

THE Lightkeeper

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 12, No. 1, March/April 2005



IN THIS ISSUE:

AGM

SUMMER TRIPS

NEWS AND VIEWS

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

NSLPS WEBSITE REPORT

FAREWELL

VOICES OF THE LIGHTS

LIGHTSHOP

MODEL GALLERY

MEMBER HONOURED

Bon Portage Light Chris Mills



The objectives of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society are: to promote and support of the preservation and awareness of Nova Scotialighthouses; and also 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.nslps.com

LIGHTKEEPER EDITOR: CHRIS MILLS

COPY/PHOTO EDITORS: Nancy Eisener & Ashley Lohnes

PATRONS: Carl Lautenslager, Betty Schloss, Richard

Hamilton, Edith Northfield

AFFILIATES: Chebucto Head Lighthouse Society, Gilberts Cove and District Historical Society, Five Islands Lighthouse Preservation Society, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Louisburg Lighthouse Society, Medway Area Communities Association, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Interpretive Centre Port Bickerton, Port George District Lighthouse Society, Region of Queens Municipality, Spencers Island Community Association, Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee, Village On The Canel Association, Walton Area Development Association.

NSLPS EXECUTIVE 2004/2005

President/Lighthouse Protection Act Committee-Barry MacDonald 827-2027 e-mail: threefathom@eastlink.ca

Past President - Tony Thompson 477-7366

e-mail: tony@mscs.dal.ca

First Vice President-1st Director, Affiliate Services-

Doug Bamford 494-8180 (w) e-mail: dbamford@nscad.ns.ca

Second Vice President/Editor, The Lightkeeper

Chris Mills 868-2313

e-mail: ketch@ns.sympatico.ca

Treasurer - Peter Flemming 477-7531

e-mail: peterf@nscad.ns.ca

Secretary - Donna Merriam 461-0868 (h/w)

e-mail: dmerriam@canad.com

Director, Website Content - Kathy Brown 479-3115

e-mail: kathy@fromthesea.ca

Director, Webmaster, Membership - Peter MacCulloch

e-mail: petermac@ocean1.net

Director, Trips and Programmes/Mail person

Dorothy MacLeod 423-8034

Director, Member-at-Large - Josette d'Entremont e-mail:josette dentremont@msn.com

Director, Member-at-Large - Annelise Chapman

Director, Member-at-Large - John Ure

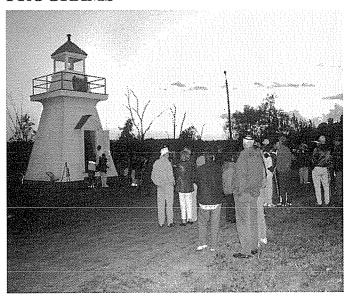
Director, Member-at-Large - John Langley

Director, Member-at-Large - Dan Sinclair 677-2133

WELCOME ABOARD

The following new members recently joined the NSLPS: Bruce Hubley, Karen Lawson, Richard Hamilton, Mark Steward Gert, Gayle Keressey, Mandine LeBlanc, Herb Beal, Jennie Bowser, George Himmelman, Graham Long, Lars Goodman, Theresa Sprinkle, David Trenbirth, Andy Henneberry.

PROGRAMS



Borden Wharf. Tony Thompson

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

7:00 PM Annual Meeting with Reports and

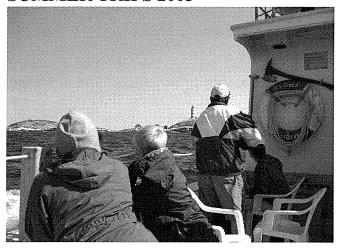
Presentation of the Craig Harding Memorial Award

8:15 PM Programme

Resurrecting Borden Wharf Lighthouse

The Borden Wharf Lighthouse near Canning was abandoned over eighty years ago, and after many years used as a pigsty and then as an information bureau. It's hard to believe it could be restored and re-lit, but that's exactly what happened last September. Meet members of the Fieldwood Heritage Society who brought about this miracle and learn how Kevin Wood's students at Northeast Kings Educational Center built the new gallery and lantern. This is one of the most amazing projects to receive a grant from the J.M.Kaplan Fund. Don't miss this fascinating story!

