

PARC DU PHARE AU CAP SAINTE-MARIE

ABOUT PARC DU PHARE AU CAP SAINTE-MARIE

Parc du Phare au Cap Sainte-Marie (Cape Saint Mary Lighthouse Park) is a one hectare parcel of land situated on a dramatic cliff overlooking Baie Sainte-Marie which meets the Gulf of Maine. The park is located within the fishing and boat building village of Cap Sainte-Marie at the westernmost spot of mainland Nova Scotia. The site is just a few kilometres away from Mavillette Beach Provincial Park. A rough and unmarked coastal trail connects the park to Bear Cove, offering an immersive outdoor experience for visitors.

In 2017, the Municipality of Clare took ownership of the property and developed the park with improvements to the exterior of the lighthouse. Since then, the Municipality has redesigned the space and provided amenities including picnic tables, picnic shelters, benches, restrooms, flag poles, viewing scopes, a large memorial monument, and interpretive panels.







HISTORY

The cliffs of Cap Sainte-Marie, named by Samuel de Champlain in 1604, mark the entrance into Baie Sainte-Marie from the Bay of Fundy to the west. From Salmon River to Meteghan, these dramatic cliffs drop into the ocean from heights of up to 45 meters. This craggy terrain is part of the Appalachian Mountain system extending from Georgia in the south to Newfoundland. Most of the cape's cliffs are 500,000,000 year-old Meguma bedrock of the Ordovician period, made of slate, siltstone and argillite, predominantly brown or grey. A small outcrop of newer Silurian White Rock Formation, mainly quartzite, exists side by side with the Meguma cliffs. The unconformity of these two bedrock formations — a geological split personality – represents a gap in the geological record of over 30,000,000 years.

The mouth of the Salmon River is about five kilometres away and was a regular summer camp site for the native Mi'kmaq of southwestern Nova Scotia, and was called *Poulamonsebou* meaning "place where the salmon abounds". A stone gouge and arrowheads have been found there.



Barchettes at Cap Sainte-Marie.A tintype of the village at Cap Sainte-Marie where fishers used small open boats known locally as barchettes.

Sometime between 1780 and 1800, the land at the cape was granted to Elias Hardy, Doctor Peter Huggerford, David Matthews, Thomas Miller and Colonel John Taylor, but there is no record that any of these men ever occupied their lands. French Acadian settlers from the villages of Clare began settling in Cap Sainte-Marie around 1804. Many of them were the descendants of Jacques Deveau who had settled at nearby Rivière-aux-Saumons around 1785. Historians have noted that the Mi'kmag supported the Acadians' settlement efforts and shared their fishing techniques and food gathering knowledge with the new settlers at Salmon River. The Mi'kmag's use of the site declined gradually after the establishment of the Bear River reservation in the early 1800s.

Within a few decades, a fishing village grew on the south side of the headlands, harvesting abundant stocks of cod, herring and other



Sea shanties.Cap Sainte-Marie fishing boats and fish sheds. The 'barchette' boats were replaced by larger boats powered with gasoline engines and equipped with small cabins on the bow for shelter. The fishing sheds were densely packed along the harbour road.

groundfish at the mouth of Baie Sainte-Marie and shellfish on nearby Plage Mavillette. The daily catch could be sold or exchanged at the local general store whose agents, in turn, would sell it or export it to southern markets such as the Caribbean.

By the 1830s, the residents petitioned the government for a lighthouse as an aid to mariners. It would be over three decades before their request was granted, and their lighthouse began operation on April 15, 1868. The original lighthouse was a wooden octagonal tower measuring 13.1 meters (approximately 43 feet) in height, equipped with a revolving light that produced a white and red flash every 30 seconds. The lighthouse grounds also included a residence for the lightkeeper and a barn for his farm animals. In 1914, a diaphone foghorn station was added, sounding a slow two-tone warning into the fog every five seconds. A



Original Lighthouse.
The first lighthouse and lightkeepers house at Cap Sainte-Marie. ca 1903. (Harold Robichaud)



Replacement Lighthouse. Cap Sainte-Marie lighthouse and lightkeepers house. 1988. (Harold Robichaud)

detailed history of the village and lighthouse, including a list of the lighthouse keepers who have served there, is on display on interpretive panels at the site currently.

