

Pre-World War 2 (1921-1936)

| Year | Principal Keepers | First Assistant Keepers | Second Assistant Keepers |
|------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1921 | | Alfred Walter Young | Erick Harold Tarlton |
| 1922 | Charles Arthur Moeller (& James Smith) | | Oscar D. McFarlane |
| | Robert Henry Leighton | | |
| 1923 | Albert Victor Pearce | | |
| 1924 | | Oscar D. McFarlane (Promotion) | Reginald Shearwood |
| 1925 | Robert Stephen Wilson | | |
| 1926 | | Reginald Shearwood (Promotion) | Name Unknown |
| 1927 | | Alfred E. Carter | Alfred G. Hodge |
| 1928 | | | |
| 1929 | | Ernest (EH) Sandley Graham | |
| 1930 | George Sinclair | | Walter Leighton |
| 1931 | | | Samuel Budd |
| 1932 | | H. W. Gausel | |
| 1933 | Percy Edwin White | Charles E. Grey | |
| 1934 | | | James Pullen |
| 1935 | | | |
| 1936 | Joshua Stuart Roberts | | Charles C. Emmens |

Alfred Walter Young

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 24-09-21 to 28-01-24.

Postmaster: from the 24-09-21.

Family: nothing known.

Alfred Walter Young replaced Douglas James Grindlay at first assistant keeper.

Erick Harold Tarlton

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 24-05-21 to 22-02-23.

Postmaster: from the 24-05-21.

Family: nothing known.

Eric Tarlton transferred to Cape Brett in 1921 to replace Charles Davis as second assistant keeper.

Charles Arthur Moeller

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: ??-01-22 to 18-09-22.

Postmaster: from the ??-01-22.

Family: Wife ~ Name unknown.

Children (6) ~ 5 sons (Joel, Albert, Maurice, Arthur and Jack) and 1 daughter (name unknown).

Charles Moeller became the principal keeper for nine month after Alfred Sanders' departure in January 1922. During his short duty he was joined by the training principal keeper James Smith for August 1922 (see below).

James R.J. Smith

Rank: Training Principal Keeper, First Assistant Keeper & Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 08-22; 06-53 to 01-54; & 07-57.

Family: Wife ~ Shirley.

Children (2) ~ 1 son, Terrance and 1 daughter, Anne.

James Smith's first placement at Cape Brett was for training as part of a multi station experience required for principal keepers. His second visit to the Cape was as first assistant keeper with his family in tow. The third was a short period in August 1957, when the station was under-staffed, with apparently only a temporary keeper in charge (see J.H. Sutherland). James would have been brought in to assist.

Robert Henry Leighton

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 18-09-22 to 24-01-33.

Postmaster: from the 18-09-22.

Family: nothing known.

Robert Leighton's term as a principal keeper was extremely short, the second shortest for a principal keeper during the light's history; 129 days (or 18 weeks or 4 months and 7 days).

Oscar Douglas McFarlane

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper to First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 20-02-23 to ??-19-26.

Family: Wife ~ Hannah (nee Waters).

Little is known about Oscar McFarlane. He originally served as second assistant keeper from February 1923 when he replaced Erick Tarlton. When Alfred Young was transferred, Oscar received a promotion to first assistant keeper effective 29 January 1924. Unusually, he stayed in the third house (generally home to the second assistant), while the new second assistant keeper (Reginald Shearwood) moved into the second house.

Reginald Shearwood

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper to First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 22-05-24 to ??-05-27.

Family: Wife ~ Ada (nee Sapple).

Reginald Shearwood was promoted from second to first assistant when Oscar moved on. The official date he took over as first assistant is unknown as there are no records for keepers for this period; it is thought they were lost in a fire in Wellington. Information passed by family members to the Russell Museum tells of Reginald's drowning at the French Pass Lighthouse in the Marlborough Sounds.

It appears that Reginald's wife Ada gave birth to a daughter at the Cape and a small newspaper article and photo of the proud parents appeared in an unidentified newspaper in 1926.²⁰² The paper claims that their baby was the first born at Cape Brett, but it is more likely that Bill Creamer's son Joel was the first born at the station.