SUMMER TRIPS 2005



Harbour Tour to Sambro Island. Kathy Brown

WATER TOURS OF HALIFAX HARBOUR LIGHT-HOUSES

Saturdays: July 1, July 30, August 27, and September 24. Depart Purcell's Cove Marina, 521 Purcell's Cove Road at 9:00 AM and return at approximately 4:00 PM.

See the Lighthouses of Halifax Harbour and approaches close up, aboard the *Sea Tiger*, a Canadian Coast Guard approved 42-foot Cape Islander. Get an on-the-water view of Halifax's magnificent harbour. NSLPS guides will tell you about the lighthouses: Maughers Beach (on McNabs Island), Chebucto Head, Sambro, Devils Island, and Georges Island. There will be a trip ashore on Sambro Island, to get a close look at the lighthouse and have lunch (weather permitting). Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

Cost- \$50 per person - lunch and refreshments included. A portion of the trip fee will be donated to the NSLPS. Registration is required. These will be taken starting at the AGM.

ILE HAUTE, BAY OF FUNDY

Saturday, September 10

Weather date: Saturday, September 24

This is an all-day boat trip out of Harbourville on the Bay of Fundy to Ile Haute which lies off Cape Chignecto. Often shrouded in mist, the island has the reputation of disappearing by times! Dan Conlin, Curator of Marine History, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, an expert on the history of the island, and Tony Thompson, Past-President of NSLPS will lead this unusual trip. This an opportunity not to be missed! It is a fairly strenuous outing (getting on and off the boat via Zodiac, and hiking up to the lighthouse site). Registration required. These will be taken starting at the AGM.

In the planning stage are:

CAPE SABLE, off Cape Sable Island, the SOUTH SHORE and a special tour to EAST IRONBOUND ISLAND, MAHONE BAY, the setting for the novel "Rockbound" by Frank Parker Day which won the CBC "Canada Reads" contest in March.

The East Ironbound trip will be out of Lunenburg and you will also see Battery Point and Cross Island Lighthouses. Both East Ironbound and Cape Sable are day trips. Details will be available at the Annual General Meeting, April 27 and registrations can be made then.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Alberta Schoolkids Learn About Lighthouses

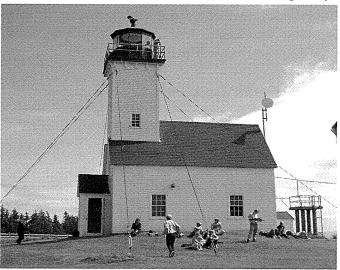
In the fall of 2004 we received a letter from a school teacher in Alberta, whose class of seven children was studying lighthouses and requesting any information we could send them. We're glad to know that kids – from grades one to four – are interested in lighthouses and their role in Canada's history. We don't know the name of the school, but it is either in or near Millet, which is about 20 miles south of Edmonton.

FHBRO Sambro Response

At the end of January the NSLPS received a brief response from the FHBRO in reference to our letter of concern about the state of the deteriorating Sambro gas house which urgently requires repairs to its granite foundation and wooden walls. Acting Cultural Resource Manager Wayne Moug has assured the NSLPS that "your concerns are being given due consideration and your letter is currently being reviewed by the FHBRO office."

Heritage Lighthouse Bill

MP Alexa MacDonough recently responded to the NSLPS letter of concern about Bill S-14. McDonough says



East Ironbound. Kathy Brown

she shares our concerns about the need for a national lighthouse protection act and told us that she has written to Federal Heritage Minister Frulla

Boat Show

NSLPS president Barry MacDonald rates the 2005 Halifax Boat Show as a success. Visitors to the society's booth signed 94 letters to the Heritage Minister in support of lighthouse protection. Lise Chapman's lighthouse quiz garnered interest as well, with 21 entries in the draw box. Special thanks to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic for allowing us to be a part of their display this year and to the board members who helped run the NSLPS booth.



Donna Merriam, Dan Conlin, Josette d'Entremont, Denyse Contrasty at the 2005 International Boat Show. *Josette d'Entremont*

Fundraising for Islands Historical Society

The Islands' Historical Society of Long and Brier Islands has issued a set of prints of the four lighthouses (see images below) found on these islands off Digby Neck. Freeport, Long Island artist Rodney Stark painted the set that includes the Brier Island, Peter Island, Grand Passage and Boars Head lights. For information or to purchase, please contact Joanne Whitenect at 839-2810.

