



THE Lightkeeper

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

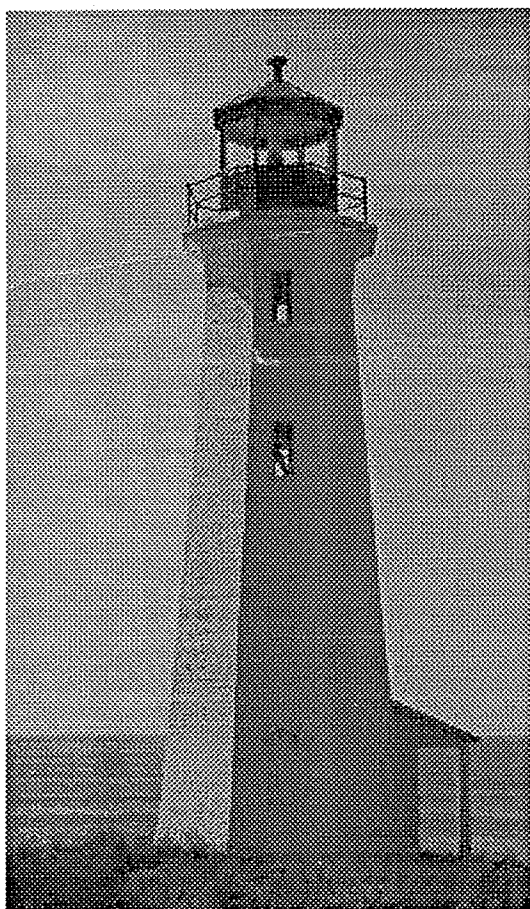
Vol. 5, No. 3, Sept., 1998

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 Kenfield, **AFFILIATES:** Age of Sail Heritage Centre, Canadian Coast Guard, Cape Sable Historical Society, Five Islands Lighthouse Society, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Mabou Harbour Authority, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Municipality of Queens Tourism & Development, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre, South Shore Tourism Association, Spencers Island Community Association, Walton Lighthouse Committee, Yarmouth County Tourist Association



Coffin Island Lighthouse, August, 1998.

Photo: ©Chris Mills

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WELCOME ABOARD!

The following new members recently joined NSLPS: South Shore Tourist Association, Elizabeth Pearo, Lillie Allen, Patricia Chalmers, Ross & Irene Codlin,, Christine & Gary Howlett, Joanne & Donald MacPherson, Douglas Robinson, William and J-M Baker,, Brent Westwood, Mark Lewis, Patricia Chalmers, Gary Howlett, Canadian Coast Guard, Jean Rushford, Douglas and Jeanne Robinson, Ross Codlin, Carl Lautenslager, Joan Czapalay, Gordon Earle MP, and Jane Earle, Martin Turpin, Eleanor Bennett.

LIGHTHOUSE TRIPS

McNabs Island

Sunday, Oct. 18, rain date Oct. 25

Leaves Cable Wharf in downtown Halifax at 10:00 AM, returns 4:00 PM.

Cost: NSLPS members: \$6.50.

Non-members: \$8.50.

Registration not required.

A joint trip with Friends of McNabs Island.

A chance to visit and go inside the Maugher's Beach lighthouse as well as take guided walks and explore this historic island. Bring your membership card, lunch and water.! Dress warmly.

Note: NSLPS volunteer needed to help at the lighthouse.

Volunteers travel free!

MEETINGS

At the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax

Wednesday, October 27: 7:00 PM, General Meeting

Wednesday November 25: 7:00 PM, General Meeting

7:45 PM, St. Paul Island: Graveyard of the Gulf

Terry Dwyer, NSLPS member, will give an illustrated talk about the lighthouses and the island off Cape Breton, where over 350 vessels have been wrecked.

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.

ALTERNATIVE USE

ALTERNATIVES

RACLAU Report - Dan Conlin

"Lighthouses as a navigational aid have a life span of no more than 20 years." *Larry Wilson, Canadian Coast Guard*

The Coast Guard's Regional Advisory Council on Lighthouse Alternative Use (RACLAU) last met on July 8. It was a stimulating, although at times worrisome meeting. Larry Wilson explained that of the 81 major lighthouse sites, 32 can be expected to become surplus in the next five years and the remainder in the next 15 to 20 years. In the meantime the Coast Guard struggles with a maintenance budget that is inadequate to maintain them and some sites are deteriorating rapidly. While the Coast Guard's desire to promote alternative use has faced some roadblocks (see last newsletter), some new options were discussed.

The most interesting is a device based on a Treasury Board policy called "96-1", originally designed for disposing of fish hatcheries. It allows a group to take ownership of Fisheries and Oceans property if they successfully operate it to government standards for five years. The five year operation is considered payment. This gets around the full market value requirement, which could bankrupt many community groups interested in lighthouses. One catch - "96-1" has to be advertised for 30 days and anyone, including commercial and real estate interests could be attracted. Larry was confident that historical, access and environmental criteria that RACLAU has developed for alternate use could be built into the process. It was my opinion, speaking for NSLPS, that this may be a helpful short term solution as the five year period at least gives a transition time for a community group to see if they can succeed with a site, while it still remains publicly owned. There will still be a loss of public ownership after five years.

Another approach Larry Wilson advocates is a non-profit lighthouse agency, that would take over a block of perhaps 40 lighthouses and administer alternate uses for them, along the Maine Lights model. NSLPS has expressed concern over this privatized approach in the past as well as doubts about where the non profit resources would come from in this region for such large scale heritage property management, but the approach may have some merit and could co-exist with our preference - A Lighthouse Preservation Act.

Both approaches will be discussed in workshops at the Beacon Conference in Moncton November 12 & 13. The committee expressed consensus that given the present threat, a "multi-tool" approach is needed for lighthouse preservation at the moment, leaving open a

diversity of roads to be applied to individual situations (leases, licenses, 96-1, an agency, possible legislation etc).

The possible demolition of Coffin Island was discussed. (See P.). The Coast Guard sees demolition as a safety necessity due to unstoppable erosion but has offered to preserve the lantern. I expressed appreciation of the preservation gesture but requested that all possible co-operation be given to any local rescue effort for the tower itself.

Joe Murphy of the Coast Guard reported on three leases signed with community groups who have taken over some well known harbour lights this summer: Neils Harbour, Cape Breton (as an ice cream stand by the local fire department) and Wood Island, P.E.I. (as a museum, gift shop and golf shop by a regional development corp.) and Mabou Harbour, Cape Breton (as museum by the local harbour authority).

BEACON CONFERENCE

9:00 am November 12 to 3:30 PM November 13

Holiday Inn Express, Moncton NB

This third annual conference continues the consultation process about the Canadian Coast Guard's plan to develop alternative uses for lighthouses in the Maritimes. You will hear alternative use success stories, learn new ideas, and have input into the Coast Guard's plans. It's a great chance to meet others with like interests! And, there is a special tour to Cape Enrage NB Lighthouse on the Saturday.

