NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)

other names/site number Raymond-Brinckerhoff Aviation Company, Raymond-Richardson Aviation Company

2. Location

street & number 2700 South Peterson Avenue (U.S. 441) ☐ not for publication

city or town Douglas ☐ vicinity

state Georgia code GA county Coffee code 069 zip code 31534

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this **X** nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property **X** meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national **X statewide** **__local**

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 20 MAR 13

Dr. David C. Crass/Historic Preservation Division Director/Deputy SHPO

Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official — Date

Title — State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 5.14.13

63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) | Coffee County, Georgia
Name of Property | County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [ ] private
- [X] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [ ] building(s)
- [X] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	2	buildings
0	0	sites
3	0	structures
0	0	objects
14	2	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense: military facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation: air-related
Government: government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Stucco, Metal
roof: Asphalt
other: Glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) is an Army Air Force (AAF) training school located south of Douglas in Coffee County in south Georgia. Built from 1941 to 1943, the school includes 11 of the original 22 buildings and three hangars organized around an open quadrangle. The complex is encircled by Airport Circle Road. The Colonial Revival-style administration building is located at the head of the complex and is the only building that features elements of an architectural style. The administration building, like most of the school buildings, is one story and constructed of hollow-clay tile covered with stucco on a concrete-slab foundation. Windows in most buildings are steel-frame casement windows. Three barracks buildings (B-2, B-3, B-7) are long three-part buildings with porches and covered with gable roofs. Three H-shaped barracks (B-4, B-5, B-8) feature two gable-roofed dormitory blocks joined by a breezeway. The complex includes a cruciform-shaped hospital building, which was enlarged in 1943, and a classroom building, with banks of sash windows, which was converted into a garage in c.1968. Hangars 1 and 2, the largest buildings in the complex, are steel framed and clad in corrugated sheet metal. Hangar No. 2 includes a restored PT-167 Stearman biplane. Hangar No. 3 was destroyed in a fire and replaced in 2011. In 2006, Barracks 7 was rehabilitated to house the WWII Training Museum of the 63rd AAF FTD Preservation Society.

Narrative Description

**The following developmental history derives from Kenneth H. Hayes, "63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)." *Historic District Information Form.* January 2012. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resource, Atlanta, Georgia.

The 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) is located on South Peterson Avenue (U.S. Highway 441/State Route 31 South). The school is set on flat terrain in a stand of pine trees on the west side of U.S. 441, less than two miles from downtown Douglas. The Contract Pilot School originally comprised 22 buildings, which were constructed from 1941 to 1943, with most built in 1941 and 1942. The buildings included an administration building, guard house, hospital, classroom building for the ground school, building for the Link trainer, a canteen/recreation hall, mess hall, 11 barracks, a flight tower, and 3 aircraft hangars. Most of the buildings were located inside the half-mile loop road called Airport Circle Road. The hangar complex is located north of Airport Circle Road. The first buildings constructed were the hangars, barracks, a mess hall, hospital, and a classroom building, built in 1941. Eleven of the 22 buildings survive, including the administration building, six barracks, the hospital, classroom building, and two hangars. Although many have been altered on the interior, the exteriors remain close to their World War II appearance. Currently, the hangars are used by the Douglas Municipal Airport.

The city of Douglas and Coffee County purchased the land in May 1941 and ground was broken for the new school in July that year. The administration building, mess hall, and two barracks had been completed by the time the first cadets reported on October 4, 1941. After the U.S. entered the war in December, construction was stepped up, and by spring, roads were built, sidewalks were laid, and new barracks were constructed. With the arrival of each new class of cadets came an increase in administrative and operational activities. This required an addition to the administration building in June 1942. A third hangar (hangar 2) was completed in September 1942.

The design and construction of the Contract Pilot School was undertaken by private contractors and monitored and approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Architect Stefan H. Zachar of Miami Beach, Florida, designed the buildings and C. Franklin Wheeler, of Miami, was the general contractor. The Contract Pilot School in Douglas is different than most military construction during World War II, possibly because the school was developed before war was declared. Most military buildings constructed during the war were temporary wood buildings. The Douglas buildings were built of permanent materials: concrete-slab foundations, hollow clay-tile walls covered with stucco, and composition shingle roofs. Most of the windows are four-light steel-frame casements.

The site plan of the Contract Pilot School is symmetrical, with the barracks built in matched pairs, with two identical barracks on each of the four sides of the quadrangle (photos 10, 11). The eight barracks, canteen, and administration building formed the quadrangle. The first four barracks were completed in 1941, another six were built the next year, and one more was built in 1943. The original walkways cross the quadrangle and join all buildings inside Airport Circle Road. The hangars, the Link trainer building (not extant), and the guard house (not extant) were located outside Airport Circle Road.

