



The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society
Vol. 15, No. 3, September / October 2008

The Lightkeeper™



IN THIS ISSUE:

- SAMBRO ISLAND FIRE
- SAMBRO 250 CELEBRATIONS
- TOM FORRESTALL PAINTS NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST OPERATING LIGHTHOUSE
- HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION AWARD
- COMMUNITY NEWS
- LIGHTS ACROSS THE BORDER





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 EDITOR: Chris Mills

LAYOUT: Dennis Connelly, Graphic and Print Production program, NSCC

PATRONS: Barbara Allen, Evelyn C. Coates, Martin Rudy Haase, Rachel Hoogenbos, Edith Northfield, Betty Schloss

SUSTAINING MEMBERS: Denyse Contrasty, Bruce Blakemore, Cynthia Curtis, Barbara Joan Davis, Camilla Dunn, Michel Forand, John Freeman, Alison Gilpin, Ian S. Griffin, Hugh Jones, Brenda Shannon, James L. Slechta, Jeanne Thomas, Michael Tilley, Alden & Roberta Wambolt

AFFILIATES: Burntcoat Head Park Association, Cape Sable Historical Society, Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, Gilbert Cove & District Historical Society, Greville Bay Shipbuilding Museum Society, Hampton Lighthouse and Heritage Society, Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society, Island Historical Society, Louisbourg Lighthouse Society, Medway Head Communities Association, Northumberland Fisheries Museum & Heritage Association, Parrsboro & Area Harbour Commission, Port George District Lighthouse Society, Port Bickerton & Area Planning Association, Sandy Point Community Recreation Group, Shag Harbour Incident Society, Spencer's Island Community Association, Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee, Tiverton and Central Grove Heritage Association.

NEW MEMBERS: David & Norma Uhlman, Margarettville, NS; Ian Nicol, England; David Shannon, Glenburnie, ON; Kelly, Ross and Willie Brown, Stewiacke, NS; Rodney Misener, Thorburne, NS; Leslie Harnish, Sambro, NS

NSLPS EXECUTIVE 2007/2008

President/Lighthouse Protection Act Committee:

Barry MacDonald 827-2027

e-mail: 3fathom@ns.sympatico.ca

Past President: Tony Thompson 477-7366

e-mail: tony@mscs.dal.ca

First Vice-President: Graham McBride

Second Vice President/Lightkeeper Editor:

Chris Mills 868-2313

e-mail: ketch1@eastlink.ca

Secretary: Joanne McCormick

Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Lew Perry 434-7208

e-mail: lewis001@ns.sympatico.ca

Member-at-Large: Denyse Contrasty

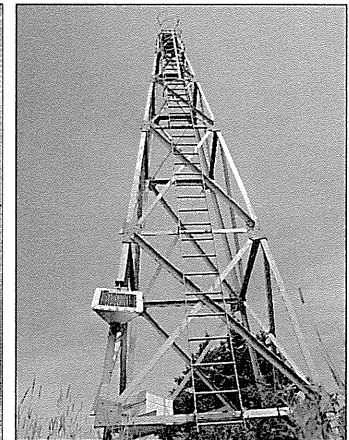
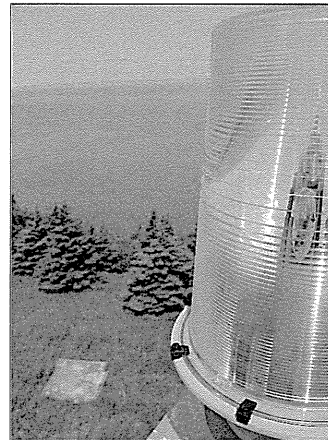
Member-at-Large: Janet Leigh Schaffner

Member-at-Large: Andrew Powter

Cover: The Head Keeper's house on Sambro Island burned to the ground in September.

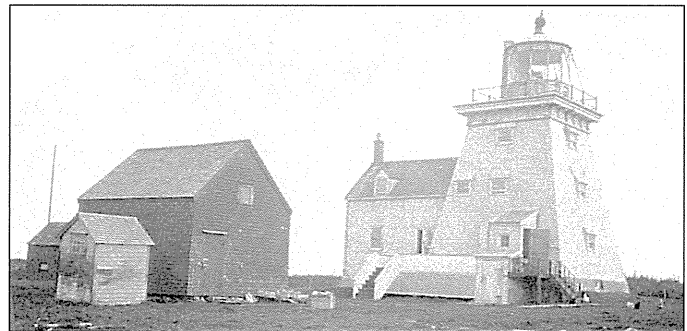
Chris Mills

MYSTERY LIGHT



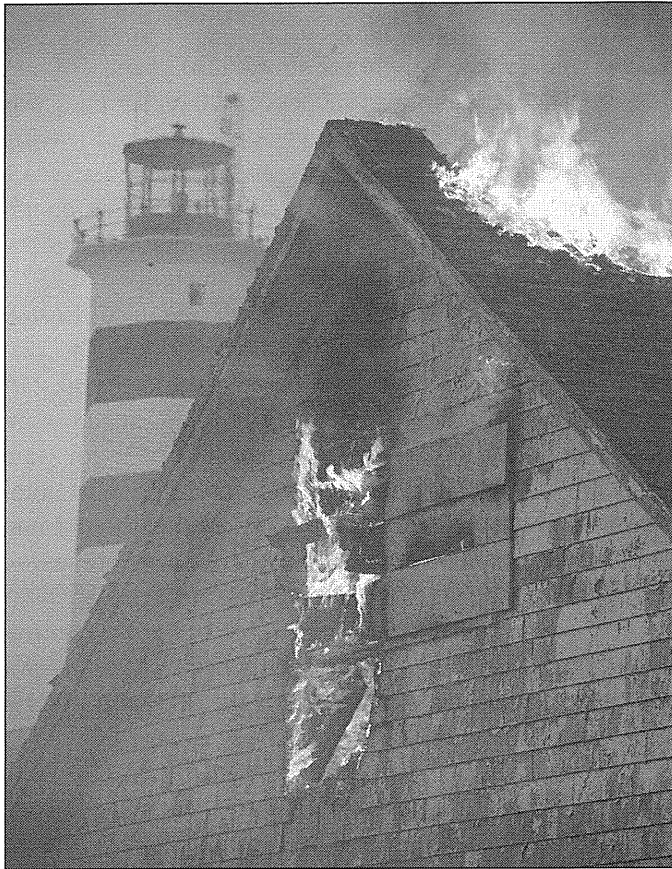
CHRIS MILLS

LEW PERRY WAS CORRECT IN IDENTIFYING LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY LIGHT AT ÎLE HAUTE, IN THE BAY OF FUNDY. THIS IS THE SECOND METAL TOWER TO STAND ON THE ISLAND SINCE THE 1878 LIGHTHOUSE BURNED TO THE GROUND IN 1956.



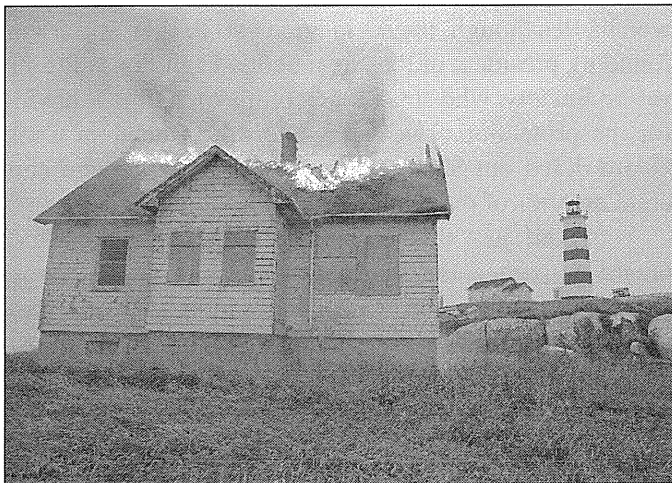
SEND YOUR GUESSES FOR THIS ISSUE'S MYSTERY LIGHT TO THE EDITOR, THE LIGHTKEEPER, NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY c/o MARITIME MUSEUM OF THE ATLANTIC, 1675 LOWER WATER STREET, HALIFAX, NS B1S 1L3, OR E-MAIL CHRIS MILLS AT [KETCH1@EASTLINK.CA](mailto:ketch1@eastlink.ca)

Sambro Island Keeper's House Falls to Arson *Chris Mills*



CHRIS MILLS

Sometime during the wee hours of Sunday, September 14th, someone lit a fire in the old Principal Keeper's house on Sambro Island. The two storey wooden frame building has stood on this granite island at the entrance to Halifax Harbour since the early 1960s. A few metres away sits another abandoned keeper's house, while the island's 250 year old stone lighthouse stands watch from the island's peak.



