

NAS Wildwood Aviation Museum  
500 Forrestal Road  
Cape May Airport  
Rio Grande, NJ 08242

HISTORY  
OF  
U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION  
WILDWOOD, NEW JERSEY

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CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

1 April 1943 to 1 June 1945

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- 1 Apr 1943: Station commissioned by Commander Francis Ballantyne Connell, USNR, of San Francisco, California, as Commanding Officer.
- The following fleet activities were also commissioned:
- Air Group 30; comprised of VC-30 with Lt. Comdr. J. D. Black, USN, as Commanding Officer and VF-30 with Lt. J. G. Sliney, USNR, as Commanding Officer.
- Lt. Comdr. Black assumed command of CFAD.
- CASU-23 Detachment assigned to support the Fleet Air Detachments.
- 2 Jun 1943: VB-14 and VB-15 arrived.
- 15 Jun 1943: VB-15 decommissioned and merged with VB-14. This new squadron was commissioned as VB-14 with Lt. Comdr. G. B. Campbell, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 17 Jun 1943: Station redesignated as U. S. Naval Air Station, Wildwood, New Jersey.
- 16 Jul 1943: The designation of VB-14 changed to VB-2.
- 20 Jul 1943: Air Group 30 departed for NAS, Norfolk.
- Lt. Comdr. J. H. Mini, USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. Black as CFAD.
- 16 Aug 1943: CASU-24 arrived for duty with Lt. Comdr. E. C. Asman, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 23 Aug 1943: CASU-23 Detachment transferred to NAS, Atlantic City, N.J.
- 1 Sep 1943: VC-52 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. V. G. Lambert, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- VB-14 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. J. P. Lunger, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 18 Sep 1943: Lt. Comdr. J. D. Blich, USN, assumed command of VB-14.
- 29 Oct 1943: VC-52 transferred to NAS, Quonset Point.

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- 1 Nov 1943: VB-13 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. R. L. Kibbe, USN, as Commanding Officer.  
Lt. Comdr. Kibbe relieved Lt. Comdr. J. H. Mini as CFAD.
- 8 Nov 1943: Sixty-eight (68) pilots reported as CATS.
- 17 Nov 1943: VB-306 reported with Lt. Comdr. C. B. Cottingham, USNR, as Commanding Officer.
- 23 Nov 1943: Date of letter requesting increase of facilities.
- 30 Nov 1943: Operations commenced at Outlying Field, Georgetown, Delaware.
- 15 Dec 1943: VB-306 departed for San Diego, California.
- 25 Dec 1943: Twenty-seven (27) VB airplanes manned and alerted in accordance with Comairlant 250413 and 251109.
- 27 Dec 1943: Outlying Field, Georgetown, Delaware, permanently assigned to NAS, Wildwood, N.J.
- 3 Jan 1944: VB-7 commissioned with Lt. J. L. McCallen, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.
- 15 Jan 1944: VB-13 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.  
Lt. Comdr. J. H. Mini relieved Lt. Comdr. Kibbe as CFAD.
- 19 Jan 1944: Lt. Comdr. A. A. Geisser, USN, assumed command of VB-7.
- 1 Feb 1944: VB-80 commissioned with Lt. E. L. A. Anderson, USN, as Commanding Officer.  
First SB2C's assigned to squadrons.
- 13 Feb 1944: Lt. Comdr. A. A. Geisser, USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. Mini as CFAD.
- 20 Feb 1944: Lt. J. L. Erickson, USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. Geisser as Commanding Officer of VB-7 and CFAD.
- 28 Feb 1944: Lt. Comdr. H. P. Lanham, USN, relieved Lt. Erickson as CFAD.
- 1 Mar 1944: VB-81 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. H. P. Lanham, USN, as Commanding Officer.

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- 16 Mar 1944: VB-7 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 28 Mar 1944: VB-80 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 1 Apr 1944: VB-82 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. S. R. Brown, Jr., USN, as Commanding Officer.  
Lt. Comdr. Brown relieved Lt. Comdr. H. P. Lanham as CFAD.
- 10 Apr 1944: Bureau of Aeronautics representatives reported aboard to produce a training film on "AN/APS-4 Interpretation".
- 21 Apr 1944: Radar training transferred to NAS, Cape May, N.J. as CASU-24 detachment.
- 1 May 1944: VB-83 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. E. A. Patriarca, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 13 May 1944: VB-81 departed for NAAF, Otis, Massachusetts.
- 15 May 1944: VB-85 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. S. D. Strong, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 19 May 1944: Mobile Aircraft Maintenance Training Unit No. 701 reported aboard for duty.
- 15 Jun 1944: VB-86 commissioned with Lieut. W. W. Bush, Jr., USN, as Acting Squadron Commander.  
Lt. Comdr. S. B. Strong, USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. S. R. Brown as CFAD.
- 16 Jun 1944: VB-82 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 20 Jun 1944: Lt. Comdr. P. R. Norby, USNR, assumed command of VB-86.
- 1 Jul 1944: VB-87 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. G. C. Simmons, Jr., USN, as Acting Commanding Officer.  
VB-83 departed for NAAF, Otis, Mass.
- 11 Jul 1944: Comdr. P. W. Maxwell, USN, assumed command of VB-87.  
Comdr. Maxwell relieved Lt. Comdr. S. B. Strong as CFAD.
- 15 Jul 1944: Bombing Target No. 11 commissioned at Big Stone Beach, Delaware.
- 5 Aug 1944: VB-85 departed for NAAF, Otis, Mass.

