



THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

by Charles K. Hyde

Color Photography by Ann and John Mahan

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(Note: Available to members of the USLHS for \$26.95 plus \$2.00 S&H.)

208 pp, 8.5 by 11. Five drawings, two maps, 65 black and white photos, 219 color photos, lighthouse location index, bibliography, and five page general index.

This excellent and long overdue volume gives the same attention to lights of the Great Lakes long afforded to coastal lights. It is of high quality throughout. The high point is the color photography of the Mahans, which has apparently lost nothing in the printing process. Color rendition and sharpness are among the best I've seen. Since it is essentially a picture book, this level of quality is most important.

Format of the book begins with a brief history of lighthouse in general,

with emphasis on very early Great Lakes developments (12 pp.). Expansion of the service following the end of the Pleasonton era until about 1910 comes next, including coverage of the various tenders used (16 pp.). There is then a brief section (12 pp.) on abandonment and automation in the 20th century, followed by 22 pages on keepers life, including the Lifesaving Service. Most of the black and white photos illustrate these early days.

The descriptions of the individual lighthouses are grouped geographically and each is shown by one or two contemporary color views. A few minor lights are illustrated, but not described. Coverage begins at the western end of Lake Erie, with that, the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers, Lake St. Clair, and Lake Huron filling the first 26 pages. The book only covers American lights, their Canadian counterparts are given only an occasional brief mention.

The Straits of Mackinac and vicinity rate a separate 18 page section owing to the many lights in that hazardous area, followed by 44 pages on Lake Michigan. Although the book was published by the State of Michigan, there seems to be little if any extra coverage of lights in that state. Lake Superior rates the final 36 pages, then comes a six page Epilogue and the indexes, etc.

The color photography often features aerial views, particularly of the very remote lights. This is a useful concept where ground obstacles make it difficult or impossible to view or photograph an entire light station from one point. The black and white photos are printed in sepia tone, which some feel lends an air of antiquity to them. I feel it only reduces the visual sharpness of photos which in many cases are somewhat fuzzy to begin with. My only negative comment of the color work is that a number of the relatively close up photos of light towers could have benefited from the use of a perspective control lens to avoid the "bending over backwards" effect.

In summation, a fine volume without major flaws, and well worth having in the back seat of the car (or on the bridge of your cruiser) when exploring the Great Lakes. Highly recommended.

Book Review

by David H. Hamley

Mapbook of Michigan Counties

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Soft Cover, 120 pages 11×17", price approximately \$10 plus shipping.

Why would a pharologist want a Michigan Mapbook? Simple, to visit lighthouses you must first find them. Some are easy, some are not. This superb book of county by county maps will enable you to find, whilst navigating by land, nearly every Michigan lighthouse with ease. And of all Great Lakes states, Michigan seems to have the lion's share of lighthouses.

The maps are detailed to the Nth degree, showing every road no matter how primitive (and, having used the book to reach Crisp Point Light, I can personally testify that some are VERY primitive!), all waterways, natural and man made features, and of prime interest, nearly all aids to navigation including some long abandoned. A separate symbol is used for aids, and most lights are also named. All maps are to the same scale, $\frac{3}{8}$ " = one mile, and the detailed legend is repeated on every other page for handy reference.

I did note at least a few minor lights that seem to be omitted. Certain county maps are not quite so well done as most, but this should be a minor drawback at best. Any contemplated excursion to Michigan's lighthouses should have this publication at hand. It is also sold in many park offices, both state and Federal. I purchased mine at the gift shop in the Point Iroquois Lighthouse.

I know of similar publications for Pennsylvania, Ohio, and a couple other inland states. If you are aware of such publications for the coastal and other Great Lakes states, please let the rest of us know.