

The Lightkeeper

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The objectives of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society are to promote and to support the preservation and awareness of Nova Scotia lighthouses; to assist community groups

in leasing or taking ownership of 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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jmccormick@nslps.com

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Meredith O'Hara

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Send items for publication to The Lightkeeper, c/o Meredith O'Hara e-mail media@nslps.com.

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From The Editor

Welcome back lighthouse lovers. Winter is almost over and soon spring and then summer will bring our beautiful province back to life.

Whether you've been hibernating, or enjoying the winter weather and activities that come with it I know you'll be as excited as I am to get back to our lighthouses and coastlines without the threat of a winter storm blowing in. This is my third lightkeeper and I hope you find it full of interesting and useful information. We are working at expanding our newsletter and are always interested in hearing from you.



Did you discover a lighthouse we've never heard of? Or maybe traveled to another part of the world where, though they're different the lighthouses still shine bright? Get in touch, we'd love to feature your work in our next Lightkeeper.

Lighthouse Project Update

By: Larry Peyton

The crowdfunding campaign for the #NSLighthouseProject is getting back into full swing after intentionally giving it a hiatus during the winter season. At just past the halfway point of the goal, I'm hoping more people realize the value of the images and videos I produce, and help out by donating to the cause.

Though I would certainly like to reach all 28 remaining beacons for completion of the venture, I am dependent upon cooperative weather, a friendly North Atlantic Ocean, availability from work and family commitments, and assistance from others. With fingers crossed, I will be focusing my springtime efforts on capturing the remaining offshore lights along the Southern Shore, from Shelburne County up to the Halifax Regional Municipality. These lighthouses include Seal Island, Cape Roseway, Gull Rock (Lockeport), Port Mouton, Coffin Island, Cross Island, Kaulback Island, East Ironbound Island, Pearl Island, Betty Island and Beaver Island.

Hopefully the crowdfunding campaign will be reinvigorated, as I will need additional funds beyond what has been currently raised in order to capture the remaining 15 offshore lighthouses in Pictou County, Guysborough



County and Cape Breton. Please consider becoming involved and joining the cause by donating, spreading the word and sharing the videos and photos from the #NSLighthouseProject.

To all those who have helped to date, please accept my most sincere appreciation. I am humbled by your love of this project, your passion for our lighthouses, and your generosity. Without you, I would not be able to capture every beacon in this province and share the footage, at no commercial gain, for all to enjoy.



NSLPS Annual General Meeting Announcement Wednesday April 25th, 2018

Please join us for the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society's 24th annual meeting. The meeting begins at 7pm in the Small Craft Gallery of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, at 1675 Lower Water Street in Halifax.

We'll feature reports covering the newest information in lighthouse preservation, our annual reports and the presenting of the Craig Harding Award. Is there a light you're curious about? Do you want to know more about ways to get involved? Come out to our meeting and a member of the board will be happy to answer your questions. We sent out the new bylaws in the Fall Lightkeeper, and ask that you look them over and let us know any concerns you have, will be voting to pass them at the AGM.

We are pleased to have past president Barry MacDonald on hand with a special presentation about the history and importance of the Sable Island Lighthouses.

We'll have light refreshments afterwards, and you'll have a chance to meet up with old friends and make some new ones too. Come out and renew your NSLPS membership, or join for the first time.

The meeting agenda will include:

- 1 - Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda
- 2 - Approval of Minutes of Previous AGM (April 26, 2017)
- 3 - Annual Reports
- 4 - Appointment of Auditor for 2018/2019
- 5 - President's Address
- 6 - Vote on Bylaws
- 7 - Election of Directors and Officers
- 8 - Awards and Recognition
- 9 - Sable Island Lighthouse Presentation - Barry MacDonald

We look forward to seeing you on April 25th.

Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, est 1993

Sable Island Lights

By: Barry MacDonald

Known as “the graveyard of the Atlantic”, Sable Island has a long history of shipwrecks that have taken countless lives.

The first humane or life-saving station was established on the Island in 1801. It wasn't until 1872 however that lighthouses were established on both ends of the island. The cost of maintaining the lifesaving station for the fiscal year of 1871 was over \$8000.00 – a tidy sum back then. As the Federal Government was to soon find out, building & maintaining lighthouses on this wind-swept outpost would be an expensive undertaking as well.

The first lighthouses were impressive structures, well-designed to withstand the climate of Sable Island. The west light had buttresses anchored to massive concrete foundation blocks, built to secure the structure from winds, which for much of the year blew at gale force. These designs were the work of engineers at the Department of Marine & Fisheries which had only been in existence for four short years. From an engineering standpoint their work was impressive and for several years the structures held up well. What the engineers were unaware of however was

the effects that constantly shifting sands would have on these structures.

