

Gateway to the Pacific
HONOLULU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



**The First 80 Years
1927-2007**

Acknowledgements

Chronicling the eighty year history of Honolulu International Airport in words and photos has long been the dream of Ben Schlapak, Oahu District Manager. He spent many years tracing the long-range planning efforts for the airport, the construction history, and other major milestones. HNL historian Marilyn Kali spent more than a year researching and gathering additional information to include in this publication, as well as writing and editing the final product.

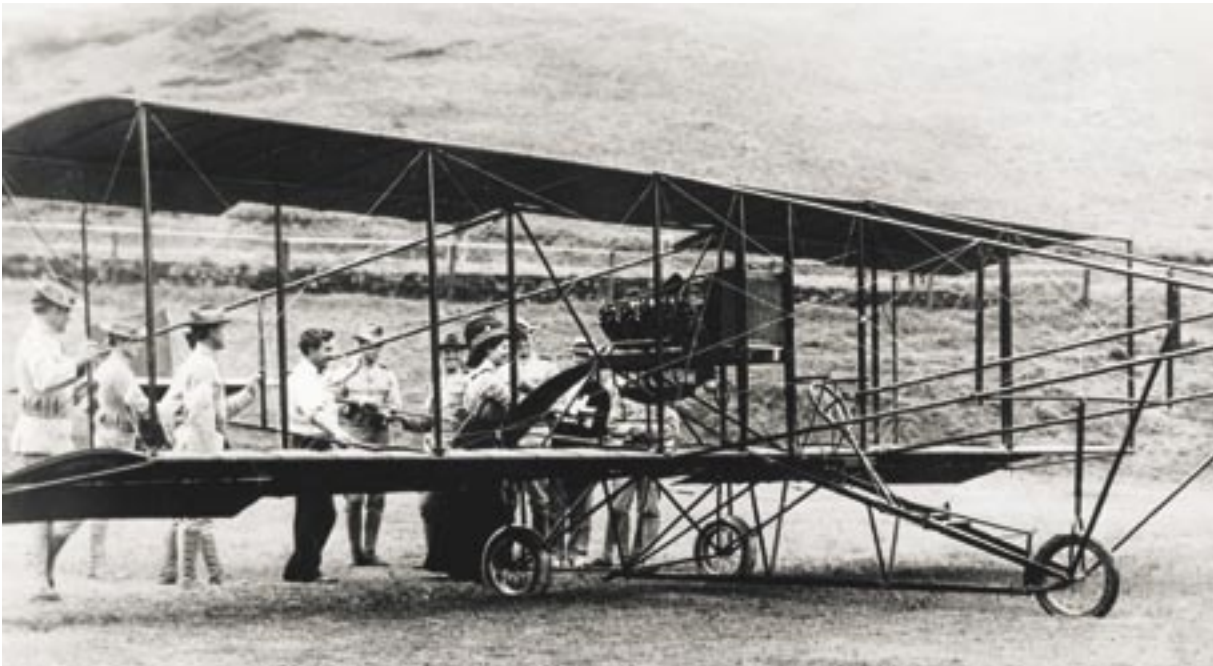
We would like to thank the Hawaii State Archives staff; Gary Miller, Museum and Heritage Program Director, Hickam Air Force Base; Judith Bowman, Curator, U.S. Army Museum of Hawaii; the U.S. Naval History Center, Marine Corp Base Hawaii, and private collectors who made their photo collections available to us.

Watch for our new website hawaii.gov/hawaiiaviation in 2007 which will feature more than 3,000 photos that were scanned from these collections, as well as other historical information about the airport and aviation in Hawaii.

In addition a big mahalo to Owen Miyamoto, retired Airports Administrator, HDOT; the staff at the Hawaii Pacific Room at the Hawaii State Library, the staff at the Hawaii State Archives, the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, and others who assisted with the research.

We still welcome old photos of Honolulu International Airport and Hawaii aviation, as well as articles or documents about the airport's history. Send them to Honolulu International Airport, 300 Rodgers Boulevard, Box 12, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-1897.

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Below: J.C. Bud Mars' first flight in Hawaii on December 31, 1910, attracted a crowd of 3,000 fans.
Below right: Honolulu International Airport in 1996.



Aloha

As Honolulu International Airport celebrates its 80th birthday on March 21, 2007, we are reminded of the brave and adventurous aviators who dared to cross the Pacific Ocean in their primitive (by today's standards) aircraft.

Without their pioneering spirit, Honolulu would not be the Crossroads of the Pacific, or the Hawaii that we know today.

In addition to aviators, it took a committed group of Territorial Legislators and Honolulu businessmen to envision an economy for Hawaii that was based on air travel and tourism. It was these visionaries who determined in 1925 that the Territory needed an airport in Honolulu and set about selecting land and financing it.

When the airport was dedicated on March 21, 1927 it was named for the late Commander John Rodgers, a third generation Navy officer, who made the first trans-Pacific flight in 1925. Although he ran short of fuel and had to land in the ocean, his mission succeeded because he and his heroic crew sailed their amphibian plane for nine days to get the rest of the way to Hawaii. Prior to the flight Rodgers had commanded naval air services at Pearl Harbor.



Speakers at the airport dedication prophetically predicted that Honolulu would become an important stopping place, not only for commercial and other aviation in Hawaii, but for ships enroute across the Pacific. This led to the branding of Honolulu as the Crossroads of the Pacific.

Development of the airport was spurred by needs of the Army and Navy during World War II. When the airport was returned to the Territory after the War, the improvements they had made provided a ready-made terminal consisting mostly of military Quonset huts.

The construction of the airport that we know today was accelerated first by the coming of the jet age, and then by the development of wide-body aircraft.

Hawaii owes a lot to the adventurous men and women who made the first trans-Pacific flights, to the many who have worked to make Honolulu a first-class airport, and to the residents of Hawaii who have embraced aviation and welcomed with Aloha the more than 700 million travelers who have traveled through Honolulu International Airport since its opening.

We dedicate this book to all of them and to the many aviators and their passengers who will continue to make Honolulu the Crossroads of the Pacific.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Fukunaga'.

Barry Fukunaga
Director of Transportation

The John Rodgers Airport

Honolulu has seen the evolution of transportation from the Chinese junk and the Yankee clipper in ye olden days to the palatial liner, the fast freighter—and now the airplane.

The dedication of the John Rodgers airport near Honolulu is a significant milestone in Honolulu's transportation history. The event virtually signalizes the inauguration of commercial aviation in Hawaii. At least, it makes possible the innovation and symbol of twentieth century progress.

In years to come it is destined to become a center in this new era. It is the pioneer of the many big commercial stations that will ultimately be located in Hawaii. And because of that fact, it will find its rightful place in history—not only of Hawaii—but of the American nation as well.

That aviation will enter the commercial life of Hawaii, there is no doubt. Definite steps to that end are already being taken. The John Rodgers airport is one of these steps.

Editorial
Honolulu Advertiser
March 22, 1927

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An Overview of Honolulu International Airport

Eighty years after its founding, Honolulu International Airport (HNL) is one of the world's largest, busiest and most beautiful airports. Owned and operated by the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation, it covers 4,520 acres of fast and submerged land, and is larger than the major resort destination of Waikiki, which is located 10 miles to the south.

The airport's humble beginning was an investment in a dream of the Territorial Legislature and the Chamber of Commerce who read articles daily in the newspaper about aeronautical feats around the world. Daredevil pilots were flying hundreds of miles over rivers, lakes, states and countries. New planes were constantly being designed and tested. Local interest in flying was high as the military brought more planes to Hawaii, and local residents earned pilot licenses.

The folks on Bishop Street and in Iolani Palace dreamed that Honolulu would one day be a major tourist attraction and that people from around the world would want to come here. They envisioned the airport as the economic catalyst that would drive that dream. Their vision has come true in a way even they probably could not have predicted.

When the airport was dedicated and named for John Rodgers on March 21, 1927 it was little more than a cleared field with a coral runway. The first plane known to use the runway was that of Pearl Harbor Naval Commander M. B. McComb who flew his plane to the airport for the dedication and then flew back to Pearl Harbor.

In its early years, the airport was used by recreational flyers, and then by Inter-Island Airways which began scheduled air service to the Neighbor Islands. Five years later, Pan American World Airways initiated commercial air travel from the Mainland to Asia through Hawaii. However, Pan Am built its seaplane base in Pearl Harbor.