We'd like a big turnout from NSLPS because we're on the program!

Conference fee is \$60.00. Stay at the Inn, or elsewhere. Kathy Brown (902) 479-3115 has registration forms. Several cars will be leaving from Halifax, for those who wish to share gas costs. There may also be a chance for shared accommodation. Contact Kathy!

HELP! HELP

We have some opportunities for members to help NSLPS. All of the following positions will be fun and will help the cause of preserving lighthouses:

We need a coordinator for trips and programmes.

This person will be on the Board as a Director and will make sure things run smoothly. We have contacts and ideas, you help the events take place!

We need **researchers** to delve into records at the Maritime Museum, the Archives, and the Coast Guard base, to provide background for the *Lightkeeper*, the Website and our files. You can do oral history through interviews, too.

Contact Jim Guptill, Tel. (902) 876-0724, E-mail jim.guptill@ns.sympatico.ca if you are interested.

COFFIN ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

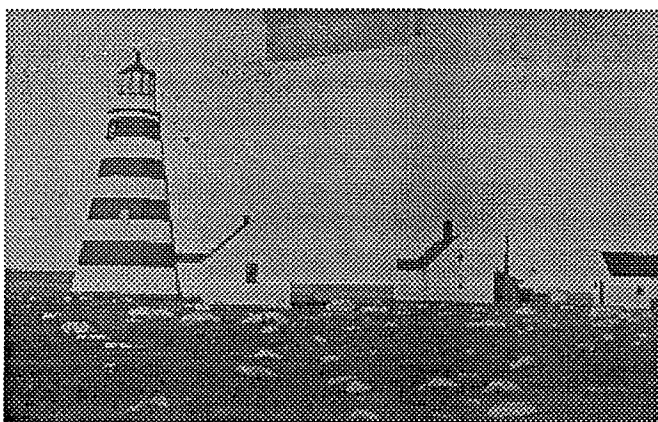
Dan Conlin

On June 26, 1811, Simeon Perkins, a 75-year-old town official and diarist from Liverpool, Nova Scotia, recorded a pleasant trip to inspect the lighthouse being built on the island at the entrance to Liverpool Bay.

"they have dug for the foundation ... there is a kind of Moss & turf on the surface then about two feet deep comes to a hard pan ... which I think will be a good bottom to Build the Foundation upon - it is about 90 feet from the Sea Wall ... at present the distance is very well but there may be Some danger (as the wood is Cut away) of the Sea wearing away the Land in time."

Prophetic words! A hundred and eighty seven years later the successor to the lighthouse that Perkins help found, the fifth oldest lighthouse site in all of Nova Scotia, is on the edge of succumbing to the sea which has eroded up to it and around it.

A month after his visit, Perkins returned to lay the first stone of the foundation. Under the hands of carpenter James Leslie from Shelburne, a wooden tower rose fifty eight feet from the stone foundation. The Nova Scotia



The first Coffin Island Lighthouse and keeper's dwelling circa 1906. Photo: *NS Archives, D.O.T. Lighthouse Collection., No 151.*

House of Assembly granted 500 pounds to build the tower and a dwelling for the keeper and a year later contributed another 500 pounds for equipment, lantern and railing. While provincially funded, the light was locally planned and supervised by a four man commission from Liverpool.

Liverpool in this period was the second most active port in Nova Scotia and enjoying a trade boom thanks to the Embargo Acts which channelled a large amount of US commerce through Nova Scotian ports. An impressive achievement for a growing community, the lighthouse was the only beacon between Sambro at Halifax, and Cape Roseway at Shelburne, which along with the light at Brier Island, made up all the lights in the province (aside from the ruins of the old French lighthouse at Louisbourg, Canada's first).

The lighthouse stood on the south end of the mile-long island, itself only a mile from the nearest mainland village at Beach Meadows. At the north end of the island, a small seasonal fishing harbour stood, and still stands, connected to the light by a road cut through the woods. Known as Bear Island in Perkin's time, it became known as Coffin Island by the 1817s after Peleg Coffin, one of the founding settlers in Liverpool and a large landowner on the island.

It is unclear who was the first keeper until James McLeod's name appears in a petition for unpaid wages in early 1817. Many keepers and their families followed, most from Queens County, and a large number, such as various members of the Wentzell family, were from Beach Meadows, the nearest village on the mainland. Keeper Thomas Eaton's life ended tragically on Oct. 7, 1871 when he drowned, while sailing into Liverpool for supplies. His wife kept the light for the rest of the year until she had to leave for the official replacement keeper.

The first tower stood for over a century. It acquired four, red, horizontal "barber pole" stripes in 1841 and a replacement lantern in 1873. Worries about erosion from the sea led to the introduction of protective wooden cribwork in 1876 which had to be constantly rebuilt in the decades that followed. A different threat destroyed the original tower on June 19, 1913, when lightning ignited a massive fire that also destroyed the keeper's house. A temporary tower served until October 1914 when a new 54 foot white octagonal concrete tower was completed along with a square hip-roofed dwelling for the keeper. The keeper's house did not survive automation in 1962 but the tower still stands. Unfortunately, the sea, 90 feet away in Perkins time, is washing at the base of the 1914 tower. 1/8 of the base is undermined. The Canadian Coast Guard now plans to replace the light with a buoy and has proposed demolishing the tower as a safety hazard. The Coffin Island Lighthouse Heritage Society, which was formed at a public meeting this summer, has won a one year reprieve on demolition, to give time to find a way to save the tower and protect its site.



The second lighthouse and keeper's dwelling in 1933. Photo: *NS Archives, DOT Lighthouse Collection, No. 150*

Keepers of the Coffin Island Lighthouse:

1812-1814 unknown
1815-1817 James McLeod
1817-J. Bays
1818-1821 unknown
1821-1856 S. Sellon
1857-1863 John McLeod
1863-1871-Thomas Eaton, drowned Oct. 7, 1871
1871-William Firth
1872-John Eaton
1872-1880 Charles W. Firth
1880-1909 Charles M. Firth
1909-1932 James Edward Wentzell
1932-1946 Arthur William Gates
1946-1950 Lester Kingsley Leaman
1950-1951 Clyde H. Fralic
1951-1959 Russell Theodore McKinnon
1959 Wallace Brenton Wentzell
1959-1961 Harry St Clare Vanbuskirk
1961-1962 Wallace Brenton Wentzell
1962-Made Unwatched

Sources: List of Lights 1873-1992; Sessional papers: Dept of Marine Annual Reports 1870-1930; Blunt's Pilot 1827, 1837, 1847; Belcher's Farmer's Almanac 1854; NS House of Assembly 1857; Nova Scotia Archives lightkeeper personnel records Reels 13173-13174.

