

Ford Island Today

The island is a mixed operational Navy base encompassing historic sites, 440 family housing units, a Navy Lodge, and a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) facility. The historic sites here include the Battleship Arizona Memorial, the USS Utah Memorial, the Battleship Missouri Memorial, multiple airplane hangars, and the control tower. Many of the historic structures are being repurposed for continued use. The Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor has rehabilitated and adaptively reused Hangars 37 and 79, along with the Aerological Control Tower. USPACOM is reusing the Dispensary as the HA/DR Center for Excellence, NOAA is reusing Hangars 175 and 176 as the NOAA Pacific Regional Center, and the former BOQ Building is being used as a Navy Lodge. The Ford Island runway, the most prominent landmark on the island, remains evident. The old hardstand areas, scarred by machine gun strafing and bomb splatter, remain largely intact and in use for a variety of purposes, including parking, roadways, and as stark reminders of Ford Island’s storied past.



Top photo: aerial view of Ford Island today, with runway and hardstand areas clearly visible, along with modern family housing areas in NW and SW ends of island. Bottom photo: NOAA Pacific Regional Center—re-purposed Hangars 175 and 176.

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returned to their aircraft carriers at about 1000, Pearl Harbor itself was in flames as damaged ships leaked oil into the water, while clouds of billowing black smoke darkened the morning sky. The harbor was awash with dead and injured U.S. sailors, oil, and debris—a galvanizing start to a perilous and ultimately victorious four years of war. Although only two of the aircraft hangars suffered substantial damage, the battleships, other vessels, and aircraft suffered devastating damage. Hangar 6 suffered fire damage due to a bomb exploding on the northeast corner of the building. A dud bomb damaged the roof and floor of Hangar 38, and the windows of the building were damaged from the concussion of nearby bomb strikes and flying concrete fragments. Although the vast majority of sailors were on shore leave on that Sunday morning, the loss of military personnel life was staggering. More than 2,300 servicemen were killed, including more than 1,100 on the Arizona alone. More than 1,100 servicemen were wounded in the attack. The numbers of civilian casualties were much smaller (68 killed and 35 wounded). Top right photo: Bomb and fire damage to Hangar 6 in background, with damaged seaplane in foreground; Bottom right photo: Photo of Ford Island taken by Japanese pilot during the December 7th attack; Bottom left photo: Photo of various aircraft ablaze during attack; Taken from channel; Top left: Flight paths used by Japanese aircraft in their two attack waves in their approach and retreat from Pearl Harbor and other targets on Oahu.



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319 Lexington Blvd, Honolulu HI
Hours of Operation: Daily 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
<http://www.pacificaviationmuseum.org>

This interpretive brochure prepared for Pacific Aviation Museum under National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program Grant # GA 2287-15-017

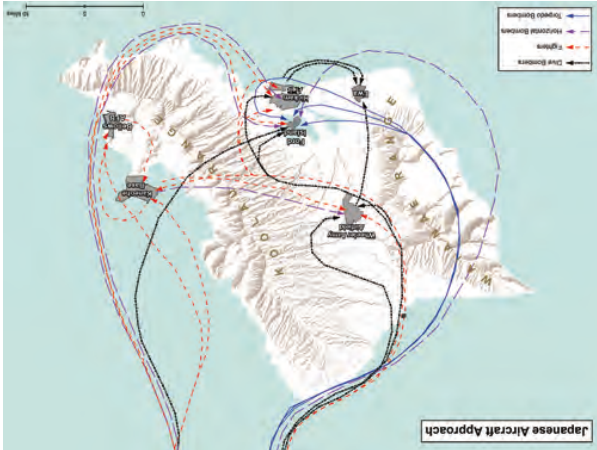
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and General Quarters (i.e., Battle Stations) were ordered two minutes later. The battleships moored at Ford Island came under attack at about 0803 as the Nevada was hit by a bomb and the West Virginia was torpedoed. The California was hit by a torpedo at 0805. A Japanese high-altitude bomber dropped an armor-piercing bomb on the Arizona. Around 0810, the Tennessee and the Maryland were both hit by two bombs. Three torpedoes struck the Oklahoma, and the ship eventually capsized. Of the approximately dozen bombs that hit Ford Island, an estimated 9 incendiary 250-kg bombs were dropped on or near Hangar 6 during the initial attack; 4 bombs are believed to have struck Seaplane Ramp No. 4. One of the bombs dropped near Hangar No. 6 created a 20-foot-wide and 7-foot-deep crater. The seaplane ramp was bombed and the gun fire, the scars of which are still visible. When the second wave of Japanese attack planes



