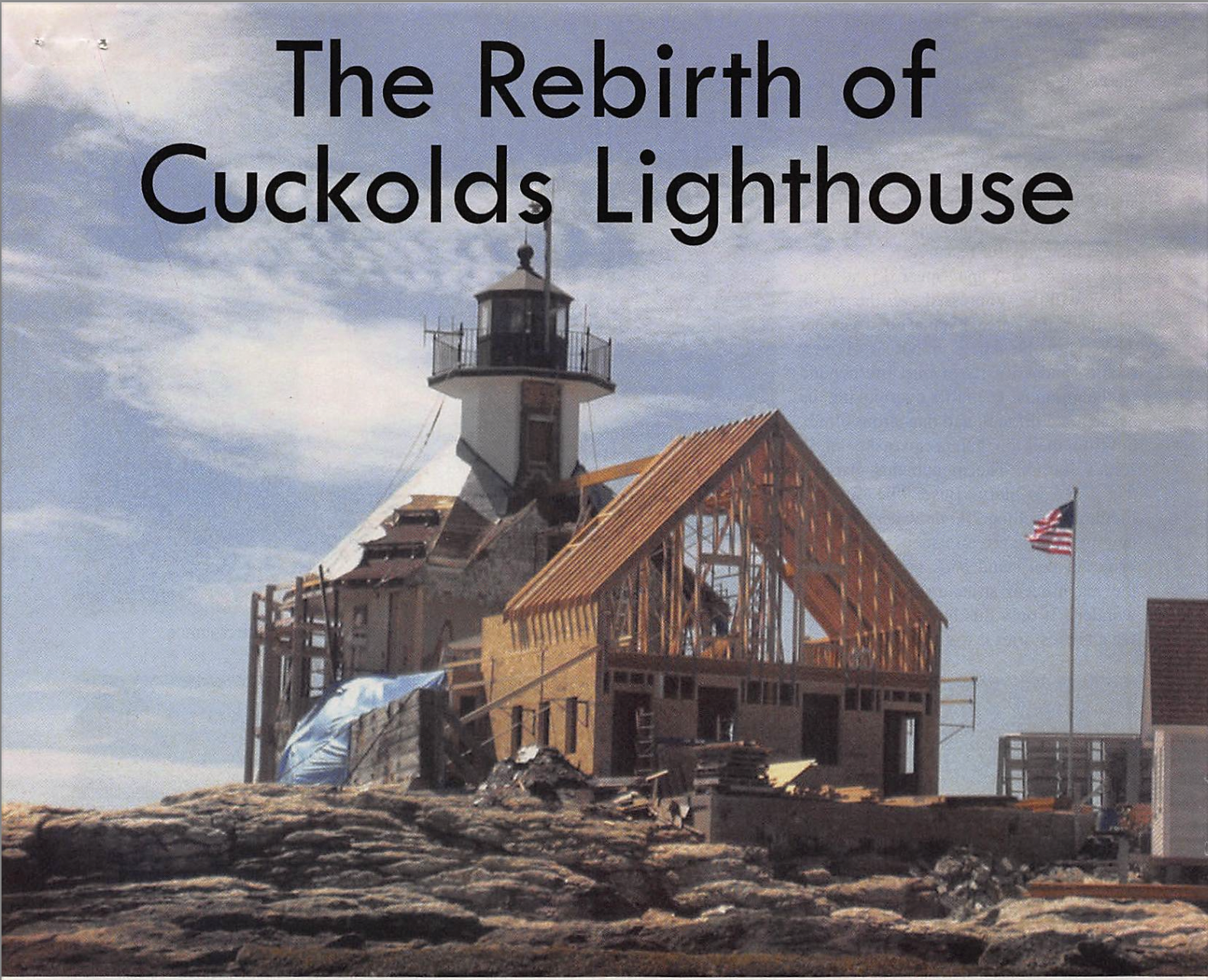
The Rebirth of Cuckolds Lighthouse



The rafters going into place for the keeper's quarters at Cuckolds Lighthouse.

By Timothy Harrison

Less than ten years ago no one could have imagined the epic restoration and rebuilding that would take place this year at the historic Cuckolds Fog Signal and Lighthouse Station in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. In fact it was only seven short years ago that the lighthouse was slated for demolition to be replaced by a fiberglass pole with a lamp on the top.

