

Naval Air Station Dallas
8100 West Jefferson Street
Dallas ~~Dallas~~
Dallas County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3408

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
Southwest System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NAVAL AIR STATION DALLAS

HABS No. TX-3408

Location: 8100 West Jefferson Street
Dallas (a portion of the facility is located in the City of Grand Prairie)
Dallas County
Texas

U. S. G. S. Duncanville Quadrangle (7.5)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
14.691355.3624340

Present Owner: United States of America
c/o Commander, Naval Reserve Force
4400 Dauphine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70146-5000, and

City of Dallas
Naval Air Station Dallas
Redevelopment Office
8100 West Jefferson Street
Building 102
Dallas, Texas 75211

Present Occupant: Naval Air Station Dallas

Present Use: Military base with operations by the United States Navy, the United States Naval Reserve, the Texas Air National Guard, Texas National Guard, the United States Air Force, and the United States Army Reserve.

Statement of Significance: Naval Air Station (NAS) Dallas is noteworthy for its contributions to Naval aviation during the World War II and Cold War eras. Established in 1941 as a Naval Reserve Air Base (NRAB, the primary World War II mission of the facility was pilot training, aircraft engine repair and overhaul, and the testing and acceptance of military aircraft manufactured by private industry. In 1943, the base became NAS Dallas. At the end of World War II the base was designated a permanent Naval facility responsible for air reserve training operations. In 1949, NAS Dallas assumed administrative and management responsibilities for the adjacent former Hensley Field, built in 1928 as an Army Air Corps Depot and designated the headquarters for the Army's Midwest Area Air Corps Ferry Command. During the Korean Conflict the Navy demonstrated its continued commitment to pilot training at NAS Dallas and Reserve force recruitment by implementing a major building program to accommodate

new types of aircraft and provide facilities for personnel receiving combat training. During the Cold War years of the mid-1950s and early 1960s and the Vietnam era, the Navy continued its support of NAS Dallas through several expansion and renovation programs. As a result of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendations, NAS Dallas is slated for permanent closure by 1998. The operation of Hensley Field as an Army Air Corps Depot for 20 years and NAS Dallas for more than 50 years reflects the legacy of Army and Navy air training and related aircraft maintenance in the defense of the United States.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: Major phases: 1929, 1940, 1942-1943, 1949-1950, 1952, 1954, 1956-57, 1961

2. Architect: NAS Dallas was constructed primarily from standardized plans developed by the Department of the Navy, Bureau of Yards and Docks. Two architectural firms—Robert and Company, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, and Corpus Christi, Texas, and Moore, Cooper, White & Moore, Architects and Engineers, Houston, Texas—developed specific plans from Yards and Docks drawings for 12 resources documented in this report. The remaining two buildings documented here, 202 and 203, were constructed as part of the original Hensley Field development in 1929. They were constructed from plans drawn by the United States Army, Quartermaster General, Construction Division.

3. Original and subsequent owners: --City of Dallas

--United States of America, Army Air Corps

--United States of America, Department of the Navy

Of the 837 acres that make up NAS Dallas, the Department of the Navy owns 121 acres and the City of Dallas owns 669 acres. Five acres are granted to the Navy as an easement and the City of Dallas leases 38 acres to the Texas Army National Guard and two acres to the Texas Air National Guard (TANG). The Navy also owns 47 acres of the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone, or clear zone, north of the facility. Buildings constructed on the leased land are owned by the Department of the Navy. When the base closes, ownership of the buildings on leased land will revert to the City of Dallas. Buildings documented in this report located on leased land include Buildings 20, 21, 22, 23, 33, and 34, and Facilities 62 and 63. Buildings owned by the Navy and documented in this report include

Buildings 1, 2, 12, and 15. These buildings have no restrictions on them and will be disposed of in a manner as yet identified by the Navy. Other buildings, including Building 202 and Building 203 are owned by the City of Dallas and are leased to the Navy. These will revert to the ownership of the City when the base is closed. The projected closure date of NAS Dallas is 1998.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Commander L.N. Moeller, CEC, USN, was the officer in charge of construction for building plans drawn by Robert and Company, Inc. Commander Moeller also was officer in charge of construction at NAS Corpus Christi. Henger Construction Company served as general contractors for plans drawn by Robert and Company. Lt. Commander W. M. Powell, CEC, USNR, was the officer in charge of construction for plans developed by Moore, Cooper, White & Moore. Actual contractors and materials suppliers are not known. Since the World War II era, numerous general contractors have worked on the base. Base personnel under the direction of the Public Works Department also have performed repairs and made alterations to resources at the base.

5. Original plans and construction: Reproductions of the original plans for the resources documented in this report, and for other pre-1946 buildings, are available at the Public Works Department, NAS Dallas. No decision has been made on where the drawings will be moved when the base closes.

B. Historical Context:

Introduction

NAS Dallas, located east of Grand Prairie and north of Mountain Creek Lake in Dallas County, has developed sporadically for more than 40 years. When NAS Dallas was first established as an NRAB in 1941, it was part of a multiphase, nationwide construction program initiated by the federal government to prepare the United States for the inevitability of war. As a result of the recommendations of many Naval aviation supporters, more funding was approved in the years just before U.S. entry into World War II to expand older air installations such as NAS Pensacola, and to build new air stations and Reserve air bases. Funds for a Reserve air base in Dallas that would later become NAS Dallas were approved in 1940 and the base was commissioned the following year. Although all of the Navy construction at NAS Dallas took place after 1940, the station had its inception in 1928 when the Army leased 319 acres in the area from the City of Dallas for use as an Army Air Corps Depot, known as Hensley Field.

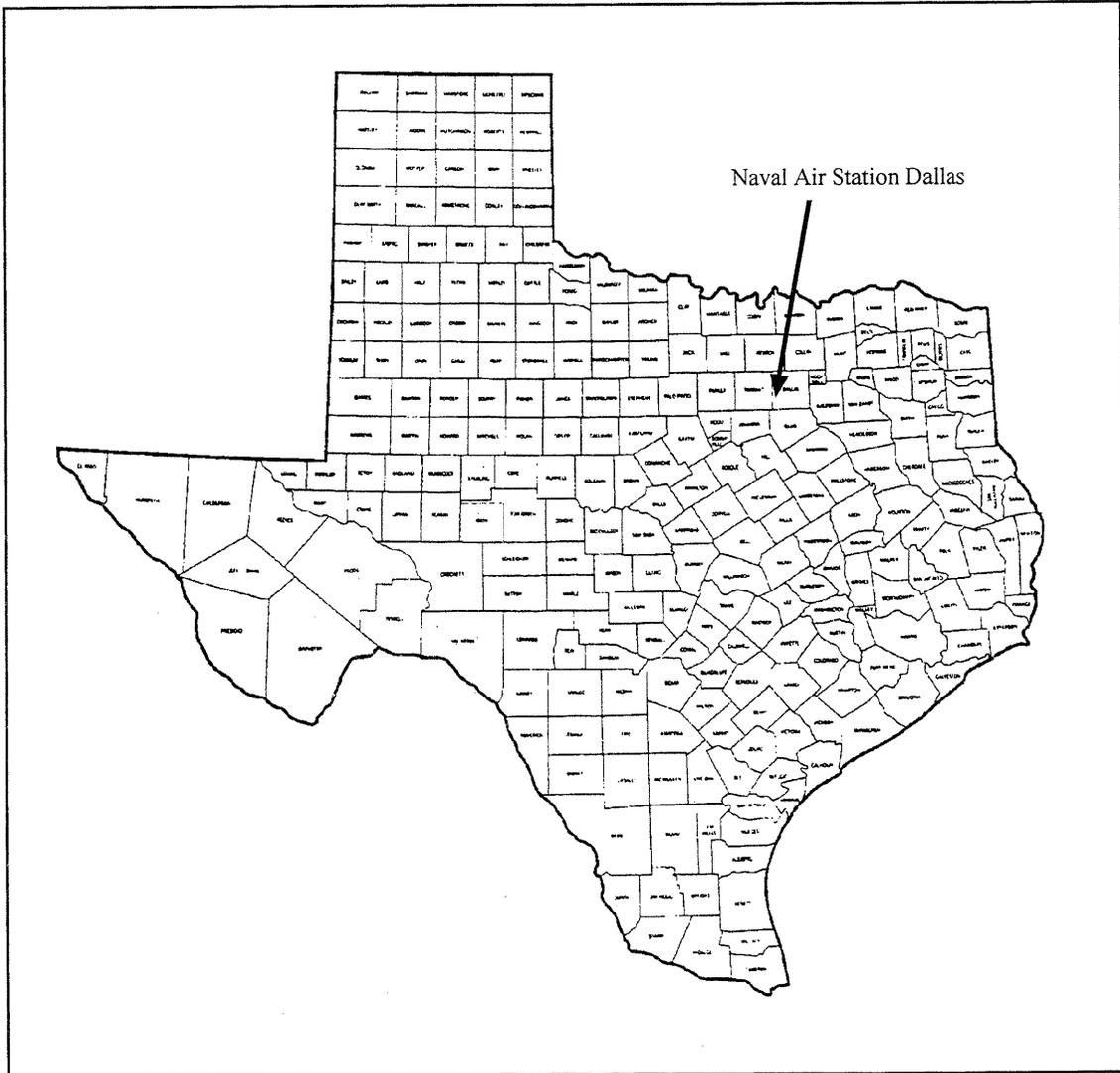


Figure 1. State of Texas, Counties Map, 1986 (Source: Texas Department of Transportation)

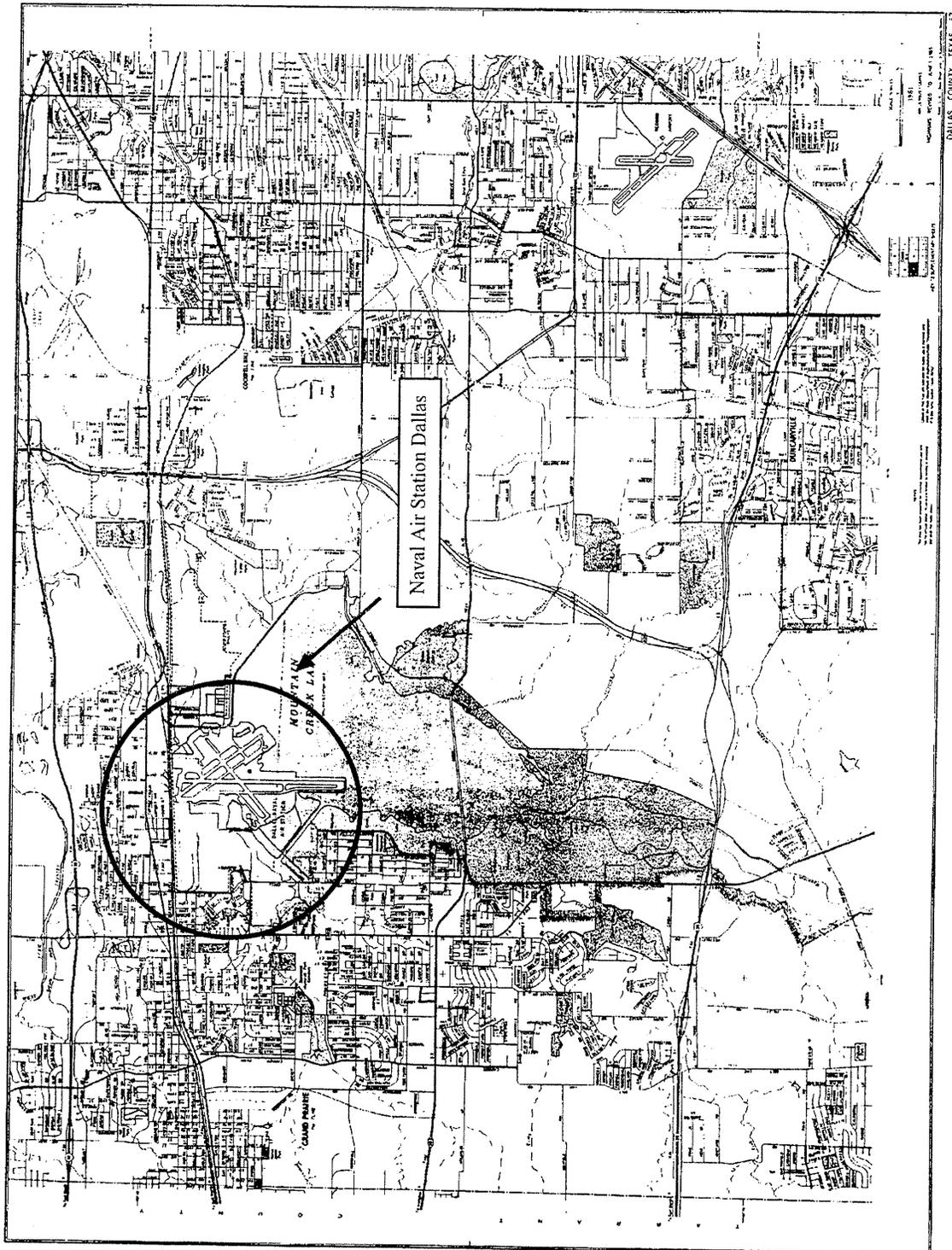


Figure 2. State of Texas, Dallas County, Map G, 1986 (Source: Texas Department of Transportation)

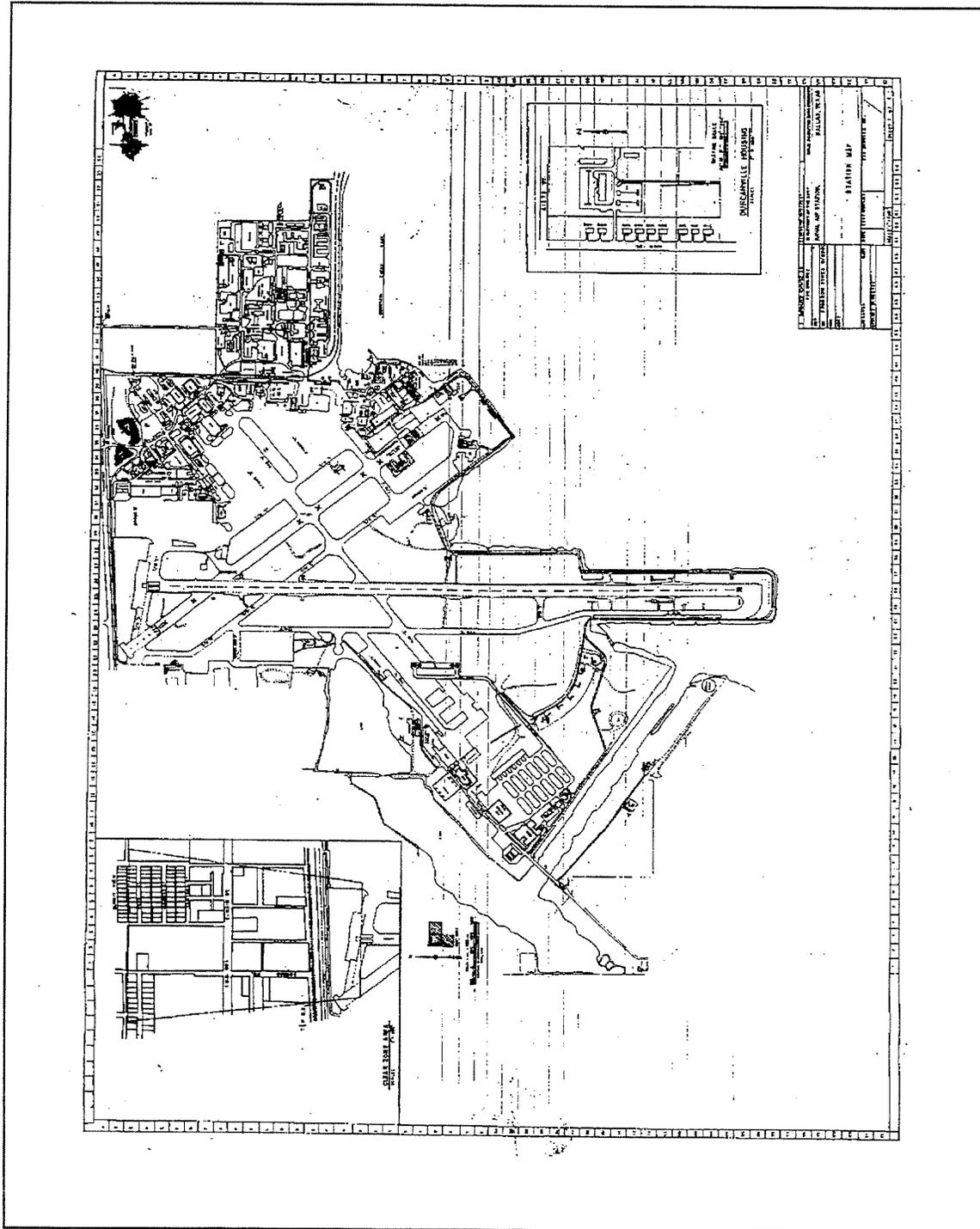


Figure 3. General Development Map, Naval Air Station Dallas, 1992
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

During the Army's sole occupation of Hensley Field, several buildings were constructed. However, there were no large federal appropriations used for expansion of military facilities at that time and the construction was not extensive. Today the station retains buildings from the Hensley Field period, World War II era, and from more recent construction phases since the Korean Conflict.

Between 1940 and 1945, NAS Dallas developed on 30 acres adjacent to Hensley Field, which the Navy leased from the Army. The continued use of Hensley Field by the Army Air Corps led to conflict between both groups over use of facilities, equipment, and air traffic space. Additional use of Hensley Field facilities by North American Aviation, Inc., an aircraft manufacturing company built adjacent to the field in Grand Prairie in 1941, further complicated the situation, making the Mountain Creek area an overcrowded hub for all military flight training, aircraft manufacturing, and acceptance depot activities in Dallas County. This problem has continued to a lesser extent until the present day.

The development of NAS Dallas, which is located within both the Dallas city limits and the Grand Prairie city limits, was an important economic stimulus for the surrounding rural communities. Construction projects at the station have employed local contractors and laborers from Grand Prairie and Mountain Creek since the 1920s. Many people in the area have also been employed in civilian and military capacities at the station. NAS Dallas has created general economic stability for an area formerly dependent on varying crop and livestock prices. The large numbers of men and women employed at the station have promoted the construction of new subdivisions and boosted the local economy. In addition, the growth of aircraft manufacturing in the area has provided many highly paid, skilled jobs for Dallas County residents.

In 1993, the BRAC Commission directed the closure of NAS Dallas; the station is projected to close in 1998. Buildings 20, 21, 22, 23, 33, and 34, and Facilities 62 and 63, which are owned by the Navy and are on land leased from the City of Dallas, and Buildings 202 and 203, which are owned outright by the City of Dallas, will become the property of the City of Dallas after the base is closed. The fate of those buildings owned by the Navy, Buildings 1, 2, 12, and 15—is yet to be decided. The closing of NAS Dallas and the loss of many defense-related jobs in the area will drastically alter the landscape and economic stability of the region.

Early Dallas County

Prior to the Texas Revolution of 1836, the area in north Texas now occupied by NAS Dallas was a virtual wilderness. Few Europeans ventured into the area, with exception of French trappers, Spanish soldiers and missionaries, and American adventurers. None of these explorers settled in the Trinity River region because of frequent Indian attacks, but all reports indicate that it was a fertile, pleasant land, with a variety of game and plentiful natural resources.

Early settlement along the Trinity River, which began in the early 1840s, was made possible by a system of military roads and the settler's living in a fortified village. The following year, the Peter's Colony, an American emigration company, began to settle the first of six hundred families in an area that would later encompass almost all of Dallas County. It was at this time that the City of Dallas was founded. A few people located their homesteads outside of the Dallas city limits, with some venturing westward into the Mountain Creek area and the region that would become Grand Prairie. The area in the Mountain Creek region that would later be occupied by NAS Dallas was originally owned by the Horton family, who arrived in 1848.¹ Although residents of Dallas were able to engage in some commerce and farming, rural landowners lacked good roads to transport their crops and had to rely on stock raising as their livelihood.

