

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society
Vol. 13, No. 3, October 2006

The Lightkeeper™

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The objectives of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society are: to promote and to support the preservation and awareness of Nova Scotia

lighthouses; to assist community groups in leasing or taking ownership of lighthouse sites; to provide access to written research and photographic documentation, to initiate oral history research and to classify and monitor the status of historic lighthouse sites.

WEBSITE: <http://www.nslps.com>

LIGHTKEEPER EDITORIAL STAFF: Nancy Eisener, Shawn Connors, Ashley Lohnes. Advisor: Chris Mills

PATRONS: Richard Hamilton, Edith Northfield

SUSTAINING MEMBERS: Dan Conlin, Denyse Contrasty, Joyce Cook, Barbara Joan Davis, Sally DeWolf, John Freeman, Peter Goforth, Ian S. Griffin, Dorothy MacLeod, Antonia (Toni) Riedl, Janet Leigh Schaffner, Brenda Shannon, Muriel Smiley, Jeffrey Smith, Mark Stewart, Michael Tilley, Nancy Walker

AFFILIATES: Burntcoat Head Park, Central Nova Tourist Association, Chebucto Head Lighthouse Society, Cunard Steamship Society, Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Gilbert Cove and District Historical Society, Greville Bay Shipbuilding Museum Society, Islands Historical Society, LinArt Designs, Louisbourg Lighthouse Society, Medway Area Communities Association, Region of Queens Municipality

NSLPS EXECUTIVE 2006/07

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 - Graham McBride

Second Vice President - Chris Mills 868-2313

e-mail: ketch@ns.sympatico.ca

Treasurer - Lew Perry

Secretary - Joanne McCormick

Director, Membership - Annelise Chapman

Programmes/Mail person - Lew Perry

Trips/Programmes - Jeanne Thomas

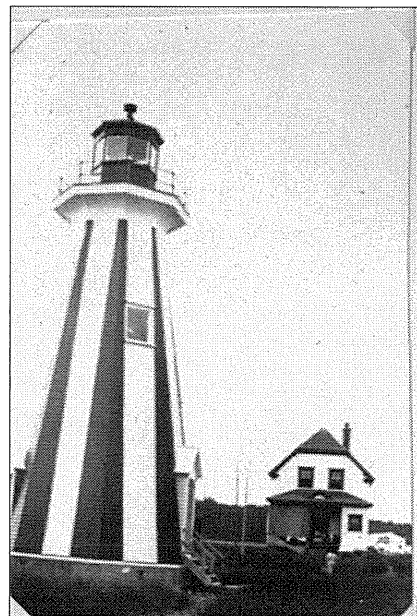
Director, Member-at-Large - Tom Roberts

Director, Member-at-Large - Denyse Contrasty

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS LIGHT?

In the next few issues of *The Lightkeeper* we will be providing a picture of an 'unknown light' in the hope that some of our

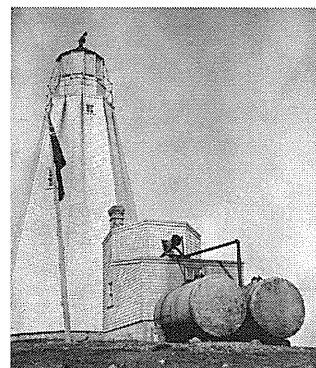
readers will recognize the light and be able to provide us with definitive information on its origin. The photos are part of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic Lighthouse collection and the Museum is partnering with the NSLPS on this project to identify these photos. If you have ideas or information on this light please contact Ashley Lohnes at portcove@hotmail.com. Ashley will ensure this information is passed on to the museum and shared in the next edition of *The Lightkeeper*.



Unidentified light. Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

June Mystery Light Identified

Thanks to Michel Forand who correctly identified the June Mystery Light as the old Coffin Island lighthouse. Michel identified the light using an old postcard for comparison.



Coffin Island Lighthouse

Errata:

June 2006 (Vol 13, No.2):

The front cover photo was courtesy of Provincial Airlines.

The two photos of the Cranberry Island lighthouse at the bottom of p.13 in the June 2006 (Vol 13, No. 2) *Lightkeeper* were taken by E. H. Rip Irwin and not Chris Mills, as noted.

Cover photo: Flying a new lantern to Coffin Island. *Courtesy Canadian Coast Guard*

LIGHTHOUSE TRIPS 2006

HALIFAX HARBOUR LIGHTS *Josette d'Entremont*

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society had a wonderful lighthouse tour on August 19th with A & M Charters. With 3 crew members, we were 20 in all. The weather was awesome, sunny and a bit gusty. I guided the tour and a few others added a few stories! We had a great Dartmouth/Halifax Harbour tour, including the shipyard and the military base at Stadacona; we viewed



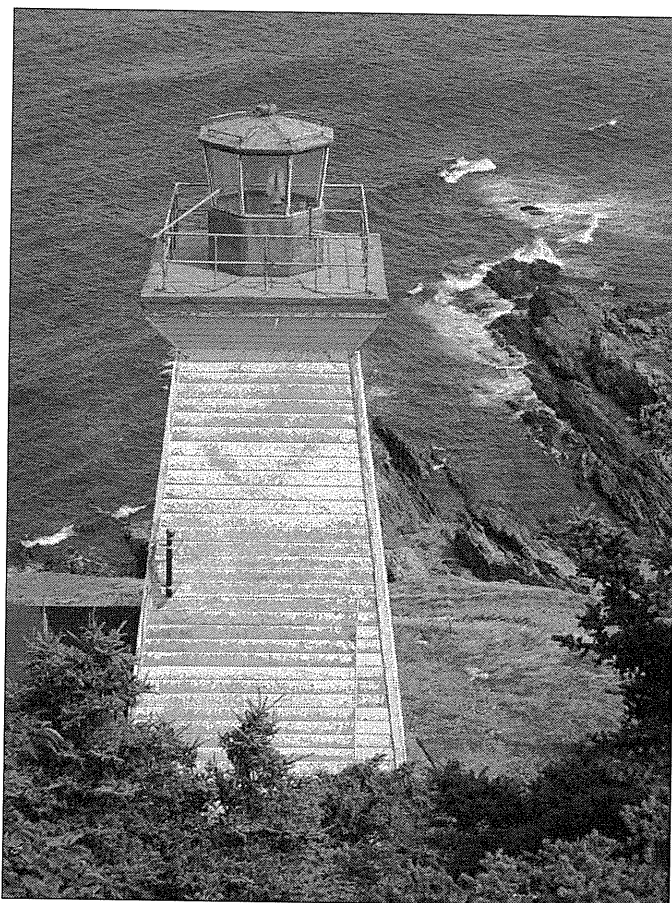
Halifax Harbour tour participants. *Josette d'Entremont*

the old Saint Paul south west light at the Canadian Coast Guard in Dartmouth; George's Island lighthouse; saw a Carnival Cruise Ship at Port; saw a Minkie whale off McNabs Island; had a nice tour of the Northwest Arm up to the Dingle Tower; viewed Maugher's Beach lighthouse; Chebucto Head lighthouse and then proceeded to Sambro Island lighthouse.

Captain Conrod was unable to land on the island due to 6 foot whitecap waves! He did however get very close to the island so the folks could get a closeup view of the lighthouse and the Devil's Staircase (rock formation) on the south side. Our ride back toward Devil's Island was a breeze and we viewed the lighthouse there, arriving back at Fishermen's Cove at 4 p.m. A fantastic trip! Thank-you Jeannie Thomas for taking over to organize this tour.

