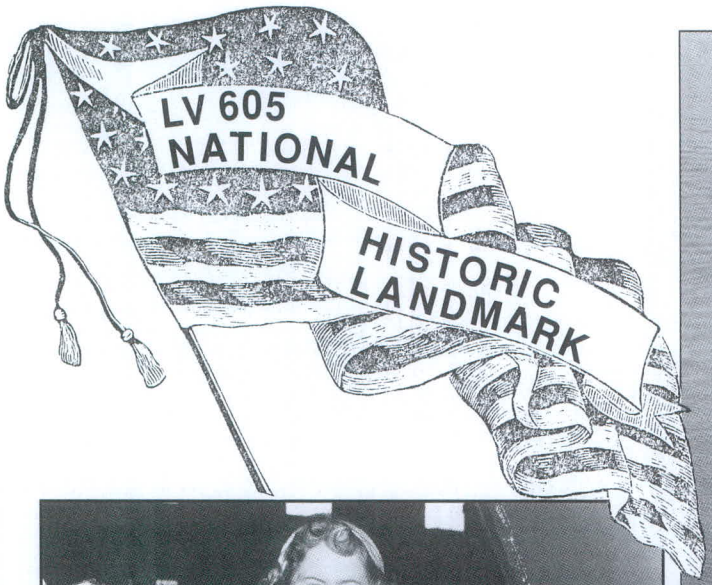
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**Left - Ms. Elizabeth Laughlin christens LV 605 at her launching May 4, 1950.**

On December 20, 1989 the Secretary of the Interior signed a paper designating the society's lightship LV 605 as a National Historic Landmark.

Our ship was constructed by the Rice Bothers Corporation, Boothbay Harbor, ME between March 1, 1949 and February 7, 1951. She was launched on May 4, 1950 and delivered to the Coast Guard on February 15, 1951.

Mr. Robert Rice has written, "construction . . . kept 150 men busy for two years. . . . Over the years, 1892 - 1956 Rice's built four lightships and three of them are now located in museums of which we are pleased. My grandfather built two and my father and self built two of which the *Overfalls* (ours) had a mind of her own, always in trouble.

She was involved in a small fire when she was about 65% completed, which could have been serious if not for the fact she was steel. Going overboard on launch day she busted the ways on the port side and almost refused to be hauled into dockside. On her way back in from sea trials she grounded herself out on a sand bar 200 feet from her berth, when she departed from the yard we all gave her a real goodby wave.

I remember the sea trials as if they were yesterday. I had invited the 7th and 8th grades to come along, about 55 youngsters and we struck heavy seas from the time we started until we got back. Of course about half of the youngsters . . . got sea sick, so bad in the after crews quarters that we had to replace a dozen mattresses."