THE OLD HEAD KEEPER'S HOUSE ON SAMBRO ISLAND WAS BURNING WELL BY THE TIME COAST GUARD ARRIVED ON THE ISLAND. *CHRIS MILLS*

As dawn broke on that Sunday morning, a local resident made a panicked call to the Coast Guard lifeboat station in Sambro, saying "The lighthouse is on fire!" As the on-duty crew rushed to the station's fast rescue craft, they could see an ominous plume of black smoke above the tree line along the far shore of Sambro Harbour. But as they rounded Inner Sambro Island and headed to the open sea, the men noticed with great relief that the smoke was coming from another area of the island, away from the tower. Flooded with relief, but still concerned, they arrived on the island to find the former Principal (Head) Keeper's house engulfed in flames.

The Coast Guard's Regional Operations Centre in Halifax advised the men to keep an eye on the blaze, but not to extinguish it unless it threatened other areas of the island. Police officers later traveled out to the island to talk with visitors who had spent the night camping near the abandoned houses. The campers mentioned a group of young and noisy partyers who had left the island at about 3 that same morning. Chances are, some of those youths are the culprits.

By Sunday afternoon, all that remained of the house was part of one wall, a chimney, and a basement full of smoking embers. Although the structure was due to be demolished, the loss of the Sambro Head Keeper's house to arson underscores just how vulnerable North America's



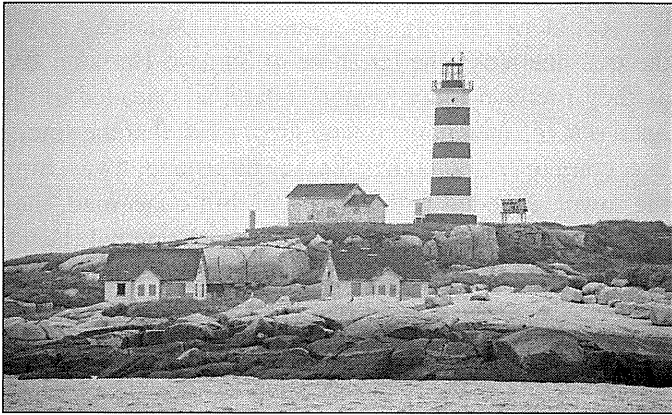
CHRIS MILLS

oldest operating lighthouse is. Although the island is officially off-limits to the public without permission from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, anyone can land on the island at just about any time. A lack of care and regular checks at the site makes it all the more vulnerable to devastating vandalism.

Members of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society plan to meet with the Canadian Coast Guard and community members to map out a plan to keep Sambro Island safe from further mindless and destructive vandalism.

Sambro Island Lighthouse: 250 Years Proud, but Future Uncertain

Chris Mills



CHRIS MILLS

I wrote this story shortly before cowardly vandals burned the head keeper's house on Sambro Island to the ground. I've left the text as I penned it, to reflect the happy occasion that preceded the disturbing loss of the structure.
CM

On a warm summer day, with a soft sea breeze blowing out of the sou'west, it's hard to believe that for more than two centuries, the Sambro Island lighthouse has played a crucial role in the life-and-death business of coastal marine traffic in and out of Halifax Harbour. On this particular August day, groups of curious visitors are milling around the base of the massive stone tower, while a lazy swell washes the island's granite shoreline.

The gentle scene belies the danger that surrounds Sambro Island, although a sense of history is palpable as gulls soar in the salt air. It's the middle of the month, and two tour boats are busy ferrying folks out to the island from the village of Sambro.

People have gathered to help celebrate the 250th birthday of the Sambro Island lighthouse – the oldest continuously operating lighthouse structure in North America. Since 1758, a scant nine years after the founding of the naval town of Halifax, the Sambro light has warned and welcomed everything from lowly dories, to naval frigates, to the massive ocean liners that carried immigrants to a new life in North America through the international doors of the Port of Halifax.

The Sambro event dovetails nicely with Nova Scotia's Democracy 250 (D250) celebrations, as the province marks the 250th anniversary of parliamentary democracy in Canada. That democratic process allowed the General Assembly of Nova Scotia to pass an act to establish a lighthouse on "Sambro Outer Island", on October 2nd, 1758.

Things moved quickly from there, and workers completed the tower part of the 60-foot granite lighthouse by late November. Keeper Joseph Rous moved to the island in 1759, beginning a succession of keepers who would tend the island light for almost 230 years.

The work of those keepers and their families was crucial to the safety of all mariners entering and leaving Halifax Harbour. But during the early years, there were problems with smoky fish oil lights, poor living conditions and even lax lightkeepers, who sometimes let the light go out when there were no ships in sight.

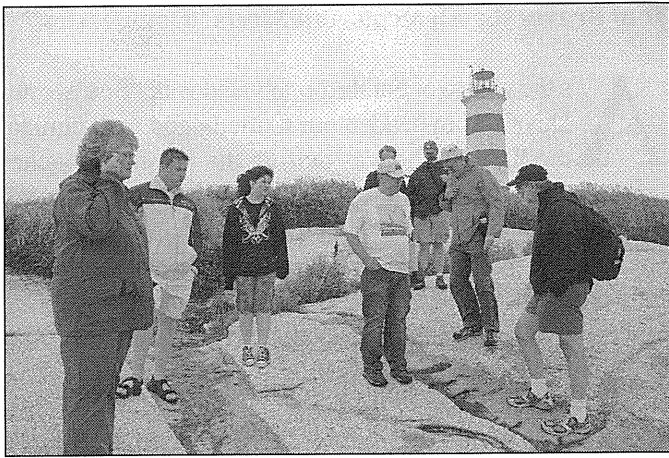
In the spring of 1771, the sloop *Granby* of Boston was lost with all hands on the Sambro Ledges. The vessel's cargo included £3000 for the payment of naval staff in Halifax. The naval Commander-in-Chief stated without hesitation that "the fatal accident happened for want of a light being kept in the lighthouse, for it is most notoriously and shamefully so, the King's Ships bound into Halifax are frequently, nay, almost constantly obliged to fire at the lighthouse to make them show a light..."

Better fuel and a higher calibre of lightkeeper followed, and the Sambro Island lighthouse went on to provide sterling service to all manner of sea-borne traffic for more than two centuries.

By March, 1988, technology caught up with Sambro Island. John Fairservice, the island's last keeper, left the barren rock that had been his family's home for 24 years. Abandoned and boarded up, the two keepers houses slowly deteriorated. The light turned by itself in its ancient, musty tower and an automatic electronic fog horn blared in thick weather.

Although the lighthouse had been declared a national historic site in the 1930s, the designation did not carry any real protection for the island and its structures. It wasn't until 1996 that the government of Canada classified the lighthouse as a heritage structure, along with a "recognized" designation for a nearby building once used for the manufacture of acetylene. These were hard won battles though, thanks in large part to E.H. Rip Irwin, founding president of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, who spent much of his own time lobbying for the protection. Two years later, the Canadian Coast Guard doled out \$250,000, restoring the wood and concrete exterior of the Sambro Island lighthouse.

