



ARTEFACT DESIGN

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CABRILLO NATIONAL MONUMENT, POINT LOMA, CA

OLD POINT LOMA LIGHTHOUSE EXHIBIT

The historic lighthouse needed fresh bilingual interpretive panels for the interior room exhibits and outdoor garden area. The Artefact team provided planning, editing, translation, graphic design and fabrication coordination. Installed 2023.

Client: National Park Service

Cabrillo

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Cabrillo National Monument
San Diego, California

1857 Old Spanish Lighthouse, Cabrillo National Monument

Old Point Loma Lighthouse

Operation Years: 1855–1891

The Old Point Loma Lighthouse is one of the first eight lighthouses built by the United States government on the West Coast. A lighthouse was needed at this southern California location to help guide ships up the coast to San Francisco, a launching point to gold territory during the Gold Rush.

After many delays, the lighthouse was built in 1854 and began operating with a third-order Fresnel lens in 1855. The steady beam could be seen up to 26 miles out to sea. Unfortunately, this guiding light was often not visible due to low clouds and fog. By 1891, San Diego's first lighthouse was replaced.

As you tour the lighthouse, step back into the year 1887. Imagine living and working in an isolated outpost like this one. How is this structure different from your residence? What makes a place feel like home?

In the 1930s, visitors could purchase souvenirs like this postcard in the lighthouse gift shop. The viewpoint was a popular spot for a weekend drive.

En la década de 1930, los visitantes podían comprar recuerdos como esta postal en la tienda de regalos del faro. El mirador era un lugar popular para ir de paseo de fin de semana.

Viejo Faro de Point Loma

Años de funcionamiento: 1855-1891

El viejo faro de Point Loma es uno de los primeros ocho faros construidos por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos en la costa oeste. Se necesitaba un faro en esta ubicación del sur de California para ayudar a guiar a los barcos por la costa hasta San Francisco, un punto de partida al territorio del oro durante la Fiebre del Oro.

Después de muchas demoras, el faro se construyó en 1854 y comenzó a funcionar con una lente Fresnel de tercer orden en 1855. El haz fijo se podía ver hasta 26 millas mar adentro. Desafortunadamente, a menudo esta luz guía no era visible debido a las nubes bajas y a la niebla. En 1891, se reemplazó el primer faro de San Diego.

Mientras recorre el faro, retrocede al año 1887. Imagínate viviendo y trabajando en un puesto de avanzada aislado como éste. ¿En qué se diferencia esta estructura de tu residencia? ¿Qué hace que un lugar te haga sentir como en casa?

The National Park Service restored the lighthouse in 1970 and whitewashed the exterior. The exposed sandstone (as seen here) was first whitewashed in 1887 and so the interior was restored to reflect that same year.

El Servicio de Parques Nacionales restauró el faro en 1970 y blanqueó el exterior. La piedra arenisca expuesta (como se ve aquí) se blanqueó por primera vez en 1887 y, por eso el interior se restauró para reflejar lo que se hizo ese mismo año.

Keeper Robert Israel in front of lighthouse, ca. 1887
El guardián Robert Israel frente al faro, hacia 1887

The Kitchen: The Center of Family Life

Family life at the lighthouse, like most homes of the mid-1800s, revolved around the kitchen. Food was prepared, served, and canned here. During quiet relaxing hours, one family member might read aloud from a book or a newspaper while the others listened. The business would work on small chores such as darning socks, ironing laundry, or cleaning oil lamp chimneys.

The cook had to stir and wash dishes with hot water. The kitchen was a busy place. It was also the place where the family gathered to eat and talk. The kitchen was the heart of the lighthouse.

La cocina: el centro de la vida familiar

La vida familiar en el faro, como en la mayoría de las casas de mediados del siglo XIX, giraba en torno a la cocina. La comida se preparaba, se servía y se ponía en conserva aquí. Durante la hora tranquila y relajante, un miembro de la familia podía leer en voz alta un libro o un periódico mientras los demás escuchaban. Los visitantes trabajaban en pequeñas tareas como reparar calcetines, planchar la ropa o limpiar las chimeneas de las lámparas de aceite.

"Cook" is a job that is often not glamorous but it is a vital part of running a lighthouse. It is a job that requires a lot of skill and attention to detail.

The Parlor

The Victorian parlor was traditionally a room used only to entertain visitors, but a lighthouse was not an average home. Since the lighthouse was isolated and received few visitors, the parlor doubled as the lighthouse keeper's office. It was a quiet space where the keeper could work undisturbed. The keeper's wife might be hand sewing by the natural light streaming through the back window.

El salón

Tradicionalmente, el salón victoriano era una habitación que sólo se usaba para recibir visitas, pero un faro no era cualquier hogar. Como el faro estaba aislado y recibía pocas visitas, el salón se convirtió en la oficina del guardián del faro. Era un espacio tranquilo donde el cuidador podía trabajar sin interrupciones. La esposa del cuidador podría haber estado cosiendo a mano con la luz natural que se filtraba a través de la ventana trasera.

This lamp is a reproduction of the original. It is made of brass and has a glass chimney. It is a beautiful example of the craftsmanship of the lighthouse keepers.

The Keeper's Bedroom & Watch Room

After tending the light from dusk to midnight, sleep came easily to the lighthouse keeper secure in the knowledge that the assistant keeper would carefully tend the light from midnight to dawn. The keeper split the night into two shifts, so that someone was always available to make emergency repairs or receive a merchant's notice.

El dormitorio del guardián y la sala de vigilancia

Después de atender la luz desde el crepúsculo hasta la medianoche, el guardián del faro podía dormir tranquilo, seguro de que su asistente cuidaría cuidadosamente la luz desde la medianoche hasta el amanecer. Los guardianes dividían la noche en dos turnos, de modo que siempre hubiera alguien disponible para hacer reparaciones de emergencia o rescates en cualquier momento.

The bed was made by the keeper's wife. It is a simple but sturdy piece of furniture. The bed was used for both the keeper and the assistant keeper.

The Children's Room

The keeper's children shared this bedroom. After their chores and school work were completed, the children played games, collected sea shells from the shore, and read books. These activities took place outside or downstairs because bedrooms were strictly places for sleeping and dressing.

El cuarto de los niños

Los hijos del guardián compartían este dormitorio. Una vez que terminaban sus tareas y el trabajo escolar, los niños jugaban, recolectaban conchas en la playa y leían libros. Estas actividades se hacían a cielo abierto o en la planta baja porque los dormitorios eran estrictamente lugares para dormir y vestirse.

The guitar was a gift from the keeper's family. It was a beautiful instrument that the children loved to play. The guitar was used for entertainment and to pass the time.

Lighthouse Garden

When possible, lighthouse keepers kept gardens to supplement seasonal food supplies. Here at Point Loma, lack of water and poor soil prevented the planting most crops. The garden you see today is lovingly maintained by volunteers with good soil and water from a hose. There was no garden at this site in the 1800s.

El huerto del faro

Cuando era posible, los guardianes de los faros mantenían huertos para complementar las reservas de alimentos de la temporada. Aquí en Point Loma, la falta de agua y la pobreza del suelo impedían plantar la mayoría de los cultivos. El jardín que ves hoy se mantiene con buena tierra y agua de una manguera y con el cariño de los voluntarios. En el siglo XIX no había un huerto en este sitio.

Then - Antes

Lack of water and poor soil prevented the planting of most crops. The garden you see today is lovingly maintained by volunteers with good soil and water from a hose. There was no garden at this site in the 1800s.

The garden was a beautiful sight. It was a place where the children could play and the keeper could relax. The garden was a source of pride for the lighthouse keepers.