THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
REDSTONE ARSENAL
1941 - 2016
Acknowledgements: Material from this book was taken from the archives of various predecessors of the U.S. Army Aviation Command which was the senior command of Redstone Arsenal (now under the U.S. Army Materiel Command). We gratefully acknowledge the work of all of those who have served as historians for the U.S. Army at Redstone Arsenal over the past 75 years. Of special note Mrs. Mary T. Cagle, considered Redstone Arsenal’s first historian, and the person she mentored and was the installation’s command historian for the last 30 years, Mr. Michael “Mule” Baker. Their works have been used to create this book. Special thanks to the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library and the Madison County Records Center for their assistance and for many of the photographs used in this book. We also like to thank the work of the Huntsville Times for capturing so much of the U.S. Army’s history at Redstone Arsenal and throughout north Alabama.

Disclaimer: The thoughts and views in this book do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Army or the U.S. Army Materiel Command.

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Produced by
The U.S. Army Materiel Command
4400 Martin Road
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The 75th Anniversary of
Redstone Arsenal
1941 - 2016
Huntsville Arsenal Locomotive, 1944
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7100 area, late 1950s
Foreword

This year, Redstone Arsenal and its dedicated workforce of military, civilians, and contractors celebrate 75 years of exceptional service to the United States Army, our Armed Forces, and the Nation. To honor this very special anniversary, The 75th Anniversary of Redstone Arsenal, 1941-2016, was prepared. The pages that follow highlight Redstone’s achievements throughout the decades, and the unique relationship that exists between the Arsenal and the surrounding Tennessee Valley community.

To those who helped shape Redstone Arsenal into the installation it is today, as you read this publication, I hope you will enjoy reminiscing about your collective contributions and achievements. To those who will build a new chapter in Redstone’s history, let this commemorative book inspire you to continue the legacy of achievements for many years to come.

When future historians write about Redstone Arsenal, I have no doubt that they will continue to praise the efforts and contributions of Redstone Arsenal – what is now a Department of Defense and Federal Center of Excellence – to our national security during this unprecedented complex period.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dennis L. Via
General, USA
Commanding
Preface

“I think George and myself did a good job for two country lads.”
Lawrence Goldsmith, June 16, 1941

So wrote Lawrence Goldsmith to Congressman John J. Sparkman in the early summer of 1941. The winds of war were brewing and Goldsmith, George Mahoney, Sparkman, and senior Alabama U.S. Senator Lister Hill worked together to convince the Army to put down roots in Huntsville, Alabama.

As Redstone Arsenal celebrates its 75th anniversary, take a look back at the story of how a World War II manufacturing facility turned into a major Federal Center of Excellence, moving beyond making bombs and gas masks to headquartering a world-wide logistics operation, managing the Army's missiles and rockets and aviation fleet, and welcoming partners from a wide spectrum of disciplines.

None of this could have been accomplished without the ardent support and work of the local communities and the Congressional delegations that have represented Alabama so well for these many years.

This work is dedicated to tens of thousands of workers who have labored at Redstone Arsenal over the past 75 years.
Ammunition warehouse sign

- SS Powder: 300,000 lbs
- One Model: 50,000 units
- Fuzes, all Model: 10,000 units
- Primers: 20,000 units
- Raw W.P. Amm: 300,200 units
Chapter One:
The 1940s
Downtown Huntsville, 1940s
Prior to the Army coming to Huntsville, the city was known as "the Watercress Capital of the World." The photo below shows watercress being harvested.

The winds of war

The line "Huntsville was a sleepy Southern town before the Army came" couldn't be further from the truth. Huntsville, as the capital of Madison County, was a major trading center for North Alabama for a variety of commodities. It was also a major banking center. With major rail lines, the Tennessee River, a plentiful labor supply, and power from the Tennessee Valley Authority dams, it would be exactly what the Army was looking for in early 1941.

On the eve of the United States' involvement in World War II, Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland, was the only chemical manufacturing installation of the Chemical Warfare Service. Consequently, the Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service requested that the War Department acquire additional facilities to supplement Edgewood's production. About 30,000 acres of land suitable for construction purposes were required for the site of the additional facilities. The land was to be located inland, far enough from the seacoast to provide sufficient protection. Also needed was access to adequate rail, water, and highway transportation; sufficient fuel and electrical power; and ample construction materials and enough raw materials for subsequent operations. Areas considered for the site included Florence, Huntsville, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama; El Dorado, Arkansas; Kansas City and St. Louis, Missouri; Toledo, Ohio; Memphis, Tennessee; and Charleston, West Virginia.
Huntsville has it

On July 3, 1941, the War Department announced that a site on the south-western edge of Huntsville, Alabama, had been selected as the location for the new chemical munitions manufacturing and storage plant. Not only was this area an inland site, but its numerous mountain ranges afforded additional protection. Moreover, the tract of land selected contained over 30,000 acres which were available at very reasonable prices. The transportation facilities, labor conditions, and climate, health, and living conditions of the area were considered to be excellent. Material for construction and raw material for manufacturing could be obtained easily. Also readily available were large supplies of soft coal and fuel oil. The water supply and sewage disposal presented no problems. Finally, the Tennessee Valley Authority could furnish the required electric power.

The Huntsville Times released two editions on July 3, 1941. The first edition (top) was distributed with fire trucks from the Huntsville Fire Department when the Army made the announcement from Washington, D.C.

The evening edition (bottom) contained more details about the new Chemical Warfare Service facility including a more specific amount the plant was going to cost.
AIR MAIL

Hon. John Sparkman,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

My dear John:-

Many thanks for everything that you have done. General Porter assured us on last night before leaving that Huntsville was his selection, and that the project will be released from the War Department sometime this week. It is a larger project than I thought ($45,000,000.00). Work, according to their information, will be begun by July 1st, and must be completed within a nine-months period.

I think George and myself did a good job for two country lads. We entertained them royally, and they spoke very, very highly of you. They also impressed upon us that Huntsville was the only point that no politics entered into. They also stated that they had looked at fifteen other sites, as far west as Omaha, and that Huntsville was by far the ideal spot.

I am writing you this, as I know you will contact General Porter immediately upon his arrival in Washington today at noon.

Thanks again from all the population of Madison County. You have done a wonderful job, and you can bet that we all appreciate your tireless efforts.

With best wishes, and kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Lawrence Goldsmith
Huntsville Arsenal

The War Department announced on July 24, 1941, that the official name of the new chemical munitions plant was Huntsville Arsenal. The Chemical Warfare Service proposed that the site be named Sibert Arsenal in honor of Major General William L. Sibert, a native of Gadsden, Alabama, and the first Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service from June 1918 to February 1920. The name Sibert, however, was reserved for Camp Sibert, a training center of the Chemical Warfare Service which was established at Gadsden in 1942. It was subsequently deactivated at the end of the war.

The first Commanding Officer of Huntsville Arsenal, (then) Colonel Rollo C. Ditto, arrived in Huntsville on August 4, 1941, and broke ground the next day for initial construction of the arsenal. By March 1942, the arsenal's first production facility had been activated. Huntsville Arsenal became the sole manufacturer of colored smoke munitions and was also noted for its vast production of gel-type incendiaries. The arsenal also produced toxic agents such as mustard gas, phosgene, lewisite, white phosphorous, carbonyl iron, and tear gas. During World War II, more than 27,000,000 items of chemical munitions with a total value of over $134.5 million (or $1.7 billion in 2016 dollars) were produced. Personnel of Huntsville Arsenal won the Army-Navy "E" Award (a War Department honor for excellence) four different times for their outstanding record in the production of war equipment.
Gulf Chemical Warfare Depot

Included in the acreage composing Huntsville Arsenal was more than 7,700 acres which were to be used for construction of a depot area. Accordingly, the War Department formally established the Huntsville Chemical Warfare Depot on March 6, 1942. Located in the extreme southern portion of Huntsville Arsenal bordering the Tennessee River, this depot received, stored, and issued such Chemical Warfare Service material as munitions, bulk chemicals, decontaminating apparatuses, protective materials, and gas mask spare parts. To avoid confusion with Huntsville Arsenal, the War Department changed the name of the depot to the Gulf Chemical Warfare Depot on August 10, 1943. Almost 3 years later, the term “Warfare” was dropped from its title.
Redstone Ordnance Plant

Recognizing the tremendous economy of locating an Ordnance shell loading and assembly plant close to Huntsville Arsenal, the Chief of Ordnance decided to build a facility to be known as the Redstone Ordnance Plant on a 4,000-acre tract east of and adjacent to Huntsville Arsenal. On October 6, 1941, the first Commanding Officer of the Redstone Ordnance Plant, (then) Major Carroll D. Hudson, arrived in Huntsville and finalized the construction plans. Groundbreaking ceremonies occurred on October 25, 1941, and the War Department officially activated the Redstone Ordnance Plant on February 5, 1942. One year later, on February 26, 1943, the plant was redesignated Redstone Arsenal.

The only government-owned, government-operated arsenal established by the Ordnance Department during World War II, Redstone Arsenal produced such items as burster charges, medium and major caliber chemical artillery ammunition, rifle grenades, demolition blocks, and bombs of various weights and sizes. In fact, between March 1942 and September 1945, over 45,200,000 units of ammunition were loaded and assembled for shipment. The arsenal also perfected the technique of mass production of tetrytol, a highly explosive binary mix used in certain bursters, boosters, and demolition blocks. For their outstanding services in the manufacture of munitions, Redstone employees won the aforementioned Army-Navy "E" Award five different times.
Clockwise, upper left: Colonel Hudson giving tour of Redstone to Congressman Sparkman, 1943; Dr. Wernher Von Braun, Dr. Richard Porter, Hudson, 1952; Huntsville Times announcing Hudson’s return to Redstone, 1948; Hudson riding trails on Redstone Arsenal, early 1940s; Hudson being saluted by Major General Jerry Max Bunyard, 1985; Hudson downtown Huntsville, 1945; Hudson reviewing installation plans, early 1950s

Colonel Carroll D. Hudson
Building two arsenals

The first challenge was the construction of both Huntsville and Redstone Arsenals. The land was a collection of very small communities with names such as "Pond Beat," "Mullins Flat," and "Hickory Grove." The inhabitants of these communities had to move first before construction could begin.

