

PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,  
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE DOCKS  
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2741)  
Alabama Avenue at Arkansas Avenue  
Plattsburgh  
Clinton County  
New York

HAER No. NY-326-L

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

PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,  
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE DOCK  
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2741)

HAER No. NY-326 -L

**Location:** Alabama Avenue at Arkansas Street, Plattsburgh, Clinton County,  
New York.

UTM: 18.622380.4945400  
Quad: Plattsburgh, NY-VT, 1:24,000 (1966)

**Date of Construction:** 1956

**Architect:** Greenberg and Ames, New York, New York

**Present Owner:** United States Air Force

**Present Use:** Vacant/Storage

**Significance:** Building No. 2741 was constructed at the same time as, and is essentially identical in appearance to Buildings No. 2766, 2785, 2793, 2808, 2818, 2837, and 2890. Six of these (2741, 2766, 2785, 2808, 2837, and 2890) were designated as large aircraft maintenance docks and provided protected space for the maintenance of larger aircraft. One dock (2793) originally provided protected space for the maintenance of small aircraft, but was redesignated as a helicopter Rescue and Recovery Hangar. One dock (2818) was a fuel systems maintenance dock and provided for fuel system maintenance, mechanical ventilation, fume sensing and alarm, fire-extinguishing and wash down drainage trenches. All eight docks contain installed utility systems (heat, plumbing, electric, and compressed air).

**Project Information:** Building No. 2741 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 and Deborah Dobson-Brown  
Earth Tech, Inc.  
1461 East Cooley Drive  
Colton, CA 92324

**Summary Description of Aircraft Maintenance Docks, (Plattsburgh Air Force Base Building No. 2741)**

**Layout**

There are a total of eight nose docks on the flightline area. Excluding a few minor variations, these nose docks are all identical to one another in construction and appearance.

Building No. 2741 has a typical cantilevered steel frame that is clad in corrugated metal siding, and a standing seam metal saltbox roof. The plan is irregular and the building is constructed atop a reinforced concrete foundation.

The main section of the building measures roughly 295'-6" x 85'-1". The front façade is asymmetrical in appearance and has twelve large metal hangar doors suspended from a steel track; the bases of the doors slide along a steel rail.

The rear façade has three offsets and two wings. This façade is almost symmetrical in appearance. Centered on the rear façade is an offset that measures 34'-9" x 39'-10"; a large overhead door is located in this offset. To the left and right of this offset, the façade mirrors itself; abutting it are two smaller offsets that measure 8'-5" x 10'-4", and these offsets have a single personnel door. From these offsets to the side elevations are two overhead garage doors and an enclosed personnel door at the first floor level. Beyond the enclosed stairways, toward the side elevations are two metal sash windows near the roofline. Two wings measuring 23'-11" x 25'-7" are located at the side elevations. Each building has approximately 28,046 square feet of usable floor area.

The side elevations are nearly blank, having only a personnel door and a few metal sash windows.

The nose dock's unique cantilevered steel framing allows for a generally open and versatile interior plan. Two office areas are located in the rear corners, at the mezzanine floor level. These Mezzanine office areas measure 36'-5" x 28'-12".

One dock (2793) originally provided protected space for the maintenance of small aircraft, but was redesignated as a helicopter Rescue and Recovery Hangar. One dock (2818) was a fuel systems maintenance dock and provided for fuel system maintenance, mechanical ventilation, fume sensing and alarm, fire extinguishing and wash down drainage trenches. All eight docks contain installed utility systems (heat, plumbing, electric, and compressed air).

**Alterations/Additions**

Building No. 2741 has had no major exterior alterations.

**Function**

Building No. 2741 was a support facility used to maintain aircraft. As such, it was designed to provide partial protection for aircraft while undergoing maintenance.

## 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 that called for a "peaceful" blocking of the expansion of Soviet political and economic influence.<sup>27</sup> 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, the Strategic Air Command (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. Task-specific facilities were designed and constructed at each of these bases, among which were the aircraft maintenance dock buildings. Because aircraft maintenance was of paramount importance to the SAC mission, Building 2741—as an exemplary building type—was critical to Plattsburgh AFB's mission and the nation's Cold War defense.

