

A Veteran in Building #1651

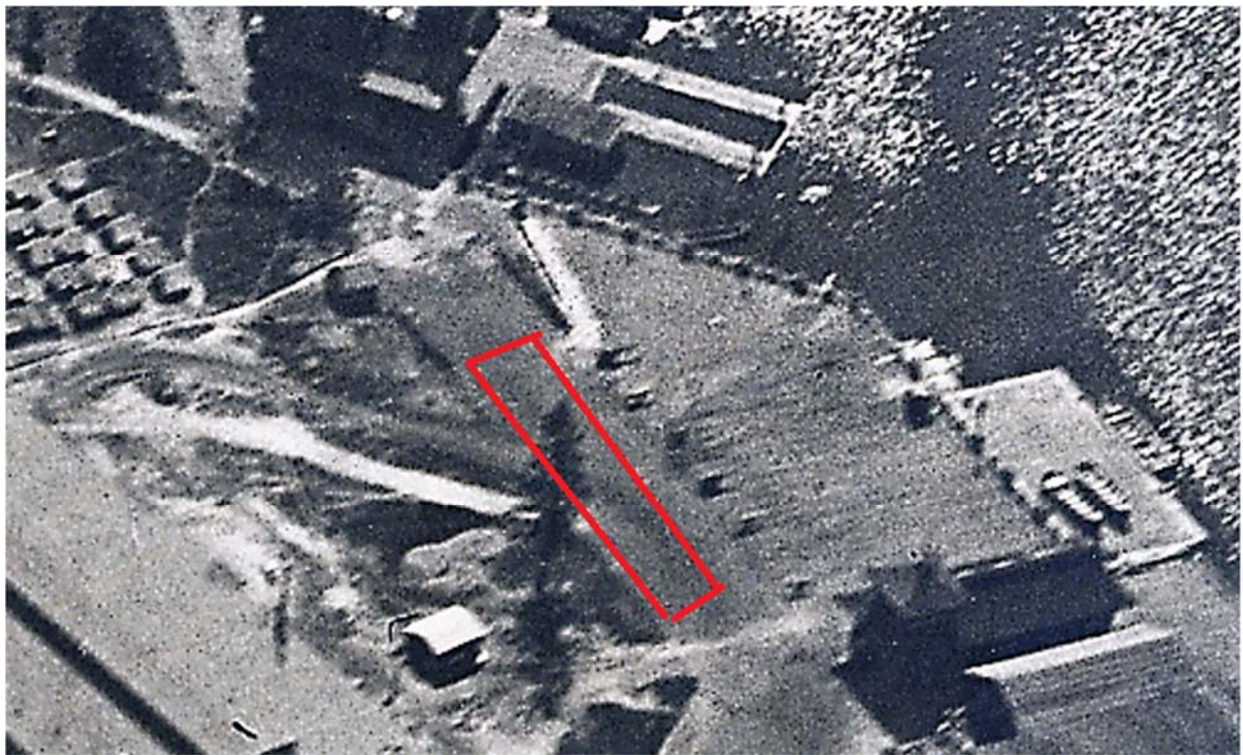
By Lee Corbin

With the demolition of the Guthrie Annex #1 building in April, 2018, the ASUW Shell House was believed to be the only remaining building from the WWI Naval Training Station that existed on campus from 1917 to 1919. Recent research, however, has uncovered an additional structure built by the Navy late in the war, near the UW waterfront on Portage Bay.



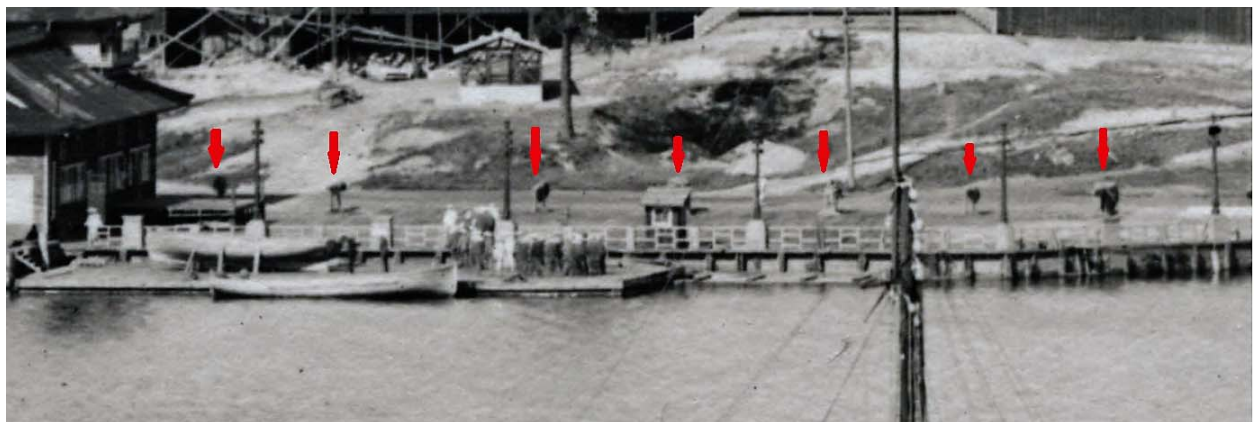
Aerial View of Naval Training Station, Summer or Later, 1918
(Photo Courtesy of University of Washington Digital Collections)

