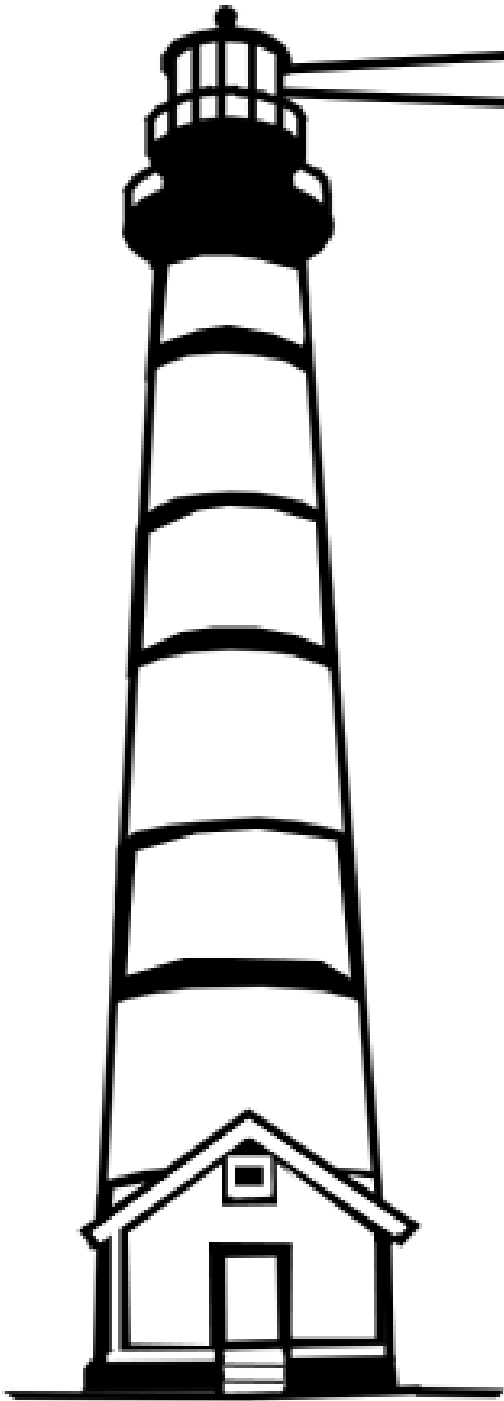


The U.S. Lighthouse Society is proud to present:

Lighthouse Fun 4 Kids



Featuring:
Misty of Chincoteague
A Wild Lightkeeper Pony

Feeling creative?
Email your colored in version of the
Assateague Lighthouse, featured on the cover,
or
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Issue #13

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Misty of Chincoteague

A Wild Lighthouse Pony

A read-aloud story for kids to read with adults.

By Elinor DeWire
Graphic Design By Richard Gales



The tall, handsome Assateague Lighthouse, in Maryland, is located on the same island where the famous book, *Misty of Chincoteague* is set. The book, read by many kids—including me!—in elementary school, was written by author Marguerite Henry in 1947. It won the Newberry Honor prize for children’s fiction in 1948 and became a children’s classic. The 1961 film *Misty* was based on the book. Mrs. Henry later wrote a series of sequels to the original book.

Marguerite Henry was inspired to write the story of Misty the wild pony when she traveled to Chincoteague Island to the annual Pony Roundup and Swim. She wanted to buy one of the ponies. Towering over the event has always been the pretty red and white striped Assateague Lighthouse. It is likely Mrs. Henry was fond of the lighthouse. After all, it’s very pretty, and who doesn’t like lighthouses?

The Pony Roundup and Swim still happens the last Wednesday and Thursday of every July. It was started to help control the population of wild ponies and raise money for the Chincoteague Fire Department. The ponies are rounded up, and then they swim across the inlet between the mainland and Chincoteague Island. An auction is held, and the ponies are bought by families and given good homes. Visitors are welcome to watch the event.

How did wild ponies get to this island? Many history experts think a Spanish ship wrecked off this coast several hundred years ago. The horses on board the ship jumped into the ocean and swam ashore. Since no people lived on the island, the

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horses became wild. They found pools of fresh water to drink and learned to eat the salty grass. Over the years, new ponies were born and old ones died.

