

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

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The Lightkeeper

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Check out the
amazing story of
a light found after 40
years on Page 3!!



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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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

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From The Editor

We hope you were able to make it out to some of our beautiful lighthouses this summer. There were so many exciting opportunities, from Sambro Days to the Cape Sable Island tours, to the Medway Head lighthouse which welcomed visits all summer long and



Walton Lighthouse which is off the beaten track but well worth the trip, communities throughout Nova Scotia were enjoying the beautiful summer we had and the lighthouses that dot our shores. As a board member of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society I recently was able to attend a national conference on heritage preservation. One of the key issues discussed was the idea that it isn't the buildings alone people will rally around to save but the stories that the buildings help us remember. As The Lightkeepers' Editor I hope some of those stories come to life in these pages and inspire our readers to get involved and protect our lighthouses and the stories they hold.

Lost Nova Scotia light found in New Brunswick

By: Kathy Johnson

Originally published in the Tri-county Vanguard

It's going to be pretty hard for anyone to top this 100th anniversary present to the Town of Clark's Harbour.

A long lost light from the Cape Sable Lighthouse that was found in an old government building on the waterfront in Saint John, N.B. is being returned to Cape Sable Island where it will be assembled and given a new home in the Seaside Heritage Center in Clark's Harbour.



Photos by Joe Flemming

The light is a 3rd order Fresnel lens that would have lit the way home for mariners from 1902 through to the 1980s on both the original Cape Sable Lighthouse that was built in 1861 and its replacement built in the early 1920s and is still operational.

The light, its base and its mechanisms and other mechanical equipment were found in 19 crates in an old government building on the waterfront in Saint John. On the crates were written Cape Sable Island main light.

Joe Flemming, President of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, said he had never heard of the light being missing until a man by the name of Ralph Holyoke stumbled upon it while in the city of Saint John while doing some volunteer work. He gave him a call one night and told

him about the crates.

"He sent me some pictures, so I sent them off to a couple of lighthouse experts ... they responded with we can't believe this has been found. It's been eluding us for decades. We often had an idea of where it might be, or heard rumors where it might be, but always ran into a dead end and were never able to locate it," he said. "When I

realized how excited they were about it, I realized I better get excited."

Flemming went to have a look, finding the 19 crates plus other mechanical equipment that holds and supports the lens, still unpacked from their trek across the Bay of Fundy decades ago.

"It's very rare to find all this together," he said. "The city managers of Saint John wanted it removed as soon as possible but they didn't want it to go in the wrong hands and get sold. They wanted it to be some place where it would be appreciated so that's why they reached out to us."

"Once we knew what it was we decided let's contact the Mayor of Clark's Harbour and see if he would want it and he does," said Flemming.

The timing couldn't have been better. With 2019 marking the 100th anniversary of the town, Flemming said, "It's the perfect opportunity to repatriate it back to Nova Scotia and bring it back to where it belongs."

For Mayor Leigh Stoddart the gift of the light was a surprise.

"I didn't know it was even in existence actually," he said, until he was contacted by Flemming. "When he asked if we were interested. I said certainly. It would be fitting for us where its our 100th anniversary. It would be great to have it back."

Mayor Stoddart said he is hoping the historic light is going to be the catalyst to get the Seaside Heritage Center open and operational again, especially for the 100th

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A #BriefHiatus but #FarFromDead

By Larry Peyton



Photo by Larry Peyton

Like life in general, the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Project has been full of ups and downs, mixed in with some speed bumps, u-turns and empty fuel tanks. Though the endeavour has been fraught with a variety of unanticipated impediments, our commitment is made to the ideology that the 'show must go on'.

Let me provide you with an update.

Once I managed to get through my nasty bout with endocarditis and then, just a few months later, open heart surgery, the project kicked into high gear as Cory and I made our way around the province. With a reasonably steady pace, we successfully captured lighthouse after lighthouse along the coastlines of the province.

Add in some appearances on the news, in traditional print and online stories, as well as on radio and television, the project was in high gear. We were pleased with the progress, astonished by the attention and humbled by the support.

