

KODIAK NAVAL OPERATING BASE, (AIRCRAFT STOREHOUSE)
(Kodiak Naval Operating Base, Bldg. No. 25)
U.S. Coast Guard Station
Kodiak
Kodiak Island County
Alaska

HABS No. AK-47-K

HABS
AK
12-KODI,
2K-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Alaska Regional Office
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

KODIAK NAVAL OPERATING BASE,
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Location: Albatross Avenue (formerly Avenue C) between Cape Sarichef Street (formerly 6th Street) and Cape Spencer Street (formerly 5th Street). U.S. Coast Guard Support Center Kodiak, Alaska (Formerly U.S. Naval Operating Base) within the Kodiak Naval Operating Base National Historic Landmark.

**Present Owner
And Occupant:** U.S. Coast Guard Support Center Kodiak.

Present Use: Heavy Equipment Garage.

Significance: This building is one of the three major support buildings erected to serve the U.S. Naval Operating Base in World War II; this building retains much of its integrity and contributes to the general character of the historic area.

PART I HISTORICAL SURVEY

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of erection:** 1942, from Albert Kahn, Inc., drawings with Approved Dates of March 22, 1940.
2. **Architect:** Albert Kahn, Inc., Detroit, Michigan.
3. **Original and Subsequent Owners:** Originally on the U.S. Naval Air Station, Kodiak, Alaska; the facility was transferred to the Coast Guard in 1972.
4. **Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:** The contractors were the Slems Spokane Company, Spokane, WA and Johnson Drake and Piper, Inc., Minneapolis, MN. Construction cost was \$400,000.
5. **Original Plans and Construction:** Drawings were prepared by Albert Kahn, Inc., Detroit, Michigan. Current photographs and field observation indicate the building was built in accordance with the original plans.

6. Aiterations and Additions:

N.A.S. Drawing Number K-3-14549 dated 4/21/45 indicates a wood-framed building approximately 40' x 120' was added to the south side of the building, but it does not exist today, leaving the exterior of the building in its original configuration. It has been painted, and is currentiy a dark blue. Most of the glass has been painted.

Kodiak Field Drawing K-3-10571 prepared by Siems Drake Puget Sound under Contract NOy-3570 dated Nov. 8, 1942 shows a wood-framed mezzanine approximately 33 feet wide on the east, south, and west sides of the perimeter of the building. The mezzanine floor is 16'-9" above the ground floor slab. This condition exists today.

B. Historical Context:

Kodiak Naval Base represents the build-up of Alaska's defenses from almost nothing in 1938 to a position of increasing strength by the time of the Japanese attack on Dutch Harbor and occupation of the Western Aleutians in 1942. In 1942, there were about 20,731 army and navy troops, 20,000 seabees (Navy Construction Battalions) and approximately 3,500 civilian workers at Kodiak. By 1943, construction at Kodiak resulted in nearly 1,200 buildings. Approximately 120 original structures remain today.

The Coast Guard came to Kodiak in 1947 to act as the Navy's search and rescue arm and to provide logistics support to several light stations and LORAN stations. By 1953, fisheries patrols were begun. The responsibilities of the Coast Guard continued to increase with the construction of additional LORAN stations and an expanded fisheries law enforcement mission.

in 1969, the Navy reduced its force on Kodiak, and in July of 1972, transferred the entire complex to the Coast Guard. The Kodiak Naval Operating Base National Historic Landmark was established in 1985.

The original structure was built as an aircraft storehouse. This structure currently provides facilities for beavy equipment service and repair of support center equipment such as dump trucks, road graders, fork lifts, and fire engines.

