

# THE Lightkeeper

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 5, No.1, March, 1998

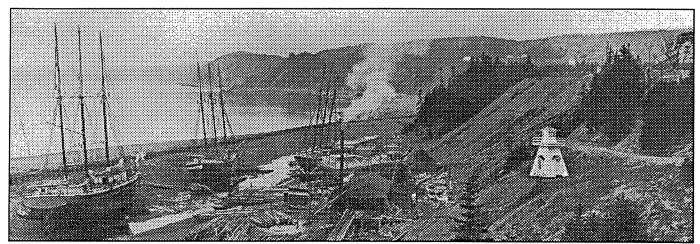
The objectives of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society are: to promote and support preservation and awareness of Nova Scotian lighthouses; to assist community groups in leasing or taking ownership of lighthouse sites; to provide access to written research and photographic documentation and to initiate oral history research; and to classify and monitor the status of historic lighthouse sites.

MEETINGS: 7:00 pm Fourth Wednesday of the month, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax.

WEBSITE: http://www.EDnet.ns.ca/educ/heritage/nslps

PATRONS: Rip Irwin, Dexter and Susan Penfield

AFFILIATES: Cape Sable Historical Society, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Municipality of Queens Tourism & Development, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre, Spencers Island Community Association, Yarmouth County Tourist Association



Port Greville, c. 1918

Courtesy Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Lister Collection

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#### WELCOME ABOARD!

The following new members have joined NSLPS since December, 1997: Ronald E. Brann, Jim Guptill, Valerie & James Campbell, Joyce Mitchell, Flora McElroy, Terry Dwyer, Sally DeWolf, Michel Forand, Ross MacInnis, Brad & Vera Blackford, Carolyn Smedley, Joyce & Paul McCulloch

## TRIPS, SUMMER 1998

Members will receive a special mailing with information and a form for pre-registration for limited trips.

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, April 22, 1998

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

7:00 PM

Slide Talk: A LIGHTKEEPING JOURNEY

Chris Mills, Lightkeeper on both our coasts

Life on the stations in Nova Scotia and British Columbia Election of Officers, Reports, 1998 Action Plan

### **PROGRAMMES**

Wed. Mar. 25,

Business 7 PM, Public Talk 7:45 PM

LIGHTHOUSE LIFE

An evening about the life of keepers and families on the offshore lightstations with Betty June (Richardson) Smith, who grew up at the Bon Portage Lighthouse and her husband, Lightkeeper Sid Smith. Together, they kept the light on Cape Sable for many years.

## **RACLAU NEWS**

Dan Conlin

The Regional Committee on Lighthouse Alternate Use is made up of Coast Guard officials and a dozen representatives of community groups with involvement in lighthouse sites. NSLPS is represented at RACLAU by Dan Conlin.

The Regional Committee on Lighthouse Alternate Use is working with the Coast Guard to set up boards to examine and select proposals from community groups interested in developing a lighthouse site. Many community groups have already sent proposals or letters of interest to the Coast Guard and it is hoped that this year the new boards will start to consider the backlog of these applications. There will be one board for each Maritime Province made up of a representatives from the Coast Guard, RACLAU,, community groups and heritage groups. The Coast Guard has been waiting for formal authorization from Treasury Board to make leases and licenses with community groups. This has been delayed somewhat by the Fisheries and Oceans merger. It looks like the Coast Guard will get approval to work with community groups. However Treasury board appears adamant that lighthouse properties be sold or leased at full market value. This could seriously burden community groups with heavy rent or purchase payments on top of the daunting challenge of fund-raising to maintain and develop a site. It could also threaten the historical value of sites by increasing the pressure to commercialize them to bring in revenue to pay for their full market value. The Coast Guard says they hope to ease the burden by considering "sweat equity" (volunteer work and improvements made) as payment, but commercial market value versus community and historical value remains an issue that probably has to be confronted.

## LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

Tim Hall

Cape D'Or is the only place in Nova Scotia where you can stay in the former lightkeeper's house. It's a spectacular site high on the cliffs at the entrance to the Minas Channel, scoured by tide rips. You can stay there from May 15 until Oct. 15. Call Harold Nuttall, (902) 392-2933 (home) or (902) 664-2108 (on the Cape) for more information.

#### **NEWS & NOTES**

NSLPS has received a cheque for \$150 from Polestar Calendars as a share of their calendar profits from the Canadian Lighthouse Calendar published last Christmas. With so many companies making lighthouse products, but so few supporting preservation, this contribution is gratefully appreciated. Sadly, the sales, in a very competitive calendar market, were not as great as Polestar hoped and they will not be doing another Canadian Lighthouse calendar next year.

Mary Primrose, well-known Halifax naturalist and photographer, a long-time member of NSLPS, died recently. Dan Conlin remembers her tramping over Georges Island last summer. We'll miss her, especially on lighthouse trips.

Mark Lewis collects post cards and is interested in corresponding with other collectors. His address is 49 Beech Hall Road, Highams Park, London E4 9NJ, United Kingdom

**Dan Conlin** presented a talk on lighthouses to the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia last month.

The Society has a new membership brochure. If you know places where it should be available, let us know. We sent a letter supporting the continuance of the Regional Museum of Cultural History in Dartmouth. Advantages of Affiliate membership were increased to include listing on the masthead of *The Lightkeeper*, and inclusion in a special section of the NSLPS Website. We are in touch with groups that have sites open to the public about a lighthouse brochure for the province.

IF YOU ARE ON E-MAIL SEND YOUR ADDRESS TO PETER MACCULLOCH - petermac@twrsoft.com - he is setting up a list for electronic updates about NSLPS meetings and activities.

# **Homecoming!** THE PORT GREVILLE LIGHTHOUSE

Donna Merriam (Donna is a member of the Age of Sail Museum, Port Greville.)

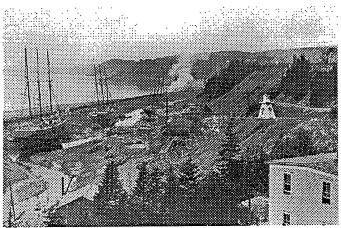
Big plans are well underway in Cumberland County, down on the Parrsboro Shore, in a tiny but picturesque tri-village area which includes Port Greville. The village may not be heavily populated but it easily compensates for that in terms of enthusiasm and perseverence for community development. Last spring an idea started which involved expanding the artifacts of the Age of Sail Heritage Centre to include the Port Greville Lighthouse.

At first glance is not seem surprising given the widely

known initiative of the Canadian Coast Guard to close lighthouses that are no longer needed for navigation. It might then seem logical that the Centre could take over the maintenance of the local lighthouse. What isn't so logical or well known, is that the Port Greville Lighthouse was sawn in half in 1981, craned onto a huge flatbed truck and taken for re-installation at the Coast Guard College in Sydney where it "resides" to this day. Lucky thing it was! Because it has been maintained all these years and not

destroyed like so many.

The idea to bring the Port Greville Light home bloomed in the spring and led to research through the summer, greatly aided by Dan Conlin, President of the NSLPS. Through his sharing of information and confirmation that indeed the lighthouse at the College was the Port Greville Light, plans for a formal request to return it to the Age of Sail Heritage Centre were underway.



Port Greville Lighthouse, c. 1918.

Courtesy of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic,

Lister Collection

Archival photos and records revealed that the "pepper pot" style lighthouse was built in 1907 and first lit with kerosene in 1908. For many years it presided over a flourishing harbour full of three masted schooners, busy tugs and log rafts. After the age of sail it stood sentinel to the building and launching of mine-sweepers during World War II and the peacetime building of scallop draggers until the late 1960's. A couple of those draggers are still working in the Digby fleet.

One anecdote from the Coast Guard file, to be copied for the museum records by Tom Harley of the Saint John Office, involved an emergency in the late 1930's when kerosene supplies ran out. The lightkeeper wrote a desperate plea for a barrel of kerosene to be sent on the next ship to Port Greville as the villagers were having to donate their private stock to keep the lighthouse lit each night! What a rich record of Port Greville life this file will add to the archives of the Age of Sail Heritage Centre. The original blueprints for the light have also been located and made available, too.