Fortunately, a group of concerned citizens, led by Janet Reingold and Philip Yasinski stepped forward to save the lighthouse. Soon ownership of the lighthouse, under the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act, was awarded to the Cuckolds Fog Signal and Light Station Council and fund raising and planning was immediately started.

The task ahead of the group was daunting; only the dilapidated light tower portion of the station was still standing, the rest of the station has been lost over 30 years ago.

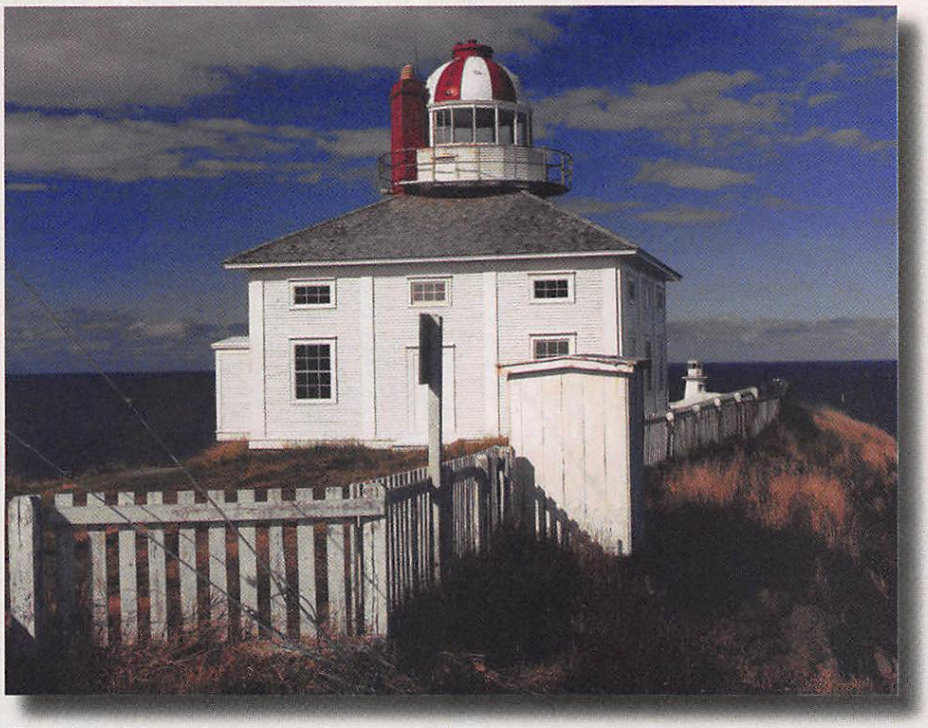
Their initial task was to secure the light tower and then rebuild the boat house as part of the first test to help them plan the rebuilding of the entire station. Since the light station sits on a small out-cropping of rock in Boothbay Harbor, this was a task that required an immense amount of planning and tenacity

Interestingly, the man picked to rebuild the boat house was Pete Rawden, the same man who, 33 years earlier, was ordered by his Coast Guard superiors to tear the boat house down.

It could be stated that the project to start saving and rebuilding the lighthouse started back in 2007 when a new flag pole was installed "Iwo Jima" style, as we reported in the November 2007 edition. Once the stars and stripes were raised, it gave the feeling that a new life was on its way to the previously abandoned outpost. Full restoration started shortly thereafter (see the October 2010 issue of *Lighthouse Digest.*) However, the project came full circle this year with everything falling place, but not without its challenges.

marked the way for the millions of U.S. servicemen who crossed the Atlantic in convoys to fight the Nazis. Some convoys and cargo ships were hit by weapons from German U-Boats; the most notorious attack was on the ferry, *Caribou*, in 1942. And always the Cape Spear Lighthouse showed the way for rescuers.