Figure 105 – From left: possibly one of the Wilson daughters, Ada and her daughter, Reginald Shearwood, May and Robert Wilson.



Figure 106 – (back row from left) Bob & May Wilson (?) and Reginald Shearwood (?), Front: Unidentified, Ada Shearwood (?) and baby, and two unidentified women.

Robert Stephen Wilson

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: ??-01-25 to ??-02-30.

Postmaster: from the ??-02-26.

Family: Wife ~ May F. Wilson.

Children (3) ~ 2 daughters, names unknown and 1 son, Edward.

Robert (Bob) Wilson was the principal keeper who replaced Albert Pearce. Robert served at the Pencarrow lighthouse in 1932 though it is not known where he was stationed immediately before or after Cape Brett.²⁰³ Robert and his wife May had two daughters who were not at the Cape as they had grown and moved on by this time.²⁰⁴

Roberts' wife May though was a member of the League of Mothers - Lighthouse Division in 1929.²⁰⁵ The League was an organisation established under the patronage of Lady Alice Fergusson in 1926 to provide fellowship for all mothers.²⁰⁶ A lighthouse division was created to help women keep in touch with each other and share common concerns and interests.

Alfred E. Carter

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-08-27 to ??-03-29.

Family: Wife ~ Daisy Carter.

Children (1) ~ a son (Edward).

Alfred Carter replaced Shearwood at first assistant in August of 1927, before he moved to the Kaipara lighthouse in 1929 and the French Pass lighthouse in 1930.²⁰⁷



Figure 107 – Alfred Carter and son Edward with a kiwi at Cape Brett, 1928.

Alfred G. Hodge

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-09-27 to ??-12-30.

Family: Wife ~ Lily E.

Children (2) ~ 1 Son, Alfred Henry and 1 daughter, Betty.

Alfred Hodge originally came to New Zealand from England to join the Navy before he joined the lighthouse service.²⁰⁸ Alfred was moved to Cape Brett in September 1927 and served until December 1930 when he was transferred to one of the Dunedin lighthouses.²⁰⁹ Hodge 's wife Lily and their baby son Alfred were with him and while there his wife became pregnant with their daughter Betty who was born in Russell on 13 September 1931.²¹⁰ Hodge remained in the service until Betty was around eight or nine years old. Lily was also one of the members of the League of Mothers.²¹¹

Ernest (E.H./Ernie) Sandley Graham

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 12-29 to ??.

Family: Wife ~ Kitty Graham.

Children ~ Names unknown.

Little is known about Ernest Graham other than it appears he was keeper in charge for December 1929 and Kitty Graham was a member of the League of Mothers.



Figure 108 - Ernie Graham on the far right with his fellow keepers at the Brothers Lighthouse in Cook Strait, 1933.

George Sinclair

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: ??- 02-30 to ??-12-33.

Postmaster: from the ??-02-30.

Family: Wife ~ Helen (nee Mowatt).

Children (6) ~ 5 Sons, Ian, Malcolm, James, Alec & Robert and 1 daughter, Ella.

George moved from Waipapa Lighthouse to Cape Brett in 1930 to become principal keeper. Mr and Mrs Sinclair received the nicknames 'Father' and 'Mother' from the teacher at the time, Miss Dunbar. Sadly one of their sons died while at Cape Brett as the result of a climbing accident.²¹²



Figure 109 – Mr and Mrs Sinclair and daughter, Isabella at Cape Brett.



Figure 110 – Two of the Sinclair boys with a large sea bird, with Ella watching on.



Figure 111 –Four of the Sinclair boys in the upper garden lettuce patch, 1932-33.

Walter James Leighton

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-09-30 to 06-03-31.

Family: Wife ~ Edith (nee Shreeve).

Children (?) ~ unknown

Leighton was a probationary keeper sent to the station to learn the job in the role of second assistant keeper.

Samuel Budd

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 06-03-31 to ??-10-32.

Family: Wife ~ Gertrude.

Children (2) ~ 2 sons, Hedley Samuel and Harold George.

