

NEWSRELEASE

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DETOUR REEF LIGHT PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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DETOUR REEF LIGHT LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Drummond Island, MI (April 18, 2005) -- The Director of the National Park Service recently announced that the DeTour Reef Light Station in Chippewa County was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on March 15, 2005.

Established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the NRHP is the nation's list of cultural resource properties of national significance worthy of preservation. It is a program of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. In Michigan, the State Historic Preservation Office administers the program. The resources listed on the National Register illustrate and commemorate our nation's past and history lives on in its historic places. Listing in the National Register honors a historic place by recognizing its importance to its community, State, and the Nation.

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. 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 Guard's not having the funding to care for the structure in accordance with historic preservation guidelines.

In 1998, local citizens formed the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society (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. DRLPS dedicated volunteers have worked determinedly to build the membership-based society and acquire donations and grant funding for their educational and restoration programs to preserve the historic DeTour Reef Light and enhance the importance of the rich maritime heritage of the region. The DRLPS completed major interior and exterior restoration of the lighthouse in 2004, and public tours to this historic structure will begin in July.

DRLPS President Dave Bardsley enthusiastically stated: "The DRLPS is honored, along with being highly encouraged and motivated, by the listing of the DeTour Reef Light in the prestigious National Register of Historic Places. We are very grateful to all of the volunteers, members, government agencies, and others, who have helped make this listing a reality. We also appreciate the meticulous effort with the preparation of our 38-page nomination material by Dan Koski-Karell, Ph.D. of the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington DC. The DRLPS plans to continue to work hard to preserve and share the extraordinary historical, cultural, and educational value of this historic offshore lighthouse, a magnificent monument to Michigan's maritime history, for people to enjoy for generations to come – and *We'll Keep the Light on for You!*"

To learn more about the organization, the lighthouse, and public tour programs, please visit www.DRLPS.com, email drlps@starband.net, or call 906-493-6609.

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