

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society
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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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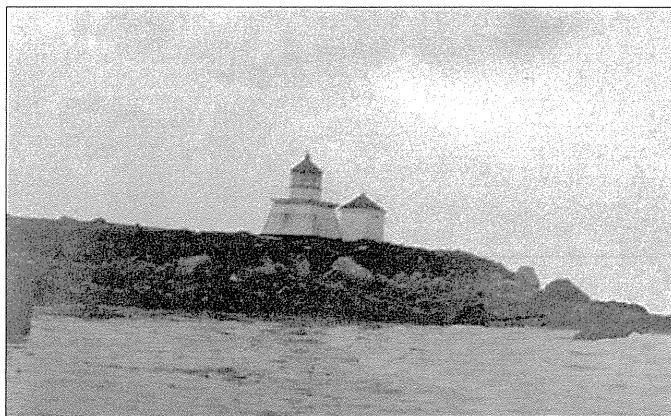
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Cover : Photographer Chris Mills and Rip Irwin at the Sambro lighthouse stamp launch on December 11, 2007. *Seana Brackett.*

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS LIGHT?



LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY LIGHT IS STODDART'S ISLAND. *NSARM*

In each issue of *The Lighthouse* this year, we're publishing a photograph of a "mystery light" in Nova Scotia. If you have any information about this month's light, please contact Chris Mills at ketch1@eastlink.ca or at 902-868-2313.

We had an overwhelming response to the mystery light question from our last issue. Jim Schlecta, one of our loyal American members, guessed Stoddart Island, which is correct. The little light sits just off Shag Harbour, in south west Nova Scotia. Josette d'Entremont was also able to identify the light.

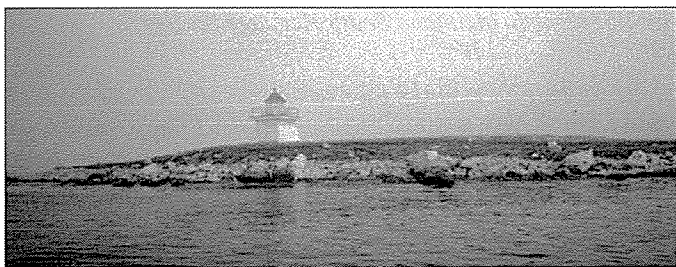
Betty June Smith sent a card before Christmas, writing "Stoddart's Island, Shelburne Co. Built in 1886... Aids to navigation here, at entrance to anchorage and to Shag Harbour began when the island's owner, Michael Wrayton put a light in his private home's seaward window in the 1870s, a signal for both inshore and deep-sea fisher-

men who sold fish and bought provisions from his business. In 1875 a small beacon was built, tended by young Agnes Wrayton, who also tended the permanent light. It is still called locally "Aggie's Light. The storehouse is long gone."

The island has also been known as Emerald Isle – it was home to Evelyn Richardson's (Betty June's mother and author of *We Keep A Light*) grandfather Ephraim Larkin, who kept the light until the 1930s.

We had another positive ID from NSLPS board member Lew Perry, who sent this account of the Stoddart's Island light:

In his book *Lighthouses and Lights of Nova Scotia*, Rip Irwin calls it "The squattest little lighthouse existing in the province. At 6.4 meters (21 feet), the Stoddart's Island light is the shortest lighthouse in Nova Scotia. It is situated just over a mile (1.6 km) from Prospect Point



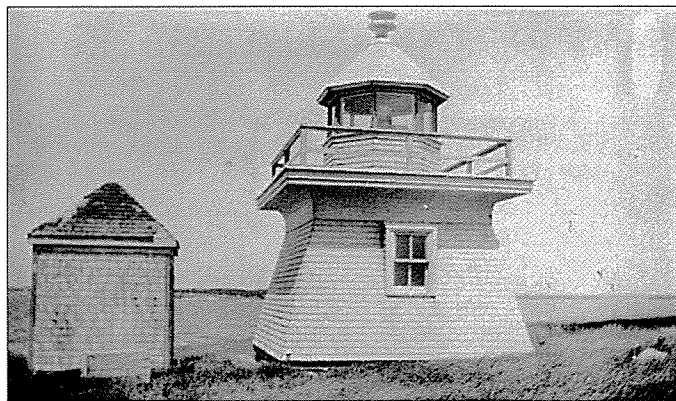
A RECENT VIEW OF THE STODDART'S ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE. JOSETTE D'ENTREMONT

in Shag Harbour and roughly five miles (8 km) from the tallest lighthouse in the province - Cape Sable".

Over the years Stoddart's Island has gone through several names and owners. When F. W. Desbarres surveyed the southwest coast of Nova Scotia in the late eighteenth century he named it Hope Island. About 1792, John Stoddart of North Shields, England and a boatswain of a British man-of-war jumped ship in Shelburne. He bought out the shares of the island and moved his family there, giving the island his name. After Stoddart died in 1819, his two sons remained on the island until the late 1850s when they moved away and sold it to an Irishman, Michael Wrayton.

Wrayton, who had been a business man in nearby Doctor's Cove for several years, moved his family to the island and re-named it Emerald Isle after his beloved homeland. It was during Wrayton's stay in 1877 that the first lighthouse was built on the island. Originally it was a lantern atop a wooden pole which used kerosene as a fuel instead of the usual whale oil – the first to do so in the area. Wrayton became the first lightkeeper on Stoddart's Island. This light was replaced by a new tower in 1886

After Wrayton's death by drowning at Argyle Sound in 1879 along with two of his children, the island



THE "EMERALD ISLE" LIGHTHOUSE IN ITS HEYDAY. COURTESY ANNE WICKENS

was taken over by his son Arthur and wife Alice. Tragedy followed the Wrayton family, when, in 1892, Arthur's small boat capsized in Shag Harbour Sound and he was drowned. Two years later his widow sold the island to Ephraim Larkin, the grandfather of Evelyn Richardson, author of the Governor General's Award winning book *We Keep A Light*. She was born there in 1902. At that time the name of the island reverted to Stoddart's Island, as Wrayton had failed to register the name with the authorities

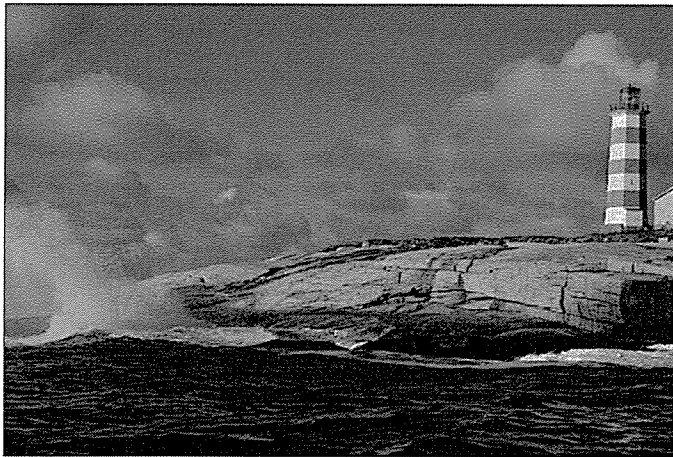
Besides Hope, Stoddart's and Emerald Island, it has been known locally by other names such as Larkin's Island, Eph's Island and Lem's Island. The Coast Guard has decommissioned the light and it is now abandoned and decaying. There is interest in the community to have the lighthouse moved ashore and restored, but to date, no concrete plan has been developed.

For more information about the Stoddart's Island lighthouse, see *The Lightkeeper* Vol 9, No. 3, September/October 2002. Thanks to everyone who responded. We look forward to your guesses for this issue's mystery light.



THIS ISSUE'S MYSTERY LIGHT. SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO THE LIGHTKEEPER, NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY, 1675 LOWER WATER STREET, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA B3J 1S3, OR E-MAIL KETCH1@EASTLINK.CA

SAMBRO ISLAND UPDATES



SAMBRO ISLAND IN NOVEMBER, 2007. CHRIS MILLS

The Sambro Island lighthouse is 250 years old this year. Despite this very important milestone, the station is in desperate condition. Although the restored the exterior of the stone tower in 1998, the keepers' houses and the historic gashouse are close to being lost.

We're at a critical juncture. If some or all of these structures do not receive immediate stabilization, they will literally fall to the ground, or in the case of the gas house, into the sea. Please make your concerns known to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans/Canadian Coast Guard. Without public input, nothing will happen.

Fortunately, the news is not all doom and gloom. Along with the Mainland South Heritage Society, the NSLPS plans to help celebrate Sambro Island's birthday during 2008. Events are in the initial planning stages now and we will bring you information as soon as it becomes available. In the meantime, here's a run-down of all things Sambro to date.