The barracks arrangement allowed staggered start dates for groups of cadets, with upperclassmen in one set of barracks, and underclassmen in another set. As the upperclassmen graduated, the underclassmen would become upperclassmen, and a new class of cadets would move into the barracks of the just-graduated class. All of the barracks were in close proximity to the common areas, such as the canteen, mess hall, and classroom building.

Architectural style was less a consideration in the design of mobilization buildings during World War II. The outcome of World War II depended upon marshaling resources. When more funds were available, permanent structures were often built. The general trend was toward less substantial construction as the air corps grew in size and funding was limited. During this period, utilitarian and functional designs maximized scarce resources. As demand for housing and training facilities increased, the military used temporary, wood construction whenever possible. Some structures, such as hangars, were constructed of permanent materials. The administration building in Douglas, with its five-part plan and its front and rear temple-front porches, is the only example of academic architectural design at the school.

The administration building, built in 1941, is a one-story office building with a five-part plan and front and rear temple-front entrances. Located at the head of the complex, the administration building is built of structural tile and clad in stucco. Classical details include pilasters, cornice, and a semi-circular vent in the rear entrance gable. Six-over-six sash windows flank the main entrance, but most other windows in the building have been replaced. The rear elevation includes the only remaining arched window openings and casement windows. The central tower was removed (photos 1-4).

Barracks B-2, B-3, and B-7, built in 1941 and 1942, are one-story, linear-shaped barracks that housed roughly 30 men in two barracks rooms. Double doors and two additional single doors opened onto a screened porch. Constructed of structural tile, the exterior is clad in stucco. The main elevations include steel-framed casement windows and a variety of nonhistoric doors. A series of single-, double-, and quadruple-casement windows are located along the rear elevation. These barracks buildings measures 2,100 square feet. Barracks B-7 was rehabilitated to house the WWII Training Museum of the 63rd AAF FTD Preservation Society. The interior includes a variety of large objects and smaller items in display cases. The screened porch on barracks B-7 has been reconstructed (photos 5-9, 11-13).

Barracks B-4, B-5, and B-8, built in 1941 and 1942, are one-story, H-shaped barracks that featured a central screened breezeway between the four barrack rooms, which has since been filled with fixed-pane windows. Constructed of structural tile, the exterior is clad in stucco. Each barracks has high, unfinished ceilings. Double-and quadruple-casement windows are located on all sides of the buildings. The doors are nonhistoric. Each barracks building measures 4,200 square feet (photos 14-16).

The classroom, built in 1941, is a long, one-story, side-gable building with a side-gable roof. It is built of structural tile and clad in stucco. The classrooms are illuminated by nine-over-nine sash windows. A smaller classroom was added to the west elevation in 1943. In that year, the school was described as having four classrooms, four instructors' offices, a book-storage room, and a latrine (Massey 1944). More recently, the classroom was converted into a garage and one of the large sets of windows on the main façade was replaced with a rolling steel warehouse door. The rear of the building includes two warehouse doors. After the war, this building was used as storage. In the 1980s, it served as one of the city of Douglas' rescue squad buildings and as storage for city records. It was later used as a garage and as storage for aircraft parts (photo 17).

The hospital, built in 1941, is a one-story, cruciform-plan building with a six-bed wing, which was added to the east side in 1943. It is built of structural tile and clad in stucco. The main block includes steel-framed casement windows. Windows in the addition are six-over-six sashes. The interior consisted of a large central waiting room and office, one examination and operation room, and an eye-testing area. In the rear was a five-bed isolation ward. Other rooms included a laboratory, closets, and bathrooms. In the 1970s, this building was used by the Georgia Poultry Diagnostic Laboratory. A rear entrance was added later (photo 18).

Hangar 2, built in 1941, is a large, steel-framed aircraft hangar with a steel-arched truss roof. The exterior is clad in corrugated sheet metal, which is not original to the building. Massive, eight-panel sliding doors retract to open the north and south elevations. Shed-roofed sections on east and west sides provide offices and storage areas. This area originally provided storage, parachute packing, and pilot-ready rooms. The hangar measures 100 feet north to south and 140 feet east to west (photos 19 (left), 24-26).

Hangar 3, built in 1942, is a large, steel-framed aircraft hangar with a steel-truss roof. The exterior is clad in corrugated sheet metal, which is not original to the building. Massive, eight-panel sliding doors retract to open the north and south elevations. The shed-roofed section on the west side has been clad in wood siding and brick veneer. This area originally provided storage, parachute packing, and pilot ready rooms. The east elevation has been extended slightly and includes a brick chimney. The hangar measures 100 feet north to south and 140 feet east to west (photos 20-23).

