Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

PH0354783 DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 17 1977
DATE ENTERED SEP 23 1977

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC ** COLLEGE PARK AIRPORT

AND/OR COMMON The College Park Airport

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER North side of Calvert Road between U.S. Route 1 and Kenilworth Avenue on Cpl. Frank S. Scott Drive
E of College Park off Kenilworth Ave.

_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN College Park _X_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fifth

STATE Maryland CODE 24

COUNTY Prince George's CODE 033

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
_DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	_AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
_BUILDING(S)	_PRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED	X COMMERCIAL	X PARK
_STRUCTURE	_BOTH	_WORK IN PROGRESS	X EDUCATIONAL	_PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	_ENTERTAINMENT	_RELIGIOUS
_OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	_YES: RESTRICTED	_GOVERNMENT	_SCIENTIFIC
	_BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	_INDUSTRIAL	X TRANSPORTATION
		_NO	_MILITARY	_OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. W.C. Dutton, Jr., Chairman, Prince George's County Planning Board/Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Comm

STREET & NUMBER 6600 Kenilworth Avenue

CITY, TOWN Riverdale _X_ VICINITY OF

STATE Maryland 20840

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Prince George's County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Main Street

CITY, TOWN Upper Marlboro

STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

_FEDERAL _STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	DETERIORATED	UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
GOOD	X RUINS Hangar Foundations	X ALTERED x	MOVED DATE
FAIR	UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Present

Located on the north side of Calvert Road between U.S. Route 1 and Kenilworth Avenue on Cpl. Frank S. Scott Drive, the College Park Airport of 1976 encompasses approximately 66 acres of land.[1] It boasts a well-kept, paved, 2,750-foot runway to serve the 76 light aircraft that are home based there; more than 50 other aircraft are on a waiting list to make use of the airport facility. The College Park Airport is one of approximately 12,700 general aviation airports serving communities throughout the United States. Seventy-two percent of all the general aviation activity in America is for business or commercial purposes, and numerous communities rely totally on general aviation facilities for air service -- facts that testify to the important role played by College Park and the other general aviation airports.

The College Park Airport structures today consist of one maintenance hangar which is built on the foundation of one of the airport's seven original hangars, and an operations building which houses ground-to-air communications gear, and an aviation lounge, appropriately known as the "Tail Spin Lounge," where pilots swap tall tales of aviation prowess. Located in the maintenance hangar is a mini-museum that houses artifacts from the airport's colorful past. Some of these are on loan from the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. Here visitors, including many local school children, may view a comprehensive slide show presented by airport staff which documents pictorially the airport's prominent place in aviation history. Annually, the College Park Airport sponsors an aviation heritage day, the latest on August 14-15, 1976, which features the display of numerous aircraft of historic interest.

Also present at the College Park Airport of today is the carefully preserved compass rose which was installed there just prior to 1918. Originally, a wind sock was placed at the center of the compass rose to give incoming pilots, who had no modern instruments to aid them, a visual indication of the compass quadrant in which the wind was blowing, as well as the direction in which they were flying. Although the compass rose is no longer needed from a functional standpoint, with the advent of sophisticated navigational aids, it serves as a reminder of an age when "seat of the pants" flying was standard procedure.

In addition to the compass rose, several other reminders still exist of the airport's formative days; the foundations of five of the original hangars have been uncovered, one of which, as was previously mentioned, serves as the foundation for the maintenance hangar. Additionally, the site of the water tower, built in 1912, still contains the remains of the steel legs that supported the structure; the legs were cut off at ground level when the tower was removed. Interestingly,

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College Park Airport
College Park,
Maryland

DESCRIPTION (continued)

the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad right-of-way which carried the early aviators and their equipment to and from the College Park site is still in operation.

In addition to its present function as an airport, the College Park facility serves as a meeting place for such groups as the National Aerospace Educational Memorial Center Committee which perpetuates interest in aviation history; the Civil Air Patrol, Air Explorer Post 1909, and the Maxicutters, a group of radio-controlled model airplane enthusiasts. A committee is being formed, called "Friends of the College Park Airport", to assist the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission as an advisory group, giving recommendations for development of the airport's historicity.

Original

A quotation from the leasing agreement, dated August 25, 1909, between Major M. Gray Zalinski, Quartermaster, United States Army, and Edward A. Newman, realtor, provides an insight into the early physical appearance of the property, which is described as: "a tract of land embracing one hundred sixty (160) acres more or less situated between College Park and Lakeland, Prince George's County, Maryland, said tract of land being bounded on the west by the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on the north and east by the Paint Branch and the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River, and on the south by the property of the Romona Land Company and the National Vaccine Company, exclusive of the two buildings erected thereon."[2]

As the result of the efforts of Brig. Gen. James Allen, Chief Signal Officer, U.S. Army, in March 1911 Congress approved a $125,000 appropriation for purchasing aeronautical equipment. Soon after the appropriation, requests were authorized and approved for the necessary construction of hangars and the purchase of aircraft to be used at College Park. As a result of a new lease agreement on February 27, 1911, the tract of land was larger than that of the 1909 agreement, with some 260 acres extending north along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad property to a series of goldfish ponds and east to the "Paint Branch" of the Anacostia River, with a maximum cleared runway of 2,376 feet in an east

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

and west direction.[4] Four temporary wooden hangars 45 feet with 11 feet in the clear, built according to plans furnished by the Wright Company, were erected along the railroad track. One of the hangars was used to quarter a detachment of enlisted men; a tent served as an emergency hospital.[5] The Quartermaster Department also assumed responsibility for the improvement and maintenance of the flying field; for this purpose they made available a mowing machine, a plow, scraper and roller, and two old reliable Army mules.[6] The Rexford Smith hangar was moved over to the line of the Signal Corps hangars.

To satisfy the need for drinking water for the airfield personnel, Capt. Chandler requested that a well "5 feet in diameter, lined with dry brick covered with 2-inch planking, and provided with a substantial pump" be installed. Approval was granted on May 23, 1911.[7]

In June 1911 telephone service was requested for the first hangar, with sufficient wire to place an additional instrument in the fourth hangar when it was completed. This request was granted by the Chief of the Signal Corps.[8] Now that construction was well underway, it became necessary to obtain items fundamental to everyday operations. On June 22, 1911 the following items were requisitioned: 6 chairs, a barracks building, 2 tents, a hospital tent, complete with files; 15 mattress covers, 15 mosquito nets, 2 water coolers, 1 refrigerator, 24 fire buckets and one field desk.[9]

The commanding officer of the College Park facility, Capt. Charles Chandler, concerned over the fire hazard created by the storage of oils, gasoline and expensive and flammable airplanes in the four wooden hangars, requested on July 29, 1911 that an elevated water tower of approximately 1,000-gallon capacity be constructed to provide gravity water service to all hangars.[10] This request was approved on August 2, 1911 and construction began soon thereafter. Also constructed at College Park was an aneometer on a portable steel tripod with the cups about 15 feet above the ground for measuring wind velocity.[11]

By June 21, 1911, there were 15 enlisted men of the Signal Corps on duty at College Park as attendants and helpers to handle the air-

See continuation sheet #3

DESCRIPTION (continued)

craft.[12] There were, however, no quarters for officers, who had to commute on the train each day from Washington, D.C. to College Park.