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- 10 Aug 1944: General Order No. 210 established Naval Air Bases Commands.  
Captain W. Capehart, USN, (Ret.) appointed Commander, Naval Air Bases, FOURTH Naval District.
- 15 Aug 1944: VB-88 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. J. E. Hart, USNR, as Commanding Officer.
- 25 Aug 1944: Air Group 16 reformed with Comdr. Ray Davis, USN, as Group Commander. VF-16 with Lt. Comdr. C. S. Moffett as Commanding Officer and VB-16 with Comdr. Davis as Acting Commanding Officer also reformed. Lt. R. M. McMackin, USNR, later assumed command of VB-16.
- 14 Sep 1944: Hurricane safely "ridden out" with minimum damage to planes and equipment.
- 15 Sep 1944: VB-10 reformed with Lt. M. E. Wolfe, USN, as Acting Commanding Officer.  
VB-87 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 18 Sep 1944: Lt. Comdr. R. D. Buchan, USN, assumed command of VB-10.
- 2 Oct 1944: VB-89 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. R. R. Stuart, USN, as Commanding Officer.  
VB-86 departed for NAAF, Otis, Mass.
- 1 Nov 1944: VB-97 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. G. H. Rogers, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 5 Nov 1944: Lt. Comdr. J. E. Hart relieved Comdr. Davis as CFAD.  
Commander CAG-16 departed with VF-16 and VB-16 for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 15 Nov 1944: VB-94 commissioned with Lt. B. F. Nabors, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.
- 16 Nov 1944: Lt. Comdr. C. H. Mester, Jr., USNR, assumed command of VB-94.
- 21 Nov 1944: Ten (10) Magazines and one (1) inert storehouse for storage of rocket projectiles usably completed.
- 29 Nov 1944: VB-88 departed for NAAF, Otis, Mass.
- 1 Dec 1944: Lt. Comdr. R. R. Stuart, Jr., USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. J. E. Hart as CFAD.

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- 1 Dec 1944: VB-10 departed for NAAF, Groton, Conn.  
 VB-92 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. D. A. Ratley, USN, as Acting Commanding Officer.
- 15 Dec 1944: VB-93 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. D. O. Duncan, USN, as Commanding Officer.
- 20 Dec 1944: Lt. Comdr. G. C. Simmons, Jr., USN, assumed command of VB-92.
- 1 Jan 1945: Lt. Comdr. G. H. Rogers, USN, relieved Lt. Comdr. R. R. Stuart, Jr., USN, as CFAD.
- 2 Jan 1945: VB-89 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 3 Jan 1945: VB-95 commissioned with Lt. C. T. Schrader, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.
- 8 Jan 1945: VF-95 reported with Lt. D. W. Mulcahy, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.  
 VBF-95 reported with Lt. C. T. Schrader, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.
- 10 Jan 1945: Comdr. John Donovan, USNR, assumed command of CASU-24.
- 12 Jan 1945: Lt. Comdr. W. C. Bryan, USN, assumed command of VF-95.
- 15 Jan 1945: Comdr. Arthur Priest Linscott, USNR, of Brookline, Mass., relieved Comdr. F. B. Connell, USNR, as Commanding Officer, NAS, Wildwood, N.J.
- 18 Jan 1945: Lt. Comdr. G. A. Sherwood, USNR, assumed command of VB-92.  
 Lt. Comdr. S. D. Wright, USN, assumed command of VBF-95.
- 20 Jan 1945: Facilities for rocket firing were completed at target No. 1, located  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles north of this station.
- 22 Jan 1945: VB-150 commissioned with Lt.(jg) Moyers as Acting Commanding Officer.  
 VB-94 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 26 Jan 1945: VF-95 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.  
 VBF-150 reported with Lt. Comdr. C. S. Radford, USNR, as Commanding Officer.

