

all Pacific fleet fighter, airborne early warning, and reconnaissance squadrons, and several senior commands. The present site originally was a ranch named Miramar consisting of 2,130 acres of land purchased in 1890 by Edward W. Scripps, a San Diego pioneer.

In World War I the U.S. government purchased the ranch and established Camp Kearny, an Army Infantry Training Center. In addition, the site was used for a variety of other military functions, including as a base for lighter-than-air blimps and as an aircraft target bombing range. With the outbreak of World War II the southern half of the site was commissioned as an auxiliary air station to Naval Air Station, North Island (q.v.), and the northern half was designated Marine Corps Air Depot, Miramar.

On 1 May 1946 the two activities were combined and designated Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, with the mission to maintain and operate a base for Naval and Marine Corps aircraft and aviation units of the fleet. However, in June 1947 all Marine Corps aviation units were relocated to the Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro (q.v.). In 1949 Congress appropriated funds to develop the site as a Master Naval Jet Air Station; and on 1 April 1952 it was designated Naval Air Station, Miramar.

In 1961 in accordance with a new concept, NAS Miramar became a support base for fighter squadrons only, the beginning of "Fightertown," which today boasts twenty-three fighter squadrons, four attack carrier air wings, a light photographic squadron, and a fleet composite squadron. In 1965 the Chief of Naval Operations designated Commander Fleet Air, Miramar, as the senior command on board the station. Reorganized in July 1973 to reflect the inclusion of airborne early warning (AEW) squadrons, this command became Commander Fighter Airborne Early Warning Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMFITAEWINGPAC) and NAS Miramar became the home base for all Pacific Fleet fighter and airborne early warning squadrons.

NAS Miramar, now comprising just under 24,000 acres with a total estimated value for land and facilities of \$4 billion, is more than ten times its original size of 2,130 acres. Northbound Interstate Highway 163 roughly bisects the facility into east and west halves. The station proper is located in the western half while the largely undeveloped eastern half provides a buffer zone for the aircraft approach corridor to the runways in the western half. Prevailing westerly winds, its location high on a mesa far enough inland to avoid much of the coastal fog, and the otherwise generally fine flying weather make NAS Miramar an almost ideal air facility for training year round, which is reflected in an annual average of 260,000 takeoffs and landings.

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ROLAND A. BOWLING

#### San Diego, Calif., Coronado, Calif., Naval Amphibious Base, 12 June 1943-

Located on the Silver Strand between the Pacific Ocean and San Diego Bay and about one mile south of the center of the city of Coronado, NAB is the home of the Pacific Fleet "Alligator Navy." It had its beginning in World War II when the Chief of Naval Operations authorized establishment of a Landing Craft Detachment at the Destroyer Base across the bay. By 1943 the burgeoning demands for amphibious warfare training to support the island-hopping strategy in the Pacific dictated an expansion of this facility greater than possible within the confines of the Destroyer Base. Accordingly, the Secretary of the Navy established the Amphibious Training Base at Coronado on 12 June 1943.

Land for the new base came from several sources. The city of Coronado leased to the Navy for \$1 a year half an acre of beach and 134 acres of landfill on the bay side. The state of California provided, at no fee, all of the beach on the ocean side that was under the control of the California State Park Commission. The J.D. and A.B. Spreckles & Company leased for \$1 a year 13 acres of beach on the ocean side, and the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railroad Company leased for \$87.50 a year a piece of their right-of-way for building a base loading platform. This lack of outright deeding of the land caused some growth and development problems after the war. But in November 1955 the federal government finally obtained clear title or long-term right to the land. For a total of about \$1.5 million, the government obtained control of 745 acres in fee simple and an additional 257 acres on a thirty-year lease.

The original land consisted of tidelands, natural ocean beaches, and hydraulic-fill. Within six months the Eleventh Naval District Public Works Department dredged the bottom of San Diego Bay to create more fill area jutting into the bay side from the Silver Strand for the base proper and made other improvements along both the bay and ocean sides of the Silver Strand to facilitate training. The resultant base provided variable beach conditions from the quiet waters of the bay on one side of the Silver Strand to the rough waters of the Pacific on the other side. In addition, the base proper jutted into San Diego Bay where the assortment of smaller landing craft could be berthed in quiet water, while the bay itself provided deep water anchorages for the larger types. And finally, uninhabited San Clemente Island off the coast provided ideal practice landing beaches and target ranges for naval gunfire and air support training under realistic simulated combat conditions.

On 12 January 1944 the original amphibious training unit in the area, by then the Landing Craft Control School, moved on board from the Destroyer Base. Three days later the Navy formally commissioned the Amphibious Training Base, Coronado. For the remainder of World War II, it continued to make a major contribution to the victory at sea in the Pacific.