The Navy began construction of a seaplane facility in Keehi Lagoon near the airport in the late 1930's and planned to move seaplane operations away from Pearl Harbor and into the Lagoon when it was finished. The Territory negotiated to improve the airport with the dredged material from the lagoon.

During World War II, the military took over the airport and built facilities for its use. When the war was over, the airport was returned to the Territory and it featured a number of Quonset huts, a control tower, new paved runways and other facilities.

Commercial air travel took off after the war, with investors creating many new airlines. Aircraft moved from prop planes to jets and to jumbo jets and the construction program at the airport went on for decades to meet the ever-changing needs.

Today, HNL has four active runways, including the 12,000-foot Reef Runway which was the world's first major runway built entirely offshore. Landscaped with the beautiful trees and flowers of the Hawaiian Islands, Honolulu International Airport plays host to more than 20 million visitors each year.

The airport is served by 29 international and domestic carriers, four interisland airlines, and two commuter airlines.

Passengers are transported from the Main Terminal Ticket Lobbies to 47 gates and holding rooms in the Central, Diamond Head and Ewa Concourses, and the Interisland and Commuter Terminals via Wiki Wiki buses.

There are nine Federal Government agencies located within the airport complex, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Federal Aviation Administration, Agriculture, Drug Enforcement, Fish and Wildlife Service, Post Office, Public Health, and Homeland Security. Hickam Air Force Base and HNL operate as a joint use facility and share runways and taxiways.

The airport has its own retail stores, restaurants and bars, barber shop, business center, automated teller machines, cable company, medical facilities, insurance companies, currency exchange, gasoline station, jail, freeway, traffic lights,

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Below: Japan Airlines calls at Honolulu.



post office, light industry, schools, and parks. At any given daytime or evening hour, an estimated 10,000 people are in the airport complex as passengers, employees or visitors. Approximately 15,000 people work at the airport every day and another 20,000 depend on the airport daily for their livelihood.

HNL has a workforce of 550 employees, half of whom are custodians and maintenance personnel.

The state operates two Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting stations, one adjacent to the Reef Runway and the other near the Interisland Terminal.

The airport works closely with the Airline Committee of Hawaii, the Airport Concessionaires Committee, the Federal Aviation Administration and other federal agencies, and Hickam Air Force Base in the operation of the airport.

Honolulu International also manages Kalaeloa Airport (JRF) and Dillingham Field (HDH).

Kalaeloa, the former Barbers Point Naval Air Station, was designated as the general aviation reliever airport for HNL on July 1, 1999. Kalaeloa is also an alternate landing site for military and commercial airlines and is used on a daily basis by the Coast Guard.

Dillingham Field is a specialized general aviation airport used primarily by gliders and parachutists.

The visionaries who dreamed of a tourist economy for Hawaii would probably have a hard time recognizing the airport today and air travel. Instead of the week it took to travel between the Mainland and Hawaii by ship, it now takes less than five hours by air. Who could have imagined that?

It will be hard to surpass the progress of the last 80 years, but change is inevitable, and we stand ready to meet the aviation challenges that lie ahead.

Below left: A Hawaiian Airlines jet loads up at the Ewa Concourse.
Below: HNL concessions.



Hawaii's State Airport System

By Owen Miyamoto, P.E.
Hawaii Airports Administrator (1969-1995)

Without reliable air service it is doubtful that the economic growth of Hawaii would be possible. Convenient and economical transportation between communities on separate islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean has been achieved by technical innovations in aviation and the willingness to take advantage of its application for the movement of people and goods.

Establishing the State Airport System to serve all of its citizens and each island began as a goal of the Territorial Government when aviation was demonstrated to be a viable transportation mode. The system was continued after Statehood when the Airports Division of the Hawaii Department of Transportation was created.

The state airport system has been especially beneficial to our Neighbor Island communities. In any of the lower 48 states, communities are linked with either highways or railroads built over the years of the growth of our nation. The Interstate Highway System connects all the states except Hawaii and Alaska and exists only on Oahu by an amendment to connect military bases on the island.

To receive the benefits of air service, it has been the responsibility of local communities to provide financing and build the airports needed by airlines.

Each of our Neighbor Islands has airports capable of serving scheduled airlines linking the community with Honolulu which provides convenient connections to the mainland and nations on the Pacific Rim. This is the typical hub-and-spoke system used at major airports. With the building of terminal facilities and runways capable of serving modern wide body aircraft, direct service to Hilo, Kona, Kahului and Lihue is now available.

Extending Runway 8-26 at Hilo's General Lyman Field to provide direct mainland service to the Neighbor Islands was begun before statehood. This was followed by extensions of existing or construction of new runways at Kona, Lanai, Lihue, and Molokai with financial assistance from the Federal Aviation Administration.

The local share of cost ranges from 50% to as low as 10% under the federal-aid program. Terminal buildings and other revenue producing areas are not eligible for aid and must be paid out of local funds, which under State of Hawaii law must be generated solely by the airport system.

Construction of Neighbor Island airport facilities is made possible by a substantial subsidy from the only other source of airport revenues, Honolulu International Airport. Fortunately for the state airport system, the new terminal opened in the early 60's at Honolulu granted a new concession lease for duty free sales that was the beginning of a lucrative source of revenues.

At its peak, duty free sales to international passengers provided more than three-fourths of total revenues, which made it possible for airlines operating at Hawaii's airports to pay only a nominal landing fee. Duty free revenues are dependent on Hawaii's international visitors, which have declined in numbers since the late 90s. However, there is no doubt that they have contributed substantially to the expansion of Neighbor Island airports.

The future success of the state's air transportation system will depend on capitalizing on external factors that depend on the efficient service provided by airports. It has provided a good foundation, and with reorganization, it can continue to serve our state well.

Opposite: Honolulu International Airport in 2000 with the Reef Runway at left, Pearl Harbor at top center, Hickam Air Force Base left center, HNL at right center, and Keehi Lagoon and the South Ramp of HNL at center bottom.



The Development of Aviation in Hawaii

By Benjamin J. Schlapak, P.E.

Honolulu International Airport, Oahu District Manager

American aviation began in 1901 with Samuel Langley flying a steam powered craft three-quarters of a mile along the Potomac River. The aircraft was unmanned and weighed about 25 pounds. Langley was a civil engineer, architect and secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Wright Brothers each flew their gasoline powered aircraft in 1903 at Kitty Hawk, N.C. They were bicycle mechanics and inventors who conducted wind tunnel experiments and found the lift in the curved upper surface of the wings.

Glenn Curtiss was a bicycle and motorcycle mechanic who made the first public flight of one kilometer in 1908. He then built the first successful seaplane pontoon and flying boat, taking off and landing on water at San Diego in 1911. He invented the aileron.

On December 31, 1910 J. C. Bud Mars flew a Curtiss P-18 off Sam Damon's Moanalua Polo Field and on his third flight reached a height of 1,500 feet. There were 3,000 fans watching and 15,000 came to watch another flight on New Year's Day but selling tickets was so unrewarding that the adventurer sailed for Japan.

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Below left: J.C. Bud Mars made the first flight in Hawaii in 1910.
Below right: Lt. Geiger and his Curtiss Model G aircraft.





Aviation in Hawaii had been given a start.

Tom Gunn flew a plane of his own design at Schofield Barracks in 1913 and fitted it with pontoons and flew from Honolulu Harbor.

The Army sent two Curtiss seaplanes, Lt. Harold Geiger and 12 enlisted technicians to Oahu in July 1913. They set up their organization at Fort Kamehameha (first known as Fort Upton).

Battery Selfridge contained 12 inch disappearing guns and was completed in 1910. It was named in honor of Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, a 1903 graduate of West Point along with Douglas MacArthur and a pioneer aviator who became the first aircraft fatality at Fort Meyer, VA in 1908.

Although he could only take off and land during high tides, Geiger made a flight from Pearl Harbor to Diamond Head at a speed of 60 miles per hour. After four months, the unit was disbanded and returned to the Mainland.