CAPE NORTH *Chris Mills*

About a dozen hearty NSLPS members gathered at the far northern tip of Cape Breton over the Labour Day weekend for what was likely the most strenuous society trip to date. And indeed it was. The Cape North lighthouse at Money Point is located at the base of a 475 metre (1558') hill, accessible only after a bumpy ride along an old dirt



Cape North Light. *Chris Mills*

road, and then a thigh-burning hike down a steep, crumbling path.

At the bottom of the hill, the trees thin out to reveal a wide expanse of meadow above the sea and the brooding hump of Saint Paul Island in the distance. The trail to the lighthouse continues along the shoreline, past the ruins of the original 1876 lighthouse and washed out guardrail posts, to the current lighthouse built in 1980-81. It replaced an iron tower which originally served at Cape Race, Newfoundland and now sits on the grounds of the National Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa.

The Coast Guard sent Money Point's last lightkeeper, John Gwynn, home in 1987, and destroyed the station's two dwellings and outbuildings a few years later. All that remains today are the foundations, set amidst this wild and spectacular site.

The tour participants took a break to eat lunch on the helicopter pad (built on the foundation of the assistant keeper's house) and then headed out for the grueling two-hour climb up the 35-40 degree slope to the top of Cape North.

It was a tough climb, but well worth the physical cost after being able to see one of Nova Scotia's most spectacular lighthouse sites.

DIGBY NECK AND ISLANDS *Chris Mills*

In contrast to the Cape North trip, visitors to Prim Point, Boars Head, Grand Passage and Western Light were able to reach these lights in the comfort of their cars. Only three people made the trip, along with leader Chris Mills, his daughter Maris and a friend. We met at Digby's crumbling concrete lighthouse at Point Prim, before traveling down the Neck to Boars Head, which sits at the north east end of Long Island.

A local group has taken over maintenance of the site, which at one time included two keepers houses and a fog alarm building. All that remains today is the 1957 wooden lighthouse (freshly painted this summer) and a modern concrete building housing the fog horn equipment. Barry Buckman of the Tiverton and Central Grove Heritage Association joined the tour to explain his group's plans and hopes for this beautiful cliff top lighthouse site. (See Community News in this issue for details.)

As the rain began to fall, we made our way to Brier Island, where the Grand Passage lighthouse had begun to send its fog horn blast into the rain. The station is one of the few in the area still intact – used now by the crew of the Canadian Coast Guard Cutter Westport.

A short drive through the village of Westport took us to the Brier Island light (known locally as Western Light and also freshly painted after more than a decade), where by this time, the wind and rain combined to drive us to find shelter and warm drinks.

HRM LIGHTHOUSES FOR U.S. VISITORS *Josette d'Entremont*

On Aug. 13th I guided an HRM lighthouse tour, sponsored by Lighthouse Depot from Wells, Maine. It was super weather-wise, with 25 lighthouse enthusiasts from all over the States, aboard the A & M Sea Charters from Fisherman's Cove, Eastern Passage. Cap't Albert Conrod was in command and he gave us a fantastic Halifax and Dartmouth Harbour tour, which included the Northwest Arm and a sighting of a Minkie whale just off Purcells's Cove! After visiting the lighthouses within Halifax Harbour, we headed for Sambro Island. We weren't able to land on the island but I made sure that our guests knew the significance of this lighthouse.

The trip participants thanked me thoroughly and made a donation for our Society of \$30 US. I thanked them on behalf of the NSLPS.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Bear River Boarded Up *Chris Mills*

The de-commissioned lighthouse at Winchester Point, overlooking Bear River has been vandalized in recent years – this no doubt prompted the recent boarding up of the lantern. The 1905 tower is still in decent shape and ripe for take-over by a community group. So far, the NSLPS is not aware of any organized interest among residents in the area.

Boars Head Future Looks Bright *Chris Mills*

After almost two decades of neglect, the Boars Head lightstation has a new lease on life. Although the freshly-painted light and the fog horn continue to operate, both keepers houses have been gone for many years and until recently, alders had all but taken over the former access road from Tiverton.

Thanks to the newly formed Tiverton and Central Grove Heritage Association, that road is now clear and there is now controlled access by car to the lighthouse. The association came into being in late 2005 and has several projects on the go, including the placement of a monument to local mariners lost at sea and care of a road that allows public access to the Fundy shore of Long Island. The association was also recently successful securing municipal heritage status for the 1879 Central Grove Baptist Church on Long Island.

Member Barry Buckman kindly opened the Boars Head gate for the NSLPS tour on September 23rd. He explained that for several weeks, volunteers had been clearing brush from the paved access road to allow cars to drive to the light. Coast Guard crews showed up in the early fall to help complete the job.

Barry says the association's short term goals are to clear the site so that interpretive signage and picnic tables can be placed near the lighthouse. He adds that his group plans to install a cairn at the site, listing the keepers at Boars Head. Long-time guardian Murray "Barney" Outhouse passed away earlier this year at the age of 84. The Coast Guard destaffed the light in 1987.

Burntcoat Head Burgeons *Charlie McCulloch*

The 2006 season was a busy time for the Association. We had the power run to the lighthouse in January and the road and the parking lot enlarged. The lighthouse has been wired and track lighting was installed to enhance the new interpretive panels. In June we purchased a 42-inch flat-screen TV with surround sound and we now have videos



Burntcoat Head light. *Josette d'Entremont*

available to the tourists on such topics as the Saxby Gale, The Mariner of Minasville, The Fundy Tides and others. The tourists are really impressed and we have received very good feedback on the contents of the videos.

A new 4 by 8-foot entrance sign has been installed and directional signage has been erected on Highway 215. A new security gate has been installed, as well as a security alarm system in the lighthouse. We have designed a new brochure for the Park and have printed 10,000 copies. We also upgraded our picnic area with the addition of five new tables.

This year we experienced a decline of approximately 1,000 visitors signing our guest book. We believe this is partly due to the fact that we received less student funding than previous years and therefore the lighthouse was not open as many hours during the day as in the past. We are continuing to improve the site and are looking forward to next season.

Coffin Island Compromise *Chris Mills*

The historic lighthouse on Coffin Island has lost its battle with the sea. Despite a \$70,000 seawall placed around the eroding foundation of the lighthouse in 1999, the sea has continued to undermine this 1914 concrete classical revival tower to the point where visitors can actually stand underneath the light's foundation. Coast Guard crews are now completing the installation of a new fiberglass tower near the old light. Considering that the old tower had been de-commissioned, replaced by a buoy and then re-lit after the buoy proved no match for wind and sea (and recently darkened again), it's the best possible compromise for the 5th oldest lighthouse site in Nova Scotia. The new tower will resemble a traditional lighthouse and will continue its job as both a sea and landmark in Liverpool Bay.

Five Islands *Chris Mills*

Gloria Lewis says visitor numbers at Five Islands bucked

the provincial trend with an increase from last summer. A student staffed the 1914 lighthouse during the summer months, although there was no Lighthouse Day celebration at the site this year.

Fort Point *Jill Cruikshank, Region of Queens Municipality.*

We had a great season at Fort Point - numbers were up on last year and our gift shop practically sold out. We enjoyed the fiddling and sea shanties of Bruce Smith, (who has moved to the area) and entertained the visitors of numerous occasions.

Jill adds: A new fiberglass [tower] was put in position on Coffin Island on Tuesday [October 17].

