



THE CHINA LAKER

Vol. 4 No. 2

Spring-Summer 1998

HEAVY EXHIBIT CENTER TRAFFIC EXPECTED DURING CHINA LAKE MUSICFEST '98

Your China Lake Museum Foundation expects to be in the thick of things when China Lake MusicFest swings into life this Memorial Day Weekend. Less than a mile away from our Exhibit Center's perch on "The Hill", Knox Soccer Field will be the site for the inaugural staging of what is expected to become an annual event. The opening concert starts at 1745 Thursday May 21, continuing through Friday and Saturday afternoons and evenings, May 22 and 23.



As a major visitor attraction in the Indian Wells Valley, the Exhibit Center has been requested to extend its hours of operation during this period. Our experience with last fall's Balloon Festival leads us to anticipate high attendance, especially considering the proximity of the expected MusicFest crowds. On the Balloon Festival weekend, some 500 individuals trekked all the way from Brown Road to stream through our premises.

So on Friday and Saturday, May 22 and 23, the Exhibit Center's doors will be open from 1000-1600—later on Saturday if visitor volume warrants it. Since the Festival doesn't get underway till Thursday evening, May 21, normal hours of operation (1000-1400) will be in effect that day.

If gift shop sales are as brisk as we expect, your Foundation can certainly put volunteer sales clerks to productive use Friday and Saturday. Moreover, our Balloon Festival experience showed there's going to be a need for docents and additional receptionists. If you're inclined to lend a hand for any of these activities, please notify CLMF Office Manager Jeanie Copeland right away. Her phone number is 939-3530; if you prefer to drop a note, the address is P.O. Box 217, Ridgecrest 93556-0217.

NAWS' Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department is sponsoring MusicFest in partnership with the community of Ridgecrest. The musical entertainment will feature country western, rock-n-roll, blues, soul, jazz and pop.

The local press quotes MWR's Quality of Life Director Alonzie Scott as seeing the event "as a way to attract tourists to the Indian Wells Valley. ... As more people visit Ridgecrest, there will be more opportunity to generate income. Tourists who come to hear the music will also spend money on food and other services."

From our point of view, another prime benefit is the opportunity to spread the story of China Lake's numerous, invaluable contributions to our nation's security.

CAPS NOW AVAILABLE IN 3 BACKGROUND COLORS

Your Foundation's Office Manager Jeanie Copeland reports that, whereas *Secret City* videotapes were the CLMF Gift Shop's sales leaders around the winter holidays, a recent pick-up in T-shirt and cap sales suggests that spring is finally here and summer may be just around the corner.

Shop shelves now display white, cobalt blue and Navy blue caps with historic, full-color NOTS and NWC insignias. The Gift Shop order form collated with this issue lists prices for these and other frequently-requested items, along with the Foundation's mailing address, phone and FAX numbers.

Business hours for the CLMF Office and Gift Shop are 1000-1400 Monday through Thursday, and the same hours on "non-flex" Fridays, i.e., every-other Friday, when NAWCWPNS & NAWS are staffed for normal work operations. In May "non-flex" Fridays fall on the 8th and the 22nd.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Office Manager Jeanie Copeland reports the following new memberships since publication of our preceding edition:

J. E. Simmons & Betty Grady (Life)
U.S. Rep. William Thomas (Life)
Catherine Anderson (Contributing)
Frank St. George (Contributing)
John M. Johnson, Jr. (Regular)
F. P. (Chic) Macuse (Regular)
Joe M. Mapes (Regular)
John & Marilyn Newbauer (Regular)
John P. Nicholson (Regular)
Alex Shlanta (Regular)
LaNelle Thompson (Regular)
Evelyn J. Wilcox (Regular)
Don L. Winter (Regular)

During the same period, Jeanie recorded 78 regular renewal memberships.

To all: Welcome Aboard!



THE CHINA LAKER is published three times a year by
The China Lake Museum Foundation
P. O. Box 217
Ridgecrest, CA 93556-0217
760-939-3530 • 760-939-0564 (FAX)

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760-939-3530

Bill Blanc, *Newsletter Editor*
760-375-5978
billb@ridgecrest.ca.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm glad to report that NAWCWPNS Commander RADM Rand H. Fisher continues his energetic pursuit of official Navy Museum status for the proposed China Lake Armament and Technology Museum. He has recently secured approval by Dr. William Dudley, Head of the Naval Historical Center, of a crucial memorandum of understanding. This MOU describes the working relationship to be implemented between NAWS and the Historical Center, once official status is authorized.

