

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Currituck
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Currituck Beach Lighthouse *Station*

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Whaleshead Lighthouse

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Northern North Carolina Outer Banks

CITY OR TOWN:
Corolla

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
First
The Hon. Walter B. Jones

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Currituck CODE: 053

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources + US Coast Guard, Norfolk District

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 27687

CITY OR TOWN:
Raleigh

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Currituck County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Currituck

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: North Carolina

COUNTY: Currituck

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Currituck Beach Lighthouse stands on an isolated part of North Carolina's Outer Banks about twenty miles below the Virginia border. It is the northernmost of North Carolina's lighthouses and is not approachable by an improved road from the north or south. Immediately to the west of the lighthouse is Currituck Sound whose shallow brackish waters extend northward into Virginia. The lighthouse complex includes a brick dependency at the base of the tower, and a keeper's dwelling a few yards to the west.

The red brick tower of the lighthouse is laid in one-to-three common bond and reaches 158 feet into the air. At its top is a polygonal glass lantern with a metal roof and acorn-shaped finial. A narrow platform with a simple iron railing encircles and gives access to the lantern. Below this is a broad circular open gallery supported by very large ornate iron brackets with pendants. The long, sloping brackets are stopped below by a heavy molded necking. Set in the shaft of the lighthouse between the brackets and above the necking are four narrow casement windows facing north, south, east, and west. Below them and facing the sea are three windows placed vertically along the height of the shaft, with diminution appropriate to the height and taper of the shaft. At levels between the three seaward windows, but facing the sound, are two windows of the same design. Each narrow eight-over-eight sash window is segmental-arched and surrounded by a projecting molded brick frame accented at its four corners and keystone with what appears to be granite. The shaft itself rests on a brick foundation, hexagonal in shape, whose iron weatherings form a water table which overhangs the off-set of the brick foundation.

Connected to the base of the lighthouse on the sound side is a small one-story brick building three bays wide and two bays deep. Through it, access is gained to the lighthouse by means of an enclosed passage. It is of brick laid in one-to-five common bond on a high brick foundation with a stone water table. Two four-over-six sash windows similar to those of the lighthouse are set in each of the gable ends. The main facade to the west contains a paneled door with a transom under a stone segmental-arched lintel on brick pilasters. The lintel carries the date 1873. Two large triangular brackets carry the small gable roof canopy. The gable is ornamented by a crossbar and king post. The roof of the building is of tile of artificial composition, and the wide overhangs are supported at the gable ends by three triangular brackets occurring at the apex and sides of the gable. The roof is pierced by corbel-capped interior end chimneys.

About a hundred feet to the west of the lighthouse is a lighthouse keeper's residence, a large house with suggestions of the Gothic cottage style. It is in a deteriorated state but remains structurally sound. The two-story frame building with a finished attic rests on a high brick foundation laid in one-to-five common bond. In plan it is a Greek cross with a central main block and wings to the north and south. The building is divided along the east and west axis on all floors creating a duplex with each unit occupying half the central block and an entire wing. Above the wooden water table, the walls are weatherboarded except in the gables of the main block where vertical board and batten is employed. The east facade, composed of a main block with a central gable and flanking wings, is completely symmetrical.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Currituck	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7.

On the side toward the lighthouse and sea, in the first story, the main block is pierced by two paired (sash missing) windows with aprons containing diagonal sheathing. Each pair is set in a heavy, eared architrave which echoes those of the lighthouse and is standard throughout the building. In the second story are two similar paired windows but diminished in size and without aprons. The board and batten gable contains a pair of narrow full height windows (sash missing) whose architraves are formed partly by the battens. An old photograph shows that all windows originally had louvered blinds, and in addition, here and there an interior flat-paneled shutter remains. Each of the gables of the main block and wings is adorned with a crossbar and king post whose base terminates in a trefoil and whose top penetrates the apex of the gables and once carried a spire-shaped finial. The narrow bargeboards are adorned with curvilinear sawwork at the ends. Ornamented brackets support the roof overhang, those at the extreme width of the gables rising gracefully from the cornerposts. Both wings are alike in construction and detail. Where each wing joins the main block its roof continues the original pitch downward to cover a small rectangular projection of the wing. A seaward window in the second level of the projection lights an interior stair, and a narrow version of the eared architrave window faces south out of this projection in the first story. At the first level facing seaward is an entrance porch, protected by a shed roof which is supported by an ornate post and bracket. A single first-story window with an apron pierces the wing proper on this side. The gable ends of the wings have two windows at the second level only.

On the west side, the main block repeats the features of the seaward side, while the wings differ by having a shed roof porch running their full length. Wooden stairs ascend to the porch level, and enclosed by the porch are an entrance and a single window, the only openings on this side of the wings. There is an interior end chimney in each wing, and two chimneys in the main block, each with a heavy corbelled cap.

