

Old Cape Henry Lighthouse Timeline

(Located at Fort Story, northern end of Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA) Revised 3/5/2007

- 1791-1792** Ninety-foot tall octagonal tower of sandstone built by John McComb, Jr. of New York for \$17,700. First federal works project and first lighthouse built by US government.
- 1792** Laban Goffigan appointed first keeper.
- 1835** New keeper's dwelling constructed.
- 1841** Lantern replaced with new lamps and reflectors.
- 1855** Fog bell tower constructed.
- 1857** Reflecting apparatus replaced by second-order Fresnel lens. Tower lined with brick.
- 1861** Tower seized by Confederate troops. Lens & lamp destroyed.
- 1863** Union troops regain control of light and resume active service.
- 1864** Wooden stairs replaced by cast-iron spiral staircase.
- 1872** Large cracks appear on tower sides.
- 1881** New 163 foot tall, cast-iron tower constructed 350 feet southeast of old tower. Jay Edwards, last keeper of the old tower appointed first keeper.
- 1930** Old tower deeded to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA).
- 1953** Old tower damaged by Hurricane Barbara, but repaired.
- 2002** Lantern room renovated for easier access.
- 2003** U.S. Post Office issues set of five Atlantic South East Coastal commemorative lighthouse stamps including Old Cape Henry.

Source: *Bay Beacons* by Linda Turbyville and APVA.