July 8, 1941

12,000 Will Be Required In Constructing Arsenal

Three Shifs Planned: Additional Homes, Schools And Enlarged Hospital Facilities Needed, Says General Porter

Colonel Hudson operates one of the bulldozers during the construction of Redstone Arsenal
FIRST ARSENAL OFFICE—Shown above is the first of a number of temporary offices used by the construction companies while building Huntsville's $47,000,000 arsenal situated near the Madison pike on the 30,000-acre arsenal reservation.

Huntsville Times, August 12, 1941

Arsenal Offices Opening Sept. 15

500 to 500 Persons to Occupy Six New Buildings

Huntsville Times, September 8, 1941

Arsenal Residents Given Until Nov. 30th To Move

All Crops Within Area Expected To Be Harvested By Then

Residents given notice to vacate the premises on or before Nov. 30, 1941.

Huntsville Times, October 15, 1941
Building 111 was the headquarters building to Huntsville Arsenal. Opened in 1942, it has served a variety of activities since its opening, to include serving as an officer’s club and the Redstone Garrison headquarters. Located on Goss Road, it is still in service today.

Building 7101 was the headquarters building to Redstone Arsenal. Opened in 1942 and located on Redstone Road, it was used by various Army commands until it was demolished in 1985. The Federal Bureau of Investigation built a new facility on the same location where Building 7101 once was.
As a Chemical Warfare Service installation, the leadership of Huntsville Arsenal decided to name roads for those who died in service to this Nation during World War I. The Ordnance Corps’ Redstone Arsenal, on the other hand, used only functional names for their roads (for example, Redstone Road, Line Road, Warehouse Road).

Rideout Road was named after First Lieutenant Percy E. Rideout, who was killed in action on October 9, 1918 in France. Martin Road is named for Private Herbert B. Martin, a First Gas Regiment member who was killed in action July 5, 1918. Buxton, Digney, Goss, Patton, Hansen, McAlpine, Mills, Neal, and Shields Roads were also named for members of the First Gas Regiment.

Years later, Brigadier General Thomas K. Vincent, a Commander at Redstone Arsenal in the early 1950s, decided that roads should be named after members of the Ordnance Corps. Wadsworth Drive, for example, was named after the first Chief of Ordnance, Colonel Decius Wadsworth, who served as Chief from July 1812 to June 1821. Skinner Drive was named after Colonel Leslie A. Skinner, a rocket pioneer who developed the Bazooka.

In 1981, fifteen roads were named after soldiers from the Huntsville/Madison County area who died in Vietnam. These names include Lewter Road for Specialist 4 Stanley R. Lewter and Hicks Road for Staff Sergeant Prentice W. Hicks.
Need for workers...

While both Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal were being built, efforts were focused on hiring the massive workforce that would be needed to run both activities on a 24 hour a day basis. The problem was the City of Huntsville only had 13,050 citizens in 1940 and both arsenals expected to employ close to 20,000 workers. After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, many men went into the Armed Forces, necessitating the inclusion of women to fill critical wartime labor needs.

Advertisement in the Huntsville Times, 1943

Redstone Eagle, February 29, 1943

Huntsville Times, May 13, 1943
To help the situation, the Army built "Redstone Park." Located in an area near Buxton Road and Farley Elementary School off of South Memorial Parkway in Huntsville, Alabama, construction began on August 19, 1942, and was completed in early 1943. During the war, Redstone Park was occupied exclusively by Redstone Arsenal and Huntsville Arsenal employees, with precedence being given to Redstone personnel.

A passenger train was used to transport workers from Redstone Park at the southeastern end of the installation to the manufacturing lines. About 75 miles of railroad track connecting Huntsville Arsenal, as well as lines to the Gulf Chemical Warfare Depot and Redstone Arsenal, were completed in December 1941. At the peak of the railroad activity at Redstone Arsenal, 1,970 cars per month moved along the tracks.
The World War II workforce

The first civil service employees - a janitor, a secretary, and a mail clerk - were hired at Huntsville Arsenal on July 12, 1941.

By the war's peak, almost 20,000 personnel worked at Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal. At one time, women comprised the majority of the workforce.

By September 1945, Redstone Arsenal had loaded and assembled over 45.2 million units of ammunition, while Huntsville Arsenal produced more than 27 million items of chemical munitions.
Redstone Arsenal production line

Redstone Arsenal's post newspaper

Redstone Arsenal identification badge

Redstone to Celebrate Anniversary October 6

Plant Sets Enviably Record in One Year Period

Redstone Eagle
Dangerous work

Given the hazardous nature of the work at Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal, accidents and casualties were not unexpected phenomena. Both installations’ high level of safety consciousness and stringent safety regulations, however, held such accidents and casualties to a minimum during the war years, considering the volume of hazardous materiel produced. There were eight fatalities from the start of production in February 1942 through July 1945.

On April 21, 1942, Easter Posey was killed during an explosion at one of the Huntsville Arsenal’s incendiary bomb manufacturing lines. On August 14, 1943, the first serious explosion at Redstone Arsenal occurred on Line 1, killing one woman and injuring seven other workers.

The Army Air Force crews who flight tested these munitions were not immune to the dangers posed by the materiel they helped to inspect. On June 27, 1944, all three crewmen were killed in the crash of a B-26 Martin Marauder shortly after leaving the Huntsville Arsenal Airfield.

### October 1943

**Sign in Redstone Arsenal Warehouse**

**One is killed and seven injured in explosion on Production Line No. 1**

Funeral services for Mrs. Nannie Martin Mefford, of New Hope, who was killed in an explosion on Line No. 1 last Saturday night, were held Monday afternoon at the Old Bethel cemetery, Owen Cross Road.

Representing Redstone at the services were Captains Owen, Lieut. Joe B. Richardson, Milton Frank, and Mrs. Johnny Hughes.

Mrs. Mefford was the only fatality in the blast which injured seven other production line workers. One of these, Mrs. Mildred Smith, of Athens, is still in the Huntsville Arsenal hospital as the result of injuries but is expected to recover.

The cause of the explosion which occurred at 11:26 p.m. Saturday night, shortly before the close of the right shift, is still being investigated by Army authorities.

Although the amount of damage was not announced, Lieut. Col. Carroll D. Hudson, the arsenal’s Commanding Officer, stated that it was not extensive.

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**Huntsville Times, June 27, 1944**

**Three Killed When Bomber Crashes Here**

Fatal Accident Occurs To West Of Arsenal, After Engine Trouble

At B-26 Martin Marauder of the Army Air Corps, a plane that has been attacking the Huntsville arsenal during recent weeks for experimental bombing tasks, crashed this afternoon at a point between 5 and 10 miles west of Huntsville, killing three members of the crew. Later was reported destroyed by the explosion of the bombs it carried.

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After the Redstone Arsenal commander Colonel Hudson learned in 1942 that office employees were wearing civilian uniforms at other installations, a military type uniform was selected for the arsenal's female employees. Interested women voluntarily bought their own outfits, which were the color of the WWII officer's "pinks." Even those women who could not actually wear the outfit during working hours wanted a uniform. According to the Redstone Eagle, "Every girl on Line 3 has the [complete] outfit... and proudly wears it. It makes her feel that she really is the 'man' behind the man behind the gun."
Huntsville Arsenal's prisoner of war camp

One of the lesser known structures located on Huntsville Arsenal during World War II was a prisoner of war (POW) camp. The Army Corps of Engineers built the original camp for 250 prisoners in 1944, but the remainder of the facility was constructed under the supervision of the Post Engineer using POW labor.

Prisoner labor was used for a variety of tasks, such as working as mechanics for the Motor Pool; laboring for the Engineering Services Division at the sawmill, in the limestone quarry, or on the rock crusher; assisting with the mosquito control program; and serving as cooks and kitchen help at the Huntsville Arsenal Officers Club. Approximately 1,100 captured German soldiers were imprisoned on the arsenal at one time.

According to Karl Spitzendorf, a former prisoner who returned to visit the arsenal in June 1982, "life in the Huntsville camp was not a hardship." Although the prisoners had to work hard, there was always enough to eat; there were occasional outings for swimming; and there were two cases of beer for each prisoner on his birthday. In addition, the Army paid the POWs 80 cents a day for their work and allowed the prisoners to use the money to buy things at the post commissary.

Located on what is now Dodd Road, northeast of the present gate into the NASA test area, no traces of the arsenal's prisoner of war camp remain.

Both undated photographs were taken near Building 112 (off Goss Road). Building 112 still stands today.
Huntsville comes to the Army

Community leaders and elected officials were responsible for bringing the Army to Huntsville. So early in this installation’s history, Army leadership invited these community leaders and elected officials for an orientation visit of both Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal on May 12, 1943. Approximately 120 citizens from the local community toured both arsenals. Community relations continued in other ways during World War II with Army participation in parades and retailers displaying some of the products being produced at the installation.
Victory suspends operations

Production at both arsenals continued after V-E day. But once victory over the Empire of Japan was secured, both facilities suspended operations. What was once characterized as a "permanent" installation and not a "war baby" became just that — a government facility that furloughed and terminated employees after the war ended.
The history of the Keller Car may be one of the most unusual stories in this installation's history. After World War II, Huntsville Arsenal offered unused facilities for lease to private enterprise. In August 1947, Huntsville Arsenal's Building 471 (later known as 4471), formerly devoted to the manufacture of gas masks, was leased to the Keller Motors Corporation.

