

## Houma, Louisiana Naval Air Station (L-T-A)

The United States Naval Air Station at Houma was a Lighter Than Air (LTA) or Blimp Base that served anti-submarine warfare purposes for the U.S. Navy during World War II. The Air Station was officially commissioned on May 1, 1943.



*The Non-Commissioned Officers' barracks of the Houma Naval Air Station during construction.*

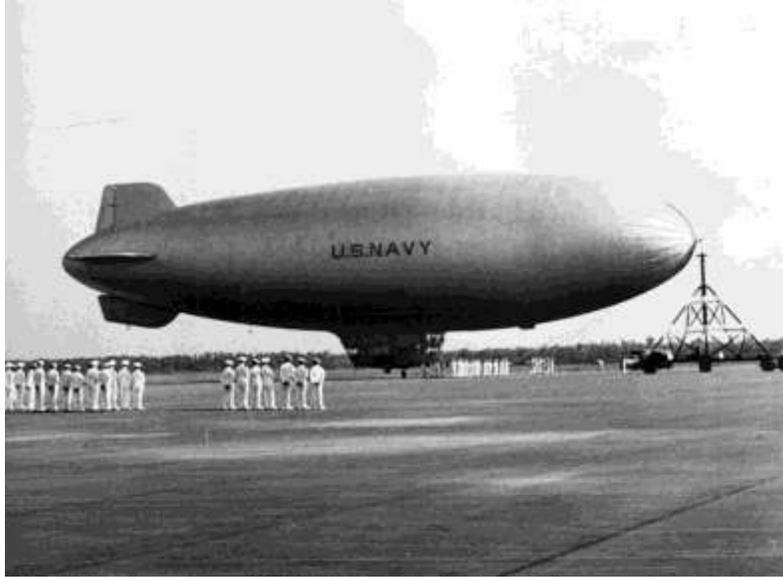
The base's distinguishing characteristic was its large hangar, which was over 200 feet high, 1000 feet long and 300 feet wide. During its existence, this hangar was the largest wooden structure in the world. The doors alone weighed 50 tons and were on rails. Other airship hangars had sliding, sectional doors that were moved on overhead tracks in the hangar's doorsills. Due to the soft, shifting soil of south Louisiana, the hangar doors at NAS Houma were built in a clamshell design that moved on tracks and rolled outward away from the entrances.



*An interior view of the blimp hangar at the Houma Naval Air Station.  
The cars and people give some idea of scale.*

Built in 1943, the hangar could house three fully-inflated K-class dirigibles. Although the hangar was demolished shortly after the war, the concrete foundations of this immense building are still visible from Clendenning Road on Houma's East Side.

LTA Squadron ZP-22 was commissioned into service at NAS Houma on May 15, 1943, and began conducting anti-submarine patrols of the Gulf coast. Operations continued until the unit was decommissioned on September 12, 1944.



*Typical K-model dirigible, seen here during a memorial ceremony for sailors killed in an accident in the Gulf of Mexico.*

The base ceased to be an LTA facility on September 21, 1944, and began serving as an HTA training facility with Coast Guard air/sea rescue flight operations continuing. In 1945, NAS Houma was redesignated as a Naval Air Facility (NAF). Following the cessation of hostilities, the base served as an aircraft storage facility until October of 1947 when the facility reverted to the control of the City of Houma. The field serves today as the Houma-Terrebonne Regional Airport.

The remnants of the base barracks are now home to the School for Exceptional Children and the Terrebonne TARC.



*Dedication Day Cover mailed May 1, 1943*