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Agenda item

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Lighthouse Conservation and National Lighthouse Museum in Korea

A lighthouse tower should be designed to withstand major storms that may bring large waves and water damage. The design of each lighthouse reflects local geographical, topographic and climatic conditions, as well as the availability of construction materials. A good example of this is the setting up of assembly stairs and the masonry structure of early lighthouse construction. These technical and functional elements have shaped the architectural designs of Korean lighthouses.

As a result of these considerations, and unlike Korea's traditional wood-based architecture, the lighthouses of Korea have various forms and shapes such as circles, hexagons and octagons, and use construction materials ranging from stone to concrete. Therefore, it is crucial to be aware of building technologies in the early twentieth century. Despite the first lighthouses being constructed using Japanese and British technology, the building of them was an important factor in developing economic power during the Daehan Empire, when King Gojong declared Korea a nation independent of Chinese influence.

The Daehan Empire provided a budget for these early lighthouses to be constructed by foreign lighthouse architects. Later Korean lighthouses were based upon these designs so it is important to understand and interpret this early Korean lighthouse architecture. The structure and the functionality of Korean lighthouses ensure that they are effective navigational aids for shipping and these primary considerations in turn create the lighthouse forms. In this way, Korean lighthouse architecture reflects the modern architectural idea that 'form follows function.' What is more, the lighthouses become an integrated part of the surrounding natural landscapes, as well as being symbolic and well-loved landmarks for local communities.

The Korea National Lighthouse Museum was established to permanently preserve and exhibit navigation aids-related relics and devices, which are gradually disappearing with advancement of industrial technology and change of time, as well as studying the history.

Aids to navigation have greatly contributed to marine safety and the development of the modern industry ; however, the navigational mark facilities and related items have gradually disappeared over time. In order to preserve these facilities as historical sites to hand down to our descendents and to promote the importance of aids to navigation and love for the sea, Korea's first lighthouse museum opened on February 7, 1985 in the region that houses the historic lighthouse at the headland of Homi(North Gyeongsang Province's local cultural asset number 39).

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of first lighthouse in Korea, the museum reopened on April 19, 2002 after facilities to hold exhibition items were expanded and the construction of the Second Exhibition Hall was completed. The construction began in 1996 to create a place where people can enjoy the sight of a white lighthouse against the blue sea and green forest.

The Lighthouse Museum has more than a million visitors a year. It is a place where people can see and experience marine culture while learning about the items on display.

The museum is dedicated to the research of the development of beacons and preservation of historic records. The Lighthouse Museum has 4,491 items of 320 types, with more than 384 of them on display. The items from the collection are rotated for display on a regular basis.

The National Lighthouse Museum consists of Lighthouse Hall, Maritime Hall, Outdoor Exhibition Area and Special Exhibition Hall, featuring permanent exhibitions on the history and functions of navigation aids, as well as special exhibitions on various themes.

The Lighthouse Hall is a place for learning and experiencing marine culture by seeing, touching and listening to exhibits. The hall is divided into five sections : the entrance where you can see the light of the lighthouse, the introductory section where the lighthouse and nature become one, the screen hall with audio-visual facilities, the lighthouse science hall that helps you understand the lighthouse, and the lighthouse artifact hall that displays the spirits of lighthouse keepers and helps you understand lighthouse history.

The Maritime Hall is prepared by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries to promote the goal of becoming an advanced marine country in the 21st century. Among the exhibits are graphic panels describing the history of the development of vessels, the history of the

changes in our marine transport, models of sea farming and the utilization of marine fisheries, and investigations and research on the ocean. Also on display are specimens of marine life from around our country. You can take a rest on the second floor of this hall and enjoy the beautiful view of the East Sea.

Here you can see the sun rising earlier than anyone else on the peninsula and investigate an exhibit of the huge equipment used at a lighthouse in the past. Additionally, there is a lighthouse town where you can enjoy models of the famous lighthouses in Korea.

The Special Exhibition Hall will contain a permanent room exhibiting items relevant to lighthouses and a theme exhibition room on the ocean and lighthouses. This hall was designed to attract tourists as well as locals on a continual basis.

The Museum is closed on Mondays, Korean Chu-seok holiday and Lunar New Year's Day holiday. If the Monday is a public holiday, the Museum will be closed on the next day.

In addition, the Museum offers a wide range of social and educational programs, including "Exhibition Guide Program" which helps visitors gain a better understanding of lighthouses and navigation aids in an interesting way ; "Youth Lighthouse Museum School", "Maritime Culture and Arts Festival," and "Hands-on Experience Programs" in which visitors can enjoy a first-hand experience with maritime culture.

The National Lighthouse will spare no effort to provide citizens with space for new maritime culture, raise awareness of the importance and roles of lighthouses and imbue the public with maritime awareness. The information of Lighthouse Museum can be found at: <http://eng.lighthouse-museum.or.kr/en/>, select the "Exhibition Information" button.

Future Tasks

We will provide introduction about lighthouse maritime cultural space and strategy for alternate uses of lighthouses in Korea to the next meeting.



Korea National Lighthouse Museum



Lighthouse Hall



Lighthouse Hall



Maritime Hall

Outdoor Exhibition Area