



NEW DIGITAL WEATHER STATION FOR THE ISLAND.

Local Rockport resident, Ken Baker, volunteered to design a new digital weather station for the island. It was installed in August on the south side rear kitchen roof of the Assistant keeper house just above the roof line. There is also an anemometer for wind speed and direction which is mounted on the house's north chimney. Everything is solar powered and wireless. The weather station is a combination of two components.

First is the Davis Vantage Pro2 weather station consisting of a sensor suite that has a rain collector, temperature, humidity, UV, and solar radiation. These units are solar powered and transmit their sensor readings to a small display, as well as a data recorder located inside the house.

Second is a Beaglebone Black computer connected to the data recorder and its software publishes weather data to online weather services, produces graphs, reports, and HTML pages.

There are a number of pages listed in the upper right-hand corner of the site. The "current" weather page has the real time weather recorded at the island. This is updated every 5 minutes. This includes temperature, humidity, dew point, barometric pressure, wind direction and speed, precipitation, UV index and solar radiation. One can also see the highs/lows recorded through the day. In addition celestial and tidal values are displayed. Lastly a brief 3 day forecast from Weather Underground is displayed on the bottom right of the page.

You can access this web-site from your home computer by typing in the link at <http://thacher-island-weather.keneli.org>



Solar panels on oil house roof.



Web cam view of Straitsmouth keeper house.

NEW WEB CAM FOR STRAITSMOUTH ISLAND.

In an effort to keep an eye on Straitsmouth Island structures while it is not inhabited, a web cam was installed by the "solar crew", Dick MacPherson, Bill Whiting, Peter Bergholtz, Dick Morris and Paul St.Germain.

Two solar panels were installed on the roof of the oil house. A web cam was installed in the gable eave of the oil house looking back toward the keeper house. This will provide a live surveillance of the keeper house and the island all year long. Eventually a second camera will be installed on the lighthouse tower enabling people to view the many gray and harbor seals who sun themselves at low tide on the rocks at the eastern end of the island. Last March over 200 seals were seen there.



Assistant keeper house siding workers.

Siding applied to Assistant keeper house kitchen.

The carpentry crew consisting of Steve Kowalski, Ed Hand, Harry Newell, Bob Macdonald, Gus Campbell, Peter Chick, Peter Bergholtz, Gail Zeman and Terry Schwenk all combined to strip the old shingles and replace them with new white cedar shingles. *Continued on page 6.*

Work Crew Profile Dick Morris

*“Who puts a gorgeous door like that on an outhouse?”
a visitor to the island asked recently.*

Dick Morris does. And he has done an equally meticulous job with the oil house doors, the cabinets in the keepers’ kitchens, and everything else he has built on the island.

Raised in Lawrence, Morris worked briefly for an electrical contractor before he joined the Coast Guard in November 1957. The following June, he was posted to the Straitsmouth Lifeboat Station, on the mainland side of the Gap in Rockport, where one of his duties was to transport Thacher keepers to and from the island for scheduled liberties. Morris characterizes his first posting as an “old age home of a station.” Nothing much happened there, with one notable exception: Walking to his skiff at the Sandy Bay Yacht Club, where the Coast Guard station kept its boats during the winter, he was struck in the head by a snowball thrown by high school senior Susan Kolterjahn.

In August 1959, Morris was transferred to the General Green, a 125-foot patrol boat that was shipwrecked off Sandwich during a March 1960 blizzard. The Coast Guard was rescuing a tugboat when a series of misadventures occurred: the tugboat captain fell and broke his leg; the tow line fouled the General Green’s screws, causing it to lose power and necessitating the use of anchors, one of which slipped its windlass while the other failed to hold in the rough sea. A duck boat sent out to assist them rammed the General Green, then tipped over, after which the General Green drifted about two miles before running aground on the beach. Second class petty officer Morris had a small, plastic (pink, he remembers) camera that came free with a pack of cigarettes; his photos were later used in the Coast Guard’s inquiry of the incident.

The patrol boat was towed to Curtis Island, Md., where it was dry-docked for repairs. It was like living inside a radiator, Morris remembers, so he was happy to be transferred to the Dolliver’s Neck Coast Guard Station in Gloucester, which was not only lively but near Endicott College, where the pretty snowball pitcher was enrolled.

