a skeleton tower replaced the light and the lighthouse fell victim to vandals. In 1973 the town of Greenwich acquired the lighthouse and had full time caretakers living in the light. This ended the vandalism. The town hopes to restore the lighthouse as well as re-light it.
- In 1991 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

---



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

## GREENS LEDGE LIGHT

Location: Southwest end of Norwalk Island, Long Island Sound, near Norwalk, Connecticut

Station Established: 1902

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1902

Operational? Yes

Automated? 1972

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: CAST IRON/CONCRETE CAISSON

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: CONICAL

Markings/Pattern: UPPER WHITE, LOWER BROWN ON BLACK PIER

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPERATE

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL LENS

### Historical Information:

- Greens Ledge is a "sparkplug" style light.
- The light was built with a fifth order Fresnel lens. Three months after it began operating, it was upgraded to a fourth order lens.
- The light developed a tilt over time. The keepers also complained the station's generators would cause the furniture to move to one side of the tower. To solve this problem, they kept the furniture on one side.
- The light was automated in 1972.
- The light is an active aid to navigation is not open to the public.
- In 1990 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

---

## LYNDE POINT (SAYBROOK) LIGHT

Location: West side of the mouth of the Connecticut River on the Long Island Sound, Old Saybrook, Connecticut

Station Established: 1803

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1839

Operational? Yes

Automated? 1975

Deactivated: N/A



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

Foundation Materials: GRANITE PIER  
Construction Materials: BROWNSTONE BLOKS  
Tower Shape: OCTAGON  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/RED AND GREY LATERN  
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: FIFTH ORDER FRESNEL

## Historical Information:

- In 1803 a 35-foot wooden tower was built at Lynde Point.
- This tower was too short and mariner's petitioned to have it raised by 25 feet.
- Instead of raising the old tower a new 65-foot brownstone tower was built in 1838.
- In 1858 the original keeper's house that was built in 1833 was demolished. It was replaced by a Gothic Revival style house that remained until 1966.
- In 1886 the Saybrook Breakwater Light was built. Lynde Point then became commonly known as the "Inner Light. Saybrook Breakwater became known as the "Outer Light."
- Lynde Point Lighthouse was electrified in 1955 and automated in 1978. The original Fresnel lens remains in the light and Lynde Point is an active aid to navigation. It is not open to the public.
- In 1990 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

---

## MORGAN POINT LIGHT

Location: West side of the mouth of the Mystic River, Noank, Connecticut  
Station Established: 1831  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1868  
Operational? NO  
Automated? NO  
Deactivated: 1919  
Foundation Materials: NATURAL GRANITE SHELF  
Construction Materials: WOOD TOWER/GRANITE DWELLING  
Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER ON MASONRY DWELLING  
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL  
Original Lens: SIXTH ORDER STEAMER



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

## Historical Information:

- In 1831 the federal government decided to build a lighthouse on Noank harbor. It was a 25-foot granite tower. There were many complaints that light was too dim. One solution was to replace the ten lamps with a sixth order Fresnel lens.
- As shipbuilding became more prominent in the area, a new lighthouse was needed and the current Morgan Point Lighthouse was built in 1868.
- In 1919, Morgan Point was discontinued and later sold to a private owner.
- It is no longer an active aid to navigation and is not open to the public.

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

---

## NEW LONDON HARBOR LIGHT

Location: West side of harbor entrance

Station Established: 1760

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1801

Operational? Yes

Automated? Yes 1912

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: SURFACE ROCK/STONE

Construction Materials: BROWNSTONE/BRICK LINING

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: 11 LAMPS W/13-INCH REFLECTORS

## Historical Information:

- The original New London Harbor Lighthouse was built on the west side of the entrance to New London Harbor in 1760. The original lighthouse was probably of masonry. It apparently was completely removed when the stone tower which stands today was built in 1801. Following the act of August 7, 1789, the lighthouse, built in 1760, was ceded to the United States, according to the following "Memoranda of Cessions" by Connecticut:
- "1790, May. Lighthouse at New London and certain rocks and ledges off against the harbor of New London, called Race Rock, Black Ledge, and Goshen Reef, together with buoys." On May 7, 1800. Congress appropriated \$15,700 "for rebuilding, altering, and improving the lighthouse at New London, Conn.," of





# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

which \$15,547.90 was spent for the purpose in 1801, the balance being carried to the surplus fund.

