

Appendix H

Historic Resources Technical Report

Historical Resource Technical Report

Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport
Building 6, Building 7 & Building 8
3873 Kearny Villa Road
San Diego, CA 92123

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for:

HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc.
7578 El Cajon Blvd.
La Mesa, CA 91942

Submitted to:

City of San Diego

Prepared by:



5645 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037
(858) 456-8555

Christopher Usler, Historic Preservation Specialist (2019)
Peter Kempson, Historic Preservation Specialist (2025)

June 2025

Table of Contents

List of Figures	ii
Executive Summary	iv
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Project Description	1
1.2 Report Organization	2
1.3 Project Area	2
1.4 Project Personnel	5
2 Project Setting	6
2.1 Physical Project Setting	6
2.2 Project Area and Vicinity	7
2.3 Historic Context.....	13
3 Methods and Results	25
3.1 Archival Research	25
3.2 Field Survey	25
3.3 Description of Surveyed Resources.....	25
3.3.1 Site – 3873 Kearny Villa Road.....	26
3.3.2 Building 6.....	30
3.3.3 Building 7.....	36
3.3.4 Building 8.....	43
4 Eligibility Evaluations	48
4.1 Significance	48
4.1.1 National Register of Historic Places.....	48
4.1.2 California Register of Historic Resources.....	51
4.1.3 San Diego Register of Historical Resources.....	52
4.2 Integrity.....	55
4.3 Eligibility Conclusion.....	58
5 Findings and Conclusions	60
5.1 Impact Findings.....	60
5.1.1 Direct Impacts.....	60
5.1.2 Indirect Impacts.....	62
5.1.3 Cumulative Impacts.....	62
5.2 Mitigation Measures.....	62
5.3 Conclusions.....	64
6 Bibliography	65
Appendices	
A. Building Development Information	
B. Ownership and Occupant Information	
C. Maps	
D. DPR Forms	
E. Preparer’s Qualifications	

List of Figures

Figure 1: Project Area/Area of Potential Effect. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	3
Figure 2: The three hangars evaluated in this report. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	3
Figure 3: Proposed Airport Plan. HELIX Environmental Planning.	4
Figure 4: The location of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in Kearny Mesa. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	6
Figure 5: Regional Map showing the location of Project Area. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	7
Figure 6: The recently expanded Montgomery Field in 1952. Kearny Mesa had remained completely undeveloped at this time due to zoning issues. The early development of the Serra Mesa community can be seen south of the airport. <i>USDA.</i>	9
Figure 7: Montgomery Airport, the industrial development of Kearny Mesa, and the residential development of surrounding communities in 1964. <i>USDA.</i>	10
Figure 8: Montgomery Field, Kearny Mesa, and surrounding communities in 1972. <i>USGS.</i>	11
Figure 9: Montgomery Field, Kearny Mesa, and surrounding communities in 1989. <i>USDA.</i>	12
Figure 10: 1941 aerial looking northeast at Gibbs Field and the Inland Highway, which was redeveloped as U.S. 395 (now SR-163). <i>Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, Gibbs Flying Service.</i>	14
Figure 11: Gibbs Field, March 1947. <i>San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2</i>	15
Figure 12: Montgomery Field and surrounding area on October 10, 1950. <i>San Diego History Center, #80.7044 Airport - Montgomery Field 10-10-50.</i>	16
Figure 13: Proposed development south of Montgomery Field. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 appear in the foreground. “Council May Act on Expansion Today,” <i>San Diego Union</i> , February 1, 1951.....	17
Figure 14: Map showing location of Montgomery Field and Miramar NAS, as well the 12,000 foot radius in which the Navy denied residential development. Image taken from “Kearny Mesa Land Sought By Navy,” <i>San Diego Union</i> , January 20, 1956.....	18
Figure 15: Approach and Turning Zones Around Montgomery Field dictated development within the surrounding area. Image taken from “All Weather Field Called Vital Need,” <i>San Diego Union</i> , July 11, 1953.	19
Figure 16: Gibbs Flying Service relocated to the newly graded, central, part of the airport around 1956. Newly built T-type hangars are visible in the background. <i>San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.</i>	20
Figure 17: Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa in 1960. <i>San Diego History Center, 92_18835-2095 Montgomery Field - General Dynamics - aerial - 1960</i>	21
Figure 18: Aerial photo c.1960, looking southeast at Convair/General Dynamics and other industrial development. Montgomery Field appears on the right-hand side of the photo. <i>San Diego History Center, 1998_63-19.</i>	22
Figure 19: Montgomery Field in 1984. <i>San Diego History Center, 1998_047.702 Montgomery Field Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road Intersection at lower left; Brouwer Collection.</i>	24
Figure 20: 1959 aerial of site, looking west.	27
Figure 21: Approximate boundaries for the site surveyed for this report.	27
Figure 22: Site Photo Survey Key Plan. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	28
Figure 23: Looking NW from NE corner of Building 6 towards Kearny Villa Road and SR-163.	28
Figure 24: Looking S from NE corner of Building 6 towards the wide, asphalt paved taxiway.	29

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

Figure 25: Looking S from NW corner of Building 6 and the asphalt paved access road.	29
Figure 26: Looking E from the wide, asphalt paved taxiway, towards the runways and center of the airport.	30
Figure 27: Detail of 1947 photo looking NE. <i>San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2.</i>	31
Figure 28: 1956 photo looking SW. <i>San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.</i>	32
Figure 29: 1956 photo looking SE. <i>San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.</i>	32
Figure 30: 1959 photo showing rear elevation of Building 6. <i>David J. Gauthier Memorial Collection, No.7644, November 1959. 1000aircraftphotos.com.</i>	33
Figure 31: Building 6 Photo Survey Key Plan. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	33
Figure 32: Three-quarter view showing the north and west elevations.	34
Figure 33: Three-quarter view showing the east and north elevations.	34
Figure 34: Three-quarter view showing the west and south elevations.	35
Figure 35: Three-quarter view showing the west and south elevations.	35
Figure 36: March 1947 photo looking NE. <i>San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2</i>	37
Figure 37: 1947 photo, looking SW. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, <i>Gibbs Flying Service.</i>	37
Figure 38: Photo, looking west, in 1947. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, <i>Gibbs Flying Service.</i>	38
Figure 39: Photo, looking NW, in 1947. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, <i>Gibbs Flying Service.</i>	38
Figure 40: 1956 photo looking SW. <i>San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.</i>	39
Figure 41: 1956 photo looking SE. <i>San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.</i>	39
Figure 42: 1960 aerial looking NW. <i>San Diego History Center, 92_18835-2095</i>	40
Figure 43: Building 7 Photo Survey Key Plan. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	40
Figure 44: Three-quarter view showing Building 7 east and north elevations.....	41
Figure 45: Building 7, South elevation.	41
Figure 46: Building 7 South elevation showing an early patch to the original stucco.....	42
Figure 47: Three-quarter view of Building 7 east and south elevations.....	42
Figure 48: Building 7 North elevation with shed roof addition.	43
Figure 49: 1959 aerial looking East. Original photo provided by Buzz Gibbs, <i>Gibbs Flying Service.</i>	44
Figure 50: 1960 aerial, looking NE. <i>San Diego History Center, 1960 - 92_18835-2095</i>	44
Figure 51: Building 8 Photo Survey Key Plan. <i>Google Maps, 2019.</i>	45
Figure 52: Photo of the east elevation of Building 8.	45
Figure 53: Three-quarter view of the south and west elevations of Building 8.	46
Figure 54: Three-quarter view showing the east and north elevations of Building 8.	46
Figure 55: Building 8 North elevation.	47

Executive Summary

IS Architecture (ISA) was retained as a subconsultant to HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) to complete a Historical Resource Technical Report (HRTR) for Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 at the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in support of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan Update and its Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR).

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the impacts of the revised Master Plan Proposed project scope to Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 will constitute a significant impact to historical resources under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This determination is achieved through the evaluation of historical resources under the City of San Diego, California Register of Historical Resources, and National Register of Historic Places designation criteria, as well as an evaluation of integrity.

Only the eligible Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are being evaluated for the impact of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan Update. This report does not evaluate the larger proposed Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan and its impact on any other historical resources currently identified or structure that will be 45 years or older at the time of specific work items during the Master Plan. Any other buildings, such as the Airport Terminal, located within the Larger APE for the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan APR and their evaluation are not part of the scope of this report.

The study concludes that Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and the San Diego Register of Historical Resources (SDRHR). The study concludes that Building 6 is significant under Criterion C/3/C and Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are all significant under Criterion A/1/A. As such, Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are considered historical resources under CEQA. This study concludes that the preservation project scope of Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8, as resources in their own right will have a less than significant impact with mitigation per the CEQA guidelines. Per the CEQA guidelines, the mitigation measures will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Description

In 2017, the City of San Diego began developing an Airport Master Plan to present the community and airport's vision for a 20-year strategic development plan. According to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) dated February 7, 2019:

The Project would involve both landside and airside components. The landside components include a hangar site within the westernmost portion of the airport. The Airport Master Plan identifies up to 92 new hangars, as well as space for 48 new tie-down areas. Some of the smaller hangars would be designed to meet a demand for luxury hangars. Implementation of several of the larger 75,000 square-foot (sf) hangars would require modification of the hotel leasehold. Also within the westernmost area are the three existing structures which will be evaluated as part of the PEIR for their historic potential. A 6,000-sf expansion to the existing terminal building is proposed (due to a deficit of space), along with other improvements such as a public viewing area (outside the fence line), aircraft wash racks, and a self-service fueling facility (fuel island). As denoted by the green hatch on Attachment 2, there are several areas of the airport that are subject to private leases which are not a part of the Project. In addition, the expansion of the San Diego Fire Department station within airport property is a separate City of San Diego project that is not a part of the Project to be analyzed in the PEIR.¹

The 2019 NOP proposed Project recommended the evaluation of Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 (Figure 2). As shown in Figure 3, the Proposed Airport Plan associated with the Master Plan Update avoids impacts to Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8.

The March 2025 update to the PEIR states the Hangar Sites project scope as:

3.4.2.2 Hangar Sites

The AMP includes construction of up to 92 new hangars, as well as space for 48 new tie-down areas, within the westernmost portion of the airport, as shown in Figure 3-1. Some of the smaller hangars would be designed to meet a demand for luxury hangars. Implementation of several of the larger 75,000 SF hangars would require encroachment into the hotel leasehold.

Within the westernmost area of the Airport are three existing hangars: Buildings 6, 7, and 8. These hangars have been evaluated for their historic potential and have been determined to be eligible for listing in the San Diego Register of Historic Resources,

¹ City of San Diego, *Public Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report And Scoping Meeting*, City of San Diego Planning Department, February 7, 2019.

the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These hangars would be retained in their current state as part of the AMP. Any maintenance, repairs, or stabilization to the historic hangars, while currently unplanned, would comply with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.²

Project scope activities concerning Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are noted to consist only of “currently unplanned” maintenance, repairs, or stabilization. Therefore, for the purposes of this HRTR, IS Architecture has been tasked with evaluating Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 for their historic potential and the current PEIR scope. Because details regarding scope, design, and any construction activities are not available at the programmatic level and not possible for unplanned work, this analysis is made with the assumption that the project scope and work would comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as applicable as stated in the PEIR. This report does not evaluate the larger proposed Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan and its impact on any other historical resources currently identified or structure that will be 45 years or older at the time of specific work items during the Master Plan.

1.2 Report Organization

This report follows the City of San Diego's standard HRTR narrative format and guidelines. Chapter 1 introduces the project description, area, and personnel. Chapter 2 discusses the project's immediate physical setting, as well as the project area vicinity and larger historic context. Chapter 3 includes an explanation of the methodology, and the results of archival and field surveys. It also includes a description of Building 6, Building 7, Building 8, and their site. Chapter 4 contains evaluations of the built resources for eligibility for listing on the NRHP, the CRHR, and the SDRHR. Chapter 5 includes the report's findings on eligibility, identifies impacts and mitigation measures, and provides an overall conclusion. A bibliography, appendices, and DPR forms follow.

1.3 Project Area / Area of Potential Effect

The project area, or area of potential effect (APE), encompasses the entirety of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport (Figure 1). The Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport is located within the Kearny Mesa Community Plan Area of the City of San Diego. It is situated north of Aero Drive, east of SR-163, south of Balboa Avenue, and west of Ruffin Road. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are located adjacent to Kearny Villa Road near the southwest corner of the project area.

² Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan PEIR December 2024, pg. 3-12



Figure 1: Project Area/Area of Potential Effect. *Google Maps, 2019.*



Figure 2: The three hangars evaluated in this report. *Google Maps, 2019.*

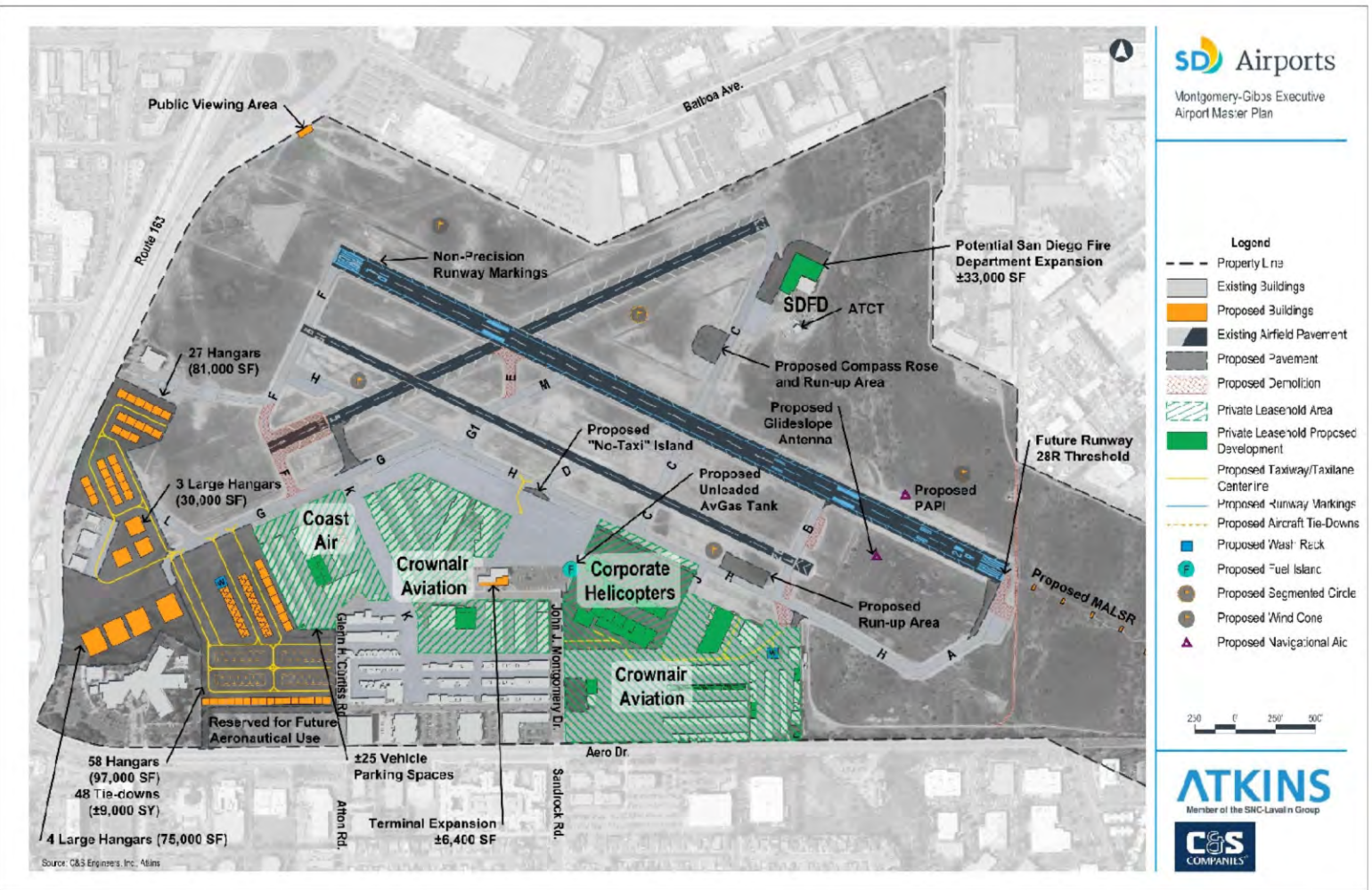


Figure 3: Proposed Airport Plan. HELIX Environmental Planning.

1.4 Project Personnel

IS Architecture Historic Preservation Specialist Christopher Usler authored this report in 2019. IS Architecture Historic Preservation Specialist Peter Kempson was the Project Manager and primary author of the report in 2024 and 2025. Mr. Usler conducted a site visit field survey and a photographic survey, conducted archival research on the project area, completed the appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation Series 523 (DPR) forms, and evaluated the project area for national, state, and local historic register eligibility. IS Architecture Historic Preservation Program Manager Rebecca McManus and Principal Architect Ione Stiegler, FAIA, reviewed and edited the report for accuracy. Peter Kempson updated this report per the 2024 and 2025 PEIR revisions and evaluated the impact of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport Master Plan Update PEIR. IS Architecture Principal Architect Ione Stiegler, FAIA, reviewed and edited the updated report for accuracy.

2 Project Setting

2.1 Physical Project Setting

The physical project setting of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport is composed of developed and undeveloped areas. The developed portion features heavily paved areas with aviation-related buildings, structures, and equipment. The developed areas include three paved runways connected by paved taxiways and access roads. Besides the control tower, the buildings are typically one-story in height and include hangars, administration buildings, maintenance garages, and sheds. Other multi-story buildings appear along Aero Drive. Structures and objects within the project area support different aviation activities, including radio towers, lighting rigs, and other equipment. Undeveloped portions of the project area feature areas of maintained, non-native grasses, coastal sage scrub, and natural habitats that support vernal pools.

The project area is set within the community of Kearny Mesa in the City of San Diego (Figure 4). It is situated east of Interstate 163 and Kearny Villa Road and northeast of the intersection of SR-163 and I-805. Surrounding the project area to the north, east, and west is a mix of industrial, commercial, and office development along Balboa Avenue and Ruffin Road. A mix of industrial, commercial, and residential developments belonging to the community of Serra Mesa abut the project area south of Aero Drive.



Figure 4: The location of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in Kearny Mesa. *Google Maps, 2019*

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

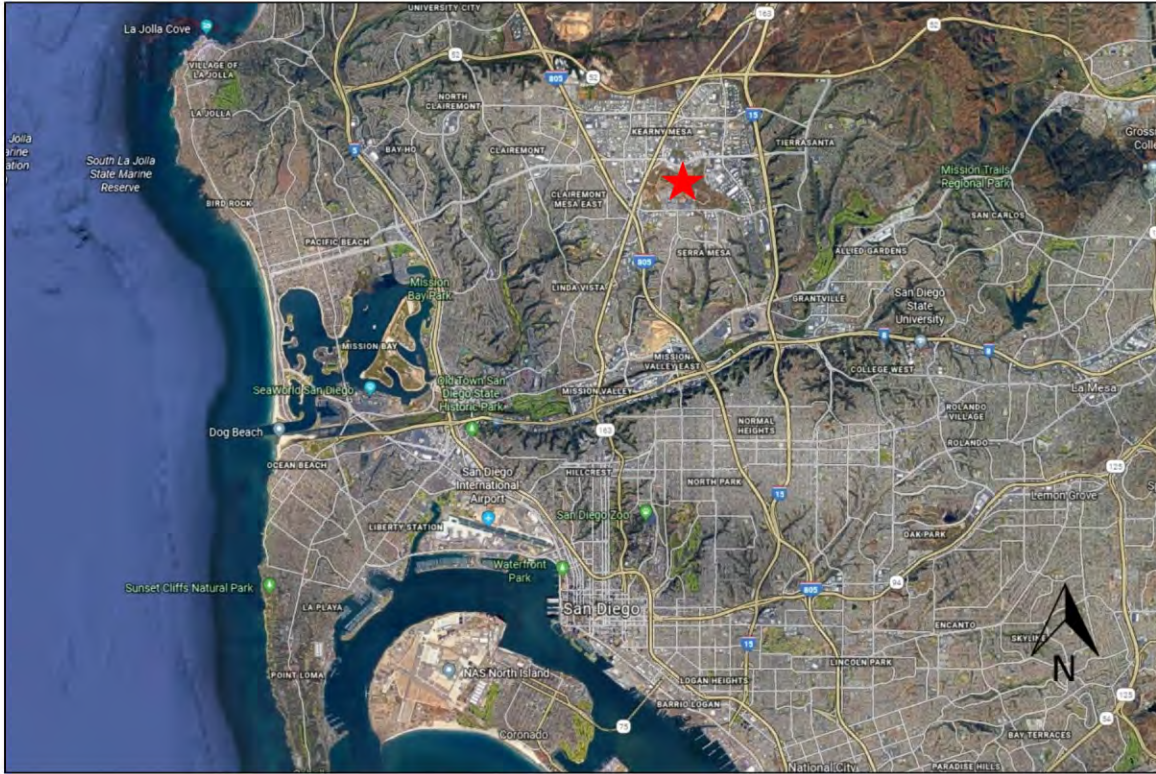


Figure 5: Regional Map showing the location of Project Area. *Google Maps, 2019.*

2.2 Project Area and Vicinity

The Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, originally known as Gibbs Field, was opened by William “Bill” Gibbs, Jr. in 1937. During this time, the project area and surrounding vicinity, later known as the Kearny Mesa community, was completely undeveloped land covered in sagebrush and other chaparral vegetation. After clearing the previously undeveloped land for two dirt runways, Gibbs Field served as an airfield for a small group of private aviators and a training ground for flight schools.

In 1940, the airport was leased to Ryan Aeronautical Co., who expanded and upgraded the field as a training ground for its flight school.³ Civilian aviation was prohibited after the start of World War II and Bill Gibbs was forced to relocate his operation to Arizona.⁴ Gibbs returned to his airport after the war and, between 1947 and 1950, constructed the three hangars known as Buildings 6, 7, and 8. It was also in 1947 that the City of San Diego acquired the airport from Gibbs, who was granted a lease to continue operating his business on-site.⁵ Shortly thereafter, Gibbs Field was annexed by the City, and a large expansion project was undertaken to update the airport.⁶ This undertaking included the re-centering of the airport, paving the runways, and the erection of new buildings and hangars. New infrastructure improvements

³ “S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes,” *San Diego Union*, July 15, 1940.

⁴ Donald H. Harrison, “San Diego’s historic placed: Montgomery Field as recalled by aviation pioneer Bill Gibbs,” *sdjewishworld.com*, June 22, 2010. <https://sdjewishworld.wordpress.com/2010/06/22/san-diegos-historic-places-montgomery-field-as-recalled-by-aviation-pioneer-bill-gibbs/0/>

⁵ “City in Control of Gibbs Airport,” *San Diego Union*, October 16, 1947.

⁶ “City Will Annex Airport To Avoid County Tax,” *San Diego Union*, April 15, 1948.

surrounding the airport around the same time included the development of U.S. 395 and the Cabrillo Freeway (both now making up SR-163) and other roads like Aero Drive, West Aero Way and East Aero Way (now Glenn H. Curtiss Road and John J. Montgomery Drive, respectively).

The airport was renamed Montgomery Field in 1950 following the city's redevelopment. Although the city had initially intended the airport to serve as its only private flying field, by the mid- 1950s Montgomery Field was seriously being considered as the city's major airport of the future.⁷ The Navy opposed this plan due to the close proximity of Montgomery Field and Miramar Naval Air Station (NAS) and it was no longer being considered by 1960.⁸ However, an airport upgrade was deemed necessary, and a master plan recommending further development was approved in the mid-1960s. As a result of this, a modern control tower was built in 1965.⁹ Further construction of administration buildings and large scale paving including the runways, taxiways, and new spaces for aircraft and automobile parking, followed shortly thereafter.¹⁰ Private aviation continued to grow in popularity during the 1970s, and Montgomery Field became one of the busiest airports in the nation.¹¹ Much-needed improvements and system updates occurred in the late-1970s, including the installation of a modern instrument landing system.¹²

The airport's expansion, combined with the infrastructure improvements in the surrounding area in the late 1940s and early 1950s, led to Kearny Mesa being recognized as a prime location for future industrial development. Businesses were specifically attracted to the area because of the proximity of the airport.¹³ Tensions between the city's residential and industrial needs, however, delayed any substantial development in the area until the mid-1950s. By then, the area that would become the community of Kearny Mesa was predominantly zoned for light-industrial due to the use and height restrictions that existed around Montgomery Field and Miramar NAS. This further enticed major aircraft, aeronautical, and defense-related companies to the area. Some of the major companies to relocate to Kearny Mesa during the 1950s included Ryan Aeronautical Co., Consolidated Aircraft Corp., General Dynamics, and Rohr Aircraft Corp. Other, more diversified, companies included Cubic Corp, a large electronics research company.

The residential development that was forced outside of the airfield safety zones surrounded Kearny Mesa to the south and east. As shown in a 1964 aerial photograph, these areas, which comprised the communities of Serra Mesa and Clairemont, had been nearly built out by that time. Industrial development followed suit, and by 1969 most of the available industrial land in Kearny Mesa was

⁷ "New Plans for S.D.," *San Diego Union*, February 9, 1947; "Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?," *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1957.

⁸ E.G. Martin, "Montgomery Field Plan Vetoed By Navy: Potential Interference with Miramar Cited," *San Diego Union*, December 15, 1960.

⁹ "Dedication Set At Field Today," *San Diego Union*, July 31, 1965.

¹⁰ "Dynamite Blast Sparks Airport Tower Rights," *San Diego Union* July 19, 1964; "Rights Planned At Montgomery Airfield Tower," *San Diego Union* July 15, 1965.

¹¹ Ken Hudson, "Montgomery Field Has Biggest Increase: San Diego's Skies Buzzing With Aircraft Activity," *San Diego Union*, May 21, 1978.

¹² "FAA Will Upgrade 3 Area Airports," *San Diego Union*, August 8, 1979

¹³ "Grove Says 9 New Industries Interested in Locating Here," *San Diego Union*, March 4, 1951.

occupied.¹⁴ While industrial development never fully ended, the declining availability of large tracts in the area had caused it to slow in the late 1960s. However, the availability of smaller parcels resulted in explosive commercial, retail, and office development in the 1970s and 1980s. As is shown in the aerial photograph (Figure 9), the entire community of Kearny Mesa had been effectively built out by 1989.



Figure 6: The recently expanded Montgomery Field in 1952. Kearny Mesa had remained completely undeveloped at this time due to zoning issues. The early development of the Serra Mesa community can be seen south of the airport. *USDA*.

¹⁴ "EDC Attracts Firms to San Diego Area," San Diego Union, January 1, 1969.



Figure 7: Montgomery Airport, the industrial development of Kearny Mesa, and the residential development of surrounding communities in 1964. *USDA.*



Figure 8: Montgomery Field, Kearny Mesa, and surrounding communities in 1972. *USGS.*



Figure 9: Montgomery Field, Kearny Mesa, and surrounding communities in 1989. *USDA.*

2.3 Historical Context

Prior to settlement, the community now known as Kearny Mesa was part of a large area solely occupied by the native Kumeyaay people. After the arrival of the Spanish explorers, the area was claimed by Spain for the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. After the Mission was secularized following Mexican independence in 1822, the land was parceled out as part of a massive tract known as Rancho Ex-Mission San Diego. By the end of the 19th century, the mesa north of Mission Valley had become known as the Linda Vista mesa and a few small farming settlements had developed around present-day University City and Miramar. In 1891, a large swath of Ex-Mission land, which would come to include a major portion of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, was surveyed, subdivided, as parceled out as part of the New Riverside subdivision (see appendix C.3, pg. 85). These parcels were sold to speculators but due to the complete lack of water, roads, and other improvements, the lots remained undeveloped.

The most significant development to occur on the mesa land by the turn of the 20th century was the creation of the Inland Highway. This road, which ran from San Diego's Old Town, across present-day Kearny Mesa, to the Old Poway Road and on to Los Angeles, was improved from what was likely an old trail from the Ex-Mission era.¹⁵ The land on the Linda Vista mesa remained otherwise untouched until 1917 when the outbreak of World War I resulted in the explosive development of Camp Kearny near present-day Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Camp Kearny was a large, completely self-sustaining military installation that brought improvements to the Ex-Mission lands for the first time. Although the war's end in 1918 effectively halted any further inland development, the camp's influence was such that the entire mesa became commonly known as the Kearny mesa by the early 1920s.

The Kearny Mesa's first residential subdivision, named "Chesterton," was developed by O.W. Cotton in 1927 and was located around the present-day community of Linda Vista. This development was only made possible, however, due to advancements in the city's water development and the creation of the Sixth Street Extension, which provided a through boulevard from the Kearny Mesa to downtown San Diego. Despite the early improvements the military brought to the north, and those brought to the south by the city, the general lack of roadways, water, and other improvements in the heart of the Kearny Mesa continued to make expanding development further inland impossible.

The inability to develop the land likely played a major role in its relative affordability. Looking for cheap land that would not flood, Bill Gibbs acquired 25 acres of land in the New Riverside subdivision on the Kearny Mesa in 1937 with the dream of establishing his own aviation field and business.¹⁶ During that time, the closest development to the north was Camp Kearny, which by then had been renamed Camp Holcomb. The Chesterton subdivision was located a few miles southwest. Grantville, one of San Diego's oldest communities, existed some miles southeast across Murphy Canyon Road. Other than the Inland Highway, no prior development is known to have existed in the immediately surrounding area. Therefore, the creation of Gibbs Field in 1937 was not only among the first developments to occur on the mesa north of Mission Valley, but it was also the first known development in the area now known as the community of Kearny Mesa.

¹⁵ "Highway 395," *City of Poway, California*, <https://poway.org/188/Highway-395>. Accessed April 12, 2019.

¹⁶ Harrison, 2010.



Figure 10: 1941 aerial looking northeast at Gibbs Field and the Inland Highway, which was redeveloped as U.S. 395 (now SR-163). *Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, Gibbs Flying Service.*

In 1940, Gibbs Field was leased to the Ryan School of Aeronautics who used the airfield for its Army Air Corps pilot training program.¹⁷ To better support its operation and to accommodate its growing enrollment, Ryan expanded the runways and likely added small ancillary buildings and barracks for the cadets in training.¹⁸ As civilian aviation so close to the coast was banned following the onset of World War II, Bill Gibbs relocated to Tucson, Arizona, where he continued work as a flight instructor.¹⁹ With Gibbs in Arizona, the United States military took control of Gibbs Field and used the airport as a training ground for bombing exercises and simulated battles.²⁰

Bill Gibbs returned to the airport shortly after the end of the war in 1945 and continued to provide flying lessons and other aviation-related services.²¹ Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Gibbs acquired Building 6 and Building 7, which were likely sold as surplus buildings no longer needed by the Navy following the war. Although no direct evidence exists, it is believed that Building 7 was originally a women's gymnasium located on Coronado's NAS North Island, and that after being acquired, it was dismantled, ferried across

¹⁷ "S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes," 1940.

¹⁸ "Ryan's Classes Show 500% Gain," *San Diego Union*, August 5, 1940.

¹⁹ Harrison, 2010.

²⁰ "House Navy Group Members See Amphibious Force Act," *San Diego Union*, May 26, 1942.

²¹ Harrison, 2010.

the bay, and shipped to Gibbs Field where it was reassembled.²² A historic photograph from early March 1947 (Figure 11) shows that the reassembly of Building 6 was nearly completed by that time and that Building 7 was just getting underway.²³ Although Building 8 does not appear in this photograph, another photograph from 1950 (Figure 12) proves that it was built sometime between 1947 and 1950. Building 8, which is said to have been custom built by hand, was likely built from surplus materials acquired from the military.²⁴ As is evidenced by the historic photos, a few ancillary buildings and trailers had also surrounded the three hangars at the time.



