National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2022



Bass Harbor Head Light Station

Acadia National Park

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Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the National Park System. Landscapes that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources and in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire, legal interest are included in the inventory. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, and condition. Cultural landscapes have approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into the Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS-CL) database. In addition, for landscapes not currently listed on the National Register and/or without adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or the Keeper of the National Register.

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is compiled from primary and secondary sources and through on-site surveys of the landscape. The level of investigation is dependent upon scoping the need for information. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's integrity and an assessment of the landscape's condition. The CLI also includes historic maps, drawings, and images; photographs of existing conditions; and a site plan that indicates major features. The CLI documents the existing condition of park landscape resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to stabilize condition. This information can be used to develop strategies for improved stewardship. Unlike a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), the CLI does not provide management recommendations or treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape, but it may identify stabilization measures.

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) replaces three legacy inventory systems: ASMIS (archeology), CLI (cultural landscapes), and LCS (historic structures); and it reinstates the former ERI (ethnographic resources). This Cultural Landscape Inventory document reflects the information in a corresponding CRIS Cultural Landscape record.

Statutory and Regulatory Foundation

The legislative, regulatory, and policy directives for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)) Sec. 110
- Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3 (a and c)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs
- Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Std. 2
- Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22; issued pursuant to Director's Order #28 (DO-28)

The NHPA requires the identification, evaluation, and nomination of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the maintenance and expansion of an inventory of cultural resources. DO-28 requires a cyclic assessment of the current condition of cultural landscapes based on an assessment interval, with a default of six years.

Use

Beyond fulfilling legal and policy requirements, park staff can use the Cultural Landscape Inventory in the following ways:

- To learn about park cultural landscapes (all staff)
- To inform management decisions (park managers)
- To inform project planning and development (park managers, facility managers, project managers, compliance specialists)
- To monitor the condition of the cultural landscape and take measures to protect its significance and integrity (cultural resource managers, facility managers)
- To recognize the stabilization and treatment needs of landscape features and plan work within cultural landscapes to address the needs (facility managers, cultural resource managers)
- To understand the cultural value of natural systems in a cultural landscape (natural resource managers)
- To create programming and educational materials based on site history (interpretation and education specialists)
- To recognize impacts within cultural landscapes and enforce protection measures (visitor and resources protection staff)

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Bass Harbor Head Light Station

Resource Classification: Cultural Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 976232

Parent Landscape: 976232

Inventory Status: Complete

Park Information

Park Name: Acadia National Park

Alpha Code: ACAD

Park Organization Code: 1700

Park District: ACAD

Region: Northeast

Restricted: Yes

Landscape Description:

The Bass Harbor Head Light Station is a historic property in Acadia National Park, located in Hancock County, Maine. Acadia was the first national park established east of the Mississippi River and today encompasses over 50,000 acres across Mount Desert Island, the Schoodic Peninsula, and other smaller islands. The light station is located at the southernmost tip of Mount Desert Island, southeast of the village of Bass Harbor in the town of Tremont. Designed to aid vessels coming into Bass Harbor, the light station was established in 1858 during a period of increased effort by the Federal government to provide aids to navigation along the coast.

The light station retains its original one-and-a-half-story frame Keeper's Dwelling and circular brick Lighthouse (attached via an altered covered way) along the rocky coast. Other historic buildings at the site are an 1897 Bell House to the southeast, a 1902 Oil House to the northwest, and a 1905 Garage to the northwest. A public parking lot and a restroom building are located just north of the Light Station, while a historic paved driveway runs from the parking lot down to the light station. A Generator Building (originally a Navy Radio Transmitting station) and antenna are located at the southeast corner of the parking lot. Spruce and fir woodlands and granite ledges characterize the landscape, interlaced with stone retaining walls and patches of lawn. A maintained historic hiking trail leads through the trees lot down to the shoreline and an iconic view of the Lighthouse.

Since automation of the lighthouse in 1974 through about 2012, the surviving structures were used by the United States Coast Guard as family housing. Since 2012, the complex has been vacant, but the light is maintained through an easement retained by the Coast Guard. In 2020 the light station was transferred from the Coast Guard to the National Park Service. Although there is no public access into the buildings, the grounds are the fifth busiest destination in Acadia National Park.
SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Bass Harbor Head Light Station derives significance under National Register Criterion A in the area of Transportation and Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The light station is associated with Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made navigation possible. The facility's distinctive character is primarily of mid-nineteenth century design and construction, although it also features components from the

later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The period of significance for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station is 1858-1948. The period begins the year that construction of the Lighthouse and Keeper's House was completed, and ends the year when planning and execution began on the modernization of the light station and before any modernization and changes were made. Thereafter, unsympathetic alterations to the site and structures occurred at a rapid pace.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The historic integrity of Bass Harbor Head Light Station is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance, 1858-1948, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2022. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today. The millennia of geological and hydrological processes that created the rocky shoreline and hidden shoals at the eastern approach to Bass Harbor, prompted the federal government to establish this light station. Such natural aspects are still on display through the site's exposed granite ledges, sudden topographic changes, and cliff edges that quicky fall to the wave-swept rocks below. The landform that came to be the lighthouse reservation is mostly cloaked in spruce and fir trees, except along the southern edge where the core light station facilities – the 1858 Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling, and 1897 bell house – are clustered overlooking the sea. Historic stone retaining walls, sidewalks, and a patio remain, as well as a curving driveway along which the oil house and barn were constructed in 1902-1905. The ca.1900 Bass Harbor Head Light Trail provides access to the water's edge and an iconic view of the Lighthouse, while the base of the tower itself offers a sweeping panoramic view toward the hidden shoal and the islands beyond. The reservation's original fence lines remain marked and small areas of grass surround some of the buildings, a legacy of a defined and well-maintained government facility.

Since 1948 some landscape characteristics and features have changed. The Coast Guard's modernization of the light station made the station's historic boat house, weight tower, and privy obsolete. They were removed, as was the massive bell on the south side of the bell house. Around the same time, the Navy built a small Radio Transmitting Building and two antennas in the northern portion of the reservation. Public visitation also increased in the 1950s, resulting in the construction of new walls, walkways, fences, and parking that introduced new designs and materials into the landscape. Eventually the driveway and parking lot were paved. The coniferous woodland has thrived in the damp climate, and has slowly taken hold in some areas that were once open. Remnants of a flagpole and sign remain from the Coast Guard's occupation, which ended in 2020.

Condition:
The condition of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station is "fair" due to improper drainage, erosion, and visitor impacts. There is evidence of poor drainage in the lawn on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, along the shoulders of the driveway. On the north and east sides of the Keeper's Dwelling, cracks and uneven pavement on the sidewalk and patio are directing water toward the foundations. On the south and west sides of the dwelling, drainage is poor on the gravel walkway, heavy visitor use is damaging the grass area, and several components of the pipe rail/chain link fence are rusted or missing. Improper drainage is also evident at the oil house, garage, and restroom. Erosion is evident along the edge of the driveway and several fence posts at the driveway and parking lot are severely leaning. Overcrowding and illegal parking is a frequent problem in the parking lot, especially in the busy summer months. Lastly, remnants of the Coast Guard flagpole and sign mar the entrance to the light station.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

Acadia National Park currently includes 15 landscapes (and eight component landscapes): Baker Island, Bass Harbor Head Light Station, Blackwoods Campground, Cadillac Mountain Summit, Historic Carriage Road System (four component landscapes), Historic Hiking Trail System (four component landscapes), Historic Motor Road System, Isle au Haut, Jordan Pond House, Picnic Areas, Sand Beach, Schoodic Peninsula, Seawall Campground, Sieur de Monts Spring, and Thunder Hole.

Landscape Type:

Historic Designed Landscape

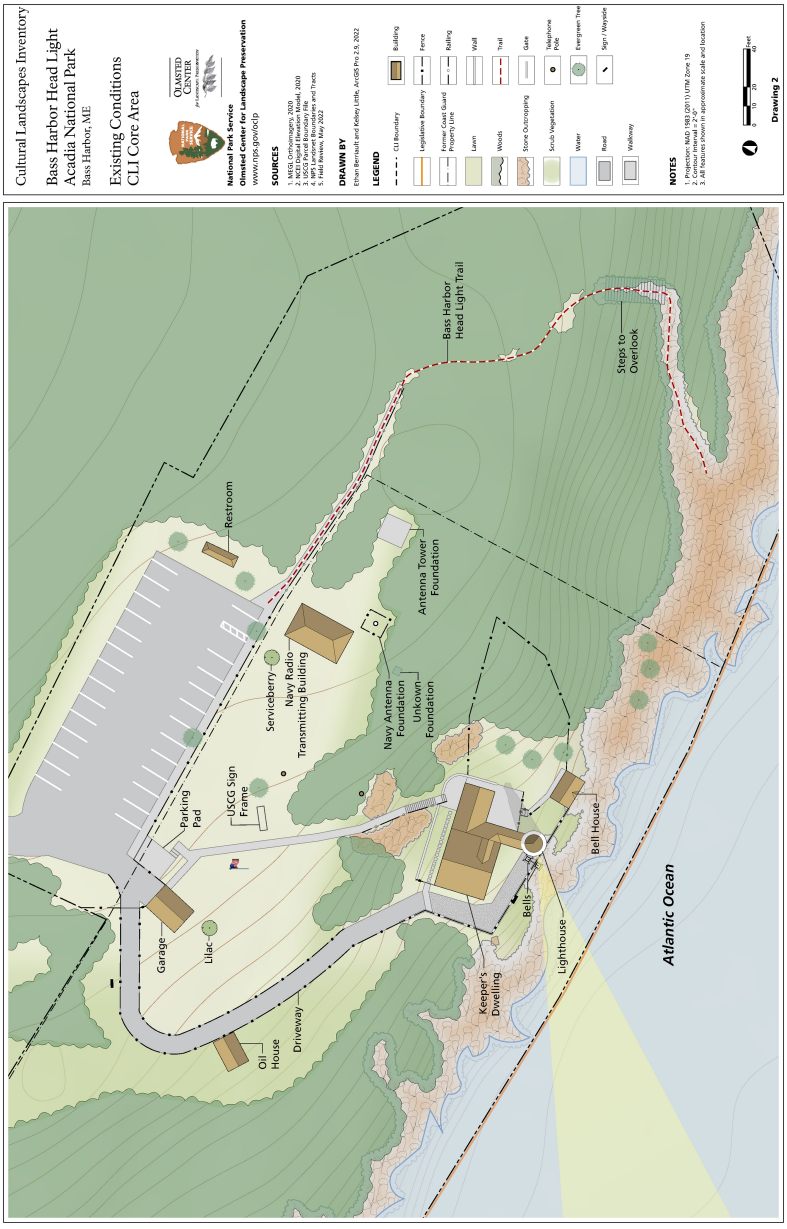
Other Names:

Other Name:	Bass Harbor Head Light Station	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic
Other Name:	Bass Harbor Head Lighthouse	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic

Site Plan



Site map of Bass Harbor Head Light Station, 1 of 2.



Site map of Bass Harbor Head Light Station, 2 of 2.

Concurrence Information

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 08/09/2022

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Information for this CLI is based on the 2020 report, “Bass Harbor Head Light Station, Historic Structure Report,” by Rebecca Cybularz. Additional research was conducted by Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect at the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, National Park Service, Boston. Field documentation was completed at the site by Killion in April 2020, and site plans were created by Ethan Berriault, Seasonal Cartographer, Olmsted Center, in May-June 2022. The park contact for this report was Gail Gladstone, Cultural Resources Program Manager.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Bass Harbor Head Light Station
Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for Bass Harbor Head Light Station, including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Should Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for Bass Harbor Head Light Station is hereby approved and accepted.

KEVIN SCHNEIDER Digitally signed by KEVIN SCHNEIDER
Date: 2022.08.09 15:58:24 -04'00'

Superintendent, Acadia National Park Date

Park Concurrence Form, August 9, 2022.

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

KIRK F. MOHNEY
DIRECTOR

September 1, 2022

Mr. Jonathan Meade
National Park Service
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Project: MHPC# 1402-22 Acadia National Park; 1.A.2 (IR1-RSS)
Bass Harbor Head Light Station Cultural Landscapes Inventory

Town: Tremont, ME

Dear Mr. Meade:

In response to your recent request, I have reviewed the information received August 10, 2022 to initiate consultation on the above referenced project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA). At this time, Acadia National Park is seeking concurrence on the National Register status of previously evaluated resources, as well as those newly evaluated in the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI).

Overall, the CLI appears to be thorough in its documentation of the above ground cultural resources associated with the Bass Harbor Head Light Station, and the Commission is not aware of any omissions in that regard. However, we note that archaeology does not appear to have been addressed in the CLI.

The CLI concludes that 1948 is an appropriate end date for the period of significance (POS), given the changes that occurred thereafter. We note, however, that additions, alterations and removals occurred at the light station throughout the period before 1948, as well as after. Please explain in more detail how the National Park Service made its decision to end the POS in 1948, particularly in light of the fact that the light station's historic function and did not end at that time. An alternative end date for the POS may be 1974, at which time the light station was automated and the historic support buildings for the aid to navigation were no longer used for that purpose.

In addition, please note that there is no Maine state register.

Please contact Megan M. Rideout at (207) 287-2992 or megan.m.rideout@maine.gov if you have any questions regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

Kirk F. Mohney
State Historic Preservation Officer

PHONE: (207) 287-2132 FAX: (207) 287-2335

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 1 of 7.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

1.A.2.(IR1-RSS)

Kirk F. Mohney
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
55 Capitol Street
65 State House Station
Augusta, Maine, 04333-0065

Dear Mr. Mohney:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) for Bass Harbor Head Light Station at Acadia National Park. We seek to reconfirm our agreement on previously evaluated resources and your concurrence on the status of previously unevaluated resources identified in this CLI for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The report has been prepared by a team of historical landscape architects with the National Park Service (NPS) Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and staff at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The CLI program and the enclosed report continue the NPS efforts to update our cultural resource inventories.

Through the CLI program, the NPS is currently undertaking a nationwide effort to inventory its cultural landscapes. The CLI is conducted in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). It is an inventory of baseline information for all historically significant cultural landscapes within the national park system, and it examines multiple landscape features that contribute to the significance of historic properties. The CLI process includes gathering information from existing secondary sources and conducting on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the property's overall significance. For landscapes found potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the evaluation describes their character-defining features and assesses the landscape's overall historical integrity. It also raises questions about the landscape that need further study.

It is important to note that the CLI reports are not intended as comprehensive inventory reports for any one property, although for some properties they provide fuller documentation than for others. For example, the reports do not include a full architectural description of structures, but document structures as elements of the overall landscape, and similarly documents other characteristics such as vegetation, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The CLI is one

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 2 of 7.

component of the NPS inventory effort that also includes cultural resource inventories for historic structures, archeological sites, ethnographic resources, and museum objects. For example, the NPS Historic Structures Inventory (formerly List of Classified Structures) includes structural features of cultural landscapes, but the CLI takes a more encompassing approach to the properties, inventorying all above-ground features in each park in which the NPS has a legal or mandated interest.

Previous Historic Property Evaluation:

Maine's Acadia National Park officially began with the proclamation of Sieur de Monts National Monument on July 8, 1916. The park was established as Lafayette National Park on February 29, 1919 and renamed Acadia National Park on January 19, 1929. The Bass Harbor Head Light Station property was transferred to the park from the US Coast Guard in 1974 except for the buildings, which were transferred in 2020.

On November 20, 1987, the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places accepted the "Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF): Light Stations of Maine," which serves as a basis for evaluating the National Register eligibility of related properties. The MPDF identified two historic contexts within which to evaluate Maine's light stations: "Maritime Transportation in Maine (ca.1600-1917)" and "Federal Lighthouse Management (1789-1939)." Registration requirements outlined in the MPDF required that the light stations retain sufficient integrity in "workmanship, materials and character, associative significance by virtue of their role in history, in their setting and in notable cases as the work of a master." The MPDF also stated that, at a minimum, a light station should include a lantern-bearing tower and distinct dwelling quarters, and that the presence of other ancillary buildings or structures could partially offset alterations to these major components. The Bass Harbor Head Light Station was identified in the form.

On January 21, 1988, Bass Harbor Head Light Station was found to meet the requirements of the 1987 "Light Stations of Maine MPDF" and was listed in the National Register. Significance for the 2.5-acre property was identified at the state level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Engineering, and Transportation. The period of significance was identified as 1858-1937, which corresponds to the year the light station was completed, and fifty years prior to the date of the National Register documentation was completed (1987). The National Register Registration Form listed the Light Tower, Keeper's House, Bell House, Oil House, and Barn (Garage) as contributing buildings and structures. The documentation's only reference about the surrounding landscape is: "the compound on which the light station stands is bordered by a low concrete retaining wall. This is apparently a modern feature since it does not appear in early twentieth century documentary photographs of the site."

On April 8, 2022, the Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System was found to meet the requirements of the 2017 "Historic Resources of Acadia National Park MPDF" and was listed in the National Register. Significance for the 109 historic maintained hiking trails was identified at the national level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Art, Community Planning and

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 3 of 7.

Development, Conservation, Entertainment/Recreation, Landscape Architecture, and Social History. The period of significance was identified as 1844-1942, which corresponds to the artist Thomas Cole's first documented impressions of the island's landscapes from viewpoints that influenced the trail system's development, to the conclusion of the Civilian Conservation Corps work at Acadia National Park. The National Register Registration Form listed the ca.1900 Bass Harbor Head Light Trail as a contributing structure, and specifically noted significance in the area of Community Planning and Development.

Current Findings:

The enclosed CLI for Bass Harbor Head Light Station fully evaluates the cultural landscape, particularly the associated landscape characteristics and features, and finds that the site's landscape retains integrity to the areas of Transportation, Architecture, and Engineering. As noted previously, six of the property's features compiled on the attached list have already been evaluated in the National Register. The CLI identifies an additional 14 resources related to natural systems and features, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, and views and vistas that contribute to the significance and historic character of the property. An additional 30 features have been evaluated as noncontributing because they are not historically significant. A total of two features have been evaluated as undetermined because future research is needed to determine their significance.

We call your particular attention to the Landscape Description, Boundary Description, National Register Information and the Statement of Significance, and Analysis and Evaluation Summary in the enclosed CLI.

Based on the CLI, we seek to reconfirm our agreement on previously evaluated resources and your concurrence on the status of resources and features identified in this CLI:

- Bass Harbor Head Light Station is significant at the state level under Criterion A in the area of Transportation as a representation of Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made safe navigation possible.
- It is significant at the state level under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering for its distinctive character that is primarily of mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth century design and construction.
- The period of significance for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station is 1858-1948. The period begins the year that construction of the Lighthouse and Keeper's House was completed, and ends the year when planning and execution began on the modernization of the light station and before any modernization and changes were made. Thereafter, unsympathetic alterations to the site and structures occurred at a rapid pace.
- The categorization of contributing, non-contributing, and undetermined landscape characteristics and features (see attached list).

If you concur with these findings, we ask that you please sign on the space provided and return this letter to Jeff Killion, Interior Region 1 CLI Coordinator, by email: jeff_killion@nps.gov.

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 4 of 7.

We would appreciate your response in **45 days**, if possible. Thank you for your attention to this inventory. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Killion at 508-455-8540 (telework cell).

Jonathan Meade
Associate Regional Director
Resource Stewardship and Science

JONATHAN MEADE

Digitally signed by JONATHAN MEADE
Date: 2022.07.14 10:58:59 -04'00'

Enclosure/Attachment

cc:
Superintendent, Acadia National Park.

I concur with the National Park Service categorizations of the landscape resources and features for Bass Harbor Head Light Station, as contributing, non-contributing, and undetermined.

_____ _____
Maine State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 5 of 7.

NPS Cultural Landscapes Inventory – Bass Harbor Head Light Station
Acadia National Park
List of Contributing, Non-Contributing, and Undetermined Landscape Features
May 2022

Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

The following landscape characteristics and associated features contribute to the property's historic character, though not all are considered countable resources according to the National Register of Historic Places. Features marked with a (*) were described in National Register documentation on January 21, 1988. Features marked with a (+) were described in National Register documentation on April 8, 2022.

Natural Systems and Features
Spruce and Fir Forests

Vegetation
Maintained Lawns
Scrub Vegetation

Circulation
+ Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129)
Driveway
Keeper's House Patio
Sidewalk, north and east sides of Kitchen Ell Addition
Sidewalk, west side of Keeper's Dwelling
Sidewalk and Stairs, Garage to Keeper's Dwelling
Sidewalk and Steps, Patio to Bell House

Buildings and Structures
* Bell House
* Garage (Barn)
* Keeper's Dwelling\
* Lighthouse
* Oil House
Stone Retaining Wall, north and east of Keeper's Dwelling and Kitchen Ell Addition
Stone Retaining Wall, Driveway
Stone Retaining Wall, Patio

Views and Vistas
Views to and from the Lighthouse
View looking west at the Lighthouse

Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 6 of 7.

Circulation

Garage Sidewalk
Parking Lot
Parking Pad and Steps
Paver Walkway, north side of Keeper's Dwelling
Walkway, south and west side of Keeper's Dwelling

Buildings and Structures

Concrete Retaining Wall, Bell House to Driveway
Radio Transmitting Station
Retaining Wall and Embankments, Parking Pad
Restroom
Timber Retaining Wall, Keeper's Dwelling

Small Scale Features

Antenna Foundation
Chain Link Fences and Gates, north and east of Kitchen Ell Addition and Bell House
Coast Guard Sign Frame
Communication Tower Foundation
Flagpole
Fuel Tank
Large Bell and Stand
Patio Fence
Picket Fence and Gate, Keeper's Dwelling
Pipe Rail Fence / Chain Link Fence, Bell House to west of Keeper's Dwelling
Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Lot
Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Pad
Post and Board Fences and Wood Gate, Driveway
Post and Rope Fences
Remnant Post and Rail Fences along Boundaries
Septic System Utility Covers, Gravel Walkway
Small Bell and Stand
Stockade Fence, Fuel Tank
Water Supply Enclosure
Wayside Signs

Undetermined Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Small-Scale Features

Remnant Iron Bolts, Boat House Site
Unknown Concrete Foundation

Maine SHPO consultation letter, September 1, 2022, page 7 of 7.

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1.A.2(ACAD)

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL:
HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

Mr. Kirk F. Mohney
State Historic Preservation Officer
55 Capitol Street, 65 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0065

RE: Bass Harbor Light Station Cultural Landscape Inventory

Dear Mr. Mohney:

Thank you for your review of the Bass Harbor Light Station Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI). In response to your comments from the letter dated September 1, 2022, the Park believes that the 1948 end date for the Period of Significance (POS) is the most appropriate date.

