Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

AA-783

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

U. S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Curtis Bay

__ VICINITY OF

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE
Maryland

CODE
24

COUNTY
Anne Arundel

CODE
003

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| X DISTRICT | X PUBLIC | X OCCUPIED | __ AGRICULTURE | __ MUSEUM |
| __ BUILDING(S) | __ PRIVATE | __ UNOCCUPIED | __ COMMERCIAL | __ PARK |
| __ STRUCTURE | __ BOTH | __ WORK IN PROGRESS | __ EDUCATIONAL | __ PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| __ SITE | **PUBLIC ACQUISITION** | **ACCESSIBLE** | __ ENTERTAINMENT | __ RELIGIOUS |
| __ OBJECT | __ IN PROCESS | X YES RESTRICTED | __ GOVERNMENT | __ SCIENTIFIC |
| | __ BEING CONSIDERED | __ YES UNRESTRICTED | __ INDUSTRIAL | __ TRANSPORTATION |
| | | __ NO | X MILITARY | __ OTHER |

## 4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS *(If applicable)*

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

__ VICINITY OF

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC
Anne Arundel County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

STATE

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Maryland Historical Trust, Historic Sites Survey

DATE
August 1981

__ FEDERAL X STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Maryland Historical Trust

CITY, TOWN
21 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---|---|---|
| __EXCELLENT | __DETERIORATED | __UNALTERED | X ORIGINAL SITE |
| X GOOD | __RUINS | X ALTERED | __MOVED DATE_____ |
| __FAIR | __UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The U. S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay in northern Anne Arundel County contains structures of historical and architectural significance. These structures are located in an area which includes the northeast quadrant of the Yard, a southeastern section along the western shore of Arundel Cove and a large square center portion of the Yard. This area, comprising the original industrial waterfront and administrative center of the Yard, is visually and historically distinct from the western Yard and areas east of Arundel Cove which were acquired after 1942, containing modern prefabricated industrial structures and military personnel barracks. Complexity and density of arrangements of structures on the Yard necessitates the inclusion of eighteen non-contributing structures within the proposed historic district. None of the original wood frame structures remain of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service Station, the predecessor of the U.S. Coast Guard, which occupied Yard land from 1899 to 1905. The earliest buildings on the Yard, Public Works Shops (Building No. 12, built 1914) and the Power Plant (Building No. 11, built 1911) continue activities of buildings formerly on their sites. Both buildings are one story gable roofed, steel frame structures sheathed in corrugated steel. Both buildings were enlarged and their interiors renovated to accommodate changing industrial production needs during Yard modernization programs prior to World War II. Three other steel frame, metal sheathed industrial buildings were later erected along the western shore of Arundel Cove and are included in this nomination; Boat Building Section (Building No. 5, erected 1931); Small Boats and Mechanical Outfitting Shop (No. 16, erected 1931); and No. 11, Machine Shop (No. 11, erected 1932). Except for one-story prefabricated additions made ; ground level to Building No. 5 (to house employee lockers and tool rooms), alterations to these buildings since their erection have been minimal. All of these structures are tall one story buildings with gable roofs, with the exception of the one and a half story, monitor-roofed No. 11. They can be characterized by embodying high standards for their day for maximum interior light and safety features, with high proportions of facades given to industrial glass set into steel sash, interior loft workspaces and cement slab floors. Five two-and three-story steel and concrete industrial structures veneered with brick were added to the Yard complex during a program of building prior to World War II. These structures, included in this nomination, are: Enlisted Men's Clubs/Switchboard, Warehouse Building (No. 3, built 1934); Graphics and Repro/Photo Lab/Woodworking Shop (Building No. 4, built 1939); Mobile Equipment maintenance section (Building No. 66, built 1939); Mechanical Shop/Mold Loft (Building No. 58, built 1939); and Pipe Section/Materials Handling/Civilian Cafeteria (Building No. 8, built 1942). The exterior appearance of Building Nos. 8 and 58 have not been significantly altered. Nos. 3, 4 and 6 have been altered to meet changing interior uses, principally through elimination of windows by bricking in or covering with sheet metal, or conversion of industrial glass to modern weatherproof materials in the interests of energy conservation. Buildings in this group are typically rectangular in plan, with two story brick end blocks enclosing a long center portion, most of the facades of which are filled with industrial glass set into steel sash. An additional group of five buildings, also erected during modernization programs prior to World War II, is included in this nomination. These structures are: Administration Building (No. 1, erected 1942;) Baltimore Group Building (No. 70, built 1937); Fleet Hall (Building No. 33, built 1939); Small Arms Storage (Building No. 72, built 1937); and Classroom (Building No. 14, built 1935). With the exception of No. 14, these structures are two and three story steel and concrete, brick veneered buildings n large-scale Colonial Revival styles with some Art Deco influences. No. 14 is a small

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 1)

one-story frame cottage. Except for conversion of original windows to modern sash on Building Nos. 70 and 33, these buildings have been altered little in exterior appearance. Fourteen storage sheds located in the northeast quadrant of the Yard are also included in this nomination: Building Nos. 38, 39, 21, 23, 44, 45, 46, 52 and 57 (built 1928); No. 41 (built 1930); and Nos. 43, 24, 25 and 26 (built 1942-43. These sheds are extremely long rectangles in plan, and are one-story gable roofed structures consisting of wood frames covered with corrugated metal sheets resting on cement slab floors. Finally, two railroad structures, Railroad Siding and Train Shed (Building No. 89, built c.1942) and Rail Shipways and Turntable (Structure No. 61, c. 1930) are included in this nomination. No. 89 is a steel framed, wooden sided structure covering a railroad siding and cement platform. No. 61 represents the remains of a rail shipways used for hauling small boats out of Arundel Cove waters for repair.

# SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| __PREHISTORIC | __ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | __COMMUNITY PLANNING | __LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | __RELIGION |
| __1400-1499 | __ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | __CONSERVATION | __LAW | __SCIENCE |
| __1500-1599 | __AGRICULTURE | __ECONOMICS | __LITERATURE | __SCULPTURE |
| __1600-1699 | X ARCHITECTURE | __EDUCATION | X MILITARY | X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| __1700-1799 | __ART | __ENGINEERING | __MUSIC | __THEATER |
| __1800-1899 | __COMMERCE | __EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | __PHILOSOPHY | __TRANSPORTATION |
| X 1900- | __COMMUNICATIONS | __INDUSTRY | __POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | __OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | __INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay possesses significance to American military history, has had important influences upon the social/economic history of the locality of Curtis Bay and the State of Maryland, and contains within its boundaries 31 structures reflecting innovations in industrial building styles and techniques which are international in scope, representing several waves of intensive building at the Yard over a period spanning most of the first half of the 20th century (1911-43).[1] The military significance of the Yard dates from 1901 with the opening of the first Revenue Cutter Service Station on Arundel Cove on a portion of present Yard land. The Cutter Service, forerunner of the modern Coast Guard, operated a small ship repair facility on the Cove until the service was abolished and the Coast Guard established in 1905. The Arundel Cove facility was also the site of the first Coast Guard Academy.[2] The Yard played a strategic role in supplying the country with

[1] This nomination is the result of the findings of architectural and archeological sites surveys performed by the Maryland Historical Trust during 1980-81. The archeological survey, completed in July 1981 by D.J. Pogue, W.E. Clark and L.E. Akerman has been published by the Maryland Historical Trust. An architectural survey was undertaken during the period July 18, 1981 through August 18, 1981, by Susanne Moore, Historic Sites Surveyor for the Maryland Historical Trust. Preliminary study of Yard configuration and building chronology, with on-site inspection and evaluation of all standing structures, established that those having historical and architectural significance are concentrated on the western shore of Arundel Cove, with extensions into the northeast quadrant and central portions of the Yard, as shown in detail on the accompanying map (Attachment 1). Historical study of the area, including research in local and national repositories and oral history interviews with Yard employees knowledgeable about the history of the facility were supplemented by on-site documentation of historic structures. This documentation consisted of detailed, written descriptions reproduced on Maryland Historical Trust inventory forms, and photographic documentation, supplemented by search through Yard photographic archives for historic photographs showing construction of buildings, structures now demolished, interiors and aerial views.

[2] The Coast Guard Academy was moved to New London, Connecticut in 1910 and the original Academy building razed during subsequent building programs at the Yard.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET No. 2)

various types of vessels needed for national defense, most notably during World War II and the Vietnam conflict, and produced prefabricated housing for the Navy Antarctic Expedition in the late 1950s, a project which had humanitarian as well as military objectives. In addition to its historical military importance, the yard is significant as well to State and local social/economic history through its role as a major employer of regional scale, attracting hundreds of immigrant families as well as Eastern Shore boat builders to the Curtis Bay area. Finally, 31 structures representative of distinct international industrial building styles of the early 20th century are extant within the Yard's boundaries. These structures can be characterized as four distinct types: (1) 14 storage sheds built 1928-1942 with stylistic connections to iron buildings designed for military use in Britain in the 1850s which may be considered prototypical of modern prefabrication techniques; (2) 10 industrial buildings reflecting the influence of early works by 20th century industrial designers such as American architect Albert Kahn (1869-1942); (3) 5 administrative and personnel support structures erected in Pre-World War II building programs at the Yard, reflecting the importance of the Yard during those years as a center or wartime production and national defense; and (4) railroad structures which remain as important artifacts of systems of intra-Yard material transport and movement of wooden vessels for repair.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Early Settlement of the Curtis Bay Area. The Curtis Bay area of Anne Arundel County, as shown on Augustine Hermann's map of 1673, was populated by several residental settlements along the Patapsco River by the late seventeenth century. One of the parcels of land that later would become part of the United States Coast Guard Yard was patented by 1663 with the rest of the area patented by 1685. From that time throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the land along Curtis Creek around Arundel Cove was continuously occupied by primarily agricultural uses.

2. 1899-1928. The location of Arundel Cove and its unusual physical characteristics are salient to the history of the U.S. Coast Guard Yard. The Cove offered a deep natural harbor protected by the immediate topography from the silting conditions prevalent in many other inlets of Curtis Creek. The presence in the Cove of a natural deep water harbor and protected anchorage with easy access via the Patapsco River to the Chesapeake Bay--and ultimately the Atlantic Ocean--led to the selection of the site for establishment of a U.S. Revenue Cutter Service Station there in 1901. United States naval victories in Manila Bay in the conflict with Spain in 1898 led to a new awareness on the part of the American public of the need for an efficient and modern naval fleet. A 34-acre parcel on Arundel Cove was leased from a local landowner in 1899. Two years later the first Revenue Cutter Service Station in the U.S. opened for the repair of ships used in enforcement of U.S. customs laws within territorial waters. The first buildings erected on the Yard were four wood

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET No. 3)

framed structures consisting of a lumber mill, storage shop, sail loft and an administration building. None of these structures survives, having been replaced by modern facilities which are the subject of this nomination. The success of this first Station led to the subsequent purchase in 1900 of the leased parcel and two others totaling 65 acres at a proce of $30,000.

The Revenue Cutter Service was abolished and the U. S. Coast Guard established in 1905. Yard construction expanded at a slow but steady rate during the first two decades of this century. A major southward expansion of Yard property took place by means of infill and reclamation of land from Curtis Creek during this period. Two structures from the period 1900-28 remain as part of the present yard, the Public Works Shops (Building No. 12) and the Power Plant (Building No. 15). These structures continued the activities of earlier Yard buildings which they replaced. While no original buildings remain, the orientation to Arundel Cove as the industrial hub of the early Yard was established by the boat building, foundry and machine shop activities which took place in those early buildings, and set the focus for subsequent rebuilding and additions to the Yard Plant until World War II.

3. 1928-1938. Considerable building activity took place on the Yard during the pre-War period, much of it supported through government building programs. The present Yard configuration was basically established during that period. The primary focus of this building effort was removal of remaining wood frame industrial structures on the waterfront and replacement with three modern steel frame, corrugated steel sheathed buildings, all of which continued ship building and repair activities of earlier buildings and all of which are included in this nomination: Small Boats and Mechanical Outfitting (Building No. 16; Boat Building Section (Building No. 5); and Machine Shop (Building No. 11). In addition, Buildings No. 12 and 15 discussed above were enlarged and renovated to meet changing production needs at the Yard. These metal buildings embody high standards for their day for clean, well lighted, efficient industrial plants in demand by a modernizing work force and an increasingly demanding system of production. Design elements of these buildings reflect the influences of early 20th century European and American designs for factories and public buildings, most notably that of American industrial architect Albert Kahn (1869-1942), premier designer of industrial buildings for the rapidly developing American automobile industry.

A second group of historic structures, the bulk of which were erected during this period, is the storage shed group in the northeast quadrant of the Yard. These structures are one story, gable roofed wood frame buildings covered with sheet metal bolted directly to their frames. As such they are very similar to the "Gloucester Hut", a prefabricated metal structure manufactured in Britain for use by the army during the Crimean War in the 1850s, a design considered prototypical of modern prefabricated metal building techniques.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET No. 4)

4. 1939-1944. The pre-War period was one of expansion and intensive building at the Yard. Ten new buildings were added to the Yard during that period within the area included in this nomination. Five concrete and steel, brick-veneered industrial buildings were erected, reflecting the expansion of Yard wartime activities and increasing specialization in some aspects of shipbuilding (such as in ship electronics) necessary to the production of modern war vessels. The buildings in this group included in this nomination are Enlisted Men's Club/Switchboard/Warehouse (No. 3); Graphics/Repro/Photo Lab/Woodworking Shop (No. 4); Mobile Equipment Maintenance Section (No. 66); Mechanical Shop/Mold Loft (No. 58); and Pipe Section/Materials Handling/Civilian Cafeteria (No. 8). The design of these structures is typical of early 20th century designs by German architect Peter Behrens (1868-1940) for factory buildings in Berlin and designs by Albert Kahn for the Ford Motor Works in Detroit. The influence of early works by the latter designer is particularly notable in these buildings in their incorporation of traditional building elements such as castellated fronts, corner bastions, and decorative buttresses and brickwork.

A second group of buildings was erected during this period to house the growing needs of military personnel and administrative functions of the Yard. Four steel and concrete, brick-veneered buildings were added to the Yard: Baltimore Group Building (No. 70) and adjunct Small Arms Storage (No. 72); Fleet Hall (Barracks, Building No. 33); and Administration Building (No. 1). These buildings were styled as large-scale Colonial Revival and Art Deco structures. The presence of this group of administrative and personnel support structures on the Yard reflects the extent of the effort to modernize the complex as an important national defense facility prior to and during World War II.

The concentrated activity of World War II at the Yard prompted expansion and acquisition of new land for industrial plant expansion and addition of new living quarters for military personnel. Extensive acreage was acquired to the west of the Yard, where modern prefabricated industrial buildings were erected. East of Arundel Cove additional land was acquired for new barracks buildings. In addition, several acres of land was reclaimed from Curtis Creek along the southern boundary of the Yard, on which were built two shipbuilding ways, a 3,000 ton floating drydock and 300 foot pier. Structures on these new land parcels were examined during the historic sites survey and found not to possess architectural or historical significance at this time. These additions, particularly the western land parcel on which new modern shipbuilding facilities were built during World War II, abruptly changed the original Yard configuration, diverting the major industrial hub from Arundel Cove to the southern and western bulkheads on Curtis Creek. The Yard thus evolved quickly from the tight-knit shipyard it had been prior to the War to a sprawling industrial plant by 1944. By the close of World War II, the Yard was one of the best equipped and most efficient small industrial plants in the country.

Detroit Institute of Arts: The Legacy of Albert Kahn, 1970.

Gropius, Walter: The Development of Modern Industrial Architecture, 1913 In Architecture and Design, 1890-1939, Tim and Charlotte Benton, ed., Whitney Library of Design, New York, 1975.

Herbert, Gilbert: Pioneers of Prefabrication: The British Contribution in the Nineteenth Century. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1978,

Hildebrand, Grant: Designing for Industry: The Architecture of Albert Kahn. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1974.

Historic American Engineering Record, U.S. Department of the Interior, files on Historic District Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility for U.S. Naval Shipyards.

Historic and Photographic Archival Material on File at the U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay Administrative Offices.

Hyde, Charles K.: Detroit: An Industrial History Guide. Detroit Historical Society, 1980.

Interview by phone with Dr. Paul Shinerer, U.S. Coast Guard Historian. Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

Interviews with Fred Konopik, Yard Management Officer, and Ed Zuruba, Acting Chief, Engineering Section, U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay, July 1981.

Jencks, Charles: Modern Movement in Architecture. Doubleday Anchor Books, New York, 1971.

Land Records of Anne Arundel County, Liber 54, Folio 224.

Navy Times: August 2, 1958; May 12, 1962.

Peterson, Charles E.: "Early American Prefabrication", Gazette des Beaux Artes, 6th ser., No. 33, pp.47-48. 1948.

Robinson, Ralph J.: The Beginnings of the U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay. Baltimore, 1947.

Spencer, Albert S.: The Practical Design of Steel Framed Sheds. D. Van Nostrand, New York, 1915.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET No. 6)

Tyrell, H.G.: Engineering of Shops and Factories. McGraw Hill, New York, 1912.

Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore. "U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay".

west along the north curbline of Billard Avenue; turning at a right angle then going north on a line drawn between the northeast corner curbline of an intersection formed by Billard Avenue and a driveway leading north from Billard Avenue to Building No. 70, to the southeast corner curbline of a driveway running east and west on the north side of Building No. 33; turning at a right angle then going east to the northeast corner of Building No. 33's lot; making a right angle turn then going south along the west curb of this same driveway to the east of Building No. 33 to the intersection of Glover Street; making a right angle turn and going east along the south curbline of Glover Street to the intersection of Hamlet Avenue; making a right angle turn then going north along the east curbline of Hamlet Avenue to the intersection with the north Yard boundary line; making a right angle turn and going east along this northern boundary to a point north of the southeast corner of Building No. 26; making a right angle turn and going south from this point to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Boundaries have been drawn to include all historic structures (concentrated on the eastern half of the property) and to exclude non-contributing structures as far as possible. Boundary lines refer to actual visual components of the Yard property: Curb lines of named streets, railroad tracks and the bulkheaded waterfront of Arundel Cove delineate the district and separate it visually from the remainder of the complex. The park-like grass plot bounded by Reinberg and Glover Streets and Hamlet and Shoemaker Avenues is an integral part of the central yard landscape and buffers the sounds and activity of the industrial waterfront from the administrative and personnel activities of Buildings No. 1, 70 and 33. Building No. 28B has been excluded from the district to avoid fragmentation of the boundary. The grassed recreation field north of Building 28B has no relation to the historic structures within the district and has been excluded. Buildings No. 79, 63 and 63A outside the west boundary of the district and the parking lot and Buildings south of the district boundaries are modern functional structures not oriented to the history and activities of the area within the district and have been excluded.

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## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


Banham, Reyner: Theory and Design in the First Machine Age. The Architectural Press, London, 1960.

Blake, E.G.: Roof Coverings. D. Van Nostrand, New York, 1925.

Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historic Commission: A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay, 1776-1976. Baltimore, 1976


See Continuation Sheet No. 9

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 22 acres

UTM REFERENCES

| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 18 | 364918 | 4304079 | B | 18 | 364820 | 4339590 |
| C | 18 | 364378 | 4339810 | D | 18 | 364500 | 4340190 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the west curbline of Waesche Avenue on the north side of its crossing over Arundel Cove, going west and then southwest following the eastern edges of the north and northeast bulkheads of the Cove, and south along the east edge of the east bulkhead (Johnson Street); turning at a right angle then going west along the north curbline of Hottel Street; turning at a right angle then going north along the east curbline of Shoemaker Avenue; turning at a left angle then going

(See Continuation Sheet No. 7)

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Susanne Moore, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION
Maryland Historical Trust

DATE
November 1981

STREET & NUMBER
21 State Circle

TELEPHONE
369-2438

CITY OR TOWN
Annapolis

STATE
Maryland 21401

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES____ NO____ NONE____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ____National ____State ____Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

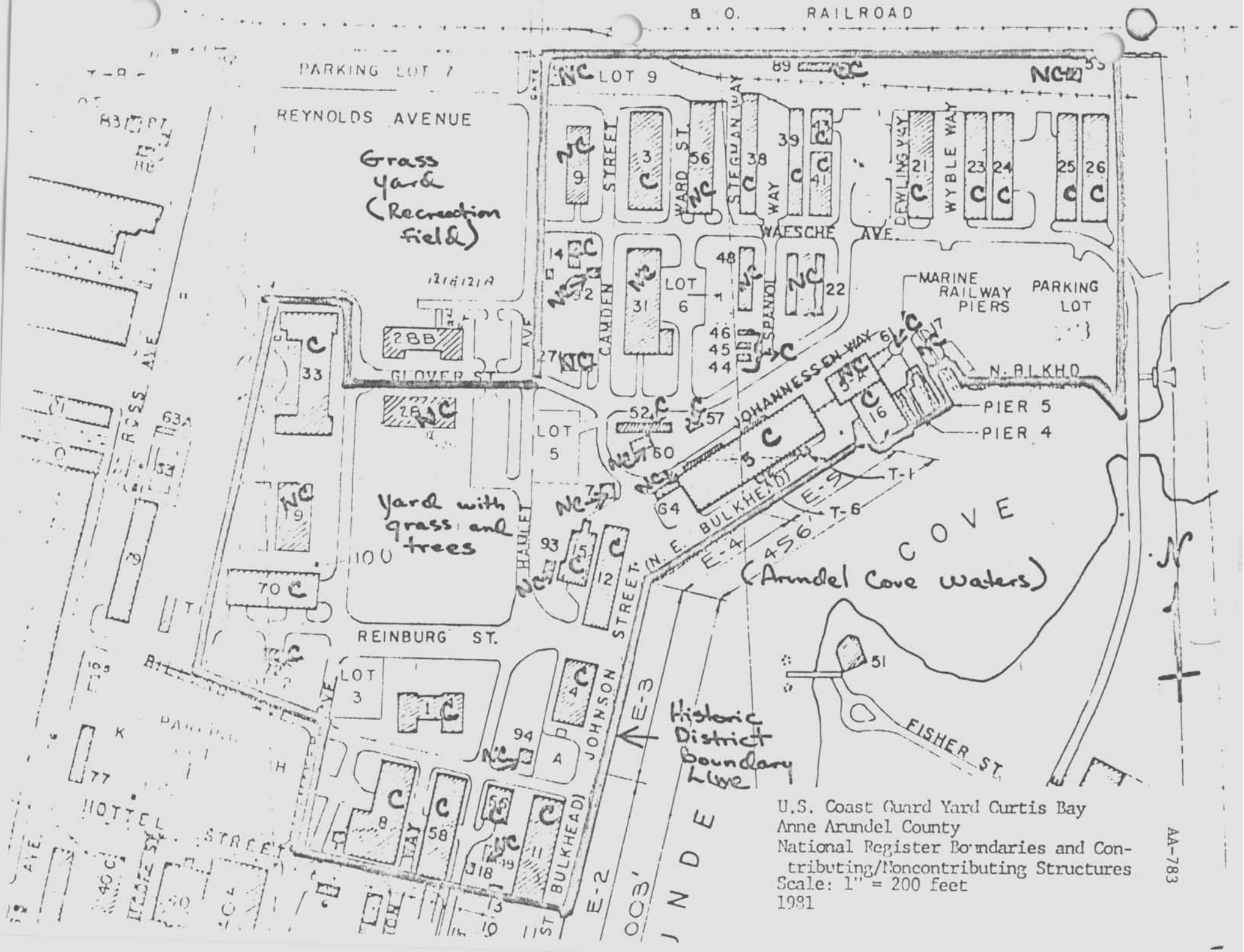
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER




U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay
Anne Arundel County
National Register Boundaries and Contributing/Noncontributing Structures
Scale: 1" = 200 feet
1981

AA-783

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DRAFT

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

AA-783

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name U.S. Coast Guard Yard - Curtis Bay

other names/site number NA

## 2. Location

street & number U.S. Coast Guard Yard ☐ not for publication

city or town Curtis Bay ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Anne Arundel code 003 zip code 21226-1897

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☒ public-Federal

**Category of Property**
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
- ☒ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | 13 | buildings |
| 5 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 28 | 13 | Total |

**Name of related multiple property listing**
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

see continuation sheet

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions)

Defense/Coast Guard Facility/Coast Guard Station/Shipyard
U.S. Coast Guard Academy (1899-1905)

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions)

Defense/Coast Guard Facility/Coast Guard Station/Shipyard
Work in Progress

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement/Moderne/Colonial Revival/ Utilitarian

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, wood piles
walls brick, steel, wood, shingles, asbestos
roof tin, asbestos, steel, slate, asphalt
other stone, limestone

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Military
Industry

### Period of Significance

1899-1946

### Significant Dates

N.A.

### Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N.A.

### Cultural Affiliation

N.A.

### Architect/Builder include:

L.A. Simon, Architect & Federal architects under employment to the Treasury Department and Coast Guard. Local contractors: Cummings Construction Company and McLean Contracting Co.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibilography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [x] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

### Primary location of additional data:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [x] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Name of repository:

Maryland Historical Trust

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 115 acres

**UTM References**
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |

☐ See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sherri Marsh with Marlene Walli Shade

organization Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc. date May 20, 1996

street & number 9001 Edmonston Road telephone (301) 982-2800

city or town Greenbelt state MD zip code 20770

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 1 Page 1

Other names/site number

Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Number
U.S. Coast Guard - Curtis Bay
(Note: Contemporary Building Names given here)

| | |
|---|---|
| AA-2129 | Building No. 2-Commandant's Quarters |
| AA-2130 | Building No. 7-Comfort Station |
| AA-2131 | Building No. 10-Shipways and Headhouse 1 & 2 |
| AA-2132 | Building No. 13-Shipways Transformer House |
| AA-2133 | Building No. 17-Marine Railway and Machine House |
| AA-2134 | Building No. 22-Yard Boatswain |
| AA-2135 | Building No. 27-Post Office and Fire House |
| AA-2136 | Building No. 31-Curtis Bay Store |
| AA-2137 | Building No. 48-Paint Shop and Carpenters Stores and Office |
| AA-2138 | Building No. 51-Magazine |
| AA-2139 | Building No. 54-Gate House |
| AA-2140 | Building No. 59-Furnace Shed |
| AA-2141 | Building No. 67-Drydock No. 1 |
| AA-2142 | Building No. 68-Drydock Headhouse No. 1 |
| AA-2143 | Building No. 73-Range Finder House |
| AA-2144 | Building No. 74-Drydock No. 2 |
| AA-2145 | Building No. 75-Drydock Headhouse No. 2 |
| AA-2146 | Building No. 78-Fabricating Shop |
| AA-2147 | Building No. 79-Fire House and Garage |
| AA-2148 | Building No. 80-Storage Shed |
| AA-2149 | Building No. 81-Storage Shed |
| AA-2150 | Building No. 82-Gate House |
| AA-2151 | Building No. 85-Navy Stores |
| AA-2152 | Building No. 86-Storage Shed/Supply Procurement/Warehouse |
| AA-2153 | Building No. 87-Scale House |
| AA-2154 | Building No. 137-Engine and Ambulance House |
| AA-2155 | Building No. 138-A/S Attack Teacher and Clothing Issue |
| AA-2156 | Building No. 139-Machinists Mate Training School |

This nomination is a re-evaluation of eligibility of the U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay National Register Historic District. The present historic district encompasses about one-third of the Yard's 115 acres (47 hectares), and contains 25 contributing and 7 non-contributing resources. The evaluation associated with that nomination also found an additional 21 resources, located outside the boundaries of the historic district, to be National Register-eligible, though these were never listed on the Register. This nomination is designed to replace, not supplement, the existing nomination.

The U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay district was listed on the National Register in August of 1981. Since then, the survey and evaluation supporting the nomination have been scrutinized and challenged as to the accuracy of some data; ultimately questioning the eligibility of the district for listing on the National Register.

In November 1990, the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay, hereafter referred to as the Yard, wrote a letter to the Keeper of the National Register requesting the Yard's formal removal from the National Register of Historic Places. Subsequent negotiations led to a Programmatic Agreement between the Yard, the Maryland Historical Trust and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

This survey and re-evaluation is carried out in compliance with the provisions of the 1993 Programmatic Agreement between the Yard, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The purpose of this investigation is to confirm or refute the disputed determinations of eligibility for the Yard's pre-1946 structures. The overall goal of the present effort is an accurate determination of eligibility for the pre-1946 historic resources at the Yard, as required by Section 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. This report has been forwarded to the Maryland Historical Trust.

Of the 53 resources examined in this report, 25 are currently listed as contributing resources in the existing historic district. Seven are considered as non-contributing to this district (an eighth non-contributing structure was demolished). The 1981 survey further found 21 additional resources as National Register-eligible, but outside the boundaries of the current historic district.

This report finds that a portion of the Yard appears eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A, Events, and Criterion C,

Architecture. The proposed historic district contains 28 contributing elements and 13 non-contributing elements. While this study does find that a National Register eligible district is present, it challenges the boundaries and the contributing/non-contributing status of included resources and differs with the 1981 nomination's reasons for significance.

Summary Description

The U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay is an industrial complex that occupies 115 acres surrounding Arundel Cove on the southeast shore of Curtis Creek, in northern Anne Arundel County. The Historic District examined by this National Register nomination is composed of 28 contributing resources and 13 non-contributing resources. The northern boundary of the Yard is a few hundred feet south of the Baltimore City line. With a few exceptions, historic buildings included in the survey are located along the western shore of the Cove, the extreme northeast quadrant above the head of the Cove, and extend toward the center of the Yard, reflecting the original orientation of the industrial waterfront to the Cove shoreline.

The physical plant of the U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay reflects its industrial heritage. The Yard is primarily a collection of utilitarian structures, metal and/or brick, that have been modified, expanded, or otherwise altered to meet changing demands of production and technology. While some of the Yard's architecture, particularly administrative buildings, make a distinct stylistic reference, efficiency and function, more than aesthetics were the motivating factors in the design of most Yard buildings. Spatially, the Yard is arranged with buildings housing the administrative and support functions near the center of the Yard. This area features the largest expanses of green area and landscaping. The historic buildings #1, #70, and #33 are arranged around this open area, as is Building #28A, which is non-historic edifice.

Previous studies have linked the architecture of the Yard to International-style architects, including Peter Behrens and Alfred Kahn.[1] While it is true that the International style both influenced and in turn was influenced by industrial structures,[2] there is no evidence to support a causal relationship between a particular architect and construction at the Yard. Buildings are typical of period industrial and military facilities. Buildings were designed by a variety of persons, including local contractors, Yard engineers, and

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[1]National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1981.

[2]Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, The International Style, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, NY, 1995., p.44.

Treasury Department architects. Stylistic reference and quality vary from structure to structure. The core of circa 1935 to 1945 buildings represent the International, Art Deco and Classical Revival tastes.

Many are the design of architects working in the Public Buildings Branch of the Treasury Department. This group of large brick buildings includes the Art Deco-influenced Building No. 70, and the Classical Revival styled Building No. 33, and the Colonial Revival styled Building No. 1. These buildings retain to a high degree their original appearance. This is far less true of other brick buildings, such as Building Nos. 3, 4, 31, and 58.

Spatially, the Yard is arranged with buildings housing the administrative and support functions arranged near the center of the Yard. This area features the largest expanses of green area and landscaping. The historic Building Nos. 1, 70, and 33 are arranged around this open area, as is Building No. 28A, which is a non-historic edifice.

Many warehouses, again mostly World War II-era structures, are situated near railroad tracks running along the Yard's northern property line; these include Building Nos. 23, 24, 25, and 26, located along the north/northeast boundary, as well as Building Nos. 85 and 86, located near the railroad tracks running along the Yard's west-side perimeter.

The waterfront is reserved for the Yard's industrial operations. This area was first developed when the Revenue Cutter Service Depot was established. The Machine Shop (Building No. 11), Woodworking Shop (Building No. 4), Facilities Maintenance Shop (Building No. 12), Machine Shop (Building No. 5), and Marine Railway, are among the operations situated along Arundel Cove. The drydocks, shipways, piers and the support buildings associated with them are located along Curtis Creek, on the south side of the Yard.

It is in this area where the intermingling of new construction amongst the old is most common. New construction, additions to historic buildings, and modern infill between historic structures occurs frequently. The western portion of the Yard features the largest concentration of new construction. Historically this area was open or outside work space.

The least intensively developed area of the Yard grounds is that portion east of Arundel Cove. Located on the east side of the Cove, this portion of the Yard is large in area, but features less than a dozen structures, with the most prominent being the Commandant's Quarters. The scores of World War II

era buildings associated with a former training center section have been razed.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The U.S. Coast Guard Yard is the largest modern industrial plant in the Coast Guard.[1] Located on 115 acres (47 hectares) along Curtis Creek, in a heavily industrialized region of Anne Arundel County just southeast of Baltimore, the Yard at Curtis Bay has been building and servicing the vessels of the U.S. Coast Guard (and its predecessor, the Revenue Cutter Service) since 1899.

The U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay appears significant under National Register Criterion A: Event, and National Register Criterion C: Design/Construction.

With respect to Criterion A, as a shipbuilding and repair facility that has continually operated from the end of the nineteenth century, the Yard is associated with changes and developments in the military shipbuilding industry. The Yard was established as the result of the Spanish American War, and experienced its most significant periods of expansion during the subsequent World Wars. This facility is therefore associated with trends in naval preparedness.

Furthermore, the shipbuilding industry has traditionally been a key industry in the Southeast Baltimore area. While the Yard did not play a particularly paramount role in the area economy, it was part of an important industry that defined the region.

An evaluation under National Register Criterion C, shows than historic resources at the Yard embody the distinctive characteristic of industrial and military/government buildings of the World War II period. The overwhelming majority of historic structures at the Yard date to the 1930s and 1940s. (Numerous examples were also found at nearby shipyards, including Smith Brothers on Curtis Creek and the Bethlehem Steel works at Sparrows Point.) Taken as a district, the ensemble of Yard buildings represent a significant and distinguishable entity, although most components lack individual distinction. Furthermore, vestiges of pre-World War II building arrangement and usage patterns still remain. While the majority of pre-World War II buildings have been replaced or altered, over time functions tended to remain

[1] *U.S. Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, MD.* U.S. Coast Guard Fifty District Public Affairs Division, Alexandria VA, 1976.

in the same location, if not the same building, thus preserving patterns of land usage that predate the actual building.

The impetus for the creation of the Yard appears to be mixed in the motives of nationalism and cost consciousness. Prior to the establishment of the Curtis Bay facility the vessels of the Revenue Cutter Service, forerunner of the present-day Coast Guard, were constructed and serviced in private ship yards. Repairs were likewise made through private contractors. As the size and activities of the Service expanded, the building and upkeep of craft became increasingly problematic. Frequently, the quality of work or the prices charged by private yards proved unsatisfactory.[1]

1898 marked the date of the Spanish-American War, a conflict that heightened awareness about the importance of naval preparedness and tested the capacity of shipbuilders to meet the demands of the military. Following the Spanish-American War, a large investment was made in making the American Navy preeminent. The best expression of this push toward naval dominance occurred in 1907, with the world cruise of the 16 new battleships known as the Great White Fleet.[2]

The nationalist spirit motivating the Navy build-up also impacted the smaller Revenue Cutter Service. In 1899, Lt. John C. Moore, sensing the pro-naval atmosphere, and citing the positive benefits of cost and efficiency, pressed for the creation of a small boat building and repair plant to be owned and operated by the Revenue Service.[3] Moore, at that time Commander of the COLFAX, persuasively argued that maintenance and repair could be accomplished more reasonably in the Service's own yard than in commercial shipyards. The

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[1]*United States Coast Guard Yard: A History of "Service To the Fleet,"* U.S. Coast Guard, Curtis Bay, Baltimore, MD, 1995, p 3.

[2]Tazewell, William L. Newport News Shipbuilding, the First Century, Public Mariners Museum, Newport News, VA, 1986, p. 49.

[3]Robinson, Ralph J., *The Beginnings of The U.S. Coast Guard Yard At Curtis Bay*. Baltimore, MD, 1926.

Baltimore native pointed out the location on Arundel Cove as an ideal place for such a depot.[1]

Once approved internally, the Revenue Cutter Service approached Congress with the idea, and in 1899 the government leased 35 acres (14 hectares) of land on the western half of Arundel Cove for an experimental depot. Here, Lt. Moore was given responsibility for starting a small boat building and repair plant. In addition to operating as a shipyard, the facility at Arundel Cove was intended to serve as the location for a Revenue Cutter Service school of instruction. Thus from 1900 to 1910, the facility on Arundel Cove also served as the forerunner of the present U.S. Coast Guard Academy, now located in New London, Connecticut.[2][3]

When the Revenue Cutter Service depot was created, the area surrounding Arundel Cove was relatively undeveloped. The nearby communities of Curtis Bay and Brooklyn located across Curtis Creek, northwest of Arundel Cove, were already well established, but travel to and from these more populous and developed regions was difficult. Hawkins Point Road, which continues to provide land access to the Yard, was paved with sand and oyster shells, and ran through an area that was very sparsely populated. The bridge over Curtis Creek, located about 150 feet (46 meters) northwest of the present bridge, was a narrow, rotted wooden structure with a swinging draw operated by hand jacking.[4] In the early period, the most effective means for Baltimore-bound depot workers to reach the car line terminal in Curtis Bay was by water. A bus line connecting the Yard and Baltimore was not put in service until 1946.

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[1]U.S. Coast Guard, *United States Coast Guard: A History of "Service To The Fleet"*, U.S. Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, MD, 1995, p. 3.

[2]For more information on the history and development of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, see Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc., *Historic Resources Inventory and Determination of Eligibility for United States Coast Guard Academy*, U.S. Coast Guard--FDCC Atlantic, Norfolk, VA, February 1996.

[3]The operations and facilities of the school of instruction, and the boat depot were kept separate. The *CHASE*, affiliated with the school, docked approximately where drydock No. 1 is currently situated. No buildings survive that are associated with the school of instruction.

[4]U.S. Coast Guard, p. 7.

The development of the nearby Curtis Bay-Brooklyn area was profoundly influenced by the arrival of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad that was extended across Ferry Branch to Curtis Bay in 1882. (The B&O Railroad was subsequently extended to the Yard in the 1920s.) This supported the development of what has been called the world's largest facility for the shipping of coal and ore[1], as well as canning, refining, heavy manufacturing, and other industry that depended upon rail transport. The industrial character of the region continues to the present day.

However, at the turn of the century, Arundel Cove was undeveloped in comparison to the communities across Curtis Creek, and had a small-scale agricultural character. One of the Yard's more immediate neighbors was a government Quarantine Hospital at Leading Point, located approximately 1 mile (2 kilometers) northeast from the Revenue Cutter Service Depot.[2]

Historic photographs indicate the scattered houses surrounding the Depot were primarily small, inexpensive, late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century structures. Shotgun-style dwellings and bungalows were typical.[3]

With respect to Depot architecture, the first buildings of the Revenue Cutter Service Depot were simple frame structures. These included a mill for sawing, shaping, and dressing lumber (approximately where the machine shop is now); a boat shop from assembly and construction) located between the present facilities management building and the boat shop); a storage building (adjacent to and behind the facilities management building); a sail loft/storage building (located near where the woodworking shop now stands); and an administration building (location uncertain).

In addition to these five buildings, a bulkhead was constructed opposite the boat shop, stopping about where the present northeast bulkhead joins the east bulkhead. The Depot's 20 workers lived aboard the ship COLFAX, which was

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[1]*A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay*, The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, 1976, Curtis Bay, MD, p. 32.

[2]Robinson , p. 3.

[3]Photographic Archives, U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay

docked at the end of a long pier that was situated where the dry docks are now located.[1]

In 1900, a small railway was constructed for the repair of life-saving boats and the construction of a variety of other small boats, including the 26-foot (8-meter) face point surf rowboats. A small machine shop, several auxiliary buildings, and a small railway were erected in 1901.

Work loads increased during 1902 and 1903 as locally stationed Service boats were sent to the Depot for repairs. In general, however, much of the Depot's physical plant continued to be simple and insubstantial, as it was not considered advisable to invest too heavily on leased land.[2]

As the size and capabilities of Depot undertakings expanded, the Service used private yards less and less. However, until the approach of World War II, work at the Depot was limited to working on wood craft, a handicap in an era when metal ships were coming to dominance.[3] Yet in their area of expertise (small and medium sized wooden vessels), the quality and quantity of the work performed at the Depot was sufficient to convince the Revenue Cutter Service, and subsequently Congress, that the Depot should be made a permanent facility. On March 3, 1905, Congress appropriated $30,000 to purchase the then-leased land.[4]

1907 requisition records survive for three departments and provide insight into the level of technology in use at that time. The Outfitting department ordered a hand wheel for a feed roller, wrought iron bench screws, grind staves, and an emery wheel. The Supply department requested lime, wood filler, and sandpaper, while Engineer Stores sought hacksaw blades, hammer handles, sledge hammers, hand cutters, and iron. Undoubtedly, this is only a

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[1]U.S. Coast Guard, p. 5.

[2]Robinson, p. 7.

[3]Fassett, F.G., Jr., The Shipbuilding Business in the United States of America, Volume I, The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, New York, NY, 1948. p. 40.

[4]U.S. Coast Guard, p. 9.

partial list, but this sample is sufficient to suggest an operation that, even for its day, was low-tech, relying on hand powered tools and labor.[1]

The presence of a foundry raises a point of comparison. According to the research conducted, many urban shipyards and depots did not maintain a foundry, instead relying on local foundries for their needs. It can be inferred that Arundel Cove's remoteness encouraged this higher degree of self-sufficiency.[2] Self-sufficiency is also expressed in the presence of a Depot farm, which provided food for both the Depot's work animals and its human workers.

The Revenue Cutter Service, which in 1915 became the U.S. Coast Guard, traditionally worked closely with the Navy, and although the Depot was established to serve the Cutter Service, as early as 1910 it was also servicing Navy vessels. However, the Depot was limited in terms of the size of vessels it could accommodate for service or undertake to construct.

Correspondence between the Navy and the Revenue Cutter Service discusses having small Navy craft sent to Curtis Bay for work. In exchange, the larger vessels of the Cutter Service would be repaired at Navy facilities in Norfolk, Virginia; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; or Mare Island, New York. Under an agreement worked out between the Navy and the Service, new cutters would be constructed in the Navy Yard at Washington, D.C.[3]

Facilities at the Depot were enlarged and improved upon consistently through the second decade of the twentieth century to meet increased demand. The Depot as configured during this period, was centered around Arundel Cove, in the same area as those first buildings erected at the close of the previous century.

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[1]Record Group 26, Records of The U.S. Coast Guard; Revenue Cutter Service. Letters sent by the Superintendent of Construction and Repair at Baltimore, 1897-1912.

[2]Fassett, p. 42.

[3]United States National Archives Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard; Records of the Revenue Cutter Service. Letters Sent by the Superintendent of Construction and Repair at Baltimore, 1897-1912, Entry 153B.

As with the earlier buildings, construction was primarily frame, with many structures covered with shingle siding.[1] (Letters and past-due invoices indicate much construction was carried out by local contractors.) Building Nos. 5, 11, 12, and 14 were two stories in height, but most structures were one story or one story with a loft.[2]

The facility layout at this time does not at first appear at to be well ordered, with buildings spread out in varying degrees of concentration around the Depot grounds. But upon closer inspection it is evident that certain activities were concentrated in specific areas of the Depot. For example, the machine shop, ironworkers shop, and foundry/blacksmith were situated in three telescoped buildings, near the location of present day Building No. 12. The boat house, boat shop, and mill were also grouped together. The organic appearance of the site plan should not suggest a lack of deliberateness in the organization of the Depot.

As with the physical plant, with the approach of World War I, machinery and equipment were modernized. Correspondence and purchase orders from the period indicate that power tools were acquired in substantial quantities. Whereas in the pre-war era, at least technologically, the Depot appeared to be lagging behind other shipyards, by the end of the First World War it was a modern, state-of-the-art facility for the repair and construction of small and medium-sized water craft.

The layout and organization seen at the Depot, specifically the grouping of functions as depicted in Figure 3, is not specific to this facility, but reflective of the nationwide changes taking place in shipyards prior to World War I. Shipyard plants in general displayed a substantially different structure than in previous decades. Changes resulted from an increase in capital investment, both in terms of buildings and tools, as well as the rapid development of mechanization, and the growing tendency to rationalize layout and operation.[3] As vessels became larger, requiring the use of heavy, non-

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[1]Photographic Archives. U.S. Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay

[2]Ibid

[3]Fassett, p. 49

portable machinery, more attention necessarily was paid to the careful placement of operations.

A visitor in the early twentieth century to the shipbuilding plant at Sparrows Point, located a few miles northeast of the Depot, made the following observations. The description provides a comparative perspective on the Curtis Bay Depot and indicates that the types of buildings erected at Curtis Bay were not unique, and that their design was based in practicality rather than aesthetics.

"To anyone who has seen pieces of machinery, pipes, etc. carried long distances to and from the shop in the process of fitting out a vessel, and the delay and expense of taking down and re-erecting onboard engines of even moderate size, the conception of a shop in a location, nearly surrounded by water, must recommend itself as a studied adaptation of means to an ends. The shop is framed with steel and sheathed with wood and corrugated iron. Its walls are high and are amply provided with skylights and windows. The interior is very bright. The end of the shop is toward the river and provided with high doors so that works after being erected can be skidded under and put aboard as one piece."[1]

While this description refers to another Baltimore area facility, the description could apply as readily to the tall metal industrial buildings soon to be erected at the Depot. Clerestory level skylights and long bays of windows, tall doorways, and proximity to the water are all features employed in Depot architecture by World War I.

The form of the Depot around the time of World War I appears to be the result of three factors. These are: 1) increased demand placed on the Depot with the approach of war; 2) a willingness on the part of the Coast Guard, once the Depot became a permanent establishment on non-leased land, to make capital investments in the Depot; and 3) the necessity for bigger, more substantial buildings to accommodate expensive, modern equipment and tools.

Portions of only 2 of the 37 structures shown on the 1916 map survive. In Figure 3 these are identified as Building No. 13 (now Building No. 15), Power

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[1]The Marine Department of the Maryland Steel Co., *Seaboard*, Sparrows Point, New York, September 1902.

House, and Building No. 12, Public Works Shop. Both of these structures were extensively altered and rebuilt during the World War II era.

With World War I came the greatest flood of ship orders in American history, both military and private. Even before 1914, about 75 percent of the country's shipyard capacity was engaged in naval work.[1] Production demands of the First World War created a nationwide post-war glut of vessels, both military and private, resulting in a severe depression in the industry.

While the Depot was not operating at its war-time capacity, the slow down at the Depot was far less severe than at other military and private yards. Depot capabilities expanded and began to service larger vessels. By 1924, the production of boats, canvas work and numerous other articles for the Coast Guard was increasing. Extensive overhaul and repairs were performed on such then-modern vessels as the YAMACRAW, SENECA, SEMINOLE and many 100-foot (30-meter), 125-foot (38-meter), and 175-foot (53-meter) patrol boats and tugs. At about this time the Depot employed about 245 civilians and approximately 250 military personnel.[2]

What was the economic importance of the Depot to the area economy? Maritime industries, such as shipbuilding, have historically played a major role in the economy of southeast Baltimore, and the Depot contributed to this. In 1924, there were approximately 500 employees working at the Curtis Bay Depot. While this number is not insignificant, it pales in comparison to the more than 2,000 workers employed across the Patapsco River at Bethlehem Steel Shipyard. But at the other extreme, many area shipyards were small family concerns employing a dozen or so men. The nearby Smith Brothers shipyard, established in 1905, is an example of this type of shipyard.[3]

Returning to the issue of Depot development, the next period of significant expansion occurred during the Great Depression. This 1930s-era building

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[1]U.S. Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation, *Third Annual Report*, Washington, D.C., 1919, p. 58.

[2]U.S. Coast Guard, p. 10.

[3]Interviews with Eunice Alexander, former shipfitter at U.S. Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, and employees at Smith Brothers, Curtis Bay, MD, April 2, 1996.

campaign was primarily a result of federal Emergency Relief appropriations and Public Works Administration funds.

Many structures erected during the 1930s, and into the Second World War, were large brick edifices. Substantial in size and with more stylistic pretensions than the frame utilitarian buildings that came before, many of these buildings were designed by federal architects employed by the Treasury Department. The Treasury Department designed hundreds of public buildings during this period, including post offices and court houses. The most notable ensemble of buildings designed by the Treasury Department for the Coast Guard is the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. Architect L.A. Simon designed buildings for both the Depot and the Academy.

Buildings constructed at the Depot during the Depression and early World War II years were typical of Treasury Department designs, which tended toward conservative Colonial- and Classical-revival styles. The original architectural drawings survive for most of these buildings. Notations indicate that buildings were not so much original design concepts, but a mix and match of standard designs and details. Columns, windows, cornices, and other architectural elements were selected from an existing catalogue of designs.[1] The Art Deco-influenced Ordnance Building (Building No. 70), while not rare, is much less typical.

Like style and detail, quality was also a matter of some flexibility. With the exception of the Ordnance Building, which employed many costly details, including limestone trim and copper roofing, most buildings erected by the Treasury Department at the Depot employed mid- to low-cost options, using, for example, cast stone instead of limestone, and less elaborate, and concomitantly less costly, detailing.

In terms of the Depot's capabilities, a 1934 internal memo to the Commandant of the Depot from the Engineering Office, provides insight into how the Depot assessed its abilities. An excerpt reads:

"The Depot is equipped to perform advantageously all machinery work on the largest ships in the Coast Guard, with the exception of re-blading and balancing main turbine rotors of the largest ships, and renewal of main

[1]This assessment is based upon an examination of Treasury Department architectural drawings in the Collection of the U.S. National Archives.

shafting of large ships. Outline of work includes all other work on turbines, all classes of work on reciprocating engines, shafting, repairs and installation of diesel engines, all electrical repairs, and repairs of any kind to boilers, and pipe work of any kind."[1]

Regrettably, nothing is said about boat-building capabilities, but it is known that craft tended to be small to mid-sized vessels. The Yard was not able to fabricate the Coast Guard's larger cutters and tugs, which were built both at Navy Yards and by private contractors.

Correspondence from the mid-1930s suggests that the Depot's Depression-era building campaign, for all its scale, was unable to keep up with the growing demands of the Depot. In 1936, there were numerous requests not to tear down the "old ordnance building," which was scheduled for demolition upon construction of the new ordnance building (present-day Building No. 70). Proponents of saving the old building wanted it utilized as a sail loft and canvas shop, pointing out that these functions were carried out in crowded, make-shift conditions. Use as storage was also proposed.

Eventually these requests were denied on the basis that "the retention of this one-story frame building, built of two buildings with additions was not in keeping with the general idea of improving the appearance of the Depot or eliminating fire hazards."[2]

Toward the end of the 1930s, depression-era relief projects gave way to pre-war mobilization efforts. The period from the late 1930s through the mid-1940s was the greatest period of physical expansion seen at the Depot. The major rebuilding and expansion program taking place at the Depot was part of a national program on military preparedness. This national effort, similar to the Emergency Fleet Program of World War I, was responsible for reconfiguring the Yard, largely in accordance with Naval specifications. It is from this period that the majority of the Yard's surviving historic buildings date.

It was in 1940, as a result of large and extensive changes, that the U.S. Coast Guard Depot became the U.S. Coast Guard Yard. Depot implied a small

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[1]Ibid

[2]Ibid

repair and supply base, but with the construction of state-of-the-art drydocks and shipways, the facility was now comparable to a medium-sized Navy Yard.

The production system of the World War II shipyard has been compared with automobile production. Everything from building organization to scheduling were designed to avoid congestion of traffic at one end of the Yard, or bottlenecks in the production process. Processes for materials procurement, storage, relocation, and production use were well thought out.[1]

At the Yard supplies were brought in and stored near the Yard's north and west boundaries. Industrial processes were located in the older section of the Yard, along the west side of Arundel Cove. Large work areas fronted the shipways and drydocks located at the Yard's extreme southern boundary. Administrative functions and personnel housing were situated near the center of the Yard. Newly acquired land on the east side of Arundel Cove was the location of the Coast Guard Anti-Aircraft and Night Vision Training Facility.

The rebuilding of the Yard began prior to the outbreak of hostilities and continued into the mid-1940s. Surviving structures from this period include Building Nos. 1, 2, 5A, 7, 8, 10, 24, 25, 26, 31, 33, 54, 59, 66, 68, 73, 74, 75, 79, 80, 81, 85, 86, 89, 137, 138, and 139, as well as piers, shipways, and drydocks. These buildings and structures only represent the surviving construction from the period. In addition, almost all surviving pre-World War II buildings were rebuilt, renovated or extended during this building campaign.

The improved capabilities marked a new era in the work of the Coast Guard Yard, which could now build at least parts of its large ships, vessels that the Yard could only repair previously. The 110-foot (33-meter) Cutter MANITOU was the first vessel to be launched on the new shipway. A 180-foot (55-meter) buoy tender was launched in 1943. The 255-foot (78-meter) cutter MENDOTA was the largest vessel constructed by the Yard. During World War II, the Coast Guard was again under the aegis of the Navy, which supplied the Yard with substantial amounts of work on submarines as well as surface vessels.[2]

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[1]Fassett, p.59

[2]United States Coast Guard, p. 35-36

In January of 1945, the Yard employed 3,100 civilian workers, an all time peak, for 1945 through 1950 was a period of continual downsizing. By 1950 the Yard employment was down to 1,200 civilians.

The termination date of the Second World War is also the termination date for resources examined in this report, but this cut off point is not arbitrary. Without exception, all of the Yard's surviving historic resources were influenced by World War II. Whether in terms of style, function or spatial arrangement, this seminal event was influential, and while the Yard continues its important "Service to the Fleet," it has never again approached the level it achieved during World War II.

In examining the historic standing structures remaining at the Yard, it is important that they primarily be evaluated against the backdrop of World War II, and the role they played during that period. The Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay is significant as a military shipyard, in constant operation from 1899 until the present. Very little survives from the early period, and that which does was rebuilt immediately prior to or during the second World War. It is therefore valid to examine those early resources against the backdrop of World War II.

The question then remains, how important, how rare, how intact, how significant is this World War II era shipbuilding and repair facility? To answer that question, examine *The Shipbuilding Business in the United States of America*. Published by the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers in 1948, this book provided a post-mortem on World War II shipbuilding. The section on shipyard statistics lists hundreds of shipyards engaged in World War II shipbuilding and repair activities. Nineteen facilities, including the Coast Guard Yard, were producers of Coast Guard vessels between 1939 and 1945. Two of these were able to construct larger vessels than the Yard.[1]

While the Yard is unique among shipyards in that it is owned and operated by the Coast Guard, during its zenith it was under the supervision of the Navy, and designed around Naval specifications. Research indicates that the Curtis Bay Yard was a typical shipbuilding facility for the period, engaged in the

[1]Fassett, p. 149

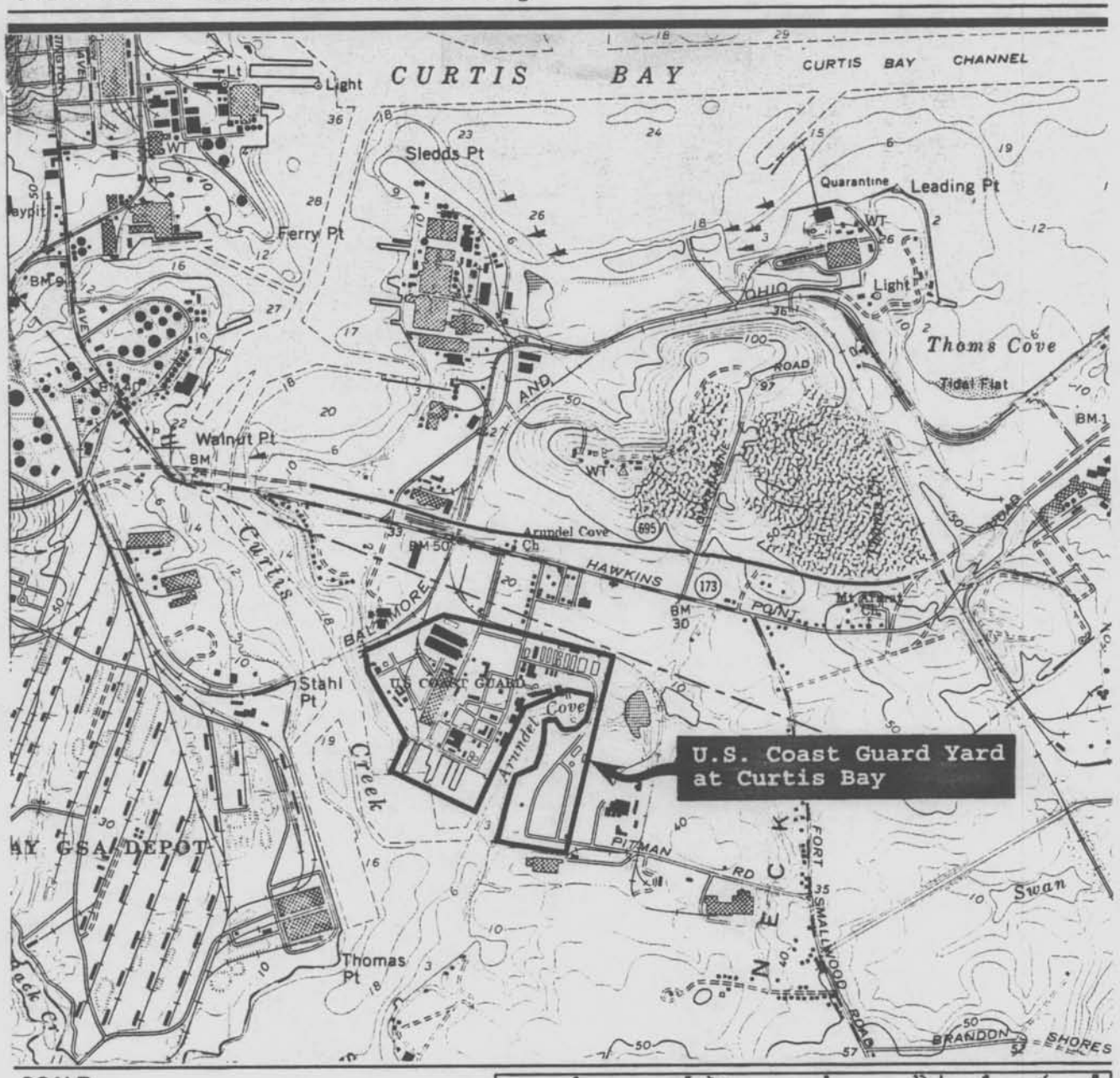
same output as numerous other yards. Its operation was important to the local economy, but its significance was dwarfed by such nearby shipbuilding behemoths as Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point Works and Baltimore Drydocks.

While not exceptional in design, magnitude, or purpose, the Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay does remain as an example of a military shipyard in continual operation from the late nineteenth century, and as a typical medium-sized, World War II-era shipyard. Furthermore, this facility is unique in that it is the only operation of its type owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. In this historic context, the Yard is significant for its association with trends and events that have made an impact on the broad patterns of our history, and for displaying architecture typical in style and type for the period.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundaries are drawn to include all historic resources retaining sufficient integrity to meet criteria for listing on the National Register, and exclude those elements that are not eligible due to age or condition.

*U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay*

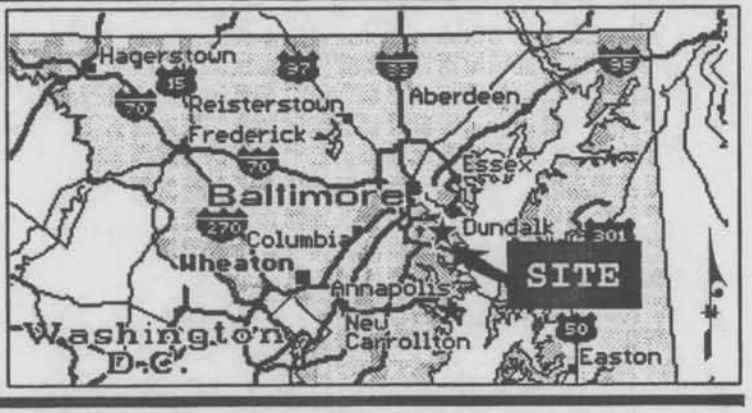



SCALE

0 1000 2000 4000 feet

0 1 kilometer

SOURCE: USGS Topographic Map; Curtis Bay, MD, photorevised 1974




**Location Map and Study Area**

**Figure 1**

U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay AA-783
View of Yard from southwest
Historic Photograph (1944) on file at Yard
Office of Graphics/Repro

PLEASE CREDIT
U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD YARD
BALTIMORE, MD. 21226

FILE NO. COPY PHOTO OF CGYARD

SUBJECT

ORIGINAL TAKEN IN 1944

PHOTOGRAPHER

Curtis Bay Survey
U.S.C.G. Yard
Aerial Photo

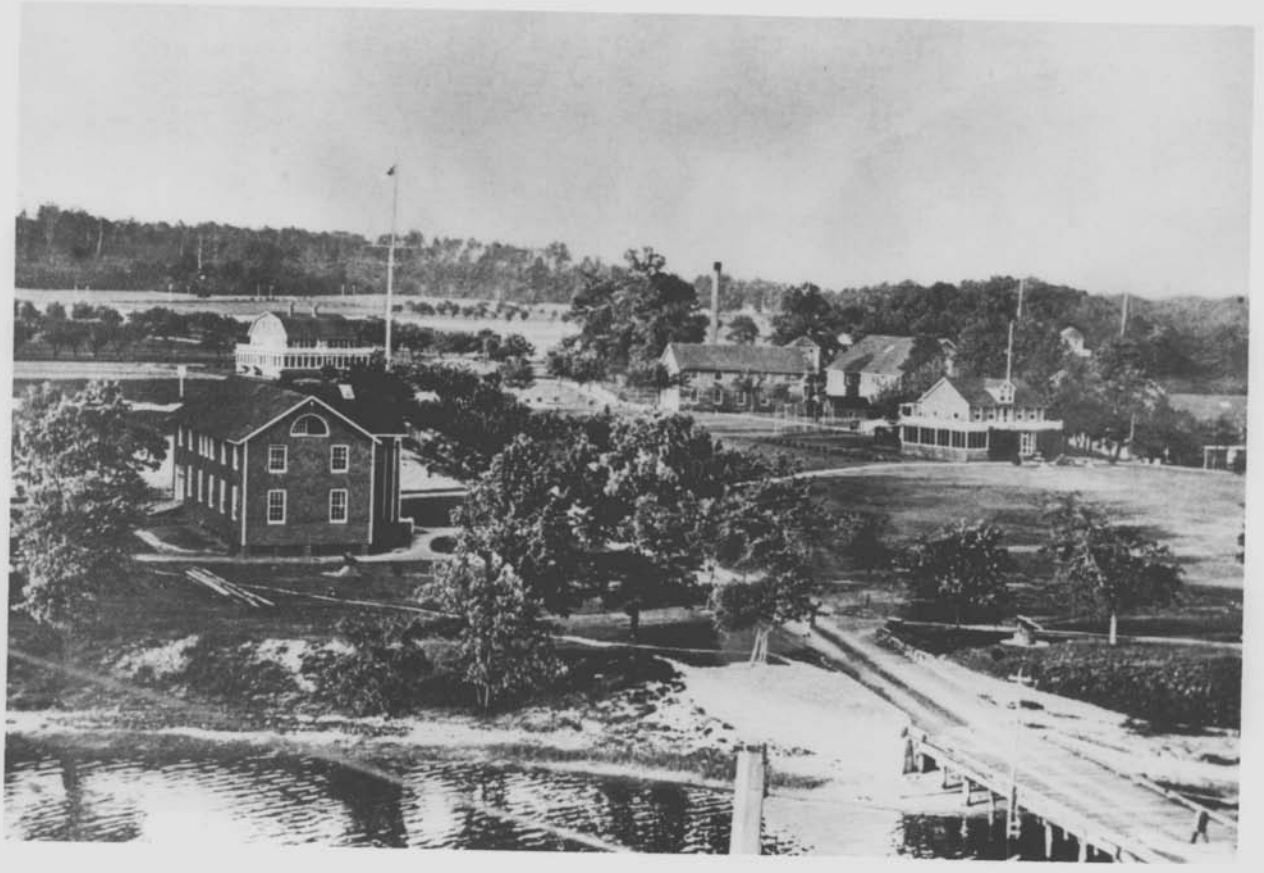
AA-783

ENGINEER'S & PERSONNEL OFFICERS QUARTERS.
AND WATER TOWER. U.S.C.G. MD.

Figure 9
Engineers and Personnel Officers Quarters, c. 1910, U.S. Coast Guard Yard historic photographs archives

9

AA-783



View of Yard, c. 1920

AA-783

exp of east buckhead 1938

AA-783

E. Bulkhead extension 1938

AA-783

Extension of east bulkhead
Historic photograph (1938), from archives
of U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

ROLLY SHOP

AA-783

E. Bulkhead ext c. 1938

Extension of east bulkhead
Historic photograph (1938), from archives
of U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

SHOPS

AA-783

E. Bulkhead expansion 1938

Extesnsion of east bulkhead
Historic photograph (1938) from archives of
U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

COAST GUARD

U.S. Coast Guard Yard AA-[redacted] 783
Curtis Bay
Anne Arundel County, Md
Susanne Moore
July 1981
Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, M
View of Yard to the southwest from
the Head of Arundel Cove 1/1

Aerial c. 1960 looking N

AA-783

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OCT - 2 '41
BALTIMORE

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DD and Shipways no. 1 # c. 1942

Construction of shipways and drydocks 1 and 2
Historic photograph, 1942
From archives of U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

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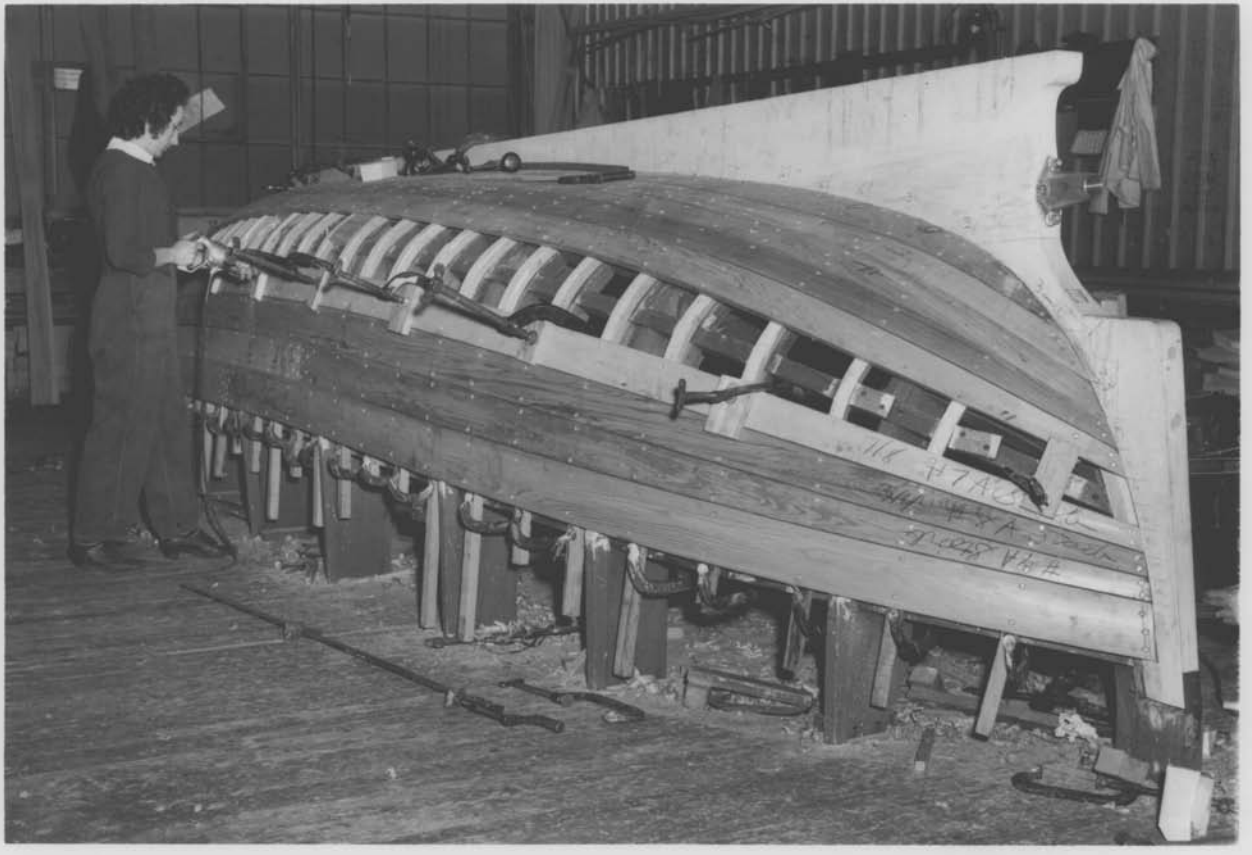
Construction of Shipways and Drydocks
1 and 2
Historic photograph 1942
U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay archives

DD and Shipways #1 c. 1942

AA-783

Construction of Shipways and Drydocks
1 and 2
Historic Photograph, 1942
U.S. COast Guard Yard Curtis Bay archives



AA-783

Wooden boat building
c. 1940

Wooden boat building
Historic photograph (c. 1940) from photographic archives, U.S. Coast Guard Yard
Curtis Bay

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Wooden boat building
Historic photograph (c. 1940) from photographic archives, U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

Figure 2
Wooden Boat Building
Historic photograph (c. 1940) in archives of U.S. Coast Guard Yard Curtis Bay

AA-783

146. Gropius and Meyer: Model Factory, Werkbund Exhibition, Cologne, 1914. North Side.

AA-783

Pevsner, Nikolaus. Pioneers of modern Design

Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1960.

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