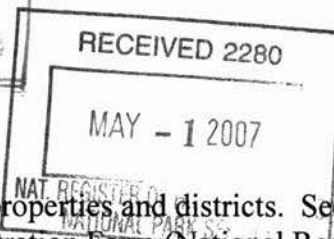


1024

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**

other names/site number

**2. Location**

street and number **2200 Vector Drive (Hangar 1)**  
**2300 Vector Drive (Hangar 2)**

\_\_\_\_ Not for publication

city or town **Cahokia**

\_\_\_\_ vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **St. Clair** code **163** zip code **62206**

**3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally \_\_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*William L. Wood / SHPO*  
Signature of certifying official

*9-27-2006*  
Date

**Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

\_\_\_\_  
American Indian Tribe

**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**  
Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**  
County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

| I, hereby certify that this property is:   | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action   |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register<br>___ See continuation sheet.      | <u>Patrick Andrews</u>  | <u>6/14/2007</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the<br>National Register<br>___ See continuation sheet. | _____                   | _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the<br>National Register                            | _____                   | _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register  | _____                   | _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain):  | _____                   | _____            |

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)  
\_\_\_ private  
\_\_\_ public-local  
 public-State  
\_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)  
 building(s)  
\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

|              |                 |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register      **N/A**

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
**N/A**

**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**  
Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**  
County and State

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) **Transportation/ Air-related**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) **Transportation/ Air-related**

---

**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification Other: **Modern Movement: Art Deco**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **Concrete**

Roof **Tar Paper**

Walls **Brick**

other **Concrete, Granite**

Narrative Description: **See continuation sheets**

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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Narrative Description:

Built in 1928, the Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are the two remaining original hangars at the present day St. Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia, Illinois, which is only seven minutes from downtown St. Louis, Missouri and the Gateway Arch. These hangars have direct access to all major thoroughfares, as I-255, I-55, I-70 and I-64 are only five to seven minutes away. With direct access to the main railroad lines of Union Pacific and Illinois Central Gulf and the Mississippi River Port only two miles west, these hangars are in the middle of a transportation hub. The airport has grown to be home for over 260 aircraft, handles nearly 200,000 operations annually, employs approximately 900 people, and contributes over \$135 million annually to the local economy.

Hangars 1 and 2 are located on the northwest side of the airfield, off of a small runway that runs perpendicular to the main runway, in a row with nine other non-historic hangars. The hangars are nearly identical, barreled roof box hangars and with an available open hangar space of 11,430 square feet; they are each capable of housing a DC3. Built in the Art Deco style, each has twenty 10' X 20' sliding hangar doors on both the north and south sides to open the hangar space. The Art Deco style is apparent on the aircraft entrances, which resemble a proscenium with an opening for both north and south doors of 100' X 20' flanked by flat roofs that cover storage and offices on the east and west sides making the overall hangar 137'10" (east to west) by 113'8" (north to south).

United States Department of the Interior  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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The hangars are two stories high, with a streamlined, stepped parapet that hides the barrel roof. Made of stucco with wooden banding, the parapet has 40' wooden projections representing the wings of a 1920s aircraft. In the center of the parapet is the Curtiss-Wright emblem, a plane rising above the clouds. On either side of the parapet, the brick walls resemble piers with concrete coping and foundations. The "piers" on the west sides of the hangars are about 15' wide, with a nine-light, steel window located on each floor, one above the other, separated by a concrete panel. About two feet above the second story windows is a red granite panel, with curved geometric Art Deco motifs. The piers on the east corner are similar, except there are two windows on the second floor directly above a window and a door on the first story, separated by a brick pilaster. The southwest/northwest sides of each hangar have one set of windows and a door. The larger southeast/northeast sides have an entrance with three sets of windows. The south and north sides are identical. The west side is one story; the east side has a second story addition. The hangar openings on these elevations consist of ten glazed steel hangar doors. The doors are 10' wide and on tracks, so they can slide open wide enough to accommodate aircraft.

Although the north and south sides are identical, the building is asymmetrical as the east and west are different. The west side pier is one story. The north and south sides have one door with a window above. What looks like a second story in the photos is just the hangar over the flat roof. The east side has the wooden second story. The north and south sides have one set of two-story windows and one with a door above the window.

On the sides of the hangars, between the piers, are recessed brick walls with six sets of one-over-one, double-sash paired windows on each floor. A band of concrete, resembling a continuous

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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sill, is directly below the second story windows. This band also caps the brick pilasters that slightly jut out from the walls and divide the paired windows on the first floor.

The east side has a wood-framed, second floor that was added to the flat roof, in the 1940s, to accommodate the many men and women who learned to fly here preparing to enter World War II. Six one-over one, double-sash windows are on this floor. A continuous band of concrete, demarcating the original roofline, lies just below these windows. The first floor has six steel casement windows with concrete sills that are separated by brick piers. The two entrances on this side are located after every other window. The west entrance has a transom and side lights. A small brick wall, about 2' high, and 3 ½' long juts out from the wall in front of this entrance, creating a small courtyard. The west entrance is topped by a transom light.

#### Interior

The ceiling in the hangar area is steel supported by steel and wooden beams. All floors were originally concrete. Some have a carpet overlay. The walls on the second story addition are wood/plaster.

The hangars' steel doors open onto a large open space (11,430 square feet) that has glazed and painted masonry walls and a concrete floor. The west side varies slightly in its original plan and consists of 1,340 square feet on the first floor, divided into three storage areas with one large window and several smaller windows. Originally designed to provide light and ventilation, the many paned, metal-framed windows have long since rusted shut.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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On the first floor of the east side is a men's lavatory, two entrances with hallways connecting the offices and storage areas for a total of 2,005 square feet. Stairwells to the second floor are located on either end. The second floor, which measures 1,500 square feet, has a women's lavatory, hallways and is divided into bedrooms.

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 have sufficient integrity for listing in the National Historic Register. Very little has changed on the interior as well as the exterior since it was first constructed in 1928. The original steam heat was replaced in the 1960s with several heaters hung from the ceiling. Air conditioning has been added to the offices and window units placed in the upstairs sleeping areas. The windows on the east side (with the addition) have all been replaced. The windows to the north, south and west are original. The hangar space has its original dimensions and the interior rooms are mostly original, right down to the concrete block bathrooms. The minor changes that have occurred on the interior floor plan are reversible. The hangars, while intact, are experiencing some deterioration and are in need of repair. However, the small alterations and the deterioration of some of the building materials have not impacted the overall integrity of the hangars.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

**Military  
Industry**

Period of Significance: **1928 - 1956**

Significant Dates     **N/A**

Significant Person:

Cultural Affiliation   **N/A**

Architect/Builder     **Franzheim, Kenneth, architect**

Narrative Statement of Significance:

**See attached Continuation Sheets.**



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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**Statement of Significance:**

The Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their associations with the military and industry. The hangars have national significance for their use during World War II. In the early 1940s, flight instructor Oliver Parks operated his flight school out of the hangars. Parks Flight School, which is the first federally approved school of aeronautics, put the Curtiss-Wright hangars to good use by training pilots for World War II. It is estimated Parks trained fifteen percent of all American pilots. The hangars also have local significance for their use as manufacturing plants for Curtiss-Wright aircraft and storage. The period of significance is from 1928, the year the hangars were built, until 1956, the fifty-year cutoff for significance for the National Register.

**Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Company**

The Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 were constructed in 1928 in the Curtiss-Steinberg Airport, later Bi-State Parks Airport, now known as the St. Louis Downtown Airport. The airport was developed by a business consortium that included Mark Steinberg, a St. Louis financier (also of Steinberg memorial Skating Rink fame), Curtiss-Wright, an aircraft and engine manufacturing firm, the Transcontinental Air Transport Service, (which later became TWA), and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The group's purpose was to provide the downtown St. Louis area with a high-quality airport offering paved runways.

United States Department of the Interior  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Company was in its infancy in 1927, the year the deal came together. They manufactured aircraft and aircraft engines and were looking to expand to keep up with the rush of new interest in aviation. The company had hangars at Lambert Field in St. Louis, which are gone today, but needed further room to grow. The company thought an airport this close to a major city would be beneficial and set out to have facilities constructed.

When the original St. Louis municipal airport was conceived, Transcontinental Air Transport Service hired Charles Lindbergh to scout three possible areas in St. Louis for their hub. Lindbergh chose the Cahokia, Illinois, site as his number one choice.

The internationally known architect Kenneth Franzheim was chosen to conceptualize and design the airport. Franzheim was born in 1890 in Wheeling, West Virginia, and, after graduating from Lawrenceville School and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, worked for Welles Bosworth, an architect from Boston. Afterwards, Franzheim served in the U.S. Army Air Corps for two years, before becoming a partner of C. Howard Crane of Detroit in 1920. When he started his independent practice in 1925, he began specializing in airports and big commercial buildings. It was during this time that Franzheim designed the Curtiss-Steinberg Airport. The original blue print for the *Curtiss-Steinberg Airport of East Louis, Illinois* still hangs in St. Louis Airport Downtown's Administration office.

Four hangars, which were subsequently named the Curtiss-Wright Hangars, were originally built to accommodate the airport. Because of its location along the Mississippi River, access to clay for brick-making and the many skilled European immigrants flooding into the city after the 1904

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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World's Fair there was plenty of work for stonemasons. Their talents were put to use on the Curtiss-Wright hangars as evidenced by the granite carvings and cement ornamentation.

In 1927, ground was broken and construction on the hangars began on the airport. The hangars opened in 1928 and were, by far, the largest structures in the area. To accommodate traffic, the airport originally had three runways, each 1,650 feet in length, and four airplane hangars. Three hangars had 14,000 square feet and the fourth had 44,000 square feet. As a modern, full-service facility, it even offered a snack bar.

At the time the airport was constructed, the Curtiss-Wright Corporation had yet to be established. The corporation was formed in 1929 when twelve businesses that were associated with either Wright Aeronautical (of the Wright Brothers) or Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Company (for aviating pioneer Glenn Curtiss) merged to create what was then the biggest aviation business in the United States.

From 1928 to 1943, the hangars were used as a manufacturing plant for Curtiss-Wright aircraft and storage. In its engine development Curtiss-Wright pioneered such innovations as forged aluminum pistons, the dynamic damper which absorbed crankshaft vibration, finned cylinder heads for cooling, and nitrided cylinder barrels, a process which gave vastly improved wear resistance and life. The P1 and P2 aircraft were developed, tested and manufactured within these hangars.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** St. Clair County, IL

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The hangars not only were used as spaces to repair aircraft, but also provided housing and schooling for future pilots. Charles Lindberg, Amelia Earhart, and Wiley Post were just a few of the famous pilots who called this home. Ozark Airlines and TWA both had their start here. During the war effort, the company had been required to place its focus on the development and mass production of reciprocating engines and aircraft. After World War II, with the jet age dawning, the company downsized from their manufacturing of these aircraft and developed the piloting and training aspects of aviation. Of the four hangars that were originally built, Hangars 1 and 2 are the only surviving hangars. Hangar 3 burned in the late thirties and Hangar 4 burned down in 1984.

### **Oliver Parks and Parks College**

*(The following was largely taken from a 1977 Centralia, Illinois newspaper, see appendix)*

Oliver Parks, a native of Minonk [Illinois] and a World War I veteran who had dabbled briefly in the post-war automobile business, established his "seminary of lunacy"<sup>1</sup> on August 1, 1927, at Lambert Field (now Lambert St. Louis International Airport) which is bordered on the one side by Lindbergh Boulevard.

He began with a rented hangar, himself as faculty, and a pair of primitive single-engined airplanes. He finished four months later, with the school experiencing only marginal success, when he got caught in a spin and crash-landed into a suburban St. Louis meadow.

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<sup>1</sup> In an old *Saturday Evening Post* article, Jack Alexander, who graduated from St. Louis University, referred such flight schools as "...seminaries of adventurous lunacy."

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Parks broke his back, his nose, and a leg, suffered the loss of his left eye, several teeth and a section of his jawbone. Marginal success, it then seemed, was all his school would ever experience.

But in April of 1928, a repaired and reconditioned Oliver Parks took off again, moving his school to a 113-acre tract of land in Cahokia, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. There he established a 50-hour training course and met with enough success to qualify for U.S. Department approval – that venerable Air Agency Certificate No. 1.

Physical facilities for the fledgling institution grew with the school – a three-story dormitory to house 150 students; a modern building with new equipment for mechanical training; later additional dormitories to handle increased enrollment.

In 1935, the school received official recognition from all major airlines and aircraft factories in the nation. And Parks became an airline itself – as part of their practical training, Executive Transport students began to operate an air service from Cahokia to Indianapolis, an airline enterprise which one day would be merged with other concerns to create Ozark Airlines.