A letter to Jim Wheelhouse, Director of the Coast Guard College, the first week of September pointed not just to the practical considerations involved but to the deep cultural value of the lighthouse to the residents and summer visitors of the Port Greville area. The enthusiastic development of the Age of Sail Heritage Centre over the past five years, and the addition last year of the Porthole Tea Room, stand as testament to the ability of supporters

to carry through on their well formulated plans.

Verbal agreement in October to the lighthouse coming home was followed by a Christmas letter confirming that the Coast Guard College was willing to gift the lighthouse to the museum. Now the real work began!

January was spent identifying potential political and funding partners. Strong support for the initiative has been secured from Bill Casey, M P, and from Guy Brown, MLA. In addition, the Cumberland Regional Economic Development Association is lending its expertise to the submission of proposals and navigation of the shoals of potential funding sources.

Before a formal proposal can be framed however, work must be completed to identify sources of local labour and materials, both donated and contracted. A flurry of activity is currently aimed at acquiring estimates for all the tasks associated with the reverse of the 1981 move to Sydney. The lighthouse must be assessed for the most careful and effective removal from its base at the Coast Guard College. Jim Wheelhouse and John Falardeau at the College have been very helpful in furthering the planning process.

Safeguards necessary to ensure its travel by flatbed over Kelly's Mountain, Mt. Thom and Economy Mountain must be established. No small feat! All the necessary materials and preparation must be considered for its reinstallment at the Age of Sail Heritage Centre grounds. Its new home is perhaps not as traditional as its original one, 60 feet mid-bank on the shores of Greville Bay, but to the residents of Port Greville, it will be wonderful to celebrate its homecoming and to see it enjoyed by residents and tourists alike.

A new addition was added to the plan during the community information meeting held on February 9<sup>th</sup>. It now seems possible and is deemed important not only to restore the lighthouse to its original charm, but to build a replica of the original rear light by which our mariner forefathers navigated safely into harbour, lining up the two lights. Current generations have little memory of this rear light, so will find this aspect an exciting and educational addition to the homecoming site.

It is an interesting development as we baby-boomers make our retirement plans, many of us find ourselves longing for a real sense of place and newfound pride in our heritage. To many a lighthouse is perhaps only a piece of real estate, even if a rather quaint and interesting one. To those of us who grew up with the Port Greville Lighthouse as a firm fixture in our memories and very much a part of our everyday lives, its homecoming will be profound and exciting.

If anyone would like to assist in the project, either with a donation or offers of materials or help, please call Donna Merriam at (902) 422-8900 (9 to 5). All offers gratefully received.

## A LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION ACT An Opinion

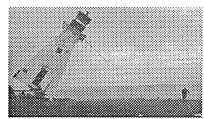
David Curry

Economic realities tend to depress us, especially here in the Maritimes. Technological innovations, on the other hand, seem always to enthral us. Yet both are means not ends.

When economic forces and technological advances become the be-all and end-all of everything, they threaten to eclipse more fundamental principles of identity and forms of association. We forget who we are and where we are. We lose the understanding of ourselves. Our villages-by-the-sea, whether large or small, become little more than the remoter suburbs of L.A. or New York.

One consequence is that heritage and culture become nothing more than consumer products. We become "service serfs." We and our communities become market commodities. At issue for lighthouses is whether or not they will become merely market commodities. Perhaps, Disney will be interested in a "Lighthouse Annie's" Theme Park.

The obstacle for an effective Lighthouse Alternative









The burning of the Mosher Island Lighthouse by the Coast Guard in 1990 is moving evidence of the need for Lighthouse Protection Legislation and the Alternate Use Initiative. The light was built in the 1950's. David Stevens, the well-known boatbulder was the contractor and the work was done by Ernest Joyce. It's been replaced by a fibreglass "tower."

