

MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, QUARTERMASTER & TAILOR
SHOP
(Building No. 938)
Railroad Avenue near Eighteenth Street
Vallejo
Solano County
California

HABS CA-1543-DA
CA-1543-DA

-DA

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
600 Harrison Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, QUARTERMASTER & TAILOR SHOP
(MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD, BUILDING 938)**

HABS No. CA-1543-DA

Location: Located within the Naval Ammunitions Depot, west side of Railroad Avenue, Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, Solano County, California

U.S.G.S.: Mare Island, 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle, 1959, photorevised 1980

UTM Coordinates: Zone 10 564843 E, 4215537 N

Present Owner: 63D United States (U.S.) Army Regional Readiness Command

Present Use: Storage and Classroom Space

Significance: Building 938, built in 1943, is considered significant for its association with U.S. Naval history and the Mare Island Naval Shipyard (MINSY), the first naval installation on the west coast of the U.S. Portions of the Mare Island Naval Shipyard are within a National Historic Landmark. Building 938, however, is not. It is within the Mare Island Shipyard Historic District. This building was a Quartermaster and Tailor Shop from 1943 until 1953 for the Marine Corps Security Detachment unit assigned to guard the Naval Ammunition Depot (NAD). It is a contributing element of the successful base operations at Mare Island and is a representative example of support structure design, construction methods and materials used on the island during the World War II (WWII) era.

Description: Building 938, built in 1943, is located within the NAD area of Mare Island at the western side of Railroad Avenue, southwest of the Building 930 (Guard House and Barracks) and between Buildings 934 (Canteen and Brig) and Building 936 (Storage Building). This area is immediately adjacent to the Shipyard South area of the island that includes the Finger Piers and other support buildings and structures that were built in the early 1940s at the onset of WWII. The building was used from 1943 until 1953 as the Quartermaster and Tailor Shop for the U.S. Marine Corps Detachment unit assigned to the NAD. The

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building was renovated for new uses twice in the 1980s, including the concrete block addition made to the west side in 1986 and 1987.

Building 938 has a rectangular 1,586-square-foot footprint that measures 61 feet northwest-southeast by 26 feet northeast-southwest. The exterior walls are approximately 10 feet high above the foundation (also the approximate interior floor-to-ceiling height) and the maximum height of the building, from floor level to the roof's ridge is about 15 feet. The building has a concrete foundation, concrete block exterior walls, and a wood-framed gable roof with corrugated metal surfacing and exposed rafter tails (with rounded ends). The gable areas of the northwest and southeast walls are corrugated metal-surfaced. The southeast gable area includes a rectangular louvered vent that appears to be metal and the northwest gable area includes a pentagonal-shaped metal box, the metal box appears to be a later addition to the building. The concrete blocks used for the walls are standard eight-inch by eight-inch by 16-inch units.

The northeast side of the building (CA-1543-DA-2) includes two entries, one at the southeast end and one at the northwest end. Each entry includes a modern metal door with a transom that replaced an original wood door and transom in 1983. The approximately six-foot-wide by eight-foot-deep poured concrete two-riser stair/stoop with pipe metal railings at each northeast side entry appear to have replaced earlier two-riser stairs in 1983 or later. The northwest side of the building (CA-1543-DA-5) includes one entry that consists of a modern metal door and transom and a one-foot, six-inch-wide by three-foot-deep concrete stoop with a one-foot-deep stair to each side (no railings); the original stoop appears to have been replaced or modified in 1983 or later. Each extant door on the building measures approximately three feet wide by six feet, seven inches high.

The windows on Building 938 – two on the northwest side, one on the southwest and southeast sides, and three on the east side – are wood sash double-hung two-over-two windows with extended stiles (CA-1543-DA-2, CA-1543-DA-3, CA-1543-DA-4, CA-1543-DA-5). Each of these windows is original to the building and measures approximately four feet in width and five feet in height. The upper sash of the southeast side window has been modified or replaced and does not include extended stiles.

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The southwest side of the building includes modifications that were made in 1986 or 1987. The major modification is the approximately 16-foot-deep, 22-foot-wide concrete block addition (CA-1543-DA-4) at the northwest end of the building that has blocked or replaced an original door and two original windows. This addition includes a concrete foundation and a wood-framed shed roof (with corrugated metal surfacing and two metal vents) on the northeast side, a triangular wood sash roof area window at the northwest and southeast sides, and a flush metal sheet-surfaced wood door with a plywood overhang on the southeast side. A rectangular metal vent on the west side of Building 938, close to the addition, was probably added in 1986/1987.

The interior of the building appears to have had three spaces prior to 1983 – an office and two classrooms. Partition walls divided the spaces, the office partition wall including windows. Each partition wall included a wood door. The floors were surfaced with one-foot-square asbestos tiles, and the ceiling includes acoustical tiles and modern florescent lighting fixtures. In 1983, the asbestos flooring was removed and new one-foot-square vinyl flooring tiles were installed, the wood door of the office partition wall was removed, and new acoustical ceiling tiles were installed. The pre-1983 florescent lighting was reinstalled. The 1986/1987 concrete block additions at the southwest side were designed to include a tiled shower area and a storage space. It is probable that in 1986/1987 the office partition wall was removed.

