

Ewa Battlefield

COMMEMORATION



“This place is sacred ground to the United States Marines that died there, to the Japanese aviators that perished and the civilian residents of Ewa plantation. Remembering our solemn commitment to their memory is the promise that is fulfilled at battlegrounds that are preserved and enshrined by our nation.”

Daniel A. Martinez, Chief Historian
WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument



Photo: US Archives

For Americans, this X marks the spot of
the beginning of WWII

Ewa Battlefield
December 7, 1941

A Day of Remembrance

Welcome
Flyovers
Presentation and Posting of Colors
National Anthem, Hawaiian Anthem
Opening Prayer
Introduction of Guest Speaker
Host's Statement
Introduction and Appreciation of Special Guests
Invitation to Lay Flowers
Music Medley
Last Roll Call
Rifle Salute
Taps
Closing Prayer

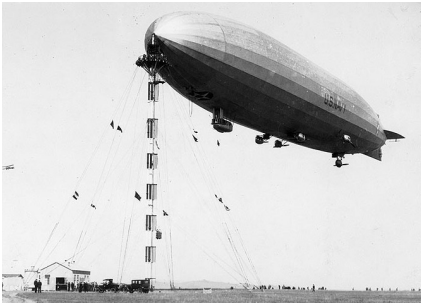


**Ewa Plain Battlefield (Ewa
Mooring Mast Field) was officially
listed in the National Register of
Historic Places on May 23, 2016.**

The Battle of Ewa Plain began just before 8 AM and was part of the larger surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) on the United States of America (US) military base at Pearl Harbor and other installations on the island of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, on December 7, 1941.

The Ewa Plain Battlefield boundary covers approximately 180 acres and includes portions of Ewa Field with physical features and characteristics dating to 1941. This includes the airfield, runways, swimming pool, foundations, open fields, and transportation arteries present during the attack.

The Ewa Mooring Mast Field



Ewa Mooring Mast Field is one of the very earliest aviation fields in Hawaii. It was constructed in 1925 as a high tech US Navy airship port for dirigibles with a state-of-the-art 160-foot high steel tower and circular railway, but two crashes on the mainland led to the cancellation of the project before the first dirigible arrived.



The Ewa site later served as the forward Marine Corps Air Station Ewa and was one of the very first military bases attacked and remained under attack for two hours due to the Japanese use of Ewa airspace as their key air attack staging objective.

Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Ewa

In 1941, Ewa Field was a new marine base comprised of the airfield, an assortment of airplanes, and marine camp called Marine Air Group 21. The nearly square base totaled approximately 180 acres and was constructed on a former sisal plantation, the fibers of which can be used to make ropes and rugs. The surrounding kiawe forest and vast complex of agriculture fields were a sea of green sugar cane and irrigated with water pumped from numerous wells



drilled on the plantation. In 1941, the marines with assistance from the plantation cleared the land to expand and redevelop Ewa Field. By December, Ewa Field contained two intersecting runways (3-21 & 11-29) forming a large black "X" in the middle of a square forest clearing of bright white coral terrain providing approaching Japanese aircraft in 1941 with a clear visual reference point from the air.

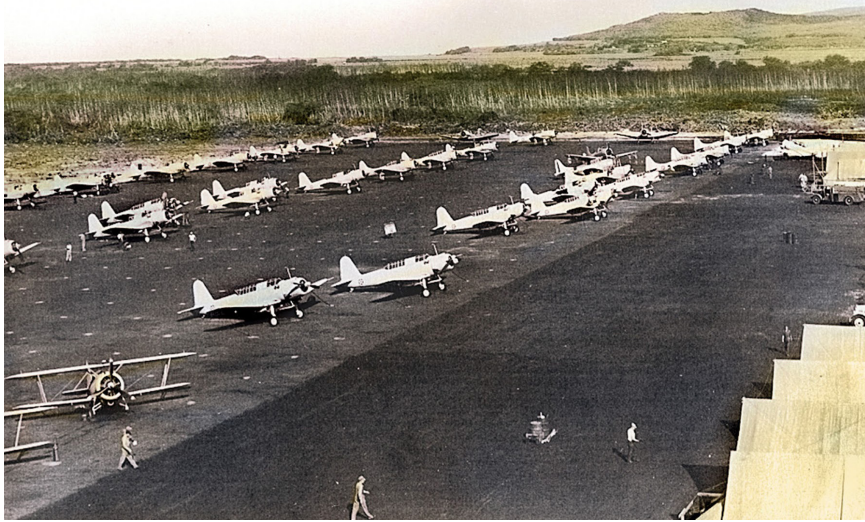
On December 7, the base was still under construction. Many of the work areas and aviation facilities were housed in tents along the airfields. The camp located north of the runways



