

MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, TEMPORARY STORAGE
(Building No. 776)
Railroad Avenue near Eighteenth Street
Vallejo
Solano County
California

HABS CA-1543-CU
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
600 Harrison Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, TEMPORARY STORAGE
(MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, BUILDING 776)**

HABS No. CA-1543-CU

Location: Located within the Naval Ammunition Depot, west side of Railroad Avenue, Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, Solano County, California

U.S.G.S.: Mare Island, 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle, 1959, photorevised 1980

UTM Coordinates: Zone 10 564813 E, 4215579 N

Present Owner: 63D United States (U.S.) Army Regional Readiness Command

Present Use: Storage

Significance: Building 776, built in 1942, is considered significant for its association with U.S. Naval history and the Mare Island Naval Shipyard (MINSY), the first naval installation on the west coast of the United States. Portions of the Mare Island Naval Shipyard comprise a National Historic Landmark. This building, however, is outside the landmark and within the Mare Island Shipyard Historic District. Building 776 was constructed as a storage building for the fire station located within the Naval Ammunition Depot area of Mare Island. It is a contributing element of the successful base operations at Mare Island and is an increasingly rare example a temporary wood-framed building constructed on the island during the World War II (WWII) era.

Description: Building 776, constructed in 1942, is located within the Naval Ammunition Depot area of Mare Island to the west side of Railroad Avenue and southwest of the South Fire Station (Building 726). This area is immediately adjacent to the Shipyard South area of the island that includes the Finger Piers and other support buildings and structures that were built in the early 1940s at the onset of WWII. The building has been used from 1942 to the present as storage for the South Fire Station building.

Building 776 has a rectangular 3,000-square-foot footprint that measures 100 feet northwest-southeast by 30 feet northeast-southwest.

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This wood-framed building has a concrete footing foundation, horizontal tongue-and-groove wood board drop siding, and a wood board-sheathed and composition material-surfaced shed roof. The northeast wall of the building is approximately 12 feet, six inches high above the concrete footings and the southwest wall is approximately 14 feet, six inches high above the footings. Each length of horizontal drop siding (called "rustic siding" on available plans) is five inches high. The roof's sheathing boards each have a one- by eight-inch nominal dimension. Rectangular metal louvered roof area vents at the north, east and west sides appear to be later modifications to the building.

A continuous concrete wall footing supports the outer walls of the building. These wall footings are one foot, six inches high, one foot wide at the base and about eight inches wide at the top; the outer faces of the walls are vertical and the inner faces of the walls slant outward from top to base. The full dimensions of the tapered concrete footings that support the central six- by six-inch posts (see next paragraph) are 16 inches square at the base, 12 inches square at the top and one foot, six inches high.

The wooden structural components of the building are nominally dimensioned and include a central northwest-southeast alignment of six- by six-inch support posts (a total of six set 14 feet, four inches on center), walls constructed of two- by four-inch studs (set 16 inches on center) with bracing, and a roof truss system consisting of two- by six-inch horizontal and diagonal struts. There is a central roof truss that extends on a northeast-southwest alignment and rests on the central support post alignment, and there are several east-west aligned trusses that are set 16 inches on center.

The northeast side of the building (CA-1543-CU-1) includes two entries. There is a centrally set original 12-foot wide by 12-foot-high service bay. Its original hinged double door was removed prior to 1981 and replaced with a fiberglass roll-up door. The second entry on the northeast side is not original to the building and was added before 1981. It is located northwest of the service bay, beneath a shed-roofed porch area, and includes a two-foot-wide by six-foot, eight-inch-high flush wood pedestrian door. The northwest side of the building (CA-1543-CU-4) has a service bay (with a fiberglass roll-up) door that is not original; this service opening and door were added before 1981. The southwest side (CA-1543-CU-3) includes a pedestrian door that was added before 1981. This pedestrian door is wood with an upper

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area that is glazed with safety glass; however, this door is boarded over with plywood at the exterior. The southeast side of the building (CA-1543-CU-2) has no doors or windows. There are original fixed or awning-type windows set high on two of the walls – six on the northeast side (CA-1543-CU-1) and eight on the southwest side (CA-1543-CU-3); the southwest side windows are fronted by wood-framed metal mesh screens that appear to be later additions. These windows are wood sash, each with six panes (three over three). The northwest portion of the southeast side also has three wood sash double-hung six-over-six windows that were added by the U.S. Navy before 1993. Wood-framed metal mesh screens front these windows. Set directly above these three windows and the aforementioned two-foot-wide pedestrian door is a shed roof that extends over an open-sided concrete porch area; the U.S. Navy added the shed-roofed porch before 1993.