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- 31 Jan 1945: The standard half hanger was completed in accordance with the expansion program.
- 2 Feb 1945: VB-92 departed for NAAF, Groton, Conn.
- 5 Feb 1945: The installation of two (2) catapults and steel decking was completed by CB's at Outlying Field, Georgetown, Delaware.
- 12 Feb 1945: VBF-151 commissioned with Lt. George B. Riley as Acting Commanding Officer.
- VB-151 commissioned with Lt. Thomas P. Green as Acting Squadron Commander.
- VB-93 departed for NAAF, Otis, Mass.
- 15 Feb 1945: Lt. Comdr. K. W. Caffey, USNR, assumed command of VB-95 and relieved Lt. Comdr. G. H. Rogers, USN, as CFAD.
- The field lighting at Outlying Field, Georgetown, Del. was usably completed.
- 18 Feb 1945: VB-151 departed for NAAS, Manteo, N.C.
- 28 Feb 1945: Lt. Comdr. G. H. Carter assumed command of VBF-151.
- 2 Mar 1945: Lt. Comdr. G. H. Carter relieved Lt. Comdr. K. W. Caffey, USNR, as CFAD.
- VB-95 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 4 Mar 1945: Lt. P. J. Rusk assumed command of VB-150.
- 5 Mar 1945: VBF-152 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. J. M. DeVane, Jr., USN, as Commanding Officer. Lt. Comdr. DeVane relieved Lt. Comdr. G. H. Carter as CFAD.
- 6 Mar 1945: VBF-95 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 16 Mar 1945: VB-150 departed for NAAS, Edenton, N.C.
- 23 Mar 1945: VBF-150 departed for NAAS, Edenton, N.C.
- 26 Mar 1945: FBT and Lt. Comdr. G. H. Rogers, the Commanding Officer of VB-97, shifted base to NAAS, Manteo, N.C.
- VBF-153 commissioned with Lt. Comdr. H. M. Jensen, USN, as Commanding Officer.

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- 27 Mar 1945: Fan Marker at Clermont, N.J., commissioned. Located 39°09'17" N, 74°45'15" W.
- 30 Mar 1945: The opening of the Commissary Store ends many difficulties encountered by Naval personnel in the area, particularly during the summer months when vacationers crowd the vicinity.
- 1 Apr 1945: Second anniversary of commissioning of station celebrated.
- 6 Apr 1945: VB-152 and VB-153 shifted base to Wildwood to complete type training.
- 7 Apr 1945: FBT and Lt. Comdr. G. H. Rogers, USN, the Commanding Officer of VB-97, shifted base from Manteo to Wildwood.
- 9 Apr 1945: Cohansey Creek dive bombing target opened for use.
- 16 Apr 1945: VB-20 reformed with Lt. J. S. Cooper as Acting Commanding Officer.
- VBF-20 commissioned with Lt. E. A. Miller, Jr., as Acting Commanding Officer.
- Lt. L. Robinson, USN, assumed command of VB-153.
- Stow Creek ship target (No. 13) completed.
- 18 Apr 1945: Commander, Air Group 20, Lt. Comdr. R. M. Milner, reported aboard from NAS, Atlantic City. Lt. Comdr. Milner relieved Lt. Comdr. DeVane as CFAD.
- 19 Apr 1945: Lt. J. S. Cooper, USNR, assumed command of VB-20.
- 22 Apr 1945: Lt. Comdr. A. Trusso, USNR, assumed command of VBF-20.
- 2 May 1945: Commander, Fleet Air Quonset, Commodore Rowe, USN, inspected personnel of fleet units and facilities for the support of fleet air detachments.
- 2 May 1945: VB-152 with Lt. H. R. White, USNR, as Commanding Officer, and VBF-152 with Lt. Comdr. J. M. DeVane, USN, as Commanding Officer, departed for NAAF, Groton, Conn.
- 7 May 1945: VB-3 commissioned with Lt. H. N. Murphy, USNR, as Commanding Officer.
- VBF-3 commissioned with Lt.(jg) R. L. Lewis, USNR, as Acting Commanding Officer.



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PART II  
NARRATIVE

The Naval Air Station, Wildwood, N.J., originally planned as the Naval Auxiliary Air Facility, Rio Grande, N.J., under the administration of Naval Air Station, Cape May, was redesignated as a Naval Air Station by VCNO on 5 March 1943,<sup>1</sup> based on a recommendation of the Commandant, FOURTH Naval District.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, it was commissioned as the Naval Air Station, Rio Grande (Cape May) by Commander F. B. Connell, USNR, Commanding Officer, on 1 April 1943.

Because of the difficulty in obtaining adequate mail, telegram, and telephone service as the Naval Air Station, Rio Grande, the station was redesignated on 17 June 1943 as the Naval Air Station, Wildwood, N.J., on the recommendation of the Commanding Officer.<sup>3-4</sup>

At the time of commissioning the station was directly under the command of the Commandant, FOURTH Naval District, and assigned the mission of providing facilities and services for the operation of Fleet Units under Commander, Fleet Air, Quonset Point. In accordance with General Order 210 and other directives, Commander Naval Air Bases was established on 10 August 1944, and from that time the station has operated under the direction of Commander, Naval Air Bases, FOURTH Naval District.

The site the station now occupies was originally pur-

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chased by Cape May County through a twenty-five thousand dollar bond issue raised for the establishment of a county airport. The Civil Aeronautics Administration constructed three (3) five thousand foot runways to be used by the Army or Navy during the war. Early in the summer of 1942 the property was inspected by representatives of the Bureau of Aeronautics and approved as the location for a Naval Auxiliary Air Facility to be used for forming and training air groups.

