1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **NORTH MANITOU ISLAND LIFESAVING STATION**

Other Name/Site Number: NORTH MANITOU COAST GUARD STATION

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: North Manitou Island Not for publication:__

City/Town: Sleeping Bear Dunes National Seashore Vicinity:__

State: Michigan County: Leelanau Code: 089 Zip Code: 49630

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property		Category of Property	
Private:	___	Building(s):	___
Public-Local:	___	District:	X
Public-State:	___	Site:	___
Public-Federal:	X	Structure:	___
		Object:	___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
6	1 buildings
1	___ sites
5	___ structures
___	___ objects
12	1 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	TRANSPORTATION DEFENSE	Sub:	Water-Related Coast Guard Facility
Current:	RECREATION AND CULTURE	Sub:	Outdoor Recreation

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: LATE VICTORIAN:
Gothic
Queen Anne
Stick/Eastlake

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Concrete
Walls: Wood
Roof: Wood Shingles
Other:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The North Manitou Island Lifesaving Station represents three distinct periods of lifesaving history: the early volunteer efforts, the United States Life-Saving Service, and the United States Coast Guard. No other lifesaving station reflecting these three periods is known to survive. Buildings dating from the volunteer period are extremely rare, especially in the context of a later station.

Especially significant to the complex are several auxiliary buildings and structures. These structures helped the crew perform its lifesaving duties and live comfortably in an isolated island location. These structures are still existing in their original locations and retain a high level of integrity of materials and design from the U.S. Life-Saving Service era. These structures were suited so well for their functions that they were still being used when the station became part of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915. The buildings remained active with only modest changes made for daily duties.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is located in the northwest portion of lower Michigan. Within the Park boundaries are three U.S. Life-Saving Service Stations (USLSS) that overlook the Manitou Passage. The close proximity of these stations was because the Manitou Passage carried heavy vessel traffic and was among the most treacherous areas on the Great Lakes. Terminology used by shipmasters when referring to the Manitou Passage included "fearful" and "dangerous".[1]

Keepers of the South Manitou Light logged ninety-six wrecks including those salvaged and sailed again. A marker outside of the Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station puts the number of shipwrecks in the Manitou Passage at 80. The December 1988 report by The Maritime Heritage Alliance of Northern Lake Michigan referred to "70 known shipwrecks in the vicinity of the Manitou Islands".[2]

Two of the three stations overlooking the Manitou Passage were constructed in 1901-02 under the same contract and used the same plans. Both stations are under the National Park Service jurisdiction and have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These stations are Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station and South Manitou Island Lighthouse and Life-Saving Station Historic District.

The third station, the North Manitou Island Lifesaving Station, is the oldest among the three and spans approximately 90 years of history representing the earliest beginnings of the lifesaving service on the Great Lakes. These buildings illustrate the beginnings of the volunteer era, and continue through the expansion of the U.S. Life-Saving Service into the Coast Guard era.

The district is located on a generally level site facing a broad sandy beach. The area is relatively open with several Lombardy poplars situated around the structures, as indicated on the

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[1]George Weeks, *Sleeping Bear Yesterday and Today, Including Ghost Towns, Lighthouses, and Shipwrecks of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore* (Franklin, Michigan: Altwerger and Mandel Publishing Company, 1990), 127.

[2]Ibid.

accompanying site plans. The lifesaving station is separated from the North Manitou Island village structures by level grassy meadows immediately on three sides. These neighboring structures are located on the rising terrain above the meadows and are quite removed from the station.

Two roads create the boundaries of the district. The access road creates the western boundary, while the new dock road creates the northern boundary. Each of these roads leads to the village structures located across the meadow expanses. Access to the site is provided by a modern dock outside the boundary.

Additional manmade landscaping is evident on the site. These items include two apple trees, black locust, several sugar maples, lilacs, spirea, and poppies. This vegetation is not associated with the U.S. Life-Saving Service, but with the Manitou Island Association that purchased the property around 1938.

The structures within the complex are situated in a linear arrangement from north to south. A description of these resources, proceeding from north to south, is as follows:

Hans Halseth House (1890s) and Shed (1910)

The Hans Halseth House stands a few feet south of the new dock road and is the only dwelling left from a complex of six houses. These dwellings were off the U.S. Life-Saving Service reservation and belonged primarily to married surfmen whose wives and families were living on the island. Hans Halseth was the longest resident of this house and started as a U.S. Life-Saving Service surfman in the mid 1890s. Hans Halseth continued working there into the late 1920s, after the U.S. Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service combined to form the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915.

The Hans Halseth House was originally located a short distance north of the complex at Pickard's Dock and was moved to its present location around 1910. The Halseth House resembles the Folk Victorian style in design and has been modified throughout its past. It is a story-and-a-half, side-gabled dwelling with a gabled dormer centered in the east roof.

The house has been added to several times, including the front porch with its sloping hipped roof. The porch is also supported by four simple columns on concrete post foundations. The original roof on the house is steeply graded and has two continuous pitched additions on the west side. The first addition at the rear is the same width as the house, while the final addition is only partially as wide. There is a central brick chimney for the historic stove heating system.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore adapted this building in 1990 to include housing for park employees. The work included removing aluminum siding and restoring the original wood siding. The asphalt shingles were removed, and the house was reroofed with historically accurate wood shingles. A recent shed addition, added to the south side of the house, was removed to return the building to its historical time period. The interior of the house was redesigned to create a more modern living space for the Park employees. The exterior of the building has integrity and this building contributes to the character of the complex.

The shed, constructed around 1910, stands directly behind the house on the west, and has an ell wood shingle roof and wood siding that matches the house. This structure was stabilized and restored to its historic appearance by the park in 1993. The structure contributes to the character of the complex.

Volunteer Rescue Station (1854)

This 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station is believed to be the only one left in the country from the 1854 appropriation that began to place surfboats on the Great Lakes.[3] The building sits 50 feet southeast of the Hans Halseth House. This appropriation, which provided the first expenditure affecting lifesaving efforts on the Great Lakes, provided $12,500 to purchase forty-seven lifeboats, nearly half of which were stationed on Lake Michigan.[4] Two letters dated September 15, 1854 were found in the National Archives that "acknowledges the receipt of $475 in bond signed by Nicholas Pickard, and others, for a Life Boat to be constructed and located at North Manitou Island".[5]

The Volunteer Rescue Station is a one-and-a-half story frame boathouse, measuring approximately 17' wide by 36' long. The walls are covered in cedar boards rather than the cedar shingles described in the 1848 federal appropriation for stations on the east coast. The single room on the first floor housed the surfboat and other rescue equipment, while the small loft above was used for storage.

Different boathouse designs and specifications were generated from each appropriation, and this boathouse closely matches the written government specifications for the 1854 appropriation. Other items that closely match the 1854 specifications are the general size, numbers and size of existing windows, pedestrian door, boat door, and the use of whitewash on the interior of the building.[6]

An act was passed on June 20, 1874 that provided funds for an additional fifty-one stations to be built on the Atlantic Coast and the Great Lakes.[7] Three months after this act was passed, a 40' x 20' tract of land was leased on North Manitou Island from Nicholas Pickard. This tract was

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[3]This theory is supported by maritime writers and experts throughout the country. Packets, which included photographs and floor plans, were sent to four recognized maritime historians who agreed this building appears to be an 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station. Letter from Captain Robert F. Bennett, USCG (Ret.), Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, April 6, 1994. Letter from Kevin Foster, Chief Maritime Historian, National Maritime Initiative, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., April 6, 1993. Letter from Dennis L. Nobel, Ph.D., Lewistown City Library, Lewistown, Montana, April 7, 1994. Letter from Eugene (Wick) York, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut, April 5, 1993.

