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Historic Light Station Information MARYLAND

BALTIMORE LIGHT

Location: South entrance to Baltimore Channel, Chesapeake Bay, off the mouth of the Magothy River

Date Built: Commissioned 1908

Type of Structure: Caisson with octagonal brick dwelling / light tower

Height: 52 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white with one red sector

Foghorn: Yes (initially bell, replaced with a horn by 1923)

Builder: William H. Flaherty / U. S. Fidelity and Guarantee Co.

Appropriation: \$120,000 +

Range: white – 7 miles, red – 5 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- This is one of the last lighthouses built on the Chesapeake Bay. The fact that it was built at all is a testimony to the importance of Baltimore as a commercial port. The original appropriation request to Congress for a light at this location was made in 1890 and \$60,000 was approved four years later. However, bottom tests of proposed sites showed a 55 foot layer of semi-fluid mud before a sand bottom was hit. This extreme engineering challenge made construction of a light within the proposed cost impossible. An additional \$60,000 was requested and finally appropriated in 1902. Even then, the project had to be re-bid because no contractor came forth within the allotted budget. Finally, the contract was awarded to William H. Flaherty (who had built the Solomon's Lump and Smith Point lights). The materials were gathered and partially assembled at Lazaretto Point Depot, then towed to the site and lowered to the bottom in September 1902. As excavation progressed, heavy seas tilted the cylinder. Later on October 12th, a storm pushed it over so it lay on its side. At this point, the contractor ceased work. Instead of returning the following Spring, as planned, Flaherty defaulted and his company later went into receivership. The resulting legal problems further complicated the situation. It was not until the fall of 1905 that construction resumed under the guidance of the surety company - U. S.



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Fidelity and Guaranty Co. A pier was built around the sunken caisson to hold worker housing, and the huge amount of machinery needed to right the structure. By that time, many of the iron caisson plates were severely damaged and needed to be replaced. By 1907 the cylinder had been righted and work progressed. When completed, the caisson stood 82 feet below sea level, on top of 91 piles driven into the bottom. It was the tallest caisson light in the world at the time. The brick dwelling / light tower was constructed the following year and the light was outfitted with a fourth order Fresnel lens and commissioned October 1, 1908.

- In 1923 the fog bell was replaced with a fog horn and the light was converted to run off acetylene. On May 1 of the same year, the light was automated and the keeper transferred to Point No Point Light.
- In May 1964 the light was converted to run off power supplied by a small atomic reactor, making it the first nuclear-powered lighthouse in the world. This experiment only lasted a year and the concept was not pursued further.

The above was researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

- Lighthouse was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2 December 2002.

BLAKISTONE ISLAND LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Blakistone Island

Location: Saint Clement's Island, off Colton's Point in the Potomac River

Date Built: 1851

Type of Structure: Brick keepers dwelling with lantern rising through the center of the roof

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$4,535

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- Blakistone Island was originally named Saint Clement's Island and Saint Clements is the name it is known by now. This was the site of the landing of the ships the *Arc of London* and the *Dove* which brought the first English settlers to



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found the Maryland colony in 1634. A settlement was temporarily founded, but the colony was soon moved to Saint Mary's City. At that time the Island was over 400 acres. The island was farmed for many years and was owned for a while by the Blakistone family, during which time it was temporarily re-named. After several years of receiving petitions for a light at the island Congress appropriated \$3,500 in 1848. After a delay caused by problems gaining title to the land, construction bids were solicited. The low bidder was John Dohahoo, who was awarded the contract at a cost of \$4,535. The structure was a two story brick dwelling, with a light tower rising from the ground through the center of the building, and sat on a two acre point of land at the southern tip of the island. The iron lantern sat on a base of sandstone. It was completed in December of 1851.

- The light is particularly famous for an event that took place during the Civil War. In 1864 CSA Captain John Goldsmith, who had once owned the island himself, led a raiding party to the Island. The Confederates destroyed the lens and confiscated the oil, then intended to blow up the lighthouse. The keeper, Jerome McWilliams, whom Captain Goldsmith knew, was successful in convincing the raiders not to destroy the structure because his wife was in an advanced stage of pregnancy. He argued that leaving them homeless would threaten the lives of both her and the baby.
- In 1919 the island was purchased by the U.S. Navy. Many of the trees and buildings were razed. Piers and a landing strip were built.
- The light was fully automated in 1932 and left unattended. During the next couple decades it suffered a certain amount of decay through vandalism, time, and the elements.
- On July 16, 1956 fire completely gutted the structure leaving only a burned, roofless, shell. To this day the fire's cause is uncertain. However, considering it a hazard, the Navy soon demolished the remains. The Saint Clement's Island Potomac River Museum now sits on the mainland across from the Island. In addition to exhibits on Maryland's founding, the museum has a small exhibit on both the Blakistone and Rag Point Lights. They offer boat-rides to the Island during season.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

BLOODY POINT BAR LIGHT

Location: Off the southern tip of Kent Island, MD, Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: Commissioned 1882



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Type of Structure: Caisson with iron dwelling / tower (spark plug caisson)

Height: 54 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white, with 2 red sectors

Foghorn: Yes – horn backed up by a bell

Appropriation: \$25,000

Range: white – 9 miles, red – 7 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- A light was requested for this location as early as 1868 to mark both the bar and the northern entrance to the Eastern Bay. It was also felt that it could also serve as a backup should the Thomas Point screw-pile light ever succumb to ice. However, Congress did not approve the funds until 1881. At that time \$25,000 was appropriated for a caisson light similar to the one then under construction at Sharps Island. Construction began in June 1882 and was relatively uneventful. The light was commissioned October 1 of the same year. A fourth order Fresnel lens was exhibited.
- In February 1883 a room was added to house a fog bell and striker.
- The winter of 1882 – 3 included several severe storms and the resulting scour caused the light to tilt noticeably just one year after its construction. Riprap stone was immediately set around the base to halt further scour. In 1884 more permanent fixes were made – Sand was dredged from one side to bring the tower to a more upright position, then an apron of over 750 tons of stone was laid at the caisson base. The repair was successful, though a slight list still exists.
- In 1960 a fire, which began in the equipment room, rapidly engulfed the light. The two Coast Guard attendants initially fought the blaze, then barely escaped with their lives before the large fuel tanks exploded. The structure was completely gutted and is now just an iron shell with a steel ladder inside for access to the lantern.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

BODKIN ISLAND / BODKIN POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Bodkin Island / Bodkin Point

Location: Bodkin Island off Bodkin Point, southern side of the entrance to the Patapsco



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River

Date Built: 1823

Type of Structure: Conical stone tower

Height: 35'

Foghorn: No

Builder: Thomas Evans and William Coppeck

Appropriation: \$5,200

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- In 1819 an act of Congress approved funding to place buoys in the Patapsco River and build lights at Bodkin Point, North Point, and Sparrows Point to aid shipping traffic to Baltimore. A survey of possible sites was made and a certain amount of trouble encountered gaining title to the land. Six acres of Bodkin Island, were eventually purchased for \$600. Bids were solicited and the contract was awarded to Thomas Evans and William Coppeck under the charge of U. S. Naval Officer William Barney. Problems with both the contractors ability and character were encountered during the construction. However, it appears that the 35' stone tower and small, one-story, keepers dwelling were completed by Evans and Coppeck in October of 1821. Thirteen lamps were procured from Winslow Lewis and installed shortly thereafter. The light commissioned in January 1822. John Donahoo of Havre de Grace, MD, worked on a bulkhead at the light and may have made later repairs to the structures, both of which had poor foundations.
- In 1851 the station was one of many lights castigated in a Congressional audit of aids to navigation. The auditors found the light maintained by a blacksmith and his family who kept it in filthy, sooty condition.
- In 1856 the completion of Seven Foot Knolls Light obviated the need for the Bodkin Island Light and the station was decommissioned. The keepers dwelling was inhabited by a fisherman for some time and later abandoned. In 1914 the tower collapsed. Since that then the 20+ acre island has been reclaimed by the bay.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

CEDAR POINT LIGHT



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Lighthouse Name: Cedar Point Light

Location: Solomons, Maryland marks the southern side of the mouth of Patuxent River

Date Built: Built in 1896 to mark the river entrance

Type of Structure: cottage-style dwelling

Height: Tower and lantern were 50 feet above the ground; the light was 45 feet above mean high water.

Lens: Fourth order Fresnel lens

Characteristics: flash red at five second intervals visible for seven miles.

Foghorn: In foggy weather ear-numbing fog bell rang twice a minute. Bell & No. 3 Gamewell machine.

Appropriation: \$25,000.00

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- In 1888, the board pointed to the need for the lighthouse: "The harbor at the mouth of Patuxent River is the best on the western side of Chesapeake Bay. Vessels about to enter this harbor from the south pass close to Cedar Point, where the water is deep near the shore. In thick weather sounding is no safeguard, as the change from deep to shoal water is abrupt. The establishment of a light and fog-signal on CP would also be of much value to the general navigation of the bay, as most vessels pass near this point."
- In 1896 the lighthouse was completed and sat on 1.54 acres, it was a cottage-style dwelling 33' by 27' with the roof rising 43' above ground. It was built of brick and wood; 3 stories high with basement with a square tower attach to one corner; first story contained a summer kitchen, second floor 2 storerooms; there was also a brick oil house, a frame boathouse and a small outhouse. The fog bell & apparatus were placed in the upper room of a wood structure 35 ft high and 12 feet by 16 ft.
- The lighthouse was abandoned in the 1920's by the Light House Board. Originally built on a peninsula erosion resulted in the dwelling ending up on an island; the lighthouse was deactivated in 1928 and sold to the Arundel Corporation. They continued to dredge tons of sand from the area in the 1930's
- A replacement beacon was installed in the old fog bell tower owned by the Arundel Sand and Gravel Corporation after a storm destroyed the original one.
- In the late 1950's the foundation of the building was so damaged by the rising waters of the Chesapeake Bay that the day beacon was abandoned. In 1956 the post light is also abandoned. In 1957 the bell tower collapsed and in 1958 the land was acquired by the Navy.
- In 1979 the lighthouse was declared eligible for the National Register of Historic places.



