

Naval Air Station Kingsville,
General Storehouse
(Naval Air Station Kingsville, Building 701)
330 Moffett Avenue
Naval Air Station Kingsville
Kingsville Vicinity
Kleberg County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3468-B

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTIONS OF DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
Southwest System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE
BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)

HABS No. TX-3468-B

Location: 330 Moffett Avenue
Naval Air Station Kingsville, Texas
Kingsville vicinity
Kleberg County
Texas

U.S.G.S. Ricardo, Tex., Quadrangle (7.5)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
14.616930.3042110

Present Owner: United States of America
Department of the Navy
c/o Chief of Naval Education and Training
250 Dallas Street
Pensacola, Florida 32508

Present Occupant: Naval Air Station Kingsville, Texas

Present Use: Storage

Significance: Building 701 is one of the original support facilities for NAS Kingsville and is associated with the base's operations as a naval air training station during World War II. Building 701 was erected as a general storehouse facility and served in that capacity since its construction in 1942. Built from standardized plans and featuring a utilitarian design, Building 701 lacks noteworthy architectural ornamentation and embellishment. However, it utilizes a limited amount of masonry construction—brick firewalls—that distinguishes it from most other contemporaneous facilities at the base. Building 701 is also the only relatively unaltered warehouse of its type at NAS Kingsville that survives from the World War II period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: While original construction drawings date to March 21, 1942, the date construction began is unknown.
2. Architect: Robert and Company, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, and Corpus Christi, Texas.
3. Original and subsequent owners:
United States of America, Department of the Navy (1942 to present).
City of Kingsville / County of Kleberg (revocable lease) (1946 to 1951)

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 2)

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Brown-Bellows-Columbia, Houston, Texas
5. Original plans and construction: Reproductions of original plans for the building are available at the Public Works Department, NAS Kingsville, Texas, and at the Public Works Department, NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. (Bureau of Yards and Docks Drawing Nos. 189593, 189601 to 189604).
6. Alterations and additions: Most alterations, repairs, and additions to Building 701 occur on the interior. Originally provided with a single supply office located in the southwest corner, the west bay had additional office spaces installed by 1955, with additional interior partitions built in 1958 and 1959. Office areas received additional sprinklers in 1955. Wear required the removal and replacement of some interior tongue-and-groove flooring, the removal and replacement of corrugated metal siding on the south side where needed, door repairs, and the replacement of sills in 1957. At the same time, a concrete ramp was added to the west end of the north loading dock. In 1970, electrical rewiring and reconfigurations were necessary for the data processing branch of the supply and fiscal department. Reroofing and repainting occurred in 1974, and in 1983, flooring again underwent repair and replacement, including the installation of vinyl floor tile over the wood planking in some office areas and the restrooms. As part of the flooring repairs, some structural repairs were completed, notably along the north side. Some exterior doors and windows have been modified, and some window air conditioning units were installed in 1974.

B. Historical Context:

Also known as the General Storehouse, Building 701 is representative of the kind of support facilities that contributed to the daily operation of the naval air training station. The base was established in 1942 and was part of the Navy's War Construction Program, a massive build-up of domestic bases at the outset of direct U.S. involvement and participation in World War II. Building 701 was one of the original warehouses at the base, and it survives as a tangible link to this pivotal era in American history. Throughout its history, NAS Kingsville has been closely affiliated with NAS Corpus Christi, and the development of NAS Kingsville and its facilities are better understood knowing the relationship between NAS Kingsville and NAS Corpus Christi and the role both bases played as training centers for advanced fighter-pilot training during World War II.

NAS Corpus Christi was established following passage and enactment of the Naval Expansion Act of 1938. Reflecting growing U.S. concerns of widespread military build-up and increased tensions in Europe, the bill called for the construction of additional naval bases throughout the country. One provision of the bill called for the establishment of a new naval air station, which ultimately became NAS Corpus Christi. Navy officials selected a large parcel of land just outside Corpus Christi, Texas, as the station, and groundbreaking ceremonies occurred on June 29, 1940. The base was officially commissioned on March 12, 1941. The Atlanta, Georgia-based architectural and engineering firm of Robert and Company, Inc., provided architectural plans for most facilities at the base, and Brown-

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 3)

Bellows-Columbia served as general contractors. Upon completion, NAS Corpus Christi was the Navy's largest air training station.¹

