

Sambro Island 1758

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society
Vol 20, Nos. 1/2, Fall 2013/Winter 2014

The Lightkeeper™

NSLPS 20th ANNIVERSARY!



IN THIS ISSUE:

LIGHTHOUSE ART SHOW
NEWS AND VIEWS
HOPE FOR SAMBRO LIGHT
CAPE SABLE RESTORATION
GEORGES ISLAND: A TRIP INTO THE PAST
FAREWELL



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

houses; 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>

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 Medway Head Lighthouse Society
 Ian Griffin, Kemptville, ON
 James Lockhart, Lunenburg, NS
 Ian Duff, Oban, Scotland

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 Dan Conlin
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 Eric & Anne Mills
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 Raye Myles

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 Cunard Steamship Society
 Five Islands Lighthouse Preservation Society
 Friends of the Yarmouth Light
 Gilbert Cove & District Historical Society
 Greville Bay Shipbuilding Museum Society
 Hampton Lighthouse Society
 Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society
 Islands Historical Society
 Isle Madame Lighthouse Preservation Society
 Louisbourg Lighthouse Heritage Society
 Medway Area Communities Association
 Medway Head Lighthouse Society
 Neil's Harbour New Haven Development Association
 Northumberland Fisheries Museum
 Port Bickerton Planning Association
 Port George District Lighthouse Society
 Sandy Point Recreation Group
 Spectacle Light Society
 Spencer's Island Community Association
 Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee
 Tiverton & Central Grove Heritage Society
 Walton & Area Development Association
 Village on the Canal Association

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Member-at-Large: Glen Fry

Member-at-Large: Graham McBride

Member-at-Large: Kelly McCoy

COVER – Keepers John and Marjorie Fairservice in March, 1988, one week before leaving Sambro Island after 24 years' service. Marjorie passed away January 14, 2014. (See "Farewell on p. 13) *Chris Mills*

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to this double issue! We've got some catching up to do, and I hope this Fall/Winter issue will bring you up to date with the lighthouse scene, positive and negative, since the last issue.

First of all, we're proud to be celebrating the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society's 20th anniversary this year. It all began on a warm summer day in 1993 when Patsy MacDonald, Graham McBride, Rip Irwin and I visited Sambro Island.. As we stood below the tower and abandoned keeper's houses, we knew that something had to be done to protect and preserve Nova Scotia's crumbling lighthouse heritage. In 1994, the NSLPS became an official entity, and since then, dozens of board members have volunteered their time and passion for our province's lights, and for the community groups working to save them.

20 years later, NSLPS is still at it, despite relentless challenges along the way. We're proud of the work we've done to raise awareness of our marine heritage and our alliances with community groups. Our legacy to date includes the "Discover our Lighthouses" brochure, the "Lighthouse Life In HRM" oral history project, lighthouse island tours, dozens of lighthouse presentations, meetings with politicians and Coast Guard officials, a professionally-designed and maintained website, the Lighthouse Protection Act, grants to lighthouse groups and communities through the Kaplan fund, and many other efforts.

Through it all, we've encountered a tide of change which has figuratively, and sometimes literally engulfed lighthouses.

It's been a time of great upheaval for lighthouses in Nova Scotia, and across Canada. Federal cutbacks, administrative changes within DFO/Canadian Coast Guard, and the passage of time have not been kind to many of our lights. Many have already been, or will be replaced by utilitarian steel towers, topped by LED lights. Others have been decommissioned and now stand dark.

There's been good news too. Lighthouses on Brier Island, Louisbourg and Seal Island have all been painted over the last year or so, and others, such as Guyon Island and Chebucto Head, have received repairs that mean these traditional aids to navigation will continue to operate for some time.

2013 also saw the blossoming of a grassroots effort to save the Sambro Island light. Although that task is far from complete, local residents have helped garner support for Canada's premiere lighthouse site, and they've made sure it won't disappear from the political

map without a fight. A feature on CBC Television's Land and Sea last November (see p. 6) showed that local pride is strong, and it might just help save North America's oldest operating lighthouse.

However, the overall picture is pretty grim. The Canadian government essentially wants nothing to do with lighthouses. For better or worse, electronic aids to navigation have superseded lights and horns, and now, even the buildings that once supported these life-saving functions, are disappearing.

But, there is hope. It already exists in the form of a dozen or more Nova Scotia lights, saved, and lovingly maintained by dedicated community groups. Lights at Five Islands, Walton, Hampton, Cape Forchu, Port Bickerton, Grandique and other sites, welcome visitors eager to learn about our history, and eager to share our amazing coastline.

As we celebrate our 20th year, thank you for your continued support of NSLPS, and Nova Scotia Lighthouses. It's up to all of us to save what we can!

Chris Mills, Editor

* * *

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TIME FOR A LITTLE FUN!!!

SAVE THE DATE!! APRIL 30, 2014

A VERY DIFFERENT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WE ARE CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NSLPS AT OUR AGM IN APRIL.

PLEASE JOIN US AT 7 PM, AT THE MARITIME MUSEUM OF THE ATLANTIC IN HALIFAX, FOR AN EVENING TO HONOUR OUR FOUNDERS AND OTHER SPECIAL PEOPLE. WE'LL BE LOOKING BACK OVER WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED, AND WE'LL LOOK TO THE EXCITING YEAR AHEAD AS OUR EFFORTS PAY OFF. WE HAVE MADE SOME REAL PROGRESS IN SAVING OUR BELOVED LIGHTS, AND WE CAN'T WAIT TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT.

BRING YOUR PARTNER AND A COUPLE OF FRIENDS - WE WANT TO FILL THE ROOM!!!

THERE WILL BE MUSIC, FOOD, FRIENDS, AND HAPPINESS!!

Two Ports Combine in South Shore Art & Craft Show

Mel Cutler, Spectacle Light Society

Cathie Pincombe, Medway Area Communities Association



CROSS ISLAND

The Port Medway and Port Mouton Lighthouse Awareness Art Shows are destined to become major annual events on the South Shore each August. Last year we reported on the first, a two-centre art show as the communities teamed up to organize their first show together. The purpose was to increase awareness of our lighthouses, to showcase the impressive array of talent in the area and raise much needed funds for maintenance of the lighthouses.

