

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

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February 2, 2012

Gregory Bean
Director of Public Works
Department of the Army
Headquarters, Garrison Command (Airborne)
2175 Reilly Road, Stop A
Fort Bragg, NC 28310

Re: Bowley Field and Ruth Field, Determination of Eligibility, Fort Bragg, Cumberland County,
ER 12-0104

Dear Mr. Bean:

Thank you for your letter of January 10, 2012, transmitting the determination of eligibility report for the above sites.

We concur with the finding of the report that both Bowley Field and Ruth Field are contributing properties to the Old Post Historic District under Criterion A for the association with military history, recreation, and military community planning and development. The report will be accepted as is and added to our files.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee Gledhill-Earley".

for Ramona M. Bartos

cc: Connie Barnett, Fort Bragg, connie.l.barnett@us.army.mil

**Determination of Eligibility for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places:
Old Post Historic District Baseball Fields**



79th Field Artillery, 1942, Photo courtesy of XVIII Airborne Corps Historian, Fort Bragg Military Reservation.

“The varied connection that existed between baseball and the military during World War II was deep and extensive, reflecting the important position that the game maintained within the fabric of American culture. To many citizens, baseball represented much of what made America great...It should come as no surprise, then, that when America responded to the aggression of totalitarian governments baseball went along for the long and arduous ride.”

-p. Xiii, *Playing for Their Nation: Baseball and the American Military during World War II* by Steven R. Bullock

**Prepared by Megan Privett
Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program
September 2010**

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Setting/Narrative Description

Located on the corner of Armistead and Woodruff Streets, Bowley Field is the oldest intact existing baseball field at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. It sits behind 1930s-era barracks to its south and west, and is conveniently placed just south of the Bastogne Gables neighborhood, which houses non-commissioned officers. A few street trees line the field's perimeter, and a chain-link fence encapsulates the field's boundaries. Although its exact date of construction is unknown, Bowley Field dates to at least to 1935, if not earlier, based upon documentary evidence.

Bowley Field consists of five resources, three contributing and two non-contributing, classified as one site and four structures. They are: A) baseball diamond and field, B) two dugouts/shelters, C) wooden stadium lighting, and D) chain link fence and backstop. The field measures 370 feet (north to south) by 359 feet (east to west) and the measurement of the field's perimeter is 1,375 feet. Bowley Field's baseball diamond is eroded most likely from years of not being maintained. The original grandstand, constructed of wood, was replaced with an early 1950s permanent set of bleachers made of concrete and glass block harboring locker rooms underneath. The grandstand is no longer extant and a few sets of metal bleachers are placed around the field's edges today. The non-contributing resources outlined do not necessarily detract from Bowley Field's integrity, but rather make the field more practical for playing baseball.

The baseball field known as Ruth Field is located adjacent to Woodruff Street, north of the barracks on Macomb St. and situated south of the industrial mule barn area. Callahan Gymnasium borders the field to the west and parking surrounds much of Ruth Field's perimeter. Ruth Field is smaller in area than Bowley Field and lacks any type of permanent grandstand or field house. Nonetheless, it is still an important recreational space where the 36th and/or 83rd Field Artillery played and practiced. Ruth Field consists of one site, four structures, and two objects. They are: A) baseball diamond and field, B) two dugouts/shelters, C) two water fountains, D) wooden stadium lighting, and E) chain link fence and backstop. Ruth Field's length measures 288 feet (north to south) by 255 feet (east to west) and the measurement of the field's perimeter is 1,047 feet. "Dugout" shelters flank either side of the south tip of the diamond. Ruth Field's date of construction is not known, but was likely built during the mid-1930s or earlier based on documentary evidence and phone interviews with former veterans who played baseball during the 1930s at Fort Bragg.