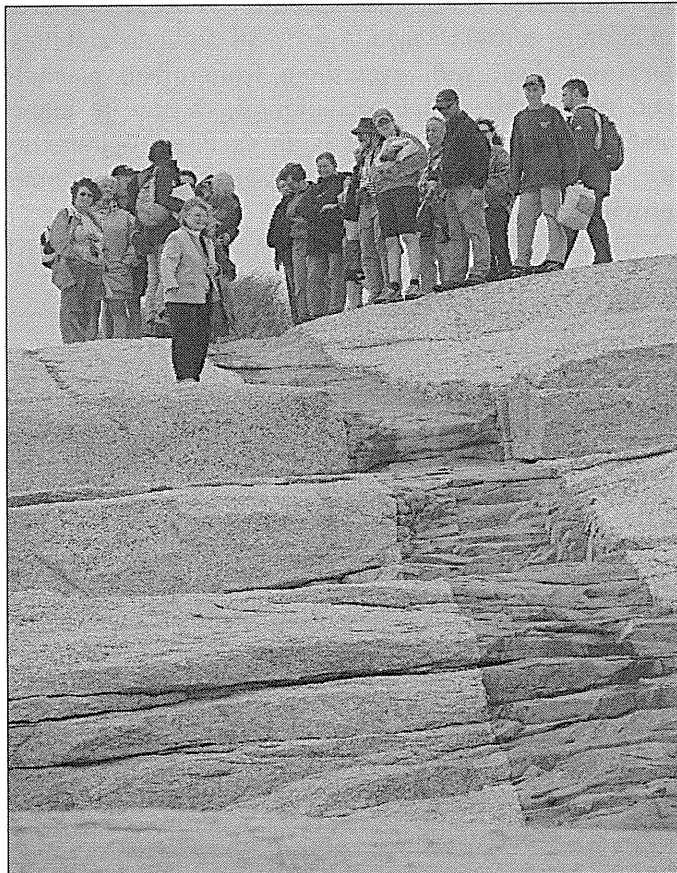
And just this summer, shortly after the Coast Guard converted the lightstation to solar power, crews painted the tower once again (thanks in large part to pressure from the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society). But below the lighthouse, the engine room sits with peeling paint and rotten shingles ripped off by the wind. The two keepers' houses are past the point of no return, after two decades' - worth of assaults by vandals and the elements. The old gas house down at the landing cove has



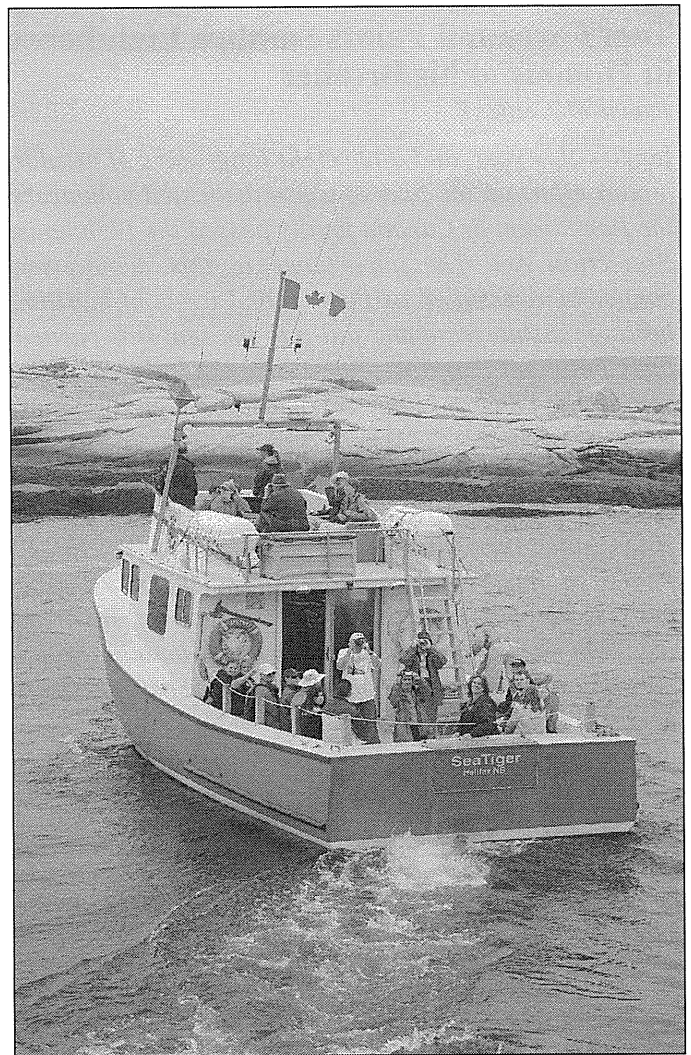
VISITORS GATHER AT THE TOP OF THE ROCK FORMATION KNOWN AS "THE DEVIL'S STAIRCASE" ON SAMBRO ISLAND. *CHRIS MILLS*

been undermined by the sea – and another good storm could bring the whole affair crashing into the ocean.

To add insult to injury, there was no interest on the part of the Canadian government to help celebrate the light's 250th birthday. At the last moment, the Coast Guard sent acting Aids to Navigation superintendent Darren Gaudet out to the island, and the summer season Halifax Inshore Rescue Boat hauled into the cove for a while. While we appreciate Mr. Gaudet's visit and his positive comments towards the continued operation of the



THE DEVIL'S STAIRCASE. *CHRIS MILLS*



THE *SEA TIGER* TAKES ANOTHER LOAD OF SATISFIED VISITORS BACK TO SAMBRO VILLAGE. *CHRIS MILLS*

station's fog horn, we were very disappointed that DFO/Coast Guard made absolutely no concerted effort to mark the occasion.

It was wonderful to see more than 150 people visit the island on that August day, and to share some of its history. But it would be nothing short of a national crime and a slap in the face to Canadian history to let this station deteriorate any further.

If there is *any* lighthouse in Canada worth protecting and preserving, it is the Sambro Island light. With the recent passage of a national Lighthouse Protection Act in Canada (Bill S-215) after an eight year struggle, the time has come for the Canadian government to give Sambro Island the attention it deserves.

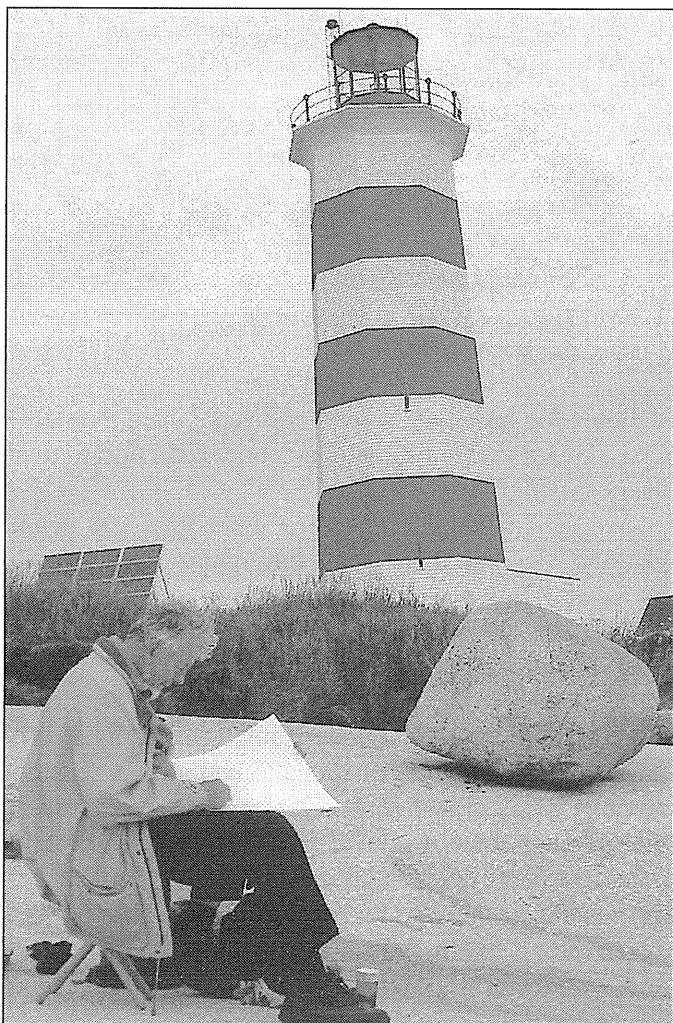
Meanwhile, the 250 year old granite tower continues to show a sweeping light from its lantern – welcoming and warning all who travel the sea road to Halifax.

Tom Forrestall Paints Sambro Lighthouse in Honour of his Brother

Joanne McCormack

Earlier this year, and after eight long years of extraordinary effort on the part of a few dedicated volunteers, the Parliament of Canada finally passed the Lighthouse Protection Act. The importance of this achievement cannot be overstated as these proud icons of maritime heritage disintegrate and fall into the sea. It is particularly poignant that this year is also the 250th Anniversary of the Sambro Light, the oldest working lighthouse in the Americas.

The late Senator Mike Forrestall introduced the first bill to protect Canadian lighthouses on April 14, 2000. Since then, the ball has been carried by NSLPS President Barry MacDonald and society board members, along with retired Senator Pat Carney, B.C., and our own MP Gerald Keddy. Now, community groups across the nation have a chance to save their cherished heritage lighthouses.



