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ABSTRACT

The original Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station (North Carolina) is a reminder of the stations constructed by the U.S. Lifesaving Service during its 44-year existence (1871-1915). The original station building was among the first seven constructed on North Carolina's treacherous Outer Banks in 1874. A larger building was added in 1904, and the site remained active under the U.S. Coast Guard until 1954, when it was decommissioned and transferred to the National Park Service as a part of Cape Hatteras National Seashore. It still stands among the windblown sands of Hatteras Island (North Carolina), untouched by development, a monument to the lifesavers it once housed. This lesson plan is based on the National Register of Historic Places for Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving/Coast Guard Station and primary sources about the station's activities. The lesson can be used in U.S. history, social studies, and geography course units on 19th-century commerce or transportation, civics, or the chronological period after Reconstruction. The teacher materials include: information about the lesson plan and how to use it, where it fits into the curriculum, objectives for students, visiting the site, and supplementary resources. The student materials include seven sections: "Getting Started"; "Photograph Analysis Worksheet"; "Setting the Stage"; "Locating the Site" (two maps); "Determining the Facts" (A Noble Service; Instructions to Mariners; Personal Testimonies); "Visual Evidence" (Photos: Lifesaving Crew, 1890s; Little Kinnakeet, 1890s; Little Kinnakeet C.G. Station; Thursday's Drill); and "Putting It All Together" (Activities: Shipwrecks and Rescues; Beach Patrol; Today's Lifesavers). (BT)

Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station: Home to Unsung Heroes. Teaching with Historic Places.

Chris Eckard
Fay Metcalf, Editor

National Park Service (Dept. of Interior),
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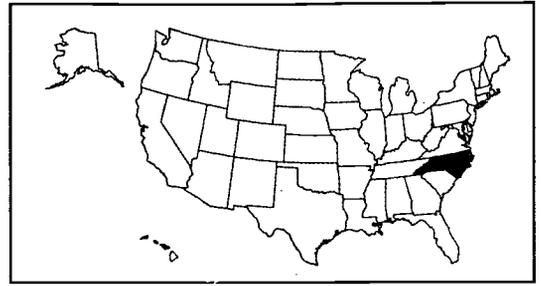
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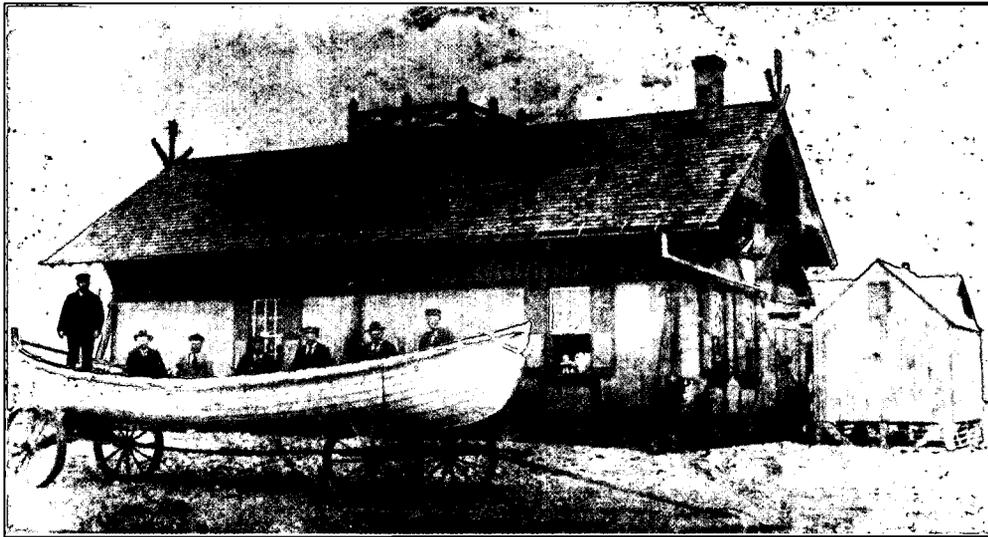
Teaching with Historic Places

Lesson Plan Series



A Program of the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places

Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station: Home to Unsung Heroes



National Park Service

Bellowing its rage like a thunderous symphony, the Atlantic Ocean throws itself once more against the narrow bastion of North Carolina's barrier islands. Storm winds shriek above the roaring breakers, and carry with them a blinding flurry of sand and sea-foam. Bird and beast alike have fled the unyielding fury of the storm, for nothing can withstand this powerful onslaught of nature. Merciless waves will overwhelm ships caught in the turmoil or drive them ashore to be smashed to pieces in the pounding surf. Yet for this very reason a lifesaver from Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station struggles amidst this forbidding storm, patrolling the beach in search of shipwrecks where mariners might be in need of assistance.

Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station is an excellent reminder of the stations constructed by the U.S. Lifesaving Service (U.S.L.S.S.) during its 44-year existence (1871-1915). The original station building was among the first seven constructed on North Carolina's treacherous Outer Banks in 1874. A larger building was added in 1904, and the site remained active under the U.S. Coast Guard until 1954, when it was decommissioned and transferred to the National Park Service as a part of Cape Hatteras National Seashore. It still stands among the windblown sands of Hatteras Island, untouched by development and a poignant monument to the lifesavers it once housed.

Featuring Reproducible Maps, Documents, and Historical Photographs
to Enrich U.S. History, Social Studies, and Geography Units on
Commerce, Transportation, Maritime History, and Civics.

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government agency that often has been forgotten but was responsible for saving more than 175,000 lives during its 44 years of operation. In 1915 the U.S.L.S.S. merged with the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service to become the U.S. Coast Guard.

Time Period: 1870s to 1910s.

Objectives for students

- To understand why the Federal Government took an active role in protecting mariners by creating the U.S. Lifesaving Service.
- To explain the nature of duty in the U.S.L.S.S., including the daily routine and rescue activities.
- To describe how the U.S.L.S.S. was perceived by some of the Atlantic Coast sailors whose lives were saved.
- To examine modern rescue methods in their community and to compare them to U.S. Lifesaving Service operations.

Visiting the site

Located within Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station is 3.5 miles north of Avon, North Carolina, off NC Highway 12 on Hatteras Island. Although preservation work is planned for the station structures, and they are not presently open to the public, visitors to the site are still welcome. Year-round exhibits and summer interpretive programs about lifesaving history are presented at the National Park Service's Hatteras Island Visitor Center in Buxton, North Carolina. For more information, contact the Superintendent, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Route 1, Box 675, Manteo, North Carolina 17954, or visit the park's Web site at www.nps.gov/caha.

