

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hampton National Guard Armory

Other names/site number: Battery D, 111th Field Artillery Armory; DHR #114-5001

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 504 North King Street

City or town: Hampton State: Virginia County: Independent City

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B XC D

<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>Date</p>
<p>Title :</p>	<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DEFENSE; arms storage

SOCIAL; meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT; Moderne

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: Limestone; METAL: Steel;
CONCRETE; BRICK; GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Hampton National Guard Armory is a brick masonry Moderne Style building constructed in 1936 as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program. The armory is located just outside of historic downtown Hampton in the middle of the 500 block of North King Street and is the only resource within the historic boundary. The armory has decorative brick cladding highlighted by stone and concrete decorative features. The interior has offices at the front, service rooms at the rear and a large assembly room and theater stage in the main central portion of the building. The armory is bounded to the south by several commercial buildings, to the east by an historic residential development, to the west by a four-lane road, and to the north by a vacant lot and a cemetery. The property is flat, covered in grass, and enclosed with a chain link fence; the setting is much like it was when the building was constructed. The parcel is 200'x200' and the armory is centered and takes up a majority of the parcel. There is a sidewalk along the street, at the entrance side of the building.

Narrative Description

The Hampton National Guard Armory was constructed in 1936 in the Moderne Style with militaristic elements and contains approximately 11,870 square feet, measuring 87' wide and 120' long. It followed the design of several other WPA-funded armories in the state. The façade is eleven bays wide and two stories in height with a Flemish bond brick veneer constructed with

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

red tapestry bricks. It is approached via a concrete sidewalk, two brick steps, and a concrete porch with two concrete platforms with support stands, on the sides, which likely held cannons at one time. The central section is large and bulky with a central, recessed double-leaf door with a wood panel on the bottom and a pane of glass on the upper half of each leaf. The entry is topped by a four-light transom above which is a stone lintel inscribed with "US/NG" on the sides, and "Virginia National Guard" in the center. Above this is a decorative brick band which supports a large arched, multi-light window which is framed by a brick arch with a pattern of brick voussoirs. Two large brick buttresses flank the entrance and feature a pair of vertical four-light casement windows on the first story and a single four-light casement above. The top of each buttress is capped with a stone relief of an eagle holding two rifles in its talons. The central wall section is taller than the sides and forms a parapet behind which is the flat roof of the building's front section and then the front of the central section's gabled roof. The two sides of the façade each have four bays separated by narrow engaged buttresses in the form of pilasters topped with stone caps. Between them, on each level are six-light metal casement windows with a four-light transom. All windows have brick rowlock sills and brick soldier course lintels and most are boarded up from the exterior but the historic sash are underneath the cladding. There is a simple soldier course cornice. The corner pilaster turns the corner and begins the three bays of each side of the front section of the armory, each of which matches the façade in proportion and details.

The armory's central section's sides are simpler but with the same basic elements and rhythm of the façade. There are six bays each separated by a brick pilaster, but without a stone cap. There is a simple brick articulated cornice. Each bay contains a huge thirty-six-light historic fixed and awning style steel frame window with multiple opening sections, all of which are again supported by a brick rowlock sill and topped with a brick soldier course lintel. On the south elevation, two of the bays (first and fifth) feature a large, brick arched opening with a concrete ramp for vehicles topped by a smaller multi-light metal sash. The last bay on the south side features a small one-story brick addition with a chimney which likely housed the boiler. The entire central section has a large front gable roof with historic slate shingle sheathing. The rear portion of the building is much simpler and utilitarian with nine-bays and no pilasters, but also two stories. There is another chimney along with a boarded up single-leaf rear entry door on the east (rear) wall.

Much of the interior of the armory's front and rear sections shows evidence of water damage, some extensive, as a result of failed flat roofs. However, most of the interior features and decorative elements remain, including almost all of the historic fixed and awning style steel frame windows. The walls are historic plaster over metal lathe and feature wood trim at the corners and wood baseboards. The vestibule is more decorative than the other rooms of the front section with cased arched openings. Wood stairs access the upper floor which has a small mezzanine which overlooks the central drill hall. The offices in the front section do not have notable decorative elements other than the metal windows and wood trim; some retain historic wood flooring. The rear of the vestibule has a double-leaf solid wood door which accesses the floor level of the central hall portion of the building.

