China Lake celebrates 75 years of service to the United States
“I’m proud to represent the hardworking, forward-thinking men and women of China Lake. I thank you for your service to our country.”

Kevin McCarthy
Sidewinder, which has become the world’s most successful air-to-air missile, was tested at China Lake. A look of China Lake from the air. A brief history of China Lake

A brief history of China Lake

The Naval Ordinance Test Station (NOTS) in November 1943. Its mission was defined in a letter by the Secretary of the Navy, “... a station by the Navy, having for its primary function the research, development and testing of weapons, and having additional function of furnishing personnel military personnel and defense contractors that has made China Lake one of the preeminent research, development, test and evaluation centers in the world. In 1950, NOTS scientists and engineers developed the air-intercept missile (AIM) 9 Sidewinder, which has become the world’s most successful air-to-air missile. A look of China Lake from the air. A brief history of China Lake

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Over 70 years later, Randolph family continues to call China Lake home

By STACEY LAWRENCE
NATIONAL Public Affairs

Petra Roy and Rex Randolph met when their parents, James "Olen" and H. Willodine Randolph, moved to China Lake. Olen began working as an automotive mechanic in 1942, just four years after the inception of the Naval Ordnance Test Station, with his wife joining shortly after in 1943. November 8 marks not only 75 years of the Navy at China Lake, but for many like the Randolph family, it symbolizes generations of continued service.

From 1947 to 1976, Olen worked in Public Works and, at a time, in San Clemente Island, while Willodine began working as a nurse and later retired in 1979 as head of staff in the Technical Information Department. Rex and Roy’s uncle, Neal Webb, worked as the business manager for the Earth and Planetary Sciences Division between 1965 and 1980 in addition to their aunt, S. Louise Moore, who worked as a secretary in the Housing and Tacklist in the 1950s. S. Louise’s husband, Homer, was a crane operator from the 40s through the 50s. Their family members were originally from Ohio, and they made their China Lake home.

"They came to China Lake when the pay was available here despite the pay Hoffman out of left field in many parts of the country," said Roy, a second-generation employee. "I think it’s obvious that generations of people was the way they work and were glad to have high-paying employment. They enjoyed raising their families in a safe and secure setting after growing up on a small farm." Rex and Roy both left behind their idyllic life in the San Francisco Bay Area and moved to Ridgecrest in 1977.

"On the beaches of Southern California to help them raise their family before World War II, China Lake," Roy said. H. Willodine began working in 1981 as an operator at the Weapons Analysis Center and joined a role as an acting integrated product team before retiring in 2009.

"I certainly feel pride and gratitude to be part of a mission that continues to distinguish China Lake's role in our national defense," said Tim Marrs, who currently works as a software test lead for the Combat Environment Simulation Division. "After 15 years in the private sector, Tim’s wife, Tara, joined the China Lake community and has been a strong supporter of the mission. Tim, who currently serves as a Naval Weapons Analyst, began his career in 1981 as a software developer. "I hope future employees and that in some small part – keep thinking that, while I may not be doing the exact same work or father-in-law did, we both the U.S. Navy and support our warriors, safe and secure."

China Lake 75th Anniversary Schedule of Events

Friday, November 9
• Reaccess Day at McLean Building - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
• China Lake Museum On- and Off-base Locations open and free of charge from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
• Food Truck Vendors available at China Lake Museum Off-base from 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
• Wartime Radio Show USO Style at Ridgecrest Fairgrounds starting at 8 p.m.

Saturday, November 10
• China Lake Museum On- and Off-base Locations open and free of charge from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
• STEM Demonstrations at China Lake Museum from noon-3 p.m.
• 75th Anniversary Dinner Gala, sponsored by Ridgecrest Community Hospital, Cosa Geothermal and China Lake Museum Foundation from 5 p.m.-11 p.m.

For more information on tickets, call China Lake Museum at 760-677-2866 or visit the China Lake Museum at 760-677-2866 or visit the China Lake Museum at www.chinalake.navy.mil.

www.goridgecrest.com

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75 Years
You Make Us
PROUD!!!

Congratulations! The Ridgecrest Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (RACVB) proudly salutes the 75th Anniversary of China Lake - NOTS Inyokern and the 25th Anniversary of the China Lake Museum Foundation. Your contributions to the community are immeasurable.

Congratulations
To
NAWCWD on
75 Years
Of Service To
Our Country,
Our Military And
The Residents Of The
World.

COURTESY PHOTOS
H. Willodine Randolph is seen reviewing a computer program at Naval Ordinance Test Station China Lake in a photo from 1957.

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(760) 399-6060

Friday, November 9, 2018 www.ridgecrestca.com
Roll Call: China Lake Commanding Officers

Here is a listing of all the commanding officers that have taken on the challenge and responsibility of taking the helm at China Lake.

Capt. Sherman E. Burroughs
Dec. 1943 - Aug. 1945

Capt. James B. Sykes
Aug. 1945 - Nov. 1947

Rear Adm. W.G. Switzer
Nov. 1947 - Sept. 1949

Capt. Walter V.R. Vieweg
Sept. 1949 - Oct. 1952

Capt. Paul D. Stroop
Oct. 1952 - Aug. 1953

Capt. R.H. Soller
Aug. 28, 1953 - Sept. 20, 1953

Capt. David B. Young
Sept. 1953-June 1955

Capt. Robert F. Sollars
June 1955 - Aug. 1955

Capt. Frederick L. Ashworth [VAdm.]
Aug. 1955 - Sept. 1957

Capt. William W. Hollister
Sept. 1957 - June 1961

Capt. Charles Blenman, Jr.
June 1961- June 1964

Capt. Leon Grabowsky
June 1964-Aug. 1964

Capt. John I. Hardy
Aug. 1964 - Feb. 1967

Capt. Grady H. Lowe
Feb. 1967 - Sept. 1967

Capt. Melvin R. Etheridge

RAdm. William J. Moran [VAdm.]

