



U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Preserving Our History For Future Generations

What are some interesting facts about lighthouses?

First lighthouse - Boston, MA (1716)

Oldest original lighthouse in service - Sandy Hook, NJ (1764)

Newest shoreside lighthouse - Charleston, SC (1962)

Only triangular-shaped lighthouse tower - Charleston, SC (1962)

Only lighthouse equipped with an elevator - Charleston, SC (1962)

Tallest lighthouse - Cape Hatteras, NC (191 ft)

First American-built West Coast lighthouse - Alcatraz Lighthouse (1854)

First lighthouse to have a Fresnel lens installed - Navesink lights (First & Second Order lenses; 1841)

First lighthouse to use electricity - Statue of Liberty (1886)

First Great Lakes lighthouses - Buffalo, NY & Erie, PA (1818)

Most expensive lighthouse (adjusted cost) - St. George's Reef, CA (1891)

First lighthouse built completely by the Federal Government - Montauk Point, NY (1797)

Founding of the U.S. Lighthouse Service - 7 August 1789

U.S. Lighthouse Service merged with the Coast Guard - 7 July 1939

Second most powerful lighthouse in the world (and most powerful in the Western Hemisphere) - Charleston, SC (1962)