After a five-year tour of duty, Morris did construction for New England Power, then worked as a roving foreman for Watts Regulatory Company, a Lawrence firm that manufactured plumbing and heating devices. He married Susan Kolterjahn, earned a degree in marketing from Lowell Technological Institute, and took a job with Dupont, where he worked for more than twenty years. During those years, the couple had four children and now have fifteen grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

The Morrises moved to Rockport in 1992, where Dick took a part-time, post-retirement job for a company that manufactured printed circuit protection material. Every three months he was sent to the Far East on business and often took Susan along. Then he finally retired and became more focused on the kind of craftsmanship evident on Thacher Island.

It was a necessity at first. He and his wife had bought an 1826 Abolitionist church parsonage in Andover that needed repairs, then later built their Rockport house. (He credits Susan, who operated a painting and wallpapering business, with a lot of the work.) Dick found that he liked woodworking, and it shows. On an otherwise utilitarian island, he supplies an artisan’s aesthetic touch, even to the humblest of structures.



Dick Morris in front of door.



Dick Morris in front double doors.



Dick Morris working on cabinets.



NEW THACHER I LAUNCH BOAT CHRISTENED.

On June 10 at the Thacher Island Association’s Annual meeting the newly built 24 foot aluminum launch boat Thacher I was christened.

Sadie Green, granddaughter of boat driver and fleet commander Tom Eldridge, christened her with Twin Lights ginger ale, (not the usual champagne after all she is a minor). The boat was later donated to the Town of Rockport, as has been the tradition over the years. The 30 year old original Thacher Island I was put on a municipal web site to be sold at auction by the Town. We were able to use the Honda engine from the old boat which was only a year old.

The new boat was totally redesigned to accommodate a minimum of 6 passengers although it will comfortably seat nine plus crew. The helm is positioned on the starboard side allowing long pieces of lumber to be easily stowed. A wider drop down cargo door will allow large pieces of equipment to hauled on and off the island. The entry door on the side allows handicapped usage and is wheelchair friendly.



Sadie christens boat

Bachelorette Party Creates Thacher Paintings.

In 2012/13 Christin Shafer lived in a winter rental across from Thacher Island by Loblolly Cove off of Eden Road with her now fiancé. She read up on the island and took lots of photos. In July her bridal party planned a paint night event for her bachelorette party in Allentown, Pennsylvania where she is from. To her surprise they decided to each do paintings of her winter view of Thacher Island. She has shared this photo with us.



Christin Shafer



Bachelorettes with paintings



Twin Lights from Emerson Point from stereopticon slide by John Heywood 1864-66, Benham Collection Courtesy Cape Ann Museum.

THACHER ISLAND VOLUNTEER WORK CREW



Volunteers await a ride back to shore from Straitsmouth after a full day of trail clearing and cistern cleaning.



Volunteers arrive in both Thacher launches for a day of work each Wednesday.

“Changed Name of Thatcher’s Island.”

This is the headline in a March 7, 1895 issue of the Boston Globe. The article reads as follows; “The U.S. board of geographic names has decided that Thatcher Island, off Cape Ann, shall have two t’s.

There is no doubt that this island was named for Erastus Thacher;(obviously their research was incorrect as it was Anthony Thacher)and some purists, going back to the origin of the name, demanded that it should be spelled without the t. The board decided that,

according to local usage, it was spelled with a t, and therefore it should be known on the maps as Thatcher Island. At the same time the board reformed the spelling of the name a little by cutting off the final and an apostrophe at the end of the proper name. “Thatcher’s Island” was the name actually given to it in the neighborhood, and the board do not recognize possessive cases in geographic titles, wherever they can be dispensed with.”

Now we know that even the federal

government has been misspelling the name from the beginning. It is Thacher Island today as it should have been from 1635 when it was probably known as Thacher’s Island as Anthony Thacher and his family owned it for some 80 years until 1715. It was sold by a Thacher heir, Colonel John Appleton of Ipswich, to Reverend John White of Gloucester for 100 pounds to use as pasturage for his oxen.

Thank you Volunteers!

You have put in over 3600 hours of work and have consumed over 60 dozen donuts!

