



# THE Lightkeeper

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 6, No. 4, Dec., 1999

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.

WEBSITE: <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/educ/heritage/nslps>

LIGHTKEEPER EDITORS: Kathy Brown & Chris Mills

**PATRONS:** Carl R. Lautenslager, Roderick J. MacLennan, Scott Mullin, Jeanne Thomas, South Shore Tourism Association

**AFFILIATES:** Advocate District Development Association, Age of Sail Heritage Centre, Burntcoat Head Park, Cape Sable Historical Society, Central Nova Tourism Association, Chapel Hill Historical Society, Clyde River Inn, Five Islands Lighthouse Society, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Margaretsville Community Hall Society, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Medway Area Communities Association, Mosher Island Lighthouse Society, Municipality of Queens Tourism & Development, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre, Prince Andrew High School, Sandy Point Recreation Group, Seal Island Tours, South Shore Tourism Association, Tidal View Drive Association, Walton Area Development Committee, Walton Pub & Eatery



Louisbourg Lighthouse during the siege of 1759.

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## MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE for 2000

Slip mailed with this issue!  
THIS IS THE ONLY NOTICE  
YOU WILL RECEIVE.

## WELCOME ABOARD!

The following new members recently joined NSLPS:

✓ Albie Falkenham, ✓ Douglas Covey, ✓ Susan S. Pratt, ✓ Geraldine Earb, ✓ David Lepkowski, ✓ Peggy Reid, ✓ Edith Foulke, ✓ Iris, ✓ Earl & Susan Stevens, ✓ Dr. Cheryl Clement, ✓ Daniel & Deborah Norris, ✓ Kelly J. Greer, ✓ Allister MacDonald, ✓ Gerald & Anna Smith, ✓ Jeffrey Smith & Family, ✓ Donna Merriam, ✓ Dr. H.C. Wilson, ✓ Moira & Jack Cottam, ✓ John & Alma Major, ✓ James & Angela Sykes, ✓ Rob MacDonnell, ✓ Sue VanRooyen, ✓ Robert Cormier, ✓ Sylvia Fisher, ✓ Peter Hall, ✓ Janet Sebastien, ✓ Ian MacDonald.

## YES! This is the December Issue!

Many of you have been watching for your *Lightkeeper*. Several factors delayed this issue. One important article was late arriving from the author, and Kathy Brown had major computer problems - not Y2K, but a dying hard drive!

As a totally volunteer organization, we can't promise not to be so late again, but we'll sure try to do better for the March 2000 issue! In order to keep continuity in the yearly volumes, the date on the masthead is December, 1999.

## NSLPS MEETINGS & PROGRAMMES

are held monthly at the  
Maritime Museum of the Atlantic,  
1679 Lower Water St., Halifax

## WEDNESDAY Jan. 22:

### 7:00 PM, General Meeting

Following the regular business meeting special guest Pam Harrison, Interim President of the newly formed Atlantic Lighthouse Council will discuss the mandate of the Council, its plans and how NSLPS and the Council can co-operate in preserving our lighthouse heritage. For more about the Council see page 11.

Programmes contd.

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## WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 23

**7:00 PM: Business Meeting**

**7:45 PM: Harbour Pilots**

**Captain Andrew Rae**

**Atlantic Pilotage Authority**

Every day, just off Chebucto Head Lighthouse, harbour pilots climb aboard ships large and small to guide them safely in and out of Halifax Harbour. Learn about this vital, exciting and sometimes dangerous work in an illustrated talk.

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## WEDNESDAY MARCH 22

**7:00 PM: Business Meeting**

**7:45 PM: Saving Coffin Island**

**Lighthouse**

Last year, the Coffin Island lighthouse near Liverpool Nova Scotia, was about to fall into the ocean. Erosion and government cutbacks threatened one of the oldest lighthouse sites in Nova Scotia, home to a lighthouse since the War of 1812. The experts said it was impossible but the tower was saved. Hear the history of this lighthouse and how a small community has worked to save it.

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**Children's Workshop**

**BUILD A MODEL LIGHTHOUSE**

**Sat., Mar. 18, 10 am - 12 noon**

How do you put a 82 ft. tall lighthouse in your living room? In miniature of course. Make a model of North America's oldest operating lighthouse, Sambro Light. The distinctive red and white striped tower has been warning ships of the dangerous shoals at the outer reaches of Halifax Harbour since 1758. For those aged 6 - 12 years, younger children should bring a helper.

Fee: \$4. Call 424-7490 to register.

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## APRIL 26

**7:00 pm: NSLPS AGM**

**8:15 pm: Lighthouses of Newfoundland**

David J. Molloy, author of *First Landfall: Historic Lighthouses of Newfoundland and Labrador*

David will treat us to an illustrated talk about the beacons of the eastern-most province of Canada. Newfoundland boasts over 70 lighthouses including one with the largest lens in all of North America, at Cape Race.

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## LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

**Coffin Island**

The Coffin Island Lighthouse has been saved. A year ago it was undermined and many expected it to fall into the ocean. By the summer of 1999 water lapped the base of

the light. Massive efforts by the Coffin Island Lighthouse Heritage Society resulted in the installation of 150 feet of armour rock along the shore on each side of the light. In front, a wall of massive granite boulders was installed to prevent the ocean from reaching the base of the light. The total cost of the project was \$70,000.

**Lighthouse for Sale**

**On Scenic Bras D'or Channel!**

Bids closed December 21 on the 1912 pepper-pot lighthouse at Man of War Point, Cape Breton. This is the first surplus lighthouse in Nova Scotia to fall prey to the Treasury Board policy of treating unneeded lighthouses like old trucks and selling them to the highest bidder. With their engineers telling them that winter's ice might topple the light from its eroded platform at the water's edge, the Coast Guard speeded up disposal and called a public meeting. Some Local residents expected consultation but discovered at the meeting that the building would be sold. For a small community the requirements of the bid seemed impossible. Within three weeks a community group would have to:

- \* Post a \$10,000 damage deposit

- \* Post a \$1,000,000 bond

- \* Remove the building within 30 days

Any group that wants the light must build a road to it or negotiate access with the owner of the land that surrounds it.

