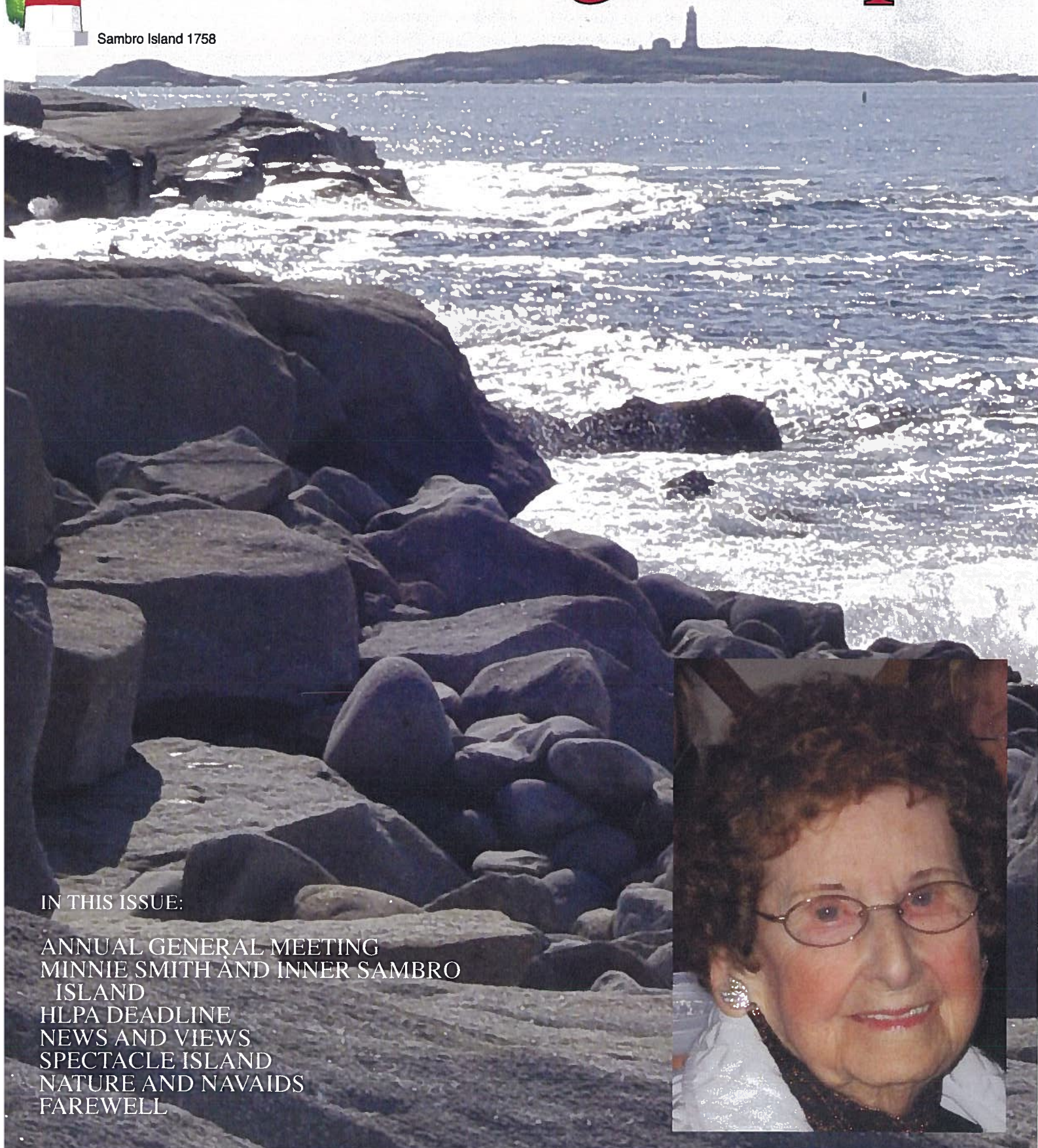




Sambro Island 1758

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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COVER PHOTO: INNER SAMBRO ISLAND, WITH SAMBRO ISLAND LIGHT IN THE BACKGROUND

COVER INSET: MINNIE SMITH GREW UP ON INNER SAMBRO ISLAND.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Chris Mills

Our 17th AGM was a great success, with at least 32 people in attendance in the Small Craft Gallery at the Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax on the night of April 18th. We were pleased to see long-time supporters Clifford and Vera Wasson, who drove in from Truro, as well as Adrienne Speck from Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society, and Friends pioneering member Gert Sweeney, who we welcome as a new NSLPS board member.

It was great to see John, Gloria and Fiona Marshall, as well as author Mike Parker, whose excellent book *Ghost Islands of Nova Scotia* has just been published by Pottersfield Press. Lighthouse model builder Carl Anderson and his wife Roxanne Smith (daughter of Cape Sable lightkeepers' son Gerald Smith) were also in the crowd, along with Dale (Matthews) Veinot, who grew up on Georges Island in Halifax Harbour.

Along with the the president's address, reports and election of board members, we were very pleased to present Glen Fry with the annual Craig Harding award. Glen is now retired from Coast Guard and we are happy that he has joined the board. Glen's knowledge of Nova Scotia lighthouses is immense, and we are excited to recognize his well-established support of our province's lighthouse heritage.

Coast Guard fixed aids to navigation foreman Tom Roberts brought along an assortment of state-of-the-art LED lenses; he was happy to answer ATON (Aids to Navigation) questions and we made note of his work in helping restore the Chebucto Head fog horn to full operation (see story on page 9).

Many thanks to Dan Conlin and Ian Mullin of the Maritime Museum for helping make this AGM one of our most successful!