Inventory

1. Bowley Field (2-1535)

A. baseball field and diamond (contributing site, c. 1928-1935)

-grass outfield, dirt diamond with bases

-field measures 370 feet (north to south) by 359 feet (east to west) and the measurement of the field's perimeter is 1,375 feet

-the measurement of the perimeter of the diamond is 485 feet



Bowley Field, facing southwest



Bowley Field, facing north

B. dugouts (non-contributing structures, date unknown)

- dugout shelters flank either side of the south tip of the diamond
- measuring 20 feet by 10 feet each, they are made of chain link walls and sheltered with shed roofs made of wood framing and V-crimp metal roofing
- each dugout has two simple wood benches, each supported by 4 round metal poles



Bowley Field, dugout

C. lighting (non-contributing structure, 1946-1970)

-stadium lights are supported by approx. 40 ft wooden twin poles with numerous conical shaped lights; they surround the field

D. fence and backstop (non-contributing structure, date unknown)

-chain-link backstop and fence running the perimeter of the field

2. Ruth Field (2-1506)

A. baseball diamond and field (contributing site, c. 1928-1935)

-grass outfield, dirt diamond with bases

-field's length measures 288 feet (north to south) by 255 feet (east to west) and the measurement of the field's perimeter is 1,047 feet.

-the measurement of the perimeter of the diamond is 420 feet.

-field is encapsulated by a chain link fence with a high chain link fence on its southwest side to guard the catcher's mound

-field is surrounded by the rear elevations of historic barracks buildings on the south, an area with administrative buildings on the east side, the mule barns on the north side, and Callahan Gym with parking lot on the west side.



Ruth Field, facing southwest



Ruth Field, facing north

B. dugouts (non-contributing structures, date unknown)

-dugout shelters flank either side of the south tip of the diamond

-measuring 17 feet by 6 feet each, they are made of chain link walls and sheltered with shed roofs made of wood framing and asphalt shingle roofing.

-each dugout has two simple wood benches of three pine planks, each supported by

round metal poles and encircled with round metal piping. The metal piping appears to have been painted at one time.



Ruth Field, dugout



Ruth Field, water fountain

C. water fountains (2) (contributing objects, c. 1945-1970)

-round, concrete hollow water fountains filled with pebbles. Each contains two spigots; one at the opening at the top, and one at the bottom center.

D. lighting (non-contributing structure, c. 1946-1970)

-eight Stadium lights are supported by approx. 40 ft wooden twin poles with numerous conical shaped lights; they surround the field.

E. fence (non-contributing structure, date unknown)

-chain-link fence and backstop running the perimeter of the field.

Historical Background: Military Community Planning & Development, Recreation Contexts

Baseball's Role in Training for War

Since baseball's rise in popularity during the early 20th century, it has played a significant role in military training and in the lives of twentieth century soldiers. Athletics in general were encouraged at all levels of service in the military, providing a distraction from the immoral vices of drinking and "loose women" while also promoting military efficiency and boosting morale both at home and overseas. Sports provided numerous advantages to the military and offered a solution to periods of inactivity or to alleviate the monotony of military routine. Through athletics, soldiers could express the stress, frustration, and trauma of war.¹

The game of baseball originated during the 1840s in New York by a group of businessmen who formed the Knickerbocker Club. The sport proliferated during the latter half of the nineteenth century and was even played at some base camps during the Civil War, encouraging baseball's regional assimilation throughout the South. Baseball leagues and teams popped up on military installations all over the country, from the early twentieth century onward. Organized athletics during the WWI and WWII eras were embedded into military training not only to provide "healthful exercise," but also to teach enlisted men the skills and tactics needed for combat on the front lines. For example, throwing a baseball across a field could be used to simulate tossing a hand grenade at the enemy. Additionally, soldiers played in mock baseball games with men wearing gas masks in order to practice using the equipment. Analogies made between baseball and military skills helped soldiers to put what they were learning into context to prepare for combat. The game of baseball was used as a metaphor for war, with tactical information often being explained in terms of the ballgame, a commonly understood language among men. Therefore, in addition to making combat more like a game, U.S. Army soldiers had to learn about baseball if they wanted to learn about the war.

