FORT PICKENS
(FORT PICKENS STATE PARK)
U.S. 98, 21A, west of Pensacola Beach
Escambia County

RECEIVED
MAY 6 1970
NATIONAL REGISTER

Old brick Fort Pickens, built on the western tip of Santa Rosa Island to defend the important deepwater habor of Pensacola against foreign attack, has been the scene of activities in every major conflict in which this country has been engaged, from the Civil War to World War II.

Its major role was during the Civil War, when it remained one of three Southern forts (all in Florida) that the Confederates were unable to seize from the Federals.

Santa Rosa Island has been the location of may fortifications since the early 1700's. It was recognized by the Spanish, French, British, Confederates, and the United States Army and Navy as the key to the defense of Pensacola Harbor.

Pensacola was the capital of West Florida when the Florida territory was ceded to the United States in 1821. In anticipation of the selection of Pensacola as the principal United States naval depot of the Gulf of Mexico, the U.S. government built four forts in the area. Fort Pickens, completed in 1834, was named in honor of Brig. Gen. Andrew Pickens of the South Carolina State Troops in the American Revolution.

At the onset of the Civil War, the fort had been unoccupied for several years. The day Florida passed her ordinance of secession, Jan. 10, 1861, the fort became the Federal headquarters. Confederates made several attempts to capture Fort Pickens, but all hostilities were stopped when they evacuated their holdings in the area in May of 1862. The Federals immediately took possession of the other deserted forts and the Navy Yard, and held Pensacola for the rest of the war.

As the war waned, Fort Pickens was used as a prison for military and political prisoners. In 1875, Congress again used Fort Pickens as a prison with the Apache, Geronimo, and some of his band being held there for two years after their capture in 1866.

Fort Pickens was an active coastal defense fortification during the Spanish-American War, and also was activated during the two World Wars.

ATTEST:

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of The National Register

Date JUL 8 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Connally
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 12 1970

PH00022284

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
Florida	
COUNTY:	
Escambia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAY 31 1972	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Fort Pickens

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: State Road 399A west of Pensacola Beach

CITY OR TOWN: Santa Rosa Island

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Florida	12	Escambia	033

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☐ Building ☐ Site ☒ Structure ☐ Object	☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☐ Occupied ☒ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☒ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☒ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Division of Recreation and Parks
Department of Natural Resources

STREET AND NUMBER: Larson Building

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Tallahassee	Florida	12

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund

STREET AND NUMBER: Elliott Building

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Tallahassee	Florida	12

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: None

DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

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STATE:	COUNTY:	FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
Florida	Escambia	MAY 31 1972	

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☒ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered		☐ Moved	☒ Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fort Pickens, named in honor of Brig. Gen. Andrew Pickens, was completed in 1834. The fort was pentagonal in shape, with a bastion at each of the five corners. Each bastion was like a small independent fort, having its own guns and magazine. These bastions projected from the regular line of the fort walls so that they could set up cross fire with the facing bastion and prevent an enemy from attacking the fort walls.

The walls of Fort Pickens were 40 feet high and twelve feet thick. The fort was complete with protected passageways, a dry ditch, flanking outworks, and portholes for one tier of guns in bomb-proof casements with an additional tier of guns mounted on top of the walls (en barbette.) The armament of the fort was to consist of 252 guns of various types and calibers.

Present-day Fort Pickens looks much as it did in its early days. Recreational facilities for public use and enjoyment have been added by the Division of Recreation and Parks. A large picnic and swimming area, along with a fishing dock and boat launching ramp comprise the total park area.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- Aboriginal
  - [ ] Prehistoric
  - [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [x] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)* _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Pickens, built on the western tip of Santa Rosa Island to defend the important deepwater harbor of Pensacola against foreign attack, has been the scene of activities in every major conflict in which this country has been engaged, from the Civil War to World War II. This terrain was recognized by the Spanish, French, British and the United States as the key to the defense of Pensacola Harbor.

Fort Pickens was one of the few in the south from which the United States flag was never brought down during the Civil War. Although under intermittent cannon fire from its companion forts--McRee and Barrancas, both of which were in Confederate hands--Fort Pickens thwarted a Confederate land assault before the attackers ever approached the walls of the fort.

At the onset of the Civil War, the fort had been unoccupied for several years. The day Florida passed her ordinance of secession, January 10, 1861, the fort became the Federal headquarters. Confederates attempted several times to capture Fort Pickens, but all hostilities were stopped when they evacuated their holdings in this area in May, 1862. The Federals immediately took possession of the Navy Yard and other deserted forts, and held Pensacola for the rest of the war.

As the Civil War waned, Fort Pickens was used as a prison for military and political prisoners. Notable among prisoners held at the fort, is the Apache, Geronimo, who along with some of his band was held for two years after being captured in 1886.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Armstrong, H. Clay. History of Escambia County, Florida. St. Augustine: Record Company, 1930.

Bears, Edwin C. "Civil War Operations in and Around Pensacola," Florida Historical Quarterly. XXXVI (July, 1957 - April, 1958), 125-165; XXXIX (July, 1960 - April, 1961), 231-255, 330-353.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	30 °	19'	52"	87 °	17 '	45 "	30 °	18 '	54 "	87 °	16 '	03"
NE	30 °	19'	33"	87 °	16 '	04 "	30	19	05	87	17	00
SE	30 °	19'	12"	87 °	15 '	15 "	30	19	28	87	17	54
SW	30 °	18'	57"	87 °	15 '	15 "						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF ~~NOMINATED PROPERTY:~~ ~~500~~ ~~acres~~ 850 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Randy F. Nimnicht, Historic Preservationist

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives, History and Records Mgt.

