

CAPE LOOKOUT NATIONAL SEASHORE
L. S. S. Boat House

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

August 2003
Historical Architecture, Cultural Resources Division
Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service





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2002
Historic Structure Report
L. S. S. Boat House
Cape Lookout National Seashore
Cape Lookout Village
LCS#: 091830

Previous page, View north of L. S. S. Boat
House, 2003

The historic structure report presented here exists in two formats. A traditional, printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the NPS (SERO), and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, the historic structure report also exists in a web-based format through the SERO intranet, which includes links to individual files for a variety of photographs, documents, plans and other material used in compilation of the printed report.

L. S. S. Boat House

Historic Structure Report

Approved by:

Superintendent

Date

Cape Lookout National Seashore

Recommended by:

Chief, Cultural Resources

Date

Southeast Regional Office

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Contents

List of Figures	ix
Foreword	xv
MANAGEMENT SUMMARY	
Executive Summary	1
Research Summary 1	
Architectural Summary 2	
Recommendations 2	
Administrative Data	5
Location Data 5	
Related Studies 6	
Cultural Resource Data 6	
6	
PART 1 DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY	
Historical Background & Context	9
United States Life-Saving Service 9	
Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station 11	
Boat Houses 12	
U. S. Coast Guard 15	
New Boat House 20	
David Yeomans 23	
Chronology of Development & Use	27
Original Construction 29	
Historic Alterations 31	
Modern Alterations 32	
Physical Description	37
Associated Site Features 37	
Foundation 38	

Structure	38
Exterior Finishes	39
Doors and Windows	40
Front Porch	41
Interior	42
Room 100	42
Room 101	43
Room 102	44
Room 103	45
Room 104	45
Utilities	46

PART 2 TREATMENT & USE

Introduction	51
Ultimate Treatment & Use	53
Requirements for Treatment & Use	57
Alternatives for Treatment & Use	59
Recommendations for Treatment & Use	61

Site	61
Foundation	62
Structure	62
Windows and Doors	63
Exterior Finishes	63
Interior	64
Utilities	64

REFERENCE

Sources of Information	67
------------------------	----

List of Figures

- 1** View north of Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, 1893. The lighthouse is barely visible on the horizon at right. (CALO Coll. G-09) 10
- 2** Life-saving crew launching boat into surf, location unknown. (Courtesy U. S. Coast Guard, CALO Coll. G-03) 11
- 3** Plot of Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, 1893. Arrows indicate main station building, right; the 1892 Boat House, center; and the 1891 "inshore" Boat House, left. (Coast Guard Coll.) 12
- 4** View south of Coast Guard Station, 1917. Arrow indicates station's second boat house, built in 1892. (Detail from CALO-Coll. D-57) 13
- 5** Map of Cape Lookout, March 1916. Arrows indicate original 1887 station building, below; 1891 "inshore" boat house, center; and 1896 boat house in the Bight. (Coast Guard Coll.) 14
- 6** Location plan of Coast Guard Station, 1920, showing old life-saving station in its new location. The boat house and stables built in 1892 would be razed a few months after this plan was drawn. (Coast Guard Coll.) 16
- 7** View south of Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station, 1917. New station is at left. (CALO Coll. D-57) 17
- 8** View of board walk and second boat house in the bight, built around 1916 to replace the original structure built in 1896. (CALO Coll., Royer Coll.) 17
- 9** Map of Cape Lookout in 1934, showing location of outlying boathouses. 18
- 10** Plan of Coast Guard Station, August 1934. The boat house completed in April 1924 is at top center. (Coast Guard Coll.) 19
- 11** View of Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station in 1941, with arrow indicating "new" Boat House. Equipment Building completed in 1939 is at left. (CALO Coll. D-55) 20
- 12** Plan of station in 1938. L.S.S. Boat House is at lower right. (Coast Guard Collection) 21

- 13** Crew cleaning surf boat, c. 1942. The 1924 boat house is at left. (CALO Coll.) 22
- 14** View southwest of Coast Guard Station, shortly after World War II. The “new” Boat House is at right. (CALO Coll.) 23
- 15** View of new Equipment Building with 1924 Boat House at right, c. 1940. (CALO Coll.) 24
- 16** View of old Boat House in May 1960 after it had been relocated and adapted for a residence. One of the old doors is lying in the foreground. (CALO Coll., Yeomans Coll.) 25
- 17** Probable plan of Old Boat House as it was completed in 1924. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 28
- 18** View north of 1924 Boat House, c. 1943. (CALO Coll.) 29
- 19** View west of Coast Guard Station, with 1924 Boat House at right, c. 1945. (CALO Coll.) 30
- 20** View north of Coast Guard Station, c. 1941, with Boat House at center. (CALO Coll.) 31
- 21** View of Boat House in 1961 after its conversion into a residence. One of the original doors is lying on the ground at lower left. (David Yeomans Coll.) 32
- 22** Plan of Boat House showing alterations in the 1960s. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 33
- 23** View to north of L. S. S. Boat House. (NPS-SERO-CRS, 2002) 38
- 24** View west of L. S. S. Boat House. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 39
- 25** View of floor framing near rear of house. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 39
- 26** View of south corner and typical eave detail. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 40
- 27** View of rear (northwest) side of house, showing typical exterior finishes. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 40
- 28** View of historic windows on northwest side of house with modern awning shutters. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 41
- 29** View of historic window on front porch with salvaged shutters added by present owner. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 41
- 30** View north on front porch. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 42

- 31** View west in Room 101 with front door at left. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 42
- 32** View to east in Room 101. Base counter at center left is part of a work bench that was originally in the space now occupied by Room 102. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 43
- 33** View of part of original boat doors under kitchen counter. Arrows indicate chamfered framing of door, left, and V-joint paneling used to finish doors, right. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 43
- 34** View to northeast in Room 101. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 44
- 35** View to south in Room 101. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 44
- 36** View of door to Room 102, believed salvaged from Life-Saving Station when it was remodeled in 1924. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002) 45
- 37** View northwest of Room 102. (NPS-SERO_CR, 2003) 45
- 38** View to southwest in Room 102. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 46
- 39** View to northeast in Room 103. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 46
- 40** *View of waste lines at rear of house. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 46*
- 41** Plan of existing building. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003) 47

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this historic structure report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the historic structures and landscapes of National Park Service units in the Southeast Field Area. Many individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Cape Lookout National Seashore for their assistance throughout the process, especially the park's facility manager Mike McGee, cultural resources manager Michael Rikard, and superintendent Bob Vogel. Special thanks go to David Yeomans, a life-long resident of Cape Lookout and Harker's Island who has used the building as a vacation retreat since 1960 and who was kind and generous in facilitating access to the building and providing information on its history. We hope that this study will prove valuable to park management in their treatment of the building and to everyone in understanding and interpreting the old L. S. S. Boat House at Cape Lookout.

Chief
Cultural Resources Division
Southeast Regional Office
January 2003

Executive Summary

The Life- Saving Station played a major role in the history of Cape Lookout, and the boat houses were crucial to the station's operation. The old Boat House has the potential to be one of the park's more- significant historic resources if it were relocated and restored, and indispensable for interpretation of the Cape's history in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Research Summary

Historical documentation for the Boat House has come from three main sources- - the log books of the Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station, 1888- 1942;¹ the park's collection of maps and drawings from the Coast Guard's archives, including plat maps of the station in 1893, 1917, 1920, 1922, 1934, 1938, and 1958; and the park's

1. Records of U. S. Coast Guard, Record Group 26, Norfolk District, Log Books, Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, original volumes at National Archives and Records Center, East Point, GA (here after "Cape Lookout Log").

collection of historic photographs. Continued research in Coast Guard records could provide additional important documentation for this building.

The station logs document construction of five different boat houses and demolition or removal of three of those. Characteristics of the present building and circumstantial evidence within the body of research material shows the present Boat House to be the “new boat house” that the station logs document as having been completed in the spring of 1924. No architectural drawings or construction specifications have been located, but additional research in Coast Guard archives might provide additional documentation for the building.

In developing this historic structure report, NPS staff at the Park have been unstinting in their support for the project. In particular, Michael McGee, Chief of Maintenance, has been extremely helpful in all phases of the work as has Michael Rikard, Chief of Cultural Resources, and Robert Vogel, Superintendent.

Architectural Summary

Built in 1924 for storage and maintenance of life boats, the Boat House is a one-story, wood-framed, hipped-roof, structure with about 775 square feet of interior space. Altered after it was relocated in 1958, the building still retains most of its historic features and original materials hidden beneath layers of modern materials.

The building was very well constructed and remains in generally good condition.

Recommendations

Alternatives for use of the building have been considered; but use of the building for exhibits to interpret the history of the Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard at Cape Lookout is the preferred alternative. If public rest rooms are needed at the Coast Guard Station, they could be installed in the Boat House with a minimum impact on the historic building.

Recommended treatment would include returning the building to its original, well-documented location at the Coast Guard Station, restoration of the exterior to its appearance at the end of World War II, and rehabilitation of the interior for exhibits and, if necessary, rest rooms.

Site

- Relocate building to its original site.
- Re-establish historic roadway that bypassed the station grounds.
- Remove pavement except for concrete apron in front of Maintenance Building.
- Replicate concrete ramps to Boat House doors.

Foundation

- Reset building on wooden pilings.
- Include termite shields on new pilings.

Structure

- Inspect and repair sills and joists when building is relocated.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Remove porches.

Windows and Doors

- Repair and preserve seven original windows.
- Close three window openings created after 1958.
- Re- open boat doors at northeast end and repair as necessary.
- Restore opening on southeast side of building and replicate original doors.

Exterior Finishes

- Remove cedar shingles; repair original drop siding.
- Repair existing soffit, window and door casing, and window sills.
- Remove wood- shingle roofing and install standing- seam metal roof.
- Paint soffit, siding, and trim white; paint window sash black.

Interior

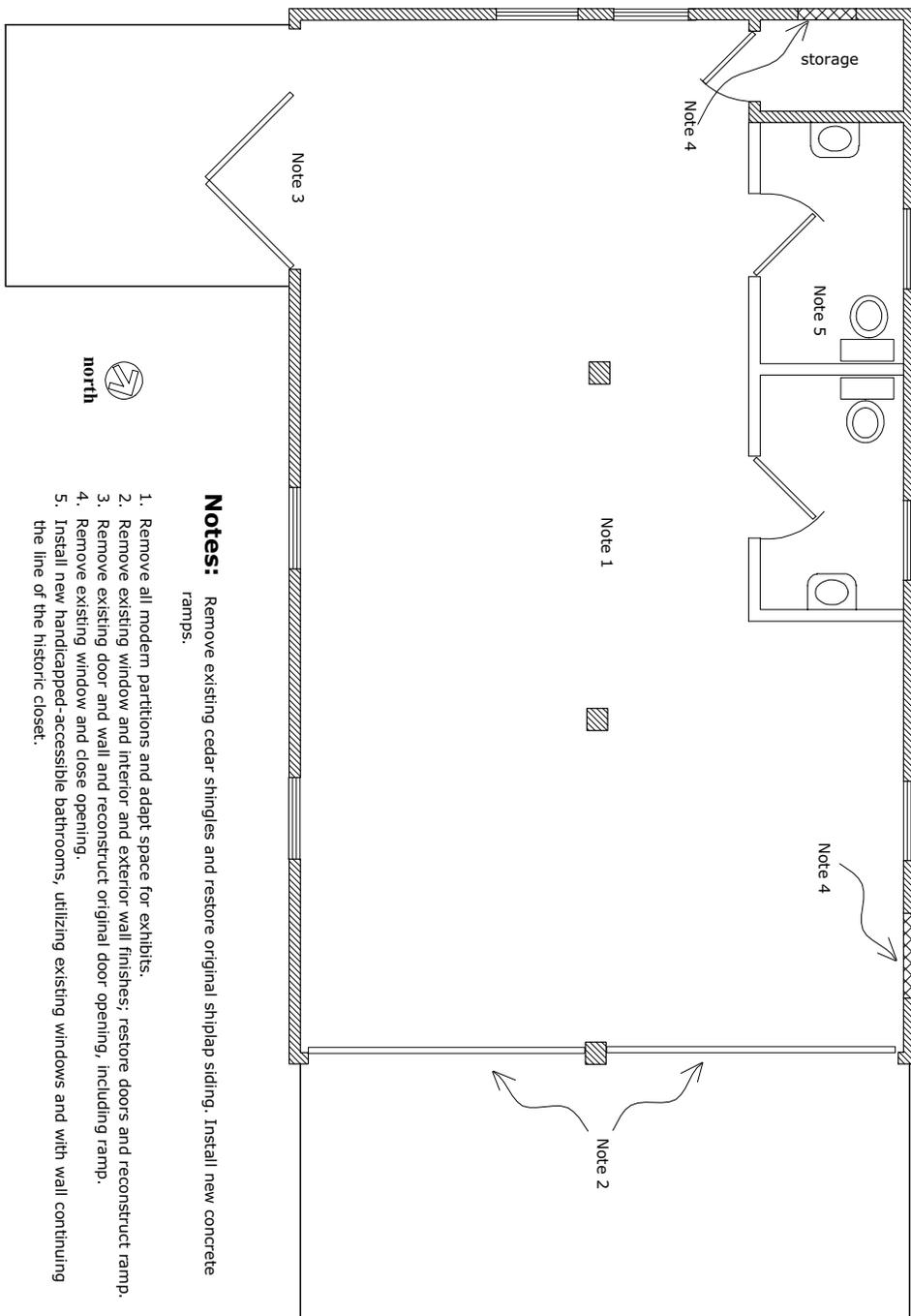
- Remove all modern walls, ceilings, and floor coverings.
- Paint interior white if indicated after modern materials are removed.
- Design and install handicapped- accessible rest rooms on the northwest side of the building.

Utilities

- Install new water supply and waste lines if new rest rooms are installed.

- Design electrical system with simple lighting to serve exhibits.
- Install smoke/fire detector system.
- If necessary, install electrical base-board heaters.

Executive Summary



Notes: Remove existing cedar shingles and restore original shiplap siding. Install new concrete ramps.

