

## Fort Knox History Timeline

**Event: 1914.** On July 28, the first of two worldwide wars begins after Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary is assassinated June 18 by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist. Alliances are made, which quickly escalates European tensions and distrust into all-out war.



**1917.** On April 6, as the United States declares war on Germany, Camp Zachary Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, becomes the first of 16 new Army cantonments to be completed. That November, the 1903 Army maneuver grounds at West Point, Kentucky, are chosen for the new Camp Taylor artillery range.

**1918.** Additional land is needed for the expanding camp and in July, Maj. William Radcliffe arrives in the small village of Stithton with plans to construct a Field Artillery Brigade Firing Center Cantonment for six brigades. Major Gen. William Snow announces that the official name of the cantonment will be Camp Knox. That October, Camp Knox's Godman Field becomes the first airfield in Kentucky.



**Event: 1918.** World War I ends Nov. 11. More than 16 million U.S. military personnel worldwide fought in the war.

**1921-28.** The Army's force is reduced in the early 1920s. As a result, in 1922 it is deemed necessary to close the post as a permanent installation. Although closed for use by the regular Army, Camp Knox remains an active training center for Army programs and is used by the 5th Corps Area for reserve officer training, the National



Guard, and as a Citizen's Military Training Camp. From 1925 to 1928, the area is designated as "Camp Henry Knox National Forest." In 1928, Third Field Artillery is assigned to the post.



**Event: 1929.** Around Sept. 4, stock prices plummet in the United States, creating the Great Depression, which would last until the beginning of World War II.



**1931.** Upon the recommendation of Col. Daniel Van Voorhis and Lt. Col. Adna Chaffee, Jr., Camp Knox is chosen to be the new headquarters for the Mechanized Cavalry.

**1932.** On Jan. 1, Camp Knox is made a permanent installation and the name changed to Fort Knox.



**1933.** The unemployment relief programs New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) are created. Adapting to its role of armor mechanized training, Fort Knox finds that the relief and funding programs provide invaluable support as the installation continues to grow. Fort Knox becomes an induction center for the Fifth Corps Area CCC.

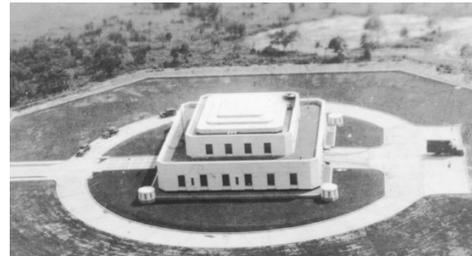




**1933.** Anti-Aircraft Artillery and Air Corps Exercises at Fort Knox in May use telephone switchboard operators and old, slow biplanes as “Red” opposing forces to test whether the much faster, modern bombers can evade interception. The tests demonstrate the need for fighter squadrons to travel with the bombers for protection, which would save countless bomber crew members’ lives during WWII.

**Event: 1934/1936/1939.** The Dust Bowl added to the suffering that came about because of the Great Depression. The droughts hit in three waves across the Great Plains throughout the ‘30s, decimating huge crops and, as a result, crippling much of American agriculture.

**1936.** The U.S. Bullion Depository is constructed on property set aside by Fort Knox. It receives its first shipment of gold in 1937 under the security of 7th Cavalry Brigade. In addition to gold, the Depository stores important documents at various times in history, including the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Articles of Confederation, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, three volumes of the Gutenberg Bible, and the Magna Carta.



**1937.** In January, a record flood of the Ohio River devastates communities along its banks, so much that on Jan. 22, Brig. Gen. Daniel Van Voorhis, post commander, makes evacuation and care of West Point a major mission. Soldiers from 1st Cavalry direct the rescue operation and 13th Cavalry establishes a camp on post to care for those evacuated.

**1938.** Godman Army Airfield undergoes a major modernization effort.



**1940.** In partial response to the war in Europe, the Army establishes the Armored Force on July 10, headquartered at Fort Knox. The First Armored Division is activated.



Creation of the Selective Service program brings thousands of new military personnel to Fort Knox. Though having almost 1,000



buildings, Fort Knox must accommodate many new soldiers in tent cities. A new construction boom occurs in an effort to house all the men arriving. As a result of the mobilization, almost 3,000 additional buildings will be constructed during World War II.

**Event: 1941.** The United States of America enters World War II on Dec. 7 after the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

**1941.** Dec. 8, one day after America's entrance into WWII, Robert Brooks, an African-American, is killed during a Japanese aerial assault on the island of Luzon, becoming the first Armored Force battle casualty of World War II. The main parade ground at Fort Knox is dedicated in his name later that month.



**1941-42.** Fort Knox purchases additional land in Hardin, Meade and Bullitt counties. Construction of more facilities continues on post during the wartime expansion. The War Department picks Fort Knox for experiments involving the Landing Ship Tank (LST). The Army Medical Research Laboratory (AMRL) is established in part to study the physical and mental stresses placed upon Soldiers in the performance of military tasks.





**1943-44.** The "Armored Force School" is designated the "Armored School" in 1943. On April 28 of that year, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt visits Fort Knox during his second wartime inspection tour. In 1944, Italian and German prisoners of war start arriving at the Fort Knox Axis Prisoners of War Camp.