Sable Island is constantly moving in a west to east direction. Charts show that the island moved 14 kilometers between 1766 and 1996 – this while maintaining its crescent shape. This migration of sands is reflected in how many times lighthouses had to be either moved or completely rebuilt. On the west end of Sable there were a total of 8 lighthouse structures dating from 1872 to present day. Given the rugged maritime landscape coupled with the constantly shifting sands, Sable Island presented unique challenges for the engineers at the Department of Marine.

The design that worked best was the open, steel skeletal tower. It offered less wind resistance, was less expensive to maintain and could be disassembled and moved to a new location with less effort than its wooden counterpart.

Light-keeping at any island location is much different from that of a mainland station. Sable Island was unique in some respects given its 240 kilometer distance from the





supply depot in Dartmouth. Until the introduction of helicopters to the Coast Guard fleet in the 1960s, all supplies had to be transported to the Island by ship.

This meant that lightkeeping families had to double-check their grocery list as it was a considerable time between deliveries and there were no corner stores.

Most of the everyday

conveniences that lightkeepers on the mainland took for granted were absent on Sable.

Lightkeeping on Sable was very much a family affair and the isolation served to bring families close together. The last lightkeeping family to serve on Sable Island was the Dooks family who hailed from Jeddore on the eastern

shore. I have been fortunate to meet some of the family and have them share a few of their memories with me.

It is at this point that I will end my brief account of Sable Island lighthouses and ask you to join me at the NSLPS AGM on April 25, 2018.

As part of the AGM, I will be giving a presentation expanding on the history of what I have covered here as well as highlighting the contribution of the Dooks family to lightkeeping on Sable Island.



Fingers Crossed for the Terence Bay Lighthouse

In 2017 the Terence Bay Lighthouse was the first to receive support through the NSLPS's "Help a Light Shine" campaign.

To anyone who has visited this little pepperpot lighthouse, you know how incredibly stubborn, persistent and patient she is!

Since getting her heritage lighthouse status in 2015, she has bravely faced storm after storm with only the barest of patches when the wind and waves prove just too much.



The Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee is chomping at the bit to get in there and help her out.

There has been much, time and effort, plus complications at getting to this point our goal is still to save this lighthouse.

For her sake, we truly hope 2018 is finally her year to shine brightly once again!

For more information or to get in touch with the community group

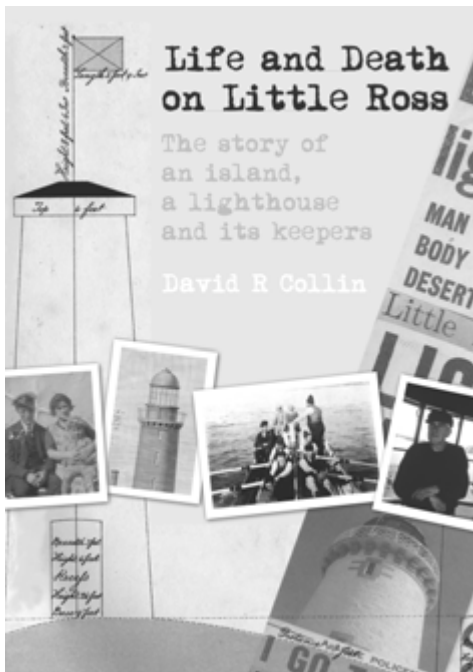
in Terence Bay go to www.facebook.com/TerenceBayLighthouse.

Lighthouse Book Reviews

By: Chris Mills

Life and Death on Little Ross: The story of an island, a lighthouse, and its keepers.

David R. Collin. Whittles Publishing. Dunbeath. 2017. Photos. Drawings. Appendices. 231 pp.



It's easy to romanticize or wax lyrical about lighthouse life, especially if you're not part of a lightkeeping family. Popular culture and Hollywood have conspired to portray the lightkeeper as a solitary stoic, polishing brass, lighting his

lamps and surveying the endless sea from his lofty perch, and perhaps writing a little poetry to help pass the time.

Okay, bits and pieces of that are true. But there's so much more. Isolation. Long night watches. Endless days of painting and maintenance. Weather observations. Gardening and raising livestock. Dangerous boat trips to shore for supplies. Keepers and their wives raised their children on tiny islands, where childhood freedom to roam was also accompanied by the dangers of jagged cliffs, treacherous seas, and isolation from medical services. Also... at least one island was the scene of murder.

Enter Little Ross. The lighthouse stands guard on a small island at the mouth of the River Dee, on the south coast of Scotland. Designed by the famous Stevenson family of engineers, the lighthouse went into service on the first day of 1843. For the next 117 years, more than 60 principal (PLK) and assistant keepers (ALK) and their families lived and worked on Little Ross. Author David Collin reveals how the lighthouse came to be, the stories of some of its lightkeeping families, and explains how he and his father were witness to the immediate aftermath of the island's most tragic event: the murder of assistant keeper Hugh Clark.

