



Sambro Island Lighthouse



Seal Island Lighthouse

Credit: Chris Mills

## Building Styles of Nova Scotia Lighthouses

What style of lighthouse do you like the most? At first, lighthouses were tall stone towers. Nova Scotia's Sambro Island Lighthouse near Halifax is made of local quarried granite stone covered with a layer of shingles and is Canada's oldest lighthouse operating since 1759.

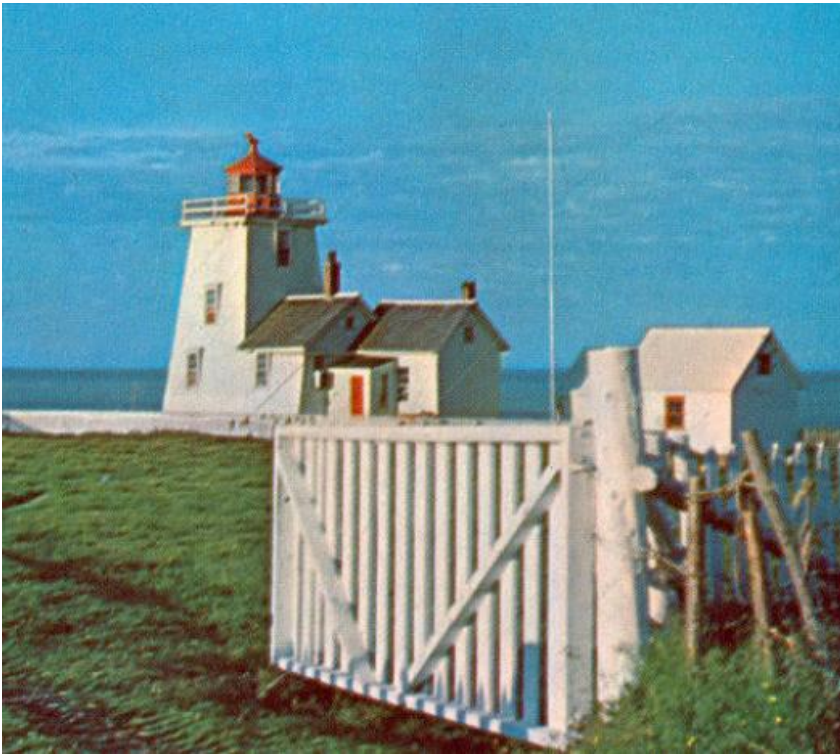
Given the surrounding thick forests, there was a switch to wood and tall wooden hexagonal or octagonal lighthouse towers such as Gabarus in Cape Breton and Seal Island off the Yarmouth coast were built. Starting around 1850, the lightkeepers' quarters were combined with the lighthouse tower in the form of a house topped with a lantern as can be seen at Port Bickerton near Sherbrooke. Alternatively a tower shared a wall with the house such as the Bon Portage Lighthouse that Evelyn Richardson described in her book, *We Keep a Light*.

With the development of new construction materials in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, concrete was used to pour octagonal or square towers while layers of fibreglass were molded into round towers. Low Point Lighthouse on the Sydney Harbour and Caribou Island Lighthouse near Pictou are concrete and Pubnico Harbour Lighthouse on the Acadian Shore is fibreglass. While cast iron was used in other provinces, Nova Scotia's only example, Cape North Lighthouse along the Cabot Trail, had a cast iron tower that was moved from Newfoundland and later shipped to Ottawa.

And let's not forget the little wooden pepper-shaker style lighthouses found in the numerous coves about Nova Scotia. Walton Harbour in East Hants is usually the first lighthouse of this style to open to the public come May. Whatever is your favourite style, one thing is certain. People love seeing lighthouses!



Gabarus Lighthouse



Bon Portage Island Lighthouse

Credit: Nova Scotia Archives



Low Point Lighthouse



Caribou Point Lighthouse

Credit: Lighthouse Friends



Pubnico Harbour Lighthouse



Walton Harbour Lighthouse

Credit: NSLPS - DPC