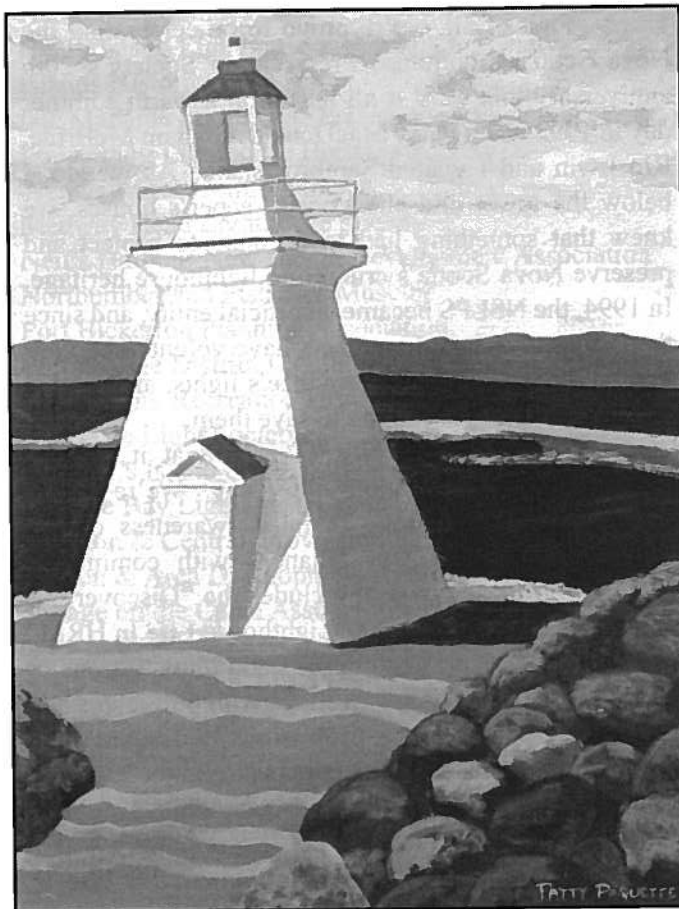
Last year the show was held over a weekend in Port Medway, and was then moved down the coast to Port Mouton on the following weekend. The show was a great success. Many artists from the local area participated. Artists from Lunenburg, Halifax and Truro were also featured. The show was well attended by the public in both locations. Visitors to the show were made aware of the sad plight of these lighthouses. They showed their concern with financial support - a real boost for the two non-profit groups. The show exceeded expectations and there was no hesitation by the organizing committee to attempt a repeat performance in 2013.

This year, the 2013 show was an even greater success, hence the "triumph" it is quickly becoming! The work of 44 artists was showcased and sales of 30 art pieces exceeded our expectations. We welcomed the participation of many new artists to the show, some from as far away as PEI and Ontario.

There were many talented crafts people who also participated. The diversity of mediums included photography, woodworking, rug hooking, hand painted silk scarves, felted pictures and even knitted lighthouse

mittens.

The show received lots of support from our local radio station, newspapers, and online publications. They helped promote the show in both locations and then were on hand to report on our success. We also received support from Mayor Christopher Clarke and some of the councillors of the Region of Queens Municipality as they



PORT MEDWAY LIGHT, BY PATTY PAQUETTE

attended the opening of each show.

The Port Medway and Port Mouton venues are very different from one another. The Warehouse at Port Medway Lighthouse Park is very open with lots of wall space. Coastal Queens Place is a former school and has smaller rooms. Visitors could look at the show in both locations and see very different art work highlighted because of the difference in the spaces.

Chris Mills, author of *Vanishing Lights and Lighthouse Legacies* attended the Port Mouton show to sign copies of his books. Chris served as a lightkeeper for the Canadian Coast Guard on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

Local quilter Bev Crouse created a community quilt. Bev designed a Lighthouse "mosaic" quilt for a donation and visitors to the show bought a piece of fabric then added it to the quilt. The quilt and names of donors will be on public display locally.

The Medway Head Lighthouse Society is responsible for the acquisition and maintenance of the Medway Head Lighthouse. The Spectacle Lighthouse Society is working towards acquiring the Spectacle Island Lighthouse as they were deemed surplus by the federal government. Both lights are unmanned but still functioning.

Many people are to be thanked for the role they played in this Art & Craft Show. Amongst them are local businesses such as the community radio station QCCR FM, The Liverpool *Advance* newspaper and White Point Resort, all of whom were very helpful in promoting the shows.

To raise additional funds, The Two Ports produced a 2014 calendar featuring works from the previous year's show. The sales of this calendar have been amazing, with more than 400 being purchased and sent to many parts of the globe.

This event is a year in the making. Like most things, the more put into a project the better the results. This show is no different. Everyone who helped make The Two Ports Lighthouse Awareness Art Show the success it was should be very proud of their efforts!

Planning is already underway for an even better show next year!!

Ed's Note: many thanks to Mel Cutler, and to Glenn and Monica Whitehouse, who treated my wife Seana and me royally during our overnight stay in the Liverpool/Port Mouton area. Mel was kind enough to give us a guided tour of Spectacle Island, and Glenn and Monica offered us the finest in South Shore hospitality. Special thanks to Sandy Brown, who put us up in her marvellous home near the Western Head lighthouse, outside Liverpool.

Port Mouton Lighthouse Divestiture Update

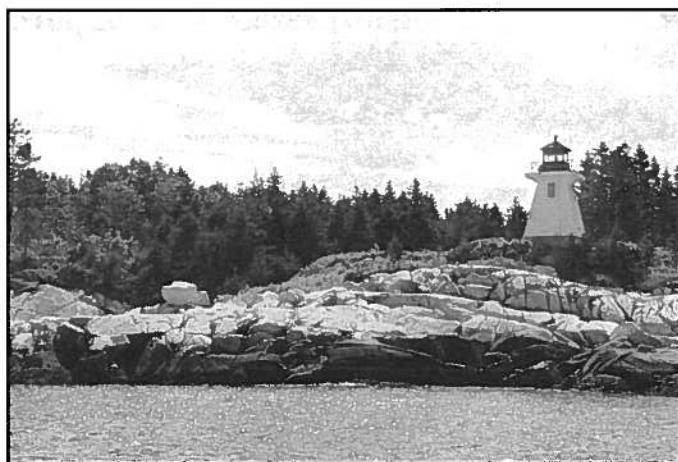
Mel Cutler

Although the Port Mouton lighthouse continues to flash its light consistently once every twelve seconds, the federal government seems a lot less dependable regarding its effort to relieve itself of this lighthouse.

The Port Mouton lighthouse – known locally as “Spectacle Light” because it stands



SEANA BRACKETT AND MEL CUTLER AT SPECTACLE ISLAND, AUGUST, 2013. CHRIS MILLS



SPECTACLE ISLAND. CHRIS MILLS

on Spectacle Island – has been in the process of being divested for several years now. A local community group (The Spectacle Light Society) has been working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) towards ownership, but barriers have just kept appearing to stall that effort/eventuality.

To be fair, the federal government first needed to perform an environment cleanup around the lighthouse, after which the association applied for heritage status. The cleanup (remediation) took two years to accomplish - thanks to internal government budgeting and procedures (!!) and the heritage evaluation took about a year.

