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National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

[x] New Submission [ ] Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Significant Relic Components of United States Army Air Fields in Nebraska

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

United States Army Air Fields in Nebraska during World War II

C. Form Prepared by

Name/title Greg Miller, Preservation Historian

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date November 1992

street & number 1500 R Street telephone (402) 471-4775

city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Lawrence Sommers

Signature and title of certifying official

May 10, 1993

Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Beth Boland

Signature of the Keeper

6/17/93

Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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G.	**Geographical Data**	10
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I.	**Major Bibliographical References** (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	

Blum, John Morton. V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.

Fine, Lenore and Jesse Remington. The Corps of Engineers: Construction in the United States. Washington D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1972.

Jameson, Kevin. "The Nebraska Air Bases of World War Two." Mimeographed. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1990.

McFarland, Stephen L. and Wesley Phillips Newton. To Command the Sky. Washington D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.

Overy, R.J. The Air War 1939-1945. London: Europa Publications Limited, 1980.

Peterson, Todd. "Small Town America Goes to War: The History of the Kearney Army Air Field, 1942-1949." Master's Thesis. Kearney State College, 1990.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for application to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Following World War I, the United States military experienced a rapid demobilization that resulted in dramatic cutbacks in personnel and new construction. Prevailing isolationist and pacifist attitudes contributed to a continuing decline in military strength into the 1920s. While all branches of the armed forces suffered under these conditions, the Army Air Corps, because it was a relative newcomer and had the least defined role, was severely affected by the reductions.

Beginning in 1927, however, the situation began to reverse when Congress approved additional money for new bases and more personnel. This revitalization proved to be short lived. With the onset of the depression in 1929, the military once again witnessed a decrease in appropriations. Again the Army Air Corps felt the brunt of the cuts. The meager times continued for the Air Corps even though other branches benefitted from New Deal programs that provided construction of new facilities. Not until 1937 were additional funds appropriated for five strategic air bases and two major air depots. Even with these additions, only twelve air stations were built between 1920 and 1939.

The isolationist and pacifist attitudes in America that hindered military expansion began to dissipate as events in Europe created a more volatile environment. The Munich Crisis in September 1938, which brought Europe to the brink of war, greatly influenced many Americans' views on world affairs. President Franklin Roosevelt took advantage of this change to call for a build-up of the Army Air Corps. Along with aircraft production, the army asked for, and received, several new airfields and the expansion of forty others.

The Munich Agreement granted a temporary reprieve, but events in 1939 continued to point to an impending crisis in Europe. Because of the deteriorating situation, the United States government continued to prepare for war by enlarging its military. When war broke out in Europe on September 1, 1939, expansion of the armed forces picked up considerably and gained additional momentum following Germany's success in the spring and summer of 1940. It was during this time of increased production, however, that General Henry Arnold of the Army Air Corps pointed out that it took more than planes to make an air force. Construction was also important when planning for expansion. Airfields, air depots, and barracks all needed to be constructed. The military determined that building sites "must lend themselves to rapid and economical construction. Climate, terrain, vegetation, soil, subsurface conditions, and the availability of transportation, utilities, labor, and materials" would all be factors in determining base locations (Fine and Remington, p. 131). An expansion in facilities created a need for more land. In June 1942 the War Department owned about two and one-half million acres, but they needed to acquire eight million more immediately. Of this total, five and one-third million were earmarked for airfields and bombing ranges.

Even though the number of construction projects for air force facilities increased during this time, the pace was methodical and often hampered by red tape. Debates raged over who should control construction and what building types should be used. Disagreements concerning building materials also hindered construction. But following the attack on Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941) the military developed a new construction strategy where "speed was all important and money was no object" (Fine and Remington, p. 478). The build-up in the size of the air force not only indicated the speed, but also the scale the new building boom would take. In January 1942, General George Marshall called for the air force to increase by more than 750,000 men including 50,000 pilots by the end of 1942. This meant that hundreds of new auxiliary fields were needed. "During the first quarter of 1942 the air force issued

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued)

directions for roughly 200 command projects--tactical fields, pilot and technician schools, bombing and gunnery ranges, CAA (Civil Aeronautics Authority) airports, and miscellaneous stations. The number of projects doubled in the second quarter and doubled again in the third. Not until fall, when it passed the $1.5 billion mark, did the program begin leveling off" (Fine and Remington, p. 484).

