

CAPE LOOKOUT NATIONAL SEASHORE  
Cape Lookout Village  
FISHING COTTAGE #2

# HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

**Historical Architecture, Cultural Resources Division  
Southeastern Regional Office  
National Park Service**

**2004**



**Cultural Resources  
Southeast Region  
National Park Service  
100 Alabama St. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 562-3117**

2004  
Historic Structure Report  
Fishing Cottage #2  
Cape Lookout National Seashore  
Cape Lookout Village  
LCS#: 091833

The historic structure report presented here exists in two formats. A traditional, printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the NPS (SERO), and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, the historic structure report also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) for more information.

**Fishing Cottage #2**

**Historic Structure Report**

Approved by: Robert H. Vogel 8-28-03  
Superintendent Date  
Cape Lookout National Seashore

Recommended by: Rob W. Rye 8-28-03  
Chief, Cultural Resources Date  
Southeast Regional Office

Recommended by: Sam Martiny 8-28-03  
Associate Regional Director Date  
Cultural Resource Stewardship & Partnership  
Southeast Regional Office

Concurred by: Charlie Burrell 8-29-03  
FOR Regional Director Date  
Southeast Regional Office



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# Project Team

*Project Manager*

**Danny Scheidt**, Historical Architect  
National Park Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Atlanta, GA

*Primary Research  
& Building Investigation*

**Tommy H. Jones**, Architectural Historian  
National Park Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Atlanta, GA

*Program Reviews*

**Bob Blythe**, History  
**Allen Bohnert**, Curatorial & Museum  
Services  
**Danny Scheidt**, Historical Architecture  
**Tracy Stakely**, Historical Landscape Architecture  
National Park Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Atlanta, GA



# Foreword

We are pleased to make available this historic structure report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the historic structures and landscapes of National Park Service units in the Southeast Field Area. Many individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank Superintendent Bob Vogel and the staff at Cape Lookout National Seashore for their assistance with this project. Especially helpful have been Mike McGee, Facility Manager; Michael Rikard, Resource Management Specialist; and Karen Duggan, Park Ranger (Interpretation). We hope that this study will prove valuable to park management in their treatment of the building and to everyone in understanding and interpreting the building.

Chief  
Cultural Resources Stewardship  
Southeast Regional Office  
December 2004



# Executive Summary

Built around 1950, reportedly by one of the employees at the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station, Fishing Cottage #2 is a small, three-room cottage sitting near the center of the historic district. Little-altered since its construction, it is also in remarkably good condition.

## **Research Summary**

Historical documentation for Fishing Cottage #2 is non-existent beyond the extremely limited information in the National Register nomination which identifies the cottage as one of the structures that contribute to the significance of the historic district of Cape Lookout Village. At a minimum, a complete chain of title should be developed for the property and additional research in local sources and in Coast Guard records should be conducted in order to identify the original owner and builder of Fishing Cottage #2.

### Architectural Summary

The cottage is in better physical condition than any of the district's other historic buildings. Except for the modern roof-covering, some alterations to the back porch, and deteriorating foundation piers, the original structure is almost completely intact. A partial bathroom, which was not present when the house was originally constructed, has been installed on the back porch, but it, the kitchen, and the building's electrical systems should be completely rehabilitated.

### Recommendations

In keeping with the parameters established for the park's other historic buildings by the park's 1982 GMP, the historic (and present) residential use of Fishing Cottage #2 and the other structures that were historically private residences should be continued, if that can be accomplished without compromising the buildings' historic character.

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* should guide treatment of the site.

### Site

- Clear vegetation from rear of house to restore access to porch
- Follow recommendations of Cultural Landscape Report in determining

treatment of the surrounding landscape

- Improve site drainage and eliminate standing water beneath house.

### Foundation

- Inspect piers and replace as necessary
- Install termite shields at each pier

### Structure

- Repair structure as needed where termite or rot have compromised the structure.

### Roof

- When roofing is replaced, use blue asphalt shingles.

### Porches

- Reconstruct missing portions of southeast porch wall
- Remove plywood shutter at southeast end and replicate board-and-batten shutters to match original shutters elsewhere on the building

### Windows and Doors

- Repair and preserve existing windows, doors, and shutters.

### Exterior Finishes

- Maintain painted finishes.

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

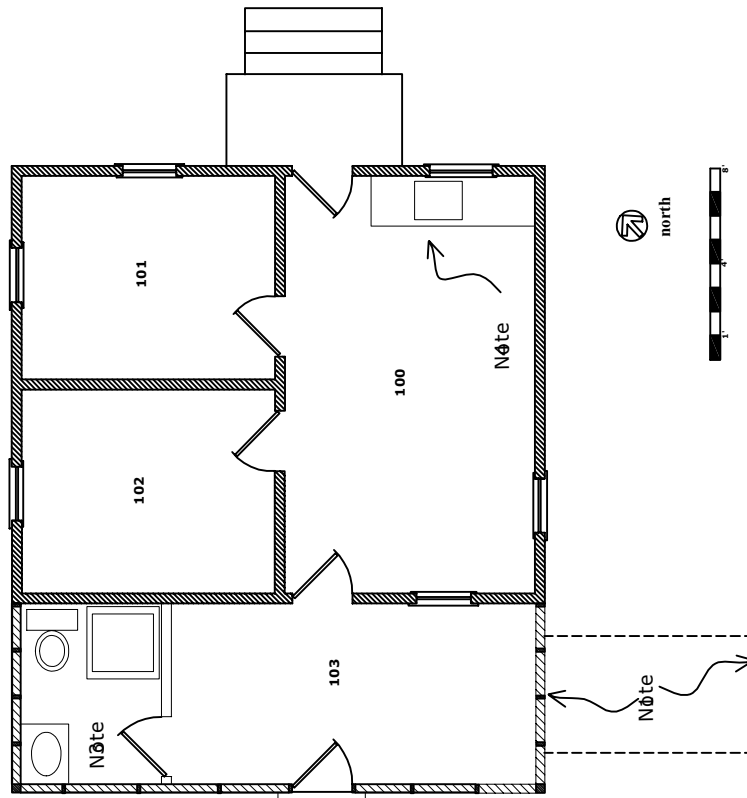
### Interior

- Clean and recoat walls, ceilings, and floors.

### Utilities

- Install new electrical system.
- Install fire and smoke detection system.
- Do not install central heating or air-conditioning; install electric space heaters if necessary.
- Rehabilitate existing bathroom.
- Rehabilitate existing kitchen.

# Executive Summary



- Notes:** Install blue asphalt-shingled roof. Repair and preserve existing exterior woodwork, including porch shutters.
1. Remove ramp and restore southeast end of porch.
  2. Reconstruct back steps and repair door.
  3. Construct framed wall with door; install new bathroom.
  4. Repair sink, counter, shelves, and cabinet.

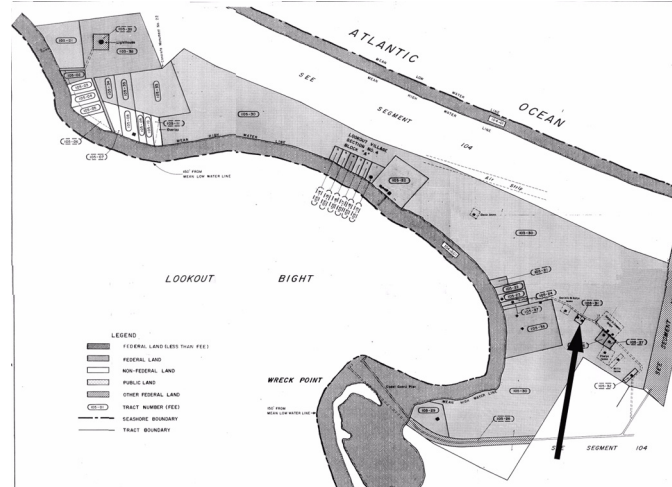


# Administrative Data

## Locational Data

Building Name: Fishing Cottage #2  
Location: Cape Lookout Village  
LCS#: CALO 091829

## Cape Lookout Village



### Related Studies

Erenhard, John E. *Cape Lookout National Seashore: Assessment of Archaeological and Historical Resources*. NPS: Southeast Archaeological Center, Tallahassee, FL, 1976.