Supplementary resources

Students (or educators) wishing to learn more about the U.S.L.S.S. may want to read: Joe Mobley, *Ship Ashore! The U.S. Lifesavers of Coastal North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1944); Dennis Noble, *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994); and David Stick, *Graveyard of the Atlantic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1952).

About This Lesson Plan

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file for Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving/Coast Guard Station and primary sources about the station's activities. Materials on pages 1-16 are designed to be removed and duplicated for students. (See back page for more instructions.) *Little Kinnakeet* was written by Chris Eckard, former Historian at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The lesson was edited by Fay Metcalf, education consultant, and the Teaching with Historic Places staff. For information on other TwHP lessons, visit the program's Web site at www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp.

Where the lesson fits into the curriculum

Topics: The lesson could be used in U.S. history, social studies, and geography courses in units on 19th-century commerce or transportation, civics, or the chronological period after Reconstruction. *Little Kinnakeet* will help students understand the need for the U.S. Lifesaving Service (U.S.L.S.S.), a

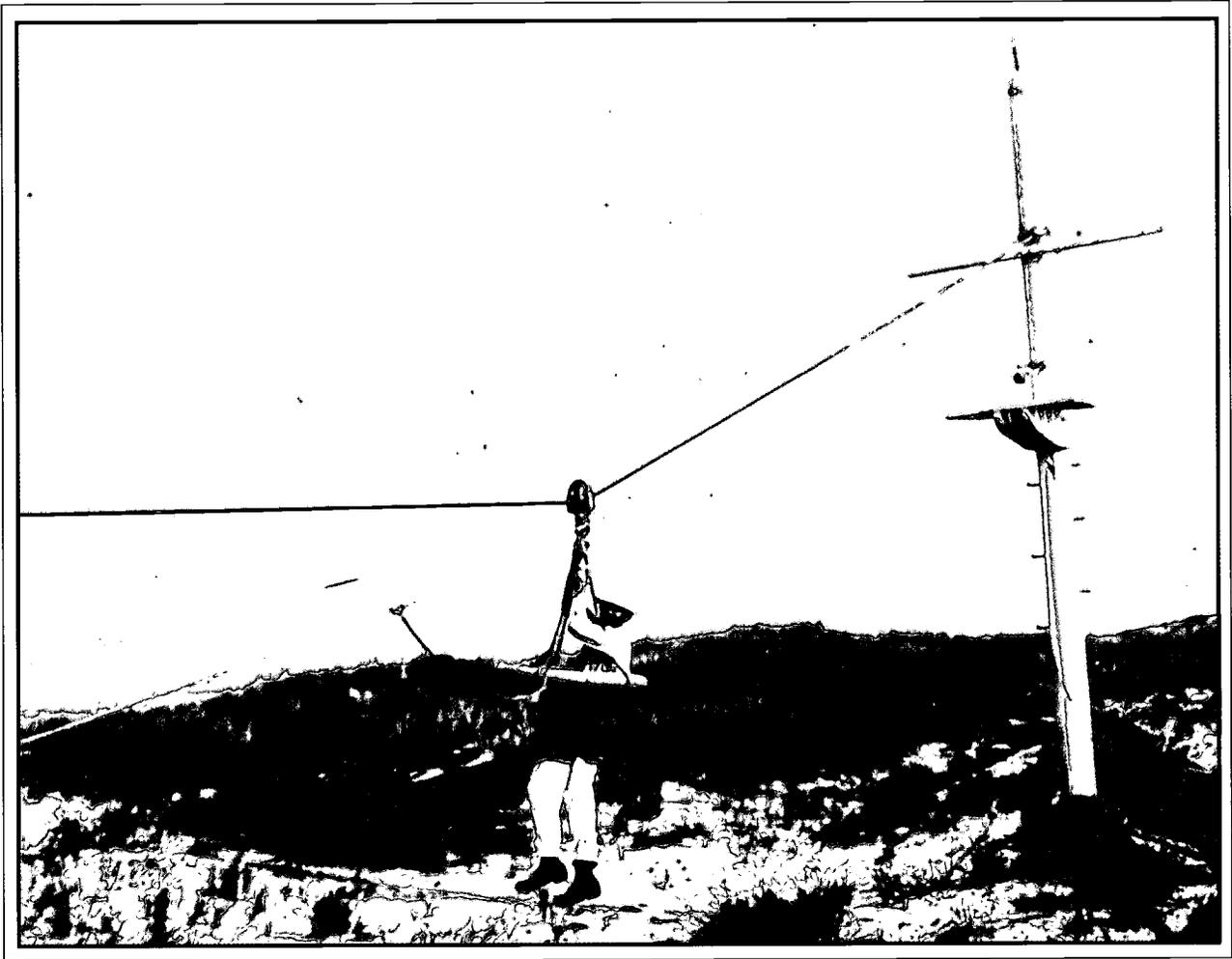
Setting the Stage

Remind students of the important role the sea has played in transportation and commerce throughout our nation's history. An unfortunate consequence of the nation's dependence on water transportation in the 18th and 19th centuries was the death of sailors and passengers due to shipwrecks. In the late 18th

(continued on inside back cover)



Getting Started



What might this man be doing?
Why do you think so?





Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1

Examine the photograph for 10 seconds. How would you describe the photograph?

Step 2

Divide the photograph into quadrants and study each section individually. What details--such as people, objects, activities--do you notice?

Step 3

What other information--such as time period, location, season, reason photograph was taken--can you gather from the photograph?

Step 4

How would you revise your first description of the photograph using the information noted in steps 2 and 3?

Step 5

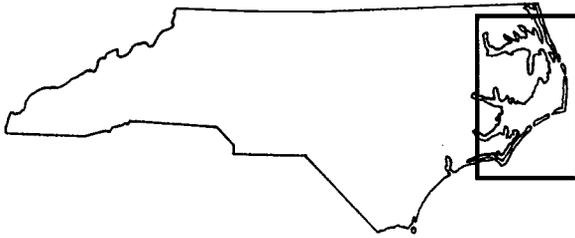
What questions do you have about the photograph?
How might you find answers to these questions?



