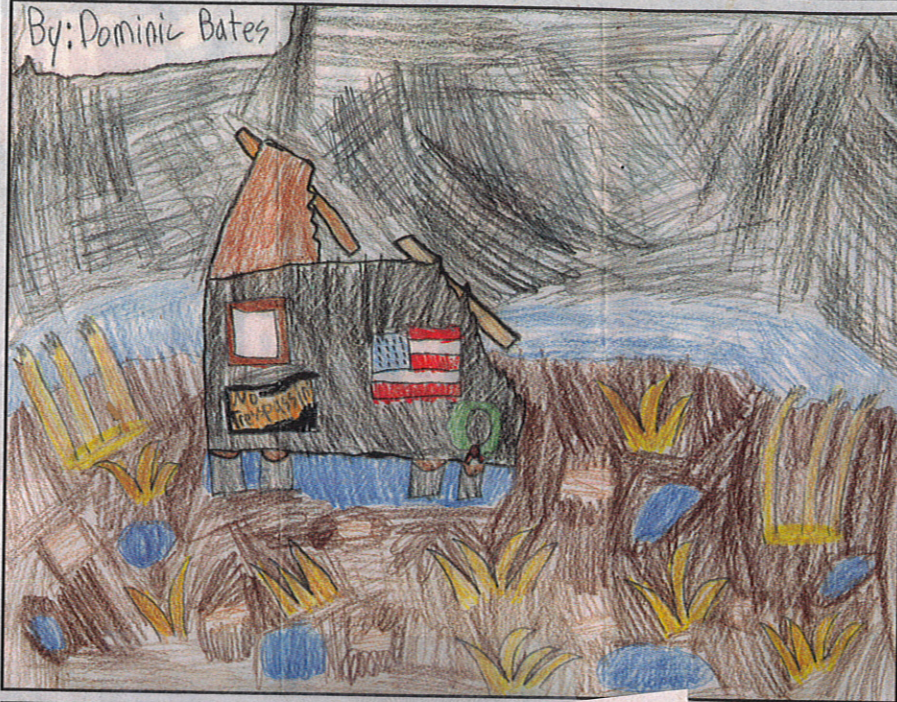


By: Dominic Bates



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PICTURED FOR POSTERITY:

Dominic Bates used colored pencils and imagination to draw his portrait of the dilapidated Causeway Shack, above. The fourth-grader poses with his inspiration, left. The shack, seemingly on its last legs, is the focus of renewed local interest in restoring it. Once ownership issues are resolved, which have been estimated to take up to six months, the property could be turned over to Stafford Township and local historical societies.

Supplied Photo, left

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Seeing an Old Shack Through Young Eyes

Editor's Note: The following essay, titled "The Shack Along the Jersey Shore," earned its author selection as one of 30 finalists in the Celebrate NJ essay contest this year. Dominic Bates is a fourth-grader at McKinley Elementary School in Manahawkin. He illustrated his essay with the picture published here.

By DOMINIC BATES

Have you ever wondered while driving over the Causeway Bridge what that shack on the right side of the road going to Long Beach Island is for? Well, here are your answers.

My mom and I spoke to Tim Hart from the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission. He told us to talk to Axel Tonnesen, who lives across Route 72 from the shack. My dad and I drove out to speak to Mr. Tonnesen. When I told Mr. Tonnesen that I wanted to get information about the shack, he said with a chuckle, "That rickety old pile of wood across the road?" I laughed with him, but to me it is a mysterious and familiar sight.

The shack was built in 1938. There were three original shacks, but only two remain. They are across from each other. One is fenced in and the other is the one everyone sees going to LBI.

The shack is a historic landmark in Manhawkin. It was originally on the other side of Route 72 from where it sits now. Huey Singleton moved the shack to where it is today. It was used for hunting and fishing in the summertime. There is much debate about who owned the shack. Many squatters lived there. There was also no running water or electricity.

Many people have thought to preserve it or to keep it the way it stands now. What do you think the people of Stafford Township should decide? ♦