

The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society

Vol. 27 No. 2 Spring/Summer 2020

www.nslps.com

The Lightkeeper

An aerial photograph of a lighthouse situated on a grassy, forested hill. The lighthouse is a small, white, rectangular building with a red roof and a red lantern room. It is surrounded by dense green vegetation. In the background, the ocean stretches to the horizon under a bright, hazy sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow over the entire scene. The lighthouse is positioned on the right side of the image, with the ocean to its left.

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**Annual General Meeting
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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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The **Lightkeeper** is published by the
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PRESERVATION SOCIETY**
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Welcome New Members

Thonas Goodyer
Golnaz Karimi
Kaitie Saich

Cover Photo

Black Rock Lighthouse - Taken by Larry Peyton

Membership News!

We're excited
to announce that
community groups
supporting their
local lighthouses
will now have
their affiliate fees
waived.

Contact
ask.us@nslps.com
for more information.

Report Card 2020

By: Denyse Contrasty

It may be hard to believe but there were once an estimated 260 lighthouses and range lights to guide mariners back to their homes or destinations in Nova Scotia starting with the construction of the first lighthouse at Louisbourg in 1734. Evolving navigational technology and changing economies have since made many obsolete and regrettably a high number of these untended structures were destroyed by fire, storms, tidal waves or humans.

It was for these reasons that NSLPS was formed:

"The Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society is dedicated to the preservation of Nova Scotia's lighthouse. Through modernization and automation, many lighthouse structures have been replaced by functional skeleton steel towers which are easier for the Canadian Coast Guard to service and maintain. We aim to create an awareness of our province's remaining lighthouses and our marine heritage, and to work with related groups to ensure the identifications and preservation of coastal sites."

- "The Lightkeeper" Vol 2 No 1 January 1995

So where are we now - 25 years later? Out of the 137 sites identified in March 2018 by NSLPS where some vestige of the lighthouse structure remains, a total of 104 lighthouses and range lights are still used by the Canadian Coast Guard as navigation aids and are included in their 2020 publication, "List of Lights, Buoys and Fog Signals".

Of these 104, nine lighthouses have lost their lanterns and lens, and instead have a top mounted flashing light. If these lighthouses are not properly capped and maintained, water will leak into the lighthouse and decay will set into its structure. If the light burns out and the site continues to require a navigation aid, a new airport beacon is usually mounted on a skeleton steel tower instead of making costly repairs to the lighthouse. This happened on Devil's Island located in the eastern approach to the Halifax harbour.

Sixty-one organizations have come forward to either take ownership of their local lighthouse or to partner with the Canadian Coast Guard to maintain its structure while applying for divestiture or heritage status, both multi-year processes. Many groups have stayed the course but sadly, due to lack of volunteers and/or money as the original guardians move on, some lighthouses are now facing an uncertain future such as the McNeil Beach lighthouse on the shore of the Great Bras d'Or Lake in Cape Breton.

Thirty-eight of these lighthouses have achieved some degree of heritage protection and are supported by a



Baccaro Point, Barrington Bay

community group or their municipality. Twenty-one of these NS lighthouses are covered by the federal Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act (HLP) passed by the federal government in 2008 after much lobbying by a coalition of interested MPs, Senators and past NSLPS President Barry Macdonald. Surprisingly 15 of these are still used as navigational aids!

Three lighthouses are protected by their municipal Heritage Property Act such as Port Grenville while five are protected by a provincial Heritage Property Act such as Gilbert's Cove. The other nine are designated as Recognized Federal Heritage Buildings such as the Mabou Lighthouse and the internationally famed Peggy's Cove Lighthouse. Lighthouses without heritage status such as Port Bickerton and Cape Forchu have strong community support to preserve their local lighthouse and it helps that many of these lighthouses continue to be used as navigational aids by DFO.

Recently two new groups came forward and got protection for the Margaree Range lights and Enragée Point lighthouse on Chéticamp Island under the HLP in 2019. In order to do

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Forgotten Lights - Hall's Harbour

By: Howard Eaton

For anyone who enjoys a drive along the back roads of Nova Scotia, and especially any that lead to the many picturesque villages that dot the shoreline, Hall's Harbour is one place that should not be overlooked.

Hall's Harbour was settled around 1826 when two brothers built a mill near the present day bridge that joins the two parts of the community. The area had been in use as a fishing station since the 1700's and also a summer encampment by Mi'kmaq people for many years to take advantage of the bountiful food provided from the Bay of Fundy.

The history of Hall's Harbour is rich in folklore and there are stories about hidden pirate treasure, American raiders during the Revolutionary war and colourful characters who sailed the world's oceans- including one local man who became the Admiral of the Turkish Navy! There are several information boards located throughout the community that tell visitors the stories of the community.

