

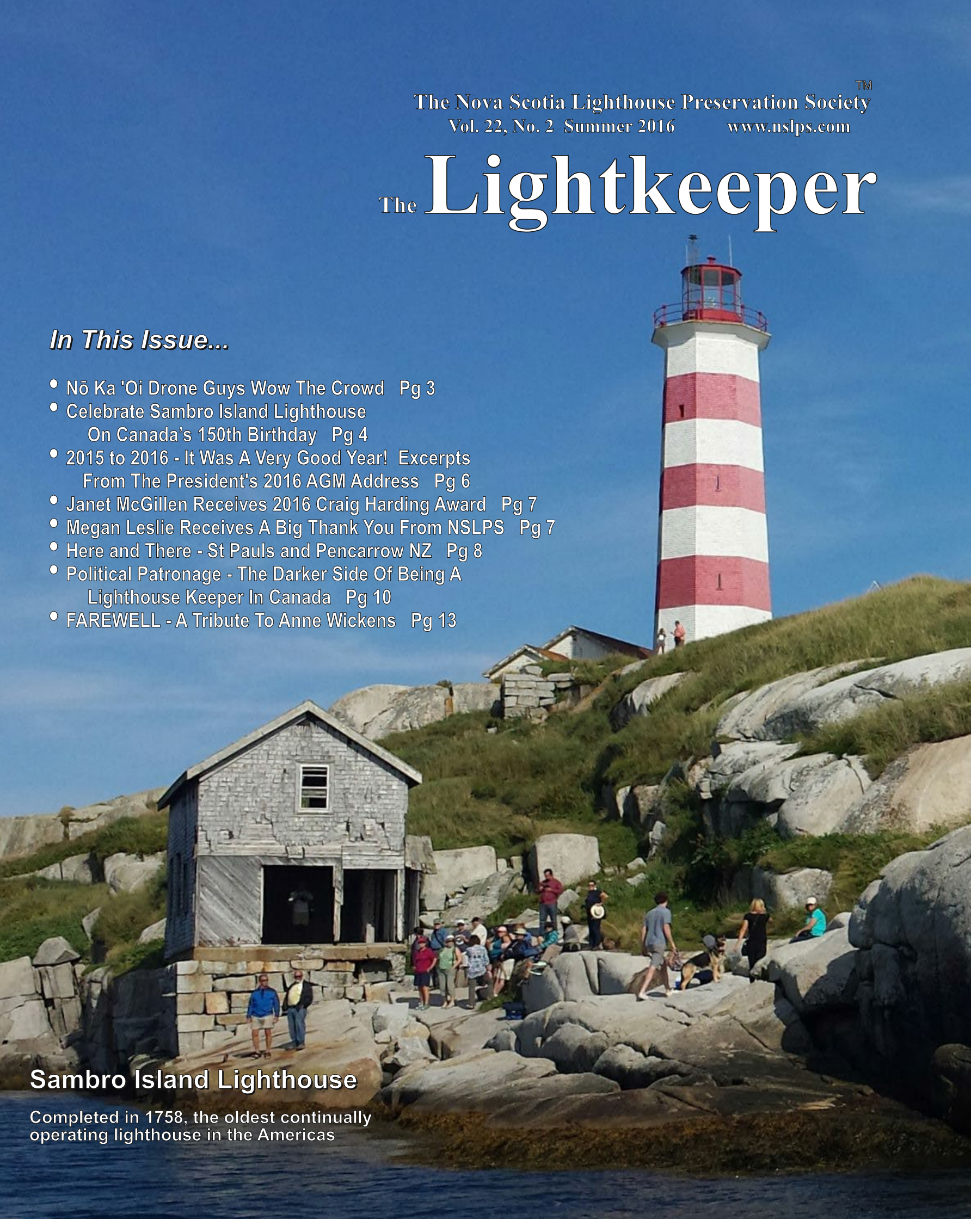
The Lightkeeper

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Sambro Island Lighthouse

Completed in 1758, the oldest continually
operating lighthouse in the Americas





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 the 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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Our Front Cover

Our front cover features Sambro Island lighthouse as seen from the gas house. Completed in 1758, Sambro lighthouse has operated continuously since then, making it the oldest continually operating lighthouse in the Americas.

Our feature issue is about Sambro Island lighthouse and the struggles to keep the light burning in an age of technology.

The **Lightkeeper** is published by the **NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY**, c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 1 675 Lower Water Street, Halifax, B3J 1 S3, Editor: Send items for publication to The Lightkeeper, c/o Peter MacCulloch, e-mail pmacculloch@nslps.com.

