

# The Lightkeeper

A photograph of three women jumping joyfully in front of a tall, white, octagonal lighthouse. The woman on the left is wearing a grey cardigan over a striped shirt and black leggings. The woman in the middle is wearing a green zip-up jacket and black shorts. The woman on the right is wearing a black jacket and denim shorts. They are all holding hands and have their arms outstretched. The lighthouse has a red lantern room at the top. The background is a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds.

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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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NOVA SCOTIA LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

c/o Maritime Museum of the Atlantic  
1675 Lower Water Street  
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## Welcome New Members

Don Forbes

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### Cover Photo

Cape Roseway Light

Credit to Cathy McKenzie

## 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](mailto:ask.us@nslps.com) for more information.



# On the Bucket List—A Visit to the Pictou Lighthouse Centre

By: Denyse Constrasty

Doing research on Nova Scotia lighthouses? You have tried online resources such as the NSLPS website or gone to the NS Archives in Halifax but still can't find the answers to your questions? Then contact the staff at the Lighthouse Centre at the Northumberland Fisheries Museum in Pictou and ask about the Rip E. Irwin Collection regarding lighthouses across Canada and in particular, on those in Nova Scotia (NS).

Rip Irwin was one of the founding members of NSLPS in 1993 and the Society's first President. He also compiled in his lifetime a vast array of lighthouse information that included 34 volumes just on NS lighthouses. Other material included 20 additional volumes on other Maritime lighthouses and several hundred books, pamphlets, maps and magazines plus a very impressive 6-foot-high illuminated map of lighthouses around the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island coasts.

This remarkable collection fills one interior wall of the Lighthouse Centre that is a ¾ scale replica of the combined lighthouse and dwelling style popular from the 1870s to the 1940s and similar to that built in 1916 on nearby Caribou Island. Also, you can see lighthouse related objects such as lighting apparatus, some of which were donated by NSLPS Past President Barry MacDonald. If you ask, a staff member will turn on the map and you will see the light characteristics of each lighthouse that would have corresponded to the official Canadian Coast Guard publication, "List of Lights, Buoys and Fog Signals" at the time of construction of the map.



A visit to the Lighthouse Centre to examine Rip's collection has been on my bucket list for years and I finally was able to spend a couple of hours on a sunny, hot day in August browsing through binders and taking the odd photograph. Talking afterwards to the Museum curator, Codie Brook Goodman, I learnt that Rip's material will be digitized as soon as funding allows. While I look forward to my next visit to the Lighthouse Centre in 2023, it will be great to be able to read and use Rip's material from the comfort of home or more importantly, from anywhere in the world.

# Terence Bay Lighthouse celebrates 137th Birthday

By: Catherine Grant

On 11 September 2022, residents of Terence Bay and other nearby communities, came together to celebrate Terence Bay Lighthouse Day to commemorate the light's 137th birthday. The original structure was built in 1885, although the lighthouse we know wasn't constructed until 1903. Community members have long enjoyed visiting this landmark lighthouse, which was given [federal] heritage status in 2015. This year, more than 30 people gathered for hotdogs and cake, and a walk to the site.

For many residents, celebrating the birthday of their newly restored lighthouse (the Department of Fisheries and Ocean (DFO) did extensive repairs in 2019-20) is bittersweet. The community was supposed to take over ownership of their lighthouse in 2017, but the transfer process from DFO, has stalled because one of the property owners adjacent to the light refuses to grant public access to the historic site. The community remains committed to having this issue resolved and the Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee continues to provide education about the site, regular walks to the lighthouse, and the annual Lighthouse Day every September.





# Terence Bay Lighthouse facts—Past, Present and Future

By: Denyse Contrasty



The original aid to navigation in Terence Bay, a lantern hoisted up a 25-foot mast, was erected and lit in 1885 following the sinking of the SS Atlantic in 1873 when approximately 550 passengers died. It was replaced by the current lighthouse in 1903 that shone a fixed red light combined with a seventh order lens to be seen from 11km (7 miles) away under ideal conditions. Without a lightkeeper after 1967, the lighthouse fell into disrepair and in 1980 the lantern was removed, an upper deck built, and a watertight light installed on top of the new decking.

In the period 2018-2020, the Canadian Coast Guard did extensive renovations that included a new lantern on top of the lighthouse. This was done in preparation to transfer ownership to the Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act (HLPa). Regretfully due to ongoing legal

issues as described in the article, “Terence Bay Lighthouse Celebrates its 137th Birthday”, the Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee is still waiting for their deed.

