Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 11 1985
DATE ENTERED

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

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC
Point Reyes Lifeboat Rescue Station (1927)

AND/OR COMMON
Point Reyes Lifeboat Station

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Drake's Bay, Point Reyes National Seashore — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Not applicable — x VICINITY OF Inverness — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fifth

STATE California — CODE 06 — COUNTY Marin — CODE 041

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| _DISTRICT | X PUBLIC | _OCCUPIED | _AGRICULTURE | _MUSEUM |
| X BUILDING(S) | _PRIVATE | X UNOCCUPIED | _COMMERCIAL | X PARK |
| _STRUCTURE | _BOTH | _WORK IN PROGRESS | _EDUCATIONAL | _PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| _SITE | **PUBLIC ACQUISITION** | **ACCESSIBLE** | _ENTERTAINMENT | _RELIGIOUS |
| _OBJECT | _IN PROCESS | X YES: RESTRICTED | X GOVERNMENT | _SCIENTIFIC |
| | _BEING CONSIDERED | _YES: UNRESTRICTED | _INDUSTRIAL | _TRANSPORTATION |
| | | _NO | _MILITARY | _OTHER: |

## 4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
National Park Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER
450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

CITY, TOWN
San Francisco — ___ VICINITY OF — STATE California 94102

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
County Recorder's Office, County of Marin

STREET & NUMBER
Civic Center

CITY, TOWN
San Rafael — STATE California

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Anna C. Toogood, A Civil History of Golden Gate . . . and Point Reyes National Seashore

DATE
1978 — X FEDERAL _STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
National Park Service, Western Regional Office

CITY, TOWN
San Francisco — STATE California

K 27 85

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---|---|---|
| __EXCELLENT | __DETERIORATED | X UNALTERED | X ORIGINAL SITE |
| X GOOD | __RUINS | __ALTERED | __MOVED DATE_____ |
| __FAIR | __UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Rescue Station, built in 1927, is located on Drake's Bay in Marin County, California. Placed near the end of the point, the station is exposed to the extreme conditions of climate and topography that created a need for a lifeboat station: heavy fog, high winds, and rough surf. The boathouse, built on a rare stretch of sandy beach on an otherwise rocky point, stands at the base of the hills and cliffs of the point. Above, perched on the grass-covered hills, stands the rest of the complex.

The station was built to replace an earlier station on Point Reyes Beach (South), which lies some four miles to the northwest of the present station facing the open ocean. Built in 1889 by the U.S. Life Saving Service, the original station was scheduled to be moved when the U.S. Coast Guard took over the mission of the U.S.L.S.S. in 1915. But intervention of the First World War postponed those plans indefinitely, and it was not until 1927 that the Coast Guard abandoned the old station upon construction of the new one. The surf at the original location had proved far too rough, indeed, lethal.

As built, the new station boasted a spacious commander's residence, a boathouse, two garages, storage sheds, pumphouses, rock retaining walls, water tanks, and a flagpole and tower. As it stands today, the station has changed very little, only several minor outbuildings having vanished, a road having been relocated after a landslip, and a water tank dismounted from its wood frame tower and placed on a foundation, all changes made as a part of the operational history of the station. The intact structures are:

Commander's Residence: This commander's residence, also known as the "officer in charge's quarters," was built in 1927 as part of the original complex and is its second most important building. A rectangular two story wood frame structure, 20 by 50 feet with a basement, it has horizontal wood siding painted white. The double hung wood sash windows, six over six, have gray tram.

The gable roof, which features two dormers, one on each side, has wood shingles which have been painted red. A single brick chimney serves a fireplace (now walled up) on the first floor. The structure has two porches. The front porch, which faces north, has been enclosed and glazed, probably an early change due to the harsh climate which proved inhospitable to use of an open porch. The rear porch, much smaller, also has been enclosed.

The interior of the home has changed little, other than some modernization of the kitchen (formica counter tops), modernization of the bathrooms of which there are two, and modernization of some electrical fixtures, as well as the walling in of the fireplace, also due to the harsh climate.

Interior walls are plastered, and the rooms have ceilings about eight feet high. From the first floor a hardwood stairway leads into the second. An original brass cap, shaped like a pyramid, tops the newel post.

There is a full basement, with a toilet which may have been added after 1940.