We thank all 70 of the volunteers for your hard work and dedication to maintaining both Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands as wonderful show places and helping to preserve our maritime heritage for future generations.

VOLUNTEER WORKERS;

- Dave Arnold
- Ken Baker
- Peter Bergholtz
- Linda Berard
- Linda Bosselman
- Bill Braunlich
- Gus Campbell
- Cyndi Carroll
- Pat Casey
- Peter Chick
- David & Sharron Cohen
- Donna Cusick
- David & Carol Delaney
- Tom & Paula Eldridge
- Dick Goehlert
- Phil Goldsmith
- Ed Hand
- Ann Patrice Hickey
- Nathan Ives
- Steve & Mary Ellen Kother
- Steve & Debbie Kowalski

- Jim Kubik
- Judy Leach
- Christine Lovgren
- Bob Macdonald
- Dick MacPherson
- Lee Marr
- Dick Morris
- Ray Moss
- Harry Newell
- Ed Nickerson
- Roger Perkins
- Paul St.Germain
- Terry Schwenk
- Ted Tarr
- Jeff Taylor
- Syd Wedmore
- Bill Whiting
- Gail Zeman

KEEPERS;

- Ian, Margie, Jessie & Ida Dewees-Boyd
- David & Sharron Cohen
- Darlene & John Fulton
- Dewey & Camille Glick
- Jeannette Haynes & Larry Haynes
- Ann-Patrice Hickey & Lynn Chambers
- Diane & Gary Johnson
- Bob Joseph
- David Joseph
- David, Susan & Ashley Murphy
- Joe Napolitano & Peggy Flanagan
- Paul Sena & Patty Wegmann
- Wayne & Anita Smith
- Syd & Suellen Wedmore

BOAT CREW;

- Bill Cardini
- Seth Cutter
- Bob Delaney
- Tom & Paula Eldridge
- Rich Lorigan
- David Murphy
- Isaac Perry
- Ray Pszeny
- Paul St. Germain
- Jeff Taylor
- Syd Wedmore



Dead whale on Straitsmouth.

Work crew member Donna Cusick stands beside the body of a minke whale that washed ashore on Straitsmouth Island in July. The minke is the smallest of the baleen whales.



Seals on Thacher Island.

Young and old adult seals clambered ashore to take a nap in Thacher’s intertidal zone.

Straitsmouth keeper house windows installed.



Joe Napolitano and his crew from Napco Builders built and installed 18 windows. Built of Spanish cedar they were designed to recreate the historically correct windows of the original 1879 house. The windows were recovered with plywood to protect them during the winter months.

Assistant Keeper House roof repair.



Joe Napolitano and his NAPCO Builders crew repair winter damage to the roof of the assistant keeper's house. Joe and his wife Peggy are also keepers on the island in September.



We Do Windows Too.

Linda Bosselman and Donna Cusick are re-glazing some of the many old windows from the keeper houses. This seems to be a never ending job because of the toll the weather takes on the island structures.



Assistant keeper house siding replaced.

Volunteers have stripped the old shingles and replace them with new white cedar shingles on the assistant keeper house west kitchen.

Video screen installed in the Visitor Center exhibit room.



Dick MacPherson delivers the new Samsung video screen to the Visitor Center



Visitors enjoy the show.

A large 48 inch flat screen TV was installed to run the 28 minute Thacher Island Historic video.

With the help of Dick Mac Pherson the screen was hung on the interior wall, electronics installed and a motion sensor just below the screen allows it to start automatically when a visitor enters the room. The room has been rearranged so that chairs are set up for visitors to get a first-hand look at the history of the island.



David Cohen paints the spiral staircase in the north tower.

Rope walk way installed in both towers.

Ray Moss and Peter Chick have added a ropewalk way as a safety measure along the long 156 step spiral stairways in both towers. This cleverly designed 7/8 inch rope attached to rings imbedded in the brick wall with a knot at each end; make this a much safer walkway for our visitors. Over 800 feet of rope was employed reaching all five landings.



The tramway cart was restored and the wheels painted. Here the Kubota tractor comes in handy to flip it back onto the tracks.