Holland, Francis Ross, Jr. *Bodie Island Light Station, North Carolina*. NPS, Division of History, 1967.

Holland, F. Ross. *A Survey History of Cape Lookout National Seashore*. NPS: Division of History, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, January 30, 1968.

Loonam, John. *Cape Lookout Lighthouse*. Bertie, NC: Self-published, 2000. <<http://www.itpi.dpi.state.nc.us/caroclips/CapeLookoutstory.htm>> (13 January 2003).

### Cultural Resource Data

*National Register of Historic Places*: Contributing structure in Cape Lookout Village Historic District, listed June 2000.

*Period of Significance*: c. 1950

*Proposed Treatment*: Minor repairs and rehabilitation of plumbing and electrical systems.

# Historical Background & Context

Marked by a lighthouse since 1812, Cape Lookout is one of three capes on North Carolina's Outer Banks. Lying at the southern tip of Core Banks, which stretch in a southwesterly direction from near Cedar Island to about four miles south of Harker's Island in eastern Carteret County, North Carolina, the area is part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. Accessible only by boat, the cape is in constant flux from the harsh action of wind and ocean currents. As a result, since the late nineteenth century, the entire cape has migrated as much as a quarter mile to the west, and partly due to construction of a breakwater in the early twentieth century, the land area in the vicinity of the cape has nearly doubled in size. It is predominantly a sand environment whose native vegetation is limited to low stands of myrtle, live oak, cedar, and marsh grasses, along with non- native stands of slash pine that were planted in the 1960s.

Cape Lookout Bight began to attract some shipping activities in the mid- eighteenth century; but the low, sparsely vegetated land



**Figure 1** View to east of Cape Lookout Lighthouse, May 1899. First Keeper's Dwelling is at right. (CALO Coll. D-01)

of Core and Shackleford Banks did not attract any permanent settlement until the late eighteenth century. Even then, settlement was apparently limited to temporary camps erected by fishermen and whalers, who had begun operations along the Cape by 1755. Sighting the whales from the "Cape Hills," a series of sand dunes up to sixty feet high that were located east and south of the present light house, the whalers operated in small open boats, dragging their catch back to the beach where they rendered the whale blubber into oil.<sup>1</sup>

Cape Lookout Lighthouse was authorized by Congress in 1804 but was not completed until 1812. Too low to be effective, it was replaced by the present structure in 1857- 1859. With a first-order Fresnel lens, the new lighthouse was "the prototype of all the lighthouses to be erected subsequently on the Outer Banks."

The harsh conditions around the cape discouraged permanent settlement, and when Edmund Ruffin visited the area shortly before the Civil War, he described it as uninhabited except for Portsmouth near Ocracoke and a similar but

1. David Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina* (University of North Carolina Press, 1958) p. 308.

smaller enlargement of the reef near Cape Lookout (where, about the lighthouse, there are a few inhabitants).”<sup>1</sup>

After the Civil War, the full economic potential of fishing at Cape Lookout began to be exploited; and by the late 1880s, Carteret County was the center of commercial mullet fishing in the United States. From May to November, when the mullet were running, scores of fisherman set up camps along the shore, especially on the sound side of the banks. Documented as early as the 1880s and featured in *National Geographic* in 1908, these mullet camps were apparently quite similar, featuring distinctive, circular, thatched huts with conical or hemispherical roofs (see Figure 2). Although some of these beach camps lasted several years, and one is even said to have survived the terrible hurricane of 1899, they were crudely-constructed, temporary structures, and none of them survives today.<sup>2</sup>

The shoals at Cape Lookout, which stretch nearly twenty miles into the Atlantic, remained a major threat to shipping until the development of better navigational aids in the early

1. Edmund Ruffin, *Agricultural, Geological, and Descriptive Sketches of Lower North Carolina, and the Similar Adjacent Lands* (Raleigh, NC: Institution for the Deaf & Dumb & The Blind, 1861), p. 123.
2. David S. Cecelski, "The Hidden World of Mullet Camps: African-American Architecture on the North Carolina Coast," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. LXX, #1, January 1993, pp. 1-13.



**Figure 2** Two of the mullet camps on Shackleford Banks, c. 1908. (reprinted in *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. LXX, #1, p. 5)

twentieth century. As a result, the first life-saving station on Core Banks opened at Cape Lookout in January 1888 a mile and a half southwest of the lighthouse. Under the direction of William Howard Gaskill, who served as station keeper for over twenty years, a crew of “surf men” served at the Cape Lookout station, patrolling the beaches and manning the lookout tower at the station throughout the day and night during the active season which, by 1900, extended from August through May.

### Diamond City

By the 1880s, as the fishing industry became more lucrative, settlements developed on the



**Figure 3** View north of the life-saving station, c. 1893, with the lighthouse barely visible on the horizon at extreme right. (CALO Coll. G-09)

protected sound side of Shackleford Banks west of the lighthouse. Diamond City, named for the distinctive diamond pattern painted on the lighthouse in 1873, was the most important of these. Lying in the lee of a forty-foot-high dune about a mile and a half northwest of the lighthouse, Diamond City and two smaller settlements further west were home to as many as five hundred people in the 1890s, according to the National Register nomination, giving Shackleford Banks a larger population than Harkers Island.

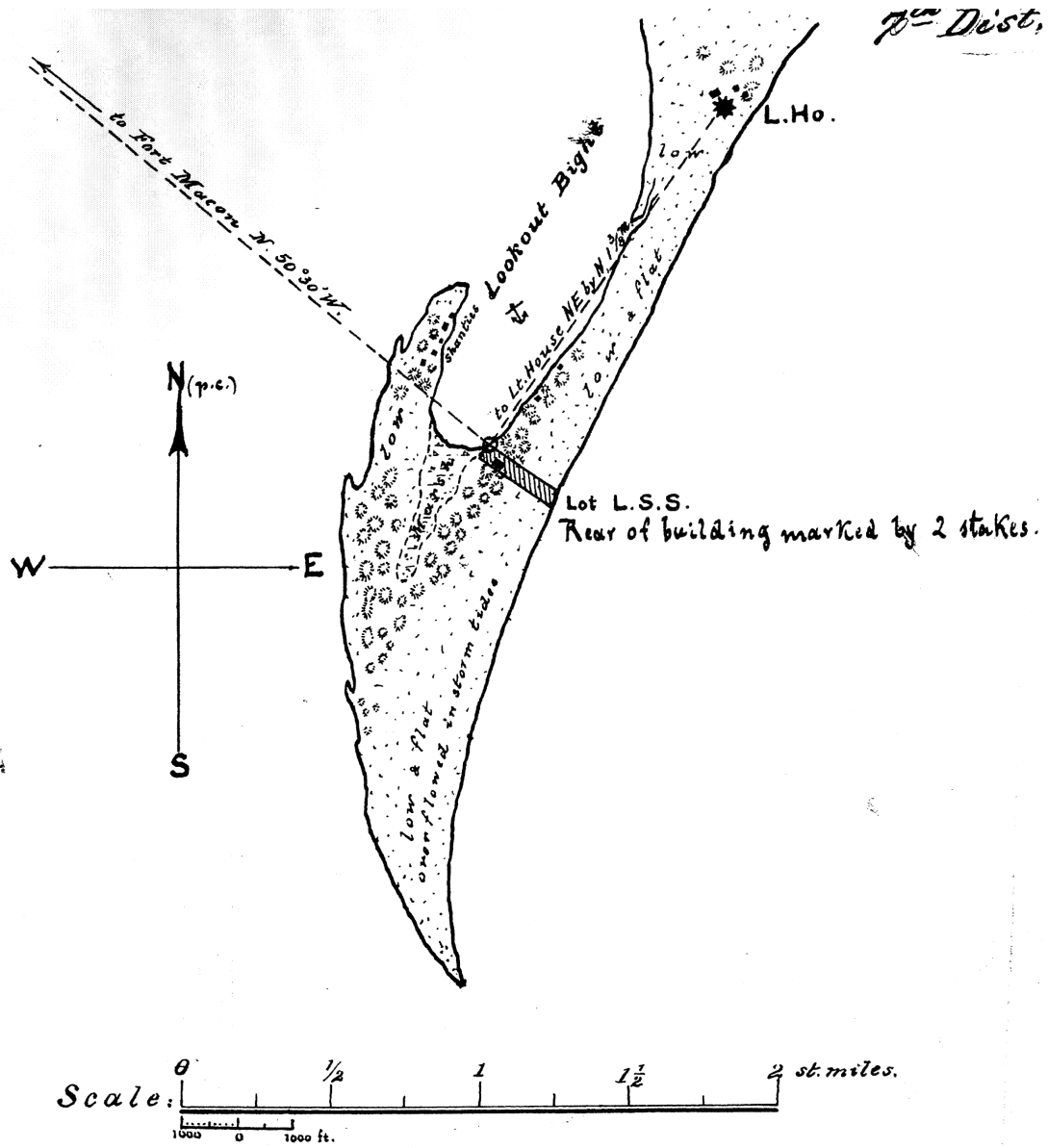
There are a number of references to “the village” in the journals of the Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station in the 1890s, but these references