Gilbert's Cove Lighthouse Ever Busy

Jim Lovett, President, Gilbert Cove/District Historical Society

Members of the Gilbert Cove and District Historical Society are pleased with the successful events they have enjoyed at the Gilbert's Cove Lighthouse this year. Since the society was formed in 1982 to assume stewardship of the lighthouse, membership has grown steadily and currently stands at 273 paid-up members. This kind of continuing support from the community has enabled the society to maintain the lighthouse in top physical condition while receiving a growing number of appreciative visitors.

The summer season at the lighthouse began with the first annual Arts & Craft Show on May 28 when society members proudly displayed their various winter works featuring hooked rugs and knitted items. Many of these products were available for purchase at the lighthouse craft shop during the summer. The lighthouse was open to visitors from mid-June to September 17. On the final weekend, the lighthouse participated in the annual Southwest Lighthouse Tour with artisans providing demonstrations while chowder and soup was available for lunch in the tea room. During the open season, 4,000 visitors signed the lighthouse guest book. We estimate that over 10,000 people visit the site annually as it is accessible year-round and growing in popularity. The Annual Family Picnic, held on the third Sunday in July, was a huge success both financially and in attendance as everybody had a great time. Another "spooky" time is planned for Haunted Halloween at the lighthouse on October 31 when it can give a little something back to the community.

While in the past the society has relied on student grant assistance to help staff the lighthouse, no grant money was available in 2006. Applications sent to both the Nova Scotia Tourism Department and to HRSDC were rejected as the lighthouse was considered to be "not a priority". However, with a little belt tightening, the lighthouse survived nicely, had a more financially successful year than ever, and is in good shape for the upcoming

season – without “help” from the senior governments.

With the exception of a \$1,000 grant received from the municipality, the society was entirely self-sufficient in maintaining the lighthouse in 2006. A maintenance reserve fund is also being set up to provide for future needs and ensure that the community and visitors alike can continue to enjoy a true lighthouse experience in the Greatest Little Lighthouse in Canada!

Hampton Continues to Shine *Chris Mills*

The Hampton lighthouse folks report that their Thrift Shop in Lawrencetown is paying off – funds raised will go towards painting the lighthouse next year, and to build a deck on one side of the lighthouse. Louise Sanderson says the community will hold an Apple Festival on Oct 29th -- guests bring their favourite apple dessert and its recipe to be included in a book. “The ultimate goal,” Louise says “is to gain new volunteers.”

She says there were 20 visitors during the community’s lighthouse weekend, from the U.S. across Canada, a groups from the South Shore and 4 local guests. “We had 10 visitors and a dog (!) from Europe and USA at different times during the summer.”

Louise adds “We have a very successful newspaper - 8 to 12 pages - circulation 1300 - mailed out free of charge, monthly.” The community is now rallying to save its CAP (public internet access site) which has lost funding from Industry Canada.

Margaretsville Shines On *Chris Mills*

John Freeman reports that it’s pretty well business as usual at Nova Scotia’s only black and white lighthouse. The tower’s recent paint job is holding up well and on the couple of occasions that the light was out, John’s call to the Coast Guard resulted in speedy re-lightings. John adds that the Margaretsville Wharf committee made some repairs to the deck surrounding the tower during the summer. He says that as far as he knows, the Coast Guard has no immediate plans to divest the community’s lighthouse.

Peter Island Spiffy at Last *Chris Mills*

As part of the program to spruce up lighthouses in the Digby Neck and Islands area, the octagonal wooden tower on Peter Island, between Brier and Long Islands, has finally received a long overdue scraping and a coat of sparkling white paint.

Prim Point Looks Grim *Chris Mills*

Although its ‘colleagues’ down the neck have been painted, the landmark Digby beacon at Prim Point is in

hard shape. Peeling red and white paint complements the crumbling concrete of this 1964 tower. The nearby keepers houses, now privately owned, provide stark contrast with their well maintained lawns and generally immaculate appearance.

Sandy Point in Limbo *Chris Mills*

The unique Sandy Point light needs a number of things, including \$45,000-worth of work on its foundation and a coat of paint. Unfortunately, none of this can take place until the light is transferred to the Sandy Point Recreation Group, according to member and prime mover Bernice Goodick. The light is currently under the care of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council (ALC).

An engineer made two visits this year to inspect the wooden tower’s crib-type foundation (the light sits offshore at the end of a tidal sandbar) and found that all of the wooden sheathing on the south side is missing. The good news is that, despite deteriorating exterior concrete, the inside of the foundation is dry and secure, and there is no sign that the 1880 tower is leaning.

Bernice says her group has been in contact with the ALC regarding a transfer of the lighthouse, but as of this fall, no decisions have been made. Meanwhile, she is concerned that repairs to the lighthouse happen as quickly as possible. The Sandy Recreation Group has a proven track record, and it’s high time they regain control of the light they fought so hard to save in the first place.

Spry Bay Sector Darkened *Chris Mills*

A recent edition of *Notices to Mariners* states that this light has been temporarily discontinued. A developer recently clear-cut and bulldozed privately owned land surrounding the 1916 lighthouse.

Terence Bay Lighthouse Needs TLC **ASAP** *Chris Mills*

Mary Thomas of the Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee says it’s been business as usual at the Tenant Point light. The group held its annual Lighthouse Day on September 10th, and despite cold and windy conditions, at least a hundred people showed up to support the light. Mary notes that despite local interest, the lighthouse is in a “terrible mess,” with shingles falling off and paint peeling. The Coast Guard has not given any indication as to when or if this lighthouse will be divested.

Walton a Global Destination *Chris Mills*

Reg Clark reports that U.S. visitors were down at Walton this year, but local visitors were strong at this Hants County light. Tourists from the Netherlands, Germany

and France also stopped by. Walton has the only remaining traditional lighthouse in Hants County.

Nova Scotia's Light Ships

Mac Mackay

Before today's modern navigation aids, Nova Scotia's coasts were marked by numerous lighthouses. Fortunately some of these survive - some in service, and others as a reminder of older times when lights and foghorns were the only aids available to mariners. Until the 1960s Nova Scotia also had "floating lighthouses." These lightships, like their landlocked cousins, were fitted with powerful lights and foghorns to guide mariners around dangerous shoals and to mark harbour approaches.

One such shoal is the infamous Lurcher, located some eighteen miles off Yarmouth. One ship marked that shoal for more than forty years, and then went on to an unusual career. Built as long ago as 1903 by Polson Iron Works in Toronto, she initially carried the utilitarian name No.14. Measuring about 120 feet long, she was built specifically for the Lurcher station and had the word "LURCHER" painted in large white letters on her sides. After several years she was renamed Lurcher to underline the point. She was fitted with a huge anchor, which lead through a hawse pipe near the water line on her stem. Despite the large size, the anchor was known to drag in severe weather. A steam winch on deck could raise this anchor when she needed to move, or if she needed to reposition herself after a storm.

