



Thacher & Straitsmouth Island News

April 2022 Newsletter | VOL 22 ISSUE 01

Sea Smoke Around Thacher

It was an extremely frigid day on January 15; temperatures dropped to a chilling 7 degrees. While Dick Carlson, the association's investment advisor at UBS Financial Services, was strolling down Eden Road near his home in Rockport, he came upon an exceedingly rare sight, "Sea Smoke" spreading around the island at 9:15 am. He took a series of photos to capture the unusual event.

Sea Smoke, frost smoke or steam fog is fog which is formed when very frigid air moves over warmer water. The air was 7 degrees (with a wind chill of -9 degrees), while the ocean water was a balmy 40 degrees.

TIA thanks Dick for his quick thinking with the camera as well as his splendid work as our investment advisor for the past several years. Our return for 2021 was 13.5% while our 3-year return was 14%. Thanks, Dick, for your advice and counsel and now for your photo.

Paul St. Germain

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2021 Was A Year of Plenty...and We Hope That 2022 Will Bring Plenty More!

If you attended November's Thacher Island Association Annual Meeting in Rockport, you were no doubt thrilled to learn that 2021 was a good year for the TIA. Projects on both islands as well as an expensive modification to one of our launches (Thacher I) to allow for safer landings on the Straitsmouth ramp were completed. It was also a spectacular year for membership growth, donations, and merchandise sales. To sum it all up: income exceeded expenses and that is always a great achievement.

The latter part of 2021 was also a busy time for the TIA South Tower Restoration Fundraising Committee. The Two-Year Capital Campaign to raise \$400,000 for the repair of the South Tower parapets at the lantern and gallery levels has begun well! Please see the article on page 3 for an update on the South Tower Restoration fund raising efforts.

As always, we are grateful for your continued support, and we cannot thank you enough for helping to restore, maintain, and promote public access to Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands.

And don't forget to **Help Save Our Lights!**

Warm Regards,

Bill Whiting

Mass Audubon to establish a series of ecological management activities on Straitsmouth Island this summer

Mass Audubon is very grateful for the incredible partnership with the Thacher Island Association (TIA). For years, we have been collaborating to protect, maintain, and enhance Straitsmouth Island. Straitsmouth Island is not only a significant historical site and popular with visitors, but it is also home to an abundance of flora and fauna, especially birds. The island is within the Rockport Headlands and Inshore Waters Important Bird Area.

Continued on page 7



PICTURE THIS 2023 CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST



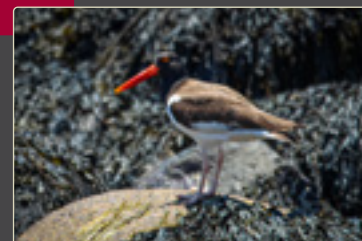
Lighthouses



Landscape



Still life



Wildlife

There is, perhaps, no more photographed subject on Cape Ann than the Twin Lights on Thacher Island. These days virtually everyone carries a camera in their pocket. Here is your chance to see how well you can capture the beauty of the islands.

In the past, we have relied on professional, or our volunteer, photographers to provide us with photos for our annual calendar. In 2023 we will be using the winning entries from a new photo contest.

All the details are on our website, but essentially the photo must be of either Thacher or Straitsmouth and must be submitted by August 15th. There is a modest entry fee of \$5.00 to enter, with a limit of two submissions per individual.

Please go to www.thacherisland.org/our-events for the entry form and all the details. Good luck!

The categories noted above are welcomed as potential subjects for your photographic contest entries.



Bob Krause at the ready on town pier

THACHER ISLAND VOLUNTEER WORK CREW

WORK CREW PROFILE

Bob Krause

Every launch passenger riding to Thacher or Straitsmouth quickly comes to appreciate that it takes a highly-skilled captain to skim gracefully over the choppy seas and glide smoothly up the narrow boat ramps. It is no surprise that Bob Krause does these things confidently and effortlessly. The big surprise is that he has only been a boat captain for two years!