The Keller Motor Car Company went public on the New York stock exchange in late September 1949. Within a few days, half of the stocks were sold. Company executives celebrated with a festive dinner on October 4, 1949.

Company founder George Keller was late coming down to breakfast on October 5, 1949. Worried friends rushed to his room and found him still in bed, dead of a heart attack. The company soon thereafter folded.

Decades later, NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center used Building 4471 as a warehouse. In 2013, NASA mothballed the building and soon thereafter had it removed. But before the building was destroyed, word got out that the birthplace of the few remaining Keller Cars would be no more. Two Keller Cars came back to Building 4471 for one last visit on May 14, 2013.
Want to buy an arsenal?

Redstone Arsenal was placed on standby status in February 1947. By the end of the year, the Secretary of the Army had decided to declare Huntsville Arsenal excess to the needs of the Chemical Corps. On November 9, 1948, the Chief of the Chemical Corps informed Huntsville Arsenal that it was being removed from the surplus category and placed on standby status for possible use by the Department of the Air Force. When the Air Force subsequently decided against using this arsenal, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army directed that Huntsville Arsenal be advertised for sale by July 1, 1949.

**BRIEF OUTLINE OF CONDITIONS OF SALE**

1. Sale will be consummated through competitive proposals to purchase the arsenal as a whole, (Item 78) or by individual units classified as Agricultural, Institutional or Industrial.
2. Inasmuch as a major portion of the lands and improvements to be conveyed constitute a part of the National Industrial Reserve under Public Law 883 (80th Congress), disposal of such lands and improvements will be effected in accordance with the provisions of the National Security Clause.
3. Full data in regard to the provisions of the National Security Clause may be obtained from the District Engineer, Corps of Engineers, Box 1169, Mobile, Alabama.
4. All sales of Huntsville Arsenal shall be subject to existing leaseholds. Copies of existing leases are available for inspection at the address shown in paragraph 7 below.
5. The property is now subject to inspection by prospective purchasers.
6. Qualified proposals contingent upon waiver or modification of the National Security Clause must be approved by the Munitions Board. It is suggested that those firms or persons wishing to qualify their proposal, consult with the Chief, Real Estate Division, Office of the District Engineer, Mobile, Alabama, prior to submission of proposals.
7. Additional details of sale, together with Invitation for Submission of Proposals, will be furnished upon application to the District Engineer, Corps of Engineers, P. O. Box 1169, Mobile, Alabama. Attention: Real Estate Division.

Page 11 of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sales brochure for Huntsville Arsenal
A new mission for Redstone Arsenal

The sale never happened because the Army found that it needed Huntsville Arsenal’s land for a new mission that was developing at Redstone Arsenal. Previously, the Chief of Ordnance had designated Redstone Arsenal as the center for research and development in the field of rockets in October 1948. On June 1, 1949, he officially reactivated the arsenal as the site of the Ordnance Rocket Center. Conversely, Huntsville Arsenal ceased to exist as a separate installation on June 30, 1949. It would be officially combined with Redstone Arsenal April 1, 1950.
Special Focus:
What has survived 75 years

Only two things remain on Redstone Arsenal on the 75th anniversary of the installation that pre-date the U.S. Army’s arrival: the Harris House and cemeteries.

The Harris House was built in the mid-1800s. It was originally located next to a large antebellum-type house on what is now known as Buxton Road. It has served as quarters and as office space.

Cemeteries were located throughout the installation before the U.S. Army built the installation. Some cemeteries were moved to other locations. There are several cemeteries still located throughout the installation.

Harris house built around pre-Civil War building

(Top) Harris House, 1930s; (Bottom) Harris House 2016

Cemetery located on Vincent Drive
Special Focus:
Remnants of war still stand

Question: what do you do with thousands of empty crates? Well, the U.S. Army was left with that dilemma as unused munitions returned to the installation after World War II. Instead of burning the crates, the Army sold them to local citizens.

One citizen, Mr. Burton Stroupe, bought many of the crates. The World War II veteran built large portions of a house with the surplus lumber. Located on Governors Drive in Huntsville, the house still stands today.
Redstone Arsenal gate, early 1950s
Chapter Two:
The 1950s
The Von Braun Team comes to Huntsville

The year 1950 ushered in the next chapter of Redstone Arsenal's history. The Secretary of the Army approved the transfer of the Ordnance Research and Development Division Sub-Office (Rocket) at Fort Bliss, Texas, to Redstone Arsenal on October 28, 1949. Among those transferred were Dr. Wernher von Braun and his team of German rocket scientists and technicians who had come to the United States under "Operation Paperclip" during 1945 and 1946. This team worked on the rocket and missile program for Germany during World War II.

An intelligence officer, (then) Colonel Holger N. Toftoy, had convinced the U.S. Government that this team could advance this Nation's rocket and missile program. Toftoy personally persuaded the Army to relocate the Von Braun team to Redstone Arsenal. It has been said before and it's true: all members of the Army team at Redstone Arsenal to this day owe a debt of gratitude to Toftoy for his efforts.

After its transfer to Redstone Arsenal, the Ordnance Research and Development Division Sub-Office (Rocket) was redesignated the Ordnance Guided Missile Center on April 15, 1950.
The Greater Redstone Arsenal Installation

The Greater Redstone Arsenal Installation is the story of Redstone Arsenal’s history. It was the most heartening piece of information that has come to this area since the war days.

First confidential reports were received several weeks ago, but all details were not completely worked out, and the final decision was not made, until this week. The release of the news came early today.

Removal of the Fort Bliss rocket research unit here will mean that about 500 soldiers, for guard purposes, will be stationed in the barracks at the corner of Jordan lane and Madison Pike; 100 top German scientists, who have made long study of rocket propulsion, will be located here; 65 civilians, now in the employ of the Fort Bliss office, will be transferred to Huntsville, while some 250 clerical workers will be employed from among local people.

In round numbers, this means approximately 900 persons are involved in the enlargement of Redstone and its facilities.

The transfer will not be immediate. Col. Hudson states it cannot be made until early in 1950.

That gives a little breathing space for Huntsville to prepare for the housing of many of these people.

But housing them is not the only problem. Thrudok, and Rome and Haas, lack a good deal of reaching the maximum of employment. Most of them are, or will be, top bracket people, who will want homes, or apartments, suitable for their needs.

It should be clearly understood in advance that most of the surplus housing available here now will not meet the needs or the requirements of the technical and scientific people who are going to be employed in connection with the Redstone operations.

It should also be remembered that this is a peace-time project, and that there will not be the mad scramble for housing that prevailed when the arsenals were being built.

To meet the wishes and requirements of the type of scientists and technicians who are coming to Redstone, on a permanent basis, a good many more houses are going to be necessary. These people are not of the class who can be, or will be, accommodated in most of the surplus housing that now exists here. Many of them will want to buy their homes, if price and location are right.

The enlargement of Redstone arsenal is a great break for Huntsville, but the community must realize that it has some obligations, on its part, to provide housing and living accommodations that will be in line, both in price and in quality, with what the newcomers have had in the sections of the country from which they come.

A Huntsville Times editorial column in late 1949 announces a new era in Huntsville’s history.

Another almost forgotten chapter in Redstone Arsenal’s history is the story of the 9330th Technical Service Unit (9330th TSU). On October 3, 1945, the U.S. Army assigned the 9330th TSU to provide military support to the early activities of the Von Braun Team at Ft. Bliss, Texas. When the team was transferred to Redstone Arsenal in 1950, the 9330th TSU was also transferred.

Members of the 9330th were mostly draftees who had completed their education in the fields of electrical, structural, and mechanical engineering. They mentored under the German rocket experts and assisted with the development of some of the Army’s earliest rocket and missile systems. The number of enlisted men assigned to the 9330th TSU peaked on August 24, 1954, to 506. The unit was dissolved on February 6, 1957. Many members of the 9330th TSU stayed at Redstone Arsenal after completing their service obligation and found employment as civil servants and contractors in the missile and rocket fields.
The work begins

Many of the buildings in 1950 were in disrepair. The Army rocket team needed to build the type of specialized facilities that were successfully used in both Germany and White Sands Missile Range.

When fabrication of the first Army missile “Redstone” (originally called “Major”) began in 1952, the Army was faced with a dilemma: refining a missile depended on a propulsion test stand. But an inflexible law stated that no funds for research and development could be spent constructing facilities. Rather than wait for funding, Redstone missile engineers designed an interim test stand for $25,000, the maximum amount allowed for constructing facilities without Congressional approval.

In 1953, when the first Redstone missile was completed, the interim test stand was ready. The first test occurred in April 1953.
The block house, used for observations and receiving telemetered data during tests, was constructed from three surplus chemical steel tanks covered by a mound of dirt. The three tanks contained 1,500 square feet of usable space for test engineers.

A total of 364 tests were performed between April 1953 and June 1961. In 1985, the National Park Service designated the site as a National Historic Landmark. Historic tests conducted include the test of the “Jupiter-C” missile which launched the Free World’s first satellite, Explorer I, into space on January 31, 1958, and the modified Redstone missile which sent the first American, Astronaut Alan B. Shepard, Jr., into space on May 5, 1961. As of Redstone Arsenal’s 75th anniversary, the test stand was still viewable.
A legendary school is built

With the advent of new rockets and missiles being developed, the Office of the Chief of Ordnance and the Chief of the Army Field Forces approved Redstone Arsenal as the site for guided missile courses in February 1951. Colonel Hudson officially established the Provisional Redstone Ordnance Center on March 3, 1952. For almost 50 years, this school trained warfighters in all U.S. forces and many allied forces in the operation, maintenance, and repair of many U.S. Army developed rocket and missile systems. Later renamed the Ordnance Missile and Munitions Center (or OMMCS), and in 2002, the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School (OMEMS), the school was moved to Ft. Lee, Virginia, in 2011 under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) action.