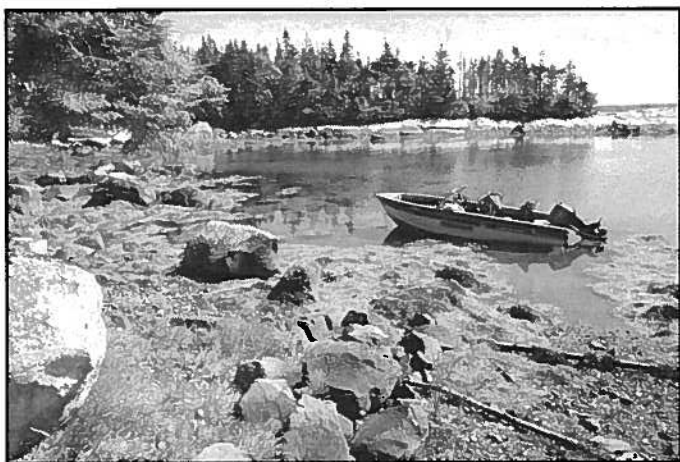
Then, just when the light at the end of the tunnel appeared in March, 2013, as we were “months away from ownership”, the provincial government threw a wrench into the works by designating the island as a nature



WOODEN TOWERS PRESENT A HOST OF MAINTENANCE ISSUES. IN THE CASE OF SPECTACLE ISLAND, CARPENTER ANTS HAVE CAUSED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE. CHRIS MILLS

reserve.

The lighthouse is like a stamp on an envelope: it is a very small area/piece of property owned by the federal government, and it sits on an island owned by the province. So, the Spectacle Light members have to cross



SPECTACLE ISLAND'S "TROPICAL" LAGOON. CHRIS MILLS

provincial land to get to the lighthouse.

Once the federal government was notified about the nature reserve proposal, they suspended the divestiture process. They needed confirmation (in writing) from the province that the Spectacle Light members had long-term approval to access the lighthouse via Crown land.

Thankfully, that approval came fairly quickly, so the federal process resumed after about a three month delay. Also, it has become very clear the province wants to work closely with the Spectacle Light Society regarding the Nature Reserve proposal. Eventually the association will become stewards of the island.

So, all bodes well for the future of this lighthouse, although the locals are still eagerly awaiting that "light at the end of the tunnel" to reappear, which will indicate ownership is getting close. In the meantime, they will just have to look to the lighthouse for the dependable light that continues to shine for them.



SPECTACLE ISLAND. CHRIS MILLS

NEWS AND VIEWS

Brier Island's Western Light Come to Dutch Brook

A scale model of the Brier Island lighthouse (known locally as "Western Light") now graces a front lawn in Dutch Brook, near Sydney. "Lighthouse kid" Harry Lent built the tower in the fall of 2013, based on plans provided by the ever-obliging Dan MacNeil of DFO/Coast Guard in Dartmouth. Harry's father Donald Wickerson ("Wick") Lent was an assistant keeper at Western light in the 1960s and 70s. Harry is now working on a scale model of Peter's Island light, which sits between Brier and Long Islands.



HARRY LENT'S SCALE MODEL OF THE LIGHT AT HIS CHILDHOOD HOME. HARRY'S FATHER WICK LENT KEPT THE BRIER ISLAND LIGHT IN THE 1960S AND 70S. HARRY LENT

Cape Sable Shines White and Bright

Nova Scotia's tallest and most graceful lighthouse has finally been repaired and painted after years of neglect. See p. 10 for details.

Grade Fours Love Lighthouses!

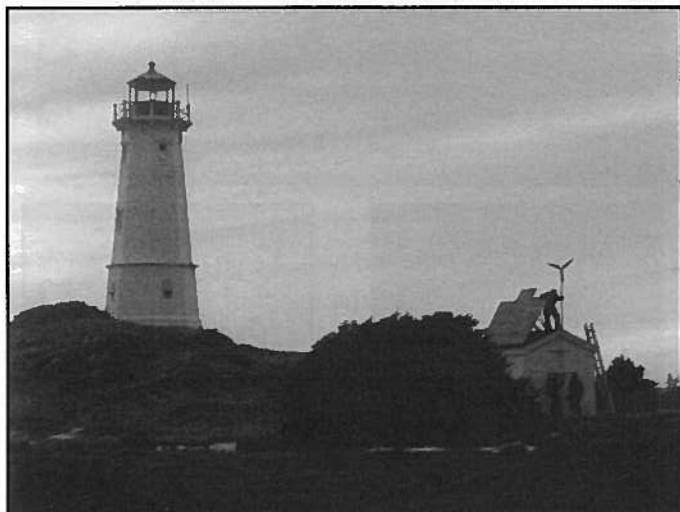
NLSPLS board member and Lightkeeper editor Chris Mills gave a talk to a group of keen (and active!) Grade Four students at the Halifax Independent School last fall. Heather Beall's class was particularly taken with lighthouse ghost stories, and intrigued by a small Fresnel lens Chris brought along!

Land and Sea Features Nova Scotia Lights

CBC Television's long-running regional show Land and Sea featured lighthouses in its November 24th show. The timely broadcast included archival footage, interviews with NSLPS members (Barry MacDonald and Chris Mills) and Sambro-area residents (including Sambro Island Lighthouse Historical Society President Stephanie Smith) working to save their lighthouse, along with the head (Margaret Herdman) of the group advocating for Isle Madame's lighthouses. To watch the show, check out <http://www.cbc.ca/landandsea/> and click on the "Lighthouses" link.

Louisbourg Light Repairs and Upgrades

The site of Canada's first lighthouse is looking decidedly better than this time last year. Over the winter and spring, workers repaired the current concrete tower and painted it, completing the job just before the spring of 2013. The work coincided with Louisbourg 300 celebrations, which drew tourists to the town, lighthouse, and nearby fortress.



TECHS INSTALL THE NEW WIND GENERATOR AT LOUISBOURG LIGHT IN JANUARY, 2014. *CHRIS MILLS*

During the fall of 2013 and early winter 2014, both the light and horn did not operate for more than a month, due to problems with the batteries that power the equipment. In mid-January, techs installed a small wind generator to help charge the batteries, and as of early March, the light is shining by night, but the horn is not in operation.



THE SOLAR/WIND GENERATOR SHED AT LOUISBOURG LIGHTHOUSE. *CHRIS MILLS*

Moque Head Loses Horn

The utilitarian light (mounted on a small aluminum tower) and horn (sounded from a small shed) at Moque Head, near Main-a-Dieu, Cape Breton, have been replaced by the standard square tower used increasingly at many sites in the Atlantic region. An LED light replaces the former traditional DLD 200 lens at Moque Head, and techs removed the fog horn (and the shed) when work began at the site in mid-January.