Bob's good friend, and our long-time Captain and Fleet Leader Emeritus, Tom Eldridge, invited Bob to drive Thacher I for the first time when they were out for a casual boat ride together. Tom then recruited Bob as a boat crew member and encouraged him to get his captain's license. Now, Bob is taking over Tom's leadership role. You can call him Fleet Commander, Admiral, or the more mundane Marine Coordinator. But know this: keeping our island launches running is a huge and critically important job. Not to mention that six to eight trips back and forth in rough water demand your full attention and can be exhausting. We are very fortunate to have both of them on our team.

Bob's new duties include scheduling boat crews, recruiting and training boat crew members and captains, keeping our two launches shipshape, budgeting launch operations, and coordinating with the Maritime Consortium to ensure our crew members are drug free.

Bob and his wife Terri have lived in Rockport for 30 years. They have a daughter who lives locally and a grandson in college. They met when Bob was in the Army stationed in Virginia and have been married for fifty years. They serve together as volunteer lighthouse keepers on both islands, usually among the first keepers of the season, performing the mountain of setup and cleaning tasks needed to open the islands to the public. Terri grew up in Pigeon Cove, and Bob was born in Texas and grew up in the Chicago area.

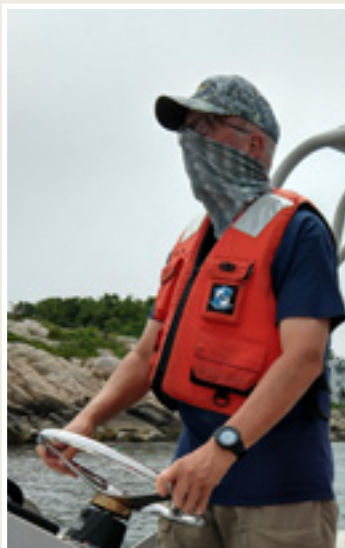
After his stint in the Army, Bob graduated with a degree in economics and worked for 15 years as a manufacturing manager before finding his true calling as a financial advisor at Prudential. He's been retired now for two years. The only thing he enjoys more than operating a launch is being out on the water, lobstering with one of his friends.

Bob has a deep appreciation for his team's vital role: most people could not get to the islands without them. They are the face of the organization, the first people visitors meet. So it is up to them to put their passengers at ease and provide safe and comfortable passage. Simply put: their job is to make the trip fun. The first time you meet Bob, you'll see immediately how well he does all this.

Norm Delisle



Tom Eldridge at the helm with Bob Krause looking on



Bob Krause piloting Thacher I

The islands and surrounding coastal waters awaken from winter's grip

During the blustery winter storms that pelt Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands, we often find ourselves imagining the intense conditions on the islands. Recently wind speeds of over 76 mph were recorded on Thacher Island during Storm Kenan. Over the next few weeks some signs of Spring will begin to arrive as the last remnants of snow and ice melt away from the islands' rocky shores into the coastal waters.

Spring is a time of great change and productivity in the waters surrounding the islands. The islands are situated in one of the most productive marine ecosystems in the world...the Gulf of Maine. Covering 36,000 square miles, the Gulf of Maine is a semi-enclosed sea, often described as "a sea within a sea", where its surface waters are fed by numerous rivers that drain large watersheds, as well as from upwelling of nutrient waters from its deep basins. The Gulf of Maine is known to be home to over 3,200 coastal and marine species that are supported by this rich ecosystem. *Continued on Page 7*



American Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) female with chicks

You Can Help Save Our Lights



Aerial view of lantern and gallery decks of the South Tower

A recent inspection of the Thacher Island twin lighthouses revealed the need for extensive restoration work to correct dangerous conditions on the gallery deck and the lantern deck of both the South and North Towers.

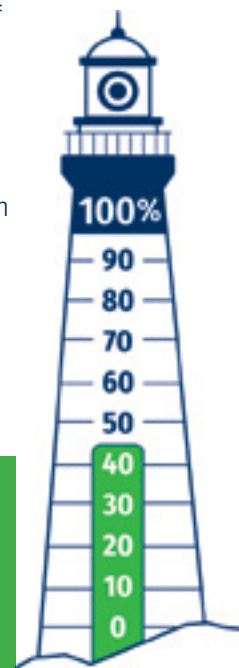
Since the Twin Lights were built in 1861, the iron rails and their stanchion anchors on the granite parapets have been "rust jacking," a process in which the rusting iron expands and cracks the granite blocks into which each stanchion anchor is secured. The result: the outside parapet walkways on the decks have become weaker; and because the parapets support the upper portion of the tower, their continued disintegration could result in a catastrophic loss of the lights, the lantern rooms, and the gallery decks below. The current estimated cost of the work is \$400,000 per tower.