Original guided missile school building

Ordnance school closes doors, clears books

Longtime tenant goes to Fort Lee

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
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Workmen carried various items from what remained of the empty classrooms and offices. The last Soldiers and civilians made their final plans for what was left in the former school building.

Building 3301 was all that remained of the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School, which has moved to Fort Lee, Va., as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure decisions. And that building is to be turned over to the Garrison today.
Built around 1835 by James Manning, the U.S. Government bought this two-story farmhouse in 1941 when it purchased the land that would become Huntsville Arsenal. The building was remodeled in 1942 and used as quarters for arsenal personnel until 1953. As the arsenal’s guided missile and rocket program assumed national importance during the mid-1950s, the number of visiting dignitaries increased with few suitable accommodations available on the arsenal. It was decided to make use of the otherwise unusable farmhouse by moving it to the Redstone Arsenal headquarters area (known as the 7000-area of Redstone Arsenal).

Newly renovated and furnished, the VIP guesthouse was ready for occupancy by February 1956. The first to sign the guest book was Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson. The guesthouse was officially named "Goddard House" in May 1956 in honor of Dr. Robert H. Goddard, the "Father of American Rocketry." Among the other notables who stayed in the house were Fred Friendly and Edward R. Murrow of CBS News, various Secretaries of Defense, and Secretaries of the Army. In 1972, Melvin Laird was the last Secretary of Defense to stay in the Goddard House.

Over the years, the house underwent extensive renovations, face-lifts, and refurbishments. The exterior clapboard siding gave way to stucco and later to yellow brick. Although evaluated for the National Registry of Historic Places, the numerous structural and design changes prohibited the old house from achieving official historic recognition. The U.S. Army Garrison Redstone ordered the structure destroyed in January 2016, just months shy of Redstone Arsenal’s 75th anniversary celebration.
The post newspaper of record

Though both World War II installations had “newspapers” (or more accurately, newsletters), February 5, 1952, marked the beginning of Redstone Arsenal’s newspaper, The Redstone Rocket.

Carrying the official disclaimer of “The Redstone Rocket is published by (a company), a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army... Opinions expressed by writers herein are their own and are not to be considered an official expression by the Department of the Army,” The Redstone Rocket was one of the only ways all soldiers and civilians of the installation received the news of post activities for the years preceding the digital age.

Historians, archeologists, and researchers have used articles and photographs recorded in The Redstone Rocket for many years. In 2008, the Command Historian of the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, Mr. Michael “Mule” Baker, worked with the U.S. Air Force in Montgomery, Alabama, to have all of The Redstone Rockets digitally preserved.

First edition of The Redstone Rocket
Colonel Hudson left Redstone Arsenal for the last time on May 7, 1952. Redstone Arsenal received its first Commanding General on June 15, 1952 when Brigadier General Thomas K. Vincent assumed command. Vincent was previously assigned to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

Under his command, Vincent continued to foster the strong working relationship with the local community. He participated in Huntsville’s community celebrations and authorized the first public display of an Army missile, the Hermes, on May 14, 1953. General Vincent commanded Redstone Arsenal until September 1, 1954. He died at his residence in Alexandria, Virginia, on September 9, 1956. On June 12, 1957, “Vincent Hall” was dedicated in his honor at the (then) Ordnance Guided Missile School. Later, a major road at Redstone Arsenal, Vincent Drive, was dedicated in his honor, as well recreational facility, Vincent Park.

To My Co-Workers at Redstone Arsenal

Upon the occasion of completing 30 years of commissioned service in the United States Army, I find that those undreamed service removed me from active duty.

I want to thank each of you, civilian and military, regardless of your position or component, for the very important part you have played in making my administration successful. In so doing you have made the Redstone Arsenal a center of scientific and technical knowledge in this new and important defense field. Without the whole-hearted cooperation of each one of you, this station would not be the success it is. Indeed, in many ways, this goal would not have been achieved.

I wish I could say to each of you personally what is in my heart at this time. I would try to let you know how grateful I am to each of you and how much you mean to this station. It is true that I have known you worked with you, shared your joys and sorrows, and to have been accepted as one of the great Redstone teams.

My best wishes to each of you.

Sincerely,

THOMAS K. VINCENT
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

Brigadier General Vincent’s note published in The Redstone Rocket, August 31, 1954
The City and the U.S. Army

The City of Huntsville celebrated its Sesquicentennial in 1955. Throughout the entire decade of the 1950s, the Army and Huntsville worked hand in hand to ensure continued growth and prosperity.

Major General Toftoy, as the senior mission leader of Redstone Arsenal, was asked to write a letter to the City of Huntsville in the year 2005. That letter was revealed in the city’s Bicentennial celebration by Redstone Arsenal’s senior mission leader in July 2005.

Downtown Huntsville sign, 1955

[Right] Time capsule being buried, 1955

[Left] Toftoy’s letter to the citizens of 2005

Doris Toftoy Williams, (then) Mayor Loretta Spencer, and Major General James H. Pillsbury read Toftoy’s letter in 2005
Thirty-nine of Redstone Arsenal's German-born scientists, along with the wives of two of the Operation Paperclip group, were sworn in as U.S. citizens at the Federal Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama, on November 11, 1954. On April 14, 1955, in an unprecedented ceremony held at Huntsville High School, an additional 109 German-born scientists, technicians, and members of their families became American citizens. Among those taking the oath of citizenship was Dr. Von Braun.

The Army's Hermes missile, the first U.S. missile ever put on public display, was donated to the City of Huntsville in 1956. The missile was placed on the corner of Airport Road (the original location of the Huntsville airport) and Memorial Parkway. That missile remains on display.
Major General Holger N. Toftoy: “Mr. Missile”

Though tens of thousands of individuals have contributed to the success of Redstone Arsenal’s many missions over the past 75 years, no other person had more of an impact to this installation’s history than Holger Nelson Toftoy.

As noted earlier, (then) Colonel Toftoy personally convinced the Army to relocate the Von Braun team to Redstone Arsenal. In 1952, Toftoy was assigned to Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, as Director of the Ordnance Missile Laboratories, which was responsible for planning, technical control, and supervision of what had become the U.S. Army’s guided missile and rocket development program. He was promoted on November 1, 1952, to brigadier general. He succeeded Brigadier General Vincent as the Commanding General of Redstone Arsenal on September 1, 1954. Toftoy was promoted to Major General on September 30, 1956, and remained at Redstone Arsenal until July 28, 1958, when he assumed command of Aberdeen Proving Ground.

In 1960 General Toftoy retired from the Army due to ill health. He died on April 19, 1967, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Of the numerous awards and honors received by General Toftoy during his life, perhaps none were more gratifying to him than a plaque placed in Big Spring Park in Huntsville, Alabama, by grateful citizens to honor the man known locally as “Mr. Missile,” a man who had a great deal to do with turning the small cotton town into the rocket capital of the world.
GEN. TOFTOY GETS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

SECRETARY OF ARMY MAKES PRESENTATION

Secretary of the Army Wilbur M. Brucker last week presented the Distinguished Service Medal to Maj. Gen. H. N. Toftoy, former deputy commanding general of AOMC.

Gen. Toftoy assumed the duties of Commanding General, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, this week. The ceremony took place in the office of the Secretary, Army at the Pentagon.

Toftoy’s Contribution

Dr. Wernher von Braun summed up pretty accurately Tuesday night the contribution of Major General Toftoy, who leaves soon for another post. Said he:

"Had it not been for his big heart and sense of duty, there would be no Redstone, no Jupiter, no Explorers."

That’s it in a nutshell. One sentence tells the whole story of his major contribution to this nation’s defense efforts.

Toftoy Receives A City’s Thanks

Huntsville Times, July 25, 1958

Toftoy Hall dedication, November 3, 1967

Plaque for Toftoy unveiled at Big Spring Park, 1958

Toftoy and Dr. Von Braun, 1958

Toftoy Day celebration, July 2002
Major General John B. Medaris

One of the most nationally-known generals ever to serve at Redstone Arsenal was Major General John Bruce Medaris who commanded here from 1956 to 1960. He led the Wernher von Braun Team of German and American engineers to some of its most memorable achievements. Medaris was famous for his swagger stick in his hand, his attention to formalities in his dress and appearance, his bluntness, and the sports cars that he loved to drive. He was widely respected for his courage to make decisions. In fact, he was once quoted as saying that "I may not always be right, but I am never in doubt." During his command, he was a guest on a number of national television shows such as "The Today Show," "Meet the Press," and "Face the Nation." He also appeared in numerous television documentaries on the space program. And, he made a number of appearances before Congress trying to secure funding and/or support for the programs he managed. He was very successful, with his budget for Fiscal Years 1959 and 1960 approaching $2 billion ($16.3 billion in 2016 dollars), or about 25 percent of the Army's budget for those years.
General Medaris ended his military career in January 1960. After trying several post-military retirement jobs and battling cancer on two different occasions, General Medaris became an ordained episcopal priest around 1970. In May 1990, the National Space Club sponsored an event at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum that saluted the U.S. Army's pioneering achievements in space. For this event, the Secretary of the Army created the Major General John B. Medaris Award for Army Achievement in Space which worthy recipients received for making or who had already made a significant space-related contribution to the Army and the Nation. Too ill to attend, Medaris wrote that "...I challenge you to continue the spirit of adventure of space for it presents an opportunity which is clearly limitless." Medaris died on July 11, 1990.
Dr. Wernher von Braun

Dr. Wernher von Braun was one of the most important rocket developers and champions of space exploration during the period between the 1930s and the 1970s. As a youth, he became enamored with the possibilities of space exploration by reading the science fiction of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. He was the chief of the missile division that created the V-2 missile for Germany during World War II.

