

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001094 Date Listed: 9/3/91

Point Montara Light Station San Mateo CA
Property Name County State

Light Stations of California MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for *Antoinette Reece*
Signature of the Keeper

9/3/91
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: The Period of Significance is amended to read 1875-1940.

This information was confirmed with David Reece of the U.S. Coast Guard.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Point Montara Light Station
other names/site number _____

MAY 11 1990

2. Location

street & number 16th St. & Hwy 1, P.O. Box 737 N/A not for publication
city, town Montara vicinity
state CA code CA county San Mateo code 081 zip code 94037-9999

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	_____ objects
			<u>4</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Light Stations of California

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Robert A. Gault Signature of certifying official Date 11-5-90
California's Office of Historic Preservation State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Robert A. Gault Signature of commenting or other official Date 7/19/91
U.S. Department of Transportation State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Antoniella Lee 9/3/91
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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of open-beam, exposed truss construction. A split-landing wooden staircase and platform that formerly supported the fog-signal apparatus are found on the upper level. Verticle tongue and groove paneling is found throughout the interior of the structure. Wide double doors and five windows (four freestanding and one paired) are found on the east facade. Four windows are found on the west facade.

The fog-signal building is identical or very similar to the standard fog-signal buildings built in California in the late 19th/early 20th century. Most had one large center chamber with two small rooms off to each side. Double doors were always located on the front facade. The exteriors were usually unadorned, reflecting their utilitarian usage. This building is in very good condition and its integrity is generally whole. Minor exceptions to integrity include non-original doors and minor cosmetic remodelling. The fog-signal equipment has been removed.

3. KEEPER'S QUARTERS (1875)--CONTRIBUTING BUILDING:

A two-story Victorian Gothic dwelling constructed primarily of wood. The building rests on a foundation of brick (with concrete repairs). The plan of the building is irregular with prominent, steep gable ends forming the roof line of the building's projections. The roof is covered in red composition shingle. Horizontal clapboards cover the exterior. The exterior of the building is in very good condition.

The dwelling was constructed as a duplex and is still being used that way today. Access to the second floor unit is obtained by way of a split-run stairway at the north end of the building. The stairway balustrade, newel post, and wainscot paneling are the most prominent historical features of the interior. The condition of the interior is very-good-to-fair.

The integrity of the structure is generally high. Alterations have occurred over the years, however. Nineteenth century photographs reveal that the front recessed porch has been enclosed and a small rear porch has been added. These changes were probably performed in the early part of this century. Photographs also show that the characteristically Gothic gable trim has been removed, although some brackets still remain. Even without the Gothic trim, the irregular plan and steep projecting gables place the building squarely in the tradition of late 19th century Victorian Gothic architecture. Many Keeper's dwellings in California were built in this style. Now, only this building and the Keeper's dwelling at Yerba Buena Island survives.

4. COAL SHED (1902)--CONTRIBUTING BUILDING:

A small one-story rectangular building with a gable roof. The roof is covered with unpainted wood shingles. The facade is covered with clapboards. The building rests on a concrete foundation. The condition of the structure is very good.

The integrity of the building is generally high although some modifications have been made over the years. A wheelchair access ramp has been added to accommodate the needs of the current tenant.

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5. KEEPER'S QUARTERS (1961)--NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING:

Duplex for Assistant Keepers were constructed in 1961. This is not a contributing building due to its recent construction and character.

6. TANK HOUSE (1907)--NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING:

Although the building was constructed in 1907 it was converted so extensively to a four-car garage in 1939 that no historical character or function remains.