As owner of the North Tower, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WLS) has committed to raising the necessary funds to repair the North Tower and plans to have the work done in 2024.

However, the South Tower is owned by the Town of Rockport, which therefore bears the responsibility for its repair, and the Thacher Island Association is committed to raising the required \$400,000. The goal is to raise the funds by 2024, so the work on both towers can be performed at the same time, thus reducing expenses by sharing some costs with USF&WLS. The graphic shows the progress of our fundraising effort at the time we went to press.

This graphic shows the progress of our fundraising effort at the time we went to press. To date, we have raised \$170,000 or 42% of our goal to restore the South Tower.

If you'd like to Help Save Our Lights, please send a check with your tax-deductible donation in the enclosed envelope, or charge your donation online at www.thacherisland.org then click on **DONATE**.



New "Bimini" top for Thacher I

The Thacher Island marine crew, under the new leadership of Bob Krause, who replaces Tom Eldridge this season, continue to make improvements on their launch vehicles. "After operating Thacher I for four years we have found areas that require changes for safety and comfort including the new bow-bumper (push-knees) we added last season," said our new Fleet Commander Bob Krause. The most recent change is the addition of a "Bimini" top to protect the boat drivers and deck hands from the sun and rain and the occasional wave splash that comes aboard even on the calmest days. They also had the boat builders, Viking Welded Boats of Kensington, New Hampshire, construct a new wind screen on the helm for driver protection.

Thacher Island I rolled off the production line with its new "Bimini Top" and helm windscreen and was delivered to Rockport at the end of January.



BIG YEAR UNDERWAY
ON THE ISLANDS

Our volunteers have already started making trips to Thacher and Straitsmouth this spring to prepare for a busy season.

ON STRAITSMOUTH, we will be completing the final section of the footbridge that goes between the keeper's house and the tower. This 200-foot-long walkway has been several years in the making and it will be great to wrap it up.

In addition, a new kayak storage rack will be built and attached to the top of the boat ramp. We have been welcoming large numbers of visitors in kayaks since we opened to the public two years ago, and for safety reasons, we need to provide safe and convenient storage for the boats while they are on the island.

And, as usual, a lot of time will be spent improving the webcams and doing landscaping and trail maintenance.

ON THACHER, both keeper houses will be painted, this time by professionals, for safety reasons. We will also begin the work of installing a new solar panel array with new batteries and inverters. Our existing system, which we have had for the past ten years, has incurred some outages recently, and solar technology has made significant leaps in reliability and efficiency over the past decade. To reduce the use of our diesel backup generator, we need a more dependable and robust solar power system.

And, like Straitsmouth there will always be trail work and landscaping to be done.

Thacher Island I has also received a much-needed modification for the comfort of our boat crew. See related article in this newsletter.

An important note: none of our major projects such as the footbridge, painting the keeper houses and the new solar system would be possible without the very generous support of you, our members, as well as the residents of Rockport, Rockport Community Preservation Committee, Cape Ann Savings Bank, Cell Signaling Technology, and the Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are so grateful for everyone's support.



Volunteers at work on the Straitsmouth walkway last September 70% complete.



Drawing showing the proposed kayak rack on Straitsmouth



The trail work is never ending, and Donna Cusick is always doing her best to keep them passable



Keeper Jeannette Haynes is ready to mount her tractor to mow the trails but she encounters a passenger in the driver's seat.



Left to right: Fred McGrath and Norm Delisle prepping for upcoming paint job on the Principal Keeper's House

Island Power

What has seven solar power systems and an ancient stone tomb imprisoning a humongous, roaring beast who must be awakened by its keepers on dreary mornings to ward off the lingering darkness?

