



**HISTORY:** The official step leading to the construction of the Naval Air Station was initiated by the 75th Congress in 1938. A board found that a lack of training facilities capable of meeting an emergency demand for pilots constituted a grave situation. They recommended the establishment of a second air training station and that it be located on Corpus Christi Bay.

NAS Corpus Christi was commissioned by its first skipper, Captain Alva Bernhard, on March 12, 1941. The first flight training started on May 5, 1941. Former President George H.W. Bush was the youngest pilot to graduate -- graduating in June 1943 and commissioned just three days before his 19th birthday.

In 1941, 800 instructors provided training for more than 300 cadets a month. The training rate nearly doubled after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. By the end of World War II, more than 35,000 Naval aviators had earned their wings here. Corpus Christi was the only primary, basic and advanced training facility in existence in the United States. At one time it was the largest pilot training facility in the world.

Today, the training program is much longer, approximately 18 months, due to the increased complexity of today's aircraft. Currently, Training Air Wing FOUR produces approximately 600 newly qualified aviators each year.

<https://cnrse.cnmc.navy.mil/Installations/NAS-Corpus-Christi/About/History/>

## Chronology: Late November - December 1941 San Francisco War Events

November 27, 1941

Navy Day patriotic show at the Olympic Club broadcast over radio station KQW.

December 5, 1941

Harbor defenses on full war alert. Troops were each issued 40 rounds of small-arms ammunition.

December 6, 1941

Fourth Air Force participated in air defense exercise in San Francisco. Exercise to continue until Dec. 11.

December 7, 1941

Japan attacked U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii. As word spread in San Francisco, thousands gathered at the Ocean Beach to gaze into the Pacific in disbelief. Minelaying in the Bay began at 11 a.m., less than one hour after the attack.

NBC-KPO listeners heard a dramatic live NBC broadcast from atop the Honolulu Advertiser building describing the bomb damage. The broadcast was suddenly and mysteriously cut off.

All members of the Armed Forces in San Francisco were recalled to duty to take up battle stations. All maritime operations in the Bay were brought to a halt. Police were ordered to stop all soldiers and sailors on Downtown streets and send them to their duty stations.

Military guards took up posts on the Golden Gate Bridge at 4 p.m. and searched vehicles of any Japanese for explosives. Western Defense Command also received an erroneous report of Japanese ships 30 miles off the coast.

Presidential Secretary Stephen T. Early announced that an Army cargo vessel 700 miles off the San Francisco coast had radioed a distress signal after it was believed torpedoed.

President Roosevelt orders the Army to cooperate with the FBI in rounding up individual enemy aliens considered dangerous.

December 8, 1941

President Roosevelt's war message to the Joint Session of Congress was heard at 9:30 a.m. on KPO, KFRC, KSFO and KGO.

Mayor Angelo Rossi issued this proclamation today: "To the people of San Francisco. I have declared an emergency in San Francisco. Under the powers conferred on me in this circumstance, I have coordinated all the proper departments of the City and County of San Francisco with the program of the Civilian Defense Council."

<https://sfmuseum.org/war/40-41.html>

## Chronology: Late November - December 1941 San Francisco War Events

December 8, 1941 (continued)

San Francisco experienced its first air raid and blackout at 6:15 p.m. Some people reported hearing aircraft during the blackout. Master power switch at the Presidio accidentally shut off and the harbor defenses were plunged into darkness.

December 9, 1941

The troop ships Etolin, Bliss, President Johnson and President Garfield turned back to San Francisco because of the Japanese attack in Hawaii.

Japanese warplanes flew over San Francisco last night. Lt. Gen. John L. DeWitt, Fourth Army commander at the Presidio, told Mayor Rossi: "You people do not seem to realize we are at war. So get this: last night there were planes over this community! They were enemy planes! I mean Japanese planes!"

December 9, 1941

Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York, national director of Civilian Defense, and Eleanor Roosevelt met with Gov. Culbert Olson in Los Angeles.

December 10, 1941

Pan American Airways Clipper plane landed at the Treasure Island seaplane harbor with bullet holes from a strafing at Wake Island on Dec. 7.