SAMBRO ISLAND STAYS SILENT

Chris Mills

There's been nary a peep from the Sambro Island fog horn since the Coast Guard turned it off last October. Unfortunately, the same can be said of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, which hasn't said a word about what it plans to do about the island's horn.

Why should they? Well, back in November and December, that callous act received a slew of media attention, including coverage on Global television, Rick Howe's column in the now defunct *Daily News*, an article in the *Chronicle Herald*, and an interview with Chris Mills about the issue on The Hotline, on 92 CJCH.

The NSLPS also contacted NDP MLA Michelle Raymond as well as local councilors to let them know of the situation (see Resolution 24 later in this Sambro update).

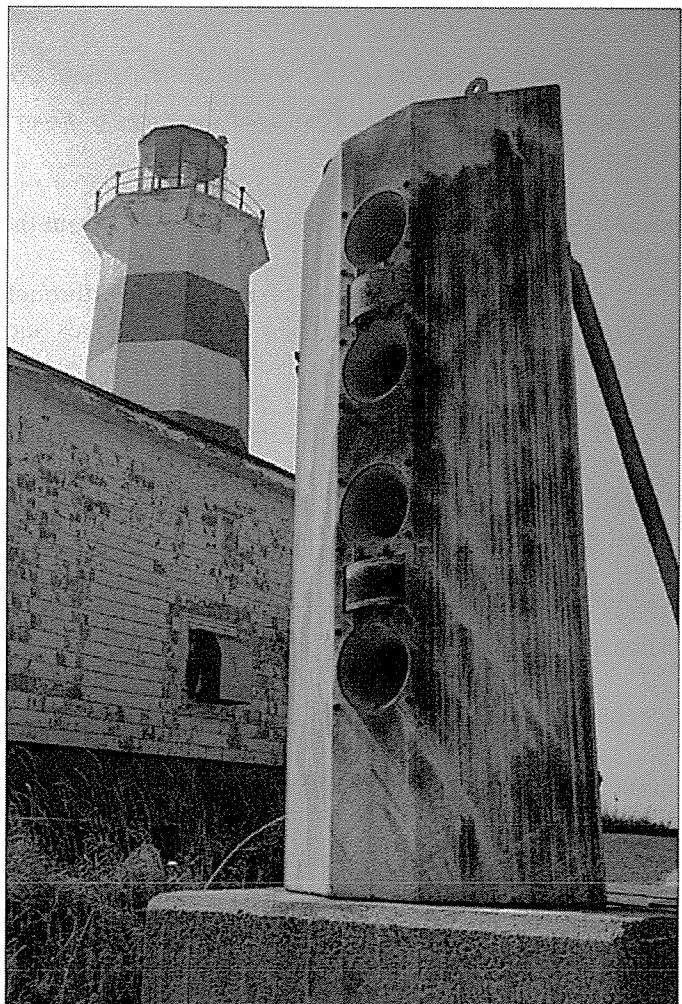
Even more importantly, Sambro Harbourmaster Patrick Gray sent a petition signed by 50 local fishermen to the assistant commissioner of the Coast Guard, the Federal Fisheries Minister and the provincial fisheries minister. That was back before Christmas, and to date, Gray has not received a single acknowledgement that the fishermen's concerns have been noted!

This is an absolutely shameful situation that only serves to further highlight the DFO/Coast Guard's lack of user and public accountability when it comes to lighthouses in Nova Scotia.

SILENCE IS NOT GOLDEN IN SAMBRO

Leslie Harnish, Mainland South Heritage Society

After too many years to count, the sea air in Sambro went sadly silent when the Canadian Coast Guard turned off the foghorn on Sambro Island. When our fishing boats



THE AGA FOG HORN ON SAMBRO ISLAND IS NOW SILENT. CHRIS MILLS

full of friends and family leave the harbour and go out of sight, their loved ones are left behind to worry and hope that they make it back home safe. In the same way that we can't see our loved ones while they are at sea, hearing the foghorn when we couldn't see the lighthouse during foggy, rainy and snowy weather let us know that even though we were safe on land, this beacon of hope was there in the darkness helping to keep our loved ones safe. There may be a time when today's technology goes on the fritz, or a smaller boat is ill-equipped and needs the sound of the horn to guide them. Let's hope this silence doesn't turn deadly.

On a positive note, during the summer of 2008, the silence will be replaced with the sounds of laughter and celebration as we gather to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of Sambro Light. A celebratory event is in the works and hopefully some restoration plans can be launched to help fix the damage caused by Hurricane Juan and more recently, Post Tropical Storm Noel. As the oldest operating lighthouse in North America, Sambro Island deserves to be honoured and restored to its former glory so that we do not lose an important piece of our Canadian history.

May her light shine on for years to come and may her horn be turned back on to protect all mariners.

SAMBRO HORN RECOGNIZED IN PROVINCE HOUSE

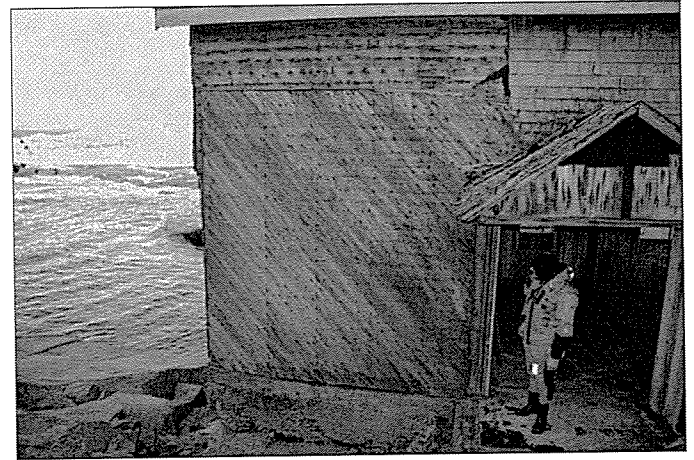
DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS Speaker: Honourable Alfie MacLeod Published by Order of the Legislature by Hansard Reporting Services and printed by the Queen's Printer. Second Session FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2007 RESOLUTION NO. 24 MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution: Whereas this province will celebrate next year the 250th Anniversary of representative democracy in Nova Scotia, since the first elected Assembly came together at Halifax on October 2, 1758; and Whereas one of the first actions the Assembly undertook that day was the passage of an Act to establish a lighthouse on Sambro Outer Island, financed by appropriating £1,000 from the duties paid on spirituous liquors, and a tax on all vessels entering the harbour; and Whereas the stone building which is Sambro Island Light is today the oldest operating lighthouse in the Americas, but its sound signal is to be turned off just as it marks the quarter millennium;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate the people and lightkeepers of Sambro, and express its displeasure to the federal government for such a careless disregard of the nation's Maritime heritage and its history of responsible government, requesting that the

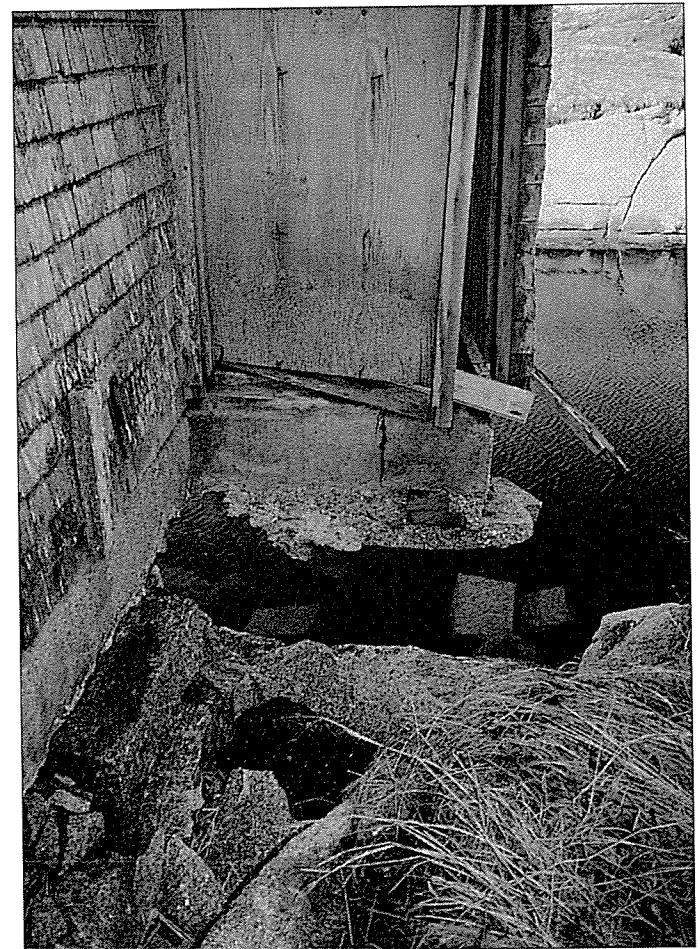
sound signal be reinstated immediately. Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver. The motion is carried.

