

Preserving the Light

The Annual Members Meeting: Wednesday, September 20th, 2023 at 6:30 PM at PITA Hall

Dear Members, Happy summertime! We have lots of exciting news to share in our year review.

Tour Schedule

Grab your sturdy shoes or sneakers and come tour the light! We invite you to email: friendsofpilight@gmail.com to request a 15-minute tour during the following schedule. You'll get an email back from our volunteers with availability. May 27th was a fantastic opening day with our tour guides: Ros, Ken, Sandy, Mari, and Jenn.

TOUR DAYS 2023: All Saturdays, 10am-1pm, 15-minute slots:

June 24th	July 22nd	Aug 5th	Aug 26th	Sept 9th
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Pictured: Visitors from Minnesota Tour the Light

What should you know in advance?

For safety reasons, people climbing the tower stairs must be at least 5 years old and a minimum of 42 inches tall. Sturdy shoes or sneakers are required and sandals are not permitted. We do not charge for tours. We greatly appreciate a suggested donation of \$5.00 per person or any amount that works for you. All proceeds are used to care for the Light. Weather, unanticipated maintenance or other various factors could cause cancellations at times, but we hope not. Rain dates are not available.

Mission: to preserve and maintain the lighthouse

Friends Board Members:

Jenn Bogard, President
Anne Morin, Vice President
Mari Rumore, Secretary
Frank Pierce, Treasurer
Linda Anton
Steve Atherton
Ron Barrett
Bill Cooper
Daniel May, RADM, USCG (ret)

Newsletter assembled by:
Friends of Plum Island Light
PO Box 381
Newburyport, MA 01950

Contact the Friends by email:
friendsofpilight@gmail.com
www.friendsofplumislandlight.org



We're Featured on The Mayor's Corner!

We hosted Mayor Sean Reardon on May 31st for an episode of The Mayor's Corner. Check out the video on the Mayor's blog at: <https://newburyportmayor.org>



Pictured: Courtney Bitto and Arlene Winkleman, members of NELL, with their Plum Island Light sweatshirts.



4th Graders from Glen Urquhart School in Beverly Visit

May 17th was a special day for learning at the lighthouse. We provided 4th graders and their chaperones an educational tour that included information about the history, architecture, and Fresnel lens. As we guided their tour, our volunteers were impressed with their knowledge of lighthouses and the depth of their questions! Students searched the walkway to locate a brick purchased by a previous 4th grade class from Glen Urquhart years ago.



A Warm Welcome for the New England Lighthouse Lovers (NELL)

On January 15th, 2023, we hosted New England Lighthouse Lovers for their annual event called, "Lighthouses, Hot Chocolate and YOU!" Bill Cooper and Dan May bundled up at the tower and gave tours while Roslin, Jenn, and Anne hosted breakfast at PITA Hall to keep visitors warm on the winter day. NELL members enjoyed goody bags assembled by Marcia Perkins, and they shopped for sweatshirts, hats, and more. We were grateful to be presented a donation for our preservation fund. Visit NELL's website: www.newenglandlighthouse lovers.org for photos of this fantastic day.

A Special Visit from John Alex Lowell, Descendant of the First Keeper

We were very excited to receive the following correspondence from John Alex Lowell (printed with permission) and to host John and his family members:

“I am a direct descendant of Abner Lowell, I would be honored to tour the current Plum Island Light House on Monday, August 22nd 2022. Historical records state President George Washington bestowed on Abner Lowell, the position of Keeper of the Plum Island Light House in the year 1789. Specifically, I am a direct descendant of Abner Lowell through his son John Eaton Lowell. He was the one brother of the 2nd Keeper of the Plum Island Light House. His name was Lewis Lowell.”

—John Alex Lowell

It was an honor to meet John Alex and his family. Three of his relatives worked as keepers of Plum Island Light! Three generations of Lowells held the Light. Visit our kiosk or website to find a list of keepers.



Pictured: Tour provided by Ralph Esposito, Roslin Esposito, and Steve Atherton (front row, three on far right)



Pictured: Roslin Esposito, John Alex Lowell, Steve Atherton



Pictured: John Alex Lowell (right) and partner, Michael McCauley

Volunteer Celebration: Potluck Party

On April 19th, The Friends brought back the long-standing tradition of gathering as volunteers with a potluck feast. This year’s dinner included delicious lobster from David’s Fish Market, wonderful homemade dishes, corn on the cob, salads, and desserts.