While it is true that the lighthouse has the highest federal heritage status possible, the Act was meant to transfer ownership and responsibility of upkeep to a community group, relieving the federal government of expenses for maintaining an outdated aid to navigation. A lighthouse is old technology and it is cheaper to erect a beacon on a metal pole on the site of a lighthouse. Yet Coast Guard is willing to consider using a lighthouse as an aid to navigation if a community group maintains the lighthouse structure to meet the health and safety standards of Coast Guard.

The lighthouse is in very good shape as can be seen in the photo. However, a lighthouse is like any other building that eventually will need repairs. How can the Committee do them if they do not have ownership or easy access to the lighthouse other than walking on the rocks at low tide on a calm day? Furthermore, they cannot apply for any federal funding until the lighthouse is officially theirs. In spite of these obstacles, the Committee members say they are thinking positive and with restrictions of Covid lifted, hope to report progress on their situation soon.



# Summer Lighthouse Visits

By: Howard Eaton

Summer is always a great time to wander about the province and check out a lighthouse or two. Nova Scotia has so many to choose from and you don't have to drive very far to see one no matter what coast you are on.

This past summer (2022) I had the pleasure of visiting a number of lighthouses in Nova Scotia and a couple in PEI as well.

Here is a sampling:

## **Cape dOr NS** (top, right)

One of the first was Cape dOr lighthouse on the north shore of the Bay of Fundy. It is a bit more of a challenge to get to and involves a walk but is well worth the effort as the view of mainland Nova Scotia and the Fundy Bay is spectacular! It is a great example of what a traditional light station looked like. The light sits out on a promontory and the two keepers cottages are back from the cliff.



## **Terence Bay, NS**

Another summer visit was to Terrence Bay. They have a very interesting museum pertaining to the wreck of the SS Atlantic which struck a rock near the community on April 1 1873 with the loss of approximately 535 people, which is the second worst maritime disaster after the Titanic.

The lighthouse sits on a point of land which is apparently private property but can be viewed from the turnaround at the end of the road. See photos on page 4-5).

## **Hampton, NS** (bottom, right)

Hampton lighthouse sits on a hill overlooking the harbour entrance to the small fishing community of Hampton NS. You can access it by turning onto the Hampton Mountain Road in Bridgetown. The lighthouse is in terrific condition and open to the public all summer. Visitors can climb up to the top for an even better view and the main floor is filled with local history stories and pictures.



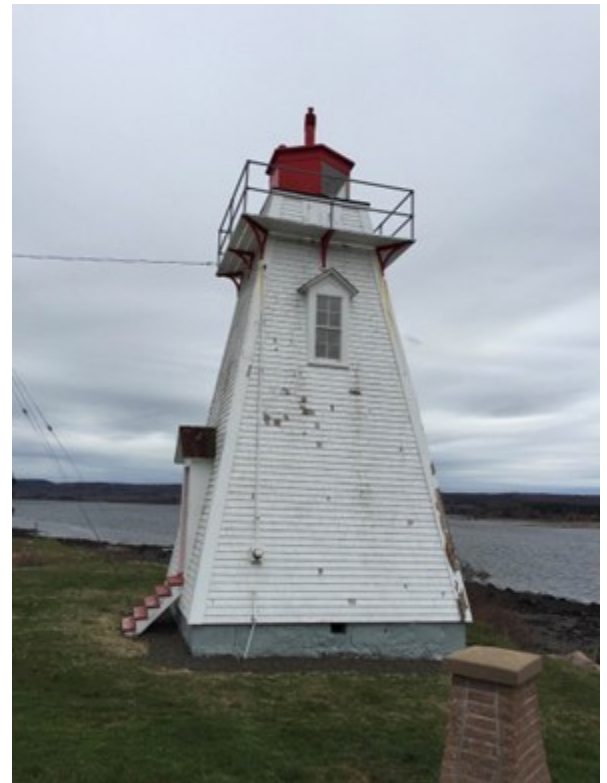




**Victoria Beach** (top, left)

Victoria Beach is a beautiful spot but you kind of have to want to go there! It is located on the eastern edge of Digby Gut looking out towards Digby. The road up is narrow and the road to the lighthouse is one lane and almost vertical!

The lighthouse is decommissioned and the power has been disconnected. The building is starting to show signs of neglect. It was built in 1901 and is a very neat little structure overlooking the Gut.



**Schafner Point Light** (middle, right)

Schafner Point Light is located beside the highway ( the Granville Road) just past Port Royal on the way to Victoria Beach. It was built and lit in 1885 and has been guarding the eastern part of Digby Gut ever since. It has fallen on tough times in the last few years and



some work has begun to stabilize it and restore it to its former glory. Today the lighthouse is still

standing but has been covered in Tyvek material to try and stabilize it.