Most construction declined after reaching its peak in 1942, and by early 1944 domestic building dropped off dramatically. The one main exception to this trend was in B-29 bases. During 1944 increasing numbers of the long-range "Superfortress" were produced for use primarily against Japan. Because the B-29 was larger and heavier than other bombers, longer, stronger air strips, bigger hangars, and other modified accessories were required. After building new bases or making the necessary alterations, training for B-29 crews began in the fall 1943 near Salina, Kansas, and expanded to 40 major air bases by spring 1945.

Nebraska, like most states, became the site of a number of military installations during World War II. There were ordnance depots and plants, and prisoner-of-war camps, but most numerous were airfields. Nebraska eventually became home to twelve air bases. As with other military facilities the airfields were built in the state for several reasons. Senator George Norris fought hard to bring military projects to the state because they would not only benefit the local economy, but would also help prevent Nebraska's work force from moving out of state in search of jobs. Nebraska's central location would help insulate it from enemy attack; while at the same time it offered good flight conditions because of light rainfall, open spaces, and sparse population.

Although all the bases had similar design features the role of the fields changed according to war needs. Many of the fields were originally built as satellite bases. These installations had limited repair and health facilities and acted as auxiliaries to the primary or hub bases. Other bases were designated as independent airfields and contained more complete facilities. Also, some of the fields were upgraded from satellite to independent bases as the war progressed. The following narrative provides a short description of each of the twelve bases in Nebraska.

AINSWORTH ARMY AIR FIELD (BW00-068)

On August 27, 1942, the War Department announced the selection of Ainsworth, Brown County, as a satellite base for the Rapid City (South Dakota) Army Air Field. By late fall 1942 the 2,403 acre air base, located seven miles west of Ainsworth, was operational. It contained sixty-four buildings and, structures and a railroad spur that brought in all the supplies required to operate the base. The cantonment area provided quarters for 112 officers and 554 men.

The base was used to train B-17 bomber crews from the 383rd, 540th, and 543rd Bombardment Squadron of the 2nd Air Force. In addition, P-39 fighter pilots of the 364th Fighter Squadron, and P-47 pilots of the 53rd Fighter Squadron also trained at this field. The base officially closed in 1946 and became the Ainsworth Municipal Airport.

ALLIANCE ARMY AIR FIELD (BX00-014)

The Secretary of War selected Alliance, on April 15, 1942, as a training facility for paratroops and glider pilots. Although it had been operational for over a year, the official dedication did not take place

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued)

until August 22, 1943. Located three miles southeast of Alliance, Box Butte County, the base sat on 4,205 acres. Alliance Army Air Field ultimately contained 775 buildings and structures.

Under the jurisdiction of the Troop Carrier Command over 14,000 paratroops and glider pilots received training using C-47 powered troop carriers and CG-3/CG-4 glider troop carriers. In late 1944 the 2nd Air Force took command of the base to train B-29 crews. On December 5, 1945, the War Department closed the Alliance Army Air Base. The city took it over and turned it into a municipal airport.

FORT CROOK (SY04-) and OMAHA MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Located near Bellevue, Sarpy County, Fort Crook had been a military installation since 1891. Initially it was primarily an infantry post, but during World War I it added a balloon training school. Then, in 1921 the Army Air Corps established itself at the fort and its presence grew over the years. In early 1941 all Army Air Force operations were transferred to Omaha's municipal air port when the Glenn L. Martin - Nebraska Company leased about 500 acres from the fort to build a bomber assembly plant at the fort. As part of the lease agreement with the government, the company agreed to replace any buildings it demolished with other of like value. As a result the fort received a new hospital, post headquarters, and non-commissioned officers club.

During the war the plant built more than 2,000 bombers and modified over 1,600 more. When operations began, production consisted of the B-26 bomber only, but in late 1943 manufacturing of the new B-29 began. Included in the 515 B-29s produced were the two that were used to carry the atomic bombs dropped on Japan.

Aside from the work done on the planes, the modification program was notable because the hangars where the work was performed were built almost entirely of non-strategic materials. Because of the shortages created by the war, many building supplies were in short supply and use of alternative materials was encouraged. The two hangars at Fort Crook were constructed primarily of wood (trusses) and concrete (buttresses). In June 1946 the 2nd Air Force assumed command of the base and renamed it Offutt Field. A survey of Fort Crook and the Omaha Airport is necessary to determine the number and condition of extant resources from the World War II period.

