

Martin Company History

When the Lockheed Martin – Denver library shut down in 2013, employee Josh Hopkins saved a 3-ring binder with photocopies of documents about Martin company history. In 2022 after several moves, the contents of the binder were scanned so that they could be shared more widely and to increase the odds that at least one copy might survive.

The contents are scanned here in the following files (separated to be a manageable size):

“Boxkites to Bombers, The Story of the Glenn L Martin Company,” a history book produced by the company around 1946.

“The Glenn L Martin Company: What it did for the growth of Baltimore” by Lisa Fallon, a report written by an employee for a class in 1985

A collection of magazine articles (including a Time Magazine cover story), advertisements, and a company list of all aircraft types and quantities produced.

A selection of Martin Star newsletter excerpts from 1942-1943.

Lisa Fallin

History of Baltimore

March 21, 1985

The Glenn L. Martin Company:

What it Did for the Growth of Baltimore

Report written by one of
our employees for school.
Taken mostly from our old
"Martin Stars" -

"On February (4,1928) Mayor William F. Broening and Glenn L. Martin Company, world famous maker of airships, announced that the Martin plant, now located at Cleveland, Ohio, would be moved to Baltimore." ¹

The Baltimore magazine claimed that this decision was "without question, one of the most important industrial acquisitions for Baltimore" ² which later proved to be true.

The establishment of the Glenn L. Martin Company would open up "new fields of foreign trade and transportation for Baltimore commerce..." ³

Glenn L. Martin had his business manager, C. A. Van Dusen, survey the land "up and down the east coast from Philadelphia to Florida. It appeared, finally, that Baltimore, Maryland would be the most suitable choice from virtually every aspect." ⁴

Martin explained the reasons for the company choosing Baltimore for the location of the new airplane manufacturing plant and airport. "Other cities can never overcome Baltimore's natural advantages. Cities farther north are hampered by ice and fog, which here are at a minimum." ⁵ Because of Baltimore's geographical location, it is the "natural center" for flight to and from South and Central America and for "high speed lines to the North and West." It was also recognized that not only was Baltimore capable of productive labor, but unlike Cleveland, it was close to Washington which meant an eight hundred dollar freight savings to government on each plane. ⁶

Being close to Washington also meant Mr. Martin would be near the chiefs of aeronautical bureaus of the army and navy.⁷

This was very important for future contracts. The railroad service and automobile highways also played a part in the decision.⁸ "Most importantly, Baltimore offered an unlimited expanse of Chesapeake Bay tidewater..."⁹

The negotiations for a location of the plant and airport led to Baltimore offering fifty acres to Martin for free. Martin did not like this idea for two reasons. First of all, "he would be obligated to the city of Baltimore for the land and wished to be his own landlord, and secondly, fifty acres would hardly provide the setting for the kind of factory that he now envisioned"¹⁰

Then, Martin made an agreement with the mayor and the Board of Estimates to purchase a one hundred-acre site near Logan Field for fifty thousand dollars. The city soon changed the plans. They believed that waterfront property was much too valuable and should be retained by the city.¹¹

Since Glenn L. Martin could not reach a decision with the city of Baltimore, he decided to find his own land. He rented a car and continued traveling north and east away from the city until he reached the "wooded lowlands around Middle River."¹² Glenn knew right away that this was the perfect site. After spending the weekend wandering around this area, he went back to Cleveland where he announced that he had "found the place that the good Lord must have created just for the building of airplanes."¹³

Immediately, he sent a purchasing agent, William Crennings,
to buy two square miles in the area. This land was currently
owned by forty-five people.¹⁴ The purchasing agent quietly
acquired each tract of the land "below Turner's Station and
bordering on Peach Orchard Grove."¹⁵ The land had "three and
a half miles of water frontage and bounded on one side by the
main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad."¹⁶

On January 2, 1929, the Martin Company began operations in
the Colgate Warehouse Number Two of the Canton Company with a
labor force of two hundred fifty men (Picture p.12).¹⁷ This
unit was planned for temporary use until the plant in Middle
River was ready for operations,¹⁸ but continued to manufacture
airplanes through World War II.

The plan was for the airport to cover nine hundred forty
acres, and adjacent to it an anchorage three miles long,
thirty-five feet deep and three thousand feet wide for
steamships finding the "present anchorage inadequate. Thus two
streams of commerce, ocean and air, (would) be linked."¹⁹

Three units were expected to be completed in three years, and
Glenn told everyone that he would eventually employ about ten
thousand workers.²⁰ These plans were carried out, and ten
years later Martin's did employ ten thousand workers (Graph p.
12).

The Martin project would also include "schools for the
training of pilots and for the instruction of aircraft
technicians, a port for private and commercial air and

seaplanes, radio and telegraph facilities, a service station, a hotel for transient air passengers, and a waterfront home development." 21

Mr. Martin predicted great things for Baltimore. "Numerous manufacturers are looking for sites and a center for industry.

