

PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,
BASE OPERATIONS BUILDING
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2712)
Idaho at Alabama Avenue
Plattsburgh
Clinton County
New York

HAER No. NY-326-K

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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HAER No. NY-326-K

Location: Idaho at Alabama Avenue, Plattsburgh, Clinton County, New York

UTM: 18.622040,4944520

Quad: Plattsburgh, NY-VT, 1:24,000 (1966)

Date of Construction: 1956

Architect: Unknown

Present Owner: United States Air Force

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: During the Cold War, Building No. 2712 housed the base operations center and was used for monitoring and overseeing all flight operations. In addition, the building housed weather observation and administrative offices. The building displays a number of architectural characteristics indicative of base flight operations facilities constructed at Strategic Air Command (SAC) installations across the United States during the Cold War era. These features include a control tower and associated office facilities for flight support operations.

Project Information: Building No. 2712 at Plattsburgh Air Force Base (AFB) is being documented in accordance with HAER standards to mitigate for the potential adverse effects of transferring deed of title to the property from federal ownership. The property transfer is a result of the disposal and reuse of Plattsburgh AFB, pursuant to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1993. The mitigation is a stipulation of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the U.S. Air Force, the New York State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (October 2000).

Michael Pumphrey
Deborah Dobson-Brown
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1461 East Cooley Drive
Colton, CA 92324

Summary Description of Base Operations, (Plattsburgh Air Force Base Building No. 2712)

Layout

The 9,139 square foot Base Operations is a two-story, reinforced concrete block building with a prominent 3,920 square foot, ten-story, reinforced concrete flight control tower on its west façade. The building is irregular in plan and is constructed on a reinforced concrete foundation. The main section of Building No. 2712 measures 100'-0" x 38'-0"; a one-story, flat roof offset on the west façade measures 11'-0" x 29'-4" inches. The building has paired, two-over-two, double hung, wood sash windows. The north façade has a one-story, shed roof addition that measures 32'-0" x 38'-0"; off the west façade of this addition is a glass vestibule.

The interior of the main section of the building has offices arranged off a double-loaded corridor on each floor. This section houses base flight operational functions offices, waiting room, weather room, airfield administration, in-flight kitchen and snack bar.

The control tower footprint measures 21 feet 4 inches by 18 feet 5 inches. The top of the tower has a control room enclosed with large, double glass windows. A metal walkway extends around the perimeter of the tower just below the control room; a similar walkway is located at the seventh floor of the tower. The tower's control room retains the flight control equipment. Additionally, the building also has a 60 kW emergency electric power generator.

The base operations section is only slightly larger than the standard 8,715 square foot Air Force base operations building.

Alterations/Additions

In 1979, a one-story, concrete block addition was constructed across the north façade. The west façade of this addition has a glass vestibule that appears to have been constructed at the same time. Numerous modifications have been made to the interior over the course of time.

Function

The Base Operations, Building No. 2712, was designed, built and modified over time to facilitate flight operations.

Significance

The end of World War II saw the beginning of hostile relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, based on differing social, economic, and political views. As this "Cold War" escalated, the United States instituted a policy of containment, which called for a "peaceful" blocking of the expansion of Soviet political and economic influence. Nuclear weapons, which had also developed at the end of World War II, held a significant place in this conflict, but it was theorized that an American nuclear capability, if strong enough, could deter unwanted Soviet expansion.

On March 21, 1946, SAC was organized as one of the three new major commands in a reorganized Army Air Force. SAC was considered the "big stick" of U.S. national military strength, and was given the responsibility of delivering the atomic weapons. With the motto "peace is our profession" SAC was the physical realization of America's deterrence theory.

The newly established Air Force (established in 1947) embarked upon an expansive Cold War building program to make SAC operable. Air Force bases designated specifically for SAC were identified (or newly constructed) and became the critical instrument in SAC's mission of posing a significant deterrent to enemy aggression. Specially designed facilities were constructed at each of these installations, and the Base Operations, Building No. 2712, was a common flight operations support property-type at all Air Force installations.

The Base Operations Building, Building No. 2712 at Plattsburgh AFB was constructed in 1956 to support the SAC flight missions. It was an essential part of Plattsburgh AFB Cold War era activities and a critical element of Plattsburgh AFB SAC bomber and tanker operations.

Drawings

Copies of as-built drawings for the Base Operations, Building No. 2712, are archived at:

Air Force Historical Research Agency/ISA
600 Chennault Circle
Maxwell Air Force Base, AL 36112-6424

Sources

Tetra Tech, Inc.

1995 *Survey of Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures at Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Clinton County, New York.* Prepared for the U.S. Department of the Air Force, Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence, Brooks Air Force Base, Texas.

