

New England Lighthouse Lovers - NELL

Cruising the Seaway Trail with NELL

It began as the trip that almost wasn't and ended with many members saying it was one of the best events NELL has ever had. We needed a minimum of 80 people to make this trip happen. We only had 72 members signed up with only three days left before the deadline to cancel the trip and still receive a full refund of our deposit. Ron and I went over the figures and saw it would take another \$15 per person to make it "a go". An e-mail was sent to the 72 members asking if they would be willing to pay the extra \$15 in order to make the trip a sure thing. With an immediate and unanimous affirmative response, Ron confirmed our reservations and the cruise was definitely happening. On May 12th, we received our last reservation - number 79 -- we came so close to making the 80 needed. Regardless, we were able to offer the attendees one of two choices; a refund of their extra fee or the chance to donate it to NELL's preservation fund.

Members and nonmembers started arriving on Thursday the 14th. Some came from as far away as South Carolina, Indiana and Massachusetts. No one was to be disappointed. The weather was beautiful through Monday with plenty of sun and temperatures in the 70's.

Saturday morning came fast and with it an early boarding time of 6:45. Cast off was scheduled for 7 a.m. but with everyone aboard we got underway at 6:50. Canada is on

the opposite side of the St. Lawrence River and at times we'd be in Canadian waters. No passports were needed because we were not going to dock at any time during this cruise.

Our first lighthouse was located on Bush Island, one most of us could see from our rooms, Sunken Rock. Sunken Rock Lighthouse marks the east entrance to the narrows between Wellesley Island, the largest island of the 1,000 islands, and the U.S. mainland.

We then sailed to Three Sisters Island. Here we photographed Sisters Island Lighthouse, a 2 ½ story house (which served as the keepers house) with the square light tower attached to the rear. This light is privately owned and cannot be seen from the U.S. mainland.

Continuing our cruise nine miles downstream, we came to Dark Island. It's said the island got its name because the pine trees stopped the sun from getting through. Dark Island (renamed Singer Island in 2003) is the home of Singer Castle. Singer Castle was the "hunting lodge" of Fredrick Gilbert Bourne, fifth president of Singer Sewing Machine Company. Some of the castles unique features include secret passageways, an underground tunnel and a turret dungeon. It's said that Singer Castle rivals nearby Boldt Castle.

Further downriver we saw Crossover Island Lighthouse named for the point where ships crossed between the American and Canadian Channels and then Cole's Shoal Lighthouse. Cole's Shoal was somewhat hidden by the trees and I almost missed it on the way down river but I made up for that misstep on Sunday after the meeting. More on that later.

The De Watteville Range lights came next and then we crossed over the river to the American side to see Ogdensburg Harbor Light. As we left Ogdensburg and started crossing over to the Canadian side of the channel on the way to Windmill Point, we were passed by what is known as a "laker" tanker – a tanker that stays on the Great Lakes. An ocean going tanker is called a "saltie". Lakers differ from most salties in having bluff bows (a more rounded bow) instead of raked or clipper bow (a more pronounced V shaped bow) of the "saltie" which allows them to cut through the ocean waves better than the more rounded ones of the "lakers".

Clearing the laker Algosteel, we arrived at Windmill Point. Once everyone was finished with their photography there the Captain headed upriver to Prescott, Canada. On our way there we were passed by another laker, the Federal Hunter. Arriving at Prescott, CA we were treated to two lights at the same "stop". Prescott Heritage Harbor Light, also known as Prescott Breakwater Light or Prescott Harbor Outer Light.

Across the small harbor was Prescott Rotary Light or as some call it Prescott Harbor Inner Light or Prescott Visitor Center. Whatever you choose to call it you can get some cool refreshment at this replica light by visiting it, in season, and stopping by the ice cream shop and gift store run by the Prescott Rotary Club. Hence, the lighthouses name.

We had some time to spare between lights so we decided to have our live auction and 50-50 raffle drawing which was done by our Master of Ceremonies, John Waters. The drawing netted new member, Becky T, and NELL, \$167 each. With fundraising completed, we revisited the lights we saw earlier and continued to the 1,000 Islands International Bridge and Rock Island Lighthouse.

All this time we were being chased by another "laker", the Montrealais out of Toronto, Canada. As we were approaching the bridge our Captain felt it would be best for us to "pull over" and wait for the Montrealais to pass us so we wouldn't be blocking the channel when we slowed down at Rock Island Lighthouse. Once the "laker" passed we continued under the bridge to Rock Island Light to what was the end to a wonderful day.

