

P00031704

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:  
Florida

COUNTY:  
Lee

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE  
OCT 1 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Sanibel Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Point Ybel on Sanibel Island

CITY OR TOWN:  
East end, Sanibel Island

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Seventh

STATE: Florida CODE: 12 COUNTY: Lee CODE: 071

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):

Agricultural  
 Commercial  
 Educational  
 Entertainment  
 Government  
 Industrial  
 Military  
 Museum  
 Park  
 Private Residence  
 Religious  
 Scientific  
 Transportation  
 Other (Specify)  
Lighthouse

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Seventh Coast Guard District

STREET AND NUMBER:  
51 S.W. First Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Miami

STATE:  
Florida

CODE:  
12

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

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

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Fort Myers

STATE:  
Florida

CODE:  
12

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

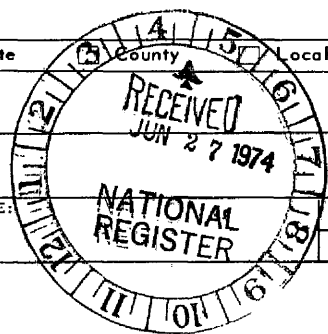
TITLE OF SURVEY:  
N/A

DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE:  
CODE:



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7. DESCRIPTION

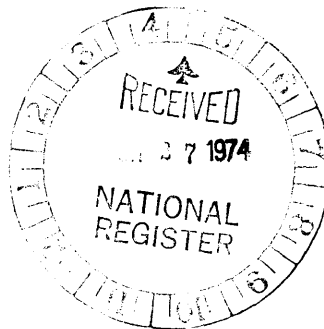
CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input 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

The tower of this lighthouse is a skeleton iron structure in the general shape of a frustum or a four-sided pyramid having a central circular cylinder enclosing a spiral stairway used for reaching the lantern. The cylinder does not adjoin the base of the pyramid, but starts from the top of a twenty foot iron column. The whole is surmounted by an iron watch room topped by the lantern housing. Both the watch room and the lantern have a separate gallery and railing. The light was 98 feet above sea level in 1884.

In close proximity to the lighthouse are two detached frame dwellings resting on well-braced iron columns; they are attached to the lighthouse by a stairway. These dwellings, constructed in 1884, incorporate architectural features indigenous to the area such as the wide verandas which extend around the buildings on three sides. On the fourth side of each structure, the basic area of which is square, is an "L" extension. The houses feature hipped roofs each surmounted by a single chimney.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1884**

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 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

In 1832, a group of investors known as the Florida Peninsular Land Company sponsored the exploration of a portion of the Gulf Coast of Florida for the purpose of selecting a site for a permanent settlement. By the end of the year, Sanibel Island had been selected as the best location for a colony, and in 1833, a small group of settlers arrived from New York. This early settlement was not long lived (within five years, the island was nearly deserted and remained so for about twenty-five years), but the initial colonists were active in trying to develop the area. In December, 1833, thirteen residents of Sanibel Island petitioned the U. S. Treasury Department for the construction of a lighthouse on the island. However, the national government showed no interest in the idea at that time.

In December, 1856, the General Land Office received a request for the creation of a reservation of land for the purpose of establishing a lighthouse on Sanibel Island. No action was taken until the request was repeated in December, 1877. By that time, seagoing commerce in the area had reached important proportions. The General Land Office acted favorably, and within two weeks, Sanibel Island was closed to private ownership.

The Lighthouse Board now began to solicit from the U. S. Congress an appropriation for the construction of a lighthouse on Sanibel Island. It argued that there was no lighthouse between Key West and Egmont Key to serve the Florida Gulf Coast shipping trade, which was increasing steadily. Steamers and many sailing ships were regularly plying the route between Key West and Gulf ports. The fact that nearby Punta Rassa was a busy cattle shipping point was not specifically mentioned, but this was an important consideration in the request for a lighthouse to serve the area. The Lighthouse Board pointed out that the vessels using this route made their landfall and took their departure from the southern point of Sanibel Island, making it the logical place for a lighthouse to be erected. The Lighthouse Board recommended in 1878 and again in 1879 that \$40,000 be appropriated to begin the construction of a light at that place.