The PT-17 Stearman biplane was manufactured by Boeing in 1943. It maintains U.S. Registration N5503N and Serial Number 75-7768. The restored Stearman biplane, located in Hangar No. 2, is model number A75 A1 and is powered by a Continental model W670 engine. This type of aircraft served as a primary trainer for cadets who were receiving their first flight hours. Boeing manufactured more than 8,500 Stearmans for both the Army Air Force and the Navy. After the war, many Stearmans were auctioned off and used as crop dusters and in aerobatic shows (photos 26, 27).

Contributing Buildings to the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)

Administration Building
Barracks B-2
Barracks B-3
Barracks B-7
Barracks B-4
Barracks B-5
Barracks B-8
Classroom
Hospital
Hangar 2
Hangar 3

Contributing Structures:

Plan of the grounds, including Airport Circle Road and the open quadrangle.
Flag pole
PT-17 Stearman biplane (U.S. Registration N5503N; Serial Number 75-7768)

Noncontributing Buildings

Hangar 1 (constructed 2011), photo 10, far left.
Guard House (reconstructed c.2004), photo 1.

63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) | Coffee County, Georgia
Name of Property | County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Military
Architecture
Engineering

Period of Significance
1941-1944

Significant Dates
1941—Pilot training school in Douglas began operations.
1944—Pilot training school closed.

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Zacher, Stefan H. (architect)
Wheeler, C. Franklin (contractor)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1941 when the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) in Douglas began operations and ends in 1944, when the school ceased operations.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) is significant under National Register Criterion A at the state level in the area of military history because it represents the mobilization and training of American pilots before and during World War II and because it is the most intact of the eight pilot training schools built in Georgia and among the 75 built throughout the nation. By war's end, the Contract Pilot School in Douglas had as many as 1,000 civilian employees and trained roughly 9,000 cadets with a dropout rate of roughly 30 percent. Nationwide, the Army Air Force trained 250,000 pilots. The Contract Pilot School is significant under National Register Criterion C at the state level in the area of architecture because its symmetrical layout around an open quadrangle is typical of military base designs that provided efficient communication from one building to another. The buildings are mostly characteristic of military construction during World War II, providing, for example, buildings for administration, training, barracks, dining halls, and recreation. Designed by Miami Beach architect Stefan H. Zachar and approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, many of the buildings were built with permanent concrete and tile materials, unlike most temporary wood-frame military construction of the era. The Contract Pilot School is significant under Criterion C at the state level in the engineering because the PT-17-Stearman biplane in Hangar 2 is an excellent example of the type of aircraft that served as a primary trainer for cadets who were receiving their first flight hours. Manufactured by Boeing in 1943, the restored Stearman biplane in Douglas retains a high level of historic integrity and is housed in a World War II-era hangar.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

In 1939, in preparation for a war in Europe, President Roosevelt pushed through a $300 million expansion of the Army Air Force (AAF), including new planes and the development of training schools for pilots. By 1939, under the Civilian Pilot Training Act, plans were underway to convert a small airport south of Douglas into a training school that would provide civilian pilots with their initial training and their first flight hours in PT-17 Stearman biplanes. Douglas and Coffee County purchased the land in May 1941, construction by private contractors began in July, and the base was mostly completed that same year. The school was operated by a series of private companies, even after it was purchased in 1942 by the Defense Plant Corporation, a federal program that asserted control over war-related assets. The school, which also taught aviation mechanics, accommodated 200 cadets. Instructors and other civilian employees lived off base. By late 1943, the bulk of the AAF strength was overseas and, in December 1944, the base was officially closed.

The 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) is significant under National Register Criterion A at the state level in the area of military history because it represents the mobilization and training of American pilots before and during World War II and because it is the most intact of the eight pilot training schools built in Georgia and among the 75 built throughout the nation. The U.S. mobilized more men for military service during World War II than at any other time in its history. By the end of the war, 10.4 million soldiers had served in the army. Although only a fraction of the total cadet pilots were trained in Douglas, the Contract Pilot School in Douglas represents that period in this nation's history when hundreds of training installations were rapidly formed to prepare to fight a war in Europe and later in the Pacific.

The Contract Pilot School is significant under National Register Criterion C at the state level in the area of architecture because its symmetrical layout around an open quadrangle is typical of military base designs that provided efficient communication from one building to another. The buildings are mostly characteristic of military construction during World War II, providing, for example, buildings for administration, training, barracks, dining halls, and recreation. Designed by Miami Beach architect Stefan H. Zachar and approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, many of the buildings were built with permanent concrete and clay-tile materials, unlike most temporary wood-frame military construction of the era. Among the 75 primary schools throughout the nation, most, if not all, have lost much of their historical integrity. The Douglas school is an outstanding example of a World War II flight training school, with many of the original buildings and the campus plan that remain mostly unaltered.

