

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 13 1975

DATE ENTERED JUL 1 1975

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Naval Military Hangar - University Shell House

AND/OR COMMON

Canoe House/Shell House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

University of Washington Campus

-- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Washington

-- VICINITY OF

#1 - Honorable Joel M. Pritchard

CODE  
53

COUNTY

King

CODE

033

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

**PRESENT USE**

AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 OTHER: Recreation & storage

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District

STREET &amp; NUMBER

4735 East Marginal Way South

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

-- VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

King County Administrative Building

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Fourth Avenue and James Street

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

STATE

Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Seattle City Landmark Survey

DATE

1974

-- FEDERAL -- STATE -- COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDSOffice of Urban Conservation  
Seattle Department of Community Development

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

STATE

Washington

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Canoe House was erected during the First World War when the U.S. Navy occupied a portion of the University of Washington campus fronting Lake Union, the ship canal and Lake Washington. Though built to shelter seaplanes as a feature of the Navy's temporary training camp, the structure apparently was not completed until 1918, late enough to have been of little use to the military during the emergency. It is a straightforward, utilitarian structure ideally suited for its intended function, with a maximum clear span and siting on the lakeshore.

The structure is located in the SE 1/4 Section 16, T25N, R4E of the Willamette Meridian. It is situated at water grade on the north bank of the entrance to the ship canal from Lake Washington. It is oriented on its site southeast to northwest, and in its original context its hangar doors opened advantageously onto the water. The immediate setting is green open space, and the location is presently one of the focal points of water-oriented recreational activities at the University. An embankment rises behind the Canoe House to the north and west, and in the background looms the University's football stadium surrounded by several acres of surfaced parking.

The simple rectangular enclosure on concrete slab measures 88 by 120 feet. Large timber trusses (as many as six or seven) span the central space and are supported at the ends by triangular framing units. Longitudinal joists are bolted to the trusses and end wall plates. The trusses are a modified Howe type with crossed chords and top members which are pitched at a low angle, instead of being straight or flat, and which account for the shape of the shallow gambrel roof. This wooden framework is sheathed and covered with shingles. Asphalt shingles make up the roof cover. The long side walls are raked outward from the eaves, and because their characteristics are stabilizing or rigidifying rather than load-bearing, they are little more than cladding openings which are, typically, large double-hung sash windows, in pairs, with nine lights over nine. Some of the original openings have been filled in or modified, and other openings, such as bay windows, have been added. The interior originally was unfinished and generally remains so today. There are grade level doorways in the north and east walls. Across the south end a large triple-section sliding door with window panes in the upper portions is suspended from an overhead track approximately 24 feet in height. The track is extended beyond the face of the structure with outriggers which enable the doors to be drawn clear of the opening.

Improvements date from 1922, when the hangar became headquarters for campus crew racing activities, and 1949, when the space was converted to use for storage and rental of boats. A 20-foot section across the north end was partitioned off and in it a second floor level added. Reached by an outside stair in the center of the end wall, the damp-free "garret" was the work space in which George Pocock built his celebrated laminated racing shells for twenty-seven years. To allow a maximum of natural light into the studio-garret, a long clerestory window was opened up across the face of the end truss. The partitioned section was further subdivided after 1949. Over the several years it was unused prior to 1922, the hangar suffered the lack of adequate drainage. Freshmen crew members were pressed into service to lay drain tile around the base. Gutters on the eaves of the side walls and corner

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Aviation	
				Collegiate athletics	

SPECIFIC DATES      1918                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      United States Navy

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed by the U.S. Navy as a seaplane hangar in 1918, the Canoe House is significant to the state as a rare, if not unique example of an architectural type developed in the early years of aviation. Because the airplane hangar was a response to new technology, its efficient form was essentially without historical precedent. No other examples of the hangar type dating from the period of the First World War are known in Washington. (A dirigible hangar at Fort Worden on the Olympic Peninsula dating from ca. 1922-1923 has an iron or steel frame with corrugated metal cladding. The oldest hangar at Paine Field south of Everett is reported to have been constructed in 1942.) Moreover, no other early hangars are known to have survived in the vicinity of Seattle, which has figured prominently in aviation history since the founding of the Boeing Company in 1916.

In 1917 and 1918 portions of the University of Washington campus were taken over for war preparations. Army Training Corps activities were relegated to the upper campus, and the U.S. Naval Training Camp extended along lower ground fronting Lakes Union and Washington and the ship canal connecting the two bodies of water. Among facilities of this cantonment area were officers' quarters, barracks, miscellaneous store rooms, and tents for the rank trainees. One of the largest of the temporary frame structures, apparently a mess hall and PX, had a roof truss profile similar to that of the Navy's seaplane hangar, but its walls were straight rather than raked. The seaplane hangar was a late addition to these facilities. Completed in 1918, it evidently was never used for the pilot training exercises it was intended to shelter. After the War, indications are that the hangar remained essentially empty, except for the unauthorized storage of a private plane, until it was relinquished to the University around 1922, reportedly for the transactional token of \$1.00.