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- Dec 1981 the lighthouse cupola was removed from the dilapidated structure and moved ashore to the Naval Air Test and Evaluation Museum. Demolition of the lighthouse was approved.
- In 1983 the lighthouse was removed from the national Register of Historic Places listing of eligible, not yet listed.
- 1996 the remains of the lighthouse were dismantled, inventoried, and the gabled roof end and bricks were delivered to the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland, to be used in the building of a pavilion at the museum.
- In 2003 the Navy Seabees volunteered to rebuild the base of the cupola. When the new museum construction is completed, the cupola will again be put on display for the public.

Keepers: G.M. Willis, Sr.

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

CHOPTANK RIVER LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Choptank River

Location: Bernoni Point, just south of Oxford inside the Choptank River - entrance to the Tread Avon River and Island Creek

Date Built: First structure 1871, Second structure 1921

Type of Structure: screw-pile

Foghorn: Bell

Builder: First structure - Francis A. Gibbons

Appropriation:

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- A contract to build a screw-pile lighthouse at Bernoni Point in the Choptank River was awarded to Francis A. Gibbons in late 1870. At about this time lightship #25, a wooden schooner that had served as a lightship on the bay since 1827, was anchored at the site and remained there until construction of the station was completed. The Choptank River Light was commissioned in December 1871. The design of this first light was similar to the one at York Spit, Virginia. A hexagonal cottage sat upon ten pilings sleeved with iron. Six of these supported the light,



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with the remaining four designed to protect the others. The lantern was outfitted with a 6th order Fresnel lens.

- In 1881 during a bad freeze ice piled up against the lighthouse shaking the foundation, cracking some of the pilings, and tilting the dwelling slightly. The keeper abandoned the station. When it was later determined that the damage was not to the supporting piles he was asked to resign.
- In 1881 the lens was upgraded to a 5th order Fresnel lens.
- In January 1918 the first light structure was destroyed by ice flows that climbed 30 feet around the structure, eventually knocking the dwelling off its pilings.
- Some thought was given to replacing the light with a hybrid design consisting of a caisson foundation topped by a screw-pile-type cottage. This was deemed too costly and the superstructure from the decommissioned Cherry Stone lighthouse in Virginia was moved to the site and erected atop a new screw-pile foundation. The light was re-commissioned in 1921. This is the only lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay to have been replaced with an existing lighthouse from another location.
- In 1964 the cottage was dismantled.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

CLAY ISLAND LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Clay Island

Location: Clay Island between Nanticoke River and Fishing Bay on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Date Built: 1832

Type of Structure: house with lantern on roof

Builder: John Donahoo

Lens: 6th Order Fresnel lens

Characteristic: Fixed White

Height: 36' above mean high water

Appropriation: \$6,500

Construction Material: 1 dwelling of brick 1 of wood

Status: decommissioned in 1892; house collapsed in 1894

Researched and written by William Simms, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.



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COBB ISLAND BAR / COB POINT BAR LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Cob Island Bar / Cob Point Bar

Location: Potomac River marking the west side of the entrance of the Wicomico River

Date Built: 1889

Type of Structure: Square screw-pile

Height: 40 feet above mean high water

Foghorn: Fog bell

Appropriation: \$15,000

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- A number of new screw-pile lighthouses were built on the Potomac River during the final 25 years of the 19th century. This was due both to increased shipping traffic and the an increased size and draft of the vessels traveling up and down the river. At this time a number of steam ship lines operated on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. These carried cargo and passengers on regularly scheduled routes, much as the airlines do today. Three steamship lines in addition to numerous smaller vessels made regular stops up the Wicomico River which was known for having a narrow and tricky channel at its entrance. Formal requests for a light at Cob Island Bar (a.k.a. Cob Point Bar) began in 1875 and the request was renewed in 1885 and again in 1887. At that time Congress appropriated \$15,000 for the light. Construction of the square, screw-pile, light was delayed until November 1889. The materials were gathered and the cottage was pre-fabricated at Lazaretto Depot using the same plans as the light at Tangier Sound in Virginia. These were brought to the site in November and the light was erected in a little over a month. It was commissioned on Christmas Day, December 25, 1889 and exhibited a fourth order Fresnel lens.
- In 1939 the lighthouse caught fire and was so badly damaged that the remains had to be torn down. It was replaced by a bell and automated light.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

CONCORD POINT LIGHT



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Location: Waterfront, Havre de Grace, MD, marking the meeting of the Susquehanna River and the northern tip of the Chesapeake Bay.

Date Built: Commissioned 1827

Type of Structure: Stone tower with detached keepers dwelling

Height: 38 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Fixed white light privately shown (not an active ATON)

Foghorn: No

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$4,000

Range: 8 miles

Status: Standing, but decommissioned

Historical Information:

- Congress initially appropriated \$2,500 for construction and outfitting of a light and keepers dwelling at Concord Point. After a fair amount of difficulty, the government gained title to a small plot of land for the tower in 1826. However, due to commercial use of the waterfront, land for the keepers dwelling had to be purchased further inland. The appropriation proved inadequate, and another \$1,500 was added the next year. John Donahoo, who had built other Bay lights and was also a native of Havre de Grace, was the low bidder at \$3,500 and was awarded the contract. (\$493 went for purchase and setup of the lighting apparatus.) Both the conical stone tower, built of Port Deposit granite and coated with "Roman cement", and a one story keepers dwelling were completed by November of 1827. The original lighting apparatus consisted of 9 lamps, each with a 16 inch reflector.
- The first keeper was an Irish immigrant named John O'Neill who was appointed by President John Quincy Adams. O'Neill was a local hero. During the War of 1812, as a local militia lieutenant he had single-handedly manned 3 cannons in the face of a British bombardment after the 50 men he was in charge of fled. Eventually he, too, had to flee the approaching British, firing back at them with his musket as he retreated. Several of O'Neill's descendents followed in his footsteps as keepers of this light.
- In 1855 the original lamps and reflectors were replaced with a steamer's lens.
- In 1869 a sixth order Fresnel lens was exhibited. The lantern was also replaced with a more modern design either at this time, or a year or two before.
- In 1884 the keepers dwelling was expanded with the addition of a second story.
- In 1891 the sixth order lens was replaced by a fifth order Fresnel lens.
- In 1920 the light was electrified and the keepers dwelling sold. (It became an inn for a while.)



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- In 1975 the light was decommissioned by the Coast Guard and the Fresnel lens was stolen. Four years later, local citizens formed the Friends of Concord Point Lighthouse and took over maintenance of this historic landmark. The tower has been restored and is now open to the public on a seasonal basis. They have also bought the keepers dwelling and plans are going forward to restore it. The (unrelated) Havre de Grace Maritime Museum is set to open its new facility half a block up the road in June of 2001.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

COVE POINT LIGHT

Location: Western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, 4 miles north of the entrance to the Patuxent River

Date Built: Commissioned December 1828

Type of Structure: Conical brick tower with detached keeper's dwelling. Separate fog bell building.

Height: 38 feet

Characteristics: Flashing white

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$6,000

Range: 19 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- The lighthouse was built in 1828. Several years later in 1837 fog bell was also installed.
- In 1855 the light was improved when a fifth order Fresnel lens replaced the original reflector system. It was improved even more when in 1857 a larger fourth order Fresnel lens was installed.
- In 1858 the fog bell apparatus was replaced with a weight driven clock-work type mechanism.
- In 1901 the current bell shed was built to house the engine that powered the second class Daboll trumpet fog horn. There were several changes to the fog



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signal which was eventually removed sometime in 2005. The back up bell to be used as emergency back up was mounted on a frame to the roof. That bell is still there today.

- In 1912 the characteristic was changed from fixed varied by flashes to an occulting white light every 30 seconds.
- In 1928 the light was converted to electricity (It was kerosene before.) A radio beacon was also installed at the station.
- In 1969 the air-powered horn was replaced with an electric diaphone signal.
- In 1984 the radio beacon was discontinued.
- In 1986 the station was automated. An automatic fog detector and an automated lamp changer was installed.
- In 2000 the light station was turned over to Calvert County and is open for visitation thru the Calvert County Marine Museum. This is still an active aid to navigation but the buildings are being maintained by the museum.

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

THE FOUR CRAIGHILL CHANNEL RANGE LIGHTS

Range lights are used in pairs to mark a channel. Each one of the pair supports a light of different heights. When the two lights are aligned one is in the channel. Named after an engineer and longtime member of the lighthouse board, Craighill Channel cuts roughly five miles off the southern approach to Baltimore, entering Brewerton Channel (the main Patapsco River / Baltimore channel). As a major segment of the approach to the commercial ports of Baltimore this was a very important channel and the need to use it at night was acutely felt. The four Craighill Channel range lighthouses are really two separate ranges built a bit over ten years apart. The older and larger pair is the Lower Range and its construction coincided with a major dredging and enlarging of the Channel in 1870.

The following four lights were listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 2 December 2002.

Craighill Channel Lower Range – Front and Rear Lights

Location: Entrance to the Patapsco River, MD, Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: Commissioned 1873 (using temporary lights), Fully completed in 1875



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Type of Structure: Rear light – Pyramidal iron frame surrounding a plate-encased stairway leading to double-decked lantern. Front light – caisson with circular dwelling / tower.

Height: Rear light - 105 feet, Front light – 39 feet (main light), 22 feet – range.

Characteristics: Fixed white for both range lights, The front light also has a flashing white main light with one red sector.

Range: 16 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Craighill Channel Upper Range ("Cut-Off Channel") – Front and Rear Lights

Location: Entrance to the Patapsco River, MD, Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: Commissioned 1886

Type of Structure: Rear – pyramidal iron skeleton supporting a square shaft leading to the lantern. Front – brick octagonal tower.

Height: Rear – 64 feet above mean high water, Front – 15 feet.