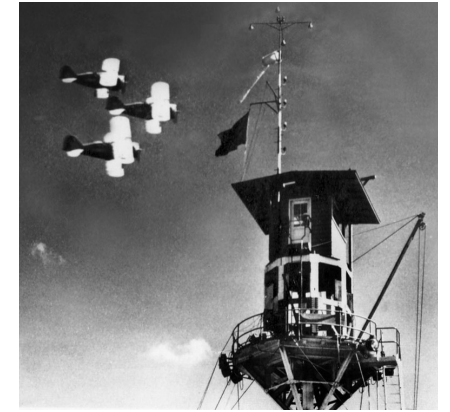
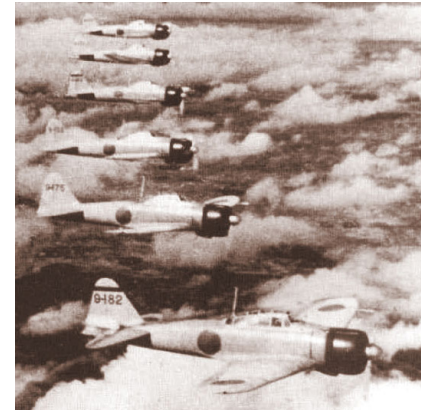
consisted of a mixture of buildings and tents organized on a grid system containing several roads.

While all of the buildings and structures at Ewa Field erected by December 7, have been torn down, we can still see the runways, roads, and the Japanese aircraft cannon and machine gun strafing marks on the warm-up platform.





Top Left: Japanese Zeros, Top Right: Grumman F3F-1941, Middle: SB2U-3 ofVMSB-232 burns up on Ewa Ramp, Bottom Left: Wrecked Ewa MCAS 1938 Ford Ambulance, Bottom Right: 2-MF-13 at a still existing early 1942 Ewa Field revetment



December 7th, 1941 Battle Action

The Battle of the Ewa Plain included air to air combat between Japanese Zeros and US Navy planes from the USS Enterprise. Army P-40 fighters joined the air battle over Ewa Field successfully shooting down several Japanese dive bombers.

Army, Navy and Marine anti-aircraft batteries fired on Japanese planes from Puuloa near Ewa Beach. Other Navy shipboard units fired on departing Japanese planes from Pearl Harbor and West Loch. As dive bombers regrouped and circled over Ewa Field, Navy AA units concentrated fire in that area causing AA

shrapnel to fall all over the Ewa Plantation area.

Further regrouping and circling near Barbers Point lighthouse before flying back to IJN aircraft carriers the planes again came under fire from Camp Malakole.

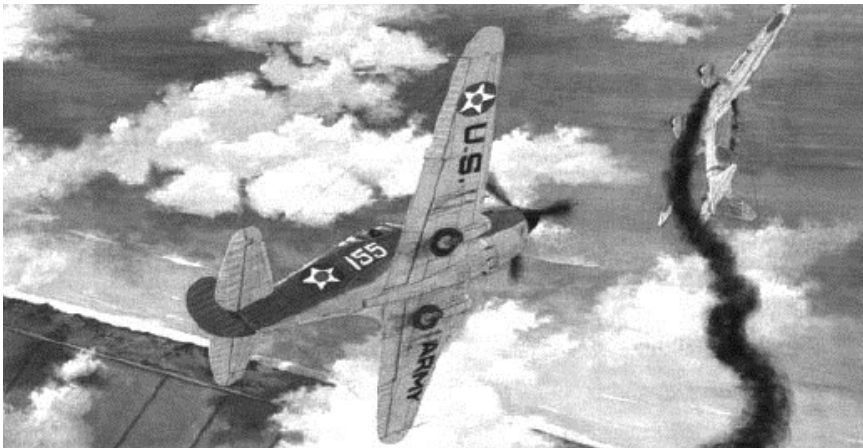
The Ewa Plain is a former coral reef and varies in terrain from exposed coral to agricultural fields. In some locations, erosion of the coral has created karst topographic features such as fissures, subterranean caverns, and sinkholes. During the afternoon of December 7, several of the sinkholes served as improvised foxholes and bunkers.

Approximately 50 American and Japanese planes destroyed, 32 killed and 65 wounded in the overall Ewa Battlefield on December 7, 1941.





Top: Lockheed Electra burns up at Ewa Field. One of 48 planes lost to the Japanese attack. Middle: "Val" BII-233, engaged and shot down over Ewa Field by US Army P-40 Warhawks from Haleiwa airfield. Bottom Left: Early Ewa Field reventment, Bottom Right: 75 half-dome reventments were built in 1942-43 to protect arriving aircraft carrier warplanes.



All Historical Photos: US Archives



This historical photo shows Ewa-based Marines firing at the Japanese planes from the site of an unfinished pool at Ewa Field. This is one of the only photos known to exist that shows U.S. servicemen actually firing at the enemy attackers on the morning of Dec 7, 1941

Honoring Major John A. Hughes, USMC (Ret.)

