



THE Lightkeeper

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 8, No.2, June 2001

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/nsllps>

LIGHTKEEPER EDITOR: CHRIS MILLS

PATRONS: Carl R. Lautenslager, Jeanne Thomas

AFFILIATES: Advocate District Development Association, Beacon Memories, Burntcoat Head Park, Cape Sable Historical Society, Chapel Hill Historical Society, Clyde River Inn, Coastal Communities Network, English Harbour Heritage Society, Five Islands Lighthouse Society, Faith Tabernacle Church, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Greville Bay Shipbuilding Museum Society, Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Keepers of the Beacons, Margaretsville Community Hall Society, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, McNab's Island Ferry, Medway Area Communities Association, Mosher Island Lighthouse Society, Municipality of Queens Tourism & Development, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre, Sambro-Ketch Harbour School, Sandy Cove Lighthouse Group, Sandy Point Recreation Group, Seal Island Tours, South Shore Tourism Association, Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee, Tidal View Drive Association, Town of Lockeport, Walton Area Development Committee, Walton Pub & Eatery.



IN THIS ISSUE:

Lighthouse Programs and Trips: p.2

News from the board: p.2

Feature: Craig Harding: p.4

Friends of the Yarmouth Light AGM: p.5

NSLPS AGM: p.6

Keeping Our Lights: p.8

Lighthouse Lands: p.10

Point Abino lighthouse: p.12

WELCOME ABOARD!

The following new members recently joined NSLPS:

Frances & Chris Jamieson, Josette d'Entremont, Richard Welsford, Adrienne Speck, Nova Scotia Scuba Association, Christopher & Eileen Fletcher, David & Sheryl Fletcher, Graham Long, Carolyn, Evariste & Eileen d'Eon, Island Historical Society, Mike & Viena Ebersold, Evelyn Coates, Dana, Santana, Gina & Tanner Rushton.

NSLPS LIGHTHOUSE TRIPS

July:

Bon Portage Island (Outer Island)

About 2 miles off Shag Harbour,

Saturday and Sunday, July 7-8

Weather dates July 21-22

Visit the island made famous by Evelyn Richardson in her classic book *We Keep a Light*. Travel by boat to the island which is now The Evelyn and Morrill Richardson Research Station of Acadia University's Biology Department.

We will visit the light station, explore trails dating from the Richardson family's many years on the island, and sleep in a 1960s lightkeeper's house. A highlight is the nightly return of thousands of Leach's Petrels, seabirds which spend their days feeding miles offshore. Watch them swoop past the lighthouse beam to their burrows on the island. Many thanks to Acadia University for their hospitality and assistance.

Cost: \$60.

What to bring: Food, drinking water, sleeping bag and pillow.

Full details supplied before the trip.

Registration required. Call Kathy Brown, 479-3115.

Register early - we expect this trip to fill up quickly.

August

Ile Haute, Bay of Fundy

Date: Saturday Aug 18

Weather date: Sunday Aug 19

Time: Meet at 10:00 at the jetty at Harbourville (Exit 15, Hwy. 101.)

Return: Arrive at Harbourville about 18:00.

Ile Haute lies off Cape Chignecto, in the Bay of Fundy. Often shrouded in mist, it has the reputation of disappearing by times!

Dan Conlin, Curator of Marine History, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and an expert on the history of the island, will lead this unusual trip. This an opportunity not to be missed! The day consists of a boat trip to and from the island and four to five hours ashore.

Cost: \$50.00 per person. *No children under 12.*

It is a fairly strenuous outing (getting on and off the boat via a Zodiac, and hiking up to the lighthouse site).

What to bring: Sensible clothing (especially footwear), food and adequate water.

Registration required. Call Tony Thompson, 477-7366, or e-mail: Tony.Thompson@dal.ca

Trip is limited to 20 persons.

Register with Tony as soon as possible. We expect this trip to fill quickly.

September

Georges Island, Halifax Harbour

Saturday, Sept. 8

Weather date: Sun. Sept. 9

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

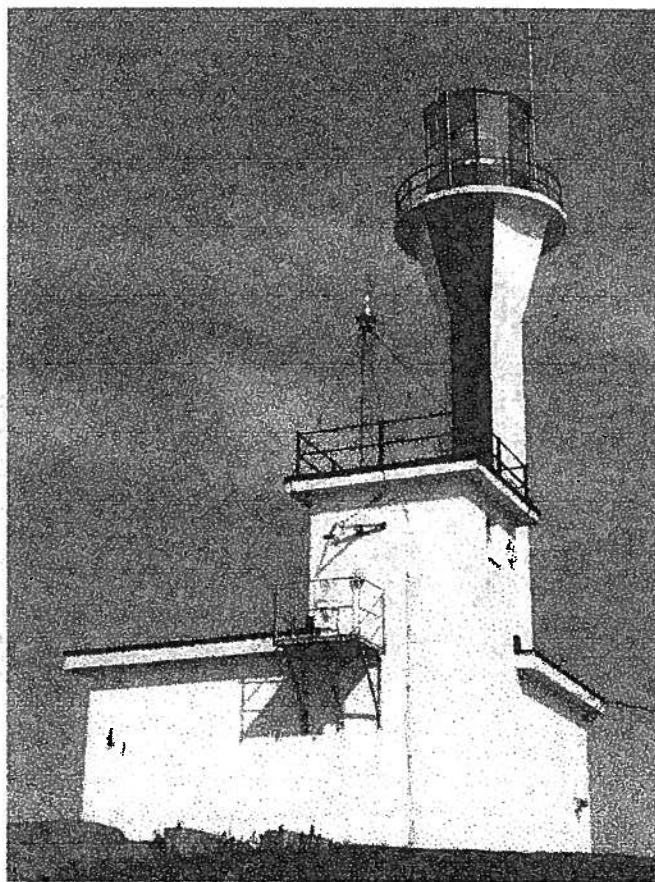
Enjoy a guided trip to the Georges Island Lighthouse across the harbour from downtown Halifax. Walk the trail to the lighthouse, past the keeper's house and climb the stairs to the lantern room. Trip guides are Dale Venoit, who grew up on Georges as daughter of longtime keeper Victor Matthews, and NSLPS Board Member George Hebb.

