

March 29, 1978

Historic board thanks C.G. for trap shed effort

By NEIL G. NICKERSON

PROVINCETOWN — Thanks to the Coast Guard for its attempt to delay demolishing action on the trap shed near the Atlantic Coast Fisheries plant has been expressed by the Historic District Study Committee of Provincetown.

In a letter to Capt. L.M. Scherer, Chief of Staff, First Coast Guard District, the committee said it was

“sincerely grateful for the gesture made by the United States Coast Guard in our behalf,” and in another part of the letter, “the Historic District Study Committee wishes to thank you for your reprieve, which, we understand, was made at the request, not only of ourselves, but several government and state officials, as well as local persons and agencies working together for the desired ‘stay of execution.’”

The “stay of execution” as

mentioned in the letter was a telegram from Capt. Scherer to Bernard Benkowitz of the Live Fish Company, Pittsborough, asking that any action against the trap shed, which the District Committee had hoped to make into a trap fishery museum, be deferred for at least three weeks, to see what could be done.

The telegram was sent out March 20, and the trap shed was demolished by 8 a.m. the next day. Neighbors said the work on demolishing the

building started at 6 a.m. that day. In the letter, the committee said “in the irony of this moment, it is hard for us not to be bitter about the loss, since it was sustained at such a near point of salvation. We do not quite comprehend the thinking of the man who ordered the demolition of a National Historic Landmark, and we will never be able to accept it as a necessary act . . . from the beginning, we have expressed our willingness to co-operate with the Coast Guard in seeking a

solution for this building . . . Even though we did not agree on the disposition of the building at the day of the hearing (March 10 in town hall) there was never any attempt on our part to use our position of difference to create a problem for the Coast Guard. Our efforts were sincerely supportive of the Government choice of the Atlantic Coast Fisheries site, but necessarily differed regarding the location of the Trap Shed from an historical perspective.”

“The trap shed remains a symbol of the essence of Provincetown. It was, perhaps, a kind of Herring Gull among its architectural brothers, not very special in any way except that it was the last of a kind of building that once proliferated along the waterfront . . .” the letter continued.

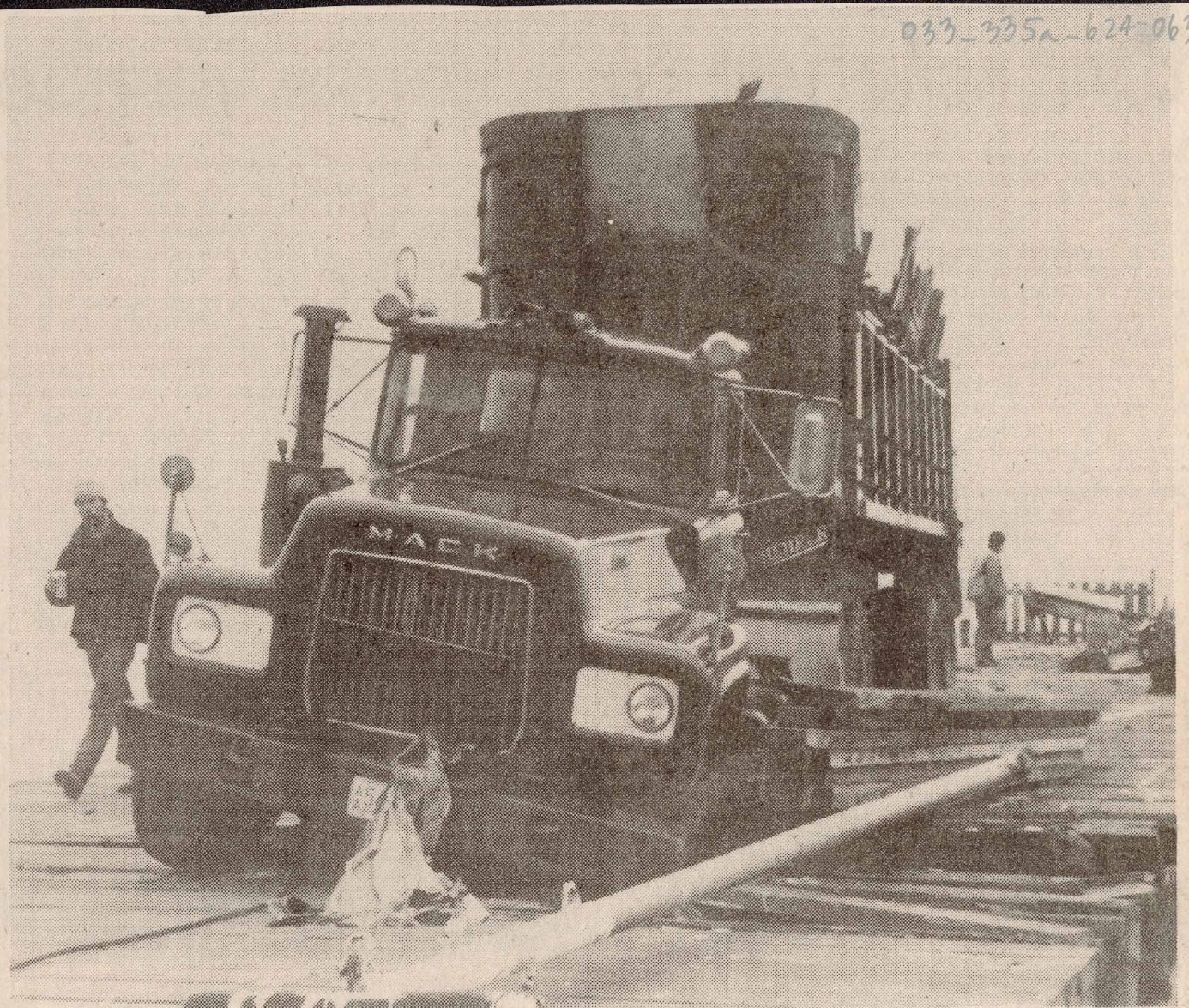
The Atlantic Coast Fisheries site was strongly endorsed as location of the Search and Rescue Station, the letter stated, and Mrs.

Josephine DelDeo, secretary of the historic district study committee, ended the letter with the statement that “I hope that, although the trap shed is no longer an object in physical focus as you look out to sea, its remembered presence will act as a warning to us all not to treat our heritage lightly.”

Other members of the committee include John D. Bell, chairman; Mary Avellar, Paul Mendes, George Bryant, Phyllis Temple and Edward F. Allodi.

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Load limit exceeded

Cleanup of the debris at the old Atlantic Coast Fisheries plant, Provincetown, is under way, and these workers are cleaning up the remnants of the old trap shed. However, the picture here isn't of the cleanup, but the problem of just how

this truck is going to get off the old wharf. The truck and trailer backed onto the wharf, stopped, and the left front wheel went through the wharf planking. (Staff Photo by Neil G. Nickerson)