

Sambro Island 1758

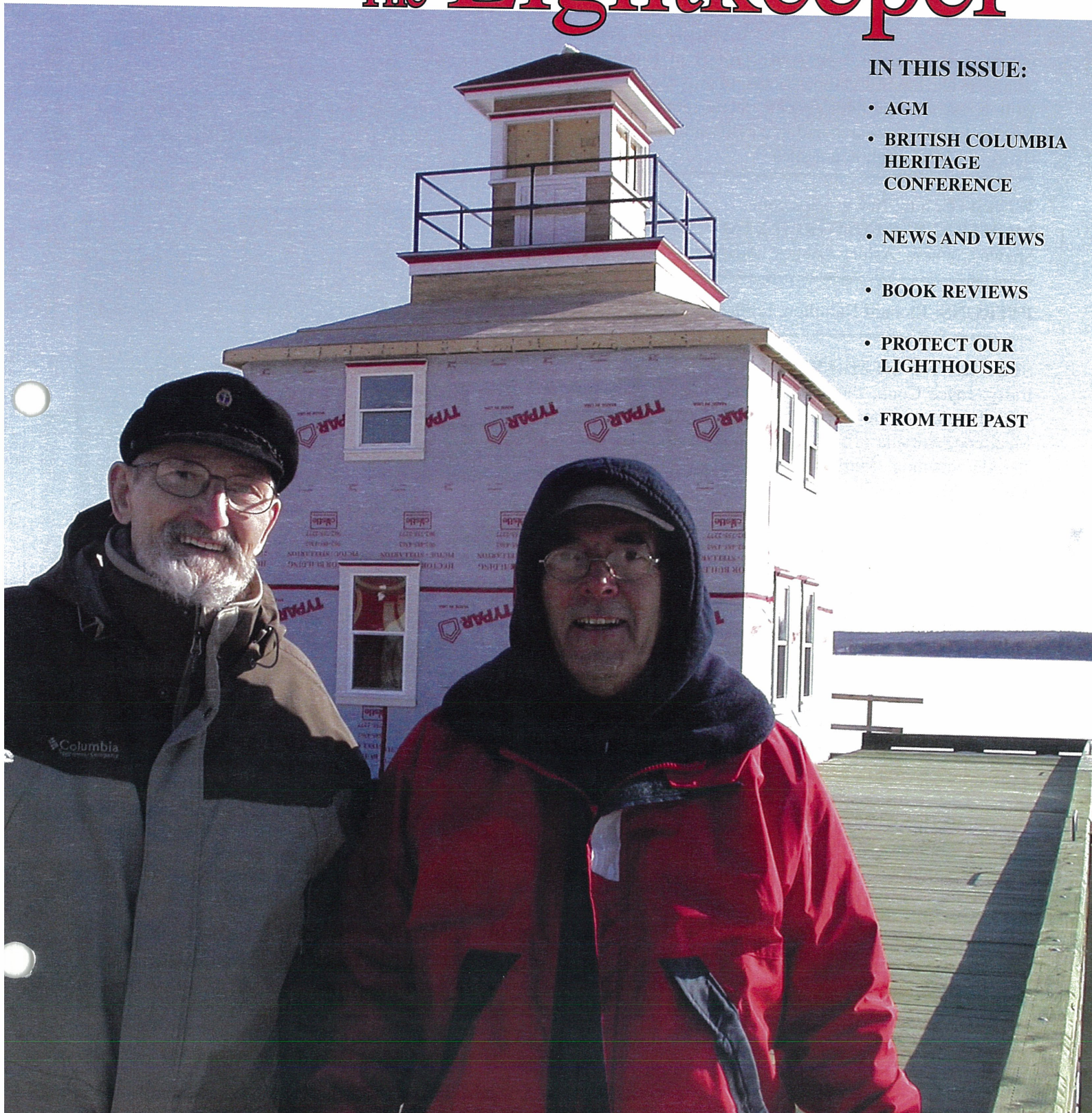
The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 14, No. 1, March / April 2007

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.

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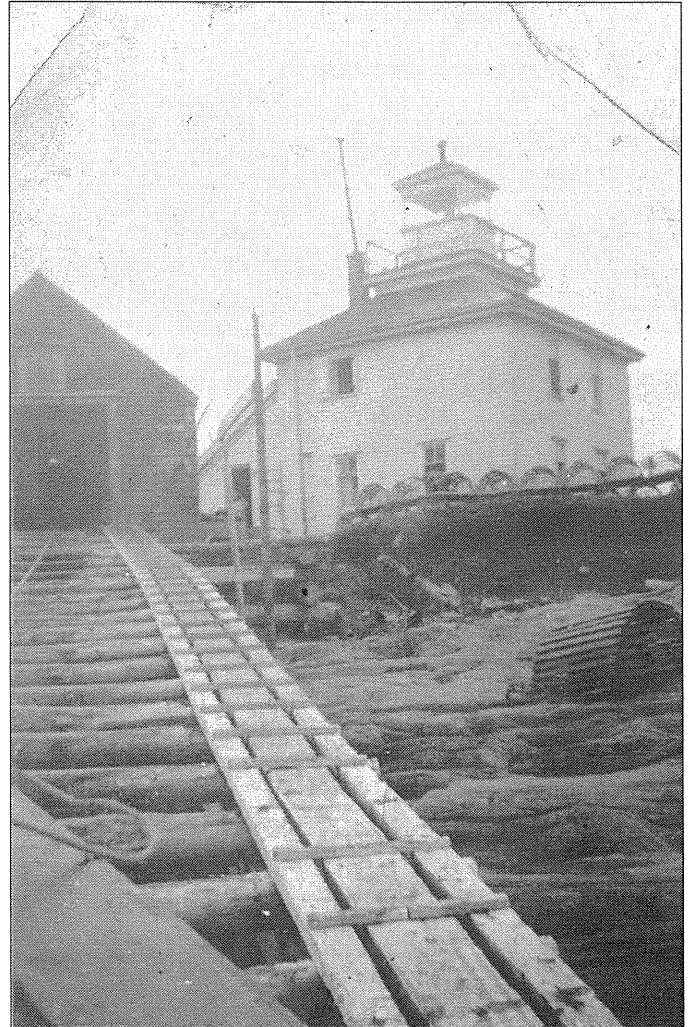
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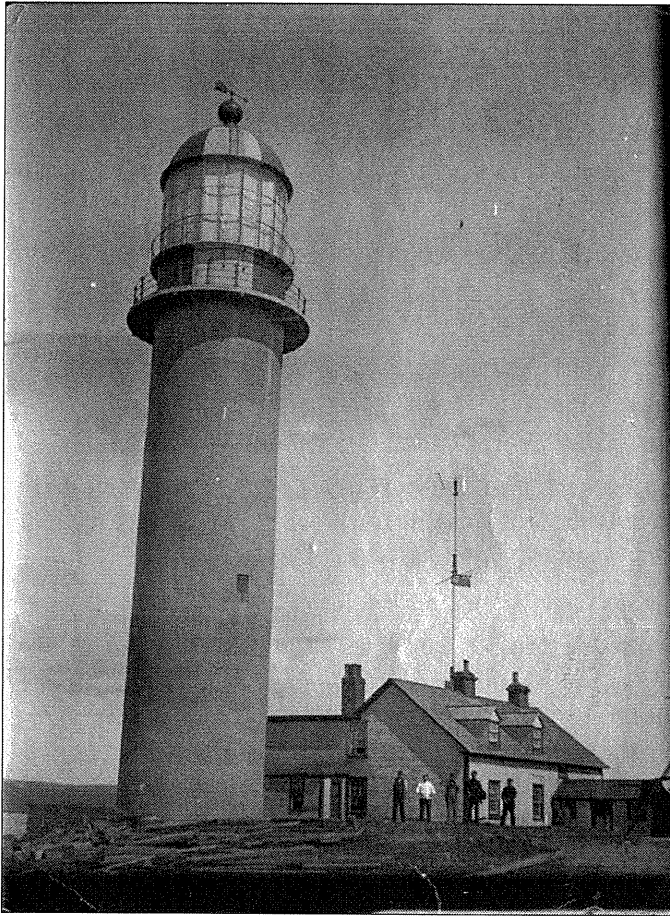
DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS LIGHT?

In this year's 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*.