Deadline for Fall 2016 issue: August 15th, 2016

Nō Ka 'Oī Drone Guys Wow The Croud

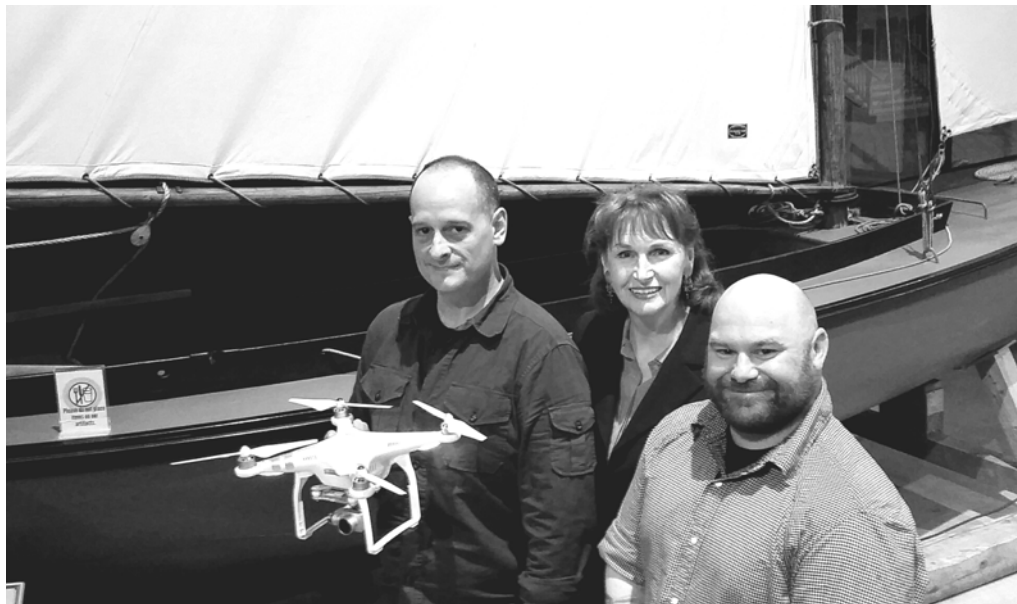
By Joanne McCormick

Larry Peyton and Corey Webb kept the attendees of the April AGM spellbound as they gave a video presentation of their lighthouse droning experiences across Nova Scotia.

The Nō Ka 'Oī Drone Guys are Larry Peyton - a drone hobbyist who produces high quality aerial images - and Cory Webb - a musician who writes original tunes for the videos. They have made it their mission to drone all 175 lighthouses in Nova Scotia and have already captured a large number of them. Along the way they have had many interactions with some of the Nova Scotians living in the coastal communities, and shared a few of these funny stories.

We are all reaping the rewards of Larry and Corey's strong commitment and sense of purpose. By documenting our lights with a fresh perspective, they have raised their profile and showcased our province and way of life of which we are so proud.

We must always remember what lighthouses have done for



From left to right: Larry Payton, Joanne McCormick NSLPS president, Corry Webb

mankind in the past, and respect it enough to save them going forward as a tribute to our great maritime history.

You can visit their videos through our website at http://nslps.com/dir_AboutLights/Videos.aspx.

Thank you Larry and Corey. We salute you.

Joanne McCormick is the NSLPS President and Lightkeeper contributor.

Attention: Lighthouse Groups

Summer is upon us. Many lighthouse enthusiasts are looking forward to visiting Nova Scotia lighthouses. It is vital that all lighthouse groups view and send updates for our **Lighthouses To Visit** page on our website.

It is easy to update this information:

1) Go to our website and view your current visitor information at

http://nslps.com/dir_AboutLights/VisitLights.aspx

2) Email our webmaster at **webmaster@nslps.com** and we will send you a PDF file with the details of the visitor information we can use.

3) Complete the PDF form and either scan and email it back to us or mail it to us at:

Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society,
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Celebrate Sambro Island Lighthouse On Canada's 150th Birthday

By Joe Fleming

Sambro Island Lighthouse was standing tall and beaming light across the horizon long before Canada's confederation in 1867. It played a quiet, yet key role in the founding of this great country of ours. Like an experienced elder standing at the door, it offered a safe, welcoming embrace to all those arriving in this part of the new world, those who would later lay the foundation for nation building. In 1749, with many perceived and potential threats looming for the British, they needed a protected and sufficient port to set up camp. Chebucto, later to be known as Halifax Harbour, would pleasantly suffice. It was comprised of several shipping lanes at its mouth, a main harbour, a narrow channel and a large basin surrounded by land. The landscape and deep waters offered an ice-free haven for their large fleets. But getting ships into harbour safely, would prove difficult. The beauty of the rugged coastal landscape that gives us so much enjoyment, caused great hardship and tragedy to ships navigating the untamed North Atlantic. They would require a helpful and steadfast hand getting safely into Halifax.



Original Sambro Island Lighthouse

Completed in 1758, as a result of the first bill introduced by the new Nova Scotia legislature, Sambro Island Lighthouse was to be built, guiding the way for generations of immigrants who would later make up this new nation called Canada.

Manning this light would see many faces. Some being local families willing to brave the harsh elements that come with living on an island in the North Atlantic. Others being members of the British / Canadian military stationed in the area. For many years Sambro was equipped with cannons manned by the Royal Artillery. They would fire them in response to ship's signals in low visibility. The cannons were later replaced by newer, more modern Fog signaling devices, however, evidence of this early military presence can still be found today while standing at the foot of cannons still lying in the grass. A signal station was also present for a time. It was linked with Camperdown, the Citadel, Georges Island and many



Sambro Island on a windy day.

others stretching to the Bay of Fundy. It would later be deemed inefficient due to visibility issues such as fog along the coastlines. It was hopeful a signal could be passed from Nova Scotia to Southern New Brunswick using this method, but it was difficult and unreliable over such a distance.

To this day, Sambro Island Lighthouse is still guiding the way into Halifax Harbour. As ships enter, they pass by this majestic structure, now holding claim as the oldest continuously operating lighthouse in the Western Hemisphere. Once inside the safe haven of Chebucto Head and its lighthouse, you'll find shelter from the Southerly gales and lofty seas. Peering to the north, several Parks Canada National Historic Sites come into view. A group of a prestigious, must see attractions for anyone visiting Nova Scotia. Despite its historic significance, Sambro Island Lighthouse has so far been excluded from this proud group. First, York Redoubt can be seen on the hillside to Port (left). Fort McNab on the Island to Starboard (right). Before long, Georges Island and its lighthouse come into view, like a seaway divider for



Early Halifax Harbour seen from Citadel Hill

incoming and outgoing ships. A quick glance to the left, and you'll see the famed Halifax Citadel looking proudly over the harbour from above and behind present day downtown Halifax. The view of the Citadel from the water, arguably equally as impressive as the Harbour view from the Citadel.

With Canada's 150th Anniversary upon us, we can see no better time to bring Sambro Island into that group of Parks Canada National Historic Sites which have played such an important role in the founding of our country. The department of Fisheries and Oceans has awarded contracts to bring this lighthouse up to a new standard. Structurally, and cosmetically. The volume and nature of work that we think would make it an attractive asset for Parks Canada. A thought echoed by Members of Parliament across all party lines. The timing is right, perfectly complimented by Canada's upcoming Birthday celebration.



