

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Oak Island Life Saving Station  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 217 Caswell Beach Road  
N/A not for publication  
city or town Caswell Beach vicinity N/A  
state North Carolina code NC county Brunswick code 019 zip code 28465

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Crow SHPD 10/31/00  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.  
     determined eligible for the National Register  
     See continuation sheet.

     determined not eligible for the National Register  
     removed from the National Register

     other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper                      Date of Action

=====  
5. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  1  </u> buildings
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<u>    </u>	<u>  1  </u> structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  2  </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   -0-  

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)   N/A

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)  
Cat:   Defense: coast guard facility  

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)  
Cat:   Domestic: camp

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)  
Stick/Eastlake

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick  
roof fiberglass  
walls wood  
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.



Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title M. Ruth Little  
organization Longleaf Historic Resources date August 10, 2000  
street & number 2709 Bedford Ave. telephone 919-836-8128  
city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27607

=====  
12. Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps  
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs  
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)  
name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7 Page 1  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

**Section 7: Description**

The eastern end of Oak Island, facing the Atlantic Ocean, forms the mouth of the Cape Fear River opposite the town of Southport, in Brunswick County, North Carolina. The island juts out into the river mouth, forming a peninsula. The Oak Island Lighthouse, Coast Guard Station, and former Life Saving Station stand one-quarter mile west of the point. The ruins of the antebellum Fort Caswell occupy the point. The 1958 lighthouse and 1992 Coast Guard Station stand on the north side of Caswell Beach Road (NC 133), while the original life saving station was sold to a private owner in 1938 and moved directly across the road to a one-third acre ocean-front lot. A row of contemporary beach cottages extend east from the former Life Saving Station to the Fort Caswell property (now Caswell Assembly, a Baptist campground). These cottages occupy an elevated bluff that overlooks the ocean. The peninsula has sandy soil and sparse vegetation typical of ocean-front areas of North Carolina.

The life saving station was built in 1889 using the 1882 prototype station design supplied by the U. S. Life Saving Service. Apart from its relocation, the station remains nearly unaltered from its original appearance during active service, as shown in a documentary photo (Fig. 1). The one-and-one-half story frame building has a front-gable form. The upper half-story, housing living quarters, is marked by trusswork gable ends, a trusswork wall dormer on each flank, and a large lookout tower projecting from the roof. German siding with wide beaded cornerboards covers the first story, board-and-batten siding with molded battens the upper story. The upper story has four-over-four sash windows. Gable ends have large decorative brackets, and the wide overhanging eaves have exposed rafter tails. Enhancing the already stylish Shingle-Stick Style features of the building are the kingpost trusses that ornament each gable end, each flanking dormer window, and the gables of the lookout tower.

The current appearance of the station reflects the minimal remodeling necessary to adapt the building to usage as a summer cottage. A few features shown in the documentary photo no longer exist. The large double boat door occupying the front gable end, reached by a wooden ramp, was removed (presumably about 1938) and replaced by German siding and two six-over-six sash windows. The low open shed containing additional boat storage and a narrow porch, sheltering the main personnel entrance to the station, on the left side, have been overbuilt with a continuous shed addition with exposed rafter tails, German siding, and a row of two-over-two wooden sash windows. The wooden shakes that originally sheathed the roof and the base of the lookout tower have been replaced by fiber-glass shingles. The louvered shutters have been replaced with solid paneled shutters to provide hurricane protection and security. The station rests on a continuous brick veneer foundation.