After Dallas County was created in 1846, the area started to grow and prosper. During the 1850s, a few roads were built to the western settlements and people in those areas were able to farm some grains. Agricultural prices were high and, during the Civil War, when Dallas became the Confederate grain procurement headquarters for north Texas, farmers all over the county were able to profit from government contracts. However, after 1865, areas like Mountain Creek were adversely affected by a decline in agricultural production, economic depression, and a loss of manpower.²

Effects of the Development of Transportation

The rapid growth of Dallas County between 1850 and 1900 is related in part to the development of transportation in the area. In its formative stage, Dallas County did not have much commercial success since the roads were often difficult to travel, Indian raids were frequent, and centers of commerce were spaced widely apart. With the arrival of the railroads in the area in 1872, goods produced in Dallas could be transported out of the state and products could be brought to Dallas from the eastern United States and Europe. During this period, Dallas

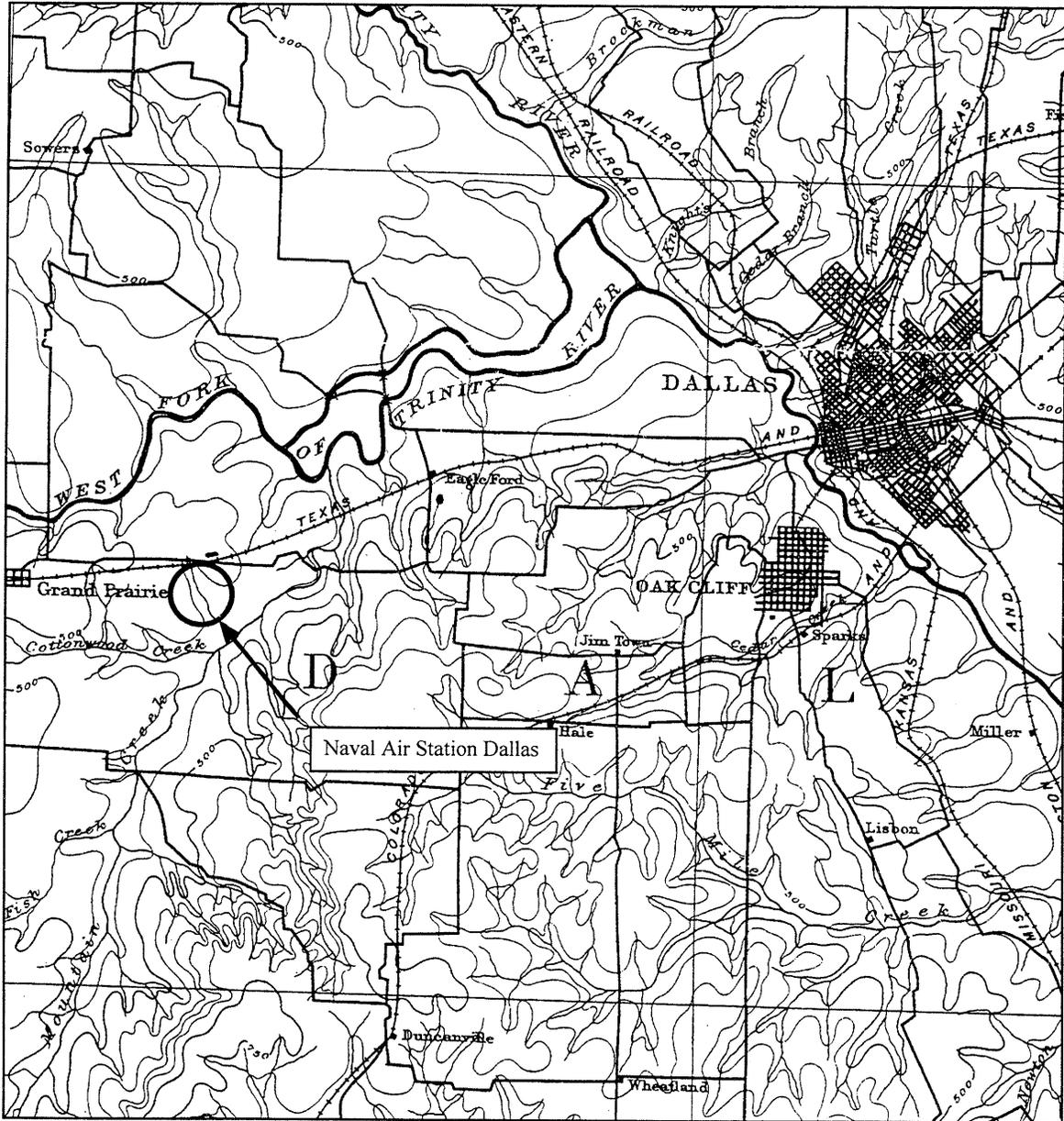


Figure 4. Duncanville Quadrangle Map (Detail) U.S.G.S., 1893 (reprinted 1949)

experienced a tremendous amount of growth; smaller communities also became centers of commerce because they were able to transport their goods to Dallas for marketing. The town of Grand Prairie, originally known as Dechmann, rose to some local importance after its founding in 1874 when it became a stop on the Texas & Pacific line between Dallas and Fort Worth. When the town site was surveyed, every other lot in blocks A, B, C, and D was offered to the railroad company if it maintained a depot for general railroad business there.³ As production and passenger traffic increased in Dallas, Grand Prairie prospered as well.

Mountain Creek had been unable to take advantage of cotton growing, Texas's major cash crop, before 1880 because it was located too far from any railway station. Owing to this inconvenience, the 1880 Agricultural Census shows that the only crops planted in the region were corn, oats, and wheat. In addition, people were still relying on stock raising to supplement their income. However, in 1881, the Dallas-to-Cleburne line of the Chicago, Texas, and Mexican Railroad was completed near the Mountain Creek area. Access to the new line boosted production and soon four cotton gins were built in the region. Rail lines passing through Mountain Creek and Grand Prairie also brought a new wave of immigrants from the Midwest U.S. and Germany who were competent farmers and active citizens.⁴

The population of the City of Dallas was 8,655 in 1860. By 1900 it had risen to 42,638, making Dallas a large city comparable to many in the east.⁵ In addition to the expansion fostered by the railroads, this explosive growth was partially due to the development of the streetcar, automobile, and interurban railroad in Dallas County. These modes of transportation allowed people in rural areas like Grand Prairie and Mountain Creek to work in prosperous areas of Dallas and Fort Worth and transport their goods to market there as well.

Aviation Before 1917

In addition to these other forms of transportation, Dallas County was greatly affected by the development of the airplane. Early aeronautics experiments with balloons began in Dallas County as early as 1861. Between 1893 and 1904, Frank Carroll, a Dallas aeronautics student, attempted to invent a flying machine in which he could observe buzzards. Other airship displays followed in the early 20th century until a Wright Brothers plane was exhibited in Fair Park in September 1909. In 1910, at the first Dallas air meet, Otto Brodie flew a Curtiss biplane, the latest form of air technology, much superior to the Wright plane. Brodie's stunts became quite a spectacle in Dallas County, and the public would

receive "wind check" vouchers if it were too windy for Brodie to fly. Local pilots like Brodie, Harry L. Peyton, and Morris Titterington flew at Caruth Field, located at the river bottoms, near downtown Dallas. Caruth Field, which was formed in 1909, remained the best airfield in Dallas County until 1917.⁶

Beginning in the late 19th century, experiments with aviation and heavier-than-air machines were undertaken by inventors and flight enthusiasts all over America. Lack of federal funding prohibited aviation from developing quickly, and it was not until 1898 that later model airplanes made their first semisuccessful flights. These advancements came to the attention of Theodore Roosevelt, then Secretary of the Navy. He persuaded President McKinley to order the Board of Ordnance and Fortification to fund a project to construct an airplane.⁷ The test flight failed on December 8, 1903, but nine days later, Orville and Wilbur Wright completed a successful flight in their own airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.⁸ The U.S. War Department was reluctant to recognize the roll aviation might play in military service and did not purchase the Wright Brothers' Model A biplane until 1909.

That same year, while various airplane models were tested all over the United States, the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps began to train pilots in College Park, Maryland. When the weather in Maryland became too cold to fly, operations were discontinued and moved farther south. In February 1910, Lt. Benjamin D. Foulois, one of the premiere pilots of the Signal Corps, and the Wright biplane were transferred to Fort Sam Houston, near San Antonio. In Texas, Foulois made his first solo flight on March 2, 1910, and between March and September, he made 61 flights, accumulating nine hours in the air. Foulois, who invented the first safety belt in Army aviation by strapping himself into the plane with a truck strap, took the first Wright Brothers' "correspondence course" in history.⁹ Whereas the Army viewed airplanes as instruments of reconnaissance only, many aviation supporters saw their potential as combat machines. Between 1910 and 1914, pilots in training schools all over the country were testing the military role of the airplane by dropping bombs, firing on ground targets, taking aerial photographs, and using two-way radio communication.¹⁰

After Lieutenant George E.M. Kelly was killed on May 10, 1911, in the crash of a Curtiss biplane, the commander of Fort Sam Houston, Major General W.H. Carter, received orders that flight training was to cease at that installation. The Provisional Aero Company that had been established at the fort was transferred to College Park, where flight training resumed.¹¹ However, it had become clear that winter training could not take place in the northern states. In the winter of 1911, a Signal Corps flight school was established in Augusta, Georgia, but the Army continued to survey areas in the south that would make ideal training sites.

See A.C. Green, Dallas: The Deciding
Years-A Historical Portrait for an
image of a wire and cloth airplane
at Caruth Field.

Figure 5. Caruth Field in Dallas County, circa 1910
(Source: Greene 1973: 171)

In 1913, the First Aero Squadron was formed at a new installation in Texas City, Texas. It was the first air combat unit in the U.S. Army and participated in the operations of the Army's Punitive Expedition on the Mexican border. Texas City was also used for special training with seaplanes. Between 1909 and 1914, the U.S. Army had purchased 24 airplanes, 10 of which were destroyed in crashes that claimed 12 lives. As an apparent sign of aviation's rise to some degree of prominence within the military, Congress officially created the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. The new division was authorized with 60 officers and flight students and 260 enlisted men.¹²

The Navy also had interests in military aviation during this period. In 1913, President Theodore Roosevelt officially recognized Naval Aviation as a branch of the Naval service, and in 1914, the first NAS was established at Pensacola, Florida.¹³ NAS Pensacola represented the Navy's first major foray into military aviation, and the success of the flight school there led the Navy to develop a more complex mission. Like the Army, the Navy began to experiment with the role of the aircraft as modern military machines. These tests continued into the 1920s and 1930s, when Congress finally approved increased military budgets to build new bases with aircraft facilities.¹⁴

In 1916, the Navy Department established the Shore Station Development Board. As the forerunner of the mammoth operation that organized construction projects during World War II, the board had a dual purpose of coordinating public works programs for Department of the Navy bureaus and making general long-range plans to guide the development of shore facilities. However, during this period, expansion of these facilities, particularly aviation operations, was not a priority. Expenditures for public works were minor, with funds only being appropriated for emergencies. The Navy did not develop any complex expansion project for its air division until the late 1930s.¹⁵

World War I

In the years preceding America's involvement in World War I, it became clear that if the military were to use air power in any capacity, the country needed more trained pilots, ground crews, and flying fields for such an operation. In 1916, with an increase in Congressional funding, the first of 29 new fields were constructed, based on Canadian models that had been adapted to fit the needs of American military service.¹⁶ Texas became the location of several major training fields located at San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Waco, Wichita Falls, and Dallas.¹⁷ Residents of Dallas County were well acquainted with aviation when the U.S. Army founded a training base at Love Field in January of 1917. The Army's

first flight took off on January 24, 1917, and by November 5 of the same year, the U.S. government converted the field to an air training base.¹⁸ The airfield was named for a Lieutenant Love, who had been killed in training in 1913.

Dallas entered World War I with patriotic zeal. In 1917, Dallas Preparedness and Patriotic Day drew 15,037 local men who registered for the draft. By the end of 1917, 5,000 men from Dallas County were in the armed forces. At the beginning of the war, the U.S. Army Aviation Section had 35 flight-trained officers and only a few aircraft. The program grew when an aviation training center opened at Kelly Field in San Antonio and produced classes with as many as 1,000 cadets. The Aviation Section was used mainly for reconnaissance duty, but also participated in some aerial combat. However, during World War I, the U.S. Army did not utilize the Aviation Section as an effective weapon. It had supporters, like Colonel Billy Mitchell, who believed in the value of Army aviation. He proposed that the Aviation Section be made a separate and equal branch of the service, but his suggestions were not well received.¹⁹

Navy pilots flew their first combat missions during World War I, which consisted of reconnaissance flights over the European trenches in 1914. Although the main purpose of Naval Aviation during the Great War was reconnaissance, Navy pilots also performed antisubmarine patrol, sank and damaged U-boats, tracked and destroyed floating mines, provided escort protection to coastal shipping, and did occasional bombing behind German lines.²⁰ Other important air stations of World War I were located at Norfolk, Virginia, and San Diego, California. As a result of World War I, NAS Pensacola expanded to include three steel-frame seaplane hangars, a brick hangar, and a barge-mounted airstrip shed.²¹ However, like the Army air arm, Naval aviation was still viewed as a nonessential part of the American military machine.

Aviation in Dallas County Between the Wars: 1919-1939

Postwar Dallas County experienced enormous population growth and great economic prosperity. By 1920, the population of the City of Dallas was 158,976, and the employment rate was high due to the oil boom. However, the rural areas around Dallas were not economically prosperous because they were not oil-producing regions. Grand Prairie attempted to compete with Dallas oil companies when the Home Oil Company was founded in 1919. However, after drilling unsuccessfully north and south of Grand Prairie, the oil fields became defunct. By 1920, Grand Prairie's interests lay solely in the automobile industry and agriculture. More rural areas, like Mountain Creek and Cedar Hill, were more

undeveloped, lacking electricity, potable water, and indoor plumbing as late as the mid-1920s.²²

The economic prosperity of Dallas led to more growth in the civilian air transport industry. By the end of World War I, Love Field was used by the Army, aviation hobbyists, and commercial pilots, a situation that limited the use of the field for all parties involved. The first air freight experiments began in 1919 at Love Field when Sanger Bros., a Dallas clothing store, sent a package of materials to its store in Waco. More air mail was sent to Chicago from Love Field via National Air Transport in 1923. The first flight departed on May 12, 1923, and returned on May 24 with 100 pounds of mail from the east. In addition to the air mail flights that departed from Love Field, the first passenger service between Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston was offered by Texas Air Transport in July 1928. Soon, several other lines were flying out of Love Field, including Southwest Air Fast Freight, Halliburton Lines, Crowell Air Lines, Western Air Express, and Wedell-Williams Lines. By 1930, transcontinental airlines, such as American Airways, also flew into Love Field.²³

Hensley Field and the Army Air Corps: 1928-1939

After World War I, Love Field was given to the City of Dallas, but the U.S. Army continued to use it until it became a municipal airport in 1927. The loss of congested Love Field was remedied when the Army chose to build another training base in Dallas County. In September 1928, the Dallas City Commission purchased 319 acres for \$75,000, located two miles east of Grand Prairie in the Mountain Creek area. This action was contingent on the agreement that the Army lease the land for use as a military base. The U.S. Army agreed to operate the new air field under a 20-year renewable lease for the nominal fee of \$1 per year. The site was approved by and named for Major William Hensley, Sr., Air Corps Commander of the Eighth Corps Area. Hensley was a noted airplane, balloon, and autogiro flyer during the early history of aviation in the United States. He was most famous for crossing the Atlantic Ocean in 1919 on a west-to-east flight in a British dirigible. He died in 1929.²⁴ Hensley Field, which functioned as an Air Corps Reserve Base and Army Air Depot in the 8th Air Corps Area, was in an ideal location, close to both Dallas and Fort Worth. Although the reasons for selecting the Mountain Creek area for an air field remain largely unknown, it is likely that air traffic was so thick in the metropolitan areas that the decision was prompted by safety concerns.

After construction was completed in 1929, Hensley Field operated mainly as an Army Air Depot and was so successful that it was designated as the headquarters

of the Midwest Area of the Air Corps Ferrying Command the same year. It was also a rest and refueling stop for students from Kelly Field in San Antonio while on cross-country training flights. The headquarters of the 366th Squadron of the Army Air Corps also was relocated to Hensley Field from Love Field during the same period.²⁵ There is little information about Hensley's role as a depot, but another Army air installation, Kelly (Duncan) Field, functioned as a depot as well. After it was established in 1917, Kelly Field operated primary flight training activities while adjacent Duncan Field was the site of the Aviation General Supply Depot, which included engineering and mechanical training departments.²⁶ Up to and throughout World War II, Duncan Field's main objective was to run the depot, which transferred supplies and military equipment to various installations in the country. Hensley Field had a function similar to that of Duncan Field in that it transferred planes to various installations across the country. A base log from 1929 reported that "The average [number] of visiting Army ships at Hensley Field is about 400 per month and Hensley Field has had an exceptionally good season with its Reserve Officers Training School this year."²⁷ The number later increased to 600 planes per month.

The construction of Hensley Field was fortuitous for Grand Prairie since it began at the same time that the Great Depression eliminated many jobs from the area. The town, with 1,263 people in 1920, was feeling the effects of low farm product prices as early as 1926. Unlike Dallas, which had rigid state controls to keep oil prices from collapsing, Grand Prairie and the Mountain Creek area both relied on agricultural production and had no such safeguards. Agricultural prices reached all time lows by 1931. Grand Prairie was one of the first towns in Dallas County to provide employment in public work projects, made possible by donations to the state by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). FERA projects employed 500 workers, and construction projects at Hensley Field provided jobs for men in Grand Prairie as well. In 1929, the Army approved the construction of an officers club and two senior officers quarters placed in a park setting with two lagoons. The senior officers houses were designed by the U.S. Army's Office of the Quartermaster General, Construction Division, using Spanish Colonial Revival design elements. The following year, a steel-frame hangar, measuring 20 feet by 110 feet, was built with \$16,000 provided by the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. A barracks for 40 men was built that year as well. In 1931, the worst year for crop prices in Grand Prairie, some minor work was provided paving the floor of the hangar, grading the hangar approach, building administration and radio buildings, and installing a floodlight system. Later, in 1936, the Bureau of Air Service in Washington, D.C. granted Hensley Field \$362,852.92 to complete runways, extend the apron around the hangars, construct an addition to the hangars, and build a gasoline service station and additional garages and barracks.

The same year, the Public Works Administration gave Grand Prairie about \$20,000 for public school construction and the improvement of Hensley Field.²⁸

Of these improvements, only the two senior officers houses (Buildings 202 and 203) are extant. Together with the two nearby lagoons in their park-like setting, Buildings 202 and 203 make up the remaining physical evidence of the Army's pre-World War II development and use of Hensley Field. The houses are important because they represent the U.S. War Department's residential design for military dwellings in the southwest in the years between the wars. At that time, the Quartermaster General's office favored the use of designs based on the



Figure 6. Hensley Field, June 1932 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

asymmetrical massing, smooth stucco wall planes, red tile roofs, and decorative door and window features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, which was currently in vogue nationwide. Selected by the Army for officer's quarters at installations in the western, southwestern, and southern states, the Spanish Colonial Revival acknowledged the history of those regions and was deemed appropriate for the comparatively mild climate. In 1993, the two buildings,

lagoons, and surrounding landscape were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A and C as a historic district.

Little information was located during research efforts regarding the conditions at Hensley Field during the late 1920s and 1930s or the off-duty activities of the men at the base. However, it is apparent from personal accounts of former personnel that appear in command histories of the base that men at the base found creative ways to accomplish their goals with little funding. One man remembered the sheep that were used for lawn care during the early days at Hensley Field. Since there was no money in the budget for lawn maintenance, two men from the base went to Fort Worth and bought 30 sheep to serve as "lawn mowers." The sheep, which became an integral part of the operation, kept the lawns at Hensley Field neat and closely clipped. They were so successful that more sheep were purchased and soon there were 500 grazing at Hensley Field. When planes took off, men would have to herd the sheep off of the runway with their cars, but the sheep soon learned to avoid the runway during periods of heavy traffic. However, the sheep were eventually considered a threat to aerial safety and were sold in Fort Worth.²⁹

Other flight activities took place in Grand Prairie during this period as well. In July 1929, the Curtiss Flying Service Corporation purchased 275 acres one mile west of the Grand Prairie corporate limits. The company planned to establish a school for advanced pilots, but which ultimately proved to be unsuccessful. The field became the Grand Prairie Municipal Airport in 1930. The airport was bought by Lou Foote in 1940 and became the Lou Foote Flying School. By the end of 1940, Foote had acquired several pieces of equipment, made some improvements, and was training 116 students for more advanced flying at Randolph Field, an Army installation in northern San Antonio.³⁰

National Defense: Expansion of Naval Air Installations

While the Army continued to increase operations at Hensley Field throughout the 1930s, the Navy sought to improve their own flight program. After World War I, Naval aviation bases at Pensacola and San Diego were maintained as permanent aviation training stations. The first major expansion initiative after World War I came in the form of the Vinson Bill, passed by Congress on May 17, 1938, in response to the advancing threat of war in Europe and Asia. The Vinson Bill appropriated enough funds to bring the number of Navy planes up to 3,000. However, Navy Department officials and congressional supporters of Naval aviation expansion did not provide funding for adequate storage and maintenance facilities for the new planes. A committee headed by Rear Admiral Arthur J.

Hepburn was organized to deal with this problem. The Hepburn Board made an extensive survey of the holdings of the Naval Shore Establishment, identifying the strategic needs of the aviation division and the facilities that met those needs. The Board submitted their report on December 27, 1938, and recommended that several new air bases be established and that several older installations, including those at Norfolk and Quantico, Virginia, and Anacostia, Maryland, be improved. The Hepburn Board's program required \$326,216,000, with an initial authorization of \$65 million to cover the first three years of the program. After the Hepburn Board's recommendations became law in April 1939, the Navy began to make plans for the acquisition, expansion, and construction of air installations. Major air bases, like NAS Pensacola, which were designated for advanced flight instruction and major overhaul of all aircraft, were to be expanded. NAS Pensacola would be so large that outlying fields were created to contain auxiliary activities of the base so as to reduce air traffic problems. This became a common practice at bases with heavy traffic. The Hepburn Board also authorized the Navy to accept land from the State of Texas at Corpus Christi and from the State of Rhode Island at Quonset Point to build major air bases.³¹ Other NASs were built at Seattle, and at Alameda and San Pedro, California. They were constructed to accommodate the transfer of the Navy fleet's main strength to the Pacific.³²

Prior to this period of National Defense, Naval air facilities consisted of air stations that were equipped to test and maintain seaplanes. Sites for air stations were chosen on the basis of their proximity to a protected body of water. However, by 1940, more training for carrier-based airplanes was being conducted ashore. This resulted in the creation of an air transport system that used land planes and seaplanes over long, transcontinental distances. The availability of a location for seaplane landing became less important in site selection and thus, a large system of inland air installations was established. Most of them were built for training air and ground personnel. Some air installations that were originally intended as Reserve air bases later became NASs as a result of World War II.³³ During the 1930s, the Navy built eight NRABs, similar to the one built in Dallas in 1941. The NRABs, located at Squantum, Massachusetts; New York City; Miami; Grosse Ile, Michigan; Glenview, Illinois; Minneapolis; St. Louis; and Oakland, California, were designed to give reserve pilots primary flight training. The facilities at these bases provided the minimum comfort, designed mainly to maintain aircraft and train personnel.³⁴ During World War II, each of these bases became an NAS.

