

# Explore our Lighthouses



a lighthouse scenic tour of Queens County

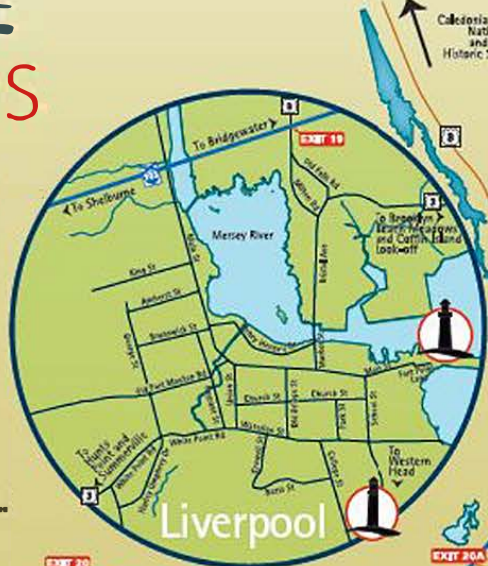


WASHED AWAY IN DECEMBER 2003 STORM

## 7 Little Hope Lighthouse

Used to be located 2 miles off Kejimikujik Seaside National Park, St. Catharines Road, Port Job - 1 minute drive from Highway 103

Yarmouth / Shelburne



Liverpool



Caledonia and Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada



## 4 Fort Point Lighthouse Park

21 Fort Lane, at end of Main Street, Liverpool - 4 minutes from exit 12 Highway 105  
Open to the public 364 in October



## 1 Port Medway Lighthouse Park

3687 Port Medway Road, Port Medway (beyond Harbour Authority wharf) - 8 minutes drive from exit 17 Highway 105



## 6 Spectacle Island Lighthouse

View in the distance from Route 5 between Summersville Beach and Hunts Point - exit 20 Highway 106



## 5 Western Head Lighthouse

Lighthouse Road, Western Head - 11 minutes drive from Fort Point



## 3 Coffin Island Lighthouse

Situated on an island in Liverpool Bay. It can be viewed from Beach Meadows Beach Park

For free look-off with interpretive panel on Brooklyn Stone Road in the Beach Meadows area

From Moose Harbour and Fort Point Lighthouse



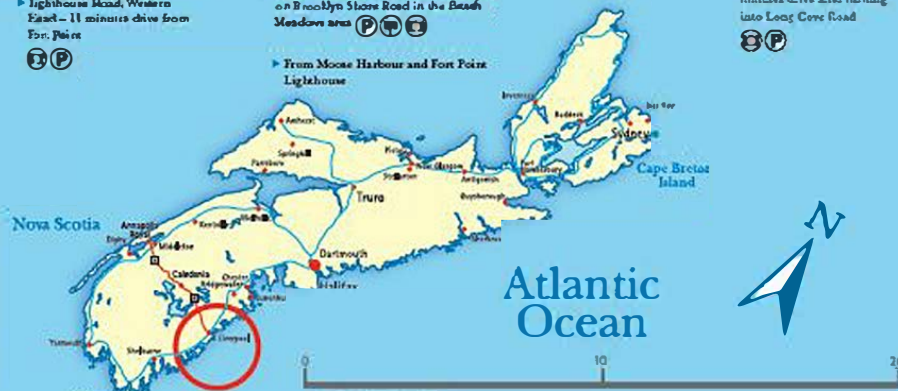
## 2 Medway Head Lighthouse

Long Cove Road, Port Medway - paved and part unpaved - lighthouse is 7 minutes drive after turning into Long Cove Road



Little Hope Island

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| SCENIC LOCATION                         | WASHROOMS (SEASONAL) |
| BEACH                                   | VIEWER AVAILABLE     |
| GIFT SHOP                               | TRAILS               |
| PARKING                                 | GUIDES OR INFO KIOSK |
| WHEELCHAIRS MAY GET CLOSE TO LIGHTHOUSE | ENTRANCE BY DONATION |
| PICNIC TABLES                           | INTERPRETIVE PANELS  |
|   | LIGHTHOUSE ROUTE     |

