

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sacramento Air Depot Historic District

other names/site number McClellan Air Force Base; Sacramento Air Logistics Center

2. Location

street & number McClellan Air Force Base

n/a not for publication

city, town n/a

vicinity North Highlands

state California code CA

county Sacramento

code 067

zip code 95652

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>43</u>	<u>21</u>	buildings
<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>51</u>	<u>21</u>	objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

Dec 9, 1991
Date

Department of the Air Force, U.S. DoD.
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of commenting or other official

9/8/88
Date

California SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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.

[Signature]

1/21/92

- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE/Air Facility

DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing

GOVERNMENT/Government Office

HEALTH CARE/Hospital

GOVERNMENT/Public Works

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE/Air Facility

DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing

GOVERNMENT/Government Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement:

Art Deco, International, Pueblo

Elements.

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Asphalt

other Cast concrete moulding and trim.

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY

The proposed Sacramento Air Depot Historic District of McClellan Air Force Base, consists of the original buildings designed in Washington D.C. by the Quartermaster General's Office, under the direct supervision of the chief architect, Leisenring. All of the buildings, from the magnificent Headquarters to the simplest electric switch house, are of board form concrete with cast concrete mouldings and trim. The architecture is Modern with Art Deco, International, and Minimalist Pueblo details.

ARCHITECTURAL OVERVIEW

Designed by architects in the eastern United States as a reflection of their idea of the California climate and landscape (Dryer 1988), the architecture of McClellan Air Force Base is unusual for either California or the east. The basic poured concrete building design was made architecturally more interesting by the use of random width board forms, rough sawed and with oil on each board to raise the grain and prevent the forms from sticking. The aggregate concrete foundations on several buildings complement the basic board form concrete facade.

The influence of International architectural style, centered in Los Angeles during the 1930s, is present throughout the historic district, particularly in the residential area. The steel-skeleton construction method, use of concrete, massiveness of the buildings, stepped appearance, long ribbons of windows (particularly on buildings 1 and 10), and flat roofs are characteristic of the International style. These International design elements, combined with the use of thin sheets of aluminum as insulation material inside interior walls of the residential units, were very progressive in the late 1930s and indicate the modern approach to architectural design taken by the Quartermaster General's office in Washington D.C.

Various Pueblo elements were added to the buildings in the form of cast concrete mouldings, cornices, lentils, and string courses to reflect the Spanish and Mexican heritage of California. This influence also is evident in the use of terrazzo for the flooring in the Headquarters and Hospital buildings. Sun-porches were also added to many of the residential units in deference to the heat of the Sacramento Valley, although it was always too hot or too cold for their use except in the evenings.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Military
Architecture

Significant Person
n/a

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Period of Significance

1936 - 1941

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Dates

n/a
n/a

Architect/Builder

Quartermaster General Office (Leisenring,
Chief Architect).

SUMMARY

The Sacramento Air Depot (SAD)/McClellan Air Force Base, was the first of six bases authorized by the Wilcox Act of 1935 (only four were actually built), was the only depot located west of the Rocky Mountains, and was designed as one of the Nation's major air power and defense centers, in anticipation of World War II. As such, it is significant under Criterion A. Building designs, plans, and specifications were developed by the Quartermaster General Office in Washington D.C. to reflect the unique architectural history and landscape of California. The buildings in the historic district, therefore, were designed by architects in the eastern United States following their conception of California's history, climate, and architectural style. They are unique in California and on military installations in the nation (Dryer 1988). The repair docks and maintenance buildings served as prototypes for other similar (but modified) facilities constructed after 1939 in the southeastern and eastern United States (McClellan AFB Archive File 4-9-12). As such, structures within the historic district are architecturally significant under Criterion C.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The development of the Sacramento Air Depot was the result of two unrelated events. Following World War I, interest in aviation flagged, particularly as the 1920s came to a close and the country entered the Great Depression. Leading air corps officials in the Nation were concerned about the lack of a national air defense program. Coincidentally, the Secretary-Manager of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Arthur S. Dudley, a man who had been involved in the development of March Air Field in Southern California in the 1920s and who truly believed in the future of aviation defense, was attempting to get Mather Air Field reinstated (Evans 1965:1; Williams 1961:3). Dudley began talking to General Arnold and General Westover of the Air Corps concerning the need for air defense in the United States.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Austin, Barbara E.

1962 A History of Rancho Del Paso. Sacramento State College
Alumni Association, Sacramento.

Dryer, Christian F.

1988 Retired Brigadier General, Construction Quartermaster at
Sacramento Air Depot (1937-1939). Interview with Mary L.
Maniery (PAR & Associates), Lt. M. Hurt and Joy Tellier (CES,
McClellan Air Force Base) held on May 13, 1988 at General
Dryer's Home in Pebble Beach, California.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

History Office, McClellan AFB
CES Office, McClellan AFB

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 108.0

UTM References

A

1	0	6	4	0	7	7	0	4	2	8	0	5	6	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	0	6	4	0	7	8	0	4	2	7	9	4	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	0	6	3	9	9	2	0	4	2	7	9	4	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	0	6	3	9	9	2	0	4	2	8	0	5	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The McClellan Air Force Base Historical District is entirely within the boundaries of the original (and present) military reservation. From the Gate 3 entrance on North Watt Avenue, proceed south along the base fence line (west side of Watt Avenue) 400 feet, to the northeast corner of the district. The district begins here and parallels the west side of Watt Avenue south for 1900 feet to Arnold Way/Southern Pacific Railroad track.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The district boundary includes buildings within the original residential/administration, barracks, quartermaster facility, maintenance and supply, and wastewater/utility areas that were historically part of the original Sacramento Air Depot and were constructed during the stated period of significance. Buildings on the base that are adjacent to these historic structures but were built at a later date, are excluded from the district.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary L. Maniery, General Partner/Judith Cunningham, Architectural Descriptions
organization PAR & Associates date August 31, 1988
street & number P.O. Box 160756/2116 T Street telephone (916) 739-8356
city or town Sacramento state CA zip code 95816

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Other buildings, especially the Headquarters (Building 1) were designed with Art Deco elements in the form of zig-zag patterns, architectural mouldings, wrought iron railings, metal sash windows, and the use of Art Deco lighting fixtures. Some cast concrete elements reflect the unique aspects of the base, including the use of the eagle and shield with the airplane propeller over the doorways to the original Bachelor Officers Barracks (#10) and the Head Building for the Warehouse (#250HH).