1. Remove all modern partitions and adapt space for exhibits.
2. Remove existing window and interior and exterior wall finishes; restore doors and reconstruct ramp.
3. Remove existing door and wall and reconstruct original door opening, including ramp.
4. Remove existing window and close opening.
5. Install new handicapped-accessible bathrooms, utilizing existing windows and with wall continuing the line of the historic closet.



north

Administrative Data

Related Studies

Ehrenhard, John E. "Cape Lookout National Seashore: Assessment of Archeological and Historical Resources." SEAC, NPS, 1976.

Holland, F. Ross. *A Survey History of Cape Lookout National Seashore*. Department of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, NPS, 1968.

Van Beck, Sara L. Cape Lookout National Seashore, Archives and Records Management Review. NPS, 2000.

Cultural Resource Data

National Register of Historic Places: Contributing structure in Cape Lookout Village Historic District, listed June 2001

Period of Significance: 1924- 1950

Proposed Treatment: Exterior restoration, interior rehabilitation for exhibits and rest rooms

PART I

**DEVELOPMENTAL
HISTORY**

Historical Background & Context

Historical documentation for the Boat House has been derived from three main sources - the log books of the Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, 1888- 1942,¹ the park's collection of maps and drawings from the Coast Guard's archives, including plat maps of the station in 1893, 1917, 1920, 1922, 1934, 1938, and 1958; and the park's collection of historic photographs. Continued research in Coast Guard records could provide additional important documentation for this building.

United States Life-Saving Service

The origins of the United States Life- Saving Service can be traced to August 14, 1848, when Congress passed the Newell Act and

1. Records of U. S. Coast Guard, Record Group 26, Norfolk District, Log Books, Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, original volumes at National Archives and Records Center, East Point, GA (here after "Cape Lookout Log").



Figure 1 View north of Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, 1893. The lighthouse is barely visible on the horizon at right. (CALO Coll. G-09)

appropriated \$10,000 for "surf boats, rockets, carronades and other necessary apparatus for the better preservation of life and property from shipwrecks" along the New Jersey shore. Although a series of lifeboat stations were built and equipped in the late 1840s and 1850s, the life-saving service was perennially underfunded, and equipment and stations that were in place frequently fell into disrepair.

Two maritime disasters in 1854 claimed hundreds of lives, and Congress was horrified when told that many of the bodies that washed ashore had been robbed by "shore villains" and

that the government had "no provision [in place] to prevent such depredations."² Nevertheless, it was not until 1857 that appropriations were made to begin implementation of the recommendations made after investigation of those disasters. Although full-time station keepers were hired for the first time, their effectiveness was often limited by the difficulty in rounding up the necessary crew of volunteer "surf men" when an emergency arose.

Another series of disasters in the winter of 1870-71 exposed the sorry state of the life-sav-

2. Means, Dennis R. "A Heavy Sea Running: The Formation of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1846-1878." *Prologue: Journal of the National Archives*, Winter 1987, Vol. 19, #4. <http://www.chicamacomico.org/Library/heavy_sea_running.html> (November 2002).

ing service after years of neglect during the Civil War. In February 1871, responding to renewed calls for reform, the Treasury Department appointed a new director, Sumner Increase Kimball, for the Revenue Marine Division, which included the life- saving service.

Kimball promptly began a complete evaluation of the system of life- saving stations, and based upon his report, Congress appropriated \$200,000 to employ life- saving crews and build new stations. New regulations and standards were established by Kimball, who succeeded in professionalizing the system and dramatically increasing its effectiveness.

The system of life- saving stations was greatly expanded in the early 1870s, with twenty- three new stations built in 1874, including ones at Little Kinnakeet near Cape Hatteras and at Chicamacomico at Rodanthe, NC.³ Nonetheless, the recommended three- mile distance between stations was not yet achieved, especially along the rugged length of the Outer Banks.

In 1878 the Federal government formally established the Life- Saving Service as a separate agency within the Treasury Department. Kimball was named superintendent, a post he would hold as long as the Life- Saving Service existed.

3. Greene, Jerome A. *Historic Structure Report, Historical Data Component, Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, North Carolina*. National Park Service, 1987.



Figure 2 Life-saving crew launching boat into surf, location unknown. (Courtesy U. S. Coast Guard, CALO Coll. G-03)

Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station

The 1878 Act that created the Life- Saving Service also included authorization for thirty new life- saving and life- boat stations, including fifteen new stations on the coasts of Virginia and North Carolina. Like so much else with the Life- Saving Service, however, full appropriations to construct the new stations were not immediately forthcoming. Eight years passed before construction began on any of the authorized stations on Core Banks.

On May 19, 1886, C.T. and Nettie Watson, David and Julia Bell, and Thomas and Mary Daniels conveyed to the United States government title to a tract at Cape Lookout for a life- saving station.⁴ Located less than a mile and a half southwest of the Cape Lookout Light- house, the new station was completed by the

4. Carteret County Records of Deeds and Mortgages, Book NN, pp. 273-276. The deed reserved fishing rights for the grantors.

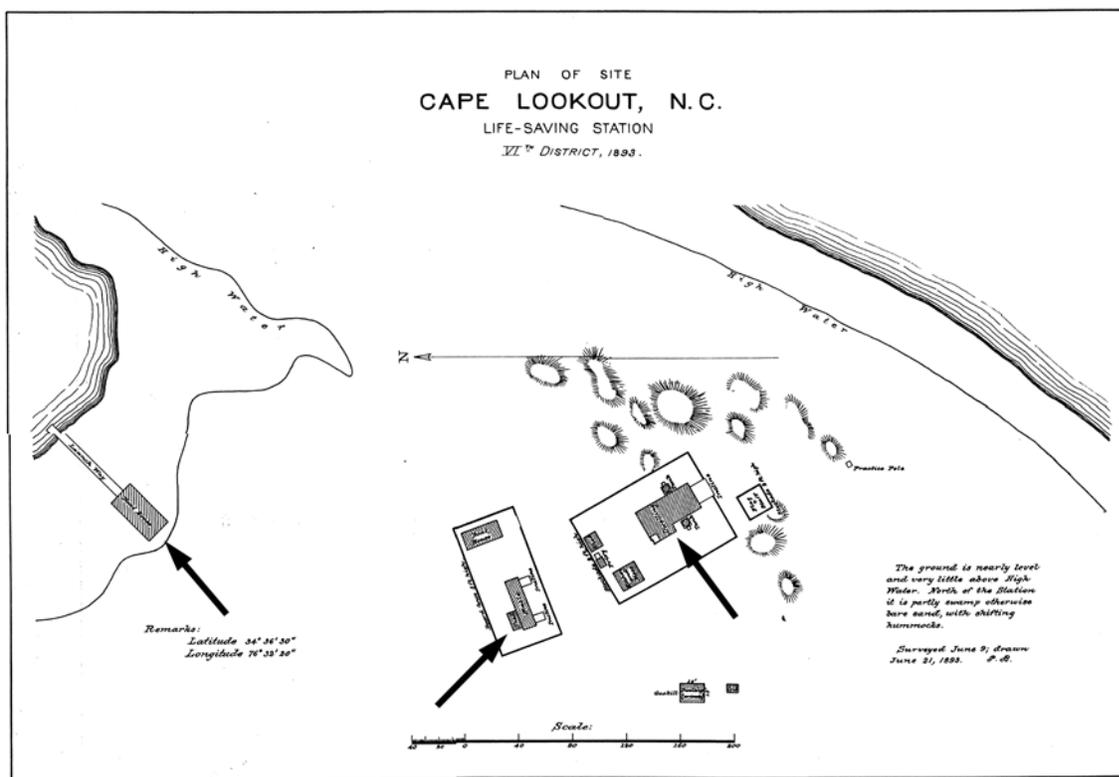


Figure 3 Plot of Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, 1893. Arrows indicate main station building, right; the 1892 Boat House, center; and the 1891 “inshore” Boat House, left. (Coast Guard Coll.)

end of August 1887. On December 15, William H. Gaskill (1857- 1914) was appointed keeper of the Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station and would serve in that capacity for twenty- five years. In January 1888, a seven- member crew of surf men was also appointed and the station went into full operation.⁵

A privy was built along with the station itself, and in the fall of 1888, the crew built an “oil

house,” or “store house,” for storage of kerosene (called coal oil at that time), linseed oil, and other flammables. Between 1891 and 1896, a “cook house,” a “tank house,” stables for the station’s mules, and three boat houses were also built at the Life- Saving Station.

Boat Houses

When it opened in 1888, the Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station had a single, wooden life-boat (visible at right in Figure 1) which was stored in the “boat room” that occupied two-thirds of the first floor of the main building. On its original site, the station was oriented with the large double doors and ramp to the boat room facing the Atlantic. Typical for the period, the boat was relatively small and was

5. Dates provided by U. S. Coast Guard website’s page for Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station #190 at <http://www.uscg.millhq/g-cpl/history/h_USLSS.html>.

stored on a wheeled wagon that the crew used to drag the boat down to the shore where it could be launched directly into the sea.

By the 1890s, larger lifeboats with sails were coming into use, and even with the team of mules that the station acquired in November 1891, moving such a boat from the station across sandy terrain to the shore was difficult at best. In addition, launching such a boat directly into the rough surf of the Atlantic was often not practical. So, in June 1891, the Life- Saving Service bought additional property as a “site for [a] Life Boat Station.”⁶ The lot measured 40’ by 100’ and was located 900 yards from the life-saving station “on south side of Cape Lookout Bay.” Construction of the boat house was begun in October or November 1891 and was substantially complete by the end of the year.⁷ Sometimes referred to as the “inshore” boat house, it was wood- framed with a wood- shingled roof. No image or other description of this boat house has been located. On January 21, 1892, the Superintendent of the Life- Saving Service’s Sixth District accompanied delivery of a “self- sailing and self- righting lifeboat” to the station along with oars, masts, sprits, and a variety of other equipment.⁸

In early March 1892, the station received a third boat- - a Beebe- McLellan “self- bailing water- ballast surf boat”- - and, in April, constructed another boat house in which to store it. Wood-

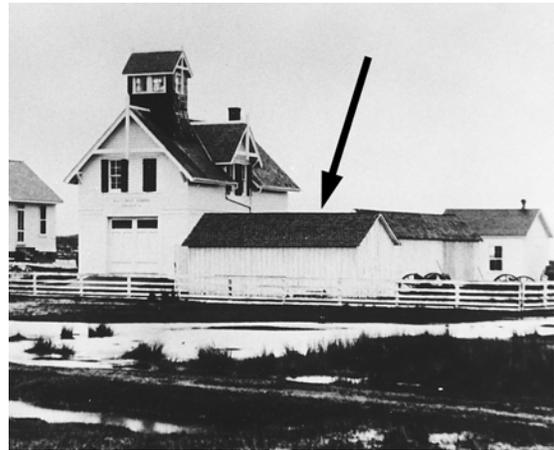


Figure 4 View south of Coast Guard Station, 1917. Arrow indicates station’s second boat house, built in 1892. (Detail from CALO-Coll. D-57)

framed with board- and- batten siding and a gabled, wood- shingled roof, it stood near the stables on the western side of the Life- Saving Station’s compound (see Figure 4).⁹

In January 1896, a third boat house was constructed in the bight itself. Built at the end of a board walk some 300 yards from the shore of the bight, it was apparently an open structure, much like the one that replaced it in 1916 (see Figure 8). As with the inshore boat house, no description or image of this boat house has been located nor has the type of boat been identified that was “hoisted in” the new building when it was completed on February 10.¹⁰

6. Carteret County Records of Deeds and Mortgages, Book QQ, p. 211.

7. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, November 27 and December 30, 1891, and September 25, 1916.

8. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, January 21, 1892.

9. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, March 4, April 7-12, 1892.

10. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, January 21 & 28-31, February 10, 1896.

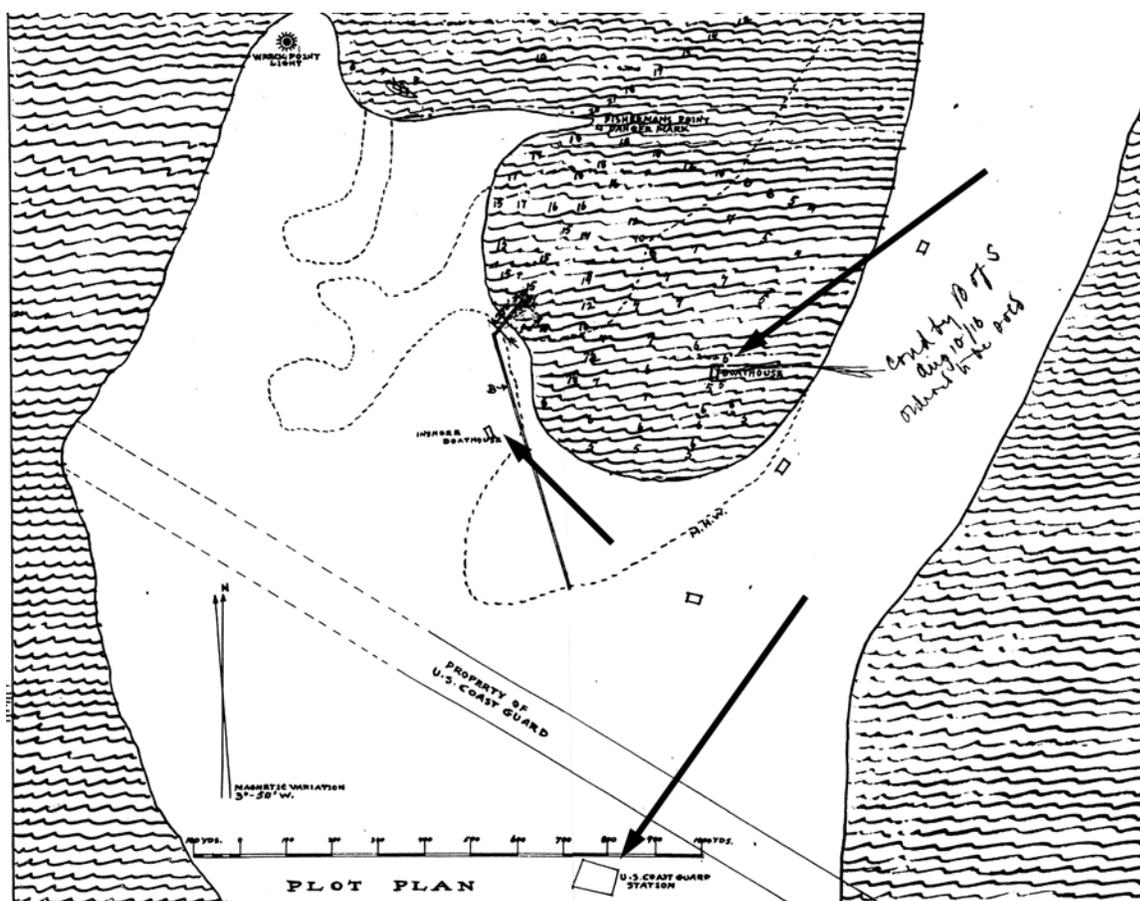


Figure 5 Map of Cape Lookout, March 1916. Arrows indicate original 1887 station building, below; 1891 “inshore” boat house, center; and 1896 boat house in the Bight. (Coast Guard Coll.)

