

HICKAM FIELD, OFFICERS' HOUSING TYPE J  
(Hickam Air Force Base, Building Nos. 534, 544 & 636)  
701 Beard Street  
Honolulu  
Honolulu County  
Hawaii

HABS HI-164-X  
HI-164-X

**HABS**  
**HI-164-X**

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

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

### HICKAM FIELD, OFFICERS' HOUSING TYPE J (Hickam Air Force Base, Building No. 636)

HABS  
HI-164-X

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- Location:** 701 Beard Street  
City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii  
U.S.G.S. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii Quadrangle 1999 (7.5 minute series)  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates 04.607580.2360260.
- Significance:** Building 636 is a part of the early development of Hickam Air Force Base as the Army Air Corps expanded its operations in Hawaii before World War II. It was built during the first phase of housing construction, which began in 1937, and was designed with features that adapt it well to the Hawaiian climate.
- Description:** Building 636 is a two-story building with an irregular L-shaped footprint. It is constructed of concrete hollow tiles with a painted stucco finish on a concrete wall foundation that is vented with decorative tile vents on the front façade and square screened openings with concrete curbs on the sides and rear. It has a double-pitch hip roof on its two-story section and a single-pitch hip roof on its one-story section over the living room, enclosed lanai, and garage. Both sections of roof have open eaves with clipped rafter tails and are covered with asphalt shingles.
- At the front of the building is a covered porch accessed by concrete steps up from grade which are flanked by concrete cheek walls. The floor of the porch is brown acid-stained concrete which is scored in an irregular pattern to simulate paving stones. The porch is covered by a shed roof that is a continuation of one slope of the hip roof above the single story section of the building. This shed roof is supported by 8" square painted wood columns with stepped capitals and bases. The front entry has a six-panel painted wood screen door and an eleven-panel natural finish wood main door.
- The interior of Building 636 typically has tongue-and-groove hardwood floors, with vinyl flooring in the kitchen, service and maid's areas, and first floor bath. The enclosed lanai has an original brown acid-stained concrete floor that is scored in an irregular pattern to resemble paving stones. Typically the interior walls are plaster with a picture rail high on the wall (about ¼" from the ceiling). The ceilings are v-joint canec panels in a centered pattern. The enclosed lanai has a coved plaster ceiling and walls of painted vertical knotty pine paneling (Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1937) with molded joints. Separating the enclosed lanai and the living room is a pair of painted wood surface sliding doors with a single panel on the living room side and painted knotty pine paneling with molded joints on the lanai side. The door separating the enclosed lanai from the garage is faced with the same painted knotty pine paneling on the lanai side. A painted molding circles the enclosed lanai just above the tops of its jalousie windows. The double door from the enclosed lanai to

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the exterior has three-light wood doors. Typical windows are one-over-one-light double-hung sash with jalousie windows in the enclosed lanai. Typical doors are single panel wood.

At the first floor hallway is a telephone niche that has a phone recess about 12" wide and 1'-10" high above a 2¾" high shelf for a phone book and a panel with a perforated design. The kitchen and pantry have laminate countertops. Metal cabinets with flush doors and drawers are found in the kitchen. In the pantry are wood cabinets with flush doors and drawers, some with original metal bin pulls. The overhead pantry cabinet has small doors near the ceiling. The kitchen has an original built-in spice rack and an original cabinet for an ironing board that has been converted to shelves.

The stairway leading to the second floor has hardwood treads and painted risers. The newel posts are painted wood, about 5½" square, with chamfered corners and an unpainted beveled and stepped cap. The posts have circumferential incised lines near their bases and at about 2/3 of the way to the top. Unpainted wood handrails with ½" square painted iron vertical rails span the distance between the newels. Every other vertical iron rail is formed with a twist.

The two bathrooms on the second floor each have original tile work. The master bath off Bedroom 1 has a mosaic tile floor in a grid pattern in off-white with contrasting black diamond accents and trim. The walls of the bathroom are 48" high wainscot of off-white ceramic tile with black ceramic tile base board and bull nose top trim. The shower is similar, except the wainscot extends up to about 6'-8" high. There are original black ceramic towel bars, soap dish, and toilet paper holder in this bathroom. The bathroom off the upstairs hall also has mosaic floor tile, in an irregularly colored pattern of blue and aqua colored square tiles. There is also a 48" ceramic tile wainscot in those colors, and ceramic towel bar, toilet paper holder, soap dish, and toothbrush holder. The original tile wainscot in the shower has been replaced with tan colored tile. Bedroom 1 has a dressing area with a single-light awning window to the outside that is operated by a transom lift. A closet in the dressing room has two sets of single-panel sliding doors. A set of small sliding doors set near the ceiling above the standard doors, provide access to the upper portion of the closet.

