

PH0505781

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 13 1977
DATE ENTERED FEB 17 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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

1 NAME

**

5190 HISTORIC HATTERAS WEATHER BUREAU STATION (Old)

AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

off NC 12

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN
Hatteras

VICINITY OF

First

STATE
North Carolina

CODE
37

COUNTY
Dare

CODE
55

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service - ~~Cape Hatteras National Seashore~~

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1, Box 675 1895 Phoenix Blvd

CITY, TOWN

Manteo, Atlanta

VICINITY OF

Georgia

STATE

North Carolina 30349

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dare County, North Carolina, Courthouse (Register of Deeds)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Manteo,

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hatteras Weather Station consists of a 1½ story wood frame office/residence building, two board and batten storage sheds and a metal flag mast. The Station is located near the center of the village of Hatteras. The property lies north east of the public road leading from Route 12 in front of store lot of A.J. Stowe. The appearance of the area surrounding the Station shows the conditions that would be expected with the normal growth of the village. The outward appearance of the house itself has had only a few minor changes since its original construction in 1901. Most obvious of these changes are the modern metal window frames in the second floor, asphalt shingles on the roof, removal of the widow's walk on the roof, and conversion of the brick cistern to an insulated fish holding tank.

Originally, the Weather Station office building was constructed of wood frame resting upon a masonry piling. The lower floor had four rooms including quarters for the observer and an office. The upper floor had one large observation room with a ships ladder leading to a widows walk on the roof. Floors throughout were tongue-in-groove hardwood. Interior walls were beaded panelling, ceilings were plastered. The upstairs room was hexagonal in shape with eight windows of 4 over 4 double hung sash to provide a full 360 degree view. The hip roof was covered by cedar shingles and the lower roof tier was pierced by two brick chimneys, one on the north and south sides of the upper room. The front of the lower roof had a flag staff positioned over the front door. the widows walk had a weather instrument/signal light staff. Porches extended across the front and west sides. Both porches had modern railings. The front porch had masonry steps leading up to the porch center opposite the front door. The side porch had wooden steps approaching from the building's rear side. The porch roofs had a slightly shallower angle of pitch than the rest of the roof to provide for gutters and spouts for water collection system that drained into a masonry cistern on the east side of the building.

The exterior walls were faced with German siding which was coated with a white paint of linseed oil and white lead. The lower floor had three outside doors, one in front-center, one rear-center, and one on the west side porch toward the back. Eleven windows with four over four double hung sash were spaced around the lower floor outside walls. Lattice work closed the spaces between masonry pilings. A white picket fence was added to the front of the property in 1902. This fence enclosed only the front half of the yard, leaving out two storage sheds and signal tower.

Standing north of the house are two outbuildings of frame construction. Both have gable roofs with cedar shingles. One is 22 feet by 14 feet. The other is 18 feet by 12 feet. They were whitewashed, ~~with linseed oil and white lead.~~ Between the two outbuildings stands a signal tower for weather flags. It is constructed of metal on four legs with a base 10'6" square. Weather warning flags can be raised to a height of 35 feet. A privy (now gone) stood just north of the larger storage building.

Over the years, routine maintenance was performed, which included repairs to roof and porch balusters and complete repainting of all structures in 1908. The fences were repaired and repainted in 1912. A cement walkway was installed from the porch to the front gate and lattice work was repaired in 1912. In the mid 1930's, a cellar was dug

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1901 - 1952

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Harding, architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hatteras Weather Station was the first building in the Outer Banks area built officially for the U.S. Weather Bureau. It served as the office and living quarters for the officer in charge for the Weather Station. The Hatteras Weather Station, originally set up in the lighthouse keepers quarters at Cape Hatteras, August 16, 1874, was transferred to Hatteras Lifesaving Station, December 1, 1880, and to a private residence in Hatteras Village on October 1, 1883. The Weather Station occupied the present building from January 1, 1902, until it was decommissioned in April of 1946. Since then, function of the Station has been relocated near Cape Hatteras at Buxton, North Carolina.¹

The Hatteras Weather Station was built for the U.S. Weather Bureau, Department of Agriculture in 1901 on lands sold to the government by a local resident, John W. Rollinson.² A sum of \$100.00 was paid for the property. The property was expanded forty feet northwestward in 1902 after construction was completed on all structures.³