David Delaney and his crew of Steve Kowalski, Harry Newell, Phil Goldsmith, Dick Goehlert and Jim Kubik built the 30 foot eastern spur extension toward the whistle house from the turntable.



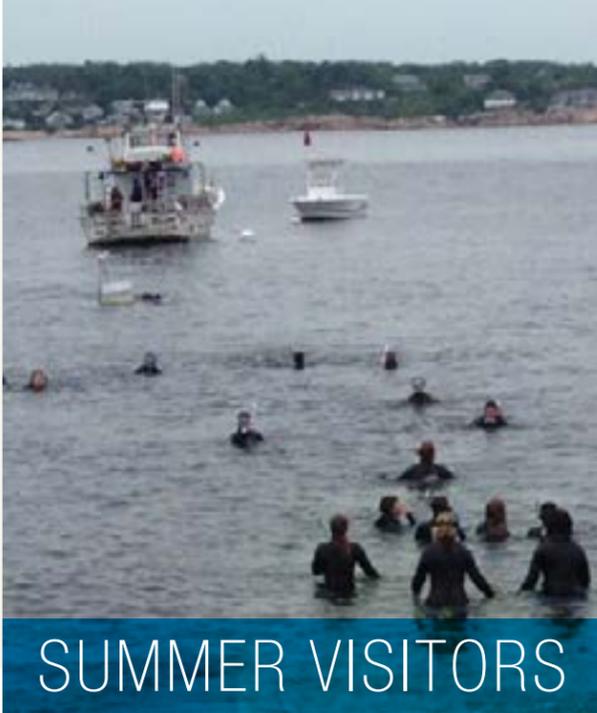
Tramway roadbed to the boat house is replaced by David Delaney, Christine Lovgren, Bill Whiting, Ray Moss, Phil Goldsmith and Harry Newell.



Corrugated aluminum panels are applied to the cistern roof by Christine Lovgren, Steve Kother, Bill Whiting and Ray Pszeny.

One hundred and forty-four sheets of corrugated aluminum panels were delivered to the island in August. These will be used to replace the roof of the cistern which collects rain water for the 25,000 gallon tank, the island's only source of water. Last summer crews replaced all the support beams under the structure.

SUMMER WORK



THEY CAME FROM DOWN UNDER

On July 4, twenty young women walked backward up the Thacher Island ramp -- a stance made necessary by their diving flippers. Students from St. Mary's Anglican Girls' School in Karrinyup, a suburb of Perth, Australia, were on a three-week tour of New England to study whales and seals. *Photos by Diane Johnson.*



SUMMER VISITORS



Anne's Way

Arnold Hiatt, along with his son, daughter and three grandchildren, walked the trail that is named after his wife, Anne Wechsler Hiatt. Because she loved the island, he donated the money to develop the trail as a 50th birthday gift to her in 1980. Anne Hiatt passed away in 2005.



An Itch to Volunteer

For the past six years, a dedicated group of General Electric employees has spent a day of hard labor on Thacher Island as part of the Lynn-based company's civic volunteer program. This year the team of nine employees and one retiree was thrilled to learn they would not be painting yet again. Instead, they were given the task of hauling debris off the southern tip of the island



They threw themselves into the task with gusto, removing years of wrecked lobster traps and other flotsam, heedless of the heat and humidity. They were also, alas, heedless of the poison ivy entangled in the trash. By the following morning, five of the ten volunteers had erupted in itchy rashes. Four of them were severely enough affected to require steroid medications.

Despite the dose of Thacher Island revenge, the GE crew declared this year's volunteer day the best they'd ever spent on the island, "though painting is looking better now," joked crew co-ordinator Phil Sudenfield. "Maybe we'll paint again next year. High up on ladders. Or something on the mainland."

At least one hundred lobster traps were removed from the island most of which had fetched up on the beach below the southern bluff and had to be chain ganged up to the top.



Descendants of Anthony and Elizabeth Thacher continue to visit the island.

Joan Thacher Tiffany and her husband Ed visited her ancestor's namesake island while in Rockport for the 2015 Bullseye National Regatta, which was hosted by the Sandy Bay Yacht Club.



Bryan Thacher Hazelton, an 11th-generation descendant of Anthony and Elizabeth, visited from Oceanside, New York.