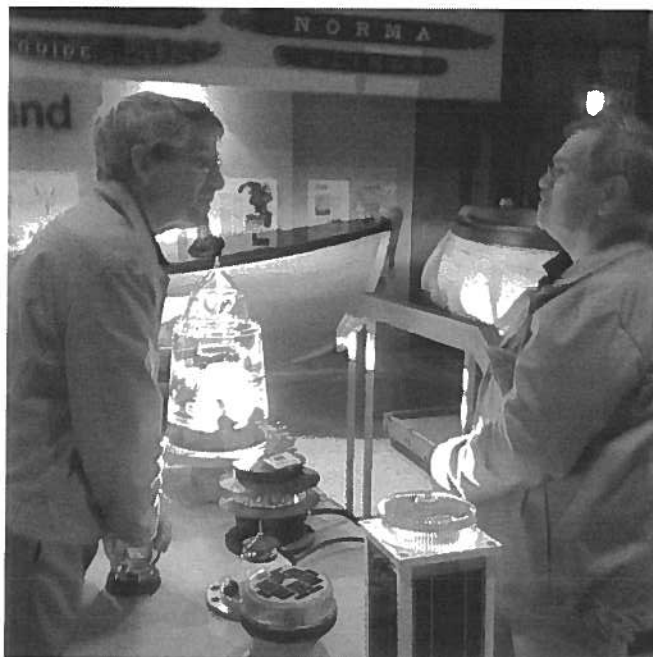
* * *



GLEN FRY WITH HIS CRAIG HARDING AWARD. *CHRIS MILLS*



FIXED AIDS TO NAVIGATION FOREMAN TOM ROBERTS WITH LED LENSES. *CHRIS MILLS*



NSLPS MEMBER AND LIGHTHOUSE MODEL BUILDER CARL ANDERSON TALKS WITH THE COAST GUARD'S TOM ROBERTS. *CHRIS MILLS*

I LOVED THAT ISLAND: Minnie Smith and Inner Sambro Chris Mills

Minnie Smith never stopped loving Inner Sambro Island. Minnie was the daughter, grand daughter and niece of lightkeepers on nearby Sambro Island, and she relished each and every year she spent living on the small island just north of the lighthouse island, near the village of Sambro.



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT FAMILIES ONCE LIVED IN BARREN INNER SAMBRO ISLAND. CHRIS MILLS

Years after moving back to the mainland, and after raising a family of her own, Minnie's thoughts often drifted back to the sand beaches, the barrens and the restless sea surrounding Inner Sambro.

Her island lineage was well established. Minnie's father Alexander Gilkie had been assistant keeper on Sambro Island for several years. Her grandfather William Gilkie kept the light in the 1870s, and an uncle and a cousin also served as keepers for many years.

Minnie was born in Sambro on November 9, 1911, to Alexander and Annetta Gilkie. When she was about two years old, the family moved to Inner Sambro Island, just off the Bald Rock shore, near Sambro, at the south west approach to Halifax Harbour.

Island life offered daily challenges and no great financial reward for the Gilkies. But for Minnie, the simple pleasures of shoreline walks, trips ashore in a rowboat, visits to Sambro Island and close family ties, made Inner Sambro a bit of a paradise.

Minnie's life spanned colossal changes in the world. When I spoke with her in 2003, she clearly remembered the Halifax Explosion on the morning of December 6, 1917, and she recalled wartime shipping in and out

of Halifax Harbour during the first world war. She could bridge the gap between her grandfather's time on Sambro Island in the 1870s and 1988, when the last keepers left the island.

Minnie was a huge fan of Elvis Presley, and she loved to dance, well into her 90s. And Minnie always talked about returning to Inner Sambro.

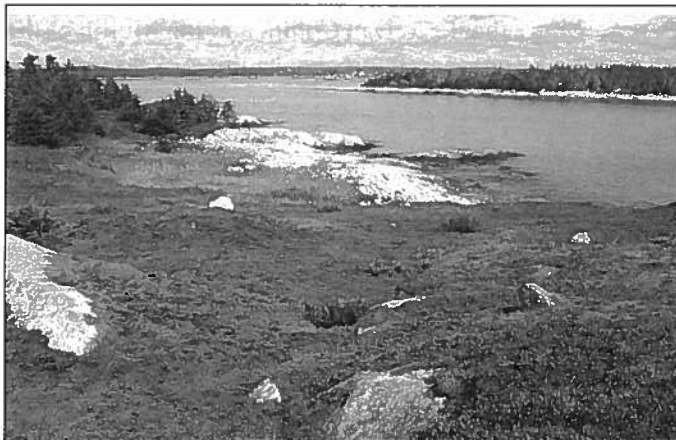
The island is now a provincially protected site. Only a few hints that anyone ever lived there remain. On the western end, iron rings that secured the guy wires that held down the pole light that marked the point have stained the granite. Further east and higher on the island, there are tell-tale furrows of scrub-covered land where the Gilkies once kept gardens.

In Minnie's mind, the island was always a kind of Shangri-La, and until her final days she spoke with pride of and longing for the life she'd had on Inner Sambro.

The first I remember about goin' out there, we had a little lamb, so we took that lamb out to the island. Of course they were all flats (rowboats) then, and we had the lamb and my sisters Mabel and Lottie and myself, and believe it or not, a bird in a cage was in the boat!

We used to go around the island...practically every day. On Western Head, there was a pole light, one of the ones you hoist up, [with a] lantern. There was a big pond down below it, and the boys used to go fishin' in that for thornfish. Bill, my brother, he made little boats and they'd take the nets off [a bag of] onions. We'd take them up the pond and set them down in the mouth of the cove, and then throw a rock up in the back part of the cove so the fish would come down and go in our nets! That was the entertainment!

There weren't many neighbours on Inner Sambro. Old Richard Nickerson lived on the island as well, as did Ephraim Smith, who maintained the pole light. However,



THE CALM WATERS OF THE PASSAGE BETWEEN INNER SAMBRO ISLAND AND THE MAINLAND. CHRIS MILLS



MINNIE SMITH AT 98! COURTESY SUSAN PAUL

as one of 12 children, Minnie had plenty of company.