Baseball was also seen as a critical morale booster: "Many officers strongly believed that high participation rates in athletic programs correlated directly with increased morale and thus promoted 'unit sports with mandatory attendance.'"² Baseball taught soldiers teamwork and cemented group loyalty, both valued qualities in combat units. The sport also played a role in forming a common bond between soldiers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Baseball uniquely helped troops meet the Army's standards of physical fitness without incessant drilling. During WWI, the YMCA administered military baseball leagues but by WWII, the Special Services department had usurped that responsibility. The Special Services Branch was responsible for organizing GI sports and programs within the Army. Often, military squads would be scheduled to play civilian teams and vice versa. At Fort Bragg, the post-wide league played a local Hope Mills team as well as teams sponsored by the American Legion. This type of interaction among civilian teams served as a bridge into civilian life, easing the transition to and from the world of military life.

¹ Bullock, Steven R. *Playing for their Nation: Baseball and the American Military during World War II*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004.

² *Ibid*, p. 6.

By participating in the game of baseball and in athletics generally, soldiers demonstrated how American athletes were superior to those of other foreign armies. Author Wanda Ellen Wakefield summarizes this theory in *Playing to Win: Sports and the American Military, 1898-1945*: “The possession of athletic ability thus stood for more than physical coordination, it represented an entire complex of desirable characteristics, the sum of which marked masculinity and in turn reflected national virility.”³

Baseball during World War II

The WWII period is often referred to as baseball’s “Golden age,” when the game was by far the most popular sport preferred among young men. Due to the sport’s popularity and morale-sustaining qualities, the War Department ensured that troops had an adequate supply of baseball gear as well as access to news and radio broadcasts of games. According to Steven R. Bullock in *Playing for Their Nation: Baseball and the American Military during World War II*, approximately 75% of troops enjoyed watching or playing baseball—and nearly 90% of professional baseball players either enlisted or were drafted into service during World War II.⁴ Though some questioned the continuance of baseball during World War II, most leaders including President Roosevelt supported the continuation of major league baseball during the war due to its ability to stimulate morale abroad and on the home front.

Additionally, baseball as a fundraising effort for the war proved to be especially lucrative. Perhaps most importantly, baseball served as a panacea of sorts for returning troops. An article from *The Chowan Herald* from May 23, 1946 titled “Let’s Have Some Baseball” states, “...Now that the actual fighting has terminated and most of our boys are home, baseball, as much as anything else, should tend to erase from their minds, for a time at least, many of the grim realities they have faced. It will cost some money, to be sure, to operate a baseball club, so that this brief comment is presented in the hope that whatever method is adopted to raise money, many of our people will fall in line and help those who have taken upon themselves the responsibility to provide the great national pastime.”⁵



Playing Baseball on post, 1941. Photo courtesy of XVIII Airborne Corps Historian, Fort Bragg Military Reservation.

³ Wakefield, Wanda Ellen. *Playing to Win: Sports and the American Military, 1898-1945*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997, p. 57.

⁴ Smith, Adam, Megan Tooker, Chelsea Pogorelac, and Chris Cochran. “A History of Recreation in the Military,” (DRAFT) Unpublished Report. Champaign: Construction Engineering Research Laboratory, 2009, p. 56. Bullock, Steven R. *Playing for their Nation: Baseball and the American Military during World War II*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 1-30.

⁵ Taken from Butchko, Thomas R. “Hicks Field National Register Nomination,” Raleigh: State Historic Preservation Office, 1995, p. 19-20.

Baseball at Bragg

Baseball has been a part of Fort Bragg from its earliest beginnings, from the Camp Bragg era to the present day. A popular recreational sport especially in the early twentieth century, makeshift baseball fields were likely drawn up at Camp Bragg from when troops first arrived. The first known recordation of baseball at Camp Bragg appears in the Fayetteville Observer in March of 1919, announcing that Camp Bragg would play other camps in baseball during the spring and summer seasons, and that the local Y.M.C.A. was lending equipment for the young teams. The series was to be called “The Red Circle



1938 Map of Fort Bragg: Bowley Field pictured in center, two blocks left is Ruth Field, and two other baseball fields are shown in the block between the two. Courtesy Fort Bragg CRMP.