With almost every lighthouse on the mainland captured, focus was turned to the offshore lights. Since we have never accepted financial backing – personal savings have funded the project – and we failed to obtain sufficient volunteer services to get us to every island beacon, we were forced to consider altering the terms of this hobby project. After discussions with a dear friend about the potential change in course, we received some advice: crowdfunding to raise money needed for fuel, hotels and the like so that we could finish what we started.

Shortly thereafter, we encountered a string of mishaps, missed opportunities and bad luck.

It began when I tried to post a lighthouse photo on social media as thanks for a local society donating funds to our cause. I plugged the external hard drive into the laptop and clicked the icon to open the folders. The hard drive responded with a peculiar series of noises and on-screen error messages. It was immediately ejected and, over the

next several weeks, examined by several computer repair technicians. Each tech ultimately provided the same devastating message: the hard drive had a complete failure, resulting in the retrieval of absolutely no data.

Not only were photos and videos of several recent lighthouse captures now lost, but so were important family pictures, including the graduation ceremonies of my eldest child. I was devastated. My creative spark was ultimately impacted so much that I put the camera and the drone away for a while.

The crowdfunding support from people throughout the province, around the country and even internationally, continued until the holiday season, at which point we decided to scale things back a bit until later in the new year. We had reached the halfway point of our goal, and felt it only proper to get ourselves out on the water, put the drone up in the air, and start capturing lighthouses again. That is, until I received a phone call.

The representative of a government agency on the other line of the phone advised they received notifications regarding the #NSLighthouseProject. Apparently, some person(s) had taken offence to the project, claiming it to be a commercial venture rather than merely a hobby, and hence issued a complaint(s). The verdict: since we had accepted money via crowdfunding, the project transitioned from pastime to business.

Though I argued otherwise – since not a photo was sold, not a dollar was taken for video footage, not a scrap of the project was beyond a true hobby, and that money raised was to help with getting us to locations, as opposed to fund the use of the drone – I was told that if I had captured any footage for the #NSLighthouseProject with a drone since accepting crowdfunding, I would be in violation of the regulations and could be fined.

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Photo by Larry Peyton

Saying Goodbye: Lew Perry

By: Matt Burke

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our past-treasurer Lew Perry after a short illness that on May 16, 2018. Lew was born on March 12, 1934 in Brass Hill, Nova Scotia and was the son of the late Roy and Lillian Perry.

He joined the Royal Canadian Airforce in 1952 as a communications technician. This allowed him to travel across Europe and Canada where in 1958 he married his wife in Newfoundland. Settling in Dartmouth in 1971 Lew eventually left the military to work with the Public Service of Canada before retiring in 1989.

He was a lover of history, particularly lighthouses as well as the history of Barrington and Shelburne County.

Joanne McCormick was on the NSLPS board for many years spending her last few years as President. She knew Lew during that time.

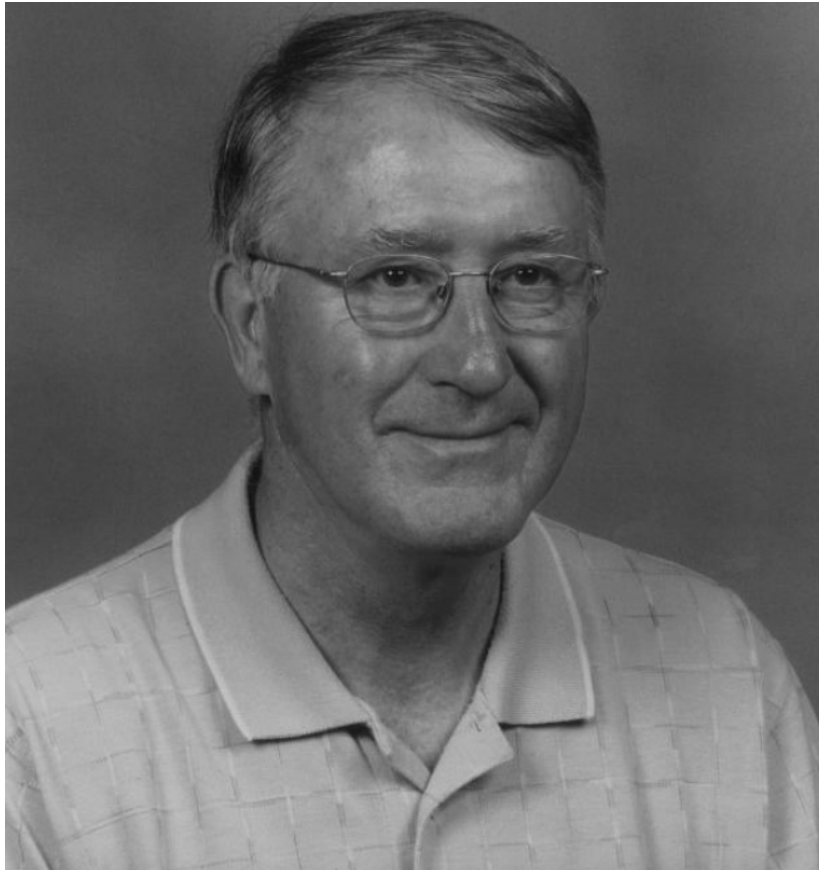
"Lew Perry was on the Board of NSLPS when I first joined the Society in 2005. In all the years I knew him, Lew was always the consummate gentleman. As treasurer of the Society, he performed his tasks with quiet professionalism. I never heard him complain."