Of the land used by the Navy eight hundred and nineteen acres were leased from the County for one dollar a year, fee title to eighty-five acres was acquired for one dollar and fee title to thirty-eight acres was acquired from eleven owners for approximately fifteen thousand dollars.

The projects of the original contract included BOQ's and Officers' Mess, Barracks, Messing facilities, Dispensary, Hangar, Operations Building and Tower, Plane Parking Apron, Aviation Repair Shops, Supply Storehouse, Facilities for radio transmission, Garage, Ship's Service and Auditorium, Maintenance Repair Shop, Roads, Water, Sewer, and Electric and Steam Heating Systems designed for one hundred and eight officers, twelve hundred men, and seventy-two planes.<sup>5</sup>

Naval Funds were allotted in the amount of approximately two million fifty-four thousand dollars for the original building construction which was begun in October 1942 with Lt. J. G. Ross, USNR, (CEC), as Officer in Charge of Construction.

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On 9 March an inspection by the Navy Department Board to Inspect and Review Progress of Aviation Shore Facilities indicated that excellent progress was being made and recommended that the following additional facilities be authorized:

1. Barracks (3 B1-B)
2. BOQ (60)
3. Extension to Messhall for issue of small stores and clothing
4. Ready magazines and high explosive magazines
5. Machine gun range
6. Compass rose

The Board also recommended that action be taken to expedite the approval of plans for ready magazines and permanent storage magazines. BuAer on 20 April<sup>6</sup> recommended to CNO that the additional housing facilities be deferred and reported that the extension to the messhall was being accomplished, that plans for the magazines were being processed, and that funds for the machine gun range and compass rose would be allocated. At the time of commissioning, on 1 April 1943, construction had progressed sufficiently to permit limited operations and Carrier Air Group 30, assigned to the USS Monterey, a CVL, was commissioned at the station on the same date.

An increase of field traffic resulted in interference to squadron field carrier landing practice, and it was decided that an Outlying Field was required. Accordingly, a survey

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was made of existing fields within a thirty mile radius of the station and a small undeveloped field in Woodbine, N.J., eighteen air miles from the station, was considered to meet the requirements.<sup>7</sup> The Army withdrew its earlier interest in the field and on 19 July the Bureau of Aeronautics requested the CAA to undertake the improvement of the field.<sup>8</sup> Approval was given in August 1943 by the Civil Aeronautics Administration for the construction of three (3) twenty-five hundred foot runways for use by the Navy.<sup>9</sup> As the Naval Air Station, Atlantic City, also required an Outlying Field for the same purpose it was directed that Woodbine be used by planes from both stations and administered by Wildwood.

During negotiations for the use of Woodbine, the CAA field at Georgetown, Delaware, constructed for the Army, became available to the Navy.<sup>10</sup> The convenient location, thirty-five air miles from Wildwood, and the three (3) five thousand foot runways made this an ideal outlying field for Wildwood. On 25 November Commander W. F. Kline, USN, representing the Office of Chief of Naval Operations, reported that the field had been assigned to Naval Air Station, Wildwood, for temporary use.<sup>11</sup> Authorization was given to establish temporary facilities for operations which commenced 30 November 1943.<sup>12</sup> Permanent assignment was made in December 1943, and the field at Woodbine, N.J., was permanently transferred to the jurisdiction of Naval Air Station, Atlantic City, N.J.<sup>13</sup>

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On 20 November 1943, ComFair, Quonset, advised the Commanding Officer that recommendations had been made to increase the number of aircraft assigned to the station to approximately one hundred from seventy-two.<sup>14</sup> In order to provide necessary facilities for this number of planes, a letter was sent to CNO on 23 November 1943, recommending immediate construction of an additional hangar, plane parking area, barracks, and training building space.<sup>15</sup>

At a conference on 10 and 11 December 1943, with representatives of the Bureau of Aeronautics (Progress Section), it was disclosed that there was under consideration the assignment to the station of three or four thirty-six plane squadrons, and the relative merits of developing Georgetown or expanding the main station were discussed. On 26 January 1944, the Bureau of Aeronautics recommended for the Secretary of the Navy's approval the facilities listed below.<sup>16</sup> The Secretary of the Navy approved these recommendations on 13 April 1944.<sup>17</sup>

1. Three B-1-B Barracks
2. One WAVE Barracks
3. One Half-Hangar
4. 20,000 square yards of Apron
5. Addition to Training Building
6. Addition to Storehouse
7. Additional Public Utilities

The above was designed to provide facilities for the following

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number of planes:

1. 108 CV's
2. 18 VSN's
3. 12 CASU planes
4. 3 Station planes

In March, ComFair, Quonset, reported that facilities would be required at this station by the middle of June to accomodate 180 CV planes and 24 VSN planes. In order to provide the additional facilities required to meet this schedule, a recommendation was made to provide additional apron space at Wildwood and Georgetown and additional Bachelor Officers' Quarters at Wildwood.<sup>18-19</sup>

Before any of these facilities could be completed, the station was called on to support as many as 154 planes, 443 officers and 2497 men with the result that all facilities were crowded to capacity and emergency facilities had to be provided.\*<sup>20</sup> The Hotel Davis in the City of Wildwood was leased and occupied by 150 men, 190 men were quartered in eight (8) Westward Huts which were provided for temporary barracks by the Bureau of Aeronautics, and additional men were housed in tents on the station. In spite of these emergency facilities, over 270 men were quartered in each of the five (5) B.B. barracks then available. Approximately 250 officers were quartered at the Naval Annex (Admiral Hotel) in Cape May.