The owner of the land surrounding the light, Art Bray has been interested in acquiring it for several years and has promised to maintain its heritage character close to its original site. However the lighthouse has no heritage protection as the federal government rejected any heritage classification for it in 1990 and it has been exempt from any other heritage designation.

**May 29 - June 2, 2000**

### *International Lighthouse Conference*

Hosted by the South Shore Tourism Association  
at White Point Lodge, near Liverpool NS

**The first conference of its kind in Canada!**

Four nights and three days with internationally recognized guest speakers, expert panels, trade show, keeper's evening, story telling, lighthouse tours and more.  
and

*Lights Along the Shore*

festival activities at lighthouses along the  
"Lighthouse Route"

**Watch your mailbox for registration package!**

## CANADA'S FIRST LIGHTKEEPER: Jean Grenard Dit Belair 1674-1744

Kenneth Donovan

Historian, Fortress Louisbourg

Lighthouses are imposing structures. Constructed of wood, stone, brick or concrete, they are meant to be durable, long lasting and can stand indefinitely, especially if protected. When you come upon a lighthouse, do you ever pause and wonder about the people who looked after the light and what their lives were like?

The lightkeepers and their families, much less permanent than the buildings they looked after, have usually long since passed on. Admittedly, they endure through the blood lines and memories of their children and grandchildren, but it is the rare person who can recall the lives of their ancestors beyond their grandparents.

This is the story of Jean Grenard dit Belair, the first lighthouse keeper in what is today Canada. His memory and that of his family have survived because of the documents that are preserved in the archives at the Fortress of Louisbourg, a Canadian National Historic Site.

A native of France, Jean Grenard was born in the town of Poitiers in 1674. Enlisting in the troops of France's marine service, Jean Grenard was sent to Placentia, Newfoundland, probably during the 1690s. Established as a French fishing settlement in 1662, Placentia had been provided with a garrison to protect the fishermen and to enable them to fish in nearby harbours.

By 1713, Jean Grenard and the other 160 permanent residents were forced to move to Louisbourg since France had lost the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13) and the French had to leave Newfoundland and come to Cape Breton.

Although uneducated, Jean Grenard had done well in the marine service, having risen in the ranks to become a sergeant. Two years after arriving in Louisbourg, Grenard married Jeanne Ozelet. Although he was 41 years and thus quite old for the time, Grenard must have been considered dependable and a good provider since he was a sergeant and carpenter as well. He would have no trouble finding work in the developing town of Louisbourg since there was a shortage of skilled labour during the 1720s and 1730s when the fortifications were being constructed.

Jeanne Ozelet was probably born in Placentia since both of her parents, as well as her grandmother and two of her sisters were witnesses to her wedding contract in



Plan of Louisbourg, 1742. The lighthouse was across the harbour from the town, on the dark point of land to the left. Archives du Génie, France.

Courtesy Fortress Louisbourg National Historic Site

Louisbourg on January 25, 1715. Like her husband, she was not able to sign her name. Jean Grenard remained a sergeant in the garrison and he and his new wife doubtless rented accommodation in the town.

In May 1722 Jean and Jeanne Grenard purchased a house lot on L'etang street in Block 20 of the town to the west of the convent of the Sisters of the Congregation. In the meantime, the Grenards had started to raise a family and by 1733 they had four children, two boys and two girls.

Grenard had remained a sergeant until 1723 but by 1726 he had retired from the service and was described as a carpenter in the 1726 census. Although 52 years old, he had a strong constitution and continued to provide for his young family. Their third child, a son, Nicolas, was born in July 1727 to be followed by another son Michel in December 1729.

Unfortunately, life could be brutal and short in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Jeanne Grenard died in January 1733, perhaps of smallpox, since there was an epidemic sweeping the town. Three weeks after the death of his mother, three year-old Michel died as well.

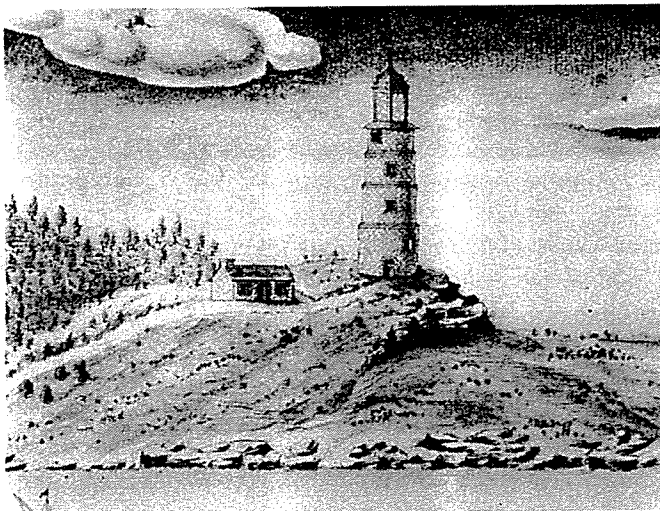
A widower with three young children, Jean Grenard had little choice but to remarry in an attempt to keep his family together. The only difficulty was finding a suitable

### First Lightkeeper, cont'd

mate since there were few available women in Cape Breton and Jean Grenard was getting on in years. By 1733 he was 59, at a time when life expectancy was approximately 45 years.

In spite of these apparent difficulties, Jean began to court Marie Fillant, a native of Normandy. They were married in May 1733, four months after Jeanne had died. It was typical for widowed spouses with young children to remarry quickly throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the people of Louisbourg were no exception. The widowed parents had little choice but to remarry as soon as possible in order to ensure that the children were looked after.