A semi-detached kitchen, a low gabled building with a metal flue, which was located directly behind the station on its original site, is gone. A recently-constructed garage of similar architectural character stands on the west side of the station, in a location that corresponds to the location of the kitchen on the original site. The station's original site was a flat expanse of sand and undergrowth, surrounded by a horizontal-board fence. The current

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina

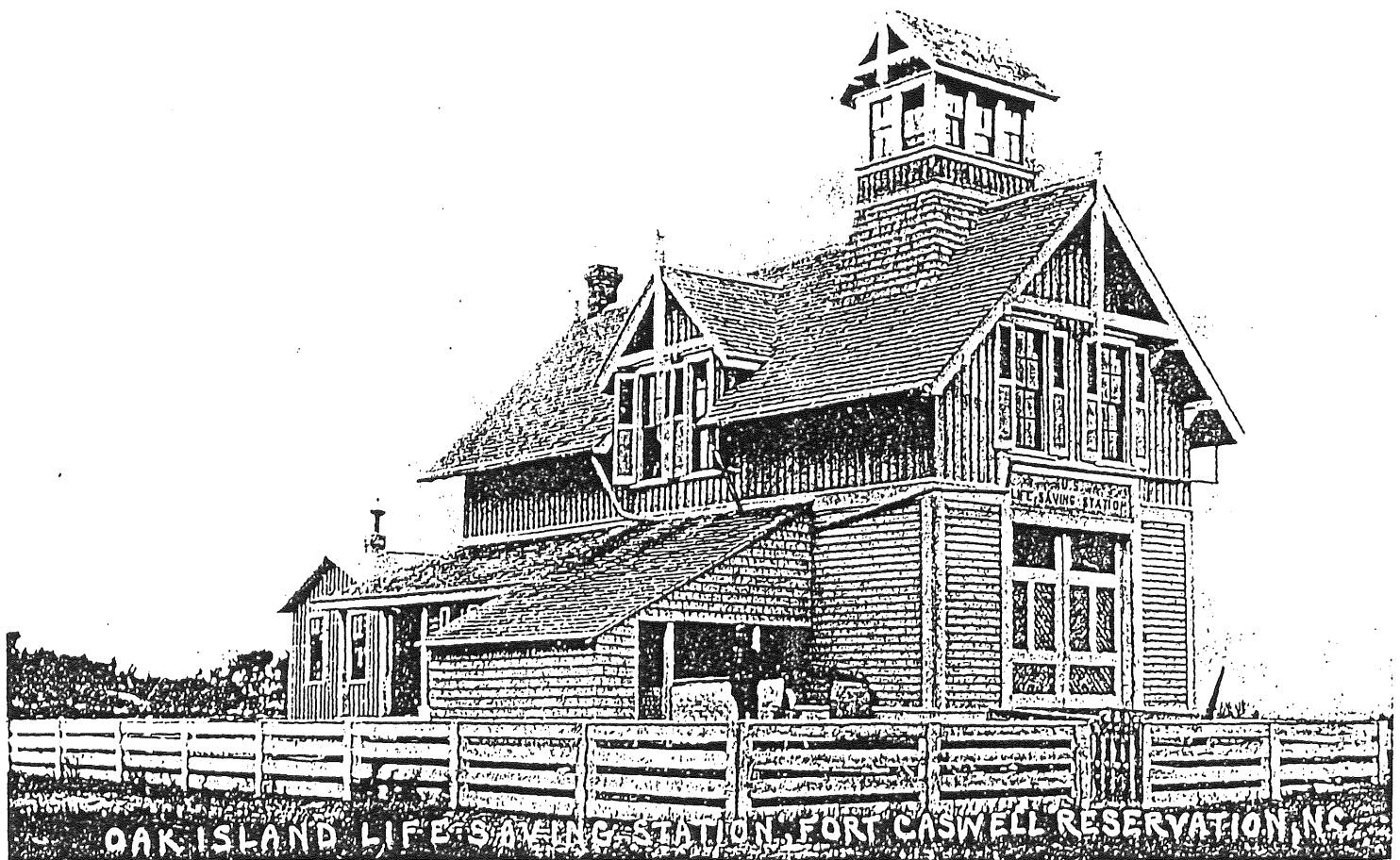


Fig. 1: Oak Island Station, documentary photo , early 20<sup>th</sup> century(?). N. C. State Archives.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7 Page 3  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

site consists of domestic landscaping, with grass, shrubs, and a board fence. The longer side elevation of the station is oriented parallel to the ocean shore, with the former boat house entrance facing east.