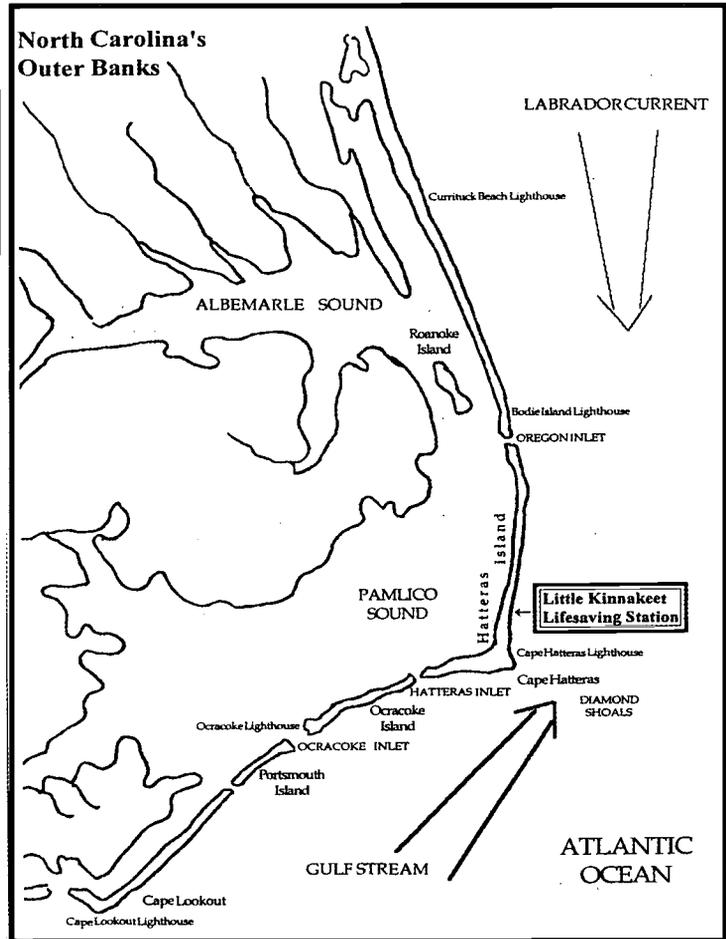


Locating the Site

Map 1: *The Outer Banks of North Carolina.*



In 1874, the U.S.L.S.S. expanded its operation to include seven stations on North Carolina's Outer Banks, a string of sandy barrier islands separating the mainland from the Atlantic Ocean. Due to the proximity of coastal shipping lanes, prevalent storms, strong currents, and deadly shoals, this once isolated and desolate area (centered on Cape Hatteras) saw many shipwrecks and earned a grim designation as "The Graveyard of the Atlantic."



National Park Service

Questions for Map 1

1. Identify the barrier islands known as the Outer Banks on both maps. Why do you think they are called "barrier islands"? Why was this region a likely area for shipwrecks and lifesaving activities?
2. What other aids to navigation are evident? Why were they important?
3. Use a dictionary, encyclopedia, or other reference book to define the Labrador Current and Gulf Stream. What might happen when these two currents meet?
4. Why might seafarers have risked navigating these notoriously treacherous waters?

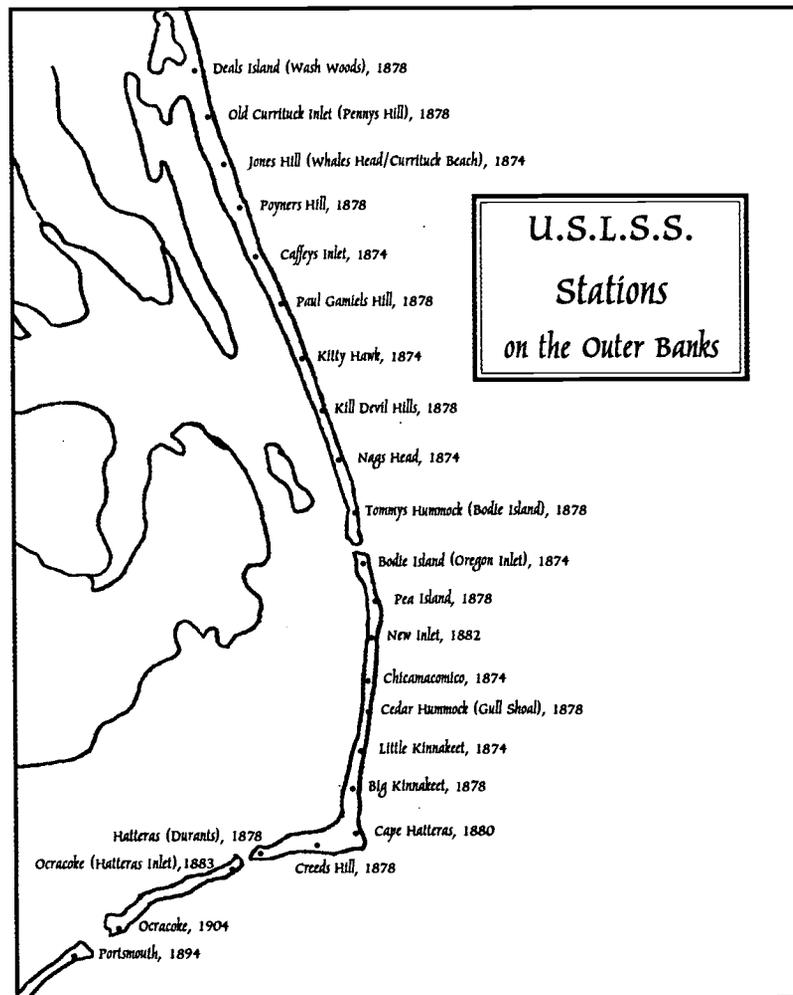




Locating the Site

Map 2: U.S.L.S.S. stations on the Outer Banks.

Little Kinakeet Lifesaving Station was among the first seven stations constructed on North Carolina's treacherous Outer Banks in 1874.



National Park Service

Questions for Map 2

1. Highlight the seven original U.S.L.S.S. stations.
2. What was the nearest station to Little Kinnakeet in 1874? When were closer stations built?
3. How many stations were constructed on the Outer Banks? Does this number surprise you? Why or why not?





Determining the Facts

Reading 1: A Noble Service

Establishing the United States Lifesaving Service was not an easy job. Limited federal funding allowed for the construction of stations, purchasing of equipment, and the hiring of crews. The U.S.L.S.S. experienced a number of growing pains because there was no lifesaving tradition in this country to serve as an example. Fortunately, Sumner L. Kimball, the first superintendent of the U.S.L.S.S., suggested and implemented many good practices. Emphasizing training and inspections, selection and use of proper rescue equipment, and overall professionalism, Kimball brought the Service through its early hardships. He was largely responsible for making it the successful, noble, and heroic agency it became.