Cost: \$10

Registration required.. Call Dorothy MacLeod, 423-8034, from August 1 onward. As with other trips, we expect this one to fill quickly, so call promptly.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Kathy Brown



Cape Forchu light and fog alarm, 1992. *Chris Mills*

Craig Harding

As many readers will know, Craig Harding passed away in early April. Craig was a driving force behind *The Friends of Yarmouth light*, the group responsible for saving Yarmouth's historic Cape Forchu lighthouse. Part

of this issue of *The Lightkeeper* is devoted to Craig and his work. Despite a happy ending at Cape Forchu, the struggle to save and maintain Nova Scotia lighthouse is still a long way from being over. We salute Craig Harding and his efforts to preserve Nova Scotia lighthouses. (Ed)

Workshops

The *Keeping Our Lights 2001* workshops for Nova Scotia were held at DalTech in Halifax April 20 - 22. See report on page 8. Planning for the workshops took up much board time from February onward. Even so, there was not enough lead-time to organize the workshops in the way we wanted.

Groups that should have sent representation were unable to do so. We hope the report in this issue will be valuable for those who could not attend. Members of the board would be very glad to hear from anyone who has questions or anyone who wants further information.

Lighthouse Day

On Lighthouse Day, May 26, the NSLPS had an information table at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. Kathy Brown drove to Yarmouth for the AGM of *The Friends of the Yarmouth Light* and the presentation of the Craig Harding Lighthouse Preservation Award. (More details on page 5)

Special Project

Dan Conlin is working on a project to reprint a booklet called *Lighthouse Keepers Duties*. It was originally published by the Department of Marine in 1912. This should be of interest to groups currently running lighthouse sites and to anyone wanting to know more about the work of lightkeepers during the early years of the 20th century.

Atlantic Lighthouse Council

Dan Conlin attended the AGM of the ALC on behalf of NSLPS. The council members agreed that the past year had been difficult.

In hopes of improving the situation, there will be a new structure, with an executive, and two committees reporting: one representing tourism and the other, community and heritage concerns. Lynne Perry, executive director of the South Shore Tourism Association, is now chair.

There may be a fall conference. The NSLPS board agreed to continue to work with the council, to offer reciprocal linking of web sites, to express any concerns we may have in writing, and to support and help with the conference if one is held.

Dan Conlin and Alison Fletcher will be NSLPS representatives on the community committee.

Correspondence

Kathy heard from NDP MP Peter Stoffer that he has forwarded our letters about the issue of the CCG charging a fee for visits to lighthouses and about mercury contamination, to the Minister of Fisheries.

Liberal MP Geoff Regan has replied to our letter stating he supports our objectives and plans to discuss them with his Atlantic and national caucus colleagues. He would like to be kept informed of developments and is willing to meet with us. It was decided a meeting with the Lighthouse Protection Act Committee would be the most appropriate.

Kathy has corresponded with Oli Belisle, communications coordinator for "Preserve Canadian Lighthouses" a group of inland Canadians interested in saving lights. The board agreed that Alison Fletcher would write and ask for more details about the group before we commit to support their efforts.

Non-Resident Land Ownership

The board has sent a written submission to the Task Force on Non-resident Land Ownership of the Voluntary Planning Board noting that in the next five to ten years the federal government will be dismantling and selling off what is probably the largest number of publicly owned coastal properties in Nova Scotia - our lighthouses. See p.10 for details.

Trips License

The NSLPS has received a license to visit Ile Haute on August 18 and Bon Portage on July 7/8. (We have signed the agreement and have received our copy from DFO.) The cost of the license is \$345.

The Department of Fisheries & Oceans notified Parks Canada of our request to access Georges Island. Our contact Ron MacDonald stated that he sees no problem with a visit. Visiting inside Maughers Beach Light in October appears unlikely due to the extent of mercury contamination. We have received no indication of when it will be cleaned up.

Other Activities

Alison Fletcher visited Sambro - Ketch Harbour Elementary School and gave a very successful presentation on Sambro Island Lighthouse.

George Hebb continues to pursue our grant with HRM to fund the collection of oral history from light keepers.

Dan Conlin noted that he assisted with a FHBRO application for the Paddy's Head Lighthouse Society.

Kathy gave a talk about Sambro Lighthouse at the Queens County Museum as part of South Shore Tourism's "Lights Along the Shore" celebration.