Ten months after they were married, Jean and Marie Grenard had a baby, who they named Pierre. Over the next five years they would have another three children, two girls and another boy. In order to support his growing family of seven children, Jean Grenard had to continue to work since there were no old age pensions or general



View of Louisbourg Lighthouse and keeper's house c. 1734.  
Archives du Génie, France.

*Courtesy Fortress Louisbourg National Historic Site*

government support of older people.

At sixty years of age, Jean Grenard was appointed keeper of the Louisbourg lighthouse. He would keep this position until his death 10 years later.

Louisbourg's first lighthouse had been started in 1730 but since it was such a massive structure- a rubblestone tower 70 feet high with a sophisticated lantern- the light did not begin operation until the April 1, 1734.

The Louisbourg lighthouse was the first built in Canada and the second in North America. The lighting apparatus was constructed in a bronze basin approximately one metre wide and 25 centimetres deep that was filled with cod liver oil. Inside the basin there were 31 copper tubes attached to a copper ring that were

kept afloat by a cork. Each tube or pipe had a cotton wick that absorbed the cod liver oil.

When all 31 wicks were lit the light could be seen up to 18 miles at sea under ideal conditions. This was the lantern that Grenard and at least one assistant had to keep in working order and supplied with fuel from the April 1 until December 31 each year.

There was a house built for the lightkeeper and Grenard doubtless stayed there during much of his employment. Grenard had a canoe and he could travel the one mile distance across the harbour throughout most of the year from his house within the walls of the town. (See the accompanying illustration showing the light keeper's house near the light house.) During high winds and rough seas, Grenard doubtless stayed in the lighthouse for a few days rather than walk the two hours around the harbour to his home.

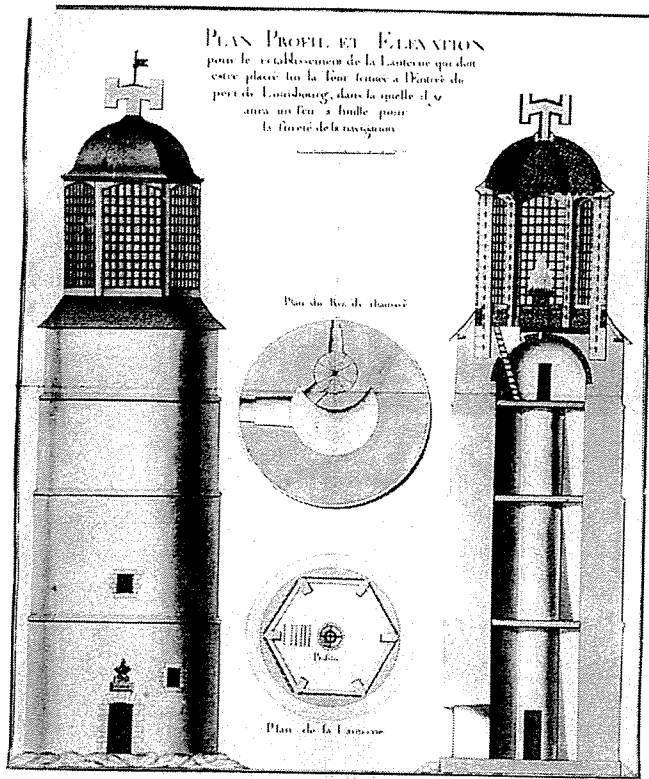
Grenard and his fellow lightkeeper were paid approximately 350 livres\* each per year, the equivalent of a fisherman's earnings during the summer and winter fishery. (A full-time servant was paid 50 livres per year during the 1730s.) The new lighthouse operated for only two years when the lantern was destroyed by fire on September 11, 1736.

Reconstruction of a new lantern began almost immediately with emphasis on making the light more fireproof. Using the same stone tower, some of the new safety features included a bigger cod oil basin so that the wicks could be spread further apart. No wood was used in the construction of the tower and a new brick roof was sheathed in lead. To ensure further protection against fire, the window frames were made of iron.

During the two years that the lantern was being reconstructed, a system of beacons was established along the coast to aid navigation. Jean Grenard likely continued to draw his salary operating these beacons since the fires had to be supplied with coal and wood. He certainly would have needed the salary to support his young and growing family.

In late 1744, for instance, Grenard bought a pair of Basque shoes for his son Nicholas who was living with him at the lighthouse. The shoes cost 5 livres. In December Grenard purchased a side of beef for his family at a cost of 55 livres. The beef was a supplement to the milk and the meat from the family's four goats and a ram kept in the back yard.

Grenard would not eat much of the purchased beef since he died on December 28, 1744 after a brief illness. At the time of his death, Jean Grenard was 70 years old and the head of a large, extended family of children and grandchildren in Louisbourg. He left a widow, Marie Fillant, and six surviving children – two from his first marriage and four from his second marriage. Jean Grenard's eldest daughter, Marie Jeanne, had married



Plan, profile and elevation of the second Louisbourg Lighthouse, 1737. Archives du Génie, France.

*Courtesy Fortress Louisbourg National Historic Site*

Philibert Pinault, a master mason for the king, in Louisbourg in 1734 and by 1745 she had five of her own children.

Jean Grenard's oldest son Nicholas was 18 years old at the time of his father's passing. The four children from the second marriage ranged in age from six to 11 years. Under French civil law an inventory was required of the estate of each person who died with heirs. Since the inventory was intended to protect the inheritance of the minors, an exact enumeration was made of all the goods and property and the appraisers set the value of the estate. After the inventory was complete, the estate could be divided (if the heirs agreed) with the surviving spouse receiving half and the children equally sharing the remaining half.

By outlining the number of rooms and describing their contents, the inventories provide information about the household of the deceased. Jean Grenard had probably started work about the age of 10 in Poitiers and he had lived in Newfoundland and Cape Breton for some 54 years, most of his adult life.

