



NORTH MANITOU LIGHT KEEPERS

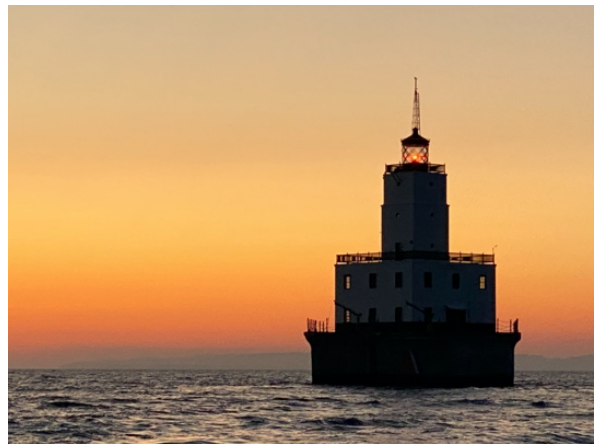
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

LOOKING AHEAD 2021: NEW DECKING AND OPENING FOR TOURS!

Restoration Priorities. At the top of our to do list for the year ahead is *replacing the watch deck roof, making some structural repairs, and starting our first public tours!* The watch deck roof (located on top of the second story) is both a wonderful outdoor viewing deck and the roof covering the living quarters. Water is intruding through this deck and causing damage that urgently must be halted. Replacing this deck will cost \$80,000. We received a \$25,000 grant from the Edmund and Virginia Ball Foundation toward this project and are pursuing other grants and donations to complete the project. We also are working to raise funds to repair minor damage to some structural beams caused by this water intrusion. If the Lake Michigan water level lowers a bit, we also want to replace the sea doors, which already is a sponsored project by one of our members!

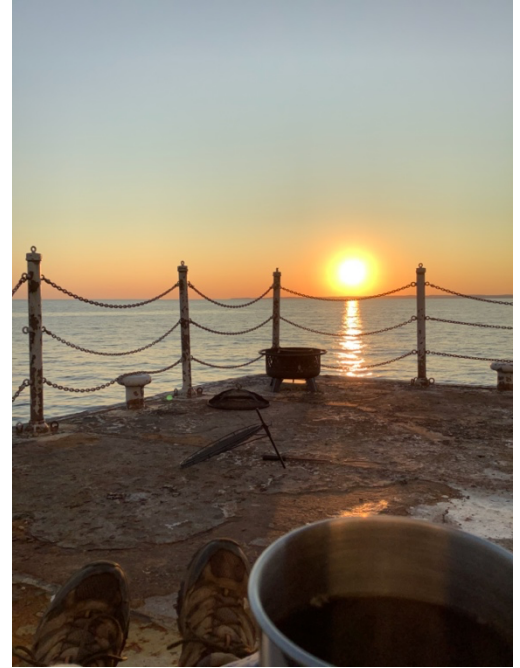
First Tours and Other Top Priorities. We are excited to start our first tours to the Crib next summer. This is possible now because we have cleaned the interior, removed hazardous materials and completed the first phase of our restoration to allow for basic tours. To support visits and work at the lighthouse, we also will be moving safety and "comfort" equipment there (such as toilets and equipment to enable electricity and running water). Take a peek below for more information about our forthcoming tours! The other items on our "top priorities" list help build the strength of our organization to support the Crib: stay cash flow positive, raise funds, maintain and grow our membership, and build a larger public presence.

Webcam and Weather Station. Also planned (and pretty exciting!) is a live video feed from the lighthouse via a webcam! We already have a live weather station on the Crib (see our website for the link to the live weather station at www.NorthManitouLightKeepers.org). Ultimately, we would love to have a user-controlled camera to view sunrises, sunsets and passing ships. We've done a fair amount of research on the feasibility of the camera, but if any members or followers have some expertise in this area, we would love to hear from you!



Reflections on the Crib from Dave McWilliam, Captain of Restoration

Greetings from the Manitou Passage! I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving - while I'm sure it was different this year, I hope it was meaningful and with family and friends (as best you could). This summer I was fortunate to spend three days completely alone on the Crib. The ultimate in social distancing! So many vivid and unforgettable memories - watching the boat pulling away and feeling excited but very much alone and isolated; laying on the deck and watching stars so bright they appeared 3 dimensional; being startled awake at 4 a.m. by the deep low rumble of a well-lit passing freighter (not to mention the myriad of other strange noises the lighthouse makes in the middle of the night)! I am fortunate that my job allows me to travel all over the globe, visiting some exciting and exotic places. I've been to some amazing places, but there's nowhere I'd rather be than on the Crib, sipping a cup of coffee and watching the sunrise over the Michigan shoreline. There's something strangely fun, odd, unique and beautiful about being on this speck of a man-made island, smack in the middle of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Unforgettable sunrises over the lakeshore and sunsets between the Manitou Islands create images that will stay with you a lifetime. The simple isolation is a peaceful escape from the fervor of day-to-day life and certainly the craziness of 2020. By far, the most frequently asked question we get when speaking about the lighthouse is "What are you going to do with it?" The rumored uses have been humorous and varied - a bed-and-breakfast, a giant water slide, casino, condos - you name it, we've heard it! From day one, our never-changing goal and answer has been "to share this truly unique place and experience with as many people as possible." The structure is fascinating, the history interesting, and the experience unforgettable. To date, we've had to do this largely through photos, video, models and speaking engagements. But coming in 2021, we will begin an exciting new phase - basic public tours, and if logistics allow, some rustic overnight stays. More details follow in the article on page three. Next summer will be exciting!