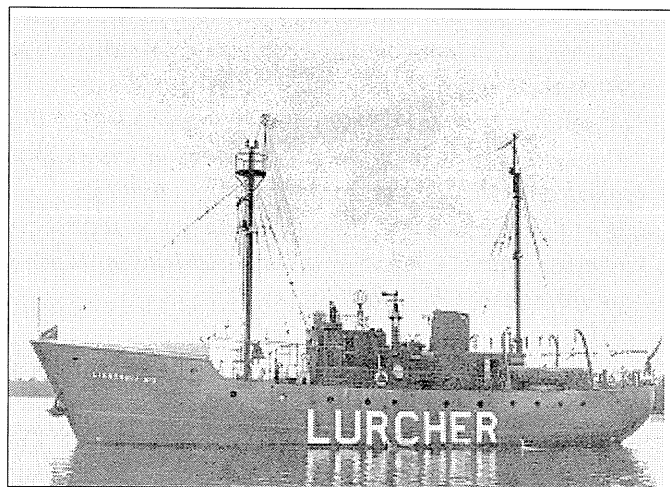
She took up the Lurcher station there in 1904, and her lamp served as a warning and navigation beacon until 1950. She did leave station for repairs and refits, and had enough power to reach Yarmouth for coaling and crew changes. Coal was also brought out to her if conditions permitted. In 1934 she spent three months in Yarmouth while new boilers were fitted. These boilers also powered her powerful fog horn. If records still exists they will no doubt show that the horn sounded continuously for many hours at a time during foggy seasons. Nearby Cape Forchu set a fog record in 1938 when her horn sounded 489 ½ hours in July, including one period of 121 hours straight.

In 1950 she was replaced by a new vessel and reverted to the name No.14. She was used as a spare vessel for the important Sambro light station off Halifax until she was decommissioned in 1956. Her last master on the Lurcher station was Capt. Leo Mallet.

Sold to Harney Brothers of Rimouski, QC, and still carrying "SAMBRO" on her sides, she arrived in Lunenburg in September 1957 where Lunenburg Foundry transformed her into a coastal freighter to be named

St-Yves, measuring 319 gross tons. She was given one large hold amidships, a 430bhp Cummins diesel engine well aft, and her wheelhouse was repositioned onto the poop deck. Her bow hawse pipe was plated over, and she was given derricks fore and aft. Harney and subsequent owners, Guy Harvey of Ile-aux-Coudres, QC and Robert Dallaire of St-Siméon, QC used her for general freight and pulpwood. Her egg shaped hull had good capacity, and she could carry an equally large deck load.

In one of those ironies that seem to prevail in shipping, she showed up again in Yarmouth in 1969 with, of all things, a deck load of ship's funnels. The stacks were



The last Canadian lightship; under way to take up station on the Lurcher Shoal, Bay of Fundy. *Courtesy Canada Coast Guard*

built in Quebec and were bound for US naval construction.

With the end of pulpwood shipping by water she was laid up in 1973, but from 1974 to 1980 she did some cargo work, had some refits, and moved around to various ports for extensive layups.

In 1980 she was sold to the Dominican Republic, but remained in Canada for some time. I saw her last at Baie-Ste-Catherine, QC in August 1983, and she reportedly sailed south that autumn.

Not surprisingly, no reports have reached me on her movements since then. Her iron hull would probably last indefinitely, so she may be doodling around the Caribbean yet.

Editor's note: Special thanks to Mac Mackay for this article on Nova Scotia's Light Ships. You can hear Mac on CBC's Information Morning every other Tuesday morning at 6:40am, where Mac tells us what's coming and going in the Halifax Harbour. You can subscribe to his Halifax shipping e-newsletter by emailing Mac at macmackay@ns.sympatico.ca.

On Getting Information About Lighthouses

Kathy Brown

Several times a month I get e-mails with information, corrections, or photos for the NSLPS website. These are usually quite straightforward, but every once in a while the situation is unusual.

On the 8 of August, I received the following message:

Hi Kathy, my name is Charlotte Frankland and I am emailing for Lois Nickerson who states her father was a lighthouse keeper for the Candlebox Lighthouse in Yarmouth county. His name would be Norman Couttreau. He started looking after the lighthouse after world war I. He looked after it before all three men that are listed as the keepers. Lois is unsure of the exact dates but knows that he looked after the lighthouse longer than any other. Could you please look into this and email me back as soon as you can. Thank you for your time and will be waiting to hear from you. Charlotte

The result was a flurry of e-mails about Candlebox Island keepers, and Pease and Green Islands, too. Charlotte talked with Lois, and they used a calendar from the Argyle Township Court House & Archives and the book *Life on the Tusket Islands* written by Caroline B. Norwood to generate information about how the government

obtained the Candlebox for a lighthouse site and keeper's lists with some dates. Charlotte also sent family information from Lois.

At the end of one of these messages Charlotte wrote:

Lois is in a long term care facility and that's where I work. Her information has been constant with me and there have been others to visit who back up her story. I think we have it straight, thanks for all your help. This will make Lois very happy to see her dad's name on your website. Charlotte

What a very kind thing for Charlotte to do both for Lois and for NSLPS! As a result we have an Early History page for Candlebox Island Lighthouse, a keepers list for Green Island (which has never had one), and more information on the keepers at Pease Island. All because Charlotte was interested enough to talk with Lois and then get in touch with me.

This is how we get the best information on the lighthouses: from the people who were there, their descendants and friends. Government records give us dry stuff that is under "Light Specs." The really interesting quality stuff you find under all those headings on the website comes from people getting in touch with their knowledge or research. Even if you have a tiny piece of information, we'd like to have it. I'll get it on the site as soon as I can. Sometimes it takes a while (a month for Charlotte and Lois' info) because it has to be written and formatted. I'm aiming at an evening a week for website corrections and addition this winter, so the time lag ought to be shorter.

To look at the Early History Page for Candlebox Island Lighthouse go to www.nslps.com and click on Candlebox Island in the "Pick a Lighthouse" box. You can get in touch with me by clicking "Contact" on the top bar and then choosing "Kathy Brown."



The second lighthouse on Candlebox Island, taken in 2005. Kathy Brown

2006 International Lighthouse Conference

Denyse Contrasty

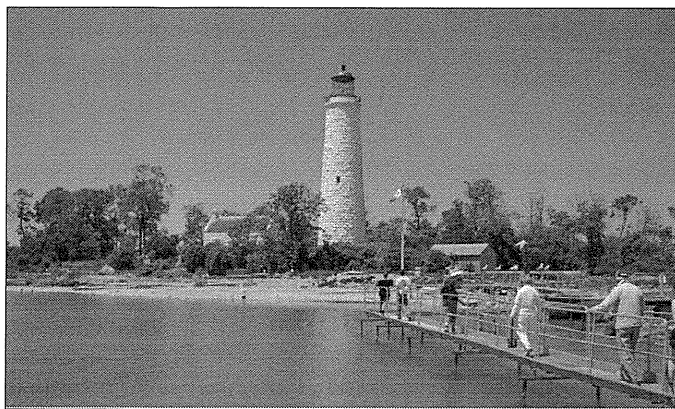
On June 1, 2006, lighthouse enthusiasts from Canada, USA and Italy gathered at the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre in Southampton, Ontario for the 2006 International Lighthouse Conference. With the assistance of museum staff,



NSLPS president Barry MacDonald presenting at the conference. *Denyse Contrasty*

the local Marine Heritage Society facilitated three days of lectures, films and tours of area highlights such as the Chantry Island Light Station and the Southampton Range Lights. Speakers included Guiseppe Amoruso and Cristiana Bartolomei from the University of Bologna on the architecture of Italian lighthouses, Steve Belko who headed the Michigan Lighthouse Project from June 2001 to August 2005, and our own NSLPS president, Barry Macdonald who reported on the current status of Canadian lighthouses and the direction needed to ensure their preservation.

