

A CE

The

Throughout
will celebra
established

Musketry moved to
settling into its perm
Through numerous
the Maneuver Cent
School colocates fro
School at Fort Benr

To mark this prou
Walter Wojdakowsk
School Centennial."
across Fort Benning
September 2007 at



David Dismukes

A drill sergeant and other recruits offer words of encouragement to a trainee negotiating an obstacle course on Fort Benning in October 2006.



U.S. Army photo

Officer candidates practice throwing grenades from the standing position on a range on Fort Benning in October 1965.

CENTURY OF EXCELLENCE

U.S. Army Infantry School — Then and Now

DAVID S. STIEGHAN

2007, Fort Benning and the Infantry community celebrate the centennial of the Infantry School. First founded in 1907 at Monterey, California, the School of Infantry moved to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, from 1913 to 1918, before its permanent home at Camp Benning in 1918.

Through several expansions, Fort Benning is poised to become the Center of Excellence by 2011 when the Armor School will move from Fort Knox, Kentucky, to join the Infantry School.

A significant milestone in Infantry history, Major General Robert M. Hayes has declared 2007 the "Year of the Infantry." In addition to media articles and displays, a suitable outdoor celebration is planned for the site of the new National Infantry Museum.



Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Division

Above, Soldiers complete machine gun training on Fort Benning in June 1942.



U.S. Army photo

Instructor with the U.S. Army Infantry School assists a student with weapons training on Fort Benning in May 1976.



U.S. Army photo

Ranger School cadre demonstrate fighting techniques during an orientation for students in May 1958.

**General Orders, Headquarters, Pacific Division, No. 5,
San Francisco, California, March 6, 1907**

“...they will carry into effect the requirements of the order with a view to opening the (Musketry) school on April 1, 1907....” By Command of Lieutenant General (Arthur) MacArthur.

(This order appears in a brief history of “The Musketry School at Monterey, California” written by Brigadier General (Retired) G.W. McIver in November 1929. Then-Major McIver, 20th Infantry, served as the second commandant from October 31, 1907 to July 1, 1911. The original monograph is preserved in the Infantry Archives in the Donovan Research Library at Fort Benning.)

The 100th anniversary of the Infantry School is April 1, 2007. On that date in 1907, the School of Musketry opened for courses in rifle and machine gun marksmanship at Monterey, California.

In 1913, the School of Musketry moved to Fort Sill and then on to Camp Benning as the U.S. Army Infantry School in 1918. Within three years, Camp Benning was rechristened Fort Benning, and the Model 1905 Bayonet on the school’s shoulder patch rotated from point downward to point upward.

A search of *The Bayonet*, Fort Benning’s post newspaper, shows that celebrations in the past commemorated the anniversaries of the founding of the Infantry School using 1907 as the founding date. In addition, the Infantry Library, now known as the Donovan Research Library, began in 1907 when General Arthur MacArthur donated around 50 books to start the collection.

The United States Army Infantry School at Fort Benning traces its creation to the beginnings of the Continental Army during the War for Independence. George Washington appointed Captain “Baron” von Steuben as Drillmaster of the Continental Army in 1778. The Prussian veteran instituted a single manner of infantry drill for the Continental Army by consolidating all junior officers into platoons and companies, and drilling them together to create a body of instructors for the entire Army. Later, von Steuben convinced Washington to create a model company of infantry to demonstrate drill and maneuvers to the rest of the army. These were the origins of an American School of Infantry. After the War for Independence, Congress undid most of the fine instrument created by Washington and von Steuben by reducing the Army to an

85-man company for a year and allowing commanders of the Regular Army and the militia to use whatever drill suited them.

In 1813, the Army adopted a form of Duane’s Tactics during the War of 1812 to reduce the infantry drill to one standard drill. On March 4, 1826, Major General Edmund P. Gaines

established the first infantry training post at Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis, Missouri. The Infantry School of Instruction began training enlisted men and small units and quickly expanded to training infantry officers in their duties. By November 24, 1828, the post closed as all the troops and infantry units were needed across the nation. Though what became known as the Infantry School of Practice lasted only two years, the overall efficiency of the United States Infantry improved immensely, and the idea of recreating a similar school was not lost on those in attendance.

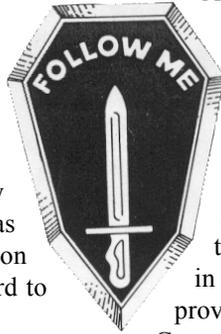
In 1881, the Army created a military postgraduate program for officers at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, known as the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry. This same program is now the Command and Staff School. In 1892, the School of Application divided into a School for Cavalry at Fort Riley, Kansas, and a School for Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, leaving the infantry without a formal school.

After the Spanish-American War, Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur ordered the establishment of new target ranges and a course of fire for every unit and post in the Department of California and the Columbia. To provide formal instruction for the marksmanship instructors, General MacArthur ordered that a school be established in the department. The first commandant, Captain Frank L. Winn, later commented, “From this idea the plan developed into a school of experiment and theory in the use of the rifle in battle and of improvement, by testing, in the rifle itself.” As a result, the War Department approved the establishment of the School of Musketry, Pacific Division, at the Presidio of Monterey, California. Though the original intent was the development of small arms use in the infantry, the scope of development and instruction soon grew to include, “all subjects connected with small arms, ammunition and tactics.” The latter directive allowed the instructors to pursue research and training methods to prepare infantrymen for modern warfare.

