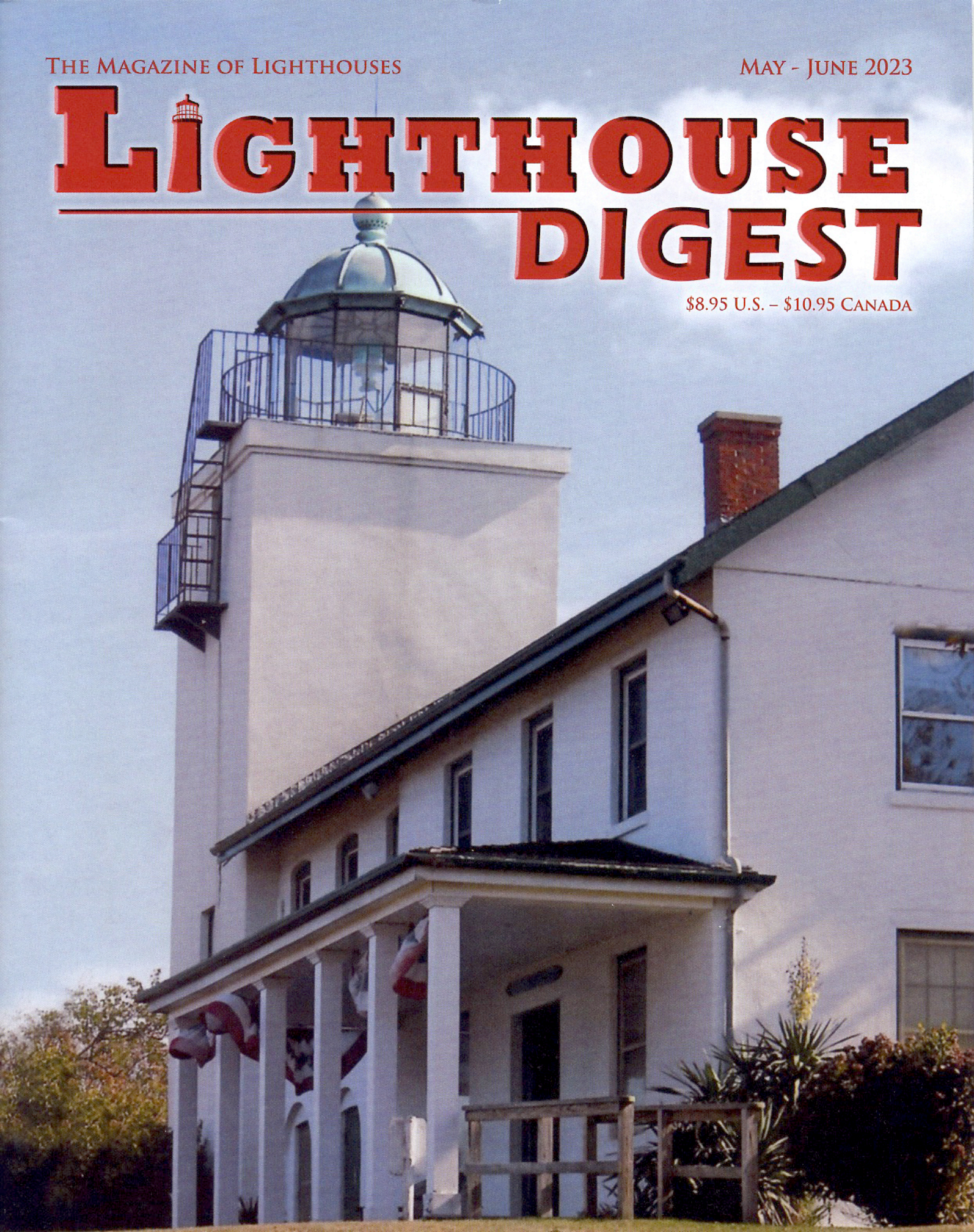


THE MAGAZINE OF LIGHTHOUSES

MAY - JUNE 2023

# LIGHTHOUSE DIGEST

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Page 3 background images is the Chatham Lighthouse on Cape Cod in Massachusetts.  
Photograph by Ron Foster.

## On the cover . . .

The cover image this issue is the Horton Point Lighthouse in Southold, New York. The lighthouse and the grounds surrounding it are under the supervision of the Town of Southold Park District. Photo by Julie Lake.

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# Portion of Historic Shipwreck Washes Ashore at Fire Island

Story and Images by Michael Salvatorezza and Christopher Weaver, (Eco-Photo Explorers)

In October 2022, a piece of wreckage from an old shipwreck washed ashore on Long Island's Fire Island during Hurricane Ian. Shipwreck historians and local archaeologists studying the wreckage have determined that it dates back to the early 1800s, and that it could very well be a section of the long-lost wreck of the *SS Savannah*.

The *SS Savannah* was an American hybrid sailing ship/sidewheel steamer built in 1818. Originally laid down as a sailing packet, the vessel was converted to an auxiliary steamship with the intention of launching the world's first transatlantic steamship service. On May 11, 1819, while in Georgia, President James Monroe took a ceremonial excursion on the ship in advance of her ground-breaking voyage. Shortly after, on May 24, 1819, the *SS Savannah* left port at Georgia's Tybee Island and set out for Liverpool, England. She arrived on June 20, 1819 and became the first steamship to cross the Atlantic. While most of the voyage was performed under sail, roughly 11% of the travel time was accomplished under steam engine power.

Two years later, the *SS Savannah* was fleeing a Nor'easter when it ran aground trying to enter the Great South Bay on Long Island's south shore through an inlet that closed in the 1850s. The ship was upright and intact so the captain was able to launch a boat and make it to shore. He was able to summon help from some fishermen and local residents and all passengers and cargo were safely removed over the next few days. Eventually, it settled into the sand and has been lost ever since.

Historians studying the wreckage have concluded that it is likely from the *SS Savannah* based on construction techniques and the materials used. The wreckage was moved to the grounds of the Fire Island Lighthouse to protect it from the damaging surf on the nearby beach. The intention is to preserve the piece and display it in an appropriate location in the near future.



## Old Newsclip Features Replica Light

*Lighthouse Digest* subscriber Charles Bickerstaff recently sent us this old newspaper clipping that shows old Model T automobiles on the street by the Pacific Oil Company gas station that sold Hess Gasoline and once stood in New Bedford, Massachusetts. It was built to be a close replica of the 1898 Butler Flats Lighthouse, that is now privately owned.

We'd love to have more photos of the no longer standing Pacific Oil Gas Station as shown in the sharp clear photo from the archives of *Lighthouse Digest*.

