Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Pensacola Naval Air Station Historic District
AND/OR COMMON
Pensacola Naval Air Station (Pensacola Navy Yard)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Pensacola Naval Air Station — NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN
Pensacola — VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1
STATE
Florida — CODE 12 — COUNTY Escambia — CODE 033

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
X DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	X MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME U.S. Navy, Department of Defense
STREET & NUMBER The Pentagon
CITY, TOWN Washington — VICINITY OF — STATE D.C.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Escambia County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER South Palafox Street
CITY, TOWN Pensacola — STATE Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey
DATE 1972 — X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress
CITY, TOWN Washington — STATE D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Pensacola Naval Air Station Historic District includes 55 designated historic structures and approximately 82 acres. Because the air station took over the abandoned Pensacola Navy Yard in 1914, the district boundaries conform closely to the original walled portion of the yard. With only a few exceptions, district structures reflect three distinct periods of construction: (1) 1865 to 1899, when the yard was rebuilt after its destruction by Confederate-set fires during the Civil War; (2) 1906 to 1908, when, following a devastating hurricane in 1906, the Navy again partially rebuilt the yard; and (3) 1916 to 1919, when the first air station structures, including hangars, were erected. The naval air station is responsible for all designated structures except eight (numbers 26, 38, 44, 71, 72, 104, 107, and 121). These are maintained by the Naval Air Rework Facility (NARF). Two of these, structures 71 and 72, are scheduled for reassignment to the station command in the near future. Most of the designated structures are in at least fair condition, but like most older buildings on any military reservation, they have undergone some degree of alteration over the years. Some have experienced extensive interior changes; all have received modern heating and lighting.

Clearly the most significant buildings from the standpoint of aviation history are the metal seaplane hangars erected between 1916 and 1918. Six of these are extant (numbers 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, and 76), but all are threatened by long-range Navy plans to create a green belt along the southern waterfront. In addition, at least three of the hangars have suffered a significant degree of chemical erosion, largely as a result of long exposure to compounds used within them by NARF. Because the six structures are extremely important in the history of naval aviation and because as a group they and their corresponding amphibious aircraft launching ramps preserve much of the early 20th-century flavor of the station, all six hangars are included in the district as designated historic structures. However, because the degree of chemically caused deterioration is considerable and because saving all six hangars may not prove economically feasible, it is suggested that if possible the Park Service have a professional engineer study them and make appropriate recommendations. Other metal waterfront buildings might be structurally evaluated at the same time.

Brief descriptions of the designated structures follow. The quarters front onto North Avenue at the north end of the district; the hangars and ramps are to the south along the waterfront; and most other buildings stand near the district center. Original names are given when known.

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A. Structures Erected Prior to 1900

Commanding Officer's Quarters (building #Q-1). Erected in 1874 in the Italianate mode, this is a symmetrical, three-story, tan brick edifice with a hipped roof that rises to a belvedere. The white-trimmed main block measures about 40 feet by 45 feet and is encircled by a two-tiered, screened veranda. There are several rear additions. The interior features a central hall plan.

Officer's Quarters (buildings #Q-2, Q-3, Q-4, Q-5, and Q-6). These nearly identical two-story, rectangular-shaped, white-painted, frame dwellings were built between 1874 and 1876. They exhibit various rear or side additions, but with their two-story, screened porches, they still represent, according to HABS, a fine example of regionally adapted architecture.

Armory and Chapel (building #16). Constructed in 1854, this octagonal, two-story, salmon-colored brick building served originally as the Navy yard's armory and chapel, and it was one of the few yard structures that survived the Civil War. It measures 48 feet in diameter and 20 feet along each facade. A double-tiered, white-painted enclosed porch now encircles the edifice.

Bachelor Officers' Quarters (building #34). Surrounded by a two-tiered veranda supported by iron columns, this white-trimmed, two-story, tan brick quarters was erected in 1873. According to HABS it is identical to the former Marine Hospital in Galena, Ill. Ammi B. Young designed that structure.