Most of the original buildings within the proposed Historic District retain their basic integrity, and plans have been completed for the restoration of significant architectural elements and the elimination of more recent additions such as the filling in of window and door openings, the replacement of metal sash with aluminum, aluminum awnings installed over the doorways of residential units, and wooden railings added to some housing units.

The landscaping in the residential/administrative northern section of the district was designed in 1937-1938 by a professor of botany at the University of California, Davis. A nursery, which had been developed at Hamilton Air Force Base in Marin County, was disbanded and the vast variety of plants were given to the Sacramento Air Depot. The professor identified the plants and, using a base map of the district, designed the landscaping around the plants, which were then planted by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) crew. Today, these mature plants reflect the excellent design of fifty years ago.

Crews from the WPA program completed much of the general landscaping on base, including sidewalks, some streets, tennis courts, and planting vegetation. Several of the sidewalks within the district still bear the WPA imprint and the date of completion (varies from 1939 to 1941). These crews performed all labor, while the Construction Quartermaster provided supplies, equipment, and direct supervision. The use of the WPA crews during the construction phase resulted in a savings of over \$200,000 below the estimated budget for the base; this money was returned to a general appropriation fund in Washington D.C. (Dryer 1988; Oliver 1981).

Of the other buildings within the district, several were constructed between 1939 and 1941 to the original specifications and are virtually indistinguishable from those completed during the initial construction phase (i.e. Buildings 209 and 269 [the warehouse]). Many temporary buildings were constructed during the War (particularly wooden additions to Building 3); these are to be removed shortly, leaving a more open aspect to the base.

The Historic District on base appears almost exactly as it did in the photographs taken between 1937 to 1939, except for the mature growth of the

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landscaping. All of the buildings have cohesive design elements, workmanship, materials, and associations, retain integrity of location and setting, and form the integral core of the base today. They remain a profound example of military architecture designed in the east for California in the period immediately preceding World War II.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILRESIDENTIAL AREA

The northern portion of the district includes 22 housing units, three five-to six-car garages, a landscaped central mall, the headquarters, hospital, officers club, fire house, and barracks (see sketch map). There are four types of residential units. These vary in size and architectural detail according to the military rank of the intended occupant. Buildings vary from single dwellings for the base commander and his high-ranking staff, to duplexes for non-commissioned officers.

Residential Area ContributorsField Officers Quarters Type B.- Building 100

Measuring 87' by 28'8", this long, rectangular, two-storied residence is the largest of the 22 housing units and was intended for the base commander and his family. There is a wing on the north side of the house with an attached two-car garage and a one-and-three-quarter story section between the house and the garage. Facade embellishments include a doorway surrounded by grooved square pilasters with capitals and a cornice, cast concrete louvre with eight square holes north of the entry, and a band course of concrete detailing the roof line. The interior of the house reflects the importance of the occupant and has polished wood floors, two fireplaces with wooden mantels, wood banisters and detailings, built-in bookcases, china cabinets, and love seats, and five-bedrooms. Except for the replacement of some original metal sash windows with aluminum sash, an aluminum awning over the entry door, and a louvred fence surrounding a roof-top deck, this 5 bedroom house has not been altered.

Field Officers Quarters Type A.- Buildings 101, 102, 103, 104, and 105

These two-story, board form concrete residences have flat roofs, a one-story sunporch and a chimney on one side, and a one-car garage on the other, and measure 73 feet by 28'8". The garage was originally attached to the main structure by a narrow passageway and a small, walled courtyard. During the early 1940s the courtyards were enclosed and the open front area filled with glass bricks to form a service porch. The sunporch originally had screens with metal sash; these have been replaced with aluminum sash windows. The central

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front entries are surrounded with cast concrete pilasters and a cornice. The doors are of two panels topped with diamond shaped panes in a diamond pattern. A new aluminum awning is over each doorway. The windows were originally of metal sash, now replaced with aluminum. A concrete band course surrounds the top of the buildings at the roofline. They also have hardwood floors, wooden fireplace mantels, and other built-in convenience, but on a slightly reduced scale from Building 100 and have four bedrooms each.

Company Officers Quarters.- Buildings 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, and 113

The company officer's quarters are two-storied, three-bedroom, individual residences that measure 60'3" by 30'3". Although they were constructed in sets of two, with each set sharing a portion of a common wall, historically they were considered separate buildings and were numbered accordingly. They reflect the same construction techniques and detailing as the Field Officer's Quarters Type B except that the front entry is through the sunporch, which had French doors to the main portion of the house. Alterations include enclosing the courtyard and sunporch, replacing some metal sash windows with aluminum, and adding porches over the back yard patios in 1942. Interior detailing is consistent with the Field Officer's Quarters, although on a less grand scale. Building 106 was the first residential unit occupied on base. The Constructing Quartermaster moved into the unit in mid-1938, before it was completely finished, to facilitate his supervision of base construction. The other units were occupied by the end of 1938.

Non-commissioned Officers Quarters - Buildings 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78

These eight buildings are two-story, board form concrete duplexes. They have a flat roof and there are chimneys at either end of the extended U-shaped structure. The central portion of the front facade has two windows flanked by entry doors with cast concrete marquees on the first floor and four windows on the upper. There are paired windows on both stories on the extended portions of the facade. The rear walls have four paired windows on the upper story and entry doors topped by a marquee flanked by windows on the lower. A string course surrounds the structures on the third board from the roofline. The buildings are original in condition except for the replacement of metal sash windows with aluminum sash.

Four of the buildings (70, 73, 74, 77), located on corner lots, also have one-story, 8'10" x 15' sunporches on either end of the building with arched openings on the fronts and backs and two on the sides. The original metal sash of the sunporches has been filled in and replaced with aluminum sash. It is planned to restore the original metal sash and arched windows when the buildings are restored in the near future.

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Three garages (Buildings 78, 79, 80) were constructed for use by the residence of the duplexes. The two five-car and one six-car garages are of wood frame and cement stucco and have had some windows replaced.

