

Author Jim Gibbs— Gone but Never Forgotten!

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James A. Gibbs, 88, of Yachats, Ore., died April 30, 2010 at his home.

He was born Jan. 17, 1922 to James A. Gibbs Sr. and Vera Gibbs in Seattle, Wash. He graduated from Queen Anne High School in Seattle. He

was a World War II veteran and in the U.S. Coast Guard, where he became a lighthouse keeper at Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, an experience that helped inspire his love of nautical history.

In 1950, he married Cherie Lola Norman, who preceded him in death in 1999. He had one daughter, Debbie Ann Pedrick, who was his buddy, confidant and neighbor for these last 34 years along with her husband, Ray.

He retired as editor of "Marine Digest" magazine in 1972, at which time he and Cherie moved to Hawaii, where they lived before returning to the Oregon coast in 1976. Here they established a home and the first privately owned working lighthouse in Oregon known as "Cleft in the Rock Lighthouse," just south of Yachats in the lee of Cape Perpetua. This was the second private lighthouse they built, the first being Skunk Bay Light on the Puget Sound in the early 1960s.

Throughout his adult working life he was always a writer and wrote more than 20 books related to lighthouses, shipwrecks, sailing ships and nautical history. In the late 1940s, he also co-founded the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society and served as one of its first presidents.

He was a man of deep faith and loved his church and church family. He was a member, deacon and lay pastor at the Yachats Baptist Church for many years. He was also a multi-time cancer survivor whose trust, faith and good-natured acceptance of life's pitfalls gave him a great inner strength.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James A. Gibbs Sr. and Vera Gibbs; and his sister, Betty Eicher.

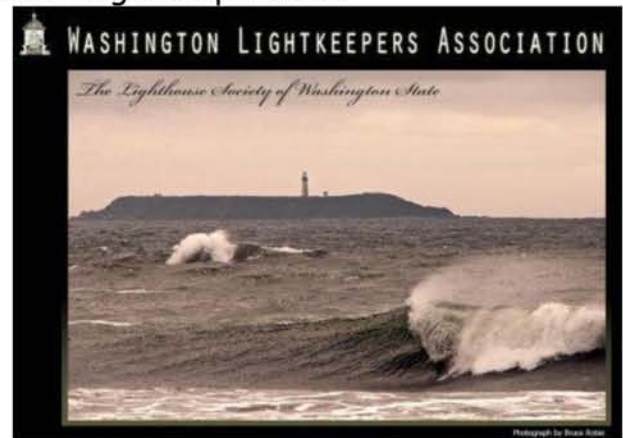
He is survived by his daughter, Debbie (Ray) Ann Pedrick; and his sister, Adrian Blackstock.

(Photo top—Jim Gibbs Collection, WLA Archives; Right—ALF)

Editor's Note: I visited Jim Gibbs at Cleft of the Rock Lighthouse on several occasions since 2002, and I am one of his biggest fans. He wrote so many wonderful books and single-handedly saved much of the history and many of the artifacts related to Washington lighthouses, as well as lighthouses in the Northwest in general. A visit with Jim was always a treat, as we explored his lighthouse home and examined the many items he had on display. Jim was a really wonderful storyteller and a kind and generous man. The last time I visited him in 2009, he presented me with a metal file box full of photos and information on Washington lighthouses. It is now part of the WLA archive—a gift from one of the best chroniclers of lighthouse history. If there's a lighthouse in heaven, I know Jim is keeping it shining bright!



Check out the WLA websites—
www.walightkeepers.com



www.Run4theLight.com



We have new photos being posted regularly and info about our mission and events. Also, you'll find back issues of *The Focal Point* on our website. The "Run for the Light" website has been revamped and is a de"light" to surf!