



1254

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

**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 Eglin Field Historic District

other names/site number N/A

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number north of Choctawhatchee Bay in Section 24, R 23W, T 1S

not for publication N/A

city or town Fort Walton Beach vicinity X

state Florida code FL county Okaloosa code 091 zip code 32548

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

T.W. McCall

10 JUL 1998

Signature of certifying official

Date

Thomas W.L. McCall, Jr.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Federal Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

Officer

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

Suzanne P. Walker

Deputy SHPO

2/26/96

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Historical Resources

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register ___ See continuation sheet.

___ determined eligible for the National Register ___ See continuation sheet.

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Edson M. Beall

10-22-98

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____	_____	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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE, air base Sub: _____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE, air base Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th Century American
Other: adaptive military style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls BRICK; concrete; clay tile
WOOD; weatherboard
other GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more 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)MILITARYENGINEERINGARCHITECTURE**Period of Significance** 1941-1945**Significant Dates** 1941-1945**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)N/A**Cultural Affiliation** N/A**Architect/Builder** U.S. Army Air Corps/Corps of Engineers
Yonge and Hart - Architects**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 16

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

Zone Easting Northing		Zone Easting Northing	
1	<u>16 548885 3372380</u>	3	<u>16 548630 3372220</u>
2	<u>16 548660 3372385</u>	4	<u>16 548900 3371950</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE / Corinne D Hollon

organization AFDTC/EMPH date 20 Jun 95

street & number 501 DeLeon Street, Suite 101 telephone 904-882-4435

city or town Eglin Air Force Base state FL zip code 32542-5101

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 7 Page 1 Eglin Field Historic District
name of property
Okaloosa, Florida
county and State

SUMMARY

Eglin is one of the largest Air Force Bases in the world and the largest in the United States. It covers 724 square miles of land and 86,500 sq. miles of the Gulf of Mexico. The majority of the land Base is located near the city of Fort Walton Beach in the Florida panhandle county of Okaloosa but it also extends into Santa Rosa and Walton counties.

There are 3387 buildings on the Base of which 164 were built during World War II. The Eglin Field Historic District contains the largest concentration of the latter with 20 contributing buildings. Together these represent the joint participation of the area and the military in preparing for and prosecuting the war.

The district is an irregularly shaped rectangle with the longest axis running north-south. The northern boundary is delineated by the tree-lined Georgia Avenue officers' family quarters; the remainder of the district is dominated by administrative, maintenance, supply, housing and research facilities. The structures range in size from the 2400 sq. feet of the U-shaped administrative buildings to officers' family housing of only 1500 sq. feet. The contributing buildings in the district, built between 1940 and 1945, follow common plans for military structures, uniquely modified to meet the exigencies of wartime, local climatic conditions and availability of construction materials.

PRESENT AND ORIGINAL PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Eglin Field Historic District contains the densest concentration of World War II associated buildings remaining on the reservation, including representatives of types of administrative buildings and living quarters. The structures derive their importance from

their association with events that occurred physically within Eglin and with Eglin Field's mission as the principal testing and proving grounds for air warfare weaponry.

Eglin Air Force Base is located within the former Choctawhatchee National Forest, a 400,000 acre tract in northeast Florida that adjoins Choctawhatchee Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Once home to a large timber and turpentine industry, the sandy soil in the region now supports both old growth and new longleaf pine, scrub coastal palmetto, and small oak. The main part of the base, which the runways, hangars, and administrative buildings occupy, contains a few trees, most of which line Georgia Avenue where officers' families were quartered.

The district presents an irregularly rectangular footprint, running north to south. Georgia Avenue, with its officers' families quarters, marks the northern boundary of this district. Buildings of varying dimensions and uses, including administrative, maintenance, supply, and housing, occupy the interior part of this rectangle. The southern boundary is delineated by Visiting Officers' Quarters. The district points south to the McKinley Climatic Laboratory, which has achieved importance as a National Historical Mechanical Engineering Landmark for the principles used in its construction and operation. Fifth Street and Barrancas Avenue delineate the east and west boundaries. The twenty contributing structures within the district were constructed between 1941 and 1943.

Common plans for military buildings, the urgency of wartime, local environmental conditions, and availability of construction materials, dictated the design of Eglin's buildings. The floor plans, configuration, window placement, roof patterns and other features that distinguish these structures came from plans shared by military bases during the mobilization in the early years of the war. The Army employed local architects to adapt the designs of some buildings to base requirements and available construction materials. The Corps of Engineers redrafted the plans for others, employing designs provided by the War Department. The distinguishing feature of the buildings within the Eglin Field District is the use of structural clay tile in wall construction, providing a durability which the hastily constructed wooden buildings at other bases did not possess.