According to the architectural plans of the 1882-type life saving station, the interior of the Oak Island Life Saving Station had the following general features. A thirty-two-foot deep boat room occupied two-thirds of the forty-four-foot deep building. A storage closet with shelves was located in the rear corner. To the rear was the "Living Room," with a small chimney flue and an enclosed staircase along the side wall. Under the stair was a closet with shelves and drawers. Along the opposite side wall, a one-story shed held a small porch, entrance vestibule, and pantry. The upper floor, containing crew's quarters, consisted of three rooms accessed from the stair hall. The largest room, over the boat room, was the general crew quarters, containing a central ladder stair to the lookout tower. At the opposite end was the keeper's room, with a closet. Between the two bedrooms stood a store room. In the hallway a row of four lockers stood along the partition wall to the store room.

The interior of the Oak Island Life Saving Station retains its original floor plan. The boat room is now the living room, with corner storage closet intact. The original living room is now the dining room, still retaining the enclosed stair with stair closet. Upstairs, the crew's quarters is now the master bedroom, the keeper's room is the second bedroom, and the store room has been converted into a bathroom. In the hall, a ladder stair to the lookout tower rises along the wall where the lockers appeared on the architectural plans. Apparently the original stair in the crew's bedroom was moved to the hallway at a later date. The only other significant alteration to the original plan is the addition of a narrow exterior door in the north side to access the staircase from the outside. This door now serves as the main entrance from Caswell Beach Road, and is reached by a small plank deck.

Original finish remains throughout the interior of the Oak Island Station. The boat room is finished completely in horizontal tongue-and-groove beadboard on the walls and ceiling. The "Living Room" has a beadboard wainscot and plaster walls. All interior rooms have heavy, rounded baseboards. The door between the two rooms, as well as the closet in each room, are original four-panel doors, most with original brass box locks and knobs. Plain surrounds with an inside bead enclose the doors and windows. The windows have a heavy rounded sill. The narrow stair has plaster walls. Upstairs, the original stair railing has a heavy Victorian-style turned newel. All upstairs rooms are plastered, with original plain surrounds, and all doors are original four-panel type. The ceilings have replacement pine boards. In the low attic, the original ladder stair with chamfered railing leads up to the lookout tower, where beadboard sheaths the walls and one-over-one sash windows (probably replacements) provide clear views in four directions. The only alterations to the interior are the addition of a closet in the master bedroom and the south shed addition, containing a sun room, bathroom, and kitchen.

NC Garage. 1990s. The garage stands a short distance west of the house, with its front-gable roof oriented to Caswell Beach Road. The two-car garage, with storage room to the rear, mimics the architecture of the station. It has German siding, overhanging boxed eaves, one-over-one sash windows with paneled shutters, and kingpost gable trusses closely resembling those of the station.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7 Page 4  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

NC Sun Deck, ca. 1980. A substantial, free-standing wooden platform located in front yard overlooking the ocean.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 5**  
**Oak Island Life Saving Station**  
**Brunswick County, North Carolina**

**Section 8: Statement of Significance**

The former Oak Island Life Saving Station, located across NC 133 from the Oak Island Lighthouse and Coast Guard Station at the mouth of the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County, is a picturesque one-and-one-half story frame life saving station built in 1889. One of the most intact of the fifteen stations that survive along North Carolina's coastline, this southernmost station was authorized by Congress in 1886 in order to improve the lifesaving capability around Frying Pan Shoals off Cape Fear, where two deadly shipwrecks in the late 1870s caused great loss of life. It began operation in 1889. The station was decommissioned in 1932 when the first Coast Guard Station was constructed, but continued to function for auxiliary boat storage. About 1938 it was sold as surplus property, moved across the road to an oceanfront lot, and rehabilitated as a private beach cottage.

