

NOTE

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Documentation of Contributing Elements, Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, Davids Island, City of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York, Volume 6: Buildings 130-135 and Unnumbered Structures (Battery Practice, Flagpole, Parade Ground, Rodman Gun Monument, Seawall, System of Roads and Paths), Rev. 1, February 2010. Prepared by Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Concord, Massachusetts.

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Prepared for:

Department of the Army
New England District, Corps of Engineers
696 Virginia Road
Concord, Massachusetts 01742-2751

Total Environmental Restoration Contract (TERC)

**Documentation of Contributing Elements
Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District
Davids Island, City of New Rochelle,
Westchester County, New York**

Volume 6

**Buildings 130-135 and Unnumbered Structures
(Battery Practice, Flagpole, Parade Ground,
Rodman Gun Monument, Seawall, System of
Roads and Paths)**

February 2010 (*Revision 1*)

Contract Number:

**DACW33-03-D-0006
TASK ORDER 2**

Prepared by:

Tetra Tech EC, Inc.
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Boston, MA 02110

Submitted by Tetra Tech, EC, Inc., on behalf of:

Jacobs – Tetra Tech EC Joint Venture
55 Old Bedford Road
Lincoln, MA 01773

2010-O-JV02-0010

USACE CONTRACT NO. DACW33-03-D-0006
TASK ORDER NO. 0002
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION CONTRACT (TERC)

**Documentation of Contributing Elements
Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District
Davids Island, City of New Rochelle,
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PREFACE

The *Documentation of Contributing Elements of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District* describes and illustrates the individual buildings, structures, objects, and features that are part of the District. The District is located on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York, and it comprises the former U.S. Army post of Fort Slocum (Olausen et al. 2005). The District is a relict landscape whose various elements illustrate significant aspects of the design of military posts and the adaptation of popular American architectural styles on a permanent post of the United States Army during the period 1878 to 1965. As discussed in the historic overview section of the documentation (see Volume 1), the District's historical significance also derives from Fort Slocum's role in the defense of New York City during two periods, 1897-1906 and 1955-1961, and from its regional and national role as a recruit depot, transit station, and training center between 1878 and 1965.

In 2005, with the concurrence of New York's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (USACE) determined that the District was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (SHPO 2005). The descriptions, photographs, and primary historical materials assembled in these volumes are intended to record the appearance and history of the buildings, structures, objects, and features that comprised the contributing elements of the District as it existed in 2004-2007. Nearly all of the elements documented in these volumes have either since been demolished or are at this writing scheduled for imminent demolition.

Documentation of the individual contributing elements in the District was completed in compliance with Stipulation II.C.1 of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed in 2005 by the USACE, SHPO, City of New Rochelle, and Westchester County. Pursuant to the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 USC 470f) and its procedural regulations (36 CFR 800), the MOA as a whole addresses the adverse effects on the District of a USACE project to demolish buildings, remove debris, and remediate asbestos at former Fort Slocum. Congress authorized this project in the Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriations Act of 2004 and provided funds through the DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment. Stipulation II.C.1 of the MOA requires the preparation of an "appropriate level of documentation" for the contributing elements of the historic district that will be adversely affected by the USACE project. The documentation was prepared by the staff of Tetra Tech EC, Inc. (Tetra Tech) under contract to the USACE, with some early assistance from a subcontractor, the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. The documentation is one element of Task Order No. 0002 of USACE Contract No. DACW33-03-D-0006, a contract held by a joint venture between Jacobs Engineering Group and TtEC ("Jacobs - Tetra Tech EC Joint Venture"). The six volumes of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District* are concerned only with historic architectural aspects of the District. Results of subsurface archeological investigations are reported elsewhere (Tetra Tech 2008a).

As defined by the National Register of Historic Places (1997:5), a district is a type of historic property that "possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development." Districts may be comprised of extant historic elements or the archeological remnants thereof. The USACE designated the district at former Fort Slocum as jointly historic and archeological to highlight the mixed character of its components, which include standing but deteriorated buildings, exposed standing ruins, and below-ground archeological deposits. Like many districts, the one on Davids Island contains both contributing and non-contributing elements. Contributing elements help to convey a district's sense of time and place and historical development or help to contain the important historical information that makes the district significant. Non-contributing elements are situated within the boundaries of a district but by virtue of their age, physical condition, historical associations, or other factors do not help to convey its defining

historical qualities or historical information. The 2004 architectural survey of former Fort Slocum inventoried 105 buildings, structures, objects, and features (Olausen et al. 2005). Of these, 92 were classified as contributing elements to the District (Table 1), and they included quarters, barracks, storehouses, medical facilities, and administrative, training, and support buildings, along with fortifications, landscape features and objects, roads and paths, and the seawall surrounding the entire island. The remaining 13 buildings and structures in the architectural inventory were categorized as non-contributing (Table 1), based upon a combination of factors that included presumed age, structural design, overall integrity, and apparent historical associations. The non-contributing elements comprised several structures associated with the post's water, sewage, or electrical utilities, and several poorly-preserved or ruinous wood-frame, ostensibly temporary buildings with minimal foundations, typically consisting of concrete piers or slab-on-grade construction.

In consultation with the SHPO, the USACE determined that each contributing element in the District should be documented through descriptions, historic imagery, and contemporary existing-conditions photographs using a format patterned after that employed by the Historic American Buildings Survey and Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) for historical reports (HABS/HAER 2000). Such documentation of historic buildings, structures, and objects provides "raw data in an accessible format for easy use by future researchers" and may also synthesize "the information, making conclusions about the building being documented, either through an analysis of the building itself and its history, or by setting it in an appropriate context." The format of HABS/HAER documentation is flexible, allowing "the kind of structure or site being documented [to] dictate the final form of that documentation" (HABS/HAER 2000:3-4). For the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, the USACE and Tetra Tech chose to document most contributing elements of the district individually, using written descriptions and historic context statements; reproductions of historical maps, photographs, plans and similar materials; and digital photographs depicting their appearance in 2004-2007. Completing a separate documentation packet for individual contributing elements ensured that each was systematically considered and described.

Tetra Tech completed field documentation of the District's contributing elements in a sequence that accommodated the order of the remediation, demolition, and cleanup work. The order of this work depended upon engineering, logistical, and funding considerations and upon the ongoing consultations among the MOA's signatories and interested parties. Field documentation and preparation of draft materials thus did not proceed in the sequential order of building numbers shown in Table 1, nor did it proceed by Fort Slocum's historic functional areas (Figure 1). Rather, Tetra Tech prepared batches of draft documentation packets that roughly anticipated the sequence in which buildings and structures would be demolished. Completion of draft documentation and USACE approval of the draft was one of several conditions to be met before the demolition team could remove a building or structure.

This version of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District* retains the format of the draft documentation, but the sequence of presentation has been altered from the drafts originally submitted to the USACE by placing the documentation generally in building number order. A general table of contents covering all volumes appears after that for the present volume. Since sequencing the documentation by building number may not serve all users of these materials equally well, the functional area map of the post with current building numbers (Figure 1) and a table listing buildings by construction date (Tables 2-3) are provided as cross-indexes at the end of this preface. Aside from the sequence of presentation, the present documentation has been revised from the draft form with editorial corrections and substantive amendments that are intended to enhance consistency and to reflect historical information that has become available since the drafts were completed.

Building names used in this documentation generally derive from the functional names originally assigned to buildings, even when there was a later substantial and longstanding change in a building or structure's use. Generally, the names employed here reflect those current around 1940, when the post

quartermaster prepared a set of record cards inventorying each building then extant (United States Army Quartermaster Corps ca. 1905-41). However, exceptions do occur, including instances where a different, less historically-reliable name had already become embedded in the overall vocabulary of the USACE's Fort Slocum Project and those in which no historical building name could be established. In addition, in a few instances, compound building names (e.g., "Magazine/Blacksmith Shop," Building 113) have been employed. These are used where it seemed essential to do so for functional or historical clarity. The historical narrative section of element's documentation usually discusses historical changes in building function.

Historical building numbers at Fort Slocum can be a source of confusion, because there were four successive numbering systems at the post, ca. 1887, 1893, 1941, and 1957. These systems are discussed in detail in the historic overview section of this documentation (see Volume 1). The numbering system used herein is that being employed currently by the USACE and Tetra Tech's demolition team. It derives from the 1957 system, but includes a few idiosyncrasies introduced at various points after the post closed in 1965.

Dates of construction are, like the building function names, also derived primarily from the Quartermaster Corps property cards (United States Army Quartermaster Corps ca. 1905-41). Where the property cards are unavailable or uninformative, the dates are drawn from study of other sources, such as historic maps and aerial photographs. As used here, the date of construction is usually taken as the year the building or structure was completed. Construction of most buildings and structures, however, stretched over months and often spanned more than one calendar year, and of course designs for buildings and structures might be executed long before the buildings were actually built. Information about the timing of the entire design and construction process is generally not available, so a single year, representing the date completed, is cited as the date of construction. Following the completion of a building or structure, they may later have been altered by expansion or substantial remodeling involving structural changes. Subsidiary dates following the original completion date reflect known significant alterations to building footprints and structural systems, but it is likely that further research would reveal additional major changes not identified herein.

Stylistic classification of the buildings and structures in the District has sometimes proven to be problematic. Only a few of the buildings at Fort Slocum were designed as high-style exemplars of a single architectural trend or movement. Constraints on construction and future maintenance costs were ever-present, as was an Army ethos that favored functionality, efficiency, and disciplined restraint over excessive and exuberant display. Such constraints probably encouraged simplification of design and ornament, sometimes complicating attribution of specific architectural styles. The tendency toward simplification and a severe lack of ornament is most pronounced among the buildings intended to be temporary, such as those erected during the First and Second World Wars (e.g., Buildings T-34 and 130-135, respectively), as well as utilitarian buildings in out of the way places (e.g., Building 52, the noncontributing Sewage Tank House). In addition, the many individual design elements and ornaments that classically define a particular style were constantly being reshuffled in new building designs and major renovations (Brand 1994; McAlester and McAlester 2000). The permanent buildings constructed at Fort Slocum between the mid-1890s and ca. 1940—which comprise around half of all the buildings on the post—were built during a period when brick construction and the Colonial Revival style dominated Army architecture in most areas of the continental United States. To harmonize buildings on these posts, the style of earlier buildings from this period tended to draw later designs toward them, resulting in elements from newer styles being subsumed by the dominant style, but not entirely eclipsed by them (Chattey et al. 1997:1-14; Hoagland 2004:211-243). Many of the buildings at Fort Slocum are therefore a more or less eclectic mix of two or more named architectural styles, a point that is highlighted as appropriate in the documentation.

Research and preparation of this documentation spanned three years and involved several authors and editors. The work proceeded somewhat episodically over this period. For general historical background, Tetra Tech initially relied upon several earlier historical and architectural studies, including ones prepared by Historical Perspectives (1986), Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. (1986), and Olausen et al. (2005). Tetra Tech's early subcontractor, the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL), collected a series of nineteenth- and twentieth-century maps from the National Archives and other sources and prepared the documentation on the Freight Pier and Passenger Dock (Volume 2). Tetra Tech staff conducted additional research online and in person at the National Archives, the New Rochelle Public Library, and other repositories. Tetra Tech greatly benefited from the knowledge and research of several people knowledgeable about aspects of Fort Slocum's history. Most importantly, Michael A. Cavanaugh of Los Angeles, California, author of a forthcoming book on Fort Slocum's history and organizer of the informal Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Association, was generous in sharing his knowledge and materials. Barbara Davis, New Rochelle City Historian and member of the staff of the New Rochelle Public Library, also helped Tetra Tech's team understand the history and significance of Fort Slocum and pointed out locally-available resources. E-mail correspondence and research materials from Bolling Smith, fortifications expert and member of the Coastal Defense Study Group, clarified many aspects of the artillery batteries erected at Fort Slocum. Oral history interviews with more than twenty-five people formerly associated with Fort Slocum as service personnel, civilian employees, or dependents (Tetra Tech 2008b) supplied additional historical details about life at the post and the uses and histories of individual buildings that otherwise would have been unavailable.

Field documentation of the contributing and noncontributing buildings and structures in the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, emphasizing digital photography, was completed by the staff members from PAL, the USACE, and Tetra Tech. PAL photographed most buildings between late 2004 and early 2006. Tetra Tech supplemented and expanded this core collection of images during archeological, historic architecture, and engineering investigations conducted between 2005 and 2008. The USACE provided additional supplementary images as a result of two trips to the island in early 2006.

Tetra Tech's Cultural Resources Documentation Team based in Morris Plains, New Jersey, consisted of Caleb W. Christopher and James C. Sexton, Ph.D. (architectural historians), Christopher L. Borstel, Ph.D., RPA (archeologist and research historian), and Robert M. Jacoby (oral historian and documentation compiler). The team was supervised by Tetra Tech's discipline lead for cultural resources, Sydne B. Marshall, Ph.D., RPA, who was responsible for initial project design, task management, personnel assignments, and technical quality assurance. Tetra Tech's overall work on Davids Island is managed by George M. Willant in the company's Boston office. At the USACE, Nancy J. Brighton has planned and guided the agency's compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and reviewed the draft versions of all documentation. Gregory J. Goepfert is the USACE's project manager for its remediation, demolition, and restoration project at former Fort Slocum.

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Louis Berger & Associates, Inc.

- 1986 *Fort Slocum, Davids Island, New York: A Historic Architectural Assessment.* Prepared for Dresdner Associates, Jersey City, New Jersey, by the Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, East Orange, New Jersey.

National Register of Historic Places

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Olausen, Stephen, Matthew Kierstead, and Jeffrey Emidy

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State Historic Preservation Office [SHPO]

- 2005 "RE: CORPS, Fort Slocum, Davids Island, New Rochelle, Westchester County, 04PR02680." Letter of February 25 to Gregory J. Goepfert, Project Manager, Environmental Analysis Branch, Department of the Army, New York District, Corps of Engineers, New York, NY, from Peter D. Shaver, Historic Preservation Program Analyst, State Historic Preservation Office, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Peebles Island, NY.

Tetra Tech EC, Inc.

- 2008a *Phase IB Archeological Surveys of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, City of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York, 2005 and 2006 Field Season Reports.* Prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Concord, Massachusetts, by Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston.
- 2008b *Davids Island/Fort Slocum Oral History Project—“And by golly I’m so proud of being part of this military life:” Conversations with Members of the Fort Slocum Community, April 2008 (draft report).* Prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Concord, Massachusetts, by Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston.

United States Army Quartermaster Corps

- ca. 1905-41 Fort Slocum Property Cards (Form 117 and predecessors). Record Group 77. National Archives, College Park, MD.

Figure 1. Historic functional areas of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District

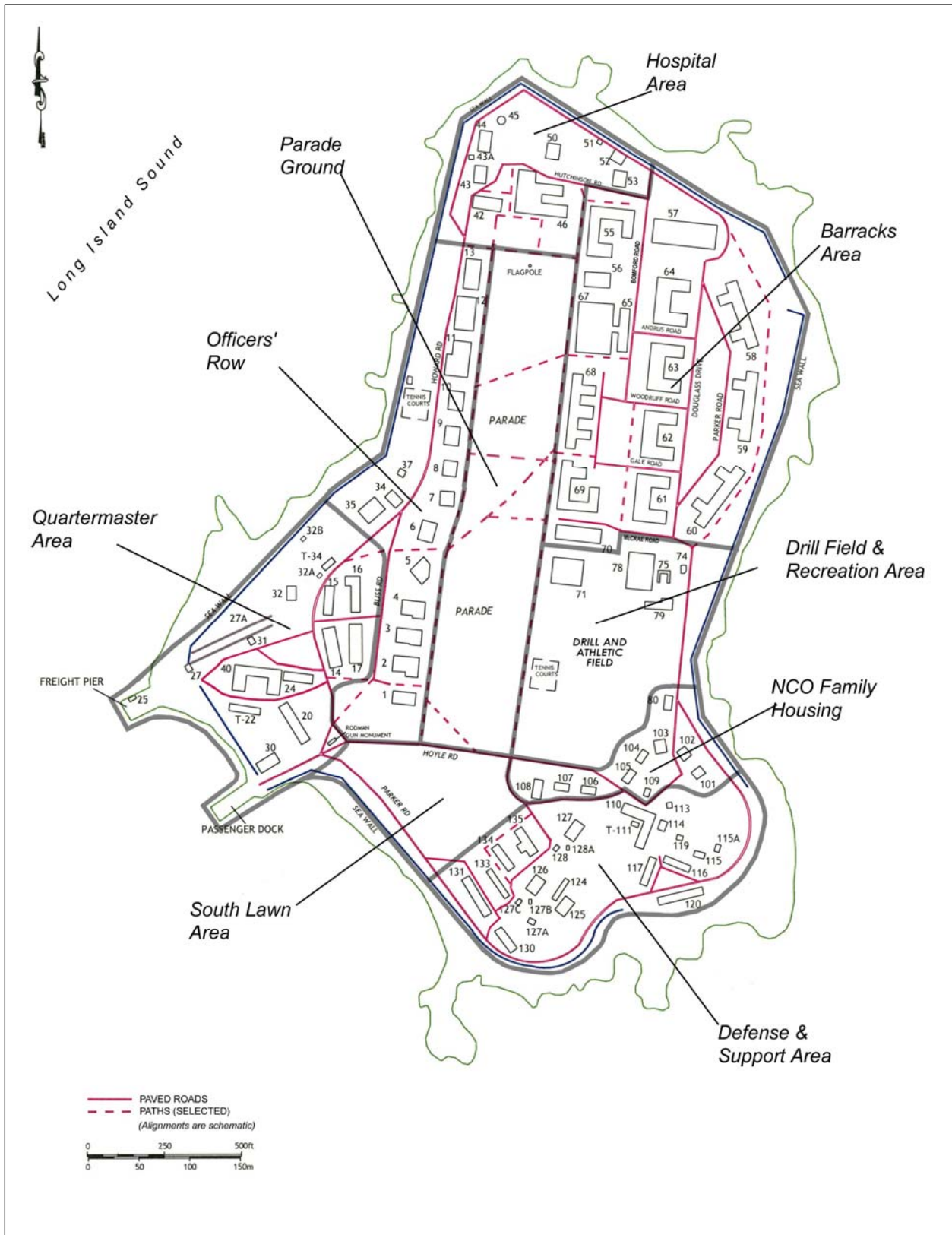


Table 1. Contributing and Non-Contributing Buildings, Structures, and Other Elements of the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, as Defined in Olausen et al. (2005), MOA (2005), and through subsequent research.

| Building No. | Contributing | Non-Contributing | Building No. | Contributing | Non-Contributing |
|--------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1 | X | | 65 | X | |
| 2 | X | | 67 | X | |
| 3 | X | | 68 | X | |
| 4 | X | | 69 | X | |
| 5 | X | | 70 | X | |
| 6 | X | | 71 | X | |
| 7 | X | | 74 | X | |
| 8 | X | | 75 | - | X |
| 9 | X | | 78 | - | X |
| 10 | X | | 79 | X | |
| 11 | X | | 80 | - | X |
| 12 | X | | 101 | X | |
| 13 | X | | 102 | X | |
| 14 | X | | 103 | X | |
| 15 | X | | 104 | X | |
| 16 | X | | 105 | X | |
| 17 | X | | 106 | X | |
| 20 | X | | 107 | X | |
| T-22 | - | X | 108 | X | |
| 24 | X | | 109 | - | X |
| 25 | X | | 110 | X | |
| 27 | X | | T-111 | X | |
| 27A | X | | 113 | X | |
| 30 | X | | 114 | X | |
| 31 | X | | 115 | X | |
| 32 | X | | 115A | - | X |
| 32A | X | | 116 | - | X |
| 32B | - | X | 117 | - | X |
| T-34 | X | | 119 | X | |
| 34 | X | | 120 | - | X |
| 35 | X | | 124 | X | |
| 37 | X | | 125 | X | |
| 40 | X | | 126 | X | |
| 42 | X | | 127 | X | |
| 43 | X | | 127A | X | |
| 43A | - | X | 127B | X | |
| 44 | X | | 127C | X | |
| 45 | X | | 128 | X | |
| 46 | X | | 128A | X | |
| 50 | X | | 130 | X | |
| 51 | - | X | 131 | X | |
| 52 | - | X | 133 | X | |
| 53 | X | | 134 | X | |
| 55 | X | | 135 | X | |
| 56 | X | | Battery Practice | X | |
| 57 | X | | Flagpole | X | |
| 58 | X | | Freight Pier | X | |
| 59 | X | | Officers' Tennis Courts | X | |
| 60 | X | | Parade Ground | X | |
| 61 | X | | Passenger Dock | X | |
| 62 | X | | Rodman Gun Monument | X | |
| 63 | X | | Seawall | X | |
| 64 | X | | System of Roads and Paths | X | |

Table 2. Index of Contributing Elements in the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District by Date of Construction.