At the end of July 1911 there were 5 flying machines at the school: a Curtiss Model D, Curtiss Model E, 2 Wright B's and a new Burgess F.[13]

By June of 1911 the number of aircraft either at the College Park facility or soon to arrive had outgrown the capacity of the 4 available hangars. Capt. Chandler on July 29 requested that 2 additional hangars be constructed, at least 5 feet greater in each dimension (at least 50 feet x 50 feet) than the existing ones. He also recommended that the doors rest on rollers attached to the bottom of the doors instead of supporting their weight from a track above. Wooden floors were also desired.[14] The request was granted and invitations for proposals were published August 19, 1911. The successful bidder, Mr. W.F. Basim, of Washington, D.C., entered into a contract with the Quartermaster of the Army for construction of two 51 feet x 51 feet hangar on September 11, 1911. The work commenced on that day, with completion of the first scheduled for October 3 and the second for October 9.[15]

It is also important to note here that, unlike today, military and civilian operations were not necessarily segregated from one another. Records show, for example, that a number of civilian aviators also had hangars at College Park, alongside the military. The situation is made clear in a reply from Brig. Gen. Allen, Chief Signal Officer, to a Mr. John Morsop, who requested space in one of the government hangars. The General indicated that, although no space was available in a government hangar, space might be available in the hangars of one of the civilian aviators located at College Park, including Dr. Christmas, and Messrs. Rex Smith, Tarbox, and Fox.[16] The facilities at College Park were also made available to civilian aviators wishing to test aircraft and equipment, as shown in a letter to Mr. Spainhour of Pittsburg, Pa., granting permission to test his monoplane at College Park. He was also allowed to erect a tent temporarily at the facility, provided he maintained good order, sanitation and discipline and conserved the interest of the Government.[17]

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

On November 28, 1911, 5 officers, 20 men, 4 airplanes (1 Wright, 1 Burgess-Wright, and 2 Curtiss pushers) and motor vehicles, wagons, horses and mules were moved by a special train consisting of 9 cars from College Park to Augusta, Georgia to set up a winter school. 1 Wright plane remained at College Park.[18] After the harshness of winter had passed, flying resumed once again at College Park in April of 1912.[19]

An additional hangar, No. 7, 50½ feet x 69 feet, was erected in the spring of 1912 by the Quartermaster Department in preparation for the new "weight-carrier" airplanes then on order. With the spare lumber the enlisted detachment constructed a small building to serve as headquarters.[20]

On May 18, 1912, the Wright Company delivered their Scout airplane, (the"weight-carrier" referred to in the above paragraph) type C,m-1, which subsequently was tested at College Park by A.L.Welch.[21]

By September the Aviation school at College Park had grown to 30 enlisted men of the Signal Corps, and 1 civilian mechanic.[22] By the end of October 1912 the Signal Corps had within its inventory 11 aircraft, 8 of which were at College Park at that time. With the increase in the number of aircraft and buildings it was necessary to obtain a fire engine because the fire risk was very great.[23]

As late as January 1913 electric power lines had not been extended to the College Park facility. Work at the airport was done by the light of portable oil lamps, lanterns and candles. Capt. Chandler was concerned, since the buildings were of such a temporary and flammable nature, filled with oil and gasoline, that there was a considerable fire hazard. Electricity was also needed to power the lathe (60-cycle, single phase).[24]

For the latter part of 1912 there were no additional buildings or aircraft added at College Park, due to the anticipated move of the school to San Diego, California.[25]

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

[1]Prince George's County Deed 4232/841, Registry of Deeds, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.
[2]Signal Corps File 1894-197, dated 10/11/09, National Archives.
[3]Signal Corps File 21891/38, dated 2/27/11, National Archives.
[4]Lahm, Frank and Chandler, Charles, How our Army Grew Wings, page 194.
[5]Signal Corps File 27146, dated 4/11/11.
[6]Signal Corps File 27647/5, dated 6/20/11.
[7]Signal Corps File 27203/1, dated 5/18/11.
[8]Signal Corps File 27794, dated 6/14/11.
[9]Signal Corps File 27647/4, dated 6/21/11.
[10]Signal Corps File 28096, dated 7/29/11.
[11]Lahm, page 203.
[12]Signal Corps File 28117, dated 6/21/11.
[13]Journal: American Aviation Historical Society, Vol. 20, No. 3, Fall 1975, page 173.
[14]Signal Corps File 27146/2, dated 7/29/11.
[15]Signal Corps File 334901, dated 9/9/11.
[16]Signal Corps File 28679, dated 10/17/11.
[17]Signal Corps File 27446, dated 5/31/11.
[18]U.S. Army Air Arm, April 1861 to April 1917, page 54.
[19]Lahm, page 215.
[20]Ibid., page 219.
[21]Ibid., page 220.
[22]Ibid., page 235.
[23]Signal Corps File 31321, dated 10/8/12.
[24]Signal Corps File 31162, dated 9/24/12, 1/6/13, and 1/30/13.
[25]Lahm and Chandler, pp. 242-3.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	X SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	X EDUCATION	X MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	X ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	X COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		X INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1908 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Man's first flight in a motor-driven, heavier-than-air machine on the sand dunes at Kill Devil Hill, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina (now a National Register Site), 12 seconds which astounded the world, was the beginning of a great adventure. However, many chapters in that adventure, including countless record-breaking flights and important developments in aerial technology, were to be written at College Park, Maryland.

