NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89001478 **Date Listed:** 05/29/90

Tongue Point Lighthouse	New Haven	CT
Property Name	**County**	**State**

Operating Lighthouses in Connecticut
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Beth A. Savage — 05/29/90
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

==========

Amended Items in Nomination:

8. Statement of Significance: Level of Significance

All properties included in the multiple property nomination Operating Lighthouses in Connecticut were considered to meet the criteria within a statewide context.

10. Geographical Data: Acreage

The acreage is <1.

This information has been confirmed with John Herzan, National Register Coordinator, CTSHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without attachment)

Form No 10-306 (Rev 10-74)

1478

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 24 1989
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Tongue Point Lighthouse, Bridgeport Breakwater Light, The Buglight, The Inner Harbor Light

AND/OR COMMON
The Bug Light

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Eastern tip of Welle's Tongue Point, west side of Bridgeport Harbor. — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Bridgeport — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE
Connecticut

CODE

COUNTY
Fairfield

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
X STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	X TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
U.S. Coast Guard Third District, Governors Island
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
New York — VICINITY OF

STATE
New York 10004

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC
U.S. Coast Guard Third District, Legal Dept., Governors Island
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
New York

STATE
New York 10004

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
see thematic form

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	_DETERIORATED	_UNALTERED	_ORIGINAL SITE
XGOOD	_RUINS	XALTERED	XMOVED DATE 1919
_FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Tongue Point Lighthouse, (Light List #1163/5), also known as the Bridgeport Breakwater Lighthouse or "The Bug Light," was established in 1894 and marks the eastern end of a point of land, Tongue or Wells Point, which extends into Bridgeport Harbor from the western shore. This small, conical cast-iron lighthouse, presently painted black, supports an octagonal lantern with a peaked roof and rests on a concrete foundation, surrounded by riprap. The lighthouse originally stood 350 feet east of its present location on a breakwater constructed in 1891. In 1919 the breakwater was demolished as a hazard to shipping, and the lighthouse moved to its present location.

The present foundation, measuring 10 feet in height, is 21 feet square at the base and 15 feet square at the top. The tower, measuring 12 feet 3 inches in diameter at the base, rises 22 feet to the lantern deck. A segmentally-arched entrance opening is located on the west side, its metal plate door sheltered by an unornamented cast-iron hood. Other architectural detail is minimal, concentrated at the upper end of the tower where the only window openings are located. Simple cast-iron brackets with open triangular centers support a lantern gallery and cover the vertical seams in the top course of cast-iron plates. At their outer edge, the brackets are joined to stanchions of the gallery railing by rods threaded through sleeves and anchored by bulbous pendants. Four evenly-spaced porthole windows are located at the level of the molded joint between the upper and middle courses of cast-iron plates; the joint itself serves as trim around the upper half of the windows. Painted or stenciled numbers which aided in on-site assembly are visible on the inside of cast-iron plates, on deck plates, and on brass or bronze lantern fittings. There is no brick lining within the cast-iron shell. A winding cast-iron stair around the outer periphery leads to the hatch door in the watchroom floor, while a curved ship's ladder provides access to the lantern from the watchroom. Through the center of the tower rises a cast-iron column which supports the floor of the watchroom. The watchroom floor is made of wedge-shaped iron segments, bolted together. The floor of the lantern, of similar construction, contains eight porthole windows to the watchroom below. Eight glass panes occupy the upper half of the lantern walls, while metal wall panels, containing two kinds of circular ventilators, occupy the lower half. A double-leafed, double-walled metal door opens onto the west side of the lantern deck directly above the lighthouse entrance. The octagonal peaked lantern roof rests on a two-part stepped

See Continuation Sheet

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Tongue Point Lighthouse

metal cornice and supports a spherical ventilator on a beak molding, topped by a lightning rod. Presently, the lantern houses an automated flashing green electric light with a plastic Fresnel-type lens. It replaced the original fourth order lantern of 1894.