Did you know that the design of the last Italian lighthouse (Faro della Vittoria) to be built in the 1920s in memory of all Italian sailors that were lost in World War I, rivals that of Canadian monuments such as the National Cenotaph in



Chantry Island Light. *Denyse Contrasty*

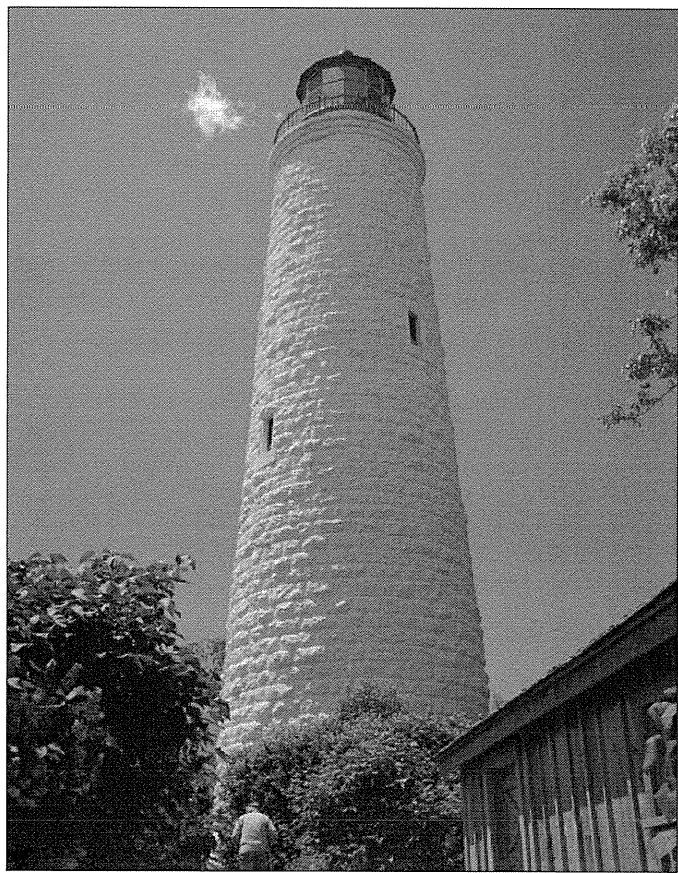
Ottawa? Or that an American city council was prodded into supporting lighthouse preservation when a keen eyed lobbyist pointed out the lighthouse on the city's crest? Or that lighthouse preservation in Canada is currently promoted by various provincial and community groups and that establishing a national organization may be the only way to ensure passage of the Lighthouse Protection Act in the House of Commons?

Without a doubt, the highlight of the conference was the trip to Chantry Island to climb the 106 steps of this Imperial lighthouse built in 1859 to get a bird's-eye view of the lightkeeper's quarters that were restored by local volunteers several years ago. The house is now furnished with period artifacts on loan from the Bruce County museum and visitors can get a guided tour detailing the history and features of this lighthouse station. Chantry Island is also a Federal Migratory Bird Sanctuary and is an important nesting ground for herons, egrets, comorants and gulls.

For information on Imperial lighthouses in Ontario, visit: www.naturalretreat.com/bruce_lighthouses/index.cfm.

For a virtual tour of Michigan lighthouses, visit: www.nightbeacon.com/zlighthouses/lakemichiganlighthousemap.htm.

To see a photo of the stately Faro della Vittoria, visit www.aritrieste.it/Lighthouse/index.htm.

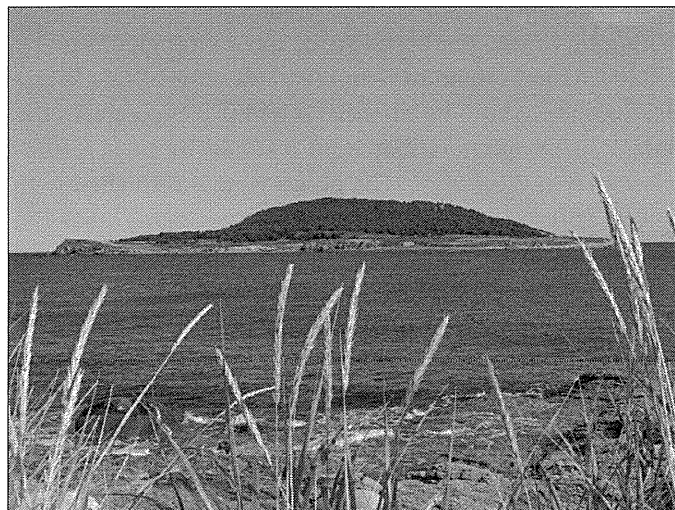


The Chantry Island Light was built in 1859. *Denyse Contrasty*

Ingonish Island

Barry MacDonald

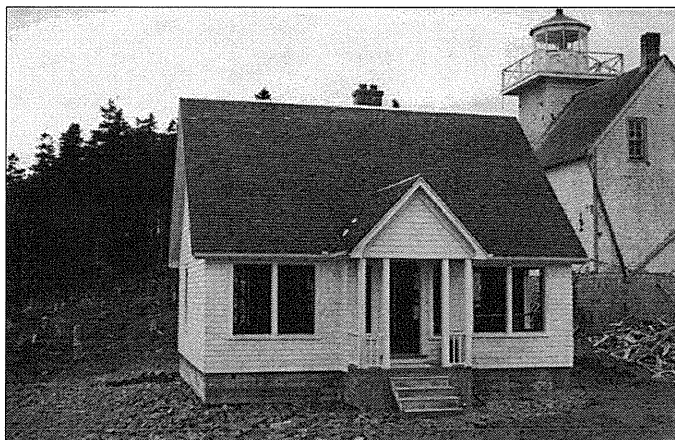
In 1870, the treacherous eastern coastline of Cape Breton had few lighthouses. Once leaving the safety of the light at Low Point, a north-bound mariner would not see another light (with the exception of Bird Island) until he reached the south-western end of St. Paul Island,



Ingonish Island. *Barry MacDonald*

a distance of some fifty-five nautical miles. By this time, many small villages existed along the coastline and the waterway was the exclusive travel route between them. Fishing was not only an occupation but a means of subsistence and when the fish were running, this meant working through the day and into the night. As the population of these villages grew, so did marine traffic and the need for more lighthouses became apparent.

The year 1871 saw two lighthouses added, one being at the entrance to St. Ann's harbour, the other on Ingonish Island. The Canadian Department of Marine and



This 1954 photo shows new keepers house nearing completion. This house was built to last. *Barry MacDonald*

Fisheries, having been established with Confederation in 1867, faced a daunting task in answering demands for lighthouses in the new Dominion. With so much coastline to light, new lighthouse sites were chosen only after careful consideration. The fact that Ingonish Island was chosen at such an early time bears witness to amount of

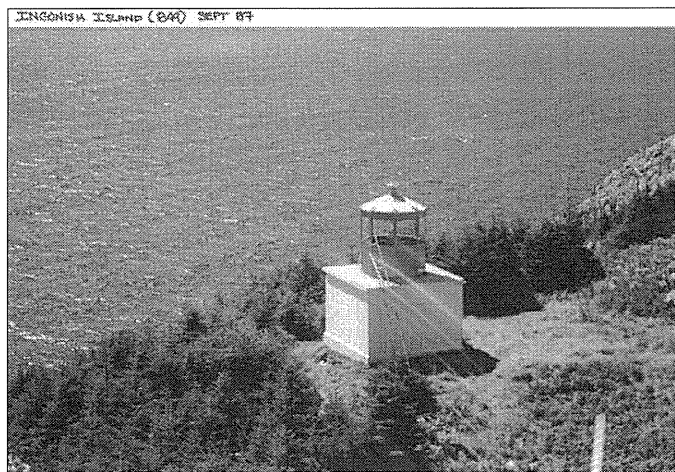


Rare photo of construction on the first Ingonish Island Lighthouse. *Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM)*

marine traffic seen along this coastline.