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Japanese bomber and torpedo planes arrived at Ford Island from aircraft carriers positioned approximately 230 miles north of Oahu at 0755 on December 7, 1941. While the primary military objective of the attack was to destroy the Pacific Fleet of U.S. aircraft carriers (which were not in Pearl Harbor that morning), the first task of the day was to preclude an American defense by disabling aircraft located at Ford Island and the other airfields on Oahu. An air raid warning went out at 0758.

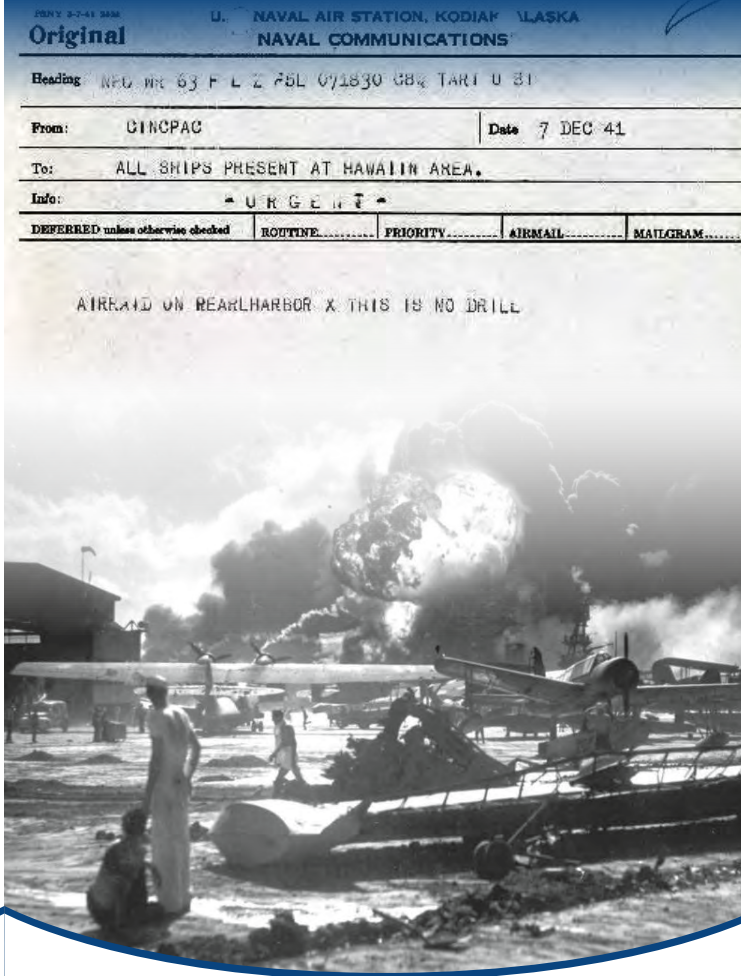
The Attack—December 7, 1941

Ford Island Runway and Hardstand Areas



“An American Battlefield”

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National Park Service
American Battlefield Protection Program
Ford Island, Pearl Harbor Hawaii
Battle of December 7, 1941



