



GUIDING LIGHTS OF THE DELAWARE RIVER AND BAY

By Jim Gowdy & Kim Ruth

At last, a definitive book about the lighthouses and lightships of Delaware Bay and River. To most lighthouse fans this is a little known area of the country, and yet Delaware Bay and River have been very important waterways to the commerce and in the development of our nation. Cape Henlopen, marking the southern entrance to the Bay, was one of the twelve colonial lighthouses. The Brandywine Shoal Lighthouse was the first screw-pile structure in the country and one of the first recipients of a Fresnel lens. Philadelphia, along with Boston, was one of the two primary ports of our new nation.

Several of the lighthouses of the Bay are offshore and not visible to those on shore; many no longer exist.

After years of dedicated and detailed research, Jim Gowdy and Kim Ruth have put together a very comprehensive history of those lighthouses and lightships, which have guided the mariner up the Bay and River to Philadelphia and smaller ports along the way. We feel scholars of the subject would be hard-pressed to find mistakes with this fine work.

The volume is laced with photos, historic and contemporary, as well as architectural drawings and one map showing the general location of the lighthouses and lightships, past and present. This isn't a "pretty" coffee table book, but, rather, a scholarly tome that,

in many cases, follows the birth, life and death of several lighthouses. If you need information on the lighthouses of this seldom written about area, this book is for you.

It's refreshing to note that *Guiding Lights* doesn't begin with the same old lead-in information of the Pharos of Egypt, the development of the Lighthouse Service, introduction and explanation of the Fresnel lens and all the usual stuff lighthouse authors feel necessary to repeat ad nauseam. If you want that information there are a host of books on the subject.

Our only criticisms are: some of the photos could have been screened better (to be more clear) and boxed (thin outlines) to make them appear sharper. Additionally, while there is a general map of the locations in the beginning, small chartlets for each lighthouse or area would help define their locations. Still, this publication is one of the better works on the subject to come along in many a year and clearly stands far above many of the lighthouse books flying off the press.

9"x11," soft cover, 300 pages with numerous black & white photographs and drawings. You may order this book by sending \$24.95, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling, to Mr. Jim Gowdy, 2615 Fifth Ave, Sweetwater, NJ 08037.

THE LIGHTHOUSE STEVENSONS

By Bella Bathurst

Probably no other family in history has been so involved with the construction of lighthouses and development of lighthouse equipment as were the Stevensons of Scotland.

The five generations of lighthouse engineers began with Thomas Smith, at the end of the 18th century. He married the widow Jean Stevenson. Her son, Robert, became apprentice to Smith, who was a metalworker and constructor of street lamps in Edinburgh. He evolved his business into providing a lamp-reflector system for Scottish lighthouses. He eventually received the contracts to construct new lighthouses for the government and became the chief engineer to the Northern Lighthouse Board, the agency in charge of Scottish lights.

Eventually, his stepson Robert took over the helm of the business. His monument to lighthouse construction was Bell Rock off Scotland's east coast, a project that took three years to accomplish (1808 - 1811). Three of Robert's children, Alan, David and Thomas, joined the business and continued the dynasty. Alan made his mark with the construction of the Skerryvore Lighthouse off Scotland's west coast. In many ways it was a more difficult project than the Bell Rock tower. Thomas oversaw the construction of the Dhu Heartach lighthouse, also off Scotland's west coast.

Later Rob Stevenson, Alan's son, and David's sons, David A. and Charles, took up the reins. The last of the Stevensons to be named Chief Engineer of the Northern Lights was Charles's son, D. Alan Stevenson (1891-1971). Thomas Stevenson's son Robert Louis Stevenson eventually eschewed the family business and became a writer (*Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, etc.).

Bathurst's work, *The Lighthouse Stevensons*, focuses on Thomas Smith and the construction of the Bell Rock, Skerryvore, Dhu Heartach and Muckle Flugga lighthouses. Although Robert Louis Stevenson had little to do with lighthouses, a great deal of attention is lavished on the famous writer, with little narrative on the talented members of the 4th and 5th generations. A shame.

Published by Harper - Collins, 304 pages, 5 1/2" x 8 1/4", several photos and drawings. \$24.00.