Before I go on to our Sunday events I'd like to say that when Ron and I first heard we'd be getting box lunches we cringed a little. But not having any other choices we went with it. In all honesty, I have to say I (and I'm sure many of you that were there) never had such a generous "box lunch". There was plenty of good meat on large pieces of bread with a side of and lettuce and tomatoes, plenty of chips, chocolate cookies, and a piece of fresh. A tip of the NELL hat to Uncle Sam Boat Tours and our boat crew for doing a great job.

Sunday morning we held our meeting and afterwards folks started heading home; while some continued on to do some sightseeing and others more lighthouseing.

The Bandocks, Spencers and I headed over to Canada and got a funny look from the customs officer when we were crossing the border and answered his "What is the reason for your visit" question with a "to see some lighthouses". After going into a little more detail for him he let us enter and we were on our way. We got "up close and personal" with Cole's Shoal Light, and the De Watteville Rear Range Light which is on private property. We spoke with the owner and received his permission to go right up to the light for our picture taking. When we were finished we had a very nice talk with the gentleman who stated he moved down from Vancouver Canada when he retired, not liking all the rain they got there.

It was a warm sunny day and we all felt like some ice cream. When we stopped at the Prescott lights we headed for the lighthouse store and found it was CLOSED! Were we

disappointed? You had better believe we were!

We then drove to Windmill Point, which is a very historical and picturesque site. I think Windmill Point Lighthouse is much more impressive in person than it was from the boat.

From there we went to Ogdensburg Light, our last stop of the day. Unfortunately the light was on private property with the surrounding grounds posted as private property. We got as close as possible without going on the restricted property and took our pictures.

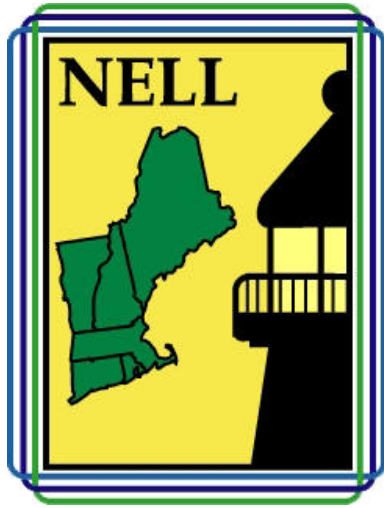
As we were driving back to Capt. Thomson's Resort for dinner we saw the boat we will be cruising Lake Champlain on in the fall. Just imagine our surprise when we saw our boat. After you finish reading this and looking at the pictures please be sure to go to the last page of pictures and there all by itself, in all its glory, is the beautiful boat that we'll be sailing on in September.

After breakfast Monday morning, we loaded up our cars and went to see Tibbetts Point Light, its original keeper's house circa 1827 and its "new" 1907 keeper's house. We then went back to Cape Vincent, whose motto is "where lake and river meet" (St. Lawrence River meets Lake Ontario) and took some pictures of the lighthouse that was on Cape Vincent Breakwater from 1900 to 1951. It now serves as a landmark for the Village.

Next on our "to see" list was Sacketts Harbor Lighthouse which was not so easy to find. We did find out it was on Horse Island with the view almost completely blocked by trees. After searching for it, we finally saw the lantern room through the trees and were able to get some "camouflaged" pictures of it.

Stoney Point Lighthouse, Lake Ontario, NY. Was the last lighthouse we would see this weekend. That too was on private property which was also posted but we were able to get some good pictures from an adjoining property and by walking further down the road.

Calling it a day, we said our goodbyes, and headed home from what was a very enjoyable weekend.



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Welcome to Alexandria Bay - Home of the 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum



Boldt Castle Power House



Children's Fun House at Boldt Castle



Boldt Castle Power House



Shuttle from Boldt Isle with Border Patrol Boat



Heart Island - Boldt Castle Complex



Sunset on the 1,000 Island from Tom's deck



Boldt Castle Boat House



Sunken Rock - Heart Island in background



Sunken Rock



Sunken Rock Lighthouse



Sister's Island Lighthouse



Coming in for a landing



Perfect Touchdown



Sisters Island Lighthouse on Three Sisters Island



Singer Castle on Dark Island



Singer Castle and Boat House



Boat House for Singer Castle



Far end of Dark Island w/Boathouse



Crossover Island



Crossover Island



Opposite end of Crossover Island



Cole's Shoal Front Range



Cole's Shoal Lighthouse



Red Channel Marker Canadian side



Cole's Shoal Lighthouse



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My House on the river - ha ha!