In the interior of each duplex a transverse hall at the base of the wing connects both east and west entrances and gives access to a room in the wing and two rooms on the main block. The wing room is plastered, as are all the others, and it and the hall have a vertically sheathed wainscot. All rooms have a standard mantel with raised molded panels on the pilasters, and raised molded escutcheons with bosses, which support the shelf. In the hall along the transverse wing wall rises a flight of stairs connected by winders to a second flight ascending to the second floor where are found rooms divided and finished as on the first floor. A central enclosed stair ascends from the hall to the attic which is finished with plaster and consists of a single room.

Flanking each wing is a square cistern with a brick foundation, louvered wooden walls, and a board-and-batten pyramidal roof.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1875

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Completed in 1875, Currituck Beach Lighthouse ^{Station} was the last of three major lighthouses to be built on the North Carolina coast. It is a graceful structure whose architectural qualities remove it from the mundane utilitarian class of building which its purely functional purpose would seem to require. With the ornate keeper's cottage, so consistent in style with the lighthouse, it forms a monument rich in associations with North Carolina's fabled Outer Banks.

Currituck Beach Lighthouse, completed in 1875, was built to warn shipping in the area between Cape Henry, Virginia, and Bodie Island Light, lower on Carolina's Outer Banks. When running south ships hug this shore to avoid the Gulf Stream. Running north there was the chance of mistaking False Cape, north of the light, for Cape Henry. Currituck Beach Light with its 160,000 candle power light is visible for fifteen miles. It was built on a tract of twenty-two acres purchased for \$75.00; construction cost \$178,000. It is sometimes called Whaleshead Light because it is near a long sand dune which mounds up at one end in a large hump resembling a whale's head. At about the time the lighthouse was completed, a group of northern sportsmen established a hunting lodge nearby called the Lighthouse Club. This was one of several such clubs formed by hunters of the abundant duck and geese in the area. The club property included the Whaleshead dune and much of the land adjacent to the lighthouse. Later a railroad magnate, Edward C. Knight, built a lavish hunting lodge called the Whaleshead Club on this tract. At about the time the lighthouse was built, a station of the United States Lifesaving Service was constructed nearby. Around these enterprises a modest settlement grew up called Corolla.

Ironically, it was after the light went into operation that a shipwreck with major loss of life occurred three miles to the south. The cause of the wreck was not attributable to any navigational error, but to a leaky ship with a badly stored cargo. Eighty-five people were lost when the sinking steamer Metropolis was run ashore in January of 1878.

The Currituck Beach Lighthouse now functions automatically, casting its beam seaward every twenty seconds. Maintenance of the light and ownership of the tract it occupies has been vested in the North Carolina Department of Economic and Natural Resources.

*Wildlife Resources Commission
in January of 1952.*

*U.S. Government, but
the property upon which the
keeper's quarters rest was transferred
to the*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research and architectural description by Charles Blume, Jr., survey specialist. Currituck County Records, Currituck County Courthouse, Currituck, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Currituck County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Sharpe, Bill. A New Geography of North Carolina. Raleigh, Edwards and Broughton, 1961.
 Stick, David. Graveyard of the Atlantic. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1952.
The Outer Banks of North Carolina. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	36°	22'	17"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	75°	49'	24"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 17 August 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: H. G. Jones I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

