



National Park Service

**SPECIAL STUDY
NORTH FIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Tinian

Commonwealth of the

Northern Mariana Islands

September 2001

United States Department of the Interior - National Park Service



North Field as it looked during World War II. The photo shows only three runways, which dates it sometime earlier than May 1945 when construction of Runway Four was completed. North Field was designed for an entire wing of B-29 Superfortresses, the 313th Bombardment Wing, with hardstands to park 265 B-29s. Each of the parallel runways stretched more than a mile and a half in length. Around and between the runways were nearly eleven miles of taxiways.

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SUMMARY

The historic World War II sites and features that comprise North Field on the island of Tinian in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) have been determined to be of national significance. In 1985, the Secretary of the Interior designated the area encompassing North Field a national historic landmark.

This study finds that North Field represents one of the major historic events of the Pacific War: the strategic bombing of the Japanese homeland and the use of the atomic bomb in war. These events led directly to the surrender of Japan and the end of World War II. Presently, this historic theme is not adequately represented in the national park system, and North Field represents the most intact example of this theme. Therefore, this study finds North Field also meets the test of suitability for inclusion in the national park system.

With regard to feasibility, this study finds that local government officials on Tinian, the CNMI legislature and the CNMI Resident Representative to the U.S. support the establishment of a National Park Service-operated national historical park at North Field. This study also finds that the U.S. Department of Defense, through the U.S. Navy, retains exclusive use, control and possession of lands encompassing the national historic landmark based on a 50-year lease agreement with CNMI, the landowner. As stated in writing (see APPENDIX) by the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), the U.S. Navy's official position regarding its long-term strategic needs for North Field is to continue its use for military training. And that this use precludes considering North Field as a national historical park administered by the National Park Service (NPS) as a unit of the national park system.

Based on the above, this study concludes that North Field does not meet the test of feasibility. And, based on the position taken by the U.S. Navy, there are presently no non-military alternatives for additional protection of North Field's historic World War II resources beyond national historic landmark designation, the U.S. Navy's regulations and directives regarding the protection and management of historic resources within its control, and the development of additional interpretive opportunities by NPS for future visitors to North Field.

Recommendations consist of implementation of additional opportunities for off-site interpretation of North Field at War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam and both off-site and on-site interpretation of North Field by Park Service personnel from American Memorial on Saipan.

Other NPS interpretive opportunities recommended include producing travel guides and publications telling CNMI visitors about North Field and other significant places on Saipan where historic events related to the World War II Marianas Campaign took place.

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BACKGROUND

Authority for this feasibility study is section 326(b)(3)(M) of Public Law 106-113, November 29,

1999. The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to study World War II sites in the CNMI "to determine the appropriateness of including such areas or themes in the National Park System." Subsection (c) requires reports "on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of each study under subsection (b) within three fiscal years following the date on which funds are first made available for each study."

In regard to which of the several World War II sites in the CNMI to study, NPS received requests from CNMI's Resident Representative to the U.S., CNMI legislators and local government officials on Tinian to study North Field on that island to determine its feasibility as a unit of the national park system. This study is in response to those requests.

NPS has developed a study process to evaluate areas or sites identified by Congress to determine if there are resources present which are of national significance. Once an area is found to contain resources that are of national significance, then it must also meet criteria for both suitability and feasibility in order to qualify as a potential addition to the national park system.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

Location, Size and Ownership

The study area, North Field, is located at the northern end of the island of Tinian. Tinian is one of the four major islands in the Mariana chain. Together with Rota, Saipan and several small islands to the north, Tinian comprises the CNMI, a United States Commonwealth. Tinian is the least developed of the three major islands comprising the CNMI.

The study area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as an historic district and has been designated a national historic landmark. The landmark encompasses approximately 2,500 acres. Lands in the study area are owned by CNMI and are a portion of the approximately 16,000 acres on Tinian under lease to the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). Study area lands are managed by the Commander, Naval Forces, Marianas (COMNAVMAR).

