

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 1

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox MHC 7/19/81

1. Annisquam Light Station from river
2. Tower and walkway
3. Oil house from tower
4. Dwelling from tower rear view

HISTORIC NAME: Annisquam Harbor

TOWN: Light Station Gloucester

LOCATION: Wigwam Point

COUNTY: Essex CODE: 009

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 6th

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Essex County Register of Deeds, South Distri  
Book 167, P. 95, 96 Gustavus Griffin to U.S.

<sup>1800</sup>  
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

see attached description of Parcel C

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: Lat 42° 39' 42" N Long. 70° 40'

UTM COORDINATE: 19/362/700/4724/600

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

SCALE: 1: 250,000

ACREAGE: 1.3 acres

OWNER(S): United States Coast Guard

First Coast Guard District

408 Atlantic Ave.

Boston, MA 02110

STATUS: occupied keepers dwelling

RECORDED BY: Leslie Fox

ORGANIZATION: MHC

DATE: September 1981

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Annisquam Harbor lighthouse is located on the western side of the Wigwam Point, near the village of Annisquam -- a part of the town of Gloucester. Long sandbars and a rocky shore along the Annisquam River create dangerous obstacles for the navigator, but the lighthouse protects the mariner from the eastern side of the north entrance of the river. Residents of Annisquam have free use of the land and beach on the west side for recreational purposes, gaining access through the land presently owned by the Coast Guard. The property to the east is called Norwood Heights, and is a private housing development begun in the early 1900's.

#### MAJOR ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION

The light station was first established in 1801 and thus is an early station site. However, the original wooden octagonal tower (1801) was replaced c. 1897 by the existing brick tower. The keeper's dwelling, also 1801, was substantially altered at that time but retains the overall plan and dimensions of the original dwelling. The complex consists of the tower, keeper's dwelling, an open elevated walkway, garage, seawall and oil house (believed to be 1801-14).

The original 6/6 windows in the tower were replaced by glass block c. 1974. The tower walkway was replaced following storm damage which resulted from the Blizzard of 1978. The tower's brick masonry was repointed and repaired in 1985. The exterior of the keeper's dwelling was renovated in 1984 including replacement of the shingle siding with bleached cedar shingles and white-painted trim, replacement of the 6/6 windows with 1/1 insulated glass sash and installation of a light colored roof.

An 1800 map by William Sanille depicts... "The Light House to Stand on Wigwam Point on the spot occupied by the Beacon the Height of the Stonework 3 feet/woodwork 40 feet/exclusive of Lanthorn. The distance of the five nearest dwelling houses 1/2 mile each... elevation of the spot where the Beacon Stands 7 feet above high water, being Solid Rock the whole quantity of land set off 6 1/2 acres". (4.9 acres were disposed of in 1972 by the U.S. Coast Guard).

Tower Exterior: Formerly called Wigwam Point, the 41' high white brick cylindrical 1897 tower rests on a stone foundation, and access is made over a wooden uncovered walkway and through a small brick 7'4" x 8'2" entryway or stage room. The entryway has single storm door and a shingled roof with a heavy wooden cornice.

A window on the inland side has been blocked up, but a stone sill is evident. Directly above the peak of the roof is a window; two or more are on the river side, one directly above the other. The grounding strap runs down the length of the tower from the lens room on the east side of the tower.

Balcony: The balcony and exterior of the lens room are iron, and are painted black. Just underneath the balcony, stepped brick corbels extend slightly outward to support the weight of the structure above. The railing itself is simple eight thin vertical rails between two horizontal flat pieces that connect to a single baluster topped by a small iron ball.

Lens room: The octagonal lens room has two panes permanently blacked out as they face inland to the residential section of Norwood Heights. An iron half door inside. The lens room has a conical metal roof made of eight segments fitted together, and is topped by the typical ball-shaped metal air vent and lightning rod.

Interior entry: The entry way has a brick floor as well as walls; the latter are 4' thick.

Tower: Once inside the tower, thirty-three iron risers ascend along the interior brick wall. The handrail is wood, and possibly handcut, as are the ones at Straitsmouth (#37), Eastern Point (#16) and Newburyport (#29). At the top of the enclosed staircase is a half deck (the lamp room) that has a 7'4" iron ladder continuing on to the lens room.