Many awaited a national survey made by our company before making a decision. It is a fair statement to say that Baltimore is on the eve of a new industrial expansion." 22

The Baltimore magazine recognized that "aside from the value of the plant and the port, its coming places Baltimore definitely on the national air map, assuring the city of a high place in aircraft manufacture." 23

In March of 1929, work on the project began with Mayor Broening "driving...the first pile in the presence of the Board of Estimates and other municipal officials, and with (Charles) Goob, (Chief Engineer of Baltimore) and Elmer E. Hammond, Harbor Engineer, as masters of ceremonies." 24

The removal of trees, grading and excavating for the plant and railroad tracks leading to Bengies was done by Potts and Callahan contractors. The first unit of the factory and the land would come to a total expenditure of two million five hundred thousand dollars (Picture, p.13). 25

In September of 1930, the Baltimore magazine exclaimed, "where, on a woodland site little more than a year ago one hunted small game, now has arisen a showplace, a plant recognized as one of the largest in the world for the

manufacture of aircraft of every description, and the most modern in layout and equipment. Now the hum of industry and the daily labor of hundreds of workers go smoothly on, where a year ago the only activity in this quiet section were the week-end visits of a few Baltimoreans to there summer waterfront shores, now a part of the one thousand two hundred-acre airport." ²⁶

In 1938, Glenn L. Martin decided to take a trip to Europe. While in Germany, he noticed that Hitler had ordered the mass production of thousands of planes. He immediately returned home and reported his findings of the "Nazi build-up" to the Army and Navy. He pleaded with congress to begin the production of offensive airplanes to be ready for the breakout of another world war. Congress disagreed. One congressman called him a merchant of death. ²⁷

It turned out, that Glenn L. Martin had been right, and soon the same congressmen were asking him to manufacture warplanes. France was also purchasing a large number of Martin's Maryland Bombers and soon Great Britain was a major customer. Another four hundred forty thousand square feet was added to the plant which expanded it to over a million square feet. It was now the largest aircraft factory in the United States. ²⁸

"Few places in Baltimore (were) busier than the employment office at the Glenn L. Martin aircraft plant, where America's need for fighting equipment (was) reflected in a constantly growing personnel. This office (was) one of the first places visited by many of those who (came) to Baltimore seeking war work..." ²⁹

By 1942, employment grew to fifty-two thousand nine hundred thirty-seven (Graph p. 12). The Glenn L. Martin Company had become one of "Maryland's largest communities... The number of employees alone (not counting... families) was larger than the combined populations of Frederick and Salisbury." By spring of 1942, the Glenn L. Martin Company became the second largest city in the state of Maryland, outnumbering Cumberland.

Many employees lived throughout Baltimore City and other counties in Maryland. Because of this, there was a problem transporting the fifty-three thousand employees to and from work. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad joined together to establish a schedule for transporting employees. A traffic study done in April, 1942 showed that during a twenty-four hour period, on the two main line tracks that run near the plant, there were a total of one hundred sixty-seven trains. One hundred twenty-six of them were passenger trains and forty-one were freight trains. Buses transported fifteen thousand workers each day. Routes were extended to include areas such as Broadway, Gwynne Falls Park, Libery Heights, Towson, Park Heights and Cold Spring (Picture p. 15).

By April, 1942, there were already approximately five hundred permanent houses and several hundred temporary houses. "Steady expansion of low-cost housing faciillites in the neighborhood of the Martin plant" was planned. At this time four hundred new homes were built in Aero Acres, a community for

housing Martin employees. Across Eastern Avenue, an additional eight hundred houses were built along with "a school, spacious parks and playgrounds, a complete civic center, recreation hall, theater and churches."

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Both of these communities still exist. The people who live there today are reminded that these communities were built because of the Glenn L. Martin Company every time they look at a street sign that bares the names of common words used in the Martin plant such as Tachometer Court, Airspeed Court, Left Rudder Court, Manifold Court, Compass Road, Hydroplane Drive and Cockpit Street.

There are also other sites which exist today that received their name from the man that began this community: Martin Boulevard, Martin Plaza, Martin Boulevard Elementary School, Glenmar Manor and Glenmar Elementary School.

Stansbury Manor, the first housing unit built in 1939-40, consists of one hundred eighty-four apartments, and in 1942 housed seven hundred people. "Located in a sylvan setting on Middle River," Stansbury Manor was considered "the most beautiful waterfront housing development in the Baltimore area." There were also five dormitories, which provided shelter and recreation facilities for three hundred single workers. In addition, "trailer villages" were set up which consisted of thousands of trailers (Picture, p. 14).

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The dormitories, complete with furniture, rented for three dollars and fifty cents a week for double occupancy and five

dollars a week for single occupancy. The trailers rented for
six dollars and fifty cents a week including utilities. ³⁸

In addition to the Middle River community, one thousand four
hundred housing units were built at Armistead Gardens on Pulaski
Highway and seven hundred units were built in the North Point
Road - Eastern Avenue Section. ³⁹ A group of one hundred
ninety-two "one-story frame bungalows" were built at the
southern end of the back river bridge on Eastern Avenue. This
bridge was built as part of the defense road plans. ⁴⁰

These communities represented the beginning of a city which
had "as its center and cause for existence the Glenn L. Martin
Company." ⁴¹

Soon, it was realized that Martin City had the same needs as
other cities its size. A branch of the Baltimore National Bank
was opened in Aero Acres, ⁴² along with a library, USO
center, ⁴³ post office, restaurant, physician and dentist
offices, ⁴⁴ a drugstore, barber shop, beauty parlor, men's
shop, women's apparel shop, ⁴⁵ and a fellowship church which
was built by Martin employees on Eastern Avenue and Bowley's
Quarters Road. ⁴⁶ A police force of over two hundred men and a
fire department were established. All employees were required
to wear a badge for security reasons. ⁴⁷

A maternity hospital was opened in the trailer park to
accommodate the large number of pregnancies of the women living
there. Dr. Edward Davens decided it was needed, because the
closest hospital, Johns Hopkins, was ten miles away. ⁴⁸

"Dairy employees, provision men, grocers and others "were
out early every morning to gather orders of the tenants. 49

"Soon the 'you-al' drawl of the Deep South was intermingled
with the nasal twang of the Down-Easter and the broad accent of
the South West... A southerner may have a Yankee for a neighbor
on one side and a Mid-Westerner on the other." 50

Since many men were off in another country during war time,
thousands of women were employed at the factory. They performed
hard labor work just like the men. Before 1942, this was not a
common practice, but Glenn believed they could handle the
work. 51 These women were often called "Rosie the Riveter,"
and there was once a movie made of these women.