Point Aconi Burns

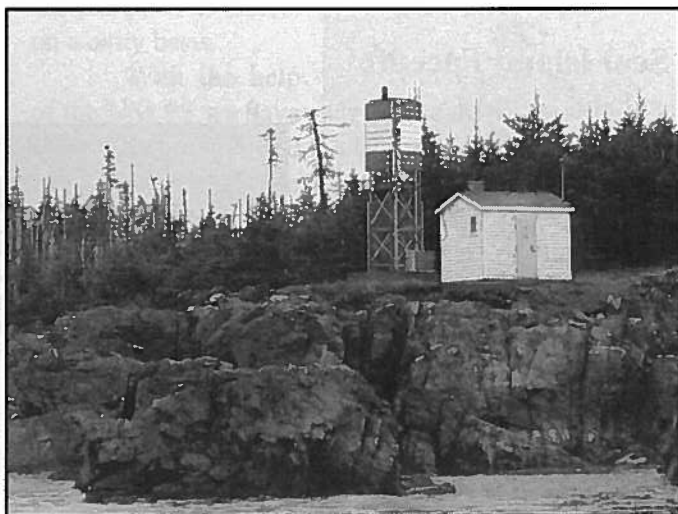
Cape Breton's Point Aconi lighthouse burned to the ground sometime over the weekend of February 22nd. The abandoned fibreglass lighthouse and its adjacent engine room/fog alarm building had been vandalized for several years, following de-staffing of the station in 1990.

Someone called firefighters on Sunday afternoon (February 23rd) after discovering the remains of the two structures. Police say the fire is suspicious; there is little doubt that the fire was deliberate, given that there was no electrical power in either of the structures.

Two years ago the Coast Guard installed a new LED light to mark Point Aconi. It sits on a galvanized steel square tower, not far from the former lighthouse, which had replaced an earlier skeleton tower in 1989, just before keepers Carl and Brenda Goyetche left the station.

Radio Canada Documentary

Canada's French CBC Television (Radio Canada) will air an hour-long documentary about lighthouses and lightkeeping in Les Iles de la Madeleines (Quebec), New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, some time this spring. The production crew interviewed NSLPS members Barry MacDonald and Chris Mills as part of the show.



ROUSE POINT, GABARUS, IN THE SUMMER OF 2013. *CHRIS MILLS*

Rouse Point Modernization

As part of ongoing changes to traditional aids to navigation in the Atlantic region, the Rouse Point light, near Gabarus, Cape Breton, is now shown from a square galvanized tower with daymarks. Much like the Moque Head site, the light was formerly shown from a DLD 200 lens, mounted in this case on a small fog horn building. During 2013, techs also removed the fog horn from this site.

Ross Island Light Lost

The light once described as “North America’s most endangered lighthouse” has finally fallen. The Ross Island lighthouse in Grand Harbour, Grand Manan collapsed on November 20, 2013, in strong nor’west winds. The Canadian government established the combined lighthouse/dwelling in 1879, but the structure had been abandoned since the early 1960s. Despite severe damage during the Ground Hog Day Gale in 1976, the tower remained standing for almost 50 years after its decommissioning. In recent years, local residents attempted to work with the island’s American owner to save the lighthouse, but those efforts were not successful.

Sambro Sound Generosity

The NSLPS would like to thank Sambro Sound for their incredible generosity with their donation of \$7550 since 2009. The group donated one third of the proceeds from their excellent CD “For Sambro Beside The Sea” to NSLPS. In total, the project raised more than \$23,000. The NSLPS has donated our share of the remaining CDs to the Sambro Lighthouse Heritage Society. We are hoping that proceeds from the CD can go towards the group’s future work to stabilize and preserve the lighthouse and fog alarm building on Sambro Island.

Seal Island Facelift

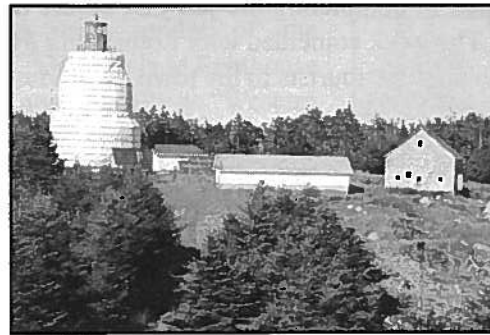
Sou’west Nova’s 183-year old wooden Seal Island tower has finally received a much needed exterior cleaning and paint job. Contractors installed covered scaffolding around the tower in the fall of 2013, and within a couple of weeks, completed painting the tower.

Seal Island is home to one of the oldest wooden lighthouses in North America. Despite its crucial role in

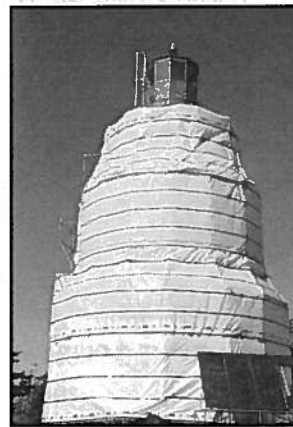


BRAND NEW PAINT JOB, SEAL ISLAND. CHRIS-ANDRA STEWART-ROSS

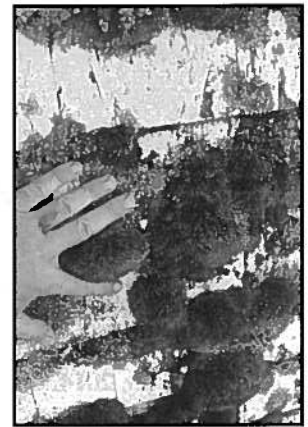
navigation and local/regional history, the light did not meet FHBRO guidelines for classification several years ago. The massive-timbered structure is one of the best examples of coastal colonial architecture in Canada



SEAL ISLAND LIGHT STATION, OCTOBER, 2013. CHRIS MILLS



SEAL ISLAND LIGHT CLOAKED IN SCAFFOLDING, IN PREPARATION FOR PAINTING, OCTOBER 2013. CHRIS MILLS



THERE WAS HEAVY MOSS GROWTH ON THE SEAL ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE PRIOR TO THE PAINT JOB IN OCTOBER, 2013. CHRIS MILLS

SAVING SAMBRO LIGHT

Steph Smith, President, Sambro Island Lighthouse Heritage Society(SILHS)

The community of Sambro is a fishing village 20 minutes from the city of Halifax. It’s also home to the iconic Sambro Island lighthouse. The members of this small community are extremely proud of their historic beacon.

Sambro Island lighthouse is not only found perched high above the Atlantic on her lone granite home of Outer Sambro Island. The striking granite tower also exists throughout our village. It is found on the Sambro Elementary School’s emblem. A large paper cut-out of lighthouse is displayed on a bulletin board in the front foyer which welcomes our children to school every morning.