After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the Navy embarked on an ambitious plan to further develop and improve its network of domestic bases and targeted NAS Corpus Christi for rapid expansion. This effort resulted in the construction of many new buildings at NAS Corpus Christi and also led to the establishment of six auxiliary fields within a 60-mile radius of the base. Of the six sites, the auxiliary fields at Kingsville and at Beeville (Chase Field) featured sufficient support facilities and improvements to operate semi-autonomously.²

The new base at Kingsville was initially called "P-4," but was soon renamed Naval Auxiliary Air Station (NAAS) Kingsville. Encompassing a large tract of land just east of the city of Kingsville, the base supported the advanced fighter pilot training mission of nearby NAS Corpus Christi. The Navy retained Robert and Company, Inc., the architects of NAS Corpus Christi, to provide plans and specifications for NAS Kingsville facilities.³ The firm also served as architects of Chase Field in Beeville.⁴ For new construction at the Kingsville base, Robert and Company typically specified the use of inexpensive and easy-to-build wood-frame systems, and the fundamental structural elements of Building 701 followed this pattern. However, Building 701 also featured brick firewalls that divided its interior into three separate spaces. The use of masonry construction distinguishes Building 701 from most other contemporaneous facilities at the base.

Robert and Company was founded in 1917 by Lawrence Wood Robert, Jr., and it remains a vibrant architectural concern based in Atlanta. The firm's earliest commissions were principally involved with the design of water treatment plants, power plants, textile mills, and other facilities for municipalities and private manufacturing concerns. Mr. Robert became a big promoter of industrial development in the southeastern U.S. and was well known in the business community. Active in politics, he served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in charge of Public Works in the Roosevelt Administration from 1933 to 1936.⁵ In subsequent years, the firm's practice grew at a phenomenal rate, and in the late 1930s and early 1940s Robert and Company received a number of military-related commissions—most notably NAS Corpus Christi—that necessitated the opening of branch offices across the nation. At its peak, the branch office in Corpus Christi, Texas, employed over 175 persons and was featured in *Life Magazine*. In 1943, the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks commended for the firm for "outstanding services," and noted "their devotion and unswerving fidelity to the tasks in hand when preparing plans and specifications for Naval Air Station Facilities and Landing Field in furtherance of the Navy War Construction Program."⁶

The general contractor for the base and Building 701 was Brown-Bellows-Columbia, a consortium that included Brown & Root of Houston; W. S. Bellows, also of Houston; and Columbia Construction of Oakland, California. This same consortium served as the general contractor of NAS Corpus Christi and NAS Chase Field. Brown & Root, the lead firm in the consortium, was a highly successful construction firm in Texas during the second quarter of the twentieth century and successfully completed numerous federally funded projects prior to its work at NAS Corpus Christi and NAS Kingsville. Among their more notable projects were the series of dams built for the Lower Colorado River Authority in the 1930s.⁷

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 4)

The original layout of NAS Kingsville featured separate runways at the base's north and south ends. Building 701 and several other warehouse facilities were erected near the north runway and adjacent to a spur from the Missouri Pacific Railroad. At this location, the warehouses not only had direct access to the railroad, they also were near hangars and other facilities involved with base's primary mission as an advanced air training station. Rail access facilitated the receiving of goods and supplies critical to the base's operation.

Throughout the duration of World War II, Building 701 served as a warehouse; however, it was abandoned after the war when the Navy closed NAS Kingsville and other surplus bases. Decommissioning ceremonies took place on August 1, 1946, and the Department of the Navy subsequently leased the base and all improvements to a local governmental board, comprised of the City of Kingsville and the County of Kleberg, for a nominal \$1.00 yearly fee. However, a provision in the agreement enabled the Navy to reoccupy the base if the need arose. The locally based Texas College of Arts & Industries (now Texas A&M University at Kingsville) subleased the complex and established a satellite campus. The fate of Building 701 during the period in which the college occupied the base remains undocumented, but other facilities, such as Building 700, were rehabilitated and converted into education-related uses. In all likelihood, however, Building 701 was used for storage purposes.

Texas College of Arts & Industries occupied the former military base for the remainder of the 1940s, but North Korea's invasion of South Korea in the summer of 1950, and the United States' subsequent involvement in the conflict, proved to be pivotal events in the history of Kingsville and the former naval air station. Navy officials reactivated many of the previously closed World War II-era bases, and NAS Kingsville was among those reopened.⁸

NAS Kingsville was officially recommissioned as a "permanent" station on April 1, 1951; however, Texas College of Arts & Industries continued to use facilities at the base until the end of the spring semester.⁹ When NAS Kingsville reopened, Building 701 was designated a warehouse facility and it has continued to be used in that capacity to the present time.