Like many other companies at this time, the Glenn L. Martin
Company had a maternalistic attitude. If families were
"confronted with major medical expenses... Glenn would lend
money, interest free, to that family." One time, a man acquired
a kidney infection while working in the plant, and Glenn payed
for his hospital expenses. Glenn L. Martin established the
Martin Foundation, from which employees could borrow money,
interest free. 52

Mr. Martin encouraged extracurricular activities among the
employees. There were reading clubs, sewing circles, boat
clubs, bowling teams, a chorus club, a Bible study group,
basketball teams, golf teams, and Glenn's favorite, the Martin
Bombers baseball team. There were dances at the Belvedere and
Lord Baltimore hotels, and dinners at Haussners. This led to a
family-like feeling among everyone.

In 1944, a "symbolic statue of labor" was erected "in front of Victory Villa Recreation Center. Glenn L. Martin's mother, Minta Martin unveiled the statue in front of many employees of the Martin plant. This shows that the employees were very proud of the work they did (Picture, p. 16)."

Thousands went to classes for airplane production, engineering, blueprint reading, etc... at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Kenwood High School, Patterson Park High School, John Hopkins University, University of Baltimore and University of Maryland.

In 1942, Glenn L. Martin established in the name of his mother, the Minta Martin Aeronautical Endowment Fund in the Institute of the Aeronautical Sciences with a gift of five hundred thousand dollars in company stock. In 1944, he gave the University of Maryland one million seven hundred thousand dollars to establish a school of engineering and a year later gave them another eight hundred thousand dollars" Mr. Martin willed University of Maryland another two million dollars.

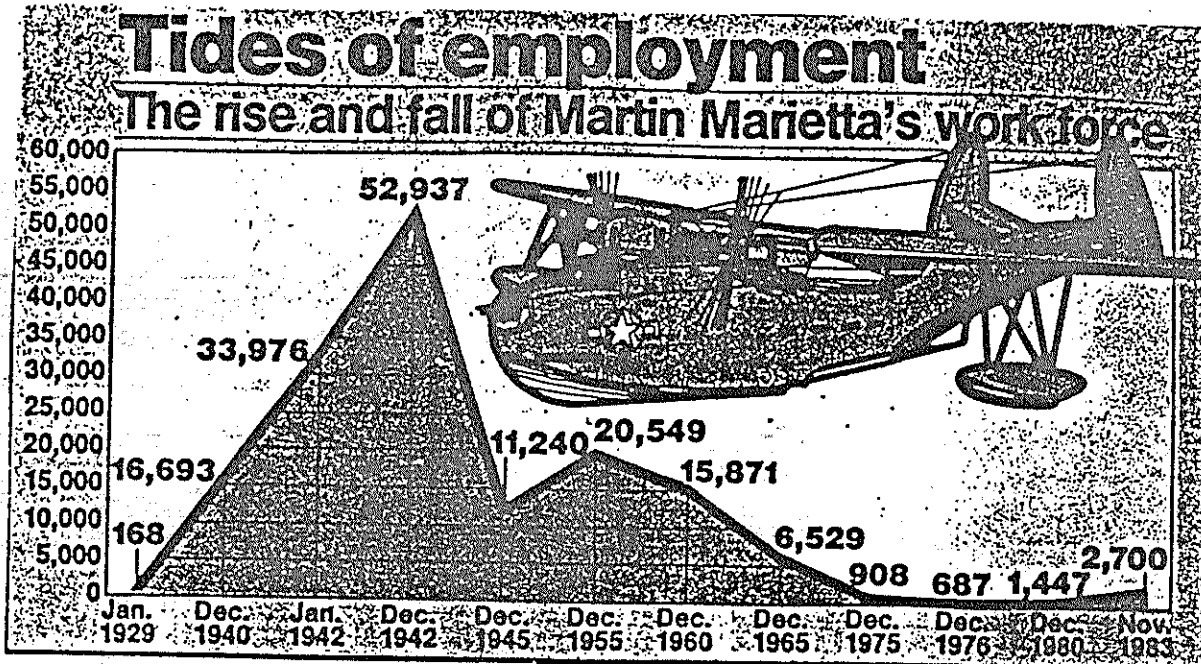
On October 10, 1961, the Glenn L. Martin Company and American Marietta consolidated. Today Martin Marietta has numerous operations in cement, chemicals, aerospace, aluminum, aggregates and data systems all over the world including Norway, St. Croix, Orlando, Denver, and of course, Baltimore.

