

'Spectacular' views

BY PAUL MORRALEE

CHARGING up the wood-burning furnace with birch in the light-keeper's dwelling was a welcoming gesture for our guests.

A slight drizzle was in the air, and a fresh wind made the interior inviting with hot water at the ready on the stove for tea. No biscuits were available, as the

rations had been devoured days earlier.

LIGHTHOUSE DISPATCHES

Sailing, fishing, sightseeing and flying were

all part of the experience for four winners from The Great Getaway radio contest on Magic 99.9 and Country 105.

The guests were here for two days to enjoy the lighthouse experience.

For most of their first day they happily sailed on their inaugural journey from Thunder Bay, past the feet of the Giant, to the Porphyry Island Light Station, 40 kilometres as the crow flies.

Pete McIntosh, Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior's summer student, was on double duty as he welcomed guests and tourism officials to the island.

Giving a tour of the new interpretive panels in the boathouse, the new arrivals were orientated to some of the lighthouse's history, giving them a sense of time and place.

It was interesting to talk to the guests later to find that they had not been on a sailboat before, nor flown in a floatplane. I guess this experience was going to be one to remember for many years to come.

Other challenges have filled our weekly roster prior to the visitors arriving, with water pumps being repaired and primed and some other creature's comforts added to the dwellings.

We have a volunteer, Josue Passos from Brazil, who has been painting our administrative office and staff accommodations, which we call the bunkhouse.

His observation of living at the lighthouse station is that; he felt constantly bathed in sound, with the lapping of the waves upon the shore, the wind in the trees and the awesome panoramic view.

Being a tourist in your own backyard is



PETE MCINTOSH

Archie Hoogsteen of Archie Fishing Charters, and the Great Getaway winners Karen and Bill Mitchell, and Betty and Lorne Blaikie from the Magic 99.9 and Country 105 contest, share their catch.

something that locals are also discovering. No need to travel far when the attraction is right on your doorstep.

A middle-aged couple moored their boat in the Porphyry harbour this past week and spent the night at the light keeper's dwelling.

In our guest book, Lori and Bob wrote, "The views are spectacular from every window in the house and it is much more spacious than the sailboat!"

Just because we live in the area doesn't mean we can't explore it in more detail over and over again.

The Merritt family visited this week to relive past experiences and to fill us in about their grandfather, Charles, who worked the light as a keeper from 1946-1959. It was interesting to learn about how

things used to be, and also to discover that a bench that is used at the sunset fire pit used to belong to the Welcome Ship.

Each day there is a sense of discovery that takes place, and as the clock ticks down on the summer, it's a pleasure to see the smiles on people's faces as they learn details of our past and develop a stronger sense of belonging.

Next week will be the final instalment of Lighthouse Dispatches, and will summarize observations of the summer.

"The views are spectacular from every window in the house . . ."

Lori and Bob
Porphyry visitors

Paul Morralee is the secretary of the Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior. He'll be sharing stories from Point Porphyry Island Light Station throughout the summer.