United States Air Force

1959 Plattsburgh Air Force Base Real Property Accountable Record (1959-1989).

United States Air Force

1991 *Peace...is our Profession: Alert Operations and the Strategic Air Command, 1957-1991.* Office of the Historian, Headquarters Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska.

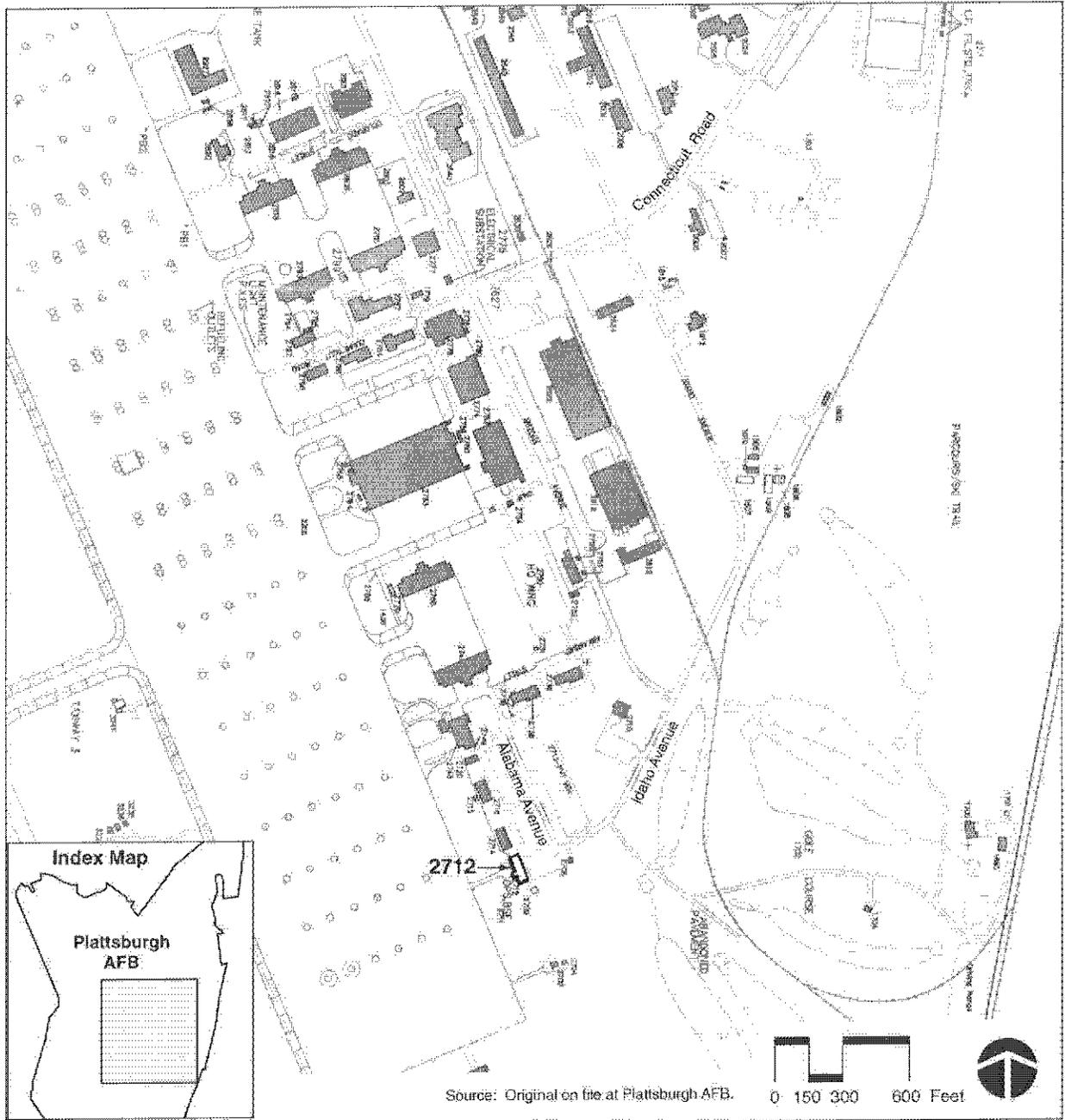
United States Air Force

2000 Plattsburgh Air Force Base Real Property Inventory Detail List.

U.S. Department of the Air Force, Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence

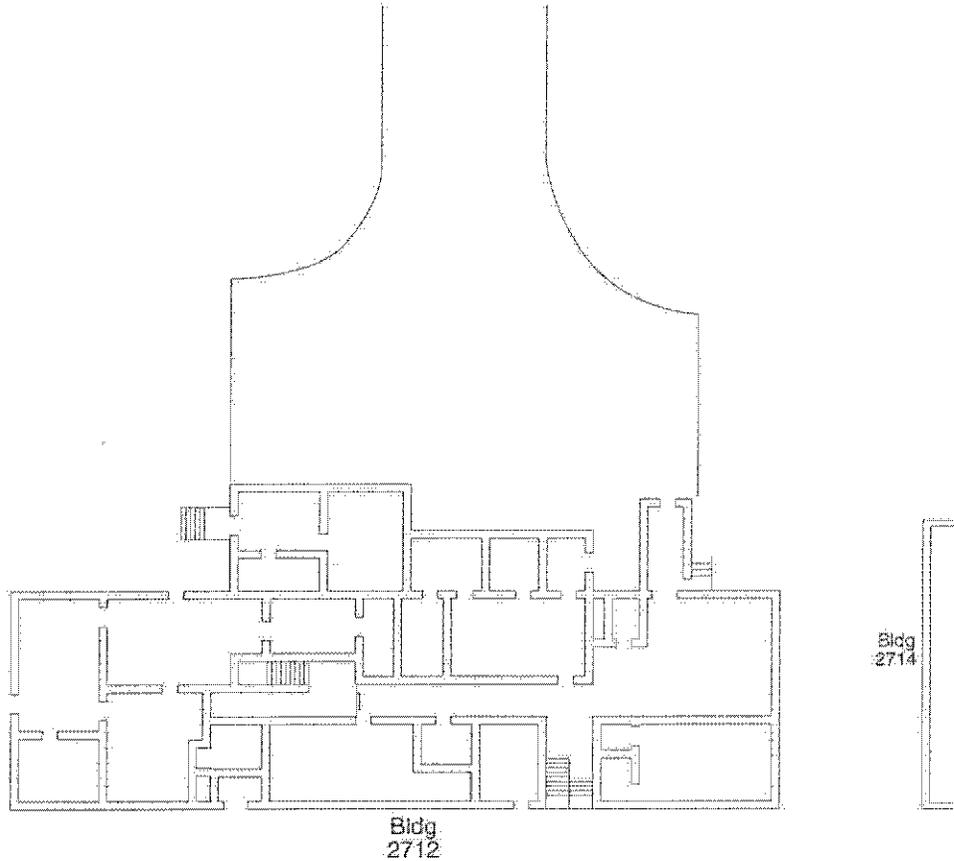
1998 *Draft Historic Building Inventory and Evaluation Plattsburgh Air Force Base New York,* Volumes I and II, June.

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Location Map for Base Operations Building, Building No. 2712
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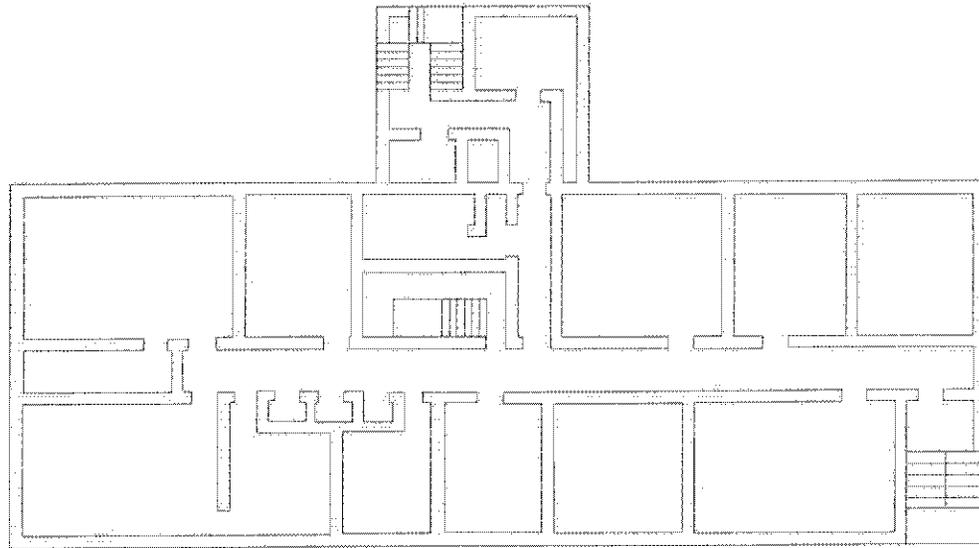


First Floor

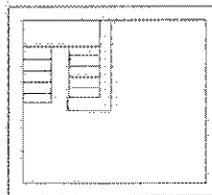

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Sketch not to Scale

SKETCH PLAN – BASE OPERATIONS BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2712)
(Source: Plattsburgh AFB CAD File, Prepared by the United States Air Force, ca 2000)
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Second Floor



Tower Level



Sketch not to Scale

SKETCH PLAN - BASE OPERATIONS BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR AND TOWER LEVEL
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2712)
(Source: Plattsburgh AFB CAD File, Prepared by the United States Air Force, ca 2000)
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