Doubling Point Gets Lift

By Timothy Harrison



Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

A small crowd of supporters stood waiting in anticipation, the TV camera's were aimed, the newspaper photographers camera's were focused in, and then the moment came.

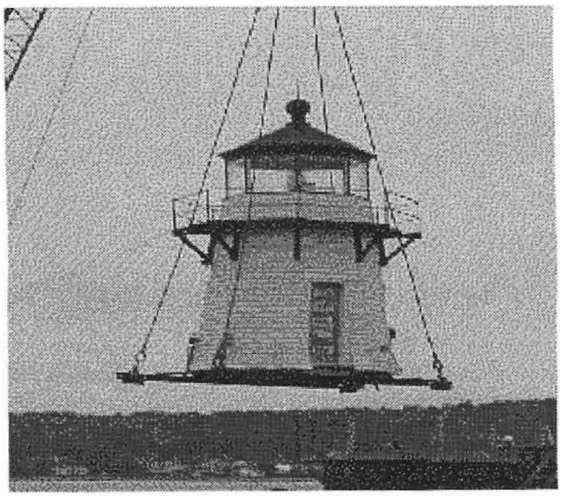
First is a twitch of the steel cables, then it was the roar of the cranes engine, and then a slight, but thankful sounding moan from the lighthouse, and suddenly the five-ton Doubling Point Lighthouse was airborne. As the crane lifted and then swung the old clapboard lighthouse from its foundation it dangled momentarily, for what seemed like forever, over the icy December waters of Maine's Kennebec River.

My heart skipped a beat, and so did a few others, as I shouted to the crane's crew in silence, "Stop dangling the lighthouse over the water! What if that steel cable snaps! What are you waiting for, get it on the barge!"



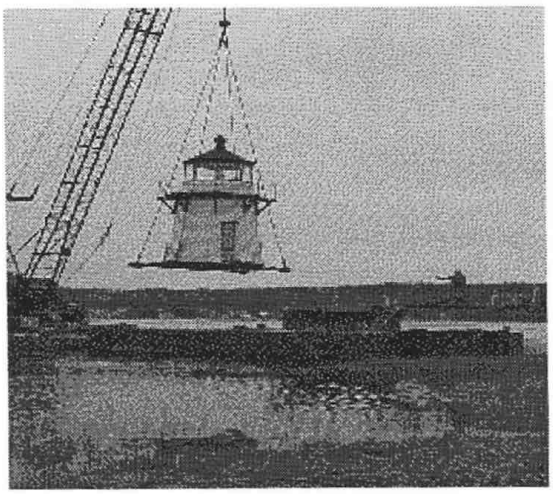
Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

I think to myself, "Wow! This is a pretty historic event for Maine." It may not be seem as impressive as the recent move of Cape Hatteras Light, or the previous move of Cape Cod's Highland Light, but I can assure you for a fact, it was an impressive sight to see.



Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

Under the Maine Lights Program, the 1898 lighthouse was given to the Friends of Doubling Point, a non-profit group dedicated to preserving the structure for the future. The Friends group immediately realized the structures foundation was in such bad shape, it might not last through another Maine winter and began an urgent fund raising effort to save the lighthouse from collapsing into the river. (Refer to July issue of Lighthouse Digest, page 9 story on Doubling Point.)

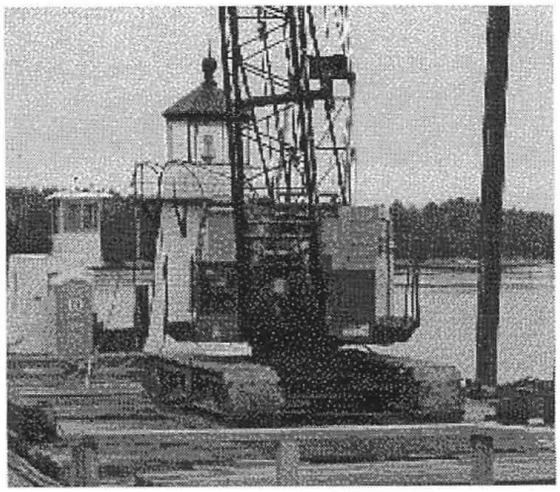


Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

Since August, the Friends group has raised $24,000 from donations sent in from all over the country. Jim Spencer, President of the Friend's group said, "I feel so grateful, the people who gave these donations have really made a difference, their efforts will save this lighthouse for the next century."

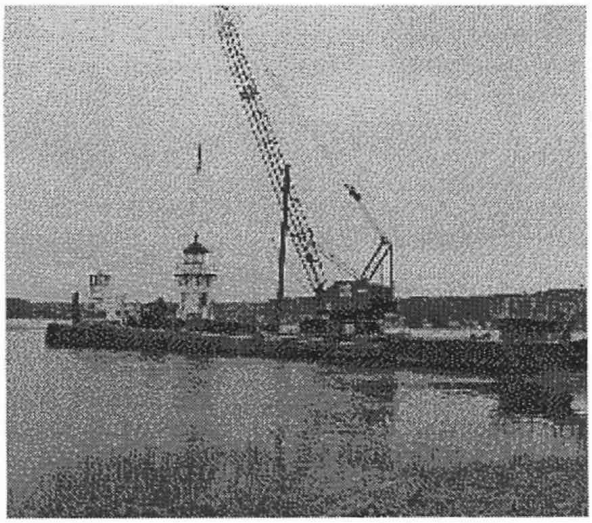
While the construction crew works to restore the foundation's base of granite blocks, the lighthouse will be stored at the construction company's facility down the river.

It was quite an amazing site to watch the barge with a lighthouse on it, go down the river to its temporary home in Woolwich Maine. As the lighthouse went under the drawbridge in Bath, Maine, motorists stepped out of their cars to watch the lighthouse pass.



Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

The Doubling Point Lighthouse was built as part of a series of range lights to guide vessels in and out of the Kennebec River. The other four light towers built at the same time are the Squirrel Point Lighthouse, Perkins Island Lighthouse and the Doubling Point Range Lights which has two towers. The Doubling Point Lighthouse is located on the west shore of Arrowsic, Maine at a point of land that forms one of two dangerous right angle bends in the river, a short distance on the opposite side of the Kennebec River from Bath Iron Works where U.S. Navy vessels are built.



Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

The foundation repairs are expected to be completed in a few weeks and the lighthouse will then be brought back to its home. In the meantime a temporary light on a pole has been affixed to the site.

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Donations are still needed for the

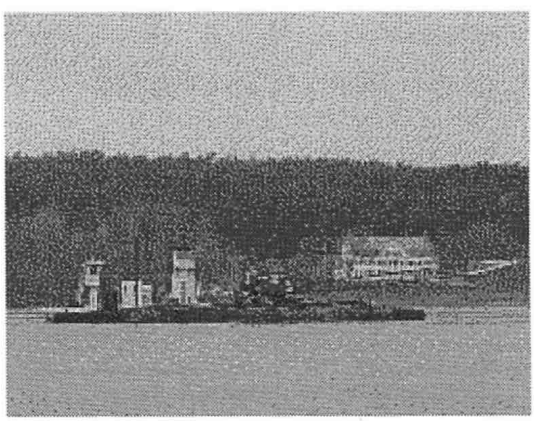
lighthouse and can be sent to:

Friends of Doubling Point Lighthouse

c/o Betsy Skillings-Coleman,

HCR 33 Box 61B

Arrowsic, Maine 04530.



Photos by Kathleen Finnegan

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