PAINTER TOM FORRESTALL HAS MADE AT LEAST THREE TRIPS TO PAINT THE HISTORIC SAMBRO ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE. JOANNE MCCORMACK

Tom Braves the Elements and Meets "Double Alex"

As the village of Sambro celebrated with "Sou'wester Days", Tom headed out to the Island to document the light. As he was putting the finishing touches on the painting, something caused his paintbrush to fall from his hand. Could it have been the Island's resident ghost, "Double Alex"? As the brush fell, it applied a little colour to the painting. Tom noticed that his painting looked very much better with this added hue, and left it in. Prints of Tom's and Double Alex's watercolour will be available later this year, and Tom is kindly donating half the proceeds to the NS Lighthouse Preservation Society.

For more information, call 425-0350, and if you are curious about "Double Alex", read Chris Mills' book, *Vanishing Lights*.

HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE – 2008

Barry MacDonald

This year's annual Heritage Canada Foundation conference was held in Quebec City to honour the province's 400th anniversary. The yearly gathering brings together a broad spectrum of people involved in heritage across Canada. A series of seminars and presentations dealt with everything from urban planning and responsible re-use of buildings, to how to attract and organize volunteers. It is an excellent opportunity to "spread our message" and engage people from other provinces.



BARRY MACDONALD'S HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION AWARD. BARRY MACDONALD



NSLPS PRESIDENT BARRY MACDONALD SPEAKS AT THE HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION CONFERENCE IN QUEBEC CITY.

BARRY MACDONALD

For this year's conference, I was asked to organize a round table presentation/discussion dealing with preservation efforts across the country, as well as an overview on what the recently-passed Bill S-215 will do for our lighthouses. Wanting Quebec's efforts to figure prominently, I asked Annemarie Bourassa and Serge Guay from the Pointe-au-Père lightstation to detail a few examples of community involvement along the Gaspésie and St. Lawrence River. The result was a very well-done PowerPoint presentation outlining the work of some 14 active groups within Quebec. I followed with a short overview of efforts in other provinces and then opened the floor to questions. All in all, it was a productive session and a repeat is planned for next year's conference to be held in Toronto.

I was honoured at this year's conference with the HCF Governor's award for my work in the passage of Bill S-215. Sharing the award with retired Senator Pat Carney was an even greater honour. In accepting the award, I pointed out that it took the work of MANY people to see the legislation come to fruition. From the pioneering efforts at the community level, to the introduction in the Senate of the first bill, we ALL deserve the credit. Thank you!

COMMUNITY NEWS

This is our yearly round-up of community lighthouse news from around Nova Scotia. It's a chance for the NSLPS to connect with the many groups that work tirelessly to save and maintain their guiding lights. If your light has been left out, or you'd like to share your community's involvement in "keeping the light burning", please contact any NSLPS board member or the editor of The Lightkeeper. The more we hear from you, the more we can share your lighthouse news!

Boar's Head Divestiture

Barry Buckman of the Tiverton and Central Grove Heritage Society has some good news after a summer of little movement at the Boar's Head lighthouse site on Digby County's Long Island. The Coast Guard shut the area down to visitors earlier this year over environmental concerns, including lead paint contamination. John Ford of DFO was scheduled to meet with the group in mid-October to discuss divestiture timelines. Barry has been told it could take about a year for the process to move ahead, after the feds do an environmental assessment and plan for clean-up. Meanwhile, local residents watch as visitors stop at the locked gate at the bottom of the lighthouse lane and "push on it" to see if they can drive up to one of the province's most dramatic lighthouse sites. Let's hope that gate will soon be open for visitors.

Boulardarie Island Restoration

The NSLPS has had no communication with the people involved in the McNeil Beach lighthouse preservation project for four or five years, but according to the Boulardarie Island Historical Society website, things are moving along. The site states: "The Boularderie Island Lighthouse Preservation Project is a committed group of individuals, whose primary goal is the restoration of the picturesque lighthouse on the shores of Boularderie Island. Headed by Boularderie resident Dr. Ron Stewart, whose valiant efforts have brought the restoration process to a tangible level, the lighthouse project plans to one day restore this forgotten structure to its original beauty." There is no information about the work done to restore the lighthouse (although the site contains a photograph of the lighthouse looking very spiffy). You can check the site out at <http://www.bihs.ca/lighthouse/>

Burntcoat Head Status Quo

Charlie McCulloch of the Burntcoat Head Park Association says "We held our own" for the 2008 tourist season, with about 5,000 people signing the guest book at Burntcoat Head on the Minas Basin shore. The lighthouse was shut down for the season by the end of August because of a lack of students to staff the site. Charlie notes that although people continue to make donations as they visit, the per person contribution only averages out to about 20 cents.

CTV's "Live At 5" did a segment on the lighthouse as part of its "Hidden Gems" series in August, and a local couple exchanged wedding vows at the site, which is renowned as home to the highest tides in the world – in the 50 foot range.

Cape Forchu's Busy Season

Denise Nickerson, Operations Manager, Cape Forchu Lightstation.

We opened on May 25th and hosted a few events on-site including, afternoon teas on Thursdays and breakfasts on Sundays in the Mug Up tea room. We hosted a scrambled egg and lobster breakfast for the Lights Along the Shore Lighthouse Festival and we were the backdrop to many local festival and events hosted in Yarmouth.

During Seafest, we had a full day of events including an Acadian style breakfast, kids' events and a sunset lobster boil with a bonfire. In 2008, we offered a picnic lunch that included a picnic basket with a lunch of choice and a blanket.

CTV's Breakfast Television taped part of their program at the light in July.

Four on-site interpretive signs were installed, including a new welcoming sign at the bottom of the hill. Part of the grant we received from the municipality of Yarmouth and ACOA included the interpretive program and also painting of the lighthouse and fog building. They are currently working on the project, putting scaffolding around the entire tower – it's quite a sight.

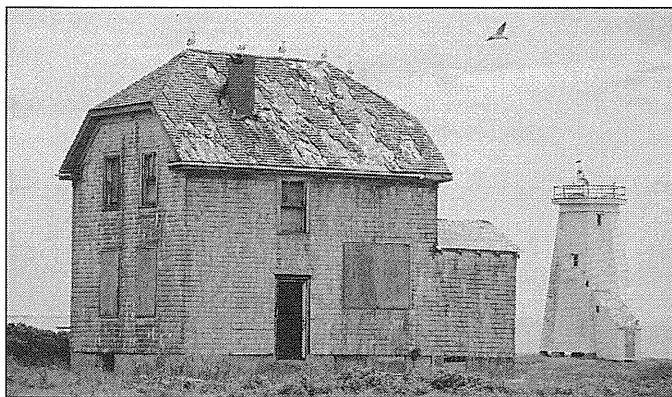
Our new website www.capeforchulight.com, became live in June. The 2008 newsletter goes into more details about the on site projects. We also have a Facebook page, Cape Forchu Lightstation, where visitors and locals have posted wonderful pictures.

On-site visitation increased a little over 12% in 2008 from 2007. This is determined by guest book signatures and we try to get as many people to sign as possible, but not everyone comes in the museum and a lot of the day-trippers from Bar Harbour only have about half an hour at the light and many go directly for lunch so we do not get their signatures.

On November 24th, we will be hosting our Dumping Day events for the first day of the lobster fishing season. There is a continental breakfast at 5 am, then the departure and blessing of the fleet at 6 am. CJLS, our local radio station, will be broadcasting live from the lighthouse.

Devil's Island in Trouble

There are reports the 1877 lighthouse on Devil's Island could be replaced by a fibreglass structure. Lack of regular maintenance coupled with a regular beating by wind and salt spray has led to major deterioration of this lanternless octagonal tower. The condition of the tower underscores the importance of the recently passed Bill S-215, "an Act to Protect Heritage Lighthouses". At present, no groups or individuals have taken up the cause of this increasingly rare type of lighthouse (wooden octagonal). The



DEVIL'S ISLAND IN 2003. *CHRIS MILLS*

island is also home to one of the last remaining hip-gable keeper's houses that were once common on both coasts of Canada.

Five Islands Gets Ready To Move

There's news of progress in the plan to move the Five Islands lighthouse to a new site. The Five Islands Lighthouse Preservation Society's Gloria Lewis says workers have poured a foundation and frost wall for the lighthouse at its new home on Broderick Lane. The Municipality of Colchester owns the tower and the new land (Gloria says council also paid for the foundation), but there's a long way to go yet –at the very least, the move will cost \$12,000. Gloria says local fundraising has gone some of the way to reaching that total, but the lion's share remains out of reach so far.

The campground where the tower now sits has been sold, but Gloria does not know the new owners' plan for the site, and there is no word on a deadline to move the lighthouse.