Initially, the school staff consisted of Captain Winn as the officer-in-charge, an assistant instructor, one company from each of the two divisions in the department and a machine-gun platoon. Each quarter, the rotating student body consisted of two officers from each of the infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments in the division, one enlisted man from each company, troop, and battery, and additional officers and enlisted men as selected by the division commander. The school cadre arrived on March 25, 1907, and replaced the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry in garrison. The new school opened for business on April 1, 1907.

Outgrowing the limited ranges at the Presidio in Monterey, California, the School of Musketry collocated with the School of Fire at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in 1913. Both schools languished within a few years as both instructors and students were needed to secure the border with Mexico and for the Punitive Expedition of 1916. Upon the Declaration of War with the Central Powers on April 6, 1917, it became apparent that the Infantry, Field Artillery, and the 35th Division could not continue to train on the same ranges at Fort Sill. The War Department needed dozens of new facilities to muster and train the millions of Doughboys required in Europe as soon as possible. By the summer of 1918, the Infantry cast about for a new home.

In an attempt to lure an Army training camp to the Columbus





Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Division

A photograph taken in 1941 shows a view of the main post of Fort Benning. Many of the buildings are still being used today.

area, the Encampment Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Columbus, Georgia, presented a "Proposal for the Lease of Land to the United States Government for Establishment of School of Musketry," on January 17, 1918, to representatives of the United States Army. Included in the original proposal are endorsements from the Muscogee County Commissioners to build access roads and the Columbus Power Company to build electrical transmission lines if the government accepted the property for a training camp. With options secured on 7,400 of the 9,000 acres proposed at \$2 per acre, total estimated construction costs for the cantonment came to \$706,000. A formal plan dated January 23 lists a total of 2,008 students, instructors, and permanent party planned housed and headquartered in 67 buildings. While the original proposal for the camp envisioned a lease on the land, the Army decided later to convert the cantonment to a permanent facility and continue training there after World War I.

On August 17, 1918, a telegram arrived in Columbus, confirming the selection of the area for the new site of the Army's Infantry School of Arms. By October 6, troops transferring from Fort Sill stepped off the train and stood in formation on October 19 christening the new post "Camp Benning" in honor of a local Confederate General, Henry Lewis Benning. Unlike most temporary training facilities created in haste during the Great War, Camp Benning survived postwar budget cuts to become a permanent infantry school in 1920. In

1921, the Army formally designated the post as the Infantry School and changed the name to Fort Benning in 1923.

During the 1920-1921 school year, the new school graduated hundreds of lieutenants and captains from the Active, Reserve, and National Guard components. In addition to instructors, Camp Benning included demonstration units to support training, an Army Air Corps detachment and the 32nd Balloon Observation Company at Lawson Field, and the Infantry Tank School. While the Tank School moved to Camp Meade, Maryland, within a year, the infantry tanks moved back to Fort Benning in 1932. In addition to training leaders, Fort Benning became an important center for testing weapons and tactics, publishing professional journals and manuals, and developing maneuver doctrine- roles it continues into the 21st century. As the home of the largest branch of the Army, Fort Benning continued to grow in facilities and troops assigned through the lean years of the Great Depression.

From 1927 to 1932, Lieutenant Colonel George Marshall served as the Assistant Commandant of the Infantry School. In this role, Marshall instituted a rigorous training program known as the "Benning Revolution" preparing thousands of officers for higher command in World War II. The infantry tank units grew through the 1930s until Colonel George S. Patton, Jr., and others formed and trained the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Benning, before deploying overseas for combat in World War II. Numerous divisions and smaller units were either

federalized or created at Fort Benning during peacetime draft buildup in 1940 and throughout World War II.

In 1940, the Airborne "Test Platoon" initiated the Airborne School that still graduates thousands of parachutists for the United States military each year. The Officer Candidate School began graduating infantry lieutenants in 1941 and still operates as the only federal OCS program in the Army. Over 100,000 Soldiers entered the Army as privates or lieutenants at Fort Benning during World War II, and the post earned the nickname: "The Benning School for Boys." At the end of the Second World War, Fort Benning remained a vibrant facility as Ranger training began, the infantry developed a mechanized component and prepared troops and leaders for the Korean War, Vietnam, and other Cold War commitments. At this writing, the U.S. Army Infantry School and Fort Benning have more troops assigned as cadre or in training than any other facility in the United States military.

From 1945 to 1965, Fort Benning transformed to its standard role as an education, testing, and doctrine development center. While recruit and officer training increased during the Korean War, 1950-1953, the next major expansion took place during the Vietnam War. The concept of helicopter-borne air assault was tested at Fort Benning for two years before the 11th Airborne (Test) Division became the 1st (Air Assault) Cavalry Division prior to deployment to Vietnam in 1965. In addition to greatly-expanded OCS, the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course trained thousands

of infantry sergeants from 1967 to 1972, forming the basis for the current Noncommissioned Officer Education System. On several occasions since 1965, brigades and smaller units were formed and trained at Fort Benning to deploy around the world to serve as part of NATO, Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other missions.