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

The huge central drill area, measuring 70 by 90 feet, is an uninterrupted space with a soaring gabled roof supported by an extensive system of metal trusses that are, in turn, supported by the exterior brick walls. The interior wall is painted brick punctuated by the various window and door openings accessing the side yards as well as the front and rear sections of the building. A full-width mezzanine overlooks the space from the building's front (west) section while the hall's east side features a large stage opening. The historic oak wood flooring is intact with some damaged areas near the exterior garage doors.

The armory's rear section is more utilitarian, with kitchen, heating, restroom, and dressing room areas (including shower and locker rooms), along with what were likely storage rooms for the military supplies and equipment. Again, most historic metal window sash are retained.

All roof sections are supported by wood joists and wood decking, except for the metal trusses in the central section. All three building sections are constructed over a crawl space. There also is a small concrete full basement under the rear section.

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1936

Significant Dates

1936

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Harmon, Captain Asher, state engineer for the WPA

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Hampton National Guard Armory is eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance, with the period of significance being 1936, the year of construction. The armory is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an intact and increasingly rare “between the wars” Moderne style armory in Hampton Roads and Virginia, as well as its role as an important surviving Hampton Roads example of a New Deal-era Works Progress Administration-funded construction project.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Hampton Armory

In early 1936 the Works Progress Administration (WPA) approved plans, and thus partial funding, for a new armory to be constructed in Hampton, Virginia, for Battery D, 111th field artillery. The effort was led by the unit’s commander, Captain H. Clark Thompson, who represented many who felt a new armory was needed. The unit had been reorganized in 1924 after being disbanded following World War I and was originally headquartered in an old power house on Sunset Creek. A fire forced a move to a former county garage on Academy Street which was renovated but was not the formal armory space needed for proper training and equipment storage. The proposed new armory was estimated to cost \$25,000, with the city providing limited funds for labor as well as the site for the new facility. Funds were also expected from Warwick County (now part of the City of Hampton) as well as the state armory fund; there were already fourteen armory projects under consideration around the state at that time. Finally, the WPA was expected to provide a substantial portion of the construction costs as part of its New Deal-era work relief efforts. As with many armories, this building was expected to serve the community as an auditorium, gymnasium, and meeting place when not in use as an armory.¹

On February 10th, 1936, the Hampton City Council approved up to \$10,000 for site acquisition and skilled labor costs towards the new armory project as well as a formal request to the Virginia General Assembly to approve the issuing of a bond for financing. Regional WPA administrator Calvin C. Tennis emphasized the need for a quick decision. With City approval, the WPA committed to funding the full cost of materials for the modern brick armory. Skilled labor would be sourced from a combination of private companies as well as the WPA relief rolls, with cost estimates assembled by W.F. Pyle, the WPA district project engineer.² An agreement was soon reached to purchase an approximately 200 square foot site for the armory on North King Street, across from the Bellamy Ice Cream plant. The land’s price was set at \$1600, with total project costs estimated at \$30,000, of which the city would provide a third. The site was formally purchased on March 2nd, and estimated total project costs had already risen to \$41,000 as a result

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

of changes in design. At this point, federal approval was the final step needed for construction to begin.³

With the arrival of WPA funds, clearing of the site by WPA workmen (consisting of both local and imported workers) began on March 9, 1936, and materials were ordered as well. By March 16th site clearing was complete and work on the foundation began. Demonstrative of the economy and the times, the speed of construction would depend partially on the availability of WPA laborers from their worker rolls. Julian Powell was named construction superintendent by City Manager J.H. Sinclair, Jr. A change resulted in the building being heated by oil, rather than coal, representing a larger shift away from coal for nonindustrial fuel. A separate garage and shooting range, which appear to never have been constructed, were planned so as to eliminate original plans for a basement.⁴

The building was constructed using 77,000 red tapestry bricks for facing and approximately 300,000 tapestry bricks for the entire building; the complete width of the load-bearing walls totaled thirteen inches. The plain construction bricks were supplied locally, while the red tapestry bricks were sourced from Roanoke, Virginia. The roof was constructed utilizing a steel framing system, covered in sheathing and topped with slate shingles. A hurricane and other delays pushed completion of the exterior into the fall of 1936. The interior walls were finished in plaster and spaces included housing and a lounge for officers. Other interior finishes include wood trim and wood flooring for the large central drill room/auditorium. The final cost of the facility was \$52,631.47, the majority of which was paid by the WPA (\$37,631.47), and it was completed by the first week of March 1937.⁵ Eugene Mitchell recalls the armory being built and recalled that the armory served as a social gathering place and musical venue in addition to its military function. In keeping with the era's practice of racial segregation, he also remembered both African American and white community residents using the facility, but at different times.⁶

