

New England Lighthouse Lovers

A Chapter of the American Lighthouse Foundation

NELL Beacon



Volume 12 Issue 3

Boston Light, September 2012

Mishaps on the Lighthouse Trail Stories and photos by Graham Meddings

As the ferry headed out to Martha's Vineyard it was very windy and raining very hard to say the least. The bus met us at the dock and we were on our way. The windows of the bus were fogging up as fast as we wiped them.

We visited West Chop, East Chop, Gay Head and Edgartown Harbor Lights. We were scheduled to visit Cape Poge Light by truck, but the weather was so bad



it was cancelled.

We had lunch, did a little shopping and met to head back to the mainland. Uh-o!! We were told to hurry as the weather was going to get worse and the ferries were going to close down. We got to the dock in record time and got on the last ferry. It would be quite a while before the ferries resumed. What a great time we had!

View from West Chop lantern room



Another uh-o! moment was a Friends of Flying Santa sponsored lighthouse boat trip around Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island. The Vista Jubilee backed out of its berth, started forward and then stopped. We sat there just drifting!! Then we saw several men running on to the dock. A bulldozer was moving toward the boat and the crew on board was throwing ropes to the workers who were tying them to the bulldozer and bollards on the dock. A small boat with a padded ram on it came around the left side and was pushing the boat to the dock. After 30 minutes of pulling and push-



ing the Vista Jubilee was tied to the dock. The problem was that electrical fuses for the gearbox had blown. They were fixed and we visited 8 lighthouses and 2 lighthouse sites. We had another great day.

Interior of the Vista Jubilee



Black Rock Harbor Light

On one of the NELL trips to Connecticut we were out on the water visiting lighthouses in the fog. We missed one lighthouse before we realized it and then the boat stopped and was going around in a circle very slowly like the captain was lost. Then we found out that the radar was not working. I guess they got it fixed as we didn't miss any other lights. I, as well as the rest of the passengers, got a lot of great pictures.



Green's Ledge Light

It was a beautiful day as we arrived at the Burlington, Vermont, waterfront. We got in line to board the ship when we spotted a newspaper vending machine. On the front page was a picture of the boat we were getting ready to board and the headline said, "Cruise Boat Stuck on Shoal." For 224 passengers, the trip became a 3 1/2-hour tour to nowhere. We, however, got on the boat and had a wonderful trip and saw 5 lighthouses.

The Lighthouse Hunters 2012 Summer Great Lakes Vacation

Story and photos by Christine and Tom Cardaci

In the spring of 2012 I emailed several other lighthouse hunters hoping to find a few people to share charters with us on Lake Superior in July. Luckily Tom and Darlene Chisholm and John "Mac" MacFarland said they were interested. We've been on several NELL, ALF and GLLKA cruises together over the past few years. It took me a few months to gather the phone numbers and locate the boat captains I needed. The Canadian side of Lake Superior seems to be more remote than our 2011 trip in Georgian Bay. Apparently many charter captains decided to not pay the additional yearly fees to be certified for charters. Therefore there were fewer captains out there to find and to choose from. Planning this section of our trip was very frustrating and discouraging to say the least. Finally our trip began to take shape and I began to book the boat charters.

Tommy and I have 22 days of vacation, which includes Tommy's Letter Carrier Union Convention in Minneapolis, MN. I emailed everyone the itinerary, packed up and we left home on Sunday, July 8, 2012. For our first day we drove 571 miles in nine hours, ending in Port Clinton, OH. Our first boat trip on Monday was a rental from Castaway Bay Marina in Harsen's Island, MI. For 3½ hours we motored the 20-foot boat in Lake St. Clair. We've wanted to see Harsen's Island Range, St. Clair Flats Ranges and the Lake St. Clair Lighthouses up close for years. We never seem to be in Lower Michigan at the proper time to take the Discovery Cruises-Metro Beach Metropark cruise to these lights. The boat rental cost us \$125 plus \$35 in gas.

Next we drove north toward the thumb of Michigan bypassing all the

lighthouses we've seen several times over the years. Our motel was in Caseville, MI, not too far from Port Austin where our boat charter was the next morning. Now we are three because Mac joined us for the morning charter with Captain Mike Morgan of M&D Marine. His 28-foot Sandpiper boat took us two miles out to the Port Austin Reef Lighthouse. By the way, there's a large shallow reef on the east side of the lighthouse. This charter cost was \$200 that we divided by three.

