



Hands Across History



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

Volume VIII, Letter I

February 2012

WSMR Hall Of Fame Began With Six In 1980

The White Sands Hall of Fame was established in 1980 by Brig. Gen. Duard Ball when he was the range's commander. He started it to recognize those who have worked at White Sands and made lasting contributions to the range's mission.

The first induction was held on the steps of Bldg. 100 during the 35th anniversary celebration for White Sands. The first class of honorees are shown on the right.

Since then, 40 more individuals - military and civilian personnel, as well as contractor employees from White Sands

Missile Range and other agencies - have been inducted into the hall of fame. For the best look at all the members, visit the Foundation's museum website at: <http://www.wsmr-history.org/> On the left is a button for the hall of fame.

Since the first induction, most of the ceremonies have been held at luncheons that the White Sands Pioneer Group has cosponsored in the Officers Club. However,

for the induction of Paul and Joy Arthur, we held an outdoor ceremony in front of the V-2 Building at the Museum. It was HOT. Subsequent ceremonies have been held indoors.

Nominations for the hall of fame are open all year but the deadline for consideration each year is the end of March. So, for consideration in 2012, nominations are due by March 31. The missile range has a pamphlet (672-1) outlining the program and directions on how to nominate someone. You can contact the Incentive Awards Office at White Sands for a copy or Jim Eckles, your HAH Editor, and he can email a PDF or Word document version directly to your email address.



The Hall of Fame medal.



Brig. Gen. Duard Ball founded the WSMR Hall of Fame in 1980. He was elected to it in 1989.

Benjamin Billups
Chief of the Plans Office
Served 1951 - 1973



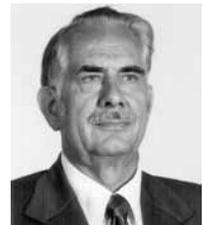
Dr. Clyde Tombaugh
Chief of Optical Measurements
Served 1946 - 1955

Col. Harold Turner
First Range Commander
Served 1945 - 1947



Gabriel Brillante
Public Affairs Officer
Served 1953 - 1974

Frank Hemingway
Technical Director, NR
Served 1947 - 1977



Dr. Wernher von Braun
Rocket Scientist
Served 1945 - 1950

Jokes Lead To A Real Story And Other Tidbits About WSMR

By Jim Eckles, Editor

On this page in the last newsletter I published a few jokes. I changed some of them by inserting real people as some of the characters. For instance, one had a role call and I used the names of several people I worked with in Public Affairs. In the one joke about a commander entering a military installation, I inserted Niles Fulwyler.

I thought I might get a comment or two. Alas, I only heard from Gen. Fulwyler. For him, it triggered a memory of when he was WSMR's commander. He sent it to me in an email and said I could print it. Here it is:

I was coming back to the Range from Las Cruces. About half way between the Organ Pass and the entry to WS, this big black car sped by me, obviously above the speed limit. I said to myself, I hope that isn't one of my soldiers! But sure enough, it turned onto Owen Road heading toward the Range. By the time I reached the LC gate, the MP was in the process of getting information from the occupants to issue a Visitor's Pass. I jumped out of my car and told the MP not to issue any pass, and to get the license plate # of the car and call the State Police. I told the driver of the car to get off the Range immediately. The driver of the car, a big blunt looking man, leaned out of the window and yelled at me "Do you think you own this place?" For once in my life I had the perfect answer for the occasion -- I replied: "As a matter of fact I do, now get your ass off this Range now!"

What a great story. If you have something rattling around in your memory banks about your time at WSMR, shoot it to me and we'll print it for everyone to enjoy.

No More Stickers For Access -- Speaking of entering White Sands Missile Range, a long, long tradition has died. Remember those stickers you had to put on your car or pickup so you could drive through the gate every morning without stopping? They are no more.

Instead, the range has moved over to the Air Force's way of doing things. If you have a Department of Defense ID of some sort, at least one that the WSMR guards recog-

nize, you can drive your vehicle up to the gate, show that ID and drive through.

Don't have a DOD identification? You still have to stop at the Reception Center and get a pass for your vehicle and for yourself.

Golf Tournament -- The White Sands Historical Foundation is planning another fund-raiser golf tournament for late spring or early summer. Again, it will be held at the WSMR course and the proceeds will go to aid the WSMR Museum.

At this time, an exact date has not been nailed down so watch the local newspapers for an announcement in the sports calendar sections. Also, we should be able to get word to you in the next newsletter.