After nearly a century in service, the octagonal lighthouse and the other buildings on the site were demolished and replaced with a modern lighthouse with both a light and a fog signal. Completed in 1965, it is a 3-meter square tower of poured concrete built into the corner of a one-story concrete block building and topped by a metal hexagonal lantern house. Measuring 8.8 meters from base to lantern floor, it is equipped with a 500-watt light that produces one flash every five seconds. It operates only at night. This lighthouse was automated in 1989.

Since 2017, the Municipality of Clare has taken ownership of the property and maintains the grounds as a public park. Many site improvements have been made since then including recladding of the lighthouse exterior, new landscaping, a larger parking area, picnic facilities, new interpretive signs and viewing scopes. In 2018, a large monument was unveiled in the park and dedicated to the memory of community members whose lives were lost at sea. The monument features a large granite sculpture of a sea captain, carved by local artist Marc Graff. A building with toilet facilities was added in 2019.

Aerial Photograph of Cap Sainte-Marie.

Aerial photograph showing the lighthouse, along with two residences and a shed. Only the lighthouse remains today.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

LANDSCAPE

Cap Sainte-Marie is located on a drumlin/ moraine extension of the White Rock formation at an elevation of approximately 25 metres above sea level. The site slopes towards the edge of cliffs which reach a height of 20 metres at the ridgeline. The cliff faces then cascade down in flute formations, defined as slate outcrops. Algae covers unique rock formations that include flutes, stacks, caves, churns, blow holes, folds, and various formations. The upper area is well to moderately well drained, flowing from the parking lot area to the edge of the cliffs; the site drains rapidly as it reaches the cliff faces.

The upper area of the park is located on hummocky terrain with few trees and mostly low-lying vegetation including grasses and groundcovers. The upper lawn area is surrounded by an expansive cliffscape of coastal rocks and slate outcrops. A small patch of trees is located at the ridge of the eroding cliff, appearing to be white spruce. Some small patches of white spruce exist within the surrounding landscape.





The **lowland meadow** area hosts small grasses such as coastal sedge, dwarf spruce and alders, defined as a brush landcover. Meadows attract sea and land-based species including grackles, robins, and blue jays and small mammals such as snowshoe hares, American mink, raccoons, and other small rodents.

Cap Sainte-Marie is dominated by **slate cliff formations**. The cliff faces, particularly at the base, are fluted from wave action. Slate is a metamorphic rock formed from sedimentary parent material. The open cliff face and along the upper cliff ridges are occupied by lowgrowing salt-tolerant plants similar to those found in barren ecosystems such as Crowberry and Coastal Sedge, Rhodiola rosea, Draba arabasiens and Saxifrage.

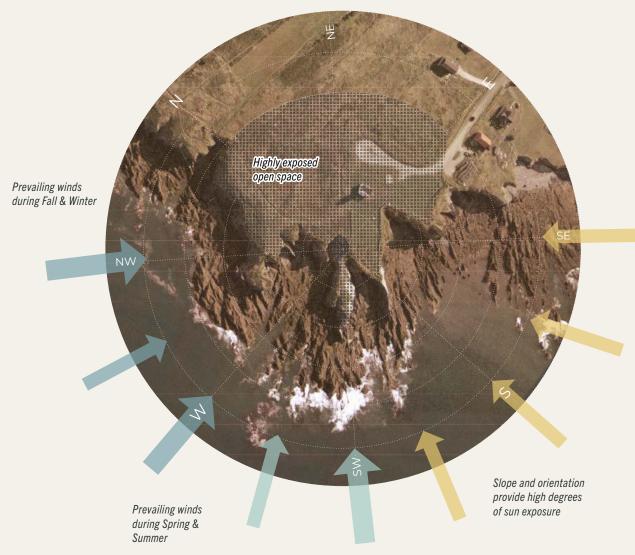
At the base of the cliff, **slate outcrops** extend into the sea. The fluted rock formations are covered with algae at low tide and act as hunting grounds for birds and small carnivorous mammals to catch clams, small fish and other aquatic life that get left behind at low tide.