The plant in Middle River, now called Martin Marietta Baltimore Aerospace Division, has plans for expansion. In 1986,

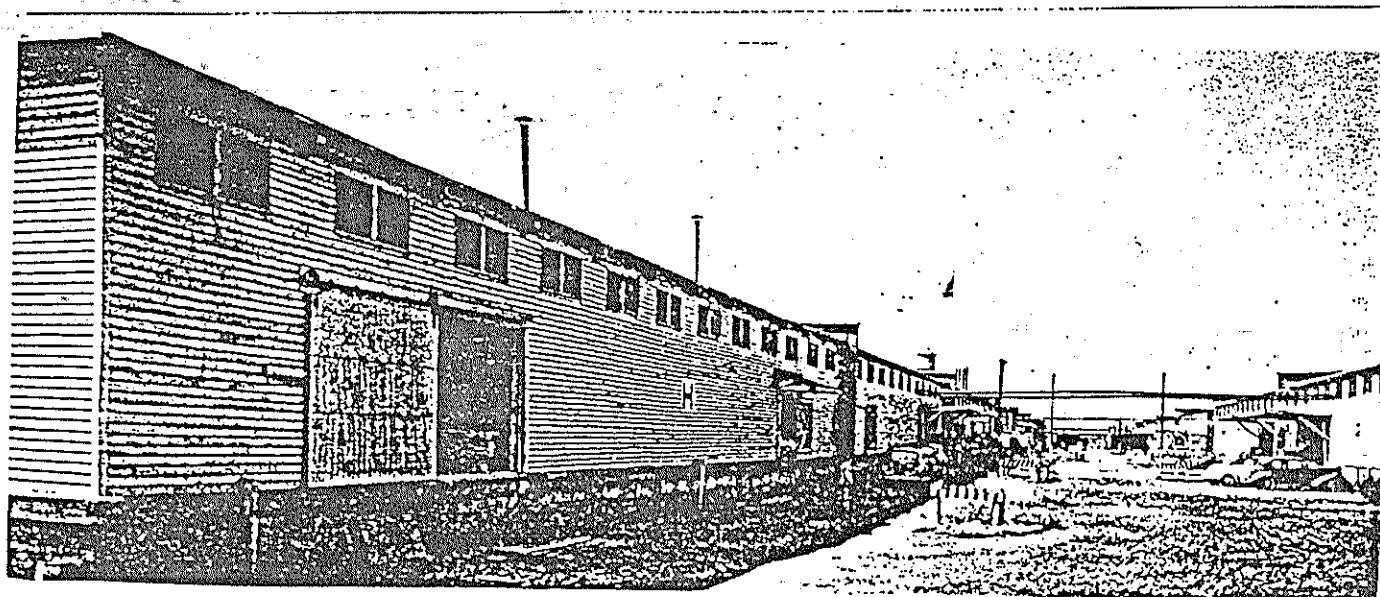
a new one hundred thousand square foot, five story office building will occupy about six hundred fifty employees.

President of the Baltimore Division, A. Thomas Young, explained that the reason for expansion is "that the employee population at the Baltimore Division has more than doubled in the past five years, and is expected to increase another ten percent by year end."⁵⁹

Congresswomen, Helen Delich Bentley, stated that the "growth of industry is vital to the Baltimore area's security and employment stability."⁶⁰ "Bentley also commended Martin Marietta for its commitment to, and investment in, the continued growth of the Middle River plant."⁶¹