Frank Thacher II and Frank Thacher III, 9th- and 10th-generation descendants of Anthony and Elizabeth Thacher, visited from Memphis, Tenn. Frank II had seen the island from a boat 25 years earlier, but he did not come ashore.



Frank Baldrini, an 11th-generation descendant of Anthony Thacher, and his wife, Sandra, visited the island for the first time in August. They live near Yarmouth, Mass., which Anthony and Elizabeth Thacher helped settle in 1639, after their rescue from the island.



Keepers Granddaughter

Dina Hamilton of Essex and member of the Association since 1987, brought her grandnephews, Calvin Harris and Simon Davis, both of Florida, to the island on which her grandfather, Eugene Larsen, served as 1st Assistant Keeper from 1911-1912. They were accompanied by Greg Porter on the right, a charter member of the Thacher Island Association.

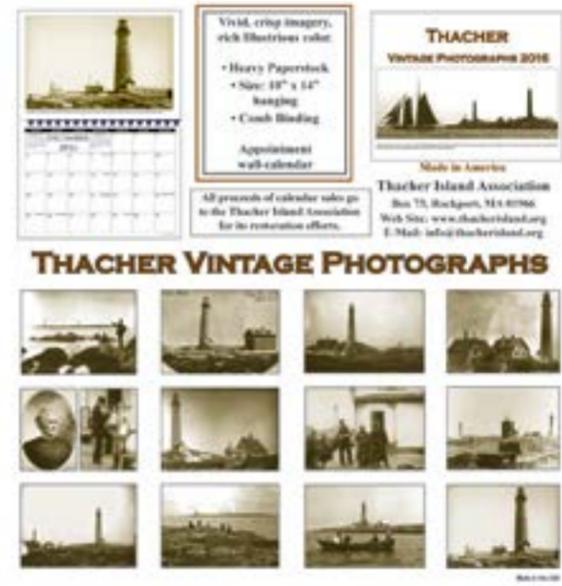
Eugene Larsen was reassigned to Graves Light, Boston Light, and then Nantucket Island, where he eventually retired as the last keeper of the Sankaty Light. Hamilton, who was 17 when her grandfather died, remembers that he always wore his full keeper's uniform when he went to town. He was so dashing in it that a photo he didn't know was being taken for commercial purposes was later used in a Granger tobacco ad. Both Eugene and his wife Edvardine ("Dina," after whom Dina Hamilton was named) are buried on Nantucket Island.

Thacher Merchandise

JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Go to www.thacherisland.org to order on-line for additional merchandise. Or send checks to Thacher Island Association, Box 73, Rockport, MA 01966.



New Vintage Photo Calendar for 2016 now available.

This year's Thacher calendar features some very interesting sepia toned vintage photographs of the island taken from 1870 to the 1920's. Each month features a different scene while each calendar page shows important historical dates about the island plus the usual important holidays. Measures 10"x14" open, comb binding on heavy stock.

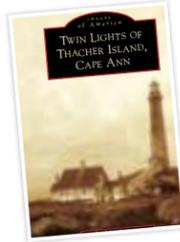
\$12.00 plus shipping and handling (\$3.00)



Cape Ann Granite Book by Paul St. Germain

Book contains over 200 vintage images of the quarries, people, tools, vessels and harbors of the 60 plus quarries located on Cape Ann for over 100 years. It also chronicles many of the buildings, memorials, monuments, bridges and lighthouses where Cape Ann granite was used. Personally signed by the author.

\$20.00 plus shipping and handling (\$3.00)



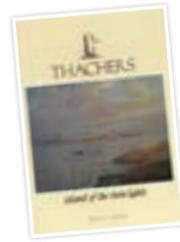
"Twin Lights of Thacher Island, Cape Ann" a book by Paul St. Germain, President of the Thacher Island Association, tracing the pictorial history of the Twin Lights with over 200 vintage photos many never before published.

\$20.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$3.00)



"Lighthouses and Lifesaving Stations on Cape Ann" traces in vintage photographs the history of the six lighthouses and lifesaving stations scattered across Cape Ann.

\$20.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$3.00)



"Thachers.... island of the twin lights."

149 pages with many b/w photos. Book by Eleanor Parsons. The definitive book on the history of Thacher Island.