A memo from the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, dated August 1, 1907, established an aeronautical division in the United States Army. However, there was to be little in the way of aeronautical equipment - other than manned balloons - until Brig. Gen. James Allen, Chief Signal Officer, solicited sealed proposals on behalf of the Board of Ordinance and Fortifications for furnishing the signal Corps with a heavier-than-air, motorized flying machine. As a result of these bid proposals, the Board of Ordinance and Fortifications selected and entered into an agreement with Wilbur and Orville Wright of Dayton, Ohio, on February 10, 1908. The major specifications included in the contract required that the plane be portable on the ground by a wagon, carry a passenger, travel at 40 miles per hour while staying aloft for more than one hour, and that 2 military officers must be trained to pilot the craft.[1]

The Army accepted the Wright aircraft, known as the Wright Military Flyer, for testing in August 1909 at Fort Myer, Virginia. It met all the requirements during testing on the parade grounds of the Fort and became the first aircraft to be accepted into service by the United States Armed Forces.[2] The Wright's were not able to fulfill the last portion of their agreement, namely the training of 2 military aviators, at Fort Myer, because the commanding officer complained that the parade ground was needed for its intended purpose, drilling, not flying. He was also concerned with the safety of the crowds that flocked daily to the area to witness the Wrights' magnificent flying machine. His concerns deepened following the death of Lt. Thomas C. Selfridge on September 17, 1908 in a crash that also gave Orville Wright, pilot of the craft, serious injuries.[3]

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

As a result of the request to move the aircraft to other quarters, Capt. Charles Chandler, in charge of the Signal Corps Aeronautical Unit, requested that Lt. Frank Lahm, a balloonist, ascend and conduct an aerial search for a new site. While making free ascents from Washington, Lahm spotted open spaces in the College Park area which appeared to be particularly suitable for operation of the Wright Military Flyer. The grassy field, located near the Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland), was later found acceptable for the purposes of these pioneer aviators and became the site of the training of the first military fliers in the United States.[4]

One fact that undoubtedly heightened Lahm's enthusiasm for the location is the fact that the field was already being used by civilian aviator Rexford Smith, a flier and inventor, who was operating from a hangar near the middle of the grassy area. It was later necessary to move Smith's hangar to the edge of the field to facilitate military operations.[5]

After the location was accepted by both the Wrights and the Signal Corps, a few weeks were needed for arranging the lease for the property,[6] erecting a small wooden hangar and clearing a small field of brush and other obstacles.[7] Because the Wright machine had no landing gear as we think of it today, it was necessary to construct a monorail starting track (the launching mechanism was a type of catapult) near the temporary hangar.[8] Although the track was placed in the direction of the prevailing wind, at that period of flying it was customary to wait for wind of very low velocity before instructing students.

The work of teaching the Signal Corps officers of the Army began on the grounds of College Park on October 6, 1909. The instructor was Wilbur Wright. The impact of the first flight of a government-owned aircraft at College Park, on October 8, 1909, can be best appreciated through reading the enthusiastic report of the Associated Press correspondent on the scene:

> "College Park (Md.) Oct. 8 - For the first time in the history of America, an aeroplane owned by the United States Government soared in the air today. Guided by Wilbur Wright, it flew 5 times in the dedication to aviation of the government's first tract of land here. With almost ideal conditions for spectators, and a breeze blowing scarcely

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

> at the rate of a mile an hour, Mr. Wright began the flights to teach the officers of the Signal Corps how to handle the machine. Off the starting rail at 3:35 o'clock, he circled the field for 3 minutes, 25 feet above ground. Again at 4:09 o'clock Mr. Wright took off for another flight. This time he was in the air 5 minutes. Each time he had kept to the reservation grounds. Then Lt. Lahm took a place in the extra seat. At 5:15 o'clock the two rose probably 150 feet. They went a mile and a half toward Washington in hardly more than as many minutes. In about five minutes after they had left they landed within 20 feet of the starting rail. In another short flight Mr. Wright took Lt. Humphreys with him. Flights probably will be made tomorrow and on the days following until the Officers are familiar with the new art."[9]

On the next day Wilbur Wright set an unofficial world speed record over a 500-meter course, an awesome 46 miles per hour! The College Park Airport was but two days old, yet it already had earned for itself a page in aviation history.[10]

The first pupils to receive instruction at College Park from Wilbur Wright were Lt. Frank P. Lahm, Lt. Frederick Humphreys, and Lt. Benjamin Foulois.[11] Lt. Humphreys became the first Army Officer to solo in the Army's first airplane on October 26, 1909, in a 3-minute flight.[12]

The continuing successful flights at College Park proved to be newsworthy and captured the attention of the nation. New aviation records were seemingly made and broken daily during the training period, which lasted until November 5, 1909.[13] No one could visualize, not even the Wright brothers or the farsighted men who flew the Army Signal Corps aircraft at College Park, that just 67 years later military aviation would stand as one of the dominant forces in world affairs, involving millions of persons and billions of dollars.

Aside from the record-breaking flights at the site of the College Park airport, other notable firsts were achieved during the facility's formative years. On October 27, 1909, Mrs. Ralph H. Van Deman

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

became the first woman in America to fly as a passenger in an aircraft. The pilot was Wilbur Wright and the flight lasted for 4 minutes.[14] A 9 minute flight on November 3, 1909 enabled the Navy to enter the recordbooks when Lt. George C. Sweet, USN, became the first Naval officer to fly.[15]

It is historically important to note that the last time Wilbur Wright was to fly at College Park was November 2, 1909, when he flew two flights with Lt. Frank Lahm.[16]

Flying at College Park was severely curtailed on November 5, 1909, when the Army's only aircraft was damaged during landing. Although experimentation continued at a lesser degree at College Park during 1910, it was during this period that the United States lost its initial advantage to European nations which were continuing to investigate vigorously the potential of manned flight.

Although this country had purchased its first military airplane in 1909, two years later a Congressional Investigation brought out the fact that our entire Air Force consisted of one wrecked plane, one pilot and 9 enlisted men. As a result of this disclosure, Congress authorized the War Department to expend, "for aviation purposes," $125,000. of which $25,000. was to be available March 3, 1911, for the immediate purchase of aircraft and supporting equipment at College Park. The rest was to be made available during the fiscal year 1912.[17]

With the immediate release of $25,000 from the congressional appropriation, work began in earnest at College Park. Hangars were erected, aircraft were purchased, and men and supporting equipment began to arrive. On July 3, 1911, War Department Memorandum Number 13 established College Park as the Signal Corps Aviation School.[18] Thus, with the establishment of the Aviation School at College Park, the United States Government made its first major commitment to developing an aviation capability within the U.S. Armed Forces.

To implement the construction of the first four hangars,

See continuation sheet #9

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

1st Lt. Roy C. Kirtland was detailed on April 13, 1911, to the Signal Corps Aviation Field as officer in charge. He later became secretary of the flying school, a position he was to hold for the next 2 years, in addition to serving as a flying instructor.[19]

Brig. Gen. James Allen, Chief Signal Officer of the Army, on June 14, 1911, recommended the assignment of a medical officer for duty at College Park. Because of the expected assignment of 5 officers and 15 enlisted men and the active flying schedule at College Park, he felt the need to assign a medical officer there to handle emergencies. There is no doubt that General Allen's concern for the safety of the aviators was heightened by the death on May 10, 1911, of Lt. George Kelly at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, following an aircraft accident. Lt. John P. Kelley, a medical officer who had been on duty with the Panama Canal Commission, was ordered to report to College Park on June 30, 1911. With this assignment Lt. Kelley became the first flight surgeon in America. He remained in this position until he was relieved of duty on September 30, 1912.[20]

Many vast aeronautical research organizations operate today with little public notice. This was not true of the Aeronautical Section of 1911, however, whose activities drew continual coverage by the Washington Press. Newsmen such as John Daly of the Washington Post, John Mitchell of the Washington Star, and Richard Richards of the Washington Times, were in constant contact with affairs at College Park.[21] Additionally, the crowds gathering at College Park to observe the flying were ever increasing in size. As was observed in the "Aero" Section of the Washington Star, visitors "came by train, trolley, wagons, bicycles, motor cycles and touring cars." Officers at the school were instructed to answer questions patiently. One of the most frequently asked questions about the aircraft was, "How do they flap their wings?"