Once a new lifesaving station was established, a Keeper was chosen and placed in charge of recruiting lifesavers or “surfmen.” Men with fishing, boating, or coastal water experience received preference. Applicants had to pass a swimming test as well as a strict medical exam. Once accepted, the life of a surfman was carefully regimented under the overall command of the Keeper. On the East Coast, surfmen served only during the winter when wrecks were much more likely to occur. The Keeper, however, lived at the station throughout the year. Surfmen worked in units that usually included eight men. Each received a ranking according to his experience and duties.

The surfmen took shifts performing various duties each day and night. One lifesaver kept watch from the watchtower, while two others patrolled the beach on either side of the station. Every surfman also was responsible for cooking one day of the week. A weekly training schedule was established for all U.S.L.S.S. crews. Each day of the week was dedicated to a particular aspect of lifesaving duty: Monday for inspecting the equipment; Tuesday for lifeboat practice; Wednesday for signal training; Thursday for the beach apparatus drill; Friday for practicing resuscitation (similar to modern CPR); and Saturday for cleaning and polishing everything at the station. Sunday was a day off. Day after day, week after week, they followed this routine. The pattern was broken only by shipwreck rescues or inspections by the district superintendent.

Such a strict regime made the crew proficient and ready to use the standard U.S.L.S.S. rescue procedures. For the most daring of the two main types of rescues, lifesavers rowed to the wreck in surfboats, which they pulled to the shore by horse and wagon and then launched into the pounding surf. If the surf was too high or the vessel was close to the shore, the surfmen used the beach apparatus method. This procedure involved using a small cannon—a wreck gun—to fire a line out to the wreck that could be recovered by the crew and attached to their ship. The secured line carried a breeches buoy, a life ring with short trouser legs into which one person at a time climbed and was pulled from the wreck by surfmen. Lifesavers hauled the breeches buoy back and forth to the wreck until the last person, usually the captain, was safe.



The surfmen of the U.S. Lifesaving Service established an impressive record of success and bravery. Seafarers came to depend upon these men as a constant presence, a source of hope amidst the wrath of the sea. Sensational and dramatic rescues drew newspaper headlines and widespread praise, but it was the drudgery of constant drill, the misery of nightly beach patrol in the worst of weather, and an ongoing dedication to duty that earned the life savers the respect and gratitude of seamen from all over the world.

By 1900 ships were built of steel and were machine-powered, thus no longer completely dependent on winds. As improvements in navigational aids and equipment were made, ships no longer had to stay as close to the shore and were less likely to run aground. Accordingly, the need for lifesaving stations diminished. In 1915 the U.S.L.S.S. and the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service combined to create the U.S. Coast Guard. Today, it is easy to underestimate the challenges faced by the U.S. Lifesaving Service and to take its efforts for granted. No one knows how many lives were lost before the Service was established, but it is known that during its 44-year existence, the U.S.L.S.S. saved 177,286 lives. Modern technology has changed the nature of lifesaving, but today's Coast Guard crews continue

Questions for Reading 1

1. Who was the first superintendent of the U.S. Lifesaving Service? Why was his job difficult?
2. Why were some stations only manned part of the year?
3. Why do you think Kimball established a regimented training schedule for members of the U.S.L.S.S.?
4. Why did the need for lifesaving stations eventually decrease? What happened to the U.S.L.S.S. as a result?

Reading 1 was compiled from Jerome A. Greene, "Historic Structure Report, Historic Data Component: Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving and Coast Guard Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, North Carolina," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987; Karl Baarslag, Coast Guard to the Rescue (New York: Farrar & Rinehard, Inc., 1936); and Dennis L. Noble, That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994).

¹ Dennis Noble, *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 148.





Determining the Facts

Reading 2: Instructions to Mariners in Case of Shipwreck, 1894

Following is a portion of the material provided to mariners concerning the operations of the U.S. Lifesaving Service. The ship's captain was responsible for preparing his vessel and crew in the event of a disaster. By the time of this report in 1894, the U.S.L.S.S. maintained stations on the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf, and Great Lakes coasts. In addition to patrol and rescue operations, crews at these stations communicated with vessels offshore, using the flag system known as the International Code of Signals or hand held flares of different colors called Coston lights. Weather predictions, location (latitude and longitude) of the station, or ship damage were common types of information conveyed.

Instructions to Mariners in Case of Shipwreck, with Information Concerning the Life-Saving Stations Upon the Coasts of the United States. Prepared by Lieutenant C.H. MCLELLAN, U.S.R.C.S., Assistant Inspector Life-Saving Stations, under the Direction of the General Superintendent.

General Information

All life-saving stations on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts are manned annually by crews of experienced surfmen from the 1st of August to the 1st of June following. Upon the lake coasts the stations are manned from the opening until the close of navigation, and upon the Pacific coast they are opened and manned the year round.

All life-saving stations are fully supplied with boats, wreck guns, beach apparatus, restoratives, etc.

All services are performed by the life-saving crews without other compensation than their wages from the Government, and they are strictly forbidden to solicit or receive rewards.

Destitute seafarers are provided with food and lodgings at the nearest station by the Government as long as necessarily detained by the circumstances of shipwreck. The station crews patrol the beach from two to four miles each side of their stations four times between sunset and sunrise, and if the weather is foggy the patrol is continued through the day.

Each patrolman carries Coston signals. Upon discovering a vessel standing in danger he ignites one of them, which emits a brilliant red flame of about two minutes' duration, to warn her off, or should the vessel be ashore, to let the crew know that they are discovered and assistance is at hand.

If the vessel is not discovered by the patrol, immediately after striking, rockets or flare-up lights should be burned, or if the weather be foggy, guns should be fired to attract attention, as the patrolman may be some distance away on another part of his beat.

Continued on page 8



Masters are particularly cautioned, if they should be driven ashore anywhere in the neighborhood of the stations, especially on any of the sandy coasts, where there is not much danger of vessels breaking up immediately, to remain on board until assistance arrives, and under no circumstances should they attempt to land through the surf in their own boats until the last hope of assistance from the shore has vanished. Often when comparatively smooth at sea dangerous surf is running, which is not perceptible four hundred yards offshore, and the surf, when viewed from the vessel, never appears so dangerous as it is. Many lives have unnecessarily been lost by the crews of stranded vessels being thus deceived and attempting to land in the ship's boats.

The difficulties of rescue by operations from shore are greatly increased in cases where the anchors are let go after entering the breakers, as is frequently done, and the chances of saving life correspondingly lessened.

Rescue with the Lifeboat or Surfboat

The patrolman, after discovering your vessel ashore and burning a Coston signal, hastens to his station for assistance. If the use of a boat is practicable, either the large lifeboat is launched from its ways in the station and proceeds to the wreck by water or the lighter surfboat is hauled overland to a point opposite the wreck and launched, as circumstances may require.