Since its construction in 1942, Building 701 has been modified only slightly. The most extensive exterior changes are the replacement of some doors and the installation of window air-conditioning units. Otherwise, the building retains its original form and massing. The interior has been repartitioned to create an additional office in the west bay and the original tongue-and-groove wood flooring has been covered with vinyl. These alterations minimally detract from the building's overall integrity and character, and the building retains its salient features and its historic form and most important physical attributes are largely intact. Although not directly associated with the primary mission of NAS Kingsville as a naval air station, Building 701 played a supportive role in the base's operation and survives as a good illustration of World War II military architecture.

NOTES

1. David Moore et al., "Historic Resources Survey & Assessments, NAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas," (Austin, Tx.: Hardy•Heck•Moore, [1992]), p. 33.

2. Ibid., p. 35-36.

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 5)

3. Diane Williams et al., "Historic Resources Survey and Assessments, Naval Air Station Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas," (Austin, Tx.: Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc., [1995]), p. 67-68.
4. Moore et al., "Historic Resources Survey & Assessments, NAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas," p. 33.
5. Mary Goldsmith, "Lawrence Wood Robert, Jr., Founder of Robert and Company." Paper presented for AH690D, Seminar in Atlanta Architecture, Atlanta, Ga., Spring 1991, p. 3.
6. Robert and Company, Architects-Engineers-Managers, *The Organization and Activities of Robert and Company, Architects-Engineers-Managers Washington, Atlanta, New York: 1917-1944*, (Atlanta, Ga.: Promotional brochure by the firm, c. 1945), n.p.
7. Tamara Scott, National Register of Historic Places Application, Brown Building, National Register Division, Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Tx.
8. Williams et al., "Historic Resources Survey and Assessments, Naval Air Station Kingsville," p. 78.
9. Ibid.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The General Storehouse is an example of a Warehouse and Storage Facility, one of the most common property types at NAS Kingsville. The plan is rectangular, and the building displays minimal architectural ornamentation. Its design is utilitarian, and the most notable exterior feature is the corbeled beam supports on the east end wall. The front and rear (north and south) walls have three service bays, articulated by brick fire walls that continue above the roofline and give the impression of the three service bays as being three attached buildings.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The storehouse measures 184'-0"-long x 101'-0"-wide, and almost 22' -tall. There are 12'-0"-wide loading platforms that extend from the north and south sides. Elevated 4'-0" above ground level, the single-story structure contains 18,400 square feet of useable space.
2. Foundation: The building rests on a reinforced concrete pier-and-beam foundation. While the west side has a continuous concrete foundation wall, the east side foundation wall has regularly spaced ventilation slits.

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 6)

3. Walls: Except for the brick endwalls, the light frame wood exterior is enclosed with the original painted corrugated metal siding, which has been patched in places. The two internal brick firewalls project through the metal-sided wood walls. A metal fire box is attached to the south wall, and fire sprinkler pipes are located beneath the roofline of each bay on the north and south sides.
4. Structural system, framing: Building 701 utilizes load-bearing brick and wood frame construction. Load-bearing brick firewalls divide the building into three bays, while timber posts and beams span each bay.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The three service bays open north and south onto concrete loading docks that are almost 12'-0"-wide and run the length of the building on both the north and south sides. Poured concrete steps access the south dock from the west side, and a reinforced concrete ramp extends 40'-0" out from the west end of the north landing; the ramp replaced a set of concrete steps in 1957. A metal bridge connects to the warehouse located to the north (Building 2701). A fixed metal ladder accesses the roof from the west bay of the north loading dock.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Centered in each of the six loading dock bays are painted corrugated metal double doors that operate on an exterior track. The two doors in the west bay were altered in 1974 to accommodate a hollow core wood pedestrian door with a panel above it sandwiched within the larger metal doors. An additional metal single-entry door provides access to each south side end bay. The doorway in the south center bay retains only one of the original sliding doors while also providing a single metal door with glazing.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Located just under the roofline, paired metal-frame awning and fixed-pane windows with four lights, six lights, and six-over-six lights pierce the north and south sides, while just above the floorline on these same sides, numerous metal vents aerate the storehouse. Some windows on the south side have been modified with replacement frames or enclosed. Two larger metal-frame six-over-six windows, added in 1974, open into the west bay from the south side. Twin metal hoods project above them. Wood frame, screened windows and openings covered with metal panels accommodate window air conditioning units on the south side, some of which date to 1974.

