



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Station Bolinas Bay, California

USLSS Station #6, Twelfth District
Coast Guard Station #312

Location:	Near south limits of Bolinas, CA, on Bolinas Bay, 9 miles northwest by west of Bonita Point Light; 37°-54' 20"N x 122°-41' 00"W
Date of Conveyance:	1878
Station Built:	1881
Fate:	Placed in caretaker status in 1947; turned over to the GSA in 1954; acquired by the College of Marin in 1958.

Remarks:

Stations at Golden Gate, in the present Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, Bolinas Bay and Humboldt Bay were authorized on June 20, 1874. Other stations at Southside, Fort Point, Point Bonita, Point Reyes, and Arena Cove, soon followed.

The original station burned and was replaced with a new "Chatham-style" structure in 1917. According to the research of Ralph Shanks, "The present structure was built as a direct result of the famed *Hanalei* shipwreck in November 1914. Both Point Bonita and Fort Point Life-Saving Service personnel received medals for heroism in that rescue." Shanks continued: "Over the years Bolinas Bay Lifeboat Station's surfmen courageously participated in numerous rescues. Two of the most important were the 1927 rescue and salvage attempts of the steam schooner *Yosemite* and the World War II era rescue of those on board the liberty ship *Henry Bergh* when it stranded on the Farallon Islands west of the Golden Gate." **

A 27 May 1947 Coast Guard memo from the Commander of the Twelfth District to Commandant (OSU) noted that the lifeboat and surfboat allowance at Fort Point Lifeboat Station needed to be increased due to: "(a) The abandonment of Point Bonita as a lifeboat station and the placing of Bolinas Bay Lifeboat Station in a caretaker status has considerably broadened the potential distress demands on Fort Point Lifeboat Station."

According to Shanks, the station is in danger of being torn down.**

Keepers:

Thomas G. Johnson was appointed keeper on 30 December 1881 and was dismissed on 13 February 1885.

George L. Gibson was appointed keeper on 13 February 1885 and was dismissed on 4 September 1885 "stationed burned down therefore no keeper needed".

CWO Harry Waters was CO as of 1929.

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 Unpublished manuscript, compiled circa 1977, CG Historian's Office collection.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. "Bolinas Bay Lifeboat Station in Danger." *Life Lines: The Quarterly Newsletter of the U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association* (Winter, 2006), p. 7.

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