Construction of the new lighthouse began in 1870 and its design was typical of a coastal light which required the services of a year-round lightkeeper and family. As seen in this early photo, the building resembled a country church with a lantern substituting for a bell tower. This combined light and dwelling served the lightkeeper well as it did not require going outside to wind up the weights or service the light. The 1872 Annual Report of the Dept. of Marine & Fisheries described the new light this way. *The new light on Ingonish Island, in the County of Victoria, Cape Breton, is a fixed white dioptric light of the fifth order and was lit for the first time on the 1st of August, 1871. The total cost of its construction up to the 30th of June last, was \$2410.47. Mr. Samuel C. Campbell was appointed keeper, at a salary of \$300.00 per annum. This*

was a heavy price tag in 1871 and was typical of construction projects on remote island locations. It is interesting to note that a fifth order fresnel lens was installed at



Ingonish Island lighthouse shortly before it was discontinued. *Barry MacDonald*

this lighthouse at time of construction. This was unusual as Canada had only begun to convert larger lightstations to this much more expensive optic. (the vast majority of lighthouses used catoptric reflectors). Widespread use of Fresnel lenses did not take place in Canada until the early

part of the twentieth century. Fuel for the light was coal oil (kerosene), a Canadian invention.

While initially expensive to construct, this lighthouse gave many years of service as an aid to navigation as well as being a home to several lightkeepers and their families. By 1953 however, the old light was showing its age and the Department of Transport decided a new light was needed. Tenders were called and in 1954 a new lighthouse and separate keepers dwelling were erected. The need for detached structures came about after many incidents of fire over the years, mainly owing to the fact that highly flammable oil was stored within the lighthouse. While the combined light and dwelling offered advantages to the keeper, the danger from the in-house storage of oil made the danger of fire omnipresent. The new light was put into service in 1954 and the old lighthouse torn down. The optic was changed to a long-focus reflector and the oil lamp replaced with a 55mm vapour burner.

Lightkeeping continued virtually uninterrupted, from August 1, 1871 until lightkeeper Richard Nolan lit the vapour burner for the last time on November 12, 1967. At this point, the lighthouse fell victim to automation and a battery-operated, 250mm acrylic lantern replaced the lightkeeper and his kerosene appliance. From that point on, maintenance ceased at the lightstation as evidenced by a 1972 report by the assistant superintendent of lights.

In 1987, Ingonish Island lightstation was declared redundant and on October 20th of that year, the light which had burned since 1871 was permanently extinguished. The ownership of the lighthouse property had been transferred to Parks Canada in 1974 and is classified as a National Historic site. You would never think this by looking at the present-day photos however. There has been nothing done over the years to even protect this important structure from the elements. Without immediate intervention, the structures have a very short life expectancy. NSLPS intends to bring this matter to the attention of Parks Canada in the near future. Watch the LIGHTKEEPER for updates.

Barry MacDonald says:


"My thanks to the following people for their assistance with this article":

Dan MacNeil - Canadian Coast Guard
 Bill Horne - Former Lightkeeper
 Lou Hatt - Retired, Canadian Coast Guard
 Ken Donovan - Historian, Fortress Louisbourg


Transport Canada Garde côtière		DRAFT NOTICE TO MARINERS		PROJET D'AVIS AUX NAVIGATEURS	
INGONISH ISLAND LIGHT - PERMANENTLY DISCONTINUED				Date: October 20, 1987	
Location: Cape Breton Island, Atlantic Coast - Ingonish Harbour				Project No.: 8010-472	
Latitude: 46° 59' 21" N		Longitude: 60° 20' 21" W		Chart: 4365	
Character: Lighthouse					
Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinued					
Remarks: Lighthouse permanently discontinued. Cancel Notice to Mariners 592(P)-1987					
Prepared by: [Signature]					
Checked by: [Signature]					
Date: [Signature]					

Photos indicating the poor condition of Ingonish lighthouse buildings

MEMORANDUM
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA



NOTE DE SERVICE
GOUVERNEMENT DU CANADA



TO : A.S.L.

FROM : []

DATE: 05 NOV 1932

SUBJECT: Ingonish Island L.L. Sht

7952-472

November 28, 1932

This station is in bad need of maintenance. The tower lantern has two broken glass. The railing is badly rusted. The tower and lantern are in bad need of paint.

The trees should be cut to the front and left side of the light looking to seaward.

I suggest that the old weight shaft be torn down.

The dwelling is in bad need of paint and one storm window is off. The inside window is broken and open to the weather on the inward side.

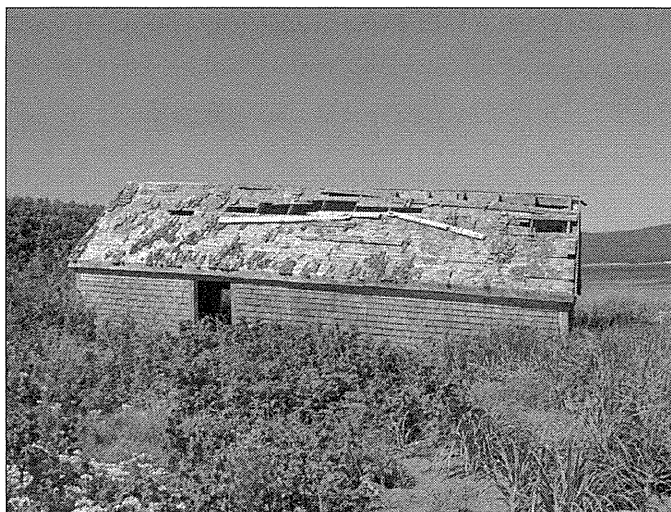
I believe this belongs to or is in the stages of being turned over to the Province.

R.T.	A.	W.	P.	R.T.	A.	W.	P.
EMP.				EMP.			
Sgt.				Sgt.			
Asst.				Asst.			
Eng.				Eng.			
Q.A.				Q.A.			
H.R.				H.R.			
U.C.				U.C.			

[Signature]
L. H. Hatt
Asst. Supt. of Lights

[Signature]
Director of Fisheries

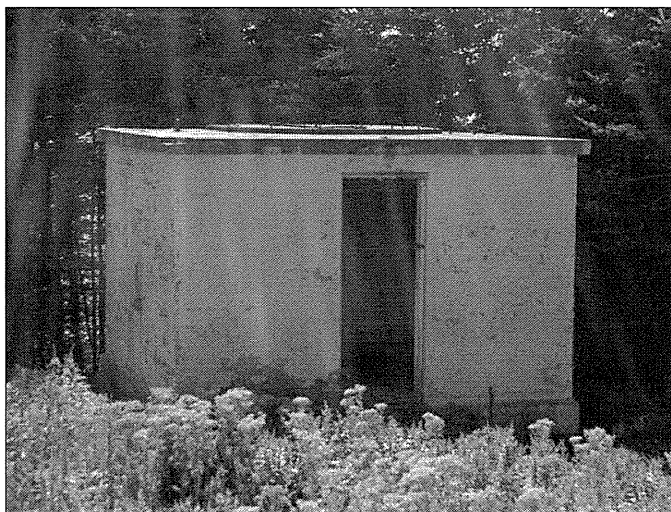
Poor maintenance at Ingonish Island as pointed out in this 1972 report. *Barry MacDonald*