One of the many schools and training classes that were held at this training camp was for the rating of Gunner's Mate, the sailors who would man the heavy deck guns aboard ship. As part of this training, a number and variety of these guns were set in the university camp. A close-up look at the above aerial photo will find six deck guns down near the waterfront and dock on Portage Bay.



Battery of Deck Guns and Future Location of Gun Shed

In the above close-up photo, a variety of Naval deck guns can be seen lined up on what had been the 1909 *Alaska-Yukon-Pacific* exposition boardwalk. The red outline directly behind the guns represents the planned location of the Gun Shed. The best description of this shed would be similar to an elongated picnic shelter, open on all sides with a roof for protection from the elements. This would protect the valuable guns, and allow training to continue into the winter months.

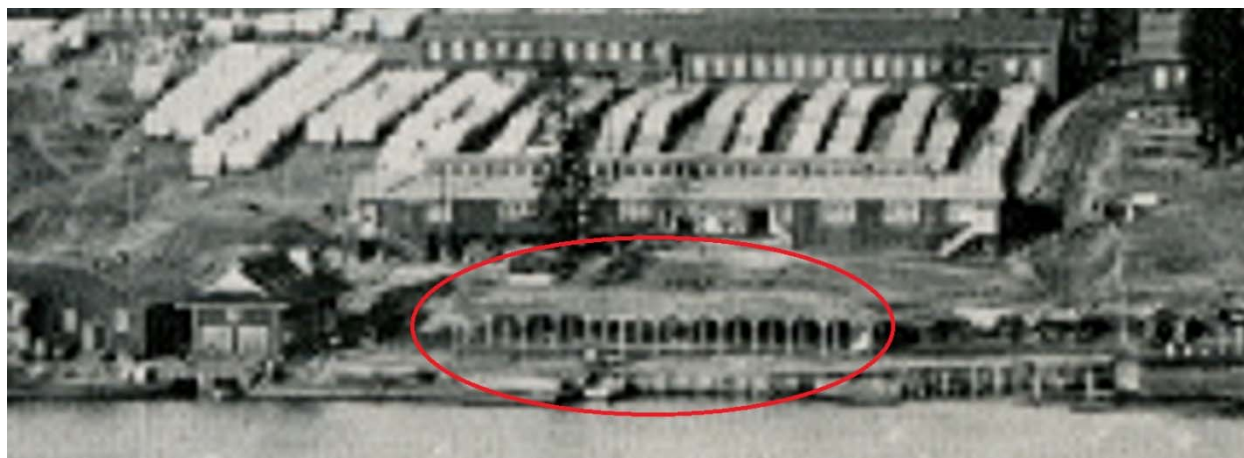


Another view of the training guns prior to the gun shed being built.



Gun Training at the Naval Training Station, prior to construction of the gun shed. Note the old boardwalk and the distinctive roof of the "Tokio Café" from the A-Y-P.