should not be confused with the National Register district of Cape Lookout Village, which developed in the early twentieth-century.

While the life-saving station journals do not name “the village,” on more than one occasion, they do note the three-mile distance from the life-saving station, which confirms that “the village” at that time was Diamond City on Shackleford Banks.

Prior to World War I, the life-saving service crew was made up almost exclusively of men whose families had lived in Carteret County for generations. The surfmen lived at the station while on duty, but during the inactive season returned to their permanent homes in Morehead City, Harker’s Island, Marshallberg, and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Before 1916, the station keeper was

1. Each station log begins with a list of the crew, their spouses or next-of-kin, and their home address.



Sketch showing site of Life-Saving Station on Cape Lookout, N.C.

Figure 4 Map of Cape Lookout, c. 1890. (Coast Guard Collection)



**Figure 5** View of Shackleford Banks after 1899 hurricane. Note the partially-submerged structures at upper right. (CALO Coll., F-184)

the only one of the crew who lived year-round at the Cape. He had separate quarters in the life-saving station, but since his family could not be accommodated, he appears to have had a house near the station by 1893. It appears not to have been a full-time residence, however, and in the early twentieth century as motor boats began to make Cape Lookout more accessible, few if any chose to live there year-round.<sup>1</sup>

By the 1890s, some fishermen began constructing more-permanent “fish houses,” as they are referred to locally, or “shanties,” as they were

1. Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station, Journal, December 6, 1890; December 6 & 26, 1891; January 25, 1892; January 22, 1895. The original journals are in Record Group 26 at the National Archives and Records Administration, East Point, Georgia.

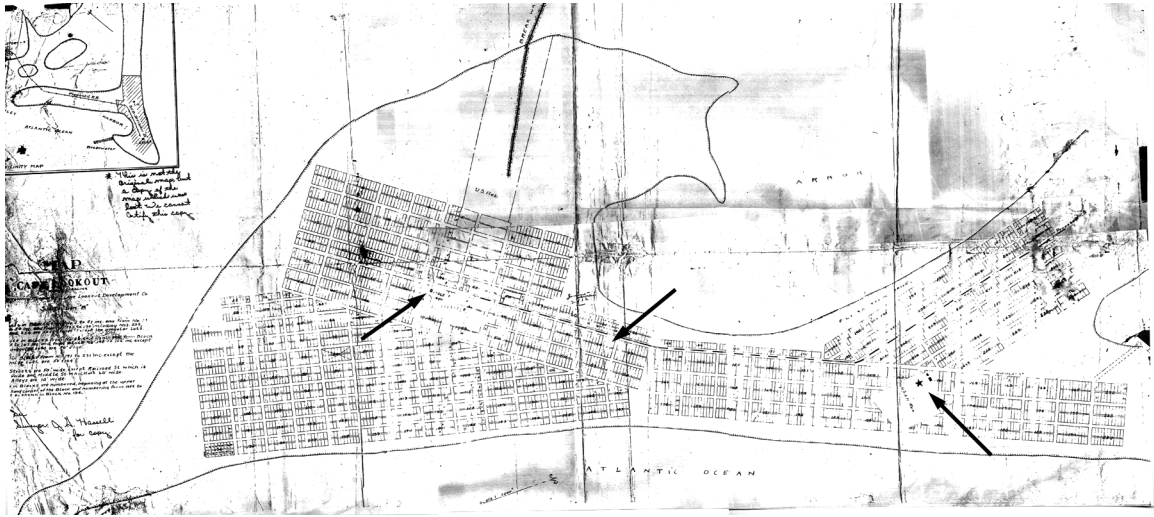
designated on the Life-Saving Service’s earliest known map of the cape (see Figure 5). Seven of these structures appear to be indicated on that map, with five in the protective “hook” of Wreck Point and two others across the Bight near where the 1907 Keeper’s Dwelling or Barden House is now located. Almost certainly, all of these were occupied seasonally and not year-round.

Even with something more than thatched huts for shelter, the cape fishermen often sought shelter in the life-saving station when their camps and fish houses were threatened by high winds and tides. On more than one occasion, as many as fifty fishermen somehow crammed their way into the life-saving station to ride out a storm. The fact that there are only two references in the journals to women or children taking shelter in the station in the 1890s, suggests that the men did not usually expose their families to the harsh living conditions associated with fishing the waters around Cape Lookout.<sup>2</sup>

Cape Lookout has always suffered from storm damage, but the hurricane that struck on August 18-19, 1899, was one of the deadliest ever recorded on the Outer Banks. Believed to be a Category 4 storm, the so-called *San Ciriaco* or “Great Hurricane” decimated the Outer Banks. Winds at Hatteras reached 140 m.p.h. before the anemometer blew away, and the Outer Banks were submerged under as much as ten feet of water. The surge swept completely

2. Cape Lookout Journal, June 16, October 13, 1893; October 9, 1894.





**Figure 6** Plat of proposed development of Cape Lookout in 1915. Arrows have been added to indicate Coast Guard Station, at left, and Lighthouse at right.

across Shackleford Bank, heavily damaging Diamond City and the other communities to the west of the Cape. Another hurricane at Halloween, though not as strong as the first, produced a greater storm surge and completed the destruction of the Shackleford Bank communities. So great were the damage and accompanying changes to the landscape that over the next year or two, the entire population abandoned Shackleford Bank, with most of them moving to Harker's Island and the mainland.