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character:** This building is a simple Industrial structure, about 50 feet high. Slding is corrugated metal wth large areas of steel sash, and sliding hanger doors on the north elevation.
2. **Condition of Fabric:** The building is in relatively good condltion, essentially unaltered since its original construction. The building currently has a somewhat faded blue paint finish, including most of the glass.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall Dimensions:** A rectangle, 123'-1" x 145'-6"; low pltch roof, 49' high at eave and 54' high at ridge. Building area is 29,051 sq.ft.
2. **Foundations:** The original architectural drawings by Albert Kahn (Y & D Drawing No. 135589) dated 22 March 1940 specifled 140 composite wood and concrete pile around the building's perimeter in order to support a clear span of over 120 feet. A subsequent drawing N.A.S. 2217, dated 10 February 1941, Indicates approximately 172 piles, and notes that this drawing supersedes the architect's original design. Reinforced concrete pile caps, footings and slab were used throughout the structure.
3. **Walls:** Exterior walls consist of a reinforced concrete wall 4'-6" above the floor slab, 10 inches thick. The remainder of the walls are corrugated metal sliding, which is attached to 1-5/8" wood planks supported by various angles, channels, and columns.
4. **Structural System:** 24-inch steel I-columns on the east and west slides of the building support steel trusses at 20' on center, spanning 120'. Trusses are 7 feet to 12 feet deep. 10-inch purlins span between trusses at approximately 7' on center. North and south slides of the building have 12 and 18-inch columns supporting varlous angles and channels to carry sliding and windows.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors:** The south elevation of the building has no doors. The east and west elevations each originally had a rolling steel door 23'-8" high x 16' wide, but these have each been replaced by an equipmnet door approximately 10' x 10' and a personnel door, canopies over these doors, and infill sliding above to match adjacent areas. The north slide has slidding hangar doors, 4 panels each 32' high x 20' wlde. The lower 10 feet of each

panel is solid metal panels, with steel sash above. Panels are about 8" thick and constructed of various steel tubes, channels, angles and plates. Each panel rolls on 2 large wheels.

- b. **Windows:** The east, south, and west elevations feature industrial steel sash, about 19 feet high above the concrete sill wall, then a 12 foot solid wall panel, followed by a 5'-2" band of steel sash. Sash is continuous, stopping about 6 feet from corners and doors. Glass is now painted, except for the bottom 2 rows of glass. Pieces of glass are approximately 20" square.
6. **Roof:** The roof consists of 1-5/8" wood planks attached to steel purlins, covered with corrugated metal panels. The roof slopes 1" in 1 foot from a ridge at the center of the building to the eaves. Access to the roof is provided by metal ladders on the east and west sides of the building.

C. Description of Interior:

1. **Floor Plan:** The building is a rectangle 120' x 140', with a toilet and office in the northeast corner. The north side features the 80' wide sliding door. There is a wood-framed mezzanine about 33 feet wide, 16'-9" above the main floor, along the east, south and west sides, leaving a full-height space in the center.
2. **Stairways:** 4 stairways serve the mezzanine.
3. **Flooring:** The main floor is a concrete slab; the mezzanine floor is 2 x 6 tongue & groove flooring.
4. **Wall and Ceiling Finish:** Interior face of wood planks at walls and roof are painted. Steel framing is painted, as is the underside of the mezzanine framing. Present appearance would indicate that no painting has been done recently.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways:** Steel doors are used, in 6" channel frames.
 - b. **Windows:** The office is glazed with glass set in steel angle and channel framing.
6. **Mechanical Equipment:**
 - a. **Heating:** Heating is by steam through unit heaters, with radiators in the office and toilet room. There are fabric tubes approximately 3 feet in diameter hanging from the unit heaters at the bottom of the roof trusses, down to about 10 feet above the floor, to deliver heat close to the floor.

- b. **Lighting:** Lighting is by high intensity discharge fixtures in the high areas, and fluorescent under the mezzanine.
- c. **Plumbing:** The building has a toilet room with plumbing required for the fixtures.
- d. **Sprinklers:** A complete fire protection sprinkler system was installed including under the mezzanine.
- e. There is a large bridge crane, with a 10-ton capacity, 116-foot span, on a 140' long runway.