Von Braun and his team surrendered to the U.S. Army in 1945. Under Operation Paperclip, they were brought to Fort Bliss, Texas, where they taught U.S. scientists and engineers the workings of the V-2. In 1950, Von Braun’s team moved to Redstone Arsenal where they would develop the Army’s first missiles and rockets.

On July 1, 1960, his rocket development team was transferred from ABMA to the newly established National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA’s) George C. Marshall Space Flight Center. Von Braun became the first director of that center.
Von Braun receives a gold medal for distinguished federal civilian service from President Eisenhower, January 21, 1959

Von Braun and Major General Charles W. Eifler, September 1969

Von Braun gives remarks at “Von Braun Day,” February 24, 1970

Von Braun Dies Of Cancer at 65

Memorial Services In Huntsville Are To Be Announced

The Huntsville Times
Space Capital of the Universe

When Major General Medaris' team began work in 1956, they had the primary mission of fielding the Army's first intermediate range (1,500 mile) ballistic missile, the Jupiter. By August 1958, this system was delivered to the U.S. Air Force for early deployment overseas. The Jupiter later proved to be a significant bargaining chip in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

It was also during this time that the U.S. Army at Redstone Arsenal made a number of contributions that helped lay the foundation for U.S. space exploration. In August 1957, they recovered intact a nose cone from a Jupiter-C flight test, the first time that a man-made object had been retrieved from outer space. Celebration.

Before a national television audience, President Eisenhower displays a nose cone from a Jupiter missile, August 7, 1957

An Army Jupiter prepares for launch

A Jupiter with Air Force markings

Billboard seen in Huntsville, Alabama, 1959
In October and November of 1957, the Soviets launched Sputniks I and II, shattering American dreams of scientific and technical superiority. Amid mounting public pressure to respond to the Soviet challenge and due to the repeated problems with the Navy-managed satellite program known as Project Vanguard, the U.S. Army was given the green light and successfully launched the Free World’s first satellite, Explorer I, on January 31, 1958, a mere 84 days after receiving the mission. The U.S. Army at Redstone Arsenal faced and met this challenge to not only restore U.S. prestige, but also to jump-start the extraordinary growth and tradition of excellence that became a hallmark of both the Redstone Arsenal and Huntsville communities.
Army in space

Other noteworthy achievements by the U.S. Army at Redstone Arsenal in the space field during this period included initiating the development of the million-pound thrust engine named Saturn that became the nation's moon rocket. The U.S. Army also sent two primates, monkeys Able and Baker, into space aboard a Jupiter missile and recovered them safely, the first successful recovery of living beings from a flight into space.
Expansion in the 1950s

Two buildings built during this time were Building 4505 and Building 4489, positioned across the street from each other on Martin Road.

Building 4505 was opened in October 1958 and served as the Headquarters for the Army Ordnance Missile Command. Major General Medaris spent his last two years in command there. In the 1960s, it would serve as the Nike-X Project Office Building. As the decades passed, Building 4505 would house the Missile and Space Intelligence Center and the Missile Defense Agency. In 2015, the building was totally gutted, rebuilt, and re-opened in January 2016 to serve as the Headquarters to the U.S. Army Contracting Command.

Building 4489 served as a film studio. The Army pictorial series, “The Big Picture,” was produced for a time in the building. Thousands of productions ranging from internal documentation to films produced for the national media were created in the building. It was destroyed in 2008 to make room for a new building – Building 4400, the new headquarters building for the U.S. Army Materiel Command.
National spotlight

Not only were the work and activities at Redstone Arsenal during the 1950s covered in the local Huntsville media, but by the national media. Dr. Von Braun, Major General Medaris, and Major General Toftoy were nationally recognized names throughout the country and around the world. Medaris alone was on NBC’s “Meet the Press” twice, as well as interviewed on Edward R. Murrow’s “Person to Person” “live” from Redstone Arsenal. Major General Toftoy was interviewed by Mike Wallace of CBS News and appeared in an episode of “This is Your Life.” Von Braun was featured in a “Wonderful World of Disney” episode as well as having graced the covers of the major newsmagazines of the era. By 1960, both Medaris and Toftoy had retired. But Von Braun would continue to garner national and international media coverage for another decade as his team at the Marshall Space Flight Center put the first humans on the moon.
The Nickerson Affair

The highest profile court-martial in Redstone Arsenal’s history took place June 25-29, 1957. Earlier in the year, The New York Times had obtained a classified document which contained details of the U.S. Army’s missile program. Colonel John C. Nickerson, Jr., a member of Major General Medaris’ staff, was charged with laxity concerning security and safeguarding military information. Media from around the country descended on Redstone Arsenal. One report noted that 71 reporters covered developments in the trial.

Nickerson, who pleaded guilty to 15 counts of breaching Army security regulations, faced the possibility of a 30-year prison sentence and dismissal from the service. The charges against him were based on Nickerson’s release of a document containing defense secrets, along with a personal memorandum highly critical of the Defense Secretary’s decision to limit the Army’s missile and rocket R&D role to ranges of 200 miles or less.

On June 29, 1957, the general court-martial board passed a relatively light sentence on Nickerson: suspension from rank for 1 year, forfeiture of $100 pay per month for 15 months, and an official reprimand. A few weeks after his trial ended, Nickerson was assigned to duty as a construction inspector in the Panama Canal Zone.

In July 1958, the Army restored full security clearance to Nickerson and reassigned him as ordnance officer of the U.S. Army Caribbean Command with headquarters in the Canal Zone. Nickerson subsequently returned to the continental United States as ordnance officer at the Air Defense Center and commanding officer of the 61st Ordnance Group at Fort Bliss, Texas. On March 1, 1964, Nickerson and his wife were killed in an automobile accident near Alamogordo, New Mexico.
Expansion, Marked Area’s Best Decade

Rockets, Fame, City’s Growth

City’s Pay, People Tied To Army

Most Records Of Community Fell

During The Span Of The Fifties

The Weather
Chapter Three:
The 1960s
The Army’s mission changes

The U.S. Army’s role in the space field began to change dramatically when President Dwight D. Eisenhower concluded that it would be in the Nation’s best interest to make the Von Braun team a part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (or NASA). As a result, on July 1, 1960, the Army officially transferred about 4,700 Army civil service employees and more than $100 million (or $800 million in 2016 dollars) in facilities and equipment at Redstone Arsenal and Cape Canaveral, Florida, to NASA’s George C. Marshall Space Flight Center.

(Top and bottom) Army/NASA transfer ceremony, July 1, 1960

Letter from Von Braun to Army’s senior mission commander
The last major construction for 30 years

Historically speaking, Redstone Arsenal has always been growing. Sometimes, it’s been a little slow. After the creation of NASA in 1960, the next major U.S. Army building to open was on October 15, 1960. Building 5250 (now the David G. Harris Building) was opened on a Saturday so that the local community could see the new building with a public open house. Over 15,000 came for the event.

A few years later in March 1964, McMorrow Laboratories was opened. Major General Francis McMorrow was the only senior mission commanding general to die while still in command. The Commanding General of the U.S. Army Materiel Command, (then) Lieutenant General Frank S. Besson, Jr., came to officiate the opening of the facility.

The next major Army building to open wouldn’t happen for another 30 years.
The Redstone Army Airfield

The arrival of President Eisenhower in September 1960 started an unusual era for one of Redstone Arsenal’s oldest entities: the Redstone Army Airfield.

As previously noted, the airfield was built by Huntsville Arsenal to assist in the testing of weapons built. After World War II, the airfield remained inactive. However, the era which saw the installation transform into the center of the Army’s rocket and missile activities necessitated the activation and upgrading of the airfield’s facilities.

After ABMA was activated on February 1, 1956, Major General Medaris "... requested that the Arsenal air strip be completely turned over to [ABMA] as the responsible agency for operations and security," since it was the only organization "...operating aircraft from the air strip physically located at Redstone Arsenal." In response to this request, the Redstone Arsenal Commander, (then) Brigadier General Toftoy, turned over the airfield to ABMA on February 15, 1956.

The first control tower was opened on July 2, 1956. Major General Medaris was one of the first commanders to be an active aviator.

The airfield served as the backdrop for some of the installation's most important visitors. In the span of four years from 1960 to 1963, the airfield played host to one visit from President Eisenhower and two visits from President John F. Kennedy. In the ensuing decades, the airfield would welcome numerous Presidents and Vice Presidents.

President Kennedy receives honors, September 11, 1962

President Kennedy is greeted by General Besson, September 11, 1962

Control tower, 1956
One of the most unusual gatherings at the airfield took place on August 26, 1962. The Army allowed the Reverend Billy Graham to conduct one of his “revivals” at the airfield. An estimated crowd of 35,000 saw Mr. Graham, a record that has never been broken at the airfield.
The origins of today’s
U.S. Space and Rocket Center

Since World War II, the Army at Redstone Arsenal has wanted to share the activities of the installation with the local population. This was accomplished by taking rockets and missile downtown for the citizens to see. As the Army’s rocket and missile inventory continued to grow in the 1960s, Redstone Arsenal leadership developed a missile and rocket park. Located off Patton Road on the installation’s most northern border, the area was open to the public on a permanent basis in 1968.
Meanwhile, the Army worked in conjunction with NASA and the state of Alabama to create a more permanent center where Army rockets and missiles, along with NASA vehicles, could be displayed. The Army donated the initial 35 acres for what would be called the "Alabama Space and Rocket Center." Ground was broken on July 31, 1968. The center officially opened its doors on March 17, 1970. Ten years later on March 27, 1981, the Army donated another 350 acres to the (later renamed) U.S. Space and Rocket Center and the City of Huntsville for further expansion of the museum and for the creation of recreational facilities for the city.