But Life and Death On Little Ross is far more than the story of the murder. Collin has written a broad-ranging human and natural history of the island, its keepers, and their families. The story of the lighthouse begins with a man who campaigned for years to have daymarks established on the island to help vessels navigate the River Dee to the town of Kircudbright. Shipbuilder and owner Captain James Skelly built two beacons on the island in 1819. It took a further 24 years, and a litany of pleas and petitions, before the Commissioners of Scottish Lights (later known as the Northern Lighthouse Board) built a lighthouse on Little Ross.

Collin provides brief accounts of the area's numerous shipwrecks, as well as delving into the light's design and construction, from bottom to lantern and lens. He details the layout of the station, right down to the dimensions of the courtyard at the base of the stone tower.

There is more to a lighthouse than stone and mortar, though, and Collin pays ample attention to Little Ross's keepers and their families. As he writes, "Few people...have had direct or indirect contact with the reality of the lighthouse service". Far from being loners and dreamers, most keepers were highly pragmatic, hard-working former mariners who upheld the rigorous standards set by the Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB). Woe betide the keeper who did not observe the specific and detailed duties (listed in the appendices) set down by the NLB! The stakes were high: in pre-radar and satellite days an extinguished light usually resulted in immediate dismissal.

Despite the rules and expectations, lighthouse life was largely uneventful, punctuated by storms and shipwrecks. Some keepers kept records of bird life on the island, one even submitting articles to *The Scottish Naturalist*. PLK William Begg wrote lovingly of autumn migration, his prose demonstrating an impressive knowledge of the birds frequenting his little island. Along with the birds, love was also in the air on Little Ross. Begg's daughter Catherine (Eva) "...must have made an impression on assistant keeper George Mackie...". George and Eva began to court, although with his future father-in-law was also his boss, George (and Eva)'s courtship, as Collin diplomatically states "...must have required discretion, restraint, and perhaps even a degree of daring".

George and Eva married, and eventually had six children. George's extensive diaries reveal his deep love for his children, and his hopes for their futures. The Mackies left in 1919 for another posting. New keepers came and went. Life moved to the rhythm of the sweeping light, the tides and the seasons...until August 18, 1960. This is where

Book Review Continued ...

Collin's account turns personal.

On that "fresh and fair" day, David and his father Thomas sailed to Little Ross for what they expected to be a pleasant day trip. After enjoying lunch near the shore, the men walked to the lighthouse. Oddly, not a soul stirred. Sensing something very wrong, the Collins entered the assistant keeper's house, where they found ALK Hugh Clark with what turned out to be fatal gunshot wounds to the head. There was no sign of ALK Robert Dickson, who had been filling in for the vacationing PLK John Thomson. That evening, police arrived on the island, with an official from the NLB, who, in a strange twist, had come to inform the keepers that the light was to be destaffed.

Police later arrested Dickson on the mainland. The ensuing trial turned out to be a traumatic affair for David Collin, who appeared in court as a witness. As the judge prepared to sentence Dickson to death by hanging, "...the building and its occupants were both illuminated and shaken by an enormous flash of lightning and a colossal peal of thunder". Shortly after Dickson's sentencing, the NLB automated Little Ross light, ending with a tragic note, more than a century of lightkeeping on the island.

The lighthouse and keepers' homes languished for a quarter of a century. In 1986, thanks to a lease agreement from the island's owner, a married couple and their friend began restoring the keepers houses, with friend Douglas Molyneux moving in and becoming a new type of "keeper". Renewed plumbing and wiring and interior renovations brought new life to the lighthouse compound.

Collin covers a lot of ground in *Life and Death On Little Ross*. Replete with letters, petitions, drawings, photographs and detailed appendices, the sheer volume of information can be a little overwhelming at times. However, Collin writes with great knowledge and affection for the island he has known since childhood. It is obvious that the murder and ensuing trial have affected him deeply. But Little Ross continues to beckon, and Collin has "no feelings of dread" when he visits the keeper's houses".

Little Ross was a lesser light than the more remote and dramatic and storied sites; Bell Rock, Dubh Artach, Skerrvore, Muckle Flugga - but it was no less important to the mariners who depended on it, or to the keepers who maintained it. Despite the tragic end to its staffed history, we are fortunate that Collin has set down the history of a small island lighthouse that might have otherwise faded into obscurity.

NSLPS Looking for New Board Members

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society is looking for new board members. The group has been around since 1994 and in the last few years many founding members have moved on to other projects after decades of commitment.

We are looking for individuals who are passionate about Nova Scotia's lighthouses and who would like to volunteer their time to help saving them.

The society works with communities and individuals throughout the province to raise awareness about our lighthouses and to support different efforts to preserve, protect and renew these wonderful icons of our past.

There are over 150 lighthouses in Nova Scotia, many of which are falling into disrepair. Communities throughout the province are doing their best to bring these lights back to life for the benefit of their area.

The Board meets once monthly at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. We are able to make arrangement for people to video conference into the meeting if you do not live in the Halifax region.

If you're interested in becoming part of our board or have



any questions about the work we do and how you can help please get in touch with Joanne McCormick, our president at pres@nslps.ca.

Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, est 1993

From the Archives: SEVEN YEARS ON THE SAMBRO LIGHTSHIP

By: Chris Mills

In November 1873 the Department of Marine and Fisheries placed Halifax's first floating aid to navigation at the entrance to the harbour. The Halifax lightship was stationed about five miles south east of Sambro Island.

Over the next nine decades, a series of lightships, "marked the beginning of the sea road to Halifax."

In 1966, the federal government removed Lightship No. 1, replacing it with a lighted whistle buoy. The present buoy is officially known as "Halifax Alpha", although some fishermen in Sambro still call it "the lightship buoy."

Andrew Hodder served on three of the Sambro lightships (Nos 5, 14 and 15), from 1947 to 1954.

I'm from Newfoundland - Bay L'Argent, Fortune Bay - down in the bay with the spiles and the fishes! During the war, I couldn't get in any of the services, so I decided, "Well, I want to go to sea, so I'll get a wireless ticket if I can." I did get one in 1944. The war was almost over by the time I got it.

After I got my ticket I went on the Park boats and went south, South America back and forth. Then one trip we were comin' back and I knew that the war was pretty close to bein' over and I signed off.

I signed up for two years on Sable Island. [But I was there] about six months. They were going to lay me off because all these guys were comin' back from the war and there was no job for me. I went back and figured this was the end of it and they said "No, no, you're going in the air service and we're sending you to Moncton to take a weather course."

And then when I went back a week later they said "No, you're not going in the air services! You're going to Resolution Island." Southern tip of Baffin Island. By the time I got home, it was 16 months, all told. Then I went out to the Sambro Lightship in December of '47.

Ahh, the Sambro Lightship! We used to go out on the Lady Laurier or the mounted police cutters or the navy. They had lots of little ships that could take us out. So the end of the month when we changed crews, we never brought the ship in. Always went out and done it at while she was still at anchor.

They'd have to put a surfboat over the side and there'd be all our luggage and then there'd be groceries and stuff like that to go for the next month and it was quite a trip. If it was rough it was really something!

The bigger ships like the Lady Laurier or even the Cornwallis, they would try to make a wind break for you, so the boat would have a half decent time to try to get everything aboard the [light]ship.

Sometimes you'd have to wait maybe six or seven times before the boat would come up and the lightship could come down, or you'd jump, or somebody'd be there to grab your arms and haul you aboard. Then you'd see all your buddies and everybody lined up to go ashore, because they'd be all takin' off and want to get going.

Then you'd go down to your room and start putting things away. [The cabins were] terrible! Especially in the old #14 and #5. They were real old and they were all outboard bunks, so in the wintertime you'd have maybe an inch and a half of frost on the side of the bunk. When she'd go down in the sea and come up, cold air would come around the back of it. It'd be really something!

The ship was one of those things, she has a round bottom, she rolls from side to side and then when she comes up in a heavy sea and she drags on that anchor it's quite the thing! I was seasick for a while, that's for sure!

The complement was 11 men. That was 11 men that was always out there at one time. At the same time there'd be five, six of them ashore. The two deckhands was 12 hours on, 12 off and then when Sunday rolled around, they'd do a double shift because they'd been working that same midnight shift all along.

Two of the crew were cooks and one fellow was the peggie.



The chief cook and the peggie would be on together and then soon as the peggie's two months was up and when the other cook came back, he'd be going ashore. Now you'd have two cooks on board.

But the chief cook is still doin' the cookin' and the second cook we'll say, he's the peggie. That's the peelin' the potatoes and bringin' everything up and gettin' everything ready for the crew and then putting the lunches out for them at night. He was actually waiting on the captain, the engineers, and the wireless operator.

The reason for having a beacon operator because she had a [radio]beacon, and therefore ships were taking bearings all the time from the Sambro Lightship and they'd take them from Seal Island and Cross Island and Beaver Island all along the coast. The lightship was the one for the entrance to Halifax Harbour, so they really needed it.

If you had thick-a-fog, the beacon was on continuous for the whole 24 hours if it was fog for 24 hours. But the regulations were such that every three hours I could shut down for 10 minutes and in that 10 minutes I'd either get traffic or send traffic.

The traffic that I would be relaying was mostly people getting sick and having to go ashore and then other things -- things that the engineers wanted. I'd make up a list and send that ashore for them to send it out, and some boat goin' by would drop it off for them. Sometimes they'd have leaks on the ship that caused a problem and they'd have to get information from the shore whether we should come in or what we could do.

I wouldn't be very busy at all -- I'd be helping everybody else! I'd check the batteries, I'd check the beacon -- our biggest problem was if it was a thick-a-fog or you had ice building up on the antennas, we had other stations that was monitoring to see that the beacon was working. But when the thing really iced up and you had about two inches of ice on the antenna, nobody could hear it that was any more than maybe 10 miles away. So the other stations would report you as not being on the air, so you'd have to log that. That kept you busy every three hours and you made sure

you were there for that one reason.