D. Site:

1. **General Setting and Orientation:** Building 25 is one of the buildings listed as associated with the industrial area on the 1985 nomination form for the Kodiak Naval Base National Historic Landmark. This industrial area is bounded by Albatross Avenue (formerly Avenue C), Cape Sarichef Street (formerly 6th Street), Cape Spencer Street (formerly 5th Street), and a taxiway between hangars and Kodiak Airport. During the period of significance, the industrial area was made up of buildings, structures, and yards whose functions included cold storage; workshops; administrative offices; commissary and stores; equipment storage, maintenance, and staging; materials storage and staging; and aircraft storage and maintenance. The facilities in this area continue to serve in a similar function today.

The buildings face northwest toward Old Woman Mountain, and to the southeast of the buildings is a large open lay-down area extending to the taxiway.

During the period of significance the area was somewhat more rough-textured than it is today, with more smooth surfaced areas now as the facility is more permanent. There is no landscaping around the building.

PART III SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings:

1. Drawings prepared by Albert Kahn, Inc., Detroit, Michigan, for U.S. Naval Air Station, Kodiak, Alaska, Aircraft Storehouse, Bureau of Yards & Docks Drawing No. 135582 through 135594, with Submitted Dates of December 2, 1939, February 28, 1940, and January 26, 1940.
2. U.S. Naval Air Stations - Bridge Cranes for Various Stations, Y & D Drawing 148671, date approved of January 17, 1941.

3. N.A.S. Drawing No. K-3-14549 dated 4/21/45, for Sprinkler System.
 4. N.A.S. Drawings No. 2545 and 2546, dated 11 March 1941, for Footing and Column Details (with note "Supersedes Y & D Drawing #135589).
 5. Kodiak Field Drawing K-3-10571 dated Nov. 8, 1942, for Mezzanine.
 6. N.A.S. Drawing No. 2217 dated 10 Feb 1941, for piling plan (with note "Supersedes Piling Plan shown on Y & D Drawing #135589").
 7. N.A.S. Drawing No. 2547 dated 11 March 1941, Foundation Plan (with note "Supersedes Y & D Drawing #135582").
- B. Field observation by Robert D. Harthorne, March 8-10, 1994.
- C. U.S. Coast Guard Support Center Kodiak, "Historic Resources Management Plan", dated April 1993.
- D. U.S. Navy Department, Bureau of Yards and Docks, Contract NOy-3570, August 29, 1939.
- E. Prepared by:
David Frost, Architect
Harthorne Hagen Architects
1725 8th Avenue N.
Seattle, Washington 98109
- March 31, 1994

PART IV PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project was undertaken by the U. S. Coast Guard in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and a Memorandum of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as mitigation for effects of rehabilitation of and addition to Coast Guard Building 27 (Cold Storage) within the Kodiak Naval Operating Base National Historic Landmark. HABS project coordinators were Robert Harthorne, AIA and Susan L. Boyle, Chief of the NEPA Support Branch, Civil Engineering Division, USCG Maintenance and Logistics Command Pacific. Historic data was compiled by Robert Harthorne, AIA, and David Frost, of Harthorne Hagen Architects, Seattle, Washington. Original architectural drawings were transferred from Coast Guard files. Photographs were taken by Ron Klein, of Juneau, Alaska, in 1987 and 1994. Photographs and narrative histories were submitted to the Alaska Regional Office of the National Park Service and drawings were provided to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer, Anchorage, Alaska.

ADDENDUM TO:
KODIAK NAVAL OPERATING BASE, AIRCRAFT STOREHOUSE
(Building No. 25)
(United States Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak,
Aviation Warehouse)
U.S. Coast Guard Station, Albatross Avenue near Cape Spencer
Street
Kodiak
Kodiak Island Borough
Alaska

HABS AK-47-K
HABS AK, 12-KODI, 2K-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Historic American Buildings Survey

This is an addendum to a
6-page report

HABS AK-47-K

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDATION FORM

HISTORIC NAME OF BUILDING: Building 25 - Aviation Warehouse

SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF PROPERTY: United States Coast Guard
Integrated Support Command Kodiak.