### Cape Lookout Village

After the hurricane, a few residents relocated to Core Banks in the vicinity of the Cape Hills, but even before 1899 these sheltering hills were fast disappearing.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there were, ac-

ording to one writer who visited the cape in the early 1900s, as many as 80 residents at Cape Lookout<sup>2</sup>, enough to warrant establishment of one-room school house. A post office was also established in April 1910, with Amy Clifton, wife of the lighthouse keeper, as post master. Post office records locate the post office "two miles north of the cape, near the light house landing," most likely in the 1907 Keeper's Dwelling. However, the widespread use of gasoline-powered boats after about 1905 made travel to Harkers Island, Beaufort, and elsewhere far more convenient, and it was soon apparent that the post office was not worth maintaining. It was discontinued in June 1911, barely fourteen months after its inception.<sup>3</sup>

1. Cape Lookout Journal, December 22, 1896.
2. Fred A. Olds, "Cape Lookout, Lonesome Place," XLVI, #26, *The Orphan's Friend and Masonic Journal* (Oxford, NC, October 14, 1921).
3. U. S. Post Office Record of Appointments of Postmasters, 1832-Sept. 30, 1971; Records of Site Locations, 1837-1950.



**Figure 7** View of Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station, 1917. In the background, are some of the small houses of “Cape Lookout Village.” (CALO Coll. D-52)

Cape Lookout was, according to one visitor “a bustling place” in the early 1900s, especially after the Army Corps of Engineers announced in 1912 that a coaling station and “harbor of refuge” would be established at Cape Lookout Bight. Sand fences were installed in 1913 and 1914 to stabilize some of the dunes, and in 1915, work began on a rubble- stone breakwater to enlarge and protect the Bight.

The project’s most- ardent supporter was local Congressman John H. Small, who envisioned a railroad from the mainland that would help make Cape Lookout a significant port. Intending to capitalize on those plans, private developers organized the Cape Lookout Development Company in 1913 and laid out hundred of residential building lots and planned a hotel

and club house to serve what they were sure would be a successful resort community. Unfortunately for all of those plans, there was less demand for a harbor of refuge than supporters had anticipated, and funding for the breakwater was suspended before it was complete. When plans for a railroad from Morehead City also failed to materialize, the resort development scheme was abandoned as well.<sup>1</sup>

In 1915, the Life- Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service were combined into the U. S. Coast Guard, and in 1916 construction began on a new Coast Guard Station to replace the old 1887 life- saving station. At the same time, pay scales were improved and a more- rigorous system of testing and training was instituted in an effort to produce a more professional staff. These measures and the availability of power

1. National Register Nomination. Also see plat for Cape Lookout Development Company, Carteret County Superior Court Records, Map Book 8, p. 13.

boats, which lessened the crew's isolation, combined to greatly reduce the rapid turnover in personnel that had plagued the station since the 1890s.

The use of gasoline- powered boats around Cape Lookout was first recorded by the life- saving station keeper in 1905, and this new mode of transportation rapidly transformed life at the cape.<sup>1</sup> So many "power boats" were in use by 1911 that the station keeper began recording their appearance in the waters around the cape, with as many as thirty- five of them recorded in a single day. Even before the life- saving service got its first power boat in 1912, many if not most of the crew had their own boats and were using them to commute from homes in Morehead City, Beaufort, Marshallberg, and elsewhere. The convenience of motor boats no doubt contributed to what the National Register calls "a general exodus" of year- round residents from the Cape in 1919 and 1920. The one- room school closed at the end of the 1919 school year, and some thirty or forty houses are reported to have been moved from the Cape to Harkers Island around the same time.

Fred A. Olds had visited Cape Lookout in the early 1900s and was even instrumental in getting a schoolhouse built on the island. When he returned for a visit in 1921, however, he found Cape Lookout to be "one of the 'lonesomest' places in the country." Only two or three families were living there by that time, he wrote, and "most of the houses are mere shacks, innocent of paint." He also found the

1. Cape Lookout Journal, June 30, 1905.

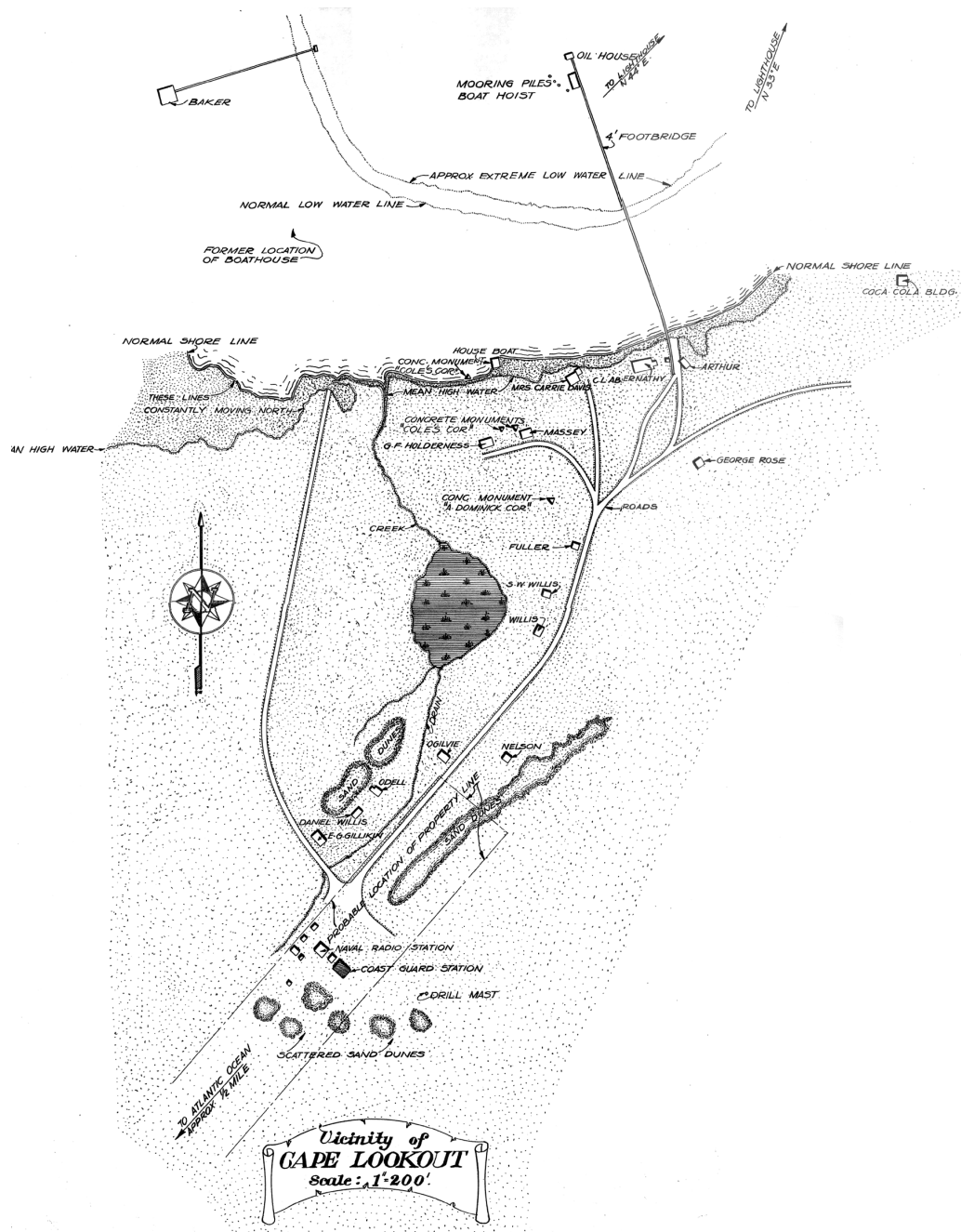
landscape littered with "thousands of rusted tin cans" and "grass or any green thing . . . conspicuous by its rarity." The lighthouse and the Coast Guard station were, he thought, "the only two real places in it all."<sup>2</sup>

Most of the houses left at the Cape were used as "fishing shacks," according to the National Register, and after World War I Cape Lookout became "an isolated haven for seasonal fishermen and hardy vacationers, most of them connected to the place by deep family roots." In addition, a few of the Coast Guardsmen with long- standing family ties to Cape Lookout maintained private residences that their own families occupied for at least part of the year. The Lewis- Davis House, the Gaskill- Guthrie House, and the Guthrie- Ogilvie House were all built as private residences by Coast Guardsmen in the 1910s and 1920s.

