United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory -- Nomination Form

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

1. Name
   Historic: Grosse Point Lighthouse
   And/or Common: Same

2. Location
   Street & Number: 2535 Sheridan Road
   City, Town: Evanston
   State: Illinois

3. Classification
   Category: Structure
   Ownership: Public
   Status: Occupied
   Present Use: Agriculture

4. Owner of Property
   Name: City of Evanston (Lessee: North East Park Dist. of Evanston)
   Street & Number: 2535 Sheridan Road
   City, Town: Evanston
   State: Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description
   Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.: Cook County Courthouse
   Street & Number: Clark and Dearborn Sts.
   City, Town: Chicago
   State: Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys
   Title: Illinois Historic Sites Survey
   Date: 1975
   Repository for Survey Records: Office of Preservation Services, Ill. Dept. of Conservation, 901 S. Spring
   City, Town: Springfield
   State: Illinois
The lighthouse, as completed in 1873, was of brick, steel, and glass construction and approximately 90 feet in height. The tower, with the adjoining duplex residence for the captain and his assistant, cost $35,000. The reflectors and lighting apparatus cost $13,000 more. A fog horn was installed on one of the buildings on the cliff with a sound radius of ten miles. In 1914 the brick walls of the tower had eroded so that a concrete coating of three and one-half inches was added.

The first illumination was provided by a three-wick kerosene lamp, which, on clear nights, could be seen for 17 miles. The entire reflector was rotated slowly by a gear mechanism powered by a weight which descended to the ground floor of the lighthouse. This mechanism can still be seen. When the mechanism revolved the reflector it was possible to obscure the light for a few seconds to make a signal which identified the light as the Grosse Point Light. There was no other way to make a kerosene light flash on and off.

In addition to the lighthouse and the residence, there are also two small brick buildings which were built to accommodate the steam fog sirens in 1880. These fog signals were removed in 1922, but the houses remain.

The iron fence along Sheridan Road was erected in 1900.

In 1935 the light was converted to electricity and made automatic, thus making the presence of a lighthouse keeper no longer required.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD
- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE - CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW
- ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- AGRICULTURE
- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- COMMERCE
- COMMUNICATIONS
- INVENTION
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INDUSTRY
- POLICIES/GOVERNMENT
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICAL/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION

SPECIFIC DATES 1873

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Grosse Point Lighthouse was built by the United States Government in 1873 after several shipwrecks had demonstrated its need. The Point had been a landmark ever since French fur traders had named the promontory upon which the buildings sit.

By 1870, over 12,000 ships entered and left the port of Chicago annually. Lake shipping used to follow the shoreline and the shoals off the Point were dangerous.

Several disasters resulted in the citizens of Evanston petitioning the government for a light during the Civil War, but the war delayed the project. (The light reflector is a Civil War veteran; during the war the reflector was being sent from Paris to Louisiana but never reached its destination. It was buried on a beach in Florida, recovered after the war, and brought to Evanston. Scratches made by the sand are still visible).

On June 30, 1873 the lighthouse was finished and commenced operation in March, 1874 and shut down in 1941 as an air raid precaution. In 1935 all the buildings and grounds were turned over to the city of Evanston by the federal government. In 1941 the city received the tower and light as well. The light and grounds are now operated by the North Evanston Park District of Evanston.

The light is now maintained to aid small craft and as an historical landmark.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

North East Park District of Evanston, "Grosse Point Light," (n.d.)
Evanston Historical Society, "Historical Summary of Grosse Point Lighthouse", in Historical Society files.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.5

UTM REFERENCES

Zone Easting Northing
A 36 114470 10 146561860
C

ZONE EASTING Northing
B
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Area includes all the land of the Park District from Sheridan Road on the west to the lakeshore on the east. The north and south boundaries are delineated by the wrought iron fence.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Theodore Field

ORGANIZATION
National Register Assistant
Illinois Office of Preservation Services

STREET & NUMBER
839 1/2 North Eleventh Street

PHONE
(815) 758-4993

CITY OR TOWN
De Kalb

STATE
Illinois

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X STATE X 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KNOW OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
NAME
HISTORIC Grosse Point Lighthouse

LOCATION
CITY, TOWN Evanston VICINITY OF Cook COUNTY Illinois STATE

PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT North East Park District of Evanston DATE OF PHOTO ca. 1900
NEGATIVE FILED AT 2535 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Ill

IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Looking east towards the lake from Sheridan Road.

