

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 15 1985

date entered DEC 5

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Rear Lighthouse of Hilton Head Range Light Station

and or common Leamington Lighthouse

2. Location

street & number Arthur Hill Golf Course, Palmetto Dunes Resort NA not for publication

city, town Hilton Head Island NA vicinity of

state South Carolina code 045 county Beaufort code 013

3. Classification

Table with 4 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use. Includes checkboxes for building(s), site, object, public/private/both, occupied/unoccupied/work in progress, accessible (yes/restricted/no), agriculture/commercial/educational/entertainment/government/industrial/military, museum/park/private residence/religious/scientific/transportation/other: abandoned.

4. Owner of Property

name Greenwood Development Corporation

street & number P.O. Box 1017

city, town Greenwood NA vicinity of state South Carolina 29648

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Beaufort County Courthouse

street & number Bay Street

city, town Beaufort state South Carolina 29648

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title South Carolina Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1980 federal X state county local

depository for survey records South Carolina Department of Archives and History

city, town Columbia state South Carolina 29211

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rear Lighthouse of the Hilton Head Range Light Station was built in 1879-1880 by the United States Light House Board as part of a system of navigation lights guiding shipping in Port Royal Sound. The Rear Lighthouse and a small oil house survive of the complex, which originally included a keeper's house and a forward beacon, which was mounted on a second keeper's house. The Rear Lighthouse has undergone minor alterations and retains integrity from the 1880s.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Hilton Head Range Light Station was designed and built by the United States Light House Board in 1879-1880. The Rear Lighthouse, the major surviving element of the complex, consists of a cast-iron skeleton, a cylindrical stair tower, and a wooden watch room and lantern room structure. Six concrete foundation bases define a hexagon some thirty feet in diameter. The sectional cast-iron columns are bolted to the concrete bases. The columns rise in five stages, with cast-iron channels connecting the columns at each junction. Wrought-iron tie bars with pinned connections provide diagonal bracing at each stage. The stair tower is built on a concrete base at the center of the hexagon. It contains a cast-iron spiral stair with four intermediate landings and four windows. The tower was originally sheathed in wood; sheet steel sheathing was added, probably in 1913. The stair cylinder is tied to the iron skeleton by iron tension bars.

The hexagonal watch room is at the top of the stair and the skeleton frame. A narrow cast-iron gallery girds the watch room, which has wooden siding and interior paneling. The lantern room is above the watch room; the original focal plane of the light was eighty-seven feet from the concrete base, and ninety-two feet above sea level. The light could be seen from fifteen miles away. None of the lantern hardware is intact.

A small brick oil house with a gable roof is intact adjacent to the rear lighthouse. Other outbuildings associated with the system, including the keeper's house, the wooden walkways, and the front beacon, have not survived.

The lighthouse is currently vacant and situated in a pine grove adjacent to a golf course.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
Specific dates	1879-1880, 1913	Builder/Architect	N/A	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rear Lighthouse of the Hilton Head Range Light Station was constructed by the United States Light House Board in 1879-1880 as part of a system of lights and beacons to guide shipping in Port Royal Sound. The lighthouse is significant as one of the few surviving lighthouses in South Carolina, and as the only one of its type remaining in the state. The lighthouse is also significant in the history of water transportation in the area.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The need for navigation lights at Hilton Head had been acknowledged in 1854, when money was appropriated by Congress for a lighthouse and beacon light. No work was done until 1863, when the federal occupying forces established an anchored light-ship and a system of range lights to guide shipping in Port Royal Sound. This system was inactive by 1869.¹

Congress appropriated \$40,000 in 1876 for a new system of range lights at Hilton Head. Plans for the system were approved by the United States Light House Board in May 1877, but work was delayed by difficulties in securing title to the land. The contract for the project was finally let in 1879, and the lights were completed in 1880. They were placed in service the next year.

The system consisted of the Rear Lighthouse, a ninety-five-foot cast-iron tower; a keeper's house close to the rear lighthouse; and a forward light, which consisted of a shorter tower on a second keeper's house over a mile in front of the Rear Lighthouse.²

Mariners seeking entrance to Port Royal Sound would steer their vessels towards the two lights until the lower front light was seen to align with the taller rear light. At this point the Tybee Island lighthouse would be visible on a port bearing to guide ships into Savannah.³

The navigation channel and the Hilton Head Beach frequently shifted location, requiring several relocations of the front beacon to insure the system's integrity. In 1884, in recognition of the likelihood that the channel would continue to shift, a movable keeper's house incorporating the front light was built. This movable house enabled ready adjustment of the front light, and several such moves were required in the 1890s.⁴

A small brick oil house was built in 1892 to store the oil required by the Rear Lighthouse. In 1893 the Hains lamps were replaced with Funck-Heap lamps.⁵

The system was thoroughly renovated around 1913, at which time the sheet steel sheathing was probably installed on the rear lighthouse cylinder.⁶ The system was taken out of service and the Rear Lighthouse abandoned sometime in the 1930s.⁷

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1

Quadrangle name Hilton Head, S.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	2	4	5	1	8	3	5	5	8	4	8	6
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is shown as the heavy red line on the accompanying Beaufort County Tax Map designated "Hilton Head Sheet No. 15," and drawn at a scale of 1 inch = 400 feet. The nominated property includes only the historic lighthouse and adjacent oil house, excluding the undeveloped and developed lands nearby.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county NA code

state NA code county NA code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John E. Wells Preston Burch
Bethea, Jordan, & Griffin

organization S.C. Department of Archives and History date July 1985

street & number 1430 Senate Street telephone (803) 758-5816

city or town Columbia state South Carolina 29211

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Charles E. Lee date 10/23/85

title State Historic Preservation Officer

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Allouez Byers 12/12/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 8

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FOOTNOTES

(1) Records of U.S. Coast Guard, Record Group 26, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.

(2) Ibid.; Blueprints for the Rear Light, Hilton Head Range, 1877, National Register of Historic Places Files, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.

(3) Records of the U.S. Coast Guard; Cassie Griffin, "The Lonely Towers," South Carolina Wildlife, January-February 1977, pp. 26-41.

(4) Records of the U.S. Coast Guard; Terry Bunton, "Island Lights," Hilton Head Islander, July 1984, pp. 12-14.

(5) Ibid.

(6) Description of Light Station, Hilton Head Range Light Station, March 1914, National Register of Historic Places Files, S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.

(7) Bunton, "Island Lights."

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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 9

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bunton, Terry. "Island Lights." Hilton Head Islander, July 1984, pp. 12-14,16.

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Griffin, Cassie. "The Lonely Towers." South Carolina Wildlife, January - February 1977,
pp. 26-41.

Washington, D. C. National Archives and Record Service. Records of the U.S. Coast
Guard. Record Group 26.