

Newport News Middle Ground Lighthouse Timeline

(Located at the confluence of the James River and the Chesapeake Bay, Newport News, VA.)

- 1891** 56 foot tall caisson with tower and cast-iron lantern built on L-shaped Middle Ground shoal. Fitted with 4th- order Fresnel lens and fog bell.
- 1954** Automation. Keeper and assistant leave. Light & fog bell characteristic changed. Light downgraded to a “second-class tall nun buoy”.
- 1979** Ship hits lighthouse, damaging lower portion of caisson.
- 1982** Coast Guard inspects lighthouse- general repairs made.
- 1986-1987** Solar panels added. Light moved to a pole outside of tower.
- 1988** Coast Guard sandblasts, paints & does repairs. Deterioration of lighthouse continues.
- 1992** CG inspection reveals extensive corrosion of foundation.
- 2000** CG replaces white light with more powerful red lamp and moves light back inside tower.
- 2003** Lighthouse becomes available for ownership under the provisions of the NHLPA. .
- 2005** Lighthouse sold to Robert Gonsoulin of Williamsburg, VA for \$31,000. Light remains active.

Source: *Bay Beacons* by Linda Turbyville, Chapter website www.cheslights.org and the Lighthouse Directory (<http://www.unc.edu/~rowlett/lighthouse/Va.htm>)