

**BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

HO 16

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

UNIQUE SITE NO. 10305.000847  
QUAD \_\_\_\_\_  
SERIES \_\_\_\_\_  
NEG. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: Town of Islip/SPLIA DATE: March 1990

Town Hall, 655 Main St.

YOUR ADDRESS: Islip, L.I., N.Y. 11751 TELEPHONE: 516.224.5450

ORGANIZATION (if any): Dept. of Planning, Housing, and Development

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**IDENTIFICATION**

1. BUILDING NAME(S): General Douglas MacArthur Memorial Terminal Building

2. COUNTY: Suffolk TOWN/CITY: Islip VILLAGE: Holbrook

3. STREET LOCATION: Veterans Memorial Hwy., opp. Johnson Ave.

4. OWNERSHIP: a. public  b. private

5. PRESENT OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

6. USE: Original: air terminal Present: air terminal

7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes  No

Interior accessible: Explain yes

**DESCRIPTION**

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard  b. stone  c. brick  d. board and batten   
e. cobblestone  f. shingles  g. stucco  other: concrete and glass

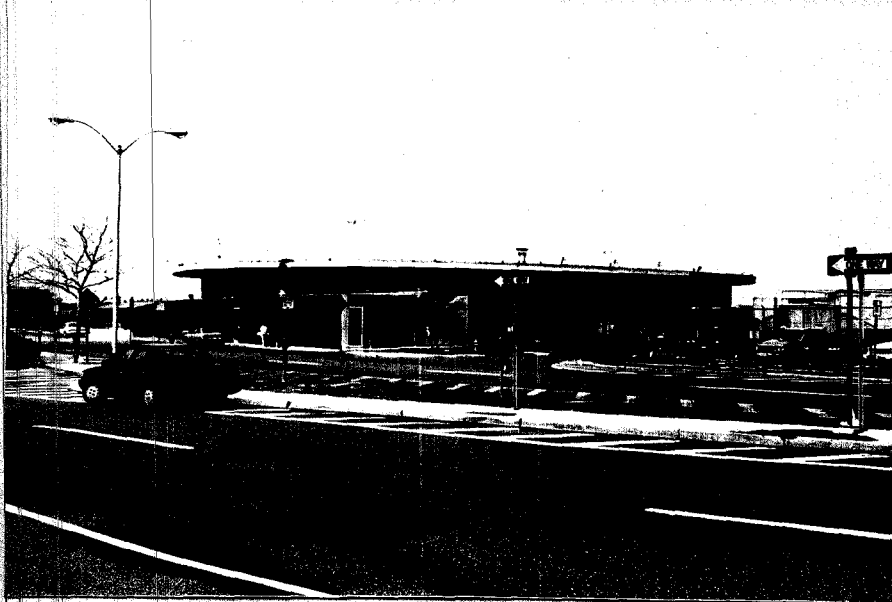
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints   
(if known) b. wood frame with light members   
c. masonry load bearing walls   
(?) d. metal (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
e. other \_\_\_\_\_

10. CONDITION: a. excellent  b. good  c. fair  d. deteriorated

11. INTEGRITY: a. original site  b. moved  if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):  
enclosed area of dark glass panels added to south facade

12. PHOTO: Neg. KK XIX-2, fm. SE

13. MAP: NYS DOT Patchogue Quad  
see attached page



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known  b. zoning  c. roads   
 d. developers  e. deterioration   
 f. other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:  
 a. barn  b. carriage house  c. garage   
 d. privy  e. shed  f. greenhouse   
 g. shop  h. gardens   
 i. landscape features: \_\_\_\_\_  
 j. other: accessory airport buildings
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):  
 a. open land  b. woodland   
 c. scattered buildings   
 d. densely built-up  e. commercial   
 f. industrial  g. residential   
 h. other: corporate/office park buildings

light

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:  
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

The Terminal Building is located at the south end of the airport surrounded by paved parking fields and runways. The building is set back from Veterans Memorial Highway on an entrance drive named in honor of Gen. D. MacArthur. Light industry, hotel, and corporate/office buildings surround the

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known): site.

