

Kelly's Corner

BY JAN KELLY



THE A.L.F., THE AMERICAN LIGHTHOUSE FEDERATION maintains 13 lighthouses in New England. Three of them are in Provincetown and the only location of the 13 where it is possible to stay overnight is

Provincetown's Race Point Light. Maintaining the keeper's house is constant work for any wooden building by the sea, but when it is a rental you have the added work of assuring the comfort and safety of others. A willing staff of volunteers performs this work. From

mid-April to May 1st the task of opening the building after a winter shut down parallels the work happening on Commercial Street. "Fix up, Paint up, Clean up, Open up." This year the project branched out and invited high school volunteers to join the crew. Paul Mendes, who is the house manager, read of some students who volunteered for Habitat for Humanity. Paul thought, "Well, if they pounded nails for them, maybe they'd be interested in helping at the lighthouse? So I went to John Janlon at the school and we put up a notice for volunteers. Ten kids signed up. They're great workers and they're learning a lot. They even came on their vacation week." The ten students who signed up are: Adam Hobbs, Derek Menengas, Zach Luster, Jessie Silva, Jessica Morgan, Ross Silva, Jake Morris, Dorothy Hitchcock, Chris de Sousa, and Mario Kennedy.

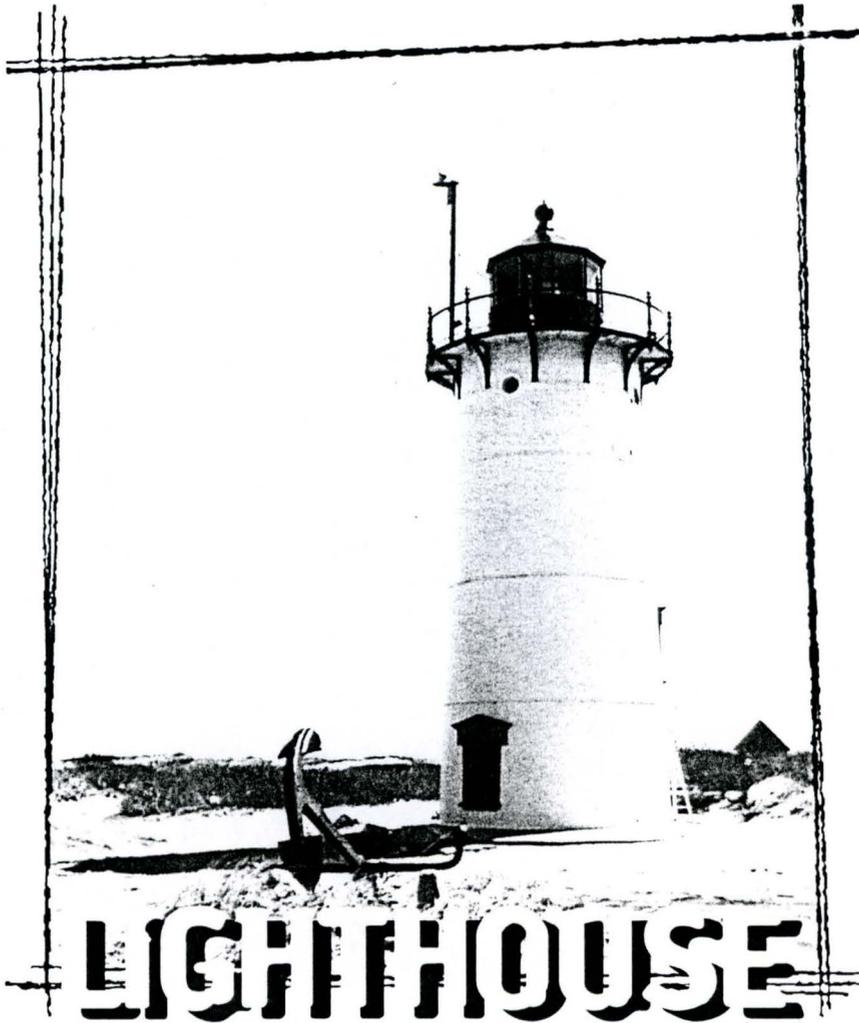
The big and long-overdue project that the students tackled included cleaning out the basement and painting it in readiment for the solar controller, which will be housed there. The solar controller is a dream close to reality. They are hoping to finish the project by the

