

Sitka Naval Air Station construction began in 1939, by civilian contractors - the consortium Siems Drake Puget Sound. U.S. Army Harbor Defenses, which would protect the Naval Air Station from attack, were begun by the same contractor.

The Naval Air Station was part of War Plan Orange, with bases at Sitka, Kodiak and Dutch Harbor, the first defenses on the North Pacific.

The first Army personnel arrived in 1941, among them Walter Dangel, with the 250th Coast Artillery. The Harbor Defenses were planned in three batteries each with searchlights and “Base End Stations” for aiming the big guns, giving comprehensive coverage against enemy vessels entering the Sound.

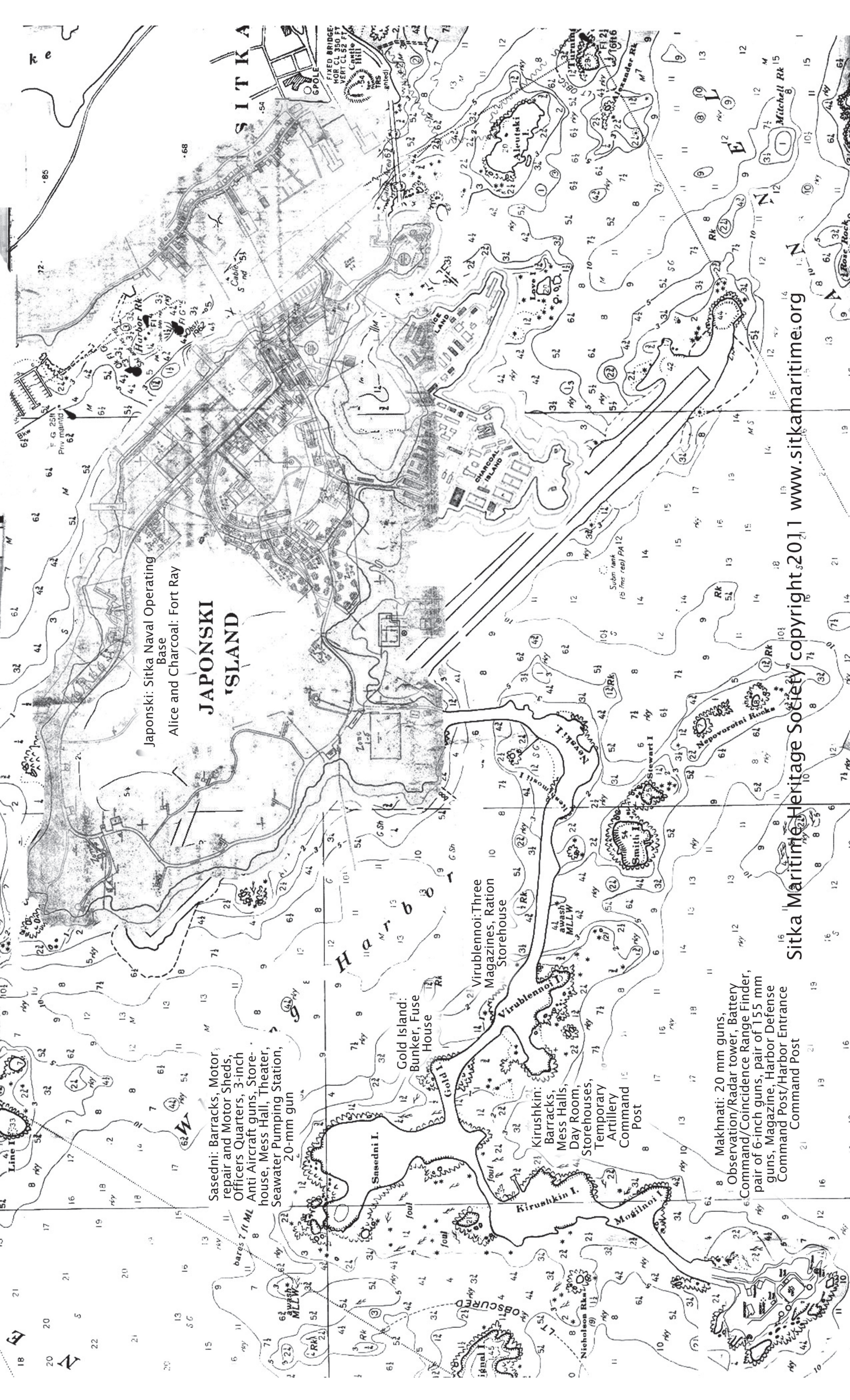
When Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941, Sitka was a potential target. The Japanese attacked and occupied islands in the Aleutians, an intended diversion from their attack at Midway Island, in June 1942. Instead the U.S. won that battle, ending Japanese naval superiority in the Pacific.

Sitka was an important waypoint for U.S. military going west for the Aleutian battles, in the summer of 1943.

The Naval Air Station, later a Naval Operating Base, was built for the PBV “Flying Boats.”

The Japonski Island Boathouse was used for repairs to smaller Navy and Army craft. A larger one was planned but never built.





Japonski: Sitka Naval Operating Base  
Alice and Charcoal: Fort Ray

# JAPONSKI ISLAND

Sasedni: Barracks, Motor repair and Motor Sheds, Officers Quarters, 3-inch Anti Aircraft guns, Storehouse, Mess Hall, Theater, Seawater Pumping Station, 20-mm gun

Gold Island: Bunker, Fuse House

Virublennoi: Three Magazines, Ration Storehouse

Kirushkin: Barracks, Mess Halls, Day Room, Storehouses, Temporary Artillery Command Post

Makhnati: 20 mm guns, Observation/Radar tower, Battery Command/Coincidence Range Finder, pair of 6-inch guns, pair of 155 mm guns, Magazine, Harbor Defense Command Post/Harbor Entrance Command Post