Latest Preservation Plans

Sara Napier



The second lighthouse at Coffin Island, now on the edge of the bank, August, 1998.

Photo: © Chris Mills

The Coast Guard has agreed not to turn off the light and not to replace it (navigationally) with a lit buoy until Spring 1999 (as per the request of the Coffin Island Society). And, the Coast Guard has agreed to commit funds towards saving the lighthouse. The committee is currently working on a plan to lay a new foundation on the island (further inland) and move the existing light to that site. The Coast Guard is aware and supportive of the Society's plan to section the lighthouse tower and move it piece by piece onto the new foundation.

The society is also trying to get funds and support for a feasibility study to be completed on the development of a park on part of the island. A boat trip is scheduled for October 10 to visit the site with potential partners (funding, in-kind or support...) such as the Municipality,

Bowater Mersey, etc. and other people that are working on the relocation plan such as a draftsman, contractor, etc. The society is proceeding with a local fund raising and awareness campaign as well. Membership numbers are increasing and the society is taking every opportunity to raise awareness and operating funds through membership drives.

James McLeod: Coffin Island's First Recorded Lightkeeper

Dan Conlin

A bold and talented man of many adventures was the first recorded keeper of the Coffin Island light. Born in Liverpool in 1772, McLeod was a carpenter and mariner who commanded fishing schooners and trading brigantines, using Coffin Island to dry and pack his fish. Not always successful in hard economic times, McLeod had to briefly flee a harsh creditor in 1805. However he served his community as constable and militia sergeant and in wartime went privateering, aboard the large Liverpool privateer ships such as the *Duke of Kent* and the *Charles Mary Wentworth*. While McLeod was serving as prizemaster aboard the *Wentworth* in 1800, a British frigate HMS *La Unity* impressed (forcibly recruited) eight of *Wentworth's* crew, including McLeod. Impressment was often a death sentence thanks to the harsh conditions of battle, accident and disease aboard Royal Navy ships. McLeod soon made his escape, jumping overboard on the coast of Venezuela, apparently judging his chances on the enemy held coastline as better than the odds in the navy. According to Liverpool folklore the frigate's commander was so outraged by this act of defiance that he vowed to catch McLeod and "hang him like a rabbit" for desertion, to which McLeod replied, "To make rabbit pie, you must catch the rabbit" as he successfully eluded the Royal Navy, eventually working his way back to Liverpool.

McLeod was present during the building of the Coffin Island lighthouse, where Perkins noted his talent in cooking fish chowder. He was at some point appointed keeper of Coffin Island where he built up the rough trail to the light into a decent road. A man known for his ingenuity in creating tools and improvised medical devices, McLeod is credited by some Liverpool sources as the designer of the revolving light mechanism for the Coffin Island light, a very early appearance of this technology on the Canadian coasts.



Coffin Island lighthouse in the 1980's showing the cribbing.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Cape Forchu

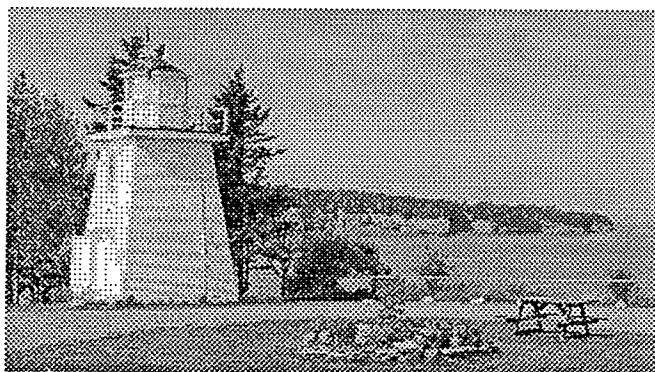
Cape Forchu enjoyed another spectacular summer season this year. The expanded museum and improved signage helped ensure that visitors' experience at the light was very enjoyable. By September, 13,000 visitors had signed the guest book, and about 40,000 people had visited. The lighthouse, the view and the setting combine to ensure that wherever the visitors are from, they are delighted with what they find at Cape Forchu. The new ferry, the "Cat", brought about an increase in visitors to the Yarmouth area as well.

A new septic system is being installed on site, beginning in October. This will ensure improved facilities are available for the 1999 summer season.

The Cape Forchu site will be open until October 24 this year. The closing celebration will include a tea in the afternoon. For further information, please contact Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society at (902) 742-5724.

Walton

Approximately 5,000 people visited Walton lighthouse this year, from all parts of Canada, and many from the United States and Europe. A guide was on site during June and July, who was able to provide excellent interpretation of the site. Visitors were able to enjoy the beautiful view of Minas Basin and Cape Blomidon from a new gazebo built on the grounds. In addition to the historic lighthouse and harbour, you may be able to see eagles, gypsum ships and some of the highest tides in the world.



Walton Lighthouse. Photo: *Reginald Clark*.

The lighthouse is open to the public from 8 AM until 7:30 PM daily until November 15th. The fall is a great time of year to visit, as the fall colours really add to the scenic beauty of the area.

Fort Point

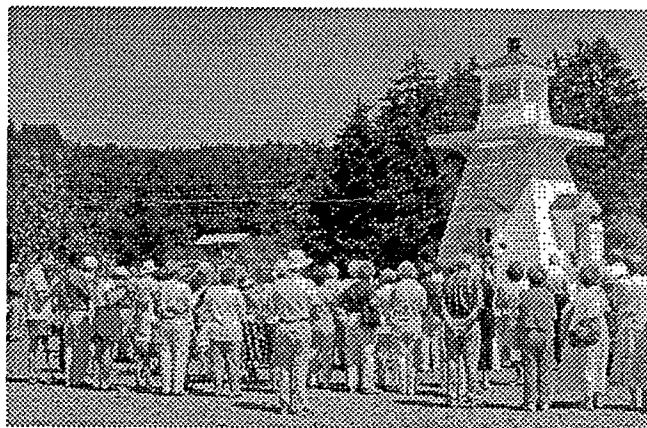
This season to date, Fort Point Lighthouse Park has welcomed 12,000 visitors! It is remarkable to see that according to our statistics, visitors hail from every state in the USA, every province in Canada, the territories, and several countries in Europe, Asia and the South Pacific. The 1855 Lighthouse celebrated its' first year anniversary

as an interpretive centre on September 13, 1998. Festivities included an encampment by the Kings Orange Rangers, displays and "work-in-progress" by the artists of the Lighthouse Gift Shop and a picnic celebration. The Lighthouse will be open until mid-October. For information call, 1-800-655-5741 or e-mail queens@auracom.com.

Port Greville



The Port Greville Lighthouse is back home! In June it was sawn in half again and transported by truck from the Coast Guard College at Sydney over hill and dale to the Age of Sail Museum, Port Greville. There, it was put back together, repaired and painted. A good crowd attended the opening in July.