In 2005, the U.S. Congress approved a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendation to move the Armor School from Fort Knox to join the Infantry School at Fort Benning. The resulting Maneuver Center of Excellence will combine both mounted and dismounted combat training and doctrine development at one location for the entire U.S. Army by 2011. Together with the Airborne School, Ranger School, OCS, Sniper School, the Army Marksmanship Unit, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), and many deployable units, the Armor and Infantry colocation will create one of the most important, and certainly the busiest, U.S. Army posts.

During 2007, the School of Infantry celebrates its centennial — 100 years of continuous service to the United States. While Fort Benning transforms into the Maneuver Center of Excellence over the next few years, it will still serve as the “Home of the Infantry” while also functioning as the “Home of the Armor.” While operating at three locations with three different names, the Infantry School has increased dramatically in size and in scope, but has not materially changed its mission. While infantry training and doctrine development took place at a number of locations at different times throughout our nation’s history, the current United States Army Infantry Center began as the School of Musketry at Monterey on April 1, 1907.

Dave Stieghan is the Infantry Branch Historian and Command Historian of U.S. Army Infantry Center. He is currently researching the Infantry School Centennial, the Echo Teams/Companies that served in Vietnam, and the U.S. Army NCOCC “Shake and Bake” course conducted from 1967 through 1972 at Harmony Church and four other posts.

A list of references for this article is on file and available through *Infantry Magazine*.

PAST USAIS COMMANDANTS

Col. Henry E. Eames, October 1918 to April 1919
 Maj. Gen. Charles S. Farnsworth, April 1919 to July 1920
 Maj. Gen. Walter H. Gordon, September 1920 to November 1923
 Brig. Gen. Briant H. Wells, November 1923 to March 1926
 Brig. Gen. Edgar T. Collins, March 1926 to May 1929
 Maj. Gen. Campbell King, May 1929 to May 1933
 Brig. Gen. George H. Estes, September 1933 to September 1936
 Brig. Gen. Asa L. Singleton, October 1936 to August 1940
 Brig. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges, October 1940 to March 1941
 Brig. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, March 1941 to February 1942
 Maj. Gen. Leven C. Allen, February 1942 to September 1943
 Maj. Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel, September 1943 to June 1944
 Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker, July 1944 to July 1945
 Maj. Gen. John W. O’Daniel, July 1945 to June 1948
 Maj. Gen. Withers A. Burrell, July 1948 to January 1951
 Maj. Gen. John H. Church, March 1951 to May 1952
 Maj. Gen. Robert N. Young, June 1952 to January 1953
 Maj. Gen. Guy S. Meloy Jr., January 1953 to June 1954
 Maj. Gen. Joseph H. Harper, June 1954 to May 1956
 Maj. Gen. George E. Lynch, May 1956 to August 1956
 Maj. Gen. Herbert B. Powell, August 1956 to April 1958
 Maj. Gen. Paul L. Freeman, May 1958 to April 1960
 Maj. Gen. Hugh P. Harris, April 1960 to July 1961
 Maj. Gen. Ben Harrell, August 1961 to February 1963
 Maj. Gen. C.W.G. Rich, February 1963 to August 1964
 Maj. Gen. Heintges, August 1964 to July 1965
 Maj. Gen. Robert H. York, July 1965 to July 1967
 Maj. Gen. John M. Wright Jr., July 1967 to May 1969
 Maj. Gen. George I. Forsythe, June 1969 to August 1969
 Maj. Gen. Orwin C. Talbott, September 1969 to February 1973
 Maj. Gen. Thomas M. Tarpley, February 1973 to August 1975
 Maj. Gen. Willard Latham, August 1975 to July 1977
 Maj. Gen. William J. Livsey Jr., July 1977 to April 1979
 Maj. Gen. David E. Grange Jr., June 1979 to August 1981
 Maj. Gen. Robert L. Wetzel, August 1981 to July 1983
 Maj. Gen. James I. Lindsay, July 1983 to March 1984
 Maj. Gen. John W. Foss, March 1984 to January 1986
 Maj. Gen. Edwin H. Burba, January 1986 to June 1987
 Maj. Gen. Kenneth C. Leuer, June 1987 to September 1988
 Maj. Gen. Michael F. Spigelmire, September 1988 to June 1990
 Maj. Gen. Carmen J. Cavezza, June 1990 to October 1991
 Maj. Gen. Jerry A. White, October 1991 to September 1994
 Maj. Gen. John W. Hendrix, September 1994 to July 1996
 Maj. Gen. Carl F. Ernst, July 1996 to September 1999
 Maj. Gen. John M. LeMoyné, September 1999 to October 2001
 Maj. Gen. Paul D. Eaton, October 2001 to June 2003
 Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley, July 2003 to August 2006
 Maj. Gen. Walter Wojdakowski, August 2006 to present

