



Hands Across History



A joint newsletter for the White Sands Historical Foundation and the White Sands Pioneer Group.

Volume VI, Letter IV

November 2010

Museum Still Growing And Gets New Look

By Darren Court, Director
WSMR Museum

There has been quite a bit of good news at the museum the last few months which I would like to share. First of all, it looks like we will be close to 100,000 visitors this year. We set a record last year with 84,600 and look to beat that by a large margin this year.

Also, in addition to the archival material and small artifacts we receive throughout the year, we were recently given a stainless steel BQM-34 by the most generous Navy during their birthday celebration. It was used in numerous laser tests on the range. On November 1 we were “handed the keys” to an MLRS donated by the Federal Republic of Germany! Both of these will make great additions to Missile Park.

In the museum, we are almost finished with a complete renovation of the exhibits in the main gallery. We have moved many items around, brought in large artifacts from storage, and tried to group like-items together.

For instance, all of the cameras and optics are now in one place, as is all of the communication equipment. We have built movable walls to separate the gallery into distinct “rooms” which now offer exhibits on “Nike and the Cold War,” “Target Drones and Equipment,” and “The Missile and Rockets of WSMR.”

In addition, we have created an exhibit called “Home on the Range” which tells the story of living at a military

post like White Sands. We have collected many experiences from family members and what soldiers found living and working here.

We have moved and expanded the Trinity Site exhibit and have almost completed installing the interpretation on the walls, now going back to give a bit of background on the Manhattan Project itself, in addition to the test at Trinity.

The old “WSPG” room is now dedicated to the V-2 with all memorabilia from the WSPG era being moved to the “Home on the Range” exhibit.

It’s been a busy summer!!! To assist us in this, we had a summer volunteer brought in through Child and Youth Services HIRED program, who we mentored. And we welcomed new museum volunteer Lucinda Hemingway, granddaughter of pioneer and Hall of Fame member Frank Hemingway. Both were very helpful.

So what’s ahead for FY11? We will rewrite the exhibits for the Pueblo Room, Hembrillo Room, and Ranch room, as well as the Navy and NASA exhibits. In addition, we will be completely cleaning and reorganizing our storage area in building 1833 to better accommodate the increasing number of items we are receiving.

This is where you come in. Nothing you have from your White Sands days is too inconsequential for us, so please, if you are cleaning out that garage or closet, DONATE IT, don’t throw it away.



Museum Director Darren Court gives a BQM-34 drone a close inspection during the Navy’s birthday celebration in October. According to Cmdr. James Harrell, commander of the White Sands Naval Detachment, this version of the “Firebee” has a special target system used for testing directed energy weapons like the airborne laser. Navy officials presented the target to Court during a celebration of the Navy’s 235 years as a service.

Photo by Drew Hamilton

Year-End Summary From Foundation Chief

By Sharon Reese
WSMR Historical Foundation President

The holiday season is just around the corner and I hope that each and every one of you have a fabulous time with family and friends.

This year we have accomplished several things.

On February 10 the Board held a briefing for our new commander, Brig. Gen. Regan. I briefed on the purpose of the foundation, our accomplishments, and the projected plans for assisting the installation on the future construction phases of the museum.

On Saturday, April 24, the Executive Board held a tea for Congressman Harry Teague at the home of Pam and Austin Vick. We had an hour and a half to provide information about the foundation and request his assistance in obtaining funding for the Museum. State Representative Nate Cote was also in attendance.

We held a golf tournament on April 30. Even with the cold winds we were able to make over \$1350. Doug Messer did a great job in organizing this event.

On May 4 we hosted a reception at the Museum for a book signing for the memoirs of Rolf Mitchell. There were over 150 attendees to include Brig. Gen. Regan.

June 8 we recognized our donors with the unveiling of our "Donor Plaque" display that is in the main lobby of the Museum. The reception was cohosted by the CG. He was unable to attend but LTC Navarre did a fine job with the unveiling of the display.

Since the unveiling, Frances Williams made another generous donation and now has a silver plaque (over \$5,000 total) hanging on the display. Also, the Raytheon Corporation has now reached the gold sponsor category (over \$25,000). Thank you all for your help.

Our summer was topped off by another golf tournament on August 27. Thanks to Doug Messer's efforts we made a profit of over \$1300.00. Next year Doug will continue as our "golf guru" and plans are underway to hold only one golf tournament in the late spring.