The administrative and housing buildings are rectangular and capped by a shallow-pitched gable roof. They lack ornamentation and contain a minimum of porch treatment. Doors usually appear along the side of the buildings and the window openings are symmetrically placed and filled by double hung sash with multi-light panes. At Eglin, the few remaining wooden or temporary structures from the World War II era have weatherboard or lap siding on their exterior walls whereas the tile buildings are covered with a stucco finish.

The size and configuration of the buildings on Eglin as well as the materials employed in their construction depended on their intended function. Within the district, the functions could be divided into two general categories: administration and personnel housing.

The northernmost structure in the Eglin Field District is Army Air Corps Building 30, situated in the block that lies south of Choctawhatchee Avenue between Barrancas and Florida Avenues. A small storage building with 1,825 square feet of floor area, this building offers an example of a virtually unaltered facility. It retains the original eight-over-eight light sash and paired wooden entry doors; four gabled ventilator apertures, resembling small dormers, pierce the lateral side of the hip roof.(Photos #1 & 2)

Buildings 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29, family housing quarters built by the Army in 1943, sit on tree-lined Georgia Avenue, along the district's northern boundary. The Air Corps constructed these residences with the same structural clay tile used for the administrative buildings. The dwellings display design characteristics related to the Minimal Traditional style, which came into popularity immediately before the war. Minimal Traditional residences reflect the transition between the period styles of domestic architecture that prevailed up to the 1920s and the post-war Ranch style. It borrows from Tudor and Colonial Revival styles with little or no ornamental detailing; and no Tudor facade, chimneys or porticoed Colonial Revival entrances. They are distinguished by front-facing paired gable ends flanking a rectangular central portion of the building, offering a U-shaped or, if one gable, an L-shaped pattern on the street facade. A plastered sand finish covers the exterior walls.

Each of the buildings originally contained only 1,500 square feet of living space. In the 1950s the Air Force added a combined bedroom and garage extension to each of the residences, installed air-conditioning, and replaced the wood sash. The buildings retain their orientation, shape, basic appearance, function, and fabric, providing a sense of the accommodations provided for officers' families at the base during the war.
(Photos #3 & 4)

Building 4 is the westernmost of five administrative facilities that line the north side of Van Matre Avenue. Currently an Armament Research and Engineering Facility, this structure was designed by Yonge and Hart in 1941 as a chapel. It consists of three separate wings, linked to form a squared "W" pattern. The central portion measures 37 feet by 76 feet and the two wings are each 28 feet by 64 feet, totaling 9586 square feet. The original plans do not survive, but building records indicate that the Air Corps

constructed it of concrete block rather than the more ubiquitous tile. The chapel is one of the few buildings in the district that offers a decorative facade, a shallow, symmetrically gabled protrusion from the main structure. A circular vent rests between the apexes of the two gables.(Photo #5)

Building 2, once a command headquarters facility, is now the Law Center. This structure opens with a squared entrance surrounded by false columns, and contains three shallow wings, added in 1963, extending eastward from the main portion. The total floor space of this building is 13,699 square feet. Yonge and Hart adapted the plans for this building in 1941 from standard drawings provided by the Mobile District Corps of Engineers.(Photo #6) Changes to the building have been sympathetic and do not detract from its appearance or the district.

Building 6, immediately east of Building 2 and adapted in 1941 by Yonge and Hart from plans for a Type "S" building, served as the original post headquarters for Eglin Air Field. Base expansion soon demanded a larger headquarters facility, and in 1943 the 10,167 square foot Building 6 was dedicated as an Arctic Information Center. It now serves as Air Base Wing headquarters. The structural tile walls rest on 4-inch monolithic concrete floors, attic ventilators with wood slat louvers appear in the roof's gabled ends, and paired doors provide entry.(Photo #7)

Buildings 200, 201, 202, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, and 220, which face First Street along the western boundary of the District, were constructed by the Air Corps in 1943 to house bachelor officers (BOQs). Eglin has converted Buildings 201 and 220 to Headquarters Administrative Facilities and Building 216 to a research facility. The others currently function in relation to the hospital. The buildings uniformly occupy 2,700 square feet of floor space on a rectangular U-shaped footprint; the bases are 16 feet wide and 123 feet long, and the wings are 13 feet by 225 feet. In general appearance they resemble other buildings of similar size in the District. The original plans for these buildings do not survive, but property cards indicate that structural tile was used in their wall construction.(Photos #8 & 9)