Stables (buildings #19 and 28). Built in 1874, these two rectangular-shaped, parapet-gable-roofed, one-story, tan brick structures stand rear of the commanding officer's quarters.

Ship Carpenters' Workshop (building #1). Although it has undergone extensive interior alteration, this long, rectangular, two-story, white-painted, brick edifice, which was completed in 1868, remains a fine example of Greek Revival design in a military-industrial structure. Its lengthy facades feature rhythmically spaced Doric pilasters, masonry openings, and recessed panels.

Storehouse (building #25). Erected in 1848, destroyed in 1862, and rebuilt in 1868, this two-story, brick edifice is cream-painted and hip-roofed. It was converted to a seaman's barracks in 1907, to a Marine barracks in 1921, and finally to office and storage space in 1957.

Plant Maintenance Shops (buildings #18 and 38). These virtually identical rectangular, two-story, hip-roofed, brick industrial buildings were erected in 1881-82. Each is more than 200 feet long and has received additions. Segmentally arched window openings are set in pairs on both stories. Building 38 sits on the site of a 1829 blacksmith shop and is threatened with demolition in the planned waterfront redevelopment.

Ordnance Workshop/General Warehouse (building #40). Believed to be a modification of a Thomas A. Walter design, this rectangular, 2 1/2-story, tan brick edifice was built in 1875. It features segmentally arched window openings and pedimented gable ends highlighted by palladian windows. Much original detailing remains, including joinery and interior cast-iron columns.

Foundry (building #26). Although flanked by adjoining structures, this 2 1/2-story-high, tan brick building remains, even with bricked-in windows, an important part of the waterfront's industrial character. Erected in 1882, it has a slate-covered, gable roof.

Waterfront Service Building (building #27). Completed in 1872, this long, rectangular, 1 1/2-story, white-painted, brick edifice with north-south gable roof stands on the waterfront and visually separates the 1916 hangars from their 1918 counterparts.

Brick Boundary Wall and Gatehouses (structures #85, 377, and 378). These are the remaining portions of the approximately 10-foot-high brick wall erected around the Navy yard in 1837. Wall sections extend north-south along Jaynes Avenue and east-west along Saufley Street. The brick gatehouses stand at the Navy yard's former main entrance on South Avenue at the west end of the district.

Bulkhead and Wet Basin (structures #178 and 177). Completed in 1852-53, these granite-block structures originally formed part of the yard's ship construction and repair facility, and the bulkhead forms a permanent wharf, at which the carrier Lexington docks when not conducting training exercises at sea. James Herron designed the basin; the firm of John S. Gilbert and Zeno Secor designed the bulkhead.

B. Structures Erected Between 1900 and 1911

Officers' Quarters (buildings #Q-7 and Q-8). The air station building log lists these as 1875 structures, but HABS suggests that quarters 8 is a 1905 building erected on the site of a quarters destroyed in 1862.

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The latter presumably is correct, and therefore similar (except for rear additions) quarters 7 may be a 1905 structure also. Both have rectangular, one-story, white-painted, frame main blocks.

Brig (building #8). This structure, completed in 1908, is scheduled for removal. Roughly 92 feet by 32 feet, the one-story, hip-roofed, cream-painted, brick building has a corbeled cornice around high cell windows.

Industrial Buildings (buildings #44 and 46). According to the air station building log, rectangular, 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, corrugated metal structure 44 was erected in 1906. More than 200 feet long, it extends from South Avenue toward the waterfront. Similarly constructed building #46 rests east-west along the north side of South Avenue.

Headquarters (building #45). Erected in 1907, this 15- by 3-bay, 3-story, red brick edifice houses Pensacola Naval Air Station headquarters. According to station engineers it was converted from industrial use. Among its many striking features are an exposed granite-block foundation; massive stone belt course between first- and second-floor levels; large, triple, first-story windows set under semicircular fanlights and molded brick arches with stone keystones and brackets; and paired rectangular window openings under flat arches on the top two stories. The building has a truncated hip roof and is situated near the waterfront across South Avenue from the wet basin.