PHOTO NO
INT: 2083-75
1. Name of Site: Crossepoint Lighthouse (the way it is spelled in the Government Light list)

   Common
   Historic x

   Location:
   Street and Number Sheridan Rd. at Central St.
   City or Town Evanston
   Zip Code 60201
   County Cook

2. Classification:
   Category (check one) x Structure
   Integrity (check one) Original Site
   Not really altered much.

3. Ownership:
   ( ) Private
   (x) Public
   Status (check one) Lighthouse keeper's home
   ( ) Occupied by sup't of
   Unoccupied Northeast Park Dist
   ( ) Preservation work in progress
   ( ) Half of lighthouse keeper's house--a nature museum

4. Access to Public
   ( ) Yes (x) Unrestricted ( ) No
   Unrestricted as far as exterior is concerned, interior open certain hours between April and Nov 1.

   Present Use (check one or more)
   ( ) Agricultural
   ( ) Commercial
   ( ) Educational
   ( ) Entertainment
   ( ) Government
   (x) Industrial
   ( ) Military
   ( ) Museum
   ( ) Park
   ( ) Private Residence still in use as a lighthouse

5. Ownership of Property:
   Owner's Name City of Evanston
   Street and Number Municipal Building
   City or Town Evanston
   State Illinois
   County Cook
   Zip Code 60201

   Leased at present however to Northeast Park District, Evanston until 1996.

6. Description:
   Condition:
   ( ) Excellent (x) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Deteriorated ( ) Ruins
   ( ) Unexposed

   Is there a program of preservation underway? (x) Yes ( ) No
   Lighthouse keeper's office restored in 1973 as part of celebration of the Lighthouse's centennial. There is need for much more work, however.
7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- Archeological Site (Pre-Columbian)
- Archeological Site (Post-Columbian to 1673)
- French Influence (1673-1780)
- Illinois Frontier (1780-1818)
- Illinois Early (1818-1850)
- Illinois Middle x (1850-1900)
- Illinois Late x (1900-present)
- Famous People (give names & dates)

8. Specific Date: Built 1873 by U.S. Government

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- Aboriginal (historic)
- Aboriginal (pre-historic)
- Agriculture
- Architecture
- Art
- Commerce
- Communication
- Conservation
- Education
- Engineering
- Industry
- Invention
- Landscape Architecture

Brief statement of significance: (Include all names and dates)

Lighthouse structure still standing, oldest lighthouse in Illinois. Significant as the oldest structure still standing in Illinois.

Use additional sheets if necessary.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Rev. Lawrence D. Perkins

Organization: Evanston Historical Society

Street and number: 225 Greenwood St.

City or Town: Evanston County: Cook Zip Code: 60201

Date June 11, 1974

Phone: 34-5-3410

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for references for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography


Considerable material, including material from the U.S. Government archives, gathered in 1873 by Historical Society Curator, at Evanston Historical Society U.S. Government Lighthouse List. Numerous photos available from time of construction to present.
In 194, turned over to City of Evanston by U.S. Government, although there is a reservation in the lease which gives the Federal Government the right to take it back, if needed for government purposes. The City of Evanston leases the site to the Northeast Park District of Evanston, which maintains the Lighthouse. Supt. of park District lives in half of the Lighthouse keeper's quarters. Rest of lighthouse keeper's quarters used by Lighthouse Nature Center as museum and classroom, part of the Evanston Environmental Association. One of Evanston's public beaches fronts on the lighthouse. Lighthouse Landing Park is the name of the site.

Wild Flower Garden, maintained by the Garden Club of Evanston is adjacent to the lighthouse.

Open weekends during summer months, afternoons. Guides.

For hours call Historical Society or Russel Watts, 2535 Sheridan Rd., 323, 6961.

Nature Center Museum. Donn P. Jerling, director. Un-9-3030

Site is also one of the legendary sites of landing of Marquette on his trip in late Nov.-December down the west side of Lake Michigan to visit the Illinois Indians. 1674. No historical proof.