Frances Williams Tribute -- On May 19 Temple Beth-El in Las Cruces is hosting a "roast or toast" highlighting Frances Williams. It is a tribute but also a fund-raiser for the temple. Hopefully we'll have more details in the next newsletter.

One great thing about the tribute is that Frances, a WSMR Historical Foundation board member, has asked the temple to split the proceeds with the Foundation for the benefit of the White Sands Museum.

This is just another example of the support Frances provides the WSMR Museum. Another example comes in the form of contributions to the Foundation in the name of deceased WSMRites. For instance, when Dr. Paul died last year, she made a contribution to his name hoping others would do the same.

Bataan Death March -- The next Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands is scheduled for March 25. If you or someone you know is interested in walking or running in the march, the only way to sign up now is on the Bataan website and the deadline is March 14. The website is: <http://www.bataanmarch.com/>

The same two distances are available as in the past - the regular 26.2-mile route out across U.S. Highway 70 into the Hazardous Test Area and the 14.2-mile route. Both take participants through the infamous "sand pit."

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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White Sands, N.M. 88002

White Sands Historical Foundation
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White Sands, N.M. 88002

Rocket Pioneer Visited White Sands In 1982

By Bill Gross, Public Affairs

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following article was written by Bill Gross and appeared in the Missile Ranger on May 28, 1982. When historians talk about the scientists who jump-started rocketry in various countries, they talk about Robert Goddard for the United States and, for Germany, it is Hermann Oberth. Wernher von Braun was inspired by Oberth.*

A week after a visit by space shuttle astronauts Jack Lousma and Gordon Fullerton, WSMR was visited by another pioneer of rocketry and space travel.

Dr. Hermann Oberth, who is credited with working out the original mathematics in 1923 for travel in space, toured the WSMR Hall of Fame and visitors' center Monday. Oberth is visiting the United States from his home in Feucht, Germany to attend his granddaughter's wedding in Pasadena, Calif., and to visit the International Space Hall of Fame in Alamogordo, where he was among the original 35 inductees in 1976.

Oberth was visiting Mrs. Thea Savage of El Paso when asked if he would like to visit WSMR. Reportedly, he answered, "Of course, I'd be delighted...that's where it all began." The visit was arranged by Tom Starkweather, chief of Data Sciences Division. Mrs. Savage is the widow of Franklin Wayne Savage who worked many years at WSMR.

Oberth was accompanied by his daughter, Erna Roth, a doctor of law, her husband Joseph, and Mrs. Savage. The party was greeted by Col. Daniel Duggan, deputy commander, Maj. David Olmsted, public affairs officer, Capt. John Storm, aide to the range commander, Austin Vick, technical advisor to the National Range Directorate, Ray Cano, general engineer with Plans, and Starkweather.

Cano narrated a slide briefing and movie in German

and acted as interpreter. Oberth explained he hadn't used his English in 20 years and felt more comfortable with an interpreter.

Oberth, who will be 88 on June 25, was born in Transylvania. He was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army as a medical corpsman at the outbreak of World War I. His theories of firing a space projectile and establishing a means by which it could escape the Earth's gravitational force were published in "By Rocket to Interplanetary Space" in 1923.

In 1938 Oberth was summoned by the German government to participate in a rocket research program at the Vienna College of Engineering. He received German citizenship in 1943 and was transferred to the Peenemuende Rocket Development Center, where the V-2 rocket had been created for use in World War II. He worked with Wernher von Braun and with Dr. Ernst Steinhoff, now also a member of the ISHF, retired and living in Alamogordo.