The end date of 1948 is significant because it is the year when the Coast Guard announced plans to modernize the light station. The changes that followed this announcement occurred at a rapid pace over the next ten years. It was after 1948 that many of the changes were unsympathetic alterations to the site and structures. The installation of electricity and plumbing made the station's historic boat house and launchway, pyramidal weight tower, and cliffside privy obsolete. The loss of these prominent and unique structures diminished the landscape's historic character, which had been that of a tightly clustered arrangement of facilities designed and located in response to the site's steep and rocky terrain. The bell house was retained for storage, but the massive fog bell that hung on its south elevation was removed. The tanks in the oil house were scrapped and the building became a paint locker. After 1950, the newly electrified light in the lighthouse was maintained by Coast Guard personnel rather than a Keeper and his family.

In 1949 the Navy built a small Radio Transmitting Building and two antennas in the northern portion of the reservation. This building now houses a backup generator and the two antennae have been removed. The complex saw an increase in public visitation in the 1950s, resulting in the construction of new walls, walkways, fences, and parking that introduced new designs and materials into the landscape. The driveway and parking lot were paved around 1974.

NPS response letter, September 21, 2022, page 1 of 2.

While the historic function largely remained, the Park feels that the changes that occurred after 1948 to the ancillary structures and the surrounding landscape are significant enough to affect the original integrity of the complex.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Gail Gladstone, Cultural Resources Program Manager, at (207) 288-8728.

Sincerely,

KEVIN SCHNEIDER Digitally signed by KEVIN SCHNEIDER Date: 2022.09.21 08:55:17 -04'00'

Kevin B. Schneider
Superintendent

CC:
Rebecca Cole-Will, Chief of Resource Management
Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
Robert Page, Director, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
Jonathan Meade, Associate Regional Director, Resource Science and Stewardship

NPS response letter, September 21, 2022, page 2 of 2.

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

KIRK F. MOHNEY
DIRECTOR

October 17, 2022

Mr. Jonathan Meade
National Park Service
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Project: MHPC# 1402-22 Acadia National Park; 1.A.2 (IR1-RSS)
Bass Harbor Head Light Station Cultural Landscapes Inventory

Town: Tremont, ME

Dear Mr. Meade:

In response to your recent request, I have reviewed the information received September 21, 2022 to continue consultation on the above referenced project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA). At this time, Acadia National Park is seeking concurrence on the National Register status of previously evaluated resources, as well as those newly evaluated in the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI).

Commission staff have reviewed your response to my prior correspondence regarding the recommended period of significance for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station as described in the Cultural Landscape Inventory. Ending the historic property's period of significance (POS) in 1949, prior to the time when a number of changes were made to the light station, is one plausible way to interpret significance. We do not object to this approach. However, the Commission also believes that a case can be made for extending the POS to 1974, when the light was fully automated and Coast Guard personnel were no longer living on-site to maintain the aid to navigation. In addition, one might also consider the significance of the light station in the area of Entertainment/Recreation as visitation to the property increased and changes were made to accommodate tourist traffic. Finally, we previously noted the absence of any reference to potential archaeological resources on the property. This was not addressed in the September 21 response.

Please contact Megan M. Rideout at (207) 287-2992 or megan.m.rideout@maine.gov if you have any questions regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

Kirk F. Mohney
State Historic Preservation Officer

PHONE: (207) 287-2132 FAX: (207) 287-2335

Maine SHPO response letter, October 17, 2022.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County
Maine	Hancock County

Size (Acres): 3.5

Land Tract Number(s)

05-163, 52.03 acres (portion)

Boundary Description:

The CLI project area includes the approximately 2.5-acre lighthouse reservation (acreage number varies in sources), as well as a one-acre area to the north and east of the reservation that includes a parking lot and Bass Harbor Head Light Trail. Although outside of the historic reservation boundary, the parking lot and trail provide visitor access to the resources within the reservation and to scenic views of the lighthouse. From the northern line of the reservation, the boundary extends 10 feet beyond the west and north pavement edges of the parking lot and continues east to meet a line approximately 75 feet north and east of the trail centerline (per the boundary definition of trails in the 2022 National Register documentation for the Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System).

The trapezoidal-shaped reservation boundary is described as:
“Those two (2) acres, more or less, of land located in the town of Tremont (McKinley), Hancock County, Maine, situate on the east head of Bass Harbor, bounded as follows, to wit: Commencing at a fir tree marked "U.S. A. L. H.", thence south 37 degrees east 22 rods, thence south 60 degrees east 22 rods, thence north 29 degrees east 10 rods, thence north 61 degrees west 41 and 12 rods to the place of beginning, containing two acres more or less; and also a right of a road and way from the northeast comer or said lot running northeasterly to the highway or road for the benefit of the GRANTEES only and the keeper of the light and persons going to and from the lighthouse and keeper's house, the same to be a way with gates or bars across the same.

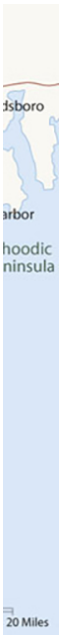
Boundary Coordinates

Source	Type of Point	Latitude	Longitude	Narrative
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222977	-68.339545	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222536	-68.337635	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222683	-68.3376	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222507	-68.336806	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222454	-68.336831	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222397	-68.336537	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222342	-68.336241	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222088	-68.336066	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.221949	-68.336014	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.221876	-68.336196	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.2219	-68.33716	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222083	-68.338068	
Aerial Photograph	Area	44.222422	-68.338979	

Location Map:



Map of Acadia National Park and Mount Desert Island. (Acadia National Park website)


sboro
arbor
hoodic
ninsula
20 Miles



The Bass Harbor Head Light Station on the west side of Mount Desert Island, at its southern-most tip (image lower cente (Acadia National Park website)

r).

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

This context concerns the large-scale physical forms and patterns of the landscape such as hill, plateau, ravine,
drumlin, etc. Mount Desert Island is rich in geological history dating back about 550 million years. Sea-floor mud deposits created during the Cambrian period by volcanic ash began to fold, thrust, and lift above sea level in the Paleozoic period, where later layers were eroded away and exposed schists. Mountain-building activity during the Devonian period gave Mount Desert Island three granite units: the Cadillac Mountain granite, the fine-grained Somesville granite, and the medium-grained Somesville granite. (Wikipedia: “Mount Desert Island”)

Most recently, Mount Desert Island was host to the Laurentide Ice Sheet as it extended and receded during the Pleistocene epoch. The glacier left visible marks upon the landscape, such as Bubble Rock, a glacial erratic carried 19 miles to the side of South Bubble Mountain in Acadia National Park. Other examples are the moraines deposited at the southern ends of many of the glacier-carved valleys on the island such as the Jordan Pond valley, indicating the extent of the glacier; and the beach sediments in a regressional sequence beneath and around Jordan Pond, indicating the rebound of the continent after the glacier's recession about 25,000 years ago. (Wikipedia: “Mount Desert Island”)

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

This context describes the general human overlay on the physical form on the landscape. Before being settled by Europeans, Mount Desert Island was the site of seasonal Native American encampments. The island offered seasonal access to food, supplies for traditional craft making, and a source for spiritual and family connections. This connection to the island landscape still exists and continues today. Bass Harbor Head likely became a scenic destination soon after the light station was built in 1858. This coincided with the island’s emergence as a European-American tourist area in the 1870s and 1880s. At the same time, the nearby Town of Tremont, and the Village of Bass Harbor, was developing into an import harbor town. Tourism and maritime activities continue to dominate the island today.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

This context describes the overlay imposed on the landscape through general land use, zoning, legal restrictions,
transportation, utilities, population, and political jurisdiction (e.g., state, county, city, borough, or village). Located at the southwestern tip of Mount Desert Island, the Bass Harbor Head Light Station is adjacent to the Town of Tremont in Hancock County, Maine. Tremont includes the villages of Bass Harbor (or McKinley), Bernard, Gotts Island, Seal Cove and West Tremont. Part of Acadia National Park lies within the town. Bass Harbor is the terminus for the Swan's Island ferry and the Frenchboro ferry. The population was 1,544 at the 2020 census. (Wikipedia: “Tremont, Maine”)

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/09/2022

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Bass Harbor Head Light Stations meets the requirements of the management category “Should Be Preserved and Maintained” because it meets National Register of Historic Places criteria and is compatible with the park’s legislated significance. Firstly, the property meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Engineering, and Transportation. Secondly, the property is located within the congressionally legislated boundary of Acadia National Park.

The NPS is authorized to acquire lands within its boundary pursuant to Public Law 99-420 (100 Stat.955) dated September 25, 1986, to protect and conserve the land and water resources and facilitate the administration of the park. The transfer of the property from the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to NPS, was executed on July 8, 2020, under the provisions of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000 (NHLPA), codified at 54 USC 305101-305106. The NHLPA makes historic lighthouse properties that are excess to the needs of the USCG available at no cost to other federal agencies, state and local governments and agencies, non-profit corporations, educational institutions, or community development organizations, for education, park, recreation, cultural, or historic preservation purposes. (Letter, John E. Kelly, Director, Property Disposal Division, General Services Administration to Jennifer Cherry, National Park Service, Northeast Region Land Resources, 8 July 2020)

Management Agreements:

Type of Agreement: None

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative:

Type of Interest: None - Other Federal Agency Owned

Narrative: The USCG retains an easement to maintain the Lighthouse lamp and the generator in the Radio Transmitting Station.

Located in managed wilderness?: No

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

Adjacent lands are lands outside the cultural landscape boundary, including lands inside or outside the park. Just south of the core of the light station is the Bass Harbor Bar, a submerged shoal that connects to Great Gott Island. The shoal is a navigation hazard for mariners entering and leaving Bass Harbor, and is the reason a light station was built at this location. The panoramic views of the ocean and distant islands are also critical to the light station, and provide context for interpreting and understanding this historic property. The views have been evaluated as contributing features in this CLI.

In the park-owned woods north and east of the light station, Robert H. MacArthur conducted a warbler study in 1958, which was repeated in 2014-2015 by Bik D. R. Wheeler. Both MacArthur's and Wheeler's studies documented the importance of the Bass Harbor headland as significant unfragmented habitat for migrating warblers. The area may be significant in the area of conservation.

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: Entered Inadequately Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

Maine's Acadia National Park officially began with the proclamation of Sieur de Monts National Monument on July 8, 1916. The park was established as Lafayette National Park on February 29, 1919 and renamed Acadia National Park on January 19, 1929. The Bass Harbor Head Light Station property was transferred to the park from the US Coast Guard in 1974 except for the buildings, which were transferred in 2020.

On November 20, 1987, the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places accepted the "Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF): Light Stations of Maine," which serves as a basis for evaluating the National Register eligibility of related properties. The MPDF identified two historic contexts within which to evaluate Maine's light stations: "Maritime Transportation in Maine (ca.1600-1917)" and "Federal Lighthouse Management (1789-1939)." Registration requirements outlined in the MPDF required that the light stations retain sufficient integrity in "workmanship, materials and character, associative significance by virtue of their role in history, in their setting and in notable cases as the work of a master." The MPDF also stated that, at a minimum, a light station should include a lantern-bearing tower and distinct dwelling quarters, and that the presence of other ancillary buildings or structures could partially offset alterations to these major components. The Bass Harbor Head Light Station was identified in the form.

On January 21, 1988, Bass Harbor Head Light Station was found to meet the requirements of the 1987 "Light Stations of Maine MPDF" and was listed in the National Register. Significance for the 2.5-acre property was identified at the state level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Engineering, and Transportation. The period of significance was identified as 1858-1937, which corresponds to the year the light station was completed, and fifty years prior to the date of the National Register documentation was completed (1987). The National Register Registration Form listed the Light Tower, Keeper's House, Bell House, Oil House, and Barn (Garage) as contributing buildings and structures. The documentation's only reference about the surrounding landscape is: "the compound on which the light station stands is bordered by a low concrete retaining wall. This is apparently a modern feature since it does not appear in early twentieth century documentary photographs of the site."

On April 8, 2022, the Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System was found to meet the requirements of the 2017 "Historic Resources of Acadia National Park MPDF" and was listed in the National Register. Significance for the 109 historic maintained hiking trails was identified at the national level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Art, Community Planning and Development, Conservation, Entertainment/Recreation, Landscape Architecture, and Social History. The period of significance was identified as 1844-1942, which corresponds to the artist Thomas Cole's first documented impressions of the island's landscapes from viewpoints that influenced the trail system's development, to the conclusion of the Civilian Conservation Corps work at Acadia National Park. The National Register Registration Form listed the ca.1900 Bass Harbor Head Light Trail as a contributing structure, and specifically noted significance in the area of Community Planning and Development.

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas of significance for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station landscape are adequately documented in the 1988 National Register, but the period of significance is not. The existing documentation does not adequately describe the historic landscape resources that contribute to the property's significance. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, the Bass Harbor Head Light Station landscape is considered "Entered-Inadequately Documented."

Eligibility: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Concurrence Eligibility Date: 09/01/2022

Concurrence Narrative:

The Maine SHPO agreed with the findings of the CLI but recommended an end date for the period of significance as 1974 instead of 1948. The NPS responded that the landscape character changed dramatically after 1948, not 1974. The Maine SHPO responded on October 17, 2022, noting that the end date of 1948 was "one plausible way of interpreting significance" and that they "did not object to the approach."

Significance Level: State

Contributing: Contributing

Classification: Site

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

The Bass Harbor Head Light Station derives significance under National Register Criterion A in the area of Transportation and Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The light station is associated with Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made navigation possible. The facility's distinctive character is primarily of mid-nineteenth century design and construction, although it also features components from the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The period of significance for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station is 1858-1948. The period begins the year that construction of the Lighthouse and Keeper's House was completed, and ends the year when planning and execution began on the modernization of the light station and before any modernization and changes were made. Thereafter, unsympathetic alterations to the site and structures occurred at a rapid pace.

The CLI project area includes the ca.1900 Bar Harbor Head Light Trail that was listed in the National Register in 2020 as part of the nationally-significant Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System, and a portion of the Lighthouse Road that may be eligible for listing as part of the park's truck and fire protection trail system developed prior to 1942. However, the areas of significance associated with the trail and road are not presented here because they represent only singular segments of those systems and are evaluated in separate CLIs.

CRITERION A

Transportation:
Bass Harbor Head Light Station is significant at the state level in the area of Transportation as a representation of Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made safe navigation possible. Maine's light stations have played significant roles in the growth and development of the state's important maritime transportation network. Prominently located at strategic offshore, coastal, and river sites, they are the most technologically and architecturally significant elements in what is today an extensive system of navigational aids employing a variety of structures. Constructed, at first, in response to specific local needs, but later as part of a coastwide pattern of aids to navigation, these complexes continue to underscore the historic patterns of growth in Maine's coastal communities. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 1)

Maritime transportation has been a significant factor in the state's particular pattern of growth. Its abundant natural resources were exploitable at an early date in large part because those resources were

made accessible by numerous and deep sheltered harbors and long navigable inland rivers. Light stations provided both distantly visible directional landmarks to specific coastal areas as well as warning signals to special hazards. Therefore, they have been intimately associated with an extremely important element in Maine s development. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 1-2)

The federal government identified the need for a navigational aid at the entrance to Bass Harbor in 1837. At that time, buoys were recommended to mark the “large and dangerous reef” but were not positioned until 1842-1843. In 1855 the federal government recommended the establishment of a light station at Bass Harbor Head on the edge of a rocky cliff approximately 40 feet above the water. The lighthouse reservation was surveyed in 1856, but not acquired until the following year. In 1858 the Lighthouse and Keeper’s Dwelling were completed and operational. These buildings remain today, as do a bell house, oil house, barn (garage), and walls, sidewalks, and fence lines added in subsequent years.

CRITERION C

Architecture and Engineering:
Bass Harbor Head Light Station is significant at the state level in the areas of Architecture and Engineering for its distinctive character that is primarily of mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth century design and construction. A large number of light stations were constructed under the purview of the United States Lighthouse Establishment (USLHE) from 1789 until 1852 when the agency was reorganized as the United States Lighthouse Board (USLHB). Subsequent light station construction and rebuilding, an explosion of which took place in the 1850s, saw newly engineered designs put into service. Subsequent modifications to these elements were made throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as technological advances in various lighthouse components made older systems obsolete. Changes came not only from an engineering standpoint but also from popular trends in architecture, especially in the design of dwellings. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 2)

Key facilities at the Bass Harbor Head Light Station shared similarities with other light stations in Maine. The light stations utilized towers of various shapes and sizes constructed of a wide variety of materials. Towers erected before 1851 were built of stone in slightly conical shapes, but afterwards most towers utilized brick construction in cylindrical shapes, including the lighthouse at Bass Harbor Head. The light at Bass Harbor Head was a Fifth Order Fresnel lens until 1901-1902 when the intensity was increased with a larger Fourth Order lens. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 2-3; HSR 2020: 83)

Early light station dwellings featured rubble stone, coursed ashlar granite, and brick construction, but after 1852 most, like the dwelling at Bass Harbor Head, featured wood construction, possibly because they were easier to heat in the cold and damp coastal climate. The wood-frame dwellings were similar in plan, materials and detailing, evidence of the USLHB’s system of engineer-designed complexes: most were 1.5-story rectangular blocks with side sheds or short rear ells; had three-bay facades with doors located in narrow vestibules and placed in the center or at one corner; and were clad in board-and-batten siding, and then replaced with clapboards. Such design characteristics were consistent with mid-nineteenth century cottage architecture. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 3-5)

Ancillary structures crucial to Maine’s light station operations include bell houses, boat houses, and oil houses. Many stations had warning bells mounted on simple skeletal frames and struck by hand, but an equally large number, like Bass Harbor Head, had pyramidal frame structures to house the mechanical apparatus that automatically operated the bells. Modern technological advances in the development of steam powered fog signals and automation doomed these structures. The boat house and slip at Bass Harbor Head was similar to others: a rectangular, wood-framed, gable-roofed plan; clapboards and wood shingle siding; and a large opening in one gable end at the location of the boat slip. Oil houses were added to light stations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when kerosene began to replace lard oil as the fuel used to operate the lanterns. Due to their highly flammable contents, the brick or rubblestone oil houses usually stood at some distance from the other buildings and featured a squat, rectangular block plan, and gable roof. They either had a ridge-mounted ventilator and a transom above the gable end door, or like the one at Bass Harbor Head, a narrow rectangular vent above the door. Other support structures at the light stations included water cisterns and barns, both of which were present at the Bass Harbor Head Light Station. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 5-6)

Maine's light stations often occupy uneven, rocky locations. In order to facilitate safe passage between the various buildings, connecting walkways were built. Depending upon the severity of the weather at a particular station these walkways were either left uncovered and provided with railings or were completely enclosed. Historic photographs of Bass Harbor Head show walkways with planks, concrete, or earthen surfaces, and in steep areas were fitted with railings. In 1878 a covered way was built to connect the Keeper's Dwelling to the Lighthouse. (MPDF 1987, Sec.F, III: 6)

National Register Significance Criteria:

A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

National Register Criteria Consideration:

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1858 - CE 1948

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Recreation	Tourism	
Expressing Cultural Values	Architecture	Vernacular Architecture	
Developing the American Economy	Shipping and Transportation by Water	Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, And Other Structures	
Expanding Science and Technology	Technology (Engineering and Invention)	Transportation	

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Architecture

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Engineering

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Transportation

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Bass Harbor Head Light Station
NRIS ID:	87002273
Primary Certification Date:	01/21/1988
NRIS Name:	Light Stations of Maine
NRIS ID:	64500264
Primary Certification Date:	11/20/1987
NRIS Name:	Mount Desert Island Hiking Trail System
NRIS ID:	MP100007602
Primary Certification Date:	04/08/2022

State Register Documentation:

National Historic Landmarks:

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

World Heritage Site:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
BCE 10500 - 5000	Inhabited	After the Ice Age, the earliest Indian hunting bands move into Maine's tundras in pursuit of caribou, musk ox, mammoth, and other wildlife. (Prins and McBride 2007: xv)
BCE 5000 - 1604	Inhabited	Indian families seasonally fish and hunt sea mammals in Mount Desert Island's coastal waters and collect shellfish on mudflats. Over many generations, shells accumulate at coastal camping sites, forming shellheaps. These sites also contain stone and bone tools, including harpoons, fishhooks, projectile points, awls, and (later) small native copper beads and thin copper blades. (Prins and McBride 2007: xv)
CE 1604	Explored	French explorer Samuel de Champlain names "Isle des Monts Deserts" for its high barren peaks. The Etchemin (later called Wabanaki) Indians guiding him know the island as Pemetic, meaning "range of mountains." (Prins and McBride 2007: i-ii; CLR 2006: 12; Neptune nd: 98)
CE 1620 - 1625	Settled	By the early 1620s epidemics and warfare have nearly annihilated the Indigenous communities occupying the coastal territories from Mount Desert Island to Cape Cod, leading to European land claims and settlement. (Prins and McBride 2007: ii)
CE 1688	Settled	Private ownership begins when Mount Desert Island is given as a feudal fief by Louis XIV to Antoine de Lamothe, the self-proclaimed Sieur de la Mothe Cadillac.
CE 1713	Settled	France cedes the Acadian region, except for Cape Breton and Ile Saint-Jean (later Prince Edward Island), to England through the Treaty of Utrecht.
CE 1762	Settled	Sir Francis Bernard is granted ownership of Mount Desert Island by the English General Court. He surveys the island and selects Southwest Harbor to be the first settlement within his land grant, called the Mount Desert Plantation
CE 1762	Inhabited	Town of Tremont, which includes the village of Bass Harbor, is settled.
CE 1763	Settled	English settlement in the area increases after the Treaty of Paris is signed, gradually displace earlier inhabitants.
CE 1809	Purchased/Sold	By 1809 the Bass Harbor Head area is part of a 110-acre parcel owned by Thomas Richardson. (CLR 2006: 15,18)
CE 1840 - 1925	Inhabited	From the 1840s to 1925 settlers note that Indians camp each summer at Clark Point, Southwest Harbor. They collect sweetgrass at Bass Harbor, cut ash for basketmaking and sell baskets, moccasins and birchbark wares. (Prins and McBride 2007: xxii)
CE 1842 - 1843	Built	Although the Bass Harbor area is identified as treacherous to mariners as early as 1837, it is not until 1842-1843 that two buoys are placed in the water. (HSR 2020: 4)