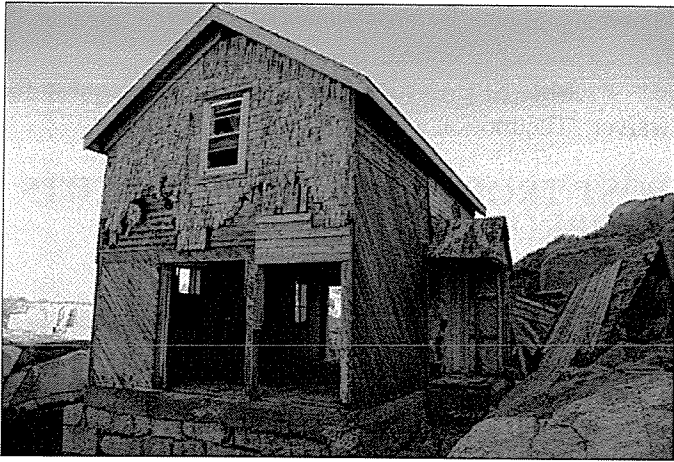
POST TROPICAL STORM NOEL HITS SAMBRO ISLAND HARD



WIND AND SEAS STRIPPED THE SOUTH WEST WALL OF THE GASHOUSE CLEAN TO THE SHEATHING. CHRIS MILLS

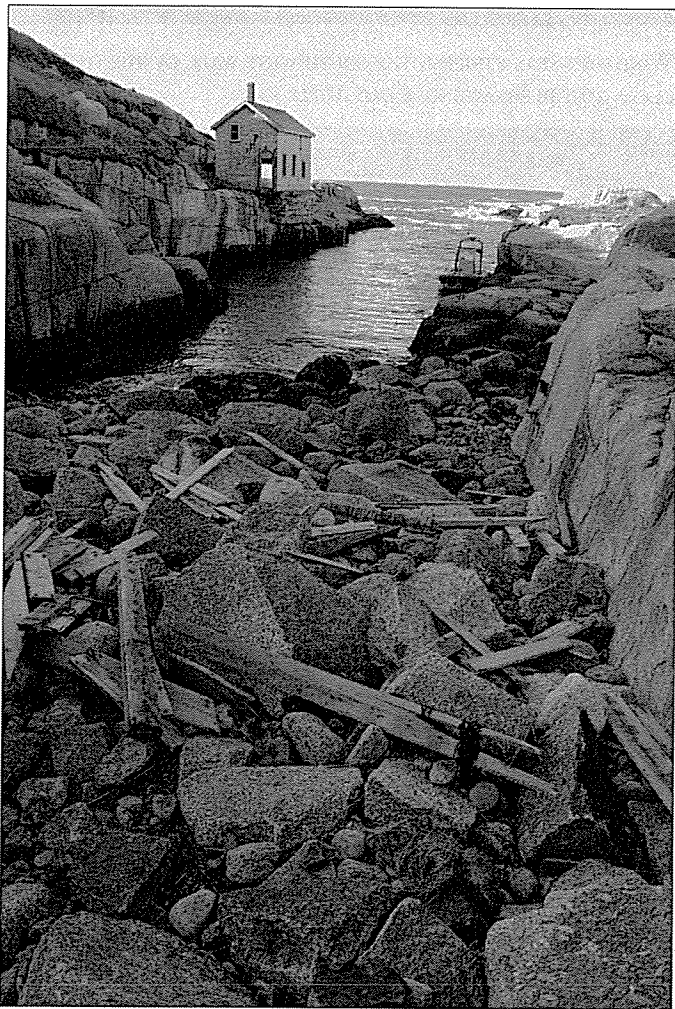


THE FOUNDATION BLOCKS SWEEPED AWAY DURING HURRICANE JUAN CAN NOW BE SEEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LANDING COVE. CHRIS MILLS

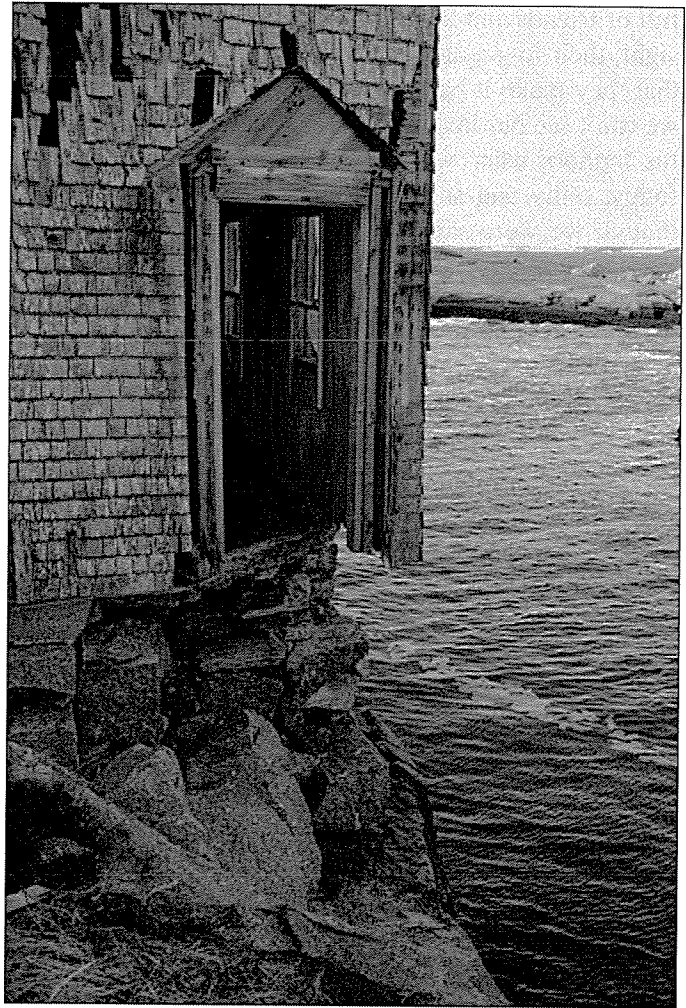


THE GASHOUSE TOOK THE BRUNT OF NOEL'S SWELLS. *CHRIS MILLS*
Chris Mills

The 3rd and 4th of November, 2007 brought a doozie of a storm to Nova Scotia. Hurricane Noel formed in the Caribbean in the waning days of October, packing



THE LANDING COVE ON SAMBRO ISLAND IS STREWN WITH WRECKAGE FROM THE GASHOUSE AFTER POST TROPICAL STORM NOEL. *CHRIS MILLS*
Chris Mills



HURRICANE JUAN TORE SOME OF THE GASHOUSE FOUNDATION AWAY. NOEL DIDN'T HELP EITHER. THE BUILDING NOW FACES MORE UNDERMINING BY THE SEAS. *CHRIS MILLS*

sustained winds of 95 km/h (60 mp/h). The storm began to weaken as it passed over Cuba, but only after killing at least 168 people. When Noel reached Nova Scotia, the Canadian Hurricane Centre downgraded it a post-tropical storm, but its large circulation brought high winds to much of Atlantic Canada, including Sambro Island.

At the peak of the storm, the anemometer at the Coast Guard station in Sambro village registered 95 knots (175 km/h). One of the older local fishermen said he'd never seen such a strong storm surge. Out on Sambro Island, the effects were evident right off the bat. Noel's massive swells inundated the main landing cove, sweeping right through the gas house, which was already badly damaged by Hurricane Noel in 2003.

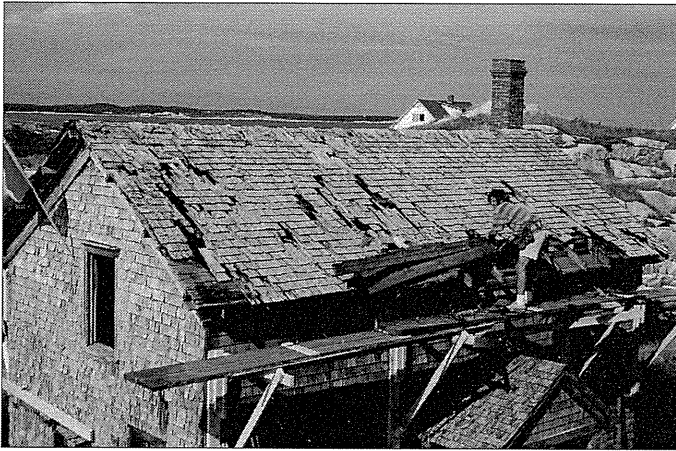
The sea tore most of the entryway off the building and stripped half of the south west wall right down to the sheathing. Nearby, a rock, the size of a Volkswagen "Beetle", was tossed from the depths, to lie along the edge of granite bluff. Further to the north, debris and flattened grass showed that seas made a clean sweep across the low middle of the island, creating, for a short time, two

Sambro islands.