Upon the boat reaching your vessel the directions and orders of the keeper (who always commands and steers the boat) should be implicitly obeyed. Any headlong rushing and crowding should be prevented, and the captain of the vessel should remain on board to preserve order until every other person has left.

Women, children, helpless persons, and passengers should be passed into the boat first. Goods or baggage will not be taken into the boat under any circumstances until all persons are landed. If any be passed in against the keeper's remonstrance he is fully authorized to throw it overboard.

Questions for Reading 2

1. What supplies did each lifesaving station have? Can you figure out the purpose of each item?
2. How could a ship in distress and lifesavers on shore communicate?
3. Under what circumstances should a ship's master (captain) and crew remain on board the wrecked vessel? Why?
4. What part of a lifeboat rescue do you think would be the most difficult? Why?
5. As a ship's captain, what information about the U.S.L.S.S. would you have considered the most important for your crew to know? If you were reading this information for the first time, what general opinion would you have about the U.S.L.S.S.?

Reading 2 was excerpted from Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1894 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895).





Determining the Facts

Reading 3: Personal Testimonies

Official U.S.L.S.S. reports explained the facts of a rescue in a straightforward style, but the human element was just as important as the physical details. The following excerpts from letters written to the U.S. Lifesaving Service demonstrate this fact.

Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station

August 18, 1899

We, the undersigned, captain and crew of the wrecked schooner Robert W. Casey, which was driven ashore by an east-northeast hurricane with very high surf and tide on August 17, 1899, at 5:30 p.m., wish to make the following statement:

At that time no person could have reached us, but as early as anything could possibly be done the life-saving crew were on hand with their beach apparatus ready to land us...then they took us upon the beach clear of the surf. They arrived at the wreck about 6 a.m. on August 18, 1899. After landing us they took us to the station three-quarters of a mile distant, and provided us with dry clothing, stimulants, and food; they gave us the very best treatment, and aided us in every possible way to save our effects so far as we could find them on board our vessel.

We also wish to say that these noble, gallant, and heroic life-savers do most dreadfully suffer hardships of life to save, protect, and take care of sailors who may be cast into their care. There was nothing left undone by the acting keeper and crew of the above-named station. They performed their duties most nobly.

Respectfully submitted.

*Julius Olsen, Master
Adolph Schick, Cook
Conrad Prescod
George Busby, Seamen*

*George W. Layfield, Mate
George Wilkins
H.P. Russell*

Excerpted from Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 204.



Avon, North Carolina

February 14, 1895

Sir:

On February 14, I was logged up with ice off Hatteras Banks, about 3 miles from land and without assistance, and being in a dangerous position I hoisted my flag at 8 A.M. At 9:30 A.M. the keeper and crew of Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station were discovered beating their way through the ice, coming to my assistance. They reached me at 11 o'clock, almost exhausted, wet, and cold. They took me in their boat and proceeded to shore, which we safely but narrowly reached at 1 P.M.

To the keeper and crew of Little Kinnakeet I owe my life, knowing that had it not been for their heroic labor and risk in endeavoring to take me ashore, I surely must have perished in consequence of the cold and dangerous position in which I was placed.

In Conclusion, allow me to congratulate them for their kindness.

I am your obedient Servant

*H. C. Miller, Master and Owner Sloop (sic)
Inez, of Avon, North Carolina*

Excerpted from Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1895 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 234.



Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station, North Carolina

May 28, 1900

Gentlemen:

Please accept thanks of myself and crew for your kindness in taking care of us and feeding us in our destitute condition, and for taking care of our schooner and cargo, which drifted ashore near your station May 6, 1900, until I arrived at Cape Hatteras Station, where I had been carried by the crew of that station, who rescued us from a small yawl on May 5, our vessel having been sunk off Cape Hatteras. I am glad, as a seaman, to be able from personal experience to recommend this crew for doing their whole duty. In conclusion, I wish to congratulate the general superintendent for having such good and accommodating men in his service as I have found during my stay here.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Sabiston, Master of the Schooner Hettie J. Dorman.

Excerpted from Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 211.



Questions for Reading 3

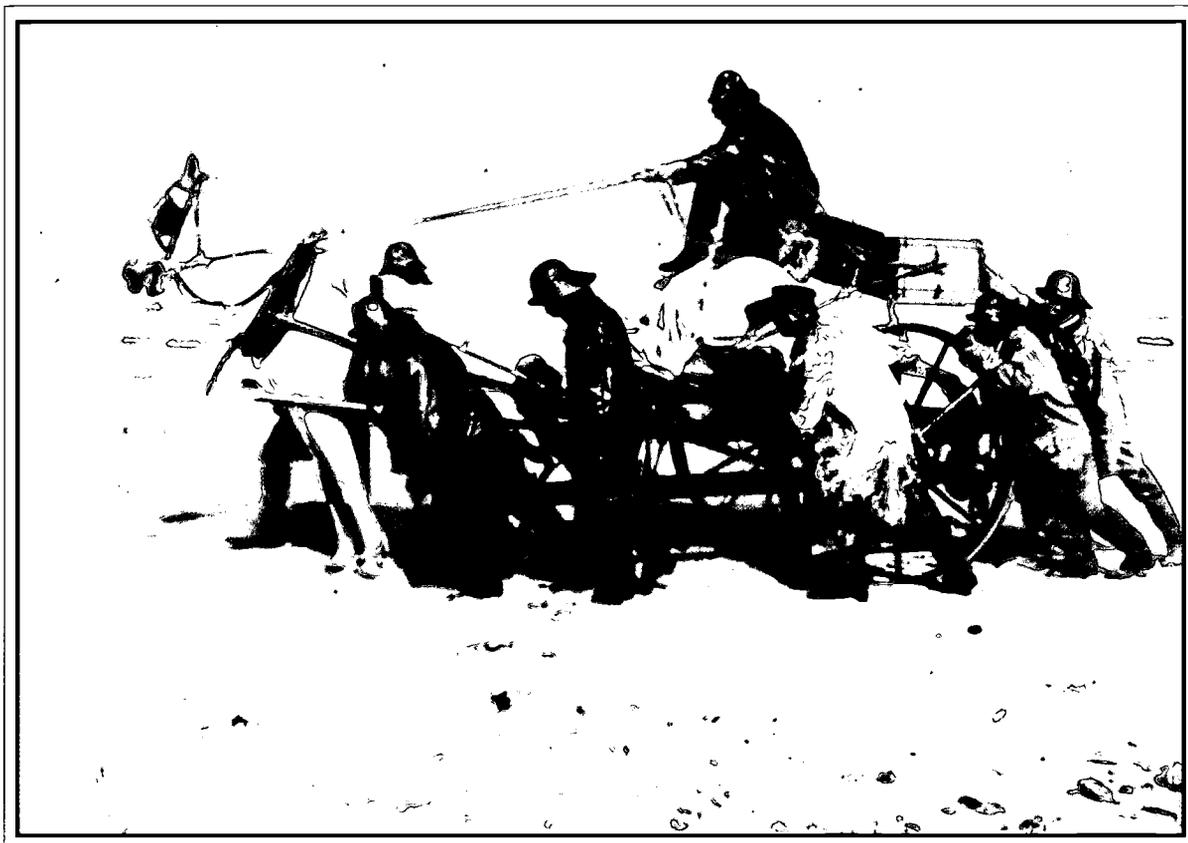
1. Why were these letters written?
2. What happened to each of these ships, and in what way were the captains and crews in need of assistance?
3. Why do you think it took so long to complete a rescue?
4. The rescue Captain Miller describes in his letter seems relatively simple, yet he terms it “heroic labor” by the keeper and crew of Little Kinnakeet. Why? For what reason does the crew of *Robert W. Casey* refer to the Little Kinnakeet life-savers as “noble, gallant, and heroic”?
5. What opinion of the U.S. Lifesaving Service as a whole do you get from these letters, and why?