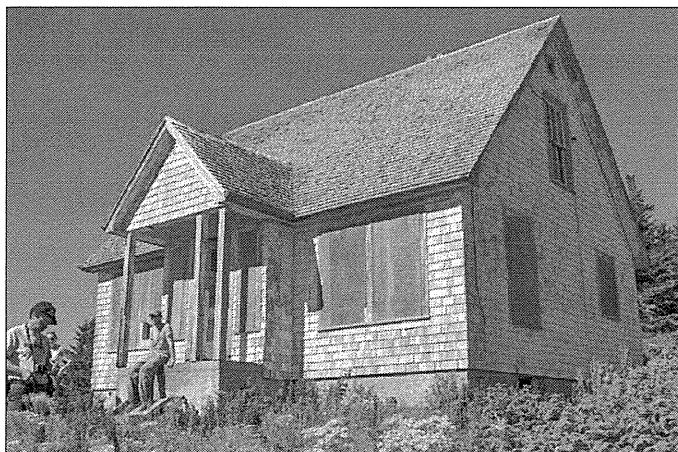
The Boathouse is (almost) beyond repair. *Barry MacDonald*



This early Coast Guard photo shows the boat house at a better time (when the light was staffed). *Barry MacDonald*



The Ingonish Island lighthouse today. The lantern has been removed, and the base is at the mercy of the elements. *Barry MacDonald*



The Keepers House - August 2006. It Desperately needs work to protct the interior from the elements. *Barry MacDonald*

BUILT HERITAGE LEADERSHIP FORUM

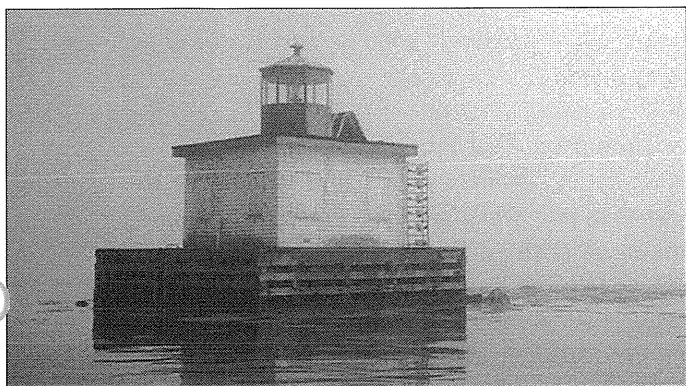
Barry MacDonald

On Thursday October 12th, Tony Thompson and I attended the "Built Heritage Leadership Forum" hosted by Heritage Canada in Ottawa. It was an excellent forum with every province, with the exception of PEI, represented. Speakers were given five minutes at the podium to tell who we are and what we are trying to achieve. (I spoke on behalf of NSLPS). The day was very busy and the agenda included talks on subjects such as dealing with the media and how campaigns such as smoking cessation have been successful. The major achievement of this day was to educate and unite us in our individual efforts across the country.

On Friday, (opening day of the conference), we attended the keynote address, delivered by Elizabeth May, former head of the Sierra Club of Canada and now leader of the Green Party of Canada. Ms. May's talk was powerful and inspirational, to say the least. Following this, we met with Michel Audy (chair of the Sites and Monuments Board of Canada) and Patricia Kell (director of FHBRO). Mr. Audy explained how the "Railroad Station Act" is administered under his department and a bit of how heritage designation for lighthouses will be done under the proposed Lighthouse Protection Act (LPA) legislation.

Ms. Kell explained some of the 'nuts and bolts' of FHBRO. We brought to her attention the lack of enforcement levers in this department as evidenced by the state of repair of the Gas House on Sambro Island. Tony also called Ms. Kell's attention to the Seal Island lighthouse and its not receiving "classified" status. The issue of lack of proper ventilation was also brought up and Ms. Kell promised to look into these issues.

Meeting with these two senior government officials was, I feel, very productive and should very much help our cause. They both thanked us and said they had got some good information from our meeting. This may be the start of more dialogue as we get closer to the passage of the LPA.



Woods Harbour Lighthouse. *Josette d'Entremont*

FAREWELL

Audery Wilkinson

We are sad to report the passing of Audrey Wilkinson of Beach Meadows on October 3rd. Audrey's husband Ken has been a strong supporter of the Coffin Island lighthouse, taking a leading role in the placement of rock around the endangered tower in 1999. More recently, Ken helped clear trails to the lighthouse site and worked with the Coast Guard to ensure that a light continues to burn on Coffin Island. A new lighthouse is slated to be placed on the island this fall.

Our sincere condolences to Ken and his family.



Brenton Hopkins

Brenton Hopkins passed away Monday, September 18, 2006, in Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital, Musquodoboit Harbour at the age of 86. Brenton was born in East Jeddore. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy during the second world war and then became a lightkeeper on Flint Island during the 1950s. He also worked as a relief keeper on at least one station on the eastern shore.

Brenton was a no-nonsense character who ran a tight (lighthouse) ship – fortunately, some of his stories live on in an interview done with his son Alf in 2004.

Our condolences to Alf and daughter Mellissa.



Murray "Barney" Outhouse

A long-time keeper at the Boars Head lighthouse on Long Island in Digby County has died. Murray "Barney" Outhouse was born in Tiverton and worked as a fisherman before joining the army in 1942. He was a D-Day veteran, having landed on the beaches of Normandy in 1944.

After returning to Nova Scotia, Barney landed a job as assistant lightkeeper at Boars Head, on the cliff overlooking the northern entrance to Petite Passage. He later became principal keeper, serving for a total of 32 years until his retirement in 1981.

Barney admitted that it was a rough place to live during bad storms. "Them winter gales up there and them gales of wind. [My wife] got tired of it and I got tired of it. One night...our [electrical] wires broke up there and they arcing...right across the driveway. If you had to get out I would get electrocuted."

It couldn't have been bad all the time though.

Barney did return to Boars Head as a relief keeper in the early 1980s. Barney Outhouse died July 29th at the age of 84.

A TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY MACLEOD

Kathy Brown

It is with sadness that we must notify NSLPS members and friends of the tragic death of board member Dorothy MacLeod on August 9, 2006. On July 20, she rolled her car near her home town of River Hebert. She hung on to life tenaciously for over three weeks, and then died peacefully during the night. Dorothy will be sorely missed. She was a long-time member of NSLPS, (since 1996). For most of that time she was a member of the Board. As a committed volunteer she was one of the staunchest supporters of NSLPS in her own quiet way. It was her practice to work behind the scenes giving time to important projects but staying out of the limelight. She must often have worked as hard as the President – but no one ever knew.

When NSLPS decided to go for Charitable Tax Status – a complex process because we were up and running – Dorothy did much of the work between 1999 and 2002. She also worked hard on the Lighthouse Protection Act Committee from its beginnings in 1999 until it was dissolved in 2002. She worked on NSLPS Workshops for Affiliates in 2001 and especially in 2003, a year when we really wondered if we could manage to present one. Her contribution to these three activities was huge.

When I began to find taking registrations for trips a difficulty, Dorothy jumped into the breach, and when I became President in 2000, Dorothy took over Trips and Programmes completely. We had planning sessions over lunch, but she did all the leg work, keeping detailed records. Though she often could not come on the off-shore trips she used to be at the wharf whenever possible, sometimes driving over an hour to get there, to mark off who was there and see everyone safely on board. Dorothy made all the bookings with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (MMA), for meetings, public programmes and the AGM. This could be a lengthy and complex process. Staff changed at the Museum and often Dorothy knew more about making the booking than did the person she was taking to on the phone!

