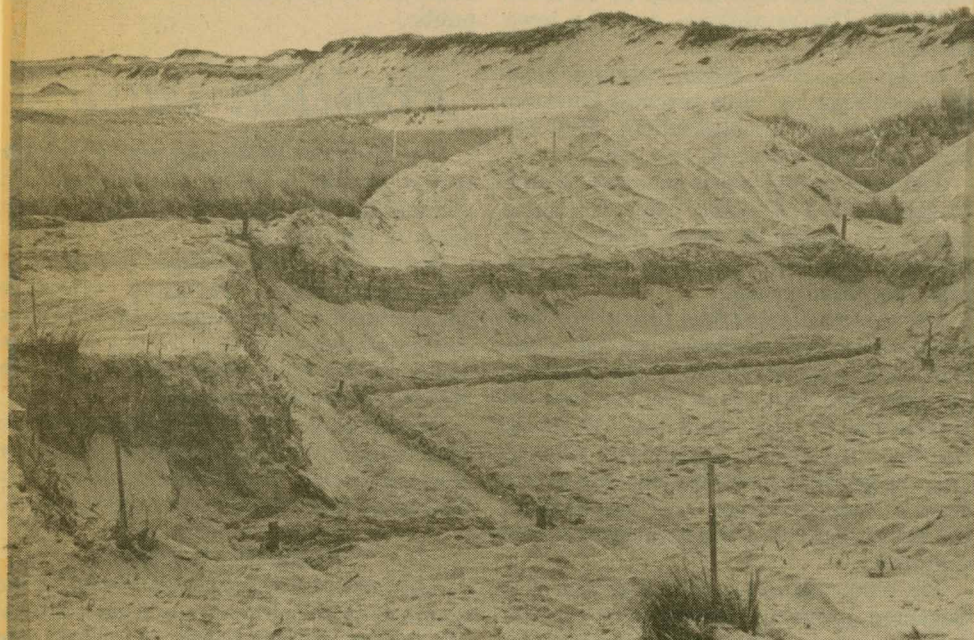


Provincetown Advocate, Thursday, November 17, 1977

Town officials fear overruns as station readied for move



Advocate photo by Jim Gilbert

Race Point foundation in preparation for Old Harbor Station move

By Jim Gilbert

While work proceeded both in Provincetown and in Chatham to prepare for moving the Old Harbor Lifesaving Station from Chatham Bar to Race Point, unconfirmed rumors flew that the move's price tag might cost over \$400,000, three times the original \$138,000 bid.

It is unclear where the rumors originated. But John Bell and Bill Sturtevant, building inspectors for Provincetown and Wellfleet, respectively, said they had heard the story.

Both the National Seashore, which is paying for the move, and Marsha Fader, an architectural historian in charge of the move, said such rumors are false. The company doing the move, Middlesex Crane Company, is sticking by their original bid, Fader said.

Ray O'Dell, contract officer for the National Park Service in Boston said there have been no contract changes and that no proposals for any changes have been made.

The rumor was that the contractor would do the move at cost-plus only.

This week, a second crane was barged across Chatham Harbor to the bar where the station is presently located. Work on the new foundation, 500 feet to the east of

shipwrecks including the S.S. Pendleton.

Fader said she and the moving company personnel are now literally living at the beach. When all advance preparations for the move have been completed they will wait for the right combination of environmental conditions.

The station will become a lifesaving museum at Race Point. It will be near the site of the old Race Point Lifesaving Station. The 60-by-80-foot structure, including living quarters and the station's boat house, is a replica of the station that used to stand off Wood End in Provincetown.

Provincetown Advocate, Thursday, November 24, 1977

Station move delayed

By Jim Gilbert

An attempt to move the Old Harbor Lifesaving Station off Chatham Bar to Provincetown failed early Sunday morning when the barge to be used in the moving operation failed to show up at high tide.

The move will be accomplished by hoisting the 60-by-80-foot building with two giant cranes onto a barge pushed ashore a few feet from the station. A high tide and calm seas are the prerequisites for the unprecedented moving feat.

The two cranes were barged across Chatham Bay last week and put on either side of the 80-year-old station. The station will be turned into a lifesaving service museum at a new site 500 feet east of the Race Point bathhouse.

In preparation for the move, the station's boathouse has been severed. It will also make the journey to Provincetown. The building has been raised off its foundation and necessary structural supports were installed to prevent damage during lifting and moving.

On Sunday morning, conditions were as good as could be expected during winter months. The move has been made necessary because the Chatham Bar has been eroding severely recently and it was feared the station will wash into the sea if it is not moved.

Engineers at the scene Sunday morning were hopeful the move could be tried. But the opportunity was lost when the barge failed to show up by high tide. Moderate northerly winds prevented the barge from making the journey early Sunday morning from Martha's Vineyard to Chatham.

On Saturday and again Sunday morning the cranes made small experimental lifts of

the station. Marsha Fader, an architectural historian, is in charge of the move for the Seashore. She and Atlantic Crane Company workers have been on the scene around the clock in recent weeks getting the building ready for the move when weather conditions permit.

It is not known when the workers will try the move again. Seashore spokesmen think the earliest move date will be late this week, when tides are high following the full moon.

On Sunday, about 100 people braved the cold dawn hours and the rugged ride over six miles of bumpy sand trails to get to the station. They were rewarded by a beautiful sunrise and the foul mood of members of the Chatham Beach Patrol who shouted at people as they approached the building to take pictures.

Many members of the news media were angry at the police's refusal to let photographers and reporters close enough to the building to take photos. No effort was made to keep the press or those watching abreast of developments in the move.

In Provincetown, work is progressing on the new foundation for the station. The station will be located close to the site of the old Race Point Lifesaving Station.

If the spirits of the old lifesavers in the Old Harbor Station sleep through the trip to Race Point, they may not even notice the change in scenery. Chatham Bar is very similar to the beach that stretches eastward from Race Point. Those in Chatham who mourn the loss of the station will be pleased to see the building in such a familiar-looking environment. That is, of course, if the move is made before the sea rolls over the stately station.