Oh Lord! There's a ton of them! We'll start from the oldest one – Bill. William. Then there was Alexander, and then there was Charlie, Albert – I said Angus, didn't I? No? Angus was in there. Then there was Lottie and Mabel, and Hilda, and Howard and Edward and Robert,

and then it was the tomboy – me!

I was with the boys and I guess I must have been a tomboy, That's why I like the young people the best. Wherever they went, I went. I remember one time I was comin' off here (to Sambro Village) and it was blowin' a little hard. I was about 15 then. 'course [my brothers] were gonna hide me! I got down in the bottom of the flat and threw one of those big long soldier jackets over me 'till we got out of the cove. When we got out the cove it was alright. Now, my father didn't want me to go. But that was the only time he ever interfered ever in my life! We lived out there for about 16 or 17 years. We were out there in the war time. I stood on the flat rock back of the house and I watched the troopship takin' Angus out, goin' to England.

Island living conditions were comfortable, but simple.

Well, [it] wasn't too fancy! It was just an old-fashioned house. It had two bedrooms downstairs and a big, huge kitchen and it had the whole loft upstairs – it wasn't partitioned off or anything. When one feller wanted his own room, well, they put up a blanket. They was six beds up there one time. That's how big the loft was.

It was good and cold [in the winter]! But we heated it with wood. The boys would go over on the point shore on the other side of the passage and they'd cut wood, and there was a lot of driftwood too that we got. Bill used to get hardwood and used to smoke the fish in



BIRTHDAY 100! MINNIE SMITH BLOWS OUT THE CANDLES ON HER CAKE, NOVEMBER 9, 2011. COURTESY SUSAN PAUL



MINNIE, JUST BEFORE HER 100TH BIRTHDAY. COURTESY SUSAN PAUL

the chimley.

It was pretty bad in the winter. You know, it blowed. You got the whole full of the breeze, whichever way it came. I remember Bill havin' to go out and prop up the side of the house one time. That breeze came and blowed that hard, you could see [the wall] goin' in and out. He went out and put props up against it, 'till the storm was over.

For entertainment we had an old gramophone that came out of the [wreck of the] *City of Vienna*, and there's where I got the [song] *My Blue Heaven*. My sister Mabel, she was like me, full of fun and crazy. She used to wind that up and get it goin' and get Rob and I up dancin', We'd dance all the tunes that they'd play.

Life was fun for the kids, but everyday life for the older children and parents required hard work, especially for mother Annetta. She also missed some aspects of mainland life.

Cookin'! Cookin'. She used to use a 98 pound bag of flour a week, settin' bread and rolls and other things. That's what took her time. And washin', and mendin' the boy's clothes. That was her work that she did. You could stay on the island and hear the church bell ringin', especially on a Sunday night and that usually got to her.

[My father] was sort of a quiet fella. When [my brother] Bill grew up – I suppose he was no more than 18,

if he was that – he sort of took over, and my father was just there like one of the rest of them. He was our Dad, but Bill was the boss. Whatever he said, went. In the evenin', my father sang a lot. He used to sing all the old Irish songs and Scotch songs.

Minnie would often go the Western Head at sun-down to watch Ephraim Smith light the kerosene lantern that guided fishing boats into Sambro Harbour.

He'd take the lantern and he'd fill it with oil before he went up, and then he'd screw the wick into it and turn the shade back and he'd light the lamp. Then he'd turn the shade back and fasten it. Then he'd just hoist it up the pole and fasten it on a little cleat.

Stories of ghosts and forerunners have been passed down through the generations on many Nova Scotia Islands. According to local legend, there was pirate gold "somewhere" on Inner Sambro, although the island's guardian ghost was not as other-worldly as originally thought.

There's a flat rock in the centre of the island and a name onto the rock, and a body onto it, with the shape of the arms goin' down. Now that was 'sposed to be a guide to the money or the gold buried there. One time my oldest brother Bill and Angus and Howard and Eddie was going to dig up this money. It had to be 12 o'clock you had to do it. After the clock turned 12 they went with their shovels and the picks. Bill dressed up and crawled 'round the back part of the island and come out handy to them that they couldn't see. It was all bushes. He started moanin', moanin'. Down with their picks and their shovels and they ran like the dickens!

Less than a mile across the water to the south-east, on Sambro Island, a much longer-lived spirit was also part of Minnie's family lore. The story of Double Alex (a soldier named Alexander Alexander, who had been stationed with a small garrison on the island) was passed down through the generations, beginning during her grandfather's time as keeper on the island in the 1870s. The story goes that Alex (or Alec, as he's often known in the Sambro area), has been entrusted with money to buy provisions ashore. Instead, he squandered the money on drink and other pleasures, returning to the island empty handed, hungover, and contrite.

He wanted the captain of the army to give him a drink of liquor and that would sober him up or bring him out of whatever he was in! The captain wouldn't do it. My grandfather William Gilkie was there. He said "Why don't you give him a drink?"

And [the captain] said "No."

So then Alec drug hisself up to the lookout and there's where he hung himself. One of the soldiers went up to see where he went, and he was up there hangin'. He come runnin' down and he said "Alec's hung himself!"

They went up and cut him down. My father said *his* father said that Alec's heart was still beatin'. My grandfather wanted the captain to draw blood on his arm, [from a] vein on his arm.

He said "Once that blood starts goin'," he said, "his heart'll come back."

[The captain] said, "No, we don't do that in the British Army."

So he just let him die. That's why they say that it's Alec's ghost that comes back to the island.

It was always the younger ones seen him. My grandfather did [too] It was comin' to blow one night, and he went down to make sure the boats was alright. He had one of those big Newfoundland dogs and the dog wouldn't go no further. He wouldn't budge. He looked around and he saw a shadow or a figure, and that was all. That was supposed to be Double Alec. So then it went from there. Every noise they heard out there was Double Alec!

Although Minnie didn't spend much time on Sambro Island, she loved to be in the middle of the surrounding islands and shoals. It was dangerous territory for shipping, and there were many shipwrecks.