Major Elements Desc

Keeper's Dwelling: This structure, built in 1801, has been altered many times since. Original cost was \$5,000, and it is a wood frame, two story building with a gable roof and painted white shingles. It covers 30' x 27', or 2374 sq. ft. Three bedrooms are located on the second floor, and a porch has recently been added to the rear. (The floor plan strongly resembles other keeper's dwellings; i.e. Race Point [#34], Straitsmouth [#37]). It is now occupied by the Commanding Officer from Gloucester Station and his family.

Garage: The single story one car garage with a window and two doors has also been shingled; both the dwelling and the garage have asphalt shingled roofs.

Walkway: The 75' wood walk (built in 1814 at a cost of \$1,000) was replaced in kind in 1978.

Seawall: Probably built in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it cost \$2,000.

Oil House: It was built in either 1801 or 1814. The one story, stone, 11' x 13' oil house is one of the few examples of its kind in Massachusetts. (Most are brick). The white washed rubble walls have a single door, a small wooden air vent above it, and a shingle roof with a wooden cornice. It is situated on the far corner of the property, near the Squam Rock Land Trust, formerly known as Sandy Cove.

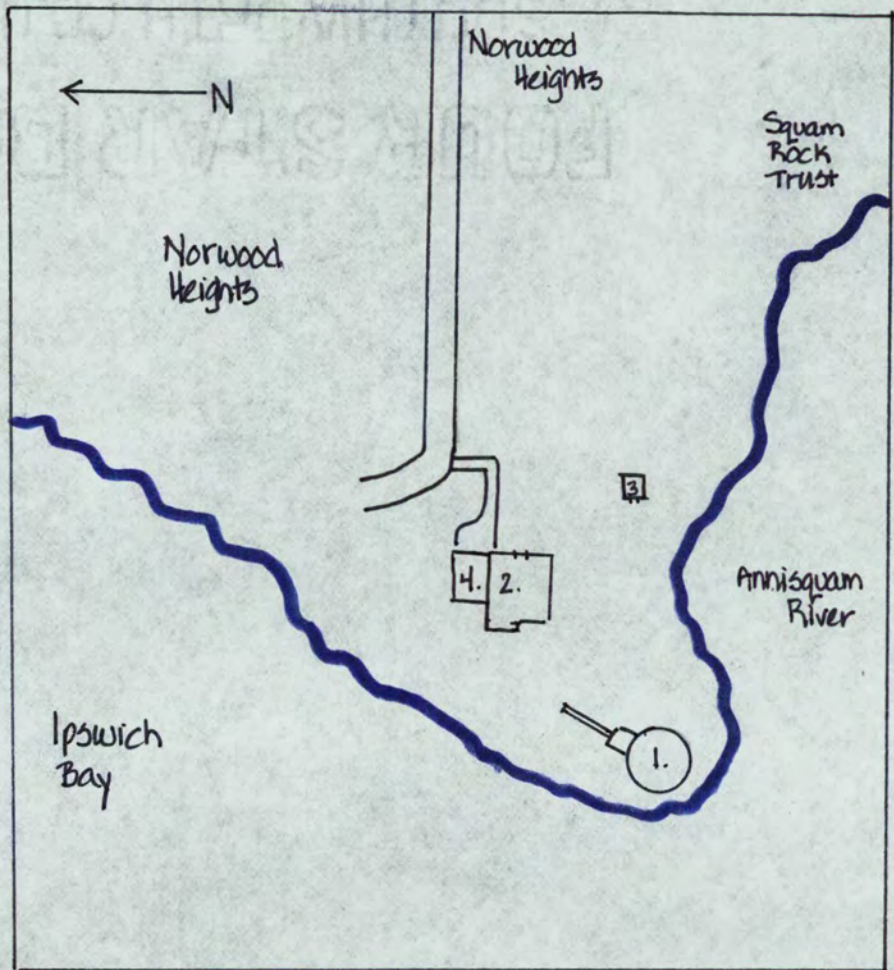
Fog Signal: Recently added, it is located on the exposed rock directly to the rear (river side) of the tower. It is controlled by the Gloucester Police Station.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1800: Congress authorized a lighthouse to be built on Wigwam Point. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts ceded land on Wigwam Point to the U.S. Government in June, Book No. A, folio 192, 193. Gustavus Griffen sold 6 1/2 acres in October to the U.S. for \$140.
- 1801: The first lighthouse was constructed and lit, and the keeper's dwelling was built, probably the oil house as well.
- 1814: Walkway was built.
- 1897: Present tower constructed.
- 1900: The residential development of Norwood Heights was built up slowly; small private and public roads laid.
- 1919: The light had 100 candlepower and was visible for 8 miles.
- 1922: The 5th order Fresnel lens was removed, and a 4th order installed. By this time the candlepower was 1300, and the source of fuel was changed from oil to electric.
- 1965: The 4th order Fresnel lens had a 250,000 candlepower flashing white light, and a 60,000 candlepower red light. It was powered by 120 volts; T-20 amps; 1000 watts and a 2c5 filament. The fog signal had been installed, and gave 1 blast every 60 seconds for 5 seconds during the daylight hours. The light in the tower was displayed from 15 minutes before sunset to 15 minutes after sunrise and at all times when the fog signal was on (which was when the Annisquam River entrance Lighted Bell Buoy # 2 became obscured).
- 1967: A quartz iodine lamp was installed in the lens room.
- 1971: The Coast Guard proposed to automate the light, then visible for 15 miles to sea.
- 1972: The Coast Guard recommended to retain the Light Tower and 1.3 of the original 6.5 acres, and decided to use the keeper's dwelling for personnel.
- 1974: The light was fully automated.
- 1978: Tower walkway replaced following damage in Blizzard of 1978.
- 1980: The Coast Guard disposed of two parcels of land totaling 4.9 acres deeded to the Norwood Heights Trust with an easement for access to the light, and retained the third parcel, - 1.3 acres. The Squam Rock Trust also received a license for access to the beach.
- 1984: Keeper's Dwelling renovated; 6/6 windows replaced with insulated 1/1 sash.
- 1985: Brick tower repointed and repaired.
- Light Characteristics: 120 volt, 2 plastic lampchanger; a cc8-th lamp; not opti OCB 10.4 RPM with red and black sectors.

#### LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Annisquam Harbor Light Station possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as significant association with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. The site is one of the oldest in the state. The complex includes an 1897 tower and also preserves elements of the original 1801-14 complex (the keeper's house and oil house). Additionally, the site is highly picturesque and represents the scenic qualities of the coast. The Annisquam Station meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places as well as survey criteria 2c, 3a, 3b, and 4a.

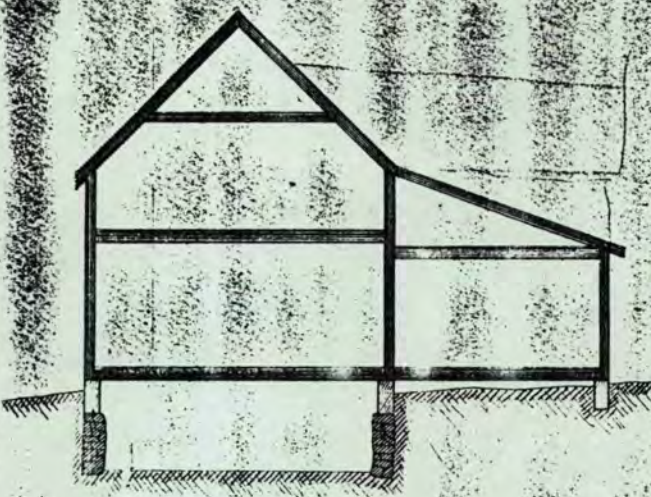


Annisquam Harbor Light Station

1. Tower, entryway, walkway
2. Keeper's Dwelling
3. Oil house
4. Attached Garage



Sect on A.A.



Frame Elevation

HOUSE AND TOWER  
AT  
ANNISQUAM, MASS.  
Scale 1/2 in to 1 ft.  
No 895

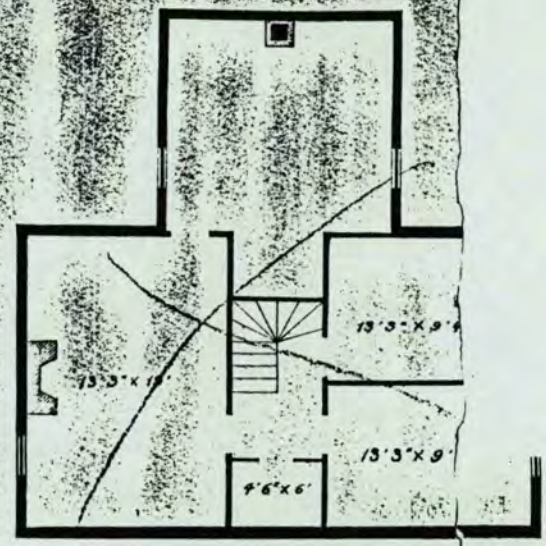
Handwritten notes:  
34 x 19  
M.H.  
58  
196  
626  
730



