

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Whaleback Light Station  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Portsmouth Harbor  N/A not for publication  
city, town Kittery Point,  vicinity  
state Maine code ME county York code 031 zip code 03905

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
<u>1</u>	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Light Stations of Maine

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Carle S. Stettin SHPO  
Signature of certifying official  
Maine Historic Preservation Commission

10/30/87  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Robert J. ...  
Signature of commenting or other official

12/2/87  
Date

U.S. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:)

Patrick Andrus

3/23/88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Water-Related

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Water-Related

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Light Station

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granitewalls Stone: GraniteBrickroof Other: Iron Deck and Lanternother 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Rising out of a shallow rock outcropping some fifty-nine feet above the mean high water level, the Whaleback Light Station consists of a conical ashlar granite tower abutting a rectangular brick fog signal building. Completed in 1872, this remarkably intact structure houses within its granite walls the former keeper's quarters and storage facilities. It features a vertical row of three windows and a door on its north face. A striking molded granite deck caps the tower shaft and supports an iron walkway with railing. The octagonal lantern is covered by a domed roof surmounted by a spherical ventilator.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Engineering  
Transportation

Period of Significance

1872-1937

Significant Dates

1872

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Designer

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Established in 1829 and completely rebuilt in 1872, the Whaleback Light Station occupies a shallow rock ledge at the outer entrance to Portsmouth Harbor. It maintains integrity of design, setting and association, and meets the requirements for registration as set forth in the multiple property submission "Light Stations of Maine". The station's significance is more fully described with respect to the associated historic contexts Maritime Transportation in Maine: ca. 1600-1917 and Federal Lighthouse Management: 1789-1939.

Whaleback light was the second of two lights built to guide vessels along the Piscataqua River. Its location at the outer entrance of the harbor served as a beacon between the Isles of Shoals light off New Hampshire and the inner harbor light that had been established in 1789. During the nineteenth century Whaleback light was classified as a secondary sea-coast light, an indication of its significance to the proximity of major shipping lanes and the great volume of traffic into and out of the harbors at Portsmouth and Kittery. It was automated in 1963.

This light station derives significance under criteria A and C. Criteria A is satisfied by the association of the complex with Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made navigation possible. Criteria C is met by the station's distinctive character that reflects one important form of light station design and construction of the 1870s.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Annual Report of the Light-House Board. Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., various dates.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

U. S. Coast Guard

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than 1

UTM References

A 

1	9
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3	6	1	8	3	0
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4	7	6	8	5	1	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property of less than one acre contains the light tower/fog signal structure and the shallow rock ledge on which it stands.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Whaleback Light Station embraces the light structure and the shallow ledge on which it stands. This is the entire area historically associated with the site.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date October, 1987

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333