A TRIBUTE TO CRAIG HARDING

Chris Mills



This spring, Nova Scotia lost one of its biggest supporters of lighthouses. Craig Harding fought long and hard to save the historic Cape Forchu lighthouse in Yarmouth, but on the afternoon of April the third, Craig lost his battle with cancer. He was just 52.

Craig was born in Overton, Yarmouth County. He loved the sea and as a young man, he worked as a steward on the Canadian Coast Guard ship *Narwhal*. In 1969 Craig joined the Canadian Air Force as a meteorological technician, serving on ships and bases across the country.

After retiring from the forces in 1988, Craig returned to live at Cape Forchu. He continued to stay in touch with the sea, working on the ferry *Bluenose* as a deckhand, and on Beaver Marine tug boats along the eastern seaboard.

But it was Craig's interest in the Cape Forchu lighthouse that revealed the depth of his passion for the beacons that guide ships at sea.

The Cape Forchu lightstation is a Yarmouth landmark. The original lighthouse was built in 1839 and since then the light on the cape has guided vessels of all sizes safely in and out of Yarmouth Harbour.

In 1962 the Department of Transport replaced the original wooden lighthouse with a slender concrete tower. In 1993 the last lightkeepers departed, leaving the tower locked and the keepers' dwellings empty.

As with other lighthouses in Nova Scotia, there was a danger the houses, including a 1912-vintage duplex, and other surplus buildings, would be demolished or sold off by the federal government.

Craig, along with his friend and neighbour Gert Sweeney formed the Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society to help save the lightstation.

The group worked tirelessly to restore the site, opening a museum and a tea room in the former keepers houses.

It wasn't glamorous work -- shingling, painting and putting in septic systems, as well as keeping up with regular maintenance in a harsh marine environment.

But Craig and the Friends persevered, and after

more than five years of fighting the weather, and fighting bureaucratic red tape, their work finally paid off.

On June 1, 2000, Larry Wilson, the Coast Guard's Maritimes Regional Director, handed the management of the Cape Forchu lighthouse over the municipality of Yarmouth.

The transfer meant the future of the lightstation was finally secure.

Craig's passion, tenacity and dedication showed that Nova Scotia lighthouses *can* be saved. Without his foresight, the Cape Forchu lighthouse may not have survived as a guiding light for mariners and as a beacon for the thousands of people who visit the lighthouse each year.

Craig Harding was a fine man and he is greatly missed by his friends, and all who love Nova Scotia lighthouses.

Thank you, Craig.



Craig Harding, Alana Hoban, Rip Irwin and Gert Sweeney at Cape Forchu, July 2000. *Chris Mills*

★ ★ ★

CAPE FORCHU: A COMMUNITY LIGHTHOUSE

Kathy Brown

The Friends of Yarmouth Light held a very special Annual General Meeting on Lighthouse Day, May 26. The meeting honoured Friends founding president, Craig Harding, who passed away in April. Craig guided the Friends through six eventful years.

Initially, the group ran a welcome centre, museum, gift shop and snack bar in buildings on the lightstation. Later, members improved the station grounds and infrastructure.

Then, it became evident that DFO was intent on divesting itself of the lighthouse, the lands and all buildings. Friends, with Craig at the helm, began negotiations to take over the property. When Craig was diagnosed with cancer, he dedicated the rest of his life to saving the station for the people of Yarmouth. The luncheon marked the completion of his dream.

In a moving moment, Nancy McNeil, the director of marine operations for the Coast Guard's Maritimes Region officially presented the papers for the lighthouse to warden Chris Perry of the Municipality of Yarmouth County. Previously, on March 16, the light station was entered into the Registry of Deeds for Yarmouth County.

Cape Forchu is the first lighthouse in Canada to be passed over to a community under the federal government's 96-1 initiative. The Friends will run the station on behalf of the county along with the Coast Guard, for they will keep the light shining as well.

The NSLPS board of directors had unanimously decided at their March meeting that the name of Craig Harding and his outstanding contribution to the cause of saving Nova Scotia's lighthouses should be honoured and remembered in perpetuity in Nova Scotia.

To this end, the "Craig Harding Lighthouse Preservation Award" was established at the NSLPS AGM. A plaque and modest cash award will be presented annually to an individual or group that has made an outstanding contribution to lighthouse preservation in Nova Scotia. Craig is the first recipient. Kathy Brown presented the award to Craig's wife Ellen.

Nova Scotia's Minister of Tourism and Culture, the Hon. Rodney J. MacDonald and Yarmouth MLA Richard Hurlbert attended the meeting.

The minister said the Nova Scotia government believes lighthouses are an important part of our maritime heritage and they should be owned by the communities in which they stand.

After the luncheon, a portion of Craig Harding's

ashes were scattered at the lighthouse during a private ceremony.

One Man's Dream

by Lin McGray, Friends of the Yarmouth Light

One man had a dream, a simple dream, to save one
lighthouse.

He planned, he campaigned, he worked and he inspired
others to follow.

Time and patience and love for a simple piece of land with a
simple concrete tower paid off.

Cape Forchu will embrace and protect its own forever.

When a dream becomes a reality, and the planned-for thing
comes true,

And work and worry are all behind, what one single man
can do,

Is smile and say "we did it!"...and know it was all worth-
while

That's what one man can do...smile.

What one man can do is dream, plant a seed and watch it
grow,

What one man can do is inspire others, and show them the
way to go.