Combat Pilot and Ewa Field—Pearl Harbor Attack Survivor



On the morning of Dec 7th, 1941, U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant John Hughes was walking toward the main gate for the Sunday newspaper when he noticed the low flying aircraft heading straight for the Ewa Mooring Mast Field. They had a red ball on the side and torpedos underneath. He instinctive-

ly knew they were under attack and ran to the guard shack and called to his men to break out the guns and ammo.

Having enlisted in the Corps in 1937 at the age of 18, he was just 22 years old on Dec 7th, and a sergeant at MCAS Ewa Field. Armed with a 1903 Springfield rifle, he fired about three shots before turning to push undamaged planes away from the ones that were on fire and exploding. "We'd fire a few shots then move the planes." In two strafing waves, the Japanese planes destroyed most of the aircraft on the tarmac. The attack lasted for about two hours.

We gratefully honor the courageous service of John A. Hughes.

President Roosevelt, General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz visit MCAS Ewa 1944



Ewa Marine Corps Air Station
—Base of Aces



All Historical Photos: US Archives

MCAS Ewa—Distinguished and Celebrated

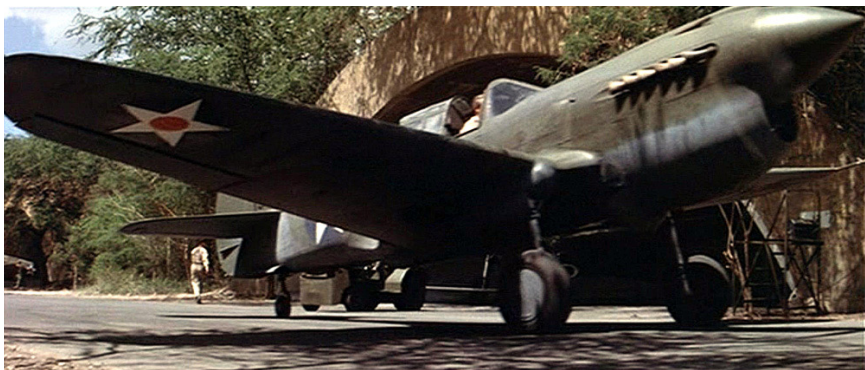
MCAS Ewa was visited by many famous military, political and historic figures, including FDR, Adm. Nimitz, Gen. MacArthur, Adm. Halsey, Gen. Geiger, and was an F4U Corsair fighter aircraft training base for legendary aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh and baseball great Ted Williams.



MCAS Ewa was also an aircraft training base for many legendary USMC fighter squadrons, ace fighter pilots and 12 Medal of Honor recipients.

Ewa Field-MCAS Ewa was the original first home of US Marine Corps aviation in the Pacific, a forward development base of key air support concepts and pivotal operational aviation airport used to win back the Pacific Islands from Imperial Japanese control.

MCAS Ewa was the WW-II home base for many special US Marine Corps air units, medium bomber squadrons, air transport squadrons, Navy SeaBee Construction Battalions and the Women's Marine Reserve squadron.



20th Century Fox

Tora, Tora, Tora" scenes shot at former MCAS Ewa Reventments 1969

Story Less Told

The historic attack on Pearl Harbor often overshadows the stories of Ewa-West Oahu on that fateful day. Today we reflect on those stories of courage, honor, sacrifice, and loss. Ewa Field, Ewa Plantation Village, Fort Barrette, and the Ewa Plain—the greater Ewa Battlefield saw attacks, fights, casualties, deaths, losses and victories. On this sacred ground, we pay tribute to the US servicemen who died defending our country, the Hawaii civilians whose lives were cut short, and also to the perished Japanese aviators. We give our solemn commitment to remember their great sacrifice and keep their stories alive.

Taps (Day is Done)



Fading light dims the sight
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright
From afar drawing nigh,
Falls the night.

Day is done, gone the sun
From the lakes, from the hills, from the sky
All is well, safely rest;
God is nigh.

Then goodnight, peaceful night;
Till the light of the dawn shineth bright.
God is near, do not fear,
Friend, goodnight.

Special Thanks

Thank you to all the businesses, organizations and volunteers who have made this Ewa Battlefield Commemoration Event possible.

Ewa Battlefield Commemoration Sponsor: AMVETS Hawaii

As one of America's leading Veterans Service Organizations with over 300,000 members, AMVETS (or American Veterans, formerly known as American Veterans of World War II) has a proud history of assisting Veterans and sponsoring numerous programs that serve our Country and its citizens. Membership in AMVETS is open to anyone who is currently serving or who has honorably served in the U.S. Armed Forces from World War II to the present, to include the National Guard and Reserves.



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