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 7)

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The flat roof slopes slightly down to roofline gutters along the north and south sides. The current built-up roof results from a 1974 work order, and the original roof was also tar and gravel. The east and west sides have single-stepped brick parapet endwalls with ceramic coping. Two similar brick parapets extend from the fire walls and subdivide the roofscape.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Corbeled brick beam supports extend from the east endwall on the interior and exterior wall faces. Original drawings note them as provisions for longitudinal expansion but along the west endwall.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: Brick fire walls divide the building into three open, yet disconnected spaces. Offices and meeting spaces occupy about one-fourth of the interior space and are located in the west bay. The original supply officer's office and lavatories occupy the southwest corner of the west bay. A caged storage area now lines the remainder of the western wall, while office areas and a conference room line the eastern wall. As in all three bays, a double row of columns articulates a central corridor.

2. Stairways: There are no internal stairs.

3. Flooring: The interior is largely open with wood tongue-and-groove flooring, protected by vinyl tile in the lavatories and some office areas as a result of 1983 repairs and alterations. Also resulting from 1983 repairs, the wood flooring is protected with either paint or a bituminous plastic cement sealant, save for the caged area. The center strip of flooring is not original; it was removed and replaced in each bay in 1957.

4. Walls and ceiling finishes: Two rows of 8" x 8" wood columns span each bay and support the roof beams. Most interior walls consist of exposed wood studs and the inside face of the corrugated metal siding. Wood planks finish the 15'-0"-high ceiling. There are 8'-0" frame walls with acoustic tile ceilings which enclose the offices. Most offices are clad with tongue-and-groove siding, while painted gypsum board walls subdivide some office areas. An area in the west bay is enclosed with wire mesh stud walls.

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 8)

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Interior doors are two-panel wood doors, typically set into wood frames.
- b. Windows: An internal eight-light window looks out from the supply officer's office to the central corridor. Alteration drawings note that this window was flanked by two four-light windows.

6. Decorative features and trim: Flat moldings encircle the top foot of the office walls, and wooden baseboards typically line the interior partitions. Wood frames typically outline exterior windows.

7. Hardware:

8. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Window air conditioning units puncture the north and south sides. Just above the floorline on these same sides, numerous metal vents aerate the storehouse.
- b. Lighting: Centered above the sliding door to each bay is a glass and metal cage light fixture, reminiscent of those found on ships. Interior fixtures include single bulb, incandescent lamps which hang from the storehouse ceiling.
- c. Plumbing: Restrooms exist in the west bay and are separated into single stall units for the ladies and the officers and a three fixture unit for enlisted men.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building fronts south onto a service alley, called Halsey Street, near North Field and is accessed from either Mitscher Avenue or Hutchins Street. A Missouri Pacific Railroad Co. track, now removed, originally ran nearby. A metal bridge connects Building 701 to the warehouse located across a paved service drive to the north (Building 2701 dating to 1957; a smaller supply building formerly occupied this site).
2. Historic landscape design: Built on flat terrain, Building 701 is surrounded primarily by paved roadways and parking lots. A small parking lot as well as a small grassy area, supporting a single deciduous tree, abut the west wall. Abutting the east wall is another small grassy area contained within the service roads. The south side faces a small lawn across Halsey Street.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A Original architectural drawings: Reproductions of a complete set of original architectural drawings are on file at the Public Works Department, NAS Corpus Christi. These drawings list Robert and Company, Inc., of Atlanta, Georgia and Corpus Christi, Texas, as the architects of record, and H.W. Howarth as the architect in charge. Available drawings include the original floor plans, elevations, and details, structural plans and details, sprinkler plan and section, plumbing and heating plans, and electrical plan and details.

B. Early views: The U.S. Navy maintains an archive of aerial photographs which provide an overall understanding of site development but minimal information on individual buildings.

C. Interviews: No oral interviews were undertaken to prepare this form.

D Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Corpus Christi, Texas. NAS Corpus Christi. Public Works Office. Archives. Maps, plans, architectural drawings, and aerial photographs.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Atlanta, Georgia. Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division. Robert and Company File. Goldsmith, Mary, "Lawrence Wood Robert, Jr., Founder of Robert and Company." Paper presented for AH690D, Seminar in Atlanta Architecture, Atlanta, Ga., Spring 1991.

Austin, Texas. Texas Historical Commission. National Register Division. Tamara Scott, National Register of Historic Places Application, Brown Building, no date.

The Flying K (NAS Kingsville, Texas), 13 January 1953.