| Date Completed | Building Number | Name | Documentation Volume |
|----------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| ca. 1862-1950 | - | System of Roads and Paths | 6 |
| ca. 1871 | - | Parade Ground | 6 |
| 1878 | 2 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1878 | 3 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1878 | 4 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1881 | 14 | Quartermaster Storehouse and Quarters | 2 |
| 1884 | - | Passenger Dock | 2 |
| 1885 | 113 | Magazine / Blacksmith Shop | 5 |
| 1886 | 5 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1886 | 7 | Officer's Quarters | 1 |
| 1886 | 8 | Officer's Quarters | 1 |
| 1886 | 67 | Mess Hall | 4 |
| ca. 1886 | 119 | Receiving Vault | 5 |
| 1887 | 68 | Barracks | 4 |
| 1888 | 69 | Barracks | 4 |
| 1889 | 55 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1890-ca. 1942 | - | Seawall | 6 |
| 1891-1897 | 125, 126, and 127 | Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin Pits A and B; Battery Overton Pit B) | 5 |
| 1892 | 6 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1893 | 1 | Commanding Officer's Quarters | 1 |
| 1893 | 11 | Officers' Mess | 1 |
| 1893 | 25 | Freight Pier | 2 |
| 1893 | 27A | Coal Yard & Conveyor | 2 |
| 1895 | 9 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1895 | 10 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1893-1898 | - | Battery Practice | 6 |
| 1896 | 56 | Guardhouse | 3 |
| 1896 | 110 | Ordnance Storehouse / Laundry | 5 |
| 1897 | 128 | Mortar Battery Powerhouse | 5 |
| 1898 | 46 | Hospital | 3 |
| 1900 | - | Rodman Gun Monument | 6 |
| 1902 | 24 | Carpenter Shop | 2 |
| 1902 | 34 | Non-Commissioned Officer's Quarters / Officer's Quarters | 2 |
| 1904 | 16 | Quartermaster Storehouse / Commissary | 2 |
| 1904 | 17 | Quartermaster Storehouse | 2 |
| ca. 1904 | 127B | Mortar Battery Data Booth ("Fire Control Building"), Haskin Pit B | 5 |
| ca. 1904 | 128A | Mortar Battery Data Booth ("Fire Control Building"), Overton Pit B | 5 |
| 1905 | 70 | Post Exchange | 4 |
| ca. 1905 | 114 | Searchlight Powerhouse / Laundry Boiler Room | 5 |
| 1906 | 63 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1908 | 20 | Quartermaster Storehouse / Post Engineer's Office | 2 |
| 1908 | 40 | Wagon Shed / Garage | 2 |
| 1908 | 42 | Recruit Examination Building | 3 |
| 1908 | 64 | Barracks | 3 |

Table 2 (continued).

| Date Completed | Building Number | Name | Documentation Volume |
|----------------|-----------------|---|----------------------|
| 1908 | 102 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1909 | 13 | Administration Building | 1 |
| 1909 | 50 | Isolation Hospital | 3 |
| 1909 | 57 | Drill Hall and Gymnasium | 3 |
| 1909 | 61 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1909 | 62 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1909 | 71 | YMCA | 4 |
| 1909 | 101 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1909 | 103 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1909 | 108 | Chapel | 4 |
| 1909 | 115 | Incinerator | 5 |
| 1910 | 12 | Officers' Quarters | 1 |
| 1910 | 35 | Officers' Quarters | 2 |
| 1910 | 37 | Electrical Substation | 2 |
| 1910 | 43 | Hospital Sergeants' Quarters | 3 |
| 1917 | T-34 | Temporary Storehouse / Quarters | 2 |
| 1929 | 45 | Water Tower | 3 |
| 1930 | 60 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1930 | 104 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1930 | 105 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1930 | 106 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1930 | 107 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 4 |
| 1932 | 58 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1933 | 74 | Sewage Sump and Pumping Station A | 4 |
| 1938 | 27 | Coal Conveyor Shed | 2 |
| 1938 | 30 | Passenger Waiting Room / Quarters | 2 |
| 1938 | 31 | Coal Yard Shed | 2 |
| 1939 | 53 | Sludge Drying Bed Building | 3 |
| 1939 | 59 | Barracks | 3 |
| 1940 | 32 | Paint Shop | 2 |
| 1940 | 44 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters | 3 |
| 1940 | 65 | Post Bakery | 4 |
| 1941 | 15 | Quartermaster Storehouse | 2 |
| 1942 | 79 | Firehouse | 4 |
| 1942 | T-111 | Firing Range Storehouse ("Pistol Range Storehouse") | 5 |
| 1943 | 130 | WAC Barracks ("Temporary Barracks") | 6 |
| 1943 | 131 | WAC Recreation & Administration Building ("Temporary Barracks") | 6 |
| 1943 | 133 | WAC Mess Hall ("Temporary Barracks") | 6 |
| 1944 | 134 | WAC Barracks ("Temporary Barracks") | 6 |
| 1944 | 135 | WAC Barracks ("Temporary Barracks") | 6 |
| 1950 | 32A | Transformer Vault No. NE 1A | 2 |
| 1954 | 124 | Nike Sighting Station | 5 |
| 1954 | 127A | Nike Generator Building | 5 |
| ca. 1955 | 127C | Transformer Vault No. 9 | 5 |
| 1960 | - | Flagpole | 6 |

(Table is slightly revised from versions that appear in Volumes 1 to 4 to reflect additional historical information.)

Table 3. Index of Non-Contributing Elements in the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District by Date of Construction.

| Date Completed | Building Number | Name |
|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 1929 | 43A | Valve House |
| 1933 | 51 | Sewage Sump and Pumping Station B |
| 1933 | 52 | Sewage Tank House |
| 1941 | 109 | Transformer House No. 3 |
| 1941 | 117 | Temporary Storehouse / Office |
| 1942 | T-22 | Temporary Storehouse |
| 1942 | 75 | Handball Courts |
| 1942 | 78 | Armory & Gymnasium |
| 1942 | 116 | Temporary Storehouse |
| 1944 | 120 | Temporary Storehouse |
| 1950 | 32-B | Pump House |
| 1955 | 115A | Machine Shed |
| 1960 | 80 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Children's Swimming Pool |

Detailed documentation has not been prepared for non-contributing elements in the District. Architectural inventory forms giving brief descriptions of these elements are included in Olausen et al. (2005).

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WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131)

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WAC Barracks (Building 134)

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Flagpole (Unnumbered)

Parade Ground (Unnumbered)

Rodman Gun & Monument (Unnumbered)

Seawall (Unnumbered)

System of Roads and Paths (Unnumbered)

**Documentation of Contributing Elements
Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District**

Contents, Volumes 1 to 6

Volume 1

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|----|--------------------------------|
| - | Fort Slocum: Historic Overview |
| 1 | Commanding Officer's Quarters |
| 2 | Officers' Quarters |
| 3 | Officers' Quarters |
| 4 | Officers' Quarters |
| 5 | Officers' Quarters |
| 6 | Officers' Quarters |
| 7 | Officer's Quarters |
| 8 | Officer's Quarters |
| 9 | Officers' Quarters |
| 10 | Officers' Quarters |
| 11 | Officers' Mess |
| 12 | Officers' Quarters |
| 13 | Administration Building |

Volume 2

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|------|--|
| - | Passenger Dock |
| - | Freight Pier, including Crane (Blg. 25) |
| 14 | Quartermaster Storehouse and Quarters |
| 15 | Quartermaster Storehouse |
| 16 | Quartermaster Storehouse / Commissary |
| 17 | Quartermaster Storehouse |
| 20 | Quartermaster Storehouse / Post Engineer's Office |
| 24 | Carpenter Shop |
| 27 | Coal Conveyor Shed |
| 27A | Coal Yard & Conveyor |
| 30 | Passenger Waiting Room / Quarters |
| 31 | Coal Yard Shed |
| 32 | Paint Shop |
| 32A | Transformer Vault No. NE 1A |
| T-34 | Temporary Storehouse / Quarters |
| 34 | Non-Commissioned Officer's Quarters / Officer's Quarters |
| 35 | Officers' Quarters |
| 37 | Electrical Substation |
| 40 | Wagon Shed / Garage |

Volume 3

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 42 | Recruit Examination Building |
| 43 | Hospital Sergeants' Quarters |
| 44 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 45 | Water Tower |
| 46 | Hospital |
| 50 | Isolation Hospital |
| 53 | Sludge Drying Bed Building |
| 55 | Barracks |
| 56 | Guardhouse |
| 57 | Drill Hall and Gymnasium |
| 58 | Barracks |
| 59 | Barracks |
| 60 | Barracks |
| 61 | Barracks |

Volume 3 (cont.)

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|----|----------|
| 62 | Barracks |
| 63 | Barracks |
| 64 | Barracks |

Volume 4

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 65 | Post Bakery |
| 67 | Mess Hall |
| 68 | Barracks |
| 69 | Barracks |
| 70 | Post Exchange |
| 71 | YMCA |
| 74 | Sewage Sump and Pumping Station A |
| 79 | Firehouse |
| 101 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 102 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 103 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 104 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 105 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 106 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 107 | Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters |
| 108 | Chapel |

Volume 5

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|-------|---|
| 110 | Ordnance Storehouse / Laundry |
| T-111 | Firing Range Storehouse* |
| 113 | Magazine / Blacksmith Shop |
| 114 | Searchlight Powerhouse / Laundry Boiler Room* |
| 115 | Incinerator |
| 119 | Receiving Vault |
| 124 | Nike Sighting Station |
| 125 | Battery Haskin Pit A } |
| 126 | Battery Haskin Pit B } Mortar Battery |
| 127 | Battery Overton Pit B } |
| 127A | Nike Generator Building |
| 127B | Mortar Battery Data Booth, Haskin Pit B* |
| 127C | Transformer Vault No. 9 |
| 128 | Mortar Battery Powerhouse |
| 128A | Mortar Battery Data Booth, Overton Pit B* |

Volume 6

Blg. No. Building Name

| | |
|-----|---|
| 130 | WAC Barracks* |
| 131 | WAC Administration & Recreation Building* |
| 133 | WAC Mess Hall* |
| 134 | WAC Barracks* |
| 135 | WAC Barracks* |
| - | Battery Practice |
| - | Flagpole |
| - | Parade Ground |
| - | Rodman Gun & Monument |
| - | Seawall |
| - | System of Roads and Paths |

**Revised building name, January 2010.*

DAVIDS ISLAND – FORT SLOCUM HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Location:</u> | Dauids Island–Fort Slocum 0.6 mi southeast of New Rochelle, New York mainland USGS Mount Vernon, NY Quadrangle UTM Coordinate (NAD 1983): 18.603604.4526214 |
| <u>Present Owner(s):</u> | City of New Rochelle, NY |
| <u>Date of Construction:</u> | 1943 |
| <u>Architect/Engineer:</u> | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| <u>Present Use:</u> | Abandoned when documented (2004-2006). Demolished 2006 |
| <u>Significance:</u> | The WAC Barracks (Building 130)—identified generically in earlier project documentation as a “Temporary Barracks”—is associated with the Defense and Support Area and the provision of quarters for the personnel of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), who supported and participated in Fort Slocum’s mid-twentieth-century military missions. Later transferred to the Integrated Fire Control section of Nike missile Battery NY-15, it also embodies the adaptive reuse of buildings at the post. The building is a contributing element to the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District. |
| <u>Project Information:</u> | The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps), has been authorized under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2004, to perform building demolition, debris removal, and remediation of asbestos materials (Project) at the Fort Slocum on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, New York. The purpose of the Project is to remove buildings and infrastructure from the abandoned fort installation that create safety hazards as part of a long-range plan to restore Davids Island for future use. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), the Corps has consulted with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (NYSHPO) regarding the effects of the Project on historic properties. The consultation resulted in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, NYSHPO, County of Westchester, and City of New Rochelle as consulting parties. This documentation report was prepared in accordance with Stipulation II.C.1 of the MOA. |
| <u>Prepared by:</u> | C.L. Borstel, J.C. Sexton, R.M. Jacoby, S.B. Marshall, and C.W. Christopher |
| <u>Title:</u> | Cultural Resources Documentation Team |
| <u>Affiliation:</u> | Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ |
| <u>Date:</u> | October 2006 (Revision 1, February 2010) |

PART I. DESCRIPTION

The WAC Barracks (Building 130) is one of a group of five buildings, originally designated as temporary, that were constructed to house members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and its 1942-1943 predecessor, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC). This group of buildings is situated near the southern shore of Davids Island. Davids Island is a roughly pear-shaped, relatively flat landmass consisting of approximately 78 acres above mean high water. It is heavily wooded and contains the ruins of more than 100 buildings and structures associated with an abandoned U.S. Army post, Fort Slocum. The ruins include barracks and quarters; quartermaster, administrative, medical, and recreation buildings; and coastal and air defense facilities. A concrete and stone seawall encircles most of the shore, and a system of roads and paths runs throughout the island. The five WAC buildings adjoin the western side of the Mortar Battery along the edge of the Defense and Support Area. This section of Fort Slocum is a mixed-use area of the post that includes service and storage facilities, quarters, and vacant defensive works.

Building 130 was destroyed by fire sometime between 1980, when an aerial photograph shows it as intact, and 1986, when its ruins were first inventoried by architectural historians (Berger 1986). It stood adjacent to Parker Road close to the seawall. Historical photographs, such as one taken in ca. 1944, soon after it was completed, record that Building 130 was a rectangular, two-story wood-frame end-gabled structure on a concrete block foundation (Figures 1-5). Building 130 was an example of a standardized Second World War-era mobilization-type barracks, probably constructed from a design specifically developed for the WAAC/WAC. Like its neighbors, Buildings 131-135, it was plain and omitted nearly all internal and external details and finishes that were not essential to its function as a temporary building to billet servicewomen.

The building's low-pitch roof was clad in asphalt shingles. The roof had little or no overhang at the gables or eaves, and there were plain fascias at the roof-wall joins. The building lacked gutters and downspouts. The exterior walls were covered by wood shingles, reportedly green in color. The northwestern end of the building was probably where the main entrance was located. This façade had a louvered vent at the gable peak and three evenly-spaced double-hung wood-frame windows with six-over-six lights on the second floor. There were two entrances on the first floor, one at the center and one offset to the left. The façades of the two long sides featured a row of around ten windows, generally regularly-spaced, on each floor. The windows were double-hung and wood-framed with six-over-six lights. The southeastern end of the building had a louvered vent beneath the gable peak and centered doorways on both floors. The second-floor entrance was reached by an exterior wood fire escape stairway, which led to a small porch over the first-floor entrance. There were no windows at this end of the building. A square, brick chimney rose adjacent to the building wall near the building's northwestern corner. Information about the interior layout of the building is unavailable.

The ruin of Building 130 measures approximately 30 by 100 feet. It consists primarily of an open slab-on-grade foundation with a low perimeter wall for the building's sills; an external chimney stack stands immediately adjacent near the northwestern corner (Photos 1-5). The area is covered in thick vegetation, and foundation elements are difficult to examine in detail. The perimeter wall of the foundation is constructed of concrete blocks, except at the corners, where they are laid up in brick. Concrete posts inside the foundation supported floor joists. A freestanding cast concrete structure near the center of the ruin consists of five open booths; these are apparently shower stalls. The building's furnace room was presumably located next to the chimney stack, but was not completely enclosed by concrete block walls as were such rooms in some other buildings erected on the post in the Second World War. A scatter of architectural debris, including glass, pieces of charred lumber, plumbing fixtures, and the like covers the interior of the ruin.

PART II. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Fort Slocum

Dauids Island is named for Thaddeus Davids (1816-1894), a New Rochelle ink manufacturer, who owned the island between 1856 and 1867. Davids was next-to-last in a line of private owners and lessees associated with the island between circa 1700 and the 1860s. During this period, the island was used primarily as farmland, but beginning probably in the 1840s, it also became a destination for excursionists who traveled by steamboat from New York and Brooklyn to picnic by the sea. The U.S. Army leased the island in 1862 and purchased it outright in 1867. In 1967, the federal government sold Davids Island to the City of New Rochelle, which sold it in turn the following year to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. Consolidated Edison returned ownership of most of the island to the city in 1976.

Two U.S. Army posts successively occupied Davids Island between 1862 and 1965. The earlier post was established as De Camp General Hospital in May 1862. The hospital treated wounded Union soldiers and, from 1863 onwards, also cared for Confederate prisoners of war. After the Civil War, the Army remained on the island, apparently using the post somewhat discontinuously as a hospital, mustering-out camp, and subdepot for recruits. By the early 1870s, the hastily-built wood frame buildings of the Civil War had deteriorated badly, and in October 1874 the Army entirely withdrew from the island, beginning a hiatus in occupation of nearly four years.

The Army returned in July 1878, when Davids Island was designated as a principal depot of the General Recruiting Service, supplanting Governors Island off lower Manhattan in that role. Originally known simply as Davids Island, the Army formally named the post Fort Slocum in 1896 to honor Maj. Gen. Henry Warner Slocum (1827-1894), a prominent Union soldier and New York politician. Recruit intake and training was a primary function of the post well into the twentieth century. Fort Slocum also saw service as an overseas embarkation station; hosted Army specialty schools for bakers, transportation officers, chaplains, public affairs personnel, and military police; provided retraining for court-martialed soldiers; and was an administrative center for the Air Force. Coastal artillery batteries operated at the post around the beginning of the twentieth century. During the Cold War, Fort Slocum supported an air defense missile battery.

When the post closed in 1965, Fort Slocum's landscape integrated elements from different episodes of development into a campus-like whole. Several episodes of development were represented, particularly 1885-1910 and 1929-1940. A few wood frame buildings remained from the late 1870s and early 1880s, and at least nine such buildings represented the Second World War. However, of the more than 50 temporary wood frame buildings erected during the First World War, only a single, partial example survived. Most of the buildings at Fort Slocum followed standard Army plans, but Army personnel or outside professional architects also produced a few designs specifically for the post. The permanent buildings at Fort Slocum generally reflected conservative and eclectic interpretations of different currents in American architecture, producing an engaging mix of Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Romanesque, and Italianate styles. The temporary buildings around the post were in contrast unadorned and starkly utilitarian, as they were designed principally for speed of construction.

The period after Fort Slocum closed in November 1965 saw severe deterioration of the former Army post. The City of New Rochelle repeatedly sought to redevelop Davids Island, at one time considering a Consolidated Edison proposal to build a nuclear power plant and later supporting proposals for luxury residences. None of these plans materialized. Neglect and vandalism took a heavy toll on the former post.

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 4)

By the first decade of the twenty-first century, the landscape was overgrown, and the more than 100 buildings and structures that once comprised Fort Slocum were in decay and ruin.

Detailed accounts of Fort Slocum's history can be found in the general historic overview to this documentation series (Tetra Tech 2008) and in Olausen et al. (2005), among other sources.

WAC Barracks (Building 130)

Building 130 is one of a group of five buildings constructed in 1943 and 1944 to quarter the 200-plus servicewomen stationed at Fort Slocum during the Second World War. The group included Buildings 130, 131, and 133, which were completed in July 1943, and Buildings 134 and 135, completed in September 1944. The five buildings stand on the western side of Fort Slocum's Defense and Support Area in the southeastern quadrant of Davids Island. This functional area contained defense works and related buildings, as well as activities desirably kept separate from the remainder of the post. It was centered on Fort Slocum's Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, Buildings 125-127), a large earth and concrete fortification for heavy, anti-ship mortars constructed in the last decade of the nineteenth century and only active until 1906. Later, the Mortar Battery was incorporated into the post's golf course (1926 to ca. 1942), was partially demolished to construct a small-arms firing range (1942), and became the site of the control area for a Nike anti-aircraft missile battery (1955-1961).

Construction of the five buildings marked a new episode in the history of Fort Slocum's personnel, for the buildings accommodated the first large group of servicewomen on duty at the post. Before 1942, the Army was an almost strictly male organization. Women were not authorized to serve in its ranks, except for a small cadre of female nurses, who had been part of the Army Nurse Corps since 1904. Although women had long been associated with the Army as nurses, laundresses, hostesses, and cooks, they had largely done these jobs as civilian employees or volunteers. As civilians, they received no Army benefits or protections and were generally required to provide their own food, housing, clothing, and medical care.

In early 1941, as the Second World War approached, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts began working with the Army to develop legislation that would allow women to join the service. Although enlisted men and officers were at first resistant to the concept of women in uniform, the Army's leadership recognized that public sentiment and potential wartime personnel needs favored creation of a women's corps, and they cooperated with Congresswoman Rogers. The entity that resulted was the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), which was established by legislation enacted in May 1942. Its purpose was to use the labor and skills of women in noncombatant military jobs, freeing men to serve in combat roles. The WAAC was an auxiliary unit to the regular Army, supporting its activities, but granted fewer benefits, lower pay, narrower authority, and a separate system of ranks. (The Army Nurse Corps existed under similar arrangements.)

Once authorized, recruitment and training took off rapidly in the second half of 1942, and by the end of the year, there were over 12,000 women in the WAAC. This number would grow to more than 60,000 by mid-1943. Despite problems with public perceptions, the resistance of some male Army personnel, and the challenges posed by rapid growth during its first year, the personnel of the new corps quickly and convincingly demonstrated their value. Most commanders were initially reluctant to accept WAAC contingents, but nearly all responded enthusiastically to their performance and requested additional Waacs. In July 1943, Congress modified the organization by providing additional benefits, such as overseas pay, veterans' medical coverage, death benefits, equivalence of ranks, and status as full members of the armed forces. This new organization was named the Women's Army Corps (WAC), and it formally came into

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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(Page 5)

existence on September 1, 1943 (Bellafaire 1993a, 1993b; Fort Slocum Historical Report 1943:15; Treadwell 1954).

The first Waacs came to Fort Slocum in late May 1943 (New York Times 1943, Casual News 1943a, 1943b, 1943c). When they arrived, the post's commander, Col. Bernard Lentz was, like many male officers, cool to their presence. He seems, however, to have been willing to give them a fair trial, and they quickly won him over. Within three months of their arrival, he could tell the Waacs, "The esprit de corps... you have displayed... has been exemplary and proved conclusively your merit and capabilities to those who have been skeptical as to a woman's place in the current war. I am proud of each and every one of you..." (Lentz 1943).

In an interview more than 60 years later, the late Gladys ("Woodie") Woodard Borkowski (1920-2009), who served as both a Waac and a Wac at Fort Slocum between 1943 and 1946, remembered a more succinct expression of these sentiments: "Col. Lentz... said many, many times, 'They came. I saw. They conquered.'" She recalled that the servicewomen enjoyed Col. Lentz's complete support. "After he got used to us... he was great.... [I]f we wanted something, he didn't hesitate to try to get it for us" (Borkowski 2007).