Some rare survivors of aids to navigation apparatus remain on site. The fog-bell stands outside the east wall of the tower. Inscribed "1881/U.S. Lighthouse Establishment," it predates the lighthouse, and most likely was brought from another location in 1899. An early fog whistle had proved inadequate and was replaced with an electric motor gong fog apparatus which had been tested at the General Lighthouse Depot in 1897. It too proved unsatisfactory and was discontinued for repair on March 30, 1898. Described as an electric bell-striker which operated every 30 seconds, this system finally was discontinued on October 5, 1898 and was replaced on March 15, 1899 with a 10,000 blow machine which struck every 8 seconds with a 160 pound bell. The bell-striking mechanism remains on the east side of the ground floor, while 15 of the 150 pound weights used to activate the clockwork mechanism remain within the hollow cast-iron central column or in a stack nearby. Attachments for pulleys and holes for the cords remain as well. Moreover, a large rack for the acetylene fuel tanks stands against the south wall of the tower on the ground floor. Some of its tubing remains in place.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION	
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE	
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE	
_1600-1699	_ARCHITECTURE	_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
_1700-1799	_ART	X ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER	
X 1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION	
_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		_INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES built 1894 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tongue Point Lighthouse is significant for its associations with the nineteenth century program of improvements for navigation in the Bridgeport Harbor area. These improvements were crucial to the development of the industrial base of the city. Tongue Point Lighthouse is also significant as a typical example of the smaller version of the Lighthouse Board's standard design of the later nineteen century pre-fabricated cast-iron tower, which could be mass produced in standard units, yet adapted to individual sites. This lighthouse also played a role in the development of fog signal devices, one of the major technical frontiers remaining in the lighthouse service in the late nineteenth century. In addition, a rare assemblage of fog-signal apparatus remains on this site: the fog bell, the clockwork striking mechanism, and the weights within the center column.

Until the 1840s Bridgeport's Harbor development lagged behind that of neighboring cities with better natural harbors. With the advent of the railroad era, Bridgeport businessmen were awarded federal contracts to dredge a ship channel and build breakwaters so that freight and passenger vessels could connect with rail lines at Bridgeport. As a transshipment location, development of the Bridgeport waterfront was assured. In the 1870s the channel in the inner harbor was widened; in 1891 a harbor of refuge was created there behind a breakwater, constructed by Brown and Flemming of New York, extending eastward 11,000 feet from Welles or Tongue Point to the site of an inner beacon. Local lobbying efforts succeeded in obtaining federal appropriations in 1893 and 1894, totalling $4,500.00 to build a special foundation on the east end of the breakwater for the construction of a cast-iron lighthouse.

Lt. Col. D. P. Heap of the Lighthouse Board supervised the installation of a 31 feet high conical lighthouse, made up of flanged, curved sections bolted together to form rings. This was a standard design used by the Lighthouse Board between 1873 and ca. 1910. Of two stories surmounted by a lantern, the tower's lower story was used for storage and the second story for a watchroom and record storage. Unlike many of the water-surrounded lighthouses, this smaller version of the type had no living-quarters within. Perhaps because of its short profile, it acquired the nickname of "The Bug" or the "The Buglight".

On March 1, 1895 a lantern light was removed and a sixth order lens lantern established in the completed lighthouse. In 1896 a landing

See Continuation Sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.02 acre

UTM REFERENCES see location map

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A				B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

see site plan

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

see thematic form

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dorothy B. Templeton/Historian

ORGANIZATION
John Milner Associates, Inc.

DATE
October 22, 1985

STREET & NUMBER
309 North Matlack Street

TELEPHONE
(215) 436-9000

CITY OR TOWN
West Chester

STATE
Pennaylvania 19380

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X NO ____ NONE ____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 5/29/90

~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~

ATTEST: DATE

~~KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER~~

GPO 899-214

wharf for small boats was built on the breakwater, since the keeper had to row out to perform his daily tasks.

