

WAKE ISLAND AIRFIELD, TERMINAL BUILDING
(Building 1502)
West Side of Wake Avenue
Wake Island
Us Minor Islands

HABS UM-2-A
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
PACIFIC WEST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700
Oakland, CA 94607

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Location: The Wake Island Airfield Terminal Building is on the west side of Wake Avenue, east and adjacent to the aircraft parking and fueling apron, and 1,500' north of the east end of the runway on Wake Island of Wake Atoll. It is approximately 1 mile north of Peacock Point. The pedestrian/ street entrance to the terminal is on the east side of the building facing Wake Avenue. The aircraft passenger entrance faces west to the aircraft parking apron and lagoon.

Present Owner/ Occupant: Wake Island is an unorganized, unincorporated territory (possession) of the United States, part of the United States Minor Outlying Islands, administered by the Office of Insular Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior. The airfield terminal is occupied by 15th Air Wing (AW) of the U.S. Air Force (USAF) and base operations support (BOS) services contractor management staff.

Present Use: Base operations and air traffic control for USAF, other tenants, and BOS contractor.

Significance: The Wake Island airfield played an important and central role in transpacific commercial airline and developments after World War II (WWII). The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA)/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) operations of airport facilities at Midway, Wake, and Guam became part of the federal airways; links in the air routes over the Pacific; and part of Pan American World Airways' (Pan Am) Pacific airline operations. Wake Island airfield served as a key refueling station for transpacific flights until the early 1970s when technological advances in aircraft design resulted in higher-efficiency jet aircraft with longer-range capabilities and lessened the need for refueling stops. Building 1502 is associated with the events on Wake Island and in the Pacific that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of commercial transpacific flight from 1962 to ca. 1972, terminating with the last Pan Am commercial flight through Wake Island airfield.

The airfield also played a central role in the development of air fueling stations in the Pacific for military purposes, including military airlifts. This building illustrates an aspect of national history within the historic context, the development of the Pacific arena as part of the global commercial developments and the U.S. military's Cold War geopolitics to 1975. Building 1502 is associated with Cold War events on Wake Island and in the Pacific that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of U.S. military efforts in Korea, Vietnam, and the Pacific arena from 1962 to ca. 1975, terminating with its role as the U.S. processing center for Vietnam refugees at the end of the U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in 1975.

Airfield terminals are associated directly with the evolution of aviation and are generally the visually dominant buildings of an airport complex. Terminals are a

distinct property type that evolved over time in response to the expansion of air travel. Building 1502 is a representative example of a modern-style, small terminal design interpreted for a tropical environment for the transpacific refueling stops in the early 1960s.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Construction: 1962

The 1962 completion date is based on the preponderance of varied information. The FAA construction drawings are dated March through May of 1961, with As Built dates of March 1963. The date of 1962 is also included in the *Chronology of Significant Wake Island Dates and Events*, an unpublished manuscript by Mr. Lou Hitchcock, who has lived on the island for over thirty years (Hitchcock, *Chronology*). A 1962 date of completion is noted on the base real property accountability record (FAA, *Airport Facilities Record* [1963]).

2. Architect: Not known, built for the FAA

3. Original and Subsequent Owners, Occupants, Uses:

President John F. Kennedy, through Executive Order 11048, assigned the civil administration of Wake Atoll to the Secretary of the Interior, including all executive, legislative, and judicial authority on September 4, 1962. At this time, the FAA had administrative responsibility of Wake Atoll, Pan American Airlines operated and administered the majority of the aviation facilities, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) had responsibility for search and rescue, and other commercial airlines, including Trans-Ocean Airlines, British Overseas Airline Corporation, and Philippine Airlines, had established operations. Standard Oil of California (SOCAL) had also established operations.

In the early 1970s, Pan Am filed with the FAA (CAA changed to FAA in 1951) to eliminate weekly stops at Wake Island. The last scheduled Pan Am passenger flight landed at Wake Island in June 1972. In July 1972, the FAA turned over administration of the island to the USAF Military Airlift Command (MAC); legal ownership stayed with the Department of the Interior.

On 27 December 1972, the Chief of Staff of the USAF directed MAC to phase out en route support activity at Wake Island effective 30 June 1973. On 1 July 1973, Pacific Air Force resumed control of Wake Atoll to provide support for the U.S. Army's HAVE MILL project (Athena missile launch program). On 1 July 1973, Detachment 4, 15 Air Base Wing (ABW) assumed responsibility for Wake Island.

By March 1975, there were USAF personnel; Kentron, Hawaii Ltd. (mostly Filipinos) contractors; and four tenants, including a small number of USCG, National Weather Service, Royal Air Force, and Pan Am personnel. In 1975, Wake Island supported operations BABYLIFT and NEWLIFE.

From 26 April to 25 May 1975, a total of 64 flights with 12,500 Vietnamese evacuees were processed through Wake Island in support of OPERATION NEWLIFE.

From 1975 and into the 1980s, operations resumed at Wake to provide standby for emergency recovery. However, in practice the atoll supported Navy and Marine TRANSPAC exercises, serviced civil aircraft with fuel, and served as a patient transfer point for injured seamen. The base also supported the NWS, AT&T, NOAA, Navy's Military Sealift Command, and a detachment of U.S. Marine Corps personnel. There were seven Air Force personnel and 200 Kentron Hawaii Ltd. contractors (BOS) on Wake Island.

In 1986, Intelsom Support Services, Inc., won a five-year BOS contract which included support for twenty-five U.S. supervisors and 152 Thailand workers.

In 1987, US Army Strategic Defense Command (USASDC) selected Wake Island as a missile launch site to support Project Starbird of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program.

During the early 1990s, Wake Island supported military operations, including Desert Shield, FIERY VIGIL, and Desert Storm, as a fueling station.

In 1993, the USAF terminated its operation of Wake Atoll, but retained real property accountability. On 1 October 1994, the U.S. Army assumed administrative command of Wake Island. Wake Island became part of the U.S. Army's Kwajalein Atoll (USAKA) command, home to the Reagan Test Site. Wake Island was administered by Detachment 1 of the 15th Logistics Group, 15 ABW Group of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (USASMDC) – Huntsville. The U.S. Army operated the island under a caretaker permit from the USAF and it became known as the Wake Island Launch Center.

1 October 2002, the USAF resumed direct responsibility for atoll operations. Real estate accountability was transferred from the 15 ABW to the 13 ABW and then to Detachment 1 of the 15th Logistics Group, 15 AW where it resides as of January 2005. Tenants include the U.S. Geological Survey, the Missile Defense Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, USAF Technical Applications Command, and the National Weather Service.

4. Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:

Not known

5. Original Plans and Construction:

The following description is from a review of the original construction drawings dated 1962 and from field observations in 2007. The terminal is a low, horizontally massed concrete building with horizontal elements. The building is 233'-0" long and divided into two sections. The southern third of the building is two stories with flat roof and measures 85'-2" x 93'-8" and is 23'-0" tall. The northern two-thirds of the building comprise the terminal and passenger service areas. This area measures 126'-0" x 78'-6". The western half of this space is one and one-half stories (17'-0" tall) and the eastern half is one story (11'-2" tall). Both sections have a flat roof. A concrete air conditioner condenser enclosure measuring approximately 14'-0" wide x 38'-0" long x 14'-0" tall is atop the southeast portion of the two-story section of the building.