And when that dream has happened, the heart can rest
assured,

That forever and always the dream is protected...insured.

Time looms now that you must leave us, for reasons we'll
never know,

But it's true that in many, many ways, you will never really
go.

Your heart will remain at that lighthouse, your soul
surround Cape Forchu,

For it wouldn't be saved, nor your friends carry on, if it
hadn't been for you.

I know you will be there smiling, every time someone climbs
that hill,

Your hand steady youngsters there on the rocks and I know
that it always will,

I know when the pipers magic rings out, that the music will
find its way

To you and you'll know that your song will go on and so
lastly I want to say,

It's your light now that shines in the darkness, your tower
will stand supreme.

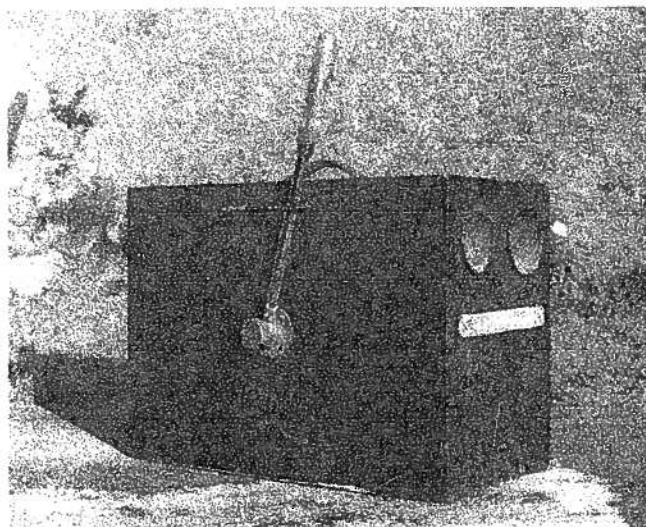
People will treasure those hills and those rocks and love
will protect your dream.

Long into the future, others will hear, and know of the effort
made,

And those doing the telling will always remember and
always say thank you Craig.

NSLPS AGM

DalTech, Friday April 20, 2001



Hand fog horn manufactured by Powers Brothers, Lunenburg, NS. *Chris Mills*

The meeting was called to order by a blast from a hand-cranked fog horn.

Treasurer's Report

Lew Perry presented a report showing the society is in good financial shape. Donations are coming in because of the charitable tax status gained last year.

Lightkeeper

Chris Mills reported that the content of the publication has been expanded with every second issue featuring the results of interviews with lighthouse keepers and families. Board members expressed the need for an improved layout program. The use of colour would be an asset. 275 copies of the latest issue were produced.

Website

The website is an important educational and publicity tool for NSLPS. The number of visitors to the site continues to grow. The site recieved nearly 11,000 "hits" in the past year from all over the world. Past president Jim Guptill receives e-mail from the site which he answers, or fields to other board members. Highlights for this year were the new masthead courtesy of Christian Ruel of Sambro, NS, and the addition of the sound of a diaphone foghorn, courtesy of Ern Dick.

The "List of Lighthouses by Location" is now subdivided to reflect the Scenic Travelways on Nova Scotia's highway map - it's now "The Doers and Dreamers Guide to Nova Scotian Lighthouses." Enragée Point, at Cheticamp Island, Cape Roseway, on the south shore, and Egg Island and White Head Island on the

Eastern Shore were added.

Once again, Peter MacCulloch, our first webmaster who now lives near Boston, gave his support in providing instructions on how to place the foghorn sound on the homepage. We will always be indebted to him for his creation of most of what we have on the site today.

Trips and Programs

The NSLPS held four programs and one children's workshop. Trips were cancelled last summer because of denial of access to lighthouses. Negotiations continue for the summer of 2001.

Presidents Report

This is the sixth annual President's Address for NSLPS. The growth in interest in lighthouses and the growth in the nature and scope of our activities makes it seem like we have been around much longer than that!

I must stress that this is not my report, but the report of the activities of a very active and enthusiastic board members who work hard to carry out our objectives.

Working to preserve lighthouses:

The board sent a motion of support for the Lighthouse Preservation Legislation to the AGM of the Canadian Heritage Foundation. This motion was passed unanimously, and the Canadian Heritage Foundation was also one of the presenters at the senate committee hearings on the bill. A big thanks goes to Brenda Shannon, Nova Scotia's representative to the Canadian Heritage Foundation for so ably presenting our cause. David Curry and Dan Conlin also made submissions at the committee hearings on behalf of NSLPS.

Once the Lighthouse Protection Legislation was introduced in the senate in the care of Senators Mike Forrestall and Pat Carney, we might have taken a breather, but Prime Minister Chretien fixed that - he called an election. So we mounted a media campaign.

I sent out news releases about lighthouse preservation to Nova Scotian and national media, plus a letter and questionnaire to the national headquarters of all the parties and to some Nova Scotian candidates. In addition, board members telephoned and e-mailed NSLPS members in Nova Scotia reminding them to ask candidates about their attitude towards lighthouse preservation.

The NSLPS scored the results. The Progressive Conservatives received a B+ for their knowledge and for introducing the Lighthouse Protection Bill, the NDP a B, and the Alliance B-, but the Liberals failed. They did not even know how many provinces have lighthouses!