## Drawings

Copies of as-built drawings for the Aircraft Maintenance Docks, Building No. 2741, 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

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United States Air Force

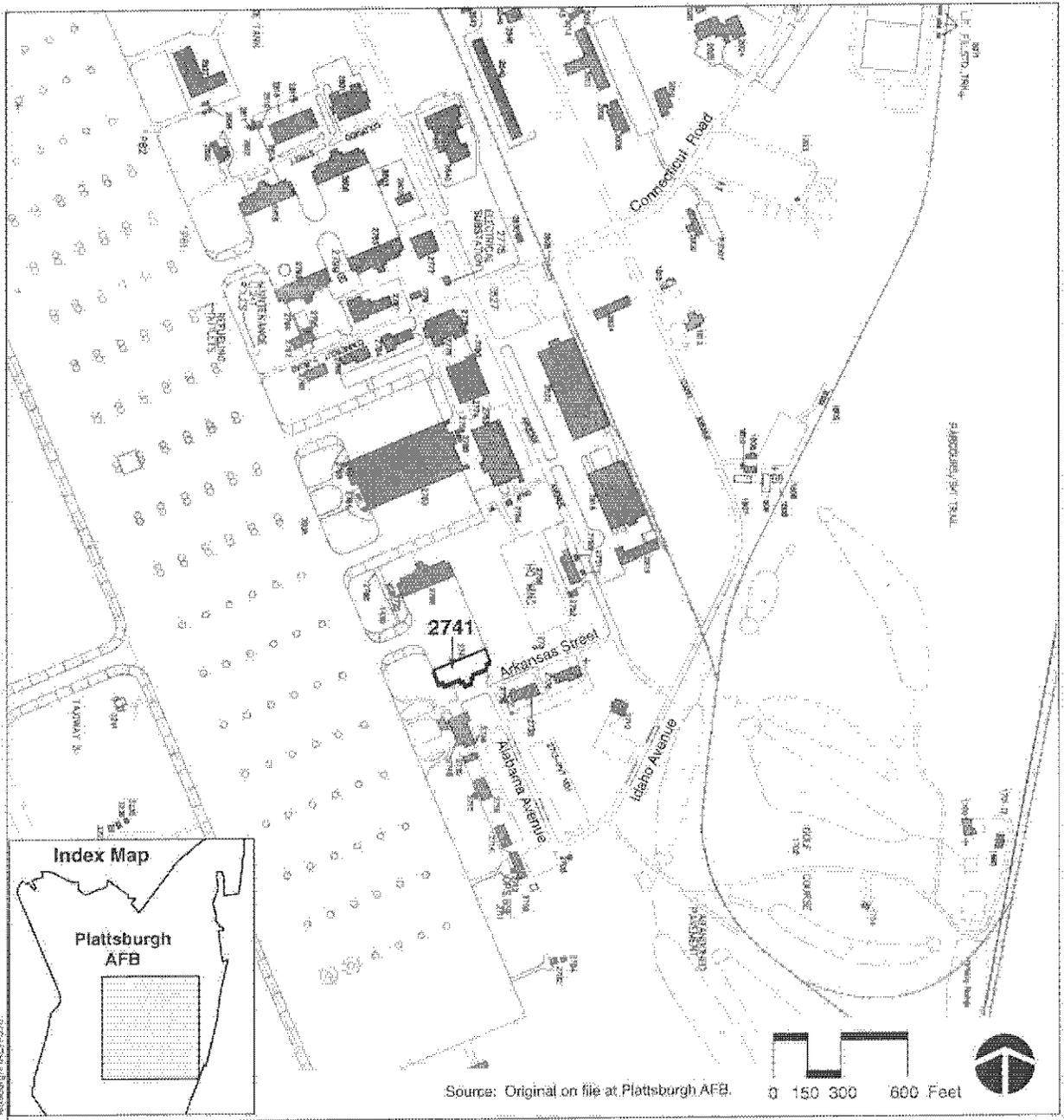
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PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,  
AIRCRAFT MAINTANENCE DOCK  
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building 2741)  
HAER No. NY-326-L  
(Page 4)

