

***Report to the Governor
and the General Assembly on the
Financial Status of the Lighthouse
Preservation Special Fund***

2003

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
(410) 514-7600
<http://www.dhcd.state.md.us>

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. Governor
Michael S. Steele, Lt. Governor
Victor L. Hoskins, Secretary
Shawn S. Karimian, Deputy Secretary

Report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the Financial Status of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund for 2003

Background

The Maryland Lighthouse Commission was created by the General Assembly in 1989 (Chapter 642, 1989 Laws of Maryland). The Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund was created in 1992 (Chapter 309, 1992 Laws of Maryland) and funded primarily by private gifts and donations. The statute creating the Commission was repealed in 1996, however the Fund was continued in order to fund outstanding lighthouse preservation efforts. The balance of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund, including interest earned, totaled \$17,029.98.

In 1995, Governor Schaefer reserved \$150,000 of the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Historic Preservation Grant Fund specifically for lighthouse projects. This funding for lighthouses was a one-time set-aside, separate from the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund.

Grant expenditures for Maryland Lighthouse projects dating from 1988 through 1997 were previously documented in a report submitted by Orlando Ridout V, Chief of the MHT Office of Survey, Research, and Development, on July 11, 1997 to the Honorable W. Ray Huff, former Chair of the Maryland Lighthouse Commission and lighthouse preservation advisor appointed by the DCHD Secretary under the statute establishing the Fund. Projects dating from 1998 through 2002 were documented in the report "Financial Status of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund, FY95-FY01" and the "2002 Report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the Financial Status of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund."

Activities During Calendar Year 2003

In 2003, approximately \$450 remained in the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund. At Calvert County's request, the Department contracted with the County to use \$426.92 of these funds as seed money for a new County initiative entitled "The Maryland Lighthouse Challenge." This event, developed by Calvert County in cooperation with The Chesapeake Chapter of the U. S. Lighthouse Society, took place on September 13 and 14, 2003. The event was modeled on an event that is held annually in New Jersey to increase awareness and appreciation of historic lighthouses, acknowledging participants for visiting at least 10 historic lighthouses in a two-day period. The County used the funding to help with the printing of brochures, maps, and other materials promoting the event.

The Maryland Lighthouse Challenge brought together seven Maryland counties and jurisdictions (Calvert, Cecil, Harford, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Talbot Counties and Baltimore City). Lighthouses featured in the event included Cove Point, Drum Point, Turkey Point, Concord, Ft. Piney Point, Point Lookout, Hooper Strait, and Severn Foot Knoll Lighthouses, Washington Light, and Chesapeake Light Ship. Documented lighthouse visitations during the Challenge weekend ranged from 657 at the Hooper Strait Lighthouse in St. Michaels to 887 at the Drum Point Lighthouse in Solomons Island.

Participants were from 24 states and the District of Columbia and included visitors from India and Costa Rica. At each lighthouse, participants had their Maryland Lighthouse Challenge passport marked with a unique lighthouse stamp. The 507 participants who succeeded in visiting all 10 lighthouses received a special stamp for “meeting the Challenge.”

Conclusion

The uncommitted balance of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund totaled approximately \$20 at the close of 2003. The Fund balance will carry forward until the statute creating it (Article 83B, Section 5-614.1) is repealed. The Governor and General Assembly may wish either to add funds to reactivate the Special Fund or close out the Fund by repealing the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund statute.