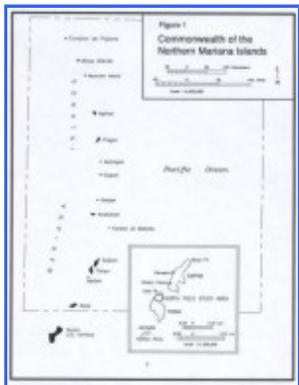
Regional Context

The island of Tinian has a total land area of approximately 39 square miles. Only about 13 square miles of the island lies outside of the area leased to DoD and available to local island residents. Tinian's population is estimated to be a little over 4,000. Local government makes up the largest component of the island's resident work force. Tinian is the only populated island in the Mariana Islands that has not experienced dramatic economic development over the past ten to fifteen years.

Commercial agriculture on Tinian consists of small-scale vegetable and fruit cultivation. The produce is marketed locally and also shipped to Saipan. Commercial cattle grazing on Tinian has now dwindled to a few small family-owned ranches. Most of the retail establishments are located in the village of San Jose, the island's only major settlement, and include a large hotel/casino, nightclubs, convenience stores, gas stations, several small restaurants, bakeries and two banks.

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Figure 1. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Tourism on Tinian is expected to increase significantly if recently opened gambling casinos succeed on the island. The Tinian Dynasty Casino Hotel is now open and another major casino is planned. The hotel has more than 400 guest rooms, as well as an employee village for an estimated 800 employees.

Freedom Air and Pacific Island Aviation provide inter-island connections to and from the Tinian airport from nearby Saipan. Rental cars are available at the airport and in San Jose. Two turbo-jet catamaran ferries transport passengers between Saipan and Tinian approximately five times/day. The trip takes about 50 minutes and the service is provided to bring customers to the Tinian Dynasty Casino Hotel.

Presently, from 1,200 to 2,000 tourists visit Tinian each month, mostly on day-trips from nearby Saipan. These tourists are primarily from Japan and South Korea, with occasional groups of U.S. and Japanese World War II veterans, eco-tourists, hikers and bicyclists. Most day-trip tours include a half-day at a beach near San Jose, lunch and a tour of the World War II sites in the northern part of the island. The expansion of Tinian's commercial airport calls for constructing a main runway parallel and north of the existing runway for use by international wide-body aircraft.

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RESOURCE SIGNIFICANCE

Current Status of the Study Area

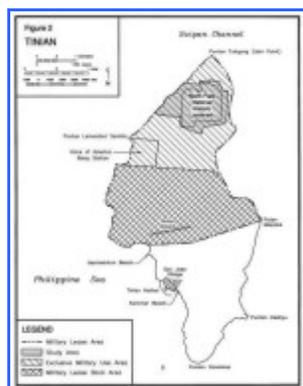
The 1976 Covenant (Public Law 94-241) creating the CNMI established jurisdiction of U.S. laws, agencies, and programs; provided for a CNMI Constitution, an elected government and defined self-rule; and granted U.S. citizenship to CNMI residents. The Covenant also brought to CNMI substantial and extended financial support from the U.S. A major portion of this financial support came in the form of payments made to CNMI for the leasing of about two-thirds of the island of Tinian. In 1983, a lease agreement covering these lands was signed and DoD assumed control and possession over the northern two-thirds of Tinian. The lease agreement is for 50 years, with a renewal option for an additional 50 years.

According to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), the "long-term and overriding purpose in acquiring the CNMI lease is to ensure there is a capable forward basing option location in the Pacific..., in the event of major hostilities in the Pacific or loss of access to existing forward basing facilities." Under the terms of the lease agreement, none of leased lands may be privately-owned, nor are any CNMI residents allowed to live or develop there. Essentially, the Navy controls all land uses within the leased area. Any non-military uses within the leased area must be approved by the Navy. Presently, the U.S. military uses major portions of the leased land area for training exercises.

The 16,100-acre leased area is known as the Military Lease Area (MLA) and is divided into two

sections. The northern half is the Exclusive Military Use Area (EMUA) and the southern half is referred to as the Leaseback Area (LBA). North Field and the national historic landmark, are located within the EMUA. The EMUA is used for periodic military training exercises. It is open to the public for recreational purposes when not being used for military training. Navy uses of the EMUA include both small and large field exercises. Marine units hold large-scale amphibious assaults and joint training exercises within the EMUA, utilizing its beaches as entry points to inland areas for maneuvers and for landing fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. The Navy uses abandoned buildings, some of which are historically related to World War II and North Field, within the EMUA for urban warfare practice. The roads that connect the training area with Tinian's commercial harbor and airport to the south are used by the Navy during training exercises.