7. WORLD WAR II BUILDINGS (1942)--NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS:

Two concrete storage bunkers remain from the World War II era when a small Naval operations was established south of the lighthouse property. These buildings are of too recent construction to be contributing buildings.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

<p>Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)</p> <p><u>Maritime History</u></p> <p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p><u>Architecture</u></p> <p><u>Commerce</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Period of Significance</p> <p><u>1874-1940</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Significant Dates</p> <p><u>1874</u></p> <p><u>1928</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
	<p>Cultural Affiliation</p> <p><u>N/A</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Significant Person</p> <p><u>N/A</u></p>	<p>Architect/Builder</p> <p><u>U.S. Lighthouse Service, 12th District</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Point Montara Lighthouse stands as an excellent example of a late 19th century/early 20th century lighthouse/fog-signal complex. It was founded in 1875 as a fog-signal station. In 1902 a small beacon was added. In 1928 the present tower was constructed. The purpose of the station was to make a dangerous part of the coast safe for shipping and also to mark the sea road to San Francisco. It meets the requirements for registration as defined in the multiple property submission "Light Stations in California." The station's significance is evaluated with respect to the historic context Maritime Transportation in California: 1842-1940. The station derives significance under Criteria A and C. Criteria A is satisfied by the association of the complex with California's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made navigation possible. Criteria C is met by the large number of original buildings on the property that reflect the design and construction of late 19th century and early 20th century light station complexes.

The station's significance has been evaluated in relation to the historic context "Maritime History in California." This lighthouse stands as a monument to the federal government's duty to aid the safe movement of ships along the reef-strewn Montara Coast. It also serves as an important landmark along the sea road to San Francisco Bay. This lighthouse tower dates from 1928 although federal involvement at the site began in 1875 with the installation of the fog-signal. Point Montara is the seaward end of a spur from Montara Mountain. With cliffs 60' high, flanked on its shoreline by outcroppings waiting to snag the unwary vessel, it is a dangerous locale in thick weather. Mariners must use extreme caution inside the 30 fathom curve. The steamer Colorado was stranded on an off-shore ledge in 1868 and the ship Acuelo was gutted below Mt. Montara in November 1872 with the loss of her coal, iron, and grain cargo. Such tragedies spurred Congress to install a fog-signal at Point Montara.

Point Montara served exclusively as a fog-signal station until 1900 when a small post beacon was added. In 1912 a 4th order Fresnel lens was put atop a wooden tower. The lens was transferred to the present lighthouse tower when it was completed in 1928. It faithfully served its navigational duties until it was replaced with a modern automated beacon in 1970. Ironically, the sound of the fog-signal at Point Montara is now silent while the automated light shines on as an important aid to navigation. The lighthouse tower together with the two-story Victorian Gothic Keeper's quarters, and the fog-signal building and shcp all stand as visual reminders of a late 19th century and an early

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20th century lighthouse complex. Five other light stations in the Bay Area also had their beginnings as fog-signal stations.

The station fully meets registration requirements for its property type. It contains an intact lighthouse tower (minus lens) and several associated historical buildings. The historic architectural integrity of the site is very high. The original lighthouse tower, fog-signal building, shop, and Keeper's quarters are all grouped together in a cohesive whole at the edge of the point. The only intervening non-contributing building is the Assistant Keeper's quarters built in 1961. Other non-contributing buildings are located in different portions of the site. The integrity of individual buildings ranges from mostly-complete to complete. The integrity of the lighthouse tower itself is complete (except for the lens). Mature cypress trees that were most likely planted by a Keeper in the early days of the station, give unity and a picturesque quality to the site. The only significant structures no longer standing include the laundry building and the small wood-frame lens structure constructed in 1912. It was demolished when the present, more substantial tower was erected in 1928. The particular significance of the individual structures and buildings on the site are as follows:

LIGHTHOUSE TOWER (1928)

The lighthouse tower is of significance as the principal element of the lighthouse complex. The tower's conical shape and glass-and-iron lantern room is similar to many other lighthouses in California. It meets the property type criteria of having integrity and of being a substantial structure with a lantern room capable of housing a Fresnel lens. It is a distinctive tower, however, in that the sides of the shaft are made of steel and are bolted together in panels. This method of construction allowed for prefabrication at a distant location and quick assembly at the site. It is the only bolted metal-sided lighthouse in California, although others have been constructed in the United States. The architectural integrity of the structure is complete with the exception of the removal of the original 4th order Fresnel lens.