Answer: Thacher Island's off-the-grid electrical power system. Here's the down-low:

- Keeper Houses: solar panels (near fire pond) backed up by diesel generator (in Stone House) or gasoline generator (next to South Tower). Propane powers most of the appliances.
- South Tower: solar panels (next to tower) for beacon and foghorn. Solar panels (near fire pond) for lights, outlets, camera, and wireless network, backed up by keeper house power.
- North Tower: solar panels (top of tower) for beacon. Solar panels (base of tower) for stairway lights. Power from the diesel generator for additional lighting and outlets.
- Boathouse: solar panels (on roof) for cameras, marine radio, and wireless network. Power from the diesel generator for lights and outlets.
- Whistle House: power from either generator for lights and outlets.
- Oil House and Stone House: power from the diesel generator for lights and outlets.
- Privy: solar panels (on roof) for lighting and vent fan.

The Thacher electrical power system might sound as intimidating as a nesting black-backed gull in June. But it all works! A central set of solar panels could have powered the entire island. However, for pragmatic reasons, our distributed system evolved. The U.S. Coast Guard installed and maintains the solar system for the South Tower beacon and foghorn, while volunteers installed and maintain all the rest. Instead of repeatedly beefing up a central system and running new cables all over the island, the more remote locations got smaller independent solar systems.

Could we go completely green? Unfortunately, solar panels only work when there is sunshine. Wind turbines are a good complement because they can provide power on cloudy days and at night. However, the investment to eliminate our fossil-fuel guzzlers would be significant in both dollars and labor, and emergency back-up power would still be needed. Preserving the historical vibe of the islands is critical to our mission, and conspicuous solar arrays or wind farms could diminish that aesthetic. In the end, our grass-fed Canada Geese have a much bigger carbon "footprint."

Over the next couple of years, we will be upgrading portions of the Thacher power systems to address shortcomings, take advantage of improved technology, and further reduce our use of fossil fuels. This summer, we plan to start construction on a new solar array for the keeper houses. We can't wait!

Norm Delisle



Installing solar panels on Straitsmouth's barn. Left to right: Randy Saville, Larry Libert, Dick MacPherson and Peter Chick



Reinstalling solar panels after reroofing the Thacher Boat House. Left to right: Tom Mikus, George Langer, Sloan Craven, Norm Delisle



Sharron Cohen, Harry Newell, and Dr. Ross look to the next site for investigation.

The Ground Beneath Our Feet

For many people rocks are just rocks. Even among those of us who take more of an interest in what’s beneath our feet, our attraction likely came from first-hand or museum encounters with semi-precious gems, glittery crystal geodes, marine fossil-rich limestones or shales, or the petrified wood and colorful jaspers and agates of the American southwest. At a glance, the granites of Cape Ann, which underlie Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands, can seem dully uniform -- monolithic.

But this may be a failure of observation and/or of imagination. Few of us have the kind of special imagination that allows certain individuals to envision eons of change: to paraphrase Handel, to see “Every valley exalted, every mountain and hill made low, and the rough places plain.” Such individuals, unlike the rest of us, find it perfectly plausible, in fact inevitable, that vast stretches of hard rock expand, stretch, and tear under pressure. But then most of us don’t, on a normal day, think of humanity as skittering over thin floes of rock that float freely, if very slowly, across a seething liquid “mantle” of molten minerals.

One individual who does visited Straitsmouth Island for the first time in July 2021: Dr. Martin E. Ross, recently retired from teaching geology at Northeastern University and author of “Cape Ann: Its Physical and Environmental Geology.” This 2015 publication had come to the attention of TIA volunteer and keeper Harry Newell, who thereafter trekked all over Cape Ann to try the many excellent self-guided field trips it outlines. And last season he invited Dr. Ross to

visit Straitsmouth. Joining Harry and Dr. Ross on this nearly island-circumnavigating field trip were fellow keepers Christa Clark and Sharron Cohen.

At the end of their several-hour exploration, the TIA volunteers agreed Dr. Ross had answered their questions, and more. Dr. Ross (with some assistance from newly-educated pairs of eyes) found much fascinating evidence of both tectonic and volcanic influence on Straitsmouth’s granites, and his companions came away with a much greater appreciation for the rock’s ancient origin and more recent active history. Among the discoveries: dark bits of even more ancient rock (xenoliths), carried to what is now the surface in slow moving eruptions of magma



Dr. Ross demonstrates the sudden shocks that create pseudotachylite.