Marguerite Henry wrote *Misty of Chincoteague*, at least in part, while staying at Miss Molly's Inn on Chincoteague. The book is fiction, but is based on real people—Paul, Maureen, Clarence (Grandpa) and Ida (Grandma) Beebe, and real Chincoteague Ponies, Misty, Phantom, and the Pied Piper.

The story centers on Paul and his sister Maureen who lived on Chincoteague Island with their grandparents. Paul and Maureen helped their grandfather raise and train ponies, and they dreamed of owning a pony of their own. They worked numerous odd jobs to earn enough money to purchase a pony at the auction. Paul was able to ride for the first time with the men who round up the wild ponies. Much to everyone's surprise Paul corralled the elusive Phantom and her newborn foal Misty. When Misty began to struggle as she swam across the channel from Assateague to Chincoteague Paul jumped in and swam her to safety.



Paul and Maureen purchased the Phantom and Misty at the auction. They spent the next year training Phantom so they could ride her and keep Misty out of trouble. Paul rode Phantom in the big race the following year on Pony Penning Day. Paul and Phantom won a prize of twelve dollars. That was a lot of money in the 1940s!

The real Misty was born on July 20, 1946 at the Beebe Ranch on Chincoteague Island, owned by Clarence and Ida Beebe. Marguerite Henry wanted to buy Misty and make her the model for her book. Clarence Beebe sold Misty to Mrs. Henry after she promised to include his grandchildren Maureen and Paul Beebe in the book. As you've already read, the book was a huge success.

The premiere of the movie "Misty" at Chincoteague was in 1961, and Misty was led down Main Street in Chincoteague by Ralph Beebe on the day the movie opened in theaters. In front of Chincoteague's Island Theater, Misty put her front hoof prints in the cement, and Marguerite Henry wrote Misty's name in the cement underneath. Misty's hoof prints can be found along the sidewalk with a bronze

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statue of Misty at Robert Reed Waterfront Park in downtown Chincoteague.

Misty stayed with Mrs. Henry for over ten years, appearing for her fans at schools, movie theaters, museums, libraries, and horse shows. Misty was sent back to the Beebe Ranch in 1957 to have foals. The foals have their own books authored by Marguerite Henry. Misty died in her sleep on October 16, 1972 at age 26. She'd had a wonderful life!

The Assateague Lighthouse

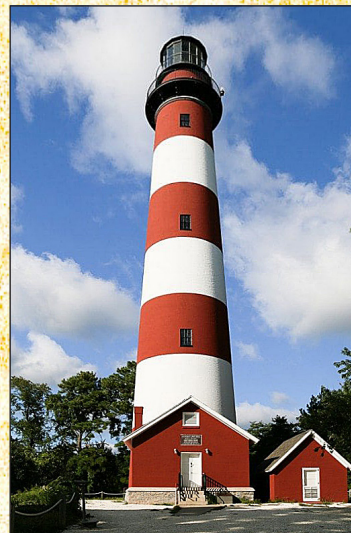
Assateague Lighthouse has served as the backdrop for many pictures of the wild ponies of Chincoteague. People, especially kids, love to visit the island to see the ponies from the top of the lighthouse.

The first light tower was built in 1833, was made of brick, and was 39-feet tall. It had eleven oil lamps set inside 14-inch reflectors coated with silver to make them like mirrors. By 1850 the tower was in rough shape. Many bricks had fallen out of its walls, and the silver coating on the reflectors had been polished off. To fix the problems, the walls were repaired and painted in 1856, and a new third-order Fresnel lens was installed. It made the light much brighter so it could be seen farther out at sea.

Still, it was decided the lighthouse was not effective in preventing shipwrecks. Dangerous shoals extend 14-miles off the island. Often, the light did not show beyond the shoals. What was needed was a much taller tower and a stronger lens. In 1860, the government set aside \$50,000 to build a new lighthouse at Assateague, but before work could begin, the Civil War started. The war did not end until 1865.

The new lighthouse, the one that stands on Assateague today, was built in 1866-1867 for \$75,000. It is made of brick and stands 140-feet-tall. At first, it was painted all red, but in 1868 it was painted with a beautiful daymark of red and white stripes. The daymark, in the opinion of many people, makes it extra pretty! The new lens was of the first-order, designating the tower as a landfall light, the brightest type of lighthouse at the time.

