

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0143235 DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED JUN 18 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Orote Field

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South of Orote Point Road on Orote Peninsula

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Apra Harbor Naval Station

VICINITY OF

Guam

STATE
Guam

CODE
66

COUNTY
N/A

CODE
410

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER Rifle range Dragstrip Refugee Camp

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

U.S. Navy - Apra Harbor Naval Station

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

FPO, San Francisco

VICINITY OF

STATE

California 96630

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Real Estate Division, OICC Naval Facilities

STREET & NUMBER

Engineering Command Contract, Marianas

CITY, TOWN

FPO, San Francisco

STATE

California 96630

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Guam Historic Survey

DATE

1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Department of Commerce, P. O. Box 632

CITY, TOWN

Agana

STATE

Guam 96910

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Orote Air Field is located on Orote Peninsula on USGS Map Apra Harbor (1968). The major runway runs from NW to SE and measures ca. 1700 m in length. Its width is ca. 10 m. The secondary runway crosses the first and runs in a NE to SW direction. It measures ca. 1200 m in length and is ca. 30 m. wide. Both strips have attendant taxiways and hardstands. All runways, taxiways, and hardstands are asphalt on a coral limestone base.

The airfield is at present used as an emergency landing strip and as a dragstrip. The west portion of the field is used as a rifle range. The main strips are clear of vegetation and obstacles except for some empty barrels which mark the dragstrip. The taxiways and hardstands are partially overgrown by tangantangan.

In April of 1975, the tangantangan was removed from the dirt areas surrounding the paved areas for installation of temporary tents for the Vietnamese refugees.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1921-1931, 1944-1946

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The air station and Orote airfield were constructed during the period 1921-22. On March 17, 1921, 10 pilots and 90 enlisted men of Flight L, 4th Squadron arrived on Guam. This Marine unit had its base at Orote Field. In 1926, a new administration office was constructed which housed the squadron offices, sick bay, dental office, aerological office and guardhouse. In early 1927, the squadron was sent to China to protect American lives during the Chinese civil war. Four officers and 97 enlisted men left Guam on April 11, 1927, and reached China on May 3. Since the Chinese government refused to allow them to use Chinese airfield, the squadron was sent to Olongapo, American naval air station on the Philippines. There they remained for a year and a half, patrolling the Chinese coast. Only a handful of men remained at Orote Field. On September 23, 1928, Patrol Squadron 3-M, consisting of 85 enlisted men and from 4 to 6 officers, was assigned to Guam and were based at Orote Field. The naval air station at Orote Field was closed on February 24, 1931, evidently as an economy measure.

The Japanese did not bomb Orote Field when they attacked the island on December 8, 1941. The Japanese military government did very little with the field until February, 1944. The Japanese then feverishly began to repair and reconstruct the field, using Korean and Guamanian labor. On February 23, 1944, American carrier based planes attacked the field. Other raids soon followed. During the battle of the Philippine Sea (the Marianas Turkeyshoot) the field was to be used by Japanese carrier based planes to refuel and rearm. The Japanese planes based at Orote Field were also to be used to attack the American fleet. As of June 1, 1944, Japanese air strength on Guam consisted of 100 Zeros and 10 Gekkos (night fighters) at Airfield #1 and 60 Ginga (bombers) at Airfield #2. It is not clear from the source material which of these two airfields was Orote Field. However, American raids on June 19, 1944, destroyed the landing fields, the aircraft on the ground, and such aircraft that managed to take off. American pilots reported extremely intense anti-aircraft fire around Orote Field. Fifteen Japanese planes crashed while attempting to land on Orote Field on June 19, 1944.

The Japanese assigned the defense of Orote Peninsula to the 54th Independent Guard Unit under command of air Group Commander Asaichi Tamai. After the invasion on July 21, 1944, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade under command of Lt. General Samuel Shepherd fought its way through the village of Agat to the base of Orote Peninsula. Here the Japanese had constructed an elaborate interlocking system of pillboxes, strongpoints, and trenches. Both regiments of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, the 4th and 22nd, fought their way through this area. Shortly before midnight on July 26, 1944, the Japanese trapped on the peninsula staged a suicide attack and were completely wiped out. The advancing Marines still met heavy

(See Continuation Sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Robert Sherod. History of Marine Corps Aviation in World War II. Combat Forces Press, Washington, 1952. Paul Carano and Pedro Sanchez. A Complete History of Guam. Charles Tuttle Co., Rutland, Vermont, 1968. O.R. Lodge. The Recapture of Guam. Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954. (See Continuation Sheet).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 94.7 acres
 UTM REFERENCES

*UTM OK
HE*

A	55	245320	1486990	B	55	244620	1485300
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
c	55	243360	1486760	D	55	243440	1486970
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

David T. Lotz, Planner

ORGANIZATION

Parks and Recreation Resources Division

DATE

April 25, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Department of Commerce, Post Office Box 682

TELEPHONE

646-1279

CITY OR TOWN

Agana

STATE

Guam 96910

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer Signature

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Chief, Parks and Recreation Resources Division

DATE

MAY 02 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

6/18/75

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

JUN 17 1975

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

JUN 9 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE One

Japanese resistance in the vicinity of the airfield. Here the Japanese fought from caves and coconut bunkers. The peninsula was declared secure in July 29, 1944. It is estimated that the Japanese lost more than 3,000 men defending Orote Peninsula.