Army transfers 350 acres to Space Center

The Army formally passed the acres of Redstone Arsenal to the Alabama Space and Rocket Center March 27 in a brief ceremony attended by Gen. Eugene Flippo, and state, city, and county officials. "The Army is pleased that the acres from Redstone Arsenal will now be used as a place for education and recreation for all the people and especially pleased that it will be used in a way that will directly benefit the people in this community who have honored us with their friendship for so many years," Robert L. Monroe, the Army official, said in his remarks.

[Left to right] Astronaut "Rusty" Schweickart, Dr. Von Braun, and Major General Edwin Donley at the grand opening of what was then called "The Alabama Space and Rocket Center," March 27, 1970
Bus toppled by the April 3, 1974, tornado
Chapter Four:
The 1970s
Uncertain future

The decade of the 1970s saw Redstone Arsenal go through its most uncertain period in its history. With the war in Vietnam winding down and with NASA’s missions to the moon nearing an end, the number of personnel employed at Redstone Arsenal declined. Defense budget cuts threatened to end many of the missile and rocket systems already being developed.

"American people want the best equipped Army defending them... They do not have it now..."

Quote from then Lieutenant General Donald Keith, May 31, 1978

Army Future In Area Depends On Congress

The Secretary of the Army said bluntly here last week that the future of Army activities in this area is in the hands of Congress.

Robert F. Froehlke, male that response to a question during a meeting with local newsmen Tuesday afternoon after spending several hours at the Missile Command, Missle and Munitions Center and School and the Safeguard System Command.

"Obviously what goes on here is vitally important to the Army," the Secretary said. "But it is impossible to predict the future of any military installation. If Congress, in its wisdom, determines to cut the defense budget then we must determine how and where to take those cuts."

Mr. Froehlke said he regretted he did not have more time to spend here and planned to return, in particular, he said, he wanted more time to work with enlisted men and junior officers.

"I was very pleased with what I saw and with the leaders with whom I talked," he said.

 Asked what advice he would give industry in bidding on Army work, the Secretary responded:

"Be realistic, not only when bidding but while implementing the contract."

His comments on other topics:

"American people want the best equipped Army defending them... They do not have it now..."
Inflation Touches Everyone...
Prices Soar
Yes, Even This!

Inflation is DOD...
A Wasting Disease

Inflation Poses Greatest Challenge

Challenges

If there were any two topics that dominated the headlines in the 1970s, it would be inflation and gas shortages. Rampant inflation severely impacted the buying power of the Army in this decade. And fuel shortages, the result of two oil embargos, threatened readiness and severely impacted the morale of many employees.
A presidential visit

President Richard M. Nixon paid a visit to Huntsville in February 18, 1974, participating in the downtown “Honor America Day.” Senior mission commander Major General Vincent H. Ellis greeted the President at the Huntsville Airport and accompanied him into the city. This was President Nixon’s only visit to the Rocket City.

Rohm and Hass, the contractor which came to assist the early efforts of the Army missile and rocket program in the 1950s, left in 1971. The company’s legacy was in its pioneering effort in missile and rocket propulsion technology. The building, located on Redstone Road, reverted over to the Army.

(Below) President Nixon is greeted by senior mission commander Major General Vincent Ellis, February 18, 1974

Rohm and Hass facility
Tragic day

A Southern Airways flight crashed in rural Georgia on April 4, 1977, carrying many civilians and soldiers from Redstone Arsenal. Six were injured and seven were killed in the crash.

Four men were en route to Boston on business for the Patriot Project Office, headed for a meeting the following day with representatives of Raytheon, the system's prime contractor. Three of the four died, including William Gudaitis, chief of the program management office; Major Edward Rosler, cost analyst; and Thomas Mazingo, a procurement analyst supporting Patriot. Leland Lavender, chief of the system engineering division, survived.

On March 16, 1999, the newly-renovated William V. Gudaitis Visitors Complex was dedicated in memory of the Redstone people who died in the 1977 crash.

TOW goes to war

Not all the news in the 1970s was negative. Redstone Arsenal made history when the Army’s Tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided – or TOW – missile in its airborne configuration became the first American-made guided missile to be fired by U.S. soldiers in combat on May 2, 1972. The airborne TOW served in Vietnam until 1973.
Testing the Enterprise

One of Redstone Arsenal’s most unusual visitors arrived on March 13, 1978. The space shuttle “Enterprise,” a full-scale model of what future shuttles would become, came to the installation riding on top of a specially modified Boeing 747. The purpose of the visit was to test the model in NASA’s vibration test facility.

Vibration test facility

Shuttle moving down Rideout Road
Redstone Arsenal witnessed its most destructive natural disaster in the installation's history on April 3, 1974. On that evening, an F-4 tornado destroyed a large portion of Redstone Arsenal's northeastern quadrant. At the time, the Army's missile school was located in the area that was hit. Fortunately, no one was killed on Redstone Arsenal. But the surrounding Huntsville/Madison County area did not fare as well. Along with massive, widespread destruction throughout all of north Alabama, there were numerous casualties in the surrounding communities.
Special Focus: The Weather

The April 3, 1974, tornado that touched down on Redstone Arsenal was not the first tornado to hit the installation, nor would it be the last. In fact, severe weather has impacted Redstone Arsenal during its entire existence.

For the first half of Redstone Arsenal’s history, flooding from the Tennessee River would often cause the installation to be split into two, making portions of the southern half of the post to be inaccessible. Snow storms, though infrequent, would cause the installation to be shut down for different lengths of time.

Only one weather event would close Redstone Arsenal for a week: the April 27, 2011, north Alabama tornado outbreak. Though the installation itself was spared, power lines feeding the post and the local community were severed.

RECOGNIZE THIS PICTURE: A pile of rubble is all that remains of the buildings on Redstone Arsenal which caught the brunt of the tornado early Monday morning. Shown here are portions of Buildings 7411, 7413 and 7402, which were completely destroyed. These buildings were located at Warehouse Road which was hardest hit by the pre-dawn twisters.

February 2000 tornado damage
(Top and bottom) March 1973 flooding

February 1960 snow storm
Signing of the INF Treaty, December 8, 1987
Chapter Five: 
The 1980s
Building for the future

Redstone Arsenal began positioning itself for the future in the 1980s. Congressional leadership pushed legislation which authorized the state to begin construction of an interstate spur to connect the Huntsville/Madison County area with Interstate 65. Previously, the Huntsville Metro area was connected to Interstate 65 by two roads. The project required Redstone Arsenal to once again donate land to the State of Alabama. Completed in the late 1980s, the new interstate – I-565 – would become a major selling point for future Base Realignment and Closure Commission (or BRAC) considerations.
**Redstone Rocket**

*Soviet inspectors visit Redstone*

**Vol. 2 No. 7**

Published in the interest of personnel at Redstone Arsenal.

*July 20, 1988*

History was made at Redstone Arsenal at about 9:30 a.m. Saturday when C-141 carrying 50 Soviet inspectors and military personnel landed at the 11,000-foot runway.

The Soviet mission, two three-member teams, shook hands with awaiting officials and waved to reporters before boarding two Army buses. Their two-day visit to Redstone was part of a on-site inspection agreed to by the United States and Soviet Union to verify compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

The treaty, negotiated at Redstone, is among the intermediate-range nuclear missiles the superpowers have agreed to eliminate under the INF treaty.

No problems that I'm aware of. Everything seems to be going perfectly," said Air Force Capt. Mike Glonek, project officer for the Redstone Site Inspection Agency (OSIA).

The two Soviet inspection teams, that arrived here were part of four groups—a total of 40 inspectors—who came to the U.S. last week to meet with U.S. military officials. The first group went to Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, the second group went to Longhorn Army Ammunition Depot at Karnack, Texas, the third group went to Redstone. These initial visits were "handshake" inspections, to verify data exchanged between the two sides.

Similar inspections are being conducted by the U.S. Soviet sides. "We're just checking each other's numbers," said Air Force Capt. Martin Huard, an OSIA public affairs officer. The Soviet inspectors said they wanted to travel to Redstone to see two of the three sites designated for their review here. These include a launcher repair facility, and a missile storage area where two Pershing missile storage. "They've seen what we've got," said Huard, public affairs officer for the Middle Command.

The site inspection team here from Dallas International Airport in Washington. The two OSIA

**REDSTONE ARSENAL WALLACE G. GREEN, JR., USA**

*Soviet inspectors visit Redstone*

**Vol. 2 No. 7**

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*July 20, 1988*

History was made at Redstone Arsenal at about 9:30 a.m. Saturday when C-141 carrying 50 Soviet inspectors and military personnel landed at the 11,000-foot runway.

The Soviet mission, two three-member teams, shook hands with awaiting officials and waved to reporters before boarding two Army buses. Their two-day visit to Redstone was part of a on-site inspection agreed to by the United States and Soviet Union to verify compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

The treaty, negotiated at Redstone, is among the intermediate-range nuclear missiles the superpowers have agreed to eliminate under the INF treaty.

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**Russians come to Redstone**

The Pershing missile system had been a Redstone Arsenal-managed project since the late 1950s. By the late 1970s, the program received top Department of Defense priority. The Pershing II, with a range of 1,100 miles, had vastly improved pin-point accuracy. With the deployment of the Pershing II in Germany in the early 1980s, negotiators from the United States and Soviet Union agreed to eliminate intermediate range ballistic missiles from both countries inventories.

The Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile Treaty – or INF Treaty – was signed on December 8, 1987. The treaty called for the on-site inspection of facilities in both nations which either produced or managed these systems. On July 15, 1988, an Air Force C-141 aircraft landed at Redstone Army Airfield, carrying inspectors from the Soviet Union. They would make visits here several more times before the verification portion of the treaty expired.
Software engineering


The Software Engineering Directorate is one of the U.S. Army's Life Cycle Software Engineering Centers. They provide "cradle to grave" software engineering support to Army customers around the world. They also perform system/software maintenance, new product development, and services such as system/software acquisition.

A ceremony last week officially opened a building here that serves as a place for designing and developing computer technology to meet the needs of new weapon systems.

"This is a big day for a lot of folks that had a hand in making this center a reality," said Maj. Gen. Thomas Reese, MICOM commander. The life cycle software engineering center is located in a remote area near the Redstone airfield. It serves as home for the Battlefield Automation Management Directorate.

Reese credited former commanders and others "who carried the ball" for bringing the center about.

"The Army is in the midst of the largest modernization ever in peacetime," he said. "It's you men and women who are doing the job in the center that are ultimately responsible for making those programs work." Reese said. "Our ultimate responsibility is to the soldier."

The MICOM commander added that he was proud to be part of a winning team. Reese cut the ceremonial ribbon along with Huntsville Mayor Joe Davis; Dr. William McCorkle, director of the Research, Development and Engineering Center; and Col. Philip Dombrowski, director of Battlefield Automation Management Directorate.

McCorkle told the officials, workers and guests that the project began in 1979 and was completed this year. Construction started about two years ago on the building that cost about $8 million, he said.

"Life cycle software engineering means supporting, from start to finish, the computer programs used in today's weapons. This software—what Dombrowski calls the computer "brain"—controls a variety of tactical functions. These functions include everything from finding the target, to shooting at it. The main purpose of the software engineering center is to support the project offices in developing and fielding systems with embedded computer systems. It supports 17 automated weapon systems managed by the Missile Command."

"We have roughly 250 personnel in the building now," Dombrowski said. This includes about 100 government workers and 150 contractor people.
Army and city eye steam plant venture

BY ED PETERS

A proposal from the city of Huntsville to MICOM to jointly develop, own and operate a refuse-fired boiler plant has been enthusiastically received here.

The proposed facility would be put into operation in 1985 on the arsenal’s east boundary and generate low-cost steam for the installation by burning tons of household trash and other refuse gathered in the city’s daily trash pickup.

Under the proposal, the city would build and equip the plant. MICOM will operate and maintain it.

The city plans to issue bonds to finance the estimated $37 million cost and pay off the debt over 25 years with steam payments received monthly from the Army. After 25 years the plant would be sold to the Army for a dollar.

After months of discussion with arsenal officials, Mayor Joe Davis formally proposed the cooperative venture on Dec. 27. That same day the city council unanimously approved it in a special late-afternoon meeting. Final Army and DOD approval of the project is anticipated.

In their proposal the city said that the project benefits citizens of Huntsville by providing a long term solution for waste disposal, benefits MICOM with low cost energy from a renewable resource, and will have the energy equivalent of 550,000 barrels of oil per year.

City trucks will deliver trash to the facility, sited near the extreme south end of Triana Blvd. on an unused area of the arsenal of about 20 acres, and haul away the ashes.

“It appears to us to be practical and mutually advantageous. We can get steam by this method cheaper than we can produce it,” said Facilities Engineering’s Ted Kornman.

The arsenal presently spends about $5 million yearly on oil and gas to generate steam.

Kornman said the refuse-fired boiler plant will meet the arsenal’s steam requirements “a minimum of seven months of the year” and might meet it year-round when winters are mild.

The arsenal intends to overhaul and keep the big oil-fired boiler plant in Bldg. 4725 to augment the refuse-fired facility. Also, a small refuse-fired boiler plant under construction on Mills Road in the 5400 area will be in operation burning trash generated on the arsenal.

Under the cooperative venture with the city, the arsenal will have at least 25 percent over the cost of producing its own steam, Kornman said.

The savings taken into account that the refuse-fired plant eliminates the need for a big coal burning plant that was scheduled to be built here at a cost of $80 million, according to Tom Hood, deputy facilities engineer.

About those pipes

Maybe one of the most frequently asked questions visitors and incoming personnel to Redstone Arsenal have is “what’s with all of those silver pipes around post?” Those are steam pipes and for many years, they have been used to heat the buildings on Redstone Arsenal. Decades ago, coal-fired steam generating plants were used to produce steam. In the 1980s, Huntsville City officials and Redstone Arsenal leadership came together to build a refuse-fired plant. It was a win-win plan for both parties. Trash generated by Redstone Arsenal and the city would be burned, eliminating much of the trash that would otherwise fill landfills. In turn, the steam would be used by Redstone Arsenal.
Chapter Five:
The 1990s
Celebration of patriots

The 1990s saw the largest deployment of missiles and rockets developed at Redstone Arsenal in combat, along with growth that hadn’t been seen since the 1950s.

Redstone Arsenal had never seen so much direct involvement in combat with Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm since World War II. Virtually every system the U.S. Army Missile Command had developed or managed went to Southwest Asia.

Community’s Celebration of Patriots to parade downtown

BY SANDA MARTEL
City and county officials hope the town will show its support for those who served in Operation Desert Storm, their families and the hundreds of workers who designed and supported the hardware used in the Persian Gulf War.

The Celebration of Patriot parade through downtown Huntsville on June 11 at 1 p.m. will be followed by a program in Big Spring Park at 2 p.m. City and county offices will close for the afternoon, and businesses in the area are being encouraged to follow suit.

Maj. Gen. William Chen, commander of the Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal, has given superiors permission to release all non-essential employees from regular work assignments to attend the parade. Maj. Gen. John Pepper, deputy commander of the Strategic Defense Command, has also excused employees to attend or participate in the parade.

More military hardware than the city has ever seen will be in the parade, as well as displayed in the Senior Center parking lot on Church Street.

Some 35 defense contractors will enter decorated floats in the parade. For example, Thiokol Corporation, manufacturer of the propulsion systems for several weapons used in Operation Desert Storm (including Patriot and Hellfire) is entering a float with a Patriot missile pattern red, white and blue.

All civilian employees who played a role in designing or supporting equipment used in Desert Storm are invited to join the parade. Lowe Avenue, the staging area for the parade, will be blocked off from traffic around 10:30 a.m. Those joining the parade need to find the hardware along Lowe Avenue where they wish to watch parade.

More military hardware than the city has ever seen will be in the parade, as well as displayed in the Senior Center parking lot on Church Street.

Each piece of hardware has been assigned a parade number that will be visibly displayed: Dragon — 002; TOW missile — 003; M996 Improved TOW vehicle — 004; Bradley Fighting Vehicle — 005; Ground launched Hailfire — 006; Hellfire — 007; FIST-V — 008; Multiple Launch Rocket System — 009; Army TACMS — 010; TMDE calibration van — 011; Slinger missile — 012; Avenger system — 013; Chaparral missile — 014; Vulcan gun — 016; Hawk missile — 017; Patriot missile — 018.

Call Lt. Col. Joe Phebe or 776-2303 for more information about participating in the parade.

Immediately following the parade a 45-minute program will begin in Big Spring Park at the corner of Williams and Church Streets. Several honors from Operation Desert Storm will be spoken briefly.

Country music artist Bobby Goldsboro will be featured performer. He will sing several patriotic selections, including a song he wrote and will perform for 12 elementary student finalists in a Celebration of Patriotic poster contest that was sponsored by the Madison County Commission.

Patriot battery, Southwest Asia, 1991

Downtown Huntsville parade, June 1991
The 1990s witnessed some of the first major construction projects for the Army since the early 1960s. Ground was broken for the John J. Sparkman Center for Missile Excellence in November 1992. The building was opened in August 1994.

With 686,790 square feet of new office space, Redstone Arsenal was well positioned for BRAC recommendations from the Department of Defense. The 1995 BRAC realigned the aviation mission of the Aviation and Troop Command with the Missile Command. The U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command was established on July 17, 1997.
A birthday and a President

In other news during the 1990s, Redstone Arsenal celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1991. A golden anniversary gathering was held on June 13, 1991, at the Von Braun Civic Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Estimated attendance at the commemorative dinner was 1,300. General William G.T. Tuttle, Jr., the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Materiel Command, was the featured speaker. The Huntsville Times and The Redstone Rocket both ran special editions of their respective newspapers.

The last President of the United States to touch down on Redstone Army Airfield was President George H.W. Bush. President Bush made a speech on June 20, 1990, at NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center. Redstone Arsenal’s senior mission commanding general at the time, Major General William S.C. Chen, greeted the President.

“Who could doubt that the Army missile program still had ‘The Right Stuff’ after seeing the performance of the Patriot and other Army missile systems during Desert Storm.”

General William G.T. Tuttle, Jr., Commanding General of the U.S. Army Materiel Command
Missile intelligence

The Richard C. Shelby Center for Missile Intelligence opened on December 17, 1999. Its occupant, the Missile and Space Intelligence Center (or MSIC), had its roots with the Army Ballistic Missile Agency in the late 1950s as an office to gather intelligence on foreign missile and rocket programs. MSIC, which operates under the auspices of the Defense Intelligence Agency, occupied Building 4505 for many years until this new complex was opened in 1999.

The 220,000 square foot complex consisted of four buildings and two connecting modules. Features included 100,000 square feet of administrative office space and 120,000 square feet of laboratories, auditorium, training rooms, support facilities and more. There was also a fitness facility, with walking trail, a snack bar, and a 398-seat auditorium.