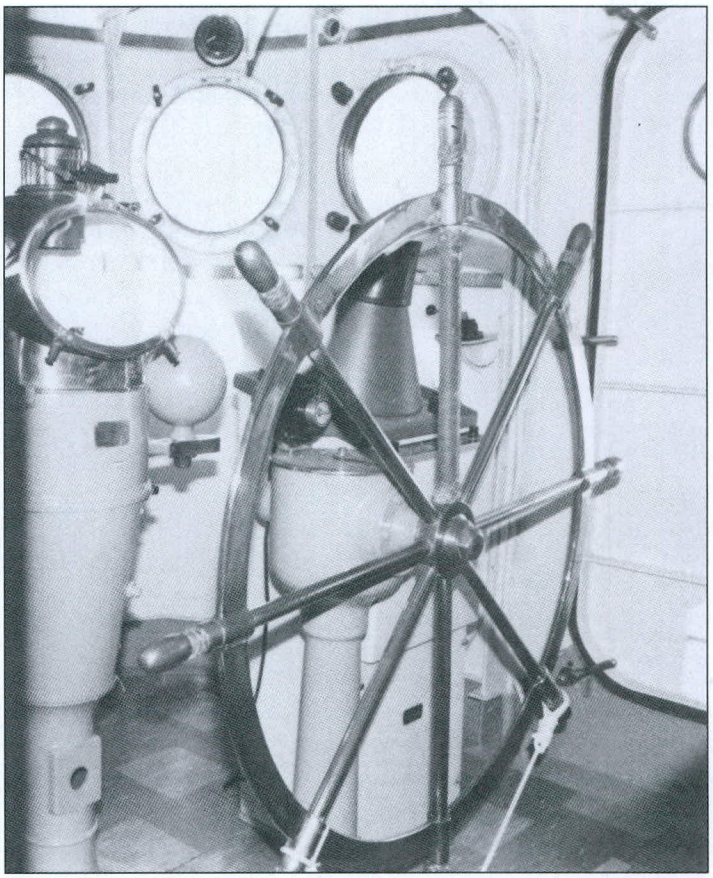
After being accepted by the Coast Guard LV 605 steamed south to take up her first assignment as *Overfalls* off Delaware. She served on this station until 1960 when the Coast Guard brought her to the west coast to serve on the Blunts Reef station off Cape Mendocino, CA. The crew operated out of Eureka, California. In 1969 she changed her assignment again and became *Relief*, relieving all West Coast lightships when they came in for a yard period. Finally, in 1975 the Coast Guard declared her surplus and she was transferred to the Government Services Administration. The City of Olympia, WA requested and was awarded the ship. The city and hoped to open the vessel as a floating museum, but it never worked out. In 1977 she was sold to the highest bidder. A Mr. Alan Hosking, of Woodside, CA, won with a bid of $79,000, beating out a scrap yard. He hauled the ship and restored the bottom, installed a new radar, converted the old cable steering to a hydraulic system and made other improvements. His crew sailed the ship to Half Moon Bay, CA where it was anchored out in the harbor for the next nine years. Finally, on New Year's Eve, 1986 the ship was signed over to the society.

For the past three years a volunteer group of members, headed by Society VP Walter Fanning and board member John Byrne, have been restoring our ship. Working mostly on Saturdays the group has expended nearly 6,000 man hours and close to $80,000 in funds and donated services and materials. The entire exterior from the waterline to the tops of the masts have been scraped and painted, wasted metal has been replaced and fancy work restored. On the interior, most compartments that will be open to the public have been painted, some decks retiled, machinery repaired, new carpeting installed in the wardroom and cabins and brass shined. I'm pleased to report she's "shipshape." One of our Chevron grants allowed us to have four large professionally designed

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story boards created that tell the history of lightships, famous American lightships, how they work and the history of ours. We have brochures printed, t-shirts, mugs and Post Cards for sale. Docents have been trained.

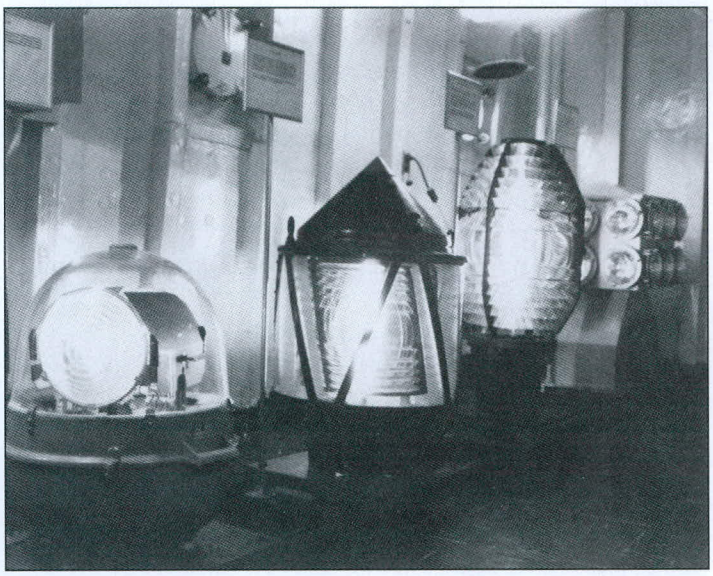
Grants from Chevron and the Skaggs Foundation, generous donations from society members and materials and supplies from Devoe Paint, Oakland Machine Works and others have greatly assisted the efforts. The final steps to a happy ending, and opening to the public, are obtaining funds to have the ship hauled and the bottom, underwater portion refurbished (estimated at $30,000), and locating a berth. The Port of Oakland has indicated a desire to have the ship open to the public along side their vessel *Potomac* at Jack London Square, apparently at no cost. This may take place this summer.