[4]T. Michael O'Brien, *Guardians of the Eighth Sea: A History of the U.S. Coast Guard on the Great Lakes* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 33.

[5]Correspondence, Records of the United States Coast Guard, Record Group 26, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland, (various Great Lakes stations and dates).

[6], Robert F. Bennett, *Surfboats, Rockets and Carronades* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 36-38.

[7]O'Brien, 35.

leased for one dollar a year for the establishment of a lifesaving station.[8] The lot size corresponds with the size of the 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station. It is believed that the 1874 act generated the accumulation of private volunteer stations for inclusion in the U.S. Life-Saving Service.

This building greatly contributes to the character and the importance of this complex. This building was moved one full length toward the water and placed on a permanent concrete foundation during the early years of the U.S. Coast Guard.

With the exception of whitewashing the interior, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore has completed the restoration of this structure. The work included removing nonhistoric partitions and work surfaces from the interior, reinstalling the historic floor, and the boat ramp on the front of the building. A 1906 surfboat is to be installed in 1998 as part of an exhibit.

Storm Tower and Flag Locker (circa 1905)

Directly south of the Volunteer Rescue Station is the Storm Tower and Flag Locker. The exact date of construction of the storm tower and flag locker is unknown. An April 19, 1905 Site Plan drawn by the USLSS shows that the storm tower was in place by that date. The original metal-framed structure of the flag tower appears much the same as it did in historic photographs, except that a horizontal yardarm beneath the national ensign is missing. This was the mast for displaying storm signal flags.

The four sides of the storm signal tower are triangulated trusses that taper to a point 50 feet above the ground. From this point a mast ascends an additional 20 feet and yardarms extend seven feet to each side. An American flag flew from the top, while storm warning flags were flown from the yards. The international code flags were also flown when needed to communicate with a ship. Inside the base of the tower was a small metal flag locker where all the flags were stored.

The original eight-foot high flag locker (ca. 1905) was retrieved from the north side of the island. This locker was repositioned under the storm tower during the summer of 1994. The storm tower and flag locker stand between the U.S. Life Boat Station and the Volunteer Rescue Station. The storm tower and flag locker contribute to the significance of the complex.

[8]Correspondence, Record Group 26.

U.S. Life Boat Station (1877)

The U.S. Life Boat Station is located twenty-five feet southwest of the Storm Tower and Flag Locker. This large open one-story boathouse is the second oldest building in the complex. The building was built using a modified floor plan based on a design by Francis W. Chandler in 1876 that was used mostly at stations on Lakes Erie and Michigan during 1876-1877.[9]

Slightly wider and shorter, the most visible differences between the original and modified designs focused on the gable treatment. Absent from the modified plan was the roof observation deck and the stickwork found at the peak of the 1875 prototype. Instead, a clipped gable terminated the front end, providing protection from the weather to an open balcony below, from where the lookout could stand when on duty. [Also missing from the 1875 prototype, are the exterior diagonal corner braces.] Otherwise much of the detailing was similar, with two hooded doors, the same vertical siding including batten on the second floor level, and bracketing beneath the eaves.[10]

Francis W. Chandler did not sign the plans for the Great Lakes stations. A bill he submitted confirms his completion of the drawings during the winter of 1875. Mr. Chandler completed these drawings shortly after leaving the office of Alfred B. Mullett, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. It appears that Chandler's work consisted of two nearly identical plans. (After leaving Mullett's office, Francis W. Chandler returned to Boston and joined in partnership with Edward C. Cabot. The firm of Cabot and Chandler designed numerous Queen Anne Style residences in and around Boston from the late 1870s through the 1880s. In 1888 he went back to M.I.T. for a third time as chairman of its Department of Architecture, staying until 1911. Chandler was also distinguished by his appointment as a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1889.[11]

The North Manitou crew built a roof observation deck on the top of the building for a more unobstructed view across Lake Michigan. The date of this addition is not known, but pictures from around 1900 show this addition already in place on top of the building. It was later removed when the complex was sold to the Manitou Island Association around 1938. The Life Boat Station remained intact during the Coast Guard era, but went through some minor changes when the complex was closed and purchased by this private corporation.

During the Manitou Island Association/Angell Foundation era, the Life Boat Station was converted into quarters and a storehouse. Changes included removing the boat door and installing a picture window in its place, installing a pedestrian door next to the new picture window, installing two windows at ground level on the west side of the building, removing the north and south hooded door entrance, and removing the lookout tower constructed on the top of the building. A capstan originally included inside the station was removed by the Manitou Island Association. All character defining details, including the brackets and clipped gable

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[9]Eugene V. [Wick] York, "The Architecture of the United States Life-Saving Service," Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1983, 19.

[10]Ibid.

[11]York, 18 and 20.

treatments, windows, interior paneling, and decorative interior braces were retained and exist today.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore adapted this boathouse into a dormitory in 1990. This work provided a kitchen, bathroom, and upper dormitory sleeping area with bath as a separate structure that is free standing on the former boat house floor plan. This design can be reversed if the original boathouse function is required. The Life Boat Station greatly contributes to the historic integrity of the complex.

Capstan (1877)

A capstan once was used for hoisting surfboats seawards or shorewards stands 35 feet to the southeast, between the U.S. Life Boat Station and the Lake Michigan shore. Originally it sat along the south side of a long wooden boat-launching ramp with metal tracks, but this feature no longer exists.

The use of this capstan became important when the distance between Lake Michigan and the Life Boat Station increased due to rising and falling lake levels. Life boats would be drawn to the first capstan during low water years and then drawn the remaining distance into the Life Boat Station using the second capstan located inside the building. This element is missing the name plate on the top and is in a rusted condition. The item contributes to the historic atmosphere of the complex.

U.S. Life-Saving Service Dwelling (1887)

Twenty feet south of the U.S. Life Boat Station stands the U.S. Life-Saving Service Dwelling. This building plan is believed to be the only one constructed of its type in the country. No record of another station with this floor plan is known. The original design for this building is believed to have been developed by another architect for the USLSS, Albert B. Bibb, who is better known for designing the Marquette style of station.

The original floor plan for this two-story building separated the captain's living quarters, on the first floor, from that of the crew's on the second floor. The initial floor plan had an open square porch at each of the four corners tucked under the roof overhangs. The stairway to the second story crew's room was through the door on the northeast corner porch.

In 1932, the Coast Guard redesigned and raised the building by placing it on a full basement. A porch was also added to the east side that partially concealed the cross gable. The stairs were also moved to the center of the building to provide access to both the second-story crews room and the basement.

This two-story building is situated with its longest axis running east to west. The roof line is a steeply gabled roof with a smaller, centered cross gable on the east side.

The second floor was a large unobstructed room for the crew's bunks. In 1992, the Park placed partitions in this space to create separate sleeping areas for staff. The original crew's lockers still run along the west wall, with the brick chimney sitting directly in front. These eight lockers are numbered "1 thru 8", and stowed the gear for each of the seven crew members and the captain.

