

Interior Shelves



CCC Archives In Focus

Contributed by Benjamin Hurwitz, Fish and Wildlife Service

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (hereafter Service) is home to 4.4 million museum collections. Most are objects generated through various types of scientific investigations (e.g., archaeological studies) but roughly 30% of the collection consists of documents. Many of these archival collections are historic in nature and contain useful information for understanding how the Service came into being. Refuge narratives are some of the more interesting historical archives held in the Service's collection. These documents are similar to diaries and evidence the earliest accounts of the National Wildlife Refuges. Among many unique aspects of Service history, these narratives highlight the connections between the National Wildlife Refuge System and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, the CCC was established in 1933 as a relief program that provided work to millions of unemployed young men. In addition to offering a small wage (\$30 a month), the CCC benefitted enrollees by improving their physical fitness, boosting morale, and providing skills that workers could carry with them to future employment. The CCC constructed buildings, dams, impoundments, canals, and fire towers, planted vegetation, and monitored wildlife populations at many refuges – improvements that were critical for the advancement of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The image of a CCC crew at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge shows one of these “improvements” in process.



CCC crew building infrastructure at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Medicine Lake, Montana.

By the time Congress disbanded the Corps in 1942, the National Wildlife Refuge System operated 257 refuges on more than 10 million acres of land (and of this, more than 8 million acres of land and 44 new refuges were established by the CCC during its existence). Over the course of nine years, more than 3,000,000 men had participated in the CCC.

Most of the buildings constructed by the CCC (residences, maintenance buildings, and headquarters) served the everyday needs of the CCC camps and continued to be used once the camps transitioned to refuges. While scores of the buildings were decommissioned or demolished, many still survive and are used to this day. Archival documents like the sketch of a proposed CCC residence at Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge help refuge managers make informed decisions regarding historic preservation issues. Some of these once functional buildings have gained recognition as historic sites, reminding us of the contributions made to the infrastructure of the nation by the CCC program and its enrollees.

The Service has created a new online gallery where staff and the public can easily browse the archive collection related to the CCC presence at refuges. This collection includes a number of historic photographs chronicling the CCC camps and men at work, refuge narratives, and other documents relating to the CCC presence in the Refuge System. The gallery is currently under construction, but a partial collection can be viewed at cccrefuge.wordpress.com. This gallery will be used to highlight the little known achievements of the CCC, to illustrate the role that they played in expanding the National Wildlife Refuge System, and to remember and recognize their revolutionary efforts toward conservation in the United States. 🐾



RED ROCK RESIDENCE - 1937

Sketch of a proposed CCC residence for Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Centennial Valley, Montana.

Not All Artifacts Fit on Shelves: Coast-to-Coast Nike Missile Transfer

Contributed by Susan Ewing Haley, National Park Service

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GOGA) in San Francisco owns the last remaining intact Nike Missile Launch site in the United States. The park received the site in a direct transfer from the United States Army in 1974 as it closed its military operations. The buildings, facilities, and some operations equipment were left in place as the Army departed and the site and artifacts became part of GOGA's museum collection. Nike Missile Launch Site



Loading Nike Missile into railroad transport container, October 2012, GOGA NPS photo.

SF-88L served as the last in a series of American, Mexican, and Spanish coastal defenses in the San Francisco area dating back to 1776. Other national park units around the country with former Nike Missile sites include: Site Summit (east of Anchorage, Alaska); Fort Hancock also in GOGA, and Everglades National Park in Florida.

Nike site volunteers at GOGA established the site under National Park Service management to preserve the technology and the story for future generations. They also acquired tons of Nike Missile material, surplus missiles, and equipment from Army depots around the country to furnish the site and provide a collection of spares to support the site into the future.

Everglades National Park (EVER) has, in recent years, geared up their Nike Missile Site preservation and interpretation programs, including restoring a Nike Hercules missile for exhibit. EVER Nike Missile Site Coordinator, Ryan Meyer, approached GOGA Supervisory Curator, Susan Ewing Haley, for possible assistance with support equipment for EVER. The staff and volunteers of both parks worked for nearly a year to identify significant pieces of equipment – including a missile body with booster rockets and full fins and a Launch Control Indicator – that were surplus to GOGA's museum needs. These items were transferred to EVER where they will be restored and incorporated into various interpretive programs.

The coast-to-coast transportation of a defensive missile system was a challenge that had not been explored by either EVER or GOGA staff. In September 2012, following months of negotiations and funding challenges, Kennedy Movers loaded the missile



Missile container arriving at EVER Nike facility, October 2012. EVER NPS photo.


components at the GOGA SF-88L Nike Missile Site and transported them to their warehouse in south San Francisco. Then, the components were loaded into a regulation transport container and shipped by rail to south Florida. Everyone was delighted with the results. This was a true example of National Park Service collaboration for preservation and public interpretation. 

Indian Arts & Crafts Board Shares Collections

Contributed by Conor McMahon, IACB

A new exhibit was recently installed at IACB's Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City, South Dakota, titled "Living in the Natural World." The exhibit highlights the close relationship of the Lakota people with the animals and plants in the world around them. Selections of clothing, tools, and weapons from the museum collection show the innovative use of hides, feathers, stones, and horns by the Indian people of the Dakotas.

Additionally, staff and volunteers at the Sioux Indian Museum are beginning to digitize archival photographs and sound recordings from the collection. Materials include historic photographs from the early reservation period, as well as audio recordings of Tribal members and artisans made by early IACB staff. These records will be used to enhance museum exhibits and serve as a resource for researchers and local Tribes.

At the IACB's Southern Plains Indian Museum in Anadarko, Oklahoma, a special exhibit of artwork by Allan Houser will be installed in the summer of 2014 as part of a statewide Oklahoma commemoration of the artist's 100th birthday. The IACB recently completed the conservation of a large mural by Houser in the lobby of the Southern Plains Indian Museum as part of the Houser Commemorative. With special funding secured by the Office of the Secretary, Page Conservation, Inc. of Washington, DC, completed the cleaning, stabilization, and restoration of the mural in July where it is already being enjoyed by museum visitors. 



Allan Houser, detail of *A Successful Raid*, 1950. Southern Plains Indian Museum, IACB.

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