



For Immediate Release

From: Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum

NANTUCKET LIGHTSHIP BASKET MUSEUM OPENS 2012 SEASON WITH EXHIBIT Members' Collection

Nantucket, MA., May 21, 2012 – The Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum www.nantucketlightshipbasketmuseum.org, begins its 13th season on May 25th with *Gifts from the Heart*. This season's exhibit interprets Nantucket baskets that were given or received as gifts to mark memorable occasions. On display, are over 100 baskets along with the unique stories of how these baskets were acquired or presented as gifts.

Included in the exhibit are a several heart shaped baskets and baskets that incorporate heart motifs as part of their adornments. There are baskets from several private collections that have not previously been on display or available for public viewing.

The exhibit also features two significant weavers from two different time periods. The first, Captain Thomas James, was a whaler and lightship keeper and wove baskets aboard the South Shoal Lightship. He along with his mates took a craft from whaling ship to lightship, thus solidifying a tradition that has remained strong for over 150 years. Harry Hilbert, a fine furniture maker, turned to crafting lightship baskets as a retirement hobby. By incorporating his knowledge of wood working into his baskets, he distinguished his baskets with exquisitely turned bases and rich inlay. The exhibit includes examples of their work and biographical information.

In addition to the basket collections on display, the museum holds a weekly lecture series with interesting topics including: basket restoration, the birth of the purse and life on board the South Shoal Lightship. "We like to think of the museum as a destination where people can gather to learn the history of lightship baskets and forge friendships with others who are passionate about Nantucket lightship baskets. In addition to the exhibit and weekly lectures, the museum is nurturing future weavers through the ever popular youth weaving program," said Maryann Wasik, Museum Executive Director.

The museum is open Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM through October 8. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors and children under 17.

About the Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum - The Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the awareness and appreciation of lightship baskets and their makers, by educating and engaging the public about the complexity of this art form unique to Nantucket, and placing it within a broader context of related crafts. The museum is dedicated to preserving Nantucket's rich history of basket making by exhibiting historic and contemporary baskets, providing a permanent home for lightship baskets, supporting scholarship of this art form, and encouraging and mentoring new generations of lightship basket makers.

For media inquiries please contact:

Maryann Wasik, Director

Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum

49 Union Street

Nantucket, MA 02554

508.228.1177 maryann@nantucketlightshipbasketmuseum.org

###