The rectangular, horizontally-massed building comprises two primary shapes: a rectilinear low form with a more cube shaped form. A recessed entrance on the east side visually denotes the entrance from the street, Wake Avenue. A covered lanai denotes the entrance from the aircraft apron. The primary horizontal details are the windows and sun shades. The windows are set in

banded series and are of gray solar glass with three horizontal lights. The bottom light is fixed and the upper lights are top-hung. The first and second floor openings of the administrative section of the building are surmounted by continuous flat concrete sunshades (eyebrows), cantilevered just above the windows at the level of the window header. These sunshades continue past the windows and wrap the entire walls of the administrative section of the building, and surmount the windows on the one story section of the terminal (east and north sides).

The west façade faces the taxiway/parking apron. The northern section is the terminal with a flat, concrete-covered lanai supported by fourteen concrete pillars of alternating width. This lanai is the terminal entrance from the airfield and apron. On the wall above the flat lanai roof extension, "Wake Island Airfield" is spelled in all capital block letters along with the words, "Where America's Day Really Begins," painted in cursive, joined flowing letters simulating handwriting. The passenger lobby is open to the aircraft apron. The fenestration on the first and second stories of the west façade of the two-story administrative section is four horizontal bands that consist of six windows. A Jersey barrier blast wall had been placed along the aircraft apron on the west side of the terminal, but has since been removed.

The east façade has a recessed central pedestrian entrance with adjoining sets of glass, double-leaf doors with metal sashes. This entrance is covered with a flat concrete roof. To the south of this entrance and within the recess is a concrete enclosure which originally housed the bank. Four horizontal bands consisting of six single-light, top hung windows are located immediately below the roofline in this section to the north of the entrance. These windows are surmounted by a flat concrete sunshade. Two glass, single-leaf pedestrian doors with metal sashes and one glass, double-leaf pedestrian door with a metal sash are on the first story of the administrative section to the south. Additionally, one band of six windows are on the first story at the north edge of the two-story section, and one band of windows are between the single and double doors. Three bands of six windows and one band of two windows are located on the second story of this section of the east façade.

The south façade has three bands of six windows on the second story, and an air intake vent measuring 28" high x 60" long to the east of the windows. On the ground floor (describing from west to east), there are one band of six windows, a glass single-leaf door with a metal sash, a band of four windows, and two bands of six windows.

The north façade has two pedestrian doors with metal sashes. One door, a metal veneer slab door, accesses the former coffee shop to the east and the center glass door with metal sash accesses the passenger lobby. A small wall air-conditioning unit has been installed in the small office on the northwest corner. The lobby door is concealed behind a windbreak wall. There are two bands of windows: the first has two windows, which have since been covered with plywood, and the second band has four windows. The north façade of the administration portion of the building has four bands of six windows on the second story and a single-leaf glass door on the east side ground floor.

The floor plan of the building is divided into three primary functions: administrative offices, passenger lobby, and passenger services. The administrative offices are in the southern third of the building which is two stories. The passenger lobby is a large open space with a one and one-half story high ceiling that occupies the west half of the northern two-thirds of the building. Passenger services occupies the east half of the northern two-thirds of the building within a one-story space.

The passenger services area contains from north to south, a coffee shop with a storage room and kitchen area; a nursery, USAF office and dependents lounge; women's and men's toilets with a recessed concessions sitting area; the street entrance, and the bank. The interior walls within the service area are gypsum board.

The passenger lobby is open with structural concrete pillars centered through the length of the room. In the northeast corner of the space is the passenger service and baggage counter. A small office for staff is located to the north behind the passenger service counter. A suspended acoustic ceiling is 14'-0" above the asbestos tile floor. The interior walls are exposed concrete and gypsum board.

The administrative area is office and equipment spaces. On the first floor, there is a hallway from the passenger lobby to the south exit and a hallway that "T"s into the primary hall, creating 22'-0"-wide offices along the west and south. The post office occupies the northeast corner of the administrative section. It is surrounded on two sides by interior rooms, including compressor room, fan coil room, Weather Bureau Office, Weather Bureau maintenance room, USAF office, men's toilet, phone vault, stairs, chaplain's office, and Stars and Stripes office. The exterior rooms along the west wall were for the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), including offices, planning room, and equipment storage. An office for MIDPAC Air Force and a large room for the Weather Bureau were situated along the south wall.

The second floor contained offices for Pan Am operations; MAC; FAA operations offices including a reception room, a steno office, and a manager and assistant manager's office; a conference room; radio station; air-conditioning equipment office; teletype room; and men's and women's toilets.

6. Alterations and Additions:

Much of the building remains the same as shown on the original drawings. Many of the windows are original; however, some windows have been boarded over or now house air-conditioning units. Many of the doors, interior fixtures, flooring, and signage appear to be original.

The following description of alterations is from a review of the original construction drawings dated 1961 and from field observations and photographs taken in 2007. A concrete condenser enclosure constructed atop the southeast portion of the two-story section of the building has been removed. The condenser enclosure appears in photographs taken in 1988.

On the west façade, changes are minor and consist of the changes to windows. A continuous band of windows and pedestrian doors were installed between the first series of structural columns and flush with the administrative west wall. One set of double-leaf pedestrian doors was installed on the north end of the lobby near the service counter, and two sets of double-leaf doors were added near the south end of the lobby. The gutter and downspouts on the lanai roof have been removed. During a remodel in 1971, on the ground floor of the two-story portion of the building, a series of windows were covered with concrete panels. Today, from north to south on the first floor, the first band of six windows is still intact, the next band has five windows with the southernmost window covered; the next band of six is covered; and the northern three windows in the last band are covered. A few of the windows in the bands have been removed and replaced with plywood and individual air conditioning units. On the second floor, in the first band of windows to the north, one window has been replaced with plywood and an air conditioning unit. The second band has had the center four windows replaced with two single-

pane lights. The next band of windows has the south three windows removed and replaced with a smaller three vertical light window filled with concrete board.

On the east façade, changes are minor and consist of the installation of air conditioning units into window openings, plywood over a few windows, and the replacement of two doors. Within the recessed entrance, an air-conditioning enclosure has been added to the east side of the bank enclosure. All of the windows on the first floor of the two-story portion of the building have been covered with plywood. Three individual windows on the second floor now contain air-conditioning units. The first and third bands of windows (from the south) of the north section of the building have been covered with plywood, and two of the windows in the northernmost band of windows contain air-conditioning units. The glass doors in the administration section have been replaced with metal veneer slab doors.

On the south façade, on the first and second floor, individual windows have been removed from each band to accommodate individual window air-conditioning units. The center band of six windows on the ground floor has been covered with concrete panels so only the two center windows are remaining.

On the north façade, the office door has been enclosed and a small wall air-conditioning unit installed. The lobby door has been concealed behind a windbreak wall. The band of two single-hung windows has been covered with plywood. In the north façade of the administration portion of the building, individual windows in the first two bands from the east have been removed for air-conditioning units. The glass doors in the administration section and the coffee shop have been replaced with metal veneer slab doors. The administration section door and the passenger entrance door have been enclosed with a windbreak structure.