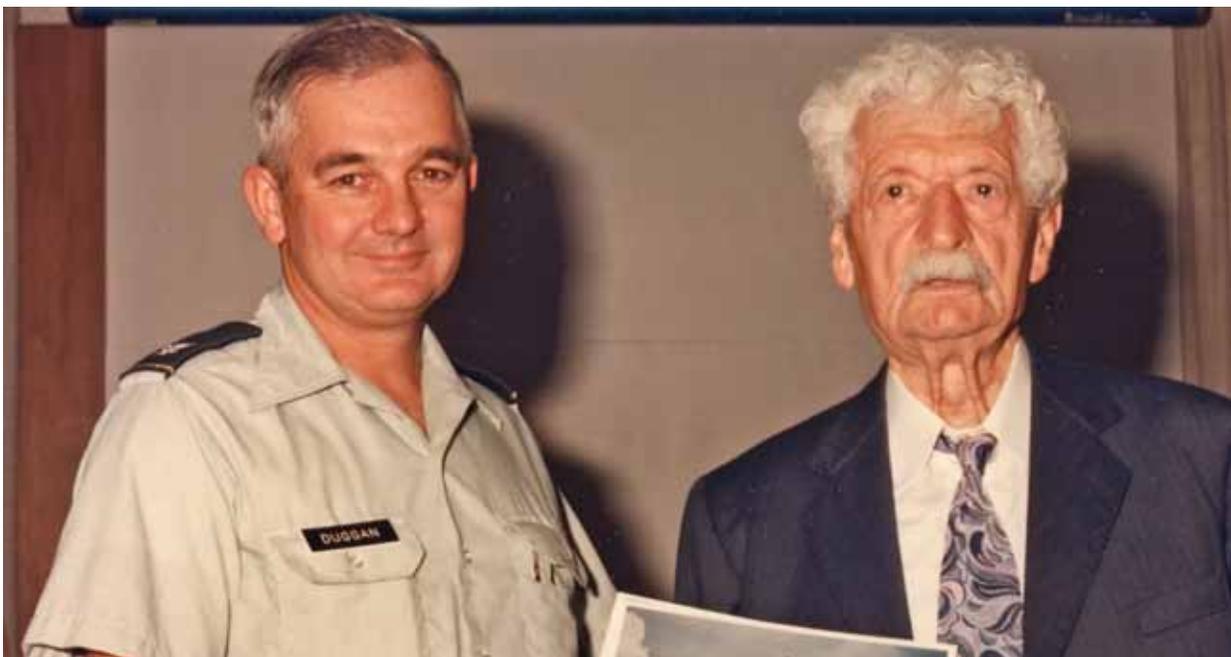
(EDITOR'S NOTE: *Of course, von Braun and Steinhoff are also members of the White Sands Hall of Fame)*

After the end of the war, Oberth served as an advisor to the U.S. Army Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Ala. Beside recognition at ISHF, he is an honorary president of the German Society for Space Research.

Oberth's book remains a guide for young rocket scientists even today. As a token of his esteem for WSMR, Oberth autographed a copy of his book and presented it to Duggan for WSMR. The book will be on display at the Visitor's Center with pictures of V-2 rockets, also autographed by the space scientist.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: *The book is now on display in the WSMR Museum.)*

The tour concluded with a visit of the missile park before Oberth and his party went on to Alamogordo.



WSMR Deputy Commander Col. Dan Duggan poses with pioneering rocket scientist Hermann Oberth in '82.

An Explanation For Post Street Names

Editor's Note: Have you ever wondered why WSMR has street names like "Hof" and "Crozier?" Are those people, places or what? This article from the Nov. 16, 1956 issue of the "Wind and Sand" newspaper explains all. For you youngsters, the "Wind and Sand" was the first newspaper for White Sands. It was a good, appropriate name. By the end of the article you'll note all the care taken to make sure no one is confused, as if the PX, bowling alley and officers club were going to move because the street names changed.

Effective Jan. 1, 1957, all streets in the WSPG cantonment area, including the housing areas, administrative areas and technical areas, will be renamed.

Post officials announced this week that new signs for all intersections, now being prepared for immediate installation, will be unveiled on or before that date.

The main north-south streets in the Army administrative area will be named after former Army chiefs of ordnance. The Main Access Road will be called Wadsworth Boulevard, after Col. Decius Wadsworth, the Army's first chief of Ordnance.

Principal streets running east and west will be named after Army Ordnance Corps installations - arsenals, depots and proving grounds. Longest of these will be Aberdeen Avenue, the present Third Street. Ranch Road will become Picatinny Avenue, and Sixteenth Street will be Rock Island Avenue.

In the Wherry housing area (Buena Vista Homes, Inc.), the streets running generally north and south will be named after various Army missiles. For example, the present F Street will be called LaCrosse Street, E Street will become Hawk Street, and D Street will become Dart Street.

The same plan will be followed in the Army housing area, although individual houses will continue to be designated by quarters numbers instead of street addresses.

In the Army housing area, B Street will become Loki Street, and C Street will become Sergeant Street.

In the Navy housing area, streets will be named after various Navy missiles. The present Y Street will become Aerobee Street and the present Z Street will be named Viking Street.

In the Navy administrative area, streets will be named after famous Naval officers and heroes. Avenue D North will become Hof Street, while Avenue D South will become Blandly Street.

