

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 14 1987

date entered 1981 9 2 NDC

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Damariscove Lifesaving Station

and or common

2. Location

street & number Damariscove Island not for publication

city, town X vicinity of Boothbay

state Maine code 23 county Lincoln code 015

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheet

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lincoln County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Wiscasset state Maine 04578

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Damariscove Lifesaving Station is an asymmetrically massed one-and-a-half story building sheathed entirely in wood shingles. It rests on a rubblestone foundation and features an octagonal watchtower on the front elevation.

The station's landward facade faces west. It is composed of a rectangular main block whose roof has a gable on the north end and is hipped on the south end. A short polygonal two-story bay window with a trio of openings on each level projects from a point just south of the center of the facade. It is flanked by a window, formerly a door, on the north and a small hip roofed addition to the south. A pair of large openings with two-leaf doors occupy the northern end of the facade, and they in turn are surmounted by a pair of hip roofed dormers. A brick chimney punctuates the roof at the junction of the bay.

The south elevation has a more symmetrical composition. A shallow hip roofed porch sheltering a door is located in the center of the wall. Its square piers support a shingled skirt and paired chamfered posts carry the roof. A single six-over-one double hung sash window is located to the right of the porch and a second opening is located to the left. One large hip roofed dormer with a pair of window openings is positioned on the roof above the porch.

Rising above a tall stone foundation punctuated by one door, the observation tower features trios of small square openings on two levels and one on each side at the apex. A narrow denticulated cornice carries around the tower below the octagonal roof. A single window occupies the wall to the right of the tower, and a pair of dormers are located on the roof of the building. To the left of the tower is a long low shed wing with rock walls. Projecting well beyond the main block and terminating below a hip roof, this wing served as the boat house and features two wide openings facing the harbor.

Inside, the station has an irregular plan with living quarters on the first floor and sleeping quarters on the second. Narrow sheathing covers the walls and ceilings of the first story rooms whereas the rooms above are plastered.

Damariscove Lifesaving Station stands on a small lot of less than one acre which is contained within the Damariscove Island Archaeological Site (N.R. 5/22/78). The period (1600-1699) and areas of significance (Archaeology-Historic, Exploration/Settlement) defined in that nomination do not embrace the significance of the station.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1897 **Builder/Architect** Victor Mendelheff, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

A lone weathered sentinel overlooking Damariscove Harbor, the Damariscove Lifesaving Station is a relatively intact shingled structure built in 1897. The building's significance derives not only from its former critical function as a front-line rescue outpost for the survivors of marine disasters, but also as an important example of the turn-of-the-century architect designed lifesaving stations erected along the coastal United States. It stands today as a mute reminder of the hazards of maritime transportation along the Maine coast.

Although the history of organized efforts at lifesaving in the United States can be traced to the eighteenth century, the United States Lifesaving Service was not officially established until June 18, 1878.¹ However, in 1848, Congress had appropriated funds for the construction of stations along the New Jersey coast, and subsequent legislation during the next three decades provided for the establishment of both manned and unmanned stations from Texas to Maine. Throughout the history of the Lifesaving Service it is credited with saving more than 175,000 lives.

Maine's first five lifesaving stations were built in 1874.² The westernmost section of the State was served by Fletcher's Neck Lifesaving Station (NR,11/1/74) and the easternmost by the Quoddy Head Station in Lubec. Additional stations were erected in 1878, 1880, 1883 and 1886. Two facilities, including the one on Damariscove Island, were built during the 1890's. In all, twelve stations (four of which contained two separate buildings) were established in Maine between the years 1874 and 1929. Of these sixteen structures constructed at the twelve sites, eleven still survive in various states of preservation and reuse, but only one continues to be utilized by the Coast Guard in its original capacity.

The lifesaving station on Damariscove Island was designed by Victor Mendelheff, an architect about whose career little is known as yet. Mendelheff's tenure with the Service began in 1897 after the dismissal of George Russell Tolman. His first design scheme was for a station at Port Huron, Michigan. Among its notable characteristics are an octagonal tower and hip roofed dormers, features which were employed not only at Damariscove but also at the Watch Hill Station in Rhode Island. Although additional stations were erected in Maine during Mendelheff's association with the Service no other bears the striking composition of the station on Damariscove.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Pemaquid Point, Maine

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	9	4	5	10	3	19	10	4	18	4	14	5	19	10
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is contained within the boundary as drawn on the Town of Boothbay Tax Map R-11, Lot 2-A/

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April 14, 1987

street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine 04333

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *E. S. Andrews*

title S.H.P.O. date 5/18/87

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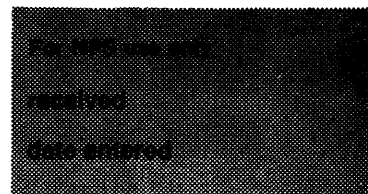
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick Andrews date 6/25/87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Betty L. Savage* date 6/25/87
Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Damariscove Lifesaving Station Item number 4

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Charles D. Whitten
62 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 01890

Barry T. Ryan
5 Garden Street
Somersworth, New Hampshire 03878

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Continuation sheet Damariscove Lifesaving Station Item number 8

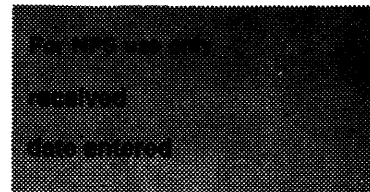
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ENDNOTES

1. The historical information on the United States Lifesaving Service is taken from Wick York, "The Architecture of the U.S. Life-Saving Stations", The Log of Mystic Seaport, Vol. 34, Number 1, Spring, 1982, pp. 3-20.
2. A history of the lifesaving service in Maine written by Wick York was published in the Island Journal, Volume Two, 1985.

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Continuation sheet Damariscove Lifesaving Station Item number 9

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York, Wick. "The Architecture of the U.S. Lifesaving Stations", The Log of Mystic Seaport. Vol. 34, Number 1, Spring, 1982. Mystic, Connecticut: Mystic Seaport Museum.

_____. "Saved! History of the Life Saving Service in Maine", Island Journal. Vol. 2, 1985. Rockland, Maine: Island Institute.

National Register nomination for Fletcher's Neck Life Saving Station, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine, August 30, 1974.