On June 4, 1944, MAG-21 (Marine Air Group), which was to be based at Orote Field, was detached from the 2nd MAW (Marine Air Wing) and attached to the 4th MBDW (Marine Base Defense Air Wing). On July 29, just after the field fell to the Marines, a 50 man working party landed to work on Orote airfield. Other working groups soon followed. On July 31 Colonel Peter B. Schrider, Commanding Officer of MAG-21, asked a Navy TBF (Avenger) to land. It did but stayed only three minutes because of intense sniper fire. On August 4 Major Ross Mickey, Commanding Officer of VMF (N)-534 (Marine Night Fighter Squadron), led in F6F (Hellcat) night fighters closely followed by echelons of VMF's 216, 217, and 225 (Marine Fighter Squadrons). All were launched for CVE Santee. During the battle for Guam the Corsairs of MAG-21 flew many close support missions.

VMTB-131 (Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadron), part of MAG-21, made an unprecedented mass flight to reach Guam by flying 4300 miles over water in single engine planes. Major George E. Dooley, Commanding Officer of VMTB-131, took off with his squadron on August 11, 1944, from Espiritu and flew to Funafuti, then to Tarawa, Kwajalein, and Engebi. From there VMTB-131 flew to Guam where it was assigned to anti-submarine duty.

By mid-November 1944, MAG-21, now commanded by Colonel Edward B. Carney, was an oversized group, having 12 squadrons. MAG-21, based at Orote Field (sometimes referred to as West Field), consisted of 4 VMF (Marine Fighter Squadrons), 1 VMF (N) (Marine Night Fighter Squadron), 2 VMTB (Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadrons), 1 VMB (Marine Bomber Squadron), 1 VBR (Marine Transport Squadron), 1 VMC (Marine Observation Squadron), and 1 AWS (Marine Air Warning Squadron). MAG-21 had 529 officers, 3,778 enlisted men, and 204 aircraft.

During the rest of the war MAG-21 saw only one more enemy action. In early 1945 an intercepted message indicated that an important Japanese passenger would be in a seaplane en route from Truk to Iwo Jima. Four F6F (Hellcat) night fighters of VMF (N)-534 were flown of Saipan. The seaplane was intercepted and shot down 110 miles northeast of Saipan. The planes of MAG-21 also joined Army and Navy planes in periodic practice attacks on the enemy held islands of Pagan and Rota.

Then, MAG-21 was shifted to Aqana airfield in 1945. Air operations at Orote Field had always been hampered by adverse cross winds. The field was then used as a Navy casualty unit for the repair of damaged aircraft. Orote Field was finally closed in 1946.

Therefore, Orote Field should be noted for four reasons that are:

First the early use of the airfield by a marine squadron which was the first airfield on Guam and a pioneer effort in military aviation in the western pacific. This was the forerunner of the present military aviation in the western pacific.

Second, the importance the airfield paid during the Battle of the Philippine Sea. During the 20th of June, 1944, numerous actions occurred in the immediate vicinity of Orote Field between American carrier planes and Japanese aircraft seeking refuge at Orote Field after flying from their carriers and Japanese aircraft attempting to

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

JUN 18 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE TWO

refuel and rearm to launch strikes to attack the American carriers. Numerous dog-fights took place in the vicinity of Orote Field and numerous strikes of American planes destroyed Japanese facilities and planes on the ground. This part of the battle was significant in that the Japanese were denied use of a crucial airfield in the battle.

Third, the location of a battle of significance in the fighting for the liberation of Guam. Specifically, the Japanese resisted American attempts to overrun Orote Peninsula with resistance from caves, coconut bunkers, and a suicide attack in the vicinity of Orote Field since once the area was secured, the harbor and Orote Field could be utilized for American logistics support and air support in the liberation of Guam.

Fourth, the use of Orote Field by Marine air power for close combat support missions during the liberation of Guam. This was accomplished by Marine Air Group 21 flying Corsairs from Orote Field and is apparently the only American airfield from which tactical ground support missions were flown from.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	JUN 18 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE One

Samuel Elliot Morrison. History of United States Naval Operations in World War II
Volume VIII. New Guinea and the Marianas, March 1944 - August 1944. Little, Brown
and Company, Boston, 1953.

M.a. United States Strategic Bombing Survey (Pacific). Naval Analysis Division,
Volume II. Interrogation Nav no. 99, USSBS No. 448, "Shore Based Air in the Marianas"
interrogation of Captain Mitsuo Fuchida, Imperial Japanese Navy; Senior Staff Officer
of the First Air Fleet, in which capacity he was in the Marianas from September 1943
until April 1944. Air Staff Officer to CinC Combined Fleet from April 1944 to end
of war. Interrogation occurred in Tokyo on 25 November 1945. n.p., n.d.
Staffort, Edward P., The Big E Random House, New York, 1962.