The Coast Guard's life- saving stations on Core Banks (one was located half- way up the Banks and another at Portsmouth) remained in service after World War I, but power boats and new navigational aids like the radio compass (or direction finding) station that the Navy began operating at the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station in 1919 were rapidly rendering the life- saving service obsolete as a separate entity. The Portsmouth Life- Saving Station closed in 1937, and the Core Banks Station in 1940. The Coast Guard Station at Cape Lookout remained active until it was decommissioned in 1982.

2. Olds, "Cape Lookout, Lonesome Place."

# Historical Background & Context



**Figure 8** Map of Cape Lookout, August 1934. O'Boyle-Bryant House would be built a short distance north-northeast of the Ogilvie House shown here. (U. S. Coast Guard Collection)



**Figure 9** View of Cape Lookout Village, 1942. The O'Boyle-Bryant House is hidden by the house at center. (CALO Coll., Royer #4)

During World War II, the government expanded its military presence at Cape Lookout significantly. In April 1942, Cape Lookout Bight became an anchorage for convoys traveling between Charleston and the Chesapeake Bay. The 193rd Field Artillery was sent to the Cape to provide protection for the Bight, replaced that summer by heavier guns that remained in place throughout the war.<sup>1</sup> Some, if not all, of the residences near the Coast Guard Station were occupied by Army personnel during the war years.

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

After World War II, the Army base was conveyed to the Coast Guard, which retained only ninety-five of the original 400+ acres that made up the base. Land speculation also increased, and several of the old residences were acquired by people without family ties to the cape.

The State of North Carolina began efforts to establish a state park on Core Banks in the 1950s, but by the early 1960s, it was apparent that the undertaking was beyond the capacity of the state alone, and efforts were begun to establish a national seashore, similar to the one that had been established at Cape Hatteras in 1953. In

1966, Congressional legislation was passed that authorized establishment of a national seashore at Cape Lookout that would include a fifty-four-mile stretch of the Outer Banks from Ocracoke Inlet at Portsmouth to Beaufort Inlet at the western end of Shackleford Bank. In September 1976, enough land had been assembled for the Secretary of the Interior to formally



**Figure 10** View to northeast from near Coast Guard Station, April 1941. (CALO Coll., O'Boyle #21)

declare establishment of the Cape Lookout National Seashore.

In the enabling legislation for the national seashore, “all the lands or interests in lands” between the lighthouse and the Coast Guard Station at Cape Lookout, which included the houses in what is now the Cape Lookout Village historic district, were specifically excluded from the new park. In 1978, however, the Federal government was able to acquire these lands for inclusion in the national seashore. Rights of occupancy under twenty- five year leases or life estates were granted to those “who on January 1, 1966, owned property which on July 1, 1963, was developed and used for noncommercial residential purposes.”<sup>1</sup>

Cape Lookout National Seashore was authorized “to preserve for public use and enjoyment an area in the State of North Carolina possessing outstanding natural and recreation values.”<sup>2</sup> That same year, however, Congress also passed the National Historic Preservation Act, and by the time the park was actually established in 1976, the area’s historical significance was being recognized. In 1972 the Cape Lookout Light Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the first formal recognition of the value of the park’s cultural resources. In 1978 Portsmouth Village was also listed on the National Register, followed by the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station in 1989.

1. National Park Service, *Cape Lookout General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan*, hereinafter designated “GMP,” (Denver Service Center, December 1982), p. 30.
2. *GMP*, p. 3.

Most recently, in June 2000, the Cape Lookout Village Historic District was listed on the National Register. According to the National Register report, Cape Lookout is one of the last historic settlements on the Outer Banks to survive relatively intact and has statewide significance in social history, maritime history, and architecture. The district's period of significance encompasses all phases of historic development from 1857, when construction of the present lighthouse commenced, until around 1950 when the lighthouse was automated and the State of North Carolina began acquiring land for a proposed state park.

The Cape Lookout Village Historic District contains twenty- one historic resources, including the lighthouse (completed in 1859), two keeper's quarters (1873 and 1907), the old Life-Saving Station (1887), the old Life- Saving Station's boathouse (c. 1894), the Coast Guard Station (1917), and several private residences (c.

1910- c. 1950). Five of the ten historic private dwellings were built by fishermen or Coast Guard employees for their families from about 1910 to around 1950. Two houses were built about 1915 for Army Corps of Engineers workers, and two others were built as vacation cottages in the two decades before World War II. The National Park Service owns all of the property in the district except for the Cape Lookout Lighthouse, which is owned, operated, and maintained by the U. S. Coast Guard.

### **Fishing Cottage #2**

According to the National Register nomination, this building “may have been built by a Coast Guardsman as quarters for his family” around 1950. The character of the building and its materials is consistent with that construction date, but no historical documentation for the structure has yet been located.

## Historical Background & Context



# Chronology of Development & Use

This building has undergone very few alterations since it was originally constructed, and nearly all of these appear to have occurred in the last twenty- five years. At some point, perhaps because of the growth of trees and shrubs on that side of the house in recent years, the steps to the porch were removed and the porch now functions as a utilitarian back porch to the house. At the southeast end of the porch, the wall has been altered and a ramp constructed so that all- terrain vehicles and other equipment can be stored on the porch. The house may have originally been painted red, its color in 1976, but has been painted white in recent years. The asphalt- composition roof covering has also been changed from bright blue shingles, which may have been original, to the present white roll- type roofing.

On the interior, changes have likewise been minimal. The most significant alteration was installation of a toilet and shower at the northwest end of the back porch. This did not include complete



**Figure 11** View west of house in 1976. (CALO Land files)

partitioning of the space, however, but only construction of a short wall to shield the toilet from view. There is also no door, but only a curtain to close the area from the remainder of the porch.

# Physical Description

**A floor plan of the existing structure may be found at the end of this section.**

Built about 1950, Fishing Cottage #2 is a small, wood- framed, end- gabled structure located a few hundred yards northeast of the Coast Guard Station. The house is wood- framed with an end- gabled roof and a shed- roofed porch, continuing a vernacular tradition embodied in the Gaskill- Guthrie House, the Bryant House, and others of the older “fish houses” in the village. The porch door is now closed and inaccessible, and the main entrance to the house is at the small, sheltered stoop on the opposite side of the house. The footprint of the building, including the porch, measures about 22’- 4” by 26’- 2” and contains about 380 square feet of interior floor space plus about 165 square feet on the porch. Unlike most of the other private residences in the village, this house, though simple and utilitarian, is a sturdy, well- constructed building. Materials are generally uniform and of standard dimensions typical of the mid- twentieth century. In general, it is in very good condition, although threatened by termite activity and a failing roof covering.



**Figure 12** View west. (NPS-SERO-CRS, 2002)

site features associated with the immediate environs of the house.

### **Associated Site Features**

The house sits on a quarter-acre lot [Parcel 105-31] on the west side of the Cape's main road. Also located on the property is another residence, designated by the park as Fishing Cottage #1, that was in existence prior to 1969.

The heavy growth of myrtle and other shrubs that surrounds the property prevents entry to the original door on the southwest side of the porch and, as elsewhere throughout the village, obscures views in all directions. The southeast end of the porch has been altered to create an opening and a ramp from the yard that will facilitate storage of small vehicles and other items. There are no significant above-ground

### **Foundation**

The wood frame of the main body of the house is set on a series of wooden piers, 8" - 12" in diameter, sunk to some indeterminate depth into the ground, and elevating the structure 15" to 25" above grade. Piers appear to be untreated cedar or juniper. Typical of many older coastal structures, there are no corner piers. None of the piers have termite shields, and there is evidence of termite activity.