McClellan Mall and Flagpole (Contributing Object)

The Non-commissioned officers duplexes are separated from the company and field officers quarters by a block-wide street with a landscaped center. This landscaped area, called McClellan Mall, has a flagpole at the west end and is lined with trees. The base Headquarters building is west of the flagpole, across Arnold Avenue. Originally, the street paralleling the Mall led to and from Gate 2, an entrance to the base used by visiting dignitaries and high-ranking military personnel. The landscaped central strip, with the flagpole and view of Headquarters at the west end, provided a favorable first impression of the Air Base. As such, the Mall and Flagpole is considered a contributing object to the historic district.

Headquarters Building #1

The Headquarters building is a two-story, board form concrete building with one-story wings and a flat roof. The front facade consists of a projecting central portion with entry and balcony flanked by two three-bayed sections and the wings. The central portal is made of cast concrete forms with Art Deco elements, including the pyramidal-shaped medallions seen on several of the major buildings on the base. The central front wood ten-paneled doors have a transom with fourteen panes. There is a cast concrete balcony with Mission style brackets and designs of triangles, circles and leaves. Metal-sashed windows and a door lead to the balcony. The rear entry has the same design elements, but the balcony is of wrought iron. The windows in the front bays are of metal sash, form linear elements on the facade, and are separated between floors with cast concrete panels. Concrete louvres top each bay.

The interior of the building consists of a central two-story lobby, square with chamfered corners, with wrought iron stair railings and balcony overlooking the lower floor. The lobby floors and stairways are of green terrazzo with a map of North America in red, purple and pale green terrazzo in the center of the main floor; a white star denotes the location of the Air Base on the map. The lobby has many Art Deco elements, including a Greek Key design frieze around the top of the walls, wrought iron railings with chrome handrails, zig-zag design on stairway wall, tile floors in the entry and hallways, and pilasters with geometric designs on the capitals of the upper and lower floors. The building still has its original lobby chandelier, wall sconces, and bronze hardware.

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Building 1 is in its original condition except for some interior modifications, such as carpeting in the offices and the addition of wood paneling in the lower floor lobby (soon to be removed and returned to its original condition). Measuring 157 feet by 45 feet, it was one of the first buildings completed on base and has remained the administrative center of the Air Base since its completion in March, 1938.

Base Hospital - Building #3

The original base hospital is a two-story, rectangular building with recessed wings and a flat roof, is also of reinforced board form concrete, and measures 88 feet by 38 feet. Situated at the southwest corner of the residential area, the central front entry has cast concrete square pilasters topped with Neo-Corinthian capitals supporting a cornice with dentils. Two design motifs with shells and egg and dart moulding top the capitals. A concrete stairway leads to the entry and has wrought iron handrails. The central entry is flanked by two windows, has recessed double doors with wood paneling and panes in the upper portions, and three windows on the upper stories.

The interior floors are of green terrazzo and have been covered with carpeting. The central stairway to the rear of the main entry is lighted by a wall of glass block. Additions to the building include replacement of metal sash windows with aluminum, lowering of ceiling in the rear central portion, and addition of a wood-frame corridor and attached building during World War II (this last addition is slated for removal and the building will be restored to its original condition).

Fire House (Building 4) and Barracks (Building 10)

These two buildings are located just south of the residential/administrative units and were historically included in this core area of the Depot. The fire station was completed at the same time as the headquarters and hospital (March, 1938) and the barracks were finished one month later.

Building 4: The base fire house is a two-story, board formed concrete, flat-roofed building with hose tower on the southeast corner. The building has a stepped facade with horizontal banding across the top of the building and at the stepped section. The hose tower has a vertical louvre in each side of the top floor. The front entry (on Arnold Avenue) is one-story with two narrow vertical windows on the south portion and an entry delineated by square pilasters topped with cornice. The front window are four-pane metal sash with concrete surrounds. The Peacekeeper Way side of the building has three large bays once used for fire trucks. There is a one-story wing to the rear or west

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of the fire house with three small bays. This was originally part of the guard section of the fire house which extended south from the one-story wing into what is now a major thoroughfare. Except for the removal of this portion of the guard station and the filling in of the truck and other bays, the fire house is in original condition, although its function has changed from fire prevention to offices.

Building 10: This two story, board form concrete building originally served as the bachelor barracks, post exchange, mess hall, and recreation area for enlisted men. It has two small wings at the north and south ends of the long, rectangular structure. The Arnold Avenue facade has a central entry flanked by two pairs of windows. Over the door is a cast concrete panel with an eagle and two stars with lights in their centers. There is a vertical cast concrete portal surrounding the entry which has cast concrete pyramidal medallions. The Mitchell Avenue side, or front, of the building has a central front portal with cast concrete moldings of pyramidal shaped medallions. The doors are new, but are surmounted by an original cast concrete panel of eagle wings and shield. The original metal sash windows in the building have recently been replaced with aluminum sash. The south side of the building originally consisted of a two-story concrete pillared porch with pipe railings along the entire facade. In 1972 it was enclosed for use as office space.

Residential Area Non-Contributors

The officers club (Building 150), although built as part of the complex in 1938, has been altered extensively and enlarged and is a noncontributing building. Building 2 was constructed in 1943 while Buildings 7, 8, and 9 were built within the last 20 years. These four buildings are also noncontributors to the historic district.

QUARTERMASTER'S MOTOR POOL AND WAREHOUSE AREA

Immediately south of the residential area and of Peacekeeper Way is the original Quartermaster facilities. This area, bound by the Railroad Tracks on the southeast, Roberts Avenue on the west, and Peacekeeper Way on the north, originally contained seven buildings used by the Quartermaster and his staff, a gas house, and an electric switch house. The buildings were among the earliest completed on base (January, 1938), and went into operation even before the Headquarter's Building was functional. Five of these buildings are contributors to the district.

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Now used for the Base Telephone Exchange, this long, rectangular building is of board form concrete and measures 201 feet by 41 feet. It has cast concrete quoins at the corners and pilasters along the length of the structure separating the bays of windows and the entry. The roof is flat with projecting eaves supported by cast concrete cornicing. Many of the original metal sash windows were replaced with glass block during World War II. The interior warehouse space has been divided into offices and the central recessed entry is filled in.

Quartermaster Motor Pool/Garage/Office - Building 23

This one-story, concrete rectangular building has a flat roof with projecting eaves and cast cornicing. There are cast concrete quoins on the corners of the structure. The original front entrance on the north side has cast concrete molding around the double doors and transom with 18-barred metal sash windows on either side. The east side of the building originally had large bays; these were enclosed in March, 1943, as part of World War II expansion. The cast concrete pillars with quoins for exit and entrance gates were also removed at this time.