RADM Fisher has sent the official request package to the Naval Air Systems Command. He's met personally with NAVAIR's Judge Advocate General to explain the purpose of the package. He has asked the JAG to expedite its review and forward it promptly to the Chief of Naval Operations.

RADM Fisher has also acted on his concern that active duty military personnel at NAWCWPNS and NAWS be aware of China Lake's major role in the development of America's air weaponry. He has directed that once a month *The Rocketeer* is to publish an article highlighting an exhibit currently on display at the Exhibit Center. Museum Foundation Director John DiPol has supplied initial input for this series.

The China Lake leadership's support for converting the Exhibit Center to a full-fledged museum has yielded an important development: an understanding has been worked out with NAWS that gives the Foundation the responsibility to staff the Exhibit Center and keep it open to the public. NAWS/NAWC personnel who used to work in the building have been relocated, and the base now uses other facilities to meet its conference needs. Exhibit Center space formerly reserved for conferences is now available for additional exhibits.

We'd be glad to see the base's Historian, Leroy Doig, Jr., set up office space in the Exhibit Center. Close cooperation with him holds great potential for developing outstanding exhibits.

John DiPol has sent out a letter to a number of individuals who have previously indicated an interest in performing volunteer support services for the Foundation. The letter is a call for volunteers to start serving, as soon as possible, as receptionists at the Exhibit Center. Normal hours of operation will be 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on NAWC/NAWS regular work days. Dick Tolkmitt is teaming with John on this effort. If you're interested in such service, and you didn't happen to be on John's

mailing list for this letter, please notify our Office Manager, Jeannie Copeland (939-3530.)

Volunteer receptionists, docents and gift shop staffers will be in special demand Memorial Day weekend, May 21-23. The Exhibit Center is one of the community facilities requested to be open for out-of-area visitors coming to town for the Inaugural China Lake MusicFest. Again, notify Jeannie if you're available to give a hand. (See EXHIBIT CENTER, p. 1.)

The most recent addition to the Foundation's Life Membership roster is our Congressional District's Representative, Bill Thomas. I was pleased to accept his donation and welcome him onto our rolls at a meeting of the IWV Rotary Club April 15. It's encouraging to have another national legislator express support for the preservation and presentation of China Lake's record of contributions to America's military preparedness. (See MEMBERSHIP UPDATE, p. 2.)

Dillard Bullard, husband of CLMF Director Charlotte Bullard passed away April 8, following an extended period of respiratory and other complications that developed after he received a liver transplant. We extend our deepest sympathy to Charlotte and other members of the family.

"YOU'RE BETTER THAN THAT. TRY!"

Vivid Recollections of Early Days at NOTS

by Chris S. Hinzo

I went back to my old job, and everyone now [was a GS-6], and so was I, since my raises and personnel status continued even while in the service. The blue collar workers were getting paid more than the white collar workers were, so I decided that it was time for a change. I told [the chief inspector] I wanted a GS-7. He said if I didn't want the GS-6 job, I would have to go into machining. I said OK. They were getting 20¢ an hour more than the GS-6s. So I became a machinist. ...

One day the big boss called me in the office and said, "Chris, you know what is required here, having been an inspector before. So you are now to keep those machines running. And make sure everything passes inspection!"

I set up small inspection stations in every building and said to the guys: "Run 'em!" The inspectors were sure sore at me. If a machine ran out more than a thousandth, I reset the machine myself. Didn't have to wait 2 to 3 hours for a set-up man anymore. I'd reset the machine, run a unit through it, and inspect it. If I thought it was OK, I told the guys: "Run it."

Well, I got a letter in my personnel jacket saying I'd upped the production of the plant by 30%. (But no raise; just a pat on the back: "Good job. Keep it up.")

My brother Jerry also worked there at Salt Wells. He was working on a long nylon rope with explosives attached every 18 inches. This rope was supposed to be shot onto the beach. When it exploded, it would clear the beach of any land mines. Don't know if it was ever used.

Now, as a machinist of high explosives, and being a former inspector, I was sent to Los Alamos, New Mexico to help teach their machinist how to machine the type of

product that we were working on at Salt Wells. While there, we used to go to Santa Fe and just browsed around.

About this time my youngest daughter Gay got sick, and the doctor said she was lonely for me. So my wife Mary went to the big boss and requested me home. I came home, and Gay got well! This was in 1953.

In the meantime, Mary was working at the dry cleaners and also was going to classes as a tab machine operator. She was transferred to the Ad Building and operated the machine that made all our government checks, etc.

We were doing all right. She had a good job now, and I was at the top of my pay grade. Time to start looking for a better job!