*Sir John A MacDonald
at Cartier Intl. Airport*

At the time of Canada's birth in 1867, Sambro Island lighthouse was already over 100 years old.

Early this year, members of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society (NSLPS), and the Sambro Island Lighthouse Heritage Society (SILHS), went knocking on the door at our Nation's Capital in Ottawa with high spirits and great hope.

Joanne McCormick, Barry MacDonald (NSLPS), Stephanie Smith, Joe Flemming and Sue Paul (SILHS), were warmly greeted by Senators Munson, Cowan, Moore, Mercer and Cordy in Senator Munson's office. The purpose of which was to put forth the case of placing Sambro in Parks Canada's inventory.

The Senators were attentive and engaged as an excellent case was tabled for saving this iconic lighthouse. Not unlike the other

Parks Canada National Historic Sites. Sambro Island Lighthouse meets, and in some instances, exceeds the historic criteria required. In fact, when Sir John A. MacDonald became the first Prime Minister of Canada, Sambro Island Light was already commemorating more than 100 years of service.

Sambro Island Lighthouse is on the World Lighthouse Society's List of the ten most important lighthouses. Most Immigrants to Eastern Canada from 1758 til the age of flight, likely sailed past this magnificent Light. They'd land at Pier 21, then spread across the country via train, ship and any means possible. It's been referred to as "Canada's Statue of Liberty. For our veterans, it was the last glimpse of home when sailing off to fight. And for those lucky enough to return, it was a joyous site as it rose over the horizon to greet them. For War Brides of both World Wars, Sambro Island Lighthouse was a tall and stately symbol of their new life in Canada.

Despite the many important issues facing our country today, we remain confident that the Canadian Government will find the time, and political will, to do what we all believe is right for this National Treasure. Make this Lighthouse a Parks Canada National Historic Site for the world to visit and enjoy. Let's make sure Sambro Island Lighthouse becomes an opportunity realized, and remains a source of national pride.

Joe Flemming is the VP of the Sambro Island Light House Society and NSLPS Board member. Joe is also a frequent contributor to the Lightkeeper.



Joanne McCormick, Joe Flemming, Sue Paul, Barry MacDonald and Stephanie Smith in Ottawa

2015 to 2016 - It Was A Very Good Year!

Excerpts From The President's 2016 AGM Address

Joanne McCormick

Although we would like all our members to attend our AGM every year, it just isn't possible, so we are including some excerpts from the President's Address of April 27, 2016:

It has been quite a year! I want to thank the members of the NSLPS Board, all volunteers, for their service this past year. We are fortunate to have a great Board. This year we added several new members which always breath new life into any organization. **New members Tom Roberts, Joe Flemming, Nigel Wright, and our dynamic new Social Media director, Meredith O'Hara, all outstanding new additions. That, along with the experience and expertise of our Past President, Barry MacDonald, has put us in a good place at the moment.**

I think most of you are aware by now of our on-line competition and crowd-funding project, **THIS LIGHTHOUSE MATTERS** held last summer. Meredith O'Hara, Communications Manager for the project, has given us a great overall view. By fall we had seen real results of our labours, as we watched Janet McGillen jump through flaming hoops to have the Gabarus lighthouse moved back from a cliff that was disintegrating in front of our eyes. Her article, "Saving the Gabarus Lighthouse" is in the last issue of the Lightkeeper. I might add that the day before the big move, that lighthouse was tilting toward the sea, poised to fall over the cliff at any moment! **Gabarus lighthouse would definitely not have been saved without THIS LIGHTHOUSE MATTERS.**

The other major highlight of the year was Sambro Island lighthouse receiving 1.5 million from DFO, for restoration. The happiness of the Sambro community group and indeed the village, not to mention ourselves, was palpable for days, and we still feel elated just thinking about it. It will go a long way toward restoration, **but it will not, however, protect Sambro into the decades ahead,** so last month, Barry and I, and three members of the Sambro group, **traveled to Ottawa to meet with several Senators and the Speaker of the House to drive home the importance of Sambro, not just to Nova Scotia, but to all of Canada, as the oldest operating lighthouse in the Americas.** Joe Flemming conjured up a profound image when he declared that when Sir John A.

MacDonald, became our first Prime Minister, he could have worn a t-shirt celebrating the 100th birthday of Sambro. We were warmly greeted by the Senators and the Speaker, and left feeling that we are getting closer to having Sambro placed under Parks Canada's protection.

Also last month, folks from the National Trust, and Barry, Glen Fry and I, traveled to Low Point, winners of the \$75,000 top prize in TLM, to assess and assist the community group there in achieving its goals.

We very much look forward to the events of this summer when the restoration will take place on the other eight winning lighthouses.

In the past year, we have seen 14 lighthouses attain Heritage Status. In addition to St. Paul Island light which had previously received this designation, we now have Bear River, Boar's Head, Cape George, Coldspring, Neil's Harbour, Pictou Island, Port Mouton, Prim Point, Queensport, Schaffner Point, Terence Bay, Victoria Beach, and Wallace Harbour. Glaring omissions are Louisbourg, Peggy's Point (Cove), and Sambro.

And then there are **The Drone Guys, Larry Peyton and Corey Webb**, who appeared like a gift, and have set out to drone all the lighthouses in Nova Scotia. They have started this great project and have made a big dent in it already. We will watch their progress over the coming months. http://nslps.com/dir_AboutLights/Videos.aspx

Finally, the news that the Province wants to increase Tourism is very welcome. When people arrive here, they want to see the ocean, and taste the flavour and lifestyle of the sea. So, so many times the first thing tourists say when they arrive is. "Where can I see lighthouses....." So let's make sure we have lighthouses for them to see. **Our lights are not liabilities, they are OPPORTUNITIES for this province.**

Before closing, I would like to quote, in part, Joseph Howe:

"A wise nation preserves its monuments, repairs its greatest structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past."