Part of the 1932 alteration included the conversion of the east elevation under the gable into a crew's bathroom, with indoor plumbing. The new facilities consisted of a shower, commode, and two wash basins.[12]

On the first floor, part of the 1932 alterations consisted of expanding the floor plan onto the original southeast corner porch. This expansion created an office for the keeper that included a desk, file, and chart case. A wall separating the office from the adjacent sitting room was removed by the Angell Foundation after 1953.[13]

On the south side of the first floor are the kitchen and sitting rooms. Next to the kitchen is the southwest corner porch that is original to the 1887 first floor plan. A pantry was also next to the kitchen, but its walls were removed by the Angell Foundation after 1953 to expand the kitchen operation.

The northwest corner porch was eliminated to create an enclosed stair into the basement of the 1932 alteration. The new facilities on the first floor at this corner consisted of a bathtub, commode, and wash basin. The bedroom for the crew's captain is situated next to this bath, with an adjoining door into a spare bedroom on the northeast corner.[14]

A stairway in the center of the building leads to the upper crew's area and to the basement. In the basement, there is a boiler room and furnace in the south central room, a coal bin in the southwest corner, and a pump in the southeast corner. The basement has many small windows, each with a single row of three lights. There are five such windows on the south face, four on the north face, two on the west, and none on the east. A coal chute door panel is located on the west wall.

The porch, added in 1932, is about 8 feet deep and extends the full 30 feet across the east elevation. Five simple square columns support the roof which was made continuous with the gable, but at a lesser angled slope. The porch has a simple railing, about three feet high, across the front. The porch has a lattice work grill beneath it to prevent pets or other animals from crawling beneath.[15]

Two large windows, each with eight-by-eight lights, were added to the east and one on the south facade, during the 1932 addition. The building's original windows include two eight-by-eight lights on the second floor at the north and south face. Two original windows with eight-by-eight lights are located on the first floor at the north and south face. Two additional original windows, with six-by-six lights, are located on the west face of the first floor as well as two original windows on the east face of the first floor.

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[12]U.S. Coast Guard Civil Engineering Tracings of Lifeboat Stations, Library Archives of the Coast Guard Academy, Microfilm File #259-North Manitou Island, 1931-32, New London, Connecticut.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore adapted this building in 1992. This work included repairing and repainting the original interior plaster and exterior siding, restoring the 1932 front porch and original southwest corner porch, and installing a partition in the open crew room to meet a current need for additional bedrooms. A partition was also added in the first floor captain's bedroom to create a hallway from the living room to the bathroom. This building contributes greatly to the significance and integrity of the complex.

Crew Ready Room (1895)

The Crew Ready Room is located approximately 10 feet southeast of the U.S. Life-Saving Service Dwelling. This pyramidal hipped roof building was the place where the on-duty surfmen awaited summons from the lookout for an emergency. Since they were allowed to read or play cards here, some surfmen called it the loafing room.

The Manitou Island Association redesigned the interior for quarters in the 1940s and created the pedestrian doors on the north and south facades. The placement of the windows has been changed as well. The exit door was originally on the east facade. The earliest photographs show two double boat doors to reach supplies and the stored beach cart. A large picture window is located where the double boat doors originally were located.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore adapted this building in 1990 for park living quarters, removing the aluminum siding and asphalt shingles. The building is currently sided with horizontal wooden clapboard siding and wood roof shingles that are historically accurate. Although this building has lost much of its integrity to the period of significance and is considered a non-contributing building, it does contribute to the historic scene of the complex.

Generator Building(1914-16)

The Generator Building is located 10 feet southeast of the Crew Ready Room. This is the only building in the complex believed to have been built just prior to the 1915 USLSS reorganization into the U.S. Coast Guard.

This building is a single story shed with gabled ends. Windows on the structure include one small square 4-light window on the east side, and two double hung 6-by-6 light windows on the north side. The single door entrance is located on the west elevation.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore adapted this building in 1994 by restoring and repainting the historical horizontal clapboard siding and stabilizing the structure. This structure contributes to the historic scene of the complex.

Flammable Materials Storage (1914-16)

This ruins of this structure are located 5 feet northeast of the Generator Building. All that remains are the poured concrete walls. The ruins are approximately 4 foot tall with evidence that the building had a gable roof. The end walls are shaped to indicate this fact as well as historic photographs. An opening in the concrete wall on the west side shows that a small door existed

for entering the interior. It appears that oil drums and other flammable materials associated with the U.S. Life-Saving Service were stored in this structure. The building appears to have been built when the generator building was constructed.

Root Cellar (1899)

This structure is located twenty-five feet west of the Generator Building. A date of 1899 has been etched into a stone above the entrance into the cellar. The construction is predominantly field stone and mortar with a wood shingled gable roof on top.

The access into the cellar is through two sets of doors. The first is an inclined double wooden cellar door at the surface. The second door, at the bottom of the stairs, is a single wooden plank door into the underground area.

The structure has a round air vent on the west side above the wooden cellar doors and a square screened hole on the east side. Both vents provide air movement into the cellar. The square vent is connected to a square wooden duct that delivers cool air to the floor of the cellar, thus keeping perishable goods fresh. The ceiling is provided by finishing the 2 x 6 framing members with planking. The cavity that this construction provides may have been filled with sawdust to provide further insulating capabilities. No evidence of sawdust is present in the structure or within the cavity. The root cellar allowed the crew to store the many fresh fruits grown on the island in addition to potatoes, carrots and cabbage. This structure contributes to the historic scene of the complex.

Sea Wall (1890s)

Directly in front of the complex to the east are the remains of a seawall built by the U.S. Life-Saving Service in the 1890s that is still intact. The outline shown on a 1905 site plan of the station is still evident. A section of the seawall in front of the Volunteer Rescue Station was removed when this structure was moved one length toward the water and placed on a concrete foundation wall. The approximate length of the seawall is 200 feet and was built using fieldstone. This structure contributes to the historic scene of the complex.

Lookout Tower Abutments (1930)

Twenty-five feet east of the Storm Tower and Flag Locker sit five large concrete squares with steel shafts protruding from the middle of each unit. These are the four corner foundations for a tower, built by the Coast Guard, which stood about thirty feet tall in this location. The fifth piece was the anchorage for the ladder stair used to climb to the lookout.

Photographs of this structure show that it was metal. A metal staircase was anchored upon the central concrete pier and ascended to a platform with one switchback stair halfway up. The tower was about ten feet square at the base and perhaps eight feet square at the top. A wooden guardhouse sat atop the tower which consisted of a walk-around balcony surrounding a sentry box. A pyramidal hipped roof covered the box and overlapped the platform. This structure was dismantled and moved to the South Manitou Island station in 1939, as identified in the South Manitou Island log book entry for October 10, 1939.

Fire Pump Well Foundation (ca. 1900)

Fifteen feet southeast of the Life Boat Station and 5 feet west of the capstan is the concrete foundation of the fire pump well. The foundation measures 5' x 5', and the concrete walls are approximately 6" thick. Historic photographs show the pump situated on a wooden deck over the foundation walls. The exact date for the removal of this equipment is not known, but the pump was in place and is shown in photographs from the Coast Guard era.

Sidewalks (1905)

The sidewalks are shown on a 1905 site plan of the U.S. Life-Saving Service Complex. Most of the walks are etched with "USLSS" and a printed date of their last reconstruction ("1908").

Two portions of walk are missing from the complex today, as shown on the site plan. One section is a forked walk in the northwest corner of the complex. This site is where a blacksmith shop sat before it was also removed during the complex's early history. The other portion of walk that is no longer present is a portion on the east side of the Volunteer Rescue Station. This section was removed when the building was moved toward Lake Michigan in the early years of the Coast Guard.