Rock Retaining Wall: The rock retaining wall near the commander's residence was built in 1927 as part of the original life-saving complex. It is approximately 330 feet long. It starts along the road that leads to the commander's residence and then follows the road until it reaches a point near the residence. It varies in height from 2-1/2 feet to about 10 feet. Approximately halfway, a concrete stairway leads up to the commander's residence. The wall is constructed of a reddish-brown rough-cut stone which is mortared with concrete. On the bottom of the stairway and attached to one wall is a small brass plaque which commemorates the voyage of Sir Francis Drake, who is credited by some scholars and by local legend with discovering Drake's Bay. The plaque was placed in 1950 by a local chapter of E Clampus Vitus.

Stone Retaining Wall: The stone retaining wall near the pumphouse appears to have been built around 1927 to hold back the eroding soil of the hill near the road leading to the boathouse. It is approximately 30 feet long and 2-1/2 feet tall and is constructed of rough stone set in lime mortar. It is overgrown and partially collapsed in several places.

Road: The road leading to the boathouse and passing through the life-saving station complex was graded in 1937. It starts near the commander's residence where it is sided by the rock retaining wall and then proceeds down the hill to the boathouse on the beach below. It is a gravel road, although at one time it was an asphalt-paved road. The grade is original.

Three Stall Garage: The three stall garage may have been built in 1927 as part of the original life-saving station complex. It is a square wood frame structure about 28 feet square with horizontal wood siding that has been sheathed with No. 1 sawn cedar shingles and painted white. It is built upon timber pilings with a concrete drive.

The building has a wood shingle, hipped roof, painted red. The five windows are double hung wood sashes, one over one. The trim of the windows is painted grey. There are three large garage doors facing the driveway, and a door on the east side. All are original.

The interior of the structure was not viewed. The floor is wood.

Garage: The garage, which serves as the garage for the commander's residence, was built in 1927 as part of the original life-saving station complex. It is a rectangular wood frame structure (12 by 20 feet) with horizontal wood siding that has been sheathed with No. 1 sawn cedar shingles and painted white. The building has a wood shingle hipped roof which is painted red. The four windows, which are double hung wood sashes, one over one, have a grey trim. There is one door on the north facade.

The structure sits on a concrete pad. There is a large garage door on the west facade which is original. The interior walls have tongue and groove wood siding and ceiling. There is a small attic with access both inside and outside the building.

Pumphouse: The pumphouse was built in 1935 by the United States Coast Guard as part of the life-saving station. It is a square wood frame structure (12 by 12 feet) with horizontal wood siding that has been sheathed with No. 1 sawn cedar shingles and painted white. The hipped roof has wood shingles which are painted red. The five windows, which are double hung wood sashes, two over two, have a grey trim. The building rests upon a concrete pad. There is one door, which is located on the north facade.

The interior has no interior walls or ceiling. The pump and any other apparatus that was originally in the building has also been removed, with the exception of some piping and a small concrete pad on which the pump rested.

Storage Shed (?): The original designation and use of this structure is uncertain. It is currently in use as a fire pumphouse which may have also been the original use. It may have been built in 1927 as part of the original life-saving station. It is a square wood frame structure (10 by 10 feet) with tongue and groove wood siding that has been painted white. The wood shingle roof is painted red. The structure has one window with double hung wood sashes, one over one. The structure rests on a concrete pad. There is one door on the north facade, with six window panes in the top half.

Boathouse: The boathouse, built in 1927, and the most important building in the complex, was designed to store the rescue boats of the station and to house the crew. It is a 2-1/2 story wood frame structure built on timber pilings. The boathouse has a horizontal wood siding which is painted white. The roof, which is finished with cement-asbestos shingles, is red. It is believed that this is the original roofing material. The original copper gutters and downspouts have been temporarily removed to prevent vandalism.

The windows are double hung wood sashes, six over six. The windows have minor trim. The dimensions of the structure, which is rectangular, are 60 by 40 feet. There is an elevated walkway on the west facade of the building. This walkway leads to the boat launching ramp, which is located on the north facade and continues some forty feet into the water. To the west and east of this ramp are two elevated docks which continue for about ninety feet over the water. From the north facade, the boat launching ramp, which supports three boat launching tracks, runs some forty or so feet into the water. The tracks, which are similar to railroad track, begin inside the boathouse and then run out through three large doors on the north wall. Once outside, the tracks converge at a junction some fifteen feet north of the doors and continue along the ramp into the water. Both the ramp and the docks are supported by timber pilings. At one time, a manually-operated davit and lifeboat

were attached to the west side of the ramp on the dock. The boat has been removed and the dismantled davit apparatus is lying on the dock.