Visual Evidence

Photo 1: A lifesaving crew with beach apparatus cart, ca. 1890s.



The Smithsonian Institution

Questions for Photo 1

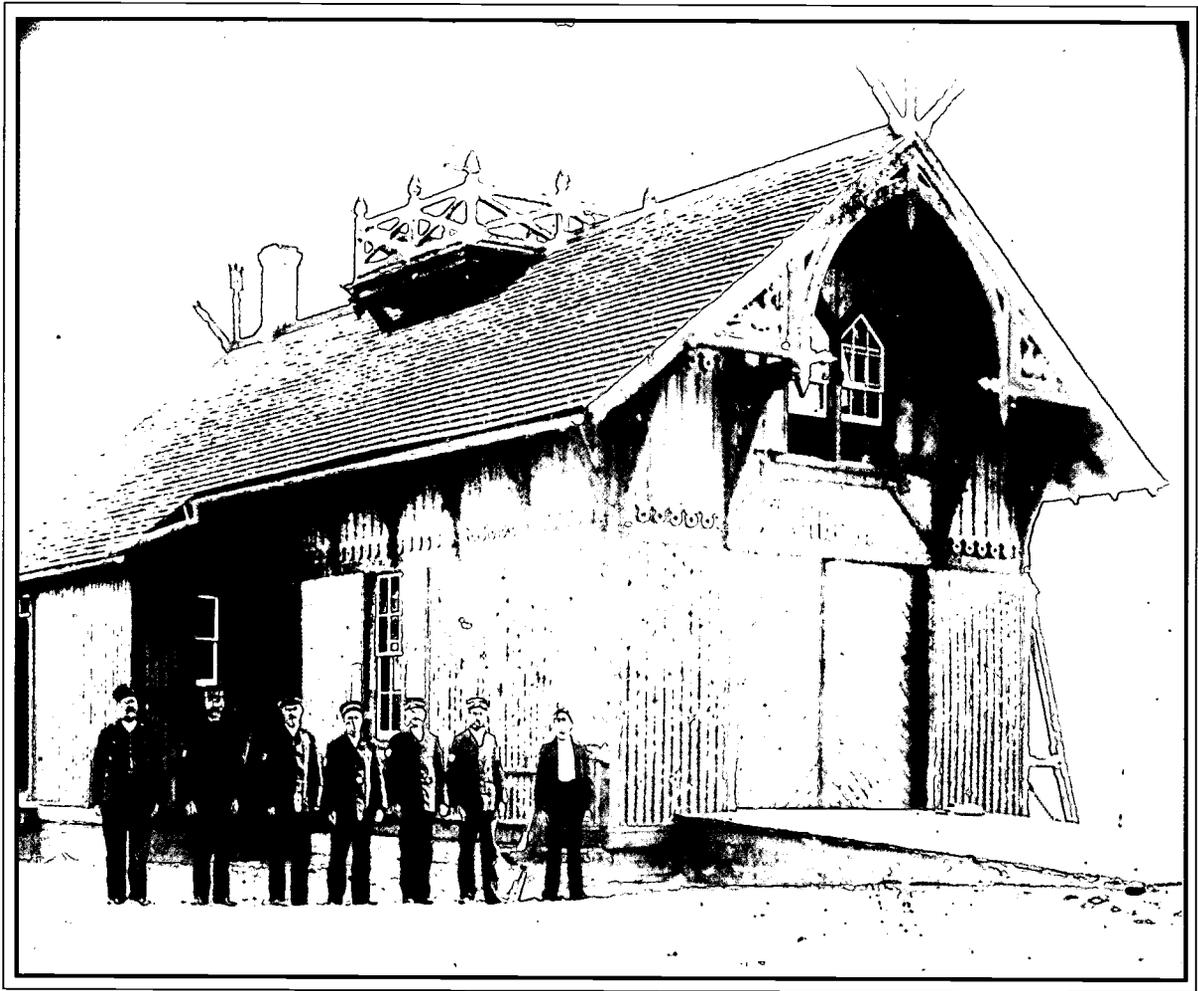
1. Describe what is taking place in the photo.
2. How difficult does it appear to have been to get lifesaving equipment a long distance down a beach? How might this have affected rescue attempts?





Visual Evidence

Photo 2: Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station and crew, ca. 1890s.