The Terminal Building is a large, glass and panel, round building with a flat roof and wide concrete overhang. The interior features a skylit roof and an unusual floor inlay depicting Long Island (Neg. KK XIX-4).

### SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: Control Tower - 1963  
Terminal Building - 1966  
 ARCHITECT: -Dobiecki, Beattie, & Colyer (terminal)  
 ENGINEERS - Seelye, Stevenson, Value, & Knight  
 BUILDER: - C & L Construction Corp.

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

In 1943 during WW II, the Federal Government sent out a notice that in any community that would provide the suitable land area, they would build an airport. Islip arranged that a tract of about 1300 acres of tax sale land north of Sayville was available by closing Johnson Avenue.

The government completed the airport in 1944. After the war the airport was returned to the Town of Islip. In 1949 MacArthur Airport was the center for the "Berlin Airlift." The Town in 1963 erected the seven story air control tower, and in 1966 erected the large ticket office and administration building. (refer to continuation sheet)

21. SOURCES:

Stoff, Joshua. The Aerospace Heritage of Long Island, 1989, pp. 59-61.  
 Plaque, Terminal Building Lobby.  
 Dickerson, Charles. A History of the Sayville Community, 1975.

22. THEME:

20 - continued:

Subsequently, the Town purchased additional land to extend the runways and built several large hangars. Scheduled passenger service was introduced in 1960 when Alleghany Airlines began direct flights to Washington, Providence, and Boston.

In 1983 the Federal Government erected the \$25,000,000 Federal Aviation Agency, Central Air Control Center Building, one of the largest in the world, controlling air traffic in the Northeastern United States.

NYS DOT Patchogue Quad

495

UNION

AVENUE

PO

BM 110

ISLAND

BM 114

St. Johns Ch

Holbrook

BM

104

FURROWS

105

108

radio tower

MAC ARTHUR AIRPORT

BM X79

BM X77

102

108

102

102

PATCHOGUE-HOLBROOK

AVENUE

SMITHTOWN

BM 85

LINCOLN

Grundy Ave Sch

AVENUE

90

84

80

VETERANS

BM 73

MEMORIAL

65

ISLAND

SMITHTOWN

BM 72

JOHNSON

AVENUE

ISLIP

HIGHWAY

PO

CHURCH

59

49

48

STREET

78

emia

Grammar Sch

BM

AVENUE

AVENUE

AVENUE

AVENUE

AVENUE

AVENUE

55

54

SUNRISE

AVENUE

52-12

27

52-3

27

CHURCH

Lakes

Camp Eddy

Davis Field (Airport)



main concourse

Neg. KK XIX-5, view of terminal building lobby towards entrance.



Neg. KK XIX-4, view of  
map inlay in terminal  
building lobby near  
entrance.

**CHAPTER XVII.  
SAYVILLE WIRELESS STATION  
MACARTHUR FIELD  
FAA AIR CONTROL STATION**



Back in the year 1911 Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany decided to build in America the most powerful wireless station in the world. He sent a company of engineers called the Telefunken Co. to America and they selected an area north of the rail road in West Sayville as the ideal location. The station with three 600 foot towers was completed in 1912. Kaiser Wilhelm then erected a similar station in Nauen, Germany and for many years the only wireless communication between North America and Europe, was between Sayville and Germany. Most of the messages were sent in German code.

In 1914 came World War 1 and many American ships were sunk by German submarines while we were still a neutral country - this despite the fact that the ships left New York "blacked out" and with no published schedule; also despite the constant protests of President Wilson and William Jennings Bryan who was Secretary of State. President Wilson arranged to have a young man from Sayville - named Sewell Thornhill, Jr. - who was interested in wireless, to decipher the secret German code. The Lusitania was sunk May 15, 1915. A message from Sayville had read "Grandmother died at 11 A.M. this morning" but when deciphered it read "The Lusitania sailed past Sayville at 11A.M. this morning." President Wilson sent a company of marines to Sayville and seized the German station. It has belonged to the Federal Government ever since. After World War 1 the station was leased to Mackay Radio and Telegraph Co. In 1939 the station was taken over by the Federal Aviation Agency for its international flight transmitting service. In a major expansion program in 1961, when about 80 additional acres were acquired, it was made one of the most powerful radio transmitting stations in the world.