The Contract Pilot School is significant under Criterion C at the state level in the area of engineering because the PT-17 Stearman biplane in Hangar 2, which was manufactured in 1943, is an excellent example of the type of aircraft that served as a primary trainer for cadets who were receiving their first flight hours. The Stearman biplane in Douglas is model number A75 A1 and is powered by a Continental model W670 engine. Boeing manufactured more than 8,500 Stearmans for both the Army Air Force and the Navy. The restored Stearman biplane in Douglas retains a high level of historic integrity and is housed in a World War II-era hangar.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

**The following developmental history derives from Kenneth H. Hayes, "63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)," *Historic District Information Form*, January 2012. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resource, Atlanta, Georgia.

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt began receiving reports about the powerful German Luftwaffe and the production capacity of the German aircraft industry in 1938, he pushed Congress to increase the U.S. Army Air Forces' (Army Air Corps) role in the U.S. military. In 1939 Congress authorized $300 million for the expansion of the Army Air Forces including the procurement of 3,251 new planes and the development of training schools for pilots. When Poland was invaded and France was attacked a year later, FDR saw the need for even more air power and vowed to increase the number of planes in the army to 36,500. With this increase in aircraft came the need for more pilots, navigators, and mechanics, as well as the installations needed to train them. However, in 1939 there were only 17 Army air bases and four depots in the U.S. (Tate 1998).

In 1939, Wesley Raymond, operator of flying schools in Griffin, Cochran, and Macon, worked with South Georgia College and the Civil Aeronautics Authority to form a Civilian Contract Pilot School at Douglas under the Civilian Pilot Training Act of 1939. This act authorized the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) to conduct a program for the training of civilian pilots through educational institutions and to prescribe pertinent regulations with the objective of providing sufficient training to prepare a student for a private pilot certificate. The act authorized $5,675,000 to be appropriated for the program during fiscal years 1939 and 1940. On the basis of this legislation, CAA's program for the 1939-1940 school year called for training 11,000 civilian pilots (Federal Aviation Administration, n.d.).

Wesley Newman Raymond (1899-1975) served with the first New Brunswick Regiment in World War I. After the war, he moved to Brooklyn, New York, where he became interested in flying. In 1920, with surplus planes he purchased after the war, he moved to Florida and started an aviation business in Orlando. In 1924 he moved to Punta Gorda, Florida, where he was in the aviation, real estate, and construction businesses. In 1929, he became involved in several aircraft companies and traveled the country selling planes. In 1936, he started an airport and airplane sales business in Macon. He became involved in the development of Herbert Smart Field in Macon, along with an airfield and school in Griffin. By 1939, he was operating four schools under the Civilian Pilot Training Program: Griffin, Cochran, Douglas, and Macon (Interview with Wesley Raymond, Oct. 14, 1943, as cited in *History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.).

In Douglas, Raymond was the president and B. P. O'Neal was secretary/treasurer of the Raymond-O'Neal Aviation Company, a civilian organization, which was contracted to build and operate the flight school (*History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.). The school was one of the first 15 in the U.S. to sign a contact with the Army Air Corps to create a primary flight school ("Pioneer Aviation Field Results in Primary Flying School Here" 1943; *History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.).

In May 1941 the city of Douglas and Coffee County agreed to purchase a 700-acre tract adjacent to the South Georgia College airfield on present day U.S. 441 for the purpose of a pilot training field. The local governments were in charge of clearing the land, but the construction of the buildings and operation of the facility were undertaken by Raymond-O'Neal Aviation Company. The Army Corps of Engineers approved the building plans ("Voters to Pass on Airport" 1941).

Construction of the buildings started in July and was undertaken by the private contractor C. Franklin Wheeler of Miami, Florida. Stefan H. Zachar (1904-1981) of Miami Beach, Florida, was the architect. Both men had experience designing and constructing airbase buildings because they had just built the Big Prairie pilot training site near Arcadia, Florida, for John Paul Riddle, one of the founders of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Like many of the Big Prairie buildings, the early buildings at Douglas were of permanent construction. At Douglas, the buildings were built of concrete and clay tile, except the hangars, which were steel-frame construction. Barracks were built to accommodate 200 men. In 1941, the auxiliary fields, hangars, barracks, mess hall, hospital, and classroom building were built.