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1844	Explored	Thomas Cole, a leading artist of the Hudson River School, arrives on Mount Desert Island. This marks the beginning of the island's tourist economy as other artists, writers, scientists, and travelers begin to flock to the area.
CE 1848	Established	The Town of Tremont is incorporated.
CE 1856 - 1857	Established	A survey establishes the 2-acre, quadrilateral-shaped Bass Harbor Head Light Station reservation, but construction does not begin until 1857. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1857	Purchased/Sold	The title to the site for the light station is conveyed from land owned by James S. Gott.
CE 1858	Built	A path or rough driveway is likely built to access the site of the light station.
CE 1858	Built	The lighthouse and work room; main block, front vestibule, and rear kitchen ell of the Keeper's Dwelling; and a privy are completed and the lighthouse is lighted. Keeper John Thurston begins tenure as keeper. Cost is $5,000. (HSR 2020: 66,129,155,160)
CE 1875	Built	By 1875 a wood post and rail fence is erected atop an L-shaped stone embankment wall along the cliff south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling. Wood and rail fencing also extends along the cliff edge east of the Lighthouse. (HRS 2020: 254)
CE 1876	Built	The light station's first stand-alone, hand-struck fog bell is erected on the cliff edge between the Lighthouse and privy. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1878	Altered	The Keeper's Dwelling is raised ten inches and clapboards are installed on exterior. The lighthouse floor is raised, as is the work room, creating a covered way that connects the Lighthouse and the kitchen ell of the Keeper's Dwelling. All light station buildings and structures are painted white by this time. (HSR 2020: 70,129,137)
CE 1892	Built	The wood post and rail fence is replaced with a wood post and wire fence. The fence is around 93 feet, running from the privy to the end of the stone wall. (HSR 2020: 74,254)
CE 1892	Built	By 1892-1897, a small patio area supported by a stone wall with wood steps abuts the kitchen ell and covered way. A small structure of unknown uses is located on the hill to the north.
CE 1893	Built	A boat house and slip are constructed. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1897 - 1898	Built	The brick bell house is constructed and a bell is hung from the south elevation. Bell is struck by hand on foggy days. In 1898 a 4,000 pound bell replaces the smaller bell. (HSR 2020: 129; Morrill n.d.)
CE 1900	Altered	The Keeper's Dwelling kitchen ell is extended ten feet east to create an office. (HSR 2020: 129,155)
CE 1900	Built	By ca.1900 the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129) tracks around the northeast side of the reservation to the shoreline. The trail first appears on maps from the 1930s.
CE 1901	Altered	East and west doghouse dormers are added on the Keeper's House. (HSR 2020: 155)

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1901	Built	A weight tower is constructed just north of the bell house. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1901	Altered	The Lighthouse's Fifth Order lens is replaced with a Fourth Order lens. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1901	Moved	The post and wire fence is removed and replaced with a post and wire fence below the stone retaining wall and anchored with more substantial wood posts. (HSR 2020: 254)
CE 1902	Built	A brick oil house is constructed. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1905	Built	A wood-frame barn is constructed. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1937	Purchased/Sold	A 52-acre parcel north and east of the Light Station is purchased by National Park Service from the Worcester family. The purchase area includes the southern half of Lighthouse Road, parking lot, restroom, and Bass Harbor Head Light Trail. (Acadia NP website, 2022)
CE 1948	Planned	Modernization plans for the light station are made, which includes indoor plumbing and electricity. (HSR 2020: 4,129)
CE 1948	Altered	By 1948 the covered way, which originally stood off the east elevation of the main block of the Keeper's Dwelling by approximately three feet, is infilled. (HSR 2020: 155)
CE 1948	Built	By 1948 a concrete patio abuts the covered way and kitchen ell. A set of steps connects it to a concrete sidewalk leading to the bell house. (HSR 2020: 253)
CE 1948	Built	By 1948 concrete sidewalks are located west of the Keeper's Dwelling, on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, on the east side of the kitchen ell addition, and between the patio and the bell house. (HSR 2020: 253)
CE 1948	Built	By 1948 a concrete sidewalk and wood stairs connect the garage to the north side of the kitchen ell addition.
CE 1949	Altered	In July 1949 the Lighthouse and other station buildings are electrified. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1949 - 1958	Built	The Navy builds a Radio Transmitting Building and two 100-foot antennas are built on the northeastern portion of the reservation. The facility is used until the late 1950s. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1949	Demolished	Boat house and launchway are demolished. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1949	Built	An electric bell striker and bell are installed on a metal framework and concrete pad just southwest of the Lighthouse. (HSR 2020: 105,256)
CE 1950 - 1987	Built	Between 1950 and 1987 a fuel-oil tank and walled containment area is built northwest of the Keeper's Dwelling. (HSR 2020: 239)
CE 1950	Built	As part of addition of indoor plumbing to the Keeper's Dwelling, a cesspool is built to eject over the cliff into the water, via an outlet pipe anchored into a concrete headwall. (HSR 2020: 129,235)
CE 1950	Demolished	The privy is demolished. (HSR 2020: 235)

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1956	Altered	Numerous changes are completed: red asphalt roof shingles added to Keeper's Dwelling, covered way, garage, and bell house; the barn side sliding door is replaced with a swing door; the oil house is used as a paint locker; and the lighthouse is sandblasted to remove paint and covered with modern coating. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1956	Built	By 1956 the parking lot just north of the reservation is built.
CE 1956	Demolished	The weight tower is demolished. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1956	Altered	The L-shaped stone embankment wall along the cliff south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling is replaced with an L-shaped concrete retaining wall topped with a pipe railing, but the short stone retaining wall section along the driveway is retained. Additional concrete wall section is built between Lighthouse and bell house. (HSR 2020: 109,129)
CE 1958	Land Transfer	USCG assumes control of the former Radio Transmitting Station building and attendant cables and transmission lines. (HSR 2020: 103-104)
CE 1958	Planned	Robert H. MacArthur publishes a report, "Population Ecology of Some Warblers of Northeastern Coniferous Forests" in Ecology Magazine. The research for the report is in park-owned woods north and east of the light station.
CE 1959 - 1962	Built	Between 1959-1962 (white) post and wire fencing is replaced by (unpainted) post and rail fence along the reservation property lines as well as alongside portions of the driveway.
CE 1959	Removed	The 4,000-pound bell on the Bell House is removed and taken off site. (HSR 2020: 104,129,256)
CE 1962 - 1987	Built	Between 1962-1987, the 1949 bell is displayed on a metal frame and concrete pad just west of the Lighthouse. (HSR 2020: 256)
CE 1962 - 1987	Altered	Between 1962 and 1987 vinyl siding and trim has been installed at the Keeper's Dwelling. (HSR 2020: 178)
CE 1963	Built	A flagpole is erected southeast of the garage. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1964	Altered	The diagonal walkway between the Keeper's Dwelling and garage is paved in concrete.
CE 1969	Removed	Several trees southeast of the Lighthouse are removed to maintain visibility. (HSR 2020: 107)
CE 1974	Land Transfer	The light station land is transferred to NPS. The USCG retains all structures for housing. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1974	Altered	In July 1974 the lighthouse is automated. (HSR 2020: 129)
CE 1974	Built	By ca.1974, a wood railing is installed along the south edge of the patio. (HSR 2020: 253)
CE 1974 - 1979	Removed	Between 1974-1979, the fog bell was inactivated. (HSR 2020: 108)
CE 1975 - 1979	Built	In 1975-1979 the driveway from the garage to the Keeper's Dwelling, and the parking lot, is paved in bituminous asphalt to improve public access. (HSR 2020: 130)

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1975	Altered	A new sewage treatment system is built (but still ejects into water). (HSR 2020: 130)
CE 1975 - 1988	Built	Between 1975-1988, a raised parking pad is built just east of the garage driveway. Wood steps connect it to the sidewalk leading to the Keeper's Dwelling.
CE 1979	Removed	By 1979 the kitchen chimney on Keeper's Dwelling is removed. (HSR 2020: 4)
CE 1980	Altered	By 1980 the west doghouse dormer on the Keeper's Dwelling is replaced with a shed dormer to accommodate bathroom alterations. (HSR 2020: 130,160)
CE 1987	Built	By 1987, the 1949 bell and metal framework is replaced by a much smaller bell and similar, but smaller stand. (HSR 2020: 256)
CE 1987 - 1990	Built	Between 1987 and 1990 chain-link fencing is attached along length of the pipe railing fence, and new chain link fence is erected at the northwest corner of the Keeper's Dwelling and north from the bell house. These measures are taken for visitor safety and resident privacy. (HRS 2020: 254)
CE 1988	Established	The Bass Harbor Head Light Station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
CE 1988	Built	The park erects a 120-foot tall, lattice-shaped communication tower.
CE 1989	Altered	A new septic system is built for the Keeper's Dwelling (so it no longer ejects into water). The leach field is located northwest of the driveway. (HSR 2020: 130)
CE 1990	Altered	After 1990, the original visitor walkway on the south and west sides of the Keeper's Dwelling, between the concrete curb adjacent the fence and concrete retaining wall, is widened with gravel. A low timber wall is built to separate the wider walk from the now smaller lawn abutting the dwelling. (HSR 2020: 249)
CE 1990	Altered	After 1990 the wood stairs on hill above north of the Keeper's Dwelling is replaced with an aluminum structure. (HSR 2020: 252)
CE 1990	Altered	After 1990 the wood steps on the east side of the parking pad are replaced with concrete steps.
CE 1990	Built	After 1990 a sidewalk connects the door on the east side of the garage to the sidewalk leading to the Keeper's Dwelling. (HRS 2020: 298)
CE 1990	Altered	By 1990 there is an angled wood railing system on the patio. (HRS 2020: 253)
CE 1993	Built	A self-contained fuel tank is installed northwest of Keeper's Dwelling utilizing part of a cinderblock containment structure from the previous tank. (HSR 2020: 238-239)
CE 1997 - 1998	Altered	Major work completed on the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail, including a new wooden deck and staircase at the cliff edge and stone work. At this time part of the upper portion of trail was rerouted eastward to align with the staircase. (CLR 2006: 246)

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 2004	Altered	Lead-based paint is removed from several areas of the Light Station buildings. (HSR 2020: 130)
CE 2012	Inhabited	In ca.2012 the last tenant vacates the Light Station buildings; USCG continues to maintain the buildings. (HSR 2020: 130)
CE 2014 - 2015	Planned	In the breeding seasons of 2014 and 2015, Bik D. R. Wheeler of the College of the Atlantic, repeats Robert H. MacArthur's wood warbler study in the same woods north and east of the parking lot.
CE 2020	Removed	The park removes the 120-foot tall communication tower but retains the concrete foundation.
CE 2020	Land Transfer	On July 8, 2020, the National Park Service formally accepts transfer of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station from the USCG. USCG retains right-of-way to operate and maintain the automated aid to navigation. (Acadia NP website, 2020)

Physical History:

INTRODUCTION

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. Much of the information is derived from the "Bass Harbor Head Light Station, Historic Structure Report," by Rebecca Cybularz, published in 2020.

MOUNT DESERT ISLAND, to the mid-18th Century

Geological Characteristics:
The geologic history of Mount Desert Island can be divided into three parts: the period when the island's bedrock was deposited; the glacial period when many of the present day landforms were shaped; and the present day, when modern processes continue to modify the land. Surrounded by the waters of Blue Hill Bay, Western Bay, Eastern Bay, and Frenchman Bay, the Mount Desert Island rises into mountainous summits, glacial-carved valleys, and rocky coastlines. It is the sixth-largest island in the contiguous United States, and the third-largest on the Eastern Seaboard. Covering more than 108 square miles, its shape resembles a claw that is divided almost in half by Somes Sound, a flooded glacial embayment over 100 feet deep in places. (Gilman et.al. 1988: 1; Wikipedia: "Mount Desert Island")

Mount Desert Island is characterized by woodlands, meadows, and wetlands dotted by lakes and laced by streams. The landform terminates along shorelines etched by harbors and coves, and headlands and points, such as Bass Harbor and Bass Harbor Head that mark the island's southern-most tip. Extending from this headland is the Bass Harbor Bar, a hidden shoal that extends approximately one mile south to Great Gott Island. Compared to water depths upwards of 50 feet at the mouth of the harbor, only around 13 feet of water covers this rocky bar at low tide.

Early Native American and European Land Uses:
Native American peoples have inhabited the land now called Maine for 12,000 years. Today four distinct tribes—the Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot—are known collectively as the Wabanaki, or "People of the Dawnland." Mount Desert Island has been the center of Wabanaki traditional homelands for thousands of years. Long before Europeans arrived, the Wabanaki traveled to the island in seaworthy birchbark canoes, setting up temporary camps at Somes Sound and other protected coves to hunt, fish, gather berries, harvest clams, and trade with other Wabanaki. (Acadia NP website)

When Europeans first visited the area just over four centuries ago, Mount Desert Island was seasonally inhabited by no more than a few hundred people. The Etchemin (later called Wabanaki) Indians guiding French explorer Samuel de Champlain in 1604 called the island Pemetic, meaning "range of mountains." Because of its high barren peaks, a prominent coastal landmark for seafarers, Champlain named it Isle des Monts Deserts, or "Island of Barren Mountains." Champlain's first encounter with the island's Indians may have taken place at Newport Cove (historically known as Stag Cove), an ideal location for beaching a fleet of bark canoes on Sand Beach and having an eastern lookout from nearby Great Head. (Prins and McBride 2007: i,xv,68; CLR 2006: 12; Neptune nd: 98)

With epidemics and warfare nearly annihilating the indigenous communities occupying the coastal territories much of the land from Mount Desert Island to Cape Cod was largely viewed as available for European settlement by the early 1620s. Having lost most of their relatives and neighbors, Wabanaki survivors joined other decimated groups and restructured their social lives. Their existence would be further complicated because of fur trade competition and the French and English claims for land. However, one account of a British emigrant ship in 1740 suggests the Wabanaki were still frequenting Mount Desert Island seasonally. When the ship encountered a storm off the island's southwestern coast and wrecked near Bass Harbor Head, many passengers escaped in boats and made it to Ship Harbor, just east of Bass Harbor.
"After escaping the wreck, they [had] examined the island and found it uninhabited [at that time]…At length a party of Indians visited the Island, and, though without interpreters, a barter was effected of a few articles of food in exchange for clothing and other matters furnished by the sufferers." (Prins and McBride 2007: ii,214, citing Eaton 1851, 63-65)

European Settlement and Establishment of Island Towns:
In an effort to establish an outpost of French feudalism, King Louis XIV granted Mount Desert Island to Antoine de Lamothe, the self-proclaimed Sieur de la Mothe Cadillac, around 1688. However, due to a continual threat of war between France and England, widespread European settlement did not

follow until after the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The English then began to dominate the area and gradually displaced the earlier inhabitants. Livelihood was primarily through hunting and fishing but supplemented through farming, logging, and especially shipbuilding.

While serving as the Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, Sir Francis Bernard was granted ownership of Mount Desert Island by the English General Court. In the fall of 1762, he came to survey the island and selected Southwest Harbor to be the first settlement within his land grant for what was called the Mount Desert Plantation. During this reconnaissance, Bernard described a path from Southwest Harbor to a marsh area at Bass Harbor, a portion of which may be the current main road between the villages. This is the earliest extant description of a road or path on Mount Desert Island. In 1777 at a Mount Desert Plantation meeting, members voted to lay out a road directly across the island from the east to the west side, between Hulls Cove and Bass Harbor. The route shortened the travel between the east and west sides of the island by six miles. (CLR 2006: 14-15)

After the Revolutionary War, the island came under the jurisdiction of the Court of Massachusetts. Ownership of the island was divided in 1785. The east side was retained by Sieur Antoine de la Monte Cadillac's granddaughter, Marie Theresa de Gregoire, while the west side was granted to John Bernard, the son of Sir Francis Bernard. The partition line, later known as the "French Line," was a path through the woods with granite markers set along the boundary between the two parcels. This line ran from the head of present-day Somes Sound across to Indian Point. Neither John Bernard nor Madame de Gregoire was able to retain much land, and it was quickly divided by settlers. (CLR 2006: 15)

In 1795, to alleviate the difficulty of communicating and traveling across the island for town meetings, the island was divided into two towns, Mount Desert and Eden [Bar Harbor]. A map prepared by John Peters Salem Towne in 1809 shows the Bernard–de Gregoire line and the new town line, landowners, and place names. By this time the Bass Harbor Head area was part of a 110-acre parcel owned by Thomas Richardson, who was possibly related to the Richardson family, one of the earliest recorded plantation settlers on the island. (CLR 2006: 15,18)

Growth of Island Tourism:
By the mid-nineteenth century, tourism was beginning to dominate the area's economy. In 1844 Thomas Cole, a leading artist of the Hudson River School, arrived on Mount Desert Island. Paintings and sketches of the island's scenery by Cole and others such as Frederic Church, Thomas Birch, and William Morris Hunt inspired other artists, and especially the wealthy, called the "cottagers," to visit the area. The island's rich natural resources also attracted the leading scientists of the day. Although transportation to the island was at times difficult, the island attracted an annual summertime influx of visitors, called the "rusticators," throughout much of the 1860s and 1870s. Visitors lodged at private homes or inns and began using the former Wabanaki carry trails and old lumber roads as walking paths to scenic vistas, particularly those situated above the tree lines of the mountains. (MPDF 2017: 5,69)

Indian Encampments and Basketmaking Trade:
The arrival of the tourist economy strengthened the Wabanaki's close ties to Mount Desert Island. From the mid-1800s through the early-1900s, multi-ethnic Indian encampments were established in Bar Harbor and other island locations, selling crafts and canoeing/hunting services to island locals and tourists. At the summer encampment at Clark Point in Southwest Harbor, they collected sweetgrass and cut ash at Bass Harbor for basketmaking, and sold baskets, moccasins, and birchbark wares. (Prins and McBride 2007: ii,xxii,280,282)

Woodsplint baskets made from brown ash drew the interest of Maine's year-round and seasonal residents, especially on Mount Desert Island. Farmers, fishermen, and "cottagers" found uses for a full range of Wabanaki baskets – from utilitarian laundry, pack, and picnic baskets to "fancy" baskets made to hold everything from handkerchiefs to hats. According to Rand and Redfield's 1894 Flora of Mount Desert Island, brown ash was "frequent" in the island's swamps and damp woods in the 1800s. Other accounts make it clear that Wabanakis who sold woodsplint wares on the island made them on location and often gathered the necessary raw materials there. (Prins and McBride 2007: 399-400, citing Rand and Redfield 1894: 176)

The Wabanakis also made and sold sweetgrass baskets, second in demand only to those made of wood. Sweetgrass appears to have been even more abundant than brown ash on Mount Desert Island, with Rand and Redfield noting that it grew in “borders of salt or brackish meadows and marshes.” Rand and Redfield identified locations where it could be found in the late 1800s, which included Bass Harbor and Southwest Harbor, and mentioned its particular importance to Wabanaki basketmakers: “Much used by the Indians for basket work.” (Prins and McBride 2007: 399-400, citing Rand and Redfield 1894: 176)

NAVIGATIONAL AIDS AT BASS HARBOR, 1837-1856

United States Light House Establishment:
In August 1789, President George Washington signed An Act for the Establishment and Support of Light-Houses, Beacons, Buoys, and Public Piers, which created the United States Light House Establishment (USLHE). The Act provided for "jurisdiction over all pre-existing aids to navigation in the United States, the maintenance of aids, and payment of keepers." Due to its link with revenue and customs, the USLHE was aligned with the Department of the Treasury. (HSR 2020: 33-34, citing Marshall 1997: np)

By this time, lighthouse lamp technology was improving. Early lighthouse lamps had used solid wicks, which caused smoke to dirty the interior of the lantern glass. In 1790, a new type of lamp with four wicks protruding from a pan of oil was introduced, but it produced toxic fumes. Meanwhile, in Switzerland Francois Pierre Ami Argand invented of a lamp with a hollow wick that burned without smoke and was brighter. England then began installing Argand lamps, outfitted with fifteen- to twenty-inch parabolic reflectors, in their lighthouses. (HSR 2020: 45)

In the United States, the use of solid wicks continued until 1812 when the federal government purchased the patent rights for a "new and improved method of lighting Lighthouses" from Winslow Lewis, an ex-ship captain from Massachusetts. Lewis's "reflecting and magnifying lantern" borrowed heavily from the Argand-style lamp and parabolic reflector. However, Lewis also fronted the lamps with green-tinted glass lenses, which drastically cut the range of the light. It took the federal government until 1840 to remove all of the green lenses. (HSR 2020: 35,45)

In 1822 French physicist, Augustin Fresnel, "revolutionized lighthouse practice" by replacing mirrored reflectors with angled prisms of glass. As described in Lighthouse Digest Magazine,
"the built-up annular lens [is] comprised of a central spherical lens surrounded by rings of glass prisms, the central portions of which refract and the outer portions both reflect and refract in the desired direction the light from a single lamp placed at the central focus (inside the middle of the light)."

Although the Fresnel lens produced a brighter light than the Lewis lens, it was not until 1841 that the first Fresnel lens was installed in a United States lighthouse. (Lighthouse Digest Magazine; HSR 2020: 46-49)

As sea trade increased, American ship captains began comparing Europe's lighthouses to those of the United States. Complaints began to arise that the USLHE was badly managed, the lighthouses were inadequately constructed, and Lewis's lamps were useless. In 1837 Congress responded by authorizing an appropriation for the construction of a large number of new lighthouses and other navigational aids, contingent upon a study by a newly formed Board of Navy Commissioners. The study determined that thirty-one of the proposed new lighthouses were not needed, but that the current USLHE was still an economical and effective agency. Nonetheless, to improve the organization, the Atlantic Coast was divided into six districts (the Great Lakes were divided into two), each headed by a naval officer. (HSR 2020: 36)

Bass Harbor Buoys:
In 1837 the federal government identified the perilous condition of the entrance to Bass Harbor. A letter from the Secretary of the Navy included testimony from US Navy Captain Edward S. Jarvis, who had sent a revenue boat captain "to examine the different sites which had been recommended for a light or a buoy." Bass Harbor Head was one of six locations on Mount Desert Island which were determined "most suitable." At that time, it appears only a buoy or two was recommended for addition to the "large and dangerous reef in the middle of Bass harbor [sic]." The same was recommended in 1839, but was not realized until 1842/1843. (HSR 2020: 63, citing Letter, Secretary of Navy, 1837)

United States Lighthouse Board Management:
By the early 1850s the USLHE had established 325 lighthouses and lightships and many other

buoys, daymarks, range lights to firmly establish a navigational aid system for the United States. However, continued criticism of the USLHE, and its reluctance to embrace technological improvements like the Fresnel lens, prompted a change. In 1851 Congress approved An Act Making Appropriations for Light House, Light Boats, Buoys, &c, which created a nine-member United States Lighthouse Board (USLHB) in 1852 to oversee the country's lighthouses. The board included two high-ranking naval officers, two army engineering officers, a civilian "of high scientific attainment," and a junior navy officer as secretary. The board completed a report that evaluated all aspects of the lighthouse establishment:
"The report detailed construction of towers and dwellings, instructions as to how keepers were to perform their duties, ability and fidelity of the inspectors, mode of procuring and furnishing oil and other stores to the light stations, methods of testing supplies and types of reports to be placed into the new system. The report recommended that Fresnel lenses be placed in all of [the] lighthouses and that they be classed by Order, like the French (1st Order being the largest and 6th the smallest). Every aspect of construction, inspection and administration was laid out in fine detail." (HSR 2020: 38 -39, citing US Lighthouse Society, np)

The USLHB divided the country into twelve new lighthouse districts, each of which eventually had their own work and supply depots. The coasts of Maine and New Hampshire were assigned to the First District, with the depot located in Portland. The number of lighthouse districts later expanded to fourteen and then sixteen as more navigational aids were added along rivers and land was developed. By 1859 all of the unsuitable lenses and reflector systems in the lighthouses were replaced with Fresnel lenses. (HSR 2020: 39-42)

DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHT STATION, 1856-1948

The namesake of Bass Harbor is the village of Bass Harbor, which along with the village of Bernard borders the harbor. The two villages are part of the Town of Tremont, which was settled in 1762 and incorporated in 1848. Centered around the well-protected natural harbor, fishing and fish curing were the town's principal industries. (Wikipedia: "Bass Harbor, Maine" and "Tremont, Maine")

In 1855, W.B. Franklin, Light-house Inspector of the First District, recommended the establishment of a light station at Bass Harbor: "A light is necessary to assist vessels in entering [the harbor]; and I recommend that $5,000 be appropriated for a light-house on Bass Harbor Head." On August 18, 1856, $5,000 was appropriated through an act of Congress. The light station reservation property was located on the edge of a rocky cliff approximately 40 feet above the water, and southwest of hill rising to around 120 feet (Figure 1). (HSR 2020: 63)

An 1856 survey map of the site shows the extents of the 2-acre, quadrilateral-shaped reservation, but does not show any buildings or structures (Figure 2). According to the map, the northwest corner of the reservation was marked by a "fir tree," the northeast corner by a "pile of rocks," and the southeast corner by "spruce tree." The parcel was oriented northwest-southeast, allowing for a 180-degree view west and south of that line. An 1875 map indicates a road heading south from the Village of Bass Harbor and then turning east to Ship Harbor (now Harbor Road/State Route 102A). At this turn, another road (now Lighthouse Road) headed south to Bass Harbor Head (see Figure 1). Both roads were likely extant at the time of survey. (HRS 2020: 71)

Construction of the Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling:
The title to the site for Bass Harbor Head Light Station was conveyed in June 1857 from land owned by James S. Gott. However, construction of the light station would not begin until the following year. The core facilities were planned for the southeast portion of the reservation, on a small but relatively level area defined by a series of steep ledges ascending to the north and east and the cliff edge dropping to the south. This core area roughly coincided with the north end of the Bass Harbor Bar. Access into this part of the reservation was by a driveway tracking from today's parking lot to just northwest of the Keeper's Dwelling. Although not indicated on maps until 1892, the driveway likely dates to the light station's establishment. Its curved alignment negotiated the site's steep topography and would have allowed the most practical delivery of stone, brick, and wood construction materials to the core area from Lighthouse Road. (HRS 2020: 71)

The original facilities at the light station were completed in 1858 and included the Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, and privy (Figure 3). The lantern was lit on September 1, 1858, "and will be kept burning during every night thereafter from sunset to sunrise." A May 1858 "Notice to Mariners" described the new light station:
"The tower is cylindrical, built of brick, is 21 feet high, will be painted white, and the lantern will be painted black. The dwelling house will be of wood, and with the walk connecting it with the work-room of the tower will be painted brown. The illuminating apparatus will be a catadioptric lens of the 5th order of the system of Fresnel, showing a fixed red light." (HSR 2020: 64, citing W.B. Franklin, "Notice to Mariners.")