Port Greville Lighthouse Opening.

Photos: *Tony Thompson*

FEDERAL LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION ACT UPDATE

Chris Mills

During the summer months The Lighthouse Protection Act Committee (Dan Conlin, David Curry, Chris Mills) met three times to discuss goals and strategies for the preservation and protection of Canadian Lighthouses. "The committee drafted an overview of proposed contents of a lighthouse

protection act, outlining the significance of lighthouses (navigationally, culturally, historically, educationally, etc.) and the need for an umbrella act to protect structures and sites that are

presently threatened by the federal government's divestiture of surplus lightstation buildings and property.

Lighthouse Legislation, cont'd

On September 11, committee members met with Heritage Canada's Doug Franklin and Betty Pacey. Doug Franklin was instrumental in developing the *Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act* which protects more than 250 heritage railway stations across Canada. Mr. Franklin was able to provide useful information about the political processes leading to the passing of protection acts and has agreed to assist the NSLPS in working toward a national lighthouse protection act. Committee members will write an article about the state of lighthouses in the Maritimes, for the Heritage Canada newsletter, and begin a vigorous letter-writing campaign to solicit the support of politicians. An information package giving an overview of the status of Maritimes and Canadian lighthouses will be enclosed with the letters. Halifax-Atlantic MP Gordon Earle has already expressed interest in the lighthouse protection act issue. The Committee's fall activities will be updated in the next issue of *The Lightkeeper*. Interested members are urged to contact Dan, David or Chris (by calling (902) 424-6442 and asking for Dan Conlin).

LIGHTHOUSE RESEARCH TIPS

Kathy Brown

National Archives, Ottawa

There is a huge collection of photographs of lighthouses in Ottawa, taken by the departments of Marine, Public Works, Transport and the Coast Guard at various times. The collection goes back to the 1890's and earlier. It appears that in certain years, 1933 for instance, most if not all lighthouses were photographed. Only one of these collections has a finding aid: 1975-387. This is 6446 photos of Marine Aids going back to 19c. The aid is Finding Aid 008, Location 1133 02650003, two identical black books, listing photos in alphabetical order.

Here are some tips to make your visit to the Archives easier. The collections are mostly stored in Gatineau, Québec, so write the Researcher Services Division, National Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0N3, about 4 weeks before you intend to visit. You can also access them through their excellent website: www.archives.ca Click on "Other Research and Services." Through the website you can get their rules and regulations, and e-mail your request.

Tell them the date you will be coming and ask for lighthouses by name. Tell them you are interested in photographs. They will then be able to bring the albums that contain photos of that light to Ottawa. When you arrive at the Archives you register, which does not take very long and receive a Researchers Pass. Bring a pencil because you won't be allowed to use a pen to make notes. You'll be directed to the 3rd floor. Here you tell the archivist that you wrote ahead. You will be directed to

people who will bring the albums for you. Be prepared to take some time - you may be presented with a large number of boxes or books to look through and find the lighthouse that interests you.

Alternatively, if you are in Ottawa for several days, you can request to look at Finding Aid 008 for Collection 1975-387 and choose some photos to look at. Come back in a few days and look through the boxes to find the photos. If you are really nice, you can add to the NSLPS list of lights in this aid which stops at Green Island!

Slides and prints can be ordered. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery. These photographs are usually available with no reproduction limits, provided the National Archives is credited as the source.

The above seems cumbersome and time consuming, but finding one neat photo can give you that Eureka feeling that makes it all worthwhile. Last June, I found an image of Sambro Lighthouse which shows the whole station just before the raising of the height of the tower in 1906. I'm sure the whole room heard my gasp of delight!

Other collections of lighthouse photographs are: 1936-271, 1936-272, 1963-058, 1968-114, 1969-120, 1971-271, 1979-21, 1992-664.

NSLPS has a partial list of NS photos included in 1000 photocopies of lighthouse photos from various collections. The photocopies are housed in the Main Room on the 3rd Floor of the Archives. PA numbers in our list allow you to order the original photo. We also have a partial list of NS photos in the big collection 1975-387.

NOTE:

NSLPS owns a copy of the US Lighthouse Preservation Handbook. It can be consulted at the Maritime Museum. Contact Dan Conlin, (902) 424 6442.

BITS AND BYTES

Canadian Coast Guard's Top Lighthouses

Sambro Island - Nova Scotia - First because of age.

Isle Verte - Québec

Cove Island - Ontario

Point Amour - Labrador

Race Rocks - British Columbia

Cap des Rosiers - Québec

Estevan Point - British Columbia

Head Harbour - New Brunswick

For further information visit their Heritage Website: <http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/iala-aism/main.htm>

Neat Websites:

St Paul's Island: [www.geocities.com/Heartland/](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/6001/St_Paul_Page_listing.htm)

Estates: [6001/St_Paul_Page_listing.htm](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/6001/St_Paul_Page_listing.htm)

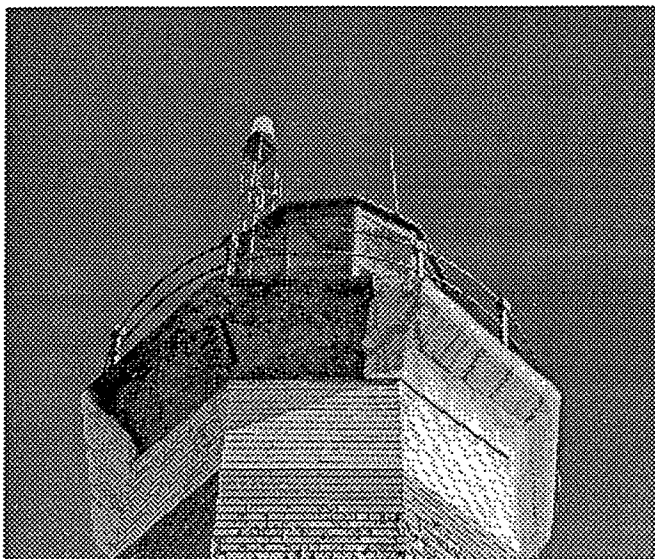
Henry Island: www.members.aol.com/w1bkr/

