

Thacher Island Association

P.O. BOX 73

ROCKPORT, MASS. 01966

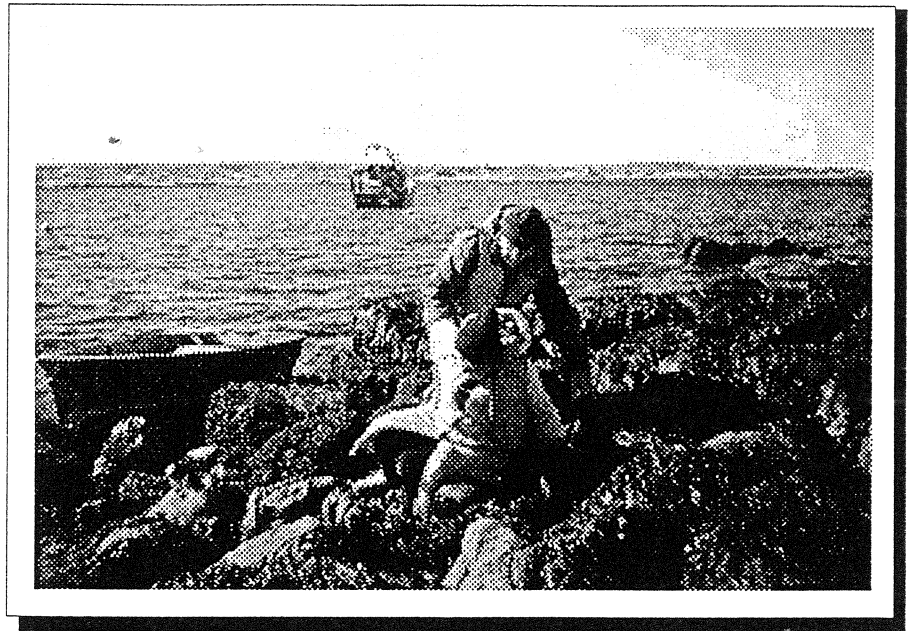
Thacher Island Newsletter

April 1996

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORT

The greatest area of concern is the restoration of the island landing ramp which was destroyed, and swept away, in a winter storm. The weather has been so unfriendly this winter that it was mid-March before anyone could venture out for any type of damage inspection. George and Dottie Carroll, along with two other volunteers, made a very hazardous trip over the slippery rocks and seaweed, (by foot, of course), through the area where the ramp used to be. In taking measurements, it was discovered that 80 feet of the ramp is gone - more than three quarters of it. While on the island, an inspection was made of the grounds and buildings and apparently there has been no further damage. At the present time, there is absolutely no way any boat, small or otherwise, can get onto the island. The volunteers who did get there had to wade through knee-deep water to get onto the rocks - not a recommended method.

The Town Committee continues to make as many contacts as possible with State, Federal, and private agencies. The Coast Guard has made suggestions and furnished pictures, but there has been no further news from Washington to indicate whether or not there is any interest in rebuilding for us. An engineering firm has agreed to do a preliminary evaluation, but so far no plans have been made to transport an engineer to the site. We had hoped by now to have an expert's estimate of the cost after an inspection. Lacking this, we have discussed it with several knowledgeable people who agreed that \$250,000 would be a reasonable figure to aim for. This would be

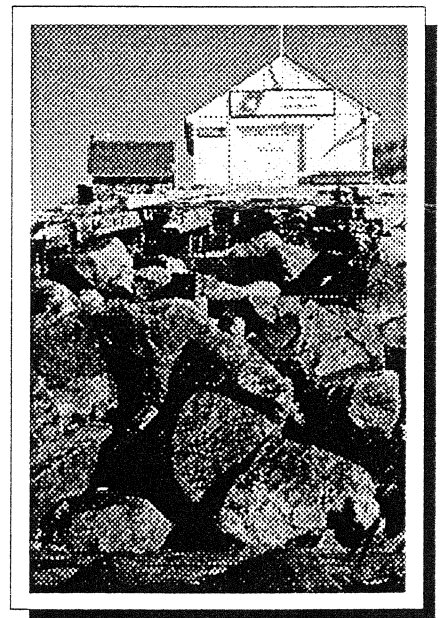


Struggling ashore over the rocks.

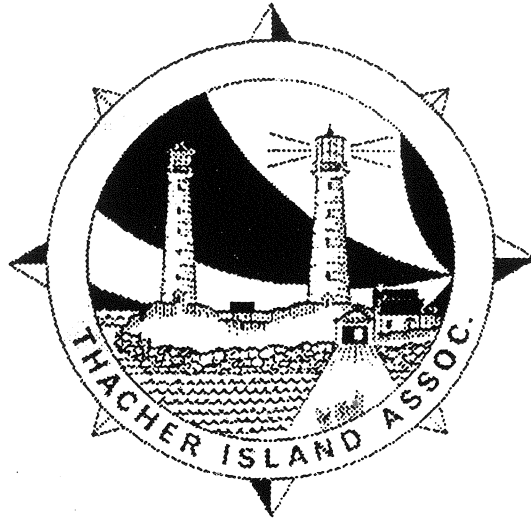
nearly doubling the 1983 estimate of \$130,000. An adequate protective rip-rap breakwater would probably push the cost even higher.