In 1943, during World War II, the Federal Government sent out a notice that any community that would provide the suitable land area, they would build an airport. The Supervisor of Islip Town, Charles Duryea, answered the notice. There was a large tract of about 1300 acres of tax sale land north of Sayville bisected by Johnson Avenue. An arrangement was made with the US Government to close Johnson Avenue, and build a new airport there. The government completed the airport in 1944 at a cost of about \$5,000,000. After the war the airport was returned to the Town of Islip. At a cost of several millions of dollars, the Town in 1963 erected a seven story air control tower, and in 1967 erected a large ticket office and administrative building. The Town purchased additional land to extend the runways for the largest planes. Also the Town has built several large hangars.

Dickerson, A History of the Sayville Community, 1975.

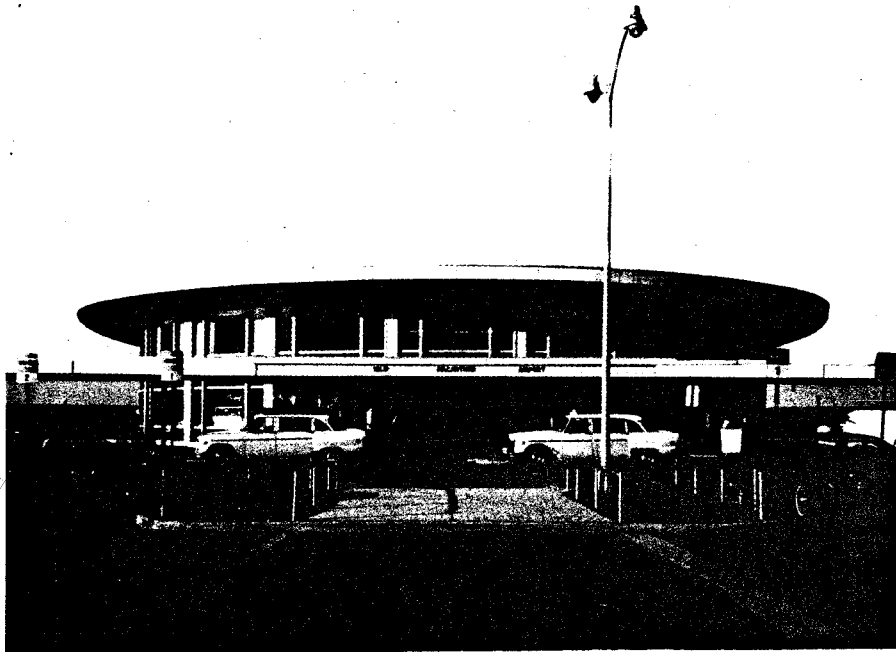
A HISTORY OF THE SAYVILLE COMMUNITY

Several large companies have leased land and built hangars at the field. In 1949 MacArthur was the center for the "Berlin Airlift."

Scheduled passenger service was introduced in 1960 when Alleghany Lines began direct flights to Washington and to Providence and Boston. In 1967 Mohawk Lines began direct flights to Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo and Cleveland. Both lines added flights to Bridgeport, New London and New Haven and Hartford. In 1971 American Lines began direct flights to Chicago, and in 1972 Altair began direct flights to Philadelphia. MacArthur is now the 3rd busiest airport in New York State and the 11th busiest in the country. Over 300,000 passengers boarded planes there in 1974. The Federal Government has referred to Mac Arthur as "the sleeping giant."

As a result of the airport, a vast industrial area has grown up in the surrounding vicinity, with many large companies that employ thousands of people.

In 1953 the Federal Government erected on Johnson Avenue just south of the airport, a new \$25,000,000 Federal Aviation Agency, Central Air Control Center. one of the largest in the world, controlling the air traffic in the northeastern part of the United States, including Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark airports, and employing about 1000 people.



*Administration building and Ticket office - MacArthur Airport - 1967*