Today the village has seen a resurgence in its fortunes and is home to a number of businesses, including several art shops and galleries and a small fleet of fishing boats.

The main draw to the village is the Bay of Fundy shore which is a typical Fundy beach stone shoreline with spectacular cliffs lining the area to the west of the village.

The other draw of course is the Hall's Harbour Lobster Pound, Gift Shop and Restaurant. The food is fresh and tasty and on a nice day you can get a table right on the wharf and eat your fish and chips or lobster dinner while watching the fishing boats rise and fall on the famous Fundy tides.

People often remark that when they first get to Hall's Harbour the boats were high and dry and when they left they were floating as they would in any harbour the world over. (Or the reverse!)

The other notable thing about the bay of Fundy is its weather. The Bay can often be rough and very cold, caused by the fact that 160 Billion tons of seawater flush in and out with each tide. This often has effects upon the weather, and one famous characteristic is the Bay of Fundy Fog which mariners have been working in for many hundreds of years. This resulted in a number of lighthouses being constructed along the Fundy coastline, including Hall's Harbour.

The present navigation light for the harbour is situated on the end of the main wharf and is a metal tower with a light beacon at the top. This light replaced a rather unique lighthouse that was situated on stilts on a small adjacent wharf until the early 1970's.

The summer brings many visitors to the village and you can see licence plates from all over Canada, the USA and even overseas on vehicles parked in the parking area. Summer days can be warm and enjoyable, especially on hot summer days in the Annapolis Valley. Many folks travel "over the mountain" to Hall's Harbour to enjoy the cool ocean breeze, catch a sunset and enjoy a meal.

From the beach you can see across the Bay and spot Cape d'Or Lighthouse, Fives islands and Ile Haute off in the Bay. Many people come



to enjoy the scenery and to photograph the vistas that are on display at Hall's Harbour.

Although the Lighthouse is gone, the history of that interesting and unique light is well preserved.



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this, these groups had to submit a detailed business plan to Parks Canada to demonstrate they are capable of paying the expenses involved in maintaining a lighthouse now and in the future.

Most groups rely on local membership, fundraising events, volunteers, in-kind (free) materials and labour in addition to tourists' dollars to operate on a tight budget. At some sites, students are hired to man the lighthouse to allow visitors to look about the interior in the summer months and hopefully leave a donation. Not all groups report a profit from year to year.

Now with Covid-19, covering expenses is about to get more difficult for everyone. No one has any idea how long physical distancing will be required, Nova Scotians must stay in their own neighbourhood, and out-of-province tourists will be required to self-isolate for 14 days in NS before starting their sightseeing. These restrictions, if they continue through the summer, will have an impact on the ability of lighthouse groups to care for their lighthouse.

If you are fortunate enough to have a saved lighthouse in your neighbourhood, please assist in any way you can. While donations are always appreciated, even a simple thank you shows your appreciation that a very treasured icon of Nova Scotia heritage is being preserved by a small group of dedicated citizens determined to keep their lighthouse standing.

The West Point Lighthouse

By Maggie-Jane Spray

Prince Edward Island is known for many things – Anne of Green Gables, potatoes, delicious lobster and miles of beautiful beaches in every direction. These things that make PEI famous would not be possible without rural communities. The same goes for the West Point Lighthouse.

The West Point Lighthouse, built in 1875, is PEI's tallest Lighthouse standing at 67 feet and 8 inches. Until the light was electrified in 1963, there were only two keepers in its 88 years of operation: William Anderson MacDonald (1875-1925) and Benjamin MacIsaac (1925-1963).

Originally, the lighthouse was red and white striped. In 1915, the stripes were changed to black and white, as it was thought to be more resistant to fading.

In 1984, the lighthouse was leased to the West Point Development Corporation to an inn, restaurant (since relocated at the nearby wharf), gift shop and museum.

The lighthouse sits in Cedar Dunes Provincial Park, an active campground and popular beach. The wharf remains an active fishing hub, with boats hauling lobster to and from nearby Howard's Cove.

The community and the West Point Development Corporation invested a lot of working in ensuring the lighthouse and inn remained well-kept and operational for many years. Through the years, residents worked hard to secure government funding to renovate the lighthouse, and they were successful in attracting tourists from across the globe.

As a child growing up in the area, the lighthouse always felt like a friend. Days spent at the beach, floating on my back and seeing food being delivered to tables inside the restaurant felt like looking in at a summer snow globe.

My mother's extended family lived in the area, and many were actively involved with the preservation and promotion of the lighthouse. My great-aunt heavily supplied the gift shop with her quilts and crafts, and many cousins worked in the gift shop or guarded the beach throughout the years.

