



# The Nantucket Lightship

A NATIONAL TREASURE IN BOSTON HARBOR, MASSACHUSETTS

## National Treasures At a Glance

National Treasures are beloved places that reveal the richness and diversity of our shared American story. These irreplaceable historic places, landscapes, and neighborhoods reflect our past and have the potential to enrich our future, but they are endangered as never before.

That is why the National Trust for Historic Preservation has launched coordinated campaigns to help save them, taking direct action that leverages our significant preservation, advocacy, legal, marketing, and fundraising expertise.

America's National Treasures:

- Represent a growing portfolio of historic places in imminent danger or facing significant threat
- Include diverse places in communities throughout the United States
- Retain their essential integrity and have made a significant contribution to our nation's story
- Catalyze local supporters and provide solutions that can be replicated across America.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately-funded non-profit organization, works to save America's historic places.

## History of the Nantucket Lightship/LV-112

Built in 1936, the Nantucket Lightship/LV-112 served for 39 years as a floating lighthouse, guiding ships safely between Europe and the United States. It is the largest U.S. lightship ever constructed and served at what was considered the most remote and dangerous lightship station in the world. Operated by the U.S. Coast Guard and required to stay on station, even in severe weather, the Nantucket Lightship was the first symbol of America seen by transoceanic travelers, earning it the nickname "Statue of Liberty of the Sea." During WWII, the vessel patrolled the waters off the coast of Portland, Maine, saving the crew of the USS Eagle-56 after it was sunk by a German U-boat. Aside from a few technological upgrades, the ship is remarkably intact, with most of its original features, including light beacons, fog horn, bells, radios, and navigational charts.



Nantucket Lightship with restoration underway.

After being decommissioned in 1975, this National Historic Landmark was converted to a floating museum and was located at various ports along the northeastern seaboard. Funding issues put the ship in jeopardy, however, and to save it from dereliction, the U.S. Lightship Museum was founded in 2009 to acquire and restore the ship in its homeport of Boston.

## Threat

Currently docked at a temporary berth, the Nantucket Lightship requires a long-term home, so the U.S. Lightship Museum can confidently move ahead with its fundraising, restoration, interpretation, and programming. The National Trust's intervention is necessary to ensure the ship's protection and to help this dedicated and effective group implement strategies that will set it on a sustainable path. Although the vessel has now been stabilized, the absence of a long-term home and full funding for its restoration remain threats.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERTSON DINSMORE



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*Save the past. Enrich the future.*

## Plan of Action

The United States Lightship Museum's (USLM) vision is to reuse the ship as the centerpiece of a land- and sea-based museum and education center, with a focus on maritime heritage and environmental education. As a National Treasure, the Lightship is receiving strong support from the National Trust to achieve this goal, including the professional expertise and connections needed to negotiate a long-term berth. The Museum has already raised more than \$160,000 toward the restoration, and the National Trust is committed to helping the USLM reach its goal of transforming the Lightship into a major educational and tourist attraction.

We will consider this National Treasure saved once a long-term berth is secured, so it can become home to a dynamic museum and education center for future generations to experience and enjoy.

## Learn More and Take Action

Visit [www.savingplaces.org](http://www.savingplaces.org) or contact Lisa Signorelli, Director of Development by email at [lsignorelli@savingplaces.org](mailto:lsignorelli@savingplaces.org) or call 617.523.0885 x.44225.



Once a long-term berth is secured, the Nantucket Lightship can become home to a dynamic museum and education center for future generations to enjoy.

## Current National Treasures

LIST CURRENT AS OF JUNE 2012

**Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Hot Springs, SD:** National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, opened 1907

**Bridges of Yosemite Valley, CA:** Rustic stone bridges crossing the Merced River

**Charleston, SC:** One of the most beloved, best preserved U.S. cities

**Chimney Rock, CO:** 4,700-acre historic site, rich in archaeological treasures

**Courthouses of Texas:** Architecturally significant civic structures statewide

**Delta National Heritage Area, MS:** 18-county region rich in history and culture

**Ellis Island, NY, NJ:** Long-overlooked hospital buildings on the island's southern side

**Fort Monroe, Hampton, VA:** Birthplace of self-emancipation for enslaved African Americans

**Hinchliffe Stadium, Paterson, NJ:** Sprawling Art Deco stadium hosted Negro League baseball

**Historic Post Office Buildings:** Endangered by U.S.P.S. cost cutting; no clear review process in place

**Joe Frazier's Gym, Philadelphia, PA:** Training center and gymnasium owned by heavyweight champion

**Lyndhurst, NY:** National Trust Historic Site, one of the nation's finest Gothic Revival mansions

**Malcolm X-Ella Little-Collins House, Boston, MA:** Boyhood home of the human rights activist

**Manhattan Project Sites, NM, TN, WA:** Historic sites integral to development of the atom bomb

**Miami Marine Stadium, Miami, FL:** Dramatic Modern stadium completed 1963

**Milwaukee VA Soldiers Home, WI:** 90-acre veterans' residence opened in 1867

**Mount Taylor, NM:** 12,000-foot pilgrimage site for Native Americans

**Nantucket Lightship/LV-112, Boston Harbor, MA:** Largest and most famous U.S. lightship ever built, 1936

**Pond Farm, Guerneville, CA:** Studio and home of noted potter and German refugee Marguerite Wildenhain

**Prentice Women's Hospital, Chicago, IL:** Modernist concrete icon lauded for structural daring

**Princeton Battlefield, NJ:** Site of George Washington's 1777 victory over British troops

**Rosenwald Schools, Southern US:** Community schools built for African-American students, 1913-1932

**Sweet Auburn Historic District, Atlanta, GA:** Once-thriving commercial area in historically African American neighborhood

**Terminal Island, Los Angeles, CA:** Historic buildings and sites within the Port of Los Angeles

**Theodore Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch, ND:** Remote presidential historic site in Theodore Roosevelt National Park

**Union Station, Washington, DC:** Historic Beaux-Arts gateway to the nation's capital

**Village of Zoar, OH:** 19th-century village established by German settlers

**Washington National Cathedral, DC:** Sixth largest cathedral in the world, severely damaged by 2011 earthquake

**Willamette Falls Navigation Canal and Locks, West Linn, OR:** 19th-century bypass canal and lock

**Woodlawn/Pope-Leighey, Alexandria, VA:** National Trust Historic Site with 1805 Federal mansion and 1940 F.L. Wright house



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