



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

## Historic Light Station Information DELAWARE

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### BAKER SHOAL RANGE LIGHTS

Location: Delaware River south of the C&D Canal, Port Penn, Delaware

Station Established: 1910

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1904

Operational: No

Automated: No

Deactivated: 1924

Foundation Materials: Unknown

Construction Materials: Front-wood; Rear-iron

Tower Shape: Front--square two-story frame dwelling; Rear--skeletal iron tower on wooden pilings

Markings/Pattern: Front-white; Rear-brown

Characteristic: Front--occulting white; Rear--flashing white

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

### Historical Information:

- A temporary light was lit in 1902. In 1904 a two-story keeper's dwelling was built with the light in a second story window.
- The Baker Range Front Light was discontinued in 1924. A new steel tower was built in that year.
- The original lighthouse was removed or destroyed.
- The new tower is an active aid to navigation.
- There was a Baker Shoal Range Rear light that originally served as the Port Penn-Reedy Island Range. Light. It became the Baker Shoal Rear Range Light in 1904 when the old range was discontinued due to the channel moving. It remains an active aid to navigation.

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

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### BELLEVUE RANGE LIGHTS



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Location: Mouth of the Christina River on the Delaware River, Wilmington, Delaware

Station Established: 1909

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1909

Operational: No

Automated: Yes

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Concrete

Construction Materials: Cast iron

Tower Shape: Front--frame structure, square tower at center with a brown lantern;

Rear--pyramid skeletal iron tower.

Markings/Pattern: Front--white; Rear--black

Characteristic: Front--flashing white; Rear--flashing white

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel

## Historical Information:

- The lighthouse is on the grounds of a landfill. Due to the expansion of the landfill the light was moved to a new structure.
- The light station had two keepers' dwellings at one time. One was the former Christina Lighthouse. The other was a concrete house.
- The Bellevue Range Rear light was deactivated in 2001 when a modern tower was built to replace it. The modern tower is an active aid to navigation
- The Bellevue Range Rear Light is not open to the public.

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

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## CAPE HENLOPEN

Location: "On cape (Del.)

Station Established: 1767

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1769

Operational: No

Automated: N/A

Deactivated: 1924; tower collapsed due to erosion in 1926

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials:

Tower Shape:

Markings/Pattern: White



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Characteristic: Flashing white with red sector

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Fog Signal: Reed horn: blast--2 seconds, silent--13 seconds; Bell (Hand) if horn is disabled, 1 stroke every 10 seconds.

## Historical Information:

Cape Henlopen Lighthouse was completed in 1769, part of the funds to erect it being raised by a £3,000 lottery. Even though the structure was within the limits of Delaware, the 200 acres on which it was erected was granted by the late proprietors of Pennsylvania to the Board of Wardens for the purpose of erecting a lighthouse on Cape Henlopen." The estimated cost of the original lighthouse was £7,674/3/2. It was the sixth lighthouse built in the colonies. In 1777 the lighthouse was practically completely burned down by the British. On the return of peace in 1783, the wardens proceeded to repair the damage and it was relighted in 1784.

On September 28, 1789, the lighthouse together with all beacons, buoys, and public piers, lands, tenements and jurisdiction was ceded to the Federal Government by the State of Delaware in accordance with the act of Congress of August 7, 1789. As early as 1788 evidence of wind erosion in the sandy area in which the tower was constructed, had been noted and steps taken, by planting "underwood and weeds of every kind," to prevent the sand from blowing away. There seemed to be no encroachment from the sea at that time.

Abraham Hargis was the keeper from 1797 to 1813 and his successor John Ware served until 1827. Following him Kendall Baston served until 1838, with a Mr. McCracken serving for a short period, until December 1839, when Asa Clifton, of Lewes, Del., took charge. William Elligood took over as keeper in 1849. In 1851 sand was reported advancing toward the tower and the keeper's house. A first-order lens was installed in 1856 due to the "numerous accidents that have occurred in consequence of the inferiority of the lighting apparatus from confounding a light which, from position, should be one of the principal seacoast lights, for the lightship off Five Fathom bank.

In 1863 a new keeper's dwelling was built, "the old one being threatened with destruction by the speedy progress in that direction of a remarkable sand hill, which has been moving inflexibly in a certain course at a constant rate of speed for many years, presenting in its existence and movement a most singular natural phenomenon." In 1868 "the big sand hill" situated at the north of the tower, formed of drifting sand, was found to have moved southward at the rate of 11 feet a year. The application of brushwood to exposed places was thought to have stopped the movement by 1872.