Heritage Canada Report Card

Lighthouses don't make the grade in Heritage Canada's Annual Report Card for 2004. In a listing of Canada's "Top





Five" worst building losses, the Pictou Bar lighthouse (lost to fire in July 2004) takes fifth place. The Report Card also lists Saskatoon's 1931 Gathercole Building, The Hotel Shediac (built in 1855) and the Carstairs grain elevator in Alberta. Heritage Canada hopes to shine a "spotlight on out endangered places..." and to prevent more from being lost. Unfortunately, it is too late for the Pictou Bar lighthouse and others which will undoubtedly follow it.

Lighthouse Protection Act

Tony Thompson

NSLPS members will be happy to know that Bill S-14 (an act to protect heritage lighthouses) is alive and well. However, it is a Senate Bill and it is not at all clear when it will move from the Senate to the House of Commons nor, when it does so, whether the government will make any time available for its debate. South Shore MP Gerald Keddy is committed to sponsoring the bill in the House of Commons. NSLPS members are urged to write to their MPs asking them to support the bill. On another positive note, NSLPS president Barry MacDonald and past-president Tony Thompson met with NDP MP Alexa McDonough on Friday March 4th – McDonough said that she and Peter Stoffer (NDP Fisheries critic) would consider introducing a parallel bill in the House of Commons. Such a move might speed up the process.

White Head Appeal

We're looking for the kind person who sent us a copy of *The Lighthouse: One of the Seven Wonders of My World* by Mary-Ellen Reynolds. The author grew up on the White Head Island in Guysborough County, where her father Almon Munroe was lightkeeper until 1924. If you are the person who sent us Mary-Ellen's story or you are related to the Munroes of White Head Island, please contact the editor, c/o the NSLPS address on p.11, or via e-mail at ketch@ns.sympatico.ca

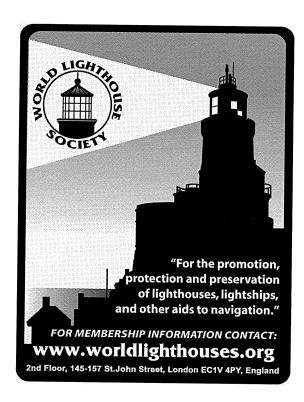
World Lighthouse Society Kudos

We have received kind comments on *The Lightkeeper* from Rosalie Davis-Gibb of the WLS, who recently wrote "I have so far found the magazines very interesting





indeed. Congratulations on a very professional publication. I know I speak for WLS members with internet access when I say that your website is also very impressive."



NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Donna Merriam, Secretary

The winter storms may have made us wish we were tucked snugly at home, but NSLPS board members have been very busy this season moving the divestiture issue more and more into the public view. Through interviews and speaking engagements, meetings and letters, President Barry Macdonald, Past President Tony Thompson, and a number of other directors have worked hard to have a timely influence on aspects of divestiture as they have become prominent. With national interest forming regarding the future of all of Canada's lighthouses, a ground swell of energy is gathering to address the planning and action required in meeting developments as the 2006 deadline for divestiture bears down. A national conference is in the planning stages. This will bring together stakeholders and will give voice to community concerns about lighthouses across Canada.

Of course the business of NSLPS must go on as usual, so individual lighthouse and Halifax Harbour trips, as well as seasonal programs are being planned and advertised. The most recent program was a well-researched talk

by John Langley on the history of Samuel Cunard in Halifax and his connection to lighthouses. Upcoming trips are noted in this issue, but you may not realize that behind the scenes Dorothy Macleod and Kathy Brown are busy organizing, contacting, advertising and like most Nova Scotians, discussing the potential effects of fog and rain on the plans for boating excursions. It looks like another successful summer of family outings in the making, so be sure to batten down your sou'wester and join the fun as often as possible.

Along with spring, memberships are a topic of conversation this time of year. Holding steady with over 200 memberships, NSLPS needs your support to remain a vibrant organization throughout the divestiture process and into the future. Have you renewed your membership? To quote Red Green, we're all in this together. So, let us count you in! Thanks.