Power Plant (building #47A). This massive, almost square, two-story-high, flat-roofed, red brick structure was erected in 1907 as a power plant. Now serving as a repair shop, it is on the station's list of expendable buildings. Beautifully ornamented, it measures five bays by seven, has pilastered and arcaded sides, and displays in each bay a triple, twelve-over-twelve sash under a semicircular fanlight and stone-decorated, molded-brick arch. Patterned stone or plaster medallions and two highly ornate cornices decorate the upper walls.

Industrial Buildings (buildings #49 and 51). Constructed in 1907-8, these contrasting structures are situated near each other on the south side of South Avenue. Building 49 is a one-story, gable-roofed, metal-sheathed, shop and warehouse; number 51 is a rectangular, parapet-shed-roofed, cream-painted, brick shop.

Administrative Building (building #52). This rectangular, two-story, gray-stucco-covered, brick office structure was completed in 1907. It is situated just north of the permanent wharf.

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C. Structures Erected Between 1916 and 1919

Seaplane Hangars (buildings #71, 72, 73, 74, 75, and 76). The most historically significant extant structures at the air station, these surviving metal hangars were among the first erected here, and they form a waterfront row that once included at least 10 such edifices. Numbers 71, 72, and 73 were erected in 1916 and doubled in size in 1917. The other three were built in 1918 and are approximately one-third larger than the earlier ones. All the hangars are similar in design with the most obvious differences appearing in the roofs. Each 1916 hangar has two low-gable-roofed sections; hangars 75 and 76 have three; and hangar 74 has only one. Each hangar is steel framed, metal clad, and cream-painted. All have undergone some alteration, but their basic exterior and interior structure is little changed except for the chemically produced deterioration described above.

Amphibious Aircraft Launch Ramps (structures #167, 168, 169, and 170). Built in 1917-18, these concrete ramps complemented the metal hangars in the Navy's early seaplane operations.

Small Craft Berthing and Repair Facility (building #295). This metal shed, which constitutes the first known addition to the wet basin, was constructed in 1919 at the height of the station's seaplane activity. Measuring about 214 feet long, 54 feet wide, and 50 feet high, it holds a 20-ton movable Chesapeake crane. Siding and structural steel were replaced in 1965.

Band Building (building #191). Currently used as a music facility, this small, rectangular, two-story, white-painted, brick structure stands at the far west end of the district. Erected in 1918, the building has a gabled roof, which is parapeted on the south end and stepped on the north. A hip-roofed veranda extends along the lower west facade, and a two-tiered, shed-roofed veranda crosses the front of the south facade. Window and door openings are segmentally arched.

Waterfront Industrial Buildings (buildings #104 and 144). These structures are a study in contrast, but both form an important part of the waterfront vista. Standing near hangar 71, building 104 is a three-story-high, metal-and-glass, steel-framed shop erected in 1918. It complements the hangars but like them appears to have suffered significant deterioration. Building 144 is a rectangular, one-story, gable-roofed, gray-painted, metal, boat shop with irregular fenestration and two small, shed-roofed additions.

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Other Industrial and Support Buildings (buildings #105, 107, 121, 230, and 238). These edifices were erected between South and North Avenues in 1917-18. Number 105 is a low-hip-roofed, frame shop covered with yellow asbestos siding; number 107 is a small, gable-roofed, red brick shop; number 121 is a similar two-story shop; number 230, the current safety office, is a small, one-story, gable-roofed, frame structure; and number 238 is a cross-shaped, one-story, administrative and storage facility covered with white asbestos siding.

Post Office (building #223). Part of the South Avenue street scape, this small, rectangular, brick structure is nine bays long, three bays wide, and covered with yellow stucco. It was built in 1918.

Officers' Quadruplex (buildings #Q-9 and Q-10). These two-story, gable-roofed quarters were constructed in 1918. Rather plain in design, they are sheathed in white asbestos siding.

Guesthouse (building #221). Completed in 1918, this 16-unit, 2-story quarters consists of two rectangular, hipped-gable-roofed, frame wings connected by a cross-gabled breezeway. Exterior walls display white asbestos siding.