**Event: 1945.** On May 7, Germany surrenders to the Allies.

**1945.** Col. Benjamin Davis, Jr. takes command of the Tuskegee Airmen of 477th Bombardment Group at Godman Army Air Field June 21.



**Event: 1945.** On Sept. 2, Japan surrenders to the Allies, bringing to an end to World War II.



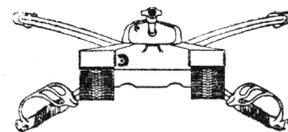
**1947.** On July 15, the replacement center at Fort Knox is named 3rd Armored Division. Between 1947 and 1955, more than 300,000 Soldiers will be trained by the division before being sent to permanent stations and units.

**1949.** The General George Patton Museum first opens its doors on May 30. When the Korean War starts a year later, armored trainers form 72nd Tank Battalion and fight with distinction in Korea. Other armored units will serve in the war until its cease-fire in 1953.



**Event: 1950.** The Korean War, between North and South Korea, begins June 25.

**1950.** Under the Army Organization Act of 1950, armor and cavalry elements are combined to form the Armor Branch.



**Event: 1953.** On July 27, an armistice is signed in P'anmunjom, North Korea, putting a halt of all combat in the divided region.

**1954.** President Dwight D. Eisenhower participates in a review at Fort Knox on April 23, 1954. An audience of nearly 10,000 people was on hand to see the famous General who had been elected Commander in Chief. Among them were 150 newspaper, radio, television, and photo news representatives to cover the event. Eisenhower's brief visit to the area included a stop to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site in Hodgenville, before his departure at Godman Army Airfield. First Avenue was renamed Eisenhower Avenue after his death in 1969.



**1955.** The ARTC is activated to resume training. The following year, 3rd Armored Division is shipped to Europe. The Armored Replacement Training Center (ARTC) is given the new name U.S. Army Training Center, Armor (USATCA), and comprises approximately half of the population at Fort Knox. Soon after, the Armored Center and Armored School are given their official designations. In 1957, they will become the U.S. Army Armor Center.

**Event: 1955-1965.** U.S. involvement in Vietnam gradually increases over a period of years starting Nov. 1, 1955, that began with non-combatant military advisors for the South Vietnamese army, before being phased into the introduction of regular combat troops in 1965.

**Event: 1957.** The Space Race begins Oct. 4 between the Soviet Union and the United States when the Soviet Union successfully launches Sputnik 1 into Earth's orbit.

**1957-1960.** The Army adopts the Combat Arms Regimental System (CARS). During the last half of the 1950s, testing is conducted at Fort Knox on an improved version of the M48 tank. The first M60 tanks are put into the field by 1960 and become the primary tank to stand watch on the frontiers of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe during Communist rule.



**1959.** Able, a 7-pound rhesus monkey, peers from her fiberglass couch being prepared for placement into a capsule for a preflight test of Jupiter, AM-18. Along with Able's partner in flight, a squirrel monkey named Miss Baker, AM-18 is successfully launched May 28 and returns to earth within the hour. The monkeys are taken to Walter Reed for examination and found to be in excellent shape. Shortly after, Able is flown back to the Army Medical Research Laboratory at Fort Knox to have an implanted electrode removed. The anesthetic used to sedate her for the minor operation causes her heart to convulse and she stops breathing. Despite efforts by

doctors to save her life, Able is lost. Her body is later preserved and is on display today at the National Air and Space Museum.

**Event: 1964.** President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act into law July 2.

**1965-1968.** ROTC Basic Camp opens at Fort Knox. In 1968, the Fort Knox Training Center graduated its one millionth trainee since its inception in 1940.

Cavalry and armor units in the Vietnam War include the 1st Cavalry Division, 11th Cavalry Regiment, and elements of 1st and 2nd Armored Divisions.



**Event: 1973.** On Jan. 27, the Paris Peace Accords are signed, officially ending direct U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

**Event: 1975.** On April 30, war in Vietnam between the north and the south ends with the fall of Saigon.



**1980-1985.** The M1 "Abrams" tank is fielded. Columbia Pictures arrives at Fort Knox to film the hit military comedy movie "Stripes." In 1985, the M1A1 Tank is introduced. Features include an upgrade to a 120mm gun, a CO2 laser range finder, and improved armor protection.

**1987.** George H. W. Bush, vice president of the United States, visits Fort Knox April 21, arriving on Brooks Field in a UH-60 Blackhawk and greeted by Maj. Gen. Thomas Tait and Rep. Harold Rogers, who then escorts him to O'Brien Range. While there, he observes M1 tank demonstrations by a platoon from Troop A, 5th Squadron, 12th Cavalry. Bush then drives an M1 for half a mile under the direction of Staff Sgt. Donald Hascher. After several more demonstrations and site visits, he joins Lt. Col. Michael Kush and other members of 1st Armor Training Brigade for a two-mile run. Following the run, the vice president praises the Soldiers and instructs them to "run two more miles, then take the day off."