The 1889 station retains its picturesque cottage architecture, with German and board-and-batten siding, steep gable ends with kingpost trusses, and steep gabled wall dormer windows and an enclosed rooftop lookout tower with matching trusses. The interior spaces and finish of the large boat room and crew's living quarters on the first floor and crew's bedroom and keeper's bedroom and storeroom on the second floor are almost completely intact. The only major alterations made to convert the station into a summer cottage were the replacement of the boat room doors with two sash windows and the addition of a one-story shed containing kitchen and bath on the ocean side. Although a row of modern beach cottages extends to the east from the station, the station retains its visual association to the lighthouse and Coast Guard Station, its successors in the ongoing government maritime rescue mission, as well as integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The station's site is adjacent to Coast Guard property. The Oak Island Life Saving Station is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its significance in North Carolina maritime history from ca. 1889 to ca. 1938, when it ceased its life saving function. The most famous keeper, Dunbar Davis, who served from 1891 to 1915, rescued five schooners in one August 1893 day with the help of a volunteer crew, in what has become known as the "long day of Dunbar Davis." As the most architecturally intact of the life saving stations built in North Carolina in the 1880s, and one of a small number of surviving stations in the state, it has statewide significance under Criterion C.

**Historical Background**

In order to supplement the lighthouse on Bald Head Island across the mouth of the Cape Fear River, navigation lights were introduced on Oak Island by the late 1840s.<sup>1</sup> By 1865 there was a "5<sup>th</sup> order lighthouse and keeper dwelling" at Oak Island. A life saving station for Oak Island was authorized in 1886, and an 1888 site plan shows the position of the proposed Life Saving Station and Boat-house about 200 feet from the high tide mark, oriented with the boathouse door facing the ocean.<sup>2</sup> The station, built for a cost between four thousand and five thousand dollars, was in service by October 1889.<sup>3</sup> By 1893 the Boat-house, located on the sound side, was washing away,

---

<sup>1</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, 264.

<sup>2</sup> National Archives, List of Lighthouse Plans, Philadelphia, Record Group 26, 6-1F-4.; 5-OKI-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ship Ashore!*, 165.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 6  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

and a new more stable site on the sound was proposed in a new site map.<sup>4</sup>

The prototype "1882 style" life saving station was probably designed by J. Lake Parkinson, Assistant Superintendent for Construction for the Life Saving Service. He was the first architect appointed to serve the life saving service. His picturesque cottage design with an enclosed lookout tower is a refinement of his 1876 design. containing an open observation deck. A large dormer breaks the roofline on each side. Both the dormers and tower have the same steep roof pitch, overhanging eaves, and kingpost trusses as the front and rear gables.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1880s the stations were manned with full crews for eight months each year, from the first of September until the end of April. The keeper worked year round, and had the responsibility of assembling a crew of volunteers if a shipwreck happened during the summer season.<sup>6</sup> The station crew consisted of nine men: a warrant officer, boatswain's mate, a motor machinists's mate, and six surfmen. The twenty-four hour watch took place in four-hour shifts with two men on each watch. One man stayed in the lookout tower, and the second man patrolled the beach for two hours, switching duties after two hours. The station day began at 7:00 A.M. with breakfast, followed by a cleaning of the station. Lunch was served at 11:00 A.M.. Work began again at 1:00 and continued until 3:00 P.M. Supper was served at 4:00 P.M.

Approximately seventy-five log books from the Oak Island Station, spanning the period from December 3, 1889 to January 5, 1942, are located at the National Archives and Records Center in Atlanta. The following keepers served the Oak Island Station: Thomas M. Savage-October 1889 to May 1891; Dunbar Davis-July 1891 to March 1915; W. F. Pinn-March 1915 to March 1916; Samuel Brinkman-March 1916 to March 1921; and W. T. Willis-April 1921 to 1932.<sup>7</sup>