As if all the above were not enough, Dorothy became the Mail Person several years ago, picking up the letters weekly at the MMA and re-addressing them or delivering them to the appropriate person. Cheques were always delivered by hand. Nothing ever went astray. Finally, Dorothy was the one who slipped out of the meetings to plug in the coffee pot and put out the chocolate chip cookies and juice she had brought along.

Dorothy was quiet in board meetings, but when

she was asked for her opinion it was always carefully thought out and valuable to the decision at hand. She showed her commitment to saving the lighthouses in another way: from 2000 she was a Sustaining Member of NSLPS.

Dorothy and I were often on the phone. Sometimes those conversations were very long because of all the details she knew about the subject – usually the programmes – or because she cared deeply about every person who contributed to

NSLPS, participated in the Programmes, desired information, or provided a service. For ten years I looked to her for support and advice and regarded her as a valued colleague and friend. I miss her.

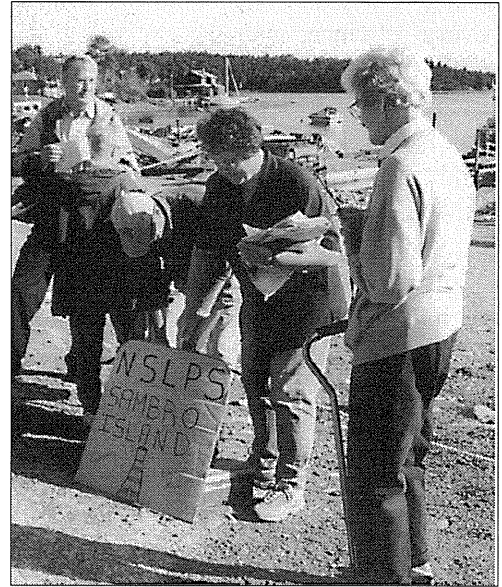
I have asked members of NSLPS current Board for their thoughts about Dorothy's contributions to the NSLPS:

Barry MacDonald, President:

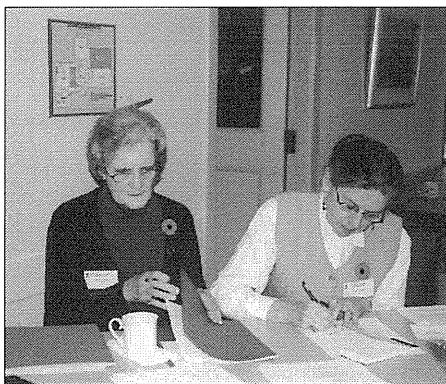
It wasn't until I became President of NSLPS that I really began to appreciate Dorothy. Prompt, thorough, dedicated, dependable, courteous.... are all accurate, descriptive terms for Dorothy. I remember thinking at one point, Dorothy is someone who's full contribution won't be realized until she is no longer here! Not only was she a great volunteer, but a genuinely good person as well. I will miss her very much.

Tony Thompson, Past-President:

Trips and programmes: she always made sure the room was booked, negotiated with the museum for a good price for the small craft gallery for the AGM, made sure everything was in order for Graham's model building sessions, she took over the job of sending out PSA's from me. At Board meetings she was generally quiet but when she did voice an opinion one could be sure that it would be very sensible and to the point. Especially on money matters.



Dorothy, on the right, organizing a Halifax Harbour Trip. Joseph d'Entremont



Dorothy at a board meeting.
Josette d'Etremont

Chris Mills, Vice-president, former Editor, *The Lightkeeper*: Dorothy was part of the "glue" that helped hold the society together. She worked tirelessly in all her capacities and she will be greatly missed. Just before the Routes to Learning

people showed up at the meeting room at the MMA last Saturday I had a vision of Dorothy sitting at her usual place, and felt a sense of loss at her death.

Graham McBride, a Past President:

Dorothy was always there during our Lighthouse Workshops. She was always so helpful in keeping track of the finances and generally assisting in the model building itself. Dorothy had a way of keeping the kids settled down, especially near the end of the project when attention spans had about reached their limit. She always managed to come up with little refreshment treats at the end of the session. She will be truly missed in the land of the Lilliput Lighthouses.

Denyse Contrasty, former Secretary:

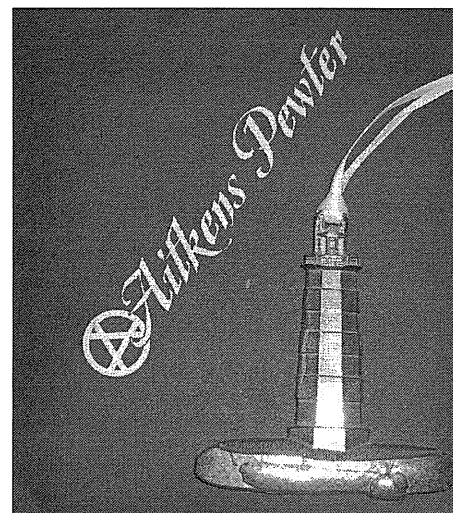
I could always rely on Dorothy to edit my NSLPS Board minutes. She had a mind like a steel trap and there weren't rarely any corrections or omissions that she didn't catch. She also served on this year's Nominating Committee and found a new secretary and VP. I am also sure that I remember her at the registration desk at the workshop for affiliates in November 2001. That workshop was much work and Dorothy did her fair share of prep for it.

Donations in memory of Dorothy All donations to NSLPS are tax deductible

Rae MacLeod and family, Toronto ON, Denyse Contrasty, Eastern Passage, NS, Isabel & Noble Veinot, Bridgewater NS, Dwight & Cheryl Wyman, Hubley NS, David & Nancy Thyng, Harwich MA, Betty Schloss, Southold NY, Lewis & Janet Perry, Dartmouth NS

Sambro Island Light Ornament

Sambro Island Light ornaments crafted by Aitkens Pewter are approx. 2 1/4 inches tall and 2 1/8 inches at the base. The inscription on the back says, "Sambro Island Light, Mouth of the Harbour, Halifax, NS. They come with a ribbon ready to hang on your Christmas Tree and a card with a short history of the light.



Cost: \$15.00 including HST

Pick-up in Halifax \$15.00;

Pack and post \$17.00

\$US same price because of extra postage.

Order from:

Kathy Brown, 5 Whimsical Lake Cres., Halifax, NS, B3PA 2P9. Tel.: 479-3115, E-mail: kathy@fromthesea.ca

Orders must be pre-paid. Please make cheques payable to NSLPS.

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: Send items for publication to *The Lightkeeper*, c/o Nancy Eisener, 610 Ketch Harbour Road, Portuguese Cove, Nova Scotia, B3V 1K1, or e-mail nancy.eisener@nsc.ca. Deadline for Winter issue: December 15, 2006.

NSLPS MEMBERSHIP FORM: January 1 - December 31, 2006

___ New ___ Renewal: Membership # _____

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

Family/Group names for 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 SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1675 Lower Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 1S3



Dorothy Alice MacLeod was born in River Hebert. She completed River Hebert High School and St. Charles Commercial. After serving in the RCAF (Women's Division) from 1943-45, she graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Social Work in 1953. She was the wife of the late John Leslie MacLeod. She worked many years in Germany for the United States Services. Dorothy passed away at the age of 81.