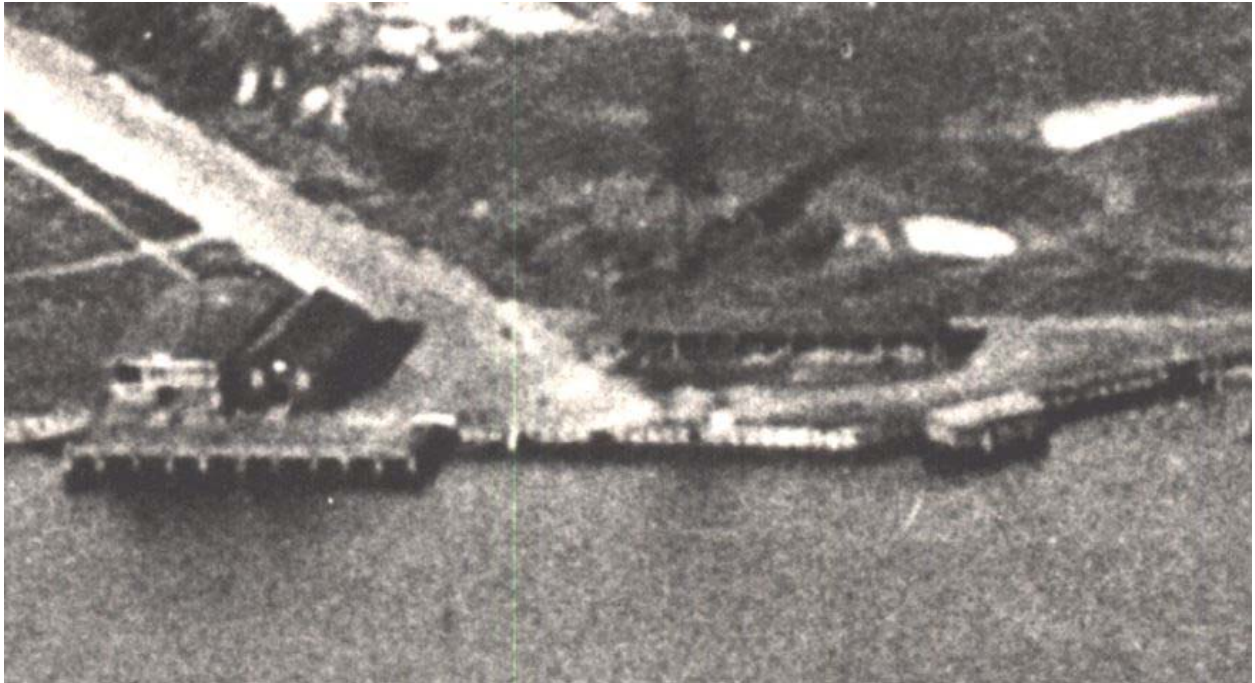
(Photo Courtesy of the National Archives)



The November 1, 1918, edition of *The Sub-Chaser* camp newspaper reported the planned construction of a 100' x 22', 12-bay, gun shed containing 12 training guns. Buildings tended to go up very quickly at the NTS. Despite the war coming to an end just ten days later, this could be a wartime or a post-war photo of the NTS waterfront, showing the completed Gun Shed.

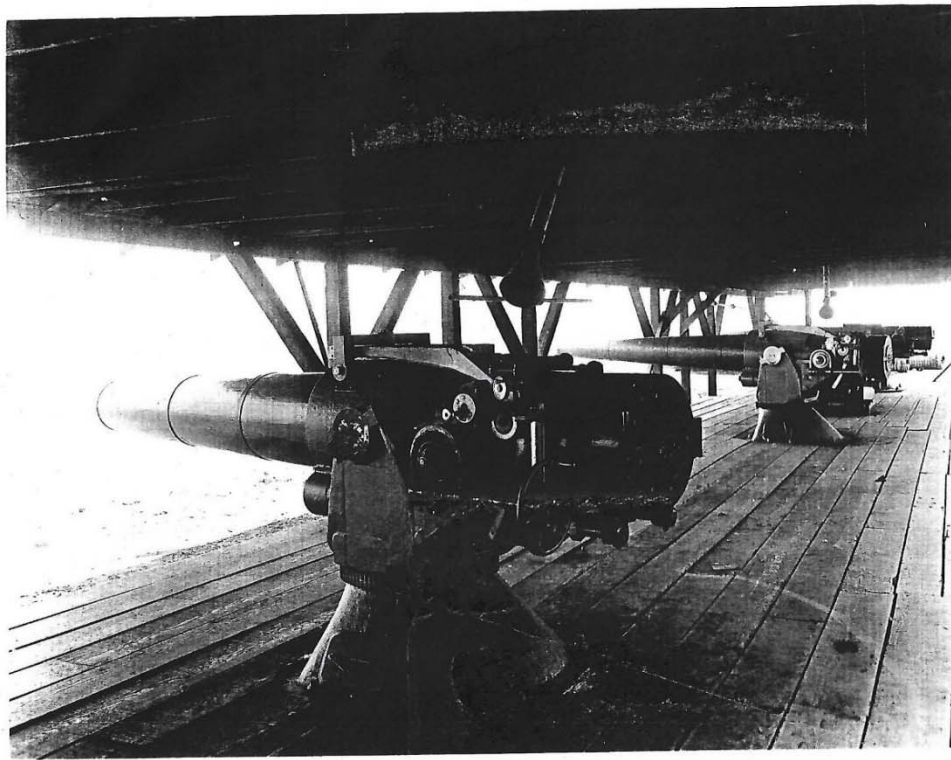
(Kline, Frank S. *U.S. Naval Training Camp, Seattle U.S.A.* [Seattle, Wash.?]: [Camp?], 1919)

On November 16th, five days after the Armistice, *The Sub-Chaser* announced that the newly completed gun shed would have an additional 18' of classroom and gun parts storage added to the east end. Currently it's undetermined if that was ever accomplished. With the war over and no longer needed aboard ships, *The Sub-Chaser* of December 16th announced the arrival of new deck guns, primarily for the use of the ongoing Officer Material School.