The main block of the 1.5-story Keeper's Dwelling featured a living room, dining room, and pantry on the first floor, and a stair that accessed two bedrooms on the second floor. In the basement was an 1,800-gallon brick cistern filled by water collected from the roof. A small one-story vestibule marked the front door on the west elevation, while a one-story kitchen ell projected from the east elevation. A door on the south side of the ell gave access to a short walkway or porch that led to a work room attached to the north elevation of the Lighthouse. Steps from the walkway/porch led down to workroom, while the privy was located east of the Lighthouse, at the cliff's edge. The 1870 USLHB Light List described the light station:
"tower of brick, whitewashed, connected with dwelling by wooden porch. Dwelling a story and a half wooden building, painted brown." (HSR 2020: 67,87, citing "Bass Harbor Head (Maine)")

Historic photographs dating to 1875 provide additional details about the Keeper's Dwelling and work

room, as well as the privy (Figures 4 and 5). The dwelling was clad with vertical board-and-batten siding painted a dark color, had unpainted brick foundation walls above grade, and featured a wood-shingle roof. The work room and privy appeared to have the same finishes as the dwelling. A photograph taken a few years later indicates a wood railing between the dwelling and privy, most likely along a walkway that ran between the two structures (Figure 6). (HSR 2020: 65)

In 1878 modifications were undertaken at the light station, including raising the Keeper's Dwelling ten inches and applying exterior clapboards. The Lighthouse floor was also raised, which required rebuilding the walkway/porch and work room that connected the dwelling's kitchen ell and the Lighthouse. This new structure, called the Covered Way, eliminated the need for steps between the Lighthouse and dwelling, and provided a sheltered passage between the two structures. It featured doors on its west and east elevations. The 1879 USLHB Light List noted that the light station's buildings and structures were painted white, which can be seen in a historic photograph from this time (see Figure 6). (HSR 2020: 70)

Additions of Embankment, Fences, Fog Bell, and Boat House:
The early site photographs reveal clues about the character and use of the surrounding landscape. The craggy terrain dominated the setting, interrupted only by scattered, mostly small, conifer trees and patches of low shrubs. By 1875 a stone embankment wall had been built south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling and topped with a post and rail fence (see Figure 4). Once backfilled, the wall created a new level space abutting the dwelling. In 1876, the light station's first fog bell was installed at the cliff edge between the Lighthouse and privy. Supported on a wooden stand, the bell was described as being struck "by hand in answers to signals." Post and rail fencing also ran along the cliff edge in this area (see Figure 5). (HSR 2020: 67, citing "Bass Harbor Head (Maine)")

The 1892 Annual Report of the Light-House Board stated that various repairs had been conducted at the Light Station, including approximately 93 feet of new wire fence "along the edge of the bluff from the tower to the road [driveway]" (Figure 7). Erected along the top of the embankment wall, the post and wire fence replaced the previous post and rail fence. The fence lines are shown in a drawing from September 1892 by First and Second Light House District Surveyor E.P. Adams. The drawing also indicates a walkway north of the Keeper's Dwelling, oriented diagonally northwest-southeast between the kitchen ell and presumably the top of the driveway and Lighthouse Road (Figure 8). (HRS 2020: 74, citing Annual Report, 1892: 43)

The 1892 drawing also shows the proposed location of a boat house southwest of the Keeper's Dwelling and just below the embankment wall and driveway. Earlier photographs showed what appeared to be a series of wood ramps in this area, presumably to access the water (see Figures 6, 7). Known to have been constructed in November 1893, the boat house was 12 x 24 feet in plan with a gable roof and clapboards. The southern portion of the boat house cantilevered from the rock ledge, from which a boat launchway extended around 100 feet over the rocks to the water (Figure 9). Both the boat house and launchway were secured by iron posts and pins drilled into the rocks. Due to the difficulty of hauling boats by hand up the steep slope, a winch was added in 1895. A larger scale survey map by Adams, published July 1894, shows the light station facilities, whose "boundaries were marked with stone posts or copper bolts, contours were located by plane table, and the buildings were measured for ground plans" (Figure 10). (HRS 2020: 74, citing Annual Report, 1893: 49)

A photograph dating to 1893-1897 reveals a new feature amongst the ledges north and east of the core (Figure 11). A white, unevenly placed structure is situated on the hillside. Given its distance from other buildings, it may have stored oil, as the current brick oil house had not yet been built, or was perhaps another privy. Next to the kitchen ell, a stone wall and wood steps are visible. The wall likely supported a patio space, labeled as a "platform" on the 1892 drawing and shown on the 1894 survey. Later reports indicate there was an "iron deck" in this vicinity. Steps provided access down to the bell house and privy, via walkways. (HSR 2020: 79, citing Annual Report, 1900: 39)

Construction of the Bell House:
Improvements to the light station's bell system came in 1897 with construction of a "fog-signal," or bell house, located at the cliff edge between the free-standing bell and the privy. Two brick ledges

under the building's south elevation (water-side) windows supported 4 x 4-inch buttresses, which in turn supported a 12 x 12-foot wood beam extending from a gable-roof projection (Figure 12). This beam supported a 4,000 pound bell, measuring 5 feet in diameter and 4 feet tall, that was "struck by machinery every 10 sec." The striking machine, located in the bell house, was a steam and kerosene oil engine built by the Shipman Engine Export Co. of Boston. The 1899 USLHB Light List noted that the bell house was built with red brick, but apparently it was painted white by this time. The door was located on the building's north elevation, and accessible from the walkway connecting the Keeper's Dwelling to the privy. (HSR 2020: 77,79, citing "Bass Harbor Head (Maine)")

Keeper's Dwelling Alterations and New Stone Retaining Walls:
Several alterations were undertaken at the Keeper's Dwelling at the turn of the twentieth century. The first occurred in 1900 when the kitchen ell was extended ten feet to the east to create an office area. More changes came in 1901 when the second floor was reconfigured from two bedrooms to three, and doghouse dormers were added to the east and west rooflines (Figure 13). The alterations to the Keeper's Dwelling were likely made to accommodate larger families, like the three-generation Willis Dolliver family living in the house at the time. (HSR 2020: 79-81,155)

Today's stone retaining walls located on the north and east sides of the Keeper's Dwelling may date to this period. A wall around the north and east sides of the kitchen ell extension would have been required to create space for the addition. The wall on the north side was not shown on the 1892 Adams survey drawing, but it also created a level space in this area. Another stone wall, similar in construction to the north wall, is located at the lower end of the driveway and may date to the early 1890s. At this time it extended from the end of the embankment wall to a rock outcrop. This wall may have been built to prevent gravel on the driveway from washing down the slope to the boat house.

Construction of the Weight Tower and Relocation of Fencing:
The tallest structure built by the USLHB at the Bass Harbor Head Light Station was not the Lighthouse, but rather a weight tower, constructed in 1901 on ledges directly north of the bell house (see Figure 13). The pyramidal-shaped, wood-shingled tower was topped with a small, hipped roof and accessed by a door via wood stairs on its west elevation. Like other structures at the light station, the tower was painted white.

The weight tower housed new bell-striking machinery associated with a clockwork-driven Stevens Fog Bell Striking machine that replaced the Shipman engine in the bell house. According to the United States Lighthouse Society's article "Fog Bells," clockwork-driven bell strikers operated as follows:
"Mechanical clockwork driven bell strikers (about the size of a pedestal sewing machine) were powered by a descending weight with their speed usually regulated by a governor. When a cam dictated, a heavy spring released a sledgehammer that struck the bell. Sometimes the automatic striking machinery was incorporated into the tower of the lighthouse and more often in a separate bell house. However, this placed the weight and attendant wire rope in proximity to salt spray, which rapidly deteriorated the wire rope causing it to part, dropping the weights into the water. The Lighthouse Service remedied this by building a tall weight tower behind the bell house or constructing a pyramidal tower that was tall enough for a sufficient weight drop [as at Bass Harbor]. The striking machinery was located inside the bell house." (HSR 2020: 79-80, citing Tag "Fog Bells")

Around the same time that the weight tower was constructed, the post and wire fence along the cliff edge and atop the embankment wall was removed and replaced with the same type of fence, but in a new location; a few feet in front of the base of the wall. This created a narrow space for a path between the boat house, Lighthouse, and bell house (see Figure 13). The fence posts were painted white (making them easier to identify in photographs). The Annual Report for 1900-1901 noted that a "100 feet of wire fence along the crest of the bluff were built, and 45 feet of tile drain was laid." The location of the drain tile is not known. (HSR 2020: 79, citing Annual Report 1901: 48)

Construction of the Oil House and Barn:
An oil house and a barn were built at the light station between 1902 and 1905. The Annual Report of the Light-House Board for FY 1901-1902 noted that a brick oil house had been built and various other

repairs were made. The one-story structure was located on the lower segment of the driveway, on the water side, around 200 feet from the Lighthouse (Figure 14). The building utilized standardized plans for the First and Second Lighthouse Districts dated 1895, which detailed a footprint measuring 12 x 10 feet with 8-inch-thick brick walls and a steep gable roof. The interior held kerosene tanks. A single door opening was located on the shorter north side, facing the driveway. Unlike the other light station buildings, it was not painted white. (HSR 2020: 83,86)

A few years later, the Annual Report of the Light-House Board for FY 1904-1905 noted that a "barn was built and various repairs were made." Although no drawings of this structure have been found, it was located at the top of the driveway, with double swing doors opening on its north elevation. The one-story, gable-roofed, wood structure measured around 20 x 14 feet and was painted white (Figure 15). The previously mentioned diagonal walkway likely terminated near the new garage. (HSR 2020: 83, citing Annual Report 1905: 28)

Another notable change occurred in the Lighthouse itself. According to the 1901-1902 Annual Report, the intensity of the light was increased by replacing the Fifth Order lens with a larger Fourth Order lens. (HSR 2020: 83)

Circulation Improvements and Expansion of Acadia National Park:
By 1880 the population of Tremont was 2,011, and was supporting a sawmill, shipyard, gristmill, shingle mill, and brickyard. A map from this period indicates roads dotted with homes on both sides of the harbor, heading east to Ship Harbor, and northeast to Southwest Harbor (see Figure 1). Since the mid-nineteenth century, the nearby Bass Harbor Head had been a scenic destination for islanders and tourists, not only for the picturesque lighthouse but for scrambles along its rocky shoreline. Due to the boundaries of the reservation, the only public view of the Lighthouse from land would have been from the shoreline to the east. According to the 2006 report, Pathmakers: Cultural Landscape Report for the Historic Hiking Trail System of Mount Desert Island, the extant Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129) tracking around the northeast side of the reservation to the shoreline existed by ca.1900. The trail first appears on maps from the 1930s. (Wikipedia: "Bass Harbor, Maine" and "Tremont, Maine"; CLR 2006: 26,39,117,246)

In 1937 two parcels of land north and east of the Light Station were purchased by National Park Service from the Worcester family. The 52-acre area included the southern half of the current Lighthouse Road and the hiking trail. In 1939 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) rebuilt the entirety of the Lighthouse Road, installing culverts and a graded, 12-foot wide gravel surface. A drawing of the road indicated the old road alignment was retained and that a gate was located at its south end. The road was one of several "truck trails" built in Acadia National Park by the CCC, one of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal work programs initiated during the Great Depression. (Acadia NP website, 2022; CLR 2006: 128)

United States Light House Service and United States Coast Guard Management:
The USLHB accomplished a significant amount of work between 1852 and 1910: the total number of lighted aids increased from 335 to nearly 4,000 (including minor lights and light buoys), the number of fog signals increased from 49 to 457, and the number of buoys had increased from 1,000 to 5,300. In 1903 the USLHB was transferred to the Department of Commerce, where in 1910 it was reorganized into the United States Light House Service (USLHS), also known as the Bureau of Lighthouses. Congress believed a pyramid organizational structure would be more efficient than the nine-member USLHB. Additionally, they believed that having military officers serve as district inspectors and engineers disrupted continuity, and that having a civilian inspector could provide continuity if able to serve for many years. (HSR 2020: 43)

The USLHS established new districts in Puerto Rico, Alaska, and Hawaii, bringing the total number to eighteen. Each district was managed by a single District Inspector (changed to District Superintendent in 1918), and also had an assistant, clerk, and engineer. As the United States prepared to enter World War I, arrangements were made to transfer several USLHS navigational aids to the War Department and the Navy. USLHS personnel at light stations transferred to the Navy were required to report any submarine and surface vessel sightings on a continual basis. More research is recommended to determine the role of the light station at Bass Harbor Head and other

Maine stations. (HSR 2020: 43)

Between 1910 and 1939 the number of navigational aids under the USLHS more than doubled, and the number of employees decreased by nearly twenty percent. These numbers were due to adoption of automatic navigational aids and other technological advancements, which included the introduction of radio beacons, use of electric buoys, and application of electricity to fog signals. (HSR 2020: 43)

In 1939 the USLHS consolidated with the United States Coast Guard (USCG), which was under the Department of the Treasury. Former USLHS employees were given the choice to either remain in civilian status or transfer to a military position in the USCG, with no loss of pay. Keepers who transferred were given petty officer rank. Those who remained in civilian status were eligible for the draft in the ensuing World War II. (HSR 2020: 44)

Later Improvements at the Light Station:
The construction of the barn in 1905 represented the last of the facilities constructed at the light station. After that, projects were mostly focused on inspecting and maintaining the existing inventory. In 1935 a Description of Bass Harbor Head Light Station was completed by Thomas Sampson, Assistant Superintendent for the Department of Commerce, Lighthouse Service. Among the Sampson's observations was that the "forest background allowed the whitewashed tower to standout." In July 1947 the cantilevered beam supporting the fog bell on the Bell House was replaced with a 12-inch I beam. Walkways were also in need of repair at this time, prompting the delivery of lumber to the Keeper to complete. Sometime in the late 1940s, exterior trim and soffits on the buildings were painted a dark color. Also around this time the covered way, which originally stood off the east elevation of the main block of the Keeper's Dwelling by approximately three feet, was infilled and fitted with a window on its south elevation. (HSR 2020: 86,89-90,155, citing Sampson 1935)

Up until this time, most historic photographs of the light station were taken from the water, shoreline, or cliff edge. However, photographs from the early 1950s, as site plans as well, reveal several features in the landscape that were most likely built by 1948. Such features included post and wire fencing along the reservation's north boundary, a well just north of the Keeper's Dwelling, a set of stairs between the bell house and privy, and multiple telephone poles and wires. A concrete sidewalk paralleling the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling extended southwest toward the stone retaining wall, where a set of wood steps descended to a plank walkway with a wood railing. The plank walkway led to the boat house.

Major changes in land uses and operations were underway, or planned, for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station in the late 1940s (Figure 16). On the last day of 1948, F.J. Sexton, First Coast Guard District Commander, requested the authority to electrify the light station,
"…in accordance with Headquarters policy to modernize light station equipment when commercial power has been made available. Since this is an improvement to an aid to navigation, funds to cover this project are requested." (HSR 2020: 89,91; citing Sexton, 1948)

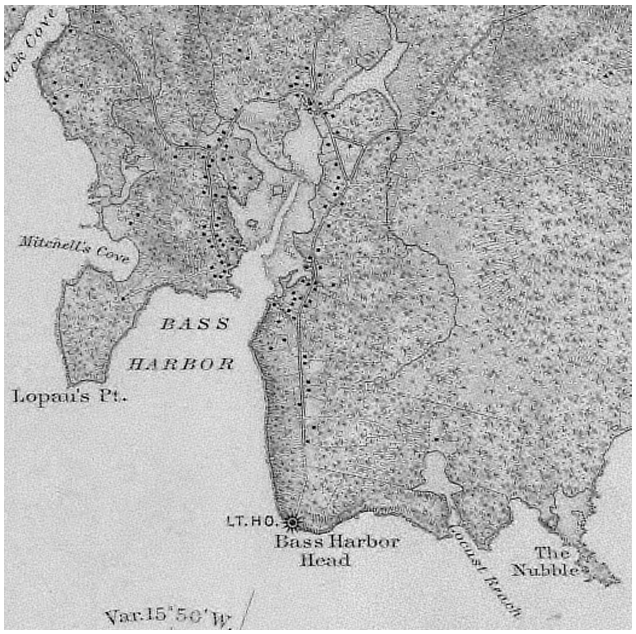


Figure 1. Portion of map from 1875 showing Bass Harbor Head Light Station at the mouth of Bass Harbor. (Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archive. From Rebecca Cybularz, Bass Harbor Head Light Station, Historic Structure Report [hereafter HSR], 2020: 63)

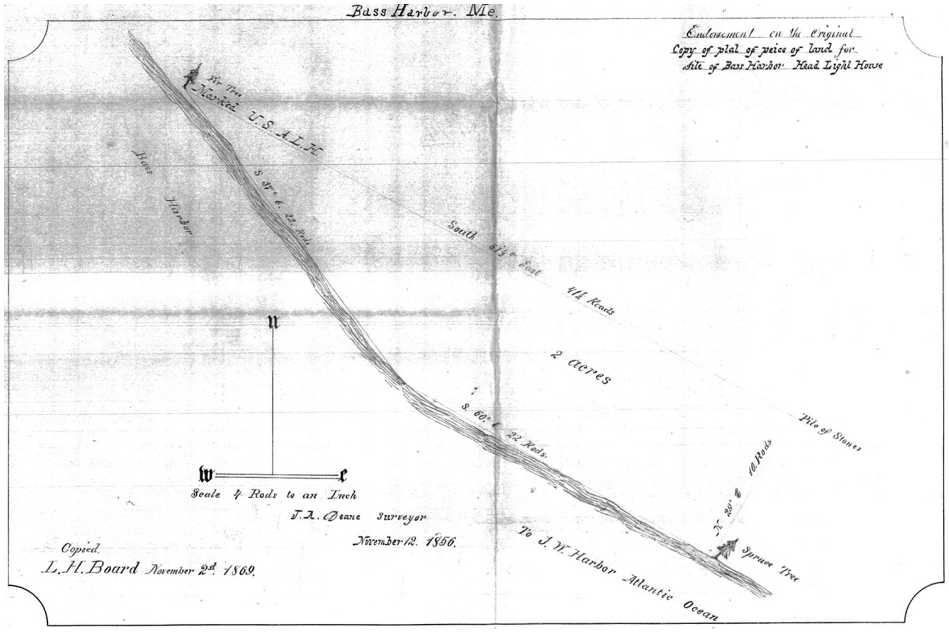


Figure 2. Reservation site plan dated November 12, 1856, copied November 2, 1869. The northwest corner of the site is denoted by a "Fir tree marked USALH," the northeast corner by a pile of rocks, and the southeast corner by spruce tree. (United States Coast Guard [hereafter USCG], Acadia National Park Archives [hereafter ACAD Archives])

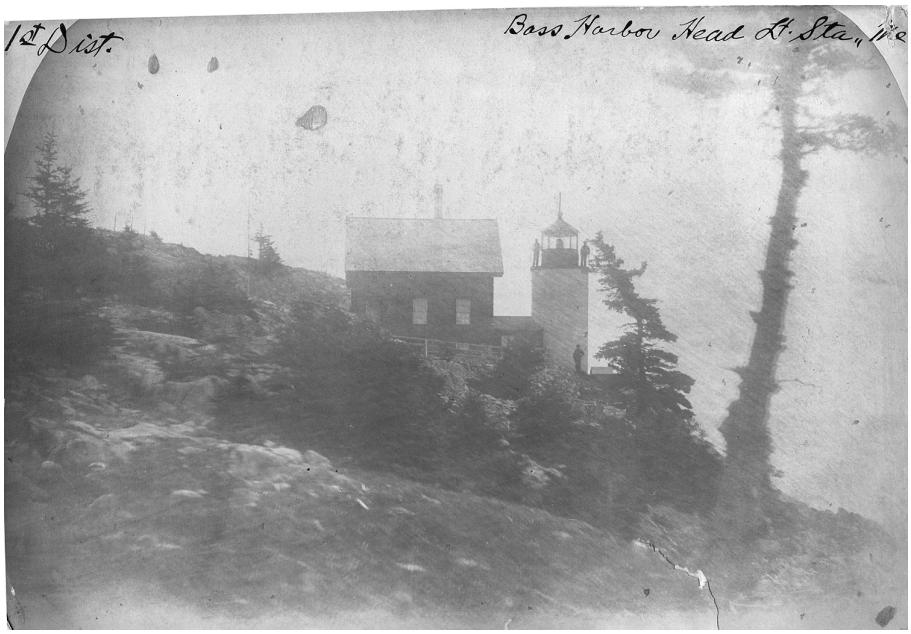


Figure 3. The earliest-known photograph of Bass Harbor Head Light Station, 1858-1878, view looking east at the Keeper's Dwelling (image center), workroom, Lighthouse, and the privy roof (to right of Lighthouse). (National Archives and Records Administration [hereafter NARA], 26-LG-1-26. From HSR 2020: 66)