Most amazingly, the seas almost reached the base of the lighthouse, which sits 58 feet (18m) above sea level. The swell scattered large chunks of stone all across the Sambro's solid granite shoreline southeast of the lighthouse and ripped up turf almost to the fog horn. Fortunately, there was no damage to the lighthouse, but another storm like this and we may no longer have a gas house to save.

Correction: *In the Sept/Oct 2007 issue of The Lightkeeper, I wrote that the current "warehouse" on Sambro Island sits on the site of the former acetylene "gashouse" (p.5). The current building is actually the original gashouse. Thanks to Rip Irwin for noticing my mistake – and for submitting the following story about this historic building- Ed.*

THE SAMBRO ISLAND GASHOUSE



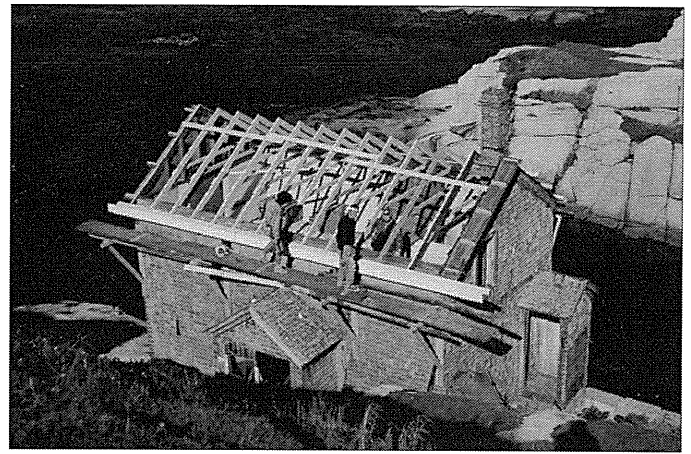
ROOF WORK BEGINS ON THE GASHOUSE IN SEPTEMBER, 1994. E.H. RIP IRWIN

E.H. Rip Irwin

Much has been said about the deplorable state of



READY FOR NEW TRUSSES. E.H. RIP IRWIN

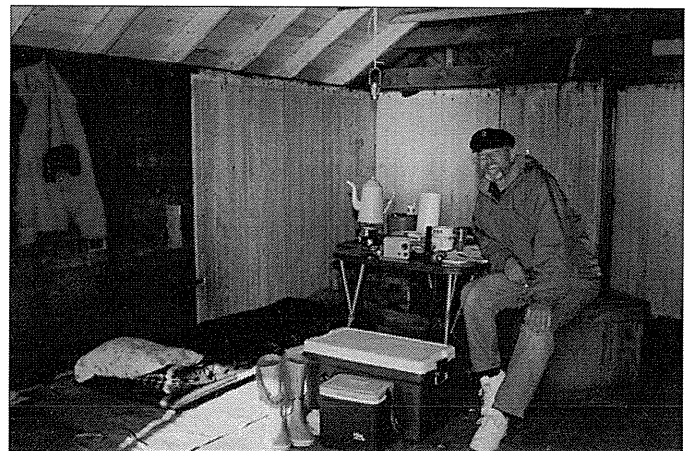


NEW TRUSSES IN PLACE. E.H. RIP IRWIN

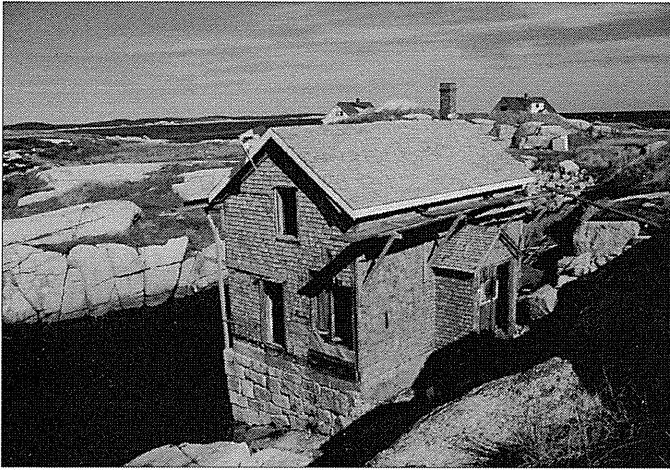
the Sambro Island lighthouse as we are now in the 250th anniversary year of its founding, and rightly so. However, very little concern has been shown for the gashouse, a building which has been an integral part of the lightstation since it was built 102 years ago. Seriously damaged by Hurricane Juan on September 28, 2003, it has been left in a state dangerous to its very existence should we experience another major storm.

Not much was known about this building until the mid-1990s. Over the years it was referred to as "the warehouse", "the fish shed" and simply "the shed". It was not until September 1994 that its true identity was determined. That was the time when we had great hopes for the Sambro Island lightstation. Having noted the solid foundation and absolutely square sturdy construction, I felt that we could use this building to great advantage as we surveyed the station and dreamed of restoration and preservation of this, the oldest operating lighthouse in North America, and all existing buildings.

We could transform this old building into a bunkhouse and living quarters for any and all persons interested and willing to come on the island overnight stays, a weekend, or a few days, to work at the project and at the



"RIP'S ROOST" IN THE SAMBRO ISLAND GASHOUSE. E.H. RIP IRWIN



A BRAND NEW ROOF FOR THE HISTORIC GASHOUSE. E.H. RIP IRWIN

same time, enjoy the camaraderie of folks with the same interest.

So with the Coast Guard's blessings and an offer to help with some materials, we started. The most obvious and important thing to consider if we were to have this building as accommodation for work parties was a new roof. The existing roof was in very bad condition but we never realized how bad until we started to strip the old cedar shingles away. Underneath, we discovered the sheathing was double thickness and totally rotted. In removing the board sheathing we found the rafters were also rotten beyond repair, so we stripped everything down to the wall plates and started reconstruction with new rafters.

No half measures here.

I bunked upstairs in this building throughout the project and spent many hours all alone laying cedar shingles on the new roof. I fondly remember the warm sunny days with the sweet smell of cedar in the air, and I dreamed of the day when the Sambro Island lightstation would be restored to its original impressiveness. I envisioned a lighthouse keeper on station which would be open to the public, much like the Boston Light on Little Brewster Island, the site of the first lighthouse to be built in the United States.

Thinking about the double sheathing on the old roof, I remembered that all the outer walls had double siding also, inside and out, which we discovered as we cut holes to install our scaffolding. This piqued my curiosity and I set out to find out more about this "shed".

Luckily, I found the original Marine and Fisheries plan titled "House for No. 100 Special Acetylene Gas Generator." The plan clearly shows this building with the double siding of 7/8" spruce tongue and groove lumber with tarred felt in between. Also shown is the position of acetylene generating equipment, the hopper, generator and expansion tank, together with the fittings and fixtures. The reason for the double sheathing and siding, I am told,

is for winter or cold weather conditions, to prevent the build-up of frost on the walls that could accidentally fall into the calcium carbide and start generating acetylene gas inside the building.

Although the plan is not dated, I would refer to the Parliamentary Sessional Paper for nine months ending March 31, 1907. It states that the lighthouse tower was increased in height by 20 feet and surmounted by a new circular iron lantern. A first order flashing light replaced the second order fixed light. It further stated that the illuminant would be acetylene burned under a mantle. As the gashouse was built specifically for the manufacture of acetylene gas, we can conclude therefore that it was built in 1906.

The gashouse has heritage status, which almost came about by accident. In 1995, when the Federal Heritage Building Review Office (FHBRO) in Ottawa was requested to consider heritage status for the Sambro Island lighthouse, information about the gashouse was included. FHBRO commented on the apparent interest shown by the NSLPS and by the Sambro community in general, regarding the amount of work and cost in replacing the roof on the gashouse and therefore rated it high enough to qualify it as a "recognized building", the second-highest heritage designation offered by FHBRO.