A program for rocket training was initiated in

\* See graphs.

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December 1943 when ComFair, Quonset, directed that two (2) practice rocket projectile ranges be established in the Wildwood area, and storage space for nine thousand rocket projectiles be provided.<sup>21</sup> The two targets on the Southwest Shore of Delaware Bay, known as Targets #9 and #10, were completed on 1 February 1944 as requested. Since it was impossible to construct additional magazines in the time requested, arrangements were made for storage space at Naval Air Station, Cape May, N.J.<sup>22</sup> Plans and specifications were drawn up for ten steel arch type earth-covered magazines and one inert storehouse. On 6 June 1944 BuDocks authorized the OinCC to proceed with construction and approved the awarding of the bid on 1 September 1944.<sup>24</sup> The work was completed approximately 20 November 1944.

On 12 August 1944 ComFair, Quonset, requested that action be taken to provide a rocket loading apron and taxi lanes.<sup>25-26</sup> BuDocks was authorized by BuAer to expend funds in the amount of \$22,880 from appropriation "Aviation Navy".<sup>27</sup> By December 1944<sup>28</sup> the Bureau approved the awarding of the contract and the contractor proceeded with the work which was completed 20 March 1945.

In order to provide sufficient facilities to accommodate the increased load, steps were taken to make the Outlying Field, Georgetown, suitable for more extensive operations. To accomplish this, the National Guard Armory in the town of Georgetown was leased to accommodate up to 150 men,

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and gasoline storage capacity of 55,000 gallons was also leased. Approximately 3200 sq. ft. of buildings were erected and a resident Officer-in-Charge was assigned to Georgetown for duty.

ComFair, Quonset, requested that two HE-1 catapults and arresting gear be installed at Georgetown, Delaware.<sup>29</sup> CNO approved this project on 9 August 1944<sup>30</sup> and the work was completed by SeaBees on 5 February 1945. On 16 January, SECNAV approved a project for the construction of safety strips for use in connection with this gear.<sup>31</sup>

On 26 June 1944 the Civil Aeronautics Administration approved the expenditure of funds for a field lighting system at Georgetown, to permit more extensive use of the field for night flying. The importance of night flying practice and particularly for night field carrier landing practice made these facilities most valuable for the training of squadrons based at this station.<sup>32-33</sup>

While originally the station was expected to be used for the training of complete air groups, shortly after commissioning it was decided to separate the fighting, bombing and torpedo elements into groups at separate fields, prior to joining up as a group, and this station was selected for dive bombing squadrons. From the middle of 1943 to January 1945 the station was used exclusively for dive bombers, with the single exception of one period from September to November 1944 when one fighter squadron was based on the station. In



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January 1945 the station was selected for the commissioning and training of fighter bomber squadrons, and the dive bombing squadrons were moved to Manteo, N.C. In April 1945 the dive bombing squadrons were returned to this station because of the lack of required facilities for the training of this type of squadron at Manteo, and the station has since had three fighter bomber and three dive bombing squadrons operating from it.

On 15 January 1945 the first change of command of this station took place when Commander A. P. Linscott, USNR, relieved Commander F. B. Connell, USNR, as Commanding Officer. The change of command took place before the ship's Company in a simple ceremony held in the station auditorium.

Through a constructive and positive spirit of co-operation on the part of CASU-24 and other activities of the Fleet Air Detachment at this station, as well as with whole-hearted cooperation and assistance of sections of the Bureau of Aeronautics, this station has been able to provide most of the needs of the Fleet Units based hereon, and to carry out its assigned missions. This is indicated by the following letter received from ComFair, Quonset, dated 21 April:

"To: The Commandant, FOURTH Naval District

Subj: Naval Air Stations in the FOURTH Naval District utilized by Commander Fleet Air, Quonset.

1. Commander Fleet Air, Quonset, has recently been in receipt of complimentary expressions as regards the training

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received by CV Air Groups that have been sent to the Pacific. The heart of the CV training program on the East Coast might very well be said to exist at three (3) type fields; namely, Wildwood, Atlantic City, and Quonset. The first two are in the FOURTH Naval District, and Commander Fleet Air, Quonset, desires to state that these two fields have been exemplary in taking care of the Fleet Units based thereon.

/s/ GORDON ROWE"



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16. BuAer End-3 to reference 15.
17. BuDocks ltr NOy-8906 C-5G(S)/NA to CO, NAS Wildwood dated 13 Apr 1944.
18. CO, NAS Wildwood Conf. ltr, Serial O-227, dated 25 Mar 1944.
19. CO, NAS Wildwood Conf. ltr, Serial O-240, dated 4 Apr 1944.
20. BuAer Conf. ltr Main. Div. Aer-MA-316-LCL, Serial C-15225, dated 8 June 1944 to BuDocks, and Ends.