Figure 2. Tinian



The LBA is a joint use area, where both military and non-military activities may take place. The LBA has been leased back to the CNMI for uses judged by the Navy to be compatible with long-term DoD needs, primarily grazing and agriculture. Under the leaseback agreement, the LBA may be used for training activities that would not be detrimental to ongoing CNMI economic and agricultural activities.

The MLA remains largely undeveloped, with no permanent military installations or staffed facilities. At the present time, there are no major construction projects planned for the MLA. None of the roads are fenced or gated and public access to North Field during non-maneuver times is not restricted.

In addition to the World War II historic resources of national significance within the EMUA, there are also public outdoor recreation sites such as beaches and shrines. The U.S. Information Agency, International Broadcasting Bureau operates the 800-acre Voice of America Marianas Relay Station within the EMUA.

The village of San Jose and the Tinian Harbor are located outside of the MLA. Tinian's commercial airport is located to the north just within the LBA. As noted, the military uses the harbor and the commercial airport as ports of entry for troops, vehicles and equipment.

Prior to 1993, military training activities on Tinian were relatively infrequent. However, the U.S. military maintains with the closure of the U.S. Navy base at Subic Bay in the Philippines, with fewer training opportunities in Okinawa and the transfer of the island of Kaho`olawe to the State of Hawaii there is a greater need for training sites elsewhere in the Pacific. More recently, COMNAVMAR announced a step-up in live-fire training exercises on Tinian, emphasizing its significance as a special training exercise area.

Presently, at North Field, military aviation units train as they deliver personnel and cargo to maneuver areas and provide various support functions to forces already on the ground, such as cargo delivery, firefighting and search-and-rescue. North Field's four runways, the associated taxiways and parking aprons support various tactical exercises. Runway One is used for military fixed-wing and helicopter activity. During military exercises in 1999, C-130 aircraft from Guam used Runway One. Runway Two is used for parachute drops and helicopter operations and low altitude parachute drops to resupply troops on the ground.

Demolition training using cratering charges to create spots on runways took place at North Field until the CNMI Division of Historic Preservation and the Tinian community requested that this training be conducted elsewhere to eliminate the potential for cratering the World War II surfaces and damaging the integrity of the national historic landmark.

The former Tinian small arms range has been inactive for several years and is now fenced off and posted for the presence of 60mm and 40mm unexploded ordnance. New live-fire ranges are proposed. One proposed range would be used by infantry personnel armed with rifles, automatic weapons and light machine guns. The other proposed range would be used for training 60mm and 81mm mortar crews. The proposed small arms and mortar ranges would be located near the eastern end of North Field next to Runway Two and Runway Three.

The interior of the World War II Japanese Naval Air Command Post at North Field is used for small arms live-fire exercises by Navy SEALs and Army Special Forces. This building was a major target for U.S. air and naval bombardment prior to the invasion of Tinian in 1944. Although heavily damaged by bombs, strafing and demolitions, the two-story concrete-reinforced structure still stands and is a popular tourist attraction. A shooting house (or firing maze) is also proposed to either replace or supplement the current use of the World War II Command Post.

The Navy provides advance information to CNMI agencies and affected commercial enterprises on Tinian whenever military training is to take place. During those times access restrictions are placed to areas on Tinian normally open to the public.



The World War II-era Japanese Naval Air Command post (Air Administration Staff Building) at North Field.

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Cultural Resources

The national historic landmark contains many World War II-era sites and artifacts associated with the Japanese presence on Tinian, the U.S. 1944 invasion and the subsequent development of North Field as an American airbase. The North Field portion of the national historic landmark area includes the four B-29 runways, the sites used to assemble and load the two atomic bombs, Japanese military structures, coastal gun emplacements and unit memorial plaques.

