The Ship

By Kara MacPhee

The ship had seen many a days out in the Atlantic. After its careful construction, it worked as passenger ship leaving Europe and transporting people to Canada’s busiest port Pier 21 located in Halifax.

When the fishing industry boomed the ship was sold to a wealth Lunenburg man, who with his crew fished, the rich waters off the coast of Nova Scotia. It was Friday night and the men just hauled in the largest catch of their lives.

Heavy with cod and high in spirits they celebrated their success and these men started the 300 km trek home to Lunenburg.

They did not see the weather coming up on them. Storms brewed quickly and suddenly as the 3 current forces unite there. The Labrador Current from the north east meeting the Belle Island current coming northwest fuses with the Gulf Stream current creating one the world’s richest fishing ground but also producing wild winds, and some of the most unpredictable waters on earth.

Sable Island, the 44 km sand bar, near to these fishing grounds, shape shifts due to the currents, tides and winds. The men knew to steer clear of the island that was notorious for being a graveyard of the Atlantic, but navigation was almost impossible. 1/3 of the year this area was a thick blanket of fog and this disrupted their only navigation system, one that relied on the sun and stars.

Without any sense of direction the men were lost. They knew Sable Island was nearby by they had no idea how close until…SMACK… the bow of the ship crashed its heavy load into the sand.

Determined but desperate, the captain commanded they turn the ship around and hoist their sails. Unfortunately, the mast made by men could not stand up to the forces of nature. It flew off the ship like a sparrow taking lift off from its perch. The men and ship once more collided with the island graveyard and this sealed their fate.

In hopes of survivors, the families of the victims encouraged a search & rescue of Sable Island but the only thing that remained was thirty one white T-shirts.