

## THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

Sally Snowman is the first woman to be Boston Light's primary light keeper in its 300-year history.

By Jake Lamb

**W**HEN THE U.S. COAST GUARD civilianized the position of light keeper, Sally Snowman applied, thinking that she had no chance. The previous 69 light keepers had all been men. She had been volunteering as part of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary at Boston Light on Little Brewster Island since 1994, and she and her husband were infatuated with its history. "We got so wrapped up in the history of Boston Light, we researched everything we could find for five years," she says. "We published a 200-plus-page book just on the history of Boston Light." Her passion won her the light keeper job in 2003.

● **Have you always been around boating?** My parents and their parents — and their parents — were boaters. In fact, on the Snowman side of the family, they were ship captains. I grew up on the water. I had my first boat ride when I was just weeks old. I joke that I'll ride in anything that floats. ● **What do your duties include?** The volunteers and I mow the lawn, paint, clean and act as tour guides. So much of the job I have now is working with the park service, working with the public and working with the media. ● **What's your daily routine?** We walk into all six buildings. Then we walk the island, which is an acre and a half at high tide and three acres at low tide. Then I make up the work schedule for the day. This is 24-hour duty. At night, we sleep with one ear and one eye open. ● **How do you relax?** I do an hour or two of yoga and meditation every morning. ● **Are you holding history on your shoulders?** Absolutely, and it's heavy. ● **You just turned 65. How long do you plan to remain light keeper?** As long as my body holds out. It would be creaky bones that would prevent me from going up the tower twice a day, and crawling in and out of my boat. This is my passion. I eat, sleep and live Boston Light. ▼



### LITTLE BREWSTER ISLAND

#### 1. NOTABLE

Cellist Yo-Yo Ma performed "This Land is Your Land" on Little Brewster Island for a National Park Service video mashup.

#### 2. RENOVATIONS

Snowman says new roofs and windows were put in, but her favorite project moment was baking cookies for all of the workers.

#### 3. BIT OF HISTORY

The light keeper position at Boston Light makes it the last manned U.S. Coast Guard light station in the United States.

*Snowman — who dresses in historical uniform — recruits, trains and schedules Boston Light's 70-plus auxiliary volunteers.*