The interior of the building is unequally divided between boat storage and living quarters for the crew. The first floor houses the boat deck which was capable of holding three vessels. Two tracks still possess the original launching cars. The central or main track has an electric winch (with a manual override) for launching the main lifeboat.

Also on the first floor is a mess deck. This contains the mess, a large kitchen, and a pantry. This area appears to have been slightly altered. The floors are covered with linoleum, the kitchen counters and hardware and plumbing are relatively new, and the lights have been changed to fluorescent. The walls are plastered. This is different than the boat deck, which has tongue and groove wood siding for walls. The boat deck has also been converted to fluorescent lighting.

From the mess deck, a stairway leads to the second floor, which houses the living quarters, the radio room, the office and the head. A large recreation room is also located at the northwest end of the building on the second floor. The stairway, with 17 risers has an original hardwood rail with rope lashing on the ends of the rail. This appears to be original.

There are six small crew rooms, approximately 10 by 12 feet, each with a steam radiator. There are no furnishings. The radio room and the office are original. All of the equipment has been removed. The head, which has two showers, has been modernized. All of the plumbing is recent, as are the metal stall showers. All lighting on the second floor has been converted to fluorescent lights.

From the second floor, a stairway leads to the loft, which makes up the next half-story. This loft area is divided into various small closets with an open storage area in the center. Wood drawers, all with their original stenciling, were used to store spare maintenance parts for the building.

There is one chimney in the building, which acts as a flue for the electrically-operated furnace on the first floor. The furnace powers the boiler, which is a small affair located in a small closet-like room near the boat deck. The furnace, which is identified as an "Electrolux 100W," was manufactured by the S.T. Johnson Co., of Oakland, California. It may be original.

Water Tanks (4): Four redwood water tanks (one of them elevated) were constructed in 1927 as part of the original life-saving station complex. Two of these tanks were built on the hill above the boathouse, while the other two (one elevated) were built on the hill above the commander's residence: These two tanks are still in place, but the elevated one has been placed on the ground. The two tanks above the boathouse were moved further up the hill after a severe landslide in 1956.

Bellpost with Stand: A wooden bellpost with stand, built in 1927 as part of the original life-saving station complex, and approximately eight feet tall, stands to the west of the boathouse. The bell has been removed.

Features no longer extant: Several structures and features of the life-saving station are no longer extant. Among these were several non-official temporary residences built near the boathouse by members of the crew for their families. These were apparently destroyed around 1956. Also gone is the 1927 wooden drill post, a storage shed, a storeroom, and the flagpole and flag tower. It is not known when these features were removed. During the Second World War, a plywood quonset hut was built near the west facade of the boathouse. It was demolished around 1960.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| __PREHISTORIC | __ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | __COMMUNITY PLANNING | __LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | __RELIGION |
| __1400-1499 | __ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | __CONSERVATION | __LAW | __SCIENCE |
| __1500-1599 | __AGRICULTURE | __ECONOMICS | __LITERATURE | __SCULPTURE |
| __1600-1699 | __ARCHITECTURE | __EDUCATION | __MILITARY | X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| __1700-1799 | __ART | __ENGINEERING | __MUSIC | __THEATER |
| __1800-1899 | X COMMERCE | __EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | __PHILOSOPHY | X TRANSPORTATION |
| X 1900- | __COMMUNICATIONS | __INDUSTRY | __POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | __OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | __INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1927-1937 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Fred J. Maurer/U.S. Coast Guard

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Point Reyes Life-Saving Station was built to rescue seamen whose misfortune it was to be wrecked on the treacherous and dangerous shore of PointReyes. Prior to its construction many vessels and their crews were lost at the point, clearly indicating a need for a life-saving station. Established to meet that need, the Point Reyes Station performed admirably, despite a change of location in 1927. By 1968, the number of wrecks had declined, and the station was no longer needed and was decommissioned, its function superseded by the new station completed in 1968 at Bodega Bay, farther to the north.