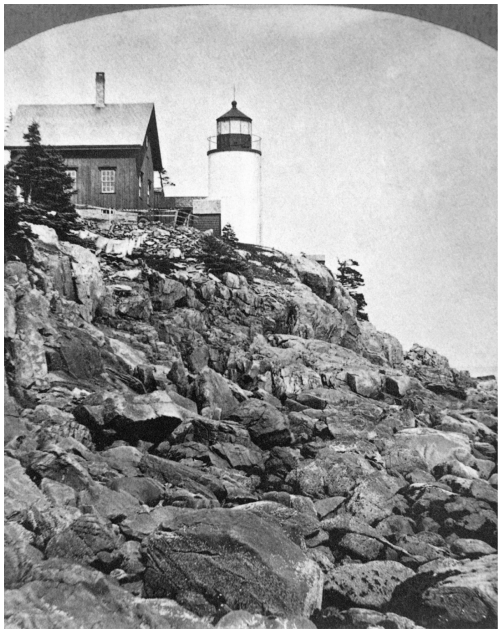


Figure 4. Bass Harbor Head Light Station, 1875, view looking east. Seen are the Keeper's Dwelling, work room, and Lighthouse. A wood post and rail fence stands atop a stone embankment wall that wraps around the south and west sides of the dwelling. (Bryant Bradley, "Bass Harbor Head Light from the West." Item 5655, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archive. From HSR 2020: 68)

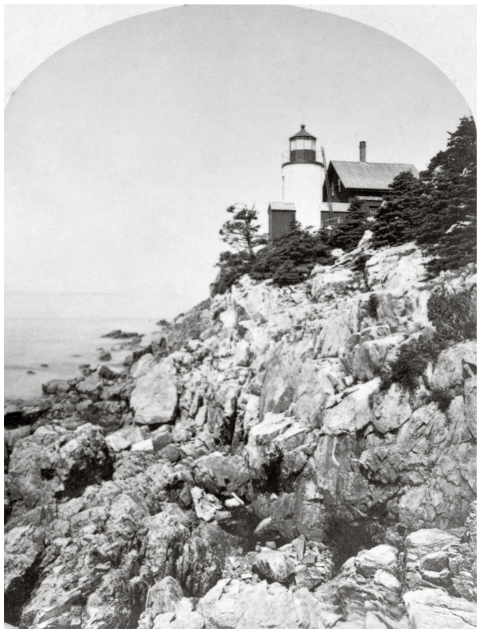


Figure 5. Bass Harbor Head Light Station, ca.1875, view looking west. Seen are the privy, Lighthouse, work room, and Keeper's Dwelling. ("Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 13207, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archive. From HSR 2020: 69)

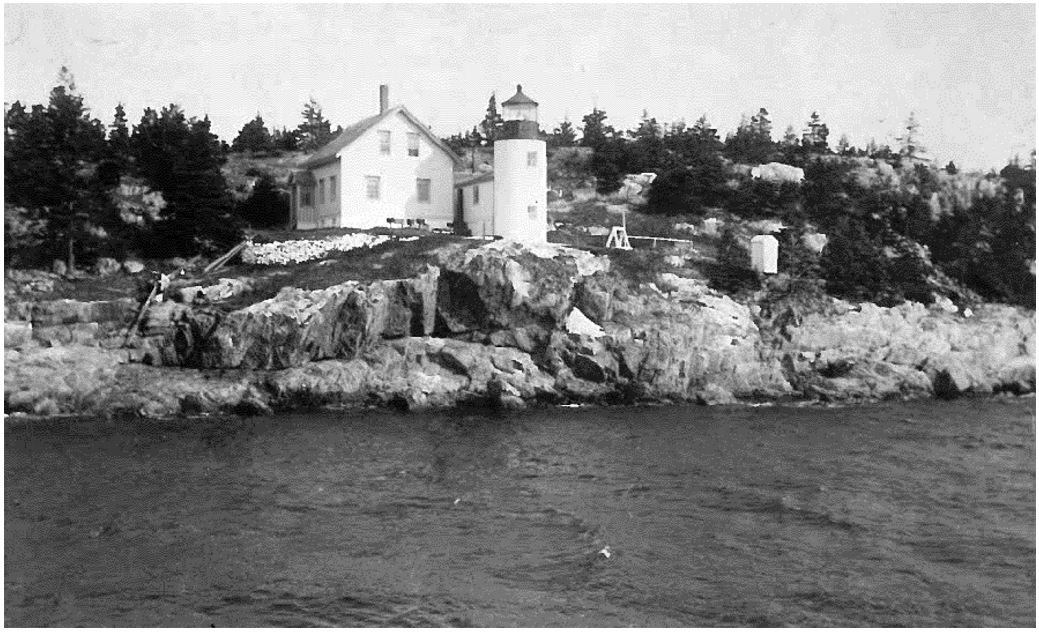


Figure 6. Bass Harbor Head Light Station, 1878-1893, view looking northeast. Note the free-standing bell at the cliff edge between the Lighthouse and privy, and the railing that marks a walkway between the Keeper's Dwelling and privy. (USCG files. From HSR 2020: B-8)

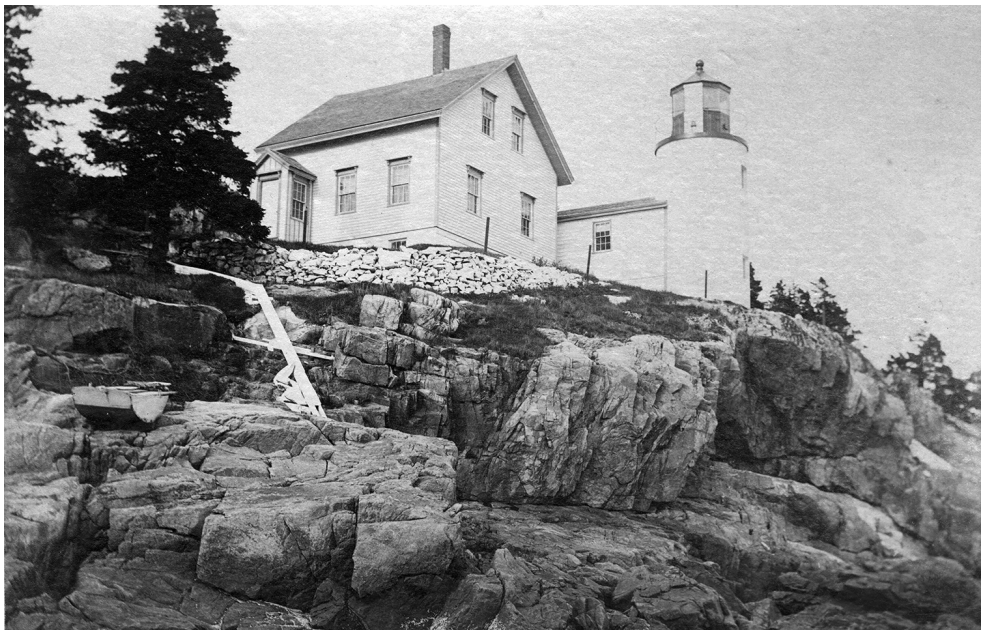


Figure 7. View looking northeast at the light station, 1892-1893. The post and board fence atop the stone embankment wall has been replaced by a post and wire fence. (NARA, 26-LG-1-27A. From HSR 2020: B-7)

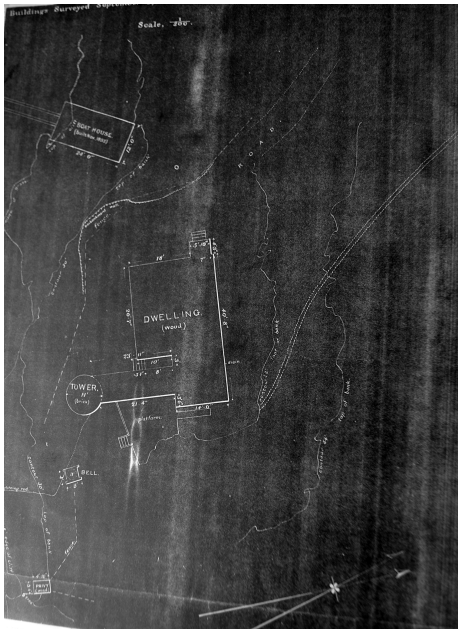


Figure 8. Portion of an 1892 survey drawing of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station, by E.P. Adams. Note the proposed location of the boat house and the diagonal walkway heading northwest from the rear of the Keeper's Dwelling. (Acadia NP, binder in Keeper's Dwelling)



Figure 9. View looking west at the boat house and launchway, 1893-1949. (NARA, 26-LG-1-28C)

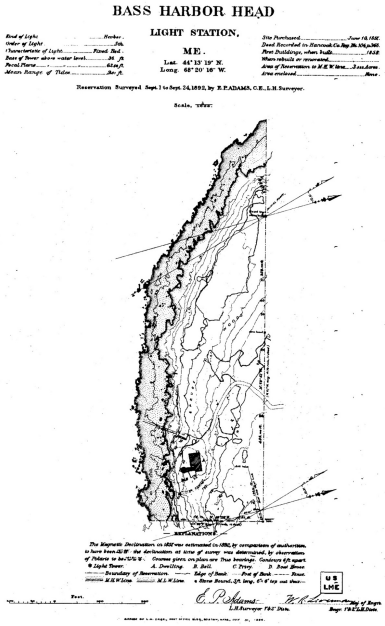


Figure 10. The Light Station was surveyed in 1892 and this map was published in 1894, showing locations of light station buildings, including the boat house completed in 1893. This is the first depiction of the 1858 driveway from the road to the core of the site. (E.P. Adams, Surveyor, First and Second District Lighthouse. Acadia NP Archives. From HSR 2020: 75)

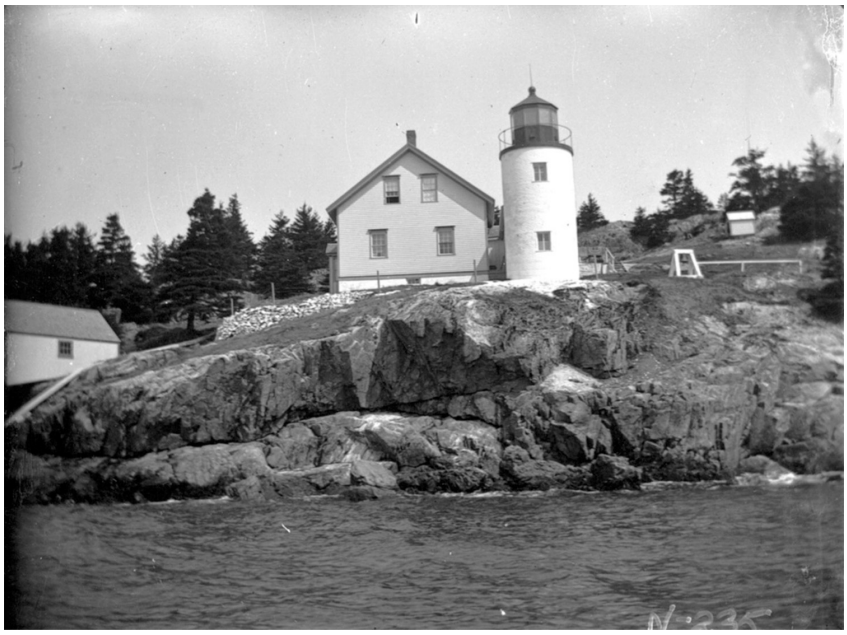


Figure 11. The Light Station, between 1893-1897. Note the small storage building on the hill (image upper right) and the stone wall and steps next to the kitchen ell (hidden behind tower). A railing marks walkway between the dwelling and privy. (George Arthur Neal, "Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 6165, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archives. From HSR 2020: 76)



Figure 12. View looking northeast, 1897-1901, showing the new bell house and old exterior bell between the Lighthouse and privy. (George Arthur, Neal, "Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 6166, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archives. From HSR 2020: 79)

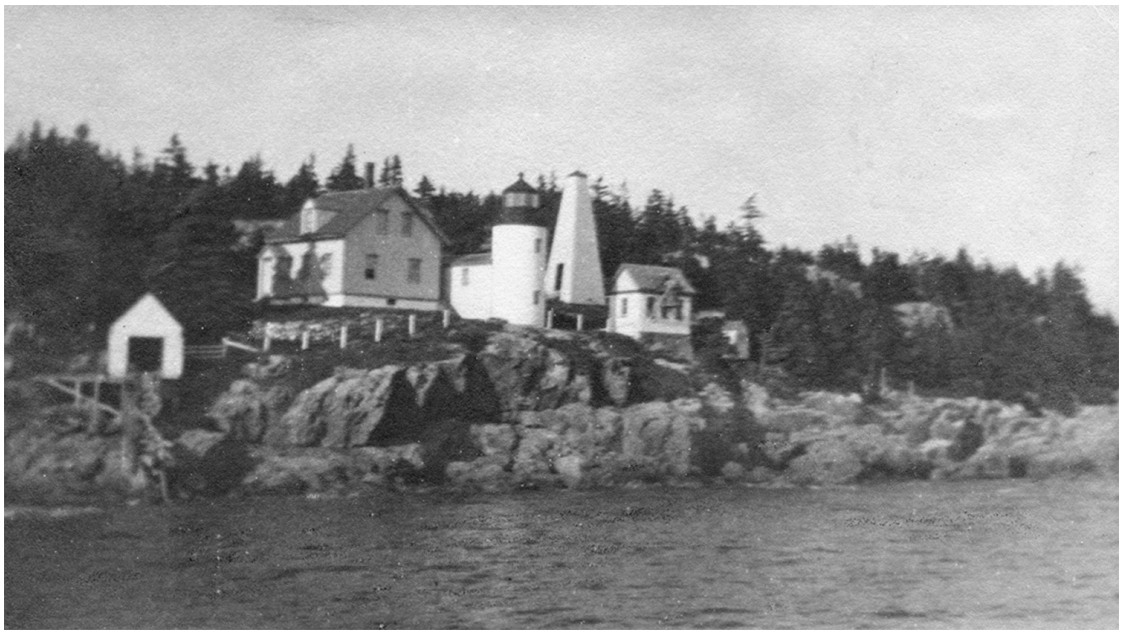


Figure 13. View looking northeast, ca.1901-1949, at the new pyramidal weight tower constructed to house the weights for the bell-striking machine. Note the dormers on the Keeper's Dwelling roof. ("Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 7775, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archives. From HSR 2020: 83)



Figure 14. View looking southwest at the Oil House, 1990. (Historic American Building Survey [hereafter HABS], ME-197. From HSR 2020: 119)



Figure 15. View looking west at the barn (now garage), 1990. (HABS, ME-197)



Figure 16. The last historic period photograph, view looking northeast in 1948, at the boat house, Keeper's Dwelling, Lighthouse, and bell house. The top half of the weight tower is in the background. (Willis Humphreys Ballard, "Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 12180, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archive. From HSR 2020: 89)

MODERNIZATION OF THE LIGHT STATION, 1949–1974

The year 1949 saw the beginning of the complete modernization of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station, including electrical service and indoor plumbing, which until this point had not been possible.

Drawings for both types of improvements indicated existing features as well as proposed changes, which would have profound short- and long-term effects on the light station's landscape.

Radio Transmitting Station and New Electric Bell:
Commander Sexton's 1948 funding request coincided with the US Navy's extension of local commercial electric power from the Village of Bass Harbor to the light station, for its new Radio Transmitting Station. Construction of the small complex in the northeast portion of the reservation began in 1948 and was completed in 1949. The station included a one-story transmitter building with board and batten siding and a hipped roof (Figure 17). The building was outfitted with a standby generator for the light station in case of a commercial power failure. From the building, electrical connections ran to the Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, bell house, and garage (barn). The Navy also erected two, 100-foot-tall antenna towers parallel with the reservation's north boundary: southeast of the transmitter building and southwest of the garage (barn). Each tower was secured by four guy wires. (HSR 2020: 91)

The 1949 plan also revealed additional details: locations of existing telephone wires and poles and the new buried electrical conduits, the concrete sidewalk on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, and a wood staircase on along the lower portion of the diagonal walkway. The plan also showed a new fog bell located just southwest of the Lighthouse (see Figure 17). Installed in conjunction with electrical improvements, the new bell was supported on a steel frame set on a concrete pad, and featured an electrical striker. (HSR 2020: 91)

Plumbing and septic improvements were indicated on a plan dated May 1950, which showed the existing well just north of the Keeper's Dwelling, a new trench connecting the well head to the dwelling, and a septic tank located to the south of the dwelling (Figure 18). Overflow of septic refuse was through a new concrete headwall, where waste would fall out onto the cliffs and into the ocean. At this time the privy was removed and backfilled. The plan also indicated steps at the patio, or "concrete platform," abutting the kitchen ell and covered way. (HSR 2020: 94)

Removal of the Boat House and Weight Tower, Construction of New Concrete Wall:
An assessment of the light station facilities in 1950 notably omitted the boat house, suggesting it and the launchway were removed in 1949. A historic aerial photograph from 1950 conforms its removal (Figure 19). The aerial also shows the Radio Transmission Building and one of the Navy antennas, post and wire fencing demarcating the reservation boundary, and the stone retaining wall on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling. A historic photograph from 1951 indicates other features: the septic overflow headwall, electrically-struck bell, and a concrete walk along the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling that extended west to access the boat house area (Figure 20). The photograph also shows that the steps and plank walkway to the boat house were left in place for a number of years. (HSR 2020: 95-96)

In 1956 K.W. Donnell, Chief, Civil Engineering Section, outlined modifications that would continue to change the appearance of the light station. Perhaps the most significant was removal of the weight tower, its purpose rendered obsolete by the electrically-struck bell. The 4,000-pound bell on the south side of the bell house would be removed a few years later to an unknown location. Other changes included repurposing the oil house into a paint storage locker and replacing all roofs (except the oil house) with red asphalt shingles (Figure 21). (HSR 2020: 101,104)

An inspection of the light station in August 1956 identified inadequacies of the embankment wall along the cliff south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling:
"This station is located approximately 100 feet from a public road [Lighthouse Road] and is considered a sight seeing attraction by civilian visitors. The station buildings are near cliffs and sheer drops which are not protected by adequate fencing, although a work order, dated April 1956, is in effect for the construction of a stone wall fence topped with an iron pipe railing. In view of the station being easily accessible for civilian visitors, it is recommended that the work order for the construction of the stone fence be expedited." (HSR 2020: 99-100, citing Eastern Inspector, 1956)

These concerns were addressed in the last half of 1956 when the L-shaped stone embankment wall was replaced with a reinforced, cast-in-place, concrete retaining wall. The new wall was longer than

the old wall, extending farther east to the bell house, and farther north to the existing stone wall at the bottom of driveway, which was not replaced. The new wall sections were topped with 1.5-inch galvanized pipe railing set on posts at 8 feet on center, all of which were painted a spruce green color (see Figure 21). (HSR 2020: 101-102,109)

A separate report the same year identified other issues: "high grass and weeds not cut back 10 feet away from buildings; identification, trespass, cautionary, and warning signs are not conspicuously posted as required; and highway guide signs are not posted." This report suggests the landscape in the core area and around the oil house and garage had been previously maintained. (HSR 2020: 100; citing Eastern Inspector, 1956)

Adjacent Land Uses:
The topics of visitor access and signage referenced in the two 1956 reports indicates visitation was increasing, and that visitors were arriving to the site by car. It can be presumed that the current parking lot just north of the reservation boundary was developed by this time to accommodate visitors, although an informal version of it probably existed for hikers and Navy personnel. The parking lot was built by the National Park Service, as it owned the land (Figure 22).