Ogdensburg Harbor Lighthouse



On the bow shooting Ogdensburg Light



Pat Bandock



Ogdensburg Harbor Lighthouse



Ogdensburg Harbor Lighthouse



Laker Algosteel heading upstream



Windmill Point with red buoy number 2



Prescott Lights across the river



Windmill Point Lighthouse



Fishing at Windmill Point



Windmill Point Lighthouse



Passing the tanker Federal Hunter



Arlene, Henry, Lynn & Gary topside



Bob and Sharon relaxing



John holding the live auction



DeWatteville Rear Range



DeWatteville Rear Range



DeWatteville Front Range Light



DeWatteville Range Lights



He said what???



Mike, Kathy and Debbie



Relaxing inside while going up river



What do you mean you don't like lighthouses?



Our members from New Jersey looking like they are enjoying the day



WOW - talk about big smiles! That's Patrick and Anita



Our friendly bar-keeper



Chris pretending she is sleeping. We gotcha Chris!



A closer look at Boldt Castle Power House and Clock Tower



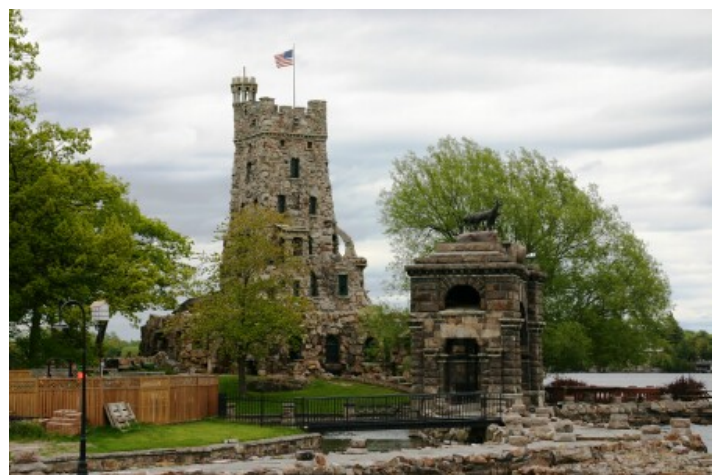
Side view of Boldt Castle



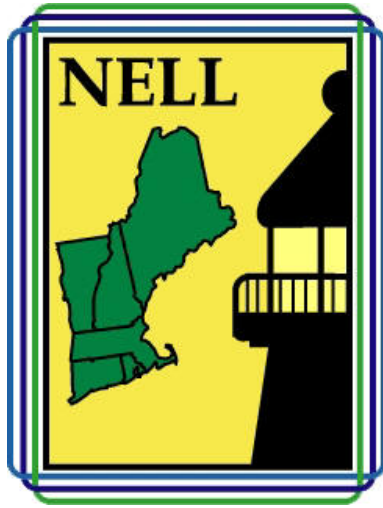
Children's Fun House



Boldt Castle has a large heart top center but it is very weather worn



View from side rear of Funhouse and Archway



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Dock and Customs station at Boldt Castle