The terminal has been a multiuse building from its inception. Originally, it housed the bank, a concession area, lobby/waiting area, operational offices, and radio room. The overall floor plan is relatively intact, although uses have changed and a few interior walls have been added or removed for various changes in command and mission. For example, on the ground floor, the coffee shop in the northeast corner is now a gift shop; the bank is now a museum; the weather bureau's office is now two offices; and the two rooms that formed the chaplain's office and Stars and Stripes office, are now one office. On the second floor, a few additional interior offices have been added or enlarged.

Specific alterations include:

In August of 1965, a wall and door were added to create an additional office on the ground floor in MATS area when MATS was replaced by the Military Airlift Command (MAC). In February of 1966, additional interior walls were erected on the second floor of the administrative area to create new offices. In May of 1967, prior to Typhoon Sarah, the west wall of the lobby was erected enclosing the passenger lobby. The windbreak wall around the lobby door on the north façade was also erected, as was the air-conditioning equipment enclosure in the street entrance recession. The Pan Am offices on the second floor of the administrative section were reconfigured, and walls and counters were added.

In March of 1971, a few offices on the second floor of the administrative wing were remodeled again. The passenger service counter was added in the northwest corner of the passenger lobby, and a wall erected parallel to the office along the north wall of the terminal lobby, creating an outdoor baggage storage area. Walls were added in the passenger service area creating a USAF

office and dependent lobby, and a wall was added to room 112, creating the chaplain's office and Stars and Stripes office.

Today, the coffee shop is a gift store and the bank is a museum. It is not known when these changes in use occurred. A concrete Jersey barrier blast wall was also removed from the aircraft apron along the west side of the terminal. It is not known when the wall was removed.

B. Historical Context:

1. Summary Statement:

The airfield terminal (building 1502) has been in continuous use since its completion in 1962. It is historically significant at the local and regional levels for its association with the history of post-WWII transpacific commercial and military air travel, and with specific events of the Cold War. General background information and two historical themes, including the associations of the Wake Island airfield terminal (building 1502) with the history of transpacific military and commercial air travel (1950 until 1972) and Operation NEWLIFE (1975), are further developed below.

General background on Wake Island Airfield immediately after World War II

The end of WWII in the Pacific saw a substantial readjustment of the U.S. military and strategic priorities. The war also marked the beginning of a new epoch in American history, one in which the nation's newly assumed international responsibilities seriously altered many traditional relationships (Wilson, *Turbulence Aloft*). Japan was defeated and was no longer the primary enemy in the Pacific. On 2 September 1945, Japan formally surrendered, signing the Japanese Instrument of Surrender. The occupation of Japan by Allied Forces lasted until 28 April 1952.

The beginning of the Cold War saw new strategic priorities and an increasing U.S. presence in Southeast Asia. The communists under MaoTse-tung overthrew the Nationalist government in China. In this atmosphere of tension, French Indochina and the rest of Southeast Asia appeared to be falling under the spell of local communist nationalists like Ho Chi Minh. The U.S. feared a "domino effect," suspecting that if one country in Southeast Asia fell to communism, the others would surely follow.

This changing global picture also had its effects on the role of Wake Island (Spennemann, "To Hell and Back"). Before the end of the war, strategic plans for the post-war period were drawn up and a base on Wake Island was again contemplated. After the recapture, the U.S. Navy once again had jurisdiction over the atoll. The continued occupation of Wake Island was important to prevent its use by other countries (Spennemann, "To Hell and Back").

. . . a number of very small islands with no permanent inhabitants (Wake, Midway) also serve America's military needs. Technological developments, economic crises and political reappraisals lead to frequent changes in appreciations of strategic requirements, but it can be assumed that the United States will at least continue to attach importance to denying politically hostile foreign powers access to such facilities. The significance of this factor is clear when one considers the future of American Pacific dependencies (Smith, *Microstates and Micronesia*).

During the years immediately following WWII, international air travel began to increase in both the military and commercial sectors. In the late 1940s, transpacific flights gained in frequency and benefited from cutting edge technology. However, technology was not advanced enough to eliminate the need for refueling on these long-distance flights. Wake Island occupied a prime geographic position in the Pacific Ocean, resting midway between Saigon and the United States, and midway between Guam and Honolulu. It was a natural choice for the blossoming transpacific air and sea shipping industries and a convenient stopping point for the many military and contract personnel involved in the United States' on-going occupation of Japan and involvement in Southeast Asia. Wake Island rapidly evolved to take its place as an essential mid-oceanic servicing and refueling hub (Swatek, "Study of the Continuation").

Following WWII, Pan Am sought to re-establish its exclusively international prewar network (Cusack, "Virtual Pan Am Museum"). Pan Am returned to Wake Island for the first time in November 1945 with an advance team of Pan Am engineers who surveyed the island assessing requirements to re-establish a regular commercial airline route through Wake Island. This was the catalyst for the subsequent economic development and growth on the island. Pan Am resumed regular passenger service through Wake Island in July of 1946.

By mid 1947, with significantly increasing transpacific travel, the U.S. Navy delegated administrative responsibility of Wake Atoll to the CAA. The CAA took over the maintenance and operations of airport facilities at Midway, Wake, and Guam, which became part of the federal airways and links in the air routes over the Pacific (Briddon et al., *FAA Historical Fact Book*).

Other commercial airlines joined Pan Am in establishing operations at Wake Island, including Trans-Ocean Airlines, British Overseas Airline Corporation, and Philippine Airlines (FAA, *Master Record* [1971], 7). By 1947, Transocean Airlines had made arrangements with the U.S. government to operate its own facilities on the island with additional personnel. Philippine Airlines began operating flights.

Peak Wake Island Post-World War II Years: 1950 to 1972

In late June 1950, the United States entered into the war against North Korea. Wake Island took on new importance because of its mid-Pacific location. It became a critical refueling stop for aircraft going into the Korean theater. The largest single user of Wake Island was MATS, which sent as many flights through Wake Island as all the private operations combined. When the USAF was created as a separate service in 1947, MATS was established to support the new Department of Defense, with responsibility for its support falling to the Department of the Air Force. MATS continued to function as a military airline until it was replaced by MAC in 1965.

On July 6, the airlift of men, supplies, and goods to the Korean front began. In June 1950, eight airplanes landed each week on Wake Island. By July, an average of thirty airlift aircraft arrived and departed daily. By September, the number had grown to 120 aircraft per day. During the airlift, Pan Am carried 114,271 passengers and 23,000 pounds of cargo. For more than two years, Wake Island was a keystone to the success of air operation to Korea (Teets, "Pegasus").

In 1951, the CAA contracted for a survey of housing, restaurant, and related facilities on Wake Island. The report of the survey describes Quonset huts serving as the primary building type. The report provides a vivid picture of Wake Island living conditions:

It was the Civil Aeronautics Administration which recognized that commercial aviation would be well served by adding Wake Island as a link in the airways that were circling the world. This island base also figured in bringing about the enactment of Public Law 647.

The physical characteristics of the present housing and feeding structures can best be summarized by describing them as inadequate, outmoded, economically impractical to maintain, and in need of immediate replacement. Their generally unsavory appearance and dilapidated condition is readily apparent to any observer to the extent that foreign travelers through Wake might well question the well publicized American claim of “know how” and efficiency. (World Resources, Inc., *Report of Survey*)

The CAA began making improvements to the facilities, the pace of which accelerated with the island’s population boom lasting through the early 1970s. The first Drifter’s Bar was built near the harbor area, additional power and pump stations were constructed, and the first Wake Atoll school was opened in 1951.