Because of the great service it rendered and due to the importance of the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station to commercial coastal shipping and transportation, it is deemed of Regional significance in the areas of Social/Humanitarian, Transportation, and Commerce. The station is significant as a humanitarian expression; it is a reminder of a time when coastal and oceanic shipping was more hazardous, and more common, than today, and of man's humanity to man in attempting to mitigate those hazards, both to seamen and their passengers. The station was significant to the commercial development of the area by helping to make coastal shipping safer, thus encouraging such commerce. It was significant as a development which aided transportation especially in offering rescue of travelers (passengers) using coastal or oceanic transportation, as well as the crews. The structures of the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station, as built by the United States Coast Guard, are of regional historical significance because the station provided aid and a point of land that was passed by shipping serving the entire Pacific Coast. Furthermore, the station possesses what is probably the last surviving Coast Guard marine railway in California, if not on the entire Pacific Coast. All structures possess integrity of site and of construction, and stand as a monument to the valiant men of the Coast Guard.

Historical background: The history of life-saving activity on the Point Reyes Peninsula dates to the Mexican Era when Marin rancheros Rafael Garcia and John Reed aided the stranded crew of the luckless sailing ship Ayacucho, wrecked on the Limantour Spit on October 27, 184. At that time and for decades thereafter, the local ranchers were the only hands available to assist the crews and passengers of ships stranded or wrecked on the coast. What clearly was needed was a life-saving station, but it was not until 1886, after some six major wrecks in two decades on the north beach, three at the headlands and five in Drake's Bay had pointedly signaled the need for marine rescue at Point Reyes that a life-saving station there became a reality. Not until January 1888 did the U.S. Life-Saving Service acquire the three and a half acre site on the north beach because the landowner, Charles Webb Howard, had "played fast and loose" with the purchasing agent, making it possible for him to secure the deed only "after a great deal of trouble and vexatious delays." The site stood some three miles north of the Point Reyes Light on a sandy beach, giving a view of ships off the beach and

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


Anna Coxe Toogood; A Civil History of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, California. (Denver: National Park Service, 1978)

Ralph C. and Janetta Shanks; Lighthouses and Lifeboats on the Redwood Coast. (San Anselmo: Costano Books, 1978).


## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 13

UTM REFERENCES

| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 10 | 502400 | 4205400 | B | 10 | 502500 | 4205400 |
| C | 10 | 502420 | 4204875 | D | 10 | 501960 | 4205060 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary begins ten feet northerly from the end of the Coast Guard Pier in line with the centerline of the pier, and extends thence 120 feet easterly at right angles to the centerline of the pier. At that point it turns 90 degrees to the right (southerly), and extends across the small beach and up the cliffs to the south side of the dirt road which extends across the grasslands towards the end

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not applicable | N/A | Not applicable | N/A |
| Not applicable | N/A | Not applicable | N/A |

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE James P. Delgado, Historian (WRO); Gordon Chappell, Regional Historian (WRO) Anna C. Toogood, Historian (DSC); F. Ross Holland, Jr., Historian, WRO (now retired)

ORGANIZATION: National Park Service, Western Regional Office (WRO)

DATE: June 5, 1985 (June 10, 1979)

STREET & NUMBER: 450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

TELEPHONE: (415) 556-4165

CITY OR TOWN: San Francisco

STATE: California 94102

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X NO ___ NONE ___

Kathryn Gualtieri

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ✓ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE Edwin C. Bearss

TITLE Chief Historian, Nat'l. Park Service DATE 10/7/85

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William B. Bushong DATE 11/7/85

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

for KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

headlands. Here, the U.S. Life-Saving Service built a station which was to serve for 38 years. Unfortunately, three surfmen lost their lives while launching their boats in the rough surf of the ocean beach between 1889 and 1927.

The ocean beach station north of Point Reyes faced vicious surf which not only made the launching of boats and efforts to effect rescues from crippled ships extremely dangerous, it also made training in boat launching and rescue techniques unnecessarily hazardous. Furthermore, it did not serve well those ships which foundered around the southeast side of Point Reyes or in Drake's Bay. Both for training in the safer waters of Drake's Bay and to enable better response to shipwrecks southeast of Point Reyes, about 1894 the Life-Saving Service built an auxiliary boathouse on Drake's Bay, and soon was conducting boat drills in the bay. Subsequently, after making a thorough inventory of the station buildings in 1910 and a survey of a new site in 1912, the Service acquired from Charles Howard's heirs in 1913 three small parcels of land, one for a dwelling, another for a new boathouse, and a third for a lookout station all on Drake's Bay, with the intention of building a new Life-Saving Station there to supersede the old one. The new life-saving station site stood barren, however, for another thirteen years, as World War I and unexplained further complications delayed construction. In 1915 the government combined the U.S. Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Service into a new U.S. Coast Guard, which shortly after the signing of the peace treaty renewed efforts to establish the new station. During the early 1920s, the U.S. Navy built a radio compass station just north of the life-saving station on the ocean beach, which undoubtedly assisted the surfmen to be on the watch for endangered ships. By January 1925, when the Coast Guard finally received orders describing the forthcoming construction of the new station, the old station had fallen into disrepair, as maintenance had repeatedly been deferred in expectation of the now long-delayed construction. The 1925 plans called for a station building to house the boats and crew which featured hot water heating, electric lights powered by a generator, and a gasoline-powered hoist to haul the boats up the launchway from the water. The station was also to feature a cottage for the officer-in-charge and for visiting officials. Near this dwelling site, the contractor was to erect a frame combination garage, workshop, and storage building on concrete foundations. At the station site, the contractor was also to erect a small outbuilding for the storage of coal, oil, gasoline, and other flammable items.

A contract with Fred J. Maurer and Co. for the station's construction began at the close of July 1926, Maurer's bid of $42,162 being the lowest submitted. During construction, the Point Reyes station finally received authorization for its first power lifeboat. This meant that the first story of the station building had to be raised two feet and the height of the center boatroom door had to be raised to

eleven feet six inches. On September 17, 1927, the crew received orders to move to the new station, although the construction of the garage, power house and coal house had not yet been completed. The station building stood a few hundred feet east of the Lighthouse Service's Drake's Bay landing and right of way, in the lee of Point Reyes' eastern headlands. The dwelling site, containing 2.07 acres, stood about 1300 feet northwest of the station building, on a hillside overlooking the bay and the lookout, within a plot of ground thirty feet by thirty feet, stood about three eighths of a mile southeast of the station building, on the high ground of the headlands.

Before its eventual disbandment and transfer to the National Park Service in 1969, the Point Reyes Coast Guard station underwent several changes and improvements. A well had been dug and connected with the electric pump in the power house in 1926, but the well gradually lost its supply of water so that by 1934, the station crew of fifteen men could only get some forty gallons of water from it per day. Water then was hauled to the station from a Naval Radio Direction Finder Station about four and a half miles away, which proved to be an expensive and time-consuming exercise. The station consumed about 1,000 gallons per day and the truck could only carry about 400 gallons per load, thus requiring several trips. Besides, not enough water could be stored in the station cisterns to protect the buildings from fire. The critical water storage problem continued for well over a year while efforts to locate a reliable source of uncontaminated water near the station were pursued fruitlessly. Finally, the decision was made to drill a well on the station premises.

In 1934, the station also received a second thirty-six foot power boat for which an additional launching carriage had to be constructed. In 1935 a pumphouse was added. By 1936 two cottages had been completed to supplement the two-story officer's residence and the station building's quarters. In 1937 approval came to build a road from the dwelling site down the hill to the station building. The work was delayed briefly in 1938 when Joseph Mendoza, over whose land the road would pass, flatly refused to sign the agreement, stating he was "fed up" with signing papers for the government, but giving the Twelfth District commander verbal permission to construct the road. The Works Progress Administrator insisted that the commander must have a written statement to proceed with construction, so after pleading with Mr. Mendoza to consider the hardship for the station's employees without the road--all supplies had to be slid down the bank on the end of a rope to the station while those taken from the station had to be packed out on the crewmen's backs--Mendoza relented and the forty-foot roadway was built. The next year a lease was signed for a new lookout site for a tower, storm signal tower and any other necessary structures. In 1941 the station received a steel paint locker and a small, frame pumphouse and in 1962 a guyed, aluminum tower, eighty-five feet high, all of which, with the station buildings dating from 1927, came under the administration of Point Reyes National Seashore in 1969, so closing nearly a century of life-saving service at Point Reyes.

Although details are few on the rescue efforts of this station at their Drake's Bay location, at least one researcher reported in 1936 that in the station's first ten years at its new site, the crew members had saved $3,000,000 worth of property and had given assistance to forty-five vessels--not a bad record and perhaps a good indication of the continued service the station provided in its waning years.