Samuel Budd was also originally a probationary keeper for his first few months at Cape Brett before becoming a longer term second assistant.

H. W. Gausel

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 21-06-32 to 22-03-33

Family: Wife ~ name unknown.

Children (3) ~ 2 daughters, Joyce Madeline and Myrtle Hannah Mary, and 1 son, Edwin Harmon.



Figure 112 – Mr Gausel hanging from the crane in he dinghy.

Percy Edwin White

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 24-11-33 to 13-02-36.

Postmaster: from the 24-11-33.

Family: Wife ~ Agnes.

Children (5) ~ 2 sons, Reginald and Sydney, and 3 daughters and Fairy, Lena, and Violet).

Percy White replaced George Sinclair as principal keeper in November 1933, a move that most likely would have been welcomed by the Sinclair family. Percy and his wife Agnes had five children aged from about one to ten years old at the time they moved to the Cape. Agnes also belonged to the League of Mothers.²¹³



Figure 113 – from left: Colin & Gordon Emmens with a little girl who is thought to be Olga and Charlie Grey at Cape Brett, 1936.

Charles E. Grey

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 22-03-33 to 03-11-37.

Family: Wife ~ Mabel.

Children (4) ~ 2 sons, Douglas John and George Albert, and 2 daughters, Olga and Joan.

Charles Grey was the longest serving assistant keeper in Cape Brett's history serving a total 1716 days (nearly four years) between March 1933 and November 1937.

James Albert Pullen

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 05-06-34 to 13-02-36.

Family: Wife ~ Ena Warnock.

Children (2) ~ 2 sons, Stanley Albert and Victor Charles.



Figure 114 – From Left: Charles Emmens, possibly Heta Clendon and Joshua Roberts at Cape Brett.

Joshua Stuart Roberts

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 13-02-36 to 17-06-37.

Postmaster: from the 02-03-36.

Family: nothing known.

Charles C. Emmens

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 13-02-36 to ??-04-39.

Family: Wife ~ Theresa Anne.

Children (4) ~ 4 sons, Jack, Gordon, Colin and Stan.



Figure 115 - The Emmens at Cape Brett. Mr and Mrs C. Emmens with their children Colin, Gordon and Jack.

The Jamieson Years – 1937-1946 (including World War 2)

| Year | Principal Keepers | First Assistant Keepers | Second Assistant Keepers |
|------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1937 | Hugh Barbour Jamieson | Fleetwood R. Tennent | |
| 1938 | | | |
| 1939 | | | Bert Lake / Kenneth Webley |
| 1940 | | William Tait | |
| 1941 | | Mawhataio Todd | |
| 1942 | | | Robert J. Naulls |
| 1943 | | | |
| 1944 | | Ray H. Batemen | |
| 1945 | | | |
| 1946 | | Jack Shepherd | N.F. Jennings |



Figure 116 – Hugh Jamieson and his family – Christmas 1942. In the back row (left to right) Win, Allan, Jock, Wattie, Mabel and in the front row (Left to right) Ann, Hugh, Dorothy and Dave.

Hugh Barbour Jamieson

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 17-06-37 to 30-01-47.

Postmaster: from the 17-06-37 to 30-01-47.

Family: Wife ~ Dorothy Maria.

Children (7) ~ 4 sons and 3 daughters. In age order = John (Jock) Morris;
Walter (Wattie) Andrew; Allan Portens; Mabel Doris; Winifred Ida;
James (Dave) Doris and Ann (Alice).

Hugh Jamieson was transferred to Cape Brett in June 1937 to serve for a maximum of three years. Instead Hugh became the Cape's longest serving principal keeper – serving a total 3515 days (or nearly ten years). The family's longer than usual stay was the result of the outbreak of World War 2. The Marine Department put a freeze on all non-essential travel during this period, deciding that the principal keepers would stay put while the assistants would still move around.

The Jamiesons seemed to embrace Cape Brett as their own with ease, Hugh bringing the station back up to scratch and instilling a sense of community for the keepers during a tumultuous time in the world.