Use programme remains the federal government Treasury Board. Without the resolution of the issue of ownership versus trusteeship, lighthouses cannot be what they properly are: the cultural and spiritual icons of our maritime landscape and history. At best, they might become culture commodities.

In my view, the Lighthouse Alternative Use programme needs the legislative umbrella of a Lighthouse Protection Act. The point of such an Act would be to allow and encourage communities to become *trustees* of the lights for the nation. This does not deny the force of economic realities and technocratic determinations. It does not deny the economic benefits that might accrue from Lighthouse Alternative Use programmes. But it does mean the subordination of such concerns to the cultural and historical significance of the lights. *It means that the lights remain in the public domain*.

With respect to a Lighthouse Protection Act, perhaps we need to think about communities in a rather extended sense. Community does not necessarily mean what is local and geographic. There are also communities of interest: historical societies; recreational associations and businesses; environmental groups and so on. Under a Lighthouse Protection Act different communities of interest, whether local or not, could make use of the sites according to the criteria of the Lighthouse Alternative Use Programme.

Without such an Act, it will be hard to prevent the lights from becoming little more than market commodities. What is principally lost in such a view of things is the spiritual significance of the lights as belonging to our maritime identity and understanding.

Perhaps the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society could be the sponsoring body for developing and promoting a Lighthouse Protection Act. Perhaps there is need for a working committee to undertake this important project. The time has come.

Anyone interested in working on legislation should get in touch with the Society. (Ed.)

## LIGHTHOUSE RESEARCH TIPS

Dan Conlin

## **Sessional Papers**

There is a wealth of information about your local lighthouse waiting at the nearest university library. It is found in the Sessional Papers published by the Canadian Government. From 1868 to 1930 the Department of Marine published its annual report in the Sessional Papers listing changes and improvements to lights as well as

keepers and their salaries. The amount of detail differed from year to year. Early years included everything down to keeper salaries and new plumbing. Later years listed major changes only, such as new foghorns or lighting apparatus. However, a few hours spent with the Sessional Papers will give you a wonderful understanding of the changes to your lighthouse and sometimes even some interesting glimpses of the life on the stations, like mention of a door that kept letting in the snow.

As an example of what you can find in the Sessional Papers, here's an excerpt from 1878:

"MOSER'S ISLAND

Lat. 44°44'15" N.; Long. 64°18'50" W.

(Henry Moser, Keeper.)

Fixed red light; five A lamps, and 12-inch reflectors; iron lantern, 7½ feet in diameter with eight sides, two being dark; plate glass, 42 X 24 inches; consumes about 180 gallons oil. Was inspected on 26<sup>th</sup> July, and 230 gallons delivered.

The buildings are in good order; the metal sheathing of the lantern floor and canvas covering of the deck is being renewed."

Sessional Papers can be found at:

Dalhousie University Killam Library Acadia university Library Saint Francis Xavier University Library

University College of Cape Breton Library.

The big disadvantage of the Sessional Papers is their size.

They comprise hundreds and hundreds of volumes, sometimes a dozen volumes for each year, with an erratic indexing system that changes from year to year. However, as part of its research, NSLPS has just developed a four page finding aid to the Sessional Papers that takes you to the Nova Scotian listings in seconds. Copies are available from the Society for \$2.00 to cover printing, handling and postage. Also available, for the same price is the NSLPS two page Guide to Oral History. As well, we are having a sale of back Issues of *The Lightkeeper*, normally \$2.00 per copy:

1995 - 5 issues, \$8.00

1996 - 3 issues, \$4.00

1997 - 4 issues, \$6.00

Full set, 12 issues, \$16

Order any of the above from the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax, NS, B3J 1S3 Please make cheques payable to The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

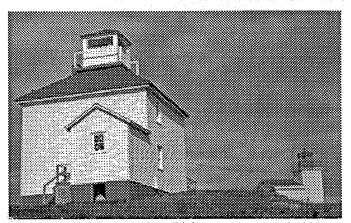
## PORT BICKERTON LIGHTHOUSE

Bickerton was settled in 1840 by a group of fishermen from Peggy's Cove. Although Bickerton Island was settled first, the area surrounding the lighthouse was settled soon afterwards.

