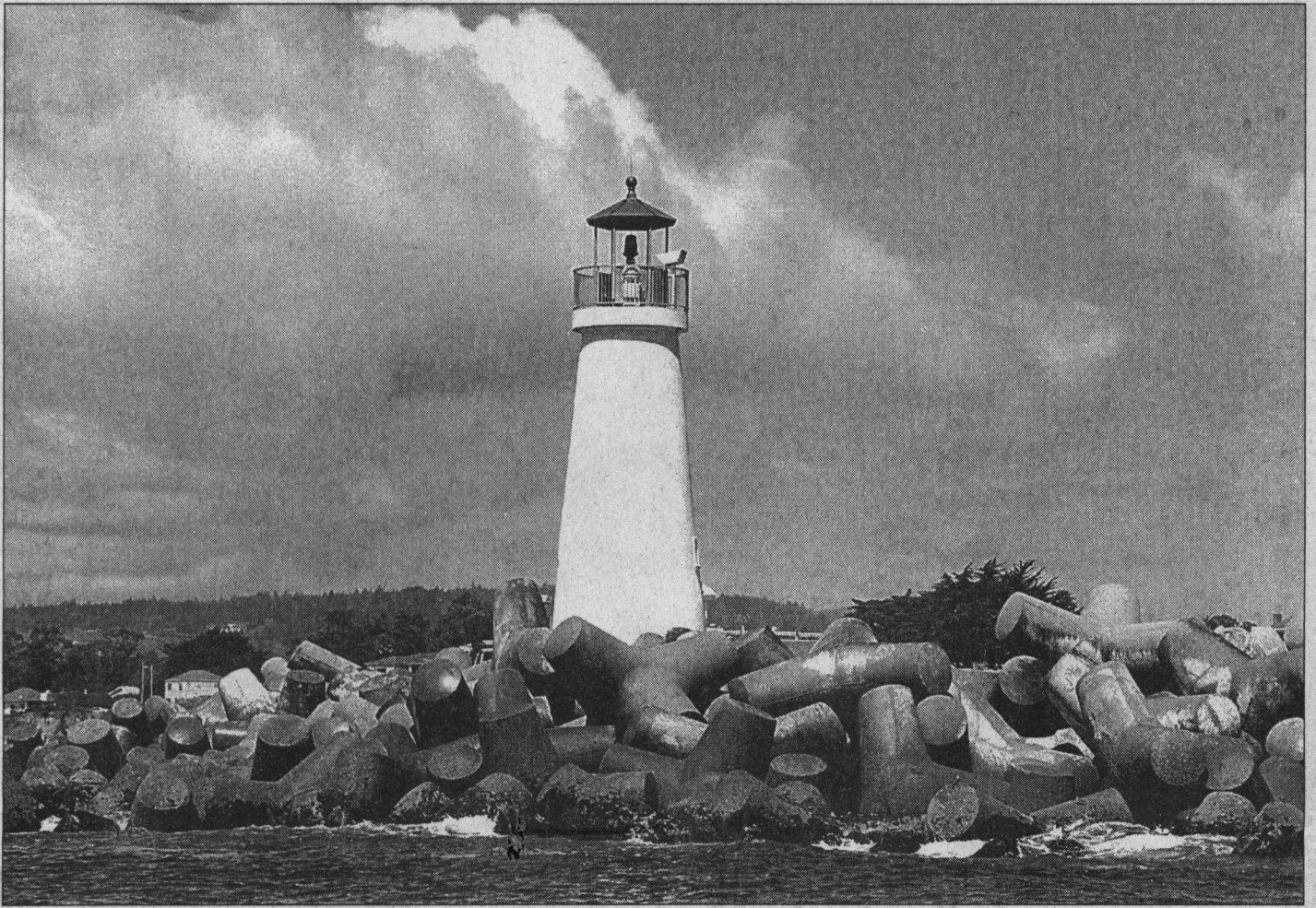


SAFE AT ANCHOR



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

To avoid confusion, USGS and NOAA maps will refer to the area between Steamer Lane and the harbor jetty as Santa Cruz Anchorage.

New maps aim to set sailors straight

By **JILL STRONG**
SENTINEL CORRESPONDENT

Lost at sea?

Actually, it appears many out-of-town boaters looking to stop in Santa Cruz are more accurately lost in the bay, and the Santa Cruz Port District aims to change that.

Sailors unfamiliar with the area frequently are misled by current nautical maps, according to Brian Foss, district director.

The official U.S. Geological Survey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration charts for the top of the bay refer to the area between Steamer Lane and the harbor jetty as "Santa Cruz Harbor." That has some confused boaters cruising around the wharf looking for a place to dock.

"Two hundred years ago, harbor just meant an area where you could duck in out of the wind," Foss said. "Now that they have marinas, the meaning of the term has changed."

The recent construction of a lighthouse at the entrance of the harbor — giving Santa Cruz two lighthouses distinguished by different blinking patterns — alleviated some confusion, but the current maps can be disorienting.

At the request of port officials, the next USGS and NOAA maps will label the roughly one-mile stretch between the wharf and the harbor entrance as the Santa Cruz Anchorage, and will pinpoint the actual marina.

While the anchorage provides shelter for boaters because of the natural curve of the bay, there are no mooring services, and harbors have come to indicate the location of a dock and port services, Foss said.

In search of the harbor, those unfamiliar with Santa Cruz often end up searching for those services somewhere west of the wharf.

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some confusion, but the current maps can be disorienting.

"When we got the new lighthouse, we contacted (NOAA and the USGS) because we moved the actual coordinates of the light," Foss said.

While they were at it, they decided to clear up the harbor issue.

Completed in 1964 and expanded in 1973, the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor is home to 1,275 boats. The harbor also offers slips to visiting boaters looking for a calm place to stay overnight. An estimated 12,000 visitors take advantage of that service annually, according to the district.

"This should alleviate confusion because there won't be two places that are called the harbor," said Kimbra Eldridge, district operations manager.

Lighthouses

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