The scores brought national coverage by CBC

Newsworld in a short feature with Jim Guptill and me at Chebucto Head, talking about the importance of lighthouses and our disappointment at the Liberals' score.

Since the election, the society has written letters to Geoff Regan, Liberal MP for Halifax West and Robert Thibault, Liberal MP for West Nova (minister for ACOA). We have received positive answers in which they documented supportive conversations with their colleagues and promised more action.

Preserving Individual Lighthouses:

Contacts with Parks Canada about the future of the lightkeeper's house on Georges Island in Halifax Harbour resulted in an official assessment which showed that it will be more expensive to replace the house than to repair it. It is likely the house will be restored. Parks will make use of the house when the island is opened for visitors. NSLPS will be encouraging them to make at least part of it open to the public to interpret the lighthouse history of the island and the harbour.

In 1991, Seal Island Lighthouse (the second oldest standing lighthouse in Nova Scotia, and second oldest wooden lighthouse in Canada) missed Federal Heritage Building Review Board "classified" status by two points.

In October, I wrote a letter supporting the Cape Sable Historical Society in their appeal of this. To date, neither society has received an answer.

The lighthouse is rotting and is on our Doomsday List. We are currently in contact with Fisheries and Oceans to see if it will be repaired this year. This campaign is ongoing.

Chebucto Head Lighthouse: Board member Tracy O'Brien contacted Coast Guard about the graffiti sprayed on the tower in late summer. It was repainted after she contacted them. The board has been tracking the condition and status of the keeper's house and the land around it. To date, nothing has happened, though it has been declared surplus.

Lighthouse Day:

The NSLPS was one of the founders of Lighthouse Day.

We cooperated with the Coastal Communities Network last year and are doing so again this year. The NSLPS, mainly through board members, provides some programming at the Maritime Museum for this, and staffs an information table. This year, the celebration was held on May 26. Lighthouse Day was well coordinated by Jillian Brown, with the Coast Communities Network.

Discussion took place regarding the date chosen for Lighthouse Day. The spring date of May 26, 2001 appears to be too early for the opening of the lighthouses but this date coincides with Safe Boating Week.

It was agreed that the results of the spring date should be compared with the fall date and that a decision will be made based upon that review. It was agreed the NSLPS should recommend the date be consistent from one year to the next.

The Future:

We are now dealing with a situation where more and more lighthouses are being passed over to the Federal Department of Public Works for disposal. All of us—board, affiliates and members—are challenged to do the work to keep these precious pieces of our maritime heritage in the hands of Nova Scotians and accessible to Nova Scotians.

Past

president Jim Guptill

conducted the election of the board of directors for 2001/2002:

President, Webmaster- Kathy Brown
First Vice President- Barry MacDonald
Second Vice President, Lightkeeper- Chris Mills
Secretary- Alison Fletcher
Director, Web mail- Jim Guptill
Director, Public advertising- Tony Thompson
Treasurer- Lewis Perry
Director, Trips- Dorothy MacLeod
Director, Member Services- Jeanne Thomas
Director, Historical Research- Dan Conlin
Director- Brenda Shannon
Director, Affiliates- George Hebb.



Enragee Point lightstation in 1987. E.H. Irwin

HIGHLIGHTS OF "Keeping Our Lights 2001" WORKSHOPS

Saturday April 21 & Sunday April 22
George Hebb / Kathy Brown

THE LATEST FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS (DFO):

Property Management

Nearly half of Saturday morning was given over to a presentation by DFO. Most participants were from Real Assets and Property Management, the division of DFO which now manages lighthouse properties.

Robert (Bob) MacDonald is supervisor of the Facilities Management Group. He spoke about Strategic Planning and Real Property - the management of lighthouse properties. Properties which had been managed by the Coast Guard are now administered by DFO. The direction of the DFO strategic plan is to obtain "financial stability" for the department.

The Treasury Board Real Property Act states that the department should retain only property that is required for delivery of programs. This plan is leading to divestiture of lighthouse properties. The government cannot pass over or sell environmentally contaminated properties.

The focus of the department is on liability, occupational health and safety for employees, and public health, which is harder to deal with because the province has the authority for this. DFO has no problem with interested parties making use of the sites, but says safety and security are top priorities.

Leases have been replaced by licenses which allow people to make use of lighthouse sites in specific ways. There is a required amount of liability insurance, and the Federal Government (The Queen in Right of Canada) must be named as an additional insurer.

There is a charge for licenses. In this way, DFO is trying to cooperate with groups that have made use of lighthouse sites in the past.

Environmental Issues

Vera Landry, Real Property and Asset Management, noted that environmental assessments are required by the Treasury Board Real Property Act before federal buildings are turned over to another party or sold. There are three steps in an environmental assessment:

Phase 1 - Review records, visit site, interview knowledgeable people, identify potential concerns, identify possible contaminants, make recommendations for further work..

Phase 2 - Testing

Phase 3 - Cleanup and managing.

Standards are set by the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) and the CCME (Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.) The CCME standards are the most stringent and clean up must be done to that level.

Vera noted the industry trend is towards management of contamination, instead of attempting to clean up a site completely. In some cases it is acceptable and a better practice to cover the contaminated area (i.e. lead paint) than to try to remove the contamination. Long-term monitoring is also a possibility. The work done depends on the type of use planned for the property.