**Right - The beautiful brass ship's wheel is a static display as the old cable system (which took 50 seconds to go from mid ship to right full) has been replaced with a hydraulic system operated by toggles. The bridge is one of the spaces that has been completely restored; even the deck was replaced.**

**Below - One corner of the ship's galley. Volunteer Gene Schick, a Coast Guard Reserve cook, spends almost every Saturday in this space cooking elaborate meals for the volunteers working on the ship. (He even buys the food!) The galley is completely outfitted with historically correct china, pots, pans and utensils. Like the other public spaces it has been lovingly restored.**





**Above - Aids to navigation artifacts on loan from the Coast Guard have been interpreted and bolted to the deck. They are located in one area of the crew's berthing space. From left to right they are; A DCB 10 rotating aero-beacon being phased out of the Coast Guard inventory. This stalwart served the Coast Guard very well for many years. The range of the light, if white, was 17 miles. Next is a 350mm lens in a lantern exactly as it appears at the top of our ship's forward mast. The 3rd optic is a 4th order Fresnel lens (fixed) and it is followed by the modern 'flash cube' type of optic the Coast Guard invented for lightships in the 1960's.**

**All photos of the interior are by RELIEF volunteer Charles Christensen.**

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Plans for the ship are: (1) Open the vessel to the public as docents allow for a modest fee. (2) Seek out school groups for no cost tours and talk slide shows on the history of lightships, (3) Allow any non profit maritime group (Sea Scouts, Coast Guard Auxiliary) to use the vessel in the evenings as a training platform, (4) Install a HAM group in the radio room to interpret that space and to operate a HAM Club from it, (5) Make the vessel available for special events (weddings, parties) to raise funds and (6) Use the vessel as the judges platform for Opening Day on San Francisco Bay every year. Eventually, when funds (for life jackets and insurance) and a suitable crew allow, we will provide no cost tours of the Bay for school groups.

You may help us with the final stages of this comprehensive project by donating to the RELIEF or by purchasing a part of our National Historic Landmark. We have several parts of the ship for sale. A porthole, as an example, goes for $200 and $300 depending on the location and size, those on the bridge are more expensive. You may buy the mushroom anchor - $3,400, the Captain's Cabin - $1,500 or a manhole cover for as little as $20. You can't buy the beautiful brass wheel as Rick McKee of Baltimore, MD "owns" that artifact.

If you're interested in what's for sale send us a SASE and we'll send you a list of ship's parts. Owners receive a letter, handsome certificate naming you as the owner and telling what you own, a diagram of the part so you may "visit" that part of the ship when you are aboard . . . and you are welcome to paint or shine the part in accordance with instructions . . . but the part must remain on the ship.

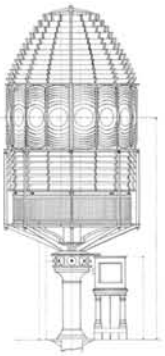


**Above - the crew's mess deck. Two of the educational story boards can be seen on the bulkheads.**




**LV 605 shortly after acceptance by the Coast Guard in 1951 flying "P" and "W" flags indicating she is not on station. USLHS photo.**

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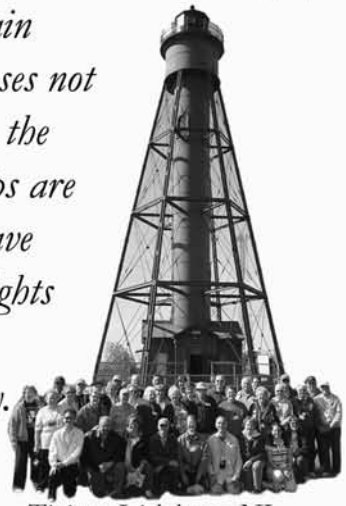
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