\$20.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$3.00)



New Fleece Vest—heavy weight polar fleece, nylon zipper and 2 zippered pockets and elastic waist ties. **Sizes S, M, L, XL \$32.00**



New Thacher Island Polo Shirts.

100% Pima Cotton. Luxurious & silky. Honeycomb pique texture results in a lofty fabric with a silky feel. Made by Port Authority.

Sizes: Sm., Med., Lg., XL
Available in Navy (PS-1) or White (PS-2).
\$32.00 plus shipping and handling.

Thacher Belt

One inch wide web/cotton with Twin Lights and schooner design, full grain leather tabs, brass buckle.

Sizes: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42
Order one size up from pant size.
Item # B-100
\$28.00 plus shipping and handling.



Denim Keeper Shirt.

This 100% cotton soft denim shirt is a key item to own. It proudly shows off the Thacher Island twin lights embroidered.

Comes in S,M,L,XL,2XL was \$40.00 now \$35.00



Colorful Hats. Shows off the Thacher Island Twin Lights logo. Yellow, Faded Blue, Khaki, Nautical Red, Charcoal. Adjustable, 100% cotton, washable. **\$22.00**



Twin Lights of Thacher Island- Navy Hooded Sweatshirt

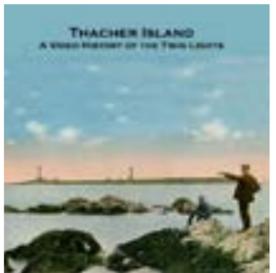
Rugged full metal zipper, heavy weight 9oz., 50/50 Cotton/Poly Lycra elastic sleeves and waist band. Twin hand warmer front pocket and draw string neck.

Sizes S, M, L, XL \$40.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$5.00)

"Thacher Island-A Video History of the Twin Lights" DVD video.

This 20 minute video is divided into five parts that includes the story behind the wreck of Anthony Thacher in 1635, the building of the first towers in 1771, a review of the various lighting arrangements used over the past 240 years including how the Fresnel lens works, the construction of the second set of towers in 1861 and stories of some of the lighthouse keepers.

\$15.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$2.50) V-101



"Sunburst"
on Sea Foam Blue
100% cotton.
Sizes S,M,L,XL. **\$22.00**



"Kayak Paddle"
on Putty
100% cotton.
Sizes S,M,L,XL. **\$22.00**



Red, White and Blue Flag
on White
100% cotton. Sizes
S,M,L,XL. **\$22.00**



Thacher Island Sand Dollars.

Thacher Island Sand Dollar Ornament is 3 ¼ "in diameter. Has decorative sea shell and hanging ribbon. Created by hand in the U.S. using natural sand dollars and shells specially preserved.

\$12.00 plus shipping and handling. (\$2.50)



Thacher Island Association
P.O. Box 73
Rockport, MA 01966

ON THE WEB: www.thacherisland.org
EMAIL: info@thacherisland.org

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It's never too early to renew your membership or make a donation.

Although 2015 is winding down we will be sending out notices for renewals for 2016 after the first of the year. We have a total membership of approximately 730 which includes 205 lifetime members. Unfortunately we have a renewal rate of only about 65%. Which means we have to start all over again each year to either attract new members or try to get our existing members to renew. This year we attracted 38 new members and renewed 350 memberships. Memberships are an important part of our fund raising efforts and account for about 20% of our annual income. Let's try to achieve a 100% renewal rate and send in your renewals now for 2016. Thanks.

Renew your membership via our web site www.thacherisland.org or by sending your check to Thacher Island Association,



www.thacherisland.org

Credits:

Written and Edited by:
Sharron and David Cohen and Paul St.Germain

Graphic Design:
Mark Drury, Percolator Design

Photos by:
Sharron Cohen Donna Cusick John and Darlene Fulton
Diane Johnson Dick MacPherson Paul St Germain Christin Shafer

Cover art:
Straitsmouth light and keeper house watercolor used with permission of the artist. Suellen Wedmore, artist, poet, keeper and wife of Syd Wedmore, Chairman of the Thacher/Straitsmouth Island Town Committee, has created over 50 different paintings of Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands. This is one of her most recent.