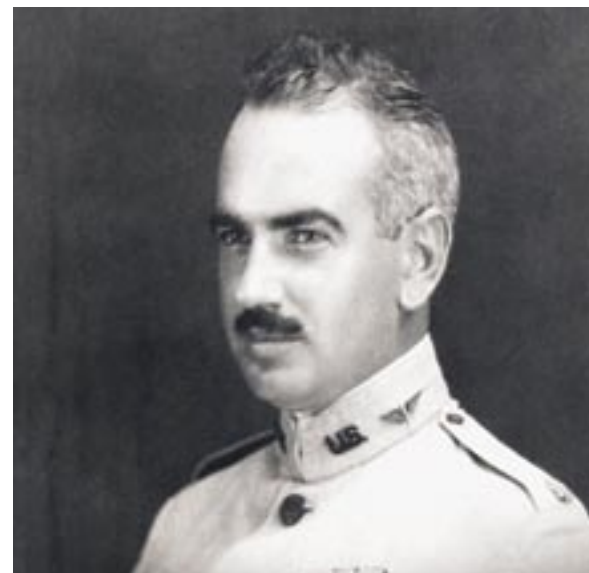
In 1916 the 6th Aero Squadron of the Army Signal Corps was sent to Fort Kamehameha for aerial coast defense. Captain Curry soon found that Ford Island at Pearl Harbor was a better site for a seaplane base. His aircraft were Curtiss N-9 seaplanes with a 100 hp engine, weighing 2,400 pounds and rated at 70 miles per hour.

In 1917 the Army constructed hangars, seaplane ramps and support buildings on Ford Island.

In May 1918 Major Harold Clark flew to Maui and then tried to reach Hawaii. He and his passenger crashed on the slopes of Mauna Kea but walked away.

The airfield at Ford Island was named Luke Field in 1919 after the WWI ace and was to be used jointly by the Army and Navy. By the end of 1919, Luke Field had 150 planes and was under the command of Army Major Sheldon H. Wheeler. Naval Aviators arrived on Oahu on 19 December 1919 with Curtiss N-9 seaplanes and set up operations at Quarry Point but soon were moving to the east side of Lake Field in 1920.

In 1921 the first radio transmission from a truck on the ground to a plane overhead took place at Luke Field.



Top left: Luke Field, 1928.
 Top right: Maj. Harold Clark
 Above: Maj. Sheldon Wheeler



The Army expanded aviation units on Oahu in 1921, established the Hawaiian Air Depot and started a new air-strip on the old 17th Cavalry drill grounds at the south end of Schofield Barracks. The new airfield was completed in mid-1922 and named for Major Sheldon Wheeler who had died in a crash at Luke Field the previous year. Billy Mitchell visited Hawaii in 1923. In Honolulu a chapter of the National Aeronautic Association was formed and 200 prominent members of the Territory were soon looking for airports and landing fields.

The economic potential of aviation was becoming apparent.

Charles Stoffer had opened the first civilian flying school in Oahu in 1921. He made many flights to Maui and Molokai. Back on the mainland two Army Lieutenants had made a non-stop 2,520 mile flight from New York to San Diego in a Fokker T-2. In 1924 Army flyers in a DeHaviland 4-B flew from Wheeler Field to Lanai in 55 minutes. Billy Mitchell returned to Washington in 1924 having surveyed Hawaii, Philippines, China and Japan. He reported the lack of Hawaiian air defense capability and a lack of coordination between the Army and the Navy on Oahu.

On 31 August 1925, Commander John Rodgers took off from San Francisco Bay for Hawaii in a PN-9 with a crew of five and the world took notice. Ten ships were stationed along the route and radio bearings were transmitted to assist in navigation. The seaplane ran out of fuel

about 365 miles from Oahu and was sailed to Kauai.

The flight proved that an aluminum alloy hull could allow a 50% useful load. Interest in commercial aviation now surged.

On Oahu \$45,000 was appropriated and \$20,000 was donated for 119.3 acres of land and 766 acres of inundated land near Fort Kamehameha.

1927 was a banner year for aviation. Charles A. Lindbergh made his solo flight from New York to Paris on 21 May and flew the 3,600 miles in 33.5 hours, electrifying the world. Many sought to do the same thing for the Pacific Ocean but finding a few islands in the middle of the Pacific was a great challenge in the days of fledgling navigation and primitive radio beacons. Within four days of Lindbergh's feat, James P. Dole of Oahu had offered \$25,000 for a flight to Hawaii and \$10,000 to the crew which came in second.

But the Army had been planning a flight to Hawaii to test a radio beacon which had been installed on Maui and could reach San Francisco. Lt. Albert Hegenberger, navigator and Lt. Lester Maitland, pilot, flew a Fokker C2-3 from Oakland, California to Wheeler Field, Oahu on June 28-29 in 25 hours and 49 minutes. This flight was hailed as a tremendous step forward. The plane was named the *Bird of Paradise*. Oahu awaited the Dole Derby.

On 14-15, July, 1927, Ernest Smith and Emory Bronte flew a Travelair monoplane from Oakland to Molokai, where they ran out of gas and crashed.

The Dole Derby from Oakland to Wheeler Field in August, 1927 contained eight contestants. Five made the flight.

Only one had a radio transmitter. The *Woolaroc*, flown by Art Goebel and Davis won in 26 hours and 17 minutes. Navigation examinations had been required for the flight but only two of the five planes made it to Oahu. Honolulu's entry, the *Aloha*, piloted by Martin Jensen with navigator Paul Schluter, made it to Wheeler Field with five gallons of gas left and no radio.

The next great flight was to be from Dallas, Texas to Hong Kong. Hawaii's airfields were considered insufficient for launching the next leg of the flight. Nevertheless, Captain William Erwin took off from Oakland on the second leg of the flight to Hong Kong on 19 August 1927. He intended to search for the missing planes from the Dole Derby on the way but developed engine trouble 600 miles west of Oakland and crashed into the sea.

All of the 1927 flights to Hawaii had been experimental and had been costly with eleven lives lost.

On the mainland, 1927 saw the first regularly scheduled commercial airline flight, sponsored by the Guggenheim Fund.

In 1928 there were fledgling attempts at commercial aviation in Hawaii with passenger and mail/freight runs to Hilo from Ala Moana. The aircraft carrier *Langley* visited Hawaii in mid-1928 with 42 Boeing fighters and Vought observation planes on her deck. The carrier *Lexington*, which had been converted from a battle cruiser, made the run from California to Hawaii in 74.5 hours.

But the major aviation event in 1928 was the first trans-Pacific flight to Australia. Australian squadron leader Charles Kingsford Smith with two American crewmen flew a Fokker-F-10 Trimotor from Oakland to Kauai in May of 1928 where a special field had been constructed to launch the longer flight to Fiji. From Fiji a beach takeoff was necessary to make the last 1,762 miles to Brisbane. Smith flew 7,230 miles in 83.4 hours. Hawaii had been a springboard for this remarkable flight.

In June 1928, Mears and Collyear made an around the world flight in 23.5 days in a Fairchild monoplane. Aviation technology was advancing rapidly.

Opposite top: John Rodgers and his crew wave before take off from San Francisco Bay.

Opposite bottom: Commander Rodgers and crew arrive at Iolani Palace for a heroes welcome and meeting with the Governor.

Below left and right: William Davis, Navigator, and Arthur Goebel, Pilot, of the winning Dole Derby *Woolaroc*.

Bottom left: Charles Kingsford Smith arrived on his way to Australia in a Fokker F-10.

Bottom right: Lt. Hegenberger and Lt. Maitland arrive at Wheeler Field, 1927.



Ushering In the Jet Age

By Owen Miyamoto, P.E.

(Editor's Note: Owen Miyamoto was the State Airport Engineer from 1962 to 1969. He was promoted to Airports Administrator in 1969 where he oversaw the State Airport System until his retirement in 1995. Owen saw HNL through many changes during his 33 years at the helm. In retirement he serves as an aviation instructor at Honolulu Community College and an airport consultant. Throughout the Mainland and the Pacific Basin, Owen is known as "Mr. Airport" for his expertise and extraordinary years of leadership in airport management.)

When I became Airports Engineer for the Department of Transportation in March 1962, the rush to make Honolulu International Airport ready to accept jet aircraft was already underway. Scheduled service with the Boeing 707 had started in June 1959 by Qantas Airlines and flying from California to Hawaii was cut by nearly a half, from 9 hours by propeller to less than 5 hours by jet.