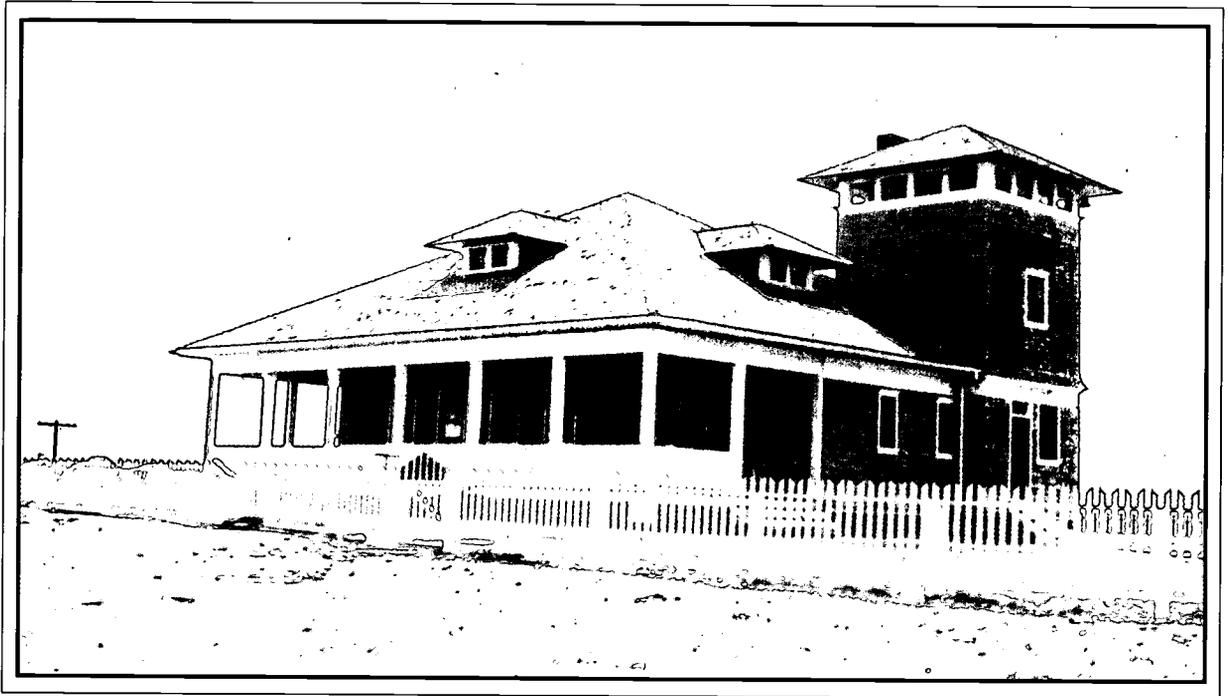
North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences





Visual Evidence

Photo 3: Little Kinnakeet Coast Guard Station, 1935.



U.S. Coast Guard

Little Kinnakeet was staffed by a keeper and six surfmen. It was not until the early 1900s that the station was occupied year round. The original station was converted to a boat-house in 1904 when a larger station was completed. The main floor of the new station included a large day room, the keeper's office, and a kitchen/pantry. The upper level had a large dorm room and the officer's bedroom. The site remained active under the U.S. Coast Guard until 1954, when it was decommissioned and transferred to the National Park Service as part of Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

Questions for Photos 2 and 3

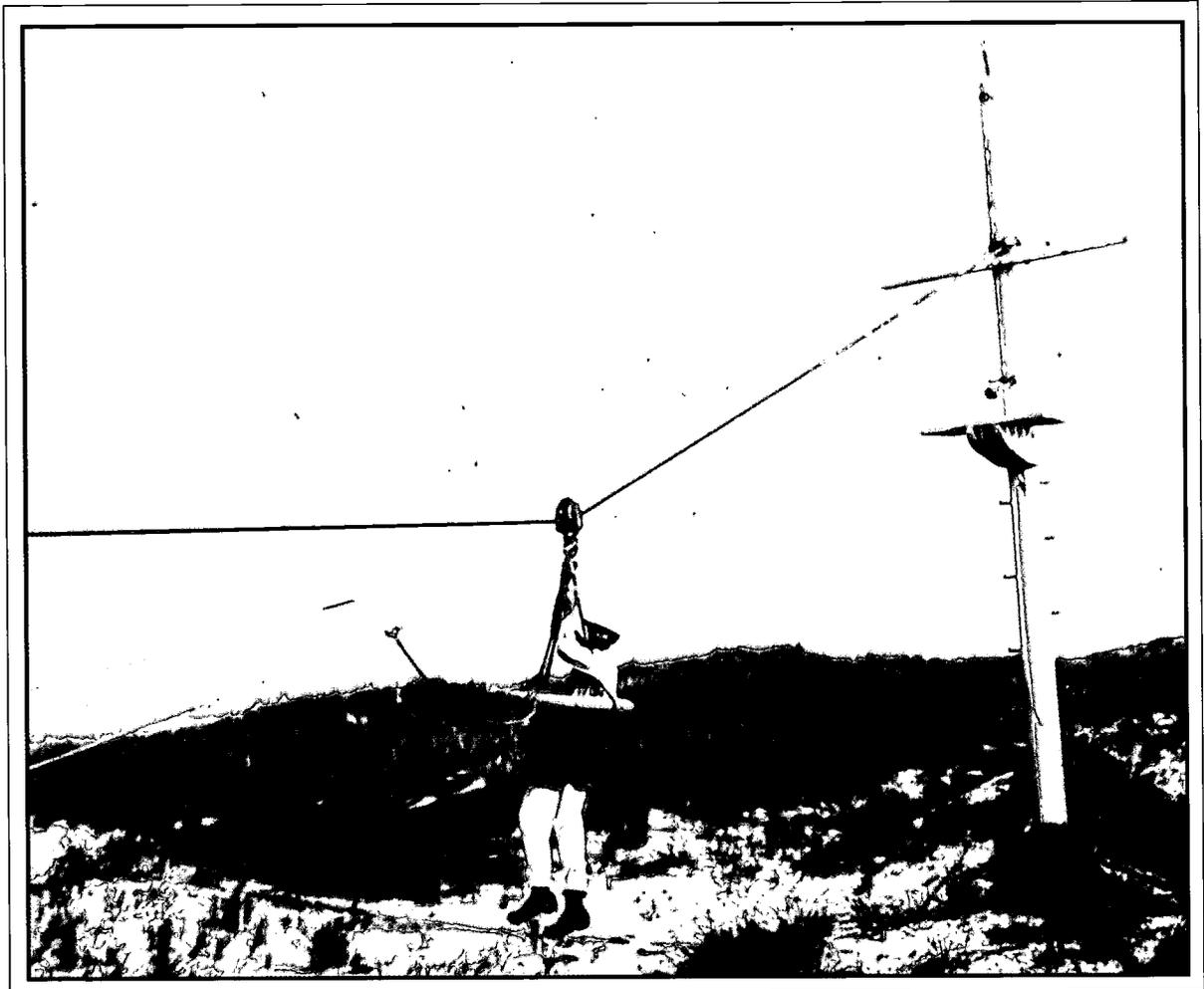
1. What are the significant features of each building? What practical feature is prominent on both stations? Why would this have been important?
2. What are some of the differences between the two structures?
3. Which building appears to be older? How can you tell?
4. Note the clothes worn by the men in Photo 2. Why might the U.S.L.S.S. have adopted uniforms?





Visual Evidence

Photo 4: Thursday's drill at a lifesaving station.



