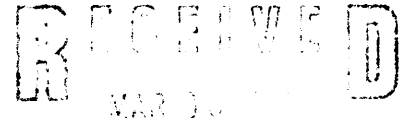


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Barksdale Field Historic District
other names/site number Barksdale Air Force Base

2. Location

street & number U. S. Hwy 71 and West Gate Drive
city, town Bossier City
state Louisiana code LA county Bossier code 015 zip code 71111

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public-State/Federal and building/district/site/structure/object. Total resources: 250.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: W. Edwin Martin, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
Date: March 2, 1992

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: Gary D. Vest, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
Date: Jan 30, 1992
State or Federal agency and bureau: U.S. Department of the Air Force (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health)

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] entered in the National Register.
[] determined eligible for the National Register.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper: Gary M. Laporte
Date of Action: 4/13/92

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE/air facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE/air facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls stucco

roof asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Barksdale Field Historic District was termed "French Colonial" when it was built, although today the style is often called French Revival. The boundaries encompass 264 stuccoed buildings disposed about an open, axial, Beaux Arts style plan. Ninety-two percent of the buildings were constructed between 1931 and 1935, with a few more being added prior to the end of 1941. Fortunately, new construction at Barksdale has been confined largely to areas adjacent to the large historic core, with the result that the non-contributing element rate for the district is a very low 5%.

Breakdown by Building Types

| | |
|-----|---|
| 106 | Officers residences |
| 62 | Non-commissioned officers residences (party wall duplexes) |
| 52 | communal garages for residences |
| 6 | hangars |
| 38 | support buildings (ranging from major styled buildings such as barracks, administration building, chapel, fire station, Officers Club, hospital, etc. to about a dozen utilitarian buildings such as aircraft maintenance facilities) |

Note: A building-by-building survey of the district was not necessary because of extensive Air Force records made available to the staff of the Division of Historic Preservation in a condensed, computer printout form. The printout identified each building by type and date of construction. Also of considerable value were historic photographs supplied by the base.

The Plan

The main (west) gate in Bossier City gives way to an axial, tree-lined boulevard. After about a third of a mile, the boulevard divides to form a park-like approach green, which runs an additional half mile, and terminates in front of the base headquarters building. On the north side of the green are houses for officers and their families. Semi-detached, duplex houses for non-commissioned officers are located south of the green. Domestic streets curve away from the green to form angles with the main approach axis (see map). The headquarters building is set on axis with the west gate. Behind the headquarters building, also on axis, is an enormous water tower with an eighteenth century French architectural treatment. The main axis terminates perpendicular to a long row of aircraft hangars. In front of the hangars are groupings of support buildings.

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Barksdale Field Historic District, Bossier City, Bossier Parish, LA

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The Style of the Base

According to the official base history, "French Colonial" was chosen as the style for the base because it was appropriate for Louisiana. This was in keeping with the Army's policy of "using the style most suited to the locality." The construction division of the Quartermaster Corps, in consultation with the Chief of the Army Air Corps, decided that the buildings should be of the "French Colonial" design. Captain Norfleet Bone, the landscape architect assigned to the Barksdale project, described the rising buildings as "resembling a little French village." He acknowledged that the provincial type architecture was appropriate for the community, with its historical and geographical setting. Ironically, Barksdale is located in northern Louisiana rather than French South Louisiana.

The smooth stuccoed buildings are evocative rather than archaeologically correct, borrowing from three centuries of French architecture, often mixing different periods in the same building. French features include hip roofs with flared eaves, copious quoins outlining the building parts, segmentally arched openings, French doors, polygonal metal hoods over porches, and decorative panels of wrought iron. There is also one mansard roof (Officers Club), one tower (chapel), and one chateau-like turret (fire station).

On the whole, the large institutional buildings tend to partake of the French eighteenth century neo-classical taste, with symmetrical articulation, quoins, pediments and segmentally arched openings. The residences are more varied. Some feature a villa-like asymmetry; others are rigidly symmetrical. As previously mentioned, the non-commissioned officers residences are double houses with party walls. These, of course, are symmetrical. All residences (except the commander's) were built to a series of about a dozen standard designs. This gives the residential areas a kind of stylistic cohesiveness few early twentieth century neighborhoods can boast. Without exception the residences maintain a two story to two-and-one-half story scale. The larger institutional buildings tend to be three to three-and-a-half stories high.

The base chapel has a nave with a cove molded ceiling, an arched proscenium, and distinctive stained glass windows. Apart from this, the interiors of institutional buildings on the base lack significant architectural treatment. The residences feature conventional, low key, 1930s interiors in varying degrees of preservation.

The Hangars and Other Utility Buildings

The aircraft hangars feature vast areas of sliding glass doors (now painted over). Some feature a hesitant Modernistic treatment with slightly stepped corner towers and a rounded parapet. Others feature a more traditional treatment

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Barksdale Field Historic District, Bossier City, Bossier Parish, LA

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with a forward facing gable parapet. For the record, all hangars in the district date from the historic period. Although they do not contribute to the architectural significance of the district (as explained in Part 8), they should be considered contributing elements because they are essential to the facility's identity as a historic air base. Further research also might indicate that they are significant in their own right (as noted in Part 8).

The south side of the district contains a small number (around a dozen) of un-styled utility buildings: aircraft maintenance shops, machine shops, etc. These too are from the historic period, with all but three dating from between 1931 and 1935. While they do not contribute to the district's architectural significance, they are historic support structures and should be considered contributing elements.

Garages

There are also 52 multi-car garages located within the residential area, each servicing a given number of residences. Their hip roofs and stucco treatment echo the appearance of the adjacent residences. They are being counted as contributing elements because they are substantial in size and are historic dependencies.