It was not until 1901 that the first of three lighthouses was constructed in Port Bickerton. Emery Taylor of Stillwater, N.S. was contracted to build the lighthouse with a bid of only five hundred dollars. The lighthouse was completed in January of 1901, but it was not operational until October 10<sup>th</sup> of the same year. The lighthouse was a small harbour light, housed in a square, wooden tower, painted white with sloping sides. The western region of Barachois Head was home to this first lighthouse. It was erected one hundred feet from the shore, on a site twenty-five feet above the high tide line In clear weather it was visible for seven miles.

As the years passed, it was clear that the lighthouse was not a sturdy building and in about 1924 it was replaced, probably by a temporary light. In 1930 the light was first shown from the combined light and dwelling which still remains on the station. (This building is now the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre and is open to the public.)

The first lighthouse keeper was Theodore O'Hara. His yearly salary was one hundred and fifty dollars. Until the first residence was completed in March of 1903, he had to row back and forth to the light from the village across the harbour. Keepers were not well paid. In the 1940's they



The second lighthouse at Port Bickerton, completed 1930 and restored in 1997. The third is in the background *Photo-Dan Conlin* 

were paid only nineteen dollars each month. Mr. Irvin Beiswanger had to lobster fish as well as operate the light in order to support his family.

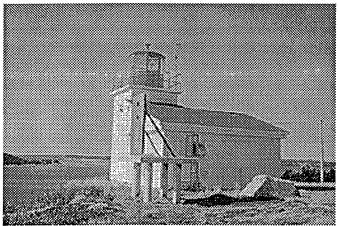
A fire in the district in 1947 brought the lighthouse dangerously close to destruction. The blaze started across the peninsula in Fisherman's Harbour and worked its way to the light. Fortunately, residents in the community were able to douse the fire with water from the sea. The light escaped destruction with only some damage to the roof.

Until 1948, the fog warning device consisted of a small, manually operated fog horn and was utilized only when boats were entering the harbour. Electricity was introduced to the Port Bickerton area in December 1947,

introduced to the Port Bickerton area in December 1947, and along with it came an automatic fog horn. The first automatic horn sounded from the Port Bickerton light October 20, 1948. Now on top of ensuring that the light itself remained lit, the keepers also had to start the engine for the fog horn. They were responsible, as well, for relaying the weather over a two-way radio. In 1962 the light was converted to electricity. Up until that time oil had been used.

## Fire at the Bickerton Light

One substantial area of concern associated with the timber



The third and current light at Port Bickerton.

Photo - Pam Harrison

buildings on lightstations was that of fire. In 1962 the Port Bickerton fog alarm building was destroyed by a fire. The fire started when the assistant lighthouse keeper tried to remove paint from the floor of the fog alarm building with a blow torch. It is believed that the torch ignited oil which2

had seeped through the floor, making the fire impossible to extinguish. The light keeper and his assistant removed the fog alarm engine, stove, and other minor pieces of equipment so the tanks, only were lost. The building itself was damaged beyond repair. The fire did not spread to the other buildings on the station because of the quick thinking of the keeper's wife. She went immediately to Bickerton by car and brought out a small pump and several men from the village. The men used the pump to hose the assistant's dwelling and also to contain the fire in the fog alarm building.

Soon after the fire, K.C.Curren, Superintendent of Lights, along with marine mechanic A.Shortt went to the Bickerton light to investigate the matter. The recommendation was made to provide light stations with a gas driven fire pump.

As a result of the visit of Curren and Shortt, a combined fog alarm building and light tower of concrete were constructed. This was the third light built at Bickerton, and it still stands today.

## Lightkeepers:

1901 - 1931 - Theodore O'Hara

1932 - 1937 - Calvin Kaiser

1937 - 1940 - Harvey Taylor

1940 - 1956 - Irvin Beiswanger

1956 - 1961 - Harold Beiswanger

1960 - 1977 - Fred Budge

1977 - 1982 - Lamont Lovitt

1983 - 1988 - Hector Lowe

1988 - De-staffed

Source: Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre. Edited by Kathy Brown.

