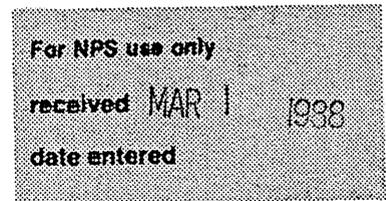


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



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1. NAME: Historic - Hog Island Shoal Lighthouse
Common - Hog Island Shoal Light Station

2. LOCATION

South of Hog Island, east passage, Narragansett Bay
Portsmouth, Rhode Island
Bristol County

3. CLASSIFICATION

Category - structure
Ownership - public
Status - unoccupied
Accessible - yes, restricted
Present Use - government, transportation, other: active
lighthouse

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

U. S. Government, Department of Transportation
First U. S. Coast Guard District Headquarters
150 Causeway Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

U. S. Government, Department of Transportation
First U. S. Coast Guard District Headquarters
150 Causeway Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

none

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7. DESCRIPTION

Condition - fair / altered / original site

Hog Island Shoal Light stands offshore about 600 yards southeast of Hog Island at the entrance to Mount Hope Bay. Still an active light, it serves to warn ships of the shoal that extends along Hog Island's south side.

Built in 1901-1902 from standardized plans that were modified for its individual site and requirements, the tower is referred to as a caisson light, after the type of foundation on which it rests. It is of the same basic design as the Conimicut, Plum Beach and Sakonnet lights.

The tower stands in 10 feet of water on a cylindrical cement foundation, 25 feet in diameter, which is sunk 8-1/2 feet into the bottom of the shoal, and which rises about 6 feet above the high water level. Bands of cast-iron sheathing plates surround the foundation cylinder and extend upward above the water line to enclose the basement level.

The tower itself is a prefabricated cylindrical cast-iron structure containing five levels plus the lantern and measures 60 feet from the high water line to the top of the lantern ventilator. The diameter of the first (basement) level is 25 feet, the next three levels are approximately 20 feet in diameter, while the fifth level is about 11 feet wide.

Four round port hole type windows pierce the foundation sheathing to light the first level. The next level is lit by four windows and the third level by three windows, each with arched casings. Six portholes are found at the fourth level. The seven windows on the second and third level originally had two-over-two sashes, but these have been removed and boarded over.

Surrounding the outside are three galleries. The bottom one of these is an 8-foot-wide covered gallery, 36 feet in diameter, offering protection from the weather at the entrance (second) level. Around the watchroom at the fifth level is an open 6-foot-wide, 24-foot-diameter overhanging gallery, surrounded by an iron railing and supported from beneath by cast-iron brackets. Mounted on the deck of this gallery is a vertical exhaust pipe which extends above the roof of the lantern, and an automatic fog

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horn. The third gallery which surrounds the lantern is 2 feet 6 inches wide, 12-1/2 feet in diameter, and is also open.

The circular lantern contains diamond-shaped sheets of glass held in place by an iron frame. Above the lantern's conical roof is a spherical ventilator topped with a lightning rod.

There is no landing pier at the base of the tower. The only access is provided by a ladder mounted to the north side of the foundation cylinder which rises up through a hatchway opening in the floor of the bottom gallery. A doorway at this level leads inside the tower where the walls are lined with brick throughout. A spiral stairway along the outside walls connects the first four floors which contained storage space in the basement, a kitchen and living area in the first floor, a bedroom above, and a tool room at the fourth level. An open iron stairway leads from the tool room to the watchroom on to the lantern. The light, which is 54 feet above sea level, can be seen from 12 miles and its fourth order equal interval white light flashes every six seconds. The fog horn gives two blasts every thirty seconds.

The shaft of the tower is painted white, while the foundation cylinder, the windows and doors, the galleries and railings, and the lantern are black. The tower's condition was listed as poor on a Coast Guard inspection of September 1980, due to stress cracks and corrosion in the iron sheathing plates.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Period: 1900-

Specific Dates: 1901-1902

Built in 1901-1902 to warn ships approaching Bristol and Mount Hope Bay of a shoal south of Hog Island, Hog Island Shoal Light was the last lighthouse to be established in Rhode Island, and the only one in Narragansett Bay built to replace a lightship. Although earlier lights had been established nearby at Bristol Ferry (1854) and off Muscle Bed Shoals (1873), Hog Island Shoal Light is the only surviving one of the three, and as such remains the primary navigational aid for ships in the area. Architecturally, the light is significant as an example of late-nineteenth-century engineering and prefabricated construction, and is one of four surviving caisson lighthouses in Rhode Island.

As early as 1869 the annual report to the Lighthouse Board had cited the need for a lighthouse southeast of Hog Island to warn ships of Hog Island Shoal, a reef situated near the entrance to Mount Hope Bay. The Board had recommended the construction of

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an offshore light on the reef to replace a private lightship maintained by a steamboat company that ran boats between Newport and Fall River. However, it was not until 1899, after the lightship was reported to be in poor condition and scarcely seaworthy, that Congress appropriated \$35,000 to establish a lighthouse and fog signal on the reef. By the end of June, 1901, the tower's foundation cylinder had been completed and work began on erecting the iron superstructure. Although a temporary light was installed in October of that year, it was not until March 1902, that the tower was entirely finished. A fog signal was established the following month.

In 1921 the station was repaired and oil tanks were installed on the deck of the lower gallery. Otherwise, few significant alterations have been made to the tower. Automation of the light was authorized in 1959 and began with the laying of an electric cable from Hog Island to supply the station with power. However, it was not until 1964 that automation finally was completed. At that time the windows in the tower were boarded over, and as part of the conversion, a brighter light was installed and a horn was added to replace an earlier fog siren.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage: Less than .5 acres
Quadrangle name: Bristol, RI
Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000
UTM References: A 19 310610 4611230

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property includes only the land on which the lighthouse sits.

Level of Significance:

SHPO

~~NPO~~ Certification:

Terence E. Williams

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Period of Significance: The period of significance extends from 1901, when construction of the lighthouse began, to 1938.

Level of Significance: State

RBC 20

Walker

GRISWOLD

HOG ISLAND SHOAL LIGHTHOUSE Portsmouth, RI

A 19 310610 4611230

Castle

STOL
NPORT

HOG ISLAND

Bristol Pt

LIGHT *

Musselbed Shoals

*LIGHT

CONRAIL
RHODE ISLAND

TURMPRE AVE

MOUNT HOPE BAY

MOUNT HOPE BRIDGE

M O U T

● INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1983

311000m E

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty Light-duty
- Medium-duty Unimproved dirt
- U. S. Route State Route



ANGLE LOCATION

BRISTOL, R.I. MAP

N41°37.5' - W71°15'7.5"

1955
PHOTOREVISID 1970 AND 1975
AMS 6767 III NE SERIES V815

4614

4613

4612

4611000m N

41° 37' 30"

71° 15'

MS 11 296
6767 III SW