Buildings 238 and 246 were constructed in 1943 as Visiting Officers' Quarters and form the corner of "D" Avenue and Second Street. These 2753 square foot concrete structures retain their tile and stucco walls. Both structures have a 924 square-foot screened-in porch. They served as Officers' Quarters through the 1960s and are currently administrative facilities. Neither has received any additions or major modifications. (Photo #10)

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

There are two non-contributing buildings in the historic district. Like the historic buildings, the non-contributing structures are covered with a stucco exterior finish and share the same paint color. Their shape, massing, and exterior appearance are generally similar. Building 23 is a small detached garage, 775 sq. ft, on Georgia Avenue built in 1948. Building 240 is a wood frame structure built in 1942. Currently a research facility, this building has undergone a series of significant changes that, together with its status as a temporary wooden structure, have rendered it a non-contributing member of the district.

CONCLUSION

Many of the buildings erected at Eglin during World War II have been razed. Primarily they were wood frame structures, which were designed for temporary use. On the other hand, the abundant number of tile and concrete buildings that remain from the period were clearly intended to be part of a permanent military establishment. Associated with Eglin's role in the pivotal historical event of the twentieth century, World War II, these structures symbolize the origins and expansion of what is now the largest Air Force installation in the western hemisphere.

Contributing Elements of the Eglin Field Historic District**Contributing Buildings:**

<u>Building Number</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>
2	1941-Designed
4	1941-Designed
6	1941-Designed
25	1943
26	1943
27	1943
28	1943
29	1943
30	1941-1943
200	1943
201	1943
202	1943
214	1943
215	1943
216	1943
217	1943
218	1943
220	1943
238	1942
246	1943

Non-Contributing Buildings:

23
240

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 1 Eglin Field Historic District
name of property
Okaloosa, Florida
county and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

The Eglin Field Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the national, state, and local levels. It is significant in the areas of Architecture, Engineering and Military history. Under Criterion A, the district possesses significance for its association with the establishment, development, and operation of Eglin Air Force Base, an important military training and weapons testing base during the World War Two and Cold War eras. The period of historical significance extends from 1941 to 1945. Although military activity began at the base in 1935 with the first transfer of land to the War Department, construction was not begun in the district until 1940. This period then extends to 1945, the end of the World War Two era, although the base continued to play an important role in the Cold War. The district contains a variety of buildings whose uses were associated with many phases of military activity. Under Criterion C, the district achieved significance for buildings within it that exhibited advanced engineering design related to the specific weapons testing and development role assigned to Eglin Air Force Base.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Eglin Air Force Base is located on what was the Choctawhatchee National Forest, designated in 1908 as one of America's eleven initial national forests. The legal transfer of this National Forest from the Department of Agriculture to the War Department occurred on June 27, 1940, with President Roosevelt's signature of the Congressional authorization (Public Law 668). Since at least 1931, however, military officials had looked at the expansive and uninhabited area as a potential site for a gunnery and bombing range. Many of the area's features that led the federal government to create the forest preserve contributed to its military usefulness. Principal among them were its

geographical extent, isolation, and sparse population. Military planners also appreciated the tract's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, which offered a still larger area over which weapons and aircraft might be tested.

Eglin Reservation, which occupies portions of Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, is located north of Choctawhatchee Bay and the Gulf of Mexico in the lower coastal plain region of Florida's Panhandle. The reservation lies between 30 minutes 20 degrees and 30 minutes 40 degrees north latitude; and 86 minutes 10 degrees and 87 minutes 0 degrees west longitude. It incorporates 464,000 acres of land.

Actual development of a military base began in 1933 when U.S. Army Air Corps officials from Maxwell, Alabama, initiated a search for a site suitable for a bombing and gunnery range. In 1935 the War Department acquired by lease 137 acres of land near Valparaiso on which to build an airport. At the same time, the Department requested Congressional authorization to construct facilities there for military operations, as well as to secure transfer of a much larger area within the forest for weapons testing.

