



The sea draws us. For people who live on small islands, especially narrow small islands, the sea is never far away and often on our minds. Many people who live in small island communities have an occupational attachment to the water and, amongst many others, a recreational passion. However, no matter ones veiwpoint, all Islanders must pass over the water to travel to or from an island.



Walking along the seven kilometre Bay Walk, the name given to a multi-use pathway situated along the Summerside, PEI shoreline illustrates the connection Islanders have to the sea. To walk on the edge has different connotations depending on one's perspective. In a geographical sense, walking on the edge is at the seashore, the dividing line between the land and the water. Walking on the edge can also indicate a precarious position or a keen sense of excitement, which is sometimes the case for fishers and boaters but always the case for everyone at some point in their life.

The relationship to the sea is a paradox of island life. To walk on the edge is also a position of taking a risk, often beyond what others would do themselves. To live life with no regrets and say “Yes” to dreams.



The ocean is silent. Walking at the edge reveals the symbolic features of islandness: the sea, the grasses, the cliffs at the edge of the land, the ubiquitous birds. Walking at the edge gives you the sensation there may not have always been a human presence. Walking at the edge of an island gives a sense of largeness to the world.



On saltwater islands, the seashore gives people a chance to reflect their life’s ebbs and flows, as occurs with the never-ending diurnal tides. A walk on the shore allows an opportunity for increased creativity, reset thinking, and contemplating your “to-do” list.



There is history in a seaside community waterfront- wharves, buildings, streets, marine-related

businesses, restaurants,

marinas, and tourist shops. Ocean-going ships registered in faraway islands often come and go through the harbour channel. Attached to the working marine wharves, they load, and unload cargo destined to

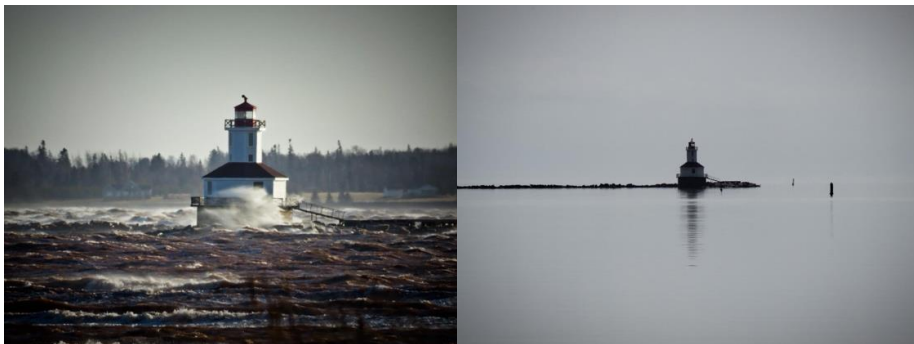
people who need products only produced “from away.” Fishers unload the daily catch as well. The scene

is never the same, and activity occurs in all seasons.

Only the players change.



As you walk on the edge of the land, you will often see lighthouses and their associated range lights, which are often mistaken for “little lighthouses.” Range lights serve a different purpose and are used to mark the channel used for safe depths by ships.



Lighthouses have been beacons for mariners. Used as a guide for navigation, an indication you are at the destination, or you have arrived at a safe place. They seem to call out, “Welcome to the end of your journey. This is the safe way home”.

The lighthouse is never switched off. Lighthouses thus have a never ceasing vigilance. Lighthouses endure for years, for centuries in some cases. Lighthouses face the ocean and do not falter in the face of the wind or the waves crashing against its base.

Lighthouses are seen as architectural icons and, on occasion, an architectural whimsy. They represent safety and the nearby presence of humans. Lighthouses symbolize the rugged coastline, a symbol of permanence, protection, and hope.



Lighthouses are often used in art and movies as a metaphor for the end of a journey, a guiding light, or finding direction within oneself.

“A good book is a lighthouse; a wise man is a lighthouse; conscience is a lighthouse; compassion is a lighthouse; science is a lighthouse! They all show us the true path! Keep them in your life to remain safe in the rocky and dark waters of life!”

Mehmet Murat Ildan is a *Turkish author, thinker, and playwright*.

Many people believe they have a doppelganger who lives somewhere else, usually on the other side of the earth, and usually on the same longitude but opposite latitude, the antipode. Walking along the edge, during a period of isolation from others, this is easy to imagine as being valid. If you draw a line from where you stand, through the centre of the earth, would there actually be land and people?





Despite years of observing clouds during walks along the shore and while out on the harbours and bays, my knowledge of clouds for weather forecasting remains rudimentary. I look at the sky and see clouds. Some are white, some are grey or black, some are fluffy, some are shaped like the skin of a mackerel, but I have difficulty trying to guess their meaning, other than the more obvious rain and thunder clouds.

Like the horizon, which is as far as the eye can physically see, these natural phenomena continue to cause wonderment. The horizon is also a boundary, yet another edge like the nearshore where we walk. Like all sailors, I continue to watch sunrises and sunsets and sail towards the horizon, but thankfully we never actually reach that physical edge.