Also in the Navy administrative area, Assembly Street will be renamed Dewey Street, Shop Street will become Parsons Street, First Street will become Noble Street and Second Street will be designated Halsey Street.

Throughout the post, streets which run from one area to another will retain the same name for their entire length. Thus on new street in some cases will replace two old ones. An example of this will be Picatinny Avenue, which is the present Ranch Road until it reaches the housing area, just northwest of the Post School, and then becomes Fourth Av-

enue. Both Fourth Avenue and Ranch Road will become the new Picatinny Avenue for their entire length.

The road leading from the "Y" in front of Headquarters Building east to the launching area and Army and Navy Blockhouses will be named Nike Avenue.

The systematic plan for renaming the posts's streets and road was proposed many months ago. Selections of the new names were completed recently and the plan was approved by Maj. Gen. W.E. Laidlaw, commanding general. Col. Howard Coleman, deputy commander for support, began mapping plans for placing the new system in effect.

Posts for the new intersection signs are being erected by the Installation Engineering Office. This work will be completed by Jan. 1. Then, on or before that date, new baked enamel signs with the new street names on them will be fastened to the posts.

The changeover is being coordinated with the WSPG Post Office, the Post Signal Office, the IEO and other affected agencies. A new street map, together with a cross index for handy reference and orientation, will be included in the next issue of the WSPG telephone directory.

Announcing the new street naming system, Col. Coleman emphasized that the official target date for placing it in effect is not before Jan. 1. This will give all concerned ample time to make plans for the changeover and become accustomed to it with a minimum of confusion.

The new street signs, being prepared and installed under direction of C.A. Farley, chief of the IEO, are expected to aid greatly in effecting the changeover. Also assisting along this line will be the maps and cross index to be included in the telephone directory published by the Post Signal Office.

Appropriately enough, WSPG's "main drag," now the Main Access Road, will bear the name Wadsworth Boulevard in honor of the first Army chief of ordnance. Col. Decius Wadsworth served in that position now held by Lt. Gen. E. L. Cummings, from July 2, 1812, to June 1, 1821.

Other WSPG thoroughfares to be named after former chiefs ordnance will be Benet, Crozier, Dyer, Flagler, Hof, Bomford, Ramsay, Craig and Ripley Streets.

Col. George Bomford was the second chief of ordnance, serving from June 1, 1821, to March 25, 1848. Col. Henry K. Craig served from July 10, 1851, to April 23, 1861.

Others for whom WSPG streets will be named and the periods of their service as heads of the Ordnance Corps were: Brig. Gen. James W. Ripley, April 1861 to Sept. 1863. Brig. Gen. George Ramsay, Sept. 1863 to Sept. 1864. Brig. Gen. Alexander Dyer, Sept. 1864 to May 1874. Brig. Gen. Stephen Benet, June 1874 to January 1891. Brig. Gen. Daniel Flagler, Jan. 1891 to March 1899. Maj. Gen. William Crozier, Nov. 1901 to July 1918. Maj. Gen. Samuel Hof, June 1930 to June 1934.

Missile and rockets used as street names include: LaCrosse, Hawk, Dart, Sergeant, Loki, Aerobee, Deacon, Terrier, Talos, Viking, Corporal, Honest John and Nike.