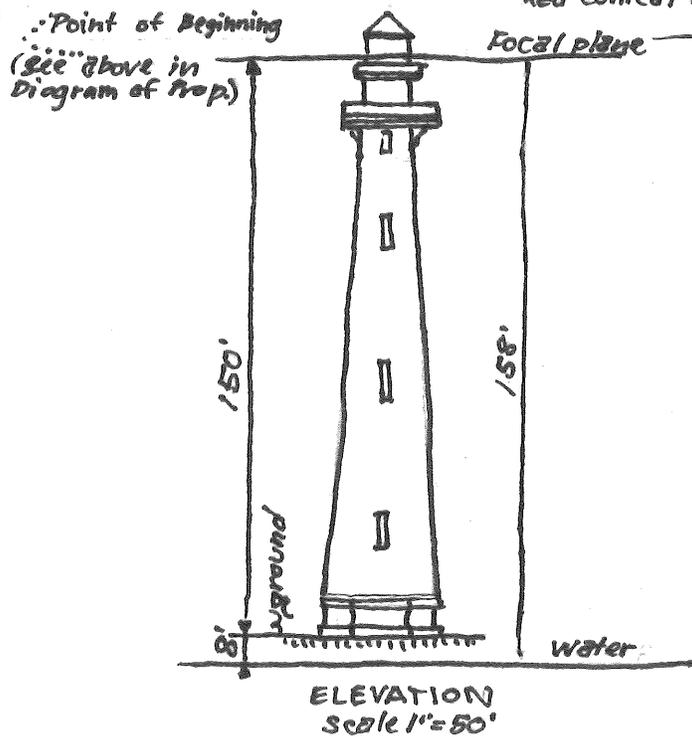
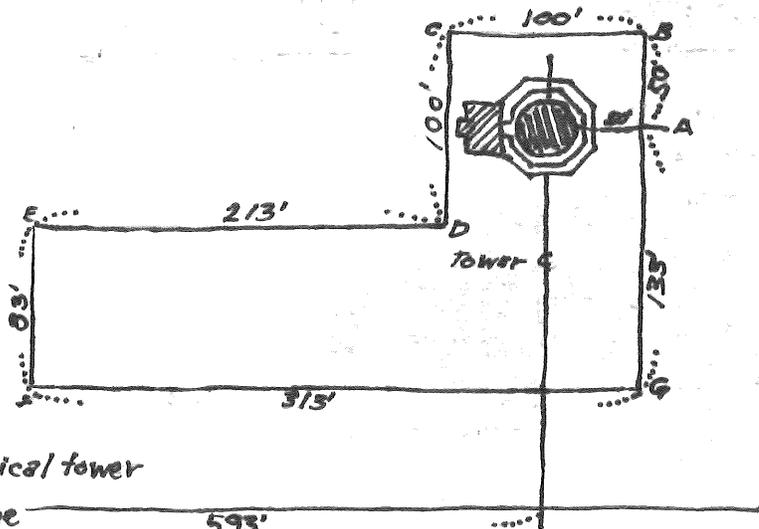
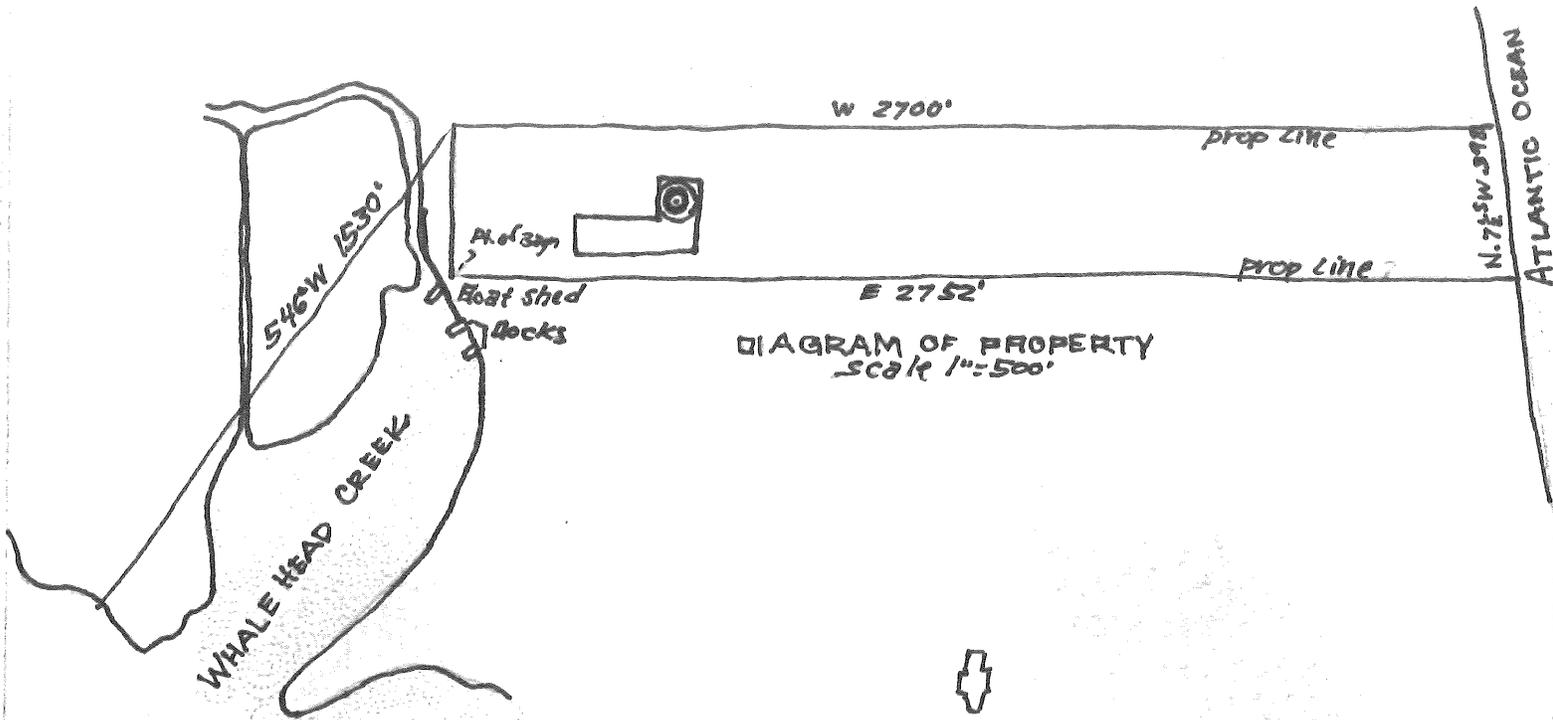
Title: Director, Division of Archives and History _____
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 17 August 1973 ATTEST: _____

Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



REVIS	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
	CURRITUCK BEACH, N.C. LIGHT STATION	Drawn by	AC
	PLOT PLAN		
	UNITED STATES COAST GUARD CIVIL ENGINEERING NORFOLK DIST. ~ NORFOLK, VA.	Scale As noted	Date: 5-10-44
	Approved	Sheet / of	
	Sr. Civil Engr. District Engr	Drawing No. 23136	

2703

ENCLOSURE 01