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In 1883, the sea, in a storm, encroached upon the ocean side of the station, until the high water line came under the lighthouse and the question of the protection of the structure was taken under consideration. In that year the bark *Minnie Hunter* came ashore 550 feet north of the lighthouse and acted as a jetty so that the level of the sand under the lighthouse structure was raised some 20 inches. Erosion continued, however, and by 1885 the beacon, which had become unsafe from undermining, had to be removed to Delaware Breakwater.

In 1897 the sand dune surrounding the tower was reported to be steadily blowing away and by 1905 'several tons of brush were placed about the tower and oil house to prevent the foundations and brick walls from being undermined by the drifting away of the sand.' All measures to protect the tower failed, however, and on April 13, 1926, a northeast storm undermined the tower and caused it to fall seaward. Its value to shipping, however, had already been superseded by the light and fog signal station on the Delaware Breakwater and by the lightships and lighted buoys marking the entrance to Delaware Bay.

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## CHERRY ISLAND RANGE LIGHTS

Location: Delaware River north of Christiana River near Edgemoor, Delaware

Station Established: 1880

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1880

Operational: No

Automated:

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials: Rear--wood frame

Tower Shape: Front--square pyramidal tower; Rear--square wooden tower attached to dwelling

Markings/Pattern: Front--white tower; Rear--white tower, white lantern, black circular daymark above

Characteristic: Front--flashing white (1 second); Rear--flashing white

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens:

Fog Signal: Bell, 1 stroke every 30 seconds

### Historical Information:

- The building was razed by the Coast Guard in the early 1970s.
- A fixed red beacon on a skeletal tower replaced the light.



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## CHRISTIANA NORTH JETTY LIGHT

Location: End of jetty at the mouth of the Christiana River, near Wilmington, Delaware

Station Established: 1884

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1884

Operational: No

Automated:

Deactivated:

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials: Wood frame

Tower Shape: Wood frame bell tower with lantern on roof

Markings/Pattern:

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens:

### Historical Information:

- Very little information exists on this light.
- In 1884 the light consisted of a fixed white lantern on a post. In 1901 it was a fixed red lantern on a bell tower. There was also a 2,100 pound fog bell and striking machinery at this location.
- At some point the light station was destroyed.

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## DELAWARE BREAKWATER LIGHT



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Location: Lewes Harbor / Delaware Bay entrance  
Station Established: 1885  
Year Current Tower(s) Lit: 1885  
Operational? NO  
Automated? YES - 1950  
Deactivated: 1996  
Foundation Materials: CAISSON  
Construction Materials: BRICK W/CAST IRON PLATES  
Tower Shape: CONICAL  
Height: 60.5 above mean high tide.  
Markings/Pattern: BROWN TOWER ON WHITE PIER  
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL  
Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL  
Foghorn: 2nd class Daboll trumpet.

## Historical Information:

- In 1973 the Fresnel lens was replaced with an airport style beacon.
- In 1996 the light was decommissioned.
- The State of Delaware assumed ownership of the lighthouse in 1999. In that same year the exterior of the light was painted.
- The Delaware Bay and River Authority signed a lease for the light in 2001.
- In 2004 The Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation formed a partnership with the Delaware River and Bay Authority to manage the lighthouse. The group began restoration efforts and began limited public tours.

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

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## DELAWARE BREAKWATER RANGE FRONT LIGHT (West End)

Location: Lewes Harbor / Delaware Bay entrance  
Station Established: 1838  
Deactivated: 1903  
Foundation Materials: Sits on breakwater  
Construction Materials: Brick dwelling with lantern on roof.  
Relationship to Other Structure: Integral  
Original Lens: Six lamps and reflectors  
Characteristic: white flash every 45 seconds (when Fresnel installed)  
Status: Torn down in 1950



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## Historical Information:

- The light at this location was first established in 1838 when a light was placed on a house for the superintendent in charge of construction of the breakwater.
- In 1849 the actual lighthouse was completed.
- Once source indicated the 4th order Fresnel was installed in 1858 and another states it was installed in 1875 a 4th.
- In 1878 the light was severely damaged by a hurricane.
- In 1881 the light became the front light of the Delaware Breakwater Range.
- In 1889 another hurricane hit and destroyed the fog bell, outbuildings and the steps to the station.
- In 1903 the light became obsolete and was deactivated. The East End light then became the Front Range light.
- The West End light was turned over to the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange who used the light to monitor the passage of vessels into the Bay.
- A 1908 inspection report indicates there is a fixed red light affixed to an iron post.
- The Philadelphia Maritime Exchange discontinued use of the light in 1942.
- The light was demolished in 1950