The website is still going strong with 3,199 visits in the month of January alone. Kathy Brown and Peter MacCulloch deserve a round of applause for their unending efforts to fine tune the look and accessibility of the site, as well as the information content. That work continues, but in the meantime the site is user friendly and an informative tool for generating enthusiasm for Nova Scotia lights. Since last year when she became a director, Kathy has provided a great resource to the World Lighthouse Society, due to her past presidency in Nova Scotia, many years of active service here, and a wealth of first-hand knowledge of our lights.

The oral history project carried out by Chris Mills collected vivid memories and riveting stories of light keepers and their families who lived at lights across the province. With the inspiration of so much rich history and no end of humour, Chris hopes to craft a volume of stories, which will ensure thatstories of life on the islands and at the lights is not lost to future generations, who may not have grown up with light houses in their communities or realize what a special way of life they represented. Of course, Chris is kept very busy editing and producing the Lightkeeper each quarter. As the work level mounts in producing the vastly improved look of the newsletter, he is increasingly thankful for the help of his new talented assistants, Ashley Lohnes and Nancy Eisener.

Again this February, NSLPS shared space thanks to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic at the boat show at Exhibition Park. Lise Chapman and Josette d'Entremont created a lighthouse quiz which provided some merriment as we tested our knowledge of Nova Scotia lights with people stopping in to see the booth. Rip Irwin's book,

Lighthouses and Lights of Nova Scotia is the prize for the draw. A great stack of letters were signed to forward to the Minister of Canadian Heritage regarding support for Bill S-14, an act to protect heritage lighthouses, which is still in committee of the house in Ottawa. It is hopeful that the minority government situation may result in greater support for the bill as it proceeds.

As all of this work progresses, plans are as well underway for the Annual General Meeting at the Maritime Museum on April 27th at 7:00 PM. Around the necessary business of the society will be interesting speakers, awards and lots of coffee and chat, so mark your calendar and join your friends celebrating another year of effective action in protecting Nova Scotia lights.

LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

Bon Portage Island Lights Out

Notices to Mariners recently stated the Bon Portage Light will be decommissioned. The horn has already been turned off and the light downgraded. If for no other reason than to mark the site as the former home of Morrill and Evelyn Richardson (of *We Keep A Light* fame), the Coast Guard should keep this light in operation.

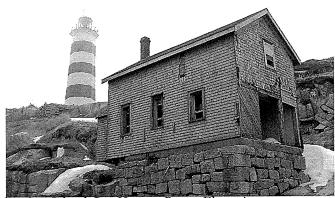
Cape Sable Spruce-Up

Clarks Harbour town council is hoping to put some badly needed paint on the lofty Cape Sable lighthouse. The 101-foot structure hasn't been painted in years and needs concrete repair work as well. According to Shelburne's Coast Guard newspaper, Clarks Harbour town council has been looking for a site access license in order to do some work on the tower. The DFO's Glen Fry was quoted as saying his department may "advance exterior maintenance painting of this structure to address tourism concerns through provision of a site access license... to undertake an exterior painting project, in compliance with federal regulations."

Fry also acknowledged the possibility of a partnership agreement between the Coast Guard and the town to maintain the tower. Cape Sable is one of only two lighthouses in Nova Scotia with "full" heritage protection. Given the state of the tower, it is sometimes difficult to understand what exactly *is* protected by Cape Sable's FHBRO designation.

New tanks for Georges and Sambro Island

The Coast Guard recently installed new fibreglass oil tanks for the back-up generator on Georges Island and in the Sambro Island ngine room.



Sambro Island Gas House. Bruce Flemming

Seal Island History Saved

A small but very important piece of Seal Island's history has made a final voyage to safety in Clark's Harbour. A 19th century lifeboat once used on the island had sat on the island's east side for decades. Island resident Ronnie Kenney decided it was time to move the decaying boat ashore so it could be restored. According to an article in the *Coast Guard* (Shelburne's newspaper), the lifeboat will spend the winter in a former fire department truck bay in Clark's Harbour. Mayor Leigh Stoddart says he hopes boatbuilder Freeman Atkinson will restore the boat.