The walks are all 3 feet wide except for the 4 feet wide walk between the Crew Ready Room and the U.S. Life Boat Station. This walk is not visible, but is believed to be buried under the sand and sod now in this location. The walks contribute to the historic scene of the complex.

Lombardy Poplars (ca. 1900s)

The exact time and individuals responsible for planting the Lombardy poplars next to the station vary with each historical source. The U.S. Life-Saving Service was directed to landscape the areas surrounding their structures and both stations at North and South Manitou chose to plant Lombardy poplars around these stations. The age of the Lombardy Poplars is believed to be between 70 - 90 years old, with the oldest being planted around the turn-of-the-century.

The U.S. Life-Saving Service also understood the value of these trees for navigational purposes. Many historical accounts admit that the ship captains would spot these trees along the horizon and know lifesaving stations were at those locations. Even today in foggy weather, the first noticeable landmarks are these tall poplars.

Historic Elements Missing From the Scene

Some historic elements from the USLSS era are visible in historic photographs within the park files but are no longer present in the existing complex. These items contributed to the appearance and daily activities of the operations of the lifesaving station. These items were removed, circa 1938, before the purchase of the station by the Manitou Island Association.

These items include buildings, structures, and features shown on the April 19, 1905 site plan by E.P.B. Asst. titled, "North Manitou Island, L-S.S., 12th District, Plot Plan of Station Property". The removed buildings, include a 16' by 12' Blacksmith Shop located in the northwest corner of the complex behind the Volunteer Rescue Station; two water closets, one was located west along the fence line between the Life Boat Station and the Storm Signal Tower, and the other was located west along the fence line behind the Crew Ready Room.

Another missing feature is the removed fence line. Missing fenceline includes a portion that tied the Volunteer Rescue Station and the former Blacksmith Shop site, on the north boundary, with the Crew Ready Room on the south boundary. The site plan shows that there were single gates behind the Volunteer Rescue Station, and by the removed water closet behind the Crew Ready Room. One double gated access was placed behind the Storm Signal Tower, next to the removed Blacksmith Shop.

Other removed structures include the well directly behind the U.S. Life-Saving Service Dwelling, the walk from the Volunteer Rescue Station to the Dock, the 6'-5" wide by 140' long dock on a stone crib leading from the Volunteer Rescue Station, and the 9' wide by 185' long boat ramp and tracks from the Life Boat Station into Lake Michigan.

There are additional elements labeled as proposed on the site plan, and built, as seen in later historic photographs. One element was the windmill, located to the west along the fence line and between the U.S. Life-Saving Service Dwelling and the Life Boat Station. Another element was the Water Tower west of the Crew Ready Room. The date these elements were removed is not known, but they were missing before the purchase of the station, circa 1938, by the Manitou Island Association.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide:__ Locally:__

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B__ C X D__

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G__

NHL Criteria: 1, 4

NHL Theme(s): V. Developing the American Economy
3. transportation and communication

Areas of Significance: MARITIME HISTORY
TRANSPORTATION

Period(s) of Significance: 1854-1932

Significant Dates: 1854, 1877, 1887, 1915

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Chandler, Francis W.
Bibb, Albert B.

Historic Context: XIV. Transportation
B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses and other structures

XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
L. Fire, Safety, Sanitation, and Pollution Controls

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Summary Statement

For approximately 90 years the North Manitou Island Lifesaving Station was a key element in the network of nearly 200 rescue stations developed by the federal government. This network provided humanitarian aid to shipwreck victims. The North Manitou Island Station is the only remaining station that encompasses the entire lifesaving service history from the volunteer era through the Coast Guard era.

The federal government became involved in shipwreck rescues in 1848 when funds were provided for volunteer stations on the New Jersey shore. In 1854, the system was extended to the Great Lakes. The 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station on North Manitou Island is the only remaining station from this era on the Great Lakes. This structure is also the only remaining rescue station of its design in the country. It is also believed to be one of the two remaining stations in the country from the volunteer period.

The U.S. Life-Saving Service was created in 1871 and introduced stations on the Great Lakes in 1876. The 1877 Life Boat Station on North Manitou Island is typical of the stations built at that time and retains a high level of integrity of material and design. As the U.S. Life-Saving Service continued to develop and gain the support of the American people, the system added more stations and improved existing stations. The 1887 Dwelling represents the upgrading of existing stations during that period.

Evolution of the Early Lifesaving Service

The United States grew proportionately to the development of its maritime transportation system. Ship transportation was a key element for the development of commerce, exploration, immigration, and settlement. The federal government was well aware of the importance of the nation's maritime resources and took an early interest in promoting the water transportation system. As early as 1789, funds were provided for the operation and construction of lighthouses. The Coast Survey was established in 1806 to develop navigational charts. The Revenue Marine was authorized in 1837 to sail along the coast to assist ships in distress, and the Steam Boat Inspection Service was created the following year.[16]

Despite all these federal efforts, shipwrecks continued to be frequent occurrences and a system to respond to them had to be developed. As early as 1787, counties along the ocean shore appointed an official to take charge of cargo and bodies cast-up on the beach. The official was typically the local sheriff, coroner, or another individual called a "coast officer", "coast master", "venue master", or "wreck master".[17]

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[16]M. J. Lamb, "The American Life-Saving Service," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Volume 64, No. 381 (February 1882): 358.

[17]Bennett, 6.

Since most of the ships were insured and became the property of the insurance underwriter when salvaged, insurance companies were especially interested in being represented at the wreck scene. Because of the slow communication and transportation systems at the time, it was impossible for the insurance company officials to be at the site in person. Groups of insurance companies formed associations called committees or boards and appointed "agents" to represent their interests along the shoreline.

The most important part of the system was the surfman who lived and worked along the ocean shores. Unlike sailors, whose training taught them to keep away from the breakers, surfmen were masters of the domain where water and land came together. Using special boats, these men passed through the surf daily as they went out to fish, travel, or to salvage cargo from wrecked ships. Their expertise was essential to the saving of cargo and lives. These men were ordinary fishermen, who engaged in salvaging or "wrecking" when the opportunity arose. Admiralty law provided that the shipwrecked cargo belonged to the owner, but that the salvor was entitled to a fair price for their labor in saving the property. A localized team could respond quickly and effectively to save and protect property from shipwrecks. While this system was designed to save property, saving human lives was an important by-product. Surfmen regularly risked their lives to rescue victims from the wrecks. Frequently, insurance underwriters supported these humanitarian efforts by rewarding the crews with the contracts to salvage the vessel and cargo.

Wrecking and rescues required larger crews and boats than those used by the local fishermen. Along the New Jersey shore, surfboats 23 to 26 feet in length were jointly owned by several men to use in shipwreck operations. These boats were simply larger versions of the beach skiffs used by two-man fishing teams. The owners jointly shared expenses and the responsibility for selecting the captain and crew.[18]

Other surfboats were recognized as community property and were said to "belong to the beach". The first men to respond to a wreck were permitted to use the community surfboats. Wrecking and rescues were hard on the boats, and surfboats might be damaged or destroyed during a wrecking operation.

The effectiveness of shore rescue stations is based on the nature of the shipwrecks. The largest shipwreck numbers are located close to shore, with only a small percentage out at sea. Shipwrecks occur when they strike rocks or sandbars because of imprecise navigation or because they are driven off course by storms. Generally, these obstacles are near islands or the mainland. If witnessed by people on shore with the proper equipment, many victims can be assisted to safety.