**Historical Context:** Building 636 was built in 1938. An aerial photo dated September 6, 1938 shows the building appearing complete (U.S Army Museum Hawaii 1938). A survey of the quarters dated February 2, 1939 lists the Type J officers' quarters as "completed" (Hickam Air Force Base History Office 1939). Original plans for Building 636 are dated August 18, 1937 and were prepared under the direction of Howard B. Nurse, the Captain of the Quartermaster Corps at Hickam Field. Building 636 was part of the first phase of housing construction at Hickam Field which began in late 1937 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1937, 1). This building was one of thirty-nine officers' quarters built under the first phase of housing construction, and one of three Type J buildings constructed at Hickam. Construction was to begin after December 1, 1937. The project, which totaled eighty-one

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quarters for officers and non-commissioned officers, was billed as "one of the most extensive housing projects ever undertaken in the territory" (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1937, 1).

Building 636 was part of the development of Hickam Air Base in the late 1930s and early 1940s as the Army Air Corps shifted its operations from Ford Island and utilized the larger area available to them in the new location. The housing planned for the new Air Base was designed "in keeping with the Hawaiian atmosphere and traditions" with some buildings placed on curving streets and amidst extensive landscaping plants, all planned to give a leisurely feeling to the community (Nurse 1938, 10).

The initial housing construction was done by Robert McKee Construction Company of Los Angeles CA. and was finished by July 1939 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 1936, 1; and Hunt ca. 1940, 6).

Building 636 has undergone several alterations over the years. The original screened lanai has been enclosed by jalousie windows. A concrete patio, covered by a shed roof supported by concrete hollow tile columns, has been added at the rear of the house. Original tongue and groove flooring in kitchen, maid's areas, and service porch of Building 636 has been covered with carpet and vinyl tile. The door between the entry and the kitchen has been removed. The screen door at the service porch has been replaced with a flush door with jalousie panel, and the house has been re-roofed with asphalt shingles.

For additional information, see HABS HI-164-AP Hickam Field, Hickam Historic Housing.

**Sources:**

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New York: A. Knopf.

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Largest Airdrome." *Air Corps Newsletter*, 15<sup>th</sup> ABW History Office,  
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U.S. Army Museum Hawaii. 1938. Aerial photo # 1445. Ft. DeRussy  
Archives, Hawaii. 6 September.

**Project Information:** This report was prepared as part of a project to privatize all military housing under the control of the 15 Airlift Wing. Approximately 656 of the 1332 base housing units to be privatized are within the Hickam Historic District. Because the units within the historic district will be altered, a representative unit of each type was selected for preservation; to be restored as part of the Programmatic Agreement (August 2000) for Hickam's Historic District. This report documents the buildings before their restoration. The photographic documentation was undertaken by David Franzen, photographer. Dee Ruzicka, Architectural Historian at Mason Architects, Inc., wrote the written documentation and conducted field work (November 2005 – February 2006) and research for this report.

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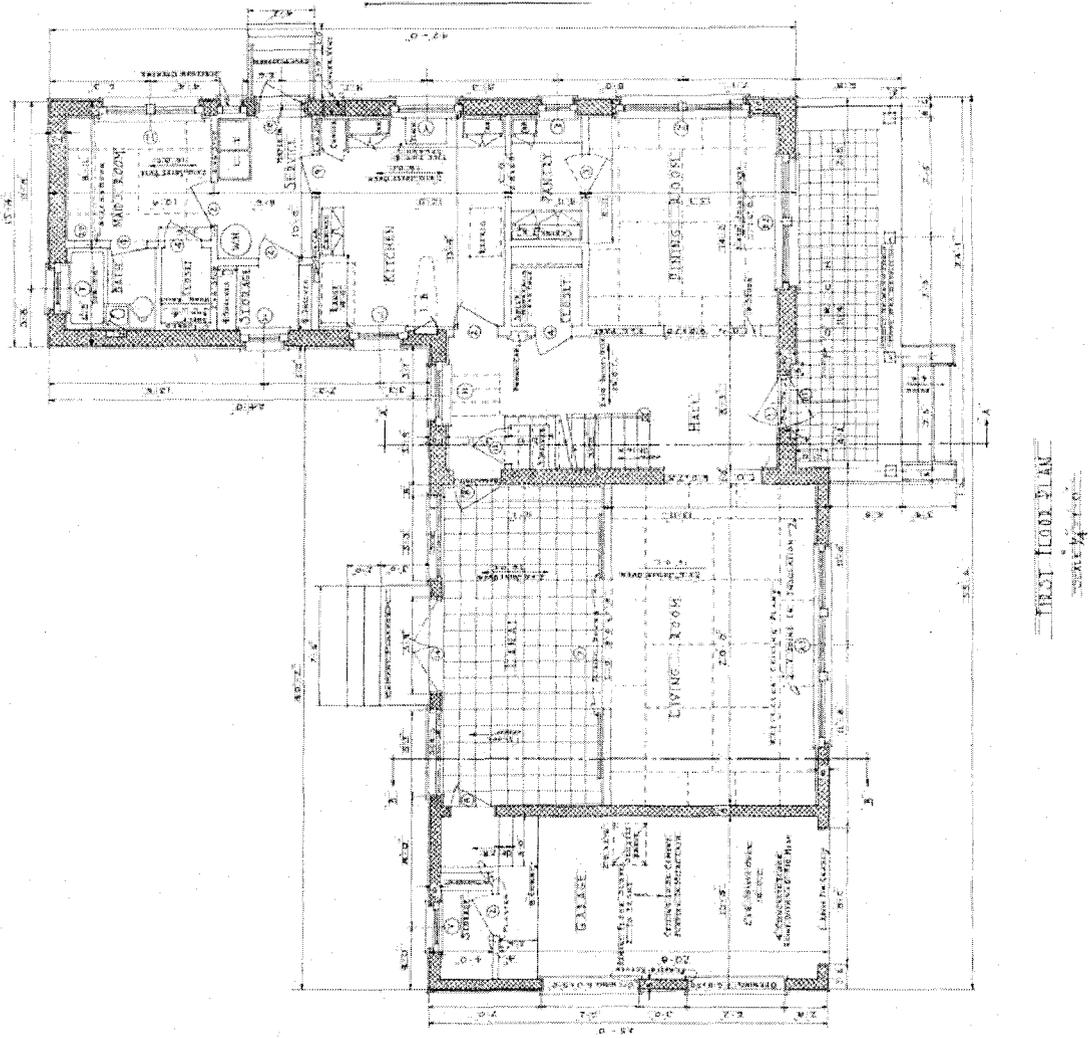
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Building 636 location map (not to scale)