The advent of “gasoline boats” in the early twentieth century was a boon to the surfmen at the life- saving station, making it practical for men residing as far away as Beaufort, Morehead City, and Marshallberg to sign on for service at Cape Lookout. After 1905, many, if not most, of the crew soon acquired their own power boats, thereby enabling them to work at the station and still get home for regular liberty, which frequently lasted less than a day.¹¹ “Gas-

line boats” are first mentioned in the life- saving station’s logs in 1905, but not until November 1909 did the station receive its first power life boat. In February 1910, the station also got its first power surf boat, and although both of these boats were primitive by today’s standards, they rapidly transformed life- saving operations.¹²

In February 1912, the station received a new 36’ power life boat and transferred the old power

11. The log books recorded the passing of as many as three dozen power boats in a day as early as September 18, 1911.

12. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, October 30 and November 8, 1909, and February 11, 1910.

boat to the station at Portsmouth. In March, a new Beebe- McClellan surfboat also arrived at Cape Lookout, but there is no mention of the disposition of the old surfboat or of the construction of any new boat houses.¹³

Ill health forced the station keeper, William H. Gaskill, to resign his position in 1912, and he died two years later. On April 20, 1912, W. T. Willis, Keeper at the Core Banks Station, was appointed to replace him. Willis was apparently appalled at the condition of the station, noting in several of his early entries, "Station needs thoroughly overhauling, leaks bad and is rotten. Kitchen, Store House, barn and all outbuildings in bad condition; need a boat house at once."¹⁴ The condition of the latter was a special concern, its pilings so rotten that it was "liable to fall at any time."

Freddie G. Gillikin was appointed station keeper on July 1, 1914, and he retained that position after the Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station became the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station (#190) in 1915.

U. S. Coast Guard

On May 26, 1913, Senate Bill #2337 was introduced into the Senate to combine the Life- Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service into a single entity, to be called the United States Coast Guard. Signed into law by President Wilson on January 28, 1915, the bill not only combined the two services but also pro-

vided for the retirement of Kimball and many of the older keepers and surfmen, something Kimball had advocated for years.

As part of the reorganization, renovations of the Cape Lookout station began almost immediately. Throughout the spring and summer of 1916, the crew was periodically busy repairing and rebuilding the outbuildings, fences, and walks. Renovation of the interior of the station itself got underway as well, including installation of a new floor in the crew's sitting room on the first floor.

In addition, a new main building was constructed to replace the original station. On August 25, 1916, W. L. Schull of Newport, N. C., who had been awarded the contract for the station, arrived at Cape Lookout to begin work.

With the crew still in residence, the old station was "blocked up" and, over the course of several days, slowly rolled to its new site a few yards west of its original location. In early September, the move was completed, and on September 9, construction began on the new station. Bad weather caused some delays in construction, however, and not until May 28, 1917, was the Coast Guard's superintendent of construction, P. Julian Latham, able to make his final inspection.¹⁵

As the new station was under construction, the station's crew was engaged in a major renovation of the entire site. In September 1916, the old boat house on the bight, which the keeper

13. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, February 2 and 23 and March 2, 1912.

14. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, June 8, 1912.

15. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, August-September 1916.

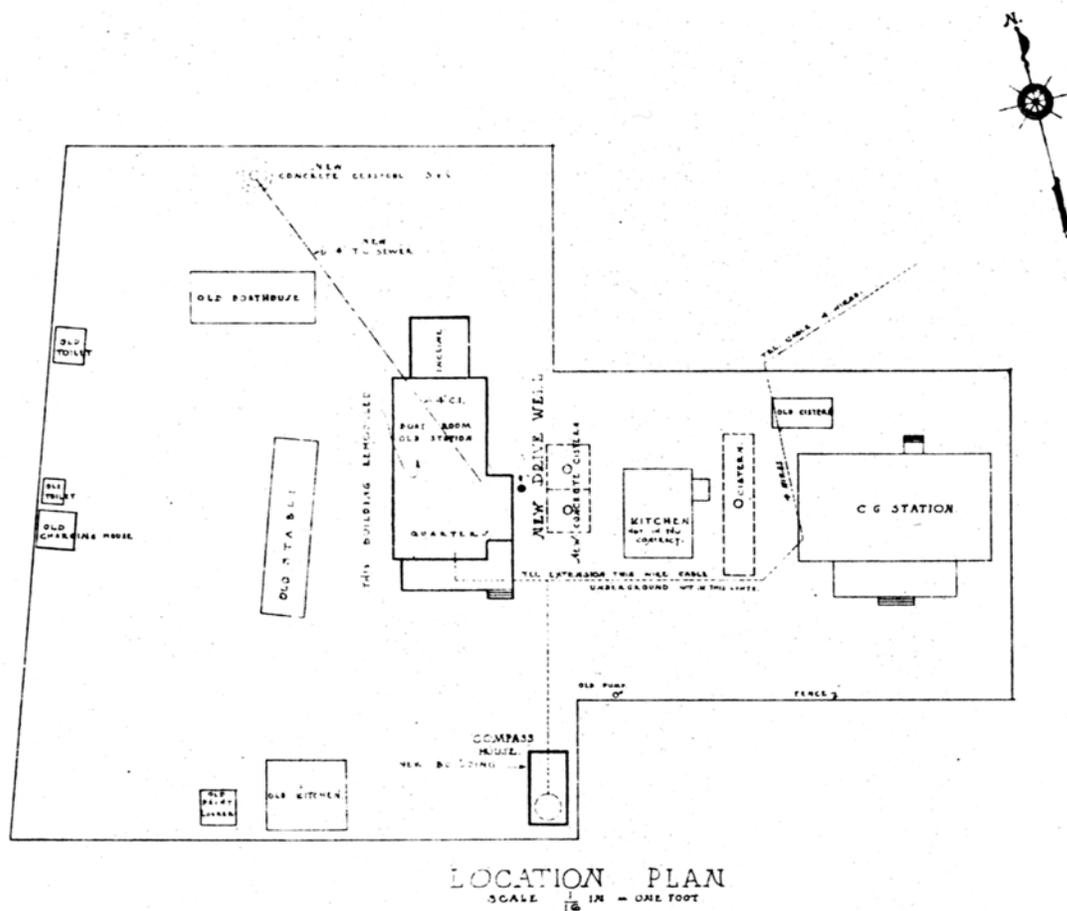


Figure 6 Location plan of Coast Guard Station, 1920, showing old life-saving station in its new location. The boat house and stables built in 1892 would be razed a few months after this plan was drawn. (Coast Guard Coll.)

had long been warning was on the verge of collapse, was “handed over to John A. Dill, Jr., upon receipt from him of \$40.50.” The boat-house, which was “situated 300 yards from shore in hook of Cape Lookout,” was apparently relocated or torn down by Dill at that time.¹⁶ Another boat house appears to have replaced it a short time later.

Although the new Coast Guard station appears to have been essentially finished in early 1917, there was an unexplained delay in actually occupying the building. Most likely the country’s entry into World War I in April 1917 disrupted the project, and not until the end of January 1918 was the new building actually occupied by the crew of Coast Guard Station #190.¹⁷

Having occupied their new quarters, the crew began renovation of the old life-saving station,

16. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, September 25, 1916.

17. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, January 23-24, 1918.



Figure 7 View south of Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station, 1917. New station is at left. (CALO Coll. D-57)

which they continued as duties permitted for much of the next two years. In addition to routine duties during the fall and winter of 1917-1918, the crew was also engaged in repairing one of the boat houses, but it is not clear if this was the boat house close to the station or the “inshore” boathouse, both of which were built in 1892 and could well have needed repairs.¹⁸

The log books make no further mention of the boathouses until July 1920 when the officer in charge (the new designation for “keeper”) at the station recorded that the crew had white washed the stable and “the old boathouse.” Again, it is not clear to which of the boat houses this refers- - the “inshore” boat house or the

18. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, September 18 and 27, October 1-3, 1917; April 4, 1918.



Figure 8 View of board walk and second boat house in the bight, built around 1916 to replace the original structure built in 1896. (CALO Coll., Royer Coll.)

boat house near the station- - but subsequent events suggest it was the inshore boat house that was whitewashed.¹⁹

On August 12, 1920, material for a new stable arrived at the station, and a month later, J. B.

19. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, July 1, 1920.

Historical Background & Context

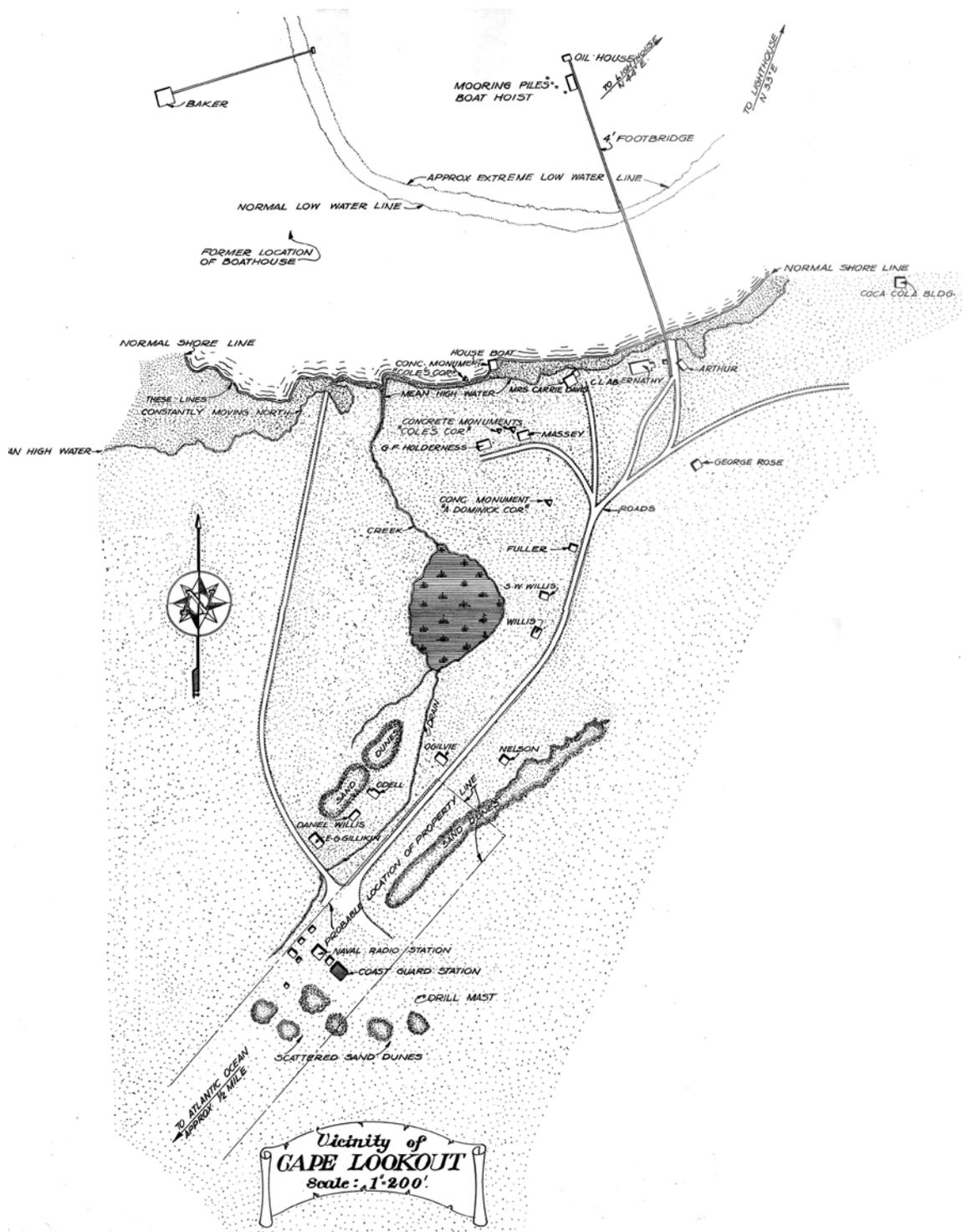


Figure 9 Map of Cape Lookout in 1934, showing location of outlying boathouses.