**Hortons Bluff Lighthouse** (bottom, left)

This light once helped guide Gypsum ships into Hantsport harbour as it sat on the north side of the Avon River. The light has been discontinued now for many years and the power disconnected. The cement lantern deck is slowly disintegrating as water and frost do its work. The property is slowly overgrowing the lighthouse and it won't be long when it will not be visible from the water and it is barely visible from the driveway. You access it by taking Lighthouse road on the old # 1 Highway as you leave the pretty little village of Hantsport.

# Lana Shupe: The Lonely Little Lighthouse

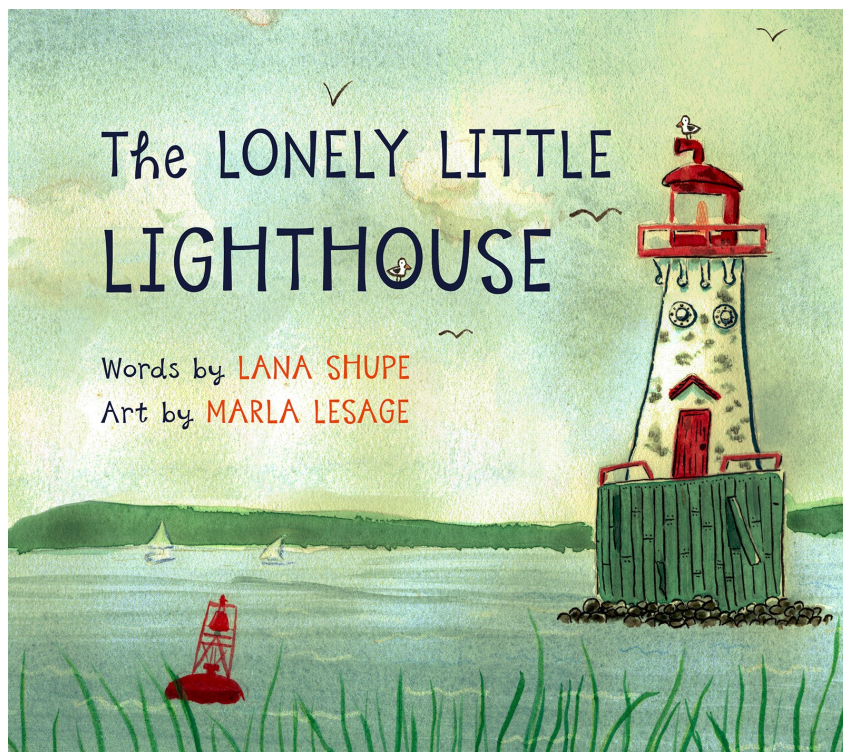
By: Maggie-Jane Spray

Lana Shupe, a member of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society, has always believed that lighthouse preservation is important. This is part of what inspired her to author her first book, titled *The Lonely Little Lighthouse*.

"Teaching a young generation to care about these beacons of Maritime history and how they can help to save them from destruction was key to the story of this book," she said.

The book revolves around the story of the Sandy Point Lighthouse in Shelburne County, NS, and how the community comes together to make her light shine again. For Shupe, she holds a personal connection to this lighthouse. "I grew up very close to the Sandy Point Lighthouse and played on the sandbar there as a child. My father was killed while serving in the Canadian Military when I was four years old. He grew up in Sandy Point. After he was killed, my mother, who was from New Brunswick, took my brother and I to live near the lighthouse," she said. "She wanted us to grow up knowing our father through his family and the people of the community there who had known him and grew up with him. She made a huge sacrifice to do, [and] I will be eternally grateful. The story of the lighthouse is wrapped up in my own family history. The story of the Sandy Point Community coming together to save the lighthouse and build the beautiful community centre there, was a story that needed to be told. Living away from the Maritimes now, I was homesick and feeling nostalgic about "home" and decided to write the story as a way to say thank you to the community who helped raise me."

The book also includes a section on the history of the lighthouses, as well as other lighthouses in the province. As a long-time NSLPS member along with her husband, Shupe said "I believe it is truly an important endeavour to maintain and preserve these beacons of our Nova Scotian history."



Shupe hopes that her book will be regular reading in schools across the province. "I would like readers to know more about the history of the Atlantic Canadian lighthouses and would like them to know that they can help preserve them. I hope the book encourages them to visit as many lighthouses as they can. I especially want children to know they are never too young or too little to start caring for lighthouses."

When asked about her favourite lighthouse, Shupe shared that Sandy Point is "hands-down" her favorite, but she believes every lighthouse has its own charm, personality and history.

Lana can be reached at her website, [lanashupe.com](http://lanashupe.com). Her book is available for purchase through Nimbus Publishing, Indigo and on Amazon.ca.