



The Catalyst

A Newsletter for the White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation

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September 2002

Annual Foundation Membership Meeting to be Held Oct. 15, 10 a.m.

All White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation members are invited to the annual membership meeting on Oct. 15, 10 a.m., in the Frontier Club.

During the meeting we will elect three new board members and hear reports from the foundation's treasurer and president as well as Ron Burkett, the museum director. Immediately following the meet-

ing, the board of directors will meet to elect new officers.

The three candidates for the empty positions are John Douds, Pam Vick and Jim Eckles. For biographical information on the candidates, see page 3. All three nominees are currently serving on the board. Write in candidates are welcome, but the submitter must make sure the nominee is willing to

serve if elected.

This meeting affords members the opportunity to see preliminary architectural concepts for the expansion of the museum. The new concept calls for a complex which includes two exhibit areas, archives and a research facility, a learning center and theater, a conference plaza, administration and, of course, a museum store.



The missile range's V-2 rocket, which had been on display in front of the Headquarters Building for decades, was removed on Sept. 12 for a trip to the renovators in Kansas. See story on page 2.

Kansas Group to Rescue WSMR V-2

White Sands Missile Range, once the home to countless V-2 parts and pieces, has undertaken the task of saving its only V-2 rocket.

On Sept. 12, a group of workers from the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kan., split the V-2 into two pieces and loaded them on a flatbed truck for the trip to the Great Plains. The work to restore the V-2 will take about 18 months because the V-2 will be completely disassembled and rebuilt.

According to the Jim Remar, leader of the Kansas team, the Cosmosphere has restored three other V-2 rockets. He said the WSMR V-2 is one of the most complete of the 19 known V-2s left in existence. It contains most of its inner working parts except for the steam generating system and the turbopump.

The restoration work is necessitated by the crumbling condition of the V-2. The bottom

portion of the rocket is filled with concrete which helped anchor it during high winds. Over the years the concrete attracted moisture which has caused the skin and other components to rust away. In fact, the Kansas restorers estimate they will have to replace most of the rocket's skin with new metal.

Remar says they plan to have a webcam posted in the work area so interested parties can monitor restoration work via the internet. When the URL is established, the foundation will let members know how to access it.

Ron Burkett, White Sands Museum Director and the initiator of this effort, said because most of the working components are in this V-2 it will be restored with part of the skin removed so visitors can see inside. When the V-2 returns, he intends to display it in a horizontal position so you can see the mechanism from top to bottom. A special shelter will be built to protect it from the wind and sun.



Ron Burkett, bottom, looks up into the V-2 guidance section as workers prepare the nose for shipment. All the visible components in the rocket are labelled indicating this V-2 was once on display in the horizontal position with various hatches open so visitors could see inside. The oxygen tanks visible in this photo are mounted on plywood which is beginning to rot away.



The V-2 warhead and guidance section are gently lifted off.

Co-ops to Reunite During Homecoming

New Mexico State University is hosting a co-op reunion during homecoming weekend, Oct. 18 - 20. Since many of the co-ops worked at White Sands, the missile range will conduct a tour and hold

a reception in the museum late in the afternoon of Oct. 18.

The historical foundation is funding the punch and snacks that will be served at the museum following a short range tour.

Donation Made to Honor Mary Bochman

Chris McDonald, whose wife Mary Bochman was killed in a tragic accident in 2000, made a donation of \$25,000 on Sept. 10 to the foundation in Mary's name.

Chris currently works for the Security Directorate at White Sands.

When Mary was killed she was working in the missile range's Civilian Personnel Advisory Center as a personnel management specialist. She had also worked in the Equal Employment Opportunity Office and had a total of 25 years of service at White Sands.

Nominees for the Foundation Board

Below are the three nominations to fill three vacancies on the White Sands Historical Foundation Board of Directors. To vote, attend the annual membership meeting on Oct. 15, 10 a.m., at the range's Frontier Club or mail this page to the foundation post office box. Write ins are welcome.

□ **John H. Douds** – Started his career as a NMSU White Sands Cooperative Student Trainee (1958-1961) where he gained experience in propulsion, climatic, shock, and vibration sciences associated with missile testing. He graduated NMSU in 1963 with a BS in Mechanical Engineering and a 2LT US Army commission. Prior to starting his 1964-1967 active duty tour he worked for EI Dupont. While in the Army he achieved the rank of Captain, completed the Guided Missile School at Redstone Arsenal, and advanced from Chief of the Test Section to Chief Assistant Test Conductor for Honest John Little John, and Lance missiles in the Army Missile Test and Evaluation Directorate at White Sands. After completion of his military service he returned to White Sands and the Army Missile Test and Evaluation Directorate where he supported the testing of a wide spectrum of munitions, artillery, air defense missiles, and rocket systems. He retired in 1995 as GM14 Chief of the Warheads Test Branch and immediately went to work as a volunteer for the White Sands Museum and Historical Foundation Operating Council where he served a tour as president. He is currently on the Board of Directors of the Foundation. Active interests in addition to the Historical Foundation

include lapidary, mineralogy, rock hounding, traveling, and being Grandpa to five grandchildren.

□ **Jim Eckles** – Has worked at the White Sands Public Affairs office for the past 25 years. He saw the Space Shuttle Columbia land at White Sands in 1982, has climbed into the empty bowels of Victorio Peak and has looked for aliens in all the obvious places. In his spare time Jim rides a mountain bike, dabbles in woodworking and is trying to play golf. He and his wife live in Las Cruces.

□ **Pam Vick** – Grew up in the hill country of Texas, lived in El Paso, finished high school and went to college at Texas Western/UTEP before moving to Albuquerque in 1974. In 1977 she began working for the City Manager of Las Cruces and later for the owner of the Holiday Inn de Las Cruces. One day in 1980 Vince Boudreau hand-carried her application to White Sands Missile Range and the rest is history, as they say. She worked progressive assignments beginning with ASL's Met Team, then to the Plans Office and the Deputy Commander's Office. In June 1986 MG Fulwyler selected her to work in the Commanding General's office where she stayed for the next thirteen years and worked for seven Commanding Generals. In 1999 she began serving as the Protocol Officer. Sometime during that year (when she came up for air), she felt she might be able to contribute to preserving the history of the personnel who have worked at this one-of-a-kind Range and began serving on the Operating Council

for WSMR Historical Foundation. She has a deep respect and affection for past and present professionals with whom she has been privileged to work. She believes we are in the infancy of preserving something very special, and is honored to be involved with the effort of many others that feel the same way. She is currently on the Board of Directors and serves as Secretary of the Board.

Appointments Possible

In addition to elected members to the foundation's board, there are a number appointed positions. If you are interested in serving in one of these spots, please contact one of the officers.

The board meets monthly and is involved in many aspects of supporting the White Sands Museum. If you want an inside look and want to help, contact us.

Volunteers Needed to Setup Museum Archive

More volunteers are needed to establish the new museum archives. All kinds of help -- everything from typing to missile systems expertise -- is needed. Call Terrie at 678-2250 to volunteer.

In Memoriam

Currently, there are seven names on the first Memorial Board in the museum. They are:

MG Thomas J.P. Jones

MG Alan A. Nord

Mary Bochman

Harris & Hollingworth Family

Edward F. Southworth

Sumiko Piland

William "Bill" Lieberman



The Back Page

Soldiers build the bunkers on the Nike firing range at Red Canyon Range Camp. Note that railroad track is used across the top to support the roof. Later volunteer soldiers used railroad track in the frame of the chapel they built on site. See J.P. Moore's new Red Canyon website at: home.sport.rr.com/nikeajax/rcrc_welcome.html