To assure proper administration of the College Park facility, Capt. Charles Chandler, who previously was enrolled in the service school at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, was assigned to take command. Taking on his official duties June 20, 1911, Capt. Chandler thus became

See continuation sheet #10

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

the first military officer in the United States Armed Forces to command a military aviation facility.[22] He also served, in a dual capacity, as officer in charge of the Aeronautical Division in Washington.

When the College Park flying school was established there was an immediate need for an expert engine mechanic to instruct the enlisted men in the maintenance of airplanes and to assume responsibility for the reliable performance of the aircraft engines on which the lives of the aviators depended. The responsibility for these duties fell upon the shoulders of civilian mechanic Henry S. Molineau, who was assigned to College Park as of July 10, 1911, thus becoming the first civilian mechanic and instructor in the maintenance of aircraft engines in the military. He was the only civilian mechanic at College Park during the first 2 years of operation.[23]

The first of the new airplanes to arrive at College Park was the Wright Type B; a second Type B was delivered on July 1, 1911.[24] Despite the fact that only 2 aircraft were being flown at College Park during the first month of operation, as of July 20 there were recorded 127 flights, 56 of them carrying passengers as students.[25]

In a letter dated August 15, 1911, addressed to U.S. Representative Ben Johnson (Ky.), chairman of the House District Committee, General Allen approved Rep. Johnson's request to be carried aloft in a Signal Corps aircraft. Gen. Allen further stated that he had no objections to cabinet officers, senators or representatives flying in Signal Corps airplanes at any time. Near the end of August, with Lt. "Hap" Arnold at the controls, Rep. Johnson took a 20 minute flight, making him the first government official to fly to College Park.[26]

One occurence that undoubtedly influenced Rep. Johnson in his desire to fly was an impromptu flight on July 10 by Lts. Arnold and Kirtland, who flew across the city of Washington and circled the Capitol at 2,400 feet. This startling event caused surrounding rooftops to become filled with people, while some 4,000 observers

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

gathered on the mall. The Senate, which was in the midst of a roll-call vote, promptly adjourned and members rushed outside to see. Vice-President Sherman rounded up some colleagues on the way and drove hurriedly to the White House grounds. Meanwhile Arnold put on an aerial show for the crowd, then headed back to College Park.[27]

Among the other duties of Capt. Chandler was service as representative of the Aero Club of America, the U.S. Affiliate of the International Aviation Federation, which issued all qualification certificates to pilots of airplanes, airships and spherical balloons. The following qualification certificate numbers were issued by September 20, 1911, to College Park personnel: Arnold, 29; Milling, 30; Beck, 39; Kirtland, 45; and Chandler, 59.[28]

Qualifications for military aviators were later established by the Signal Corps. Requirements included attaining a prescribed altitude, making a cross-country flight of at least 20 miles at a minimum height of at least 1,000 feet, carrying a passenger and being a commissioned officer.[29]

The first aerial photography by the military occured at College Park on September 19, 1911. An aerial photograph of the school was made from an altitude of 600 feet. Other photographs, taken at 1,500 and 2,000 feet, showed the topographical features of the area very distinctly. Photographs were taken using a small-lens Kodak camera. (See enclosed photographs).

The first cross-county military flight, in a Burgess-Wright aircraft, was flown from College Park to Frederick, Maryland, an astounding distance of 42 miles, on August 21, 1911. At the controls was H.H. "Hap" Arnold with Chandler as co-pilot. They departed College Park at 6:42 a.m. and arrived at Camp Ordway in Frederick at 7:23 a.m. Because this was the first plane ever to have flown over Frederick County, Maryland, the Frederick Board of Trade presented silver cigarette cases with appropriate engraving to the two aviators to commemorate the event.[30]

On November 18, 1911, the first night landing using ground runway lights to illuminate the field was successfully accomplished at

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

College Park. The pilot, Lt. T. DeW. Milling, after attaining an estimated altitude of 300 feet, flew over the aviation field and was guided to his landing place by means of two acetylene lights located on the ground in such a manner as to cross their rays in an effort to produce maximum illumination of the ground. Lt. Milling remained within the confines of the aviation field and depended upon these cross beams of light to guide him and show the proper landing place. The experiment was carried out on an overcast, dark night.[31]

Cpl. Riley E. Scott, formerly of the Coast Artillery Corps, brought to College Park an invention that would play a major role in modern warfare, the ability to drop bombs with great accuracy upon targets of choice. His invention, a bombsight and dropping device, underwent military trials at College Park, beginning on October 10, 1911.[32] The apparatus weighed 64 pounds, but if constructed of light metals and simplified in form, this could be reduced to approximately 40 pounds. A small telescope, moveable in a front to rear direction, served first for determining the actual speed over the ground of the airplane in flight by solving a right angle triangle with two known sides - height above the ground from an altimeter reading and a stop-watch reading upon passing over a previously observed ground position. Tables were prepared for reference to obviate the necessity of making computations in flight. Scott lay prone on the lower wing with the device immediately in front of the wing. During the test the device carried two 18 pound bombs, both to be released at the same time so the balance of the sighting would not be disturbed. The height for which the tables were prepared was 400 feet; consequently, the trial flights were made from the altitude, although the inventor realized that 3,000 feet was probably the minimum that would be permissable for safety in warfare.[33] On the first try with Lt. Millings as pilot, in a Wright B plane, Scott missed the target by 62 feet; the second time, the bombs fell about 32 feet to the right of the target. On Scott's final try both bombs landed within 10 feet of the 4x5' target. In an effort to determine what an inexperienced bombardier could do, Sgt. Idzorek of the Signal Corps replaced Scott on one flight. Sgt. Idzorek missed the target by only 11", thus demonstrating that the apparatus was dependable, even when operated by an inexperienced bombardier.[34] After completing these tests it was Scott's desire to

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

make further drops from 3,000 feet; however, because of the impending bomb dropping competition at the Villacoublay Airdrome, located in France, to which he had received a special invitation by the sponsor, Monsieur Michelin, he had to postpone the high-altitude tests.[35]