At Fort Slocum, the Waacs and Wacs worked in nearly every major department of the post. They served as file clerks, typists, stenographers, messengers, telephonists, mess hall staff, motor pool drivers, morale and recreation personnel, and hospital technicians and orderlies. Their range of duties expanded as they became experienced in Army life and as their male counterparts gained confidence in their abilities. They acted as instructors both in the regular training programs and in voluntary supplementary ones. They participated actively in the social and ceremonial life of the post, performing in theatricals, providing teams for athletic events, giving skill demonstrations and drills, and going to frequent dances. They also represented Fort Slocum at outside events, marching in parades and military reviews, participating in recruitment drives, selling war bonds, and singing on the radio with the post band (Borkowski 2007; Casual News 1943c).

Integration of women into the service was only beginning, and the location of the WAC housing area at the southern end of Davids Island in an area separated from other buildings appears to directly reflect the institutional culture of the Army during the Second World War and societal norms of the time. Two factors seem to have been key to the choice of this location.

Most importantly, social conventions in the 1940s discouraged groups of unattached men and women from living in immediate proximity to one another. Quartering the Waacs in an existing barracks in Fort Slocum's Barracks Area would have raised questions of propriety, morality, and discipline inside and outside the Army, as the women would have had a thousand or more males living as bachelors for their immediate neighbors. At least one historian has argued that the first director of the WAAC/WAC, Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, portrayed the women of her corps as "chaste, asexual, and essentially middle class," and she "characterized the WAAC/WAC as acting in loco parentis, as a guardian of young women's welfare and morals" (Meyer 1992:585). Indeed, Army policy established in 1942-43 specified that women's housing should be located at least 50 yards from the nearest men's quarters (Wasch and Bush 1991:22).

The second important factor leading to the location of the barracks complex followed from the Army's desire to quarter male and female personnel some distance apart. The Waacs were relative latecomers to Fort Slocum, and many parts of the post were already developed. The western edge of the post's Defense and Support Area and the adjoining South Lawn Area was the largest undeveloped section of the post.

The WAC barracks occupied the approximate area where the Army had erected several one-story temporary barracks during the First World War. These earlier buildings were part of a group of thirteen temporary

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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barracks and latrines built in 1917 across the South Lawn Area between the Mortar Battery and Hoyle Road. Many temporary buildings in this group were removed in the 1920s, and by the early 1930s, only four remained. These stood on the western perimeter of the Mortar Battery, roughly where the WAC barracks would subsequently be built. Sometime before 1932, these buildings were converted to stables for Fort Slocum's mules. After the post converted to motorized transport completely at the beginning of 1938, the Army mules were shipped off, and all but one of the buildings were soon removed. Between 1938 and 1943, the future site of the WAC housing area seems to have been little used.

The WAC housing area resembled a single "company block," which was the basis for Army cantonment design during the Second World War. In June 1940, as the War Department planned for a vast increase in manpower to confront the Axis powers, it envisioned that cantonments for processing and training "would be built on 125-man company blocks. Each company unit would contain two 63-man barracks..., one mess hall, one recreation building, and one supply building" (Wasch and Bush 1991:12). The WAC area omitted the supply building (such facilities already existed elsewhere within the small acreage of Fort Slocum) and eventually added more barracks, but the area nonetheless reflects the concepts of small-unit cohesion and sufficiency implied by the War Department's basic cantonment design.

Construction of Buildings 130, 131, and 133 began on April 1, 1943, with excavations for the building foundations. Foundation work was completed by mid-May, and on May 19 workers began framing up the buildings, around the time the post's contingent of 85 Waacs arrived. Since their new quarters were not ready, the new arrivals were billeted in Building 42, the Recruit Examination Building. At the time, this building had been vacant for some time. In an oral history interview, Gladys Borkowski remembered that the Recruit Examination Building was in need of a good cleaning before they could settle in properly (Borkowski 2007; *Casual News* 1943b, 1943d; *New York Times* 1943).

The Waacs put their temporary quarters in order, and by July 29, the new buildings were ready. With some fanfare, the Waacs moved from one end of the island to the other. According to a contemporary description published in the camp newspaper, *Casual News*, the Waacs moved into a green-shingled group of three wood-frame buildings overlooking Long Island Sound on the hill above the sea wall. The buildings included a barracks, a recreation and administration building, and a mess hall, all of which were described in an article in a special edition of *Casual News* celebrating the opening of the buildings and saluting the contributions of the servicewomen (*Casual News* 1943c, 1943d; *Fort Slocum Historical Report* 1943:8-9).

The WAC Barracks (Building 130), located at the southeastern end of the group, was a two-story building with a capacity of 94, which could be increased to 110 by rearranging the bunks. It had separate quarters for non-commissioned officers, modern showers and baths, and laundry rooms.

The one-story WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131) included a large recreation room with library and canteen, commanding officer's room, orderly room, heater room, supply room, and fully-equipped beauty-shop, which was to be run on a concession basis. The recreation room, "where Waacs will be able to entertain their dates in a comfortable atmosphere," was furnished with a combination phonograph-radio, records, divans, chairs, lamps, piano, sheet music, and games; and there were plans to add a game room with pool table, dart boards, and so on in the basement (*Casual News* 1943d). An officers' quarters occupied the southern end of the building and comprised three bedrooms, bath, and small living room.

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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The WAC Mess Hall (Building 133) was the smallest of the three buildings and was also a single-story building. It had 14 large tables with benches, large kitchen, and storeroom. The food was served family style, and there were touches of hominess in curtains at the windows and flowers on the tables.

In 1944, plans to double the size of the WAC contingent at Fort Slocum led to the construction of two more barracks, Buildings 134 and 135. Both were two-story buildings, apparently similar in design to Building 130, the wood-frame barracks constructed in 1943. Unlike the earlier buildings, the two built in 1944 had concrete-block structural walls. Each was designed to accommodate 70 persons in rooms arranged along center hallways (Casual News 1944; Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944b:3; New York Times 1944).

Research to date has yielded only limited information on the source of the plans for the 1943 and 1944 WAC buildings. Available information, including period sources, historic photographs, the extant ruins and buildings, and studies of the Army's twentieth-century architectural heritage, indicates that they were built from standardized plans for mobilization buildings, possibly adapted to some degree to the local building site.

The plan numbers for Fort Slocum's buildings, however, are unknown. According to a historic context study of Second World War mobilization buildings, the standards for housing for Waacs/Wacs were higher than for male personnel and also reflected differences in biology and cultural expectations between women and men:

[W]omen's barracks had their own drawings, including a plan for new construction and a plan for remodeling existing enlisted men's barracks. Female occupancy was accommodated by the installation of toilet partitions and doors; the subdivision of showers and hanging of shower curtains; the hanging of window curtains; the construction of a closed corridor... to latrines [where indoor toilet facilities could not be provided]; the inclusion of laundry tubs and ironing boards; replacing fire-escape ladders with stairs; and adding a beauty parlor to the company grouping (Wasch and Bush 1991:22).

As the war progressed, these and many other of the Army's standardized designs were revised from time to time to respond to lessons learned and changing circumstances—e.g., the need for ever more personnel or the availability of certain types of construction materials. Local modifications to standard plans were sometimes introduced in response to circumstances at a particular installation or the preferences of a commanding officer, though the War Department disapproved many proposed deviations to ensure that buildings were built as inexpensively and quickly as possible (Chattey et al. 1997:8-12; Fine and Remington 1972:343-345; Historic American Buildings Survey ca. 1988a, ca. 1988b; Wasch and Bush 1991:35-49).

An account in *Casual News*, Fort Slocum's camp newspaper during the Second World War, reports that the 1943 buildings were "built under the direction of the Supervising Engineer, Peter Florence of New York, and Resident Engineer, Simon Merenbach" (Casual News 1943d). Quarterly reports from 1944 record that the later barracks were built "on a contract basis" under the supervision of the Corps of Engineers' District Office (Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944a:2, 1944b:2-3)

After the Second World War, the WAC buildings had several different tenants, including servicewomen. Period photographs collected by Michael A. Cavanaugh (2007), who is writing a history of Fort Slocum, show that in the late 1940s, when the First Air Force controlled the post, at least one building of the group served as an administrative building for an Air Force unit, the 34th Communications Squadron. In the early 1950s, Buildings 130, 134, and 135 were quarters for the staff, faculty, and students of the Armed Forces (later Army) Information School (1951-1965). In the mid-1950s, however, Building 130, along with Buildings 131 and 133 were incorporated into the Integrated Fire Control area of Nike Missile Battery NY-15 (1955-1961) to provide quarters and offices for the men of that section (Cavanaugh 2007; Lowery 2007). Throughout this period, Buildings 134 and 135 continued to be used for servicewomen in the information

school. Little information is available about subsequent alterations, most of which, to judge from later aerial photographs, were probably relatively minor.

Building 130 was designated as Building T-14 when it was completed in 1943. In 1957, it was renumbered as Building T-130. Sometime after the post closed in 1965, maps and other sources begin to omit the T-prefix, which signified a temporary building. In earlier historic architectural documentation for Fort Slocum, Building 130 was identified as a structure of undetermined function and as a temporary or Nike-related barracks (Berger 1986; Olausen et al. 2005; Tetra Tech 2008). Subsequent historical research clarified the construction date and history of the building, resulting in its identification here as a WAC Barracks.

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WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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Lowery, Rich

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Maps and Drawings

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**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM**
(Page 11)

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May 1949, revised through November 1957 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines." Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD; digital copy from Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

1952 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, NY." Prepared by Armed Forces Information School. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

1961 "Map of Fort Slocum (Davids Island), New Rochelle, N.Y." Prepared under the direction of the First Army Engineer by the Engineer Intelligence Division, Governors Island, New York. Record Group 92, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Panoramic and Aerial Photographs

(Except as noted, all photographs are on file at National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Digital copies examined for this research come from the Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.)

ca. 1922: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View southeast. Winter.

1932: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View south. January 11.

1936: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View southeast. June 29.

ca. 1938: Real-photo postcard showing low-angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. Summer. View north. In collection of Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles. Also published in *New York City's Harbor Defenses* (2003), p. 92, by Leo Polaski and Glen Williford, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina.

1940: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island. September 4.

ca. 1942: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, Columbia Island, and Huckleberry Island. View northeast. U.S. Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base.

ca. 1958: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Summer. Included in a 1966 report prepared by Cross & Brown Co., New York, for the Federal Property Resources Service, on file at the New York City branch of the National Archives, Record Group 291.

1961: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. November 15. Attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

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ca. 1968: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

1980: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island, New Rochelle, NY. Date and originating agency unknown. Available online in a georeferenced photo mosaic version through HistoricAerials.com at <http://www.historicaerials.com>. Accessed January 4, 2010.

**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM**

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LOCATION MAP (USGS Mount Vernon, NY)

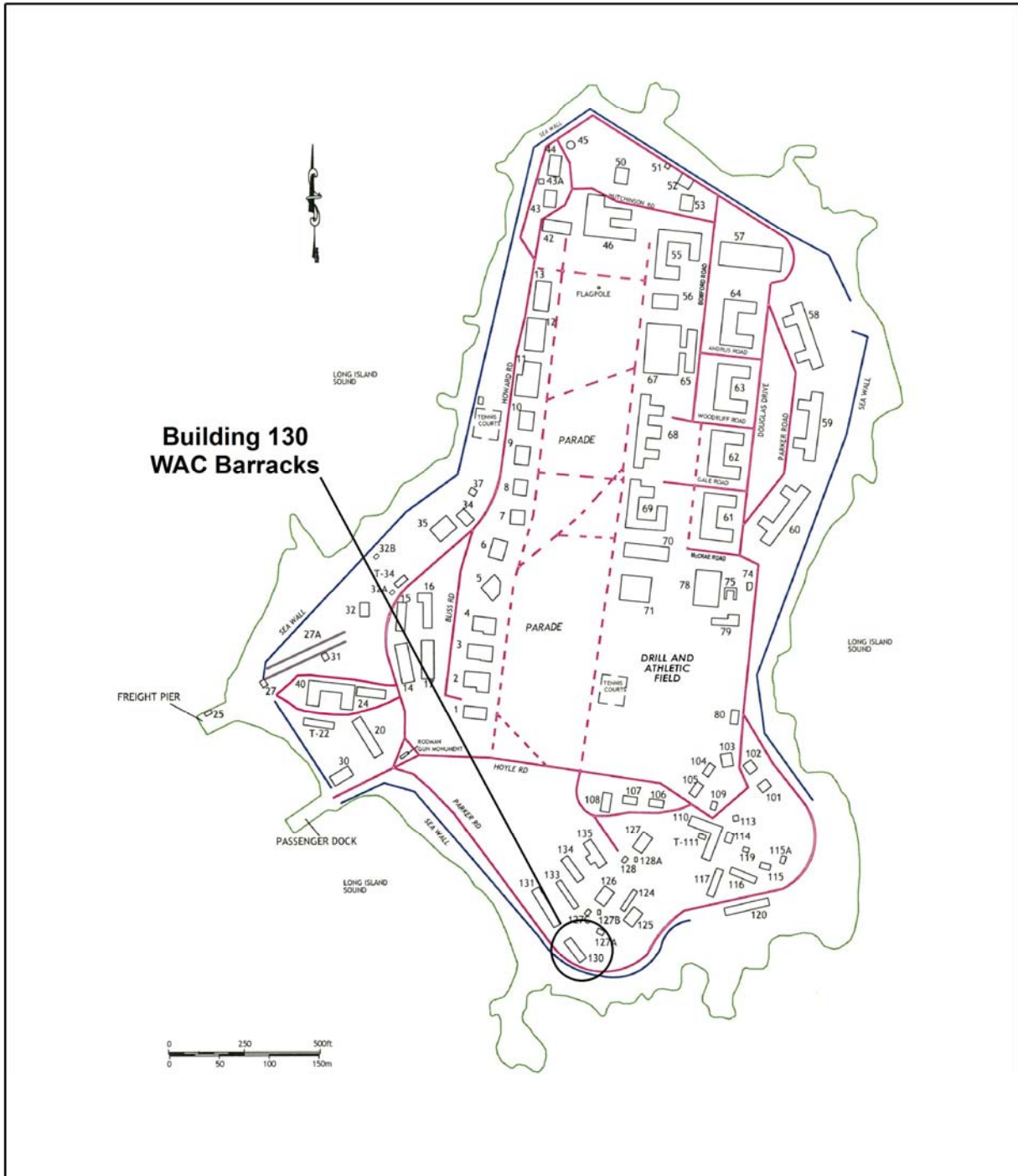
Scale: 1:24,000

1966 (Photorevised 1979)



WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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SITE MAP



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Figure 1. Southern end of WAC area from Parker Road, ca. 1944. View north. WAC Barracks (Building 130) is in the foreground at right. Shown are the back end and southwestern side of the building. Note the exterior wood fire escape stairs leading from the second story. The WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131) is at left. Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, NY.



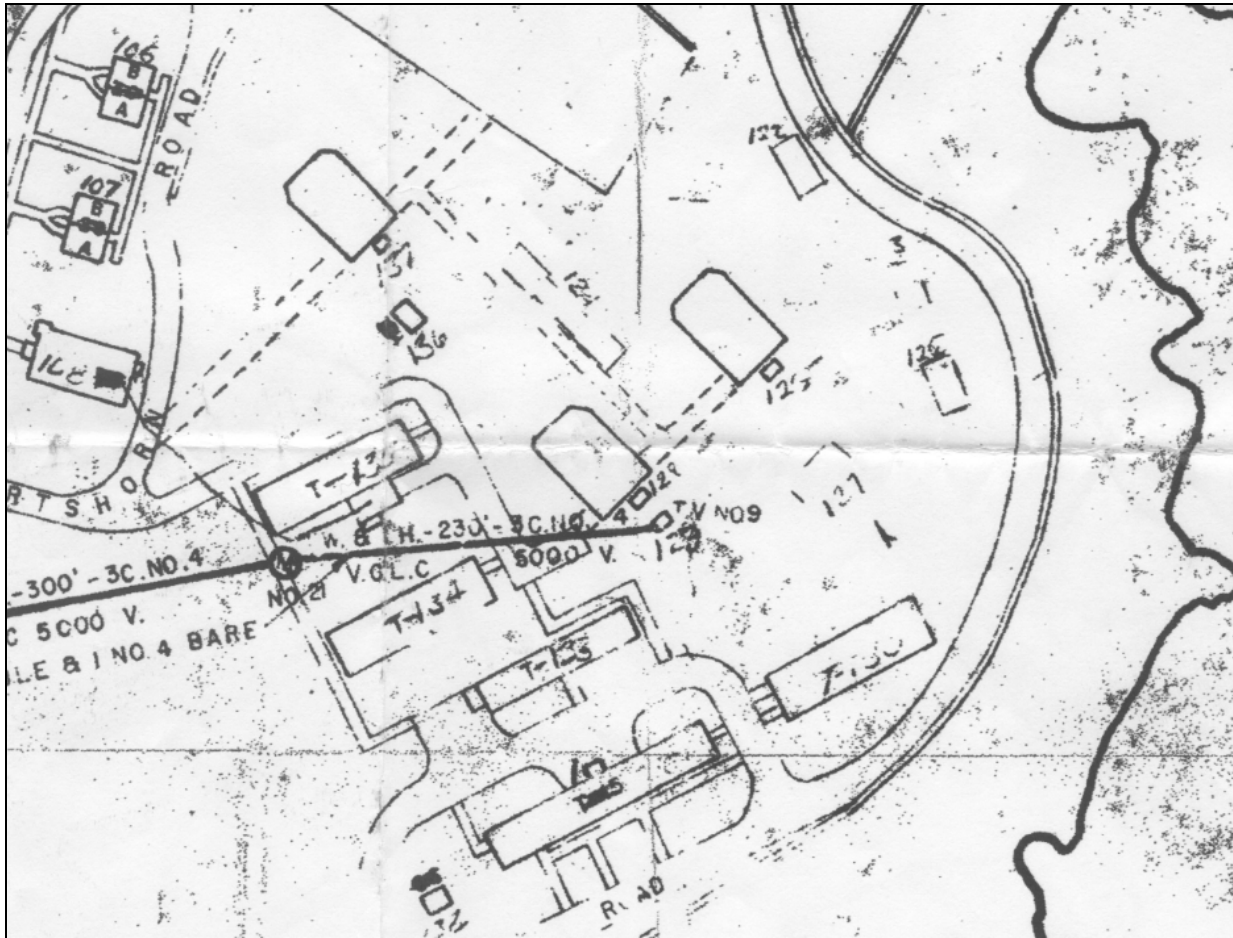
WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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Figure 2. Building 130, ca. 1948, during the period when Fort Slocum was the administrative center of the First Air Force. Front (northwestern) end and portion of southwestern side. View east. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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Figure 3. "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines," May 1949, revised through November 1957, detail. Building 130, located near lower right of image, is labeled "T-130," with the T-prefix signifying its "temporary" status. North is to the top of the page. Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum; copy on file at Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ.



WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
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Figure 4. High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake, November 15, 1961, detail with labels added. View north. Southeastern part of island showing a portion of the Mortar Battery, along with the WAC area (Buildings 130-135) and most of the Nike Integrated Fire Control Area. Building 130 is at lower left of image. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A.Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 19)

Figure 5. Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968, detail. View north. Building 130 is the two-story building located toward lower left of image along Parker Road. This photo was taken a few years after Fort Slocum was abandoned by the Army, and shows the rapid re-vegetation of the island, with trees beginning to obscure the facades of buildings. Compare with Figure 4. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.



HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 130)

Davids Island—Fort Slocum

New Rochelle

Westchester County

New York

Photographers: Matt Kierstead, PAL Inc., Pawtucket, RI, November 2005 (Photo 1).

Caleb Christopher, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ, November 2006 (Photos 2-5).

1. Building 130 ruins, facing northeast.
2. Building foundation, detail at southwestern corner, showing use of brick and concrete blocks.
Facing southeast.
3. Chimney, facing northwest.
4. Mechanical system remnant in western half of foundation interior.
5. Cast concrete shower enclosures near center of foundation, facing southeast.

Photo 1. Building 130 ruins, facing northeast.



Photo 2. Building foundation, detail at southwestern corner, showing use of brick and concrete blocks. Facing southeast.



Photo 3. Chimney, facing northwest.



Photo 4. Mechanical system remnant in western half of foundation interior.



Photo 5. Cast concrete shower enclosures near center of foundation, facing southeast.