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Ford Island, called Moku'ume'ume by Native Hawaiians, was not traditionally inhabited before Europeans made contact because there is no naturally occurring fresh-water source. However, the island served as a source of pill grass, which the Native Hawaiians used to thatch the roofs and walls of their dwellings. Captain James Cook first landed in Hawaii in 1778, and while western influence immediately became a factor in the Pearl Harbor area, the region remained less developed than neighboring Honolulu throughout much of the 19th century due to its relative inaccessibility. Common practices by the Native Hawaiians during the post-contact period included fishing and the farming of taro, with western agricultural influences also taking hold during the 19th century. Ford Island functioned as a productive agricultural area starting in the mid-19th century, and watermelons and sugarcane grew on the island in abundance. In 1863, James I. Dowsett acquired a portion of the island through a land auction. Dowsett sold the property in 1866 to a woman named Caroline Jackson, who married Dr. Seth Ford. It is from the Fords that the island takes its present name; the island has also historically been called Ford's Island. In 1891, Ford's son sold Ford Island to the John II Estate, which leased Ford Island to the Oahu Sugarcane Company. The island was planted with sugarcane, aided by the recently dug freshwater wells that provided a reliable source of water on the island. The U.S. Navy began intensive survey efforts in Pearl Harbor in the 1890s, locating the headquarters for these efforts on Ford Island. The Native Hawaiian history of Moku'ume'ume has been commemorated in various ways on the island, including re-enactments of Makanihiki, a Native Hawaiian Thanksgiving season which includes spiritual cleansing and offerings to the god Lono, a cease-fire to all war and fighting, and festivities including sporting events and feasting to celebrate the bounty of the land. Top photo: A house constructed using pill grass, shown in about 1900 and exhibiting some western-influenced features like the open-roofed area in back). Photo by J.A. Gonsouves, from Bishop Museum Archives #SP 201238. Bottom photo: The first military boat slip on Ford Island was built in the late 1910s by the Army in the general location of the sugar plantation-era cable ferry landing. The concrete loading ramp and seawall remain intact today near the southwest corner of the island. Photo from U.S. Army, Signal Corps, from National Archives II #111-SC-35225.

