



CURTIS ISLAND LIGHT STATION

(THE NEXT 100 YEARS)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

CURTIS ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE
FOUNDATION & CAMDEN SELECT
BOARD

PRESENTED BY
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CURTIS ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION



- Organized in 2023
- Incorporated in Maine as a non-profit corporation
- Granted 501(c)(3) status by IRS

INTRODUCTIONS



- Michael Skaling, President
- John Healy, Trustee
- Sam Appleton, Trustee
- Jack Sanford, Clerk
- Philip Conkling & Associates, Advisors
- ++

OUR MISSION

To protect, preserve and restore the Curtis Island Light Station for current and future generations.

OUR VISION



Curtis Island Light Station, historically restored to the early 1900s, is safeguarded for the next 100 years by a dedicated community of volunteers, donors, and Town officials while serving as an educational resource for the community.

WHY DID WE FORM?

To help the Town with systematic and full restoration for the next 100 years.

- Current structures built in 1889
- Continuous repairs and preservation efforts over 134 years
- Many areas showing significant deterioration
- Conditions Assessment needed-- Foundation to Roof
- Historic Preservation Plan needed

BRIEF HISTORY

- EARLY

- 1791 – Camden Incorporated
- 1820 - Maine becomes a state
- 1833 - Negro Island purchased for \$400
- 1834 - Congress Appropriated \$4500
- Andrew Jackson President
- 1835 - Keeper's House and Light Tower built
- 1836 – First Light Keeper - Henry K.M. Bowers