Joanne McCormick is the NSLPS President and Lightkeeper contributor.



Janet McGillen Receives 2016 Craig Harding Award

Joanne McCormick

Janet McGillen, President of the Gabarus Lightkeepers Society, has received the Craig Harding Award for 2016.

An article Janet wrote about saving the Gabarus Lighthouse was in our last issue. It documents the effort, frustration, and drama she and her community went through to save their light, including entering it into THIS LIGHTHOUSE MATTERS to try to win some much needed funds.

It is an incredible story, with the lighthouse being saved literally at the eleventh hour as the wind, rain, and the ocean tore at the cliff upon which it stood. Janet McGillen went above and beyond her duty as she worked day and night to get through the paperwork, make arrangements for just the right contractor, and personally supervise the undertaking every step of the way.

Congratulations Janet – our 2016 winner of the Craig Harding Award.



NSLPS President Joanne McCormick presents the Craig Harding award to Janet McGillen

Megan Leslie Receives A Big Thank You From NSLPS

Barry MacDonald

Over the years NSLPS has sought help from many politicians at all three levels of government and from all political parties. Some have been very helpful and worked hard on our behalf – others not as much. Megan Leslie, former NDP MP for Halifax is very much in the first category and was chosen by the NSLPS board to be honored at our 2016 AGM.

Speaking on behalf of the organization, Joanne McCormick, our president, presented Megan Leslie with a Tom Forrestall limited edition print of Sambro Light. Joanne has known Megan Leslie since shortly after she

became the MP for Halifax in 2008. Over the course of her 7 years in Ottawa, Megan worked tirelessly for her



Barry MacDonald, Past NSLPS President NSLPS and Joanne McCormick, current NSLPS President present Megan Leslie with a limited edition Tom Forrestall print of Sambro Island Lighthouse

constituents. Her hard work and drive earned her respect not only from within her beloved NDP Party but also from both the Liberal and Conservative caucuses in Ottawa.

Megan was quick to recognize the valuable work we were doing in lighthouse preservation and offered her assistance. One undertaking in particular concerns the efforts of the SILHS (Sambro Island Lighthouse Society) and NSLPS to have ownership of the Sambro Island lighthouse transferred to Parks Canada. After meeting with NSLPS, Megan saw that this was something really worth going for. Shortly thereafter she surprised us with a draft of a Private Members' Bill which, if passed, would achieve the status we were seeking. Before Parliament rose in June of 2015 the Bill had passed second reading with only one dissenter. Had there been just a little more time the Bill surely would have passed third reading and been proclaimed into Law. So near! The fact the Bill got as far as it did shows the esteem in which Megan Leslie was held on both sides of the House!

From NSLPS and lighthouse enthusiasts, thank you Megan for your tireless efforts to raise awareness and save our lighthouses.

Call To Contributors

Is there a great story to be told about the lighthouse in your community? The Lightkeeper is always looking for lighthouse related stories and announcements.

Please send submissions to lightkeeper@nslps.com

Here and There - St Pauls and Pencarrow NZ

By Denyse Contrasty

It is said that everyone has a double somewhere in the world. Mine was a British woman called Pauline I never met during my year in England in 1986 and whose friends were quite astonished to hear "Pauline" return their hellos in a distinctly Canadian accent.

The following is the first in a series of articles that will compare one of our Nova Scotia lighthouses to another lighthouse somewhere in the world. Both built in a similar fashion to save human lives and to guide ships to safe harbour, yet having their own distinct history and features.

Here...



St Paul's Island Lighthouse, Nova Scotia
(Photo credit Kraig Anderson @ Lighthouse Friends)

If you drive the Cabot Trail this summer, be sure to exit at Dingwall Road and visit the St Paul's Island Lighthouse and Museum. Far away from its original home on the cliff at the south west end of St Paul's Island in the Cabot Strait, this lighthouse built in 1915 cast a flashing white light that was visible to a distance of 18 nautical miles, very important in an area known as the Graveyard of the Gulf of St Lawrence. Originally red and the first cast iron lighthouse to be constructed in Canada at the Dominion Lighthouse Depot in Prescott, Ontario, this prefabricated, cast-iron, cylindrical tower was topped with a 12-sided iron

lantern and used a 4th order dioptric¹ Fresnel lens with a kerosene lamp. Surprisingly given the frequency of fog year round, this lighthouse did not have a fog signal or building, unlike the St Paul's lighthouse at the north end of the island.

Billy Budge wrote of his life on St Paul Island when his father tended the light from 1955 to 1960 and of the isolation and challenges the family faced without the help of neighbours or modern conveniences. Shortly after the Budges departed, the lighthouse was replaced in 1964 by a solar powered beacon. The lighthouse was then dismantled and shipped to the Canadian Coast Guard base in Dartmouth, NS. There it sat on the wharf until 2011 when the lighthouse was relocated to Dingwall, NS off the Cabot Trail on Cape Breton Island looking across to its original home of St. Paul's Island. In 2012 it became a federal heritage property, the first lighthouse to be designated as such under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act.

From June 17th until September 4th, the lighthouse is open to visitors 7 days a week from 10am to 6pm. Facilities include a museum next to the lighthouse and a gift shop and are located at 575 Dingwall Road, Dingwall, NS. Donations appreciated; guided tours available.

There...

If Wellington, New Zealand is on your bucket list, be sure to drive or bus around the harbour to Burden's Gate at the southern end of Eastbourne where you can walk or bike a 8 kilometre gravel road to Pencarrow Head Lighthouse located on a high cliff overlooking the Cook Strait between North and South Islands at the entrance to Wellington Harbour. It was New Zealand's first lighthouse built in response to shipwrecks that involved significant loss of life and cargo. An octagonal tapering cast-iron white tower topped with a lantern holding a catadioptric² flashing light and a colza³ lamp, it too was prefabricated and ordered from



Pencarrow Head Lighthouse, New Zealand

(Photo credit Carly St-Laurent)

Trinity House⁴, England, transported to NZ in 480 packages via ship, assembled on site, and made operational New Year's Day 1859.