Cover :

Founding NSLPS president E.H. Rip Irwin with current president Barry MacDonald at Pictou's "new" lighthouse in March, 2007. *Chris Mills* See story p.8

December Mystery Light Identified



Cape Race, NF. *Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.*

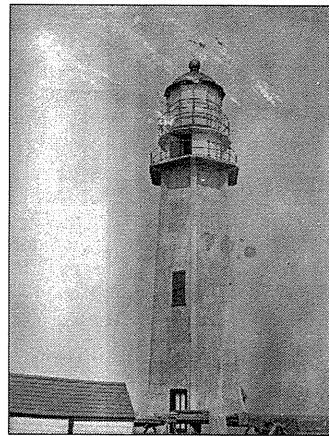
PROGRAMMES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

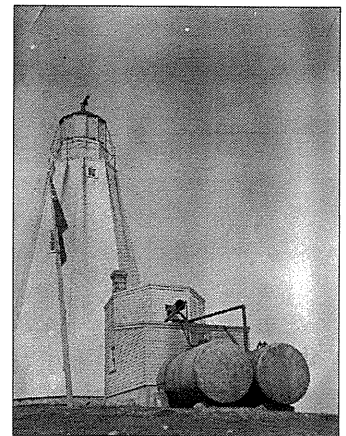
7 PM, Wednesday April 25, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

7 PM - Reports, election of board members for the 2007-08 season and presentation of the Craig Harding Award.
7:30 - Join us for an illustrated talk about Canada's oldest (and North America's second oldest) lighthouse site at Louisbourg. Parks Canada historian Ken Donovan has done exhaustive research on this historic lighthouse (first lit in 1734) and its first keeper, Jean Grenard dit Belair. This talk is a must for lighthouse enthusiasts and history buffs alike!

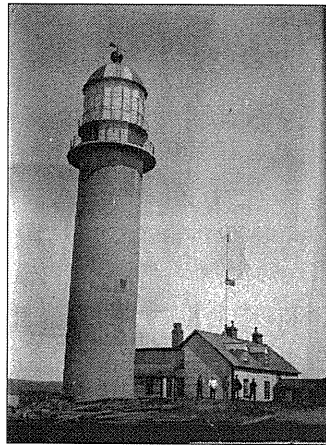
Previous Mystery Lights



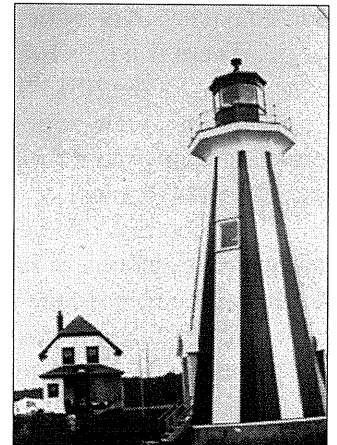
Flint Island *Maritime Museum of the Atlantic*



Scatarie Island *Maritime Museum of the Atlantic*



Cape Race *Maritime Museum of the Atlantic*



Pictou Bar Light. *Maritime Museum of the Atlantic*



Flint Island

SAVING OUR LIGHTS – FROM COAST TO COAST

When it comes to lighthouses, Nova Scotia and British Columbia are miles apart. This statement applies both literally and figuratively, but it also has much to do with the state of each province's lights and efforts to preserve them. British Columbia has 27 staffed lightstations, all of which are maintained to a high level of repair by their keepers. Since the moratorium on de-staffing in 1998, the Coast Guard has poured millions of dollars into station infrastructure, with upgrades to towers, dwellings, winches, generators and fuel systems.

Nova Scotia's last tended lighthouse closed 14 years ago, and today our 160 (+/-) traditional lighthouses are in varying stages of abandonment and decay. At most sites, dwelling and ancillary buildings have been bulldozed, burned, or beaten apart by the elements. What little remains is largely in poor shape.

There is a plus side though. Nova Scotia, thanks to the efforts of the NSLPS and local community groups, has a growing preservation movement, which has succeeded in saving more than a dozen towers, and in a few cases, keepers' homes.

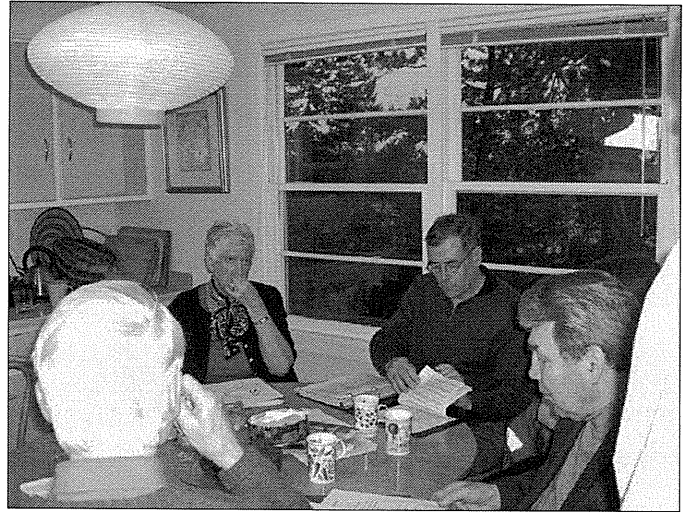
In contrast, British Columbia, with its modern and sparkling stations, has no province-wide preservation movement. Until now, the main concern of lightkeepers, politicians and those interested in the lights has been keeping stations staffed. And although that status is not slated for immediate change, the day will come when more of BC's lights will be made keeperless. The time is ripe for a move to preserve and protect west coast lighthouses.

With this in mind, and with a view to creating a national lighthouse preservation movement, NSLPS president Barry MacDonald attended heritage and lighthouse preservation meetings in British Columbia in February this year. Barry brought his expertise in lighthouse preservation and divestiture to the table while meeting with Senator Pat Carney, members of local heritage groups and Heritage Canada. The following reports by Barry and Heritage Canada's Douglas Franklin illustrate that it's time for Canadians and politicians to get moving on a plan to save our lighthouses "Usque ad Mare" -- "From Sea to Shining Sea".

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE – PRESIDENT'S VIEW

Barry MacDonald

When Heritage Canada Foundation's Executive



Senator Pat Carney, Barry MacDonald and Heritage Canada's Doug Franklin in the former assistant lightkeepers' kitchen at Point Atkinson. *Barry MacDonald*

Director, Natalie Bull invited me to speak in Victoria, BC, I was elated at the opportunity to take the "national perspective" on lighthouse preservation to the West Coast. It has been apparent for some time that part of the reason for the slow progress in our efforts to secure lighthouse protection act lies with the fact that we have been approaching the matter from a "regional" perspective. Since the proposed legislation seeks to protect lighthouses coast-to-coast, support from ALL provinces with lighthouses on their waterways is needed.

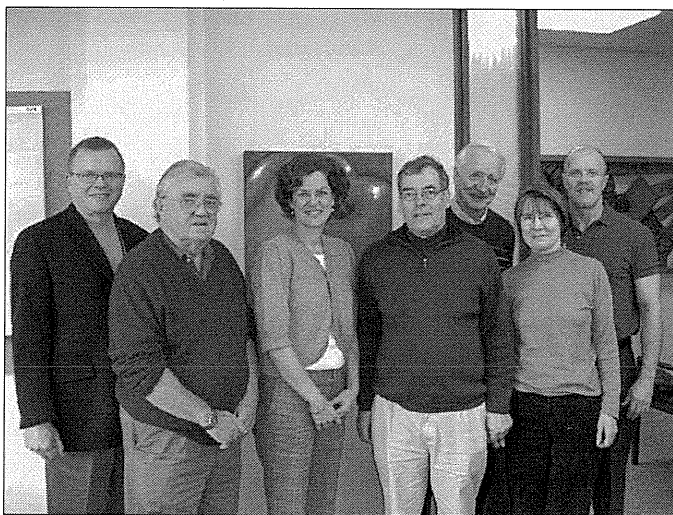
A very different situation exists in British Columbia, as the majority of their 51 lightstations are located in isolated areas, accessible only by boat or helicopter. Overall, the condition of pacific coast lighthouses is much better than most of the rest of Canada. This is due, in part, to the fact that 27 of these lightstations are still staffed – the same pride which our Maritime lightkeepers once



Elaine Graham, Barry MacDonald and Senator Pat Carney in the Point Atkinson fog alarm building. *Barry MacDonald*

took in their work is evident in these staffed stations.