Merchandise Sold at Fair Helps Our Preservation Fund

Thank you to all who stopped by our table at PITA Hall during the Annual Christmas Fair at PITA. Every purchase helps us maintain the Light.

Pictured Top: Board Member, Linda Anton, gets the display ready. Bottom: Frank Pierce, Treasurer, lends a helping hand.





The Generosity of Attorney Rob Ciampitti

We greatly appreciate the expertise and generosity of Attorney Rob Ciampitti, Co-Founder of Liberty Law, as Legal Advisor to the Friends of the Plum Island Lighthouse: <https://libertylawma.com/robert-ciampitti-jr-esq/>

Attorney Ciampitti recently helped the Friends update and refine our

corporate by-laws which passed at the Special Member Meeting on June 21st! Rob has a deep passion for Plum Island and our local maritime history, lending his voice, expertise & passion on various local committees, boards and initiatives (including the Newburyport Zoning Board of Appeals since 2002, where he serves as its Chairman).



Impressed with the Condition of the Structure

On March 28th, Mr. Dennis Morel, Building Inspector for the City of Newburyport conducted a courtesy inspection of the

lighthouse for us, along with The Friends' Safety Committee. Below are Mr. Morel's comments, shared with permission:

"It's obvious, the lighthouse staff takes a lot of pride in their work and it shows. The building is perfectly maintained to the era in which it was constructed. The exterior framing and structural members are all exposed on the interior of the lighthouse. The framing system is fully intact and nothing was compromised at the time of inspection."

Dan May, RADM, USCG (ret), Board Member and Safety Committee Chair, commented that this is "a tribute to everyone

involved with the Friends who have diligently and dutifully preserved this historic structure over the past 25 plus years."

Holiday Decorations!

In cooperation with the annual Newburyport Holiday House Tour, our own Plum Island Light was decorated for the season!

Pictured: Dan May, RADM, USCG (ret), Steve Atherton, Bill Cooper after hanging the wreath and garland



The Brick Walkway Story

by Steve and Jill Atherton

Brief History

In the early days of the “Friends” the idea to sell commemorative bricks to be placed in a walkway from the driveway to and around the lighthouse tower came into being. Jim and Pat Frey were the driving force behind this project along with assistance and involvement from many other members. Since inception of the program, hundreds of commemorative bricks have been sold and placed in the walkway, providing the “Friends” with continuing funds for our mission.



Fun fact: Steve Atherton has been ordering and installing the bricks for over a decade. If you see him, be sure to tell him thank you!

Today's Process

The brick ordering process begins after we receive a completed brick order form, along with the appropriate payment. This goes to our treasurer who records that payment has been made then forwards the brick order marked as paid, for ordering. The order is then checked for spelling and verified for correct spacing and number of characters used. Any special requests or instructions are noted. We try to accumulate 5-6 individual orders before we place a group order with our vendor. After sufficient individual orders have accumulated the group order is placed with the vendor. Normal delivery from vendor, based on over 10 years experience with this company, has been around



5-6 weeks... once they have received the order. After receipt of the brick shipment it is checked for accuracy and verified that there is no damage. As time and weather allows the bricks are then installed in the walkway.

We do honor any reasonable request as to placement location. Also, if so requested on their order, we will notify the customer when installation has been completed. 100% of the net proceeds we receive go into the maintenance and preservation of the Lighthouse.

History Corner

The following excerpt is from Bridges to Plum Island, an article written by Steve Atherton, published in the Friends of Plum Island Light, Inc.; 2012 Spring Newsletter, pgs. 2, 3:

“We take it for granted ... that ride to Plum Island across the marsh and over the bridge... but this easy access was not always the case. Prior to 1806 there was only one way to reach the island... by boat. In 1806 Plum Island was for the most part desolate and un-inhabited but for the scrub vegetation, wildlife and of course sand.”

Want to learn more? Read the full article from the 2012 newsletter and learn about the history of the bridge by visiting:

www.friendsofplumislandlight.org

*Visit our website
and become a
member today!*



Pictured: Ken Cmar, Tour Guide and Anne Morin, vice president of The Friends

Snapshots



Pictured: Speaker Jon Johansen and Board Member Ron Barrett during Jon's talk: "Shipwrecks of New England and Beyond"



Pictured: Mari Rumore, Secretary of The Friends



Pictured: Ken Cmar, Tour Guide

Front Door Repair

- New hinges and hardware
- Split hinge side board repair
- Fresh coat of paint
- Relocated the hook and eye that holds the door open
- New "stop" to prevent the door from opening too far and bending the hinges





Catch us on Chronicle!

