

1989

Seahorse Key was included in the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District as listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2012



The exterior of the lighthouse was repainted.

Today, the Refuge continues to host an Open House about four times during the year. See the dates at www.ncbs.ifas.ufl.edu

Cemetary

Patrick Doran 1839 - 1863

Served on board the U.S.S. Fort Henry.

John Bishop 1840 - 1863

Killed in a rebel ambush in the Waccasassa River.

Ephriam Hearn 1840 - 1863

Served on board the U.S.S. Fort Henry and died from shipboard injuries.

William M. Robinson 1842 - 1864

Served on board the U.S.S. Union and died from shipboard injuries.

William Wilson 1802 - 1866

First lighthouse keeper.

Joseph Crevasse 1809 - 1874

Timothy Crevasse 1852 - 1869

Father and son, local fishermen.

Catharine Hobday 1796 - 1879

Assistant lighthouse keeper from 1872 until 1879. Only woman to serve at this station. Mother of Andrew Hobday, longest serving lighthouse keeper at this station.



Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge

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UF/IFAS Nature Coast Biological Station

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Friends of the Cedar Keys Light Station, Inc.

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1888 Reservation Survey
A.C. Bell, Light House Surveyor

CEDAR KEYS LIGHT STATION

Seahorse Key, Florida
Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge

Start Here!

1835

2nd Seminole Indian War began. Headquarters of the Military Department were moved to the Cedar Keys from Tampa.

General Zachary Taylor petitioned President Martin Van Buren to formally retain the group of islands known as the Cedar Keys for Government use, especially the outer Key, "as on it will no doubt be erected, at some future time, a lighthouse for the benefit of vessels trading to the Suwannee River."

1840

Cantonment Morgan, a temporary encampment was established on Seahorse Key. The encampment was utilized until 1842 as a staging area for the receiving, processing and deploying of troops; a hospital for both military troops and Seminole Indians; and an internment camp for captured Indians being shipped to the West.

1841

1848

Robert E. Lee, Secretary of a Commission under the U.S. Engineer Department traveled to Florida to examine and survey the entire coast line from Pensacola to Jacksonville.

1850

The U.S. Congress appropriated the sum of \$8,000 for the erection of a lighthouse on Seahorse Key.

Follow the arrows!

1854

In January, the Lighthouse Board approved the detailed plans and estimates for the building of a structure on Seahorse Key. By the end of March, Lt. Meade reported all materials, and a suitably organized working party was dispatched to the Cedar Keys from Philadelphia. Construction of the 70-foot square brick lighthouse was completed on July 20th and the light was exhibited for the first time on August 1st, 1854.

1861

January 11th, Florida became the third state to secede from the Union. On March 16th, the Florida Railroad locomotive Abner McGehee traveled 155.5 miles from Fernandina to be the first train to reach the dock of the Cedar Keys. On June 7th, at the direction of the Superintendent of the Confederate States of America Light House Bureau, all lenses, fixtures and appurtenances of the lighthouse, together with the oil and other public property, were removed and shipped by rail to Waldo, Florida, for safe keeping. Local newspapers carried notices warning persons against trespassing on Seahorse Key.

1862

On January 16th, the second most important port on Florida's West Coast, the Cedar Keys, were blockaded by the Union side-wheel steamboat, U.S.S. Hatteras. Two long 18 pounder field pieces with carriages and an army barracks which sat on the east end of Seahorse Key were destroyed. The lighthouse suffered no damage.

1853

Lt. George G. Meade visited several proposed lighthouse sites in Florida and returned to the Corps of Engineers office in Philadelphia to prepare reports, plans, and estimates for their construction.

Obediah O'Stein from Old Town on the Suwannee and the Alderman Simons family lived in the lighthouse. They were joined by other refugees, James B. Betten and John Sea, and their families.

1863

1852

The U.S. Congress deemed the \$8,000 appropriated in 1850 as insufficient and an additional \$4,000 was granted with the recommendation that the plans to erect a lighthouse proceed without delay.

1866

After a complete overhaul and repair, the light was relighted on August 23rd.

Almost There!

1872

U.S. Congress appropriated \$7,500 to dredge the channel at the Cedar Keys and \$3,000 to replace the channel buoys. Since vessel traffic increased to the port, a Customs House was built on the Dock at the Cedar Keys.

1890

The Town of Cedar Key started to feel the impact of the loss of natural resources, loss of population, and the opening of two other railroads in the state.

1951

Dr. E. Lowe Pierce from the University of Florida arranged with the U.S. Department of Interior for the University at Gainesville to use the island to establish and maintain a laboratory of marine biology and a biological field station.

1936

On June 13th, the lighthouse property was transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Biological Survey and in November Seahorse Key was added to the Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge by Executive Order 7484.

1929

The Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge was established by President Herbert Hoover under Executive Order 5158 dated July 16th. However, Seahorse Key remained under the control of the Department of Commerce, Light House Service.

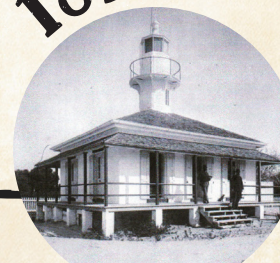
1915

The Cedar Keys Light Station was reported as being surplus property as of January 15th and went abandoned at the close of the fiscal year on June 30, 1915.

1900

The population of Cedar Key dropped to 700 and locals found the oyster banks were near exhausted.

1893



Keep Going!