

*U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

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## Station Short Beach, New York (Now Station Jones Beach)

USLSS Station #30, Third District  
Coast Guard Station #88



<b>Location:</b>	On west end of Jones Beach, abreast of yacht basin and 5/8 mile east of Jones Inlet; 40-35' 30"N x 73-31' 20"W
<b>Date of Conveyance</b>	
<b>Station Built:</b>	1878
<b>Fate:</b>	Still in operation as Station Jones Beach

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## Remarks:

One source lists the station as having been originally established in 1851, taking its name from a small spit of land just east of Jones Inlet. Another source notes that it was originally built "one-half mile east of Jones Inlet" in 1878. A comment in the 1878 *Annual Report* mentions that the site for the station was bestowed by the authorities of the town of Hempstead, Long Island:

". . . about midway between Fire Island and Coney Island upon this coast is a place known as Short Beach. It is an uninhabitable stretch of sand three miles in length, and especially dangerous seaward; and being cut off from the supervision of the patrol (from) Zachs Inlet on the east, and of Jones' Inlet on the west, the possibility of the seasonable discovery of a wreck from either direction at night or in thick weather, is thus precluded. The citizens of the town of Hempstead, to whom this island belonged, appreciating the need for the establishment of a life—saving station thereon, donated a site to the government, upon condition that one would be put upon it."

It was necessary to move the station to higher ground in 1887, in 1890 and again in 1893 due to encroachment of the sea. "The safety of the Short Beach station was imminently threatened by the encroachment of the sea, and the removal of the buildings to a position beyond the reach of storm tides or probable changes in the coast line became a matter of urgent necessity. Necessary repairs and improvements" were made at the station in 1893.

The station was rebuilt using Works Progress Administration funding between 1933 and 1935 at a cost of around \$200,000. In 1939 the station rendered assistance to 164 vessels, an increase of 65% over the number of boats aided in 1935. The boathouse suffered severe damage after a fire in 1961 but was repaired. An enlisted Coast Guardsman perished during a SAR case in 1962. The station participated in the rescue efforts after the Eastern Airlines crash in the mid-1960s as well.

In 1979, the unit ran 1089 SAR cases plus 403 other missions, including law enforcement, training, MEP, and ATON runs. They were ranked as the fifth busiest SAR unit in the country. The boats in their inventory were a 20-foot Pennyan, a 21-foot Revenge, a 41-foot UTB, and a 44-foot MLB.

That facility remained in use until 1987, when the Coast Guard Facilities Design and Construction Center began building the current station. The old boathouse and railway were removed that year and the old station was demolished in March of 1990. The new station was dedicated on June 15, 1990. Interestingly, the Coast Guard chose to rename the station as Jones Beach, taking the name of the old Station #86, and retiring the name Short Beach.

## Keepers:

Early keepers were John Edwards (appointed September 3, 1879 until his resignation due to physical reasons October 23, 1904), Martin Hendrickson (appointed October 19, 1904 until his resignation due to physical reasons in January 1908), Clarence W. Chichester (January 7, 1908 until his reassignment to the Jones Beach station May 21, 1909), and George A. Van Nostrand (appointed August 21, 1909 until his reassignment to the Office of the Superintendent of the Fourth District on May 12, 1924). The position was vacant until John E. Tourgee was reassigned from Potunk station on September 14, 1925; he went back to Potunk on March 16, 1927. Then followed a series of chief petty officers: J. H. Ketcham (1928), C. T. Williams (1929), P. S. Midgett (1930), R. G. Miller (1931), T. G. Fenner (1932), J. M. Odin (1933-1934). Then came more warrant officers: C. R. Peele, assigned November 14, 1934 until his reassignment to the Office of the First District December 8, 1935; C. O. Gray, assigned December 2, 1935 and still listed in 1939.

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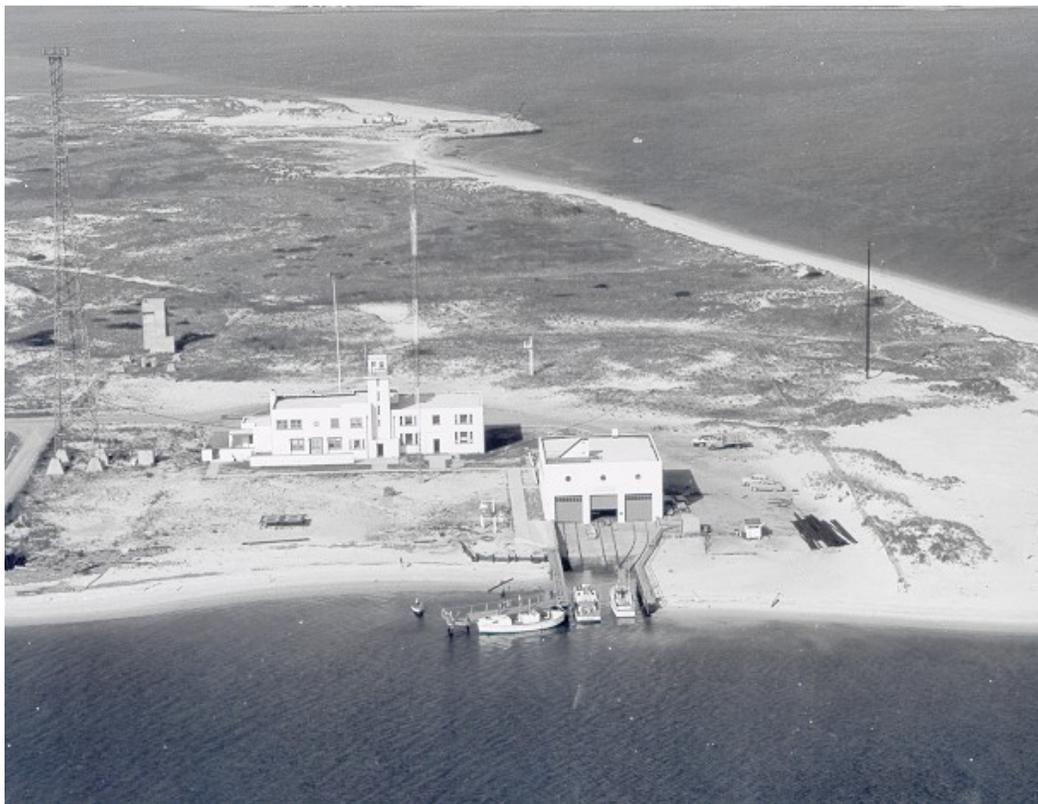
## Photography:



"Short Beach Station #88."; no date/photo number; photographer unknown.



"Old photo, Short Beach."; no date/photo number; photographer unknown.



"Short Beach Lifeboat Station."; 12 September 1962; Photo No. 3CGD 0 0126201; photographer unknown.

## 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.