The lighthouse has a cast-iron stairway and seven windows inside to bring



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in natural light, since it was built before electricity was invented. A duplex (double) house was built for the keepers and was nicknamed the Keepers Mansion for its large size and four apartments. Later, a brick oilhouse was added to store kerosene to fuel the lamps in the lighthouse.

The lighthouse was wired for electricity in 1933 with a generator and batteries. Shortly afterward, the light was automated to run by itself using a special clock that turned it on at sunset and off at sunrise. It no longer needed keepers. In 1961, power lines were strung to the island and a piggyback beacon replaced the first-order lens.

The lens was taken out of the lighthouse and set up outside alongside the tower. A metal fence surrounded it to keep visitors from taking pieces of it. Even so, the weather was bad for it. When the U.S. Lighthouse Society discovered the lens was sitting outside on the ground, they wrote a letter to the owner—Museum of Chincoteague Island—asking that the lens be moved inside. This was done, and the lens can now be seen in the museum itself.

Just across the bridge to Chincoteague Island is a trail that leads to the lighthouse. It takes less than five minutes to reach the lighthouse, but often there are lots of mosquitoes. Be sure to take bug spray! When the lighthouse is open for tours, you can go inside, climb the metal stairs to the top, and view the ocean and surroundings from the gallery of the lighthouse. Look for ponies from the top. Check out the Atlantic Ocean too. In summer, you might see people in the ocean, since it is warm enough for swimming in the warmer months of the year.

Assateague Lighthouse also has a gift shop where you can find Marguerite Henry's books, wild pony souvenirs, plenty of lighthouse souvenirs—such as patches, rubber stamps, mugs, wind chimes, t-shirts, and other goodies. Who doesn't love souvenirs? I do!

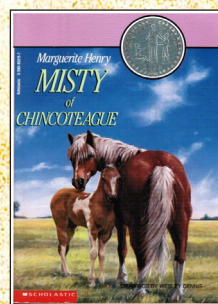
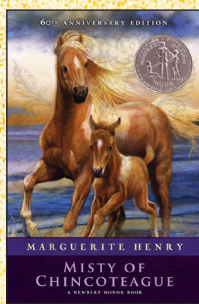
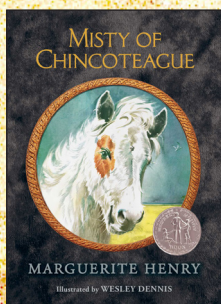
Back on the mainland, you can visit the Museum of Chincoteague Island. It is located near the island bridge. It has exhibits about the wild ponies and the lighthouse. You'll also learn about the Assateague Lifesaving Station. Its crew of excellent boat-handling men saved shipwreck survivors in the years before ships had engines. Back when ships were powered by sails, they often had little control of their direction during storms. They could be pushed into rocks and onto shoals. The lighthouse was supposed to prevent shipwrecks, but when it couldn't, the lifesavers launched a surfboat and rowed to the shipwreck. They rescued the survivors and took them ashore.



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About the Author

Marguerite Henry was born April 13, 1902 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and died on November 26 1997, in Rancho Santa Fe, California. She was 95 years old. Marguerite graduated from Milwaukee State Teachers College. She also attended the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. Her father was the owner of a publishing business. As a girl, Marguerite lived in a city. After she married, she and her husband moved to a farm. In 1940, Marguerite Henry had her first book published. After that, she wrote almost a book each year for several years. Some of Marguerite Henry's books were made into movies, such as *Justin Morgan Had a Horse* and *Peter Lundy and the Medicine Hat Stallion*. For more than 40 years, Marguerite wrote books for children. Mrs. Henry often wrote stories that took place in outdoor settings. Also, her books often told about the wonderful friendships between animals and children. This was the case in *Misty of Chincoteague*, which sold more than one million copies. The author won many awards for her books. *Misty's Twilight* is a book about a descendant of Misty and first published in 1992 and published again in 1996 as a paperback.



