



# The US Naval Museum of Armament and Technology

Historical  
Educational  
Entertaining

# U.S. Naval Museum of Armament and Technology



From World War II through Vietnam to the deserts of Iraq, China Lake has provided our warfighters with the most reliable and most effective weapons systems ever built. These development were made possible through the unique partnership of uniformed military personnel, civilian scientists and the private industry workforce that, together, have designed, developed, produced, fielded and supported these state-of-the-art weapons and weapon systems for more than fifty years. This 'China Lake model' for weapons development identified naval requirements and operational needs, developed feasible advanced technological developments and conceptual designs and the engineering support necessary to equip the Navy (and other services) with weapon systems that have proven to be extremely reliable and effective in combat. So successful was this approach to weapon development that this Navy team developed 70 percent of the US weapons used in Vietnam and 80 percent of the weapons used in Desert Storm. Museum displays highlight these team efforts and the many contributions made by our industry partners.



## The Museum

The Secretary of the Navy officially established the US Naval Museum of Armament and Technology on 12 May 2000. It is currently located aboard the Naval Air Warfare Station at China Lake, California. The museum is one of only 13 official Navy museums and is the only such museum dedicated to military air weapon systems. The museum is a salute to all of those who have participated in the unique partnership of uniformed military personnel, civilian scientists and the private industry workforce.

# The China Lake Museum Foundation

To support the museum, the Commander of the Navy Air Weapons Station requested that a foundation be established as a separate entity from the Navy for the specific and primary purpose to solicit and receive contributions. The China Lake Museum Foundation was established for this purpose and to operate the museum on a non-profit basis.

In 1993 the Foundation was incorporated in the State of California as a non-profit organization exclusively for education purposes.

The China Lake Museum Foundation supports and oversees the daily operation and maintenance of the museum, develops and constructs the individual displays, provides docents for visitor tours, operates the museum gift shop, provides educational seminars and raises money for the support and operation of the museum.

## Future Plans

The China Lake Museum foundation plans to relocate the US Naval Museum of Armament and Technology from its present location aboard the Naval Air Weapons Stationm China Lake, CA to a more accessible and more practical site within the adjacent city of Ridgecrest. Reasons for making this move are to provide additional space for expansion of the museum and its displays, provide additional educational facilities and to eliminate the need for visitors to obtain a Navy security pass to visit the museum.



# Preserving History

The museum is currently located on the Naval base at China Lake in a 10,000 square foot building. The new museum will be housed in a 20,000 square foot building to be constructed on a location near the existing Maturango Museum thus creating a major Museum Culture Center for the city of Ridgecrest and the China Lake communities.

This center will include a common parking area shared by both museums. Initial land area requirement for the new museum site is 45,000 square feet - 20,000 square feet for the museum building itself and an additional 25,000 square feet for the outside aircraft display area.

Future expansion of the museum could approach an additional 20,000 square feet. Currently, the Naval Museum has about 15,000 visitors per year while the Maturango Museum hosts about 22,000 visitors over the same period. Both numbers could be expected to rise due to the synergy of the co-location.



# Enlisting Your Help

Estimated cost for the construction of the new museum facility is about \$5 million. Two categories of funding are required. The first is for initial construction of the facility, including relocation of exhibits and future expansion. The second is for the continuing daily operation of the museum.

The first category initiating construction of the new museum depends directly on the availability of funding. A process including fundraisers and soliciting small donations will not achieve the necessary capital to initiate construction within a reasonable period of time. Therefore, the approach is to solicit a few initial large grants and donations for construction of the basic facility. This will permit establishing the location and provide for earliest construction of the new museum facility. Then, with time and continued solicitation of donations, the museum will be expanded accordingly with exhibits of additional weapon systems displays as they are developed.

The second category of funding will come from small donations, the gift store and an annual dinner-auction event. Past experience indicates this will be an adequate source, particularly with the benefit of the 2005 BRAC action resulting in a significant increase mission of NAWC, China Lake and in the local population of this area.

To accomplish this plan the CLMF is soliciting donations from our industry partners as well as from individuals who wish to support this exciting and educational piece of military history. Sponsors and donors will be acknowledged in special displays.



# Educational and Inspiring

The objective of the Museum is not only to exhibit missiles, but also to exhibit the missile, avionics and aircraft platform as a complete weapon system as used in military operations. Exhibits are designed to demonstrate how the many scientific, engineering and technical support disciplines and industrial organizations must be teamed together for research, development, production, technical support and effective operational utility of a complete system.

Our intent is not only to exhibit the systems, but also to emphasize how the proper use and integration of technical disciplines and education can be used to meet future challenges in all walks of life. In addition to its historical value, the museum is of excellent educational value for young men and women interested in a future in the sciences. It is a living demonstration of how varied scientific disciplines (physics, chemistry, aerodynamics, mathematics, operational analysis etc.) can and must be integrated into a single-system approach to produce the desired capabilities.