- On November 22, 1838, Lt. George M. Bache, U. S. N., made a report on the light which he described as a stationary light, situated on a rocky point to the westward of the entrance to the River Thames, and 2 miles from the town of New London. "It is of great importance as a leading light for vessels going in and out of the harbor of New London, which, on account of its position and security, is much resorted to during the heavy gales of winter."
- "The light is shown from an elevation of 111 feet, which, in clear weather, should render it visible 1612 miles. \* \* \* The tower is a substantial building of freestone, smooth hammered, and laid in courses; it is 80 feet in height, and is ascended by an interior stairway of wood, having landings at convenient distances. "The lighting apparatus consists of 11 lamps, with parabolic reflectors, disposed around 2 horizontal tables so as to throw the lights from WSW south about to N by E. The reflectors are 13 inches in diameter. This apparatus was furnished in 1834."
- In 1855 a fourth-order lens to illuminate 315 degrees was recommended. In 1863 new dwellings for keepers were provided. In 1868 a road was opened by the city of New London across the lighthouse grounds, the road being fenced on both sides. In 1874 a second-class fog signal with two 18-inch engines and a Daboll trumpet was installed. It was in operation 553 hours during 1875. In 1883 a first-class fog trumpet was substituted. On December 21, 1896, an improved fog signal consisting of two 3 1/2-horsepower Hornsby-Akroyd oil engines, air compressors etc., was installed operating the first-class Daboll trumpet.
- A fog-signal house was built in 1903 and 13-horsepower oil engines, with trumpet, siren etc., were installed in the following year. The fog signal was discontinued on September 5, 1911. On July 20, 1912, the light was changed to acetylene, unattended. The lighthouse is a white, octagonal pyramidal tower, 90 feet above ground and 89 feet above water, the light being visible for 15 miles, and located on the west side of the entrance to New London Harbor. The light is a 6,000-candlepower fourth-order electric light flashing white every 4 seconds, with a red 1,300-candlepower sector from 0 degrees to 41 degrees, covering Sarah Ledge and the shoals to the westward.

---

## NEW LONDON LEDGE LIGHT

Location: Thames River-New London Harbor entrance

Station Established: 1909

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1909

Operational? Yes



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

Automated? Yes, 1987

Deactivated: n/a

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE PIER/ORIG. CRIB

Construction Materials: GRANITE/BRICK

Tower Shape: SMALL CYLINDRICAL TOWER ON DWELLING

Markings/Pattern: RED WITH WHITE TRIM

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL 1910

Characteristic: Three white flashes followed by a red flash every thirty seconds.

## Historical Information:

- On March 20th 1794 the House of Representatives authorized the treasury to mark the rocks with four buoys.
- There were many requests for a light of some sort to mark this location. In 1845 there were requests from the public to erect a lighthouse at the location. In 1854 requests were again made to mark the location with a light. In 1865 there were requests for a lightship. A lighthouse was again requested in 1890.
- In 1902 the lighthouse board finally requested funds for a lighthouse. In 1904 congress authorized the appropriation of \$60,000 for a lighthouse on Southwest Ledge. It was originally to have been built on Black Ledge but after consideration it was moved to Southwest Ledge.
- After drawings were made for the lighthouse design additional money was authorized and the new lighthouse was to be built for a sum not to exceed \$115,000. The lighthouse is unique in its architectural style.
- Work did not begin until 1908. Work was suspended during the winter and resumed in 1909.
- The light was completed and first lit in November of 1909. A fourth order Fresnel lens was installed. A fog horn was also installed at the time.
- In 1910 the lighthouse was renamed to New London Ledge Light. It was originally called the Southwest Ledge light, but it was felt this could be confused with another lighthouse in New Haven.
- U.S. Coast Guard took over in 1939.
- The light was automated in 1987. The Fresnel lens was removed and was later put on display in the Custom House Maritime Museum. In 1989 a grant was received to make improvements to the lighthouse. Windows were uncovered, a new stairway to the boat ramp was built, a new sewage treatment plant. Later solar panels were added. The Coast Guard signed a 30 year lease with a non profit group New London Ledge Lighthouse Foundation. Volunteers continue to work on the lighthouse with hopes of opening it up to the public.
- In 1990 the light was added to the National Register of Historic Places.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

