

The Thacher Island News

Volume 4, Issue 1

March 2004

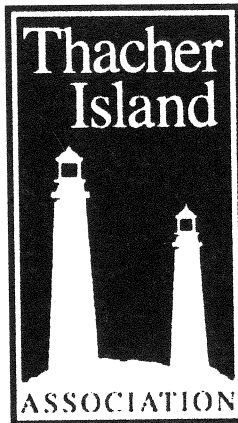
Electric Power Cable is Lost Again.

In late December the North tower light went out again. Syd Wedmore and Bob Smith journeyed out to the island via the Rockport Harbor Masters launch captained by Rosemary Lesch and Scott Story and discovered once again that it was the cable and not just a blown light bulb. As you may recall we lost the cable in March and were able to repair it at minimal cost with a host of volunteers.

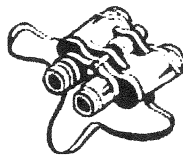
Bill Lee Captain of the *Ocean Reporter* and Dave Stillman, scuba diver and owner of Cape Ann Divers, have called and volunteered their services once again. We plan to examine the cable and find the fault in the spring. Bill has taken to calling our group of volunteers "The Thacher Island Cable Company".

The U.S. Coast Guard has been contacted to see if they may have surplus cable that they can give us for these repairs. Currently there are at least 6 splices in it and probably more to come. It has been estimated that it would cost in excess of \$150,000 to replace the 6000 foot cable. In the past the Coast Guard inspected and repaired the cable annually. Unfortunately the Coast Guard no longer maintains the cable since it turned the island over to the Town of Rockport in 2001.

The Thacher Island Association has formed a sub committee to look at renewable energy sources for the island. We feel that the cable is only going to get worse and we should focus on an alternative energy system that is more reliable and which will require minimum maintenance. Options include solar power, wind power and possibly geothermal sources. We hope to develop a plan this summer to improve the electrical system. If you have any expertise in this area please call us.



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Written and Edited by
Paul St.Germain

A New Electric Car for the Island

We were recently the recipient of a brand new Gem car long bed utility electric vehicle. This vehicle was donated by the Christopher Cutler Rich Memorial Trust. It's retail value is over \$9000 and is made by Global Electric Motorcars, LLC a subsidiary of Daimler Chrysler Corporation. It has a top speed of 25 miles per hour and a payload weight limit of 1050 lbs. This will come in very handy for the volunteer keepers who put on many miles during their stay. Now hopefully some of these miles will be by electric car instead of on foot. We plan to use it to haul materials from the boat ramp as well as transportation of equipment around the island. We thank the Christopher Cutler Rich Trust for this much needed equipment. A special thanks to Peter Bergholtz for coordinating this donation.



Thacher Island is focus of National Cover Story

The winter issue 2004 of *The Keeper's Log* a publication of the U.S. Lighthouse Society which is a non-profit Historical and Educational Organization, has published a comprehensive 12 page history on Thacher Island's Cape Ann Light Station. The article is a detailed chronology of the last operating twin lights in the nation and includes many old photos and drawings relevant to Cape Ann Light Station's role in the history of our country. The front cover includes a full color aerial photo of the island and the back cover a photo of the North tower. The Association has a limited supply of these magazines available for \$7.00 each post paid. Just write to:

Paul St.Germain, 74 Marmion Way, Rockport, MA 01966 for your copy.

New Grants Awarded

We have been the recipient of 3 more grants since November of 2003. On November 18 we were notified that the National Trust for Historic Preservation had awarded us a grant of \$5000 to be used for architectural planning for the Principal keeper house. In January the Thacher Island Association, received a grant from the Lynch Foundation in the amount of \$20,000 for the restoration of the Principal Keeper house. In addition the Lynch Foundation has offered an incentive Challenge Grant in the amount of \$20,000 if the Association is able to accomplish its goal to raise the balance needed of \$210,000 before December 31, 2004. This project entails the restoration of the keeper's house to its original 1875 look and will provide living accommodations for the volunteer summer keepers, a visitor center, interpretive exhibit which will be open free of charge to the public. The exterior of the building including a new roof, clapboards and trim was completed this past summer and phase two work on the interior will begin in the spring of 2004. This is the first challenge grant we have ever received and we are excited about the possibility of raising the additional funds in order to capture this significant challenge grant money. We are also particularly proud of the fact that Peter Lynch, of Fidelity Investments fame, has enough confidence in the Association's abilities to invest in our preservation efforts in this way. The Foundation has given to over 200 charities over the past decade. It has also created inner city scholarship funds, as well as scholarships to several colleges and universities in the Boston area. Lynch Grants have been awarded to such historical entities as The House of Seven Gables, Plymouth Antiquarian Society, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Academy of Arts and Science and Mount Vernon, home of George Washington.