The entire EMUA area has been surveyed by archeologists. Numerous and significant cultural resources have been identified within the EMUA during a series of surveys beginning in the early 1980s. Specifically, large and prominent features were identified from the Japanese use of Ushi Airfield and the American use of North Field. Archeologist D. Colt Denfeld recorded 11 Japanese sites and 20 American sites and noted the significance of Unai Chulu and Unai Babui as the beaches on which the American invasion forces landed in 1944. Six features were recorded in the vicinity of these beaches, including Japanese pillboxes and gun positions.

The National Register nomination form for North Field included five Japanese structures, a Japanese service apron, two American invasion landing beaches, and the North Field runways, taxiways and service aprons. Other surveys documented 17 additional significant Japanese pre-World War II, Japanese World War II and American World War II sites within the EMUA and a number of other sites in the LBA.

Based on field surveys conducted in the late 1980s, an expansion of the North Field Historic District was recommended to include the U.S. Army Air Force North Service Group facility areas, the 18th Naval CB/509th Composite Group camp and the Japanese Asahi Shrine.

In a 1992 survey of the area between Runway One and Runway Four, along the road running north from North Field and Unai Chiget, 48 prehistoric and historic period sites were identified. A 1993 survey of the northwest and northeast corners of North Field, an area southwest of the field and an area near the north end of the island recorded 349 locations with evidence of former cultural activity.

The area around Lake Hagoi has been found to contain prehistoric deposits and remnants of a Japanese village site that existed prior to World War II and features related to World War II Japanese military installations.

There is an established historic trail with 14 points of interest located in the EMUA and the LBA. The Navy, under contract, has produced an interpretive brochure entitled, "Tinian North Field Historic Sites" that describes and maps an historic trail and the locations of each site. The brochures are available in San Jose.

Natural Resources

The native vegetation of Tinian has been highly disturbed and only small remnants now remain. The thickets of native limestone forest believed to have covered the island in the late 1700s and 1800s were mostly cleared in the 1920s by the Japanese in order to plant sugar cane. During World War II, the sugar cane plantations were abandoned and the bombing, fires and military reconstruction further reduced the native limestone forest. Both the sugar cane fields and native limestone forest areas have now been replaced with the introduced, weedy tangantangan (*Leucaena glauca*).

Tangantangan stands dominate most of the level and moderately sloping portions of the island. Within the EMUA, the predominantly tangantangan forest is interspersed with Guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*). The remnants of the native limestone forest are now restricted to clifflines and escarpments around the plateau on the southeast side of Tinian and in a corridor on the central escarpment.

There are three wetland areas within the MLA. The largest is Lake Hagoi just to the west of North Field and two smaller areas to the south. Hagoi is the only major body of open water on Tinian and the lake and its surrounding marshy area provide important habitat for the endangered Mariana common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus guami*) which nests near here and for migratory birds during the wet season. The island population of the moorhen has declined due to mortality and decreased nesting success.

Tinian is sometimes frequented by the Mariana fruit bat (*Pteropus mariannus mariannus*), which is on the CNMI Endangered Species List and proposed for federal listing throughout the Marianas archipelago. The fruit bat roosts in large trees surrounding Lake Hagoi and along the clifflines and forest plateau near Mount Lasso.

There have been five unconfirmed Brown Tree Snake (*Boigus irregularis*) sightings on Tinian: one in February 1990 and four were spotted during one sighting in November 1995. The snake is an alien species that preys on and is highly destructive to native birds.

Like the Mariana common moorhen, the endangered Micronesian megapode (*Megapodius laperous*) is becoming increasingly rare on Tinian. The megapod inhabits the native limestone forest along Tinian's clifflines. The only endemic bird species on the island is the Tinian monarch (*Monarcha takatsukasae*). The Tinian monarch, known locally as the Chuchurian Tintan, nests in the trees of the native limestone forest, secondary forest and tangantangan.

Despite its threatened status, the monarch is still quite common on Tinian.

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Evaluation of Significance

The designation as a national historic landmark by the Secretary of the Interior in 1985 determined the national significance of the historic World War II resources connected with North Field. The historical significance of the landmark is based primarily on its role as a major American airbase for the B-29 Superfortress heavy bomber during the later part of World War II in the Pacific. From North Field and from Isley Field on nearby Saipan, massive air raids, at times involving hundreds of B-29s, were carried out on the home islands of the Japanese Empire. Moreover, North Field was the airbase from which the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were staged. These events were major contributions to the destruction of Japanese industry and cities and the ending of World War II.