Sound of Silence On Hold, Sort Of

The DFOs Glen Fry reports that the Coast Guard has imposed a moratorium on fog horn removal. The Chebucto Head fog signal will continue to operate for the time being, but the Coast Guard turned off the Georges Island horn in February, stating that it is not necessary for commercial interests in the harbour. A Coast Guard official said that fog signals are not operated for the benefit of pleasure vessels. One would think that fog signals should be operated for the benefit of *all* tax-paying mariners. The removal of fog signals has caused a public outcry in British Columbia, where the Coast Guard has recently re-activated six horns. Only a handful of fog signals remain in operation in Ontario, Quebec and PEI.

NSLPS WEBSITE REPORT

Kathy Brown

The website continues to be heavily used. From a high of 3,560 in July, the number of visitors went down to 2,596 in November, but they have since risen to 3,361 in February. This is almost the same as the number of visitors last August. Work continues on corrections. In addition, photos documenting the move of the Abbotts

Harbour Lighthouse have been added to that page. History and photos have been added to Western Head, a page on the Craig Harding Award is now under "About NSLPS," and historical details and images have been added to the East Ironbound page. Masthead Images have been added to the following lighthouse pages: Canso Range Lights, Charlos Harbour, East Ironbound, Havre Boucher Range Light, Marache Point, Pictou Harbour Range Lights, Pubnico Harbour, and Western Head. Many thanks to those who supplied photos. Please contact Peter MacCulloch and Kathy Brown through the website e-mail with any errors or additions.

FAREWELL

We are sad to report the passing of **Anne Flemming** of Ketch Harbour, on February 19th. Anne and her husband Stanley lived at the Chebucto Head lighthouse from 1950 to 1980, raising a family of five children on the granite cliffs overlooking Halifax Harbour. Anne was very proud of her lighthouse connections, and always pleased to share her memories of life at Chebucto Head. (See Anne's story in *The Lightkeeper*, Vol 8., No.3, Sept 2002). Anne Flemming was 86.

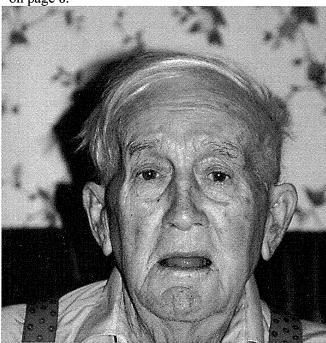


Anne Flemming. Chris Mills

Lightkeeper **Sidney Malone** died December 13, 2004. Sid became a lightkeeper in 1976, working on several stations, including Cross Island and Chebucto Head. He was predeceased by his brother Radford, who kept the lights at Peases Island, NS and Machias Seal Island, New Brunswick. Sidney Malone was 68.

We also extend condolences to the family of Blair Cameron, who died on October 16, at the age of 82. Blair kept the light on Beaver Island, near Port Dufferin, on Nova Scotia's eastern shore. Blair spent more than 25 years on Beaver Island, rasing seven children with

his wife Joyce. A combination of quick wit and dry humour no doubt helped Blair weather life on his isolated island. Read his story in *Voices of the Lights*, on page 8.



Blair Cameron. Chris Mills

The North American lighthouse community has also suffered a loss with the death of **Connie Small**. Connie and her husband Elson kept lights in New England, including Portsmouth Harbour, Avery Rock and Saint Croix Island. Connie loved to tell people about lighthouses and gave an estimated 550 lectures about life on the lights. Connie's book, *The Lighthouse Keepers Wife* came out when she was 85, becoming a best-seller in Maine. Connie Small died on January 25, 2005 at the age of 103.

On November 24, 2004, lightkeeper's daughter **Ethel** (**Boutilier**) **Kennedy** passed away. Ethel was eldest daughter of Wentworth and Maggie Boutilier, who kept the Croucher Island lighthouse in Saint Margarets Bay from 1922 to 1944. Ethel is survived by her sisters Geraldine Stevens and Joyce Cook and brother Wayne.

The Nova Scotia lighthouse community has suffered a loss with the death of **Donald Wickerson** Lent on March 21st. Wick was born in Westport, Brier Island in 1919 and became a keeper at the island's Grand Passage Light in 1959. He worked for a number of years as assistant keeper at the Brier Island lightstation (known locally as Western Light) and then returned to Grand Passage, until he retired in 1984. Wick was

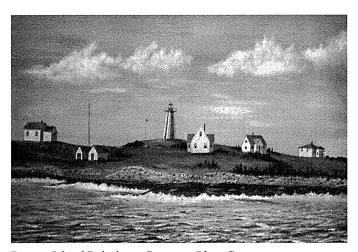
a true character and delighted in telling tales of his lightkeeping days, including various adventures with the old diaphone fog alarm at Western Light. His lighthouse reminiscences (as recorded by Chris Mills in 2000) were published in *Passages* (the monthly Long and Brier Islands newsletter) in August and September 2002.