MAGAZINES AND ROCKET FACILITIES

21. ComFair, Quonset, Conf. ltr FF13-17/A5, Serial 0510, dated 2 Dec 1943.
22. CO, NAS Wildwood Conf. ltr NA126/F41/P11(21), dated 18 Jan 1944.
23. BuDocks NOy 9307 dated 6 June 1944.  
C-9-2-2
24. BuDocks speedltr NOy 9307 to O-in-CC dated 1 Sep 1944.  
C-9-2-2a
25. ComFair, Quonset, Conf. ltr FF13-17/N10(c), dated 12 Aug 1944 with End. by ComAirLant and BuAer.
26. CO, NAS Wildwood, Conf. ltr NA126/N10 dated 23 Aug 1944, Serial O-307.
27. BuDocks NOy-11075 C-5G(S)/vm dated 27 Sep 1944.
28. BuDocks NOy-11075 C-5G-LF:bmf dated 22 Dec 1944.

CATAPULTS AND FIELD LIGHTING AT  
OUTLYING FIELD, GEORGETOWN, DEL.

29. ComFair Conf. dispatch O21817 Aug 1944.
30. CNO Conf. dispatch O91445 Aug 1944 to BuAer.

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AIRCRAFT OPERATING AREAS

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1. In May 1943, operating areas for Fleet Air Detachments operating from Naval Air Station, Rio Grande, and Naval Air Station, Cape May, were agreed upon. The following areas are set forth on the accompanying chart dated 22 May 1943 and are to be used by Fleet Air Detachment at this station:

(a) Gunnery Areas.

S4, S5, NS20, NS20A, NS21, NS21A.

(b) Bombing Targets.

Water target at latitude  $39^{\circ}09'30''$  N and longitude  $74^{\circ}56'00''$  W.

Water strafing target latitude  $39^{\circ}07'30''$  N, longitude  $74^{\circ}59'$  W.

(c) General Operating Areas.

NL-11 and NL-12 from 5,000 to 10,000 feet.

(d) Night Flying Area.

NL-11 West of Railroad Track.

2. In July 1943, the following areas shown on the accompanying chart, PW Drawing #94 dated 14 Feb 1944, were assigned to Wildwood in agreement with the Army Air Forces, First Fighter Command:

NL-11 and NL-12, NS20, NS20A, NS20B.

3. In February 1945 a conference was held with representatives of the NAS, Atlantic City, AAF, Dover, Delaware, AAF, Millville,

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New Jersey and CNAB 4ND, at which time the areas shown on the accompanying chart, PW Drawing #350 dated 30 May 1945, were agreed upon. This meeting established a liaison with the nearby Army Air Fields which has proved and which is expected to prove of benefit to all concerned.

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BOMBING AND ROCKET RANGES

One of the primary requirements of the Fleet Units based from time to time on this station has been for adequate dive bombing and rocket ranges, and because of the excellent location of the station with respect to uninhabited areas within short distances, a very satisfactory group of targets have been established.

A list and description of the targets follow:

Target No. 1 Green Creek.

Land Target at Green Creek, N.J. Latitude  $39^{\circ} 03' 20''$ , Longitude  $74^{\circ} 55' 20''$ .  
Approved IATC B meeting No. 330-A, 23 August 1943  
Original Purpose: Dive Bombing.  
Revised Purpose: Rocket Firing.

Target No. 4 East Creek

Land Target at East Creek, N.J., (Vicinity of Dennis Creek), Latitude  $39^{\circ} 10' 24''$ , Longitude  $74^{\circ} 54' 24''$ .  
Approved IATCB Meeting No. 366, November 1943.  
Original Purpose: Dive Bombing.  
Present Purpose: Dive Bombing.

Target No. 6 King's Pond

Water target in pond near Egg Island Point, N.J. Latitude  $39^{\circ} 12'$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 08' 30''$   
Approved IATCB Meeting No. 330-A, 23 August 1943.  
Original Purpose: Dive Bombing (High Altitude Bombing)  
Present Purpose: Dive Bombing.

Target No. 7 Masthead - Maurice River Cove.

Water target in Maurice River Cove, Delaware Bay, Latitude  $39^{\circ} 11.1'$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 05.1'$ .  
Located in Caution Area S-5 which was approved at IATCB Meeting No. 330-A, 23 August 1943.  
Original Purpose: Masthead Bombing.  
Revised Purpose: Masthead Bombing and Strafing.

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TARGETS, N.A.S. WILDWOOD, CONT'D.

Target No. 8 - Strafing - Deadman's Shoal.

Water Target (salvaged PBM) at south end of Deadman's Shoal in Delaware Bay, Latitude  $39^{\circ} 05.2'$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 00.6'$ . Located in Caution Area S-5, which we approved at IATCB Meeting No. 330-A, 23 August 1943.  
Original Purpose: Strafing.  
Present Purpose: Strafing.