AHRS NO.: KOD - 462

COMPLETE ADDRESS (or PHYSICAL LOCATION): This building is located on Albatross Avenue near Cape Spencer Street within the boundaries of the Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak.

UTM:

PRESENT USE: Vacant

SIGNIFICANCE: One of three major United States Naval Air Station support buildings erected in this area, this warehouse retains much of its original character. Constructed in 1942 as the Aviation Warehouse or Aircraft Storehouse, this steel structure was intended for permanent use. This structure is an early permanent structure designed by the architectural office of Albert Kahn for the base. The building was constructed by the Navy's main contractor at Kodiak, Siems Drake Puget Sound of Seattle, Washington at a cost of \$411,800. It is within the period of significance, retains its overall integrity, and is within and contributes to the boundaries of the revised National Historic Landmark.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: 1942
2. Architect: Office of Albert Kahn
3. Original and subsequent owners: The building has remained under ownership of the United States Government. It was originally managed by the United States Navy and then by the Department of the Transportation, United States Coast Guard.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: The construction contractor was Siems Drake Puget Sound of Seattle, Washington.

HABS AK-47-K

5. Original plans and construction: Original design plans by Albert Kahn Inc. are dated March 22, 1940. Copies are available at Coast Guard ISC Kodiak, National Park Service-Alaska Regional Office, and the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology. Limited maintenance records at USCG ISC Kodiak and at Coast Guard Island, Alameda, California.
6. Alterations and additions: Building 25 does not appear to have undergone any major changes or alterations throughout its history of use including the siding, which is original.

B. Historical Context:

The United States Coast Guard Integrated Support Command at Kodiak Island, Alaska, is the original site of the Kodiak Naval Operating Base with the United States Army Forts Greely and Abercrombie in the near vicinity. These bases were the principal advance bases in Alaska at the outbreak of World War II. The site is approximately eight miles southwest of the City of Kodiak, the oldest permanent Russian settlement in Alaska. Construction at the site began in 1939 and the bases were formally established and operational by 1941. Two of the installations, the Naval Operating Base and Fort Greely, are adjacent to each other and are now one reservation administered by the Coast Guard. The Navy facilities were located between the head of Women's Bay and Buskin River and on Nyman Peninsula. Fort Greely's main developments were north of Buskin River, from Buskin Lake in the west to St. Paul Harbor in the east. Construction was first carried out by a civilian contractor. Then, at the beginning of 1943, Naval Construction Battalions (Seabees) gradually took over all construction activities for both the Navy and the Army. Today, many World War II naval buildings remain standing and are used by the Coast Guard; however, few Army structures remain at the Fort Greely site.

On the eve of World War II, Congress, anticipating conflict with Japan in the North Pacific, authorized construction of Naval Air Stations in Sitka, Kodiak, and Dutch Harbor. Work began at Kodiak in 1939 and progressed furiously after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Japanese seizure of islands in the Aleutians, and other aggressions in the North Pacific, turned Alaska into a territory at war. Navy and Army troops, with their supplies, poured into Alaska. Kodiak, because of its protected harbor and shipping access, became one of the main depots supporting the air and sea war with Japan in the Aleutian Campaign.

The site selected for a Naval Air Station and Naval Operating Base was Women's Bay, south of the town of Kodiak, on Kodiak Island. It was designed to hold thousands of men and the equipment to service surface ships, submarines, and wheeled and amphibious aircraft. Massive earth-moving was required to carve out large runways, build numerous bunkers, dredge the harbor, and fill the land necessary for the base. To mobilize such men and equipment required experience. The federal government issued a cost-plus contract to a consortium of three major construction contractors, who took the name Siems Drake Puget Sound and immediately began assembling barge-loads of materials destined for Kodiak. Hangars and other large buildings were designed by the office of one of this century's premier industrial architects, Albert Kahn.

