

ST. ELIZABETHS HOSPITAL, STORAGE SHED  
(Building No. 11)  
2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Southeast, Holly Street,  
Southeast  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS DC-349-BF  
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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

### STORAGE SHED (BUILDING 11)

HABS NO. DC-349-BF

Location: Holly Street SE, Washington, D.C., on the West Campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital

Significance:

As a utilitarian structure, the Storage Shed (Building 11) is not directly related to the historically significant function of the St. Elizabeths West Campus as a place for the treatment of mental illness. However, the Storage Shed is associated with the historically significant physical development of the west campus. In addition, the Storage Shed is an example of the provision of service and support structures that allowed for the partial self-sufficiency of the campus. As a utilitarian structure, the Storage Shed's character-defining features include the low shed roof, exposed rafter ends, as well as the exposed structural system on the interior of the building which includes the roof trusses.

Description:

The following description was developed prior to the demolition of the building and reflects conditions as they existed in April 2009.

The Storage Shed is a one-story wood-framed structure with a concrete foundation. The building is generally L-shaped in plan, with two approximately equal wings intersecting at a slightly obtuse angle, and overall plan dimensions of about 99 feet long by 75 feet wide. The east end of the north wing is likely a later addition, while an original portion at the south end of the southwest wing has been demolished. The building has wood stud walls constructed with 2-inch by 4-inch framing members, and the roof has 2-inch by 6-inch rafters. A line of wood trusses bearing on wood posts provides interior support for the roof rafters. A cast-in-place concrete knee wall and column bases support the wood structure. The height of the concrete knee wall varies; it is exposed on the north and west sides.

Above the concrete, the exterior walls are clad with corrugated galvanized steel panels nailed to the wood framing. The building has a shed roof, sloping to the north and west. The wood rafter tails are exposed. The roof surface is covered with corrugated galvanized steel panels nailed to the roof framing. The east end of the north wing is similar, except that the walls are clad with vertical wood planks and covered with asphalt sheeting.

At the south end of the southwest wing, an open, covered storage area was originally present; this part of the original building was demolished, and the south wall of the building is a temporary plywood enclosure. Metal storage frames are located adjacent to this end of the building. At the east end of the north wing, there is a similar open, covered storage area, now closed off by a temporary plywood enclosure. The roofline of this portion of the building is at a lower level.

The main portion of each wing is enclosed. The unpainted wood structural framing and exterior corrugated wall and roof cladding are exposed on the interior. Interior floors are concrete slab-on-grade. The interior space is subdivided into several storage rooms by unpainted wood plank walls and metal screening. Each storage room is accessed from the exterior by its own door; there are no interior connections between rooms. The southernmost interior room has its original sliding metal-clad doors. A temporary painted plywood enclosure wall with a temporary door has been built across this door opening. Other door openings may have originally had similar sliding doors, but these have been previously removed and replaced by temporary painted plywood enclosures with temporary doors.

The Storage Shed contains no heating, ventilating, air conditioning, or plumbing systems or components. Surface-mounted lighting and power receptacles are present throughout the building, supplied by surface-mounted rigid and flexible conduit. A power panel is located on the interior at the southeast corner of the southwest wing. Power is supplied via underground cabling from the adjacent Mechanical and Electrical Shops (Building 12). All breakers and primary connectors of the electrical system have been removed.

History:

The last major building campaign on the west campus spanned from the 1910s through the 1920s and included the development of a series of staff facilities, campus improvements, and support buildings at the west campus. New single-family staff residences (Buildings 15, 17, 27, 67, 76) and the Employee Cafeteria (Building 70) were constructed to support the hospital as an expanding clinical institution. Gatehouse No. 2 (Building 78), the Red Cross Building (no longer extant), the General Store/Canteen (Building 39), and a collection of small comfort stations (which include Building 77) were constructed throughout the campus to improve security and patient conditions. Support buildings, such as the Mechanical and Electrical Shops (Building 12), were constructed along the perimeter of west campus development.

The Storage Shed was one of the support structures built in this era. It was constructed in 1925 as a one-story structure with concrete foundation and interior floor, hewn-wood framing, and wood-framed shed roof. The building functioned as storage space for pipes and construction materials. Historic photographs document some later changes to the building. Between 1945 and 1968, a small extension was added to the east end of the north wing. Sometime after 1968, the large bay openings were infilled with metal double-doors and metal infill panels. Vents openings and grilles were also added. Later, in the 1990s or early years of the twenty-first century, the south end of the building was partially demolished, leaving the concrete foundation slab. Also, a one-story addition with corrugated siding and a flat roof was constructed on the east end of the building.

Ownership of the west campus was transferred from the Department of Health and Human Services to the General Services Administration in 2004. The structure was stabilized and mothballed by 2005. As part of the construction of a new headquarters for the United States Coast Guard on the St. Elizabeths West Campus, the Storage Shed was demolished in late August 2009.

Sources:

*Building Preservation Plan: Storage Shed (Building 11), St. Elizabeths West Campus.* Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., March 2010.

*St. Elizabeths West Campus: Cultural Landscape Report.* Heritage Landscapes, Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners, and Robinson & Associates, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., April 2009.

Historians: Mike Ford, Kenneth Itle, Tim Penich, and Deborah Slaton, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE), 2012.

Project Information: This historical narrative was prepared by WJE in conjunction with Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC, who prepared the measured drawings, and Leslie Schwartz Photography, who prepared the photographic documentation. The HABS documentation was completed for the General Services Administration.