



PROJECT PROFILE

Naval War College

Historic Preservation of Mahan and Pringle Halls | Newport, RI



CLIENT

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Mid-Atlantic

BACKGROUND

Mahan Hall, named for Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, was opened in 1904 and encompasses the historic Mahan Rotunda and Reading Room. Additions, including library stacks, were completed in 1934 and 1965. Pringle Hall, named for Vice Admiral Joel R. P. Pringle, was opened in 1934 and was the principal site for war gaming until the Naval Electronic Warfare Simulator was built in Sims Hall in 1957. Pringle Hall contains a 432-seat auditorium, the Quinn Lecture Room, the Naval Staff College, and the Naval War College Press. Both buildings are National Historic Landmarks with facades of Milford pink granite and wood windows, and each have roofs of slate with copper flashing.

The Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) decided to upgrade their aging facilities to meet their anticipated needs for the twenty-first century. Work included maintenance and repair of the exterior enclosures of each building, addressing blast requirements, and updating mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. NAVFAC sought to preserve the historic integrity of the facilities using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; therefore, all work respected the original historic fabric of the exterior and interior finishes.

SOLUTION

WJE was retained as a consultant to an architect-led team to assess the condition of the exterior enclosure. This included flat roofs, slate, and copper flashing; exterior granite facades; and wood operable windows and doors. On the interior, WJE performed analyses on various plaster surfaces, including scagliola columns in the Mahan Rotunda. Findings as well as recommendations for the preservation or rehabilitation of the enclosure materials and assemblies were summarized in a report along with cost estimates that were developed by others. NAVFAC intends to use the report for budgetary planning of a comprehensive modernization and rehabilitation program.

