

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0695050

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 15 1979
DATE ENTERED	MAR 2 1979

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

Avalon Life Saving Station

AND/OR COMMON

Avalon Coast Guard Station (former) #131

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

76 W. Fifteenth Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Avalon

— VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Jersey

Cape May

9

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Donald DeSantis, MD

STREET & NUMBER

4001 State Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Drekel Hill

— VICINITY OF (Del. Co.)

Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cape May Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Cape May

N. J.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input 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 two story Avalon Life Saving Station has a steeply pitched roof with a dormer window. The four story tower contains windows that reflect the placement of the stairwell it contains. The observation floor of the tower projects over the main body of the tower and the transition between these two dimensions is facilitated by brackets. The tower is capped with a bellcast roof. The exterior fabric is wood shingles.

The modifications to the exterior are as follows: The large boat shed doors were removed. A small overhead garage door leads to a one car garage. The space has been filled in with wood shingles to match the facade. Larger windows were added to the top of the tower. In the rear of the building, a wing was added but the exterior shingle treatment and roof lines are consistent with the original building. To the rear of the dining area and boat shed, a new bedroom with a sliding glass door have been added. Exterior alterations are from 1973.

The outhouse, a free standing structure behind the station, remains on its original site. The interior has been modified into a cabana for the pool. The exterior shingling is original. A large family room was also added to the rear of the building.

The majority of the interior work consists of subdividing larger spaces. In the case of the upstairs dormitory, a dividing wall and closets were added. No finished ceiling was added to this area and the exposed structure remains. Interior alteration date from 1964 to the present.

The boat shed has been divided into bedrooms, garage, bath and closets. The living room, kitchen and dining areas remain much as they were originally. The steep ladder to the last floor of the tower has been replaced with a metal circular stair. A swimming pool has been added in the space between the main building and the outhouse.

The later alterations have not compromised the integrity of the original fabric.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

PECIFIC DATES 1894 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Hiram Godfrey

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Avalon Life Saving Station is one of a few remaining stations that once dotted New Jersey's coast during the 19th century protecting vessels from natural disasters. Architecturally it is a good example of a shingle style building where the function is clearly expressed by the form.

In August of 1848, the Honorable Doctor William A. Newell from the 2nd Congressional District of New Jersey, proposed the following amendment to the Lighthouse Appropriation Bill:

"For providing surboats, rockets, carronades and other necessary apparatus for the better protection of Life and Property from Shipwrecks on the Coast of New Jersey, between Sandy Hook and Little Egg Harbor, Ten Thousand Dollars, the same to be expended under the supervision of such officers of the Revenue Marine Corps as may be detached for this duty by the Secretary of the Treasury".

This bill was enacted on August 14, 1848 and became the basic foundation from which the U.S. Life Saving Service was born. In later years, the Life Saving Service & the Cutter Service were combined to form the U.S. Coast Guard. Dr. Newell was very interested in the various aspects of sea rescue and also helped develop the Breeches Bouy into a practical rescue tool. This Act of 1848 provided for 8 Life Saving Stations to be built that were little more than frame boathouses, 28 feet long by 16 feet wide. Six more stations were added in 1849 in New Jersey and 14 on Long Island. The 28 stations built by 1855 were 36 feet in length and 17 feet wide.

These stations were a factor during the development of coastal sea trade and commerce. The implementation of rescue and salvage of vessels relieved a problem which plagued the shippers of that period. Vessels were continually running aground on the shifting sandbars off the Jersey

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Coast Guard Station Remodeled," House and Garden Remodeling Guide, Fall 1972
 Bennett, Robert F., Surfboats, Rockets, and Carronades. Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.
History of Cape May County, p. 362-363.
 "The Life Saving Service of Long Ago," The Cape May County Magazine. June 1957 Bulletin, p. 338-340

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/4 acre
 QUADRANGLE NAME Avalon QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES 840

A	1,8	5,2,4	1,3,0	4,3	2,8	8,7,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C							D			
E							F			
G							H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The two story building is situated on Lots 14 and 16, Block 15.02 as shown on the Tax Map of the Borough of Avalon. The property forms a rectangle measuring 110' by 100'.

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 Edward T. Hinderliter, Architect DATE _____
 ORGANIZATION _____
 STREET & NUMBER 207 W. Baker Street TELEPHONE _____
Media Pennsylvania 19063
 CITY OR TOWN _____ STATE _____
 (215) 565-0349

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 procedure set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE [Signature] DATE 12/28/78
 TITLE Deputy Commissioner

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER [Signature] DATE 3-2-79
 ATTEST: [Signature] DATE March 1, 1979
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED JAN 15 1979	
DATE ENTERED	MAR 2 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

#2

Significance - cont.

Coast. The prevailing winds and tides enhanced these misfortunes by driving the ships toward the shoals during most storms that pounded the Jersey Coast. The U.S. Life Saving Station grew out of a need to protect vessels, cargo, and crews from these natural hazards.

The Avalon or (7 mile beach) Life Saving Station, was constructed in 1894 at a cost of \$4,915. It was built by a local contractor named Hiram Godfrey. On a map dated 1895 of Cape May County, all the stations then in existence were located and numbered consecutively beginning in the north and ending on the bay side of Cape May Point. The Avalon Station was not in this numbered sequence but its location was clearly delineated in 1895. This building was larger and more sophisticated than the original Boar Houses. The outside dimensions were 48 x 60 and it was two stories with an observation loft that rose another two stories. Rooms on the first floor included a kitchen, office, mess and barracks. There was a barracks and locker room on the second floor. The first Captain or Keeper was John W. Swain who was salaried at \$900.00 per annum. He was responsible for raising a crew of six to seven surfmen who labored for \$65.00 a month. The Keeper was also the Superintendent of the Building and Recording Secretary. The function of the men stationed in Avalon was to rescue equipment and personnel that were in difficulty between the Townsends Inlet Station and the one located three miles to the South in Stone Harbor. Records of many rescue operations performed by this personnel at the Avalon Station are to be found in the National Archives. At least one of these rescues resulted in the surfmen and keeper being cited for heroism by the Government.

As one of a vanishing type of building along the Jersey shore and because of its importance to the state's maritime history, the Avalon Life Saving Station warrants listing in the National Register.