He established a communal area for a large vegetable garden consisting of three terraces, one for each keeper. Who got which terrace was determined literally by drawing straws.²¹⁴

Hugh was also the keeper who promoted socialising in the form of regular afternoon tea meetings and frequent card games with the keepers; families and Navy personnel.²¹⁵

However, he also expected his team to go above and beyond the call of duty. Not all keepers appreciated his directives to assist — unpaid — with the unloading of Navy goods and hauling them up the tramway.

The Jamiesons' time on the station is covered in the personal recollections entitled 'The Children of the Lighthouse' written by Mabel Pollock (nee Jamieson). This covers her father's career in the light service from her perspective (see sources for more information pg 172). She also recalls what she remembers of other keepers and their families.²¹⁶



Figure 117 – The Tennent Family and their pet cat.

Fleetwood R. Tennent

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 03-11-37 to 09-11-40.

Family: Wife ~ Evelyn Myrtle.

Children (3) ~ 3 sons, Charles Fleetwood, Eric Emerson and Graham Robert.

Fleetwood Tennent was brought in as first assistant keeper to replace Charles Grey. His three sons all attended the school, while it was open, with the Jamieson children. Charlie shared a desk with Mabel Jamieson.²¹⁷

Bert Lake²¹⁸

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 24-02-39 to 01-08-39.

Family: Wife ~ Name Unknown.

Children ~ 1 son, Dennis.

Bert Lake was the second assistant keeper, present between the postings of Charles Emmens and Ken Webley. Bert was engaged while he lived at the Cape and married before being transferred to East Cape, which meant he received the full keeper's wage. Mrs Lake later became pregnant and gave birth in Wellington to their son Dennis. Bert unfortunately passed on and Mrs Lake went on to remarry.²¹⁹

While stationed at Cape Brett Hugh built Bert a dinghy from a pohutukawa stem that was flat on one side only. Consequently Bert worried that his dinghy would be lopsided — it wasn't and actually proved very sturdy — and these worries gave Hugh nightmares about him rowing around in circles!²²⁰



Figure 118 - The Webley Family - Joy, Ken and baby Barbara.

Kenneth Webley

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 01-08-39 to ca 02-42.

Family: Wife ~ Joy.

Children (2) ~ 1 daughter, Barbara, and 1 son, Charles (aka Charlie).

Ken Webley was one of a small number of ‘young’ men in the light service and therefore Jamieson, in particular, considered him a valuable commodity. When Ken was transferred to the Cape as second assistant keeper in August 1939 he was joined by his wife, Joy, and daughter, Barbara. They had previously been at Cuvier Island, Ken’s first station.

Ken was previously a trained Naval reservist and was described by Mabel Pollock as being ‘young, strong and vigorous’.²²¹ He was also said to have been a good keeper who ‘did his morning’s work, swam, gardened, hunted and fished’.²²² But from the beginning of the war (which New Zealand officially became a part of a month after Ken arrived) he wished to resign the light service in order to join the Navy. The principal keeper was against this, saying that Ken had a young family to think of and was too much of an asset to the Marine Department to be allowed to join the war.²²³

After two attempts to join – both times receiving bad recommendations from the principal keeper – Ken tried to get himself fired. He used several different methods, the tamest of which was falling asleep while on light duty. Jamieson finally took notice and forwarded Ken’s resignation and request for a transfer to the Navy to the Marine Department with his endorsement as principal keeper.²²⁴ Ken transferred from Cape Brett in November 1941 and went of to serve in the Royal New Zealand Navy in the Atlantic and Pacific before retiring to Devonport.

Ken often took toddler Barbara on his daily activities and they would be joined by their black Border Collie, Spark (Webleys were just one of the families who had pets at the Cape). Barbara and her mother used to take lunch to Ken at the lighthouse. Their second child Charlie was born soon after they were transferred from the Cape.



Figure 119 – Barbara helping her dad (Ken) distribute supplies between the houses.