"Through the years, I came to know him as a devoted husband to his wife, Janet, and a proud father of his adult children. Lew possessed a dignity few people know."

"After his wife Janet passed, Lew's health went downhill rapidly. Although he is now gone, Lew left a legacy of devoted service. He will be remembered for a long time to come. He was one of the builders of our organization. Thank you, Lew."

Barry MacDonald was president of NSLPS for many years and got to know Lew quite well over that time. He wrote the following about his memories of Lew.

"I first met Lew Perry when I joined NSLPS in the Fall of 1997. Lew had joined the Board a year previous and was I



believe, in charge of membership. It wasn't until I became president in 2003 that I got to know him on a personal level."

"Since I passed close to his house, we would drive together to Board meetings and it was during this time that we talked about our families, our careers and of course our mutual love of lighthouses."

"It was also during this time that I learned of his Loyalist roots and of his love of history. He also loved to travel and explore lighthouses and was always accompanied by his wife Janet. I don't think Lew ever missed an NSLPS-led lighthouse tour and was always first to volunteer to help make

sure the trip went well."

"Lew was a stickler for detail and punctuality, two attributes which contributed to his successful management of both our membership & treasurer positions (he managed both jobs for a couple of years). Whenever a financial matter was discussed, Lew could always be counted on to come up with sound reasons for why or why not a financial expenditure should be considered. In short he had the trust and respect of all Board members."

"As I said in my final report as NSLPS president, my greatest reward was the people I met along the journey. I will always remember Lew Perry as a kind, gentle and generous man – one of the 'good guys' whom it was my pleasure to have known."

As for myself, I did not know Lew very well. I only met him when he stepped off the board in 2014. I had just finished university and NSLPS had agreed to take me on to succeed Lew as my first accounting position. I say succeed because I could never hope to replace Lew. He was a kind man who loved lighthouses and took his work very seriously while still having fun with what he was doing.

All of us at the NSLPS express our sympathies and condolences to Lew's family on his passing.

Lighthouse Project continued from page 4 ...

Luckily, due of the loss of artistic passion after the hard drive crash, the drone had not been in the air.

With the loss of some lighthouse captures due to the external drive failure, the project no longer being accepted as a hobby according to the governing agency, and the stall in support to move beyond the halfway point of the crowdfunding goal, a hiatus was necessary to problem solve. Not to halt the project, but rather to reassess and determine the best path to complete the venture while adhering to all regulations.

As such, the past several months have been spent giving consideration to alternate methods of capturing the remaining lighthouses, as well as acquiring and testing equipment that could potentially allow me to still complete the task.

Then, just a couple of weeks ago, a spark of light at the end of the tunnel had finally begun to flicker. Newly proposed rules and regulations were announced pertaining to the use of drones, which appear to have a positive impact on the #NSLighthouseProject.



Photo by Larry Peyton

Without inundating the reader with technical jargon and legal wording, these changes could allow me to complete the venture with its initial intention: capture every lighthouse in Nova Scotia via drone. Though it still remains unconfirmed, as the final regulations have yet to be published in the Canada Gazette Part II 2018, our string of bad luck seems to be finally coming to

a conclusion.