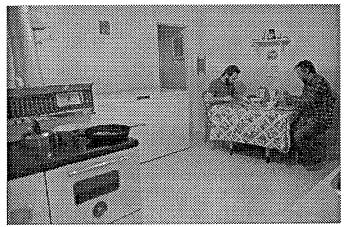
## WINTER ON THE LIGHTS

Chris Mills

It's the first watch of the day. It's February, and at four a.m. the tiny rock in the middle of the Bay of Fundy is battered by smashing seas and a relentless wind. The cold, held at bay in the centre of the house by an ancient Enterprise oil heater, blows under doors and through rattling windows. In the kitchen, a naked 150 watt lightbulb casts a harsh light on the white and aquamarine walls. On a roaring Kemac stove the kettle's boiling, perpetually, and the damper on the silver painted stove pipe swings as the wind roars up the flue. High above the roof of the house, the beam of light from the tower races by, penetrating the wind and dark. The back hallway and steps to the second floor are as cold as a deep freeze, and in the upstairs kitchen, another old stove growls ineffectively against the cold that seeps through the walls

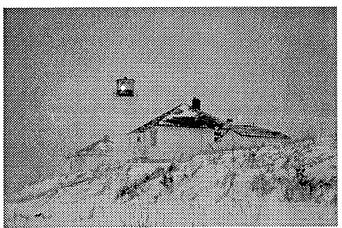
of the house. At the top of the old wooden tower the lantern windows are white with frost. A quick spray with a bottle of methyl hydrate clears the glass, so that the light may be seen more readily by anyone who might be on the water on such a morning. There is no point in even attempting to go out on the balcony. One hundred feet above sea level the wind is a force to be reckoned with, and it's best to stay inside and watch the seas that bury the landing below in cascades of white water.

Winter on the lights wasn't always as harsh as it was on Gannet Rock. On mainland Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, many stations enjoyed road access to local communities where keepers could pick up supplies and visit with friends and relatives. On the more isolated rock



The kitchen, Gannet Rock Lighthouse. Photo © Chris Mills

and island stations, though, winter imposed more restrictions on keepers and their families, and life ran at a different tempo than during the spring and summer. The usual fine weather tasks such as painting and grounds work were abandoned in favour of inside work- the daily engine checks, paperwork, hobbies, television. Winter on some lights, especially on the rock stations, was often a monotonous affair when bad weather and restrictive space led to boredom and restlessness. And yet winter brought many of its own delights, from the sight of huge swells born of storm-force winds, to incredible sunsets and friendly conversation around the oil stove. Perhaps one of the most special aspects of winter on the lights was the opportunity to savour alone the beauty of the natural environment surrounding offshore islands.

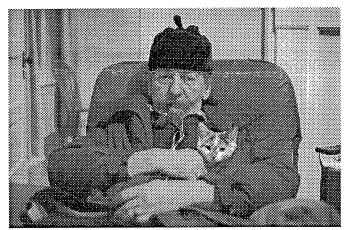


Cross Island in winter. Photo © Chris Mills

Although only seven miles off the town of Lunenburg, Cross Island was often a rough place in the winter. The station boat would normally be hauled up for the season, and the keepers and their families relied on one of the Coast Guard helicopters from Dartmouth to bring in groceries and supplies every few weeks. The lightstation is located on the south end of the island, and it was not uncommon for the road to the landing to be blocked with

six foot snowdrifts, while the tractor and cart stayed parked in the shed. In heavy winds, the inlets on the eastern side filled with deep, salty foam, and horizontally driven snow left red marks on the face of anyone walking any distance outside. After a tough slog through knee deep snow it was warm and comfortable inside the two keepers' bungalows standing out on the point, hunkered against the buffeting winds. And between equipment checks and radio scheds there was often time to sit down with a good book as the fog horn sent it's raspy blasts into the blowing snow.