Target No. 9 - South Stinger Target.

Water Target located off the west shore of Delaware Bay, Latitude  $38^{\circ} 51'$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 12.5'$ . Approved IATCB Meeting No. 399, 10 January 1944.  
Original Purpose: Rocket Firing.  
Revised Purpose: Rocket Firing and Strafing.

Target No. 10 - Middle Stinger Target.

Water target located off the west shore of Delaware Bay. Latitude  $38^{\circ} 52' 50''$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 14' 20''$ . Approved IATCB Meeting No. 399, 10 January 1944.  
Original Purpose: Rocket Firing.  
Revised Purpose: Rocket Firing and Strafing.

Target No. 11 - Big Stone Beach.

Land target on west shore of Delaware Bay, at Big Stone Beach, Delaware, Latitude  $38^{\circ} 58' 30''$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 19'$ . Approved IATCB Meeting No. 484, 12 June 1944.  
Original Purpose: Dive Bombing.  
Revised Purpose: Dive Bombing and Strafing.

Target No. 12 - Cohansey Creek.

Land Target near mouth of Cohansey Creek, New Jersey. Latitude  $39^{\circ} 21' 24''$ , Longitude  $75^{\circ} 23' 00''$ . Approved IATCB Meeting No. 593, dated 14 March 1945.  
Original Purpose: Dive and Glide Bombing.  
Present Purpose: Dive and Glide Bombing.



DECLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED  
TARGETS, N.A.S. WILDWOOD, CONT'D.

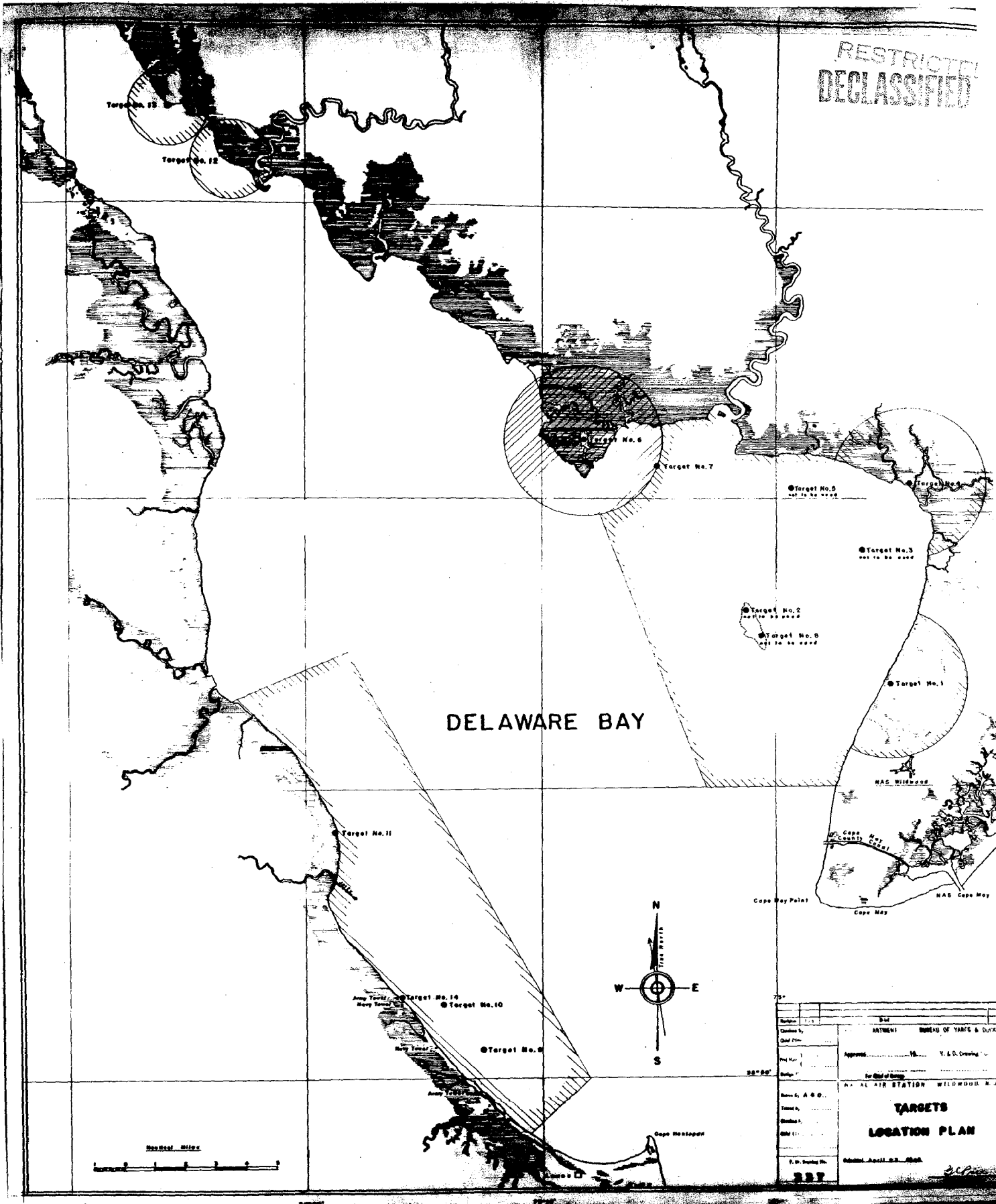
Target No. 13 - Ship Target - Stow Creek