Pan American Airways followed in September and United Airlines jet service arrived at Honolulu in January 1962. In October 1962 all airline operations moved from the terminal building built by the Navy during World War II on Lagoon

Below: The first Pan American jet arrives at HNL in 1970.
Below right: Jets line the Central Concourse in the mid-70s.

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Drive to new passenger terminal buildings on the North Ramp of the airport. The economies of the new aircraft made it possible for tourism to grow at an unprecedented rate.

We had barely enough time to settle down in our new quarters when Boeing announced in 1966 that Pan American would be the launch customer for the B-747 wide body jet. It was clear the terminal planned in the 50's for the 707 would be totally inadequate for the 747.

Director of Transportation Fujio Matsuda organized an Airport Task Force to oversee the planning for the Jumbo Age and the group held its first meeting on March 31, 1967. It was clear the terminal building completed only five years earlier had been overwhelmed by the jet age and could not accommodate the wide body 747.

Although the airport was fortunate to have inherited a runway long enough for jet operations, it was pointed directly at the city and created serious noise problems and the fear of overflights of the Kalihi-Palama neighborhood. An earlier study had recommended the construction of a "seaward runway", which was discarded because it did not increase airfield capacity.

In its place the Task Force recommended the construction of a "reef runway" parallel to the existing runway, to increase airfield capacity, and far enough from the rest of the airfield to allow aircraft to safely turn away from populated areas adjacent to the airport. In spite of environmental challenges that were carried up to the Supreme Court, the State prevailed and the Reef Runway was open for flights on October 14, 1997.

The construction boom lasted for 24 years. Beginning with ground breaking for the Diamond Head 747 gates in March 1969, the dust of construction at Honolulu International Airport did not settle until the completion of the Interisland Terminal on July 20, 1993. In addition to the Reef Runway, expanded ticket lobbies, a new International Arrivals Building, 29 wide body gates and the Interisland Terminal were among the major improvements to the airport.

Construction cost the airport fund several billions of dollars. Under the terms of the Airport-Airline Lease executed in 1962, the airlines were obligated to provide the funds needed to make up the balance between total revenues and the cost for airport maintenance and construction.

Fortunately revenues included the lucrative duty free concession that eliminated the need for any airline landing fee contributions for many years. Concession fees also were able to finance the construction of airport improvements on the Neighbor Islands that spread the economic impact of air travel throughout the state.

Building the airport facilities for Hawaii's air transportation needs has been the most satisfying part of my career with the state.

With the airlines recovering from the slump that began in the late 1990's the challenge for the State Airport System is to resume upgrading and incremental expansion coupled with a sound plan for financing operation and maintenance needs.



Owen Miyamoto



Honolulu International Airport

The First 80 Years

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Above: John Rodgers and crew landed on Kauai on September 10, 1925 after their trans-Pacific flight.

Opposite: Maitland and Hegenberger arrive at Wheeler Field on June 29, 1927.

1925

Act 176, Session Laws of Hawaii 1925, appropriated \$45,000 for the acquisition and improvement of an airport and/or landing field on the Island of Oahu... within a reasonable distance of Honolulu. The amount was not to be expended until the sum of \$20,000 had been raised by private subscription and paid into the Territorial Treasury. The Chamber of Commerce took on the task of raising the money from local businessmen.

From these funds an area of 119.3 acres of land and 766 acres under water was acquired from the S. M. Damon estate as an airport site for the sum of \$27,410.

On August 31, 1925 at 2:55 p.m., Commander John Rodgers and his crew left San Pablo Bay, San Francisco in Navy PN-9 No. 1 to attempt the first flight across the Pacific Ocean from the Mainland U.S. to Hawaii. The plane was forced to land in the ocean at 4:15 p.m. September 1 after running out of fuel about 365 miles from Oahu.

After three days of waiting to be picked up, the heroic crew crafted sails from the wings of the plane and sailed toward Hawaii. Their food supply was exhausted after the third day and their water ran out on the sixth day at sea. On the tenth day, they spotted Kauai. Ten miles off shore they encountered a submarine which towed them safely into Nawiliwili Harbor and a heroes welcome. The 1,841.12 statute miles flown from August 31 to their forced landing was accepted by the F.A.I. as a new world airline distance record for Class C seaplanes that remained unbeaten for almost five years.

1927

John Rodgers Airport was dedicated March 21, 1927. The principal speaker at the dedication was the Honorable E. P. Warner, Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The field was named in honor of the late Commander John Rodgers, who had been Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station at Pearl Harbor from 1923 to 1925, when he left to command the Navy's historical flight between the West Coast and Hawaii.

Act 257, Session Laws of Hawaii 1927, approved May 2, 1927, by Governor Wallace R. Farrington appropriated \$75,000 for airport development at John Rodgers Airport.

The labor of clearing and grading the 119.3 acres of the airport was progressing slowly but surely under appropriations of the 1925 and 1927 Territorial Legislature.

John Rodgers Airport comprising 885 acres and located at Keehi Lagoon was placed under the jurisdiction of the Territorial Aeronautical Commission by Executive Order 293, dated August 2, 1927.

1928

February 5, 1928, the Territorial Aeronautical Commission adopted a regulation requiring all privately operated landing fields to be licensed.





In July 1928, Major C. C. Moseley conducted a survey of air fields for Western Air Express and reported unfavorably on Hawaii's airports because they were too short.

Of the several proposed interisland air services, the field narrowed down to two contenders: Hawaiian Airways and Inter-Island Airways. A Mainland company, Hawaiian Airways Co. Ltd. of Nevada, erected a hangar at John Rodgers Airport and made survey flights with a small tri-motor Kreutzer mono plane.

Inter-Island Airways, a division of the Inter-Island Steam Navigation Co., began organizing to offer commercial flights.

1929

A portion of John Rodgers Airport was under construction in 1929 by the Superintendent of Public Works. A runway 250-300 feet wide and 2,050 feet long was completed as well as considerable clearing on the balance of the area. Some 766 acres of the airport was under tide water. The balance of 119 acres was available for clearing and grading. There was much delay in getting the airport prepared for use. The delay was blamed on problems of divided responsibility and a lack of sufficient funds.

The Territorial Aeronautics Commission noted the following improvements were needed immediately: clearing, grading, filling, roadways, runways, landing strips, aprons, water service, hangars, administration building, telephone, electric light and power service, and fencing.

Fiscal Year 1929 witnessed the inauguration of commercial aviation in Hawaii on a larger scale than any previous such period. Several new concerns were organized and incorporated to conduct flying activities within the Territory.

Among these were Hawaiian Aeronautical Industries at John Rodgers Airport, with W. D. Cannon, Chief Pilot. Hawaiian Aeronautical Industries, Ltd., incorporated November 5, 1928 with authorized capital stock of \$1,050,500. They intended to conduct regularly scheduled interisland passenger and express transactions. They were awaiting two Fokker F-10 Super-Trimotor planes which would carry 12 passengers, baggage and freight. They offered pilot and mechanic instruction, and general flying activities such as sightseeing and aerial photography. They had three land biplanes--an American Eagle, a Swallow and a JN-4. Eventually they did get started, flying a Kreutzer plane.

Inter-Island Airways incorporated on January 30, 1929, with an authorized capital stock of \$2 million. On October 29, 1929, two Inter-Island Airways S-38 amphibians made pre-inaugural flights from Honolulu to Hilo, piloted by Lt. Cover and Captain Charles I. Elliott.

On November 8, 1929, 51 Army and Navy airplanes flew in formation over Honolulu in celebration of Aviation Day, and the inauguration of the new Inter-Island Airways air service which was to commence on November 11, 1929. Fares for the various routes at the beginning of operations were: Honolulu to Molokai, \$17.50; Honolulu to Maui, \$20.00; Honolulu to Hilo, \$32.00; Honolulu to Kauai, \$20.00. Each passenger was allowed 20 pounds of baggage, 25-cents per pound for baggage in excess of 20 pounds. During the first year of operations Inter-Island flew a total of 275,574 miles and carried 10,355 passengers; and 18,680 pounds of express cargo.



Top: John Rodgers Airport, 1928.

Above: The world's fastest amphibian plane is unloaded at Honolulu Harbor for Inter-Island Airways.

Commander John Rodgers

Commander John Rodgers loved the Navy, flying and Hawaii. The love affair was mutual and Hawaii's first airport was dedicated to him on March 21, 1927. When the airport was moved to its current location in 1962 the Terminal Building was named in his honor, as was the main road leading into the airport.