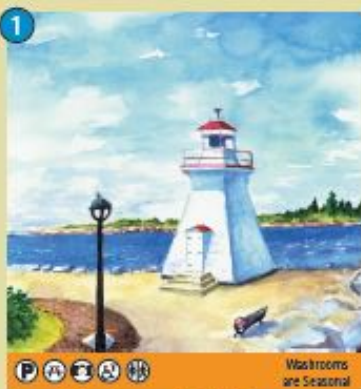


Atlantic Ocean

Nova Scotia is renowned for its cultural richness and diversity. From sandy beaches to rugged cliffs, dramatic headlands and memorable sunsets – Nova Scotia's coastline has it all. Lighthouses are part of its deep maritime heritage and the warm glow of their beacons has safely guided seafarers homeward for generations.

Situated on the Lighthouse Route on the beautiful South Shore of Nova Scotia, Queens County is fortunate to have six lighthouses – four on land and two on islands offshore. All are visible from land, two (Fort Point and Port Medway) have been restored and one (Fort Point) is open to the public. All are steeped in our rich maritime history. Come and explore the lights in Queens County.

The lighthouse histories below are from east (coming from Halifax) to west (traveling towards Yarmouth). If you are beginning the tour at the west of our County (in the Port Joli area), begin at number 6 and work back to 1. A detailed map is shown overleaf. Enjoy the tour!



**1** **Port Medway Lighthouse**  
 ▶ 1687 Port Medway Road, Port Medway (beside Harbour Authority Wharf) – 8 minutes drive from exit 17a Highway 103

Established in 1859, Port Medway light was built to mark the outer end of the breakwater and as a navigational aid to traffic using Medway Harbour. It has a square white wooden tower with sloping sides (16 x 16 feet at the base and 6 x 6 feet at the top). The lantern was originally white, but has been painted red in more recent years until the restoration in 2001.

The light was electrified in 1967 and the colour of the light changed from red to green on April 3, 1967. It had a drum lens and the revolving or flashing mechanism was a Ripley Sunswitch. The light was decommissioned on January 4, 1983.

Port Medway Lighthouse Park was completed in the fall of 2002. Primarily created to preserve the lighthouse, it also features a park enjoyed by the community and visitors alike. The one and three quarter-acre former derelict fish plant property situated beside the busy wharf in Port Medway had been vacant since 1992 and interest in developing the site started when a local community organization, the Medway Area Communities Association, met with the Region of Queens Municipality in the fall of 1998 to express their desire to preserve the lighthouse and create a tourism destination. The project came to a reality when the Municipality was able to purchase the property in a tax sale on July 29, 2000.

Whilst the lighthouse is no longer an official navigational aid, the Coast Guard was able to provide an old drum lens to display at the top of the light tower. Interpretive panels at the site depict the rich maritime history, including shipbuilding, the two Medway lights, the Old Meeting House and the Old Cemetery. The park is landscaped with a large grassed area, native plantings and local rock. It has a paved parking lot, together with a look-off enabling visitors to view the scenic islands in Port Medway Bay. The Washroom hosts various cultural events throughout the year.



**Symbol Key**

- SCENE LOCATION
- BEACH
- GET SHIP
- PARKING
- WASHROOMS CAN BE CLOSE TO Lighthouse
- picnic TABLES
- WASHROOMS (SEASONAL)
- DRIVER AVAILABLE
- TRAILS
- GUIDES OR INFORMATION
- ENTRANCE BY DONATION
- INTERPRETIVE PANELS

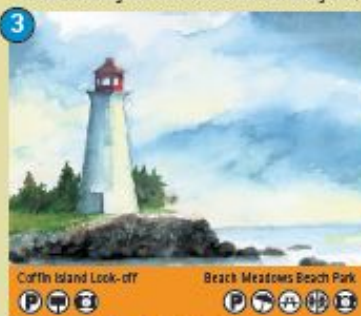


**2** **Medway Head Lighthouse**  
 ▶ Long Cove Road, Port Medway – part paved and part unpaved – lighthouse is 7 minutes drive after turning into Long Cove Road

Built in 1851, the original Medway Head Light sat below the present site – its old foundation can still be seen among the rocks. The first of the four lighthouses on this site was a square wood dwelling, which was 23 feet high, painted white, with a black square daymark.

