

# Pladda Lighthouse

## Light Established

1790

## Engineer

Thomas Smith

## Position

Latitude 55° 25.5'N

Longitude 05° 07.3'W

## Character

Flashing (3) White every 30 secs

## Elevation

40 metres

## Nominal Range

17 miles

## Structure

White tower 29 metres in height there are 128 steps to the top of the tower

## History

Pladda Lighthouse was built on the pear-shaped island of Pladda, off the South East corner of Arran. Lighted in October 1790, it joined those on the Mull of Kintyre, Cumbrae in the Firth of Clyde, and Copeland light on the Irish coast. It soon had to be distinguished from these three by showing a lower light from a small lantern 20 feet below the original one - an arrangement that was soon made permanent and was to operate for more than 100 years. In 1870 trials were carried out at Pladda with paraffin, a light material oil which now superseded colya, just as that on Joseph Mumi's recommendation had succeeded sperm oil. In 1874 the Commissioners ordered sirens driven by hot air engines from America. Pladda was about the third station in 1876 to have a fog signal.

In 1901 fixed lights were no longer regarded as suitable for the great landfall and coastal lights and a powerful group flashing light was installed.

Provisions and other light stores were brought to the lighthouse by boatmen permanently attached to the station and they also carried out the reliefs. These attending boats were limited to 4 visits to the rock per month, 2 on Sundays to enable the lightkeepers to attend church. All this changed in 1972 with the introduction to the service of the helicopter, which was used to transport the keepers back and forward.

The Station was automated in 1990 and the Lightkeepers withdrawn. The light is now remotely monitored from the Northern Lighthouse Boards Headquarters in Edinburgh.

It should be noted that at some sites the Northern Lighthouse Board have sold some redundant buildings within the lighthouse complex and are not responsible for the maintenance of these building.