Similar to Big Prairie, which was laid out in a circle, the Douglas facility was laid out in a rectangle with rounded ends and its long axis oriented north to south. The idea, as described in the *Arcadian* newspaper in Florida at the time, was "so that no one building should be too great a communicating distance from one another, which would make for convenience of both students and instructors in the performance of their duties" (Glassman 1989). Other features of Big Prairie that were included at Douglas were: single-story buildings, tennis courts in the center of the open quadrangle, screened porches to allow breezes for cooling, and an administration building with the flag pole in front, framed by queen palms. In addition, hangars were placed on the outside of the quadrangle.

However, as construction at Douglas proceeded, O'Neal resigned as a contractor when construction costs started to add up. A new organization was formed with Raymond as president and George Brinckerhoff as vice president, and the name of the organization thus became the Raymond-Brinckerhoff Aviation Company. (Written statement by Wesley Raymond, October 10, 1943, as cited in Meltzer *63rd Army Air Force Contract Pilot School (Primary), Douglas, Georgia, History of the School for the Period 7 December 1941 to 1 January 1943* n.d.).

Operations began in August 1941 with a sod landing strip, which measured 800' x 2,600', and one 10' x 12' building (no longer extant). At that time 18 buildings were under construction, and by October 1941, when the first group of 50 cadets arrived, two barracks and a mess hall were in operation. Of the 50 students enrolled in the first class, 32 graduated on December 12, 1941. The second class, designated 1942E, arrived on November 6, 1941 and consisted of 53 men. Two more ground school instructors arrived with the Class of 1942E (General file, as cited in *History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.). A second landing strip measuring 2,500' x 1,000' was also now ready in time for the second class (Civilian and Personnel Construction Report File 319.1, 27 September 1941, as cited in *History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.).

On January 9, 1942, the Defense Plant Corporation, which was formed by the federal government to invest in industrial production, took over the fixed assets of Raymond-Brinckerhoff Aviation Company, and Raymond-Brinckerhoff then rented the properties from the Defense Plant Corporation in order to continue operating the school (Interview with Wesley Raymond, 4 January 1944, as cited in Meltzer, *The History of the Douglas Primary School, 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School, 7 December 1941 - 1 January 1943* n.d.). After a disagreement with the army supervisor, Brinckerhoff resigned on July 28, 1942. Wesley Raymond and Robert Richardson reorganized the company as Raymond-Richardson Aviation Company, the name that was identified with the base until the end of the war (Interview with Wesley Raymond, 4 January 1944, as cited in Meltzer, *The History of the Douglas Primary School, 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School, 7 December 1941 - 1 January 1943* n.d.). Robert Richardson had a range of experiences in aviation and owned his own field and planes in Laurens, South Carolina. He was the state director of sales for Luscombe Airplanes (Interview with Robert Richardson, October 10, 1943, as cited in *History of the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)* n.d.).

Cadets were sent from all over the eastern U.S. for training at 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary). After finishing their pre-flight instruction elsewhere, they were transferred to Douglas where they received 100 hours of ground school instruction in the classroom building and trained in the Link Trainer flight simulator in the Link Trainer building (no longer extant). They also completed 60 hours of flight time in PT-17 Stearman biplanes. They were to solo after 10 hours of flying and were required to have a minimum of 25 landings with an instructor before soloing. By the end of the program, they completed 60 hours of flying with a minimum of 175 landings to complete the program. If they passed, they moved on to other schools that taught basic flying and advanced flying.

Douglas usually accommodated 200 cadets along with some Army officers. Civilian instructors lived off the base. The base also employed mechanics, office workers, dispatchers, cooks, and waiters from the Douglas area. Women were hired to keep records of the planes and to give periodic mechanical inspections. Women also attended school on site and received their Civil Air Mechanics License. The course consisted of three months of training in which aircraft fundamentals, theory of flight, structure and design, hydraulics, and other subjects related to aviation were taught. At the height of the war, women made up 25 percent of licensed mechanics at the airbase ("Women Mechanics Amaze Visitors But Old Stuff Now to 63rd FTD" 1943).

The 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) was important to the economy and social life of Douglas during World War II. In October 1943, the number of personnel totaled more than 1,000, nearly all of whom were local civilians. The annual payroll totaled more than one million dollars. The public was often involved in the activities at the base, including baseball games and other athletic events. They were invited to open houses, air shows, graduations, and other ceremonies. In turn, the community hosted dances, dinners, and other social activities, and provided housing for army personnel, instructors, and mechanics ("Raymond-Richardson Celebrate Anniversary" 1943).

By 1942, the school provided a basketball court, four tennis courts, a baseball diamond, several volleyball courts, and an obstacle course in order to keep the cadets physically fit. Facilities added in the spring of 1943 included an additional basketball court, three badminton courts, an archery range, horseshoe pits, punching bags, tether ball, and fencing and boxing equipment. A second basketball court was added in January 1944. Except for the tennis courts, which were located within the quadrangle, the exact location of these facilities is not known.