Boundary Justification. Included within the historic district are 55 designated historic structures and approximately 82 acres. The boundary follows relatively closely the southern and eastern shore boundaries to which the installation has conformed since its inception. On the north and part of the west sides, the boundary follows closely the original Navy yard wall. Thus the district includes both the extant Navy yard structures and the extant pre-1920 air station edifices.

Boundary Description. As indicated in red on the accompanying maps [(1) U.S.G.S., 7.5' Series, Florida, Fort Barrancas Quad., (2) Master Shore Station Development Map, Part II, Section 2, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla.], a line beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Avenue and Saufley Street and running eastward approximately 780 feet along an east-west plane one foot north of the old post wall to the west curb of East Avenue; thence, southward about 340 feet along the west curb of East Avenue to the south curb of the entrance to Pier 302; thence, east about 75 feet along the south curb of the Pier 302 entrance to an unmarked point; thence, south about 400 feet along a north-south plane 75 feet east of the east curb of East Avenue to an unmarked point about 20 feet east of the southeast corner of the main block of building 52; thence, southwestward about 100 feet along a diagonal line to the east curb of East Avenue; thence, southward about

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45 feet along the east curb of East Avenue to the north curb of South Avenue; thence, east about 280 feet along the plane of the north curb of South Avenue to the edge of bulkhead 178; thence, southwestward about 440 feet along the southeastern edge of bulkhead 178 to its terminus; thence west about 80 feet across the entrance to the wet basin (bulkhead 177); thence westward about 1,040 feet along the shoreline, including the masonry and concrete seaplane ramps, to a point approximately 600 feet west of ramp 170; thence, northward about 210 feet to the south curb of Dallas Street; thence, east along the south curb of Dallas to a point 1 foot west of the south gate of the old post wall (near the east curb of Jaynes Avenue); thence, north approximately 480 feet along a north-south plane about 1 foot west of the remaining portion of the old post wall to the south curb of North Avenue; thence east about 70 feet along the south curb of North to the east curb of West Avenue; thence north about 230 feet along the east curb of West to the point of beginning.

Johnston, S. Paul, Flying Fleets: A Graphic History of U.S. Naval Aviation (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1941).

Miller, Harold Blaine, Navy Wings (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1942).

Pensacola's Navy Yard--1528-1911 (Pensacola: Pensacola Home and Savings Association, 1967).

Pratt, Fletcher, The Compact History of the United States Navy. Revised Edition. (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1962).

Sprout, Harold and Margaret, The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939).

Turnbull, Archibald and Clifford L. Lord, History of United States Naval Aviation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949).

Untitled 48-page Manuscript History of Pensacola Naval Air Station. Mimeographed. Pensacola Naval Air Station, n.d.

Welcome Aboard the Navy in Pensacola Area (n.p.: Barron Publications, Inc., n.d.).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	X MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES Navy Yard 1825-1911 / Air Station 1914-present BUILDER/ARCHITECT Navy Department

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Pensacola Naval Air Station enjoys the distinction of being the United States' first permanent naval air station, first Navy pilot training center, and first naval installation to send pilots into combat. During the station's initial 3 years, it provided a setting for the achievement of several American altitude records and for the first successful catapult launching of an aircraft from a ship. Pioneer aviators who flew here during this period included Godfrey deC. Chevalier, Kenneth Whiting, Theodore G. Ellyson, John H. Towers, Henry C. Mustin, and R.C. Saufley.

Although the Army supported experiments with heavier-than-air craft as early as 1898, the Navy remained skeptical about airplanes as a potential military weapon until 1910. Proof that planes could take off from the deck of a ship eroded this skepticism, and in 1911 the Navy secured an appropriation from Congress for a naval air service. After 2 years of experimentation and aircraft development, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels ordered creation of a permanent naval air station at Pensacola, where the climate favored year-round flying. Established as Pensacola Naval Aeronautic Station in January 1914, the installation began modestly on the site of abandoned Pensacola Navy Yard. When all men and machines arrived, the entire command numbered 6 qualified pilots, 23 enlisted men, 7 seaplanes, some spare parts, and a few canvas hangars.

