



KEYSTONE TECHNOLOGIES

PROJECT PROFILE

A Beacon for Philadelphia, Built to Last

After 140 years, the Turtle Rock Lighthouse continues its vigil—with help from Keystone

(LANSDALE, PA) – For nearly 140 years, the Lighthouse on Turtle Rock has watched over the Schuylkill River.

Today, its light is powered by Keystone.

The lighthouse is located at the westernmost point on Philadelphia's Boathouse Row. It was originally built to warn river traffic about a dangerous curve, a nearby dam, and a rocky stretch that marked "the gateway to Philadelphia," said Alexander H. Plache, Resident Manager at the Sedgeley Club, which abuts the lighthouse.

"In the 1890s, the lighthouse guided commercial barge traffic that had to navigate past a dam," said Plache. "There was a lock system to the right of the dam as you headed downriver toward Philadelphia, and the barges would pass through it."

Within a decade, the rise of railroads ended the need for barge traffic, and the locks were closed. "Once they put in the lighthouse, within 10 years it effectively became obsolete because rail had improved so much," Plache said.



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The installation of the dam in the early 19th century, in connection with the construction of the Fairmount Water Works, allowed the Schuylkill River to evolve into a hub for rowing. In the second half of the 19th century more than a dozen boathouses were built along the river. Today, Boathouse Row is a national historic landmark.

The Sedgeley Club was founded in 1897, with its current building—constructed around the lighthouse tower—dating to 1903. Originally a women's social club, it counted as many as 400 members in the first half of the 20th century. (Technically, though it's part of Boathouse Row, the Sedgeley Club doesn't house any boats, nor does it have a dock.)

“The club members convinced the city to let them build a house around the lighthouse,” said Plache. “In return, they agreed to maintain it.”

Today, the club has about 75 members—and for more than a century, it has upheld that commitment to the lighthouse.

For most of the 1900s, the lighthouse beacon was powered by gas. It switched to electric in 1990. In 2019, the club upgraded again, moving from legacy lighting to LED. For a new lamp, it turned to Keystone.

Keystone shares deep Philadelphia roots. Founded in 1945, when the city was known as “the Workshop of the World,” the company began by producing ballasts for fluorescent lamps. More than 80 years later, Keystone offers thousands of SKUs featuring the latest LED technology—including the lamp installed in the Turtle Rock Lighthouse.

Recently, after nearly seven years of continuous, 24/7 operation, the original Keystone LED lamp—a 27-watt model that produced 2790 lumens—reached the end of its life. [A new Keystone lamp](#) has now taken over. It's a newer model that features [a photo sensor option](#) for more efficient energy usage, so the lamp turns off during daylight hours and shines bright at night. It continues the lighthouse's tradition: guiding the eye and illuminating the Schuylkill as rowers glide past.

“There's nothing else quite like Boathouse Row,” said Plache. “It's one of the most extensive historic boathouse collections anywhere.”

Philadelphia is a city built on tradition and resilience. The Turtle Rock Lighthouse and the Sedgeley Club embody that legacy of service.

Keystone is proud to help keep the light on.