The above-mentioned southeast side porch area is an approximately 27-foot-wide by 12-foot-deep concrete slab that includes four wood support posts (each four- by four-inch) along the northeast side, approximately six-foot-wide wall sections at the northwest and southeast sides (possibly windbreaks), and a wood-framed shed roof made of two- by six-inch wood beams (set approximately two feet on center) and surfaced with metal sheeting (CA-1543-CU-1, CA-1543-CU-5).

Attached to each side of the northeast side's central service bay is a cast iron hose rack and a water pipe with a threaded spigot (for attaching a hose). A concrete driveway leads from the southeast side of the fire station (southwest of Building 776) to the service bay of Building 776. The remaining area surrounding the building is asphalt-surfaced. Chain-link fencing encloses the approximately 100-foot northwest-southeast by 85-foot northeast-southwest area in front (northeast) of Building 776.

The interior of the building appears to have two spaces – a main storage area and a workroom. Original plans suggest that the building initially had one large space and an asphalt-surfaced flooring; however, the extant floor surface is concrete. The main storage area has walls that are open-framed (CA-1543-CU-7) or that have been surfaced with plywood paneling (CA-1543-CU-6) in more recent years. Sections have been delineated within this open area by the placement of wooden and freestanding metal shelving units within the space (CA-1543-CU-8). The wooden shelving along the southeast wall may be the earliest shelving in the space, while the extant metal shelving is a more recent

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addition. The fluorescent light fixtures in this space are modern additions; the original 200-watt hanging light fixtures were removed prior to 1993. The workroom is located at the northern corner of the building and the space measures approximately 28 feet, six inches north-south by 15 feet east-west (CA-1543-CU-9). The wood-framed walls and ceiling of this space are plaster- or sheetrock-surfaced and details include wood baseboards (four-and-one-half inches high by one-half inch thick) with one-inch quarter round molding along the bases and a modern wooden picture molding (set about 13 inches below the ceiling) along three walls. The southeast wall of the room is sided with seven-inch-wide wood boards at the exterior (side that faces the main storage area). There is a doorway at this southeast side that includes a paneled wood door with upper glazed area. The exterior of the southwest wall (main storage area-facing side) is surfaced with modern plywood paneling added before 1993. A second doorway, that appears to be a modification, is at this southwest side of the room.

An original wooden workbench (CA-1543-CU-9) extends the length of the northeast side of the workroom. The workbench is two feet, seven and one-half inches high and two feet, six inches deep with a one and one-quarter-inch-thick tabletop, two and one-half-inch-square legs spaced about three feet on center, and several equally-sized wooden shelves beneath the tabletop, each having a one-foot, one-half-inch wide by seven-inch-high face with a centered brass handle. Non-original wooden shelving is set on the workbench tabletops and extends to the ceiling. Other furnishings in the room include modern moveable metal shelf unit. The two florescent light fixtures in the room are later additions.

Historical Context: Building 776 was constructed as part of the Mare Island naval facility located in Vallejo, California. The U.S. Navy established MINSY in 1854 as a shipbuilding and repair facility. This shipyard was the first west coast naval installation and was the only such facility in California for many years.

Mare Island's built environment is the product of over 100 years of military construction and consists of a blend of buildings that demonstrate many different historical functions, construction technologies and architectural styles. Building 776, constructed in 1942 for use as fire station storage, is located at the southern end of the island within the Naval Ammunition Depot area. Architectural plans and drawings for this building identify contractors and draftsman by initial only.

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In response to growing tensions in Europe, the U.S. Congress, in 1938, decided to expand the size of the American fleet by 20 percent. This expansion escalated at the end of 1941 with the entry of the U.S. into WWII. There was a massive expansion of aircraft and shipbuilding industries at Mare Island during WWII. Along with a fundamental redesign of the Shipyard South area at the brink of the U.S. entry into WWII, the adjacent Naval Ammunition Depot expanded its production and storage capacities. Buildings, such as the South Fire Station and associated storage shed (Building 776), were constructed within this area of the island to support the bustling activity in the berthing areas and ammunitions depot. Many buildings in this area were erected to support the U.S. Marine Security Detachment unit, which was stationed in this area to protect the Naval Ammunition Depot.

The surviving buildings and structures from the WWII era represent an important collection of buildings, “arranged in a manner that enables an understanding of how the base functioned at that time” (JRP Historical Consulting with PAR Environmental Services, Inc. 1996: Section 8, page 53). Building 776 is a storage shed that was constructed to support the South Fire Station (Building 726). This shed is of the wood-framed construction typical of a large number of WWII era buildings deemed as temporary. The majority of WWII temporary buildings are no longer intact.

The U.S. Navy used Building 776 until MINSY was closed in 1993. In 1997 the U.S. Army Reserve acquired a use permit for the storage building from the U.S. Navy. On July 12, 2002, ownership of Building 776 was formally transferred from the U.S. Navy to the U.S. Army Reserve.