Having done this a few years now, my observation is that some of our best ideas and suggestions come from you - our members and followers. To that end, I'd love to hear from you - about anything! Any suggestions, comments, questions are fair game. Send me an email at Dave@NorthManitouLightKeepers.org and I promise to respond promptly. Keep the great ideas coming!

First Light Keeper Rally a Success!



On September 19th we hosted our first annual Light Keeper Rally. The weather cooperated and we safely gathered outside to hear about the restoration progress and plans for the coming year.

We plan to host this event annually in September. We hope you will join us in 2021!

History Happens Here: Lightship Manitou



Before the Crib there was the North Manitou Shoal Lightship know as LV-56.

The ship was built in 1891 in Toledo, Ohio by Blythe Craig Shipbuilding Co. It was 103 feet long and propelled by a steam engine. The “light” on the ship was illuminated by a cluster of 3 oil burning lenses hoisted to each mast head. In 1910 the ship was equipped with a submarine bell signal. The ship anchored in 19 feet of water two miles off of Dimmick’s Point on North Manitou. The ship served the North Manitou Shoal from 1910-1926.

After LV-56 the shoal was served by LV-89 from 1927 to 1933, and LV-103/WAL-526 from 1934 to 1935. Of the three lightships, only LV-103 survives, and it can be toured in Port Huron, Michigan, where it is dry docked. In 1989 the LV-103 was designated a National Historic Landmark. She is the only lightship on the Great Lakes to be so honored.



TOURS STARTING IN 2021!

As mentioned above, tours are coming next summer! The tour details will be finalized this winter, but a basic framework has been established. The tours likely will occur in July and August to ensure the greatest chance of good weather. Due to the transportation logistics, tour groups will be fairly small at 5 or 6 people with a personal tour guide. Tours will be open to the general public but priority will be



given to our members first, so please sign up or maintain your membership! The fee to take a tour will be based on covering our out-of-pocket cost to safely transport the tour group and provide the tour. This will be a memorable and unique experience - there’s nothing like standing on the lantern deck and taking in that 360-degree view! It’s a bucket list item for many, and a once in a lifetime experience for most. Stay tuned for further details in the coming months, as well as sign-up information. We’d love to have you join us!

Historic Structure Report

Nearing completion is our Historic Structure Report (HSR). You may recall we received a \$40,000 grant from the State of Michigan to fund the majority of this important document. The funding source for this grant was the sale of Michigan’s “Save our Lights” license plates, and we were grateful to receive this grant. This 300+ page document covers virtually everything you can imagine about the lighthouse: construction, history, modifications, structural evaluation of current conditions, paint color analysis, hazardous materials analysis, historic photos etc. Perhaps the most important part of this document is a comprehensive restoration plan and the associated costs to bring this project to completion. It will be our core source reference document as we proceed with the restoration. Preparation of this document involved hundreds of hours and involved trips to the National Archives in Washington DC for research, as well as interviews with former Coastguardsmen. We look forward to receiving the final draft of this document in the coming days!



Guardian of the Passage

Over the course of the last year, not only have we been working hard on our restoration plans, but we have also put a great deal of time into enhancing our organizational capacity. You may have noticed we expanded our membership levels and now use a donor management software to keep track of your vital gifts to the lighthouse. As we look to the year ahead, we are moving into the next phase of our restoration and hope you will consider a contribution to the Campaign for the Crib in addition to your membership. 100% of your contribution dollars to

this fund will go directly toward restoration efforts. Any level of contribution is welcome and will be graciously accepted. We wish to honor those who make a contribution to this fund with the designation of “Guardian of the Passage” because your gift ensures that the North Manitou Shoal Lighthouse stands watch in the Manitou Passage for many years to come.

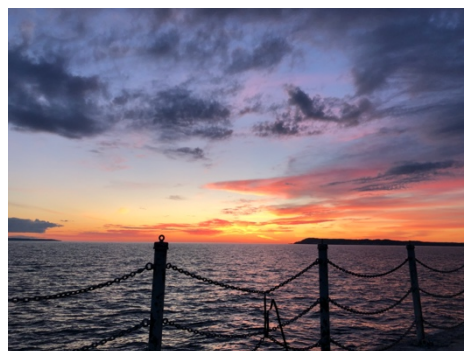
Shine On!

**Support
North Manitou Light
Keepers Inc.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

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Many of our members have asked about purchasing photo prints. We are looking into an efficient way to offer you a variety of choices and sizes! Keep an eye on our email newsletters for updates on this.