Characteristics: Fixed red for both range lights

Foghorn: No

Appropriation: \$25,000

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- Ten years after the completion of the Craighill Channel Lower Range Lights an appropriation was requested for a second set of range lights to mark a new “cut-off” channel between the Craighill and Brewerton Channels. These lights were designed and built on a much less ambitious scale than their older siblings.
- **The Upper Range Rear Light:** The land for the rear light was purchased in the summer of 1885 and by the Fall work had begun. The tower consists of a simple pyramidal iron frame, that surrounds a square wood-encased stairway that is covered with corrugated iron. A keepers dwelling was built nearby.
- **The Upper Range Front Light:** Initially, it was hoped that the old North Point Rear Light tower could be converted for use as the new front light. However, it ended up being unsuitable and was dismantled. The old foundation was in good shape, so a new, smaller, octagonal, brick, tower was built upon it. Initially a small bridge connected the light to the shore, where a keepers dwelling was built. However, this was destroyed by a storm in 1893. Rather than re-build the bridge, It was decided that the keeper would move into the less than twelve foot square



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lighthouse and use a skiff to get to shore. Because of the cramped conditions, the lantern had to be moved to the outside of the tower.

- Both lights were fully automated in 1929 and are still active.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

DRUM POINT LIGHT

Location: Originally at the northern mouth of the Patuxent River. Moved in 1973 to the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, MD.

Date Built: Commissioned 1883

Type of Structure: 1 ½ story hexagonal screw-pile cottage

Height: 46 feet

Characteristics: Inactive

Foghorn: Yes - Bell

Appropriation: \$25,000

Range: 12 miles

Status: Standing, but moved to a museum setting

Historical Information:

- Efforts to build a lighthouse at this point began in the 1850s. Jurisdiction over the site was gained in 1853 and a Congressional appropriation of \$5,000 was granted in 1854. However, issues arose regarding title to the site and the plans were dropped.
- In August of 1882 Congress authorized \$25,000 for set of range lights for the river, apparently without consulting with the Lighthouse Board. Given that the amount was insufficient and range lights not needed, a single screw-pile light was decided upon instead. The light was commissioned August 20, 1883 and exhibited a fourth order Fresnel lens with prisms covering only the 270 degrees needed for visibility from the water.
- Built not far from shore, the light originally stood in ten feet of water. In contrast to many other lights that have suffered from erosion, steady silting over the years slowly brought the shore out to this light. Around the turn of the century it was possible to build a bridge from the shore to the light. This enabled the keeper to move his family in with him (something normally not allowed in off-shore lights at that time). By the 1970s, the shoreline had enveloped the light.



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- The light weathered the years fairly well. Some damage was suffered from storm of 1933, which flooded the light and sank its tender.
- In 1944 the light was electrified.
- In 1960 the light was automated.
- In 1962 the light was discontinued, its function handled by a lighted buoy. Neglect and vandalism, including several fires, caused considerable damage over the next decade and a half.
- In 1974 the Calvert Historical Society was given the light, but not the site on which it stood. The following year, with the help of the B.F. Diamond Construction Company (who was then building the new Route 4 bridge by Solomons) the solid iron pilings were cut and the light was moved by crane and barge to the grounds of the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, MD. It has been completely restored and is open to the public. More information is available at: www.calvertmarinemuseum.com

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

FISHING BATTERY LIGHT

Location: Fishing Battery Island, South of Havre de Grace, MD, Northern Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: Commissioned in 1853

Type of Structure: 1 ½ story, 36 x 16 foot, brick dwelling with lantern on roof

Height: 32 feet (original), 38 feet (current steel tower)

Characteristics: Fixed white light (original light in 1853); Flashing white, with two red sectors (current steel tower)

Foghorn: No

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$5,000

Range: White sector 4 miles, Red sector 3 miles (current steel tower light)

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- Fishing Battery is a man-made island just south of Havre de Grace, MD in the northern Chesapeake Bay, 2 ½ miles below the mouth of the Susquehanna



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River. In 1851 Congress appropriated \$50,000 for a light to work in conjunction with the Turkey Point and Concord Point lights to guide vessels to the mouth of the river. A contract was awarded in 1852 to John Donahoo. This was the last lighthouse built by Donahoo (out of 12 total) and was the last Maryland lighthouse built under the administration of the 5th Auditor of the Treasury, Stephen Pleasonton. Interestingly, Donahoo had once owned the Island and it had once been known as Donahoo Battery. He brokered the Government's purchase. The one and a half story brick dwelling, with an old-style lantern on the roof, was completed by early 1853 and outfitted with 5 lamps and reflectors. A keeper was appointed January 7th. In the mid-1850s the original multiple lamp and reflector lighting system was replaced by a sixth order Fresnel Lens

- In 1864 the lantern was replaced because the original was deemed an old design of "exceedingly defective character"
- In 1867 the lantern was replaced again (as were those on the Pooles Island, Turkey Point, and Concord Point Lights)
- In 1899 a fifth order Fresnel lens was installed
- From 1880 to 1891 the Island was leased by the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and used for a fish hatchery. They made many improvements, including raising the grade of the island. As a result, the lower floor of the lighthouse had to be removed and re-laid in 1887. At this time the dwelling was enlarged and the lower level may have been redesigned as a boathouse.
- In 1921 the light was moved to a 38 foot steel tower next to the original lighthouse and converted to acetylene gas. The light was automated in 1939 when the U. S. Coast Guard took over management of all aids to navigation. It now runs off solar cells and batteries and is still active. The original building is now a historic landmark.
- In 1942 the Island was transferred to the Department of the Interior and is now under the jurisdiction of the Blackwater Wildlife Refuge.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

FOG POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Fog Point Light

Location: North-western tip of Smith Island (an isolated community of oystermen and fisherman in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay); it marked the narrow passage north of Smith Island through Kedges Strait.

Date Built: 1827



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Type of Structure: White house with a stone tower with lantern placed on top of the roof dwelling. The land being a remote marshy island caused some concerns on the condition of the structure ten years later.

Height: focal plane 40' above mean high water

Characteristics: Fixed white

Lens: Original 10 lamps with 16 inch reflectors were replaced with fifth order Fresnel installed in August 18, 1855.

Foghorn: None listed

Appropriation: The few acres were purchased for \$200.00; the lighthouse was built for \$3,500.00 by John Donohoo

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- Discontinued and abandoned in 1875 with all traces of it have disappeared. This happened when Solomon's Lump Lighthouse a mile-and-a-half northeast was completed in September 1875.

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

FORT CARROLL LIGHT

Location: Patapsco River, MD – Just before the Frances Scot Key Bridge

Date Built: 1854

Type of Structure: Square wooden tower

Height:

Characteristics: Not active

Status: Standing, but in very poor shape. Not active

Historical Information:

- Fort Carroll is a man-made island in the middle of the Patapsco River built to protect the approach to Baltimore. Construction on the fort began in 1847 and Robert E. Lee oversaw a phase before becoming superintendent of West Point. Fortifications of this type rapidly became obsolete and the fort was not completed to plans. It was minimally gunned during the Civil War, abandoned after World War I, and used again briefly during World War II by the Coast Guard.



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- The small wooden lighthouse was first built in 1854 and was moved several times during the Fort's construction. It marked the turn from the Brewerton Channel to the Fort McHenry Channel going into and out of Baltimore Harbor. The keeper lived in a separate dwelling on the Fort's grounds.
- The lighthouse was completely re-built in 1898 and this second tower is the one visible today.
- The light was discontinued in 1931. After World War II both the fort and the lighthouse were abandoned. While still standing, it is in an extreme state of decay.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

FORT WASHINGTON LIGHT

Location: Marks a point on the Potomac River with Swan Creek on the north and the Piscataway Creek on the South. The tower is located on the grounds of Fort Washington National Park, on the Maryland side of the Potomac River, across from Mount Vernon.

Date Built: Light established 1857, Current tower constructed 1882

Type of Structure: Converted wooden pyramidal fog-bell tower with detached keepers dwelling.

Builder: Lazaretto Work Shop

Height: 28 feet.

Characteristics: Fixed White

Range: 7 miles

Foghorn: 1400 Metal Bell with single blow every 15 seconds.

Builder:

Fog Bell Manufacturer: E. J. Codd Co., Baltimore, MD.

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- In 1857 a lantern was hoisted on top of an 18 ½ 'cast-iron pole. * In 1870 the first "true" lighthouse was built. The light was fitted with a sixth order Fresnel lens. The current fog bell tower was built in 1882 to house the 1400 fog bell.
- In 1885 the keeper's house was built near the bell tower.



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- As the fort grew the gun batteries and pier blocked the light from the second tower. There were several complaints about the quality of the light.
- Funds were requested to heighten the light tower, but the request was denied. In an effort to address concerns about the obscured light the 1901 the bell tower was modified to raise the height of the bell tower and a small automated fixed white light was installed. This was supposed to be a temporary fix, but a replacement tower was never built. In 1901 the tower built in 1870 was also torn down.
- In 1920 the fixed white light was changed to a fixed red light.
- In 1954 the station became unmanned.
- In 1970 the bell mechanism broke and was not repaired.
- In 2005 the tower was turned over to the National Park Service.

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

GREAT SHOALS LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Great Shoals

Location: Near the mouth of the Wicomico River, Chesapeake Bay, Eastern Shore

Date Built: 1884

Type of Structure: Square screw-pile

Height: 37 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Fixed white (when in service)

Foghorn: Bell

Appropriation: \$15,000

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- In 1882, in response to a request from the Maryland General Assembly, the Lighthouse Board requested funding for a screw-pile lighthouse at Great Shoals. The purpose of the light was to guide vessels through a narrow channel entering and leaving the Wicomico River on Maryland's, Chesapeake Bay, Eastern Shore.
- Congress appropriated the funds in March 1883. Construction was delayed while site surveys and borings were taken and the contract for the ironwork was bid out. The square cottage was pre-fabricated at the Lazaretto Depot in Baltimore and all the components were shipped to the construction site in July



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1884. The light was completed in 32 days and commissioned August 15th. The lantern exhibited a fifth order Fresnel lens.