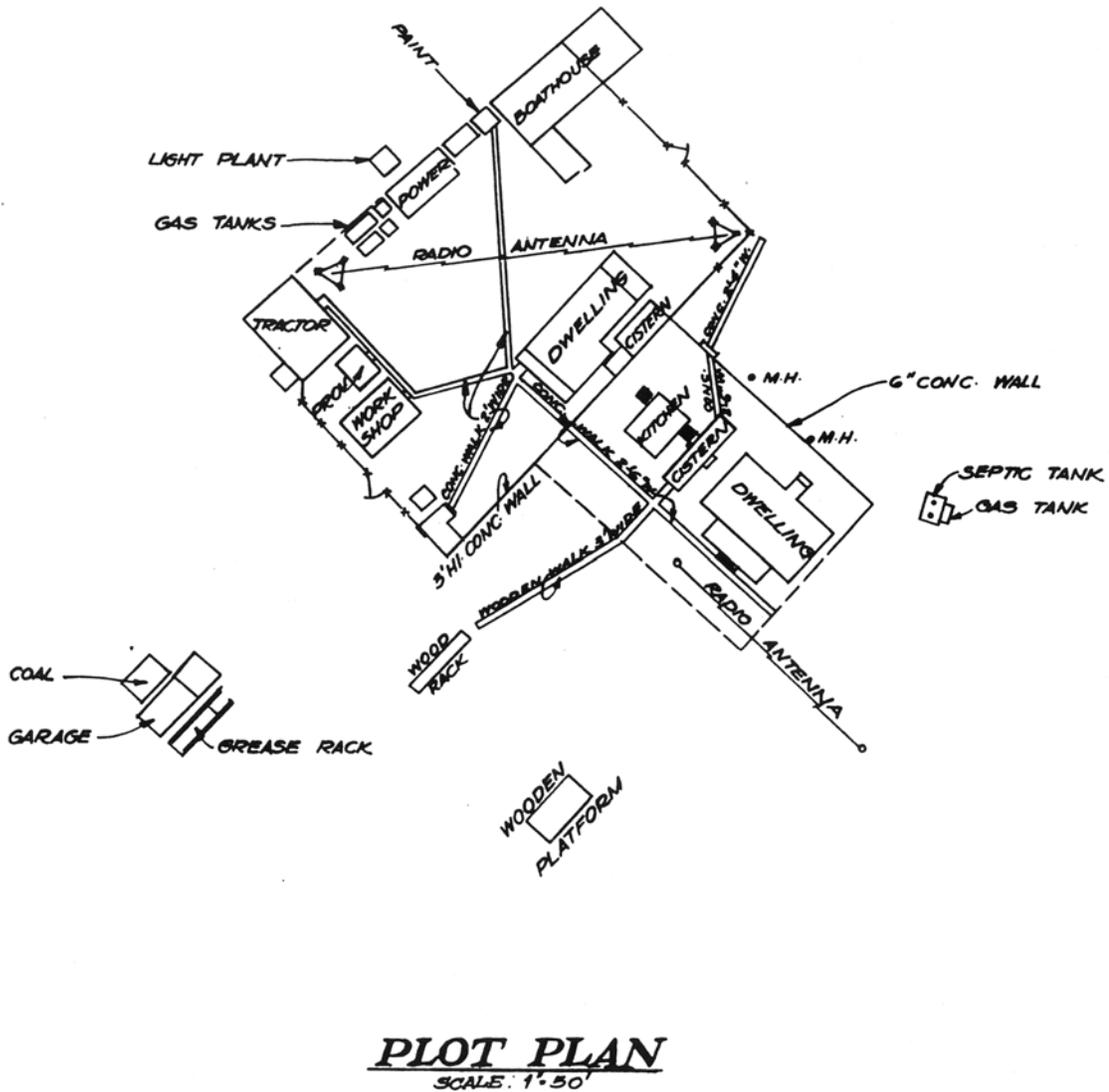


Figure 10 Plan of Coast Guard Station, August 1934. The boat house completed in April 1924 is at top center. (Coast Guard Coll.)

Daily, the carpenter hired to construct the stable, arrived to inspect the site.²⁰ Daily had worked at the station the previous year putting

20. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, August 12, September 18, 1920.

up a new flag pole, and on October 1-2, he supervised the crew as they poured a concrete floor for the new building. With the crew's help in raising the building's wood frame, Daily had the building up by the time Coast Guard inspectors arrived by seaplane on October 19.

The crew installed the wood shingle roof of the new stable and painted the building, which was

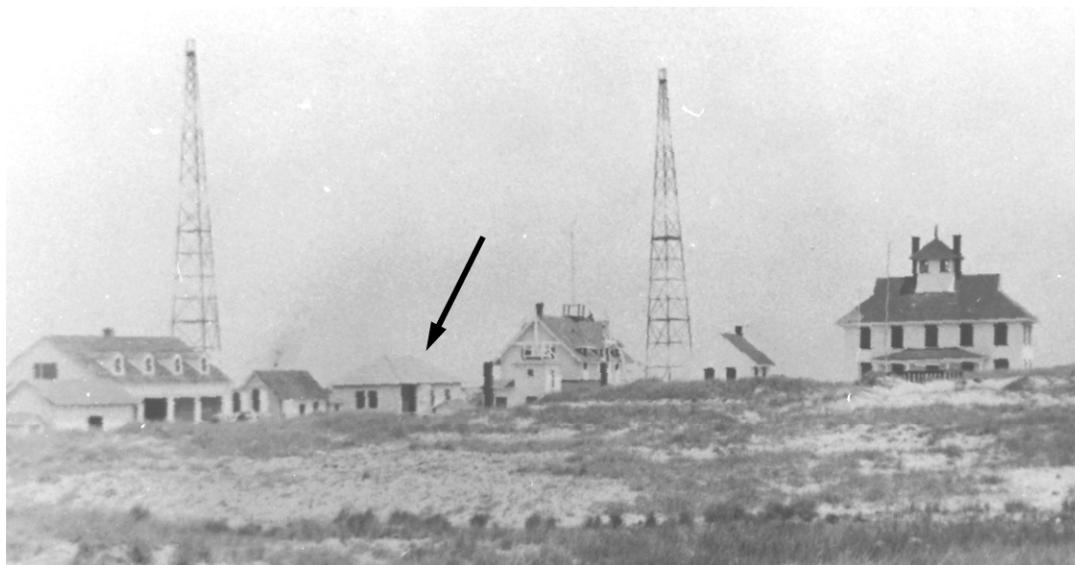


Figure 11 View of Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station in 1941, with arrow indicating “new” Boat House. Equipment Building completed in 1939 is at left. (CALO Coll. D-55)

occupied on November 24, 1920.²¹ When the station’s mules were replaced by a tractor and a Ford pickup truck in 1931, those vehicles were stored in the stable until it was torn down for construction of the Maintenance Building in 1939.

Two days after occupying the new stable, the crew began tearing down the old 1892 boat house near the station, which a Board of Survey had condemned when the inspectors were at the station in October. By early December 1920, the boathouse was gone.²² After Christmas, the crew turned their attention to demo-

lition of the old stable and, by January 3, 1921, they were “tearing down” the foundation of the old building.²³

New Boat House

There are a number of log book entries after the 1892 boat house near the station was torn down that record the crew’s bringing surf boats “to the house,” apparently a reference to the boat room in the old Life-Saving Station.²⁴ The Navy’s remodeling of the station partitioned the second floor and gave it a separate entrance, but the boat room on the first floor appears to have remained in use until a new boat house was completed in 1924.²⁵

21. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, August 12; October 6, 19, 25, 29; November 1-3, and 24, 1920.

22. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, November 24, 26, and 29, 1920.

23. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, December 29-31, 1920; January 3, 1921.

24. E.g., *Cape Lookout Log Book*, September 21, October 20, 1921.

25. See *Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station Historic Structure Report (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)*.

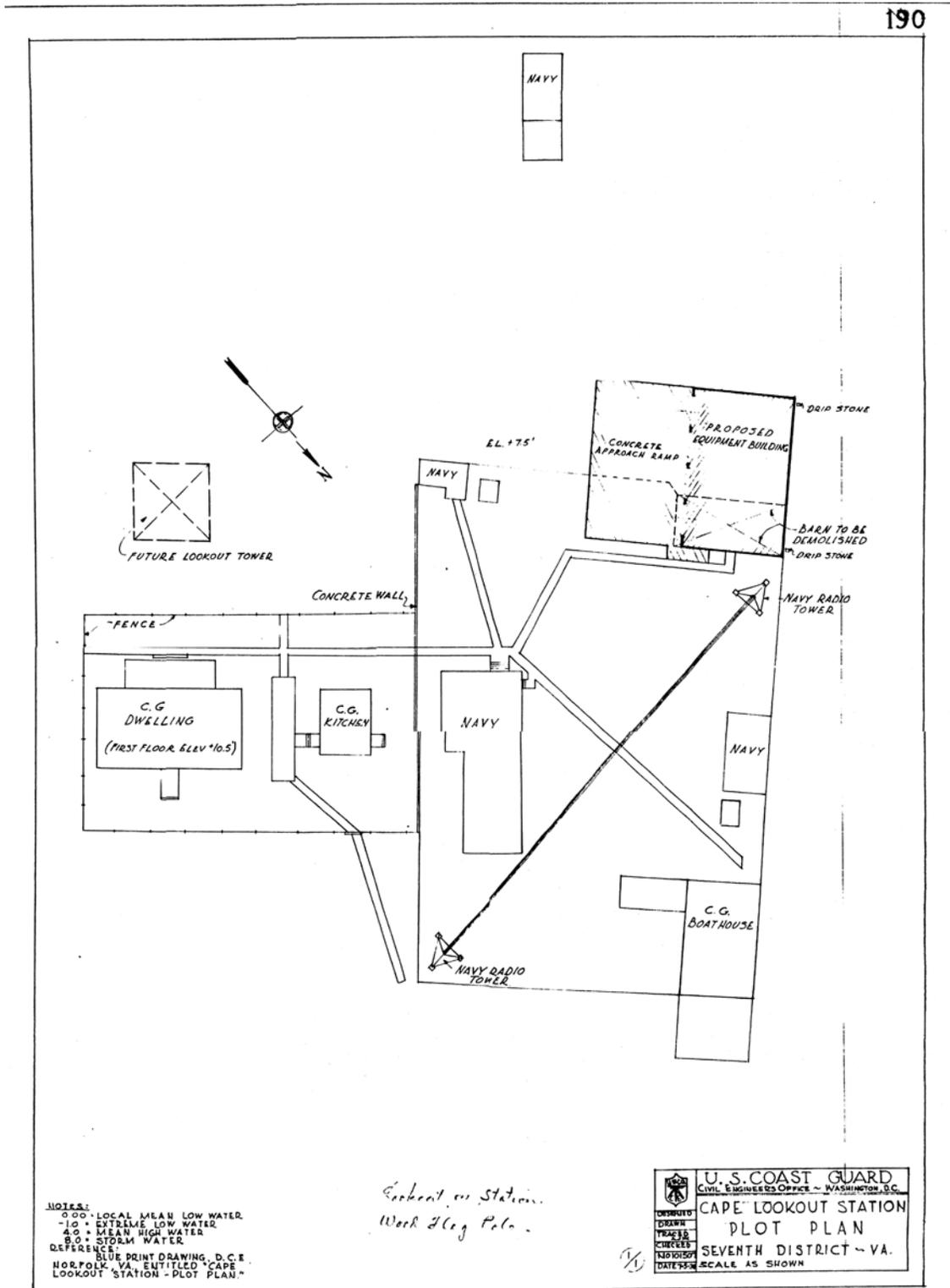


Figure 12 Plan of station in 1938.
L.S.S. Boat House is at lower right.

(Coast Guard Collection)

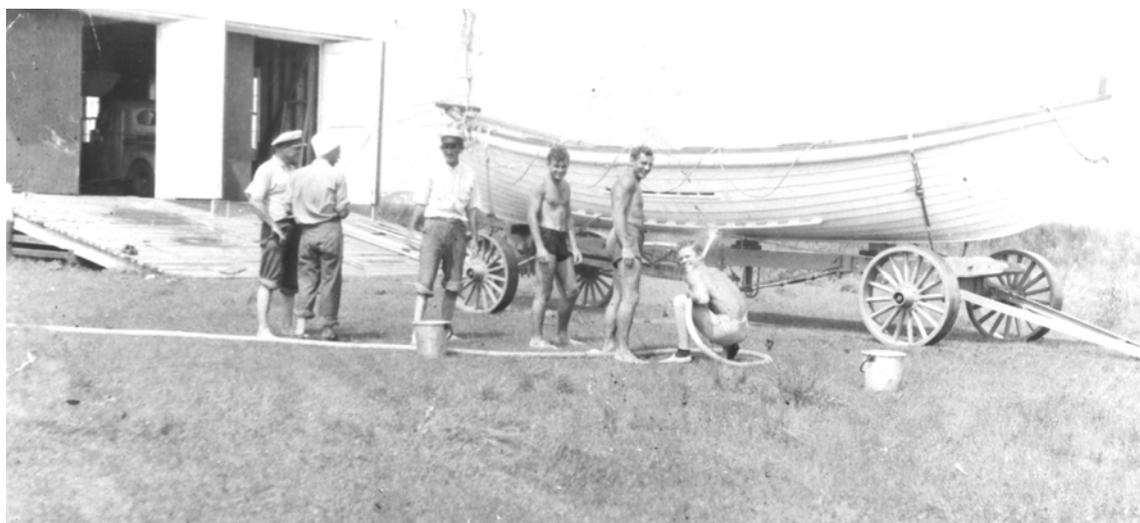


Figure 13 Crew cleaning surf boat, c. 1942. The 1924 boat house is at left. (CALO Coll.)

In April 1924, the station log mentions “the new boat house” for the first time, and contextual references indicate that this was the boat house near the station seen first in photographs taken around 1941 (see Figure 11).²⁶ The occasional references to the “old boat house” after that refer to the 1892 “inshore” boat house, which was mentioned in the station logs as late as August 1930 but was removed by 1934, when a plot of the station shows the “former location” of that boat house (see Figure 9).²⁷

The station got a tractor and a Ford truck in 1931, eliminating the need for mules, and the stable or barn that was constructed in 1920 began to be used as a garage for the truck. In 1938, it was demolished for construction of a new “Equipment Building” on that site.

26. *Cape Lookout Log Book*, April 14-16, 1924.

27. *Cape Lookout Log*, March 25, April 8, 1926; January 17, May 1, 1929; August 13, 1930.

