

From the desk of Bruce Roberts  
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### ***Why Make A Donation to the Outer Banks Lighthouse Society?***

I have always tried to write a small check to worthy charities as their appeals for money came in the mail each year. I know they do good work. Now as part of the OBLHS, I see needs that must be met in preserving our lighthouses and their histories, but many of these needs cannot be met because the money simply isn't there—yet. With your help, future projects can happen.

But, *why* are there such needs for lighthouses now? We are still in the early days of lighthouse preservation. It has been just in the last two decades that lighthouses have been repurposed from navigational aids cared for by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) to historic monuments that are becoming big travel destinations. The USCG faced big expenses as a major participant in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; therefore, it became necessary to disperse hundreds of lighthouses to qualifying organizations. Many lighthouses are still crumbling, waiting for restoration; further, once restoration is accomplished, maintenance is mandatory. This is where you and I come in.

The National Park Service (NPS) has taken over about three dozen lighthouses, but its budget is restricted also. This is why Cheryl (Shelton-Roberts) and I believe in diversity of ownership of American lighthouses, including ownership and/or volunteer management by successful nonprofits like the Outer Banks Conservationists, Old Baldy Foundation, and the Friends of Oak Island. Fortunately, some companies are stepping up; for instance, around ten years ago, Home and Garden TV (HGTV) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation put a spotlight on the Bodie Island Lighthouse (BILH) as one of ten historic places most in need of help. Today, the lighthouse and its rare, first-order Fresnel lens have been restored and opened to the public with federal funds and OBLHS's help along with a matching grant from HGTV. But more help is an ongoing need at all our lighthouses.

### ***Your donation will live on in the light***

Every dollar you entrust to OBLHS will be put to work, and your donation will be warmly acknowledged. We endeavor to help save historic documents and artifacts as well as save keepers' descendants' memories about their fathers and grandfathers. OBLHS purchased the original plans for the 1859 Bodie Island Lighthouse (second light built there and destroyed at the beginning of the Civil War) that were found at an estate auction in New England and donated them to the NPS. We have published two oral history books about North Carolina's lighthouse keepers, created a coloring book for kids, given presentations to interested groups, answered questions from educators and students, maintained an outstanding website at [outerbankslighthousesociety.org](http://outerbankslighthousesociety.org) (or [oblhs.org](http://oblhs.org)), and lent a hand to other groups when asked. Please see a comprehensive account of our history since 1994 in the "About Us" section of our website.

So the real question is: "How much lighthouse history do you want to save for the future?"

***The answer: "As much as we can!"***

Please join us and we can *all* celebrate in the name of preservation.



Bruce Roberts  
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