**Event: 1989.** A wave of peaceful revolutions sweep across Central and Eastern Europe, signaling the end of Communist rule there and, by 1991, the end of the Cold War.

**Event: 1990.** Operation Desert Shield commences after Iraq's hostile invasion of Kuwait.

**1990-1991.** The Continental U.S. Replacement Center is activated at Fort Knox to support Operation Desert Shield; designed to send replacements to warfighting commanders in the theater of operations. In 1991, Operation Desert Storm



begins after coalition forces initiate an air and ground offensive against the Iraqi Army to liberate Kuwait.

The M1 Abrams tank and M2/M3 Bradley fighting vehicle prove themselves to be effective armored vehicles in combat. Fort Knox is designated a Department of the Army Community of Excellence at that same time. Fort Knox executes a demobilization mission of units mobilized for Desert Storm.



**Event: 1991.** Operation Desert Storm ends Feb. 28, as an agreement is reached between the United States and Iraq.

**1992.** The U.S. Army Recruiting Command headquarters relocates to Fort Knox. Headquarters staff are responsible for worldwide recruiting efforts and providing the command, control and staff to support the recruiting force as the Army annually recruits over 75,000 new Soldiers.



**Event: 1993.** Islamic terrorists bomb the World Trade Center in New York City Feb. 26; forecasting greater and more extreme attacks to come.

**Event: 1996-1999.** The last original M1 Abrams tank retires from active Army at a Fort Knox ceremony marking the occasion. In 1999, Platform Performance Demonstration begins at Fort Knox. This event explores suitability of tactical vehicles for possible use in the medium weight brigades intended by the Army Chief of Staff as part of the Army's ongoing transformation efforts.

**Event: 2000.** In July, the Armor Center commander is directed to create a Blue Ribbon Panel to develop organizational and operational concepts and a related transformation strategy for 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. The Army announces selection of an Interim Armored Vehicle, known as the Stryker, which is intended to equip the interim brigade combat teams desired by the Army Chief of Staff. When the Stryker is fielded, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment becomes 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

**Event: 2001.** On Sept. 11, America is attacked by al Qaeda terrorists, who kill 2,996 people. On Oct. 7, the United States strikes militants in Afghanistan, launching Operation Enduring Freedom.



**2003.** The Stryker Interim Armored Vehicle goes through extensive testing at Fort Knox. Fort Knox continues to provide the U.S. Army with trained Soldiers in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom during the Global War on Terror.

**Event: 2003.** The United States begins Operation Iraqi Freedom March 19, capturing Baghdad by April 9.

**2005.** Congress directs another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The result sends the Armor School to Fort Benning, Georgia, and replaces it with an infantry



brigade, a support brigade, and the Army's recruiting, officer training, and Army Reserve training commands. Between



2005 and 2011, BRAC transforms the face of Fort Knox.

**2010-2011.** Human Resources Command relocates to Fort Knox that first year. On May 27, the Armor Center turns over command of Fort Knox to U.S. Army Accessions Command and moves to Fort Benning, Georgia. Accessions Command is headquartered in a new 900,000-square-foot complex memorialized after Lt. Gen. Timothy Maude. On Nov. 23, 2010, U.S. Army Cadet Command arrives to Fort Knox from Fort Monroe, Virginia. In the post's largest combat deployment since 1942, 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division – the Duke Brigade – departs Fort Knox in January 2011 for a year-long deployment to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.



**2011.** 84th Training Command arrives to its new home at Fort Knox Aug. 11 after moving from Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.



**Event: 2011.** Under the direction of President Barack Obama, military operations in Iraq end Dec. 18.

**2012-2013.** Accessions Command is deactivated in January 2012 and relinquishes command of Fort Knox to U.S. Army Cadet Command. In 2013, all ROTC Cadet Summer Training is consolidate at Fort Knox. About 10,000 cadets will train each summer in the Army's largest annual training event.



**2014.** On March 6, Maj. Gen. Peggy Combs becomes the first female commanding general of U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox.

**2016.** On April 1, First Army Division East leaders uncase the unit's colors at Fort Knox after moving from Fort George G. Meade, Maryland.





**2017.** After more than four decades of history at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 1st Theater Sustainment Command cases the colors in preparation for the move to Fort Knox, Kentucky. The unit arrives shortly afterward.

**2018.** Fort Knox celebrates its centennial throughout the year. From humble beginnings as an artillery training center to nearly 80 years as the “Home of Cavalry and Armor” to most recently embracing its new array of missions brought about by BRAC and other changes, Fort Knox continues to enjoy a unique role for all Soldier career management – from swearing in to departing service. Its major units include U.S. Army Cadet Command, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, and U.S. Army Recruiting Command. These units, along with U.S. Army Garrison, 1st Theater Sustainment Command, 84th Training Command, Army Reserve Aviation Command, 19th Engineer Battalion, Ireland Army Health Clinic, and thousands of civilian employees and other "partners in excellence" make Fort Knox one of the most multi-functional military installations in the U.S. Army. The mission remains the same as it did 100 years ago, however: to train the finest Soldiers in the world to defend America’s freedom.



**2020.** On Oct. 16, V Corps activates on Fort Knox.