Early funding for development of the base was difficult to obtain. The nation remained mired in economic depression in the mid-1930s and military funding occupied a low priority within the federal budget. Construction of a landing strip and barracks at Valparaiso was largely completed through the assistance of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers. At the same time, there were concerns about development of the forest as a military proving grounds base. Initial feasibility studies revealed a lack of commercial, housing, and transportation facilities to support the operation of a large military installation. In addition, some 200 individual homesteaders remained scattered throughout the National Forest. Still, the advantages of Eglin as the only large undeveloped tract in the eastern United States encompassing contiguous coastal and marine environments outweighed the site's disadvantages.

As America edged toward war, a special board convened by the Air Corps concluded that Eglin Field provided the most suitable available site for location of an armament proving ground. In early 1940, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Quartermaster General conferred on terms of the transfer of the Choctawhatchee National Forest to the War Department. This transfer was consummated later that same year.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

During World War Two, Eglin Field served as the nation's principal station for air warfare experimentation. In May 1941, the Army Air Corps designated Eglin as the Air Corps Proving Ground, removing it from the jurisdiction of the Southeast Air Corps Training Command and placing the base immediately under the control of the Chief of

Air Corps. The primary purpose of the Proving Ground was to provide a station for tactical tests of aircraft armament and accessory equipment and of aviation tactics and techniques.

For a time the regular Army command nevertheless continued to maintain that the Air Corps should use the Army's Material Command to conduct its testing and experimentation. Air Corps commanders who had for a long time desired status as an independent military branch, resisted subordinating their needs to those of the Army. General H. H. "Hap" Arnold, Army Air Corps Chief of Staff, wanted a proving ground under Air Corps direction with the commander reporting to him. On April 1, 1942, he appointed Brig. Gen. Grandison Gardner as the Base Commander at Eglin with instructions to supervise and conduct a testing program responsive to the specific requirements of the Air Corps. Gardner remained at Eglin until July 1, 1945, nearly the duration of the war.

Accelerated aircraft and armament tests began in September 1941, three months before Pearl Harbor. The early tests encompassed a variety of areas, including a determination of efficient tactics and materials for night attacks upon enemy aircraft, comparisons of low and high altitude bombing, the effectiveness of specific weapons of various caliber, tests of specific aircraft, and such mundane items as tests of storage cabinets and spark plugs. Shortly after the United States entered the war in the Pacific, one mission assignment became the development of aircraft that could compete against the lighter, faster, and more maneuverable Japanese Zero fighter plane.

A second priority was the climatic testing of aircraft. America's involvement in a global war meant that aircraft would be subjected to a variety of climates, ranging from arctic conditions in Alaska and hot deserts in the Middle East to tropical rain forests in the Far East. Gathering data concerning those areas, climate testing of machines, development of adaptive equipment, and expedient acclimatization of troops were critical to military operations. The Arctic, Desert and Tropic Information Center was established at Eglin to coordinate gathering of data and oversee climatic testing of equipment, shelter, food, medicine, clothing, and even the selection and care of personnel.

In response to this mission requirement, the cold weather testing unit stationed in Alaska was transferred to Eglin and plans were initiated to construct a climatic testing hangar at the Florida base. While the McKinley Climatic Laboratory was being constructed, climatic testing on Eglin was performed in Building 6.

Eglin expanded rapidly in the first year of the war. By 1943 the personnel stationed at the base numbered 576 officers and 7,896 enlisted. Activities undertaken at Eglin in pursuit of its mission included 724 service tests of aircraft and equipment and six special operations projects. The majority of buildings within the district were erected

during this period of rapid expansion. They served to house and support the personnel and the mission sent to Eglin. As personnel became stationed on Eglin Field, they needed housing (buildings 25-29, 200-220, 238-246), a facility in which to worship (building 4), and places to perform the gamut of administrative work (building 2).

The administrative, support and housing facilities within the district gain in significance due to their association with Eglin Field mission and contribution to many spectacular events of the Great War. One of the earliest of them was the legendary raid upon Tokyo in April 1942, led by Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle. U.S. leaders ordered the raid against Japan to bolster civilian morale in America and subvert Japanese confidence about their nation's invulnerability. The collapse of American arms throughout the Pacific region in the early weeks of the war had raised questions about the ability of the United States to stem the tide of Japanese advance. The lack of a land base from which to launch an air strike against the Japanese isles led military planners to consider a carrier-based attack. Between March 3 and March 29, 1942, B-25 crews from the 89th Reconnaissance Squadron and 17th Bombardment Group under Doolittle's command practiced short-field take-offs at Eglin in preparation for the carrier based raid, while maintenance crews worked to modify their B-25s to accommodate extra gasoline weights and additional firepower. The bombers, launched from the carrier *Hornet* 650 miles from the Japanese coast on April 18, 1942, achieved complete surprise in the raid on the Japanese capital. Although the damage the bombs inflicted was relatively small, the psychological effect on the Japanese was significant and America's resolve was strengthened.