- Then abandoned, the lighthouse was dismantled in 1966.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

GREENBURY POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Greenbury Point Light

Location: North side of entrance to Severn River and Annapolis Harbor, Annapolis, MD

Date Built: 1848

Type of Structure: Hexagonal wooden tower on center of keepers dwelling

Height: focal plane 39' above mean high water

Characteristics: Fixed white

Lens: In 1848 had 9 lamps and parabolic reflectors replaced in 1855 with Sixth order Fresnel lens and later with Fourth order

Foghorn: Stevens Bell Machine – double blow every 10 sec.

Appropriation: Just over two acres of land purchased for \$367.00

Range:

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- The annual reports of the Lighthouse Board stated that by 1878, the land around Greenbury Point was washing away, and eventually the lighthouse would be in danger. "The light, in its present position, is of little use, and is so small that it can hardly be distinguished from the lights of the Naval Academy and the harbor of Annapolis.
- It was deactivated in 1891, being replaced by offshore Greenbury Point Shoal Lighthouse. The shore station was discontinued, but the old lighthouse was retained as a day mark until it finally collapsed.

Keepers: Levin Wheeler (1848-1850), Robert Wilson (1853-1859), Benjamin Smithicum (1859-1861), William Freeman (1861-1862), Benjamin Suit (1867-1891)

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



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HAWKINS POINT LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Hawkins Point Light; also known as Brewerton Range Front Light and Brewerton Channel Range Front Light

Location: Off Hawkins Point more than halfway up the Patapsco River (for the Brewerton Channel) leading into the port of Baltimore; nearest Town or City is Curtis Bay, Maryland

Date Built: 1868

Type of Structure: White square two story structure built on screw pile in six feet of water

Height: 34 feet

Characteristics: Fixed white

Lens: Lighthouse with two lights: Each fitted with 2 Franklin lamps.

Foghorn: None noted in inspection report.

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- 1886 disputes started with the land owner, the Light House Board tried to purchase the land at the point but declined the exorbitant price, the case went to the U.S. Circuit Court for resolution ruling in favor of the Light House Board granting easement to send "unobstructed rays of light over the land" (LTB pg 78)
- One light on top of a wooden tower at a 70' focal plane was removed in the early 1900s with a lower light in the dwelling's top floor at a 28' height.
- The lighthouse was torn down and replaced with a tower in 1924 (LTB 109).

Keepers: James Murray Waterworth (c. 1880s), William Raabe (c. 1915)

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

HOLLAND ISLAND BAR LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Holland Island Bar Light Station

Location: Off Holland Island in the Holland Straits off the main channel of the Chesapeake Bay, slightly northeast of Point Lookout.

Date Built: 1889



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Type of Structure: White hexagonal dwelling on a cast iron screw-pile foundation.

Height: 42 feet above the water's surface.

Characteristics: 4,500 candlepower light emitted white flashes visible for 12 miles twice every 10 seconds.

Foghorn: Diaphone.

Appropriation:

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- The station was established in 1889.
- Sometime in 1957 a U.S. Navy aircraft on bombing practice damaged the light station.
- As of 1957 the station was manned by four Coast Guardsmen: BML1 Arnold W. Doyle; SN David L. Ferrell; EN3 William T. Scott; and EN2 Donald Warren.
- In November 1959 bids were invited to demolish the current light station and build a new one. The bid called for: "demolition of the existing one and one-half story wood-frame dwelling and storage platform underneath the dwelling, and construction of a concrete deck, concrete block house and steel tower." The new light would be automated.
- The Coast Guard lit the newly constructed light sometime in early to mid-1960.

HOOPER ISLAND LIGHT

Location: Eastern side of the Chesapeake Bay off Hooper Island.

Date Built: 1902

Type of Structure: Caisson with iron dwelling / tower (spark plug)

Height: 63 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: Variety Iron Works Co. / Toomey Brothers

Appropriation: \$60,000

Range: 9 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:



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- In 1897 funds were requested for a light to protect mariners from 30 miles of shoals on the Eastern side off the main Chesapeake Bay channel between Cove Point and Smith Point lights. In July the following year \$60,000 was approved and a contract was awarded in 1899 to the Variety Iron Works Company. The materials were delivered over a month late and their subcontractor failed begin work. The contract was consequently re-bid and re-awarded in 1900 to Toomey Brothers of Guiford, CT for \$29,000 (the materials having already been delivered by Variety Iron Works). The caisson was partially assembled in Baltimore and towed down the Bay. Further layers were added at a harbor in the Patuxent River and from there it was towed to the construction site and sunk in July 1901. The construction of earlier caisson foundations entailed floating them to the site and slowly filling them with stone and concrete, adding layers of ironwork as the caisson was slowly sunk to the bottom. While some bottom preparation was performed, the caisson was seated largely by its own weight. In contrast to these earlier lights, the new Hooper Island caisson was sunk using the “pneumatic” method. Like the earlier caissons, it was filled with cement and sunk into place. However, an air shaft was installed through the concrete, leading to a working chamber at the bottom. This allowed men to work within the caisson excavating the site’s sand bottom through the aid of an air pump. (The caisson workers were sometimes referred to as “sand hogs”.)
- The caisson was completed in October and surrounded by rip rap stone to prevent scour. Work continued on the tower through February when it was halted due to winter weather.
- The light was completed, with little in the way of mishaps, and a fourth order Fresnel lens was exhibited, on June 01, 1902.
- In the late 1930s an air diaphragm foghorn and generator system was installed.
- The lighthouse was fully automated in November of 1961.
- In the mid-1970s the Fresnel lens was stolen.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

- Lighthouse was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2 December 2002.

HOOPER STRAIT LIGHT

Location: Originally off the northern entrance to Tangier Sound, between Bloodsworth Island and the eastern shore mainland in the Chesapeake Bay. Moved in 1966 to the



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Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, MD

Date Built: First structure (destroyed by ice) – 1867. Current structure – 1879

Type of Structure: Screw-pile

Appropriation: \$20,000

Characteristics: Inactive

Foghorn: Bell

Status: Standing, but moved to a museum setting

Historical Information:

- A lightship station was established at Hooper Strait as early as 1827. Several different ships served duty there, one of which was destroyed during the Civil War by Confederate raiders. As was common on the Chesapeake Bay, the lightship station was succeeded by a screw-pile lighthouse in 1867. This was the first of two screw-pile style lights at Hooper Strait. It was a square dwelling with a fog bell that was rung via a clockwork mechanism. It stood until January 1877 when ice flows tore the iron sleeve piles out from under it, causing the wooden lighthouse to collapse into the Bay. The two keepers made a perilous escape, dragging the station's small boat for 24 hours across the ice. The mostly submerged lighthouse was later found 5 miles away and some of the equipment, including the lamp, lens, and bell, was salvaged.
- In January 1879 Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a second screw-pile light. The foundation for this one consisted of seven, 10 inch thick, solid wrought iron, (true) screw-piles which were screwed 25 feet into the shoal. As was common, the wooden dwelling was pre-fabricated at Lazaretto Point Depot in Baltimore and shipped to the light station site. This second structure, exhibiting a fifth order Fresnel lens, was commissioned October 15, 1879.
- In December of 1954 the light was fully automated. The windows were boarded up and the dwelling was largely left to the elements.
- The cottage was scheduled for destruction in 1966, as part of an overall Coast Guard policy of dismantling old screw-pile dwellings. However, it was acquired in the nick of time by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, MD, 40 miles away. A number of corporations donated goods and services and in November that year the lighthouse was cut from its pilings and barged up the Bay to its new home. It has been completely restored and is now open to the public along with the museum's extensive other exhibits. More information on the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum is available at: www.cbmm.org

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.



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JANES ISLAND LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Janes [James] Island

Location: mouth of Little Annemessex River on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Date Built: 1867

Type of Structure: screwpile light

Characteristics: fixed white light

Lens: fourth order (L. Sautter & Co., Paris)

Height: 38' above mean high water

Foghorn: fog bell struck by machinery every 15 sec.

Construction Materials: Wood

Deactivated: 1935

Status: Destroyed

Historical Information:

- A lightship marked this location beginning in 1853. In 1866 it was replaced by a relief vessel because the lightship was in need of repair.
- A screwpile lighthouse replaced the relief vessel in 1867.
- In January of 1879 the first screwpile was damaged by ice and a second one was built to replace it. This one was exactly like the second Hooper Strait Light and showed a fixed white light.
- This must have been a particularly icy location as in the winter of 1893 the light was again visited by ice and was damaged. Apparently repairs were made and the second Janes Island light lasted until 1935 when ice again damaged the light – this time it sinking it.
- The next light installed in 1936 was a skeletal tower erected on a caisson base which stands 37 feet high. This is what stands there today.

Researched and written by William Simms, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

LAZARETTO POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Lazeretto Point

Location: Lazaretto Point

Date Built: 1831



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Type of Structure: Conical tower
Operational: No
Date Automated: 1916
Deactivated: 1954
Height: 31'
Foghorn: bell tower
Construction Material: Brick
Original Lens: eleven oil lamps with reflectors
Characteristics: fixed white light.
Status: Original demolished, a replica stands in its place

Historical Information:

- Built in 1831 by John Donahoo to mark the harbor entrance for the increase in maritime traffic into Baltimore Harbor. The site was already owned by the government and had been the site of a smallpox hospital which had already been closed. Originally it had eleven oil lamps and reflectors. A keeper's house and a fog bell tower were also built at that time.
- In 1852 a fourth order Fresnel lens was installed.
- In 1863 Lazaretto point became the site of a lighthouse depot. The depot serviced many of the lights in the bay providing storage and re-supply to the lighthouse tenders. Many of the lighthouses in the bay were prefabricated at the Lazaretto depot and then placed on their supports.
- In 1870 the fixed white light was changed to red.
- In 1914 the light was electrified and the lens was changed to a 3-½ order.
- By 1920 the light was considered less useful because of all the other buildings around it and in 1926 the tower was torn down and a steel tower was erected to replace it. As more and more the of lights were automated the work of the depot was cut back and much of the work was shifted Portsmouth.
- In 1936 a fire destroyed the old hospital building and damaged the keeper's dwelling. A new keeper's house was build using materials from the old keeper's house and the old hospital building.
- In 1954 the steel tower was torn down as well.
- In 1958 the depot was shut down and the land was sold. The area became a shipping terminal.
- In 1985 the replica was built in honor of Norman G. Rukert Sr. who had owned the Rukert Terminals Corporation and who had been a historian who had loved the Baltimore waterfront. The original plans for Lazaretto Light were found in that National Archives and used to build the replica. The replica is not an active aid.