Rodgers was born January 15, 1881 in the District of Columbia; and died August 27, 1926 as the result of a flying accident over the Delaware River, Pennsylvania, his plane falling into the river at the end of a flight from Washington.

Commander Rodgers carried on the tradition of a long-distinguished American naval family, entering the naval academy on September 9, 1899, having been appointed at large. While at the U. S. Naval Academy he played football, rowed on crew and was an all around athlete.

Commander Rodgers' father was John Augustus Rodgers, Rear Admiral (Retired) U.S. Navy, who was born at Havre de Grace, Maryland on July 30, 1862. John Rodgers' grandfather was a capable naval officer, and Commander Rodgers' great grandfather was the celebrated John Rodgers, who was in the command of the President, with the rank of commodore and distinguished himself in the War of 1812.

Lt. Cmdr. John Rodgers was advanced to the rank of Commander on November 4, 1920. After his history-making flight in the PN-9 No. 1 to Hawaii, he was assigned to duty as Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. On June 19, 1926, he was selected for advancement to the rank of Captain in the Navy.

He commanded the PN-9 No. 1, which made the first trans-Pacific flight from San Francisco to Honolulu on August 31, 1925 and got within 300 miles of Oahu when the plane ran out of gasoline. The plane landed in the water and drifted and sailed for nine days before reaching the island of Kauai. Rodgers' leadership brought the plane and crew safely through, after nine days of hardship.

Glenn Curtiss, aviation pioneer taught Commander Rodgers to fly at San Diego in 1910-1911, on North Island where the Naval Air Station now stands. At that time nei-

ther the Army nor the Navy were based on the island. What became the Rockwell Field Intermediate Air Depot was at that time just a good hunting ground for rabbits.

During his course of instruction under Glenn Curtiss, at North Island, and while Rodgers was instructing another student, a crash occurred that buried Rodgers in the ground up to his shoulders. He was flying in a land-plane at the time.

At the time of his death in 1927, Rodgers was the senior naval aviator in the U.S. service and had been flying since 1910. After his course with Glenn Curtiss, he flew for several years, and then returned to the regular line of the Navy, where he remained until approximately 1920 when he returned to aviation duty.

His career was a varied one much more so than the average Naval officer. He had 16 years of sea service to his credit, embracing command of a surveying ship for a number of years in the West Indies, command of a submarine division base of the Canal Zone for a number of years; command of the mine-sweeping detachment which swept the northern mine barrage in the North Sea during 1919. He was executive officer of the USS Nevada and developed mass singing there with the band, in connection with moving pictures in the evening.

Commander Rodgers was in command of the Pearl Harbor Naval Station from September 1, 1922 to May 1925. While at this station he specialized in aerial navigation which was of great benefit to aviation then and now.

While in Hawaii he became adept with the surfboard, and strongly recommended it to his aviators as being excellent sport and great for developing proper sense of balance. At Lahaina, Commander Rodgers rode a surfboard which was being towed behind a power boat, the tow-line being held in his hands.

At the time of his death, he had just left the post of Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, to take command of an experimental long distance scouting squadron and his trip to Philadelphia, which ended so disastrously, was for the purpose of inspecting new planes assigned to his squadron.

Commander Rodgers had not only specialized in

aerial navigation and made great improvements, but instructed all of his officers in the subject. The instruments that he perfected while at Pearl Harbor, and in which he trained his officers, were his own developments, and were used in the trans-Pacific flight.

Commander John Rodgers was distinguished for his courage, imperturbability, taciturnity and tenacity of purpose. He was a firm disciplinarian, and a man of excellent judgment. He was also a man of vision, especially in regard to naval aviation, in which he was 10 years ahead of his time.

Rodgers had nerves of steel and was noted throughout the navy for his lack of fear. Many stories of his capacity to endure pain are recounted.

It is said that on one occasion at Pearl Harbor his index finger was badly mangled. He was laid on an operating table while physicians worked on it. The pain was terrific but Rodgers was given neither a local nor general anesthetic. In spite of this, the story goes, he went to sleep while the doctors were repairing the injured member.

It was this officer's inestimable privilege to render real service to the Navy that he loved. His outstanding performance in the PN-9 No. 1 was that it occurred at a psychological moment, and was a complete refutation of the attacks then being made on naval aviation. His performance in that flight made him the outstanding figure in American air circles. — U.S. Navy



1930

A 1930 photo of Rodgers Airport shows two runways and two hangars. One of the hangars is marked Inter-Island Airways.

1930-1931

During the year, 40,000 cubic yards of coral was placed to grade and surface additional areas for the runway. The cross-wind runway was widened from 100 feet to 250 feet and lengthened from 1,600 feet to 2,050 feet. The main runway was widened from 250 feet to 550 feet and lengthened from 1,800 feet to 2,200 feet.

One thousand feet at the windward end of the main runway was brought to rough grade and needed only surfacing coral to complete a runway a total length of 3,000 feet. The intersection of the two runways was increased and brought to a finished surface. This added greatly to the appearance and usefulness of the airport.

Eight hundred feet of wire fence was placed across the space between the two Inter-Island Airways hangars so that the public was effectively kept off the runways. The macadam take-off strip was resurfaced during the year with a surface coating of bitumuls and fine rock.

Of the 40,000 cubic yards of coral placed, 10,000 cubic yards were from Ala Moana and loose coral collected from outcroppings in the airport; 30,000 cubic yards was quarried from one corner of the property; 22,500 cubic yards was excavated by contract and 7,500 by prison labor.

The prisoners did good work during the year and were depended upon for the further development of John Rodgers Airport as no funds were available to undertake further contracts.

It was proposed to add to the width and length of the cross-wind take-off, cut off certain angles between intersections to increase the usable area, and complete widening of the main take-off though the placing of approximately 20,000 additional yards of coral. An attempt was made to obtain this coral from dredging operations in progress at Pearl Harbor.

On July 12, 1930, Governor Lawrence M. Judd approved the first Territorial Airport Rules and Regulations.

A sum of \$24,000 was spent on clearing and grading. Water and electricity were provided for \$3,481.

Interisland Airways Ltd. and Hawaiian Airways Co., Ltd. were given permission to erect hangars with 20 year leases. An additional building was erected for \$5,609. The U. S. Weather Bureau established weather reporting stations at Hilo, Laupahoehoe, Kuihoele, Maalaea and Port Allen. This was the first expenditure of federal funds in support of commercial aviation in Hawaii.

1931-32

Act 17, as passed by the Second Special Session of the 1932 Legislature, abolished the Aeronautical Commission

Below: The Inter-Island Airways hanger.

Opposite top: Commander John Bayliss of the U.S. Coast Guard "wishes well" to Captain Charles Elliott, pilot of the first air mail plane to be flown in Hawaii.

Opposite bottom: Flying instructor Olean Andrew with an all-girl class in 1935.



and transferred its duties to the Superintendent of Public Works, under whose jurisdiction the work on the airport was first started.

From 1932 to 1937 the Works Progress Administration lengthened Rodgers Airports' runways, at a cost of \$34,000.

Highlights

December 1, 1932 Pan American Airways announced plans for service to Hawaii.

1932 Andrew Flying Service inaugurated non-scheduled flights between the main airports, as well as the smaller airports that could not be served by the scheduled airlines. One principal service of this carrier was to Kalaupapa Leper Settlement.

1933-1934

A gang of prisoners worked steadily at John Rodgers Airport cutting brush and weeds, blasting and grading coral, and keeping the runways in good shape.

In January 1934, six Navy P2Y-1 flying boats flew from San Francisco to Pearl Harbor in 24.5 hours.

Highlights

May 18, 1934 Women pilots formed a Hawaii aviatrix club.

1934-1935

With the development of air travel, development of suitable public airports was an increasing necessity. Additional federal grants were needed to improve and enlarge the airport.

Some funds were available to maintain the field, but with prison labor and FERA assistance, considerable improvements were made.

Inter-Island Airways, Ltd. used all of the Territorial airfields and five of them on a regular daily schedule with passengers and mail. A rental charge was instituted in 1935 for building areas occupied by them.