Lighthouses of BC: www.aspen.bc.ca/bclights/

Trinity House: www.trinityhouse.co.uk

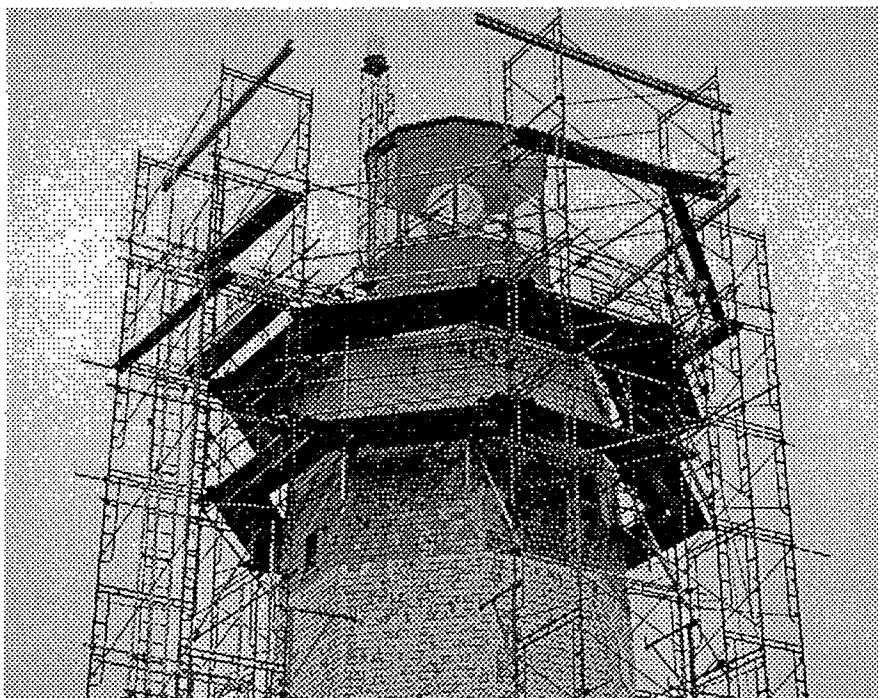
SAMBRO LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION

Kathy Brown



Damage to the lantern gallery, and the peeling paint on Sambro Lighthouse. Aug, 1998. Photo: *Kathy Brown*

For the past several years, Sambro, Canada's premier lighthouse, has looked like no-one cared. Great chunks of concrete have been falling from the underside of the lantern gallery of the oldest operating light in North America. In addition, the timber cladding that protects the mortar from the effects of the salt air is rotten and the paint is peeling everywhere. Panels of plywood cover test areas and the worst damage. Sambro was listed as a Federal Heritage Building in 1997, but it sure didn't look like one!



Scaffolding on Sambro Lighthouse. The gallery has been removed.
Photo: © *Chris Mills*

But, great plans were in the air. The Coast Guard had been hoping to repair the light for the past few years, and was encouraged in this by letters and personal contact from NSLPS. Finally the great day came in late August, and the scaffolding went up. The concrete is being removed back to good concrete, new reinforcing bar added, and the concrete replaced out to the original configuration. Then all the timber cladding will be removed, and replaced with pressure treated timber and two layers of cedar shingles. Finally the tower will be repainted to her red and white stripes. She won't have looked this good for decades. All this will cost about \$193,000, a great contribution by the Coast Guard to our lighthouse heritage.

Much was learned in the first month of work. The concrete problems arise from the 22 feet added to the lighthouse in 1906. The mix was not good, containing beach rock and unwashed sand. It begins to seem amazing that it held up for so long. No wonder most photos show cracking and patching of the flared base to the gallery. The sheathing was adrift as well as rotten, allowing water to enter and increase the damage. Finally, after the gallery was removed it was discovered that a 6" layer of concrete was simply poured with little preparation above the old rotten gallery to support the aluminum lantern installed in 1967. So the whole lantern has to be jacked up, so that new concrete can be inserted beneath it! The beams supporting the concrete are loose, but these will be re-inserted with wires to bond them to the new concrete in order to preserve the historic integrity of the structure. The whole job is being done to Federal Heritage Review Board specifications.

By September 24, 28 feet of the shingles and cladding had been removed exposing the concrete top of the tower and the granite stonework beneath it. The granite is in good shape but plastered with a lot of mortar. The new nailing strips will be embedded in the concrete and fastened into the original holes in the granite and mortar. The concrete will be raised using two concrete pumps, one at the bottom and one half way up the tower.

Everything is being ferried out to the light by helicopter. For the past 30 years this has proved to be the most efficient method to deliver equipment to the island. Those who have visited know that the narrow inlet which is the only place to tie up cannot accommodate vessels of any size.

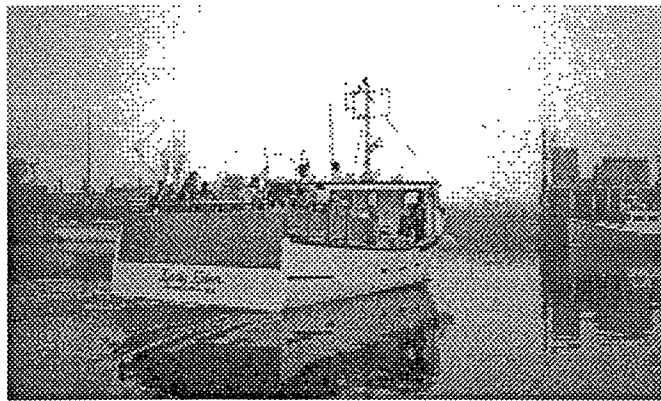
"OUT OF THE MIST" - A TRIP TO THE TUSKET ISLANDS

Tim Hall

On Saturday, July 20, the NSLPS sponsored a trip to the Tusket Islands, south of Yarmouth, NS. The trip afforded an excellent opportunity to get a glimpse back in time to a rapidly disappearing way of life, and to gain a deeper understanding of the unique communities that have fished from here for nearly two centuries. Fishermen and their families have used the Tusket Islands as a seasonal base for lobster fishing for generations. Their brightly colored "cottages", the rich tidal waters and natural beauty make an wonderful backdrop to view the lighthouses of the area.

Early morning saw a light breeze, and that dreaded southwest shore fog lying heavily across the Yarmouth area. The forecast however, was favorable, and the sky showed promise of brightening. Being an optimistic group, everyone arrived at the wharf in Pinkneys Point full of hope and enthusiasm. Stephen Saulnier, the owner of the cape island lobster boat "Lady Eden", and his wife Deborah were our hosts for the day. Stephen has fished these waters since he was a boy, and his expertise was invaluable, as we left the wharf in thick fog with visibility of about 100 feet.

Steaming south, the first thing we saw was the outline of Murder Island, just off the port side. Turning to the southeast we gradually saw the outline of Candlebox Island looming out of the fog. In those conditions, with the fog horn eerily sounding, it was



Lady Eden leaving Pinkney's Point. Photo: *Tim Hall*.

clear to everyone the essential role the lighthouse serves in this confined waterway. The original lighthouse on Candlebox Island was built in 1893, a traditional combined wooden tower and dwelling. The lightkeepers used a hand fog horn to answer vessels right up until the early 1960's, when the original tower was replaced by today's concrete tower and fog signal building.