I was very privileged to have been invited to tour Race Rocks, BC's second oldest lighthouse, located west of Victoria, in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. This lightstation was de-staffed in 1998 but lightkeepers Mike and Carol Slater remain as caretakers of the tiny island. Their salaries are paid by Pearson College, long-time stewards of Race Rocks and its surrounding marine park. While all auxiliary buildings have been divested to the college, the grand old stone lighthouse is still owned by DFO/Coast Guard and remains an active aid to navigation. Here we find the trend of little or no maintenance we are used to seeing on the East Coast, evident in lack of paint and the resulting damage to the structural stone blocks which



Left to right Kevin Pike- Director, Parks and Community Services (Dist of West Vancouver), Ian Macdonald - West Van Historical Society (NSLPS member), Pamela Goldsmith-Jones - Mayor, Dist of West Vancouver, Kevin Spacee, Rod Day - Councillor, Dist of West Vancouver, Elaine Graham - Caretaker, Lighthouse Park, Doug Levers - Manager, Parks/ Environment, Dist of West Vancouver. *Barry MacDonald*

have withstood the elements since 1860. Efforts to have the Coast Guard look at this issue have, so far, yielded nothing. The condition of Race Rocks gave me reason for concern and stood in sharp contrast to the second lighthouse I toured at Fisgard, which is the oldest lighthouse in BC, lit only 2 weeks prior to Race Rocks. Located on historic Esquimalt Harbour, Fisgard was acquired by Parks Canada in the 1960s and has been open to the public ever since. Staffed by knowledgeable interpreters, this lighthouse is well cared-for and is a pleasure to experience.

The last lighthouse on the tour was Point Atkinson, located at the entrance to Vancouver harbour. Along with Senator Pat Carney, Doug Franklin (Heritage Canada Foundation), Ian MacDonald (West Vancouver Historical Society), representatives from the District of West Van-

couver and a CBC - TV film crew, my wife Anne Marie and I were guests of former lightkeeper Elaine Graham, who still lives in the lightkeeper's house.

The main purpose of this visit was a press conference to support Bill S-220, the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. We also discussed the situation at Point Atkinson, which, along with 140 acres of virgin forest, is currently leased to the District of West Vancouver by DFO. The lease does not, however, include the lighthouse. Despite efforts by district officials to have Point Atkinson and Lighthouse Park divested to them, DFO officials had refused to discuss the matter. I saw this as a prime example of the lack of a "National Divestiture Policy" and took the opportunity to compare the Point Atkinson situation with our own Cape Forchu, in Nova Scotia.

The strategy worked and I was contacted soon after by an official from DFO who told me that the department was open to discussing the divestiture matter with the District of West Vancouver. Needless to say, Parks officials were very pleased and I was invited to the Mayor's office to further explain the process. On Saturday, February 18 I gave my presentation to an appreciative audience at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. This event, like Victoria, was well attended and I felt that the trip to the west coast was well worth the effort.

I would like to thank everyone I met along the way for making me feel at home. I would especially like to thank Natalie Bull and the staff of the Heritage Canada Foundation, the staff at both the Maritime Museum of British Columbia in Victoria and the Vancouver Maritime Museum as well as Ian Macdonald and his wife, Shirley, for their hospitality and the wonderful dinner at their home. Thanks also to Elaine Graham, Trev and Flo Anderson (former lightkeepers), Garry Fletcher and Chris Blondeau (Pearson College), as well as Mike and Carol Slater (Race Rocks).

Bill S-220 has received second reading in the House of Commons and has been referred to the Standing Committee - Fisheries and Oceans. I strongly urge you to contact your MP and ask for their support of the Bill.

LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION EVENTS ON THE WEST COAST

Douglas Franklin

Early February was a busy time for raising awareness about heritage lighthouses in Canada. On February 8th in Victoria, British Columbia, the Heritage Canada Foundation hosted two important meetings at the Maritime Museum of British Columbia. The first meeting was an opportunity for those with a specialized knowledge of lighthouses to learn about the lighthouse situation from a



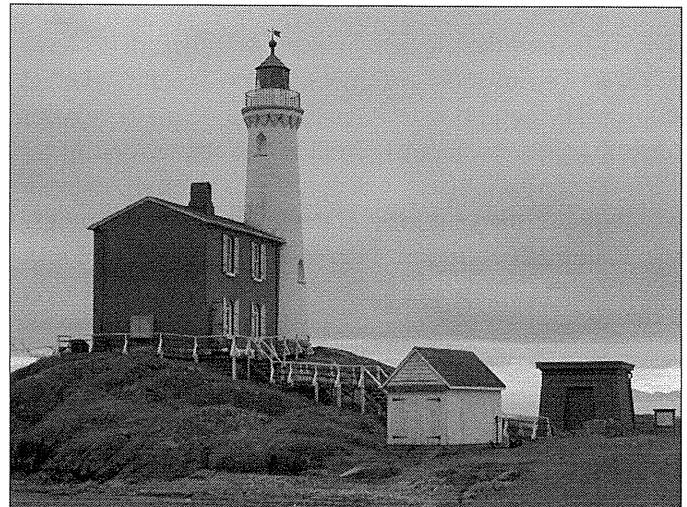
The massive 1860 stone tower at Race Rocks. *Barry MacDonald*

national perspective. The main speaker was Barry MacDonald, President of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society. Barry explained why his organization was started and, using excellent slides, presented cases of endangered and saved heritage lighthouses across Canada. He stressed common themes: the need for maintenance, recognition of precious surviving heritage technology, the willingness of communities to be part of the preservation solution. One of the key questions he posed to the audience was, "Is this the time to create a Canada-wide lighthouse preservation organization?"

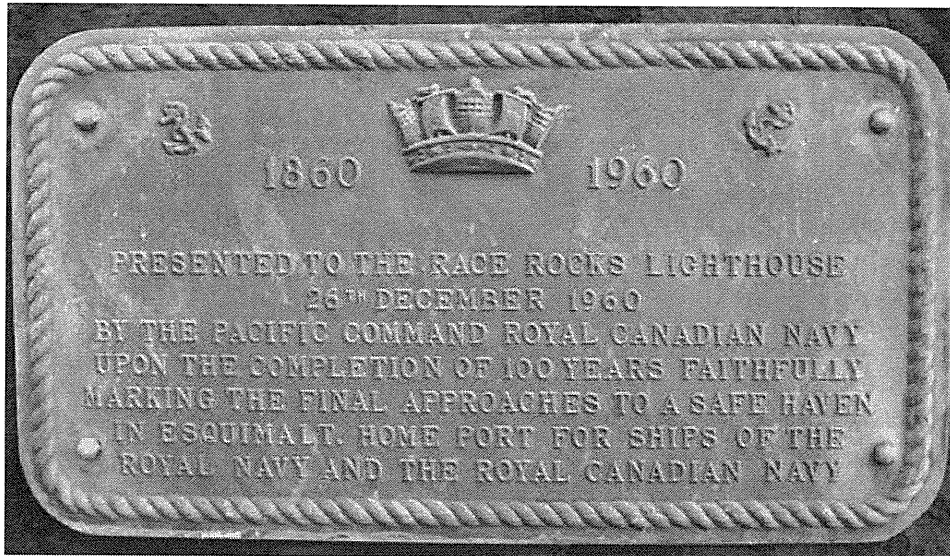
The second meeting, on the evening of February 8, focused on Bill S-220, An Act to Protect Heritage Lighthouses, and attracted more than sixty people, including media. Representatives from the boards of the Heritage Canada Foundation and the Heritage Society of British Columbia were also prominent in the audience. The featured speaker was Senator Pat Carney (British Columbia) who described the Bill she steered through the Senate in December. She emphasized the basic purpose of the Bill, which is to involve communities and Canadians in

petitioning the Minister of the Environment to designate and protect heritage lighthouses.