Baseball League,” with athletic officers coordinating the games in order to “... bring the Naval Training Station at Charleston here again, and it is hoped that a game can be arranged in the near future with the University of North Carolina.”⁶ Only after Camp Bragg became Fort Bragg and permanent construction began did the construction of formal fields commence.

During the 1930s, Fort Bragg was one location in North Carolina hosting Citizen Military Training Camps (CMTC). The CMTC camps, held for four weeks during the summer, offered military training to young men potentially interested in future military service while also affording them the chance to obtain an Officer commission Reserve Corps of the Army upon completion of four years of the CMTC. Moreover, the camps taught young men physical fitness and skills to become ‘good citizens,’ sport of baseball was integral to the CMTC camps as an athletic activity of choice.⁷



Fort Bragg CMTC, Battery “B” baseball team, 1929. Courtesy XVIII Airborne Corps Historian.

⁶ “Baseball: Fayetteville to Enjoy the National Game this Spring and Summer—Camp Bragg Will Play Other Camps.” *The Fayetteville Observer*, 26 March 1919, p. 3. Cumberland County Public Library Microfilm Collection.

⁷ McDonald, Heather. “Citizen Military Training Camps (CMTC): 1921-1940,” Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program, unpublished report, August 2008, p. 5-10.

The camps were divided into Batteries; each battery boasting its own baseball team of about twelve players that would compete against the others for the CMTC championship. Athletics began at 1:30 PM on a typical day after the military training portion of the CMTC was completed. Each trainee was required to participate in some form of athletics every day except on weekends.⁸ A newspaper article reporting on the CMTC camps mentions the baseball field: "At the camp site is to be found an athletic field and a boxing and wrestling ring, where many exciting baseball games, field meets, wrestling bouts and other athletic events are held. Here the youth of North and South Carolina vie with one another for honors to carry back home."⁹

Most divisions, battalions, or regiments had their own baseball teams that played against one another. Inter-team rivalry within Fort Bragg was a greater deal to servicemen of the 1930s and 1940s than competing against teams outside the installation. At Fort Bragg, the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery, 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery, 83rd Field Artillery, 36th Field Artillery, and others each had their own team and some teams were assigned to specific fields on which to play and practice. Described in the 1928



Fort Bragg Barracks Bag, "Each organization maintains a well-equipped athletic field suitable for all forms of sport...These plants are in constant use, leagues being formed during appropriate seasons of the year, where meets including the entire garrison or with outside teams are held...Fort Bragg athletic teams of all kinds have an enviable reputation in the State for their excellence and fairness in their playing."¹⁰ The 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery in particular played on what later

1937 Fort Bragg Post Champions Baseball Team, posing in front of the original Bowley Field Grandstand. Courtesy of Jarvis Gust.

⁸ Brand, Capt. T.S. "Citizens Military Training Camps will Care for 40,000," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 28, 1932. North Carolina Collection Clippings Files through 1975, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, p. 821.

⁹ Franke, Major G.H. "Thousand Student Soldiers Assigned to Fort Bragg for Month of Open Recreation," *The Charlotte Observer*, 12 February 1928. North Carolina Collection Clippings Files through 1975, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, p. 758.

¹⁰ *The Barracks Bag*, 1928, Fort Bragg, NC, p. 15.

The Red Guidon: A Souvenir of Fort Bragg and Activities of Civilian Military Training Camp. Fort Bragg, NC 1929. UNC Wilson Library, North Carolina Collection.

became known as Bowley Field, winning the post championship in 1935. The unit even had their own band to lead pep and cheering in the grandstand.