As the strategic bombing offensive in Europe gathered momentum, Eglin completed testing of six heavy bombers and began experimenting with electronic warfare equipment. Final tests of the B-17, the work horse of the allied air effort against Nazi Germany, were completed and evaluations of the B-29, which was to be employed against the Japanese isles, were initiated. Charles Lindbergh accompanied a flight from Eglin Field January 21, 1944 in an experimental XB-29, which had arrived at the base for tests. The crew of the flight included 1st Lt. F. A. Lewis and Lt. Col. Paul Tibbets, who flew the *Enola Gay*, which dropped the first atomic weapon on Hiroshima; and Capt. Charles Sweeney, who flew in the B-29 that dropped the second atomic weapon upon Nagasaki. Electronic warfare techniques, such as radar and radio beam target acquisition, were becoming increasingly important to air operations, both offensive and defensive. The 1st Proving Ground Electronics Unit began operations in late 1943 to test such equipment. The operations were code named "Florosa Project" because of their proximity to a town of that name in the vicinity of Eglin.

Another project conducted at Eglin in 1943 was the development of tactics to surmount the beach defenses along the coast of France, in preparation for the invasion of Europe. A full scale model of the defenses erected by the Germans was created at Eglin

for testing of aircraft ordinance and underwater demolition techniques. The tests resulted in tactical changes that proved successful in the assault upon Normandy in June 1944.

Heavy losses of bombers, principally B-24s and B-17s, in raids deep within the heart of Nazi Germany demonstrated the need for long-range fighter aircraft that could accompany such missions and provide cover for the relatively defenseless bombers. Tests to develop a long-range fighter aircraft, which included the P-38, P-47 and P-51, proceeded at Eglin Field. The smaller planes were fitted with additional fuel capacity to permit longer flights and then tested to measure their speed and maneuverability. Range trials conducted from Eglin Field led to the development of a version of the P-47 that could accompany missions over 2,000 miles. The swift, agile P-51 had been available since the beginning of the war, but the Army's Material Command did not see fit to procure it. Its virtues were discovered by Eglin Field and advanced models soon produced. By the end of the war, American fighter planes had all but destroyed both the Japanese and German fighter plane inventory and American bombers flew to their targets virtually unmolested.

By late 1944, development of a U.S. version of the V-1 missiles had begun at the Proving Grounds. The first U.S. missile, the JB-2, was essentially a copy of the ground-launched V-1. At least three launching sites were constructed at Eglin. The first missiles were launched from permanent concrete ramps, portable and fixed steel lattice frame ramps, steam powered ramps, and various aircraft. Researchers also experimented with radio-controlled guidance systems. All of the tests proved important in subsequent missile research.

Launches of the JB-2 missiles had become routine by mid-1945. A launching squadron was created to deliver the weapon against Japanese targets from the Philippines. The war ended before the weapon could be used, however. At the time of Japan's surrender in August 1945, the Proving Grounds was also involved in testing a radio-controlled bomb. Well into the 1970s, missile launching experiments featuring several generations of weapons continued at Eglin.

Physical expansion of the base continued from 1940 through 1945, the end of the historical period, as Eglin's role in the testing and development of new weapons systems expanded. The historic district embraces the greatest concentration of World War II buildings on the base.

In fulfilling its military mission, Eglin Air Force Base has made major contributions to the defense of the United States in the development of tactical strategies, testing of weaponry, and missile research. Eglin, the largest Air Force base in the Western Hemisphere, played a highly important role in World War Two, the pivotal

event in the twentieth century history of the United States. The buildings within the historic district which date from that time provide the most enduring physical legacy of Eglin's involvement in the American war effort.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The district meets Criterion C on the basis of the design and construction at the base of significant military facilities, notably the testing facilities associated with the military purposes of the base. The primary testing facility in the district, Building 6 gained distinction as the Arctic Information Center. The other buildings listed as contributing to the historic district provided facilities for administration, housing, recreation, and other facets of base operation associated with its primary mission as the Air Corps Proving Ground for weapons and tactics.