In 1939, with a European war underway and creeping closer to American Shores, Oliver Parks was called to Washington by General Henry H. (Hap) Arnold and given a staggering challenge – increase flight training capacity from 400 to 7,000 pilots each year...and do it within 90 days.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Parks, in response, opened five additional schools, using original Parks graduates as a staff and faculty nucleus. Between 1940 and 1945, Parks Air College trained 24,000 military and transport pilots – one out of every 10 delivered to the U.S. Army Air Corps – as well as hundreds of aircraft mechanics.

### **Curtiss-Wright Hangars**

The number of those enlisted during the war was staggering. The authors of *World War II and the American Home Front* (Harper, et al.) estimated that by 1945, over 12 million G.I.s were on active duty, with a total of 16 millions serving in the military over the course of the war. Those inducted into the military were relocated to 242 recently built and quickly expanding training camps.

In order to accommodate the growing number of military trainees, in the early 1940s, Oliver Parks leased the Curtis-Steinberg airport and moved his flight school into the hangar. Parks Flight School, the first federally-approved school of aeronautics, put the Curtiss-Wright hangars to good use by training pilots for World War II. After the war, Parks, bought out the owners and renamed the airport Parks Metropolitan Airport.

By 1959, the airport and the Curtiss-Wright hangars had become unappreciated. The airport was closed until 1965, when it was purchased by the Bi-State Development Agency. In 1984, the airport was renamed the St. Louis Downtown – Parks Airport. The airport, which is currently the St. Louis Downtown Airport, continued to expand and still operated today.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 11 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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At present, Curtiss-Wright Hangar 2 is the home of the Greater St. Louis Air and Space Museum. The museum collection includes, among other things:

- The 1941 Meyers O.T. W Bi-plane once owned by Nikki Caplan, world famous St. Louis balloonist;
- A full-scale YAV-8A “harrier” used by McDonnell Douglas and the Marine Corps in the 1970s;
- The 1960 golf cart used by President Kennedy and Mr. McDonnell when he visited McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis, MO;
- An extension aerospace library, including books and log flight books dating 1930 and earlier;
- The Mercury space flight suit worn by Virgil “Gus” Grissom for early training exercises;
- Jet Star previously owned by Howard Hughes;
- Extensive spacesuit collection from Rose Church, who was the NASA nurse on the Mercury program.

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(8-86)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   8   Page   12   **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are good candidates for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The hangars have local significance for their association with the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, a leading company in the aircraft manufacturing business. The hangars have also achieved national significance for their role as a training facility for World War II military and transport pilots.



**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**  
Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**  
County and State

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Name of repository **St. Louis Downtown Airport local archives**

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property **Less than 1 acre**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

1 **15 747051 4273379**    3 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_    4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

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(8-86)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   9   Page  12  **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** St. Clair County, IL

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St. Louis Downtown Airport website, [www.st.louisdowntownairport.com](http://www.st.louisdowntownairport.com).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 13 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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Verbal Boundary Description

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 (2200 Vector Drive) and 2 (2300 Vector Drive) are located in Sauget, St. Clair County, Illinois, on part of Lots 139, 140, & 228 of Cahokia Common Fields (St. Louis Air Terminals), Township 1 North, Range 11 West.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the hangars only.

**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**

Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**

County and State

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**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title **Wendi M. Sellers**

organization **St. Louis Downtown Airport**

date **7-27-06**

street and number **1680 Sauget Industrial Parkway**

telephone **618-337-6060**

city or town **Sauget**

state **IL**

zip code **62206**

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**Additional Documentation**

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Property Owner**

---

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **St. Louis Downtown Airport**

street and number **1680 Sauget Industrial Parkway**

telephone **618-337-6060**

city or town **Sauget**

state **IL**

zip code **62206**

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 11 Page 14

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"The attached is further explanation for information that was requested from the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, asking for more information in order to successfully complete the nomination...."

Civilian Pilot Training Program

And

The Curtiss-Wright Hangars

It is actually surprising the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) not only came to fruition, but also continued after World War II. From the beginning it was fraught with contradiction, isolationism, misconceptions and political fighting. On the one hand, congress wanted air preparedness, but not war readiness. They wanted European association, but not European responsibility. But most of all, no one seemed to know what to do about aeronautics.

The Coolidge administration had sponsored the Air Commerce Act that required aircraft registration and certification, certification of pilots and regulation of air traffic. Herbert Hoover's administration restructured the airways, but both administrations left aviation business pretty much alone. As a consequence, two major companies, United Aircraft and Transport Corporation and, pertinent to our purposes, Curtiss-Wright, controlled 81 % of aircraft and engine sales. Even though Roosevelt's administration did not have a clear aviation policy, FDR felt that if war did come, superior air power would be the advantage. Chief of Air Corps, "Hap" Arnold said 1,499 aircraft were needed to mobilize. FDR suddenly wanted 20,000 planes to prevent an attack. This was eventually scaled down to 10,000. Everyone wondered who would fly these planes as the U.S. had a small reserve of pilots and no training program. The CPTP was the logical way.

The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 consisted of a panel of five, one of who was Robert Hinckley, originator of the CPTP. The Civilian Pilot Training Program grew out of President Roosevelt's New Deal and the Works

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 11 Page 15

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Progress Administration. It was designed to use the classrooms of American colleges and universities and was fully federally funded. The Works Progress Administration (WPA), contained many different programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the National Youth Administration (NYA), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and all were designed to get America working. However, the CPTP had another, some said thinly disguised goal: war preparedness.

As a division of the National Youth Administration (NYA), the CPTP was generally believed to be Roosevelt's admission that war was inevitable. It began with a three-point promise: to train and make pilots war ready, give an economic boost to light plane industry and FBOs, and condition young Americans to the evolving air age...so called "air conditioning," by producing textbooks and curriculum.

In a December 1938 press conference the administration announced an experimental program using \$100,000 from the NYA that would train 330 pilots in 13 colleges and universities. By January of 1939 a Gallop Poll showed 87% of voting Americans supported plans for the CPTP. In June of 1939 college administrators met to further the CPTP forward with a plan for practical education that would benefit both the student and the workforce. Now with the support of the administration, college administrators and the American people, Hinckley moved on to Congress.

The House of Representatives was first to hear testimony in March 1939. Hinckley was quick to detail the CPTP aim to encourage and develop aeronautics and to train civilian pilots who could, if necessary, be quickly merged into the Navy and the Army Air Corps. The House was concerned that the CPTP be open to all candidates not just students in a traditional four-year or two-year degree program, but also to applicants who were not lucky enough to be able to afford college. At the insistence of Everett M. Dirksen (R. -Il), the first assault on a segregated military began: the bill stated that no one could be denied the program on the basis of race, creed or color. It also allowed for women to be trained, but only one woman for every ten men.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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After much discussion regarding whether the trainees should be required to enter military service (no), facility selection, funding, and above all how to advance toward war preparedness while appearing to be isolationists, the bill passed the House.

The Senate bill was similar in that it stated that no one could be refused admittance because of race, creed or color. It allowed that 5% of students be non-college bound and authorized training of fifteen thousand pilots the first year with a budget of \$5,675,000 in 1939 and 1940 after which it would have \$7 million fiscally.

Even after President Roosevelt signed the bill on June 27, 1939, the Congress continued to battle with how much money was to be spent, how many pilots should be trained and as always, how not appear to be war mongering even though by this time most assumed war was inevitable.

When the Coolidge administration enacted the Air Commerce Act, Oliver "Lafe" Parks was quick to sign up. His school has Air Certificate Number One. He was beginning to be prepared for one of the greatest war efforts the United States had ever encountered.

After leasing space at Lambert Airfield, he decided to start his own school and searched until he found Cahokia, Illinois. There he set up his facilities to train executive transport pilots, commercial pilots, and airplane and engine master mechanics flight courses.

Before the Congress officially enacted the CPTP, Gen. Harold "Hap" Arnold called on his civilian friends to use their private aviation schools to train pilots, Lafe Parks was ready. By the time the June 27, 1939 came around, his Cahokia campus, with over 300 commercial aviation students, was filled to the brim. He built more dormitories and still that wasn't enough. In 1940 Parks leased the adjacent Curtiss-Steinberg Airport, eventually buying out Curtiss, renaming the Airport to Parks Metropolitan, asked the civilian tenants to leave and expanded his school into the three original Curtiss-Wright Hangars.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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After Pearl Harbor, the CPTP became the War Training Service (WTS) and air traffic increased to over 100 planes on takeoffs and landings. The civilian instructors were immediately inducted into the military and given a choice: train other pilots here or go into combat. The three-part course consisted of flight training at Curtiss-Parks Field, ground school, and military training, but without guns or target practice. Eventually it became clear to everyone that training pilots did little good without ground support. For every trained pilot, five support personnel were required.

Hangar #1 was named "Red," #2 "White," and #3 "Blue." The hangars were budding with activity to accommodate General "Hap" Arnold's request to train 4,000 army cadets immediately. Commercial students worked and trained from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm after which the Air Corps mechanics arrived and worked until 2:30 am.

Commercial students had to complete 200 hours of training. The CPTP had to complete just as much training, but in only 60 to 90 hours. Training was exhausting, rigorous and stringent. If you couldn't master the program in 60 hours (in 90 if you could plead your case successfully) you were washed out. That meant student turnover every 60 to 90 days for the Air Corps School. East St. Louis and the surrounding areas had long been the site of giant industrial plants with huge furnaces and smoke stacks spewing dark clouds of smog. Often this generated a thick haze over the airfield making it impossible to take off, let alone fly. When this happened, it meant the students worked harder and longer on clear days.

The 100 trainer planes were tail draggers, most with skids, but some with a tail wheel, and most days all 100 planes would be on the airfield at one time, nose to tail. There were planes in front, back and to each side, taxiing using the whole field for takeoffs and landings. If the trainee was in a plane with a tailskid, the grass field was the best place because those planes didn't have flaps or brakes and the skid dug into the grass bringing the plane to a halt.



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National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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After flying, the trainees would push all the planes into its designated hangar and in the evening mechanics would work on them until 2:30 am. The "Red Hangar" had a second story addition added to the East side that housed administration offices, classrooms and a snack bar.

Although many young men worked and trained with distinction in these historic hangars, some eventually giving their lives to protect their ideals, there are several that stand out.

George Meacham, a farm boy from Clinton, Oklahoma went on to the "Flying Tigers." Joseph John Kruzal became Major General Kruzal, deputy director of operations, Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force. The most famous of all is Lt. Col. Francis S. "Gabby" Gabreski, who barely made his "elimination flight" but went on to become America's future "Greatest Living Ace."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 12 Page 19

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Reference:

Faherty, William Barnaby, S.J. (1990). Parks College: Legacy of an Aviation Pioneer. Ocean Park, Washington: Harris & Friedrich

Pisano, Dominick A. (1993). To Fill the Sky With Pilots: The Civilian Pilot Training Programs, 1939-1946. Originally published: Urbana; Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Interview/Personal Communication

Wheeler, Carl "Chubb"(2007, April 13). Instructor, Civilian Pilot Training Program, East St. Louis, Illinois.  
Interview.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 13 Page 20

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Photographic Documentation – Photo List

IL\_St. Clair County\_Curtiss-Wright Hangars

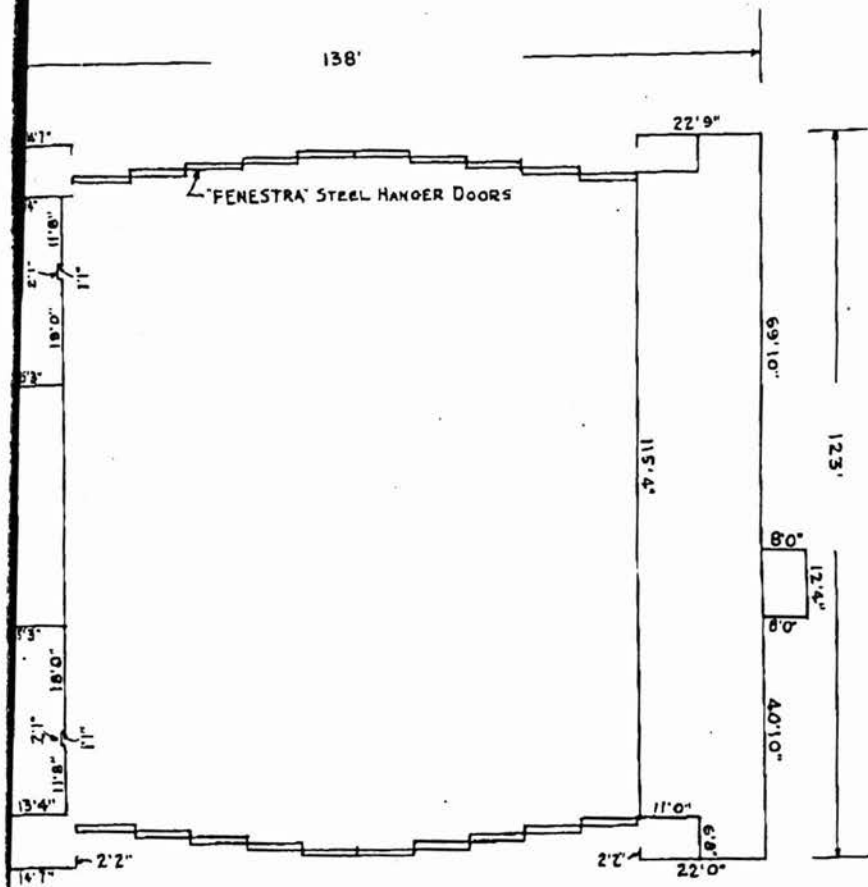
1. Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2
2. St. Clair County, Illinois
3. Wendi Sellers
4. September 2006
5. St. Louis Downtown Airport