Kahn (1869-1942) became known as the world's best industrial architect, the father of modern factory design, and the man who perhaps more than any other architect helped create a new industrial architecture in America. Beginning in 1906, Kahn began designing large single-story buildings using reinforced concrete, steel, and large many-paned windows and skylights to light workspaces. Kahn's designs were well-received on the east coast by his clients, including industrialists George N. Pierce, Horace E. Dodge, Walter Chrysler, the Packard Corporation, the Fisher Brothers, and Henry Ford of Ford Motor Company.

While factory buildings became Kahn's specialty, he also designed the laboratory and hangar complex at the United States Aviation School at Langley Field, Virginia, as well as many military aircraft and tank factories. At the beginning of World War II Albert Kahn's office designed buildings for the Naval Operating Base and Naval Air Station at Kodiak, including the three main hangers at Kodiak as well as smaller warehouses and storage facilities.

At its peak in the late 1930s, the office of Albert Kahn employed a staff of over 600, producing 19 percent of all architect-designed industrial buildings in the United States. Although Albert Kahn died in 1942, his office, Albert Kahn, Associated Architects and Engineers, Inc., produced close to 2,000 architectural design for the United States Military.

HABS AK-47-K

As the war progressed and the Navy's needs changed, construction of some planned buildings was canceled, and the materials diverted to Dutch Harbor and elsewhere to be closer to military action, according to then-Base Commander John Perry. By the end of 1943, the Aleutians were freed of Japanese control and combat forces moved to other areas of concern. Most of the troops and much of the equipment followed, and the Army facility at Kodiak (Fort Greely) was placed in caretaker status in December of 1944. The Naval Operating Base at Kodiak remained an important site for training and supplies throughout the war.

Despite its readiness, the Kodiak base saw no direct combat during World War II. It was operational on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and served as the base of operations for the Aleutian theater of the War. The base provided supplies and reinforcements for the War in the South Pacific and provided air and sea patrols for the remainder of the War. As the historian Morison has noted, "During the rest of the war the Aleutians offer little of interest. . . . But there was a constant improvement both of bases and of flying efficiency in these difficult northern areas. . . . In any case, it was wonderful practice ground for armed forces; after a tour of duty in the Aleutians, every other field of action seemed good" (Morison, *The Two-Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War*. 271-272).

After 1943, when the Americans re-secured the Aleutian chain from the Japanese, Alaska was never again threatened by Japanese hostility. However, the war with Japan continued and naval, air, and land engagements in the South Pacific were reinforced by troops newly-freed from duty in Alaska. Within the larger context of Alaska's war effort Kodiak contributed greatly to both the Aleutian campaign and to America's continued race toward victory.

As the war moved south, Kodiak found itself further from combat and in an area of increased safety. Kodiak based air and sea patrols continued to monitor Japanese movement for the duration of the war. The submarine base, however, was decommissioned in May of 1945. With the end of World War II, the Kodiak Naval Operating Base was still a contributing element of Alaska's defenses and became a minor player in the escalating Cold War with the Soviet Union.

With the conclusion of the War in 1945, Kodiak Naval Air Station remained under Navy control. By 1947, United States Coast Guard personnel were added to the base to provide search and rescue expertise to the Navy and to maintain several lighthouses and Long Range Navigational Aid (LORAN) stations around Kodiak. Three cutters were assigned to Kodiak by 1953 to conduct fisheries patrols. The responsibilities of the Coast Guard continued to increase with the construction of additional LORAN

HABS AK-47-K

stations and an expanded fisheries law enforcement mission. The Navy moved most of its personnel out of Kodiak in 1969, and transferred the base to the Coast Guard in July of 1972.