The issue of fog was not addressed until 1898 when an audible gun cotton gun was erected beside the lighthouse. This was the first fog signal for New Zealand and it produced explosions of guncotton every 15 minutes. While it appears the firing was done automatically using electricity, the lightkeeper still had to manually load the charge between explosions. In 1927 a compressed air diaphone blasting for 3 seconds every minute was installed and required the services of a lightkeeper until it became automated in 1959.

Helen Beaglehole, Kiwi author, notes that its first lightkeeper was the only female NZ lightkeeper to date, Mary Jane Bennett. She together with her husband had operated a light from a window in their cottage at Pencarrow Head before the lighthouse was built. After her husband drowned in 1855, Mary Jane continued lightkeeping duties until 1865 when she returned to England with her children. The lighthouse operated until 1935 when it was decided to build a new lighthouse

nearby at Baring Head at water level as high level fog and light pollution from nearby Wellington obscured its light that was visible up to 30 nautical miles on a clear night. Heritage New Zealand took ownership of the lighthouse in 1966 and restored it in 1980.

While the lighthouse is not open to visitors, it is possible to walk or cycle the 8km gravel road from Burden's Gate in Eastbourne where you can park your car or take a bus from Wellington to the Eastbourne terminus. There is no charge to visit the grounds and exterior but visitors should be prepared for changeable weather with severe winds. Occasionally local societies such as NZ Historic Places Trust organize for a fee a day's outing to Pencarrow Head and open the lighthouse to participants.

Notes:

1. A dioptric Fresnel lens uses a framework of thin, light prisms arranged in a circular pattern to produce a parallel beam of rays, thereby eliminating the need for mirrors.
2. A catadioptric optical system uses both lenses (dioptrics) and curved mirrors (catoptrics) to focus a beam of light.
3. Colza oil is made from the seeds of rapeseed (a low acid variety is called canola in Canada) and was used in the early days of lighthouses.
4. Trinity House is a charity and independent corporation that was started in 1514 by Henry VIII to safeguard shipping and sailors. It uses Light Dues paid by commercial vessels using ports in the British Isles to maintain lighthouses.

Sources:

Books:

1. Billy Budge, *Memoirs of A Lightkeeper's Son: Life on St Paul Island*
2. Helen Beaglehole, *Lighting the Coast: A history of New Zealand's coastal lighthouse system*

Websites:

1. Parks Canada
2. Heritage New Zealand
3. Wikipedia
4. www.nzhistory.net.nz/culture/pencarrow-lighthouse web pages

Denyse Contrasty is *NSLPS vice president and secretary, NSLPS website content editor and Lightkeeper contributor.*

Political Patronage - The Darker Side Of Being A Lighthouse Keeper In Canada

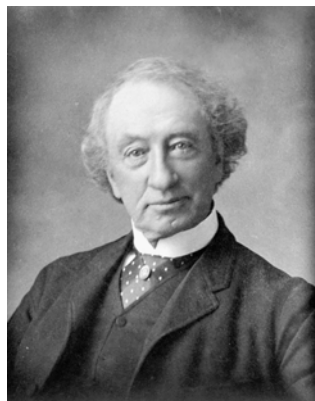
By Mark Wilson

Find me a reason against this or that man and I will drag him from his position and give it to you. It [patronage] has introduced espionage; It has introduced false accusers; it has introduced a malignly degrading element into our political and social life, and what is the consequence?

- Member of Parliament, Nicholas F. Davin,
House of Commons Debates March 29, 1897

Overseeing a light station has always been fraught with difficulties, and that was especially true in the post-Confederation era where lighthouse keepers also walked a political tightrope. As a general rule, it simply wasn't wise to engage in overt political activity, lest it serve as a cause for losing one's job. And it was downright foolish to do so when you were not of the right political persuasion. In the latter case, especially, you would think that discretion and self restraint would have been widely observed.

Still, there were a number of lighthouse keepers who just couldn't contain themselves. They garnered attention by campaigning for their preferred candidates or by criticizing those in opposition. And when they did, they paid for it professionally. The more vociferous ones were "investigated" for their public displays and occasionally terminated by those in power. When the axe fell, it was often the Prime Minister himself who signed the termination letter.



Sir John A. MacDonald,
Canadian Prime Minister

One of the more vocal light keepers was Samuel Massey from Peggy's Point, Nova Scotia. Massey didn't care much for John A. MacDonald's government at the time, and his misgivings turned to contempt when MacDonald sought a 4th term in office in 1882. It was too much to bear for the keeper, who went on a very public tirade and unloaded on those "across the aisle". His actions were strident, to the point where he had applied "vile and insulting epithets" to voters and those about to be elected. Evidently this keeper had seen enough.

Unfortunately for Massey, MacDonald saw fit to capitalize on the outburst. The Prime Minister accused Massey of being politically active, which was a fully dismissible charge, and then removed him from the position. As MacDonald noted in his Privy Council letter (and the keepers' virtual pink slip): "Massey appears to have made himself notorious at the late election by his violent partisanship in opposition to the government." In the end, it was MacDonald who had seen enough.

The fact of the matter is that Massey didn't stand a chance. He was the victim of his own boorish behavior and a government that was ready to exploit his indiscretion. He became a pawn. An example of low hanging political fruit. A part of something much larger than himself. Sure, we could debate the merits of his specific termination, but it is far more interesting to look at the environment that allowed his dismissal in the first place. Like so many things in life, context is everything.

Canada never had a full-spoils system of government where the new ruling party got to clean house and stock the civil service with party faithful. That was more of an American tradition, largely attributed to Andrew Jackson when he assumed the White House in the 1830's. Canada took a watered-down approach whereby most of the civil service was unaffected by election results, and where political patronage was kept to a minimum. At least in theory.