To meet the preferred level of the new regulations, I am currently working towards the purchase of a new, much smaller, drone that would complete the captures at the same level of expected viewing quality.

We are committed to seeing this project through to its end. We have 28 beacons remaining to record, as well as another 10 that must be recaptured due to the loss of data from the hard drive failure. We are devoted to providing the time, planning, effort and travel to get every single one.

Put your name on history. Let's complete this together.

Visit: <https://ca.gofundme.com/nslighthouseproject>

Lost light continued from page 3 ...

anniversary celebrations next year. The center has not been open for a few years.

"We want to re-assemble it at the Seaside Heritage Center. I think that will be a good spot for it," he said.

Mayor Stoddart said the light would be transported to the town, perhaps as soon as this coming week. It is presently in secured storage.

Flemming said the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society will give the Town all the support they need to get the light back together.

"What's unique about these lights is there really are no two alike. It's safe to say that there are probably only one or two people left in Canada who have ever put one of these things together," Flemming said.

"Typically they were assembled back in the 1920s or earlier and most of those people are gone. Finding the expertise is very difficult," he added.

"We're hoping between the resources we have here that we will be able to do it, but we may have to reach out to people in the U.S. who still operate this type of light."

Flemming said he thinks it will be quite a project.

"It's not going to happen overnight," but in the end, he said, it's "going to be an incredible piece for Clark's Harbour."

***The article was republished with permission from Kathy Johnson, reporter for the Tri-County Vanguard**

2017 NSLPS Spring AGM Update

By Denyse Contrasty

Thirty-six members of NSLPS and the public attended the NSLPS AGM on April 25, 2018 at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.

Highlights of the AGM included the presentation of three new lighthouse maps created by cartography student, Johnny Eaton; the adoption of new by-laws; and the presentation of the Craig Harding award to Rear-Admiral John Newton who organized work parties to stabilize the gashouse on Sambro Island.

Outgoing President Joanne McCormick was presented with a framed photo of Sambro Island lighthouse taken by one of the "No Ka 'Oi" Drone Guys, Larry Peyton.



Photo by Sarah Almon

The guest speaker was Barry Macdonald who spoke of the transformation of the two lighthouses on Sable Island from traditional wooden buildings to skeleton towers that are now both inactive.

Like so many of the lighthouses in Nova Scotia, those on Sable Island survived storms and shipwrecks, leaving many fascinating stories behind as their legacy. Thank you to Past-President Barry Macdonald for sharing some of those stories with us.

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society holds its Annual General Meeting the fourth Wednesday of April each year.

Next year's meeting will be Wednesday, April 24.

New Lighthouse Maps

By Denyse Contrasty



Photos by Meredith O'Hara

Johnny Eaton, a Cartography student at NSCC campus in Middleton, approached Past President Joanne McCormick with the proposal to create three new maps using lighthouse information supplied by NSLPS.

The first map shows the locations in Nova Scotia where there is a traditional lighthouse structure as opposed to an airport beacon on a metal tower.

The second map shows the locations in Nova Scotia where there once was a lighthouse structure but is no longer standing.

The third map is web-based and will link to the existing NSLPS database for information on each lighthouse.

People who attended the AGM and saw the maps on display are already requesting paper copies of the first and second maps.

Once NSLPS has established a shipping process to cover handling and postage, we will offer copies of the maps for sale.



Sambro Island Tours

By: Joe Flemming

On September 11 2018, about 75 enthusiastic visitors enjoyed exploring Sambro Island, Nova Scotia, a small but significant granite island at the entrance of the Halifax Harbour.

The island was nicely groomed, providing easy access hiking through the provided trails.

The weather was as perfect as it could be for being offshore and in the North Atlantic. A light sea breeze, bright sunshine, and a wisp of white cloud provided a perfect contrast against a beautiful blue sky.

Sambro Island Lighthouse is the oldest continuously operating lighthouse in the Western Hemisphere, built in 1758. More than 250 years later, it did not disappoint.



Photos by John Beer and Josette d'Entremont

Visitors were treated to a short guided tour, followed by an opportunity to explore the island and its surrounding natural beauty.

During the tours, visitors were witness to the historic preservation work currently taking place, as they were able to see the red stripes getting a new lease on life.