Historical Context

The context in which the Point Reyes Lifeboat Rescue Station operated was that of lifeboat stations on the Pacific Coast of the United States between the borders of Canada and Mexico. Unfortunately, the history of lifeboat stations, whether under the United States Coast Guard or its predecessor U.S. Life Saving Service, is an area of American history not yet thoroughly explored. In contrast, there is extensive literature about lighthouses.

Two sources deal with lifeboat stations in California, and are cited in the bibliography. One deals only with those on the coast north of San Francisco, and the other deals principally with the Point Arguello station. How reliable the latter is, remains unknown; it claims that the Point Arguello station was the only such station south of San Francisco. Perhaps that is correct, and it seems to have been correct as of 1940, but it is still somewhat difficult to believe that there never were stations in the vicinity of the port of San Diego and elsewhere where maritime hazards caused wrecks. Nevertheless, this is the limit of available historical data without extensive primary source research and on-site visits beyond the legal authority and funding scope of this regional office.

Based upon the thin available published literature, the following has been derived regarding the known California stations, listed below in chronological order of establishment.

Golden Gate Park - The first station on the Pacific Coast was established on the north side of Golden Gate Park on the western edge of San Francisco at Ocean Beach in 1878. The station apparently never had a marine railway; crews hauled boats from the boathouse to the water across Ocean Beach on wheeled carriages, either by hand or by horsepower. The date this station was discontinued is unknown. Moved to a new location, the architecturally distinctive single story residence now forms the third story of a three story house on the second lot south of the southeast corner of 47th and Cabrillo Streets in San Francisco. The remainder of the station has been demolished.

Humboldt Bay - Built in 1878 also, the original character of this station is unknown. At some point in its history it apparently acquired a marine railway. The station apparently was demolished when replaced by a new station in 1936.

Bolinas Bay - Established in 1881, little is known of the history and character of the original station here, which burned in 1885.

Point Bonita Life Saving Station - Built in 1889 near the Point Bonita Light, this station consisted of a small pyramidal-roofed boathouse east of the Point Bonita Light. That building is now gone, only the badly rusted marine railway laying in the salt water to mark its location. Date of closing is unknown, but probably about 1915 when the Coast Guard enlarged the Fort Point station.

Point Reyes Beach - Built in 1889 north of Point Reyes, this station apparently had no

marine railway, boats being launched into the surf by other means, probably manpower. It was superseded by the 1927 station on Drake's Bay. The station residence still stands as a private ranch residence; the rest of the buildings apparently are gone.

Fort Point Life Saving Station - Built in 1889 east of Fort Point inside San Francisco Bay, this station originally was of the same architectural style as the Point Reyes Beach station. Its two original buildings still stand, however in 1915 both were moved 700 feet further west to make way for a racetrack being built for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The orientation of the buildings also was changed in relation to each other. However, they served the same function at their new sites, except that the boathouse/carriagehouse thereafter was merely a carriage house, for in 1915 the newly established U.S. Coast Guard erected a new boathouse with three boat stalls and marine railway and with barracks upstairs. This building also survives, however the U.S. Coast Guard removed the marine railway about 1971 with concurrence of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and subsequently the Coast Guard rebuilt the boathouse doors as windows. The Coast Guard still mans and uses the station, but is considering moving across the strait to Fort Baker, where it would build a new station. Even lacking the marine railway, the Fort Point station is considered historically significant.

Southside Station (Fort Funston) - Built south of Golden Gate Park and Ocean Beach in 1894, this station is entirely gone, and its character is not known.

Bolinas Bay - Apparently without a station after the destructive fire of 1885, Bolinas Bay regained a station when the Coast Guard built a new one there in 1915. Of this station, the main building apparently now serves as the Biology Station of the College of Marin. Its integrity is unevaluated.

Point Reyes (Drake's Bay) - About 1915 the Coast Guard built a new boathouse inside Drake's Bay, apparently on the west or northwest side of the bay, although the men who manned this boathouse came from the other station on Point Reyes Beach facing the Pacific Ocean. Whether or not this station had a marine railway is unknown; it is now gone, probably demolished about 1928 when the new Drake's Bay station was built.

Point Reyes Lifeboat Rescue Station - Built in 1927, this is the station which is the subject of this nomination form.

Humboldt Bay - The U.S. Coast Guard built an entirely new Humboldt Bay station in 1936. The boathouse still stands and is in use, and the marine railway still exists, but the boat bays have been turned into offices, and the boat doors have been removed and replaced with a wall featuring windows. Nine years younger than the Drake's Bay Station, it is of an entirely different style.