But that notion was tested in the earliest days of Canada during the governments of MacDonald and Laurier. The two Prime Ministers saw nothing wrong with political patronage, and even boasted of its advantages for party unity and nation-building. By Canadian standards they did it with great regularity. They especially took advantage of the civil service, since it had yet to win autonomy and was

still vulnerable to the whims of the highest offices. Both leaders had a great amount of latitude and they acted accordingly.

Once a new government came to power the engines of patronage roared to life. Those with decision-making abilities were suddenly swamped with requests for positions. But in order to place a loyal party member, you sometimes had to FIND a place. And this is where the wheels started turning. In the first ten months of Laurier's government 473 civil servants were fired, and 196 of those were terminated for their political involvement. But this was just the beginning. As Robert M. Dawson notes, "This number increased greatly over the next few years."

With regard to lighthouse keepers, per se, dozens of dismissals were identified in the Maritimes. There, in the Canadian Parliamentary Debates, in various old newspapers and in the archived letters from the Privy Council, one can find numerous instances of keepers who met their end. And in almost half of those terminations the means for getting rid of them was an accusation of active political involvement. This was a charge that went by several different names in the earliest years, though its variations generally referred to the same thing. As time wore on, and as Laurier took office, the term "offensive political partisanship" became the most commonly used phrase.

Whatever you call it, there's no denying it was a thorny issue. And it's one that played out in different ways. Samuel Massey represents someone who basically deserved his fate, and he was introduced here for that very reason. He was an instructive reference point. But there is a different group of keepers who did little or nothing to

warrant their dismissal. This includes people like Lewis Hudgins, Benjamin Palmer and a number of others who were largely (or completely) innocent of the charges filed against them.

A small newsline in the Ottawa Journal from 1897 begins



Salmon Point Lighthouse in Ontario

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<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/43627283>

our look at this latter group: "The dismissal of J. Campbell from the position of light house keeper at St. Paul island [N.S.]....on the sounds of political partisanship, was discussed at length in the House of Commons a few sessions ago. The acting minister of marine has re-instated Mr. Campbell." As we read news like this it's only natural to want more details of the case. But all we really

need to know is that it was a very typical scenario. And for all the wrong reasons.

The patronage environment was riddled with questionable practises, including the premature firing of people. Many people were let go over very flimsy evidence, or removed when superiors took the accuser's word for gospel. Many others were never told why their job was taken away. Even more curious is that many accusations came from the losing candidates of the winning party, who then marched to their leaders with an axe to grind. And there were others yet, who made accusations because they coveted the very position they were complaining about.

An outstanding example of such nonsense can be seen in the eastern Ontario case where Lewis Hudgins was removed in 1876. He was the keeper of Salmon Point lighthouse until he was charged with being abusive to the government and generally making a spectacle of himself. The accusation came from another local, Peter Huff. The only problem here was that the keeper was highly regarded by all around him and was almost certainly innocent of the things for which he was accused. Upon

learning of the charges against him, he replied:

"I beg to state that I did vote against Mr. Walter Ross, at the elections in 1874; but, as to using an violent or profane language concerning the present Government, I deny altogether, and I furnish you with a statement, signed by supporters of Mr. Ross and all my immediate neighbours, and who would have heard me if I had been guilty of any of the charges with which I am accused. Party feeling runs very high in this county, and this is done simply to injure a political opponent. Trusting my explanation will be satisfactory."

He did indeed provide that statement of support, though it amounted to very little. And he was gone. It must have been an awkward moment when Hudgins, on his last day at the light, happened to meet the newly appointed keeper. And it must have been all the more poignant and bitter since it was the incoming keeper himself who leveled the accusation that had Hudgins fired. From the Canadian Parliamentary Debates we learn that Huff "was instrumental in making the charge."

Years later Hudgins was re-instated, and the injustice was recognized in the community. The Kingston Daily News noted: "We are pleased to hear that Captain L. Hudgins, who was light house keeper out at Salmon Point, Prince Edward County, and who was dismissed a couple of years ago without cause, has been re-appointed. This is as it ought to be." Seven years later, MP's in the House of Commons were still citing this case for how patronage appointments can go so wrong...

Closer to home there is another case with many of the same unfortunate hallmarks, but with an added dimension. It's the story of New Brunswick light keeper Benjamin Palmer, who was never politically active in his lifetime. But that didn't stop a charge from being leveled against him. It came from the losing candidate of the winning party, and he pressed hard to get rid of Mr. Palmer even though his superior (the Minister of Marine and Fisheries) was not inclined to proceed:

"Mr. Palmer has been a most bitter political enemy, and has used all possible machinations in conjunction with his brother, Whit Palmer, against us, and so successfully that at last election I was beaten in that parish nearly two to one. If an investigation is held there is ample proof ready, and I wish to see this man removed"

The aggrieved Mr. Domville got his investigation, but not the desired result. Benjamin Palmer was cleared of the charge for which there was "ample proof". But Domville wasn't done. He had much better luck by introducing information about the brothers' living arrangements and Whit's previous political involvement. The brothers lived together and often pooled their incomes from whatever they made. And this became the crux of Benjamin's dismissal, for the Minister argued that because their finances were intertwined, Benjamin was effectively using light keeping income to support the opposition party that his brother was a part of. It was guilt by association, a self-serving interpretation of facts. As one MP noted, it was an "exceedingly thin" ground for dismissal.

Moreover, the overall tone of the case smacked of retribution. It included the branding of Whit Palmer as a 'notorious organizer', until a number of MP's came forward to refute it. One incredulous MP interjected by asking: "Did he say 'notorious'?" It also included an overzealous Mr. Domville who revealed himself as the real driving force behind the dismissal (which was evident to many). It even included a parting shot, of sorts. In a letter to the accuser Mr. Domville, the writer makes a gleeful reference to exacting revenge on the Palmer brothers, even if it was the innocent keeper who had to pay.