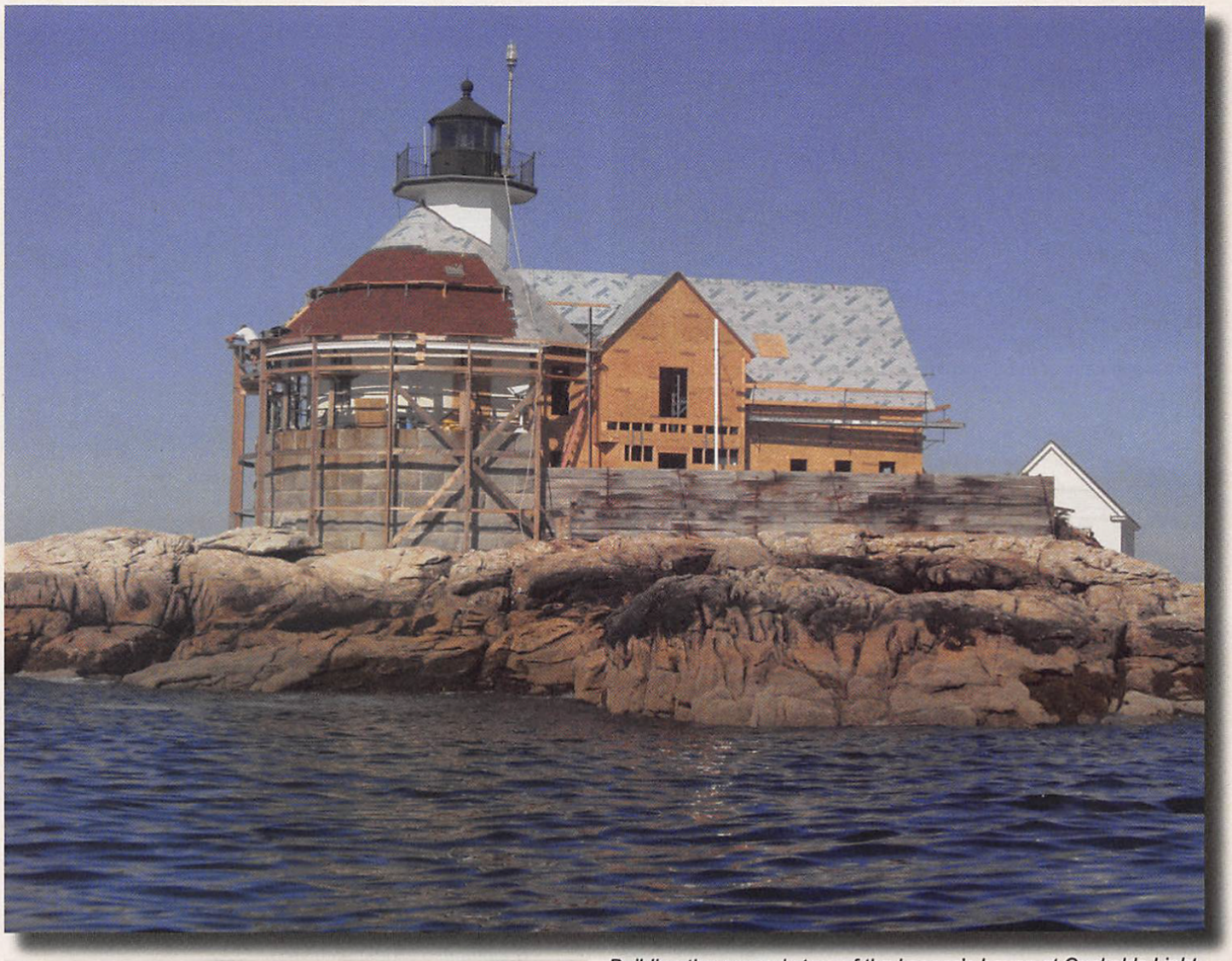
A visitor to Cape Spear Lighthouse today will be impressed by the rustic hardiness of the area. Even in good weather there is a bleakness about it. Foxes, rabbits, and all sorts of bird life abound on the grounds. The cliffs overlooking the ocean are a difficult and dangerous climb, but from their top, hikers can make out St. John's Harbor. The monuments marking the U.S. Military Base, the original lighthouse (selling *Titanic* water), and the new lighthouse are all excellent places to visit. As you stand back and look up at the magnificent structure, you can only wonder - if only this building could talk, what great stories it would tell.