Point Arguello - Built in 1936 and abandoned in 1941, this station is believed recently to have been demolished by the U.S. Air Force in order to make way for a station for recovery of booster-stage rockets employed in the launching of missiles and space shuttles at Vandenburg Air Force Base.

Information regarding stations in Oregon and Washington is even more difficult to obtain. According to Roald Bendixson, Environmental Specialist for the 13th District, United States Coast Guard, there are no published histories of life saving stations in Oregon or Washington, but on the basis of personal knowledge, he cited the existence of the following:

Three "older" stations which had, and apparently still have, marine railways:

Willpa Bay, Washington

Point Robinson, Puget Sound, Washington - marine railway characterized as "rails lying on the beach"

Tillamook Bay, Oregon

Stations with other means of launching boats, all apparently recent stations built during or since the 1960s:

Depoe Bay, Oregon

Florence, Oregon

Stations with boom-hoist boat launching systems:

Burrows Island, Washington

Destruction Island, Washington

Cape Flattery, Tatoosh Island, Washington

Other stations, character and launching systems unknown:

Point Adams, Oregon - station relinquished to GSA by the USCG

Cape Disappointment, Washington

The dates of establishment and discontinuance, the architecture, the integrity, and the individual histories of these stations remain unknown at present.

Bandon, Oregon - The NPS Regional Historian for the Pacific Northwest Region, Stephanie Toothman, was aware of one station not mentioned by the Coast Guard at Bandon, Oregon, which, apparently abandoned by the Coast Guard some time ago, has become a small local museum. Other stations may have at one time existed whose existence today has been forgotten.

On the basis of the foregoing, it may be useful to note that some stations duplicated the design, plan, and architecture of others, while some were unique in architecture, plan, or design, at least insofar as the Pacific Coast stations are concerned.

The Point Bonita and early Humboldt Bay stations, for example, apparently were quite similar if not identical, as were the Fort Point and Point Reyes Beach stations. However, the design and plan of the Point Reyes (Drake's Bay) station which is the subject of this nomination does not seem to have been duplicated among the California stations - whether or not it was among the Oregon and Washington stations is unknown. It was therefore unique among the California stations.

Among the California stations, only three marine railways still exist, and two of those are at stations whose integrity has been impaired (Humboldt Bay) or destroyed (Point Bonita). Only the Point Reyes (Drake's Bay) Lifeboat Rescue Station, among those in California, appears to retain complete integrity of its boathouse and marine railway. But how this compares with stations in Oregon and Washington, whose integrity remains unevaluated and whose history is unexplored, is unknown. Furthermore, the marine railway at Point Bonita is believed to be of the early type which employed switches, the one at Point Reyes being of the switchless type, as was probably that at Humboldt Bay.

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station appears to be the last intact and unaltered Lifeboat Rescue Station built by the U.S. Coast Guard in California. Whether or not it may be the last unaltered station on the Pacific Coast is unknown.

UTM Coordinates, Zone 10, continued: E 10 5/02/000 42/05/160

Verbal Boundary Description, continued:

of the foot of the point to the east. Then the boundary follows the south edge of that dirt road westward to its intersection with the paved road; from that point it follows the south side of the paved road to the gate and fence on the east side of the station commander's residence compound. Then it follows the fence southeast, southerly, westerly, then northerly, around that portion of the residence compound which is south of the paved road, until it reaches the gate west of the residence; then it continues on the same line down the hill and down the cliff to the 20 foot elevation contour on the cliff; then it turns easterly again, following the 20 foot elevation contour along the cliffs inside Drake's Bay until reaching the north side of the paved road between the residence compound and the boathouse as it descends along the edge of the hillside eastward toward the boathouse, following the south edge of that road to a point which is 120 feet west of the centerline of the pier at which point it turns northerly and runs parallel to the centerline of the pier until it reaches a point in the water on a parallel with a point ten feet beyond the end of the pier and at right angles to its centerline; then the boundary turns easterly again in alignment with the first segment described, following that line to the starting point.

Photographs accompanying this nomination which show present conditions were taken in 1979. However, in order to complete a sketch map to accompany this form, Regional Historian Gordon Chappell reinspected this resource early in 1985 and found the station unchanged in appearance since 1979, so that the 1979 photographs reflect 1985 appearance as well.