After the war, recognizing the broader than training alone aspects of amphibious warfare, the Secretary of the Navy redesignated the Amphibious Training

Base as the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, on 7 January 1946. Concurrently, its role changed from primarily training to that of providing a shore base not only for the overall support and training of amphibious units, but also facilities for research in and the testing of new amphibious warfare equipment.

Between wars there was some natural diminution of activity. But the Navy embarked on an orderly program of upgrading temporary World War II buildings and constructing new facilities to maintain the base ready for combat service when needed. This policy was vindicated during the Korean War and Vietnam conflict, when the base again became the primary amphibious warfare training and support complex in the Pacific area.

Today, NAB Coronado is a major shore activity assigned to the operating forces through the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. In addition to providing support and training for amphibious warfare, it also serves as home for several major tenant commands, such as the Naval Amphibious School, Coronado; Landing Force Training Command, Pacific; and Commander Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, who is the immediate superior of the base commander. The Navy continues to maintain and upgrade buildings and facilities to ensure that the base will be ready again if required to support all of the diverse combat needs of the "Alligator Navy."

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ROLAND A. BOWLING

#### SAN DIEGO, CALIF., MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP JOSEPH H. PENDLETON, 1942-

The Marine Corps activated Camp Joseph H. Pendleton on 25 September 1942 to provide large-scale tactical training for entire units before they were shipped out to the Pacific Ocean battle areas during World War II. It was the logical offshoot of Marine Corps training in the Southern California area going back to the establishment of Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, in 1914 as Marine Barracks, San Diego, Calif. For some time the Marines had needed more land than was available at the San Diego site.

As the United States expanded its military forces in reaction to the wars in Europe and Asia, training overflowed the built-up Recruit Depot. Since 1934 the Marine Corps had been renting from the city of San Diego land twelve miles northeast of the city. That site was expanded to approximately 32,000 acres to accommodate the new Second Marine Division, and its name was changed from Camp Holcomb to Camp Elliott. That became the principal training site for Marine units until it also became too small.

The Marines formed a Board of Inspection headed by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver P. Smith, which studied several possible locations in Southern California. One of them was the 122,798-acre Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, located

at Oceanside, Calif., approximately seventy-five miles south of Los Angeles and forty-five miles north of San Diego. Both Marine Corps and Army planners considered the Rancho, but the Army turned elsewhere. In February 1942 the Marine Corps decided that the Rancho, with its oceanfront property, was suitable for its West Coast amphibious training facility, comparable to Camp Lejeune, N.C. (q.v.), on the East Coast. From that decision has sprung an installation of over 27,319 permanent military, 3,612 transient military, and 3,580 civilian employees working or housed in over 4,000 structures using 500 miles of roads to work and live in the base, currently 125,000 acres large. (Personnel figures are as of December 1982.)

Camp Pendleton provides housing, training facilities, and logistics support for Fleet Marine Force and other units assigned to it. The Infantry Training School intensively trains recent graduates of the recruit depots in their future infantry specialties. The Schools Battalion conducts courses in amphibian equipment, amphibious small unit leadership, and Marine Corps administration. The Field Medical Service School trains members of the Navy Medical Department and Chaplains Corps in combat survival and field medical and dental practices.

The First Marine Amphibious Force Headquarters is based at Camp Pendleton. It is the senior Fleet Marine Force Headquarters in the East Pacific area. Its largest component, the First Marine Division, is also based at Camp Pendleton, as is the First Force Service Support Group, the logistical part of the Marine combat organization. Marine Aircraft Group-39, the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, and the Navy Regional Medical and Dental Centers are also located there.

Those combat troops, combat service units, and schools students train in twelve separate areas, eighty-five ranges, four landing beaches, numerous helicopter landing zones, and related facilities for ground and air operations. The areas with their colorful names—Talega, Christianitos, San Mateo, San Onofre Horno, Las Pulgas, Vado Del Rio, Margarita, and Del Mar—also used to be called camps. Their names were changed recently to avoid confusion between those area names and Camp Pendleton itself. Thus Camp Pendleton represents the largest training area in the western United States where combined ground and air amphibious landings of battalion size or larger can be practiced. Its subordinate Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, Calif. (q.v.), supplies additional training in mountain, cold weather, and survival training.

Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, so named in 1844, formed the largest rancho in San Diego county. Spanish missionaries had begun cultivating the land in about 1798. Secularized between 1824 and 1835, the land passed into the control of one of California's most prominent families, that of Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor of California.

The oldest structures on the base, the chapel (built 1810) and the ranch house (probably built after 1827) are still in use. The chapel has been restored to its original use, and the ranch house is the quarters of the base's commanding general. The bunk house, dating from a later period, is the post museum. The