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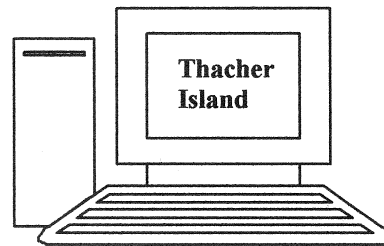
Peter Lynch and his wife Carolyn, who is President of the Foundation, reside in the North Shore community of Marblehead and have warm feelings for the area and its people.

In February we were notified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission that an additional matching grant of \$10,000 will be awarded to the Association. This is in addition to the \$25,000 grant awarded in April of 2003. We continue to seek out grant opportunities and if you know of any particular foundations please let us know.

Annual Meeting Date is Set for June 21st.

Once again the annual meeting of the Thacher Island Association is set to be held at the Rockport Community House at 58 Broadway in Rockport at 7:30 p.m.

All members are encouraged to attend. President Paul St.Germain will review the years accomplishments as well as discuss future plans. Refreshments will be served. Last year we had a terrific turnout and hope we can entice even more of you to attend. Mark your calendars for Monday June 21,2004 at 7:30 p.m.

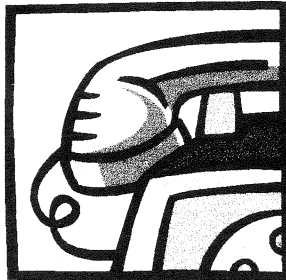


Thacher Island has been Googled!

For those of you who are familiar with the internet web site search engine Google you will be as surprised as we were when we typed in the search box "Thacher Island" We came up with over 11,000 sites that indicate some kind of connection to Thacher Island . These included women's shoes, miniature prints for sale, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Maria Bray* named after the wife of keeper Alexander Bray from 1864, even a memorial site to Ned Cameron, founder and former President of the Thacher Island Association.

Most interesting and exciting of all was that the very first listing was the Thacher Island Association web site. Give it a try its amazing how popular Thacher has become on the internet.

New Phone Number for Reservations for the Guest Apartment.



We have a new phone number to make reservations for the guest apartment, 617-599-2590. If you get a recording leave your message and someone will call you back within 24 hours. There has been an overwhelming response for reservations for the guest apartment in the Assistant Keeper house for this coming summer. The apartment is available from July 2nd through September 26. To date 9 of the 13 weekends have been reserved. We also have availabilities for week days as well. There is a two night minimum for all stays. Call soon to reserve your space.

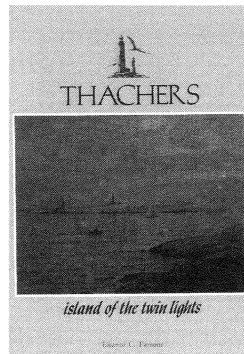


Thacher Island...An adventure with keeper Russell Grubb.

115 pgs. Soft cover, many b/w photos.

In December of 1980, Russell Grubb became the first volunteer civilian keeper at Cape Ann Light Station on Thacher Island. This is the story of the first 5 years that made him part of Thacher history.

\$8.00 incl. postage and handling.



Thachers.... island of the twin lights

149 pages with many b/w photos.

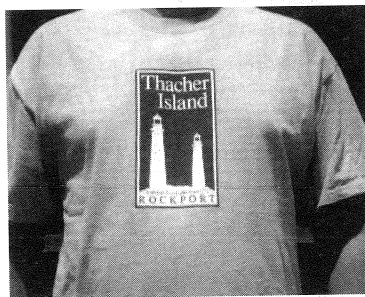
Book by Eleanor Parsons. The definitive book on the history of Thacher Island. Signed by author.

\$22.00 incl. postage and handling



Denim Keeper Shirt.

This 100% cotton soft denim shirt is a key item to own .It proudly shows off the new Thacher Island twin lights logo embroidered in dark blue. Comes in S,M,L,XL,2XL
\$40.00 incl. postage and handling.