During that time his personal estate amounted to only 381 livres, exclusive of his house and land. Most of Grenard's possessions were well used and some were described as being half worn out. The assessors first entered the kitchen of the Grenard home and listed fireplace utensils such as two firedogs, a shovel, a

pothanger, two gridirons, two trivets, three iron hooks, two cooking pots and a copper cauldron. The family's dishes included 24 pounds of "old pewter". There were only two candlesticks in the house and a coffee pot made of copper.

Unfortunately, the assessors did not describe the individual rooms in the house but, judging by the few household furnishings, it was small. The family may have eaten in the kitchen. The dining furniture consisted of "a wretched table, six old wooden chairs and an old calico table cover," valued at only 4 livres 10 sols. There were also three "old chests", an "old buffet" and 10 worn out napkins. The bedrooms were also poorly furnished and included "a bed fitted with a bedsted and a feather mattress, a bolster, two woolen blankets and a hanging of blue serge" The bed, a four poster with a canopy that was typical of the period, was the most valuable item of furniture in the home.. The children slept on a feather mattress, valued at 25 livres, that was spread on the floor. There were nine "old bedsheets" for the family.

Jean Grenard, however, did have some prized possessions including an English watch with a silver case, accessed at 60 livres and a pair of silver shoe buckles and silver sleeve buttons valued at 9 livres 5 sols. He also had a pocket telescope, handy in his work as lightkeeper. The final item listed in the inventory, "was a little canoe on the shore near the tower," valued at 20 livres.

After the capture of Louisbourg in 1745 by New England and British forces, the Grenard family was deported to France. Marie Fillant returned to Louisbourg, eventually remarried, and continued to raise her family in the Grenard house in Block 20 of the town.

Nicolas Grenard returned to Louisbourg in 1749 and married Marie Perrigault, a native of Louisbourg. He became a fisherman and by 1754 he and his wife had two daughters. Marie Jeanne Grenard also came back to Louisbourg with her husband and five children. She eventually had 9 children in Louisbourg. Nicolas Grenard, his sister Marie Jeanne and their step mother Marie returned to Cape Breton because of the economic opportunities available and their fond memories of growing up and living in Louisbourg.

Although Jean Grenard's family had few material comforts, they had a loving and caring relationship. A member of the working poor, Jean Grenard made sacrifices in order to support his wife and children. In this regard, he was little different from hundreds of lightkeepers and their families who kept the lights along the coasts of Canada throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

\* The value of a livre in today's money is tricky. The purchasing power of a livre in the 18th century was as follows: a bottle of Bordeaux wine sold for one and one quarter livres; a cow cost 60 livres; one pair of shoes 3 livres; a horse 300 livres. I would say a livre was worth about \$20.00 Canadian.

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## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DEBATE KEEPING THE LIGHTS

*"New technology such as GPS has made lighthouses obsolete."* Greg Turner, an Oceans 11 teacher at Digby Regional High School, gave his class this statement last fall, asking them for a written response. A class debate followed. Here are some excerpts from the written responses representing the feelings of the class:

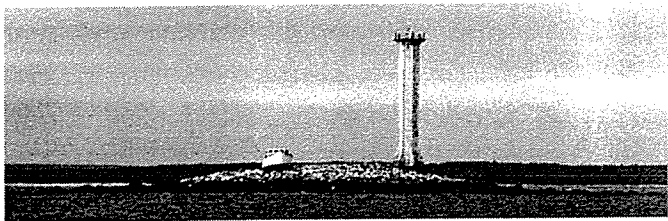
- It's a shame lighthouses aren't needed. I agree with the statement but I don't like it. Lighthouses are a part of our heritage, so even if we leave them, we shouldn't destroy them. If we no longer use them for navigation, we should use them for tourism and as a backup in case GPS ever breaks down.- I think we should have lighthouses because: they are a part of history; they are beautiful; not everyone has GPS; people think of lighthouses when they think of Nova Scotia.
- I think that lighthouses should still be put up in case the GPS breaks down unexpectedly.
- Lighthouses should be kept to remind us of the past.
- I agree they should tear lighthouses down because of the new computerized and advanced navigational equipment. Also, the government doesn't want to fund them and most people can't afford it themselves.
- I disagree. Lighthouses are great tourist attractions. One I was in has hotel suites and another was very old and when you climb all the way up you could see marshes on one side and the beach on the other and that was cool. Electronics can't always be relied on because satellites can break down (Y2K). Lighthouses are really great for bird watching.

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## LITTLE HOPE ISLAND – AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

*Tim Hall*

Little Hope Island is a tiny ledge located off of Port Joli, NS. A lighthouse was first established here in 1865. A small concrete tower has long since replaced the original combined tower and dwelling. Not only has the lighthouse diminished in stature, but the ledge today is very small compared with the original island. Part of the reason for this was the extensive reinforcement that was built around the tower.



Capt. Hubert Hall took this recent photo when passing

the island. As you can see, there is a small fishing boat abandoned on the island. A little searching found that it was named the "Lady Helen" and has been on the island for a couple of years. As the story goes, it had been sold from West Pubnico, and was being steamed to Tancook Island. Apparently its new owner fell asleep and the boat ran ashore on the island. The two men onboard had to be rescued by helicopter. The lighthouse and the fishing boat now serve as reminder to unwary mariners.



## KEEPING THE LIGHTS!

**Oct. 29 - 31, Digby, NS**

*Kathy Brown*

This first community sponsored BEACON Conference for lighthouse enthusiasts in the Atlantic Provinces was hosted by The Fiends of the Yarmouth Light (FYL). It was moved from Yarmouth, NS to Smith's Cove near Digby because of a about dispute at the Rodd Grand Hotel in Yarmouth. Congrats to the FYL for running an excellent event. Congrats to the enthusiastic participants, as well.

We spent an intense 2 days discussing issues surrounding the preservation of the lights.