Photos (CRH = Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2)

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH001 | 1950 Arial view of airport layout  |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH002 | Exterior four views; from front, north, rear and side of Hangar 2                                      |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH003 | Exterior, west ramp view of Hangar 2 doors   |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH004 | Exterior, rooftop view of current airport as Hangar 2 sits   |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH005 | Exterior, 1930-era picture of front of Hangar 2  |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH006 | Exterior, southern view of Hangar 1  |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH007 | Exterior, view of parapet of Hangar 1  |
| IL_St. Clair Co_CRH008 | Exterior, 1930-era picture of southern view of Hangars 1, 2, and 3<br>(before fire destroyed Hangar 3) |

(17)

OUTLINE SKETCH  
OF  
HANGAR No. 1  
SCALE 1" = 20'



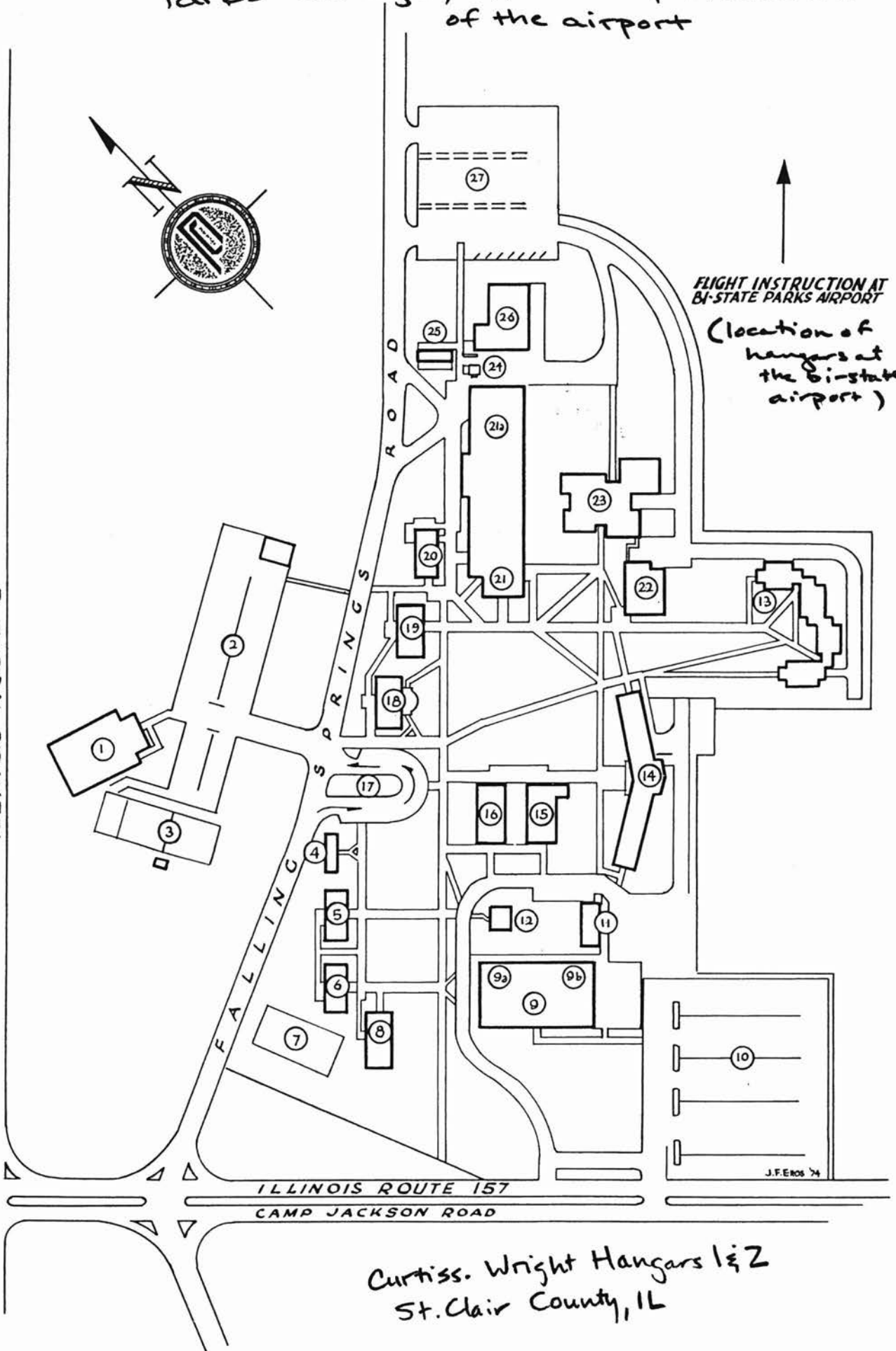
Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL

Parks College, approximately 1/4 mile SW  
of the airport



FLIGHT INSTRUCTION AT  
BI-STATE PARKS AIRPORT  
(location of  
hangars at  
the Bi-state  
airport)

ILLINOIS ROUTE 3

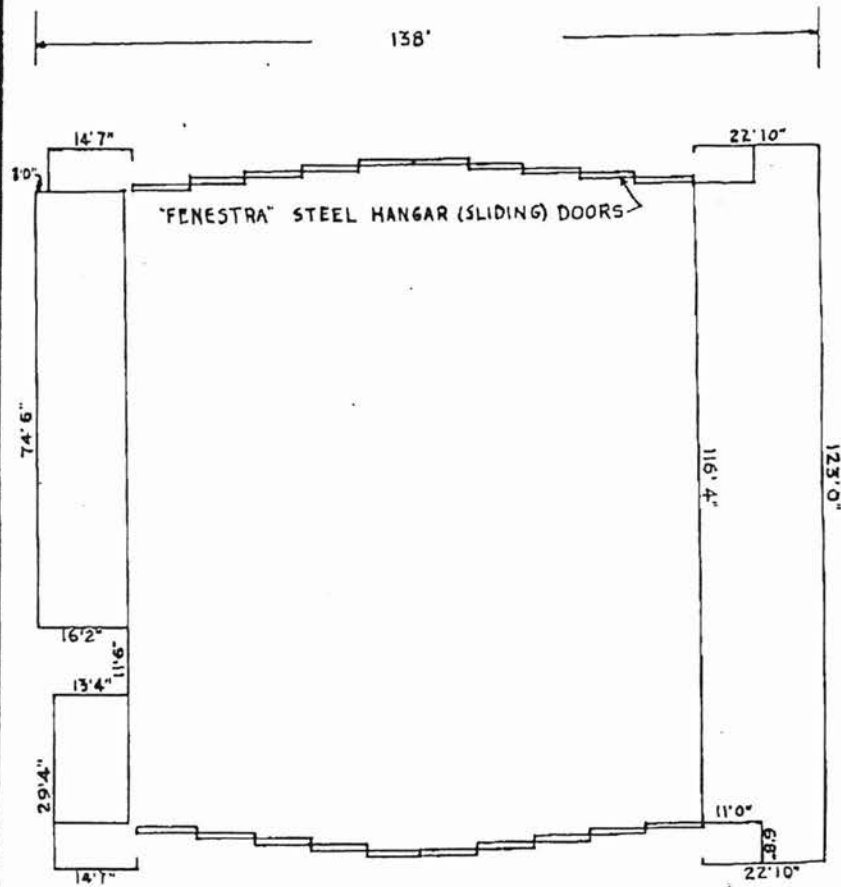


J.F. EROS '74

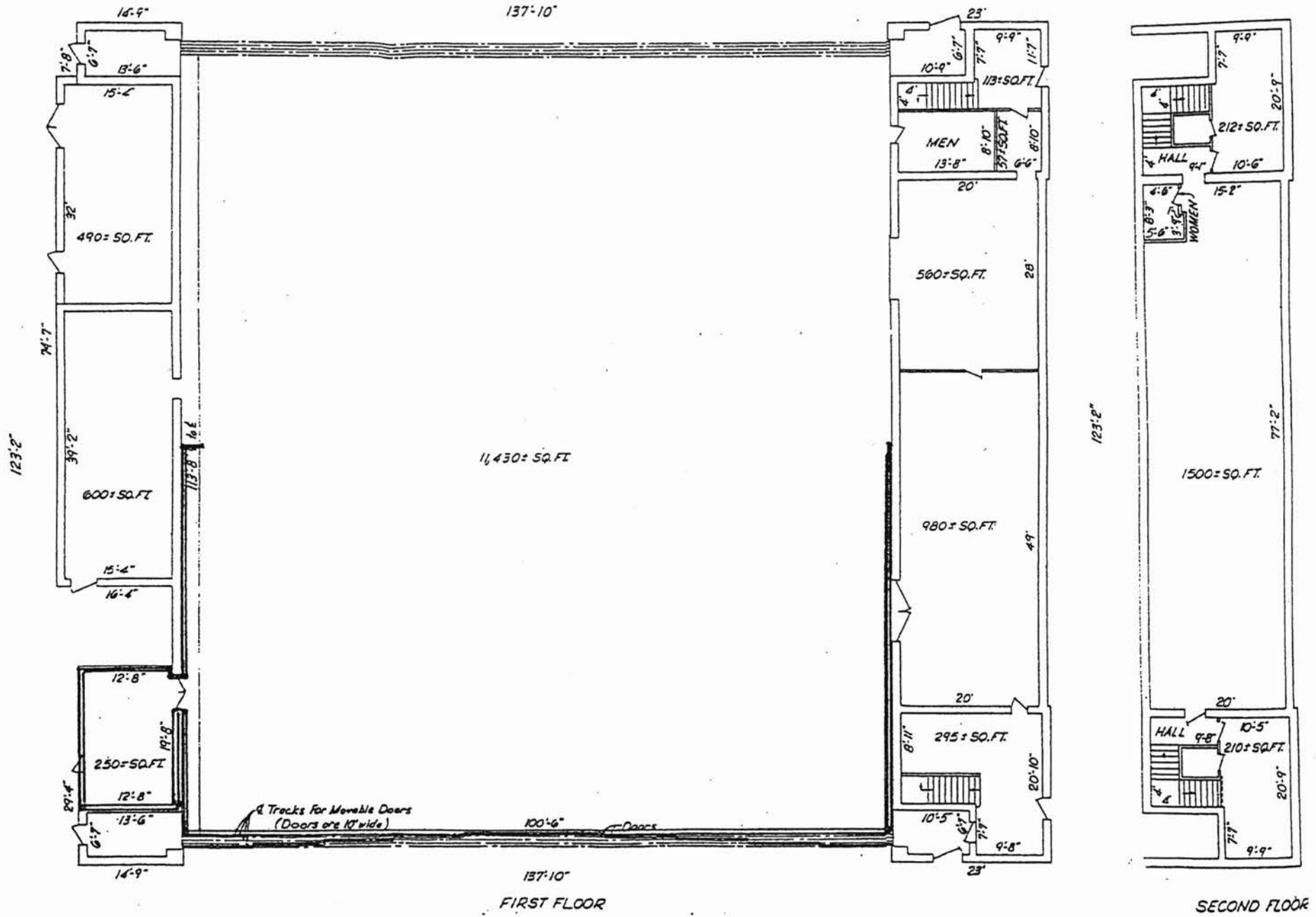
Curtiss. Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL

(20)

OUTLINE SKETCH  
OF  
HANGAR No. 2  
SCALE 1" = 20'



