

# Lighthouse: Getting to 'Terrible Tilly' was a challenge

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Rekate, a retired Cannon Beach contractor, now plans to offer his photos to the Cannon Beach History Center and Museum to help piece together the lighthouse's history.

"When I read that article, I thought, 'Hey, maybe they could use these, too,'" he said.

## Local lore

Lots of local lore exists about fishermen taking trips into the lighthouse, but photos documenting the interior or taken from the perspective of being on the lighthouse are uncommon, according to the history center.

While the abandoned lighthouse was always in the background, it wasn't especially common for fishermen to get onto the sea stack, Rekate recalled. There is no good way to dock a boat, and the area is known for its tumultuous conditions.

But one day, when fishing was unusually slow and the water was strangely placid, Rekate and a few other fishermen decided to take a look inside.

Getting there, however, was still a challenge. Rekate and his partners took turns jumping onto the island while the others would putter around.

"Even though it was calm, there was still a swell, so you'd have to time it," he said. "You'd move in

with the swell and the person going would jump, then you'd have to hit reverse and back out."

When he first arrived at the lighthouse, the front door was flung open and the insides were in disarray.

The building was incredibly dark, Rekate remembered, illuminated only by the light from the front door and from the lighthouse above. Some chairs and a table remained — even a 1950s newspaper from Tampa, Florida. Inside where the Fresnel lens used to live, little holes from small rocks carried by large waves punctured the glass.

What impressed him the most, however, was the staircase.

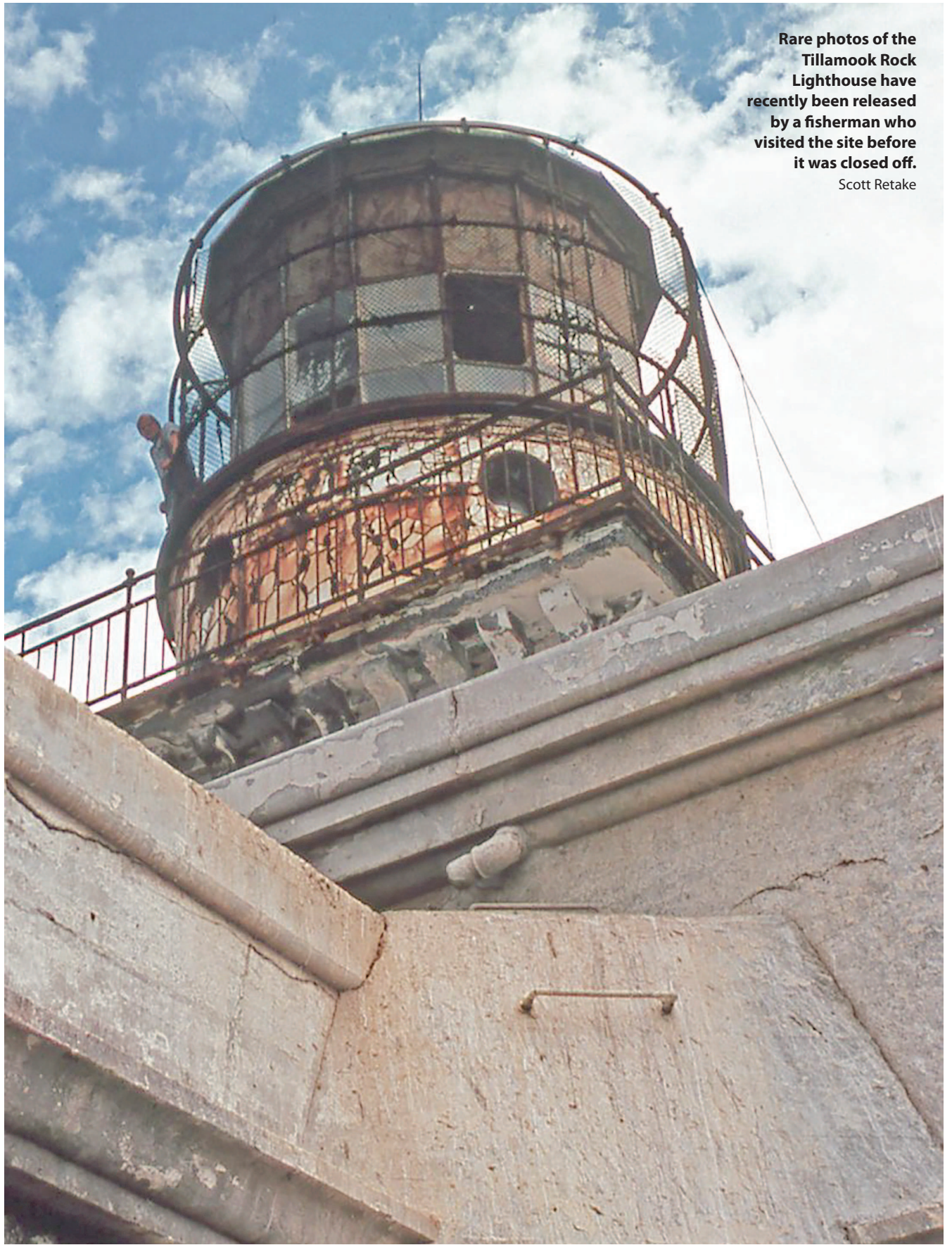
"The catwalks were very unique," Rekate said. "Light from the lighthouse would hit down on diamond-shaped Fresnel pieces on the staircase and illuminate the whole staircase without any lights. I thought that was pretty cool."

## Still curious

Rekate remains curious about the state of the lighthouse almost 40 years later, and of the other fishermen who made the journey.

"If there was any kind of major swell, you'd bash into the rocks," he said. "So I can't imagine it happened a lot."

Many who remember Terrible Tilly have "likely been blown apart across the country by now," he said.



Rare photos of the Tillamook Rock Lighthouse have recently been released by a fisherman who visited the site before it was closed off. Scott Retake

# Park: The heritage association will be responsible for maintenance

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Jonah Dart-McLean, the interim park director, said the city was waiting for the project to go through the

approval process. The park the heritage association plans to develop will include interpretive features and information about the Scandinavian immi-

grants who came to Astoria seeking work and better lives. The park will be low maintenance, but also a public monument, easily accessible to visitors and locals

alike, organizers say. While the site will continue to be a city park, the heritage association will be responsible for maintenance. The park has been two

years in the making. The heritage association had hoped to have a park in place in time for the annual Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival's 50th anniversary

in 2017. "We're very excited," said Judi Lampi, the park project chair for the heritage association. "I'm looking forward to a lot of hard work."

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