In 1897, a Congressional appropriation of $1200 was made to establish an electrically operated gong fog-signal. This fog-signal was being developed in the General Lighthouse Depot on Staten Island. However, the invention proved unreliable. Discontinued for repair on March 30, 1898, it was decommissioned seven months later and replaced in March 1899 with a 160 pound fog-bell. During fog conditions the bell was struck every eight seconds by a system of clockwork and weights. Although the mechanism was a 10,000 blow machine, it required attendance for starting and ending operation, as well as for rewinding during extended periods of fog. This clockwork mechanism along with the fog bell and the 150 pound weights, remains in place at Tongue Point Lighthouse.

In 1904 a reservation to contain a keeper's dwelling and garden was proposed in a sketch by the Third District's Engineer. The reservation was to be located at the inland end of the plank walk which had been installed in 1900. In 1906 the Annual Report of the Lighthouse Board reported that the keeper had, at this own expense, erected a small shanty in which he slept nightly "so as to start the fog signal at short notice." An appropriation of $5,000 was requested for erecting a dwelling, but no such action was taken, and within a decade, plans were underway to move "The Bug" (or "The Buglight") to a new location on shore.

Ships' captains had complained about the sharp turn they had to make around the Tongue Point or Inner Breakwater on their way into Bridgeport's Inner Harbor. In 1919, 350 feet of the inner breakwater was removed and added to the outer breakwaters. A Lighthouse Department derrick was employed to move the Tongue Point Lighthouse to a new reinforced concrete foundation, located 275 feet closer to shore. As an additional accommodation to large vessels, the 18 feet deep channel was dredged to a depth of 22 feet and a width of 300 feet.

The significance of "The Bug Light" at Tongue Point in the local maritime situation was demonstrated in 1967, when the possible discontinuance of the light and fog signal was vigorously protested.

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Tongue Point Lighthouse

"A New Lighthouse," Bridgeport Standard, January 16, 1891.