Two factors made the time right for the American people to take a greater interest in shipwreck disasters. First, beginning in the 1840s many of these ships were American owned and therefore insured by American underwriters. Thus, there was a growing economic interest in responding effectively to shipwreck disasters. Second, passengers were the major cargo of the time. This was the time of the great influx of immigrants to the United States, with many passengers moving between the coastal cities. The loss of life, when one of these vessels was involved in a

[18]Peter J. Guthorn, The Sea Bright Skiff and Other New Jersey Shore Boats (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971), 80.

wreck, was often staggering and aroused the humanitarian interests in the normally uninterested public.

Several humanitarian organizations were created to assist shipwreck victims. These included The Merrimac Humane Society, The Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and The New York Shipwreck Society. The Massachusetts Humane Society established the first boathouse with rescue equipment in 1807 at Cohasset, Massachusetts. By 1845, the Massachusetts Humane Society had built eighteen rescue stations equipped with boats, boat wagons, line throwing mortars and rockets. These stations, called Houses of Refuge, could also provide shelter for shipwreck survivors on the desolate shores.[19]

In 1847, Representative McClelland of Michigan, Chairman of the House Committee on Commerce, made an amendment to a lighthouse bill. This amendment provided $5000 for lighthouses on the Atlantic with the "means of rendering assistance to shipwrecked mariners". This was the first federal appropriation to provide shore rescue assistance. The action was based on a report concerning lighthouses in Great Britain, France and Belgium prepared for the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. The report identified the rescue equipment provided to lightkeepers in England and the work accomplished by a volunteer rescue system called the Royal National Life-Boat Institution.[20]

In 1848, Representative William Newell introduced an amendment to the lighthouse bill that added $10,000 for the establishment of rescue stations on the New Jersey shore. The amendment passed and Captain David Ottinger of the U.S. Revenue Marine was assigned the task of locating, constructing, and equipping the stations. This was all done in cooperation with the New York Board of Underwriters. The $5000 from the 1847 appropriation was finally issued to the Massachusetts Humane Society at this same time.[21]

Captain Ottinger identified eight sites for these stations and gave considerable attention to selecting the best equipment for these stations. Seeking out the best experts on the subject he consulted with the Board of Underwriters and their agents, the Massachusetts Humane Society. Captain Ottinger also consulted with the surfmen who made the rescues. Working with an experienced producer of metal lifeboats, Joseph Francis of the Francis Metallic Life-Boat Company, Brooklyn, New York, Ottinger presented two innovations for inclusion in the stations.[22] One of these new pieces of equipment was the lifecar. The lifecar was a small enclosed metal boat that could be drawn out to the wreck and back to shore by ropes. Using the line throwing mortar and the lifecar, victims could be rescued in storms when launching a surfboat was impossible.

Ottinger also introduced a unique surfboat for these stations. Since this was to be a volunteer system, there would not be a regular crew at the stations to maintain a wooden surfboat.

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[19]Lamb, 358.

[20]Bennett, 11, and O'Brien, 33.

[21]Lamb, 358.

[22]Bennett, 21.

Because the boats would be stored out of the water for long periods between rescues, they would dry out and not be watertight when needed. To correct this situation, Ottinger had the surfboat incorporate the latest boat-building technology and constructed them out of metal. The Francis Metallic Life Boats were patterned after the best models of wooden surfboats used on the New Jersey coast.

The metallic surfboats were 26 feet in length and 6 1/2 feet in beam. Unlike the Jersey surfboat, they were double ended and had ten air chambers. They were constructed from sheet iron coated with a thin layer of tin and an outer coating of zinc to prevent corrosion. The metal was corrugated to add strength to the hull. In addition to not drying out, the metallic surfboats were much stronger and required no regular maintenance.[23]

To house this equipment, a boathouse 28 feet by 16 feet, with cedar shingles on its roof and sides, was constructed. The building had a loft and an eight-by-eight double door opening.[24]

These New Jersey stations with federal equipment and volunteer crews soon became more successful than anyone imagined. During the first season of operation, the Francis Lifecar was put into operation for the first time. The crew of the Squan Beach Station, under the direction of Captain John Maxon, saved 201 of the 202 passengers and crew of the British bark ALSHIRE. Even before this rescue, the Ludlams Beach crew had saved 400 people from the wreck of the EUDORA using the new metallic surfboat. Another 90 people were saved from the ORION later that season. The crews participated in eight additional rescues that year. The total number of people saved is not known because no official reports were required.[25]

Congress provided funds in 1849 to provide additional stations on the New Jersey shore and to add stations on the Long Island shore, creating a network of 24 stations. Later appropriations allowed the construction of additional stations.

Beginning in 1850, the Treasury Department began to make the metallic surfboats available to many other locations. The Treasury Department provided these boats to Collectors of Customs along the Atlantic and Gulf coast.[26]

In 1854, funds were provided for 28 additional stations on Long Island and New Jersey, and for the first time, money to hire paid keepers for each station. Also that year, an appropriation of $12,500 was authorized to provide metallic surfboats to 25 locations on Lake Michigan and other points as the Secretary of Treasury deemed appropriate.[27]

Early Lifesaving Efforts in the Great Lakes

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[23]*Francis' Metallic Life-Boat Company* (New York: William C. Bryant, 1852), 20.

[24]York, 6.

[25]Bennett, 70 and 81.

[26]Bennett, 28.

[27]O'Brien, 33.

Federal lifesaving equipment, which had been so successful on the coasts, was now on its way to the Great Lakes. With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, the Great Lakes had become an important transportation network into the northwest territory of the United States. The Great Lakes system was an important method for transporting immigrants and the supplies and materials needed to develop communities throughout the Great Lakes region. While some agricultural produce was shipped to the east, the trade was predominantly from the eastern cities to the wilderness frontier. Business leaders and politicians knew that this transportation route was essential for the development of the region.

While the Great Lakes may not have had storm waves as large as those on the ocean, the waves came closer together and could disable a vessel just as easily. Most importantly the lakes lacked sea room. A ship could run before a storm for only a short time until it was forced to turn or maneuver around a point or island. Groundings were common because of the infrequency of natural bays on the Great Lakes, especially on Lake Michigan. Harbors were dredged at river mouths and protected by a set of narrow breakwalls, and entering these harbors in bad weather was especially difficult. As a result, on the Great Lakes and Lake Michigan in particular, most of the wrecks took place near the entrances of these harbors. As occurrences increased, community leaders began to want the assistance provided by the government surfboats used on the ocean shores.

The surfboats were assigned to a government official, a lighthouse keeper or collector of customs, wherever possible. When a government official was not present at the location, two or more responsible persons could post a $475 bond and receive a boat. The parties were to show that there were enough people in the area willing to operate the vessel during an emergency.[28] Forty-seven boats were shipped to the Great Lakes: 16 for Lake Erie, nine for Lake Ontario, 25 for Lake Michigan and one to Lake Superior.[29]

These sites received only the Francis Metallic Lifeboats and not the lifecar, mortar and other gear provided to the New Jersey and Long Island stations. Care of the boats, including storage, maintenance, and repairs, was the responsibility of the local community. Lighthouses frequently had a boathouse which might also hold the surfboat. Other communities built their own buildings for storing the boats. Some communities requested and received additional funds to construct boathouses, including St. Augustine, Florida; Buffalo, New York; and Saugatuck, Michigan.[30]

By August 16, 1854, a Treasury official had selected 17 lighthouse keepers and one Collector of Customs on Lake Michigan to receive 19 boats (the keeper at Chicago got two).[31] Included in this list was keeper Alonzo Slyfield of South Manitou Island, Michigan, with six other sites still needing to be selected. On September 15, 1854 Secretary of the Treasury Guthrie received a

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[28]Frederick Stonehouse, *Wreck Ashore, The United States Life-Saving Service on the Great Lakes* (Duluth, Minnesota: Lake Superior Port Cities Inc., 1994), 11.