The year was rounded off by holding our annual members meeting on November 10.



Dale Smith, left, and others warm up on the putting green for the Foundation's August golf tournament. Note the shorts and short sleeves compared to the April event.

Statement of Purpose and Membership

The "Hands Across History" newsletter is published by the White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation and the White Sands Pioneer Group (WSPG). Both nonprofit organizations aim to preserve the accomplishments of White Sands Missile Range.

The newsletter is intended to keep members of both groups informed about current events and share information of common interest. The edi-

tor is Jim Eckles. He can be contacted by email at nebraska1950@comcast.net or at either address below.

Membership to either organization is open to anyone who shares their goals. However, details of membership (dues, etc.) differ between the two groups. For more information, please contact the appropriate organization and we will send it via the Post Office or email.

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Wild Critters Bear Witness To Remoteness Of Some Out-Of-The-Way Places On WSMR

By Mara Weisenberger
Wildlife Biologist
San Andres National Wildlife Refuge

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The wildlife refuge is wholly contained within White Sands Missile Range but belongs to the Department of Interior. In addition to Mara's job as the refuge's biologist she also takes its history very seriously. Read on and you'll see why.*

While in the field with Kevin Hansen, a colleague from NM State Parks on August 27, we saw shape in the shade under a small juniper that normally isn't in that exact spot. You know how it is when you know a piece of land well enough to know something is out of place.

The shape was in the wash below us, about 35 meters away, downslope, at around 5,525 feet in elevation. Sure looked like a bear: round ears, long muzzle, light color, round body, somewhat smallish, but it couldn't be – everyone knows there are no bears in the southern San Andres Mountains.

Where are the binoculars? It sure looked like a bear looking back at me, but it couldn't be. Had to figure out what it was for my own curiosity and sanity. I know there is no big boulder in that wash under that tree, at least not normally.

No binoculars at hand, so I started to panic as the macro lens (for close-ups) was on the camera from taking photos of a praying mantis a short time previously. That won't work. According to Kevin, there was some inaudible

language and frantic grabbing of the camera case. After what seemed like an eternity, I finally got the correct lens on my camera, turned off the truck, jumped out and the rock was gone.

This has happened a thousand times when glassing (using binoculars or a telescope to search for animals) for big-horn sheep. From experience, I know we have a lot of rock sheep, yucca oryx, and stick snakes on the refuge. Thought I was losing my mind because I knew I saw something... whatever that something was.

I figured most likely it was a mule deer doe and my eyes don't focus as quickly as they used to. Had to make certain what it was, so I started creeping over the edge to look for movement of the doe running away, hoping I might get an observation of one of our radio-collared deer. Just maybe there was a fawn with her since peak fawning is July through September.

Finally I saw movement trotting down the narrow wash and sure enough, it was a black bear! It was wearing its light phase coat: chocolate brown head and feet and a long, blond coat bleached from the summer sun.

As the bear trotted down the wash, I jogged along down the road out of sight to try to get in front of it. I stopped, looked back over the edge and the bear had stopped too. It looked up my way for a few moments and then continued, at a casual walk, down the wash. (SEE MARA'S PHOTO BELOW)

see Bears Visit Occasionally, page 6



Bureaucracy At Its Best With Pigs

Editor's Note: The following DF or "disposition form" was sent in by Stephenie Crowley. She found it amongst her father's papers. He was Sgt. Maj. Stephen F. Crowley. She said it probably came across his desk when he was serving as the Sgt. Maj. of Troop Command or as the Post Sgt. Maj. She doesn't know exactly when he moved from one position to the other. Unfortunately he is no longer with us to ask. In talking about its authenticity, Stephenie said it looks real and has original ink signatures, etc. She said her father was always "amused by the crazy things the Army did" and it would be the kind of thing he just might save. I've run the text completely across the page like a DF and made the type size a bit bigger for ease of reading. If you know anything about the Oscura pig SNAFU (Stephenie's title), please let us know. THANKS Stephenie.