Many thanks to our volunteers

who make this annual event possible during Sou'West Days in Sambro: Joe Flemming (President of the NSLPS), Paddy Gray (Captain of the Pic Pocket), Alan Maryatt, Sue Paul, Pat Blaikie, Bub Smith, Mark Smith, Nigil Kidd, John Beer, and Josette d'Entremont.



Good News After Almost 20 Years

By: Michelle Forrest



Photos provided by Michelle Forrest

After almost 20 years of community efforts to save the Terence Bay Lighthouse, and three years after it was deemed a Canadian Heritage Lighthouse (29 May 2015), repairs were carried out by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Coast Guard in July and August!

Using the blueprint of the original lighthouse design from 1903, they will replicate the original top, removed when the automation of lighthouses began in the mid-twentieth century.

Whether you were born-and-bred in Terence Bay, also call the coastal community 'home', or are one of folks anywhere who value culture, heritage, and community as shared public responsibilities – the repairs to the Terence Bay Lighthouse are cause for us all to celebrate. Many people deserve thanks, and have themselves to thank, for their loyalty to this community effort: neighbours and relatives, friends of the Terence Bay light and other lighthouses, elected government representatives, public servants, engineers, carpenters – too many to name and many likely unknown.

Some of the diverse actions these community-minded people took in reaching this historic moment are: letter- and report-writing, researching, submitting applications, pre-hurricane repairs, running and attending meetings and annual Lighthouse Day, baking, path-clearing, fund-raising,

designing logo and other promotional goods, community and government advocacy for heritage lighthouses locally and globally. All the folks who care and support the survival of this 'pepper-pot' treasure at the mouth of Terence Bay have this moment as thanks for everything they have done.

This long, sometimes frustrating process of advocating to save the Terence Bay Lighthouse represents what heritage lighthouses have always represented. Lighthouses worldwide stand for the enduring value of what happens when good folks work amiably, equitably, and faithfully together for a common good. The fact that this unique heritage lighthouse will continue as a working light, on its original site, and join all lighthouses that are sustained as a public trust fulfills the goal of Canada's Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act (in force 29 May 2010). And, more importantly, it restores people's faith in the democratic process. So many can be grateful for so much, with reawakened hope for the future of community-minded social action!

Don't forget Lighthouse Day in Terence Bay (est. 2001), always the Sunday after Labour Day, weather permitting. This year we had a special cause to celebrate!



Medway Head Art Show

By: Marieke deRoos



Photo by Marieke deRoos

Pristine, sunny weather greeted community members and tourists on August 17, 2018 as the Lighthouse Awareness Art and Craft Show began. The highly-anticipated event in Port Medway is the Medway Head Lighthouse Society's (MHLS) major annual fundraiser, now in its eighth year.

The Warehouse – found just beside Port Medway's Government Wharf and Lighthouse Park – was packed wall-to-wall with jovial art lovers and lighthouse enthusiasts, snacking on delicacies and sipping wine. This evening kicked-off the ten-day art show, run by MHLS board members and other volunteers.

The show didn't stop at the Warehouse, however. The

show's second venue, Seeley Hall – just a stone's-throw down the road – had traditional crafts on display. Meanwhile, patrons were also invited to visit Medway Head on Long Cove Road for lighthouse tours during art show hours.

While most artwork on display was produced by local artists, people from all over the country contributed pieces in an effort to preserve a significant piece of Port Medway's heritage. Artists received a portion from sales, with the bulk of proceeds going toward the lighthouse.

MHLS board President, Donald Allan, expressed that this event saw record-breaking numbers, with the highest amount of attendees as well as revenue.

"This was our most successful year financially to date, raising \$6,000 with all proceeds going to repairs to the lighthouse". Allan continued, "To date we have spent over \$35,000 on major repairs to the building and making the building watertight. Our next project slated for the spring will be to repaint the red on the upper part of the lighthouse".

After such a successful event, it is clear the interest to preserve the Medway Head Lighthouse doesn't end with the society's passionate and hard-working board members.

Locals, summer residents, and even tourists who pass through, recognize the significance of this folkloric icon and contribute so much to its well-being.



Two Lighthouse Visits

By Howard Eaton

Margaretsville

On June 22nd I visited the light at Margaretsville, NS. It was a beautiful warm summer day and the beach was full of colour and fresh air.

