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UNITED STATES NAVY AND MARINE CORPS BASES, DOMESTIC

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In keeping with peacetime directives, Santa Ana began early in 1946 to transfer as many of its maintenance functions as possible from military to civilian personnel. Its Blimp Headquarters having been decommissioned on 25 December 1945, it was left with little more than its target drone school. On 1 February 1946, in accordance with a planning directive issued by the Chief of Naval Operations, it was placed in reduced status. Thereafter, until mid-1947, while seamen replaced the Marine Guard detachment and it retained Blimp Squadron 31 and a utility squadron, it served principally to service aircraft engaged in drone control operations.

On 6 September 1945 the first of a series of Aviation Planning Directives determining the postwar status of outlying auxiliary air stations and facilities was received and a "roll up" program was initiated. Effective 1 October 1946, a revocable permit covering the use of a hangar and lean-to space was issued to Douglas Leigh Sky Advertising Corporation by the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Inspected by the staff of the Eleventh Naval District on 4 March 1946, conditions at Santa Ana were found to be "good to very good." A similar inspection held on 13 May 1947 noted that conditions were only "fair." On 6 June 1949 it was decommissioned and designated an outlying field. In January 1951 Marines reported aboard and began to clear the vegetation that cluttered the site, on 1 May 1951 it became a Marine Corps Air Facility, and on 1 September 1969 it had its name changed to Marine Corps Air Station (Helicopter), Tustin, Calif. (q.v.).

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SANTA BARBARA (GOLETA), CALIF., MARINE CORPS AIR STATION, 1942-1947

Santa Barbara is located along the Pacific coast of California about 110 miles northwest of Los Angeles. With the urgent need following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor for air stations at which to train Marine Air Groups (MAGs), a most unpromising site near the city was selected. From a swamp with a slaughterhouse and hog farm as neighbors arose a 1,500-acre station that accomplished more than double the task originally assigned to it.

Because MAG-24 took its records when it departed the station and because early personnel were overworked and the station was understaffed, a completely documented history of the station cannot be provided. Nevertheless, the record shows that Santa Barbara had built a municipal airport during the mid-1930s on

a tidewater swamp in the town of Goleta. Its two short runways were used by privately owned aircraft and a small flying school, and occasional use was made of it by United Air Lines (UAL) Boeing 247s. In 1941 the city bought 568 acres through a bond issue for \$149,000, filled in the swamp, and laid out runways with about \$1 million in Civil Aeronautics Administration funds. By the end of the year, UAL opened the three-runway field. Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, however, Mayor Patrick Maher of Santa Barbara sought to interest the Navy in acquiring the airport. Talks with a naval representative led to nothing, but Lt. Col. William Fox, USMC, declared the airport suitable "except for that road going through the middle of it." When Fox inspected the station, he found three 4,000-by-500-foot runways and five taxi strips. On the northeast side were the UAL office and two hangars; to the south, near the beach, was the beacon tower. Best of all, the runways could be used immediately for operational training. In consequence, when he visited Washington in February 1942, Fox listed Goleta among the four West Coast stations the Marine Corps had been authorized to build. Meanwhile the Army made its desire to lease the airport known to Mayor Maher, who immediately called his councilors together in special session and obtained a letter from them agreeing to lease it to the Navy. Thereupon Marines moved onto the field and persuaded the pilots of a number of Army bombers and P-40s to move elsewhere. A sticky problem remained the rerouting of the objectionable highway that ran through the base.

The first construction lumber arrived at Santa Barbara on 29 May 1942; the first Marines, on 15 June. The latter were soon followed by MAG-24, which would organize and train itself as a combat unit. The twelve officers and 125 men in the first draft for Santa Barbara left San Diego and at first lived in tents on firm ground along the northeastern end of Runway 21. The easternmost UAL hangar became a barracks, the other a messhall for both officers and men with some space left for the quartermaster. Operational headquarters were originally set up in three revetments the Army had built for some scout bombers between Runways 21 and 25. Meanwhile dust, mud, and mosquitoes made life combat-rugged for MAG-24. The incoming tide so flooded the landing field that men had to wear rubber boots, only jeeps could navigate the mud, and pilots felt that they were landing on water instead of land. The water available locally was strongly flavored with iron. Therefore water was obtained from town, chlorinated, and issued in lister bags. In addition, the prevailing winds brought strong odors and flies from the nearby slaughterhouse and hog farm. Nerves were not helped early in 1942 when a Japanese submarine shelled the Ellwood oil fields near Santa Barbara. For a long time the men of MAG-24 stood a port and starboard watch, lookouts were posted along the beach, and one of the three planes on board, a J2F, was kept loaded with depth charges. By the fall, however, the J2F, the one SNJ-3, and an old biwing SBC-4 had given way to F4Fs.