North Field, when completed in 1945, was the largest airbase in the Pacific, perhaps in the world. Each of its four parallel runways stretch east and west for 8,500 feet. Around and in between the runways are nearly eleven miles of taxiways. Hardstands were constructed for 265 B-29s. Two large asphalt aprons still exist.

Just to the north of the northernmost runway is a special asphalt service apron and two pits. Here, the two B-29s "Enola Gay" and "Bock's Car" were loaded with the first and only atomic bombs to be used in warfare. The two pits were constructed because the bombs were too large to be placed under the B-29s for normal loading procedures. The pits are now filled with earth and landscaped and in front of each is a bronze historic plaque mounted on a concrete pedestal. As noted, present uses of the national historic landmark property include: Runway One for military fixed-wing and helicopter landings and take-offs and Runway Two for parachute drops and helicopter operations. The boundaries of the landmark and the contributing properties of the landmark are presently under review for expansion to include the U.S. Army Air Force North Service Group facility areas, the 18th Naval CB/509th Composite Group camp and the Asahi Shrine.

Except for the normal process of aging, the physical condition of the historic World War II resources connected with North Field are well preserved and their basic integrity remains intact.

EVALUATION OF SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

Rarity of This Type of Resource (Suitability)

The NPS publication, History and Prehistory in the National Park System and the National Historic Landmarks Program, 1987, and the 1996 revision present in outline form a comprehensive thematic classification of the prehistoric and historic resources and cultural endeavors of the U.S. Outline elements are composed of major themes, subthemes, topical facets and facets. The thematic outline is used to show the extent to which units of the national park system, affiliated areas and national historic landmarks reflect the nation's history.



One of the two atomic bomb loading pits at North Field.

According to NPS's Service-wide policy document, Management Policies 2001, the test of suitability rests with determining whether the area being studied, in this case North Field, represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies, state or local government, or the private sector.

The study area contains thematic historic resources representative of World War II; specifically, the War in the Pacific, 1941-1945. The history of War in the Pacific, 1941-1945, is currently represented by two units of the national park system and one affiliated area: the USS Arizona Memorial on Oahu in Hawaii, War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam and American Memorial on Saipan.

The purpose of the USS Arizona Memorial is to preserve and interpret the historic events which took place at Pearl Harbor and other military installations on the island of Oahu on December 7, 1941. War in the Pacific National Historical Park was established to commemorate those participating in the campaigns of the Pacific Theater of World War II and to conserve and interpret historic values and objects on the island of Guam. American Memorial is an affiliated area set aside by Congress for public use as an American memorial park to honor the American and Marianas dead in the World War II Marianas Campaign.

The theme, War in the Pacific, 1941-1945, is also presently represented by 48 sites, including 22 World War II era ships, designated by the Secretary of the Interior as national historic landmarks.

The national historic landmark most closely resembling the study area, North Field, in its thematic framework is Aslito-Isley Field on the nearby island of Saipan. Constructed initially by Japan prior to World War II as their principal air base in the Marianas, Aslito Field was captured by U.S. forces early in the 1944 battle for Saipan. Following its capture, Aslito Field's runway was quickly repaired by Navy Seabees for use by U.S. fighter planes. Army engineers later expanded the airfield into a huge airbase for the B-29 Superfortress. Later, the airbase was renamed Isley Field. Of the two runways built by the Army engineers, one has been modernized to accommodate modern passenger aircraft and today serves as Saipan's commercial airport. The national historic landmark includes the site of the two B-29 runways, taxiways and hardstands; the site of the 73rd Bombardment Wing's administrative area; and the Japanese blockhouse and other concrete structures associated with Aslito Field.

Major events of the Pacific War in terms of U.S. history include: the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor; the Battle of Midway; the battle for Guadalcanal; the island-hopping amphibious assaults from Tarawa to Okinawa; the Battle of Leyte Gulf; and the strategic bombing of the Japanese homeland and the use of the atomic bomb in war. Places that are directly related to the strategic bombing and the atomic bombs--historical events which ended the War in the Pacific and World War II--are presently not represented in the national park system. This study finds North Field to be the most intact and best remaining example of these two events and therefore finds the study area meets the test of suitability for inclusion in the national park system.