### The Lights Are Not for Burning

David Curry talked about the campaign for a Lighthouse Preservation Act (LPA). He styled the federal attitude towards lighthouses as "state sponsored vandalism in the aid of asset reduction." The letters sent to all MP's about the need for a LPA stressed that lighthouses must remain in the public domain, they are a special type of property, they are in danger because of the move to divestiture, and they are important to tourism and economic development.

### Further Developments:

- office of Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage replied that she is committed to providing enhanced protection for all Federal Heritage Properties, including lighthouses
- Department of Fisheries and Parks Canada are looking

**Continued on page 10**



## Seal Island Memories

Maureen Penney

Maureen (Swim) Penney was born in Clark's Harbour in 1923. Her father, Reginald Swim, fished from the island during the fall and spring lobster season. Maureen spent almost a decade on the island with her parents in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Today she lives in Halifax.



Maureen(l) and Ruby Swim at their Seal Island home, late 1920s.  
Photo courtesy Maureen Penney

### First Trip

My first trip to Seal Island was the summer I was four years old. My vivid recollection of that summer was visiting the wreck that had struck the winter before on Scratch All, within sight of the houses at West Side. The vessel was the *Burpee L. Tucker*. I was too small to go aboard of her but a rope ladder hung over the side and all went up the rope. I had to sit on the bank. My Dad was fishing over there that summer and Mum went with him.



The "Hearty House," now called "The Cookhouse," in 1998.

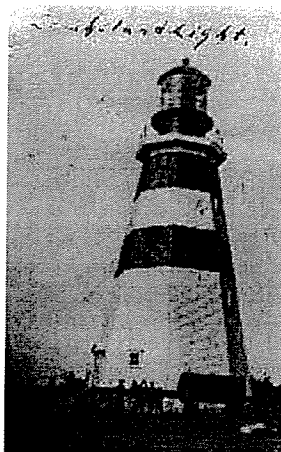
Photo: Chris Mills

There are other vivid pictures that remain with me. Next to our shack was a building vacant for many years and where we used to play was the old Hearty House where you people (on NSLPS Seal Island trips) had your meals

and slept when you visited there. It was made into a two family house in the years following the 1930s. Next to the Hearty House was another house called the Bears House. It was going into slow decay in 1927-1928.

There was a pretty girl who lived below us (the house now occupied by Ronnie Kenney's son Wade). Her name was Francena. She went with us one day to the light to get some fresh eggs. In those days, the pastures were mowed and a wire fence built all around the lighthouse station. Today it is all overgrown with high grass.

It was no problem to reach East Side from our house.



Seal Island light, 1937. Photo courtesy Maureen Penney

We had to walk over beach rocks to get around Brig Pond and with no problem reached the road going to the light. At the lighthouse, we could see the gate and all we could see were cows and the bulls so we climbed a tree.

After they got past we reached the gate and there before us was a beautiful clearing and a lovely old home. To the right was the Seal Island light. Behind the light there was a field with a fence to keep the horses.

Next, the two big collie dogs came running towards us but they called to them from the house and the dogs went back. On the other side of the lighthouse was another home of the wireless operator and his family.

The wireless station was down from the house close to the shore. We used to visit it often on our trips to the light.

We also visited Ms. Winnie Hamilton (wife of lightkeeper Ellsworth Hamilton and a descendent of the original settlers of Seal Island). No kinder soul ever lived than Ms. Winnie. She was there to make you feel welcome and important, and we had to go to her for our mail.

I have a story to tell about my life on Seal Island and how in this big city of Halifax a man (Douglas Snow from Barrington) bought the house next to ours. While chatting with him I found that he too had been on Seal



Reginald and Eunice Swim with island children, Seal Island.

Photo courtesy Maureen Penney

Island the night fishing boats were blown ashore. The fishermen had left them off in the cove and a bad storm came

up in the night and blew them ashore where an ice wall had formed. That month was March 1923, the year I was born.

### 1995 Trip to the Island

I visited Seal Island in 1995 for the first time in about 50 years. My sister and I enjoyed our visit but so much had disappeared. When we lived there it was a thriving community with a number of fishing shacks scattered all over the west side.

## Seal Island cont'd

There were also several houses at the North Home. The last remaining one was built by Walter Nickerson who later sold it to my father. I think he and Mom and their hired man occupied it last. Now the bird watchers have it.

During my visit in 1995, Ronnie Kenney took my sister and I into the Hearty House. It has been made into a large room where you people sat. They had a dishwasher, fridge and TV. It was hard to believe.

Our house that set next to it was long gone. We stood there on that spot while we talked with Ronnie. We had gone to school together and we reminisced about the old days. We had to go to the east side to Miss Daisy's—she was our teacher. My sister Ruby was also teacher on the island.

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## FEDERAL LIGHTHOUSE HERITAGE STANDARDS

Most lighthouses are federally owned so they are exempt from provincial or municipal heritage protection. Only federal heritage rules apply.

There are almost 300 lighthouses in the Maritime Provinces. Only four have full heritage protection:

Nova Scotia: Sambro Island, and Cape Sable.

New Brunswick: Head Harbour

P.E.I.: Point Prim

Newfoundland: Point Amour

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## THE CANADIAN LIGHTHOUSE DOOMSDAY LIST

We've decided to start printing a list of Canadian lighthouses or structures on light stations that are in danger of lightstation structures in danger of demolition, collapse, serious neglect, or decayed as well as in danger of disposal for non public or non heritage uses. The worse the danger or decay, the higher on the list.

Here's an initial list. Please send additions!

Thanks to the US publication *Lighthouse Digest* for this idea!