U.S. Coast Guard

Questions for Photo 4

1. Describe what is taking place in the photo.
2. What does the white drill pole represent?
3. Describe this rescue procedure. (Refer back to Reading 1 if necessary.) Under what circumstances could it be used?
4. Why do you think it would have been important to practice rescue techniques on a regular basis?



century, the new Federal Government established agencies which had some influence on the safety of ocean travel, ships, and their cargoes. The U.S. Lighthouse Service, established in 1789, provided beacons to warn sailors about nearby dangers such as shallow seacoast waters filled with sandbars and rocky seabeds. The U.S. Revenue Marine, later called the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, was established in 1790 to help prevent smuggling and enforce the collection of customs duties. This organization eventually became responsible for sea rescues.¹

The seamen of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, lighthouse keepers, and local volunteers did their best to alert ships to danger, but an untold number of lives were lost in shipwrecks before 1844, when Congress set aside funds for lifesaving efforts. In 1848, Congress appropriated \$10,000 to buy surfboats and other equipment to help ships in trouble along the New Jersey coast, an area that witnessed many wrecks as ships approached New York City harbor. At this time eight small lifesaving stations were ordered built on the New Jersey coast.

Public interest grew, and by 1854 there were 137 lifesaving stations along American coasts. However, all were manned only by community volunteers due to limited funding. During the winter of 1870-71, several severe storms in the Great Lakes region and on the East Coast caused great loss of life. These deaths once again called attention to the inadequacies of the lifesaving system.² In 1871 Congress created the United States Lifesaving Service (U.S. L.S.S.) which finally employed full-time professional lifesaving crews.



Putting It All Together

The following activities will help demonstrate to students the need for the establishment of the United States Lifesaving Service and the important role it played in our history.

Activity 1: Shipwrecks and Rescues

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Have each group write a short story about a shipwreck that could have occurred along North Carolina's Outer Banks during the late 19th century. Students should try to emphasize details about the ship, cargo, crew, and the circumstances of the wreck—weather, location, and so on.

Randomly distribute these stories so that each group receives another group's story. Each group must then write a lifesaving rescue report to match that shipwreck story. Corresponding wreck and rescue accounts can then be read to the class and discussed.

Activity 2: Beach Patrol

This activity simulates one of the most important duties a surfman had to perform: accurately reporting shipwreck details to the Keeper of the station. Divide the class into equal groups, and assign each group a separate area of the room to serve as their "station." Each group should elect a Keeper and assign numbers to the crew members or surfmen. All of the students who are designated Surfman #1 then step forward, walk a "patrol" once around the room, then report to the teacher, who will show them a sheet of information stating (a) the weather (clear, rain, snow, fog, etc.), (b) the type of ship in distress (schooner, steamship, warship, passenger liner, etc.), (c) the distance the wreck is from shore (in hundreds of yards), and (d) how many people were spotted aboard. The surfmen must memorize this information as best they can in 30 seconds and then return around the room to their station and report to their Keeper, who will record the information. Proceed with the Surfmen #2's, Surfmen #3's, and so on until all have participated. Put the data from each Keeper's log on the blackboard and have students assess the accuracy of the recorded information. Hold a general classroom discussion of what the students have learned about the lifesavers' complex job.

Activity 3: Today's Lifesavers

Arrange for the class to visit a local fire station (or Coast Guard station if possible). Have students prepare a list of questions to ask a member of the rescue team about lifesaving procedures and training as well as about the history of the station building and how the space is used by the rescue personnel. After the visit, hold a classroom discussion about how modern lifesaving procedures and conditions differ from those encountered by lifesavers of the U.S.L.S.S.

Alternatively, have students research details of a fire station call or Coast Guard rescue from the local newspaper and discuss similarities and differences of rescue by members of the U.S.L.S.S. and lifesavers of today.

¹Dennis Noble, *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 150.

²Ibid., 24.

How to Use Teaching with Historic Places Lesson Plans



Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans bring real places where history happened directly into your classroom. By examining carefully selected written and visual documents, students experience the excitement of historical investigation as they learn the stories of these special places. The lesson plan format and content fit comfortably into standard units and curriculum topics in history, social studies, geography, and civics. Most student materials can be removed easily and duplicated. Although the format allows flexibility, it was designed to present the material as described below:



Getting Started

Begin the lesson by asking students to discuss possible answers to the question(s) found on the page titled *Getting Started*. To facilitate a whole class discussion, you may want to use the master copy provided to make an overhead transparency. The purpose of the exercise is to engage students' interest in the lesson's topic by raising questions that can be answered as they complete the lesson.



Setting the Stage

Present the information in *Setting the Stage* by reading it aloud, summarizing it, or photocopying it for students to read individually or in small groups. This historical background familiarizes students with the lesson's topic.



Locating the Site

Provide students with photocopies of the maps, captions, and questions in *Locating the Site*. Students may work together or individually to answer the questions. At least one map familiarizes students with the site's location within the country, state, and/or region. Extended captions may be included to provide students with information necessary to answer the questions.



Determining the Facts

Provide students with photocopies of the readings, charts, and/or other documents included in *Determining the Facts*. The questions for each selection help ensure that students have gathered the appropriate factual information.



Visual Evidence

Provide students with photocopies of the lesson's visual materials or use the master copies to make overhead transparencies. Students may work together or individually to answer the questions. Some lessons require studying two photos together. Extended captions may be included to provide students with important information.

Rather than serving merely as illustrations for the text, the images are documents that play an integral role in helping students achieve the lesson's objectives. To assist students in learning how to "read" visual materials, you may want to begin this section by having them complete the *Photograph Analysis Worksheet* for one or more of the photos. The worksheet is appropriate for analyzing both historical and modern photographs and will help students develop a valuable skill.



Putting It All Together

After students have answered the questions that accompany the maps, readings, and visuals, they should complete one or more of the *Putting It All Together* activities. These activities engage students in a variety of creative exercises, which help them understand the big picture by synthesizing the information they have learned and formulating conclusions. At least one activity leads students to look for places in their community that relate to the topic of the lesson. In this way, students learn to make connections between their community and the broader themes of American history they encounter in their studies.

Teaching with Historic Places (TwHP) is a program of the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as the nation's official list of cultural resources significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. TwHP is sponsored, in part, by the Cultural Resources Training Initiative and Parks as Classrooms programs of the National Park Service. This lesson is one in a series that brings the important stories of historic places into classrooms across the country. For more information, contact Teaching with Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 C Street, NW, Suite NC400, Washington, DC 20240 or visit the program's Web site at www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp.



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