Derelict ship beached near mouth of Stow Creek, New Jersey,  
Latitude 39° 23.1', Longitude 75° 25.6'  
Approved IATCB Meeting No. 593 dated 14 March 1945  
Original Purpose: Dive Bombing.  
Revised Purpose: Dive Bombing and Rocket Firing.

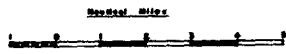
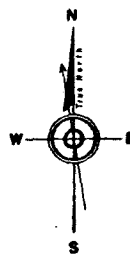
Target No. 14. - North Stinger Target.

Water target located off the west shore of Delaware Bay,  
Latitude 38° 52.8', Longitude 75° 15.9'.  
Approved IATCB Meeting No. 399, 10 January 1944.  
Original Purpose: Rocket Firing.  
Present Purpose: Rocket Firing.

RESTRICTED  
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DELAWARE BAY



Subject:	14	Date:	
Drawn by:		Approved:	15. Y. S. D. Drawing
Chief:		for Chief of Station	
Drawn:		N. S. AL AIR STATION WILDMOOR N. J.	
Checked:		<b>TARGETS</b>	
Scale:		<b>LOCATION PLAN</b>	
Drawn by:		16th April 53 - 1953	
Scale:		300	

## CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

1 June 1945 to 15 August 1945

- 1 Jun: VBF-75A with L. Harlan J. Coit, as Acting Commanding Officer and VBF-75B with Lt. Comdr. F. G. Gooding, Jr., as Commanding Officer reported from NAAS, Chincoteague Island, Va.
- VB-153 with Lt. L. Robinson as Commanding Officer and VBF-153 with Lt. Comdr. Jensen as Commanding Officer departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va.
- 5 Jun: Construction of taxiways leading to runways 19 and 23 commenced.
- 13 Jun: Lt. Comdr. F. M. Welch assumed command of VBF-75A.
- 22 Jun: VB-20 with Lt. J. S. Cooper as Commanding Officer and VBF-20 with Lt. Comdr. A. Trusso as Commanding Officer departed for NAS, Edenton, N.C.
- Commander Air Group 20, Lt. Comdr. R. Milner, departed for NAS, Edenton, N.C.
- Lt. Comdr. E.S. Gwathmy assumed command of FAD.
- 30 Jun: One Hundred twenty-five (125) German prisoners assigned.
- 8 Jul: A school for training combat aircrewmen in the operation and maintenance of 20MM aircraft guns was begun.
- 15 Jul: Lt. Comdr. F. M. Welch relieved Lt. Comdr. E. S. Gwathmy as Commander, Fleet Air Detachment.
- VB-3 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va. with Lt. H. N. Murphy as Commanding Officer.
- VBF-3 departed for NAAS, Oceana, Va. with Lt. Comdr. E. S. Gwathmy as Commanding Officer.
- 17 Jul: VB-4 reported aboard with Lt. H. W. Calhoun as Commanding Officer.
- VBF-4 reported aboard with Lt. Comdr. J. H.

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Lackey as Commanding Officer.

- 26 Jul: Construction of 3 soil cement parking aprons commenced: a 5044 sq. yd. apron 1250 ft. west of Operations tower, a 6538 sq. yd. apron 300 ft. southeast of Operations tower and a 7392 sq. yd. apron 200 ft. north of Operations tower, the latter to include a taxiway outlet onto runway 10-28.
- 1 Aug: VBF-75B decommissioned and VBF-75A was redesignated VBF-75 with Lt. Comdr. F. M. Welch as Commanding Officer.
- 3 Aug: VB-81 with Lt. H. Burns as Commanding Officer and VBF-81 with Lt. Comdr. E. H. English, Jr. as Commanding Officer reported aboard.
- Commander, Air Group 81, Comdr. H. P. Lanham, reported aboard. Comdr. Lanham relieved Lt. Comdr. Welch as Commander, FAD.
- 8 Aug: 63' Crash Boat, Number C-36258 delivered to Coast Guard for ASR Operations, pursuant to CNO letter dated 3 July 1945, transferring Crash Boats C-36258 and C-26587 to the Coast Guard for such purposes.
- 9 Aug: VBF-75 departed for NAAS, Chincoteague, Va. with Lt. Comdr. F. M. Welch as Commanding Officer.
- 13 Aug: Construction of taxiway to runways 19 and 23 completed.
- 15 Aug: All local fleet training and fleet cross-country flying secured for two days by ComFair Quonset in observance of discontinuance of hostilities with Japan 14 August 1945.