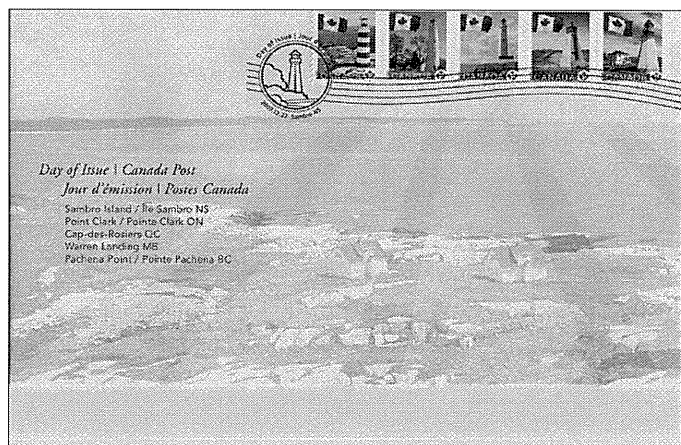
The indescribable joy I felt the day we started ripping the old roof off the gashouse and the hope I had for the course I thought we had set for the goal of restoring and preserving such an historic site -- which is part of this country's very existence -- has long since been lost in a sea of indifference. It distresses me and fills me with disbelief to witness the apparent disregard shown for saving an historic building that should be the first and most valuable step in saving the Sambro Island lighthouse.

Surely that is worth saving.

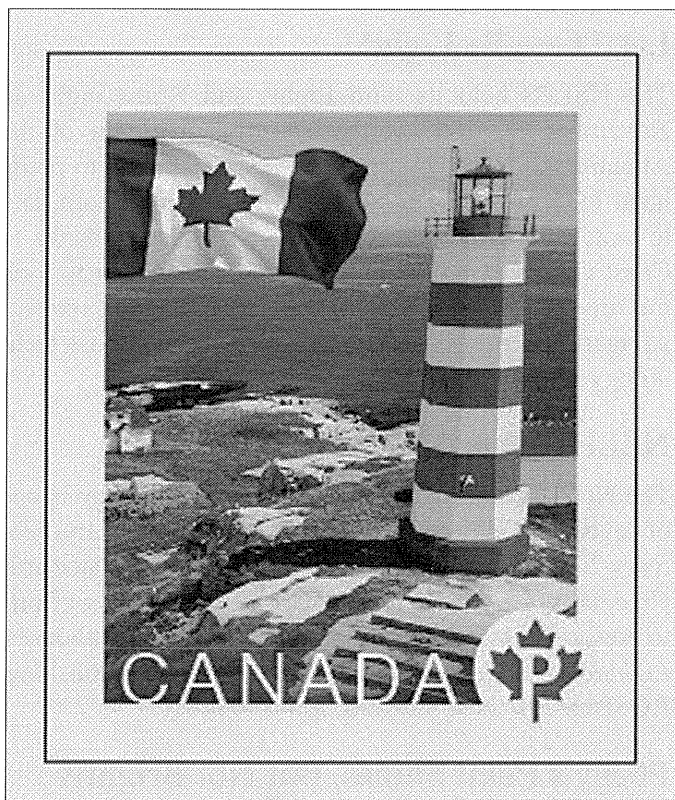
SAMBRO ISLAND LIGHTS UP CANADA POST

Chris Mills

Amidst all the government neglect and apathy surrounding Sambro Island, to say nothing of the assault of the



THE NEW CANADA POST LIGHTHOUSE SERIES FIRST DAY COVER.



THE SAMBRO STAMP.

elements, there's been a small ray of light for North America's oldest operating lighthouse. The tall red and white striped tower is now featured on a Canada Post stamp.

It's part of a series of five Canadian lights, which also includes Pachena Point, British Columbia; Warren Landing, Manitoba; Point Clark, Ontario and Cap des Rosiers, Quebec. The post office held a launch for the Sambro stamp at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax on December 11th. Along with Coast Guard and Canada Post Officials, NSLPS president Barry MacDonald, second vice-president Chris Mills (who took the photo of the lighthouse) and Rip Irwin were also in attendance.



NSLPS PRESIDENT BARRY MACDONALD, CHRIS MILLS, THE COAST GUARD'S NANCY HURLBURT AND RIP IRWIN AT THE SAMBRO STAMP LAUNCH. SEANA BRACKETT

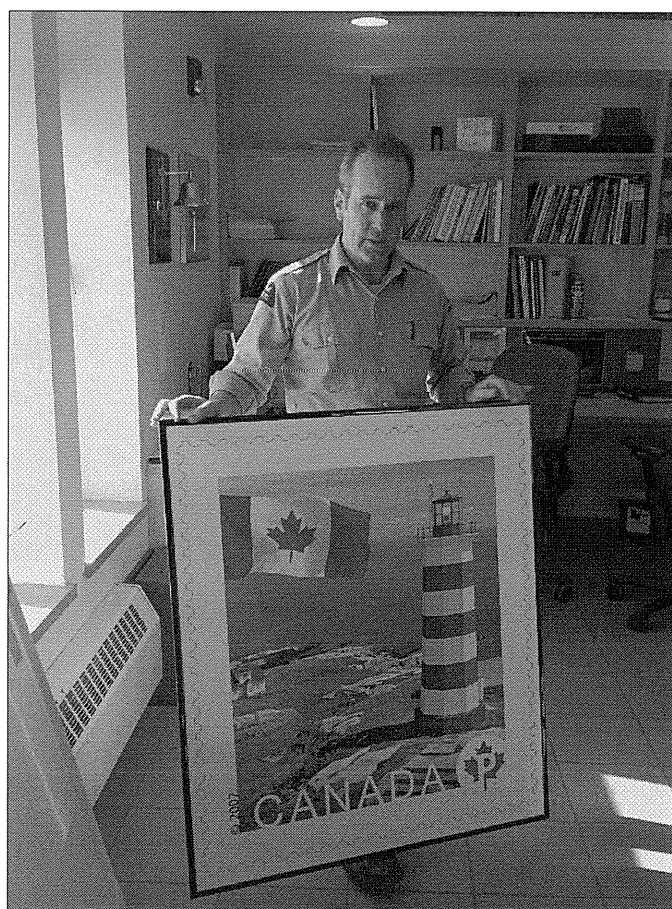


THE NEW CANADIAN LIGHTHOUSE STAMP SERIES.

You might want to hold on a couple of books of these stamp books. According to the stock photo company that sold the image to Canada Post, the image was flipped by the company hired to scan the image, before it was posted on the First Light Associated Photographer's Inc. website.

Former Pachena Point keeper Ian Colquhoun noticed the screw-up, saying "I find it offensive that they've done that. Can you imagine showing the parliament buildings in Ottawa on a stamp backwards?"

Canada Post plans to have a new and corrected



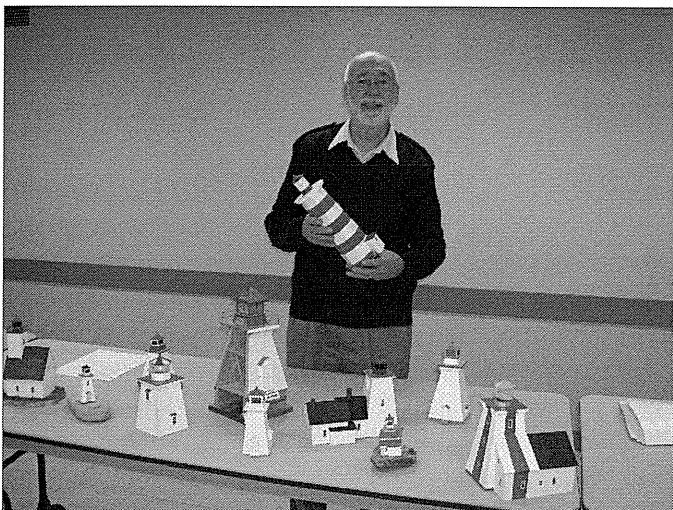
THE NSLPS DONATED THIS SAMBRO ISLAND STAMP POSTER TO THE COAST GUARD STATION IN SAMBRO. MIKE PETTIPAS

Pachena Point stamp out by June. Unfortunately, since about 800,000 stamps with the flipped image have already been produced, they won't be as rare as some collectors might hope.