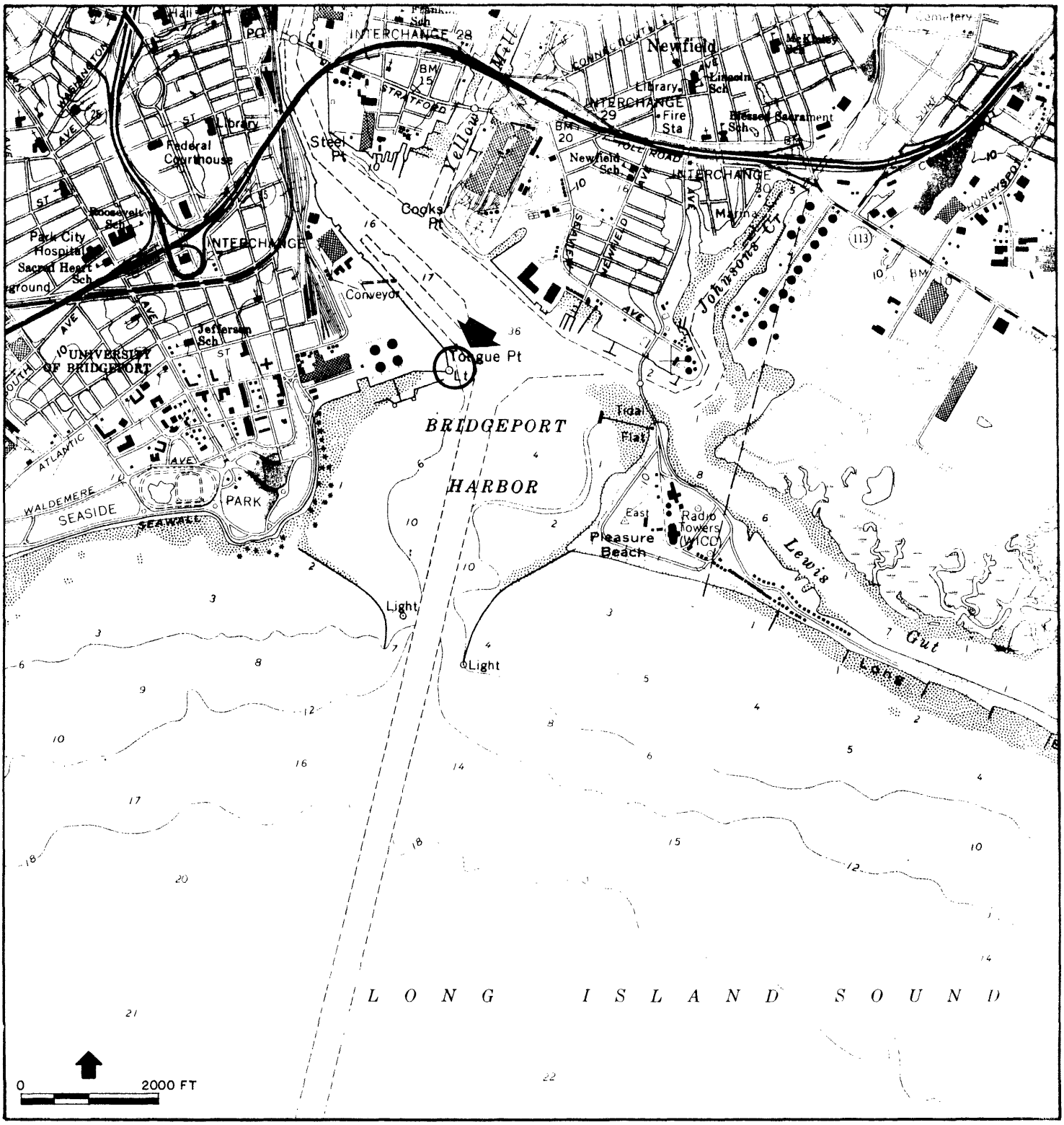
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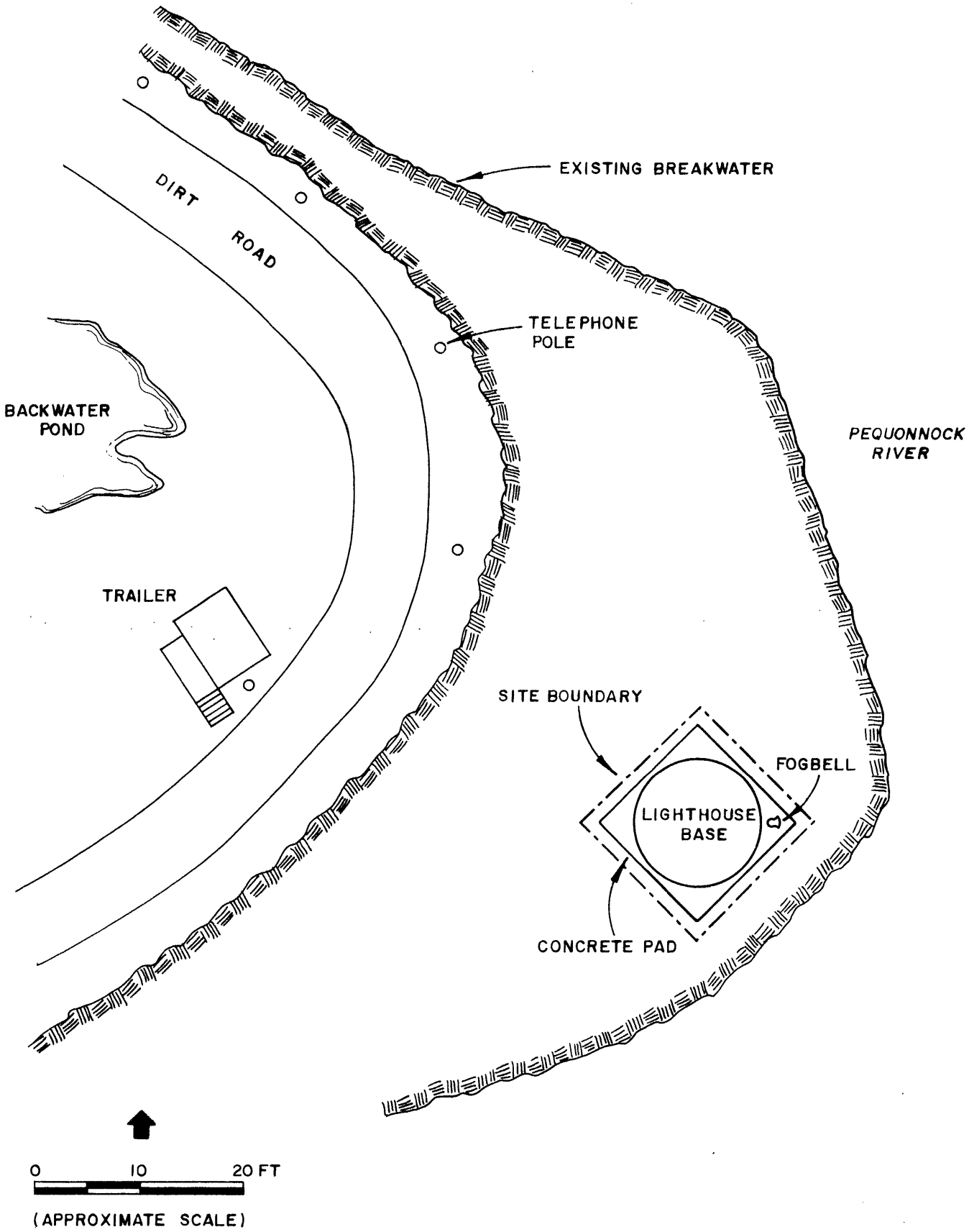