We talked to Darlene and Tom Chisholm who were already beginning their drive north to Canada. Later that evening the five of us met at a place Darlene found for us in Batchawana Bay, Ontario. The Lakeshore Salzburger Hof Resort Chalet was a great spot on the water for the five of us for two nights. On Wednesday, July 11, we all woke up at 3:45 am and drove the short distance to Captain Jim MacDonald's boat. He's the 81-year-old owner of Ferroclad Fisheries. The Century is an enclosed 40-foot working fishing vessel with three beds, five cushioned chairs, bucket head with seat, and a lighthouse curtain for privacy. We shoved off at 5:15 in the dark. The boat went only 9 mph so it took 6+ hours to motor around 55 miles out to



Caribou Island. We were so excited to photograph this very remote Canadian Lake Superior lighthouse. During our slow motor back east to the mainland,

Captain Jim surprised us all with a bowl of ice cream. We saw nothing but water all around us for hours and only one boat, we were that remote. This 13-hour boat trip wouldn't have been possible without splitting the cost five ways. What a great day!

The following morning we temporarily went our separate ways. We finally shot the Coppermine Point Light with the morning sun. During our drive north on Highway 17 we stopped by Scenic Magpie High Falls to take a few pictures. By the way, King's Highway 17 is 1,220.4 miles long and it's Ontario's longest highway. We were the first to arrive at the motel in Marathon, ON, after our day's drive of 245 miles. A sign on the door said, "Caution black bears have been seen in this parking lot, remove all food from cars." That made me very nervous so we even removed the breath mints from the car. We all got up at 3:00 am to reload our cars and drove to the dock in Heron Bay, ON. We met Captain Keith McCuaig and boarded the M/V Melissa June. It's a 30 x 11 foot aluminum landing craft catamaran with two 250 hp outboard motors. We shoved off in the dark at 4:45 am on Friday, July 13, and began the difficult hard slamming 25 mph boat ride. We saw the sunrise over the hills of Pukaskwa National Park and after 3½ hours the boat was anchored at Michipicoten Island. First he had to pick up three customers and their canoe, and then we motored to **Davieaux Island**. Once on the island we bushwhacked our way uphill to the lighthouse. When we were finished taking our shots we returned to the boat after our ¾ mile round trip hike. Forty-five



minutes later we arrived on the east side of Michipicoten Island photographing the **Michipicoten Island East End** Lighthouse. It was right



there on the rocks near the water, so we didn't have to walk too far for this one. We've now seen both of the flying buttress lighthouses in Ontario. Once back on the boat we motored north 1/4 hour to Otter Island. We had to hike a mile round trip for the Otter Island Lighthouse. It was a hard, sweaty walk with several sets of steps, many fallen trees to climb over or duck under, and rocks and boulders. The seas were less choppy for our 90 minute steam back to Heron Bay, ON. We motored 167 miles round trip during our 10 3/4 hour charter. The cost was \$200 per person. Our motorcade of three cars headed 90 minutes west to Schreiber, ON, stopping in Terrace Bay to see the recently built Slate Islands Replica.

The following morning we all met Captain Paul Turpin of Discovery Charters in Terrace Bay, ON. He has a 24-foot Zodiac which is an open inflatable boat with an aft console. We were taken nine miles out to Slate Islands. We all hiked 18 minutes uphill to see the lighthouse. Once back onboard the Zodiac we returned to

the mainland and into our cars. We drove 12 miles west to Rosspoint, ON, and got back into the Zodiac. This time we went nine miles out to **Battle Island**. The best shots were from the water looking up at the light on the huge protruding cliff. We still walked on the island, but the long set of stairs up to the light was blocked. We were



also hoping to go to Lamb Island but the weather turned and we were only in a 24-foot Zodiac. Our total boat mileage for the day was 36 miles and the cost was \$100 a person. Back in the cars we continued west on Highway 17 to Nipigon, ON, for groceries for the next few days.

Our next destination was Bruce and Brenda Wing's Beyond the Giant Nature Retreat in Pass Lake, ON. In order to see the next two lighthouses we had to sleep here for three nights because the owner isn't a licensed charter captain. The five of us rented The Mystic Log Cabin on Lake Superior. It doesn't have electricity therefore no tv, air conditioning, fans, or internet, but it had solar lights. The stove, grill and refrigerator were all propane. The highly raised commode is a special composting toilet with special instructions.