In preparation for America's involvement in World War II, Congress appropriated millions of defense dollars in addition to the money approved for the Hepburn Board's recommendations. This action was prompted by the growing aggression

of Germany throughout 1939 and 1940 in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium, and the Netherlands. American legislators and military personnel were faced with the inevitability of another war. Between July 1, 1940, and December 7, 1941, the Navy obtained only \$175 million through traditional budget channels, whereas \$915 million was approved through emergency funding procedures. The Naval air program was not only expanded to accommodate the world political climate, but also the number of men who joined the Navy in 1941. On June 30, 1939, the Navy had a force of 125,000 sailors, but after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Navy had to accommodate 1 million men. The rapid growth of the Navy population was due in part to the implementation of the Selective Service Act of 1940. Thus, there was a desperate need for more facilities at the beginning of the war. Continual orders for new bases, related military facilities, manufacturing complexes, and additional housing provided work for many previously unemployed contractors. Owing to enormous demands, labor and supplies became scarce during the period of National Defense, despite unlimited funding. There was a great deal of competition within the Department of the Navy for funds for existing facilities and new construction. New installations, like NRAB Dallas, were looked on with great anticipation.³⁵

Hensley Field and Naval Reserve Air Base Dallas: 1940-1942

As part of the National Defense Act of 1940, which included more funding for Naval aviation facilities, Congress authorized an increase in the Navy's air strength that would boost the number of planes to 10,000. As soon as this bill was signed, construction began on the NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, the first major Naval air facility in the state. Plans for many of the buildings at Corpus Christi were drawn by Robert and Company, an Atlanta-based firm that opened an office in Corpus Christi to better handle the work at the air station. Robert and Company also prepared plans for the buildings at NAS Dallas as well as for facilities at Naval auxiliary air stations under the jurisdiction of NAS Corpus Christi. While work was proceeding at Corpus Christi, Charles P. Mason and a group of Naval officers toured sites in the Dallas-Fort Worth area during the summer of 1940 in order to select a location that would be suitable for an NRAB. Both cities wanted to locate the base within their corporate limits because of the imminent financial gain it would bring and the possibility of obtaining "Aeronautical supremacy."³⁶ Similar to the Army's choice to build a base at Hensley Field, the Navy was interested in building a base in north Texas because it would be conveniently located on a midcontinental air route. Although aviation technology had progressed since the early 1930s, it was still necessary for pilots to make frequent stops on long flights. During negotiations, the Navy rejected a 700-acre tract in the Fort Worth area, which would later become Carswell Air

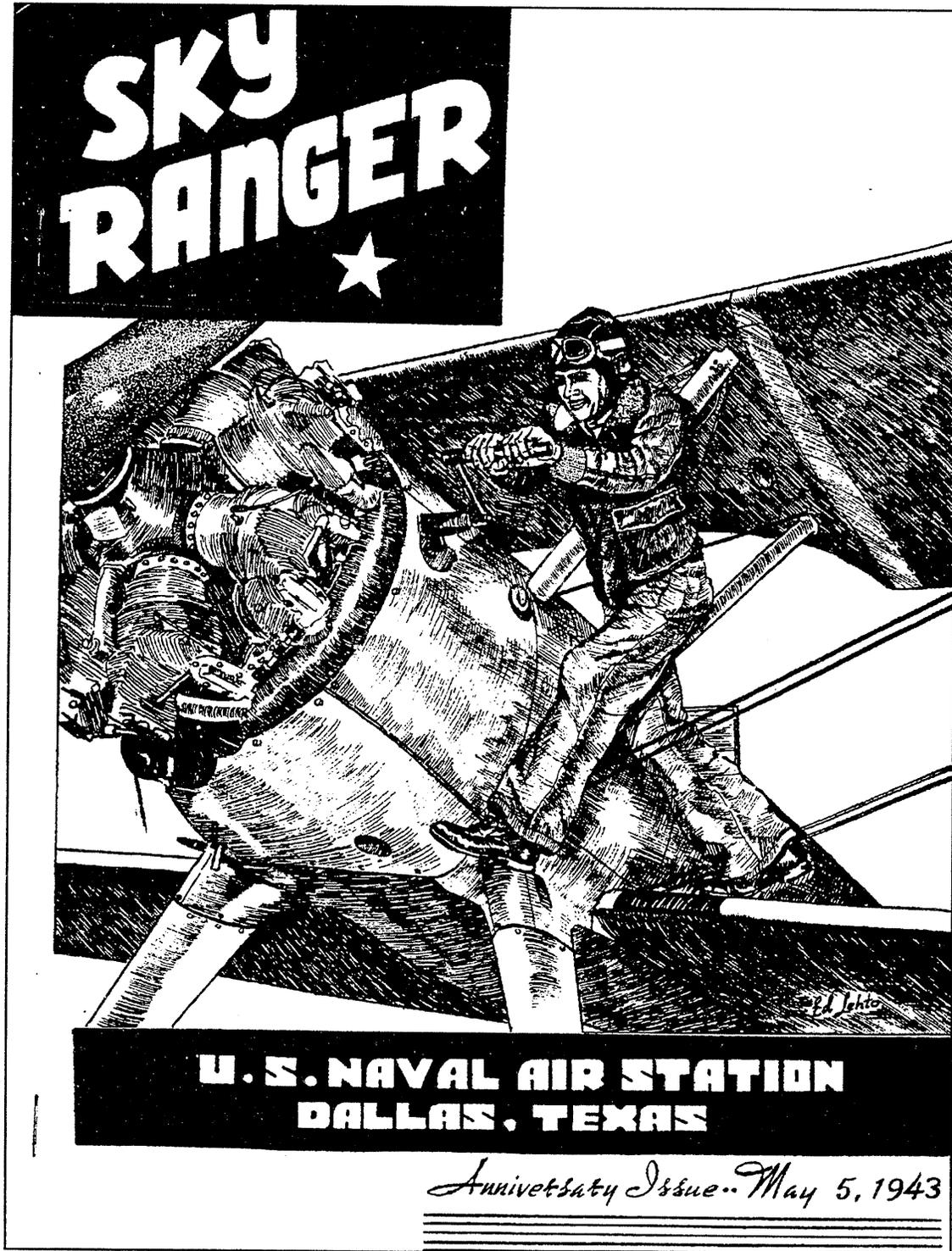


Figure 7. *Sky Ranger*, May 5, 1943 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

Force Base, and also turned down land adjacent to Love Field because of heavy air traffic. Ultimately, the City of Dallas offered the Navy 30 acres adjoining Hensley Field. This tract of land had originally been included in the Army lease. The Navy Department accepted the site for a training base and sent a request to the Army Department on October 3, 1940, to amend the Hensley Field lease to include an NRAB.³⁷

In a letter dated November 12, 1940, Secretary of War Stimson allowed the Navy to use Hensley Field. Stimson authorized 30 acres to be removed from the Army lease, but stipulated that "the Army will maintain control of all flying activities at Hensley Field and that all training activities conducted by the Navy, will be from outlying fields and not from Hensley Field."³⁸ The proposed use of outlying fields at NRAB Dallas was not an unusual practice, since auxiliary fields were in use at large installations like NAS Pensacola. However, these restrictions created a great deal of tension between the two branches of service and made it very difficult for the Navy to conduct a centralized operation at the base.

Construction at NRAB Dallas began in the fall of 1940; identical NRABs were constructed that year in Atlanta and New Orleans as well. In addition to funds already approved for the construction of the base, the federal government appropriated more than \$1 million for additional construction in September 1940. On November 13, 1940, the Henger Construction Company was named as the general contractor for the project and on November 16, 1940, the City of Dallas officially donated the site for the base to the Navy.³⁹ The entire cost of the project was \$1,211,000 and was supervised by Commander L.H. Moeller, USN, the construction officer in charge of NAS Corpus Christi. Moeller had spent two years working on construction at NAS Pensacola before he was ordered to Corpus Christi to construct a duplicate of the Pensacola station. A Navy construction crew assisted Moeller at Dallas. They were later joined by 42 motor mechanics who arrived to work on three N3N planes that were transported to the base in April 1941. This military construction crew was enlarged by civilians from the Grand Prairie area. Together these men erected buildings funded by the first round of military appropriations. In the next two years there would be two more wartime funding phases that would result in expanded facilities at NRAB Dallas.⁴⁰

Plans for new buildings at the base included a masonry and steel hangar (Building 20), "designed according to the general plan for hangars at all NRABs at the time," a smaller hanger for the Assembly and Repair Department (Building 21), two barracks, an underground bunker (Building 22), a Paint and Dope shop (Building 23), a Heating Plant (Building 34), a 50,000-gallon Water Tower (Facility 62), a 200,000-gallon Water Tank (Facility 63), and several other

auxiliary structures.⁴¹ Buildings 20, 21, 23, and 34 were designed by Robert and Company, Inc., Architects & Engineers of Atlanta and Corpus Christi, based on existing standardized plans developed by the Department of the Navy at the Bureau of Yards and Docks.

Many of these buildings, including the Maintenance Hangar (Building 20), the Assembly and Repair Hangar (Building 21), the Paint and Dope Shop (Building 23), and the Heating Plant (Building 34), utilized the design principles of the Bauhaus, which are seen in the smooth, volumetric forms, flat roofs, and large banks of industrial-style steel-frame windows. These buildings demonstrate the Navy's and the architects's understanding of the practicality and applicability of this European design theory to American industrial buildings. The two hangars, with their large boxy forms, flat roofs, utilitarian brick, hollow clay tile, and corrugated asbestos exteriors, are enhanced by the large horizontal bands of windows that bring natural light inside. The Paint and Dope Shop, a small, one-story brick building with a half-story ventilation attic, is a cubic flat-roofed volume pierced on three sides by a large horizontal band of steel-frame windows. It closely resembles the massing of the larger Heating Plant. The Heating Plant, with almost monumental cubic form, stands out among the Bauhaus-influenced buildings through the generous tripartite steel-frame window on the main elevation and the bas-relief concrete panel above the entry door. Seen at night with internal illumination, the building's windows create a transparent wall, and the small window panes complement the smooth red brick exterior. The bas-relief, which is the only public art at the installation, depicts Prometheus holding several bolts of lightning in the midst of different types of industrial equipment, symbolizing the gift of electricity and modern technology instead of fire, as in the traditional Greek myth. The panel is representative of New Deal era public art, present in many government building constructed in the 1930s and early 1940s.

It is possible that Building 22 and Facilities 62 and 63 were also built by Robert and Company since they were part of the same construction phase. However, no information remains pertaining to the construction of those buildings. All of the Navy buildings were painted in camouflage colors to disguise them from possible enemy reconnaissance. In contrast, Army facilities at Hensley Field were painted yellow and white. It is interesting to note that the Navy's camouflage style was designed to hide buildings whereas the Army's style of camouflage was highly visible. No information was found pertaining to this difference in strategy.

All of the buildings erected by the Navy at NRAB Dallas in the first phase of wartime construction were built southeast of the Hensley Field facilities. All of the Navy aircraft maintenance facilities, particularly Buildings 20 and 21, were

built as close to the Hensley Field runway as possible without straying from the allotted 30.70-acre tract. The closer the hangars were to Hensley Field, the shorter the distance that planes would have to taxi back and forth to be serviced. Throughout the Navy's various World War II construction projects adjacent to Hensley Field, maintenance facilities were always built closer to Hensley Field and the subsequent runway extensions, whereas administrative buildings were built further to the east, where accessibility to Hensley Field was not an issue.

In August 1940, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce also succeeded in bringing North American Aviation Inc., an affiliate of General Motors, to Dallas County. On August 10, 1940, Ben Critz, manager of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, received a telegram from J.H. Kindleberger, president of North American, stating that his company had been authorized by the U.S. War Department to build an aircraft manufacturing plant in Grand Prairie, on the west side of Hensley Field.⁴² The plant required a 700-acre site and would cost more than \$7 million. Although NRAB Dallas had not begun to function as an aircraft acceptance depot, the proximity of the North American plant suggests that it was intended from the start to work in a related capacity to the base. Commander Moeller, head of construction at NRAB Dallas, traveled to Dallas in September 1940 to inspect the base site and also to attend the North American ground-breaking ceremony that same month.⁴³

The plant became operational in 1941 and was expanded several times during the war. Between 1941 and 1945, North American produced more than 20,000 planes in addition to aircraft parts to equal more than 4,000 planes. At the peak of operation, more than 38,000 people, 10 percent of the population of Dallas County, were employed by the plant, producing more than 700 planes per month. The establishment of North American Aviation Inc. and the NRAB permanently changed the economic climate of rural Dallas County. The arrival of the plant provided industrial jobs in Grand Prairie and the Mountain Creek area that had never been available in such volume before. People in both communities grew to depend on the profitable, if unstable, federal contracts that kept the plants in business.⁴⁴

When the plant was first established, there was some initial concern that Grand Prairie would not be able to provide adequate housing for the potential number of wartime factory workers. A committee of local citizens formed the Grand Prairie Housing Authority and filed an application with the U.S. Housing Authority for a \$3 million grant for immediate construction under the Defense Emergency Program. The local housing authority retained architects to consult on the project. More than 1,000 new homes were built on a 200-acre tract adjacent to Grand

Prairie. Local officials enforced all standard zoning laws so that no unhealthful conditions would arise as a result of the quick, inexpensive construction.⁴⁵ The construction of military housing in Grand Prairie further cemented the dependence of the area economy on operations at NRAB Dallas.

In early May 1941, 35 students arrived for duty at the new base. After receiving their physicals, uniforms, and flight equipment, they attended the commissioning ceremony of the NRAB on May 15, 1941. The base was placed under the command of Lieutenant Henry Sartoris, USNR. Since some of the buildings were not yet completed, personnel at the base had to live in spartan conditions. While awaiting the completion of the administrative wing of the main hangar, the installation's offices were located in the "white cottage," a small farmhouse that was built on the site before the government purchased the land.⁴⁶ When the main hangar was completed, the farmhouse was moved and used for some time as a headquarters for the building contractors. It was later demolished. While the house functioned as base headquarters, the commanding officer used the back bedroom as his office, the executive officer and the supply officer were in the front bedroom, the base's doctor used the kitchen as an infirmary, and the marine officer worked out of the pantry. The living room of the house was used as a central office, run by yeomen. During this period, the unpaved roads at the base were a major problem, causing men and vehicles to become mired in the mud. The muddy roads bred mosquitoes that plagued the men who still slept in unscreened barracks.⁴⁷

When NRAB Dallas was established, its primary mission was to function as an "Elimination base" under the command of the Bureau of Aeronautics. As an elimination base, flight cadets were given primary training through the solo flight stage and aircraft crew were given instruction in maintenance. Those who qualified at the end of the program successfully completed a solo flight and were sent on to NAS Pensacola and NAS Corpus Christi, where they received advanced training.⁴⁸

Flight instruction at NRAB Dallas began on May 26, 1941. Students used 16 N3N-3 trainers, which were staked down near the Army hangar on Hensley Field. Ten new flight instructors arrived to train students on these planes, and other operations began to take place in the main hangar, which was completed in June. Training in Dallas was stepped up after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Once it was clear that the base was operating in a state of national emergency, all leave for all personnel was cancelled and flight operations continued seven days a week, instead of six. At the end of December, 132 cadets, the largest class ever to graduate from the primary training program, left Dallas

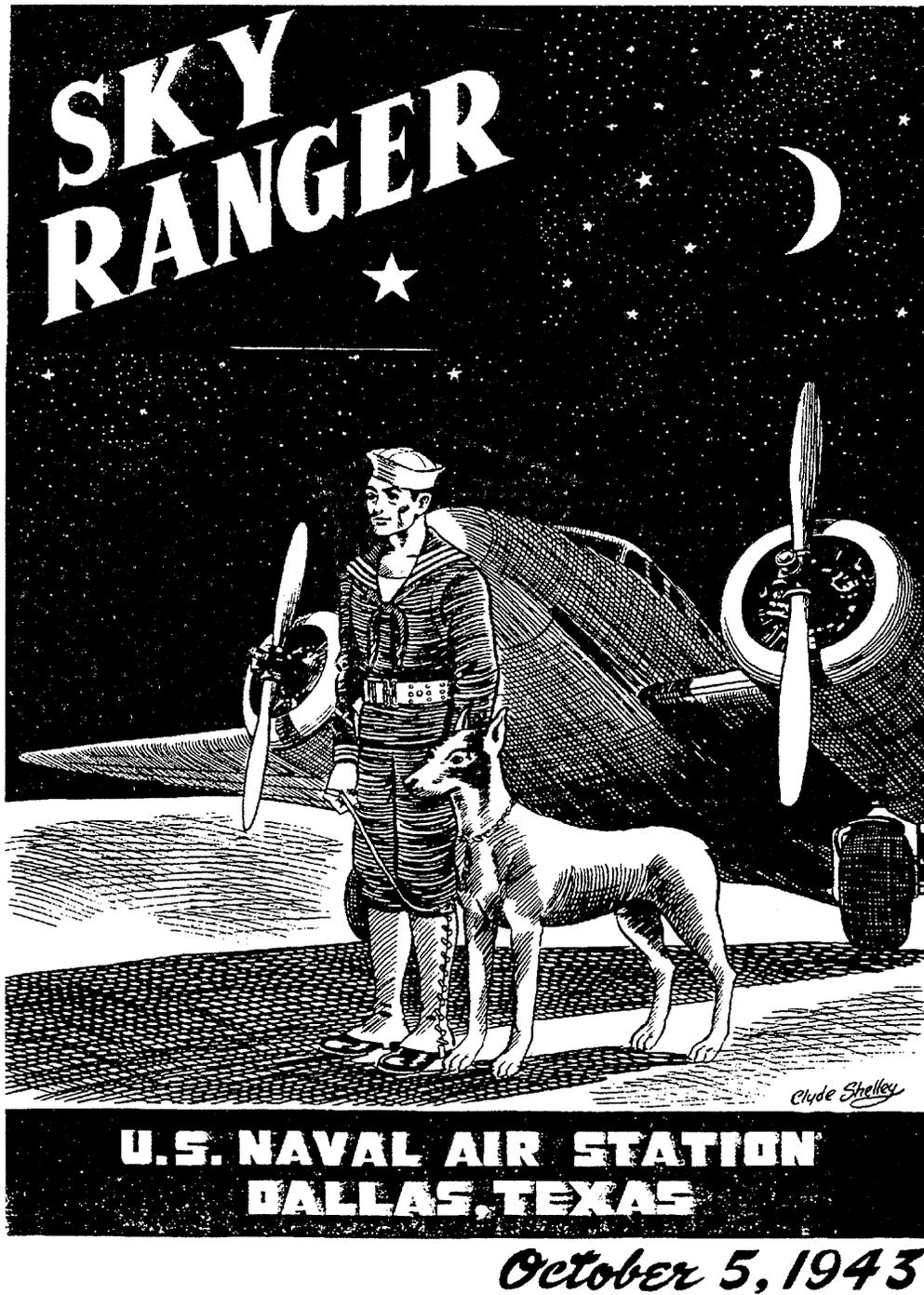


Figure 8. *Sky Ranger*, October 5, 1943 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

for Pensacola.⁴⁹ Originally, Navy maintenance crews borrowed Army trucks to put gas in the planes, but they soon received their own tank trucks and related equipment.⁵⁰ The initial Navy dependence on Army property created tensions that were not relieved as the Navy flight schedule and Army air traffic increased. By

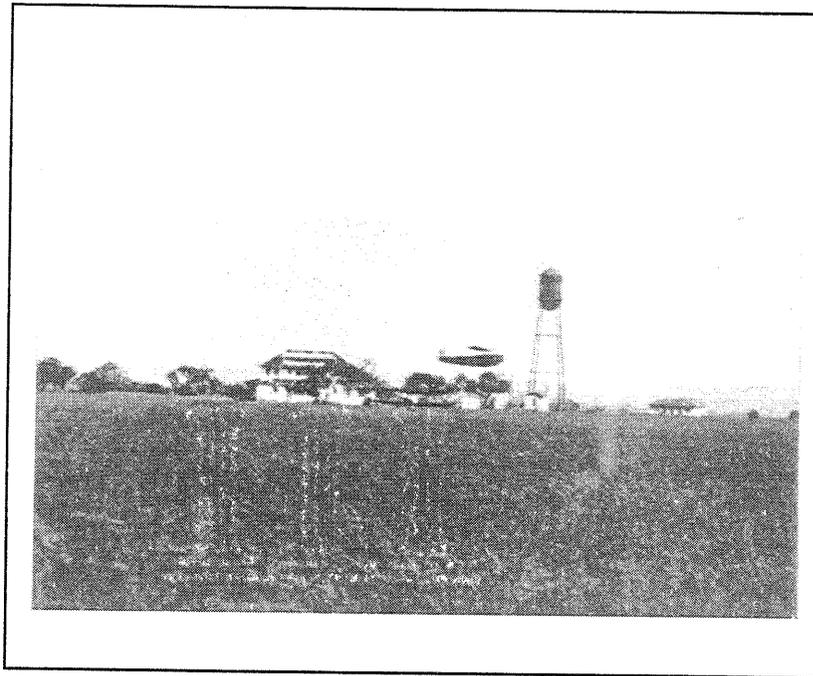


Figure 9. The "White Cottage," Naval Reserve Air Base Dallas, Circa 1941 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

the fall of 1941, the Army Ferry Command, the transport activity for the Army's depot at Hensley Field, was servicing 1,800 to 2,000 planes per month. In addition, Navy training planes known as "Yellow Perils" and many other types of aircraft were flying into Hensley Field and other auxiliary fields at such a rate that the air traffic situation became "almost intolerable."⁵¹

The situation became more complex in December 1941 when NRAB Dallas became an acceptance depot for SNJ aircraft, manufactured by North American Aviation, Inc. in Grand Prairie. The base was one of the first Navy installations to hold the title of depot, which was generally an Army term. As an aircraft acceptance depot, it was the responsibility of base personnel to perform a 30-hour check and test hop on the planes before accepting them for Navy use. The Navy did not contract directly with North American Aviation Inc. for the planes, but received them through Army contracts. Navy inspectors were employed at the plant to ensure that they

were built according to Navy standards. Most of the approved planes were sent to air stations at Pensacola, Corpus Christi, and San Diego via the Navy Air Ferry Command (NAFC). Similar to the Army Ferry Command, the NAFC delivered approved aircraft to their final destination within the continental United States. Under the direction of the Naval Air Transport Service (NATS), NAFC acceptance activities increased the work load for the entire base, including the Operations Department, which was already maintaining station aircraft and many Navy Ferry planes using Hensley Field as a stopping point.⁵²

On February 1, 1942, a contract was let for \$3.9 million for additional construction at NRAB Dallas. This was part of the second wartime appropriation that funded a second phase of new military construction all over the United States. Buildings constructed during this period immediately followed the Allied declaration of war on the Axis powers. They were built when the nation was in a state of emergency, as is evidenced by their simple designs, low-cost construction, and expedient building techniques. The contract provided for a gatehouse (Building 1), an \$80,000 Administration Building (Building 2), a Recreation building (Building 12) for \$186,000, a mess hall for \$98,000, bachelor officers quarters for \$145,000, five barracks buildings that would house 800 men, an instruction building with seating for 600 men, a subsistence and supply building, a small arms firing range, a 110-bed medical dispensary with X-ray facilities, and various garages and storage facilities.