The distinctive and extensive use of structural clay tile on the exterior walls of Eglin's buildings varied from the predominance of wood on military bases elsewhere in the United States. The material's origins are associated with the application of terra cotta in the late nineteenth century as a covering for steel buildings. The clay tile walls were given a stucco finish. As a result of the use of the more durable tile, Eglin's buildings have weathered the years well, and almost uniformly continue in good condition. Good maintenance and sympathetic alterations have contributed to their appearance and condition. The replacement of wood sash with metal sash is the most common alteration.

Tile was widely employed in Florida throughout the great building boom of the 1920s. This use of tile in construction addresses the severe environmental conditions found on the southeastern coast of the United States. Insects, moisture, rainfall, and the salted mists from the Gulf wreak havoc on wood and metal buildings. Unlike many other installations, Eglin was clearly not meant to be a temporary base, closed at the end of the war.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 1 Eglin Field Historic District
name of property
Okaloosa, Florida
county and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 1 Eglin Field Historic District
name of property
Okaloosa, Florida
county and State

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Eglin Field Historic District essentially follow street lines, diverting to encompass historic buildings that contribute to the integrity and historic purpose of the district. The northern boundary encompasses the dwellings on either side of Georgia Avenue as well as Building 30, immediately north of Georgia Avenue. The western boundary line runs directly down First Street. To the east, the line is drawn down Second and east along Van Matre Avenue to fourth street to encompass Building 6. The southern boundary is, for lack of a street in the immediate area, drawn between the contributing structure, Building 246, and Building 243.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries are drawn to include the major grouping of buildings in the main base complex that date from the World War II period. The northern boundary encompasses the historically significant family housing quarters along Georgia Avenue as well as virtually unaltered Building 30. It does not include the World War II structures to the north of 30, along Choctawhatchee Avenue because they lack historic integrity. Buildings 33 through 40 and 66 through 71 were not included because they would have a negative impact on a cohesive district. A scatter of World War II buildings east of the eastern boundary, although in proximity to the district, are excluded because of compromising alterations and the loss of district cohesiveness that would result from the necessary addition of other non-contributing buildings. The eastern boundary, therefore, is drawn directly down Second Street, diverting only once to include Building 6. The western boundary is also drawn directly down a street, First Avenue, and encompasses all of the World War II structures on the western side of the district. Finally, the southern

boundary has been drawn between contributing Building 246 and the parking lot and non-eligible Building 243 to the south. Building 243, as well as the other southern structures, are not of the World War II era and are not eligible for nomination due to any other factor; thus their inclusion would harm the integrity of the district.

The boundary is drawn around the largest concentration of World War II era structures on Eglin. These facilities have received few, if any, renovations or additions over the years and therefore have managed to retain their original form, feel and historic integrity. Furthermore, the concentration of them, coupled with the virtually unchanged landscape, result in the retention of historic setting and feel. The scatter of World War II era buildings outside of the district do not have these benefits. Most of them have been altered in such a way as to change their form or historic feel; all of them are in environments that have been drastically altered, thus destroying their historic setting and often their association.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS PAGE 1

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

1. Building 30, Eglin Field
2. Eglin Air Force Base, Florida
3. U.S.A.F. Photographer
4. March 13, 1995
5. AFDTC/EMPH, Eglin AFB, Florida
6. Building 30, looking southwest
7. Photo 1 of 10

Items 2-5 are the same for all of the photographs

1. Building 30, Eglin Field
6. Building 30, looking southeast
7. Photo 2 of 10

1. Georgia Avenue, Eglin Field
6. view of Georgia Avenue, looking east
7. Photo 3 of 10

1. Building 27, Eglin Field
6. Building 27, looking north
7. Photo 4 of 10

1. Building 4, Eglin Field
6. Building 4, looking northeast
7. Photo 5 of 10

1. Building 2, Eglin Field
6. Building 2, looking northeast
7. Photo 6 of 10

1. Building 6, Eglin Field
6. Building 6, looking northeast
7. Photo 7 of 10

1. Building 202, Eglin Field
6. Building 202, looking northeast
7. Photo 8 of 10

1. Building 202, Eglin Field
6. Building 202, looking northwest
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1. Building 238, Eglin Field
6. Building 238, looking southwest
7. Photo 10 of 10

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS
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NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

1. Building 23, Non-Contributing, Eglin Field
6. Building 23, looking southeast
7. Photo 1 of 3

1. Building 240, Non-Contributing, Eglin Field
6. Building 240, looking east
7. Photo 2 of 3

1. Building 240, Non-Contributing, Eglin Field
6. Building 240, looking west
7. Photo 3 of 3