Curtiss Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL



FLOOR PLAN OF HANGAR II

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2, St. Clair County, IL





Curniss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2

St Clair County, IL

Wendi Sellers, photos/images

5/2004

Hangar 1, N elevation, looking SE



Curtiss-Wright Hangers 1 & 2  
St Clair County, IL

Wendi Sellers, photos/images  
5/2004

Hanger 2, Selevation, looking NE

2



Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St Clair County, IL

Wendi Sellers, photos/images  
5/2004

Hangar 1, east elevation, looking W



Curtiss-Wright Hangers 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL

Wendi Sellers, photo/images  
5/2004

Hangar 2 east elevation, looking W

4

NO SMOKING  
IN THE HANGAR

N885BC



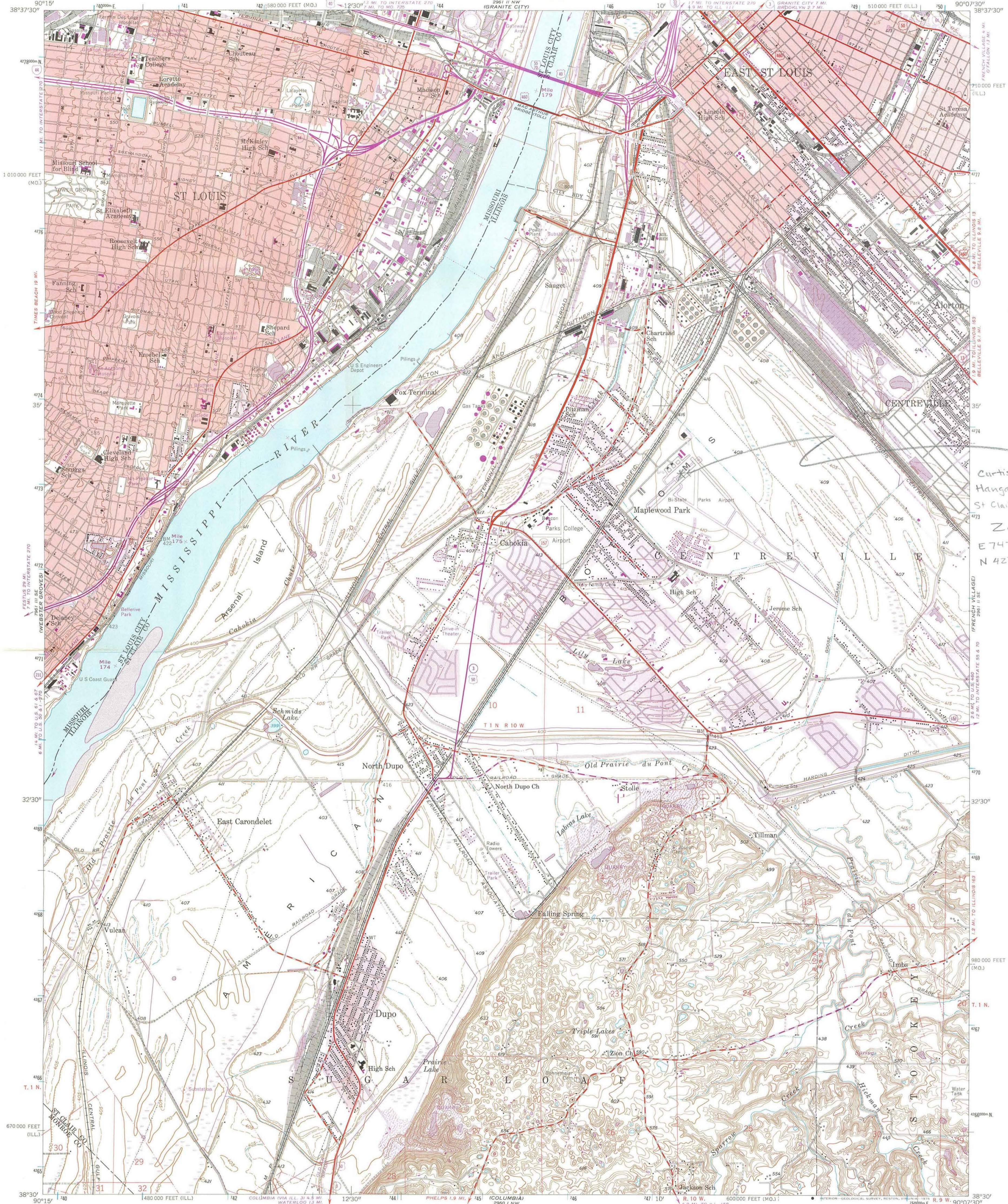
Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2

St. Clair County, IL

Wendi Sellers, photo/images

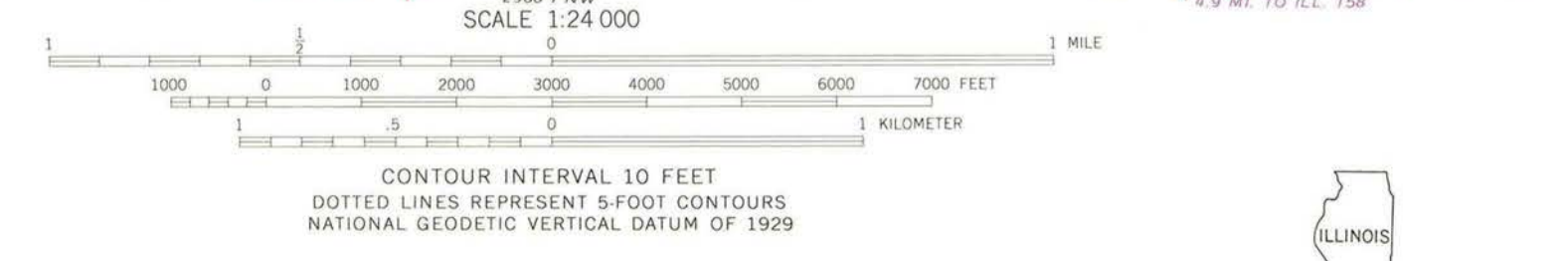
5/2004

Interior, Hangar 1



Curtiss-Wright  
Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL  
Zone 15  
E 747051  
N 4273379

Maped by the Geological Survey  
Revised by the Army Map Service  
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from planetable surveys by the Geological Survey 1929  
and 1933. Planimetric detail revised from aerial photographs  
taken 1952. Field check 1954  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Illinois coordinate system, west zone  
and Missouri coordinate system, east zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15,  
shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801  
AND BY THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION  
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological  
Survey from aerial photographs taken 1968 and 1974  
This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Heavy-duty       | Light-duty      |
| Medium-duty      | Unimproved dirt |
| Interstate Route | U. S. Route     |
|                  | State Route     |

CAHOKIA, ILL. - MO.  
N 3830 - W 9007.5 / 7.5  
1954  
PHOTOREVISED 1968 AND 1974  
AMS 2961 II SW - SERIES V863

# National Register of Historic Places

## Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2014

PART LOT 116 - FRANK & ELIZABETH CLOPON  
19.12 ACRES (1-13-34) AND MARY N. STILLMAN AND LOUISA BETZ

PART LOT 116 - MARCEL J. SOUCY (TRUSTEE)  
40.38 ACRES (4-15-50)

ILLINOIS STATE  
TRUST CO. (TRUSTEE)  
(2-8-50)

PART LOT 117 - KOPPERS COMPANY, INC.  
135.50 ACRES (11-9-44)

ENTIRE  
LOT 111  
CONTAINS  
13.10 ACRES

PART LOT 118  
PART  
LOT 112

MISSOURI PACIFIC R.R.

ST LOUIS AIR TERMINALS, INC.  
(PARKS METROPOLITAN AIRPORT)

LOT 136-C

LOT 131-VIOLA B

LOT 136-E  
59.39 ACRES

LOT 139-C

LOT 139-E  
MAGGIE A. PFEIFFER  
62.40 ACRES

LOT 141-B  
RODAR H. LITTLE  
26.13 ACRES (7-23-28)

N.W. CORNER  
LOUIS MEN

LOT 230-B  
MELVIN L. SCHARF  
& ELVIRA H/W  
21.40 ACRES (3-26-47)

LOT 231  
MARY A. JEROME  
& ISABELLE HAAS  
21.90 ACRES  
(8-28-58; 12-12-53; 3-19-58)

LOT 222

LOT 22

LOT 219-B  
JOHN C. DEMANGE  
33.83 ACRES (9-21-17)

LOT 220 (EXCEPT 300)  
ALPHONSE LEVIN  
(9-29-17)

LOT 218-B

LOT 212-B  
SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
20.13 ACRES (8-21-49)

LOT 211

LOT  
WM. KO

JEROME LANE 7

LOT 213-B  
LEO SAUGET  
& WIFE  
(9-16-50)

LOT 207  
PART SUBDIVIDED  
PART OWNED BY  
ELIZABETH JEROME  
(5-2-36)

LOT 208  
SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
(8-1-49)

LOT 209  
PART SUBDIVIDED  
PART OWNED BY  
JAMES O. JOHNSON  
& RUTH M. H/W  
(11-1-49)

LOT 197

JOSE

LOT 198

LOT 204

LOT 203

LOT 199

LOT 200 - 17.86 ACRES



FRONT



NORTH SIDE



REAR & SIDE  
(SOUTH)



REAR & SIDE  
(NORTH)











COMMUNITY CENTER  
**EASTSIDE  
CHAPTER 64**  
1000 S. 10TH ST. SPOKANE, IDAHO 83402





National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Curtiss--Wright Hangars 1 and 2

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ILLINOIS, St. Clair

DATE RECEIVED: 5/01/07

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16TH DAY:

DATE OF 45TH DAY:

6/14/07

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06001024

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6/14/2007 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*On resubmission, additional contextual information has been provided.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus

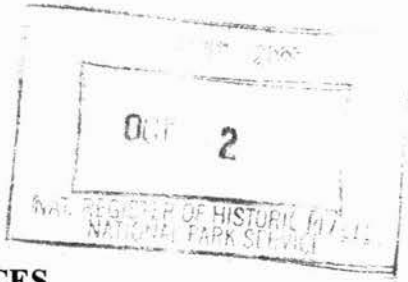
DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 6/14/2007

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

1024



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**

other names/site number

**2. Location**

street and number **2200 Vector Drive (Hangar 1)**  
**2300 Vector Drive (Hangar 2)**

\_\_\_\_ Not for publication

city or town **Cahokia**

\_\_\_\_ vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **St. Clair** code **163** zip code **62206**

**3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*William L. Leland / SHP*  
Signature of certifying official

*9-27-2006*  
Date

**Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

\_\_\_\_\_  
American Indian Tribe

**4. National Park Service Certification**

| I, hereby certify that this property is:  | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
|---|-------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register<br><input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.                 | _____                   | _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the<br>National Register<br><input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | _____                   | _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the<br>National Register   | _____                   | _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register   | _____                   | _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain):   | _____                   | _____          |

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register      N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**  
Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**  
County and State

---

**6. Function or Use**

---

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) **Transportation/ Air-related**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) **Transportation/ Air-related**

---

**7. Description**

---

Architectural Classification Other: **Modern Movement: Art Deco**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **Concrete**

Roof **Tar Paper**

Walls **Brick**

other **Concrete, Granite**

Narrative Description: **See continuation sheets**



**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

**Military**  
**Industry**

Period of Significance: **1928 - 1956**

Significant Dates      **N/A**

Significant Person:

Cultural Affiliation    **N/A**

Architect/Builder      **Franzheim, Kenneth, architect**

Narrative Statement of Significance:

**See attached Continuation Sheets.**

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2  
Name of Property

St. Clair County, IL  
County and State

---

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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

Name of repository **St. Louis Downtown Airport local archives**

---

### 10. Geographical Data

---

Acreage of Property **Less than 1 acre**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

|   | Zone Easting | Northing | Zone Easting | Northing |
|---|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| 1 | 15           | 747051   | 4273379      | 3 _____  |
| 2 | _____        | _____    | 4 _____      | _____    |

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

**Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2**  
Name of Property

**St. Clair County, IL**  
County and State

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title **Wendi M. Sellers**

organization **St. Louis Downtown Airport**

date **7-27-06**

street and number **1680 Sauget Industrial Parkway**

telephone **618-337-6060**

city or town **Sauget**

state **IL**

zip code **62206**

---

**Additional Documentation**

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:  
Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Property Owner**

---

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **St. Louis Downtown Airport**

street and number **1680 Sauget Industrial Parkway**

telephone **618-337-6060**

city or town **Sauget**

state **IL**

zip code **62206**

---

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NPS Form 10-900-a  
OMB No. 1024-0018  
(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 St. Clair County, IL**

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Narrative Description:

Built in 1928, the Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are the two remaining original hangars at the present day St. Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia, Illinois, which is only seven minutes from downtown St. Louis, Missouri and the Gateway Arch. These hangars have direct access to all major thoroughfares, as I-255, I-55, I-70 and I-64 are only five to seven minutes away. With direct access to the main railroad lines of Union Pacific and Illinois Central Gulf and the Mississippi River Port only two miles west, these hangars are in the middle of a transportation hub. The airport has grown to be home for over 260 aircraft, handles nearly 200,000 operations annually, employs approximately 900 people, and contributes over \$135 million annually to the local economy.