Of the five species located within the Clare region listed under the Endangered Species Act, the eastern white cedar, is located slightly inland from Cap Sainte-Marie towards Hectanooga. Clare hosts the largest population of eastern white cedar in the province, and the Hectanooga area is the largest stand in the region. Eastern white cedar is listed as vulnerable under provincial legislation and should therefore be protected.

MICROCLIMATE

The highly exposed ridge area experiences strong winds and direct sun. There is no tree protection on the site, so the site is highly vulnerable to impacts of extreme weather conditions. The south facing orientation maximizes sunlight year-round and makes for long days in the summer.

The Bay of Fundy, in addition to having the world's highest tides, is also one of the foggiest places in the world. Geographic and climatic conditions combine here to create dense fog particularly during the spring and summer months. Surrounded by imposing cliffs, battered by strong winds and often obscured by dense fog, Cap Sainte-Marie is both a hazard and a navigational aid for mariners.





SITE FEATURES

Cap Sainte-Marie attracts visitors for its cultural and natural features. Cultural features encompass built form, structures and site amenities such as seating and picnic shelters, and natural features include a trail and sublime landscapes.

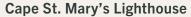
Parc du Phare au Cap Sainte-Marie has been a significant development for the community of Clare. The site is a desired gathering space for community events, commemorative celebrations and for general sightseeing—by far the most popular current use.

Visitors to Cap Sainte-Marie can experience panoramic views of Baie Sainte-Marie, explore the restored lighthouse, investigate the interpretive panels and written histories, and explore the coastal ridgeline on outcrop lookouts and a trail. Fossil hunters are attracted to the shore below the cape cliffs where marine fossils lie exposed at low tide.

Cap Sainte-Marie, being an abundant fishing port, has a wharf area with fishing boats. Aside from the lighthouse park experience, visitors could explore the working fishing community, wharf and coastal activities below the cliffs to the southeast for general sightseeing.







The lighthouse, constructed in 1969, functions uniquely as both a light tower and fog alarm. The heritage lighthouse is protected under the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act for its historical, architectural and community values. The lighthouse is automated and unstaffed, serving as a navigational aid for shipping and for lobster and groundfish fleet. It is located 31.8 meters above the high water mark and is an iconic and important landmark for the community. It is also a much-appreciated tourist icon, appealing to visitors as a scenic landmark and a place to watch the sunsets and bird-watch.



The lighthouse is a private use building comprised of a lighthouse tower plus an attached one-storey building section. The one-storey section hosts the main entrance to the building and is constructed from concrete (as seen from a site visit, complete construction assembly was not visible), and partly woodshingled cladding.

The lighthouse tower is constructed with cladding in another type of material, appearing to be concrete or similar. The lighthouse building looks to be on a concrete foundation. The entirety of the building's interior is not accessible to a person using a wheeled mobility device as the door is located a step above the



level of grade. Similarly, the sole access to the viewing platform from the building's interior is via a steep staircase. In general, the building's interior is in poor condition, yet the exterior of the building is in good condition, particularly the one-storey section of the building which appears to have had new cladding installed very recently.











Restrooms

The restroom building is a public use space constructed on a concrete foundation with walls made of cladding material from recycled plastic bottles by the local Acadian company, JD Composites. The structure has a red pitched roof that appears to be clad in the same recycled plastic bottle material. The building is accessed by a ramp constructed of wood decking with additional traction mats for accessibility. The building is in very good condition, built in spring 2019 and opened in July 2019.

Picnic Shelter

The picnic shelter is a public use space constructed out of wood with open walls and a covered roof; the roof is clad with red asphalt shingles. The covered structure is situated on stable and level terrain, accessible to people using assisted mobility devices. The covered space can accommodate two standard picnic tables (including wheelchair accessible picnic tables) and the extension of the level ground surface around the shelter allows for uncovered picnic experiences. The shelter itself is inset below grade, surrounded by a concrete curb and wood post with rope fence. Fascia is showing wear, but otherwise the shelter is functional and in relatively good condition.