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Figure 3. North Field Tinian

Feasibility for Protection

Position of CNMI and Local Government Officials. In 1999, at meetings on Tinian with NPS officials, the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and the Tinian Historic Preservation Officer called for the study area, North Field, to become a national historical park administered by NPS. At this time, letters were sent by CNMI officials to U.S. World War II veteran groups connected with North Field to solicit additional support for the national historical park idea.

Last year, Juan N. Baubauta, the Resident Representative to the U.S. for the CNMI, requested a meeting in Washington D.C. with the NPS Director to discuss with him the intent of section 326 (b)(3)(M) of Public Law 106-113, which calls for the study of World War II sites within CNMI. On July 27, 2000, the Director and other NPS officials met with the following CNMI officials: Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Special Assistant to the Resident Representative; Robert Schwalbach, Congressional Liaison to the Resident Representative; and CNMI Senators Ramon S. Guerrero, Joaquin G. Adriano, David M. Cinq and Jose M. Dela Cruz. At the meeting, the CNMI delegation stated they were very pleased with the way NPS was managing American Memorial Park on nearby Saipan and wanted to see a feasibility study for North Field Tinian undertaken and completed as soon as possible so that this area could become a historical park administered by NPS. They indicated there was strong local support for a national historical park on Tinian.

Following the meeting, the CNMI House of Representatives and Senate adopted a joint resolution requesting that Congress designate North Field a national historical park. Resident Representative Baubuata is also supportive of the designation. The resolution was seen as a follow up to the meeting members of the CNMI legislature had with the NPS Director.

Plans and Objectives of the Lease Holder. USCINCPAC [U.S. Commander in Chief, Pacific] Instruction 11O11.3 dated May 15, 1985 states under paragraph 3. Policy that "the primary purpose of the CNMI lease is to provide training areas for USPACOM [U.S. Pacific Command] forces and to preserve options for USPACOM forward military basing should circumstances require." Further, the instruction states that "USCINCPAC will be the approving authority for all use of CNMI lease lands which fall outside of the [primary] purpose..."

On June 5, 2000, the Superintendent, Pacific Islands Support Office, National Park Service sent a letter to Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, CINCPACFLT, inquiring as to whether the U.S. still has long-term strategic needs for North Field Tinian and its immediate environs that would preclude its consideration for use as a national historical park. In a letter dated July 26, 2000, Admiral Fargo replied, stating that the Navy's long-term strategic needs were to continue using the North Field area for military training and that this use precluded its consideration for use as a national historical park (see APPENDIX).

On August 23, 2000, the Superintendent, War in the Pacific National Historical Park and the Ranger in Charge at American Memorial met with the Chief of Staff, COMNAVMAR to discuss the feasibility study for North Field Tinian. At the meeting, COMNAVMAR stated they would not be interested in NPS pursuing a feasibility study for North Field to become a unit of the national park system.

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FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and Conclusions

This study finds that North Field Tinian is one of the most significant World War II sites in the Pacific. The historic World War II-related resources of the study area have already been determined to be of national significance, as attested by the designation as a national historic landmark by the Secretary of the Interior in 1985. Consequently, the historic World War II resources of the study area have met the test of national significance.

While the theme, War in the Pacific, 1941-1945, is presently represented by two units of the national park system, an affiliated area and several national historic landmarks, this study finds that the World War II resources present at North Field represent specific historic events not presently represented. These events, the strategic bombing of Japan and the use of the atomic bomb in war, are of such singular importance that this study finds North Field meets the test of suitability for inclusion in the national park system.

With regard to a determination of North Field Tinian's feasibility as a unit of the national park system, this study finds: (1) the U.S. DoD presently holds a 50-year (1983-2033) lease over CNMI lands comprising the study area; (2) this lease agreement gives the U.S. DoD, through CINCPACFLT and COMNAVMAR, exclusive use, control and possession of study area lands; and (3) CINCPACFLT's present position regarding the U.S. military's future long-term needs for study area lands makes impossible North Field's consideration for use as a national historical park at this time. Moreover, CINCPACFLT's July 26, 2000 letter seems to rule out any potential for an agreement between DoD and the Department of the Interior (NPS) establishing North Field Tinian as either a unit of the national park system or an affiliated area and still be functionally available to DoD to meet its stated national security mission. Consequently, this study concludes that North Field Tinian does not meet the test of feasibility.