Border Patrol boat at Buoy 191



Laker Montrealais



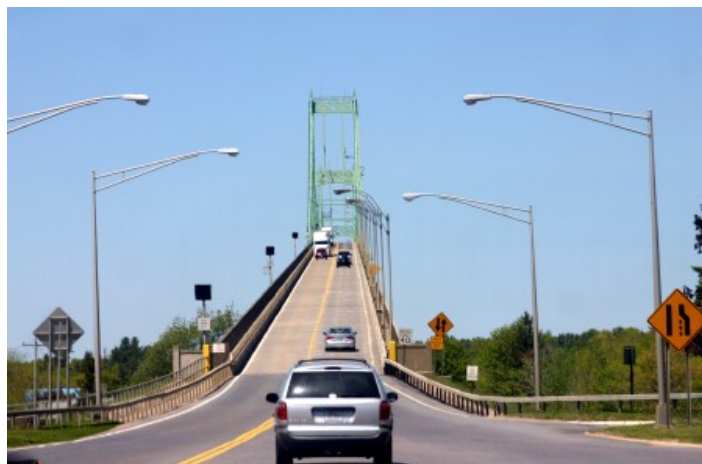
The Montrealais



Stoney Point Lighthouse Lake Ontario, NY



Stoney Point Lake Ontario, NY



1,000 Islands International Bridge to Wellesley Island



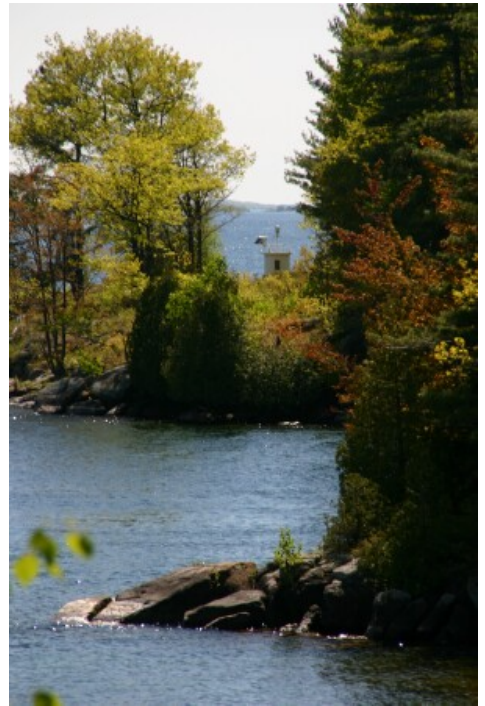
Cole's Shoals Lighthouse



Cole's Shoals Lighthouse



Canadian Fire Hydrant on dead end street



Looking at DeWatteville Front Range from the Rear Range Light



DeWatteville Rear Range



Sideview of DeWatteville Rear Range



Ladder and entry hatch of DeWatteville Rear Range



Ogdensburg Lighthouse taken from Prescott, Canada



Prescott Harbor Outer Light



Lens at Prescott Rotary Light



Put into service in 1949 to give the U.S. superiority over the Russian Mig 15



Windmill Point



Loading the cannon at Windmill Point



Prescott Rotary Light



Windmill Point



Ogdensburg Harbor Lighthouse



Ogdensburg Harbor Lighthouse



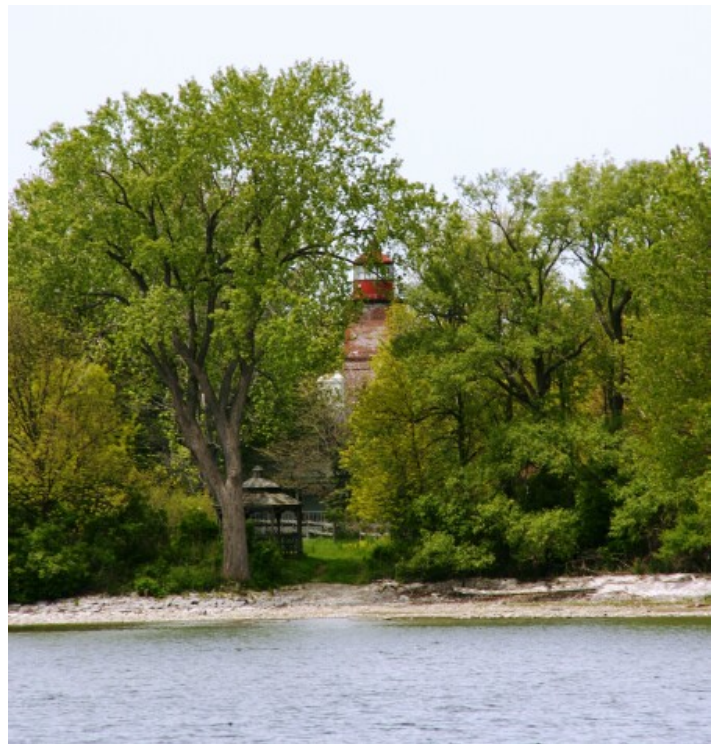
Amish horse and buggy in the countryside



Sunset over Boldt Castle



Capt Vincent Lighthouse relocated to approach to entrance of Village



Sacketts Harbor Lighthouse



Sacketts Harbor on Horse Island



Welcome to Cape Vincent - notice that the light shown on their sign is Tibbetts Point



Tibbetts Point



Tibbetts Point Lighthouse



Keepers Dwelling circa 1907



Tibbetts Point Lighthouse with original keeper's house circa 1827



A hearty group



Boat for NELL's fall cruise
Crew is 10 rowers and 85 members SRO