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

---

## PECKS LEDGE LIGHT

Location: Long Island Sound--Norwalk Islands  
Station Established: 1906  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1906  
Operational? Yes  
Automated? Yes, 1933  
Deactivated: n/a  
Foundation Materials: CAST IRON/CONCRETE CAISSON  
Construction Materials: CAST IRON  
Builders: TOOMEY BROTHERS OF GUILFORD, CT  
Tower Shape: CONICAL ON CYLINDRICAL BASE  
Height Above FOCAL PLANE: 61'  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BROWN BAND ON BLACK PIER  
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL  
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL  
Characteristic: White flash every 10 seconds lasting 2 seconds.  
Fog Signal: Yes – operating on compressed air.

### Historical Information:

- Requests for a lighthouse here began in 1896 but it was several years before anything happened.
- In 1901 \$10,000 was appropriated for the construction of a lighthouse. Additional money was required when plans were changed to include the housing of two keepers.
- Construction began in 1905 and was completed in 1906. The light was put into operation in July and contained a fourth class Fresnel lens. There were complaints raised while the light was under construction that it was in the wrong location. It was felt by many that a better location was George's Rock, but construction had already started so it remained on Peck's Ledge.
- In 1913 a fire was started when a tub of hot tar was placed on some newspaper while the keeper was preparing his lobster trap funnels. He managed to put the fire out and there was no significant damage to the lighthouse.
- The light was automated in 1933.
- In 1988 the Fresnel optic was removed and a 250 MM was installed.  
Characteristic is flashing green light.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

- Inspection in 1989 found the structure to be in fair condition.
- In 1990 added to the National Register of Historic Places. Reference #89001472
- In 2004 the Coast Guard planned to install 100 tons of granite riprap as well as a section of step-cut stones to allow for easier access.

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

---

## **PENFIELD REEF LIGHT**

Location: South side of Black Rock Harbor entrance on the Long Island Sound, Near Fairfield, Connecticut

Station Established: 1874

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1874

Operational: Yes

Automated: 1971

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Granite Caisson

Construction Materials: Wood / Granite

Tower Shape: Octagonal

Height: 51 feet above water

Markings/Pattern: White with black lantern

Characteristic: Flashing red, 5 seconds

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: Horn, 2d cl. reed: Blast 3 seconds, silent 17 seconds

### **Historical Information:**

- The Penfield Reef was reportedly one of the most dangerous areas to navigate on the Long Island Sound. The Penfield Reef Light was constructed in 1874. It is one of the last offshore masonry lights. Most off shore lights built after this were cast iron towers built on cylindrical cast iron foundations.
- The 35-foot tower had an fourth order Fresnel lens.
- The Penfield Reef Light saw many tragedies throughout the years. The most well known occurred on December 22, 1916. Keeper Frederick A. Jordan left for the mainland to join his family for Christmas. His boat capsized. Due the size of the waves and speed of the wind, Assistant Keeper Rudolph Iten was not able to lower the lighthouse boat and rescue the head keeper.
- The light is an active aid to navigation.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

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

---

## SAYBROOK BREAKWATER LIGHT

Location: Connecticut River near Old Saybrook, Connecticut on south end of west jetty

Station Established: 1886

Year Current / Last Tower(s) First Lit: 1886

Operational: Yes

Automated? 1959

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Cast Iron / Concrete Caisson

Construction Materials: Cast Iron / Brick Lining

Tower Shape: Conical

Height: 58 feet above water

Markings/Pattern: White Tower on Brown Pier

Characteristic: "F. W., Alt. Fl. G., R. sector, 10 sec" (as per 1933 *Light List*)

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Fifth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: Bell, 1 stroke every 20 seconds

### Historical Information:

- The Saybrook Breakwater Light was constructed in 1886. It is also known as the Saybrook Outer Light. It is one and one-half miles from the Lynde Point Light.
- The original optic was a fifth order Fresnel lens. In 1890 a fourth order lens replaced the original.
- The lighthouse was originally equipped with a 1,000 pound fog bell in 1889. However, the residents objected to the noise that it was replaced with a 250 pound bell.
- On September 21, 1938 the Saybrook Breakwater Light witnessed the most devastating hurricane ever recorded in New England. The light house endured damage including losing a bridge to the breakwater, the platform around the lighthouse, and a 12-foot row boat. The waves also carried away a 1,500 gallon tank of kerosene. The Keeper kept the lighthouse lit throughout the storm.
- In 1933 the light's characteristic was listed as being: "Fixed white 5 sec., eclipse 2.3 sec., red from 74° to 98°, covers shoals off Cornfield Point."
- The lighthouse is an active aid to navigation.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