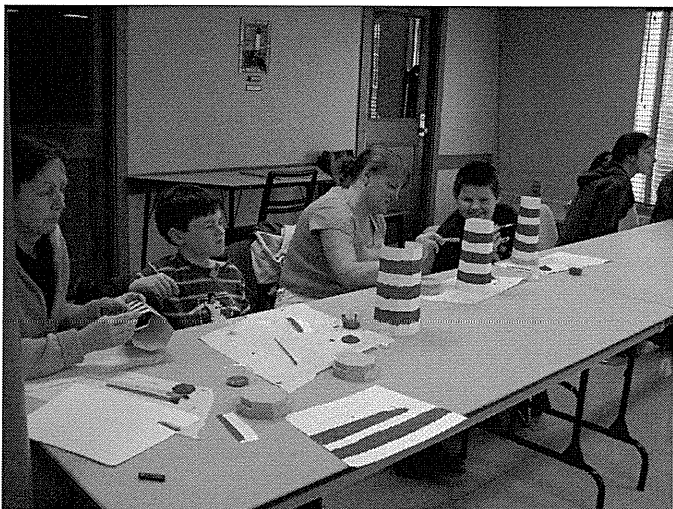
The lighthouse stamps were released on December 27, 2007 – they're available at post offices across Canada.

NEWS AND VIEWS

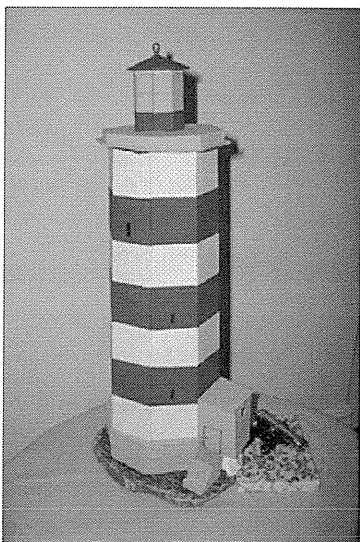
Build a Lighthouse!



GRAHAM MCBRIDE SHOWS OFF SOME OF HIS BEAUTIFUL MODELS OF NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSES. JOSETTE D'ENTREMONT



EAGER LIGHTHOUSE BUILDERS AT WORK. JOSETTE D'ENTREMONT



Thanks to Graham McBride for holding another one of his popular "build a lighthouse" sessions at the Maritime Museum. 10 people showed up on the chilly night of December 8th, 2007 to construct models Sambro Island's famous tower. Graham also showed off some of his beautiful scale models of Nova Scotia lights.

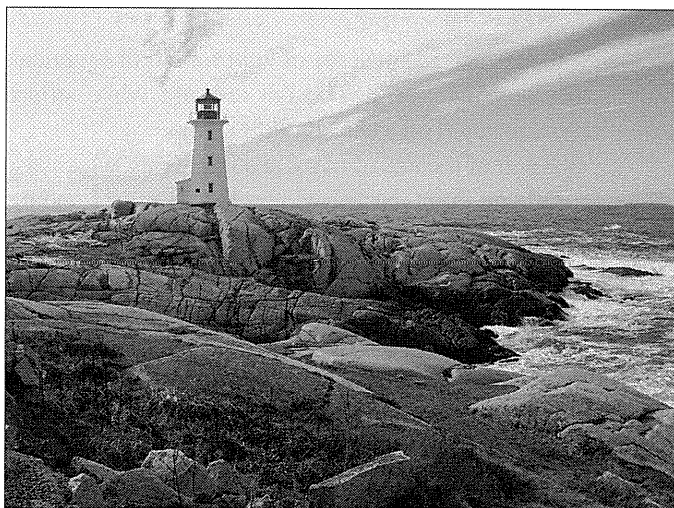
Let There Be Light!

The NSLPS held its third Lights and Horns night on November 28, 2007 at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. About 30 lighthouse keepers came out to pump hand foghorns, hear an air-powered Airchime horn, and to watch the glow of kerosene lights. Special thanks to Coast Guard nav aids technician Tom Roberts, who took the time to share his knowledge and interest in modern navigational aids, including the latest in lighthouse technology – LED lights.

NSLPS Stateside

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society is one of several lighthouse groups featured in the January-February 2008 issue of *Lighthouse Digest*. The illustrated article details our accomplishments, and our ongoing efforts to preserve, protect and promote Nova Scotia lighthouses. *Lighthouse Digest* is published by FogHorn Publishing, P.O. Box 250, East Machias, Maine 04630.

Peggy's Point Shines, But Not Brightly



PEGGY'S COVE LIGHTHOUSE. DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD

It's likely the most-photographed lighthouse in Canada, and one of the top in North America. The little red and white tower at Peggy's Point, near Halifax, has become a Nova Scotia icon, drawing hundreds of thousands of tourists each year, who come for a little slice of Maritime life.

But those who brave the off-season gales and biting cold temperatures will notice something different about the Peggy's Cove light – instead of its steady green glow, there's just a tiny flash now, coming from a funny looking hexagon with a little LED light on top.

The reason for the change is the weather, or rather, a weather event. On the 3rd and 4th of Novem-



NOEL'S SEAS TORE UP THE CONCRETE WALKWAYS TO THE LIGHTHOUSE AND SEVERED THE POWER CABLES CONTAINED WITHIN. *DFO/COAST GUARD*

ber, 2007, Post Tropical Storm Noel came barreling



GREEN PLASTIC AROUND THE FOURTH ORDER FRESNEL LENS AT PEGGY'S COVE GAVE THE LIGHT ITS CHARACTERISTIC GREEN COLOUR. *DFO/COAST GUARD*

over Nova Scotia, packing winds of up to 95 knots (109 mph/175 km/h). Peggy's Cove was hit hard with huge seas that tossed boulders onto the parking lot near the popular Sou'wester Restaurant and gift shop. The concrete lighthouse, built in 1915, was right in the line of fire as well. The sea smashed a window on the bottom level of the lighthouse, where Canada Post maintains a post office during the summer months.

Massive seas also tore up a concrete walkway to the lighthouse, containing the power cables for the tower. As a temporary measure, Coast Guard technicians have installed a Tideland LED light to replace the tower's fourth order Fresnel drum lens.

There are rumblings that the Coast Guard will

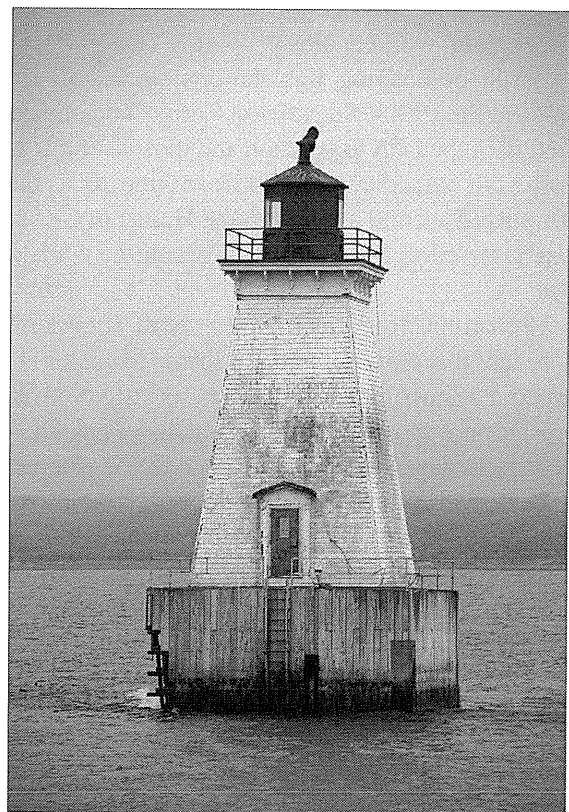


THE SOLALED 140 NOW INSTALLED AT PEGGY'S COVE. *DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*

replace hydro power to the lighthouse. It would be the right thing to do, given the light's importance as an ambassador to Nova Scotia and its wild coastline.

Sandy Point Update

We received a card from Bernice Goodick in January, thanking the NSLPS for its recent donation to the Sandy Point lighthouse group. The deteriorating base of the 1880 lighthouse has been repaired and Bernice says the group hopes to replace rotten wood and railings on the tower and paint the structure this summer.



SANDY POINT IN SEPTEMBER, 2007. *CHRIS MILLS*

Bill S-215: Another Attempt

Barry MacDonald



THE ABANDONED HEAD KEEPER'S HOUSE ON SAMBRO ISLAND. CHRIS MILLS

For anyone keeping track, the concept of a "Lighthouse Protection Act" which began with Rev. David Curry in 1998, probably should have been given up for dead several years back! The first meeting of the Lighthouse Protection Act Committee was held in January 1999. Approximately one year later (the late) Senator Michael Forrestall presented the committee with the first draft of a bill to protect heritage lighthouses. Now, eight years and seven bills later, we have the latest version, Bill S-215.

Having worked closely with Senator Forrestall on the issue of keeping lightstations staffed in British Columbia in the 1990s, Senator Pat Carney became deeply involved with the LPA legislation and took over after Senator Forrestall passed away in 2005. In June 2007, the bill (S-220) passed second reading in the House of Commons and was referred to the Standing Committee – Fisheries and Oceans.

