



For Immediate Release

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Local youth collaborate on a series of aviation themed murals in the Sand Point Naval Air Station Historic District

Teens living in and around Magnuson Park have collaborated to paint several murals with the goal of creating an outdoor history of aviation exhibition, now on view at Building 41 in the Sand Point Naval Air Station Historic District. Friends of Magnuson Park is proud to present this project alongside their partners: Artist Sandy Bricel Miller, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, 4Culture, Seattle Landmarks Board, Seattle Parks, Mercy Magnuson Park and Solid Ground.

Young residents of Magnuson Park and students from Eckstein Middle School came together under the guidance of Artist Educator, Sandy Bricel Miller and several dedicated volunteers over the course of two weeks in early July 2021 to paint the murals. This two-week art workshop illuminated the rich history of aviation at Sand Point (now home to Magnuson Park) for the youth and offered a valuable painting apprenticeship for these budding artists.

“This mural project not only offered an enriching learning experience for local youth, but also acts as a protective measure for an unused historic building within the Historic District and serves as one of the only indications of this area’s connection to Seattle aviation history currently visible within the Park” said Friends Executive Director, Elisa Law.

Murals were designed by Bricel Miller and feature aircraft that flew from Sand Point during its years as Seattle’s first municipal airport and Naval Air Station Seattle and include a Sikorsky F-43, Fairchild C-119 Flying Boxcar, Goodyear Blimp, Boeing Model C, Curtiss Flying Jenny, Douglas World Cruiser, and a PBY5A among others. For more information on the aircraft that flew from Sand Point, visit www.friendsofmagnusonpark.org/history.

These murals will be exhibited October 30th, 2021 until further notice.

Friends of Magnuson Park hopes to develop Building 41 into Magnuson Park's first Visitor Center where the stories of Sand Point's aviation history can shine. In anticipation of this, Friends of Magnuson Park is seeking funding support for a feasibility study and historic assessment of the building to be completed this Fall. To offer a tax-deductible donation or become a member please contact info@friendsofmagnusonpark.org.

With Funding Support From

This mural project was generously supported by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Neighborhood Matching Fund and 4Culture's Preservation Sustained Support Program.



Seattle
Neighborhoods

About Aviation at Sand Point

First and foremost, Sand Point (now the site of Magnuson Park) is significant because of its connection to Seattle's aviation history. In 1917 near the end of WWI, the first conflict to utilize aircraft, a group of Army airmen came to Seattle to sell Liberty Bonds. Because Seattle had no airport, they had to land on Jefferson Golf Course – which was an embarrassment for Seattle. A few years later, in 1920, King County opened Sand Point Airfield – Seattle's first municipal airport.

Bill Boeing used Sand Point to test and fly new airplane models that were barged in from his plant “The Big Red Barn” on the Duwamish. Boeing also built the pontoons for the four Douglas World Cruiser airplanes that would be the first to fly around-the-world flight in 1924. For our American fliers, this global race to girdle the world by air began and ended here at Sand Point. The winged obelisk at the entry to Magnuson Park marks this important event.

After World War I, a movement began to build a Naval Air Station at Sand Point, and King County began acquiring surrounding parcels. The location near water was essential because at the time, sea planes were more utilized than land planes. The land was flat with no steep slopes, nothing in the way like trees or power lines and it was easy to spot from the air and was accessible from Seattle by the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad.

Most of the buildings within the Historic District were built throughout the 1930s and NAS Seattle and the headquarters of the 13th Naval District developed. Pilots were trained and aircraft were tested and torpedoes assembled in what is now the Magnuson Park Brewery. They were preparing for the front lines of the war in the Pacific.

Early on that fateful Sunday morning December 7, 1941, Sand Point received word of a surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, another Naval Air Station. The commander of NAS Seattle ordered all windows at the base blacked out, and a machine gunner was placed on every roof. Some of the highest clerestory (clear-story) windows in Building 2 are still blackened.

There were only two other Naval Air Stations on the west coast, near San Francisco and San Diego California. The first six months of this war were very scary for Seattleites. Japanese submarines lurked offshore and islands off Alaska were being invaded.

Along with the Bremerton shipyard and the Boeing airplane factory, Sand Point Naval Air Station and Fort Lewis provided protection for the Northwest Coast and their combined efforts helped turn the tide of the war.

About Friends of Magnuson Park

Friends of Magnuson Park (formerly Friends of Naval Air Station Seattle Historic District) formed in 2008 when changes were proposed to the historic district overlay at the former Naval Air Station Seattle that would allow for demolition of historic buildings for redevelopment.

Friends advocated for the historic district's listing in the National Register of Historic Places and Washington Heritage Register, supporting Seattle Parks and Recreation's voluntary nomination in 2009. In 2010, Naval Air Seattle (NAS Seattle) was formally listed as a historic district in the Washington Heritage Register and in the National Register with national significance.

Galvanized by the federal and state register listings, Friends took the next step and submitted a landmark district nomination to the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board in 2010. This was a major effort for a grassroots, all-volunteer organization to undertake and we were successful. The designation process was completed in March 2011 when the Board voted to designate the former Sand Point Naval Air Station as a Landmark District, the first historic district in Seattle in twenty-three years.

Today, Friends continues to advocate for the preservation of the historic district, curating exhibits within the Park, hosting events and tours, granting academic scholarships to high school seniors living at Magnuson and archiving oral histories through the Sand Point Remembered program.

In the future, Friends of Magnuson Park hopes to develop Magnuson Park's first Visitor Center where the stories of Sand Point's aviation history can shine. In anticipation of this, Friends of Magnuson Park is seeking funding support for a feasibility study and historic assessment of the building to be completed this Fall. To offer a tax-deductible donation or become a member please contact info@friendsofmagnusonpark.org