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



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LEADING POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Leading Point Lighthouse (a.k.a. Brewerton Range Rear Light)

Location: Patapsco River

Date Built: 1868

Type of Structure: tower on roof of dwelling.

Operational: No

Deactivated: 1924

Foghorn: No record of foghorn.

Construction Material:

Original Lens: 4th order Franklin lamps

Characteristic: Fixed white light

Status: Destroyed

Historical Information:

- Tower was built in 1868 only a mile from Hawkins Point Light.
- The 1870 inspection report shows keeper John Cooper tended the light. The Keeper's wife occupied the building with him. There was no assistant keeper.
- In 1915 William Raabe was appointed keeper to both lights and they were considered range lights.
- In 1924 the light was replaced by a steel tower.
- At some point it was torn down and deactivated.

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

LOVE POINT LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Love Point Light

Location: near north point of Kent Island in Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: 1872

Type of Structure: hexagonal cottage type screwpile lighthouse

Characteristics: white flash every six seconds with red sector for nearby shoals.

Lens: 3-1/2 order Fresnel, Henry Lepaute, Paris

Appropriation: \$15,000

Construction Material: Wood



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Foghorn: Yes, Bell made by Register & Son, Baltimore, MD; Rung every 8 sec.

Automated: 1953

Deactivated: 1964

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- Ice was a special threat to the lighthouse. During the first winter in 1872, ice severed several of the lighthouse's pilings.
- In 1879 ice again threatened the light but did no further damage.
- Light was automated in 1953;
- The house taken down in 1964 and the original pile foundation supports a small flashing signal and fog bell today.

Researched and written by Bill Simms, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

LOWER CEDAR POINT LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Lower Cedar Point Light

Location: Middle of the Potomac River downstream from the Potomac River Bridge (US 301) near Dahlgren, VA; nearest Town/City is Morgantown, MD

Date Built: Built in 1867

Type of Structure: Square cottage-style Screw pile lighthouse

Height:

Characteristics: October 1896 the red sector was removed and the fourth order light showed a fixed white light.

Foghorn: Fog bell struck at intervals of twelve seconds

Appropriation:

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- Lighthouse replaced lightships (1825-1861) a small, wooden, sailing schooner showing a single light. In 1861 the lightship was burned and destroyed by Confederate forces; a second Lightship #24, a 77', 2-masted sailing with each mast holding an iron day-marker and 2 lanterns, each having 8 oil lamps provided services in 1864.



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- Lighthouse was destroyed by fire on Christmas Day 1893; a lens lantern was immediately placed to mark this important navigation point in the Potomac River; the lighthouse was rebuilt in 1896.
- Lighthouse was deactivated in 1951 and the cottage was dismantled and replaced with a skeleton tower built on the original lighthouse foundation. The skeleton tower is visible from Cedar Beach on the Maryland side and from the Harry Nice Bridge (US 301) over the river.

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

MARYLAND POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Maryland Point

Location: Potomac River

Date Built: 1892

Type of Structure: Hexagonal screw-pile with dormer windows

Foghorn: Fog Bell

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- The Lighthouse Board requested an appropriation for a light to mark the shoal at Maryland Point in 1887 and again in 1888 and 1889. In 1890 Congress approved \$50,000 for construction of a light. Originally a caisson structure was envisioned – hence the sizable appropriation. However, after additional tests of the hard river bottom, the engineers decided that screw-piles augmented with 5 foot wide disks to stabilize them, would work. The cottage was constructed at Lazaretto Depot while the ironwork was ordered. In October 1892 the materials were loaded onto scows and brought to the site along with the construction crews by the tenders *Jessamine* and *Thistle*. The resulting white hexagonal cottage, with a red roof and exhibiting a fourth order Fresnel lens, was completed in December. The light was commissioned December 15, 1892.
- In 1954 the light was automated.
- The light was decommissioned in 1963. At that time the cottage was dismantled and the pieces moved to the Portsmouth Light Depot.



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Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

MATHIAS POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Mathias Point Shoal

Location: Potomac River opposite the mouth of the Port Tobacco River

Date Built: 1876

Type of Structure: Hexagonal, three level, screw-pile

Foghorn: Fog bell

Appropriation: \$40,000

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- In apparent surprise to the Lighthouse Board, a Congressional appropriation of \$9,000 was received in June 1872 to construct a lighthouse in the Potomac River at Shipping Point by Quantico Creek. An engineering survey determined that this was an inappropriate location and the money was returned with a request for a new appropriation for two lights to be built 24 miles down the river. One was to be at a major and dangerous bend named Mathias Point and the second near by at Port Tobacco Flats. An appropriation of \$40,000 was received in 1874. Initially a day marker tower was approved for Mathias Point and a light for Port Tobacco Flats. However, construction was delayed for almost two years and during this time the sites were switched. Construction commenced in September 1876 and, since screw-pile lights were pre-fabricated off site, the light went up quickly. It was commissioned December 20, 1876 and exhibited a fifth order Fresnel lens. The design of this lighthouse was unique among screw-piles on the Bay. It had three levels and a great amount of detailed woodwork.
- The light was automated in 1951 and was monitored by the keeper of Maryland Point Light.
- In 1961 the light was decommissioned and dismantled.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.



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NORTH POINT RANGE LIGHTS

Location: North side of the entrance to the Patapsco River as an aid to ships entering Baltimore harbors in Maryland.

Date Built: 1822

Type of Structure: Two lights with stone masonry towers. Eastern light (lower) stood in 3' of water, connected to shore by a 200' footbridge; western light tower (upper) stood in 5' of water, 700 yards from the eastern light, and 100 yards from the shore. Keeper's house was a 20' x 34' stone dwelling on shore

Height: Focal plane of Upper Tower 40' above mean high tide, Focal plane of Lower tower 34' above mean high tide.

Lens: Both Upper Tower and Lower Tower - 6th order with 6 fountain lamps and 12 burners.

Characteristics: Fixed White

Foghorn: None noted on inspection record.

Status: Decommissioned in 1873 and left to deteriorate.

Historical Information:

- Benjamin Henry Latrobe submitted drawings for the North Point lighthouses shortly before his death in 1820.
- The lighthouse builders proved so unsatisfactory that Mr. Donahoo was called in to shore up the structures; records of the city council in Havre de Grace show that Mr. Donahoo resigned to work on the North Point Lighthouse on November 30, 1830.
- The keeper, who tended both lights, was paid almost double the annual wages.
- Complaints regarding the light's poor visibility were common; the values of their location frequently questioned, and were replaced by the Craighill Channel Range lights built in 1873.
- The front light of the Craighill Channel upper range sits upon the foundation of the earlier North Point Light.

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

PINEY POINT LIGHT

Location: Piney Point, on the Maryland side of the Potomac River, 14 miles from its mouth.



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Date Built: 1836

Type of Structure: Conical brick tower with detached keepers dwelling

Height: 34 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Inactive (light maintained by the St. Clements Island Potomac River Museum)

Foghorn: Fog bell tower (no longer standing)

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$5,000

Range: 10 miles at commissioning, 11 miles with the Fresnel lens.

Status: Standing, but no longer an active ATON

Historical Information:

- This conical brick tower and one story keepers dwelling was built in 1836 by John Donahoo at a cost of \$3,488 for the construction work and \$400 for the lantern. (The remaining funds would have gone towards the lighting apparatus and purchase of the land.) Interestingly, Donahoo claimed to have lost money on the project. Named after the loblolly pine trees that are common in this area, this is the oldest lighthouse on the Potomac River. It is known as the "Lighthouse of Presidents" because several U.S. heads of state, beginning with James Madison and continuing through Teddy Roosevelt, spent their summers here.
- In 1855 the old, 10 lamp / 10 reflector, Argand style lighting system was replaced with a fifth order Fresnel lens. This gave the light a range of 11 miles.
- In 1880 a fog bell tower was constructed next to the lighthouse.
- In 1884 the keepers dwelling was expanded with the addition of a second story, porch, and new windows.
- In 1936 the fog bell was replaced by a reed horn (the bell being kept as a backup).
- During World War II Piney Point was used by the Navy to test torpedoes. At the end of the war, the U.S. captured an experimental German submarine (the U-1105) which had been coated with rubber in an attempt to make it invisible to sonar. In 1949, after a few years of examination, the submarine was used to test a new type of depth charge and was intentionally sunk off the Point.
- In the 1950s a chief petty officer's cottage and garage were built.
- In 1954 the bell tower had to be torn down because of damage suffered during Hurricane Hazel. It was not re-built.
- The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1964. However, the Coast Guard continued to use the dwelling for staff housing for the next 15 years. In 1980 the lighthouse and associated buildings were transferred to the St. Mary's County Department of Parks and Recreation. They are now under the management of



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the St. Clement's Island Potomac River Museum about 20 miles up the road. The chief petty officer's cottage has been converted into a small gift shop with exhibits on the light and submarine. (St. Clements Island is the site of the landing of the Arc of London and the Dove which brought the first English settlers to found the Maryland colony. St. Clements Island was also known for a while as Blakistone Island, and had its own light house. In addition to exhibits on Maryland's founding, the St. Clements Island Potomac River Museum has exhibits on both the Blakistone and Rag Point Lights. More information is available at: www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/museum.htm)

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

POINT LOOKOUT LIGHT

Location: Northern mouth of the Potomac River

Date Built: 1830

Type of Structure: Wooden dwelling with lantern on top.