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

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## FENWICK ISLAND LIGHT

Location: Delaware / Maryland border  
Station Established: 1859  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1859  
Operational? YES  
Automated? YES 1940  
Deactivated: 1978-1982  
Foundation Materials: NATURAL/EMPLACED  
Construction Materials: BRICK  
Tower Shape: CONICAL  
Markings/Pattern: WHITE W/BLACK LANTERN  
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: THIRD ORDER, FRESNEL 1859

## Historical Information:





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Congress authorized the erection of a lighthouse on Fenwick Island, Del., in 1856. The site for the light adjoined the south boundary of Delaware on the Delaware-Maryland boundary line in the vicinity of Fishing Harbor. Immediately behind the storehouse of the light station is a stone monument or marker, apparently of granite, having the arms of William Penn carved on the north side and the arms of Lord Baltimore on the south side. This stone is the first stone erected in connection with the Mason and Dixon's line survey. It is the only and original first stone set up in 1751.

When King Charles of England granted Penn his 29,000,000 acres in 1681 which now form the State of Pennsylvania, a controversy immediately began with Lord Baltimore, who owned the Maryland territory, as to the boundary line. As Penn acquired, also, what is now Delaware, it affected the line of that territory as well. This controversy raged through three or four generations and was not finally settled until 1768. By 1750, however, the only line the disputants were not quarreling over was the lower east-west line, so they appointed two surveyors to go the spot, determine the compass variation, and start the survey of the line, which was and is the present lower line of Delaware State. The surveyors arrived at Fenwick Island in December 1750. They drove a stake at a point 139 perches west of the "Main Ocean" at a group of four mulberry trees where the lighthouse now stands. Then they measured east to the "Verge of the Ocean" and began the line there. They could put no permanent mark at the water's edge, but they measured some 6 miles west and then quit for the weather was bad, their cabin had burned up, and the exposure was great.

In April 1751, all hands again met at Fenwick Island. The commissioners were shown the work of the previous December and approved it and on April 26, 1751, a stone was set where the stake had been, having the arms of Lord Baltimore on the south side and of Penn on the north. This is the stone that stands there today.

Other stones were erected at 5-mile intervals and the west line of the State of Delaware was set up. Soon after this Lord Baltimore died and his death delayed things. Nothing was done for about 10 years, when under a new agreement in 1760, between the then generations of Penns and Baltimores, surveys were started again on this north line, the object being to lay it out so as to hit the 12-mile circle, 81 miles above, determined upon as the northern boundary of Delaware, with New Castle as its center. The surveyors made such a poor job of it, despite several efforts, after 3 years, that Penn and Baltimore in England hired Mason and Dixon, two engineers of note, to go over to America, take charge and do the job. They arrived in 1763, accepted the lower or east and west line across the peninsula as correct, reran the north line and ran the line from the northeast corner of Maryland west, for about 223 miles. This is the generally understood Mason and Dixon's line. They also ran the north and south line which is the western boundary of Delaware. Five years were occupied in this and not until 1768 was the last stone set, which ended the controversy of nearly a century.





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By 1857 the site for the lighthouse had been selected and marked and the tower was completed early in 1859, being first lit on August 1, 1859. The total cost was \$23,748.96. In 1932 a strip of land 60 feet wide, extending east and west across the site, was deeded to the State of Delaware for roadway purposes and in 1940 about three-fourths of the site was sold including the entire northern wooded half and 2.71 acres of the southern half.

The white lighthouse tower now stands 0.3 mile inshore on the coast, the tower being 83 feet above water and the top of the lantern 87 feet above ground. A 25,000-candlepower light flashes white every 3 seconds and is visible 15 miles at sea.

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## FOURTEEN FOOT BANK LIGHT

Location: Delaware Bay / Bowers Beach

Station Established: 1876

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1887

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1972

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: SUB CAST IRON/CONCRETE CAISSON

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: SQUARE

Height: Focal Plane above mean high tide 59'

Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER & DWELLING/BLOCK PIER & LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Fog Signal: Yes - 2nd class Daboll trumpet, operated by engine & compressor

Fog Signal Characteristic: 5 sec blast, 25 sec silent. No duplicate parts but they did have a second apparatus as backup.