Bush dedicates Shelby site

Ex-president joins other dignitaries at ceremony here

Redstone Rocket

Huntsville Times, December 17, 1999
"History of Redstone Arsenal" display at the City of Huntsville's Bicentennial Celebration, July 2005
Chapter Six:
The 2000s
September 11, 2001

On September 10, 2001, General John G. Coburn, Commanding General of AMC, presided over the change of command ceremony between the outgoing AMCOM commander, Major General Al Sullivan, and the incoming commander, Major General Larry Dodgen. Major General Dodgen held his first staff meeting on the morning of September 11, 2001. After hearing the news of the multiple terrorist attacks, he closed and secured the installation, the first time the post had ever been closed because of a national security situation. Major General Dodgen also met with community leaders and held a joint press conference that day.

The installation was re-opened on September 17, 2001. Never before in Redstone Arsenal's history had security measures been put in place whereby every single vehicle entering the post was thoroughly inspected. Before September 11th, the gate's guard force was relatively small. After September 11th, Army National Guard soldiers augmented staffing of the gates.
As Redstone Arsenal once again supported the warfighter in the early part of the decade with Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, the installation continued to build for the future. In May 2001, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC) announced that it was leaving a building it had leased for decades in Research Park and building its first permanent facility on Redstone Arsenal. So began the first phase of construction off of Martin Road that was named the Von Braun Complex. A ribbon cutting ceremony for Building 5220, SMDC’s new building, was held on January 20, 2004.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI, broke ground for their Hazardous Devices School in 2002, their first major training facility on Redstone Arsenal. Opened in September 2004, the $23 million facility included three administrative and classroom buildings containing nearly 54,000 square feet, along with 14 practical exercise training villages on 295 acres.
A four-star destination

Maybe the biggest news in Redstone Arsenal’s history was the 2005 BRAC announcement. The installation would be home to a four-star command: the U.S. Army Materiel Command, or AMC.

Since September 11, 2001, AMC was looking for a more secure location for its headquarters. It moved from its Alexandria, Virginia, location to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, in 2003. The BRAC 2005 decision would give AMC its first permanent headquarters in its almost 50 year history.

The 2005 BRAC decision also called for the AMC Band, the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command, the Missile Defense Agency, the 2nd Recruiting Brigade, the Space and Missile Defense Command Headquarters, and activities in rotary wing research and development to come to Redstone Arsenal. The installation would gain 1,655 civilian and military positions.
Construction begins

General Benjamin Griffin, AMC’s Commanding General, broke ground on the new AMC Headquarters on September 17, 2008. Employees from AMC’s Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, began moving to Redstone Arsenal.

The $105 million facility would be headquarters for both AMC and one of its subordinate organizations, the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command. The two headquarters, adjoined by a common lobby, were slated for completion in January 2011.
Redstone Arsenal’s era of mass construction

By the end of 2009, much of Redstone Arsenal was under construction. Spurred by the 2005 BRAC decision, the installation became a blur of groundbreaking and ribbon cutting ceremonies.

For example, the first 2005 BRAC-related facility, the U.S. Army’s 2nd Recruiting Brigade, opened October 14, 2009. The $7.2 million, 25,000 square-foot building serves as headquarters for the brigade that recruits one-fifth of the Army’s Soldiers.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives began construction of their National Center for Explosives Training and Research in November 2007. Opened in October 2010, the $30 million facility consists of 83,500 square feet of classrooms, a mock courtroom, laboratories, a full suite of audio-video facilities, and offices.
Last of large-scale BRAC footprint becomes reality

On August 21, 2009, ground was broken for the last BRAC-related facility. Redstone Arsenal leadership turned ceremonial shovels for a $46.5 million building project that included the Rotary Wing Center Hangar Facility and the Redstone Test Center’s new headquarters buildings.

Indirectly related to the 2005 BRAC, construction of new general officer housing continued during this period. In anticipation of the influx of General Officers coming to Redstone Arsenal after the BRAC 2005 decision, this initiative by the City of Huntsville to give housing to Redstone Arsenal started in 2003. By June 2007, a total of ten new general officer’s quarters had been built and given to Redstone Arsenal as a gift from the City of Huntsville. These new quarters replaced outdated houses which were built in the late 1950s.
Chapter Seven:
The 2010s
The BRAC-related construction that began in the late 2000s was finally completed in this period. The year 2010 saw Redstone Arsenal elements which had supported the warfighter in Iraq slowly wind up operations. But this period would be forever known as a history-making chapter in Redstone Arsenal’s history. For it was during this time that Redstone Arsenal witnessed two firsts: the first four-star U.S. Army General to ever establish a command on the installation. And Redstone Arsenal would host the first female four-star General in United States history.

General Ann E. Dunwoody assumed command of AMC on November 14, 2008, the same day she was promoted to four-star general. She remained at AMC’s Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, until April 27, 2011. General Dunwoody officially opened AMC’s new Headquarters building at Redstone Arsenal on June 15, 2011, with a “touchdown” ribbon cutting ceremony. Installation and community leaders attended the event. Redstone Arsenal was now in the same league as the other two Army installations which hosted four-star commands.
Redstone Arsenal’s first four-star headquarters had two additions within the first few years of opening. First, a parade field with amphitheater seating was built. This facility would host numerous and varied command events and ceremonies. Next, a cafeteria was built next to the headquarters complex. Named the “Lakeside Café,” this stand-alone building provided both AMC and U.S. Army Security Assistance Command employees the benefit of a full-service post cafeteria.
More BRAC-related openings

The decade of the 2010s witnessed more BRAC 2005 openings and activities. The 389th Army Band, known as the AMC Band, opened its doors to a brand new state-of-the-art facility on January 24, 2011. The $4.4 million, 16,082-square-foot facility would house the first Army band on Redstone Arsenal since the departure of the 55th Army Band in 1975.

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) expanded its facilities in phases during this period. Moved to Redstone Arsenal as part of the BRAC 2005 decision, the largest building of what would be named "The Von Braun Complex" (MDA facilities and the Space and Missile Defense building) opened in October 2011. Called "Von Braun III," the $221.8 million, 840,000-square-foot facility was state-of-the-art in design, furnishings and technology. Von Braun III featured an 800-seat auditorium, 700-diner cafeteria, 120 conference rooms, barber shop, dry cleaners and laundry, convenience store, a coffee shop, ice cream and snack store, supply store, fitness center, a Dr. Wernher von Braun exhibit area, a basement area for classified work, full video-teleconferencing capabilities, and six floors of office space for 2,600 employees. When "Von Braun IV" opened in 2014, the complex housed over 5,500 workers.
Pershing Park

After the Ordnance Corps moved the munitions and electronics school to Fort Lee, Virginia, in 2011, there were many unused buildings. Redstone Arsenal’s leadership transformed a large portion of the area into Pershing Park, an area dedicated to serving the workers of Redstone Arsenal. Services such as badging, education center, and morale, welfare, and recreation components that were for many years scattered throughout the installation, were now consolidated into one area.

Pershing Park formally opened on June 13, 2013.
Redstone Gateway

In 2010, the Army leased to the City of Huntsville almost 500 acres for an “enhanced use lease” facility. For 50 years, the Army would lease the land for commercial development. Ground was broken for what would be called “Redstone Gateway” on August 23, 2010. Redstone Gateway would accommodate up to 15,000 jobs moving into the area in the coming years, and would offer approximately 4.4 million square feet of office space, including 1.2 million square feet of secure office space and an additional 124,000 square feet of convenience retail, restaurants, hotels, and more.
Department of Justice expands its footprint

The FBI opened the $125 million Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center (or TEDAC) on February 16, 2016. FBI Director James Comey, U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, and other officials took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the occasion. TEDAC is a multi-agency organization that performs a critical function in the fight against terrorism.

Before TEDAC’s creation in 2003 in Quantico, Virginia, no single government entity was responsible for analyzing and exploiting intelligence gleaned from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Since then, TEDAC has examined more than 105,000 IEDs from around the world, providing intelligence to the military, law enforcement, and the intelligence community at home and abroad.
One Besson Drive

In 2015, construction of general officer housing culminated with the completion of the house for the AMC commanding general. The street was named "Besson Drive" in honor of AMC's first commanding general, General Frank S. Besson, Jr., who commanded AMC from its inception in 1962 to 1969.
AMC assumes role of Senior Command for Redstone Arsenal

After taking command of AMC on August 7, 2012, General Via set in motion a sequence of events to have AMC assume the role of Senior Command. One year after he took command of AMC, the Army officially gave the AMC Deputy Commanding General the title of Senior Commander, effective July 31, 2013.
A new hub for distinguished visitors

Historically, many senior military, federal, state, and local leadership officials have visited Redstone Arsenal. With the arrival of AMC in 2011, those visits increased exponentially.
Four-star community relations

Continuing a tradition that dates back to the beginning of Redstone Arsenal, General Via and members of his team have been actively engaged in community events and affairs.
AUSA comes to Huntsville

Since 2014, the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) has made Huntsville, Alabama, the permanent home for its winter meetings. Traditionally held in March of each year, AUSA attracts all elements of the U.S. Army to discuss the current state of the Army.
Another 75 years

For 75 years, the Nation has called upon Redstone Arsenal to provide for the warfighter, be it on the battlefields of World War II or in Southwest Asia. From conventional munitions to the most advanced aviation platforms and high-tech missile systems, Redstone Arsenal has always answered the call.

Redstone Arsenal is now home to more than 70 organizations, representing the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and NASA. It also has the largest workforce in its history – an average daily population of over 40,000.

In 1955, Major General Toftoy was prophetic when he placed a letter in a time capsule noting that Redstone Arsenal in the year 2005 would be “a world-renowned institution and a mecca for (people) of science around the world.”
View of the Tennessee River from the southern border of Redstone Arsenal, 2016
“I believe that Redstone has a great future... Redstone is a shining star for the United States Military.”

U.S. Senator Richard Shelby
March 17, 2005