The Army Air Forces constructed little over the last two years of the war, and they began to dispose of excess properties before the end of the war. By late 1943, the bulk of Army Air Forces strength was deployed overseas and existing U.S. facilities were underutilized. In 1943, the Army Air Forces leadership embarked on a program of phased drawdowns in base facilities. Most of the leases at civilian training centers were abruptly terminated in 1944 (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1999). Although originally leased to the military for ten years, the Douglas installation received its closure notice on November 15, 1944. The base officially closed on December 28, 1944. During the war, the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) instructors trained as many as 9,000 pilot cadets of the 250,000 trained in the 75 flight schools throughout the United States ("Douglas Air Base Will Close On December 28 After Successful Record" 1944; Miller n.d.).

Since the end of the war, the airfield and hangars have served as the Douglas Municipal Airport. The WWII buildings have served a wide range of uses including a spring training camp for the Cincinnati Reds from 1954 to 1957, a factory for the Federal Corset Company in the late 1950s, a Douglas County food distribution center, a mental health training center, a kindergarten, an elementary school, and an agricultural research lab.

In Georgia during World War II, there were three primary, two basic, and three advanced pilot training installations. The following is a summary of the remaining condition of these facilities.

The Darr Aero Tech Primary school near Albany is now the Southwest Georgia Regional Airport. Only three hangars dating from World War II remain. None of the barracks or administration buildings remain. (Bridge 2011; "Southwest Georgia Regional Airport" 2011).

Souther Field in Americus served as a primary school. Only two hangers remain, both of which have been extensively modified for non-aircraft usage (Zainaldin 2009).

Bainbridge Army Airfield, now Decatur County Industrial Air Park, was a basic training facility. A few hangars survive ("Decatur County Industrial Air Park" 2011).

Cochran Field south of Macon, now Middle Georgia Regional Airport, was a substantial basic flight training school with 52 barracks, six mess halls, and 11 administration buildings. Only two hangars remain ("Middle Georgia Regional Airport" 2011).

Bush Field in Augusta, now Augusta Regional Airport at Bush Field, was a basic school. It includes a few hangars and an altered Link Trainer building ("Augusta Regional Airport" 2011).

Turner Air Field in Albany was an advanced, two-engine school with 79 barracks, nine mess halls, 19 administration buildings and numerous other structures. Most of the site has been redeveloped and few, if any, of the historic buildings survive ("Turner Field History" 1992; Freeman 2011; Drake n.d.).

Moody Field in Valdosta, now Moody Air Force Base, was a large advanced training school. Nearly all of its historic buildings have been demolished or altered (Messick 1999; Diamond 2008; "Moody Air Force Base" 2011).

Spence Field in Moultrie was an advanced school. Three hangars and the air traffic control tower remain ("Spence Air Base" 2011).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
___previously listed in the National Register
___previously determined eligible by the National Register
___designated a National Historic Landmark
___recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
___recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
___recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___Other State agency
___Federal agency
___Local government
___University
___Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 24.3 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	323800	3484240
B	17	324120	3484280
C	17	324120	3483800
D	17	323820	3483789

63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary) | Coffee County, Georgia
Name of Property | County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The National Register boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The National Register boundary for the 63rd Army Air Forces Contact Pilot School (Primary) includes the historic, intact parcel historically associated with the Contract Pilot School.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, GA Dept. of Natural Resources date November 30, 2012
street & number 254 Washington Street, Ground Level telephone (404) 656-2840
city or town Atlanta State GA zip code 30034
e-mail Steven.moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)

City or Vicinity: Douglas

County: Coffee State: Georgia

Photographer: Charlie Miller

Date Photographed: August 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 26

1 of 26. Main entrance with reconstructed guard house, photographer facing west.

2 of 26. Administration building photographer facing west.

3 of 26. Administration building, photographer facing west.

4 of 26. Administration building, rear façade, photographer facing east.

5 of 26. Barracks B-7, World War II Flight Training Museum, photographer facing southwest.

6 of 26. Barracks B-7, interior displays, photographer facing west.

7 of 26. Barracks B-7, interior displays, photographer facing west.

8 of 26. Barracks B-7, interior displays, photographer facing west.

9 of 26. Airport Circle Road with administration building and barracks B-7, right, photographer facing south.

10 of 26. Quadrangle with hangar 1 (left), photographer facing north.

11 of 26. Quadrangle, photographer facing northwest.

12 of 26. Barracks B-2, photographer facing west.

13 of 26. Barracks B-3, photographer facing west.

14 of 26. Barracks B-8, photographer facing west.

15 of 26. Barracks B-4 and B-8 (background), photographer facing northeast.