DAVIDS ISLAND – FORT SLOCUM HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Location:</u> | Dauids Island–Fort Slocum 0.6 mi southeast of New Rochelle, New York mainland USGS Mount Vernon, NY Quadrangle UTM Coordinate (NAD 1983): 18.603568.4526250 |
| <u>Present Owner(s):</u> | City of New Rochelle, NY |
| <u>Date of Construction:</u> | 1943 |
| <u>Architect/Engineer:</u> | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| <u>Present Use:</u> | Abandoned when documented (2004-2006). Demolished 2006 |
| <u>Significance:</u> | The WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131)—identified generically in earlier project documentation as a “Temporary Barracks”—is associated with the Defense and Support Area and the provision of quarters for the personnel of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), who supported and participated in Fort Slocum’s mid-twentieth-century military missions. Later transferred to the Integrated Fire Control section of Nike missile Battery NY-15, it also embodies the adaptive reuse of buildings at the post. The building is a contributing element to the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District. |
| <u>Project Information:</u> | The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps), has been authorized under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2004, to perform building demolition, debris removal, and remediation of asbestos materials (Project) at the Fort Slocum on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, New York. The purpose of the Project is to remove buildings and infrastructure from the abandoned fort installation that create safety hazards as part of a long-range plan to restore Davids Island for future use. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), the Corps has consulted with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (NYSHPO) regarding the effects of the Project on historic properties. The consultation resulted in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, NYSHPO, County of Westchester, and City of New Rochelle as consulting parties. This documentation report was prepared in accordance with Stipulation II.C.1 of the MOA. |
| <u>Prepared by:</u> | C.L. Borstel, J.C. Sexton, R.M. Jacoby, S.B. Marshall, and C.W. Christopher |
| <u>Title:</u> | Cultural Resources Documentation Team |
| <u>Affiliation:</u> | Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ |
| <u>Date:</u> | October 2006 (Revision 1, February 2010) |

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 2)

PART I. DESCRIPTION

The WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131) is one of a group of five buildings, originally designated as temporary, that were constructed to house members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and its 1942-1943 predecessor, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC). This group of buildings is situated near the southern shore of Davids Island. Davids Island is a roughly pear-shaped, relatively flat landmass consisting of approximately 78 acres above mean high water. It is heavily wooded and contains the ruins of more than 100 buildings and structures associated with an abandoned U.S. Army post, Fort Slocum. The ruins include barracks and quarters; quartermaster, administrative, medical, and recreation buildings; and coastal and air defense facilities. A concrete and stone seawall encircles most of the shore, and a system of roads and paths runs throughout the island. The five WAC buildings adjoin the western side of the Mortar Battery along the edge of the Defense and Support Area. This section of Fort Slocum is a mixed-use area of the post that includes service and storage facilities, quarters, and vacant defensive works.

Building 131 was destroyed by fire sometime between 1980, when an aerial photograph shows it as intact, and 1986, when its ruins were first inventoried by architectural historians (Berger 1986). Oriented northwest-southeast, Building 131 was on the northern side of Parker Road just across the road from the seawall. Historical photographs and other sources record that Building 131 was a narrow, rectangular, gabled building of one story (Figures 1-5). A small one-story dependency projected from the center of the building's northeastern side. The building was wood framed and stood on a concrete block foundation, with a low-pitch roof and shingled exterior.

Two photographs of Building 131 depict the building in ca. 1944, soon after it was finished (Figures 1-2). These and other less-detailed photographs from the 1950s and 1960s show that the building resembled its neighbors, Buildings 130 and 133, which were built at the same time. All three were standardized Second World War-era mobilization-type buildings and were designed to be simple, plain, and easily erected.

The building's low-pitch roof was clad in asphalt shingles. The roof had little or no overhang at the gables or eaves, and there were plain fascias at the roof-wall joins. The building lacked gutters and downspouts. The exterior walls were covered by wood shingles, reportedly green in color. There were several entrances, including one at each end and three on its southwestern side. Most of these entrances had single-leaf doors, but the one at the northwestern end had a large, central double-leaf door, and it appears to have been the main entrance to the building. The northwestern façade had a louvered vent over the entrance and a double-hung wood sash window with six-over-six lights to either side. The entrance held a pair of paneled doors with two-over-two lights. To judge from the available historical photographs, the doors and windows used in this façade were typical of the entire building. Because of the sloping ground on which the building was built, the northwestern entrance stood several feet above grade and was reached by a short flight of wooden stairs and a small exterior porch. Underneath the porch, directly below the first-story entrance, a sunken entryway led to a low cellar or crawlspace. As preserved in the building's ruins, the sunken entryway had brick retaining walls and steps and a concrete floor. A historic photograph shows the cellar entrance was a solid batten door.

The southwestern façade had three unevenly-spaced entrances with an intervening row of windows. Each entrance was reached by a flight of wood stairs leading to a small porch. Window and door types appear to have been identical to those of the northwestern façade. The southeastern gable-end of the building had a louvered vent at the gable peak, like that at the opposite end of building, an offset entrance, and a single window, also placed asymmetrically. Research to date has provided no details about the appearance of the

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 3)

northeastern façade. The small dependency on this side of the building apparently contained the boiler room, as a tall square brick chimney rose from its northwestern side. No detailed information about the interior layout of the building is available, however.

The ruin of Building 131 measures approximately 28 by 142 feet. The area is covered in thick vegetation, and foundation elements are difficult to examine in detail. The ruin is dominated by a concrete block foundation whose walls rise in height from east to west. While most of the foundation is constructed of concrete block, its corners are brick. There are several apparent window openings in the side walls of the foundation—apparently these are later alterations—as well as the door opening at the northwestern end. Small, evenly-spaced vent openings appear to have been bricked shut. Within the main section of the foundation is a concrete slab floor. Evenly-spaced rows of concrete piers rise from the foundation floor and presumably supported the building's floor joists. The ruin of the dependency on the northeastern side of the foundation has an exterior concrete block wall and a concrete floor, which stands higher than the main foundation floor. A tall square chimney of brick, still intact, is located on the western side of the dependency foundation. The rusting remnants of the heating boiler occupy the interior of the dependency. A scatter of architectural debris, including glass, pieces of charred lumber, plumbing fixtures, and the like covers the interior of the ruin (Photos 1-4).

PART II. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Fort Slocum

Between 1862 and 1965, Davids Island was the site of two successive posts of the U.S. Army posts. The earlier of these was DeCamp General Hospital (1862-1866/1874). The later, established in 1878, was known as Fort Slocum from 1896 onwards. Fort Slocum served as a recruit intake and training center, coastal and air defense installation, embarkation station, and advanced training school. The island has been abandoned since the late 1960s, soon after Fort Slocum closed. Over the past forty years, the over 100 buildings and structures that formerly comprised the post have deteriorated through neglect and vandalism. The U.S. Army leased the island in 1862 and purchased it outright in 1867. In 1967, the federal government sold Davids Island to the City of New Rochelle, which sold it in turn the following year to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. Consolidated Edison returned ownership of most of the island to the city in 1976.

A more extensive summary of Fort Slocum's history appears in the documentation for Building 130, also in Volume 6 of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements: Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District*. Detailed accounts of Fort Slocum's history can be found in the general historic overview to this documentation series (Tetra Tech 2008) and in Olausen et al. (2005), among other sources.

WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131)

Building 131 is situated in the Defense and Support Area of former Fort Slocum. This functional area is in the southeastern quadrant of Davids Island. It contains defense works and related structures, along with buildings for activities and functions desirably kept separate from the rest of the post. The Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, Buildings 125-127), a large concrete and earth fortification that was in active use around the beginning of the twentieth century, occupies the center of this area. Building 131 is among five buildings that neighbor the Mortar Battery on the west. These five buildings, which also include Buildings 130 and 133-135, comprise a section of Fort Slocum developed during the Second World War to house and

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 4)

administer the 200-plus members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) who were then stationed at the post. The buildings occupy an area that had also been used during the First World War as the site of temporary barracks, which were demolished between the wars. The historical documentation for Building 130, elsewhere in Volume 6, provides a general overview of the development of this area and the Second World War history of the WAC at Fort Slocum.

In brief, servicewomen were assigned to Fort Slocum beginning in 1943 and remained at the post in significant numbers through the end of 1945. As members of the WAC (originally Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, or WAAC, 1942-1943), these servicewomen supplemented or replaced male soldiers in a wide range of noncombatant jobs. At Fort Slocum they worked in nearly every major department of the post, serving as clerks, typists, stenographers, messengers, telephonists, mess hall staff, motor pool drivers, morale and recreation personnel, and hospital technicians and orderlies. They played an active role in the life of the post during the war and represented it at many events outside Davids Island.

The first contingent of Wacs arrived at the post in May 1943. In keeping with the social mores of the time, they occupied quarters separate from the Barracks Area, where male enlisted personnel were housed. Their first quarters were in the Hospital Area at the northern end of Davids Island, but at the beginning of August 1943, they moved into a newly-constructed group of buildings in the Defense and Support Area at the opposite end of the island. Initially, this area contained three wood frame buildings (Buildings 130-133), but it was soon expanded with the construction of two additional buildings of concrete block (Buildings 134-135).

Some of the buildings in Fort Slocum's WAC area, continued to be used as servicewomen's quarters until the post closed in 1965. In the 1950s, other buildings in the group, including Building 131, were incorporated into the Nike anti-aircraft missile battery fire-control area (active 1955-1961) on the southern flank of the Mortar Battery. The WAC itself remained active as a distinct organization until 1978, more than a decade after Fort Slocum closed, when women were fully integrated into the Army.

Although earlier historic architectural documentation described Building 131 as a structure of unknown function and as a temporary barracks (Berger 1986; Olausen et al. 2005), subsequent historical research established that it was the WAC Recreation and Administration Building. Building 131 was one of three buildings completed for Fort Slocum's contingent of servicewomen and first occupied at the beginning of August 1943. It was a one-story wood-frame building originally with green shingles. It included a large recreation room with library and canteen, commanding officer's room, orderly room, heater room, supply room, and fully-equipped beauty-shop, which was to be run on a concession basis. The recreation room, "where Waacs will be able to entertain their dates in a comfortable atmosphere," was furnished with a combination phonograph-radio, records, divans, chairs, lamps, piano, sheet music, and games; and there were plans to add a game room with pool table, dart boards, and so on in the basement. An officers' quarters occupied the southern end of the building and comprised three bedrooms, bath, and small living room (Casual News 1943). Available information, including period sources, historic photographs, the extant ruins and buildings, and studies of the Army's twentieth-century architectural heritage, indicates that they were built under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers using standardized plans for mobilization buildings designated for WAAC/WAC use. Research to date has not determined the standardized plan number for the building.

In the late 1940s, Building 131 possibly served as an administrative building for a unit of the First Air Force, then the sole tenant of Fort Slocum. In the early 1950s, it was used by servicewomen affiliated with the

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
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Armed Forces (later Army) Information School (at Fort Slocum 1951-1965). In the mid-1950s, however, this and the other two buildings erected as WAC quarters in 1943 were incorporated into the Integrated Fire Control area of Nike Missile Battery NY-15 (1955-1961) as office space and/or living quarters (Cavanaugh 2007; Lowery 2007). Virtually no information about alterations to the building is available, except that the crawlspace vents appear to have been bricked shut at some point.

Building 131 was designated as Building T-15 when it was completed in 1943. It was renumbered as Building T-131 in 1957. Sometime after the post closed in 1965, the T- prefix (signifying a temporary building) disappeared from its building number.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- 2007 *What Is, What Was, and What Was NOT: A Companion to the 2005 Davids Island Footage*. May 2007 version. Unpublished ms in possession of author, Los Angeles, CA.

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- 1986 *Fort Slocum, Davids Island, New York: A Historic Architectural Assessment*. Prepared for Dresdner Associates, Jersey City, New Jersey, by the Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, East Orange, New Jersey.

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U.S. Army

ca. 1941-45 Photographs of activities, buildings, and personnel at Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, New York. Local History Collection, New Rochelle [NY] Public Library.

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May 1949, revised through November 1957 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines." Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD; digital copy from Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

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Panoramic and Aerial Photographs

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1940: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island. September 4.

ca. 1958: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Summer. Included in a 1966 report prepared by Cross & Brown Co., New York, for the Federal Property Resources Service, on file at the New York City branch of the National Archives, Record Group 291.

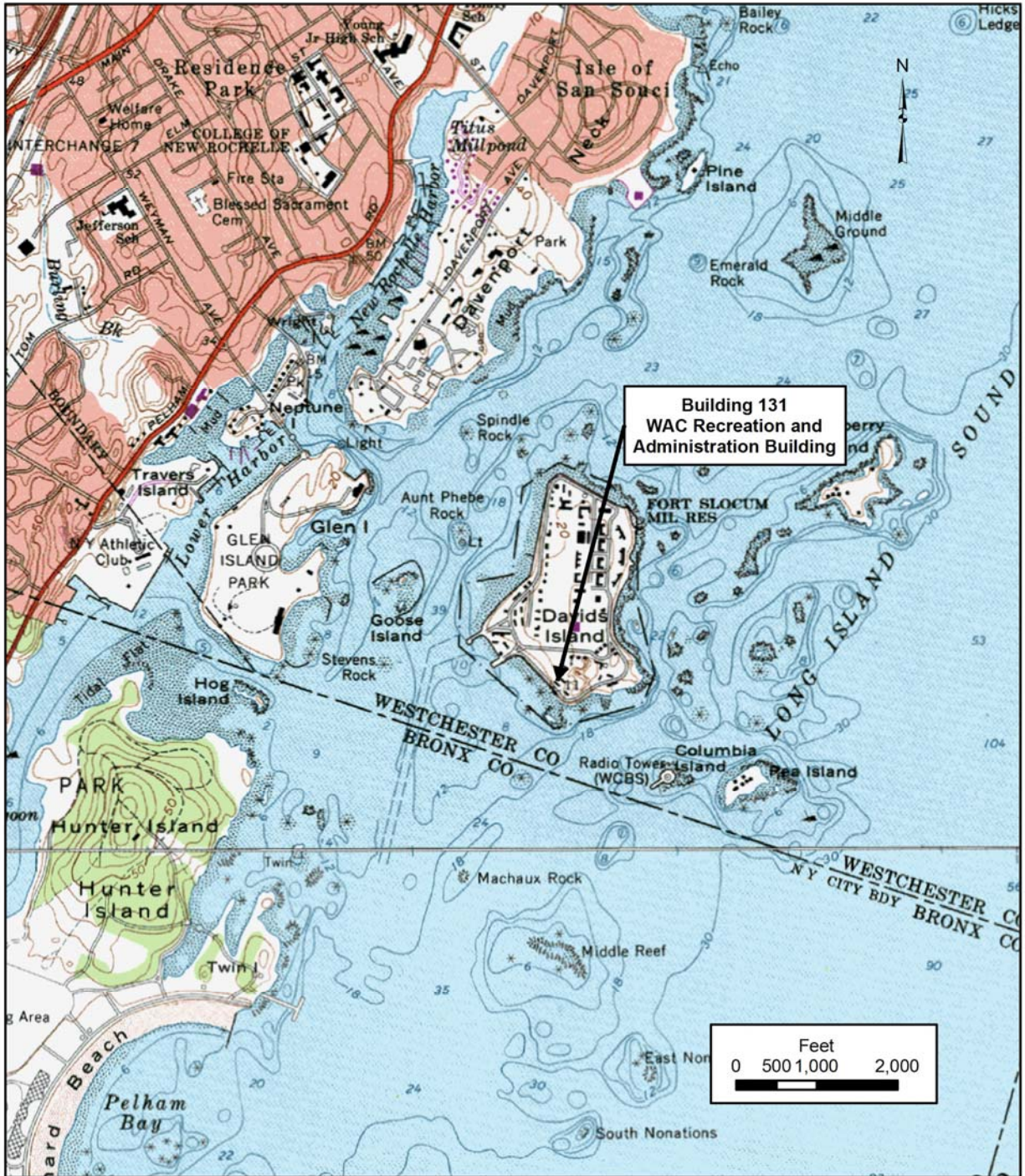
1961: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. November 15. Attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

ca. 1968: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

1980: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island, New Rochelle, NY. Date and originating agency unknown. Available online in a georeferenced photo mosaic version through [HistoricAerials.com](http://www.historicaerials.com) at <http://www.historicaerials.com>. Accessed January 4, 2010.

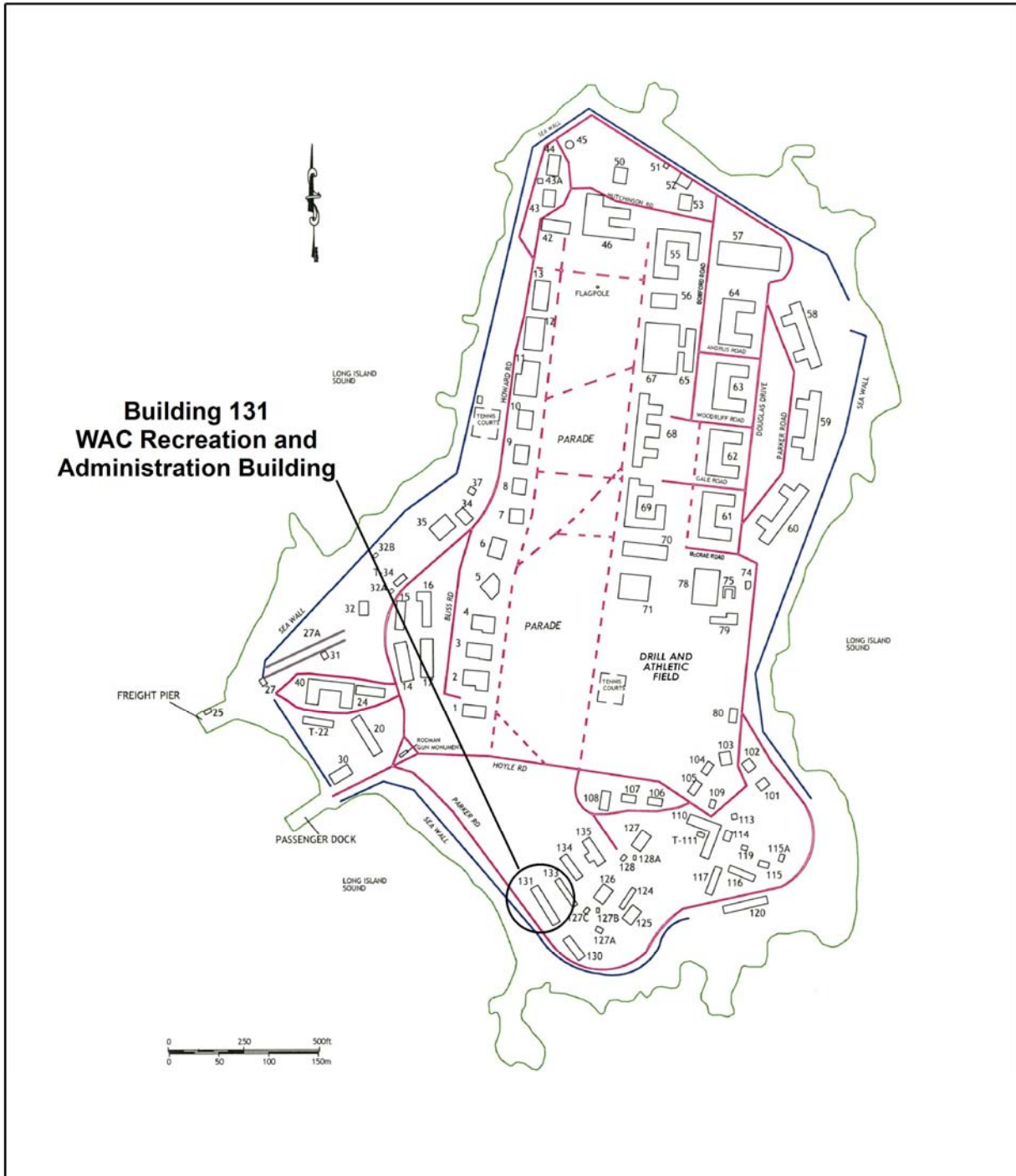
WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
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LOCATION MAP (USGS Mount Vernon, NY)
Scale: 1:24,000
1966 (Photorevised 1979)



WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
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(Page 8)

SITE MAP



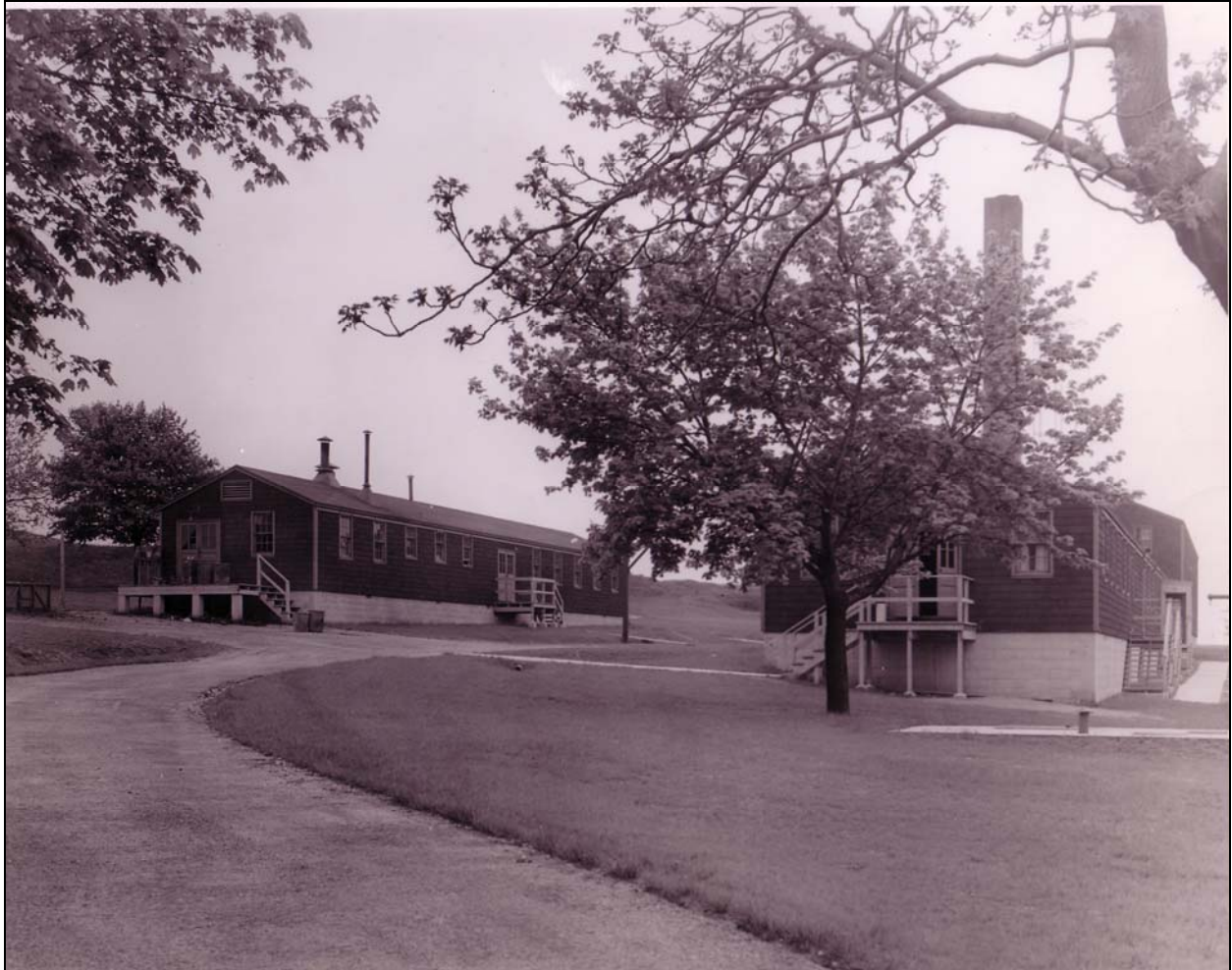
**WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
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Figure 1. Southern end of WAC area from Parker Road, ca. 1944. View north. The WAC Recreation and Administration Building (Building 131) is at left, and the WAC Barracks (Building 130) is in the foreground at right. Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, NY.