Contributing Elements

Any building built prior to the end of 1941 (the 50 year cut-off) is listed as a contributing element. 1941 is an appropriate cut-off because it represents a "clean break" for the district. Almost nothing was constructed in the district during World War II. Then, in the 1950s, there was a major building program which added around 100 new housing units in and adjacent to the district. Those within the district, as well as others, have been demolished and have not been replaced. Except for the five percent intrusion rate and some alteration of contributing elements, the district's collection of buildings is virtually the same as it was on the eve of America's entry into World War II.

Alteration of Contributing Elements

In general, alterations consist of the following:

1. Window replacement in institutional buildings. In addition, in a few cases windows have been covered over, but the shape, recess, and frame of the window remains. Only the glass is replaced.

2. What were originally side lean-to porches on the residences have all been enclosed. In cases where the porch took the form of arched or flat cut

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Barksdale Field Historic District, Bossier City, Bossier Parish, LA

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articulated openings, the opening remains (usually glazed in). In cases where the porch consisted of columns, the colonnade has almost always been replaced with a solid wall.

3. As previously mentioned, the glass doors and walls on the hangars have been painted over.

These changes should be regarded as minimal. In all cases the building's pronounced architectural character is still starkly apparent.

Non-contributing Elements

As mentioned previously, the district has a very low 5% non-contributing element rate. All of the fourteen less than fifty year old buildings are one story, and most are small buildings such as a branch bank or various utility buildings. All lack pronounced architectural character of their own, and thus they are easily dominated visually by the surrounding contributing elements.

8.- Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
architecture

Period of Significance
1931-1941

Significant Dates
1931-1941

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Barksdale is of state significance in the area of architecture as one of Louisiana's most important examples of early twentieth century eclectic (period) architecture, the prevailing American architectural trend of that day.

The trend towards reviving historic styles for use in modern design has its roots in the French Beaux Arts system. In the nineteenth century, students at the Ecole des Beaux Arts were taught to work in a variety of historical styles with a fair degree of accuracy. Quotation from well known monuments of the past in new designs was taken as a sign of cultivation rather than poverty of invention. This spirit of learnedly imitating the past came to America in the later nineteenth century in the form of academic schools of architecture, professional publications, and a more discriminating clientele. Increasingly, clients were demanding designs in this or that particular historical style. Of course, some of this was a natural desire for more order in architecture after the chaotic excesses of the Queen Anne Revival.

Perhaps the greatest tour de force eclectic architecture could achieve was a large and evocative complex of buildings unified and distinguished by a consistent "period" treatment. Examples include World's Fairs, academic campuses, governmental complexes, resort complexes, and rural estates. In Louisiana, complexes of this ilk are pretty much limited to college campuses (for example, the Italian Renaissance LSU campus), although there are a few major exceptions (most notably the Louis XV style Veterans Hospital complex at Alexandria and Barksdale).

Of the dozen or so twentieth century eclectic architectural complexes in Louisiana, Barksdale is important because it is by far the largest, with over 250 buildings. (The others are in the 10-50 building range.) In addition, Barksdale is one of two with a Beaux Arts axial layout.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Computer printout of historic buildings provided by Barksdale AFB giving type and date of construction.

Historic photos provided by Barksdale AFB.

Grandy, Walter F., editor. The History of Barksdale Air Force Base, 1971.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository:

Barksdale Air Force Base

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property @ 225 acres

UTM References

A | 1, 5 | 4, 3, 6 | 1, 4, 0 | 3, 5 | 9, 7 | 2, 4, 0 |
Zone Easting Northing
C | 1, 5 | 4, 3, 4 | 9, 6, 0 | 3, 5 | 9, 5 | 6, 2, 0 |

B | 1, 5 | 4, 3, 7 | 1, 0, 0 | 3, 5 | 9, 5 | 4, 2, 0 |
Zone Easting Northing
D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to enclosed map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification Boundaries were drawn to encompass the historic section of Barksdale Air Force Base. Those buildings not included are less than fifty years old -- for example, 1950s and later housing abutting the district to the west and southwest. The linear section extending to the west recognizes the very important axial approach to the base.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Assisted by Barry McKinney & Sr. Airman Keith Stroh

name/title National Register Staff Barksdale AFB
organization Division of Historic Preservation date January 1992
street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160
city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

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Possible Additional Significance

Barksdale may also be significant in the area of military history as a virtually intact historic air base, but such is not being claimed because of the lack of survey data to make the necessary comparisons. Also, the hangars may be significant as rare examples of a type, but again, the documentation is not available at this time.

Historical Background

The announcement on December 4, 1928 that the Shreveport-Bossier City area had been chosen as the new home of the Third Attack Group was the culmination of several years work by local civic leaders. The heavily wooded site initially suggested to the government was rejected because it might prove too dangerous for low flying aircraft. The local Citizens Committee speedily suggested the present site, which at the time was flat cotton land dominated by the huge L. R. Kirby Cotton Plantation. Because it was highly developed agricultural land, its acquisition would involve a large capital outlay. Acquiring the land was quite a task because there were 128 separate tracts involving 800 owners. A fleet of attorneys worked to clear the numerous titles, and Shreveport citizens voiced their endorsement of the project by approving a \$1,650,000 bond issue to help finance the land purchase. In November 1930, the mayor of Shreveport formally turned the land over to the federal government. The new airfield would embrace an area approximately five miles wide and nine-and-a-half miles long, covering some 21,705 acres of land. Construction began in 1931, with 92% of the buildings in the nominated district being completed by 1935. The base was officially dedicated on February 2, 1933. It was named for Lieutenant Eugene H. Barksdale, a pioneering, heroic airman who lost his life in the line of duty in 1926. Barksdale Field was noted at the time as being the largest military air field in the world. Today, it is best known as one of the home bases of the Strategic Air Command.