



Friends of the
Doubling Point
Light
Newsletter
2024

Change, Commitment, Challenging Construction Costs

Since it was twenty-six years ago Friends of the Doubling Point Light (Friends) formed to begin its mission, for many people it may not be entirely clear *how and why* a small group of volunteers joined forces to preserve a stunning little lighthouse.

The story of *how* our organization developed aligns with the historical changes in the oversight and maintenance of lighthouses. In 1910, America launched its lighthouse automation process with the intent to reduce costs and achieve operational lighthouses with minimal human intervention. Modernization succeeded, and except for Boston Light, all U.S. lighthouses became fully automated in 1990. That said, the U.S. Coast Guard is still responsible for the safety and security of the maritime public by ensuring the operational readiness of lighthouse lenses, sound signals, and power sources. Nonetheless, ending the traditional era of lighthouse keepers at these invaluable beacons of America's maritime heritage meant replacement support solutions became necessary. To maintain the irreplaceable network of lighthouse structures and towers, the government decided to grant stewardship of lighthouses to other qualified entities. Some lighthouses were excecised and sold by auction, but for the purpose of historic preservation and public tourism, most lighthouses transferred to eligible communities or organizations. Thus, through the Maine Lights Program, Doubling Point Light conveyed to the Friends Non-profit in 1998.

Although we acknowledge that periodic visits by Coast Guard technicians, and advances in technology can provide a beam of light for mariners — without continuous caretaking by a multitude of dedicated common people — our nation's captivating, historic navigational landmarks cannot survive.

Accordingly, committed Friends volunteers, alongside generous contributors like you, answered the call to conserve Doubling Point Light. *Why* Friends embarked on this journey shines through our wholehearted belief this rare, idyllic lighthouse, and its well-preserved keeper's cottage, outbuildings, and grounds, are remarkable! Doubling Point Light gracefully depicts the rich maritime heritage of Midcoast Maine. Albeit petite, this picturesque Kennebec River beacon appears in promotional literature for Bath Iron Works, the tourism industry, and countless businesses. Our charming lighthouse shines for mariners, delights visitors, and is truly a treasure worthy of saving for historical and educational study.



Friends look forward to welcoming back visitors. Above, Friends Secretary/Treasurer Karen McLean.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Friends of the Doubling Point Light, PO Box 225, Bath, ME 04530
Email: lighthouse@doublingpoint.org
Website: www.doublingpoint.org

PLEASE HELP REOPEN DOUBLING POINT LIGHT

To donate via PayPal or Venmo, visit our website:
www.doublingpoint.org

Over the past year, Friends has thoughtfully navigated rough seas after the lighthouse walkway collapsed. Some people affected may still be recovering. We sincerely hope that as the storm wanes and the clouds clear, sunshine reappears on the horizon bringing healing and peace.

Friends is making headway, now focusing all its effort on structural restoration of crucial importance. We must build a new elevated pedestrian walkway leading to the lighthouse, and two catwalks that encircle the light tower; both components are essential extensions to iconic Doubling Point Light. In mid-August, we finally received construction plans at a cost of \$25,500. These funds have been allocated. Importantly, the new walkway and catwalk design upgrades integrate improved structural strength and longevity features, while maintaining the graceful, historic look of the original impressive railing trusses. Friends board members reviewed cost proposals from interested marine contractors. The board selected a respected local company. Will you consider uniting with us to build a bridge? With concentrated effort, and great deliberateness, we aim to complete this extensive project by September 2025, ultimately ending a disappointing closure.



A lovely autumn view of Doubling Point Light.

However, **we face a monumental, all-hands-on-deck fundraising challenge to raise \$500,000!** Success is the only option. Incredibly, one local couple has donated \$50,000! With this amazing contribution and savings, our project is twenty-five percent funded. Your generous support, grant assistance, and a Telluride-like can-do spirit, are essential to achieve this enormous budget need. Any gift amount will help. As an all-volunteer organization, every dollar received supports our mission and projects.

Together, we will restore wholeness to this maritime gem. Eager lighthouse enthusiasts yearn for re-opening; but funding is key. Kindly send your best donation today. *If you commit, you play a vital role in how and why we successfully achieve this challenging fund drive.* Thereupon, the change we long for comes to fruition when beloved Doubling Point Light welcomes visitors again. We are deeply grateful for your support.

“The greater the obstacle, the more joy in overcoming it.” — Moliere

Submitted by Karen McLean
Friends Secretary/Treasurer



Design/Edit by Leanne M. Robicheau
Friends Board Member



Jaime L. Montilla
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