### **Structural System**

The house is a simple wood-framed building, constructed using wire-nailed connections



**Figure 13** View northwest.  
(NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

throughout. Dimensions of framing members are standard and typical of the mid- twentieth century. Floor and ceiling joists are 1- 5/8" by 5- 5/8", set on 24" centers. Floor joists are set on top of perimeter sills that are 4" by 6". Studs and rafters are typically 1- 5/8" by 3- 5/8", also set on 24" centers.

### Roof

The rafters have a solid deck composed of 3/4" by 5- 1/2", tongue- and- groove boards. The existing roof covering is a white, asphalt- composition, roll roofing material. Remnants of older asphalt roofing on the ground at the rear of the house suggest that the house was earlier roofed

with bright- blue, asphalt- composition shingles, which were probably original.

### Exterior Finishes

*Siding:* The walls of the house are unsheathed and finished with a 3/4" by 6" siding with a shiplap joint. Each run of siding is covered at the top in a pattern sometimes referred to as German siding and designated #105 in the 1951 edition of *Architectural Graphic Standards*.

*Doors:* The present front door is 2'- 6" by 6'- 3" and has two flush panels like the bedroom doors. The door from the porch into the house is 2'- 6" by 6'- 2" and has four, vertical, raised panels. It may not be the original door at that opening.



**Figure 14** View east showing typical exterior finishes. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

*Windows:* The window above the kitchen sink in Room 100 is an opening 2'-8" wide and 1'-8" high with a six-light wooden sash that slides up into a pocket in the wall. The remaining five windows openings are 2'-4" by 3'-6", double hung with two-over-two wooden sash. All of the windows are fitted with top-hinged shutters constructed with 1" by 6" tongue-and-groove boards, like those used for decking the roof. Around the back porch, the openings are protected by top-hinged shutters as well, but they are constructed out of tongue-and-groove

boards, 2-1/2" wide, like the flooring on the interior of the house.

*Trim:* Door and window openings are trimmed with 3"-wide casing. Window sills are 1-1/2" thick with 1" by 2" trim where the bottom of the sills meet the siding. Quarter round trims the top of the walls. The narrow eaves, typical of the mid-twentieth century, are unboxed.

### **Interior**

The house has one large room (10'-4" by 17'-4") running the length of the southeast side of the house and serving as a combination living room, dining room, and kitchen. Two small bedrooms, identical in size (8'-5" by 10'-7"),

span the northwest side of the house. All three rooms are finished in a similar manner.

*Flooring:* Floors are finished with pine flooring, tongue- and- groove, 2- 1/2” wide.

*Walls and Ceilings:* Ceilings are set at 8’- 3”. Walls and ceilings are finished with V- joint, tongue- and- groove, pine paneling in alternating widths of 3- 14/” and 5- 1/4”.

*Doors:* Doors are typically 2’- 6” with heights of 6’- 2” at the back door, 6’- 3” at the front door, and 6’- 7” at the bedroom doors. The front and bedroom doors are pine and have two flush panels in each door. The back door is pine and has four vertical raised panels.

*Trim:* Doors and windows are trimmed with pine casing, 3- 1/2” wide, and a molded back-band.

Baseboards are pine, 7’- 1/2” wide, plus a 1- 3/4” base cap that is very deeply molded. A plain shoe mold is used and there is a 2” bed molding at the joint between walls and ceilings.

*Utilities;* The house is wired for electricity with ceiling- mounted, keyless, porcelain fixtures in each room.

At the northeast end of the main room is a pine counter 6’- 11” long and 25” deep with a porcelain- enameled sink. Although the formica counter top is modern, the base cabinet, which is constructed of the same tongue- and- groove boards used on the walls and ceilings, appears to be original.



**Figure 15** View to southwest in Room 100. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



**Figure 16** View to northeast in Room 100. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

## Porch

Although the National Register nomination indicates that the porch is an addition to the house, that does not appear to be the case. When the house was originally constructed, the porch was probably the main entrance into the

## Physical Description



**Figure 17** View to north in Room 101. Room 102 is finished in a similar fashion. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



**Figure 18** View to southeast on porch. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)



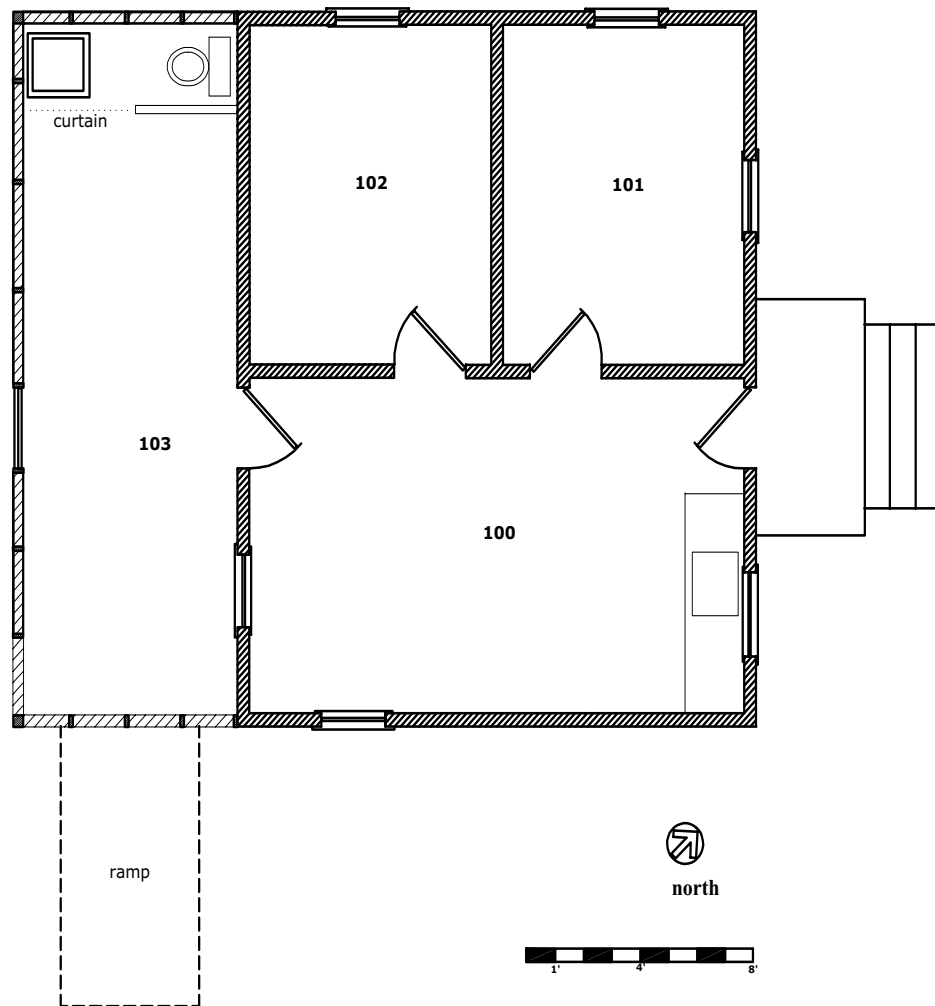
**Figure 19** View to northwest on porch, showing enclosure for bath room at center rear. (NPS-SERO-CR, 2002)

house, but the steps on the southwest side of the house have now been removed.

The same flooring used on the interior of the house is also used on the porch floor. Walls, which are framed with 2" by 4" studs on 18" centers, are sided on the exterior to a height of 28" from the floor using the same shiplap siding used elsewhere on the exterior. Above that, openings 3'- 5" high are screened. Siding continues in an 18"- wide band from the tops of these openings to the eave.