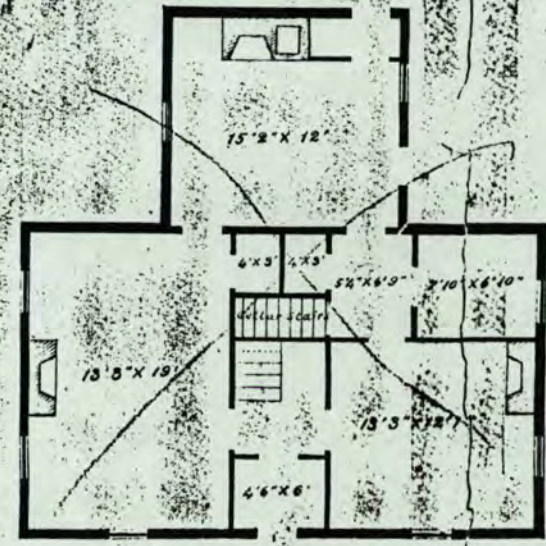
*Old Tower  
obsolete*



Cellar



Second Floor



First Floor

*Annisquam*

ANNISQUAM HARBOR LIGHT-USCG PROPERTY

DESCRIPTION OF PARCEL C (TO BE RETAINED)

A certain parcel of land situated in the Village of Annisquam, City of Gloucester, Essex County, Massachusetts, which is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a point on the Mean High Water line of Ipswich Bay at a point one hundred seventy five (175) feet, more or less, northerly of the center of the Annisquam Harbor Light Tower and twenty five and five tenths (25.5) feet, more or less, southeasterly of a copper bolt set in the rock ledge between the Mean High Water line and the Mean Low Water line of Ipswich Bay; thence in a southeasterly direction a distance of one hundred thirty two (132.00) feet to a copper bolt in rock ledge at the base of a stone wall, thence still in the same southeasterly direction along the remains of an old stone wall a distance of two hundred eighty eight (288.00) feet; thence in a southwesterly direction at an angle of ninety degrees with the line of the aforementioned old stone wall a distance of one hundred ten (110) feet, more or less, to the Mean High Water line of Ipswich Bay; thence in a generally northwesterly direction along the meandering Mean High Water line of Ipswich Bay to a point west of Annisquam Harbor Light Tower; thence in a generally northeasterly direction along the meandering Mean High Water line of Ipswich Bay to the point of beginning.

Said parcel, described above, being a portion of land owned by the U. S. Coast Guard and shown on LCGD Drawing No. 6569, dated 25 June 1975, entitled U. S. Coast Guard Annisquam Harbor Light, Property Subdivision, as Parcel C and containing one and three tenths (1.3) acres, more or less.

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 374

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR  
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 21. Hospital Point Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. Graves Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. Annisquam Harbor Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. The Beacon *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. Bird Island Light *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 26. Borden Flats Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. Boston Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 28. Brant Point Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 29. Butler Flats Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. Cape Poge (Pogue) Light *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Annisquam Harbor Light Station (Lighthouses of  
Massachusetts TR) Essex Co.  
Gloucester County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/58/821  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88  
Date Due: 6/18/87  
Action:  ACCEPT 6-15-87  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: USCG

Entered in the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_

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

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	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	date _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

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**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

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



JULY 1981



by Berkey

Annisquam

ANNISQUAM HARBOR LIGHT STA.  
GLOUCESTER- #1  
*Lighthouses of Ma, TR*  
PHOTO #1



ANNISQUAM HARBOR LIGHT STATION

GLoucester - #1

Lighthouses of Me, TN

PHOTO #2

Ut.



ANNISQUAM HARBOR LIGHT STA.

GLOUCESTER #1

Lighthouses of Ma, TR

PHOTO #3

oil house

Annisquam Lt.



ANNISQUAM HARBOR LIGHT STA.

GLoucester #1

Light houses of MA, TR

PHOTO #4

Annisquam Lt.  
dwelling

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282