Figure 11: Gibbs Field, March 1947. *San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2*

In October 1947, the City of San Diego purchased the airport from Bill Gibbs with plans to make it the City's only private flying field.²⁵ As part of the deal, Bill Gibbs was granted a lease on 15 acres of the field to continue operating his aviation business.²⁶ Almost immediately after acquiring the airport, the City began work on a major expansion and improvement project, which included moving ten former Navy

²² This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

²³ The original negative from SDHC only lists the year, 1947, as the date. However, the same photograph was used for an article in the *San Diego Union* on March 9, 1947. See: "Flying for Fun," *San Diego Union*, March 9, 1947.

²⁴ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

²⁵ "New Plans for S.D.," 1947.

²⁶ "City in Control of Gibbs Airport," 1947.

buildings from Balboa Park to the center of the airport; grading the field; extending, surfacing, and lighting the runways; paving new taxiways and parking areas; updating telephone lines; installing water and sewer lines; and creating a new access road to the recently developed U.S. 395.²⁷ The new runway improvements were completed and officially approved in 1949.²⁸



Figure 12: Montgomery Field and surrounding area on October 10, 1950. *San Diego History Center, #80.7044 Airport - Montgomery Field 10-10-50.*

That same year, an ordinance was passed dedicating the public land required for new airport access roads: Aero Drive, East Aero Way (now John J. Montgomery Drive), and West Aero Way (now Glenn H. Curtiss Road).²⁹ As is shown in Figure 12, and supported in a bid notice from January 22, 1950, an early section of present-day Kearny Villa Road connecting Aero Drive to the Inland Highway was developed in 1950, as well.³⁰ Capping off all of this major development was Resolution No. 97985, passed by the City Council in May of 1950, which officially renamed the airport to Montgomery Field.³¹

²⁷ "C.A.A. Grants \$20,547 To Aid Gibbs Airport," *San Diego Union*, March 16, 1948; "City to Open Airport Bids," *San Diego Union*, June 13, 1948; "Gibbs Airport Sale to City Near Conclusion," *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1947; "Gibbs Airport Area Annexing Urged," *San Diego Union*, September 24, 1947.

²⁸ "Officials Look Over Gibbs Field Maps," *San Diego Union*, August 9, 1949.

²⁹ "Ordinance No. 4015," *San Diego Union*, April 7, 1949.

³⁰ "Notice Inviting Bids," *San Diego Union*, January 22, 1950.

³¹ "Resolution No. 97985," *San Diego Union*, May 25, 1950.

Following the City's airport acquisition, Bill Gibbs continued to lease out Buildings 6 and 7 to various aviation-related businesses like Pacific Airmotive Corp. and Crownair Aviation. As his own business grew, Gibbs moved closer to the center of the airport and began to rent out spaces for aircraft in newly built T-type hangars (Figure 16).³² As the airport attracted more aviation-related activities and businesses, so too did the surrounding area. One of the earliest examples was reported one month after the City's acquisition of the airport by the *San Diego Union*, which detailed the relocation plan of the Stinson Aircraft Tool & Engineering Corp. to a large plant just off U.S. 395 on Clairemont Mesa Road in Kearny Mesa.³³

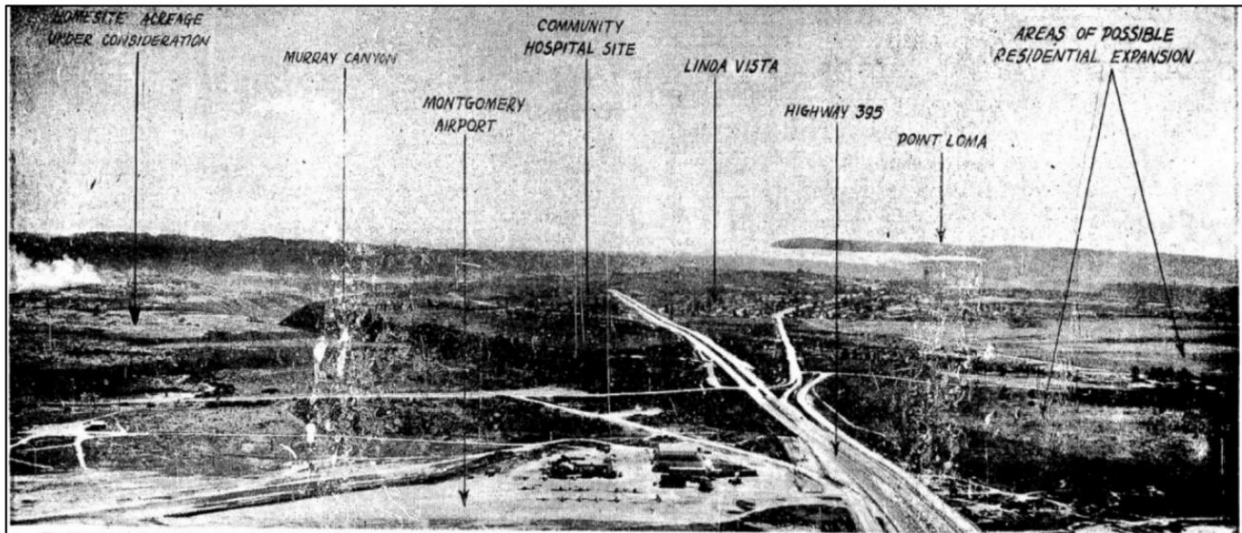


Figure 13: Proposed development south of Montgomery Field. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 appear in the foreground. "Council May Act on Expansion Today," *San Diego Union*, February 1, 1951.

With the newly developed Linda Vista housing project on the southern end of the mesa and Miramar NAS to the north, the Navy's presence was also growing stronger. In reaction to the growth of both the Navy and the aerospace industry, the City began to forecast a major housing boom in the Kearny Mesa area around 1951.³⁴ In response to the proposed residential development, the Navy made it clear that it favored agricultural, recreational and light industrial zoning around Miramar NAS, and stated that no residences were to be built within a 12,000 foot, or 2.3 mile, radius of the installation's runway.³⁵ Large areas of Kearny Mesa land outside of the Navy's 12,000 foot radius, which had already been zoned for residential use, were also called to be recategorized as temporary holding zones while the zoning issue was debated. The reason stated by the *San Diego Union* was that "although outside the Miramar circle, the recently annexed land is opposite the city's Montgomery Field."³⁶

³² Harrison, 2010.

³³ "Stinson Aircraft Plans Expansion," *San Diego Union*, November 10, 1947.

³⁴ "Council May Act On Expansion Today," *San Diego Union*, February 1, 1951.

³⁵ "Owners Will Confer On Mesa Zoning," *San Diego Union*, December 17, 1953.

³⁶ "Council Delays Kearny Mesa Zoning Case," *San Diego Union*, December 16, 1953.

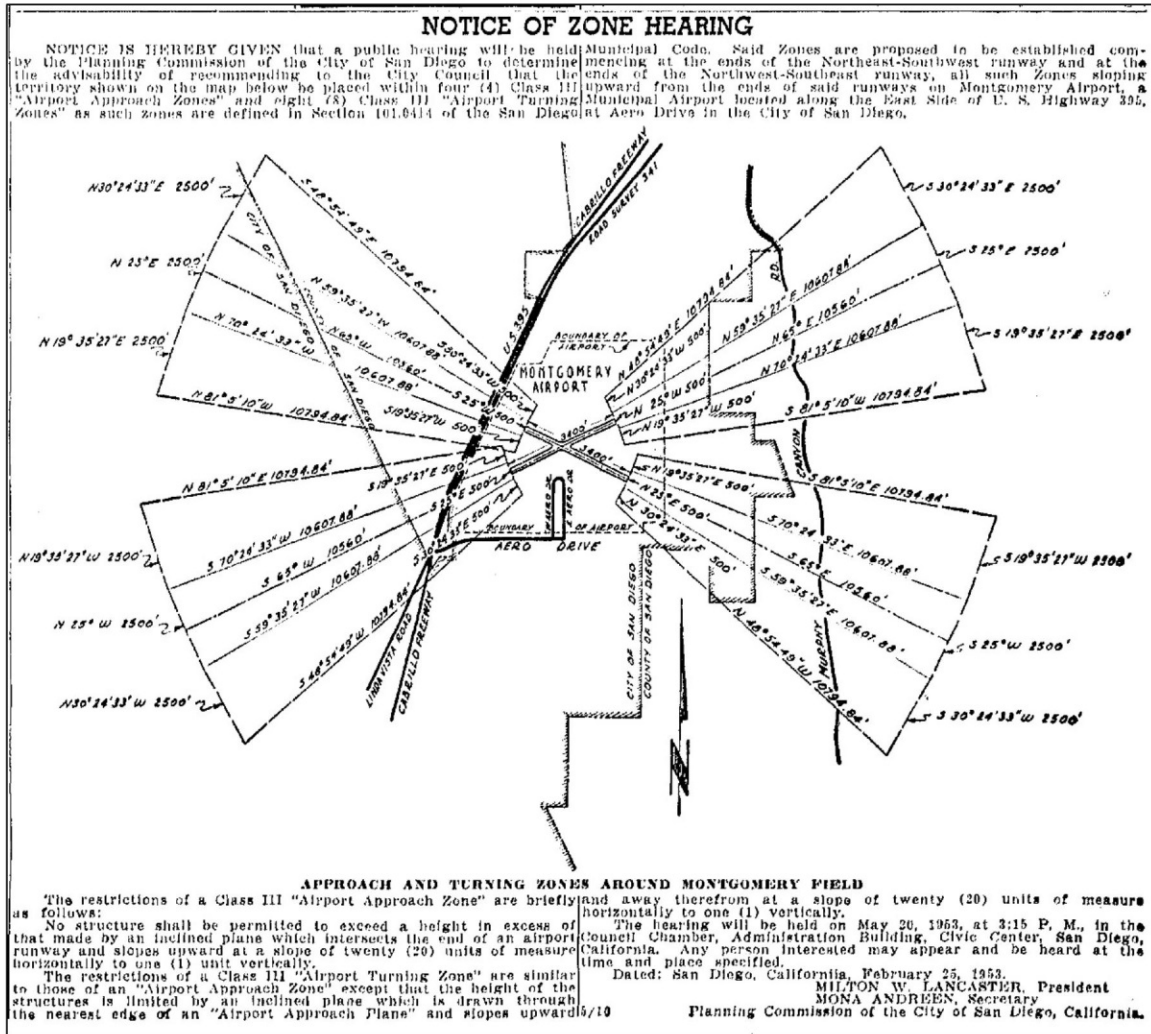


Figure 15: Approach and Turning Zones Around Montgomery Field dictated development within the surrounding area. Image taken from “All Weather Field Called Vital Need,” *San Diego Union*, July 11, 1953.

The City viewed Montgomery Field as “essential to San Diego’s development” and partnered with the Civil Aeronautics Administration in 1953 to prepare “building-height limits and zoning legislation for the Montgomery Field area.”³⁷ The same was also sought in the area around Miramar NAS, which remained outside the city limits. Although the legality of instituting such building heights around Miramar NAS and Montgomery Field was debated, it was reported in June of 1953 that planning director Glenn A. Rick stated “We’re proceeding with Montgomery, but we’re ‘held up’ on Miramar.”³⁸ It appears that it wasn’t until 1960, though, that an official ordinance was adopted establishing the “Airport Approach Zones” and “Airport Turning Zones”.³⁹ An ordinance that was adopted by City Council in 1953, however, put an end to some of the debate over land use within Kearny Mesa by rezoning 101 acres of land within the Navy’s

³⁷ "All Weather Field Called Vital Need," *San Diego Union*, July 11, 1953.

³⁸ "Height Limit Opinion Divided," *San Diego Union* June 4, 1953.

³⁹ "Ordinance No. 8310," *San Diego Union*, June 19, 1960.

12,000 foot radius for light industrial purposes.⁴⁰ The following month, the *San Diego Union* reported that, “moving to provide Kearny Mesa land for future industry, the City Council yesterday authorized City Mgr. Campbell to execute an agreement for the purchase of 180 acres northwest of Montgomery Field.”⁴¹ Shortly thereafter, in early 1954, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution establishing a light industrial zone for additional Kearny Mesa land within 12,000 foot radius of the center of the Miramar NAS runways.⁴² This resolution not only took into account the proximity of Miramar NAS, but it “also asked that present and future needs of Montgomery Field be examined carefully so that the field’s growth will not be stunted by residential building getting too close.”⁴³

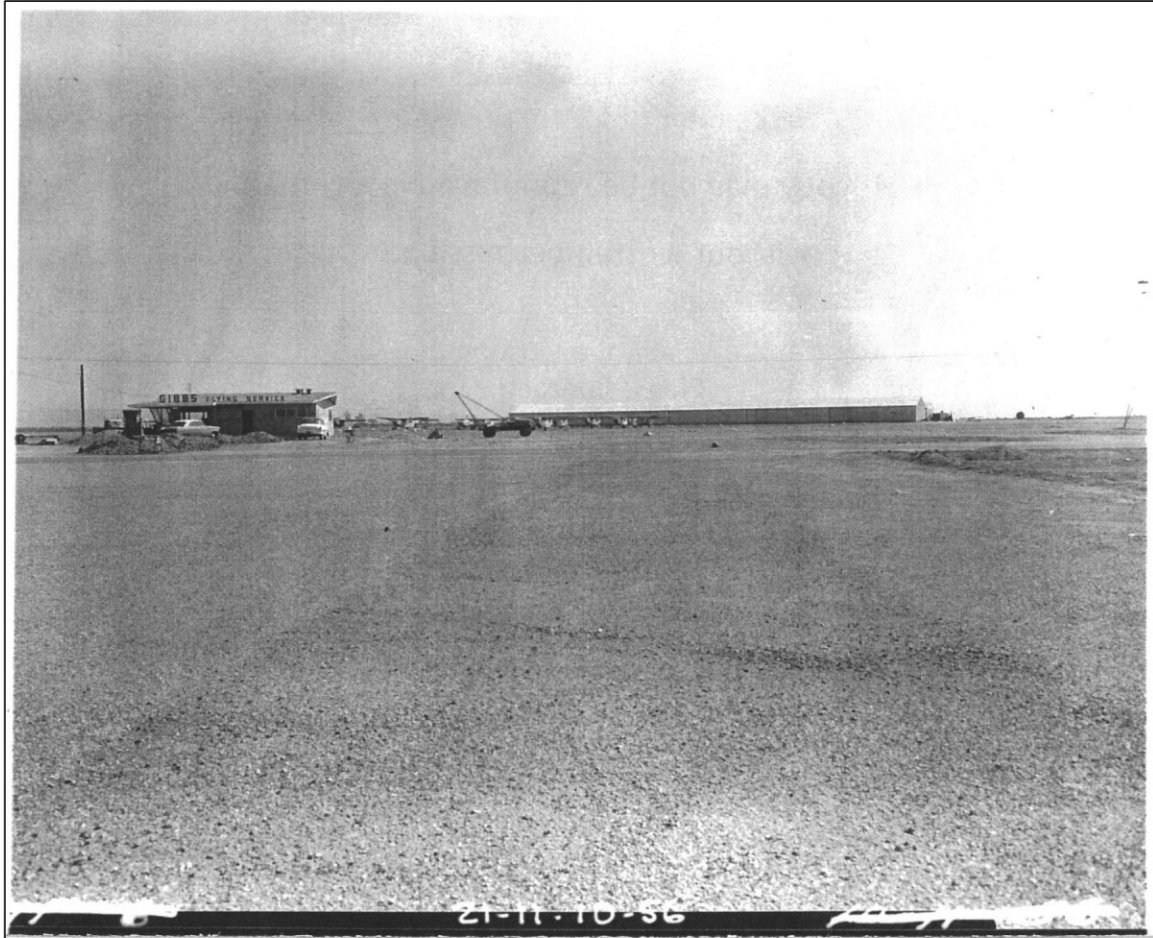


Figure 16: Gibbs Flying Service relocated to the newly graded, central, part of the airport around 1956. Newly built T-type hangars are visible in the background. *San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.*

Tensions over residential and industrial zoning continued throughout the early 1950s as new, and typically large, acreages of land around Montgomery Field were annexed by the City. Residential developments

⁴⁰ “Kearny Mesa Zoning for Light Industry Adopted by Council,” *San Diego Union*, September 23, 1953.

⁴¹ “City Will Buy Mesa Land for New Industries,” *San Diego Union*, October 16, 1953.

⁴² “Chamber Asks End Of 2-Year Delay On Miramar Zoning,” *San Diego Union*, January 14, 1954.

⁴³ Ibid.

occurred mainly to the south and east of the airport, in communities now known as Serra Mesa, Linda Vista, and Clairemont. However, due to Miramar NAS to the north and Montgomery Field to the south and east, the land between the two, which today makes up the community of Kearny Mesa, was instead prioritized for industrial and commercial use.



Figure 17: Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa in 1960. *San Diego History Center, 92_18835-2095*
Montgomery Field - General Dynamics - aerial - 1960

Kearny Mesa was quickly recognized as “offering the city’s best potential for future industry.”⁴⁴ This was partly due to accessibility to U.S. 395. However, according to Stanley Grove, general manager of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce at the time, “the Kearny Mesa area, on Highway 395 beyond Linda Vista” was an especially attractive location for industrial development because “its proximity to Montgomery airport is important to manufacturers.”⁴⁵ Recognizing the benefits of the area, a number of major aeronautical and defense-related companies, such as Ryan Aeronautical Co., Solar Aircraft Co., Consolidated Aircraft Corp., General Dynamics, and Rohr Aircraft Corp., began relocating to the area between 1954 and 1958. Other, more diversified, companies such as Cubic Corp, an electronics research firm, moved to the area as well.

⁴⁴ “Talk on Zoning Will Continue,” *San Diego Union*, September 9, 1953.

⁴⁵ “Grove Says 9 New Industries,” 1951.



Figure 18: Aerial photo c.1960, looking southeast at Convair/General Dynamics and other industrial development. Montgomery Field appears on the right-hand side of the photo. *San Diego History Center, 1998_63-19.*

Also beginning in the mid-1950s was an investigation to develop Montgomery Field into the City's primary airport.⁴⁶ The proximity of Montgomery Field to Miramar NAS proved to be too problematic, though, and, after the Navy outright rejected the idea, the proposition was no longer being considered by 1960.⁴⁷ Uncertain as to the future of the airport, the city began developing a master plan to recommend much needed upgrades and to help guide its future development.⁴⁸ It was reported that although "the plan is not intended as an answer to San Diego's search for a new jet-age municipal airport...development of the field is particularly needed because of the growth of private and business flying activity."⁴⁹ Among the work recommended by the master plan, which was approved in 1964, was a wider access road, expanded parking, a new administration building and a control tower.⁵⁰ Construction on the control tower began

⁴⁶ "Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?" *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1957.

⁴⁷ Martin, 1960.

⁴⁸ Roy C. Johns, "City Council Gets Montgomery Field Development Plan," *San Diego Union*, March 11, 1960.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ "Montgomery Field Expansion Detailed," *San Diego Union*, February 23, 1964.

almost immediately and, following its completion in 1965, the City opened bids “on a repaving project for all runways, taxiways and aircraft parking areas at Montgomery Field.”⁵¹

Industrial development in Kearny Mesa continued well into the late-1960s and included an increasing number of industrial parks, such as San Diego City Industrial Park and Aetna Insurance Co.’s Kearny Industrial Park.⁵² By 1969, however, most of the industrially zoned land in Kearny Mesa was occupied.⁵³ As large scale industrial development began to wane in the 1970s, the availability of smaller lots gave way to a wave of explosive commercial, retail, and office development.

Such as it had in the decades prior, Montgomery Field continued to shape the community’s development into the 1980s. In 1978, the *San Diego Union* reported on the rapidly increasing popularity in private aviation, stating, “in numbers, San Diego’s downtown airport is the least busy...[and that] Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa is where the biggest increases in aviation are centered.”⁵⁴ In fact, the popularity of private aviation paired with the increase in corporate traffic at the time had caused Montgomery Field to rank among the top 10 in the nation in the numbers of aircraft based there and the 14th busiest airport overall.⁵⁵ To take advantage of this increased traffic the city authorized the construction of a hotel “designed to enable private pilots using Montgomery Field to taxi up to the lobby and check-in before parking their airplanes.”⁵⁶ Construction began in 1984⁵⁷ and the hotel and accompanying golf course was located immediately south of Buildings 6, 7, and 8 at the southwestern corner of the airport, along Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road.

The traffic of Montgomery Field also brought increased attention from real estate developers and new companies looking to relocate. As was reported by the *San Diego Union* in 1982, “Montgomery Field, until a few years ago only the home of private airplanes for flying clubs and weekend pilots, has taken on a new role – as an emerging North City building site which is becoming a haven for high technology and insurance companies.”⁵⁸ Although it was largely the surrounding area, which the airport helped to shape, that attracted many new companies, the airport itself did attract a number of new office space users.⁵⁹ In particular, new complexes on or immediately adjacent to airport grounds included the Montgomery Airport Plaza, the Viewpoint Plaza, the Dynamic Office Park, the Airport Plaza, the Aero Office Park, the Kearny Mesa Office Park, and the Crossroads Building.⁶⁰ Although improvements continued into the 1990s and 2000s, both Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa appeared to be effectively built out by 1989. In 2016, City Council passed a resolution officially renaming the airport Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in honor of Bill Gibbs and the original airfield he created.

⁵¹ “Bid Openings Scheduled On Airport Paving,” *San Diego Union*, June 10, 1965.

⁵² “Industrial Parks Lure Farsighted Businesses,” *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1969.

⁵³ “EDC Attracts Firms,” 1969.

⁵⁴ Hudson, 1978.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ “City Authorizes Airport Hotel,” *San Diego Union*, January 16, 1981.

⁵⁷ “Hotels,” *San Diego Union*, November 13, 1983.

⁵⁸ “Montgomery Field is Building Up,” *San Diego Union*, November 14, 1982.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

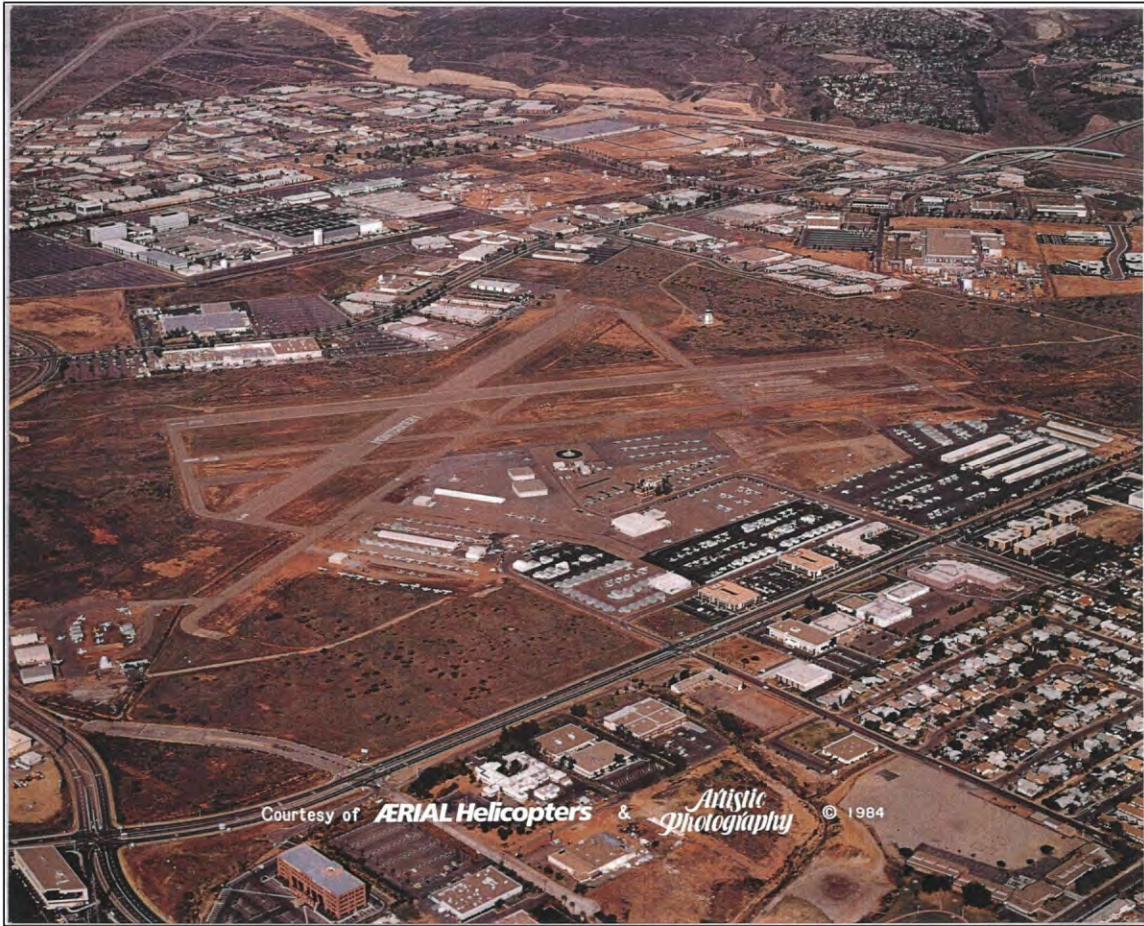


Figure 19: Montgomery Field in 1984. *San Diego History Center, 1998_047.702 Montgomery Field Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road Intersection at lower left; Brouwer Collection.*

3 Methods and Results

3.1 Archival Research

Several cultural resource reports and research efforts that have been previously conducted for the airport property are on file with the City and were provided to HELIX for the purposes of the Master Plan Update. These were reviewed and used for this report as applicable. Additional archival research was conducted at the following locations:

- County of San Diego Recorder's Office
- County of San Diego Planning & Development Services
- Genealogy Bank (Historic newspapers)
- <http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs> (USGS Maps)
- San Diego County Assessor's Office
- San Diego History Center
- San Diego Public Library Online (Sanborn maps)
- www.historicaerials.com (Historic aerial photographs)
- Gibbs Flying Service
- Sorbi Aircraft Maintenance

3.2 Field Survey

Field surveys were conducted by Christopher Usler, MSc, and Rebecca McManus, MHP, in the course of writing this report. A tabular survey log follows.

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	SURVEY PURPOSE	SURVEYOR(S)
02/27/2019	Photographic, Pedestrian	Initial site visit and photographic documentation	Christopher Usler, MSc Rebecca McManus, MHP

3.3 Description of Surveyed Resources

For the purposes of this HRTR, ISA has been tasked with evaluating Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 for their historic potential. Therefore, only Building 6, Building 7, Building 8, and their site located at 3873 Kearny Villa Road was surveyed. No official boundary was able to be determined for the site located at 3873 Kearny Villa Road. Therefore, the site was approximated based on existing boundaries to the west and south, which are delineated by chain-link fencing; geographic boundaries to the east, delineated by trenches; and by the edge of the access road to the north. These boundaries were also determined based on what the historic photos from 1947 and 1950 showed to be the core of the original Gibbs Field. The site has three potentially eligible resources: Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8. Due to the inability to determine an official boundary, there is no potentially eligible historic district.

3.3.1 Site – 3873 Kearny Villa Road

The site is located along the western boundary of the project area. The site is immediately bounded to the north by open, undeveloped airport land with grasses and other chaparral vegetation. Bounding the site immediately to the east is open land with taxiways that lead further east towards the runways and the administrative center of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport. To the south, the site is bounded by a hotel with a small golf course. Kearny Villa Road, with SR-163 to its west, runs along the western boundary of the site.

The site features a flat terrain with large areas of asphalt pavement and graded dirt with grass and chaparral vegetation. A chain link fence surrounds the western boundary, dividing Kearny Villa Road from the site. The site is accessed from Kearny Villa Road by an asphalt paved road located near its southwestern corner. From Kearny Villa Road, this access road splits in a number of directions. First, it curves to the north where, after running along the western elevations of Buildings 6, 7, and 8, and past a chain-link fence and gate, curves eastward and continues until merging with a taxiway that leads to the center of the airport. The second split in the access road runs from Kearny Villa Road, east, along the southern elevation of Building 8, past a large chain-link fence and gate, where it merges with a wide, asphalt paved, taxiway that runs roughly northward along the eastern elevations of Buildings 6, 7, and 8. This wide taxiway features two smaller taxiways, one at the southern end and one at the northern end, that curve eastward, across an area of graded dirt and grass, and merge with larger taxiway that continues to the center of the airport. Third, the access road curves south from Kearny Villa Road, which, after a short run, terminates in an asphalt-paved parking lot on the southern boundary of the site just north of the hotel.

Situated close to the western boundary along Kearny Villa Road are Buildings 6, 7, and 8, which are set side-by-side in sequential alignment. Building 6 is the northernmost building. Building 7 is situated to the south and sits between Building 6 and Building 8. Building 8 appears to the south of Building 7 and is the closest to the access point with Kearny Villa Road. The three aircraft hangars are spaced equidistant from each other. Graded areas mainly used for parking aircraft and cars exist between each of the hangars and to the northern and southern sides of Buildings 6 and 8, respectively. A short chain-link fence runs along the western edge of the graded areas to either side of Building 7. As mentioned above, running along the east elevation of these hangars is a wide, asphalt paved taxiway that connects to the runways and the administrative center of the airport.

Some remnants of concrete slab foundations from buildings that once stood on the site are located on the northern side of Building 6 and elsewhere around the site.



Figure 20: 1959 aerial of site, looking west.



Figure 21: Approximate boundaries for the site surveyed for this report.



Figure 22: Site Photo Survey Key Plan. Google Maps, 2019.



Figure 23: Looking NW from NE corner of Building 6 towards Kearny Villa Road and SR-163.



Figure 24: Looking S from NE corner of Building 6 towards the wide, asphalt paved taxiway.



Figure 25: Looking S from NW corner of Building 6 and the asphalt paved access road.



Figure 26: Looking E from the wide, asphalt paved taxiway, towards the runways and center of the airport.

Building 6

Building 6 is a single-story, pre-fabricated, steel-frame aircraft hangar with a semi-cylindrical massing. Oriented westward, its primary elevation faces Kearny Villa Road. It features a slightly raised, poured concrete foundation and a roof made entirely of corrugated galvanized steel panels. The roof curves downward, covering the northern and southern sides of the building, and terminates at the raised concrete foundation. The western end wall is the primary elevation of the building and was constructed with wood framing and sheathing. The exterior of this end wall has a squared, stuccoed, office-like façade that spans three-quarters of the height of the building. This stuccoed front façade features a central, flush door flanked by sets of two, fixed, steel sash windows. The windows closest to center are composed of eighteen lights stacked in three horizontal rows of six. The outer windows are of a similar composition but feature horizontal jalousie window in the top outside corner. Above the squared, stuccoed façade is the rounded top quarter of the western end wall. This top portion is clad in nailed sheets of lead and features a central, wood framed, tripartite window. This window is composed of a central, two-light, aluminum sliding window flanked by narrow, jalousie glass-filled side lights.

The eastern end wall makes up the rear elevation of the building. The lower half of this end wall features an exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding, hangar door. This door system is made of corrugated steel panels that slide sideways along an exposed top track made of a steel box rail and dimensional lumber.

The top track extends out past the sides of the buildings and terminate at vertical supports made of dimensional lumber. These vertical supports are also braced to the corrugated steel panel roof.

Above the hangar door, the rounded top half of the building features a corrugated steel paneled exterior. A horizontal row of four, large, fixed, wood-framed, square-shaped windows appears off-center with the façade. Curved vents made of metal mesh appear above three of the windows.