Fisherman's Monument

The centrepiece of the park is a monument commemorating those lost to the sea from the Municipality of Clare. Local sculptor Marc Graff carved the fisherman's bust that sits atop the monument. A great place to sit and watch waves break!





Sentier de Cape Sainte-Marie

An old hiking trail along the coast links the lighthouse park to Bear Cove, about 15 kilometers to the north. Being one of the westernmost points on mainland Nova Scotia, the site offers spectacular views of the bay, good bird watching and magnificent sunsets. The trail skirts the cliffs, offering excellent views of the bay, but the terrain is difficult, even challenging and often quite wet. In some places there may be no clear trail at all and walkers must wade through high grass or low scrub to get through. In its current state, it is not recommended for tourists out for a relaxing walk and only suitable for seasoned hikers, preferably with a guide. There is no directional signage along the way and paths sometimes diverge suddenly. It should also be noted that the trail passes on private property (multiple owners) over its entirety, sometimes passing close to private residences.

Cape Lookout

A rugged, narrow headland extends out from the lighthouse area and juts out into the sea. For those brave enough, it offers fantastic views of the surrounding seascape; however, a formal trail and lookout does not currently exist.

THINGS TO DO

Cap Sainte-Marie offers a handful of activities for visitors, including hiking and birdwatching.

Birdwatching

Cap Sainte-Marie is known for its diverse and abundant bird life and serves as a breeding and nesting habitat for certain species and a seasonal stop for others. During autumn, birds rest in the western headlands of the Cape, as they pause on flights across the

bay. Birdwatchers visit here year round to observe terrestrial, seabird, waterfowl and shorebird species from the ideal vantage points of the cliffs. The nearby marshes and shoreline at Mavillette Beach also offer excellent bird watching opportunities.

Festival Hike

A tradition since 1990, the Festival Hike is a 15 km long guided nature tour featuring stunning panoramic clifftop views of Baie Sainte-Marie.



REVIEWS

Cape Sainte-Marie has received 29 reviews on tripadvisor.com. Most reviews are generally positive, especially after the Municipality revitalized the park in 2017.



Comments:

"A Must See When in the Area."

"A beautiful and rugged coastline... this is well worth a visit to appreciate the view and the memorial to lost fishermen."

"The scenery is amazing and even though it was foggy there is still plenty to see."

"The trail is 200 metres long and give you superb views of the surrounding rocks. It is absolutely breath taking."



SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Recently upgraded interpretive panels, seating and historical landmarks.
- The expansive cliffscape has unique topography and attracts countless coastal birds, appealing to photographers, adventurists and birdwatchers.
- Historical visitor experiences within the park complement the expansive beach and outdoor offerings within the nearby Mavillette Beach Provincial Park.
- The site is well developed to accommodate large groups and gatherings.

WEAKNESSES

- Some features and infrastructure require improvements and renovations.
- The lighthouse structure requires interior renovations in order to facilitate tourism programming.
- Access to the lookout point is not currently secure or safe.
- Activities and site offerings are generally geared toward older demographics with few experiences appealing to children or young adults, aside from the trails.
- Trails are unmarked with signs and underexposed.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Once renovated, the lighthouse could provide additional programming for visitors. Visitors could potentially climb the lighthouse stairs to the tower.
- The lighthouse building could host interpretive features and panels in the interior.
- Upper ridgeline walkway could extend out onto the outcrop cliff area.
- Sloping areas towards the ridgeline could accommodate terraced seating and platforms for small groups.
- Trail networks around the lighthouse park could be linked to the network of trails and paths to Mavillette.

THREATS

- Elevation, slope and exposure to the elements can challenge particular uses and threaten visitor's comfort while on site.
- The ridgeline walkway could be a potential safety risk.

SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Having undergone major renovations in 2017, the site is now equipped to host community events, large groups and visitors looking to experience the rugged cliffs of Cap Sainte-Marie area and indulge in local histories of the lighthouse. The proposed site improvements include a lookout structure that enhances the views and rugged topography of the site, as well as a program that utilizes the interior space of the lighthouse for a new experience centre.

CSM1 Light Point Lookoff

CSM2 Lighthouse Experience Centre



CSM 1

LIGHT POINT LOOKOFF

CAP SAINTE-MARIE

OBJECTIVES















TIMELINE









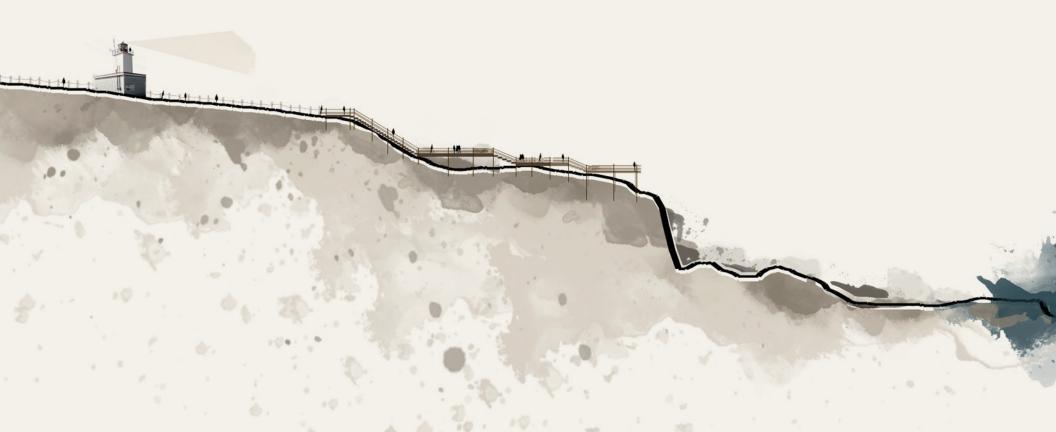




The expansive cliffscape offers extensive panoramic views, which could be leveraged with a look-out on the cliffs. The existing trail network connecting to Bear's Cove could be marked with signage and interpretive features and additional look-offs could be implemented.

Furthermore, more formal seating and gathering space could be designed around the monument, highlighting its significance and capturing the beautiful bay in the backdrop during community celebrations. Similarly, staggered seating could be embedded into

the hill leading to the look-out. A picnic pavilion, complementary to that proposed at Le Fourneau and L'Anse-des-Belliveau, could be added near to the parking lot. A lookoff such as this will require a geotechnical study to advise on feasibility.





CSM 2

LIGHTHOUSE EXPERIENCE CENTRE

CAP SAINTE-MARIE

OBJECTIVES





























The existing lighthouse lends itself as a potentially unique experience for visitors, including an interior interpretive centre and viewing area. The layout of exhibits and the visitor experience for the interior of the Cap Sainte-Marie lighthouse has been planned with the following criteria in mind:

- 1. The interpretive centre and park will have one guide on site during operating hours. When the guide is not on site, the interpretive centre will be closed, but the park grounds will remain open to the public
- 2. The exhibits inside the centre should be tamper-proof and there should be no artifacts exposed where they would be subject to theft or vandalism.
- 3. The interpretive exhibits can be left open to the public and unstaffed for periods when the guide is elsewhere on the park property.
- 4. The lighthouse equipment (e.g., light control panel, fog signal, etc.) should be inaccessible and protected from tampering by visitors.
- 5. All of the electrical panels, electrical conduits and lighthouse control equipment will remain in their current locations.
- 6. The exhibits have been arranged in discrete themes that can be viewed in any

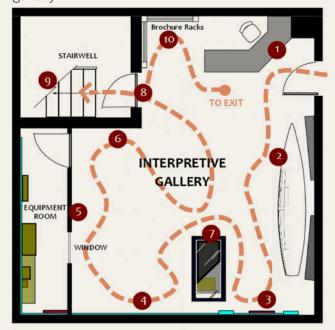
- sequence. There is no 'correct' visitor path through the exhibits.
- 7. The space will require a new suspended ceiling, appropriate exhibit and task lighting, and new flooring.
- 8. All texts in the exhibits will be presented in two languages (French and English) with French being placed in the left-hand or top position and English in the right-hand or bottom position. This is consistent with the interpretive texts that appear elsewhere in the interpretive materials already installed on the site.