The most famous keeper at the Oak Island Life Saving Station was Dunbar Davis. Davis first distinguished himself as keeper at the new Cape Fear Lifesaving Station from 1882 to 1892. Davis had operated a charter schooner in Cape Fear waters for many years, and became keeper of the new station in his mid-forties.<sup>8</sup> Davis transferred to the Oak Island Station in 1891 and served to 1915. The Cape Fear and Oak Island stations were several miles apart on opposite sides of the mouth of the Cape Fear River. Davis and the keeper at the Cape Fear Station communicated with each other by signal flags. Both men were highly regarded in the Southport community and received commendations by the masters of wrecked vessels which they had assisted.<sup>9</sup>

Davis's most famous rescue at the Oak Island Station took place in August 1893 during a hurricane that made

---

<sup>4</sup> National Archives Lighthouse Plans, Site Plan, 1888, 5-OKI-6.

<sup>5</sup> *The U.S. Life Saving Service: Heroes, Rescues and Architecture of the Early Coast Guard*, 222.

<sup>6</sup> *Bald Head*, 62.

<sup>7</sup> Bob Browning, Coast Guard historian, Washington, D.C. Transmittal to Gary and Judy Studer, Jan. 11, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> *Bald Head*, 58-61.

<sup>9</sup> *Bald Head*, 61.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 7  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

landfall at Charleston, S.C. Because the hurricane happened in August, before the normal crew of surfmen reported for duty on September 1, Dunbar had to make rescues with the help of volunteers. He led the successful rescue of five schooners on this day, christened by noted coastal historian David Stick the "long day of Dunbar Davis." Another famous rescue occurred in 1894, when the Norwegian bark *Ogir* wrecked off Cape Fear. Davis and his crew rescued all eleven crew members amid the tangle of rigging and wreckage.<sup>10</sup> Davis and at least one of his crew members are buried in the Old Morse Cemetery at Southport, about ten miles from the station.<sup>11</sup>

The Cape Fear Station was abandoned in 1914, when a new Coast Guard Station was built at a different location. The old station was basically identical to the Oak Island Station, but has been demolished.<sup>12</sup> In 1932 a Coast Guard Station was built to replace the old Oak Island Station.<sup>13</sup> Roy McKeithan, a crewman from 1937 to 1941 at the new station, recalled in a recent interview that the old station, which sat beside the new one, was then used to house the twenty-six foot pulling surfboat, and other rescue equipment. McKeithan also recalled that young people occasionally travelled by boat from Southport to the old station for a picnic and party with the crew members. The young people brought food and a record player, and walked across the marsh to reach the station. One of the crew called a square dance. Around 1938 the station was sold to a man from Charlotte, who moved it across the road for use as a private beach cottage.<sup>14</sup>

By the beginning of World War II, the old life-saving stations, with their primitive rescue methods, had become obsolete. During the war the Coast Guard primarily handled coastal surveillance and patrol. After the war, the Coast Guard decommissioned or replaced all remaining old lifesaving stations in North Carolina. All of the pre-1915 stations had ceased operations by the 1950s.<sup>15</sup>

The Oak Island Coast Guard Station, the southernmost station in North Carolina, remains an active facility. The 1932 station, which replaced the 1889 life saving station, was itself demolished and replaced by a modern four-million-dollar building in 1992. The search-and-rescue mission remains the same, with additional duties of law enforcement. The present Oak Island Lighthouse was built in 1958 behind the Coast Guard Station, and is operated by the guardsmen. It is the newest lighthouse in the United States and was the second most powerful light in the world when completed. It now serves as the principal beacon at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. The 169-foot cylindrical concrete tower, tinted in bands of gray, white, and black, presents a striking contrast to the picturesque nineteenth century brick lighthouses along the rest of the North Carolina coast.<sup>16</sup>

Since the late 1930s, the old Life Saving Station has been a summer cottage and has changed ownership a

---

<sup>10</sup> *Ship Ashore!*, 119-120.

<sup>11</sup> Roy McKeithan interview with Gary and Judy Studer, August 12, 1999.

<sup>12</sup> *Bald Head*, 63, 65.

<sup>13</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, 264.

<sup>14</sup> Roy McKeithan interview with Gary and Judy Studer, August 12, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> *Ship Ashore!*, 164.