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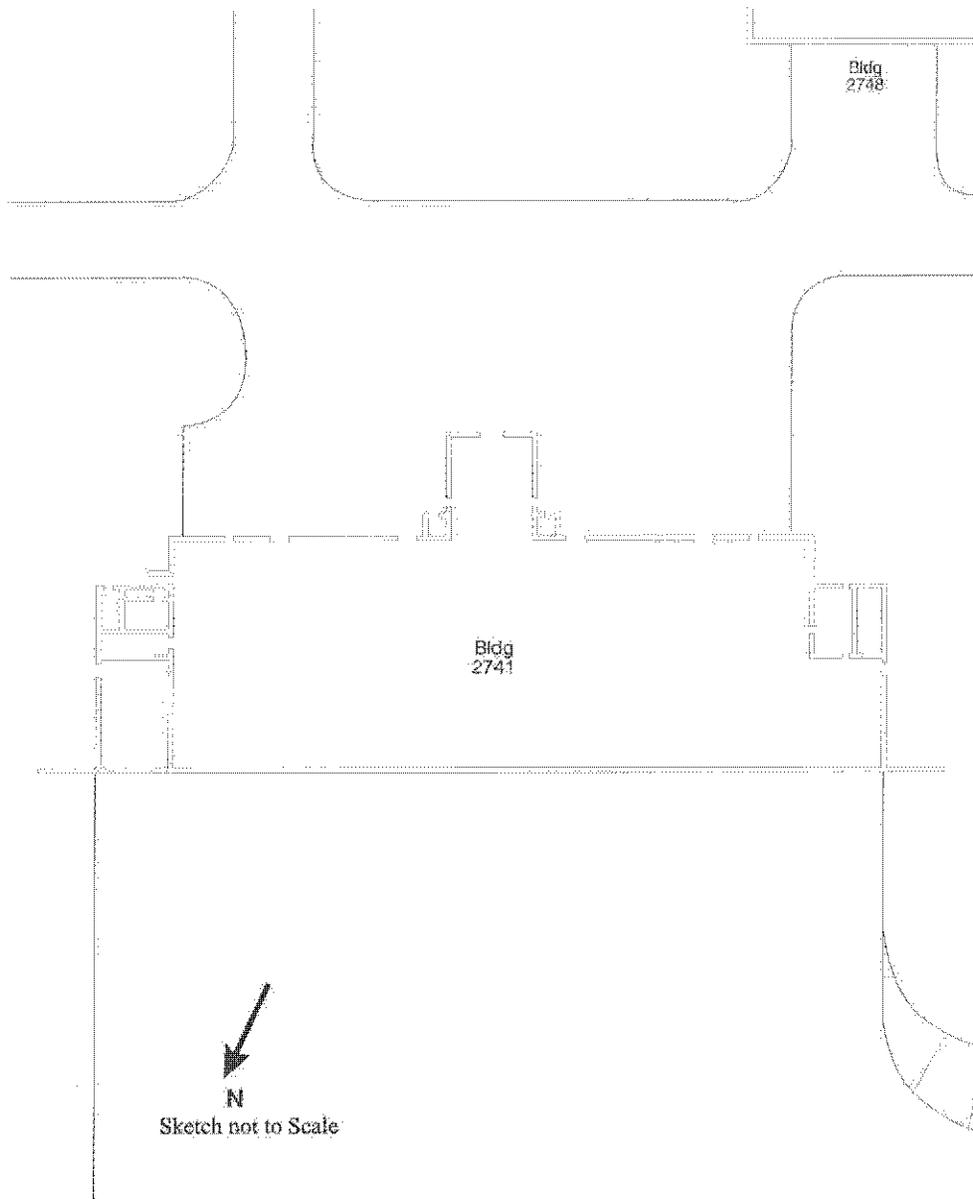
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PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,  
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE DOCK  
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2741)  
HAER No. NY-326-L  
(Page 5)



Location Map for Aircraft Maintenance Dock, Building 2741  
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PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE,  
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HAER No. NY-326-L  
(Page 6)



SKETCH PLAN – AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE DOCK  
(Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Building No. 2741)  
(Source: Plattsburgh AFB CAD File, Prepared by the United States Air Force, ca 2000)  
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