~~Hangars 1 and 2 are located on the northwest side of the airfield, off of a small runway that runs~~ Hangars 1 and 2 are located on the northwest side of the airfield, off of a small runway that runs perpendicular to the main runway, in a row with nine other non-historic hangars. The hangars are nearly identical, barreled roof box hangars and with an available open hangar space of 11,430 square feet; they are each capable of housing a DC3. Built in the Art Deco style, each has twenty 10' X 20' sliding hangar doors on both the north and south sides to open the hangar space. The Art Deco style is apparent on the aircraft entrances, which resemble a proscenium with an opening for both north and south doors of 100' X 20' flanked by flat roofs that cover storage and offices on the east and west sides making the overall hangar 137'10" (east to west) by 113'8" (north to south).

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Section 7 Page 2 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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The hangars are two stories high, with a streamlined, stepped parapet that hides the barrel roof. Made of stucco with wooden banding, the parapet has 40' wooden projections representing the wings of a 1920s aircraft. In the center of the parapet is the Curtiss-Wright emblem, a plane rising above the clouds. On either side of the parapet, the brick walls resemble piers with concrete coping and foundations. The "piers" on the west sides of the hangars are about 15' wide, with a nine-light, steel window located on each floor, one above the other, separated by a concrete panel. About two feet above the second story windows is a red granite panel, with curved geometric Art Deco motifs. The piers on the east corner are similar, except there are two windows on the second floor directly above a window and a door on the first story, separated by a brick pilaster. The southwest/northwest sides of each hangar have one set of windows and a door. The larger southeast/northeast sides have an entrance with three sets of windows. The south and north sides are identical. The west side is one story; the east side has a second story addition. The hangar openings on these elevations consist of ten glazed steel hangar doors. The doors are 10' wide and on tracks, so they can slide open wide enough to accommodate aircraft.

Although the north and south sides are identical, the building is asymmetrical as the east and west are different. The west side pier is one story. The north and south sides have one door with a window above. What looks like a second story in the photos is just the hangar over the flat roof. The east side has the wooden second story. The north and south sides have one set of two-story windows and one with a door above the window.

On the sides of the hangars, between the piers, are recessed brick walls with six sets of one-over-one, double-sash paired windows on each floor. A band of concrete, resembling a continuous

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Section 7 Page 3 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 St. Clair County, IL**

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sill, is directly below the second story windows. This band also caps the brick pilasters that slightly jut out from the walls and divide the paired windows on the first floor.

The east side has a wood-framed, second floor that was added to the flat roof, in the 1940s, to accommodate the many men and women who learned to fly here preparing to enter World War II. Six one-over one, double-sash windows are on this floor. A continuous band of concrete, demarcating the original roofline, lies just below these windows. The first floor has six steel casement windows with concrete sills that are separated by brick piers. The two entrances on this side are located after every other window. The west entrance has a transom and side lights. A small brick wall, about 2' high, and 3 ½' long juts out from the wall in front of this entrance, creating a small courtyard. The west entrance is topped by a transom light.

Interior

The ceiling in the hangar area is steel supported by steel and wooden beams. All floors were originally concrete. Some have a carpet overlay. The walls on the second story addition are wood/plaster.

The hangars' steel doors open onto a large open space (11,430 square feet) that has glazed and painted masonry walls and a concrete floor. The west side varies slightly in its original plan and consists of 1,340 square feet on the first floor, divided into three storage areas with one large window and several smaller windows. Originally designed to provide light and ventilation, the many paned, metal-framed windows have long since rusted shut.

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Section 7 Page 4 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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On the first floor of the east side is a men's lavatory, two entrances with hallways connecting the offices and storage areas for a total of 2,005 square feet. Stairwells to the second floor are located on either end. The second floor, which measures 1,500 square feet, has a women's lavatory, hallways and is divided into bedrooms.

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 have sufficient integrity for listing in the National Historic Register. Very little has changed on the interior as well as the exterior since it was first constructed in 1928. The original steam heat was replaced in the 1960s with several heaters hung from the ceiling. Air conditioning has been added to the offices and window units placed in the upstairs sleeping areas. The windows on the east side (with the addition) have all been replaced. The windows to the north, south and west are original. The hangar space has its original dimensions and the interior rooms are mostly original, right down to the concrete block bathrooms. The minor changes that have occurred on the interior floor plan are reversible. The hangars, while intact, are experiencing some deterioration and are in need of repair. However, the small alterations and the deterioration of some of the building materials have not impacted the overall integrity of the hangars.

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Section 8 Page 5 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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**Statement of Significance:**

The Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their associations with the military and industry. The hangars have national significance for their use during World War II. In the early 1940s, flight instructor Oliver Parks operated his flight school out of the hangars. Parks Flight School, which is the first federally approved school of aeronautics, put the Curtiss-Wright hangars to good use by training pilots for World War II. It is estimated Parks trained fifteen percent of all American pilots. The hangars also have local significance for their use as manufacturing plants for Curtiss-Wright aircraft and storage. The period of significance is from 1928, the year the hangars were built, until 1956, the fifty-year cutoff for significance for the National Register.

**Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Company**

The Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 were constructed in 1928 in the Curtiss-Steinberg Airport, later Bi-State Parks Airport, now known as the St. Louis Downtown Airport. The airport was developed by a business consortium that included Mark Steinberg, a St. Louis financier (also of Steinberg memorial Skating Rink fame), Curtiss-Wright, an aircraft and engine manufacturing firm, the Transcontinental Air Transport Service, (which later became TWA), and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The group's purpose was to provide the downtown St. Louis area with a high-quality airport offering paved runways.



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Section   8   Page   8   **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** St. Clair County, IL

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The hangars not only were used as spaces to repair aircraft, but also provided housing and schooling for future pilots. Charles Lindberg, Amelia Earhart, and Wiley Post were just a few of the famous pilots who stayed here. Ozark Airlines and TWA both had their start here. During World War II, the company placed its focus on the development and mass production of reciprocating engines and aircraft. After the war, with the jet age dawning, the company reduced their aircraft manufacturing and developed piloting and training programs. Of the four hangars that were originally built, only Hangar 1 survive. Hangar 3 burned in the late thirties and Hangar 4 burned down in 1984.

**Oliver Parks and Parks College**

*(The following was largely taken from a 1977 Centralia, Illinois newspaper, see appendix)*

Oliver Parks, a native of Minonk [Illinois] and a World War I veteran who had dabbled briefly in the post-war automobile business, established his "seminary of lunacy"<sup>1</sup> on August 1, 1927, at Lambert Field (now Lambert St. Louis International Airport).

He began with a rented hangar, only himself as faculty, and a pair of primitive single-engined airplanes. He finished four months later, with the school having only marginal success, when he got caught in a spin and crash-landed into a suburban St. Louis meadow.

Parks broke his back, his nose, a leg, suffered the loss of his left eye, several teeth and a section of jawbone. Marginal success, it then seemed, was all his school would ever experience.

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<sup>1</sup> In an old *Saturday Evening Post* article, Jack Alexander, who graduated from St. Louis University, referred such flight schools as "...seminaries of adventurous lunacy."

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 St. Clair County, IL**

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But in April 1928, a repaired and reconditioned Oliver Parks took off again, moving his school to a 113-acre tract of land in Cahokia, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. There he established a 50-hour training course and met with enough success to qualify for U.S. Department of Commerce approval – that venerable Air Agency Certificate No. 1.

Physical facilities for the fledgling institution grew with the school – a three-story dormitory to house 150 students; a modern building with new equipment for mechanical training, and later additional dormitories to handle increased enrollment.

In 1935, the school received official recognition from all major airlines and aircraft factories in the nation. And Parks became an airline itself – as part of their practical training, Executive Transport students began to operate an air service from Cahokia to Indianapolis, an airline enterprise which one day would be merged with other concerns to create Ozark Airlines.

In 1939, with a European war underway and creeping closer to American Shores, Oliver Parks was called to Washington by General Henry H. (Hap) Arnold and given a staggering challenge – increase flight training capacity from 400 to 7,000 pilots each year...and do it within 90 days.

Parks, in response, opened five additional schools, using original Parks graduates as a staff and faculty nucleus. Between 1940 and 1945, Parks Air College trained 24,000 military and transport pilots – one out of every 10 delivered to the U.S. Army Air Corps – as well as hundreds of aircraft mechanics.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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**Curtiss-Wright Hangars**

The number of those enlisted during the war was staggering. The authors of *World War II and the American Home Front* (Harper, et al.) estimated that by 1945, over 12 million G.I.s were on active duty, with a total of 16 million serving in the military over the course of the war. Those inducted into the military were relocated to 242 recently built and quickly expanding training camps.

In order to accommodate the growing number of military trainees, in the early 1940s, Oliver Parks leased the Curtis-Steinberg airport and moved his flight school into the hangar. Parks Flight School, the first federally approved school of aeronautics, put the Curtiss-Wright hangars to good use by training pilots for World War II. After the war, Parks bought out the owners and renamed the airport Parks Metropolitan Airport.

By 1959, the airport and the Curtiss-Wright hangars were used less frequently. The airport was closed until 1965, when it was purchased by the Bi-State Development Agency. In 1984, the airport was renamed the St. Louis Downtown – Parks Airport. The airport, which is currently the St. Louis Downtown Airport, continued to expand and still operates today.

At present, Curtiss-Wright Hangar 2 is the home of the Greater St. Louis Air and Space Museum. The museum collection includes, among other things:

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Section 8 Page 11 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 St. Clair County, IL**

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- The 1941 Meyers O.T.W. Bi-plane once owned by Nikki Caplan, world famous St. Louis balloonist;
- A full-scale YAV-8A harrier used by McDonnell Douglas and the Marine Corps in the 1970s;
- The 1960 golf cart used by President Kennedy and Mr. McDonnell when he visited McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis;
- An extension aerospace library, including books and log flight books dated 1930 and earlier;
- The Mercury space flight suit worn by Virgil "Gus" Grissom for early training exercises;
- Jet Star aircraft previously owned by Howard Hughes;
- Extensive spacesuit collection from Rose Church, a NASA nurse on the Mercury program.

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 are good candidates for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The hangars have local significance for their association with the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, a leading company in the aircraft manufacturing business. The hangars have also achieved national significance for their role as a training facility for World War II military and transport pilots.

NPS Form 10-900-a  
OMB No. 1024-0018  
(8-86)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 13 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 St. Clair County, IL**

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OMB No. 1024-0018  
(8-86)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 14 **Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2** **St. Clair County, IL**

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Verbal Boundary Description

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 (2200 Vector Drive) and 2 (2300 Vector Drive) are located in Cahokia, St. Clair County, Illinois, on part of Lots 139, 140, & 228 of Cahokia Common Fields (St. Louis Air Terminals), Township 1 North, Range 11 West.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the hangars only.

### **St. Louis Downtown Airport Chronology**

*(excerpted from St. Louis Downtown Airport's web site)*

- 1929 The Airport opened as the Curtiss-Steinberg Airport. The airport was developed by the Curtiss-Wright company, the Transcontinental Air Transport Service (which became TWA), the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and St. Louis financier Mark Steinberg.
- Mid-1930s Oliver Parks, who founded Parks College in 1927, became a business partner of the Curtiss-Steinberg Airport. Parks also became the airport's operator. Parks College is about one-quarter of a mile southwest of the airport.
- Early 1940s The airport's name was changed to Curtiss-Parks Airport. Oliver Parks leased the airport and used it to train pilots during World War II. He operated the flight school out of the hangars.
- Mid 1940s After the war, Oliver Parks bought out the other business partners of the airport. He renamed it Parks Metropolitan Airport.
- 1959 Parks closed the airport.
- Mid 1960s The airport reopened in 1965 as the Bi-State Parks Airport, with Oliver Parks serving a two-year contract as the airport manager, for \$1 a year.
- 1970s – 1990s The airport continued to expand, with new runways, buildings, and improvements. In 1984, the name changed to St. Louis Downtown – Parks Airport, to highlight its proximity to downtown St. Louis. In 1994, Parks was omitted from the airport's name to avoid confusion with Parks College.
- 2000 – present The St. Louis Downtown Airport has continued to increase the size of its facility by acquiring additional land, building new hangars, and expanding existing properties. In 2004, Ozark Air Services started using Hangar 1 for aircraft maintenance and Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 64 used the second floor of the hangar as its headquarters. That same year, the Greater St. Louis Air and Space Museum moved into Hangar 2.

First Labeled "Seminary of Adventurous Lunacy"

# Parks at Cahokia Is Nation's Oldest Aviation School

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — Although it is not common knowledge, aeronautical history is sitting in our backyard. At Cahokia, about 60 miles west of Centralia, is Parks College of St. Louis University, acknowledged as the nation's first school of aviation. The school was founded in 1927 by Oliver L. Parks, known in the Sentinel area by a number of persons who worked with him when he was the driving force behind the creation of Kings House, now celebrating its 25th year as the Belleville Diocese retreat house. The following is the colorful history of Parks College, referred to in its infancy as Parks' "seminary of adventurous lunacy."