Other key aspects of the Bill include recognizing and protecting related auxiliary buildings, and imposing responsibility for basic maintenance of the protected



Fisgard lighthouse, Esquimalt. *Barry MacDonald*



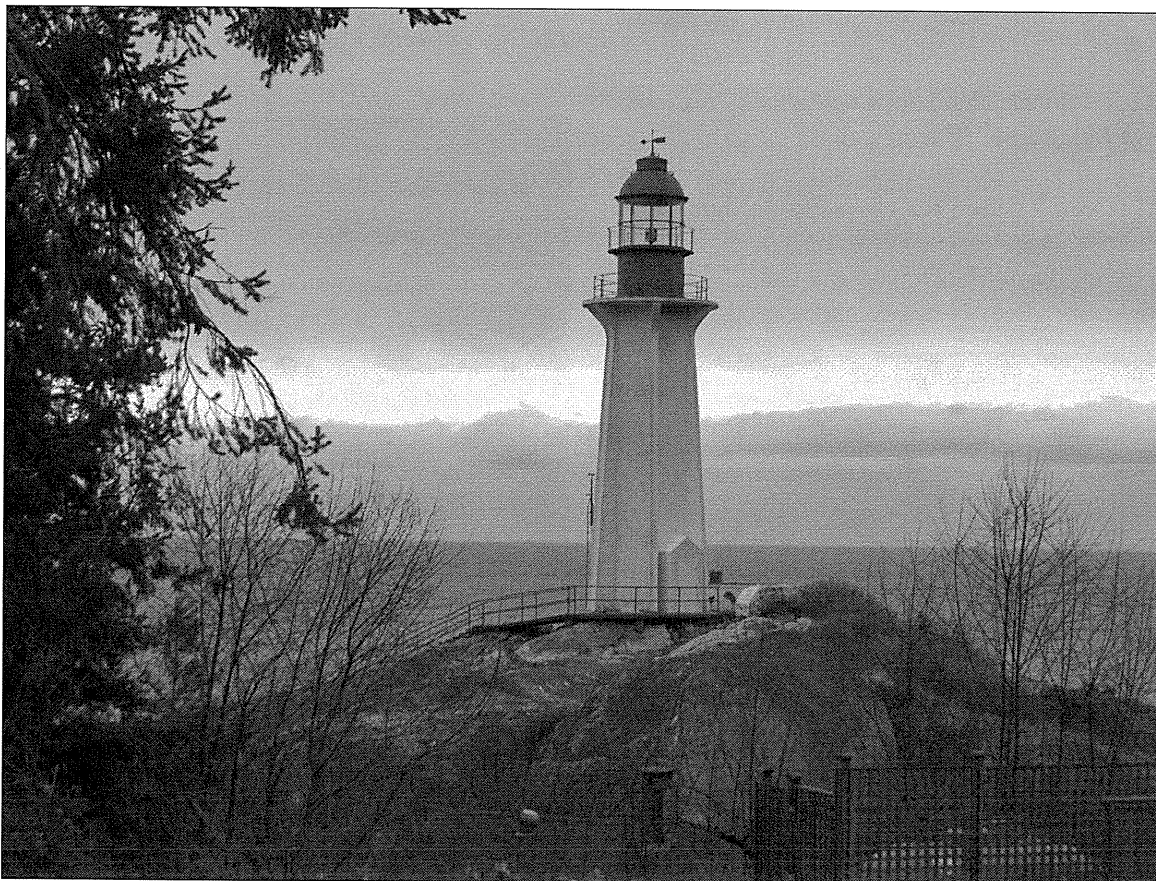
Race Rocks commemorative plaque. *Barry MacDonald*

structures on federal custodial departments or agencies. Member of Parliament Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore) said that he endorsed Bill S-220 fully, and would champion it when it came forward in the House of Commons. The third speaker was Barry MacDonald who presented a very engaging talk, illustrating historic lighthouses across Canada and driving home the need for immediate action before any more of these landmarks might be lost. Lively discussion followed.

On February 14, Senator Carney held a press conference at the Point Atkinson Lighthouse. Several representatives from the municipality of West Vancouver, including an elected official and members of the historical society, as well as Doug Franklin from the Heritage Canada Foundation and Barry MacDonald, were present. It was a typical blustery and damp West Coast day, and the Point Atkinson Lighthouse provided a splendid setting. The magnificent tower, one of several surviving structures designed by Marine and Fisheries engineer Colonel William Anderson in the early 1900s, is a federally classifi-

fied heritage building and National Historic Site. Still, as Senator Carney explained, it has no legal protection and has serious maintenance problems. Anxious local officials and volunteers, however, would gladly step in to help secure the future of this lighthouse – but an orderly and predictable process is needed. Again, Bill S-220 provides a mechanism for community involvement.

It is expected that Bill S-220 will be presented for Second Reading in the House of Commons before the end of



The graceful Point Atkinson lighthouse in West Vancouver. *Barry MacDonald*

NEWS AND VIEWS

A New Lighthouse for Pictou

Chris Mills

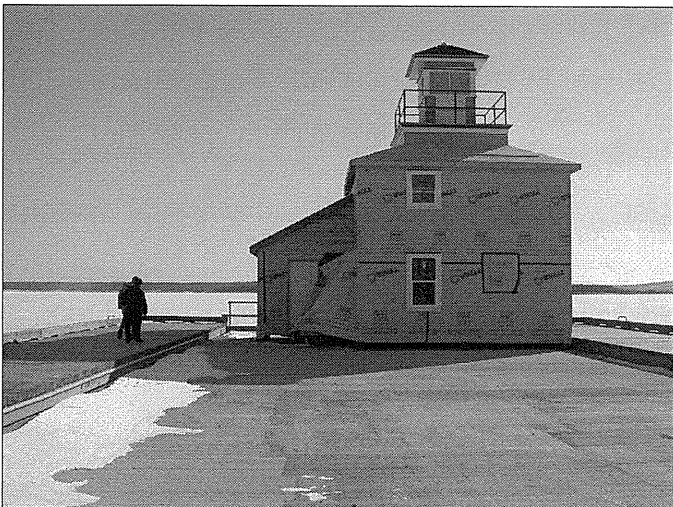
There's good news from the Northumberland Strait area little more than two years after the historic Pictou Bar lighthouse burned to the ground – the town of Pictou now has a new lighthouse. It's actually a scale replica of the old Guysborough light – a combined



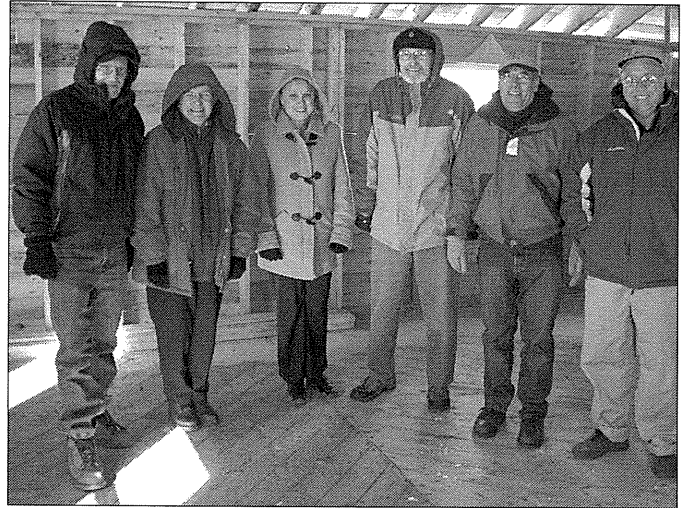
A scale replica of an early 20th century combined lighthouse/dwelling now graces the Pictou waterfront near the Hector quay. *Chris Mills*

dwelling and lighthouse that looks remarkably like the 1916 Caribou lighthouse. The new light is part of the Northumberland Fisheries Museum and will serve as a museum and research centre for Nova Scotia lighthouse history

Rip Irwin, Barry MacDonald and Chris Mills met with museum committee members and toured the new



The new lighthouse in Pictou. *Chris Mills*



Northumberland Fisheries Museum and Heritage Association members and visitors in the new lighthouse replica in Pictou. From left to right: Keith Munsie, Linda Laybolt, Michelle Davey, Rip Irwin, Barry MacDonald and Robert Mills. *Chris*

structure on a bitterly cold March day. The lighthouse sits on a brand new wharf adjacent to a new fish hatchery, situated near the Hector quay. Museum members hope to see the exterior and possibly part of the interior completed by the summer.