A 1926 aerial photo, showing the still open-sided gun shed facing the water. The UW Canoe House and canoe annex can be seen on the left, and a few sand traps of the university's golf course in the upper right. The gun shed was probably being used for canoe, boat, and golf course storage at this point, since there wasn't much else around that part of the campus.

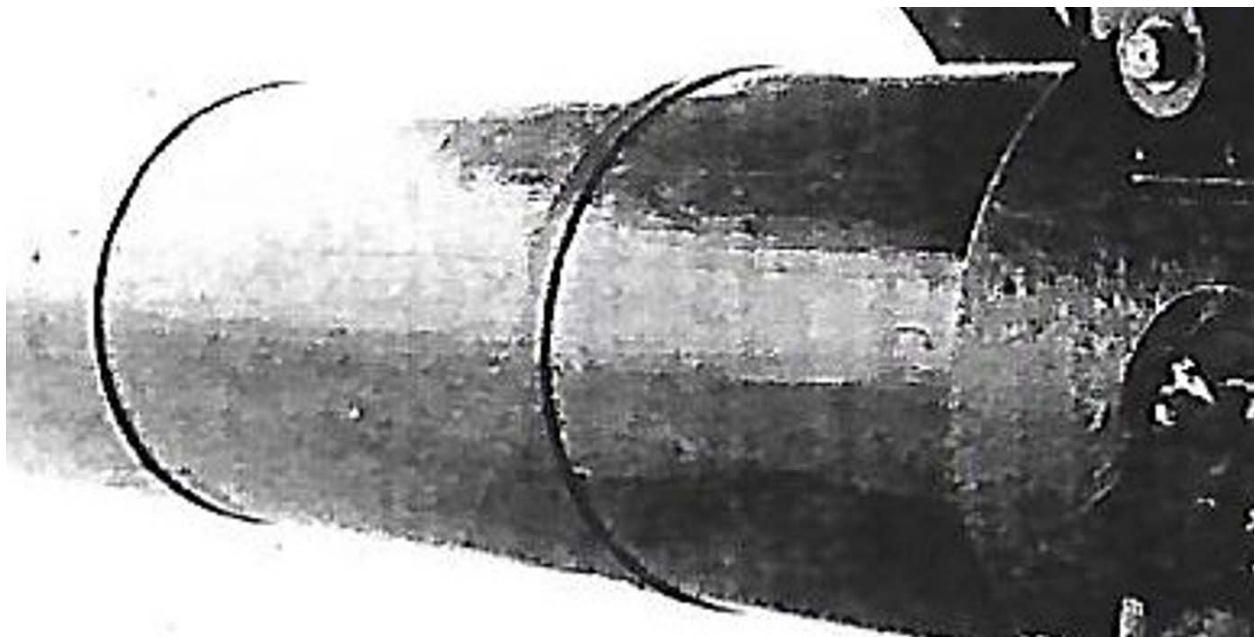
(Photo courtesy of UW Digital Collections)



An Undated Photo Showing the Interior of the Gun Shed*

The photo above comes from a 1999 doctoral dissertation written by Michael Besch. According to Mr. Besch, the guns in this photo are training mockups and are actually made of wood. A close-up of the barrel, although grainy, does show a milled appearance and several hoop bands that you might find on a wood pipe. Research of these wood guns is ongoing.

*Besch, Michael Dennis, "A Navy second to none: The history of United States Naval training in World War I" (1999). *Dissertations (1962 - 2010)* Access via Proquest Digital Dissertations. AAI9953484.





Recent Photos of the Storage Shed Interior



1936 Aerial Photo showing position of gun shed in relation to the 1932 Oceanography Building



The Fisheries Center, dedicated in 1950, required moving the shed closer to the water and shortening its length.

A grainy 1937 aerial photo shows the shed now having walls and windows. The 1932 construction of the original Oceanography building may have prompted its conversion into an enclosed storage shed. But there were two additional modifications to come, that would make it the shed it is today.



The Divided Gun Shed

The current roof configuration of today's Oceanography storage shed has a 'hip' roof at the east end and a straight cut-off on the west end. The photo above is a 1949 aerial photo of the Oceanography building on the right and the Fisheries Center, under construction, on the left. A large portion of the gun shed has been moved south to make way for this construction, but a small portion remains in its original location. That portion has a straight cut-off roof on the east end and a 'hip' roof on the west end.

Prompted by the construction of the Fisheries Center, the UW's engineering department appears to have lopped off a good portion of the west end and moved the larger portion south about 45 feet. As for the smaller portion remaining, its ultimate fate is unknown.



'Hip' Roof On the East End.



Straight Cut-Off Roof of the West End