16 of 26. Barracks B-5, photographer facing northwest.

17 of 26. Classroom building, photographer facing south.

18 of 26. Hospital, photographer facing south.

19 of 26. Hangar 2 (left) and hangar 1, facing northeast.

20 of 26. Airport Circle Road with hangar 3, photographer facing north.

21 of 26. Hangar 3, photographer facing southwest.

22 of 26. Hangar 3, photographer facing north.

23 of 26. Hangar 3, interior, photographer facing southeast.

24 of 26. Hangar 2, photographer facing north.

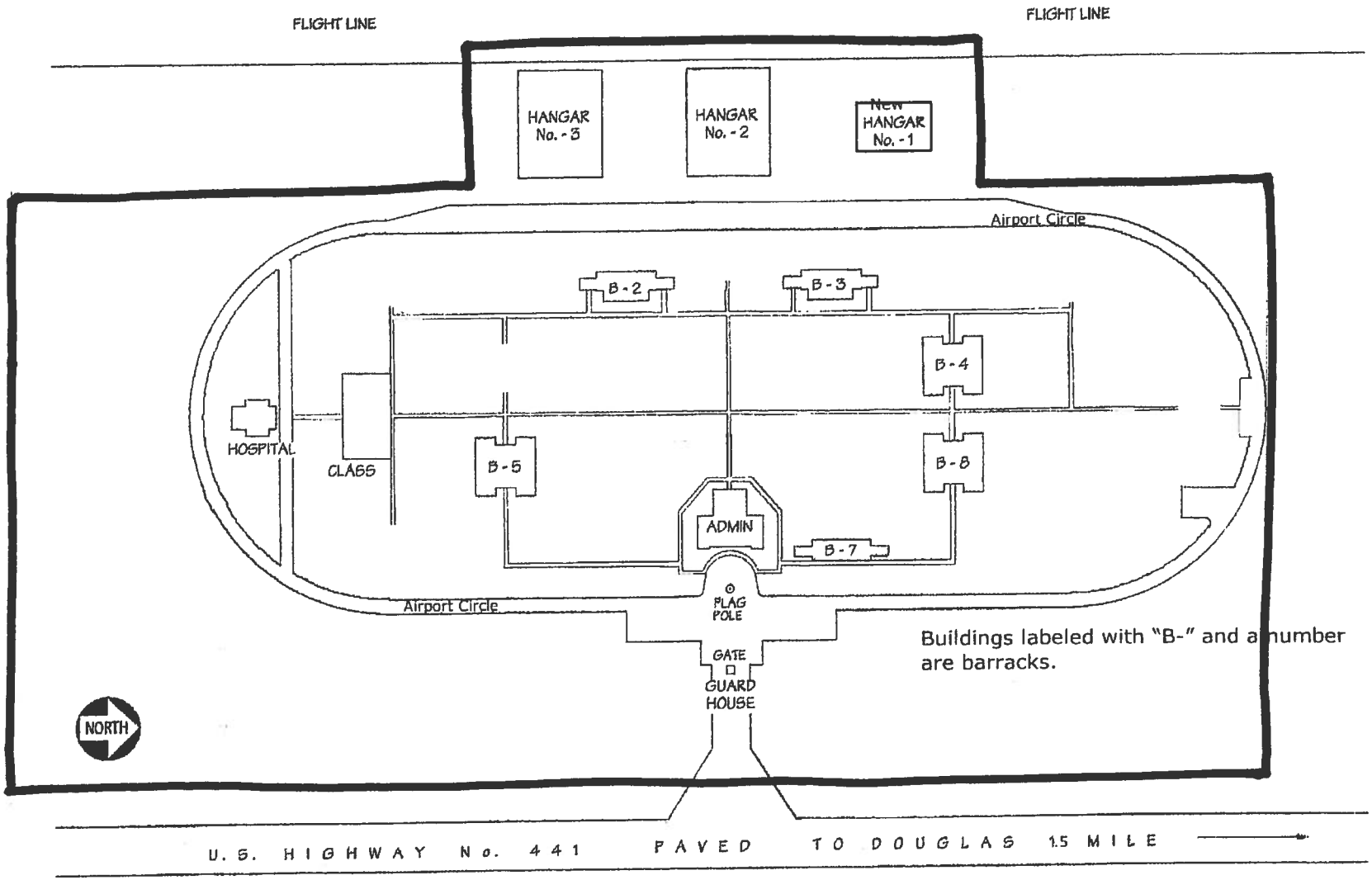
25 of 26. PT-17 Stearman biplane in hangar 2, photographer facing north.