Functions of the Weather Station included an extensive observation program of hourly surface observations (temperature, relative humidity, etc.). Permanent records were kept of winds, solar radiation, temperatures, precipitation, and pressure. The Station was equipped with telegraph communications with the District Forecast Center at Washington, D.C., where a daily weather map was plotted and analyzed. The Weather Station was responsible for the issuance of Coastal Forecasts and Warning for the area, as well as the dissemination of storm warnings for Dare and Hyde counties.⁴ The Station did not signal to passing vessels because the nearby Durrants Life Saving Station was equipped for that work. Information gathered by the Life Saving Station was telephoned to the Weather Station and in turn was telegraphed to Norfolk.⁵

That the life of observers for the Weather Station was routine is attested in a letter requesting transfer by observer Doshier in 1911, "the lonely life one is forced to lead . . . here and the . . . continuous round of duty one must perform in keeping up all the work alone, where there are none of the diverting pleasures of civilization to break the dull, soporific monotony of the situation, prove after a time to be a strain that depresses even the most optimistic nature, and a physical and an intellectual menace that even the most robust constitution and the strongest mentality can not long withstand."⁶

In 1946, the functions of the Hatteras Weather Station were transferred to a new building at Buxton, North Carolina, and the old Hatteras Station was decommissioned in April of 1946. The property was retained by the U.S. Weather Bureau as living

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under the office building. In 1946 the structure was converted to living quarters. Rooms were divided and the interior was completely renovated. Interior walls were resurfaced with sheetrock. Modern electrical and water/sewer services were installed. In 1964, changes were made in the floor plan, adding (or removing) partition walls, laying vinyl tile in the kitchen and baths, upgrading electrical, water and sewer services and fixtures. Interior woodwork and hardware were replaced and sheetrock walls were covered with $\frac{1}{4}$ inch Luan paneling. Ceilings were covered with acoustical tiles.

The only exterior changes in appearance were elimination of the widows walk and two windows, replacement of original sash windows in second story with aluminum roll out windows, installation of asphalt shingles and change of exterior color from white to gray with white trim. Presently, the structure is divided into two apartments. New paneling and cabinets were installed in 1976. All light fixtures were changed from 8 foot fluorescent to incandescent. These changes did not involve structural modification and the exterior remains the same as in 1964.

The fence had rotted away by 1964 and was not replaced. All outbuildings and the flag staff remain as in the historic period. The village has grown up around the station and a paved road has been cut across part of the front yard so that the historic scene has been compromised somewhat.

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quarters for Richard B. Daily, in charge of local weather observations.

In 1952 the old Weather Bureau Station and outbuildings were turned over to the General Services Administration as excess real property. The U.S. Coast Guard acquired the property that year from G.S.A. for use as a new Hatteras Inlet Lifeboat Station or for standby use as a shelter in rough weather. On June 2, 1958, the Coast Guard reported this structure as excess real property.

Public Law 85-540 enacted July 18, 1958, provided for addition of this excess property to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreation Area. In 1958, the Department of Zoology, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, was permitted by the Seashore to station Dr. and Mrs. Harvey W. Wells in this building. They used the building as a residence and laboratory from 1958 to 1964 in the course of studies on local marine invertebrates.

On June 1, 1964, a special use permit was issued to North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, to use the Weather Station for a biological laboratory for the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station. This permit was cancelled by mutual consent on April 5, 1976.

Present use of the building is as a duplex residence for National Park Service personnel. The outbuildings are still being used for their original purpose, storage. The storm warning tower is maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard and still displays warning of Hatteras' frequently harsh weather.

- 1) Stick, David, "Outer Banks of North Carolina", Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1958, p.295.
- 2) U.S. Weather Bureau, "Letters Sent to Chief of U.S.W.B.", Washington, D.C., May 7, 1901, by Dasher.
- 3) IBID, June 18, 1902, by Davis.
- 4) "Interesting History Attaches to Weather Station at Hatteras", "Coastland Times", Manteo, North Carolina, Friday, March 12, 1961.
- 5) U.S. Weather Bureau, "Letters Sent to the Navy", Washington, D.C., February 26, 1910, by Dasher.
- 6) U.S. Weather Bureau, "Letters Sent to Chief U.S.W.B.", Washington, D.C., May 5, 1911, by Dasher.