After Pearl Harbor, the government expanded its military presence at Cape Lookout and other stations significantly. In April 1942, Cape Lookout Bight became an anchorage for convoys traveling between Charleston and the Chesapeake Bay. The 193rd Field Artillery was sent to the Cape to provide protection for the Bight, replaced that summer by heavier guns that remained in place throughout the war.²⁸

With the end of World War II, the army and navy presence at Cape Lookout quickly diminished, and in 1945, most of the government property at the cape reverted to Coast Guard control, including the lighthouse station which had become a part of the Coast Guard in July 1939. The compass station, also known as the “radio shack,” was removed about that time. The Army’s lease on ninety-five acres south of the Coast Guard station was allowed to expire in 1949, and the radio beacon was moved from

28. Rex Quinn, *The Gun Mounts at Cape Lookout, Historic Resource Study* (National Park Service, 1986).

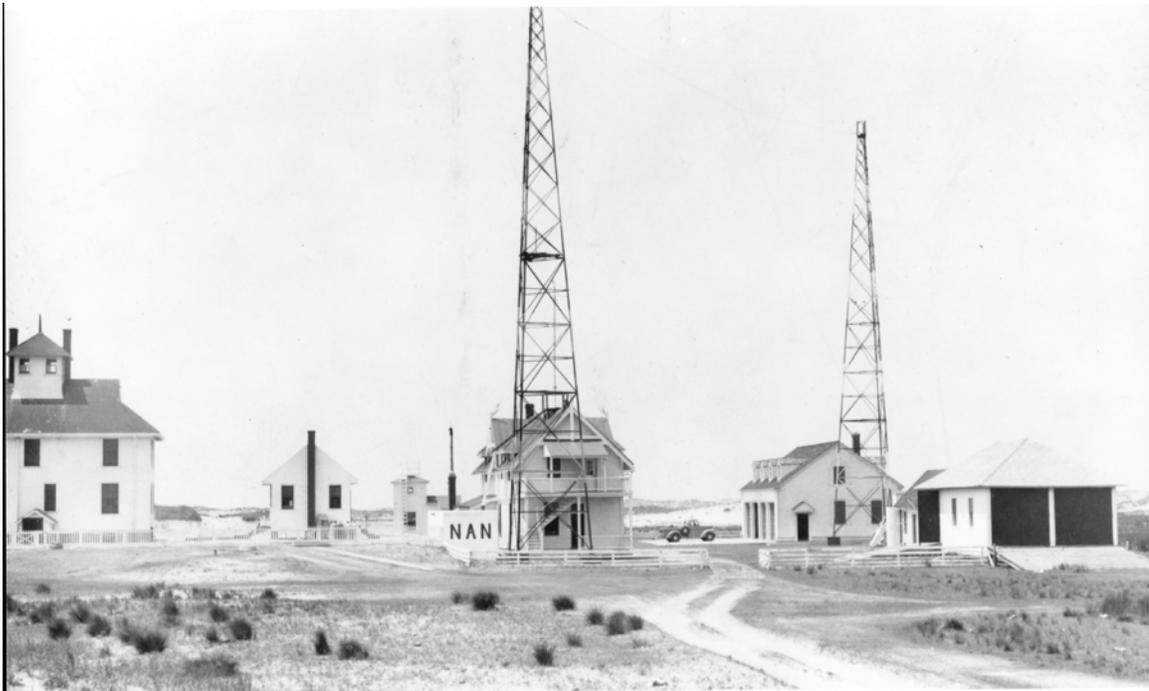


Figure 14 View southwest of Coast Guard Station, shortly after World War II. The “new” Boat House is at right. (CALO Coll.)

the Coast Guard Station to the Lighthouse Station that same year. In 1950, an underwater electrical cable was laid from Harker’s Island to the lighthouse, which then became fully automated. The Coast Guard continued to evolve, and many of the buildings at Cape Lookout were deemed obsolete. In 1957, the Coast Guard decided to surplus a number of the old structures at Cape Lookout, and the old Life-Saving Station Boat House by David Yeomans.

David Yeomans

David Eden Yeomans was born in 1921 on Harker’s Island, one of two children of Eugene Yeomans (born February 1856) and his second

wife Sabor J. Yeomans (born about 1892). Eugene Yeomans was a fisherman most of his life, but in his old age in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he was the mail carrier at the Harker’s Island Post Office, where his nephew Floyd Yeomans was postmaster.

David grew up on Harker’s Island, where he also went to school, but he spent long periods of time, including most summers, at Cape Lookout, where his father had built a “fishing shack” at Wreck Point in the nineteenth century.

In June 1959, having acquired the old L.S.S. Boat House, Yeomans and his wife Clara bought a quarter acre of land at Cape Lookout from his cousin Clifton Yeomans and H. G. Willis. The land was part of Luther Guthrie’s



Figure 15 View of new Equipment Building with 1924 Boat House at right, c. 1940. (CALO Coll.)

property that Yeomans and Willis had purchased in August 1958.²⁹

It took over a month for David Yeomans to move the building, using two telephone poles and a pickup truck. Even then, the difficulties presented by the deep sands at the site prevented Yeomans from placing the structure exactly as he had planned. As a result, the road now jogs slightly to the east as it passes the house.³⁰

In 1966 the Federal government established the Cape Lookout National Seashore, a fifty- four-mile stretch of the Outer Banks from Ports-

29. The title was apparently clouded, however, which allowed Charles Reeves to temporarily gain title to the land through North Carolina's unusual Torrens land title system.

30. Interview with David Yeomans by the author, 21 August 2002.

mouth Island to Cape Lookout. In April 1976, the Yeomans conveyed title to the old Life- Saving Station Boat House to the State of North Carolina who conveyed it to the Federal government for inclusion in the National Seashore in June 1978. As were many of the other private property owners, the Yeomans were granted a 25- year lease and continue to periodically occupy the house.

The Cape Lookout Lighthouse Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and the Coast Guard Station was listed in 1989. In June 2000, the Cape Lookout Village historic district was listed on the National Register. The district has twenty- one historic structures, including the lighthouse (1859), two keeper's quarters (1873 and 1907), the old Life- Saving Station (1887), the old Life- Saving Station's boathouse (1891), the Coast Guard Station (1917), and several private residences (c. 1910- c. 1950). Six of the ten historic private dwellings were built by fishermen or



Figure 16 View of old Boat House in May 1960 after it had been relocated and adapted for a residence. One of the old doors is lying in the foreground. (CALO Coll., Yeomans Coll.)

Coast Guard employees for their families from about 1910 to around 1950. Two houses were built about 1915 for Army Corps of Engineers workers, and two others were built as vacation cottages in the two decades before World War II. With recent transfer of ownership of the lighthouse from the Coast Guard, the National Park Service now owns all of the property in the historic district.

Historical Background & Context

Chronology of Development & Use

No plans, specifications, or other documentation has been located that would specifically date the Boat House's original construction. However, a process of elimination based on research in the station logs, examination of historic photographs, and investigation of the existing building leads to the conclusion that the present L. S. S. Boat House was constructed in 1924. Additional research in Coast Guard records would probably provide documentation to confirm that date.

As outlined in the previous section, the station logs document construction in late fall 1891 of the first boat house, located some distance from the station on the shore of the bight, and of a second boat house, which was constructed a few dozen yards northwest of the life- saving station in the spring of 1892. The logs also document construction in the winter of 1896 of a third boat house, which was built in Cape Lookout Bight some 300 yards from shore. The logs also document subsequent demolition and replacement of that boat house in the same location in 1916 as well as the razing of the 1892 boat house in 1920.

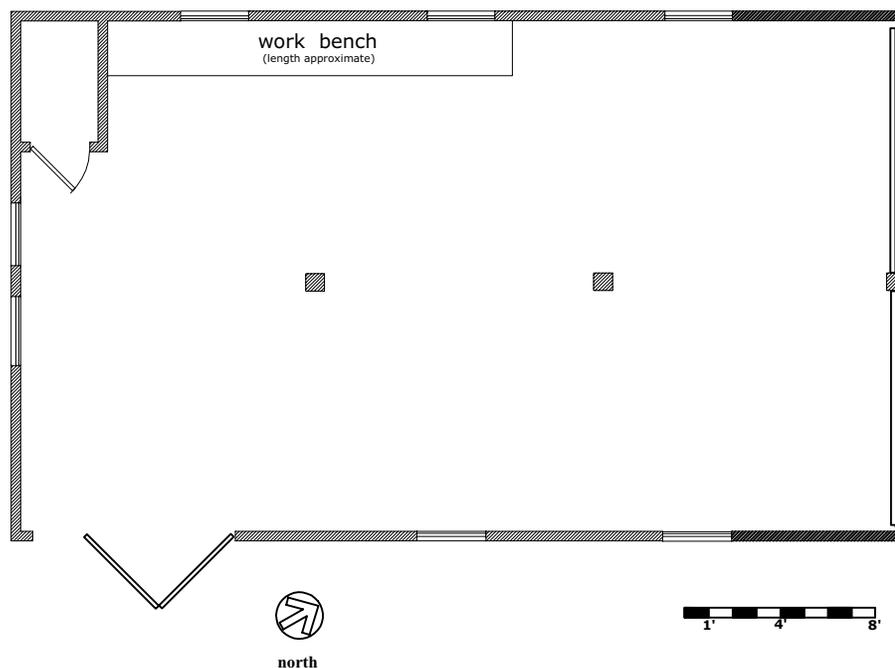


Figure 1 Probable plan of Old Boat House as it was completed in 1924. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

There is no mention in the logs of the fate of the 1891 boat house on the shore of the bight, but the log books document the presence of a “new boat house” in the spring of 1924 along with an “old boat house” to which there are scattered references throughout the 1920s. A Coast Guard map of Cape Lookout in 1934 shows the “former location of [the 1891] boathouse,” but there is no documentation for its fate. It is possible that the 1891 boat house was relocated to the station and is the same as the present building. That would mean, however, that the “new boat house” finished in 1924 was never photographed and was torn down before World War II, leaving the 1891

building intact. Given the rapid deterioration documented for the other outbuildings, that scenario seems unlikely.

In addition, the design characteristics of the present L. S. S. Boat House differ significantly from the other nineteenth century outbuildings, including the 1892 boat house and, it must be assumed, the 1891 boat house as well. All of the nineteenth century outbuildings at the station, including the 1892 boat house, had gabled roofs, unboxed eaves, and board- and- batten siding. In contrast, the 1916 Coast Guard Station had a hipped roof, boxed eaves, and ship- lap siding, all features found on the present L. S. S. Boat House.



Figure 2 View north of 1924 Boat House, c. 1943. (CALO Coll.)

In addition, the eaves of the present Boat House are finished with double- V- joint tongue- and- groove boards very much like the double- V- joint boards used in the alterations to the Life- Saving Station after World War I. V- joint material was available in the late nineteenth century, but double- beaded boards were more typical and were used in construction of the Life- Saving Station in 1887.

Because so much of the historic building is obscured by modern materials, the door in Room 101 is one of the building's most- prominent architectural features. Identical to the doors in the 1887 Life- Saving Station, its

presence has led to the erroneous conclusion that the Boat House is contemporaneous with the 1887 Life- Saving Station. The door is not, however, original to the Boat House, as will be discussed below; and it must be assumed that the present structure is the “new boat house” that the station logs document as being built in the spring of 1924.

Original Construction

Wood- framed with a hipped roof, the original building was constructed without partitions, leaving one large open space on the interior. Two large door openings, each almost 10' wide, filled the northeast end of the building and another door, around 9' wide, was located at the southern end of the southeast side. The



Figure 3 View west of Coast Guard Station, with 1924 Boat House at right, c. 1945. (CALO Coll.)

doors themselves were constructed of double-V- joint, tongue- and- groove boards on cross-braced frames of 2"- thick material, 4" to 6" wide, with chamfered edges. The mechanism by which the doors opened has not been positively identified, but the single door on the southeast side appears to have been side-hinged and bi- fold while the front doors may have been overhead doors.³¹ At each of the doors, there were large, full- width, wooden ramps to the ground.

The building was also built with seven, double-hung, six- over- six windows: three on the northwest side, two on the southeast side, and two on the southwest end. The exterior walls were finished with 6" shiplap siding and the eaves with double- V- joint tongue- and- groove boards.

31. The current orientation of the building is similar to its original orientation.

In historic photographs, metal caps are clearly evident on the hips and ridge of the Boat House roof, but the building's original roof covering is not certain. The Coast Guard Station was built in 1916 with a wood- shingled roof, but when the Equipment Building was constructed in 1939, asphalt shingles were used. Photographs of the Coast Guard Station around 1940 provide the first images of the Boat House, and in those images, the Boat House roof is distinctly lighter than the other roofs. This may indicate the building had been recently re- roofed and the wood shingles had not darkened with age, but it is also possible that the Boat House was originally roofed with standing- seam metal, like that which was installed on the Life- Saving Station around 1942. Further investigation of the existing roof may confirm the nature of the historic roofing material.

Throughout the historic period, the interior of the Boat House had no ceiling or wall finishes. Flooring was plain, 2"- thick planks, spaced slightly apart to allow water to drain through the floor.



Figure 4 View north of Coast Guard Station, c. 1941, with Boat House at center. (CALO Coll.)

Historic Alterations

The Boat House was apparently completed under contract with an outside party, but the Life- Saving Station crew, and later the Coast Guard crew, were responsible for much of the routine maintenance of the station buildings, including re- roofing, repainting, and all sorts of repairs. On occasion, they even assisted in or took over construction, from the store house that they constructed in 1888 to the concrete retaining walls that they built in 1926.

On April 14, 1924, the officer in charge recorded that the crew spent much of the afternoon “arranging apparatus in new boat house” and spent the following day cleaning around the building. They spent much of April 16- 17 carting wind- blow sand from the station yard and grading in front of the new boat house.

The most significant alteration the station crew made to the Boat House was the addition of a “tool locker,” which they worked on in July 1924.³² Apparently, this work created the small room that is now the bathroom (102), replicating a similar room that had been part of the boat room in the original Life- Saving Station. The door to the room is identical to the original doors in the Life- Saving Station and retains its original rim lock and one of its porcelain knobs. Significantly, however, the frame and casing for this door are makeshift, with the casing made from the same double- V- joint, tongue- and- groove boards used on the exterior soffit. It is likely that it was salvaged from the Life- Saving Station, perhaps from the original tool room in that building, as the Navy began partitioning the first floor.

There are scattered references to shingling and painting of one of the boat houses throughout the 1920s, but it is unclear to which boat house the entries refer.³³ A “hurricane disaster,”

32. *Cape Lookout Log*, July 14, 1924.