I liked [to be] surrounded by the water and the shoals, like Shag Rock, Mad Rock, Black Rock and the Sisters. All this fascinated me. I seen shipwrecks! In fact I saw one go ashore! The *Bohemian*. I think it was March. I went upstairs in the loft, and I was scrapin' the frost off the window. First thing this big blast came, a steamer blowin'. There was three big blasts, and I knew that she was in trouble, she was ashore.

So I run downstairs right fast and I said "There's a steamer gone ashore!"

'Course, none of the boys was home. They were out haulin' cages (lobster traps). So, they went ashore to the lighthouse and they could see it from the lighthouse. That was the [wreck] that we got all the goodies out of.

She had those big bales of leather. All kinds of leather – kid, and patent leather and any kind of piece of leather that you'd want to see. My mother made 52 leather jackets for people here in Sambro. 'Course she made one each for the boys.

[*Bohemian*] had a supply of meat aboard of her, and all kinds of canned goods. I guess she must have been takin' it overseas for the army.

We got whole sides of pork, like the pig was split in two, you know? I don't know how many of them we had. We had all kinds of canned fruit and can milk and everything that you get in a can at that time they were takin' to the soldiers overseas.

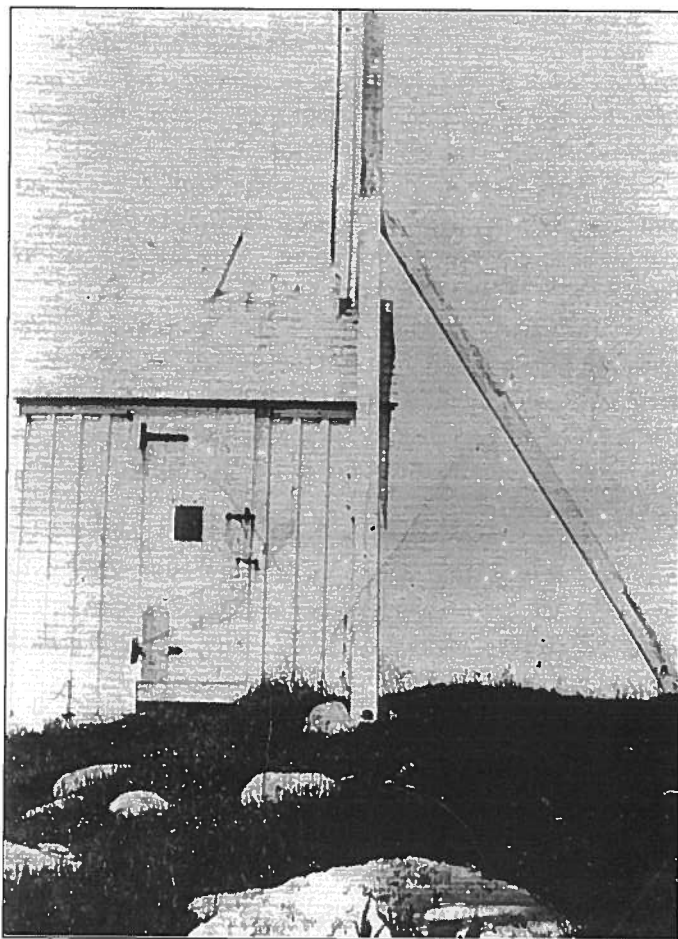
It was a big thing, I'll tell you, when you're only livin' hand to mouth as the old saying is. We never had much. Only what came from the sea, and the bread that

Granny (mother) made.

During the First World War years, Minnie saw troopship traffic in an out of Halifax Harbour. When I interviewed her in 2003, Minnie thought back to 1917, when the largest man-made explosion before Hiroshima flattened north end Halifax, killing 2,000 people and injuring thousands more.

I remember the explosion in Halifax. It was in the morning and my mother was washin' the dishes. 'Course you washed the dishes in a dishpan then. Mabel was home too. She was through with her dishwater and she went out to throw out the dishwater. First, there was a big jar (tremor). Dishes shook on the cupboard. When she went out[side] here was this *big cloud* in over Halifax, and [my mother] come in and she said "My God, Mabel, get up! The Germans is comin'!"

Mabel got up and looked out. She said "Mama, that's just a big ball of smoke. Somethin'," she said "must



THE POLE LIGHT AT WESTERN HEAD. COURTESY MINNIE SMITH

of blowed up."

That was the two ships, when they blew up together.

The years passed. Life was tough on Inner

Sambro but Minnie always spoke longingly of her island home, especially after the family moved back to Sambro village in the late 1920s.

Tell you the truth, there's times I wisht I was there. I'm tellin' you the truth. You know, my sister died about two years ago. She was in a nursing home. I went out to see her one night. She wasn't [feeling] very good and she says "Min, I can't wait 'till spring comes!"

I said "Oh, what are you gonna do in the spring?" She said "you and I, we're gonna go back out home. Out to the island!"

I said "What are we gonna live in?"

She said "Oh, we'll get some kind of a little shack out there."

"Well," I said, "the only way I'm goin' out to the island [is] if I have one of them speedboats and a place decent to live in and then I'll talk about it to you then!"

But she only lasted that week. She never made it out there. But she said "You know, that was the only place we were happy."

When I told Minnie I'd play the devil's advocate and say "that's just a little strip of a bit of sand and a lot of rock and a bit of turf! Why was it so special to you? she responded simply.

I don't know why the reason is. I loved that island, and I could go out there – if I had the means of havin' everything that you wanted out there – I could go back out there now.

It's just somethin' drawin' you to it. When I was out – not last summer gone, but the summer before that – I went back and I had my picture taken layin' down beside the pond [where we used to play]. It was right full to the top! Right full to the top! Couldn't be any fuller. And that really made my day!

Minnie Smith passed away on Januray 29th, 2012. She was 100. She is survived by four children, 19 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren and 16 great great-grandchildren.

Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act Deadline Looms *Chris Mills*

It's been almost two years since the federal government declared 976 lighthouses across Canada to be surplus. The clock is ticking for our endangered beacons, which have guided marine traffic and saved lives since 1734 when the massive stone tower at Louisbourg went into service. For more than 260 years, lightkeepers and their families maintained lifesaving lights and fog signals. Many of their lights remain, although only about 50 are staffed.

Many hundreds stand deserted on isolated shorelines and desolate islands, keeper's houses bulldozed, burned, or left to rot.

Fortunately, there are good news stories from across the country, in which local groups, municipalities, and in scattered cases, the federal government, have restored and preserved light towers and station buildings. However, these sites are in the vast minority, and time is literally running out for dozens of lights.

Parks Canada requires a petition for each light to be nominated for inclusion under the HLP. Out of more than 60 sites in Nova Scotia, only 14 have been petitioned for so far.

It's time to act.

This may be the last, best chance to lay a protective foundation for Canada's lighthouses. Deemed all-but-obsolete by the federal government and assaulted by Canada's harsh marine environments, our lights need YOUR help so that they remain an integral and vital element of our country's maritime history.

For information on how to nominate your light through the HLP, see:

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/progs/lhn-nhs/pp-hl/page02.aspx>

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/infocus-alaune/2010/02/index-eng.htm>

You can also contact the NSLPS for further information. See nslps.com for details.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Battery Point

Lunenburg's signature light and fog horn equipment could soon enter the 21st century. The lighthouse and fog signal sit at the end of a deteriorating breakwater at the entrance to the south shore port's harbour, and the Coast Guard is concerned the cable providing power to the light and AGA horn will not last much longer.

There are now tentative plans to solarize the site, while retaining the station's distinctive red fixed light, and its current 1,000 watt fog signal. At many other solarized sites, power hungry AGA horns have been replaced by high-pitched, battery operated AB 560 emitters, which are not nearly as powerful or as pleasing to the ear as the mellow AGA tone.

We will keep you up to date on progress at Battery Point.

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Cape Forchu

Denise Nickerson, Operations Manager, Cape Forchu Lightstation

Grand Re-opening



CAPE FORCHU. COURTESY FRIENDS OF CAPE FORCHU

On June 30th, 2011, The Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society celebrated its 15th year since its inception. To commemorate this milestone and the completion of the major renovations on site, the “Friends” hosted a Grand re-opening. In addition to the entertainment, cake and refreshments for the guests, the Canadian Coast Guard “saluted” the crowd by passing by the lighthouse in Yarmouth Harbour as they did when the transfer from the Coast Guard to the Friends of the Yarmouth Light first took place.

Community Garden

In 2011, a community garden was established on site. This included flower gardens and a vegetable garden. The lightkeeper’s house is also home to the Mug Up Tea Room and the garden helped provide the tea room with fresh, nutritious vegetables. The profits from the tea room help keep the site open, therefore giving the participants a sense of partnership for contributing to the success of the site. During the 2012 season, more vegetable gardens will be built because of their success in 2011.

Visitation to the site

2011 saw another decrease in tourists to the Lighthouse. This was due mainly because of the second year without a ferry from New England -- but also, as it happened during the 2010 season, an increased flow of local visitors helped maintain the site. The covered patio overlooking the Yarmouth Harbour proved to be a very appealing addition to the Mug Up Tea Room, making it an even more memorable experience.

The Live Webcam

In July of 2011, a live webcam was installed at the Lighthouse giving people the opportunity to watch the site and Yarmouth Harbour 24-7, with only a two second delay. This webcam is part of the “Nova Scotia Webcams” family and can be viewed at www.novascotiawebcams.com.

[com](http://www.novascotiawebcams.com). The feedback from both local people and those far away has been overwhelming! Some are even making plans to visit the site that have never been or even heard of the Cape Forchu Lighthouse. During Halloween, a 500lb pumpkin was placed in the view of the webcam and for Christmas, a lighted, 28 lobster pot Christmas tree; both creating major buzz and attention to the site.

Facebook page / Website

Please visit our Facebook page, Cape Forchu Lighthouse, and “Like” us! Beautiful photos of the Light and the surrounding areas are posted almost daily and keep up to date with events that take place. The www.capeforchulight.com website is currently being redesigned! We look forward to the new, updated site that will include even more breathtaking photos of Cape Forchu Lighthouse and much more!

Chebucto Head Horn

In late January Coast Guard workers removed the fog horns from Chebucto Head lightstation. Initially, some local residents were concerned that the horns has been decommissioned, but it soon came to light that one of the three emitters had not been working properly, and that the horns’ support tower was rusting.

The whole assembly is now in the shop at the Coast Guard’s Dartmouth Base, where technicians and fabricators are working on the horn and support tower. The latest word is that the horn could be re-installed and back in service by the end of March. Until January, Chebucto Head has the last functioning fog horn in all of Halifax Harbour, excluding low-powered signal devices on each of the harbour bridges.

