

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT  
JANET HEAD LIGHTTOWER  
GORE BAY, ONTARIO**

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FHBRO Number: **06-078**  
DFRP Number: **67645**  
Resource Name: **Janet Head Lighttower**  
Address: **Janet Head Lightstation, Gore Bay, Ontario**  
FHBRO Status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**  
Construction: **1879**  
Designer: **Department of Marine and Fisheries**  
Original Function: **lighthouse**  
Current Function: **lighthouse**  
Modifications: **No known modifications**  
Custodian: **Department of Fisheries and Oceans**

**Description of Historic Place**

The Janet Head Lighttower consists of a wooden two-storey lighttower with an attached one-and-a-half storey gable-roofed dwelling. The square tapered tower is topped by a straight cornice supporting a decorative wooden railing and iron octagonal lantern. The tower features regularly disposed windows with surrounds projecting from the tapered walls. The lighttower is prominently located on a large piece of land at the mouth of Gore Bay. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

**Heritage Value**

The Janet Head Lighttower is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

The Janet Head 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 serves both as a channel light and harbour light to maritime traffic coming in and out of Gore Bay. The lighttower is associated with five dedicated keepers, the first one being Robert Boyter. Built in 1879, only a few years after Gore Bay's first settlers had arrived and the town was plotted, the lighthouse is directly linked to the founding of the town and the rapid growth and economic development of the community, which relied on trade and navigation of the North Channel. The lighthouse still functions as a channel light and as private residence.

Architectural value:

The Janet Head 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 controlled massing, its domestic scale, its simple details and its use of red and white colours. 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 reflect the standards of the time. The lighthouse has been well maintained over time.

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## Environmental value:

Standing near the water against a forest backdrop, the Janet Head Lighttower is a compatible element in a mixed maritime environment consisting of mature trees and cultivated shore. The site on which the tower stands has been manicured and a gravel road was added in front as well as a picnic and parking area. The relationship between the lighttower and its isolated shoreline has nonetheless been maintained. The lighttower is well known to the boaters who navigate the waters of Gore Bay and eastern North Channel. It is also recognized in the region as an important heritage asset, generating interest from both local residents and visitors.

## **Character-Defining Elements**

The character-defining elements of the Janet Head 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 at the entrance to Gore Bay.

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

- Its balanced proportions and picturesque qualities, characterized by its domestic scale, controlled massing, tapered walls, straight cornice, decorative wooden railing and iron octagonal lantern;
- Its distinctive profile, consisting of a square tapered 2-storey tower attached at the corner of a one-and-a-half-storey gable-roofed dwelling;
- The simple details of the tower's windows;
- The distinct expression of the tower adjoining the dwelling with a slight offset in plan;
- The integration of the dwelling and light-keeping spaces, which could be accessed independently of weather conditions;
- The use of the white colour for the walls and contrasting red colour for the window surrounds, lantern and roof of the dwelling, which increase the structure's daytime visibility; and,
- The use of basic and durable materials such as a rubble stone foundation, wood framing, and painted shingle cladding on the exterior, all of which have endured well.

The building's compatibility with the maritime character of the area and role as landmark for the region, as evidenced in:

- Its prominent position on a gentle shoreline, and,
- Its recognizable form and colours.

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

March 2008

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