Map Of The White Sands Main Post In 1956

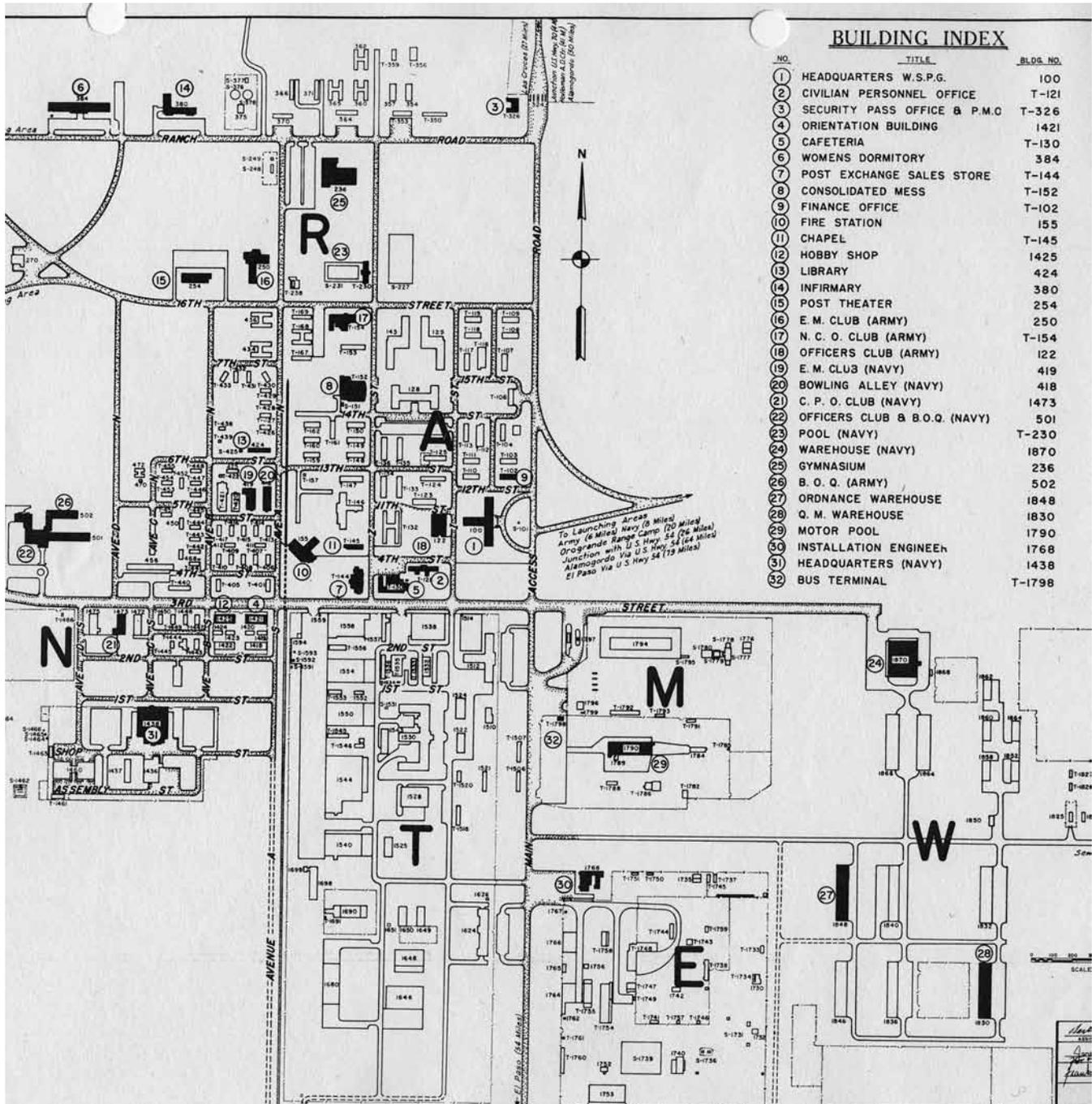
EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the published map of the White Sands cantonment area in 1956 before the street name change. I apologize in advance if you have trouble reading the labels - a magnifying glass may help as I couldn't make it any larger and have it fit on the page.

Obviously this has the old street names with such imaginative names as 1st Street and 3rd Street to be replaced by the forgotten heads of the Ordnance Corps and facilities that no longer exist. But I didn't include it for the streets. I thought you might like to see where the facilities were located. There is a building index on the side and it identifies

some 30+ places.

Also, there is an index identifying the areas labelled with the large letters but I had to trim it to make the map fit. It is a pretty obvious system:

- A = Administrative Area
- R = Recreation Area
- N = Navy Area
- T = Technical Area
- M = Motor Pool
- W = Warehouses
- E = Installation Engineers



Early Rockets & Missiles Tested At WSPG Covered In Large Format Book By Kennedy

By Jim Eckles, Editor

When I found out “The Rockets and Missiles of White Sands Proving Ground, 1945-1958” by Gregory Kennedy was out, I ordered it from Amazon that night. Three reasons for that.

One is that I kind of know Greg Kennedy. I worked with him once or twice when he ran New Mexico’s International Space Hall of Fame in Alamogordo. He left to work for the Smithsonian and published a softbound book about the V-2 rocket. I helped him with a few photos. I doubt if he remembers me but I would say he is a good guy and knows what he is doing.

The second reason is really obvious - its a book, filled with photos, about some of the rockets and missiles tested at White Sands while the place was still labelled a proving ground, not a missile range. Third, Greg has had access to all kinds of storage facilities in the Washington area to include the National Archives. He’s seen stuff about White Sands we can only guess at.

When I received my copy I looked to see when it was printed and found the copyright date is 2009. Imagine my disappointment. It’s been out for at least a year and nobody told me.