<sup>16</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, 264; *Ship Ashore!*, 165-166.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 8  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

number of times. From the early 1970s to the mid-1980s a physician from Raleigh owned the station. An attorney from Concord was the subsequent owner. The current owners, Gary and Judy Studer, who live in St. Louis, Missouri, purchased it in 1999 and use it as a summer house.<sup>17</sup> They seek listing in the National Register to recognize and protect the maritime landmark for the future.

**Maritime History and Architecture Context**

Life Saving stations had been constructed in the United States since the 1840s. The U. S. Life Saving Service was established in the early 1870s by the U. S. Congress. The first series of seven North Carolina life saving stations were built along the northeast coastline, north of Cape Hatteras, in 1874. Each station, built in the picturesque cottage style that was standard in the 1870s, was a small, steeply-gabled one-and-one-half story house approximately 20 x 40 feet in size, with intricate patterns of board-and-batten siding and wall dormers and gables with fancy bargeboards and kingpost ornament. Each had an open observation deck on the roof. Five of the original seven are still standing: Kill Devil Hills, Kitty Hawk, Bodie Island, Chicamacomico, and Little Kinnakeet, although all have been altered by conversion to boathouse, private cottage, or ranger's residence. Several have been moved.<sup>18</sup> One of the best-preserved is Little Kinnakeet, converted to a boathouse when a replacement station was built in 1904. One 1870s station that originally stood in Dare County, the Kill Devil Hills Station, has been moved to Corolla in Currituck County.

During the 1880s Congress authorized the construction of a second series of six stations in North Carolina, including several south of Cape Hatteras. Among these were a station at Cape Fear (on Bald Head Island) in 1883, at Oak Island in 1886, and at Cape Lookout in 1888. These were slightly larger and more elaborate versions of the 1870s stations, with enclosed lookout towers and larger rooms. Along with the architectural changes came improvements in safety equipment and working conditions. Surfmen were now employed for eight months each year instead of only four winter months.<sup>19</sup> Of the three surviving of this group of six stations, the Oak Island Life Saving Station is the most architecturally intact. The Cape Lookout Station was moved a greater distance, suffered much more alteration during its conversion to a summer cottage, and is in poor condition. The Cape Hatteras Station (renamed Durant's Station) stands on its original site, but underwent a number of small additions during its conversion to a private cottage.<sup>20</sup>

The third and final series of stations in North Carolina were five stations built along the central coast from 1894 to 1905. These followed the new standard shingled and towered plan known as the Quonochontaug type. In 1915 the Life Saving Service and Revenue Cutter Service merged to become the U. S. Coast Guard. At this time, North Carolina contained twenty-nine of the 250 life saving stations in the United States.<sup>21</sup> Only one of the

---

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Gary Studer, April 20, 2000. (copy in file)

<sup>18</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, see entry for each station.

<sup>19</sup> *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*, 172-173.

<sup>20</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, see individual entries for each station.

<sup>21</sup> *Ship Ashore!*, 104.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 9  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

original stations of the third group, the Portsmouth Life Saving Station, is known to be standing.<sup>22</sup>

In 1915 when the Life Saving Service became the Coast Guard, new stations continued the architectural evolution from Shingle Style into Colonial Revival style that had begun in the late 1800s. At Cape Lookout, the new Coast Guard Station built in 1917 to replace the old Life Saving Station has a two-story, colonial form with a gable on hip roof and a hip-roofed porch, with a lookout tower attached to the roofline with a curved weatherboarded base echoing the swelling shapes of the Shingle Style. The Creed's Hill Life Saving Station in Dare County, built in 1918, has a quite similar form, with a gable-on-hip roof, but lacks the tower.

Fifteen of North Carolina's twenty-nine life saving stations still stand.<sup>23</sup> Although some of these stations are restored, most are being adaptively used for residential and other purposes and have been modified accordingly. The Oak Island Station is the only station that survives south of Cape Lookout, and thus an extremely significant landmark of maritime history along North Carolina's southeastern coast.