Other study findings are:

At present there is no permanent presence in the study area by any public or private entity to preserve and protect the nationally significant historic resources found there; to adequately interpret these resources and events for visitors; and to deter littering, vandalism or other activities, intentional or unintentional, that might adversely affect historic and archeologic resources.

The Navy, through funding from the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program, has cleared roads and trails, produced and installed interpretive signs and printed an interpretive guide for North Field (see APPENDIX) that describes North Field's historic resources.

A Memorandum of Agreement, signed in 1993 by the Navy, the CNMI Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, NPS and the Historic Preservation Coordinator for Tinian stipulates that a number of mitigative actions--including collecting additional archival documentary research, photographic

documentation, preparation of historic preservation management base maps and a reassessment of historic property boundaries for North Field--be taken by the Navy.

Recommendations

The Navy (COMNAVMAR) has discussed with the Superintendent, War in the Pacific National Historical Park and the Ranger in Charge at American Memorial the need for better interpretation at North Field. Consequently, it is recommended that sufficient additional copies of the interpretive brochure produced by the Navy be made available at American Memorial Park headquarters on Saipan and at the War in the Pacific National Historical Park Visitor Center at Asan, Guam for distribution to visitors at those parks.

Further, it is recommended that the significant historical events associated with the Mariana Islands campaign, including North Field, be made part of the visitor interpretive program at these two parks and that the Superintendent at War in the Pacific consider establishing both off-site and on-site interpretive tours of World War II Marianas Campaign battle sites on Saipan and North Field on Tinian by NPS personnel from American Memorial. It is also recommended that NPS produce travel guides and publish in the *National Park Handbook* series a booklet for CNMI visitors about the historic events of the Marianas Campaign (see APPENDIX).

The position of DoD as reiterated in the CINCPACFLT letter of July 26, 2000 would seem to rule out any non-military alternatives for protecting North Field's historic resources. Existing levels of protection consist of national historic landmark designation and the U.S. Navy's regulations and directives for the protection and management of historic resources under their control. Additional protection of historic resources could be achieved through increasing the distribution of the Navy-produced brochure for self-guided tours of the area and the implementation of the above recommendations for increased interpretation by NPS of the Marianas Campaign, including North Field.

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APPENDIX

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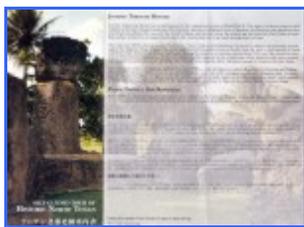


CINCPACFLT Letter of July 26, 2000



COMNAVMAR Letter of August 28, 2001

Brochure: Self-Guided Tour of North Field Tinian



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Interpret the Marianas Campaign from American Memorial Park, on Tinian and with NPS Publications

The very significant events and places connected with the Marianas Campaign that need interpretation by publications and road or travel guides include:

- Charon Kanoa D-Day Beachheads, Saipan ([Crowl, page 82](#))
- Aslito Airfield, Saipan
- Battle of the Philippine Sea
- Battle for Central Saipan - Death Valley, Hell's Pocket, Mt. Tapotchau
- Northern Saipan - Banzai and Suicide Cliffs
- Tinian - North Field
- Tinian - Atomic bomb assembly pits

As background, the Marianas Campaign was a significant event in the Allied victory over Japan. The Joint Chiefs overruled General Douglas MacArthur's 'island by island' strategy and opted for a strike at the Marianas, close enough to base the new B-29 bombers for strikes directly against Japan. Recognizing the threat, the Japanese fought to the last gasp and airplane in the Battle of the Philippine Sea and on Saipan. With victory there, the U.S. built a huge air base on Saipan and on nearby Tinian at North Field. A relentless air war was then waged against Japan itself--culminating in assembly of two atomic bombs which flown from North Field bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan capitulated.