In a letter to Gen. James Allen, Scott described the tests in France, which consisted of two parts: a prize of 50,000 fr. for the greatest number of projectiles placed within a circular target of 10 m. radius from a height of 200 m., required that 15 such projectiles be carried and dropped; a prize of 25,000 fr. for the greatest number of projectiles placed within a rectangular target representing the shed of a dirigible balloon, 40x120 m., from a height of 800 m. In addition, there was a special prize of 10,000 fr. for the most scientific and practical apparatus entered, whether the winner of a prize or not. From 200 m. he placed 12 out of 15 within the target, and from 800 m. 8 out of 15. Cpl. Scott's performance was so outstanding that he won all the prizes offered at the competition.[36] Both Germany and France adopted the bomb-sight.[37]

October 1911 proved to be particularly significant to the development of aerial communication. Because of the necessity for communication between air and ground, particularly during times of combat, Mr. James Means, inventor of a visual signaling device, forwarded it to College Park for testing on October 9, 1911.[38] The apparatus consisted primarily of a tank containing powdered lampblack fitted with a discharging nozzle and connected with a tank of compressed air. Arranged to operate by a key, puffs of black smoke of variable duration could be thrown out. The Morse or any like code could be used in sending. The entire apparatus weighed about 30 pounds. In placing the apparatus on the Burgess-Wright plane for testing, the compressed air tank (pressure in tank 900 pounds), was fastened on the lower plane near the engine and connected by copper tubing with the tank containing lampblack on the top of the upper plane. The key was to be operated from either of the two seats. A Mr. Bowman was sent by inventor Means to demonstrate the device at College Park. The test was observed by Lt. H.H. Arnold and Capt. H.B. Kirtland. They reported that the signals were easily read at a distance of a mile when the machine was sailing in a direction perpendicular to the line

See continuation sheet #14

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

of sight of the observer, but that it was impossible to decipher them when the plane was sailing straight away from the observer. It was felt that because it was impossible to distinguish the message from a distance of more than 4 or 5 miles, the device was not practical for military use.[39]

In addition to the Signal Corps decision, it should be noted that a message dated November 2, 1911, to the Chief Signal Officer of the Army, Washington, D.C. from Capt. Chandler suggested that Mr. Means be informed that the Signal Corps had already successfully used wireless telegraph from an airplane and was about to conduct experiments with a new and improved wireless set. It was believed by Capt. Chandler that the wireless would answer all needs for communication far more efficiently than any visual device.[40] It should be noted, however, that the military did not give up on Mr. Means' signalling device, but requested, on October 14, 1912, that he bring it to Fort Riley, Kansas, to test during the field artillery fire experiments. It was felt that this method of signalling should be practicable for the short distance required for field artillery observation.[41] Although wireless communication proved superior to visual communication for combat applications, Means' apparatus was the forerunner for present-day sky writing devices.[42]

As was noted in Capt. Chandler's memo to Gen. Allen cited in the preceding paragraph, testing of wireless communication had already occurred at College Park prior to the trials with the means visual communication device. Sources indicated that Lt. Benjamin Foulois and Cpl. Scott had experimented at College Park with wireless radio messages from their airplane above the field and were received by Dr. James Harris Rogers at the "Red Hill" Receiving Station in Hyattsville, Maryland. Dr. Rogers, an independent inventor and Nobel prize nominee, was experimenting with "Hydophonics" in his lab. These communications tests took place before the publicized successful radio messages from a plane at Fort Riley, Kansas.[43]

Unfortunately, the latitude at College Park was not conducive to flying 40 hp biplanes in winter. It was therefore decided that a winter site with a more moderate climate was necessary for the school.

See continuation sheet #15

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

On April 1, 1912, the winter school at Augusta, Georgia, was closed and all men and equipment returned to College Park.[44]

On April 25, 1912, the Secretary of War granted the United States Aeronautical Reserve organization a license to erect an aeronautical station and conduct airplane flights from College Park, subject to the regulations of the Chief Signal Officer. In May the War Department granted the Christmas Co. permission to construct a hangar at College Park and to conduct flights there.[45]

By this time, the Wright's had developed a new model "C" plane, called the CM-1 Wright Military Scout. One was delivered to College Park in the first part of May, 1912. This aircraft, with a more powerful 6-cycle engine, was built to carry 2 people with controls at both seats. Capable of climbing 2,000 feet in 10 minutes with a 450 pound load, it had fuel for 4 hours and a minimum speed of 45 miles per hour. On May 17 Orville Wright and civilian test pilot, Arthur L. Welsh, arrived at College Park to start the official test program. Welsh had been one of the first 5 students to complete the Wright's civilian flying school established in Montgomery, Alabama, in March, 1910. By June 11, 1912, Welsh completed several trial flights in the Wright's new military designed aircraft; however, this date will be remembered for the first air disaster at College Park. On the morning of June 11, Welsh had reached an altitude of 1,827 feet, and later that afternoon he gave notice that he wanted to try and reach a greater height. Taking off at 6:00 p.m. with Lt. Leighton W. Hazelhurst, Welsh climbed to approximately 200 feet, then dove downward at a very steep angle to gain momentum to assist the start of his climb. Nearing the ground, as he made an attempt to change his direction upward, the center section of the plane gave way under the load, the wing folded up, and they crashed to the ground, killing both men instantly.[46]

On September 28, 1912, disaster struck again at College Park, when Lt. Lewis C. Rockwell and Cpl. Frank S. Scott, the passenger, were killed in a crash. Cpl. Scott served as a mechanic in the hangar in which Lt. Rockwell kept his machine. While in flight, shortly before 6:00 p.m., after reaching an altitude of 150 feet and soaring for about 10 minutes, the machine was headed nose downward within 30 feet of the ground. Lt. Rockwell reached up to cut the engine;

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

however, it did not stop and the biplane rammed into the ground with tremendous force. Both men were buried at Arlington Cemetery on October 1, 1912. Cpl. Scott was the first enlisted man in the United States armed forces to be killed in an aviation disaster.[47]

In tribute to Cpl. Scott, War Department Office Memorandum 59 designated the field at Belleville, Illinois, to be Scott Field, presently called Scott Air Force Base. He is the only enlisted man ever to have been so honored.

