

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
BREBEUF ISLAND FRONT RANGE LIGHTTOWER
BREBEUF ISLAND, ONTARIO**

FHBRO Number: **06-073**
DFRP Number: **11288**
Resource Name: **Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower**
Address: **Brebeuf Island Lightstation, Brebeuf Island, Ontario**
FHBRO Status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1878**
Designer: **Department of Marine and Fisheries**
Original Function: **lighthouse**
Current Function: **lighthouse**
Modifications: **removal of decorative cornice brackets (after 1944); removal of chimney and fire safety ladder (date unknown); change to the exterior cladding of the second floor of the lighttower (date unknown); replacement of multi-paned wooden sash windows with aluminium ones (date unknown); alteration to the ventilator (date unknown); addition of a small storage shed and raised walkway linking to a work shed (date unknown).**
Custodian: **Department of Fisheries and Oceans**

Description of Historic Place

The Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower consists of a two-storey lighttower with an attached one-and-a-half storey gable-roofed dwelling and one-storey shed-roofed addition. The square tapered tower is topped by an angled cornice supporting a railed observation platform and octagonal lantern. Both dwelling and tower sections feature regularly disposed windows with surrounds projecting from the tapered walls. The lighttower is the central feature of a rocky and isolated island surrounded by the open waters of Georgian Bay. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

Heritage Value

The Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

The Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower is a good illustration of the theme of aids to navigation in Canadian inland waters at a time of rapid economic development in the Great Lakes area. The lighthouse was moved from Gin Rock to its current location in 1900 to provide direction to the area served by the Severn Channel and Honey Harbour. Over its long life, two dedicated keepers have tended the lighthouse, namely: William Baxter, from 1900 to 1931, and Clifford Paradis, from 1931 to 1962. The lighthouse was placed in its current location as a response to an increase in maritime traffic. It is associated with the community's transition from a resource extraction economy to a recreation-based economy with the development of cottages along the shores. It currently serves as an Inshore Search and Rescue Centre for the Canadian Coast Guard during the navigation season.

**FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE
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Architectural value:

The Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower is a good example of a combined dwelling and lighttower in a single compact building, a type used most frequently in minor coast lights in remote locations. It is notable for its balanced proportions, its domestic scale, its use of red and white colours, and its regularly disposed window openings. Built according to plans prepared by the Department of Marine and Fisheries, it is a simple and elegant response to the combined functional requirements of dwelling and light. The lighthouse was well built, using durable materials and quality of the craftsmanship and materials that reflects the standards of the time. The lighthouse has been well maintained over time.

Environmental value:

As the central feature of the island and clearly visible from the water, the Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower reinforces the maritime character of the area. The rocky and isolated site has remained largely unchanged, and the relationship between the lighthouse and its surrounding landscape characterized by small outcroppings of fir trees and scrub bush has retained its original character. The lighttower is well known to the mostly recreational boaters who navigate through the Severn Channel that connects the small mainland communities and cottages to the open waters of Georgian Bay.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of the Brebeuf Island Front Range Lighttower include, among others:

The features that illustrate the theme of aids to navigation in Canadian inland waters during the economic development of the Great Lakes, notably:

- Its design and materials typical of the combined square, tapered lighttower and dwelling; and,
- Its strategic location as a navigational aid on the eastern edge of the Severn Channel.

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

- Its balanced proportions and picturesque qualities, characterized by its domestic scale, tidy massing, tapered walls, cornice line, and iron octagonal lantern set within a railed observation platform;
- Its distinctive profile, consisting of a square tapered tower integrated with an attached one-and-a-half-storey gable-roofed dwelling and shed-roofed addition;
- The regularly disposed window openings with pediments projecting from the tapered walls;
- Its simple and efficient interior plan, combining dwelling and keeper functions, with interior stairs providing access to the light;
- The use of white colour for the walls and contrasting red colour for the window surrounds, lantern and roofs of the dwelling, which increase the structure's daytime visibility; and,
- The use of basic durable materials, such as a wood frame construction clad with clapboard and set on a stone foundation.

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The building's reinforcing role in relation to the maritime character of the area and role as landmark for the region, as evidenced in:

- Its prominent position on a flat bare rock surface, in close proximity to the shoreline; and,
- Its recognizable form and colours, with great visibility from the waters of Georgian Bay.

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

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