1. Fish Fluke Point, NB
2. Point Abino, ON
3. Seal Island, NS, 1831 lighthouse, barn and wireless operator's dwelling
4. Port Medway, NS
5. St. Paul's Island, NS, wireless operators's dwelling
6. Shampers Bluff, NB
7. Sambro Island, NS, dwellings
8. Cape Roseway, NS, dwellings and old fog alarm building
9. Quuensport (Rook Island), NS
10. Liscomb Island, NS, houses
11. Country Island, NS, keeper's houses

12. Margaree Island, NS, defunct lighthouse and dwelling.
13. Mosher's Island, NS, keeper's houses
14. Devil's Island, NS, rare hip-gable roofed dwelling
15. Georges Island, NS, keeper's dwelling
16. Man of War Point, Cape Breton, NS

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## GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTION AT HISTORIC LIGHTHOUSE SITES

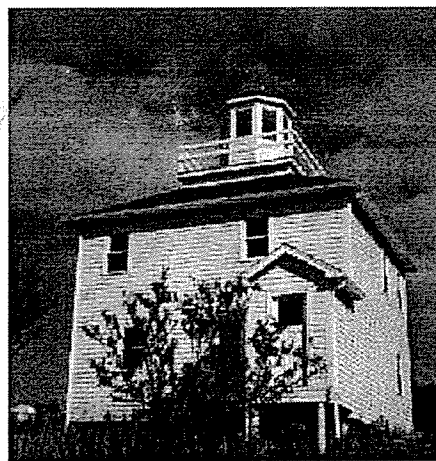
### *Replica and New Construction*

Passed at Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society meeting at the BEACON Lighthouse Conference, October 29, 1999

### Introduction

Under existing laws, there are almost no heritage standards for Canadian lighthouses. As decommissioning and commercial pressure increases, their historic value and the value of their natural environment will be threatened. Until new federal rules, such as a Lighthouse Protection Act, are introduced, these guidelines should be considered.

### Replica Lighthouses



Burntcoat Head, a well-done replica.

Photo: Kathy Brown

### Background:

No one has counted how many replica lighthouses there are in Nova Scotia but there are over a dozen. They range from relatively faithful *replicas* such as Burntcoat Head; to outright *fantasy* lighthouses such as at Newport

Landing; to superficially authentic *imitations* such as the NS Tourism gateway at Amherst.

### Dangers:

This pressure to build fake and replica lighthouses brings certain dangers:

They can divert money and resources from preserving real lighthouses. (At one location in Nova Scotia, a replica light stands only a few miles from a historic light which stands empty for lack of money to open it to visitors.)

They can blur the line between real lighthouses and fake ones, undermining their authenticity as heritage attractions and endangering the long-term sustainability



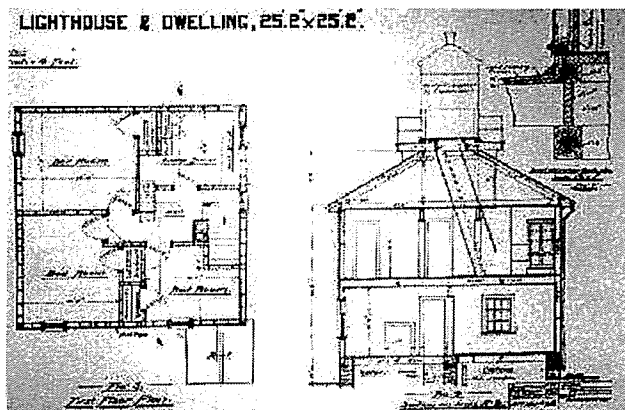
of that attraction. This danger is especially acute in Nova Scotia. One of the strengths of our lighthouse inventory is the large number of small, well-preserved harbour lights. The scale and location of these lighthouses make them tempting targets for imitation. Some tourists will be satisfactorily fooled for a time, but it is entirely possible that Nova Scotia may gain a reputation as the land of the fake lighthouses and our real harbour lights will come to be dismissed as artificial tourist props.

They are disrespectful of the cultural significance of real lighthouses. The powerful role lighthouses play as community and spiritual symbols should not be dismissed or underestimated. Fake lighthouses are the most blatant way of reducing them to commercial attractions or props which is disrespectful to many people.

They communicate false and misleading historical messages. Fake lighthouses suggest lighthouses were present in places they never were, had luxuries they never offered, offering misleading lessons in lighthouse function, regional styles and the lives of lightkeepers.

### **With this in mind NSLPS endorses the following guidelines for replica lighthouses:**

1. The first choice should be, whenever possible, to steer resources into preserving genuine historical lighthouse structures, instead of building replicas.
2. If there is no other choice but building a replica at light station location, it should be historically accurate replica of an actual structure associated with its site, built to original plans and



Plans for the Burntcoat Head Replica were obtained from the Coast Guard. Photo: Kathy Brown

comprehensive historical documentation.

An option worth considering instead of replica light towers, in cases where additional service buildings are required, are faithful replicas of light stations structures such as dwellings, fog alarm

buildings, barns and sheds. These would make a heritage contribution to a site by communicating the look and feel of a light station and making up for past demolitions of attractive and historic ancillary light station structures.

3. If a replica cannot be made historically accurate, it should not be constructed at all. Instead, an unobtrusive and site-sensitive modern building should be constructed that does not pretend to be historic. (See guidelines for new structures).
4. As a last resort, if a fake lighthouse cannot be resisted, its disruptive effect should be minimized by keeping it as far away as possible from authentic lighthouse structures and limiting its scale, style and colours, so as not to detract from the genuine lighthouse.
5. Any replica or imitation should be prominently identified as a replica with year round exterior signage. Any advertising should make clear that these structures are replicas or imitations. To do otherwise is false advertising.
6. Public support and funding should not be provided to replica lighthouses built as part of commercial attractions such as fake seaside villages, motels, housing developments, amusement parks or shopping malls.