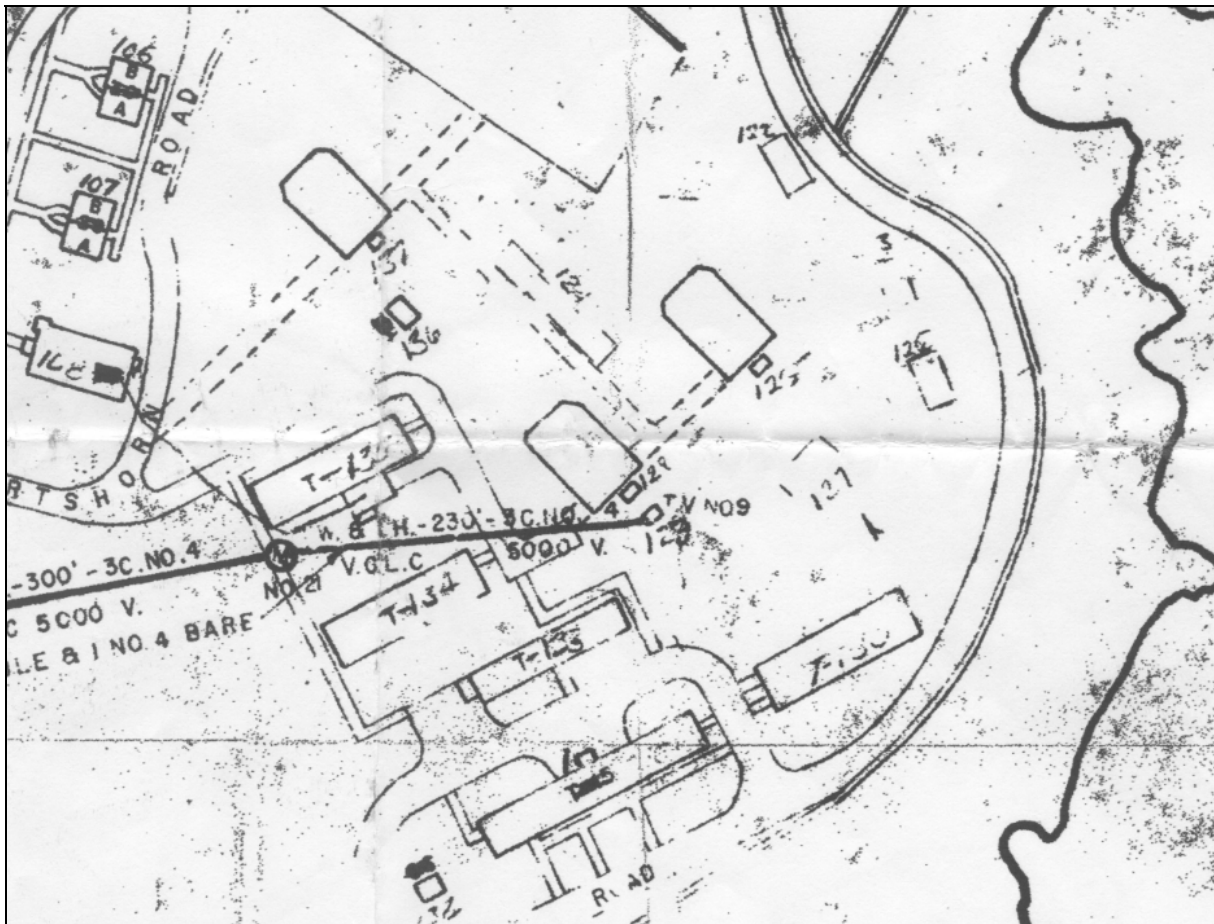
**WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
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Figure 2. WAC area from access lane off Parker Road, ca. 1944. View southeast. The WAC Recreation and Administration (Building 131) is at right, while the WAC Mess Hall (Building 133) is at left. Partially visible behind Building 131 is the WAC Barracks (Building 130). Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, NY.



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Figure 3. "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines," May 1949, revised through November 1957, detail. Building 131 is depicted as a long rectangle at the bottom of the drawing. The label is illegible. Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum. Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum; copy on file at Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ.



**WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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Figure 4. High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake, November 15, 1961, detail with labels added. View north. Southeastern part of island showing a portion of the Mortar Battery, along with the WAC area (Buildings 130-135) and most of the Nike Integrated Fire Control Area. Building 131 is located at far left, along Parker Road. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



**WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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Figure 5. Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968, detail. View north. Building 131 is located at far left of image, along Parker Road. This photo was taken a few years after Fort Slocum was abandoned by the Army, and shows the rapid re-vegetation of the island, with trees beginning to obscure the facades of buildings. Compare with Figure 4. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.



HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

WAC RECREATION AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (BUILDING 131)

Davids Island—Fort Slocum

New Rochelle

Westchester County

New York

Photographers: Matt Kierstead, PAL Inc., Pawtucket, RI, November 2005 (Photo 1).

Caleb Christopher, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ, November 2006 (Photos 2-4).

1. Foundation ruins as seen from Parker Road, facing east.
2. Foundation interior, northeastern wall near westerly end, facing southeast.
3. Interior of northwestern end of foundation, facing west.
4. Northwestern end of foundation ruin at crawlspace entrance, facing northeast.

Photo 1. Foundation ruins as seen from Parker Road, facing east.



Photo 2. Foundation interior, northeastern wall near westerly end, facing southeast.



Photo 3. Interior of northwestern end of foundation, facing west.



Photo 4. Northwestern end of foundation ruin at crawlspace entrance, facing northeast.



DAVIDS ISLAND – FORT SLOCUM HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)

Location: Davids Island–Fort Slocum
0.6 mi southeast of New Rochelle, New York mainland
USGS Mount Vernon, NY Quadrangle
UTM Coordinate (NAD 1983): 18.603592.4526265

Present Owner(s): City of New Rochelle, NY

Date of Construction: 1943

Architect/Engineer: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Present Use: Abandoned when documented (2004-2006). Demolished 2006

Significance: The WAC Mess Hall (Building 133)—identified generically in earlier project documentation as a “Temporary Barracks”—is associated with the Defense and Support Area and the provision of quarters for the personnel of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), who supported and participated in Fort Slocum’s mid-twentieth-century military missions. Later transferred to the Integrated Fire Control section of Nike missile Battery NY-15, it also embodies the adaptive reuse of buildings at the post. The building is a contributing element to the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District.

Project Information: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps), has been authorized under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2004, to perform building demolition, debris removal, and remediation of asbestos materials (Project) at the Fort Slocum on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, New York. The purpose of the Project is to remove buildings and infrastructure from the abandoned fort installation that create safety hazards as part of a long-range plan to restore Davids Island for future use. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), the Corps has consulted with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (NYSHPO) regarding the effects of the Project on historic properties. The consultation resulted in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, NYSHPO, County of Westchester, and City of New Rochelle as consulting parties. This documentation report was prepared in accordance with Stipulation II.C.1 of the MOA.

Prepared by: C.L. Borstel, J.C. Sexton, R.M. Jacoby, S.B. Marshall, and C.W. Christopher
Title: Cultural Resources Documentation Team
Affiliation: Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ
Date: October 2006 (Revision 1, February 2010)

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 2)

PART I. DESCRIPTION

The WAC Mess Hall (Building 133) is one of a group of five buildings, originally designated as temporary, that were constructed to house members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and its 1942-1943 predecessor, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC). This group of buildings is situated near the southern shore of Davids Island. Davids Island is a roughly pear-shaped, relatively flat landmass consisting of approximately 78 acres above mean high water. It is heavily wooded and contains the ruins of more than 100 buildings and structures associated with an abandoned U.S. Army post, Fort Slocum. The ruins include barracks and quarters; quartermaster, administrative, medical, and recreation buildings; and coastal and air defense facilities. A concrete and stone seawall encircles most of the shore, and a system of roads and paths runs throughout the island. The five WAC buildings adjoin the western side of the Mortar Battery along the edge of the Defense and Support Area. This section of Fort Slocum is a mixed-use area of the post that includes service and storage facilities, quarters, and vacant defensive works.

Building 133 was destroyed by fire sometime between 1980, when an aerial photograph shows it as intact, and 1986, when its ruins were first inventoried by architectural historians (Berger 1986). Oriented northwest-southeast, Building 133 was behind Building 131 and a little north of Parker Road. Historical photographs and other sources record that Building 133 was a rectangular, one-story gabled building (Figures 1-4). The building was wood framed and stood on a concrete block foundation, with a low-pitch roof and shingled exterior.

A photograph of Building 133 taken in 1943 or 1944, soon after it was finished, depicts the northwestern and southwestern façades (Figure 1). This and other less-detailed aerial photographs from the 1950s and 1960s show that the building resembled its neighbors, Buildings 130 and 133, which were built at the same time. All three were standardized Second World War-era mobilization-type buildings and were designed to be simple, plain, and easily erected.

The building's low-pitch roof was clad in asphalt shingles. The roof had little or no overhang at the gables or eaves, and there were plain fascias at the roof-wall joins. There were no gutters or downspouts. As originally constructed, three low, metal chimneys projected through the roof of Building 133. Two were located to the western end of the building; the larger was centered on the roof ridge, while the smaller was offset to the southwestern side. The third chimney was apparently located near the center of the building on the northeastern side of the roof. Building 133 had exterior walls of wood shingles, reportedly green in color. The northwestern façade had a louvered vent at the gable peak and a large offset entrance with a pair of paneled two-over-two glazed doors, balanced by a single six-over-six double-hung wood sash window. Extending from this end of the building was a small open porch built of wood on square concrete piers. Judging by details in the photograph, including a vehicle space on the adjacent ground and the presence of several trash cans, the porch appears to have been a loading dock. The southwestern façade was dominated by a row of ten double-hung wood sash windows spaced at regular intervals. Seven of the windows in the row, including the westernmost two and the easterly five, had six-over-six glazing. A group of three smaller windows with three-over-six glazing interrupted the line of larger windows. An entrance occupied the center of the façade. This entrance had a double-leaf door similar to that on northwestern end of the building and a small, open porch of wood on low concrete piers. Research to date has provided no photographs of the other two façades, but they were presumably similar in appearance to the two described here. The placement of sidewalks around the building as depicted by aerial photographs suggests that the two undocumented sides of the building also each had an entrance. No interior plans are available; however, the arrangement of

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 3)

windows, doors, and other elements suggests that in the 1940s the pantry and kitchen of the mess hall were located at the western end of the building and the dining room was at the eastern end.

The ruin of Building 133 measures an estimated 22 by 100 feet. The area is covered in thick vegetation, and foundation elements are difficult to examine in detail. The foundation comprises a predominantly concrete block wall with evenly-spaced rows of three concrete piers inside it. The corners of the foundation walls are built of bricks in place of concrete blocks. A gap at the center of the southeastern foundation wall presumably marks the location of a hatch to enter the crawlspace that would have existed beneath the building's floor inside the wall. All around the foundation wall, a few concrete blocks in the top course are placed on their sides to ventilate the crawlspace. The rows of interior piers apparently supported the building's floor joists. While most of the foundation interior is open, the northwestern end has a concrete slab floor supported by the perimeter wall and, presumably, at least one row of the interior piers. It is unknown whether this floor is original or a later alteration. A scatter of architectural debris, including glass, pieces of charred lumber, plumbing fixtures, and the like covers the interior of the ruin. Although the building was designed and initially used as a mess hall, there seem to be no traces of cooking or refrigeration equipment among the visible architectural debris. The remnants of the boiler to heat the building, including a collapsed metal chimney, are situated at the southeastern corner of the building. Piers in the ground just outside the foundation wall indicate the locations of at least two wood porches (Photos 1-5).

PART II. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Fort Slocum

Between 1862 and 1965, Davids Island was the site of two successive posts of the U.S. Army posts. The earlier of these was DeCamp General Hospital (1862-1866/1874). The later, established in 1878, was known as Fort Slocum from 1896 onwards. Fort Slocum served as a recruit intake and training center, coastal and air defense installation, embarkation station, and advanced training school. The island has been abandoned since the late 1960s, soon after Fort Slocum closed. Over the past forty years, the over 100 buildings and structures that formerly comprised the post have deteriorated through neglect and vandalism. The U.S. Army leased the island in 1862 and purchased it outright in 1867. In 1967, the federal government sold Davids Island to the City of New Rochelle, which sold it in turn the following year to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. Consolidated Edison returned ownership of most of the island to the city in 1976.

A more extensive summary of Fort Slocum's history appears in the documentation for Building 130, also in Volume 6 of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements: Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District*. Detailed accounts of Fort Slocum's history can be found in the general historic overview to this documentation series (Tetra Tech 2008) and in Olausen et al. (2005), among other sources.

WAC Mess Hall (Building 133)

Building 133 is situated in the Defense and Support Area of former Fort Slocum. This functional area is in the southeastern quadrant of Davids Island. It contains defense works and related structures, along with buildings for activities and functions desirably kept separate from the rest of the post. The Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, Buildings 125-127), a large concrete and earth fortification that was in active use around the beginning of the twentieth century, occupies the center of this area. Building 133 is among five buildings that neighbor the Mortar Battery on the west. These five buildings, which also include Buildings

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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130 and 133-135, comprise a section of Fort Slocum developed during the Second World War to house and administer the 200-plus members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) who were then stationed at the post. The buildings occupy an area that had also been used during the First World War as the site of temporary barracks, which were demolished between the wars. The historical documentation for Building 130, elsewhere in Volume 6, provides a general overview of the development of this area and the Second World War history of the WAC at Fort Slocum.

In brief, servicewomen were assigned to Fort Slocum beginning in 1943 and remained at the post in significant numbers through the end of 1945. As members of the WAC (originally Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, or WAAC, 1942-1943), these servicewomen supplemented or replaced male soldiers in a wide range of noncombatant jobs. At Fort Slocum they worked in nearly every major department of the post, serving as clerks, typists, stenographers, messengers, telephonists, mess hall staff, motor pool drivers, morale and recreation personnel, and hospital technicians and orderlies. They played an active role in the life of the post during the war and represented it at many events outside Davids Island.

The first contingent of Wacs arrived at the post in May 1943. In keeping with the social mores of the time, they occupied quarters separate from the Barracks Area, where male enlisted personnel were housed. Their first quarters were in the Hospital Area at the northern end of Davids Island, but at the beginning of August 1943, they moved into a newly-constructed group of buildings in the Defense and Support Area at the opposite end of the island. Initially, this area contained three wood frame buildings (Buildings 130-133), but it was soon expanded with the construction of two additional buildings of concrete block (Buildings 134-135).

Some of the buildings in Fort Slocum's WAC area, continued to be used as servicewomen's quarters until the post closed in 1965. In the 1950s, other buildings in the group, including Building 133, were incorporated into the Nike anti-aircraft missile battery fire-control area (active 1955-1961) on the southern flank of the Mortar Battery. The WAC itself remained active as a distinct organization until 1978, more than a decade after Fort Slocum closed, when women were fully integrated into the Army.

Although earlier historic architectural documentation described Building 133 as a structure of unknown function and as a temporary barracks (Berger 1986; Olausen et al. 2005), later historical research established that it was the WAC Mess Hall. Building 133 was one of three buildings completed for Fort Slocum's contingent of servicewomen and first occupied in July 1943. It was a one-story wood-frame building with green shingles. The building was the smallest of the three buildings built in 1943. It had a large kitchen and a storeroom and a dining area containing 14 large tables with benches. The food was served family style, and there were touches of hominess in curtains at the windows and flowers on the tables (Casual News 1943). Available information, including period sources, historic photographs, the extant ruins and buildings, and studies of the Army's twentieth-century architectural heritage, indicates that they were built under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers using standardized plans for mobilization buildings designated for WAAC/WAC use. Research to date has not determined the standardized plan number for the building.

In the late 1940s, Building 133 possibly served as an administrative building for a unit of the First Air Force, then the sole tenant of Fort Slocum. In the early 1950s, it was used by servicewomen affiliated with the Armed Forces (later Army) Information School (at Fort Slocum 1951-1965). In the mid-1950s, however, this and the other two buildings erected as WAC quarters in 1943 were incorporated into the Integrated Fire Control area of Nike Missile Battery NY-15 (1955-1961) as office space and/or living quarters (Cavanaugh 2007; Lowery 2007). Aerial photographs from the late 1950s and early 1960s indicate changes in the number

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
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and location of metal chimneys from that shown in a photograph taken in 1943 or 1944. Indeed, the only chimney found in the building's ruins was situated in the southeastern corner of the building, which was not the location of a chimney in the 1940s. The significance of these alterations is unknown, but they could indicate that the building ceased to be used as a mess hall. It is also unknown whether the concrete slab floor at the northwestern end of the building was original or a later alteration.

Building 133 was designated as Building T-16 when it was completed in 1943. It was renumbered as Building T-133 in 1957. Sometime after the post closed in 1965, the T- prefix (signifying a temporary building) disappeared from its building number.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Published Materials

Bellafaire, Judith A.

- 1993 *The Women's Army Corps*. CMH Publication 72-15. U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, D.C. Available online at <http://www.history.army.mil/brcchures/wac/wac.htm>.

Casual News [Fort Slocum's post newspaper in the Second World War era]

- 1943 "Slocum Honors Its Soldier Women; Formal Dedication of WAAC Barracks: 'County Fair' Display on WAAC Assignments." July 31:1, 2.

Nichols, Herbert B.

- 1938 *Historic New Rochelle*. Board of Education, New Rochelle, NY.

Unpublished Materials

Cavanaugh, Michael

- 2007 *What Is, What Was, and What Was NOT: A Companion to the 2005 Davids Island Footage*. May May 2007 version. Unpublished ms in possession of author, Los Angeles, CA.

Louis Berger & Associates, Inc.

- 1986 *Fort Slocum, Davids Island, New York: A Historic Architectural Assessment*. Prepared for Dresdner Associates, Jersey City, New Jersey, by the Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, East Orange, New Jersey.

Olausen, Stephen, Matthew Kierstead, and Jeffrey Emidy

- 2005 *Historic Architectural Survey and National Register Evaluation, Davids Island/Fort Slocum New Rochelle, New York*. Prepared for Tetra Tech FW, Inc., Morris Plains, New Jersey, by PAL, Inc., Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

Tetra Tech EC, Inc.

- 2008 "Fort Slocum: Overview." In *Historic Building Documentation, Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District, Davids Island, City of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York*, Volume 1. Prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Concord, Massachusetts, by Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston.

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U.S. Army

ca. 1941-45 Photographs of activities, buildings, and personnel at Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, New York. Local History Collection, New Rochelle [NY] Public Library.

Maps and Drawings

1943 No title [Informal guide map of Fort Slocum]. Prepared by T/3 Richard Williams. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

May 1949, revised through November 1957 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines." Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD; digital copy from Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

1952 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, NY." Prepared by Armed Forces Information School. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

1961 "Map of Fort Slocum (Davids Island), New Rochelle, N.Y." Prepared under the direction of the First Army Engineer by the Engineer Intelligence Division, Governors Island, New York. Record Group 92, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Panoramic and Aerial Photographs

(Except as noted, all photographs are on file at National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Digital copies examined for this research come from the Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.)

1940: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island. September 4.

ca. 1958: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Summer. Included in a 1966 report prepared by Cross & Brown Co., New York, for the Federal Property Resources Service, on file at the New York City branch of the National Archives, Record Group 291.