Elson Perry was the first lightkeeper (until 1892). When Jonas Whynter and his wife lived at the station (1910 – 1934), they had to place large iron plates over their window shutters which closed to keep the stormy seas at bay. In years gone by, goods such as oil and personal supplies came to Medway Head via supply ship. The goods would be delivered to the station by rowboat to a landing between two large boulders. In the mid-1930's the 1851 lighthouse was replaced by a larger building that served as both dwelling and light. This building now sits on the hill across the road as a private home. In 1951 it was replaced by a fiberglass structure, which was later replaced by the present automated lighthouse in 1986. The current wooden pyramidal tower is 29 feet high. The light was automated and dewatered in 1987. Douglas Smiley was the last lightkeeper.

Full over in the area provided just above the lighthouse and take in the view of the high cliff formations and hear the roaring surf.



**3** **Coffin Island Lighthouse**  
 ▶ Situated on an island in Liverpool Bay  
 ▶ Can be viewed from Moose Harbour, Fort Point Lighthouses [see 4] and also from a look-off with interpretive panel on Brooklyn Shore Road in the Beach Meadows area

The original lighthouse was erected at the southern tip of the island in 1811–12 at a cost of approximately £536 sterling. At the time it was one of the earliest in service in Nova Scotia, along with Sables, Shelburne and Brier Island. It was built of wood, standing in total 75 feet high, octagonal in shape and painted with horizontal stripes of red and white. The corner stone was laid by Sreen Perkins on July 24, 1811. In those days the island was called Bear Island.

In its design, the Coffin Island Lighthouse incorporated the very latest in technology. In particular, it held the distinction of having the first revolving light in Nova Scotia. In a system known at the time as catoptric light, the massive dodecadwork mechanism turned fourteen Argand oil lamps and highly polished parabolic reflectors. Revolving every two minutes, the light could be seen up to 15 miles away in good conditions; early 19th century accounts describe it as the best on the coast.

The old lighthouse was struck by lightning on June 19, 1913 and burned to the ground along with the keeper's home and outbuildings. It was replaced by a smaller steel-reinforced concrete lighthouse (52 feet high) which was completed in 1914 a short distance from the original location and was manned by James Edward Wentzell. This lighthouse was automated and the keeper's house torn down in 1961.

By 1964 the former mile-long island had shrunk to a mere 130 acres and the portion surrounding the unmanned light was retained by the Federal Government until 1998, when it was slated for demolition due to cash shortages. A local community group the Coffin Island Lighthouse Heritage Society was formed to save the light and through diligent efforts managed to raise enough money to save the tower and protect its site. In recent years the structure has been replaced by a fiberglass cone.



**4** **Fort Point Lighthouse**  
 ▶ 21 Fort Lane, at end of Main Street, Liverpool  
 ▶ 4 minutes from exit 19 of Highway 103  
 ▶ (902) 354-3240

Fort Point Lighthouse is the third oldest surviving lighthouse in Nova Scotia and is open to the public from mid-May to mid-October. Visitors can enter the lighthouse where maritime and pioneering history is brought to life by costumed interpreters. An audio visual presentation is available where a previous lightkeeper's son describes life in the lighthouse. On the top level, you can crank the handle of the fog horn and enjoy the view. On the lower level is a gift shop containing locally-made folk art and unique lighthouse collectibles.

Built in 1855 to supplement Coffin Island lighthouse, Fort Point light originally had a range of seven miles from its elevated height of thirty-nine feet. It was eventually joined by a host of smaller lights on buoys and wharves, and even a small beacon on the tower bridge, all installed to help navigate the inner harbour to the Mersey River.

Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, it was manned by a keeper, who initially lived in a nearby house. In addition to the regular maintenance and upkeep of the light he was responsible for operating a hand-cranked foghorn in reply to the foghorn signals from incoming vessels as they entered the harbour. By the turn of the century (1900) an attached dwelling was built with a storage shed, which was used to house fuel oil and maintenance equipment.