BRUNING ARMY AIR FIELD (TY00-191)

Construction of the Bruning Air Base, seven miles east of Bruning, Thayer County, began in September 1942; and by the time of the dedication in August 1943, the field had been in operation for over six months. The 1,720 acre installation eventually contained 234 buildings and structures.

The base was used to train both B-24 bomber crews and P-47 pilots. The bomber crews belonged to the 456th and 449th bombardment Group (15th Air Force) and the 487th Bombardment Group (8th Air Force). The P-47 pilots were part of the 507th Fighter Group (20th Air Force) and 508th fighter Group (7th Air Force). Owned by the state, the property is now leased to agricultural interests.

FAIRMONT ARMY AIR FIELD (FM00-028)

On September 16, 1942, construction began on the Fairmont Army Air Field. The base, located three miles south of Fairmont, Fillmore County, was a satellite field for the Topeka (Kansas) Army Air

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued)

Base. Completed in November 1942, it was laid out on 1,844 acres, contained 275 buildings and structures, and could house 3,700 officers and men.

The base's original mission was to train B-24 bomber crews. Men from the 485th and 451st bombardment Group (15th Air Force) completed their training at Fairmont before proceeding to Europe. In 1943, expansion of the base began in anticipation of its new role as a final phase training facility for B-29 crews. Members of the 504th and 16th Bombardment Group (20th Air Force) trained at the base. Additionally crews from three other bombardment groups received retraining for B-29s at Fairmont. The air base had the distinction of having a 350 bed hospital which also served Bruning AAF and Harvard AAF, and was the largest hospital in Nebraska in 1943. The field is now owned by the state and has a variety of uses.

GRAND ISLAND ARMY AIR FIELD (HL00-041)

Prior to the United States entering the war, the federal government provided aid to cities throughout the country to help build municipal airports. These facilities were then designated as national defense airports and could be used by the military if the need arose. Grand Island, Hall County, was one of the cities that had a national defense airport. Although it originally could not handle the large military aircraft it was quickly brought up to standard after the United States entered the war. The base, located three miles northeast of Grand Island, eventually had 173 buildings and structures on 2,125 acres.

After initially being used to train bomber crews, the field later became a staging area for B-29 crews of the 20th Air Force waiting for assignment in the Pacific. After being deactivated, the city of Grand Island acquired the air field.

HARVARD ARMY AIR FIELD (CY00-123)

The Harvard Army Air Field, located three miles northeast of Harvard, Clay County, began operations on December 12, 1942. The 1,704 acre installation contained 277 buildings and structures.

Serving as a satellite base for the Kearney AAF, its mission was to train men for the B-17, B-24, and B-29. The base also had complete engine and airframe repair facilities available for all three types of aircraft. Crews flying B-17s for the 447th Bombardment Group (8th Air Force) trained at the base as did B-24 crews from the 484th and 505th Bombardment Groups (15th and 20th Air Forces respectively), and B-29 crews of 501st Bombardment Group (20th Air Force). On May 21, 1946, the Harvard base became surplus property and was eventually taken over by the State of Nebraska.

KEARNEY ARMY AIR FIELD (BF00-078)

Like Grand Island, the Kearney Army Air Field also had its origins as a national defense airport. But unlike most other bases in Nebraska, Kearney was an independent installation rather than a satellite field. Located four miles east of Kearney, Buffalo County, the base was laid out on 2,784 acres and contained 485 buildings and structures. Construction began on October 21, 1941 and by August 1942, the base was operational.

Crews from the 100th and 393rd Bombardment Groups (8th and 2nd Air Forces respectively) trained in their B-17s at Kearney. But the main mission of the base was to serve as a processing center for bombardment groups. Bomber crews came to the air base to give a final demonstration of their flying

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued)

proficiency before being sent overseas. After a brief reactivation period the Kearney Air Field was officially deactivated on March 15, 1949 and the property transferred to the city.

LINCOLN ARMY AIR FIELD (LC00-117, LC00-118)

Construction on the Lincoln Army Air Field began in March 1942 and was completed on August 20th of the same year, seventy days ahead of schedule. The base, located five miles northwest of Lincoln, Lancaster County, contained 1,016 buildings and structures on approximately 3,000 acres.