RAdm. Henry Suerstedt, Jr.
Oct. 1972 - May 1973

RAdm. Paul E. Pugh
May 1973 - June 1974

RAdm. Rowland G. Freeman III
June 1974 - May 1977

Capt. Frederick H.M. Kinley
May 1977 - Sept. 1977

RAdm. William L. Harris
Sept. 1977 - June 1979

Capt. William B. Haff
June 1979 - June 1981

Capt. John Jude Lahr
June 1981 - June 1983

Capt. Kenneth A. Dickerson
June 1983 - June 1986

Capt. John W. Patterson
June 1986 - Aug. 1986

Capt. John A. Burt
Aug. 1986 - June 1989

Capt. Douglas W. Cook

Capt. John I. Hardy
Aug. 1964 - Feb. 1967

Capt. Frederick H.M. Kinley
May 1977 - Sept. 1977

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CONGRATULATIONS ON 75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY AND OUR COMMUNITY

When The World Calls On America, America Calls On The Navy. Thank You.

Roll Call: China Lake Commanding Officers

The Naval Weapons Center and the Pacific Missile Test Center Point Mugu were disestablished in January 1992 and joined with naval units at Albuquerque and White Sands, N.M. as a single command - the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division. At the same time, the physical plant at China Lake was designated as a Naval Air Weapons Station - currently NAWS - and became host of the Weapons Division, performing the base-keeping functions.

Under the new structure, NAWS China Lake's commanding officer oversaw the operations of the installation, while NAWCWD took on the role of its largest tenant command, with its commander in charge of its mission at both China Lake and Point Mugu.

NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION CHINA LAKE

Capt. Billy J. Craig

Capt. Charles A. Stevenson

Capt. Stanley W. Douglas
July 1996-June 1998

Capt. John D. Langford, Jr.
June 1998 - July 2000

Capt. James R. Seaman, Jr.
July 2000 - March 2003

Capt. Alexander B. Hnarakis
March 2003 - March 2004

Capt. Mark G. Storch
April 2004 - April 2006

Capt. Michael "Mick" Gleason
April 2006 - April 2008

Capt. Gary Peterson

Capt. Jeffrey Dodson
March 2009- Feb. 2012

Capt. Dennis Lazar

Capt. Rich Wiley

NAVAL AIR WARFARE CENTER WEAPONS DIVISION

RAdm. W.E. Newman

Capt. Charles A. Stevenson

Capt. Stanley W. Douglas
July 1996-June 1998

Capt. John D. Langford, Jr.
June 1998 - July 2000

Capt. James R. Seaman, Jr.
July 2000 - March 2003

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R

B

CURRENT NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION CHINA LAKE COMMANDER

Dec. 2016 - present

Current NAWC Admiral

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Official Navy Biography

Zachary Scott Dillon is a native of Hilltop, Pa., and a 1991 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. Dillon has served in various capacities and commands, including the US Naval Test Pilot School, Naval Postgraduate School, and subsequently to Air Test and Evaluation Command.

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VX-9, ‘Vampires’

VX-9 conducts operational test and evaluation of all air-to-ground weapons, air-to-air weapons, sensors, electronic warfare systems and mission software upgrades to aircraft and weapon systems. The naval aviators and ground crew accomplish this by flying an assortment of fighter jets including the FA-18 Super Hornet, the FA-18 Hornet, the Harrier and Prowler. The aircraft are “used in the demanding and dynamic role of operational flight test, supporting both Navy and Marine Corps tactical aviation.” VX-9 was born from the 1995 merger of VX-9, (already stationed at China Lake since 1956) and VX-4 from Point Mugu. The squadron carries on the legacy name of its predecessor squadron VX-9 as the “Vampires.”

VX-31, ‘Dust Devils’

VX-31 fills an odd niche at China Lake: It’s both test and evaluation (fixed-wing planes) and search and rescue (SAR) operations (helicopters). VX-31 flies approximately 4,000 flight hours per year with unique test assets. It also houses airborne the test bed, a T-39 Sabreliner meant for employing sensor/seeker prototyip, target presentation and range calibration. Its mission is simple: test and evaluate current and future manned and unmanned aircraft, weapons and weapon systems, operate the Airborne Test Bed Program and conduct successful inland search and rescue operations in the high desert and surrounding area. Over the years, VX-31’s SAR crews have conducted successful operations or assisted local agencies in search operations.
Congratulations!

75 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

We’re happy to be part of your story.

AltaOne has been a community partner of Naval Weapons Air Station (NAWS) China Lake since 1947. We value the hard work of the past and present workforce who helped put China Lake on the map.

Our nine original members who started the credit union at China Lake would be proud that their sense of community and family tradition exists after all these years. We look forward to continuing our journey with you.

We are family, we are you.

“Old Dorm 1” on Blandy Avenue
Chartered on November 26, 1947 as N.O.T.S. (Naval Ordnance Test Station) Employees Federal Credit Union. The initial location was provided by N.O.T.S. in Room 1 in what was known as the “Old Training Building” on Halifax Street (which is now Inyokern Road). The Credit Union moved several times after its original location. In 1985, the Credit Union moved into “Old Dorm 1” on Blandy Avenue.

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Ridgecrest Regional Hospital thanks the men and women of Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake for their service to our nation.