

Thacher Island Association

P.O. BOX 73

ROCKPORT, MASS. 01966

Thacher Island Newsletter

February 1992

STORM DAMAGE UPDATE

In the Fall Newsletter we mentioned a large boulder alongside the boat ramp that was no longer to be seen. Well, it has now been found. You may discover it for yourself at the foot of the ramp by attempting to land the boat at dead low tide, just as much of a nuisance as ever.

On a more positive note however, the Coast Guard made good on their promise to make restoring power to the Island a high priority, and sent a cable ship during the third week of November which spent about two and one-half days repairing the power cable to the island. In the meantime, a work party of volunteers led by Armand Desharnais and John Bennett travelled to the Island on November sixteenth to carry out more damage assessment and to try to get the emergency generator in the whistlehouse operational. This was successfully accomplished, with the generator moved back onto its pad and the fuel tank restored to an upright position. The generator appears to have successfully weathered its salt water bath, although it does need some engine tune-up work which is now being scheduled.

With the return of power to the island, and with the generator operational, Armand and Betty were able to return to the Island for the remainder of their normal winter stay, and to begin the job of storm clean-up. With the replacement of a damaged phase converter, the boat winch has been placed back into operation.

Although the boathouse roof was badly wracked by the collapse of the north wall of the boathouse, it seemed to be still structur-

ally sound, and so on December twelfth a work party of volunteers including Armand and Betty Desharnais, George and Dottie Carroll, Ned Cameron, Ray Parsons, John Bennett, Dan Karr, Syd Wedmore, Seth Cutter, Bob Brown, Jim Runkle and George Fisher went to the Island along with several boatloads of scaffolding, jacks, come-alongs and lumber with the intent of raising the roof. Just so all the amateurs did not get into *too* much trouble, George Hobbs and two of his carpenters, Ken Holmes and Dave Parsons also accompanied the group. By the end of the day, the roof was sitting plumb and true on scaffolding, awaiting the rebuilding of its supporting walls. As this newsletter is being written, Armand has completed studding the walls and sheathing them in plywood, so the boathouse is once again intact and usable. Replacement overhead doors have been ordered, and so by summertime the boathouse should be "good as new". Any volunteer painters out there for when the weather warms up?

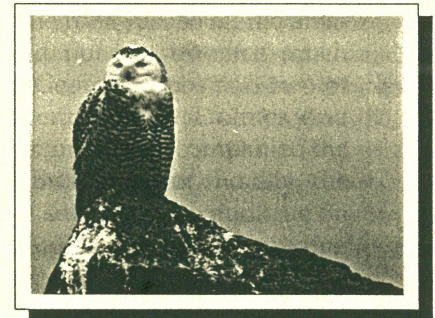
Armand and Betty have also removed the loose brickwork hanging on the east wall of the whistlehouse, and have studded up that wall as a temporary measure to ensure the stability of the roof and to protect the generator from further exposure to the weather. Armand has tried closing in the building with polyethylene, but the winter gales have done a number on that form of closure, so temporary plywood may be the next step.

We will continue to keep you informed about progress in the Spring Newsletter. Δ

Winter Wildlife

The keepers have reported that during the past several winters, two snowy owls have generally taken up residence on the Island, subdividing it into two hunting territories, a northern half and a southern half.

This was emphatically confirmed to the group of volunteers on November sixteenth when an immature female showed up and allowed several of the party to approach closely enough for a clear photographic record to be made. Δ