The northwest end of the porch has been partially enclosed in recent years to allow installation of a shower and toilet. At the southeast end, the knee wall has been cut and hinged to swing open and part of the wall above the screening has been removed to increase vertical clearance. These alterations are associated with the ramp that allows small vehicles to be stored on the porch.





**Figure 20** Plan of existing house. (NPS-SERO-CRS, 2002)

## Physical Description

# Treatment and Use

Built around 1950, Fishing Cottage #2 is the most- recently constructed of the historic structures in the district but, ironically, is also the least- well- documented of those structures. Nevertheless, it is clear that the house has undergone very few changes since it was constructed

This section of the historic structure report is intended to show how a plan for treatment of Fishing Cottage #2 can be implemented with minimal adverse affect to the historic building while still addressing the few problems that exist with the building. The following narrative outlines issues surrounding use of the building as well as legal requirements and other mandates that circumscribe its treatment. These are followed by an evaluation of the various alternatives for treatment—preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration—before describing in more detail the ultimate treatment recommendations.

## Ultimate Treatment and Use

Because the Cape Lookout Village Historic District is a relatively new addition to the National Register, the park has not set a program of use for the private residences in the village, including the Fishing Cottage #2. The authorizing legislation (Public Law 89- 366) for Cape Lookout National Seashore mandated the park's establishment for the purpose of preserving "for public use and enjoyment an area in the State of North Carolina possessing outstanding natural and recreational values."

By the time the seashore was actually established in 1976, the historical significance of the cultural resources at Portsmouth and at the Cape Lookout Light Station were also recognized. The general management plan (GMP) developed for the park by the NPS Denver Service Center in 1982 states that one of the park's management objectives is "[t]o preserve intact, as feasible, the historic resources of the national seashore and to recognize that dynamic natural forces have influenced them throughout their existence and will continue to influence them."<sup>1</sup> The GMP envisioned interpretation of the park's cultural resources that would "emphasize man and his relation to the sea" with maritime history a focus at the lighthouse and the cultural and economic life of the Outer Bankers at Portsmouth Village."<sup>2</sup> Since that time, additional cultural resources besides the lighthouse station and Portsmouth have been recognized through National Register listing. In 1989, the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Sta-

tion, with four intact historic structures, was listed on the National Register; and in June 2000, the Cape Lookout Village Historic District, with fourteen historic residential buildings, was listed as well.

An amendment to the 1982 GMP was completed in January 2001, but it only addressed improvements in overnight accommodations and transportation services for visitors to Core Banks and not the additional cultural resources that had been recognized since 1982. Nevertheless, these additional listings, which like the earlier listings are of statewide significance, do not appear to require any marked departure from the management approach established in 1982 for Portsmouth and the Cape Lookout Light Station.

Three points from the 1982 GMP are particularly relevant to treatment decisions on the buildings in the Cape Lookout Village and in the Coast Guard complex as well.

- The 1982 plan "perpetuates the present level of use and development of Core Banks/Portsmouth Island. . . ."<sup>3</sup>
- Pointing out the resources' state level of significance, the 1982 plan intended "to preserve intact, as feasible, the historic resources of the national seashore and to recognize that dynamic natural forces have influenced them through their existence and will continue to influence them."<sup>4</sup>
- "As appropriate, some structures may be perpetuated through adaptive use. Con-

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

2. *Ibid.*

3. *GMP*, p. iii.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

temporary public and/or administrative rights will be allowed with necessary modifications. The qualities that qualified these resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be perpetuated to the extent practicable."<sup>1</sup>

*Use:* In keeping with these parameters, the historic (and present) residential use of Fishing Cottage #2 and the other structures that were historically private residences should be continued, if rehabilitation can be accomplished with minimal alteration to the buildings' historic character.

*Treatment:* Unlike the other private residences at Cape Lookout, Fishing Cottage #2 has undergone very few alteration since its original construction and remains in remarkably good condition. Preservation of the basic structure along with restoration of the porch, rehabilitation of the plumbing and electrical systems, and installation of a new bathroom would insure the building's continued usefulness as a residence.

### **Requirements for Treatment and Use**

The historic character of Fishing Cottage #2 is embodied not just in the vernacular form of the building but also in its structure and its component materials, including wood siding, flooring, paneling, windows, doors, nails, and hardware. The more these aspects of the building are compromised, especially through replacement or removal of the historic material or fea-

1. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

ture, the less useful the building becomes as an historical artifact.

The key to the success of any historic preservation project is good judgement in determining where replacement of a deteriorated building element is necessary. While total replacement of a damaged element is often recommended, especially in rehabilitation projects, the success of most preservation projects can be judged by the amount of historic material that remains. Even "replacement in kind" does not typically address natural processes that give the historic materials an aged appearance that cannot be duplicated except by the passage of time.

Because it is a contributing building in a National Register district, legal mandates and policy directives circumscribe treatment of Fishing Cottage #2. The NPS' Cultural Resources Management Guideline (DO- 28) requires planning for the protection of cultural resources "whether or not they relate to the specific authorizing legislation or interpretive programs of the parks in which they lie." Therefore, the house should be understood in its own cultural context and managed in light of its own values so that it may be preserved unimpaired for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

To help guide compliance with legal mandates and regulations while still maintaining the building's historic integrity, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties have been issued along with guidelines for applying those standards. Standards are included for each of the four separate

but interrelated approaches to the treatment of historic buildings: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. These approaches define a hierarchy that implies an increasing amount of intervention into the historic building. Rehabilitation, in particular, allows for a variety of alterations and even additions to accommodate modern use of the structure. Regardless of approach, a key principle embodied in the Standards is that changes be reversible, i.e., that alterations, additions, or other modifications be designed and constructed in such a way that they can be removed or reversed in the future without the loss of existing historic materials, features or characters.

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

**3406.1 Historic Buildings.** The provisions of this code related to the construction, repair, alteration, addition, restoration and movement of structures, and change of occupancy shall not be

mandatory for historic buildings where such buildings are judged by the building official to not constitute *a distinct life safety hazard* [emphasis added].

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

### **Alternatives for Treatment and Use**

The highest and best use for most historic buildings is the use for which the structure was originally designed. For Fishing Cottage #2 this use is residential, and given its small size and location, it is difficult to conceive of another use for the structure. The building is also exceptionally well- preserved, and any treatment that diminished its existing integrity should not be considered.

# Recommendations for Treatment & Use

In keeping with the parameters established for the park's other historic buildings by the park's 1982 GMP, the historic (and present) residential use of Fishing Cottage #2 and the other structures that were historically private residences should be continued, if that can be accomplished with minimal alterations to the buildings' historic character.

Treatment of Fishing Cottage #2 (and the other historic properties in the district) must, at a minimum, adhere to the Secretary's Standards if the historic character of the individual buildings is to be maintained.

## **Site**

There are no apparent historic features in the landscape surrounding the house, but the historic character of the landscape changed dramatically in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The unchecked growth of myrtle and other trees and shrubs have rendered the porch entrance to the house unusable. Treatment of the landscape around the house will be defined through a Cultural Landscape Report; but at a minimum, vegetation should be removed to allow restoration of the porch entrance.

Site drainage is poor, and water routinely ponds around and beneath the house. This condition should be eliminated to prevent deterioration from rot and termites.

Improvements to the water and septic systems at the site are being planned, but these should have little, if any, effect on the visual character of the site.

In summary:

- Clear vegetation from rear of house to restore access to porch
- Follow recommendations of Cultural Landscape Report in determining treatment of the surrounding landscape
- Improve site drainage and eliminate standing water beneath house.

### **Foundation**

The wooden piles that form the building's foundation are in fair condition, but a number of them should be replaced. An evaluation of each pier should be conducted and piers replaced as needed, replicating the existing placement of piers. The absence of corner piers is intentional and meant to reduce the likelihood that water-borne debris would dislodge the house from its foundation. Installation of termite shields is recommended as an aid in preventing damage to the structure.

