

NEWSRELEASE

For Immediate Release on 6/24/2006

DETOUR REEF LIGHT PRESERVATION SOCIETY

For additional information contact Ann Method Green, 906-493-6303 voice, 906-493-6911 fax, or LightsOnPR@lighthouse.net

DETOUR REEF LIGHT PRESERVATION SOCIETY WINS SUPERIOR AWARD FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN

Drummond Island, MI (June 24, 2006) – The DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society (DRLPS) was honored with the Superior Award by the Historical Society of Michigan at the Society's 2006 Upper Peninsula History Conference in Escanaba, June 24th. Chuck and Jeri-Baron Feltner accepted the award on behalf of the dedicated volunteers of the DRLPS.

The Superior Award was established in 2006 to honor historical societies, museums, and other historical organizations in the UP for their efforts to preserve and promote Upper Peninsula history. Territorial governor Lewis Cass and Henry Schoolcraft, who explored and wrote about the UP, founded the Society in 1828.

"The (DeTour Reef Light) Preservation Society's remarkable efforts in only eight years exemplify the dedication and community spirit for which the Upper Peninsula is renowned," commented HSM Awards committee chairman Robert Myers of Berrien Springs.

Chuck Feltner, DRLPS Restoration Chairman and past-President, stated: "Jeri and I were honored to accept the prestigious Superior Award on behalf of all the dedicated hard-working volunteers of the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society team. DRLPS has come a long way from the first organizational meeting on January 8, 1998, and accomplished much to be proud of, but we must keep our eyes on the mission and stay on course for the preservation of the DeTour Reef Light for generations to enjoy."

In the years following its organization, the all-volunteer DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society has obtained over \$1 million in grants, matched with nearly \$125,000 to restore the lighthouse. Projects have included manufacture and installation of one of the deck cranes, interior and exterior restoration of the building, and reinstallation of one of the original foghorns.

Several historical and educational projects were also completed including a traveling historical display of historic lighthouse photographs and engineering drawings, oral history videos of past lighthouse keepers, production of lighthouse existing conditions video, production of a video of DeTour Reef Light history and restoration, obtaining of copies of the original lighthouse keepers' logbooks from the National Archives along with over 1,000 pages of official correspondence, and creation of digital copies of all historical material onto DVDs.

Planned work in the future includes rebuilding of a second deck crane, construction of a tour boat landing dock and access stairway to better facilitate public tours of the lighthouse, creating interpretive signs, and development of an onshore visitor's center.

The DRLPS nomination was submitted to recognize the outstanding contributions that the local grass-roots volunteers of the DRLPS have made over the past nine years, for their unflinching dedication and determination to restore, preserve and promote the DeTour Reef Light, to acknowledge the key role they have played in enhancing public awareness, education, and understanding of the history of the Light, and for advancing appreciation for the Eastern Upper Peninsula's maritime history.

Built in 1931, and standing a mile offshore in northern Lake Huron at the far eastern end of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the DeTour Reef Light rises gallantly 83 feet above the water. The structure, sitting on a unique 60-foot square, 20-foot high concrete crib, is a steel-framed square tower of three distinct levels in Classical-Revival architectural style. It marks a dangerous reef to help guide ship traffic from and to Lake Huron and Lake Superior via the strategic St. Mary's River. The Light was automated in 1974. In 1997, the lighthouse was declared surplus property by the U. S. Coast Guard due to sophisticated navigational systems aboard ships, and the Coast Guards not having the funding to care for the structure in accordance with historic preservation guidelines.

In 1998, local citizens formed the DRLPS as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization to restore and preserve the lighthouse which sits between the two communities of DeTour Village and Drummond Island. The DRLPS completed major interior and exterior restoration on the lighthouse in 2004. Public tours and overnight keeper programs to this historic Light began in July, 2005.

To learn more about the organization, the lighthouse, and the public tours and keeper programs, please visit www.DRLPS.com, email drlps@lighthouse.net, call 906-493-6609 or write to DRLPS, PO Box 307, Drummond Island, MI 49726.

###

Attached photo caption:

At the 57th Annual Historical Society of Michigan UP History Conference (left to right) Sean O'Neill - President of the Historical Society of Michigan, Jeri Baron Feltner - Founding Director Emeritus of DRLPS, Chuck Feltner - Restoration Chairman, Treasurer & past-President of DRLPS, Robert Myers, Chair of the Historical Society of Michigan Nomination & Awards Committee of the Board of Trustees, and Larry Wagenaar, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Michigan. (Photo by James Cameron, 2006)