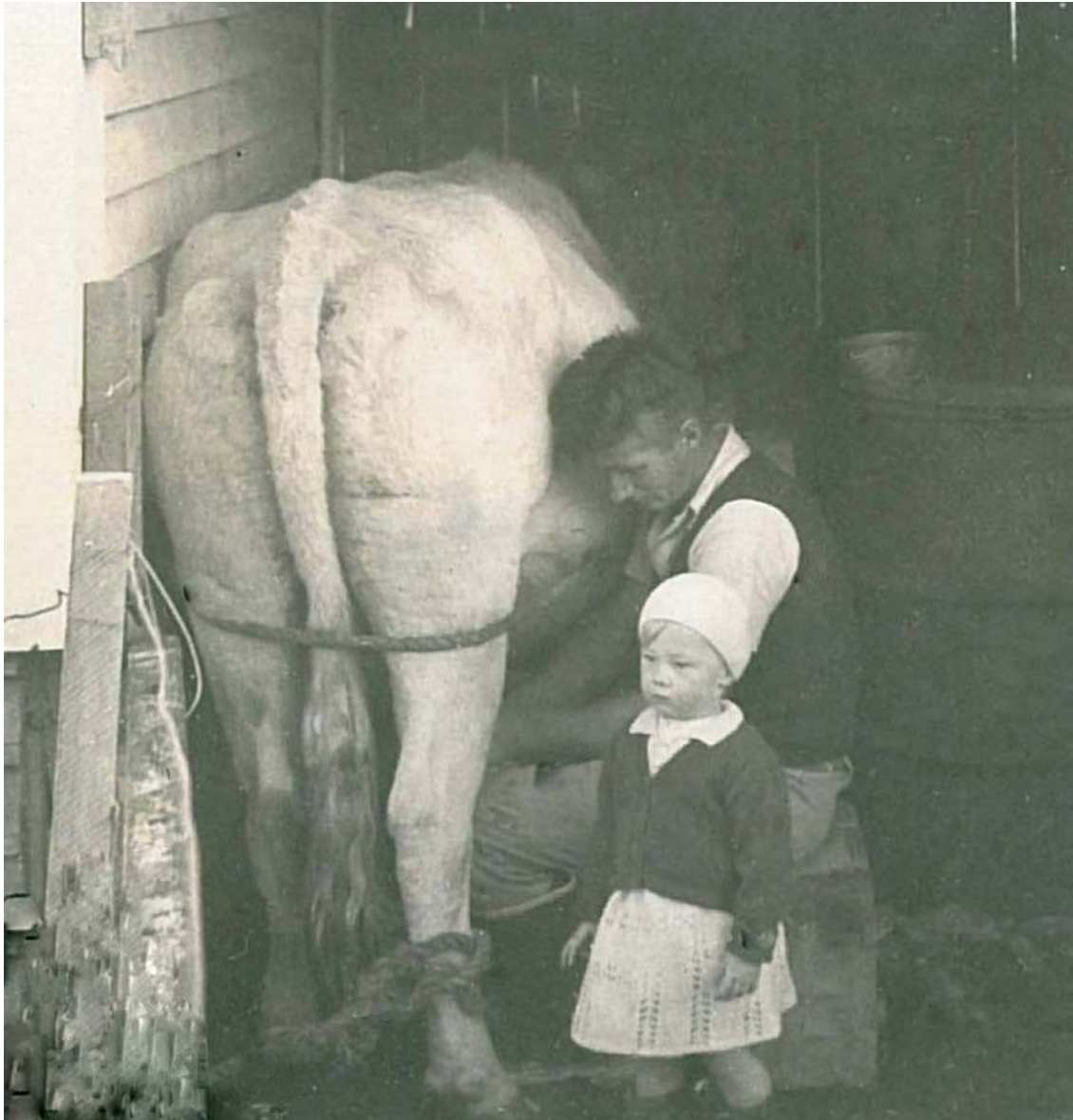


Figure 120 – Barbara decides she’s had enough of milking.

William Tait

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 09-11-40 to ca 03-41.

Family: Wife ~ Martha.

Children ~ 1 daughter, Eunice.

William Tait arrived in November 1940 to replace Fleetwood Tennent. Nothing specific is known of his perspective on the station, though Mabel Jamieson did take their daughter Eunice to see her first calf being born.²²⁵ The Tait family was also known for being practising Jehovah’s Witnesses.