With the onset of World War I, naval aviation expanded rapidly. The Navy established additional training bases, but Pensacola, now designated Pensacola Naval Air Station, remained a major flight center. The Navy's first aerographical officer reported for duty here, the Navy's first aircraft carrier conducted experiments here designed to help determine the service's policy on carriers, and the Navy's aerial photography school (now one of the world's largest) relocated here--all before 1926.

Naval aviation slumped in the early 1930's, but Pensacola Naval Air Station underwent a huge building program between 1935 and 1939 and expanded its training facilities to include aviation mechanics and aviation medicine. During World War II, the station turned out thousands of new Navy and Marine pilots, who together destroyed more than

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15,000 Japanese aircraft while losing only 451 of their own. Continuing its training mission, Pensacola Naval Air Station is today headquarters for the Chief of Naval Education and Training, a command created in 1971 to oversee all such Navy programs.

The station's historic district includes approximately 82 acres and some 55 designated historic structures. Among these are the commander's and other quarters from the 1870's, several metal hangars and concrete ramps from 1916-18, and support buildings from both the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Most of these structures are in fair or good condition and still in use, although some hangars have suffered corrosive damage from chemicals used within them by the Naval Air Rework Facility.

History

The history of Pensacola Naval Air Station is in part the history of Pensacola Navy Yard. Andrew Jackson, first Governor of Florida after its transfer from Spain to the United States in 1821, is credited with initiating events that led to construction of the shipbuilding facility. His official reports from Pensacola emphasized its strategic location on the Gulf of Mexico. The Nation had hundreds of miles of new coastline to protect; British and French agents remained in the Caribbean casting covetous eyes toward the American South; and Florida stood virtually isolated from the rest of the United States due to poor, almost nonexistent roads. Therefore in March 1824 Congress approved the establishment of a naval base at Pensacola, and the following year Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard appointed an examination board to select a specific site for the installation. They chose a spot south of and near the mouth of Pensacola Bay.

Over the next 17 years Congress appropriated more than $1/2 million for construction and operation of the yard, but because the Navy had no master plan for the facility, work proceeded slowly. As late as 1842, the yard still lacked the capability for shipbuilding, and even major ship repair proved difficult. Conditions changed little until the Mexican War, when the Navy successfully upgraded the yard so that it could supply and repair ships of the U.S. invasion fleet. Meanwhile, between 1829 and 1844 the U.S. Department of Engineers labored to provide land and sea defenses for Pensacola. In a span of 15 years they erected Fort Pickens on Santa Rosa Island, Fort McRee on Perdido Key, and Fort Redoubt west of the yard. An old Spanish installation, Fort San Carlos de Barrancas, also west of the yard, was strengthened with the addition of a U-shaped brick and earthwork.

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At the close of the Mexican War, the Government withdrew its troops from Forts Pickens and McRee, leaving them unoccupied. The Navy Yard, on the other hand, enjoyed a decade of growth. Between 1855 and 1859, yard artisans fabricated two frigates, the Seminole and the Pensacola, and by the latter year more than 60 structures dotted yard work and living areas.

The Civil War interrupted this progress. Soon after Florida seceded from the Union early in 1861, Confederate troops from that State and Alabama assembled at the Navy yard and persuaded its commander to surrender it. The southerners occupied Forts Barrancas and McRee too, but Union forces retained Fort Pickens. The following September they used it as a base from which to launch a surprise night attack on the rebel-held Navy yard. For the next few months Union and Confederate artillery exchanged fire across Pensacola Bay; and then, in February 1862 the southerners began removing all useful machinery from the yard. On May 9 they withdrew from the facility and burned it.

Federal forces reoccupied the yard almost immediately and began to clear away the rubble and erect new structures. After the war Congress, in 1867, appropriated considerable money to complete the task, and during that year and the next, houses, shops, and dock basin gates were rebuilt. Little else was accomplished until the Spanish-American War, though, for congressional appropriations dwindled during peacetime.