Moore, David et al. "Historic Resources Survey & Assessments, Naval Air Station Chase Field, Beeville, Texas." Austin, Tx: Hardy•Heck•Moore, 1992.

Robert and Company, Architects-Engineers-Managers. *The Organization and Activities of Robert and Company, Architects-Engineers-Managers Washington, Atlanta, New York: 1917-1944*. Atlanta, Ga.: Promotional brochure by the firm, c. 1945.

Williams, Diane et al. "Historic Resources Survey and Assessments, Naval Air Station Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas." Austin, Tx.: Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc., 1995.

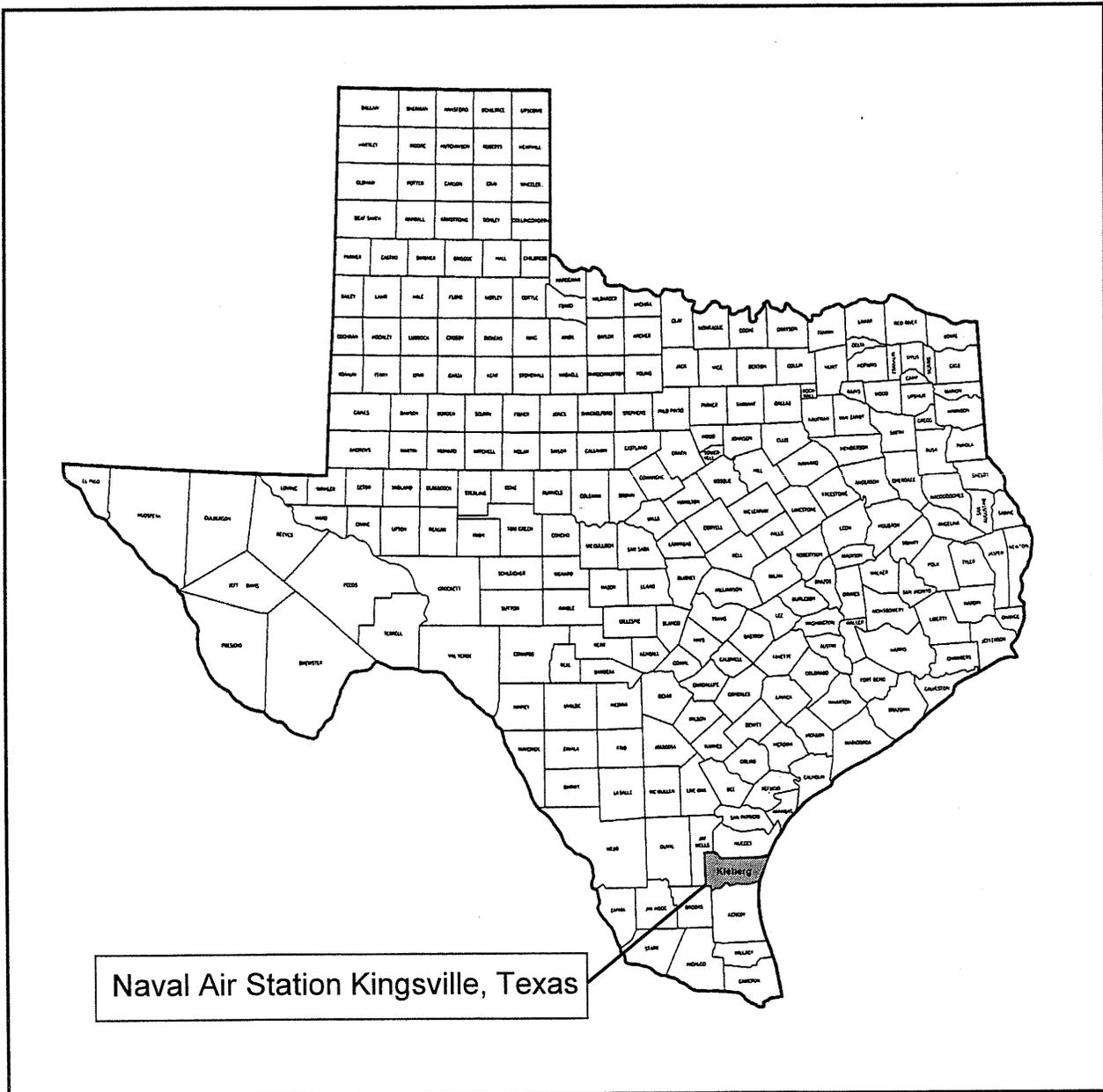
NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 10)

- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: Information on NAS Kingsville may be held in the Federal Records Center in Fort Worth Texas, the Navy Historical Center and the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The architectural collections of the archives in Suitland, Maryland, may also contain some project-related information. These repositories will not be investigated for the purposes of this project.
- F. Supplemental Materials: N/A

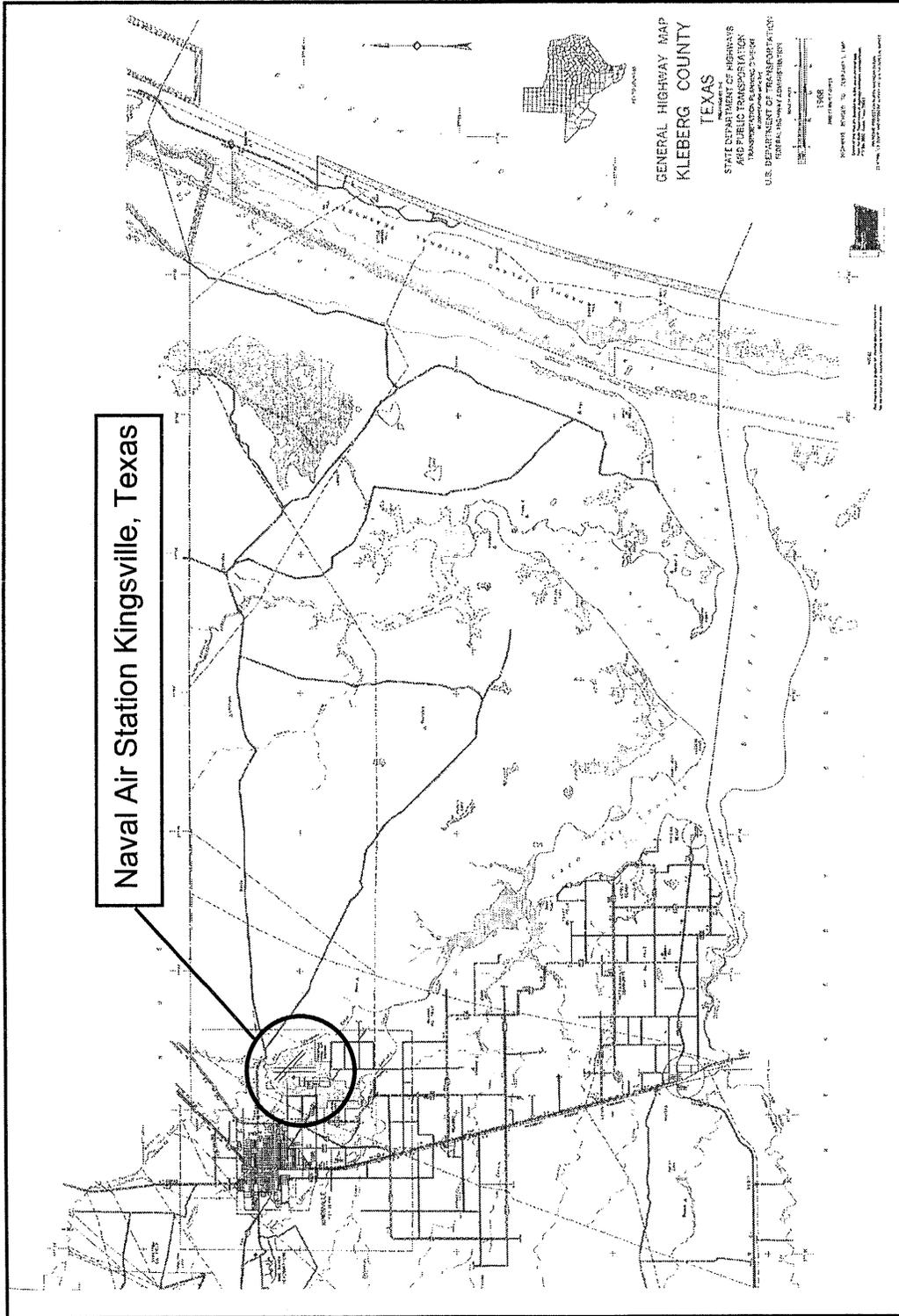
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation was completed in compliance with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and complies with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by representatives with the Department of the Navy, the Texas Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Under Contract No. N62467-94-D-1128, Delivery Order No. 00190, Southern Division Naval Facilities Engineering Command (SOUTHNAVFACENGCOM) contracted with Turner Collie & Braden (TC&B) Inc., of Houston, Texas, to oversee the preparation of the HABS recordation. As subcontractors to TC&B, Inc., Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc. of Austin, Texas, gathered historical and architectural information and, prepared a historic context and the HABS forms. All project personnel directly involved with the preparation of the HABS documentation meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. David Moore served as principal investigator. Contributors include Anne I. Malanka, historian; Diane E. Williams, architectural historian; Tina Roach, associate architectural historian; Terri L. Myers, historian; and Sara Kirtland, associate historian. Preservation architect Tom Eisenhour recorded the buildings with large format (4" x 5") black-and-white photographs. Mr. Eisenhour also photographed existing measured drawings with large-format black-and-white photography and recorded information on the physical attributes of the buildings.