On June 20th, producers from the Channel 5 Chronicle show visited to learn about the history of the beloved lighthouse. Dan May, RADM, USCG (ret); Steve & Jill Atherton; and Roslin Esposito worked as a team to welcome the crew.

Visit [Light Hearted episode 159](#) to learn more about our new board member, Dan May, RADM, USCG (ret) and his role in the initial ceremonies at the start of the Friends.

Pictured: Jennifer Platt-Ure, Photographer



Pictured above: Jennifer Platt-Ure, Ramen Cromwell, & Friends: Roslin, Dan, Jill, and Steve



All photos provided by Ramen Cromwell, Producer.

Pictured: Ramen, Dan, and Steve

Happy 125th Anniversary of Plum Island Lighthouse!

Plum Island Light has a history dating back to the late 1700's, but the present conical structure was first lighted on September 20, 1898.

Join us in celebration and help us continue to maintain the Light!

Dinner Cruise Aboard the Captain's Lady II

Catered by Starboard Galley | Saturday, August 19th, 2023

Departure: 7pm from Plum Island Point (7-10pm)

Cost: \$65.00 per person, paid in advance; a portion of the ticket cost goes to our preservation fund.

Includes boat ride, music with DJ, and dinner. This event is for adults.

Dinner includes a buffet of steak tips, shrimp, marinated chicken, salads, and dessert.



For more information and to find out if tickets are still available, email: Friendsofpilight@gmail.com prior to July 1st.

If tickets are available at the time of your email, send check to: "Friends of Plum Island Light," PO Box 381, Newburyport, MA 01950.

Payment must be received by July 8th.

FRIENDS OF PLUM ISLAND LIGHT

www.friendsofplumislandlight.org

We recently received a wonderful evaluation of the condition of the lighthouse from a courtesy inspection by the city inspector! You might wonder: How is a small group of dedicated volunteers able to do such a great job of maintaining Plum Island's 1898 lighthouse?

...Because of support from members like you!

As you renew your membership, we hope you might consider adding a donation, if at all possible. Costs to keep up with the tower and property are ever present, in addition to our obligations to pay for electricity, insurance, landscaping, and more. Sometimes lifetime members make a donation, and we are so grateful! No amount is too small and all contributions go to maintaining the Light.

Beginning June 30, 2023, annual memberships will expire on the last day of the month, one year from receipt. For example, annual membership dues received on July 20, 2023 would expire July 31, 2024. You'll receive a membership card with dates of membership.

Tear on dotted line & mail with your remittance.

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Friends of Plum Island Light Membership Form

Annual: Individual: ____ \$10 Family: ____ \$20 Business: ____ \$50

Lifetime: Individual or Family Member: ____ \$200 Lifetime Business Member: ____ \$500

Name: _____

Mailing Address (if new membership): _____

Phone: () _____ Email: _____

New membership: ____ Renewal: ____ Would you like to be a volunteer? ____

Donations:

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation in the amount of: _____

Make checks payable to: Friends of Plum Island Light and mail to: P.O. Box 381, Newburyport, MA 01950

A 501 (c)(3) Charitable Organization

Office use: Date of pmt _____ Amt of pmt _____ Check # _____

Commemorative Brick Order Form

To order a personalized commemorative brick please complete the form below and mail along with your \$75.00 check to: Friends of Plum Island Light, P.O. Box 381, Newburyport, MA 01950.

Order turn around time will vary but bricks should be received within 1 month from when the order is placed. We may accumulate a few orders before placing our order with the vendor. After the order has been received they will be incorporated into the walkway around the lighthouse on a timely basis weather permitting.

Bricks are engraved with your inscription, using all upper case monument style lettering, and then highlighted with a special durable black resin. Currently the cost per inscribed brick is \$75.00 but this is subject to change and not guaranteed for future orders.

To inquire about your order or if you have questions, email Steve Atherton at plx@comcast.net

Inscription Guidelines

*The inscription on the brick may have up to 3 (three) lines with 14 (fourteen) available spaces per line. Letters, numbers, punctuation marks and blank spaces all count as one space used per line.

*All type is upper case (capitalize)

*We reserve the right to reject any inscription copy we feel is inappropriate.

.....
Line 1 _____

Line 2 _____

Line 3 _____

Your Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____