Margaretsville, like many of the Fundy coast communities is a shadow of what it once was, but it still offers visitors a quaint seaside community, with friendly people, a few fishing boats and a unique lighthouse.

Margaretsville is a wonderful location for a visit or a picnic and offers exceptional vistas on a clear day. Access Margaretsville from Kingston on highway 362 north. The lighthouse is operational and is run by the Canadian Coast Guard. It appears to be in decent shape but could use a coat of paint!

Background:

The lighthouse is a 22 foot high tapered square wood tower painted white with black bands which makes it somewhat unique in Nova Scotia.

The white light is shown 30 feet above the water.

The Margaretsville lighthouse was built in 1859 when the residents of Margaretsville decided that a lighthouse was a necessity to navigation for vessels plying the water of the Bay of Fundy in ever increasing numbers. The original light was kerosene powered.

The first keeper of the Margaretsville light was William Earley, 1859-1887.

John Earley succeeded his father as lightkeeper, holding the office from 1887 to 1907. While John was incumbent, the second floor of the light was converted to living quarters, where he stayed during bad weather. After John Earley's death, his widow, Mrs. Ruth Earley, became keeper from 1907 to 1910.

She had the distinction of being the only woman to actually be a keeper of the lighthouse. It was during her term that the old lantern, was removed and replaced with a new cast iron top which is the same one that is presently in use.



Horton Bluff Lighthouse

I visited the Horton Bluff Lighthouse in January to see how the light was faring. The light is in ok shape with the exception of the concrete platform which holds the lantern room which is deteriorated on the south side of the platform.

The structure's paint is very faded and the glass panels in the lantern room are very dirty or weathered and now look opaque. The bright red stripe that dominates the east side of the building is very faded and appears orange. The overall structure is in a field which is very grown over and this is actually the best time to visit the light if you want to see it and the surrounding views without being impeded by the foliage that grows there in the summer months.

The Horton Bluff Lighthouse sits on the west bank of the Avon River near the river mouth where it meets the Minas Basin. It is the third structure at this location with the first one built in 1861 and operated until it suffered the familiar fate of fire in April 1883.

A second light was constructed five months later which was a pyramid shaped structure with attached dwelling. It was in operation until 1961 when the structure was replaced by the present concrete square structure. The old lighthouse was bulldozed over the bank and burned after 78 years of service.

Horton Bluff was a front range light with companion light situated 539 meters away. The rear range was removed a number of years ago.

The power was disconnected in 2013 as there has been no commercial shipping in the Minas Basin since approximately 2009 when the gypsum mill closed.



Life on Fish Island

By: Betty (LeBlanc) Palleschi

When I tell people I grew up in a lighthouse, their faces tend to light up in surprise and interest. Lighthouse life was not as glamorous and idyllic as the movies may make it seem, but on Nova Scotia's Big Fish Island, we had plenty of good times and the kind of warmth that comes from life alongside a very big family.

I'm always proud to tell people that I grew up on Big Fish Island, in the mouth of the Tusket River in

Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia. This region has deep roots in Acadian history. The LeBlanc family is believed to have settled in Nova Scotia from France as early as 1645. The LeBlancs were among the largest families in colonial area Wedgeport, Nova Scotia, a prosperous fishing port city that became famous in the 1930s as the Sport Tuna Fishing Capital of the World.

The Tusket River Light Station was built in 1864 on the southwest point of Big Fish Island in the mouth of the Tusket River. To get there, you must take a boat from Wedgeport. The LeBlanc family would move back and forth between Massachusetts and Southwestern Nova Scotia many times over many centuries. My father, Luke LeBlanc was no exception, moving our family a few times after serving in the Canadian Army during WWI. But wherever he lived, he was never far from the ocean.

After marrying my mother, Tessie Doucet, in 1920, they moved to the Boston area. My dad built homes, boats, furniture and even a few guitars, in addition to taking fishing jobs. I was born in Saugus, Massachusetts, in 1928, the fifth of their 11 children. We lived in a house my father built.

When I was four years old, we moved to Lower Wedgeport, Nova Scotia. Dad had applied to be the lighthouse keeper on Big Fish Island – a job available to war veterans.