On 16 September 1952, Typhoon Olive passed over Wake Island, totally destroying 85 percent to 90 percent of the buildings on the island. Reconstruction of island facilities cost approximately \$10 million. The CAA built or remodeled residences during 1952 and 1953; maintenance shops and warehouses, dining hall, dormitories, infrastructure, and recreational facilities continued to be built throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

In the years following Typhoon Olive in 1952 until 1971, the island’s population grew rapidly and the most significant building occurred. The population grew from 349 in 1950 to 1,097 in 1960 to 1,650 in 1970 (U.S. Census Bureau, “Population of the United States,” table series A 9–22; FAA, *Study of Departmental Responsibilities*). This was in direct response to the dizzying number of aircraft passing through Wake Island—as many as 50 planes a day—going to and from Guam, Korea, Vietnam, and other Pacific Rim locations. During the year 1959, there were 1,732 commercial aviation, 2,284 general aviation, and 6,518 military aviation flights (a total of 10,534) through Wake Island. In 1959, there was a total of twenty-seven weekly passenger-carrying commercial airline flights (Spennemann, “To Hell and Back”). The FAA controlled airspace within a 190-mile radius of Wake Island for overflying aircraft. Wake Island underlay a busy oceanic route and the tower handled approximately 5,000 overflights a year (FAA, *Study of Departmental Responsibilities*).

With the population boom came the development of a variety of facilities and amenities. These included housing, a school, a greenhouse, a bowling alley, a golf course, a chapel, a bar, a softball field, a post office, and a gift shop on the island. In 1957, the FAA (the CAA changed to FAA in June 1951) constructed a control tower (building 1601). In 1959, the FAA began another extension of the runway from 7,000’ to 9,800’ (phased and completed in 1964) to accommodate new jet traffic. In 1960, the new MATS billeting was constructed. A new passenger terminal (building 1502) was constructed in a new location in 1962 replacing a Quonset hut built by the Navy. A nondenominational chapel (B106) was constructed near the new airport terminal. The chapel was prefabricated in the Orient and shipped to Wake Island (Hitchcock, *Chronology*). Also during this time, the USCG had a small but permanent long-range navigation (LORAN) radar facility on the atoll (World Resources, Inc., *Report of Survey*). A USCG station was established on Peale Island in 1971.

Residents recall life on Wake Island fondly. Two generations of the Raleigh family lived at Wake Island. As a child, Maureen Raleigh lived on the atoll from 1959 through 1960 (age 9 and 10) while her father, a Pan Am employee, was stationed there. Ms. Raleigh's grandmother had been to Wake earlier (in 1949), while her husband worked on the runway. The younger Ms. Raleigh describes life on the atoll in 1959–1960 as a small community: “There were about 2,000 FAA or Pan Am employees and dependents. The work force was predominately Philippino. There was an open-air theater, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, a little church, and a lot of cocktail parties.” According to Ms. Raleigh, Pan Am employees were motivated to move to Wake because there were no taxes and it was a good stepping stone for advancement within the organization. However, the maximum stay allowed was two years. Pan Am felt that the island was too isolated for a longer stay. Also, the school only went to a certain grade, so parents with children of a certain age needed to return to the states (Maureen Raleigh, interview, June 2007).

In 1962, the basic island responsibility for Wake's civil administration was transferred by President John F. Kennedy from the U.S. Navy to the Department of the Interior (Executive Order 11048 [4 September 1962]). Concurrently, the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of the FAA entered into an agreement that provided for all executive, legislative, and judicial authorities to be exercised by persons designated by the Administrator, FAA. The Wake Island Code, issued in September as part of FAA regulations, provided the necessary regulations and procedures for administering the island (FAA, *Study of Departmental Responsibilities*). Therefore, it was necessary for the FAA to perform many secondary functions to support the primary functions of air traffic control and airport operations. These functions included the entire range of services needed to maintain a small municipality, such as civil government, roads, utilities, housing, supplying food and other necessities, medical services, police, and fire protection. These services were furnished to other tenants of Wake Island (FAA, *Study of Departmental Responsibilities*).

Airlift again became important during the Vietnam conflict. Airlift was one of the first aspects of U.S. military aid to the government of South Vietnam beginning in December 1961 and continuing throughout the 1960s. In May 1965, Pan Am's Wake Island station handled a total of eighty-three transits, including forty-two of its own aircraft. In July 1966, Pan Am handled a total of 443 transits, 105 of which were Pan Am flights, including troop charters and 338 transits by ten other airlines. This represented an increase of more than 500 percent from the year before. (Teets, “Pegasus”). During September 1966, 11,389 transient personnel passed through Wake Island. In October, there were 1,296 employees from nineteen different organizations on the island, and 535 dependents of the employees. The total island population was 1,831.

Typhoon Sarah, a major tropical storm with winds exceeding 140 miles per hour, hit Wake Island on 16 September 1967. The storm, accompanied by towering, wind-whipped waves, ripped off housetops, smashed windows and walls, and knocked out the island's electrical power, air traffic control center, and all navigation aids. In total, Typhoon Sarah caused \$5 million in damages on Wake Island (FAA, *Master Record* [1971]). Approximately 95 percent of island buildings were damaged and half of the FAA employee housing was destroyed. Due to damage to the family housing, sanitation system, and fresh water supply, 25 percent of Wake's population had to be evacuated (Briddon et al., *FAA Historical Fact Book*). A taxiway parallel to the runway was completed in 1968. It was not until 1970 that the last of the damaged houses were replaced and the last of \$294,439 in FAA personnel claims from the typhoon were paid (FAA, *Wake Island Activities*). In 1970, the new and existing Drifter's Bar (building 1109) and four holes of the golf course were also completed.

Wake Island quickly rebounded after Typhoon Sarah. In 1969, Wake Island was included in the United Service Organizations (USO) entertainment circuit. The first show was held on 16 July 1969. During the same year, Bob Hope, Jerry Colona, Peter Leeds, Anita Bryant, the Nicolas Brothers, Carrol Baker, Miss USA, and others visited Wake Island as part of USO tours (Hitchcock, *Chronology*). By 1970, the island population was 1,650, and various tenant organizations had taken up residence on the island to support operations there. The largest employer was the Facilities Management Corporation (FMC), a contractor for MAC. The second-largest employer of Wake Island residents was the FAA. Interestingly, wives and children of FAA employees outnumbered all of the FAA and other employees with the exception of the employees of FMC. In 1971, the population of Wake Island grew to 1,763 residents (FAA, *Master Record* [1971]).

Although the number of employees on Wake Island increased, the island was beginning to diminish in its role as a vital staging area of MAC aircraft and contract carriers on the Southeast Asia airlift. In 1970, the number of aircraft landing and departing from Wake Island decreased by 17.1 percent (4,989 aircraft) from the 1969 level. The decrease reflected the tapering off of air support operations in the Far East and the introduction of increasing numbers of large transport aircraft with greater airlift capabilities (Harper, *FAA Study*).

