

Off for a gallop on a hobbyhorse made from a bomb casing and cartridge legs.



Playground

*Troops of the Pueblo (Colo.) ordnance depot
have fashioned a unique "kiddieland"
from obsolete weapons of war.*

IN JULY, 1955, a group of workers and army ordnance experts, armed with hand grenades, tank tracks, rockets, and armor-piercing bombs, dug emplacements in the Colorado prairie.

To residents of nearby Pueblo, it looked as if the army was girding itself for an invasion. They were partially right. But the invaders were hardly from across the sea or from outer space. Instead, they were hordes of Colorado youngsters and tourists.

The attraction was Hi-PODner park, a military kiddieland where scrap-bound tools of war have been converted into a full-scale playground. While all the conventional favorites are there—swings, slides, teeter-totters—the construction isn't exactly according to a playland designer's specifications.

Take these contraptions for example: a Maypole swing made of a 90-millimeter gun barrel with a tank wheel as the rotating unit and decorated with three 3.5-inch rockets; a teeter-totter with a pyramid of three 1,600-pound bombs, a fulcrum of two 76-millimeter projectiles, and handles made from cartridge cases; a hobbyhorse with a hollow bomb for a body and 76-millimeter cartridges for legs, and a suspension bridge made from a salvaged tank track supported by 1,600-pound bombs.

At the entrance of this playtime arsenal is a 44,000-pound British bomb that rests on its nose and stands more than 20 feet high. This World War II super blockbuster, the largest in the world, inspired the idea for the playground when it was marked for scrap at the Pueblo ordnance depot, an army general store that distributes everything from tiny watch springs to mammoth tanks.

Col. John M. Henderson, commander of the depot, suggested saving the giant and building Hi-PODner park around it. No taxpayer dollars were available for the project, so the necessary \$2,000 came from the Civilian Welfare Council of the depot, the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, and Colorado Arkansas Valley Inc., an organization promoting the area. Hi-PODner's name is built around the initials of the Pueblo ordnance depot.

Once the park was completed, the army rolled out its modern weapons to contrast with the obsolete parts used in the playground. An array of tanks, guns, and guided missiles are on display, complete with price tags, to show taxpayers where today's defense dollar goes.

On opening day, which attracted more than 3,000 persons, even the traditional ribbon cutting ceremony took on a military guise—a 30-caliber ammunition belt was cut!

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