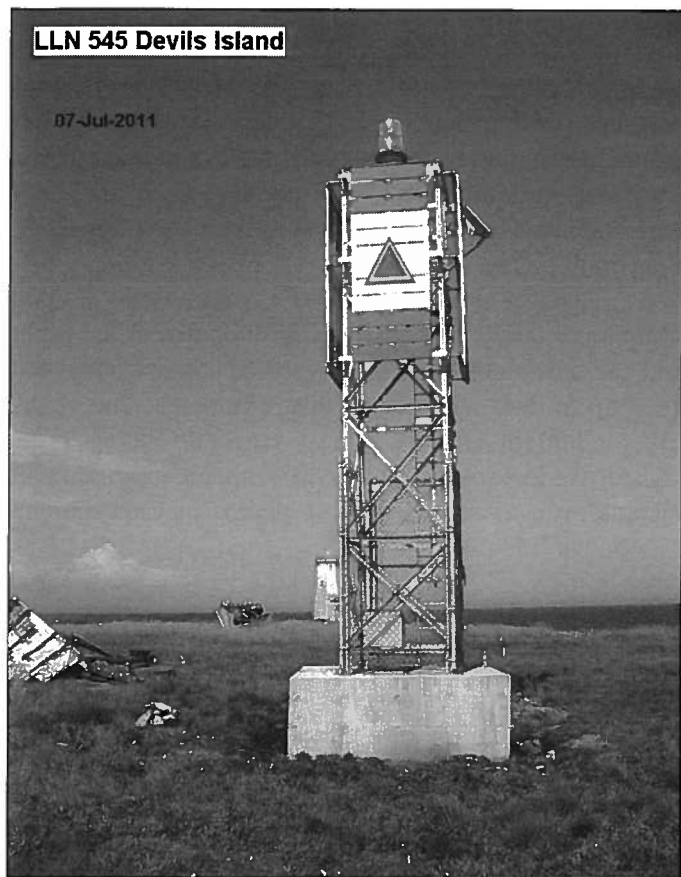
Update: A Coast Guard crew re-installed the refurbished horns on the base of the old fog horn building in April, and the Chebucto Head fog signal is once again sending out its warning during foggy weather. Congratulations to Fixed Aids to Navigation Foreman Tom Roberts and the technicians and machine shop workers who worked to bring the horns back to life!



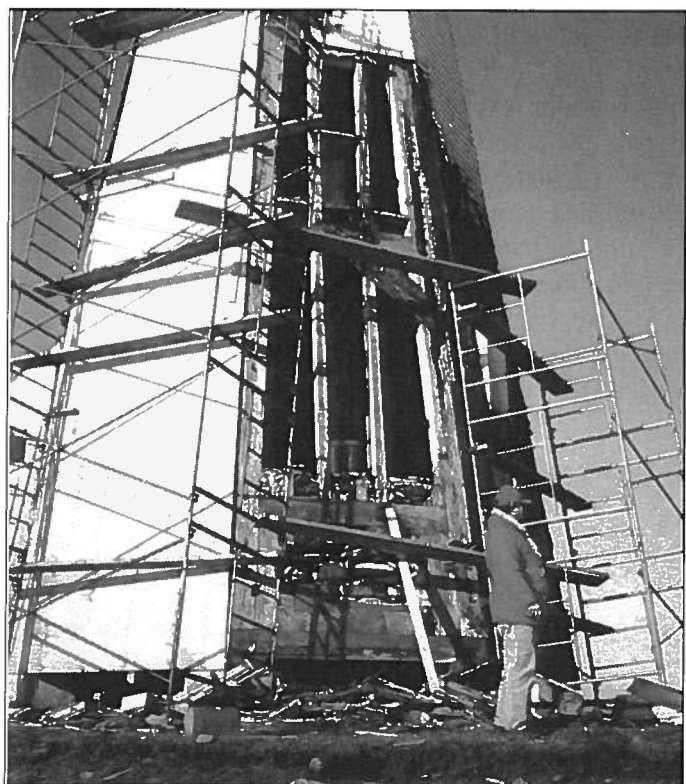
THE WELL-FINISHED INTERIOR OF DEVIL’S ISLAND LIGHT – NOW ABANDONED, AND IN DANGER OF BEING LOST. CHRIS MILLS

LLN 545 Devils Island

07-Jul-2011



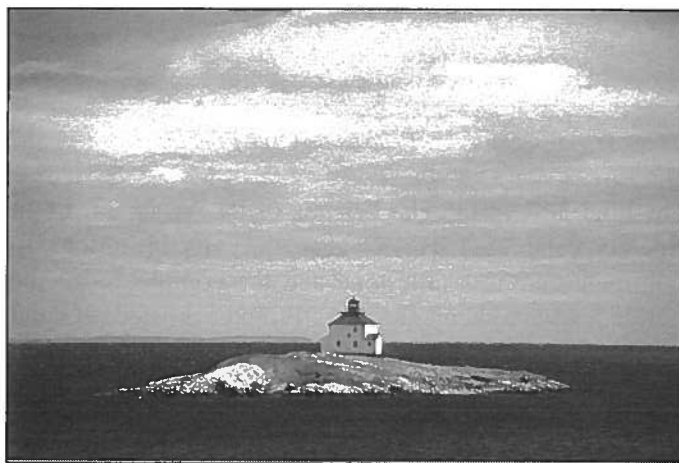
THE NEW DEVIL'S ISLAND LIGHT. COURTESY DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD



IN THE 1990s, THE COAST GUARD MADE EXTENSIVE REPAIRS TO THE DEVIL'S ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE. COURTESY DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD

Devil's Island

In July 2011, Coast Guard crews installed a new steel light tower on Devil's Island, at the eastern approaches to Halifax Harbour. The nearby 1877 tower is now decommissioned, more than two years after the Coast Guard "temporarily discontinued" its light due to structural safety concerns. The tower's shingles and in some places, sheathing, have deteriorated rapidly in recent years. There is no word as to whether or not a local group hoping to save the tower is still active in its efforts to move or preserve this beautiful and historic wooden structure.



QUEENSPORT LIGHT ON ROOK ISLAND IN 2011. CHRIS MILLS

Queensport

Paul Ehler of the Out of the Fog Museum in Guysborough County recently sent us an update covering ongoing work at Queensport Light in Chedabucto Bay. Work at the site to date includes replacement of rotten fascia boards on the 1937 combined dwelling/lighthouse. Workers painted one side of the building last fall, and replaced a window.

Paul writes:

"The Municipality of Guysborough budgeted \$7,000 for this work. The approved monies also covered wages and transportation (hiring a local fisherman), costs to and from the site.

"For 2012, Public Works has earmarked further monies for work at Queensport Light. These monies await Council approval and should be passed [with no problem]. Work planned for '12 includes "redoing" the north-facing verandah and re-doing (yet again), the deteriorating widow's walk."