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Horse Word Search

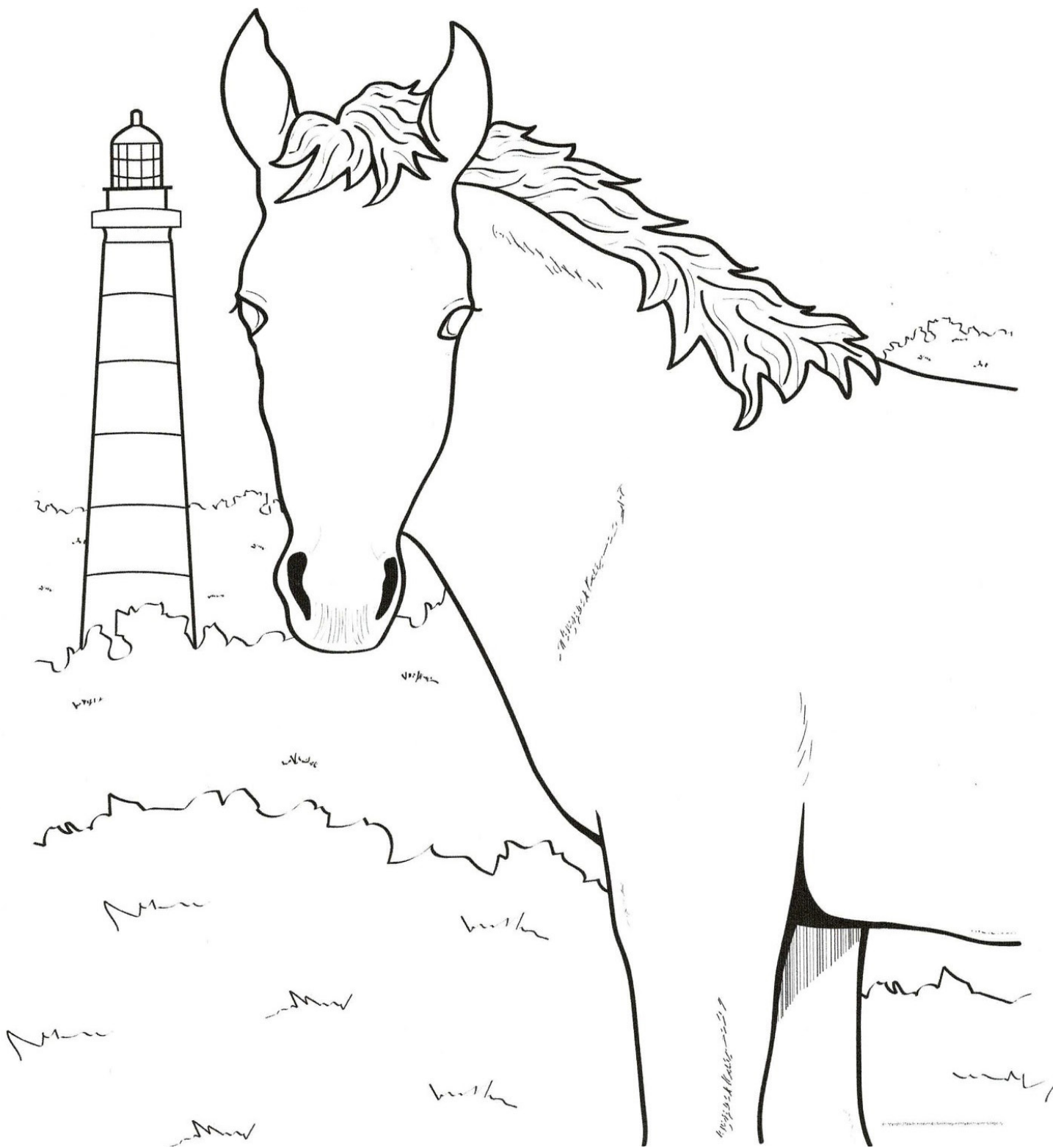
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hoof
withers

colt
filly
blaze
saddle

english
dressage
girth
western

Giddy-up and color Misty and the Assateague Lighthouse.
Send us a scan of your coloring page and we'll send you a fun surprise!
Send scans to info@uslhs.org



If you can't visit Chincoteague soon, buy the book, *Misty of Chincoteague* here:
[Misty of Chincoteague: Henry, Marguerite, Dennis, Wesley, Sloan, Sam: 9784871876834: Amazon.com: Books](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR004)

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