Height: Originally 24 feet, now 41 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Inactive

Foghorn: Fog bell tower (no longer standing)

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$4,500

Range: 12 miles (when active)

Status: Standing, but Inactive

Historical Information:

- Efforts to place a light on this point, which marks the northern side of the entrance to the Potomac River date back to 1825 when Congress appropriated \$1,800 for the task. However, the landowner refused to accept the Government's offer, instead pricing the desolate point of land at many times the going rate. A commission was established to set a reasonable price and the owner was later forced to sell. Interestingly, the Government went ahead and constructed the light while the land sale was still in arbitration. Congress revised its appropriation in 1828, authorizing \$4,500 for a small lighthouse. John Donahoo was awarded the construction contract and erected the one story white brick dwelling with a lantern tower rising through the center of its red roof. James Geddes received the



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contract for the lamps and reflectors. It was commissioned September 20, 1830. In December 1832, a bit over two years later, the government finally received deed to the land.

- During the Civil War the point was host first to a sprawling military hospital and, after 1863, to a Union prisoner of war camp. This camp became notorious for its squalid conditions and the thousands of Confederate prisoners who died there. Its existence also gave rise to numerous ghost stories after the light was decommissioned.
- A fourth order Fresnel lens was installed in the 1850s shortly after the reorganization of all U.S. lights under the newly created Lighthouse Board. The lamp was upgraded again in 1860.
- In 1872 a fog bell tower was constructed. As was common at the time, the bell tower contained a set of weights and a mechanism somewhat similar to a grandfather clock that could be wound for automatic ringing of the bell.
- In 1883 the lighthouse was substantially enlarged so that two families of keepers could live there. A second story was added, along with new porches and the height of the lantern was increased from 24 to 41 feet. At this time the Point was also made into a buoy depot.
- In 1888 a new, taller, fog bell tower was built as an attachment to the east end of the coal shed. The bell had to be relocated because the newer buoy and coal sheds had blocked the sound of the bell. At the same time, efforts were undertaken to combat shore erosion, which had become a problem.
- In 1899 the lamp was upgraded to a new model fourth order lens.
- In 1965 the light was replaced by an off-shore steel tower and shortly thereafter the property was turned over to the U.S. Navy.
- In 1968 the bell tower was disconnected from the coal shed and moved to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, MD (www.cbmm.org). The structure is no longer inhabited, but basic actions have been taken over the years to maintain it. The Navy maintains a communication tower next to the old light and both are fenced off. However, it adjoins a small park and one can get close enough to get a good look at, and photograph the exterior. The lighthouse is open to the public once a year in November.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

POINT NO POINT LIGHT

Location: Western side of the Chesapeake Bay, 6 miles north of the mouth of the Potomac River



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Date Built: Commissioned 1905

Type of Structure: Caisson with octagonal brick dwelling / tower

Height: 52 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: Toomey Brothers

Appropriation: \$65,000

Range: 9 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- Like the Hooper Island Light, Point No Point light was built to compensate for a lack of lighted navigational aids in the 30 mile stretch of the Chesapeake Bay's main shipping channel between the Smith Point and Cove Point lights. An appropriation was requested as early as 1891. Despite repeated requests, Congress did not approve funds until 1901. Given the exposed location, a caisson structure was decided upon. The construction contract was awarded to Toomey Brothers of Connecticut who had recently built the Hooper Island Light. Like the Hooper Island Light, the Point No Point caisson was set pneumatically. Work assembling the caisson began in the Summer of 1902 at Solomons, MD. It was towed to the site in April the following year. Numerous problems were encountered during construction. Almost immediately after the caisson arrived at the site, a storm caused the temporary work pier to collapse. This flipped the caisson which drifted free approximately 40 miles down the Bay to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. The half submerged caisson had to be towed back to Solomons for righting and repairs. It was re-towed to the site and sunk in its proper location October 1903.
- The following year ice flows destroyed the second construction pier and many of the materials, including a number of the caisson cylinder plates. It's interesting to note that because of the two disasters, some of the iron plates of this light had to be ordered three times. By July 1904 the caisson foundation was set and filled and work had begun on the dwelling / tower. The light was finally commissioned, and a fourth order Fresnel lens exhibited, on April 24th of 1905.
- In 1938, the light was fully automated, but remained manned.
- In 1962 it was converted to unmanned status. The original Fresnel lens has, since, been replaced.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.



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- Lighthouse was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2 December 2002.
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POOLES ISLAND LIGHT

Location: Pooles Island, Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: 1825

Type of Structure: Conical stone tower

Height: 38 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Inactive

Foghorn: Fog bell tower (no longer standing)

Builder: John Donahoo and Simon Frieze

Appropriation: \$5,000

Status: Inactive, but still standing (in a restricted, military, area – not accessible to the public)

Historical Information:

- Pooles Island lies in the Chesapeake Bay outside the mouth of the Gunpowder River. The Island had been settled and farmed as early as 1808. In 1824 Congress appropriated \$5,000 for the building of a lighthouse on the Island at the same time they authorized building the original (land-based) Thomas Point light. The land for the station was purchased for \$500 and John Donahoo and Simon Frieze were awarded the construction contract along with the one for Thomas Point Light. (The two projects were undertaken simultaneously.) They built a 40 foot conical tower using Port Deposit granite which was topped by a wooden lantern. The spiral steps inside the tower, are of cut granite, set into the walls. Upon completion, the tower was parged and whitewashed. The lighting apparatus was provided by John Bovis of Baltimore, MD and the station was commissioned November 27, 1825. A one story keepers dwelling was built nearby. This was the first of 12 lighthouses to be built by John Donahoo on the Chesapeake Bay. In 1828 a 25 – 30 foot fog bell tower, costing \$2,800, was built at the site. This was the first fog bell installed on the Chesapeake Bay. In 1857 the lighting system of 7 Argand lamps and reflectors was replaced with a fourth order Fresnel lens.
- In 1867 the lantern was replaced with one constructed out of iron.
- In 1882 the keepers dwelling was enlarged by the addition of a second story. (During this period, the island became known for its thriving orchards and its



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peaches in particular.) In 1917, coinciding with America's entry into World War I, the island was purchased by the U.S. Army and made part of Aberdeen Proving Ground. The light was automated on June 12, 1918, but continued to be used. In 1939 the light was decommissioned and the property turned over to the Army. The keepers dwelling and ancillary structures were torn down and the tower was left to decay for several decades, serving only as a day marker. Recently, the army has taken major steps to renovate the tower which is the oldest one still standing in Maryland. In 1996 the exterior was completely stripped. The lantern was re-painted, new windows and mahogany doors of the original design were installed, and the tower was re-parged and painted. Plans are currently underway to renovate the tower interior in hopes that it can be turned back over to the Coast Guard and re-lighted.

(Note: While this light tower is visible from the water, the Island is still part of Aberdeen Proving Ground. It is off limits to the public due to unexploded ordinance on the island.)

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

RAGGED POINT LIGHT

Name of Lighthouse: Ragged Point

Location: West side of Potomac River, opposite Piney Point

Date Built: 1910

Type of Structure: hexagonal, 2-story, screw-pile

Foghorn: Bell

Appropriation: \$35,000

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- The Lighthouse Board first requested that Congress fund a light at Ragged Point in 1896. However, the original appropriation of \$30,000 (split into two \$15,000 payments) was not made until 1906. This proved insufficient and there were several cycles of soliciting bids and requesting additional funds. Finally an additional \$5,000 was received and work began. The light was completed February 26th, 1910 and the station was commissioned on March 15th. It exhibited a 4th order Fresnel lens. This was the last lighthouse erected in



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Maryland waters and the last lighthouse to be built on the Chesapeake Bay in a new location.

- In the early 1960s the lighthouse was strafed by pilots on a practice mission from the Patuxent Naval Air Station who thought the structure was vacant. The U.S. Coast Guard keepers rushed to the catwalk to waive off the attacking planes and were unharmed, though the structure sustained some damage.
- In 1962, shortly after the strafing incident, the cottage was dismantled.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

SANDY POINT SHOAL LIGHT

Location: Chesapeake Bay, southern mouth of the Magothy River (north of Annapolis, MD off Sandy Point State Park)

Date Built: Original, land-based light – 1858, Current, caisson light – 1883

Type of Structure: Caisson with octagonal, brick, dwelling / tower

Height: 51 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white (initially fixed white)

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: Original land-based light – W. J. Humes

Appropriation: \$25,000

Range: 9 miles (current light)

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- The first lighthouse marking Sandy Point Shoal in the Chesapeake Bay was land based. Congress appropriated \$8,000 for its construction in 1854. However, issues procuring the land delayed construction until mid-1857. The construction contract was awarded to W. J. Humes and the resulting light consisted of a 1 ½ story brick Victorian dwelling with the tower rising out of the roof. It was a much more ornate structure than the lights built under the earlier administration of Stephen Pleasonton. The light was exhibited through a fifth order Fresnel lens in early 1858 and stood 50 feet above mean high water (35 feet above the ground). A fog bell tower was added in 1863. In the decades following construction of the land-based Sandy Point Shoal Light the shoal grew and maritime traffic, particularly to the ports of Baltimore, increased. Mariners increasingly found the



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light severely lacking because of its distance from the shoal and the new shipping channel. In 1882 Congress appropriated \$25,000 for construction of a new light. Initially a second light of the screw-pile design was proposed to mark the Sandy Point Shoal. However, a number of recent ice flow related accidents with screw-piles in open waters caused the Lighthouse Board to reconsider. Additional funds were sought for a caisson light, but were not received. So, the current light is somewhat of a compromise – The proposed caisson foundation was built and sunk. However, a smaller, less expensive, brick tower was built upon it. Construction progressed without undue mishaps and a fourth order Fresnel lens was exhibited on October 30th 1883. The earlier land-based light was discontinued at that time.

- In 1929 the light was electrified.
- The light was automated in 1963.
- In 1979 the Coast Guard found that the light had been badly vandalized and someone had smashed the almost 100 year old, hand-made, crystal Fresnel lens.

(Note: This light is visible from both the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and from the shore of Sandy Point State Park. The original, land-based, lighthouse is no longer standing.)

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

- Lighthouse was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2 December 2002.

