

Dedicated to the Sport of Safe Long-Distance Riding

IRONBUTT[®]



MAGAZINE

Spring 2011

USA \$5.95



History of the IBR, Part II
Battle Ready | Portable Computers | Braking
Rallymasters Explained

IBA's Newest
Challenge:

The Light- house Tour

Are you riding
to the light?



By Bill Watt



There are more than 13,300 known lighthouses in the world today. Not all of them are accessible by road, but many can be reached by motorcycle. The Iron Butt Association has developed a new series of rides that will complement the National Parks Tour (Master Traveler Awards) and allow more of our members around the world to participate in a stamp and photo collection qualification ride.

The conventional definition of a lighthouse is a tower or other structure containing a beacon light to warn or guide ships at sea. However, the Iron Butt Dictionary defines a lighthouse as: “A photographic or rubber stamping opportunity that lures a motorcyclist into taking the time to visit and experience new roads, often reaching the very end, and to visit, in the words of the United States Lighthouse Society, ‘the many proud coastal ladies of former years with their sweeping towers of brick and Victorian gingerbread.’”

North America is “middle-aged” in lighthouse years, while Iceland is a “nýju krakki á blokk,” (new kid on the block). **The Icelandic Lighthouse Society** explains that Iceland had only five operating lighthouses at the turn of the 20th century and it was not until 1954 that the circle of 104 lighthouses around Iceland was finally completed.

How many of these Icelandic lighthouses can be visited by motorcycle? We don't know because their website is in Icelandic. However, we do know that you can ride to the oldest working lighthouse in the world, which is in the city of La Coruña in northwestern Spain. This lighthouse is known as the Tower of Hercules and has been operating since the time of the Roman Emperor Trajan, who died in 117. That is not a typo, the Tower has been in operation since the year one hundred seventeen!

Like most Iron Butt challenges, the Lighthouse Tour came about by happenstance. In the summer of 2010, I was checking out bonus locations for the 2011 Iron Butt Rally and decided to ride part of the way home along a coastline. At lunchtime I saw a lighthouse and decided to stop, take a few photographs, and have lunch. As I wandered about the grounds, I entered a

gift shop and learned the U.S. Lighthouse Society sponsors a Passport Program. I bought two, got one stamped, then went outside and called Mike Kneebone. I explained the program to Mike, who gave his signature laugh (it's really not evil) and said, “It passes the sickness test. We have to use this program as a basis for a new IBA ride!”

The Iron Butt Association is going to use the levels of accomplishment that are outlined in the U.S. Lighthouse Society Passport Program as part of our ride requirements. Simply put, you will need 60 stamps, or other proof of visitation, during any continuous twelve-month period to qualify for an IBA certificate. Like the Master Traveler Award, we will be expanding the ride geographically to include higher mileage Silver and Gold levels. The Iron Butt Association will also be certifying rides outside of North America, on either a country basis (such as New Zealand, Chile, Australia) or geographical region basis (such as Europe or the United Kingdom).

In developing this ride I've had the great pleasure to consult with two very knowledgeable individuals — Anthony (Tony) Melosci (a friend of IBA member Wayne Edkin) and Richard Gales of the U.S. Lighthouse Society. Tony has visited by plane, boat, or automobile every lighthouse in the United States. Richard has been very generous in sharing information and supporting the IBA's idea of modeling unique IBA rides that will include their Passport Program. The accompanying photos and passport stamps in this article are courtesy of Tony and Rich.

We are asking for your help in building a GPS database for these lighthouses. In order to help other riders in their quest to visit the lighthouses, we want you to send us information about the lighthouse to the web site address listed below. Also, we're asking you to send us photos, as well as directions or other unique information you think might assist both future riders and other lighthouse organizations.

Detailed ride information, rules, and links to lighthouse websites are available at www.ironbutt.com/lighthouse. 🏠