Sambro Island lighthouse is also brightly painted on our local store’s front window, for all who enter and pass by to see. The lighthouse can be heard in songs and poems written and performed by local musicians. Our



THE FORMER ASSISTANT KEEPER'S HOUSE, SAMBRO ISLAND.
CHRIS MILLS

lighthouse can be admired hanging from the walls of our homes in many forms of artwork and photographs.

Most importantly, Sambro Island lighthouse is in our memories and in our hearts.

Due to government cutbacks, we have been stripped of what the island once was to us. No longer do we have the pleasure of listening to the low moan of the fog horn, nor can it give us warning of fast-approaching fog. If we heard that fog horn on a sunny summer's day, we knew to cover up or forget about the trip to the beach, or that spin in the speed boat!

The tower's powerful lens has been removed and replaced with a solar light that merely gives off a dull glow; nothing, compared to the magnificent funnel of light that once swept across our shoreline and into the windows of our homes.

I can recall as a child counting the rays of the lighthouse lens as it passed across my walls, while I lay in bed. I'd count the flashes instead of sheep. Being scared of the dark, the movement of the luminous beams put me at ease, evoking images of my ancestors who were once responsible for operating the light and making sure ships were warned away from the dangerous rocks and shoals that surround our harbour. The lighthouse even brought comfort to those who hadn't been to sea.

Every time I visit the island and set my gaze on the mighty lighthouse standing so tall and sturdy, I am overwhelmed by the history that lies there. I can't help but feel so confused and disappointment by the Canadian Government's decision to withdraw funding for the upkeep of the light. With the lighthouse being the oldest operational tower in the Americas, how can they just stop maintaining it?

This structure is such an important part of not only my community's history and Maritime history, but of Canadian history too. It is a classified federal heritage building and it has been accredited by the Government of

Canada as a place of national historic significance!

Our Sambro Island Lighthouse stands on the first and last piece of Canadian soil and rock that our troops saw coming to and from both wars. It also welcomed our first immigrants, who came here by ship – the very people who helped build our nation!

It's also crucial to note just how important it is to our community that the lighthouse become a tourist attraction. The only other industry that keeps Sambro going is the fishery, and we are uncertain what the future holds for that. We need to utilize what we have and create jobs and bring money into our small community through the lighthouse and the tourism industry.

Many people in our community are willing to help save the Sambro Island lighthouse. After a few discussions with concerned community members, a good friend of mine came up with the great idea of starting a petition to ask the federal government to continue to fund the lighthouse.

Once we had the petition in our hands, my cousin, my friend and I started collecting signatures. It didn't take long before the whole community was engaged! This is what started our grassroots endeavour. More people began collecting signatures. The petition was placed at Mishoo's store in Sambro and the Now We're Cookin' take-out in Herring Cove.

Before long it was being sent out via e-mail to people across the country and they collected signatures too! From June of last year to the present day, we have collected more than 5,400 signatures! Since then, all the signed petitions have been presented to the House of Commons by representatives from all three political parties. We created a Facebook group to promote the cause and to inform people of the plight of the Sambro Island Lighthouse. The Facebook page has 1,044 members and people continue to join the group, on an almost on a daily basis.

With the help of the NSLPS we have established a registered not-for-profit group to help community efforts in saving the lighthouse. Please look forward to future funding activities from the Sambro Island Lighthouse Heritage Society. Add your voice to ours and help save Canada's "Statue of Liberty"!



SAMBRO ISLAND LIGHT SHOWS ITS AGE, SUMMER 2013. *CHRIS MILLS*

Note: In the near future, SILHS will working on a business plan and we will be submitting it to the Government.

CAPE SABLE LIGHTHOUSE SHINES ANEW

Nova Scotia's tallest lighthouse (101'/30.8m) has a new lease on life, following an intensive effort to repair its crumbling concrete and faded paint. In 2013, after several years of lobbying and fundraising, the Friends of Cape Sable Lighthouse were able to hire workers to repair and paint the graceful 1924 tower. Town of Clark's Harbour Mayor Leigh Stoddart takes up the story:



THE CAPE LIGHT IN 2008.
COURTESY LEIGH STODDART

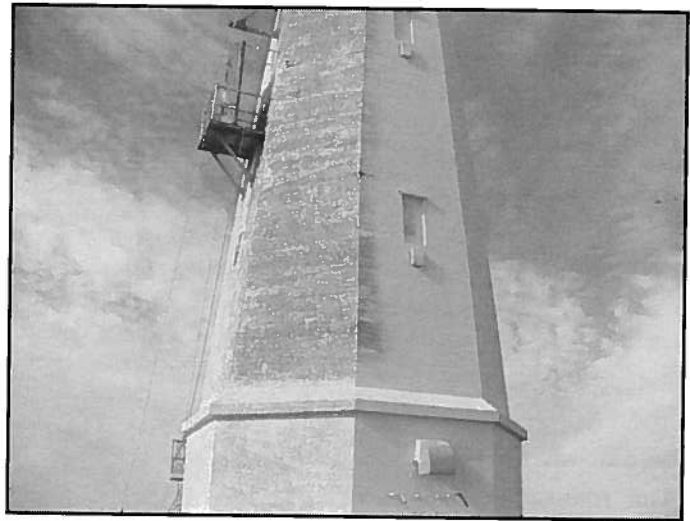
ears, so we decided to form a group called "Friends of the Cape Sable Lighthouse".

Early in 2013 we contacted Mr. Bruce Bishop (Bruce Bishop Communications) to start an online fundraising campaign called "Go Fund Me". We thought this would bring awareness to our cause and we hoped like-minded people would donate to help us achieve our goal of having the lighthouse repaired and painted.

Prior to that, we contacted a number of companies to get a price for the project. Eastern Infrastructure of Elmsdale, N.S. won the contract. In total, we knew we had to raise approximately \$95,000. After three months with the Go Fund Me program, our share amounted to about \$ 8,000; very short of we had hoped for.

With help from social media, CBC TV Halifax, CJLS radio Yarmouth, CKBW radio Bridgewater, Shelburne's *Coast Guard* newspaper, and the Chronicle Herald, our message reached a lot of people and funds started coming in daily.