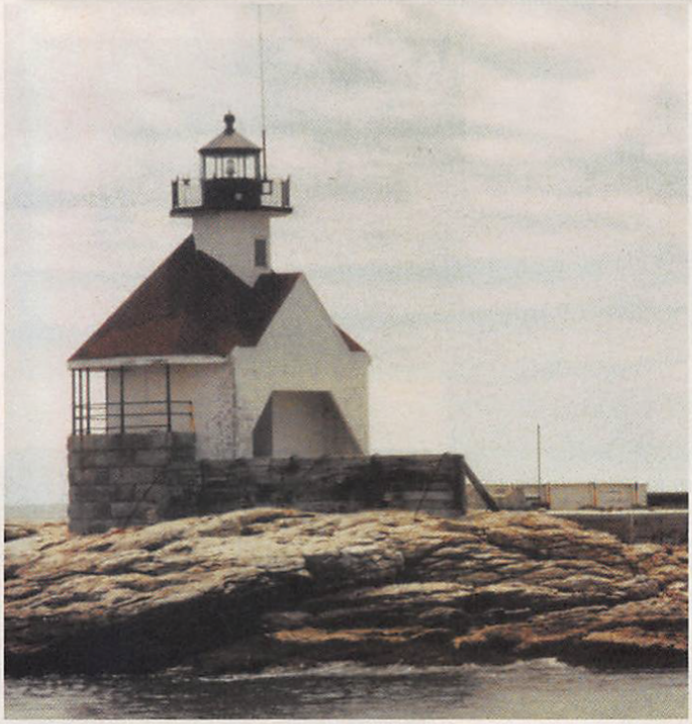
The original Cape Spear Lighthouse with the new tower seen in the distance. (Photograph by David Dilworth.)



Close up view of the magnificent lantern room of the original Cape Spear Lighthouse. (Photograph by Keith Martin Howard.)



Building the second story of the keeper's house at Cuckolds Light.



By the late 1970s this is all that remained of the Cuckolds Fog Signal and Lighthouse Station. (*Lighthouse Digest* archives.)

Marden Builders, the firm contacted for the rebuilding will get as much accomplished before the project needs to be buttoned up for the winter. In 2012 they plan to complete the interior after which it will be furnished and made ready for overnight stays and other adventures.

All those associated with this project are to be congratulated for bringing the Cuckolds Fog Signal and Lighthouse Station back to life, something that will surely be appreciated by generations to follow.

To learn more, make a donations or volunteer, you can visit their web site at www.CuckoldsLight.org. (Photographs of the reconstruction are courtesy of the Cuckolds Fog Signal and Lighthouse Council.)

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Bird's eye view of the Cuckolds boat house under construction.



The Cuckolds boat house nears completion.

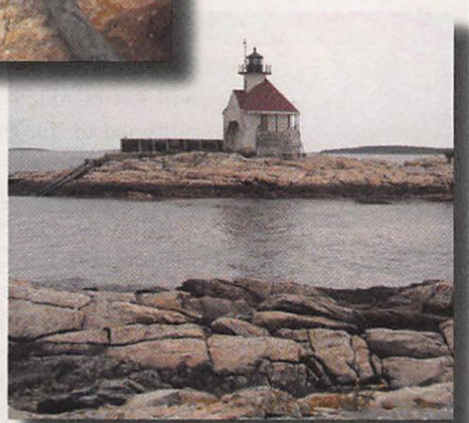


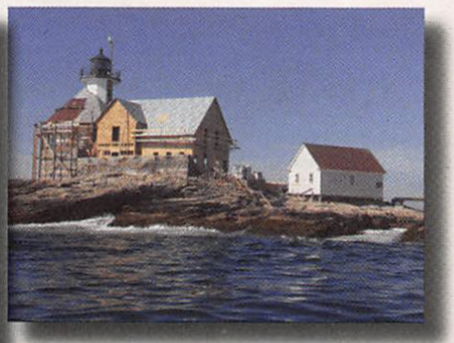


Cuckolds Fog Signal Station and keeper's house was built in 1872. There was no lighthouse at the station. (*Lighthouse Digest* archives)



The Cuckolds keeper's quarters is framed in.





There is not much room to work on the rocky outcropping and hailing lumber, supplies and scaffolding over the uneven rocks to complete the project was a monumental task.



Vintage color image of the Cuckolds Fog Signal and Lighthouse Station. The tower was added in 1907. (*Lighthouse Digest* archives.)

