MAGI # 2104770623 T-477

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED 24

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Sharps Island Light

AND/OR COMMON
Sharps Island Light

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Tilghman Island

X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First

STATE
Maryland

CODE
24

COUNTY
Talbot

CODE
041

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	XX PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	XX UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
XX STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	XX GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		XX NO	__MILITARY	XX OTHER Navigati

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District

STREET & NUMBER
431 Crawford Street

CITY, TOWN
Portsmouth

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Virginia 23705

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Same As # 4

STREET & NUMBER
Logistics & Property Branch

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

[7] DESCRIPTION

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CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	XX DETERIORATED	XX UNALTERED	XX ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE___
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The first light was a small wooden house with lamp housing on top, 30 feet above the ground on the northwest tip of Sharps Island.

With the threat of further erosion of the island, a new screwpile structure was erected approximately one (1) mile east of the previous position. In 1881, the house was carried away by ice causing the need for a third structure.

The third and present structure is a 14' diameter steel shell over brick, on a 30' diameter steel caisson having four stories plus the light tower and a basement. The interior was much like some of the other caisson towers built on the Bay, consisting of kitchen, O-I-C Quarters, watch room and quarters for two assigned watchstanders.

The 54 foot high brown tower, which was once painted purple, is situated in 10 feet of water. The nominal visibility is 10 miles to sea.

On October 1, 1957, the light was converted from 10V battery pack to electricity.

The light started to lean as early as 1973 and leans even further as the result of extremely heavy ice in the winter of 1976.

The 4th order lens was removed May 3, 1977 and replaced with a 250 MM plastic lens. The installed fog alarm system sounds from 15 September to 1 June.

SIGNIFICANCE

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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	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
XX1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	XX OTHER (SPECIFY) Navigation
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1882 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sharps Island Light was required to guide mariners away from the shoals off Poplar Island and Black Walnut Point. The Lighthouse Service decided on the location even though it was known from earlier maps and charts that the island was suffering severe erosion having diminished from 700 acres in 1675 to 480 acres in 1838 when the first light was built.

An act by the Maryland General Assembly on April 6, 1874 provided for "the relinquishment to the United States, title and jurisdiction over land for sites of lighthouses, beacons and other aids".

Ten acres of land was acquired by deed in fee simple and in consideration of the sum of $600.00 from Joseph A. Reynolds and his wife Ann, on August 13, 1837 for the construction of the first light. The structure built by Thomas Evans was designed so it could be easily moved in the event that the severe erosion of the island further threatened the light.

As anticipated by the Lighthouse Service, the light was in fact threatened and plans were made to relocate the light.

A tract of land measuring 10.2 acres assessed at a value of $1,022.00 was acquired by condemnation on June 13, 1848. By this time the size of the island had decreased to 438 acres.

In 1864 the Lighthouse Board reported to Congress that "the lighthouse at Sharps Island in Chesapeake Bay is in imminent danger of being destroyed by the washing away of the bank on which it stands". The absence of the usually severe winter in 1865 granted the lighthouse a reprieve. In 1866 a second structure was built but it too was ill-fated. On February 10, 1881, the house was lifted from it's foundation and carried away by the heavy moving ice floes.

The following year, in 1882, the present lighthouse was built on a five acre circular plot deeded from the state of Maryland on February 16, 1878.

A 1950 U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey chart showed the island to be about 300 yards long near the center. There is nothing in the records on hand to indicate the size of the island at the time the light was automated in August 1951.

The site was visited by a Coast Guard Survey Board on August 3, 1955. Their report states the island had diminished to about 300 yards. The total acquired acreage (25.2) was deeded back to the state of Maryland by deed dated October 8, 1957 to clear the real estate records. The island has completely disappeared.

The light is presently serving as an unmanned aid to mariners in the area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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de Gast, Robert; The Lighthouses of The Chesapeake
Baltimore; The John Hopkins University Press, 1973

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5 (under water)

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	380935	4277340	B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Boundary of property 263.3 feet out from center in any direction.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
CW04 D. M. HANLEY - Special Projects Officer

