

Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse Society Assistant Keeper Program

2023 Information Sheet

The Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse is located in Huron County Michigan's Lighthouse County Park, on the shores of Lake Huron about five miles northwest of Port Hope and twelve miles southeast of Port Austin. The park features 110 campsites on 120 acres of land, including modern RV sites, tent sites and six cabins. In addition to the Lighthouse and the campground, Lighthouse County Park is now the site of the Pointe aux Barques U.S. Life-Saving Service Station and attached Keeper's living quarters. The Station, which went into operation in 1876, was formerly located about 300 yards southeast of the Lighthouse. The Station was closed in 1937, fell into disrepair, and was moved in 1959 to the Huron City Museum (about two miles to the northwest). In 2017, the buildings were moved back to Lighthouse Park and secured on new foundations. Restoration has begun.



The Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse is one of the oldest lighthouses in Michigan. It remains in active service, with its light remotely controlled by the United States Coast Guard since 2003. The original lighthouse was built in 1848; due to problems in design and materials, the tower was rebuilt nine years later, in 1857. This structure, a cylindrical brick tower 89 feet tall, has been in use for 166 years. It is connected by an enclosed corridor to the lighthouse keeper's house which, since 2002, has been operated as a museum by the Pointe aux Barques

Lighthouse Society (PABLS). The museum is open during the season, and the lighthouse tower is open to climb on specified dates. A nearby gift shop is generally open six days per week. Please see <https://pointeauxbarqueslighthouse.org> for more information.



In 1908, a second residence was built near the lighthouse that served as the assistant keeper's house. In recent years, the assistant keeper's house was used by Huron County as the seasonal residence of the Lighthouse County Park manager. In 2019, the County agreed to allow PABLS to use the assistant keeper's house to initiate an "Assistant Keeper Program". The house has recently been refurbished for this purpose.

THE ASSISTANT KEEPER PROGRAM

The Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse offers the perfect opportunity for lighthouse enthusiasts. A group of two to four adults can spend a week or more staying in the assistant keeper's house overlooking the scenic shores of Lake Huron and helping as an "Assistant Keeper". The cost is \$100 per person per week plus your agreement to provide volunteer services.



The assistant keeper's house includes two bedrooms, each with a queen-sized bed, thus sleeping up to four adults. The house has a large living/dining room, a fully-equipped kitchen, and one full bathroom with a walk-in shower. The quarters are heated, but not air conditioned. You provide your own linens; a washer and dryer are available in the basement. Maximum occupancy of the living quarters is four people at any one time. All Assistant Keepers must be 18 years of age or older. We are not able to accommodate children or overnight guests. Parking for two vehicles is provided.

Please note that the house's original dining room, which is just to the left of the front door, is used by the Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse Society as an office. Officers may use the office occasionally, but will always

announce their presence before entering and, except in emergencies, will only use the office between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

AVAILABILITY

The 2023 Assistant Keeper Program is available from June through September. Assistant Keepers are required to participate for at least one full week during this time. Assistant Keepers serve in teams of two to four people that can be made up of family members and friends.

INFORMATION ON KEEPERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibilities of Assistant Keepers include greeting visitors and acting as docents by giving tours and providing information about the lighthouse and the local Thumb area. In addition, Assistant Keepers will be asked to perform basic facility maintenance such as sweeping floors, dusting and taking out the garbage. Other duties may include keeping the gift shop neat and restocked, as well as receiving and pricing merchandise. Assistant Keepers' presence at the lighthouse also helps with on-site security for this historic location.

At least two Assistant Keepers will be responsible for being on duty Wednesday through Sunday, generally between the hours of 10:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The total commitment will not exceed 35 hours per week per person, but the total time commitment may be less if your group includes three or four persons. Participants should be comfortable speaking to the public and in good health.

Assistant Keepers are asked to arrive no later than 4:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of their stay and to check out no later than 11:00 a.m. on the last Monday of their stay.

Some other requirements include:

- All Assistant Keepers must be 18 years of age or older.
- We are unable to accommodate children.
- Provide your own food, linens and toiletries.
- No pets are allowed.
- No smoking in the assistant keepers' house, lighthouse or gift shop.

Other requirements and rules are provided in the 2023 PABLS Assistant Keeper Program Handbook and PABLS Assistant Keeper Program Application Form. Please review before applying.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

A Docent Manual and Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse Assistant Keeper Program Handbook will be provided to all Assistant Keepers. It is expected that these documents will be reviewed thoroughly prior to arrival. All Assistant Keepers will be expected to attend an orientation session upon arrival.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested individuals must complete the PABLS Assistant Keeper Program Application and mail it and the other required documents and \$25 enrollment fee to:

PABLS Assistant Keeper Program
P.O. Box 172
Port Austin, MI 48467

or email the required documents as pdf files to Mimi Herrington at mimiherrington@comcast.net. For further information, including a list of available weeks, contact Mimi by email or call (989) 768-0466.