DATE: 3/10/71

STREET AND NUMBER: Department of State, The Capitol

CITY OR TOWN: Tallahassee

STATE: Florida

CODE: 12

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name: Robert Williams

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 29, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/31/72

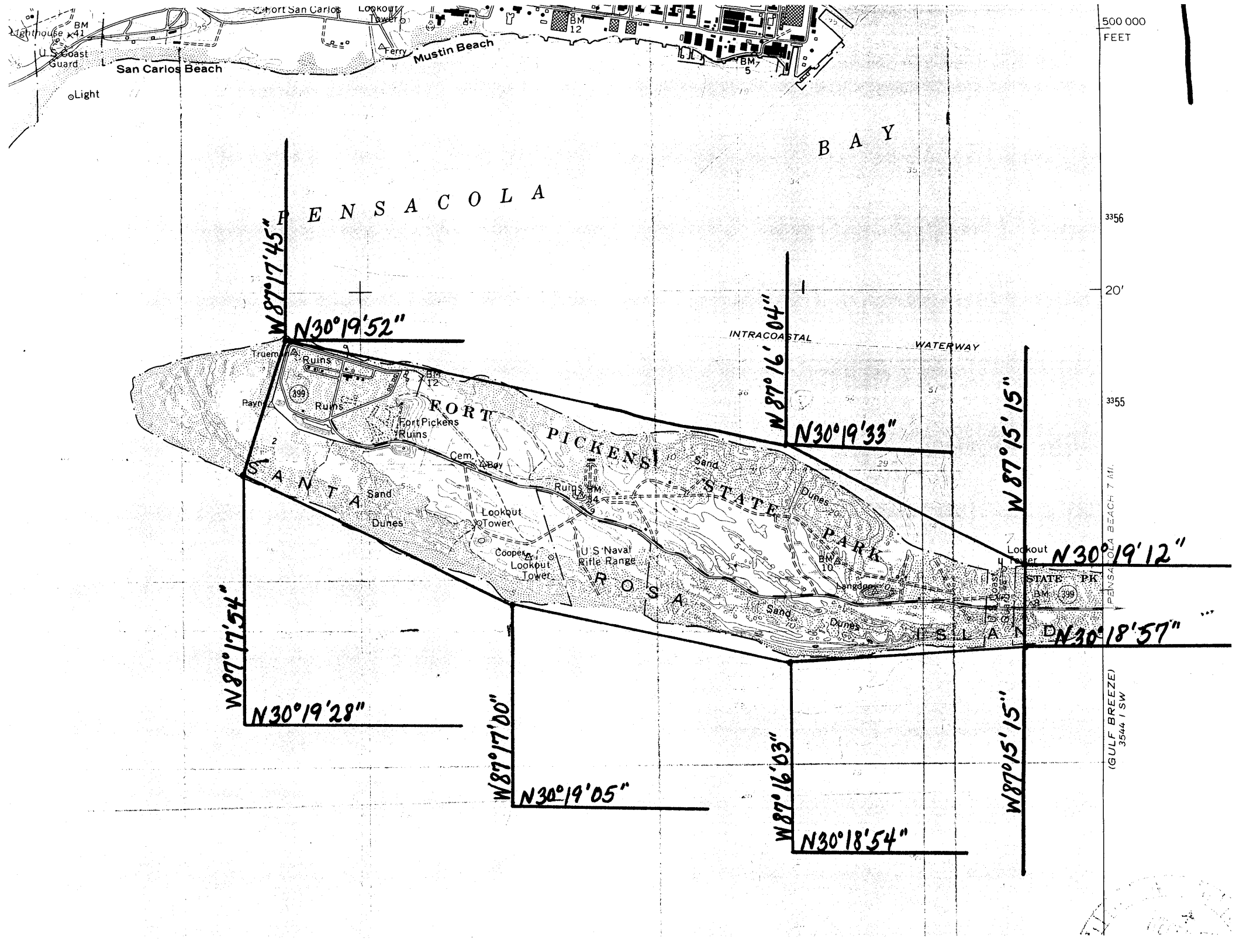
ATTEST:

William Murtagh

Keeper of The National Register

Date:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS


Fort San Carlos
Lookout Tower
BM 12
Lighthouse
BM 41
U.S. Coast Guard
San Carlos Beach
Light
Ferry
Mustin Beach
BM 5
500 000 FEET
BAY
PENSACOLA
3356
20'
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
W87°17'45"
N30°19'52"
W87°16'04"
N30°19'33"
W87°15'15"
N30°19'12"
N30°18'57"
W87°17'54"
N30°19'28"
W87°17'00"
N30°19'05"
W87°16'03"
N30°18'54"
W87°15'15"
Truemen
Ruins
399
Payne
Ruins
BM 12
FORT PICKENS STATE PARK
Fort Pickens Ruins
Cem.
Bay
Sand
Dunes
Ruins
BM 14
Lookout Tower
Cooper
Lookout Tower
U.S. Naval Rifle Range
SANTA ROSA ISLAND
Sand
Dunes
BM 10
Langdon
Lookout Tower
STATE PK
BM 8
399
Sand
Dunes
3355
PENSACOLA BEACH 7 MI.
(GULF BREEZE)
3544 I SW