By 1972 numerous World War II military buildings, particularly smaller temporary structures, had been dismantled or sold. However, numerous structures, because of the quality of their construction, remained in service into the 1970s. Today, ISC Kodiak is the Coast Guard's largest facility. The runway has been expanded and now handles all of Kodiak's commercial air transportation, including large jets. ISC Kodiak is the Host Command for several units within the Coast Guard including the Air Station Kodiak, Communication Station Kodiak, and an Electronics Support Unit. In addition, several other state and federal agencies are tenants at the site, including the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Fish and Game, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Aviation Administration, NOAA Vessels, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Weather Service, U. S. Navy Special Warfare Group 1, U. S. Army Western Command, U. S. Postal Service, Kodiak Island Borough - Peterson School, and the Kodiak Electrical Association. Lastly, several private enterprises are tenants within the vicinity of the commercial airport.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

Building 25 is a tall, one-story industrial structure, rectangular in shape, with a low-gabled roof. A series of industrial sash windows form the building's only decorative treatment. The building does not appear to have undergone any major changes or alterations through the years.

1. Architectural Character: This building has an overall industrial character indicating its use as an aviation support building.
2. Condition of fabric: This building is in fair condition.

HABS AK-47-K

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: This building is 146 feet in length by 123 feet in depth and is 29,051 square feet in plan. The building is 49 feet high at its eave and 54 feet in height at its ridge. The gable ends of the building face Albatross Avenue on the west, and the taxiway on the east.
2. Foundations: The foundation is a concrete slab placed on wooden piles. Finish floor elevation is 122'-6" (local datum).
3. Walls: The lower 4 feet of the exterior walls are of reinforced concrete, while the upper portions of the exterior walls consist of corrugated metal siding (24 ga. Mansard APM) with an asbestos/bituminous coating. The walls are punctured with industrial sash metal windows.
4. Structural system, framing: The structural steel columns support steel roof trusses and curtain walls. A four-foot tall reinforced concrete stem wall surrounds the building.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies: None
6. Chimneys: None
7. Openings - doorways and windows: The north elevation has sliding hangar doors, 32 feet in height. The other elevations have industrial steel sash windows placed in long horizontal rows along the building elevation. The lower row of windows rests upon the concrete stem wall, and extends 19 feet high. The upper band of windows is five feet high, located eight feet below the eaves. One pedestrian doorway is located on the west, south and east sides of the building. The north side has two doors.
8. Roof: The roof is a low-pitched gable sheathed in corrugated metal with an asbestos bituminous coating.

HABS AK-47-K

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: The original floor plan was open, with an office and toilet room located in the northwest corner. A U-shaped mezzanine, open to the west, was added at a later date. The mezzanine is constructed of timber.
2. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior partitions are non-load bearing, constructed primarily of steel sash multipane glass and metal panels. Toilet room walls are cast-in-place concrete. Inside surfaces of exterior walls and ceiling are exposed structural steel spanned by tongue and groove wood planks.
3. Flooring: Exposed concrete.
4. Mechanical: Heating was provided by steam from the base central heating plant. A bridge crane was located just below the roof trusses.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: This building is located within the Air Station industrial area of ISC Kodiak. It faces Albatross Avenue, north of Cape Spencer Street, west of the taxiway.
2. Historic landscape design: The building is surrounded by asphalt pavement on the north, west and south sides. Gravel surfacing exists on the east side. Opportunistic vegetation exists at some locations.
3. Outbuildings: Several metal containers are located adjacent to the structure.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original architectural drawings: Maintenance records at USCG ISC Kodiak and at Coast Guard Island. Alameda, California. Copies of original drawings have been provided to the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology for archival purposes.
- B. Early views: None found.
- C. Interviews: None conducted.

HABS AK-47-K

D. Bibliography:

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HABS AK-47-K

E. Likely sources not yet investigated: None.

F. Supplemental material: None.

G. Prepared by:

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