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

---

## **SHEFFIELD ISLAND (NORWALK) LIGHT**

Location: Sheffield Island / Entrance to Norwalk River

Station Established: 1828

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1868

Operational? NO

Automated? NO

Deactivated: 1902

Foundation Materials: DRESSED STONE/TIMBER

Construction Materials: METAL TOWER ON STONE DWELLING

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL ON SQUARE HOUSE

Height: 44 feet

Focal Plane: 51 feet

Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER/BLACK LANTERN ON DWELLING

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL 1857

Characteristic: Rotating red and white flashes

### **Historical Information:**

- 1804: Robert Sheffield purchased White Island for \$6000.
- 1826: Gershom Smith, Sheffield's son-in-law, sold 4 acres of the 53 acre island to the U.S. government for the first of 2 lights to be built on the island. He would serve as the first keeper.
- 1828: The first lighthouse was completed.
- 1857: A forth order Fresnel lens replaced the original 10 lamps and reflectors which were rotated with red and white flashes.
- 1868: The current lighthouse was built.
- 1902: The light was deactivated due to its distant location from the ledges it was designed to warn ships of. The Green Ledge Light replaced the Sheffield Island Light.
- 1914: The government sold the lighthouse and four acres of land to Thorsten O. Stabell for under \$5000.
- 1930's: An attempt was made to create a resort on the island. It was shut down in 1937 due to a lack of fresh water.
- 1986: The Norwalk Seaport Association purchased the lighthouse and land from the Stabell family for \$700,000.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

- 1989: The lighthouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1993: A utility generator was rebuilt and electricity was added to the keeper's house. That fall, a storm flooded the basement resulting in the loss of a number of artifacts.
- 2000, September: The Norwalk Seaport Association retired the mortgage on the property.
- 2002: Summer tours are available by ferry service from Norwalk.

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

**Photographs** (click on light name below to access image):

**NO PHOTOGRAPH AVAILABLE**

---

## **SOUTHWEST LEDGE (NEW HAVEN BREAKWATER) LIGHT**

Location: Reef at main entrance to New Haven Harbor, New Haven

Station Established: 1877

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1877

Operational: YES

Automated: 1973

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: CAST IRON/CONCRETE CAISSON

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE ON BROWN CAISSON W/BLACK LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel

### **Historical Information:**

- On the east side of the main channel in New Haven Harbor there is a dangerous rock formation named Southwest Ledge. In 1845 it was recommended to build a lighthouse on Southwest Ledge to replace the old New Haven Light at Five Mile Point. This idea was deemed too expensive at the time.
- Construction on the Southwest Ledge Light started in 1873 after advances in engineering and construction made the project viable. It was one of the first to be built on a cylindrical iron foundation. It was such a marvel when completed





# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

the lighthouse was displayed at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 with a keeper maintaining the light during the exposition.

- Not wanting to halt construction to wait for the exposition to end, an identical lighthouse was built. The second lighthouse was shipped to Southwest Ledge and the original went to Ship John Shoal in Delaware.
- Southwest Ledge was lit on January 1, 1877. At the same time the old New Haven Light was extinguished.
- The living conditions were very inhospitable. The lighthouse leaked, had very little drinkable water and a cockroach problem. These conditions may be to blame for one assistant keeper taking his own life.
- The lighthouse was fully automated in 1973. It is an active aid to navigation. The tower is not open to the public but it may be viewed by boat or from the Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven, Connecticut.

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

---

## STAMFORD HARBOR (CHATHAM ROCKS) LIGHT

Location: Stamford Harbor entrance on Chatham Rock near Stamford.