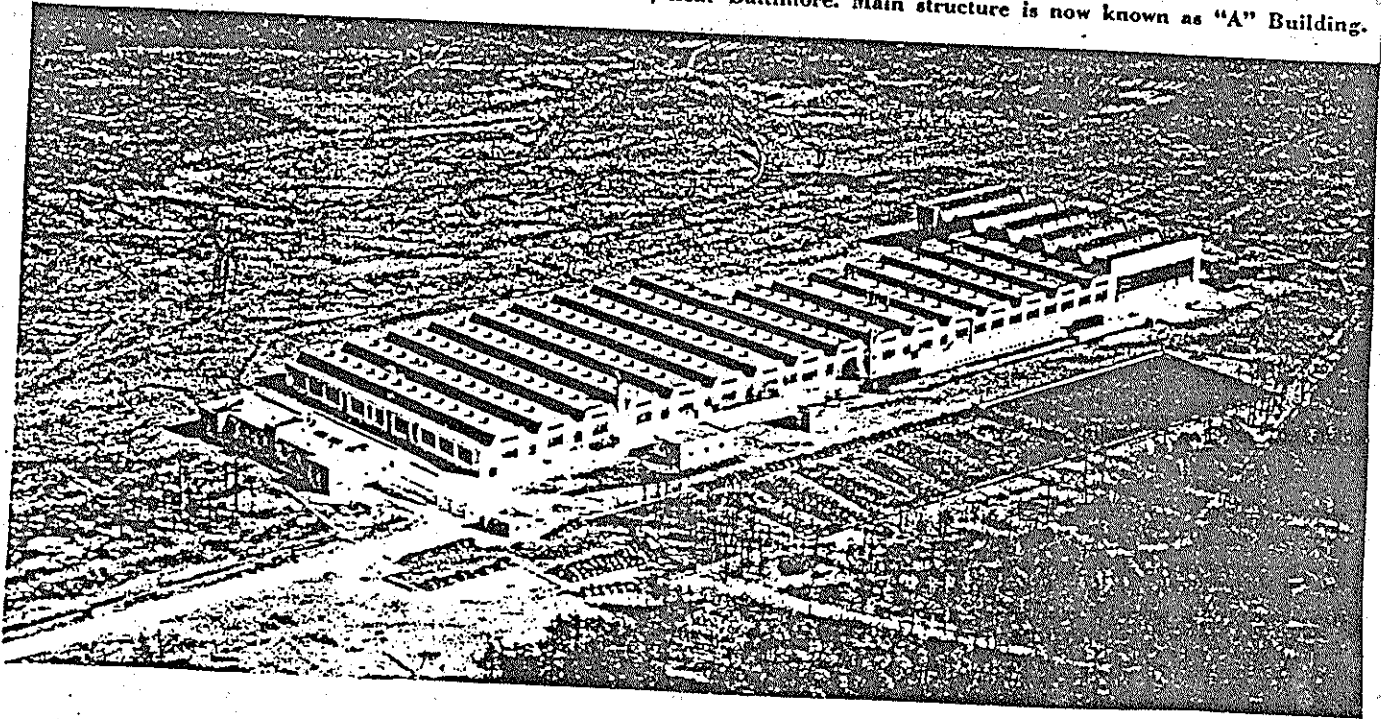


Martin aircraft during the World War II boom period included seaplanes such as the Mariner, shown above. By Jef Dauber—Evening Sun Staff

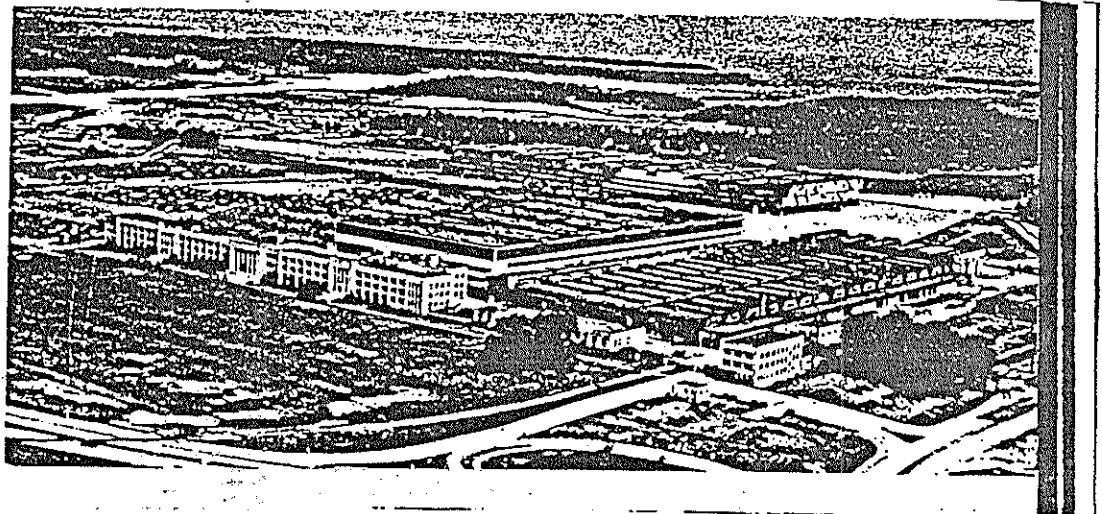


The Martin factory at Baltimore was first located in the Canton warehouse area near the waterfront.

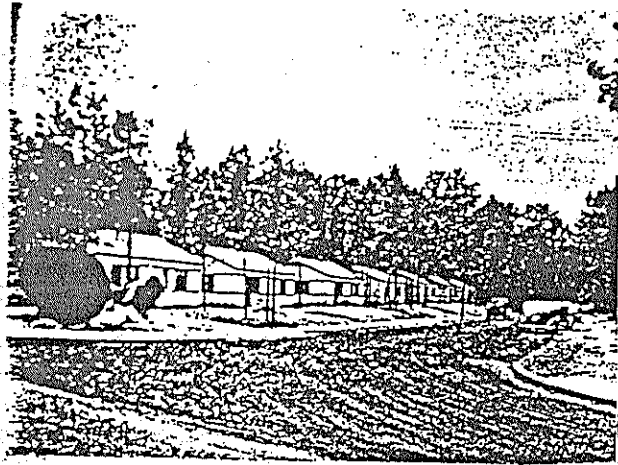
Air view of first unit of Martin plant at Middle River, near Baltimore. Main structure is now known as "A" Building.