Sources:

A. Architectural Drawings

U.S. Department of the Navy. *Navy Yard, Mare Island, California – Temporary Storage Bldg. No. 776, Floor Plan, Section, and Electric Lighting Service*, (P. W. Drawing No. 10848-1), 1942. On file, U.S. Army Reserve, Vallejo, CA.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

No historic views or aerial photographs for this building were located during this effort.

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C. Interviews

Volk, J. S. Telephone communication between Tracy Bakic, PAR Environmental Services, Inc. and J. Stephen Volk (Environmental Scientist [Adecco TAD], 63D U.S. Army Regional Readiness Command CST Environmental Division), 2002.

D. Bibliography

Bumatay, H. California Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Record form for Building 776 (South Fire Station Storage), Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Mare Island, California, 1994. On file, State of California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

JRP Historical Consulting Services with PAR Environmental Services, Inc. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Mare Island Historic District, Vallejo, California*, 1996. On file, State of California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento and U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

PAR Environmental Services, Inc. Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan for Army Lands at Mare Island National Historic Landmark, Vallejo, Solano County, California, 2002. On file, California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

Project Information: After the September 11 terrorist attack, new standards were implemented for federal facilities. Building setbacks from roads and parking areas have been greatly increased. The Department of Defense's Antiterrorism Standards for Buildings, 4-010-01 8 October 2003 Distances per United Facilities Criteria require minimum setbacks that are greater than the existing setbacks, thereby requiring this facility's removal. This undertaking has been approved in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the California State Historic Preservation Officer and the U.S. Army Reserve, pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f).

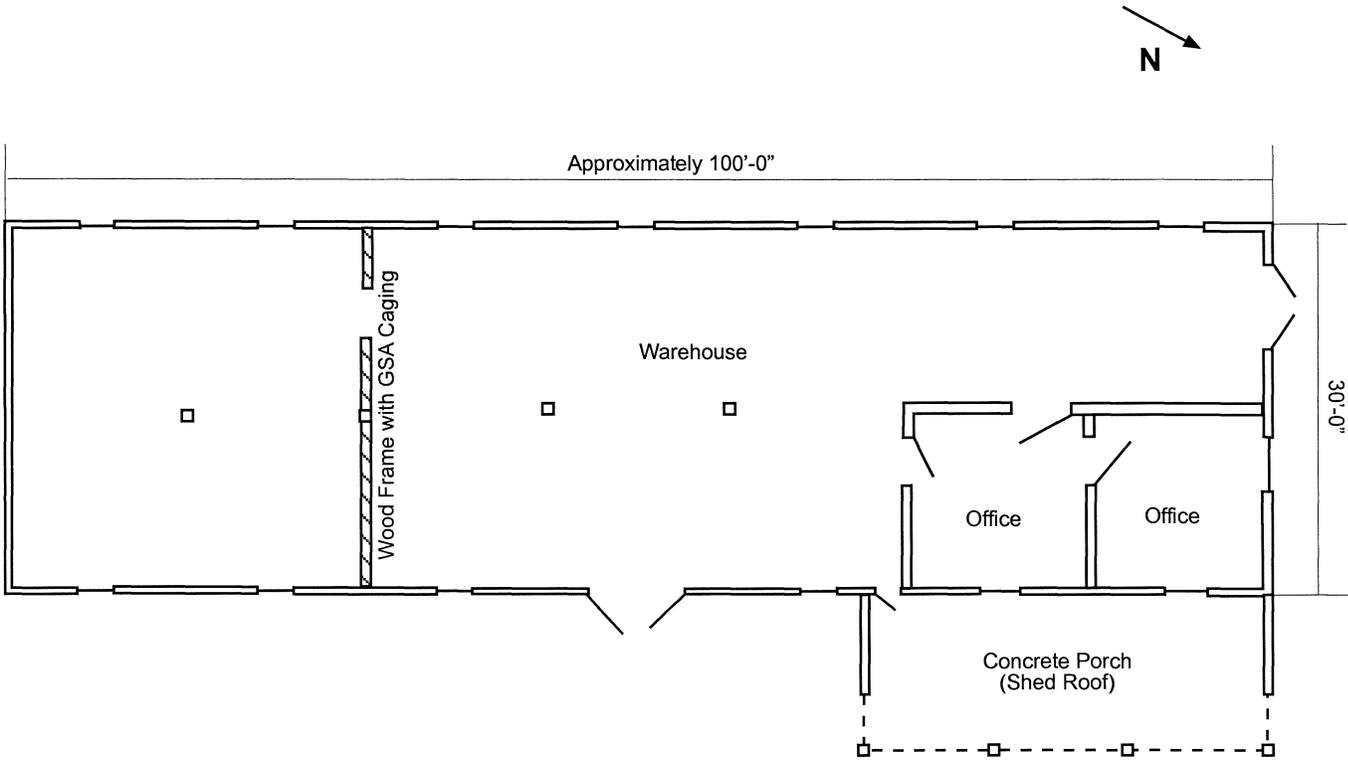
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Prepared By: This report was prepared by Tracy Bakic, cultural resources specialist with PAR Environmental Services, Inc., Sacramento, California. Photography and the associated photographic index were prepared by Dave Devries, Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California.