During the 1930s a small number of armories in addition to Hampton's were constructed across Virginia as part of the WPA program, including at Newport News and Portsmouth, also both in 1936. The Newport News armory was demolished in the late twentieth century while the exterior of the Portsmouth armory, with a design nearly identical to Hampton's, was covered in stucco in the late twentieth century and most or all of its historic windows were removed and the openings filled in. Hampton has one of only two remaining armories in Hampton Roads which dates from before World War II, and the only one which retains a high level of architectural integrity. It is also among a small group of surviving WPA-funded armories remaining in Virginia. Nearly identical buildings still survive in Blackstone, Emporia, and Charlottesville. Some of these buildings have been rehabilitated for current use, but unfortunately a good number are not in use and are threatened by deterioration.

Armory Building Type

For most of America's military history, from the Colonial period until the early twentieth century, state-led militias of citizen soldiers formed the foundation of armies and the National Guard. Beginning in the twentieth century the United States developed a regular, professional

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

army with the National Guard becoming a reserve force for this army. During the post-Civil War nineteenth century the National Guard also served as a peacekeeping force during an era of violent labor conflicts. Before the Civil War the primary military facilities for militia were called arsenals and were typically manufacturing and/or storage facilities for arms and equipment. The term 'armory' emerged during the Civil War, but was clearly established as an American building type after the construction of the famous Seventh Regiment Armory in Manhattan in 1879. Armories after this time were built to serve as headquarters for militia, and later National Guard, units with two primary components: administration blocks and attached drill sheds, which were developed to provide a reliable, safe training location. Armories also expanded their functions from not only National Guard facilities, but also community clubhouses as well as public monuments to the military and the governmental power within the community.⁷

The armory building type of the National Guard era emphasized a grand entrance into a large, central vestibule which led to offices, meeting rooms, and officers' quarters to either side and on upper stories. Rifle ranges were often located in basements. The drill shed would be attached to the rear, and its huge size led to extensive use of steel truss work to support the large and elevated roof spans. These armories were located near the center of communities for convenience of members, and later for use by members of the community as well. Nineteenth and early twentieth century armories almost uniformly followed the Gothic Revival, military fortress design with design elements inspired by medieval military architecture.⁸ During the twentieth century armories no longer had to serve as bastions against domestic insurrection and design drifted away from both the fortress to simpler militaristic designs utilizing increasingly Moderne stylistic elements.

During the 1920s armory construction was largely dormant as a result of the turn against militarism after World War I. This also began the period of armories being regularly used by communities for civic purposes, in some cases almost entirely as army units were disbanded after the war. These armories became focal points of local pride, which eventually led to a renewed support for the National Guard. New armories were now specifically built to serve both purposes: military training and community events. With the adoption of mechanized equipment, armories needed more space and moved away from the central core of most cities.⁹

New Deal PWA and WPA funding for Armories

The Public Works Administration (PWA, 1933) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA, 1935) were created as massive work relief and economic stimulus programs during the Great Depression and were largely focused on construction projects. Both programs were intended for civic works, but the increasing political instability of Europe in the 1930s led to the new focus of military readiness. The first public funds for armories were released in 1936, with four hundred armories eventually built through these two programs and hundreds more existing facilities updated and enlarged. These programs also allowed the poorer Southern states to catch up with the other regions of the United States in armory construction, overcoming the deficit resulting from the Civil War's destruction and general economic malaise. Generally the WPA focused on smaller single-unit armories while the PWA funded larger armory buildings. The design of the

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

armories was largely left to the local units and communities. To control costs, concrete was increasingly used and elaborate military features were eschewed for more utilitarian models which rarely followed the nineteenth century Gothic Revival-inspired designs. In any case, the Gothic Revival style was generally falling out of favor as the twentieth century progressed towards World War II. The New Deal work relief programs actually envisioned armories being used by the public 75% of the time, and the designs reflected this expectation with features such as raised stages and dressing rooms for theatrical productions and hardwood floors for dances and sports events.¹⁰

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Daily Press (Newport News), various.

Fogelson, Robert M. America's Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Eugene Mitchell, interview by Margaret Long Stephenson, Hampton, July 26, 1994.