The West Point Lighthouse was recognized as a heritage place under the Prince Edward Island Heritage Places Protection Act on November 1, 2012. Today, the lighthouse features prominently in many tourism ads for P.E.I.

Being witness to the incredible efforts of a small community to keep their lighthouse preserved is what inspired me to join as a board member on the NSLPS. The work that the board does to support small communities like West Point to preserve their lighthouses. Community support – and the support of NSLPS members – helps us to preserve these historic lighthouses for years to come.



Notice of Change in Membership Year

Given that the Christmas to New Year period is a busy time for many members, the NSLPS Board decided in February 2020 that the NSLPS membership year will now run from April 1st to March 31st. Those who paid prior to April 1st will have their 2020 membership extended to March 31 2021.

Those who send their renewals via Canada Post and have a valid email address will now receive their tax receipt by email to save stationery and postage costs. Those without an email address will continue to receive them by mail.

If you mailed your renewal fee after March 13th, we have not received yet your renewal as the Maritime Museum that kindly lets NSLPS use their civic address for correspondence, is closed indefinitely until the NS state of emergency is lifted.

If you wish, it is possible to renew using the NSLPS website at: https://www.nslps.com/_Login If you have not renewed online since April 2019, you will need to click on "Forgot my password". You will be asked to enter your email address. A message will tell you to check the Inbox of that address. The NSLPS website will send you an email to click on a link that will allow you to enter a new password.

If you have any concerns regarding your membership, please email member.info@nslps.com for assistance.

Annual General Meeting Notice

Given the continuing Covid-19 situation, the Board is officially deferring the NSLPS AGM planned for May 20 until the NS government declares it is safe to hold meetings again. According to instructions received from the NS Registry of Joint Stocks, NSLPS has up to 90 days to reschedule the AGM from the date the NS State of Emergency is lifted.

The Board continues to do business via conference calls and emails, and will continue to keep our members updated via our website and social media.

Those of you who mailed your membership renewals in February and March should have received your tax receipts by email in the past week. This is a new function of our website to send a receipt automatically when the Membership Officer enters your renewal into the NSLPS database. It will cut down on the cost of stationery and postage while permitting the Membership Officer to assist in other tasks and initiatives.

We greatly appreciate the support of all our members and we hope you will remain safe and healthy during this difficult time.

2019 Lighthouses supported by their communities

Photos sourced by: Denyse Contrasty



Grandique, Isle Madame



Spencer's Island, Greville Bay

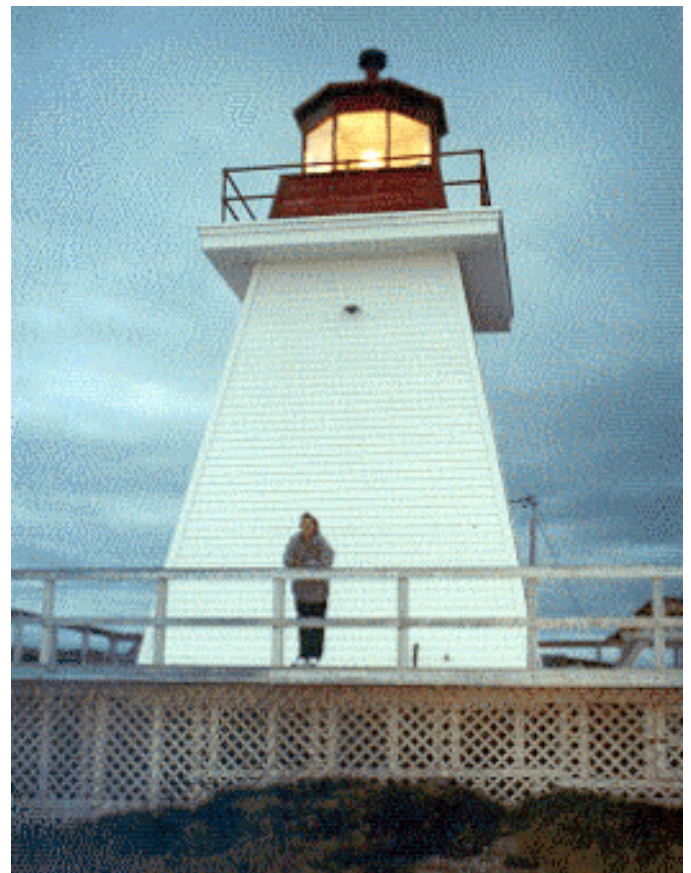


Port Bickerton, Eastern Shore



Boars Head, Petite Passage

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**Top: Port George, Bay of Fundy
Bottom: Cape Sable, South Shore**

**Top: Henry Island, Northumberland Strait
Bottom: Neil Harbour, Cape Breton Island**