ORGANIZATION
Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District

DATE

STREET & NUMBER
431 Crawford Street

TELEPHONE
(804) 398-6356

CITY OR TOWN
Portsmouth

STATE
Virginia 23705

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Sharps Island Light

AND/OR COMMON
Sharps Island Light

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN
Tilghman Island

XX VICINITY OF

COUNTY
Talbot

STATE
Maryland

3 MAP REFERENCE

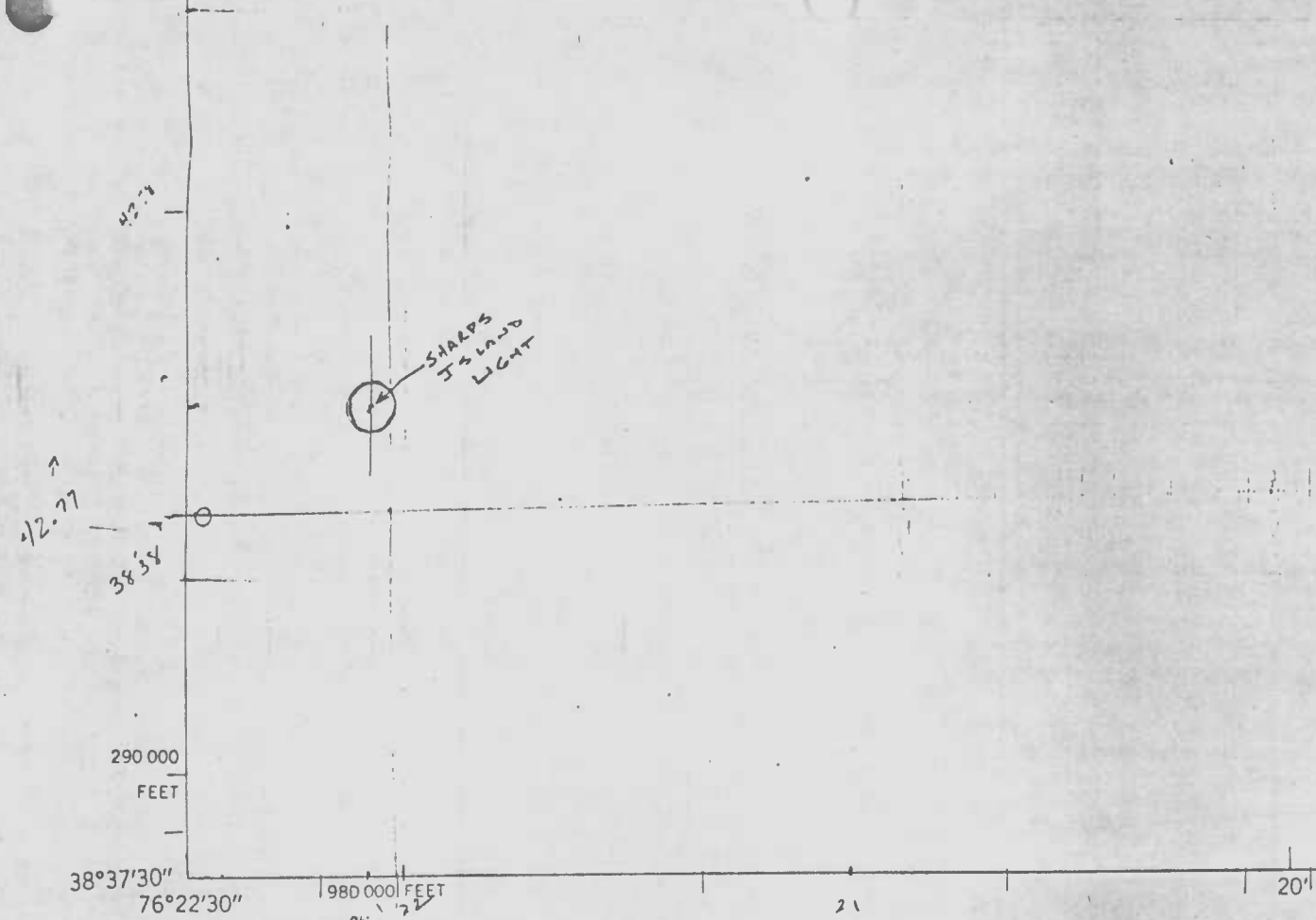
SOURCE U.S. Department of The Interior, Geological Survey

SCALE 1:24000 (7.5 Minute Series) DATE 1942

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 3464

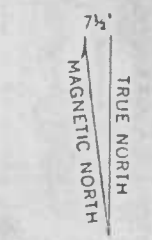


Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey

Control by USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods and by planetable surveys 1942. Aerial photographs taken 1942

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue



APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION, 1942

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A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC M

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Form No 10-301a
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Sharps Island Light

AND/OR COMMON
Sharps Island Light

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Tilghman Island XX VICINITY OF COUNTY Talbot STATE Maryland

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT US Coast Guard DATE OF PHOTO 1979

NEGATIVE FILED AT
Fifth CG District, 431 Crawford St., Ports., VA 23705

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET PHOTO NO.

Aerial view 001

Sharps Island Lighthouse T-477

.15 x 1.98 477 43%