Cases like this are the tip of the iceberg, but they do give us a glimpse of the older political landscape and the actors who played their parts. We would be well served by a more detailed analysis of the facts back then, if only to flesh out the histories of these keepers and to show us why lighthouses are such an important part of our history. They're touchstones to our past and we're lucky to have them in our midst. I look forward to visiting one such light at Schafner Point in the not-too-distant future. No doubt I'll think about Joseph K. Healy, the light keeper who was removed for offensive political partisanship in 1897. And as I look over the Annapolis Basin and admire the very lighthouse he worked in, I'll ponder how notorious he really was.

Mark Wilson is an amateur historian who has previously written on matters relating to Nova Scotia's history and built heritage. He was born and raised in Halifax, but now resides in Toronto, Ont.. He can be reached at ivmwilson@yahoo.ca

FAREWELL - A Tribute To Anne Wickens

by Chris Mills

I first met Anne Wickens at the International Lighthouse Conference at White Point Beach Resort, during late spring in 2000. She'd come with her sister Betty June, and brother-in-law Sid Smith to share their collective memories of their lives on Bon Portage and Cape Sable Islands. Anne professed a general reluctance to stand and talk in front of a crowd, but she did so with grace, delivering a drily funny, touching tribute to her life on Bon Portage.

I saw Anne again later that year at Sid and Betty June's home, and a few years later when I took part in a lighthouse event in the Barrington area. Anne also granted me an interview in which she shared her memories of her childhood, her parents Evelyn and Morrill Richardson, and her siblings, Laurie and Elizabeth June.

Anne had a way with words (likely due in part to her years as a teacher), and I still laugh when I think of her account of brother Laurie's entry into the world:

It was a very hard birth and in the middle of it, [our] cow Amarylly decided to strangle herself! The cow wrapped the rope around her throat and lay down and started rolling around [outside]. The midwife screamed, the doctor dropped everything and went rushing out. He didn't know

what to do for the cow, so the midwife came tearing out with a carving knife and cut the rope!

Laurie did get born, eventually and my earliest memory of him is lying in a crib in my parents' bedroom. He was looking at me through the bars of the crib and I thought he was the most horrible looking object! But I couldn't help loving him anyway! (The Lightkeeper, Vol 14, No. 2, June 2007)



Anne (Richardson) Wickens in 2000.

Courtesy Chris Mills

I was a very anti-social child. I hated to see company coming. I would get fond of some of the relatives, but I was always glad to see them go, just the same. To this day, I do not like people as people. I don't like crowds. I don't like lots of people talking.

What bothers me is where do people today go to find a place without people, where there's just themselves and nature? I mean as a family or as an individual. In a great many lives it can't be done. I have always prized the fact that I had that on Bon Portage. And frankly I miss it yet.

Anne (Richardson) Wickens passed away on January 21st this year at the age of 87. She is survived by her sister Betty June, four sons, 14 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and three great great-grandchildren.

Anne submitted this reminiscence for inclusion in The Lightkeeper, in 1999. She'd hand-written the story, and mailed it to me. It seems a fitting tribute to republish it now.



*Laurie, Betty June and Anne Richardson at Bon Portage.
Courtesy Anne Wickens and Betty June Smith*

MY LIGHTHOUSE HOME, THEN By Anne Wickens

My earliest memory of Bon Portage lighthouse is hazy, and conditioned by my size. My brother Laurie is sitting on a



Bon Portage lighthouse during the Richardson family's time at the light. Evelyn and Morrill lived on the island from 1929 to 1964. Courtesy Anne Wickens and Betty June Smith

mat, blond and beaming; I am aware that he cannot move, only sit. He must, therefore, be less than a year old, and I barely two. I am climbing the lighthouse steps, and making heavy weather of it. I am a small, pudgy child,

and crawling or walking up it is beyond me. I place one hand, arm rigid, on the first step, and stretch to grip the flange of the next with my other hand. I set one foot on the first step, drag up the other, and straighten. It is hard going; perhaps I have never done it before. Laurie gurgles at me; perhaps he is admiring my prowess. I keep going...

The lighthouse, as erected by the Government, consisted of a fine, full-sized, fieldstone cellar; the tower, slanting inward all the way to the lantern on top; a northward-jutting ell. These provided two fair-sized rooms and a porch the full width of the ground floor. This porch, alas, opened to the north with a wide door.

The chief problem was that the first keeper, Will Wrayton, had seven small children. Another man, at least in winter, was a necessity that had to be fitted in somewhere. Will complained that they were "crawling all over each other like maggots." With or without official permission, he added a kitchen ell on a stone foundation. The kitchen was complete with closet- the only closet in the house- and a door opening to the south, to milder winds, usually less violent than the northern ones. The new kitchen being below the original structure, Will built steps to the level of the former porch. Such flights, especially in a kitchen, were known as "woman killers". Part of the former porch was

then a passage to the original kitchen; the eastern part of a pantry. In winter, the pantry advanced to the status of a refrigerator