Paul indicated that the information above is courtesy Glen Avery, of Public Works for the Municipality. "Mr. Avery also said that Dept. of Transport, (who are currently on site), are shuttling (via barge) new soil and

gravel to replace/cover soil believed to be contaminated by lead paint."

There have been similar environmental "remediations" at other lighthouse sites, including Boar's Head and Bear River.

Paul noted that his grandmother, Lavinia Munroe, kept Queensport Light for 17 years. Mrs. Munroe lived to be very old, showing no ill effects from her exposure to lead paint!



SPECTACLE ISLAND IN PORT MOUTON BAY. COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY

Walton Correction

Thanks to Gerda Hudson of the Walton and Area Development Association for pointing out that the Walton lighthouse is *not* located in King's County (as stated in the last issue of *The Lightkeeper*), but in Hants County!



SPECTACLE ISLAND IN PORT MOUTON BAY. COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY

Spectacle Light Shines Thanks to Hard Work and Federal Help

Chris Mills

Times are tough for Nova Scotia's lighthouses, but there are bright spots here and there as community groups take action to preserve and protect their guiding lights.

A recent stellar example is the Spectacle Light society, which has been vigorously pursuing a plan of action on a 12-acre wooded island off Port Mouton, on the south shore.

Back in 2004 local residents became concerned when they learned that the lighthouse on Spectacle might be demolished. The original lightstation was established in 1873, and for close to a century, keepers tended its light for the benefit of fishing and coastal vessels transiting the tricky waters.

The Department of Marine and Fisheries built the current tower in 1914, and until the early 1960s, keepers including Leonce Huskins and his family (see *The Lightkeeper*, Vol. 16, No.3, Oct/Nov 2009) lived on site.

By the 1990s, the tower was showing signs of deterioration. When rumours that the Coast Guard would demolish the tower began to circulate, local residents got together, and voiced their concerns.

According to Mel Cutler of the Spectacle Light society "the government reacted very favorably. Not

only was the Lighthouse allowed to remain standing, but in 2005 it was extensively repaired. Thanks to that, today the lighthouse is still in very good condition."

By 2009, the loose group concerned individuals had joined forces to become an official society. Their aim is to take over the lighthouse site and preserve the small wooden tower, which still serves as an aid to navigation. With the help of the Coast Guard, that plan is much closer to reality today.

This past December, workers embarked on an environmental remediation process that included excavating contaminated soil around the tower, and flying bags of "clean" soil out by helicopter.

According to the society's website (<http://sites.google.com/site/spectaclelight society/>):



COAST GUARD HELICOPTER SLINGING BAGS OF CONTAMINATED SOIL FROM SPECTACLE ISLAND. COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY

"Friday December 9th was quite an exciting day down at Carters Beach because a coast guard helicopter was used to "sling" bags of contaminated soil off the island into a waiting truck in the parking lot at Carters Beach. On the return trip to the island a bag of "good stuff" (fill or ¾" stone) was "slung" from the parking lot to the island.

"Fourteen bags of contaminated soil were removed from the island and thirty five bags of fill were taken onto the island. The whole operation, including ferrying of the contractor and DFO personnel to/from the island, along with a trip by the pilot to Western Head to refuel, took from 9:30am until 2:30pm.

"The pilot was amazing; a round trip to take a bag over to the island, drop it, pick up a bag of contaminated soil and deposit it in the truck at the Carters Beach parking lot took him just five minutes. And when he was left to carry bags only to the island, he did a round trip in

four minutes! Chris, the coast guard pilot, was a delight to watch in action, extremely proficient, so helped get the days work done in record time. Thanks Chris!”



COAST GUARD HELICOPTER SLINGING BAGS OF CONTAMINATED SOIL FROM SPECTACLE ISLAND. *COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY*



COAST GUARD HELICOPTER AT PORT MOUTON ISLAND. *COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY*

Members of the Spectacle light society continue to communicate with federal officials, and they look forward to the day when they will take possession of the little light that still guides traffic in and out of Port Mouton Bay.

* * *



SPECTACLE ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE. *COURTESY SPECTACLE LIGHT SOCIETY*



GRANDIQUE LIGHTHOUSE WITH FANCY HEAD DRESS. *DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*

the main island of Cape Breton. Using some diversionary tactics, Tom was able to gain access to the light, which for all appearances, was ruled by the nesting raptor.

Following consultation with the Canadian Wildlife Service, workers removed the nest *after* the birds had left the nest for the season.

The light has since been refurbished and solarized.

Thanks to Tom Roberts for this story and his amazing photos of Grandique Point's feathered keeper.

