

Navy Yard, Boilermakers Shop
(Building 167)
Navy Yard Annex
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DG-442-B

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

NAVY YARD, BOILERMAKERS SHOP (BUILDING 167)

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Location: Washington Navy Yard Annex, on the Northwest corner of Tingey and 4th Streets.

UTM: 18.326350.4304850
Quad: Washington West

Date of Construction: 1917-1919
Additions and Alterations 1919-1957

Present Owner: General Services Administration
Region 3

Present Use: Motor Vehicle Pool and Repair Shop

Significance: The Washington Navy Yard Annex was historically significant in the manufacture of large scale ordnance during World Wars I and II. Boiler-maker's Shop 167 was necessary to the daily functioning of the Yard. It is a good example of foundry-type architecture with an unusual double-tiered monitor roof.

Architect: Not known

Project Information: Demolition of the Boilermakers Shop is to be funded by the Urban Mass Transit Administration. Under Executive Order 11593 and the Historic Preservation of 1966, mitigative documentation was undertaken in 1981 by historian Kathleen Coelos of Wallace, Roberts and Todd, Environmental Consultants, for the Washington Mass Transit Authority.

Historical Information:

Boiler-maker's Shop 167 was an auxilliary building constructed between 1917-1919 by the Department of Public Works. It was part of the general expansion of the Navy Yard necessitated by the United States' involvement in World War I. There is no documentation as to its role in the process of heavy ordnance manufacture. The boilers fabricated in the shop were presumably used in the daily functioning of the Navy Yard, but some may have been constructed for use in the U.S. naval fleet. 175 men were initially planned to be employed in its operation.

The original plan of 1917 shows a 200' long by 100' wide building with ten enclosed 20' bays and an open four bay extension. In 1930 the building was extended to the west by six bays, replacing the original open-sided extension and increasing the total length to 320 feet. A crane runway was extended even further to the west. A shelter for a stress-relieving furnace was added to the northwest corner in 1943. New offices, washrooms and lockers were added to the southeast portion in 1953, but a proposed enclosure of the crane runway was never built. Several service space additions, which are documented by historic drawings, do not exist in the current physical form of the building and were presumably never realized.

Building 167 is currently used as a motor vehicle repair shop by the General Services Administration. The only remaining equipment is a 20-ton crane with a five-ton auxilliary in the center aisle, jib cranes and three-ton hoists in each of the side aisles, and five large roof ventilators.

Architectural Information:

As an example of foundry-type architecture, Building 167 is typical. Its approaches to structure and provision of light are standard for industrial buildings of the period. But the double-tiered monitor roof over the central space is an architectural feature which distinguishes it from other buildings in the Navy Yard. (BCT, 1976)

Building 167 has a pile and concrete foundation and a steel frame structural system. The Warren roof truss has an extra compressive member above the central chord to support the monitor. The roof is corrugated iron carried on steel purlins and covered with a composition

material. The exterior curtain walls are brick and steel frame factory sash with manually operable window panels. The monitor glazing is ventilated by mechanical chain operators. The original floor was wood blocks on a concrete base; it is currently a concrete slab.

The main entrances to the building are an electric door at the east end and a sectioned door comprising nearly all of the central western end. By opening the entire door the crane could travel outside the building on its runway; opening part would admit a truck; opening the smallest section would create a door. There are also two sets of doors on the north facade and an entry to the office addition on the southwest corner.

The building is in a serious state of deterioration. Numerous window panes have been replaced with plywood or metal sheets, the concrete sills are spalling extensively, the sheet metal flashing and western door are seriously rusting.