Exceptionally good players from all units on Fort Bragg were chosen as “all-stars” for the Post League or Post Team. A 1946 article in the *Fort Bragg Post* states, “All Stars of the various clubs on the post represented Fort Bragg in the North Carolina Servicemen’s Baseball Tournament at Greensboro. The local team came out second, losing in the final round to Greensboro ORD.”¹¹

Fort Bragg contained multiple fields, but Bowley Field was by far the most prominent, boasting its own grandstand. Bowley Field, named for General Albert J. Bowley, was constructed sometime between 1928 and 1935 according to photographs, personal interviews, and primary source documentation. The field first served as the 17th Field Artillery Baseball Field. A Fort Bragg-based veteran, Jarvis Gust, remembers baseball at Bowley Field vividly. Gust recollected the scene on game days with several hundred people out supporting the teams: “folks that could not get a seat would line their cars up along



Fort Bragg baseball game, possibly on Bowley Field. 1945. Courtesy of XVIII Airborne Corps Historian, Fort Bragg Military Reservation.

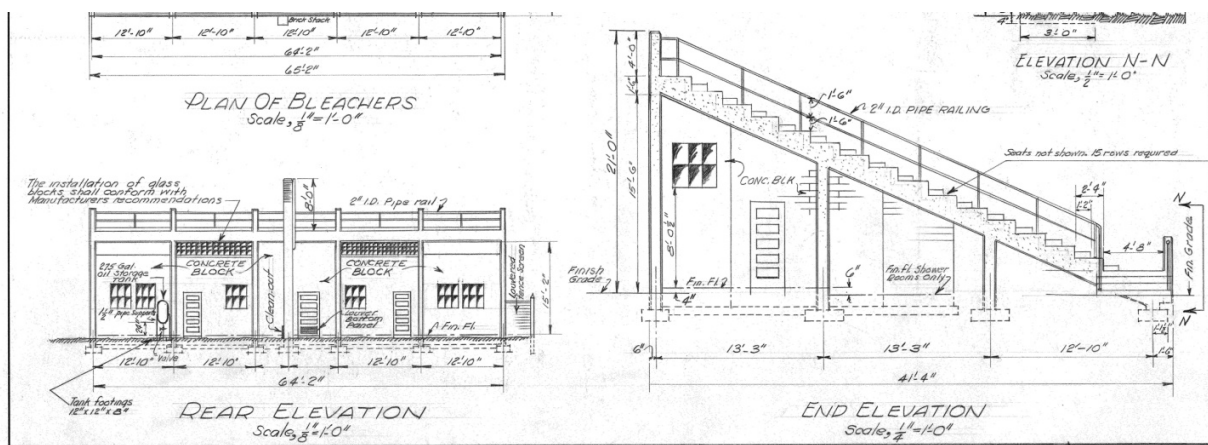
the streets to watch the game and would honk their horns if someone made a good hit.”¹² An original wooden frame grandstand stood on the southwest corner of the field, complete with wooden seats, wooden floors, a concrete foundation and a metal cage guard to protect the audience from fly balls. The Real Property card for the grandstand lists the structure as measuring ninety-seven by thirteen feet with a capacity of 350 at a cost of \$450.00. According to oral history sources, originally Bowley Field did not possess actual dugouts; rather, the two competing teams merely sat on the first row of the grandstand.¹³ However, a set of 1951 architectural plans for new bleachers show existing dugouts at Bowley Field, implying that perhaps dugouts or team shelters of some sort were added sometime between the mid-1930s and 1951. The original wooden grandstand was demolished due to plans for a permanent grandstand designed and built in 1951. The 1951 concrete block and glass block bleachers (see image

¹¹ “Highlights of the Year at Fort Bragg,” *Fort Bragg Post*, January 2, 1946. North Carolina Collection Clippings Files through 1975, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, p. 794. “Baseball: Fayetteville to Enjoy the National Game this Spring and Summer—Camp Bragg Will Play Other Camps.” *The Fayetteville Observer*, 26 March 1919, p. 3. Cumberland County Public Library Microfilm Collection.

¹² Personal phone interview, Jarvis Gust with Megan Privett, 16 August 2010.