July 15th is Superior Days all over Lake Superior in Canada and we spent it on the water. Bruce Wing took the five of us out in his 50-foot tugboat. Pretty early into the trip it began to get foggy. Since his boat only goes 7 knots it took us three hours to get to the cove near Point Porphyry. We got into the dinghy and made it to the island. We hiked on the two track road 3/4 mile to the light-

house. In seventeen minutes we all were at the lighthouse, which was still surrounded by fog. Once back on the boat we motored to **Shaganash Island** and finally had sun for 15 minutes. The whole trip took 9 1/4 hours. This was Mac's last



boat trip and night with us. The following day it was very windy and rainy. At least we were in a comfortable spot. Once the rain ceased we looked around outside but had to be careful and keep an eye out for bears. We had bear spray just in case.

The following morning the four of us left Pass Lake, ON, and drove south on Highway 17 to Thunder Bay, ON. We went to the Terry Fox Monument and Kakabeka Falls, which were pretty nice. We also celebrated Tom Chisholm's birthday with a cake while at dinner. Our last boat charter was on July 18 with Archie's Fishing Charters. Captain Archie Hoogsteen took the four of us out in his 30-foot fishing boat at 6:10 am. We were photographing the **Thunder Bay Main** Lighthouse at sunrise.

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Two NELL Members Honored with the Len Hadley Volunteerism Award

Story by Tom Kenworthy Photos by Bob Trapani, Jr.*

On April 28, 2012, our parent organization, the American Lighthouse Foundation (ALF) held its annual gala at the Four Points Sheridan in Eastham MA. During the weekend event we visited and climbed three Cape Cod lighthouses: Nauset, Three Sisters and Highland. The visits were followed in the evening by our dinner and awards presentation. One of the awards segments was the presentation of the Len Hadley Volunteerism Award given to the “Volunteers of the Year” by each chapter of ALF.

This year, NELL posthumously recognized Kevin Sullivan for his work and contributions to NELL. I read the following text to the attendees and then presented the Len Hadley Volunteerism Award to [Kevin’s wife, Rosalie](#), and his son, Patrick.



Kevin joined New England Lighthouse Lovers in 2005 and quietly worked his way into our hearts. He soon became NELL’s Communications Chair, which eventually encompassed the duties of Publicity Chair.

As Chair of those committees, Kevin was in charge of all our communications, writing letters, or helping our other committees to write them, asking for donations or taking other groups to task for not meeting our requirements for a naming plaque after they received our preservation grant and finished the work.



**Photo by Kathy Santucci*

Another of his duties was to help Lynne and Mike with the Beacon. Under Kevin’s tutelage, they redesigned and updated the Beacon. Not content with that, Kevin continued to work on it making an improved version for the web site with a larger font and more pictures.

Kevin was instrumental in helping the by-law committee update and revise our by-laws, which were unanimously approved by the NELL Board of Directors. They will be voted on and hopefully approved, at our spring meeting in May, in Nantucket.

I’ve been told that once the itinerary for our events was announced, Kevin would research the location and, if possible, plan a side trip or two to see more lighthouses.

He was also famous for his dayca-tions and staycations, and he would proudly write about them in our newsletter, the NELL Beacon.

Dedicated NELL member and light-



house supporter Kevin J. Sullivan passed away suddenly on February 16, at his home in Torrington, CT, the age of 59. Kevin was an unassuming man and had a beautiful, quite way about him. I will miss him very much as I’m sure all of NELL will.

NELL’s second honoree was none other than the affable Lynne Kerber. Eric Davis, President of ALF, read the following about Lynne’s work with NELL.



**Photo by Ann-Marie Trapani*

Lynne joined the New England Lighthouse Lovers in 2004. She was a very active member from the beginning attending our events and meetings. A few years after joining, she became a member of the Board of Directors. Once on the board Lynne took on the daunting task of resurrecting our newsletter, The Beacon.

After the board voted and approved that the Beacon be in color and mailed to all members Lynne sent out the call for stories, recipes, and pictures. It

seemed like it was going to be easier than it actually was. The first issue proved a very difficult job. No one sent their stories in. Not to be discouraged, Lynne scratched and clawed a few stories from a few members and was finally able to publish.



Lynne's tenacity finally started to

pay off and we now publish The Beacon three times a year. She still had to ask, and sometimes almost beg for articles, but somehow she gets the job done.

Lynne has also participated in NELL's Project H.O.P.E. (Hands On Preservation Effort) at Long Point and Wood End Lighthouses.

Aside from her duties with NELL, Lynne is also a volunteer keeper at Race Point Lighthouse.

This year Lynne expressed her desire to step up to the new position of 2nd VP (if our by-law revisions are passed). This is a position I feel she would serve very well.

Lynne, thank you for all you have done for NELL.