---

<sup>22</sup> *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, see Portsmouth Life Saving Station, 224.

<sup>23</sup> Life Saving Stations known to survive: **Dare County**: Little Kinnakeet (1874 and 1904), Cape Hatteras (Durant's) (1879), Kill Devil Hills (1879 and 1910), Creed's Hill (1918), Oregon Inlet (1897), Caffey's Inlet (1897), Kitty Hawk (1911), Chicamacomico (1911), and Bodie Island (1989); **Currituck County**: Currituck Beach (1874; moved); Wash Woods (1910); **Hyde County**: Ocracoke (1904); **Carteret County**: Portsmouth Village (1895), Cape Lookout (1888); **Brunswick County**: Oak Island (1889).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 9 Page 10  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

**Section 9: Bibliography**

Bishir, Catherine and Southern, Michael. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

McKeithan, Roy. Interview by Gary and Judy Studer, August 12, 1999. Telephone interview by Ruth Little, May 24, 2000.

Mobley, Joe A. *Ship Ashore! The U.S. Lifesavers of Coastal North Carolina*. Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1994.

National Archives Lighthouse Plans, Philadelphia, Pa.

Shanks, Ralph, Woo, Lisa and York, Wick. *The U. S. Life Saving Service: Heroes, Rescues and Architecture of the Early Coast Guard*. Costano Books, 1996.

Stick, David. *Bald Head: A History of Smith Island and Cape Fear*. Wendell, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 10 Page 11  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

**Section 10: Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The nominated parcel, containing .351 acre, is shown on the attached survey, prepared in 1998.

**Boundary Justification:**

The nominated parcel constitutes the entire site currently associated with the Oak Island Life Saving Station.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section Photos Page 12  
Oak Island Life Saving Station  
Brunswick County, North Carolina**

**Photographs:**

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Photographer: Ruth Little

Date: April 2000

Location of negatives: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh

- A. Overall view from southeast, with lighthouse and coast guard station in background.
- B. View of station from northwest, along NC 133 (Caswell Beach Road).
- C. Rear view of station from northwest.
- D. Detail of east gable end.
- E. Interior view of boat room.
- F. Interior view of "living room," looking toward stair.
- G. View of upstairs stair hall.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
BRUNSWICK COUNTY

I, ROBERT B. McHENRY, JR CERTIFY  
THAT THIS MAP WAS DRAWN UNDER MY  
SUPERVISION FROM AN ACTUAL FIELD  
SURVEY MADE UNDER MY SUPERVISION;  
THAT THE RATIO OF PRECISION AS  
CALCULATED BY LATITUDE AND DE-  
PARTURES IS 1:10,000+; THAT THE  
BOUNDARIES NOT SURVEYED ARE SHOWN  
AS BROKEN LINES PLOTTED FROM IN-  
FORMATION FOUND IN BOOKS REFER-  
ENCED.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL THIS THE  
22nd DAY OF JUNE A.D. 1998

*Robert B. McHenry, Jr*  
LAND SURVEYOR REG. NO. L-3521

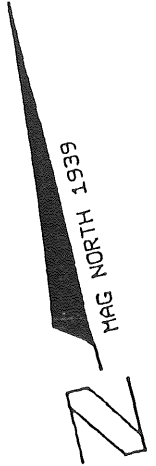


# PLAT OF SURVEY FOR GABE S. & BETTY LOU STEWART

LOT 9, BLOCK 2, SECTION B  
CASWELL BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA  
SMITHVILLE TOWNSHIP BRUNSWICK COUNTY  
SCALE: 1" = 30' JUNE 22nd, 1998  
JOB NO: 980551 FIELD BOOK: CB-15