Figure 27: Detail of 1947 photo looking NE. *San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2.*

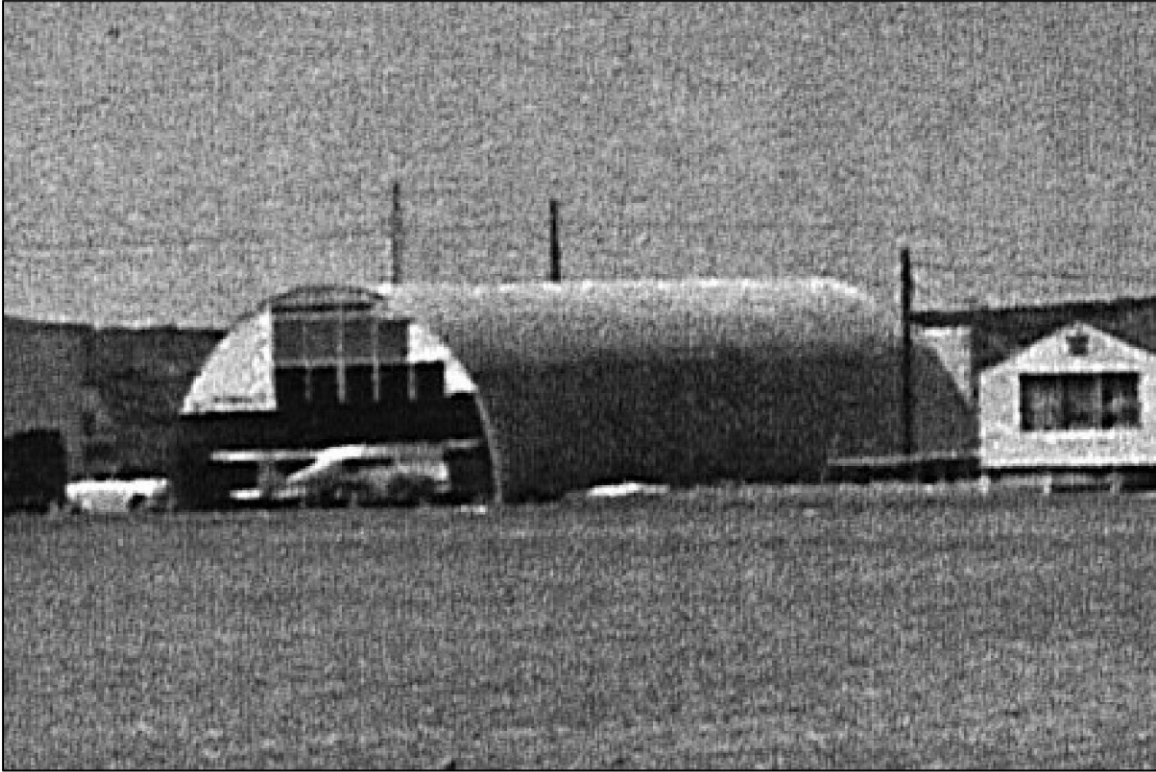


Figure 28: 1956 photo looking SW. *San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.*



Figure 29: 1956 photo looking SE. *San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.*



Figure 30: 1959 photo showing rear elevation of Building 6. *David J. Gauthier Memorial Collection, No.7644, November 1959. 1000aircraftphotos.com.*



Figure 31: Building 6 Photo Survey Key Plan. *Google Maps, 2019.*



Figure 32: Three-quarter view showing the north and west elevations.



Figure 33: Three-quarter view showing the east and north elevations.



Figure 34: Three-quarter view showing the west and south elevations.



Figure 35: Three-quarter view showing the west and south elevations.

3.3.2 Building 7

Building 7 is a wood-framed aircraft hangar with a box-like massing. Oriented eastward, its primary elevation faces towards the Montgomery-Gibbs Airport. Its roof is supported by timber bowstring trusses and is covered with asphalt roll roofing. The east facing end wall, and primary elevation, features a large, exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding hangar door system with a steel top track that extends out past the building at both ends of the elevation. The sliding hangar door panels are composed of corrugated steel panels. Above the hangar door is the top portion of the eastern end wall. This exterior is also clad in corrugated steel panels and features letters spelling “Spiders Aircraft.” Extending out near the top of the end wall is an aluminum lighting fixture. A fascia made of dimensionally cut lumber curves along the roof line's top elevation.

The south elevation features a stuccoed exterior wall that is largely uninterrupted except for two, fixed, 16-light, steel windows that covered by a protective steel mesh screen. These windows are located in the center and westernmost corner of the south elevation, respectively. A thin, wood fascia runs the entire length of the south elevation. The hangar's west, or rear, elevation features a stuccoed exterior and three, evenly spaced, fixed, 12-light, steel sash windows. A protective steel mesh screen covers each window. Located above the windows and affixed to the stuccoed exterior wall are letters spelling out “Spiders Aircraft.” Just beneath the roofline is a thin, wood, fascia that runs the length of the rear elevation. Projecting out from the northern corner of the west elevation is a single-story addition with a shed roof. The western elevation of this addition features a stuccoed exterior wall; a three-light, horizontal sliding, aluminum window; a projecting, open eave with exposed rafter tails that terminate behind wooden fascia board.

The shed roofed addition spans the entire lower half of the hangar's northern elevation. The roof of the addition is covered in asphalt roll roofing and has a narrowly projecting, open eave with exposed rafter tails that terminate behind a fascia made of dimensional lumber. The addition also features a stuccoed exterior wall and a central, outward swinging, galvanized steel double door. East of the double door are four, two-light, horizontal sliding, aluminum windows. To the west of the double door is a fifth window of the same type and configuration as the previous four, as well as two, two-light, horizontal sliding, vinyl windows set between a single, inward swinging, wood door with a full, glass, light. At its western corner, a small portion of the addition recedes back to provide space for an entrance on the west elevation. Here, the recessed, north facing, exterior wall features a lower, identically pitched, shed roof that extends out from beneath the shed roof covering the rest of the addition. The stucco exterior of the original hangar appears above the height of the shed roofed addition to a thin, wood fascia at the base of the roofline.



Figure 36: March 1947 photo looking NE. *San Diego History Center, UT84_22856.2*

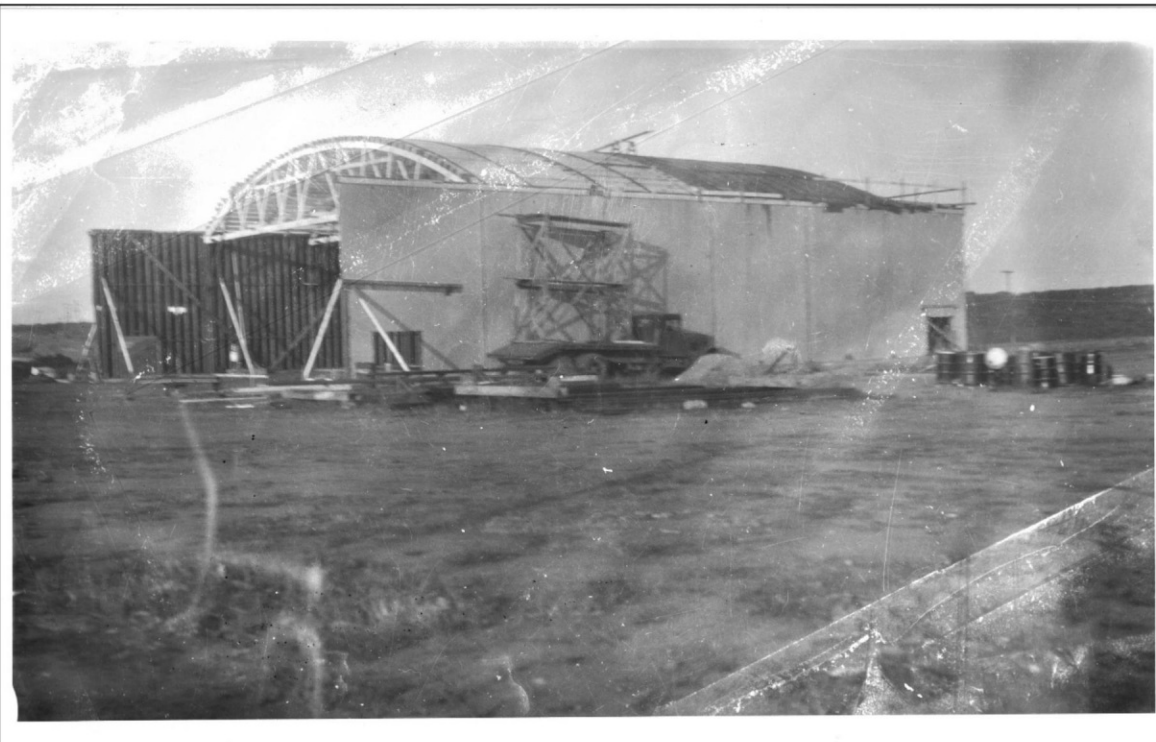


Figure 37: 1947 photo, looking SW. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, *Gibbs Flying Service*.

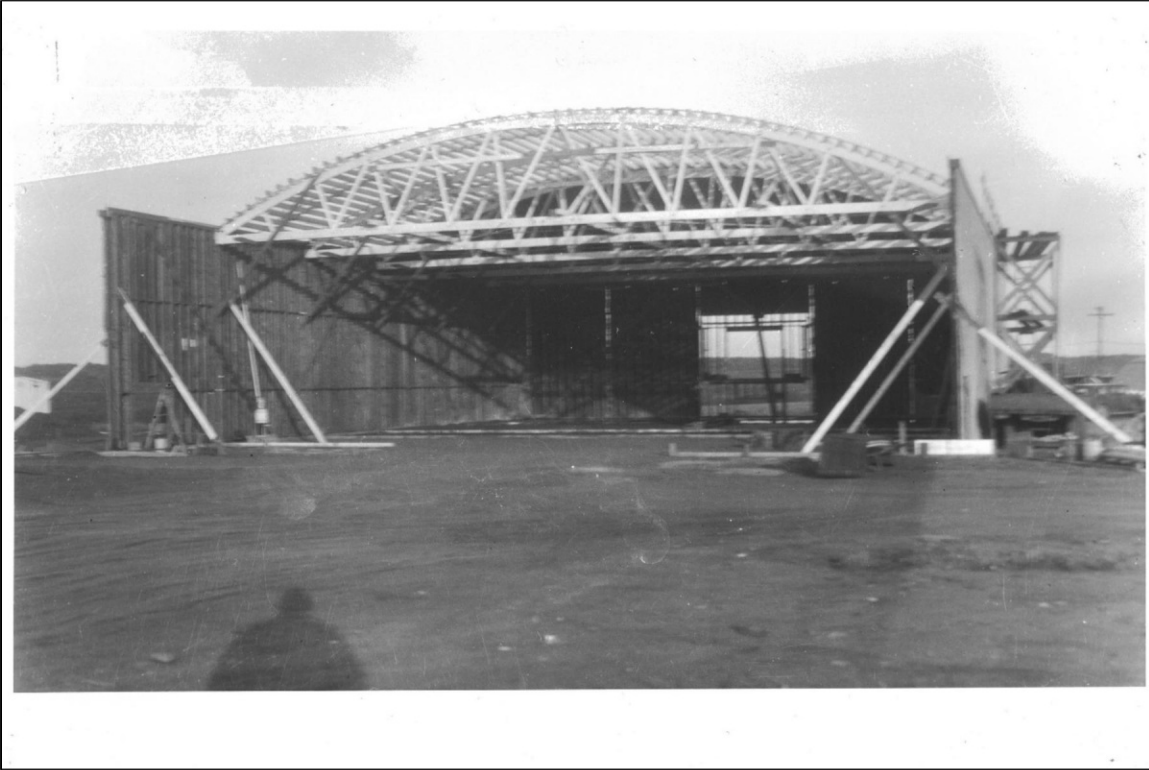


Figure 38: Photo, looking west, in 1947. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, *Gibbs Flying Service*.

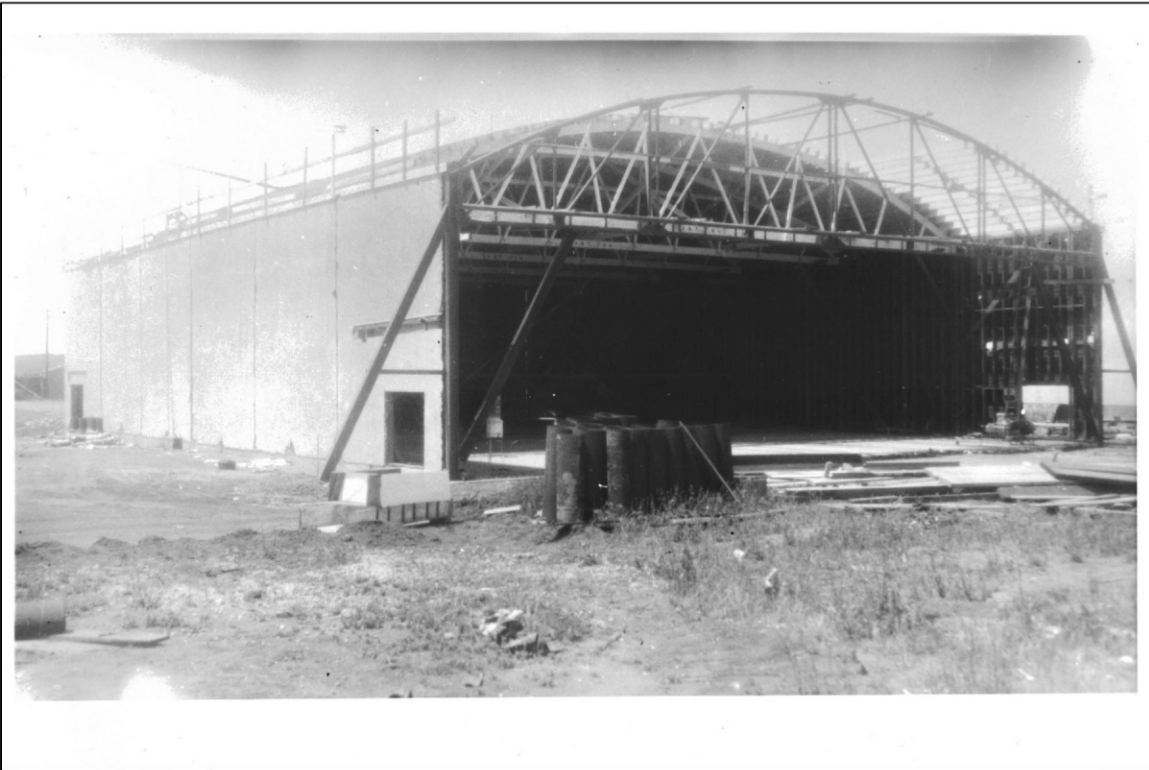


Figure 39: Photo, looking NW, in 1947. Original photo courtesy of Buzz Gibbs, *Gibbs Flying Service*.

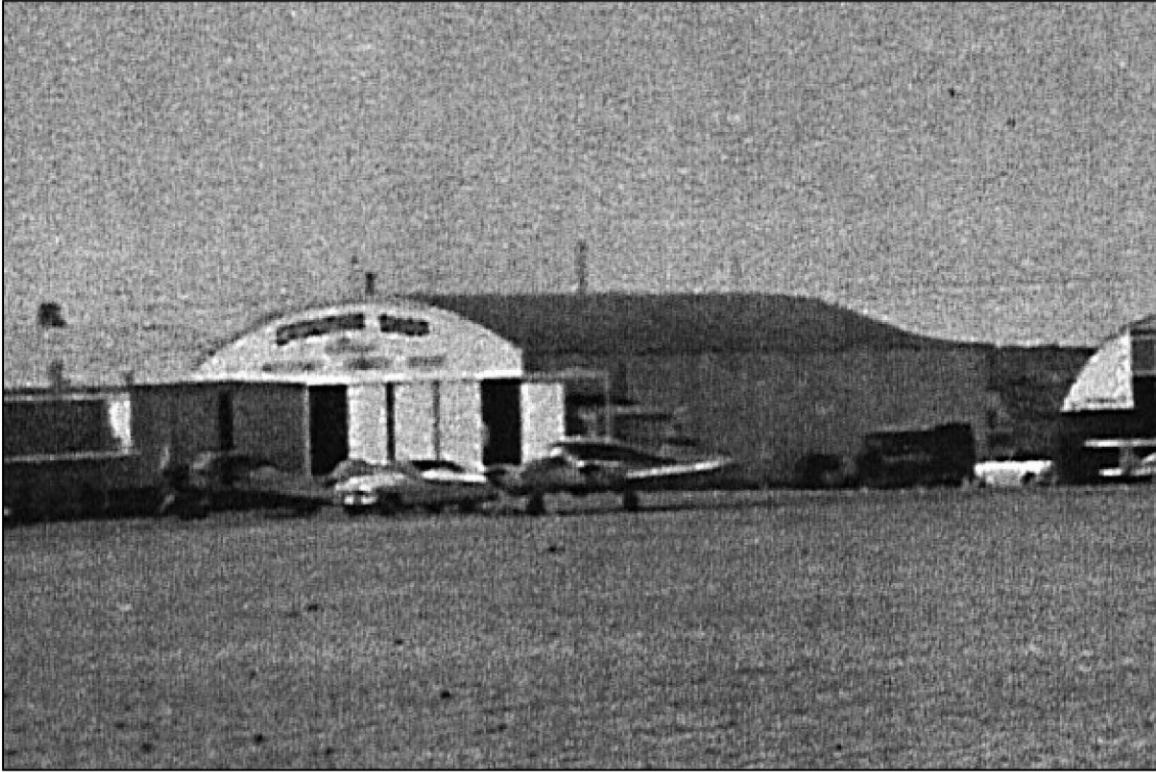


Figure 40: 1956 photo looking SW. *San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.*



Figure 41: 1956 photo looking SE. *San Diego History Center, 2002-15, Box 2, Folder 1 Kearny Mesa.*

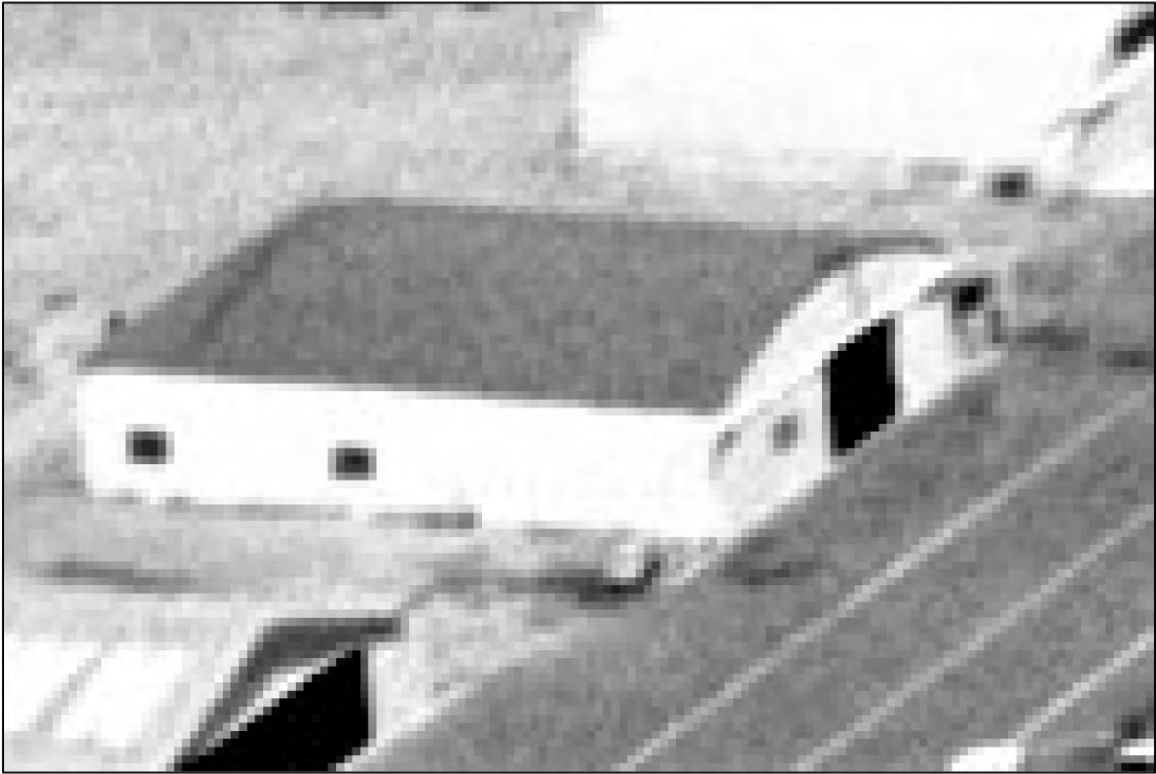


Figure 42: 1960 aerial looking NW. *San Diego History Center, 92_18835-2095*



Figure 43: Building 7 Photo Survey Key Plan. *Google Maps, 2019.*



Figure 44: Three-quarter view showing Building 7 east and north elevations.



Figure 45: Building 7, South elevation.



Figure 46: Building 7 South elevation showing an early patch to the original stucco.



Figure 47: Three-quarter view of Building 7 east and south elevations.



Figure 48: Building 7 North elevation with shed roof addition.

3.3.3 Building 8

Building 8 is a steel-frame aircraft hangar with a box-like massing and a gable end roof that was reportedly custom built from surplus materials acquired by Buzz Gibbs. The gable end roof is composed of corrugated steel panels. Oriented eastward, the hangar's primary elevation faces towards the Montgomery-Gibbs Airport. The primary elevation features a large, exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding hangar door system with a steel top track that extends out past the building at both ends of the elevation to vertical supports. Angled steel braces also appear to either side of building to provide additional support for the large door system. The sliding hangar door panels are corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. The exterior wall within the gable end above the hangar door comprises the same corrugated steel panels and features a single, centered, light fixture. The south elevation is composed entirely of uninterrupted corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. The west, or rear, elevation also features a completely uninterrupted wall surface composed of corrugated steel panels; however, five, evenly spaced, light fixtures project from the exterior within the gable end. The north elevation features a mostly uninterrupted wall surface composed of corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. A flush, outward swinging, steel door appears near the western corner of the north elevation.



Figure 49: 1959 aerial looking East. Original photo provided by Buzz Gibbs, *Gibbs Flying Service*.



Figure 50: 1960 aerial, looking NE. *San Diego History Center, 1960 - 92_18835-2095*



Figure 51: Building 8 Photo Survey Key Plan. *Google Maps, 2019.*



Figure 52: Photo of the east elevation of Building 8.



Figure 53: Three-quarter view of the south and west elevations of Building 8.



Figure 54: Three-quarter view showing the east and north elevations of Building 8.



Figure 55: Building 8 North elevation.

4 Eligibility Evaluations

Under CEQA, historical resources are defined as resources listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, or in a local register, such as the SDRHR.⁶¹ The following section evaluates the eligibility of Buildings 6, 7, and 8 for listing in all three registers. 36 CFR 60.3(d) of the National Register defines a “District” as “...a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history.”⁶² Because no official boundary could be determined for the site located at 3873 Kearny Villa Road, the site was approximated based on existing boundaries and historic photographs. Due to the inability to determine an official boundary, and the lack of geographic separation, a District as defined by the National Register does not exist at the site surveyed. This report does not evaluate the buildings as part of any larger proposed historic district at Montgomery Field.

4.1 Significance

In order to be eligible for designation, a resource must both have significance under one or more Significance Criteria and retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance in its current state. *What follows is an evaluation of significance only; see the Section 4.2 for an evaluation of integrity and Section 4.3 for a final eligibility conclusion.*

4.1.1 National Register of Historic Places

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a property must be at least 50 years of age and possess significance in American history and culture, architecture, or archaeology. Younger properties can be eligible for listing, however, if they achieve exceptional significance.⁶³ The National Park Service provides the guidance in National Register Bulletin #43, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties*, that “...aviation properties, like wartime training fields and temporary buildings, similarly were never intended to last fifty years. Without identification and preservation of some of these properties before they reach the age of fifty years, the properties will not survive to reach fifty years of age.” and “The phrase “exceptional importance” may be applied to the extraordinary importance of an event or to an entire category of resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual.”⁶⁴

A property must also meet one or more of the following four criteria.⁶⁵

Criterion A: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

⁶¹ CEQA Guidelines, §15064.5.

⁶² Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.3

⁶³ *National Register Bulletin #15*, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, p. 2.

⁶⁴ *National Register Bulletin #43*, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, p. 33.

⁶⁵ Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.4.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are** significant under Criterion A at the local level as they are associated with a pattern of important events that not only shaped the historical development of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, but, by extension, influenced the entire development of the community of Kearny Mesa. Among others, these events include the first private development in the area, the development of Gibbs Field between its founding in 1937 to 1947, San Diego's acquisition of the field in 1947, the annexation of the field by the City in 1948, the expansion and dedication of the airport as Montgomery Field in 1950, the ordinances that zoned Kearny Mesa for industrial and commercial uses in the 1950s, and the attraction of various types of companies to the area from at least 1947 to 1989 and later. The period of significance under Criterion A is 1947-1950. The period of significance is based on the buildings' appearance and construction on the site and coincides with San Diego's acquisition (1947), annexation (1948), and the expansion and dedication of the airport (1950).

Criterion B: Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion B at any level because, while they are associated with the lives of a significant person in our past, Bill Gibbs, there is not enough historical evidence to both determine which of the three buildings is most associated with Gibbs and to establish a specific significance under Criterion B.

The buildings were acquired and constructed by Bill Gibbs between 1947 and 1950 for use at the airport. Bill Gibbs was responsible for developing the original airport in 1937 where he operated his business, Gibbs Flying Service. In 1940, he leased the airport to Ryan Aeronautical, who then hired Gibbs to teach flying lessons in Arizona during World War II. After the war, Gibbs returned to his airport and, in 1947, acquired and re-constructed Buildings 6 and 7. Building 8 was constructed sometime between 1947 and 1950. It was also in 1947 that Bill Gibbs sold the airport and surrounding land to the City. As part of the sale, Gibbs was provided a lease to continue operating his business at the airport. The Gibbs Flying Service still operates out of the airport today. In recognition of his legacy, Bill Gibbs was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2011. On Gibbs's importance, Jim Kidrick, President and CEO of the San Diego Air & Space Museum, stated, "Bill Gibbs lived through almost the entire history of aviation, and certainly through the history of aviation in San Diego."⁶⁶

Although Bill Gibbs is most certainly a notable figure in San Diego history, Bill Gibbs has not been found to be significant under NRHP Criterion B. According to National Register Bulletin 15, "[p]ersons 'significant in our past' refers to individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, State, or national historic context."⁶⁷ Additionally, to be significant under Criteria B, an individual must have specific events and accomplishments identified that are historically significant and that, when *"significance rests more in a property's representation of a pattern of history ... the appropriate criterion is A rather than B. This is true even when the careers or actions of various individuals are discussed to illustrate these important patterns of history."*⁶⁸ Although he founded Gibbs Field in 1937, sold it to the

⁶⁶ *San Diego Air & Space Museum*. "San Diego Air & Space Museum mourns the loss of Aviation Legend Bill Gibbs." <https://sandiegoairandspace.org/press/release/san-diego-air-space-museum-mourns-the-loss-of-aviation-legend-bill-gibbs>.

⁶⁷ *National Register Bulletin 15*

⁶⁸ *National Register Bulletin # 32*, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

City in 1947, and was a lifelong aviator, Bill Gibbs's activities and contributions have not been found to be sufficiently important within a local, State, or national context to be considered significant under Criterion B because there is no specific event associated with him. Additionally, Bill Gibbs is potentially best associated with the entire Airfield for its original development in 1937; however, this analysis is outside the scope of this report. Thus, there is not enough documentary evidence to determine which of the three buildings, and others potentially associated with Gibbs, is most associated with any individual accomplishment of his.

Criterion C: Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

Building 6 is significant under Criterion C at the local level as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut. The Quonset Hut is an important building type that was developed by the U.S. Navy during World War II. Following the war, surplus Quonset Huts were sold to civilians for private use, and multiple companies that built wartime Quonset Huts continued their production. This combined wartime and civilian use sets the era of Quonset Huts as 1941-1960⁶⁹ and makes the Quonset Hut a particularly unique architectural style when considering historic significance, because relocation and reuse are one of the character-defining features for post-war Quonset Huts. Additionally, while originally developed by the George A. Fuller Company, wartime demand for the Quonset Hut led the Navy to contract with other companies, most notably the Stran-Steel division of the Great Lakes Steel Corporation, for increased production and use-specific designs.⁷⁰ Other manufacturers and models include the wooden Pacific Hut and Emkey Huts, the heavy steel Armco Hut, the Cowin and Company Inc "Steeldrome" Hut for the Air Corps, the Canadian Portaseal Hut, the arctic Jamesway Hut, and the half-U Buttler Hut.⁷¹ Repurposed civilian Quonset Huts were extensively adapted and altered for their use, which ranged from modernist homes to sheds, barns, and hangars.⁷²

The Character Defining Features of the Quonset Hut are:⁷³

- Corrugated Metal Exterior
- Steel Frame of curved rib pieces
- Wood fiber insulation
- Inner Masonite walls
- Concrete or TNG floors on a raised metal framework
- Front and rear "bulkhead" end elevations with doors and windows
- Easily installed, taken down, and transported

⁶⁹ Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP), "Quonset Hut," Quonset Hut | Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP), <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/quonset-hut>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Julie Decker and Chris Chiel, eds. *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*, (China: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005). 148-149

⁷² Michael Lamm, "The Instant Building," *Invention & Technology Magazine* 13, no. 3 (Winter 1998): <https://www.inventionandtech.com/content/instant-building-1>

⁷³ Washington State (DAHP)

Building 6, with its curved steel frame ribs, corrugated metal exterior, concrete floors, bulkhead ends, and transportation to and reuse at the Montgomery Field site post-World War II, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut, particularly in its postwar Civilian reuse era. It has, therefore, been found to be significant at the Local Level under Criterion C with a period of significance of 1947.

Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion C at any level because it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. It is a utilitarian aircraft hangar that is believed to have originally served as a women's gymnasium on Coronado's NAS North Island. It features wood frame construction with dimensional lumber and sheathing, stuccoed exterior walls, and the vaulted roof is supported by bowstring trusses. Building 7 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion C at any level. It is a post-war era aircraft hangar that was custom built on site using surplus materials acquired by Bill Gibbs. It does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. Building 8 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion D: Yield, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The potential for yielding new information important to the prehistory or history of the area is slim and, therefore, Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are not considered significant under Criterion D at any level.

4.1.2 California Register of Historic Resources

The criteria for eligibility of listing the CRHR are based upon NRHP criteria, but are identified as 1-4 instead of A-D. To be eligible for listing in the CRHR, a property must be at least 50 years of age and possess significance at the local, state, or national level. Younger properties can be eligible for listing, however, if they achieve exceptional significance.⁷⁴

A property of potential significance must meet one or more of four established criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United State; and/or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; and/or
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; and/or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

⁷⁴ California Office of Historic Preservation, *California Register of Historical Resources, Criteria for Designation*. http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238.

Resources found to be significant under NRHP Significance Criteria can generally be found to be significant under the equivalent CRHR Significance Criteria. Accordingly, Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are significant under CRHR Criteria 1, at the local level. The period of significance under Criterion 1 is 1947-1950. The period of significance is based on the buildings' appearance and construction on the site and coinciding with San Diego's acquisition (1947), annexation (1948), and the expansion and dedication of the airport (1950). Additionally, Building 6, embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut in the postwar Civilian reuse era, is significant under CRHR Criteria 3 with a period of significance of 1947, its earliest identifiable appearance at Montgomery Field.

4.1.3 San Diego Register of Historical Resources

The Historical Resources Guidelines of the City's Land Development Manual identifies the criteria under which a resource may be historically designated. It states that any improvement, building, structure, sign, interior element and fixture, site, place, district, area, or object may be designated a historical resource on the SDRHR by the City's Historical Resources Board (HRB) if it meets one or more of the following HRB designation criteria:

Criterion A: Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's, or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are significant under Criterion A because they reflect a special element of Kearny Mesa's historical development. Specifically, the three hangars reflect the airfield created by Bill Gibbs, which was the earliest known development in Kearny Mesa. As such, these hangars influenced both the development of Montgomery Field, presently named Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, which by extension, influenced the development of the entire community of Kearny Mesa.

