

For Immediate Release

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The Port Washington North Breakwater Light Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

Port Washington, Wis. - The Wisconsin Historical Society has announced the listing of the Port Washington North Breakwater Light in Port Washington, Ozaukee County, in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register designation provides access to certain benefits, including qualification for grants and for rehabilitation income tax credits, while it does not restrict private property owners in the use of their property.

Lighthouses have long exerted an emotional pull on those who visit them and the lighthouse that guides ships into the city of Port Washington's harbor is no exception. Built in 1935 and located at the end of a 2,535-foot-long breakwater that was completed the year before, the unmanned Art Moderne style, concrete and steel Port Washington North Breakwater Light is one of eight Great Lakes lighthouses that were built between 1934 and 1950 to a standard design developed by the U.S. Lighthouse Service specifically for use on the Great Lakes. The lighthouse is square in plan, with a steel frame superstructure sheathed in pre-fabricated steel sheets, riveted together. This light has a one-story first level, above which is a narrower four-story steel shaft; connecting the two is a one-story curved section.

This design features Art Moderne (sometimes called "Streamline Moderne") stylistic influences such as curved design elements, circular "porthole" windows that in this instance are clear references to its maritime origins, and chamfered corners that referenced the curved corners that appeared on many Art Moderne style buildings. During a period when shipping on the Great Lakes was critical to commerce and interstate trade, navigational aids were an essential component of the safe travel in and out of the harbor. This lighthouse is a striking example reflecting the early twentieth century period of maritime history.

The register is the official national list of historic properties in America deemed worthy of preservation and is maintained by the National Park Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Wisconsin Historical Society administers the program within Wisconsin. It includes sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts that are significant in national, state or local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture.

To learn more about the State and National Register programs in Wisconsin, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.

About Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical Society, founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.

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