

The Jean P. Haydon Museum Today

Today, the Jean P. Haydon Museum has displays of various aspects of Samoas history, culture, and natural history and is the official repository for collections of artifacts for the territory. The Museum is housed in a National Register of Historic Places building, part of the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila Historic District in the village of Fagatogo on the island of Tutuila. The Museum is funded in whole by the American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture and the Humanities and is the venue for many of the cultural resource activities in the Territory. (From ashpo.org)



The Jean P. Haydon Museum building
(as the Pago Pago U.S. Post Office)

To find out more about Historic Fagatogo and its U.S. Naval Station Historic District, contact:

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AMERICAN SAMOA HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Jean P. Haydon Museum

The National Register of Historic Places



The Jean P. Haydon Museum in 2009



Jean P. Haydon Museum

The Jean P. Haydon Museum was initially two buildings (the Navy Commissary and Garage). The Navy authorized construction of a new one story commissary in 1917, and it was built with the same locally made molded concrete blocks as were used on the radio station just down the road.

The Museum is one of several buildings that represent a distinctive architectural style developed by the Navy in response to the effects the harsh tropical climate was having on the other buildings of the station. The building measures approximately 40 by 70 feet, and there is a covered veranda along the front facing the main road.

A Brief History

U.S. Navy

The Commissary was built in 1917 to provide goods for sailors and dependents of Naval Station, Tutuila, and its exterior has remained essentially the same since its construction.

The Commissary was one of the only places in American Samoa where sailors could get items from back home, such as tennis shoes and dried and canned goods. Only active duty personnel and their dependents had access to the Commissary, which probably made it one of the reasons local Samoans might want to join the ranks as part of the Fita Fita Guard. The Commissary remained open for over 30 years, before closing and being converted to a U.S. Post Office by the Department of the Interior.

History (cont.)

The Post Office was operational at this location for almost 20 years, until a new one was built as part of the Lumana'i Building across the street. At this time, Governor Haydon designated that the old Commissary would become a museum dedicated to preserving Samoan history. The work on the renovation of the post office to a museum was performed by local businessman Bill Satele.

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