SEVEN FOOT KNOLL LIGHT

Location: Originally in entrance to the Patapsco River, Chesapeake Bay, moved to Pier 5, Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD

Date Built: 1855

Type of Structure: Screw-pile with cylindrical iron dwelling / tower

Height: 40 feet above mean high water (when on station)

Characteristics: Inactive

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: Murray and Hazelhurst of Baltimore, MD

Appropriation: \$27,000

Status: Inactive, moved to a museum setting



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Historical Information:

- Requests for a lighted aid to navigation at Seven Foot Knoll began in earnest in 1848. At this time the Maryland Legislature formally requested a light vessel for the mouth of the Patapsco River. The Fifth Auditor of the Treasury, Stephen Pleasonton, initially resisted the request, considering the North Point Range Lights and Bodkin Island Light sufficient. However, complaints from mariners and ship owners persisted and Congress ended up appropriating \$27,000 for the light before Pleasonton finally accepted the proposal in 1851. At this time a congressional inquiry was underway reviewing the entire U.S. system of aids to navigation. Shortly thereafter supervision of U.S. lighthouses was reorganized under the newly formed Lighthouse Board. From its earliest design stages, plans for the new Seven Foot Knoll light incorporated the new “screw-pile” lighthouse technology which had been developed in Britain. Technological issues along with the change in administration caused delays in construction of the light and the plans were re-drafted several times. The final design consisted of an iron cottage sitting upon nine iron piles which formed an octagon with the ninth pile in the center. The iron founders, Murray and Hazelhurst, of Baltimore, MD were contracted with to provide the ironwork and construction began in 1854. The light was completed in late 1855. There is some dispute as to whether the new fourth order light was exhibited that year or in January of 1856. Most sources list 1855 as the year the light was commissioned. This light took over the role formerly handled by the Bodkin Island Light and the latter was decommissioned soon afterwards. The original octagonal cottage, built in 1855, was replaced somewhere around 1875 with the current cylindrical structure. In January of 1884 ice flows broke some of the iron piles. These were repaired. However, ten years later ice had again damaged the foundation piles. Large amounts of rip rap stone were laid around the lighthouse to help protect it. Seven Foot Knoll is particularly famous for the actions of one of its keepers – Thomas Steinheise. During the infamous storm of 1933 (which also severed New Point Comfort Light in Virginia from the mainland), Steinheise single-handedly went forth in his small tender boat and rescued five men from a foundering tug boat. He was awarded a Congressional Medal of Heroism (the highest civilian honor) for his bravery. In 1948 the light was fully automated.
- By October of 1988 the light had been replaced by a steel tower and title to it was obtained by the City of Baltimore. With the assistance of Empire Construction, the 220 ton structure was cut from its pilings on October 11, placed on a barge, and towed to Pier 5 in Baltimore's re-vitalized Inner Harbor. Initially the renovated lighthouse served as the offices of the Living Classroom Foundation. However, it is now open to the public along with the Lightship Chesapeake and the World War II submarine, Torsk. Seven Foot Knoll is the first screw-pile lighthouse built



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in Maryland and is one of only four, out of the forty-two screw-piles lighthouse built on the Chesapeake Bay, that is still standing.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

SHARKFIN SHOAL LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Sharkfin Shoal Light

Location: Near Fishing Bay at Maryland's lower Eastern shore

Date Built: 1892

Type of Structure: screwpile

Height: 44 ft.

Characteristics: white flash every 6 seconds with red sector for nearby shoals.

Lens: 4th order fixed light

Fogbell: yes

Appropriation: \$25,000

Construction Material: Wood

Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- Sharkfin Shoal light was built to replace 1832 Clay Island light
- According to inspection records the light was repaired in 1909.
- House taken down in 1964; replaced by an automatic light placed on the old Foundation.

Researched and written by Bill Simms, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

SHARPS ISLAND LIGHT

Location: Chesapeake Bay, off the entrance to the Choptank River

Date Built: Original, land-based lighthouse – 1838, Screw-pile light – 1866, Current caisson light – 1882

Type of Structure: Caisson with cylindrical iron dwelling / tower (sparkplug)

Height: 54 feet above mean high water



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Characteristics: Flashing white with one red sector

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: Builder's Iron Company of Providence, Rhode Island

Appropriation: \$35,000

Range: 9 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- Sharps Island Light marks the shoal of what once was a 900+ acre island in the Chesapeake Bay off the entrance to the Choptank River. The current structure is the third Sharps Island lighthouse and marks both the entrance to the Choptank River and the main shipping channel of the Chesapeake Bay. The original structure was built in 1838 using a \$5,000 appropriation from Congress. At first a tower with detached keepers dwelling was envisioned, similar to the one at Bodkin Island, and a contract for such a light was awarded to Thomas Evans (who had co-built the Bodkin Island Light). However, it was soon recognized that there were erosion issues associated with the Island. Rather than combating this through the erection of expensive jetties and bulkheads, the Fifth Auditor of the Treasury, Stephen Pleasonton, directed that the light should be re-designed. The result was a wooden structure, incorporating the keepers dwelling and a roof-top lantern, built on wheels so it could be moved if necessary. Evans agreed to surrender his earlier contract and build a structure of the new design. Pleasonton thereafter turned down any requests for barriers to prevent soil erosion. The light was commissioned in late 1838. After only, ten years, much of the Island had been reclaimed by the Bay and in late 1848 additional acreage had to be purchased and the light was moved inland. This unique original structure served for 27 years. In 1855, its Argand-style lighting system was replaced with a fifth order Fresnel lens. By 1865 the waters had reached the light again. By that time the administration of U.S. lights had been reorganized under the Lighthouse Board. Rather than attempting to move the light again, the Board sought and received funds for a new light of the screw-pile design. Several requests to Congress had to be made before funding was received and by that time the situation was urgent. During construction of the new light, water had reached the light on shore and it had to be discontinued. A temporary wooden tripod was constructed which exhibited a steamers lens while the new light was being built. (The old lighthouse structure was soon lost.) The new hexagonal screw-pile light, located 1/3 of a mile off the northern tip of the Island, was commissioned early 1866. It exhibited a fixed white light through fifth order Fresnel lens. This second lighthouse lasted 15 years. In February of 1881 ice flows sheared the lighthouse from its piles and carried it for five miles down the Bay, with the keepers still



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inside. In 1881 the Lighthouse Board urgently sought and received an appropriation of \$35,000 for a replacement light. Due to the exposed location, a caisson light was decided upon and a contract for the ironwork was awarded to the Builders Iron Company of Providence, Rhode Island. Construction of the open-water work platform began while the caisson was assembled in Oxford, MD. On September 13th the caisson was floated to the light's designated site and the job of sinking it into position began. There was a short delay between the construction of the caisson and that of the tower because the latter's ironwork had not arrived. However, the construction was relatively uneventful. A fourth order Fresnel lens was exhibited on February 1, 1882 and the keepers moved in before the tower was fully completed. The construction crews were temporarily called away to work on other navigational aids, but returned in May and completed the tower. Around 1940 the last remaining land of Sharps Island disappeared under the waters of the Bay.

- In 1976 and '77 scour and severe ice flows tilted the tower badly. The Fresnel lens was removed because of this and replaced with a plastic lens with a leveling apparatus. In 1982 the light was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The structure is currently in very poor condition.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

SOLOMONS LUMP LIGHT

Location: Kedges Straits in the Chesapeake Bay

Date Built: Original screw-pile – 1875, Current caisson - 1895

Type of Structure: Caisson with square brick tower and wooden keepers dwelling (keepers dwelling dismantled)

Height: 47 feet above mean high water

Characteristics: Flashing white with two red sectors

Foghorn: Yes

Builder: William H. Flaherty

Appropriation: \$30,000 +

Range: 8 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:



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- Solomons Lump is a shoal extending from the southern end of Smith Island, MD into Kedges Straits. In the mid 1800s the shore-based Fog Point Light marked the entrance to Kedges Straits. However, this was ineffective at warning ships away from the shoal. The Lighthouse Board, therefore, requested funds to erect a new screw-pile light on the shoal itself. From its inception this light was intended to replace the old Fog Point light, which was only 1 ¼ miles away. So, it was argued that its construction would not cause a significant increase in yearly operating costs. Eventually an appropriation of \$15,000 was received from Congress and construction began in June of 1875. A square cottage atop wrought iron piles was completed in less than three months and the light was exhibited on September 10th. This lighthouse lasted a bit over 17 years until January of 1893 when ice flows partially submerged the cottage and damaged the light beyond repair. Plans to for a replacement structure initially called for another screw-pile. However, after re-consideration, a caisson structure was decided upon. Congress had already approved \$30,000 for the new light and this was insufficient for caisson design. However, the Wolfe Trap Shoals Light in Virginia had been completed under budget and Congress authorized use of the savings at Solomons Lump. A contract for the ironwork was awarded to Chamberlin, Delancy and Scott and the construction contract was awarded to William H. Flaherty. In May of 1894 the partially completed caisson was towed to the site from Lazaretto Depot outside of Baltimore, MD. When the caisson was sunk into position it settled at an angle. The process of righting it caused it to sink a couple feet lower than intended and another course of ironwork had to be added to bring it to the correct height. The caisson foundation was completed by July. A square, brick, light tower was built to one side and a wooden keepers dwelling was constructed that incorporating the tower and giving the whole structure an octagonal appearance. Construction of the tower and keepers dwelling took only one month.
- The light was commissioned on September 30, 1895 and a fifth order Fresnel lens was exhibited. In 1919 the range of the light was increased by installation of a fourth order Fresnel lens. The lenses of the Solomons Lump Light and the Cherrystone Light in Virginia (which had been downgraded) were swapped. In 1950 the light was fully automated. At that time, the wooden dwelling was torn down giving the light its current, lopsided, appearance.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

SOMERS COVE LIGHT



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Name of Lighthouse: Somers Cove Light
Location: Entrance to Little Annemessex River
Date Built: 1867
Type of Structure: Cottage style screwpile structure
Operational: No
Date Automated: N/A
Deactivated: 1932
Appropriation: Approximately \$10,000.00
Construction Material: Wood
Tower Shape: square
Relationship to Other Structure: Integral
Original Lens: Sixth Order Fresnel
Status: No longer standing

Historical Information:

- The lighthouse was erected in 1867 for a cost of \$10,000.
- The lighthouse was dismantled in 1932.