EARLY PAINTING OF NEGRO ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE



Painting by John Locke at age 14

He was the author of *Sketches of the Town of Camden, Maine (1859)*

From Camden Rockport Historical Society

Rubblestone house
and light tower

Early photo by
Fitz Henry Lane

c.1859



**ORIGINAL LIGHT KEEPER'S
HOUSE REPLACED AFTER
53 YEARS IN 1889**

**ORIGINAL LIGHT TOWER
REPLACED AFTER 60
YEARS IN 1896**

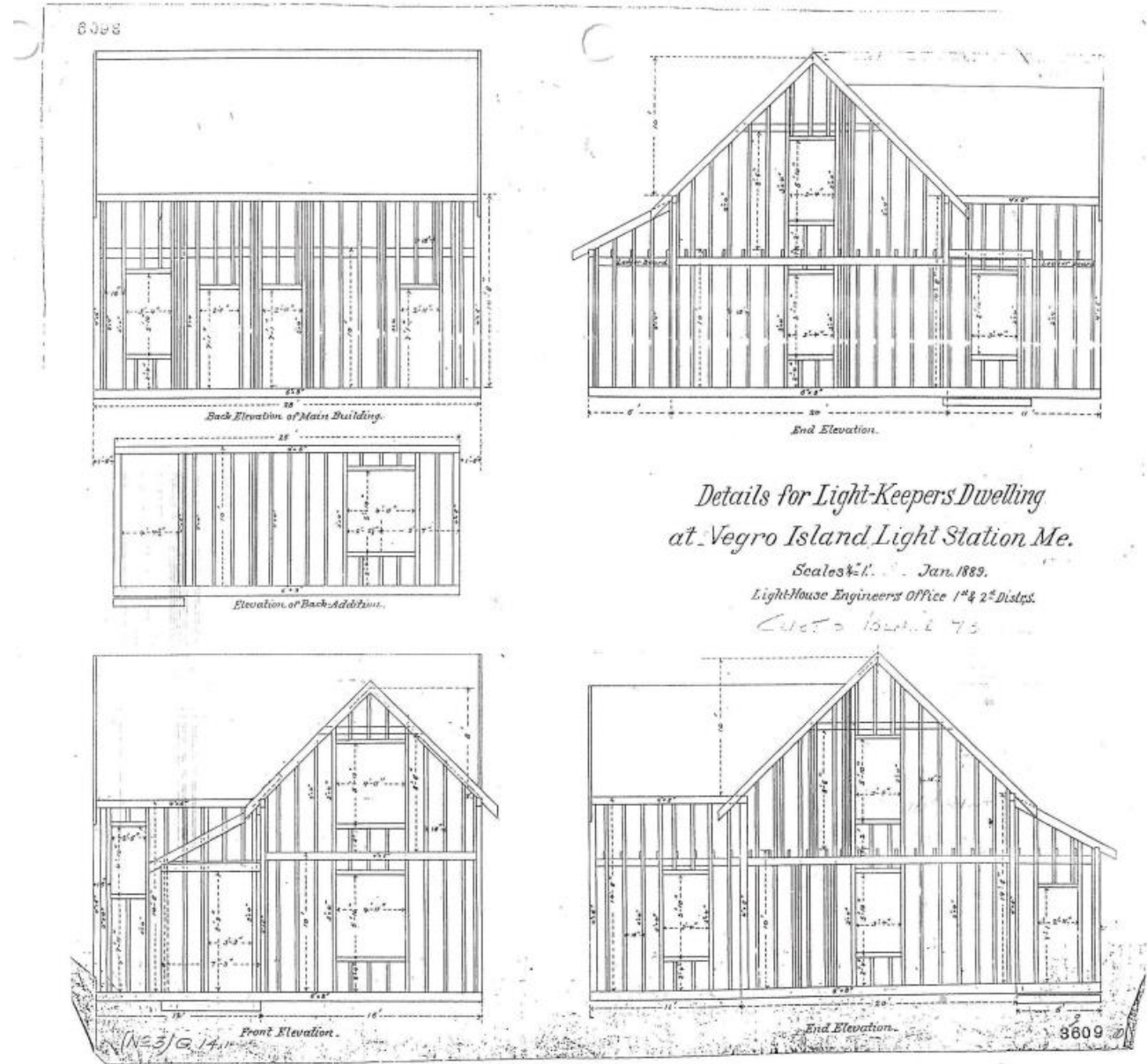
**NEW 1000 POUND FOG
BELL ADDED 1896**



ALL NEW DESIGN - 1889

Local Newspaper stated:

"It is in a modern and pleasing style of architecture and very convenient. It contains six large, airy, well lighted rooms, beside numerous closets, and halls... and every floor in the house is of hard pine and the whole house is built in the most thorough manner and of the best materials."



THE SECOND BEGINNING 1886 – 1896

By 1896, all lighthouse structures were redesigned and rebuilt.

These included:

- Light Tower and Fog Bell

- Light Keeper's House

- Barn

- Oil Shed

- Boat House

- Boat Ramp

- Dock



**BOAT HOUSE,
RAMP, AND
DOCK c. 1918**



THE GOOD NEWS:

**THE FOUR
REMAINING
STRUCTURES
ARE MUCH THE
SAME TODAY AS
WHEN BUILT IN
THE LATE 1800s**



c. 1925

2023

Strong Bones...

Curtis Island Light
Station looks
beautiful and
continues to be a
guiding light into
Camden Harbor



**BUT, ON
CLOSER
LOOK...**



Roof with
temporary fix
after December
2022 storm



TODAY ON CLOSER INSPECTION

2022 Winter Storm
Gutter ripped away;
fascia boards split



TODAY ON CLOSER INSPECTION

Water, moisture,
and wind damage
have accelerated
paint peel

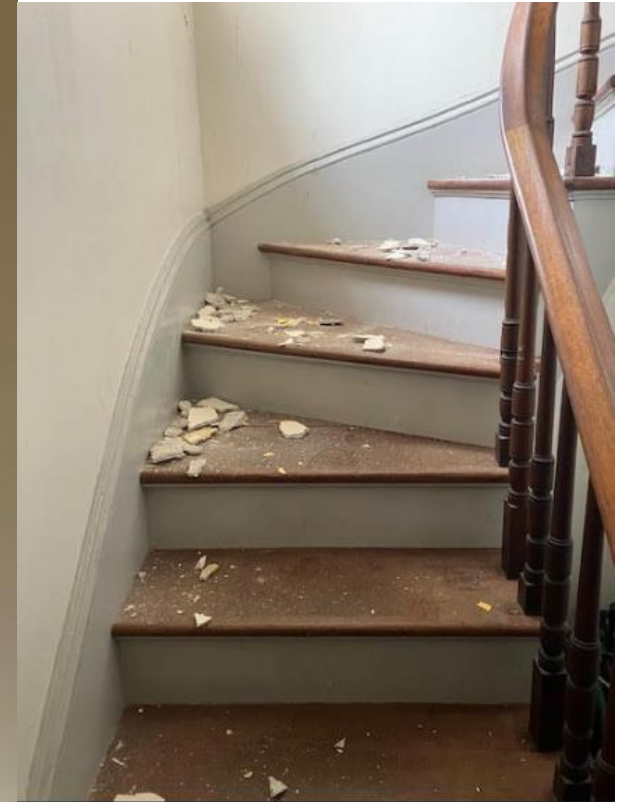
Clapboards not
holding paint



TODAY ON CLOSER INSPECTION

Water damage
inside from 2022
Storm

Moisture has
accelerated paint
peel and plaster
failure



TODAY ON CLOSER INSPECTION

Dry rot found
in Northeast
Corner



WHAT'S BEEN DONE



- 1989 New roofs on all buildings
- 1990s All structures and interior stripped and repainted
- 2000-2015 Light keepers house stripped, primed, repainted along with interior rooms
- 2005 New roofs on all buildings (after 15 years)
- 1987-2023 Roof repairs almost every year
- 2010 Lightkeeper's House scraped, sanded, painted with help from Coast Guard
- Stairs from boat landing and outhauls repaired/replaced several times

WHAT'S BEEN DONE



- 2018 Camden Historic Resources Committee receives \$10,000 grant from Maine Community Foundation to restore all window sashes.
- 2019 All window sashes removed, restored, reinstalled.
- 2020 Historic Buildings Conditions Assessment completed by Gartley & Dorsky.
- 2022 Town funded \$25,000 to paint the Lightkeeper's house – Rot was discovered, and decision was made not to paint until extent of deterioration determined.
- 2022 Town funds were applied to asbestos abatement and lead paint removal in the basement and lead paint on the Oil Shed exterior.
- 2022 Winter storm caused major damage to the Lightkeeper's roof and interior plaster.
- 2023 Temporary roof patch placed on missing shingles.
- 2023 Town funded \$55,000 to replace the roof including soffits, fascia boards, gutters. Contractor returned with a cost that was over \$100K.
- Due to high cost, temporary shingle patches were made in November 2023 to protect from further damage until the conditions assessment is completed and a plan in place for all the exterior work on the Light Keepers House.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE FIRST?

