

VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division
Boiler House (Building No. 4)
5103 Delafield Avenue
Aspinwall Vicinity
Allegheny County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5438-D

HABS
PA
2-ASPNA.V
1-D-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

VA MEDICAL CENTER,
ASPINWALL DIVISION, BOILER HOUSE
(Building No. 4)

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Location: The Boiler House is located in the southeast quadrant of the hospital complex, north of an axial road leading southeast from the main entry drive, approximately 550 feet southeast of the end of the drive. The Medical Center is located at 5103 Delafield Avenue, Aspinwall vicinity, O'Hara Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

Significance: Constructed in 1924, the Boiler House and its associated Smokestack (Building No. 41) are associated with the Aspinwall Hospital complex, which was developed by the Veterans' Bureau (later the Veterans Administration) as part of a nationwide expansion of the Bureau's hospital facilities conducted between 1920 and 1947.

Description: The Boiler House is a two-story building set into a sloping site. Both stories are fully exposed above grade at the northeast elevation, while only the upper story is exposed above grade at the southwest elevation. The building measures approximately 100 feet by 40 feet, with an addition measuring 22 feet by 48 feet attached to the southeast elevation of the main block. The building has a reinforced concrete structural system, with structural tile walls and brick cladding. The flat roof is surrounded by a low brick parapet wall that steps up slightly at the central portion of the front (southwest) facade. Windows are rectangular, with rowlock lintels, concrete sills, and sixteen-light steel sash. A reinforced concrete loading dock is located at each end of the southwest facade, the southern dock is protected by a small metal canopy. A reinforced concrete coal storage room is located below the courtyard enclosed by the Boiler House, the Station Garage (Building No. 3), and the Storehouse (Building No. 5). Access to this room is by means of the lower level of the Boiler House.

The Smokestack (Building No. 41) associated with the Boiler House is located approximately ten feet from the east corner of the Boiler House. The brick stack is five feet in diameter and rises 130 feet. The stack is constructed of oversized bricks. The uppermost thirty feet of the structure is reinforced by metal tension bands.

History: The Boiler House was constructed as a combination boiler house and laundry in 1924. The Boiler House is grouped with the Station Garage (Building No. 3) and the Storehouse (Building

No. 5) into a small complex of utility buildings located east, and slightly downhill, from the Infirmary Building. The upper floor housed a carpenters' shop, engineer's room and electrical shop, in addition to the laundry. The laundry was removed from the building in 1936 and relocated to a separate new facility. The five original 150-horsepower Kewanee boilers, located on the ground floor, were replaced in 1929. Coal-fired boilers remained in use until 1967, when the present three gas-fired units were installed. In 1939 an addition, measuring 22 feet by 48 feet was made to the southeast end of the building. The upper three feet of the main block's southwest facade, including the parapet wall were rebuilt at an unknown date.

The Smokestack was constructed by the Rust Engineering Company of Washington, D.C. in 1924. The chimney has undergone routine maintenance and general repointing since its construction, but has experienced no major alterations. Both buildings presently serve their original functions, although the upper floor of the Boiler House is vacant.

Sources:

Veterans Administration Medical Center. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (1980).

Twenty-fifth Anniversary: Veterans Administration Hospital, Aspinwall, Pennsylvania (1950).

National Hospital Day at U.S. Veterans Administration Facility, Aspinwall, Pennsylvania (1945).

Original architectural drawings on file at Engineering Services, VA Medical Center, Oakland Division, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

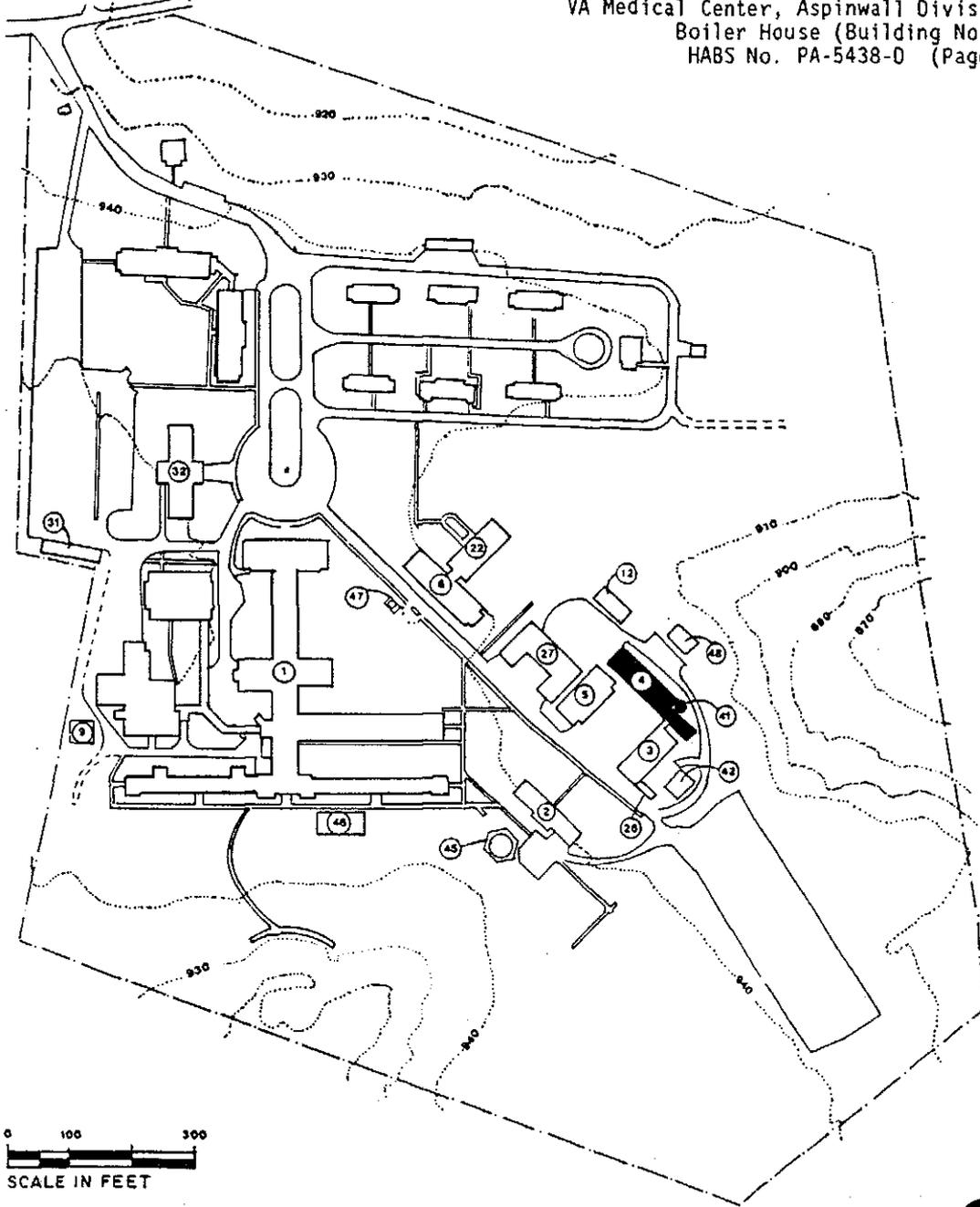
Historian:

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Delfield Avenue

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SCALE IN FEET

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