Unlike other installations in Nebraska that trained bomber crews and fighter pilots, the primary mission of the Lincoln base was to train technicians and mechanics to work on all types of aircraft. More than 24,000 men received their training at this technical school. In addition to this function, the base also served as a basic training facility for aviation cadets, a processing center for troops going overseas, and as a separation center for people leaving military service. The base became temporarily inactive on December 15, 1945. After being reactivated in 1951 the facility was finally closed on June 25, 1966. The city now owns most of the original airfield.

McCOOK ARMY AIR FIELD (RW00-001)

Activated on April 1, 1943 the McCook Army Air Base was originally designated as a satellite field, but later became an independent facility. Located nine miles northwest of McCook, Red Willow County, the base contained approximately 110 buildings and structures on 2,100 acres.

The McCook Air Field, under the command of the 2nd Air Force, provided training for B-17, B-24, and B-29 crews. Eight different bomb groups representing the 8th, 15th, and 20th Air Forces trained at the base. A total of 15,000 servicemen and 500 civilians were stationed at the field during the war. The McCook base was deactivated on December 31, 1945, and is now in private ownership.

SCOTTSBLUFF ARMY AIR FIELD (SF00-048)

The Scottsbluff Army Air Field, which became fully operational on February 10, 1943, was designated as a satellite of the Casper (Wyoming) Air Base. The facility was located three miles east of Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff County on 1,755 acres and contained 108 buildings and structures.

Under the 2nd Air Force the base was initially the training ground for B-17 and B-24 bomber crews. In May 1944 the First Troop Carrier Command took control of the installation. The Scottsbluff field then became a satellite of the Alliance AAF with a new mission of training C-47 and glider pilots. Shortly after the war ended the property was transferred to the city and in 1947 officially became known as the Scottsbluff Municipal Airport.

SCRIBNER ARMY AIR FIELD (DD00-081)

After beginning construction in October 1942, the Scribner Army Air Field officially opened on December 9, 1942. The base, three and one-half miles southeast of Scribner, Dodge County, was laid out on 2,060 acres and consisted of 87 buildings and structures.

Originally the Scribner field was a satellite of the Sioux City (Iowa) Air Base. In late 1943, however, the base achieved independent status. As with most other bases in Nebraska the Scribner facility trained bomber crews; in this case for the B-17 and B-24. In 1943 the base's mission switched to

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued)

training fighter pilots for the P-47 Thunderbolt. The most unique aspect of the Scribner Air Field was the camouflage techniques that were implemented. Using the most advance methods, the base was disguised to look like a farm and small village. Even though the state acquired the field from the federal government in 1946, the Air Force continues to operate a communications center on the site.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Air Fields

Description

The Army air fields in Nebraska varied in size and in some cases fulfilled different missions. Still, the bases shared many of the same characteristics and closely resembled each other. This commonality occurred because the building designs came from standard plans; and since the buildings performed similar functions they were usually arranged in the same pattern. When looking at an active base then, one could expect to find many of the same buildings and structures, and see them laid out in a similar way. Table 1 (see p.) lists the types of buildings and structures that could be found on a typical air base in Nebraska. The number next to the building or structure indicates how many of these still exist in Nebraska. It should be noted that no air base contains all of the existing types.

Significance

After the United States became involved in World War II, the military quickly decided that strategic bombing would play a crucial role in the war effort. To accomplish this mission, new air fields were needed to train crews. Nebraska eventually became home to twelve of these bases. The sole purpose of the air fields in Nebraska (as in other states) was to train air crews that eventually participated in the air war overseas.

Throughout the strategic bombing campaign, United States military leaders generally believed the air attacks were having the desired effect of destroying the enemies' infrastructure and industrial capacity. Studies after the war, however, proved they were only partially correct. "Strategic Bombing Surveys concluded at the end of the war, suggested that the German economy far from declining from an earlier peak due to the increased bombing effort was in fact expanding at a faster rate than before" (Overy, p. 123). But the bombing had other consequences that made it quite effective. "The important consequence of the bombing was not that it failed to stem the increase in arms production, but that it prevented the increase from being very considerably greater than it was" (Overy, p. 123). Without the bombing effort the war would certainly have lasted considerably longer. In Japan, the strategic bombing campaign was much more successful in destroying production facilities. "By July 1945 Japanese production was 35 per cent of its war time peak" (Overy, p. 125).