Senator Carney and I were both summoned to testify before this committee when Prime Minister Harper prorogued Parliament back in June. Prorogation meant the legislation had to start from scratch, yet again. With her retirement date looming, it was doubtful whether the good Senator would re-introduce the bill. (She is as tired of this as anyone). But much to her credit, Senator Carney lit the torch one last time in the name of lighthouse preservation and the (hard-won) Bill S-215 is now waiting to be re-introduced in the House of Commons.

It isn't clear who will shepherd Bill S-215 in the House or if it will regain its previous status (having passed second reading). The good news is that Senator Lowell Murray will be watching the bill from the Senate. Senator Carney was very pleased to make this announcement and

assures us the bill is in good hands. I hope to meet with Senator Murray in the near future to discuss, among other things, the amendments which have been made while it was before the Senate Committee on National Finance.

I have worked very closely with Senator Pat Carney on this legislation for the past two years. It has been both a pleasure and an education working with such a knowledgeable and professional veteran of our Canadian political system. Senator Carney is a great Canadian and we owe her a great debt of gratitude. On behalf of all lighthouse preservationists, I would like to say a heart-felt thank you and wish her all the best in retirement – *Barry MacDonald.*

WEST POINT IN PERIL

Chris Mills

Prince Edward Island's West Point lighthouse faces an uncertain future as erosion eats away the island's western shoreline. West Point is an operating lighthouse, but it's also an inn, restaurant and museum employing 25 people in total. Thousands of tourists visit the site each year, to climb the magnificent 133-year-old tower and enjoy stunning views of the beaches of Cedar Dunes Provincial Park.

Carol Livingstone was a prime mover in efforts to save the lighthouse and turn it into a spectacularly successful heritage site and tourist attraction. She's concerned that recent beach erosion threatens this local land and seamark.

"In the last two weeks (in the period before Christmas)," she says "we have lost at least 10 feet minimum just north of the lighthouse where our own shore frontage is, or I should say, *was*. We had to move my brother's 5th wheeler almost a week ago, and on the weekend had to move our house trailer because the bank had eroded so much that the north end of the patio deck was undermined. Fortunately, the area directly in front of the lighthouse was not directly hit. However, it is only a matter of time."

Carol goes on to say that "we have lost as much frontage in two months as we usually lose in a couple of years. Ralph Bulger, president of the West Point Development Corporation, stressed that something must be done as the loss affects the lighthouse, and Cedar Dunes Park as well as the harbour. The Minister of Environment, George Webster, conceded that this is a problem all along the Island coastline and said they are monitoring the situation.

"There was mention of two solutions; putting used tires which have been fastened together with non-corrosive material in a couple of rows to break the waves and to catch the sand, and a second proposal which would

use tubes of a fibrous material, formed like a stocking and filled with sand. I believe one row would be in the water to break the waves and the other along the beach to catch and hold sand."

Scientists blame global warming for the situation in coastal PEI, where reduced ice cover in the winter and spring months means less protection from storm surges. Although coastal erosion is nothing new on the island, the increased rate at which land is being washed away is a real concern to all islanders. It also poses real challenges to those who fight to keep PEI's lighthouses from literally toppling into the ocean.

HARBOURVILLE'S LITTLE LIGHT

Lew Perry

The village of Harbourville lies just north of Berwick, on the Bay of Fundy. Settled around 1829, it was originally called Givens Wharf, in honour of one of its first settlers, John Givens. The name Harbourville came about after a meeting held in 1860.

The federal government built a small "pepper-shaker" style lighthouse in the early 1900s, to guide local fishermen and mariners into the harbour. But it seems that the fishermen were unhappy about the location of the lighthouse.

The April 13, 1927 issue of the *Berwick Register* reported that "the seafaring members of the Board of Trade are very much peeved over that, contending that as it stands now, the lighthouse is absolutely useless for mariners and fishermen, but do admit that it is a great thing for motorists coming into Harbourville from Berwick, as it lights up perfectly Givens Hill coming into our charming hamlet.

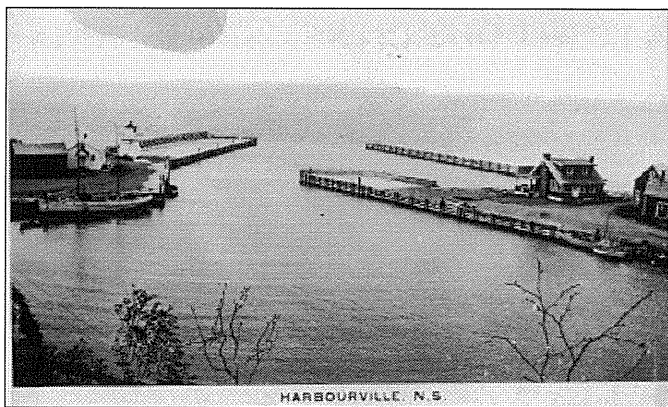
"If this alleged lighthouse was not intended for the benefit of seagoing men, but rather for the benefit of automobilists, that it be removed to the public square, fronting the federal building, where it would be more useful and ornamental, instead of being hid behind barns and shacks on the shore end of the wharf."

By the late 1950s, the lighthouse had been closed down, replaced by a light on a pole at the end of the wharf. In an edition of the *Gulf of Maine Times* a resident of Harbourville recalled a day in May, 1961:

"I remember getting out of school and there was the Coast Guard tearing down the light. I was devastated and angry too, because there was nothing wrong with the structure. It was a lesson to me as a young person that if the people in the community want to be heard, well, they had better start speaking up."

Another resident saw it this way:

"Thursday morning, the interest of many Har-



HARBOURVILLE'S TINY LIGHTHOUSE, VIEWED IN A POSTCARD FROM THE COLLECTION OF LEW PERRY.

bourville residents in the lighthouse boat anchored off-shore, turned to consternation when a wrecking party came ashore and demolished the lighthouse that had for many years been part of the view, to those coming into our village. True, it had not been in use since the electric pole with bulb had been on the end of the wharf. But had we been allowed to, I think the community would have restored it and kept it in its original state. Slightly, landmarks are becoming fewer each year, along our shores. We regret the passing of this one."

Ed's note: This article shows that in some ways, little has changed in the fight to save our lighthouses. Although the Coast Guard rarely burns or demolishes lighthouses nowadays, their current, unofficial program of "demolition by neglect" is doing a bang-up job of laying waste to Nova Scotia's lighthouses.

A NEW CHAPTER FOR LISE CHAPMAN

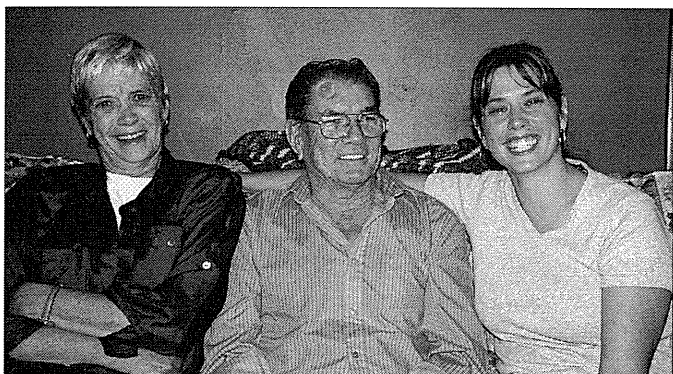
We're sorry to be saying good-bye to active board member Lise Chapman. Lise is moving to Norway in February, after living in the Ketch Harbour area for the past few years. She's been board member for four years and was also active in the Chebucto Head Lighthouse Society. At the January 23rd monthly meeting, we presented Lise with a framed photo of the Chebucto Head lighthouse as a token of thanks for her participation on the board.

Home for Lise will soon be the small island village of Runde, located near Aalesunde, on the west coast of Norway. She's been hired as a research scientist at the Runde Environmental Centre. (See <http://www.runde-centre.no/english/index.htm?refreshed> for more information).

There's a lighthouse on the island as well! All the best in your new life, Lise and thanks for your contributions to the NSLPS!

A LIGHT OUT ON SAMBRO ISLAND

Chris Mills



MARJORIE, JOHN AND KELLY FAIRSERVICE IN SEPTEMBER, 2001.
NSLPS/CHRIS MILLS

The man who “loved every minute,” of his 24 years at the Sambro Island lighthouse, has died.