Heritage

All federal properties over 40 years old have received a heritage review. This includes lighthouses.

RUNNING A LIGHTHOUSE AS A SMALL BUSINESS

In the afternoon, Ray Savage of Action International presented a worthwhile session on running a lighthouse as a small business. He said groups and individuals interested in running a lighthouse require a financial plan and a marketing strategy.

Savage noted groups need a good board made up of the movers and shakers in lighthouse communities. Kathy Brown has an annotated copy of Savage's overheads and will send a photocopy to anyone interested.

NON-PROFIT SOCIETY, CHARITABLE TAX REGISTRATION

We had an open exchange of information with Dorothy MacLeod and Dan Conlin of NSLPS. Information about registering as a non-profit society in Nova Scotia is available at <www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rjsc> It is important to update your records each year (i.e. new board of directors).

Gaining charitable tax status can be time consuming, but it is worthwhile. It is good to be able to provide a charitable tax receipt for members- often people will add something to their membership. On the other hand, there is also a higher level of financial accountability required of charitable societies.

Charities can get back 50% of the HST they pay, i.e. on a \$10 sweater to sell they pay 15% (\$1.50) and 7½% (\$.75) will be returned.

You have to register for this. It is also possible for people to set up a legacy so that they receive a charitable tax receipt and your group receives a donation when they die. "Leave a Legacy" has a website where you can find out about this.

RESEARCH GUIDE FOR LIGHTHOUSE HERITAGE GROUPS

Dan Conlin presented a revision of his guide. Affiliates can obtain of this by contacting the society. Dan emphasized that it is important to obtain a copy of the FHBRO report if there is one. He also talked about obtaining provincial heritage status.

The day ended with a guided lighthouse tour of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic by Dan Conlin

THE CAPE FORCHU EXPERIENCE

On Sunday, Gert Sweeny and Adriane Speck, Friends of Yarmouth Light, started us off with a wonderful illustrated talk on the progress of developing Cape Forchu into the beautiful site now visited by 40,000 people annually. The Friends are the operating body for the lightstation, with ownership in the hands of the municipality.

The Friends have raised approximately \$200,000 over the past six years through various fund raising activities. They made major improvements to the lighthouse site, including building maintenance and painting, and the installation of a proper septic system. This work stood them in good stead when environmental remediation began - the big keeper's house had only to be given another coat of paint.

The municipality has contributed \$68,000 towards the environmental clean-up and another \$100,000 has been found through other sources. Contaminated soil was removed and replaced with clean earth, window frames were scraped and painted with non-lead paint, shingles were completely removed from the garage and replaced with new, and the whole tower was scraped and painted.

It should be kept in mind that Cape Forchu is a large, intact station with four buildings, including a big concrete lighthouse. Most other sites in Nova Scotia will not be nearly as costly to clean up.

TOURISM AND LIGHTHOUSES

Lynne Perry, the executive director of the South Shore Tourism Association, gave a very interesting



Low Point lighthouse, near New Waterford -- One of Nova Scotia's many "real assets". *Chris Mills*

presentation about the promotion of tourism along the "Lighthouse Route", where there are 32 lighthouses. She emphasized the three As - Authentic, Attractive, Activities - that are required for quality tourism.

Interpretation of sites is important, so visitors get a sense of the history and beauty of the sites they visit. Lynne said the economic spin of tourism helps save heritage buildings.



The turn out for the weekend was small because of the short time we had to let people know about the workshops. On the other hand, key people attended from across Nova Scotia, and we trust they will share what they learned with others in their areas.

LIGHTHOUSE LANDS FOR SALE

On May 22, 2001, NSLPS president Kathy Brown wrote this letter to Nova Scotia's Task Force on Non-Resident Land Ownership:

I would like to make a contribution on behalf of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society. We represent over 200 members and 23 community groups from across Nova Scotia who seek to preserve lighthouses in Nova Scotia.

We wish to alert you that in next five to ten years the federal government will be dismantling and selling off what is probably the largest number of publicly owned coastal properties in Nova Scotia - our lighthouses. Current federal disposal policies and a "hands off" approach by our provincial government essentially guarantee that most these properties are headed for out-of-province ownership.

Nova Scotia has about 150 lighthouses which act not only as navigational aids, but as public landmarks. Almost all of our lighthouses are owned by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

Changes in navigation technology have made it easier to decommission lighthouses. In addition, there is a strong push from Treasury Board to sell off federal properties and maximize sale values for Ottawa.

Last year there were about three lighthouses facing disposal. This year there are at least ten. Next year DFO tells us to expect 30 lighthouses to be up for sale. DFO is also actively working on severing lighthouse land; that is, retaining a lighthouse, but selling off all the land around it.

There is an overwhelming interest outside Nova Scotia in buying our lighthouse lands. Our coastal land is perceived as a bargain and our lighthouses are well known.

When our society was first founded, its first rush of members were Americans, who joined in droves because of their attraction to our unspoiled lighthouses.

Coast Guard officials have told us that numerous developers have approached them seeking lighthouse properties with the message of "name your price and we will pay".

It is clear from our experience that Nova Scotians and out-of-province residents see lighthouses in fundamentally different ways. Nova Scotians see them as community landmarks and as public places. Out-of-province residents see lighthouses as symbols of seclusion and a chance to own your own island.