My life on the island, just a mile and a half from Lower Wedgeport, began in 1939. By then, I had six siblings: Verna, Esther, Billy, Bobby, Lolly (Lawrence) and Jean (My mother had given birth to two other siblings who passed by then as well: Marcella in 1922 and Phyllis in 1932). My brother, Victor was born on Fish Island in 1939, and my



Photo provided by Betty (LeBlanc) Palleschi

sister Aline was born in 1947.

On the island, we had no electricity or plumbing. My dad managed the kerosene which lit the way for seafarers several times day and night, cranking the wheel to make it light. He worked around the clock. We helped him by washing windows in the upper deck. He also had to maintain the family residence, connected with the lighthouse by a staircase on the second floor.

Dad also taught us how to tell the weather, which he had to log each day – the wind, the tides, awareness of coming thunderstorms, which were frequent, and intense. I remember hiding under the covers, shielding my ears from the wind and thunder. To this day, my kids rely on me for their weather report.

The Canadian government came to inspect the beacon, lighthouse, family residence and island a few times a year. They would supply paint, coal and wood to help keep the island in good condition. Dad went to the mainland once a month to get groceries – mostly canned goods, sacks of potatoes, flour and sugar. We had a small garden on the island where we grew string beans, lettuce, carrots – anything we could grow on hard land, in a foggy climate without much sunshine. In the summertime, we would row boats to a nearby island we named Strawberry Island, where we picked strawberries.

My mother was a very good cook. She baked fresh bread every morning and would often cook pies and donuts using lard and pork fat. We had a cow and a pig for awhile, but killed them after a year.

My favorite was her lemon meringue pie, which she would make if there was no fresh fruit on the island. Another favorite of mine was her Rappie Pie, a local dinner dish we all loved.

Life with 11 of us on the island could be hectic. We had school and chores. In good weather, we rowed a boat to shore to go to school, then walked over a mile. I still know how to row a dory, and I would tell all of my children and their friends that I rowed, then walked to school whenever they complained about getting up and going to school.

During the winter, we boarded with family and friends on

Fish Island Continued...

the mainland. Winters were tough, since we had no plumbing. We were used to using an outhouse, behind the lighthouse, but in colder months, we'd go to the bathroom in pots we kept under our beds. My mother emptied the pots every day.

I have fond memories of growing up on the island with all of my sisters and brothers. They saved me – the life of a lighthouse keeper was a lonely existence. We liked playing outside, running around, picking fruit and fishing. We liked to listen to music. My brothers, Lolly and Victor, learned to play the guitar and harmonica. They kept us entertained singing the latest songs that we heard from the radio.

Sundays were for church and socializing. We rowed out to the wharf and walked two miles to attend Mass. It didn't feel very far or inconvenient to us back then. If the weather was nice, we'd picnic after church or visit with other lighthouse families. We would go to Comeau's Hill or Peace Island or Candlebox Lighthouse. All of these lighthouses are now gone too! Such a shame to have lost them all.

Winters were hard on Fish Island. The weather was unpredictable but for my mother she found the season to be a very social time. There were two to three cabins on the island that were home to a few local fishermen for the fishing season. The season was from the end of November thru to the end of May. With the men came a woman cook. To my mother, this cook was her female adult company to socialize with. It helped her get through the tough times. In the summertime, there were also visitors to the island to come see the lighthouse and picnic.

Holidays were nothing special, just another day. There was one Christmas that I remember we had a Christmas tree and oranges were our treats or presents. On another special day, my sister, Verna, had a small wedding reception on Fish Island. A storm broke out of thick fog. The weather got so bad that all of the guests had to stay overnight. You had to fight the good and bad weather all the time on the island.

Our time on Fish Island came to an end in 1951. Dad came down with TB and had to go to the hospital. Once healthy, Dad built a home for Mom and the remaining children on the mainland of Lower Wedgeport. He lived out a very productive life until his death in 1982 at the age of 90. My mother continued to be a great cook and homemaker, producing many handmade quilts until her death in 1984 at the age of 83.

She passed on the quilting tradition to me – it was a great way to pass the time while creating something beautiful to help us keep warm. I've made many homemade quilts for all my family members.