John Rodgers Airport was a coral-filled area with a paved runway for the prevailing wind. The field housed the main shops of Inter-Island Airways, Ltd., and was patronized extensively by amateur fliers. The Territorial airport custodian was housed at this field, and two hangars housed the planes used by private fliers and two aviation schools. A concession was rented by the Territory for lunches and soft drinks.

The principal needs at the field were clearing and grading and additional paving. Prisoners continued to maintain the field. Buildings were rearranged on the eastern side so that future hangars could be built along the field and a roadway developed in the rear.





Top: Amelia Earhart arrives in Oakland, California after her solo flight from Hawaii on January 11, 1935.

Above: Amelia is welcomed back to Honolulu in 1937 on the first leg of her around the world flight.

Opposite: Parking was easy at John Rodgers Airport in 1935. An Inter-Island Airways plane ready for take off.

Pan American Airways made its first flight to Hawaii April 16, 1935 in a Sikorsky S-42 seaplane in a time of 17.25 hours. Juan Trippe had been seeking a Siberian route to the Far East but had to settle for an island hopping route via Hawaii. He outfitted the depot ship *North Haven* with 44 aircraft technicians and 74 construction specialists and enough supplies and materials to build two villages and five air bases for seaplanes. In four months in the summer of 1935 Pan Am blasted seaplane landing areas at Midway and Wake Islands. This ambitious precedent opened a route to Hong Kong and Shanghai via Manila and Guam.

Highlights

September 19, 1934 Inter-Island Airways received a contract from the U.S. Post Office Department to carry airmail between Honolulu, Maui, Hilo and Kauai. The route was designated as Route 33. This was a very important milestone in air service to the neighbor islands. The first air mail flight took place on October 8, 1934.

November 3, 1934 Charles Kingsford-Smith made the first eastbound flight from Hawaii to California as the last leg of his eastward crossing of the Pacific from Australia. His single-engine Lockheed Altair aircraft *Lady Southern Cross* made the trip in 15 hours, a little over half what it had taken him in 1928.

November 16, 1934 Japan announced plans for air line service over the Pacific via Hawaii.

December 1934 An Australian twin-engine aircraft flying from California with a crew of three was lost at sea just short of Hawaii.

December 1934 Pan American Airways announced a plan to build four large Sikorsky Flying Boats for use on a proposed California-Hawaii-Manila-China route.

December 27, 1934 When the ocean liner *Lurline* arrived in Honolulu Harbor on December 27, 1934 it carried Amelia Earhart and her Lockheed Vega. Speculation was rampant that she would attempt a flight to the Mainland, but she insisted that she was in Hawaii for a vacation and brought her plane to fly between islands. Despite her denials, she departed from Wheeler Field on January 11, 1935 and flew to Oakland, California in 18 hours, 17 minutes arriving on January 12, 1935. She was the first pilot to fly solo between Hawaii and the Mainland.

February 20, 1935 The Hawaiian Air Depot at Luke Field on Ford Island was outgrowing its facilities. A total of 2,225 acres of land and fishponds adjacent to John Rodgers Airport and Fort Kamehameha was purchased by the United States Army from the Bishop, Damon and Queen Emma Estates for a new air depot and air base (Hickam Field) at a cost of \$1,095,543.78. It was the largest peacetime military construction project in the United States and went on through 1941. During 1935, a \$1 million condemnation suit by lease holders of Watertown was filed. The court ruled on December 9, 1935 that terms of the original leases were clear and contained a clause whereby interest in leaseholds ceased when property was condemned in public interest.

April 16, 1935 Pan American Airways commenced survey flights to Hawaii with hopes of establishing regular trans-Pacific passenger service. On April 16, 1935, the first survey flight took off from San Francisco Bay in a Sikorsky S-42 seaplane with Captain Musick, veteran PAA pilot, at the controls. The flight to Pearl Harbor was made in 17 hours and 14 minutes. This flight was the beginning of an orderly development of Pacific air transportation. Clippers were initiated into the Pacific via Hawaii, Midway, Wake, Guam and Manila to Hong Kong. Pan Am acquired both Sikorsky S-42 and Martin 130 flying boats with the S-42 arriving on April 17. Survey flights followed to Midway, Wake and Guam and a ship with construction crews, materials and equipment to build seaplane bases and hotel facilities followed.

May 31, 1935 Hickam Field was dedicated. It was named for Lt. Col. Horace M. Hickam, C.O., 3rd Attack Group, who was killed Nov. 5, 1934 at Fort Crockett, Texas.

November 22, 1935 Pan American Airways inaugurated regular trans-Pacific air service to Hawaii with a Martin M-130, the *China Clipper*, from Alameda, California to the Pearl City Peninsula in 21 hours and 20 minutes. This was the first scheduled air mail flight across the Pacific to go on all the way to Manila and Hong Kong. Pan Am operations were conducted from a company base at Pearl City. The first service was provided by Martin Clippers which were augmented in 1941 by larger Boeing Clippers. Postmaster General Farley came from Washington to witness what he characterized as



Below: Captain Edwin Musick climbs down from the first Pan American Clipper to arrive in Honolulu on April 16, 1935.

Opposite top: Inter-Island Airways planes line up on the tarmac.

Opposite center: It was 1936 when Mary Kearney of Honolulu received the largest postcard ever delivered by air mail in the U.S., just 20 hours after it was mailed in California. It carried postage of \$10.50 and was flown 2,400 miles over the Pacific by the Pan American "Hawaii Clipper."

Opposite bottom: Pan American's first paying passengers were welcomed to Hawaii with musicians and leis.

"the beginning of the most significant achievement in the development of air transportation."

1935 Inter-Island Airways began replacing its nine-passenger Sikorsky S-38 amphibians with larger Sikorsky S-43 amphibians. In 1941 this equipment was replaced by Douglas DC-3 landplanes. In the change over to DC-3s and to demonstrate the safety of land planes in over-water flying, the first three DC-3s were flown in formation from San Francisco to Honolulu. The flight was made in 14 hours, 52 minutes. Due to the size of the planes, and when the last of the S-38s were phased out, air service to Lanai ceased.

December 1935 Planning was initiated for seaplane runways in Keehi Lagoon.



1936-1937

The Department of Public Works requested the Commissioner of Public Lands to procure 66.22 acres of land to enlarge John Rodgers Airport. The land acquisition provided two runways, 4,000 and 3,500 feet long. The runways were paved 300 feet wide with 100 feet of grading on each side. Considerable work was done by the Work Progress Administration (WPA) in the extension of the runways at a cost of \$8,733.14 for materials, \$24,973.33 for labor or a total of \$33,706.47. The Territory applied for 100,000 gallons of crude oil from Pearl Harbor to lay on the runways to reduce the dust.

No further construction was contemplated at Rodgers Airport until the location of a Seaplane basin could be decided upon. Dredgings from the basin, if located near John Rodgers Airport, could be used for the improvement of the field.

In 1937 a U.S. Department of Commerce official inspected Hawaii airports. A sum of \$200,000 was appropriated for improvements.

The Territorial Legislature set up an Airport Fund from aviation gas taxes.

A 3,000 foot concrete runway was constructed at nearby Luke Field on Ford Island.

In 1937 Amelia Earhart attempted an around the world flight in a Lockheed Electra. She started by flying from Oakland to Wheeler Field. This leg was flown in a record 15.75 hours. As she prepared for the next leg, the plane was moved to Luke Field which had a smoother runway for a takeoff with a heavy fuel load. On takeoff she blew a tire and the plane was badly damaged. She went back to San Francisco by boat and later tried the around the world flight by a different route and was lost between New Guinea and Howland Island in the Pacific. Stories still linger about whether she had been on a secret mission to spy on the Japanese bastion at Truk and whether she perished in Guam or on a remote atoll in the Marshall Islands.

In 1938 the Chief Inspector of the Bureau of Air Commerce, USDC rated John Rodgers Airport as the worst in the islands.

Highlights

October 21, 1936 Pan American initiated regular six-day weekly passenger service between San Francisco and Manila via Honolulu.

