

Lighthouse Talking Points

Last Updated 1/8/22

Start (outside entrance)

1. Welcome to the iron lighthouse.
2. This is the only active lighthouse owned by the Space Force.
3. The Coast Guard still maintains the working light.
4. The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation is a nonprofit that helps the Space Launch Delta 45 by preserving the history and providing these tours.
5. The first lighthouse was built out of brick in 1848 and located about a mile closer to the ocean.
6. This lighthouse was first built next to it in 1868 out by the ocean but moved to this location in 1894 because of the rising sea level.
7. More of the history of the lighthouse is told in the museum, so please visit, if you haven't already. The gift shop is also located there.
8. Commemorative bricks on walkways are available for purchase. Funds from these sales help maintain the museum and will help build an educational building and replica cottage in the future.
9. *Safety – proper footwear required (closed toe or sandal with back strap. No flip flops), no food or drink (closed water bottles allowed but don't consume in the lighthouse or museum).*
10. No children under 4 feet may climb above the 1st level. Children may not be carried.
11. Across is the oil house where they stored the fuel for the light when it was a Fresnel lens. The lens was replaced in 1993 with a searchlight beacon because vibrations from rocket launches kept breaking the prisms in the lens. In 2021, this beacon failed and was replaced by a Sealite 300 LED marine lantern that blinks, instead of sweeping.
12. Please go in and start your tour on the 1st level

1st Level Facts & Features

1. The entire lighthouse is made of cast iron. There is no steel.
2. The front door didn't exist until needed to install generators for electrification in 1931. The original entrance was via the outside stairs up to the 3rd level.
3. Two concrete pads on the floor to the right of the entrance held two generators used during early electrification before commercial electricity was available.
4. Radio beacon equipment was located on the west wall from 1931 to 1996. It was connected to an antenna constructed nearby. It sent out a Morse code signal (Z), unique to this lighthouse.
5. Water tanks stored rainwater here, collected by a gutter around the 2nd level – note the overflow pipe and the access pipe nearby.
6. There are 176 steps up to the light.
7. When going up the stairs, note the Roman numeral assembly numbers on the stair column. Each piece of the lighthouse is marked, for easy assembly.

2nd Level Right Room Facts & Features

1. The 2nd, 3rd and 4th levels were designed as living quarters. Because of the Florida heat, the Keepers typically only stayed here during storms or as temporary quarters.
2. This room was designed to be a kitchen / eating area. There was a cook stove on the left inside the door. The chimney went up through the ceiling.
3. Note the assembly numbers up by the beams.

2nd Level Left Room Facts & Features

1. This room was designed to be a bedroom.
2. Note the signatures on the door glass (one was a Keeper).
3. The grated holes in the floor were used as ventilation between levels.
4. **Small tour (or less than 70 people with Hangar C open):** Continue directly up to the 5th level, watch the low beam just before you get to the 5th level.
5. **Large tour (more than 70 people or 30+ people without Hangar C open):** Continue up to the 3rd level.

5th Level

1. Fuel to light the lamp could be winched up to the level above (6).
2. The Keepers carried the fuel in oil transfer cans by hand from there - 80 feet (equal to 10 floors).
3. At this level you have only climbed one quarter of the height to get to the top.
4. Note the gray pipe. This was the chimney from the stoves on the 2nd and 3rd levels.
5. (Point up the stairway) - This is what the next 80 feet looks like to climb up to the light, without an enclosed stairway.
6. Proceed down to the 4th level.

4th Level Left Room Facts & Features

1. This was designed as a bedroom.
2. Note the date on the iron beam in the bedroom on your left. It was fabricated at Phoenix Iron Works (near Philadelphia), the first maker of metal I-beams in the US.

4th Level Right Room Facts & Features

1. This was designed as a bedroom.
2. They were not sure in 1868 if the cast iron would be strong enough, so an inside brick layer was added. Insulation was an added benefit.
3. The gray ring you see all the way around is a flange from outside plates locking into the brick layer, every 8 feet.
4. There is a 1.5-inch gap between the brick and the iron.
3. Continue down to the 3rd level.

3rd Level Facts & Features

1. This was designed to be the main room and was the original entrance level.
2. Duck fat was smeared between the plates to make the lighthouse watertight to the 3rd level.
3. The receiver you see here would have been used aboard a ship to pick up the lighthouse radio beacon.
4. Note the trap doors in the floor and ceiling. These were used to move heavy items between levels, with block and tackle.
5. To the left of the door there was a stove to heat the area during the cool winter months. Note the flue hole cover.
6. The black wall across from the stairs held sea surveillance radar and viewing scopes for tracking boats during early rocket launches. There was an antenna outside the lamp room.
7. Note the curvature of the doors to conform to the circular stairwell.
8. The gray ring you see all the way around is a flange from outside plates locking into the brick layer, every 8 feet. (Also spoken to on the 4th level, but the sign is here for people who don't climb above)

Above 3rd Level Facts & Features

1. **For Large Tours going only to the 3rd level:**
 - a. The level above (4th) has two bedrooms.
 - b. Above that there are six, 16-foot high open areas with an open circular stair going up 96 more feet to the light.
 - c. The stairwell is only enclosed to the 5th level.
 - d. The last 6 to 8 feet going into the watch room is also enclosed. The Keepers would have to close the door to keep the draft from blowing out the light.
 - e. At this point you have only climbed 12% of the way to the top.
2. Exit down the stairs which were the original entrance and exit to the lighthouse. On the way down, you will pass the rainwater collection gutter. Hold onto the handrail.

Exit

1. Watch the bottom step.
2. To the right is the keeper's cottage museum with artifacts and the history of the lighthouse. If you haven't already, please visit to learn about the lighthouse and its role in the start of the space program.
3. The Keeper's Cottage Gift Shop is also located inside the cottage.
4. The brick walkway, on the right side of the cottage, leads to the restrooms.
5. Go on over to the keeper's cottage or back to your bus or vehicle.

Museum Talking Points

Last Updated 12/23/21

Entrance

1. Welcome to the museum.
2. This building is a replica of the original Head Lighthouse Keeper's cottage, built by the ocean and moved to this spot when the lighthouse was moved. That cottage, along with the other buildings, fell into disrepair after the light was automated so the Air Force burned them down for firefighting practice in the mid 1960s.
3. The displays start in the left room.
4. (Point out the timeline boards). The history of the original brick lighthouse and this iron lighthouse can be learned on our Timeline Boards in both rooms.
5. The museum is set up as a self-guided tour, but feel free to ask any questions.
6. Our Keeper's Closet gift shop is in the back.
7. (Each docent should read and be familiar with all the interpretive signage in order to be able to answer questions and direct visitors to where they can read more about what they're interested in.)

Greeting the KSC bus

Welcome to the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse and Museum. My name is _____. We have docents in both the museum and lighthouse to answer your questions. While here you will be able to climb the lighthouse to the 3rd level and tour our museum. We also have a restroom facility behind the museum for your comfort. Please feel free to visit this historic lighthouse complex at your own pace, for the time you have available. On behalf of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation, welcome to the lighthouse that has witnessed every rocket and missile ever launched from the Space Coast, and every cruise ship that ever called in Port Canaveral!