QUADRANGLE LOCATION

TONGUE POINT LIGHTHOUSE
Fairfield County, Connecticut

Bridgeport, Connecticut Quadrangle, 1970
1:24000

UTM References:
18.652820.4558600



SITE PLAN

TONGUE POINT LIGHTHOUSE
Fairfield County, Connecticut

Description (continued):

In 1989, Tongue Point Lighthouse was re-photographed and examined in the field in order to bring the National Register documentation fully up to date. Following are the features or characteristics of the lighthouse that differ from its condition and appearance as described in the National Register Inventory/Nomination form prepared in 1985:

> The watchroom floor, described in 1985 as "made of wedge-shaped iron segments, bolted together," is made of reinforced concrete. Spalling of the concrete and corrosion of the exposed reinforcement indicate that this floor was probably in place in 1985 as well.
>
> The fog bell that once stood outside the east wall of the tower has been removed; the only signs of it are the twisted and broken-off brackets that once supported the bell.
>
> The bell-striking mechanism and the rack for acetylene tanks have been removed from the first-floor interior.

Tongue Point Lighthouse still retains the requisite degree of integrity for National Register eligibility.

All photographs:

1. TONGUE POINT LIGHTHOUSE
2. Bridgeport, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. March 1989
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT

West elevation, camera facing east
Photograph 1 of 7

Watch deck and lantern, camera facing east
Photograph 2 of 7

Iron door, camera facing southeast
Photograph 3 of 7

Broken-off brackets for fog bell, camera facing northeast
Photograph 4 of 7

Concrete watchroom floor; ladder to lantern at left, central structural column to right; the hole in the floor allows passage of the rope that operating the bell-striking mechanism.
Photograph 5 of 7

Watchroom ceiling (lantern floor)
Photograph 6 of 7

Floor of lower level, showing hollow structural column with weights for the pulley mechanism that actuated the bell-striker.
Photograph 7 of 7