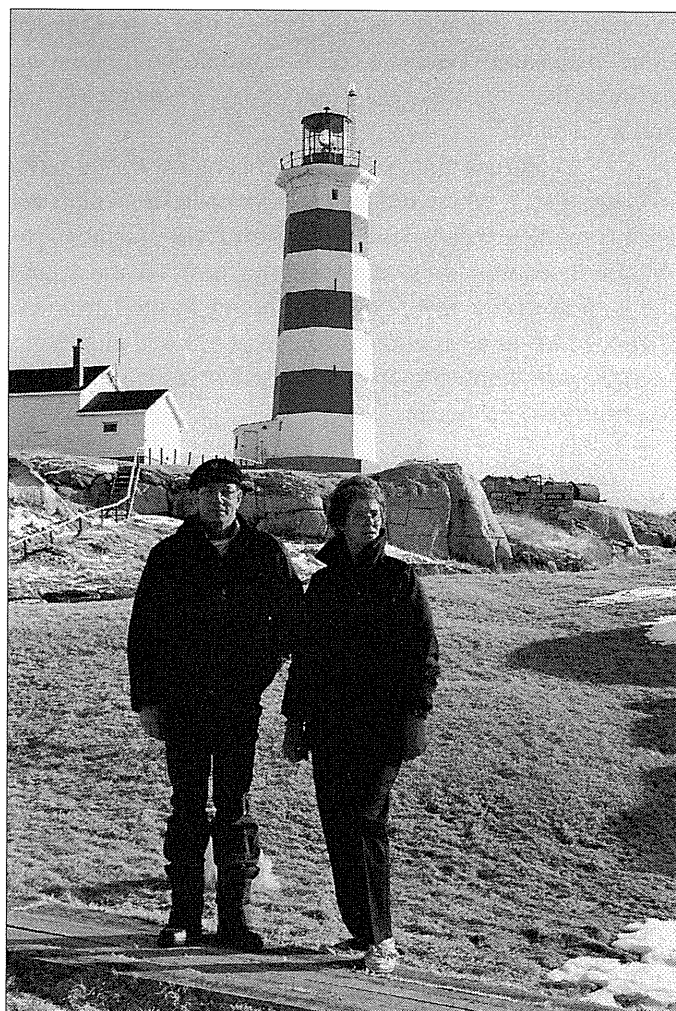
John Fairservice passed away on November 12, after a lengthy illness. Back in 1964, John packed up his young family to take on the position of assistant lightkeeper on Sambro Island, at the southwestern approaches to Halifax Harbour. Born in Quebec’s Gaspé region, John served for 10 years in the Canadian Navy before settling down on a dry – albeit small – chunk of terra firma: Sambro Island.

Although only a mile from the nearest mainland, Sambro was and is a desolate spot, especially in the winter. While John took care of lighthouse business with the other two lightkeepers, Marjorie had her hands full keeping house and keeping an eye on their three active children – Philip, Deidre and Kelly.

In an interview from 2001, Marjorie remembered that the transition to island life was challenging. “Yes I had worries,” she said. “I used to keep an eye on them, especially Kelly. She was a good climber and one day I saw her going up the light and into the tower no clothes on. So the Head Keeper come to me and he said ‘Is your daughter a little Doukhobor?’ I looked and, glory, she was gone! I had to take my time goin’ up the tower. I didn’t want to scare her ‘cause she would [fall] down [the tower stairs].”

There were other episodes. One day the kids found a can of paint washed up on the beach and decided to paint the rocks, and each other. Of all the kinds of paint to wash up, it had to be highway yellow...

Meanwhile, John and the other keepers kept busy working eight hour shifts. Sambro was a big station with generators, a diaphone horn, a massive first order Fresnel lens and extensive grounds to maintain. “When I first went out there it was no landscaping,” John said. We had to landscape all around the dwellings, sowed grass seed and we were busy all the time. Constantly.



JOHN AND MARJORIE FAIRSERVICE ON SAMBRO ISLAND JUST DAYS BEFORE LEAVING THE ISLAND FOR GOOD IN 1988. CHRIS MILLS

“We had to clean the lenses and we cleaned all the windows in the lantern. We had a routine – the three of us would get together and do up all the work. We’d usually work our eight hours in the daytime, then stand your shift at night. So, it was busy all the time.”

In 1968 John was promoted to Head Keeper, and by the mid-70s, Marjorie was in the running for the assistant’s position. But somehow her application didn’t go through and another man got the job. Marjorie stuck to her guns and eventually got the position, making her one of the few full time keepers in the country at the time.

Working with your spouse on a small island had its moments, as Marjorie remembered. “It did have its ups and downs,” she said with a smile “but then again, if things got too rough and I didn’t want to do it, I just tell him I was gonna resign and he’d go and on do it!”

John laughed and added “Yeah, I seen her pay cheque comin’ in, so I didn’t want to fire her, that’s for sure! I didn’t want to get rid of her!”

And he didn’t. Marjorie remained the island’s assistant keeper until March, 1988, when the family left the island as a result of the Coast Guard’s destaffing program.

It was a tough move for John after 24 years on the island.

"Leavin' Sambro Island was the hardest thing for me to do," he said, "because I didn't have quite enough time for my 35 year pension. They put me out on Saint Paul's Island (off the north tip of Cape Breton) for 18 months and that was like goin' to Alcatraz! When the helicopter pilot waved goodbye, you never seen no life until 28 days later. So I found that very hard. But, leavin' Sambro, I didn't want to retire. I was only 56 years old when I left there and that was terrible hard."

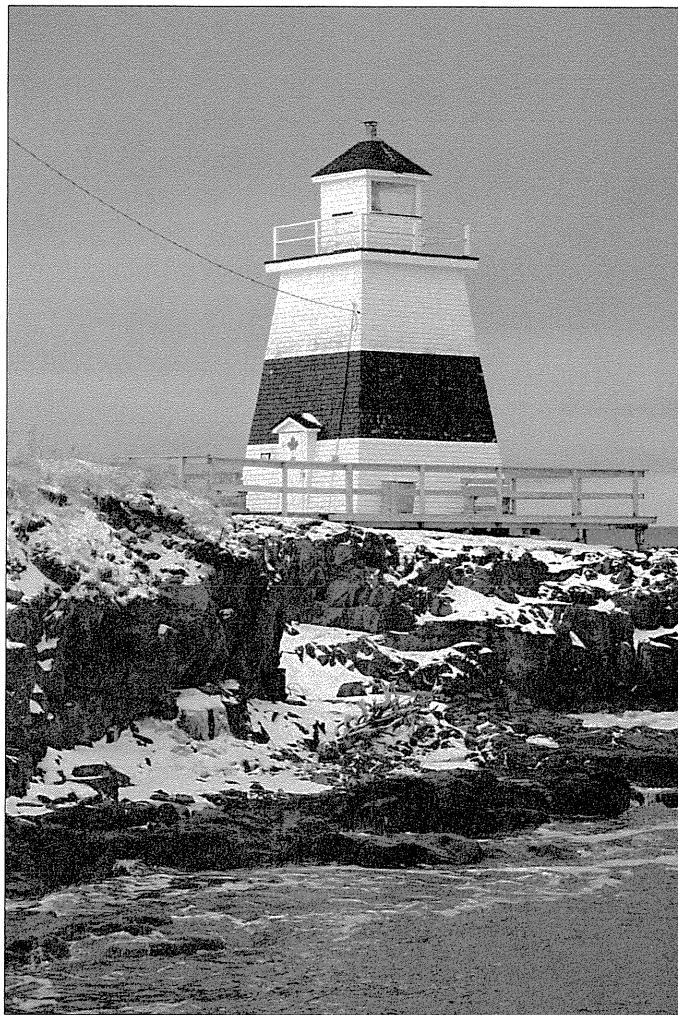
John paused and thought back to his first days on Sambro. "When I first went to Sambro Island, I asked if I could go out and have a look at it. I went out and had a look at it and I just fell in love with the place. When I left, I still felt the same. I still loved the place as much as when I first went out. I loved every minute I stayed out there."

Our condolences to Marjorie, Philip, Kelly and Deidre- Ed.

FAREWELL

We are sad to report that the daughter of a former Digby area lightkeeper has died. Helen Louise (Wilson) Fleet was born in the Point Prim lighthouse, where her father Frank was lightkeeper. She died on November 7, 2007 at the age of 77.

COMING NEXT ISSUE: In the March *Lightkeeper* we'll take a look at 4 lights along the Fundy Shore and community efforts to keep them shining brightly.



THE MARGARETSVILLE LIGHT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1859. CHRIS MILLS

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JOHN FAIRSERVICE SPENT 24 YEARS ON SAMBRO ISLAND. *CHRIS MILLS*