[The light was] all hundred watt bulbs up on the top of a little cage. But then when the new one, #15 came out, the diesel job, well everything was enclosed. And the other one you had to climb up a mast to get to them where this here you climbed up, it had a tripod and you climbed up and lots of room and inside a cage, was just great.

The fog horn was a horrible thing! The operator's room was right underneath the fog horn! Oh, it was real loud! In fact, it was funny the way things would go. Everyone would be out there, they'd be playin' cards and then all of a sudden that fog horn would come on and everyone would run for their room to get away from the fog horn.

Around [August], from then on, you'd be getting all kinds of weather. You'd hear of a hurricane coming up the coast and you'd see all the trawlers, you'd see all the ships all heading for Halifax, but you stayed there! Well, you were an aid to navigation so you had to be there. Just like an old buoy!

[One time] Captain Boudreau was out there with us and it was a cross sea and comin' up on the end of the chain. She'd jerk sideways on it and be hit by a big wave and she'd roll down under. Captain Boudreau and I were looking at each other when she went down and the water came in thorough everywhere, places you wouldn't think it could come in through. He said "I didn't think she would ever come back!" And then he said "Doesn't seem to worry you!"

I said "No, I'm too stupid, I don't know what's goin' on!" They'd have fellows come out aboard the ship and they wouldn't be aboard any more than 15 or 20 minutes when they would get seasick. I had all kinds of Gravol and stuff with me because I was always figurin' I'd be seasick and my problem was sinus, but it has the same effect as sea sickness and I didn't find that out 'till years later.

One fella, he got all his discharge papers out and he said "Here's 20 ships that I was on and I was never seasick, and I get on a pisspot like this and I'm seasick!"



And then we had a pilot. The CBC was going to make a little do on the ship. It was such a nice fine day when they arrived out there. [They] were gonna stay about three days and we couldn't get any rolling seas. We had to put a hose out over the side and splash it on the side of the [ship], to make it seem like we were in some kind of a storm! But this airline pilot, he was with them and he got seasick. And he was really, really mad to think that he would get in an aircraft, fly upside down, inside out, loops the loop, never sick at all and then come out in a thing like a lightship and get sick! He was really, thoroughly done in with himself to think that "Here, what's goin' on?!"

We had a captain, he was on old two and three-masted schooners way back, and on draggers -- Captain Whynacht. And when he got aboard the ship and was standin' there, he looks at me and he says "Tunderation! This things's got a movement all of her own!"

During the war they had quite a few mishaps.[The crew] saw a lifeboat going by and there was bodies in it and they knew they were frozen. They upped anchor and moved to pick those people up and they were reprimanded for it because that ship should have been on station.

[Another time] it was a thick-'a-fog and the convoy was going out. They always had a barrel, a 45 gallon drum on a long hawser out the back, so the other ship could follow behind him. The lightship got hit by one of them on the way out and she couldn't stay on station in the condition that she was in. The bow was all broken in and it took the boats on the side that was hanging out over.

The hawse pipe and the chain was all caught up together in the bow and 'course with the lightship, the anchor chain goes right down through the middle of the bow, not like most other ships. It had jammed everything up. Jimmy Rose [radio operator] was the youngest fellow on the ship at the time and [he said] they all took turns all night long and they were sawing, trying to saw through that big chain. I wish you could see the size of it!

We had a submarine one time. They knew where we were and they just stayed astern of us. When we got up in the morning, there was a submarine behind us and we could

look right in through the torpedo tubes at the crew!

* * *

Well, [the job on the lightship] just meant that I was home. That's the main thing. I could see the TV tower on the mainland and I know where I lived and I'd be out for a month.

Bein' an old Newfoundlander, it's all in a day's work and you don't see anything to talk about anyway! It was hard on my wife on days like in the winter time. We were a coal burner at home too. So the coal would come. My wife and the

young fellow would have to shovel it in. [It] was half hard coal, half coke. When I'd come home I'd think I was helpin' her out and through the night it would get so bloomin' hot here that she said "Leave that fire alone!"

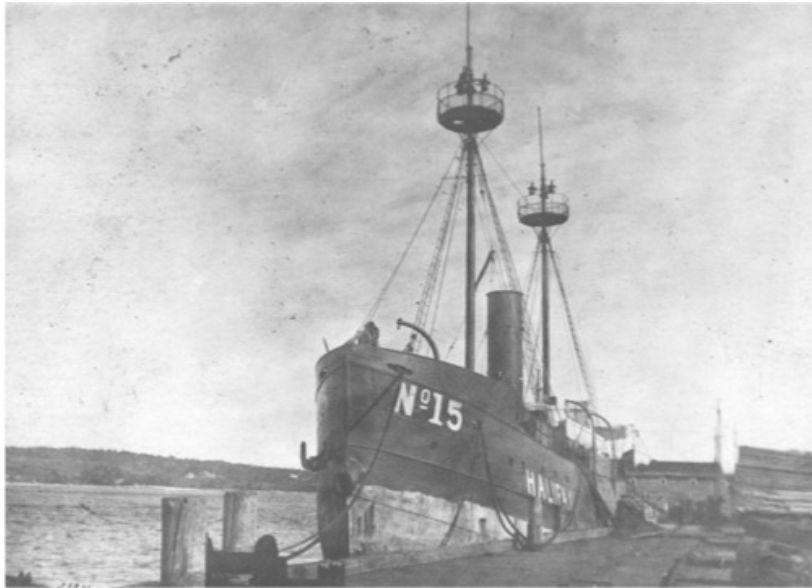
So the worst about it would be that I wasn't home. And the best about it, I liked the crew. The fellows that were on there were just fantastic. The