As before, war sparked a revival of activity at the Navy Yard, and subsequent construction of the Panama Canal kept interest in the historic facility high. The Navy bought a 10,000-ton floating dry dock in Havana and towed it to Pensacola, and workmen built a new wharf, a modern power plant, and several wireless stations. Then in 1906 the worst hurricane in memory lashed the area and destroyed or damaged nearly every major yard structure. For some 4 years afterward, naval officials in Washington debated the future of the battered installation. By 1910 shipyards in Baltimore, Boston, Brooklyn, Norfolk, and Philadelphia were fulfilling the Navy's needs, and so in 1911 the Government closed Pensacola Navy Yard.

By coincidence, in that same year Congress appropriated the initial funds for a naval air service. The Navy Department had shown interest in heavier-than-air craft as early as 1898, when Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt recommended that the Navy and Army cooperate in investigating Samuel P. Langley's experiments with models. Afterward, however, the Army provided money for the continuation of these tests, while the Navy decided not to participate in them. Despite

the protests of numerous officers, the Navy reacted in much the same way after the Wright brothers' trial flights for the military at Fort Myer, Va., in 1908. The War Department bought its first planes the following year, but the Navy Department remained skeptical about the potential use of aircraft as weapons and refused to follow the Army's lead once again. Then in 1910 Capt. Washington I. Chambers, assistant to the Secretary of the Navy's Aid for Material, engineered a successful ship-to-shore flight by a private plane from aboard the U.S.S. Birmingham. After other experiments--many of which were conducted at pioneer aviator Glenn Curtiss' new flying school in San Diego--showed that carrier landings, flights of several hours' duration, aerial photography, and wireless communication were possible, Secretary of the Navy George von L. Meyer asked Congress for $25,000 for the service's first planes. Upon obtaining that sum, the Navy had three aircraft constructed, and then engaged in 2 years of rather intense testing and experimentation.

By the summer of 1913, the Navy had eight planes, about a dozen licensed pilots, and a multitude of conflicting opinions about proper aviation policy. At this juncture, new Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels appointed a special board to consider all views and "prepare a comprehensive plan for the organization of a Naval Aeronautic Service." Headed by Chambers, the board deliberated 12 days then recommended 50 aircraft and as many spares for the Navy's fleet, 6 planes for an advanced base ashore, ongoing aviation research at the Washington Navy Yard's model basin, and establishment of a flying school, repair shops, and general training program at Pensacola, where the climate favored year-round flying. The Department adopted most of the board's recommendations, and Capt. Mark L. Bristol became the first head of naval aeronautics.

In December 1913 Daniels ordered all the Navy's aviation personnel and equipment to Pensacola, where they were to establish the Navy's first permanent air station at the Navy yard. When all assigned men and machines arrived at the abandoned installation in January 1914, their entire command numbered only 6 qualified pilots, 23 enlisted men, 7 seaplanes, some spare parts, and a few canvas hangars.[2] Many fine quarters and sturdy industrial buildings remained at the yard, but the

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[1] Quoted in Archibald D. Turnbull and Clifford L. Lord, History of United States Naval Aviation (New Haven, 1949), 33.

[2] Sources differ on the number of planes. Numbers given range from 7 to 11.

beach, which would be the center of flight operations, lay cluttered with scrapped cement blocks and decaying docks. Nevertheless, by early February, the command had cleared the beaches, put up their tent hangars, unloaded their Curtiss flying boats and Wright hydroplanes, and officially opened the Pensacola Aeronautic Station.

For the next few years, while Navy officials in Washington labored for larger congressional appropriations and more planes, the men at Pensacola trained hard and achieved a number of naval "firsts." Unhappily one of these was a disaster rather than an accomplishment; only 2 weeks after the station opened, one of the pilots died in the Navy's first fatal crash. Scarcely 8 weeks later Pensacola became the first American military installation to send pilots and planes into combat. During the Tampico crisis in April 1914, Lt. John H. Towers, 3 other pilots, and 12 enlisted men, took 3 aircraft aboard the U.S.S. Mississippi and accompanied U.S. troops to Vera Cruz. There Lt. Pat Bellinger made, according to Navy historian Harold Blaine Miller, "long and extensive scouting flights over the enemy lines and the information he obtained proved of great assistance in the campaign."[3] His plane was also the first to be hit by enemy fire.