Even though strategic bombing did not have the results its early proponents had anticipated, it still made a significant contribution to the war effort. Post-war studies reveal that without strategic bombing, the war in both Europe and the Pacific would have lasted longer and undoubtedly cost more in terms of

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES (continued)

material and lives. Without the efforts of air crews, such as those trained in Nebraska, the air war, as prosecuted by the United States, would not have been possible.

Registration Requirements

Although some of the former air bases still function as airports, all have been effected by a return to civilian use. Demolition occurred at a rapid rate immediately after the war, resulting in the loss of a large number of resources and greatly impacting the integrity of the base as a complex. Since being turned over to civilian control, many of the remaining buildings have been altered to accommodate new usage or are falling into disrepair through lack of maintenance. At present, none of the bases contain a large number of buildings and structures (in comparison to when they were active), nor do they retain the same types of buildings and structures. Because of the reduced number of resources and the major alterations, no base retains enough integrity to be eligible as a district.

As a result, it Was considered desirable to consider the potential significance of individual building or structural components of the air base complex. Eligible buildings and structures could be significant under Criterion A for their association with the significance of the complex vis a vis the war effort. Although the bases contained a large number of buildings and structures, the vast majority were of the auxiliary type. These types of buildings and structures could be found on any number of bases (and in some cases civilian communities) and therefore did not specifically contribute to the air fields' significant mission of training air crews. Consequently, it was determined that there were only two building types (squadron hangars and national defense hangars) and one structure type (bombsight vault) that directly contributed to the bases' significant mission of training air crews for the overseas mission. Additionally, no building or structure was considered eligible until it meets the minimum fifty year criterion.

Significantly Related Constituent Property Types

Squadron Hangars

Description

After the United States became involved in World War II, the military quickly decided that the Army Air Force in general, and especially the use of strategic bombing, would play a crucial part in the war effort. This new role called for an expansion in the number of planes and the crews to fly them. To facilitate the training of crews, new bases were built throughout the country. While the bases contained a large number of buildings and structures the squadron hangars were central to the training of men who were sent overseas.

Significance

Squadron hangars are significant under Criterion A for their association with the training of air crews for overseas duty, which directly contributed to the war effort. Other hangar types did exist at the

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES (continued)

training facilities, but they were used for support or auxiliary purposes. In contrast, air and ground crews from the same squadron trained together at the squadron hangar before being shipped overseas, where they would continue to work together during the war.

Registration Requirements

A reconnaissance survey identified seven squadron hangars in Nebraska. Photographs indicate all of the buildings have been altered to some extent. All of the hangars have the original clerestory lights and other windows removed and covered on at least three of the four sides. Although the hangars can still be identified as such, this alteration has a tremendous visual impact and severely effects the integrity of the buildings. A more intensive survey, including on-sight inspection, is required to adequately determine levels of integrity. Because of the number of buildings and the known adverse alterations remaining squadron hangars can be considered eligible only at the local level.

National Defense Hangars

Description

Prior to the United States entering the war, the federal government provided aid to cities throughout the country to help build municipal airports. Those facilities were then designated as national defense airports and could be used by the military if the need arose. In Nebraska, Grand Island and Kearney both had national defense airports. Because facilities like these were in operation when the war started, they were essential to the mobilization and training of Army Air Force recruits.

Significance

National defense hangars are significant under Criterion A for their association with the early mobilization and training of air crews after the United States entered the war. Since most other air base training facilities were not completed until mid to late 1942, national defense airports and especially the hangars they contained, were instrumental in this country's military preparations during the early stages of the war.

Registration Requirements

Although national defense airports were located at Grand Island and Kearney, the reconnaissance survey did not identify any significantly associated buildings at Kearney and indicated that both facilities, considered as a district, lacked integrity. However, the survey did identify a national defense hangar at Grand Island. Photographs indicate the hangar retains a high degree of integrity on the exterior. An intensive survey, including the identification of original blueprints if available, will help determine the integrity of the building's interior. Provided integrity has not been severely compromised, this national defense hangar could be eligible at the state level under Criterion A.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES (continued)

Bombsight Vault

Description

The Norden bombsight was an essential factor in defining air strategy. Because of its importance and the sensitive nature of the technology it employed, the bombsight was a closely guarded secret. But for bomber crews to effectively use this new instrument they had to train with it. This meant that when not in use the bombsight needed to be stored in a secure area. The vault fulfilled this need. Army Air Force bases that trained strategic bomber crews could not have performed their mission if a bombsight storage vault was not present.