cook, you could get anything to eat from him. Every week, we'd make 12 dozen donuts and he'd get the old pot goin' on the stove and cut the doughnuts out and throw them in. It was my job to turn them over and put them out.

I'll tell you one thing that happened and that was before I went out on the ship itself. The lightship came in for coal in a thick-'a-fog and 'course there was no radar or anything, and they stayed in down over in the cove by Maughers Beach.

The Marblehead Race was on and [the boats in the race] were to go on the outside of the lightship and then come around. But no lightship there! Some of those guys were mad because they figured that they spent so much time lookin' for the lightship that they lost the race. [Bob] Chambers had a cartoon in the paper and it was fantastic. It showed a codfish with a lantern underneath its fin sayin' "Where in the hell is that lightship!?"

Chris Mills interviewed Andrew Hodder at his home in Halifax on August 17, 2001.



Post Storm Inspection of Sambro Island!

By Joe Flemming

On Feb 20th 2018, Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic (Unit of Joint Task Force Atlantic) delivered members of the 14 Construction Engineering Squadron and members of the Sambro Island Lighthouse Heritage Society (SILHS) safely to Sambro Island for a post storm inspection of the Light Station. The trip required braving the turbulent waters of the North Atlantic which had already scrubbed 2 previous attempts.



Unfortunately, Winter 2018 brought with it some of the fiercest winds our coastline has felt in years. As we rounded the cove not knowing what to expect, we were elated to see the gas house standing there. As if waiting for us.

The lighthouse, though there was no doubt about her resilience, was perched atop of the island looking proudly over the sea.

But the good news was not to last. As we walked down the rocky slope towards the waters edge, a glimpse of the last remaining Keepers Dwelling starts to show itself through the fog.

Almost as if embarrassed to show it's weakness. A structure that has endured decades of neglect, wind, waves and rain, was down on one knee. As if to say. I can't go on. Please go on without me. It's crazy how an old building, cold and empty, can bring emotions of warmth and fulfillment while imagining it's life before my time.

Her days remaining are few. And it should be a lesson to us all. Unless we learn from our past, to preserve our past, memories will be all that



remain. Memories have a shelf life not much longer than a lifetime.

The Atlantic Ocean is beautiful, but our winter weather in Nova Scotia can cause real damage to coastal structures like our lighthouses and surrounding buildings. The work to keep these lights shining bright is important as they connect us to the past and our Maritime heritage.



Remembering Lighthouse Advocate Debbie Lee Pearson

By: Joanne McCormick

A tragic cross-country skiing accident claimed the life of Debbie Lee Pearson, of Cape Breton, in March of this year.

Debbie Lee, along with Lawrence and Danielle MacSween, Rob Murphy, and Rick McCready, spearheaded the effort to save the Low Point Lighthouse outside Sydney in Cape Breton by entering the THIS LIGHTHOUSE



MATTERS competition, in 2015 and winning the top prize of \$75,000.

The lighthouse restoration will finish up in late spring of this year. Both NSLPS and the National Trust of Canada mourn the loss of this bright and spirited woman.

Low Point Lighthouse will stand and shine a little brighter due to her leadership. Thank you Debbie Lee, you will be missed.

A Trip to Scotland - Three Scottish Lighthouses

By: Matt Burke

This past summer I had the chance to visit the beautiful country of Scotland. As part of that trip I was fortunate enough to visit the Outer Hebrides islands. But the only way to get there is by boat. I took a ferry ride from Oban to Castle Bay on the island of Barra.

Many Nova Scotians will have roots here as Barra is the home of the McNeil clan. The journey to Barra is a six-hour ferry ride that takes you past three Scottish lighthouses. I was not expecting to see any lighthouses on this trip and was not able to get to see these magnificent structures up close.

These lighthouses are remarkable for how different they are in design from Canadian lighthouses here in Nova Scotia despite some of them being between over one hundred and fifty years old.