Quartermaster Motor Shed #1 and #2 - Buildings 24 and 25

These buildings measure 20 feet by 186 feet and are of board form concrete with flat roofs. The roofs have projecting eaves with cast cornicing and there are cast concrete quoins on the corners of the structures. There are diamond-shaped cast concrete louvres at both ends of the buildings. Originally, each shed contained 16 vehicle stalls; these entries (located on the east side of Building 24 and west side of 25) have been filled in with horizontal board siding and new doors and aluminum windows installed.

Quartermaster Gas Station - Building 26

This board form concrete gasoline station is in pristine condition except for the installation of new pumps and a small, half-sized wood-frame storage addition to the north side. The office portion of this 20-foot by 42.5-foot building has cast quoins on each corner. A porte cochere extends east to the street and is supported by two rusticated pillars. The roof is concrete and is flat with projecting eaves and cast cornicing. Original metal sash windows are in place on either side of the central front door and in the rear and sides of the building.

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Utility Buildings 27 and 28 (Contributing Structures)

Included within the Quartermaster Facility area are two contributing structures; a gas meter house and an electric switch house. Both structures are one story, board form concrete and have flat roofs with projecting eaves and cast concrete cornicing. They retain metal sash windows and central entries and have not been altered. The Gas House (Building 28) measures 17'4" by 23'4", while the electric switch house is slightly larger, at 20'4" by 26'5". Although the structures were built and owned by the military, the service was provided and owned by Pacific Gas and Electric Company of San Francisco, CA.

Quartermaster's Area Noncontributors

Of the seven original buildings, two (Buildings 21 and 22) have been extensively altered or added to and no longer retain integrity. Six additional buildings (18, 49, 52, 53, 54, 58) were built between 1942 and 1943, during the World War II expansion phase on base, and are not considered contributing elements to the district.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR AREA

The area west of the Quartermaster facilities, between Roberts Avenue and the runways of the base, contains the enormous aircraft maintenance docks and bays and warehouses. This section of the base was designed with aircraft repair and maintenance in mind and consists of three large buildings (260, 251, 269), with several smaller buildings located to the south of Howard Street. The buildings were part of Sacramento Air Command Center (now Sacramento Air Logistics Center) activities and are industrial in nature.

Maintenance and Repair Area Contributors

Warehouse Shops/Head Building - Building 250

The maintenance shops consist of seven pitched-roof bays or sections on each side of a central opening. The board form concrete bays are marked with letters of the alphabet which are cast concrete within a circle. The building is of board form concrete with partial buttresses; two on each side of the bays. The Head Building (250HH) is a flat-roofed, two-storied board form concrete building with two one-story wings attached to the north side of the structure. The front entrances are recessed with cast concrete moldings. The vestibules are paneled and have the original paneled and windowed doors. Above the doors are cast concrete panels with propellers and other aeronautical elements. The building has some new aluminum windows but is essentially in original condition. Alterations to the warehouse bays include filling in of some doors to create

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office space, replacement of metal sash windows with aluminum, addition of canopies and concrete railings along concrete ramps.

Warehouses/Shops - Buildings 269, 262, 264, 271

Although not completed until 1941, this group of warehouses was built to the same specifications as Building 250 and is identical to it in architectural detailing. Building 269 consists of seven bays that face the east side of Building 250. Building 262 heads the eastern bank of shops and includes a head building and two bays. Buildings 264 and 271 are adjacent to each other in the southeast corner of the structure and are individual bays with a common wall.

Air Corps Storage - Building 354

Located south of Warehouse G, Building 250, this 121'4"-square one-story board form concrete building served as a storage/warehouse facility. It has two doorways with transoms, flanked by metal sash windows, on either side. There are concrete stairways with metal pipe railing leading to the entrances. A loading ramp is located on the west side and has loading bays. Although a wood frame addition has been added to the south rear of the structure, it appears to have had few other alterations from its original condition.

Air Corps Reclamation Shop - Building 355

Situated west of Building 354, this rectangular one-story, board form concrete structure measures 181'4" by 61'4". It has three entry bays; the central one has been filled in. There are six multi-sectioned metal sash windows in the facade and three on the west side. The openings on the east side have been filled in and a corrugated canopy added. The front facade, however, retains its original appearance.

Engineering Shops and Repair Docks - Building 251

This extensive complex of buildings comprise three bow-string truss structures; two high bays and one low bay. The original base control tower was located atop Dock #1, but was replaced in the 1950s by a newer model and by a separate facility in recent years. The repair docks have bow-string truss roofs and are built of corrugated metal. Openings covered with vertical sliding metal doors were designed for the fronts of the three repair docks, above the multi-paned metal section doors, in anticipation of aircraft of the future. Some of the original exterior flood light brackets and fixtures are still attached to the outside of the docks.

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Adjacent to the docks and attached to the east side are two high bays with space for airplane repair in each. Attached to the east side of the high bays is the low bay, which has storage facilities and shops. The building is in its original condition except for the removal of skylights the replacement of some windows, and the addition of the base operation facility on the north side.

Encompassing over 500,000 square feet, this 925-foot by 604-foot building was the largest of its kind when it was constructed in 1938. The interior roof of the repair docks is over 60 feet high. The high roofs and small doors over the main sliding doors in the docks attest to the visionary design of this 1930s building in foreseeing the increasing size of aircraft and anticipating the repair and maintenance needs of the future.

Air Corps Equipment - Building 252

This rectangular board form concrete building has a flat roof and three bays on the front. The front entrance is located in the center of the front bay; all bays are of two-storied multi-paned windows separated by a cast concrete panel. There are also several bays along the east side of the building with multi-paned metal sash windows. Cast concrete pilasters separate the bays and a concrete wainscoting surrounds the building except for the entries. The building is in original condition except for the replacement or filling in of some windows.

Buildings 231, 232, 233, 333, 326 (Contributing Structures)

Five contributing structures are included in the Maintenance area.

Buildings 231 and 232 are small sheds built in 1938 and used as water supply buildings. They are situated just north and south of the original water tower (Building 233).

Building 233 is the original water tower, constructed in 1936, and has the distinction of being the first structure constructed on the Air Depot. It is situated between Buildings 251 and 250 and is 40' in diameter, 24 feet high, and sits 125 feet above the ground on a six column steel trestle.