Figure 5 View of Boat House in 1961 after its conversion into a residence. One of the original doors is laying on the ground at lower left. (David Yeomans Coll.)

according to the station log, occurred on September 12, 1930, damaging the station and some of the outbuildings, but it is not clear if the Boat House was damaged in this storm.³⁴

In December 1941, the crew were busy mixing and pouring concrete for a ramp for the boat house. Located at the front doors at the northeast end of the building, this ramp was the last documented Coast Guard alteration to the building.³⁵

33. E.g, *Cape Lookout Log*, March 25, April 8, 1926; May 1, 1929.

34. *Cape Lookout Log*, September 12, 14, 1930.

Modern Alterations

One of the more significant alterations to the building occurred in 1958 when the building was relocated a few hundred yards north of its original site. The original foundation and the ramps at the doors were lost at that time.

After the building was moved, it was converted into a residence, which necessitated several alterations. The conversion occurred in several stages, with most of the alterations occurring in the 1960s.

Alterations to the doors was the first major change. The single door on the southeast side of the building was removed and the opening closed by a wall and a conventional front door.

35. *Cape Lookout Log*, December 2, 1941.

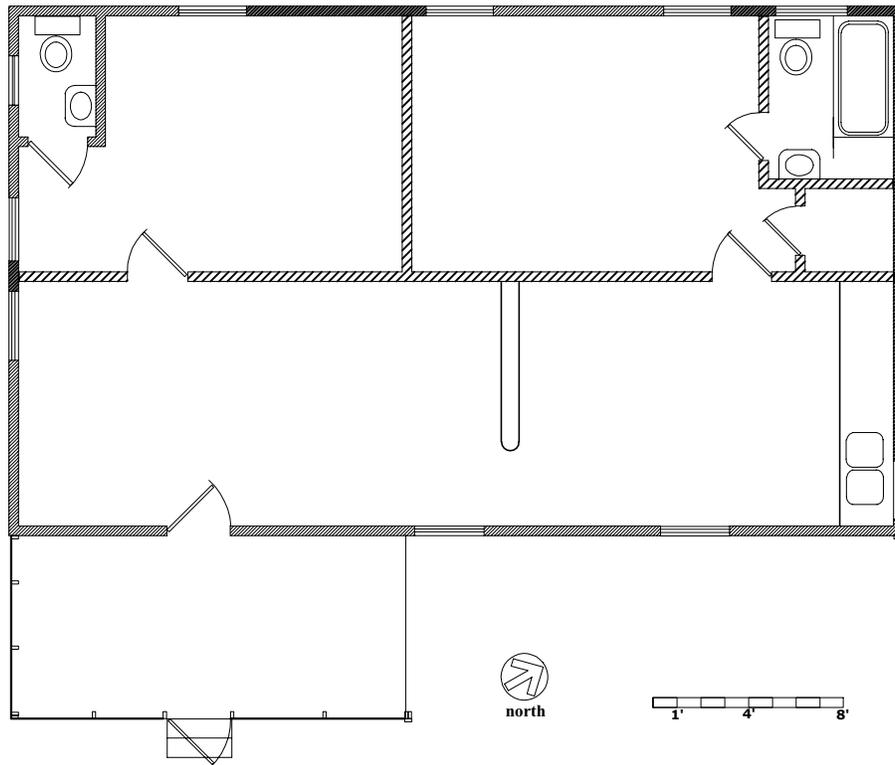


Figure 6 Plan of Boat House showing alterations in the 1960s. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

The exterior of the wall was sided with drop siding that matched the original siding, but it is not clear if the existing front door was installed at that time or if it is a later replacement. At the northeast end of the building, the old double doors were simply fixed in place and the exterior covered with drop siding. The roof was also shingled with wood at the same time.

The interior was partitioned by construction of a center wall the length of the building, and the old tool locker in the western corner of the building was converted into a bathroom. A ceiling set about 10' above the floor was also

installed and finished with fiberboard tiles. A second wall was also installed to partition the northwest side of the building to create two bedrooms, but it stopped two feet below the ceiling. A second bathroom and a small closet were later framed at the northern end of that side of the building. All of the interior walls were paneled with 4' by 8' sheets of plywood paneling. The floor appears to have also been covered with plywood and finished with carpet or vinyl floor coverings.

The old work bench that had once stood along the northwest wall of the building was relocated to the opposite corner of the building, where it remains in use as a counter for the kitchen sink. The present window

Chronology of Development & Use

opening was also created above the kitchen sink around the same time. Windows were also added in the two bathrooms. Exterior louvered blinds, which the building had never had, were also installed.

Finally, a shed- roofed porch was installed at the new front door to the house in the 1960s. In 1979, the porch was screened and, more recently, expanded to its present size. By 1976, the exterior of the building was also covered with cedar shingles.

Time Line for L. S. S. Boat House	
Aug 1887	Construction of Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station completed
Jun 1891	Watson, Bell, et. al. convey land for boat house
Jan 1892	Boat house on bight completed; stable for mule team completed
Apr 1892	Boat house constructed near station house
Fall 1892	Cook house constructed
1893	First photograph of station
1896	Second boat house constructed, in bight 300 yards from shore
Fall 1909	Station gets first gasoline- powered boat
Jan 28, 1915	Life- Saving Service becomes part of new U.S. Coast Guard
Aug- Sep, 1916	Old life- saving station relocated for construction of new Coast Guard building; 1892 boat house in Bight sold and removed
May 1917	New Coast Guard building completed
Jan 23- 24, 1918	Crew moves into new Coast Guard Station
Jun 26, 1919	Station keeper turns old life- saving station over to Navy for remodeling as a residence for radio compass station personnel.
Nov- Dec 1920	Old boat house and stable torn down; new stable constructed
Apr 1924	New boat house completed
Jul 1924	Crew builds “tool locker” in boat house
Aug- Dec? 1926	Contractor at station doing unspecified work, probably including partitioning of first floor of Life- Saving Station
Sep 12, 1930	Station log records unspecified damages to station and outbuildings during “hurricane disaster”
1930- 1934	1892 boat house on bight disappears
Dec 1941	Crew pours concrete ramp for boat house
Feb 4, 1942	Last entry in Cape Lookout life- saving logs
1950	Light Station automated
1958	Boat house acquired by David Yeomans, relocated, and converted into a residence
1966	Cape Lookout National Seashore established

Chronology of Development & Use

Time Line for L. S. S. Boat House	
Oct 1972	Cape Lookout Light Station listed on National Register of Historic Places
Apr 1976	Daniels convey property to N. C. and sign 25 year lease
1989	Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station listed on National Register
Jun 3, 2000	Cape Lookout Village Historic District listed on National Register

Physical Description

The old Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station (L. S. S.) Boat House is located on a quarter- acre lot (Parcel 105- 26) about two hundred yards northeast of the old Coast Guard Station, on the northwest side of the main road to the Lighthouse. Facing in a southeasterly direction, the building is wood- framed with a hipped roof and sided with cedar shingles. The historic structure is approximately 22' by 37', encompassing a little over 800 square feet of floor space. Constructed in 1924, it is the only one of the several boat houses built by the Life- Saving Service and the Coast Guard in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to survive at Cape Lookout. A modern, shed- roofed porch, built in two phases after 1958, spans the width of the front of the building, which is now used as a private residence.

Associated Site Features

In the yard northeast of the house is a small, modern, wood- framed storage building. On the southwest side of the house is an

Note: A plan of the existing building is at the end of this section.



Figure 1 View to north of L. S. S. Boat House. (NPS-SERO-CRS, 2002)

example of what is today known as “yard art,” a large assemblage of buoys, oars, ropes and other marine- related items that the owner has salvaged from the shoreline. Weeping willows are the most notable trees on the site, which is mostly grassed and is surrounded by native myrtle and other low vegetation.

Foundation

As is typical of most structures at Cape Look-out, the building is wood- framed and set on very low wooden piers or pilings that elevate it less than 10” from the ground. Heavy- duty wire mesh, installed to prevent animal entry

under the house, surrounds the foundation. Because of the wire mesh and the building’s close proximity to the ground, the condition of the pilings and floor framing could not be determined.

Structure

The building’s proximity to the ground, the modern finishes that cover most of the building, and lack of attic access prevent direct examination of most of the structure’s framing. Floor framing can be observed through the wire mesh that encloses the foundation and appears to be 2” by 8” joists on about 20”- 24” centers. Joists run parallel to the building’s long side and are supported at mid- span by a 4” by 8” beam that runs the width of the structure.



Figure 2 View west of L. S. S. Boat House. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

Walls appear to be framed with 2” by 4” studs, but the spacing could not be determined. The roof’s structure is supported by the four outside walls of the building and by a 6” by 8” beam running the length of the building and resting on the end walls and two internal 5- 1/2” by 5- 1/2” posts. There is no access to the attic, which prevents examination of the character and condition of the roof framing. Historically, the building had no ceiling, but one was added when the house was moved. It appears to be framed with 2” by 4” or 2” by 6” (nominal dimensions) on 20” centers.

There is evidence that termites have attacked the floor framing, but the damage may not be widespread. Walls are generally plumb, floors



Figure 3 View of floor framing near rear of house. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

are level, and the roof shows no visible signs of structural deficiencies.

Exterior Finishes

Except for the building’s soffit, fascia, and some of the windows and their trim, all of the building’s exterior materials are modern. The build-

Physical Description



Figure 4 View of south corner and typical eave detail. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



Figure 5 View of rear (northwest) side of house, showing typical exterior finishes. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

ing's eaves are boxed with a soffit finished with double- V- joint, tongue- and- groove boards about 3" wide. They appear to be original material. Bed molding, about 2- 1/2" wide, finishes the juncture of the soffit and the walls. Fascia is a plain 1" by 6" board.

The exterior walls are finished with sawn cedar shingles. These may be laid directly over the original shiplap siding, which appears to have been installed without an underlying sheathing.

Roofing is modern, three- tab, asphalt shingles. The character of the roof decking has not been determined. There are no gutters on the building.

Doors and Windows

As originally constructed, the building appears to have had a pair of large doors, each as much as eight feet wide, at the northeast end of the structure and a similar door at the south end of the southeast side. One and probably both of the doors at the northeast side remains mostly intact, having been simply closed and covered inside and out with modern materials. Part of the door at the east end of the northeast side is visible on the interior underneath the kitchen counter. It is constructed with chamfered, 2" by 6" cross- bracing and double- V- joint boards. The opening for the third original door was infilled after the building was moved in 1959. It was replaced by the present front door, a modern four- panel door, 2'- 8" by 6'- 6", with four lights arranged in a semi- circle.

In its historic configuration, the building appears to have had seven window openings: two on the southeast side, two on the southwest, and three on the northeast. The thickness of the existing sash (1- 1/2") suggests that these may not be the original sash (the original sash in the Life- Saving Service, for example, are 1- 3/4" thick). However, the seven windows with

wooden sash that remain in the building appear to be historic, having been in place when the building was moved in 1959. All are 2'-10" by 5'-2" with six-over-six, double-hung sash.

Most exterior trim at original windows appears to be historic, consisting of plain 1" by 4-1/4" casing, a 2"-thick sill, and no drip cap. Most original windows are fitted with wood-framed screens that appear to date to the historic period if not to the building's original construction.

In addition, three other windows were added after the house was relocated. The window over the kitchen sink is 2'-5" by 3'-2", double hung sash with two-over-two horizontal lights. In the bathroom at the north corner of the building, the window is 3'-0" by 3'-2", also double hung, but with six-over-six sash. In the bathroom at the west corner, the window opening is 2'-1" by 2'-11" with an aluminum, triple-track storm window closing the opening.

Front Porch

The front porch, which is not an historic feature of the building, was added in two phases. The earliest portion, which was added shortly after the house was moved, is at the southwest end of the front of the house and measures about 7'-8" by 16'-7". In recent years, the porch was expanded to the north by an addition that measures about 11'-6" by 21'. Both sections are framed with modern 2" by 8" floor joists and 2" by 4" rafters, all on 16" centers. Roof decking and flooring consists of 3/4" plywood.



Figure 6 View of historic windows on northwest side of house with modern awning shutters. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



Figure 7 View of historic window on front porch with salvaged shutters added by present owner. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

Physical Description



Figure 8 View north on front porch. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



Figure 9 View west in Room 101 with front door at left. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

Aluminum storm windows with screens enclose the three exterior sides of the porch.

Interior

The building was partitioned into three main rooms and two bathrooms after it was moved in 1958. The front door provides the only access into the house, entering into a large room

that stretches the length of the front of the house and that functions as a combination living room, dining room, and kitchen. Across the rear of the house are two bedrooms and, in the north and west corners, the two bathrooms.

The original flooring for the building consisted of 2" by 6" boards, spaced slightly apart to allow water to drain. It is unclear if this flooring was replaced or simply covered when the building was remodeled, but evidence for its existence can be seen in the pattern of water stains on the floor joists (see Figure 3, above). The original building had no ceiling, and the walls were probably unfinished as well.

Room 100

Occupying the front half of the building and running its length, this room serves as a combination living room, dining room, and kitchen. It measures about 10' - 8" by 36' - 7".

Floor: The floor is covered with a sheet vinyl floor covering in a faux wood pattern. The underlayment of this floor covering is unknown but is probably plywood.

Ceiling: A series of exposed wooden beams, 7-3/8" by 1-1/2" set on 48" centers, support the ceiling framing. The ceiling is finished with plywood panels.

Walls: The wall running through the center of the building is composed of 1-3/4" by 3-3/4" studs, dating to the period after the building was moved. Outside walls contain the building's historic framing, except around the front

door where a much larger door opening was infilled when the building was remodeled. Walls are finished with plywood paneling in 4' by 8' sheets. Part of the paneling in the kitchen area is covered with wallpaper. The space is partially divided by a low wall about 7'-6" long and 48" high surmounted by a series of 9"-wide shelves that runs to the ceiling.

Trim: Windows are cased with plain boards, 3/4" by 3-3/4" with a simple molded stool, 1-1/8" by 3-1/4", and unmolded apron, 3-3/4" wide.