(dikes) into cracks and faults; bluish, glassy streaks on the surface, indicating extreme heat generated by sudden shifts along faults due to ancient earthquake activity (pseudotachylite); fractured rock between granite blocks that shows the extreme forces of block movement along a fault (extension gashes).

All this and more are now recorded by Dr. Ross in a fascinating report composed, with maps and photographs and much useful basic geology instruction, and furnished to the association. It will be available this coming season in the Straitsmouth museum, with extra copies for visitors to borrow for guiding their own field trips to geological points of interest on the island.

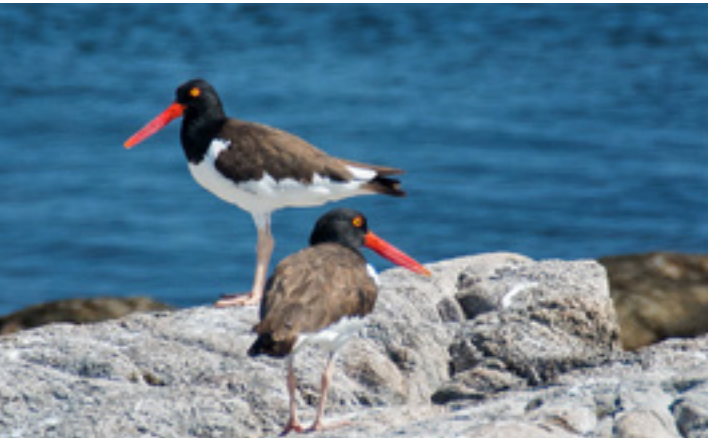
Maybe Dr. Ross can be lured out to Thacher this season!

Harry Newell

Extension gashes along an east shore fault



This map was created last summer by Flavio Sutti, Mass Audubon’s Senior Conservation Ecologist, to identify various flora and to determine key areas to establish songbird nesting areas and remove invasive plant species.



American Oystercatcher (Haematopus palliatus)

Winter’s Grip

Continued from Page 2

A fascinating array of wildlife is drawn to these productive waters and to the islands each year. Mass Audubon Society estimates over 180 bird species visit the islands annually. Most notably the islands are home to Herring and Great Black-backed gulls and more recently Canada geese. In addition, the islands serve as an ideal stopover for songbirds and other migrants to rest and feed during their seasonal migration along the Atlantic flyway. The migratory birds travel, north and south, along the flyway drawn by the sources of food, the breeding grounds and overwintering locations in the south.

Thacher and Straitsmouth islands are positioned

uniquely within this rich ecosystem to serve as an ideal landfall for these migrants during their long journeys. The nearby salt marshes, such as the Great Marsh, also serve as an ideal habitat offering food and protection. In addition to the wide variety of migrant birds that visit the islands, visitors will often see harbor and gray seals, loons, grebes, Northern Gannets and cormorants in the islands’ surrounding waters. Lush kelp beds that blanket the subtidal zone in the islands’ nearshore waters provide valuable habitat and a rich source of food for many of the marine species.

Recognized for centuries as rich fishing grounds of the iconic Atlantic cod, halibut, and haddock, the Gulf of Maine fisheries have also sustained many coastal communities from Maine to

Mass Audubon *Continued from Page 1*

Although the island formerly hosted a colony of Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls, this colony disappeared in early 2000, possibly due to the increased vegetation on the island. However, the dense shrubby vegetation that covers most of the island appears to be a great nesting site for many songbirds and may be a potential nesting habitat for Brown Thrasher, a declining species in Massachusetts. Not much is known about birds’ use of the island during spring and fall migrations, but we are looking forward to learning more.

This upcoming summer, we are collaborating with TIA on a series of ecological management activities to improve habitat for wildlife. We plan to remove some of the invasive plant species on the island, increase native plants, especially species that attract pollinators, and adjust the trail system to prevent disturbance to future nesting Ospreys.