Gilbert's Cove Always Busy

Tina Raymond, Gilbert's Cove Lighthouse and Historical Society

The Gilbert's Cove Lighthouse and Historical Society had a very successful season this year. Currently the lighthouse has more than 260 members, including people from all across Canada and the U.S. Members pay a yearly \$5 fee and in return they receive a newsletter giving them an update on the lighthouse, which includes some of the items/events mentioned below.

The lighthouse opens every year from approximately mid-June to mid-September. Visitors can take a tour of the lighthouse, visit the gift shop, have a beverage or muffin in the tea room, walk the grounds or bring a lunch and enjoy the site outside on one of the picnic tables. The gift shop contains locally made crafts, such as hand-knit sweaters, socks, trinkets, photos, and one-of-a-kind items that you may not find anywhere else. These craft items are sold on consignment from our talented local residents.

In addition, visitors are welcome to climb the stairs that lead to the 'light' and enjoy the view from the top.

During the season we have a variety of events and happenings, such as our annual family picnic, bus tours, Halloween 'haunted' house, and the occasional wedding on the grounds.

The family picnic is held every year on the 3rd Sunday of July and is our only fundraiser. Although it's called a 'family' picnic everyone is welcome to attend (locals or visitors), as we consider everyone family. There is a food stand, children's games, ticket sales on various prizes donated by local businesses, 50/50 draw, and live music and other entertainment. If you would like to join us, don't forget your lawn chair and come have a great time next year, on Sunday July 19, 2009!

On October 31st the lighthouse holds a haunted Hallowe'en house for children wishing to get some treats and maybe a trick or two! Children and parents alike take a small tour of the 'redecorated' house and get a bag of treats at the end. More than 140 children and their parents enjoy this spooky event year after year.

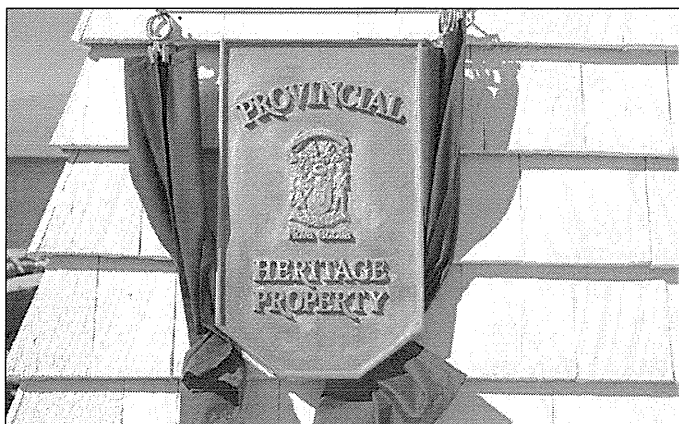
This summer, the society added an additional parking lot, (to accommodate the growing need for more people to attend the annual picnic) and built a walkway leading to the beach for easier access. We also have quite a collection of international flags that fly on the poles outside. All of the flags, (20+) are given to the lighthouse by visitors wishing to leave a part of their home here with us.

According to our guest book, the lighthouse had more than 3,300 visitors from all over the world, including Germany, and Australia.

We look forward to seeing YOU next year!

Hampton Unveiling

On a brisk and sunny October 5th, the Hampton lighthouse received its provincial heritage designation plaque. The unveiling followed last November's designation,



HAMPTON'S OFFICIAL PROVINCIAL HERITAGE PLAQUE.
LEW PERRY



THE 1911 HAMPTON LIGHTHOUSE IS IN TOP-NOTCH SHAPE. *LEW PERRY* making the Hampton lighthouse the first designated provincial heritage building in Annapolis County. NSLPS board members Lew Perry and Denyse Contrasty attended the celebration, joining Hampton Lighthouse and Heritage Society Members, along with Marilyn Wilkins, Chair, Heritage Advisory Committee, Municipality of the County of Annapolis."

The society has 21 members, some of whom contributed materials and labour to paint the lighthouse this year. Denyse says the care lavished by volunteers really shows, and "the lighthouse looks wonderful inside and out."

Denyse adds "this event was well organized. There were tables on the wharf with a cake decorated with Hampton lighthouse. A piper was on hand to call visitors to the lighthouse where (HLHC member and NSLPS board member) Andrew Powter was MC. He introduced members of the board, and welcomed Lew and myself from NSLPS.

"After the unveiling, the piper led all to the wharf for refreshments. I took advantage to climb to the top of the lighthouse and upon returning to the ground floor, found myself locked in! I was able to call out on my cell phone when someone returned to get the raffle tickets and I was soon on my way to have a piece of cake too."



LET THEM EAT LIGHTHOUSE CAKE! *LEW PERRY*

There is a now a temporary exhibit in the light-house and the Hampton society has plans for a permanent display in 2009. For more information about this beautiful light on the Fundy Shore, go online to: <http://www.hamptonlighthouse.com/index.php>

Isaac's Harbour To Lose Light



ISAAC'S HARBOUR LIGHTHOUSE IN 2001. CHRIS MILLS

The Isaac's Harbour lighthouse, on the province's eastern shore, is about to be snuffed. The light is in the wrong position to be of use to ships traveling to the new LNG (liquid natural gas) terminal near Goldboro. The Coast Guard plans to replace the lighthouse with a buoy. That move, while making sense navigationally, puts the rare combined keeper's house/lighthouse at risk unless a local group comes forward to protect the structure.

Margaretsville Beams Steadily

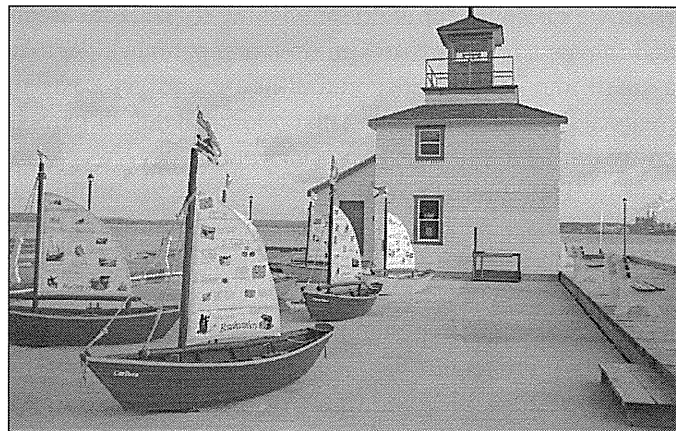
The site near where wrecker Peter Barnes lured the schooner *Saucy Nancy* to her untimely demise in 1783 continues to draw sunset-seeking locals and tourists. John Freeman says the Coast Guard painted the 1859 Margaretsville light this year, as well as making repairs to the tower's lantern deck and railing. As I spoke with John on the evening of September 25th, he told me that 15 or 20 people had enjoyed the site during the day. As far as John

knows, the Coast Guard has no immediate plans to divest the community's lighthouse. The Margaretsville Wharf Committee maintains the deck around the base of the tower and pays insurance covering its public use.

Peggy's Cove Lens on the Move

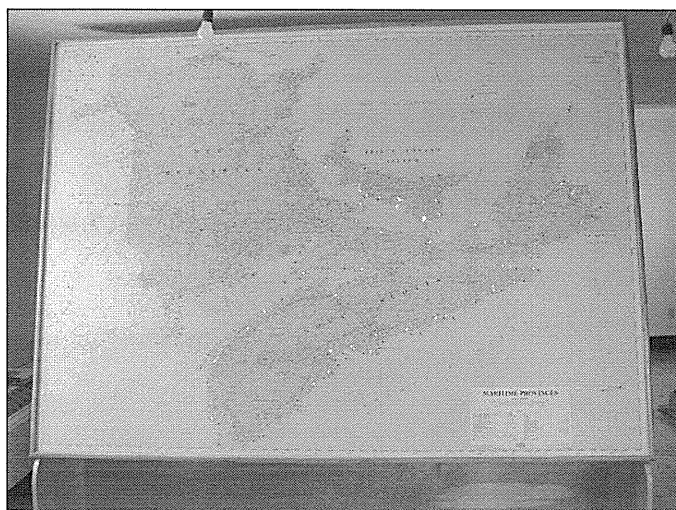
The word from DFO/Coast Guard is that the old fourth order Fresnel drum lens from the Peggy's Cove lighthouse will be loaned to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax. Coast Guard technicians removed the lens from service after Post Tropical Storm Noel tore up power lines to the tower last November. Peggy's Cove now shows a red flashing light (An APRB-252) rated at 8 nautical miles.