One company - GN Thermoforming of Chester, wrote us a cheque for \$10,000; something that gave us courage that we might be able to accomplish this project in 2013. Then, the provincial NDP Government, through

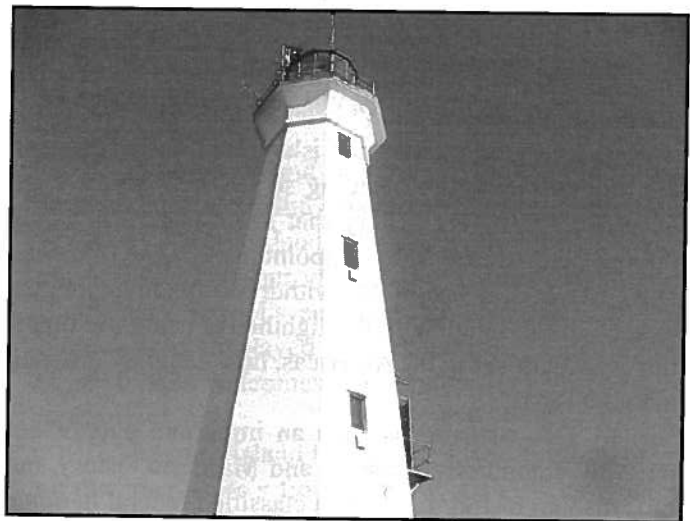


PAINTING BEGINS. COURTESY LEIGH STODDART

our MLA Sterling Belliveau, handed us a cheque for \$ 50,000, which put us close enough to our goal to give the green light to our contractor.

Meanwhile, our committee was raising funds through suppers, variety shows and Cape day trips to the lighthouse. On Sept 15th, work commenced on the lighthouse and one month later the job was complete. In a span of six months of fundraising, our dream of seeing our lighthouse brought back to its former beauty was realized.

I hope what we were able to do with the support of our community and others will be an inspiration to others to move ahead and protect their lighthouses as well. We are now planning to do more by placing interpretive panels, picnic tables, etc. to enhance the experience of visiting the Cape Sable Light, situated approximately a half mile from The Hawk Point, Cape Sable Island. I would like to also thank the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society for their support and encouragement in this project. Thanks to everyone for your support.



NEARING COMPLETION, LATE 2013. COURTESY LEIGH STODDART



THE FINAL PRODUCT! COURTESY LEIGH STODDART

Leigh B. Stoddart – President, Friends of the Cape Sable Lighthouse

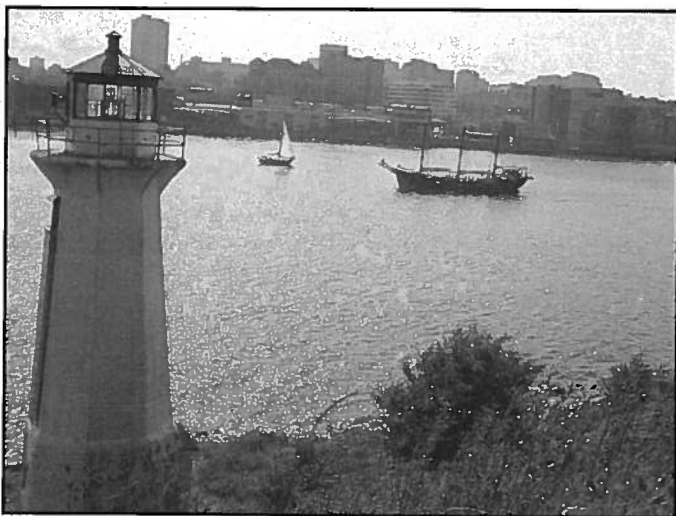
My Summer Trip to George's Island

Kelly McKoy, NSLPS Board Member

Having been captivated by beautiful George's Island from a distance since childhood, I had been greatly anticipating the chance to do some exploring and was thrilled when the rare opportunity arose via the 2013 event Picnic in the Past.

As a lover of lighthouses I have enjoyed the sight of the tower that stands on the glacier-shaped island. I was very intrigued to see some of the infamous underground tunnels that I'd heard varying mythic tales about!

While eagerly awaiting the trip I refreshed myself a bit about the island. George's Island was named after King George II of Great Britain. George's Island is marked as a Canadian National Historic Site through



HALIFAX HARBOUR SENTINEL ON GEORGES ISLAND.
KELLY MCCOY

Parks Canada. It's open to the public on a very limited basis, which is why I felt it was important to visit.

Based on Parks Canada historical site information, Georges Island has played a major role in the history of Halifax Harbour. It was a prison and holding ground for Acadians during the deportation of 1755. The island played a crucial role in harbour defence for two centuries. The island is also known for its many tales of underground tunnels.

When the Georges Island Picnic in the Past event arrived it was a scorching hot summer day. I came prepared with my backpack of essentials for we were now stepping into the partial past and who really knew what were we would be faced with? Spiders, rodents, bats, ghosts, spirits and porta potties.

Amidst the hot temperatures, today would be an opportunity to press pause in the middle of our fast-paced technological world and take a short sail into the past.

After a long hot wait we left our electric city and boarded the tour boat Harbour Queen and within in a few minutes we had reached our destination.

As we began to pull closer to shore I felt the joy and excitement begin to rise.

When we docked and disembarked it almost felt like I was about to jump into an antique painting or enter a story book tale.

On the island there were crowds of people some of who had just arrived and other who were heading back to the city. Midway up the hill there was eatery area where I had some lunch from local farming vendors and the BBQ. I enjoyed my lunch at a picnic table that showcased great views of Halifax and Dartmouth. It almost felt as if I were dinning in some hidden-away restaurant with top-notch views.

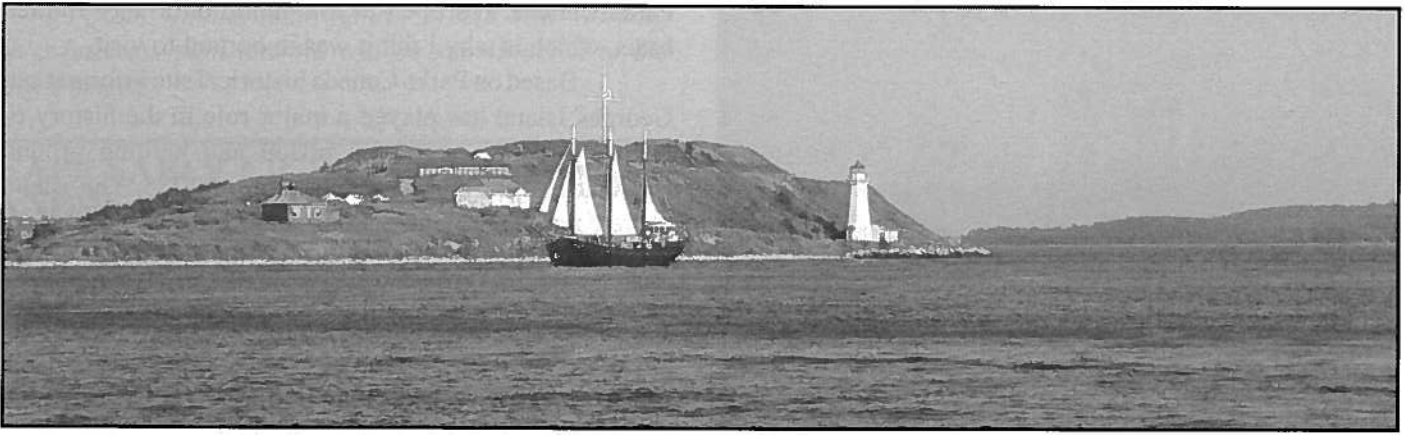
Once I reached another clearing, the clocks started to rewind a little more as we encountered costumed soldiers and we learned that more tunnel tours would be offered before the end of day.

