

Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot, Gymnasium  
(Building No. 38)  
North Maine Avenue  
Industrial Area  
Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant  
Hawthorne  
Mineral County  
Nevada

**HABS No.** NV-21-G

HABS  
NEV  
11-HAWT,  
2G-

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAWTHORNE NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT, GYMNASIUM  
(Building No. 38)

HABS No. NV-21-G

HABS  
NEV  
11-HAWT,  
26-

Location: North Maine Avenue  
Industrial Area  
Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant  
Hawthorne, Mineral County, Nevada

USGS Hawthorne West Quadrangle (7.5')  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 11/355880/4267760

Significance:

The Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot (NAD) is a nationally significant military district. It was built for state-of-the-art ammunition storage in the late 1920s (criterion C); it is by and far the largest depot of its kind known in the world with 2501 magazines and storehouses, 212 miles of railroad track, 418 miles of blacktop, and 232 square miles of land (criterion C); and it is significant for its role in World War II. Producing a vast amount of ordnance, it was THE Naval Ammunition Depot for the Pacific Theater during World War II.

Operations have included: production of propellant charges, projectiles, bombs and rockets; demilitarization of all types of munitions; and storage of national stock piles of munitions. Since the 1940s until the facility was turned over to the Army in 1977, Hawthorne NAD was the country's largest producer of Navy mines and depth charges.

The Depot is also significant for the role it played in the military history of the State of Nevada. It represents 50 plus years of federal military operation in Nevada. The Hawthorne NAD is the oldest twentieth century U. S. military reservation in Nevada. It has been in continuous active operational status since its commissioning in 1930 (criterion A). The Depot is the best collection of early twentieth century military, cultural resources in Nevada (criterion C). The Hawthorne NAD represents the largest industrial activity in the State of Nevada during World War II, as well as during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

The operation has been the local area's major employer and has represented relative economic stability to the town of Hawthorne since its commissioning. The Depot significantly changed the fortunes of the town of Hawthorne.

Over 90% of the buildings within the 148,000 plus acres of the Hawthorne NAD date from World War II or before. The district as a whole and great majority of the individual buildings within it retain integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Architectural Information:

Located on the western edge of the Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant in the industrial and residential area, building No. 00A38 is approximately 100 yards northwest of the main entrance. A separate handball court adjacent to Building No. 38 was built in 1943 (Drawing No. 272387).

Building 38 is one story and approximately 143' by 224' by 29' high with a hidden flat roof. Considered semi-permanent construction when it was built, the building has a concrete foundation with a 5" concrete slab under pool area. The superstructure consists of 2 x 6 stud walls and the original roof system consisted of built-up gravel and felt over 1" tongue and groove diagonal lumber sheathing on rafters. The 2 x 10 Douglas Fir rafters were spaced 24" on center then framed into large timber trusses spaced 16' on center. The trusses were supported above the floor by 8 x 12 Douglas Fire posts. The wooden trusses over gym were 9' 6 1/2" deep and the trusses over pool were 8' 4 1/2" deep. The original roof system has been replaced.

The exterior is 1" by 10" V-groove wooden siding pierced by wood framed doors and windows. The tall portions of the building have horizontal siding and the shorter portions have vertically placed siding. The one, two, and three part windows are placed in rows forming horizontal bands. The windows are mostly fixed with one operable section hinged at the top. The placement of the operable part varies depending on the placement of the window and the interior use. The entrances vary. The two main entrances are on the west and north elevations and are identical. Each consists of double doors each with four lights with four light sidelights and an eight light ransom covering the entire opening. Three other entrances are solid wooden double doors. The entrances have small flat roofed porches with pipe railings and concrete steps.

When built the building contained the following spaces: an entrance lobby (12'1" by approximately 24'), a four lane bowling alley (29'10" by 98'10"), a library (approximately 22' by 30'), a reading & writing room (approximately 22' by 30'), a swimming pool (66' by 97'), a gymnasium (74- by 112'), men's and women's lockers, showers, and toilets, and equipment room and filter room for the pool. Oil heat was provided by the central heating plant.

In 1959, changes were made to the chlorinating system. In 1961 the gymnasium was re-stripped to include a basketball court and a volleyball court. In 1962, changes were made to the heating system. Changes were made to the bowling alley at the pin end in 1968. The swimming pool roof system with the exception of the rafters was replaced in the 1970s. Drawings dated 1972 and 1979 were done for the replacement of the roof. A 1983 report states that the roof was replaced in 1972 and now deteriorated condition. The pool filtration system was replaced in 1983 and surplused in 1989.

Historical Information:

The Hawthorne NAD was created by an Act of Congress following the destruction of the Navy's East Coast main ammunition facility in 1926. In 1928, \$3.5 million were allotted for the development of the Naval Ammunition Depot at Hawthorne. Starting in 1935, plans were laid to increase the size of the depot. In 1939 the expansion began in earnest and the depot began producing ammunition and shipping it to classified locations. With the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Hawthorne NAD took on new importance; the Hawthorne depot was the principal west coast naval ammunition plant. Over 2,000 construction workers increased the size of the depot tenfold during World War II and 5,500 workers produced a tremendous amount of ammunition. Bombs, mines, and rockets were filled and assembled at Hawthorne NAD. Mines and rockets were also being developed and tested here.