Figure 121 – William and Martha Tait at the Cape Maria Van Diemen Light station in 1939.

Mawhataio Todd

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-03-41 to ??-01-44.

Family: Wife ~ Name unknown.

Children ~ 2 daughters (Shirley and Coralee).

Mawhataio (aka Whata) Todd was transferred to the station to replace William Todd. Before Whata's transfer he and his family were located at Castlepoint (in the Wairarapa). As first assistant keeper he was recorded as stepping in to act as keeper in charge in February 1942, but would have acted in this role many times.



Figure 122 – The Webley and Todd Families. In the back row (l to R) Ken Webley, Mrs Todd, Joy Webley, Whata Todd; Front row Barbara Webley, Shirley and Coralee Todd.

Mabel Pollock's recollection of Whata was of a man who was part Maori, had an enormous stomach and a huge belly laugh.²²⁶ The Todds often had the Navy men from the radar station to their house (the second house) to play cards.²²⁷

One accident that was recollected by Mabel Pollock was when Whata fell while standing in his dinghy and landed face first with his stomach hitting the stern of the dinghy. Fortunately he was not seriously injured.²²⁸

Mrs Todd was also a member of the League of Mothers in 1936 – most likely the last recorded as having lived at Cape Brett.²²⁹



Figure 123 – Robert and Dawn Naulls with the catch of the day.

Robert J. Naulls

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-02-42 to ??-12-44.

Family: Wife ~ Irma.

Children (3) ~ 2 sons, Douglas and John and 1 daughter, Dawn.

Robert Naulls worked for the lighthouse service from 1938 to 1944 with Cape Brett his last station.²³⁰

Robert's daughter Dawn Faulkner (nee Naulls) remembers a terrifying day for the family when her youngest brother went missing. When the children were very young and living in the third house the youngest – John – went missing. The family understandably panicked thinking that he might have fallen off the cliff. The whole station banded together to find him with several large search parties scouring the settlement. After a significant amount of time (or what must have felt incredibly long) John was found – curled up asleep in the bottom of the linen closet at the back of the third house.

During the war, it was forbidden to take any photos or footage of a lighthouse station, yet on most stations it was a well documented and heavily photographed time. The Naulls family has a film of the crane during a storm - what would be considered a dramatic piece of footage.²³¹

Irma, Robert's wife, spent a lot of her time in the vegetable garden at the top of the station and even lost her wedding ring while working up there.²³²

The three children were all enrolled in correspondence school as the school had been closed by the time of their arrival.²³³



Figure 124 – Dawn and Doug Naulls on the steps of the third house.

Ray H. Bateman

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-01-44 to ??-05-46.

Family: Wife ~ Dorothy Ethel.

Children (8) ~ at least 2 sons, Stanley and Dennis - the rest, 6, unknown.²³⁴

Ray Bateman replaced Whata Todd in 1944 as first assistant keeper and his most memorable feature was his large family who were at the Cape with him –his wife and eight children.²³⁵

The Batemans hold the record for having the largest family, only rivalled by the Jamiesons with seven and the Sinclairs with six children.

Jack Shepherd

Rank: First Assistant Keeper & Principal Keeper.

Work Period: ??-??-46-47 to ??-10-51.

Postmaster: from the 28-05-47.

Family: Wife ~ R. O. Shepherd.

Children (2) ~ 2 Sons, John and Daniel.

Jack Shepherd began his stay at the Cape Brett light as first assistant keeper until May 1947 when he was promoted to principal keeper upon Eric Bowley's departure. Jack was the last keeper of the Farewell Spit lighthouse in the early 1980s.

N.F. Jennings

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper & First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-??-46-47 to ??-10-47.

Family: nothing known.

Jennings was promoted to the rank of first assistant keeper when Eric Bowley moved from the station. During this change over all the keepers spend a couple of days packing to play 'musical houses' — with Bowley moving out, Sheppard moving from the second to first house and Jennings moving from the third to the second.