Colin P. Kelly, Jr., U.S. Army Air Force captain, was killed in action while attacking Japanese invaders in the Philippines; in his memory Board of Supervisors changed Japan Street to Colin P. Kelly, Jr. Street.

U.S. Treasury agent reports to Army authorities in San Francisco that "an estimated 20,000 Japanese in the San Francisco metropolitan area were ready for organized action." Army staff immediately began planning for mass evacuation of West Coast Japanese.

Mayor La Guardia arrived by train to urge Bay Area police and fire chiefs to begin air raid drills for wardens and auxiliary fire fighters.

December 11, 1941

San Francisco and the West Coast declared a wartime "Western Theatre of Operations" by the Western Defense Command. No private vessels were allowed to sail at night in the Bay. Lt. Gen. John L. DeWitt is placed in command.

Germany declared war on the United States.

<https://sfmuseum.org/war/40-41.html>

## Chronology: Late November - December 1941 San Francisco War Events

December 13, 1941

So far, the Dept. of Justice has rounded up 831 enemy aliens in the Pacific states, including 585 Japanese and 187 Germans.

December 14, 1941

Japanese submarine I-15 was placed on standby by the Imperial Navy west of the Farallones to shell San Francisco.

December 16, 1941

President Roosevelt signed an Executive Order to establish Defensive Sea areas off the San Francisco coast.

December 17, 1941

Submarine I-15 surfaced to charge batteries near the Farallones. Seeing the lights of the City, Capt. Hiroshi Imazato joked to the crew that it was a good time to visit the famous city of San Francisco.

December 19, 1941

Gen. DeWitt recommended to the War Dept. to round up "all alien subjects 14 years of age or over, of enemy nations and remove them to the Zone of the Interior," because the West Coast had become a wartime Theater of Operations. DeWitt also wrote, "...that there are approximately 40-thousand of such enemy aliens and it is believed that they constitute an immediate and potential menace to vital measures of defense."

December 20, 1941

Oakland garbage scow Tahoe rammed a Japanese submarine nine miles southwest of the Farallones. Capt. William Vartnaw saw the periscope and part of the conning tower as his vessel passed over the submarine. A tanker was also torpedoed off Santa Cruz today.

December 21, 1941

S.S. Emidio, torpedoed by the Japanese, sank off the Mendocino coast.

December 23, 1941

Gov. Culbert Olson, at the request of Gen. DeWitt, banned sale of liquor to persons in uniform, except between 6 and 10 p.m.

December 24, 1941

Tokio canceled the shelling of San Francisco by the submarine I-15 and ordered the vessel to return to its base at Kwajalein.

## Chronology: Late November - December 1941 San Francisco War Events

December 26, 1941

Gen. DeWitt telephoned the Provost General in Washington to say the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce was demanding the internment of all Japanese, citizens or not, in the Southern California area. DeWitt felt such a move would likely alienate loyal Japanese.

PG&E distributed blackout pointers for your home as recommended by the Blackout Precautions Advisory Committee of the San Francisco Civilian Defense Council.

December 30, 1941

FBI agents given the authority to search the homes of enemy aliens if there were reason to suspect there was contraband on the premises.





## Kaneohe Naval Air Station

### Abstract

Construction of a naval air station on the western half of Mokapu Peninsula began in 1939. As of December 1941, two of the five planned steel hangars had been completed, each measuring 225 feet by 400 feet. The historic district includes the following nationally significant features: Hangar No. 1; the parking area between the hangars and Kaneohe Bay, and the five ramps. Kaneohe Naval Air Station is significant for its association with the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941. At 7:48 a.m., seven minutes before they bombed Pearl Harbor, Japanese fighters and five bombers attacked Kaneohe Naval Air Station. Fifteen sailors and two civilians were killed and sixty-seven personnel were wounded.

This list of Hawaii's historic properties is provided as a public service by Historic Hawaii Foundation. It is not the official list of properties designated on the Hawaii State Register of Historic Places. For official designations and determinations of eligibility, contact the State Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Land and Natural Resources of the State of Hawaii at 808-692-8015.



**Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, HI; TMK (1) 4-4-008:001; 4-4-various**

**SHPD Historic Site Number: 80-10-1386**

**National Historic Landmark District; National Register of Historic Places #87001299**



## WWII seaplane ramps to be repurposed by USMC

Mike Eppinger – February 23, 2016

The Marine Corps' base in Hawaii is looking into repurposing at least one of its pre-World War II seaplane ramps, which figured in the Dec. 7, 1941 attack, for a 21st-century need. They are planning on using the ramp to utilize a large hovercraft that will ferry equipment from ship to shore.

The landing crafts are air cushioned vehicles with two giant fans used for propulsion. They have been hindered by hitting their bellows on the beach during training exercises with visiting amphibious ships.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is investigating whether any of the five 160-foot-long concrete ramps located in the Kaneohe Bay, with strafing and bomb marks still visible from the Dec. 7 attack, are up to the task of supporting a landing craft and amphibious operations.



A 1919 aerial view looking east at the Luke Field Amphibian Base, showing 2 hangars and 2 seaplane ramps.



# Corps Teams with Army Divers to Conduct Structural Study of Historic Seaplane Ramps

By Mr. Joseph Bonfiglio (USACE) January 30, 2016



HIDE CAPTION –

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MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII (Jan. 26, 2016) -- Divers from the U.S. Army's 7th Dive Detachment ready their dive gear and rib boat before heading out into the waters of Kaneohe Bay to conduct a dive survey for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu ... (Photo Credit: U.S. Army)

[VIEW ORIGINAL](#)



MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII, Kaneohe Bay (Jan. 28, 2016) -- The U.S. Army's 7th Dive Detachment just completed a dive survey for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District in support of a Navy Dept. financed structural study of the historic Seaplane Ramps at Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) on Kaneohe Bay.

The study, being conducted in-house by the District, provided an opportunity for the Corps to partner with the Army's 7th Dive Detachment, 84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade, which conducted the two day underwater site survey this week.

The District is conducting the two-phase assessment for MCBH to determine the feasibility of the ramps to support landing craft use and training. The dive survey is part of the first phase that includes an initial scope validation with a visual site survey, research of as-built documents, and recommendations for the second phase which will be an overall assessment with cost estimates.

The study also provided the certified divers of the 7th Dive Detachment with a challenging training opportunity in addition to providing the Honolulu District with vital structural information for less money than a commercial dive operation.

"Our divers enjoyed this mission," NCOIC Sgt. Thomas Hunnicutt said. "They checked the condition of all five ramps and the marine environment around them, collected data, and took photos for the report documentation. In addition, this mission provided an outstanding training opportunity for our Soldiers. It has been very good working with the Corps' Project Manager Jennifer Eugenio and Coral Rasmussen (the MCBH Cultural Resources Manager)."

According to Rasmussen, the Seaplane Ramps are a part of the Kaneohe Naval Air Station National Historic Landmark, which means they meet the highest level of national significance and warrant a level of preservation and care commensurate with this designation.

The five Seaplane Ramps are located on the shore of Kaneohe Bay south of Hangars 101, 102, 103, and 104. The ramps and Hangar 101 became famous in the first few minutes of WWII when forces of the Empire of Japan attacked the Navy's PBY Catalina patrol fleet and hanger complex minutes before the main attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

The PBY Catalina (PB standing for Patrol Bomber and the Y for its manufacturer code) was an amphibious aircraft first commissioned by the Navy in the late 1930s. Sometimes called a "flying boat," it was the mostly widely used seaplane of World War II.

Catalinas served with every branch of the United States Armed Forces and in the air forces and navies of many other nations. The planes, with their 100 foot wing spans and large fuel capacity, were used for long-range patrols, bombing missions, search-and-rescue, convoy escort, and cargo transportation.

Kaneohe Naval Air Station was home to three Patrol Squadrons and 33 PBY's were on the ground or floating just off-shore in Kaneohe Bay at the time of the 1941 attack. Only six survived the bombing, and those six were heavily damaged. Three Kaneohe PBY's were out on patrol during the attack and were the only Patrol Squadron seaplanes fit for use after the attack.

In 2016, more than 80 years after the first PBY flight, these aircraft continue to fly as waterbombers in aerial firefighting operations all over the world.

The Honolulu District is committed to supporting our federal partners and stakeholders by executing high quality studies and projects, and the District is honored to support this mission to document and analyze such an historic military site.