

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 12 1987

date entered MAR 13 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Grindle Point Light Station

and or common

2. Location

street & number Ferry Road \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Islesboro, \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county Waldo code 027

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Islesboro

street & number

city, town Islesboro, \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Maine 04848

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Waldo County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Belfast, \_\_\_\_\_ state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state

## 7. Description

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

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Facing southwest across West Penobscot Bay, the Grindle Point Light Station is a virtually intact example of a square-towered lighthouse complex. It consists of a relatively short tapered brick light tower connected by a covered, below-ground passage to the frame keeper's house. The tower is capped by a steel deck which extends beyond the walls. This deck is partially supported by a curved steel cornice, and it has a perimeter iron railing. At the center of the deck is the lantern. The lens was removed from the tower before the site was sold to the Town of Islesboro in 1935. Four windows illuminate the circular staircase located within the structure.

The low gable roof covered passage located between the light tower and the dwelling is built on the foundation from the original 1850 structure. It has a single dormer on both the west and east facades.

Oriented with its steeply pitched gable roof perpendicular to the connecting passage, the keeper's house is one-and-a-half stories in height and an irregular three bays wide. It is covered in clapboards. The house features two windows and a door on the front (east) elevation and two windows in the second story. This fenestration pattern, less one upper story window, is repeated on the gable end which faces Penobscot Bay.

Standing to the northwest of the house is a frame boathouse sheathed in board-and-batten siding. Farther to the north is a small brick building said to have been used to store flammable materials such as oil and kerosene. At present, an automated light, detached from the original building, functions as a navigational aid.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1874-75 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Located at the entrance to Gilkey's Harbor and the Village of Islesboro, Grindle Point Light Station has, for more than one-hundred years, been the preminent landmark on this island of about 500 year-round inhabitants. First established in 1850 and rebuilt in 1875, the lighthouse is one of only three similarly shaped structures which still survive along the coast of Maine.

The light station at Grindle Point was built at a time of increased commercial traffic in Gilkey's Harbor./1 In 1847, for example, Islesboro was first included on a steamboat line between it and the mainland. Settlement of Islesboro commenced in 1769, and by 1860 its population reached 1,276 persons, its highest recorded figure./2 During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the island became a popular summer resort area witnessed by the construction of sprawling hotels and cottages.

On March 3, 1849, the United States Navy appropriated \$3,500 to build a lighthouse at Islesboro. A three-acre tract of land was acquired from Francis Grindle for \$105, hence the name Grindle Point Light. The twenty-eight foot high tower and first keeper's house, built of brick, were completed in the summer of 1850. Rufus Dunning was appointed keeper of the light on August 20, 1850. He was replaced by Francis Grindle on April 3, 1853.

The 1875 annual report of the Lighthouse Board stated that the Grindle Point Lighthouse was in such condition:

that it was determined advisable to re-build instead of repairing it. A one-and-one-half story building for the keeper's dwelling and a square brick tower for the light was therefore erected; the walls of the original house torn down to near the surface of the ground and the roof lowered. The original building thus changed will be used as a covered way between the new dwelling and the tower and for the storage of provisions, fuel, oil, and supplies of various kinds.

An appropriation for the rebuilding was made on June 23, 1874. A Boston contractor, who is as yet unidentified, performed the work, and a machine shop in Portland refurbished the replacement lens.

Few changes were made to the light station after it was rebuilt in 1874-75. At some point the boathouse was moved back five feet from the water and the board-and-batten siding added. In 1887 a brick cistern was built into the covered passage, and in 1896 a 1,000 pound hand-struck bell was added to the site.

Initial plans to automate the light station were made in 1923, but objections by local residents stalled the move until 1934. A twenty-one foot tall steel tower was built that year to carry a flashing white light. The de-activated station was acquired in 1935 by the Town of Islesboro for use as a public park and to house the Islesboro, now Sailor's Memorial, Museum. It retains this function. (SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Hayden, Henry L., "Grindle Point Light And/Or Gilkey's Harbor Light". Unpublished Typescript Copy on File at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1

Quadrangle name Islesboro, Maine, 1973

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	9	5	0	4	5	2	0	4	9	0	2	9	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property of one acre is contained within the boundary of Town of Islesboro Tax Map 14, Lot 1.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January, 1987

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Earle S. Feltz*

title S.H.P.O. date 2/9/87

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*John A. Brown* Entered in the National Register date 3-13-87  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



GRINDLE POINT LIGHT STATION

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

Endnotes

- ./1 The historical background for Grindle Point Light was derived principally from research undertaken by Henry Hayden and assembled into an unpublished typed manuscript entitled, "Grindle point Light and/or Gilkey's Harbor Light". A copy is on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.
- ./2 The 1860 population figure for Islesboro was published in the Maine State Year-Book and Legislative Manual for the Year 1871, (Portland: Hoyt, Fogg and Breed, 1871), p. 308.