(con't.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See attached sheet.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

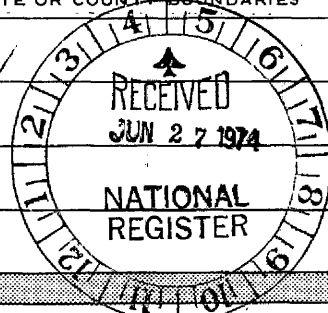
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N26° 27' 10"	W82° 00' 52"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM  
17/398880  
2926050  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Mildred L. Fryman, Graduate Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives, History & Records Mgt. DATE: 11-5-73

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Department of State, The Capitol

CITY OR TOWN: Tallahassee STATE: Florida CODE: 12

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

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>Robert Williams</u></p> <p>Title: <u>Historic Preservation Officer</u></p> <p>Date: <u>June 11, 1974</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Robert Williams</u> Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: <u>10/1/74</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>Constance</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>9-27-74</u></p>
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(Continuation Sheet)

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OCT 1	1974

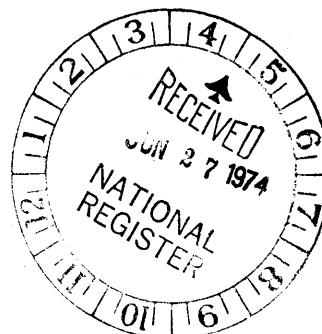
(Number all entries) 8. Significance

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It was March 3, 1881, before Congress appropriated \$20,000, the amount it considered to be sufficient for construction of a lighthouse on Sanibel Key. The final cost was much larger, however, for on August 7, 1882, another \$30,000 had to be appropriated for the completion of the lighthouse. It was some time before actual construction of the tower began. In April, 1883, the District Engineer surveyed the site and recommended that the east end of the island be permanently reserved for the lighthouse reservation. A few more months' delay occurred due to the fact that the state of Florida claimed ownership of the land in question under the Swamp Land Act of 1850 and did not relinquish that claim until August, 1883. Finally, on December 19, 1883, all of Sanibel Island was declared a reservation by an Executive Order signed by President James A. Garfield.

The actual construction of the lighthouse station began in February, 1884. The foundation for the lighthouse was completed within three months, but unfortunately, the schooner transporting the iron work for the tower from Jersey City was wrecked just two miles from Sanibel, and most of the cargo sank with the vessel. Assistance was provided from Key West for the salvage operation which soon commenced; all but two small pieces of the lost iron work was recovered. Construction resumed while a firm in New Orleans made duplicates of the missing parts; by the end of the summer, the lighthouse was completed. The station was lighted for the first time on August 20, 1884. It continues in use at the present time as an automatic electric light.

Throughout the years of its service, the Sanibel Lighthouse has been the scene of routine activities associated with the functions of a lighthouse station. Its significance lies in regular and reliable service to the commercial life of the west coast of Florida rather than in any special events which occurred at or near the Sanibel Lighthouse. Presently, the former keeper's dwellings are in use by representatives of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Department of the Interior.



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(Number all entries) 9. Major Bibliographical References

Carter, Clarence E., ed. The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. 24. Florida Territory, 1828-1834. Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1959.

Dormer, Elinore. "Sanibel Lighthouse," Unpublished manuscript, 1973.

Hammond, E. A. "Sanibel Island and Its Vicinity, 1833, A Document," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XLVIII, no. 4 (1970), pp. 392-411.

Holland, Francis R. America's Light Houses, Their Illustrated History Since 1716. Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1972, p. 141.

Records of the U. S. Coast Guard. Record Group 26. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

