

## All About Brant Point Lighthouse - History Reading

During Comet's eighth life, he is caught in a hurricane and washes ashore at Brant Point Lighthouse. Brant Point light on Nantucket Island is America's second oldest Lighthouse. Lighthouses are used to mark dangerous coastlines and help ships identify their location at sea.

Nine lighthouses have been built on Brant Point Island. The first Brant Point Lighthouse was a bonfire contained in a barrel. Two other Brant Point Lighthouses were made of wood and burned down. The oil used to light the lanterns in the lighthouse was stored in the basement of the lighthouse and caught fire.

Other Brant Point lighthouses were destroyed in storms such as tornadoes and hurricanes. Tornadoes are columns of spinning air. When a tornado is on water it is called a waterspout or hurricane.

During the time that Nantucket was the whaling capital of the world, a new lighthouse was built on Brant Point. This lighthouse contained a tower light and a keeper's house.

One lighthouse keeper complained he had no boat and no way to save his family if a storm destroyed the lighthouse.

Another keeper arrived to tend the lighthouse on Christmas Eve; it was dark and the new keeper knew it was dangerous to bring his family and their belongings by row boat to the lighthouse. He instead waited until Christmas morning to come ashore to the Brant Point Lighthouse to begin his duties as keeper.

One of the jobs of the lighthouse keeper was to keep the glass tubes that surround the lights clean. One inspector of the lighthouse reported that the glass looked black and spotted as though it had been weeks or months since cleaned. Another inspector reported the basement of the lighthouse , where the oil was stored, was often flooded. The tower is leaky, he said and the lantern is rusty.

Finally, a brick lighthouse tower was built and still stands today. The building is now used as a US Coast Guard Station. The present day Brant Point Lighthouse has a red light, not a white one. White lights look like house lights so red lights are now used. Today, the Brant Point light is automated, a lighthouse keeper is not needed to tend to it. If you visit Nantucket you will see the Brant Point Lighthouse from the ferry, as you arrive and leave the island.