Thacher T-shirt.

100% cotton in gray with dark blue TIA logo and the words "America's twin lights since 1771"

Sizes S,M,L,XL,2XL

\$20.00 incl. postage and handling



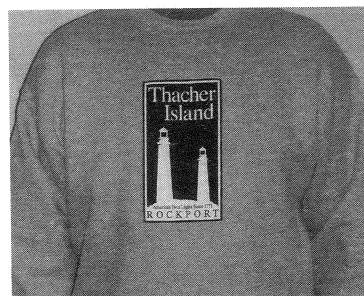
Twin Light Beverages T-shirt.

Full color reproduction of the original 1928 Twin Lights Beverages label. On a tan color shirt

100%cotton

Sizes M, L, XL.

\$20.00 incl. postage and handling



Thacher Sweatshirt.

Heavy weight 100% cotton same design as the T-shirt. Sizes S,M,L,XL,2XL

\$35.00 incl. postage and handling



NEW ITEM!

Full Color Aerial Photo of Thacher Island.

Taken by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Lots of detail taken from space satellite.

Size 15"x18" in tube. Looks great framed.

\$10.00 incl. postage and handling

All Proceeds go to our restoration efforts.

**To order make checks payable and send to:
Thacher Island Association
Box 73, Rockport MA 01966**

A Day in the Life of a Lighthouse Keeper's Wife.

Here is a letter we received recently from one of our members.

Dear Thacher Island Association:

Just a note to share a day in the life of a lighthouse keeper's wife on Thacher Island.

Mother's Day I received a model Coast Guard helicopter from my daughter. Funny she didn't give it to her father as he is such a Coastie, then I thought a minute and realized it was such an appropriate gift for Mother's Day.

My husband Richard was stationed on Thacher Island from November, 1960 to October, 1963. During this time we had two beautiful daughters Denise and Patricia. It was quite an exciting adventure. This is when I fell in love with the ocean, the beauty and the fury of Mother Nature at its best.

Well, on February 20, 1963 at 3:00 a.m. I woke up with labor pains. Couldn't be, because I was not due for another full month. By 4:00a.m. I knew and awoke Richard. He explained that there was a living gale outside and he could not get me off the island. I was fine until I heard that, especially since the birth of our daughter Denise was born four hours from the first sign eleven months earlier. I remembered that there was an article in this month's issue of Life Magazine on how to deliver a baby. I asked him to read it; well Richard was about to pass out at the thought of it. "I'll call Group Commander at the Gloucester Coast Guard Station" he replied. Commander Crowley assured him that he would have a Coast Guard helicopter out on the island at daybreak. Well, that was a relief.

Sure enough, at 6:00a.m. a helicopter landed on Thacher Island and air lifted me to Chelsea Naval Hospital. Dad and Denise were not authorized to come. That was OK because I was met by an ambulance, two fire engines and the Boston Globe, all with their lights flashing. All I could think was after all this hoopla I had caused was please dear God let me be dilating. In the emergency room they told me "Not for another month".

I said "what about the three minutes apart pains?"

The doctor said that could go on for another month, and we want you to stay in the hospital for the day. Talk about being embarrassed!! The morning edition of the Boston Globe was "Mother Fly's, Stork Doesn't-No harm done, father just had a small case of anxiety". Well. Thank God!! That afternoon Patricia was born 5lbs 8oz. A beautiful little girl. The evening edition of the Boston Globe was "Proving Father Knows Best". A day in the life of a lighthouse Keeper's wife

Very Truly Yours,
Lillian A. d'Entremont



Volunteer Rooms Needed.

This summer we are looking for people in the Gloucester / Rockport area to volunteer to put up a Thacher Island guest on an emergency basis. On a few occasions during the months of July, August and September the summer visitors who have reserved the guest apartment on the island have been unable to get out to the island due to the weather. We advise prospective guests to make backup arrangements especially if they are from out of town in case we are unable to land them on the island due to severe weather. Often times they are unable to secure a local inn or motel at the last minute. We are looking for a few volunteers to provide overnight emergency accommodations for these stranded guests. Friday nights are usually the time needed. Anyone interested in helping should call John Krenn at 978-546-3191 for details.

New Items for 2004

Thacher Island Official Mug.