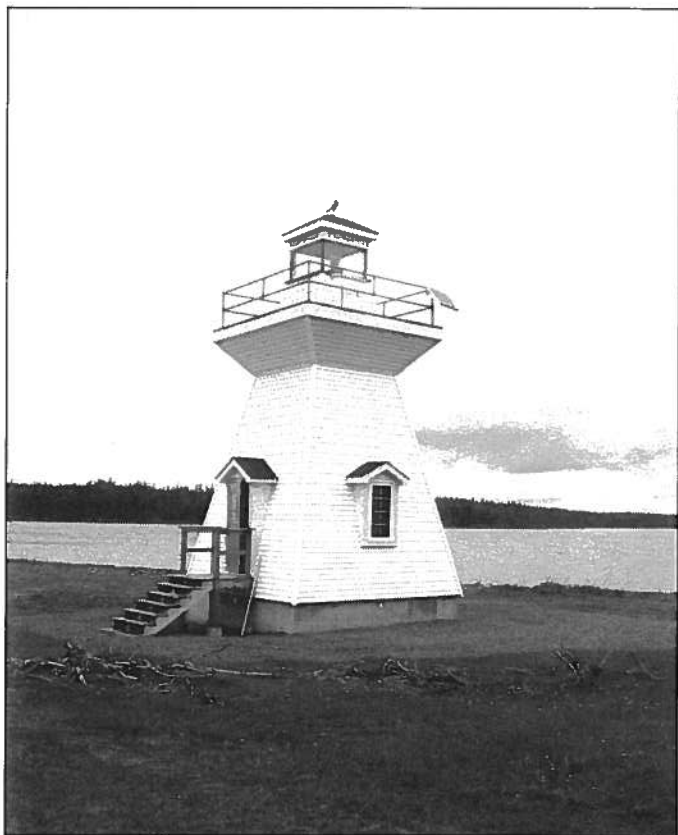
Nature and Navais *Chris Mills*

Coast Guard technicians occasionally get up close and personal with wildlife when they service the hundreds of navais along the Nova Scotia coast. Foreman Tom Roberts encountered a cranky osprey at the Grandique light on Lennox Passage, which separates Isle Madame from

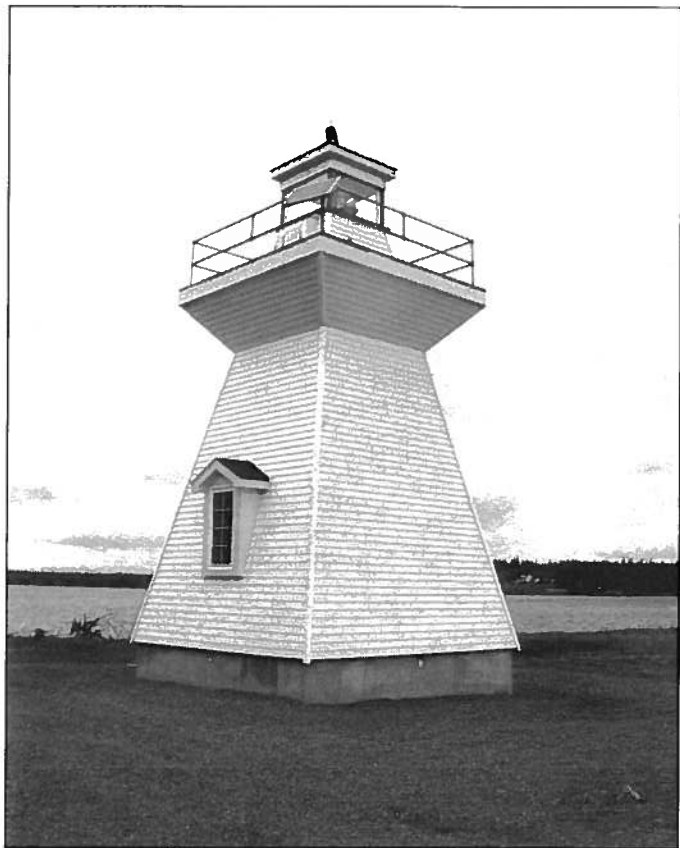
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OSPREY TOUCHES DOWN ON GRANDIQUE LANTERN. *DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*



GRANDIQUE LIGHT HAS BEEN REFURBISHED. *DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*



THE REFURBISHED GRANDIQUE LIGHTHOUSE. *DFO/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*

FAREWELL

Stephen Beazley

Captain Stephen Beazley was a man born to the water. Beginning at an early age he fished out of Sambro and Cape Breton, and he spent three decades working at the lifeboat station in Sambro. Steve was a consummate boat handler, a dedicated leader and a caring man. He knew the waters off Sambro as well as anyone, and his local knowledge played a huge role in many successful missions by his crew on *CCGS Sambro*.

I was privileged to have worked with Steve on and off for several years. You couldn't spend any time on his shift and not learn something about search and rescue, the local area, and most importantly, have a laugh.

Steve had a passion for Sambro Island. He was a close friend of the last lightkeeping family, the Fairser-vices, and for at least three decades, Steve travelled to the island to pick cranberries to be used for Christmas Dinner. Steve made it out to the island one last time in October 2011, with me and two other friends. He picked a big bag of cranberries and we talked about plans for the next island jaunt.

Steve was diagnosed with cancer shortly after this trip. He had just retired as Commanding Officer of the North Crew at Coast Guard Station Sambro. He fought hard, but his illness claimed his life on Saturday March 17, 2012.

Stephen Beazley was a fine skipper and a fine man. He is survived by his wife Gwen, and by his three daughters, his step-son and six grandchildren.



CAPTAIN STEPHEN BEAZLEY AT THE HELM OF *CCGS SAMBRO*. *CHRIS MILLS*

Mary Florence MacDonald

Our heartfelt wishes go out to NSLPS president Barry MacDonald upon the recent death of his mother.

Robert Pietrzak

Bob Pietrzak was involved with the NSLPS in its early days, and continued with his interest in lighthouses over the years. A long-time employee at Bedford Institute of Oceanography, Bob passed away March 1st at the age of 56. He is survived by his mother Mary and his sister.

Minnie Smith

Sambro has lost a matriarch and along-time link to the past with the death of Minnie Smith. Minnie's grandfather, father, uncles and cousin were all keepers on Sambro Island, serving for multiple decades, beginning in the 1870s. Minnie passed away January 29th at the age of 100. See p.4 for our 2003 feature interview with Minnie Smith. Our condolences to Minnie's children and extended family



CHRIS MILLS VISITED LIGHTHOUSE SUPPORTER GWEN SPICER IN SPENCER'S ISLAND IN EARLY MAY. GWEN'S LATE HUSBAND STANLEY WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN SAVING THE SPENCER'S ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE, WHICH, IN 1990, BECAME THE FIRST LIGHTHOUSE IN CANADA TO BE OFFICIALLY DIVESTED TO A LOCAL GROUP. *CHRIS MILLS*

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A NESTING OSPREY LANDS ON THE LANTERN OF THE GRANDIQUE LIGHT ON ISLE MADAME, CAPE BRETON. *TOM ROBERTS/CANADIAN COAST GUARD*