Spring 2024

The Assessment and Plan will define the condition, the cost, the priorities, and how it will be done to meet historic preservation standards

- Historic Architecture Conditions Assessment
- Historic Architecture Preservation Plan

**FOUNDATION
WILL PARTNER
WITH TOWN TO
COMPLETE THE
ASSESSMENT
AND BEGIN A
STRATEGIC
AND PLANFUL
APPROACH**

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and Curtis Island Lighthouse Foundation

MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into on _____, 2023, by and between:

Curtis Island Lighthouse Foundation, Camden, Maine (hereinafter, "Foundation")

and

Town of Camden, Maine (hereinafter, "Town").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Curtis Island has a rich historical significance dating back to the late 1700s and has served continuously as a navigational landmark since 1834; and

WHEREAS, the Curtis Island Light Station (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) located on Curtis Island in Camden, Maine, which is comprised of four existing historic structures that require restoration and preservation to adhere to the standards set forth by the United States Department of the Interior's "Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties"; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Camden has been the custodian of Curtis Island and three of its four existing structures since 1973 and of its fourth structure, the light tower, since 1996, and is required to, and committed to, the maintenance and preservation of Curtis Island and its structures in accordance with historic preservation standards; and

WHEREAS, the Curtis Island Lighthouse Foundation was formed in 2023, with the objective of providing planning, organizational, and financial resources to the Town to fully restore, maintain and preserve the Curtis Island Light Station to its historic state as it was redesigned and rebuilt in the late 1800s; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual understandings contemplated herein, the parties confirm their commitment to undertake the following duties and responsibilities in connection with the assessment, restoration, maintenance, and ongoing preservation of the Curtis Island Light Station of Camden, Maine.

MOU

TERMS OF UNDERSTANDING

1. The goal of the assessment, restoration, maintenance, and preservation work will be to restore Curtis Island Light Station to the historic preservation standards set by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, preserving its historical, cultural, and maritime significance.
2. The Town owns Curtis Island and all its structures, while the United States Coast Guard owns and maintains its navigational aids.
3. The Town is responsible for the care, maintenance, historic preservation, and overall upkeep of all structures on Curtis Island, as per prior agreements with the United States Coast Guard and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

MOU

4. The Foundation is a registered non-profit corporation in Maine and holds 501(c)(3) non-profit status from the IRS and will maintain its current legal status under state and federal laws throughout the duration of its involvement and affiliation with the Curtis Island Light Station.

5. The Foundation's goal will be to raise funds for:
- a. Historic restoration of the four (4) existing buildings, which may include water, plumbing, and electrical systems;
 - b. Design, construction, and installation of island access structures that reflects (if possible) the historic structures in place during the early 1900s while meeting current requirements/standards.

MOU

6. To accomplish this goal, The Town will contribute Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000), and the Foundation will contribute Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) by February 1, 2024, to engage a third party to develop a comprehensive Historic Conditions Assessment and Historic Preservation Plan (“Assessment”).

7. The Town will allow the Foundation and its members, affiliates, agents, representatives, contractors, and invitees reasonable access to Curtis Island for Assessment purposes.

8. Upon completion of the Assessment, the Town and the Foundation will work cooperatively with each other to explore development of a Memorandum of Understanding, based on cooperative efforts to restore, maintain, and preserve the property and structures.

MOU

9. The Town will appoint a dedicated representative to coordinate all Town and Foundation interface and communication activities.
10. The Foundation will work with the Camden Historic Resources Committee and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to ensure compliance with historic preservation standards.
11. The Foundation will manage donor relationships, grant writing, and fundraising activities, with consultation and reasonable assistance from the Town.

MOU

12. The Town will solicit, identify, write, and submit grants that are available through municipal governments but not accessible to (501(c)(3) organizations. The Foundation will identify, write, and submit grants that are available to (501(c)(3) organizations. Where possible, each organization will assist the other in these endeavors.

13. The Foundation and the Town acknowledge that this MOU is not a binding agreement of the parties but does represent their good faith understanding of commitments that will be required and necessary to undertake the assessment, and future restoration, maintenance, and ongoing preservation of the Curtis Island Light Station. Any formal commitments will be incorporated in a definitive and legally binding agreement by the parties.

14. The Town retains all rights, title, interest, control and possession of Curtis Island and nothing herein shall be construed to convey or grant any possessing rights to the Foundation.

QUESTIONS?

The 1000-pound fog bell