Narrow Escape for New Brunswick's Swallowtail Lighthouse

This story from the Canadian Press



Grand Manan's Swallowtail lighthouse in 1993. *Chris Mills*

Black soot still surrounds Grand Manan's iconic Swallowtail Lighthouse after firefighters extinguished a near-disastrous fire on weekend of March 31st. In what can only be described as a remarkable rescue, a group of quick-thinking volunteer firefighters used a technique from the Prairies to extinguish a grass fire that could have destroyed

the 147-year-old lighthouse and the nearby vacant keeper's duplex on Sunday. For a few dreadful moments, the future of one of New Brunswick's most recognizable shorelines looked bleak.

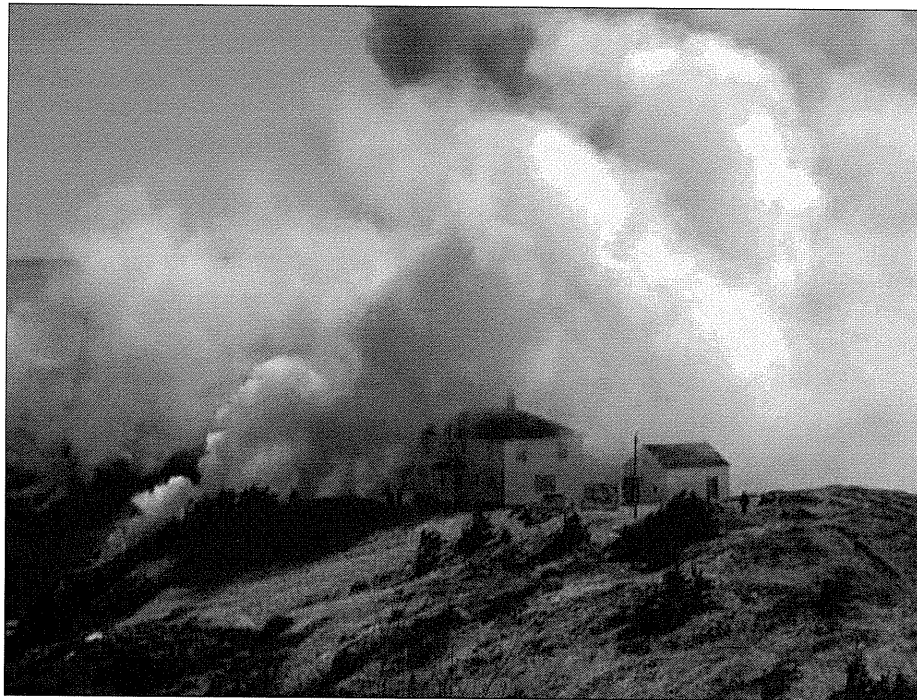
"When I got the call, I phoned the lieutenant who was at the scene and said, 'Can you tell me what's burning?'" recalled Grand Manan Fire Chief Colin Bagley.

"He said, 'I think the whole lighthouse is going to go.'"

When Bagley arrived at North Head, where the lighthouse faces coastal New Brunswick, he moved quickly. Fire trucks were bringing pumps, but the fire was spreading too quickly to wait. The fire station's water hose couldn't reach the lighthouse, making the ocean's salt water the only water source immediately available.

With flames rising as high as 10 metres in the air, the firefighters had a few spare tools to fight them: a sheet of plywood, one shovel and a backpack full of forestry items.

Then, a sign of hope: the light from the Swallowtail tower beamed through



Smoke and flames from a fast moving grass fire at the Swallowtail lighthouse kept firefighters hopping – both the lighthouse and the abandoned keepers' duplex survived the blaze. *Holly and Kirk Cheney*

to burn up any grass or ground debris before putting them out.

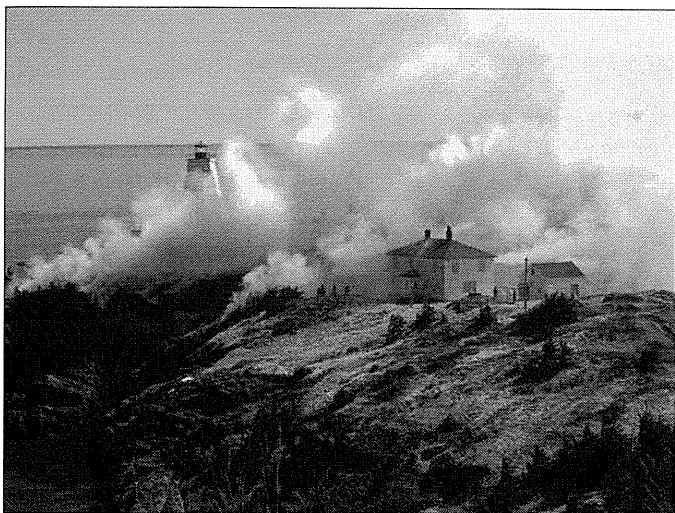
"We were looking at the fire and it's coming at us. We back up to where the house is. We got as close to the structures as we can, start about three fires, let them run out after about three feet. Then we put out the fires," explained Bagley.

"We were burning everything, so the big fire that had the wind pushing it toward the lighthouse would run into black ground and go out. That's about the only thing we could do until the trucks arrived."

It took about 20 firefighters



Flames and dense smoke all but obscure the Swallowtail lightstation on Grand Manan on April 1, 2007. *Holly and Kirk Cheney*



“...a sign of hope: the light from the Swallowtail tower beamed through...smoke and towering flames.” *Holly and Kirk Cheney*

to finally suppress the fire, but it was the back fires that proved the most crucial.

“There were some tense moments but there was no damage to the buildings at all. It blackened just about everything though,” said the fire chief.

Swallowtail Lighthouse was identified in 2006 as one of New Brunswick’s top 10 endangered lighthouses. It is widely considered to be one of the province’s key tourist attractions and is one of the most photographed lighthouse in the Maritimes.

“The islanders are coming up to me and saying, ‘I’m so glad you fellows were able to save it,’” said Bagley

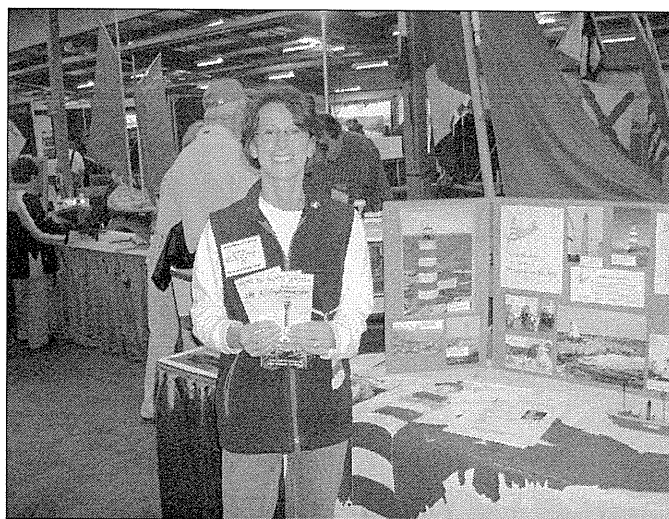
Boat Show Blues

Chris Mills

Since 1995, the colourful NSLPS banner has been a fixture at the Halifax International Boat Show. Amidst the shiny fibreglass cruisers, SeaDoos, high-end electronics and hardware displays, we’ve tried to garner the interest of marine-minded people and at the same time, raise the profile of Nova Scotia lighthouses.

Some years it seems to have worked. We’ve attracted new members, got people involved with lighthouse quizzes and activities, and shared stories with former keepers and their families. In recent years though, interest seems to be flagging. Reports by board member Lew Perry and by long-time volunteer Josette d’Entremont indicate that attendance at this year’s show was down on the first day anyway, due to bad weather.

But Lew also notes that the NSLPS booth seemed to be in a “...bad spot...out of the main traffic flow.” Although we were pleased to be included with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic display, it seems that the



Josette d’Entremont at the 2007 Halifax International Boat Show. *Josette d’Entremont*

adjacent boat models were attracting much more attention than our tiny display.

It is time to re-evaluate our involvement with the boat show. Despite the many hours of help from board members and Barry MacDonald’s excellent and steadfast involvement with the show, we may be better served by involving ourselves with an event more closely aligned with our interests in history and preservation.

Mr. Lighthouse Passes Away

Chris Mills

A major figure in the preservation of Maine’s lighthouse history has died. Ken Black passed away on January 28th at the age of 83.