We can use your help. If you are visiting the island, we would love your help documenting your natural history observations using two easy-to-use apps: iNaturalist and eBird. When reporting observations of plants and animals on the island to iNaturalist, information is shared to the Mass Audubon’s Straitsmouth Island iNaturalist project that everybody can access at inaturalist.org. When birding on Straitsmouth, please report your observations in eBird. If you do, please share your list with ebird@massaudubon.org so that we can quickly expand the bird list for the island.

We are looking forward to seeing you on Straitsmouth Island this summer.

Flavio Sutti
(Mass Audubon’s Senior Conservation Ecologist)

Amy Weidensaul
(Mass Audubon’s Coastal Senior Regional Director)



Atlantic Cod (Gadus morhua)

Massachusetts. Nearly four centuries ago Gloucester was established by a colonial charter issued in order to profit from cod fishing.

As the snow and ice melt and spring rains fall, the river flows increase, carrying nutrients into the Gulf of Maine. As the season progresses the combination of increasing sunlight, gradual warming, and the flow of nutrients combine to drive the productivity within the ecosystem — first with phytoplankton (microscopic plants) and then with the many marine animals that are sustained by these rich waters. TIA is so fortunate to be spectators and stewards of this rich marine ecosystem as we strive to preserve Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands.

Margaret (Peg) Brady

Sunset Lighthouse Cruise
will feature two trips in 2022

Our popular Sunset Lighthouse Cruise returns in the summer of 2022.

After missing the 2020 and 2021 cruises (oh, that pandemic) and with vaccines/boosters in place, TIA is eager to return to the sunset seas around Cape Ann.

This is a fundraising event for Thacher Island Association. We are the 501c3 non profit dedicated to making Straitsmouth and Thacher Islands, accessible and maintaining the 15 or so buildings on the islands. This is accomplished by a large, skilled volunteer work crew and donations from members like you.

This year, the cruise route departs from Gloucester Harbor, sailing around Cape Ann counterclockwise to the Annisquam River as it meets Ipswich Bay,

where we come about for our return to Gloucester Harbor. The boat will approach all six Cape Ann lighthouses from Ten Pound to Annisquam. Other sites include the Londoner Reef, the Dry Salvages, Avery Ledge, and the old breakwater of Sandy Bay.

Cruises are scheduled for Tuesday, July 5 (alternate date Thursday, July 7) and Tuesday, August 2 (alternate date Thursday, August 4). Details will become available in many places: our website (www.thacherisland.org), email communications to members, print article in The Gloucester Times, socially on Good Morning Gloucester, and flyers posted in shops around Cape Ann.

Tickets go on sale Monday, April 10, 2022, using Eventbrite (www.eventbrite.com). Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera for instant access.

We look forward to seeing you on the boat. This is a very popular cruise and tickets go quickly.

This event will have corporate sponsors, companies

committed to our communities on Cape Ann. Please show your appreciation by supporting these businesses. A list of sponsors will become public by early June 2022.

Bring your own food and make a picnic on board or buy light food and drinks at the galley on board the boat. Oh, and please no pets.

Sunset Lighthouse
Cruise 2022
Tuesday, July 5



Sunset Lighthouse
Cruise 2022
Tuesday, August 2



The Thacher Island Association boat launches make the islands accessible to everyone. We hope you will join us.

2022 Launch Access to
Straitsmouth & Thacher Islands

Our boats, Thacher Island I and Thacher Island II will be back in the water with our able captains and crew beginning Tuesday, June 7, 2022. We expect to transport more than 900 visitors to the islands during the summer season.

Launch trips are available to Straitsmouth Island on Tuesdays and to Thacher Island on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Tickets, which become available on May 1, 2022, can be purchased using Eventbrite (www.eventbrite.com). Scan the QR Code in this article with your smartphone camera for instant access. For those experiencing problems with Eventbrite you may call 617-599-2590 for assistance.

There are some important changes
for the 2022 season:

Pandemic precautions: Proof of vaccination will be required for all passengers before they board the boats. Masks must be worn on the launch, in buildings, or within six feet of others.