Though the National Park Service affiliated area, American Memorial Park, is on Saipan, the 133-acre area does not include any of the above places. However, the Memorial's proximity lends itself to interpreting these historic places. An obvious technique would be for the Service to fund production of a booklet in the *National Park Handbook* series. Perhaps entitled, the World War II Marianas Campaign, such a handbook would broadly cover the CNMI portions of the Pacific War, from the Joint Chiefs' decision to capture Saipan to the surrender of Japan. The handbook should have the capability to encourage visitors to CNMI to see and appreciate the battle sites listed above, and synthesize them into an understanding of their place in our nation's history. All of the sites listed above are worthy of visiting and learning about.

Some of us have had a good deal of experience in guiding distinguished visitors around these sites. Our personal preference is to visit them in the following order, starting from American Memorial Park:

- 1) Drive south along Beach Road. Stop along the 1944 invasion beaches (one good

place is where a rusted tank is awash on the outer reef). Reflect here on the Joint Chiefs' decision; MacArthur's counter views; the Japanese realization of Allied bombing of the home islands if Saipan and the Marianas were lost; and the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Where you are stopped, anywhere along here, is reasonable to assume could be a Japanese machine gun emplacement with a sweeping field of fire across the invasion beach. If you have fins and mask--snorkel out toward the breakers far out toward the edge of the reef; when there, stop and turn around; you're breathless from the swim, but now start wading back toward shore and imagine you have a full field pack and are carrying a BAR.

2) Stop at Aslito Airport, checking out some of the old World War II concrete structures. Aslito, and its capability to launch B-29s toward Tokyo was our objective. If a visitor is planning to take a side trip by air to Tinian--highly recommended--don't stop at Aslito now. Wait until later.

3) Drive north on the Cross Island Road. Take particular note of Mt. Tapotchao and imagine its slopes laced with limestone caves, each spouting cannon, mortars and machine guns. Look right and left. You could easily be in everyone's field of fire. This place was regarded as a last stand by the defending Japanese, to hold at all costs, to defend the homeland against the bombs of the potential B-29s. But if you were a U.S. Marine here you would have called it Death Valley. They did.

4) Go past Tapotchao. At the road junction turn north on the Marpi Road and head to its end. Hang a left toward Banzai Cliff. The story here is, and it is substantial, that many local people had been so terrorized by the Japanese military about the Americans--that complete families jumped to their deaths rather than be captured and tortured by the Americans.

5) Head back, but turn toward the Marpi Cliff. Park at the road's end and walk to the edge of Suicide Cliff. Review the history of Japanese who had fought to the last person, and now out of ammo, jumping. Saipan--from the invasion beaches, past Aslito, up Death Valley, along the cliffs to here--was grotesquely wasteful of human life. North, towards Japan, was guarded by many more equally grotesque places--Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Japan itself. Standing there, reflecting back in time with knowledge of this fresh battle--if you were the U.S. President would you have unleashed the two atomic bombs?

6) Whatever your answer--head back toward American Memorial at Garapan. Mosey about the memorials there. And maybe consider too, that the local islanders, after the war, wanted their lost heroes to be remembered with playing fields and amphitheaters. Thus, the picnic area, tennis courts and stage.

7) You've come this far--stick around a day and go to nearby Tinian, either by plane or the casino boat. Rent a car or hire a guide. Head to North Field. Drive the length of one of the runways. Poke around. Once this was the largest and busiest airport in the world--in area and in number of planes leaving and arriving, but in bomb tonnage not in passengers. The tonnage of conventional explosives staged from here wreaked firestorm havoc upon Tokyo and other Japanese cities. The firestorms

were horrendous. That's usually forgotten. Remembered are the two pits, still carefully preserved, where the two atomic bombs were finally assembled and lifted into the bellies of two B-29s for their flights to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Here really ended the Pacific War with Japan. It's worth a visit.

The above places are enormously important to both U.S. and world history. It is a pity that they are not feasible at this time to become part of the national park system. Maybe someday. In the interim, there is a great opportunity to interpret these places with both a fine *National Park Handbook* and off-site and on-site interpretation by Park Service people from American Memorial Park.

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