

Old Camp Turned Into Space Base

VANDENBERG AFB, Calif. (UPI)—This once unwanted piece of real estate on the shores of the Pacific has been transformed in the last two decades from 65,000 acres of shifting sands and scrub oak into one of this country's most important space age bases.

The transformation has been gradual. The area first came to

the attention of the military shortly before World War II when an armored training base, Camp Cooke, was established there. It was closed in 1946, reactivated briefly during the Korean War and then abandoned again in 1953.

In December, 1956, two Air Force officers arrived at old Camp Cooke. It was one of 200 sites being investigated as a possible place to establish the Air Force's first missile base.

The abandoned camp was not an impressive site. Trees had grown over the roads, sand blew over the tops of fences, and the relentless wind and sun had drained the color from the few remaining buildings.

Finds It Perfect

But the Air Force decided old Camp Cooke was perfect for what it wanted — a site for training missilemen along with maintaining an operational missile force.

That is the prime reason Vandenberg has for being. But scientists soon found it was perfect, too, for launching satellites into orbit over the poles. It is one of the few places really suited for that in this country.

months possibly, the first Titan ICBM will be fired from a silo launcher 160 feet below the surface of a Vandenberg hillside.

The Air Force has stationed about 7,000 officers and men here, and there is an equal number of civilian workers on the base building new facilities for new rockets.

What do the natives think of the nearby missile base? When they shoot one of the 90-ton missiles into the sky now, the people pay little attention. They glance up for a minute, and then go back to raising cattle, drilling for oil, harvesting broccoli, or weeding the many commercial flower seed fields around the base.

"You can shoot a rocket south from here," one officer said, "and the first land mass it crosses is Antarctica, 6,500 miles away."

Flood Of People On Forest Land

PORTLAND (AP)—A flood hit federal forest lands in Oregon and Washington last year—a flood of people.

Swarming over national parks and forests in the two states in 1960 were about 9½ million sightseers, hunters, fishermen, skiers, campers, hikers and other persons, the U.S. Forest Service said today. That was 16 per cent more than the previous year.

Regional Forester J. Herbert Stone said creation of new facilities has not kept pace with the deluge of visitors, and added that the pressure will be even greater in the future.

Make First Recovery

Particularly so on a sunny August afternoon last year when a Discoverer, No. 13, sent back the first man-made object from orbit. Three more recoveries followed quickly, planes catching them in flight off Hawaii.

Scientists hailed the recoveries as proving that plans for the Mercury man-in-space program would work. They pointed out that the mechanism that fired the capsule out of orbit and down toward the Pacific was similar to the one planned for the Mercury astronaut capsule.

Nineteen launch pads are scattered around Vandenberg and its adjoining Navy counterpart, Point Arguello, including four pads for the short-range Thor where Air Force crews still train British Royal Air Force missilemen to handle the IRBMs positioned throughout the British Isles.

Other launching facilities are under construction, including silos from which to fire America's newest ICBM, the solid-fueled "more bang for the buck" Minuteman, which a few months ago completed its first full-scale test at Cape Canaveral.

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OCE President To Speak At Farm Bureau Meeting

Dr. R. E. Lieuallen, president of Oregon College of Education, Monmouth, Ore., will be the banquet speaker at the second annual education conference of the Oregon Farm Bureau scheduled for Salem, Ore., March 16 and 17.

Charles Gossett Aboard Frigate

Charles D. Gossett, seaman apprentice, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Gossett of Star Route, Chiloquin, is serving aboard the guided missile frigate USS Mahan on a five-week cruise in the Pacific.

The Mahan departed San Diego, Calif., Feb. 16, and is scheduled to visit Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Acapulco, Mexico, before returning March 21.

The Mahan is the third ship named in honor of Rear Adm. Alfred T. Mahan, whose writings, citing the importance of sea-power for nations, became world famous. The first Mahan, a destroyer, was decommissioned in 1930, and the second was sunk in the Leyte Gulf, Dec. 7, 1944.



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