Black co-founded the Maine Lighthouse Museum in Rockland – and for many years he had helped run the Shore Village Museum, with its huge collection of lighthouse artifacts.



Barry MacDonald with Ken Black at the Shore Village Museum in November 2003. *Courtesy Barry MacDonald*

An e-mail from *Lighthouse Digest*'s Tim Harrison states that "Black is largely credited as being one of the principal founders of the lighthouse preservation movement in the United States, and the first person to have a national newsletter about lighthouses, which always ended with his personal comments and the statement, 'Be neighbourly,' a philosophy that he was known to live by."

I received that newsletter for a number of years, and Ken always made time to write a small hello before his "Be neighbourly," sign-off. I was also fortunate enough to meet Ken during a trip to Maine in the late 1980s.

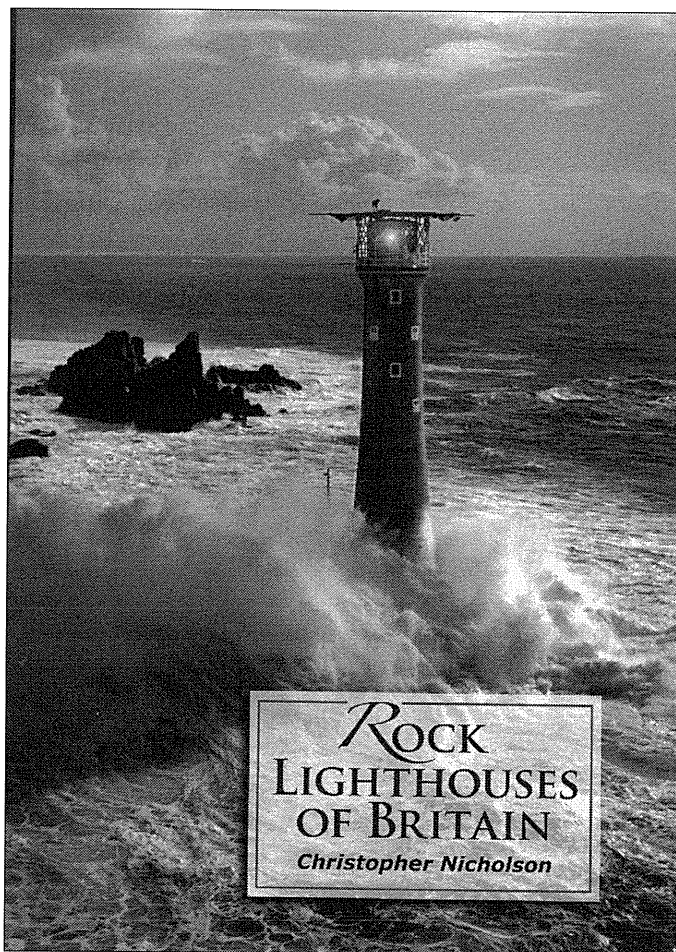
Ken Black was a veteran of the Second World War and later served with the U.S Coast Guard. He began to rescue lenses and fog horns when he realized that automation was leading to the loss of outdated equipment.

Ken Black is survived by his wife Dorothy.

BOOK REVIEWS

Chris Mills

Rock Lighthouses of Britain. Christopher Nicholson. Whittles Publishing. Dunbeath, Scotland. 2006 (Third edition). Colour and b&w. Maps, illustrations, photos. 224 pp.



A stone monolith topped with a powerful sweeping light, rising from a tempestuous sea – it's the classic image of a British lighthouse. Names like Eddystone, Bishop Rock, Skerryvore and Bell Rock conjure up images of wave-pounded towers where keepers lived in the cramped confines of tiny round rooms while tending their lights for the safety of mariners.

But what did it take to build these marvels of engineering in an age before helicopters, hydraulics and computers? Christopher Nicholson answers these questions and many more in this handsomely produced third edition of *Rock Lighthouses of Britain*.

Originally published in 1983, the book immediately became the definitive work on Britain's most famous and exposed lighthouses, beginning with the fabled Eddystone. The construction of an ornate tower on these rocks off Plymouth in 1698 marked the beginning of a two-century era of rock lighthouse construction in Britain.

Rock Lighthouses of Britain: The End of an Era? followed in 1995, but it's the 2006 edition that is the best and most comprehensive version, containing many new, full-colour images, rare hand-coloured drawings and dramatic aerial views.

After an introduction and an overview of the British lighthouse service, Nicholson dives into accounts of the building of 13 remote, mostly wave-washed lighthouses. His detailed descriptions bring to life the painstaking work of engineers and builders – for instance, at the Bishop Rock, off the Scilly Isles, engineer Nicholas Douglass had to wait for the lowest spring tides to lay the first stone, which itself was one foot below water. Workers laid the stone in July 1852, and by the end of the year had installed only 44 stones – all dovetailed and keyed together. It would be another six full years before workers completed the 147 foot tower.

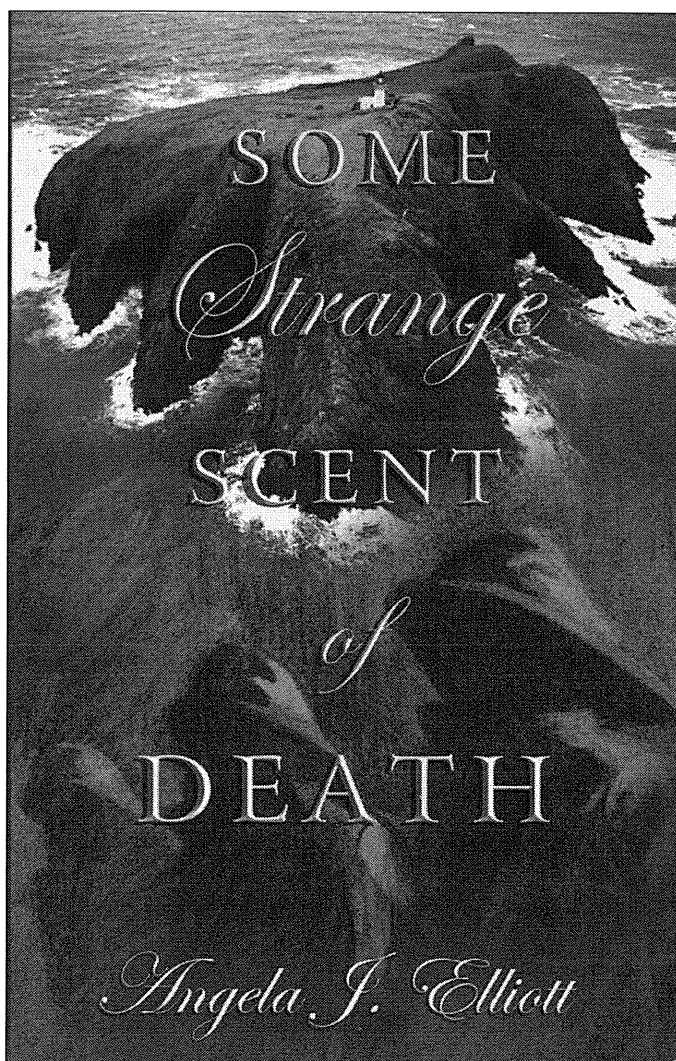
From Bishop Rock, to Scotland's Dubh Artach (likely a corruption of the Gaelic "black one of death"), to Chicken Rock, to the Flannan Isles, Nicholson provides fascinating detail of keepers' lives, disastrous fires (in 1960, the 3 keepers at Chicken Rock were forced to escape their burning lighthouse by sliding down a rope from the top of the 116-foot tower onto the rocks below) and intriguing photos of tower interiors (and yes, keepers did live in little round rooms).

Nicholson has also added another "rock light" to the 2006 edition, although in the true sense of the word, the solar-powered beacon on Rockall is not a lighthouse. About 21 metres (70 feet) high and only 100 metres (328 feet) in circumference, Rockall sits alone, 400 kilometres (250 miles) off the west coast of Scotland! Although it's only had a minor beacon for the past three decades, the rock's extremely remote location makes it "the daddy

of them all". Added to this, claims of ownership by the U.K, the Republic of Ireland, Iceland and Denmark, make Rockall a fascinating subject for a chapter in *Rock Lighthouses of Britain*, even though a lightkeeper has never been stationed there.