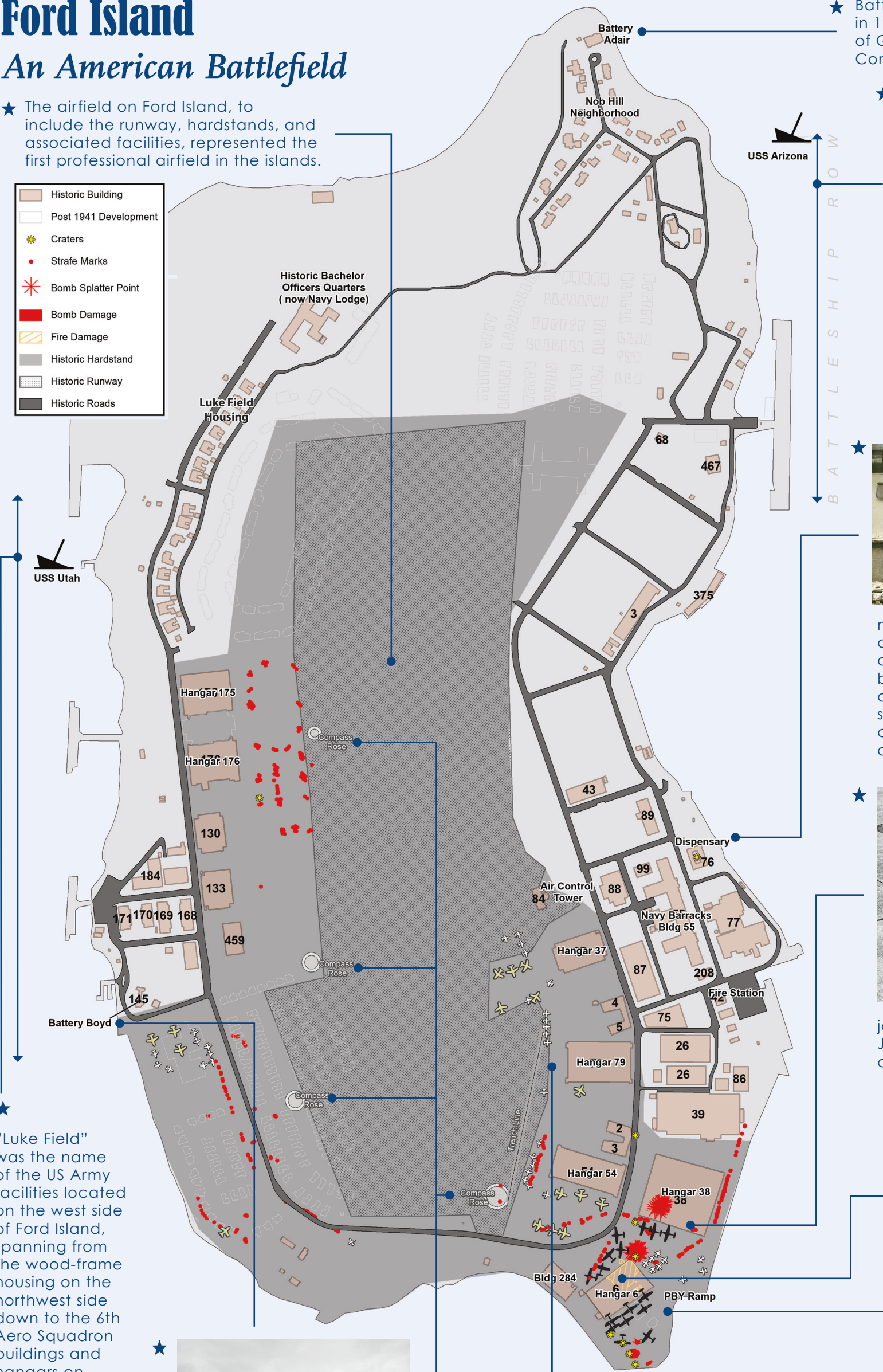


Ford Island

An American Battlefield

★ The airfield on Ford Island, to include the runway, hardstands, and associated facilities, represented the first professional airfield in the islands.

- Historic Building
- Post 1941 Development
- Craters
- Strafe Marks
- Bomb Splatter Point
- Bomb Damage
- Fire Damage
- Historic Hardstand
- Historic Runway
- Historic Roads



★ Battery Adair is a gun battery constructed in 1917. The battery is now in the basement of Quarters K, The Pacific Submarine Force Commander's quarters, constructed in 1936.



Six battleships—the USS Nevada, USS Arizona, USS Tennessee, USS West Virginia, USS Maryland, and USS Oklahoma—were moored along Battleship Row adjacent to the southeast side of Ford Island on the morning of December 7, 1941.



★ A bomb dropped by the Japanese on December 7, 1941, and likely intended for the USS California moored nearby, fell into the courtyard of the Dispensary but caused little damage. The Dispensary continued to be used to aid the injured during that day and the following days, and has since been repurposed to serve as a center for excellence in humanitarian assistance and disaster response.



★ These hardstand areas were used to store and park aircraft. Tiedown chains were affixed to the aircraft and then made fast to padeyes incorporated into the concrete—as can still be seen today adjacent to a strafing mark from likely Japanese gunfire no doubt intended to destroy the aircraft parked in this location.



★ Hangar 6 and planes nearby were damaged and set afire by a Japanese bomb exploding on the northeast corner of the building. (Photo from the National Archives.)

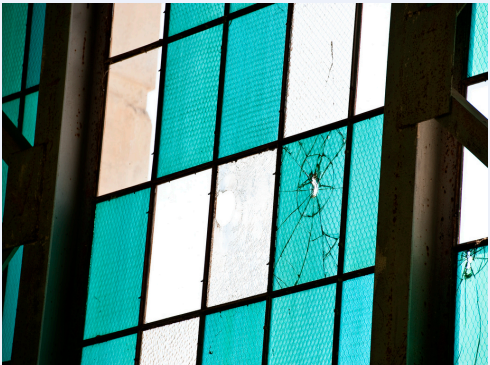
★ "Luke Field" was the name of the US Army facilities located on the west side of Ford Island, spanning from the wood-frame housing on the northwest side down to the 6th Aero Squadron buildings and hangars on the west and southwest side. Named after 2nd Lieutenant Frank Luke, the first airman to earn the Medal of Honor for his 18 aerial victories during WWI, Luke Field served as the base for the 6th Aero Squadron until 1939 when Army air operations moved to Hickam Field. The Luke Field facilities are prime examples of vernacular military architecture.



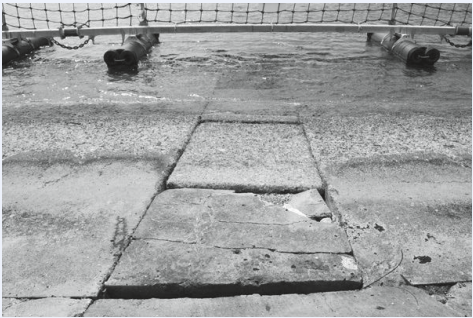
★ Battery Boyd is a gun battery constructed in 1917, during World War I.



★ The radial lines of the compass rose align with compass points and were used to calibrate the compasses in the Navy's planes.



★ The buildings that make up PAMPH are positioned on the hard stand areas - the bullet holes in the windows of Hangar 79 speak to the impact of the battle on that day.



★ The patrol seaplane ramps were bombarded by Japanese bombers but remained useable after the attack.