These buildings, which made up the largest part of the base, were constructed on the north shore of Mountain Creek Lake, east of the main hangar. Buildings 1, 2, and 12 were designed by Moore, Cooper, White & Moore, Architects and Engineers, of Houston, Texas. Like the former architects of NRAB Dallas, Robert and Company, Inc., Moore, Cooper, White & Moore made their drawings from standardized plans developed by the Department of the Navy at the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Lt. Commander William Powell, USNR, served as officer in charge of construction. The Gatehouse, perhaps the most visually interesting building at the station, originally had two large gates accessed from the projecting canopies attached to the building, but these canopies were not tall enough for large trucks to pass through. When the Gatehouse was first constructed, a truck went underneath the canopy and nearly tore it down.⁵³ Subsequently, a separate gate west of the Gatehouse was installed for trucks. The Recreation Building provided many types of off-duty activity for a large number of men. It included an auditorium equipped for movies and stage shows, a pool room, bowling alleys, a library, reading rooms, a ship's service store and restaurant, and offices for the Red Cross and the chaplain.⁵⁴



Figure 10. *Sky Ranger*, May 5, 1944 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

Moore, Cooper, White & Moore, the Houston firm responsible for the design of five of the buildings at the base (Buildings 1, 2, 12, 15, and 33), appears to have been headed by noted Houston architect Harvin C. Moore, FAIA. A drawing for a 100-bed hospital at NAS Dallas, dated 1941, was identified at the Houston Public Library. Moore was also involved in the design of buildings at the Navy's lighter-than-air base at NAS Hitchcock, Texas,⁵⁵ as well as for other federal projects.⁵⁶ Recognized for his residential, commercial, and institutional work, Moore began working in 1931 after receiving his B.S. in architecture in 1930 from Rice University. Moore worked as a sale proprietor and in partnership arrangements, including Moore & Lloyd (1932-1941) and Harvin C. Moore & Associates 1941-1969.⁵⁷ The firm of Moore, Cooper, White & Moore was not identified during research in city directories, city telephone books, on any plans in the Moore archive at the Houston Public Library, in the American Institute of Architects' directories, or in other biographical compilations. However, individual listings in city directories in the early 1940s have been found for Harvin C. Moore, Dale S. Cooper (an engineer) and Emory Stroud White, AIA (another architect).⁵⁸ The initials DSC and ESW are found on plans for buildings at NAS Dallas. It is thought that the firm of Moore, Cooper, White & Moore was a consortium of design professionals formed to undertake the work at NAS Dallas.

Despite the urgency for completed facilities at the base, the Navy specified more than utilitarian form for several of the new buildings, drawing on then popular architectural motifs and design theories to create functional buildings that brought distinction and dignity to the physical environment of the base. The Gatehouse (Building 1) and the Administration Building (Building 2) were distinctive examples of the then popular Art Moderne style, which referenced in part then modern modes of transportation. The Gatehouse, with its cylindrical massing, smooth lines, flat roof, ribbon-like bands of windows, and projecting elliptical-shaped porte cocheres, resembled, in plan, the front of a single-engine airplane. The Administration Building, with its horizontal asymmetrical massing, flat roof, smooth belt-course-like bands, and curved, flat-roofed tower, resembled, in profile, the elevation of an aircraft carrier. These buildings were the most distinctive at the base and were the first encountered when entering the facility. The strong Art Moderne references and the buildings' individual massing resulted in a symbolism that was highly appropriate for use at a Naval air installation.

The Recreation Building (Building 12) displayed strong Classical Revival elements, which were expressed primarily in the nearly monumental scale of the building and the sedate two-story-high, columned-front portico, which projected slightly from the main mass of the building and clearly announced the importance

of the building and the location of the entry. Used widely throughout the late-19th and early-20th centuries, the Classical Revival was often incorporated as a design theme at military installations for administrative and recreation facilities, like the Recreation Building at NAS Dallas. The conservative formalism of the style identified buildings as important, enhanced their visibility, and often made them focal points within an installation. Such associations were appropriate for the Recreation Building since it was a multipurpose building intended to provide service and recreational opportunities to base personnel. Through its highly recognizable form, its size, and its dignified design references, the building symbolized the importance of the men and women at the base for whom the building was specifically built.

By May 1942, personnel at the base numbered 1,000, compared with the 120 people at its inception, and the Navy had acquired eight outlying fields for training purposes (by the end of the war, there were 15 auxiliary fields related to NAS Dallas). More than 2,100 students had passed through flight training classes. This number increased in June 1942 when the complete Primary Flight Syllabus was first offered to students, prior to their transfer to Pensacola or Corpus Christi. Before the acceptance of this new task, students were only offered partial training. In addition to flight training squadrons, sailors at NRAB Dallas were employed in many other departments, such as construction and aircraft assembly and repair (A&R). A&R consisted of 100 people working in several different departments, including maintenance, engineering, control, and operations. Among their duties was the overhaul of aircraft engines.

During June 1942, students flew a total of 3,493 flights, accumulating a total of 3,286 flight hours. A total of 281 planes cleared the field, including 64 SNJ-3s, which were accepted from North American Aviation and delivered to their final destinations.⁵⁹ Many of these flight hours can be attributed to NRAB Dallas students who trained at Lou Foote Airfield, located five miles west of the base. On June 5, 1942, the Navy acquired the airfield through eminent domain and designated it the Grand Prairie auxiliary field. Eventually, Navy flight operations would be conducted from a total of 15 auxiliary landing fields in Dallas County. This 274-acre private flying field became the operating base for the Navy Primary Training Squadron.⁶⁰ One of the units that trained at the field was "The Flying Tomcats," or Squadron II, which consisted of cadets in the second phase of the primary training syllabus.⁶¹ The addition of the Lou Foote Field to the Navy holdings in the Mountain Creek area made NRAB Dallas the largest Navy Primary Training Station in the United States.⁶² During the summer of 1942, several buildings, wire fences, and gas storage tanks were constructed at the old airfield, thus expanding the facilities from the two existing hangars and a barracks

building.⁶³ The Grand Prairie auxiliary field and other similar outlying fields were used as a means of dealing with air traffic congestion in the immediate base area. Thus, while the NRAB at Hensley Field handled all aircraft maintenance, transient Navy Ferry planes, and SNJ acceptance from the North American plant, primary training took place at a separate location.

Throughout 1942 the Army and Navy battled a congested air traffic situation. Types of activities operating at Hensley Field consisted of transient Army traffic, North American flight testing, Navy testing of the SNJs, transient Navy traffic, Naval Air Transport schedules, and Navy primary training. At some point during the year, it was suggested that the title to Hensley Field be transferred to the Navy. Secretary of War Stimson replied that such a change was not feasible since Hensley Field was used for Air Depots and Service Groups. Earlier in the year, operations of the Army Ferry Command (AFC) had been transferred to Love Field to relieve some congestion. In his letter, Stimson stated that after AFC activities had moved to Love Field, restrictions on the use of Hensley Field by Navy primary training would be removed. In addition to the removal of the AFC, the establishment of the Army Air Corps installation, Tarrant Field Airdrome (formerly Carswell Air Force Base and now NAS Fort Worth), west of Fort Worth, helped to limit the growth of Army missions at Hensley Field. After these changes, the Army only constituted 15 percent of all air traffic at Hensley Field, but any competition for air space with the burgeoning Navy program was perceived as a problem.⁶⁴

Naval Air Station Dallas: 1943-1945

In December 1942, the Navy Department announced that the NRAB Dallas would be redesignated as NAS Dallas, effective January 1, 1943. During the third and final phase of World War II building appropriations, the new air station received a new Drill Hall and Gymnasium (Building 15) in 1943, built with \$310,000 of the military funding, and a Pumphouse and Water Treatment Facility (Building 33).⁶⁵ Both buildings were designed by Moore, Cooper, White & Moore.

The Drill Hall and Gymnasium provided much needed extra space for training activities as well as for organized sports such as basketball. Laminated-wood arches supported the barrel-vaulted ceiling in the expansive interior drill/gym area. The building's design may be based on plans drawn for the Navy by Shreve, Lamb and Harmon of New York. This firm designed what appears to be a model, both in exterior form and in the use of the laminated beams, for the Drill Hall and Gymnasium.⁶⁶

The Pumphouse (Building 33) was designed as a stylistic companion to the larger Heating Plant (Building 34) located immediately adjacent to it, and to the nearby Paint and Dope Shop (Building 23). Despite its small size, the Pumphouse utilizes volumetric massing, brick-bearing wall construction, and a flat roof, which relates it to the Heating Plant and Paint and Dope Shop designed by Robert and Company in 1940-1944.

By the time the base had been redesignated, 49 Navy buildings and facilities had been completed, including two underground ammunition bunkers. Listed by building number only, the bunkers were not named in the station's 1943 inventory owing to the need for national security.

In 1993, due to their association with World War II Naval aviation mobilization, 11 World War II era buildings and structures were determined eligible for NRHP listing under Criteria A and C. These buildings include the Gatehouse (Building 1), the Administration Building (Building 2), the Recreation Building (Building 12), the Drill Hall and Gymnasium (Building 15), the Maintenance Hangar (Building 20), the Assembly and Repair Hangar (Building 21), the Paint and Dope Shop (Building 23), the Pumphouse (Facility 33), the Heating Plant (Building 34), the 50,000-Gallon Water Tower (Facility 62), and the 200,000-Gallon Water Tank (Facility 63).

The base also expanded to include other types of training other than Naval aviation instruction. After December 1942, Marines, Coast Guard, Navy, and Free French Navy personnel arrived to take the flight training course at NAS Dallas.⁶⁷ When the base became an NAS, it came under the authority of the Chief of Naval Air Primary Training in Kansas City, Kansas, and ceased to report directly to the Naval Reserve. Naval Air Primary Training Command was first established by the Secretary of the Navy in September 1942 but did not become fully functional until January of 1943. When NAS Dallas made this transition, the station was also responsible to the Eighth Naval District. The district's jurisdiction extended only to matters concerning the military defense, security, and communication of the district.⁶⁸

The role of NAS Dallas grew rapidly in 1943 as a result of America's massive increase in training and production that would eventually result in an Allied victory on D-Day in 1944. As part of NAS Dallas's attempt to make an inventory of their holdings and make long-range plans for aviation instruction and aircraft manufacture and maintenance, Harland Bartholomew and Associates prepared a master plan of the station in September 1943.⁶⁹

As part of this continued expansion, in March 1943, the station offered an abbreviated syllabus for former civilian pilots (A-V(T) Officers) and partially trained students (A-V(P) Officers), to prepare them for training as primary flight training instructors at NAS New Orleans. The air traffic situation at Hensley remained undesirable and was maintained with a rigid system of control. Although the Navy had the largest volume of air traffic at the field, they wasted the most valuable time flying students four and one half miles from Hensley to the place where landing instruction could be given. In general, it was perceived by many high ranking Army officers that it had been a mistake to permit the Navy to conduct flight operations at Hensley. In March 1943, in order to further relieve traffic congestion, most of the Navy's primary training activities were moved to the Grand Prairie auxiliary field (the former Lou Foote air field). For the most part, this solved the problem, leaving Hensley Field for Army operations and Navy depot, testing, and transient transport activities.⁷⁰

For the duration of the war, Hensley Field continued to operate as an air depot for the Army Air Corps. In June 1943, the 136th Airlift Wing of the Texas National Guard was established and the 368th Fighter Group, with three squadrons, was located at Hensley Field. Although this unit drilled extensively at Hensley, the air field offered no significant flight training activities for the rest of the war.⁷¹ However, these activities were important enough for the Army to let a \$5,127,000 contract at Hensley Field for new concrete runways. When work began on the runway project in November 1943, Hensley Field had only gravel runways, but when work was completed on June 15, 1944, the improved field included three lengthened runways with parallel airstrips. The project was not without complications due to the lack of taxi strips to useable runways. Since the Navy owned the railroad spur needed to bring material to the construction site, an agreement was reached between the Army and the Navy whereby Navy planes were given access to a taxiway at all times. However, during early 1944, the weather was so poor that flights from Hensley Field were often prohibited. The runway extensions did not become fully functional until October 1944 when lights were installed.⁷²

Soon after the base was redesignated as NAS Dallas, a contingent of WAVES (Women in Auxiliary Voluntary Service) arrived to perform auxiliary duties at the installation. Enlistment in the WAVES program began in 1942, but it was not until June 1943 that 16 Yeomen Third Class WAVES arrived at the station. These women were joined by Seaman WAVES, accounting for 97 recruits by the end of June. More WAVES were scheduled to follow, with 53 in July, and would function as record keepers, drivers, telephone operators, messengers, specialists, storekeepers, radiomen, metal smiths, aviation machinists mates, pharmacist's

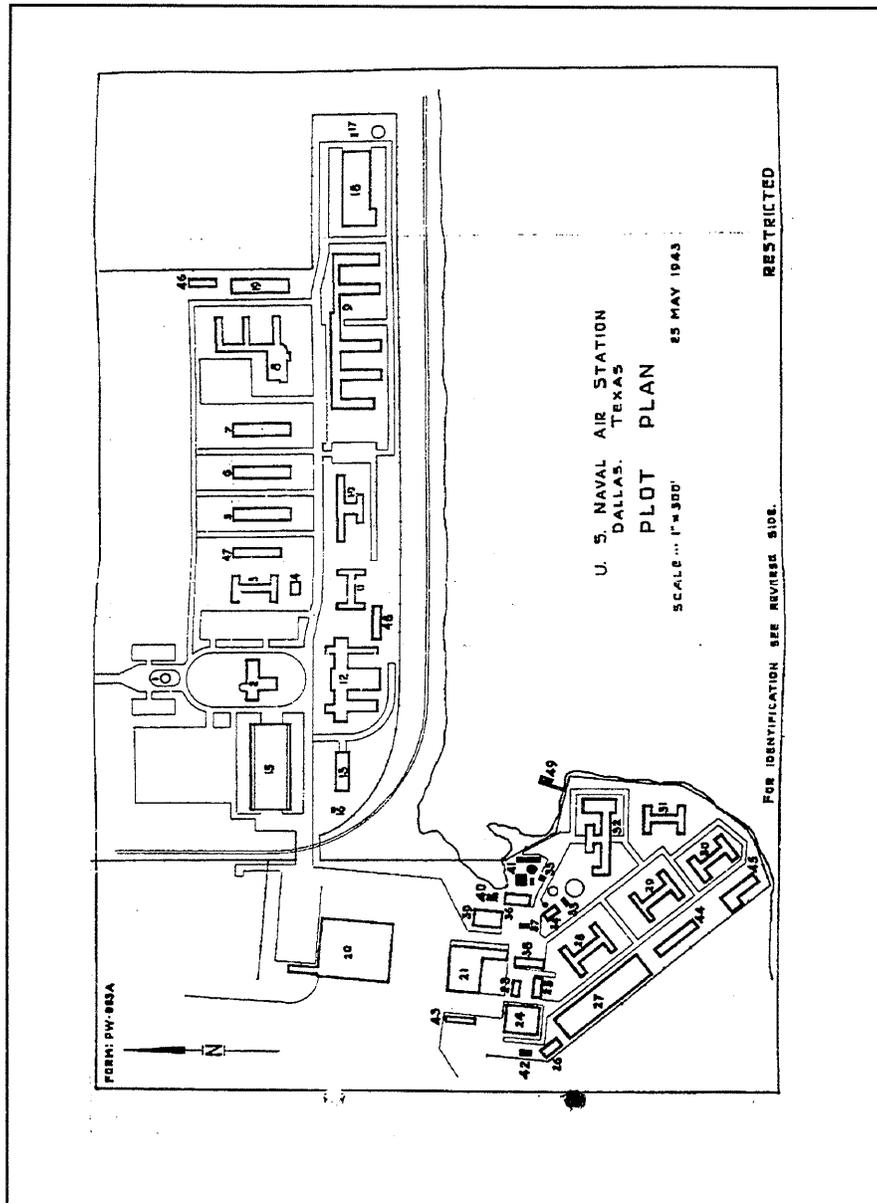


Figure 11. Plot Plan, Naval Air Station Dallas, May 1943 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

FORM: NA 0030.

BUILDING IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

1 GATE HOUSE.	21 A AND B HANGAR.	41 SEWAGE DISPOSAL PLANT.
2 ADMINISTRATION BLDG.	22	42 PAINT AND OIL STORAGE.
3 INSTRUCTION BLDG. NO. 2.	23 SPRAY BOOTH.	43 ENGINE TEST BLDG.
4 STUDENT ADMINISTRATION BLDG.	24 SUPPLY WAREHOUSE NO. 1.	44 ENLISTED MEN'S BARRACKS NO. 3
5 STUDENT BARRACKS NO. 1.	25 PUBLIC WORKS WAREHOUSE.	45 ENLISTED WAVES BARRACKS.
6 STUDENT BARRACKS NO. 2.	26 SUPPLY DEPT. OFFICE BLDG.	46 MISS ATTENDANTS BARRACKS.
7 STUDENT BARRACKS NO. 3.	27 SUPPLY WAREHOUSE NO. 2.	47 STUDENT BARRACKS NO. 4.
8 BACHELOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS.	28 ENLISTED MEN'S BARRACKS NO. 1.	48 BLDG.
9 DISPENSARY BLDG.	29 ENLISTED MEN'S BARRACKS NO. 2.	49 GOAT HOUSE.
10 STUDENT SUBSISTENCE BLDG.	30 ENLISTED MEN'S BARRACKS NO. 3.	
11 INSTRUCTION BLDG. NO. 1.	31 ENLISTED MEN'S BARRACKS NO. 4.	
12 RECREATION BLDG.	32 ENL. MEN'S SUBSISTENCE BLDG.	
13 LINK TRAINER BLDG.	33 PUMP HOUSE NO. 1.	
14	34 BOILER HOUSE.	
15 DRILL HALL.	35 INCUBATOR.	
16 SEWAGE LIFT STATION.	36 GARAGE NO. 2.	
17 PUMP HOUSE NO. 2.	37 FILLING STATION.	
18 SWIMMING POOL.	38 GARAGE NO. 1.	
19 JUNIOR S.O.P.	39 P.W. MAINTENANCE BLDG.	
20 MAIN HANGAR BLDG.	40 P.W. PAINT SHOP.	

Figure 12. Building Identification Numbers, Naval Air Station Dallas
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

mates, photographer's mates, link trainer operators, parachute riggers, aerographer's mates, and strikers.⁷³ During World War I, the Navy recruited women called "Yeomanettes" to replace men for active duty, but these women played only a limited role in auxiliary duty. WAVES involved in World War II had fewer restrictions and, by the end of World War II, were permitted to serve overseas.

Initially, the Navy command was uncertain as to how to provide for the needs of women in a military environment. Thus, WAVES had some trouble adjusting to the male-oriented lifestyle at NAS Dallas. Upon receiving notice that WAVES would be joining the ranks at NAS Dallas, Navy officials made few changes at the

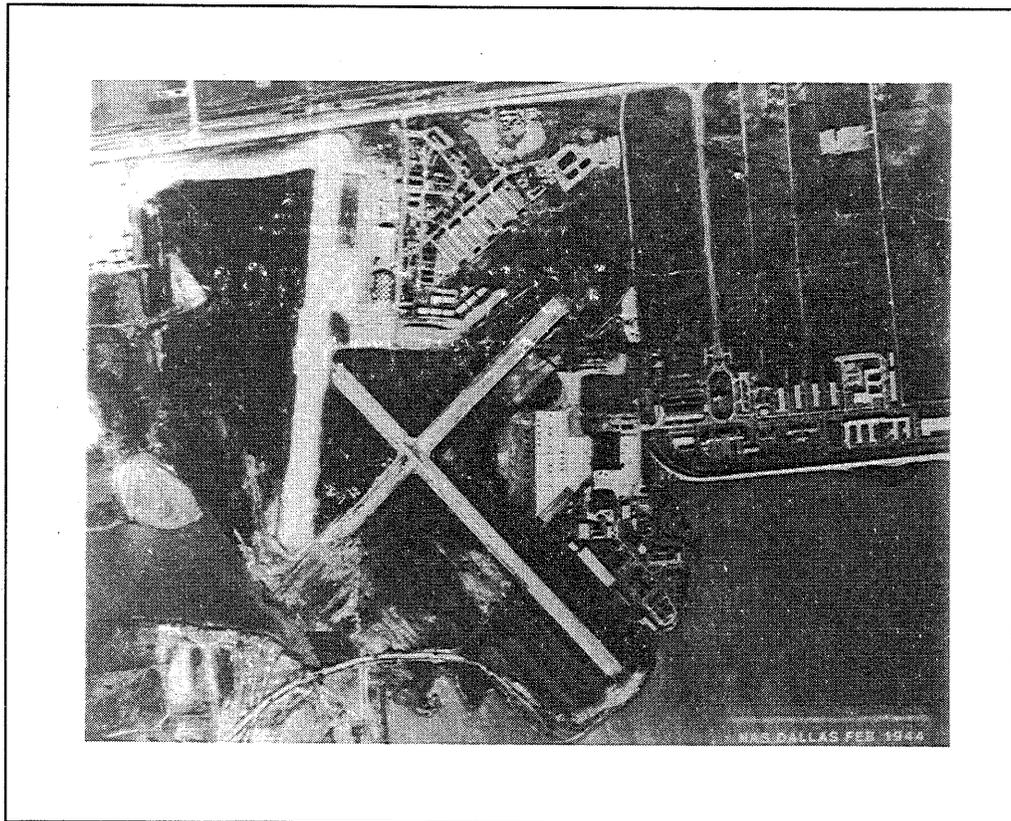


Figure 13. Aerial Photograph, Naval Air Station Dallas, February 1944 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

base in order to ensure that the women would fit in properly. "Since the WAVE Officers have been waging a war on the unmilitary looking locks of the enlisted woman, there have been quite a few changes made in the styles of 'hair-dos'...Betty, S2C, has come to the rescue and will shear the WAVES in the Barber

Shop (behind curtains) until the promised beauty shop is opened."⁷⁴ In some cases, both the Navy and the WAVES were unprepared for the realities of cohabitating at a military installation. During a fire drill, "it did look more like an 'Abandon Ship' drill, what with every color house coat imaginable fluttering out on the Plaza."⁷⁵ Despite these comic incidents, WAVES were invaluable additions to NAS Dallas. Their competency in various fields allowed more men to go on active duty with the assurance that their jobs were being performed properly. The presence of the WAVES at NAS Dallas provided a more active social life for the men at the base through informal dances and various holiday activities. Many WAVES married men from the station and settled in Dallas County after the war.