Pictou Making Progress

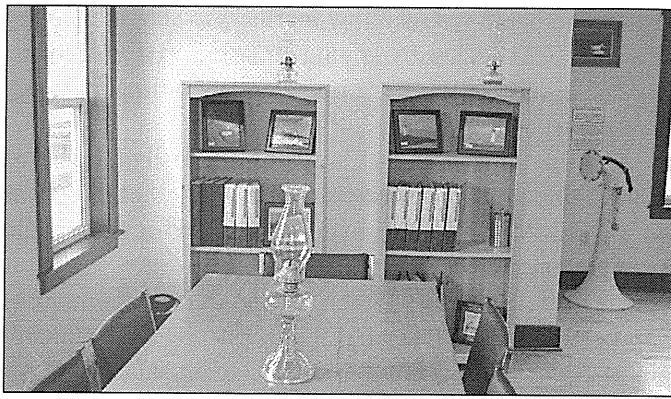


THE NEW PICTOU LIGHTHOUSE SITS NEXT TO THE *HECTOR* QUAY ON THE TOWN'S WATERFRONT. BILL HENDERSON

The folks at The Northumberland Fisheries Museum in Pictou continue to forge ahead with their "new" lighthouse on the town's waterfront. The museum's Bill Henderson says the first floor of the lighthouse opened for business



RIP IRWIN'S AMAZING LIGHTHOUSE MAP. BILL HENDERSON



INTERIOR OF THE NEW PICTOU LIGHTHOUSE. *BILL HENDERSON*

on August 5th, with some of lighthouse historian Rip Irwin's artifact collection on show. The display includes an incredible map of the Maritime Provinces, marking every working lighthouse in the region, with flashing LED lights to denote each station.

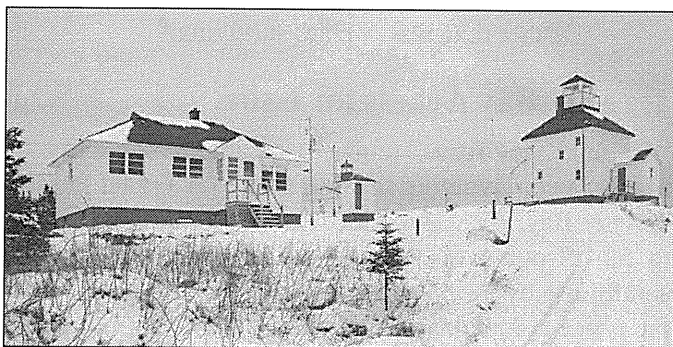
According to Bill Henderson "We will be working on the stairway, second floor (floor, window inserts, baseboards, decor) this winter and getting ready to open this floor for next year. [Students from] the Nova Scotia Community College will be making the stairway and hopefully the ladder to the light. They will also be finishing the map to show all the lighthouses in the Atlantic Provinces (NS, NB, PEI).

Bill adds, "I'm hoping the second floor will have a small display of a bedroom and lamp room for visitors to look at the way it used to be. This fall we will pressure treat the deck at the entrance to the lighthouse and make some repairs to the roof shingles as well as look at some exterior paint touch ups."

Ed's note: The Pictou lighthouse project shows how hard work and dreams can come together to create a new, important part of Nova Scotia's maritime and lighthouse history. Congratulations to all involved for doing such a fine job.

Port Bickerton Divestiture Woes

"The thorn in our craw is divestiture."



PORT BICKERTON LIGHTSTATION. *CHRIS MILLS*

Don Dodge is not a happy camper. He's been involved with the Port Bickerton lighthouse and its interpretive centre for years, and for years he's been told that divestiture *will* take place. Back in February 2005, the Municipality of Saint Mary's and the community of Port Bickerton had a meeting with DFO to discuss the issue. At that time, the end of March was put forward as the divestiture date. Don says that deadline has been extended six times over the past three years. "This is our future as well as anyone's," he says. "The government should be ashamed by this."

Don feels the site is a prime candidate for provincial ownership, considering the Nova Scotia government's recent purchase of more than 1100 acres of ecologically sensitive land and shoreline around the lighthouse site. The inclusion of the Port Bickerton lightstation in this purchase would have been a boon to the operation and long-life of the site.

On the good news front, Don reports that the entire station is now being painted (as of September 23rd). The station includes a keeper's bungalow, small shed, the 1930s dwelling/lighthouse, and the current light and fog alarm structure. The Port Bickerton Area Planning Association signed a new three year lease for the site in March of this year. The lighthouse received about 3,200 paying visitors this season.

Port Greville Spruced Up

Age of Sail Heritage Museum Curator/Manager Oralee O'Byrne reports that overall visitation is down again this year, "but we are holding our own. June actually saw an increase of tourists for us of about 12%."

Oralee says lighthouse maintenance volunteer Walter Lake made minor repairs to the upper deck of the lighthouse this year, while John Merriam kept the lighthouse bulb timer on track after power outages. Todd McCall spent time sprucing up the flower beds at the base of the little 1908 tower. Oralee calls "these three invaluable volunteers our modern day lighthouse keepers."

She adds, "The Port Greville lighthouse was granted an overseas honor when it was chosen for use on a poster in Europe."

Oralee mentions a sad note from November 2007, with the death of a "valuable member of our lighthouse community, Walter DeWolfe. Walter used to help his brother as the last official lighthouse keepers of the Port Greville light. Walter also made beautiful hand crafted models of the pepperpot lighthouses for sale in our gift shop and at Peggy's Cove. He will be greatly missed."

Port Medway Retrospective

Dan Sinclair

Opening Day Of 'Old Port, Scanning The Past': "Look... that's MY house!!" was the refrain from many local residents as they viewed the astonishing compilation of pictures at "Old Port, Scanning the Past".

The exhibition took place August 9 and 10 in the Port Medway Lighthouse Park warehouse building. Organizers of the event were Bob Whitelaw and Suzanne Morton. Bob has had a long-standing interest in old Port Medway and has been fortunate to have access to some family albums, including the collection of the late Herbert Manthorne.

Suzanne is a professor of Canadian history at McGill University and does marvelous research, including obtaining sound clips from material recorded by Helen Creighton -- residents of Port Medway (such as local historian Marguerite Letson) singing various songs of long ago.

Thanks to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, the exhibit also featured a scale model of the Medway River fishing boat, the *Elson Perry* (named after the keeper of the nearby Medway Head lighthouse, from 1850 to 1892), in addition to a large sign describing the building and launching of the full-scale replica and a DVD.

Sambro Island DCB 36 Finds New Home

The DCB 36 (a Crouse Hinds "directional code beacon") lens which served for more than three decades on Sambro Island has found a new home at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax. Coast Guard technicians removed the unit earlier this year when the station was solarized.

First introduced in U.S. lighthouses in the 1940s, the DCB 36 was once a common replacement for classical Fresnel lenses in Nova Scotia (until the early 1980s). Now, only two remain in service (at Low Point in Cape Breton and at Cape Sable).

In early October, Coast Guard navaid technician Tom Roberts helped bolt together the large assembly, and it now stands in the Maritime Museum's artifact storage area. Curator of Marine History Dan Conlin says the museum is now looking at display possibilities for the DCB 36.

Sambro Island Fog Horn Stays On!

After weeks of uncertainty this summer it appears the new Sambro Island fog horn will remain in regular operation. After Coast Guard techs switched on the new solar-powered light and horn in March there were a number of complaints from a resident of Atlantic View Drive, about the sound of the horn. We understand that the Coast Guard was considering a number of options for the horn, includ-

ing a system that would allow mariners to activate the fog horn in thick weather by keying a marine VHF radio mic, instead of having the horn operate all the time in foggy conditions.

But when a Coast Guard official visited the home of the complainant, it soon became evident that there was no way this low-powered, battery operated fog horn could keep anyone ashore awake at night.

While visiting Sambro Island during 250th birthday celebrations for the lighthouse, acting Superintendent of Aids to Navigation Darren Gaudet said the Coast Guard likely plans to leave the horn just as it is. Let's hope that's just what happens, given the navigational and historic significance of this site.

Sandy Point

Bernice Goodick of the Sandy Point Recreation Group is happy to report that hard work and perseverance have come together to produce a new, strong and beautiful Sandy Point lighthouse. Renovations and repairs to this unique crib lighthouse in Shelburne Harbour have already cost about \$100,000.

As well as raising more than \$5,000 this summer the Recreation Group had to take out a loan to finish work on the lighthouse, which included major crib repairs, painting, and the installation of a galvanized "stairway to heaven" which will provide safe access to the deck surrounding the base of the lighthouse. Bernice says that as of early October, workers were still installing the stairs and a new railing around the base of the light.