Snowy Owl



Boathouse Repair



Sincerely yours,

George Fisher

President

Thacher Island Association

"Ned" Cameron

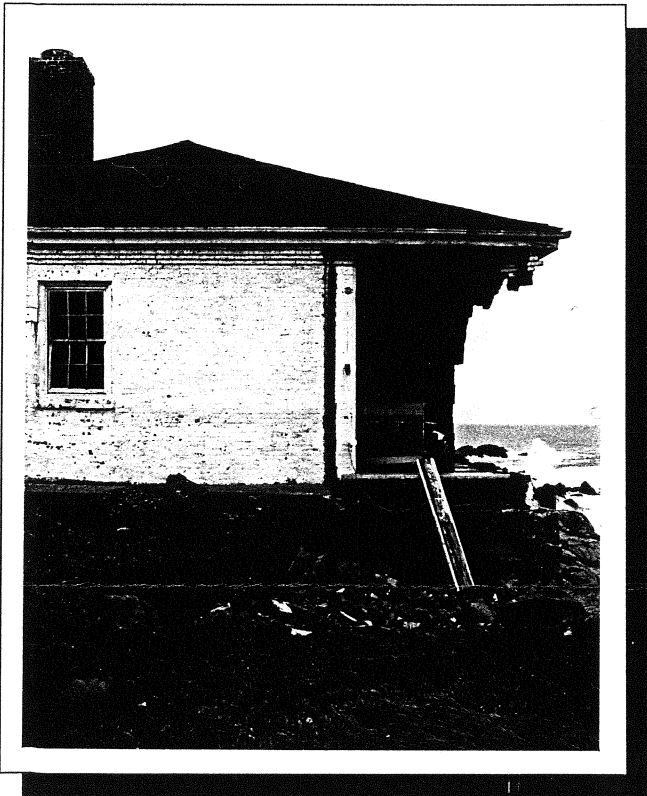
Chairman

Thacher Island Committee

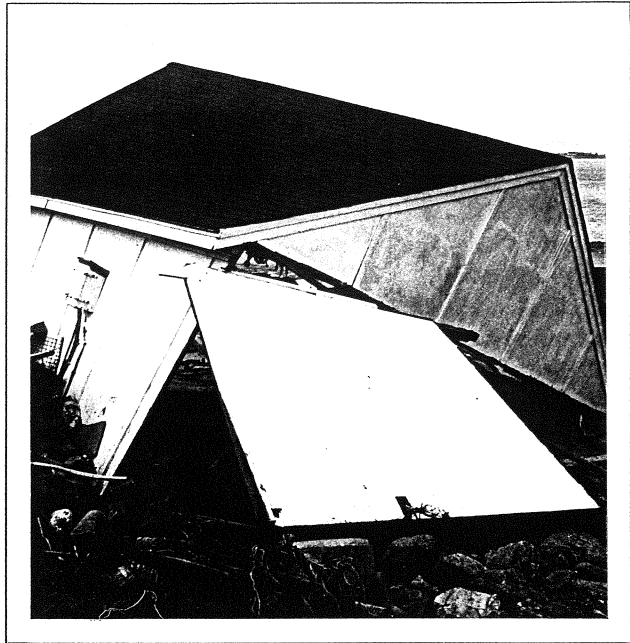
tors will become fully trained and qualified. (Some of them are already fully licensed of course.)

In September, the assistance of Seaside Glass and Mirror, Inc. was retained to remove all the old and weathered caulking at the north tower lantern and to reseal the glazing in an attempt to halt the leakage of water that was beginning to corrode some iron inside the lantern and wick room again. This work seemed to be doing the trick, at least before the great storm. This work was paid for by US Fish and Wildlife, who also unveiled plans for a new entry ramp and stair at the north tower that should make access easier and safer. They are planning to bid this work this fall, and begin the work immediately, weather permitting, although spring may benow more likely for a construction start.

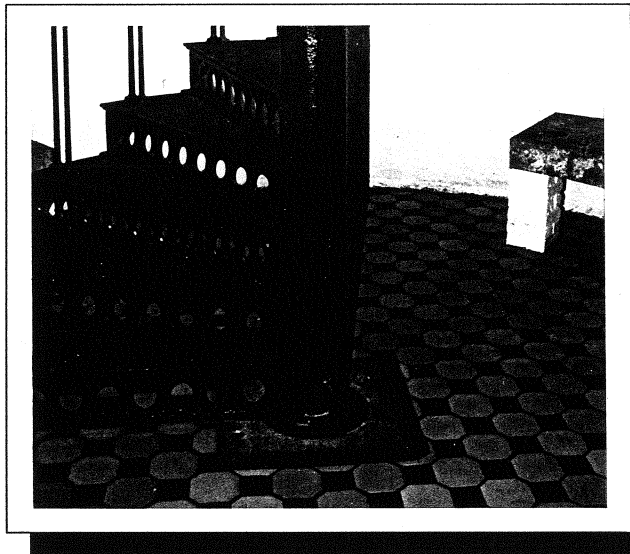
Finally, as part of a commitment to Fish and Wildlife, the tile work was installed at the base of the north tower, a tan octagonal tile and a square blue tile matching closely the original 1860's tile imported from England. The installation looks terrific, very nineteenth century, and well worth doing. Δ



Whistlehouse Damage



Boathouse Damage



North Tower Tilework

With the holidays soon to be upon us we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone all the joys of the season.....along with a happy, healthy, productive and storm free 1992.

Sincerely yours,

George Fisher
President
Thacher Island Association

"Ned" Cameron
Chairman
Thacher Island Committee