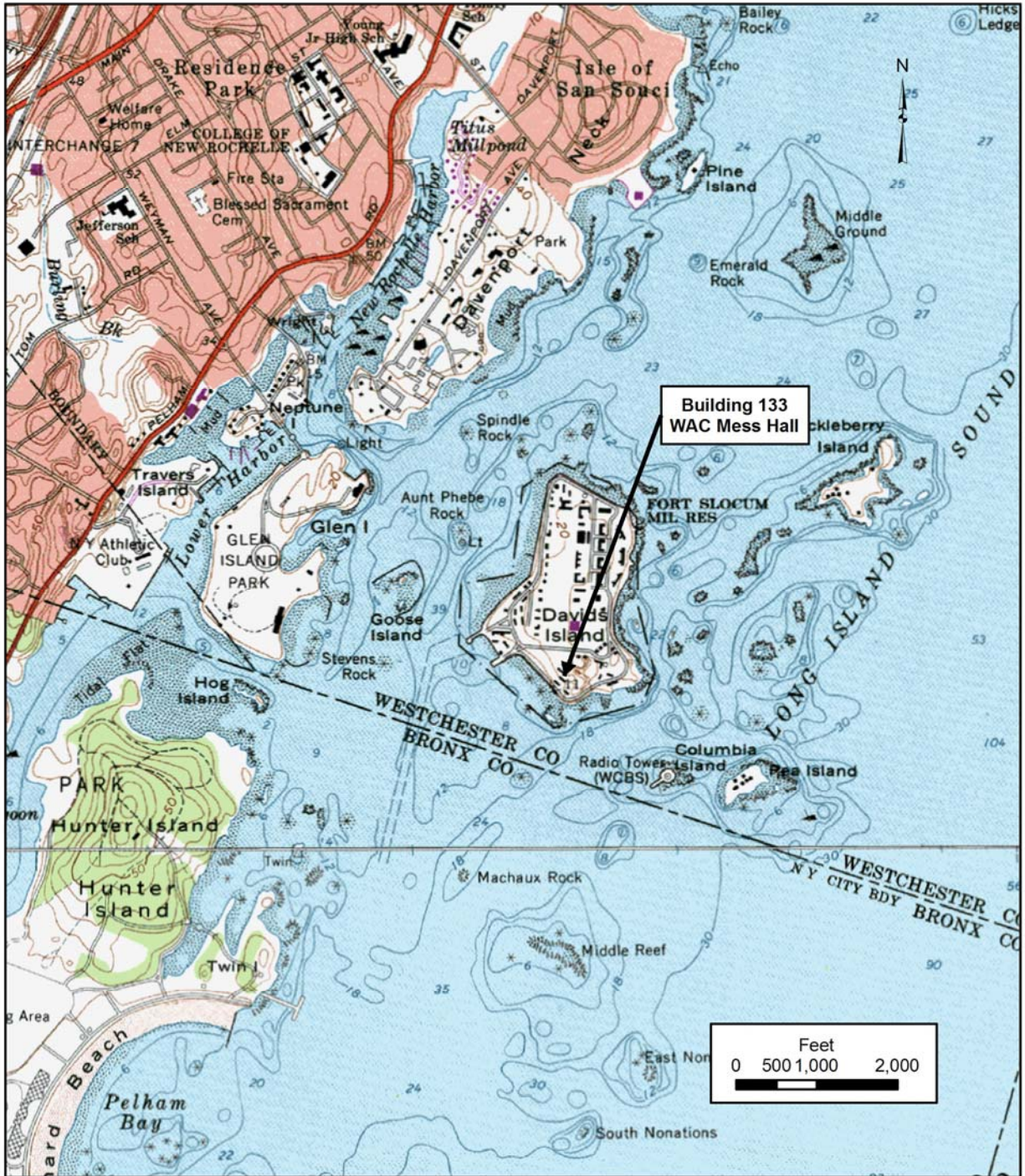
1961: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. November 15. Attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

ca. 1968: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

1980: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island, New Rochelle, NY. Date and originating agency unknown. Available online in a georeferenced photo mosaic version through [HistoricAerials.com](http://www.historicaerials.com) at <http://www.historicaerials.com>. Accessed January 4, 2010.

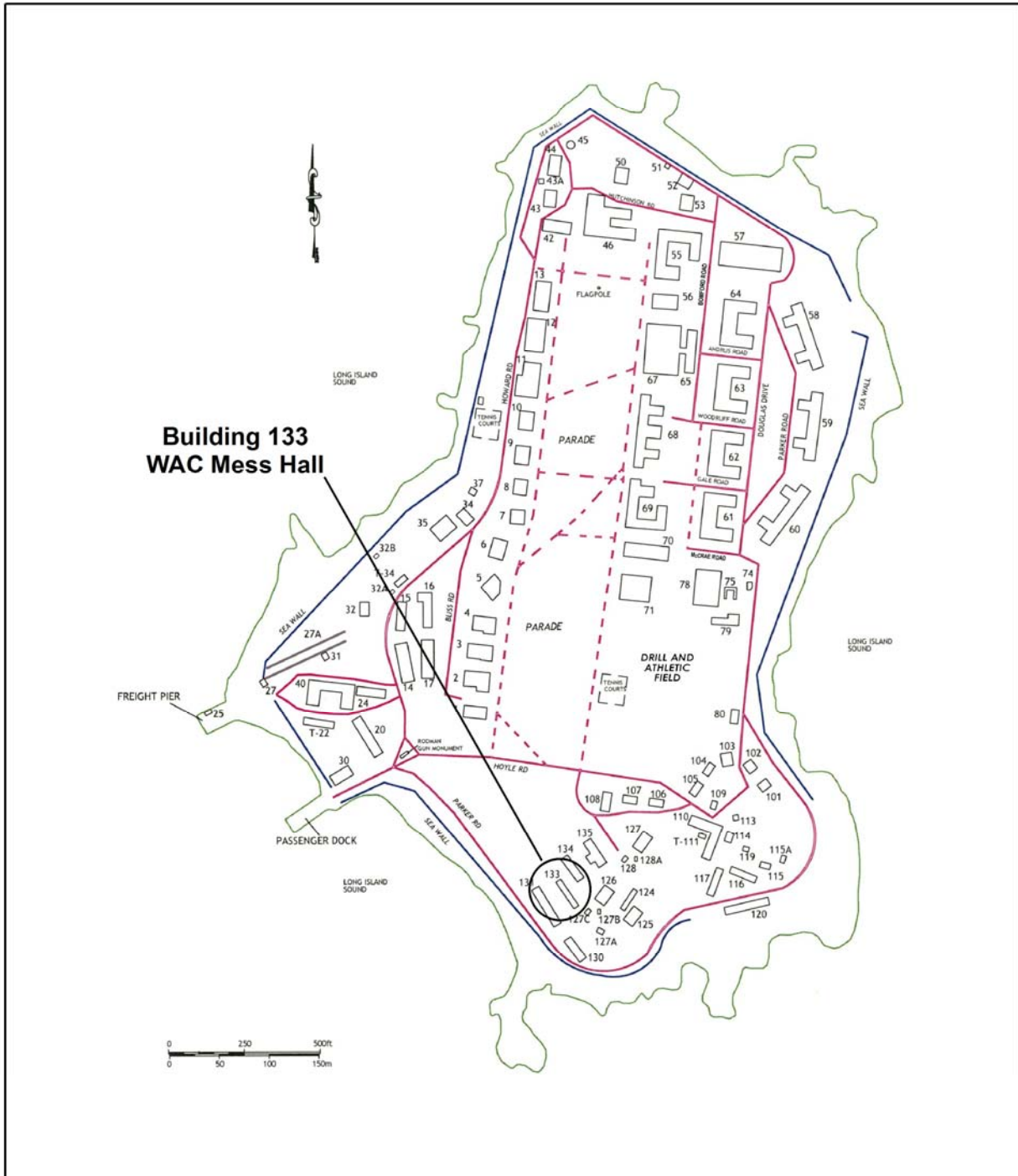
**WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
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LOCATION MAP (USGS Mount Vernon, NY)
Scale: 1:24,000
1966 (Photorevised 1979)



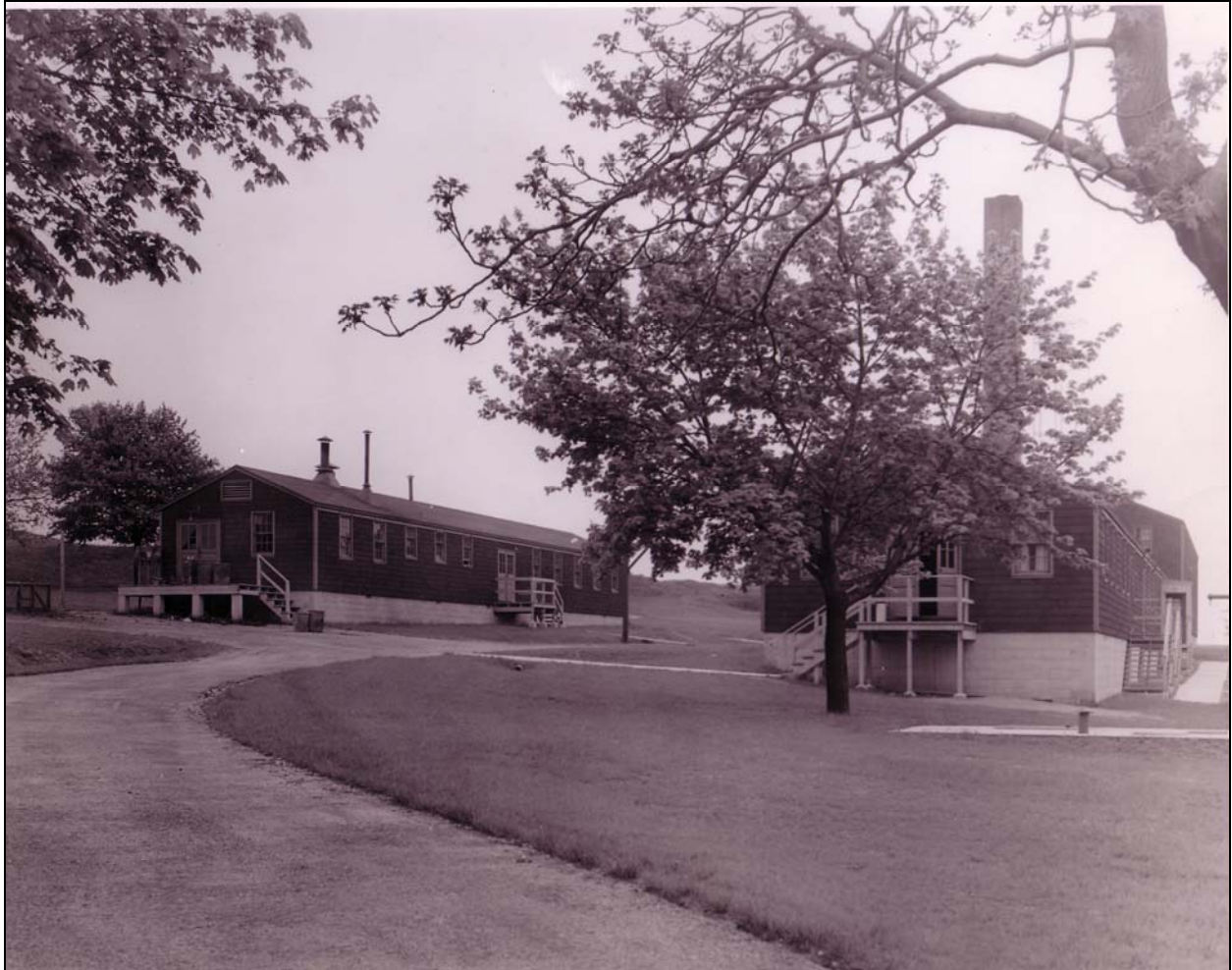
**WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 8)**

SITE MAP



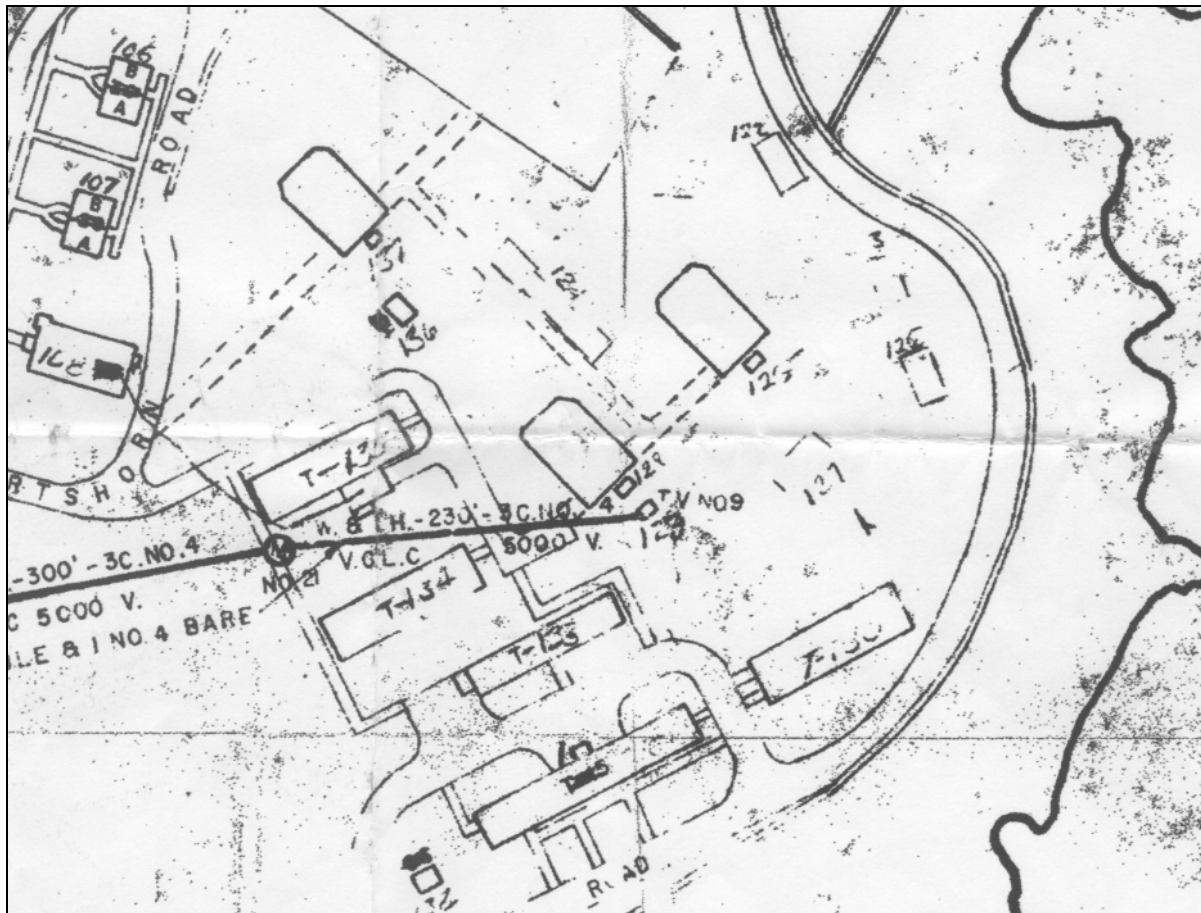
WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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Figure 1. WAC area from access lane off Parker Road, ca. 1944. View southeast. The WAC Mess Hall (Building 133) is at left, and the WAC Recreation and Administration (Building 131) is at right. Partially visible behind Building 131 is the WAC Barracks (Building 130). Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, NY.



**WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
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Figure 2. "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines," May 1949, revised through November 1957, detail. Building 133 is depicted as "T-133," near center of the drawing, with the T-prefix signifying its "temporary" status. North is to the top of the page. Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum; copy on file at Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ.



**WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
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Figure 3. High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake, November 15, 1961, detail with labels added. View north. Southeastern part of island showing a portion of the Mortar Battery, along with the WAC area (Buildings 130-135) and most of the Nike Integrated Fire Control Area. Building 133 is located at center left. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



**WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 12)**

Figure 4. Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968, detail. View north. Building 133 is the one-story, long rectangular building minus a chimney, located toward upper left of the picture. This photo was taken a few years after Fort Slocum was abandoned by the Army, and shows the rapid re-vegetation of the island, with trees beginning to obscure the facades of buildings. Compare with Figure 4. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.



HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

WAC MESS HALL (BUILDING 133)

Davids Island—Fort Slocum

New Rochelle

Westchester County

New York

Photographers: Matt Kierstead, PAL Inc., Pawtucket, RI, November 2005 (Photo 1).

Nancy Brighton, USACE, New York, NY, March 2006 (Photo 2-5).

1. Foundation ruins of Building 133, facing northwest from southeastern end of former building.
2. Boiler at southeastern end of ruin, facing west.
3. Foundation interior with floor joist supports, facing northwest.
4. Northwestern end of foundation with floor joist piers and concrete slab floor, facing west.
5. Concrete slab floor atop foundation wall at western end of ruin, facing southeast.

Figure 1. Foundation ruins of Building 133, facing northwest from southeastern end of former building.



Photo 2. Boiler at southeastern end of ruin, facing west.



Photo 3. Foundation interior with floor joist supports, facing northwest.



Photo 4. Northwestern end of foundation with floor joist piers and concrete slab floor, facing west.



Photo 5. Concrete slab floor atop foundation wall at western end of ruin, facing southeast.



DAVIDS ISLAND – FORT SLOCUM HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)

Location: Davids Island–Fort Slocum
0.6 mi southeast of New Rochelle, New York mainland
USGS Mount Vernon, NY Quadrangle
UTM Coordinate (NAD 1983): 18.603586.4526292

Present Owner(s): City of New Rochelle, NY

Date of Construction: 1944

Architect/Engineer: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Present Use: Abandoned when documented (2004-2007). Demolished 2007

Significance: The WAC Barracks (Building 134)—identified generically in earlier project documentation as a “Temporary Barracks”—is associated with the Defense and Support Area and the provision of quarters for servicewomen serving in the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), who participated in Fort Slocum’s military missions from the 1940s to the 1960s. The building is a contributing element to the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District.

Project Information: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps), has been authorized under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2004, to perform building demolition, debris removal, and remediation of asbestos materials (Project) at the Fort Slocum on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, New York. The purpose of the Project is to remove buildings and infrastructure from the abandoned fort installation that create safety hazards as part of a long-range plan to restore Davids Island for future use. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), the Corps has consulted with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (NYSHPO) regarding the effects of the Project on historic properties. The consultation resulted in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, NYSHPO, County of Westchester, and City of New Rochelle as consulting parties. This documentation report was prepared in accordance with Stipulation I.I.C.1 of the MOA.

Prepared by: C.L. Borstel, J.C. Sexton, R.M. Jacoby, S.B. Marshall, and C.W. Christopher
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Affiliation: Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ
Date: March 2007 (Revision 1, February 2010)

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 2)

PART I. DESCRIPTION

The WAC Barracks (Building 134) is one of a group of five buildings, originally designated as temporary, that were constructed to house members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and its 1942-1943 predecessor, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC). This group of buildings is situated near the southern shore of Davids Island. Davids Island is a roughly pear-shaped, relatively flat landmass consisting of approximately 78 acres above mean high water. It is heavily wooded and contains the ruins of more than 100 buildings and structures associated with an abandoned U.S. Army post, Fort Slocum. The ruins include barracks and quarters; quartermaster, administrative, medical, and recreation buildings; and coastal and air defense facilities. A concrete and stone seawall encircles most of the shore, and a system of roads and paths runs throughout the island. The five WAC buildings adjoin the western side of the Mortar Battery along the edge of the Defense and Support Area. This section of Fort Slocum is a mixed-use area of the post that includes service and storage facilities, quarters, and vacant defensive works.

Building 134 is a two-story end-gable building constructed of concrete block (Figures 1-4; Photos 1-8). With its unadorned and utilitarian appearance, the building is an example of a standardized Second World War-era mobilization-type barracks. It is located west of an unnamed lane that extends off Hartshorn Road. Building 134 is south of Building 135 and north of the ruins of Building 133. It has a long rectangular footprint of approximately 30 by 100 feet, and like its neighbors, its long axis is oriented southeast-northwest. Its principal entrance is at its southeastern end. Although the building was standing when documented (2004-2007), its roof decking and cladding were largely missing, and the interior had deteriorated severely as a result of exposure to the weather.

Building 134 is built on a concrete slab-on-grade foundation. It has concrete block bearing walls, including a pair of parallel interior bearing walls at the first story that line a central corridor and support the interior structure of the second story. Interior framing and the second story floor use standard dimensional lumber. Walls and ceilings are gypsum board. The remnants of the roof show that it was framed with a wood joist-and-rafter system and was clad with roll roofing or asphalt shingles.

The façade with the principal entrance, at the southeastern gable end of the building, is starkly plain, like the entirety of the building exterior. A rectangular louvered vent is placed immediately beneath the gable peak, and three regularly-spaced windows are located at the second floor level. These are identical to all other fenestration in the building; the openings have concrete lintels and sills occupied by six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows. The first floor has only a single door, also with a concrete lintel and sill. There are no windows on the first floor. The door is missing, but its frame indicates it was wood. A fragment of an exterior metal lamp bracket projects from the wall above the doorway.

The façades of the northeastern and southwestern sides of the building are similar and consist generally of ten regularly-spaced windows on each floor. However, an additional window is included on the first floor near the easterly end of the southwestern façade.

The northwestern façade lacks windows. There is a rectangular louvered vent beneath the gable peak and entrances at the second and first floors. The doors have concrete lintels and sills and wood frames. Apparently there was an exterior stair to reach the second-story doorway, but this is not extant.

The building's floorplan consists of modest rooms opening off a central corridor on each floor. Presumably there was an interior stairway to connect the floors, but this element was not recorded during documentation.

PART II. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Fort Slocum

Between 1862 and 1965, Davids Island was the site of two successive posts of the U.S. Army posts. The earlier of these was DeCamp General Hospital (1862-1866/1874). The later, established in 1878, was known as Fort Slocum from 1896 onwards. Fort Slocum served as a recruit intake and training center, coastal and air defense installation, embarkation station, and advanced training school. The island has been abandoned since the late 1960s, soon after Fort Slocum closed. Over the past forty years, the over 100 buildings and structures that formerly comprised the post have deteriorated through neglect and vandalism. The U.S. Army leased the island in 1862 and purchased it outright in 1867. In 1967, the federal government sold Davids Island to the City of New Rochelle, which sold it in turn the following year to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. Consolidated Edison returned ownership of most of the island to the city in 1976.

A more extensive summary of Fort Slocum's history appears in the documentation for Building 130, also in Volume 6 of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements: Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District*. Detailed accounts of Fort Slocum's history can be found in the general historic overview to this documentation series (Tetra Tech 2008) and in Olausen et al. (2005), among other sources.

