



Visit the Burnt Island Lighthouse in 2022 For A “True Living History” Experience.

The *Keepers of Burnt Island Light*, a nonprofit organization in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, is offering a unique, “living history” tour of the recently restored light station. They are pleased to announce that this year’s interpretive staff are “the real McCoy.” Yes - former Burnt Island keepers, the wife of a deceased keeper, and the son of another are taking turns in sharing their life stories. Visitors who come ashore on their own, or as part of an organized tour, will receive a one-of-a-kind educational experience that spans a period of 30 years from 1958 to 1988.

Lighthouses belong to a bygone era when ships had to navigate dangerous, rocky coastlines without radar or GPS. The beacons of light were sometimes all that stood between life and death for these mariners. Since then, technological advancements made light-keeping obsolete and automated equipment replaced the vigilant keepers.

Now, these former keepers have returned home to share their intriguing stories of daring rescues, damaging storms, ghostly figures, and means of survival in a remote setting that was loved by some and detested by others. As primary sources of information, they bring history to life – a perspective that surpasses all other resources. While on the island, visitors climb the spiral stairs into the lantern-room, tour the buildings, and visit the covered-walkway museum. The five-acre island’s scenic beauty is enjoyed seated on granite benches or walking perimeter trails.

Tours are Mondays and Thursdays from June 27th to September 1st. Reservations are made by contacting the Balmy Days Cruises at 207-633-2284 with departure from Pier 8 at 1:45 PM and return to the mainland at 4:45 PM. Owned by the State of Maine, the island is open to the public seven days a week from 10 AM – 5 PM, and maintained by the Department of Marine Resources. Visitors can paddle ashore or utilize floats and moorings on a first-come, first-serve basis. Admission for recreational use is free; however, donations are appreciated.

The following schedule identifies when each keeper is on duty as the residential interpreter:

June 26th - July 9th - Henry "Hank" Sieg was the last keeper to serve on Burnt Island. He and his wife Jeanne moved onto Burnt Island in 1983 and welcomed two children during their stay. They left in 1988, when the light was automated.

July 9th - 19th – Steve McCullough, son of James McCullough, has vivid memories about his childhood years (1958-1961) on Burnt Island. He and his family members were all trained to tend the light and fog bell.

July 24th – 30th and August 28 – Sept. 3rd - Paul Kelly transferred to Burnt Island in 1970 and resided there for three years with his wife Sharon, son Brandon and St. Bernard Spunky. He provided assistance to mariners lost in the fog many times and received a commendation for saving the life of a sailor.

July 31st – August 13th - Randy Griffing and wife Anna were stationed on Burnt Island from 1974-1977. He attached the famous tire swing that thousands of children have enjoyed. They shared their home with Jet the dog and Foghorn the cat.

August 14th – 27th - Betsy Norton moved onto Burnt Island in 1968 with Keeper Tom Norton, her groom of 27 days. The young couple were thrilled to settle into their first home and welcomed children Stuart and Jennifer to the family.



Hank Sieg



Steve McCullough



Paul Kelly



Randy Griffing



Betsy Norton