

VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division,  
Attendants' Quarters Annex (Building No. 22)  
5103 Delafield Avenue  
Aspinwall Vicinity  
Allegheny County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5438-G

HABS  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

VA MEDICAL CENTER  
ASPINWALL DIVISION, ATTENDANTS' QUARTERS ANNEX  
(Building No. 22)

HABS No. PA-5438-G

Location: The Attendants' Quarters Annex is located in the northeast quadrant of the complex, immediately northeast of the Attendants' Quarters (Building No. 6). It is on the north side of an axial road leading southeast from the main entry drive, approximately 230 feet east of the end of the drive. The Medical Center is located at 5103 Delafield Avenue, Aspinwall vicinity, O'Hara Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Pittsburgh East Quadrangle. Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: I7.594100.4483140

Present Owner: United States Veterans Administration

Present Occupant: United States Veterans Administration

Present Use: Veterans Hospital

Significance: The Attendants' Quarters Annex is associated with an early program of expansion at the Aspinwall veteran's hospital facility. The construction of new quarters for attendants in 1932 is indicative of the increased demand placed upon the hospital during the late 1920s.

The Attendants' Quarters Annex is significant for its associations with the Veteran's Bureau's efforts to expand its medical facilities during the 1920s and is representative of the first period of expansion and new construction undertaken at the Aspinwall facility in the early 1930s.

Part I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: 1932
2. Architect/Engineer: United States Veterans Administration.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: United States Veterans Administration.
4. Builders, contractors, suppliers: Unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: United States Veterans Administration.
6. Alterations and additions: The Attendant's Quarter's Annex has undergone some alterations since its construction in 1932, these include the extension of the central stairwell to the ground floor and the removal of the wood balustrade from the northwest porch roof.

- B. Historical Context: In 1932 the Veterans Administration authorized construction of an addition to the Infirmary Building at the Aspinwall tuberculosis facility. This increase in the number of beds at the hospital necessitated the hiring of additional attendants for the new patients. The Attendants' Quarters Annex was constructed to provide housing for these new attendants. The building is located immediately northeast, and is attached to, the original Attendants' Quarters (Building No. 6). The new quarters were constructed in the same architectural palette as the original buildings at the site, which assured that they would harmonize with the "architectural set" and the campus setting established as part of the initial development of the facility.

The Attendant's Quarter's Annex is representative of the architectural style established for the Aspinwall Hospital Complex. It is a three-story red brick Georgian Revival style building with hipped roof and gabled dormers. Currently the building is vacant.

Part II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Georgian Revival.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Attendants' Quarters Annex is a three-story rectangular plan building measuring approximately 98 feet by 38 feet. A three-story passageway, measuring approximately 15 feet by 8 feet, at the southwest facade provides a connecting link to the Attendants' Quarters (Building No. 6). A single story porch, measuring approximately 24 feet by 10 feet, is attached to the northwest, front, facade.
2. Foundations: Reinforced concrete.
3. Walls: Walls are structural tile, between concrete columns, with an exterior brick veneer.
4. Structural systems, framing: One-way concrete slab construction including columns, beams and flooring.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Single story porch at main entry on northwest facade measuring approximately 24 feet by 10 feet. Porch rests on a concrete slab at ground level. Paired square columns support a plain wood architrave and box cornice below a flat roof. A wrought iron fire escape is attached to the northeast facade of the building.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The principal entry in the northwest facade has a nine-light, two-panel door flanked by six-light sidelights and surmounted by a multiple-light fixed transom. The fire escape doors have nine lights above vertical paneling.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Window openings are rectangular, with concrete sills and brick soldier course lintels. Each opening is fitted with a pair of six-over-six double-hung wood sash. Two sets of paired windows above the entry porch include stuccoed tympanum set into a elliptical arch with concrete keystones and impostes.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Slate-shingled hip roof.

- b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wood box cornice.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Three gabled dormers placed symmetrically on each roof face. The dormers include simple wood framing around a fixed nine-light sash capped by a wood pediment. Dormer sides are slate-shingled.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor Plans:
  - a. Ground Floor: Double-loaded corridor flanked by small dormitory-type rooms. Centrally located stairwell.
  - b. First floor: Double-loaded corridor flanked by small dormitory-type rooms. Centrally located stairwell.
  - c. Second floor: Double-loaded corridor flanked by small dormitory-type rooms. Centrally located stairwell.
- 2. Stairways: Metal stairs with slate treads.
- 3. Flooring: Concrete flooring with linoleum covering.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finishes: Painted plaster over structural tile with plaster drop ceiling.
- 5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Paneled wood doors in metal frames with operable transoms.
  - b. Windows: Plain openings cut into the plaster walls with wood sills and wood molding below the sill.
- 6. Decorative features and trim: No significant decorative features exist other than those addressed previously.
- 7. Hardware: Brass.
- 8. Mechanical equipment: Some steam-fed radiators remain, as well as stacked plumbing fixtures, and incandescent light fixtures.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: Linked at southwest facade to Attendants' Quarters (Building No. 6). The two buildings form a

"T," with the Attendants' Quarters Annex sited below the grade of the Attendants' Quarters due to the site topography. The Annex is approached via a short flight of stone steps built into a curved stone retaining wall located west of the building.

2. Historic landscape design: The building is placed with the 1924 landscape design, which created a campus-like setting of buildings, lawns, and tree-lined walks and roads. The Attendants' Quarters Annex is skillfully placed within the confines of the prevailing site topography so that it blends into the landscape.
3. Outbuildings: None.