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL (manufactured by Henry Le Paute, Paris)

### Historical Information:

- From 1876 to 1886 this location was marked by a lightship. Once the lighthouse was completed the ship was relocated to Ram Island Reef in Connecticut.
- This lighthouse has the distinction of being the first caisson built using the pneumatic process to imbed the structure in the seafloor.
- A 1910 inspection report indicates the Characteristic was a fixed white, alternately 14 sec & 40 sec, eclipse 3 sec to the eastward of NNW & SSE 1/8 E. Fixed red varied by eclipse as above throughout remaining sector.



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- Evidently this changed because a 1918 inspection report indicates the characteristic was now occulting white, 10 sec; light 8 sec.; eclipse 4 sec. showing in main channel. Red, W of 331 degrees and 151 degrees covering Brown & Joe Flogger Shoals.
- The light was automated in 1972.
- Added to the National Historic Register in 1989.
- In 2000 the Fresnel lens from Fourteen Foot Bank Lighthouse which is on loan from the U.S. Coast Guard was put on display at the Lewes Historical Society's Cannonball Museum and Marine Museum.
- University of Delaware has used the lighthouse as a base for its Delaware Bay observation system where they can collect meteorological and oceanographic information gathered from instruments on the light.

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

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## **HARBOR OF REFUGE (SOUTH) BREAKWATER LIGHT**

Location: Lewes Harbor / Delaware Bay entrance

Station Established: 1896

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1926

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1973

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: CAST IRON CAISSON/ROCK JETTY

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: CONICAL

Markings/Pattern: WHITE TOWER/BROWN CYLINDER/BLACK LANTERN

Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL

Original Lens: FOURTH ORDER, FRESNEL

Status: Standing and operational

### **Historical Information:**

- The breakwater was originally built to provide a safe harbor for ships during stormy weather. The construction was authorized in 1825 and was completed in 1869. A second breakwater was needed to accommodate larger ships that were being built. This second structure was completed in 1901. In 1902 two temporary beacons were placed on either end of the breakwater to illuminate it. Both lights were destroyed in a storm the following year and had to be replaced.



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- A permanent structure was begun in 1906. This 52 foot tower was completed in 1908. It was three story, white hexagonal building made of wood. Original plans had called for brick but somewhere in the final stages this was switched to wood.
- The initial light contained a fourth order Fresnel lens with a flashing white light with a 10 second interval. The station also had a fog siren.
- Storms frequently assault this location and in 1918 the lighthouse was moved two inches off its foundation in a heavy storm. This happened again in 1920 when it was moved another two inches in yet another storm.
- In 1925 this light was considered uninhabitable and was dismantled.
- In 1926 the current tower was completed. It is a cast iron 76 foot tall white conical tower with a black lantern room. A fourth order lens was installed with a white light flashing every 10 seconds.
- In 1986 the tower was struck by a passing ship.
- In 1945 the Fresnel lens was replaced by and Aero beacon. This was replaced in 1997 when a solar powered Vega lens was installed. The characteristic was changed to a white light flashing every five seconds. A fog signal was also installed.
- In 1973 the light was automated.
- In 1999 the Coast Guard performed restoration to the exterior of the light. The Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation began preservation efforts at the light.
- In 2000 the dock was replaced to provide safer access. It has since been rebuilt or repaired several times due damage from frequent storms.
- In April 2002 the Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation signed a lease to manage the lighthouse. They received ownership in 2004 under the National Lighthouse Preservation Act.
- Currently the breakwater itself may be in need of repair. The lighthouse is open to the public for scheduled tours coordinated by the Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation.

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

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## LISTON RANGE LIGHT

Location: Delaware River

Station Established: 1906

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1877

Operational? YES

Automated? YES 1976



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Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: MASONRY (MOVED 1906)

Construction Materials: WROUGHT IRON

Tower Shape: PYRAMIDAL SKELETAL W/CYLINDER

Height: Focal Plane is 176

Markings/Pattern: BLACK

Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE

Original Lens: SECOND ORDER RANGE, FRESNEL 1906

## Historical Information:

- The tower was originally the rear range light of the Port Penn Range. By 1904 that range light was no longer needed and the light was decommissioned.
- In 1906 the light was moved to its present location to guide ships down the Delaware River between Ship John Shoal light and Liston Point Delaware.
- In 1936 the light went from shinning dusk to dawn to staying on 24 hours a day.
- In 1976 the light was automated.
- In 1978 the light was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- In May 2004 Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation signed a thirty-year lease agreement with the Coast Guard to take care of the light.

