



**APRIL 2009**

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Free to FoCH members.

## Report from the Chair of the Friends of Cabot Head

by Ina Toxopeus, Chair FoCH

It's spring time again on the Bruce Peninsula. The maple sap is running. The robins, and sandhill cranes have arrived. The snow is slowly receding from the roadsides and in the bush. Slowly the animals are creeping out of their protective homes and venturing out. So too is the human population, with thoughts of all the things to do in order to get ready for the up coming summer season. Yes, it is time to think about preparing the Light House for another season of activities.

With our treasurer in India for 6 months, our Past Chair going around the world, the winter weather, and health issues, getting the Board together for meetings this year has been a challenge. But we had the internet and as long as the power was on we managed to get some things done and/or started.

The **Bruce Coast Lighthouse Partners** have been busy this winter and spring. In case you are not aware, as Chair of FoCH, I sit on this organization making Cabot Head an active member. With the help of the Bruce County Museum in Southampton, they have been successful in getting a grant to hire Betty McKillop, as a Project Co-ordinator. Betty has been busy this winter, not to mention keeping me busy. She has been/is working on initiatives including:

- research for the lighthouses
- creating a marketing/business plan for the Partners,
- reorganized the Partners files,
- investigating funding opportunities for the Partners (e.g., Trillium, Agri-spirit, Eco-energy Fund, Rural Economic Development grant, etc.),
- organizing our "wish lists" in priority order for grant proposals and capital needs for grant application,
- obtain quotes for 2009/10 tourism-advertising campaigns,
- sits on the Lighthouse Exhibit Team Meetings to assist in the creation of a lighthouse exhibit for the Museum,
- prepare and submit forms for Trillium funding in partnership with the Partners and the Museum for banners and posts for promotional purposes, and
- working with 2 separate groups for our lighthouse.

The Partners are also working at being an integral part of the planning stages of the "Lighthouse Preservation" Bill (S 215). Gordon Web, the present Chair, has been in active contact with Barry MacDonald. The "word" is that the powers in Ottawa will circulate the key policy questions publicly and solicit input. This may be ready as early as the end of April. So keep tuned and please be ready with your input.

The **Southampton Museum** is working very hard to get a permanent Marine (Lighthouse) exhibit ready for the Spring season. They acquired the Cape Croker lens and it has been reassembled for display. Cabot Head has been asked to loan them a model, pictures of the keepers, etc. So Kathleen (our manager) and I will be working on that this spring. If you have anything related to our lighthouse that can be borrowed, reproduced etc. we would appreciate that very much.

I have asked Stan McClellan to do a "travelling" model of our light. I will donate it to Cabot Head when it is finished.

Patrick spent last winter adding to and up dating the **Cabot Head history book**. We will have signed copies for sale at our AGM on May 3rd. So please attend. The board is planning to sell the history books and possibly some other branded items from our web site during the winter months.

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In the fall, Kathleen and I managed to put the 2 antique showcases together. They are now ready for Patrick to fill with items related to the lighthouse and the marine history of the area. This winter, he has collected items, with the help of the Bruce County Museum and will have the display ready for the summer season.

Gwen and Robert spent some time at the Gift Show again this spring and picked up new items for the store. I hope that you'll have some time to come up this summer and have a look (and of course .... buy!).

A new artist will be added to the **Shipwreck Gallery**. The art of Ken Thornburn from Northern Flyer, Tara with his series of lighthouse drawings of Bruce County and especially Cabot Head will be for sale this summer. There has been discussion of doing a drawing of the Gargantua as she is at present with her original look, as a ghost ship, in the back ground.

We're looking forward to having Dorothy Dedels again sitting in the art gallery on one of the weekend days, both painting and discussing painting with the visitors. Dorothy has been know to give small art lessons to those who visit her at the gallery. Artists are always welcome to be in the gallery to do their painting.

Last year we wanted to **paint the lighthouse**, as it badly needs a new coat. We budgeted about three thousand dollars for it. Calls were made to local painters, but only one bid was received. It was considerably higher than we had expected. So with the eye on the economy, we decided to postpone the paint job to this year. New calls for bids will be going out soon and if the budget is approved with the paint allotment considerably higher we hope to have the job done sometime in the summer. This is our main goal, even if we have to dip into our reserve funds. The other possibility might be that we qualify for a grant for the painting.

With the economy on the skids last year we found that by the end of September our **numbers were down**: sales -21.11%, visitors -15.28%, and donations -4.52%. However our donations per visitor was up +12.71%, which was a pleasant and welcome surprise.

Our year end total revenue was down 18.53% from 2007. We managed to keep our total expenses down by 14.04% over the previous year. Thus by not painting the light, and holding off, or scaling down, the other budget items we managed to remain in a fair monetary condition. At present, our books are at the accountant for the year end and tax preparation. Her statements will be available at our AGM.

Gwen has informed me that we have filled 22 weeks of the **Assistant Lightkeepers program**, starting with the week of May 11th. and ending with the week of October 5th. We're still trying to fill the week of Oct. 12th. to the 18th. (so, if anyone is interested please contact Gwen). This program has become a very successful with the volunteer help of Valerie Hill, who frequently does a story on us and the program in the Kitchener Record. A very big thank you to Valerie for all her help in the past and hopefully in the future.

On the topic of **volunteers** - I was pleasantly shocked last month. As part of the grant applications, we (the applicants) need to be willing to come up with half the money (or in kind) for the proposed project. The money "in kind" can be volunteer time calculated at \$12.00/hour. At the last meeting of the Bruce Coast Lighthouse Partners, Betty informed us of the numbers she submitted were only her guesses and would appreciate more accurate ones. This I calculated for last year. To my surprise, and this is on the low side, I came up with the following figures: approx. 12,332 hours of volunteer time last year for a value of \$147,992.00. That is an awesome number! It gets even more astounding if we consider the 14 years that we have been incorporated.... 172,648 hr. brings the value of all our volunteer time to over 2 million dollars. These figures do not include the 4 yrs. a small band of people spent organizing the "sit in", writing letters to government agencies etc. to set up "The Friends of Cabot Head", allowing us to apply to the Coast Guard to be custodians of the light and to get us incorporated as a Not For Profit Organization.

So as the out going chair I would like to say....

A big Thank You to all the people who have helped in any way to make our light, Cabot Head the success it is today.  
THANK YOU!



Without your support, both in volunteer time and donations, we would not have been able to accomplish what we have.

Alas, we can not rest. The next few years will be rocky, as we navigate the uncertain waters of Bill S215. The greater involvement of our membership base, both as board members (which we really need) and active participation in the programs and new program development, the stronger argument we will have for the retention of our lighthouse as a viable entity. In this regard we need all the help we can muster. We have the internet, which allows members to be more active and connected. An e-mail with your ideas or visions will be appreciated. **Your attendance at the AGM on May 3rd. would be greatly appreciated.** We are serving a free lunch!

**AGM date: Sunday, May 3, 2009** - lunch at noon, meeting starts at 1PM. Guest speaker: Gordon Web on Bill S215.  
**AGM location:** Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula town offices, 56 Lindsay Road 5, east of Hwy 6 (P.J. Corners).