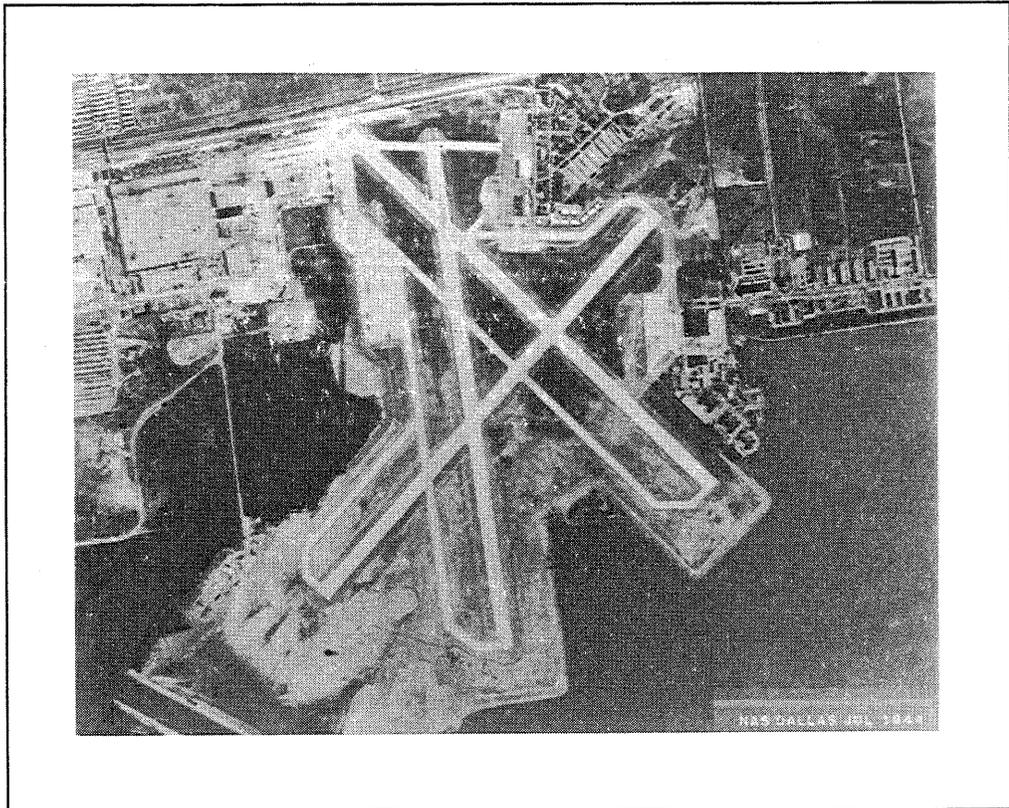


Figure 14. Aerial Photograph, Naval Air Station Dallas, July 1944 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

With increased funding that provided recreational facilities at the station, there were more activities available for personnel when they were off duty. Recreational committees held informal dances in the Recreation building and

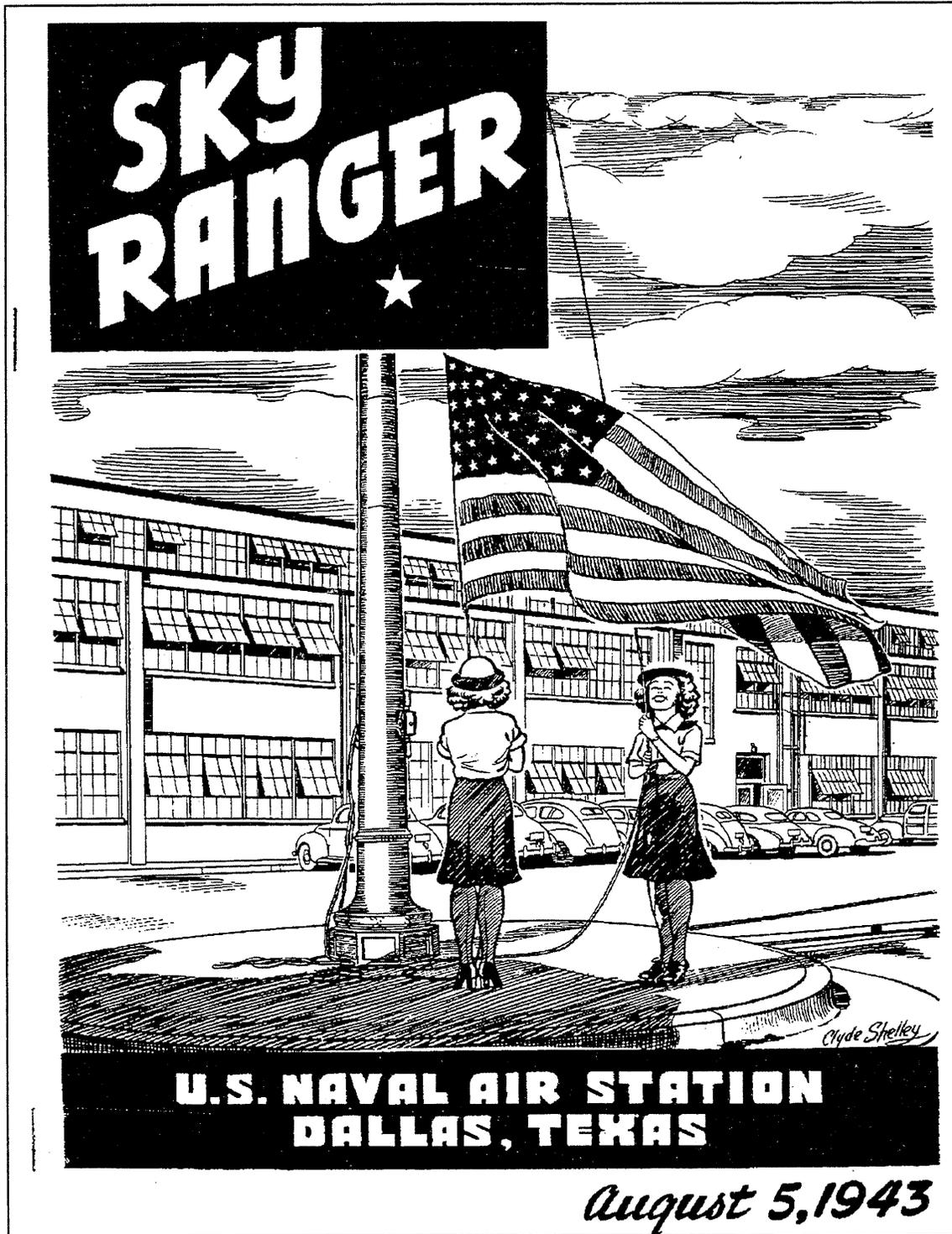


Figure 15. *Sky Ranger*, August 5, 1943 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

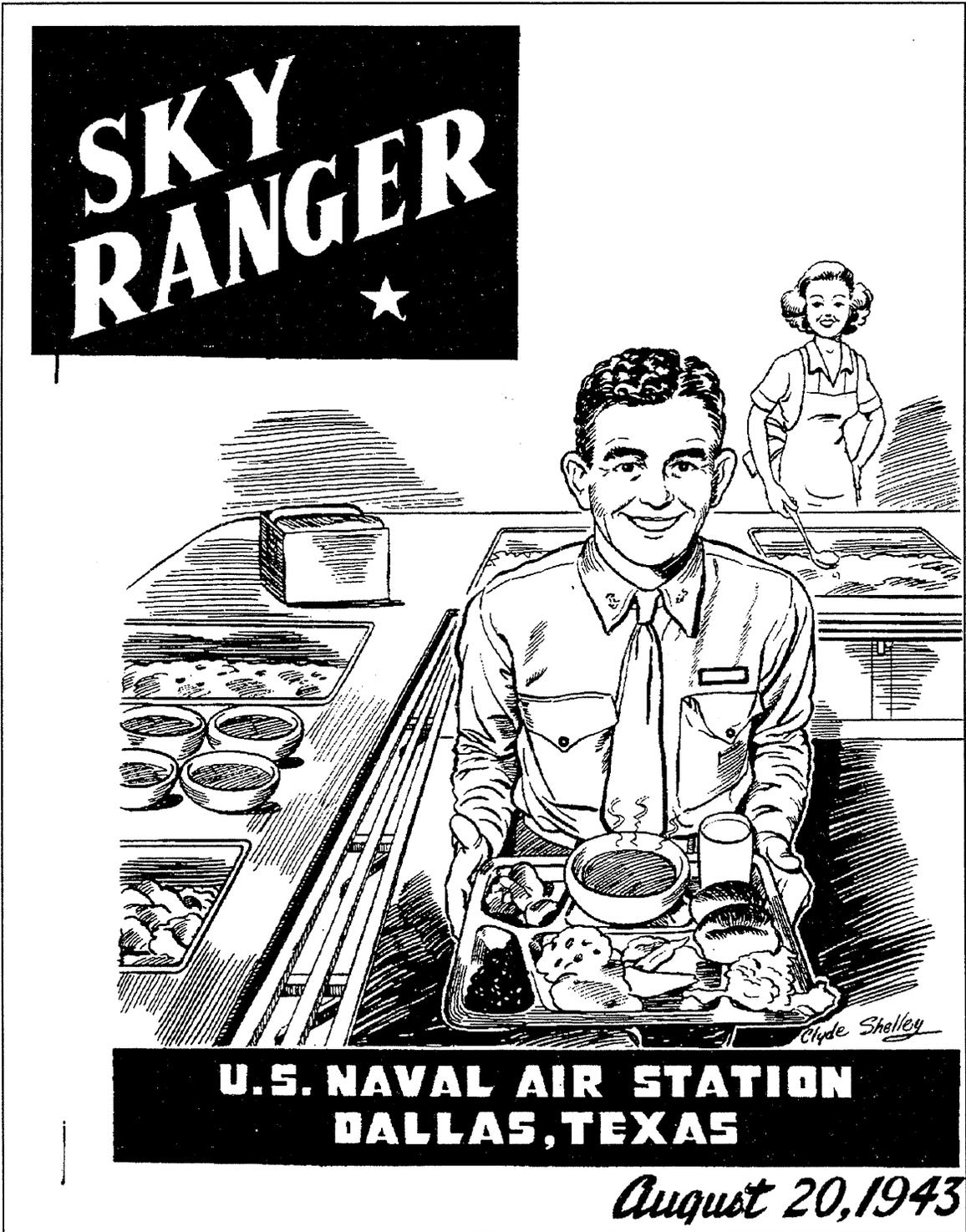


Figure 16. *Sky Ranger*, August 20, 1943 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

USO camp shows frequently stopped at NAS Dallas. Most prominent on the recreation itinerary were the big war bond shows, which raised millions of dollars for national defense and featured Hollywood stars and famous musicians. The most famous war bond rally to occur at NAS Dallas was the Red Skelton War Bond Show, held on Valentine's Day in 1944. Skelton's show, which starred Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard and also featured the NAS Dallas Band, raised \$14,351,000 for the war fund.⁷⁶

On January 28, 1944, the station had a record high total of 1,187 students in training. However, after D-Day on June 6, 1944, the role of NAS Dallas changed again to accommodate the new military climate of the United States. The war was turning in favor of the Allied forces and, since early wartime construction and recruiting had been so extensive, many military bases were no longer in need of extra facilities or man power. Most of the men needed for the Navy war effort were already serving in Europe or in the Pacific. All World War II era construction was finished at NAS Dallas by July 15, 1944.

Stateside mobilization continued to slow down throughout the summer of 1944. In August, the station was put back on a six-day work schedule and the installation was designated a storage location for surplus N2S, N2T, and SNV aircraft and engines.⁷⁷ By September, all personnel at the station were alerted that primary flight training at NAS Dallas would be terminated on October 19, 1944. During this period, the number of cadets receiving primary flight training at various stations was reduced because the rate of combat pilot survival was one third greater than anticipated. Owing to low combat losses, the Navy no longer needed as many new pilots, only replacements for those who had completed their tour of duty.

Despite reductions at the end of 1944, primary training was the chief mission of the station. Between January and October 1944, students flew 250,000 solo dual-training hours, with June as the most productive month when 29,362 hours were flown.⁷⁸ But in October 1944, more than 7,000 aviation students were affected by the nationwide cutbacks and were reassigned to reserve midshipman training courses.⁷⁹ On November 2, 1944, NAS Dallas became a Naval training school for flight instructors that was directed toward determining their qualifications and the limitations of future assignment. The new program was known as the Aviation Refresher and Indoctrination School and functioned as an expanded version of the similar instruction program offered in March 1943. NAS Dallas remained a unit of the Naval Air Primary Training Command, and the station continued to receive \$125,000 in federal funds each month. In addition, the federal government continued to support the monthly \$500,000 payroll at the station. The flight

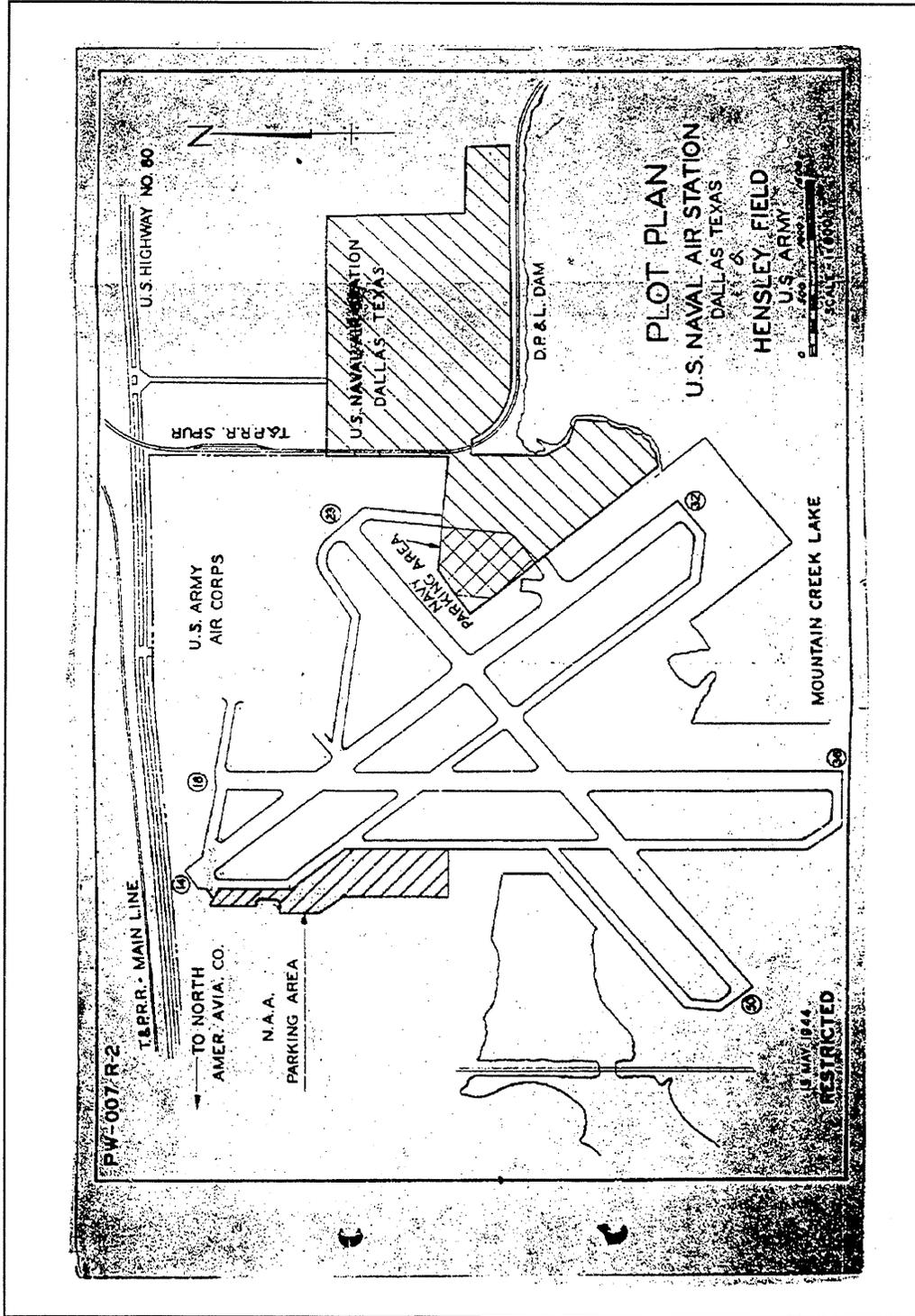


Figure 17. Plot Plan, Hensley Field and Naval Air Station Dallas, 1944
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

school included a four-week basic training course, which taught fundamentals of Naval service, aerology, communications, and ship and airplane recognition. Some flight instructors went on through a full 15-week course, providing refresher instruction in solo and dual flight training. Those who completed the entire course went on to intermediate and operational training at NAS Pensacola.⁸⁰

In early 1945, the Navy Department announced that the aviation program would be accelerated again and many NASs, like NAS Dallas, were reassigned to primary flight training. Although the Navy made cutbacks in the program after the initial cancellation of primary training, it became clear that more pilots were needed to ensure proper rotation of replacements. Former students had to complete their midshipman courses before returning to primary flight training, at which time they would be trained as commissioned officers. New ensigns assigned to the redesignated program were divided into three classes and staggered through the primary training courses in two-week intervals. The program was designed to operate just as before with cadets who completed the NAS Dallas course going on to intermediate training at NAS Pensacola.⁸¹

Another phase of reorganization was initiated at NAS Dallas when a new program to overhaul and repair R-985 aircraft engines began in April 1945. The first part of the program began in November 1944, resulting in the remodeling and expansion of the station's assembly and repair department, in Building 21. The program included acquisition of special equipment and training new personnel for the department. In 1945, NAS Dallas began receiving R-985 aircraft engines, which were 450-hp air-cooled radial engines that powered GB, JRB, SNV, NB, GH, and NH planes, from all over the country. Between September and December 1945, NAS Dallas overhauled 581 engines, with 3,342 engines shipped out of the assembly and repair department during the year. This activity was very successful at NAS Dallas because of the station's central location in the country, which made transporting engines to various installations more convenient. The program employed more than 725 people, most of whom were skilled military mechanics, and produced several hundred overhauled engines every month.⁸²

Toward the end of the war, NAS Dallas was training 97 cadets per month in primary training courses, 36 per month in aviation refresher courses, and overhauling 300 engines per month. There were 4,041 people assigned to the station, with 888 officers under instruction, 390 station officers, 1,959 enlisted personnel, and 804 civilians.⁸³ The station itself was worth more than \$7 million. After the Allied victory over the Japanese in August 1945, there was some concern that NAS Dallas might close since its wartime mission had ended. The Dallas Chapter of the Navy League and the Dallas Chamber of Commerce sought

to make NAS Dallas a permanent military installation. On September 5, 1945, Weaver Holland, chairman of the Navy League, stated that, "There is complete unanimity that Dallas wants to keep the Naval Air Station, which is one of the city's greatest military and civic assets."⁸⁴ Support for the station resulted in it becoming a permanent operation, but on a reduced basis. The Navy planned to keep 50 to 60 planes at the station at all times, but would only utilize 20 percent of the facilities at Hensley Field. In addition, the Navy offered a large enough payroll to support 1,000 civilian employees. NAS Dallas was one of several Naval air installations, like Cabaniss Field, Chase Field, Cuddihy Field, and Rodd Field, which stayed open and became a permanent part of the landscape in the post-World War II years.⁸⁵

Development of the Naval Air Reserve Program at NAS Dallas: 1946-1949

The reorganization of the Naval Reserve began more than one year before the end of World War II when Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal appointed a board of 20 officers in December of 1944 to "make a comprehensive study of the employment, assignment, and relationship of Reserve and temporary officers with officers of the Regular Navy."⁸⁶ In planning for the ready Reserve force that would be needed at the end of the war, the Navy sought to attract veteran officers and enlisted men to form experienced units. Men who had fought during World War II proved invaluable as leaders during the initial years of the postwar Reserve program. Other branches of the Navy, such as Naval Aviation and the Marine Corps, also were integrated in this proposed program. Ultimately, the Navy succeeded in acquiring a budget from Congress of \$138.8 million and an authorized strength of 24,000 officers and 200,000 enlisted personnel. However, due to ambiguity concerning America's role in post-World War II politics, funding was always uncertain and budget trends vacillated accordingly.