¹³ Personal phone interview, Jim Hay with Megan Privett, 20 August 2010.

below) emitted a modern, sleek feel with metal six-over-six sash windows and five-panel wooden doors. Underneath the stands was a locker room for each team with restrooms and showers. Also visible in archival photographs and aerials is a small structure at the northwest corner of the field: perhaps a field house, storage equipment building, or refreshment stand. In 1946, Bowley Field received a new lighting system, making possible the introduction of night baseball games.¹⁴ Bowley Field was in constant use; not just by soldiers but also by Babe Ruth Little League teams during the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to baseball, the field was used for softball, flag football, football practice, or another sport. Gust remembers Bowley Field as the “centerpiece” and “pride and joy” of the post during the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁵



Elevation details from architectural drawings of Bowley Field Bleachers, 1951, Fort Bragg CRMP drawings files.

Another well-used baseball field was Ruth Field, located in between Macomb and Woodruff Streets and to the west of Armistead Street. Ruth Field was quite plausibly named for Babe Ruth considering that the famous ball player hit his first home run in Fayetteville before he went on to play for the Major Leagues. The 36th Field Artillery and the 83rd Field Artillery played and practiced on this field, along with other regimental teams. Though this field was certainly less significant in terms of size and stature, it remained a well-used field throughout the period of significance of the Old Post Historic District (1918-1945).

Baseball at Fort Bragg could not be deemed historically significant if it weren't for the players who made the game enjoyable and legendary. Although not quite as well-known as teams such as the Great Lakes Naval Station league, Fort Bragg did have a few key servicemen come through that became famous ball players. Arguably the most celebrated baseball player from Fort Bragg was pitcher Max Lanier. A lefty, Max Lanier pitched while stationed at Fort Bragg during his one year of military service in 1945. He played for the St. Louis Cardinals making his debut in 1938, and led the Cardinals to a win in the 1944 World Series. Lanier also led the National League in earned run average in 1943. Another player at Bowley Field but a member of the Hope Mills American Legion team, Don Smith, went on to play for the Cincinnati Reds. Well-known local players included, among others, Brice “Big Boy” Wrenn and his son Bobby “Spider” Wrenn. Brice Wrenn was noted as one of the best players at Fort Bragg during the

¹⁴ “Highlights of the Year at Fort Bragg,” *Fort Bragg Post*, January 2, 1946. North Carolina Collection Clippings Files through 1975, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, p. 794.

¹⁵ Personal phone Interview, Jarvis Gust with Megan Privett, 16 August 2010.

1930s. While playing baseball, he broke his leg which inhibited his baseball career; however, he later became an umpire after the Army sent him to school for the proper training. His son, Bobbie, was born at the original Post Hospital near the Bastogne Gables neighborhood. Bobbie also played baseball while stationed at Fort Bragg from 1955-1981 mostly with the Golden Knights Parachute Team.¹⁶

Baseball Fields and Stadiums

The significance the sport of baseball in the military is intricately tied to the baseball fields and facilities themselves. Planners of Army posts accounted for recreational spaces, including baseball fields, in their master plans, strategically locating them to be used by military families. First Lt. Howard B. Nurse, Chief Design Branch, Construction Service, Q.M.C., states in the 1928 *Quartermaster Review*, "Recreation is becoming of constantly greater importance. Our modern American youth, especially, requires active recreation and the incentive supplied by out-of-door games. Therefore, of utmost importance in our planning are the tennis and hand ball courts, baseball diamonds, swimming pools, and athletic fields, which should be so located to allow access from all parts of the post so that they may be freely used by either the enlisted or commissioned personnel."¹⁷ Utilizing the Beaux Arts planning concept popular in the early 20th century, post architects and planners located buildings on Army posts in a tiered system, with important administrative and civic buildings at the core, housing in semi-prominent areas, and buildings related to industrial functions on the outer rim. Recreational facilities fell somewhere between the middle and outer layer of the hierarchy, often close to housing neighborhoods and barracks for easy access by troops and families but still detached enough from key buildings associated with training operations and mission such as a post headquarters.

