



Nantucket's Historic Sankaty Head Lighthouse relocated

"...without so much as cracking a brick or chipping the paint."

The 'Sconset Trust is the new caretaker of the lighthouse that was moved 405 feet inland in October 2007 from its base since 1850.

Following an act of the U.S. Congress and 16 years of a fundraising and public awareness effort, the 157-year-old historic Sankaty Head Lighthouse is now safely moored at a new location 390 feet to the northwest of its home since 1850.

The 85-foot lighthouse was a gift from the U.S. Coast Guard to the 'Sconset Trust, which had raised \$4 million to move it to its new location near the fifth hole of the Sankaty Head Golf Course. It continues as an aid to navigation,

although its beam is seven feet lower than the original site. Also, its grounds and historical interpretative exhibits are open to the public.

In a series titled "Moving Sankaty," The Nantucket Independent weekly newspaper documented in text and photos the move that it suggested was "almost more historic than its original construction." In fact, the newspaper reported, security preparations were made to accommodate the island, regional and national news media and documentary coverage of the

Moving the lighthouse 405 feet required a 12-foot drop in elevation from the original site to the new foundation.



By JACK E. BRYMER, SR., Contributing Editor / Photos Courtesy of ROB BENCHLEY - THE SCONSET TRUST

move, "while keeping the lighthouse secure and rubberneckers safe."

Also, during the actual move in October, 2007 several film, television and print media had petitioned to record it. Some included Windfall Films of London, England, U.S. Cable Television and National Geographic. The Independent's own Rob Benchley served as official photographer for the move.

While the project was under the supervision of International Chimney of Buffalo, N.Y., IASM member Expert House Movers of Maryland was subcontractor and did the actual move. Expert House Movers, along with International Chimney, had successfully relocated the Southeast Lighthouse on Black Island, RI, the Cape Hatteras Light Station on the Outer Banks in North Carolina, the Highland Light Station in Truro, Massachusetts, and the Nauset Lighthouse in Eastham, Massachusetts

Expert House Movers President Jerry Matyiko estimated the move could be done in 10 days



International Chimney employee, John Mitchell, using a hydraulic powered diamond chain saw to cut pocket holes in the original foundation for placement of steel beams.



It became necessary to remove approximately six inches of the original base of the lighthouse to accommodate rocker beams. This action was caused when the base did not separate when the lift was made. Chains shown on the left side are for safety purposes in case the masonry base should separate.

Below:
Pressure hoses are being arranged for connection to unified system jacks.

"without so much as cracking a brick or chipping the paint." But International Chimney President Rick Lohr was a bit more cautious about making predictions. The move was scheduled to take place in October.

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