The first lighthouse you encounter shortly after leaving Oban. It is the Lismore Lighthouse, located on the inlet of Eilean Musdile in the Firth of Lorne in the entrance to Loch Linnhe. It was designed by the Scottish civil engineer Robert Stevenson whose family is well known for designing and building several lighthouses over a period of

150 years. It was opened in October 1833 and cost 4,260 pounds to build. It initially showed a fixed white light and was operated by the Northern Lighthouse Board. In 1910,



Lismore Lighthouse

the board converted lights to dioptric or Fresnel lenses and this light was one of the only ones left running catoptric lenses. The lighthouse itself had a staff of four men who

Scottish Lighthouses Continued ...



Rubba nan Gail lighthouse

had six weeks on station followed by two weeks off. Provisions were brought to the station by a boatman permanently attached to the station. In 1965 the light was automated at an estimated cost of 10,000 pounds. Today, it is operated by Oban Depot Personal.

The next lighthouse I saw on my trip was Rubba nan Gall lighthouse. It is located on the Isle of Mull, north of Tobermory. It was built in 1857 by David and Thomas Stevenson. The tower itself is on a small islet joined to the keeper's house by a bridge.

The light is displayed from a black painted lantern room on top of the tower, which is painted white. The base of the light is painted gold. You can access the tower from a walk along the cliff top from Tobermory. It stands 17 meters tall and the light was automated in 1960.

Today, the keepers cottage is a private residence. It is one of only two lighthouses in Scotland that are accessible by a bridge. The other light is Eilean Ban Light, which is of a similar design and is located on a small island of the same name located on Skye

Bridge and was also built in 1857 by David and Thomas Stevenson

The last lighthouse I saw on my trip was Ardnamurchan Lighthouse. This part of the ferry ride hits the open sea for

a few hours before reaching Barra. The lighthouse was built in 1849 and is located on Ardnamurchan Point in Lochaber which is west of Fort William in the Western Highlands. Ardnamurchan Point is the most western point on the UK mainland.

The lighthouse itself stands 36 meters tall and was designed by Alan Stevenson. Alan Stevenson was the son of Robert Stevenson who designed the light at Elean Musdile. Alan's nephew was the famous author Robert Louis Stevenson.

The lighthouse is one of the only lighthouses in the world designed in an Egyptian style making it fairly unique.

The tower was automated in 1988 but is still operational today. The keeper's cottage and other buildings have been operated as visitor Centre since 1996 allowing visitors to learn about Scottish lighthouses and the flora and fauna of the area.



Ardnamurchan Lighthouse

New Lighthouse Map Showcases NS Lights

By: Joanne McCormick & Meredith O'Hara



on the grant for needed repairs.

The second map will be of our lost lighthouses, and we hope we won't have to add any more to that one. These two maps will also be used for presentations.

"I find it an interesting topic," said Eaton of why he wanted to do the lighthouse maps. "There's a sort of nostalgic glamour to lighthouses and especially the lost lighthouses map is just a good story, I like storytelling with maps, so that's a good one."

The third map will be an interactive digital map for anyone to access and learn about Nova Scotia and our lights. A much-needed update for NSLPS. As of this writing, it is still in the formative stage.

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society is very excited about a new project we're working on this year. Johnny Eaton, a student from the Centre of Geographic Sciences at the Lawrencetown NSCC, contacted us before Christmas with an offer we couldn't refuse.

Eaton's course requirement sent him on a search to find a map-making project. He chose to contact NSLPS with the offer of help which if not for school would cost thousands of dollars. Needless to say, we snapped Johnny up with the speed of light, and it has proven to be a very productive and fun journey.

Eaton tells us he came by his love of maps early in life when he used to make treasure maps that he would mail to his grandfather. Then his grandfather would "follow" the map and send back the treasure he had found.

NSLPS met early in the year to make a plan with Eaton and work out the details of what the maps would cover. There will be three maps in total.

The first map will be the "working map" for NSLPS. It will be a print map which will illustrate the lighthouses remaining in Nova Scotia. It will allow us to identify, and grade the condition of each lighthouse in real time. We are hoping to then be able to give out a grant to a lighthouse in need which has a community group that can build

Eaton hopes providing the society with an up-to-date map means more people will go visit Nova Scotia's lighthouses and by seeing all the lighthouses on the map, especially the lost lighthouses he hopes people get a better understanding of the lighthouses in Nova Scotia whether they're still here or lost to time.

"People learn visually and maps help them do that."



Cape Sable Island - Lighthouse Success

By: Leigh B. Stoddart

Our story begins in 2013 when we realized our Lighthouse was getting in pretty bad condition and that the possibility of losing it was at hand. I gathered a group of interested citizens together and suggested we do something about that.

We lobbied the Federal Government but were told there was no money available to support our cause because the government wanted to divest Lighthouses to private or municipal concerns. So we took it on ourselves (30 in number) to go it alone.

We were determined to bring the Lighthouse back to its former glory and purpose, and that we did by a number of ways. First we asked for financial support by way of donations from the general public. We had a go-fund-me effort going as well on the computer. It surprised us at the number of people that gave from other provinces and countries that shared our vision.