FOG-SIGNAL BUILDING (1902)

The fog-signal building is significant as a contributing element of the light station complex. Prior to the installation of the first light in 1900 the complex was exclusively a fog-signal station. This present 1902 building replaced the original dilapidated fog-signal building of 1874. The building meets the requirements for registration of its property type. It is identical or very similar to the standard fog-signal buildings built in California in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Most had one large center chamber with two small rooms off to each side. Double doors were always located on the front facade. The exteriors were usually unadorned, reflecting their utilitarian use. This building is in very good condition and its integrity is generally whole. Minor exceptions to integrity include non-original doors and some cosmetic remodeling.

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KEEPER'S QUARTERS (1875)

The Keeper's quarters is significant as a contributing element of the light station complex. The building meets the requirements for registration of its property type. The integrity of the structure is generally whole. Alterations have been made over the years, however. Nineteenth century photographs reveal that the front recessed porch has been enclosed and a small rear porch has been added. These changes were probably performed in the early part of this century. Photographs also show that the characteristic Gothic gable trim has been removed, although some brackets still remain. Even without the Gothic trim, the irregular plan and steep projecting gables place this building squarely in the tradition of late 19th century Victorian Gothic architecture. Many Keeper's dwellings in California were built in this style. Now, only this building and the Keeper's dwelling on Yerba Buena Island survives.

COAL SHED BUILDING (1902)

The coal shed building is significant as a contributing element of the light station complex. The building meets the requirements for registration of its property type. A ready and convenient supply of coal was necessary for the operation of the adjacent fog-signal. The integrity of the building is generally high, although some modifications have been made over the years, especially to the interior.

The 1961 Assistant Keeper's quarters, the garage (tank house), and the several World War II storage buildings lack significance due to their recent construction and character.

The period of significance was chosen to be 1875--the founding of the station--until 1940. The lighthouse continues to have significance in maritime transportation. However, significance has not been shown to be exceptional in the last fifty years.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- U.S. Lighthouse Board, Annual Report, various dates.
- Gibbs, Jim. West Coast Lighthouses. Seattle: 1974.
- Holland, F. Ross. America's Lighthouses, Their Illustrated History Since 1716. Brattleboro: 1972.
- U.S. Coast Guard, 12th District. Proceedings Of A Board Of Survey, Pt. Montara Light Station, June 6, 1973. San Francisco: 1973.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office 1
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other 2

Specify repository:

- 1-- _____
- 2--Photo collection on site.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7.27 acres

UTM References 2585 54340

A 10 540165 4185010

Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____

Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All that land situated in the County of San Mateo, State of California, said land particularly being described with plans coordinates and bearings referred to the Lambert conformal projection of Grid Zone 111 of the State of California as follows:

Beginning at concrete monument with a bronze disk marked U.S.C.G. (Co-ordinates Zone 3 x = 1,415,166.24 Y = 383,422.70) which

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Point Montara Light Station embraces the buildings and immediate setting historically associated with this complex.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack Bookwalter