I left Fish Island and Nova Scotia when I was a teenager, in 1944 to join two of my sisters, Verna and Esther, and my brother, Billy, who were living on the North Shore of Boston. This was a better place to begin an adult

life, away from the ruggedness of the island. We all got jobs in factories in this region. I met the love of my life, John Palleschi, while working at General Electric Company. We married in 1948 and had seven children, ten grandchildren and – to date – nine great-grandchildren. I lost John in 2014 after sixty-five years together.

The lighthouse at Tusket River Light Station was torn down in 1957 while a new house and separate tower were built for the new lighthouse keeper and his family.

There was also electricity run by a generator and indoor plumbing. The second structure was destroyed by a fire in June 1961 after it was struck by lightning during a severe storm. Another lighthouse was built after this fire.

A second and more modern house was built on the island in 1967-1968. In 1971, both houses were moved by barge to Pembroke near Yarmouth. The Tusket River Light Station became automated in 1970 and was decommissioned by the Canadian Coast Guard.

Today, I am surrounded by my family and friends and wonderful memories of a life well lived. But even though home is Massachusetts, and I was born in Saugus – I always tell people that I really grew up on Fish Island, Nova Scotia.



Walton Lighthouse: Worth the drive

By: Meredith O'Hara



Photos by Meredith O'Hara

Walton Lighthouse is a treasure tucked on the coast of the Minas Basin. Just over an hour from Halifax, this lighthouse is well maintained by the community and includes a short hiking trail for visitors to walk along and take in the view.

This lighthouse is posted on the highway signs along the 101 and many times I've thought I should take the detour and see what this light has to offer. When I finally got the chance this summer on a drive home from the Valley I was surprised by how far it was off the highway.

While it was a pretty drive along secondary highways, for someone who wasn't sure how far I had to go it was a

surprise to drive a full half hour before being sure I was on the right track.

However, all told it was well worth the drive and I'd recommend you head that way next summer. The light has a small shop open next to it, staffed by a summer student who gets to work in a beautiful spot.

You can climb up to the top of the lighthouse, even stepping outside of the lantern to get an amazing view of the Bay below. With some of the highest tides along this shore you'll rarely get the same view twice and can enjoy lunch on the lawn or walk down to the mud flats if the tide is out.

The Walton Lighthouse is a registered municipal heritage site. Constructed in 1873, the light's flashing character was provided by a clockwork mechanism that the keeper had to wind each night.

This lighthouse welcomes visitors official from May 15 to October 15 each year.



Many members didn't receive a membership card this year as we ran out of stock and are currently redesigning our logo.

Waiting for the launch of the new logo will save a few trees and NSLPS dollars by not reprinting them until then. Even without the membership card you're still a member of the society and we look forward to your support.



Summer Trip to Cape Sable Island

By Meredith O'Hara and Cory Webb



Photos by Cory Webb

Each year the people of Clark's Harbour welcome locals, visitors, and tourist alike for Cape Day celebrations. All day locals move visitors back and forth in small boats to and from the lighthouse.

With a barbeque on the island and beautiful beaches to wander the Lighthouse is just one of many reasons to make the trip in August.

The Cape Sable Island Lighthouse is located offshore on an island past Clark's Harbour.

At 101 feet, Cape Sable Lighthouse is the tallest lighthouse in Nova Scotia and helps mark the southern tip of the province.



This year, board members Meredith O'Hara and Cory Webb both made the drive to Shelburne Country and were not dissatisfied in the beauty and adventure offered by the island.

To access a place that so few are able to most of the year is a special thing and a worthwhile effort.

One surprise for many visitors was the hike through a bit of mud from the landing site where you get off the boat to the lighthouse on the other side of the island. The hike wasn't much more than a kilometre but there were a few wet feet getting there.

Along the way there were lots of interesting places to stop including a couple of cabins that visitors were allowed to check out.

Visitors were also treated to sheep sightings as many sheep and their lambs live and wander the island.

According to the Friends of Cape Sable Facebook page it was a record breaking year with "over 500 and possibly as many as 600" visitors on a beautiful hot day this summer.

Because of the Cape's storms, and the proximity of the island to shipping routes, a substantial number of shipwrecks were recorded in the area.

The most tragic was the wreck of the SS Hungarian in February 1860 with the loss of over 200 lives. A lighthouse on the island was established at the tip of Cape Sable in the next year.

The opportunity to visit the island is worth taking advantage of, and plans are already in the works for 2019.





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