We were encouraged when a company from Chester (GN Thermoforming Equipment) gave us a \$10,000 check. This was a much needed boost. We were also involved in

holding suppers, shows, etc. which proved to be successful.

We also asked our local MLA Stirling Belliveau to see if the NDP Government could do something for us. Indeed they

did by presenting us with a check of \$50,000 at one of our dance functions. We were well on our way and very excited what we had accomplished in such a short time.

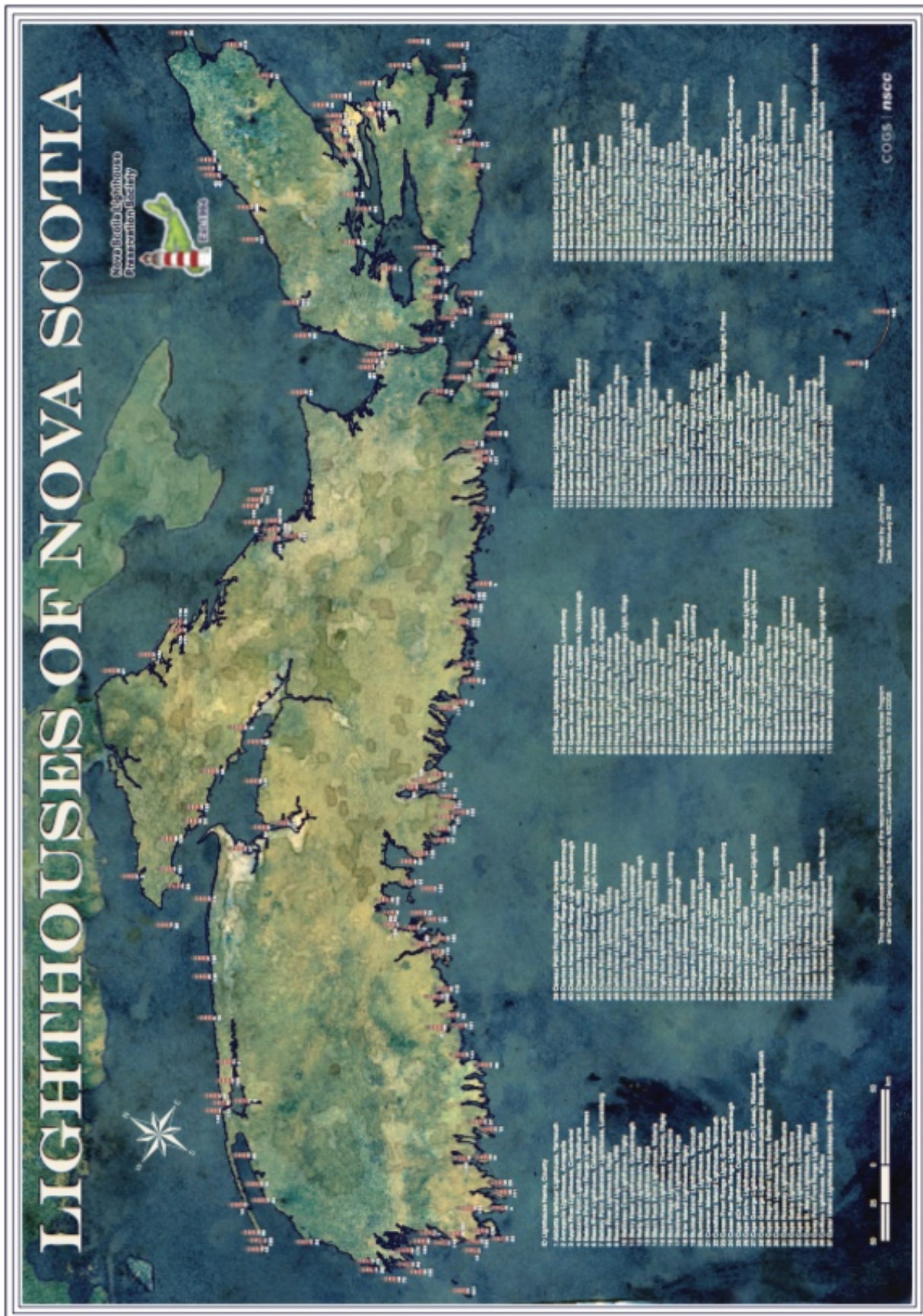
The rest is history and to date we have raised over \$130,000, the lighthouse looks wonderful and we now hold "Cape Day" every second Saturday in

August and boat 3 to 4 hundred people to see our lighthouse of which we are so proud.

The Cape Light is the tallest (101 ft.) in Nova Scotia and third tallest in Canada, and will have it's 100 anniversary in 2023. Information about the next Cape Day can be found on the group's facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/CapeSableLightFundraisingCampaign2013/>



Do you love Nova Scotia's Lighthouses? Would you like to learn more about them and help keep them around? We're always looking for new volunteers and board members. Learn more about our organization at nslps.ca or on facebook at www.facebook.com/NSLPS1993



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