As was shown in the historic context, the development of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport by both Bill Gibbs, from 1937-1947, and the City of San Diego, from 1947-1989 and later, was in large part responsible for the way in which the community of Kearny Mesa, itself, developed. Not only was the airfield the first development to have occurred in the area, but it was also responsible for attracting new businesses to the area, such as Bee Aviation Associates and Crownair. It influenced the development of U.S. 395 (now SR-163), Aero Drive, and Kearny Villa Road. The airport was also responsible for the establishment of airport approach and turning zones that influenced the development of the area, as well as influencing the restriction of residential development in favor of zoning Kearny Mesa for light industrial and commercial uses. The combination of the industrial and commercial zoning, the proximity to the airport, and the accessibility of U.S. 395 then brought major aeronautical and technology companies to the area during the 1950s and 1960s. As private and corporate aviation grew in popularity, the airport continued to attract new businesses and real estate developers during the 1980s. As a result, a number of new office parks and plazas were built on airport grounds and within the immediate vicinity. A large hotel was also built on airport grounds to take advantage of the growing number of private aviators using the airport. As the Buildings 6, 7, and 8 reflect the airfield that has been shown to have greatly influenced the historical development of Kearny Mesa, they have been found to be significant under Criterion A. The period of significance under Criterion A is 1947-1950.

Criterion B: Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion B because, while they are associated with the lives of a significant person in our past, Bill Gibbs, there is not enough historical evidence to determine which of the three buildings is best associated and identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B. According to the City's criteria guidelines, "[p]ersons significant in our past refer to individuals associated with San Diego whose activities, achievements and contributions are demonstrably important within the City, state, or nation." and "Eligibility under Criterion B for significant person(s) involves first determining the importance of the individual, second ascertaining the length and nature of the individual's association with the resource under study and in comparison to other resources associated with the individual, and third determining if the resource is significant under HRB Criterion B as a resource that is best identified with a person(s) significant in local, state, or national history."

Bill Gibbs founded Gibbs Field in 1937, sold it to the City in 1947, was a lifelong aviator, and was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2011, and Jim Kidrick, President and CEO of the San Diego Air & Space Museum, stated of Gibbs's importance that he "...lived through almost the entire history of aviation, and certainly through the history of aviation in San Diego."⁷⁵ When Bill Gibbs passed in 2016, the San Diego Air and Space Museum declared him "a significant part of the legacy of aviation in the San Diego region."⁷⁶ Therefore, Bill Gibbs's activities and contributions have been found to be demonstrably important enough to be considered a significant person under Criterion B.

There is minimal evidence to establish the length and nature of Bill Gibbs's association with Buildings 6, 7, and 8. While it is known that he acquired Building 6 and Building 7 in 1946 or early 1947 and built Building 8 between 1947 and 1950, he leased Buildings 6 and 7 to other various aviation-related businesses rather than using them himself, and by 1956 his business operations moved to the center of the airport to make use of other hangars. Therefore, Bill Gibbs' direct association with Buildings 6, 7, and 8 is limited to the years of their construction.

Finally, there is insufficient historical evidence to determine which of the three buildings is best identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B, or if a different resource outside the scope of this report is best associated with him. Bill Gibbs' association with Buildings 6, 7, and 8 is only for the years of their construction, and there is not enough evidence to establish a stronger association for any one of the buildings over the others. Further, according to the City's criteria guidelines, "The best representatives are properties associated with the person's productive life." Thus, Bill Gibbs is best associated with a building or structure used in his career and aviation activities, neither of which applied to Buildings 6, 7, or 8 as they were used as rentals.

⁷⁵ San Diego Air & Space Museum

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Thus, while Bill Gibbs is a significant person, there is not enough documentary evidence to determine which of the three buildings, or others potentially associated with Gibbs, is best identified and associated with his productive life. Therefore, Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion B.

Criterion C: Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

Building 6 **is** significant under Criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut. The Quonset Hut is an important building type that was developed by the U.S. Navy during World War II. Following the war, surplus Quonset Huts were sold to civilians for private use, and multiple companies that built wartime Quonset Huts continued their production. This combined wartime and civilian use sets the era of Quonset Huts as 1941-1960⁷⁷ and makes the Quonset Hut a particularly unique architectural style when considering historic significance, because relocation and reuse are one of the character-defining features for post-war Quonset Huts. Additionally, while originally developed by the George A. Fuller Company, wartime demand for the Quonset Hut led the Navy to contract with other companies, most notably the Stran-Steel division of the Great Lakes Steel Corporation, for increased production and use-specific designs.⁷⁸ Other manufacturers and models include the wooden Pacific Hut and Emkey Huts, the heavy steel Armco Hut, the Cowin and Company Inc “Steeldrome” Hut for the Air Corps, the Canadian Portaseal Hut, the arctic Jamesway Hut, and the half-U Buttler Hut.⁷⁹ Repurposed civilian Quonset Huts were extensively adapted and altered for their use, which ranged from modernist homes to sheds, barns, and hangars.⁸⁰

The Character Defining Features of the Quonset Hut are:⁸¹

- Corrugated Metal Exterior
- Steel Frame of curved rib pieces
- Wood fiber insulation
- Inner Masonite walls
- Concrete or TNG floors on a raised metal framework
- Front and rear “bulkhead” end elevations with doors and windows
- Easily installed, taken down, and transported

Building 6, with its curved steel frame ribs, corrugated metal exterior, concrete floors, bulkhead ends, and transportation to and reuse at the Montgomery Field site post-World War II, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut, particularly in its postwar Civilian reuse era. It has, therefore, been found to be significant at the Local Level under Criterion C with a period of significance of 1947.

Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion C because it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. It is a utilitarian aircraft hangar that is believed to have

⁷⁷ Washington State (DAHP)

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Decker and Chiel, 148-149

⁸⁰ Lamm

⁸¹ Washington State (DAHP)

originally served as a women's gymnasium on Coronado's NAS North Island. It features wood frame construction with dimensional lumber and sheathing, stuccoed exterior walls, and the vaulted roof is supported by bowstring trusses. Building 7 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion C. It is a post-war era aircraft hangar that was custom built on site using surplus materials acquired by Bill Gibbs. It does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. Building 8 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion D: Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion D. They have not been found to be associated with an established Master. Therefore, the buildings have not been found to be representative of the notable work of a master.

Criterion E: is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion E. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 have not previously been listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources.

Criterion F: is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **are not** significant under Criterion F. They are not located within an identified, significant grouping, such as a historic district.

4.2 Integrity

To be eligible for listing, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations,

define integrity.⁸² These seven aspects or qualities include Location, Setting, Design, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association. The following is an evaluation of integrity.

Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **do** retain integrity of location to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Criterion C/3 for Building 6. The three hangars have not been moved since being relocated or erected by Bill Gibbs between 1947 and 1950.

Setting: The physical environment of a historic property.

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 **do** retain a sufficient integrity of setting to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Criterion C/3 for Building 6. Historic photos show that during the 1947-1950 period of significance, the physical environment surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 was characterized as a small airfield on flat, open, graded terrain. By 1950, the site was bounded to the west by U.S. 395 (now SR-163) and an early section of what would become Kearny Villa Road. The airport runways and Aero Drive, to the south, had also been paved. Additionally, the airport had been expanded to what appears to be its current form and rededicated as Montgomery Field.

Although the airport has developed since 1950, the physical environment surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 has remained sufficiently intact and is still characterized as an airport. The hangars are situated on flat, open, graded terrain and are still bounded to the west by the same section of Kearny Villa Road and SR-163. The proximity of the three hangars to the roadways to the west and south, as well as the runways and the expanded part of the airport to the east, remains the same. Because of these factors, the physical environment immediately surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 has been found to retain a sufficient degree of integrity of setting.

Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

Buildings 6, 7 and 8 **do** retain sufficient integrity of design to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Criterion C/3 for Building 6. As is evidenced by the historic photographs, each of the three hangars still strongly reflect their original design and appearance. Although some alterations appear to have been made over time, such as the front door on the west elevation and the horizontal sliding door system on the east elevation, Building 6 retains its original semi-cylindrical form; open, rectangular, plan; steel frame structure with corrugated steel panels; the squared-off, stuccoed, business-entrance façade on the west elevation; and general utilitarian appearance associated with the Quonset Hut building type.

Building 7 still features its original box-like form, open plan, timber-frame structure, and bowstring truss supported roof. It is uncertain if the existing windows are original to the 1947 construction. Although historic photos confirm that the existing window openings on the west and south elevations had existed as early as 1956 and 1960, respectively, (Fig. 39, pg. 37; Fig.40, pg.38), the 1947 photos of the building under construction do not show them (Figs. 35 & 36, 37, pgs. 35 & 36). As the exterior walls are unfinished in the 1947 photos, it is possible that the two window openings on the south elevation and the three on the west elevation were cut out after the stucco exterior was finished. However, without the direct evidence showing that the original fenestration differed from that seen in 1947 photos, the windows

⁸² *National Register Bulletin 15.*

cannot be found to be original. Since the south and west elevation steel sash windows match each other in material and design, it can be inferred that they were installed around the same time.

Building 8 appears to have remained entirely intact since its construction sometime between 1947 and 1950. Historic photos show that the hangar has always had a box-like form, a rectangular plan, a gable roof, windowless exterior elevations, and a massive, east facing, horizontal sliding hangar door system.

Materials: The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a pattern or configuration or form a historic property.

Buildings 6, 7 and 8 do retain sufficient integrity of materials to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Criterion C/3 for Building 6.

As is evidenced by the historic photos, Building 6 retains a majority of its materials. These include the poured concrete foundation, corrugated steel panels, wood and steel sash windows, and the stuccoed west façade, all common materials during the World War 2 and post-war period.

Building 7 still features its concrete foundation, wood-frame construction, timber bowstring truss supported roof, corrugated steel hangar doors and steel horizontal sliding rail system. The 1947 photographs (Figs. 35 & 36, 37, pgs. 35 & 36) prove that Building 7 originally had stuccoed exterior walls. Whereas the exterior of the shed roofed addition has relatively newer stucco, no physical or documentary evidence was found to suggest that the original building was ever restuccoed. Some patching has occurred, however. The 1947 photographs show that the Building 7 originally had short, square-shaped, openings at either end of its unfinished, stucco-clad, side elevations (north and south). The easternmost openings on both elevations also had what appears to have been a horizontal element affixed above them at the mid-point of the unfinished exterior wall. The 1956 photograph (Fig. 39, pg. 37) shows that the westernmost opening on the north elevation was intact at that time. The 1960 photograph (Fig. 40, pg. 38), however, shows that the openings on the south elevation had been infilled. Therefore, if the short, square, openings on the southern elevation were not infilled, and the horizontal element removed and patched over, when the exterior walls were finished in 1947, they were infilled by 1960. The fact that these patches can still be read in the exterior stucco of the south elevation today (Fig 43, pg. 39), suggests that the building was never restuccoed. Because of this physical evidence, it has been determined that Building 7 retains most of its original stucco.

Building 8 was constructed using corrugated steel panels for the exterior walls, the roof, and the hangar door. These materials remain intact today. Based on the historic photos, no alterations appear to have occurred.

Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.

Buildings 6, 7 and 8 do retain sufficient integrity of workmanship to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Criterion C/3 for Building 6.

Building 6 still exhibits its utilitarian and functional craftsmanship. The physical evidence includes the wood and steel sash windows, the poured cement foundation, and the bolted, steel corrugated panels.

Building 7 still exhibits the craftsmanship common to the pre-and post-war periods. The physical evidence of the workmanship from these periods includes the wood framing and bowstring truss-supported roof, the steel sash windows, the poured concrete foundation, the exterior stucco, the corrugated steel paneled façade, and the horizontal sliding, steel, hangar doors and rail system.

As Building 8 does not appear to have ever been altered since its original construction, the hangar still exhibits the craftsmanship of the period in which it was built. The physical evidence of this craftsmanship is evident in the use of corrugated steel panels for the exterior walls and the gable roof, as well as the exterior steel, horizontal sliding, hangar door system.

Feeling: The property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Buildings 6, 7 and 8 **do** retain a sufficient integrity of feeling to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Building 6 does retain a sufficient integrity of feel to convey its significance under Criterion C/3 as an embodiment of the Quonset Hut. As is evidenced by the historic photos, the three hangars still remain largely as they appeared when they were built between 1947 and 1950. Because of this, the three hangars still express a strong historic sense of their respective periods of significance.

Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

Buildings 6, 7 and 8 **do** retain a sufficient integrity of association to convey their significance under Criterion A/1 and Building 6 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance under Criterion C/3 as an embodiment of the Quonset Hut. As is evidenced by the historic photos, the three hangars still remain largely as they appeared when they were erected by Bill Gibbs for the airport between 1947 and 1950. Because of this, the direct link remains between the hangars, Bill Gibbs, and the early development of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport.

Building 6 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance under Criterion C/3 as an embodiment of the Quonset Hut.

4.3 Eligibility Conclusion

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are significant under Criterion A/1/A with a period of significance of 1947-1950. Building 6 is also significant under Criterion C/3/C with a period of significance of 1947. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 retain seven out of the seven aspects of integrity. Therefore, Buildings 6, 7, and 8 have been found eligible for listing in the SDRHR, CRHR, and the NRHP.

BUILDING 6				
Register	Significance Level	Significance Criteria	Aspects of Integrity	Period of Significance
National Register of Historic Places	Local	A, C	7 out of 7	1947-1950, 1947
California Register of Historical Resources	Local	1,3	7 out of 7	1947-1950, 1947

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

San Diego Register of Historical Resources	--	A, C	7 out of 7	1947-1950, 1947
--	----	------	------------	-----------------

BUILDING 7

Register	Significance Level	Significance Criteria	Aspects of Integrity	Period of Significance
National Register of Historic Places	Local	A	7 out of 7	1947-1950
California Register of Historical Resources	Local	1	7 out of 7	1947-1950
San Diego Register of Historical Resources	--	A	7 out of 7	1947-1950

BUILDING 8

Register	Significance Level	Significance Criteria	Aspects of Integrity	Period of Significance
National Register of Historic Places	Local	A	7 out of 7	1947-1950
California Register of Historical Resources	Local	1	7 out of 7	1947-1950
San Diego Register of Historical Resources	--	A	7 out of 7	1947-1950

5 Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Impact Findings

Under CEQA, a significant effect to a historical resource is one that “may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource” (§15064.5[b]). A substantial adverse change may include “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired” (§15064.5[b][1]). Any change that alters a historical resource’s eligibility for listing in a historical register must be classified as an impact.

The following classifications can be used to characterize impacts under CEQA:

- A **beneficial impact** would result when the proposed project would have a positive effect on the natural or human environment. No mitigation is required for beneficial impacts.
- **No impact** would result when no adverse change in the environment is expected. No mitigation is required for a finding of no impact.
- A **less than significant impact** would not cause a substantial change in the environment, although an adverse change in the environment may occur that does not rise to a level of significance. In the case of a less than significant impact, only compliance with standard regulatory conditions would be required.
- A **less than significant impact with mitigation** would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment but would be reduced to a less-than-significant level through successful implementation of identified mitigation measures. Mitigation measures are required for a less than significant impact with mitigation.
- A **significant and unavoidable impact** would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures would be available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, even after all feasible mitigation measures have been implemented to reduce the impact to the extent possible. Mitigation measures are permitted for a significant and unavoidable impact, even though the mitigation will not reduce the impact below the level of significance.⁸³

CEQA requires the evaluation of both direct and indirect impacts to resources within the project area. Direct impacts include design changes and the processes of development themselves, including but not limited to grading, demolition, alteration, new construction, and staging activities. Indirect impacts are those that alter the non-physical character of the historic resource or alter its significant setting. Indirect impacts can include but are not limited to the alteration or interruption of viewsheds, the addition of significant noise or vibration, or the substantial alteration of air quality. CEQA also recognizes the cumulative impact of changes on a resource, meaning that the accumulation of small-scale, individually insignificant changes may also constitute a significant impact.

5.1.1 Direct Impacts

⁸³ *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno*, 2018. Accessible at: <https://cases.justia.com/california/supreme-court/2018-s219783a.pdf?ts=1545687370>, p. 30.

Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 have been established as historical resources under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The PEIR Project Scope concerning Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 is to consist only of **“currently unplanned” maintenance, repairs, or stabilization** and has no identified timeframe in the 20-year Master Plan. The Code of Federal Regulations, §36 CFR 68.2(a), defines *Preservation*, stating:

*Preservation means the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.*⁸⁴

Therefore, the scope of work for Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 is to be understood as Historic Preservation work.

Details regarding the preservation scope, design, and construction are not available because while the scope of work is identified as a potential, it is currently not planned or expected. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the work will be limited to maintenance, repairs, or stabilization and not consist of alterations, changes, or restoration activities to the buildings. This preservation scope may consist of, but not be limited to, mitigation measures of environmental concerns such as lead paint, hazardous materials in the ceiling and floors, pest infestations, and repairs of damage to the structure such as cracks in the foundation. Finally, it is assumed that all preservation work will comply with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Section §15331 of CEQA states that:

*Class 31 consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer.*⁸⁵

However, §15300.2. (f) of CEQA states that:

*Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Code of Federal Regulations. §36 CFR 68.2(a), Available at [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.2#p-68.2\(a\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.2#p-68.2(a))

⁸⁵ 2025 CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act Statute and Guidelines, 2025. Association of Environmental Professionals. Accessible at: https://www.califaep.org/docs/CEQA_Handbook_2025combined.pdf, p. 331.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 3320.

Also, Section §15064.5[b][3] of CEQA states that:

*Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource.*⁸⁷

Therefore, while CEQA's Categorical Exemption for Class 31 (Historical Resources) includes maintenance, repair, and stabilization when done in a consistent manner with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, it cannot be used for a project which may cause substantial adverse change to the resources' significance. Since specific details of the nature of any unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization projects' scope, design, and construction are not possible to know, a categorical exemption cannot be assumed or determined at this time.

However, the PEIR specifically directs any unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization that may occur during the AMP of Building 6, Building 7, and Building 8 are to be done in compliance with the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and therefore would have at the most, a ***less than significant impact with mitigation*** and most likely be a ***Categorical Exemption from CEQA*** if analyzed separately.

5.1.2 Indirect Impacts

There are ***no anticipated indirect impacts*** that would result from a preservation scope project of any unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8.

5.1.3 Cumulative Impacts

The preservation of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8 by a preservation scope project of any unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization would not result in any cumulative impacts to the resources.

5.2 Mitigation Measures

This report provides mitigation measures to be included in the project to avoid unanticipated, potentially significant effects of the proposed project. Because details regarding the scope, design, and construction are not possible for currently unplanned work, it is not possible to conclude that the plans for the preservation of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8 by maintenance, repair, or stabilization comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Therefore, implementation of the following measure would ensure that there would be no adverse impacts on the historic resource.

This report also does not include avoidance-type mitigation measures. The CEQA guidelines allow mitigation to include "avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action"

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 209.

(§15370[a]). In the event that maintenance, repairs, or stabilization do not occur during the AMP, as currently anticipated, the scope becomes equivalent to a No Project alternative. In the case that any currently unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization do occur, there is no way to separate the programmatic preservation by programmatic maintenance of a building into “parts of an action” without further project details and development, and therefore the preservation scope should be considered a single action. Alterations that would demolish any part of the buildings are significantly different from the assumed project and should be evaluated as Project Alternatives, not mitigation measures.⁸⁸

MM-1: Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Since the definition of a preservation project of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8 includes the project being done in compliance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, the project definitionally “shall generally be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact” under the CEQA Guideline §15126.4[b][1], which states:

Where maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of the historical resource will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, the project’s impact on the historical resource shall generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance and thus is not significant.⁸⁹

Further development of any preservation projects of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8 in the event of currently unplanned maintenance, repairs, or stabilization shall be done in compliance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. These are:

Standards for Preservation

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.*
- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*
- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.*
- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*
- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*
- 6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate*

⁸⁸ Assessing project alternatives is beyond the scope of this report.

⁸⁹ 2025 CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act Statute and Guidelines, p. 245

- level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color and texture.*
7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*
 8. *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*⁹⁰

The City shall engage a qualified historic architect and/or architectural historian (pursuant to the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications in 36 CFR Part 61) to consult on the projects’ development and analyze the final project scope for Compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

5.3 Conclusions

Buildings 6, 7, and 8 are significant under Criterion A/1/A with a period of significance of 1947-1950. Additionally, Building 6 is significant under Criterion C/3/C with a period of significance of 1947 as an embodiment of the Quonset Hut. Buildings 6, 7, and 8 retain seven out of the seven aspects of integrity. Therefore, Buildings 6, 7, and 8 have been found eligible for listing in the SDRHR, CRHR, and the NRHP.

A project done in compliance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, is generally “considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact” under the CEQA Guidelines and therefore, the preservation project of Building 6, Building 7, or Building 8 would have at the most, a ***less than significant impact with mitigation***, under its preservation project description to be done in compliance with the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Places. Since specific details regarding the preservation project’s scope, design, and construction are not possible at the programmatic level, this report stipulates **MM-1: Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties** so that all feasible mitigation will be carried out following the assumptions of this preservation project’s analysis.

⁹⁰ Code of Federal Regulations. §36 CFR 68.3(b), Available at [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.3#p-68.3\(a\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.3#p-68.3(a))

6 Bibliography

- “All-Metal, Low Cost Light Plane Succeeds in Initial Flight Here.” *San Diego Union*. July 13, 1952.
- “All Weather Field Called Vital Need.” *San Diego Union*. July 11, 1953.
- “Bid Openings Scheduled On Airport Paving.” *San Diego Union*. June 10, 1965.
- “C.A.A. Grants \$20,547 To Aid Gibbs Airport.” *San Diego Union*. March 16, 1948.
- “Chamber Asks End Of 2-Year Delay On Miramar Zoning.” *San Diego Union*. January 14, 1954.
- “City Authorizes Airport Hotel.” *San Diego Union*. January 16, 1981.
- “City in Control of Gibbs Airport.” *San Diego Union*. October 16, 1947.
- “City to Open Airport Bids.” *San Diego Union*. June 13, 1948.
- “City Will Annex Airport To Avoid County Tax.” *San Diego Union*. April 15, 1948.
- “City Will Buy Mesa Land for New Industries.” *San Diego Union*. October 16, 1953.
- “Council Delays Kearny Mesa Zoning Case.” *San Diego Union*. December 16, 1953.
- “Council May Act On Expansion Today.” *San Diego Union*. February 1, 1951.
- “Dedication Set At Field Today.” *San Diego Union*. July 31, 1965.
- “Dynamite Blast Sparks Airport Tower Rights.” *San Diego Union*. July 19, 1964.
- “EDC Attracts Firms to San Diego Area.” *San Diego Union*. January 1, 1969.
- “FAA Will Upgrade 3 Area Airports.” *San Diego Union*. August 8, 1979.
- “Flying for Fun.” *San Diego Union*. March 9, 1947.
- “Gibbs Airport Area Annexing Urged.” *San Diego Union*. September 24, 1947.
- “Gibbs Airport Sale to City Near Conclusion.” *San Diego Union*. August 3, 1947.
- “Gibbs Airport To Be Called Montgomery.” *San Diego Union*. August 31, 1949.
- “Grove Says 9 New Industries Interested in Locating Here.” *San Diego Union*. March 4, 1951.
- “Highway 395.” *City of Poway*. <https://poway.org/188/Highway-395>.
- “Honey Bee Plane To Make Initial Flight Here Today.” *San Diego Union*. July 12, 1952.

“Hotels.” San Diego Union. November 13, 1983.

“House Navy Group Members See Amphibious Force Act.” *San Diego Union*. May 26, 1942.

“Industrial Parks Lure Farsighted Businesses.” *San Diego Union*. January 1, 1969.

“Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?.” *San Diego Union*. March 10, 1957.

“Kearny Mesa Land Sought By Navy.” *San Diego Union*. January 20, 1956.

“Kearny Mesa Zoning for Light Industry Adopted by Council.” *San Diego Union*. September 23, 1953.

“Montgomery Field Expansion Detailed.” *San Diego Union*. February 23, 1964.

“Montgomery Field is Building Up.” *San Diego Union*. November 14, 1982.

“New Plans for S.D.” San Diego Union. February 9, 1947.

“Notice Inviting Bids.” San Diego Union. January 22, 1950.

“Officials Look Over Gibbs Field Maps.” *San Diego Union*. August 9, 1949.

“Ordinance No. 4015.” *San Diego Union*. April 7, 1949.

“Owners Will Confer On Mesa Zoning.” *San Diego Union*. December 17, 1953.

“Resolution No. 97985.” San Diego Union. May 25, 1950.

“Rights Planned At Montgomery Airfield Tower.” *San Diego Union*. July 15, 1965.

“Ryan’s Classes Show 500% Gain.” *San Diego Union*. August 5, 1940.

“S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes.” *San Diego Union*. July 15, 1940.

“Stinson Aircraft Plans Expansion.” *San Diego Union*. November 10, 1947.

“Talk on Zoning Will Continue.” *San Diego Union*. September 9, 1953.

“Tiny Plane Makes Extended Flight.” San Diego Union. March 13, 1949.

“Wee-Bee Makes Trial Flights Successfully.” *San Diego Union*. November 21, 1948.

Association of Environmental Professionals. 2019 *CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act Statute and Guidelines*. 2019.

Association of Environmental Professionals. *2025 CEQA: California Environmental Quality Act Statute and Guidelines*, 2025. https://www.califaep.org/docs/CEQA_Handbook_2025combined.pdf.

Boland, Beth Grosvenor. "Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons." *National Register Bulletin*. Washington DC: National Park Service.

California Office of Historic Preservation. *California Register of Historical Resources, Criteria for Designation*. http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238.

California Office of Historic Preservation. *Technical Assistant Series #1*. 2001. <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/ts01ca.pdf>.

Code of Federal Regulations. §36 CFR 60.3. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-I/part-60/section-60.3>.

Code of Federal Regulations. §36 CFR 68.2(a). [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.2#p-68.2\(a\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68/section-68.2#p-68.2(a)).

Criteria for Evaluation. Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.4, Title 36. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/section-60.4>

Decker, Julie, and Chris Chiel, eds. *Quonset Hut: Metal Living for a Modern Age*. China: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.

The City of San Diego. "Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria." City of San Diego, 2011.

The City of California, *Barrio Logan Historic Resource Survey*, San Diego, 2011.

City of San Diego, *Public Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report And Scoping Meeting*, City of San Diego Planning Department, February 7, 2019.

Harrison, Donald H. "San Diego's historic places: Montgomery Field as recalled by aviation pioneer Bill Gibbs." *sdjewishworld.com*. June 22, 2010. Accessible at: <https://sdjewishworld.wordpress.com/2010/06/22/san-diegos-historic-places-montgomery-field-as-recalled-by-aviation-pioneer-bill-gibbs/0/>.

Hudson, Ken. "Montgomery Field Has Biggest Increase: San Diego's Skies Buzzing With Aircraft Activity." *San Diego Union*. May 21, 1978.

Johns, Roy C. "City Council Gets Montgomery Field Development Plan." *San Diego Union*. March 11, 1960.

Lamm, Michael. "The Instant Building," *Invention & Technology Magazine* 13, no. 3 (Winter 1998): <https://www.inventionandtech.com/content/instant-building-1>.

Martin, E.G. "Montgomery Field Plan Vetoed By Navy: Potential Interference with Miramar

Cited.” *San Diego Union*. December 15, 1960.

Milbrooke, Anne, Patrick Andrus, Jody Cook, and David B Whipple. National Park Service. “Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties.” *National Register Bulletin*. Washington DC: National Park Service, 1998.

National Park Service. “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” *National Register Bulletin*. Washington DC: National Park Service, 2002.

Plain, Carl. “Light Craft Test Due For Autumn.” *San Diego Union*. March 6, 1957.

“Quonset Hut,” Quonset Hut | Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP), *Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP)*, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/quonset-hut>.

“San Diego Air & Space Museum mourns the loss of Aviation Legend Bill Gibbs.” *San Diego Air & Space Museum*. <https://sandiegoairandspace.org/press/release/san-diego-air-space-museum-mourns-the-loss-of-aviation-legend-bill-gibbs>.

Sierra Club v. County of Fresno. 2018.
<https://cases.justia.com/california/supreme-court/2018-s219783a.pdf?ts=1545687370>.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Federal Regulations 36 CFR Part 68, (1995). <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/part-68>

Appendix A: Building Development Information

- A.1 County Assessor's Building Record
- A.2 Notice of Completion
- A.3 Water/Sewer Connection Records
- A.4 Construction Permits
- A.5 Lot and Block Book Page
- A.6 Previous Historical Resource Survey Forms

A.1 County Assessor's Building Record

Not Found

A.2 Notice of Completion

Not Found

A.3 Water/Sewer Connection Records

Not Found

A.4 Construction Permits

Not Found

A.5 Lot and Block Book Page

Not Available. According to the Chain of Title Report, the Lot Block Book Page for year 1944-1949 could not be located.

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

A.6 Previous Historical Resource Survey Forms

P-37-023982
37023982

State of California – The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary #: _____ HRI #: _____ Trinomial: _____ NRHP Status Code: _____
Other Listings: _____ Review Code: _____	Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Page 1 of 2 Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder): MF-S-1

P1. Other Identifier: None

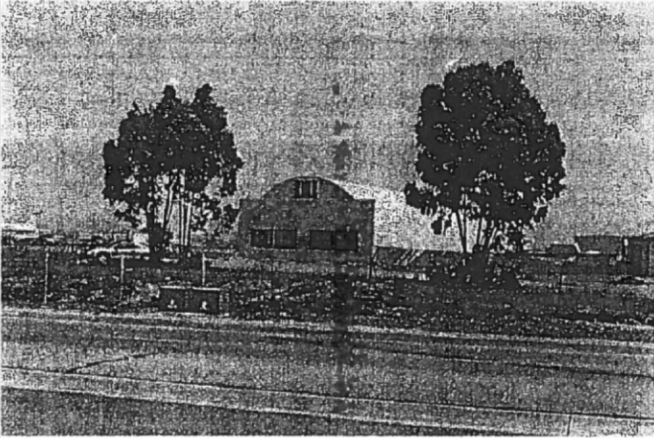
P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted a. County: San Diego
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
b. USGS 7.5' Quad: La Jolla, CA Date: 1967 T 16S ; R 3W; unsectioned
c. Address: 3750 John J. Montgomery Drive, San Diego, CA 92123
d. UTM: Zone 11 ; NAD 1927; 486060 mE/ 3630460 mN
e. Other Locational Data (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): On east side of Kearny Villa Road, at the west end of Montgomery Field Airport is Building 114.

P3a. Description (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries): This historic building is a large, off-white, quantsit hut/airplane hangar with a rectangular facade on the west side. The west facade also has a door in the center with two large, multi-paned (12X3 panes) windows on either side and two levered windows and an aluminum, sliding window centered in the top half of the hangar. The east facade contains four windows with vents above them on the top half of the hangar and side, sliding hangar doors. It is used for flight training and aircraft rentals.

