



## Hiking Program Talking Points

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### Point Vicente Lighthouse History and Fact Sheet

- **Origin of the Name:** Capt. George Vancouver, English explorer, named Pt. Vincente after his friend Friar Vincente of Mission San Buenaventura. Later changed to Vicente in 1933.
- **Original landowner:** Frank A. Vanderlip, President, Palos Verdes Corporation, from 1913.
- **Purchase date:** October 1921, after a 5-year court battle with Vanderlip (had other plans)
- **Lighthouse built:** 1924-1926
- **First Day of Lighthouse Operation:** April 14, 1926
- **Last Day:** February 4, 2019
- **Lighthouse tower:** 67 feet tall, lens focal point 185 feet above ocean, focal length: 19.685 in.
- **Fresnel Lens:** 3rd Order (mid-range of sizes available), 5.170 ft. high, made in France by BBT in 1914 (BBT name started 1902). (Note: This lens did **not** serve in Alaska for 40 years before coming here-- no lighthouses in Alaska until 1902).
- **Light Source:** Original: 500-watt incandescent light bulb + 1 spare. Reduced to 25-watt bulb during World War II (1941-1945). Now using 1000-watt Halogen Incandescent bulbs.
- **Range of Lighthouse Beam:** Over 20 miles. Can be seen from Catalina, 26 miles away.
- **What Ships at Sea view:** Characteristic: 0.3 second flash, 4.7 second eclipse, 0.3 second flash, 14.7 second eclipse. This is due to the round lens (Bullseye) portion of the Fresnel Lens.
- **Radio Station:** Built in two buildings here from 1934 to 1980, manned round the clock until 1980 when it was automated. Buildings have since been torn down and radio moved to Terminal Island. Other technology has since replaced radio communication.
- **Fog Horn:** Originally compressed air, run by a huge mechanical compressor. Later automated.
- **Owners:**
  - ✓ (1926-1939) US Government, Dept. of Treasury, Lighthouse Service
  - ✓ (1939-present) **US Coast Guard**
  - ✓ (1992-present) Maintained by US Coast Guard Auxiliary **Aids to Navigation Team LA/LB**
- **Lighthouse Keepers:** The lighthouse was fully staffed from 1926 to 1971.
  - (1926-1930) George L'Hommedieu (head), Harry Davis (1<sup>st</sup> Asst.), Ben Davis (2<sup>nd</sup> Asst.), Raymond Deurloo (3<sup>rd</sup> Asst.)
  - (1930-1945) Anton Trittinger (head), Thomas Atkinson (1<sup>st</sup> Asst.1930-35), Calvin Cooper (1<sup>st</sup> Asst. 1937-39), Charles Livesay (1<sup>st</sup> Asst.1939-41), Joe May (1<sup>st</sup> Asst. 1942-45)
  - (1945-1955) Joe May (head) **Last full-time lighthouse keeper**
  - (1955-1971) Various Coast Guard personnel
  - (1971-1992) NOT MANNED (automated in 1971)
  - (1992-2016) Eric Castrobran (US Coast Guard Auxiliary) (**Directed renovation**)
- **Park-like Landscaping:** Originally planted by Anton Trittinger and family.
- **Ghost Stories:** "Lady of the Light" seen on white-painted glass in the tower windows caused by shadow of the light as the lens rotated. 3 coats of paint on inside later, **no more ghost.**
- **Current Buildings:**
  - ✓ **Lighthouse Tower.** 67 feet tall masonry structure with lantern room.
  - ✓ **Fog Signal Building.** Originally contained two large internal-combustion engines each one driving a large air compressor, to power the foghorn. Required daily maintenance and oiling. Foghorn was located outside this building, facing ocean.
  - ✓ **Office.** Small office building was where Keepers and Assistants kept their records and attended to administrative duties.
  - ✓ **Storage Room.** A small storage room is located next to the Lighthouse Tower.

- ✓ **Keepers Quarters.** A large 2-story building facing West was used to house Head Keepers and their families.
- ✓ **Assistants Quarters.** A larger building was divided into 3 apartments which were used by the Assistant Keepers and their families.
- ✓ **Garage.** A large garage building was used to protect vehicles from the salt air.
- ✓ **Current Occupants:**
- ✓ **Keepers Quarters:** Lt. Commander Jackson, Marine Safety/Security Team, USCG
- ✓ **Assistants Quarters:** Various Coast Guard persone

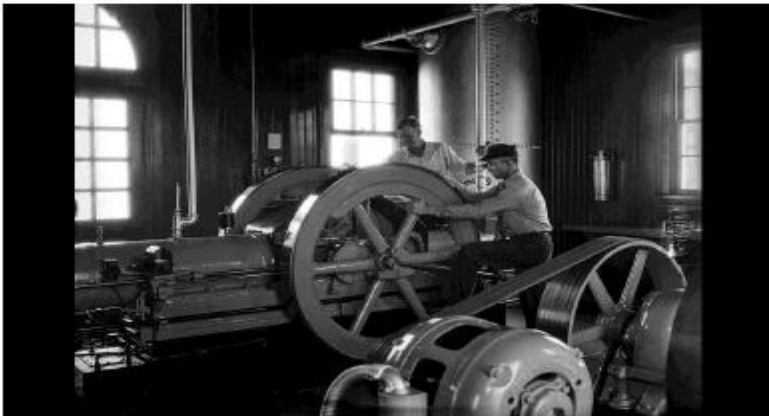


On November 17, 1979, Point Vicente Lighthouse was added to the National Registry of Historic Sites.

The lens revolved around the light bulb on 16 ball bearings, on a pedestal base made in the USA. It was originally intended (by the factory) to be mounted on a mercury-bath pedestal base.

It was decommissioned in February 2019 and moved to the Point Vicente Interpretive Center where it is now on static display.

It will be replaced with a more modern LED based light system which requires far less maintenance, but have the same flashing characteristic and range.



1935



## 1926 - 1930



Ben	Harry	George
South	Davis	L'Hommedieu
Asst. Keeper	Asst. Keeper	Senior Keeper

## 1930 - 1945



Only known  
Photo of  
Anton  
Trittinger  
1930-  
1945

## 1945 - 1955



**SOON TO RETIRE**—Joe May, 70, talks about his coming retirement from Point Vicente Lighthouse post. *Times Staff*

## 2019