Significance

Norden bombsight vaults are eligible under Criterion A. They are significant air base associated property type which was used by the military to help ensure the secrecy of an advanced technology device during World War II. The use of the Norden bombsights was an integral part of World War II army air bases, and is significant under Criterion A as an important relic feature of a significant event (air war) associated with the war.

Registration Requirements

When the Norden bombsight was not in use at a training facility it was stored in a vault because of its secret classification. Originally, a building of wood construction contained five or six concrete vaults inside. In addition to being used as a security storage area, this building also had room to test and repair the sights. This type of structure is designated as a first-generation bombsight vault.

After the Norden bombsight was reclassified from secret to restricted (probably in 1944), the second-generation bombsight vault came into use. Rather than being contained in a wooden building, the vault stood in the open and was used solely for storage purposes. The two generations of vaults are architecturally the same; only the first-generation vaults were contained within a large wooden building, which also housed work spaces associated with the bombsights.

A reconnaissance level survey has identified all (six) bombsight vaults in the state. All are second-generation vaults except for one at McCook and possibly one at Fairmont. A more intensive survey is required to determine the proper classification of the Fairmont vault. None of the first-generation vaults, however, retain their original wooden superstructure.

Further survey would be beneficial to determine the exact condition of the individual structures. Photographs do not adequately identify deterioration that may be taking place. However, photographs do illustrate whether the vaults still have doors, which is a major integrity consideration. The second-generation vault at McCook has one door while the structure at Ainsworth has both doors extant. All other vault doors are missing.

If a first-generation vault with good integrity still existed it would certainly be of statewide significance. The second-generation vault, even though it did not contain testing and repair facilities,

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES (continued)

and the security measures were not as strict (since the classification was downgraded), is still significant at the local level if it retains enough integrity. The second-generation vault at McCook does meet the minimum integrity qualification since it has one door. The vault at Ainsworth, with both doors in place, however, retains a higher degree of integrity.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

There were twelve World War II Army air fields located near the following communities: Ainsworth; Alliance; Bruning; Fairmont; Grand Island; Harvard; Kearney; Lincoln; McCook; Omaha; Scottsbluff; and Scribner.

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION MEHTODS

In 1991, Bob Hurst, Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) volunteer and Nebraska State Historic Preservation board member, and Tom Buecker, Curator, Fort Robinson Museum, conducted a reconnaissance level survey of eleven of the twelve Army air bases in Nebraska. The survey identified over 125 extant buildings and structures. Research at the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics resulted in the acquisition of copies of War Department site plans for the air bases. Extant resources, foundations and non-extant properties were recorded on War Department site plans. Some of these were copied for the NSHS files. Other fieldwork documentation included black and white photographs and color slides of most of the extant buildings and structures.

Preparation of the multiple property nomination included research and compilation of background data resulting in the historic context: "World War II Army Air Fields in Nebraska." Secondary sources included The Corps of Engineers: Construction in the United States by Lenore Fine and Jessie Remington (1972), V was for Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II by John Blum (1976), and The Air War 1939-1945 by R. J. Overy (1980).

At present, none of the bases contain a large number of buildings and structures, nor do they retain the same types of buildings and structures. Because of the reduced number of resources and the major alterations, no base retains enough integrity to be eligible as a district.

Since none of the air bases are eligible as districts, individual components should next be examined for significance and eligibility. However, comparing the large number of resources that still exist could be a time consuming and cumbersome procedure. But the historical use of the air bases has necessarily eliminated a large number of resources. The sole purpose of the air base was to train crews for overseas duty. Therefore, only those component resources directly related to the training of air crews were determined individually significant. All other component properties were considered as support or auxiliary. They were either not directly related to training, not specifically significant to the importance of the base, or could be found on any number of different bases and therefore were consequently considered not to be individually significant to the historic context.

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION MEHTODS (continued)

While determining eligibility for listing, integrity was certainly one component that was considered, but other factors were also taken into account. Since most air base components were built as impermanent buildings and structures, some loss of integrity as a result of lack of maintenance was expected. So when comparing like properties the degree of alteration and integrity must be examined. Also, standards of integrity may be considerably compromised if the resource type represents the last of its kind.