On Gannet Rock, the scrap of rock nine miles south of Grand Manan, conditions were often spectacular, if a little



Keeper Peter Coletti, Gannet Rock, wearing his winter jacket indoors and keeping the cat warm. Photo © Chris Mills

uncomfortable. The house attached to the 167 year old wooden tower was new by comparison, but it was built of concrete, not insulated, and it didn't have central heating. This meant that when a stiff north east breeze created a wind chill of say, -40 degrees, the warmest place to be was on top of one of the three stoves. Supper was usually a "social" time- some teams of keepers took turns with cooking duties, creating boiled and fried culinary masterpieces on alternate nights. Later, while the radio crackled with fishermens' chatter and requests for weather conditions on the rock, many companionable hours were spent near the old Enterprise pot-burner in the livingroom.

With no heater closer than the spare kitchen (it had an old coal-wood-oil combination stove near the leaky windows), the upstairs bathroom was not a preferred place to visit in the mornings. Outside the window, tendrils of Arctic Sea Smoke or "vapour" hung dramatically above the sea while inside, a temperature of 40 degrees Fahrenheit left toilet seats icy, uninviting, and only very briefly visited. One winter the sewer line froze, necessitating creative use of a Honda fire pump and 50 feet of fire hose. And then there was "Gannet Rock double glazing"- the layer of frost on top of the single layer of glass in the old windows. Without being able to see outside, the house became even more confining, although on sunny days, the frost patterns on the kitchen windows were intricate and beautiful to

view.

Yarmouth County's Seal Island lightstation offered a little more freedom to roam than Gannet Rock, and there were even storm windows on the house. The keepers lived in one half of a spacious, oil furnace-heated duplex, with electric stove, television and VCR, a full deep freeze, and enough space to really stretch the legs. During the winter months there was ample opportunity to walk the shorelines of the thousand acre island, shorelines which had once seen shipwrecked mariners freeze to death with sickening regularity. When families finally settled on the island in 1823, there was a new security for those who were cast ashore on winter's inhospitable beaches and bluffs, and by 1831 the newly erected lighthouse was in full operation. Shipwrecks declined over the years, and in the last days of Seal's keepers, winter beach patrols were not really necessary, although the lightkeepers always kept an eye on fishing boats in the area.

Before the advent of electricity, winter meant that keepers had to lay in enough supplies for the season-flour, sugar, tea, canned and bottled meats, fruit and berries. By the 1950s, even remote island stations had their own generators, making it possible for food to be kept in

LIGHTSHOP

Profits go to support your society!

Order from: Kathy Brown, 24 Armshore Drive, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3N 1M5. Please make cheques payable to the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society.

NSLPS Membership Pins: \$5.00 + \$1.00 shipping.

**Pewter Keychain, Sambro Lighthouse:** \$11.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

Art Print, The Work Crew on Sambro Island:  $7 \times 10 \frac{1}{2}$  print by Maurice Bernard, ready to frame \$29.00, including postage.

freezers and refrigerators. Regular visits from supply ships and helicopters made food delivery almost regular, although storms and reduced visibility often meant that scheduled supply runs were postponed. Weather delays were expected as part of lighthouse life, and many keepers stoically endured the disappointment of a late mail or grocery delivery. Tobacco shortages were another matter, often leading to tense moments for smoking and non-smoking shift partners alike.

Lightstations were special places from which keepers enjoyed (and sometimes endured) the vagaries of winter. The comforting isolation imposed by gales and snowstorms could wear thin quickly, especially when equipment failures or medical emergencies occurred. Day after day of screaming winds and freezing spray made life monotonous and even hazardous at times, and yet at the end of the shift, there was the satisfaction that the light and horn were operating properly, and that the station was secure for the night. Today, as snow swirls through gaping doors and windows of abandoned houses and sheds of Nova Scotia's lightstations, the memories of winter's beauty remain, as do the visions of warmly lit houses under the sweeping beam of light from a tower wrapped in snowfall.

#### **NSLPS EXECUTIVE**

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