Despite the tragedies occurring at College Park, aviation records continued to be made and broken. As part of the celebration to honor the memory of Dr. Samuel P. Langley, the Washington Association of the Aero Club of America arranged for an exhibit on the grounds of the Chevy Chase Club, Chevy Chase, Maryland. As the Army's representatives at this event on May 6, Capt. Chandler and 2 other pilots took off from College Park in 3 planes and landed on the golf course of the Club, thus completing the Army's first group cross-country flight.[48]

Lt. H.H. Arnold, on June 1, 1912, established a new Army altitude record of 6,450 feet, breaking his own previous record. According to a news article describing the recordbreaking event, Lt. Arnold almost lost control of the aircraft at 4,167 feet and became benumbed by cold before reaching his objective.[49]

The first night flight also occurred on June 1, 1912. It was not however, planned in advance. Capt. Chandler, commanding officer at College Park, had journeyed to Annapolis to attend the annual Army-Navy baseball game. After the game, engine trouble delayed his departure. By the time necesssary repairs were completed, the sun had set, but he decided to return to College Park. Heavy winds buffeted his craft during the return flight and, by the time he got out of trouble, it was dark. He was able, however, to follow the signal lights of the Baltimore and Ohio railway to College Park. When he arrived over the field, the mechanics heard the engine and saw flashes from the exhaust; they promptly threw oil and gasoline on the field, lighting the way for Chandler, who landed safely.[50]

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

An experiment that attracted much attention at this time was the first firing of a machine gun from an airplane in flight. On June 7, Col. Issac N. Lewis, the inventor of the famous Lewis gun, brought one of his first sample guns to College Park and asked that it be tested on an airplane in flight. Capt. Chandler undertook the firing experiment himself, with Lt. Milling as pilot. The Lewis gun was described as air-cooled, with a weight of 25 pounds, 6 ounces. It fired the Army's standard rifle ammunition which was loaded in a circular drum holding 50 cartridges that was slipped over a spindle on top of the gun. It could be adjusted for rates of fire between 300 and 700 shots a minute. For testing at College Park, Col. Lewis set the rate at about 500 shots per minute, sufficient to empty the drum in 6 seconds. A ground target was improvised from a strip of cheesecloth, about 6x7' in size. The machine gun proved its worth; however, with no sights on the gun the accuracy of the weapon depended largely on steering the aircraft steadily along the length of the target.[51]

The men of College Park did not by any means limit their flying strictly to that field. In August 1912 during Army maneuvers near Bridgeport, Connecticut, the War Department had an opportunity to test the efficiency of airplanes operating in conjunction with ground troops. Capt. Hennessey and Lts. Kirtland, Arnold, Foulois, Grahm, Geiger and Milling represented the aviation service during these maneuvers. Arnold and Kirtland were at the Burgess factory when they received their orders. On Chandler's recommendation they left for the maneuvers on August 12 in the Army's first tractor aircraft (having a propeller in the front rather than a pusher-type propeller in the rear), the Burgess hydroairplane, Signal Corps No. 9. The Burgess-Wright Signal Corps No. 5, piloted by Foulois, and the dual-control Curtiss, Signal Corps No. 6, piloted by Milling, were sent from College Park to participate. The maneuvers dramatically demonstrated that the forces with aerial reconnaissance information had a distinct advantage.

The Burgess hydroairplane was later sent to College Park. Because there was no water nearby, it, and the single-pontoon Curtiss Type D, were kept at the Army War College in Washington, D.C. Capt. Hennessey,

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

in addition to his duties at College Park, was placed in charge of the seaplane equipment and enlisted personnel.[52]

By November of 1912, the College Park school had eight sheds. The personnel on aviation duty consisted of 1 civilian mechanic, 39 enlisted men and 14 flying officers. Of the 11 aircraft in the Signal Corps inventory, 8 were at College Park.[53]

By this time the weather at College Park was no longer suitable for daily flying. Glenn Curtiss had invited the Signal Corps to send officers to his flying school in San Diego, California, for the winter months. It was decided, as a result, that the personnel at College Park should be separated into 2 groups: the Curtiss pilots and mechanics being sent to San Diego and the Wright pilots and mechanics going to Augusta, Georgia. The school at College Park closed on November 18, 1912, and although legislation was introduced on May 6, 1913, to buy the ground there, the Chief Signal Officer recommended the annulment of the lease when it expired on June 30, 1913, and the station was abandoned on that date.[54]

It is interesting to note that attorneys for civilian aviator Rex Smith, who had holdings at College Park, offered to sell the government his property there, supposing that such a move would aid in getting the pending bill through Congress for the purchase of all College Park property in that section for a National Aviation Field. A brief quotation from the Smith proposal gives insight into the extent to which civilian aviation interests were involved at the College Park complex: "As attorneys for the Rex Smith Aeroplane Company we are authorized to offer you the Rex Smith Company's holdings at College Park, Maryland, at a fair rental or for the price of Fifteen Thousand Dollars ($15,000.). The property consists of all of Block No. 19 in Kropps' Addition to College Park, together with the factory, hangars and machinery. We are also authorized to offer you the adjoining property known as "The National Aviation Company Hangars," consisting of Lots numbers 1 to 3, 34 to 44, both inclusive, in Block No. 7, in the said Addition, for the sum of Four Thousand Dollars ($4,000) or at a reasonable rental."[55]

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The Rex Smith offer was rejected because no funds were then available for the purchase of the property, according to a memo dated February 7, 1913, from the Chief Signal Officer of the Army.[56] From the wording of the memo it appeared, even at that date, that the Army intended to re-open the school at College Park in April. A later letter, dated May 10, 1913, to the attorneys for the Rex Smith Company made it clear that the Army had decided not to return.[57]

When the personnel left College Park in the fall of 1912 for San Diego and Augusta, Lt. H.H. Arnold remained behind and was returned to the Office, Chief of the Signal Corps. As one of his duties he supervised the dismantling of the College Park flying school and the destruction of all materials not removed for other use by the government. Piles of office desks and chairs, torn down hangars, and building walls were piled up, covered with gasoline, and burned. In June 1913, Lt. Arnold looked over the field, found all government material removed or destroyed, and informed the Chief Signal Officer that College Park was officially closed.[58]

Although the Signal Corps training school at College Park officially ceased operating in 1913, civilian aviation continued to thrive as it had since the early 1900's. Such notables in civilian aviation as Rex Smith, whose presence at College Park predated the arrival of the Signal Corps, and Dr. William Christmas, physician turned full-time experimenter in aeronautics, built airplanes, flew, and taught students at their College Park facilities. Rex Smith continued operating at College Park until 1916, and Dr. Christmas remained until 1914, at which time he moved to Hempstead, Long Island, New York. His Christmas "Bullet," a pursuit plane which flew a few weeks after the end of the First World War (1918), had an astonishing top speed of 170 miles per hour, yet such thin, weak wings that it soon killed two test pilots and ended the aviation career of Dr. Christmas.[59]

From 1912 to 1917 the Washington Aeroplane Co. maintained facilities at College Park and there built its Columbia Biplane.

