



## Symbol of gratitude, solidarity set for dedication

Port light station restored with Luxembourg's aid

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**Port Washington** - When Georges Calteaux promised two years ago that he would ask the grand duchy of Luxembourg to replace the tower and light at the Port Washington Light Station, the members of the Port Washington Historical Society started scrambling.

### Port Washington



*Photo/David Joles*

Volunteer Dennis Klopp cleans windows of the mostly restored Port Washington Light Station. Several top officials from Luxembourg will be on hand this weekend to help dedicate the light station.

Calteaux is Luxembourg's director of national sites and monuments, so he was someone who could probably pull something off, the historical society decided. Society members got busy drawing up plans, raising money and finding volunteers to help restore the 142-year-old light station at 311 Johnson St.

Calteaux came through. The assembly arrived in March and was installed in April.

"It was just a dream at that time," Port Washington Historical Society President Ann Flierl said. "But we had a feeling it could be done."

The dream officially becomes reality Sunday when the historical society dedicates the restored tower and lantern at the light station. The work was part of the society's effort to restore the entire light station to how it looked when it was in use, Flierl said.

Most of the work was done by volunteers.

The society has raised about \$150,000 to pay for other aspects of the restoration, said Nancy Mersereau, who is chairing the dedication ceremony. The society estimates it needs an additional \$75,000 to complete the project.

The tower and lantern were donated by Luxembourg both to honor the 70,000 U.S. servicemen who helped liberate the country during World War II and because so many of its immigrants settled in Ozaukee County, Mersereau said.

Luxembourg, a tiny country about the size of Rhode Island, is between Belgium, France and Germany. Its population is about 440,000.

Dignitaries from the United States and Luxembourg will gather on the bluff overlooking Lake Michigan for the ceremony.

Calteaux will be there, along with Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, who is Luxembourg's minister of public works as well as minister of culture, higher education and research; Arlette Paccoud Conzemius, Luxembourg's ambassador to the United States; Georges Faber, counsel general of Luxembourg, who is based in New York City; and a number of other Luxembourg officials.

Among those representing Port Washington and the U.S. will be U.S. Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (R-Wis.), Lt. Gov. Margaret Farrow, Port Washington Mayor Mark Gottlieb and several other local dignitaries.

Also coming from Luxembourg will be the Troaterbattien, a well-known Luxembourg band.



*Photo/David Joles*

Ron Mans climbs the ladder into the cupola of the Port Washington Light Station. Officials estimate \$75,000 still is needed to finish restoring the 142-year-old station.

The public ceremony will begin at 1:30 p.m. with a musical prelude at the light station. The dedication will be at 2 p.m. Other events will be held throughout the day to commemorate the dedication, Mersereau said.

The light station was constructed in 1860 on a high bluff overlooking Lake Michigan on what then was the north side of Port Washington. The light station hasn't been used since the early 20th century, Mersereau said. It was replaced by a lighthouse at the end of a pier that jutted out into Lake Michigan. The tower and lantern were removed in 1934.

In 1993, the historical society leased the lightkeeper's house on the site from the U.S. Coast Guard for use as a museum. In 1997, the Coast Guard declared the house surplus property and donated it to the city with the understanding that the historical society would be responsible for its upkeep.

The society leases the building from the city for \$1 a year.

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