

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED DEC 03 1979  
DATE ENTERED MAY 7 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Monhegan Island Lighthouse and Quarters  
AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Monhegan Island  
CITY, TOWN Monhegan Plantation VICINITY OF First  
STATE Maine CODE 023 COUNTY Lincoln CODE 015  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**CLASSIFICATION**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>OWNERSHIP</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>PRESENT USE</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

(See continuation sheet)

NAME Monhegan Associates, Incorporated (Keeper's House, attached buildings and oil house)  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN Monhegan, VICINITY OF STATE Maine

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Lincoln County Registry of Deeds  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN Wiscasset STATE Maine

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Monhegan Island Light, dating from 1824, is a well-preserved lighthouse and supporting buildings in a spectacular setting.

The lighthouse proper is a circular granite tower, forty-seven feet high with a parapet and light casing above. The walls of the tower are not parallel, sloping inward from the base, making the tower a truncated cone. The beacon consists of a flashing white light of 30-second interval, each flash being 2.8 seconds in duration. Attached to the south side of the tower is a small, gable-roofed brick entry-house, with a doorway beneath a low arch. Each side contains a 6/6 window.

Moving southward, the rest of the complex consists of the following: a detached storehouse of frame construction with gable roof and shingled siding; an oil storage house of brick construction with gable roof and a louvered vent atop the ridge; the long gable-roofed sheds of the keeper's house; and the keeper's house itself.

The keeper's house is a frame building of two stories with gable roof and a wing to the north of 1½ stories. Siding is clapboard and the two internal chimneys are brick. Fenestration is consistently 6/6. A one-story enclosed porch covers the entrance, which faces east.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1824

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Probably familiar to Basque, Breton, Spanish and Portuguese fisherman in the late 15th century, Monhegan Island was recorded by John Cabot in 1498. One early visitor aptly described this lonely outpost as "a great island that was backed like a whale". The colorful and imaginative Capt. John Smith landed on Monhegan in 1614 and his account of the attractions of the island and its anchorage eventually led to settlement as early as 1625. Since 1674, there has been continuous population of the place based largely on a fishing economy.

Today, Monhegan supports a year round population of about 100 which climbs to over 300 in summer with the arrival of cottage-owning summer residents. The rich and unusual flora has been carefully guarded by careful control of the wild areas of the island so that the natural beauty is largely unspoiled.

By act of Congress in 1822, \$3,000.00 was appropriated to establish a lighthouse and keeper's dwelling on Monhegan Island. The first keeper, Thomas B. Seavey, and his family occupied the quarters and lit the light on July 2, 1824. The light was supervised by the Lighthouse Service until that organization was consolidated with the Coast Guard beginning in July, 1939.

In 1959 the kerosene fired Welsbach mantle and its weight-powered rotary mechanism were replaced by a generator operated and regulated by remote control from the fog signal station on nearby Manana Island. The keeper's house and outbuildings were therefore declared surplus property shortly thereafter.

By sealed-bid public auction held on June 1, 1962, these buildings were acquired by Monhegan Associates, Inc., an organization formed in 1954 "to preserve for posterity the natural wild beauty, biotic communities, and desirable natural, artificial, and historic features of the so-called 'wild-lands' portions of Monhegan Island, Maine, and its environs, as well as the simple, friendly way of life that has existed on Monhegan as a whole".

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ashley, Alta, The Monhegan Museum, Monhegan Associates, Inc. 1973.

Sterling, Robert T., Lighthouses of the Maine Coast. Brattleboro, 1935.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Scale: 1:24000

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

Quadrangle name: Monhegan

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 4745210 4845590  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The property nominated is a rectangular area, 40X100 meters, running northwesterly and southeasterly with the lighthouse located 30 meters from the southeasterly end and centered between the northeasterly and **southwesterly** sides.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

DATE

October, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

242 State Street

TELEPHONE

207/289-2133

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. Felt*

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

11/9/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

5/7/80

ATTEST: *Patrick Andrews*

DATE

5/7/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 2

United States Government (Light Tower) ✓  
Commander, First Coast Guard District  
150 Causeway Street  
Boston, Massachusetts

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In the summer of 1966, after extensive repairs, a few museum exhibits were opened to the public in the keeper's quarters. Since 1968 the buildings have been open on a daily basis during the summer with a constantly expanding group of exhibits designed to exemplify the historical, natural and economic features of Monhegan Island. These include a room of historic photographs, displays devoted to the fishing and lobstering industries, a remarkable collection of color photographs of the various species of birds found on the island as well as a depiction of ice harvesting and a recreation of a typical fish house. Also on display is a remarkable collection of paintings and other works of art created by the numerous artists for whom Monhegan Island has long been a mecca.

The rugged stone column of the light tower and the simple white wooden structures standing atop a bare exposed hill overlooking the sea in all directions epitomize the wild beauty and rugged life which is Monhegan Island.

\* Dating from 1822, Monhegan Lighthouse is one of the key navigational signals on the Maine coast. Because it lies far off shore it is an important landfall for approaching vessels as well as those traversing the coast. The museum at the keeper's quarters provides an understanding of both the historical background of the island and its peculiar environment. An important feature of the museum is the extensive collection of paintings and other works of art executed by generations of Monhegan artists.

(This paragraph is intended as an introduction to the Statement of Significance - item 8.)