By now it was 1954, and Salt Wells was going to close. They had transferred all of our operators to Los Alamos. There were about 200 of us guys there at Salt Wells, so the base personnel [department] decided to open an apprenticeship, just for the guys at Salt Wells.

I had been working at the China Lake 3-inch line and had a chance to take the test for the apprenticeship also. I passed the test and had put on my papers that I'd like to be an electrician.

You see, in 1952—while in the Marines—I bought a TV. When I came back to China Lake there were only 11 TVs in the whole valley. So I read a lot on TVs, and I learned how to repair them. I knew about scopes, multimeters, power supplies, etc., and I'd help the other fellows with their TVs.

Well, we went for our interviews, and Mr. McClung asked me why I wanted to be an electrician, since I knew a lot about electronic equipment. I told him I thought you needed more schooling to be an electronics

Chris Hinzo served in a variety of positions at NOTS/NWC from 1945 to 1976. With his permission, these passages have been excerpted from his handwritten reminiscences. This month's selection starts as Chris returns to NOTS following a USMC tour of duty during the Korean Conflict.

mechanic and I'd only gone one year to high school. He looked at the other persons on the panel, and they all agreed that I should become an electronics mechanic.

To myself I said, "OK, Electronics Mechanic pays more than Electrician anyhow." (They never told me I'd have to go to college classes!) ...

Friday afternoon I checked in at the Sight Lab, and Mr. McClung showed me around. Then he showed me the working spaces and said, "This is yours. Go to the shop stores and buy anything you'll need. Your signature is good there."

A SIDEWINDER FIRST.

Next he said, "Come here, Chris." On the floor were a lot of assembled Heathkits: power supplies, scopes, meters and other gauges. He then pulled out a drawing about 4 by 8 feet, and tacked it on a piece of plywood. ... Then, pointing to the drawing, he said, "This is a schematic of the first Sidewinder rate table, and you are going to build it. I know you can do it." I did. That was my first job on the Sidewinder missile. ...

The apprenticeship was to start in August, but Rod [McClung] had me transferred in April, so I was the first to start my apprenticeship. We worked on the job 3 weeks and took Bakersfield College courses 1 week out of the month.

After the rate table console, we worked on a photomultiplier setup. I built the power supply and all the other associated pieces. Then Rod and I would throw rocks over the photomultiplier and record the current, then go inside and figure the changes needed to up the current.

Well, finally I finished the unit, and Rod and I went out to "C" Range to test it ... where the planes can fly over these photomultipliers and the pulse goes back to the control tower where it is recorded as per speed between stations (8) and height. So you can know where the plane is from the range and how high it is. Also the time between stations gives you the speed of the plane. Last I knew, this range is still in use.

From the Sight Lab I went to the hospital for a gall bladder operation, and then to Area "R" and work on liquid propellants.

There I built an intercom so we could talk to the ordnancemen from our station. I installed the first unit and checked it out. Great! Well, the first time they checked out a rocket, the speaker was blown out! The ordnancemen forgot to move the speaker!

It worked out so well, I built myself one for use here at home many years later. Now I use it on Halloween. I put the speaker behind a skeleton, and I can hear the kids come for blocks. Then I'll talk to them. Lots of comments!

From Area "R" I went to the lab and started my stay in the Sidewinder group. Here I was assigned to work with Dr. Benton. He and I became good friends, and our job was testing transistors for use in the Sidewinder missile. You see, this was back in 1955, and transistors were just starting to be used. Remember the old CK 722? And the 1N34 diode?

I took a 1N34 diode, some wire, and earphones, and made a crystal radio, which I built into my hat. I guess I was the only person walking around with his own radio back then. Remember: this was 1955, before the Walkman.

AHEAD OF THE TECHNOLOGY CURVE

Lucky for me, I had a friend that had a hearing aid that wasn't any good anymore, and he gave me the earphone. Thus my radio was kept small. Later on I found some 1-inch speakers and mounted them in my hat. Now I had stereo! People sure looked at me funny back then. Now it's common to see someone with a radio on his hip and an earphone in his ear.

Well, from testing transistors for Mickey, we were moved into Room 148A, and I was made the Head Technician for the Test Equipment Section.

I graduated from the apprenticeship program as a journeyman Electronics Mechanic. I also graduated from Bakersfield College with an Associate of Arts degree in Electronics. It took me 4 years of hard work and study—especially when you consider that Electronics training started out with algebra, not sign numbers! I was self-taught in all my math, and I really felt good that I always said, "You're better than that! Try!"