

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 15 1975
DATE ENTERED SEP 9 1975

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Racine Harbor Lighthouse and Life Saving Station

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

North Pier at entrance to Racine Harbor

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Racine

VICINITY OF

1st

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Racine

CODE

101

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input checked="" 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 | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <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 type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Not currently in use. |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME U.S. Coast Guard (in litigation)

STREET & NUMBER 400 Seventh Street, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington,

VICINITY OF

STATE District of Columbia 20024

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Racine County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 730 Wisconsin Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Racine

STATE

Wisconsin 53403

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Wisconsin's Historic Preservation Plan, Volume II: The Inventory

DATE

1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" 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

Lighthouse & Keeper's Quarters: This building was made of cream-colored brick and was located 200 feet offshore on a rock-filled timber crib; the building is now on a peninsula built out from the mainland over a period of years. One-and-one-half stories high, it had a rectangular tower centrally situated on the east end of the building facing the lake. On the north side of the roof near the tower was a brick gable roofed dormer. On the west end of the structure was a one-story enclosed brick porch with a hipped roof. Atop the tower was an octagonal lantern house equipped with a fixed white light that was removed in 1903.

When the keeper's dwelling was remodelled, the ridge was crossed with a gable roofed structure that spans the breadth of the house converting it into a two-story building. The former light tower was crowned with a pyramidal roof. The three pipe, straddle ridge chimney remains intact on the west end of the roof.

Life Saving Station & Boat House: This is a two-story frame edifice with a gable roof. A centrally located, pyramidal-roofed lookout tower on the south is flanked on either side by a shed dormer, with two identical ones on the north side of the roof. East of the tower is a one-story, two-bay end porch. The building's dimensions are 30x50 feet. The interior was finished in Georgia pine.

The one-story boat house has a gable roof with an attached one-story, two-bay end porch that faces south towards the harbor. An 80 foot launch-way runs from the covered porch down into the harbor. The entire building measures about 35x50 feet and is also frame. All three buildings have been painted white.

Warning Tower: In the northwest corner behind the Life Saving station stands a 120 foot high galvanized steel tower that served to warn ships, either entering the harbor or sailing along the coastline, of any impending storm. During the day specially marked flags and pennants aided the navigator and captain, while at night lanterns helped to point out possible storms and their direction. Racine's tower was "one of about 380 storm warning display stations on the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts and on the Great Lakes."¹

When the new Coast Guard station was completed, the Racine Journal Times noted with pride that "The buildings are said to be the finest on the great lakes and are certainly a credit to the city."²

¹Racine Journal-Times, vol. 95, No. 162, July 11, 1951, p. 5.

²Racine Journal-Times, vol. 44, No. 279, December 1, 1903, p. 1.

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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input 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 checked="" 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 1866; 1903

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Jensen Brothers, Racine
Contractors

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Once a leading Wisconsin commercial lake port, Racine became an important Great Lakes shipbuilding and shipping center during the last half of the nineteenth century. As an aid to the many navigators experiencing the hazards of an often treacherous Lake Michigan, lighthouses were built.

Racine's Harbor Lighthouse was constructed on the north pier where the Root River empties into Lake Michigan. Begun by the federal government in 1863, it was finally completed in 1866. In 1903 the fixed white light was removed to a steel tower on the end of the north pier. During that same year the two-story frame life saving station and boat house were completed. Whereas the lighthouse assisted only with navigational safety, the life saving station [in 1915 the Life Saving Service was merged into the Coast Guard] was concerned with search and rescue operations along the 16-mile Milwaukee-Kenosha shoreline and a 40-mile area stretching out into Lake Michigan.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Leach, E.W. "Racine Harbor Lighthouses and Shipyard," Racine Journal News, vol. 81, No. 166, July 16, 1921, p. 3.
- Racine Journal-Times, vol. 44, No. 279, December 1, 1903, p.1.
- Racine Journal-Times, vol. 95, No. 162, July 11, 1951, p.5.
- Stone, Fanny S. (ed.), Racine: Belle City of the Lakes and Racine County, Wisconsin, 2 vols., Chicago: 1916, p.280.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.3

UTM REFERENCES

A | 16 | 436279 | 4731355 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | | | | | | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

07AC OK W.M. 900-15

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

Allan Heninger, Planning Analyst, Historic Preservation Office

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

2 May 1975

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-2971

CITY OR TOWN

Madison,

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

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.

S.H.P.O.

-FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

James Norton Smith

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

6/24/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. M. Smith

DATE

9/9/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

SEP 8 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER