

HICKAM FIELD, OFFICERS' HOUSING TYPE P
(Hickam Air Force Base, Building No. 870)
403K Signer Boulevard
Honolulu
Honolulu County
Hawaii

HABS No. HI-164-AQ

HABS
HI-164-AQ

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

**Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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(1945)

- Location:** 403K Signer Boulevard
City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii
U.S.G.S. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii Quadrangle 1999 (7.5 minute series)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates 04.607220.2359740.
- Significance:** Building 870 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 second phase of housing construction, which began in 1939, and was designed with features that adapt it well to the Hawaiian climate.
- Description:** Building 870 is a two-story, ten-unit apartment building with a u-shaped plan that covers a footprint measuring about 155' wide and about 84' deep. The courtyard formed between the two wings at the front façade of the building is 61'-8" wide and 45'-8" deep (Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files 1939, 6812-357-3076). The building has a hip roof with open eaves and clipped rafter tails that is covered with clay tiles. Each front-facing hip on the side wings has a fixed louver vent at the top. Single-story sections with low-slope shed roofs have been added at the rear of each of the units for family rooms. Building 870 is built of concrete hollow tile on a concrete slab-on-grade. A belt course of three flared bands circles the building between the floors. The added family rooms are concrete hollow tile and plywood on a concrete slab-on-grade. There is a ten-foot wide covered lanai on the three sides of the building which face the front courtyard. This has a concrete slab-on-grade and a clay tile covered hip roof that is supported by paired 5½" square wood posts, with triple posts at the corners. Unit K is typical of the building's units, a two-story layout with two bedrooms on the second floor. There are four one-bedroom units in the building.
- The front entry of Unit 403K/ Building 870 has a wood main door with vertical v-joints and an aluminum screen door. The rear entry door to the family room is flush wood. The building typically has two-over-two-light double-hung sash windows with brick sills. There are one-over-one light double-hung sash at the bathrooms and kitchens, and jalousie windows at the added family rooms. At the second story, decorative concrete tile grilles are used in the exterior walls to vent the large walk-in storage closets found in most units. These were originally screened, but are now sealed with clear acrylic sheets.
- The interior of Unit 403K/ Building 870 is typically carpeted, with plaster walls and v-joint canec panel ceilings in a centered pattern. The walls have picture moldings about ¼" from the ceilings. Typical interior doors are single-panel wood. Two original doors are found at the service porch; the first, separating the service porch from the added family room, is a

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combination door with a single screened panel over a solid panel. A vertically sliding glazed panel covers the screened opening, sliding down into a pocket in the lower portion of the door to allow ventilation through the screen. The second original door at the service porch is a single-panel wood door that closes the cooler. This door has two screened openings, one at the top and one at the bottom. The cooler was originally a vented storage closet with screened shelves for semi-perishable food items. The service porch also has a built-in cabinet closed by a narrow single-panel door with a wood pull. This cabinet originally housed an ironing board and has been converted to shelves.

Unit 403K has a straight-run stairway with carpeted treads and risers. A painted wrought iron railing of 2" x 5/8" stock at the second floor stair hall reverses and extends down the stairs as a handrail. At the top and bottom of the stairs are plywood-sealed doorways to the adjacent unit. The bathroom has a mosaic pattern ceramic tile floor and a 6'-8" high wainscot of asbestos cement board that is scored to resemble 4" tile. The floor of the second floor storage closet is original tongue-and-groove oak.

Historical Context: Building 870 was built in 1940 or 1941. Original plans are dated September 21, 1939 and were prepared under the direction of John A. Hunt, the Captain of the Quartermaster Corps at Hickam Field. Building 870 was part of a second phase (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 10 August 1939, 1) of housing construction at Hickam Field which began in late 1939 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 6 November 1939, 1). This building was one of thirteen Type P apartment buildings of the same plan which were built at Hickam for the use of commissioned officers and their families. These apartment buildings were designed with ten units each, six two-bedroom units and four one-bedroom units. The appropriation for the phase of housing construction which included the Type P buildings was approved on June 14, 1939 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin* 14 June 1939, 1).

The Type P housing units were 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 (Hunt ca. 1940, 5). Much of the housing construction of the second phase, which began in 1939 and was finished during 1941, was done by E.E. Black, Ltd., of Honolulu.

Unit 403K/ Building 870 has undergone several alterations over the years. A family room of concrete hollow tile and plywood has been built adjoining the service porch. Original stained concrete and oak tongue-and-groove floors have been covered with carpet and vinyl composition tile. The

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double-acting door between the kitchen and the dining room has been removed.

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

Sources:

Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files. 1939. Historic Plans of unit type P, plan # 6812-357-3076 and 6812-397-3077. 21 September.

Honolulu Star Bulletin. 1939. "Big Program for Air Field Building Here." 14 June.

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Hunt, John A. 1940. "Construction of Hickam Field." *The Quartermaster Review*, November-December.

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J.M. Waller Associates and Mason Architects, Inc. 2003. *Building Preservation Plan of Selected Historic Homes for Hickam Air Force Base*. Honolulu: Hickam Air Force Base.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. 1996. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: A. Knopf.

Nurse, Captain H. B. 1938. "Hickam Field, The Army's Newest and Largest Airdrome." *Air Corps Newsletter*, 15th ABW History Office, Hickam Air Force Base. 1 July.

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.

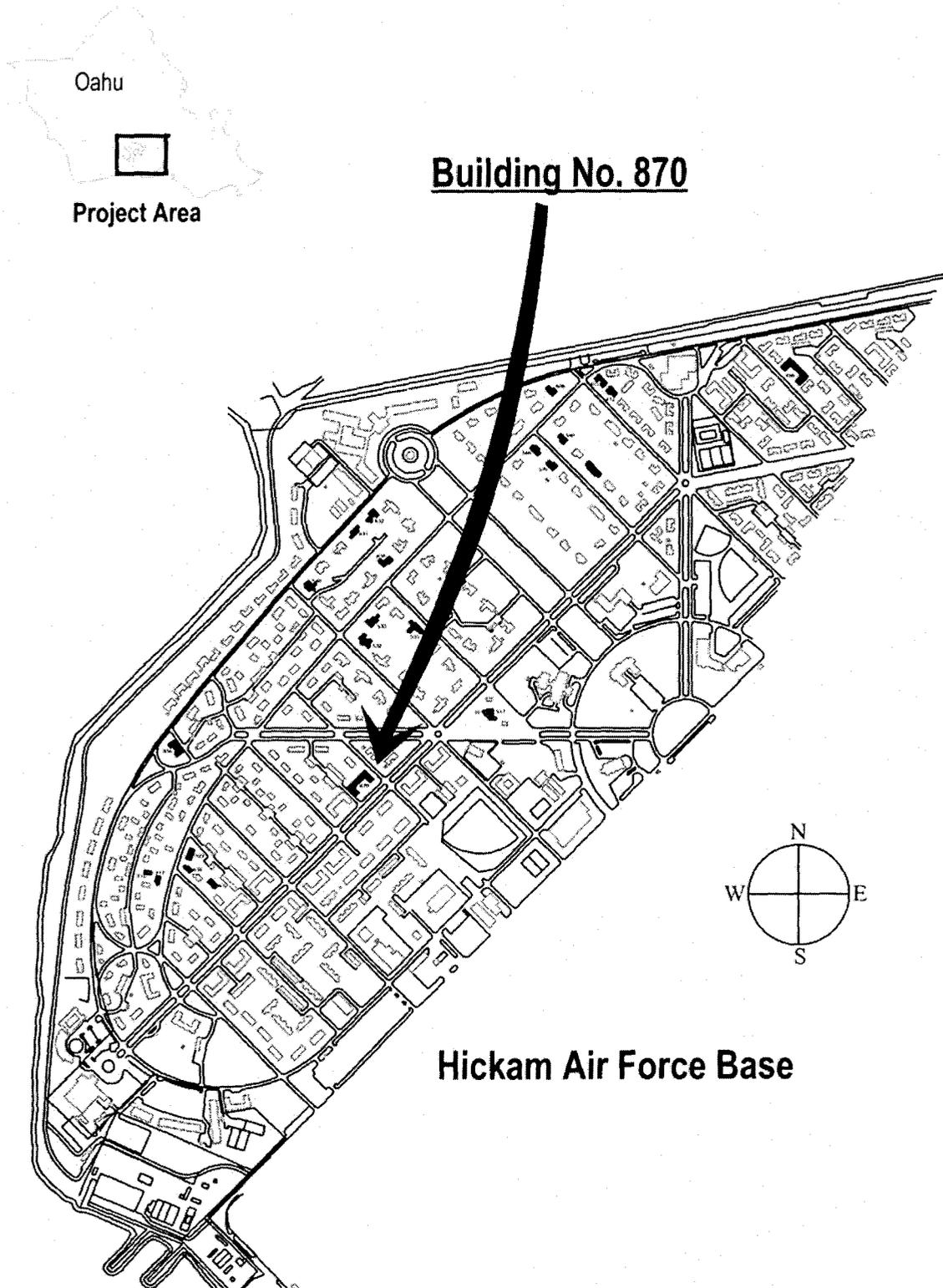
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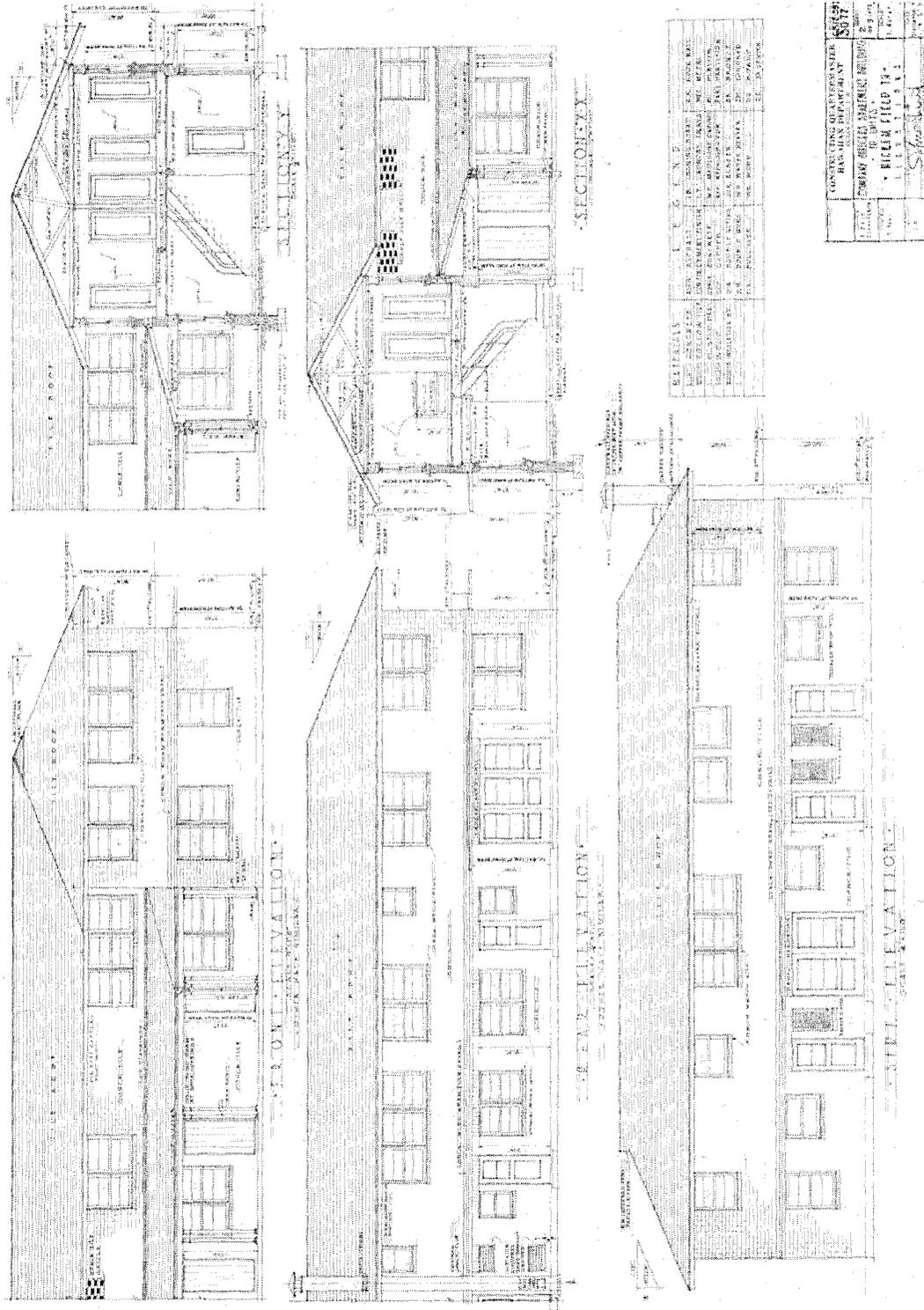
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Building 870 location map (not to scale)



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Portion of original elevation of Building 870, Type P. Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files
 1939, 6812-397-3077.



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Portion of original floor plan of Building 870, Type P. Hickam Air Force Base Plan Files,
1939, 6812-397-3076.