The Hawthorne Depot continued to play an important role in the Navy's chain of producing, storing, and destroying munitions after World War II. After W.W.II the depot was responsible for the destruction of thousands of tons of munitions. During the Korean and Vietnam conflicts the Hawthorne NAD provided back-up storage of conventional ammunition and mines for the entire Pacific theater. In 1977, under directive of the Department of Defense, Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot was transferred to the Army and became the Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant.

The architect for the building was the U. S. Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks with Austin Willmott Earl of 233 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA serving as consulting engineer. The contractor was Dinwiddie-Monson Construction Company of Los Angeles, California.

Completed in September 1943 as the Marine Recreation Building, it cost \$214,747 to construct. The 1976 property record shows the following four uses: indoor swimming pool (9,585 square feet); gymnasium (8,214 square feet); bowling alley (2,842 square feet); and special services issue office (2,650 square feet).

Sources:

Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant Real Property Records and Architectural Drawings.

Koval, Ana B. "Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot" National Register of Historic Places District nomination. 1989.

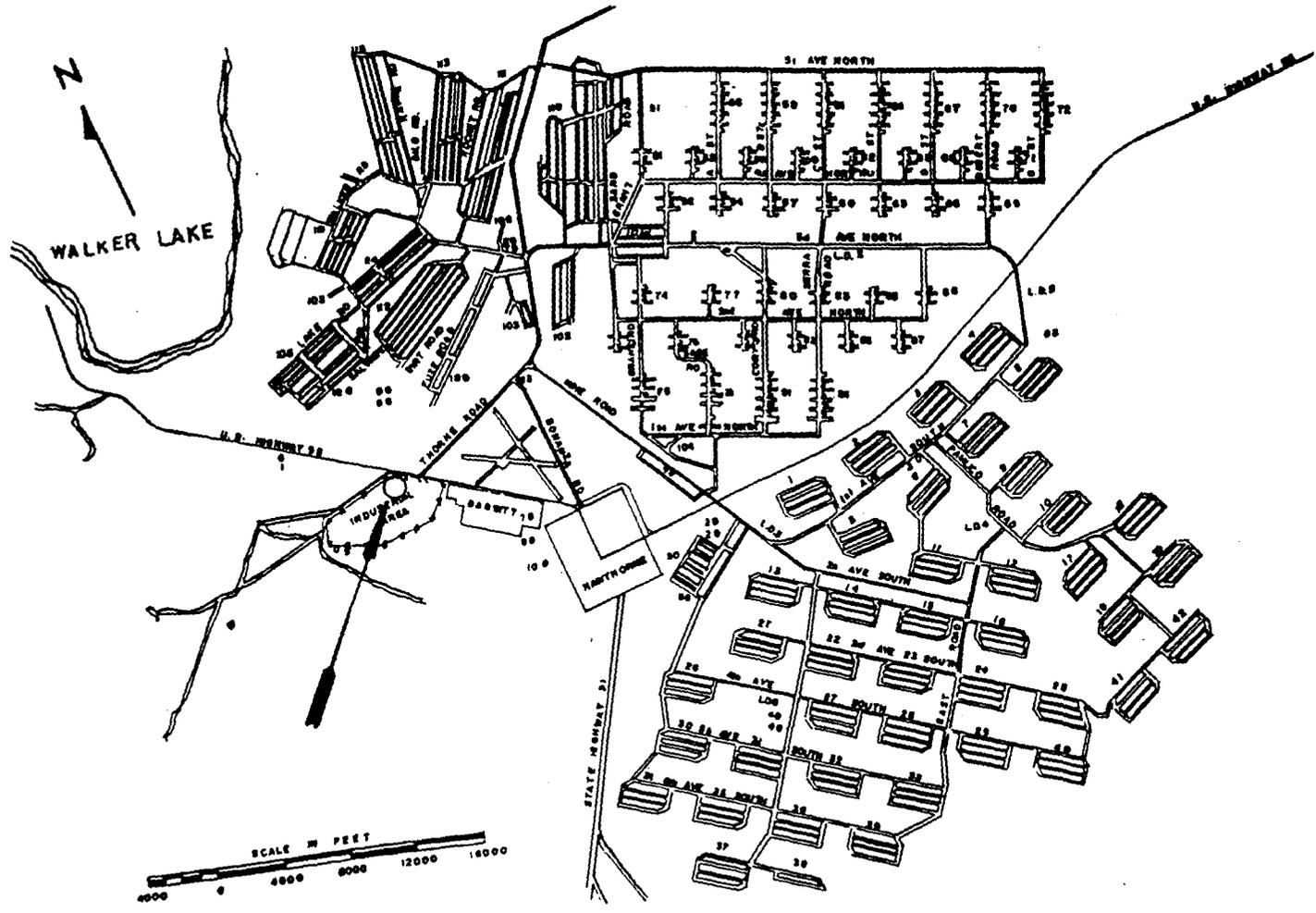
Project Information:

The U. S. Army is demolishing and removing Building No. 38 which is currently not in use, cannot be used in current state of repair, cannot be safely and

HAWTHORNE NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT, GYMNASIUM  
(Building No. 38)  
HABS No. NV-21-G  
page 4

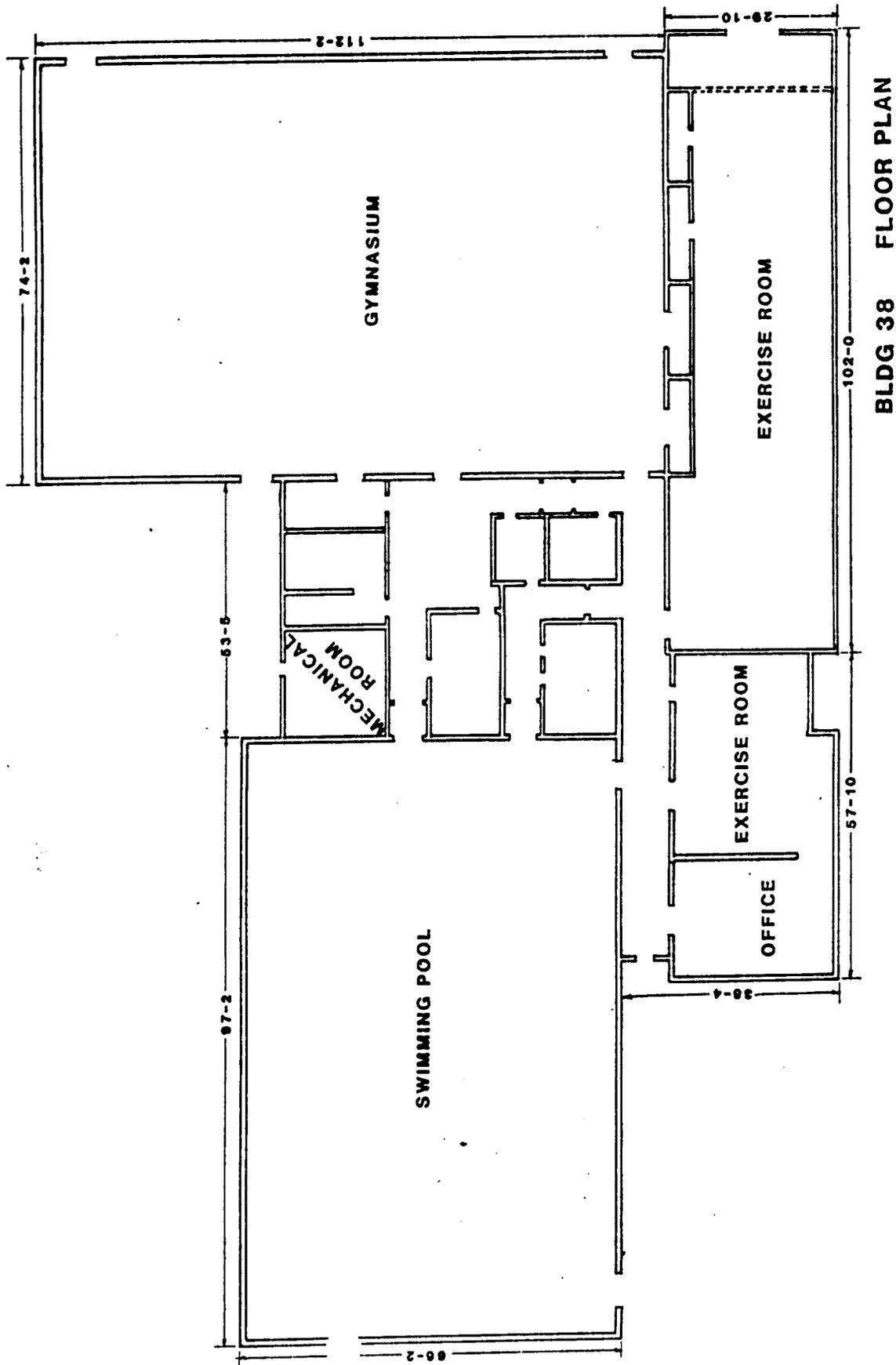
economically refurbished for use, and is currently in a deteriorated state. The current state of the building includes fallen ceilings and roof, broken windows, and deteriorated interior and exterior. The building has been declared excess by the government and is currently locked but not fenced. The open building is currently home for several populations of animals and is known to contain hazardous material (asbestos and lead based paint).

Historian: Ana B. Koval,  
Rainshadow Associates,  
P. O. Box 2650, Carson City, NV 89702  
(702) 849-3511  
January 15, 1994.



HAWTHORNE ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT





BLDG 38 FLOOR PLAN