### **New Buildings**

#### **If required, new modern buildings should:**

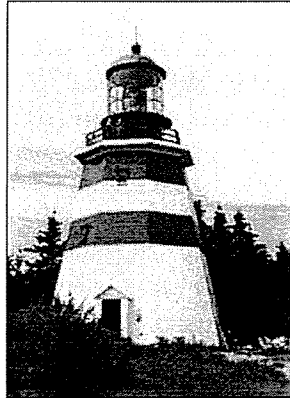
1. Be located as far away from historic lighthouse sites or as unobtrusively sited and screened as possible.
2. Embody scale, colour and design that are sensitive to their surroundings and which do not overwhelm historic structures. They should blend in, but not pass themselves off as historic buildings.
3. They should not interfere with archeological remains such as historic building foundations.

#### **Alterations of Existing Lighthouse Buildings**

1. Should faithfully conform to any heritage standards which apply. (Such as they are!)
2. Even where standards do not exist, alterations should faithfully respect the heritage architecture of the building and make as little alteration as possible.
3. Retain existing door and window style, and decorative elements.
4. Retain paint colours.
5. Use traditional materials or, where this is not possible, a very close approximation to traditional materials.
6. Any new functions should be sensitive to the site and character of the building. For example, washroom doors, electrical utilities and signs should be discretely located.

## Guidelines cont'd

7. Any changes to the original fabric of lighthouse structures should be carefully documented so that the changes could conceivably be "undone" and the knowledge embodied in older construction can be preserved.
8. The amount of new construction affecting the original building should be limited to retain as much original fabric as possible and ease possible future restoration. For example, modern decks should not be directly built into original lighthouse walls.
9. Where there is a desire to rebuild an original lighthouse feature which was removed in the past, such as a porch or lantern, the restored feature should only be constructed if there is adequate research (plans and photo documentation) to ensure authenticity and where there are adequate resources to ensure that the restoration is faithful and sound.



Seal Island Light Museum, Barrington, NS. The building is a 1980's re-creation of the top of the Lighthouse. It supports the 1903 iron lantern and lens.  
*Photo: Kathy Brown*

## Conclusion:

For all these standards, the period character of lighthouse structures should be respected, even if the period is comparatively recent. Buildings of the 50s and 60s retain unique styles which, although familiar at present, grow more valuable and recognizable as time goes by, representing the last era of lightkeeping before the era of automation.

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## BEACON Conf. Cont'd

at where their jurisdictions overlap in the matter of heritage.

- two private members LPAs being drafted
- heightened public awareness

## Discussion

Dan Conlin noted that heritage standards are critical to saving the lights, and we don't have any. He suggested that all Pre-Confederation lights should get classified status, old lighthouse sites should have archeological protection and a code of practice should be produced along with a Canadian manual on preservation. There should be penalties for defacing and demolishing structures.

Ken Wilkinson stated that the issue is how well the government is managing this resource, saying "what we've got we'd like to keep." He stressed that the movement to get a LPA has to be from the grass roots upward.

Participants felt that lighthouses must be projected as an historical resource. They agreed that we can't attract visitors without having the real thing to show them.

The conference moved that

- the 1999 Atlantic BEACON Conference supports the campaign for a Lighthouse Preservation Act
- the Conference urges the Canadian Coast Guard to give time for preservation to take place
- that the first act of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council be to pass a motion supporting the Lighthouse Preservation Act campaign. (See pg .11 for news re Council.)

## CCG: Don't Take No! For an Answer

Nancy McNeil and Carl Goodwin represented the Coast Guard. Here's a summary of their points:

- The submission regarding flexibility in divestiture of lighthouses is being submitted to Treasury Board as part of Fisheries and Oceans long-term strategy.
- Final meeting, Regional Advisory Committee on Lighthouse Alternative Use (RACLAU), held Oct. 29. A lot has been accomplished by RACLAU over the past few years, in CCG Maritimes Region. Information is in order. There is less need to consult.
- A conduit is needed for information. The lights can't be dealt with case-by-case: there are 250 in the Maritimes.
- Several lights, including Cape Forchu, are about to be transferred to communities.
- CCG primary focus is marine safety. Level of service consultations are taking place which will affect lighthouses. Budget is limited.
- Carl Goodwin stressed that he is a mariner himself and philosophically he wished to "take a dear old friend and move her gently into a new role" in culture, tourism or heritage.
- Carl stressed that not taking "No" for an answer is the community's job. CCG plan is to try to do something better than in the past with the lighthouses that are left. CCG is willing to request re-evaluation of lights such as Seal Island that have not received federal heritage designation, if they get a letter from the community.
- Face-to-face communication with Members of Parliament and especially the Minister is valuable.

## Cultural Tourism Growing

Tourism is Big Business. Nova Scotia stats., 1998:

- 2.1 million visitors
- \$1.1 billion in direct revenues

- 33,000 jobs

Over 30% of tourists visit museums and historical sites, and 25% visit national and provincial parks, reported Darlene MacDonald of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in her informative presentation "Tourism and Lights."



*Photo courtesy Lin McGray*

The growing interest in culture, heritage, the outdoors and natural environment meshes with the lighthouses. Nova Scotia is most competitive in marine heritage and coastal touring. Darlene stressed the necessity of preserving the lighthouses and their history so that visitors experience the real thing.

Value is important, and visitors seek quality experiences. They are looking for authenticity in the attractions they visit, high standards of hospitality and service, and knowledgeable staff.

### **Funding Is Available**

Chuck Smith, Programs Officer, Human Resources and Development Canada, and Irvin Surette, Economic Development Nova Scotia, suggested that lighthouse groups could qualify for funding through a number of programs.

- Canada Job Fund (HRDC)
- Youth Employment Services (HRDC)
- Student Summer Job Action (HRDC)
- Community Opportunities Fund (NS)
- Provincial Employment Program (NS)

All stressed getting in touch with them and seeing what can be done. They try to make the applications straightforward and they give advice. Nova Scotia has assisted groups at Fort Point, Sandy Point, Cape Forchu, Port Bickerton, Barrington, and Gilbert's Cove.