[29]Ibid, 12.

[30]Ibid, 11.

[31]Ibid, 12.

bond from Nicholas Pickard and others of North Manitou Island. Secretary Guthrie ordered a boat to be delivered to the island from the Francis Metallic Life-Boat Company of Brooklyn, New York.[32]

Apparently Pickard, who owned the cordwood station on North Manitou Island, requested and received plans for building a boathouse for the surfboat. (Whether he also received any money to construct the station is unknown.) The twenty-eight stations built under authority of the 1854 appropriation, including the Long Island and New Jersey coast, used a slightly different design than the 1848 stations.

The 1854 stations were larger, 36 feet by 17 feet, and used cedar board and battens in place of shingles for siding. The boathouse on North Manitou Island closely matches the official written description of these boathouses. It is well documented that the Treasury Department shared these specifications with communities wishing to build boathouses. The federal officials knew the design was serviceable and inexpensive to build.[33]

While the success of the surfboats in stations on the east coast continued to be recorded, the use of the government surfboats on the Great Lakes remains unknown. The number of wrecks at these locations, the success of the surfboats on the lakes, and the fact that the metallic boats were being used in fresh not salt water, suggests that the boats would have been put to good use. Unfortunately, since no reports were required, no records of rescues made with the government boats have been found.

The 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station on North Manitou Island is the only boathouse built from these specifications still in existence. It is also the only existing building on the Great Lakes used by the volunteer rescue system. In addition, the only other structure associated with the volunteer system in the United States, the 1848 Spermaceti Cove Station, New Jersey, has been moved to Navesink Twin Lights.[34]

Except for paying the salaries of the superintendents and keepers, little of the appropriations between 1855 and 1870 were spent. There were no federal expenses incurred at the stations because there were no regular drills, no regulations, no operating funds, no paid crews, no regular maintenance of the buildings and equipment, and recommendations to the Treasury Department were routinely ignored.

Through all this, and the disruption of the Civil War, the system of local volunteers worked amazingly well. It is known that at least 4,163 lives were saved by the stations between 1848 and 1870, and it is believed the number is much greater than reported.[35]

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[32]Record Group 26.

[33]Bennett, 36.

[34]Letter from Eugene [Wick] York, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut, April 5, 1993. Letter from Kevin Foster, Chief Maritime Historian, National Maritime Initiative, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., April 6, 1993. Letter from Captain Robert F. Bennett, USCG (Ret.), Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, April 6, 1994.

[35]Bennett, 1976, p.75.

Formation of the U.S. Life-Saving Service

In 1869, the Division of Revenue Marine was created in the Treasury Department. This division had responsibility for the Revenue Cutters, Life-Saving Stations, Steamboat Inspection Service and the Marine Hospitals.

Following the loss of many lives in the winter of 1870, the *New York Herald* called for reforms and improvements of the lifesaving system. It stated that many of the stations and their equipment were in poor condition, and keepers lived many miles from their stations. Since there were no paid crews, no one was on the beach to locate wrecks or to be summoned in case of an emergency.[36]

In 1871 Sumner I. Kimball was appointed to head the Revenue Marine Department. Kimball dispatched Captain John Faunce of the Revenue Marine to inspect the stations. Faunce's report substantiated the charges made by the press. Kimball began at once to reorganize the system. He replaced politically appointed keepers who lacked the skills for surf rescue, and he developed regulations for the keepers to follow. An appropriation of $200,000 permitted the hiring of six man crews at all twenty-eight of the stations around New York harbor. This provided for the daily patrol of the shore and regular drills with the equipment.[37]

The following year the system expanded to the coast of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. These new stations were almost twice as large as the older stations and were designed to provide living space for the full time crews. Resembling the 1848 buildings, the new stations were one-and-one-half stories with shingled sides and roofs stained red. These so called "redhouses" were 18 feet by 48 feet.[38]

In 1873, the system again expanded to the shores of Maine, New Hampshire, Virginia, and North Carolina as other states wanted to protect the shipping along their shores. Again these new stations used a single design, but for the first time consideration was given to an architectural style. The stations used a combination of two design styles that included Carpenter Gothic and Stick Style. Built in 1874, they were one-and-one-half stories, and 19 feet by 43 feet.[39]

U.S. Life-Saving Service on the Great Lakes

An act passed June 20, 1874, provided funds for an additional fifty-one stations to be built on the Atlantic Coast and the Great Lakes.[40] Three months after this act was passed, a 40' x 20' tract of land was leased on North Manitou Island from Nicholas Pickard. This tract was leased for one

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[36]Dennis L. Noble, *That Others Might Live, The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915 (*Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 24.

[37]Ibid, 28.

[38]York, 13.

[39]York, 15.

[40]O'Brien, 35.

dollar a year for the establishment of a lifesaving station.[41] The lot size corresponds with the size of the 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station. It is believed that the 1874 act generated the accumulation of private volunteer stations for inclusion in the U.S. Life-Saving Service.

Kimball requested the services of an architect from the Treasury Department. Frank Chandler, assistant supervising architect, was assigned the project. Chandler's design for the 1875 stations closely resembles the 1874 stations. This suggests that Chandler may have also been responsible for the former design of the previous year's station, with only some exterior detailing being different.

The ocean ports were usually protected by natural bays, inlets and large river mouths. Most of the wrecks were located along deserted exposed stretches of the shore and not near populated port cities so the ocean stations were usually located on the sparsely populated barrier dunes along the shore. Therefore, it was necessary to have a paid crew on hand to watch for wrecks and to be nearby to man the lifesaving equipment. Stations along the ocean provided storage space for all the rescue equipment and living quarters for the crews, and were called Life-Saving Stations.

The situation on the Great Lakes was different, since they do not have the irregular shoreline with natural bays and inlets. Harbors were dredged from the mouths of the rivers that flowed into the lakes. The harbors were then protected by a set of breakwalls. Reaching the safety of the harbor through the narrow opening of the breakwalls was a difficult task in all but the best weather.

As a result, most of the shipwrecks on the Great Lakes were near the entrance to port cities and therefore near population centers. At these locations it would be possible to quickly muster a crew of volunteers. The station's needs, for areas with local volunteers, included storage for the equipment but no living quarters for the crew. The name "Life Boat Station" was used for the stations that housed equipment with no live-in crews.[42]

The modifications Chandler made to his 1875 design for the Life Boat Stations included a wider and shorter floor plan and clipped gable ends. Because there were no crews to accommodate, a loft or sleeping room was not needed, just one large equipment room for the boats and gear. There was also no need for the lookout platform on the roof, but the design did provide for a balcony. This balcony was placed under the clipped gable end on the seaward side where the keeper or a volunteer could stand watch in bad weather.[43]

Some of these stations were built on the beach, similar to the lifesaving stations, but many were built within a bay or harbor. At these protected locations the station could be provided with a sloping ramp to run the boats into the water. This meant that the stations could use the standard surfboat or the much heavier lifeboat that was self righting and self bailing.

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[41]Record Group 26.

[42]O'Brien, 34.

[43]York, 17.