P3b. Resource Attributes (List attributes and codes): HP39. Other (Airplane hangar)

P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects)



P5b. Description of Photo (View, date, accession #):

P6. Age and Sources:
☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

P7. Owner and Address:
City of San Diego
3750 John J. Montgomery Dr.
San Diego, CA 92123

P8. Recorded by (Name, affiliation, and address):
Stephanie Murray, Andrew Pignolo, and Carmen Zepeda
Tierra Environmental Services
9903-E Businesspark Avenue
San Diego, CA 92131

P9. Date Recorded:
April 24, 2001

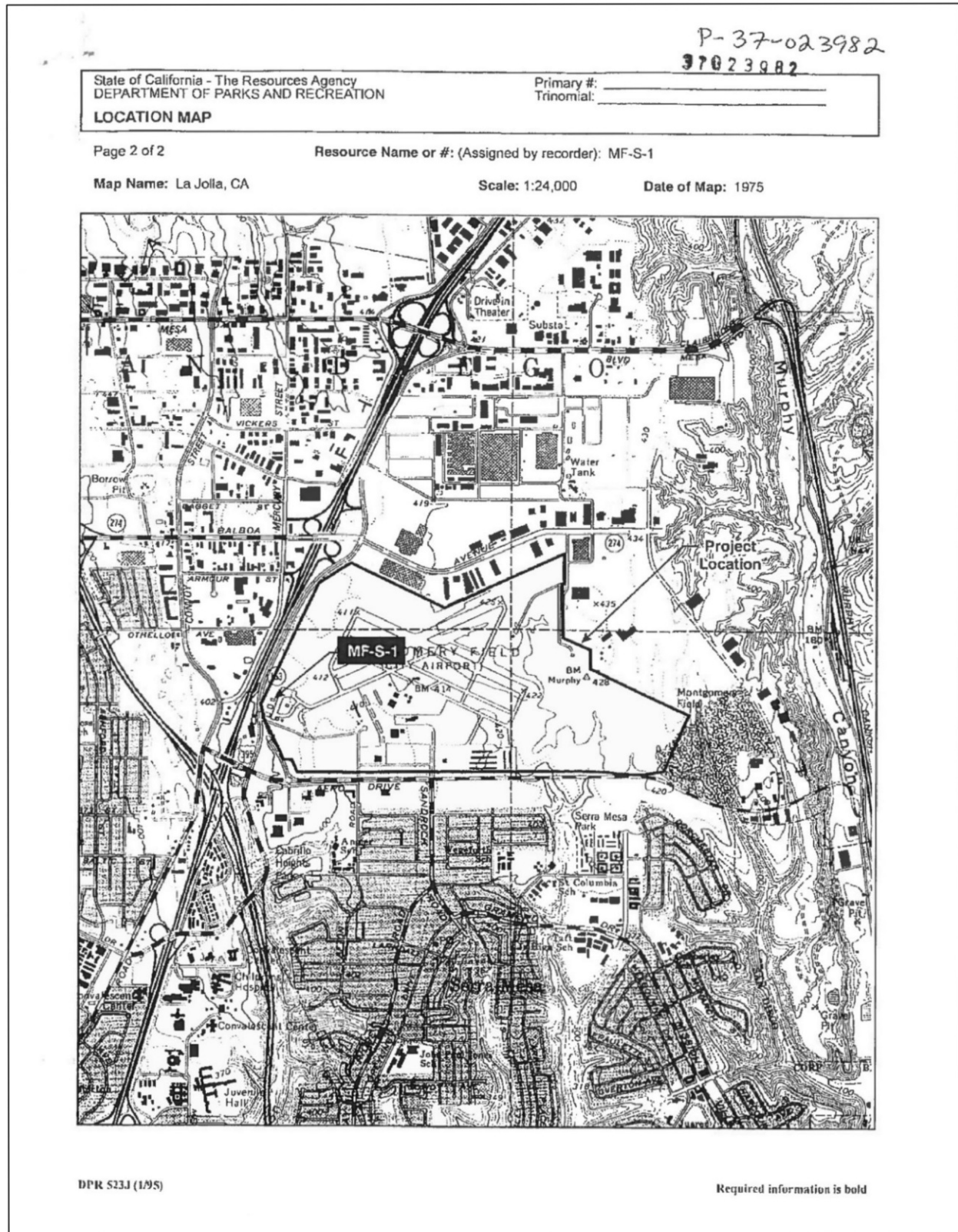
P10. Survey Type (Describe):
Constraints Study

P11. Report Citation (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none"): Pignolo, Andrew R. and Stephanie Murray 2001 Cultural Resources Survey for the Montgomery Field Airport Master Plan Project, City of San Diego, California.
Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

DPR 523A (1/95) Required information is bold

Building 6 - 2001 DPR 523A - page 1 of 2

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8



Building 6 - 2001 DPR 523A - page 2 of 2

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary #: <u>P-37-023981</u> HRI #: _____ Trinomial: _____ NRHP Status Code: _____
Other Listings: _____ Review Code: _____	Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Page 1 of 2

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder): MF-S-2

P1. Other Identifier: None

P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted a. County: San Diego
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
b. USGS 7.5' Quad: La Jolla, CA Date: 1967 T 16S ; R 3W; unsectioned
c. Address: 3750 John J. Montgomery Drive, San Diego, CA 92123
d. UTM: Zone 11 ; NAD 1927; 486050 mE/ 3630420 mN
e. Other Locational Data (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): On east side of Kearny Villa Road, at the west end of Montgomery Field Airport is Building 3873.

P3a. Description (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries): This historic building is an off-white, airplane hangar named "Spiders Aircraft." It has an asphalt, strip shingle roof with lath and plaster walls. A single-story shed with a blue door on the west facade extends from the north side of the hangar. The west facade has three multi-paned (3X3 panes) windows while the south facade has 2 windows. There are side, sliding hangar doors on the east facade. It is used for flight training and aircraft rentals.

P3b. Resource Attributes (List attributes and codes): HP39. Other (Airplane hangar)

P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects)



P5b. Description of Photo
(View, date, accession #):

P6. Age and Sources:

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

P7. Owner and Address:

City of San Diego
3750 John J. Montgomery Dr.
San Diego, CA 92123

P8. Recorded by (Name,
affiliation, and address):

Stephanie Murray, Andrew
Pignoli, and Carmen Zepeda
Tierra Environmental Services
9903-E Businesspark Avenue
San Diego, CA 92131

P9. Date Recorded:

April 24, 2001

P10. Survey Type (Describe):

Constraints Study

P11. Report Citation (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none"): Pignoli, Andrew R. and Stephanie Murray 2001 Cultural Resources Survey for the Montgomery Field Airport Master Plan Project, City of San Diego, California.

Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

DPR 523A (1/95)

Required information is bold

Building 7 - 2001 DPR 523A - page 1 of 1

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary #: <u>P-37-023980</u> HRI #: _____ Trinomial: _____ NRHP Status Code: _____
Other Listings: _____ Review Code: _____	Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Page 1 of 2 Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder): MF-S-3

P1. Other Identifier: None

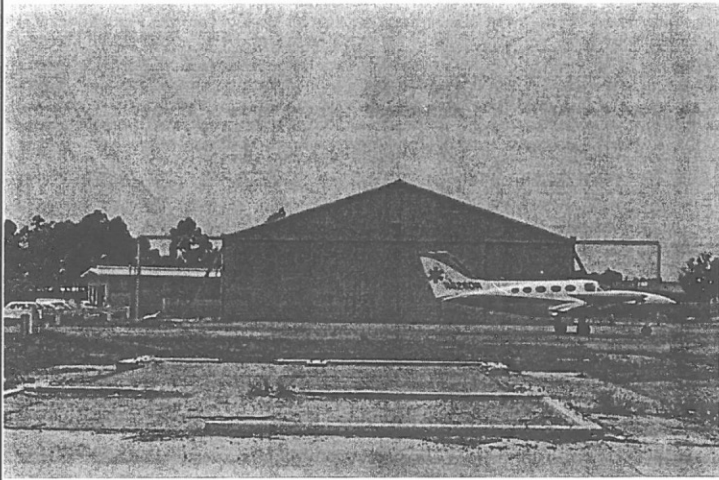
P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted a. County: San Diego
(and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
b. USGS 7.5' Quad: La Jolla, CA Date: 1967 T 16S ; R 3W; unsectioned
c. Address: 3750 John J. Montgomery Drive, San Diego, CA 92123
d. UTM: Zone 11 ; NAD 1927; 486030 mE/ 3630380 mN
e. Other Locational Data (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): On east side of Kearny Villa Road, at the west end of Montgomery Field Airport, south of Building 3873.

P3a. Description (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries): This historic building is a corrugated, metal hangar with a gabled roof and no windows. There are five lights extending out of the west facade. The east facade has side, sliding hangar doors. It is used for flight training and aircraft rentals.

P3b. Resource Attributes (List attributes and codes): HP39. Other (Airplane hangar)

P4. Resources Present: ☐ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☒ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects)



P5b. Description of Photo
(View, date, accession #):

P6. Age and Sources:
☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

P7. Owner and Address:
City of San Diego
3750 John J. Montgomery Dr.
San Diego, CA 92123

P8. Recorded by (Name,
affiliation, and address):
Stephanie Murray, Andrew
Pignolo, and Carmen Zepeda
Tierra Environmental Services
9903-E Businesspark Avenue
San Diego, CA 92131

P9. Date Recorded:
April 24, 2001

P10. Survey Type (Describe):
Constraints Study

P11. Report Citation (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none"): Pignolo, Andrew R. and Stephanie Murray 2001 Cultural Resources Survey for the Montgomery Field Airport Master Plan Project, City of San Diego, California.

Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

DPR 523A (1/95) Required information is bold

Appendix B: Ownership and Occupant Information

B1. Chain of Title

B2. City Directory Listing of Occupants

B.3 Copy of Deed from Date of Construction

B1. Chain of Title

The following Chain of Title Report was completed for 3873 Kearny Villa Road, the address for Buildings 6, 7, and 8. The legal description initially identifies the parcel as Lot 26 of the New Riverside Subdivision in accordance with Map No. 679 filed in 1891. Current San Diego County Assessor's Maps Book 421, Page 29, SHT 1 of 2 (pg. 85), however, clearly show that lot 26 is not the lot containing Buildings 6, 7, and 8. Instead, this map locates Lot 26 in the center of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport. Moreover, the Chain of Title shows that Lot 26 was acquired by Bill Gibbs in 1941. This information conflicts with that obtained during the research for this report, which cites *San Diego Union* articles from 1940 to 1984, articles with interviews of Bill Gibbs, and other resources regarding the established history of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport. The research for this report has determined that Bill Gibbs developed Gibbs Field in 1937.

The following Chain of Title also identifies the property as Lease Lot 9 in Montgomery Field. It is unknown if this is accurate. The Property Detail Report following the Chain of Title identifies the property as "Sublease (Unit 3) in Lot 9 in Montgomery Field Tr 10Blic." Upon referencing San Diego County Assessor's Map, Book 421, Page 29, SHT 1 of 2, as well as the original New Riverside map from 1891, tract 10 does appear to contain Buildings 6, 7, and 8. However, the Property Detail Report lists "CLL-Airplane 1 LLC" as the owner and not the City of an Diego. It is not certain if this property report is referring to 3873 Kearny Villa Road.

Despite the discrepancies stated above, the following Chain of Title report and Property Detail Report are included for completeness.

California Lot Book, Inc.
dba California Title Search Co.
P.O. Box 9004
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067
(858) 278-8797 Fax (858) 278-8393
WWW.LOTBOOK.COM

Chain of Title Report

IS Architecture
5645 La Jolla Blvd.
La Jolla, CA 92037
Attn: Chris Usler

CTS Reference No.: 0319405

Title Search Through: March 14, 2019

Property Address: 3873 Kearny Villa Road
San Diego, CA 92123

Assessor's Parcel No.: 760-222-32-07 (Sublease)
421-290-11-00 (Fee)

Assessed Value: \$508,392

Exemption: None

Property Characteristics

Use: Garage

Improvements: 3,600 square feet

Legal Description

LOT 26 OF NEW RIVERSIDE IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ACCORDING TO MAP THEREOF NO. 679, FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY, AUGUST 11, 1891.

SUBJECT PROPERTY ALSO IDENTIFIED AS LEASE LOT 9 OF MONTGOMERY-GIBBS EXECUTIVE AIRPORT IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ACCORDING TO CITY OF SAN DIEGO DRAWING THEREOF NO. 13246-D AS APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) AND FILED WITH THE SAN DIEGO CITY CLERK.

B1. Chain of Title

California Lot Book, Inc., dba California Title Search Co.
CTS Reference No.: 0319405

Chain of Title
(August 25, 1891 through March 14, 2019)

1. Grant Deed

Grantor: D. C. Reed and J. C. Reed
Grantee: Dr. Nathan Hunt
Recorded: August 25, 1891, Deed Book 187, Page 227

2. Grant Deed

Grantor: Nathan Hunt
Grantee: Clarence E. Hunt
Recorded: August 14, 1930, #38999, Deed Book 1800, Page 264

3. Grant Deed

Grantor: Clarence E. Hunt
Grantee: Nathan Hunt and Ida E. Hunt
Recorded: August 18, 1930, #39434, Deed Book 1787, Page 474

4. Grant Deed

Grantor: Nathan Hunt and Ida E. Hunt
Grantee: Hettie J. S. Hunt
Recorded: November 4, 1936, #71461, Official Records Book 582,
Page 277

5. Grant Deed

Grantor: Hettie J. S. Hunt
Grantee: William Gibbs, Jr.
Recorded: February 26, 1941, #11639 Official Records Book 1143,
Page 206

**Please be advised that this is not Title Insurance. The information provided herein
reflects matters of public record which impart constructive notice in accordance
with California Insurance Code 12340.10**

Page 2 of 3

B1. Chain of Title

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

6. Grant Deed

Grantor: Wm. Gibbs, Jr., aka William Gibbs Jr., and Barbara M. Gibbs
Grantee: The City of San Diego
Recorded: October 10, 1947, #105892 of Official Records

7. From a review of available Lot Block Book Pages, it appears that the first year with assessed improvements is after 1944.

The Lot Block Book Page for the years between 1944 and 1949 could not be located.

8. Notice of Completion

Recorded: April 11, 1958, #58658, Official Records Book 7034,
Page 452
Note: We are unable to determine if this relates to the subject
property

– End of Report –

Please be advised that this is not Title Insurance. The information provided herein reflects matters of public record which impart constructive notice in accordance with California Insurance Code 12340.10. Note that we are not a Title Insurance Company, and that no express or implied warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the information provided herein is granted. Our work has been performed under short time constraints with a quick turn around, and is based in part on the use of databases outside of our control. The recipient hereby acknowledges that California Lot Book, Inc. assumes no liability with respect to any errors or omissions related to the information provided herein. Also note that this search has been performed without the benefit of a Statement of Identification from the property owners, and if a search was performed for liens recorded against owner names, we cannot be sure that the information provided relates to the actual property owners, or is complete with respect to the property owners. In any event, our liability is limited to the amount of fees collected for the information provided herein.

Page 3 of 3

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

B1. Chain of Title (Supplemental) – Property Detail Report

Property Detail Report			
Montgomery Fld, San Diego, CA			
APN: 760-222-32-07		San Diego County Data as of: 02/21/2019	
Owner Information			
Owner Name:	CLL-Airplane 1 LLC Corporation		Occupancy:
Vesting:	Corporation		Unknown
Mailing Address:	3565 Riviera Dr, San Diego, CA 92109-6639		
Location Information			
Legal Description:	Sublease(Unit 3)In Lot 9 In Montgomery Field Tr 10Blic		County:
APN:	760-222-32-07	Alternate APN:	San Diego, CA
Munic / Twshp:	San Diego	Twshp-Rng-Sec:	Census Tract / Block:
Subdivision:		Tract #:	Legal Lot / Block: 9 /
Neighborhood:	Eastern San Diego	School District:	Legal Book / Page: 760 / 22
Elementary School:	Wegeforth Elementa...	Middle School:	San Diego Unified School District
		Taft Middle School	High School:
Last Transfer / Conveyance - Current Owner			
Transfer / Rec Date:	/ 03/05/1999	Price:	Transfer Doc #:
Buyer Name:	CLL-Airplane 1 LLC LF	Seller Name:	1999.904399
	Crownair Holdings Inc	Owner Name Unavailable	Deed Type: Deed
Last Market Sale			
Sale / Rec Date:	/ 03/05/1999	Sale Price / Type:	Deed Type: Deed
Multi / Split Sale:		Price / Sq. Ft.:	New Construction:
1st Mtg Amt / Type:		1st Mtg Rate / Type:	1st Mtg Doc #: N/A
2nd Mtg Amt / Type:		2nd Mtg Rate / Type:	Sale Doc #: 1999.904399
Seller Name:	Owner Name Unavailable		
Lender:			
Title Company:			
Prior Sale Information			
Sale / Rec Date:	/ 03/05/1999	Sale Price / Type:	Prior Deed Type: Deed
1st Mtg Amt / Type:		1st Mtg Rate / Type:	Prior Sale Doc #: 1999.904399
Prior Lender:			
Property Characteristics			
Gross Living Area:	3,600 Sq. Ft.	Total Rooms:	0
Living Area:	3,600 Sq. Ft.	Bedrooms:	
Total Adj. Area:		Baths (F / H):	
Above Grade:		Pool:	
Basement Area:		Fireplace:	
Style:		Cooling:	
Foundation:		Heating:	
Quality:		Exterior Wall:	
Condition:		Construction Type:	
Site Information			
Land Use:	Garage	Lot Area:	17,849,653 Sq. Ft.
State Use:		Lot Width / Depth:	
County Use:	46 - Automotive Garages (Small)	Usable Lot:	
Site Influence:		Acres:	409.77
Flood Zone Code:	X	Flood Map #:	06073C1610G
Community Name:	City Of San Diego	Flood Panel #:	1610G
		Water / Sewer Type:	
		Flood Map Date:	05/16/2012
		Inside SFHA:	False
Tax Information			
Assessed Year:	2018	Assessed Value:	\$508,392
Tax Year:	2018	Land Value:	\$42,871
Tax Area:	8-001	Improvement Value:	\$465,521
Property Tax:	\$5,971.62	Improved %:	91.57%
Exemption:		Delinquent Year:	
 DataTree By FIRST AMERICAN © 2017 FIRST AMERICAN DATA TREE AND/OR ITS AFFILIATES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PAGE 1 OF 1			

B2. City Directory Listing of Occupants

Not Found

B.3 Copy of Deed from Date of Construction

The 1937 deed conveying the original New Riverside Subdivision lots to Bill Gibbs was not found. This would have been the deed during the time Buildings 6 and 7, and possibly 8, were built.

B.3 Copy of Deed from Date of Construction

GRANT DEED

WM. GIBBS, JR., also known as WILLIAM GIBBS, JR., AND
BARBARA M. GIBBS, husband and wife

For and in consideration of - - - - - TEN AND NO/100 - - - - - DOLLARS.

Do hereby grant to THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a Municipal Corporation

All that Real Property situated in the County of San Diego,
State of California, bounded and described as follows:

That portion of Lot 12 lying Easterly of the State Highway, that portion of the East Half of Lot 13 lying Easterly of the State Highway, the East Half of Lot 14 and all of Lots 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26, and 27 all in New Riverside, according to the Map thereof No. 679, filed in the office of the County Recorder of said San Diego County, August 11, 1891.

All that portion of Lot 32 of the Highlands, according to the Map thereof No. 284, filed in the office of the Recorder of said San Diego County, March 16, 1887, lying Easterly of the Easterly line of the State Highway, formerly known as Road Survey No. 341, according to the Map thereof filed in the office of the County Surveyor of San Diego County.

WITNESS our hands this 4th day of August, 1947.

Signed and executed in presence of
Miriam Schwarz } *William Gibbs, Jr.*
Barbara M. Gibbs

1947 deed from William Gibbs, Jr. (Bill Gibbs) and Barabara M. Gibbs conveying Gibbs Field to the City of San Diego. If Building 8 was constructed after August 4, 1947, this would have been the deed at the time of its construction.

Appendix C: Maps

C.1 City of San Diego 800 Scale Engineering Map

C.2 USGS Maps

C.3 Original Subdivision Map

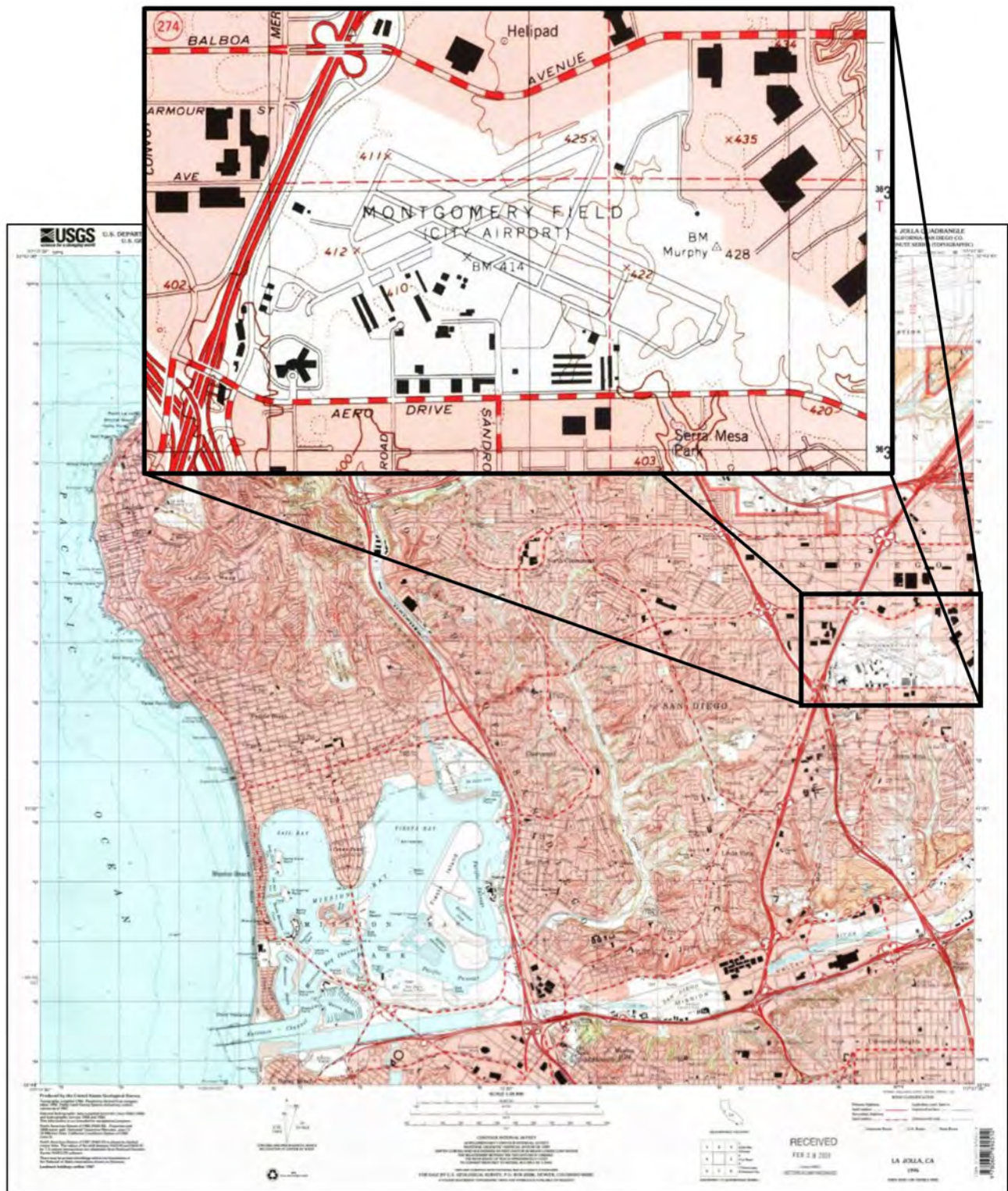
C.4 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

C.1 City of San Diego 800 Scale Engineering Map

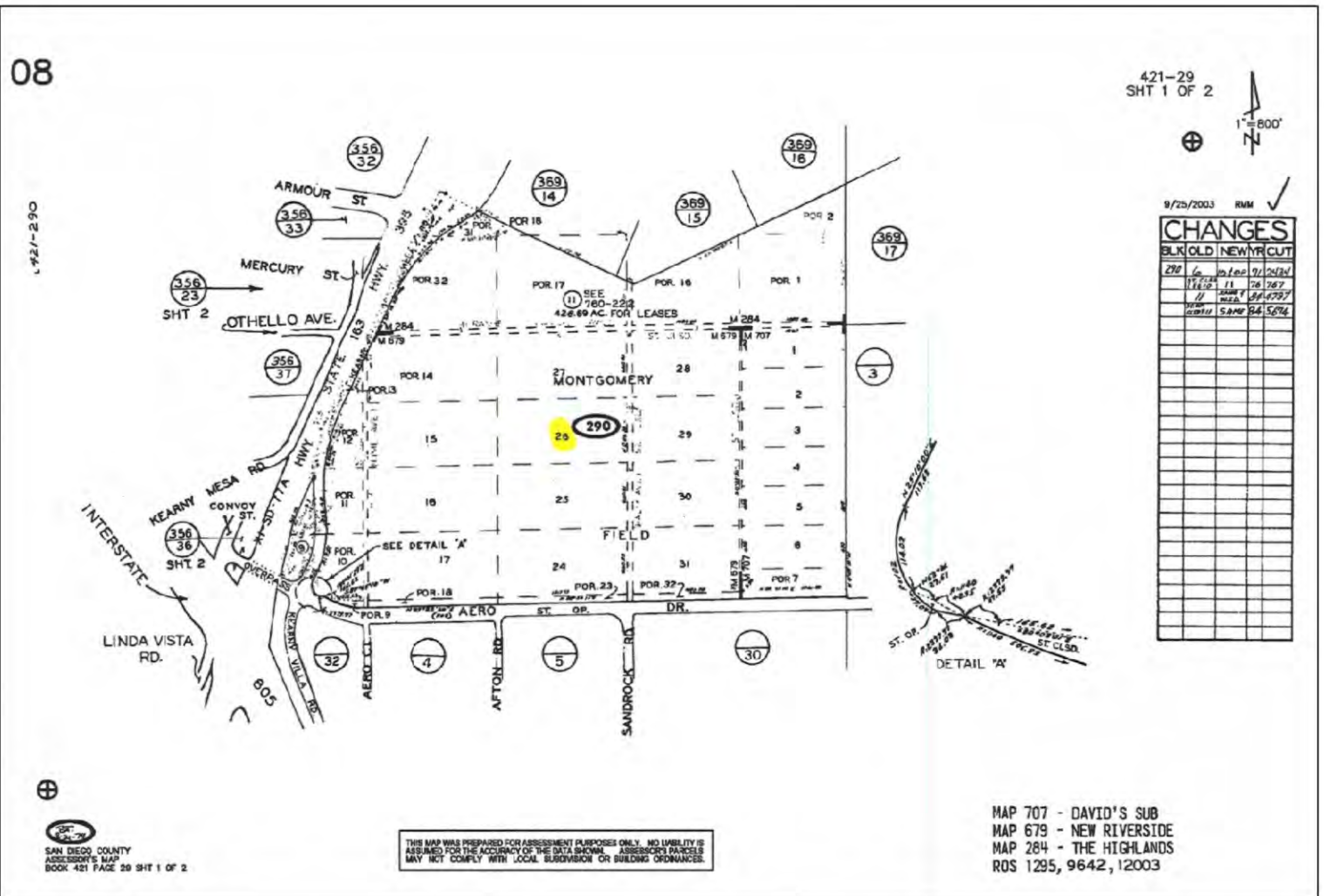
Not Available.

Historic Resource Technical Report:
Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport – Buildings 6, 7 & 8

C.2 USGS Map (1996)



C.3 Current Subdivision Map



C.4 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Not Available

Appendix D: DPR Forms

[DPR Forms Begin on the Next Page]

State of California The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 5S1

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 14

*Resource Name or #: **Building 6**

P1. Other Identifier: N/A

***P2. Location:** ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Diego

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** La Jolla **Date:** 1996

c. Address: 3873 Kearny Villa Road

City: San Diego

Zip: 92123

d. UTM: Zone 11 S; 486003.35 mE/ 3630633.49 mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Legal Description

On east side of Kearny Villa Road at the west end of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, north of Building 7.

***P3a. Description:**

Building 6 is a single-story, pre-fabricated, steel-frame aircraft hangar with a semi-cylindrical massing. Oriented westward, its primary elevation faces Kearny Villa Road. It features a slightly raised, poured concrete foundation, and features a roof made entirely of corrugated galvanized steel panels. The roof curves downward, covering the northern and southern sides of the building, and terminates at the raised concrete foundation. *(Continued on pg 3).*

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP39 - Other

***P4. Resources Present:** ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing



P5b. Description of Photo:

¾ view showing west and south elevations. IS Architecture, 2019.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age:**

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1947.

***P7. Owner and Address:**

City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

***P8. Recorded by:**

IS Architecture
5645 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, California 92037

***P9. Date Recorded:** April 2019

***P10 Survey Type:** Intensive/pedestrian

***P11. Report Citation:** None.

***Attachments:** ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name: Building 6

*NRHP Status Code: 5S1

Page 2 of 14

B1. Historic Name: N/A

B2. Common Name: Building 6

B3. Original Use: Aircraft Hangar (1947)

B4. Present Use: Aircraft Hangar

*B5. Architectural Style: Quonset Hut

*B6. Construction History:

Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Bill Gibbs acquired Building 6, which was likely sold as a surplus building no longer needed by the Navy following the war. A historic photograph shows that the reconstruction of Building 6 was nearly completed by March of 1947.

*B7. Moved? ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: 1947 Original Location: Unknown

*B8. Related Features: N/A

B9a. Architect: N/A

b. Builder: Bill Gibbs

*B10. Significance Theme: Historical Development Area: Kearny Mesa

Period of Significance: 1947-1950 Property Type: Aircraft Hangar Applicable Criteria: A

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Prior to settlement, the community now known as Kearny Mesa was part of a large area solely occupied by the native Kumeyaay people. After the arrival of the Spanish explorers, the area was claimed by Spain for the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. After the Mission was secularized following Mexican independence in 1822, the land was parceled out as part of a massive tract known as Rancho Ex-Mission San Diego. By the end of the 19th century, the mesa north of Mission Valley had become known as the Linda Vista mesa and a few small farming settlements had developed around present-day University City and Miramar (*Continued on p.3*).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes:

*B12. References: See endnotes.

B13. Remarks: None.

*B14. Evaluator: IS Architecture

*Date of Evaluation: April 2019

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 3 of 14

P3a. Description: Continued

The western end wall is the primary elevation of the building and was constructed with wood framing and sheathing. The exterior of this end wall has a squared, and stuccoed, office-like façade that spans three-quarters of the height of the building. This stuccoed front façade features a central, flush door flanked by sets of two, fixed, steel sash windows. The windows closest to center are composed of eighteen lights stacked in three horizontal rows of six. The windows outer windows are of a similar composition but feature horizontal jalousie window in the top outside corner. Above the squared, stuccoed façade is the rounded top quarter of the western end wall. This top portion is clad in nailed sheets of lead and features a central, wood framed, tripartite window. This window is composed of a central, two-light, aluminum sliding window flanked by narrow, jalousie glass-filled, side lights.

The eastern end wall makes up the rear elevation of the building. The lower half of this end wall features an exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding, hangar door. This door system is made of corrugated steel panels that slide sideways along an exposed top track made of a steel box rail and dimensional lumber. The top track extends out past the sides of the buildings and terminate at vertical supports made of dimensional lumber. These vertical supports are also braced to the corrugated steel panel roof.

Above the hangar door, the rounded top half of the building features a corrugated steel paneled exterior. A horizontal row of four, large, fixed, wood framed, square-shaped windows appears here off-center with the façade. Curved vents made of metal mesh appear above three of the windows.

*B10. Significance: Continued

In 1891, a large swath of Ex-Mission land, which would come to include a major portion of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, was surveyed, subdivided, as parceled out as part of the New Riverside subdivision (see appendix C.3, pg. 83). These parcels were sold to speculators but due to the complete lack of water, roads, and other improvements, the lots remained undeveloped.

The most significant development to occur on the mesa land by the turn of the 20th century was the creation of the Inland Highway. This road, which ran from San Diego's Old Town, across present-day Kearny Mesa, to the Old Poway Road and on to Los Angeles, was improved from what was likely an old trail from the Ex-Mission era.⁹¹ The land on the Linda Vista mesa remained otherwise untouched until 1917 when the outbreak of World War I resulted in the explosive development of Camp Kearny near present-day Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Camp Kearny was a large, completely self-sustaining military installation that brought improvements to the Ex-Mission lands for the first time. Although the end of the war in 1918 effectively halted any further inland development, the camp's influence was such that the entire mesa became commonly known as the Kearny mesa by the early 1920s.