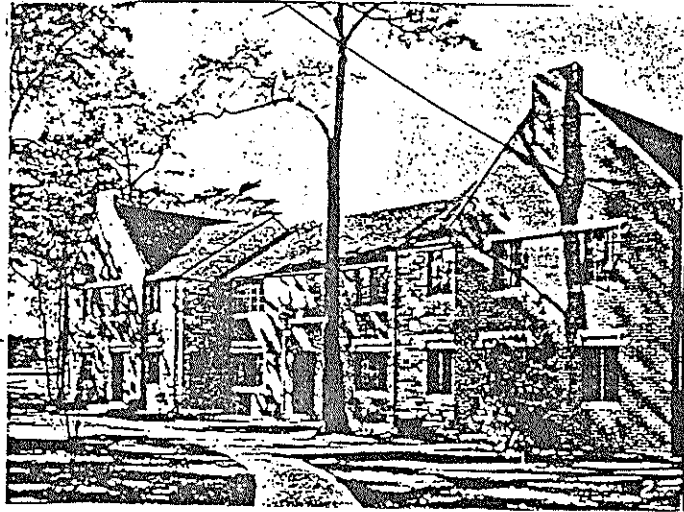
The Martin Plant As of August, 1949 65



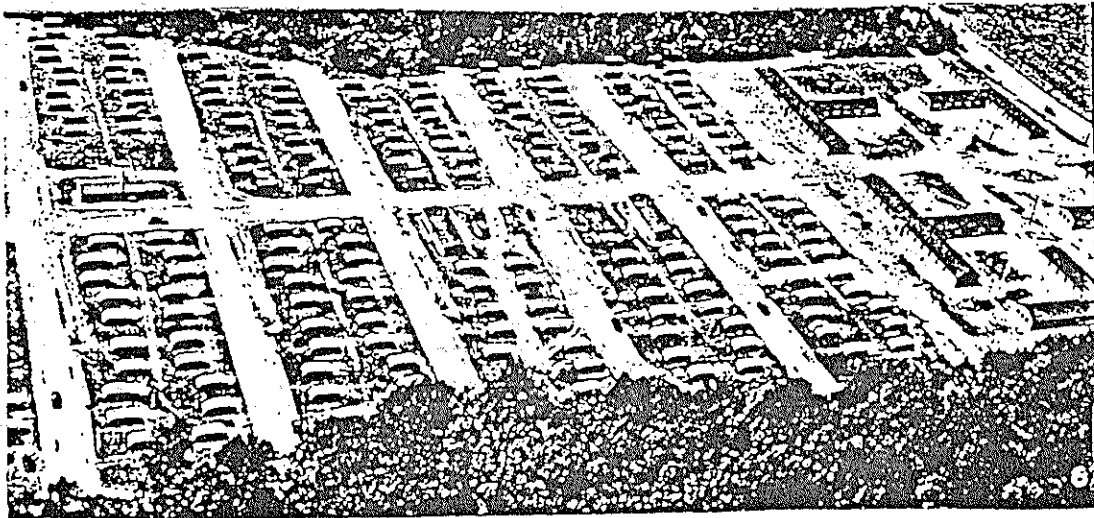
HOMES OF MARTIN EMPLOYEES



Stansbury Estates 66

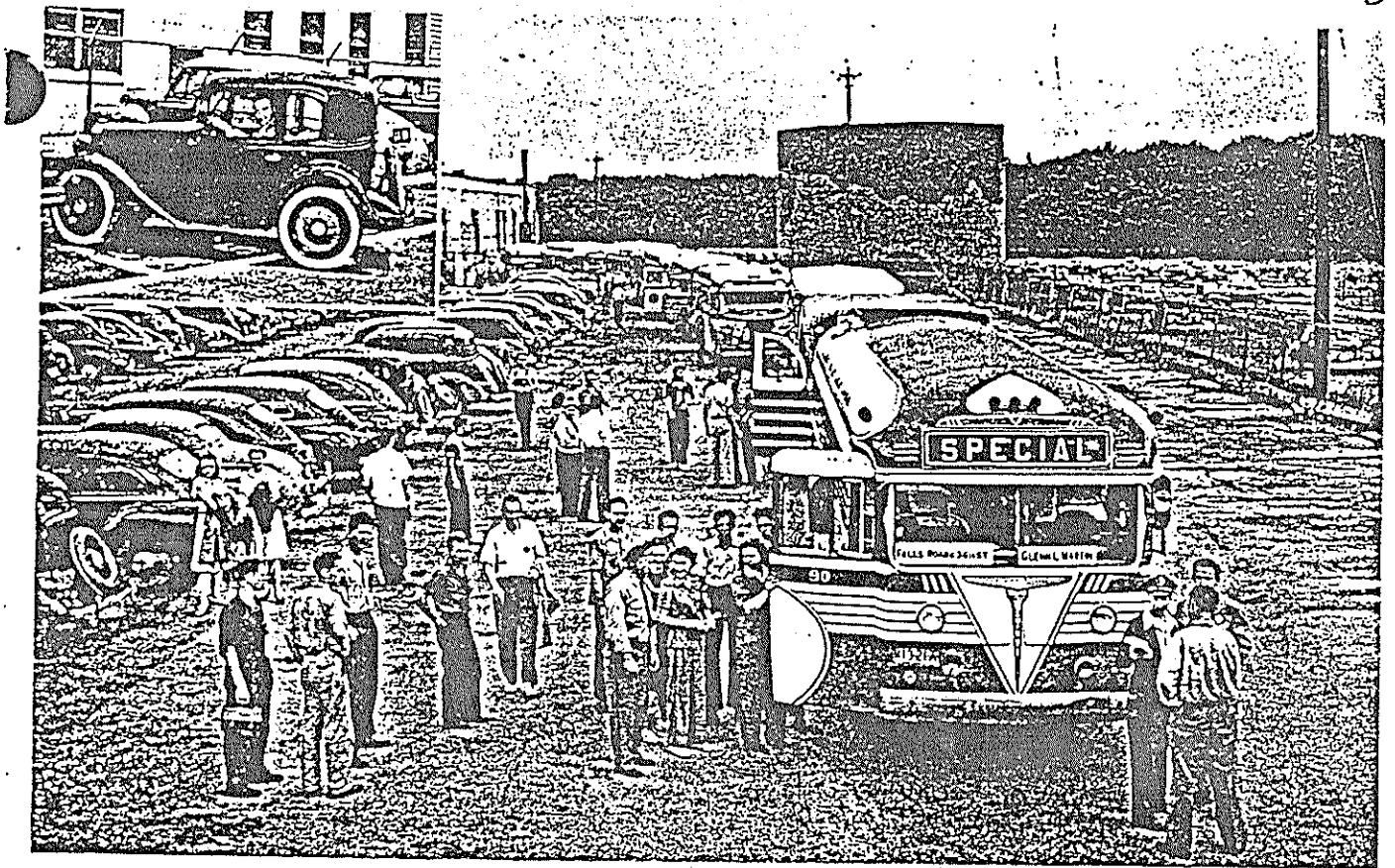


Stansbury Manor 67

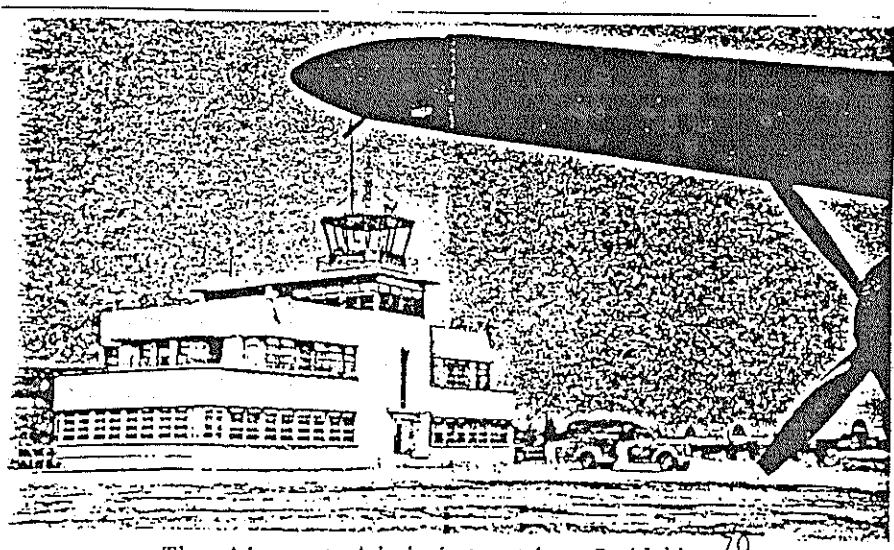


"Trailer Towns" and Dormitories 68