Uncle Sam's first formal nod to the infant world of flying schools back in the 1920s is an ordinary-looking document usually referred to as Air Agency Certificate No. 1.

It is framed and hangs inconspicuously in a conference room at Parks College in Cahokia, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. The certificate's presence there, among mementos of nearly 50 years of American aviation history, acknowledges Parks' position as the nation's first school of aviation instruction.

Air Agency Certificate No. 1 says a lot about the history of an institution that began in a rented hangar at a St. Louis airport, expanded its curriculum in spite of the Depression, trained 10 percent of the nation's military pilots during the World War II, and ultimately emerged as the vital arm of a great American university: Parks College of St. Louis University.

It says a lot simply because it is Number One, identifying Parks as the first transport and commercial ground and flying school in the United States.

In 1977, Parks College — the dream-come-true of aviation pioneer Oliver Lafayette Parks — will commemorate 50 years of service to American aviation, a half century of work in the classroom and beyond the clouds, wing-spanning the gulf of aviation history from Charles Lindbergh to Neil Armstrong.

During those 50 years, the trademark of Parks College has been its commitment to stay abreast of the ever-expanding world of aviation, an ever quickening pace set by scientists, engineers and test pilots, and all

the developments that have taken aviation from biplane to blast-off.

In 1931, for instance, the school established a one-year course that combined business training with flying — the Executive Transport Pilot's Course. Later, the school offered such advanced instruction as radio beam and instrument flying, a personnel training program, a two-year course in aeronautical engineering and a course for master aviation mechanics.

In 1976, the school established a program leading to a bachelor's degree in Plant Engineering Technology, preparing today's students to assume the ever-increasing responsibilities of industrial plant standards, specifications and priorities, of plant performance, and cost of plant systems and services.

And although typical of Oliver Parks' academic philosophy and foresight, the Plant Engineering Technology program is a long way from what the founder had in mind when he took a flyer on an aviation school in 1927, two months after Lindbergh piloted "The Spirit of St. Louis" across the Atlantic.

St. Louis University alumnus Jack Alexander, writing in the old Saturday Evening Post, commented on the vagaries of flight instruction in the early decades of wings:

"Anyone who aspired ... to make a profit out of teaching aviation to civilians during the '20s and '30s necessarily had to be tough and impervious to corrosion. The school operators subsisted largely on a thinning diet of exhaust gases, hamburger, red ink and beautiful dreams.

"And their schools were widely regarded as seminaries of adventurous lunacy."

Oliver Parks, a native of Minonk, and a World War I veteran who had dabbled briefly in the post-war automobile business, established his "seminary of adventurous lunacy" on Aug. 1, 1927, at Lambert Field (now Lambert St. Louis International Airport) which is bordered on one side by Lindbergh Boulevard.

He began with a rented hangar, himself as faculty, and a pair of primitive, single-engine airplanes. He finished four months later, with the school experiencing only marginal success, when he got caught in a spin and crash landed into a suburban St. Louis meadow.

Parks broke his back, his nose



**EARLY AVIATORS AT PARKS** — Aviation pioneer Charles A. Lindbergh, left, met with Parks College founder Oliver L. Parks on March 13, 1929. With them was Boots Dempsey, right, who was killed three months later while attempting an endurance refueling flight over Tampa, Fla.

and a leg, suffered the loss of his left eye, several teeth and a section of his jawbone. Marginal success, it then seemed, was all his school would ever experience.

But in April of 1928, a repaired and reconditioned Oliver Parks took off again, moving his school to a 113-acre tract of land in Cahokia, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. "There he established a 50-hour training course and met with enough success to qualify for U.S. Department of Commerce approval — that venerable Air Agency Certificate No. 1.

Physical facilities for the fledgling institution grew with the school — a three-story dormitory to house 150 students; a modern class building with new equipment for mechanical training; later additional dormitories

to handle increased enrollment. In 1935, the school received official recognition from all major airlines and aircraft factories in the nation. And Parks became an airline itself — as part of their practical training, Executive Transport students began to operate an air service from Cahokia to Indianapolis, an airline enterprise which one day would be merged with other concerns to create Ozark Airlines. In 1939, with a European war underway and creeping closer to

American shores, Oliver Parks was called to Washington by Gen. Henry H. (Hap) Arnold and given a staggering challenge — increase flight training capacity from 400 to 7,000 pilots each year ... and do it within 90 days. Parks, in response, opened five additional schools, using original Parks graduates as a staff and faculty nucleus. Between 1940 and 1945, Parks Air College trained 24,000 military and transport pilots — one out of every 10 delivered to the U.S.

Army Air Corps — as well as hundreds of aircraft mechanics.

By 1946, in spite of the post-war slowdown, Parks Air College consisted of 22 buildings with extensive shop, classroom laboratory and dormitory facilities. Enrollment stood at 368 students and was projected to 400. Students came to Cahokia from 43 states, from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Canada, China and France.

Also in 1946, Parks took the step which would weld his college to one of the major universities in the nation, presenting what was a \$3-million gift to the Jesuit fathers of St. Louis University, the oldest university west of the Mississippi River.

The Rev. Patrick Halloran, then-president of the university, responded:

"The affiliation of Parks Air College with the University marks the greatest single forward step the institution has ever been permitted to take. All the other schools of the University had extremely humble beginnings, and have grown only with the passage of years.

"In the present instance, however, the finest school of its type in the world becomes part of the University by one definitive act on the part of a great and generous man."

With that, Oliver Parks' flying school became "Parks College of Aeronautical Technology of St. Louis University."

The immediate result was a "beefing up" of academic programs, with more humanities and social sciences and a more collegiate, less-military campus environment. The ultimate result was an expansion of the role Parks College was to play in the university world.

In 1970, the Parks curriculum was expanded to include non-aviation students and Associate degree programs for the first time. Among the former is a baccalaureate program in Transportation, Travel and Tourism, which attracted women students — who now number 52 — for the first time.

Also among the former is the baccalaureate program in Plant



**PIONEER IN AVIATION** — Oliver L. Parks, right, founder of Parks College, received the Pioneer in Aviation Award in 1973. It was only the second time the award was made, the first time being in 1969 to Grover Loneig, who worked with the Wright brothers. Making the presentation was Parks Dean Leon Z. Setzler. Parks now resides in St. Louis.

Engineering Technology, established to meet industry's growing need for professionally educated plant engineers.

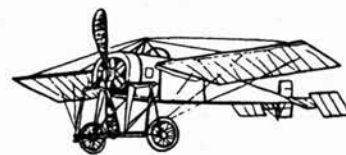
But today, under the administration of Dean L.Z. Setzler, the college's roots remain in aviation, where its heritage began.

For the school, after all, has been visited by such aviation giants as Charles Lindbergh, who stunned the world solo the same year Parks was established; Amelia Earhart, one of America's first airborne women and an example to Parks' current co-eds; and Jimmy Doolittle,

who had Parks-trained airmen under his command during those 30 seconds over Tokyo.

And the school also, after all, has the framed original of Air Agency Certificate No. 1.

A number of Sentinel area students have received various types of aeronautical education at Parks. Those currently enrolled in the school are Virgil Pingsterhaus of Germantown, Kevin Nagel of Nashville, Jim Broughton and William Timberlake of Centralia and John Buhner of Salem.

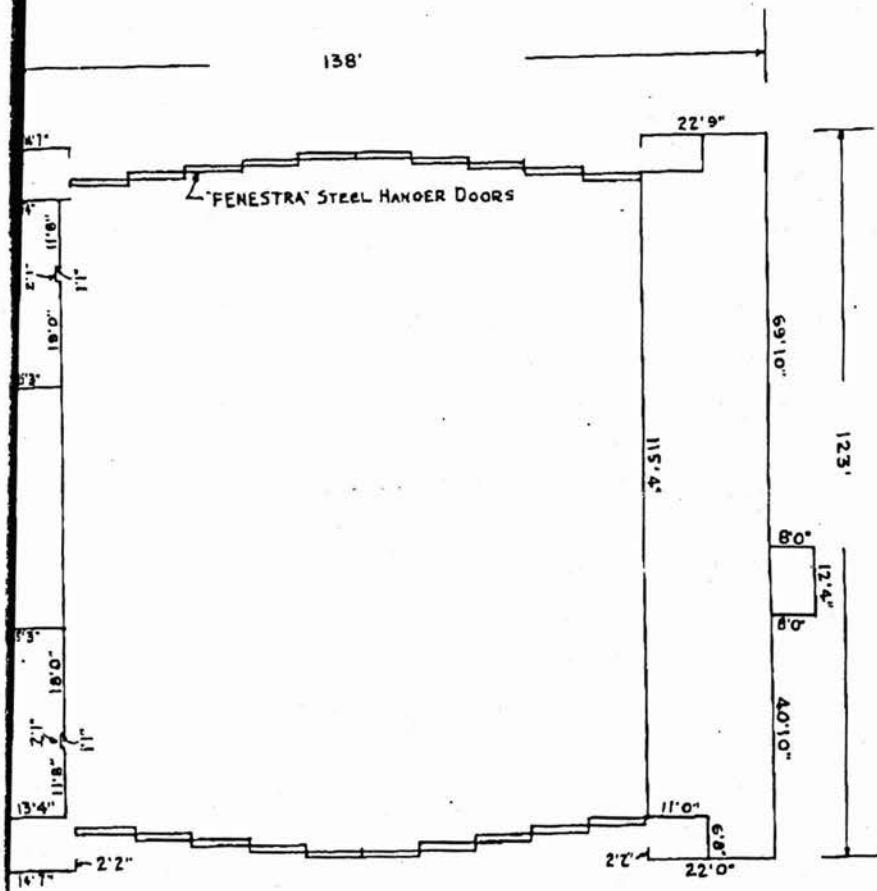


Located in the National Register files, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency



(17)

OUTLINE SKETCH  
OF  
HANGAR No. 1  
SCALE 1" = 20'



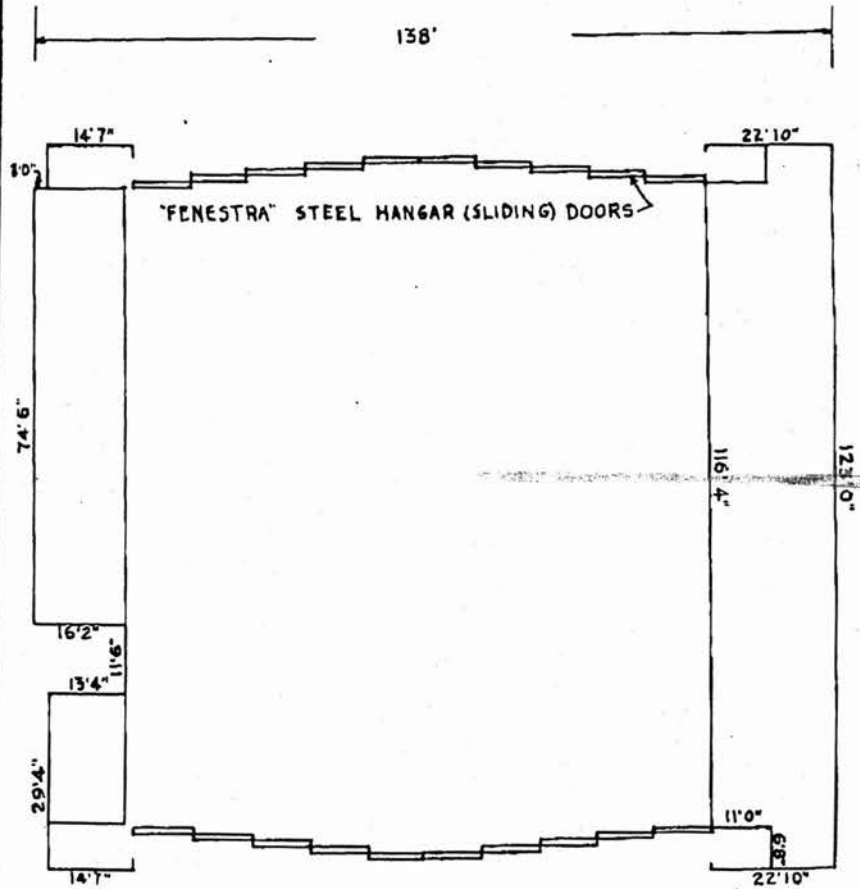
Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL

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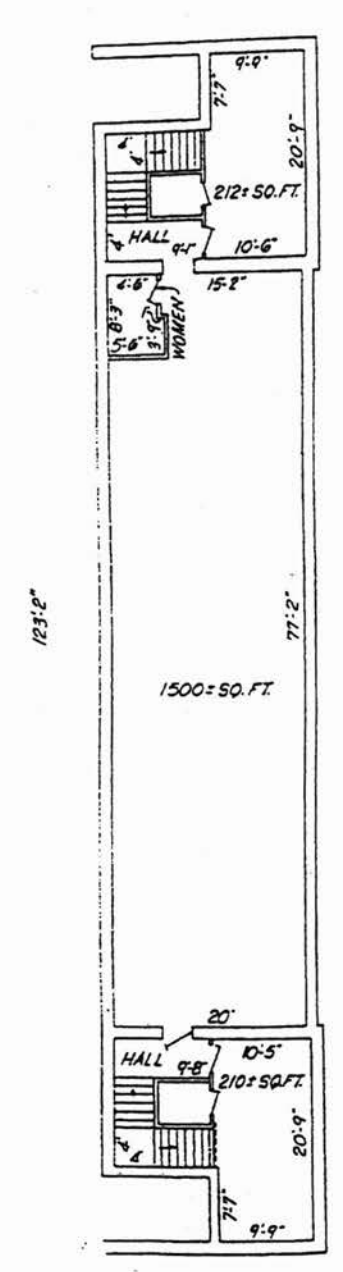
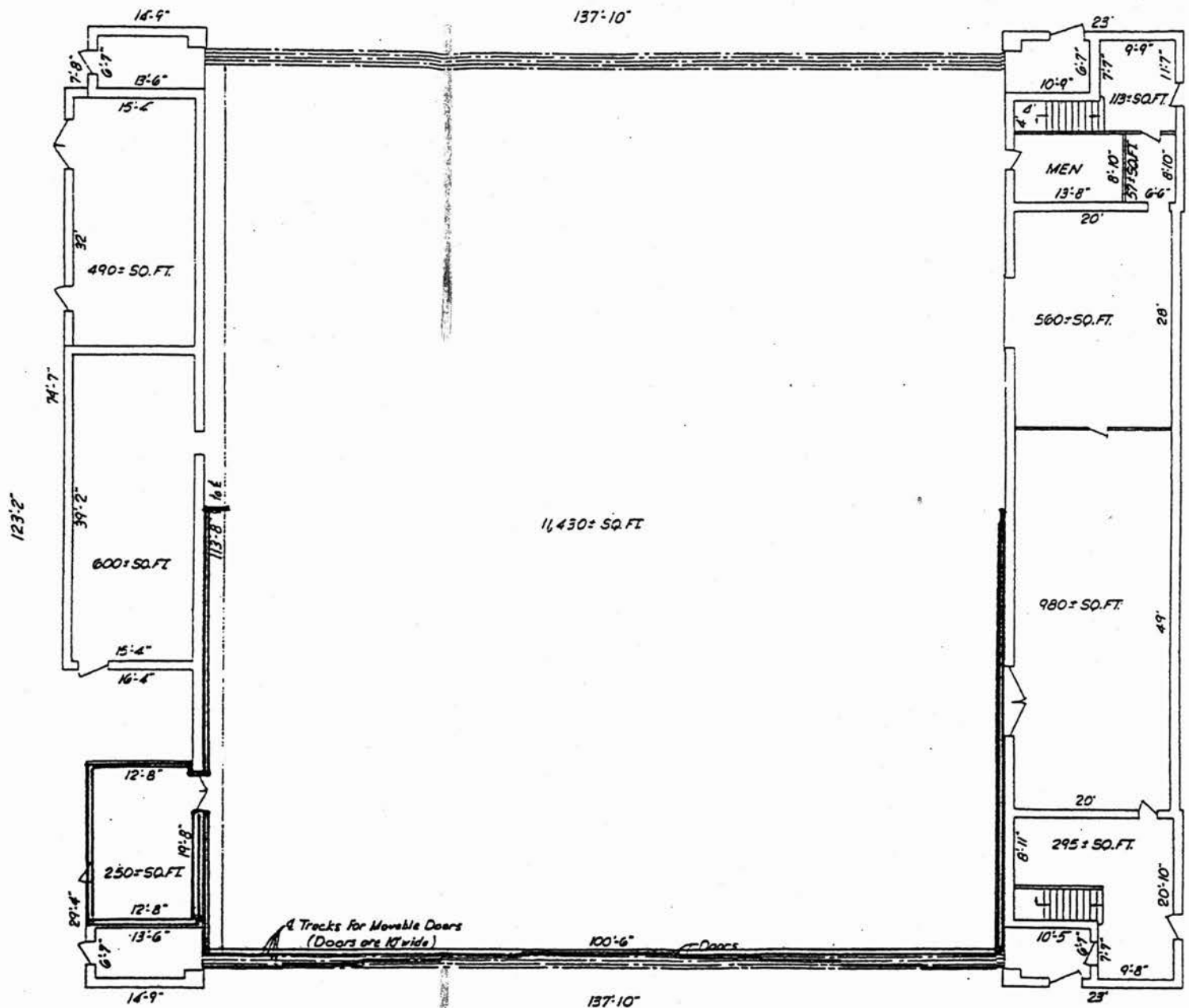
OUTLINE SKETCH  
OF

HANGAR No. 2

SCALE 1" = 20'



Curtiss Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL



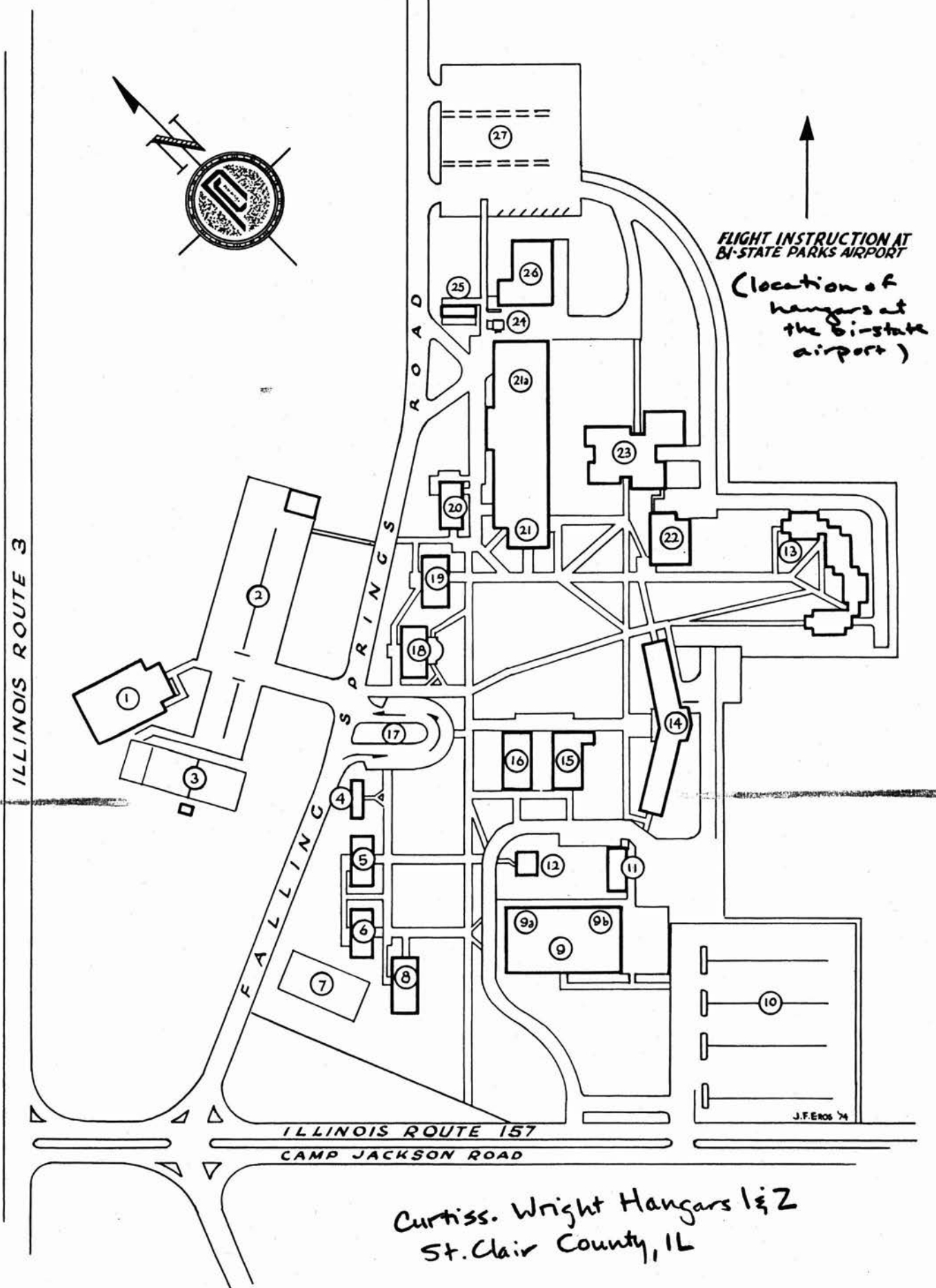
FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

FLOOR PLAN OF HANGAR II

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2, St. Clair County, IL

Parks College, approximately 1/4 mile SW  
of the airport



FLIGHT INSTRUCTION AT  
BI-STATE PARKS AIRPORT  
(location of  
hangars at  
the Bi-state  
airport)