Disposition Form

To: CO, Troop Command

Subject: Garbage Disposal

From: OIC, Oscura Range Camp

Date: 22 April 60

1. On 17 April 1959 a DF was written to Post quartermaster through Troop command concerning the disposal of Garbage from Camp Mess Hall. It was requested that such garbage be physically collected and removed from the Range rather than to continue to dump such garbage in a nearby pit where it presented a breeding ground for flies.
2. Post Quartermaster in Comment No. 2 to this DF granted authority to dispose of this garbage by giving it to a local rancher on a gratis basis. On this authority personnel of Oscura Range Camp attempted to find someone interested in receiving this garbage. However, because of the small amount of garbage involved and the isolated location of the Camp no one was found who was interested in collecting it.
3. This problem was discussed by phone with Captain McCabe of the Post Quartermaster and the possibility of using the garbage to feed pigs which could be slaughtered and used for a unit barbecue was suggested.
4. On 10 June 1959 a DF was written to the Post Quartermaster confirming the fact that no one could be found to pick up the garbage and that it would be disposed of either by dumping or used to feed pigs which in turn would be used for a barbecue for Camp personnel.
5. Subsequently M/Sgt (E-7) Bernard J. Beaulieu, the Camp Mess Sergeant, was instructed to see if he could make some arrangement whereby he could obtain some baby pigs which could be fed such garbage and raised for Camp use. Sgt Beaulieu later reported that he had obtained 4 pigs with an agreement that two (2) pigs were to be returned when grown to the rancher and the other two (2) would become ORC property.
6. The pigs were kept in an old corral approximately 1,500 feet from Oscura Range Camp where one of them died from an unknown cause.
7. On or about 18 February 1960 the pigs were removed from the close proximity of the Camp due to the approaching summer months and possible criticism which might arise from the sanitation angle. Arrangements were made by Sergeant William I. Simpson to keep the pigs in a pen on private property at Oscura, New Mexico approximately 8 ½ miles from Camp where Sergeant Simpson lives in a trailer.
8. At the time the pigs were removed from the Range Sgt Beaulieu was in the William Beaumont Hospital at El Paso. Within one or two days after the pigs were removed from Camp, I informed Sgt Beaulieu in a phone conversation that the pigs had been moved, that Sgt. Simpson was taking care of them and that they were not to be moved or disposed of without my knowledge or permission.
9. Upon Sgt Beaulieu's subsequent release from the Hospital and return to duty. He was personally ordered by the undersigned that two of the pigs were government property and that he was to be held responsible for them and that they were not to be removed or disposed of without my knowledge.

Continued on the next page

Pigs Conintued From Page 4

10. During the course of a CI investigation on or about mid February at this Camp made by personnel of the Provost Marshal office, AMTC, that office learned of the existence of the pigs. Col. King in a subsequent visit to Oscura Range Camp stated to the undersigned that he was not concerned with either the existence or location of the pigs unless they were used for a purpose other than for the benefit of the Camp personnel.

11. During the course of Col. R.H. Wells, AMTC IG, visit to Oscura Range Camp on 7 March 1960 the undersigned discussed the history of the pigs with him and asked the possibility of such pigs being sold and the money being realized from such sale being picked up in the Detachment # 6 Unit Fund. Col. Wells stated that he would check into the matter upon his return to AMTC and that he would call and advise me if such a transaction could be made. A few days later Col. Wells phoned me and stated that my proposal was legal and quoted me the Reference regulations.

12. No further action was taken on the pigs and they were not discussed again until Sunday, 3 April 1960 when on the way to work SFC (E-7) Arthur C. Maney mentioned that Captain Drebber was planning a picnic at Tularosa Range Camp. We mentioned that such a picnic would be the perfect answer as to how to dispose of our two (2) pigs.

13. On Monday, 4 April 1960 during my absence from Camp, Sgt Maney called Captain Drebber and told him Oscura Range Camp had the two (2) pigs which could be barbecued for the picnic. After the call was over SP/4 Robert J. Steinbrick who had overheard Sgt Maney's conversation told him he didn't think the pigs still existed. Sgt Maney immediately tried to verify this information. Sgt Beaulieu was downrange and could not be contacted, Sgt Simpson when questioned stated that he had bought all three (3) pigs from the rancher for \$8.00 each or a total of \$24.00 dollars. He further stated that he had then sold two (2) of the pigs for \$20.00 each or for a total of \$40.00. He stated that he did not know the pigs were government property and that he had given Sgt Beaulieu \$10.00 from the money received for the sale of the pigs.

14. Sgt Beaulieu did not return to Oscura Range Camp prior to 1830 hours on 4 April at which time I left Camp for my home.