Everett, Diana. Historic National Guard Armories: A Brief, Illustrated Review of the Past Two Centuries. Arlington, VA: National Guard Bureau, 1994.

Short, C.W. and R. Stanley-Brown. Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years 1933 and 1939 With the Assistance of the Public Works Administration. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939.

Todd, Nancy L. New York's Historic Armories. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA: City of Hampton Library, Hampton, VA

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 114-5001

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.26

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.031280 | Longitude: -76.345380 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary conforms to the lot lines for tax parcel 02K078 00 00000, as recorded by the City of Hampton, and is also delineated on the attached printed digital Location Map and Sketch Map/Photo Key. The following information was obtained from local government records: 504 N King St (Plat book 0093, Plat page 0229).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the armory and all land which has been associated with the Hampton Armory since its construction in 1936.

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Marcus R Pollard
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group
street & number: PO Box 11083
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23517
e-mail: marcus@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com
telephone: 757-651-0494
date: 6/8/2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Hampton National Guard Armory

City or Vicinity: City of Hampton

County: N/A State: Virginia

Photographer: Marcus Pollard

Date Photographed: December 2015

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 14: West Elevation (façade), facing east
- 2 of 14: NW Elevation oblique, facing SE
- 3 of 14: South Elevation, facing NE
- 4 of 14: Entry, facing east
- 5 of 14: Entrance Hall, facing west
- 6 of 14: Entrance Hall, facing east
- 7 of 14: Interior view of arched façade window, facing west
- 8 of 14: Second floor office, facing west
- 9 of 14: Assembly Hall, facing west
- 10 of 14: Assembly Hall, facing SE
- 11 of 14: Assembly Hall, Stage, facing east
- 12 of 14: Rear second story interior, facing east
- 13 of 14: Rear oblique, facing SW
- 14 of 14: Rear oblique, facing NW

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Hampton National Guard Armory
Name of Property

City of Hampton, VA
County and State

ENDNOTES

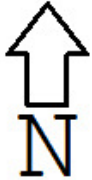
- ¹ “Studying Details of Proposal for Building Armory,” *Daily Press*, February 10, 1936, p 5.
- ² “Council Approves Armory; Finance With Bond Issue,” *Daily Press*, February 11, 1936, p 9; February 14, 1936, p 11.
- ³ “Offer Received to Sell Armory Site for \$1,600,” *Daily Press*, February 19, 1936, p 7; “City Purchases Armory Site at Cost of \$1,600,” *Daily Press*, March 3, 1936, p 6; “Interior Work on New Armory to Start Soon,” *Daily Press*, p B1;
- ⁴ “Armory Project Gets Under Way Here Tomorrow,” *Daily Press*, March 8, 1936, p D1; “Start Foundation Excavations for New Armory Today,” *Daily Press*, March 16, 1936, p. 5; Hampton Armory Plans Complete, Work Commences,” *Daily Progress*, March 25, 1936, p 8.
- ⁵ “77,000 Tapestry Bricks Will be Used in Armory,” *Daily Press*, April 26, 1936, p D2; “Progress Made on Brick Wall of New Armory,” *Daily Press*, May 17, 1936, p D1; “Armory For Housing Battery ‘D’ Turned Over To City; Has Large Drill Hall; Total Cost \$52,631,” *Daily Press*, March 7, 1937, p 1.
- ⁶ Eugene Mitchell, interview by Margaret Long Stephenson, Hampton, July 26, 1994.
- ⁷ Nancy L. Todd, New York’s Historic Armories: An Illustrated History (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2006), p 1-3.
- ⁸ Todd, New York’s Historic Armories, p 2-4.
- ⁹ Todd, New York’s Historic Armories, p 243-44, 248-49.
- ¹⁰ C.W. Short and R. Stanley-Brown, Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years 1933 and 1939 With the Assistance of the Public Works Administration (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), p i-x; Todd, New York’s Historic Armories, p 249-50; Robert M. Fogelson, America’s Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), p 196-99, 211; Diana Everett, Historic National Guard Armories: A Brief, Illustrated Review of the Past Two Centuries (Arlington, VA: National Guard Bureau, 1994), p 33-43.

Icon Coordinates:

(decimal degrees)

-Longitude: -76.345380

-Latitude: 37.031280



Hampton Armory
Hampton, VA
DHR#: 114-5001

1 Inch = 150 ft.



SKETCH MAP/PHOTO KEY

Hampton National Guard Armory, Hampton, VA

DHR #114-5001

(1 contributing building)

