

# FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT POINTE AU BARIL REAR RANGE LIGHTTOWER POINTE AU BARIL, ONTARIO

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FHBRO number: **05-175**  
DFRP number: **86199**  
Resource Name: **Pointe au Baril Rear Range Lighttower**  
Address: **Georgian Bay, Pointe au Baril, Ontario**  
FHBRO Status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**  
Construction: **1910**  
Designer: **Department of Marine and Fisheries**  
Original Function: **Lighttower**  
Current Function: **Lighttower**  
Modifications: **No known changes**  
Custodian: **Department of Fisheries and Oceans**

## Description of Historic Place

The Pointe au Baril Rear Range Lighttower consists of a four-tiered, tapered steel frame, surmounted by a wood watchroom and steel lantern, standing 28.6 meters high. The watchroom is clad in cedar shingles and flares at its top into a coved cornice supporting a gallery and wood lantern, itself coiffed with a pyramidal roof and vent stack. The lighttower is painted white, and features a contrasting daymarker on its front face. The lighttower sits on the rocky northeast tip of Macklin Island in Georgian Bay. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

## Heritage Value

The Pointe au Baril Rear Range Lighttower is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

### Historical value:

The Pointe au Baril Rear Range Lighttower is a good illustration of the theme of aids to navigation in Canada's Great Lakes, as a response to the economic development along the shores of the Georgian Bay region. Built to replace the original 1889 light, at a time when recreational maritime traffic was increasing in the area, the tower is a useful example of the region's last phase of economic development as a destination for tourism and recreation. It forms a functional pair with a slightly larger and more elaborate front range tower, built at the same time. The structure is associated with a number of dedicated lighthouse keepers, prominent members of the local community.

### Architectural value:

The Pointe au Baril Lighttower is a good example of a sub-type of steel-framed lighthouses, a clever adaptation of a technology developed for windmill construction. Built according to plans prepared by the Department of Marine and Fisheries, it combines features of traditional lighthouses with a utilitarian efficiency and durable method of construction, adapted to a remote

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location. Well-built using durable materials and carefully maintained over time, the structure has endured well despite the harsh climatic conditions to which it is exposed.

## Environmental value:

Standing prominently on a rocky shore and rising above a thin conifer forest, the Pointe au Baril Lighttower reinforces the marine character of the area, where man-made structures punctuate the predominantly wild environment of forested lakeshores. Its immediate environment has been altered by the abandonment of a nearby cottage and fishing operation, but the original character of the site has been retained. Given its strong presence and location on the open waters of the Georgian Bay, the tower is well known to the community of commercial and recreational boaters who travel in this area. It is also a valued local landmark and symbol in the region.

## **Character-Defining Elements**

The following character-defining elements of the Pointe au Baril Rear Range Lighttower should be respected:

Features that illustrate the historical theme of aids to navigations in Canada's Great Lakes, notably:

- Its combination of innovative technologies of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the features of traditional lighthouses.

Its good aesthetic design, very good functional design and good quality materials and craftsmanship as manifested in:

- The simple assembly of its three functional constituents: steel frame, watchroom and lantern, which clearly reflect the tower's function;
- Its slender, tapered prefabricated skeletal steel frame, purchased from windmill manufacturers, and providing a stable and durable base, effectiveness and easy assembly in a remote location;
- The elegant upper portion of the tower, whose design is based on an earlier wood light towers, with its wide cornice, railed projecting gallery, square steel lantern whose lines prolong those of the steel frame and watchroom, pyramidal roof and ventilator stack;
- The use of contrasting white and red colours and of the daymarker panel on the structure's front face, which increase the structure's daytime visibility; and,
- The combination of basic durable materials, such as the bolted steel sections of the steel frame, wood construction and cedar shingle cladding, and steel lantern, all of which have endured well.

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The manner in which the building reinforces the maritime character of its rural shoreline area, as evidenced in:

- Its prominent location on the open waters of Georgian Bay;
- Its recognizable tall silhouette, simple form and colours.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. For further information contact FHBRO.

April 2007