If lighthouses are sold off to private, non-resident owners and the fences and No Trespassing signs go up, small coastal communities will lose access to beaches and coastal trails. We will lose irreplaceable heritage buildings, many of which are small and sturdy enough to be dismantled and moved out of the province in the same manner that many of our historic barns are currently disappearing.

We will also lose an opportunity for economic development in coastal communities as these properties become private preserves for seasonal residents.

In the past our provincial government took more active interest in preserving lighthouse properties. Two lighthouses, Gilbert's Cove in St. Mary's Bay, and Fort Point in Liverpool are owned by the province and cared for by community groups. They have been remarkably successful as community parks and sustainable tourism development. However Nova Scotia has more recently been turning down offers to acquire surplus lighthouse properties.

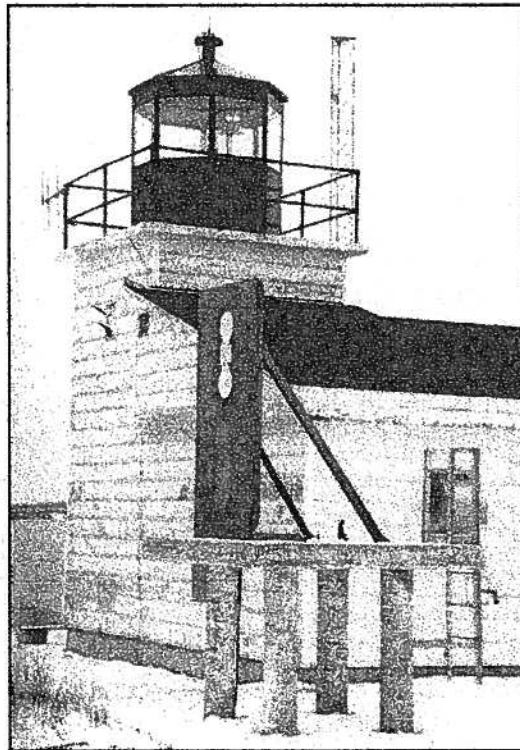
Community groups with small resources have been fighting to keep our lighthouses accessible to Nova Scotians. They have

succeeded in getting DFO to slow their disposal process and include community groups in the notification procedure.

However the deck remains stacked against them.

The federal government is eager to sell off coastal lands and is committed to getting maximum market value, putting such properties out of reach of community groups and sending them on the road to offshore ownership. Here are a few examples to consider:

1. **Seal Island** - the second oldest lighthouse in Nova Scotia, established in 1831. Most of the island has been bought by a German landowner.



Port Bickerton lighthouse. *Chris Mills*

The Coast Guard still owns land attached to the lighthouse which is key to its access and preservation, but is in process of severing the land from the light. The surplus land will become available for possible sale.

2. **Coffin Island** - an eighty seven year-old lighthouse on a historic island near Liverpool. It has recently been decommissioned. A community group which has invested thousands of dollars to save the light from erosion now faces having to pay thousands more to keep the lighthouse public, in part because the province of Nova Scotia turned down a chance when offered the land in transfer.

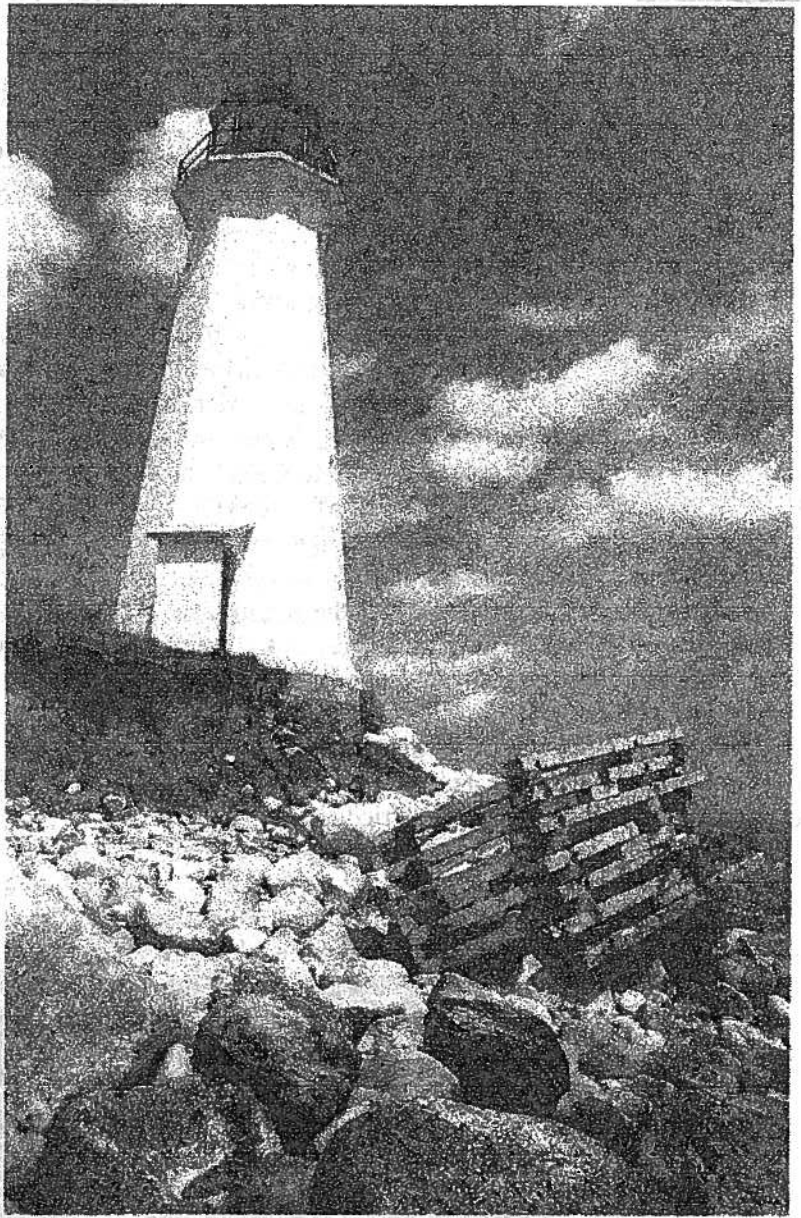
3. **Port Bickerton** - is a 1930s lighthouse which has been restored as an interpretive centre for Nova Scotian lights with a network of hiking trails. However DFO plans to sell off surplus land on the site will physically isolate this lighthouse success story.