Of the twelve stations built on Lake Michigan in 1876, nine were Life Boat Stations. The Life Boat Station on North Manitou Island was constructed in 1877 and went into operation the following year.[44] Daniel L. Buss was selected as keeper of the station.[45] The Life Boat Station was located near Pickard's wharf next to the 1854 rescue station.[46] While the station may have had a life boat, it would have been difficult for the crew to launch in many storms. The station was located on the beach and not within a harbor, and therefore had no launch ramp into protected water.

The continued success and expansion of the service permitted the U.S. Life-Saving Service in 1878 to become a separate agency within the Treasury Department with Kimball in charge. Apparently the reliance on volunteer crews was not entirely satisfactory. Soon after the creation of the life boat stations, one or two surfmen were hired to assist the keepers at some of the Great Lakes Stations.

Beginning in 1878, the North Manitou Island station was manned by a paid six man crew, as were the other stations on Lake Michigan.[47] Lifesaving was a twenty-four-hour occupation and it was essential that the crew live near the station. They needed to be able to take their rotation on watch, beach patrol, and if necessary, be quickly assembled for a rescue. No records have been found to indicate this, but it is assumed there were no established crews' quarters on North Manitou Island at this time. It is believed the crew purchased or boarded in houses built nearby for the cordwood operation. It was common practice at this time that the crew took their meals at the keeper's house. Several of the men may also have boarded with Keeper Buss since he owned a large home behind the station.

Because the Life Boat Station did not provide a lookout platform, a suitable lookout had to be built once a crew was added. It appears that a simple functional enclosed lookout was added to the boathouse from historic photographs available at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The addition lacks any stylistic design and was probably constructed by the crew. The exact date the lookout was removed is not known, but it was gone by the time the station was purchased in the 1940s by a private corporation, the Manitou Island Association.

As the Service became better established, it was necessary to enlarge many of the stations. This was required, in part, to house additional lifesaving equipment, but the primary reason was to provide additional space for the keeper and crew. During the early years of establishment, as a means to save money, the stations had been designed to provide only the minimum amount of space for the staff. Larger crews, and the need to provide some private space for the keeper and his family, compelled the USLSS to modify many of the stations. This was especially true for the early Life Boat Stations that had not been designed to house a paid crew.

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[44]*Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service, 1875-1914* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), for year 1877.

[45]Rita Hadra Rusco, *North Manitou Island, Between Sunrise and Sunset* (Ravenna, Michigan: Rogers Printing, 1991), 19.

[46]Record Group 26.

[47]*Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service, 1875-1914,* for year 1878.

Providing crew accommodations at the Great Lakes Life Boat Stations was a concern for the service in the mid 1880s. In some cases, additions were added to the Life Boat Stations, but at other sites a separate building away from the original boathouse was constructed. In 1885, the first separate dwelling to be apart from the boatroom was designed for a Life Boat Station at Golden Gate Park, California.

Albert B. Bibb was working as an architect for the service by 1885, although he probably began his employment as an Inspector of Stations as early as 1881. Bibb's initial involvement was in the enlargement of several stations, by extending the roof line and adding ell additions, throughout the system.[48]

In the mid 1880s, Bibb designed a new station for Marquette, Michigan that was the first station to be originally constructed with the dwelling and boat room separated. The Marquette style of station is believed to be Bibb's final work for the USLSS. Although the original drawings are unsigned, the use of numerous details associated with Bibb's successor suggests his hand. At least thirteen stations were built using this Marquette design.[49]

The Marquette plan permitted a greater flexibility by allowing each building to be located in the most advantageous spot. The boathouse could be placed at the water's edge while the dwelling was usually set back on land less susceptible to coastal erosion.

A separate dwelling was built in 1887 for North Manitou Island, and again for nearby Beaver Island when its Station was constructed. Both the Beaver Island Station and the North Manitou Station were on exposed beaches and not on protected water. It is believed that Bibb was responsible for the design of the North Manitou Island station dwelling. Its massing and the use of different types of shingles or siding at each floor level are synonymous with buildings designed by Bibb.

Similar to all stations, a drill pole and a 60-foot flagpole were included in the complex. The drill pole sat to the south of the station, but is no longer present. The original flagpole was replaced circa 1905 with a 70-foot prefabricated steel structure that exists today. Towers of this type were installed at all the stations in 1914.

A wood framed supply building with a hip roof was at the station by 1895. The building first had two sets of large boat house doors, which suggest that it was built to house some of the rescue equipment. As the service evolved, it was common to add extra buildings to accommodate additional boats and rescue gear, or to provide living space for the crew. These buildings were simple, lacking both the architectural detail and the substantial construction of the main buildings. Many of these buildings were built by the crews. By 1902 this supply building had been converted into a ready room for the crew. This loafing or "ready room" was simply a place where the men could relax and still be near the station.

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[48]York, 42.

[49]Ibid, 218.

Buildings were constructed or reassigned functions as needed to complete the task assigned to the station. A blacksmith shop once existed behind the 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station. The Volunteer Rescue Station was used to hold the station's supply boat in the early 1900s, and then to store the beach apparatus after 1920.

From an early date, if not from the very start of the station, there were two boats stored in the Life Boat Station. The building had one boat door opening and required an interior cross over track to get the boats out of the building. The beach carts would have been in the way of launching the boats in this arrangement, so the gear was stored in a separate building. This allowed the rescue boats to be launched and retrieved at a much faster and easier speed. Around 1920 the supply boat became motorized, and because it was heavier, it was stored in the water or on the beach during the winter months.

The station maintained a sloped wooden launch ramp from the Life Boat Station to the water. The ramp had a light metal track for moving the boats stored on wheeled carriages. The ramp was routinely damaged by the storm waves and ice so yearly maintenance was required to keep it operational. A crude ramp, built with a log track and wooden rollers, also connected the 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station with the water for launching the supply boat. Near the ramp was a well and a two-man pump for fire protection. Where this track entered the water, the crew had built a small dock out into the lake.

After the addition of the 1887 Dwelling, the crew slept at the station. Since it was difficult for the married men to see their families, the service permitted the men to build cottages for their families on the government property. It was common at the Great Lakes stations to see two to six simple vernacular homes for the families of crew members. While these buildings were frequently on government property, they were privately owned. When men moved to another station, they sold their home to another crew member. Sometimes, the homes were moved by barge, or on the ice, to a new station in the vicinity.

One of these, the Hans Halseth house, still exists on North Manitou Island. The cottage originally sat to the north of the complex at Pickard's Dock. Halseth became a surfman as a young man in the mid 1890s and worked at the North Manitou Island station at least until the late 1920s. Around 1910 the building was moved to its present location at the north end of the complex.

Lifesaving Equipment

The Life Boat Station first received a Merryman self-bailing, self-righting lifeboat patterned after the 30-foot English lifeboat of the Royal National Life Boat Institution. The Merryman lifeboat was 26 feet 8 inches by 7 feet 3 inches and had a draft of 1 foot 9 inches. Most likely the station was also provided with a Jersey style surfboat at this time.

As boats became older they were replaced with newer models provided for the station's use. In 1884 another Long Branch Jersey style surfboat arrived, and the following year they received a 30-foot Mackinaw boat to use for general transportation. Records indicate that in 1892 a 22-foot Dobbins lifeboat was listed in poor condition, which means it probably had been at the station five to ten years. Another Long Branch surfboat came in 1894 and a 26-foot self bailing, water

ballast Beebe-McLellan surfboat arrived in 1895. A new lifeboat was received in 1896, similar to the one the station began with 19 years earlier.

Records for new boats after 1900 have not been located. It is known that at least one newer Beebe-McLellan surfboat and a motor surfboat were used on the island after that date. The station never had a 34- foot lifeboat or a 36-foot motor lifeboat because the water was too shallow for launching these vessels.