The important elements of the space plan are described in the following visitor experience with bracketed numbers (#) that correspond to numbered bullets on the accompanying floor plan. Exhibit concepts are illustrated with inspirational photographs of best practices found in museum displays and interpretive centres located elsewhere or with images taken at the site. They are included to help convey the 'look and feel' of the visitor experience.

Visitor Experience

Visitors enter at the northeast corner of the building. Immediately to their right, along the north wall of the lighthouse, they will see a

reception counter 1 for the on-site guide. The space in this area is equipped as a mini Visitor Expericen Centre equipped with rack displays, regional map, local tourist guides, etc., and uses about 65 square feet of floor space. Visitors may see a guide at the counter, or the guide may have already greeted them outside on the park grounds. They are free to explore the centre and its exhibits in any sequence they wish, but for the purposes of this description, the path is clockwise around the gallery.







The largest exhibit in the room is the Bartchette and Fish Shack exhibit 2 , located along the east wall of the space. In the background along this wall, shallow facades of unpainted fish shacks serve as a scenic backdrop for a replica of a 19th century Acadian barchette fishing boat [LOA approximately 17 feet or 5.2 metres], equipped with oars and a mast and sail. Fishing tools, gear and other artifacts, donated or loaned by the community, are displayed on the fish shack facades and near the barchette. The guide on site can demonstrate how the small mast and sail are stepped (placed vertically) for use. Interpretive panels attached to the fish shack facades provide information about the fishers at Cap Sainte-Marie who relied on these small open boats for a livelihood during the 19th century. The best practices image provided here shows a similar installation in the sports fishing exhibit at the Campbell River Museum in British Columbia.

The Fishing Life in the Early 1950s exhibit 3 located in the southeast corner, is a photographic display using the photographs of life at Cap Sainte-Marie taken by the acclaimed American photographer John Collier in 1950 and 1951. These photos were taken as part of an ethnographic study by scholars at Cornell University and financed by the Rockefeller Foundation. The selected photos show daily life and the step-by-step processes involved in harvesting cod, ground fish, herring and lobster. They show fishers preparing their gear and boats for fishing, fishers at sea, fishers processing their catch, villagers planting their gardens, people at home and in the village's general store. Caption cards accompany each photo. Fishing artifacts loaned or donated by the community are displayed here. Fragile or small objects are in small cases. The best practices image included to illustrate the photo gallery technique is from the Columbia River Maritime Museum in Oregon, USA.

A sample photo array of John Collier photographs depict lobster-fishing activities at Cap Sainte-Marie: 1) making the nets used inside the lobster traps, 2) painting a set of lobster buoys, 3) assembling a wooden lobster trap, 4) a bucket of bait bags filled with fish, ready to be put into the traps, 5) loading the traps onto a boat, 6) measuring the catch to see if it is of legal harvesting size, 7) the day's catch brought ashore in a wire basket, and 8) weighing a crate of lobsters for export. The Collier collection is now in the Nova Scotia Archives digital collection.







The What's The Catch? exhibit 4 is a display of five exhibit panels along the south wall. Visitors are introduced to the fish and crustaceans that are the species fished at the Cape: herring, mackerel, cod and other ground fish, lobster and tuna. The exhibits include depictions of each species at their mature size ranging from the tiny herring to the gigantic tuna. The exhibit panels include photographs (both historic and from the present day) of relevant fishing and processing activities, and natural history information about each species. A small activity station allows visitors to try their hand at making a fish net, by following a set of how-to diagrams that show each step in the process. The sample photograph, from the Lake Havasu Museum of History in Arizona. shows how comparing and contrasting various fish species can produce an appealing and educational display. [Note: along this wall,

exhibits that are placed in front of the two electrical panels will be hinged for easy access to the electrical equipment.]