Miscellaneous: A wooden base cabinet approximately 27" wide runs the width of the northeast end of the room. According to the house's present occupant, who moved the building in 1958, this cabinet was part of a somewhat longer workbench that was originally located on the northwest (rear) wall of Room 102. Dimensions of wood used in its construction suggests that the cabinet dates to the building's original construction. The base cabinet door openings may not be original but the two drawers appear to be so. Both have faces 8-1/2" by 33", with broadly chamfered edges. Beneath the cabinet, part of the original boat doors at that end of the building are visible. The door was constructed with double-V-joint, tongue- and-groove, similar to that used on the building's soffit.

Wall cabinets on the northeast and northwest walls and the base cabinet on the northeast wall are wood and date to the building's remodeling after 1958. The top of the work bench is a board that is unusually wide, 22", and 1-3/4" thick.



Figure 10 View to east in Room 101. Base counter at center left is part of a work bench that was originally in the space now occupied by Room 102. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

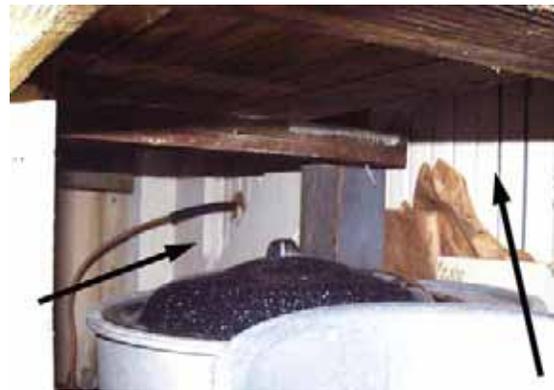


Figure 11 View of part of original boat doors under kitchen counter. Arrows indicate chamfered framing of door, left, and V-joint paneling used to finish doors, right. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

Room 101

The northwest side of the building is partitioned into two bedrooms, Rooms 101 and 103, each connected by separate doors from Room 100.

Physical Description



Figure 12 View to northeast in Room 101. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



Figure 13 View to south in Room 101. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

Floor: The floor is covered with a sheet-vinyl floor covering that imitates wood flooring. The underlayment of this floor covering is unknown but is probably plywood.

Ceiling: The ceiling is finished with plywood similar to that used in Room 100, but without beams or battens.

Walls: Walls are paneled with modern plywood paneling.

Doors: The door from Room 100 is a modern, hollow-core, flush door, 2'-6" by 6'-6". The door to Room 102 is the only historic door remaining in use in the building. Measuring 2'-6" by 6'-6" by 1-3/4", the door has four raised panels and deeply molded stiles and rails. The style of the door suggests that it was re-used from an earlier building when this room was created shortly after the boat house was constructed in 1924.

Trim: Both window openings are historic, but the trim may be modern. It consists of a stool 1-1/8" by 3-1/4", 3-3/4" casing, and a 3-3/4" apron. The historic door to Room 102 is cased with the same V-groove paneling, 3-3/4" wide, used on the soffit and on the original boat room doors at the northeast end of the building.

Room 102

This small room, which is about 3'-4" by 5'-2" with a ceiling at 7'-6", was created in July 1924, shortly after the building was constructed.

Originally windowless, it was built as a "tool locker," similar to one that was in the boat room of the original 1887 life-saving station. The sink is dated 1950, which may indicate a sink (and possibly a toilet) were installed in the room prior to the time of its relocation, but that has not been otherwise documented. The window opening on the southwest wall was created after 1958 and is now filled with an aluminum storm window, 2'-1" by 2'-11".

Room 103

The northwest side of the building is partitioned into two bedrooms, Rooms 101 and 103, each connected by separate doors from Room 100.

Floor: The floor is covered with a sheet- vinyl floor covering that imitates brick. The under- layment of this floor covering is unknown but is probably plywood.

Ceiling: The ceiling is finished with plywood like that used in Room 101.

Walls: Walls are the painted back sides of the modern plywood paneling in Rooms 100 and 101.

Doors: The door from Room 100 is a modern, hollow- core, flush door, 2'- 6" by 6'- 6". The door to the bathroom (104) is a modern, hol- low- core door, 2'- 0" by 6'- 6". There is no door to the closet.

Trim: Both window openings are historic, but the trim may be modern. It consists of a stool 1- 1/8" by 3- 1/4", 3- 3/4" casing, and a 3- 3/4" apron.

Miscellaneous: A ceiling- mounted light fixture is a few feet off the wall on the southeast side of the room. It is not centered in the room and may pre- date the partitioning of this side of the Boat House.

Room 104

This modern bathroom contains a lavatory, tub, and toilet. The window, which was created as



Figure 14 View of door to Room 102, believed salvaged from Life- Saving Station when it was remodeled in 1924. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



Figure 15 View northwest of Room 102. (NPS-SERO_CR, 2003)

Physical Description



Figure 16 View to southwest in Room 102. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)



Figure 18 View of waste lines at rear of house. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)



Figure 17 View to northeast in Room 103. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

part of the construction of this room, is wood, six- over- six, 3'- 0" by 3'- 2".

Utilities

The condition of the wiring could not be examined. Water and sewer lines are relatively new but are run in an *ad hoc* fashion across the rear of the house. There is no central heating.

PART 1 DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

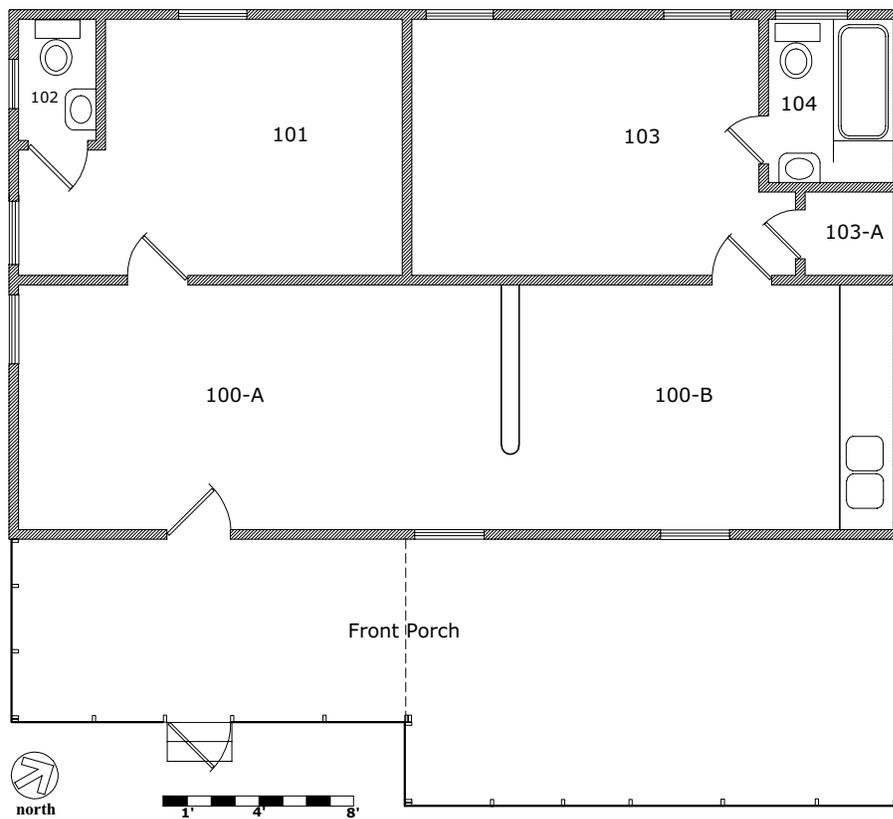


Figure 19 Plan of existing building. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

Physical Description

PART II

TREATMENT & USE

Introduction

The Boat House that is the subject of this study was the last of five boat houses that were built at the Cape Lookout Life- Saving Station between 1891 and 1924 and the only one that has survived. Constructed near the station in 1924, the Boat House here replaced an older boat house from the 1890s and remained in use until after World War II. Surplused by the Coast Guard in 1957, the building was moved from the Coast Guard's property to its present site a few hundred yards north of the Coast Guard Station in 1958.

The Life- Saving Station played a major role in the history of Cape Lookout, and the boat houses were crucial to the station's operation. The old Boat House has the potential to be one of the park's more- significant historic resources if it were relocated and restored, and indispensable for interpretation of the Cape's history in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Very well constructed, the building remains, for the most part,

Introduction

structurally sound. There were significant alterations to the building when it was converted into a residence after 1958, but nearly all of these changes were additive in nature and most of the building's historic features and finishes remain intact, if generally covered by modern materials.

This section of the historic structure report is intended to show how a plan for treatment and use of the Boat House can be implemented with minimal adverse affect to the historic building while still addressing the problems that exist with the current structure. The following sections outline issues surrounding use of the building as well as legal requirements and other mandates that circumscribe treatment of the building.

In addition, because the Cape Lookout Historic District was only recently designated, the park's use of the various historic structures in the district, including the Boat House, has not been fully explored or defined in terms of general management goals. Preliminary options for use of the Boat House will be outlined and evaluated in the following pages and will conclude with recommendations for treatment.

Ultimate Treatment & Use

The authorizing legislation (Public Law 89- 366) for Cape Lookout National Seashore mandated the park’s establishment for the purpose of preserving “for public use and enjoyment an area in the State of North Carolina possessing outstanding natural and recreational values.” By the time the seashore was actually established in 1976, the area’s cultural resources at Portsmouth and at the Cape Lookout Light Station were also recognized.

The general management plan (GMP) developed for the park by the Denver Service Center in 1982 states that one of the park’s management objectives is “[t]o preserve intact, as feasible, the historic resources of the national seashore and to recognized that dynamic natural forces have influenced them throughout their existence and will continue to influence them.”¹ The GMP envisioned interpretation of the park’s cultural resources that would “emphasize man and his relation to the sea” with maritime history a focus at the lighthouse and the cultural and economic life of the Outer Bankers at Portsmouth Village.”²

Since that time, additional cultural resources besides the lighthouse station and Portsmouth have been recognized through Na-

1. Cape Lookout *GMP*, p. 4.

2. *Ibid.*

tional Register listing. In 1989, the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station, with four intact historic structures, was listed on the National Register; and in June 2000, the Cape Lookout Village Historic District, with fourteen historic residential buildings and the old Life-Saving Station, was listed as well. An amendment to the 1982 GMP was completed in January 2001, but it only addressed improvements in overnight accommodations and transportation services for visitors to Core Banks and not the additional cultural resources that had been recognized since 1982.

Since the buildings in the historic district have only recently come under the park's jurisdiction, the park's current General Management Plan (GMP) does not address their use. Continued residential use of the L.S.S. Boat House has been suggested, but because of the major adaptation necessary for residential use, such use would preclude interpretation of the historic building. The historic buildings in the district differ markedly from one another in terms of scale, significance, and condition; and some buildings are clearly more appropriate for certain uses than others. A comprehensive planning process resulting in an amendment to the park's GMP will be necessary to insure that the park's and the public's needs are addressed *and* that the historic buildings, including the Life-Saving Station, are treated and used appropriately.

Use: The park envisions interpretation of the Life-Saving Service and the Coast Guard through exhibits at the Coast Guard Station, and the Boat House could play a role in that ef-

fort. Permanent exhibits, perhaps including a life boat, could be accommodated in the Boat House. Although more in-depth interpretation of the historic district would require more space elsewhere, the Boat House could be opened only as needed without interfering with the routine use of the other buildings at the station.

The historic building had about 775 square feet of floor space, uninterrupted except by the small closet, now a bathroom, in the western corner of the building. Rest rooms may be necessary as visitation increases at the Coast Guard Station. If so, the Boat House might be an appropriate site, since it could be more easily adapted for that purpose than some of the other historic buildings in the district.

Since both entrances to the historic building were ramped, the Boat House could also be easily adapted for full handicapped accessibility. Properly designed for self-service use, it could be the primary visitor contact point at the Coast Guard Station.

Treatment: Alternatives for treatment are also discussed below, but recommended treatment should include returning the building to its original, well-documented location at the Coast Guard Station. The exterior of the building should be restored to its appearance at the end of World War II by removing the cedar-shingle siding; re-opening of the original boat-room doors; installation of a standing-seam, metal roof; and repairing and repainting exterior woodwork, most of which remains on the building. The historic interior of the building

should be exposed by removal of modern partitions (which do not include the walls that create Room 103) and finishes. Room 103 should be preserved, since it is an historic feature of the building and would be useful for storage of equipment and supplies. If bathrooms are installed, additional enclosures will be necessary, but these could be designed in a way that would be fully reversible and minimize their intrusion on the historic space.

Ultimate Treatment & Use

Requirements for Treatment & Use

The key to the success of any historic preservation project is good judgement in determining where replacement of a deteriorated building element is necessary. Deterioration in a portion of an element should not necessitate total replacement of the element, since epoxy consolidants and fillers can often be used to repair the damaged area, often without even removing the damaged element to make the repair. While total replacement of a damaged element is often recommended, especially in rehabilitation projects, the success of most preservation projects can be judged by the amount of historic material that remains. Even "replacement in kind" does not typically address natural processes that give the historic materials an aged appearance that cannot be duplicated except by the passage of time.

Because it is a contributing building in a National Register district, legal mandates and policy directives circumscribe treatment of the L. S. S. Boat House. The NPS' Cultural Resources Management Guideline (DO- 28) requires planning for the protection of cultural resources "whether or not they relate to the specific authorizing legislation or interpretive programs of the parks in which they lie." Therefore, the house should be understood in its own cultural context and managed in light of its own values so that it may be preserved unimpaired for the enjoyment of present and future

generations.

To help guide compliance with legal mandates and regulations while still maintaining the building's historic integrity, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties have been issued along with guidelines for applying those standards. Standards are included for each of the four separate but interrelated approaches to the treatment of historic buildings: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. These approaches define a hierarchy that implies an increasing amount of intervention into the historic building. Rehabilitation, in particular, allows for a variety of alterations and even additions to accommodate modern use of the structure. However, regardless of approach, a key principle embodied in the Standards is that changes be reversible, i.e., that alterations, additions, or other modifications be designed and constructed in such a way that they can be removed or reversed in the future without the loss of existing historic materials, features or characters.