White ceramic 11oz. with blue Thacher logo on both sides, shiny finish with large C handle.

\$6.00 each incl. postage & handling.



Thacher Striped Polo Shirt,

100% Cotton, White with Navy stripe on collar and sleeves and embroidered logo.

Available in Medium, Large, Extra Large.

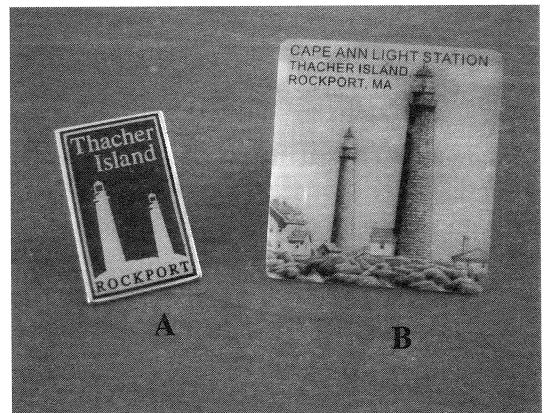
\$38.00 incl. postage & handling.



Thacher Island Pins

- A. Thacher Logo 1"
- B. Thacher Lights 1 1/4"

\$4.00 each incl. postage & handling



New Hats for 2004

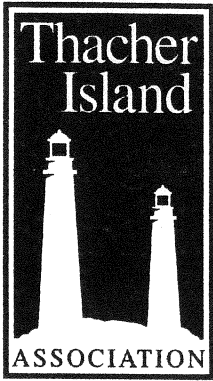
100% Cotton washable. Inside mesh lining for cool comfort. Pigment dyed, leather strap with antique brass buckle.

Available in new colors:

Khaki, Nautical Red, Yellow, Periwinkle Blue and Tangerine.

\$20.00 incl. postage & handling.





**Thacher Island Association
P.O.Box 73
Rockport MA. 01966
Annual Solicitation**

**For Membership Year 2004
(April 30, 2004-April 30, 2005)**

Standard	Individual or family, minimum of	\$25.00
Business or Corporate	Minimum of	\$50.00
Life	Individual or family, minimum of	\$250.00

Please make checks payable to Thacher Island Association
a 501(c) (3) organization donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law

Name _____

Address _____

City or Town _____ **State** _____ **ZipCode** _____

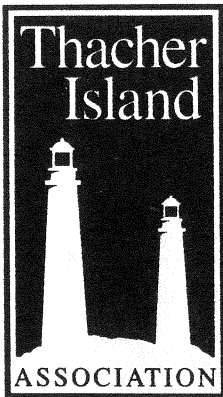
Comments or Suggestions:

Time to renew your membership

Its time to renew your membership. We have over 600 members today and want to keep each one of you on the list. Its more important than ever now that the island is reopened and ready to receive visitors. With your membership you receive a member card, a member window sticker for your car or boat as well as a ride to the Island on Saturday mornings plus issues of our newsletter 3 times a year.
We are beginning to do some major renovation work including the re-roofing of the Principal Keeper's dwelling at a cost of over \$400,000. Your assistance is needed to continue our efforts to save and restore this National Historic Landmark. Please use the enclosed form to renew today.

Thacher Island Association
Box 73
Rockport, MA 01966

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Rockport, MA.
Permit No. 19



Web: www.thacherisland.org
E-Mail: info@thacherisland.org

Your 2004 Membership is Due see inside.

Keeper Information Wanted.

Your author is trying to gather information about the various keepers and their families who have lived on Thacher Island. The first keeper to live here was James Kirkwood in 1773. He was thought to be a Tory and was taken off the island in 1775 by the patriot militia from Gloucester. Since that time there have been over 100 keepers and assistants manning the island up through 1945. The U.S. Coast Guard took over operation of all lighthouses in the United States in 1939 lived there until 1980. We are trying to build a library and data base of all keepers including Coast Guard personnel through the years. If anyone has information, photos or other facts or knows where we can find data about these keepers it would be appreciated if you could call, write or E-mail us about it. Thanks.



Photo Courtesy of Eleanor Parsons

Unknown trio on July 28, 1896 on back porch of Principal Keeper's house. Keepers at that time were James Allison, E.C. Hadley, Frank Hall and Albert Whitten.

Note North Tower and Keeper house in background.