Circling the island, you could still make out a well beaten path around the edge of the tiny island, where a

former keeper used to jog every day. With the fog still lying thick in the islands, we carefully made our way to Deep Cove Island. With boat secured alongside a deserted wharf, everyone took an opportunity to walk through the empty village. Other than sheep, rabbits, swallows and other birds, the tiny community was deserted. A sense of detachment from today's world pervaded, and we all allowed ourselves some reflective thoughts on this wonderful place. Upon leaving the island, we moored off the wharves for lunch.

The sun finally managed to burn the fog off to an extent where we could see for about one mile. In the warm midday sun, a wondrous sight greeted us as one by one, the islands came into view. Guillemots, cormorants, eiders, gulls and swallows guided us as we steamed south past several islands. Occasionally a solitary figure from one of the tiny communities would wave as we passed alongside their island cottage. Our next lighthouse destination was Pease Island, one of the southern islands.



Pease Island from a distance, with the duplex keeper's house on the right. Photo: *Tim Hall*.

Located at the entrance to Schooner Passage, this lighthouse was automated in 1992. The original combined wooden tower and dwelling has long since been replaced, and today's tower is of a modern circular fibreglass design, that while efficient, has none of the character of the original tower erected in 1879. The old duplex keeper's dwelling, in its neglected condition standing nearby was a haunting reminder of a lost tradition. Leaving Pease Island, we made our way to Big Tusket Island.

Here, local fishermen from Wedgeport bring tourists, and the wharves, cottages and lawns have been renovated giving the it a distinctly holiday atmosphere. No one was here on this day however, and we were free to wander walkways and wharves at our own pace. The fog, while not as thick, was still hanging in the distance, and we wondered if we would be able to get to our final destination, which was Green Island. Located a half hour steam offshore, Green Island is home to puffins and razorbills, as well as a lighthouse.

We decided to venture forth, and headed northwest towards Green Island. The fog was patchy, but at times visibility was down to less than half of a mile. The wind remained light however, and we had a pleasant trip out. We could tell we were approaching the island because of

the birds. Guillemots and puffins were excitedly gathering small fish in the waters surrounding Green Island, and taking all their beaks could carry back to their young.

The square concrete lighthouse was built in 1961. This was the first light on the island, but a fog signal has been in operation much longer. In 1919, an explosive fog cannon was put in operation here to warn mariners away from the isolated rock. The station was automated in 1981, and I can still remember the sight of one of the keeper's houses coming up Yarmouth Harbour on a barge. The other house still sits in quiet watch over the lonely, windswept outcropping. As we quietly encircled the island, with only the birds and several curious seals for company, the view of the lighthouse from the west with the sun shining through the fog and creating a glow from the tower, it seemed a fitting way to end our journey.

This was the first time the NSLPS had made this trip to the Tusket Islands. Judging from enthusiastic reaction of members and nonmembers who took part in this trip, it will likely become an annual event. While at times we may have wished for better visibility, the experience of being on the water on a calm, foggy day when sounds carry for miles is something that most non-mariners never experience. I would like to extend a special note of thanks to Deborah and Stephen Saulnier for their patience and thoughtfulness, which contributed to making this a most memorable trip for everyone.

BOOK REVIEW

No Port in a Storm, by Bob MacAlindin

146 pages, soft cover.

Whittles Publishing, Caithness, Scotland.

ISBN 1-870325-37-0

Kathy Brown

The lore of lightships is a rather neglected area but this book does much to redress the situation. Bob MacAlindin, a Scot who was manager of the North Carr Lightship Maritime Museum for three years, has produced a meticulously researched and well written account of lightships world wide.

I first made contact with Bob MacAlindin after he contacted me, through *The Lightkeeper*, about Canadian *Lightship 19 (Halifax)*. Fortunately, I was able to put him in touch with Lynne-Marie Richard, researcher at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic who had information. Our correspondence continued sporadically and I regretted that I couldn't provide him with information about other Canadian lightships. I was a thrill to receive a copy of his book last summer.

It's a great read, with oral and documentary history

intertwined in accounts of twenty lightships based in countries as far flung as the U.K., United States, France, Finland, Australia, and even China. The book contains a lot of information applicable to the lights as well, such as much information about lighting systems that were shared by both types of navigation aids.

The account of *LV Pharos*, moored off Bell Rock, Scotland, not only covers the ship and her work, but also the momentous building of the famous lighthouse designed by Robert Stevenson. The difficulties of using the lightship as accommodation for the lighthouse work crew are outlined here in Stevenson's own words. There is a wonderful account of a storm in 1807 which almost sank the *Pharos*. The book gives example after example of the fearsome effects of weather on these ships which have to withstand the crashing of seas while at anchor rather than rising and riding with them as a ship underway can do. In the case of the *Pharos*, it was eventually discovered after the storm had abated that the ship was adrift! They set sail and anchored at a position a mile from their former station, until they could grapple for their mooring.

The *Pharos* survived, but many other lightships were overcome by storms. The tragic wreck of *LV 90 (South Goodwin)* is a case in point. A severe storm in November 1954 drove the ship onto the very sands it guarded. She lay on her side with great seas crashing around her. A major life saving effort was mounted which eventually saved one crew member only, who had managed to cling to the ship's rail through the night. There are do many more tragic episodes told here: *LS 82 (Buffalo)*, sunk on Lake Michigan in the famous storm of November, 1912, Finnish *LV Storbrotten* sunk by a mine, *LV 38 (Gull, Brake)*, struck by the steamer *SS City of York*, and *LS 117 (Nantucket)*, probably the most famous tragedy in lightship history, run down by *RMS Olympic*, sister ship of the *Titanic*.

There are rescues as well, *Falls* lightship, in the English Channel, saved the 60 members of the Belgian watersports club *Les Pneumatiques*, caught in a storm between Ramsgate and Dunkirk with their families on board. (Read the book to find out why!) More than 100 survivors from the wreck of the steamship *Bear* off San Francisco crowded aboard *LS 83 (Blunts Reef)*, in June 1914, which probably saved their lives.

But the book features fog, storm and adversity for the most part. You may be wondering about *LV 19 (Halifax)*. Her story is perhaps the strangest of all. She was built in Scotland and destined for a position off Sambro, NS. On her voyage here from Scotland, she was wrecked on the ledges at Liscomb before she made it to Halifax. This book contains the most complete account of this tragedy.

No Port in a Storm, cont'd

There is so much here, I can't cover it all! The "Light Bites," short anecdotes, humorous accounts, and bizarre incidents, are a master stroke scattered in specially marked panels throughout the book.

Bob MacAlindin has done a masterful job of weaving all this diverse material together into a fascinating whole. You'll enjoy this book, learn a lot from it, and be glad to have it available to re-read and for reference. I don't think there's a better source about lightships - from equipment, to history, to life onboard.

Now, how can you get hold of a copy of this publication? The US contact address is Lighthouse Depot, PO Box 427, Wells, Maine 04090. Telephone 1-800-758-1444. The book costs \$17.95 US + \$4.95 US for delivery. There is a possibility of doing a group order through the Book Room in Halifax and getting a better price. Contact Kathy Brown (902) 479-3115.