Nicholson ties things up with a chapter on the "new era" for rock lighthouses – by the 1970s, the English lighthouse authorities began to build helipads on the top of their graceful granite towers, compromising their aesthetic appeal, but making dangerous boat reliefs a thing of the past. The next step was automation, and by 1998, there were no staffed lighthouses – rock or otherwise – in Britain. *Rock Lighthouses of Britain* brings the story of these amazing structures and their keepers full circle and in doing so, Nicholson has produced a valuable record of a crucial and fascinating part of British maritime history.

Some Strange Scent of Death. Angela J. Elliott. Whittles Publishing. Dunbeath, Scotland. 2005. 226 pp.



On the evening of December 15, 1900, the S.S.

Archtor passed just off the Flannan Isles, a series of rugged islands and rocks some 32 kilometres (19 miles) west of the Isle of Lewis in Scotland's Outer Hebrides. The steamer was on her way from Philadelphia to Leith and the weather was poor. Her bridge officers were surprised to see that the newly established light on Eilean Mòr – the largest of the Flannans – was not flashing. Although this news was reported when the ship arrived in Oban, it was not until Boxing Day that the Northern Lighthouse Board tender *Hesperus* was able to reach the station.

None of the lightkeepers were waiting for the ship. The flagstaff stood bare. No provision boxes waited on the landing. When crewmembers from the *Hesperus* came ashore, they found beds unmade, the clock stopped and an overturned chair by the kitchen table. At the station's west landing crewmembers discovered twisted iron railings near the cargo crane, a full 70 feet above sea level – and at 110 feet, a lifebuoy had been torn from its ropes.

There was no sign of the three keepers. So began a mystery that remains to this day.

Some Strange Scent of Death is based on this intriguing true story, although some of the characters and events are fictional. The story revolves around two characters – Joseph Moore, a real-life assistant keeper, and Callum Robinson, a fictional, hard-up newspaper reporter on a passage from the United States to Scotland on the *Archtor*.

Both men are haunted by their own demons – Moore by his sightings of the apparitions of the three missing keepers, and his hidden love for the wife of one of them, and Callum by alcohol and his overpowering desire to find out what "conspiracy" lies behind the darkened Flannans lighthouse.

Moore dreads his return to duty on Eilean Mòr and his sense of foreboding grows as he learns of the missing keepers. He becomes obsessed with the idea that phantoms – possibly the spirits of monks from the island's ancient and crumbling monastery – are trying to lure him to his death.

Meanwhile, a drunk and obsessed Callum Robinson desperately seeks information about the incident and a passage to the lonely island so he can write his article. The story peaks with a face-to-face meeting between Moore and Robinson after the newspaperman makes a wild ride to Eilean Mòr in a tiny open boat. And it ends with the deathly, pounding sea against the cliffs of the island.

Author Angela Elliott has woven a dark story, with a relentlessly ominous mood that rarely peaks beyond somber. It's an evocative tale that fleshes out the original mystery with some of the speculations about its cause – phantoms, sea serpents and spirits of the dead.

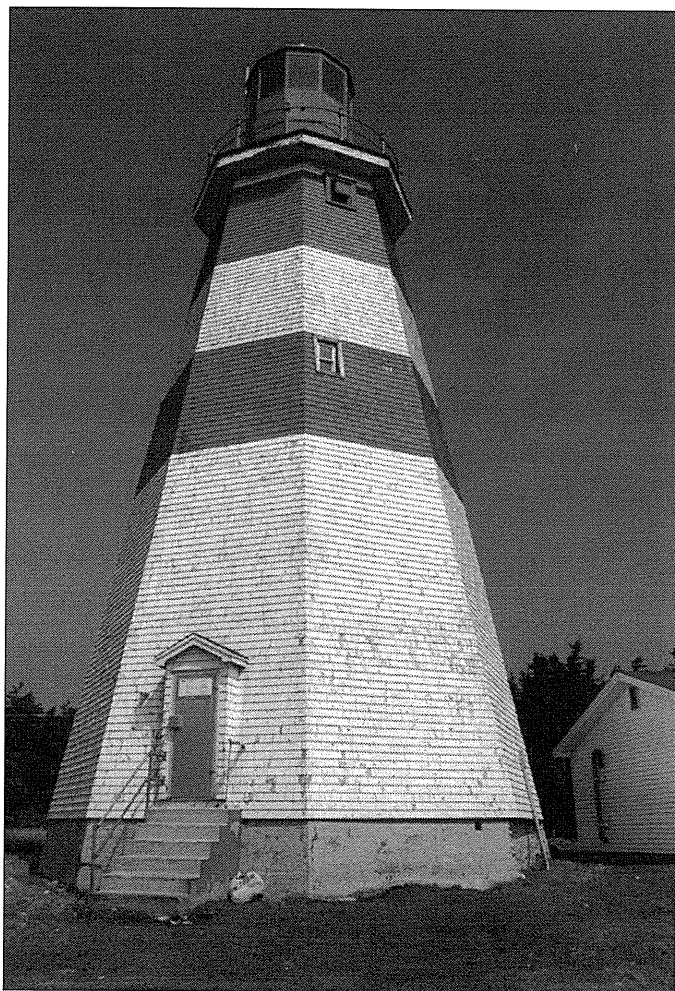
Elliot deftly weaves fiction and fantasy – we read of Moore’s nightmares and efforts to appease island spirits in the abandoned monastery, and later, the original report about the missing men by Northern Lighthouse Board Superintendent Muirhead, complete with details of the search of the island. The superintendent also makes note of assistant keeper Moore’s “high state of nervousness,” as a result of the incident.

It is likely that the three keepers were washed away by a giant seas crashing into the island’s west landing. But their bodies were never found, and to this day, the disappearance of the keepers of the Flannans remains a mystery. *Some Strange Scent of Death* offers a compelling look at this enduring tale of tragedy and intrigue in the North Atlantic.

Let’s Act to Protect Our Lighthouses

Philip Pacey

The Seal Island lighthouse has been listed as one of Canada’s 10 most endangered places in 2007. Built in 1831 off the south-west tip of Nova Scotia, the Seal Island light is



Seal Island tower in 1998. *Chris Mills*

the oldest wooden lighthouse in Nova Scotia. A report by the Heritage Canada Foundation states that the lighthouse has not been kept in good repair, with leaks, rotten shingles and peeling paint.

This highlights the need for stronger federal and provincial legislation to protect heritage buildings. Except for railway stations, which were protected by a private members bill about 20 years ago, there is no legislation to protect federally owned and regulated buildings in Canada. We are the only G-8 nation that lacks such fundamental legislation.