Wick was predeceased by his wife Madeline, in 1978. Our condolences to his children Brian, Chester, Harry and Faye.

VOICES OF THE LIGHTS

Chris Mills

Blair Cameron moved out to the Beaver Island lighthouse, near Port Dufferin, in 1960. For the next 27 years he kept the light and horn going and raised a family of 7 kids with his wife Joyce. In May, 2004 I visited Blair at his home in Moser River, on Nova Scotia's eastern shore. Along with his daughters Heather and Valerie, Blair shared his short, sharp and dry reminiscences of life on Beaver Island. Blair Cameron died in October 2004 at the age of 82.



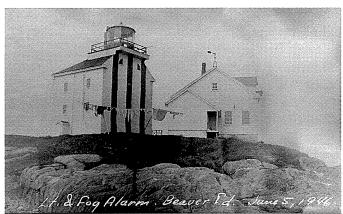
Beaver Island Painting. Courtesy Blair Cameron

Well, I was wanderin' around the coast. They picked me up and took me out. I didn't think too much of it! It was a dreary place. But you could make some moonshine. [The other keeper] had a keg goin' all the time. That never lasted 'till it got brewed!

You'd have to drink it to appreciate it. Sometimes it was pretty thick.

The job was all about paintin' and keepin' everything shipshape. You lit the light at dusk and you put it out at daylight. Where could you get a job any better? All to yourself and a cheque every month!

At this point, amidst much laughter, his daughter Valerie reminded him that his seven children took up a bit of his time as well.



Beaver Island 1946. Canadian Coast Guard

We lived on the island for most of the summers. My mother stayed home and we went to school in Moser River and in the summers we went out. The seas were so bad at times that we thought we'd never make it! I remember we started out and the winds came up and it was so stormy that we couldn't get ashore. We had to anchor off and of course everybody was as sick as a dog.

One time we had two boats goin' out with supplies and the guy drivin' the other boat dropped dead. He had a heart attack. He dropped dead on our bread and I couldn't eat bread for six months!

It was a great place to raise kids, although with two other families on the island, there were often interesting interludes with the assistant keepers boys. Bert remembered:

One time they smashed I don't know how many 200-watt bulbs. Smashed them! I hung the boys up on the clothesline for half the night, and left them there. They didn't think much of it! When I let them down they come after me with a big long pole. And if they'd 'a hit me I'd 'a been gone way before I was! Bad buggers. The whole tribe of them!

For the Cameron kids, the living was easy in the

summer. Heather loved it.

We played endlessly and built camps and stayed in them. We swam in the water, which was ice cold. We'd come out lookin' like a lobster because we were so red, but we didn't mind. One day I was swimming alone and I heard a strange noise. I shot up straight in the water and came out and when I looked and there was a



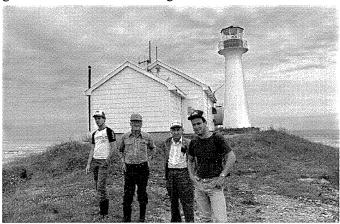
Beaver Island. Coast Guard

-8-

huge whale had surfaced and blown. I stood there and watched him in awe.

You always had something to do. Swimming or stealing something – oh *borrowing* something – from the supply building and nails and lumber to build your camps and just walkin' around the islands. Just havin' fun.

We used to have plays in the lighthouse and all the families would come and we'd perform our little skits. The older girls would make up something and you'd have to perform something - usually the trouble that we would get into and how would we get out of it.



Beaver Island 1987. Chris Mills

Blair added: They'd get in a barrel of that herring, with all the scales on them. They'd be some god-damn mess! Your mother would holler at you, when she see you comin'! They'd be loaded with scales. They'd stick right to ya when they got dry.

Heather remembered: We'd dress up in some sort of a costume. Vincey Fleet would always sing Sugar in the Morning, Sugar in the Evening, Sugar at Suppertime. That was his big thing.