Operational History

During the years of the Life-Saving Service, the station saved 772 individuals from shipwrecks with no shipwreck victim losing their life.[50] Most of the ships assisted were schooners and sloops with crews of eight or less. The station crew also provided general fire, rescue and police services for the island population. The station's fire equipment included a hose cart, two man pump, hand drawn fire engine, buckets, extinguishers and ladders. The crew also provided first aid and evacuated islanders to the mainland to receive medical care. The keeper settled disputes and restrained disorderly citizens, when it was necessary.

The station became part of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915. There were few changes to the buildings or to the daily routine because of this change. In the late 1920s, Lt. Willard Smith evaluated the need for the area stations. Lt. Smith's father had worked at the North and South Manitou Island Stations and was currently in charge of the Sleeping Bear Point Station across the Manitou Passage. Lt. Smith's report indicated that his father's old station at North Manitou and his current station at Sleeping Bear Point were no longer needed by the Coast Guard.Both stations lacked a protected harbor and could not operate the larger motor lifeboats which had become the standard of the day.

Conclusion

The North Manitou Island Life-Saving Station is representative of the nearly two hundred stations that made up the U. S. Life-Saving Service. The North Manitou Island Station is the only remaining station that encompasses the entire lifesaving service history from volunteer era through the Coast Guard era. Because this station saw no interruption in service, the station buildings retain a high degree of integrity of design, material and workmanship.

The setting has remained relatively unchanged from the years of operation. It conveys a strong feeling of the historic past and associated sights and sounds identified with a maritime landscape. No other lifesaving station location in the United States retains so fully the historic scene that includes the buildings, structures, and maritime landscape associated with the creation and development of federal lifesaving efforts in the United States.

[50]Jim Muhn, *Historic Resource Study, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore*, National Park Service, 1984, 66.

The period of significance for the North Manitou Lifesaving Station complex is 1854 through 1932. This includes the construction of the 1854 Volunteer Rescue Station through 1932, the last year the Station was operational with a full time crew.

The operation of this complex remained relatively unchanged, even with the reorganization into the U.S. Coast Guard. The work in 1932 illustrated how confident the Coast Guard was in their continued operation on the island. No changes in numbers of personnel or operation occurred until 1933 when the station was determined obsolete by the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard left a skeleton crew of two to man the station. The station was operated in this manner until around 1938 when the station was closed and sold to the Manitou Island Association. The Manitou Island Association used the buildings for employee housing and general operation of their island hunting preserve. This continued until the National Park Service purchased the island from the Manitou Island Association in 1984.[51]

[51]Rusco, 19.

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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.
X Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #MI-338A & B
__ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

__ State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State Agency
X Federal Agency (SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE)
__ Local Government
__ University
__ Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 3 acres

UTM References:	**Zone**	**Easting**	**Northing**
	16	580420	4996700

Verbal Boundary Description:

The lifesaving station is located on approximately 3 acres on the northeast side of North Manitou Island. The northern boundary runs from Lake Michigan along the south edge of the new dock road and intersects with the access road that runs into the village. From this intersection the boundary turns south and runs east along the access road to an area just south of the Generator Building. The boundary then turns east and runs to Lake Michigan.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes all of the structures and the setting that have historically been associated with the North Manitou Island Lifesaving Station and that maintain historic integrity.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: William Herd (Park Ranger) and Kimberly Mann (Historic Architect)

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Telephone: 616-326-5134

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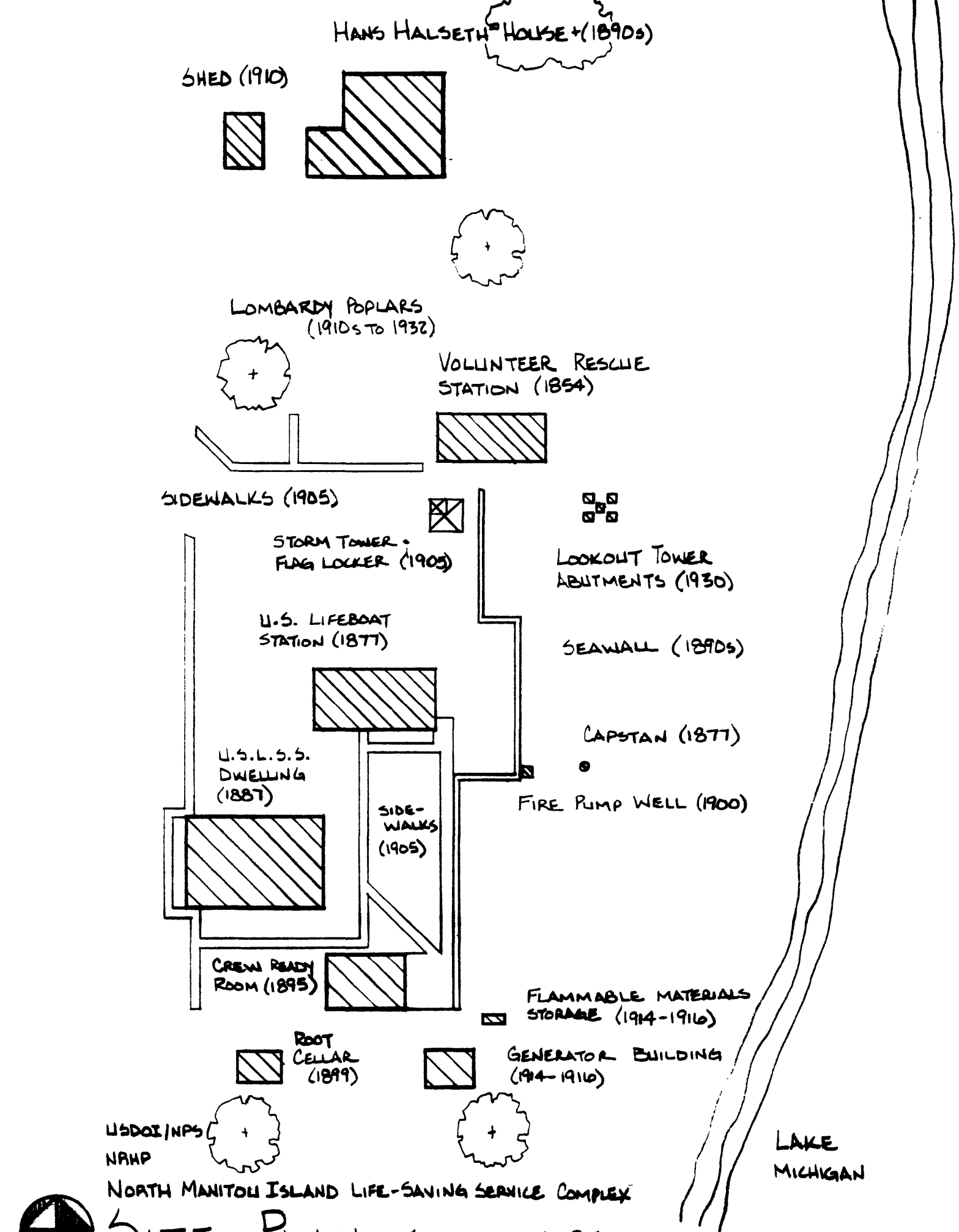

NORTH MANITOU ISLAND LIFE-SAVING SERVICE COMPLEX

SITE PLAN: SCALE: 1:25

LEELANAU COUNTY, MICHIGAN