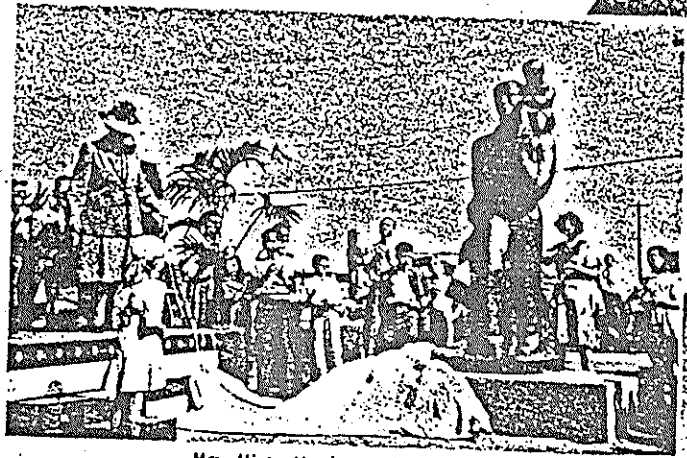
THE NATION WATCHES . . . *Martin's Record of Car Pooling*



Ingenuity and the maximum use of resources are two vital factors in the solution of The Glenn L. Martin Company's transportation problem. Here we have ingenuity, in the form of Traffic Engineer E. A. Barton's Bantam (inset), and mass in the busses. 69