In summary:

- Inspect piers and replace as necessary

- Install termite shields at each pier

### **Structure**

The wood frame of the building appears to be in very good condition. It is likely that some isolated areas of termite damage are present, but damage may be so limited that repairs will not be necessary.

In summary:

- Repair structure as needed where termite or rot have compromised the structure.

### **Roof**

The existing roll-type asphalt roofing is in fair condition, but will require replacement within five years. When it is replaced, modern, three-tab, asphalt shingles would be appropriate, preferably in blue to match the historic roof covering.

- When roofing is replaced, use blue asphalt shingles.

### **Porches**

Wooden steps with open stringers should be constructed to the screened door at the back porch. The ramp at the southeast end of the porch was constructed to allow storage of ATVs and lawn mowers on the back porch. While the ramp is somewhat obtrusive, it does not necessarily have to be removed. However, along with the ramp, alterations were made to the end wall



of the porches to allow access and to increase vertical clearance. While the alterations to the knee wall are not significant, the missing framing and siding at the upper part of the wall should be restored.

In addition, the modern plywood shutter that was installed to close the ramped entrance should also be removed and new shutters fabricated to match the original board- and- batten shutters that survive around the other sides of the porch. Alterations to the bathroom located at the northwest end of the porch are recommended below, but these should not interfere with continued preservation of the exterior appearance of the porch's shutters and knee walls.

In summary:

- Reconstruct missing portions of southeast porch wall
- Remove plywood shutter at southeast end and replicate board- and- batten shutters to match original shutters elsewhere on the building

### **Windows and Doors**

Existing windows and doors are in reasonably good condition and need only minor repairs. Wooden board- and- batten shutters remain intact and should also be repaired, if necessary, and preserved. The original shutters at the southeast end of the porch are missing and, as noted above, should be replaced.

- Repair and preserve existing windows, doors, and shutters.

### **Exterior Finishes**

Exterior siding, window and door casing, and trim are intact and in good condition. Except for the porch, where more- extensive repairs may be needed, maintenance of painted finishes is all that is necessary.

In summary:

- Maintain painted finishes.

### **Interior**

As with the exterior finishes, interior finishes are mostly intact and in good condition. Hidden damage may be discovered if the house is emptied of its contents, but it would probably be of very limited extent. Walls, ceilings, and floors were originally finished with a clear coat that is probably varnish. The coating is dirty and dull but could be simply cleaned and recoated without stripping the finish.

In summary:

- Clean and recoat walls, ceilings, and floors.

### **Utilities**

*Wiring:* The building's existing electrical system should be completely rewired, adding additional convenience receptacles as necessary. Smoke and fire detectors should be installed to protect the entire building.

*Heating:* Installation of a central heating and/or air- conditioning system is discouraged, since

the necessary equipment would be highly visible. Historically, the houses have remained mostly unheated, but electric baseboard heaters could be installed if necessary.

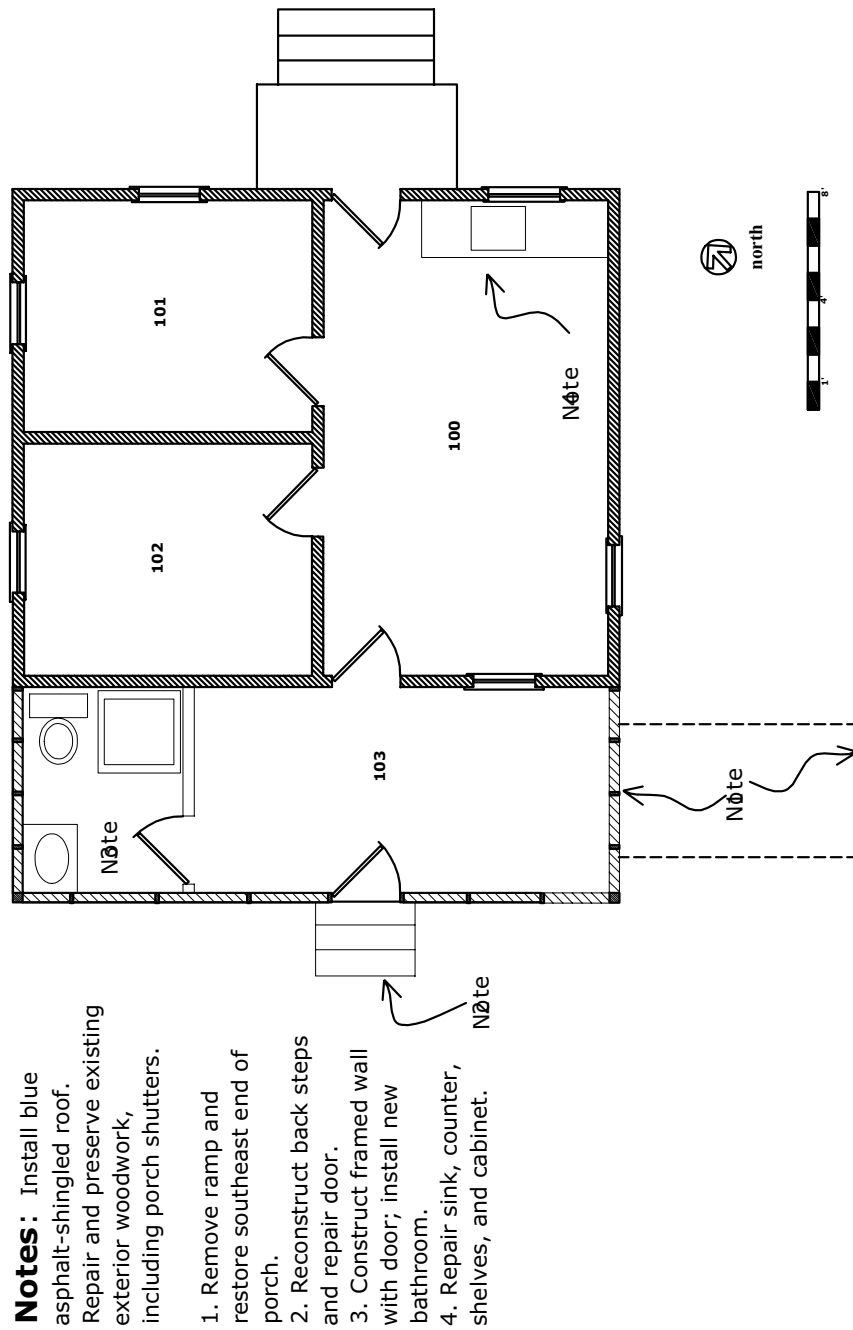
*Plumbing:* The entire plumbing system should be rehabilitated. The existing bath area, which does not include a lavatory, should be replaced by a conventional bathroom in the same location. A framed wall, with a door opening, should be constructed approximately six feet from the northwest end of the back porch to create the space. The exposed back wall of the house and the outside knee walls and screening that form the other walls of the space can be repaired and preserved. The top-hinged exterior shutters are currently raised for light and air in the bath area, and they can continue to be

used in the new bathroom without installing permanent windows.

The existing kitchen arrangement should be rehabilitated. Cabinet, sink, and pump can be preserved, but the formica counter top, which is a modern replacement of the original can be replaced. The wall-mounted shelves and cabinet should be preserved.

In Summary:

- Install new electrical system.
- Install fire and smoke detection system.
- Do not install central heating or air-conditioning; install electric space heaters if necessary.
- Rehabilitate existing bathroom. Rehabilitate existing kitchen.



**Figure 21** Proposed plan for treatment and use. (T. Jones, NPS-SERO-CR, 2003)

## Recommendations for Treatment & Use

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**A**s the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