Civil aviation also decreased by 1970, and the number of passengers dropped to 1,180 for the entire year. In the early 1970s, higher-efficiency jet aircraft with longer-range capabilities lessened the need for Wake Island Airfield as a refueling stop. Pan Am filed with the FAA to eliminate weekly stops at Wake Island. The main reason was the replacement of their Boeing 707s with 747s, which could fly longer and faster than earlier aircraft. This change saved as much as \$500,000 a year. Another blow to the island economy came when the USAF declined to plan overflights with their C-5A, C-124, and C-133 aircraft. The only aircraft that would use the island was the USAF C-141 (FAA 1971[b]). This spelled the waning of Wake Island's aviation and social heyday.

Wake Island's future as a standby airport was predicted: "Today, with about 100 flights crisscrossing the Pacific each week, Wake is extremely important to Pacific travel. However, already Pan American, during the months of the jet stream winds, overflies Wake on its Japan-Hawai'i flights. Tomorrow, with jet airplanes, Wake will probably become a standby airport" (Teets, "Pegasus").

The steady decrease in air traffic control activities at Wake Island was apparent by 1971, and was expected to continue into the future. In 1971, the FAA conducted a study of the continuation of the department's responsibility for Wake Island. The study concluded that Wake Island was primarily a military base funded and operated by the FAA. Since a high in fiscal year 1967 (even with a typhoon), Wake Island had seen a steady decrease in takeoffs and landings. Fiscal year 1970 had seen 20 percent less airport control tower activities over the previous year. In fiscal year 1971, 90 percent of the operations had been in support of the military. The decline in use by civil and military agencies was a permanent trend. The other users did not contribute their fair share of the \$6.8 million annual operating costs according to the FAA study (Harper, "FAA Study").

In 1971, the population of Wake Atoll began to decline precipitously. The FAA decided it would no longer retain its administrative role, and only 50 of the 252 people employed by the FAA on Wake Island would be retained (Harper, "FAA Study"). The 1971 study conducted by the FAA determined that between \$20 and \$30 million was spent by the agency on Wake Island, and another \$4 to \$5 million of capital improvements would be needed to keep the island

functioning. The FAA also felt the USAF was not contributing a sufficient amount of funds to support the island (Harper, “FAA Study”).

June 1972 heralded the last scheduled Pan Am passenger flight. In July 1972, the FAA turned over administration of the island to MAC, although legal ownership stayed with the Department of the Interior. The demand for Wake Island services was further reduced as the military minimized its operations during the Vietnam Conflict (Preston, *Troubled Passage*). July 1972 brought the last scheduled Pan Am cargo flight through Wake Island. This marked the end of the heyday of Wake Island’s commercial history.

Wake Island served a vital role for military and commercial aircraft during the 1950s and 1960s when it provided needed refueling for military airlift and civilian passenger service for the Korean War, Vietnam Conflict, and air travel elsewhere in the Pacific Rim. Wake Island’s aviation facilities also guarded the approach to Hawai‘i. It is estimated that more than 3 million passengers have set foot on Wake Atoll (Spennemann, “To Hell and Back”; Teets, “Pegasus”). The need for Wake Island services gradually diminished as aviation technology advanced. By the early 1970s, Wake was no longer considered vital for the defense of the United States, but sufficiently important that its use was denied to other nations that were possibly hostile to the United States (Spennemann, “To Hell and Back”).

The 1971 FAA analysis that concluded the future of Wake Island turned on its central Pacific location proved to be perceptive. Again, it was primarily the military who found later Cold War-related uses for the island—first as a remote missile test launch site, then as a Southeast Asia refugee processing center and emergency landing field. This transition from a military and commercial aircraft refueling and maintenance stop was initiated at the end of December 1972 at the direction of the USAF, and reflected the importance of the Pacific arena to Cold War geopolitics.

On 27 December 1972, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) directed MAC to phase out en route support activity at Wake Island effective 30 June 1973. On 1 July 1973, Pacific Air Forces resumed control of Wake Atoll to provide support for the U.S. Army’s HAVE MILL project on a reimbursable basis. Project HAVE MILL was an Air Force Systems Command (AFSC) Space and Missile Systems Organization (SAMSO) Athena missile launch program in support of the Army’s Advanced Ballistic Missile Defense Agency (ABMDA) detection and discrimination programs (Niles, *History 15th Air Base Wing*).

By the beginning of 1974, Wake Island was manned by seven officers, seventeen airmen, and fifty-eight civilians, and tasked to support the HAVE MILL project, maintain a VORTAC navigation aid, and provide a safe haven to ships and aircraft in time of trouble (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [1974]). By March 1975, there were five USAF personnel, 200 base operating support contractors from Kentron Hawaii Ltd, Hawai‘i (mostly Filipinos), and four tenants, including a small number of USCG, National Weather Service, Royal Air Force, and Pan Am personnel. South California Oil had decided to withdraw from its contract because the company was losing money, Pan Am had let its contract lapse, and the Athena launches were completed. There appeared to be no projects for Wake that would support its operating costs of \$2 million (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [January–March 1975]).

1975: South Vietnamese Refuge Operation NEWLIFE

Near the end of the Vietnam Conflict, the North Vietnamese army launched a general offensive in late January 1975, two years after the cease fire had been established by the Paris Peace

Accord. During the first week of April, North Vietnamese communist forces attacking from the south pushed into Long An Province, south of Saigon, thereby threatening to cut Highway 4, Saigon's main connection to the Mekong Delta. This would have precluded reinforcements from being moved north to assist in the coming battle for Saigon (Globalsecurity.org, "Operation New Life"). The South Vietnamese military soon collapsed as a cogent fighting force and the North Vietnamese continued the attack all the way to Saigon. South Vietnam surrendered unconditionally on 30 April 1975 (Globalsecurity.org, "Operation New Life"). The war's end caused hundreds of thousands of citizens to flee the country, fearing for their lives (PBS, "Precious Cargo").

On 3 April 1975, in response to appeals from South Vietnam's ambassador to the United Nations and various humanitarian agencies, President Gerald Ford announced that money from a \$2 million special foreign aid children's fund would be used to fly 2,000 South Vietnamese orphans to new homes in the United States. He directed American officials in Saigon to act immediately to cut red tape and remove obstacles preventing the children's departure, stating that aircraft especially equipped to accommodate the orphans would begin evacuation flights within 36 to 48 hours (Globalsecurity.org, "Operation New Life").

The operations evolved in two phases—Operations BABYLIFT and NEWLIFE. Operation BABYLIFT focused on the evacuation of orphans. During Operation NEWLIFE, the focus shifted to the politically sensitive refugees. From 4 April to 3 September 1975, U.S. forces supported the movement of almost 100,000 orphans, refugees, and evacuees from Southeast Asia to the United States.

On 23 April, newspapers carried a story that the U.S. Congress had decided to admit 130,000 refugees to the United States. On this same day, Colonel Richard L. Thompson (Hickam AFB) announced a plan to use Wake Island as a staging area for refugees and developed a plan to open closed shelters that had been boarded up as a typhoon precaution when the base was put on standby. The 15 ABW would greet 92,126 refugees at different locations before the use of Wake Island as a staging area was over (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975])

Preparations on Wake Island Airport began in early April. A thirty-five-member Prime Beef Team arrived to ready the island for a maximum of 8,000 refugees. The team opened the Pan Am housing area by removing the typhoon boarding, restoring rooms, and moving furniture out to be replaced with cots. Brackish water was hooked up for showers and toilets. Most housing could not have potable water faucets installed, so potable water points were set up and refugees had to obtain their water with buckets. The team constructed 237 family units, four dining halls, two refugee supply points, one orderly room, one nurses' quarters, two storage buildings, two schools, four dormitories to house task force and additional contractor personnel, and two senior non-commissioned officers' dormitories usable for the mission. It was estimated that Wake Island could handle 9,500 persons, if necessary, estimating 30 to 35 square feet per person. Area 300 was in poor shape with no water, although Areas 100 and 200 had adequate utilities. The school was estimated to handle 300 to 500 persons. Heel Point housing was open. Areas A, B, and C could handle 7,743 billeting (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975]).