Visits from Coast Guard ships and helicopters also provided the Cameron kids with fodder for fun. As Valerie remembers,

When supplies would come in we'd open up the boxes and go through them. I guess sometimes we'd take a few things, use them in our camps. We'd take a lot of the rags they'd send out and nails. If they had lanterns and things like that we'd take them and we'd put them in our little camps that we'd make. So, we stole a lot of supplies.



Beaver Island 1987. Chris Mills

And of course my father had to account for it. I guess a lotta times he used to think that they shorted him on the supplies. But of course we would get into the boxes before he opened them and we would borrow a few things.

Valerie enjoyed "borrowing" from the assistant keeper's wife, too.

I used to steal Ruth Fleet's bread. She used to get quite hostile with me, after she figured out it was me stealin' the bread. She'd have it on the counter and I'd run in and sneak a couple buns right out of the oven.

She used to like to wait for her bread to cool off. I wanted it hot! It took a while to figure out who it was sneakin' the bread and when she found out she chased me. She hauled off and whacked me with some kind of paddle or something. I told her I was gonna tell my father and she said "Blair D. Cameron? What do you think he's gonna do?

The 1960s were busy years on Beaver Island, with three keepers and their families on the island during the summer months. After altercations with whales and camp-building activities, there was always time for a picnic on the beach, as Heather remembers.



Beaver Island houses 1987. Chris Mills

They used to boil lobsters on the shore and you'd eat them out of the shell. [The assistant keeper] had a lobster license. 'Course we would never catch them out of season! You just made a fire on the shore and that was a picnic. Somebody would bring a potato salad and rolls and you'd just sit there and those were the good old days, I guess.

They weren't always good days for Joyce Cameron. Valerie notes that her mother had her hands full with seven kids on an isolated island.

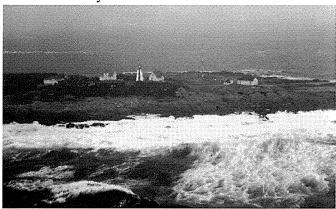
Life out there was very hard for my mother. She had to make sure she had all her supplies and she had to look after all us children and if anything went wrong, well, Dad had a first aid kit and they diagnosed and treated us. It would be kind of scary, I think, when a kid comes runnin' to the house with blood goin' down their face. So, she had to be everything. A doctor, a cook. I think it was stressful and hard on her, bein' out there because of the children. You couldn't just get ashore if anything happened. And she didn't even have a washing machine. She had to use a scrub board to wash our clothes!

It's been 18 years since Blair Cameron left Beaver Island. The houses are gone, and all that remains is a fibreglass lighthouse and a few reminders of the Cameron family's life on the island. Heather still goes out to the island.

I have a little boat of my own and I go out there and walk around the island and look at some of the remnants of our old camps. It's kinda sad though really. But it's nice, too. It brings back memories of when you were a kid and things you used to do.

I asked Blair what the best part of life on Beaver Island was for him

I don't know if there was any best thing to it! I don't think there was anything I enjoyed about it. That fog horn blowin' in your ears!



Beaver Island 1987. Canadian Coast Guard

"Alright," I said, "If there wasn't anything good, what was the worst of it?"

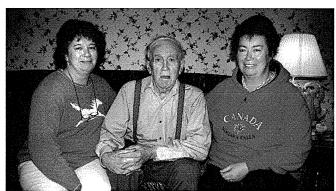
Blair responded Well, it would be I guess that fog horn blowin' all night, and the fog. Thick as the hair on a dog's back!

Valerie, after listening to her father told me it wasn't that simple. Her father had really loved his life on Beaver Island

When he turned 65 they said it's time to retire and he refused. That was the year that they told him that they passed a law that you didn't have to retire at 65, so he said he thought he'd stay out there.

It had become a way of life for him and it took him a while to adjust once he did come home, 'cause Beaver Island was his home. It was like they were kickin' him out. He knew his time was coming close, that they were gonna close it. He was quite upset because that was his home and they weren't gonna tell him he was going to retire. He was gonna stay there 'till they closed it down. He come home on vacation and they sent him his papers saying they closed it down

Blair had the final word though. I had no feeling when I left. I took a drink of moonshine and left!