A small group of us gathered around an ancient-looking door where we had a safety briefing, and leaned that it was going to be dark in the tunnels and to take some of the small flashlights provided before entering.

I grabbed my flashlight and followed our leader as we stepped further into the past.

Upon entering I felt a mix of excitement and the slight apprehension of going into an unknown area. But this was something that I had wanted to explore for so long and I was prepared for the adventure.

We stepped into a fairly dark tunnel and spacious passage way. The structure appeared to be strongly fortified with brick walls on either side and the concrete ground was damp in places. I wondered if this is perhaps how an Archaeologist might feel exploring an ancient



A TIMELESS VIEW OF GEORGES ISLAND. *KELLY MCCOY*

tomb.

It was like a scene from an adventure movie like Indiana Jones or a majestic medieval television series. It was very mysterious and mystical and I was enjoying it.

The tunnels were very long and maze-like with stairs in some places and a few times some of us had to catch up to the group after being delayed by taking pictures or because some of the flashlights had died, which in turn added more to the journey.



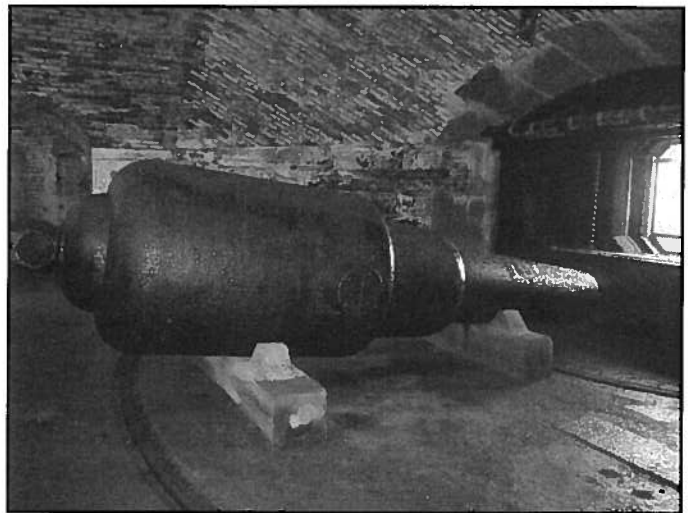
A MEETING OF THE PAST AND PRESENT, GEORGES ISLAND. *KELLY MCCOY*

Our tour took us to internal tunnel areas and into the North Battery and the South Battery, passing through external passages that connected to other tunnels. One minute we would be in a dark and damp tunnel then on a short grassy lane feeling the heat. Then we would venture back into another cool tunnel.

While in The South Battery, we saw a huge cannon facing the small cannon port with a harbour view. But before I knew it, the tour was over and it was time to exit. I had hoped we could continue further, since some reports claim the tunnels run under the harbour towards

Citadel Hill. Perhaps one day I shall return to explore more of these tunnels.

After we exited the tunnel I went over to the quick-fire gun emplacement to see the peaceful scene of sailboats in the harbour. I also went into a huge 1812-inspired encampment; a glimpse of the past.



PART OF GEORGES ISLAND'S FORTIFICATIONS. *KELLY MCCOY*

People in period costume were involved in setting up tent camps. I learned that some encampment volunteers had been given permission to stay overnight on the island. It was quite extraordinary to look in one direction and see our modern cities, and then in the other direction, see an historical re-enactment. These changes in perspective created an illusion that I had stepped into the past, when in reality I had only traveled a short distance across the harbour.

It was almost time to head back to the boat, but I was also on a mission to get closer to the lighthouse in the remaining minutes of my visit. From where I stood the lighthouse appeared to be in fairly decent shape, although it could have used a few touchups.

While viewing the ocean and the lighthouse, I was reminded of the importance of our guiding lights,

and just how vital their roles have been in safely guiding vessels into the port of Halifax.

I made it in time to board the boat back to the city. It had been a really great day.

Now, during these bitterly cold winter days, as we await the next snow storm or blizzard, I like to warm up by reminiscing about stepping into one of my favourite Maritimescenes on that hot summer day on George's Island.

FAREWELL

Marjorie Fairservice

I first met Marjorie Fairservice in March, 1988. Rip Irwin, my friend and a founding president of NSLPS and I had been invited to spend a couple of days with Marjorie and her husband John, as they prepared to leave Sambro Island lighthouse. I was in the throes of honours dissertation preparations for my final year of university, and I could ill afford the time away from studies, but it seemed to me this might be a visit not to miss.

It turned out to be just the case. Marjorie and John, along with daughter Kelly, and relief keeper Gerry O'Neill made us welcome amidst the final days of packing and departure preparations. To me, it seemed like a big deal – the Fairservices were leaving the lighthouse and island that had been their home since 1964. Sambro Island, after 230 years of faithful staffed service, would

be abandoned to the elements and the vandals.

Marjorie and John were stoic about the whole deal. No doubt they harboured some regrets about leaving, but they also seemed to accept and perhaps even look forward to the next stage in their lives. As a gale of wind drove a hard rain into the window panes of the Principal Keeper's house, the fog horn up by the lighthouse started to blast. Marjorie laid her cigarette in the ashtray, opened the Lightkeeper's Log, and made of note of the time. It was all done without thinking: just another part of the routine of lightkeeping.

It was routine that Marjorie knew well. Her people had been lightkeepers at Money Point (Cape North) in Cape Breton, and for the past 24 years, she'd lived her own routine on Sambro Island. It wasn't always easy. She was isolated for much of the year, raising three kids on an island smaller than most big-box store parking lots. In a 2001 interview she told me the early times were tough.

"The worst of it for me was the first year," she said. "I used to climb the tower with Kelly and cry."

But Marjorie wasn't one to give up. In the mid-70s, it came about that there was need of a new assistant keeper on Sambro Island. Marjorie decided to give it a go. When she learned that another applicant, a man, had been offered the position, she appealed the decision.

As she told me, "It was uphill for quite a while and then I went on the competition and I beat out six guys and got the job permanently!"



MARJORIE, JOHN AND KELLY FAIRSERVICE IN 2001. CHRIS MILLS

It was the beginning of a decade and a half lightkeeping partnership (that actually began in '64, but she was an unpaid keeper's wife then!) that ended only when the Coast Guard decided it would de-staff Sambro Island lightstation. When I interviewed Marjorie 2001, I wondered if there were times when marital harmony and the working relationship she shared with John, were an issue. In typical to-the-point fashion, she told me "Well, it did have its ups and downs, but then again, if things got too rough and I didn't want to do something, I just told him I was gonna resign and he'd go and on do it!