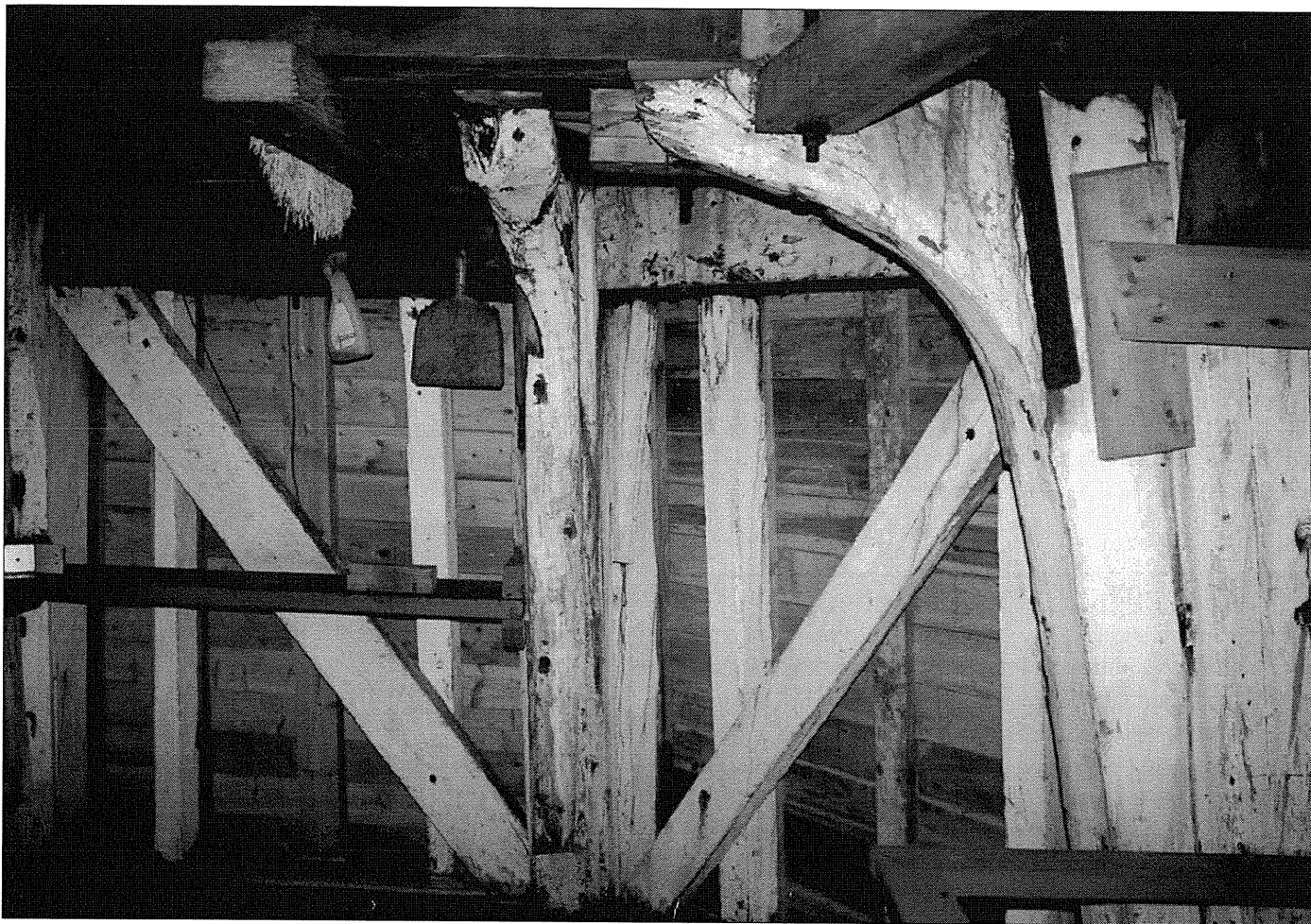
Lighthouses have been a central part of the image of Nova Scotia for generations. Unfortunately, many of the beacons along the Lighthouse Route are in jeopardy.

The contrast is obvious for any Nova Scotian who visits New England, where the lighthouses are well maintained. Businesses thrive arranging for visits and selling souvenirs. It is no coincidence that more than 70% of the historic lighthouses in the United States are legally protected.

At the urging of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society and other heritage groups, the late



The Seal Island light shows wear and tear in 1998, 8 years after the last keepers left. *Chris Mills*



Natural-growth knees at the top of the Seal Island lighthouse show signs of water damage in 2004. *Chris Mills*

Senator Michael Forrestall proposed a bill to protect lighthouses. His initiative was taken up by Senator Pat Carney of British Columbia. Bill S-220, an Act to Protect Heritage Lighthouses, was passed by the Senate in December, 2006. This bill would provide for evaluation of the heritage significance of lighthouses by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The government or other owners would be required to maintain and protect lighthouses that pass the criteria.

Meanwhile, in the Commons, Peter Stoffer (Sackville-Eastern Shore) introduced Bill C-268 last May, saying "We believe that working through community groups and communities throughout the country we can preserve and protect these lighthouses for many generations to come." On February 7, MP Gerald Keddy (South Shore - St. Margaret's) introduced Bill S-220, already passed by the Senate. He said, "It is the intent of this bill to have as many as possible of Canada's existing 583 lights transferred to their community of interest."

The bill was given first reading and will come up for second reading on March 27, 2007. Similar bills have been presented before, but have not been adopted, despite strong support from Nova Scotian MPs.

The Province also has a role to play in protecting these important icons of Nova Scotia. The Heritage Strategy Task Force of Voluntary Planning has recommended that the Province consider the remaining lighthouses for possible designation as Provincial Heritage Properties.

Heritage buildings are important to the economy. For example, other than shopping and walking, visiting heritage buildings and sites is the most popular activity of visitors to Nova Scotia. Tourism is worth \$1,300,000,000 annually to the province.

This is a time to value our historic legacy from past generations, and a time to resolve to conserve that legacy for future generations. Let us hope that Parliament and the Province will act this spring, before it is too late.

This article originally appeared in the *Halifax Chronicle Herald*. Philip Pacey is president of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, a charitable, non-profit society founded in 1959, with offices in a registered heritage building at 1588 Barrington Street, Halifax, B3J 1Z6 www.htns.ca.



A close call - this dramatic aerial view shows damage from the April 1st grass fire at Swallowtail, New Brunswick. *DFO/Canadian Coast Guard*

Memorial Donations

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society would like to express our appreciation to the following people for their thoughtful donations in memory of our dear friend Dorothy MacLeod:

Philip Vienot, Mount Royal QC

Brenda Shannon, Halifax, NS

Lynn Sanderson, Halifax, NS

Marjory & Blair Anderson, Delta, BC

Alice Sanderson, River Herbert, NS

Tony & Chai-Chu Thompson, Halifax, NS

All donations to the NSLPS are tax deductible.

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Exiled...miles off Nova Scotia's lonely coast



—yet the world is his at the turn of a dial

WILLIAM J. FAULKNER is a "man without a neighbor." Like his father and his father's father before him, he keeps the lamps burning in Devil's Island lighthouse—miles off the barren Nova Scotia coast.

Yet the isolation and stark loneliness his father and grandfather knew are not his lot—thanks to modern radio... a new General Electric All-wave set.

As the angry Atlantic spends its fury on the rocks, he and his family listen to scores of American and Canadian stations... delight in music winged from London, Paris and Berlin... get the headline news of two busy hemispheres.

After spending 10 minutes with a new G-E set, you'll turn "thumbs down" on your present radio

You'll leave the radio world you know behind—the familiar realm of American stations—

And embark on thrilling voyages of discovery... touch many strange ports-of-call... get entertainment refreshingly new from European capitals, Latin-American cities, scores of foreign stations.



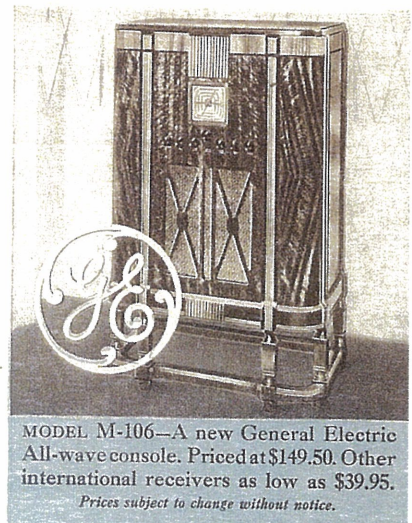
You'll also hold a passport to the air waves where drama rides... for you will listen to grim calls to police cars, aviators flying the night mail.

And your favorite American programs will give you a new delight... for no other radio brings them in as does this new All-wave G-E... with a fidelity, richness and brilliance of tone for which General Electric Radio has ever been noted.

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Ask your nearest G-E dealer to demonstrate one of the new G-E All-wave models—highly improved descendants of the famous G-E sets that "won the tone tests." "Believe your own ears" as you compare this new G-E with your present radio... And remember that this distance-defying G-E is less expensive than the standard-range set of three years ago!

Many superb models... table receivers, consoles, radio-phonograph combinations... ranging from \$18.75 to \$375.00. Prices slightly higher in the West, Mid-West and South. See your nearest G-E Radio Dealer or write the General Electric Company, Section R-4711, Mds. Dept., Bridgeport, Conn.



MODEL M-106—A new General Electric All-wave console. Priced at \$149.50. Other international receivers as low as \$39.95.

Prices subject to change without notice.

GENERAL ELECTRIC RADIO



BORN OF THE PIONEERING ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FAMOUS "HOUSE OF MAGIC"

From the past... Ya gotta love those old American ads—poor old William Faulkner, "exiled...miles off Nova Scotia's lonely coast." (Well, 800 metres off Hartlen Point in Halifax Harbour). We wonder why the Devil's Island keeper liked to listen to "American" radio stations first and Canadian stations second, and hey, isn't that a photo of Sambro Island? This gem appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* in the 1930s.