organization Sonoma State University date October 6, 1989

street & number 767 Southwood Dr. telephone (707) 526-3197

city or town Santa Rosa state CA zip code 95407

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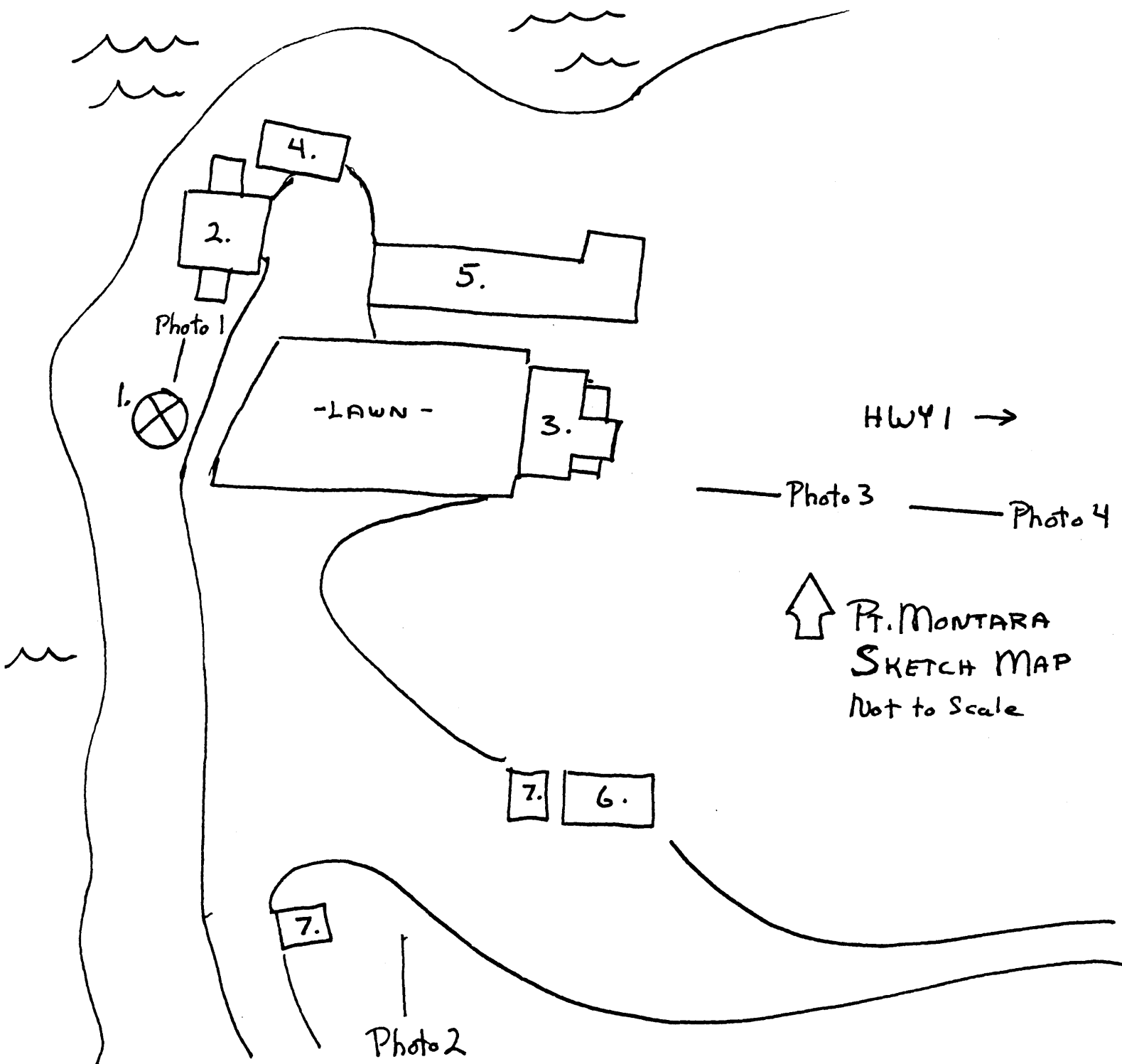
bronze disk bears South 1° -14' West 562.9 feet from a stone monument marked U.S.L.N. (X=1,415,178.34 Y = 384,005.50), and further described as bearing South 48° - 39' - 54" E., 409.2 feet from the finial of the Point Montara Light Tower, thence along a line North 88° - 46' West 215.00 feet to a concrete monument with a bronze disk marked U.S.C.G. (X = 1,415,951.29 Y = 383,447.33), thence North 85° - 46' West 121.88 feet to a point (X = 1,414,829.53 Y = 383,449.95), thence by Southerly courses which follow the meanderings of the bank along the Westerly boundry of the original lighthouse reservation to a stone monument marked U.S.L.N. and which marks the Southwest corner of the original lighthouse reservation (X = 1,414,955.11 Y = 382,509.93), thence along the Southern boundary of the original lighthouse reservation South 88° - 46' East 191.00 feet to a point at the Southeast corner of the original lighthouse reservation (X = 1,415,146.07 Y = 382,505.82), thence along the Eastern boundary of the original lighthouse reservation North 1° - 14' East 937.1 feet to the point of beginning; containing an area of approximately 7.27 acres.

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