Building 333 is a board form concrete octagonal building that served as a sewage disposal plant and pumping station. Originally one-story in height, the original stepped top was filled in when a second story laboratory facility was added to the building in the 1940s. The lower story has six-pane metal sash windows, while the upper, newer story paired three-pane vertical sash. The upper story is covered with stucco. Two original and six additional vertical board form concrete sewage tanks are in close proximity to the building. This

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sewage treatment plant was completed soon after the water tower, prior to construction of the industrial and residential buildings on base.

Building 326 is the original base natural draft incinerator structure, completed in 1938. It is a 23'9" by 21' one-story board form concrete structure with a square chimney on the northwest. There is a central front doorway flanked by metal sash windows and two windows with concrete louvers above each opening on the side of the structure. Horizontal string courses are present around the basement level of the building. A new addition has been made to the northwest of the building and the interior has been converted to office space, but otherwise it is in its original condition.

Maintenance and Repair Area Noncontributors

The Maintenance Area contains seven noncontributing buildings. The head building (209) north of Building 269 was constructed in 1949 and is not a contributing building. A section of three bays (Building 263) situated between 262 and 264 were constructed in 1963. Building 353, although built during the initial construction phase of the base in 1938, has had extensive additions and alterations and does not retain integrity. Buildings 322, 343, 344, and 359 were constructed during the World War II expansion phase between 1942 and 1943 and are not integral parts of the historic district.

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In 1934, a meeting was held at the instigation of General Henry "Hap" Arnold to create an organization called the National Air Frontier Defense Association. Principal attendants at this meeting were representatives from national and local newspapers, Chamber of Commerces, and Air Corps, as well as several members of the United States Congress who were active in trying to reactivate Air Fields in their states. As a result of this meeting, the Association decided to try to have Congress approve construction of a series of six air defense bases located around the perimeter of the United States. These bases would be repair and supply depots, as well as military installations. Dudley was appointed president of the group and worked closely with Congressman J. Mark Wilcox in preparing a bill to present to Congress. The Wilcox Bill was passed (without one negative vote) in 1934 and funds were appropriated from Congress in 1935 (Evans 1965:2; Oliver 1961:4).

At the time of the passing of the Wilcox Bill, one air and supply depot was located in the west: Rockwell Field near San Diego, CA. The Army shared this facility with the Navy, a situation that was unsatisfactory due to space limitations, and were looking to relocate the Rockwell facility. Officials at Rockwell called Dudley to ask if the deactivated Mather Air Field was available; they preferred a Sacramento location due to the location near a good sized community, closeness to water and rail transportation routes, open country surrounding the city, and good landing terrain. Dudley's enthusiasm for air defense and his key role in the passing of the Wilcox bill were also beneficial factors in Sacramento's favor (Evans 1965:3; Miller 1982:17; Williams 1961:7).

When converting Mather to a depot proved unacceptable to military officials in Washington D.C., Sacramento was given a choice of reopening Mather as a regular air field (forfeiting a depot) or of finding another Sacramento location for a new air and supply depot. Dudley located a 1,100-acre site near Ben Ali, showed it to the Army for approval, and was given the go ahead to begin negotiating quietly with local land owners to appropriate the land (Evans 1965:4; Williams 1961:7).

The land had several redeeming factors for an air depot location. First, it was between an established railroad line and the Sacramento River; supplies could be shipped by land or sea. Second, the site had been part of a large Mexican Land Grant that was not subdivided until after 1910, resulting in relatively few land owners to negotiate land appropriation; much of the area was used for sheep or cattle grazing and was not planted in crops (Austin 1962). Finally, it was close enough to Sacramento for civilian housing and recreational use, yet was far enough away to allow for base expansion.

Following approval of the site by the Air Corps, Dudley arranged an official ground breaking ceremony to signify the start of base development. The ceremony was held under an oak tree at 11:00 am on September 8, 1936. California Governor Frank Merriam pushed an electric switch to set off a small

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explosion that officially started ground preparation. Brigadier General Arnold (then Assistant Chief of the Air Corps), Congressman Frank H. Buck, Brigadier General Delos Emmons (commander of March Field), Arthur Dudley, and other military and civilian dignitaries attended the official ground breaking of what was then called the Pacific Air Depot (Miller 1982:20).

Soon after the ground breaking, dissention broke out among several communities in the Sacramento area who requested that the Air Depot be named for their communities. Rio Linda, Roseville, Ben Ali, and Sacramento all vied for the privilege; on February 1, 1937, the War Department finally issued an order confirming the name as the Sacramento Air Depot (Miller 1982:21).

Construction began at the new depot shortly after the ground breaking. The first structure completed on base was the water tower, with work on the maintenance buildings, warehouse, Quartermaster's facilities, and headquarters beginning shortly after. Buildings were constructed by contractors who were selected following an open bid period. Most of the work was completed by a variety of firms from San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento, although one company from New Jersey did complete several buildings (Q.M.C. form 117 1937-1939).

Designs and specifications for each building were sent from the Quartermaster's General Office in Washington D.C. and were followed explicitly during construction under the direction of the Construction Quartermaster. The activities at the air depot were followed with interest by local newspapers and were reported on regularly. Part of the enthusiasm came from the types of buildings that were being erected. The maintenance building and warehouse were the two of largest structures erected in the United States at that time and were considered engineering marvels; the maintenance building alone comprised over 13 acres (Meyer 1939:1-2). Reinforced board form concrete buildings were also a novelty. The massive size of some structures, combined with the poured concrete construction methods, resulted in an expensive product, but one considered worth the total \$7,000,000 cost (Miller 1982:22).

By June, 1938, the exteriors had been completed on all buildings and detailing on the interiors had begun in the housing units. Supplies from Rockwell began arriving in October of that year and the transfer from San Diego to Sacramento began in earnest. The Sacramento Air Depot made their first supply shipment to Air Corps facilities in the Pacific coast area on November 15, marking the first official activity of the base (Miller 1982:31; Sacramento Bee, November 16, 1938).

All equipment was transferred from Rockwell in February, 1939, and air repair work was in full swing at Sacramento by March (McClellan AFB Archival

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Files 4-9-12). Over 50,000 people attended the official dedication ceremony on April 26, 1939; an open house and aerial show showcasing B-18 bombers marked the occasion (Sacramento Bee, supplement April 28, 1939). Dedication Day at the new air depot attracted national attention, with dignitaries flying in from Washington D.C. and elsewhere in the United States. The event was attended by reporters and news people throughout the nation, including a photographer from Life magazine. Several news reels were made of the event and were shown across the nation in movie houses (McClellan AFB Archival File 4-9-12).

While much of the initial construction phase was completed by Dedication Day, landscaping, and interior finishing work continued on the base through 1939. In addition, a second large warehouse building, following the original specification, was in the planning stage. This second bay of shops and warehouses was started in 1940 and was completed in early 1941, marking the end of the initial construction and transition phases on base.

In mid-1941 Sacramento Air Depot began gearing up in anticipation of military involvement in Europe. Temporary buildings and other structures were built all over the base between 1941 and 1943; however, the initial board form concrete structures remained the core of the operations. During the war Sacramento Air Depot was given the responsibility of maintaining and repairing aircraft for the entire Pacific region (11 states and then-territories Alaska and Hawaii) and for supplying air fields in the Philippines and Hawaii. The base was responsible for activities at eight subdepots in the west. Virtually every type of aircraft involved in World War II was repaired and maintained at SAD (by then named McClellan Air Force Base).

The Sacramento Air Depot/McClellan Air Force Base has always been an installation where the vast majority of the workers were civilians. Initially, less than 100 military personnel and over 500 civilians worked on base; only military officers and personnel lived at the military reservation. During World War II the number of civilian employees reached a peak of 18,000, with military personnel numbering less than 2000 (McClellan AFB Archival File 4-9-12). This pattern remains unchanged; current estimates indicate a military attachment of less than 4000 with a civilian work force of over 16,000.

From its roots in unpastured farm land surrounded by oak groves and fields, McClellan has grown in both size and national stature. It continues to be the only air depot and supply facility for the western region and plays an integral role in the repair, supply, and maintenance of the National Defense Program.

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PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for the historic district is marked by the groundbreaking ceremony in September, 1936, and continues to June, 1941. The initial construction phase of the depot is characterized by a massive work effort on the part of military and numerous contractors to ready the new installation for occupation. A transition phase on base went into effect after Dedication day in April, 1939. During this phase, the repair, supply, and maintenance activities were building up to capacity. Landscaping and interior details on some buildings were completed, all equipment was put in operating order, and a second bank of warehouses, following the original specifications of Building 250, was completed.

After June, 1941, construction activities on base were designed around erection of temporary facilities in anticipation of United States involvement in a world-wide war, and later, of construction buildings to accommodate the growing work force on base during the war. Therefore, the period of significance on base ends by June, 1941.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

McClellan Air Force Base is significant under criteria a and c.

Criterion A: Historical Significance. The Sacramento Air Depot (SAD) was developed in recognition of the growing role that Air Defense would play in the future of the United States Military. One of only six defense bases planned for the United States, SAD was given the responsibility to repair and maintain all military aircraft in the western region (13 states, including Alaska and Hawaii) for defense purposes, and to supply equipment to other air fields in the west, including Hawaii, Philippines, and Alaska. Only four of the six appropriated bases were actually built before World War II. These military reservations, as well as one other built after 1942, continue to provide aircraft repair and maintenance services for all military aircraft.

Criterion C: Architectural Significance. Designed by architects in the eastern United States following their concept of California's climatic requirements and architectural history, the architecture at the base is unusual in California and the United States. The buildings were designed in Washington D.C. by the Quartermaster General's Office under the supervision of Mr. Leisenring, the Chief Architect (Dryer 1988). All of the buildings, from the magnificent Headquarters to the simplest electric switch house, are of board form concrete with cast concrete mouldings and trim. The architecture is Modern with Art Deco, International and Pueblo (latter only in the housing units) elements.

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Both the architecture and construction methods employed in these buildings are unusual in the United States.

The repair docks and warehouse structures were two of the largest ever built in the United States at the time and were considered engineering marvels. The maintenance shops, in particular, became the prototype for "modern" shop arrangements and space requirements for aircraft and engine repair and overhaul at other depots in the United States (Strauss 1939:2). Studies conducted at the depot in late 1939 by top engineering experts in the Army and Air Corps divisions of the War Department resulted in the recommendation that the type of building construction used at SAD be continued, with modifications, at other as yet unbuilt depots, because it allowed for excellent arrangement of machinery and repair (Strauss 1939:2).

Landscaping in the residential area was laid out by a University of California - Davis, professor. Actual planting was completed by WPA crews under the supervision of the base Construction Quartermaster. Sidewalks, tennis courts, and McClellan Mall were also completed under a WPA program.

Of the numerous other buildings on base, one group of warehouses (Building 269, 271) were constructed during the period 1939 to 1941 to the original specifications, were planned during the initial construction phase (1936-1939) and are virtually indistinguishable from the initial warehouse structure. Several of the temporary wood frame buildings constructed during World War II are to be removed shortly, leaving a more open aspect to the base.

The Historic District appears almost exactly as it did in photographs taken during the 1938-1939 period, except for the mature growth of the landscaping. All of the buildings have cohesive design elements, workmanship, material, and associations and form the integral core of the base today. They are unique to McClellan and are not found in any other location in California or the United States. As such, they remain a profound example of military architecture designed in the east for California in the period immediately prior to World War II.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Archaeological field investigations have been conducted on McClellan Air Force Base. No significant resources were identified during the field reconnaissances (California Sites Inventory, North Central Information Center, California State University, Sacramento).

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Evans, Charles E., Staff Sergeant

1965 Sacramento Air Logistics Center Oral Interview No. 1 of Arthur S. Dudley. Office of History, Sacramento Air Logistics Center, McClellan Air Force Base, California.

Gallup, Aaron

1988 Architectural Historian, Caltrans. Personal communication with Judith M. Cunningham on May 29, 1988, Murphys, CA.

McClellan Air Force Base

n.d. Archival file 4-9-12, containing oral interviews dated 1944 with original base military and civilian employees, correspondence dated 1939, and newspaper clippings concerning early development of the base. On file, Office of History, Sacramento Air Logistics Center, McClellan Air Force Base, California.

Meyer, John G.

1939 Air Depot Dedicated. In The Engineerogram 1(3):2-4. Publicity Committee of the Sacramento Section, American Society of Civil Engineers, Sacramento.