Baseball field facilities were not standardized and varied from post to post; the breadth of the sports program on an installation was often reflected by the number and quality of athletic facilities. Fort Benning's Gowdy Field, erected in 1925, boasts a large permanent grandstand influenced by the Spanish Mission style reflected in many of the other prominent buildings on post. Most of Fort Bragg's historic buildings and recreational facilities, though similar to those at Fort Benning, were designed less elaborately and on a smaller scale. Military installations attempted to improve athletic facilities by adding lights to ball fields, lengthening playing time and making possible night games. An article in the *Fort Bragg Post* on January 2, 1946 titled "Highlights of the Year at Ft. Bragg" states in the month of June, "Night baseball games started at Bowley Field."¹⁸ Additionally, newer fields were built adjacent to new housing areas for soldiers, including the "New Division Area" near the "Hammerhead" barracks at Fort Bragg as well as near Smoke Bomb Hill. Today there are nearly thirteen baseball fields located within Fort Bragg. Bowley Field and Ruth Field are the only two baseball fields extant located in the OPHD. In more recent years, some baseball fields have scaled back their facilities to make room for other uses of the land they occupy. For example, at Bowley Field the grandstand as well as a field house were demolished to provide more room for parking behind the 1930s-era barracks buildings. Today temporary metal bleachers provide seating to spectators.

Baseball played a vitally important role in military life evidenced by the sport's centrality to soldier training, morale, recreational entertainment, and even public support for the war effort. In recent years

¹⁶ Personal Phone Interview, Bobby Wrenn with Megan Privett, 17 August 2010.

¹⁷ Nurse, First Lt. Howard B. "The Planning of Army Posts," *The Quartermaster Review*, September-October, 1928, p. 16.

¹⁸ "Highlights of the Year at Fort Bragg," *Fort Bragg Post*, January 2, 1946. North Carolina Collection Clippings Files through 1975, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, p. 794.

the sport of baseball has waned in popularity in comparison to the mid-twentieth century. This phenomenon is reflected at Fort Bragg through the demolition and gradual neglect of the older, less frequented fields. Nevertheless, Bowley Field and Ruth Field represent important recreational spaces over time and symbolize the Army's dependence on athletics for the physical training and moral of soldiers.

Recommendation of Eligibility

The OPHD's only extant Baseball Fields, Bowley Field and Ruth Field, are recommended for eligibility as contributing elements in the Old Post Historic District under Criterion A for local significance in the areas of military history, recreation and military community planning and development. Bowley Field's original field and its footprint are still intact although its integrity has diminished somewhat with the demolition of the Grandstand, slight erosion of the baseball diamond and general lack of maintenance. Likewise, Ruth Field is intact and maintained in a similar fashion as it was during the period of significance (1918-1945). Neither Bowley Field nor Ruth Field is currently an "official" playing field for a particular regiment or unit. However, Bowley their function as recreational spaces over time speaks for their significance as purposefully planned areas for the recreation of troops. Bowley Field and Ruth Field are similar to the OPHD's Polo Field in that they function as recreational spaces; even though the activities carried out on the fields have changed through time. Additionally, the baseball fields are unique to the Old Post Historic District; they were and are recreational spaces for all soldiers, regardless of rank; thereby symbolizing the American ideal of equality and democracy. Enlisted men, NCO's, and Officers alike played as a team on the same fields; conversely Officers were the only group allowed to play at the Polo Field or Ryder Golf Course, also located in the OPHD. The fields' placement directly behind the barracks and adjacent to NCO housing demonstrates their utility and importance to the everyday life of the soldier. Furthermore, they are an example of the Beaux Arts Style concept of planning which was popular during the early 20th century. Landscape architects and urban planners located buildings on Army posts in a tiered system; with important administrative and civic buildings at the core, housing in semi-prominent areas, and buildings related to recreational and industrial functions on the outer rim. Green open spaces were incorporated throughout the plan in the form of parks, fields, and ceremonial spaces. Bowley Field and Ruth Field are integrated into this layout near the Bastogne Gables housing area and behind the historic barracks. In contrast, contemporary Army planners tend to separate recreational spaces far from housing areas; they are a destination rather than a neighborhood feature. Thus, the baseball fields contributing status in the OPHD ensures the preservation of the space for future recreational activities and symbolizes the historical significance of baseball in the life of the soldier.

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Photographs

All Photographs taken by Megan Privett.