### **Conference Wrap up**

Sunday's wrap up discussion was more wide ranging and positive than any held before. People felt that this Beacon Conference had a more positive atmosphere. Things are moving forward. Some lights are being passed from CCG to communities. Coffin Island Light has been saved by community efforts. CCG appears to be more open to proposals. The Atlantic Lighthouse Council should be a help to everyone. Provinces are

becoming more aware and committed to preserving our lighthouse heritage.

The meeting passed a motion that the BEACON Conference should continue as the annual gathering for lighthouse enthusiasts for the Atlantic Region under the auspices of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council.

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## **COUNCIL ESTABLISHED**

The formation of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council was announced at the BEACON Conference. This initiative has been under development for the past several years. It is a non-profit organization set up to meet funding requirements of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC.). The society, which will have an executive guided by advisory committees, has received funding from both ACOA and the CTC.

The Board of Directors is proposed to include four representatives from tourism, culture and heritage, four for provincial lighthouse or heritage societies, three representatives designated as heritage, environmental and aboriginal, and four representatives at large. The executive, will be elected from the Board. Planned committees include finance, development, communications and heritage.

There will be two types of membership. General membership is for everyone interested in lighthouses, and membership in the Lighthouse Product Club of the Council is for groups associated with lighthouse sites.

The key aims of the Council are

- to provide a network of information, contacts and learning opportunities
  - to highlight the significance of lighthouses
  - to make the lighthouse product of Atlantic Canada market ready
    - to increase visitation and revenues
  - to partner with other tourism industry stakeholders
    - to develop and sustain the Atlantic Lighthouse Club
- One of their strong thrusts is expected to be support of the Lighthouse Preservation Act initiative.

The Council is currently completing the process of hiring a coordinator

Founding members of the Council, from the four Atlantic Provinces, are:

Nadine Cheverie, East Point Light; Dennison Tate, Cape Enrage Adventures, Gert Sweeney, Cape Forchu Light; Jack Peddle, West Point Light; Anne Marie Beaudin, Ile Miscou Light; Sara Napier, Fort Point Light; Eric Ensor, McNutt's Island Light; Annette Parsons, Cape Bonavista Light; David Curry, Port Bickerton Light; Eliza Manuel, Peggy's Cove Commission, Bernice Goodick, Sandy Point Light; Tina Wickens, Baccaro Point Light; Carol Livingstone, PEI Lighthouse Society Linda Deveau, Abbott's Harbour Light; Pam Harrison, RACLAU. Pam Harrison is interim Chair.

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## Lucky British Columbia!

*From a Department of Fisheries and Oceans internal newsletter, British Columbia, on Y2K*

### Lighthouses:

#### The year 2000 compliant home!

If you are worried about whether your home is ready for the year 2000 transition, consider looking for work as a lighthouse keeper. Lighthouses are among the most year 2000 compliant homes anywhere. Because they exist in such isolated locations, they are always totally self reliant with their own power supply from diesel generators, water and sewage systems and several forms of communication including radio, satellite and cell phone.

BC has 27 manned lighthouses and, according to Vivian Skinner, more than 50 families in residence.

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### LIGHTHOUSES OF THE GLOOSCAP TRAIL

Caleb Elliott has written and published a small tour guide with a location map and colour photographs of lighthouses on the Fundy Shores. Price is \$4.95.

To purchase a copy, call him at (902) 667-8867 and leave a message or e-mail [calebelliott@hotmail.com](mailto:calebelliott@hotmail.com)

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### LIGHTSHOP

Order from: Jeanne Thomas, 262 Purcell's Cove Road, Halifax, NS, B3P 1C3. Telephone 479-1626

Please make cheques payable to the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society.

#### New! PEGGY'S COVE LIGHT PAPER WEIGHT

A 3 inch circle of smoothly finished hardwood topped by a Turk.'s head sailor's knot and a Peggy's Cove Lighthouse quarter. A collectible only available from NSLPS.

\$10.00 + \$3.00 shipping. All proceeds to NSLPS.

#### NSLPS MEMBERSHIP PINS:

\$5.00 + \$1.00 shipping.

#### PEWTER KEY CHAIN, of Sambro Lighthouse:

\$11.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

*Back by popular demand:*

**VANISHING LIGHTS** *Chris Mills*

A lightkeeper's experiences during the last days of staffed lights in the Maritimes. \$13.00 + \$3.00 shipping

**ART PRINT: *The Work Crew on Sambro Island:***

7 x 10 1/2, *Maurice Bernard*, ready to frame.

**SPECIAL \$20.00**, including postage.

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### BRIEF NOTES

Tim Hall, 426-4116 is the contact for Affiliates.

20,000 copies of the brochure *Nova Scotia: Visit our Lighthouses* have been distributed since last June. More will be printed soon.

Website visitors in the last 2 years total 15,394, from allover the world. About half the viewers come from the United States and Canada, the rest from places as far flung as Poland, Thailand, Israel, Singapore and Finland

### Ingonish Ferry Lighthouse



*Photos: David Lawley*

As a follow-up to the article about the Ingonish Ferry Lighthouse, September *The Lightkeeper*, pg. 5, here are photographs of the East Indian statue found in the ruins of the foundation in 1983. In addition, the photograph of the lighthouse in the same issue was provided by Rollie MacKinnon

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*Lightkeeper* is published quarterly by THE NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY, c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax., B3J 1S3 Editors: Kathy Brown and Chris Mills. Send items for publication to Editors *The Lightkeeper*, c/o 24 Armshore Drive, Halifax, NS, B3N 1M5, or E-Mail to [krbrown@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:krbrown@ns.sympatico.ca). **Deadline for March issue: Feb. 29**

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### NSLPS MEMBERSHIP FORM - January 1 - December 31, 2000

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Family/Group names for extra card(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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.

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