At an open house held at NAS Dallas on August 30, 1945, in honor of the 32nd anniversary of Naval Aviation, Vice Admiral Mitscher outlined the Navy's postwar plan for aviation. The plan provided for a greatly expanded postwar Naval role, including provision for aircraft carriers to serve in policing functions around the world; for 3,000 Navy pilots and 2,600 ground crewmen to be trained each year; 3,000 new planes to be added to Navy inventories by the end of 1946 while maintaining a strong civilian aircraft industry, and for new aircraft, such as jet-propelled planes, fighters, and torpedo bombers, to be further developed and used aboard carriers.⁸⁷ Personnel at NAS Dallas hosted another open house for the public in late October 1945. In recognition of the station's peacetime status, all of the Navy buildings were repainted gray and white, instead of the

camouflage of the war years. People who visited NAS Dallas could tour the Drill Hall, assembly and repair shops, galley, and barracks buildings.⁸⁸ By December 1945, NAS Dallas obtained a more complex postwar mission, when it was designated as one of the three NATS headquarters in the United States. The three NATS headquarters, maintained at San Pedro, California, and New York City, as well as Dallas, were responsible for moving wartime aircraft to new destinations and ferrying new planes from plants to aircraft carriers. Whereas the other two NATS headquarters were at opposite ends of the United States, NAS Dallas was chosen for this activity because of its central location. The NATS squadron at NAS Dallas included 250 personnel. Between January and May 1946, over 17,000 planes were ferried to various destinations by NATS, with Dallas bearing a proportionate amount of the air traffic.⁸⁹

Owing to the need for secrecy during World War II, the first announcement that the Navy operated 15 NAS Dallas satellite fields came with the information that most of them would be excessed and closed. In keeping with downsizing trends, the Navy Department decided to close 14 of the 15 auxiliary fields used by NAS Dallas, leaving the station to continue its operations with the base installations and the hard-surfaced satellite field near Mansfield, located 10 miles south of Arlington. The 14 fields, most of which were leased from Dallas County farmers, were released to their owners throughout 1946. Fields released to their local owners included those in Britten (Ellis County), Collard (Tarrant County), Hanley, Lake, Pleasant Valley, Polo, Silo, Tower, Webb, and Singleton. Other fields that were disposed of were Navy-owned installations, such as the fields at Duncanville, Cedar Hill, and Five Points.⁹⁰

The Navy announced that a Naval Air Reserve program would begin on July 1, 1946. During the period between the end of the war and the inception of the Reserve program, former pilots on inactive status were permitted to accrue flight time on a voluntary basis. Although new and veteran pilots were able to partially resume their flight routine, enlisted men joined the program as station keepers and received all of the benefits of regular enlistment. Enlisted men had the right to return to inactive duty at any time unless the country was at war. Instead of recruiting solely from Dallas County, the NAS Dallas Reserve program drew pilots from five southwest states: Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. Recruits formed Organized Reserve Squadrons in their respective states, which contained 42 pilots, 14 ground officers, and 175 enlisted. They were flown to NAS Dallas to receive four to six hours of training every month. Recruits would receive 48 training sessions, totaling 100 hours annually. Training sessions would include take-offs and landings from an outline of a carrier on the ground, formation flying, and live bomb practice. Reservists would use Helldiver,

Wildcat, F-7-F, and Avenger torpedo bombers during their practice. In addition, they would spend two weeks every year aboard aircraft carriers. NAS Dallas was one of several installations converted to provide Reserve training for 28,700 officers and enlisted men. In addition to the Dallas installation, 21 other air stations were converted for Reserve training, including those at Seattle, San Diego, Minneapolis, Olathe (Kansas), New Orleans, Memphis, and New York City.⁹¹

In May 1946, NAS Dallas received a contingent of Marine Reservists, one of 21 different Marine Air Detachments located at each of the new Naval Air Reserve Stations. Marines at NAS Dallas first formed Marine Air Reserve Squadron 112 and flew the F4U Corsair. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonels of the Regular Marine Corps, the mission of the Marine Air Reserve was to support all Naval Air Reserve activities, including Organized Reserve Squadrons, furnished by the Naval Air Reserve Training Command. The Marine Air Detachments were under the direction of the commander of Marine Air Reserve Training with headquarters in Glenview, Illinois.⁹² In addition to the Marine Air Detachment that shared the facilities at NAS Dallas, the 368th Fighter Group of the TANG arrived at the station in 1947 and located the headquarters of the 136th Fighter Group there. The group used P-51 "Mustang" Fighter aircraft and included the following units: 181st Fighter Squadron, Headquarters 236th Air Service Group, and the 1808th Engineer Aviation Company. In 1947, they ceased to be members of the Army Air Corps and became part of the U.S. Air Force Reserve.⁹³ Other planes used by Reservists at NAS Dallas were the F6 "Hellcats," F4F "Wildcats," TBM "Avengers," SB2C "Helldivers," PB4Y "Liberators," PV "Venturas," SNB "Beechcrafts," PBM "Mariners," and SNJ "Texans."⁹⁴

On July 1, 1946, NAS Dallas officially became part of the Naval Air Reserve Training Program. Personnel at the station honored the occasion by hosting a Navy air show with 600 people in attendance, complete with pilots flying advanced training ships and torpedo bombers. That day, interim flying ended and the installation officially went on station keeper status. Throughout 1946, personnel at NAS Dallas carried out a full roster of civic events, including a tree planting ceremony in remembrance of Dallas Naval dead. The trees were planted near the entrance to the station and became known as the Circle of Remembrance. On October 27, 1946, the Navy League of Dallas sponsored Navy Day at the station with air shows and civilian tours.⁹⁵

During 1947, many of the same activities were held in order to integrate the NAS Dallas Reserve program into the community. On February 10, 1947, "Operation Reunion - A Carnival with all the Trimmings" was held to benefit the Navy Relief

Society in the NAS Dallas Drill Hall. The festivities included bingo, dancing, and many types of games. The carnival was part of a joint effort by all 22 NRABs around the country to raise money for needy families of deceased members of the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps.⁹⁶ In July 1947, 10,000 people attended the first anniversary celebration of Naval Air Reserve Training at NAS Dallas. A model airplane tournament with hundreds of contestants from all over north Texas was held at the station during the anniversary celebration. Visitors also were invited to view the radar trailer and inspect instruments used in the Navy's Ground Control approach system of controlled landings.⁹⁷

After World War II, production at North American Aviation, Inc. ceased and the buildings occupied by the company were turned over to the War Assets Administration. However, in 1946 and 1947, Texas Engineering and Machinery Company (TEMCO) and Chance-Vought Aircraft Company, a subsidiary of United Aircraft Company, moved into the vacant buildings. Although they did not completely replace the number of wartime jobs offered by North American, by 1956, there were 17,000 people working at both companies (12,000 at Chance-Vought and 5,000 at Temco). Thus, Chance-Vought and Temco provided 22 percent of all industrial employment in Dallas County in the mid-1950s. Production of transportation equipment, particularly airplanes and aircraft parts, became the largest industry in Dallas County during this period. Grand Prairie became completely dependent on the transportation industry after the 1940s and prospered due to the high volume of government contracts.⁹⁸

By 1948, 300 pilots and 1,000 enlisted men were part of 16 Organized Reserve Squadrons at NAS Dallas. In addition, 30 officers and 500 enlisted men were part of the station-keeping crew.⁹⁹ During the fall of that year, 300 members of the Organized Reserve at NAS Dallas participated in the first training cruise that included carrier take-offs and landings. The Reservists were part of NAS Dallas's Fighter Attack Squadron 702 (VA-702). Part of a two-week training obligation for Reservists, NAS Dallas participants spent 14 days in Pensacola, including three days aboard the USS *Carrier Wright* that was stationed at NAS Pensacola for use by Reservists.¹⁰⁰ WAVES were also still employed at the station in a reduced capacity. They performed a variety of duties that fit the new mission and activities at the station. Station regulations stated that among their many duties, "WAVES may be used as mess cooks, WAVES shall stand night watches; however, no night watches involving duty to be stood alone shall be assigned WAVES except in the WAVES' barracks."¹⁰¹

During the period before the Korean Conflict, there were no major construction projects at NAS Dallas. However, in 1948, part of the station's funding was

directed toward building technical training shops, complete with new gear and supplies, and converting the enlisted men's club to an instructional building. In addition, several smaller public works projects were underway. These projects included altering the dispensary, repairing water tanks, performing road work, and draining water ponds behind the brig and recreation building to rid them of mosquitoes.¹⁰²

On May 1, 1949, the Navy and the Air Force signed an agreement that finally allowed the Navy joint use of Hensley Field and exclusive use of some of the buildings and utilities. The administration and management of the air field officially passed from the Air Force to the Navy at this time. The agreement also provided for exclusive use areas that would be limited to the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard, operated at no cost to the Navy.¹⁰³ The following month, the City of Dallas and the federal government signed an agreement dated June 27, 1949, which stated that the City and the government would cancel the existing Hensley Field lease between the Air Force and the City of Dallas and enter into a new contract by a separate instrument under the jurisdiction and control of the Navy Department. As part of the agreement, the Navy Industrial Reserve Plant, occupied by Chance-Vought, was provided with the means to extend the north-south runway at Hensley Field in order to test aircraft. The City of Dallas donated \$256,000 for acquisition and development of the necessary land to extend the runway. The City retained the title to the land, but its liability was to be limited to the amount of funds remaining after the deduction of the land cost. The runways were built under a contract let through the Bureau of Yards and Docks.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, it was decided that if the Navy should no longer require the testing and delivery operations of the Naval Industrial Reserve Plant, the lease would revert back to the Department of the Air Force, providing that the Navy would continue general operations at NAS Dallas if it were in operation at the time of transfer.¹⁰⁵

The proposed construction on the north-south runway at Hensley Field began in the fall of 1949, to be completed by March 20, 1950. A small chapel was also completed adjacent to the Administration building in September 1949. At the same time that construction began on the runway extensions, NAS Dallas was expanding its Reserve training program to include several off-duty training courses. The courses, known as ODEP, the Off Duty Educational Program, were set up within each unit of the Naval Air Training Command for officers and enlisted personnel. The program was designed not only to help all personnel advance in their rate and improve their job skills, but to complete high school diploma requirements, start college level correspondence courses, and increase civilian vocational opportunities for all Reservists.¹⁰⁶

The Korean Conflict: 1950-1953

As tensions in Korea grew more strained, President Truman called for an increase in the size of the Reserve forces and asked Congress for \$13.5 billion in additional military expenditures. Yet despite any build up for possible conflict in Korea, the U.S. Armed Forces were smaller than they had been during the late 1940s. The Army and the Navy had been greatly reduced in size due to restrictions on new enlistment. Only the Air Force, the newest branch of the service, gained men between 1949 and 1950.¹⁰⁷ In the beginning of 1950, 16 Navy and Marine Organized Reserve Squadrons were in flight training in Dallas with 110 planes, 40 Navy officers, 510 Navy enlisted men, seven Marine officers, and 75 Marine enlisted men.¹⁰⁸ By July 1950, Squadrons 701 and 702 departed NAS Dallas on a secret mission to Korea with one Marine Air Reserve unit on alert. The first Marine Air Reserve unit to leave for Korea from NAS Dallas was the 155th Howitzer Battalion. After that unit left in August 1950, a second group of Marines, VMF 111, mobilized at NAS Dallas. They were followed by another unit, MGCIS 20.¹⁰⁹ The 368th Fighter Group of the Texas Air National Guard was also activated at NAS Dallas and renamed the 136th Fighter-Bomber Group for service in Korea.¹¹⁰ The mission of the station during the Korean Conflict was to maintain a high level of Reserve pilot training to ensure that the United States would have a large force of aviators ready for active duty. In addition, NAS Dallas personnel were responsible for maintaining the station's aircraft.

Beginning in 1950, NAS Dallas began another phase of construction related to America's involvement in Korea, although it was much smaller than the Navy's World War II building initiative. In September 1950, orders were given for the Ordnance Shop to be enlarged. With labor performed by the Public Works Department at the station, the floor space was doubled and new storage racks and testing stands for guns and bomb racks were installed. In addition, projectors and mockups were added to aid in teaching new trainees.¹¹¹ In December 1950, NAS Dallas was allotted an additional \$600,000 to further enlarge its facilities for the war effort. The portion received by the station was part of an \$18 million congressional military appropriations bill. The new funds were used to increase the number of personnel at NAS Dallas and expand the aircraft fueling facilities.¹¹²

Mobilization for the Korean Conflict continued at NAS Dallas in 1951. Marine Organized Fighter Squadron 112, which was the first Marine unit to be formed at NAS Dallas in 1946, was the last Marine unit to be called to active duty.

Squadron 112, which included over 200 Marine officers and enlisted men, arrived at the station on March 1, 1951, and left for Korea shortly thereafter.¹¹³ In order to accommodate the massive numbers of men going through NAS Dallas, the station's Planning Board approved several reorganizational changes. Building 11, the former headquarters of the Second 155 MM Howitzer Battalion, was converted to house the personnel, Organized Reserve, and disbursing offices. The Chief Petty Officer Club and the Enlisted Men's Club was once again located in

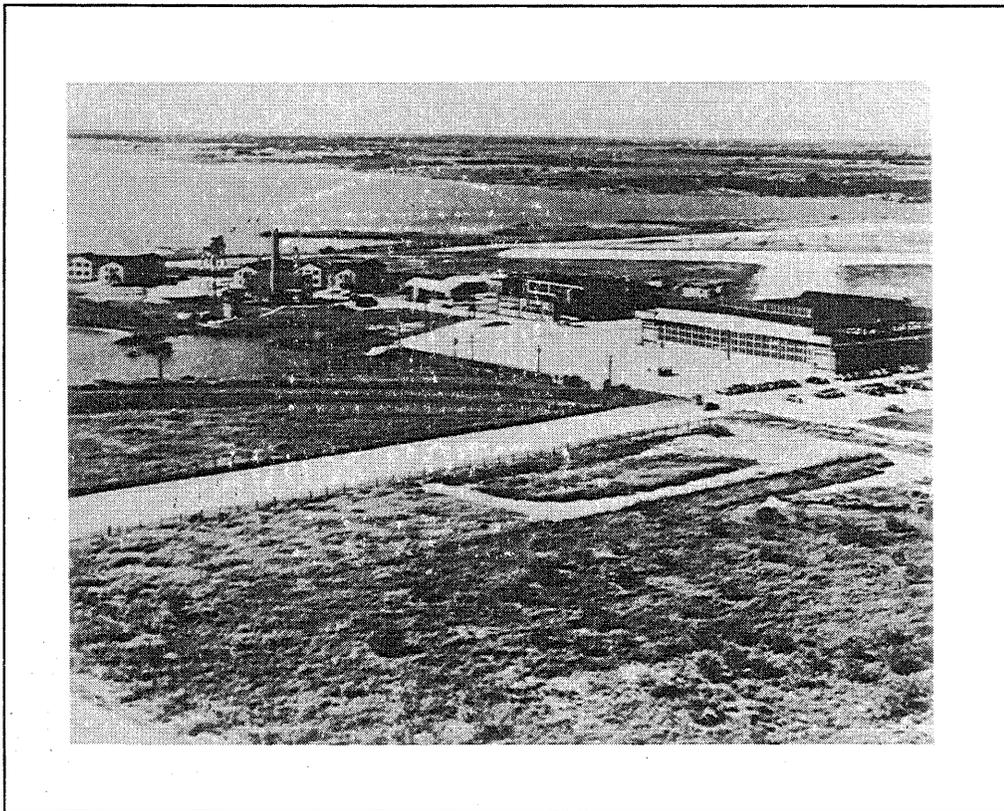


Figure 19. Naval Air Station, circa 1950 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

the Recreation building. The new Chief Petty Officers Club was completed in June 1951 and included a television room, lounge areas, pool room, tap room, dance room, and a mural of a pin-up model in "abbreviated cowboy attire."¹¹⁴ On March 9, 1951, the new Navy Exchange Cafeteria opened for business with stainless steel fixtures, linoleum floors, and automatic kitchen appliances.¹¹⁵ Later, in March 1952, the Enlisted Men's Club in Building 10 was converted into a mess hall, capable of serving 9,000 meals per day. Apparently there were

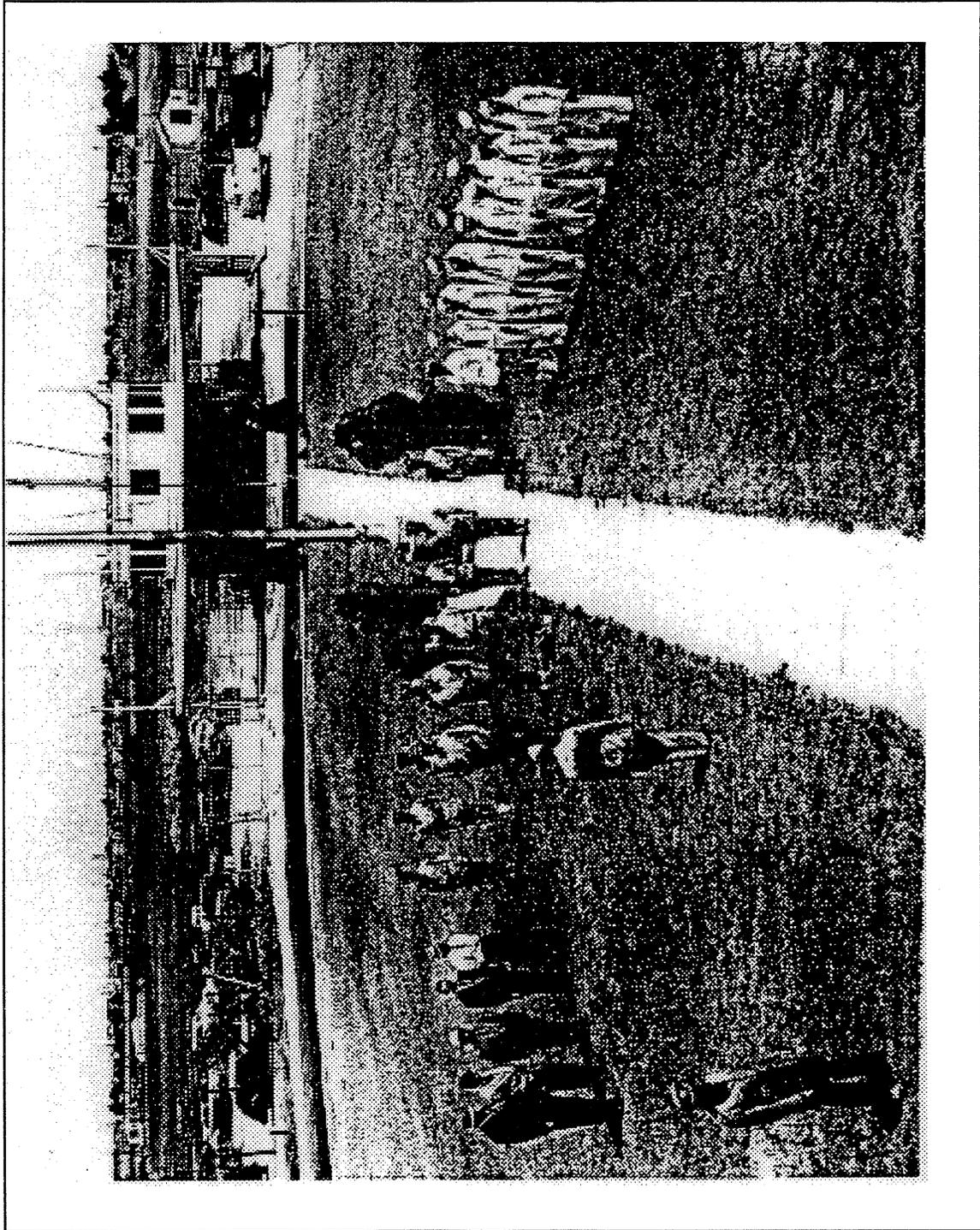


Figure 20. Citation Presentation, near Building 1 (Gatehouse), Naval Air Station Dallas, 1949
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

enough recruits at NAS Dallas during this period to warrant extensive entertainment and eating facilities.

In April 1952, jet aircraft called FH-1 "Phantoms" were incorporated into the NAS Dallas program. With the arrival of this new type of technology, the station's facilities had to be modified to accommodate the increase in number of aircraft. Between 1951 and 1952, a new jet fuel tank farm was built by the O'Rourke Construction Company of Dallas. The \$260,000 tank farm had a 260,000-gallon holding capacity. There were two large tanks that held 100,000 gallons each and a smaller, 60,000-gallon tank. The new tank farm made it possible for more planes to be serviced without the use of tank trucks.¹¹⁶ NAS Dallas had a high volume of air traffic during the Korean Conflict, including planes from Navy Attack Squadrons 701, 703, 704, and 705; Navy Patrol Squadron 701; Navy Fighter Squadrons 701, 702, 703, 705, 706, and 708; and Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (airlift) 702.¹¹⁷ In addition, the Marine Corps and the TANG had several units of their own.