The **Lighthouse Keeping Then and Now** exhibit 5 borders the west side of the exhibit room. A new partition wall with a narrow view window and a flush-mounted door separates the 'working equipment' of the lighthouse from the interpretive gallery. This new wall creates a new dedicated equipment room measuring approximately 4 feet wide by 17 feet long, permitting technician's access for maintenance of the equipment. Along this wall, static panels to the left of the view window describe the difficult life of the lighthouse keepers, illustrated with historic images of the Cap Sainte-Marie lighthouses, and descriptions of the tasks needed to keep the light and horn in operation. The view window permits visitors

to see the equipment that, in the present day, has replaced the job of the lighthouse keeper. A description of each piece of equipment and its function are attached on small display cards on the wall. To the right of the view window, exhibit panels decode a marine chart of the Cape, and explain the light strength and signal frequency of the Cap Sainte-Marie light today and how its signal differs from other lighthouses. A brief history of the foghorn, a Bay of Fundy invention, is featured. Two pairs of headphones on a button-activated panel allow visitors to hear the lighthouse's foghorn. The examples of similar exhibits shown here are the MV Gay Head lighthouse exhibit at the Martha's Vineyard Museum in Massachusetts (left) and a photograph of children listening to submarine signals at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in England (right).





The **Headland Look-off** interpretation is a small exhibit in the northwest corner of the gallery space 6. This interprets and promotes the new look-off on the cliffs below the lighthouse, the westernmost point of land on mainland Nova Scotia, and Clare's miniature version of the Skyline Trail. [An alternative use for this wall space could be The Wharf and Fishing Boats at Cap Sainte-Marie. It introduces visitors to the 21st century fishing fleet that makes its home here, with photographs and text describing the village wharf and the variety of vessels and catch to be found there. Visitors are encouraged to walk the wharf and see the large lobster boats hauled up during the summer and fall.1

In the centre of the gallery space, visitors can explore the multi-user interactive touchscreen

table 7. The multi-user touchscreen is similar to a giant computer tablet, but is programmed to allow multiple users to use the device simultaneously. Visitors can open, view, resize, move and otherwise manipulate documents, independent of the actions of other users. The on-site guide can respond to visitor's interests by suggesting materials available on the touchscreen: it is capable of storing hundreds of photographs, maps, marine charts, aerial and scenic images, videos and sound files related to Cap Sainte-Marie village and lighthouse, and Mavillette Beach and environs. It can provide exhibits on new themes not covered in the gallery, such as sunset images, birding photographs and night sky images, and it can provide supplemental material on the themes encountered in the gallery space. The guides on site can add interesting and

relevant materials easily. Equipped with an internet connection, the touchscreen table can also be used to access interesting websites related to the Cape, Baie Sainte-Marie and the Bay of Fundy. A few examples of relevant sites could include: Ocearch.org's Shark Tracker that follows the movements of sharks in Atlantic waters in real time, E-Bird.org's page that lists bird sightings recorded by birders at Mavillette and Cap Sainte-Marie, and Windy.com's site that illustrates wind speeds and wind direction in real time. [Note: This touchscreen table is located so that it straddles and conceals a cement pad bearing lighthouse equipment. The base of the table should be equipped with doors to permit technician's access to this equipment.]





A display panel covering the door to the stairwell 3 invites visitors to climb to the lamp room at the top of the lighthouse. Safety regulations are displayed on this panel as well. The stairwells and ladders have attractive paint treatments and good lighting 9. Small interpretive panels on the walls at the stair landings display nostalgic vintage images of the community and its people.

Arriving at the top of the lighthouse, visitors can enjoy the panoramic views and see the light in operation. Small panels with interpretive

information provide orientation as to the points of the compass, and the vistas afforded in each direction. [Note: it remains to be determined whether visitors will be limited to the lamp room or whether they will be permitted to step outside onto the railed enclosure.]

Descending to the interpretive gallery, visitors can refer to the rack card displays and consult the guide for information about other attractions in the area, or options for dining and accommodations, before heading out to explore the park grounds.