The Kearny mesa's first residential subdivision, which was named "Chesterton," was developed by O.W. Cotton in 1927 and was located around the present-day community of Linda Vista. This development was only made possible, however, due to advancements in the city's water development and the creation of the Sixth Street Extension, which provided a through boulevard from the Kearny mesa to downtown San Diego. Despite the early improvements the military brought

⁹¹ "Highway 395," *City of Poway, California*, <https://poway.org/188/Highway-395>. Accessed April 12, 2019.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 4 of 14

to the north, and those brought to the south by the city, the general lack of roadways, water, and other improvements in the heart of the Kearny mesa continued to make expanding development further inland impossible.

The inability to develop the land likely played a major role in its relative affordability. Looking for cheap land that would not flood, Bill Gibbs acquired 25 acres of land in the New Riverside subdivision on the Kearny mesa in 1937 with the dream of establishing his own aviation field and business.⁹² During that time, the closest development to the north was Camp Kearny, which by then had been renamed Camp Holcomb. The Chesterton subdivision was located a few miles southwest. Grantville, one of San Diego's oldest communities, existed some miles southeast across Murphy Canyon Road. Other than the Inland Highway, no prior development is known to have existed in the immediately surrounding area. Therefore, the creation of Gibbs Field in 1937 was not only among the first developments to occur on the mesa north of Mission Valley, but it was also the first known development in the area now known as the community of Kearny Mesa.

In 1940, Gibbs Field was leased to the Ryan School of Aeronautics who used the airfield for its Army Air Corps pilot training program.⁹³ To better support its operation and to accommodate its growing enrollment, Ryan expanded the runways and likely added small ancillary buildings and barracks for the cadets in training.⁹⁴ As civilian aviation so close to the coast was banned following the onset of World War II, Bill Gibbs relocated to Tucson, Arizona where he continued work as a flight instructor.⁹⁵ With Gibbs in Arizona, the United States military took control of Gibbs Field and used the airport as a training ground for bombing exercises and simulated battles.⁹⁶

Bill Gibbs returned to the airport shortly after the end of the war in 1945 and continued to provide flying lessons and other aviation related services.⁹⁷ Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Gibbs acquired Building 6 and Building 7, which were likely sold as surplus buildings no longer needed by the Navy following the war. Although no direct evidence exists, it is believed that Building 7 was originally a women's gymnasium located on Coronado's NAS North Island, and that after being acquired, it was dismantled, ferried across the bay, and shipped to Gibbs Field where it was reassembled.⁹⁸ A historic photograph from early March 1947 shows that the reassembly of Building 6 was nearly completed by that time and that Building 7 was just getting underway.⁹⁹ Although Building 8 does not appear in this photograph, another photograph from 1950 proves that it was built sometime between 1947 and 1950. Building 8, which is said to have been custom built by hand, was likely built from surplus materials acquired from the military.¹⁰⁰ As is evidenced by the historic photos, a few ancillary buildings and trailers had also surrounded the three hangars at the time.

⁹² Harrison, 2010.

⁹³ "S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes," 1940.

⁹⁴ "Ryan's Classes Show 500% Gain," *San Diego Union*, August 5, 1940.

⁹⁵ Harrison, 2010.

⁹⁶ "House Navy Group Members See Amphibious Force Act," *San Diego Union*, May 26, 1942.

⁹⁷ Harrison, 2010.

⁹⁸ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

⁹⁹ The original negative from SDHC only lists the year, 1947, as the date. However, the same photograph was used for an article in the *San Diego Union* on March 9, 1947. See: "Flying for Fun," *San Diego Union*, March 9, 1947.

¹⁰⁰ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 5 of 14

In October 1947, the City of San Diego purchased the airport from Bill Gibbs with plans to make it the City's only private flying field.¹⁰¹ As part of the deal, Bill Gibbs was granted a lease on 15 acres of the field so that he could continue to operate his aviation business.¹⁰² Almost immediately after acquiring the airport, the City began work on a major expansion and improvement project, which included moving ten former Navy buildings from Balboa Park to the center of the airport; grading the field; extending, surfacing, and lighting the runways; paving new taxiways and parking areas; updating telephone lines; installing water and sewer lines; and creating a new access road to the recently developed U.S. 395.¹⁰³ The new runway improvements were completed and officially approved in 1949.¹⁰⁴

That same year, an ordinance was passed dedicating the public land required for new airport access roads named Aero Drive, East Aero Way (now John J. Montgomery Drive) and West Aero Way (now Glenn H. Curtiss Road).¹⁰⁵ As is shown in Figure 12, and supported in a bid notice from January 22, 1950, an early section of present-day Kearny Villa Road connecting Aero Drive to the Inland Highway was developed in 1950, as well.¹⁰⁶ Capping off all of this major development was Resolution No. 97985, passed by the City Council in May of 1950, which officially renamed the airport to Montgomery Field.¹⁰⁷

Following the City's acquisition of the airport, Bill Gibbs continued to lease out Buildings 6 and 7 to various aviation-related businesses like Pacific Airmotive Corp. and Crownair Aviation. As his own business grew, Gibbs moved closer to the center of the airport and began to rent out spaces for aircraft in newly built T-type hangars.¹⁰⁸ As the airport attracted more aviation-related activities and businesses, so too did the surrounding area. One of the earliest examples was reported one month after the City's acquisition of the airport by the *San Diego Union*, which detailed the relocation plan of the Stinson Aircraft Tool & Engineering Corp. to a large plant just off U.S. 395 on Clairemont Mesa Road in Kearny Mesa.¹⁰⁹

With the newly developed Linda Vista housing project on the southern end of the mesa and Miramar NAS to the north, the Navy's presence was also growing stronger. In reaction to the growth of both the Navy and the aerospace industry, the City began to forecast a major housing boom in the Kearny Mesa area around 1951.¹¹⁰ In response to the proposed residential development, the Navy made it clear that it favored agricultural, recreational and light industrial zoning around Miramar NAS, and stated that no residences were to be built within a 12,000 foot, or 2.3 mile, radius of the installation's runway.¹¹¹ Large areas of Kearny Mesa land outside of the Navy's 12,000 foot radius, which had already been zoned for residential use, were also called to be recategorized as temporary holding zones while the zoning issue

¹⁰¹ "New Plans for S.D.," 1947.

¹⁰² "City in Control of Gibbs Airport," 1947.

¹⁰³ "C.A.A. Grants \$20,547 To Aid Gibbs Airport," *San Diego Union*, March 16, 1948; "City to Open Airport Bids," *San Diego Union*, June 13, 1948; "Gibbs Airport Sale to City Near Conclusion," *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1947; "Gibbs Airport Area Annexing Urged," *San Diego Union*, September 24, 1947.

¹⁰⁴ "Officials Look Over Gibbs Field Maps," *San Diego Union*, August 9, 1949.

¹⁰⁵ "Ordinance No. 4015," *San Diego Union*, April 7, 1949.

¹⁰⁶ "Notice Inviting Bids," *San Diego Union*, January 22, 1950.

¹⁰⁷ "Resolution No. 97985," *San Diego Union*, May 25, 1950.

¹⁰⁸ Harrison, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ "Stinson Aircraft Plans Expansion," *San Diego Union*, November 10, 1947.

¹¹⁰ "Council May Act On Expansion Today," *San Diego Union*, February 1, 1951.

¹¹¹ "Owners Will Confer On Mesa Zoning," *San Diego Union*, December 17, 1953.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 6 of 14

was debated. The reason stated by the *San Diego Union* was that “although outside the Miramar circle, the recently annexed land is opposite the city’s Montgomery Field.”¹¹²

The City viewed Montgomery Field as “essential to San Diego’s development” and partnered with the Civil Aeronautics Administration in 1953 to prepare “building-height limits and zoning legislation for the Montgomery Field area.”¹¹³ The same was also sought in the area around Miramar NAS, which remained outside the city limits. Although the legality of instituting such building heights around Miramar NAS and Montgomery Field was debated, it was reported in June of 1953 that planning director Glenn A. Rick stated “We’re proceeding with Montgomery, but we’re ‘held up’ on Miramar.”¹¹⁴ It appears that it wasn’t until 1960, though, that an official ordinance was adopted establishing the “Airport Approach Zones” and “Airport Turning Zones”.¹¹⁵ An ordinance that was adopted by City Council in 1953, however, put an end to some of the debate over land use within Kearny Mesa by rezoning 101 acres of land within the Navy’s 12,000 foot radius for light industrial purposes.¹¹⁶ The following month, the *San Diego Union* reported that, “moving to provide Kearny Mesa land for future industry, the City Council yesterday authorized City Mgr. Campbell to execute an agreement for the purchase of 180 acres northwest of Montgomery Field.”¹¹⁷ Shortly thereafter, in early 1954, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution establishing a light industrial zone for additional Kearny Mesa land within 12,000 foot radius of the center of the Miramar NAS runways.¹¹⁸ This resolution not only took into account the proximity of Miramar NAS, but it “also asked that present and future needs of Montgomery Field be examined carefully so that the field’s growth will not be stunted by residential building getting too close.”¹¹⁹

Tensions over residential and industrial zoning continued throughout the early 1950s as new, and typically large, acreages of land around Montgomery Field were annexed by the City. Residential developments occurred mainly to the south and east of the airport, in communities now known as Serra Mesa, Linda Vista, and Clairemont. However, due to Miramar NAS to the north and Montgomery Field to the south and east, the land between the two, which today makes up the community of Kearny Mesa, was instead prioritized for industrial and commercial use.

Kearny Mesa was quickly recognized as “offering the city’s best potential for future industry.”¹²⁰ This was partly due to accessibility to U.S. 395. However, according to Stanley Grove, general manager of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce at the time, “the Kearny Mesa area, on Highway 395 beyond Linda Vista” was an especially attractive location for industrial development because “its proximity to Montgomery airport is important to manufacturers.”¹²¹ Recognizing the benefits of the area, a number of major aeronautical and defense-related companies, such as Ryan Aeronautical Co., Solar Aircraft Co., Consolidated Aircraft Corp., General Dynamics, and Rohr Aircraft Corp., began relocating to the area between 1954 and 1958. Other, more diversified, companies such as Cubic Corp, an electronics research firm, moved to the area as well.

¹¹² “Council Delays Kearny Mesa Zoning Case,” *San Diego Union*, December 16, 1953.

¹¹³ “All Weather Field Called Vital Need,” *San Diego Union*, July 11, 1953.

¹¹⁴ “Height Limit Opinion Divided,” *San Diego Union* June 4, 1953.

¹¹⁵ “Ordinance No. 8310,” *San Diego Union*, June 19, 1960.

¹¹⁶ “Kearny Mesa Zoning for Light Industry Adopted by Council,” *San Diego Union*, September 23, 1953.

¹¹⁷ “City Will Buy Mesa Land for New Industries,” *San Diego Union*, October 16, 1953.

¹¹⁸ “Chamber Asks End Of 2-Year Delay On Miramar Zoning,” *San Diego Union*, January 14, 1954.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ “Talk on Zoning Will Continue,” *San Diego Union*, September 9, 1953.

¹²¹ “Grove Says 9 New Industries,” 1951.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 7 of 14

Also beginning in the mid-1950s was an investigation to develop Montgomery Field into the City's primary airport.¹²² The proximity of Montgomery Field to Miramar NAS proved to be too problematic, though, and, after the Navy outright rejected the idea, the proposition was no longer being considered by 1960.¹²³ Uncertain as to the future of the airport, the city began developing a master plan to recommend much needed upgrades and to help guide its future development.¹²⁴ It was reported that although "the plan is not intended as an answer to San Diego's search for a new jet-age municipal airport...development of the field is particularly needed because of the growth of private and business flying activity."¹²⁵ Among the work recommended by the master plan, which was approved in 1964, was a wider access road, expanded parking, a new administration building and a control tower.¹²⁶ Construction on the control tower began almost immediately and, following its completion in 1965, the City opened bids "on a repaving project for all runways, taxiways and aircraft parking areas at Montgomery Field."¹²⁷

Industrial development in Kearny Mesa continued well into the late-1960s and included an increasing number of industrial parks, such as San Diego City Industrial Park and Aetna Insurance Co.'s Kearny Industrial Park.¹²⁸ By 1969, however, most of the industrially zoned land in Kearny Mesa was occupied.¹²⁹ As large scale industrial development began to wane in the 1970s, the availability of smaller lots gave way to a wave of explosive commercial, retail, and office development.

Such as it had in the decades prior, Montgomery Field continued to shape the community's development into the 1980s. In 1978, the *San Diego Union* reported on the rapidly increasing popularity in private aviation, stating, "in numbers, San Diego's downtown airport is the least busy...[and that] Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa is where the biggest increases in aviation are centered."¹³⁰ In fact, the popularity of private aviation paired with the increase in corporate traffic at the time had caused Montgomery Field to rank among the top 10 in the nation in numbers of aircraft based there and the 14th busiest airport overall.¹³¹ To take advantage of this increased traffic the city authorized the construction of a hotel "designed to enable private pilots using Montgomery Field to taxi up to the lobby and check in before parking their airplanes."¹³² Construction began in 1984¹³³ and the hotel and accompanying golf course was located immediately south of Buildings 6, 7, and 8 at the southwestern corner of the airport, along Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road.

The traffic of Montgomery Field also brought increased attention from real estate developers and new companies looking to relocate. As was reported by the *San Diego Union* in 1982, "Montgomery Field, until a few years ago only the home of private airplanes for flying clubs and weekend pilots, has taken on a new role – as an emerging North City building site which is becoming a haven for high technology and insurance companies."¹³⁴ Although it was largely the

¹²² "Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?," *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1957.

¹²³ Martin, 1960.

¹²⁴ Roy C. Johns, "City Council Gets Montgomery Field Development Plan," *San Diego Union*, March 11, 1960.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ "Montgomery Field Expansion Detailed," *San Diego Union*, February 23, 1964.

¹²⁷ "Bid Openings Scheduled On Airport Paving," *San Diego Union*, June 10, 1965.

¹²⁸ "Industrial Parks Lure Farsighted Businesses," *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1969.

¹²⁹ "EDC Attracts Firms," 1969.

¹³⁰ Hudson, 1978.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² "City Authorizes Airport Hotel," *San Diego Union*, January 16, 1981.

¹³³ "Hotels," *San Diego Union*, November 13, 1983.

¹³⁴ "Montgomery Field is Building Up," *San Diego Union*, November 14, 1982.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 8 of 14

surrounding area, which the airport helped to shape, that attracted many new companies, the airport itself did attract a number of new office space users.¹³⁵ In particular, new complexes on or immediately adjacent to airport grounds included the Montgomery Airport Plaza, the Viewpoint Plaza, the Dynamic Office Park, the Airport Plaza, the Aero Office Park, the Kearny Mesa Office Park, and the Crossroads Building.¹³⁶ Although improvements continued into the 1990s and 2000s, both Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa appeared to be effectively built out by 1989. In 2016, City Council passed a resolution officially renaming the airport Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in honor of Bill Gibbs and the original airfield he created.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for designation on the City of San Diego's Register of Historical Resources, a resource must both have significance under one or more of the City's Historical Significance Criteria *and* retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance in its current state. *What follows is an evaluation of significance only; see the following sections for an evaluation of integrity and for a final eligibility conclusion.*

Criterion A: Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's, or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development.

Buildings 6 is significant under Criterion A because it reflects a special element of the Kearny Mesa's historical development. Specifically, it reflects Gibbs Field (now the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport), the earliest development to have occurred in Kearny Mesa, which was instrumental in shaping the development of the entire community.

As was shown in the historic context, the Gibbs Field/Montgomery Field/Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport was in large part responsible for the way in which the community of Kearny Mesa developed. Not only was it the first development to have occurred in the area, but it also responsible for attracting new businesses, such as Bee Aviation and Crownair, to the area. It was also responsible for a number of new improvements, such as major roadways. New aircraft safety zones created for both the airport and Miramar NAS further shaped the area, restricting residential development and zoning Kearny Mesa for light industrial and commercial uses. The combination of the industrial and commercial zoning, the proximity to the airport, and the accessibility of U.S. 395 (now SR-163) then brought major aeronautical and technology companies to the area during the 1950s and 1960s. The layout of the airport's approach and turning zones also likely dictated the location of major industrial plants north of airport. Additionally, it is likely that these zones were partly responsible for slow development of the open lots located east and west of the airport, which did not develop in earnest until the 1970s. As private and corporate aviation grew in popularity, the airport continued to attract new businesses and real estate developers during the 1980s. As a result, a number of new office parks and plazas were built on airport grounds and within the immediate vicinity. A large hotel was also built on airport grounds to take advantage of the growing number of private aviators using the airport.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 9 of 14

Criterion B: Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

Building 6 **is not** significant under Criterion B because, while it is associated with the lives of a significant person in our past, Bill Gibbs, there is not enough historical evidence to determine it is best associated and identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B. The building was acquired and constructed by Bill Gibbs between 1947 for use at the airport. Bill Gibbs is an important figure because he was responsible for developing the original airport in 1937 where he operated his business, Gibbs Flying Service. In 1940, he leased the airport to Ryan Aeronautical and was hired on to teach flying lessons during World War II. After the war, Gibbs returned to his airport and, in 1947, constructed Buildings 6 and 7. Building 8 was constructed sometime between 1947 and 1950. It was also in 1947 that Bill Gibbs sold the airport and surrounding land to the City. As part of the sale, Gibbs was provided a lease so that he could continue to operate his business at the airport. Bill Gibbs was also a philanthropist who supported the San Diego Air & Space Museum, the Salvation Army, and the San Diego Zoo.¹³⁷

In recognition of his legacy, Bill Gibbs was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2011. On Gibbs's induction, Jim Kidrick, President and CEO of the San Diego Air & Space Museum stated that "Bill Gibbs lived through almost the entire history of aviation, and certainly through the history of aviation in San Diego."¹³⁸ When Bill Gibbs passed in 2016, the San Diego Air and Space Museum declared him "a significant part of the legacy of aviation in the San Diego region."¹³⁹ Therefore, Bill Gibbs's activities and contributions have been found to be demonstrably important enough to be considered a significant person under Criterion B.

According to the City's criteria guidelines, "[p]ersons significant in our past refer to individuals associated with San Diego whose activities, achievements and contributions are demonstrably important within the City, state, or nation." and "Eligibility under Criterion B for significant person(s) involves first determining the importance of the individual, second ascertaining the length and nature of the individual's association with the resource under study and in comparison to other resources associated with the individual, and third determining if the resource is significant under HRB Criterion B as a resource that is best identified with a person(s) significant in local, state, or national history."

There is minimal evidence to establish the length and nature of Bill Gibbs's association with Buildings 6. While it is known that he acquired Building 6 in 1946 or early 1947, he leased the Building to other various aviation-related businesses rather than using it himself, and by 1956 his business operations moved to the center of the airport to make use of other hangars. Therefore, Bill Gibbs' direct association with Building 6 is limited to the years of its construction.

Finally, there is insufficient historical evidence to determine which of the three buildings at Montgomery Field is best identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B, or if a different resource outside the scope of this report is best associated with him. Bill Gibbs' association with Building 6 is only for the years of its construction, and there is not enough evidence to establish a stronger association for it over the others. Further, according to the City's criteria guidelines, "The best representatives are properties associated with the person's productive life." Thus, Bill

¹³⁷ "San Diego Air & Space Museum mourns the loss of Aviation Legend Bill Gibbs," *San Diego Air & Space Museum*, <http://sandiegoairandspace.org/press/release/san-diego-air-space-museum-mourns-the-loss-of-aviation-legend-bill-gibbs>. Accessed April 16, 2019.

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 10 of 14

Gibbs is best associated with a building or structure used in his career and aviation activities, neither of which applied to Building 6 which was used as a rental.

Thus, while Bill Gibbs is a significant person, there is not enough documentary evidence to determine which building is best identified and associated with his productive life. Therefore, Building 6 **is not** significant under Criterion B.

Buildings 6 **is not** significant under Criterion B because it could not be identified with events significant in local, state, or national history. What was discovered during research was a photograph showing that Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. had operated out of Building 6 in 1956. Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. is notable for creating three experimental airplanes between 1948 and 1960.

The first prototype, known as the "Wee Bee," was regarded by the media as the "world's smallest airplane."¹⁴⁰ According to the *San Diego Union*, a number of trial flights occurred at Gillespie Airport in 1948.¹⁴¹ The official first extended flight took place at Brown Field in March 1949.¹⁴² Moreover, as a 1947 photograph shows that Pacific Airmotive Corp. had operated out of Building 6. There has been no direct evidence found linking the development of the Wee Bee to Building 6.

The second experimental airplane developed by Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. was the "Honey Bee." This prototype was larger than the Wee Bee and, as noted in the *San Diego Union*, was "described by its builders as the world's first all-metal, single place, low-cost, light plane."¹⁴³ The Honey Bee made its first flight on July 12, 1952 at Montgomery Field.¹⁴⁴ Despite this, it is unknown where the Honey Bee was designed and built. Therefore, no direct evidence was found linking the Honey Bee to Buildings 6.

The third prototype, known as the "Queen Bee," was larger than its predecessor. It was a light, all-metal, low-wing, monoplane. A 1957 article from the *San Diego Union* that reported on the plane's development noted that "Bee's factory is 1,500 square feet of rented hangar space at Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa."¹⁴⁵ The 1956 photograph identifies this hangar as Building 6.

The City's criteria guidelines state that "resources associated with historical events are those associated with a single event such as the place where an important battle occurred, a building in which an important invention was developed, or a factory district where a significant strike occurred."¹⁴⁶ No direct evidence was found linking the creation of the Wee Bee or the Honey Bee to Buildings 6. The Queen Bee prototype was found to have been created in Building 6, however, it has not been found to be an important invention.

¹⁴⁰ "Tiny Plane Makes Extended Flight," *San Diego Union*, March 13, 1949.

¹⁴¹ "Wee-Bee Makes Trial Flights Successfully," *San Diego Union*, November 21, 1948.

¹⁴² "Tiny Plane Makes Extended Flight," 1949.

¹⁴³ "All-Metal, Low Cost Light Plane Succeeds in Initial Flight Here," *San Diego Union*, July 13, 1952.

¹⁴⁴ "Honey Bee Plane To Make Initial Flight Here Today," *San Diego Union*, July 12, 1952.

¹⁴⁵ Carl Plain, "Light Craft Test Due For Autumn," *San Diego Union*, March 6, 1957.

¹⁴⁶ The City of San Diego, "Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria," City of San Diego, 2011.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 11 of 14

Additionally, Building 6 **is not** significant under Criterion B because it could not be identified with events significant in local, state, or national history. What was discovered during research was a photograph showing that Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. had operated out of Building 6 in 1956. Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. is notable for creating three experimental airplanes between 1948 and 1960.

The first prototype, known as the "Wee Bee," was regarded by the media as the "world's smallest airplane."¹⁴⁷ According to the *San Diego Union*, a number of trial flights occurred at Gillespie Airport in 1948.¹⁴⁸ The official first extended flight took place at Brown Field in March 1949.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, as a 1947 photograph shows that Pacific Airmotive Corp. had operated out of Building 6, there has been no direct evidence found linking the development of the Wee Bee to Building 6.

The second experimental airplane developed by Bee Aviation Associates, Inc. was the "Honey Bee." This prototype was larger than the Wee Bee and, as noted in the *San Diego Union*, was "described by its builders as the world's first all-metal, single place, low-cost, light plane."¹⁵⁰ The Honey Bee made its first flight on July 12, 1952 at Montgomery Field.¹⁵¹ Despite this, it is unknown where the Honey Bee was designed and built. Therefore, no direct evidence was found linking the Honey Bee to Building 6.

The third prototype, known as the "Queen Bee," was larger than its predecessor. It was a light, all-metal, low-wing, monoplane. A 1957 article from the *San Diego Union* that reported on the plane's development noted that "Bee's factory is 1,500 square feet of rented hangar space at Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa."¹⁵² A 1956 photograph identifies this hangar as Building 6.

The City's criteria guidelines state that "resources associated with historical events are those associated with a single event such as the place where an important battle occurred, a building in which an important invention was developed, or a factory district where a significant strike occurred."¹⁵³ Whereas enough evidence was found to determine that the Queen Bee prototype was built in Building 6, the Queen Bee has not been found to be an important invention.

Criterion C: Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

Building 6 **is** significant under Criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut. The Quonset Hut is an important building type that was developed by the U.S. Navy during World War II. Following the war, surplus Quonset Huts were sold to civilians for private use, and multiple companies that built wartime Quonset Huts continued their production. This combined wartime and civilian use sets the era of Quonset Huts as 1941-1960¹⁵⁴ and makes the

¹⁴⁷ "Tiny Plane Makes Extended Flight," *San Diego Union*, March 13, 1949.

¹⁴⁸ "Wee-Bee Makes Trial Flights Successfully," *San Diego Union*, November 21, 1948.

¹⁴⁹ "Tiny Plane Makes Extended Flight," *San Diego Union*, March 13, 1949. <https://www.historynet.com/the-wee-bee.htm>

¹⁵⁰ "All-Metal, Low Cost Light Plane Succeeds in Initial Flight Here," *San Diego Union*, July 13, 1952.

¹⁵¹ "Honey Bee Plane To Make Initial Flight Here Today," *San Diego Union*, July 12, 1952.

¹⁵² Carl Plain, "Light Craft Test Due For Autumn," *San Diego Union*, March 6, 1957.

¹⁵³ The City of San Diego, "Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria," *City of San Diego*, 2011.

¹⁵⁴ Washington State (DAHPR)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 12 of 14

Quonset Hut a particularly unique architectural style when considering historic significance, because relocation and reuse are one of the character-defining features for post-war Quonset Huts. Additionally, while originally developed by the George A. Fuller Company, wartime demand for the Quonset Hut led the Navy to contract with other companies, most notably the Stran-Steel division of the Great Lakes Steel Corporation, for increased production and use-specific designs.¹⁵⁵ Other manufacturers and models include the wooden Pacific Hut and Emkey Huts, the heavy steel Armco Hut, the Cowin and Company Inc “Steeldrome” Hut for the Air Corps, the Canadian Portaseal Hut, the arctic Jamesway Hut, and the half-U Buttler Hut.¹⁵⁶ Repurposed civilian Quonset Huts were extensively adapted and altered for their use, which ranged from modernist homes to sheds, barns, and hangars.¹⁵⁷

The Character Defining Features of the Quonset Hut are:¹⁵⁸

- Corrugated Metal Exterior
- Steel Frame of curved rib pieces
- Wood fiber insulation
- Inner Masonite walls
- Concrete or TNG floors on a raised metal framework
- Front and rear “bulkhead” end elevations with doors and windows
- Easily installed, taken down, and transported

Building 6, with its curved steel frame ribs, corrugated metal exterior, concrete floors, bulkhead ends, and transportation to and reuse at the Montgomery Field site post-World War II, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut, particularly in its postwar Civilian reuse era. It has, therefore, been found to be significant at the Local Level under Criterion C with a period of significance of 1947.

Criterion D: Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Building 6 **is not** significant under Criterion D. It has not been found to be associated with an established Master.

Criterion E: is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources.

Building 6 **is not** significant under Criterion E. It has not previously been listed or determined eligible for listing in the Nation Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources.

Criterion F: is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Decker and Chiel, 148-149

¹⁵⁷ Lamm

¹⁵⁸ Washington State (DAHP)
DPR 523 (1/95)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Building 6

Page 13 of 14

aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

Building 6 is not significant under Criterion F. It is not located within an identified, significant grouping, such as a historic district.

INTEGRITY EVALUATION

To be eligible for designation under any City of San Diego Historical Significance Criteria, a resource must retain integrity. According to the National Park Service (NPS), the integrity of a resource is determined by “the ability of a resource to convey its significance.” In this case, Building 6 is significant under Criteria A and C as it reflects special elements of Kearny Mesa’s historical development and embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut building type, respectively. In the context of Criterion A, each aspect of integrity share an equal weight of importance. For Criterion C, however, the Design, Materials, and Workmanship aspects of integrity are of particular importance.

What follows is an evaluation of integrity only; see the preceding section for an evaluation of significance and the following section for a final eligibility conclusion.

Location: Location is defined by the NPS as the “place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.”

Building 6 does retain sufficient of integrity of location to convey its significance. It has not been moved since being constructed by Bill Gibbs in 1947.

Setting: Setting is defined as the “physical environment of a historic property.”

Building 6 does retain a sufficient integrity of setting to convey its significance. Historic photos show that during the 1947 period of significance, the physical environment surrounding Buildings 6 was characterized as a small airfield on flat, open, graded terrain. It was bounded to the west by the Inland Highway and sat to the north of Building 7. Although the airport has developed since 1947, the physical environment surrounding Building 6 has remained sufficiently intact and is still characterized as an airport. The hangar is situated on flat, open, graded terrain and is still bounded to the west by a major roadway. Because of these factors, the physical environment immediately surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 has been found to retain a sufficient degree of integrity of setting.

Design: Design is defined as the “combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.”

Buildings 6 does retain sufficient integrity of design to convey its significance. As is evidenced by the historic photographs, each of the hangars still strongly reflects its original design and appearance. Although some alterations appear to have been made over time, such as the front door on the west elevation and the horizontal sliding door system on the east elevation, Building 6 retains its original semi-cylindrical form; open, rectangular, plan; steel frame structure with corrugated steel panels; the squared-off, stuccoed, business-entrance façade on the west elevation; and general utilitarian appearance associated with the Quonset Hut building type.

Materials: Materials are defined as the “physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a pattern or configuration to form a historic property.”

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 6**

Page 14 of 14

Building 6 **does** retain sufficient integrity of materials to convey its significance. As is evidenced by the historic photos, Building 6 retains a majority of its original materials. These include the poured concrete foundation, corrugated steel panels, wood and steel sash windows, and the stuccoed west façade, all common materials during the World War 2 and post-war period.

Workmanship: Workmanship is defined as the “physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.”

Building 6 **does** retain sufficient integrity of workmanship to convey its significance. Building 6 still exhibits the utilitarian and functional craftsmanship common during the World War 2 and post-war period. The physical evidence includes the wood and steel sash windows, the poured cement foundation, and the bolted, steel corrugated panels.

Feeling: Feeling is defined as the “property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.”

Building 6 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its significance. It is remarkably intact and expresses a strong historic sense of what both the building and Gibbs Field was like during the 1947 period of significance.

Association: Association is defined as the “direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.”

Building 6 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance. As is evidenced by the historic photos, it remains largely as it appeared when it was built by Buzz Gibbs for his airport in 1947. Because of this, the direct link remains between Building 6, Buzz Gibbs, and Gibbs Field.

Conclusion:

Building 6 is significant under HRB Criterion A with a period of significance of 1947-1950 as it reflects special elements of Kearny Mesa’s historical development and embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Quonset Hut building type. It has also been found to retain 7 out of the 7 aspects of integrity. Therefore, it has been determined eligible for listing in the San Diego Register of Historical Resources.