AT THE LIGHT

Clyde N. Slauenwhite (1947)

There you'll find a tower gleaming,
Sending light across the sea,
O'er the bay that spreads before it,
In it's path must darkness flee.
On the barr wick guards the entrance
And withholds the Fundy's might,
You will see this silent statute,
Down in Parrsboro, at the Light.

Were you there in early morning,
Greet the sun o'er rising cliffs,
Merging from the blue-green waters,
Breaking through the morning mists,
Looking southward is old Blomidon,
Dim in distant's morning light,
Stretching out on yon horizon,
Down in Parrsboro, at the Light.

A bit of fishing in the morning
As swelling tide comes rolling in,
Never were such hordes of water
Seen to thicken and to thin.
As we view the gaping beaches,
Minutes before, a barren sight,
Filled now with surging breakers,
Down in Parrsboro, at the Light.

Spend the day along her beaches,
Clams and dulse, sea shells galore,
Colours splendid to our viewing,
Down along the Parrsboro Shore.
Nestled in the valley, sheltered
By the distant woody heights,
Nature puts forth all her beauty,
Down in Parrsboro, at the Light.

Evening comes along the skyline,
In the west a crimson veil
Spreads it's splendour in the heavens -
Sacred quietness prevails.
Behind the scattered lights are winking,
Breaking through the falling night,
Time has come for rest and slumber,
Down at Parrsboro, at the Light.

Tour your towns of Nova Scotia,
From western points to Cabot trail,
See your valleys, field and forests,
Journey on by road or Rail,
When at last you reach the Fundy,
You will find to your delight,
Never have you viewed more grandeur,
Than at Parrsboro, at the Light.

This poem was sent to us by Ken Belfountain.

Clyde Slauenwhite writes "This is not a recent poem. The old lighthouse was still standing on the sandbar at the entrance to the harbour in Parrsboro when I was inspired to pen those words Away back in the 1940's when I was courtin' (and later married) the lighthouse keeper's daughter!

Many thanks, Clyde and Ken.

The lighthouse in this poem has been replaced. The scenic splendour remains. Currently, there is at Parrsboro a skeleton tower on the wharf and a square, white, concrete lighthouse with a square tower on the sandbar.

MORE BITS AND BYTES

Public Broadcasting Lighthouse Programmes

Public Television in the United States is airing a series of six programmes about lighthouses. The first two were too early for this issue, but it will be worth watching the rest. You should find them listed on Mondays, at 9 PM.

Oct. 26 - South Atlantic

Nov. 9 - Great Lakes

Nov. 23 - California

Nov. 30 - Pacific Northwest

The top 10 lighthouses in Canada (by height):

1. Cap des Rosiers, Quebec, 112 feet
2. Point Amour, Newfoundland, 109 feet
3. Cape Sable, Nova Scotia, 101 feet
4. Estevan Point, B.C., 100 feet
5. Pointe-au-Pere, Québec, 97 feet
6. Nottawasaga Island, Ontario, 95 feet
7. Race Rocks, B.C., 93 feet
8. Bay Bulls, Newfoundland, 90 feet
8. Ponte des Monts, Quebec, 90 feet
10. Point Clarke, Ontario, 87 feet

EXECUTIVE NOTES

1998 Executive

Past-President: *Dan Conlin*

President: *Jim Guptill*

1st Vice-President: *Jeanne Thomas*

2nd Vice President: *Gerald Ferguson*

Secretary: *Valerie Myra*

Treasurer and Membership: *Tony Thompson*

Director Public Relations - *Bill Mont*

Director Trips and Programs - *Vacant*

Database and Records: *Tim Hall*

Lightkeeper: *Kathy Brown*

Website: *Kathy Brown, Peter MacCulloch*

Lighthouse Legislation Committee: *Dan Conlin, Chris Mills, David Currie*

Summer was busy with background work on the lighthouse preservation legislation and support for the Coffin Island Lighthouse Heritage Society taking precedence. Dan Conlin did research about the Coffin Island Lighthouse and attended the first public meeting. Kathy Brown and Jeanne Thomas attended the second. Kathy and Jeanne also met with Sara Napier, Queens County Tourism, about the proposed folder advertising light stations that are open to the public. This may also become the NSLPS membership folder.

Tips were organized to Chebucto Head, the Tusket Islands, George's Island, Seal Island, McNabs Island and Henry Island. With the lack of a Trips and Programmes Co-ordinator planning is divided amongst executive members and it greatly expands the work load.

NSLPS now has a short membership video which has been distributed to NS television stations. Watch for it and let us know if you see it!

Members of the executive did media interviews about Coffin Island lighthouse, and the restoration of Sambro Lighthouse. There was coverage in the Daily News, papers in Queens County, the Globe and Mail, and CBC TV.

The Sambro Island Fund is being used to defray the costs of special visits to the Island and the expenses of obtaining experts opinions and information about the lighthouse. NSLPS will receive a chip of granite for testing to see whether the stone was quarried on the island. There are also plans to have a marine historian for the 1700's period and an architect look at the building after all the cladding has been removed.

A First Aid Kit has been purchased to take on trips.

At the September meeting we discussed lighthouse inquiries which are taking up more and more time. We decided that in future, for inquirers from outside Nova Scotia, we will provide information from our database and general information answering "Frequently Asked questions," or the tourist package we have put together.

For further research we will provide names of people who do this work. *We will continue to provide research and support to our Affiliate Members.*

ERRATA

for the June issue of *The Lightkeeper*:

Seal Island Lighthouse is the oldest wooden lighthouse in Nova Scotia, not Canada. Gannet Rock is Canada's oldest timber lighthouse.

LIGHTSHOP

PROFITS GO TO SUPPORT YOUR SOCIETY!

Great stocking stuffers and gifts!

Order from: Jeanne Thomas, 262 Purcell's Cove Road, Halifax, NS, B3P 1C3.. Please make cheques payable to the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society.

NSLPS MEMBERSHIP PINS: \$5.00 + \$1.00 shipping.

