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Friends of Wood Island Lighthouse
woodislandlighthouse.org
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[Bill Edmunds](#)

photographer

Winter 2006

[Online Store](#)

Friends of Wood Island Lighthouse Newsletter

From the Executive Committee



Jerry Murray - Keeper 1973-1976

What is This?



We would like to salute Keeper Jerry Murray, who passed away January 22nd. He will be missed by many. Jerry described his job as keeper of Wood Island Light as the best job he ever had. He considered it a privilege to live and work at Wood Island Lighthouse.

As well as keeper, Jerry worked in the Coast Guard Search and Rescue following an extended tour of duty in Vietnam. This brave and compassionate man was a natural born storyteller, whose gentle, offbeat humor kept stories lively and entertaining. Many in FOWIL were fortunate to enjoy Jerry as raconteur.

Journalist, Chris Crawford, told one story which captured the essence of this man. "During his three years on Wood Island, he developed a hobby of building model boats which he launched in rough seas so that the wind and tide would take them where they would. He launched his beautiful handicraft into peril with no regrets".

We send our condolences to his family, especially his wife Susan and daughter Jessica, who lived with him at the lighthouse, and his grandsons Jake and Johnny.

The first tower built on Wood Island in 1808 was a wooden octagonal structure sheathed in wood shingles and topped with a domed metal lantern room. It lasted for about thirty years. A new granite tower was built circa 1839.

[Story Here](#)



Membership Benefits

The greatest benefit for being a 2006 member is that you are saving the lighthouse!!!!

Another benefit revolves around our island tours. We will be trying a phone reservation system this summer. **There will be some sort of priority planned for 2006 Members.** Details will be announced this Spring.

Shipwrecks



painting by Ron Goyotte

Lighthouses are all important for mariners. The summer before Wood Island Light was built, the schooner

MEMBERSHIP

FOWIL's membership roll took a great leap forward in 2005 with approximately 230 members (individuals or families), we "quintupled" the number in 2004. We are grateful that a majority of our 2004 members remained loyal and supportive in 2005. The *Lightrunner* boat tours were a source of about 40% of our memberships. The tours heightened FOWIL's visibility and enabled people to experience Wood Island, learn the light station's history, and get up close and personal with our charming and awe-inspiring lighthouse. If you haven't become a 2006 member, please visit our web site for information including how to [pay on-line.](#)

RESTORATION



photo from 1994 Coast Guard Restoration
courtesy of Joe Tully

Restoration efforts continue forward with the completion of plans for the tower hand rail system. There will be a meeting set up with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to review the handrail plan. A good deal of onsite work took place in order to complete the handrail design. Difficult measurements were required and experimentation with sample parts from several companies that make connecting rail systems. When permission

Charles, on her way from Boston to Portland foundered in mountainous seas, which pounded her to pieces. Bodies of passengers and crew were found near Crescent Beach the next day. They were buried there by the local people. One of the victims seemed very special - a five-foot tall beautiful red headed girl dressed in a flowing gown. Beside her body they found a damaged trunk that contained a new white wedding gown, this they buried with her body. Evidence of her spirit pacing the beach have been reported over the years.

Resource:

Coastal Ghosts and Lighthouse Lore
William Thompson

is granted, construction will begin as soon as can be arranged. Another step forward has been taken as all architectural plans for the existing buildings have been converted to electronic form. This will greatly facilitate further design work.

New Online Store

A small online store has been added to the web site. As items become available, members and friends will be informed. You are invited to visit the store to see how it operates.

[Online Store](#)

Web Team: Sean Murphy, Bill Edmunds and Sheri Poftak
Newsletter Team: Sheri Poftak, Bill Edmunds and contributors

The Friends of Wood Island Lighthouse

is a chapter of the American Lighthouse Foundation. It was formed in the Spring of 2003 specifically to preserve and restore the Wood Island Light Station. Please visit our web site for information.

www.woodislandlighthouse.org

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Postcard from Joe Tully - Coast Guard