Despite the huge amount of air traffic at NAS Dallas, the Navy had trouble recruiting the proper number of pilots. Although NAS Dallas was ranked in first place in January 1953 in procurement of aviation cadets in the country, the numbers of recruits at NAS Dallas were still 80 percent below the minimum requirement. Most of the trained pilots were on active duty and it was difficult to recruit Reserve pilots. By the end of the Korean Conflict, there was a desperate need for new pilots, since most that were currently flying were World War II veterans and over 30 years old. The Navy was considerably concerned that there would not be enough men to operate its planes in the next decade.¹¹⁸

Growth of the Reserve program at NAS Dallas during the early 1950s made extra housing for families in the Grand Prairie area a necessity. Housing additions were not only for GIs and their families, but also for the thousands of civilians working at NAS Dallas and in the local aircraft industry. One such housing development was the Sol Spiegel Village, located on federal property at Fish Creek and Skyline Road in Grand Prairie. Named for the well-respected and beloved Operations Chief, Sol Spiegel, who had been at NAS Dallas for eight years before his death in 1950, the addition provided a variety of low-cost housing for military and civilian personnel assigned to NAS Dallas. It had 129 housing units, with monthly rents of \$72.50. There were 14 detached, one-story units, 23 one-story multifamily units, and 92 two-story multifamily units. Each dwelling was furnished with a gas range, electric refrigerator and air furnace, venetian blinds, showers, attic vent fans, and laundry facilities.¹¹⁹

The Cold War and Vietnam Era: 1954-1974

Disagreement among the different branches of the service at NAS Dallas continued after the Korean Conflict. When the TANG 136th Fighter-Bomber Wing returned from Korea, it was reorganized as an Air Defense Wing of the Air Force's Air Defense Command and served both at Hensley and Love Fields. In 1953, the Texas Air National Guard charged that the Navy was delinquent in providing much needed additional facilities for TANG units at NAS Dallas. In order to appease the Department of the Air Force and TANG officials, the Navy invested in a \$180,000 building program at Hensley Field that was underway by March of 1953. The new buildings included three new warehouses that cost \$28,000 each, a base operations building for \$18,000, remodeling of the 500-man base dining hall for \$5,000, remodeling of the post exchange, and new repair and testing sheds for aircraft. Other infrastructure included additional parking spaces and installations of sidewalks.¹²⁰

As part of a \$15 million federally funded project to increase and improve facilities for the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve, the Navy authorized \$539,000 in 1954 to be spent on more new construction at NAS Dallas. The project included \$400,000 for an extension of the Hensley Field runway and taxiway and \$139,000 for aircraft parking. The runway extension was necessary to accommodate the new jet aircraft being used at NAS Dallas. In 1952, the runway had been extended over Mountain Creek Lake and the new construction, which added 500 feet, made the entire runway 8,000 feet long, the minimum required length for jet operations. During 1954, 13 Naval Air Reserve projects, 10 Naval Reserve Surface Training projects, and 14 Marine Corps projects were authorized, with the largest portion of federal funding, \$9,791,000, spent on the Naval Air Reserve.¹²¹ The runway extensions at Hensley Field helped to bring the latest jet aircraft to NAS Dallas. In 1954, the FH-1 Phantom was replaced by the F9F Cougar, which was in turn replaced by the FJ Fury in 1958.¹²²

In 1956, Major General K.L. Berry, Texas Adjutant General, considered moving the TANG 136th Fighter-Bomber Wing to Carter Field in Fort Worth to relieve some of the congestion at Hensley Field. However, it must have been beneficial for the different branches to share the station, since an interservice agreement was reached later that year.¹²³ The TANG acquired more facilities of their own in

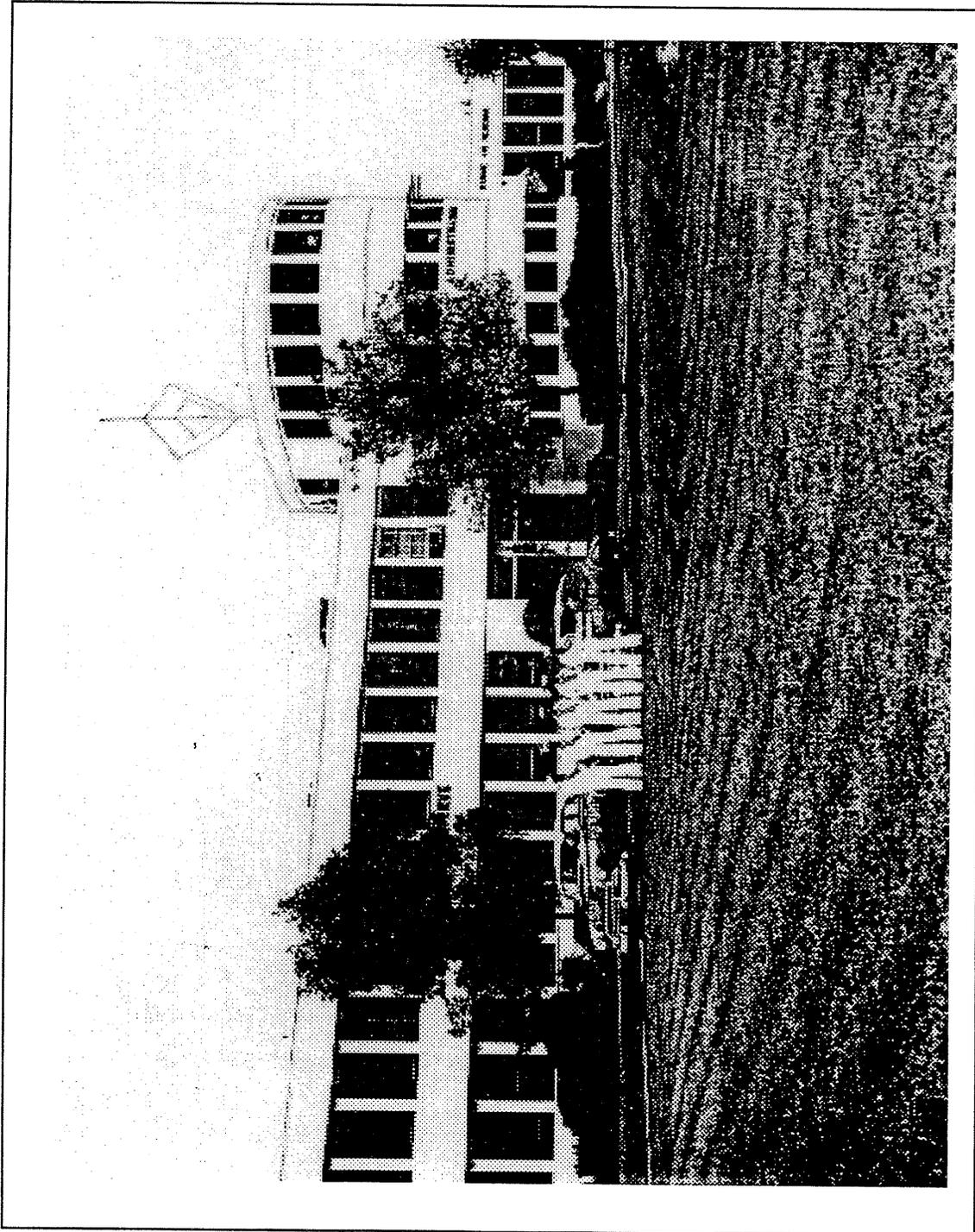


Figure 21. Building 2 (Administration Building), Naval Air Station Dallas, circa 1955
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

1959. The Navy broke ground for a \$1,500,000 hangar in May 1959. The new hangar, which was presented to the TANG on July 12, 1961, had 74,000 square feet of maintenance and shop space and 13,800 square feet of office and administrative space. It also included an adjoining three-story annex with 3,400 square feet for an X-ray, medical, and dental section and a cafeteria-style kitchen and dining room.¹²⁴ TANG F-86D Saberjets, flown and serviced by Reservists, were to be housed in the new hangar.¹²⁵

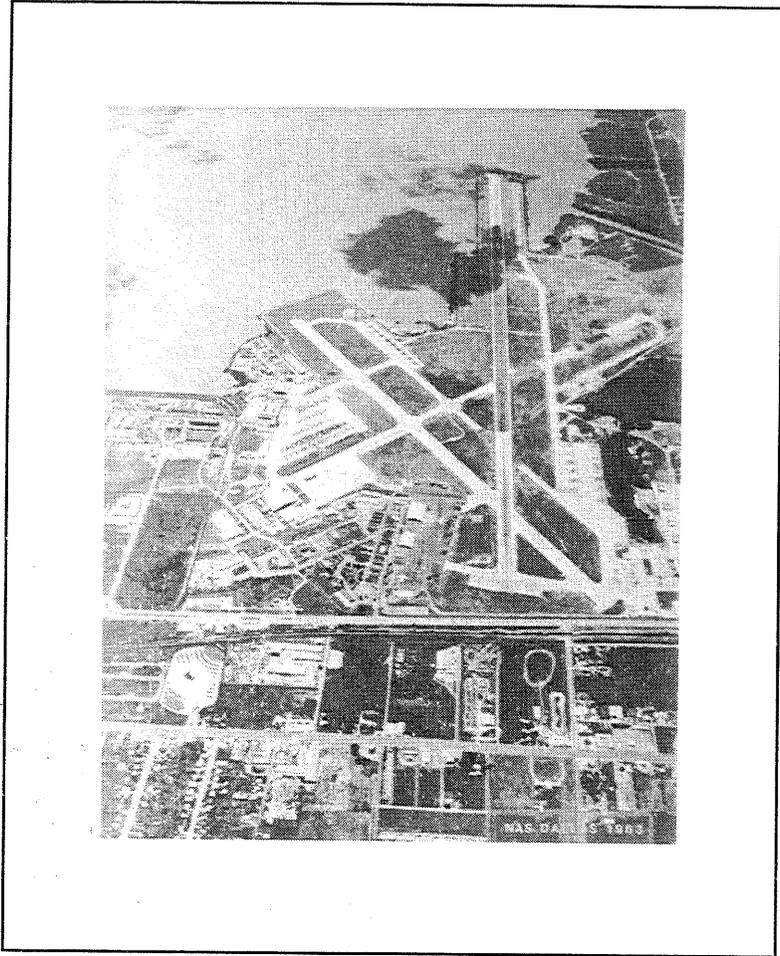


Figure 22. Runway extensions across Mountain Creek Lake, Naval Air Station Dallas, 1957 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

In 1956, the Navy requested more funding for fiscal year 1957 to be used at NAS Dallas. Of the \$1,985,000 appropriated for construction at the station, \$1,730,000 was used for airfield pavement, \$170,000 for jet engine testing, and \$85,000 for additional land acquisition. The 85-acre tract provided an extra 1,700 feet for a noise buffer zone, 2,000 feet shorter than the ideal noise corridor.¹²⁶ However, the highway running west from Dallas prevented any further land acquisition. The increase of air traffic and use of NAS Dallas by several branches of the Armed Forces caused conflict just as it had during World War II.

After the Korean Conflict, the first recall to active duty came in September 1961, when Reserve Squadron 703 was sent to join the Berlin airlift operation. The mission of the station continued to focus on pilot training and aircraft maintenance. TANG units also prepared for eventual mobilization and used \$2 million in federal appropriations to further modernize their facilities and make them better suited for the latest training methods and equipment. With this new phase of construction, most of the older buildings at Hensley Field were destroyed.

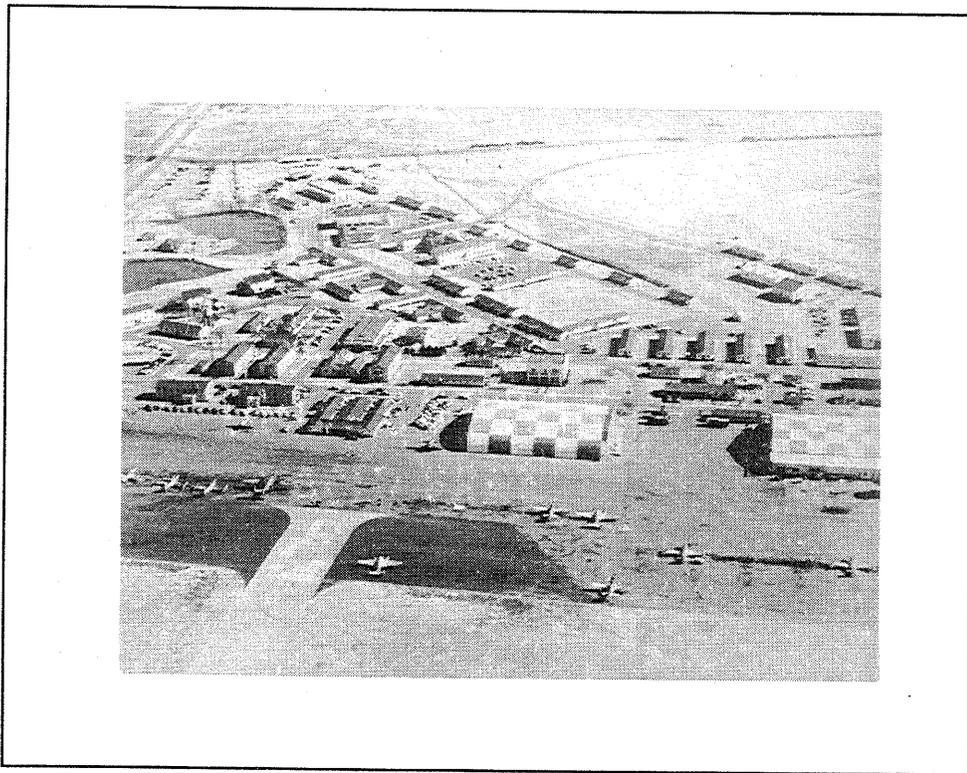


Figure 23. TANG Area, Hensley Field, circa 1960 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

While Americans were gradually being sent to serve in Vietnam in the early 1960s, Navy officials decided to remodel some of the existing buildings at NAS Dallas to prepare for a possible large-scale mobilization. In 1963, three enlisted men's barracks, which had been built in 1942, were scheduled for remodeling at a cost of \$407,000. With improvements, it was thought that the barracks buildings, which held a total of 600 men, would last another 15 years.¹²⁷ The same year, NAS Dallas had the first Reserve Squadron chosen to fly the new F-8 Crusader jet.¹²⁸

In 1965, the 136th Air Defense Wing of the TANG was reorganized as the 136th Refueling Wing and assigned to a Stratotanker under the Tactical Air Command. In 1967, the unit participated in "Operation Creek Party," which was a 10-year mission designed to keep jet fighters refueled while on active duty with the U.S. Air Force in Europe. During this period, they were stationed in Germany and were later used to refuel aircraft in southeast Asia during the Vietnam Conflict. The unit did not return to the United States until 1977.¹²⁹

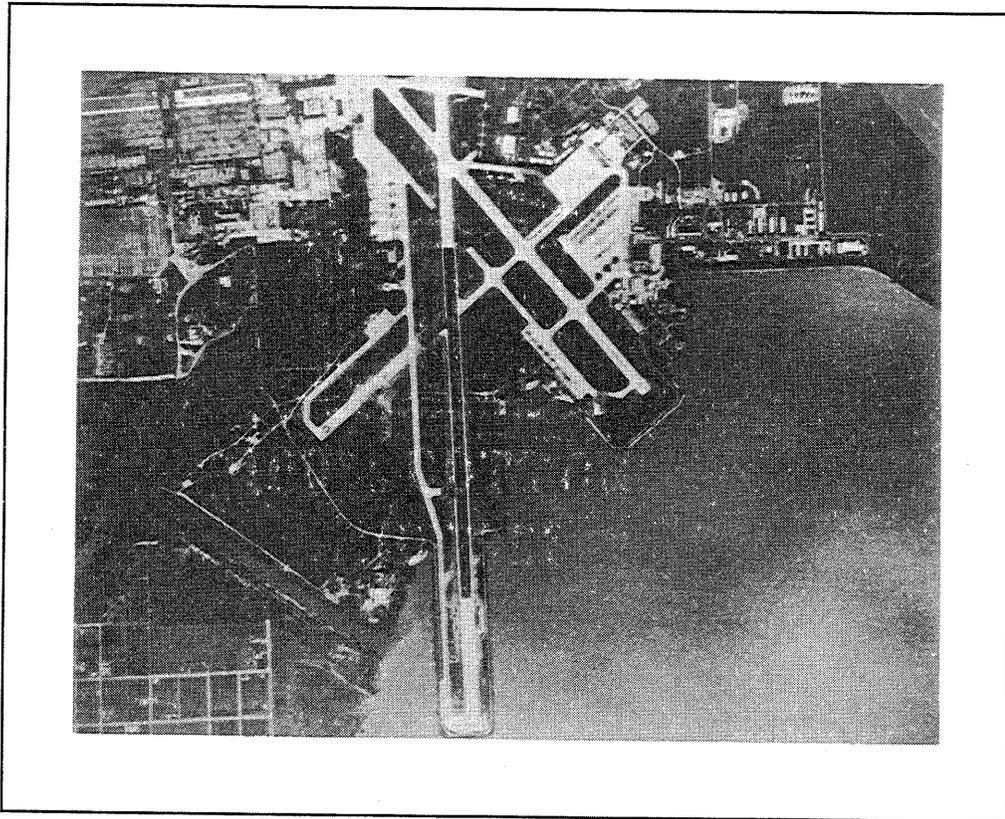


Figure 24. Aerial Photograph, Naval Air Station Dallas, 1963 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

Although it was necessary to have enough trained pilots to be sent to southeast Asia, the Navy command deemed it important to continue to train pilots not related to the Vietnam Conflict. In September 1967, the Navy asked Congress for \$16 million to increase pilot training in Texas on a permanent basis. As part of this program, 2,525 additional pilots went through the standard instructional program, with NAS Corpus Christi receiving \$3 million and Chase Field Auxiliary Station receiving \$12 million, to facilitate the process.¹³⁰ Expansion of the Naval Reserve Program became more important as the war in Vietnam

escalated. Reserve Squadron 703 was recalled to active duty again in 1968 after the USS *Pueblo* was captured by the Viet Cong. Expansion of the training program at NAS Dallas was valuable and there was a 20 percent increase in personnel in November 1969. NAS Dallas received more men because of federal closings of NAS Olathe and NAS Minneapolis, which resulted in total federal savings of \$3 million.¹³¹ In 1972, toward the end of the Vietnam era, NAS Dallas had 1,600 Reservists.¹³²

NAS Dallas in Recent Years: 1975-1995

After 1970, the entire Naval Air Reserve Force was reorganized to conform to active duty squadrons to which Reserve squadrons would report in case of national emergency. Certain types of training, such as antisubmarine warfare, were phased out of the NAS Dallas instruction program so that students could focus on the main mission of the station: fighter and transport flying. Reserve squadrons were staffed with active duty members to increase the quality of training for Reserve personnel. During this period, construction of a new Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center began at NAS Dallas. In July 1975, a ground-breaking ceremony was held for a new two-story, \$6 million Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center. The Center, which was to include training equipment to instruct Reservists in simulated shipboard routine, was scheduled for completion in November 1976.¹³³ The Army also increased its Reserve force at NAS Dallas to include the 1st Battalion of the Army's 158th Aviation Regiment. As a helicopter unit, the 158th was part of the 101st Airborne Division, but by the 1970s, was organized under the Army Reserve, providing support to the Fifth Army Corps. Personnel at the station also took part in civic activities involving Navy League Cadets and Sea Cadets. On May 13, 1976, NAS Dallas celebrated its 35th anniversary, Armed Forces Day, and the national bicentennial with displays, tours, and air shows by all branches of the service in residence at the station.¹³⁴

As NAS Dallas grew and encroached upon Grand Prairie, people living in the area north of the main runway had to adjust to the high noise level of the planes taking off and landing there. The problem peaked in September 1977 when NAS Dallas officials considered rerouting the flight patterns of planes flying at low levels through the area in question. There was considerable concern that homeowners in the noise contour area would not be able to secure future home improvement loans because of devalued real estate prices.¹³⁵ Later in September, the Grand Prairie City Council passed a resolution requesting that the government purchase their property so that they might profit from the situation. This decision was

based on a noise level study made at NAS Dallas called an Air Installation Compatible Use Zone. This study, and a second one completed in November of 1977 showed that the high noise level emanating from the runway did have harmful effects on the residents in the area and their property values. Members of the Grand Prairie City Council feared that the area north of the runway would become a slum because of the noise pollution.