15. On 5 April Captain Drebber arrived at Oscura Range Camp early in the morning. I informed him of the pigs history and what had happened as I knew it. Captain Drebber as Detachment #3 Commanding Officer ordered Sgt Beaulieu to report to him. I was not present in the room when he talked to Sgt Beaulieu. Captain Drebber later told me Sgt Beaulieu had denied having sold the pigs. Captain Drebber and I discussed that Sgt Simpson had paid the rancher for them and the \$20.00 each (\$40.00 total) he had received from their sale or a total of \$24.00 must be turned over by Sgt Simpson and picked up in Detachment # 3 unit fund. Sgt Beaulieu agreed to return to Sgt Simpson the \$10.00 Sgt Simpson had given to him thus leaving \$14.00 that Sgt Simpson would have to furnish from money received from sale of the Pigs.

16. Sgt Simpson was not on duty on 5 April and Captain Drebber could not reach him at his home to discuss the matter with him. He requested that I contact Sgt Simpson on his next work shift and question him regarding the situation. When questioned Sgt Simpson stated he had paid a total of \$24.00 for the pigs to the rancher Sgt Beaulieu has originally got them from. He stated that he had sold the two (2) pigs for a total of \$10.00 to Captain Burdsall and a tall Sergeant from one of Captain Burdsall's mess halls. I told him that to account for the pigs to the I.G. and PMO's satisfaction he must return \$14.00 together with the \$10.00 Sgt Beaulieu would return to him.

(signed)

William W. Colebank, Capt, Ord C
Commanding

Editor: But what happened to the third pig???

Bears Visit Occasionally ——— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Then, even more adrenaline flooded my system as I caught the distinctive sound of a rattlesnake buzzing away, thankfully by the bear and not me. The bear made a quick jump out of the wash and turned back looking toward the snake. After a few more moments, it continued walking slowly, making a wide arc around the wash, smelling the dried fruit of a banana yucca, before dropping back down and continuing south out of sight in the drainage. It was heading up toward Little San Nicholas Camp and pinyon-juniper habitat.

I managed to snap a few photos of this splendid and very real critter before it wandered off.

Was my sighting really all that unusual? White Sands Missile Range biologists have documented black bears in the northern San Andres Mountains for several years, including nine observations of black bears in the northern portion of the San Andres Mountains last year alone. So far in 2010 there has been one other sighting in Rhodes Canyon (40 miles north of this observation as the crow flies). Rhodes Canyon is the southern most location for bears documented in the San Andres Mountains in recent years.

In addition, two young black bears have been documented in the White Sands Missile Range main post area; one in the late 1970s and another in 2002. One other observation was of a young bear that climbed an electrical pole east of the refuge on WSMR in the early 1980s. Last year, a researcher on White Sands National Monument observed bear tracks in their cottonwood groves near the visitor center, but no animal was ever observed.

Even though there is a Bear Creek, Bear Canyon, and Bear Peak bordering the southern boundary of the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, this is our first documented bear since the refuge was established in January of 1941. Black bears are not on the refuge's 1965 mammal list, but

were discussed in a 1946 article in the Journal of Mammalogy (Vol. 27, No. 2) by Arthur Halloran, the first Refuge Manager for the San Andres NWR.

Here is the pertinent part of Halloran's article: "We have not been able to locate any specimens of bears. Local ranchers report that a few bears were present in the middle 90's and that they occasioned some livestock loss. A "black bear" was reported killed in the Ropes Spring area in 1895 according to A. D. Litton now of Hatch, New Mexico. Watson Rich, pioneer rancher of Hembrillo Canyon, told the writer that both "cinnamon" and "silvertip" bears were present in the late 80's and that they appeared in greater numbers in the fall. James Young, a hunter of the Fish and Wildlife Service, told us of a bear track he had seen in 1941 in the Caballo Mountains, just west of the San Andres Range. Bailey (1931, p. 352) states, "In 1902 in the San Andres Mountains Gaut was told by a ranchman near Salinas that two bear had been killed two years previously near his place." Ligon (1927, p. 96) does not indicate that the San Andres contained bears nor does he indicate that they were present in 1917. Under date of April 26, 1945, Louis H. Laney, District Agent, Fish and Wildlife Service, wrote from Albuquerque, New Mexico that his records did not indicate that any bears had been taken in the San Andres Range. No signs of bears were noted by the writer during the study. It seems that few, if any, bears can now be found as residents of this range, although individual stragglers might be noted."