Valerie Opas, Blair Cameron & Heather Turner. Chris Mills

This interview is part of the NSLPS oral history project. Special thanks to Valerie Opas and Heather Turner, and to the late Blair Cameron for taking the time to share their memories of Beaver Island.

LIGHTSHOP

Help support the NSLPS! Profits from these items go to the society to help save our historic lights.

Lighthouses and Lights of Nova Scotia: A Complete Guide, by E.H Rip Irwin. Nimbus Publishing, 2003. The definitive book on all existing Nova Scotia lighthouses. \$32.00 including tax. Book + packing and postage: Nova Scotia: \$40.00. For mailing in Canada outside Nova Scotia: \$43.00. For mailing to USA: \$45.00. Air mail to USA please add \$3.00.

NSLPS Membership Pin:

Enhance your prestige with this oval pin, showing the NSLPS logo in red and gold on a dark blue background. \$7.50 including packing and postage.

Lighthouse Locator Map:

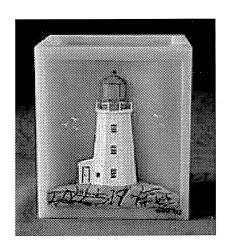
Correlates with the book *Lighthouses and Lights of Nova Scotia.* \$18.00 including packing and postage.

Order from: Kathy Brown, 24 Armshore Drive, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3N 1M5 e-mail: kathy@fromthesea.ca

ORDERS MUST BE PRE-PAID. PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO THE NSLPS

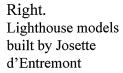
LIGHTHOUSE LUMINARIES FROM CHESTER CANDLES

These are carved-in-relief replicas of lighthouses which have been lovingly painted by local artists. They each have a history on the back on the luminary. The outer shell with the design and information is everlasting. Included with each is a candle and holder, a certificate of authenticity with the limited edition number and a guarentee. Nova Scotia lighthouses available are: Peggy's Point Light; Sambro Island Light; Henry Island Light; Cape Forchu (1962) and Cape Forchu (circa 1839); Louisbourg Light (circa 1734).25 per cent of each sale is contributed to the work of the NSLPS. Lumineries depicting other lighthouses are available from our website www.chestercandles.com.They can for the same benefit of 25 per cent to the NSLPS. If ordering directly from us, tell us you would like the donation to go to NSLPS. Cost \$49.95 plus \$8.00 shipping.



MODEL GALLERY

Left. Scale model of JerseymanIslandlighthouse built by Russ Latimer. Russ moved to the small island off Arichat, Isle Madame, in 1930. He built the model from memory in 2004. The structure was built in 1872 and demolished in 1950.





SPECIAL HONOUR FOR NSPLS MEMBER

Roderick J. MacLennan has been named to the Order of Canada. The Truro resident is well known for his work with youth groups. MacLennan heads a foundation that funds young performers as well as musical and theatre groups in Colchester County and Cape Breton.

The Lightkeeper is published 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 Chris Mills, 1121 Ketch Harbour Road, Ketch Harbour, Nova Scotia, B3V 1K7, or e-mail ketch@ns.sympatico.ca. Deadline for June issue: May 15, 2005.

NSLPS MEMBERSHIP FORM: January 1 - December 31, 2005		New Renewal: Membership #
NAME:		TELEPHONE:
ADDRESS:		POSTAL CODE:
E-MAIL:		CELL PHONE:
Family/Group names for	or extra cards:	
Single - \$20.00	Institutional/Group - \$30.00	Patron - \$100.00
Family - \$25.00	Sustaining - \$50.00	Foreign - \$15.00 U.S. Funds, or equivalent.
Amount enclosed \$	Please make cheques payable to the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society	
Mail to: THE NOVA So	COTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SO	CIETY
c/o Maritima Museum	of the Atlantic 1675 Lower Water Street Halif	ax Nova Scotia B31 1S3



FROM THE PAST...

This happy group of picnicers poses near the Peter Island lighthouse in Digby County, some time during the 1920s. Seated left front is Miriam Turnbull. To her right is Elizabeth Turnbull Ellis, of Bayview, near Digby. The lady in the centre is Minnie Welch, of Barton, Digby County. Her husband David holds the picnic mugs. *Thanks to Nancy Walker (Elizabeth Ellis's grand daughter) for this wonderful photo.*