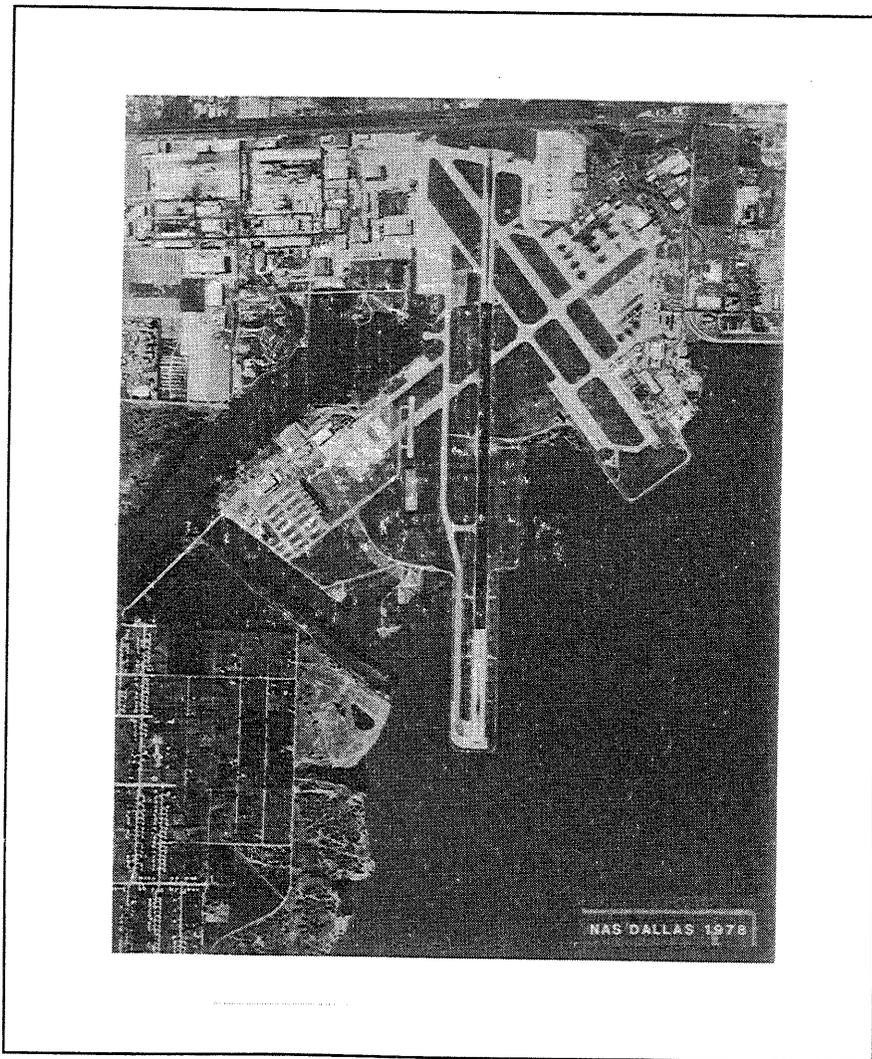


Figure 25. Aerial Photograph, Naval Air Station Dallas, 1978 (Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

In early 1978, officials at NAS Dallas announced that their first budget priority was to buy the 128-acre "clear zone" with \$9.3 million that was to become available by October 1, 1979. The area was 75 percent renter occupied and

included a city fire station and more than \$1 million in utilities. The expense to the City of Grand Prairie for clearing the area would be \$80,000.¹³⁶

Delays in acquiring sufficient funds to buy the tract above the runway resulted in no definite purchase of the land until 1981. Although the entire acquisition project was estimated at a total cost of \$20 million, the Military Installations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee only succeeded in appropriating \$4,628,957 for fiscal year 1981. During Phase I, all residential property in the area was acquired, which included 62 duplex units and 2 single-family units. Phase II, which occurred in 1983, involved the acquisition of undeveloped commercial property and an elementary school for \$4,066,951. Of the original 128 acres needed to successfully complete the project, only 46 acres were actually acquired. The lack of Congressional support for expansion at NAS Dallas represents the nationwide trend toward demilitarization and downsizing of Reserve forces and their installations.¹³⁷

On November 23, 1988, the commanding officer at the Naval Legal Service Office at NAS Corpus Christi wrote to the commanding officer of NAS Dallas concerning the Navy's authority over NAS Dallas and its tenant commands. In the letter, which described the Navy's legal rights and responsibilities, the commanding officer gave a full description of the ownership and tenant holdings at NAS Dallas. Of the 834.06 acres that comprised NAS Dallas in 1988, the Navy owned a total of 120.73 acres. This land was composed of Tract 1 (the original 30.70 acres leased by the Navy in 1940), which consisted of AIMD, Supply, and Public Works areas; Tract 2 (70.80 acres), with the Administration building, Drill Hall and gymnasium, exchange, Bachelors Officers Quarters and Bachelors Enlisted Quarters; Tract 3 (5.08 acres), with Special Services and picnic areas; and Tract 4 (14.15 acres), which consisted of the runway extension. In addition, the Navy had lease-hold rights to another 669.50 acres at the station, which included the runway, taxiway, and magazine storage areas. The Navy also held easements of .92 acres that consisted of a railway spur line, the street south of the gymnasium, and the power line near the station.¹³⁸

Several tenants also resided at NAS Dallas in 1988. The TANG Headquarters Area was located on a 1.92-acre tract granted to the Texas National Guard Armory Board by the City of Dallas. Of the remaining 40.99 acres on the site, 38.73 acres were leased to the Texas National Guard Armory from the City of Dallas. The other 2.26 acres were contained within an access road. The Army and the Air Force also had some exclusive use arrangements at NAS Dallas. The Air Force used 2.80 acres as the Building 1239 area while they also retained 49.93 acres located due west of the railroad spur line and due south of Jefferson Avenue

for use by their Reserve organization, the TANG. The Army also had exclusive use of 35.77 acres for the Army Reserve Center building and complex (Buildings 801, 802, and three unnumbered buildings) located adjacent to the 38.73-acre tract leased to the Texas National Guard Armory from the City of Dallas. All of these changes were made after the Navy acquired control of the station in 1949.¹³⁹

Other tenants at the base with a specific mission were the goats who performed lawn care duties as their sheep predecessors had done at Hensley Field in the early 1930s. The herd of goats, which included nine members in 1986, had been at the station since 1941. Managed by Chief Petty Officer James Yates, the goats were used to cut the grass since spark-emitting lawn mowers were too dangerous to use over the underground fuel tanks. In 1986, the oldest goat at NAS Dallas was Fred, who had been at the base for 19 years. In the winter, the goats took shelter under sheds designated for their use.¹⁴⁰ Throughout the 1980s, NAS Dallas did not expand as a whole, but individual units received new buildings, aircraft, and extra personnel. In September 1983, a \$2.3 million enlisted men's dining hall was completed at the station. It was named for Whitt L. Moreland, a 21-year-old Marine Private First Class (PFC) who fell on an enemy grenade in Korea and was killed in 1951.¹⁴¹ In August 1989, NAS Dallas became the new headquarters for Naval Reserve Fleet Hospital 500, Combat Zone 21. The new temporary hospital could be set up anywhere in the world, run by Naval Reserve personnel. It had an 850-member crew unit, 500-bed capacity, dental care facilities, a laboratory, and a blood bank.¹⁴² Simultaneously, with the completion of the enlisted men's dining hall, NAS Dallas received the first of 24 F4S Phantom airplanes.¹⁴³ By April of 1988, pilots at NAS Dallas were flying aircraft such as F-14 and F-4 Fighters; A-4 Attack aircraft; C-130, C-12, and C-9 cargo planes; and VH-1 and CH-46 helicopters.¹⁴⁴ Two years later, in January 1991, as part of the mobilization for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, 300 Marines assigned to active duty arrived at NAS Dallas. They formed two flying squadrons and two ground squadrons.¹⁴⁵ After the crisis in the Persian Gulf, the F-4 Phantom, which had been used by Marine Aircraft Group 41 and Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112 for 30 years, was finally retired in January 1992.¹⁴⁶ It was replaced by the F-14 Tomcat.

Before NAS Dallas was scheduled for closure, several Navy and Marine units were assigned to the station. They included Fighter Squadrons 201 and 202, Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 59, Marine Air Group 41, Fleet Tactical Support Squadron 52, and several operational support and intelligence units. NAS Dallas was also the headquarters of Naval Reserve Readiness Command Region 11, Naval Reserve Mobile Construction Battalion 22, a Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Readiness Center, a regional headquarters for the selective service

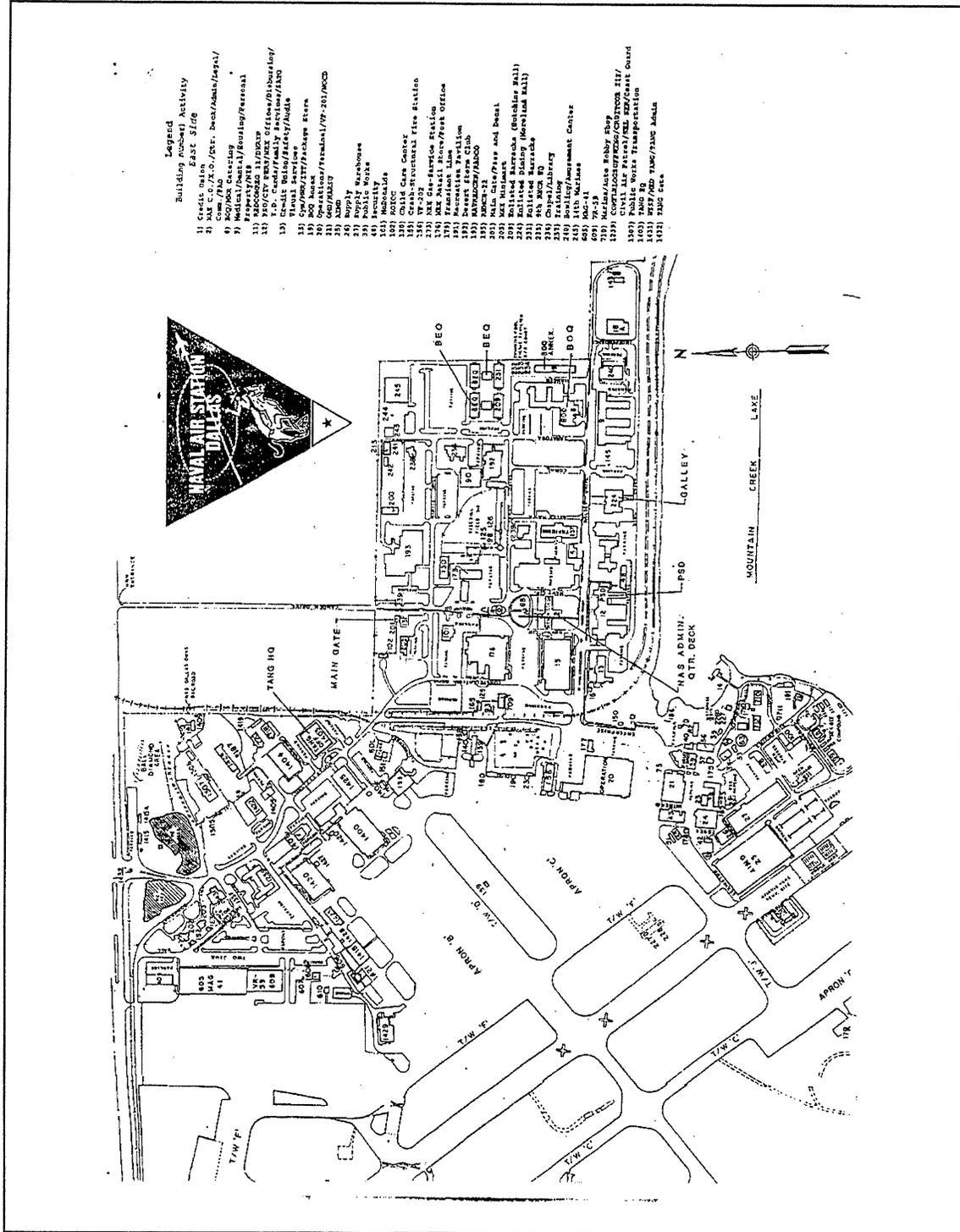


Figure 26. General Development Map, Naval Air Station Dallas, circa 1990
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

system, a Coast Guard unit, a Civil Air Patrol, and several Air Force and Army units. As late as 1990, Naval Reservists at NAS Dallas felt that they were making a vital contribution to national defense and that their efforts were worthy of national tax dollars.

The training program of the Naval Air Reserve is designed to economically train and produce the most competent, capable, and combat-ready Reserve force possible. Success and effectiveness of the program has been proved on numerous occasions. Although change and revision within the program has been constant in order to achieve and meet current defense demands, there has been a consistency in the men and women who fill the program's ranks. These dedicated individuals have adapted and even improved their own performance to ensure overall readiness. Today, the Naval Air Reserve is one of the best taxpayer investment in our nation's defense profile.¹⁴⁷ Throughout the Navy's occupation of NAS Dallas, the mission of the base has remained virtually the same: to provide facilities and equipment for the training of air crews and aviation ground support personnel.

By early 1993, it was clear that NAS Dallas eventually would be closed as would many other military bases in Texas and across the country. As part of the Base Realignment and Closure program, the closure of NAS Dallas was the result of post-Cold War reduced military spending. Despite the success of the American armed forces in the Persian Gulf Conflict, the end of the Cold War made large-scale training at huge military installations and massive weapon storage unnecessary. National base closure would affect 35 major bases and 95 minor facilities, with 27 major and 18 minor facilities to be realigned. Although the cost of initial closure was \$7 billion, the reduced military infrastructure would save the U.S. government \$2.3 million per year after the turn of the century. Base closure has had a great impact on military personnel in Texas. In early 1993, 1,374 active duty personnel and 268 civilian employees were already affected by the shutdown of several bases.¹⁴⁸

In April 1993, members of a presidential committee visited the Dallas-Fort Worth area to study the affects of base closure on the area. Thousands of military personnel at NAS Dallas and other Texas military installations were scheduled to be sent to Carswell Air Force Base. Located in Fort Worth, Carswell Air Force Base, a B-52 bomber facility, was closed in 1991. The 3,000-acre site was reopened as a Navy-owned facility. In addition to the military activities scheduled to occur at Carswell, the U.S. Bureau of Prisons would use the old base hospital as a federal prison hospital.¹⁴⁹

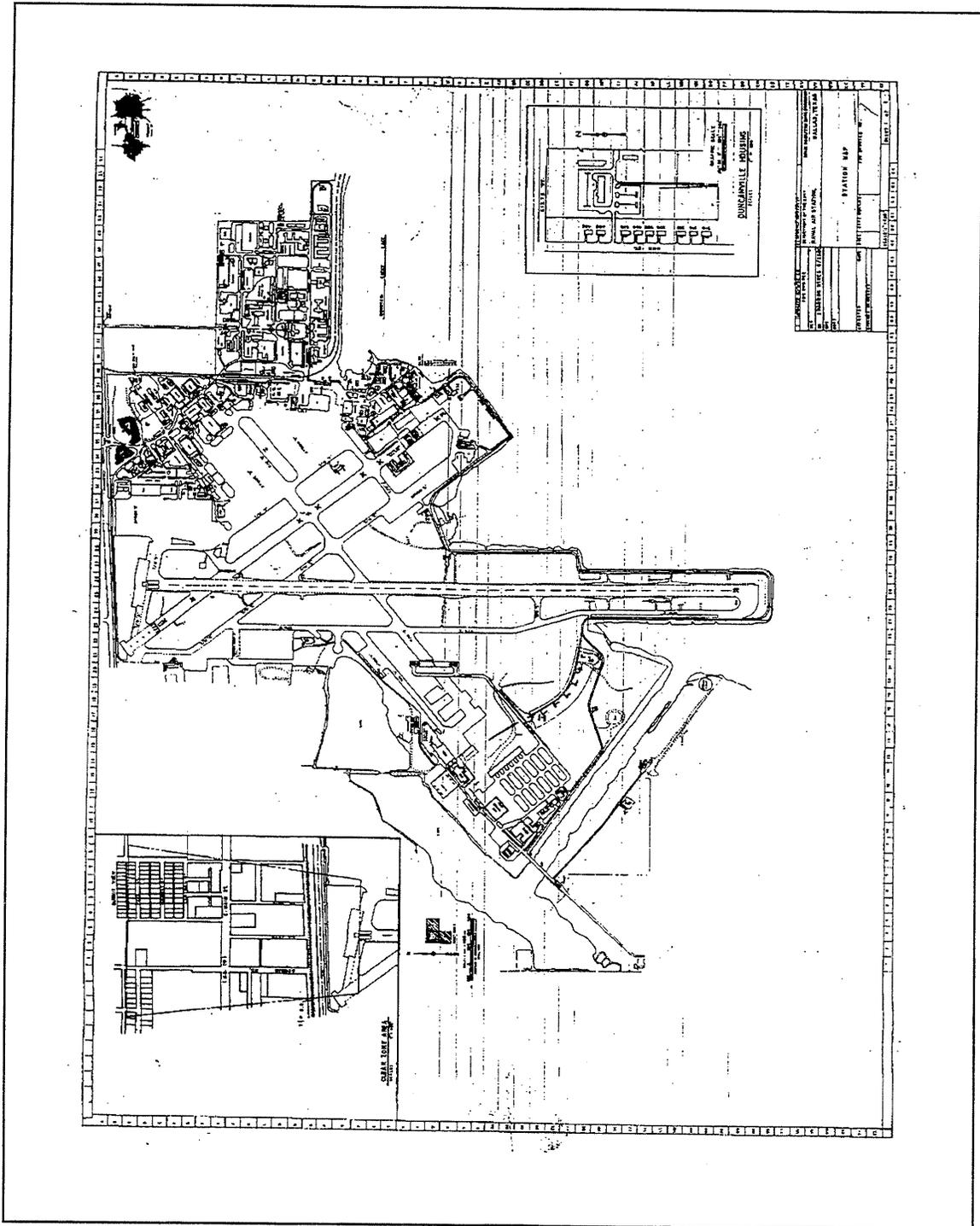


Figure 27. General Development Map, Naval Air Station Dallas, 1992
(Source: Public Affairs Office, NAS Dallas)

In November 1993, NAS Dallas held its last air show, which attracted 20,000 spectators. Until the announcement that the station was to close, NAS Dallas continued to be the economic focal point for people in Grand Prairie. A large portion of the population still worked in aviation manufacturing and in civilian jobs at the base. In addition, much of the service industry and other local business benefitted greatly from the large number of people at NAS Dallas. Thus, it is not surprising that closure of the installation was perceived as an "economic kick in the teeth" by Grand Prairie residents.¹⁵⁰ In 1993, when it was announced that NAS Dallas would shut down, Grand Prairie was already suffering from the loss of some defense-related jobs eliminated as a result of military downsizing of the 1980s and 1990s. Today, Grand Prairie is economically depressed and most of its residents have sought employment elsewhere.

Although the relationship between the Navy and other branches of the service at NAS Dallas has been largely confrontational, and none are likely to forget the struggles each had to endure to gain access to facilities at the base, many Reservists felt a certain camaraderie about their experiences at NAS Dallas. One Reservist, John Anders, stated,

As Texas Air National Guard members of the 136th Air Refueling Wing and Group, our unit was a tenant of the naval base, sharecropping on adjacent Hensley Field in Grand Prairie. I've experienced giddy root canals in comparison.... We were the "weekend warriors" and the Navy swabbies were regulars during the Vietnam era. I suppose we got along as well as possible under the circumstances.¹⁵¹

Since it was announced that the station would close, there has been much speculation regarding the future use of NAS Dallas. On October 1, 1994, Carswell Air Force Base was established as Naval Air Station, Fort Worth, Joint Reserve Base (JRB). NAS Fort Worth, JRB, was designed to house a number of tenant commands in addition to the Navy and act as a model for future military consolidations. The major tenant commands at NAS Fort Worth, JRB, are Naval Reserve Intelligence Command, the 14th Marine Regiment, 301st Fighter Wing, Naval Reserve Readiness Command Region 11, Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 41, Navy Fighter Squadron 201 (VF-201), Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 59 (VR-59), the 136th Airlift Wing of the TANG, and the Texas Army National Guard. Many of these groups formerly served at NAS Dallas. In November 1994, Dallas and Grand Prairie officials pursued the idea of making NAS Dallas into an industrial aviation park. According to the plan, industrial aviation would include activities related to aircraft manufacturing, retrofit, ground testing, and

inspection. However, there was some concern that any industrial aviation activities might conflict with other airports in the area and with Chance-Vought. Originally, the Navy planned to vacate the station in 1996, but owing to the massive undertaking required to move personnel, equipment, and supplies to Carswell Air Force Base, the date was pushed back to 1998. Property owned by the City of Dallas, including Navy-owned buildings on property leased from the City of Dallas, will be marketed for development by the City of Dallas. The future of properties owned by the Navy is as yet undetermined.

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The 189 extant resources at NAS Dallas include a diverse collection of temporary and permanent resources

constructed between 1929 and the 1980s. Although they are used for a variety of purposes, these resources all support the operation of the base as a Naval air training facility. Distinctive building types include large and small hangars, runways, taxiways and aprons, barracks and other living quarters, administrative offices, recreation buildings, support buildings, and infrastructural elements. Buildings are generally functional and utilitarian, with modest amounts of stylistic embellishment. However, several of the documented buildings display distinct design elements associated with the principles of the Bauhaus, as well as Art Moderne, Classical Revival, and Spanish Colonial Revival styling. The earliest buildings are two single-family houses built of masonry and wood to serve as senior officer quarters. They reflect the Army's tenure at Hensley Field, which operated independently of NAS Dallas until 1949. Buildings erected by the Navy during World War II are generally large-scale wood-frame, masonry, or steel-frame buildings designed to serve the large numbers of personnel and planes trained and repaired at the base.

2. Condition of fabric: Because of its active status, the buildings at NAS Dallas are generally in good condition.

B. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: NAS Dallas encompasses 837 acres immediately west of Mountain Creek Lake and immediately south of Jefferson Street and about 2.75 miles west of Texas Loop 12 on the western edge of Dallas. The land is flat with an elevation of about 380 feet above sea level. There are no major creeks or drainages within the boundaries of the base. However, immediately to the east and south is Mountain Creek Lake. Two intermittent streams are found within the base and Cottonwood Lake is located immediately west of NAS Dallas. A diversion channel is southwest of the property boundary and there are two palustrine lagoons in the northwest portion of the base. Commercial and industrial uses are found to the north and west of the air facility. The majority of the base is located within the corporate limits of the City of Dallas, with a small portion at the northeast edge in the City of Grand Prairie.

2. Historic landscape design: NAS Dallas is in a natural region known as Blackland Prairie, which consists mainly of a variety of grasses that include bluestem, big bluestem, Indian grass, switch grass, buffalo grass, and Grama grass. Since the establishment of NAS Dallas, the landscape

has changed considerably. A variety of nonnative plant life has been introduced in those areas used most extensively by base personnel. Nonnative grasses are accented by various shrubs and trees, including Bermuda grass, Dallis grass, Johnson grass, western ragweed, mesquite, elm, Eastern cottonwood, and willow. Undeveloped areas within NAS Dallas are maintained grassland with some scattered trees.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original architectural drawings: Reproductions of original architectural drawings are on file at the Public Works Department, NAS Dallas. The drawings list Robert and Company, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, and Corpus Christi, Texas; Moore, Cooper, White & Moore, Architects and Engineers, Houston, Texas; and U.S. Army Quartermaster General, Construction Division, as the architects of record. Reproductions of plans for alterations, additions, and repairs drawn by the Department of the Navy, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Charleston, South Carolina, and by the Public Works Office at NAS Dallas also are on file. No decision has been made on where the drawings will be moved when the base closes.

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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Federal Agency: Department of the Navy, Southern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, North Charleston, South Carolina.

B. Project Causing Alteration or Demolition: The decision by the Defense BRAC to close NAS Dallas and relocate needed activities to NAS Fort Worth (the former Carswell Air Force Base) triggered an assessment of the property's potential eligibility for the NRHP, as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The Texas Historical Commission determined 12 buildings and structures in a portion of the base built for and associated with World War II Navy activities and two single family officers' houses and two adjacent lagoons built for and associated with Army Air Corps activities in the late 1920s and the 1930s to be eligible for the NRHP. The Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, the Department of the Navy, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation are in the process of signing a Memorandum of Agreement requiring Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Level I documentation of the 14 buildings and structures and two lagoons. Through its Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division, with offices in North Charleston, South Carolina, the Department of the Navy contracted with Turner Collie & Braden, Inc., of Houston, Texas, to oversee the

preparation of the HABS recordation. Under contract with Turner Collie & Braden, Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc. of Austin, Texas, gathered historical and architectural information and, prepared a historic context and the HABS forms. Diane Elizabeth Williams served as principal investigator and project architectural historian. Sara Kirtland was associate historian and Elliott K. Wright gathered information for the architectural descriptions. Craig Melde, of ArchiTexas, Dallas, Texas, supervised the preparation of the measured drawings, Craig King served as project coordinator, and Stan Solamillo was the field coordinator. Measured drawings were drafted by members of the ArchiTexas staff. Tom Eisenhour recorded the historic resources with large-format black-and-white photographs.