On August 12, 1918, the College Park field became the Washington terminus for the first United States Post Office commercial airmail service, the

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

other terminus of which was in New York. Those selected to fly the airmail aircraft were former flight instructors and test pilots; a minimum of 500 hours in the air was required in order to qualify as an airmail pilot, a considerable amount of flying time in those days.[60]

On the inaugural August 12 flight, Max Miller, who flew the first leg of the journey from College Park to New York, took off in a Standard Aircraft Corporation Standard JR-1B mail plane. The Standard weighed 2,400 pounds, including 360 pounds of gasoline and 180 pounds of mail and the pilot, had a 180 hp Hispano-Suiza engine, could fly at 100 miles per hour, and could climb 6,000 feet in 10 minutes -- a far cry from the very limited performance of the fragile airplanes taking to the air but a few years earlier at College Park. A 70 x100' prefabricated metal hangar, shipped to the site by rail, was erected in 1919 to house the mail planes. Also in 1919 Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. affixed a stamp to his forehead and flew from College Park to Philadelphia in support of a Liberty Bond drive. Airmail service continued from College Park airport to New York City until 1921. It was determined at that point that the time saved by flying mail from Washington, D.C. to New York was not sufficient to justify the expense. This was particularly true since the airmail had to be brought to College Park by truck from the main post office in Washington and then transported by truck from the terminal point in New York to the New York City post office downtown. The railways, on the other hand, had stations in Washington and New York City located in close proximity to the respective post offices. The mail planes at College Park were relocated in Chicago and St. Louis to provide airmail service westward where moving mail by air was clearly superior.

Emile and Henry Berliner arrived at College Park in 1920 and began testing their helicopter, 9 years before Sikorsky's successful flights. The Berliners are credited with inventing the first helicopter possessing maneuvering capabilities. Vertical take-off machines invented prior to the Berliner's craft were capable of moving only straight up and down. The Berliner helicopter tests at College Park continued until 1924.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Shortly after establishment of the Aeronautical Division in the Department of Commerce (The National Bureau of Standards), Division personnel began development of improved navigational aids for aircraft. Between 1927 and 1934 the Bureau of Standards conducted testing of radio aids at College Park. The most important event there in this regard was the first practical demonstration of blind landing of an aircraft on September 5, 1931. Marshall Boggs was the test pilot.

The aircraft used in the blind landing experiment was a Curtiss Fledgling with its cockpit completely hooded, the Fledgling successfully completed a series of landings. A dual-pointer landing indicator on the instrument panel gave the pilot a visual indication of his position in space with respect to the approach glide path. The inventive developer of the system, Harry Diamond, who established an outstanding reputation in the research and development field, operated the radio himself in the first of the test series of directional and blind flights made between the Bureau experimental station at College Park and Newark, New Jersey. The latter airport was chosen for its heavy air traffic. His system proved highly satisfactory, and in 1933 it was turned over to the Department of Commerce.

By June 20, 1934, the group of Bureau of Standards personnel involved in applied radio research at College Park was disbanded and the Bureau ceased operations there.[60]

College Park Airport was the scene of numerous historic firsts during the formative years in American aviation; these exciting events cannot be allowed, however, to blind the reader to the important role in the community that the College Park facility has played for many years. As the world's oldest continually operating airport, many private airplanes have been home based here and visited, and many student pilots have learned to fly here. From the early 1920's to the present, such men as Steve Reich, George Brinkerhoff, George Cook, Jeff Brinkerhoff, and Frank Loving, and now the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, have managed the affairs of the airport. As mentioned previously, both aircraft and

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helicopter flying lessons have been and continue to be an important aspect of the airport's operations. Over the years such well-known persons as Arthur Godfrey, who learned to fly a Bell helicopter at College Park, have been among its students.

Not even men of such exceptional vision as the Wright brothers could have predicted the almost unbelievable leap of progress that has brought man from his first faltering steps into the air aboard a flimsy, sputtering and feeble craft to the threshold of space in less than 75 years.

Man's reach for the heavens does not diminish, however, the importance of the contributions made by the early aviation pioneers; it, in fact, makes their early contributions all the more awesome. The site at College Park has known many of the greatest of the early aviators and has been the scene of many recordbreaking flights. On its grounds have been tested such devices as the first bomb sight and dropping mechanism and the first aerial machine gun, both of which are still with us in modern form as a part of our Air Force arsenal. On this site Americans took their first aerial photographs, experimented with wireless radio communications, made the first nighttime landing with the aid of runway lights, and experimented with radio navigation aids. Of less dramatic impact but of great importance to modern aviation are the inventions and improved designs for such items as sparkplugs and mufflers that were given trials at College Park. The College Park facility, in its roles as military flying school, testing ground, general aviation airport and home base for countless private aircraft, has played a continuous role for 67 years in aviation. College Park thrives today as an integral part of the community, proud of its distinction as "The World's Oldest Continuously Operating Airport."

Ownership Status

As has been the case with so many historical sites and buildings throughout America, advanced age, human neglect and the relentless pressure of progress, industrial construction in this case, have

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combined to threaten the existence of the College Park airport. By the close of the 1950's her runways had become rutted and muddy, hangars were rusty and dilapidated, and construction crews from nearby building projects were dumping fill debris in her aircraft tie-down areas. Even local residents, who seemingly lost sight of the airport's historic past, were using airport grounds as a refuse heap.

The early 1960's however, witnessed the kindling of a new spark of interest in both the airport's rich heritage and its future potential for serving the community. In 1961 the College Park Rotary Club erected a marker and flag pole commemorating the numerous notable events in the history of aviation occuring at the College Park field. On August 22, 1967, in a proclamation, the Mayor and the City Council of College Park made known their desire that the airport continue to operate, advocated efforts by private citizens to raise funds to purchase the College Park facility for the good of the general public, and recommended that an aviation museum and educational center be established on the airport grounds. The Maryland State Legislature, on March 6, 1968, passed House Resolution No. 89 calling upon all interested person in the state and the nation to cooperate in efforts to save the airport.

The major breakthrough came on February 16, 1973, when Mr. William Gullet, County Executive of Prince George's County, issued Order No. 26-1973 approving the expenditure of $1.5 million by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission from its Advanced Land Acquisition Fund for the purchase of the College Park Airport property from Jerome S. Murray. Thus the Commission purchased the Airport and its adjacent Lake Artemisia for the expressed purposes of preserving the historic value of the site, providing the lake area as park land for public use, and assuring the safe operation of the airport facility.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet #26

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 66 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
E	18	333170	4316520
A	18	333340	431660
B	18	333780	431580
C	18	333720	431610

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION D E 18/333040/4316160

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

bjn

NAME / TITLE

William A. Aleshire/Robert F. Sellers

DATE: August 30, 1976

ORGANIZATION

Prince George's & College Park-Adelphi Jaycees, Inc.

TELEPHONE: 301-474-3360

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 14

CITY OR TOWN

Hyattsville

STATE: Maryland 20781

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X 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 John N. Pearce 2/14/77

TITLE SHPO DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 9-23-77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: Charles Adams

DATE 9-23-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892-453

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Journal: American Aviation Historical Society, Vol. 20, No. 3, Fall 1975, pp. 172-175.