Around this time, ecological research was underway in the park-owned woods north and east of the light station. Robert H. MacArthur, a doctoral candidate at Yale University, studied the ecology of five species of the genus Setophaga (wood warbler), which resulted in contributions to the theory of niche partitioning. His observations were studied in a mature stand of white spruce. (Wheeler 2015: np)

Property Transfer:
Another inspection was completed at the light station in July 1957. Although facilities were reported as being in good condition, the inspector noted, "It is the belief of this command that this unit would be more effective if the light were made unattended and Bass Harbor Head Bay Buoy was converted to an unlighted bell." Interestingly, handwritten under this opinion is "I Do not Agree." The author of the handwritten note is unknown, but the station would stay operational. (HSR 2020: 103; citing Treasury Department, 1957)

The Navy's use of the radio transmitting station was coming to an end by the mid-1950s. Starting in 1956, permits were issued from the Navy to the Coast Guard for the use of the Radio Transmitting Station, an underground electrical power cable, and main electrical power transmission line. Discussions occurred in 1957 about removing the building entirely, which would require installing a new utility service from the village to the light station. In April 1958, the Coast Guard requested the formal transfer of the facilities from the Navy, as they were "…the source of commercial power required for the operation of the Aids to Navigation equipment of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station." In December 1958, the Coast Guard assumed ownership of the radio building, cable, and transmission line." (HSR 2020: 103-104, citing Commander, First Coast Guard District, 1958)

Later Changes at the Light Station:
Changes at the light station in the early 1960s concerned a change in fence types along the reservation boundaries. A ca.1959-1962 photograph shows that the (white) post and wire fencing along the north boundary of the reservation, and possibly along the other boundaries, was replaced by (unpainted) post and three-rail fencing (see Figure 22). The photograph shows that at that time the diagonal walkway between the garage and Keeper's Dwelling had not yet been paved with concrete. In 1963, between this walkway and the garage, the USCG installed a 35-foot-tall flagpole, comprised of galvanized metal finished in white with bronze cleats and a bronze halyard top. The following year, according to an aerial photograph, the diagonal walkway was paved. The new flagpole and paved walkway were likely intentionally improvements by the USCG to enhance the appearance of the light station. (HSR 2020: 106-107)

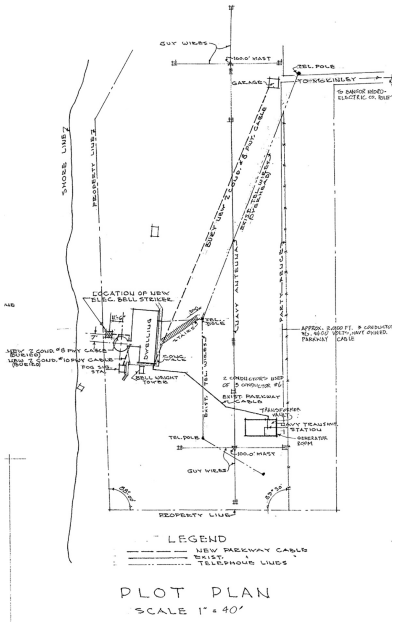


Figure 17. Portion of the "Electrification of Station" plan, dated March 1949, details site power generation and transmission, upgrades to the Keeper's Dwelling, and the installation of a electrified bell striker in front of the Lighthouse. (USCG File, P4355. From HSR 2020: 92)

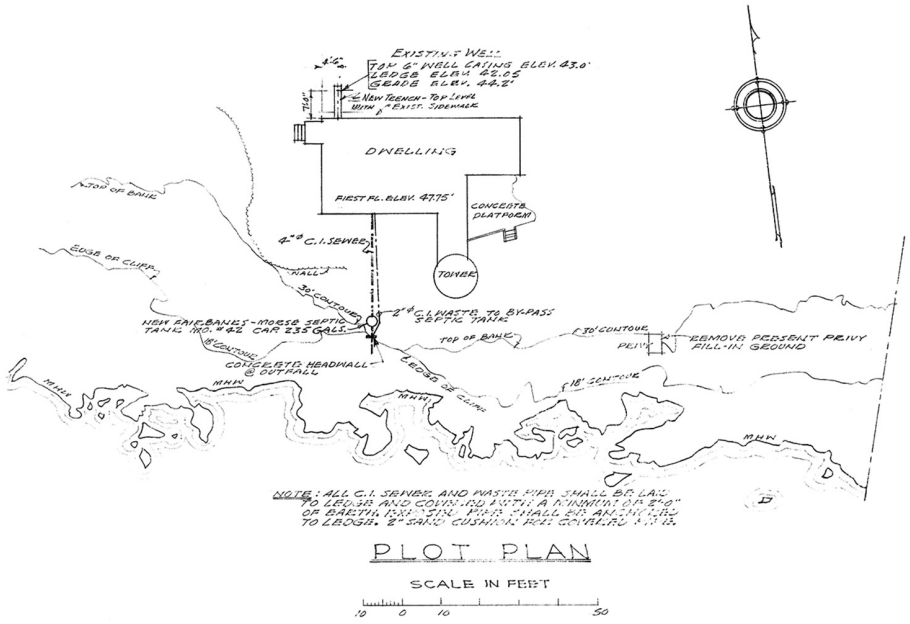


Figure 18. Portion of the "New Sanitary Facilities" plan, dated May 1950. (USCG File, P4402. From HSR 2020: 94)



Figure 19. The light station, aerial view looking northeast, 1950-1956. By this time the boathouse has been removed. To the northeast is the Naval Radio Transmission Building and one of two of the antennas. White fence posts visible nearby mark part of the reservation boundary. (United States Lighthouse Society, https://archives.uslhs.org/node/7151)



Figure 20. View looking northeast, 1950-1956. Note the electric bell and septic system concrete headwall south of the Keeper's Dwelling; the sidewalk, stairs, and plank walkway that accessed the boathouse; and a stairway and walk with railings on the ledges behind the dwelling. The small gap between the Keeper's Dwelling and covered way has been infilled. (USCG, 170602-G-XX000-434. From HSR 2020: 98)



Figure 21. View looking north, ca.1962. By this time the weight tower and 4,000 pound bell are gone. The concrete retaining wall runs along the cliff. (Paul A. Knaut, Jr., "Bass Harbor Head Light." Item 6886, Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Archives. From HSR 2020: 106)



Figure 22. View looking northeast, ca.1959-1962. By this time the parking lot north of the reservation has been laid out. By this time new post and rail fencing has been erected along the reservation boundary. Note the unpaved diagonal walkway and wood staircase between the garage and Keeper's Dwelling. (Acadia NP, binder in Keeper's Dwelling)

LIGHT STATION AUTOMATION, 1974–2020

Land Transfer:

The Coast Guard's automation of the country's light stations was well underway during the 1960s, and by late 1972 the Bass Harbor Head Light Station was scheduled for "automation, modernization, and unmanning." In December of that year, Acadia National Park Superintendent, Keith Miller, wrote to the Commander of the First Coast Guard District in Boston with the understanding that the excess light station, excluding access to the automated light and the antenna site at the Radio Transmitting Building, could be transferred to the park. Miller had already,
"received the approval of Director Brooks, Northeast Region, National Park Service to proceed with a request that all excess Coast Guard Property at Bass Harbor be transferred…to Acadia National Park when no longer needed for Coast Guard purposes."

In 1974, the land transfer (approximately two acres) occurred and the light was automated, but the USCG retained the use of the light station as housing. At some point between 1974-1979, the fog bell was inactivated. (HSR 2020: 44,107-108, citing Letter, Miller to Commander, First Coast Guard District)

Driveway and Parking Lot Improvements:
In 1973 or 1974, the Light Station was closed to visitors due to the poor condition of the gravel driveway from the garage to the Lighthouse. By September of that year, the Coast Guard felt the pressure from disappointed visitors and nearby businesses who relied on tourism, and planned to reopen the light station to visitors. At that time that Commander of the Coast Guard Group at Southwest Harbor recommended making the driveway usable, safer, or kept as is, but reopened regardless. Plans for a installing a bituminous asphalt surface were finalized in August 1975, extending from the parking lot to the edge of the concrete sidewalk on the west side of the Keeper's Dwelling. An aerial photograph suggests Lighthouse Road and parking lot were paved with asphalt between this time and 1979. (HSR 2020: 107-108)

Keeper's Dwelling Alterations and Historic Recognition:
Several changes were made at the Keeper's Dwelling in 1976-1980. Plans for bathroom renovations were completed in December 1976 and included replacement of the west doghouse dormer with a larger shed dormer to create more headspace. However, the project was not completed until 1980. Later photographs suggest white vinyl siding and white trim may have been installed at the dwelling at this time. The unused kitchen ell chimney was also removed during this period. (HSR 2020: 108-109)

Some of the changes to the Keeper's Dwelling were described in 1988 when the Bass Harbor Head Light Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling, bell house, oil house, and garage (barn) were listed as contributing buildings and structures to the Light Station (HSR 2020: 111; citing NR 1987)

Utility Improvements:
In 1975 a new sewage treatment system was installed at the light station. A cast iron pipe extended southwest from the south elevation of the Keeper's Dwelling, connected to a treatment unit and chlorinator, and then ejected at the southwest corner of the concrete retaining wall and into the water. The old septic tank located just south of the dwelling was backfilled with gravel and capped. The existing outfall drainline was cut back to the face of concrete retaining wall and plugged, but the concrete headwall was left in place. (HSR 2020: 108-109)

In June 1986, a directive was released regarding new (May 1984) Environmental Protection Agency sewage discharge requirements into the Atlantic Ocean. All Coast Guard facilities were to conform with the environmental pollution control standards and comply with wastewater testing, monitoring, and reporting requirements. The light station's system installed in 1975 failed the tests. (HSR 2020: 112)

Although the Coast Guard was taking action to correct the test results, internal correspondences in February 1987 reported that the agency was requesting the EPA permit a continuation of waste discharge into the ocean. However, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) found the USCG's permit application to be insufficient and required a site evaluation to determine if a subsurface wastewater disposal system could be designed and used in place of the overboard

system. An evaluation in May 1988 determined “there is no area available in the vicinity of these buildings on which even the smallest of subsurface wastewater systems could be sited.” By February 1989, the Maine DEP indicated they would “under no circumstances allow the USCG to continue its overboard discharge of treated effluent from the living quarters at the light station.” (HSR 2020: 112-113, citing Ott 1988; and Letter, Ott to Martin, 16 February 1989)

In April 1989 the area west of the paved driveway, around 80 yards northwest of the Keeper’s Dwelling, was found to be for a suitable location for a leach field. It was one of the few locations on the property that was level and without obvious ledge outcrops. An application was submitted to the state in June 1989, which included a site plan of the new system: a septic tank and lift chamber in the front yard (west) of the Keeper’s Dwelling, a buried pressure effluent line running to the northwest to a 16 x 28-foot leach field (Figure 23). The application was approved and work was completed in 1989 or early 1990. (HSR 2020: 113,115-116)

Other utility-related projects concerned communications and fuel oil. In 1988 the park built a communication tower east of the former Navy Radio Transmitting Building (Figure 24). The 120-foot tall, lattice-shaped tower was erected on a 14-foot square concrete platform (removed in 2020) and enclosed within a wood stockade fence. In 1993 issues were discovered with the two diesel fuel tanks at the station. At that time a 275-gallon tank inside the Radio Transmitting Station supplied fuel to the emergency generator, and a 500-gallon exterior tank supplied fuel to the furnace of the Keeper’s Dwelling. Each were replaced; a new self-contained fuel tank installed northwest of Keeper’s Dwelling was set on a cinderblock base. (HSR 2020: 120,239)

Security Improvements for Residents:
In the late 1980s several fence projects were undertaken to improve security and privacy at the light station. In April 1989 a stand-alone chain-link fence and gate was erected at the northwest corner of the Keeper’s Dwelling to keep visitors from walking around the building. A similar addition of a chain link gate on the south elevation of the Lighthouse served the same purpose. This work was likely done in conjunction with the attachment of chain-link fencing to the pipe railing fences between 1987 and 1990, and installation of new stand-alone chain link fences and gates from the kitchen ell heading northeast and from the bell house heading north-northeast. (HSR 2020: 117,254)

Circulation Improvements:
By 1990 a parking space was built just northeast of the garage for exclusive use of residents in the Keeper’s Dwelling. A concrete wall topped with post and four board rail fencing supported the west side of the slightly elevated stall while stone embankments and sections of dimensional timber defined the south and east sides. Wood steps connected the parking stall to the diagonal sidewalk (see Figure 15). Also by this time, the wood steps at the Keeper’s Dwelling patio had been replaced by concrete steps (Figure 25). (HSR 2020: 117,254)

In 1997 and 1998 the park improved the trail from the parking lot to the shoreline east of the reservation. Named the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129), work included stonework and new wooden deck and stairs. The trail provided visitors a stunning view of the ocean and Lighthouse. The 2006 Pathmakers report classified the trail as a high use trail. (CLR 2006: 175-176,246)

Since the construction of the concrete retaining wall in 1956, the visitor access to the grounds around the south and west sides of the Keeper’s House was limited to a narrow 3-foot wide gravel path defined by the concrete retaining wall/pipe railing fence and a concrete curb (Figure 26). After 2003, in response to increased visitation that was damaging the lawn on the south and west sides of the Keeper’s Dwelling, the path was widened by 5-8 feet, which reduced the size of the lawn area. A low timber wall was built to separate the wider path from the lawn. (HSR 2020: 249)

Adjacent Land Uses:
In the breeding seasons of 2014 and 2015, Bik D. R. Wheeler of the College of the Atlantic, repeated Robert H. MacArthur’s wood warbler study in the same woods north and east of the parking lot. Wheeler established plots in red spruce, which predominate the area today. Both MacArthur’s and Wheeler’s studies documented the importance of the Bass Harbor headland as significant unfragmented habitat for migrating warblers. Their work also documented the importance of scientific

research as foundational to Acadia National Park. (Wheeler 2015: np; Review comments: R. Cole-Will, 2022)

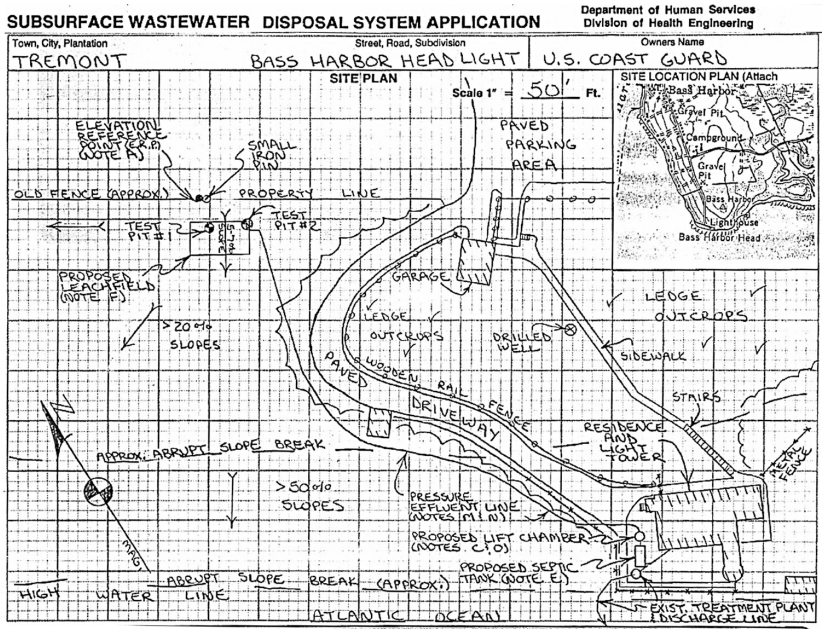


Figure 23. June 1989 site plan showing the location of the proposed septic tank, lift chamber, pressure effluent line, and leachfield. (Allan E. Ott, "Subsurface Wastewater Disposal System Application," June 7, 1989. From HSR 2020: 115)



Figure 24. View looking east at the former Navy Radio Transmitting Building, 1990, which now houses an emergency generator, and the park's communication antennae tower. (HABS, ME-197)



Figure 25. Keeper's Dwelling and Lighthouse, view looking west. (HABS, ME-197. From HSR 2020: 119)



Figure 26. The light station, view looking north, 1990. (United States Lighthouse Society, https://archives.uslhs.org/node/32965)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MANAGEMENT, 2020-2022

The year 2012 marked the last time Coast Guard personnel occupied the Keeper's Dwelling, but the USCG continued to maintain the buildings. Discussions about transferring the light station buildings from the Coast Guard to the National Park Service occurred from 2017-2020. During that time a Historic Structure Report (HSR) was prepared to determine the best treatment and use for each light station structure, and guide future rehabilitation and repair work on them. (HSR 2020: 128)

On July 8, 2020, the National Park Service formally accepted transfer of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station from the USCG. The Coast Guard retained a right-of-way to operate and maintain the automated aid to navigation. In 2022, the park stationed volunteers in the Keeper's Dwelling to do light maintenance and provide visitor information. (Acadia NP website, 2020; Review comments: G. Gladstone 2022)

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Transportation	Water-Related	Lighthouse	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transportation	Water-Related	Navigational	Yes	Yes	Yes
Landscape	Scenic Landscape	Overlook	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transportation	Water-Related	Boat Launching Area	Yes	No	No
Defense	Coast Guard Facility	Coast Guard Facility	Yes	No	No
Government	Government Office	Government-Other	Yes	No	No
Transportation	Pedestrian-Related	Hiking Trail	Yes	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Naval Facility	Naval Facility	Yes	No	No
Domestic (Residential)	Secondary Structure (Garage)	Secondary Structure (Garage)	Yes	Yes	No
Domestic (Residential)	Single Family Dwelling	Single Family House	No	Yes	No
Landscape	Scenic Landscape	View	Yes	Yes	No

Public Access:

Public Access: Other Restrictions

Public Access Narrative:

With 180,000 annual visitors, the light station is the most visited place on the west side of Mount Desert Island and the fifth busiest destination in the entire park, behind only Cadillac Mountain, Jordan Pond, Sand Beach, and Thunder Hole. Although there is no public access to the interior, visitors can view the exterior of the light station via a walkway. The park maintains a parking lot, restrooms, and short trail to a shoreline viewpoint.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Group: Scott Family Descendants

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Group: Songish

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Group: Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, California

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Group: Mammoth Cave Baptist Church Congregation and Descendants

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Study Status: Yes-Unrestricted Information

Ethnographic Narrative:

In 2007, the report, “Asticou’s Island Domain: Wabanaki Peoples at Mount Desert Island, 1500-2000, Acadia National Park, Ethnographic Overview and Assessment, Volume 1 and Volume 2,” was completed by Harald E.L. Prins and Bunny McBride, through the National Park Service Northeast Region Ethnography Program, under cooperative agreement with the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, Maine. The historical-ethnographic overview of Acadia National Park spans almost 500 years and covers a wide coastal stretch between Penobscot and Gouldsboro Bays, as well as surrounding areas. As stated in the report’s Executive Summary: “such breadth of coverage is necessary in order to take in the park’s center piece on Mount Desert Island, plus Isle au Haut and Schoodic Peninsula, along with various land holding arrangements (including easements) on numerous offshore sea-islands in this area. The study explores the shifting but ongoing relationship between this habitat and Wabanaki peoples – a group of northeastern Algonquian-speaking ethnic groups or tribal nations today distinguished as the Abenaki, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot.” (Prins and McBride 2007: i)

The report’s findings indicate that:
“Mount Desert Island has been a nexus point over the centuries for Wabanaki peoples – not only part of their prehistoric and historic hunting, fishing, gathering and trading range, but a strategic location in military maneuverings during the colonial wars and American Revolution, a prime place for marketing traditional crafts (and thereby for sustaining knowledge concerning the making of these crafts) and more recently a center point in their individual and collective efforts toward cultural reclamation. Their deep and intertwined connection to the area is reflected in traditional Wabanaki legends and place names. It is also evident in the names and genealogical information of specific 19th-century Wabanaki individuals identified in this study – most of whom have descendants associated with two or more of Maine’s still existing tribal groups. (Prins and McBride 2007: iv)

The 2007 report specifically references the Bass Harbor area and its association with early Native American trails, seasonal encampments, and harvesting of brown ash and sweetgrass for basketmaking. For more information, please refer to Asticou’s Island Domain or contact park staff.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The historic integrity of Bass Harbor Head Light Station is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance, 1858-1948, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2022. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today.

The millennia of geological and hydrological processes that created the rocky shoreline and hidden shoals at the eastern approach to Bass Harbor, prompted the federal government to establish this light station. Such natural aspects are still on display through the site's exposed granite ledges, sudden topographic changes, and cliff edges that quicky fall to the wave-swept rocks below. The landform that came to be the lighthouse reservation is mostly cloaked in spruce and fir trees, except along the southern edge where the core light station facilities – the 1858 Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling, and 1897 bell house – are clustered overlooking the sea. Historic stone retaining walls, sidewalks, and a patio remain, as well as a curving driveway along which the oil house and barn were constructed in 1902-1905. The historic Bass Harbor Head Light Trail provides access to the water's edge and an iconic view of the Lighthouse, while the base of the tower itself offers a sweeping panoramic view toward the hidden shoal and the islands beyond. The reservation's original fence lines remain marked and small areas of grass surround some of the buildings, a legacy of a defined and well-maintained government facility.

Since 1948 some landscape characteristics and features at have changed. The Coast Guard's modernization of the light station made the station's historic boat house, weight tower, and privy obsolete. They were removed, as was the massive bell on the south side of the bell house. Around the same time, the Navy built a small Radio Transmitting Building and two antennas in the northern portion of the reservation. Public visitation also increased in the 1950s, resulting in the construction of new walls, walkways, fences, and parking that introduced new designs and materials into the landscape. Eventually the driveway and parking lot were paved. The coniferous woodland has thrived in the damp climate, and has slowly taken hold in some areas that were once open. Remnants of a flagpole and sign remain from the Coast Guard's occupation, which officially ended in 2020.

INTEGRITY

The National Register of Historic Places defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. The National Register program identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is necessary for a property to convey its significance; however, not all seven aspects must be present to retain integrity. The following evaluation is based on an 1858-1948 period of significance for Bass Harbor Head Light Station. Overall, the light station retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, but the integrity of design has diminished.

Location:
Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The light station is in its original seaside location. Unlike some of the country's other lighthouses where shoreline erosion is prevalent, there has been no need to move any facilities at Bass Harbor Head further inland.

Design:
Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The historic design of the light station is intact through the extant Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, bell house, oil house, garage, stone retaining walls, driveway, patio, and sidewalks. These features have undergone minor design changes but continue to convey their historic roles in operation of the light station. However, the loss of the boat house, launchway, weight tower, large bell (at bell house), and privy diminishes the site's design integrity, as they can no longer represent important uses at the light station. The non-historic concrete retaining wall, dyed paver walkway, and post and board fences are in historic locations, but their designs do not contribute to the site's historic character.

Setting:
Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. The site's sloping landform, granite ledges, and rocky shoreline, and its position marking the shoal entering Bass Harbor, remain evident. The light station's facilities are still set within the clearings and maintained lawns that were created amongst the native spruce and fir woodlands. Post-historic features like the parking lot, restroom, and Radio Transmitting Building are located away from the core and overall are unobtrusive.

Materials:
Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Many of the site's original materials are visible today, including the brick Lighthouse, bell house, and oil house; the wood-frame garage, the stone retaining walls and foundations; and the concrete sidewalks and patio. The most notable change is at the Keeper's Dwelling, which is now clad in vinyl siding rather than wood clapboards. Spruce and fir trees, and maintained lawns, represent original plant materials. Materials of some historic features have changed, namely the introduction of asphalt on the historic gravel driveway and the replacement of a stone embankment wall with a cast-in-place concrete wall.

Workmanship:
Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. This aspect of integrity is illustrated through the light station's location at a remote oceanside site characterized by countless outcroppings and elevation changes. The original designers had to build a driveway across uneven terrain and then construct buildings along the cliff edge comprised of jagged and slippery rocks. In particular, the bell house stone foundation reveals the high level of workmanship that was required at the cliff. Remnant iron bolts are all that remain from the wood boat house and launchway, which was likely the most difficult part of the light station to build and operate.

Feeling:
Feeling is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. With exception of the Lighthouse, no other facilities at the light station are used for their original purposes: modernization of the station began in 1949, the last Keeper left in 1950, and the light was automated in 1974. Although several features at the station were deemed obsolete and removed, those that remain clearly convey the feeling of a government light station. This is also conveyed through the upkeep of buildings, structures, and grounds.

Association:
Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The light station still represents the government departments and agencies that created and managed it: the United States Lighthouse Board (USLHB) until 1910, the United States Light House Service (USLHS) from 1910-1939, and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) from 1939 to present. The NPS managed resources adjacent to the reservation beginning in 1937 (Bass Harbor Head Light Trail, Lighthouse Road, and parking lot), the grounds of the reservation in 1974, and then the light station buildings in 2020. The Navy's presence is represented by the Radio Transmitting Building and a remnant antenna foundation.

The next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding HSI and FMSS names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1858-1948), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. If a feature is non-contributing, it is evaluated as "compatible" (visually congruent with the historic character of the landscape) or "incompatible" (visually incongruent with the historic character of the landscape).

Landscape Characteristic: Natural Systems and Features

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape, and can include geology, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology, climate, and native vegetation. These natural aspects directly influenced the decision to build a lighthouse at Bass Harbor Head. The lighthouse reservation was laid out on a landform of ledges sloping north to south, extending from a large relatively flat area 80 feet above sea level to a smaller flat area at the edge of cliff 30 feet above sea level. In this lower area the federal government built the Bass Harbor Head Light Station (Figure 27). The 26-foot tall Lighthouse, its light visible from 13 miles, warned mariners of the dangerous shoal reaching out from the headland at the mouth of Bass Harbor. Named Bass Harbor Bar, the shoal's presence is distinctly marked by breaking waves during low tide.