Rowing started on the University campus as early as 1902 and 1904. Speed racing did not become an official sport, however, until 1907, when direction of such activities was assigned to Hiram Conibear. During these early years the Pocock Brothers were brought to campus to fabricate racing shells according to a revolutionary, light-weight design which contributed to the varsity crews' success and subsequent recognition nationwide. Having been interrupted during the emergency, crew racing was resumed under Coach Conibear's successors after the War. George Pocock returned to the campus from a wartime job building seaplane pontoons for the Boeing Airplane Company. All crew activities, including Mr. Pocock's shell-building shop, were housed in the former Naval Military Hangar from 1922 to 1949, when activities were shifted to a new facility designated the Conibear Shell House. During the years they were quartered in

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Burandt, Bob J. "Good-Bye to U's Old Canoe House", Seattle Times Magazine, January 1, 1950, 11.

Gates, Charles M. The First Century at the University of Washington, 1861-1961, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961. pp. 98-100.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.9 acres (See description)

UTM REFERENCES

*UTM OK MF*

A	1,0	5,5,2	6,6,0	5,2	7,7	2,1,0	B					
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
C							D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The area proposed for nomination, containing 1.9 acres more or less, is bounded on the south by the natural shoreline of the north bank of the Lake Washington Ship Canal, and on the north by the northernmost boundary of property governed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Consent Agreement No. DA (S)45-108-CIVENG-66-2. The west boundary is a line running perpendicularly from said northerly boundary to the end.

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

Elisabeth Walton Potter, Historic Preservation Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

DATE

May 10, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 1128

TELEPHONE

(206) 753-4117

CITY OR TOWN

Olympia

STATE

Washington

## 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Charles H. Odegaard*

TITLE

Executive Director - Charles H. Odegaard

DATE

June 9, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/1/75

ATTEST:

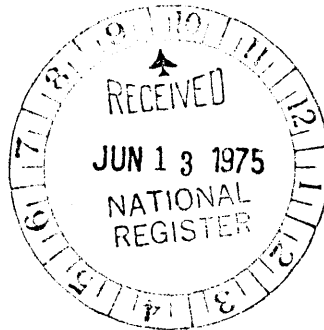
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

JUN 27 1975

downspouts completed the rain drain system. Other modifications include the addition of showers and lockers and a storage shed on the north end of the west wall.

Still used as a canoe house and sail-boat rental concession and storage area, the Canoe House is maintained by the University of Washington under terms of a consent agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the property owner of record. Dry rot and fire prevention are two major maintenance problems at present. The structure is not sprinklered. Construction of a new aquatic recreation facility is being planned for a location elsewhere on campus, and a future use for the existing canoe-rental facility is not contemplated.



their make-shift facility the University's varsity crews compiled a distinguished record, of which a high point was competing in the World Olympic Games of 1936. During this time also George Pocock was permitted to fill orders for the superior laminated racing shells from Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Syracuse and other universities around the country.

Shortly after the hangar was vacated by varsity crews in 1949, it was converted for use as the University's Canoe House. Presently fulfilling a traditional function on the campus, the Naval Military Hangar is the second or third boat-rental facility operated under University auspices since the turn of the century. The predecessor canoe house, a much re-located building in use for nearly forty years, was torn down in 1950.



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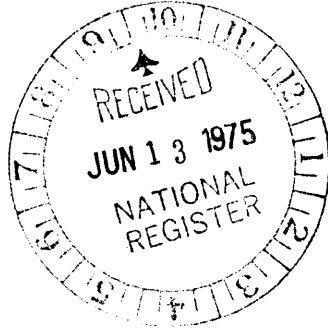
Interview April 17, 1975: Alvin Ulbrickson, University of Washington Crew Racing Coach, retired. Interview April 22, 1975: George Pocock, Racing Shells, Inc., Seattle, Washington.

Photo Albums, U.S. Naval Training Camp, University of Washington. Collections of the Seattle Museum of History and Industry.

Three Quarters of a Century at Washington. Seattle: University of Washington Alumni Association, 1941, pp. 11-12, 20.



of the ship canal revetment, which is a distance of approximately 248.7 feet. The east boundary is a line running perpendicularly from said northerly boundary to its point of intersection with the natural shoreline, which is a distance of slightly less than 150 feet. The distance between the east and west boundaries is approximately 300 feet.





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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Naval Military Hangar - University Shell House  
Additions and corrections to the nomination forms

Item Number 4

Revise to indicate the following ownership:

The hangar building itself is owned by the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

The building is situated approximately half-way overlapping property of the University of Washington and the adjoining property of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District.

The Corps of Engineers owns the portion of the site bordering on the Lake Washington Ship Canal. This is a strip of land roughly 100' wide running east and west and tapering with the shoreline as the ship canal widens where it joins Lake Washington.

Item Number 7

In the last paragraph the first sentence should read:

Still used as a canoe house and sailboat rental concession and storage area, the Canoe House is owned and maintained by the University of Washington. Under terms of a consent agreement a portion of the building for approximately half its length on the end facing the ship canal occupies neighboring property of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.