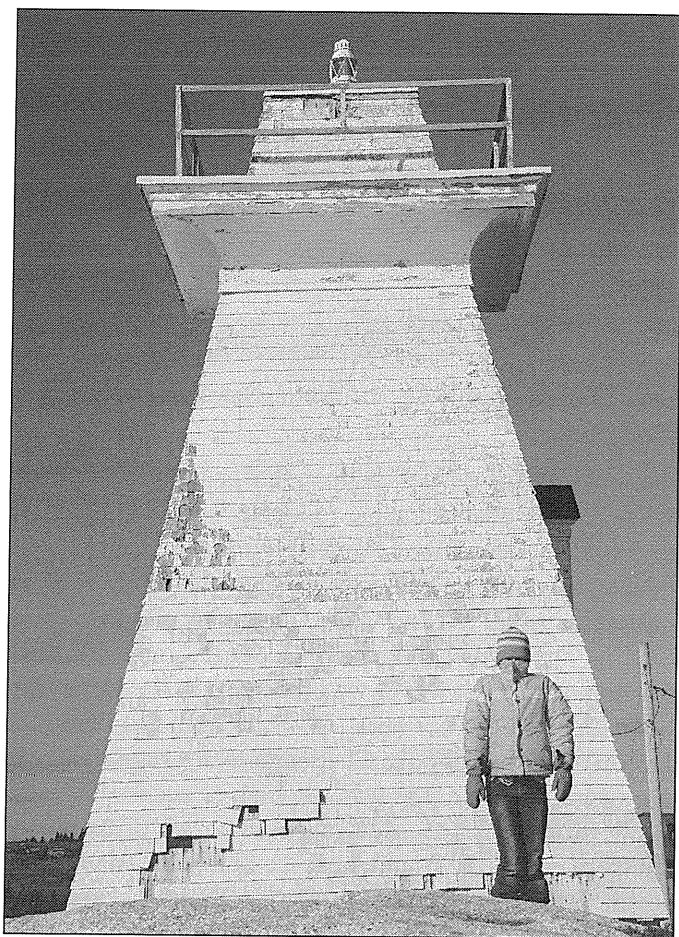
Seal Island Light Museum Slow Year

"SIL was quiet this year." That's Brenda Maxwell's description of the 2008 season at the Seal Island Lighthouse Museum in Barrington Passage. "We did not receive federal grants for summer students," she adds, "which caused major scrambling and cancellation of some projects we had planned for other buildings. We did not open 'till mid-June as a result. We did think we would have to close by mid-September, but we were most fortunate when Economic Development gave us two more summer students.

"Other than that, we are surviving."

Terence Bay Access an Issue

"As The Light Turns" might be an appropriate name for a soap opera involving this little light on Tenant Point in Terence Bay. For years, a local landowner has been trying to cut off public access to the light, despite decades of careful use by locals and visitors. Now, it appears one of the prime complainants has formed the non-profit Sandy Cove Lighthouse Society (the lighthouse stands just



THE TERENCE BAY LIGHTHOUSE SHOWS MUCH WEAR AND TEAR DURING THE COLD MONTHS OF EARLY 2008. CHRIS MILLS

above Sandy Cove), even though the Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee has been around for at least a decade. The move has the TBLC's Mary Thomas scratching her head, wondering just what the game is.

On the plus side, late September saw Coast Guard work crews making minor repairs and painting the deteriorating 1903 tower. Mary says Tropical Storm Hanna kept her group from celebrating lighthouse day at the site this summer, but their commitment to the little wooden lighthouse remains strong. At the end of September, the TBLC planned to submit a letter to the Real Properties division of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, saying they would like to take the over site upon divestiture. The NSLPS fully supports this move.

Note: Mary says she had heard from a DFO official that a number of soon to be divested lighthouses are "stuck on [the provincial tourism department's] desk. This is a surprise to the NSLPS, given Tourism Minister's Bill Dook's apparent lack of any interest in Nova Scotia lights, as well as his department's long-standing dearth of any type of support for the very lighthouses they use in tourism brochures, maps, and "The Lighthouse Route" highway along our south shore.

Walton at 135

It was a busy summer at the Walton lighthouse, according to Walton Area Development Association Secretary Johanna Hudson. "We have had a very good season," she says, with "thousands of visitors since we opened the lighthouse and park. People enjoy having a picnic and rest and walk on our trail. Visitors from all over the world have been there."

"We have volunteers who help out on the days our student was off during her term at the lighthouse. We decided to stay open with our lovely gift shop for the month of September."

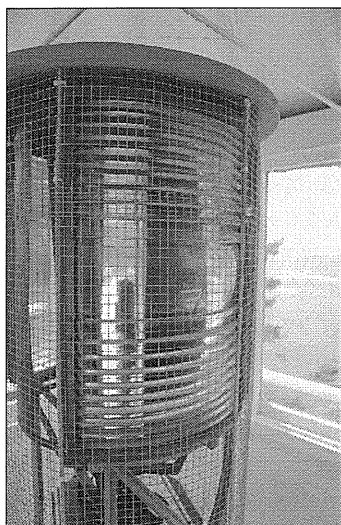
Johanna adds that "volunteers take turns opening the gate and the lighthouse door every day of the week. The lighthouse was freshly painted this year by another volunteer. Ted Burgess is still the president and comes around a few times during the day to make sure everything is fine."

Along with amazing views and huge tides, Walton has the added attraction of a clockwork flashing system attached to its fourth-order lens. The system does not use weights, but rather a spring system that rotates a series of panels inside the lens to create the flash. The system is still operational, and lasts for about four hours per winding.

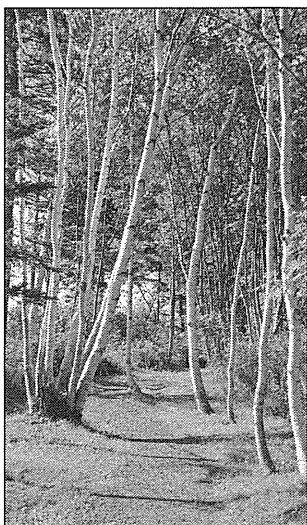
The Walton lighthouse turned 135 this year. It is the only original lighthouse still standing in Hants County.



THE STURDY WALTON LIGHTHOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1873. CHRIS MILLS



WALTON'S 4TH ORDER LENS SYSTEM INCLUDES AN OPERATIONAL CLOCKWORK MECHANISM WHICH REVOLVES SHADES AROUND THE LIGHT SOURCE TO CREATE A FLASH.



A BEAUTIFUL TREE-LINED WALK FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE LEADS TO AN INCREDIBLE VIEW OF THE WALTON SHORELINE.

PHOTOS CHRIS MILLS



WALTON. CHRIS MILLS

Ed's note: This is a world class site, with its immaculate 1873 lighthouse, cliff-top walking trails and unparalleled views across Minas Basin to Five Islands and Parrsboro. The work of the Walton Area Development Association shows how effective grassroots work can be in saving and maintaining our community lights.

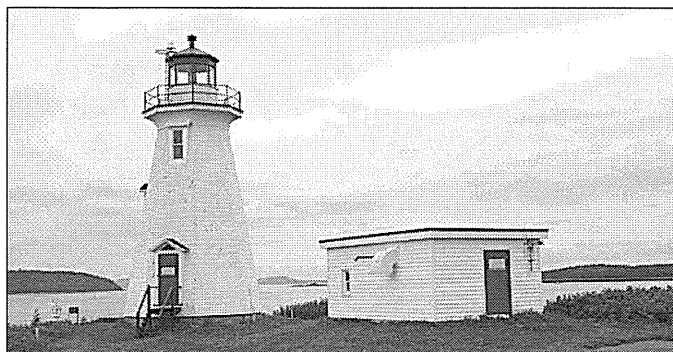
Lights Across the Border

Lew Perry

The "Lights Across the Border", International Lighthouse Challenge was held Saturday, August 9th, 2008. This involved visiting five lighthouses in New Brunswick and Maine in one day.

The day before, my wife and I set off for Campobello Island to begin the challenge. On the way, we stopped at the Green's Point Lighthouse near L'Etete, New Brunswick. The light was not open but we did a quick tour of the marine museum which was in the old keeper's house.

At L'Etete, we boarded the free car ferry that took us to Deer Island. Driving across the island we were on



GREEN'S POINT LIGHTHOUSE, AT L'ETETE, NEW BRUNSWICK.

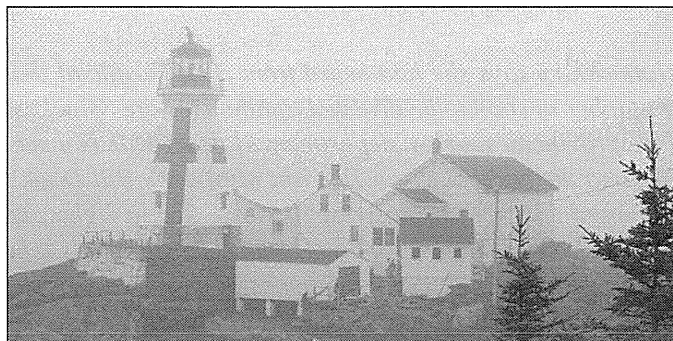
LEW PERRY

the look-out for a small pepper shaker light at Leonardville. Since we were unable to locate it we continued on to the small Deer Island Point light near the Campobello Island ferry. About half way through this ferry ride we passed the small red and white Cherry Islet Light.

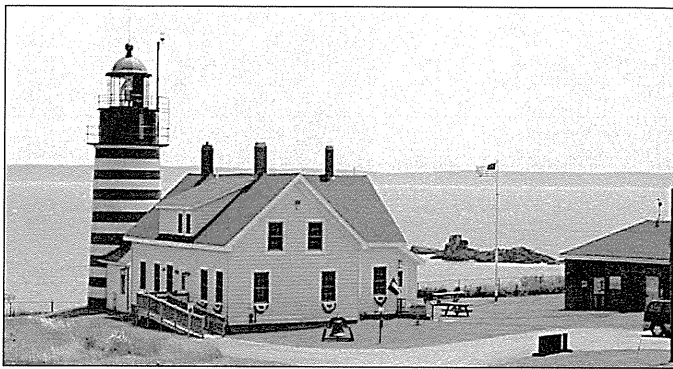
The day of the challenge started out with thick fog and drizzle. However we proceeded to the Head Harbour Light on the northern tip of the island to begin the International Lighthouse Challenge. After registering we discovered that the tide was too high to access the light. While waiting for the tide to go down we drove to the southern end of the island, near the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Bridge to visit the Mulholland Light. The tower of this light was not open but we had a quick look in on the ground floor

Then it was back across the island to Head Harbour (also known as East Quoddy), where, by this time, the tide had receded enough to get to the light. This involved negotiating two sets of steep stairs, a walk across the ocean floor and crossing a small bridge to get to the light. Although the light and keeper's house were open, I decided not to go in as there were several visitors waiting.

After Head Harbour we passed through American customs and headed for the Lubec Channel Light. Because of the heavy fog we were unable to see this small spark plug light. Since it was getting near lunchtime we moved on to the West Quoddy Light. The easternmost lighthouse on the U.S. mainland was open for visiting both the tower and the museum which is in the old keeper's house.



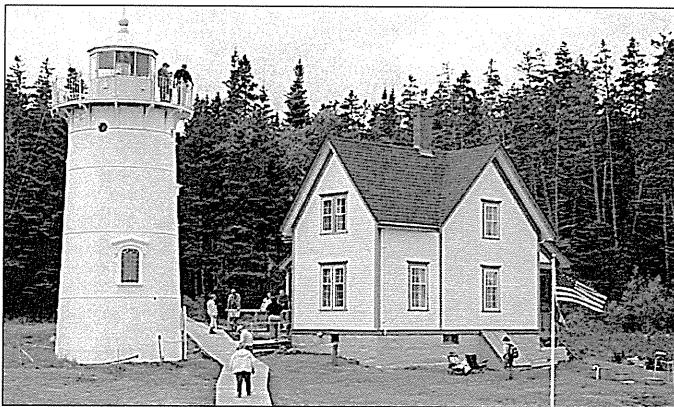
HEAD HARBOUR, NEW BRUNSWICK. LEW PERRY



WEST QUODDY, MAINE. LEW PERRY

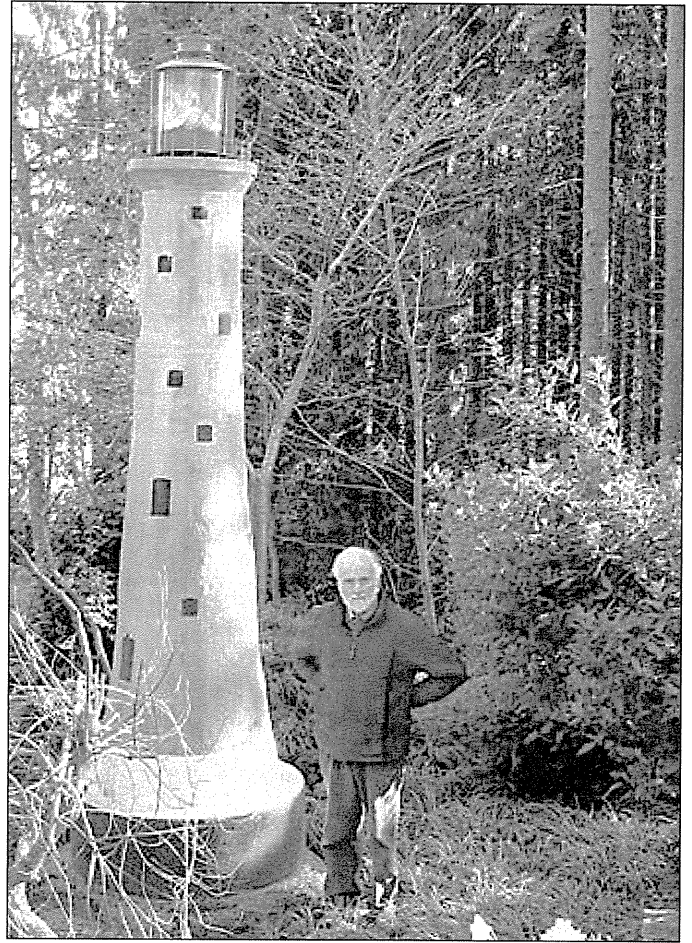
The next stop, after lunch, was the Little River Light in Cutler, Maine. This light is located on the south side of an island in Cutler Harbour. After a five minute boat ride and a short walk across the island, I made it to the light. Friends of Little River Lighthouse, a chapter of the American Lighthouse Foundation, had recently renovated this light and the keeper's house. Since the fog had nearly lifted by now I decided to climb to the top of the tower. The view was spectacular and the light was in great shape. With a quick tour of the keeper's house, I returned to Cutler.

After viewing and visiting three lights on Friday and four on Saturday, the weekend was capped off with a lobster dinner in Cutler, Maine.



LITTLE RIVER LIGHTSTATION OFF CUTLER, MAINE. LEW PERRY

ACROSS THE POND



ARTHUR LANE'S SCALE MODEL OF THE EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE (WHICH SITS IN HIS GARDEN AT OLD WILLIAM'S COTTAGE IN KIDDERMINSTER, WORCESTERSHIRE) EXHIBITS THE VERY LATEST IN LED TECHNOLOGY. LANE WORKED AT THE REAL EDDYSTONE, OFF PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND, IN THE MID-LATE LATE 1950S. HIS BOOK *IT WAS FUN WHILE IT LASTED* (PUBLISHED BY WHITTLES, IN SCOTLAND) IS A POIGNANT AND HILARIOUS ACCOUNT OF LIGHTKEEPING DURING THE '50S AND '60S AT SEVERAL TRINITY HOUSE LIGHTHOUSES.

ARTHUR LANE

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 Chris Mills, 1121 Ketch Harbour Road, Ketch Harbour, Nova Scotia, B3V 1K7, or e-mail ketch1@eastlink.ca. Deadline for December 2008/January 2009 issue: December 20, 2008.

NSLPS MEMBERSHIP FORM: January 1 - December 31, 2008 ☐ New ☐ Renewal: Membership # _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

Family/Group names for extra cards: _____

Single - \$20.00 Institutional/Group - \$30.00

Family - \$25.00 Sustaining - \$50.00

Patron - \$100.00

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



ALICE (SPENCER) BREAU HAPPENED TO BE VISITING THE SITE OF HER OLD HOME AT THE PARRSBORO LIGHTHOUSE WHILE CHRIS MILLS WAS ON THE BEACH IN MID-AUGUST. ALICE'S FATHER RUSSELL KEPT THE LIGHT FROM 1920 TO 1960. *CHRIS MILLS*