Mount Desert Island's geological history dates back about 550 million years. The earliest formation on the island is the Ellsworth Schist Formation, which was a sea-floor mud deposit created during the Cambrian period by volcanic ash. A long-lasting mountain building event during the Ordovician period caused the formation to fold, thrust, and lift above sea level, where later layers were eroded away and the schist was exposed. The Bar Harbor Formation, which is made up predominantly of sands and silts, and Cranberry Island Formation, made up from volcanic ash and magmatic debris, occurred under similar circumstances in the Silurian and Devonian periods, and were deposited on top of the Ellsworth Schist. However, due to less tectonic activity at that time, their deformation was less severe. Most recently, Mount Desert Island was host to the Laurentide Ice Sheet as it extended and receded during the Pleistocene epoch. The glacier left visible marks upon the landscape, including erratics, moraines, and beach sediments. (Wikipedia: "Mount Desert Island")

Mountain building activity during the Devonian period gave Mount Desert Island three granite units: the Cadillac Mountain granite, the fine-grained Somesville granite, and the medium-grained Somesville granite. The granites all are pink, fine to medium grained, and contain black flakes of biotite mica; those found at Bass Harbor Head are characterized by a distinctive fine-grained granular texture similar to a lump of sugar. Here, waves from the open ocean, beating against the rock walls with full force, have eroded a wave-cut platform of considerable size at the base of the sea cliff. (Gilman et.al. 1988: 45)

Spruce and Fir Forests
Maine is located in the boundary area between two forest zones - eastern deciduous forest (oak, maple, and beech) and northern boreal forest (spruce, fir, birch). On Mount Desert Island, such woodlands thrive in its cool, foggy climate, ocean salt spray, and harsh weather conditions. The persistent fog and geology create a moist forest environment in places like Bass Harbor Head (Figure 28).

The dominant vegetation type at the site is classified by the State of Maine as a "Maritime Spruce-Fir Forest." The overall density, pattern, and height of the forest is described as "open canopy/discontinuous (25-60% coverage), clumped/bunch pattern, between 40-65 feet high." Such species were present during the historic period: spruce and fir trees were used as landmarks on the site's 1856 boundary survey, and a 1937 report noted that the "forest background allowed the whitewashed tower to standout." (ACAD GIS 1997)

Historic photographs of the undeveloped western part of the reservation show it as densely wooded, and such conditions persist there today. In contrast, early historic photographs of the developed eastern portion of the reservation (generally from the driveway to the eastern property line) show open conditions with some scattered clumps of trees that increased in density by the end of the historic period. Some of the trees in this area were likely cleared for the building sites and driveway, and used to construct buildings and plank walkways. An analysis of aerial photographs show that the mostly open conditions persisted until the mid-1960s, after which the density of scattered forest vegetation began to slowly increase, especially along the ledges just north and west of the Keeper's Dwelling. The trunks of trees growing out of the outcrops and ledges, and those adjacent to the cliff edges, are typically twisted and crooked. Areas beyond the reservation

boundaries but within the CLI boundary are also dominated by spruce and fir trees.

Evaluation:
The property's sloping landform, granite ledges, and rocky shoreline illustrate the federal government's decision to develop a light station on this foggy headland at the mouth of Bass Harbor. Overall, the spruce and fir trees that characterized the site historically are the dominant vegetation type today. Tree density has increased in the developed eastern part of the reservation since the historic period, but has remained steady in the undeveloped western half.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Spruce and Fir Forests	196592	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 27. The Lighthouse and Keeper's Dwelling from the rocky shoreline, view looking northeast. An L-shaped reinforced concrete retaining wall runs along the cliff edge. (Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation [hereafter OCLP] 2022, DSC-6653)



Figure 28. Mature spruce trees near the Lighthouse, view looking southwest. The red roofs of the bellhouse (left) and Keeper's Dwelling (right) are visible through the trees. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6459)

Landscape Characteristic: Spatial Organization

Historic Condition (to 1948):
Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. When completed in 1858, the original core of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station was clustered at the southeast portion of the 2-acre government reservation, on a small level area bound by steep ledges and the edge of a rocky cliff. Comprised of the Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, and privy, the core area was expanded with the addition of a boat house and launchway (1893), bell house (1897), and weight tower (1901). The close proximity of these key facilities ensured efficient and effective operations at the facility. In 1902-1905 an oil house and barn (garage) were built along the driveway, but both were within 50 yards of the core. Fences, walls, and walkways further divided the spaces around and between the buildings, as did scattered trees and shrubs growing amongst the granite outcrops. The western portion of the reservation was never used and was mostly wooded.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
In 1949 the Navy completed their Radio Transmitter Station at the northeast portion of the reservation, along with two antennas paralleling the north boundary. Between 1949 and 1956 the boat house, privy, and weight tower were removed and a parking lot was developed just to the north of the reservation. Since then, the spatial arrangements at the site have remained mostly unchanged except for a greater coverage of native vegetation that has infilled some of the formerly open areas (Figure 29).

Evaluation:
The historic spatial patterns established by built features at the core of the light station are intact, anchored by the Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, and bell house. The loss of the boat house and launchway, weight tower, and privy has diminished the compact character of the facility. The alignments of most fences, walls, and walkways remain, and coverage of trees has increased.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 29. The core of the light station is located in the southeast portion of the reservation. This view looking north from the Lighthouse shows some of the granite ledges that separate this part of the reservation into two moderately-sloped areas. A staircase and concrete sidewalk runs diagonally between the garage (image left) and Keeper's Dwelling. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6507)

Landscape Characteristic: Land Use

Historic Condition (to 1948):
Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction. Little is known about land uses at the site prior to 1858, but from that year until 1948 the property was developed as the Bass Harbor Head Light Station by the United States Lighthouse Board (USLHB) until 1910, the United States Light House Service (USLHS) from 1910-1939, and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). The station's lighthouse, bells, and life-saving boats aided mariners, while the weight tower, bell house, oil house, and barn (garage) supported station operations. The Keeper's Dwelling and privy allowed the station to operate 24/7. Recreational uses in the area likely began soon after the picturesque Lighthouse was built, and ca.1900 were formalized with a trail that tracked around the northeast corner of the reservation to provide views looking west from the rocky shoreline. The NPS acquired the trail and the lands north and east of the reservation in 1937.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
A new land use was introduced at the site by the Navy and its Radio Transmission Station, which operated from 1949 until the late 1950s. The Navy's need for electrical power allowed the Coast Guard to modernize the light station, which resulted in the removal of several facilities that were no longer needed. Around this same time, recreational uses expanded as the public was allowed to access portions of the reservation, namely the Lighthouse exterior and ocean views from an adjacent gravel walkway. The parking lot just north of the reservation was developed by the NPS at this time. Although the Lighthouse was automated in 1974, the Keeper's Dwelling continued to house USCG employees until around 2012. In 2020 the USCG transferred the buildings to the National Park Service but retained an easement to maintain the automated light.

Evaluation:
The red lamp of the Lighthouse remains an active aid to navigation, but the other facilities at the light station are no longer used for the historic purposes; the Keeper's Dwelling is no longer home to a Lighthouse Keeper family or Coast Guard personnel, and the other buildings are vacant. The property is one of the park's most popular recreation destinations, especially the ocean view from the Lighthouse and the view of the Lighthouse from the shoreline trail.

Landscape Characteristic: Topography

Historic Condition (to 1948):
Topography is the three dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect). This characteristic is one of the most important at the reservation as it directly influenced the location of the light station's facilities. With the property's overall topography descending north to south, the eastern, and widest, part had the most available space. Here, beginning around 80 feet in elevation, the north half was characterized by a narrow but long area of gentle to moderately-steep terrain, followed by a series of steep ledges dropping around 30 feet, and then the shorter and smaller south half comprised of a small level area of moderately-steep terrain. The southern half was edged by a cliff that dropped another 30 feet across more ledges and rocks to the water. The light station's core facilities were located in this south half, which positioned the Lighthouse 75 feet above the water at the north end of the Bass Harbor Bar, and gave it a 180-degree view visible for 13 miles. The site's topography required the use of tall foundations at the bell house; elevated platforms at the boat house and launchway; a curved alignment for the driveway; retaining walls around some buildings; and steps and staircases along several walkways.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
Just at the USLHB considered topography in siting the Lighthouse, so too did the Navy in erecting two 100-feet antennas in the north part of the site, and highest in elevation, for its Radio Transmitting Station. In 1988 the park built a 120-foot tall communication tower near one of the Navy's antenna sites. The tower was removed in 2020. The most recent topographic alteration was the construction of a retaining wall and embankment to build the parking pad adjacent to the garage. In the late 1990s a wood staircase, and stone waterbars and steps were built on the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail for visitors to negotiate the steep terrain.

Evaluation:
The bell house foundation and numerous retaining walls illustrate early responses to the site's topographic conditions. Although the concrete wall that supports the gravel walkway north and west of the Keeper's Dwelling is not historic, it replaced an earlier stone embankment that created the level space in this area during the historic period. The wall and embankments associated with the parking pad at the garage detract from the original landform. The staircase and steps on the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail still reveal the area's topography.

Landscape Characteristic: Vegetation

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. Vegetation at Bass Harbor Head Light Station consists of spruce and fir woodlands (discussed under Natural Systems and Features), scrub vegetation, and maintained lawn areas.

Maintained Lawns
The core of the light station features three small areas of maintained lawns. The lawn space on the south and west sides of the Keeper's Dwelling became smaller after 2003 when the park widened the adjacent walkway. It is still prone to visitor foot traffic, with portions typically worn bare by summer despite signs asking visitors to stay off the grass (Figure 30). Two other lawn spaces in the core are in better condition because they are not accessible to the public; the grass on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling is interspersed with moss but is poorly drained, while grass between the Lighthouse and oil house transitions to patches of mosses on the hill to the north (Figures 31, 32). A larger maintained lawn area dotted with mosses and exposed ledge stretches across much of the northern half of the site from the Radio Transmitting Building to the garage, while narrow strips of grass are mowed along the driveway shoulders (Figures 33 and 34). Another large lawn area sweeps from the driveway curve toward the diagonal sidewalk, but it is mowed less frequently and is interspersed with a large lilac, small spiraea, and numerous spiraea shoots (see Figure 34).

Photographs are inconclusive on the types of groundcovers that were grew historically in these areas, but an inspection report in the 1950s noted "high grass and weeds not cut back 10 feet away from buildings." This suggests that the site's harsh environmental conditions influenced the type of plants that grew.

Scrub Vegetation
Several areas of scrub vegetation comprise a transition between the lawn and forest areas. They are mainly located in the eastern portion of the site, in the northern and southern halves (see Figures 33, 34). Plant species include a mix of grasses, forbs, ferns, blueberry, lilac, and young fir, spruce, and birch. These areas are not regularly maintained by the park.

Evaluation:
Areas of maintained lawn and scrub vegetation are appropriate in this still-active government facility, but are subordinate to the maritime forest.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Maintained Lawns	196593	Contributing					No
Scrub Vegetation	196594	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 30. A small lawn area bound by a gravel walkway wraps around the west and south sides of the Keeper's Dwelling, view looking southeast. The narrow concrete sidewalk in the foreground abuts the lower end of the driveway and ends at the concrete retaining wall. Visitation to this area of the property is heavy. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6572)



Figure 31. Grass area on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, view looking east. It is bordered by a walkway comprised of dyed concrete pavers (where a concrete sidewalk once ran) and a historic mortared stone retaining wall. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6422)



Figure 32. Lawn area between the Lighthouse and bell house, view looking southeast. The concrete ends at cobblestones at the bell house door, (OCLP 2022, DSC-6438)



Figure 33. A stretch of lawn interspersed with mosses and exposed ledge runs from the Radio Transmitting Building to the garage, view looking southeast. In the background is an area of scrub vegetation that transition between the lawn and forest areas. The aluminum frame once supported a Coast Guard sign. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6398)



Figure 34. Maintained strips of grass lines both sides of the driveway, view looking southeast. A less frequently mowed lawn area inside the driveway extends toward the diagonal sidewalk. It is interspersed with a large lilac, a spiraea, and numerous spiraea shoots. On the ocean-side of the driveway (image right) is an area of scrub vegetation. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6406)

Landscape Characteristic: Circulation

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute systems of movement in a landscape. Such features at Bass Harbor Head Light Station include sidewalks and walkways, staircases and steps, a hiking trail, driveway, parking lot, and a portion of a road.

Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129)
This 0.1-mile gravel trail begins at the southeast corner of the parking lot, heads east then south through woods, and descends a wood staircase to several small overlooks built amongst the rocky shoreline (Figure 35). An early form of the trail was present in ca.1900. The current configuration dates to 1997-1998 when the NPS rehabilitated the stone work and constructed a new wood staircase at the cliff edge. At this time a part of the upper portion of the trail was shifted eastward. The heavily-used trail offers close ocean views and an iconic view of the Lighthouse. The NPS recently rebuilt and widened the staircase. (CLR 2006: 246; NR 2022, Sec.7: 28; Review comments: G. Gladstone, 2022)

Driveway
The paved asphalt driveway heads southwest from the parking lot and garage, and then curves to the southeast, passing the oil house and ending at the concrete sidewalk on the west side of the Keeper's Dwelling (see Figure 34). The driveway's curved alignment responded to the site's steep and rocky topography, and for that reason was likely chosen as the best route in 1857-1858 to efficiently deliver brick, stone, glass, and lumber to build the light station. Originally an earthen/gravel surface, it was paved in 1975. Its use is restricted to pedestrians, but it is wide enough to accommodate a vehicle if needed. There are severe erosion issues along the shoulder near the oil house.

Garage Sidewalk
A short concrete sidewalk connects the door on the east side of the garage to the sidewalk that runs diagonally to the Keeper's Dwelling. The walkway was constructed sometime after 1990.

Lighthouse Road
A very short portion of this road is within the CLI boundary and provides access to the parking lot. The origin of the road is unclear, but the southern half was in place by 1937 when two parcels of land north and east of the Light Station were purchased by National Park Service. In 1939 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) rebuilt the entirety of the Lighthouse Road, installing culverts and a graded, 12-foot wide gravel surface. A drawing of the road indicated the old road alignment was retained and that a gate was located at its south end. The road was one of several "truck trails" built in Acadia National Park by the CCC, one of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal work programs initiated during the Great Depression. The road is now paved.

Keeper's Dwelling Patio
A trapezoidal-shaped patio area paved in concrete abuts the kitchen ell and the covered way (Figure 36). This space is documented in an 1892 drawing and an 1894 survey, and likely the location of an "iron deck" noted in later documents. The texture and appearance of the patio's concrete is similar to the sidewalk on the west side of the Keeper's Dwelling, suggesting it was paved during the historic period. The patio currently exhibits numerous cracks and is uneven. The steps on the south side of the patio connect to the sidewalk to the bell house.

Parking Lot
The asphalt paved parking lot is located just north of the reservation boundary. It accommodates 25 vehicles and is in good condition. The lot's current configuration was developed in the 1950s, but it probably existed earlier in an informal form. The parking lot was first paved with asphalt between 1975 and 1979. It is accessed by what is now known as Lighthouse Road

Parking Pad and Steps
A parking pad abuts the northeast corner of the garage (Figure 37). The south and east sides of the pad are retained by a stone and earth embankment topped with dimensional timber, while the west side is supported by a concrete retaining wall topped with a fence. These features altered the site's topography and detract from its historic character. Historic plans and photographs suggest the parking pad was built between 1975 and 1988 to provide a reserved parking space for residents. Steps on the east side of the pad, originally constructed of wood and now with concrete, link to the adjacent sidewalks.

Paver Walkway, north side of Keeper's Dwelling
A walkway comprised of dyed concrete pavers parallels the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, extending between the concrete sidewalk and picket fence to the west and the concrete sidewalk at the kitchen ell to the east (see Figure 31). Drawings from 1949 and 1950 indicate a concrete sidewalk along this alignment. The installation date of the pavers is not known; the concrete sidewalk may have been removed or it may be under the pavers. The materials of the pavers detract from the historic character of the light station.

Sidewalk, north and east sides of Kitchen Ell Addition
A concrete sidewalk abuts the north and east sides of the kitchen ell addition (Figure 38). This sidewalk connects to concrete steps and the steel staircase that ascends the hill, a dyed paver walkway on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling, and the concrete patio that abuts the kitchen ell and covered way. A drawing from 1949 indicates an existing concrete sidewalk along this alignment. The sidewalk is cracked and uneven.

Sidewalk, west side of Keeper's Dwelling
A concrete sidewalk extends from the northwest corner of the Keeper's Dwelling, abuts the lower end of the driveway, and ends at the concrete retaining wall (see Figure 30). The west end of the sidewalk historically connected to steps and a plank walkway that accessed the boat house, while the east end continued along the north side of the dwelling. A 1949 drawing indicates the sidewalk was concrete. The sidewalk is around three feet wide, and portions are obscured, missing, or

cracked.

Sidewalk and Stairs, Garage to Keeper's Dwelling
A 3-foot wide concrete sidewalk runs diagonally northwest-southeast between the garage and Keeper's Dwelling (see Figure 29). Traversing moderately-sloped terrain, the sidewalk is bound by a paved gutter on one side, while the stairs span ledges just north of the dwelling. The far northwest end of the original sidewalk may be buried under the parking pad. The walkway is indicated on an 1892 drawing, and the stairs are shown on a 1949 plan. An aerial photograph suggests it was paved with concrete by 1964, but more research is needed regarding this date. The staircase was originally a wood structure with white railings until 1990 when it was replaced with aluminum components. At the bottom of the stairs is a concrete landing and a set of four concrete steps that connects to a sidewalk.

Sidewalk and Steps, Patio to Bell House
A concrete sidewalk running northwest-southeast links the Keeper's House to the bell house (see Figure 32). From the patio, concrete steps descend to the sidewalk that tracks down moderately-sloped terrain where it meets cobblestone pavers at the door on the north side of the bell house. An 1893-1897 photograph indicates the steps were originally wood while a 1949 plan shows the alignment of the sidewalk. The replacement date of the wood steps with concrete steps is not known, but the texture and appearance of the sidewalk's concrete is similar to the sidewalk on the west side of the Keeper's Dwelling, suggesting it was installed during the historic period. A photograph shows that the concrete in front of the bell house door was replaced with cobblestone sometime after 1990. Though no longer extant, historic photographs indicate wood steps at the lower end of the sidewalk once led to the privy.

Walkway, south and west of Keeper's Dwelling
A gravel walkway on the west and south sides of the Keeper's Dwelling offers visitor access to views of the water and a close-up view of the Lighthouse (see Figure 30). During the historic period this level area appears to have been characterized by groundcovers, but there were no formal paths. The gravel walkway was originally developed after the historic period, stretching from the concrete walkway on the west side of the dwelling to the west side of the Lighthouse. At that time it was round 3 feet in width and defined by concrete curbing and the concrete retaining wall. After 2003, to increase space for visitors, the walkway was enlarged to 5-8 feet toward the dwelling. A low timber wall separates the walkway from the now-smaller lawn area abutting the dwelling.

Evaluation:
Historic circulation features include the Bass Harbor Head Light Trail, driveway, Keeper's Dwelling patio, and concrete sidewalks. The gravel walkway, garage sidewalk, and parking lot are not historic but are compatible with the historic scene. The parking pad and steps are incompatible because of the topographic changes they introduced at the site, while the dyed paver materials that comprise the walkway on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling is incompatible with other circulation materials on site. The portion of the Lighthouse Road is evaluated as undetermined until it can be evaluated as part of the park's truck and fire protection trail system.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129)	196595	Contributing					No
Driveway	196596	Contributing					No
Keeper’s House Patio	196597	Contributing					No
Sidewalk, north and east sides of Kitchen Ell Addition	196598	Contributing					No
Sidewalk, west side of Keeper’s Dwelling	196599	Contributing					No
Sidewalk and Stairs, Garage to Keeper’s Dwelling	196600	Contributing					No
Sidewalk and Steps, Patio to Bell House	196601	Contributing					No
Garage Sidewalk	196602	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Parking Lot	196603	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Parking Pad and Steps	196604	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Paver Walkway, north side of Keeper’s Dwelling	196605	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Walkway, south and west side of Keeper’s Dwelling	196606	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Lighthouse Road (portion)	196607	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 35. The Bass Harbor Head Light Trail (#129) begins at the southeast corner of the parking lot, heads east then south through woods, and descends a wood staircase to several small overlooks built amongst the rocky shoreline, view looking east. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6630)



Figure 36. A concrete patio abuts the covered way and kitchen ell, view looking southwest. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6433)



Figure 37. A parking pad bound by a retaining wall abuts the northeast corner of the garage, view looking southeast. The parking space was formerly reserved for residents. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6399)



Figure 38. A concrete sidewalk wraps around the north and east sides of the kitchen ell addition, bound by a stone retaining wall, view looking east. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6601)

Landscape Characteristic: Buildings and Structures

Historic and Existing Conditions:

Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. Features at the site are associated with the light station, the Navy's Radio Transmitter Station, or the park visitor services.

Bell House
The bell house is a one-story building erected in 1897. It has a three-bay front elevation that faces the water, single windows at the two gable ends, and a single door at the rear elevation. The bell house features white-painted brick exterior walls with some green trim, and a cross-gable roof covered with red fiberglass shingles. On the south elevation, built in line with the cliff below, hung a bell struck by hand on foggy days. In 1898 a much larger 4,000 pound bell supported by a new projecting I-beam and timber braces replaced the smaller bell. The bell striking mechanism was originally operated by a Shipman steam and kerosene oil engine in the bell house, but then replaced by a Stevens clockwork-driven machine that relied on a system of weights and pulleys that were housed in an adjacent weight tower. The bell house became obsolete when an electrified bell was installed just southwest of the Lighthouse in 1949. The weight tower was removed in 1956 and the bell attached to the bell house was taken down in 1959-1962.

Concrete Retaining Wall, Bell House to Driveway
An L-shaped reinforced concrete retaining wall runs along the cliff edge, from the west side of the bell house to a point west of the Keeper's Dwelling (see Figure 27). The original wall at this location was an embankment of piled stone construction and shorter in length, running south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling, by 1875. In 1956 the stone embankment was replaced with the current wall. This wall longer than the embankment, extending east to the bell house. Pipe rail fencing and later, chain-link fencing, was attached to the top.

Garage (Barn)
Constructed in 1905, the 1.5-story garage/barn is a rectangular frame building set on granite piers, clad in white clapboards with green trim, doors, and soffits, and a gable roof covered with red fiberglass shingles. Three of its four walls are punctuated by windows while the other wall holds a paneled overhead garage door. A hoist beam that once held a block and tackle projects from the north elevation above a door on the second floor, which was originally used to store hay/straw. The adjacent asphalt driveway meets the front elevation.