Finally Faulkner's!

Story and photo by Lynne Kerber

My husband, Bob, and I have been trying to get out to see Faulker's Island Lighthouse that is off shore near Guilford, Ct, for a number of years now. This lighthouse is only open one weekend a year after their nesting terns have fledged. They open their reservations about 3 weeks before the open house. So you don't know when the open house will be until some time in early August.

Well, by early August, we have already paid for our NELL fall trip. For the last several year, their open house was on the NELL weekend. Last year, Hurricane Irene took out their dock and they had to cancel the weekend altogether! We even asked Bill Kent if he could build a NELL fall event around the open house at Faulkner's but it was too difficult to plan with the uncertainty of knowing when the terns would fledge.

Finally, I found out that the open house for this year would be September 8 and 9. I was so excited because it wouldn't conflict with anything else we had planned! They started taking reservations for the 5

boat trips on Saturday and the 3 boat trips on Sunday on August 15. Bob was actually up late that evening and sent the email that I had saved in drafts just after midnight.

The following morning I received an email from them saying the noon trip that I wanted to be on was already full! So we decided on the 10:30 boat instead! We were psyched! It was finally going to happen!

We arrived at the town dock about 10:00 only to be told that they had to cancel the trips out to the lighthouse because of a small craft advisory due to rough seas. We had driven an hour and a half for nothing!

However, they were putting extra boats on for Sunday and we could take spots on one of those boats. Of course we did. They gave us a phone number to call in the morning to double check to make sure they were on.

Sunday morning I called the number they gave me just to be sure. It was busy, busy, busy! I couldn't get through! I never did get through, but we crossed our fingers and got in the car to drive there again! I had given the lady at Faulkner's my cell phone number to call in case they cancelled again. We figured that we could turn around and come home if they called while we were driving.



The lady at Faulkner's had told us to come early and maybe we could get on an earlier boat. We decided to try for the noon boat, but were told it was full, so we went and had lunch at the Stonehouse Restaurant while we waited.



Finally we boarded the 20-passenger, 34-foot, flat-bottomed aluminum boat and headed out to Faulkner's! It was an easy 15-minute ride on the now calm water! After a brief orientation we got to climb the lighthouse! We were told to go to the front of the line because we had to be back on the boat when it returned with the next group. It was so worth the wait!

NEW ENGLAND LIGHTHOUSE LOVERS

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.NELL.CC



Member Linda Graham took this picture of Boston Light from a sunset cruise put on by the "Friends of Thatcher Island" in July 2007. She thought members would enjoy it.

The Lighthouse Hunters cont.

Next was Welcome Island and Trowbridge Island. We were dropped off on Trowbridge and given a tour by the summer keepers, Diane Berube and her son, Ben. While we were climbing the lighthouse and checking out the beautiful water view, Diane was cooking. She made us unique, but delicious, pancakes for breakfast. Then we were back on the boat going to photograph Angus Island, Pie Island, Mission Channel and Thunder Bay Main again. It was a bargain at \$230 a couple for our 7½-hour trip traveling 55 miles. We all said our good byes and went our separate ways. We shared five boats with the Chisholms during the past eight days in Canada. So now we've seen all the Canadian Lake Superior lighthouses except for Lamb Island. Tommy and I

drove south into Minnesota and the next day we toured the grounds of the Two Harbors Lighthouse and climbed it. The next day while in Michigan, we took the Ontonagon County Historical Society tour of the lighthouse and also climbed it. Our last boat charter was with Captain Tom Colgin of Superior Charters. He took us as close as he could to the Fourteen Mile Point Lighthouse. It cost \$200 to go 28 miles round trip in 2½ hours. This was the last new lighthouse of the trip to bring us to 1,273 lighthouses photographed in North America. The next day we drove north on the Keweenaw Peninsula stopping at a few repeat lights. Our main focus was the **Copper Harbor** Lighthouse boat tour. We've wanted to get on this for years. It cost \$34 for the 1¾ hour boat ride with land tour. We had another gorgeous day and a perfect ending to our lighthouse vacation.

Before heading home, Tommy had a week of union meetings while I found a few things to do while in Minneapolis, MN. Once home we calculated the mileage. We drove 4,401 miles on this 22-day trip. We saw 16 new and 19 repeat lighthouses. If anyone is interested we also have a group on Facebook called The Lighthouse Hunters. I hope this article helps others plan their lighthouse vacation. If anyone ever needs any information about a private charter or cruise we've ever taken, please feel free to contact us by phone or through our website. www.thelighthousehunters.com