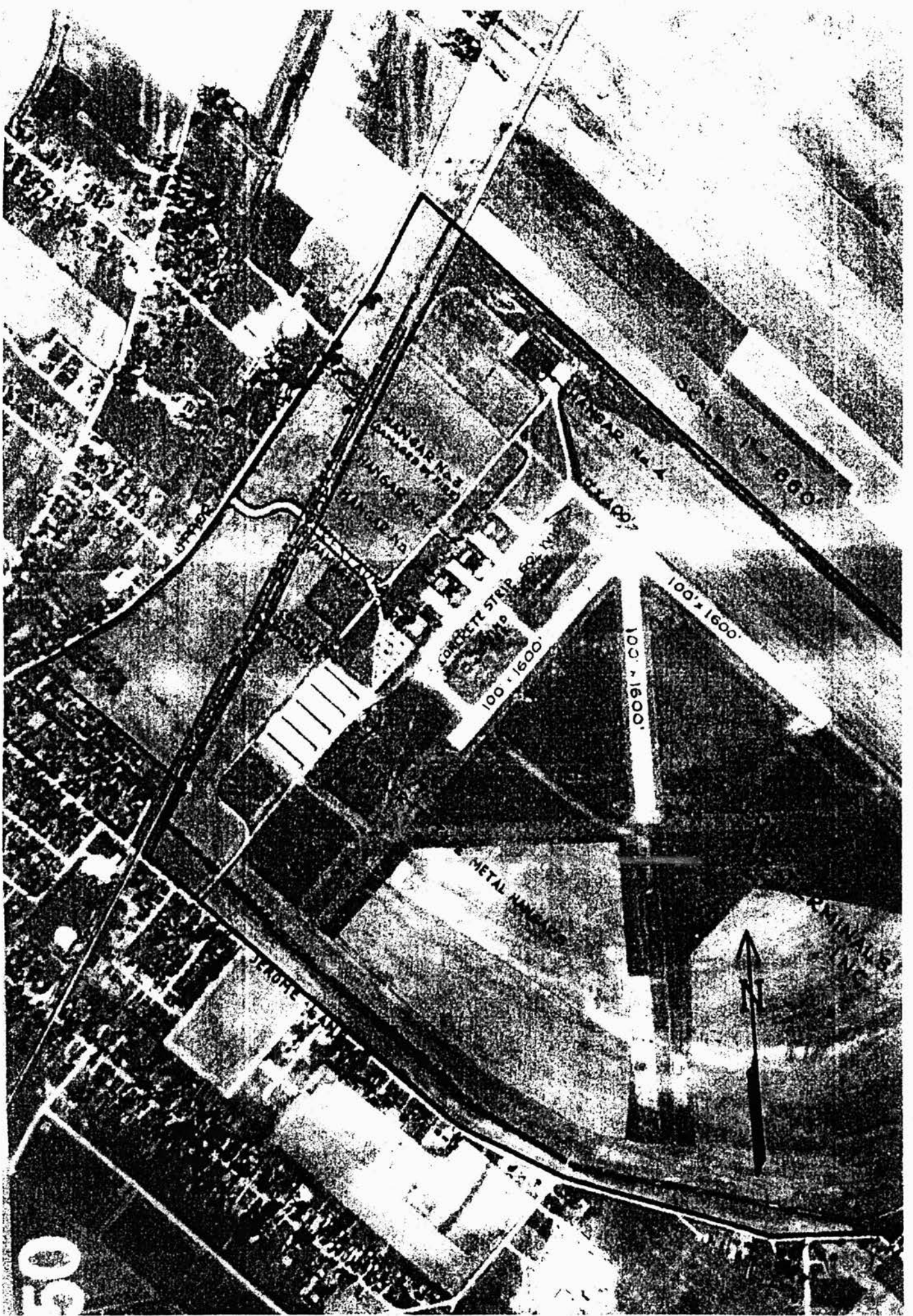
ILLINOIS ROUTE 3

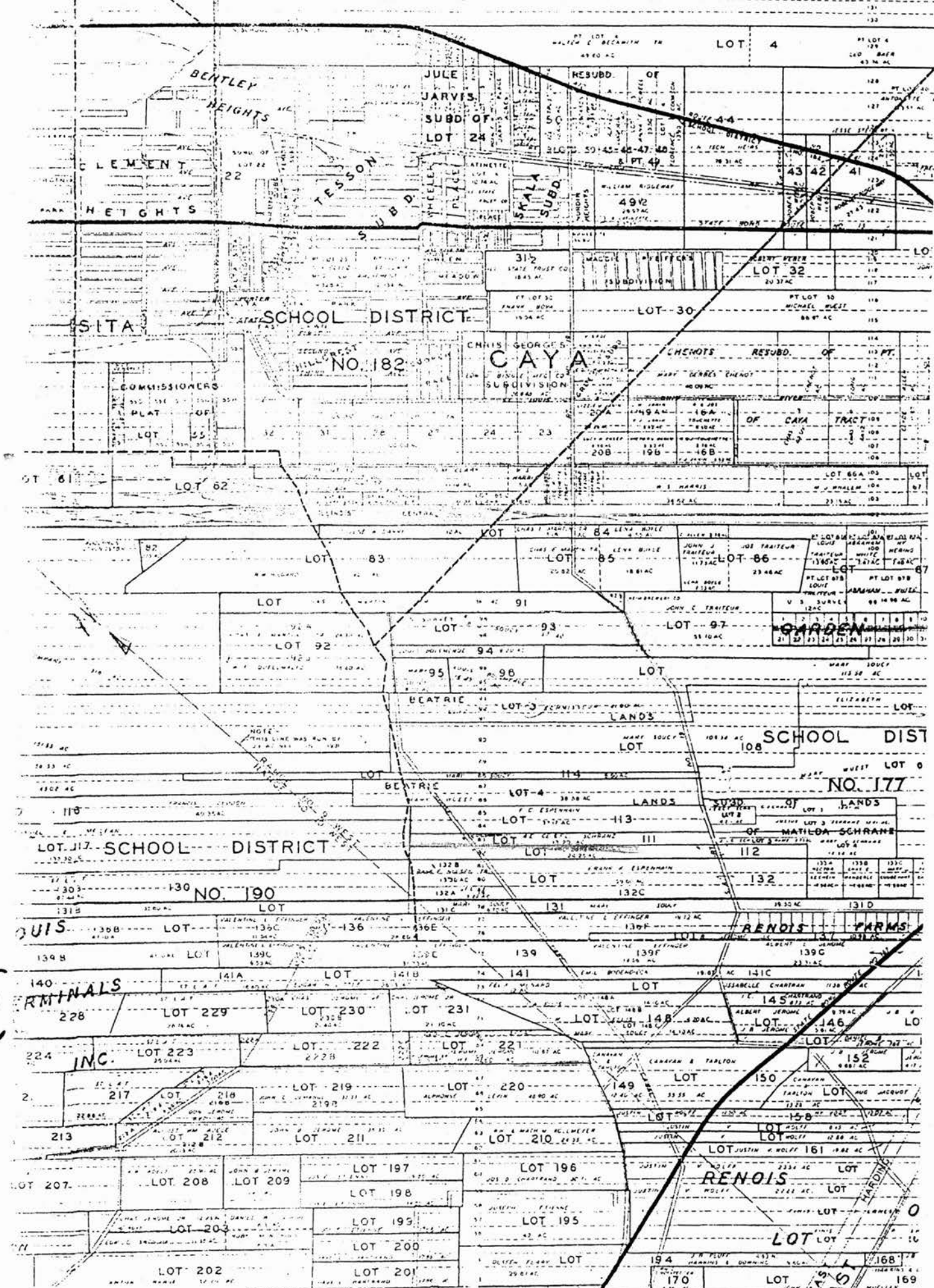
ILLINOIS ROUTE 157  
CAMP JACKSON ROAD

Curtiss. Wright Hangars 1 & 2  
St. Clair County, IL

J.F. Eros '74

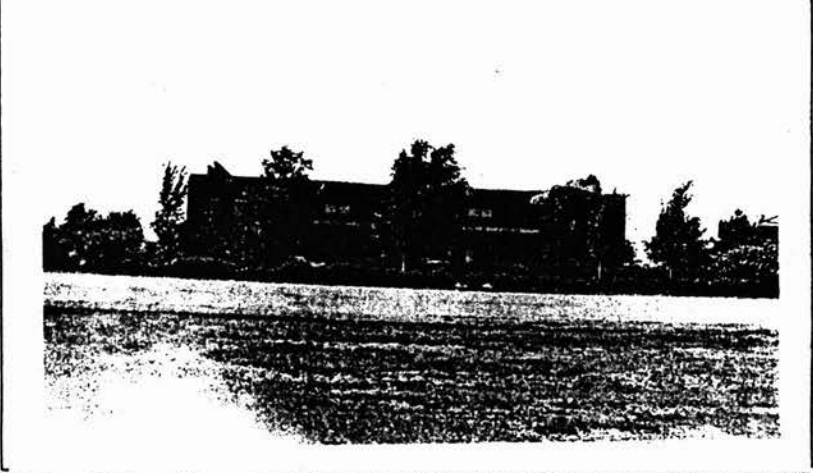
St. Louis Downtown Airport, showing aerial map of airport location of hangars





Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 & 2 St. Clair Co. IL

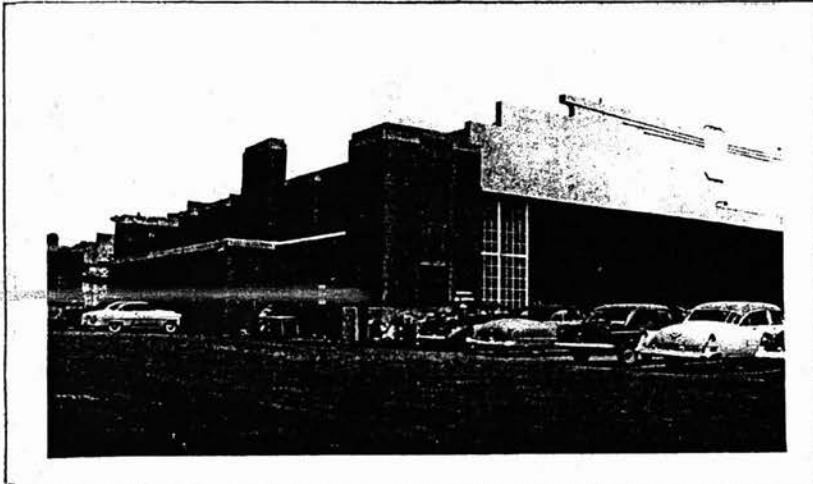
1954  
photographs  
of  
Hangar 2



FRONT



NORTH SIDE



REAR & SIDE  
(SOUTH)



REAR & SIDE  
(NORTH)

Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1&2 St. Clair Co. IL

**FAX  
FROM**



**SAINT LOUIS  
DOWNTOWN  
AIRPORT**

*A Division of Bi-State Development Agency*

1680 Sanget Industrial Parkway, Sauget, Illinois 62206-1449  
Phone (618) 337-6060 Fax (618) 337-1597  
Visit our web site at: [www.stlouisdowntownairport.com](http://www.stlouisdowntownairport.com)

**To:** Amy Easton **From:** Wendi Sellers  
**Fax:** 217-524-7525 **Pages:** 1 Including this cover sheet  
**Phone:** **Date:** August 30, 2006  
**Subject:** Hangars 1 & 2

Amy,

From the time of nomination of Hangars 1 & 2 to the National Historic Register to the current time, and since the pictures have been taken, no changes have occurred to the hangars.

Sincerely,

Wendi Sellers

Assistant Director St. Louis Downtown Airport

*A World Class Reliever Airport Serving Downtown St. Louis and the Bi-State Region  
Reliever "Airport of the Year" 2002*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Curtiss--Wright Hangars 1 and 2

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ILLINOIS, St. Clair

DATE RECEIVED: 10/02/06      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/24/06  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/08/06      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/15/06  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06001024

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: Y    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: Y    NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    11/13/06 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**RECEIVED**

NOV 22 2006

PRESERVATION SERVICES

*See attached Return Sheet for detailed comment.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Return

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 11/13/2006

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
**National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet**

Property Name: Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 (St. Clair County, IL)  
Reference Number: 06001024

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Tuskegee Institute in Alabama). By time the program was phased out, the CPTP (renamed the War Training Service) trained 435,165 people to fly (including hundreds of women and African Americans) and was a vital part of America's war effort.

The role of the flight school operated by Oliver Parks at the airport should be placed within this larger national context and then evaluated for national importance.

It is recommended that the nomination preparer consult the book *To Fill the Skies with Pilots: the Civilian Pilot Training Program, 1939-1946*, by Dominick A. Pisano (Smithsonian History of Aviation and Spaceflight Series, 2001), the primary work on the CPTP. The book, and the National Register Bulletin, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties*, both contain extensive bibliographies which may assist in revising the nomination.

The nomination is not clear on where Parks operated his flight school. The nomination notes that there were once four hangars at the airport (only the nominated two survive). In Section 8, Page 10 of the form it is noted that "in the early 1940s, Oliver Parks leased the Curtis-Steinberg airport and moved his flight school into the hangar" without identifying which hangar. The nomination should document which hangar or hangars were used as the flight school.

Photographs - The nomination includes digital photographs and a disk of images. The disk does not meet National Register archival standards because it is in a Power Point presentation instead of the required .TIF files. Please provide a disk of uncompressed .TIF files with each image sized at 1600 by 1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger.

Patrick Andrus  
Historian, National Register of Historic Places  
11/13/2006



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Curtiss-Wright Hangars 1 and 2 (St. Clair County, IL)  
Reference Number: 06001024

#### Reason for Return:

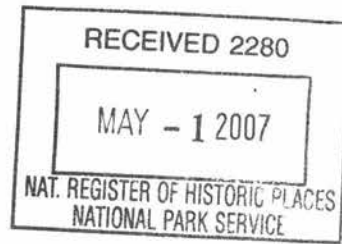
The nomination is being returned because the form does not provide sufficient information to evaluate the hangars for the claimed national significance for their use as a training school for pilots during World War II. The nomination is very brief and from the bibliography it appears that the statement of significance is not grounded in a substantial degree of scholarship (the primary information on the historical importance of the hangar's role in the pilot training program comes from an unattributed 1977 article in a Centralia, IL, newspaper).

The nomination does not provide any detailed contextual information to place the role of the Curtiss-Wright Hangars in the larger story of World War II military aviation history. The nomination form does not explain if the school operated at the airport was part of the Federal government's Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) which from 1939-1946 was one of the largest government-sponsored vocational education programs of its time. The CPTP served both war-preparedness goals and New Deal economic needs. Using facilities of colleges, universities, and commercial flying schools, the CPTP was designed to provide a pool of civilian pilots for potential military service in the event of war, while boosting the airplane industry and the network of small civilian airports and support services.

While initially hesitant to trust any military aviation training to civilians, the U.S. Army Air Corps and the U.S. Navy eventually recognized the necessity of employing civilian trainers to meet the vastly expanded wartime need for pilots. At that time, pilot training consisted of three distinct phases, Primary, Basic, and Advanced training. The civilian schools handled basic training (which taught the rudiments of flying through a 72-hour ground school course followed by 35-50 hours of flight instruction), then the military proceed with the more complex Basic then Advanced training. The owners of these civilian school were paid by the Federal government for providing the Primary training of pilots. By the program's peak, 1,132 educational institutions and 1,460 flight schools were participating in the CPTP (including, perhaps most notably, the



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April 26, 2007

Mr. Patrick Andrus  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW Suite NC400  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Andrus:

Please find enclosed the revised nomination for the Curtiss-Wright Hangars in St. Clair County, Illinois. The form had been returned to us in November, 2006, in order to make a better case for national significance. Also enclosed is a CD of photographs in compliance with the National Register photo policy. The new material is found in the form from page 8-8 ff.

Please feel free to contact me at the address above, by telephone at 217-785-4993 or by email at [ted.hild@illinois.gov](mailto:ted.hild@illinois.gov).

Sincerely,

Theodore Hild  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures