

ONTARIO CITY LIBRARY

JUL 1986

215 EAST C ST.

WITHDRAWN

---

# UNITED STATES NAVY AND MARINE CORPS BASES, DOMESTIC

---

PAOLO E. COLETTA, *Editor*  
K. Jack Bauer, *Associate Editor*



**Greenwood Press**

Westport, Connecticut • London, England

Unit, only to be activated during the Korean War. On 16 November 1950, moreover, 30 officers and 23 men of VMF-224 were detailed to extended active duty, four twin-engine pilots were transferred to MCAS El Toro, Calif. (q.v.), and 26 officers and 23 men were transferred to MCAS Corpus Christi, Tex. Another recruiting drive filled the depleted complement by the end of 1951, but orders were received to be on the alert for mobilization. Early in January 1952 most of the personnel of VMF-244 were transferred to Corpus Christi, which meant that another recruiting drive had to be undertaken. While this was under way, the Navy Department decided that the facility was excess and disestablished it on 30 June 1959.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. "History of United States Naval Air Station, Columbus, Ohio, May 1, 1942 to September 18, 1945," and supplements; "Historical Report of Marine Air Detachment, Columbus, Ohio, 2 May 1946-30 June 1952" (Washington: Naval Historical Center, Operational Archives Branch); "Columbus, Ohio, NAS," *Naval Air Stations*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., Navy Yard: Naval Aviation History Office, n.d.).

#### CONCORD, CALIF., NAVAL WEAPONS STATION, 1942-

Naval Weapons Station, Concord, is located thirty-two miles northeast of San Francisco on the south side of Suisun Bay. Originally established in 1942 as Naval Magazine Port Chicago, it consisted of 640 acres of tideland. It was a subordinate command of the Naval Ammunition Depot, Mare Island, and was the outgrowth of a long-needed transshipment point on the West Coast.

It soon became apparent that its surrounding land was desirable as an ammunition storage point. In 1944, approximately 600 acres were acquired by the Navy through condemnation, and an inland storage area was established.

Activity at the magazine was temporarily curtailed on 17 July 1944, when an explosion of unknown origin occurred at Pier #1, destroying two ships and all buildings and equipment on the pier. A total of 320 military personnel were killed and 390 military personnel and civilians injured.

The Inland Area was commissioned in January 1945, and by April the Tidal Area contained six deep-water berths. In July 1945 authority was received from the Bureau of Ordnance to establish a quality control laboratory, which has grown into one of the largest facilities of this type in the world.

By 1946 the Naval Magazine had become the principal loading and storage point for ammunition and high explosives on the West Coast. On 11 January 1946 it was established as a separate command. On 23 December 1957 a consolidation with the Naval Ammunition Depot, Mare Island was consummated. In 1958 Naval Net Depot, Tiburon, Calif. (q.v.), was inactivated and operational control placed under the Naval Ammunition Depot, Concord.

The mission of this activity is to receive, renovate, maintain, store and issue ammunition, explosives, and technical ordnance material.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Dan Tikalsky, Public Affairs Officer, Naval Weapons Station Concord, to the author.

SUE LEMMON

#### CONTINENTAL NAVAL AIR PATROL STATIONS, WORLD WAR I

With the entry of the United States into World War I, consideration was given to establishing coastal air patrols as a protective measure against U-boats. Even though the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. William S. Benson, was not air minded, as early as 5 February 1917 he directed that eight naval air coastal patrol stations be established, and on the seventeenth Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels ordered that fourteen nonrigid airships be provided. Such air enthusiasts in Benson's office as Capt. Noble E. Irwin and Lt. Comdr. John Towers pushed mightily to centralize all aviation activities in that office rather than leaving them scattered among the bureaus of Engineering, Ordnance, Construction and Repair, Yards and Docks, and Navigation. Not until 7 March 1918, however, was Irwin's office of Director of Naval Aviation established under Benson's purview, when it then became the Aviation Division.

By the time the United States entered the war, Captain Irwin had recommended twelve sites for air stations, of which three proved unsuitable: Provincetown, at the northernmost point of Cape Cod, for which Chatham, Mass., at the elbow of the Cape, was substituted; Savannah, where the site could not handle both heavier-than-air and lighter-than-air craft; and Ediz Hook—between Port Angeles and Puget Sound, fifty-eight miles from the sea—for which Tongue Point, Ore., was substituted. Although Secretary Daniels approved a number of sites on 19 August 1917, most of those chosen were on a list provided by the Rear Adm. J. A. Helm Board on the Shore Establishment appointed on 19 October. There would be main bases from the Canadian to the Mexican border 150 miles apart with rest stations in between and nine permanent stations on the West Coast with twenty-five rest stations.

In addition to the sole naval aviation training base, at Pensacola, Fla. (q.v.), temporary training stations were established at East Greenwich, R.I.; Miami, Fla.; and Key West, Fla. (q.v.); San Diego (North Island), Calif. (q.v.); and at the Curtiss Exhibition School at Newport News, Va. At the Curtiss plant at Buffalo, N. Y., Lt. W. Capehart and Naval Constructor E. L. Gayhart supervised the teaching of inspectors of machinery. The students were Naval Reservists who paid their own expenses. James P. Knapp gave his private seaplane base at Mastic, Long Island, to the Navy for training purposes—it was used until the autumn of 1917—and New York State's militia station at Bay Shore and Massachusetts' militia station at Squantum (q.v.) were commandeered. The 15-acre site at Bay Shore already had three hangars, a dock, and a crane, and ninety-five militia students. The ground school that began at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was moved to the new station at Great Lakes, Ill. in 1918. (See Lake Bluff, Ill.) Aviation gunners were trained at Miami and radiomen there and also at Harvard University. Plans drafted by the Bureau of Yards and