Although MCAS Santa Barbara was commissioned and organized on 13 August 1942, much construction proceeded for another year. During the winter storms of 1943, the weather made work impossible for protracted periods. There

were as yet no sidewalks and the field, with an elevation of 10 feet and a fall of only 6 inches in 1,000 feet, was always coated with water. In any event, formal commissioning occurred on 4 December 1942 under a unique arrangement—because CAA personnel were needed to control UAL flights, the CAA tower operators controlled both UAL and Marine flights. A second unusual occurrence was the sale in 1943 for \$2,000 of lemons from a 24 acre lemon farm and still more income from a quarter-acre strawberry patch, the proceeds going into the recreation fund.

The lease entered into between the Navy and the City of Santa Barbara ran for only a year, from 1942 to 1943, and covered 580.22 acres at an annual rental of \$2,600. However, the lease was subject to annual renewal to six months after the war. Meanwhile UAL would remain on board. Because of various legal problems, the Navy never paid a rental fee to the city. The tearing down of the offending slaughterhouse and hog farm improved the quality of life at the station, which was expanded following 10 February 1943 with the acquisition by purchase for \$80,000 of 441.251 acres from the estate of Charles Albert Storke. In March 1944 a final acquisition was made of 458.92 acres from several owners for \$137,300. Of the total of 1,493.81 acres, 910 had been acquired in fee simple, and 580 had been leased.

By the end of 1942 most major construction projects at MCAS Santa Barbara had been completed. Among these were a parachute loft, aircraft accessories maintenance shop, propeller shop, aircraft maintenance storehouse, four squadron headquarters, and ten BOQs. In 1943 there were added a photograph shop, a completed administration building, six storehouses, guard house, warming-up platform, transmitting radio tower, two squadron hangars, and two married officers quarters. Early in January 1944, \$2.7 million was allowed for still further expansion, including a crash boat pier. Meanwhile, the first echelons of MAG-24 departed for overseas duty, in January, and its rear echelon in February. Other MAGs came on board and, when they had completed their training, were deployed forward, leaving room for squadrons that had operated overseas to return for recreation and refresher training. Among those returning was the great Marine ace, Maj. Joseph Foss. Foss, who made Santa Barbara his adopted home, on 1 March 1945 was assigned to Operations as flight training officer and ground training officer.

Relations between the Marines and the City of Santa Barbara were originally excellent, with the citizens viewing the Marines as saviors. Marines did not have to pay for drinks at bars, or to enter movie theaters, and were often invited to dine at private homes. After a year or so, the relationship could be described as offering warm but not lavish hospitality. Not until the fall of 1944 did Santa Barbara State College, now a branch of the University of California, establish night courses open to Marines, whereupon more than 200 of them attended courses three times a week. In addition to the Santa Barbara State College, there were the Marine Corps Institute and the U.S. Armed Forces Institute.

The daily production of the station bakery opened on 20 December 1944,

depending on the menu, called for 700 pounds of bread, 250 pies, 30 sheetcakes, 3,500 cookies, 3,000 doughnuts, and 3,000 sweet rolls for 2,500 persons.

Available now were horseback riding, golf, roller-skating in town, and a bathhouse at "Se[mper] Fi[delis]" Beach. A landscaping was launched in April 1945 to beautify the station. All activities appeared regularly in the station newspaper, *The Beam*.

Although the lease had been extended to 30 June 1946, doubt arose following the end of the war as to the permanency of the station. After much discussion on the point in official circles and in the Santa Barbara press, the Secretary of the Navy on 14 December decided upon permanent status and designated MCAS Santa Barbara as a permanent establishment. Upon the recommendation of 25 May 1945 by the Bureau of Aeronautics, however, the secretary reversed himself. Even if now only carrier air groups used the station, much of the \$6 million annual payroll had been spent in Santa Barbara. On the other hand, the city's tourist agencies, bankers, and businessmen preferred that the station be closed and returned for commercial and private flying, and that their city resume its war-interrupted role as a cultural, educational, and recreational center. On 6 September 1945 the first of a series of Aviation Planning Directives determining the postwar status of outlying auxiliary air stations and facilities was issued and a "roll up" program was initiated. On 15 January 1947, MCAS Santa Barbara was disestablished, with the War Assets Administration assuming custody and accountability for its real property.

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SCOTIA, N.Y., NAVAL SUPPLY DEPOT, 1943-1959

During 1942 the Navy Department recognized the need for additional inland storage depots to supply Atlantic coast and European bases. On 27 March 1942 the Chief of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts recommended that such a depot be built to serve the New England bases. Funding was included in the 28 April 1942 Supplemental National Defense Appropriation Act. A special board on 26 May recommended a site in the Mohawk River Valley at Scotia, N. Y., about three miles northwest of Schenectady, which had excellent rail and highway connections with New York City and New England.

Construction begun on 13 June 1942 involved the preparation of 337 acres of hilly land and the erection of fourteen general storehouses, six heavy-materials storehouses fitted with ten-ton overhead cranes, and thirty-six other buildings that provided 2.4 million square feet of covered storage plus an additional