

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 30a

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox, MHC, July 1981

1) Newburyport Harbor Front and Rear
Ranges.

2) Front Range Light

3) Rear Range Light

HISTORIC NAME: Newburyport Harbor Front
Range Light

TOWN: Newburyport

LOCATION: Merrimac River Coast Guard Station

COUNTY: Essex CODE: 009

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 6th

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Essex Registry of Deeds

Book 878, p. 26

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination is confined to the front
light itself.

LAT./LONG.: 42°48'7"/70°53'2" (front range)

UTM COORDINATE: 19/352/000/4739/800

USGS QUADRANGLE: BOSTON, MA; NH; CT; RI; ME

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: under 1 acre

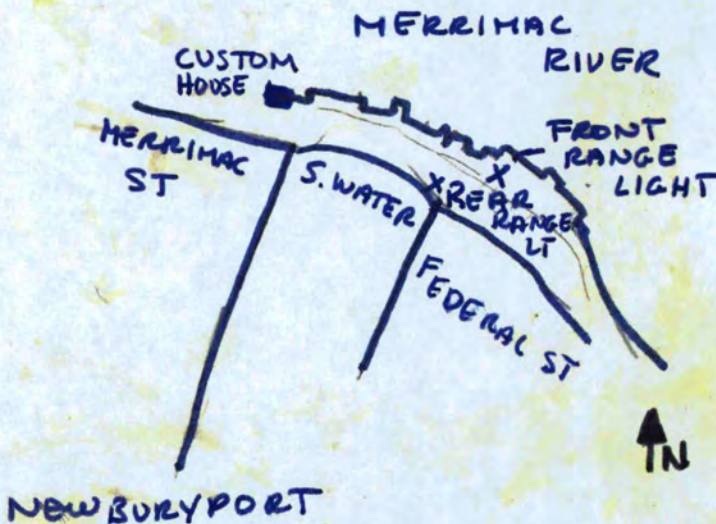
OWNER(S): U.S. Coast Guard
First Coast Guard District
408 Atlantic Ave.

Boston, MA 02210

STATUS: Unmanned/Inactive

Site, Active Coast Guard Station

SKETCH MAP



RECORDED BY: Leslie Fox

ORGANIZATION: MHC

DATE: September 1981

SITE DESCRIPTION

The altered Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light was moved from its original location on Bayley's Wharf to its present location within the metes and bounds of the adjacent Merrimac River Coast Guard Station, which was built in 1972. It is only a short distance to the dock and Newburyport Harbor and is still used as a daymark by navigators. Much restoration and preservation has come to this part of Newburyport, and the main shopping district and Customs House are just a few blocks to the west. Access to the Coast Guard Station is restricted, but it is located on the waterfront parallel to Water Street.

Major Elements

The Front Range Tower, built in 1873, is intrinsically important to the Rear Range Tower, which is located a few hundred feet to the south on Water Street. When the tower was situated on the commercial Bayley's Wharf prior to the late 1960's, the two range lights were of great value to mariners entering the harbor, helping them to avoid the dangerous reef, Goose Rocks. Currently, the tower sits on the northwest corner of the station and is used only for storage although it appears to be well tended. The new Coast Guard Station and Boathouse are not discussed as they are peripheral to the theme of this nomination.

Tower: The foundation of the range light is of cement, and was constructed when the tower was moved to its present location in 1964.

Exterior: The frame is made of steel and wood which are covered by painted white shingles on the upper half. The cylindrical 35' high frame is constructed of steel plate lined with brick to a thickness of 1' - the steel and brick component comprises the lower 15' of the tower. The upper 20' consists of a hexagonal wooden frame structure covered by shingles.

Door: Entry is gained through a curved steel door 19" above the ground; its measurements are 30" x 73".

Windows: Two windows are located on the north, or Merrimac River side. The Tower is an original 2/2 window; the upper was added when the roof was raised and is a single pane.

Balcony: Ten iron brackets support the exterior balcony. The balcony itself is 20" wide with an apron of 6", and the iron railing is 3' high. The distance between railings is 45" with a curved brace of 6".

Roof: The roof was raised several feet to its present height sometime before 1957. It served as an interesting and unique example because the original roof and lantern room are intact. In fact, only two iron segments of the old roof were dismantled; these rest to one side and were removed to allow access to the new lens room within.

Interior: An iron spiral staircase leads to the first level, and an upright ladder leads to the second - the lens rooms. The interior walls are brick, painted gray. The staircase has been painted red and has twelve risers, excluding two brick steps from the entrance down to the tower's brick floor.

Lamp

Room: The first landing is composed of five triangular iron segments fitted together, and it was probably the old lens room. In the walls facing north there are spaces for the three panes of glass that originally allowed mariners to see the light.

Windows: The lower, existing window frame is 3" wide. The window on this level, the old lens room, now covers the window just described. The newer window has actually been built out 1' from the original frame thus making the balcony considerable smaller. The old lantern windows had contained 35.5" x 26.5" panes.

The original curved 31" x 18 1/4" iron half door leads to the balcony from

this level too. A wooden ladder extends from the second landing to the addition, which is situated atop the old roof.

Roof: The roof was constructed in segments of iron. Each segment was 4' long.

Lens Room: Another wooden ladder leads to the second lens room. The eight sided wood frame roof shows evidence of repair and two sections of the wood roof have been completely replaced, but there is no apparent water damage. The second roof was built and raised from its original level when the light was discontinued as a range light, and commenced use as a channel light.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

1873: Robert Bayley, who owned Bayley's Wharf, and operated a lucrative business there, sold two parcels of land to the U.S. Government to erect the range light. Both were erected the same year.