P1. Other Identifier: N/A

P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

a. County: San Diego

b. USGS 7.5' Quad: La Jolla

c. Address: 3873 Kearny Villa Road

d. UTM: Zone 11 S; 486003.35 mE/ 3630633.49 mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Legal Description

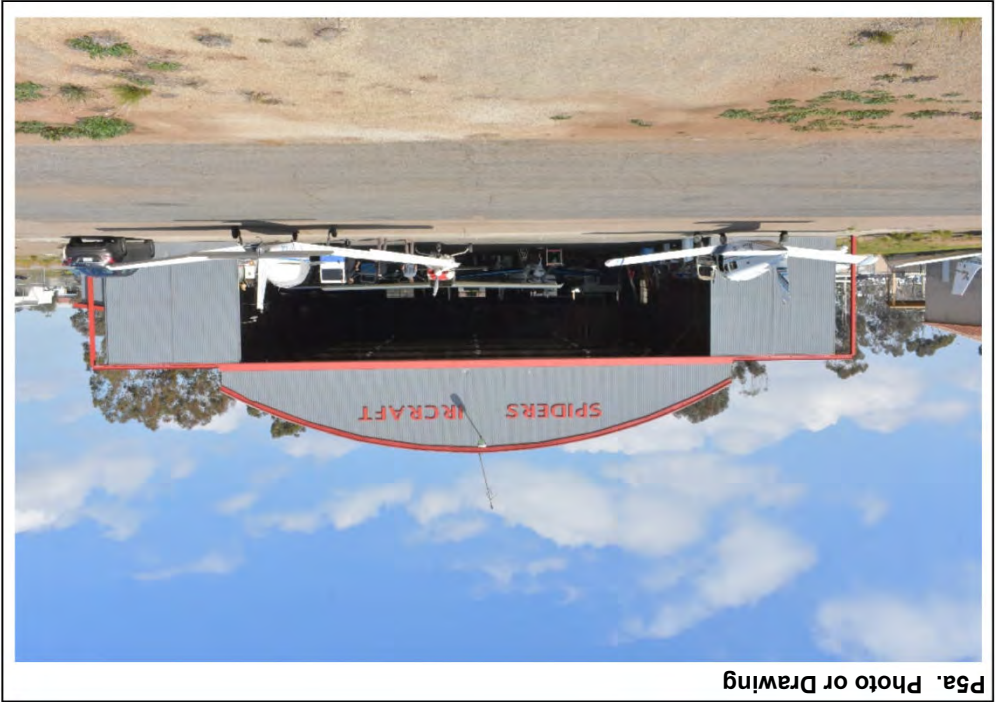
On east side of Kearny Villa Road at the west end of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport.

P3a. Description:

Building 7 is a wood-framed aircraft hangar with a box-like massing. Oriented eastward, its primary elevation faces towards the Montgomery-Gibbs Airport. Its vaulted roof that is supported by timber bowstring trusses and is covered with asphalt roll roofing. The east facing end wall, and primary elevation, features a large, exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding hangar door system with a steel top track that extends out past the building at both ends of the elevation. The sliding hangar door panels are composed of corrugated steel panels. (Continued on pg 3).

P3b. Resource Attributes: HP39 - Other

P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo:

3/4 view showing west and south elevations. IS Architecture, 2019.

P6. Date Constructed/Age:

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1947

P7. Owner and Address:

City of San Diego

202 C Street

San Diego, CA 92101

P8. Recorded by:

IS Architecture

5645 La Jolla Boulevard

La Jolla, California 92037

P9. Date Recorded: April 2019

P10 Survey Type: Intensive/pedestrian

P11. Report Citation: None.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☒ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name: Building 7

*NRHP Status Code: 5S1

Page 2 of 12

B1. Historic Name: N/A

B2. Common Name: Building 7

B3. Original Use: Gymnasium (1920s); Aircraft Hangar (1947) B4. Present Use: Aircraft Hangar

*B5. Architectural Style: N/A

*B6. Construction History:

Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Bill Gibbs acquired Building 7, which was likely sold as surplus buildings no longer needed by the Navy following the war. A historic photograph from March 1947 shows that the construction of Building 7 had just begun.

*B7. Moved? ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: 1947 Original Location: Believed to be NAS North Island (1920s)

*B8. Related Features: N/A

B9a. Architect: N/A

b. Builder: Bill Gibbs

*B10. Significance Theme: Historical Development of Kearny Mesa Area: Kearny Mesa

Period of Significance: 1947-1950 Property Type: Aircraft Hangar

Applicable Criteria: A

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Prior to settlement, the community now known as Kearny Mesa was part of a large area solely occupied by the native Kumeyaay people. After the arrival of the Spanish explorers, the area was claimed by Spain for the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. After the Mission was secularized following Mexican independence in 1822, the land was parceled out as part of a massive tract known as Rancho Ex-Mission San Diego. By the end of the 19th century, the mesa north of Mission Valley had become known as the Linda Vista mesa and a few small farming settlements had developed around present-day University City and Miramar (*Continued on p.3*).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes:

*B12. References: See endnotes.

B13. Remarks: None.

*B14. Evaluator: IS Architecture

*Date of Evaluation: April 2019

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Building 7

Page 3 of 12

P3a. Description: Continued

Above the hangar door is the top portion of the eastern end wall. This exterior is also clad in corrugated steel panels and features letters spelling “Spiders Aircraft,” which is the name of the company currently operating out of the building. Extending out near the top of the end wall is an aluminum lighting fixture. A fascia made of dimensionally cut lumber curves along the top of elevation at the roof line.

The south elevation features a stuccoed exterior wall that is largely uninterrupted except for two, fixed, 16-light, steel windows that covered by a protective steel mesh screen. These windows are located in the center and westernmost corner of the south elevation, respectively. A thin, wood fascia runs the entire length of the south elevation. The west, or rear, elevation of the hangar features a stuccoed exterior and three, evenly spaced, fixed, 12-light, steel sash windows. Each window is covered by a protective steel mesh screen. Located above the windows, and affixed to the stuccoed exterior wall are letters spelling out “Spiders Aircraft.” Just beneath the roofline is a thin, wood, fascia that runs the length of the rear elevation. Projecting out from the northern corner of the west elevation is a single-story addition with a shed roof. The western elevation of this addition features a stuccoed exterior wall; a three-light, horizontal sliding, aluminum window; a projecting, open eave with exposed rafter tails that terminate behind wooden fascia board.

The shed roofed addition spans the entire lower half of the hangar’s northern elevation. The roof of the addition is covered in asphalt roll roofing and has a narrowly projecting, open eave with exposed rafter tails that terminate behind a fascia made of dimensional lumber. The addition also features a stuccoed exterior wall and a central, outward swinging, galvanized steel double door. East of the double door are four, 2-light, horizontal sliding, aluminum windows. To the west of the double door is a fifth window of the same type and configuration as the previous four, as well as two, 2-light, horizontal sliding, vinyl windows set between a single, inward swinging, wood door with a full, glass, light. At its western corner, a small portion of the addition recedes back to provide space for an entrance on the west elevation. Here, the recessed, north facing, exterior wall features a lower, identically pitched, shed roof extends out from beneath the shed roof covering the rest of the addition. The uninterrupted stucco exterior of the hangar continues past the height of the shed roofed addition to a thin, wood fascia at the base of the roofline.

*B10. Significance: Continued

In 1891, a large swath of Ex-Mission land, which would come to include a major portion of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, was surveyed, subdivided, as parceled out as part of the New Riverside subdivision (see appendix C.3, pg. 83). These parcels were sold to speculators but due to the complete lack of water, roads, and other improvements, the lots remained undeveloped.

The most significant development to occur on the mesa land by the turn of the 20th century was the creation of the Inland Highway. This road, which ran from San Diego’s Old Town, across present-day Kearny Mesa, to the Old Poway Road and on to Los Angeles, was improved from what was likely an old trail from the Ex-Mission era.¹⁵⁹ The land on the Linda Vista mesa remained otherwise untouched until 1917 when the outbreak of World War I resulted in the explosive development of Camp Kearny near present-day Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Camp Kearny was a large, completely self-sustaining military installation that brought improvements to the Ex-Mission lands for the first time.

¹⁵⁹ “Highway 395,” *City of Poway, California*, <https://poway.org/188/Highway-395>. Accessed April 12, 2019.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page 4 of 12

Although the end of the war in 1918 effectively halted any further inland development, the camp's influence was such that the entire mesa became commonly known as the Kearny mesa by the early 1920s.

The Kearny mesa's first residential subdivision, which was named "Chesterton," was developed by O.W. Cotton in 1927 and was located around the present-day community of Linda Vista. This development was only made possible, however, due to advancements in the city's water development and the creation of the Sixth Street Extension, which provided a through boulevard from the Kearny mesa to downtown San Diego. Despite the early improvements the military brought to the north, and those brought to the south by the city, the general lack of roadways, water, and other improvements in the heart of the Kearny mesa continued to make expanding development further inland impossible.

The inability to develop the land likely played a major role in its relative affordability. Looking for cheap land that would not flood, Bill Gibbs acquired 25 acres of land in the New Riverside subdivision on the Kearny mesa in 1937 with the dream of establishing his own aviation field and business.¹⁶⁰ During that time, the closest development to the north was Camp Kearny, which by then had been renamed Camp Holcomb. The Chesterton subdivision was located a few miles southwest. Grantville, one of San Diego's oldest communities, existed some miles southeast across Murphy Canyon Road. Other than the Inland Highway, no prior development is known to have existed in the immediately surrounding area. Therefore, the creation of Gibbs Field in 1937 was not only among the first developments to occur on the mesa north of Mission Valley, but it was also the first known development in the area now known as the community of Kearny Mesa.

In 1940, Gibbs Field was leased to the Ryan School of Aeronautics who used the airfield for its Army Air Corps pilot training program.¹⁶¹ To better support its operation and to accommodate its growing enrollment, Ryan expanded the runways and likely added small ancillary buildings and barracks for the cadets in training.¹⁶² As civilian aviation so close to the coast was banned following the onset of World War II, Bill Gibbs relocated to Tucson, Arizona where he continued work as a flight instructor.¹⁶³ With Gibbs in Arizona, the United States military took control of Gibbs Field and used the airport as a training ground for bombing exercises and simulated battles.¹⁶⁴

Bill Gibbs returned to the airport shortly after the end of the war in 1945 and continued to provide flying lessons and other aviation related services.¹⁶⁵ Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Gibbs acquired Building 6 and Building 7, which were likely sold as surplus buildings no longer needed by the Navy following the war. Although no direct evidence exists, it is believed that Building 7 was originally a women's gymnasium located on Coronado's NAS North Island, and that after being acquired, it was dismantled, ferried across the bay, and shipped to Gibbs Field where it was reassembled.¹⁶⁶ A historic photograph from early March 1947 shows that the reassembly of Building 6 was nearly completed by that time and that Building 7 was just getting underway.¹⁶⁷ Although Building 8 does not appear in this photograph, another

¹⁶⁰ Harrison, 2010.

¹⁶¹ "S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes," 1940.

¹⁶² "Ryan's Classes Show 500% Gain," *San Diego Union*, August 5, 1940.

¹⁶³ Harrison, 2010.

¹⁶⁴ "House Navy Group Members See Amphibious Force Act," *San Diego Union*, May 26, 1942.

¹⁶⁵ Harrison, 2010.

¹⁶⁶ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

¹⁶⁷ The original negative from SDHC only lists the year, 1947, as the date. However, the same photograph was used for an article in the *San Diego Union* on March 9, 1947. See: "Flying for Fun," *San Diego Union*, March 9, 1947.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page **5** of **12**

photograph from 1950 proves that it was built sometime between 1947 and 1950. Building 8, which is said to have been custom built by hand, was likely built from surplus materials acquired from the military.¹⁶⁸ As is evidenced by the historic photos, a few ancillary buildings and trailers had also surrounded the three hangars at the time.

In October 1947, the City of San Diego purchased the airport from Bill Gibbs with plans to make it the City's only private flying field.¹⁶⁹ As part of the deal, Bill Gibbs was granted a lease on 15 acres of the field so that he could continue to operate his aviation business.¹⁷⁰ Almost immediately after acquiring the airport, the City began work on a major expansion and improvement project, which included moving ten former Navy buildings from Balboa Park to the center of the airport; grading the field; extending, surfacing, and lighting the runways; paving new taxiways and parking areas; updating telephone lines; installing water and sewer lines; and creating a new access road to the recently developed U.S. 395.¹⁷¹ The new runway improvements were completed and officially approved in 1949.¹⁷²

That same year, an ordinance was passed dedicating the public land required for new airport access roads named Aero Drive, East Aero Way (now John J. Montgomery Drive) and West Aero Way (now Glenn H. Curtiss Road).¹⁷³ As is shown in Figure 12, and supported in a bid notice from January 22, 1950, an early section of present-day Kearny Villa Road connecting Aero Drive to the Inland Highway was developed in 1950, as well.¹⁷⁴ Capping off all of this major development was Resolution No. 97985, passed by the City Council in May of 1950, which officially renamed the airport to Montgomery Field.¹⁷⁵

Following the City's acquisition of the airport, Bill Gibbs continued to lease out Buildings 6 and 7 to various aviation-related businesses like Pacific Airmotive Corp. and Crownair Aviation. As his own business grew, Gibbs moved closer to the center of the airport and began to rent out spaces for aircraft in newly built T-type hangars.¹⁷⁶ As the airport attracted more aviation-related activities and businesses, so too did the surrounding area. One of the earliest examples was reported one month after the City's acquisition of the airport by the *San Diego Union*, which detailed the relocation plan of the Stinson Aircraft Tool & Engineering Corp. to a large plant just off U.S. 395 on Clairemont Mesa Road in Kearny Mesa.¹⁷⁷

With the newly developed Linda Vista housing project on the southern end of the mesa and Miramar NAS to the north, the Navy's presence was also growing stronger. In reaction to the growth of both the Navy and the aerospace industry, the City began to forecast a major housing boom in the Kearny Mesa area around 1951.¹⁷⁸ In response to the proposed residential development, the Navy made it clear that it favored agricultural, recreational and light industrial zoning

¹⁶⁸ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

¹⁶⁹ "New Plans for S.D.," 1947.

¹⁷⁰ "City in Control of Gibbs Airport," 1947.

¹⁷¹ "C.A.A. Grants \$20,547 To Aid Gibbs Airport," *San Diego Union*, March 16, 1948; "City to Open Airport Bids," *San Diego Union*, June 13, 1948; "Gibbs Airport Sale to City Near Conclusion," *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1947; "Gibbs Airport Area Annexing Urged," *San Diego Union*, September 24, 1947.

¹⁷² "Officials Look Over Gibbs Field Maps," *San Diego Union*, August 9, 1949.

¹⁷³ "Ordinance No. 4015," *San Diego Union*, April 7, 1949.

¹⁷⁴ "Notice Inviting Bids," *San Diego Union*, January 22, 1950.

¹⁷⁵ "Resolution No. 97985," *San Diego Union*, May 25, 1950.

¹⁷⁶ Harrison, 2010.

¹⁷⁷ "Stinson Aircraft Plans Expansion," *San Diego Union*, November 10, 1947.

¹⁷⁸ "Council May Act On Expansion Today," *San Diego Union*, February 1, 1951.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page 6 of 12

around Miramar NAS, and stated that no residences were to be built within a 12,000 foot, or 2.3 mile, radius of the installation's runway.¹⁷⁹ Large areas of Kearny Mesa land outside of the Navy's 12,000 foot radius, which had already been zoned for residential use, were also called to be recategorized as temporary holding zones while the zoning issue was debated. The reason stated by the *San Diego Union* was that "although outside the Miramar circle, the recently annexed land is opposite the city's Montgomery Field."¹⁸⁰

The City viewed Montgomery Field as "essential to San Diego's development" and partnered with the Civil Aeronautics Administration in 1953 to prepare "building-height limits and zoning legislation for the Montgomery Field area."¹⁸¹ The same was also sought in the area around Miramar NAS, which remained outside the city limits. Although the legality of instituting such building heights around Miramar NAS and Montgomery Field was debated, it was reported in June of 1953 that planning director Glenn A. Rick stated "We're proceeding with Montgomery, but we're 'held up' on Miramar."¹⁸² It appears that it wasn't until 1960, though, that an official ordinance was adopted establishing the "Airport Approach Zones" and "Airport Turning Zones".¹⁸³ An ordinance that was adopted by City Council in 1953, however, put an end to some of the debate over land use within Kearny Mesa by rezoning 101 acres of land within the Navy's 12,000 foot radius for light industrial purposes.¹⁸⁴ The following month, the *San Diego Union* reported that, "moving to provide Kearny Mesa land for future industry, the City Council yesterday authorized City Mgr. Campbell to execute an agreement for the purchase of 180 acres northwest of Montgomery Field."¹⁸⁵ Shortly thereafter, in early 1954, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution establishing a light industrial zone for additional Kearny Mesa land within 12,000 foot radius of the center of the Miramar NAS runways.¹⁸⁶ This resolution not only took into account the proximity of Miramar NAS, but it "also asked that present and future needs of Montgomery Field be examined carefully so that the field's growth will not be stunted by residential building getting too close."¹⁸⁷

Tensions over residential and industrial zoning continued throughout the early 1950s as new, and typically large, acreages of land around Montgomery Field were annexed by the City. Residential developments occurred mainly to the south and east of the airport, in communities now known as Serra Mesa, Linda Vista, and Clairemont. However, due to Miramar NAS to the north and Montgomery Field to the south and east, the land between the two, which today makes up the community of Kearny Mesa, was instead prioritized for industrial and commercial use.

Kearny Mesa was quickly recognized as "offering the city's best potential for future industry."¹⁸⁸ This was partly due to accessibility to U.S. 395. However, according to Stanley Grove, general manager of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce at the time, "the Kearny Mesa area, on Highway 395 beyond Linda Vista" was an especially attractive location for industrial development because "its proximity to Montgomery airport is important to manufacturers."¹⁸⁹ Recognizing

¹⁷⁹ "Owners Will Confer On Mesa Zoning," *San Diego Union*, December 17, 1953.

¹⁸⁰ "Council Delays Kearny Mesa Zoning Case," *San Diego Union*, December 16, 1953.

¹⁸¹ "All Weather Field Called Vital Need," *San Diego Union*, July 11, 1953.

¹⁸² "Height Limit Opinion Divided," *San Diego Union* June 4, 1953.

¹⁸³ "Ordinance No. 8310," *San Diego Union*, June 19, 1960.

¹⁸⁴ "Kearny Mesa Zoning for Light Industry Adopted by Council," *San Diego Union*, September 23, 1953.

¹⁸⁵ "City Will Buy Mesa Land for New Industries," *San Diego Union*, October 16, 1953.

¹⁸⁶ "Chamber Asks End Of 2-Year Delay On Miramar Zoning," *San Diego Union*, January 14, 1954.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ "Talk on Zoning Will Continue," *San Diego Union*, September 9, 1953.

¹⁸⁹ "Grove Says 9 New Industries," 1951.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page 7 of 12

the benefits of the area, a number of major aeronautical and defense-related companies, such as Ryan Aeronautical Co., Solar Aircraft Co., Consolidated Aircraft Corp., General Dynamics, and Rohr Aircraft Corp., began relocating to the area between 1954 and 1958. Other, more diversified, companies such as Cubic Corp, an electronics research firm, moved to the area as well.

Also beginning in the mid-1950s was an investigation to develop Montgomery Field into the City's primary airport.¹⁹⁰ The proximity of Montgomery Field to Miramar NAS proved to be too problematic, though, and, after the Navy outright rejected the idea, the proposition was no longer being considered by 1960.¹⁹¹ Uncertain as to the future of the airport, the city began developing a master plan to recommend much needed upgrades and to help guide its future development.¹⁹² It was reported that although "the plan is not intended as an answer to San Diego's search for a new jet-age municipal airport...development of the field is particularly needed because of the growth of private and business flying activity."¹⁹³ Among the work recommended by the master plan, which was approved in 1964, was a wider access road, expanded parking, a new administration building and a control tower.¹⁹⁴ Construction on the control tower began almost immediately and, following its completion in 1965, the City opened bids "on a repaving project for all runways, taxiways and aircraft parking areas at Montgomery Field."¹⁹⁵

Industrial development in Kearny Mesa continued well into the late-1960s and included an increasing number of industrial parks, such as San Diego City Industrial Park and Aetna Insurance Co.'s Kearny Industrial Park.¹⁹⁶ By 1969, however, most of the industrially zoned land in Kearny Mesa was occupied.¹⁹⁷ As large scale industrial development began to wane in the 1970s, the availability of smaller lots gave way to a wave of explosive commercial, retail, and office development.

Such as it had in the decades prior, Montgomery Field continued to shape the community's development into the 1980s. In 1978, the *San Diego Union* reported on the rapidly increasing popularity in private aviation, stating, "in numbers, San Diego's downtown airport is the least busy...[and that] Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa is where the biggest increases in aviation are centered."¹⁹⁸ In fact, the popularity of private aviation paired with the increase in corporate traffic at the time had caused Montgomery Field to rank among the top 10 in the nation in numbers of aircraft based there and the 14th busiest airport overall.¹⁹⁹ To take advantage of this increased traffic the city authorized the construction of a hotel "designed to enable private pilots using Montgomery Field to taxi up to the lobby and check in before parking their airplanes."²⁰⁰ Construction began in 1984²⁰¹ and the hotel and accompanying golf course was located immediately south of Buildings 6, 7, and 8 at the southwestern corner of the airport, along Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road.

¹⁹⁰ "Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?," *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1957.

¹⁹¹ Martin, 1960.

¹⁹² Roy C. Johns, "City Council Gets Montgomery Field Development Plan," *San Diego Union*, March 11, 1960.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ "Montgomery Field Expansion Detailed," *San Diego Union*, February 23, 1964.

¹⁹⁵ "Bid Openings Scheduled On Airport Paving," *San Diego Union*, June 10, 1965.

¹⁹⁶ "Industrial Parks Lure Farsighted Businesses," *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1969.

¹⁹⁷ "EDC Attracts Firms," 1969.

¹⁹⁸ Hudson, 1978.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ "City Authorizes Airport Hotel," *San Diego Union*, January 16, 1981.

²⁰¹ "Hotels," *San Diego Union*, November 13, 1983.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Building 7

Page 8 of 12

The traffic of Montgomery Field also brought increased attention from real estate developers and new companies looking to relocate. As was reported by the *San Diego Union* in 1982, "Montgomery Field, until a few years ago only the home of private airplanes for flying clubs and weekend pilots, has taken on a new role – as an emerging North City building site which is becoming a haven for high technology and insurance companies."²⁰² Although it was largely the surrounding area, which the airport helped to shape, that attracted many new companies, the airport itself did attract a number of new office space users.²⁰³ In particular, new complexes on or immediately adjacent to airport grounds included the Montgomery Airport Plaza, the Viewpoint Plaza, the Dynamic Office Park, the Airport Plaza, the Aero Office Park, the Kearny Mesa Office Park, and the Crossroads Building.²⁰⁴ Although improvements continued into the 1990s and 2000s, both Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa appeared to be effectively built out by 1989. In 2016, City Council passed a resolution officially renaming the airport Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in honor of Bill Gibbs and the original airfield he created.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for designation on the City of San Diego's Register of Historical Resources, a resource must both have significance under one or more of the City's Historical Significance Criteria *and* retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance in its current state. *What follows is an evaluation of significance only; see the following sections for an evaluation of integrity and for a final eligibility conclusion.*

Criterion A: Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's, or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development.

Building 7 is significant under Criterion A because it reflects a special element of the Kearny Mesa's historical development. Specifically, it reflects Gibbs Field, the earliest development to have occurred in Kearny Mesa, which was instrumental in shaping the development of the entire community.

As was shown in the historic context, the Gibbs Field/Montgomery Field/Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport was in large part responsible for the way in which the community of Kearny Mesa developed. Not only was it the first development to have occurred in the area, but it also responsible for attracting new businesses, such as Bee Aviation Associates and Crownair, to the area. It was also responsible for a number of new improvements, such as major roadways. New aircraft safety zones created for both the airport and Miramar NAS further shaped the area, restricting residential development and zoning Kearny Mesa for light industrial and commercial uses. The combination of the industrial and commercial zoning, the proximity to the airport, and the accessibility of U.S. 395 (now SR-163) then brought major aeronautical and technology companies to the area during the 1950s and 1960s. The layout of the airport's approach and turning zones also likely dictated the location of major industrial plants north of airport. Additionally, it is likely that these zones were partly responsible for slow development of the open lots located east and west of the airport, which did not develop in earnest until the 1970s. As private and corporate aviation grew in popularity, the airport continued to attract new businesses and real estate developers during the 1980s. As a result, a

²⁰² "Montgomery Field is Building Up," *San Diego Union*, November 14, 1982.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Building 7

Page 9 of 12

number of new office parks and plazas were built on airport grounds and within the immediate vicinity. A large hotel was also built on airport grounds to take advantage of the growing number of private aviators using the airport.

Criterion B: Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

Building 7 is not significant under Criterion B because, while it is associated with the lives of a significant person in our past, Bill Gibbs, there is not enough historical evidence to determine it is best associated and identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B. The building was acquired and constructed by Bill Gibbs between 1947 for use at the airport. Bill Gibbs is an important figure because he was responsible for developing the original airport in 1937 where he operated his business, Gibbs Flying Service. In 1940, he leased the airport to Ryan Aeronautical and was hired on to teach flying lessons during World War II. After the war, Gibbs returned to his airport and, in 1947, constructed Buildings 6 and 7. Building 8 was constructed sometime between 1947 and 1950. It was also in 1947 that Bill Gibbs sold the airport and surrounding land to the City. As part of the sale, Gibbs was provided a lease so that he could continue to operate his business at the airport. Bill Gibbs was also a philanthropist who supported the San Diego Air & Space Museum, the Salvation Army, and the San Diego Zoo.²⁰⁵

In recognition of his legacy, Bill Gibbs was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2011. On Gibbs's induction, Jim Kidrick, President and CEO of the San Diego Air & Space Museum stated that "Bill Gibbs lived through almost the entire history of aviation, and certainly through the history of aviation in San Diego."²⁰⁶ When Bill Gibbs passed in 2016, the San Diego Air and Space Museum declared him "a significant part of the legacy of aviation in the San Diego region."²⁰⁷ Therefore, Bill Gibbs's activities and contributions have been found to be demonstrably important enough to be considered a significant person under Criterion B.

According to the City's criteria guidelines, "[p]ersons significant in our past refer to individuals associated with San Diego whose activities, achievements and contributions are demonstrably important within the City, state, or nation." and "Eligibility under Criterion B for significant person(s) involves first determining the importance of the individual, second ascertaining the length and nature of the individual's association with the resource under study and in comparison to other resources associated with the individual, and third determining if the resource is significant under HRB Criterion B as a resource that is best identified with a person(s) significant in local, state, or national history."

There is minimal evidence to establish the length and nature of Bill Gibbs's association with Building 7. While it is known that he acquired Building 7 in 1946 or early 1947, he leased the Building to other various aviation-related businesses rather than using it himself, and by 1956 his business operations moved to the center of the airport to make use of other hangars. Therefore, Bill Gibbs' direct association with Building 7 is limited to the years of its construction.

Finally, there is insufficient historical evidence to determine which of the three buildings at Montgomery Field is best identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B, or if a different resource outside the scope of this report is best associated with him. Bill Gibbs' association with Building 7 is only for the years of its construction, and

²⁰⁵ "San Diego Air & Space Museum mourns the loss of Aviation Legend Bill Gibbs," *San Diego Air & Space Museum*, <http://sandiegoairandspace.org/press/release/san-diego-air-space-museum-mourns-the-loss-of-aviation-legend-bill-gibbs>. Accessed April 16, 2019.

²⁰⁶ Ibid

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page 10 of 12

there is not enough evidence to establish a stronger association for it over the others. Further, according to the City's criteria guidelines, "The best representatives are properties associated with the person's productive life." Thus, Bill Gibbs is best associated with a building or structure used in his career and aviation activities, neither of which applied to Building 7 which was used as a rental.

Thus, while Bill Gibbs is a significant person, there is not enough documentary evidence to determine which building is best identified and associated with his productive life. Therefore, Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion B.

Additionally, Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion B because it could not be identified with events significant in local, state, or national history.

Criterion C: Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion C at any level because it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. It is a utilitarian aircraft hangar that is believed to have originally served as a women's gymnasium on Coronado's NAS North Island. It features wood frame construction with dimensional lumber and sheathing, stuccoed exterior walls, and the vaulted roof is supported by bowstring trusses. Building 7 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion D: Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Buildings 7 **is not** significant under Criterion D. It has not been found to be associated with an established Master. According to Buzz Gibbs, the son of Bill Gibbs, Building 7 was originally constructed in the 1920s as a women's gymnasium on NAS North Island.²⁰⁸ It became a surplus property following World War 2 and was acquired by Bill Gibbs for use as an aircraft hangar sometime around 1946 or early 1947. After being dismantled, ferried across the bay, and shipped to the existing site, the building was reconstructed in 1947.

Criterion E: is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources.

Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion E. It has not previously been listed or determined eligible for listing in the Nation Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources.

Criterion F: is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

²⁰⁸ This information was learned during an interview with Buzz Gibbs, Gibbs Flying Service.
DPR 523 (1/95)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 7**

Page 11 of 12

Building 7 **is not** significant under Criterion F. It is not located within an identified, significant grouping, such as a historic district.

INTEGRITY EVALUATION

To be eligible for designation under any City of San Diego Historical Significance Criteria, a resource must retain integrity. According to the National Park Service (NPS), the integrity of a resource is determined by “the ability of a resource to convey its significance.” In this case, Building 7 is significant under Criteria A as it reflects a special element of Kearny Mesa’s historical development. In the context of Criterion A, each aspect of integrity share an equal weight of importance.

What follows is an evaluation of integrity only; see the preceding section for an evaluation of significance and the following section for a final eligibility conclusion.

Location: Location is defined by the NPS as the “place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.”

Building 7 **does** retain integrity of location. It has not been moved since being constructed by Bill Gibbs in 1947.

Setting: Setting is defined as the “physical environment of a historic property.”

Building 7 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of setting. Historic photos show that during the 1947 period of significance, the physical environment surrounding Buildings 119 was characterized as a small airfield on flat, open, graded terrain. It was bounded to the west by the Inland Highway and sat to the north of Building 7. Although the airport has developed since 1947, the physical environment surrounding Building 7 has remained sufficiently intact and is still characterized as an airport. The hangar is situated on flat, open, graded terrain and is still bounded to the west by a major roadway. Because of these factors, the physical environment immediately surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 has been found to retain a sufficient degree of integrity of setting.

Design: Design is defined as the “combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.”

Building 7 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of design to convey its significance. As is evidenced by the historic photographs, it strongly reflects its original design and appearance. Building 7 still features its original box-like form, open plan, timber-frame structure, and bowstring truss supported roof. It is uncertain if the existing windows are original to the 1947 construction. Although historic photos confirm that the existing window openings on the west and south elevations had existed as early as 1956 and 1960, respectively, (Fig. 39, pg. 37; Fig.40, pg.38), the 1947 photos of the building under construction do not show them (Figs. 35 & 36, 37, pgs. 35 & 36). As the exterior walls are unfinished in the 1947 photos, it is possible that the two window openings on the south elevation and the three on the west elevation were cut out after the stucco exterior was finished. However, without the direct evidence showing that the original fenestration differed from that seen in 1947 photos, the windows cannot be found to be original. Since the south and west elevation steel sash windows match each other in material and design, it can be inferred that they were installed around the same time.

Materials: Materials are defined as the “physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a pattern or configuration to form a historic property.”

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Building 7

Page 12 of 12

Building 7 does retain sufficient integrity of materials to convey its significance. Building 7 still features its concrete foundation, wood frame construction, timber bowstring truss supported roof, corrugated steel hangar doors and steel horizontal sliding rail system. The 1947 photographs prove that Building 7 originally had stuccoed exterior walls. Whereas the exterior of the shed roofed addition has relatively newer stucco, no physical or documentary evidence was found to suggest that the original building was ever restuccoed. Some patching has occurred, however. The 1947 photographs show that the Building 7 originally had short, square-shaped, openings at either end of its unfinished, stucco-clad, side elevations (north and south). The easternmost openings on both elevations also had what appears to have been a horizontal element affixed above them at the mid-point of the unfinished exterior wall. The 1956 photograph shows that the westernmost opening on the north elevation was intact at that time. The 1960 photograph, however, shows that the openings on the south elevation had been infilled. Therefore, if the short, square, openings on the southern elevation were not infilled, and the horizontal element removed and patched over, when the exterior walls were finished in 1947, they were infilled by 1960. The fact that these patches can still be read in the exterior stucco of the south elevation today, suggests that the building was never restuccoed. Because of this physical evidence, it has been determined that Building 7 retains most of its original stucco.

Workmanship: Workmanship is defined as the “physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.”