Although not as glamorous, perhaps, as Bellinger's exploits in Mexico, the "firsts" achieved at the air station itself proved more significant. For example, on April 23, 1914, Bellinger set an American seaplane altitude record by ascending to 10,000 feet over Pensacola. In July 1915 the station began training exercises in antisubmarine patrol and bombing, and these demonstrated among other things the need for greater fuel capacity and better bomb sights. That same year, in November, Cmdr. Henry C. Mustin made the first successful catapult launching from a ship, flying off the stern of the U.S.S. North Carolina in Pensacola Bay; and, in March the following year, Lt. R.C. Saufley set a new American altitude record of 16,000 feet. In part because of these accomplishments and in part because of the need to improve the overall administration of naval aviation, the Navy Department, in mid-1916, reorganized the Naval Aeronautic Station, giving it official manufacturing and experimental departments. The station's responsibilities now included: (1) training personnel, both commissioned and enlisted, (2) maintaining and repairing school aircraft, (3) testing new planes, instruments, guns, bombs, and other devices, (4) experimenting with new aircraft body, engine, and instrument design, (5) constructing new kinds of aircraft, and (6) collecting performance data, apparently for both experimental and training flights.

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[3] Harold Blaine Miller, Navy Wings (New York, 1942).

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When the United States entered World War I, Pensacola was the only training station in operation. Since it could accommodate only 64 student pilots at any one time, the Navy Department established several other training facilities. Pensacola remained preeminent, however. By 1918 it had gained a new name--Pensacola Naval Air Station--and erected 10 new, metal hangars along its waterfront. After the war naval aviation on the whole declined, but at Pensacola training and testing proceeded apace. In 1923-24 the Navy's first aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Langley, came here twice to conduct experiments to help determine the proper Navy policy for such vessels, and about this same time the Navy moved its school of aerial photography here. It is now one of the world's largest.

Naval aviation slumped during the early 1930's, but between 1935 and 1939, Pensacola Naval Air Station underwent a tremendous building program and expanded its training program to include aviation mechanics and aviation medicine. These changes proved invaluable after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Within 9 days Pensacola was able to adjust its training schedule to accommodate 2,300 students per month, an increase of nearly 300 percent. Additional growth and construction followed, and by mid-1943 the station had produced some 20,000 pilots. By the end of the war, Pensacola-trained Navy and Marine fliers had sunk 63 German submarines and 161 Japanese warships and destroyed more than 15,000 Japanese aircraft. Pensacola pilots lost only 451 aircraft to Japanese fliers. The station contributed similarly to the U.S. military effort in Korea, and the installation today continues its tradition of leadership. In 1971 the Navy, for the first time, combined all its training and educational programs--except health care services--under a single command. It is headed by the Chief of Naval Education and Training and headquartered at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Carrison, Daniel J., The United States Navy (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968).

Collier, Basil, A History of Air Power (New York: the Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1974).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY circa 82 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	1,6	4,7,3,9,2,5	3,3,5,7,3,9,0
B	1,6	4,7,4,4,4,5	3,3,5,7,3,2,0
C	1,6	4,7,4,5,6,0	3,3,5,6,8,9,0
D	1,6	4,7,4,3,2,0	3,3,5,6,6,8,0
E	1,6	4,7,3,5,8,0	3,3,5,6,8,9,0
F	1,6	4,7,3,6,2,0	3,3,5,7,0,2,0
G	1,6	4,7,3,8,4,0	3,3,5,6,9,9,5

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See last page of description.)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
George R. Adams, Managing Editor

ORGANIZATION
American Association for State and Local History

DATE
April 1976

STREET & NUMBER
1400 Eighth Avenue South

TELEPHONE
615-242-5583

CITY OR TOWN
Nashville

STATE
Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ 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 ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

7: