



UNITED STATES LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

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Celebrating Excellence in Lighthouse Preservation, Education, and Volunteerism

Lighthouses are more than navigational aids. They are sentinels of our maritime heritage—silent witnesses to centuries of history, weathering storms and standing watch over generations of mariners. Preserving them is not simply an act of restoration; it is an act of love, memory, and commitment to ensuring these beacons continue to inspire future generations.

The U.S. Lighthouse Society and the Lighthouse Managers Advisory Group are proud to recognize extraordinary contributions to lighthouse preservation, education, and volunteerism through our annual awards program. These awards honor the individuals, teams, and organizations whose dedication keeps our maritime heritage alive.

The Cullen Chambers Preservation and Stewardship Award recognizes exceptional preservation projects and programs—efforts that protect and restore aids to navigation for posterity. The Wickie (Keepers) Award celebrates individual volunteers whose dedication to preservation and public education makes a lasting impact at lighthouse sites across the country. The Fresnel Award honors innovative educational and interpretive programs that bring lighthouse history to life for diverse audiences, inspiring new generations of enthusiasts. And the Sally Wheeler Volunteerism Award recognizes extraordinary volunteers whose long-term, sustained service—often behind the scenes—has strengthened the organizations and sites they serve.

This year's recipients embody the very best of the lighthouse preservation community. From the restoration of historic Fresnel lenses and the creation of thriving volunteer programs to the preservation of National Historic Landmarks and decades of dedicated service, their accomplishments demonstrate what is possible when passionate individuals and communities unite around a shared purpose.

Their work reminds us that lighthouse preservation is never just about the structures. It is about the people who care for them—the volunteers who give their time, the leaders who inspire others, and the communities who embrace these landmarks as their own. It is about the stories these lighthouses tell and the legacy we pass to those who will follow.

We invite you to read about this year's remarkable award recipients and to celebrate their extraordinary contributions. May their example inspire us all to protect and preserve these beloved beacons for generations yet to come.

Jeff Gales
Executive Director
U.S. Lighthouse Society

USLHS / LMAG

Award Citations – 2026

Cullen Chambers Preservation and Stewardship Award for preservation projects or programs awarded to teams/groups/organizations.

Awardee: **Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Project**

The U.S. Lighthouse Society and the Lighthouse Managers Advisory Group are proud to present the Cullen Chambers Preservation and Stewardship Award to the Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Project—a preservation effort that stands as a model of what can be achieved when a community rallies around a shared vision.



For decades, Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse has been more than a navigational aid. It is a beloved landmark, a National Historic Landmark, and one of only ten lighthouses in the country to hold that distinction. It is also the last screw-pile lighthouse in Chesapeake Bay still standing on its original station—a survivor of ice floes, storms, and the passage of time. When the Coast Guard considered automating and demolishing the cottage in the 1970s, public outcry saved it. That same spirit of community devotion has carried the project forward ever since.

Under the leadership of Lighthouse Manager John Potvin, the Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Project has become a shining example of selfless cooperation and volunteer dedication. Year after year, a committed team of volunteers has given thousands of hours to preserve this historic treasure—not just the tower, but the stories it holds.

The past year alone has seen remarkable achievements. After years of work, the original 4th order Fresnel lens was transferred from the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore to the Annapolis Maritime Museum, where it has become the centerpiece of the new museum's entrance. At the same time, a 5th order Fresnel lens—held in storage for over 20 years—was restored by a certified lampist and installed inside the lighthouse in a custom display case built by the Annapolis Woodworkers Guild. The lighthouse shines with a new pancake LED beacon, the first of its kind installed in a U.S. lighthouse, casting light 10 to 12 nautical miles across the bay.

The project's tour program has flourished, with the 2026 season selling out completely. Integration with the Annapolis Maritime Museum has enhanced the visitor experience, and private tours have hosted community leaders, elected officials, and organizations ranging from the Annapolis Yacht Club to the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County.

The “One Light – One Voice, Spirit of America” event, held on July 8, drew over 4,000 views and

featured the reading of the Declaration of Independence from the lighthouse dock—a moment that captured the enduring connection between this lighthouse and the nation it serves. A graveside ceremony honoring Eugene Berchenal, the station's first keeper, drew more than 30 attendees, demonstrating the project's commitment to honoring the human stories behind the structure.

Preservation work continues at a remarkable pace. Grants from the National Park Service's "Saving America's Treasures" program, the Gosnell Foundation, and Maryland Historic Trust have funded critical maintenance and an engineering study to raise the lighthouse six feet to address sea level rise—a project estimated at \$3.5 to \$5.2 million. The Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Endowment has grown to more than \$150,000, providing a secure financial foundation for the future.



What makes this project extraordinary is not just the physical preservation of a National Historic Landmark. It is the army of volunteers who have made it possible—the docents who lead tours, the preservation crews who repair handrails and clean the lighthouse, the woodworkers who built the display case, the lampist who restored the lens, and the countless others who have given their time, talent, and passion. They are the reason Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse remains a living, breathing part of the Chesapeake Bay community.

The Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Project is an inspiration—proof that when people come together with a shared purpose, they can save a piece of American history for future generations. The U.S. Lighthouse Society is deeply grateful for this extraordinary preservation effort and the volunteers who make it possible.

The Wickie (or Keepers) Award

for individuals (or a team) of volunteers working in lighthouse preservation and/or interpretation.

Awardee: **Deb and Dan Call for Burrows Island Lighthouse, WA**

The U.S. Lighthouse Society and the Lighthouse Managers Advisory Group are proud to announce Dan and Deb Call as recipients of The Wickie (Keepers) Award. This honor recognizes a team of volunteers whose exceptional work in lighthouse preservation and interpretation has made a lasting impact—and few teams have been as effective as Dan and Deb Call.



When the Northwest Schooner Society assumed responsibility for the

abandoned Burrows Island Light Station in 2009, the site had suffered decades of neglect. Vandalism, weather, and overgrowth had left the three remaining buildings severely damaged. Progress was slow but steady. Then, in 2017, Dan and Deb Call arrived—and everything accelerated.

Dan brought technical expertise and project management discipline. As Project Manager, he has planned and executed the restoration's most complex undertakings. He led the installation of a new water collection and storage system—personally designing and overseeing the rigging that lifted two 5,000-gallon tanks up a 30-foot embankment and across nearly 1,000 feet of island terrain. He provided the documentation that finally secured the station's listing on the National Register of Historic Places. And after years of persistent effort, he successfully navigated the transfer of ownership from the Coast Guard to the Northwest Schooner Society—a milestone that secures the station's future.

Deb brought community engagement and public visibility. As Outreach Manager, she has been the face and voice of the project—staffing information booths, presenting to community organizations, and publishing the “Burrows Beacon” newsletter. She is the reason volunteers first learn about the project. She is the reason they show up.



But their individual accomplishments only tell part of the story. Together, Dan and Deb are a force. Dan's leadership style—listening to volunteers, uncovering their skills, and giving them ownership of their tasks—is why volunteers return. Deb's passion and promotional energy are why they come in the first place. Their complementary strengths have transformed a long-neglected station into a thriving preservation and interpretation effort.

Dan and Deb have committed thousands of hours of their time, treasure, and passion to saving Burrows Island Light Station and sharing its story. The U.S. Lighthouse Society is deeply grateful for all they have given.

The Fresnel Award for Interpretation Projects

Awardee: **Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse**

The U.S. Lighthouse Society and the Lighthouse Managers Advisory Group are happy to announce the Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse as



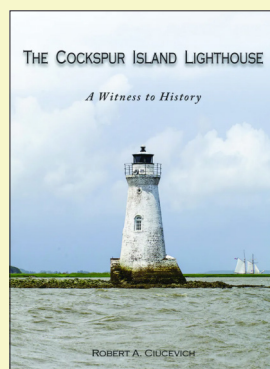
recipients of The Fresnel Award, for their role in producing and publishing an excellent educational resource about lighthouse history.

The book is titled *The Cockspur Island Lighthouse: A Witness to History* by Robert A. Ciucevich, which was funded and published by the Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse. This exceptional educational resource brings to life the history of one of Georgia's most iconic lighthouses, often affectionately known as "the little lighthouse that could."

Despite its modest size, the Cockspur Island Lighthouse has endured wars, hurricanes, changing coastlines, and decades of preservation challenges, making it a powerful symbol of resilience and determination. The book connects readers to the lighthouse's role in maritime navigation, the Civil War, coastal engineering and historic preservation through engaging storytelling, extensive archival research, historic photographs and maps. Written for a broad audience, it makes complex history accessible to visitors, students, educators, and lighthouse enthusiasts while enriching the interpretive experience both at Cockspur Island and beyond. As a permanent educational tool, it extends learning long after a site visit, encourages appreciation for maritime heritage, and serves as the definitive modern history of the lighthouse. By combining scholarly research with compelling narrative and visual interpretation, the publication exemplifies innovative educational programming that increases public understanding and appreciation of lighthouse history.



The project also reflects the power of collaboration and long-term commitment to preservation education. By funding and publishing the book, the Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse created a lasting resource that supports interpretation, promotes heritage tourism, and inspires stewardship of historic resources. Developed through the combined efforts of historians, preservation advocates, and community supporters, the publication reaches audiences through museums, libraries, historical organizations, educational programs, and public events. Its enduring value ensures that future generations will continue to learn about the significance of "the little lighthouse that could" and its remarkable place in American history. Through its broad educational



Show your support by getting your own copy today:

**"The Cockspur Island Lighthouse:
A Witness to History"**

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impact, innovative interpretation, community partnerships, and sustainable contribution to public understanding, *The Cockspur Island Lighthouse: A Witness to History* embodies the purpose of the Fresnel Award and serves as a model for lighthouse education and interpretation nationwide.

Sally Wheeler Volunteerism Award

Awardee: **Dick & Evelyn Richardson**

The U.S. Lighthouse Society and the Lighthouse Managers Advisory Group are pleased to announce Dick and Evelyn Richardson as the recipients of the Sally Wheeler Volunteerism Award. This honor recognizes their decades of sustained service and the foundational role they have played in advancing the Society's mission.

Dick's association with the Society began in 2006, when he cataloged thousands of books, logs, and manuscripts in the San Francisco library—an archive that had become unmanageable after the previous librarian's retirement. His work brought order to a priceless collection. He has since served as the editor of *The Keeper's Log*, a role he continues to hold today.

In 2018, Dick and Evelyn sold their home in Fresno and relocated to Washington state specifically to increase their volunteer commitment to the Society. Shortly after arriving, they took charge of the Point Wilson Lighthouse project. They built the volunteer docent program from the ground up—recruiting, training, and scheduling volunteers. They managed on-site operations, including interpretation, gift shop sales, financial reporting, and facilities oversight. They routinely stayed at the Keeper's House for multiple days at a time, ensuring the site was operational and welcoming to visitors.

Evelyn, who began as a travel companion on Society tours, became an indispensable partner in every aspect of the Point Wilson project—from daily operations to volunteer coordination. Her willingness to embrace the work and the community strengthened the program immeasurably.

Their decision to relocate, their years of service, and their hands-on leadership at Point Wilson have left a lasting legacy. While they are now returning to Fresno to be near family, Dick will continue as editor of *The Keeper's Log*, and their impact on the Society endures.

The Sally Wheeler Volunteerism Award is reserved for those whose dedication exemplifies the very best of the volunteer spirit. Dick and Evelyn Richardson embody that spirit fully. We are profoundly grateful for all they have given.