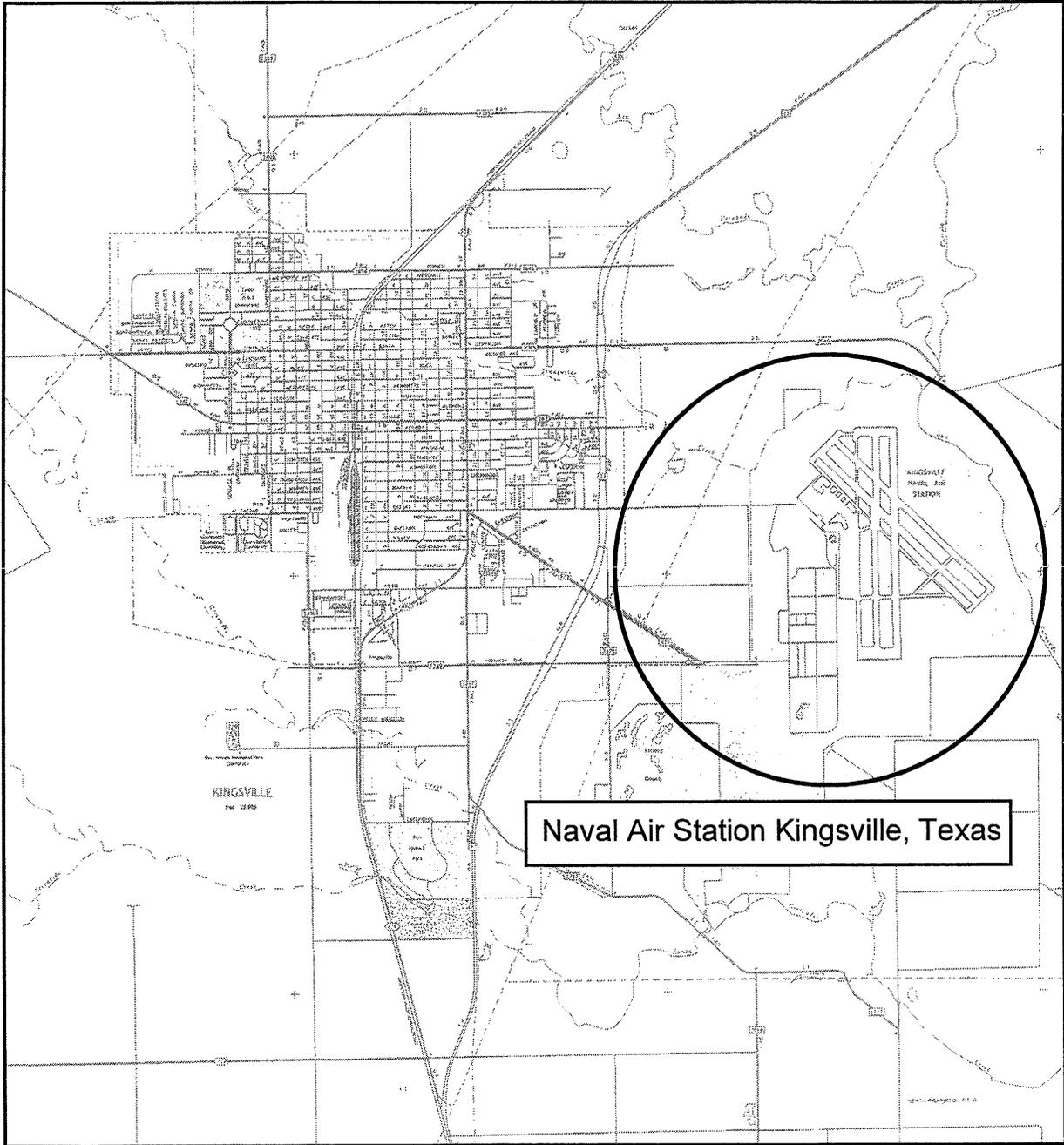
NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
 (NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
 HABS NO. TX-3468-B
 (Page 11)



NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 12)

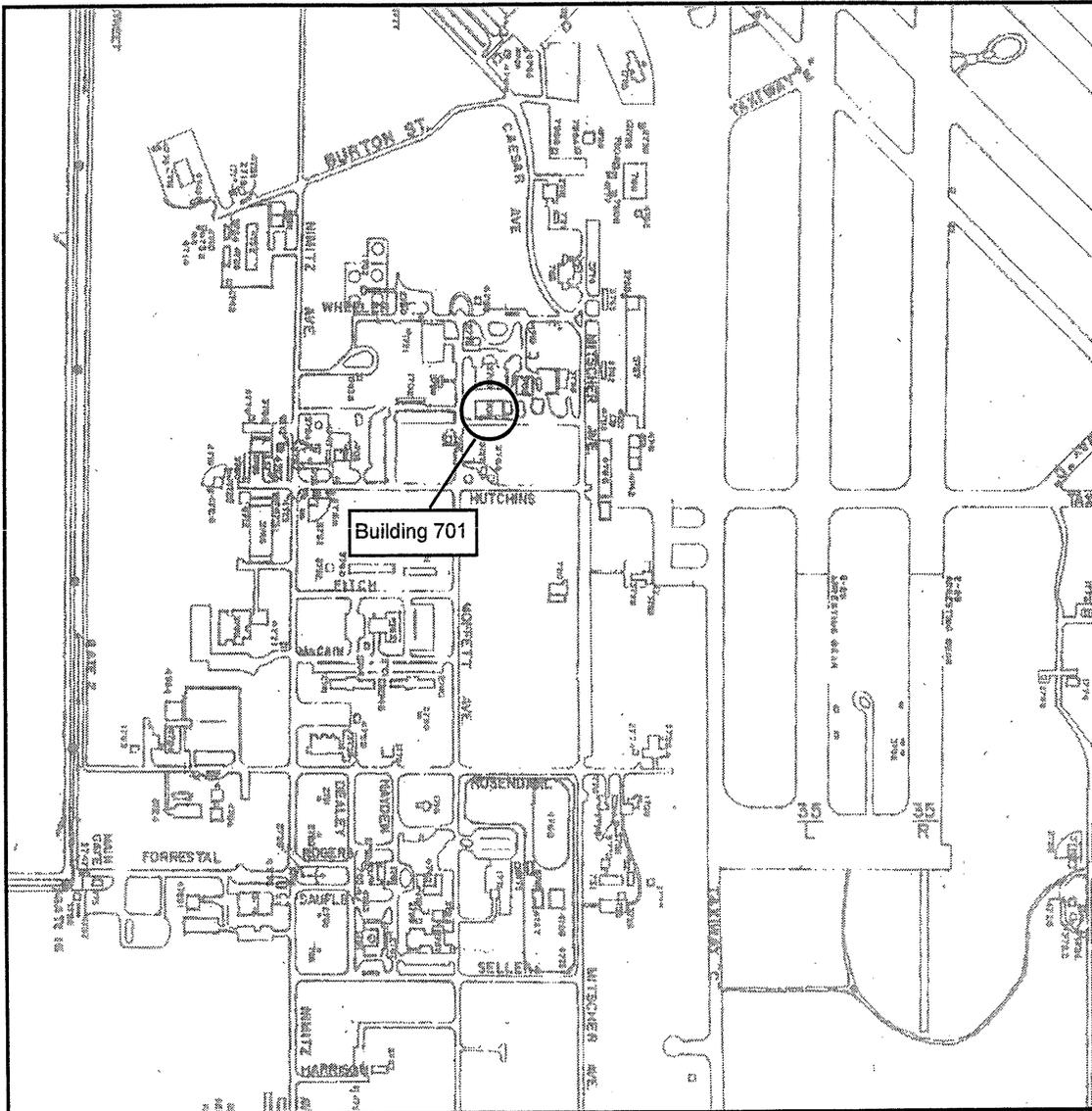


NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 13)



Source: Texas Department of Transportation, 1968, updated 1986

NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, BUILDING 701
(NAVAL AIR STATION KINGSVILLE, GENERAL STOREHOUSE)
HABS NO. TX-3468-B
(Page 15)



Detail: General Development Map, NAS Kingsville