While modern building codes and accessibility issues often necessitate significant changes to the an historic building, the character of the Boat House is such that code issues will be minimal. Unlike some of the other historic buildings at the Cape, handicapped accessibility can readily achieved at the Boat House by simply reconstructing the concrete ramps to the doors. The design of new rest rooms and exhibits can also easily incorporate features that would make the building fully accessible.

Electrical and plumbing systems and fixtures are not historic and will need to be redesigned to accommodate the building's new program of use. Installation of a smoke/fire detection system will also be required.

Treatment of the building should be guided by the International Building Code, including that code's statement regarding historic buildings:

3406.1 Historic Buildings. The provisions of this code related to the construction, repair, alteration, addition, restoration and movement of structures, and change of occupancy shall not be mandatory for historic buildings where such buildings are judged by the building official to not constitute *a distinct life safety hazard* [emphasis added].

Threats to public health and safety will be eliminated, but because this is an historic building, alternatives to full code compliance are recommended where compliance would needlessly compromise the integrity of the historic building.

Alternatives for Treatment & Use

The L. S. S. Boat House is a simple, utilitarian structure designed and constructed specifically for boat storage and maintenance. Of all the contributing structures in the Cape Lookout Village Historic District, the Boat House has undergone the most radical transformation, primarily because, unlike the other structures, it was adapted for an entirely new use after its relocation in 1958. Nevertheless, most of its historic features and finishes remain intact, concealed under modern finishes. The building has the potential to be an important part of the park's efforts to interpret the historic district at Cape Lookout.

The Boat House is in excellent condition, and residential use could be continued, if utilities were upgraded. However, residential use necessarily obscures the historic character of the building, requiring interior partitions, conventional doors, and additional windows to function in that capacity. While additional alterations to the historic building might not be necessary to continue residential use, the potential for meaningful interpretation would remain unrealized.

At a minimum, the exterior of the building should be restored, including re-opening of the large boat doors, which are perhaps the building's defining feature. These doors in themselves may limit

use, however, since their large size do not lend themselves to the sort of regular opening and closing expected of a conventional building entrance. For that reason alone, use of the building for offices, for instance, would not be practical.

One of the park's goals is expanded interpretation of the Life-Saving Service and the Coast Guard at Cape Lookout. Part of that expansion would include relocation of the 1887 Life-Saving Station to its original location at the Coast Guard Station and overall improvements to presentation of the site. Increased visitation at the site might necessitate additional visitor facilities, especially rest rooms. The Boat House could be easily adapted for rest rooms, even with the large doors in place, since they could be raised and lowered each day to provide access to separate rooms built out on the interior of the building.

Consideration has also been given to again using the building for storage and maintenance, its original use, since much of what is significant about the structure can be interpreted without interior access. However, the 1939 Equipment Building at the Coast Guard Station is currently being used in that capacity, and additional space is not really necessary.

The park envisions interpretation of the Life-Saving Service and the Coast Guard through exhibits at the Coast Guard Station, and the Life-Saving Station has been proposed for that purpose. The Boat House could also be used for exhibits, especially of a life boat, since restoration of the Boat Room in the Life-Saving Sta-

tion is not recommended. The building could be opened only as needed without interfering with the routine use of the other buildings at the station. Properly designed, it could be entirely self-service. With approximately 775 square feet of floor space and easily adapted for full handicapped accessibility, it would be possible to accommodate both rest rooms and exhibits in the building, turning it into the primary visitor contact point at the Coast Guard Station.

Recommendations for Treatment & Use

Significantly altered after it was relocated in 1958, the Boat House still retains most of its historic features and original materials hidden beneath layers of modern materials. Built in 1924, the building is very well constructed and is in generally good condition.

Use of the building for exhibits to interpret the history of the Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard at Cape Lookout is the preferred alternative. If public rest rooms are needed at the Coast Guard Station, they could be installed in the Boat House with a minimum impact on the historic building. Recommended treatment would include returning the building to its original, well-documented location at the Coast Guard Station, restoration of the exterior to its appearance at the end of World War II, and rehabilitation of the interior for exhibits and, if necessary, rest rooms.

Site

The historic site of the Boat House can be readily identified through the numerous plot plans and photographs of the station. Located in the northernmost corner of the station's main compound, the building was oriented parallel to and about one hundred feet northeast of the 1939 Maintenance Building. There are no visible signs of the building's location, its original piers and

concrete ramps having been lost when the building was relocated in 1958.

Complete site recommendations if the building is returned to its historic location are beyond the scope of this report, since they would be determined by treatment of the Coast Guard Station as a whole. Most significantly, the existing route of travel from the dock through the station and northward through the village was created after the Life-Saving Station was relocated in 1958. Some realignment of traffic flow will be necessary, perhaps including re-establishment of the historic route of public travel, which ran just south of the Lewis-Davis House (see Figure 15).

In addition, a large, concrete apron was poured in front of the Maintenance Building when it was constructed in 1939, but the remainder of the pavement was added in the 1960s and should be removed.

The original wooden ramps to the Boat House doors were replaced with concrete in 1941, and new concrete ramps should be reinstalled when the building is relocated. Both ramps were the width of the adjacent door opening and stretched about twenty feet from the building.

- Relocate building to its original site.
- Re-establish historic roadway that bypassed the station grounds.
- Remove pavement except for concrete apron in front of Maintenance Building.

- Replicate concrete ramps to Boat House doors.

Foundation

Historically, the building was always set with the bottoms of the sills within a foot of grade level. To facilitate inspection and maintenance of the structure, the bottoms of sills and joists should be no closer than 12" from the ground. Wooden piles appear to have always formed the building's foundation and should be used when it is returned to its original site. Termite shields should be installed on all pilings.

- Reset building on wooden pilings.
- Include termite shields on new pilings.

Structure

Structurally, the building appears to be in excellent condition. Over-structured, even by today's standards, it was built to withstand hurricane-force winds, and in spite of numerous storms, has never suffered more than minor storm damage. However, given its close proximity to the ground (which prevented inspection of the sills and floor framing), some deterioration from termites and/or rot is to be expected. When the building is relocated, sills and floor framing should be thoroughly inspected and repaired as necessary.

The front porch is a modern addition, added in two phases after 1961. It should be completely removed.

- Inspect and repair sills and joists when building is relocated.
- Remove porches.
- Restore opening on southeast side of building and replicate original doors.

Windows and Doors

All seven of the original windows remain intact, and although some sash may have been replaced, all of the existing sash should be repaired and preserved.

Three window openings have been added to the building since it was moved. Located in the two bathrooms and over the kitchen sink, all three of these openings should be eliminated.

The original doors at the northeast end of the building appear to remain at least partially intact, although covered inside and out with modern materials. One of these doors has been damaged by installation of the window over the kitchen sink, but the overall condition of the doors cannot be determined until modern materials are removed. The doors in the smaller opening where the front door is now located were removed when the opening was walled in when the building was moved. The original opening should be re-opened and new doors fabricated that match those at the northeast end of the building.

- Repair and preserve seven original windows.
- Close three window openings created after 1958.
- Re-open boat doors at northeast end and repair as necessary.
- Remove cedar shingles; repair original drop siding.

Exterior Finishes

The existing wood shingles cover the original drop siding and should be removed. While the siding will have many nail holes, repair and repainting of the original material should be possible. Enough drop siding should remain where the southeast door opening was closed in 1958 to close the bathroom window openings.

The original soffit, window and door casing, and window sills remain mostly intact. Only minor repairs may be necessary.

Although wood shingles have been used to roof the building since it was moved, photographs indicate that the historic roof covering may have been standing-seam metal, similar to what was installed on the Life-Saving Station in 1942. Clearer prints of the historic photographs might provide conclusive evidence of this assumption, but based upon existing evidence, standing-seam metal would be most appropriate for re-roofing the structure when it is moved.

The building's siding, soffit, and trim were historically painted white, but it appears that window sash may have been painted black or dark green. Evidence for dark sash should be apparent through a simple scrape test of the existing sash; otherwise the sash can be painted white.

Recommendations for Treatment & Use

- Repair existing soffit, window and door casing, and window sills.
- Remove wood- shingle roofing and install standing- seam metal roof.
- Paint soffit, siding, and trim white; paint window sash black.
- Design and install handicapped- accessible rest rooms on the northwest side of the building.

Interior

All modern wall partitions and ceilings should be removed, leaving only the historic closet, now a bath room, in the southwest corner of the building. All modern wall and floor coverings should be removed, exposing the original wood plank floor and open stud walls.

Station log entries suggest that the interior of the building was painted historically. Once modern materials are removed, the extent of painting, which probably also included the floor, can be assessed and replicated.

In addition to its primary use for exhibits, the building may need to house handicapped- accessible rest- room facilities. These should be designed to utilize the historic window openings on the northwest side of the building and should be built in line with the historic closet in the western corner of the building. The rooms' ceilings should be set no higher than the top plate of the outside wall so as to leave the roof structure of the building open and visible.

- Remove all modern walls, ceilings, and floor coverings.
- Paint interior white if indicated after modern materials are removed.

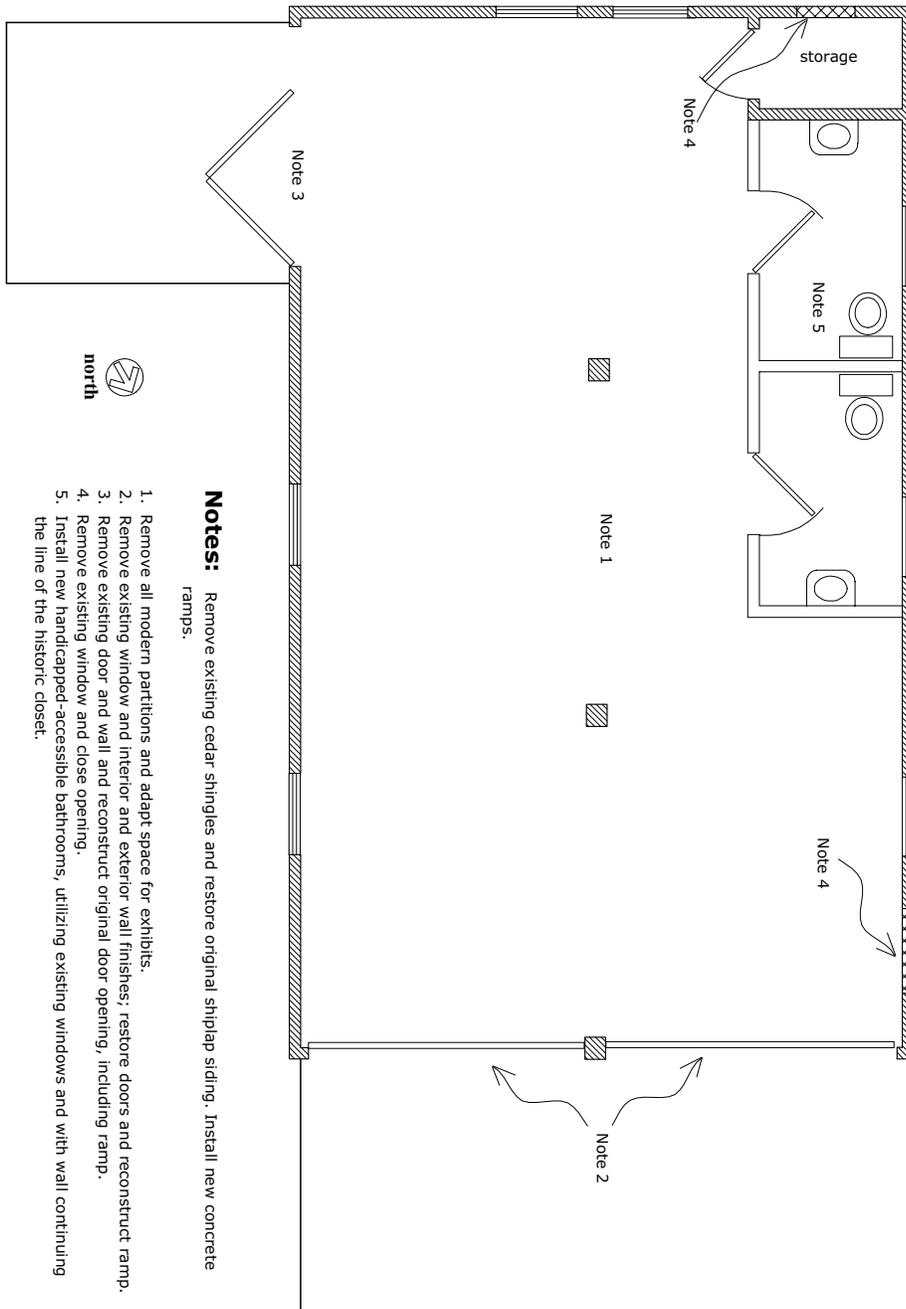
Utilities

If rest rooms are installed, entirely new supply and waste lines will be necessary. Evidence for the historic electrical system may survive above the existing ceilings and should be recorded if present. The new electrical system should include lighting designed specifically for exhibits, but fixtures should be simple and unobtrusive.

If exhibits are limited to interpretive panels, a central heating and cooling system will not be necessary. If heating is necessary, electrical baseboard heaters should be used, since the nature of the building is such that any ducted system would be unacceptably obtrusive.

Smoke/fire detectors should be installed throughout the building, including the crawl space. A sprinkler system is probably not necessary but could be installed with a minimal impact on the historic structure.

- Install new water supply and waste lines if new rest rooms are installed.
- Design electrical system with simple lighting to serve exhibits.
- Install smoke/fire detector system.
- If necessary, install electrical baseboard heaters.



Notes: Remove existing cedar shingles and restore original shiplap siding. Install new concrete ramps.

1. Remove all modern partitions and adapt space for exhibits.
2. Remove existing window and interior and exterior wall finishes; restore doors and reconstruct ramp.
3. Remove existing door and wall and reconstruct original door opening, including ramp.
4. Remove existing window and close opening.
5. Install new handicapped-accessible bathrooms, utilizing existing windows and with wall continuing the line of the historic closet.

Recommendations for Treatment & Use

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