

## The Great Squam Lobster Heist

**David W. Teele**

One fine day in July, 2004 I was startled by the arrival of a TV truck directly in front of our house at #39 Leonard Street. As a Gloucester policewoman once said to me “nothing ever happens on Leonard Street”, so further investigation seemed warranted.



Two CBS camera men seemed to be interviewing a large, gaudily painted, plastic lobster. The exercise had attracted every kid who owned a bicycle. I am guessing that many had been headed for the Yacht Club and the Junior Program.







We'll let the *Boston Globe* take things from here.

*A nearly 6-foot-long fiberglass lobster and its base that were stolen from outside Annisquam Village Hall were scheduled to be returned last night after a dive team and Gloucester police found them in an estuary.*

*The replica crustacean titled "Bread & Roses" was reported stolen on Monday night, said Sue Todd, president and chief executive officer of Pathways for Children, an early education and child-care program that will receive the donations from an auction of the lobster and others like it in September.*

*The lobster -- decorated with an American flag and small portraits describing Gloucester -- is one of 29 painted by local artists, teenagers, and politicians and scattered throughout Gloucester.*

*They are part of the Lobsters Landings promotion, similar to the political statues that line some neighborhoods in Washington. A growing number of municipalities nationwide have taken to auctioning off sculptures with local themes to raise funds for charities.*

*Before the lobster's theft, neighbors had pooled their money to bid on the sculpture and keep it in their community, Todd said.*

*Residents, the sponsor, the artist, and members of the Pathways for Children organization were watching at Lobster Cove as a police detective riding in a boat pulled the sculpture from a tangle of seaweed, Todd said.*

*Anticipation turned to cheering, said onlookers, describing the crowd of about 25 who erupted when the crustacean was recovered.*

*"The mood was one of great excitement," said Stevie Neal, 68, of Gloucester, who sponsored the lobster with her husband, Greg. "It was in remarkably good shape, and it's good that it wasn't in the water any longer."*

*Todd said Gloucester police received an anonymous tip Tuesday that a Volvo with teenagers was seen in the area before a large splash was heard.*

*Captain Miles Schlichte, divemaster of the Cape Ann Regional Dive Team, said two members of his team recovered the brass base about 25 feet from a footbridge where police told him they believed it was tossed. More than an hour later, a Gloucester police detective riding a jet ski retrieved the statue.*

**(These days the perpetrators would probably be driving a Tesla or a BMW.)**