Buildings 7 does retain sufficient integrity of workmanship to convey its significance. It still exhibits the craftsmanship common to the pre-and post-war periods. The physical evidence of the workmanship from these periods includes the wood framing and bowstring truss-supported roof, the steel sash windows, the poured concrete foundation, the exterior stucco, the corrugated steel paneled façade, and the horizontal sliding, steel, hangar doors and rail system.

Feeling: Feeling is defined as the “property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.”

Building 7 does retain a sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its significance. It is remarkably intact and expresses a strong historic sense of what both the building and the airport was like during the 1947 period of significance.

Association: Association is defined as the “direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.”

Building 7 does retain a sufficient integrity of association to convey its significance. As is evidenced by the historic photos, it remains largely as it appeared when it was built by Buzz Gibbs for his airport in 1947. Because of this, the direct link remains between Building 7, Buzz Gibbs, and the airport.

Conclusion:

Building 7 is significant under HRB Criterion A with a period of significance of 1947 as it reflects a special element of Kearny Mesa’s historical development. It has also been found to retain 7 out of the 7 aspects of integrity. Therefore, it has been determined eligible for listing in the San Diego Register of Historical Resources.

State of California The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 5S1

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 11

*Resource Name or #: **Building 8**

P1. Other Identifier: N/A

***P2. Location:** ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Diego

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** La Jolla **Date:** 1996

c. Address: 3873 Kearny Villa Road

City: San Diego

Zip: 92123

d. UTM: Zone 11 S; 486003.35 mE/ 3630633.49 mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Legal Description

On east side of Kearny Villa Road at the west end of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, south of Building 7.

***P3a. Description:**

Building 8 is a steel-frame aircraft hangar with a box-like massing and a gable end roof that was reportedly custom built from surplus materials acquired by Buzz Gibbs. The gable end roof is composed of corrugated steel panels. Oriented eastward, the hangar's primary elevation faces towards the Montgomery-Gibbs Airport. *(Continued on page 3).*

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP39 - Other

***P4. Resources Present:** ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing



P5b. Description of Photo:

¾ view showing east and north elevations. IS Architecture, 2019.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age:**

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
c. 1950

***P7. Owner and Address:**

City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

***P8. Recorded by:**

IS Architecture
5645 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, California 92037

***P9. Date Recorded:** April 2019

***P10 Survey Type:** Intensive/pedestrian

***P11. Report Citation:** None.

***Attachments:** ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☒ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☒ Other (List): HRB Format Attachments

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name: Building 8

*NRHP Status Code: 5S1

Page 2 of 11

B1. Historic Name: N/A

B2. Common Name: Building 8

B3. Original Use: Aircraft Hangar

B4. Present Use: Aircraft Hangar

*B5. Architectural Style: N/A

*B6. Construction History:

A historic photograph from March 1947 shows that the reassembly of Building 6 was nearly completed by that time and that Building 7 was just getting underway. Although Building 8 does not appear in this photograph, another photograph from 1950 proves that it was built sometime between 1947 and 1950. Building 8, which is said to have been custom built by hand, was likely built from surplus materials acquired from the military.

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: 1950 Original Location: Original location

*B8. Related Features: N/A

B9a. Architect: N/A

b. Builder: Bill Gibbs

*B10. Significance

Theme: Historical Development

Area: Kearny Mesa

Period of Significance: 1947-1950 Property Type: Aircraft Hangar

Applicable Criteria: A

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Prior to settlement, the community now known as Kearny Mesa was part of a large area solely occupied by the native Kumeyaay people. After the arrival of the Spanish explorers, the area was claimed by Spain for the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. After the Mission was secularized following Mexican independence in 1822, the land was parceled out as part of a massive tract known as Rancho Ex-Mission San Diego. By the end of the 19th century, the mesa north of Mission Valley had become known as the Linda Vista mesa and a few small farming settlements had developed around present-day University City and Miramar (*Continued on p.3*).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes:

*B12. References: See endnotes.

B13. Remarks: None.

*B14. Evaluator: IS Architecture

*Date of Evaluation: April 2019

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 3 of 11

P3a. Description: Continued

The primary elevation features a large, exterior, four panel, horizontal sliding hangar door system with a steel top track that extends out past the building at both ends of the elevation to vertical supports. Angled steel braces also appear to either side of building to provide additional support for the large door system. The sliding hangar door panels are composed of corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. The exterior wall within the gable end above the hangar door is composed of the same corrugated steel panels and features a single, centered, light fixture. The south elevation is composed entirely of uninterrupted corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. The west, or rear, elevation also features a completely uninterrupted wall surface composed of corrugated steel panels; however, five, evenly spaced, light fixtures project from the exterior within the gable end. The north elevation features a mostly uninterrupted wall surface composed of corrugated steel panels covered in failing paint. A flush, outward swinging, steel door appears near the western corner of the north elevation.

*B10. Significance: Continued

In 1891, a large swath of Ex-Mission land, which would come to include a major portion of the Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, was surveyed, subdivided, as parceled out as part of the New Riverside subdivision (see appendix C.3, pg. 83). These parcels were sold to speculators but due to the complete lack of water, roads, and other improvements, the lots remained undeveloped.

The most significant development to occur on the mesa land by the turn of the 20th century was the creation of the Inland Highway. This road, which ran from San Diego's Old Town, across present-day Kearny Mesa, to the Old Poway Road and on to Los Angeles, was improved from what was likely an old trail from the Ex-Mission era.²⁰⁹ The land on the Linda Vista mesa remained otherwise untouched until 1917 when the outbreak of World War I resulted in the explosive development of Camp Kearny near present-day Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Camp Kearny was a large, completely self-sustaining military installation that brought improvements to the Ex-Mission lands for the first time. Although the end of the war in 1918 effectively halted any further inland development, the camp's influence was such that the entire mesa became commonly known as the Kearny mesa by the early 1920s.

The Kearny mesa's first residential subdivision, which was named "Chesterton," was developed by O.W. Cotton in 1927 and was located around the present-day community of Linda Vista. This development was only made possible, however, due to advancements in the city's water development and the creation of the Sixth Street Extension, which provided a through boulevard from the Kearny mesa to downtown San Diego. Despite the early improvements the military brought to the north, and those brought to the south by the city, the general lack of roadways, water, and other improvements in the heart of the Kearny mesa continued to make expanding development further inland impossible.

The inability to develop the land likely played a major role in its relative affordability. Looking for cheap land that would not flood, Bill Gibbs acquired 25 acres of land in the New Riverside subdivision on the Kearny mesa in 1937 with the dream of establishing his own aviation field and business.²¹⁰ During that time, the closest development to the north was Camp Kearny, which by then had been renamed Camp Holcomb. The Chesterton subdivision was located a few miles southwest. Grantville, one of San Diego's oldest communities, existed some miles southeast across Murphy Canyon

²⁰⁹ "Highway 395," *City of Poway, California*, <https://poway.org/188/Highway-395>. Accessed April 12, 2019.

²¹⁰ Harrison, 2010.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 4 of 11

Road. Other than the Inland Highway, no prior development is known to have existed in the immediately surrounding area. Therefore, the creation of Gibbs Field in 1937 was not only among the first developments to occur on the mesa north of Mission Valley, but it was also the first known development in the area now known as the community of Kearny Mesa.

In 1940, Gibbs Field was leased to the Ryan School of Aeronautics who used the airfield for its Army Air Corps pilot training program.²¹¹ To better support its operation and to accommodate its growing enrollment, Ryan expanded the runways and likely added small ancillary buildings and barracks for the cadets in training.²¹² As civilian aviation so close to the coast was banned following the onset of World War II, Bill Gibbs relocated to Tucson, Arizona where he continued work as a flight instructor.²¹³ With Gibbs in Arizona, the United States military took control of Gibbs Field and used the airport as a training ground for bombing exercises and simulated battles.²¹⁴

Bill Gibbs returned to the airport shortly after the end of the war in 1945 and continued to provide flying lessons and other aviation related services.²¹⁵ Sometime in 1946 or early 1947, Gibbs acquired Building 6 and Building 7, which were likely sold as surplus buildings no longer needed by the Navy following the war. Although no direct evidence exists, it is believed that Building 7 was originally a women's gymnasium located on Coronado's NAS North Island, and that after being acquired, it was dismantled, ferried across the bay, and shipped to Gibbs Field where it was reassembled.²¹⁶ A historic photograph from early March 1947 shows that the reassembly of Building 6 was nearly completed by that time and that Building 7 was just getting underway.²¹⁷ Although Building 8 does not appear in this photograph, another photograph from 1950 proves that it was built sometime between 1947 and 1950. Building 8, which is said to have been custom built by hand, was likely built from surplus materials acquired from the military.²¹⁸ As is evidenced by the historic photos, a few ancillary buildings and trailers had also surrounded the three hangars at the time.

In October 1947, the City of San Diego purchased the airport from Bill Gibbs with plans to make it the City's only private flying field.²¹⁹ As part of the deal, Bill Gibbs was granted a lease on 15 acres of the field so that he could continue to operate his aviation business.²²⁰ Almost immediately after acquiring the airport, the City began work on a major expansion and improvement project, which included moving ten former Navy buildings from Balboa Park to the center of the airport; grading the field; extending, surfacing, and lighting the runways; paving new taxiways and parking areas; updating telephone lines; installing water and sewer lines; and creating a new access road to the recently developed U.S. 395.²²¹ The new runway improvements were completed and officially approved in 1949.²²²

²¹¹ "S.D. Air Corps Training School Doubles Classes," 1940.

²¹² "Ryan's Classes Show 500% Gain," *San Diego Union*, August 5, 1940.

²¹³ Harrison, 2010.

²¹⁴ "House Navy Group Members See Amphibious Force Act," *San Diego Union*, May 26, 1942.

²¹⁵ Harrison, 2010.

²¹⁶ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

²¹⁷ The original negative from SDHC only lists the year, 1947, as the date. However, the same photograph was used for an article in the *San Diego Union* on March 9, 1947. See: "Flying for Fun," *San Diego Union*, March 9, 1947.

²¹⁸ This information was provided during an interview with Buzz Gibbs of Gibbs Flying Service.

²¹⁹ "New Plans for S.D.," 1947.

²²⁰ "City in Control of Gibbs Airport," 1947.

²²¹ "C.A.A. Grants \$20,547 To Aid Gibbs Airport," *San Diego Union*, March 16, 1948; "City to Open Airport Bids," *San Diego Union*, June 13, 1948; "Gibbs Airport Sale to City Near Conclusion," *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1947; "Gibbs Airport Area Annexing Urged," *San Diego Union*, September 24, 1947.

²²² "Officials Look Over Gibbs Field Maps," *San Diego Union*, August 9, 1949.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 5 of 11

That same year, an ordinance was passed dedicating the public land required for new airport access roads named Aero Drive, East Aero Way (now John J. Montgomery Drive) and West Aero Way (now Glenn H. Curtiss Road).²²³ As is shown in Figure 12, and supported in a bid notice from January 22, 1950, an early section of present-day Kearny Villa Road connecting Aero Drive to the Inland Highway was developed in 1950, as well.²²⁴ Capping off all of this major development was Resolution No. 97985, passed by the City Council in May of 1950, which officially renamed the airport to Montgomery Field.²²⁵

Following the City's acquisition of the airport, Bill Gibbs continued to lease out Buildings 6 and 7 to various aviation-related businesses like Pacific Airmotive Corp. and Crownair Aviation. As his own business grew, Gibbs moved closer to the center of the airport and began to rent out spaces for aircraft in newly built T-type hangars.²²⁶ As the airport attracted more aviation-related activities and businesses, so too did the surrounding area. One of the earliest examples was reported one month after the City's acquisition of the airport by the *San Diego Union*, which detailed the relocation plan of the Stinson Aircraft Tool & Engineering Corp. to a large plant just off U.S. 395 on Clairemont Mesa Road in Kearny Mesa.²²⁷

With the newly developed Linda Vista housing project on the southern end of the mesa and Miramar NAS to the north, the Navy's presence was also growing stronger. In reaction to the growth of both the Navy and the aerospace industry, the City began to forecast a major housing boom in the Kearny Mesa area around 1951.²²⁸ In response to the proposed residential development, the Navy made it clear that it favored agricultural, recreational and light industrial zoning around Miramar NAS, and stated that no residences were to be built within a 12,000 foot, or 2.3 mile, radius of the installation's runway.²²⁹ Large areas of Kearny Mesa land outside of the Navy's 12,000 foot radius, which had already been zoned for residential use, were also called to be recategorized as temporary holding zones while the zoning issue was debated. The reason stated by the *San Diego Union* was that "although outside the Miramar circle, the recently annexed land is opposite the city's Montgomery Field."²³⁰

The City viewed Montgomery Field as "essential to San Diego's development" and partnered with the Civil Aeronautics Administration in 1953 to prepare "building-height limits and zoning legislation for the Montgomery Field area."²³¹ The same was also sought in the area around Miramar NAS, which remained outside the city limits. Although the legality of instituting such building heights around Miramar NAS and Montgomery Field was debated, it was reported in June of 1953 that planning director Glenn A. Rick stated "We're proceeding with Montgomery, but we're 'held up' on Miramar."²³² It appears that it wasn't until 1960, though, that an official ordinance was adopted establishing the "Airport Approach Zones" and "Airport Turning Zones".²³³ An ordinance that was adopted by City Council in 1953, however, put an end to some of the debate over land use within Kearny Mesa by rezoning 101 acres of land within the Navy's 12,000

²²³ "Ordinance No. 4015," *San Diego Union*, April 7, 1949.

²²⁴ "Notice Inviting Bids," *San Diego Union*, January 22, 1950.

²²⁵ "Resolution No. 97985," *San Diego Union*, May 25, 1950.

²²⁶ Harrison, 2010.

²²⁷ "Stinson Aircraft Plans Expansion," *San Diego Union*, November 10, 1947.

²²⁸ "Council May Act On Expansion Today," *San Diego Union*, February 1, 1951.

²²⁹ "Owners Will Confer On Mesa Zoning," *San Diego Union*, December 17, 1953.

²³⁰ "Council Delays Kearny Mesa Zoning Case," *San Diego Union*, December 16, 1953.

²³¹ "All Weather Field Called Vital Need," *San Diego Union*, July 11, 1953.

²³² "Height Limit Opinion Divided," *San Diego Union* June 4, 1953.

²³³ "Ordinance No. 8310," *San Diego Union*, June 19, 1960.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 6 of 11

foot radius for light industrial purposes.²³⁴ The following month, the *San Diego Union* reported that, "moving to provide Kearny Mesa land for future industry, the City Council yesterday authorized City Mgr. Campbell to execute an agreement for the purchase of 180 acres northwest of Montgomery Field."²³⁵ Shortly thereafter, in early 1954, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution establishing a light industrial zone for additional Kearny Mesa land within 12,000 foot radius of the center of the Miramar NAS runways.²³⁶ This resolution not only took into account the proximity of Miramar NAS, but it "also asked that present and future needs of Montgomery Field be examined carefully so that the field's growth will not be stunted by residential building getting too close."²³⁷

Tensions over residential and industrial zoning continued throughout the early 1950s as new, and typically large, acreages of land around Montgomery Field were annexed by the City. Residential developments occurred mainly to the south and east of the airport, in communities now known as Serra Mesa, Linda Vista, and Clairemont. However, due to Miramar NAS to the north and Montgomery Field to the south and east, the land between the two, which today makes up the community of Kearny Mesa, was instead prioritized for industrial and commercial use.

Kearny Mesa was quickly recognized as "offering the city's best potential for future industry."²³⁸ This was partly due to accessibility to U.S. 395. However, according to Stanley Grove, general manager of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce at the time, "the Kearny Mesa area, on Highway 395 beyond Linda Vista" was an especially attractive location for industrial development because "its proximity to Montgomery airport is important to manufacturers."²³⁹ Recognizing the benefits of the area, a number of major aeronautical and defense-related companies, such as Ryan Aeronautical Co., Solar Aircraft Co., Consolidated Aircraft Corp., General Dynamics, and Rohr Aircraft Corp., began relocating to the area between 1954 and 1958. Other, more diversified, companies such as Cubic Corp, an electronics research firm, moved to the area as well.

Also beginning in the mid-1950s was an investigation to develop Montgomery Field into the City's primary airport.²⁴⁰ The proximity of Montgomery Field to Miramar NAS proved to be too problematic, though, and, after the Navy outright rejected the idea, the proposition was no longer being considered by 1960.²⁴¹ Uncertain as to the future of the airport, the city began developing a master plan to recommend much needed upgrades and to help guide its future development.²⁴² It was reported that although "the plan is not intended as an answer to San Diego's search for a new jet-age municipal airport...development of the field is particularly needed because of the growth of private and business flying activity."²⁴³ Among the work recommended by the master plan, which was approved in 1964, was a wider access road, expanded parking, a new administration building and a control tower.²⁴⁴ Construction on the control tower began almost immediately and, following its completion in 1965, the City opened bids "on a repaving project for all runways, taxiways and aircraft parking areas at Montgomery Field."²⁴⁵

²³⁴ "Kearny Mesa Zoning for Light Industry Adopted by Council," *San Diego Union*, September 23, 1953.

²³⁵ "City Will Buy Mesa Land for New Industries," *San Diego Union*, October 16, 1953.

²³⁶ "Chamber Asks End Of 2-Year Delay On Miramar Zoning," *San Diego Union*, January 14, 1954.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ "Talk on Zoning Will Continue," *San Diego Union*, September 9, 1953.

²³⁹ "Grove Says 9 New Industries," 1951.

²⁴⁰ "Is Montgomery A Practical Airport Site?," *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1957.

²⁴¹ Martin, 1960.

²⁴² Roy C. Johns, "City Council Gets Montgomery Field Development Plan," *San Diego Union*, March 11, 1960.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ "Montgomery Field Expansion Detailed," *San Diego Union*, February 23, 1964.

²⁴⁵ "Bid Openings Scheduled On Airport Paving," *San Diego Union*, June 10, 1965.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 7 of 11

Industrial development in Kearny Mesa continued well into the late-1960s and included an increasing number of industrial parks, such as San Diego City Industrial Park and Aetna Insurance Co.'s Kearny Industrial Park.²⁴⁶ By 1969, however, most of the industrially zoned land in Kearny Mesa was occupied.²⁴⁷ As large scale industrial development began to wane in the 1970s, the availability of smaller lots gave way to a wave of explosive commercial, retail, and office development.

Such as it had in the decades prior, Montgomery Field continued to shape the community's development into the 1980s. In 1978, the *San Diego Union* reported on the rapidly increasing popularity in private aviation, stating, "in numbers, San Diego's downtown airport is the least busy...[and that] Montgomery Field on Kearny Mesa is where the biggest increases in aviation are centered."²⁴⁸ In fact, the popularity of private aviation paired with the increase in corporate traffic at the time had caused Montgomery Field to rank among the top 10 in the nation in numbers of aircraft based there and the 14th busiest airport overall.²⁴⁹ To take advantage of this increased traffic the city authorized the construction of a hotel "designed to enable private pilots using Montgomery Field to taxi up to the lobby and check in before parking their airplanes."²⁵⁰ Construction began in 1984²⁵¹ and the hotel and accompanying golf course was located immediately south of Buildings 6, 7, and 8 at the southwestern corner of the airport, along Aero Drive and Kearny Villa Road.

The traffic of Montgomery Field also brought increased attention from real estate developers and new companies looking to relocate. As was reported by the *San Diego Union* in 1982, "Montgomery Field, until a few years ago only the home of private airplanes for flying clubs and weekend pilots, has taken on a new role – as an emerging North City building site which is becoming a haven for high technology and insurance companies."²⁵² Although it was largely the surrounding area, which the airport helped to shape, that attracted many new companies, the airport itself did attract a number of new office space users.²⁵³ In particular, new complexes on or immediately adjacent to airport grounds included the Montgomery Airport Plaza, the Viewpoint Plaza, the Dynamic Office Park, the Airport Plaza, the Aero Office Park, the Kearny Mesa Office Park, and the Crossroads Building.²⁵⁴ Although improvements continued into the 1990s and 2000s, both Montgomery Field and Kearny Mesa appeared to be effectively built out by 1989. In 2016, City Council passed a resolution officially renaming the airport Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in honor of Bill Gibbs and the original airfield he created.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for designation on the City of San Diego's Register of Historical Resources, a resource must both have significance under one or more of the City's Historical Significance Criteria *and* retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance in its current state. *What follows is an evaluation of significance only; see the following sections for an evaluation of integrity and for a final eligibility conclusion.*

²⁴⁶ "Industrial Parks Lune Farsighted Businesses," *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1969.

²⁴⁷ "EDC Attracts Firms," 1969.

²⁴⁸ Hudson, 1978.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ "City Authorizes Airport Hotel," *San Diego Union*, January 16, 1981.

²⁵¹ "Hotels," *San Diego Union*, November 13, 1983.

²⁵² "Montgomery Field is Building Up," *San Diego Union*, November 14, 1982.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 8 of 11

Criterion A: Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's, or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development.

Buildings 8 **is** significant under Criterion A because it reflects a special element of the Kearny Mesa's historical development. Specifically, it reflects the airfield created by Bill Gibbs, which was the earliest known development to have occurred in Kearny Mesa. As such, Building 8, along with the adjacent Building 6 and 7, influenced both the future development of the airport as Montgomery Field, presently named Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport, and by extension, influenced the development of the entire community of Kearny Mesa.

As was shown in the historic context, the development of Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport by both Bill Gibbs, from 1937-1947, and the City of San Diego, from 1947-1989 and later, was in large part responsible for the way in which the community of Kearny Mesa, itself, developed. Not only was the airfield the first development to have occurred in the area, but it also responsible for attracting new businesses, such as Bee Aviation Associates and Crownair, to the area. It also influenced the development of U.S. 395 (now SR-163) and was responsible for the creation of other roadways like Aero Drive. New aircraft safety zones created for both the airport and Miramar NAS further shaped the area, restricting residential development and zoning Kearny Mesa for light industrial and commercial uses. The combination of the industrial and commercial zoning, the proximity to the airport, and the accessibility of U.S. 395 then brought major aeronautical and technology companies to the area during the 1950s and 1960s. The layout of the airport's approach and turning zones also likely dictated the location of major industrial plants north of airport. Additionally, it is likely that these zones were partly responsible for slow development of the open lots located east and west of the airport, which did not develop in earnest until the 1970s. As private and corporate aviation grew in popularity, the airport continued to attract new businesses and real estate developers during the 1980s. As a result, a number of new office parks and plazas were built on airport grounds and within the immediate vicinity. A large hotel was also built on airport grounds to take advantage of the growing number of private aviators using the airport.

Criterion B: Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

Buildings 8 **is not** significant under Criterion B, while it is associated with the lives of a significant person in our past, Bill Gibbs, there is not enough historical evidence to determine it is best associated and identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B. The building was constructed by Bill Gibbs sometime between 1947 and 1950 for use as a hangar at the airport. Bill Gibbs is an important figure because he was responsible for developing the original airport in 1937 where he operated his business, Gibbs Flying Service. In 1940, he leased the airport to Ryan Aeronautical and was hired on to teach flying lessons during World War II. After the war, Gibbs returned to his airport and, in 1947, constructed Buildings 6 and 7. Building 8 was constructed sometime between 1947 and 1950. It was also in 1947 that Bill Gibbs sold the airport and surrounding land to the City. As part of the sale, Gibbs was provided a lease so that he could continue to operate his business at the airport. Bill Gibbs was also a philanthropist who supported the San Diego Air & Space Museum, the Salvation Army, and the San Diego Zoo.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ "San Diego Air & Space Museum mourns the loss of Aviation Legend Bill Gibbs," *San Diego Air & Space Museum*, <http://sandiegoairandspace.org/press/release/san-diego-air-space-museum-mourns-the-loss-of-aviation-legend-bill-gibbs>.

Accessed April 16, 2019.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 9 of 11

In recognition of his legacy, Bill Gibbs was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2011. On Gibbs's induction, Jim Kidrick, President and CEO of the San Diego Air & Space Museum stated that "Bill Gibbs lived through almost the entire history of aviation, and certainly through the history of aviation in San Diego."²⁵⁶ When Bill Gibbs passed in 2016, the San Diego Air and Space Museum declared him "a significant part of the legacy of aviation in the San Diego region."²⁵⁷ Therefore, Bill Gibbs's activities and contributions have been found to be demonstrably important enough to be considered a significant person under Criterion B.

According to the City's criteria guidelines, "[p]ersons significant in our past refer to individuals associated with San Diego whose activities, achievements and contributions are demonstrably important within the City, state, or nation." and "Eligibility under Criterion B for significant person(s) involves first determining the importance of the individual, second ascertaining the length and nature of the individual's association with the resource under study and in comparison to other resources associated with the individual, and third determining if the resource is significant under HRB Criterion B as a resource that is best identified with a person(s) significant in local, state, or national history."

There is minimal evidence to establish the length and nature of Bill Gibb's association with Buildings 8. While it is known that he built Building 8 between 1947 and 1950, he leased the Building to other various aviation-related businesses rather than using it himself, and by 1956 his business operations moved to the center of the airport to make use of other hangars. Therefore, Bill Gibbs' direct association with Building 8 is limited to the years of its construction.

Finally, there is insufficient historical evidence to determine which of the three buildings at Montgomery Field is best identified with Gibbs to establish a specific significance under Criterion B, or if a different resource outside the scope of this report is best associated with him. Bill Gibbs' association with Building 8 is only for the years of its construction, and there is not enough evidence to establish a stronger association for it over the others. Further, according to the City's criteria guidelines, "The best representatives are properties associated with the person's productive life." Thus, Bill Gibbs is best associated with a building or structure used in his career and aviation activities, neither of which applied to Building 8 which was used as a rental.

Thus, while Bill Gibbs is a significant person, there is not enough documentary evidence to determine which building is best identified and associated with his productive life. Therefore, Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion B.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion B because it could not be identified with events significant in local, state, or national history.

Criterion C: Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion C at any level. It is a post-war era aircraft hangar that was custom built on site using surplus materials acquired by Bill Gibbs. It does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. Building 8 is not associated with a Master. It does not possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

²⁵⁶ Ibid

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 10 of 11

Criterion D: Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion D. It has not been found to be associated with an established Master. Therefore, it has not been found to be representative of the notable work of a master.

Criterion E: is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion E. It has not previously been listed or determined eligible for listing in the Nation Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources.

Criterion F: is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

Building 8 **is not** significant under Criterion F. It is not located within an identified, significant grouping, such as a historic district.

INTEGRITY EVALUATION

To be eligible for designation under any City of San Diego Historical Significance Criteria, a resource must retain integrity. According to the National Park Service (NPS), the integrity of a resource is determined by "the ability of a resource to convey its significance." In this case, Building 8 is significant under Criteria A as it reflects a special element of Kearny Mesa's historical development. In the context of Criterion A, each aspect of integrity share an equal weight of importance.

What follows is an evaluation of integrity only; see the preceding section for an evaluation of significance and the following section for a final eligibility conclusion.

Location: Location is defined by the NPS as the "place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred."

Building 8 **does** retain integrity of location. It has not been moved since being constructed by Bill Gibbs between 1947 and 1950.

Setting: Setting is defined as the "physical environment of a historic property."

Building 8 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of setting to convey its significance. Historic photos show that by 1950, the physical environment surrounding Building 8 was characterized as a small airfield on flat, open, graded terrain. Buildings 7 and 8 sat to the north. The site was bounded to the west by U.S. 395 (now SR-163) and an early section of what would become Kearny Villa Road. The airport runways and Aero Drive, to the south, had also been paved. Additionally, the airport had been expanded to what appears to be its current form and rededicated as Montgomery Field.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: **Building 8**

Page 11 of 11

Although the airport has developed since 1950, the physical environment surrounding Building 8 has remained sufficiently intact and is still characterized as an airport. The hangar is situated on flat, open, graded terrain and is still bounded to the west by the same section of Kearny Villa Road and SR-163. The proximity of the hangar to Buildings 6 and 7, the roadways to the west and south, as well as the runways and the expanded part of the airport to the east, remains the same. Because of these factors, the physical environment immediately surrounding Buildings 6, 7, and 8 has been found to retain a sufficient degree of integrity of setting.

Design: Design is defined as the “combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.”

Building 8 **does** retain sufficient integrity of design to convey its significance. Building 8 appears to have remained entirely intact since its construction sometime between 1947 and 1950. Historic photos show that the hangar has always had a box-like form, a rectangular plan, a gable roof, windowless exterior elevations, and a massive, east facing, horizontal sliding hangar door system.

Materials: Materials are defined as the “physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a pattern or configuration to form a historic property.”

Building 8 **does** retain sufficient integrity of materials to convey its significance. Building 8 was constructed using corrugated steel panels for the exterior walls, the roof, and the hangar door. These materials remain intact today. Based on the historic photos, no alterations appear to have occurred.

Workmanship: Workmanship is defined as the “physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.”

As Building 8 does not appear to have ever been altered since its original construction, the hangar still exhibits the craftsmanship of the period in which it was built. The physical evidence of this craftsmanship is evident in the use of corrugated steel panels for the exterior walls and the gable roof, as well as the exterior steel, horizontal sliding, hangar door system.

Feeling: Feeling is defined as the “property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.”

Building 8 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its significance. It is remarkably intact and expresses a strong historic sense of what both the building and the site was like during its 1950 period of significance.

Association: Association is defined as the “direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.”

Building 8 **does** retain a sufficient integrity of association. As is evidenced by the historic photos, it remains largely as it appeared when it was built by Buzz Gibbs in 1950. Because of this, the direct link remains between Building 8, Buzz Gibbs, and the airport.

Conclusion:

Building 8 is significant under HRB Criterion A as it reflects a special element of Kearny Mesa’s historical development. It has also been found to retain 7 out of the 7 aspects of integrity. Therefore, it has been determined eligible for listing in the San Diego Register of Historical Resources.

Appendix E: Preparer's Qualifications

Ione Steigler, FAIA
Principle Architect
IS Architecture

Ione R. Stiegler, FAIA is the Principal Architect for IS Architecture. Her studio specializes in applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties and have completed projects implementing all four approved treatments; Restoration, Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction. Together Ione R. Stiegler, FAIA, and her studio have rehabilitated or restored more than 75 institutional historic structures, 18 adobe buildings, and more than 100 historic homes. In addition, the firm possesses an expertise in the technical, aesthetic, building code, Americans with Disability Act (ADA), structural and agency review aspects of architectural design for historic structures. Ms. Stiegler's qualifications exceed the requirements established by the National Park Service, for History, Architectural History, Architecture, and Historic Architecture, as published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61.

Christopher Usler
Historic Preservation Specialist & Architectural Historian
IS Architecture

Mr. Usler holds a Master of Science degree in Architectural Conservation from the University of Edinburgh, where, as part of the Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies, he studied the historical and theoretical foundations of historic preservation; the techniques of recording and research; and the technologies of building repair. Mr. Usler has experience providing a full range of preservation services. Some of his projects include the repair and restoration of 19th century stone statuary at The Breakers mansion in Newport, Rhode Island; the preservation and maintenance of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Massachusetts; a measured building survey of the Old Moray House of 1619 in Edinburgh, Scotland; as well as a National Register of Historic Places nomination for a Carnegie Library and numerous Determinations of Eligibility for buildings and structures around western Indiana. Mr. Usler's qualifications exceed the requirements established by the National Park Service, as published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61 (Secretary of the Interior's Standards)

Peter Kempson, MAH, MARCH
Historic Preservation Specialist/Associate Project Manager
IS Architecture

Peter Kempson, MAH & MARCH is a Historic Preservation Specialist at IS Architecture. Mr. Kempson has project experience ranging from work on historic structure reports, historic resource evaluations, local historic nominations, building condition assessment reports, Section 106 Compliance, and historic architectural design projects. These projects have been at Local, State, and Nationally Historic Designated Sites. Mr. Kempson holds Master of Architectural History and Master of Architecture degrees from the University of Virginia and exceeds the requirements established by the National Park Service for Architectural History and Historic Architecture as published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61.