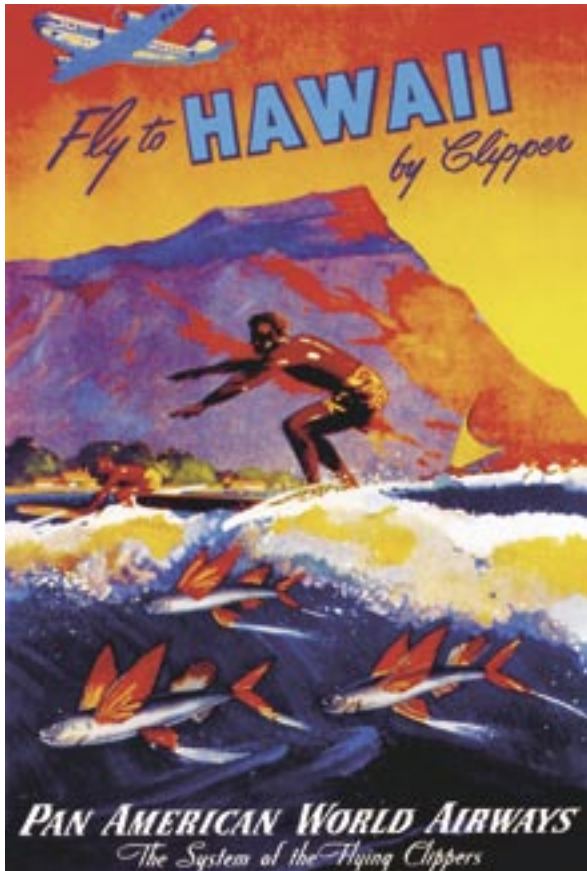
1936 There was a large increase in interisland travel. Inter-Island Airways had operated for seven years with S-38 amphibians without accident. They were now flying four S-43 aircraft which carried 16 passengers each. Two S-38s were used for charters and flights to smaller airports.

1938-1939

The Department of Public Works requested \$300,000 from the 1939 Legislature to continue construction of airports with the cooperation of the Works Progress Administration. However, no appropriation was made. The only funding available was from the Aviation Gasoline Tax of \$13,599.43.

Pan American Airways paid no aviation gasoline tax since its inception, claiming they purchased fuel in California





and consumed it outside of the Territory in Inter-State and Foreign Commerce. Therefore they claimed exemption. The question was referred to the Territorial Attorney General for an opinion.

During the fiscal year, \$1,076 was spent at John Rodgers Airport. No construction was undertaken on the field awaiting approval of the Keehi Lagoon Seaplane Basin Project. The U.S. District Engineer report on the seaplane runway was approved by the Chief Engineer U.S. Army and forwarded to Congress for funding.

Inter-Island Airways, Ltd. made 3,347 flights during the year, carrying 24,482 passengers.

Highlights

September 15, 1938 Hickam Field was officially activated. The Hawaiian Air Depot began its move from Luke Field with approximately 600 men.

1938 Marguerite Gambo opened a flying school at John Rodgers Airport and built a hangar adjacent to the Inter-Island Airways hangar.

1938 The K-T Flying Service began operating from John Rodgers Airport.

January 23, 1939 Luke Field was made a sub-post of Hickam Field.

June 16, 1939 Inter-Island Airways was awarded a CAB Certificate of Convenience and Necessity, in accordance with the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, to operate as a scheduled carrier between the existing terminals on its route. The certificate was later amended to allow operation between the major airports on all of the islands for the purpose of carrying passengers, cargo and air mail.

1939-1940

Very little work was done on airports in the Territory due to lack of funds. However, maintenance was carried out from the General Airport appropriation of \$11,877.88 from the aviation gas tax received principally from Inter-Island Airways, Ltd., and private aviation schools.

Although the Territorial Treasurer collected \$31,637.42 from Pan American Airways, paid under protest, the money was held pending a suit filed by Pan American challenging the execution of the tax. The Attorney General was pressing the claim of the Territory. A total of \$609.92 was spent on improvements at John Rodgers Airport during the year.

At the request of the Army and Navy, land on Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and Molokai was set aside for military use. In exchange, the U.S. Army turned over 91.133 acres at Hickam Field for future development of John Rodgers Airport.

Pan American Airways carried a total of 1,200 passengers to and through Honolulu. The flights were from San Francisco to Honolulu, from Honolulu to the Orient, from the Orient to Honolulu, and from Honolulu to San Francisco. Inter-Island Airways made 2,824 flights from Territorial airports, carrying 26,482 passengers.

Since the inception of John Rodgers Airport a total of \$355,945.44 was spent on construction and maintenance. This includes \$51,300.54 in Federal funds; \$191,237.59 in Territorial funds, and \$113,407.31 from Inter-Island Airways.

The total rentals received from Inter-Island Airways, Ltd. and private flying services at John Rodgers Airport amounted to \$2,720.70.

In 1936, Governor Poindexter requested the U.S. Department of Air Commerce to send an engineer to Hawaii to advise the Territory in its airport program. Robert I. Campbell was assigned by the department for this work.

In 1939, Campbell returned to Hawaii at the request of Governor Poindexter to work with the U.S. Engineers in connection with the design and construction of the Keehi Lagoon seaplane project. A Federal appropriation of \$9 million was authorized for development of this and other Territorial airports. In 1940, Congress authorized a total of \$3.3 million for dredging of Keehi Lagoon. In 1941, an additional sum of \$1.9 million was authorized for the development of John Rodgers Airport in conjunction with the seaplane project.

Layout for this combined airport and Seadrome as submitted by Campbell in July, 1941, was carried out by the U.S. Engineers and the Navy in the war development of John Rodgers Airport.

Highlights

November 1, 1939 All Air Corps activities formerly at Luke Field, with the exception of the Hawaiian Air Depot, had completed the move to Hickam Field. Luke Field ceased to exist as an Army post. The Hawaiian Air Depot completed its move to Hickam on September 13, 1940.

1940-1941

Final approval of the Keehi Lagoon Seaplane basin was given by the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army and a contract for the dredging in the amount of \$3.3 million was awarded to Standard Dredging Company, Los Angeles, California. A change in one of the runways was being considered, which would increase the cost by \$500,000. Construction began in October 1941.

Work by the Survey Division of the Territorial Highway Department was necessary on this project as the rights-of-way involved 1,621 different ownerships.

In this connection, the Department of Public Works applied to the Civil Aeronautics Authority for funds to initiate a survey to determine the feasibility of building land runways at the same time the seaplane runways were being dredged, as well as developing a final plan for a complete airport.

The Hawaiian Department, the U.S. Engineer and the local Civil Aeronautics Authority office approved the request and it appeared probable that such funds would be allotted. Immediately on completion of the survey, the Territory applied to the CAA for the necessary funds to construct the airport.

During the year, the CAA spent \$53,000 on John Rodgers Airport, while the U.S. Engineer spent \$3.3 million on the Keehi Lagoon Seaplane Basin.

The Territory collected \$18,076.08 in aviation gasoline tax, which amount was expended in maintenance and operation of the airport.

To date, approximately \$48,500 in gasoline tax has been collected from Pan American Airways. However, this amount was paid under protest and was in litigation. A decision in favor of the Territory was handed down by the court but Pan American immediately appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. A final decision was expected in October 1941.

During the year, Inter-Island Airways made 3,419 flights from Territorial airports, carrying 35,134 passengers. Inter-Island expended \$1,350 for station improvements at John Rodgers Airport.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration completed a radio station at John Rodgers Airport.

Pan American carried 1,965 passengers to and through Honolulu.

On July 1, 1940 there were 28 private planes registered in the Territory. On July 1, 1941, there were 43 private planes registered, an increase of 54 percent. These planes were all operated commercially either by the established operators or were owned by flying clubs. Three new clubs

Opposite top: Clipper poster from the 1940s.

Opposite bottom: Christening ceremony for Pan American's *Honolulu Clipper*, 1939.

Below: Andrew Flying Service.

Bottom: John Rodgers Airport in 1941.





were organized within the past year.

A total of 18,950 hours were flown by these airplanes. Of this total, 17,085 hours were logged by planes operating at John Rodgers Airport. All of this flying, which consisted mostly of student instruction and solo flying, was done without injury.

A few landing and taxiing accidents occurred during the year, but all were minor and no injuries were incurred by personnel. Four of these accidents were caused by high winds upsetting light aircraft while taxiing.

There was an increase of approximately 100 percent in flying activities at John Rodgers Airport during the past year. On Sunday, November 10, 1940, 517 take-offs were made. On Sunday, June 29, 1941, 720 take-offs were made. Each takeoff represents a landing; therefore, on an average weekend or holiday there are approximately 1,400 landings or take offs. A conservative estimate would indicate a 50 percent increase in flying in the next six months. A control tower was urgently needed at the airport.