Fare increase: The "Adult Non-member" round trip boat fare has increased to \$35. However, a Thacher Island Association individual membership (\$30) entitles the holder to 2 free launch seats or trips, and a family membership (\$60) entitles the holder to 4 seats per season, as long as the reservations are available. Because reservations fill quickly, the most cost-effective way to see the islands is to join or renew Thacher Island Association memberships and make reservations as early in the season as possible.

Tuesday Boat to
Straitsmouth Island
2022



Wednesday Boat to
Thacher Island 2022



Saturday Boat to
Thacher Island 2022



Recruitment is underway
for docents and boat crew.
The former serve visitors to
Thacher and Straitsmouth,
while the latter assist on the
launches that transport visitors
to and from the islands.

DOCENTS

Supervised by Joanne Sullivan, docents on Thacher alternate between two posts: the Boat House, where they greet visitors and manage sales from the gift cart, and the lamp room of the South Tower, where they monitor tourist safety and answer questions about the island.

Two docents are required every Wednesday and Saturday from early June through August and

are asked to work at least one Saturday a month. Ideally, the two docents change posts halfway through the day, so volunteers need to climb to the top of the lighthouse at least once during the day and be able to use the credit card reader on the island phone. Additionally, docents may be asked to help open the keeper houses in the spring and close them at the end of the season. Coordinator Sullivan is seeking volunteers who combine competence and reliability with enthusiasm for Thacher and the ability to engage with visitors.

This year, for the first time, docents will be assigned to Straitsmouth Island. One is required on Tuesdays from early June through August to greet visitors arriving by launch. A second docent may be needed at the other end of the island to answer questions about the lighthouse and museum and to manage gift sales. While these docents will not be required to climb the lighthouse stairs, there is a steep set of steps from the ramp to the top of the bluff and an

approximately one-third-mile walk over a grassy path to the museum and lighthouse.

To volunteer, contact Joanne Sullivan at jsull9012@hotmail.com.

BOAT CREW

The island launches, which take visitors to Straitsmouth on Tuesdays and to Thacher on Wednesdays and Saturdays, require two crew members each to assist the licensed captains. Prior experience is not necessary, but crew members need to be in good physical condition and have the endurance to be on the water all day.

If interested, contact boat crew coordinator Bob Krause at 508-414-0090 or bt.krause@comcast.net.

Volunteer Opportunities
on Land and Sea



Betsy Eck and Joanne Sullivan wait for visitors in the lamp room of Thacher Island's South Tower.



Karen Wise and Maggie Debbie flank the Thacher Island map kiosk and gift cart



Sadie Green mans the bow of the Thacher Island launch, while keepers Gail Zeman, left, and Grace Teborek, right, wait to disembark.



Boat crew work is more fun than work.

NEWSLETTER CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

The first issue of this newsletter was a single page sent in May 1983 by Thacher Island Town Committee chairman Ned Cameron. The letter reported that keepers Harold and Sylvia Whitaker had already spent six weeks on Thacher; Chip Norton had been engaged to perform maintenance of trails and structures; students from The School for Field Studies were planning to arrive in a 65-foot schooner and use the island for tabulating their whale-watching results; there was a tentative plan to film a “Rockport Students Day” program on the island for cable television; and there was to be a clambake for association members.

Cameron’s successor, George Fisher, published a four-page newsletter from 1991 to 1999, when Paul St. Germain, then vice president of the island association, increased the number of pages to eight and introduced color by publishing the October issue on orange paper.

When Mark Drury, of Drury Creative, got involved in 2001, he prescribed a more consistent layout and look for the issues. Mary Bennett and Dottie Carroll contributed articles, but St. Germain, by then president of the association, continued to write and produce the twice-yearly issues. A four-color edition on matte paper was introduced in 2009.

Sharron Cohen began serving as co-writer and photographer in 2012, and in 2014 the newsletter grew again, into the glossy 12-page publication that association members receive today. Copy editor Linda Berard joined the team of St. Germain, Drury, and Cohen in 2018 to provide a greater degree of quality control.

Now the newsletter is changing again.