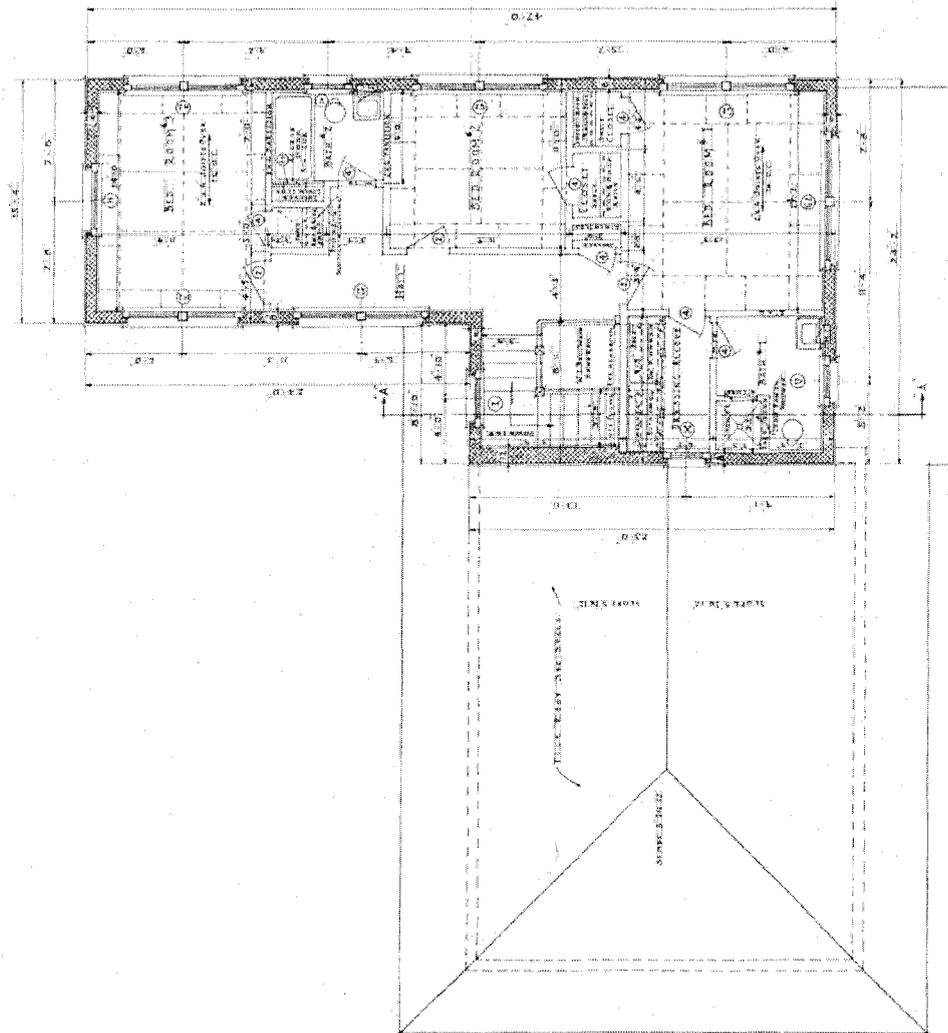
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Portion of original drawing of Building 636, first floor, Type J, dated August 18, 1937.  
Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1937.



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Portion of original drawing of Building 636, second floor, Type J, dated August 18, 1937.  
Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1937.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
August 18, 1937