Keeper's Dwelling
The Keeper's Dwelling dates to 1858. The 1.5-story, almost square main block features granite and brick foundation walls, white vinyl-sided exterior walls, a cross-gable roof clad with red fiberglass shingles, a central brick chimney, front-facing shed dormer (1977), and rear-facing doghouse dormer (1901). A small one-story vestibule projects from the front (west) elevation at the main entrance. An original (1858) one-story square kitchen ell is located on the east elevation. In 1900, the ell was extended ten feet to the east to create an office. A one-story rectangular covered way (1878) connects the south elevation of the ell to the north elevation of the adjacent Lighthouse. The covered way originally stood off the east elevation of the main block by approximately three feet, but by 1948 this area was infilled.

Lighthouse
The Lighthouse, built in 1858, is 26 feet in height from its base to the original focal plane of the beacon (Figure 39). The cylindrical brick tower, painted white, has a pair of small windows facing the water. An iron gallery deck sits directly on the tower rather than projecting from the exterior of the wall. The exterior of the deck features a narrow walkway and a metal railing that surrounds an iron and glass lantern room, comprised of ten paired round arched panels in each face, and a conical metal roof topped by a round ventilator and lightning rod. In the center of the lantern room is the 1901 Fourth Order lens and red light supported by a painted metal base. A one-story covered way connects the Lighthouse to the Keeper's Dwelling on the north side. The entrance into the Lighthouse is from the covered way.

Oil House
The one-story brick oil house was added to the light station complex in 1902. It is typical of other oil

houses built in Maine at this time and features a door and narrow ventilator in one gable end. A slate roof covers the small rectangular building, which has an exterior entrance facing the driveway. The brick is unpainted, but the trim, ventilator, and door are painted green. The building originally housed oil tanks, but they were likely removed in 1956 when it became a paint locker.

Radio Transmitting Building
The Navy completed this 30 x 15-foot building in 1949 to house communication equipment and a generator (Figure 40). The one-story building is built on a concrete foundation, clad in board and batten siding, and topped with a hipped roof. No longer used by the Navy, it still accommodates a backup generator.

Restroom
A restroom measuring 17 x 6 feet is located at the east end of the parking lot features two unisex rooms accessed by doors on the west elevation. The wood frame structure sits on a concrete foundation and features wood shingle siding and a hipped roof with wood shingles. The restroom is open seasonally and is not historic.

Retaining Wall and Embankments, Parking Pad
The west side of the parking pad located adjacent to the garage is retained by a low, cast-in-place concrete wall, topped with a wood fence (see Figure 37). A stone embankment wall supports the south side of the wall. The retaining walls were built between 1975 and 1988 and detract from the historic scene.

Stone Retaining Wall, Driveway
A rough-cut, mortared stone retaining wall runs along the south side of the driveway, from the northwest end of the concrete retaining wall to ledge outcroppings (Figure 41). The wall is approximately 25 feet long and 3-4 feet wide, and is topped with pipe rail and chain linked fence. The wall's construction is similar to the wall on the north and east sides of the Keeper's Dwelling, and likely dates to the early 1890s. The wall may have been built to prevent gravel on the driveway from washing down the slope to the boat house.

Stone Retaining Wall, north and east of Keeper's Dwelling and Kitchen Ell Addition
A rough-cut, mortared stone retaining wall stands 10-11 feet from the north elevation of the Keeper's Dwelling and around 2.5 feet from the east elevation of the kitchen ell addition (see Figures 31, 38). The wall is around 1.5-2 feet tall, and is punctuated by concrete steps that lead to a staircase ascending the hill to the north. Although it does not appear in any photographs or drawings from the historic period, its stone construction is similar to the 1890s stone retaining wall at the patio, suggesting that it dates from the same period. In addition, a wall built after 1948 would likely have been constructed with concrete, much like the 1956 concrete wall along the cliff edge.

Stone Retaining Wall, Patio
A rough-cut mortared stone wall supports the south side of the Keeper's Dwelling patio (Figure 42). The west end of the wall abuts the stone foundation of the covered way, while the east end transitions to ledge and the adjacent landform. A portion of the wall (painted white) is visible in a 1893-1897 historic photograph when it supported a level patio area and possibly an "iron deck" structure. A single course of brick marks the top of the wall, but its history is not known. The wall also supports a painted wood balustrade system. Steps abutting the wall lead to a sidewalk that connects the patio to the bell house.

Timber Retaining Wall, Keeper's Dwelling
A 2-3-course dimensional timber retaining wall defines the north and east sides of the gravel walkway (see Figure 30). The wall was installed after 2003, as part of a project to widen the original walkway.

Evaluation:
The Lighthouse, Keeper's Dwelling, bell house, oil house, garage, and stone retaining walls contribute to the historic significance and character of the site. Although the non-historic concrete retaining wall conveys a different character than the historic stone embankment wall it replaced, it is

in the same location and serves a similar function, and therefore compatible with the historic scene. The Radio Transmitting Building is incompatible because it was not present during the historic period.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Bell House	196608	Contributing					No
Garage (Barn)	196609	Contributing					No
Keeper’s Dwelling	196610	Contributing					No
Lighthouse	196611	Contributing					No
Oil House	196612	Contributing					No
Stone Retaining Wall, north and east of Keeper’s Dwelling and Kitchen Ell Addition	196613	Contributing					No
Stone Retaining Wall, Driveway	196614	Contributing					No
Stone Retaining Wall, Patio	196615	Contributing					No
Concrete Retaining Wall, Bell House to Driveway	196616	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Radio Transmitting Station	196617	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Retaining Wall and Embankments, Parking Pad	196618	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Restroom	196619	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Timber Retaining Wall, Keeper’s Dwelling	196620	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 39. A 4th order Fresnel lens tops the Lighthouse, view looking south. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6515)



Figure 40. The Navy's 1949 Radio Transmitting Building, view looking east. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6476)



Figure 41. A mortared stone retaining wall runs along the south side of the driveway, view looking northeast. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6638)



Figure 42. A rough-cut mortared stone wall supports the south side of the Keeper's Dwelling patio, view looking north. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6441)

Landscape Characteristic: Views and Vistas

Historic and Existing Conditions:
A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision, which is deliberately contrived. Views to and from the Lighthouse were historically a character-defining feature of the Bass Harbor Head Light Station for mariners and tourists alike, and they remain so today.

Views to and from the Lighthouse
The Lighthouse offers an almost 180 degree view of offshore islands (Great Gott Island/Little Gott Island, Black Island, Placentia Island) and the Atlantic Ocean beyond (see Figure 30). Visible up to 13 miles away, the tower's red light marks the east entrance to Bass Harbor and warns of the treacherous Bass Island Bar that connects Mount Desert Island to Great Gott Island. Visitors cannot access the 32-foot tower itself, but can enjoy the panoramic views from the gravel walkway at the base of the tower, which itself stands around 30 feet above the water.

View looking west at the Lighthouse
The view looking west at the Lighthouse is one of the most photographed in the park, especially at sunset (see Cover). The Bass Harbor Head Light Trail provides access, via a staircase and a stepped path, from which many visitors scramble over the rocks to snap a photograph. The south end of the east boundary fence prevents visitor access up to the light station.

Evaluation:
The two historic views at the light station are extant and in good condition.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Views to and from the Lighthouse	196621	Contributing					No
View looking west at the Lighthouse	196622	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: Small Scale Features

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Small-scale features are elements that provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. Small-scale features at Bass Harbor Head Light Station include various types of fences and gates, remnants of old fences and foundations, two bells, two wayside signs, the base of a flagpole, an old sign frame, and a fuel tank.

Antenna Foundation
A concrete foundation of one of the Navy's two 100-foot tall antennas erected in ca.1949 is located just southeast of the Radio Transmission Building (Figure 43). The 4-foot tall foundation is 4-feet square at the bottom and tapers to 2-feet square at the top. Copper insulator bans 6-inches wide are attached to each face. The current antenna is not the original antenna. A dilapidated wood stockade fence encloses the foundation.

Chain Link Fences and Gates, north and east of Kitchen Ell Addition and Bell House

Beginning at the northeast corner of the kitchen ell addition, chain link fencing runs northeasterly up the hill, turns east, and then turns southwest where it ends at the northeast corner of the bell house. Gates are located at each building (see Figures 32, 38). The fences and gates were erected after the historic period to provide privacy for residents.

Coast Guard Sign Frame
The frame of the former Coast Guard sign that identified the light station is located in the lawn south of the parking lot, next to the diagonal walk (see Figure 33). Supported by two aluminum posts, the 14 x 3-foot aluminum frame held metal panels that read, "U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Coast Guard, Bass Harbor Head Light." A replica life-saving boat supported in a wood cradle was displayed in front of the sign. Four granite blocks that supported the cradle remain flush with the ground. The sign panels and boat were removed in 2020, but the large frame remains.

Communications Tower Foundation
In 1988 the park erected a 120-foot tall, lattice-shaped communication tower, set on a 14-foot square concrete foundation extending 2-3 feet above grade (Figure 44). The tower was removed in 2020.

Flagpole
The base of a 35-foot tall flagpole is located around 30 feet southeast of the garage and near the site's new wellhead. It was installed in 1963, but was dismantled when the Coast Guard transferred the light station buildings to the National Park Service in 2020. The mast portions of the pole are lying in the grass next to the garage. Historic photographs suggest a flagpole may have been locate on the ledges north of the bell house.

Fuel Tank
A 500-gallon, self-contained fuel tank is located northwest of the Keeper's Dwelling (see Figure 30). Installed in 1993, it replaced a fuel-oil tank and walled containment area that was used between 1950 and 1987. The lower portion of the former tank's cinderblock containment wall was retained to support the new tank. The tank is painted brown to help minimize its appearance.

Large Bell and Stand
A large bell mounted on a trapezoidal metal frame and set on a 4-foot-square concrete pad is displayed at the end of the gravel path, just west of the Lighthouse (Figure 45). This is the 1949 bell that was originally located where the current small bell is located. The bell is stamped with "Blake Bell Co. Boston Mass 1891" and "U.S. Lighthouse Establishment 1891." It is thought this bell was reused from another location before being electrified in 1949 at Bass Harbor. (HSR 2020: 256)

Patio Fence
A painted wood balustrade system defines the south side of the patio and the steps that connect the patio to the sidewalk leading to the bell house (see Figure 36). The fence is the latest iteration of fences here; there was a wood vertical railing present by ca.1974 and an angled wood railing is seen in photographs from 1990. The design of the current fence appears bulky compared to previous fences. A historic photograph from 1893-1897 shows only a railing on the wood steps.

Picket Fence and Gate, Keeper's Dwelling
A low picket fence and gate is located at the northwest corner of the Keeper's Dwelling, where a concrete sidewalk and dyed paver walkway meet (see Figure 30). The structure was intended to divide the private residence area from the visitor use area, and replaced a former chain link fence and gate at this location. It was erected after the historic period. There is no other use of picket fencing at the site.

Pipe Rail Fence/Chain Link Fence, Bell House to west of Keeper's Dwelling
Pipe rail fencing with attached sections of chain link fencing is secured at the top of the L-shaped concrete retaining wall that runs along the cliff edge, from the west side of the bell house to the lower portion of the driveway (see Figure 45). Photographs from 1875 show wood post and rail

fencing in this location, with the section south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling mounted atop a piled stone embankment wall. By 1892 the fencing was replaced with a wood post and wire fence. Around 1901 the fence line was moved to below the embankment wall and used more substantial wood posts. In 1956 the embankment wall was replaced by a reinforced concrete wall, which also extended to the bell house. Atop the new wall a pipe rail fence was attached and painted green. Chain-link fencing was installed between July 1987 and September 1990 along the length of the pipe rail.

Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Lot
A 140-foot long, white-painted, post and three-board wood fence parallels the south side of the parking lot (see Figure 33). A modern aluminum swing gate at the east end of the fence can be shut to close the adjacent Bass Harbor Head Light Trail. The fence marks the approximate boundary of the light station reservation established in 1856, and during the historic period was (white) post and wire fence. In 1959-1962 the post and wire fence was replaced with (unpainted) post and three-rail fencing, and then replaced with the current (white) post and (white) three-board fencing after 1987.

Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Pad
An 18-foot long, white-painted, post and four-board wood fence is located atop the concrete retaining wall that supports the west side of the parking pad (see Figure 37). A modern aluminum swing gate attached to the north end of the fence can be shut to prevent unauthorized parking. The four-board fence and aluminum gate were installed sometime after 1990, and detract from the historic character of the site.

Post and Board Fences and Wood Gate, Driveway
A 4-foot long unpainted post and three-board wood fence extends diagonally from the northwest corner of the garage (see Figure 37). Another 10-foot long section is located directly across the driveway and supports a wood gate constructed with dimensional lumber that can be used to close off the driveway. They were erected by 1990. Both sections of the fences abut the post and rope fences that line the driveway.

Post and Rope Fences
Post and rope fences extend along both sides of the driveway (see Figure 34). The fencing consists of unpainted wood posts with tapered tops that hold a single length of half-inch thick rope. At the top of the driveway both sides of the fences connect with post and board fences. At the bottom of the driveway the fencing on the south side connects to the pipe rail/chain link fence atop the stone retaining wall, while the fencing on the north side ends west of the fuel tank. The current fence replaced post and two-rail fencing at this location sometime after 1990.

Remnant Iron Bolts, Boat House Site
Iron bolts and bars associated with the boat house and launchway can be found in the granite ledge and rock southwest of the Keeper's Dwelling. Two iron pins were observed drilled into the outcrop where a portion of the boat house was anchored. Four iron bolts found frilled in the rocks below the boat house site likely supported the wood launchway (Figure 46). Additional research is needed to locate other traces of these features.

Remnant Post and Rail Fences along Boundaries
Remnants of post and three-rail fencing erected along the reservation property line can be found along the eastern boundary next to the communication tower foundation, and along the northern boundary near the septic field (see Figure 44). This fence type was installed by 1956, and replaced historic post and wire fencing.

Septic System Utility Covers, Gravel Walkway
A circular utility cover and square utility cover rise slightly above the grade of the gravel walkway west of the Keeper's Dwelling. They are associated with the current septic system that was installed in 1989.

Small Bell and Stand

A small bell mounted on a trapezoidal metal frame and set on a 6-foot-square concrete pad is located just southwest of the Lighthouse, on the water side of the pipe rail/chain link fence (see Figure 45). This bell and frame date to 1987, but it does not operate in any signaling capacity. It replaced the adjacent larger bell, electric bell striker, and larger metal frame that was installed at this location when the Light Station was electrified in 1949.

Stockade Fence, Fuel Tank
A 6-foot tall section of wood stockade fence is located near the northwest corner of the Keeper's Dwelling. It is a continuation of the picket fence and abuts the east end of the fuel tank. The non-historic feature screens the fuel tank from the dwelling windows.

Unknown Concrete Foundation
A 4-foot square concrete foundation is located just southwest of the remnant antenna foundation (Figure 47). The foundation extends about 2 feet above grade and features a circular hole in the center. Its purpose may have been related to the Radio Transmitting Station.

Water Supply Enclosure
A green-painted insulated box protects a portion of the water supply pipe than runs from the modern well head near the flagpole to the Keeper's Dwelling. A section of the enclosure is visible where it cantilevers above the ledge near the dwelling (see Figure 31). A broken concrete cover locates the site's original well head. The modern system utilizes the original trench to the basement.

Wayside Signs
Along the gravel walkway at the Keeper's Dwelling, an NPS-style angled wayside sign atop the pipe rail/chain link fence is supported by metal posts anchored into the face of the concrete retaining wall. On the north side of the driveway, a 5 x 3.5-foot vertical wayside sign is mounted on wood posts.

Evaluation:
There are no historic small-scale features at Bass Harbor Head Light Station. Although non-historic post and board fences and post and rail fence remnants still demarcate portions of the reservation property lines, their designs and materials detract from the original fences. Except for the picket fence and gate at the Keeper's Dwelling and Coast Guard sign frame, the other small-scale features do not appreciably detract from the site's historic character.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Antenna Foundation	196623	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Chain Link Fences and Gates, north and east of Kitchen Ell Addition and Bell House	196624	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Coast Guard Sign Frame	196625	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Communication Tower Foundation	196626	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Flagpole	196627	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Fuel Tank	196628	Noncontributing – Compatible					No

Large Bell and Stand	196629	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Patio Fence	196630	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Picket Fence and Gate, Keeper's Dwelling	196631	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Pipe Rail Fence / Chain Link Fence, Bell House to west of Keeper's Dwelling	196632	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Lot	196633	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Post and Board Fence and Aluminum Gate, Parking Pad	196634	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Post and Board Fences and Wood Gate, Driveway	196635	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Post and Rope Fences	196636	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Remnant Post and Rail Fences along Boundaries	196637	Noncontributing – Incompatible					No
Septic System Utility Covers, Gravel Walkway	196638	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Small Bell and Stand	196639	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Stockade Fence, Fuel Tank	196640	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Water Supply Enclosure	196641	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Wayside Signs	196642	Noncontributing – Compatible					No
Remnant Iron Bolts, Boat House Site	196643	Undetermined					No
Unknown Concrete Foundation	196644	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 43. Concrete foundation for one of the Navy's former antennas just southeast of the Radio Transmission Building, view looking southwest. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6482)



Figure 44. Only the foundation remains of a 120-foot tall NPS communication tower, view looking southeast. Remnants of post and three-rail fencing erected along the reservation property line are at image left. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6484)



Figure 45. A large bell is the 1949 bell that was originally located where the small bell is located, which was installed in 1987, view looking east. Pipe rail fencing with attached sections of chain link fencing is secured at the top of the L-shaped concrete retaining wall that runs along the cliff edge. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6657)

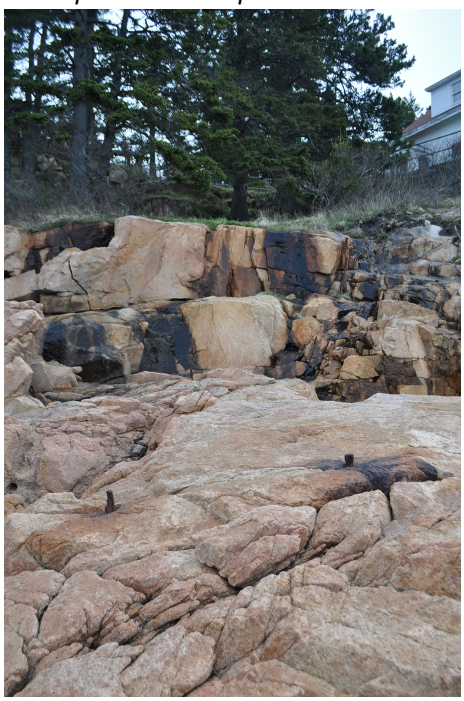


Figure 46. Iron bolts and bars associated with the boat house and launchway are visible in the granite ledge and rock southwest of the Keeper's Dwelling, view looking northeast. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6647)



Figure 47. This concrete foundation is located just southwest of the remnant antenna foundation, view looking north. (OCLP 2022, DSC-6495)

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 7

Next Assessment Due Date: 08/09/2029

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 08/09/2022

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The Bass Harbor Head Light Station is in “fair” condition due to improper drainage, erosion, and visitor impacts. There is evidence of poor drainage in the lawn on the north side of the Keeper’s Dwelling, along the shoulders of the driveway. On the north and east sides of the Keeper’s Dwelling, cracks and uneven pavement on the sidewalk and patio are directing water toward the foundations. On the south and west sides of the dwelling, drainage is poor on the gravel walkway, heavy visitor use is damaging the grass area, and several components of the pipe rail/chain link fence are rusted or missing. Improper drainage is also evident at the oil house, garage, and restroom. Erosion is evident along the edge of the driveway and several fence posts at the driveway and parking lot are severely leaning. Overcrowding and illegal parking is a frequent problem in the parking lot, especially in the busy summer months. Lastly, remnants of the Coast Guard flagpole and sign mar the entrance to the light station.

A “fair” condition assessment indicates the property shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the property to degrade to a poor condition.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Portions of the pipe rail/chain link fence south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling have missing or rusted rails. Several fence posts along the driveway and south side of the parking lot are leaning.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Type of Impact: Erosion

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Severe erosion is evident along the lower part of the driveway, just west of the oil house, and east as well. Moderate erosion is evident at the junction of the driveway and gravel walkway.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Type of Impact: Improper Drainage

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Several wet areas were observed in the lawn on the north side of the Keeper's Dwelling and along the shoulders of the driveway. The cracked and uneven concrete on the north side of the dwelling's kitchen ell and the east side of the covered way had created negative drainage toward those structures. Poor drainage is evident at the garage, oil house, and restroom. Standing water is present along the gravel path south and west of the Keeper's Dwelling.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Type of Impact: Neglect

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The stockade fence around the former Navy antenna and picket fence at the northwest corner of the Keeper's Dwelling are failing.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Type of Impact: Operations On Site

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The remnants of the flagpole are laying on the ground near the garage. The remnant Coast Guard sign frame is distracting.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Type of Impact: Visitation

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Heavy visitation continues to damage the lawn area on the south and west sides of the Keeper’s Dwelling. Unauthorized parking during the peak season is common.

Date Identified: 08/06/2022

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Treatment Documents

Treatment Type: Undetermined

Treatment Completed: No

Document Type: Other Document

Title: Revised Land Protection Plan

IRMA Link:

Narrative:

According to the Revised Land Protection Plan (2004), the Bass Harbor area falls within two land classification and resource management zones published in the 1978 Statement for Management (1978) and in the General Management Plan (1992):

Outstanding Natural Zone – these lands, approximately 4,678 acres, contain the areas of scenic splendor, natural wonder, or scientific importance and are the heart of the park. These lands receive the highest order of attention to monitor different levels of use and activities.

Historic and Cultural Zones – this category includes areas and structures of historical and/or cultural significance. These zones contain approximately 488 acres and include numerous park buildings and the carriage roads and hiking trails. The zones embrace diverse cultural and historical sites and landscapes. (RLPP 2004: 4)

The 2020 Bass Harbor Head Light Station, Historic Structure Report, recommended restoration of lost character-defining features at the station's buildings and structures, especially on the exterior:
"An archival photograph from 1951 shows the Light Station just after the end of the proposed Period of Significance and shows many character-defining features of buildings and site, including those removed, which should be restored. Conversely, an archival postcard from ca. 1962 shows the Light Station after significant modernization, removal of historic features, and addition of several modern exterior materials. Comparison of the two images clearly shows the character defining features (even buildings) which were removed or covered up by modern accretions and materials. (HSR 2004: 302)

"Starting in 1949 through automation in 1974, significant alterations occurred to the Light Station buildings, including removal of the boat house and the weight tower, and numerous modifications to the Keeper's Dwelling. Since automation of the lighthouse in 1974 through about 2012, the surviving structures were used by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) as family housing with no official treatment of the structures, besides maintenance (not preservation maintenance). Since 2012, the complex has been vacant with minimal maintenance and no official treatment of the structures. (HSR 2004: 421)

To date, no treatment approach or plan has been developed for the site, but funding for a Cultural Landscape Report has been requested.

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

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