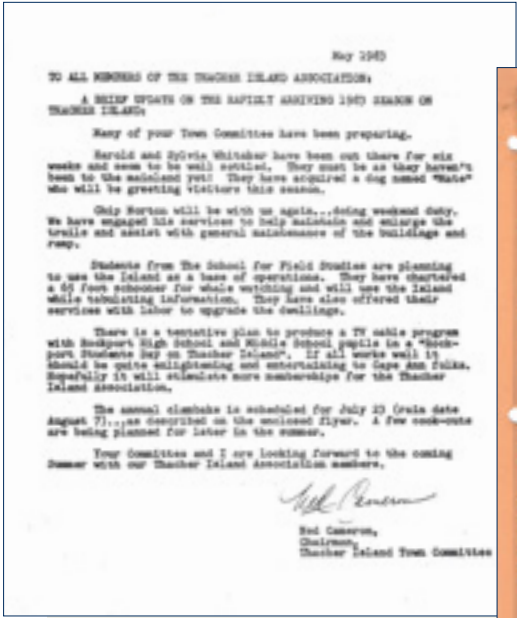
The most visible change in this issue is the presence of bylines on feature articles. Credits on individual photos will come later as the staff perfects the layout logistics.

The most profound difference in the newsletter is less visible. After decades of decision making by a few people with specific tasks, the newsletter will now be produced in a wider, more collaborative way. A newly formed advisory board currently includes nine members: association board members Paul St. Germain, Bill Whiting, and Kristy Rudel; town committee member George Langer; and keepers/work crew members Norm Delisle, Harry Newell, Sharron Cohen, Linda Berard, and Peg Brady.

Members will be responsible for writing or acquiring at least one article per issue, and all will collaborate in story planning and proofreading. Every issue will have a point person for story management, layout, and photos, each with an aide from the newsletter board who will assume the role of that task’s point person for the following issue. In this way, a broader group of people will gain experience in all aspects of planning, writing, and producing the newsletters.

What used to be a solo undertaking has become that of a group, but the newsletter staff remains on the same path, motivated by love of the Rockport islands and concern for their futures. Please bear with us while we bring that effort into greater harmony. And please let us know what you find interesting or useful in this and future newsletters. Contact us at info@thacherisland.org

Sharron Cohen



The first newsletter, spring of 1983



First taste of color, October 1999



November 2011



Time to get your
Summertime Gear. As always...
free shipping



Colorful Keeper Hats - Shows off the Thacher Island Twin Lights logo, Nautical Red, Faded Blue, Khaki and Graphite, adjustable, 100% cotton, washable, \$24.00



Denim Keeper Shirt - This 100% cotton, soft denim shirt is a key item to own. It proudly shows off the Thacher Island Twin Lights embroidery.

Comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$39.50

PLEASE GO TO OUR WEB SITE WWW.THACHERISLAND.ORG FOR MORE ITEMS, CLICK ON THE SHOP MENU



Thacher Island Long Sleeve Panorama T-shirt, Midnight Navy, 100% cotton. comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$29.50



Thacher Island Long Sleeve Panorama T-shirt, White, 100% cotton, comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$29.50



Thacher Island Short Sleeve Panorama T-Shirt, Blue, 100% cotton, comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$24.50



Straitsmouth Island Short Sleeve T-shirt with graphic of the island logo front and back, Mist, 100% cotton, comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$24.50



Straitsmouth Island Short Sleeve Panorama T-Shirt, White, 100% cotton, comes in S, M, L, XL, 2XL, \$24.50



Thacher Island Association
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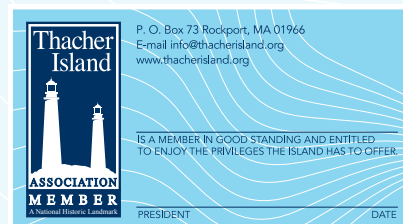
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IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

We depend on Membership Dues and Donations to help fund our vital mission of preserving and promoting public access to Thacher and Straitsmouth Islands. Please check the address label on this newsletter to see if your membership is due to be renewed. Renewing is easy! Simply return the attached reply envelope with your check or credit card information. Or if you prefer, renew online at www.thacherisland.org/join-us. If you'd prefer not to worry about annual renewals ever again, perhaps consider becoming a Life Member.

Thank you for your support.



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