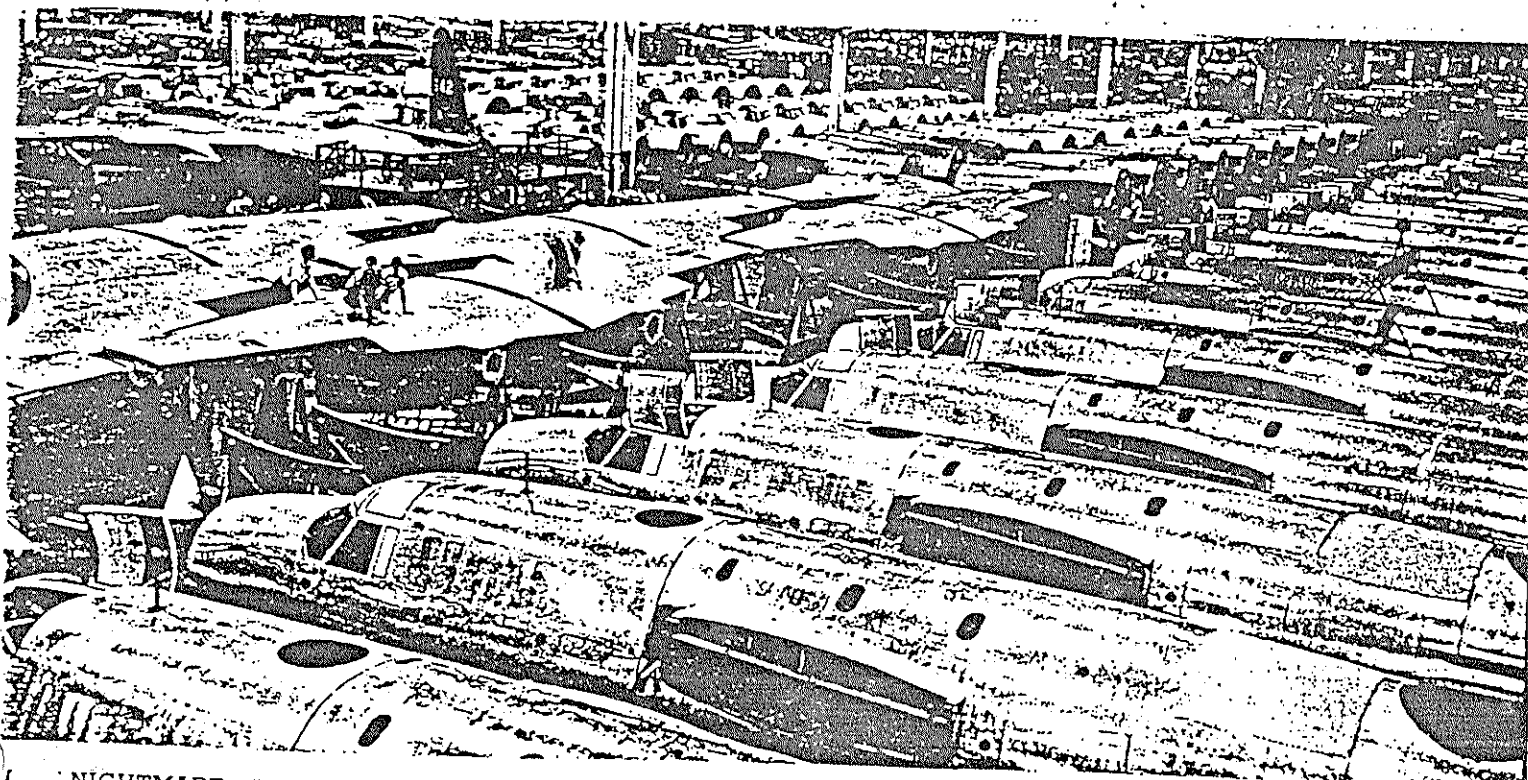


The Airport Administration Building ⁷⁰



Mrs. Mintz Martin unveils symbolic statue of labor in front of Victory Villa Recreation Center during opening ceremonies.

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NIGHTMARE. A scene showing mass-production of Martin B-26 bombers for the Army. Sections (background) roll up on the floor to become fuselages (foreground). Next stage, completed bombers.

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Notes

- 1 "Leading Airplane Plant Selects Baltimore," Baltimore, February 1928, p. 1.
- 2 "Martin Gives Reasons for Choosing Baltimore," Baltimore, April 1929, p. 49.
- 3 "Aircraft Development Will Help Port," Baltimore, April 1929, p. 49.
- 4 Henry Still, To Ride the Wind (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1964), p. 167.
- 5 "Glenn L. Martin Tells Why He Selected Baltimore as Location for America's Greatest Airplane Factory," Baltimore, February 1928, p. 1.
- 6 "Glenn L. Martin Tells Why He Selected Baltimore," p. 1.
- 7 "City officials Think Martin Will Buy Here," Baltimore Morning Sun, 2 December 1928, p. 22, col. 5.
- 8 "Baltimore Would Be Graf Zeppelin Port," Baltimore, August 1929, p. 23.
- 9 Still, p. 167.
- 10 Still, p. 167.
- 11 "City To Get Reply From Martin," Baltimore Morning Sun, 30 November 1928, p. 22, col. 2.
- 12 Still, p. 168.
- 13 still, p. 169.
- 14 still, p. 170.

- 15
"Martin Picks City For Big Plane Factory," Baltimore Morning Sun,
30 December 1928, p. 16, col. 3.
- 16
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- 17
"Baltimore Future in Aeronautics Assured," Baltimore, May 1929, p.
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- 18
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- 30
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- 31
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- 32
"B. & O., Pennsy Tackle Martin Plant Traffic," Baltimore Morning Sun, 23 April 1942, p. 30, col. 1.
- 33
"Getting Plane Workers To Job Called No. 1 Task," Baltimore Morning Sun, 5 April 1942, p. 14, col. 1.
- 34
"Company Arranges New Bus Service," The Martin Star, July 1942, p. 14.
- 35
"More Housing Soon ... 1200 New Units," The Martin Star, April 1942, p. 19.
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- 37
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- 38
"Martin Plant Housing Site Picked By FSA," Baltimore Morning Sun, 1 February 1942, p. 22, col. 1.
- 39
"Housing Seen as Half Needs," Baltimore Morning Sun, 18 February 1942, p. 26, col. 1.
- 40
"1000 Houses Planned for Defense Area," Baltimore Morning Sun, 15 March 1942, p. 24, col. 6.
- 41
"More Housing Soon,"p. 19.
- 42
"Branch Bank At Aero Acres," The Martin Star, June 1942, p. 12.
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"Aero Acres Center Ready," The Martin Star, July 1942, p. 11.

- 46
"Fellowship Church Will Be Opened Easter Sunday," The Martin Star,
April 1943, p. 7.
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"Maternity Trailers For Middle River," Baltimore Morning Sun, 27
August 1942, p. 26, col. 2.
- 49
"Martin Trailer Homes Opened," Baltimore Morning Sun, 6 March
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"Thousands of Women To Work in Plant of Martin Company," Baltimore
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- 60
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- 61
"New Building to House 650 Employees," p. 2.
- 62
"Jef Dauber, "Tides of Employment," The Evening Sun, 21 December 1983, Sec. A. p. 1.
- 63
6. "Martin Observes 40th Birthday," The Martin Star, August 1949, p.
- 64
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"More Housing Soon...", p. 19.
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"More Housing Soon...", p. 19.
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- 69
"The Nation Watches... Martin's Record of Car Pooling." The Martin Star, August 1942, p. 7.
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"Flyaway," The Martin Star, August 1942, p. 6.
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p. 9. "From Waterfront to Production Front," The Martin Star, June 1942,

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