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Form No. 10-300a
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 22 1977
DATE ENTERED SEP 23 1977

College Park Airport
College Park,
Maryland

ADDITIONS TO DESCRIPTION #7:

College Park Airport, located in College Park, Maryland, northeast of the intersection of College Avenue and CPL Frank S. Scott Drive, is the world's oldest continually operating airport. None of the original buildings remain on the site. However, one hangar, built in 1919, has been altered but is still in use.

In 1910 two hangars were built for the Rex Smith Aeroplane Company. By 1911 the Army built four board and batten hangars north of the Rex Smith ones. Each was 50'-4" square with an elliptically-shaped truss roof. The truss roof was X-braced at 3-foot intervals along the building's width and at 12' intervals between vertical members to stiffen the structure along the building's depth. Wooden buttresses, spaced at 12' intervals and placed along both sides of the building, also helped support the roof. Large double sliding doors offered access to the front of the building. In 1912 two more hangars were built extending the row of hangars to the north. A photograph of the airport probably taken during the 1930s (copy at College Park Airport, Jim Powell's office) shows a larger hangar (the present one), a water tower to the north of it, three Army hangars to the south and below them two small buidings. To the east there was a tower, probably for parachutes, and a frame domestic-type building (see sketch map).

The hangar now in use was built in 1919. Also having an elliptically-shaped truss roof, it is larger (approximately 60' X 100') than the Army hangars were. This structure was covered with corrugated metal, probably iron, until that was replaced by aluminum in 1968. In order to meet fire regulations, the interior was renovated in 1974. New lighting and a ceiling conceal the trusses. A veneer of concrete block extends partially up the interior side walls, and a full-height partition dividing the rear of the hangar enabled offices and rest room facilities to be added. The sliding doors remain across the front, but their rail which extends out from the sides of the building has also been covered with corrugated aluminum.

Next to the hangar is the airport's operations building. Built in 1949, this small, concrete block structure was recently renovated for its present use. The exterior is now board and batten.

There are no intrusions of buildings unrelated to the airport within the district boundaries.

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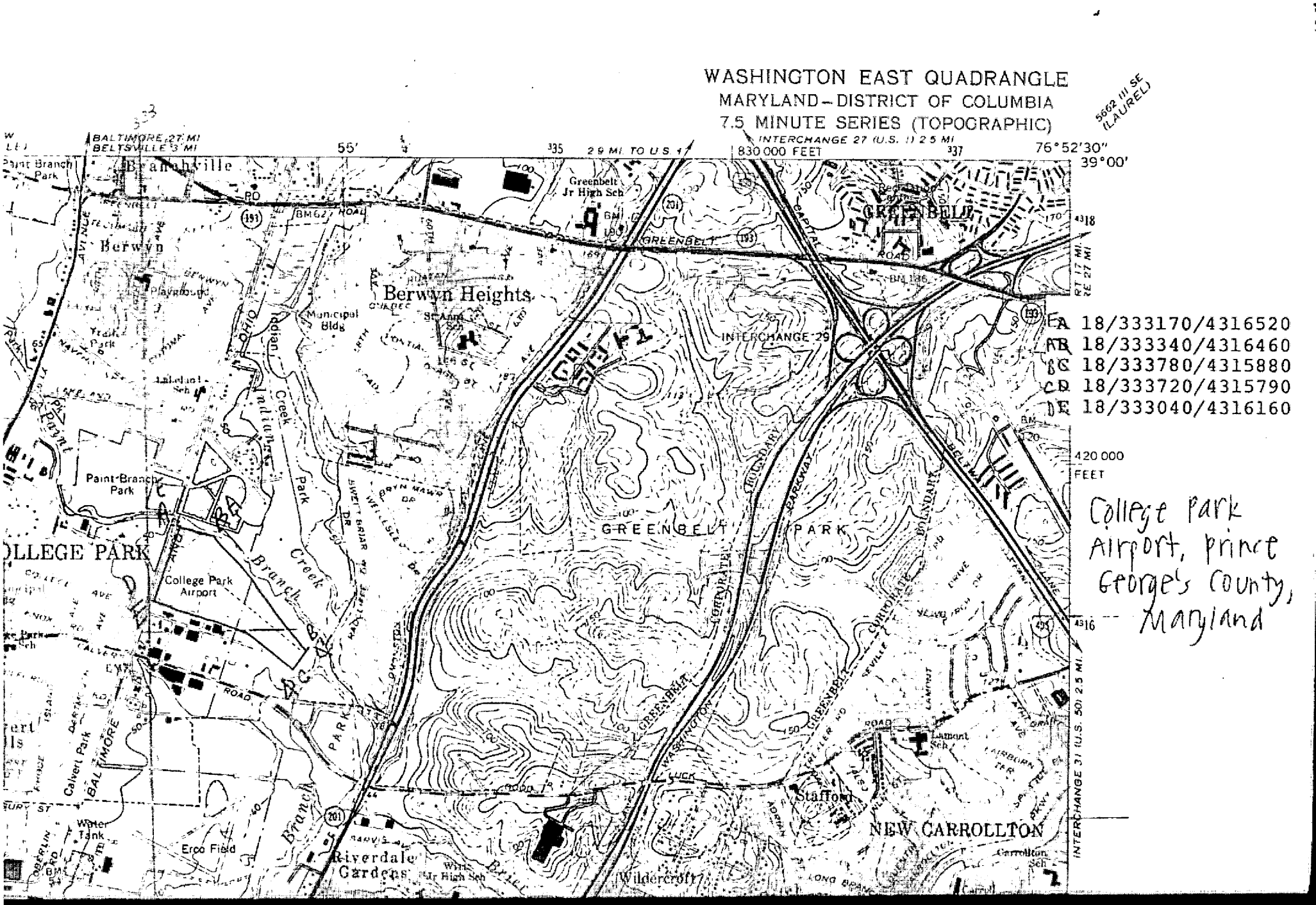
College Park Airport
College Park,
Maryland

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the southwest corner of the airport, moving N 17° 54' 40" E 360 feet, N 17° 51' 30" E 1079.27 feet to the northwest corner of the parcel, then south 68° 32' 50" E 38.41 feet, S 67° 50' 00" E 207.89 feet, south 68° 48' 30" east 377.36 feet, south 50° 59' 20" east 372.70 feet, south 34° 17' 20" east 322.89 feet, south 40° 13' 40" east 300.81 feet, southeast 1,300 feet, southwest 400 feet, northwest 1,000 feet north 72° 05' 20" west 1,200 feet, south 17° 54' 40" west 130.01 feet, north 72° 05' 20" west 479.74 feet to the point of beginning.



College Park Airport, Prince George's County, Maryland