The flying services operating at John Rodgers Airport made substantial improvements to their plants and facilities during the year. The Andrew Flying Service built an



extension to its hangar for an office. The K-T Flying Service built a new all-steel hangar 90 by 100 feet. Standard Oil Company installed an additional gasoline service, consisting of a 1,000-gallon underground tank and service pit at the K-T hangar.

Gambo Flying Service erected a 40 x 60 foot hangar and extended it to 60 x 80 feet to provide for two classrooms and two offices.

The Honolulu Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsored a CAA Non-College Civilian Pilot Training Project. The ground school was conducted by the University of Hawaii and the flight contractor was Andrew Flying Service.

Highlights

December 1940 A total of 1,153 people came to Hawaii from the Mainland by air. Flights took 16 hours and the cost was \$278.

1940 Pan American Airways started a connection by Clipper to Alaska and delivered air mail to Auckland, New Zealand through Honolulu, Canton Island and New Caledonia.

1941-1942

On October 1, 1941, Inter-Island Airways changed its name to Hawaiian Airlines.

In October 1941, layout was complete and the Army Corps of Engineers began dredging Keehi Lagoon for seaplane runways, using the spoil to augment John Rodgers Airport. \$5 million was appropriated by Congress for the project.

On November 27, 1941, the Hawaiian Islands were placed on alert. Attack by Japanese Forces was expected in the Philippines. Additional security measures were taken but aircraft were bunched up to protect against anticipated sabotage rather than dispersed against potential air attack.

Top: Hickam Field, 1940.

Above: Marguerite Gambo, Gambo Flying Service.

At 0755 on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, 183 aircraft from six Japanese aircraft carriers struck American military facilities and vessels on Oahu. The second wave consisted of 170 aircraft. Ninety-four American ships were in Pearl Harbor. Four hundred American aircraft were parked at Ford Island, Hickam Field, Wheeler Field, Ewa MCAS, Kaneohe MCAS, Bellows Station and Haleiwa Field. The American Aircraft Carrier *Saratoga* was in San Diego, the *Lexington* was delivering planes to Midway Island and the *Enterprise* delivering planes to Wake Island. The Japanese attack sunk 18 American ships and destroyed 188 American aircraft and caused 2,335 American military deaths while losing 29 Japanese planes, damaging 50 Japanese planes and suffering fewer than 100 Japanese deaths. A flight of 11 B-17s arrived during the attack from the West Coast and landed at Wheeler, Haleiwa, Hickam and the golf course at Kahuku. One plane was destroyed and three badly damaged.

Two Hawaiian Airlines transports were damaged on the ground during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The first civilian casualty of the War in Hawaii was Robert Tyce, owner of the K-T Flying Service, who was killed by machine gun fire from Japanese torpedo planes as they flew over John Rodgers Airport on their way to Pearl Harbor.

Small planes of other flying services received bullet holes but were able to return to Rodgers Airport without injury to pilots or passengers.

Gambo Flying Service lost two planes and two civilian Aeronca aircraft were fired on by the attacking forces. World War Two had started in Hawaii and was followed within a few hours by attacks on the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies.

Immediately after the Pearl Harbor Attack all airports were taken over by the armed forces of the United States. Some of these airfields were considered vulnerable to attack and unusable, and the others were placed under strict control of either the Army or Navy.

All civilian aircraft in Hawaii were grounded. Within a few days, Hawaiian Air was approved by the Military Governor to make emergency flights under military direction, carrying engineers, medicines, munitions, etc. to the neighbor islands. Passenger priority supervision was exercised by the Army for security purposes and expediting war priority transportation. As a security measure, airplane windows were blacked out.

An "Agreement with the United States Relative to Operation and Maintenance of the John Rodgers Airport and Keehi Lagoon Seaplane Base" was reached between the Territory and the military.

Kalaupapa Leper Settlement on Molokai was isolated and the Gambo Flying Service based at John Rodgers Airport was authorized by the military to furnish emergency transportation of medical supplies, etc. direct to Kalaupapa. These flights were made by Marguerite Gambo with a Fairchild monoplane which was suitable for operation into the small field at Kalaupapa.

During the early days of the War, Hawaiian's Sikorsky planes were converted to cargo planes, carrying critical medical supplies and equipment to the other islands and bringing back cargo of fresh vegetables and beef. Thus began the first U.S. air-freight service.

In December 1941 the Army Corps of Engineers was about 10 percent complete on the dredging of three seaplane runways at Keehi Lagoon which were to be two to three miles long by 1,000 feet wide by 10 feet deep. Dredging was intensified with as many as nine dredges working on the project which was useable by late 1943 and completed in September of 1944. More than 10 million cubic yards of coral was placed between John Rodgers Airport and Hickam Field, in Fort Shafter Flats, in Mapunapuna and elsewhere in the vicinity. However, the most important construction was four runways at John Rodgers Airport which would become Naval Air Station Honolulu (NAS 29) and home base for an Army and Navy Air Transport Command.

Highlights

August 1941 Inter-Island Airways acquired three DC-3 24-passenger aircraft and they flew from Oakland to Honolulu in 14 hours and 58 minutes.

Below: Barbed wire lined John Rodgers Field during World War II.





Top: Flying School.
Above: G.I.s at the "Crossroads of the Pacific."

1942-1943

Immediately after December 7, 1941, the control and operation of all Territorial airports was taken over by the armed forces for the duration of the war and six months thereafter. Under these conditions extensive improvements were made at John Rodgers Airport.

Upon the outbreak of war all civilian flying was suspended with commercial airlines allowed to continue some operations on a restricted basis. Flying around the islands during the years 1941-45 was risky. There were 37 crashes, seven of them civilian and 485 lives were lost.

Dredging operations on the Keehi Lagoon seaplane base commenced in October 1941. Dredged material from these operations proved to be of great benefit to the war effort. More than 10 million cubic yards of coral were dredged by six cutterhead and hopper dredges and the material was deposited from Fort Kamehameha to Mapunapuna to Fort Shafter Flats and Sand Island. The elevation of the airport was continued at about eight feet above low water. The amount of land at John Rodgers Airport increased from about 200 acres to more than 1,000 acres. A square mile of area between Hickam Field and John Rodgers Field was also filled in and a future joint runway conceived.

By mid 1943, the land plane area had been filled by spoil from seaplane channel dredging and three runways completed. The three seaplane runways were more than two miles in length and 9 to 10 feet deep. The field was taken over by the Army at the beginning of the War and used as a troop carrier transport base while construction of the runways was in progress.

In August 1943, the Navy received a permit from the Territory to enter and construct facilities for its own use. Extensive construction was undertaken to provide a base for seaplane and land plane operations, principally for the Naval Air Transport Service. The airport was officially designated as Naval Air Station Honolulu. The Army continued to use the field in conjunction with the Navy and all B-29s and many other combat planes were staged through the airport, making it one of the most important installations in the War.

Highlights

March 20, 1942 Hawaiian Airlines started its first scheduled air freight service between the islands.

June 1942 At the beginning of war, the facilities of Pan American Airways were placed at the disposal of the Navy and in June 1942, operations for the Navy were commenced on a contractual basis in conjunction with the Naval Air Transport Service.

1942 As Pearl Harbor became congested with ships in 1942, work was rushed on the Keehi Seadrome so that seaplane transport operations could be removed from Pearl Harbor.

June 10, 1943 The establishment of Naval Air Station, Keehi Lagoon, was approved by the Secretary of the Navy. The station was to serve as a terminal for NATS and Pan American Airways. The initial operation of both land and sea planes was planned for December 1, 1943.

December 26, 1943 The Secretary of the Navy redesignated the Naval Air Station, Keehi Lagoon as U.S. Naval Air Station, Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii, with the primary mission of maintaining and operating a base for Naval Air Transport Units, Pacific Wing.

1943 During the war years, John Rodgers Airport was also home base for the Naval Utility Flight Unit, Naval Air Transport Service, 1522d AAF Base Unit, 15th Air Service Squadron and 19th Troop Carrier Squadron.

1944

In November of 1944 the seaplane runways and launching ramps in Keehi Lagoon were turned over to the Commandant of the Honolulu Naval Air Station. By the end of World War II the seaplane runways were obsolete and the project was abandoned.