Historical Context: Building 938 was constructed as part of the Mare Island naval facility located in Vallejo, California. The U.S. Navy established MINSY in 1854 as a shipbuilding and repair facility. This shipyard was the first west coast naval installation and was the only such facility in California for many years.

Mare Island's built environment is the product of over 100 years of military construction and consists of a blend of buildings that demonstrate many different historical functions, construction technologies and architectural styles. Building 938 was constructed in 1943 as a Quartermaster and Tailor Shop for the Marine Corps Security Detachment Unit, which was stationed at the southern area of the island to guard the NAD.

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In response to growing tensions in Europe, the U.S. Congress, in 1938, decided to expand the size of the American fleet by 20 percent. This expansion escalated at the end of 1941 with the entry of the U.S. into WWII. There was a massive expansion of aircraft and shipbuilding industries at Mare Island during WWII. Along with a fundamental redesign of the Shipyard South area at the brink of the

U.S. entry into WWII, the adjacent NAD expanded its production and storage capacities. Buildings were constructed within this area of the island to support the bustling activity in the berthing areas and ammunitions depot. Many of these buildings, such as the Guard House and Barracks (Building 930) and Quartermaster and Tailor Shop (Building 938), were erected in the early 1940s to support the U.S. Marine Security Detachment unit stationed in this area to protect the NAD.

The surviving buildings and structures from the WWII era represent an important collection of buildings, “arranged in a manner that enables an understanding of how the base functioned at that time” (JRP Historical Consulting with PAR Environmental Services, Inc. 1996: Section 8, page 53). Building 938 was initially designated as Building A904 (NAD inventory number) and served from 1943 to 1953 as the Quartermaster and Tailor Shop for the members of the Marine Corps Security Detachment Unit, which was stationed at the Guard House and Barracks (Building 930) to provide security for NAD.

In 1953 the building was vacated by the Marine Corps unit and was renumbered as Building 938 (a shipyard inventory number). In 1983 the building was renovated by the U.S. Navy for use as a Damage Control “Wet Trainer” to instruct naval personnel on shipboard emergency procedures. Possibly in 1986/1987 when the west side concrete block shower area addition was made, the building was transferred to the SUBDEVGRU Training Command. The U.S. Navy vacated the building in 1993 when the military base closed and the City of Vallejo acquired a use permit for the property from the U.S. Navy. In 1996, the CCC entered into a lease with the City to use the building for its training programs. In 1997 the U.S. Army Reserve received a use permit for the building from the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army Reserve allowed the CCC to continue leasing the property. On July 12, 2002, ownership of Building 938 was transferred from the U.S. Navy to the U.S. Army Reserve. The CCC moved out of the facility in 2003.

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Sources:

A. Architectural Drawings:

U.S. Department of the Navy. Building 938, Exterior Elevations, Section & Floor Plan (Demolition Notes) (NAVFAC Drawing No. 6192558) 1983. On file, U.S. Army Reserve, Vallejo, CA.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

No historic views or aerial photographs were located for this building.

C. Interviews

Volk, J. S. Telephone communication between Tracy Bakic, PAR Environmental Services, Inc. and J. Stephen Volk (Environmental Scientist [Adecco TAD], 63D U.S. Army Regional Readiness Command CST Environmental Division), 2002.

D. Bibliography

Bumatay, H. (Mare Island Naval Shipyard). California Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Record form for Building 930 (Guard House and Barracks), Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Mare Island, California, 1994. On file, California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

JRP Historical Consulting Services with PAR Environmental Services, Inc. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Mare Island Historic District, Vallejo, California, 1996.* On file, California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento and U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Mikesell, S. D. California Department of Parks and Recreation Building Structure Object Record form for Building 930 (Guard House and Barracks), Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Mare Island, California, 1995. State of California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

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D. Bibliography

PAR Environmental Services, Inc. *Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan for Army Lands at Mare Island National Historic Landmark, Vallejo, Solano County, California, 2002.* On file, California Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

Project Information: After the September 11 terrorist attack, new standards were implemented for federal facilities. Building setbacks from roads and parking areas have been greatly increased. The Department of Defense's Antiterrorism Standards for Buildings, 4-010-01 8 October 2003 Distances per United Facilities Criteria require minimum setbacks that are greater than the existing setbacks, thereby requiring this facility's removal. This undertaking has been approved in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the California State Historic Preservation Officer and the U.S. Army Reserve, pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f).

Prepared By: This report was prepared by Tracy Bakic, cultural resources specialist with PAR Environmental Services, Inc., Sacramento, California. Photography and the associated photographic index were prepared by David DeVries, Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California.

Submitted By: 63D U.S. Army Regional Readiness Command Headquarters, 4235 Yorktown Avenue, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-5002

Inventory Date: November 6, 2002 (Updated April 18, 2005).

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