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

THOMAS POINT SHOAL LIGHT

Location: Chesapeake Bay just north of the mouth of the South River, south of Annapolis, MD
Date Built: Original shore light – 1825, Re-built shore light – 1840, Current screw-pile – 1875
Type of Structure: Hexagonal screw-pile
Height: 43 feet above mean high water
Characteristics: Flashing white
Foghorn: Yes
Appropriation: \$35,000
Range: 11 miles
Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:



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- The current Thomas Point light is arguably the most widely recognized lighthouse in Maryland and is the only screw-pile light on the Chesapeake Bay still in its original location. (The remaining 3 have been moved to museum settings.) It is the third light to mark Thomas point shoal.
- The Thomas Point Shoal Light Station dates back to 1824 when Congress appropriated \$6,500 for construction and outfitting of a 30 foot, land-based, light tower, a small keepers dwelling, and a well. The seven acres of land for the site was purchased for \$525 and the construction contract was awarded to John Donahoo and Simon Freeze in February of 1825. The resulting light was commissioned in December of that year with John Bovis of Baltimore, MD providing the Argand style lighting apparatus. Few details exist about this original light. It is assumed it was built of granite quarried in Port Deposit, MD. (Donahoo and Freeze were also awarded the construction contract for the Pooles Island Light at this time and the two projects were underway simultaneously.) The light stood on a bank overlooking the Chesapeake Bay, approximately 100 feet from the water. The site proved particularly susceptible to shore erosion. Stone was initially laid at the waterline, but the attempts were not sufficient to impede the erosion. By 1838 the water had come to within 15 feet of the tower and plans were made to move it.
- In 1840 the Fifth Auditor of the Treasury, Stephen Pleasonton, hired Winslow Lewis to review the site and provide options. For \$2,000 Lewis agreed to re-locate / re-build the tower behind the keepers dwelling using materials from the original tower. This second tower was 3 feet higher than the first so the lantern would clear the roof of the keepers dwelling. It was completed November of that year. In 1855 the lamp was replaced and a fifth order Fresnel lens installed. As the 19th century progressed, the inadequacy of the shore-based tower for marking the shoal became increasingly apparent.
- In 1872 Lewis' tower was in need of extensive repairs and the Lighthouse Board requested funds for construction of a new screw-pile light on the shoal itself. Congress appropriated \$20,000 the following March. Given the substantial ice damage suffered by the Love Point light that winter, the Board revised their plans, preferring to build a caisson light instead. However, funds were not available and the Board revised their plans again for a stronger screw-pile. An additional \$15,000 was appropriated to cover the cost. The new light was completed and commissioned on November 20, 1875 and exhibited a fourth order Fresnel lens.
- Various methods have been used over the years to protect the station from winter ice flows on the Bay. In the late 1800s, a cast iron ice breaker, on its own screw piles, was constructed about 100 feet from the light. Clusters of pilings and piles of rip rap stone have also been used successfully.



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- In 1972 the Coast Guard announced that it was considering plans to automate the station and dismantle the cottage. The public rallied around the light and in 1975 it was made a historic landmark.
 - The lighthouse was manned until 1986 and was the last lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay to be fully automated. More recently, its image was a runner up for Maryland's back of the 2000 U.S. quarter coin. Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.
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TURKEY POINT LIGHT

Location: Chesapeake Bay, mouth of the Elk and Northeast Rivers

Date Built: 1833

Type of Structure: Conical brick and masonry tower

Height: 35 feet (height of tower)

Characteristics: Flashing white with one red sector

Foghorn: Fog bell tower (no longer standing)

Builder: John Donahoo

Appropriation: \$5,000

Range: 8 miles

Status: Standing and Active

Historical Information:

- Turkey Point is a 100 foot bluff at the tip of a peninsula dividing the Northeast and Elk Rivers at the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay. Efforts to build a lighthouse on the bluff were stalled initially because the landowners valued the property at several times what the Government considered the going rate. Eventually the Maryland State Legislature was asked to condemn the land and a commission set the value at \$564, which the Government paid. Probably due to its remote location, John Donahoo was the only bidder and after some negotiation he was awarded a construction contract of \$4,355. A contract of \$419 for the lamps went to James Geddes. Using the same plans as the Concord Point tower in Havre de Grace, MD (with some small changes), Donahoo completed the 35 foot brick tower and a small 1 ½ story brick keepers dwelling by July of 1833. It was outfitted with 11 lamps, each with a corresponding 15 inch reflector. In 1855 the old Argand style lighting system was replaced by a single lamp and a fourth order Fresnel lens.



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- In 1867 the lantern was completely refitted and designed to properly display the Fresnel lens.
- In 1868 a new Franklin lamp was installed.
- In April 1888 a fog bell tower with automated ringing mechanism was installed. Because of its location atop the bluff, the fog bell sat as low to the ground as possible in order to be heard far away. To accommodate this design, a 30 foot well was dug beneath it into which the counterweights fell. 1889 the dwelling was enlarged with the addition of a second story and a porch.
- In 1933 the lamp was changed from oil to vaporized kerosene. Nine years later, in 1942 it was electrified and an electric fog horn was installed. The light was fully automated in 1947 and the keeper, Mrs. Fannie Mae Slater, retired. She was the last woman lighthouse keeper in the United States (see below for more information).
- In its remote location the lighthouse suffered from a fair amount of neglect and vandalism over the next couple decades. The tower was broken into and the Fresnel lens was stolen. In 1972 the keepers dwelling had decayed to such state of disrepair that it had to be torn down. Since that time the tower has been refurbished and the grounds are now well maintained. It is now situated in Elkneck State Park at the mid point of a scenic, 2 mile, loop trail.

Researched and written by Matthew B. Jenkins, a volunteer through the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Light House Society.

- Lighthouse was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2 December 2002.

KEEPERS OF THE TURKEY POINT LIGHT:

The first keeper at Turkey Point was Robert C. Lusby who served from August 10, 1833, to August 18, 1841, when John C. Waters took over for just under two years until Robert returned on June 3, 1843. The first of many women keepers was Elizabeth Lusby, Robert's wife who replaced him upon his death and served from May 8, 1844, to at least 1861. Edward Cloman took over on March 13, 1862 until December 30, 1865 when John Crouch was appointed keeper. Mr. Crouch died on July 3, 1873, and his wife Rebecca L. Crouch assumed his duties on October 2, 1873, until she died on July 11, 1895. Their daughter, Georgiana S. Brumfield, who lived at the station since the age of 16, served as keeper from July 26, 1895 until 1919, retiring at age 70 after living 54 years at Turkey Point. She died in June 1934. Caleb Stowe from North Carolina served from 1919 to 1922. C. W. "Harry" Salter served from 1922 until he died in 1925.

In 1921, Caleb Stowe noticed a disabled powerboat with seven men onboard and towed it with the station's boat to Town Point Wharf. In May 1923, C. W. Salter noticed that a



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motorboat towing a "Floating Department Store Loaded with Bankrupt Merchandise" valued at \$25,000 had become disabled, and the barge was about to be caught in a strong northeast wind. He took the station's boat and towed the barge to safety under the point out of the wind.

Salter's wife, Fannie May Salter, took over her husband's duties in 1925 thanks to the personally granted authorization of then President Calvin Coolidge. Because of her age, the Civil Service had told Fannie that she could not succeed her husband. However, she appealed to her senator who took it to the White House, which then overruled the Civil Service. She served until August 1947 when she retired at age 65, with 22 years of service as lighthouse keeper, and another 23 years previously assisting her late husband who was keeper at several stations. She stated, "Oh, it was an easy-like chore, but my feet got tired, and climbing the tower has given me fallen arches."

Before the station was electrified, Fannie would fill and light one of the two lamps at dusk, climb the tower and place the lamp within the lens, then recheck it about one hour later, and again at 10 pm before going to bed. From her bedroom in the keeper's quarters she could see if the light was functioning properly and would immediately awake if the light ever went out. With electricity installed in 1943, she only had to turn on a switch, which lit a 100 watt bulb, which in combination with the lens produced 680 candlepower of light. Once she had to manually strike the fog bell when it suddenly failed as a steamer was heading for the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal in a fog. She rang the bell four times a minute for 55 minutes until the steamer had safely passed. In so doing, she was away from the phone when her son-in-law tried to call and tell her that her daughter had given birth to her granddaughter. The Lighthouse Board in 1928 authorized \$25 per month for a laborer to wind the fog bell striking mechanism for Mrs. Salter during months of the year when fog was prevalent. This fee was reduced to \$15 per month in 1932. Upon retirement, she moved to another house six miles away, but she was still within sight of the light. She died at age 83 in 1966. Turkey Point Lighthouse had more women lighthouse keepers than any other lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay.

It was 14 miles over poor roads to the nearest store; the station families typically raised fruits, vegetables, chickens, turkeys, sheep, and pigs. During World War II, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal became an important inland shipping corridor due to the threat of submarine warfare off the Atlantic. Because of this increased shipping, the Turkey Point Lighthouse became an especially important aid to navigation, and a detachment of Coast Guard personnel were assigned to the station as a precaution against saboteurs.



U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

UPPER CEDAR POINT LIGHT

Lighthouse Name: Upper Cedar Point Light
Location: Potomac River 2 miles west of Mathias Point
Station Established: 1867
Year Current Tower(s) First Lit: 1867
Operational? NO
Automated? YES 1963
Deactivated: YES 1876 AND 1963
Foundation Materials:
Construction Materials:
Tower Shape: SQUARE SCREWPILE
Markings/Pattern:
Relationship to Other Structure: INTEGRAL
Original Lens:

Historical Information:

- In 1821 a lightship was established at the location of the Upper Cedar Point light. The screwpile light was built and lit in 1867.
- In the 1870's the lighthouse had African-American keepers.
- The light was deactivated in 1876.
- The lighthouse was reactivated in 1882 after numerous complaints. It remained lit until 1963 when it was dismantled.
- A small navigational light stands on the original foundation.

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