Station Established: 1882

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1882

Operational? YES

Automated? 1953

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: CAST IRON/CONCRETE CAISSON

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: CONICAL ON CYLINDRICAL PIER

Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER ON RED PIER

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL

### Historical Information:

- Stamford Harbor's entrance is obstructed by treacherous reefs. Starting in 1871, local mariner's petitioned for a lighthouse. They would have to wait until 1881 when the funds were approved for the light.
- The light was built in 1882 and was also lit that year. The lighthouse is 3,600 feet from shore. The shape of the light is "spark plug" style. The cylindrical pier is 28





# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

feet high and 30 feet in diameter. The cast iron sections, which were manufactured in Boston, were assembled on the pier.

- The light was discontinued in 1953. The light was sold to a private party in 1955. The light has been sold several times over in the intervening years.
- It is currently a private aid to navigation and not opened to the public.

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

---

## STONINGTON HARBOR LIGHT

Location: East side of Stonington Harbor, Connecticut

Station Established: 1823

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1840

Operational? NO

Automated? N/A

Deactivated: 1889

Foundation Materials: GRANITE

Construction Materials: GRANITE

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL

Markings/Pattern: N/A

Relationship to Other Structure: ATTACHED

Original Lens: SIXTH ORDER FRESNEL LENS, 1856

### Historical Information:

- In 1823 a lighthouse was built at the Southeastern entrance of the Stonington Harbor.
- An inspection in 1838 found the lighthouse in poor condition. Too much polishing had rubbed the silver coating off of the reflectors and the stairway was bordering on collapse. The sea was eating away at the bluff below the light
- The government first considered building a wall around the station but decided on building a new light. The new light was finished in 1840 and most of the lighthouse was built from the disassembled light.
- The original lantern room had a system of eight lamps and reflectors. A sixth order Fresnel lens replaced the lamps in 1856.
- Stonington Harbor Light was rendered obsolete when a 25-foot cast iron light was erected on a breakwater in the harbor in 1889. A skeleton tower replaced that light in 1926.



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

- The 1840 lighthouse is now a museum and is open to the public. In 1976 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

**Photographs** (click on light name below to access image):

**NO PHOTOGRAPH AVAILABLE**

---

## STRATFORD POINT LIGHT

Location: Mouth of the Housatonic River near Stratford, Connecticut

Station Established: 1822

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1881

Operational? YES

Automated? 1970

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: CONCRETE

Construction Materials: CAST IRON/BRICK LINING

Tower Shape: CONICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE WITH BROWN BAND MIDWAY

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: THIRD ORDER FRESNEL

Fog Signal: Bell

### Historical Information:

- In 1822 the first Stratford Point Light was built on the west side of the Housatonic River. In 1855 a fifth order lens was added to the 28-foot wooden tower. In 1864 a fog bell and bell tower were added to the station.
- By 1867 the original tower was in bad shape and the keeper's quarters were considered too small for a keeper and an assistant.
- A 35-foot cast iron tower and Gothic Revival style keeper's house were built in 1881. The tower was equipped with a third order Fresnel lens. The tower was one of the first prefabricated cylindrical lighthouses in the country. A new fog bell was added in 1881 as well.
- In 1969 the lantern room was removed to make way for the new automated beacon. The lantern was given to the Stratford Historical Society. In 1990 a



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

smaller optic was installed in the lighthouse. The original lantern was refurbished and reinstalled at that time.

- It is an active aid to navigation and is used for Coast Guard housing. It is not currently open to the public.

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

---

## **STRATFORD SHOAL (MIDDLE GROUND) LIGHT**

Location: Long Island Sound between Long Island, New York and Bridgeport, Connecticut

Station Established: 1837

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1877

Operational? YES

Automated? 1970

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: GRANITE ASHLAR CAISSON

Construction Materials: GRANITE BLOCKS

Tower Shape: OCTAGONAL TOWER ON SQUARE DWELLING

Markings/Pattern: NATURAL WITH WHITE LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL

### **Historical Information:**

- The sight for the Stratford Shoal Light in 1837. A lightship was stationed at the sight in 1837. Ice and storms caused the ship to lose anchorage and drift off the site.
- The lighthouse was completed in 1877 to replace the lightship. It is built of granite blocks. Storms caused numerous delays in completing the construction. The light was first lit in December 1877.
- The remoteness of the station created difficult living conditions for the keepers. Over the years, the keepers performed many rescues.
- The light was also known as Middleground Light. It was automated in 1970.
- It is an active aid to navigation and not open to the public.

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



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

---