Vehicles, equipment, supplies, and personnel were shipped to Wake Island. Over a three-day period, 200 line items were purchased and shipped, weighing in excess of 822,000 pounds and totaling more than 71,000 cubic feet (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975]). Water was a critical factor. Wake Island had a 5.8-million-gallon storage capacity and a catch basin. There were 2.5 million gallons in storage, and two good rains during this time provided approximately 4.5 million gallons. Daily consumption was estimated at 70,000 to 80,000

gallons per day. To conserve, water rationing was established (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975]).

The first plane carrying 180 refugees arrived, which nearly doubled the population of the island instantly. The refugees were processed on Wake and held until final transportation to the United States was arranged. Processing included punching an IBM card for each individual with family name, first and second name, date of birth, current location, and sex; assigning billets and meal tickets; and using locator services to reunite families. Planes began to arrive every two hours. It took one hour and forty-five minutes to process 180 people, so there was only fifteen minutes to rest between flights (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975]).

A total of 64 flights arrived at Wake resulting in 12,650 evacuees being processed from 26 April to 25 May. Operations at Wake Island went from one plane a week to one plane per hour, and up to 1,500 people per day being processed. When it was over, a total of 2,307,035 pounds of supplies had been shipped, including more than 37,700 pounds of clothing (Jordan, *History 15th Air Base Wing* [April–July 1975]).

After Operation NEWLIFE and into the 1980s, operations resumed at Wake Island to provide standby for emergency recovery. However, in practice the atoll supported Navy and Marine exercises, serviced civil aircraft with fuel, and served as a patient transfer point for injured seamen. The base also supported the National Weather Service, AT&T, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command, a detachment of U.S. Marine Corps personnel, and a missile launch site for the U.S. Army.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character:

The terminal building, constructed in 1962, comprises a terminal section and an administrative section. The administrative section is two stories and comprises the southern third of the building. At one time this section had a condenser enclosure on top, which has since been removed. The terminal section is one story on the east side, one and one half stories on the west side, and comprises the northern two-thirds of the building. The one and one half story section of the building is the passenger lobby, while the one-story section is the concessions and restrooms.

The airfield terminal (building 1502) is minimalist Modern style architecture, reminiscent of the International style from the 1920s with ribbon-like bands of windows in stark concrete walls that create low horizontal rectilinear forms. The horizontal massing is further emphasized by the flat roof and projecting sunshades. Flat sunshades project out 3'-6" over the windows on the west, south, and east façades of the administrative section of the building, and on the north and east façades of the terminal portion of the building to form continuous horizontal bands. The terminal has a flat-roofed lanai supported by a colonnade projecting 18'-6" on the west side. These shading features stylistically adapt this building to the Pacific Island region. On the wall above the lanai roof on the west side the words "Wake Island Airfield" are attached in all capital block letters along with the words, "Where America's Day Really Begins," painted in cursive.

2. Condition of Fabric:

The current condition of the airfield terminal (building 1502) is fair. The terminal sustained some damage during the 2006 typhoon (Ioke). The roof leaked, which severely damaged a portion of the interior drop-ceiling and, in the passenger waiting area and restrooms, loosened and damaged some floor tiles. Some windows, doors, and sections of the roof also were damaged. The corners and pieces of the overhanging concrete sunshades and other sections of concrete have spalled; however, this damage was evident prior to Typhoon Ioke as noted from photographs in a building inspection report from 2004.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions:

The terminal is generally rectilinear in plan measuring 233'-0" north-south. The south portion of the U is the two-story administrative wing measuring 85'-2" east-west x 93'-8" north-south. The north one-story portion of the building contains the lobby to the west measuring 42'-0" east-west x 141'-8" north-south and an area originally housing the coffee shop, concessions, nursery, and restroom. This area abuts the lobby on the north end of the east side and measures 36'-6" east-west x 85'-2" north-south. A small office measuring 14'-0" x 14'-0" is located off the north side on the lobby on the west corner.

The coffee shop/restroom wing, the south end of the lobby, and the east side of the administrative wing surround a recessed opening on the east side for the street-side pedestrian entrance and lanai. The opening is 20'-6" wide north-south. The north interior wall of the

recessed entrance formed by the coffee shop/restroom wing measures 36'-6", the south wall is 42'-0". On the south wall at the west end of the recessed pedestrian entrance area is a small enclosed area originally for the bank and housing the air-conditioning equipment. This area measures 20'-0" x 23'-0".

The second floor is 85'-2" east-west x 85'-2" north-south and is located only over the administrative portion on the south end of the building.

2. Foundations:

The airfield terminal has concrete footings with poured concrete floor slab.

3. Walls:

The walls are starkly painted concrete penetrated by bands of windows. Flat concrete sunshades project 3'-6" out over the windows on the west, south, and east façades of the administrative section of the building, and on the north and east façades on the terminal portion of the building to form continuous horizontal bands.

4. Structural System:

The structural system consists of load-bearing exterior reinforced concrete walls and load-bearing interior 18" square reinforced concrete columns set on a 21' grid. The floor is on-grade concrete slab. The roof is reinforced concrete slab with steel reinforced concrete beams.

5. Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Bulkheads:

The terminal has a flat-roofed lanai supported by a colonnade projecting 18'-6" deep and 148'-0" long on the west side. The outermost (west) reinforced concrete columns alternate between 30" x 10" and 10" x 10" for every other column. The wider columns are on a 21' grid and the smaller columns are set in between each wide column except for the northern most end of the lanai where two 30" wide columns are 14' apart. The lanai roof extends 3'-6" to the west beyond the columns. The lanai roof wraps around the north façade for 15'-0" to cover the projecting office and entry.

The covered pedestrian entrance on the east side is 18'-0" deep x 20'-0" wide.

6. Chimneys:

None

7. Openings:

The west elevation is the main façade of the building that faces the taxiway/parking apron. A continuous band of windows with two entries is located in the wall under the lanai roof extension. The one-story section to the north has a continuous band of windows and entrances, broken every 21' by concrete support columns. From north to south, a single-leaf glass door with metal sash is flanked by a fixed single-light window to the north and paired fixed, single-light windows to the south; a single-leaf glass door with metal sash is flanked to the south by three single-light fixed windows; a double-leaf glass door with metal sash; three banks of two-light windows are separated at 21' by support columns; paired double-leaf glass doors with

metal frames are flanked by single fixed light windows to either side; and a final bay of five two-light windows. The two-light windows are a fixed upper light with a fake mullion and top-hung lower light. The windows resemble the original three-light windows in the other areas of the building. On the two-story administrative wing, four horizontal bands measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high and each band consisting of six three-light windows did span the first and second stories. The windows comprise three horizontal lights with a fixed bottom light and top hung upper lights. On the first floor, in the second band of windows from the north, one window has been removed and replaced with plywood and an air conditioning unit. The next and half of the southern-most bands have been removed and replaced with precast concrete panels. On the second floor, in the first band of windows to the north, one window has been replaced with plywood and an air conditioning unit. The second band has had the center four windows replaced with two single pane lights. The next band of windows has the south three windows removed and replaced with a smaller three vertical light window filled with concrete board.