Post War – (1947-1956)

| Year | Principal Keepers | First Assistant Keepers | Second Assistant Keepers |
|-------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1947 | Eric I. Bowley | | |
| | Jack Shepherd | N.F. Jennings | Mr Gillipond |
| 1948 | | William Joseph Johnson | L. Carlise |
| 1949 | | C.P. Gallop | |
| 1950 | | | |
| 1951 | | | |
| 1952 | Cecil Olsen | A.J. Wareing | Rod McIntosh |
| | Thomas Robert (Bob) Welch | | |
| 1953 | | James R.J. Smith | |
| 1954 | Ronald Downie | | |
| 1955 | | GAP – No names known and previous assistants had moved on. | |
| 1956 | | | |

Eric I. Bowley ²³⁶

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 30-01-47 to 28-05-47.

Postmaster: from the 30-01-47.

Family: Wife ~ Anna Louisa.

Children ~ 1 daughter, Eve, and 1 son, Alan.

Eric Bowley was the shortest serving principal keeper in Cape Brett's history serving only 119 days (or four months). Eric had previously served at Cuvier Island lighthouse for ten years and after his short stint at Cape Brett moved to the French Pass Lighthouse. By 1947 the Bowley children, Eve and Alan, were no longer accompanying their parents around the light stations; Eve had entered the workforce while her brother Alan attended boarding school.



Figure 125 - Mr and Mrs Bowley on Cuvier Island in the 1940s.

Mr Gillipond

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-06-47 to ??-??-47.

Family: nothing known.

William Joseph Johnson

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-03-47 to 17-11-49.

Family: Wife ~ Mrs M. Johnson.

Children ~ nothing known.

L. Carlise

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 03-48 to ??.

Family: nothing known.

Colin P. Gallop

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: 17-11-49 to ??-01-52.

Family: nothing known.

Colin Gallop was the first assistant keeper for just under three years. During this time he spent four months in late 1952 as acting principal keeper.

Cecil Olsen

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 01-02-52 to 02-12-52.

Postmaster: from the 01-02-52.

Family: nothing known.

Thomas Robert (Bob) Welch

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: 02-12-52 to ??-10-54.

Postmaster: from the 02-12-52.

Family: Wife ~ Jocelyn.

A.J. Wareing

Rank: First Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-09-52 to ??-05-53.

Family: nothing known.

Roderick Daniel McIntosh

Rank: Second Assistant Keeper.

Work Period: ??-01-52 to ??-09-54.

Family: Wife ~ Patricia Irene.

Children (8) ~ 3 sons, Clive, David, Roderick, and 4 daughters,
Janis, Louise, Lynn and Patsy.

Rod McIntosh was second assistant keeper from the beginning of 1952 but it is not clear whether he immediately filled the position after Carlisle departed.

The youngest McIntosh son, David, was born in Auckland while his father was stationed at Cape Brett.²³⁷ According to their daughter Jan (Janis) her mother hated Cape Brett; with seven children, five were learning by correspondence, and she still had to run the household which included baking bread and milking the cow.²³⁸ The lack of electricity at the station didn't help either. Rod, however, is said to have loved the outdoor work at the Cape.²³⁹



Figure 126 – from left: James Smith, Bob Welch and Rod McIntosh up by the lighthouse at Cape Brett, 1953.

Ronald Downie

Rank: Principal Keeper.

Work Period: ??-11-54 to 13-03-57.

Postmaster: from the ??-01-55.

Family: Wife ~ Name Unknown.

Children ~ 4 Children (more than one son – Colin).

Ronald Downie was the principal keeper transferred to the station after Thomas Welch's departure. While on the station the New Zealand Film Unit visited, producing the 1957 film 'A Letter to Teacher' about the New Zealand Correspondence School system. The footage shows Ronald Downie's children – his son, Colin, and daughter, name unknown – doing their school work in the kitchen of the principal keeper's house. The film also shows another family (mother, two sons and toddler) but it is unclear which it is – best guess is it may have been the Sutherlands. Ronald Downie was principal keeper during electrification, one of the biggest changes in the Cape Brett lighthouse history.



Figure 127 – The two families that appear on the 'A Letter to Teacher' Footage.