

Ragged Island Lighthouse fonds. 1910-1954. 14cm textual records

Administrative history

Ragged Island is located in Smith Sound, Trinity Bay. The lighthouse on the Island was operated by a Lighthouse Keeper until the mid 1950's. The first seven entries in the log books are by Leonder Gardner, then on May 8th, 1911 James Toop Sr. is the Light Keeper. James Toup III passed on the duties of Lighthouse Keeper on June 30, 1927 to his son James Andrew Toope, IV. On October 21, 1931 a new lighting system was installed, there was no longer a need to light and extinguish the kerosene oil lamp everyday. A new system using acetylene gas provided a signal automatically and for longer periods of time. Every year after the new gas light was installed the light was extinguished from mid-January to mid-April as there was little travel by boat during those months.

James A. Toope held the position which mainly consisted of record keeping until 1955 when his grandson Charles (Charlie) Dewling Toope took over. From 1984 until 1998 Cyril Toope was in charge of maintenance of the light unit, he would go climb the island periodically to change the batteries and check to ensure that things were in working order. In 1998 when a new solar panel light was installed Cyril Toope received a letter stating that his service of checking the lighthouse was no longer necessary.

Custodial history

These records were donated to the Society by Cyril and Norma Toope in 2014. Cyril Toope is the grandson of Charles Toope Sr., the last Light House Keeper on Ragged Island. They were found in the house of Charles and Mary Toope when their children cleaned out their house after Mary's death in 2011.

Scope and content

These files contain books with a daily account of when the light was lit, when it was extinguished, how much oil was consumed, and a note of the weather for that day. The style of book and information changed in 1931 when a new light system was installed.

The material has been divided into two series, the first one being a chronological list of log books and the second series is a list of materials at the lighthouse on May 9, 1911.

Series 1: Lighthouse Log Books 1910 - 1954

Log Books - The fond consists of books containing items and amounts of supplies for the following years:

1.01 1910

1.02 1911
1.03 1912
1.04 1913
1.05 1914
1.06 1917
1.07 1918
1.08 1919
1.09 1920
1.10 1921
1.11 1922
1.12 1923
1.13 1924
1.14 1926
1.15 1927
1.16 1928
1.17 1929
1.18 1930
1.19 1931
1.20 1932
1.21 1933
1.22 1934
1.23 1935
1.24 1936
1.25 1937
1.26 1938
1.27 1939
1.28 1940
1.29 1941
1.30 1942
1.31 1943
1.32 1944
1.33 1945
1.34 1946
1.35 1947
1.36 1948
1.37 1949
1.38 1950
1.39 1951
1.40 1952
1.41 1953
1.42 1954

Series 2: List of Supplies

May 9, 1911 - Leonder Gardner is likely to have taken a list of the supplies at the light station before he left and James Toop Sr. took over as Light Keeper.

Notes:

Supplied title based on provenance. Information also received from Cyril Toope.

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References:

Toope Family Tree

Flower that Bloomed on Ragged Island – Josephine Johnson