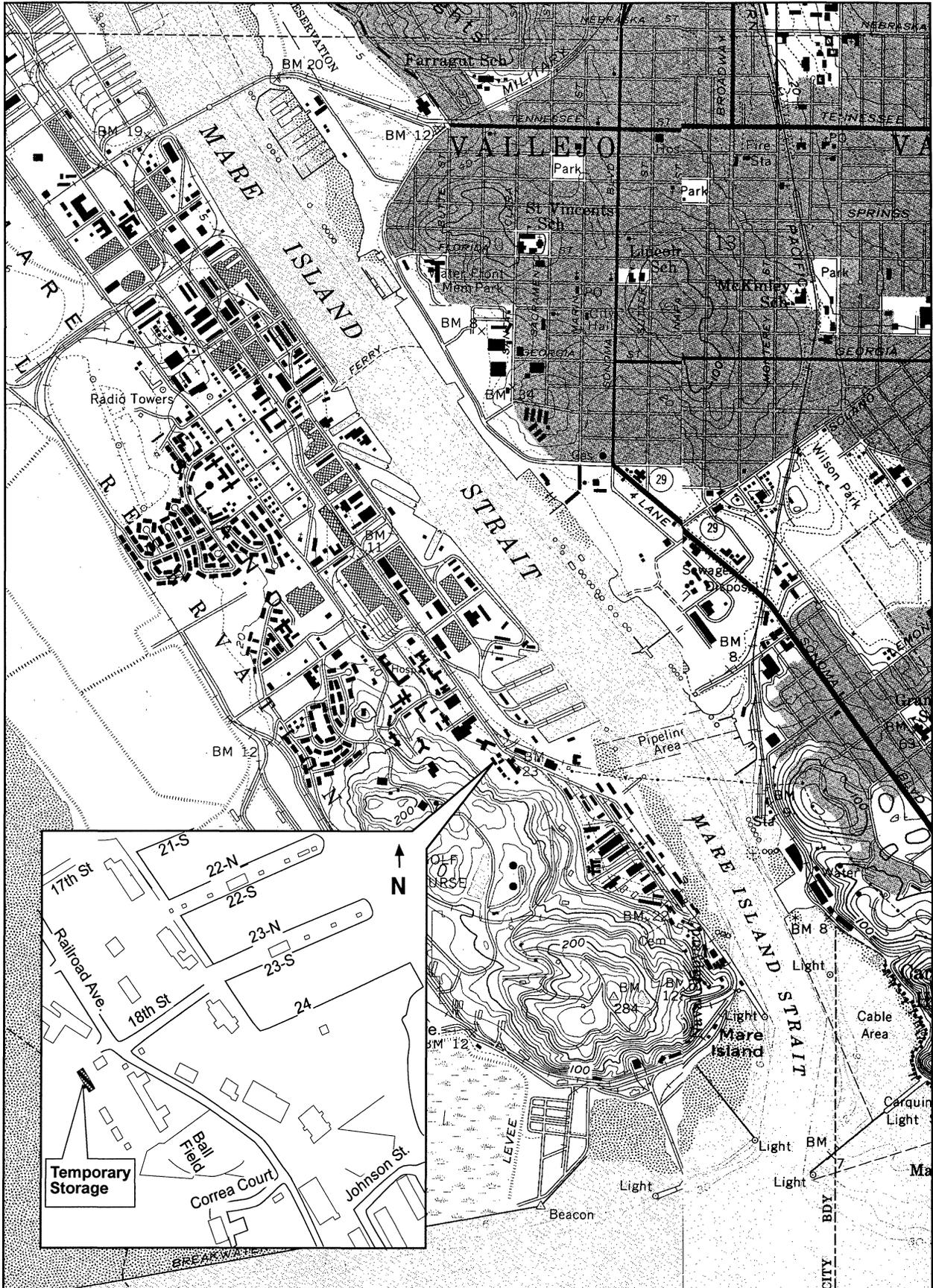
Submitted By: 63D U.S. Army Regional Readiness Command Headquarters, 4235 Yorktown Avenue, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-5002

Inventory Date: November 6, 2002 (Updated April 18, 2005)

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Location Map and Site Plan (Inset) of Mare Island Naval Shipyard Temporary Storage (Building No. 776) (USGS: Benicia and Mare Island, CA 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle, Both 1959, Photorevised 1980)