The Committee, along with the Thacher Island Association, is still seeking innovative ideas for fund-raising. At this point, ideas and/or donations of any amount will be gratefully received. Donations earmarked for RAMP RESTORATION are 100% tax-deductible. When things really start to happen, we will be sending out progress reports. Lets all work together for the restoration of the landing ramp so that folks may once again enjoy the uniqueness of our own historical Thacher Island. Δ

John and Mary Bennett, Co-chairmen,
Thacher Island Town Committee



The few remains of the boat ramp.



THACHER ISLAND ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING

MONDAY JUNE 24, 1996
7:30 PM

ROCKPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

- ELECTION OF OFFICERS
- REPORTS •NEW BUSINESS

PLEASE ATTEND

Island Activities

Our first tourist launch of the new season was scheduled for June 3, but due to weather conditions, we did not begin until June 10. Our final trip was planned for October 1. We did have to cancel ten trips due to weather.

Visitors to the Island numbered 912 who registered, with 475 being transported by the launch.

The total donations of monies taken in on the Island came to \$3,338.25, which was accumulated from camping, apartment use, gift shop and contributions for the maintenance of the Island.

We had several educational programs on the Island, including students from the Beeman School in Gloucester, Coastal Discoveries, Ham Radio Operators, and Project Adventure.

We also have had private picnics and various groups from churches and other organizations.

John Beebe, son of Keepers Nancy and Merrell Beebe, became engaged this summer at the top of the North Tower, on August 3. They set their wedding date for this fall, in Florida. *(I guess you could say they have high hopes for their marriage.....ed.)*

The Thacher Island launch was entered in the Lighted Boat Parade at the Sandy Bay Yacht Club this summer. The theme, as suggested by a Committee member, was "Making A Clean Sweep". With a crew of three and ten Association passengers, we won the prize for the Most Original. This was a "first" for the launch and it was certainly an evening of fun and laughter, especially since, for that one evening, the launch was turned into a unique sailboat!

"Cookie", the former island dog mascot, and now adopted by George and Barbara Fisher, took a day off from just lazing around in the shade to spend a few hours back home again on her peaceful island. Not only did she enjoy the familiar boat ride over to the Island, but she romped around over the rocky

The Keeper's Log

Vi and John Materkowski, of Minnesota, started us off in May and June to prepare the Island for summer visitors.

Nancy and Merrell Beebe, from Florida, took over July and August to handle the bulk of the tourists.

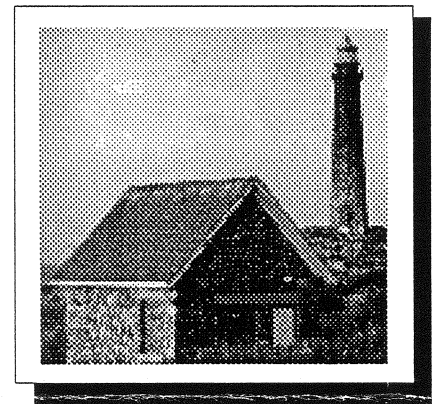
Kathy and Andy Heinze, from Andover and West Gloucester, who were trained by the Beebe's, spent two weeks in September with further training on their own.

Ann Hernandez and Alan Tomaska, from Illinois, returned once again for part of September and October.

All keepers have done a great job in utilizing their different talents in order to help the Town of Rockport save the island from vandalism and decay. There are several keeper applications on file for the future, if needed. For the present, 1996 seems to be taken care of, as far as the keepers are concerned. Δ

shoreline, chasing the seagulls, roamed the familiar trails, visited the North Tower, and, of course, swam and swam off the end of the ramp. Her masters for the day were George and Dottie Carroll who had spent six summers with her when they were the Island keepers. They said that, after having been off the island for the past four years, it was remarkable how much Cookie remembered of her former daily routine. Folks sometimes thrive on memories....maybe animals do too.

As is mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, the "tourist trips" will be discontinued next season. Bearing in mind that the Association will be concentrating on Member Activities, suggestions are needed. One of the proposed events could be member participation in some of the maintenance activities...which could be scheduled once a month on a weekend day...on the Island. If this is of interest, we would like to hear from you. Remember, the Island belongs to it's Membership! Δ



The Stone House where the plaques are located.



Sincerely yours,

George Fisher
President

Thacher Island Association

John and Mary Bennett
Co-chairmen
Thacher Island Committee

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