WAC Barracks (Building 134)

Building 134 is situated in the Defense and Support Area of former Fort Slocum. This functional area is in the southeastern quadrant of Davids Island. It contains defense works and related structures, along with buildings for activities and functions desirably kept separate from the rest of the post. The Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, Buildings 125-127), a large concrete and earth fortification that was in active use around the beginning of the twentieth century, occupies the center of this area. Building 134 is among five buildings that neighbor the Mortar Battery on the west. These five buildings, which also include Buildings 130 and 133-135, comprise a section of Fort Slocum developed during the Second World War to house and administer the 200-plus members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) who were then stationed at the post. The buildings occupy an area that had also been used during the First World War as the site of temporary barracks, which were demolished between the wars. The historical documentation for Building 130, elsewhere in Volume 6, provides a general overview of the development of this area and the Second World War history of the WAC at Fort Slocum.

In brief, servicewomen were assigned to Fort Slocum beginning in 1943 and remained at the post in significant numbers through the end of 1945. As members of the WAC (originally Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, or WAAC, 1942-1943), these servicewomen supplemented or replaced male soldiers in a wide range of noncombatant jobs. At Fort Slocum they worked in nearly every major department of the post, serving as clerks, typists, stenographers, messengers, telephonists, mess hall staff, motor pool drivers, morale and recreation personnel, and hospital technicians and orderlies. They played an active role in the life of the post during the war and represented it at many events outside Davids Island.

The first contingent of Wacs arrived at the post in May 1943. In keeping with the social mores of the time, they occupied quarters separate from the Barracks Area, where male enlisted personnel were housed. Their first quarters were in the Hospital Area at the northern end of Davids Island, but at the beginning of August

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 4)

1943, they moved into a newly-constructed group of buildings in the Defense and Support Area at the opposite end of the island. Initially, this area contained three wood frame buildings (Buildings 130-133), but it was soon expanded with the construction of two additional buildings of concrete block (Buildings 134-135).

Some of the buildings in Fort Slocum's WAC area, including Building 134, continued to be used as servicewomen's quarters until the post closed in 1965. In the 1950s, other buildings in the group were incorporated into the Nike anti-aircraft missile battery fire-control area (active 1955-1961) on the southern flank of the Mortar Battery. The WAC itself remained active as a distinct organization until 1978, more than a decade after Fort Slocum closed, when women were fully integrated into the Army.

Building 134 was one of two buildings completed for Fort Slocum's contingent of Wacs in September 1944. Construction of this building and its neighbor to the north, Building 135, were a result of the Army's plans to double the number of Wacs at Fort Slocum through recruiting in Westchester County where the post was located (Casual News 1944; New York Times 1944). The buildings were constructed "on a contract basis" by an unidentified firm (Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944a:2). A contemporary account reported:

Two new additional WAC barracks constructed under the supervision of the New York District Engineers Office were completed and dedicated on Saturday, 23 September 1944. [Fort Slocum's Post Engineer Department] cooperated immeasurably with the District Engineers Office in the construction of the same. Construction of the new barracks began on 13 June 1944. They are of standard construction, two-story, 100' long and 30' wide. In the interests of wood conservation, fancy masonry was adopted in the outer structure. The exterior color scheme is of grey with white trim and the roof is green. The first floor is of concrete with asphalt tile finish and the second floor is of special resilient asphalt finish. Each building has a laundry with dryers and ironing boards. Unique in design and quite convenient is the housing of a central boiler in one compartment for both buildings. Seventy (70) members of the detachment can be accommodated in each barrack (Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944b:2-3).

An Army report from the summer of 1944 describes Buildings 134 and 135 as being "of the same design as the [existing] temporary structures," i.e., Buildings 130-133 (Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944a:2), which suggests the buildings were based on standard plans. The phrase "of the same design" in this report stresses the similarities among the buildings, but they were not identical, of course; Buildings 134 and 135 most closely resembled Building 130, the two-story wood frame barracks of 1943. Available information, including period sources, historic photographs, the extant ruins and buildings, and studies of the Army's twentieth-century architectural heritage, indicates that they were built under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers using standardized plans for mobilization buildings designated for WAAC/WAC use. Research to date has not determined the standardized plan number for the building. Built after wartime shortages of building materials developed (Chattey et al. 1997:8-12; Fine and Remington 1972:343-345; Wasch and Perry 1991:45-46), the 1944 WAC barracks substituted concrete block masonry for wood frame construction. The provision of a shared boiler room to heat both buildings—in a dependency on the southwestern side of Building 135—was unusual at Fort Slocum and was also apparently enough of a deviation from the standardized Army's design for buildings of this type to warrant a comment in the previously-cited quarterly report.

The end of the Second World War saw the rapid reduction of the size of the WAC, and most servicewomen were gone from Fort Slocum by the spring of 1946. The immediate consequences of this reduction for the use

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 5)

of Building 134 are unknown, and no information is available about alterations to the building after the Second World War. In the late 1940s, however, Building 134 was possibly used by a unit of the First Air Force, then the sole tenant of Fort Slocum. In the 1950s and 1960s, the building provided quarters for servicewomen affiliated with the Armed Forces (later Army) Information School (at Fort Slocum 1951-1965) as instructors and students.

Building 134 was designated as Building T-17 when it was completed in 1944. It was renumbered as Building T-134 in 1957. Sometime after the post closed in 1965, the T- prefix (signifying a temporary building) disappeared from its building number. In earlier historic architectural documentation for Fort Slocum, Building 134 was identified as a structure of undetermined function and as a temporary or Nike-related barracks (Berger 1986; Olausen et al. 2005; Tetra Tech 2008). Subsequent historical research clarified the construction date and history of the building, resulting in its identification here as a WAC Barracks.

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(Page 7)**

May 1949, revised through November 1957 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines." Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD; digital copy from Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

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1961 "Map of Fort Slocum (Davids Island), New Rochelle, N.Y." Prepared under the direction of the First Army Engineer by the Engineer Intelligence Division, Governors Island, New York. Record Group 92, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Panoramic and Aerial Photographs

(Except as noted, all photographs are on file at National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Digital copies examined for this research come from the Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.)

1940: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island. September 4.

ca. 1958: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Summer. Included in a 1966 report prepared by Cross & Brown Co., New York, for the Federal Property Resources Service, on file at the New York City branch of the National Archives, Record Group 291.

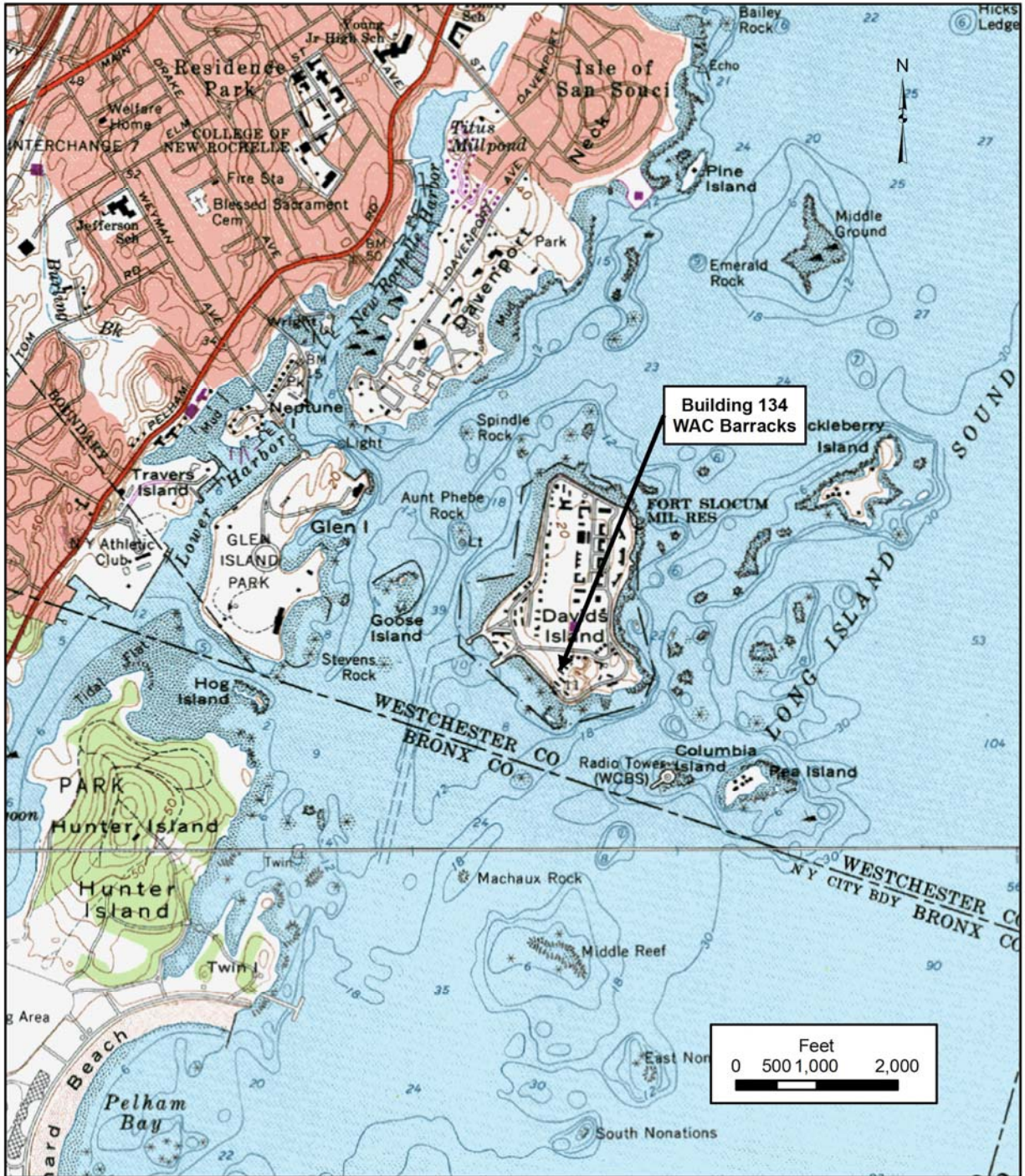
1961: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. November 15. Attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

ca. 1968: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.

1980: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island, New Rochelle, NY. Date and originating agency unknown. Available online in a georeferenced photo mosaic version through [HistoricAerials.com](http://www.historicaerials.com) at <http://www.historicaerials.com>. Accessed January 4, 2010.

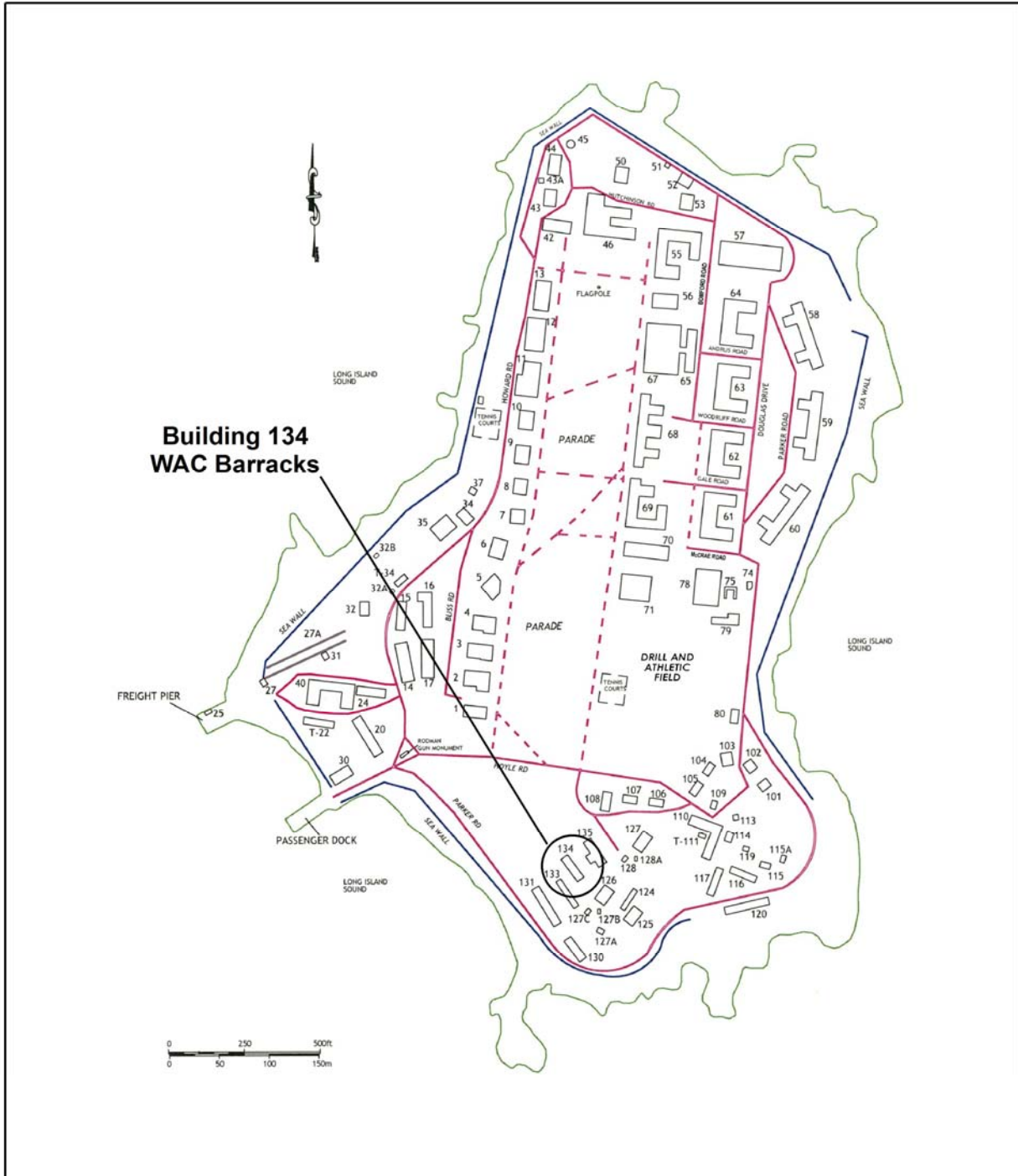
**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 8)**

LOCATION MAP (USGS Mount Vernon, NY)
Scale: 1:24,000
1966 (Photorevised 1979)



**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 9)**

SITE MAP



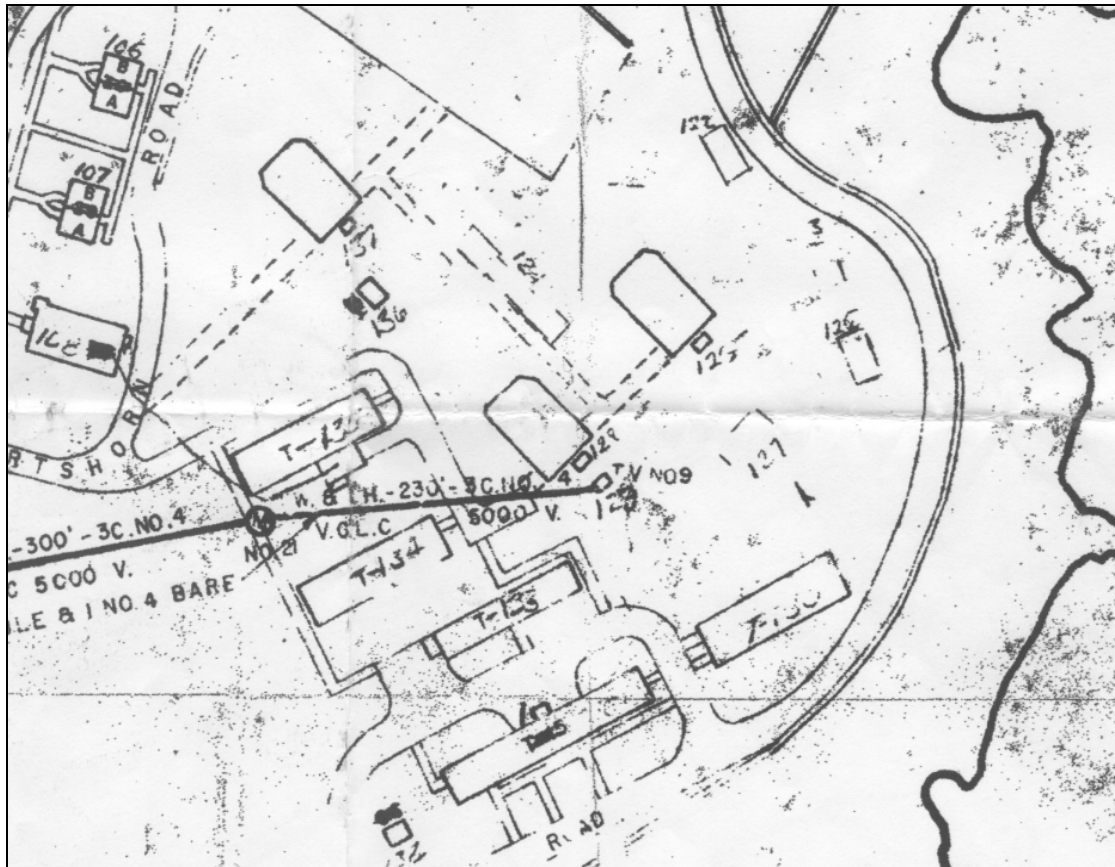
**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM**
(Page 10)

Figure 1. Main entrance, Building 134 or 135, ca. 1944. These concrete block buildings were built in 1944 as WAC barracks. At left is Capt. Elizabeth Strayhorn. Next to her is Col. Bernard Lentz, Fort Slocum's Commanding Officer during the Second World War. Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, New York.



**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 11)**

Figure 2. "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y., Electric Distribution System Primary Lines," May 1949, revised through November 1957, detail. Building 134 is labeled "T-134" near center of drawing, with the T-prefix signifying its "temporary" status. North is to the top of the page. Office of Post Engineer, Fort Slocum; copy on file at Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ.



**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 12)**

Figure 3. High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake, November 15, 1961, detail with labels added. View north. Southeastern part of island showing a portion of the Mortar Battery, along with the WAC area (Buildings 130-135) and most of the Nike Integrated Fire Control Area. Building 134 is located at top center. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



**WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 13)**

Figure 4. . Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968, detail. View north. Building 134, clad with light and dark colored roofing material, is located near upper left of image. This photo was taken a few years after Fort Slocum was abandoned by the Army, and shows the rapid re-vegetation of the island, with trees beginning to obscure the facades of buildings. Compare with Figure 4. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.



HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 134)

Davids Island—Fort Slocum
 New Rochelle
 Westchester County
 New York

Photographers: Kendall Walker, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston, MA, March 2007 (Photos 1 and 3) and June 2007 (Photo 8).

Nancy Brighton, USACE, New York, NY, March 2006 (Photos 2, 4, and 6).

Caleb Christopher, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ, November 2006 (Photos 5 and 7).

1. Principal (southeastern) façade, facing west.
2. Southeastern end of building, showing principal façade (right) and portion of southwestern side (left). Facing north.
3. Southwestern side of building, facing north.
4. Northwestern façade, facing southeast.
5. Northwestern façade, detail: second-story door. Facing southeast.
6. Portion of northwestern end (right) and northeastern side, facing south.
7. Partially collapsed interior, looking toward second floor corridor and exposed roof rafters.
8. Building 134 during demolition, facing northwest.

Photo 1. Principal (southeastern) façade, facing west.



Photo 2. Southeastern end of building, showing principal façade (right) and portion of southwestern side (left). Facing north.



Photo 3. Southwestern side of building, facing north.



Photo 4. Northwestern façade, facing southeast.



Photo 5. Northwestern façade, detail: second-story door. Facing southeast.



Photo 6. Portion of northwestern end (right) and northeastern side, facing south.



Photo 7. Partially collapsed interior, looking toward second floor corridor and exposed roof rafters.



Photo 8. Building 134 during demolition, facing northwest.



DAVIDS ISLAND – FORT SLOCUM HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)

Location: Davids Island–Fort Slocum
0.6 mi southeast of New Rochelle, New York mainland
USGS Mount Vernon, NY Quadrangle
UTM Coordinate (NAD 1983): 18.603610.4526314

Present Owner(s): City of New Rochelle, NY

Date of Construction: 1944

Architect/Engineer: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Present Use: Abandoned when documented (2004-2007). Demolished 2007

Significance: The WAC Barracks (Building 135)—identified generically in earlier project documentation as a “Temporary Barracks”—is associated with the Defense and Support Area and the provision of quarters for servicewomen serving in the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), who participated in Fort Slocum’s military missions from the 1940s to the 1960s. The building is a contributing element to the Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District.

Project Information: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps), has been authorized under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2004, to perform building demolition, debris removal, and remediation of asbestos materials (Project) at the Fort Slocum on Davids Island in the City of New Rochelle, New York. The purpose of the Project is to remove buildings and infrastructure from the abandoned fort installation that create safety hazards as part of a long-range plan to restore Davids Island for future use. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), the Corps has consulted with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (NYSHPO) regarding the effects of the Project on historic properties. The consultation resulted in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, NYSHPO, County of Westchester, and City of New Rochelle as consulting parties. This documentation report was prepared in accordance with Stipulation II.C.1 of the MOA.

Prepared by: C.L. Borstel, J.C. Sexton, R.M. Jacoby, S.B. Marshall, and C.W. Christopher
Title: Cultural Resources Documentation Team
Affiliation: Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ
Date: March 2007 (Revision 1, January 2010)

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 2)

PART I. DESCRIPTION

The WAC Barracks (Building 135) is one of a group of five buildings, originally designated as temporary, that were constructed to house members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and its 1942-1943 predecessor, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC). This group of buildings is situated near the southern shore of Davids Island. Davids Island is a roughly pear-shaped, relatively flat landmass consisting of approximately 78 acres above mean high water. It is heavily wooded and contains the ruins of more than 100 buildings and structures associated with an abandoned U.S. Army post, Fort Slocum. The ruins include barracks and quarters; quartermaster, administrative, medical, and recreation buildings; and coastal and air defense facilities. A concrete and stone seawall encircles most of the shore, and a system of roads and paths runs throughout the island. The five WAC buildings adjoin the western side of the Mortar Battery along the edge of the Defense and Support Area. This section of Fort Slocum is a mixed-use area of the post that includes service and storage facilities, quarters, and vacant defensive works.

Building 135 is a two-story end-gable building constructed of concrete block (Figures 1-5; Photos 1-11). With its unadorned and utilitarian appearance, the building is an example of a standardized Second World War-era mobilization-type barracks. It is located west of an unnamed lane that extends off Hartshorn Road. Building 134 is its southern neighbor, and the Post Chapel (Building 108) is a short distance to the north. Building 135 is a long essentially rectangular structure. The main, two-story, section of the building measures approximately 30 by 100 feet, and this section is adjoined near the center of its southwestern side by a largely below-grade dependency measuring 16 by 30 feet. Like the other buildings of the WAC group, the long axis of Building 135 is oriented southeast-northwest. The building's principal entrance is at its southeastern end. Although the building was standing when documented (2004-2007), its roof decking and cladding were largely missing, and the interior had deteriorated severely as a result of exposure to the weather.

The main part of Building 135 is built on a concrete slab-on-grade foundation. It has concrete block bearing walls, including a pair of parallel interior bearing walls at the first story that line a central corridor and support the interior structure of the second story. Interior framing and the second story floor use standard dimensional lumber. Walls and ceilings are gypsum board. The remnants of the roof show that it was framed with a wood joist-and-rafter system and was clad with roll roofing or asphalt shingles.

The façade with the principal entrance, at the southeastern gable end of the building, is starkly plain, like the entirety of the building exterior. A rectangular louvered vent is placed immediately beneath the gable peak, and three regularly-spaced windows are located at the second floor level. These are identical to all other fenestration in the building; the openings have concrete lintels and sills occupied by six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows. The first floor has only a single door, also with a concrete lintel and sill. There are no windows on the first floor. The door is missing, but its frame indicates it was wood. Attached to the wall above the door is an alarm bell with a dome-type gong and a fragmentary metal bracket for an exterior lamp.

The building's northeastern façade is similar to the southwestern façade of Building 134. of ten regularly-spaced windows on each floor; however, an additional window is included on the first floor near the easterly end of the southwestern façade. In addition, at the westerly corner of this façade, an exterior light on a bracket arm extends from the second-story wall.

The northwestern façade lacks windows. There is a rectangular opening beneath the gable peak, presumably for a louvered vent like that found at the opposite end of the building, but it is covered by a sheet of plywood. The façade also has entrances at the second and first floors; these feature concrete lintels and sills and wood

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 3)

frames. A deteriorated wood vestibule projects from the first-floor entrance, and this structure is a remnant of a more extensive wood structure comprising a flight of steps and a small porch

A heavy growth of trees obscures the façade on the southwestern side of the building. It appears to be broadly similar to that of the northeastern side of Building 134, which stands opposite. Like the building opposite, the southwestern side of Building 135 apparently has ten evenly-spaced windows on the first and second floors. However, the low walls of the dependency that adjoins this side of the building interrupt the smooth regularity of the fenestration by forcing some of the first-floor windows to be half-height. In addition, a large square brick chimney rises from the dependency next to the main wall of the building. The dependency is a below-grade boiler room, which served both Buildings 135 and 134. The above-ground section is a concrete block structure with a height of approximately 3 to 4 feet above grade. The roof (of undetermined material) is a very-low pitch shed roof. There are a few small windows low in the above-grade sections of the dependency walls. A concrete stairwell leads down to the boiler room entrance.

The building's floorplan consists of modest rooms opening off a central corridor on each floor. Presumably there was an interior stairway to connect the floors, but this element was not recorded during documentation.

PART II. HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Fort Slocum

Between 1862 and 1965, Davids Island was the site of two successive posts of the U.S. Army posts. The earlier of these was DeCamp General Hospital (1862-1866/1874). The later, established in 1878, was known as Fort Slocum from 1896 onwards. Fort Slocum served as a recruit intake and training center, coastal and air defense installation, embarkation station, and advanced training school. The island has been abandoned since the late 1960s, soon after Fort Slocum closed. Over the past forty years, the over 100 buildings and structures that formerly comprised the post have deteriorated through neglect and vandalism. The U.S. Army leased the island in 1862 and purchased it outright in 1867. In 1967, the federal government sold Davids Island to the City of New Rochelle, which sold it in turn the following year to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. Consolidated Edison returned ownership of most of the island to the city in 1976.

A more extensive summary of Fort Slocum's history appears in the documentation for Building 130, also in Volume 6 of the *Documentation of Contributing Elements: Fort Slocum Historic and Archeological District*. Detailed accounts of Fort Slocum's history can be found in the general historic overview to this documentation series (Tetra Tech 2008) and in Olausen et al. (2005), among other sources.

WAC Barracks (Building 135)

Building 135 is situated in the Defense and Support Area of former Fort Slocum. This functional area is in the southeastern quadrant of Davids Island. It contains defense works and related structures, along with buildings for activities and functions desirably kept separate from the rest of the post. The Mortar Battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, Buildings 125-127), a large concrete and earth fortification that was in active use around the beginning of the twentieth century, occupies the center of this area. Building 135 is among five buildings that neighbor the Mortar Battery on the west. These five buildings, which also include Buildings 130 and 133-135, comprise a section of Fort Slocum developed during the Second World War to house and administer the 200-plus members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) who were then stationed at the post.

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 4)

The buildings occupy an area that had also been used during the First World War as the site of temporary barracks, which were demolished between the wars. The historical documentation for Building 130, elsewhere in Volume 6, provides a general overview of the development of this area and the Second World War history of the WAC at Fort Slocum.

In brief, servicewomen were assigned to Fort Slocum beginning in 1943 and remained at the post in significant numbers through the end of 1945. As members of the WAC (originally Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, or WAAC, 1942-1943), these servicewomen supplemented or replaced male soldiers in a wide range of noncombatant jobs. At Fort Slocum they worked in nearly every major department of the post, serving as clerks, typists, stenographers, messengers, telephonists, mess hall staff, motor pool drivers, morale and recreation personnel, and hospital technicians and orderlies. They played an active role in the life of the post during the war and represented it at many events outside Davids Island.

The first contingent of Wacs arrived at the post in May 1943. In keeping with the social mores of the time, they occupied quarters separate from the Barracks Area, where male enlisted personnel were housed. Their first quarters were in the Hospital Area at the northern end of Davids Island, but at the beginning of August 1943, they moved into a newly-constructed group of buildings in the Defense and Support Area at the opposite end of the island. Initially, this area contained three wood frame buildings (Buildings 130-133), but it was soon expanded with the construction of two additional buildings of concrete block (Buildings 134-135).

Some of the buildings in Fort Slocum's WAC area, including Building 135, continued to be used as servicewomen's quarters until the post closed in 1965. In the 1950s, other buildings in the group were incorporated into the Nike anti-aircraft missile battery fire-control area (active 1955-1961) on the southern flank of the Mortar Battery. The WAC itself remained active as a distinct organization until 1978, more than a decade after Fort Slocum closed, when women were fully integrated into the Army.

Building 135 was one of two buildings completed for Fort Slocum's contingent of Wacs in September 1944. Construction of this building and its neighbor to the south, Building 134, were a result of the Army's plans to double the number of Wacs at Fort Slocum through recruiting in Westchester County, where the post was located. The two barracks were each designed to accommodate 70 enlisted women. The buildings were gray with white trim and green roofs. Each had a laundry with dryers and ironing boards. They were built "on a contract basis" by an unidentified firm. Construction was supervised by the New York District Office of the Corps of Engineers, and the building design was from a standardized plan administered by the Corps. The substitution of concrete block ("fancy masonry") for wood framing and siding "in the interests of wood conservation," was common in the latter stages of the Second World War. Another modification was the boiler room appended to Building 135, which heated both that building and its neighbor, Building 134. This modification was unusual for Fort Slocum and perhaps for mobilization barracks generally, making it worthy of a special comment—"unique in design and quite convenient"—in an Army document from the period (Casual News 1944; Fort Slocum Historical Report 1944a:2, 1944b:2-3; New York Times 1944; Wasch and Perry 1991:45-46). (See the documentation for Building 134, elsewhere in this volume, for an extended version of these comments.)

The end of the Second World War saw the rapid reduction of the size of the WAC, and most servicewomen were gone from Fort Slocum by the spring of 1946. The immediate consequences of this reduction for the use of Building 135 are unknown, and no information is available about alterations to the building after the Second World War. In the late 1940s, however, Building 135 was possibly used by a unit of the First Air

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)
DAVIDS ISLAND-FORT SLOCUM
(Page 5)

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Building 135 was designated as Building T-17 when it was completed in 1944. It was renumbered as Building T-135 in 1957. Sometime after the post closed in 1965, the T- prefix (signifying a temporary building) disappeared from its building number. In earlier historic architectural documentation for Fort Slocum, Building 135 was identified as a structure of undetermined function and as a temporary or Nike-related barracks (Berger 1986; Olausen et al. 2005; Tetra Tech 2008). Subsequent historical research clarified the construction date and history of the building, resulting in its identification here as a WAC Barracks.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- 1944b "Historical Report, 1 July-30 September 1944." Record Group 336. National Archives, New York City Branch.

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- ca. 1941-45 Photographs of activities, buildings, and personnel at Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, New York. Local History Collection, New Rochelle [NY] Public Library.

Maps and Drawings

1943 No title [Informal guide map of Fort Slocum]. Prepared by T/3 Richard Williams. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

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1952 "Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, NY." Prepared by Armed Forces Information School. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.

1961 "Map of Fort Slocum (Davids Island), New Rochelle, N.Y." Prepared under the direction of the First Army Engineer by the Engineer Intelligence Division, Governors Island, New York. Record Group 92, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Panoramic and Aerial Photographs

(Except as noted, all photographs are on file at National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Digital copies examined for this research come from the Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A. Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.)

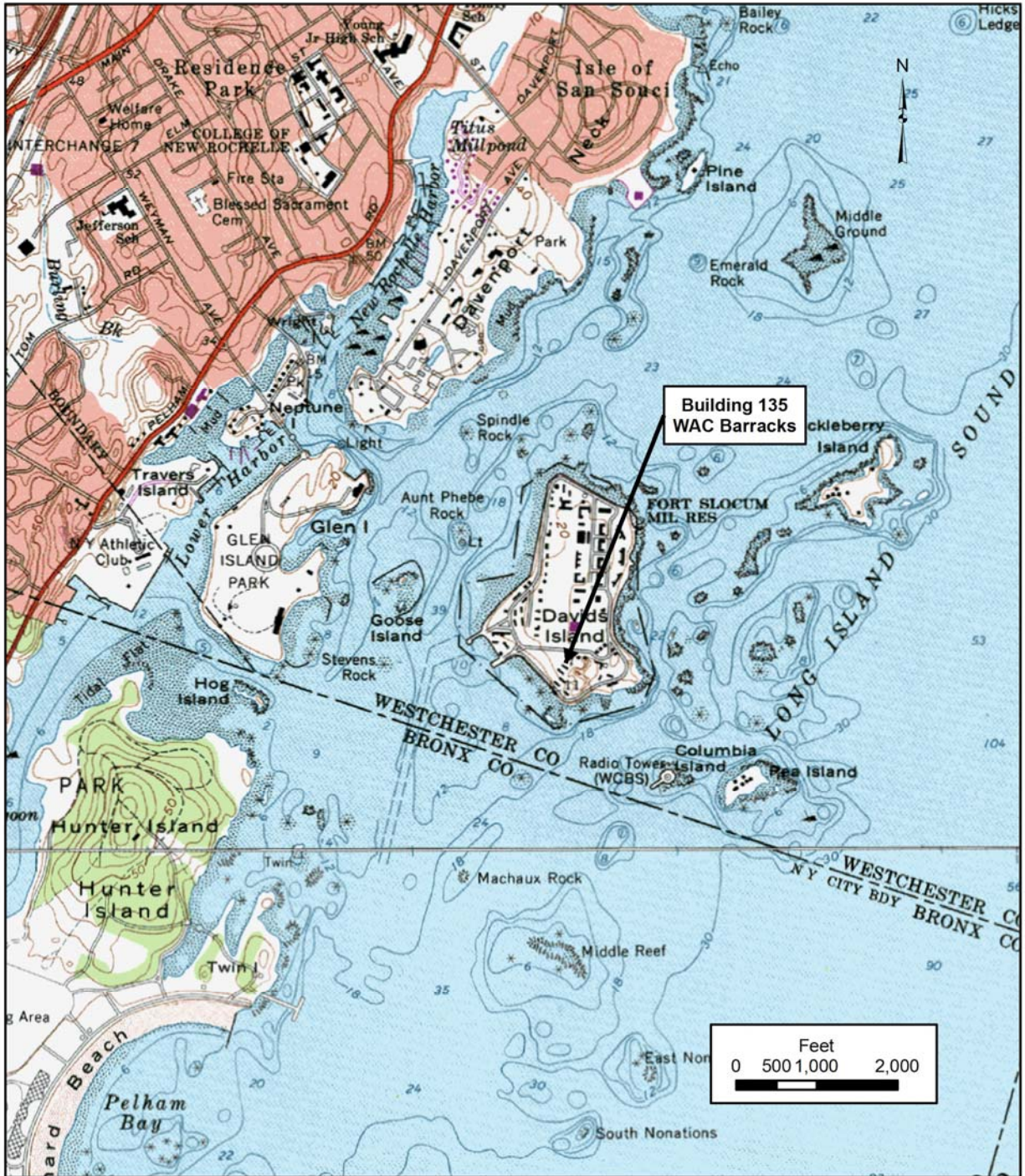
1940: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island. September 4.

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- ca. 1958: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Summer. Included in a 1966 report prepared by Cross & Brown Co., New York, for the Federal Property Resources Service, on file at the New York City branch of the National Archives, Record Group 291.
- 1961: High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. November 15. Attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.
- ca. 1968: Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island. View north. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.
- 1980: Vertical aerial photograph of Davids Island, New Rochelle, NY. Date and originating agency unknown. Available online in a georeferenced photo mosaic version through HistoricAerials.com at <http://www.historicaerials.com>. Accessed January 4, 2010.

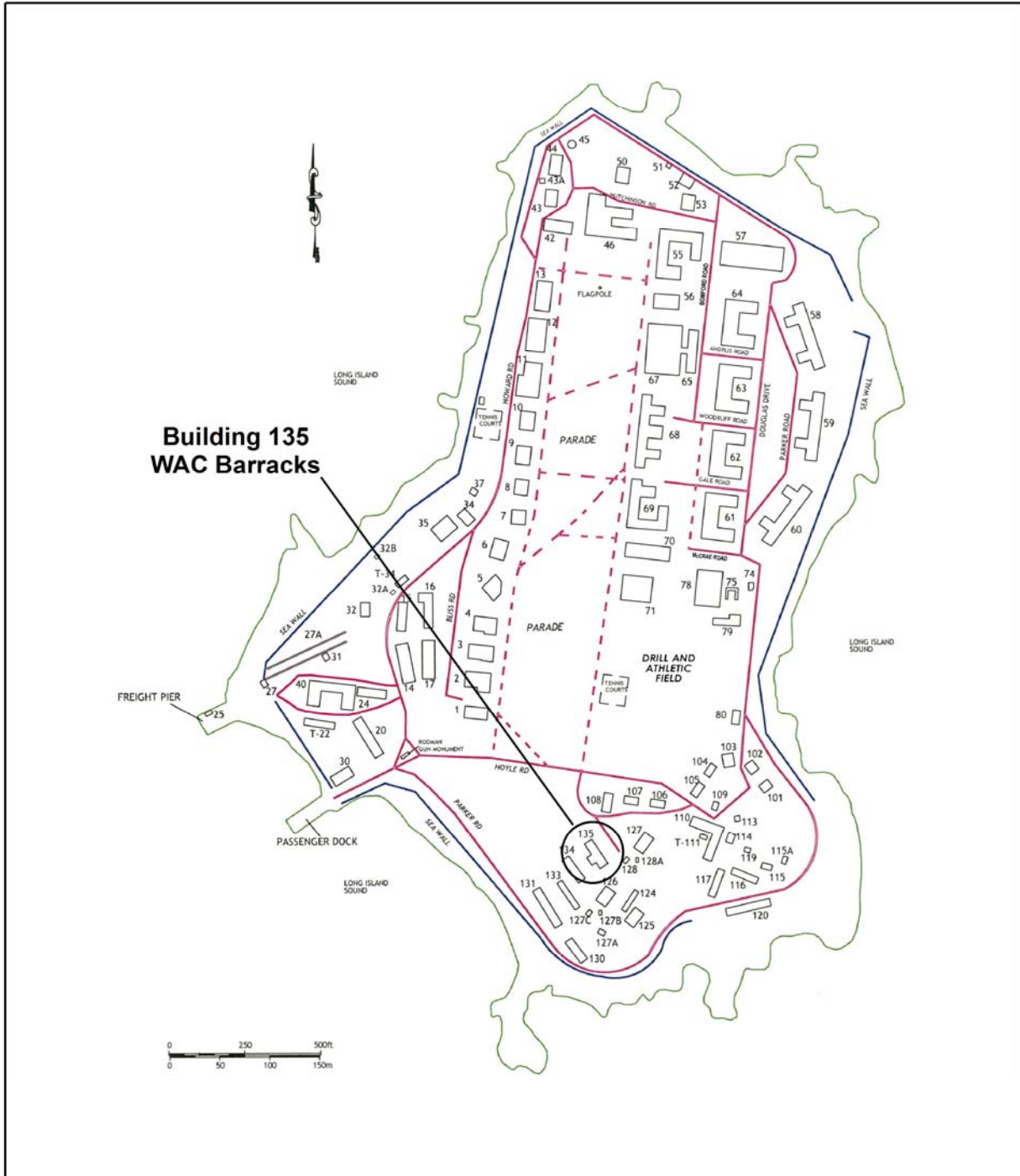
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LOCATION MAP (USGS Mount Vernon, NY)
Scale: 1:24,000
1966 (Photorevised 1979)



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SITE MAP



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Figure 1. Main entrance, Building 134 or 135, ca. 1944. These concrete block buildings were built in 1944 as WAC barracks. At left is Capt. Elizabeth Strayhorn. Next to her is Col. Bernard Lentz, Fort Slocum's Commanding Officer during the Second World War. Fort Slocum Collection, New Rochelle Public Library, New Rochelle, New York.



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Figure 3. Building 135 in the 1950s. View northwest. Note boiler room on southwestern side of building. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A.Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



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Figure 4 High angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island attributed to Capt. Donald P. Blake, November 15, 1961, detail with labels added. View north. Southeastern part of island showing a portion of the Mortar Battery, along with the WAC area (Buildings 130-135) and most of the Nike Integrated Fire Control Area. Building 135 is located at top center. Fort Slocum Alumni and Friends Collection, Michael A.Cavanaugh, Los Angeles, CA, custodian.



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Figure 5. Low angle oblique aerial photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968, detail. View north. Building 135 is located at top center of image. This photo was taken a few years after Fort Slocum was abandoned by the Army, and shows the rapid re-vegetation of the island, with trees beginning to obscure the facades of buildings. Compare with Figure 4. Original in National Archives, College Park, MD.



HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

WAC BARRACKS (BUILDING 135)

Davids Island—Fort Slocum
 New Rochelle
 Westchester County
 New York

Photographers: Kendall Walker, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Boston, MA, March 2007 (Photos 1, 3, 6, and 8) and June 2007 (Photo 11).

Caleb Christopher, Tetra Tech EC, Inc., Morris Plains, NJ, November 2006 (Photos 2, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10).

1. Principal (southeastern) façade, facing west.
2. Southeastern façade, details: second-story window and alarm bell attached to wall above door, facing northwest.
3. Southeastern end (right) and southwestern side including dependency containing boiler room (left). Facing north.
4. Dependency containing boiler room on southwestern side of building, facing northwest.
5. Stairwell to boiler room on southwestern side of dependency, facing northwest.
6. Northwestern façade, facing southeast.
7. Northwestern façade, detail: first-floor vestibule and second-floor porch, facing southeast.
8. Northwestern and northeastern façades, facing south.
9. Northeastern façade, detail: bracket for exterior light at northern corner of building, facing south.
10. Northeastern façade, detail: partially intact typical six-over-six double-hung wood sash window.
11. Demolition of Building 135, facing west.

Photo 1. Principal (southeastern) façade, facing west.



Photo 2. Southeastern façade, details: second-story window and alarm bell attached to wall above door, facing northwest.



Photo 3. Southeastern end (right) and southwestern side including dependency containing boiler room (left). Facing north.



Photo 4. Dependency containing boiler room on southwestern side of building, facing northwest.



Photo 5. Stairwell to boiler room on southwestern side of dependency, facing northwest.



Photo 6. Northwestern façade, facing southeast.



Photo 7. Northwestern façade, detail: first-floor vestibule and second-floor porch, facing southeast.



Photo 8. Northwestern and northeastern façades, facing south.



Photo 9. Northeastern façade, detail: bracket for exterior light at northern corner of building, facing south.



Photo 10. Northeastern façade, detail: partially intact typical six-over-six double-hung wood sash window.



Photo 11. Demolition of Building 135, facing west.