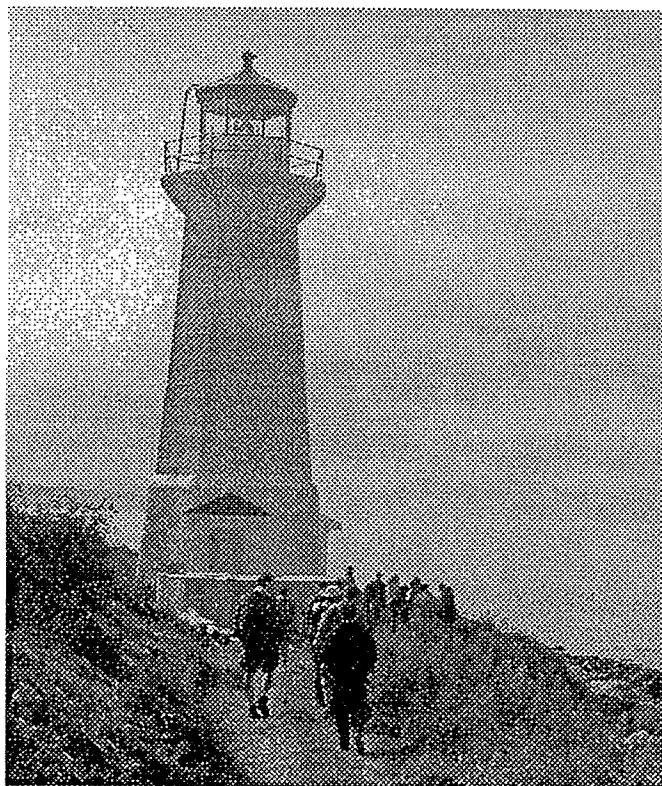
PEWTER KEYCHAIN, Sambro Lighthouse: \$11.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

BOOKS BY STANLEY SPICER:

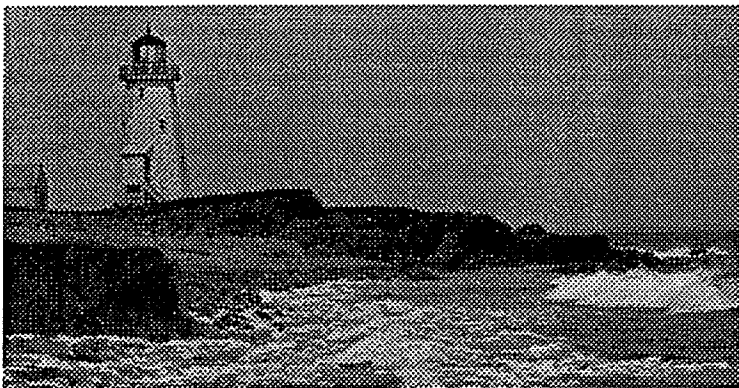
Captain from Fundy: The Life and Times of George Spicer of Spencers Island. \$7.00. + \$2.00 shipping
The Saga of the Mary Celeste, Ill Fated Mystery Ship. \$8.00 + \$2.00 shipping.

ART PRINT:

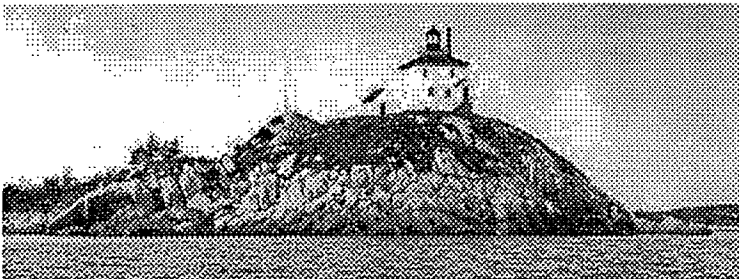
The Work Crew on Sambro Island: 7 x 10 ½ print by Maurice Bernard, ready to frame \$29.00, including postage.



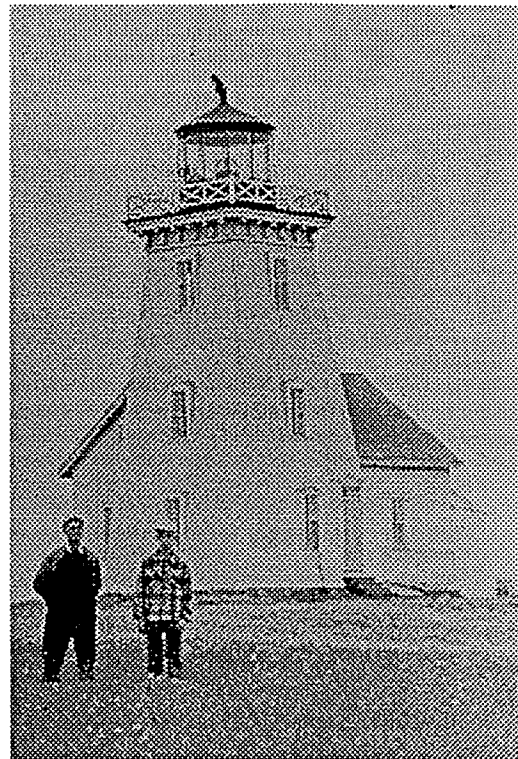
NSLPS George's Island Trip, 1998. Photo: *Tony Thompson*



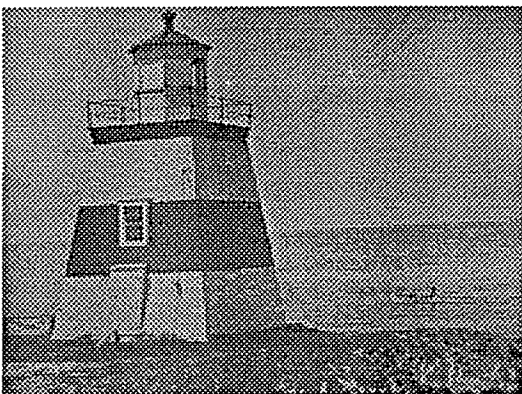
Devil's Island Lighthouse



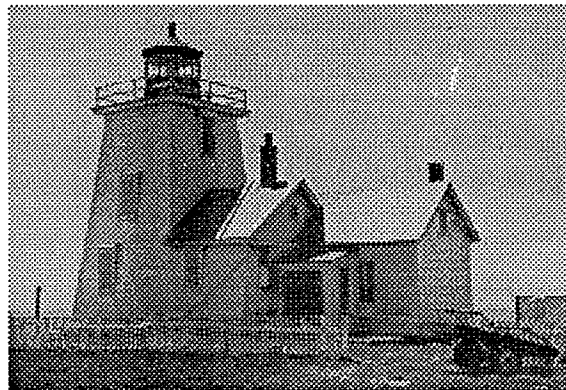
Jeddore Rock Lighthouse, now replaced.



Ile Haute Lighthouse, now replaced.



Margaretsville Lighthouse



Bon Portage Lighthouse, now replaced. Photo courtesy: *Sid and Betty June Smith*.

NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM - 1998

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____
 ADDRESS _____ POSTAL CODE _____
 E-MAIL _____

Family/Group names for extra card(s): _____

Can you help us in any way? Please give details.

Single - \$15.00	Institution/Group - \$30.00 (4 cards)	Patron - \$100.00
Family - \$20.00	Sustaining - \$50.00	Foreign - \$15.00 U.S. Funds, or equivalent.

New ☐ Renewal ☐ Membership Number: _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Please make cheques payable to Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Mail to: THE NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY
 c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax, B3J 1S3

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