Miller, Maurice, general editor

1982 History of McClellan Air Force Base: A Pictorial History. Office of History, Sacramento Air Logistics Center, McClellan Air Force Base, California.

Oliver, Raymond

1981 Sacramento Air Logistics Center Oral History Interview No. 2 of Brig. Gen. Christian F. Dryer, USAF (Retired). Office of History, Sacramento Air Logistics Center, McClellan Air Force Base, California.

Olson, Bonnie A., and Dunlap Castle

1964 Silver Anniversary History of Sacramento Air Materiel Area, McClellan Air Force Base: 1939-1964. History Office, Office of Information, Sacramento Air Materiel Area, McClellan Air Force Base, California.

Quartermaster Corps, War Department

1937-1939 Ledger of Building Alteration Records Form 117. On file, Civil Engineering Section, McClellan Air Force Base.

Strauss, H. A., Colonel

1939 Memorandum reply to letter from Major Hugh A. Bivins dated February 28, 1939. On file, Archival file 4-9-12, Office of History, Sacramento Air Logistics Center, McClellan Air Force Base, Sacramento.

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Williams, Fenton L.

1961 Arthur S. Dudley and his Contribution to U.S. Air Defense. SMAMA
Historical Study No. 44. On file, Historical Division, Office of
Information, Sacramento Air Materiel Area, McClellan Air Force Base,
California.

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It continues southwest along Arnold Avenue for 1000 feet and turns northwest by the south side of Building 27 for 100 feet to the intersection of Howard Street and Arnold Avenue. The boundaries follow Howard Street west to Dudley Blvd., about 800 feet, and continue south on Dudley Blvd. for 350 feet. It then turns west between Buildings 354 and 358, 300 feet to Bailey Loop and follows Bailey Loop south and west for 1500 feet to Dudley Blvd. It continues northwest 300 feet and then north 500 feet to the south side of Building 368. Boundaries extend east 200 feet to the southeast corner of Building 368 and continue north 550 feet to building 355. It turns west, along the south side of Building 355 for 150 feet, to the southwest side of the building and continues north for 250 feet to the south side of Building 251. The district follows Building 251 west for 650 feet to the southwest corner of Dock # 3 and continues north in front of the docks, for 1150 feet to the northwest corner of the building and Peacekeeper Way.

The boundary parallels the northern edge of Peacekeeper Way for 2100 feet due east to the southwest corner of Building 4. From this point it extends north, keeping west of Buildings 7, 3, 2, 1, 100, and 101, for 1350 feet; to the fence delineating the north edge of Building 101's yard. At this point it turns due east along the north edge of Buildings 102 and 103 fenced lots for 900 feet, to its starting point adjacent to Watt Avenue.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001969 Date Listed: 1/21/92

Sacramento Air Depot Historic District
Property Name

Sacramento CA
County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for *Antoinette J. Gue*
Signature of the Keeper

1/21/92
Date of Action

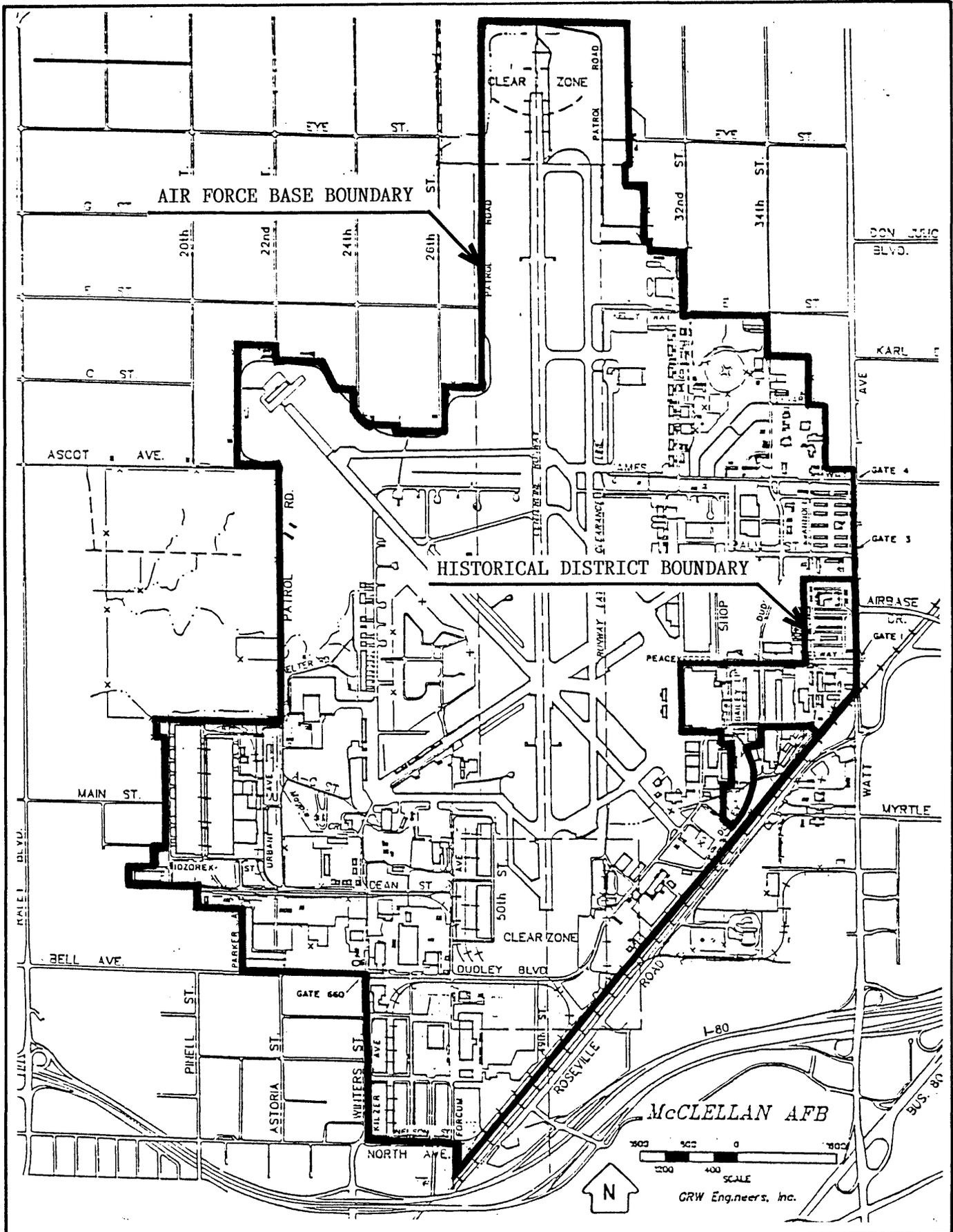
=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: Under Criteria Considerations, G is removed.

