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Consolidation Will Create America's Largest Lighthouse Museum

Rockland, ME. The Maine Lighthouse Museum (MLM) in Rockland and the American Lighthouse Foundation (ALF), the national leader in lighthouse preservation, have announced a groundbreaking collaboration. ALF has become a full partner in the Maine Lighthouse Museum and will be moving its corporate offices to the museum along with its extraordinary artifact collection.

According to Renny Stackpole, Chairman of the Maine Lighthouse Museum, this coming January the American Lighthouse Foundation will begin the process of consolidating the organization's outstanding artifact collection from their Museum of Lighthouse History in Wells, Maine, with the exhibits at the Maine Lighthouse Museum in Rockland.

The collaborative effort brings together two of the nation's finest exhibits of lighthouse artifacts and forms an unprecedented collection of classical lenses and lighthouse equipment, as well as rare lightkeeper mementoes and uniforms. In addition, the combined collection will boast some of the most compelling human interest stories and their paralleling artifacts, all of which pay tribute to the dedicated men, women and children who helped keep the lights shining bright along America's coastlines for over two centuries.

"The merging of these two lighthouse museums may well be one of the defining moments in modern lighthouse history," says Timothy Harrison, president of the American Lighthouse Foundation. "The partnership between MLM and ALF will truly make the Maine Lighthouse Museum the largest and most important lighthouse museum in the United States, if not the world."

The consolidation also brings full circle the amazing contributions of Ken Black, founder of MLM and the individual widely credited for starting the lighthouse preservation movement in the United States, with that of Timothy Harrison, founder of the Museum of Lighthouse History. Mr. Black served as a mentor and friend to Mr. Harrison and was the inspiration behind Harrison's efforts to create the Museum of Lighthouse History, which formerly housed the largest collection of lightkeeper artifacts in the country.

Ken Black, who is affectionately known as "Mr. Lighthouse" by lighthouse enthusiasts around the country, couldn't be happier about the museums coming together. According to Black, "This is more than I could have ever imagined. It is very gratifying to know that after so many years of working hard to save America's lighthouse artifacts from being lost forever that this commitment will now be carried forward stronger than ever through the combined efforts of MLM and ALF. Wow!"

Ken's wife Dot Black shares her husband's enthusiasm, noting "As you can imagine, I have a strong desire to protect Ken's many contributions to our nation's lighthouse heritage and therefore I am simply ecstatic that we will have management of the museum by lighthouse enthusiasts who will ensure this legacy is perpetuated for future generations."

"The consolidation of the two museums is not only exciting for artifact conservation, but also for lighthouse preservation – and at a time when it is needed most throughout the nation," says Bob Trapani, Jr., executive director of the American Lighthouse Foundation. The organization presently has 23 historic lighthouses under its stewardship that the group is actively working to restore and maintain.

In addition to his duties as executive director for ALF, Trapani has been appointed the new director of the Maine Lighthouse Museum and will oversee both the day-to-day operations and consolidated collections.

Trapani went on to note, "This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to bring together the very best in historic lighthouses, priceless artifacts and unmatched camaraderie and energy that will foster a stronger and broader interest nationwide in

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To learn more about the Maine Lighthouse Museum, visit www.mainelighthousemuseum.com

To learn more about the American Lighthouse Foundation, visit www.LighthouseFoundation.org