The original light was red, however, in 1926 it was replaced by a flashing white light. Three oil-burning lanterns provided the source for the light in the early years. These were magnified by a twelve-inch round reflector. The light was electrified in 1951 and in 1964 it was automated or "made unwatched". It was decommissioned in 1986.

Coffin Island Light can be viewed from the Park.



**5** **Western Head Lighthouse**  
 ▶ Light House Road, Western Head – 11 minutes drive from Fort Point

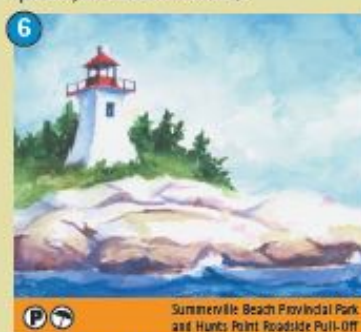
Western Head light is located on the west side of the entrance to Liverpool Bay and began as a fog alarm station in 1930. The lighthouse was built in 1962 after the keeper's dwelling at Coffin Island had fallen into serious disrepair, and it was decided that it

would be more reasonable to dewater it, and add a tower to the existing Western Head facility. The octagonal lighthouse was topped by a 500-watt beacon that was turned on manually at sunset and extinguished at sunrise. The light was built to throw a beam out to a radius of approximately 40 km (25 miles).

Today the facility serves as an Environment Canada Weather Station, which is constantly monitored by automatic equipment.

Years ago when the station was staffed by three keepers, the keeper on duty had to manually report the weather conditions on an hourly basis. Rough weather was an occupational hazard – high winds would sometimes force them to use the back door, as they couldn't open the front one. Between 1965 and 1966 a current annual was erected on the ocean side of the lighthouse for extra protection against stormy seas. The radio beacon at this site also kept signal time. The lighthouse was dewatered in 1988.

The view of the ocean and rock formations make the Western Head area ideal for photographers, artists and bird watchers. Visitors should be mindful that this lighthouse is still owned and operated by Fisheries & Oceans Canada.



**6** **Spectacle Island Lighthouse**  
 ▶ View in the distance from Route 3 between Summersville Beach and Hunts Point – exit 20 Highway 103

Built in 1873, this unmanned lighthouse is still operational as a navigational aid. It has a square wooden tower with a red square wooden lantern.

In 1916 the Clifford J. White was en route from New York to Yarmouth when she ran aground and sank off Spectacle Island Ledge. In 1852 the Dart was en route to Yarmouth from Halifax when she sank off the Ledges, and the Ethel Emerson actually struck the island in 1864.

The light was rebuilt in 1977. When the light was dewatered some associated local residents spent a winter taking the adjoining buildings off the island, including the two-story lighthouse keeper's house. After moving the house off the island it was tied up at the former wharf in South West Port Mouton overnight. During the night a severe storm came up and destroyed the house before anyone had the chance to haul it to safety. The lighthouse can be viewed (at a distance) at various points along Route 3 between Summersville Beach and Hunts Point.



**7** **Little Hope Lighthouse**  
 ▶ Used to be located 2 miles off Kejimikujik Seaside National Park, St. Catherine's Road, Port Joli – 9 minutes drive from Highway 103

Unfortunately, this automated lighthouse was sadly lost in the severe winter storm of December 6 – 7th, 2005. Until this time the lighthouse had been operational, having been dewatered in 1950. It was originally built in 1865, due to the large number of shipwrecks that had occurred on the island and the shoals surrounding it. Among them was a large ship, the Elizabeth from Great Britain, who was bound for Saint John, New Brunswick in 1815 and was stranded on the island. Her valuable cargo, worth £70,000 sterling, was lost.

Little Hope was located two miles from the nearest point of land and got its name from the saying "A ship oughtn't get too near her in a storm, there'd be little hope for her if she did".

Enjoy a hike to unspoiled Atlantic coastline in Kejimikujik Seaside National Park (30 minute hike from the parking lot) – open year-round (902-682-3772). Look out into the ocean from the end of the trail to see where the lighthouse once stood.