It is also worth observing that some out-of-province landowners have been very responsible in lighthouse ownership. An American resident owns most of Henry Island in Cape Breton, including the oldest surviving keeper's house in Nova Scotia. He has maintained the historical character of the island and worked to continue some public access to its historic lighthouse. However these moves reflect only one individual's commitment to lighthouse preservation in spite of market forces. There are virtually no heritage standards and no public access rules for lighthouses or the land around them.

Consider in contrast the sad outcome in the Great Lakes where disposal of lighthouse lands has proceeded further. At the Point Abino lighthouse on Lake Erie in Ontario, American landowners have bought all the land around this lighthouse including the access road. They have banned the community group who wish to restore the lighthouse from accessing it and are denying Canadians the ability to visit one of their own historic sites. Under current policies, we can expect to see this happen with our lighthouse lands.

We would like to make the following recommendations for the Nova Scotia government:

1. Pressure the federal government for a moratorium on lighthouse disposal until changes are made to guarantee public access and historic preservation.
2. Provide more support to community groups that wish



On the edge: Coffin Island lighthouse in 1998, before it was protected from the encroaching sea. *Chris Mills*

to preserve public access to lighthouse lands.

3. Actively support the Lighthouse Protection Act currently being redrafted prior to re-introduction in the Senate. It strengthens lighthouse heritage status and promotes community ownership.

4. Persuade the federal government to lease or transfer surplus lighthouse properties to other levels of government or on non profit groups without forcing them to compete at market values for lighthouse land.

I hope this information is helpful. In the next ten years the federal government will be dismantling a system of lighthouses, a network which took Nova Scotians over two centuries to build.

This is a crucial time. I hope your work will help keep these landmark properties in Nova Scotian hands.

NOTE:

The feature on West Ironbound light advertised in the March *Lightkeeper* will appear in the September issue.

POINT ABINO LIGHTHOUSE SAVED

Kathy Brown



Point Abino light, Lake Erie.
Canadian Coast Guard

An outstanding example of Greek Revival style expressed in concrete, this 1917 lighthouse is both a FHBRO recognized structure and a National Historic Site. It is currently out of bounds to Canadians because of wealthy American neighbors who have cut off road access.

On the morning of Monday, May 14, Kathy Brown received a phone message from Janet Truckenbrodt, Chair of the Point Abino Lighthouse Preservation Society, asking for support. The Fort Erie Town Council was meeting that night to decide whether to accept the lighthouse. They were worried about the issue of access. Kathy fired off a fax supporting their acceptance of the light,

On Tuesday, Janet called to say that the Council had voted unanimously to accept the light. Later she sent a thank you fax noting that Kathy's letter raised the awareness of the Mayor and Council by stressing the importance of the lighthouse throughout Canada. Access to the lighthouse is being solved as part of the hand over. The offer to purchase is conditional for a year so that the Town can assess costs of repair, accessibility, management arrangements and the like.

Point Abino Lighthouse is on the NSLPS Doomsday List. It can now be removed.

DONATIONS

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society has charitable tax status. That means you'll get a receipt for your donation to the NSLPS. We'll gladly accept donations in memory as well.

LIGHTSHOP:

Order from: Jeanne Thomas,
144 Spinnaker Drive, Halifax, NS B3N 3C1
Telephone 479-1626
e-mail: jmthomas@navnet.net

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

Peggy's Cove Paper Weight

\$10 + \$3 shipping

NSLPS Membership Pins

\$5 + \$1 shipping

Lighthouse Locator Map

\$13 + \$2 shipping.

***Vanishing Lights* by Chris Mills**

\$13 + \$3 shipping

(NOW OUT OF PRINT)

Art Print

The Work Crew on Sambro Island

7" x 10.5", ready to frame

Special \$12, postage included



"The Lightkeeper" Chris Mills

The 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 Editor: Chris Mills. Send items for publication to Editor *The Lightkeeper*, c/o 1121 Ketch Harbour Road, Ketch Harbour, NS B3V 1K7, or e-mail ketch@ns.sympatico.ca. **Deadline for September issue: August 20, 2001.**

NSLPS MEMBERSHIP FORM : January 1 - December 31, 2001

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