

PEOPLE WITH A MISSION

Clarksville Base had a specific mission; to keep the nation's nuclear weapons secure and ready for use.

Everyone who served at the base functioned to support this central mission. Administrators managed the operations of the base, weapons handlers transported and performed routine maintenance on the weapons, inspectors examined the weapons to make sure they would work when needed and security personnel protected the base from infiltration. It is a testament to the professionalism of the people who served at Clarksville Base that the facility never experienced an enemy security breach or a nuclear accident during its seventeen years of operation.



Early 1950's photograph of members of the Atomic Energy Commission stationed at Clarksville Base.

To learn more about the Clarksville Base Historic District, please contact the Cultural Resources Office at 270-412-8174 or online at <https://home.army.mil/campbell/index.php/clarksville-base>.

BUILDINGS WITH A MISSION

Security was top priority at Clarksville Base. Both the physical layout of the base and design of the buildings helped keep the weapon stockpiles secure. Three main layers of security were employed. First, the base was built within Fort Campbell so the Army could provide a security buffer from the outside world. The second layer of security was a system of perimeter fences and a patrol road that surrounded the entire base. Heavily armed Marines circled the patrol road at regular intervals to ensure that the base was secured.

The reinforced concrete storage bunkers provided the third layer of security. Armed Marines in "pillboxes" guarded the entrances to bunkers which were secured with heavy blast doors. Inside, multiple cages and bank vault doors secured the weapons storage areas and gave Clarksville Base its nickname: the Birdcage.



An artist's rendering of an A-structure guarded by Marines. The pill box can be seen in the foreground.

WELCOME TO CLARKSVILLE BASE

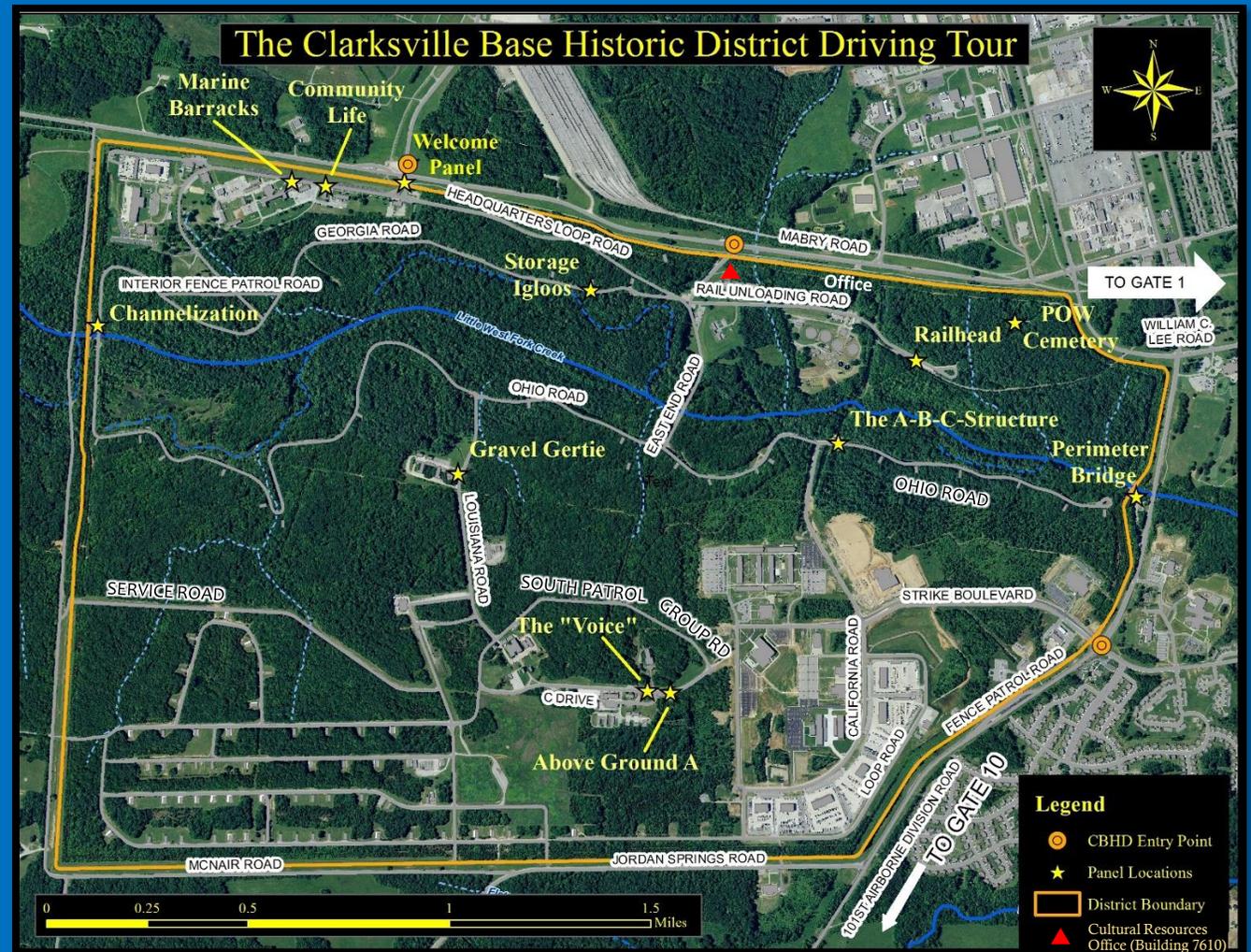


A MISSION BEGINS

Clarksville Base was born out of fear of Soviet military might. U.S. Military planners were convinced that stockpiling nuclear weapons was the only thing that would deter the Soviets from all out war.

The Cold War developed after World War II when the wartime alliance between the U.S. and Soviet Union crumbled. For more than forty years, the two nations were locked in a political, economic, and indirect military struggle. The conflict was called the Cold War because the armies of the U.S. and the Soviet Union never directly fought each other.

Although the U.S. and the Soviet Union never declared war on one another, they did engage in a nuclear arms race. Each nation created stockpiles of nuclear weapons and built facilities like Clarksville Base where they could be stored in a secure environment.



PANEL TOPICS ALONG DRIVING TOUR ROUTE

WELCOME PANEL

Introduction to Clarksville Base.

COMMUNITY LIFE

The role of the administration complex.

MARINE BARRACKS

Marine duties and life on Clarksville Base.

CHANNELIZATION

Re-routing Little West Fork Creek.

STORAGE IGLOOS

The role of igloos in Clarksville Base.

COMBINED A-B-C STRUCTURES

The storage of nuclear weapons.

RAILHEAD

Transporting nuclear weapons to the base.

POW CEMETERY

The story of the German POWs during WWII.

PERIMETER BRIDGE

Preventing infiltration via West Fork Creek.

GRAVEL GERTIE

Modifying nuclear weapons at the plant.

THE "VOICE"

The most mysterious entity at Clarksville Base.

ABOVE GROUND A

Deceiving the Russians by hiding in plain sight.