



## U.S. Coast Guard History Program

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# Station Shinnecock, New York

USLSS Station #14, Third District  
Coast Guard Station #72

<b>Location:</b>	Near south end of Ponquoque Point, abreast Shinnecock Bay, west northwest 1 1/2 miles from Shinnecock Light; 40-50' 40"N x 72-27' 50"W
<b>Date of Conveyance</b>	1855
<b>Station Built:</b>	1855
<b>Fate:</b>	Still in operation

### Remarks:

Shinnecock station was built in 1855 "two miles east- southeast of Shinnecock light." This position later changed to "east-southeast two miles of Shinnecock Bay Light." This eight-man station was located on the Barrier Beach just east of the present inlet at Shinnecock. A single building, 35 feet x 17 feet served as combination boathouse and barracks. This structure was replaced by a two story wooden barracks building, new boathouse and steel lighted beacon tower during World War I.

### 1938 Hurricane:

The hurricane arrived with no warning early in the afternoon of 21 September 1938. Weather predictions called for a possible Northeast gale that afternoon but few people heeded even this mild warning. The day promised to be bright and sunny. Skies over Long Island were clear that morning. A little after noon time, fishermen off shore noticed a large cloud bank approaching from the southeast and south. The sky began to take on an odd yellowish hue. Winds began to

drastically pick up and barometers started to drop from 29.70 inches to 27.95 inches.

By 3:00 p.m., winds lashed the south shore of Long Island of up to 110 miles per hour in force. Tides swelled to 18 feet above normal. At about 4:15 p.m. that terrible afternoon, a huge wave struck Shinnecock Station and destroyed it. George E. Burghard gave this account as he and his wife and surfman Avery tried to escape the fury of the storm: "It was a terrible sight, but more so because of the absence of noise. The main building, 60 x 50 and two stories high - hit the bay and smashed to pieces, throwing lifeboats in all directions. The effect was that of a silent movie - there wasn't any sound. Although only a few hundred feet to leeward we could hear none of the break up crash, the 110 mph wind took care of that."

Luckily Burghard, his wife and Avery escaped. All station personnel were saved, but many others along Dune Road perished. The storm moved on up into New England that evening killing a total of 680 people and injuring 708 people in the northeast region.

A new station was built on the north side of Shinnecock Bay on the Ponquogue Light Station property. Commissioned in 1940, the station is comprised of a three story brick barracks and communications building and a brick boathouse. The boathouse contains repair shops, classroom and three marine railways capable of hauling boats up to 30 feet in length. The bulkheaded boat basin provides a safe harbor for the station's 44 foot motor lifeboat, 30 foot utility boat and 21 foot outrage Boston Whaler.

In the 1978, Shinnecock is listed as the control center for four eastern Long Island Coast Guard units. The station is still in service.

### **Keepers:**

The first keeper was George Seaman, appointed in 1856. The next known keeper was Lewis R. Squires (appointed at the age of 47 on July 5, 1869, and serving until some unknown date in 1878). Then came Adolphus K. Hand (September 6, 1878 until resignation September 3, 1885), John H. Corwin (September 1885 until resignation June 19, 1886), William H. Carter (August 9, 1886 until resignation July 28, 1891) and Alanson C. Penny (August 21, 1891 until retirement with thirty years service on December 15, 1915). He was followed by Earl W. Sudyam (appointed July 1, 1916 until his reassignment to the Office of the Third District Supervisor on March 1, 1917) and then John L. Edwards (acting until appointment November 1, 1917 and serving until his retirement with thirty years' service on February 1, 1939).

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### **Sources:**

Station History File, CG Historian's Office

Dennis L. Noble & Michael S. Raynes. "Register of the Stations and Keepers of the U.S. Life-Saving Service." Unpublished manuscript, compiled circa 1977, CG Historian's Office collection.

Ralph Shanks, Wick York & Lisa Woo Shanks. *The U.S. Life-Saving Service: Heroes, Rescues and Architecture of the Early Coast Guard*. Petaluma, CA: Costañó Books, 1996.

U.S. Treasury Department: Coast Guard. *Register of the Commissioned and Warrant Officers and Cadets and Ships and Stations of the United States Coast Guard, July 1, 1941*. Washington, DC: USGPO, 1941.