end of June. There has been an ongoing fundraiser through the winter. A mailing was the method and funds came in from Georgia to Canada. The Provincetown businesses have been generous—restaurants, real estate and retail shops helping them towards their goal. CCBOT paid for the solar brochure and Seaman's Savings Bank paid for the mailing and advertising. The goal is \$20,000 and \$16,000 has been raised to date.

The solar controller will replace the present generator that supplies the lighthouse with electricity for light and pumping water. The controller will ease the job of the keeper, a person who acts as landlord when the house is rented. As it stands, the current generator has to be run twice a day at least to pump water for showers, the flushing of toilets and water for kitchen use. All this water is salt (drinking water is carried in from town). Generators are noisy, need watching and logging after each use and can break down. Solar power will make all their lives easier.

But the mundane chores lay ahead of us and the veteran crew turned out, whatever their schedule and whatever the weather. This particular day it was 30 degrees. Besides our enthusiastic high school students, Jim Walker, Bill Fiske and Paul

Mendes, were Sidney Bamford, the Provincetown P.R. man. Also, Lorena and Franz Rosales who have their own painting businesses, "General Maintenance," gave up business hours to repaint ceilings and walls in need of correction after a long, cold, persistent winter. Danielle Glasbeek-Martinez prepared the lunch and I joined in where needed.



Having the lighthouse open again means so much to our lives. Jim Walker closed its doors in 1972. He was an electrician for the Coast Guard and he automatized Race Point Light that year. The Branco

portation along the beach to the lighthouse, a tour of the house and the light. All you have to do is show up at Race Point parking lot between 10am and 2pm and you will be greeted. While there, be sure to look out for whales, seals, gannets, laughing gulls, marsh hawks and turkey vultures. Don't miss the outing.

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Jessie Silva



family occupied the keeper's house to that date. They moved to Highland Light, but in 1973 Jim Walker automatized that light and the days of a keeper and his family living at and maintaining a lighthouse were of the past. Jim also wired the roof the monument from a telephone pole so that the Coast Guard could install an antenna at the top of the monument for radio communication.

Still the humble tasks. Jim repaired the generator then whoever wanted to stay overnight could. The fridges needed cleaning and checking (they are gas-run). A chandelier donated by the Lighthouse Depot in Wells, Maine was hung. It is in the shape of a lighthouse appropriately enough. Two gas grills had to be assembled. Land's End Marine donated one of them. So much is donated and we are grateful!

But the Lighthouse Federation gives back too. Helping Our Women, an organization dedicated to the needs of terminally ill and healing women, is given time to stay out in the lighthouse. A stay in the lighthouse on the remote edge of the cape is especially rejuvenating. The Council on Aging has also enjoyed the unique experience, many of them relatives who lived and worked at the light. They will visit again in the fall. Their lighthouse project is a cookbook, which will be coming out in May. *Friends of Race Point Lighthouse Cookbook* as it is called features all kinds of recipes and even includes tips on lighthouse living.

If you would like to visit this haven so sacred to many, you have a chance without obligation. On Sunday May 11th, which is Maritime Day, there will be an open house 10am to 2pm. You will have trans-

Race Point Light is open from May 1st to October 1st. The Keeper's House is available as a rental, partial or the complete house of three bedrooms, one and a half bath, full large kitchen and living room, porch and beach beyond for a reasonable fee. There is still space available. You can call Nikke at 508.487.9930 for reservations or you can e-mail at racepointlight-

Provincetown High School Volunteers



house@attbi.com. After your first stay here you may be back for work weeks!

Also, the lighthouse is in dire need another 4-wheel drive truck. Any dealers or owners of an appropriate vehicle who would like to donate to a worthy cause please contact Nikke at the above number. ■