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

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## MAHON RIVER LIGHT

Location: Port Mahon, Delaware, on the west side of the mouth of the river

Station Established: 1831

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1955

Operational: Yes

Automated:

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials:

Construction Materials: Steel

Tower Shape: Skeletal

Markings/Pattern: White, small white house

Characteristic: Flashing white with 2 red sectors

Relationship to Other Structure:

Original Lens:

Fog Signal: None



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## Historical Information:

- There is very little information on the history of this light. There was a lighthouse built in 1903.
- The light was an octagonal tower on the roof of a two story wooden keeper's dwelling.
- That light was discontinued in 1955, the same year as the current tower was lit. A fire in 1984 destroyed the 1903 house.
- The current tower is an active aid to navigation and not open to the public.

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

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## MARCUS HOOK REAR RANGE LIGHT

Location: Delaware River Channel near Bellefonte, Delaware

Station Established: 1915

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1920

Operational: Yes

Automated:

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Concrete

Construction Materials: Reinforced concrete

Tower Shape: Square

Markings/Pattern: Natural

Characteristic: Flashing white (till replaced by fixed red DCB-24 lens sometime in the early 1980s)

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Fourth Order Fresnel

## Historical Information:

- The Marcus Hook Channel was widened and deepened in 1910.
- In 1918 a lighthouse was built with light facing north.
- The lighthouse is composed of nine sections of reinforced concrete.
- In 1925 the front range light was built. It sits on a concrete pier in the Delaware River. Both lights shine red.
- The original keeper's quarters are now a private residence. The light tower is an active aid to navigation and not open to the public.



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## MISPILLION LIGHT (OLD)

Location: On the west side of the mouth of the Mispillion River on the Delaware Bay near Milford, Delaware.

Station Established: 1831

Year Current/Last Tower(s) First Lit: 1873

Operational: No

Automated: 1926

Deactivated: 1929

Foundation Materials: Natural emplaced

Construction Materials: Wood Frame

Tower Shape: Square

Markings/Pattern: White wood tower on carpenter gothic house

Characteristic: Flashing white every 3 seconds, flash duration 0.3 seconds, with a red sector from 301° to 308°

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: Sixth Order, Fresnel

Fog Signal: None

### Historical Information:

- The original Mispillion Lighthouse was first established in 1831. There is some discrepancy in the date of the second house. Some say 1839 and others say 1857.
- The third lighthouse was lit in 1873 and served until 1929 when it was deactivated and replaced by a steel skeleton tower that had originally served at Cape Henlopen. The skeleton tower remained as an active aid until 1984.
- The lighthouse became private property in 1932 and remained so.
- The structure was struck by lightning in 2002 and was severely damaged. The owner dismantled and removed what remained of the structure. The steel skeletal tower remains at the location. The tower originally served at Cape Henlopen. It is not active or open to the public.

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## NEW CASTLE RANGE LIGHTS

Location: Delaware River near New Castle, Delaware

Station Established: 1876

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: Front-1964, Rear-1953

Operational: Yes

Automated: Front-1964; Rear-1953

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Unknown

Construction Materials: Steel

Tower Shape: Skeletal

Markings/Pattern: White

Characteristic: Front-occulting white; Rear-flashing white

Relationship to Other Structure: Separate

Original Lens: Unknown

Fog Signal: None

### Historical Information:

- The original New Castle Range lights were wooden towers built in 1876. The rear range light was attached to the keeper's quarters while the front light was a free standing tower.
- The original front range light was demolished in 1964 when it was replaced by a steel skeletal tower.
- The original rear range light was deactivated in 1953 when it was replaced by another steel skeletal tower. The original lighthouse was burned 1982.
- Both of the current steel towers remain an active aid to navigation and are not open to the public.

