

## Museum Lighthouse Dicke Berta 1897 – 1983

Altenbrucher Hafen      Am Deich (At the dyke)

### Opening hours

Easter Saturday – September

Tuesdays

10 – 12 am

Saturdays

3 – 5 pm

### Tour of the tower

The tower is constructed of riveted steel and erected on a hollow concrete foundation that formerly used to collect rainwater. From the foundation to the top, the tower has a height of 15,1 m, while it is 8.4 m high to the outer gallery.

The first floor was used as a storage room for gas bottles (used in case of emergency operation) and tools and materials, while coal and wood for the stove was stored in the space under the stairs.

By a spiral staircase one arrives at the second floor that houses the hand pump, which pumped up the collected rainwater. Here the switchboard and meter panel from the early days of electrification is especially remarkable. Another focus of this engine room is the compressed air boiler (manufactured by the shipyard Mützelfeldtwerft Cuxhaven in 1950 with a volume of 750 litres) that is filled using the manual flywheel pump. This compressed air operates the Otter shades (upright slats that rotate producing shade and light, named by their inventor Fredrik Otter) in the lamp room.

On the next floor we find the conveniently equipped office of the lighthouse keeper. Between outer and inner walls wooden coffers (sunk panels) were installed and insulated with peat dust. A small coal-burning stove produced heat for the room.

At the desk the lighthouse keeper carried out his office work (completing journals, purchase orders, observations). He was able to monitor both the lamp room by means of a mirror system and the

navigable channel by looking out of the window. A little comfort for the usually rather monotonous work was a wireless and later the inevitable TV.

Another attractive feature was the two-story bunk bed, equipped with various shelves and racks and sliding doors to darken the bottom bed. Shelves almost covered the door and housed various items, for example a washbowl. A ladder chair made it easier for the keepers to reach the top bed.

The third floor is the lamp room. The room's centre is dominated by a steel platform with the lighting system, a 300/500 Watt incandescent lamp amplified by a drum lens.

The drum lens is called after its inventor named Fresnel lens and features a special grinding resulting in the powerful focusing of light rays.

If the electricity should fail, an electromagnetic switchover system activates a propane gaslight as auxiliary system.

In front of the Fresnel lens there are green and red coloured glass sections for the diagonal marking lights and the Otter shades alongside. Upright slats that can be rotated by 90° generate flashes – the characters of the light – by shading and letting through the light. The compressed air generated in the engine room controls these shades by mean of a camshaft.

A ventilation system prevents condensation: Four air openings in the floor allow fresh air and the roof hood is automatically set to the lee side, together generating a continual air exchange.

## **Lighthouse Keeper Wanted!**

The Förderverein "Dicke Berta" (Friends of Big Berta) is always striving to keep the lighthouse up and accessible to the public. Mostly this means time!

Become a lighthouse keeper for a few hours!

We would dearly like to open the lighthouse more often! For this we need volunteers to man the lighthouse during opening hours and probably even to give a guided tour.

Your reward is the most beautiful view you can find in the District Cuxhaven!

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[www.dickeberta.de](http://www.dickeberta.de)

"Dicke Berta" - a place for people say "I do"

Make your wedding to an unforgettable event and say "I do" on the Dicke Berta.

If you love all things maritime, our lighthouse is the ticket for you: Tie the knot with wonderful views of the River Elbe!

There is no better way to begin your life together than to circumnavigate life's dangerous cliffs and abysses with the help of a lighthouse.

Information

Standesamt (Registry) Cuxhaven

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## **The Förderverein "Dicke Berta" (Friends of Big Berta)**

Of course, keeping up the historic lighthouse takes not only time, but also money. Personal efforts make great contributions, however they are not enough. Thanks to various companies, sponsors, organisations and volunteers, our lighthouse is today again a presentable maritime attraction at the port.

Our work is funded by:

- donations
- presentations at events
- weddings
- membership fees of the Friends of Big Berta.

If you are interested in helping, become a Friend of Big Berta!  
Membership declarations can be found at the lighthouse or can be downloaded on our homepage under **[www.dickeberta.de](http://www.dickeberta.de)**.

Chairman of the supporting society "Friends of Big Berta":  
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