1933: The Front Range Light was gray with a brown base. Its candlepower was decreased from 2000 to 69- and the illuminant changed from coal to electric incandescent (300 mm).

1952: Front Range still on Bayley's Wharft, though now unattended.

1957: First photograph showing new roof.

1961: Proposal by Coast Guard to sell the properties on which the range lights were located.

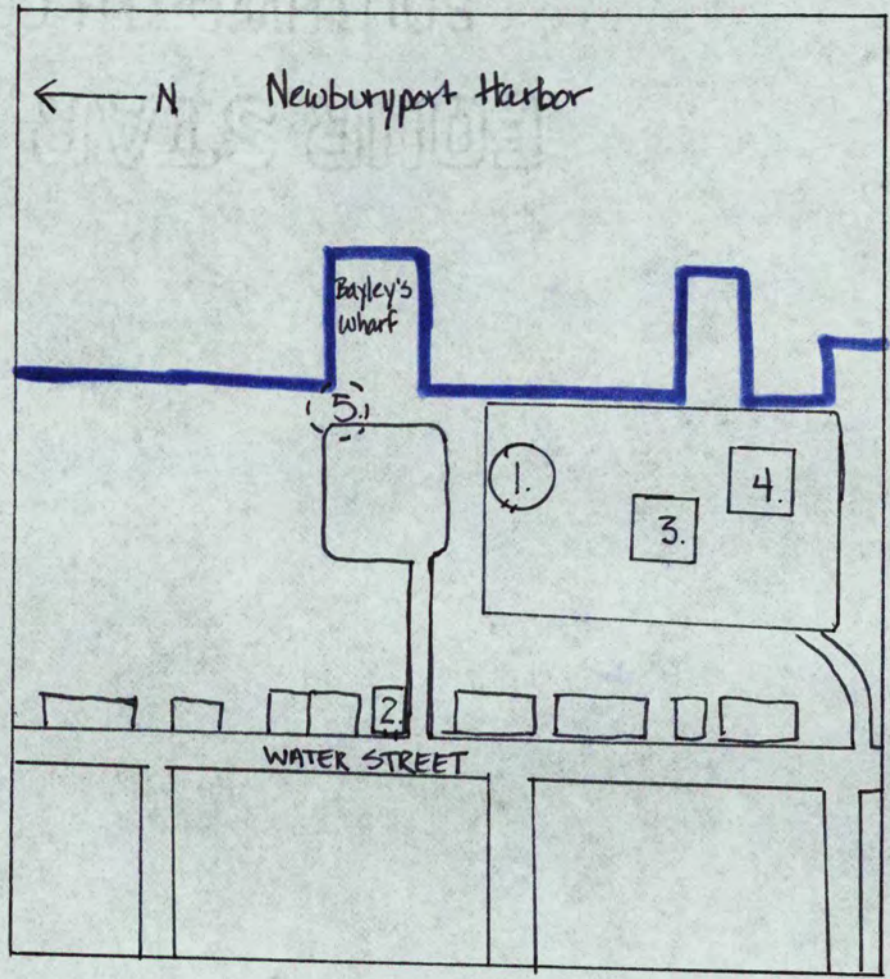
1964: Photographs showing what appears to be the removal of the range from Bayley's Wharf to Coast Guard property.

1972: New Coast Guard Station built.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Newburyport Harbor Range Lights possess integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship as well as significant associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Constructed in 1873, they are significant as one of the only three sets of range lights in Massachusetts and as part of an important historic waterfront. Although the front light has been moved and altered somewhat, this pair remains as the best example of a range light in Massachusetts. The lights meet criteria A & C of the NRHP on the state level as well as survey criteria 1a, 4b,

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION



Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light

- 1. Front Range
- 2. Rear Range
- 3. Merrimac Coast Guard Station
- 4. Boathouse / Garage
- 5. Approx. former site of Front Range

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAY 4 1987
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 4

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Minot's Ledge Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

2. Nauset Beach Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

3. Ned Point Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

4. Newburyport Harbor Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

5. Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

6. Nobska Point Light Station

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

7. Race Point Light Station

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

8. Sankaty Head Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

9. Scituate Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

10. Straightsmouth Island Light

entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light (Lighthouses
of Massachusetts TR)
Essex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/28/88
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88
Date Due: 6/18/87
Action: ACCEPT 6-15-87
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: USCG - DOT

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the
~~Historic Register~~

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category _____ Ownership _____ Status _____ Present Use _____
Public Acquisition Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair
 deteriorated ruins unexposed
Check one unaltered altered
Check one original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Newburyport Harbor
Range Lights #31

Lighthouses of May, TR

Photo #1 of 3

Range Lts.
Newburyport



Newburyport Harbor
Range Lights #31

Lighthouses of Ma., TN

Photo #2 of 3

Front Range Lt.
Newburyport

MAP 17
SCALE 1" = 40'

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

WAY

#15
30a & b

R.R. BRAN

TREET

20

16

STREET

19

51 4

SULLIVAN 3

4350

DAVIS
K. S.
M. A.

53 5

8700

GRECO

55 6

5576

2

GRECO

5900

HALL + MASHLOW

61 7

3724

DIMAGGIO

8

4974

9 LIGHTHOUSE
225
30a 2b

18

DENT ST.

WATER ST.

65 63

11
NBPT ART
ASSOC.

3130

5050

17

SCALE: 1" = 40'

NEWBURYPORT CITY

16

- NEWBURYPORT Harbor Front Range Light
- NEWBURYPORT, MA

TER

73

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282