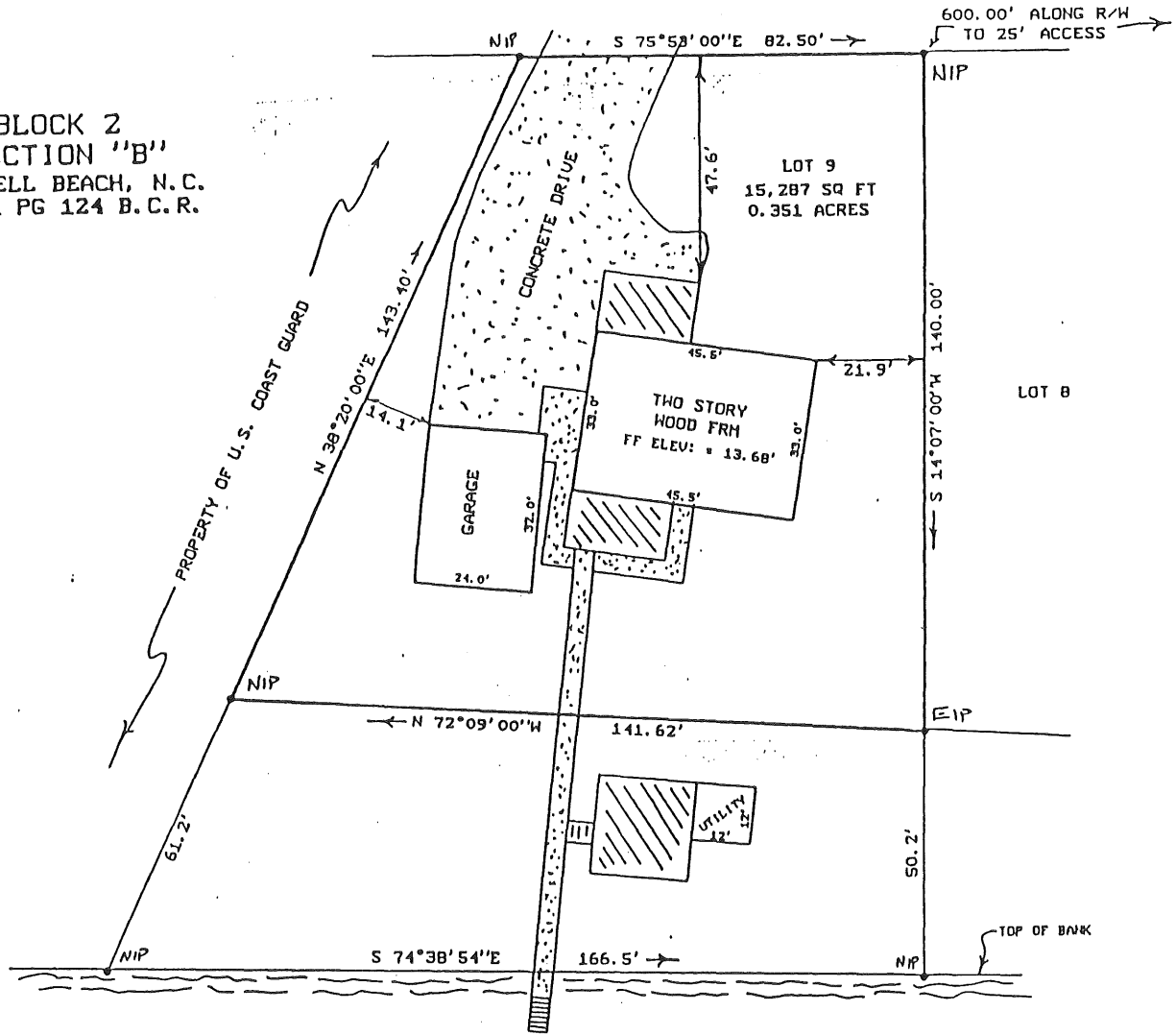
30 15 0 30 60

DRAWN BY BRYANT P. SPENCER: 6-22-98



CASWELL BEACH ROAD 60' R/W

BLOCK 2  
SECTION "B"  
CASWELL BEACH, N.C.  
MB 1 PG 124 B.C.R.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