Laughing, John 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!

But back to 1988. The Fairservices packed up and left the island for good soon after that windy March day when the fog horn blasted, smoke curled from countless cigarettes, and stories went on into the night. The Coast Guard sent John to St. Paul Island, up the gulf, to finish up his time. Marjorie became a monitoring keeper at the INTRAC station at Eddy Point, keeping a long-distance eye on automated lights in the Canso area.

When Eddy Point closed, she moved to Cape Forchu lighthouse. The woman who had fought for the job of assistant keeper on Sambro Island almost 20 years previously, became one of Cape Forchu's two Principal Keepers, and it was there that she finished her time as a lightkeeper in the early 1990s.

John and Marjorie lived much of the remainder of their retirement years at their home in Oyster Pond. John passed away in 2007, and on January 14, 2014, Marjorie died, at the age of 76. She'd had health difficulties for the last few years of her life, but I like to think back to the 80s and 90s, and the fall of 2001, when Marjorie, forthright and no holds barred, told me how she felt about leaving Sambro Island.

"Leaving! That was the best part. I was really glad when everything was packed and off of there. I knew I had another job. I enjoyed Eddy Point and I really enjoyed Yarmouth. I think that was my favourite place, Yarmouth."

Marjorie Fairservice is survived by her son Philip, and daughter Kelly. She was predeceased by her husband John, and by daughter, Deidre.



SAMBRO ISLAND IN 1996. DFO/CCG



RIP IRWIN, JOHN FAIRSERVICE, MARJORIE FAIRSERVICE AND GERRY O'NEILL IN THE HEAD KEEPER'S KITCHEN, SAMBRO ISLAND, MARCH, 1988. CHRIS MILLS

Yvonne Kozera

We are sad to report Yvonne Kozera's passing on January 21st. Yvonne lived for many years at the Louisbourg and Black Rock Point lightstations in Cape Breton, where her late husband Frank was an assistant and Principal lightkeeper. Yvonne is survived by her three children, seven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

ARISTOCRATIC LIGHTKEEPER

We thank Yarmouth County Museum Curator Emeritus Eric Ruff for the following article, which sheds light on a little-known and "peerless" piece of Nova Scotia lighthouse history! It was first published in the November 21, 1888 edition of the Yarmouth Herald.

When an applicant for the position of caretaker of a lightship was asked some time ago to furnish references, he astonished the deputy head of the department by referring him to "Burke's Peerage" for a succinct history of his family. The same department has been again startled by the application and appointment of a genuine French count as a lighthouse keeper at Perroquet Island, one of the most cheerless spots on the Labrador Coast

This handsome and accomplished nobleman came to Canada about four years ago, and for months was the lion of society both in Quebec and Montreal. He outshone the exiled bank officials in attractiveness and splendor. At dinners he invariably led the conversation, and in the parlour and ballroom easily eclipsed the most fascinating of Quebec beaux.

Before his social career was closed at the ancient capital he had wooed and wedded the daughter of a leading provincial official, and then M. le Compte de Piquelon settled down to the realities of life and entered into a precarious commercial enterprise which resulted unfavorably. His business ardor having been thus dampened le Compte next turned his attention to sport, and for three years of his life has been that of a hunter, trapper and a fisherman. The athlete who was a terror to Canadian fencing masters now makes his points with the salmon spear. The highly cultured baritone voice which at one time secured him an offer of 30,000f. per annum to join a troupe of vocalists in the French capital is now wasted on moose calls. The eccentric career of De Piquelon is now more than ever the subject of speculation and curiosity. Sarah Gamp, who was at first certain that le Compte had been crossed in love ere he left La Belle France, has changed her mind since he has become the devoted and faithful husband of La Belle de Quebec. Pecksniff said his coming was due to his having surfeited of the gaiety and debaucheries of Parisian life, but our aristocratic lightkeeper has, since his arrival in Canada, been a model in morals and bears no traces of over indulgence in "life".

His acceptance of a salary of \$400 adds to the romantic nature of the career of la Compte de Piquelon.

* * *

CUBA CALLING

Loreto Fidel De La Cruz lives in Cuba. He is an employee of the Canadian mining company Sherritt International. Loreto is interested in lighthouses and he collects everything concerning lighthouses, especially philatelic items. Loreto would like to communicate with someone in Canada with similar interests for exchange of items and general communication about lighthouses. His email is lfidel@sherrittogp.com



THREE OF THE ORIGINAL NSLPS MEMBERS AT SAMBRO ISLAND IN 1993: CHRIS MILLS, PATSY MACDONALD AND GRAHAM MCBRIDE. PHOTO BY NSLPS FOUNDING PRESIDENT E. H. RIP IRWIN

NOW – PAY MEMBERSHIPS ONLINE!

Renewing your membership or joining NSLPS just got easier. Save postage and get a receipt right away! You can now pay by PayPal in a secure section of the website (www.nslps.com). You don't have to have your own PayPal account. Just click on the fancy rectangle on the bottom left of the Home Page and follow instructions. You'll get a receipt by email. Your Charitable Tax Receipt and Membership Card will arrive later, by snail mail, from Treasurer Lew Perry.

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 Spring/Summer issue: June 15, 2014

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

THE Lightkeeper

Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol.1•No.1•January 1994

We are a recently formed group of individuals interested in the preservation and protection of lighthouses and lighthouse sites along the coastline of Nova Scotia. Canada's first lighthouse was lit in 1734 at Louisbourg and North America's oldest extant lighthouse (begun 1758) continues to operate on Sambro Island, at the approaches to Halifax Harbour.



Until recent years these and countless other beacons along our rocky coastline played a major role in the development and sustenance of trade, commerce, and the fishing industry in the Maritime Provinces. Through modernization and automation we have already lost many historic and architecturally significant structures, as keepers are removed from lightstations and lighthouse functions are taken over by functional skeleton towers and electronic equipment.

The aim of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society is to create an awareness of our province's lighthouse and marine heritage and to work with related groups to ensure the identification, documentation and preservation of coastal sites, beginning with Sambro Island. As the oldest

operating lighthouse structure in North America it is a natural candidate for attention to its historic and architectural merit. The NSLPS wishes to ensure the restoration, protection and continued maintenance of the lighthouse and grounds, as well as opening the site to the public. The NSLPS is also committed to ongoing lighthouse and related marine research, including the collection of artifacts, lore, photographs and oral history.

To do this we need your support. At present the NSLPS is in its beginning stages- we now need a general membership of individuals interested in helping save Sambro Island and other important lighthouses in Nova Scotia. For further information please contact:

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