The east façade has adjoining sets of glass, double-leaf doors with metal sashes at the south end of the terminal section near the center of the building. Additionally, four horizontal bands consisting of six single top hung ribbon windows are located immediately below the roofline in this section. These bands measure 18'-6" x 18" high. Two metal veneer slab, single-leaf pedestrian doors with metal sashes and one metal veneer slab, double-leaf pedestrian door with a metal sash are on the first story of the administrative section. Additionally, one band of six windows measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high. The windows comprise three horizontal lights with a fixed bottom light and top hung upper lights. One opening on the first story at the north edge of this section has been filled with plywood and measures 6'-0" wide x 4'-0" high. Three bands of six three-light (as described above) windows measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high and one band of two three-light windows measuring 6'-0" wide x 4'-0" high are on the second story of this section of the façade.

The south façade has three bands of six three-light windows measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high on the second story. On the first story, extending from the west, there is one band of six three-light windows measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high, a glass single-leaf door with a metal sash, a band of four three-light windows measuring 12'-6" wide x 4'-0" high, and a band of three three-light windows measuring 9'-6" wide x 4'-0" high.

The north façade has three pedestrian doors (one glass for the passenger entry, and two metal veneer metal slab doors) with metal sashes, a set of four three-light windows measuring 12'-6" wide x 4'-0" high, and one opening measuring 6'-0" wide x 4'-0" high that has been filled with plywood in the northern terminal section of the façade. At the southern end of the building, the façade has four bands of six three-light windows measuring 18'-6" wide x 4'-0" high on the second story.

8. Roof:

The concrete slab roof is currently covered with composite aggregate asphalt sheeting adhered with tar. The roof was originally covered with a built-up composite asphalt material. The flat concrete eaves project 2'-0" on the administrative portion of the building, and 1'-0" on the terminal portion of the building.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plan:

The plan of the interior of Building 1502 is defined by two distinctive types of spaces. The passenger terminal and services area is located to the north in the one story, and one-and-one half story wing. The administrative office area is located to the south in the two story section of the building.

The passenger terminal portion is divided into two sections. The western half, measuring 126'-0" north-south x 42'-0" is a large open waiting/reception area with a passenger service counter measuring 13'-0" x 36'-0" x 36'-6" in the northwest corner. The space is open with a high drop acoustic ceiling and a single row of supporting concrete columns spaced evenly in the center of the room running north to south. The eastern half of this building contains, from north to south:

1. A gift shop (formerly the coffee shop) measuring 35'-6" x 20'-6".
2. Private spaces for passengers (formerly the nursery measuring 20'-6" x 13'-6" with a USAF personnel office and USAF dependents waiting area to the west of the nursery measuring 16'-6" x 10'-0" and 21'-6" x 10'-0", respectively).
3. The women's restroom is 21'-0" x 20'-6" including a 5'-0" x 5'-6" powder room. The restroom is accessed through a hallway (5'-0" wide x 15'-0" long) from the passenger waiting area.
4. The men's restroom is 28'-0" long x 20'-6" including a small janitorial closet. This restroom is also accessed from a hallway (5'-0" x 8'-0") from the passenger waiting area.
5. The street (east) entrance is recessed into the building, flush with the interior passenger service walls, and contains two double-leaf glass doors. To the south of the entrance is a museum (formerly the bank) measuring 21'-0" x 17'-0".

The first floor of the administrative wing is separated from the passenger waiting area by walls and a double-leaf glass door with metal sash. The wing is divided by an interior full length hallway that runs north to south along the western quarter of the wing. It is intersected by an interior hallway running east to west along the southern quarter of the wing to an exit and with a 90 degree angle turn to a flight of stairs. The halls are flanked by varying-size offices that have been modified in size over the years, equipment storage rooms, and small restrooms. The largest room is the post office, which is accessed from the waiting area, in the northeast section of this wing. It measures 41'-0" x 42'-0" and contains a 9'-6" x 19'-0" customer area and a 8'-0" x 21'-0" post office box area. A stairwell to the second floor is located about one-third down the primary hall from the passenger waiting area.

The second floor is accessed from the stairs in the northwest central part of the floor or from the stairs in the southeast corner of the wing. The wing is divided by an interior hallway that runs north to south along the western quarter of the wing. It is intersected by a central interior hallway running east to west that turns 90 degrees to the south and 90 degrees to the east to intersect the southeast staircase. The halls are primarily flanked by varying sized offices that have been modified in size over the years. The floor also contains a conference room, equipment storage rooms, and small restrooms.

2. Decorative Features

The passenger lobby was originally constructed with the west side to the aircraft apron open. The floor of the lanai and the terminal lobby are the same and colored (rust) acid-washed concrete. Vinyl asbestos

tile is used predominately in the offices and ceramic tile in the restrooms and still exists. Interior walls are smooth concrete on the exterior walls or plaster board. The two flight central stair case has an aluminum tube-line rail from Blumcraft of Pittsburg (catalogue number M-61).

D. Site:

Wake Atoll is a small tropical coral atoll in the Pacific Ocean consisting of three islands: Peale, Wake, and Wilkes (collectively called Wake Atoll). Wake Atoll is situated 2,458 miles west of Hawai'i, 1,591 miles east of Guam, and 691 miles north of Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands. The V-shaped atoll consists of approximately 2.73 square miles of total area, with approximately 1,747 acres of dry land mass, 10.0 miles of Pacific Ocean coastline, and 6 miles of lagoon shoreline. The atoll is surrounded by a barrier reef, and is approximately 4.5 miles long end to end and 2.0 miles wide. The maximum elevation on Wake Atoll is 21' above mean sea level with an average elevation of 12' above mean sea level. The shallow lagoon averages 3' to 12' in depth.

Wake Atoll comprises three islands forming a wishbone-shaped land mass enclosing a shallow lagoon, which is open to the ocean on the northwestern extremity. Peale Island forms the northwestern portion of the wishbone and was the location of pre-WWII development. The Pan American Skyways Hotel, Clipper Pier, and other support facilities were located on the southwestern portion of Peale, while the Navy seaplane ramp, barracks, and support facilities were located in the south-central portion of the island. After the war, the USCG built a LORAN station in the central portion of Peale Island.

Today, Peale Island is inhabited by birds and rats and an occasional visitor from Wake Island. Vegetation has reclaimed much of the southern two-thirds of the island; Toki Point lost much of its vegetation during Typhoon Ioke. Artifacts that remain from the pre-WWII days are few. Reminders of the war and the Japanese occupation, remnants of Peale Avenue and Pan Am Road, foundations of the U.S. Navy barracks, the structural remains of the USCG LORAN facilities (abandoned in 1971), and the remains of a Thai temple comprise the current built environment on Peale.

Wilkes Island forms the southwestern portion of the wishbone. The southern quarter of Wilkes Island contains the aviation fuel storage facilities, which have been there since 1946, although periodically and recently upgraded. The northern end of the island is in the possession of three-quarters of a million sea birds and an infinite number of rats. The northern portion contains the ruins of a VORTAC that has not been in use during the 2000s. Wilkes Island also has a collection of war defense fortifications and two large coral rocks inscribed by those previously stranded (1935) or held captive (WWII) on the atoll. The causeway that once provided vehicular access between the upper and lower halves of Wilkes Island washed out in the typhoon, so vehicular access is no longer possible to the northern half of the island.

Wake Island, the largest of the three islands that comprise Wake Atoll, forms a "V." The northern extremity of the island turns inward toward the lagoon, while the outer edge of the crook forms Heel Point. The channel between Wilkes Island and Wake Island is currently obstructed by a solid-fill causeway. In the early 2000s, the bridge connecting Wake and Peale Islands burned and has not been rebuilt. Access currently is by boat or by swimming.

Wake Island is the main island and contains the majority of the operations and facilities associated with the military and airfield. The boat basin and marina and marina support facilities are on the southwestern portion of the V formation. On the southern leg of Wake Island is the 9,850' runway and taxiway. The ABMDA operations are on Peacock Point, the southeasternmost point of the V. This is a secured and off-limits area except for authorized personnel. The air traffic control tower is along the northern edge of the ABMDA area and southeastern perimeter of the runway.

The leg of Wake Island running from southeast to northwest contains the terminal and taxiways on the southern extremity. To the north of this area and on the lagoon side of the island are the fire station, aviation and base support operations, storage, and maintenance shops. The original post-WWII terminal was also located in this area. This area also once included a theater and commissary. To the north of this area is the water catch basin (not used today) and water supply plant. On the east (ocean) side of the island from just north of the terminal to east of the aviation support area was the location of the bachelors' quarters, jail, restaurant, dispensary, library, and other recreational facilities. Pan Am housing and a school were north of this area. A few of these houses remain, have been extensively remodeled, and are occupied by the Base Commander and BOS contractors. Structural ruins and the foundations of a few other Pan Am and CAA residences also remain.

Along Heel Point bend is the golf course; the golf clubhouse was destroyed by Typhoon Ioke. Heel Point also once contained FAA housing, of which a few structural ruins remain. Beyond this area, the FAA family housing duplexes still exist. The northwestern portion of Wake Island is the area currently known as "Downtown." Downtown contains what were the FAA and military barracks, atoll power plant, MAC transient barracks, bar and barbershop, bowling alley, tennis courts, baseball field, and other recreational facilities.

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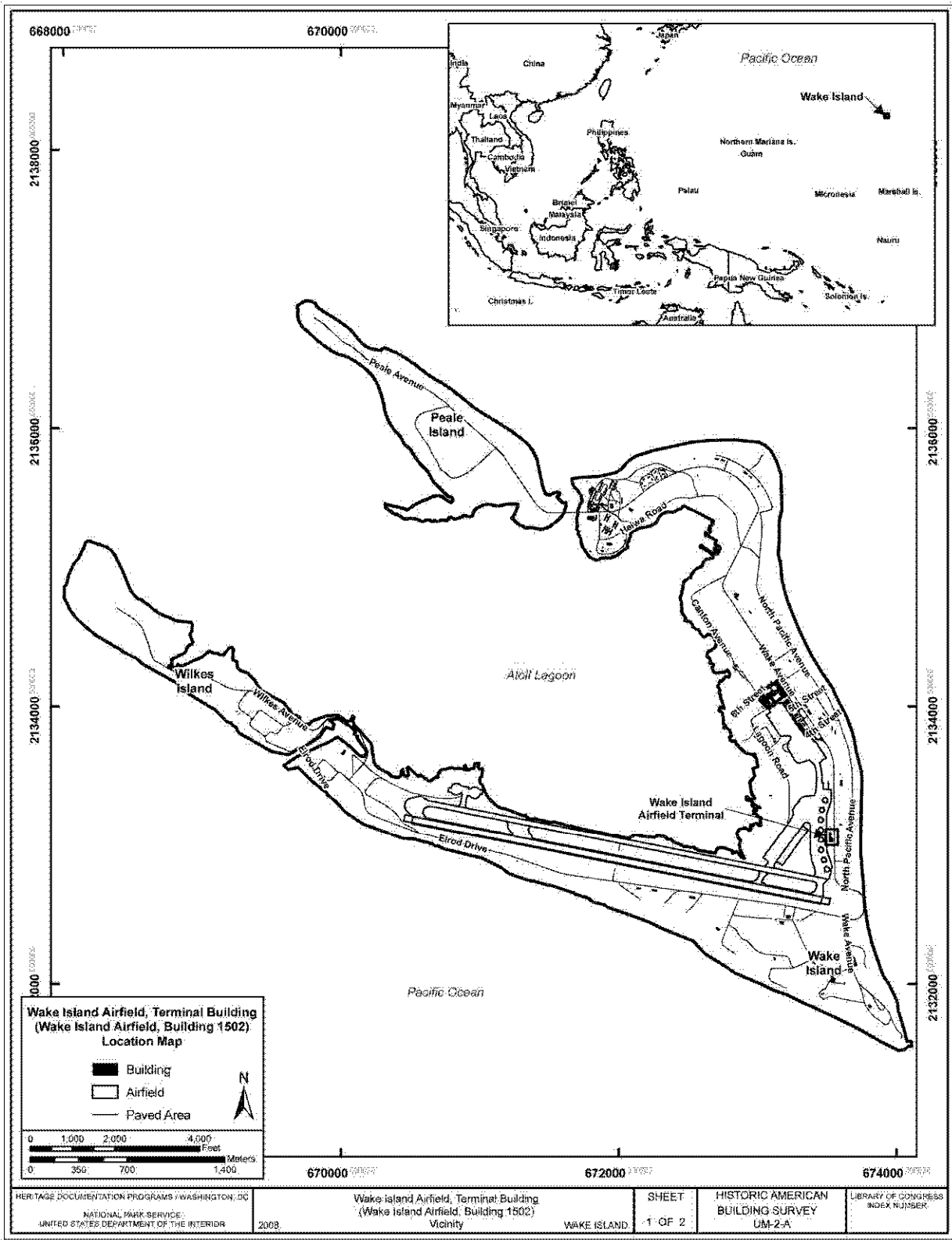
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IV. Project Information

Hurricane Ioke caused extensive damage to the Wake Island Airfield Terminal Building in 2006. The required repairs and rehabilitation will alter and replace some of the historic fabric of the building necessitating mitigation for adverse effects to a historic property. A memorandum of agreement was negotiated between the Air Force and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This documentation is in fulfillment of this agreement. This project was sponsored by the 15th Air Wing of the U.S. Air Force and Chugach Environmental Services, the current Base Operations Support contractor.

The research and documentation was undertaken by Jayne Aaron, Architectural Historian of engineering-environmental Management, Inc. Research was conducted primarily at the National Archive and Records Administration in Maryland, the Pan Am Archives at the University of Florida, the Federal Aviation Administration office in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and Hickam Air Force Base in Oahu, Hawai'i. The photography was produced by Timothy McGrath. The project was completed during the winter of 2007-2008.



Wake Island Airfield, Terminal Building
 (Wake Island Airfield, Building 1502)
 Location Map

Building
 Airfield
 Paved Area

N
 0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet
 0 350 700 1,400 Meters