### Part III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural Drawings: Located at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- B. Early Views: Located at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- C. Interviews: Personnel, VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division, O'Hara Township, Pennsylvania.
- D. Bibliography:
  1. Primary and unpublished sources:
    - Allegheny County, Deed Books, vol. 2095, p. 454.
    - Deed Files, VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division. On file at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.
    - Historic Architectural Drawings -- Aspinwall Facility. Various files held at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.
    - Historical Files -- Aspinwall Facility. Various files held at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.
    - Hospital Handbook*, Veterans Administration Hospitals, Pittsburgh and Aspinwall Divisions (1962, 1965, 1967). On file at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.

National Register Of Historic Places -- Nomination Form (1980).

*The Nation Builds For Those Who Served: An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of the Veterans Administration* (Washington: The Veterans Administration and The National Building Museum, 1980).

*National Hospital Day at United States Veterans Administration Facility, Aspinwall, Pennsylvania* (1945). Pamphlet on file at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.

*25 Anniversary: Veterans Administration Hospital, Aspinwall, Pennsylvania* (1950). Pamphlet on file at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, PA.

2. Secondary and published sources:

*Federal Architect*, 2 (April 1932): 25.

*Federal Architect*, 7 (January 1937): 37, 43.

*Federal Architect*, 12 (July 1943): 12-13.

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Weber, Gustavus A., *The Veterans Administration: Its History, Activities and Organization* (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1934).

VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division,  
Attendant's Quarters Annex (Building No. 22)  
HABS No. PA-5438-G (Page 7)

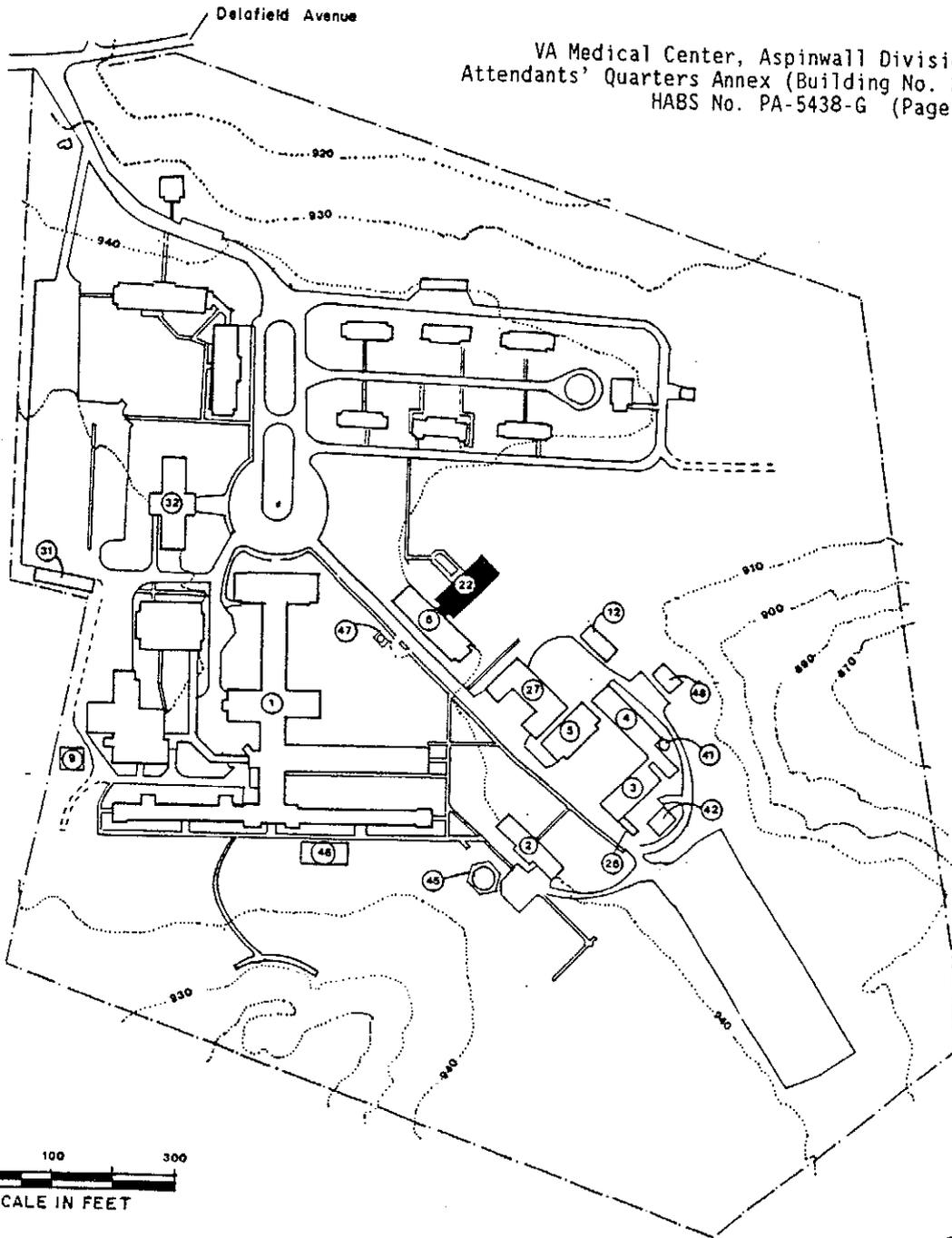
Part IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation was undertaken in July 1989 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the United States Veterans Administration, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative measure prior to the demolition of the subject buildings at the Aspinwall Division Medical Center.

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September 1989

VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division,  
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HABS No. PA-5438-G (Page 8)



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SCALE IN FEET

HABS SURVEY NO. PA-5438