Halloran's article is the only historical written record of black bears in the San Andres Mountains that I could find. If you know of any other information, I'd love to hear about it. I can be reached by phone at: 575-382-5047 or by email at mara_weisenberger@fws.gov

Our mailing address is San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, 5686 Santa Gertrudis Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88012.



In September this photo of a young bull elk was snapped by an infrared-triggered camera positioned at a water tank in the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge. The drinker is located in the San Andres Mountains about 10 miles north of U.S. Highway 70 near Little San Nicolas Canyon. Weisenberger said she has also spotted elk on the refuge and, by default, on the missile range near Hembrillo Canyon while conducting an aerial survey for desert bighorn sheep. Watch out when driving over San Augustine Pass.

Here's A JFK Riddle For Your Consideration

By Jim Eckles, Editor

In going through some old, old Public Affairs files, I discovered an original program from President Kennedy's visit. Written on the cover in ink is "Thorlin." So I'm thinking this was the commanding general's personal program during the visit.

On the itinerary page (I've included the top half of it below) there are handwritten times for everything - in pencil. Note how tight the schedule is.

Then for the surface-to-surface missiles there is a handwritten note about each of their CPEs (circular probably error). The CPE was generally the radius of a circle containing 50% of the weapon impacts. For instance, Little John had a CPE of 130 meters and the Sergeant was 400 meters.

On the surface this looks like the Little John was more accurate but one has to remember it was flying a much shorter distance. He also lists who briefer was for each system.

For the air defense systems, he has cheat notes on the "max miss distance" for each system. We assume this means

the maximum distance the missile can be from the target and still achieve a kill. For instance, Talos had a 1,500' max miss distance and the HAWK was at 65'. For the Nike Zeus he wrote in "800' to kill an ICBM warhead."

That all seems straight forward. The briefings were not classified, except for the Zeus, so the general probably was prepared to whisper some sensitive data into the President's ear whenever needed. But what are the other numbers?

For instance, Pershing has "40, 200, 440" written above it. The Nike Zeus has "165, 255" written above it. Sergeant has "40-150" above it. Here's an odd one - Talos has "2" above it - while Honest John has "2-10-30" written over it.

So, do you have any idea what these numbers might represent? Yes, I have checked with Dan Duggan, who was there as a briefer, and he doesn't know.

If you have an idea, give me a call at 575-521-8771 or email me at nebraska1950@comcast.net or mail me a note at the Foundation's post office box - see page 2.

- 1445 **Arrival at White Sands Missile Range Headquarters Area from Holloman Air Force Base**
- 1455-
1503 **Travel to Launch Site No. 1**
- 1505-
1508 **Introduction to exercises by Major General J. Frederick Thorlin, Commanding General of White Sands Missile Range**
- 1508-
1510 **Display and firing of HONEST JOHN ballistic rocket (LT ANDERSON)**
2-10-30 CPE-240 meters
- 1510
1513 **SERGEANT artillery ballistic missile assembly (CAPT BELL)**
- 1513
1521 **Helicopter deployment and firing of LITTLE JOHN artillery rocket (CAPT ORR)**
2.4-11 CPE-130 meters
- 1521
1526 **SERGEANT firing (CAPT BELL)**
40-150 400 meters
- 1526
1533 **Launcher loading and firing of HAWK anti-aircraft missile (COL STACY)**
CONV 65' max miss dist
- 1533
1538 **Travel to Launch Site No. 2**
2-20-30 200' max miss dist
- 1538
1603 **Display and firing of NIKE HERCULES anti-aircraft missile (LT LYNCH)**
- 1603
1608 **PERSHING ballistic missile system demonstration (CAPT GOLDSTIEN)**
40, 200, 440 600 meters (experience shows 350 meters)
- 1608
1613 **Display and firing of TALOS air defense missile (CMDR CULP)**
2 1500' max miss dist
- 1613
1616 **Display and firing of NIKE ZEUS anti-missile missile (CAPT DUGGAN)**
165, 255 800' max miss dist to kill ICBM warhead.

Hands Across History
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The Back Page



This is a drawing of the lounge in the first Officers Club, Bldg. 122. It was done by Don Alfredo in 1947. Also he was allowed to draw the blockhouse at the Army Launch Complex. I (editor) worked in this building for about 20 years as we in Public Affairs were the last inhabitants. We called the room the “pine box” because of the pine paneled walls and ceiling. It was probably smoke filled every Friday and Saturday night. The building was recently demolished.