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

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## OLD REEDY ISLAND LIGHT

Location: South end of Reedy Island on the Delaware River, Near Port Penn, Delaware

Station Established: 1839

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1839, 1879

Operational: No

Automated: N/A

Deactivated: 1950





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Foundation Materials: Unknown  
Construction Materials: Unknown  
Tower Shape: Square tower on top of original dwelling  
Markings/Pattern: White  
Characteristic: Flashing white with red sector  
Relationship to Other Structure: Integral  
Original Lens: Fourth Order, Fresnel  
Fog Signal: Bell, 1 stroke every 15 seconds

## Historical Information:

- The Reedy Island light served between 1839 and 1877. The original tower was a 44-foot round brick tower and two-story keeper's house.
- The light was reactivated in 1879. This time a square tower was placed on top of the original dwelling.
- The light was discontinued permanently in 1950. The structure was destroyed by fire. A light tower still stands near the original sight of the lighthouse. The light tower is an active aid to navigation.

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

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## REEDY ISLAND RANGE REAR LIGHT

DELAWARE RIVER MOUTH  
Station Established: 1839  
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1910  
Operational? YES  
Automated? YES – mid 1930s  
Deactivated: N/A  
Foundation Materials: 9 CONCRETE PIERS  
Construction Materials: CAST IRON  
Tower Shape: SKELETAL  
Markings/Pattern: BLACK  
Relationship to Other Structure: SEPARATE  
Original Lens: FIFTH ORDER RANGE 1910

## Historical Information:

- The original light was discontinued in 1950. A skeletal tower replaced it.



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- Added to the National Historic Register in 1989.
- On April 6, 2002 vandals set the keeper's house on fire, destroying the structure and damaging the brick oil house near by.
- Skeletal tower which stand near by is still an active aid to navigation.

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

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## REEDY ISLAND RANGE FRONT LIGHT

Location: N edge of marsh on W bank of Delaware River between mouth of Appoquinimink Blackbird Rivers, 3-1/3 miles S by W 1/8 W from Old Reedy Id. Lighthouse, 2-3/8 mi S by E of Liston Range front light & on S prolongation of axis of 38' dredged channel

Station Established: 1904

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1904

Operational?

Automated?

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Lantern is on dwelling

Construction Materials: CAST IRON

Tower Shape: Lantern is on dwelling

Markings/Pattern: Lighthouse is white, lead colored trimmings, brown roof.

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: 4th order (Henry LePaute)

Characteristic: fixed white 2 secs eclipse 1 sec.

### Historical Information:

- The only information available on this light seems to be from an inspection record from 1910.

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## SHIP JOHN SHOAL LIGHT



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Location: In 8' water on Ship John Shoal, NJ E'ly side of main channel in upper part of Delaware Bay

Station Established: 1877

Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1877

Operational? YES

Automated? 1973

Deactivated: N/A

Foundation Materials: Cast iron caisson, which rests on piles protected by riprap (penetration of piles not known)

Construction Materials: Iron - wood lined inside

Tower Shape: no tower - watchroom is polygonal

Height: Height of focal plane above mean high tide is 50'

Markings/Pattern: brown with black lantern

Relationship to Other Structure: Integral

Original Lens: 4th order lens

Characteristic: Fixed white 10 sec, eclipse 5 sec, to W'd of 324 degrees 30' true (NNW 9/16 W mag) & 138 degrees 00' true (SE 1/8 S mag) fixed red 10 sec, eclipse 5 sec, throughout remaining sectors. Red sector to E'd of 324 degrees 30' true (NNW 9/16 W mag) & 138 degrees 00' true (SE 1/8 S mag)

Fog Signal: Yes - Bell struck by machinery, triple blow every 45 seconds. Machinery made by Geo. M. Stevens - Boston Mass. Fog bell is supported on roof of lighthouse just outside of watchroom

## Historical Information:

- The shoals that the light marks was named after a ship that wrecked there in 1797. The light itself takes its name from that same ship.
- Original plans were made to build a screwpile lighthouse on this location but the destruction of the foundation of a screwpile lighthouse being built at Cross Ledge in Delaware Bay caused these plans to be scrapped.
- In 1872 approval was given to construct a caisson lighthouse to mark the dangerous shoals. Construction was delayed because there was difficulty getting title to the land. There is still debate as to whether this lighthouse is in New Jersey or Delaware. Finally work began in 1874 and in late 1875 a temporary light was placed on top of the incomplete structure. The light was finally completed in 1877.
- In 1907 about 900 additional tons of riprap was deposited about the lighthouse.
- In 1988 the Fresnel lens was replaced. The light's 4th order lens is on display at the Coast Guard Group Air Station in Pomona New Jersey.

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



# U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

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