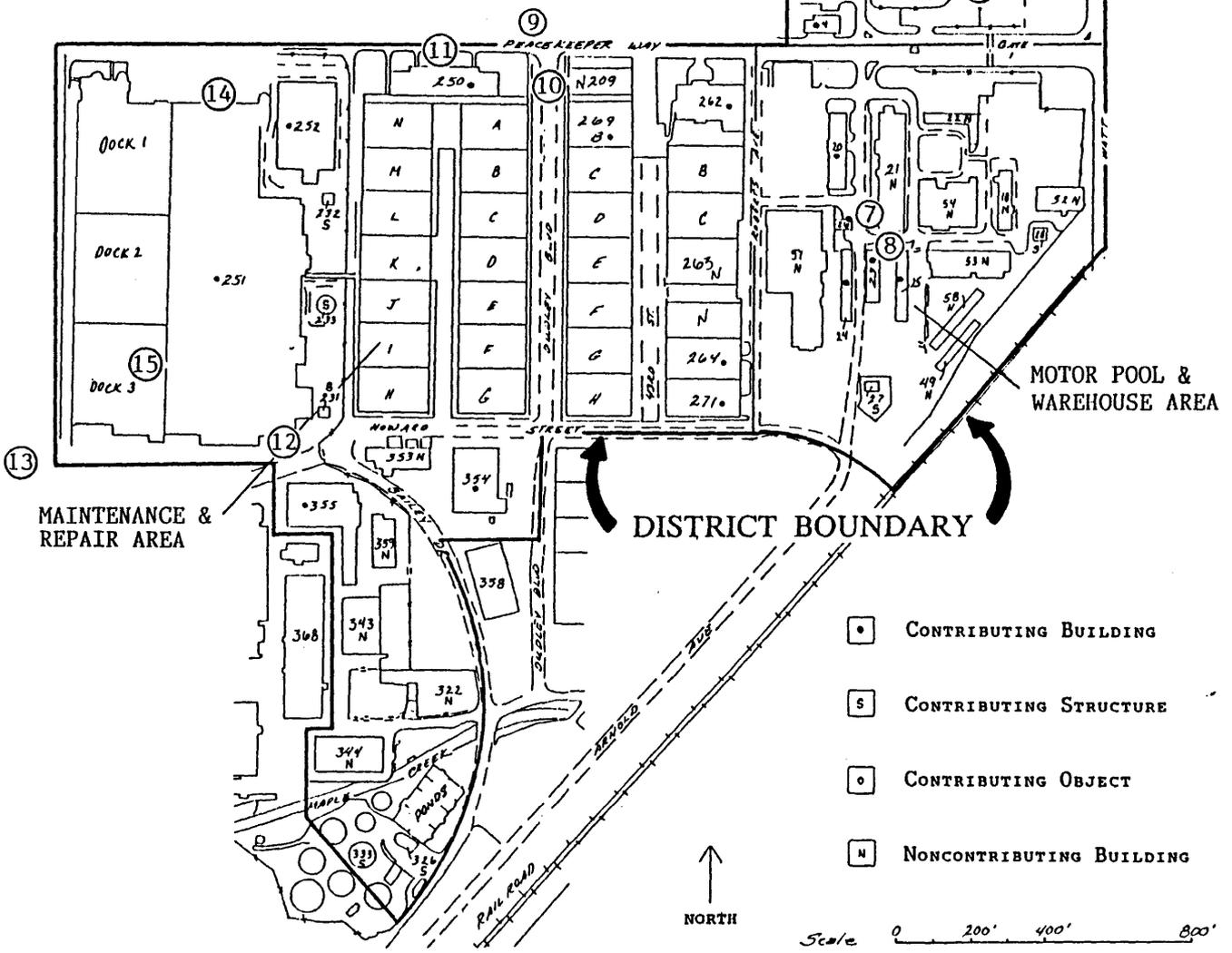
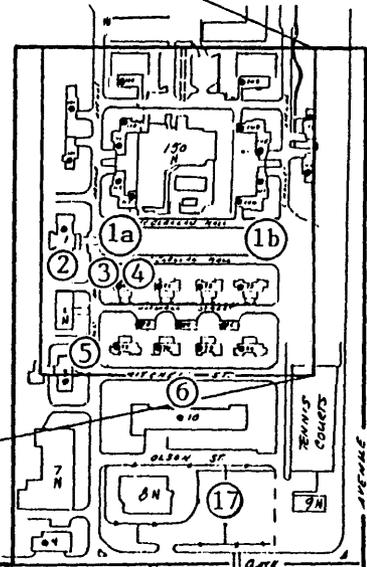
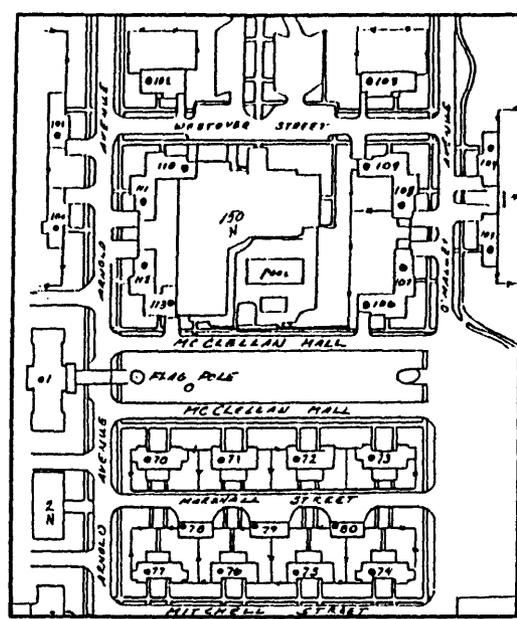
This information was confirmed with Donna Akers of the Department of the Air Force.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



MAP 2. Location of Sacramento Air Depot Historical District within McClellan Air Force Base



MAP 3. Sacramento Air Depot Historical District: Boundary, Contributors, and Photograph Key