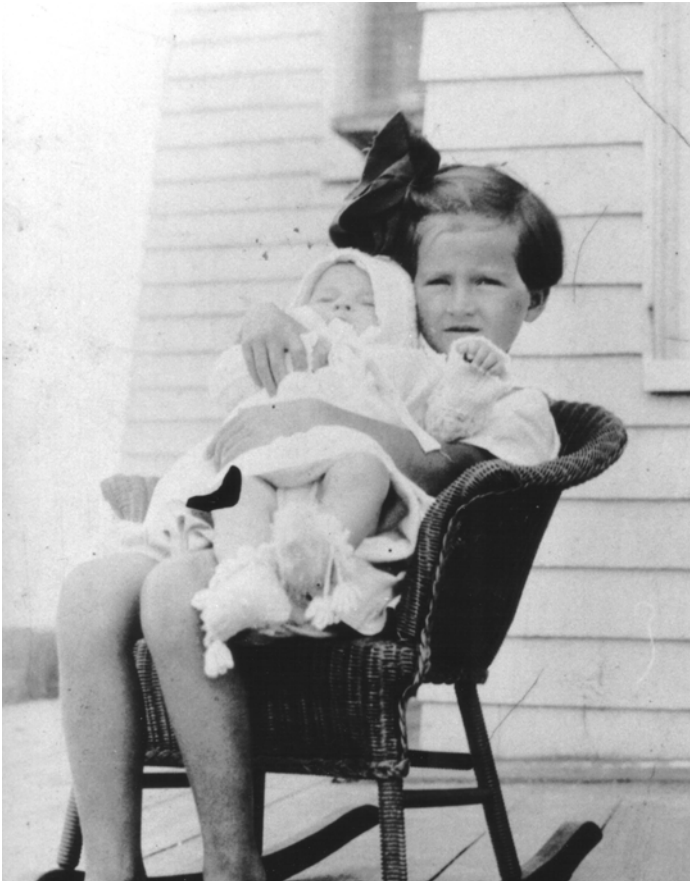
Our father, after wrestling with the results of Will's endeavours, always declared that no Irishman should ever be permitted to build anything. (He was partly of Irish descent himself.) Nothing Will built was straight, or square, or level; nevertheless, I feel he had the right idea.

My world, in those days, consisted of these ground floor rooms, two porches, built by someone, one either side of the kitchen, the doorsteps of the porches, and the cleared lighthouse field. The field enclosed a barn, oil shed, Dad's truly admirable woodpile, and - a long way off - henhouse and outside toilet. Shortly, it also contained a pighouse.

We had a cow, Amaryllis, mainly Jersey, who was cross and unapproachable. There was a dog, Rags, who snapped at everyone and wore a muzzle. I was not afraid of Amaryllis, but so afraid of Rags I was fearful of all dogs for years. Dad didn't like cats, or thought he didn't; Mum preferred them to mice, which kept coming in uninvited. When a nearby uncle moved to Bedford, little Kenny was heart-broken when told he must leave his cat behind. Asked to give it to a younger cousin, Kenny cried harder and said Jackie could pull poor Teddy's tail. (He was right, too; "Jackie's" dog led a miserable life). Kenny agreed, however, to give Teddy to me. Dad came home with a cat and a very sour face, but Mum was pleased, and I, overjoyed. Teddy really was a very nice cat, though not a mouser. His mere presence kept mice out, and the game of The Paw entranced Laurie and Me.



Bon Portage hay wagon. Courtesy Anne Wickens and Betty June Smith



Anne with Betty June at Bon Portage. Courtesy Anne Wickens and Betty June Smith

Teddy lay under the black, cast iron kitchen stove, out of the way of men's feet, while Laurie and I lay on our tummies on the braided mat, peering in at our now inaccessible cat. Teddy would extend a paw, and we would try to touch it before he could withdraw it. Sometimes we took turns; sometimes we both tried at once. Teddy tired of this before we did. I discovered that, if I offered a paw, Teddy would bat at it - lightly, with never a claw. I became adept enough to sometimes beat Teddy at both forms of play, but the score was always something like Teddy 93; Anne 7, Laurie 0.

Close to the advent of Teddy, Laurie and I approached Broad, the ox, not having been warned against him. For a Jersey, he was extremely large, with an enormous spread of horns. The adults must have considered a caution unnecessary.

We merely played around him as he lay chewing his cud. Then we scratched his nose. He didn't

mind, so we scratched his ears. Somehow we were climbing up one side - I had to help chubby, clumsy Laurie - and sliding down the other. Eventually we climbed over his horns and slid down his nose. We soon realized there were things we could do for our wonderful, huge playmate, which we thought of as the delightful games of Swat the Flies, Tidbits for Broad, and Tickle the Ox's Nose.

Broad was seldom in the lighthouse field (we were not allowed out of it) except for those noons on which he was required for an afternoon shift. Mother, most unreasonably, insisted on a full hour for dinnertime - Dad would have leaped to his feet and gone to work at the last swallow. It would have done no good to tell him he must take a break; Mother argued that it wasn't fair to the hired man. Dad fidgeted, grumbled, but finally adjusted to a few minutes' relaxation after his meal. That was when we reveled with Broad, for apparently no adult ever learned of it. Mother was to write later that Lion was our first oxen friend. Actually, Lion's charms were then old hat.

A lengthy stay on the mainland resulted in Betty June, five years younger than I; everyone had a dreadful time, very little of it her fault; that fall I began lessons, with Mother my teacher; a decidedly squiffy Laurie was sent to play by himself - he was not good at it; Teddy disappeared, Pinknose arrived; Rags went, Peggy, a cross black Labrador came; Grandpa Fox acquired a new radio and donated the old one to us; nothing was ever the same again.

Chris Mills is an author and NSLPS board member.



Bon Portage Island lightstation in 2004. Chris Mills

Scatarie Lighthouse 46° 02' 04.3" N -59° 40' 33.7" W

Located at the eastern tip of Scatarie Island off Cape Breton's eastern coast, this lighthouse is another light that is wasting away.

Typically, lights located on an island are very hard to promote as they are isolated and difficult to access. Being out of sight means that they get little or no funding from government for upkeep and there is no community group to champion their cause.

Scatarie lighthouse, although still standing, has now been replaced with a light on a steel tower. No money will be spent on upkeep of the existing lighthouse. We are told that water has caused severe damage to the beams in the lighthouse structure and it is now unsafe to enter.

The final fate of Scatarie is still uncertain. Without intervention we will certainly soon lose this light.

Chris Mills and Keenan, grandson of Clive Lahey, who provided Chris with transportation to Scatarie in September 2012. Chris and Keenan are sprucing up the gravesite of a lightkeeper's child who died on the island many years ago. Photo courtesy Chris Mills