Now, right up front, I have to confess I have not read the whole thing. For me it is going to be more of a reference book instead of something you sit down and read straight through. That is because it goes into quite a bit of technical detail about many of these old missile systems, many of which I don’t care about.

It is not, however, simply a dry recitation of facts about each system. Greg prepares each rocket or missile with some background that provides perspective on why the system was started, how it developed and why it may have come to an early demise or actually got deployed.

There is much information to be mined from the book. For instance, at Launch Complex 33 on WSMR, we have a Hermes A-1 missile on display below the V-2 gantry. We know it was based on the

German Wasserfall which was under development to be an anti-aircraft weapon.

Greg has obviously found the records for this system and its tests. He outlines what happened with the A-1 and how it led to the Hermes A-1E-1 and the A-1E-2 before the program was scrapped. He even includes quick summaries of some of the test flights.

For inquiring minds, Greg has included stuff I never dreamed I would be reading about. Whenever I’ve looked through the old firing tables at White Sands, some of the systems are listed as unfathomable letters and numbers. An example is the MX-774.

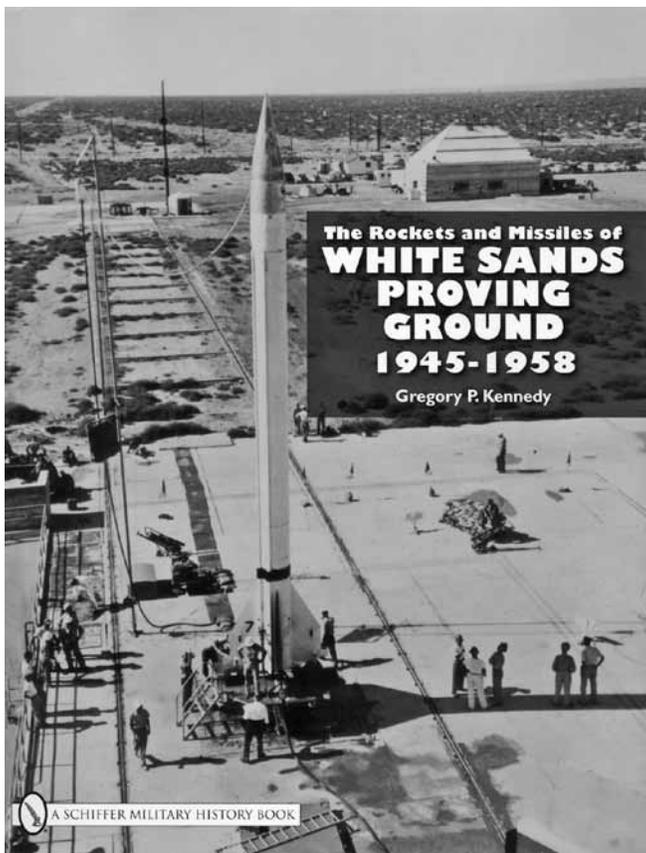
Well, Greg has a few pages on the Air Force’s HIROC or sometimes referred to by its contract number MX-774. Now it makes sense.

The contract called for Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation to look into designing cruise missiles and a supersonic ballistic missile. They came up with three designs. Greg writes, “They nicknamed the subsonic cruise missile the *Teetotaler*, since it used jet fuel, rather than alcohol. The second design was called the *Old Fashioned* because it was a supersonic test missile that outwardly resembled the V-2. Because it was intended to deliver a nuclear warhead, design C was dubbed the *Manhattan*, an allusion to the atomic bomb project.” I think the designers must have been into cocktail parties on Fridays after work.

The book devotes whole chapters to some of the big-name systems such as Viking, Aerobee, Corporal, and the Nikes and smaller sections to things like Dart and Lark.

Although I haven’t read every word, I think I can whole-heartedly recommend this book to anyone with an interest in the technical details of early missile testing. It just may fill in those knowledge gaps.

The book is published by Schiffer Military History Books and runs 168 pages. Pages are 8.5 inches by 11 inches. The listed retail price is \$45. I got mine from Amazon for \$42. I saw used copies available on the web for around \$26.



The White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation

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The Capital Fund

For The White Sands Missile Range Museum And Learning Center



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**Hands Across History
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The Back Page



Leo “Pappy” White pets his dog Nippy and looks into the camera as his team prepares a V-2 rocket. White was General Electric’s manager at WSMR for the V-2 program. His nickname came from his fellow engineering grads at the University of North Carolina in 1927 where he was two years their senior. He always wore that hat when outdoors.