

Prospect Harbor

OLD TIMES AT THE LIGHTHOUSE ARE RECALLED.

On a hot and humid Saturday (Aug. 17th) more than 40<sup>family</sup> members of the last keeper of the Prospect Harbor light gathered for an all-day family reunion<sup>at the light house,</sup>. Some came from as far away as the mid-west and the deep south, others were local. . During the day there was much socializing, reminiscing, looking at old photographs, some ball playing by the youngsters and much eating of home cooked food<sup>by all</sup>.

These were the descendants of John and Daisy Workman, last keepers of the light, who served<sup>there</sup> from 1935 thru 1953. John's two sons, Allison of Winter Harbor and Gordon of Inverness, Florida and their families made up the 40.

The Prospect Harbor light , the only wooden<sup>one</sup> on the coast, was built in 1859 has been on active service ever since. Both brothers, Allison and Gordon, agreed that when their ~~Dad~~ was stationed here the light had already been automated and all he had to do was to see to it that the standby batteries, needed in case of a power outage, were fully charged.

Both brothers recalled that in <sup>the</sup> ~~these~~ early 40's the living quarters were connected by a walkway to a barn, toolhouse and privy. All<sup>of</sup> these out-buildings are gone today.

Gordon's wife, Carmel, had prepared for family use a written "Welcome Home" summary of her recollections of life at the Prospect Harbor light. The following is quoted, in part, from that summary:  
" My first introduction to the lighthouse was in Sept. 1944, as the bride of Gordon Workman, the second son of Daisy and John Workman. Gordon was on leave from the Army Air force. Grandfather Ira Workman, Daisy and John Workman resided at the premisis now known as Gull Cottage. It was a lovely home even without any modern conveniences. The black ironsink, the hand pump and the woodstove always shined



"The floors shined and the uncarpeted stairs were very handsome and beautiful as the shore and ocean outside. The home was sparsely furnished with just the necessities of life. The outhouse with its Sears catalog and its linoleum floor even welcomed you."

"When washday came on Monday's, mother Workman would bring up her copper boiler from the cellar and put it on the stove to boil. Her big round tub would be put on its stand with her scrubboard- and washday began. The wash would be hung out between the barn and the tool house to dry."

"The walkway between the house and the back of the tool shed ran to the outhouse. The barn held one car, and the winters wood supply and a hidden bottle of "remedy". Grandfather Ira would sneak out to the barn and have a nip every once in a while and take some sugar and water to refill so that John wouldnt know that he had had his little noonday today."

"On Tuesdays Mother Workman would do her baking in the small pantry off the kitchen that also led to the cellar door.. In the cellarway on the shelf food was set to cool and be stored. In the cellar were two brick cisterns to hold the drain water from the roof for household uses. The water was pumped up to the kitchen sink by means of the hand pump.."

"Grandfather Ira's pipe and tobacco sat on the mantle in back of the large black iron stove along with the oil lamps. The house had only one <sup>electric</sup> light in the kitchen. The oil lamps were kept trimmed and mantles cleaned to use going upstairs at night- along with the <sup>a</sup>chamber pots and down in the morning. On wednesdays the ironing was done."

"Daisy knitted pot heads and bait bags for the lobstermen. She also baked donuts for the summer people and baby sat for most of the small children in town. She was known as Aunt Daisy to many and loved by all.

Allison Workmen, their oldest son was and still is a lobsterman."



"He married Marie Rolfe Torrey in Sept. 1940."

"On Friday nights we would all go to the dances in West Bay. On Saturday mother Workmen would make her baked beans and biscuits. and on Sundays her New England chop suey.."

"Both brothers attended the Prospect Harbor Grammar School and the Winter Harbor High School. Later Allison served in the Army of Occupation in both Japan and in Manila. Gordon served about six years in the Army Air Force."

The last keepers of the Prospect Harbor Light are both buried in the Prospect Harbor cemetery, Daisy in 1963 and John in 1972."

*(end of quote)*

Two events stand out in the memories of the two brothers of their growing up at the lighthouse. One, during WW2 a German submarine was apparently sunk somewhere off the coast and pillows and debris with German markings were washed up on the lighthouse shore. The other event was a one time bad storm when the ocean water completely surrounded the lighthouse and for a short time they were actually marooned.

Today the light is completely automated with no need for human attendance and is under the control of the Coast Guard. The lightkeepers quarters have long since been refurbished and are now used as a guest house- known as Gull Cottage- for visiting Navy personnel.

*Glen Dalton*  
Glen Dalton

18 Aug. '91