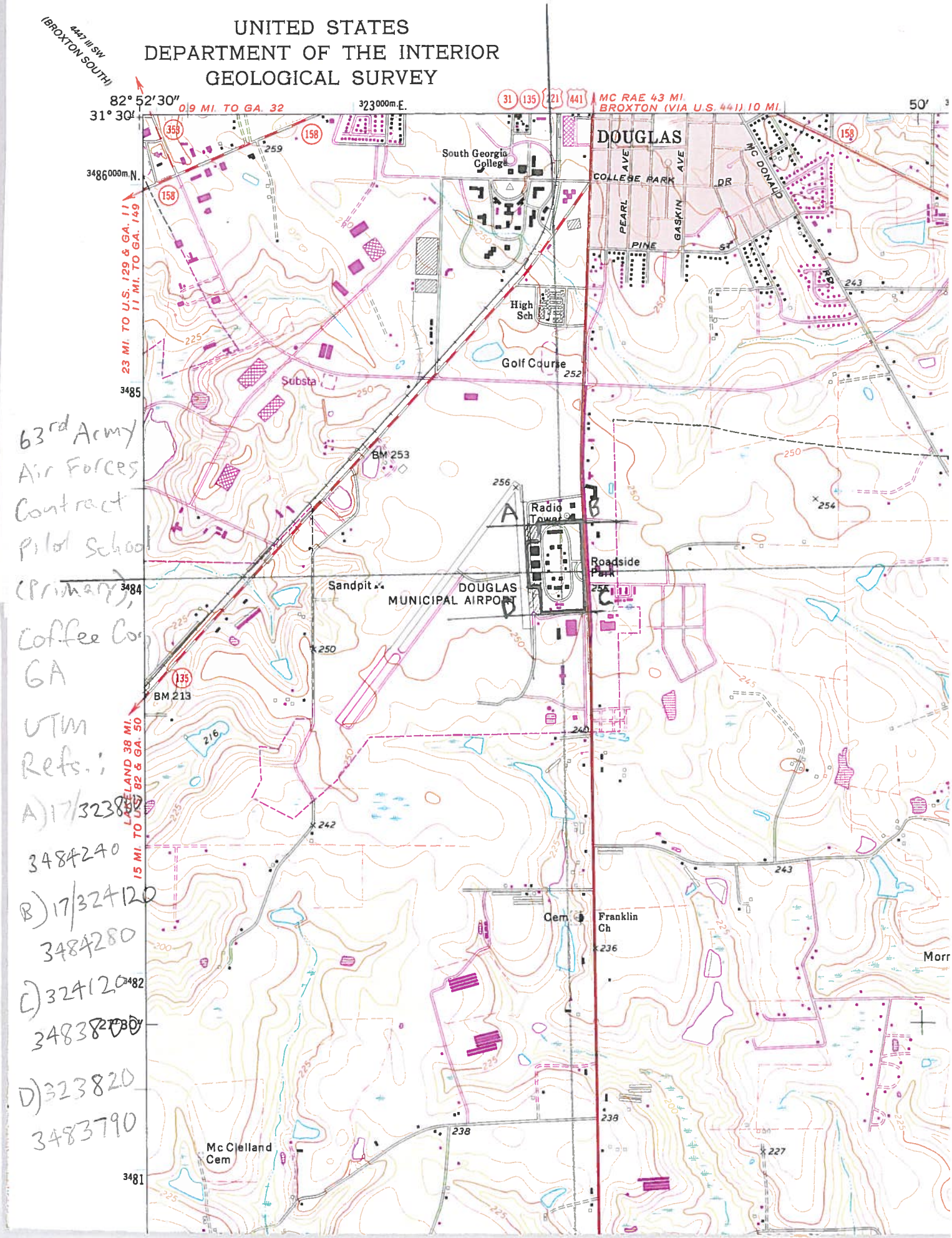
26 of 26. PT-17 Stearman biplane in hangar 2, photographer facing northwest.

63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary)
Coffee County, Georgia

National Register boundary ▬▬

Approximate scale: 1 inch = 200 feet





63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School (Primary), Coffee Co. GA

UTM Refs.:

A) 17/323850 3484240

B) 17/324120 3484280

C) 324120 3483870

D) 323820 3483790

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STOP

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PRHS DIVISION

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Cadet for the Class of 44-D
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KEEP 'EM FLY
Bombers at War

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OAHU BOMBED BY JAPANESE PLANES
UNITED WE STAND
THE HOME FRON

BEWARE OF PROPELLERS
TO VICTORY
BUTTON YOUR LIP!
LOOSE TALK CAN COST LIVES
Link Trainer
Stearman Instructors Outfit Southeastern US

WW II FLIGHT
TRAINING
MUSEUM

HARLESS
AVIATION
NO
TRESPASSING

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COMANCHE
250