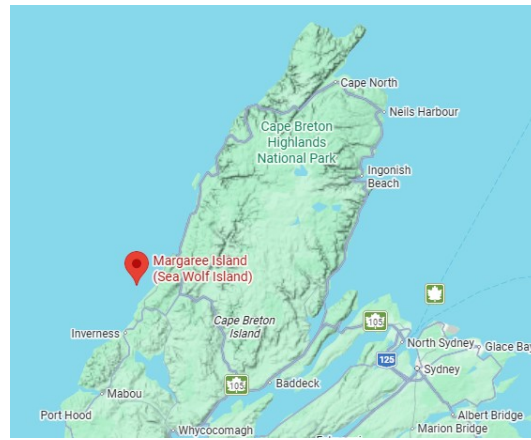


1<sup>st</sup> Margaree Island Lighthouse  
Credit: Library and Archives Canada



Location of Margaree Island  
Credit: Google Maps

Being the lightkeeper on Margaree Island off Cape Breton was a hard job. Not only was the Island 3.9km (2.4mi) from the mainland but the first lighthouse built in 1855 was a square four-sided wooden tower with a tiny attached house for the lightkeeper and his family. There was so little space that the kitchen was in the basement that flooded often!

In 1883 it was decided to build a bigger lantern room to support a brighter lighting system of two tiers of seven large flat-wick lamps with twenty-one-inch reflectors and five lamps with eighteen-inch reflectors. Can you imagine cleaning and filling these on a daily basis, let alone lighting them every evening?

In 1908 a new octagonal, wooden lighthouse was built along with a standalone lightkeeper's quarter. However those high-maintenance tiers of lamps and reflectors weren't replaced until 1921 when a 2<sup>nd</sup> order Fresnel lens was installed.

During the period 1956 to 1958 a new hexagonal tower made of reinforced concrete was erected and the lightkeeper got a new wooden frame house! He only got to enjoy it 13 years before the light was automated and his job eliminated. Today only a huge colony of Great Cormorants live on Margaree Island where a lighthouse has shone a guiding light for 171 years!



2<sup>nd</sup> Margaree Island Lighthouse  
Credit: Canadian Coast Guard – PEI office



3<sup>rd</sup> Margaree Island Lighthouse  
Credit: Department of Oceans & Fisheries

Here are some rare photos of constructing a concrete lighthouse in the late 1950s:



2<sup>nd</sup> Margaree Island Lighthouse with 3<sup>rd</sup> concrete lighthouse construction in progress  
Note the 2<sup>nd</sup> tower appears to be missing its outer layer. Was the wood used as concrete forms for the 3<sup>rd</sup> one?



At the base of new concrete lighthouse tower



Adding the second floor to the tower base

Construction photos credit: Canadian Coast Guard – PEI office