

Abandoned But Not Forgotten: The Cold War 1945-1991



Project Nike began during 1944 when the U.S. War Department sought a new air defense system to combat the latest jet aircraft and developing weapons based anti-aircraft missiles. **Nike, the Greek Goddess of Victory** was the name chosen for this mission by the U.S. Army staff. A genuine belief marked this period that the world's great superpowers would destroy one another in a nuclear holocaust as United States and Soviet Union tensions threatened to boil over. Both countries were in the midst of ramping up production of a fleet of warheads. Russia exploded their first atomic bomb in 1949. An outbreak of hostilities in Korea in the early 1950s provided further homeland concerns. Clearly, conventional warfare would no longer provide adequate defense of the U.S. homeland.

Bell Laboratories proposed a "**line-of-sight anti-aircraft missile system**" in May 1945. The first test firing came in 1951. Operational anti-aircraft guided missile systems known as **AAGM** were delivered in 1953. The first generation of missiles were **named NIKE-AJAX** after the Greek warrior. This last-ditch line of air defense for selected areas were constructed in defensive 'rings' surrounding major urban and industrial areas. The first operational site was in Maryland in December 1953 at Fort George G. Meade. Despite some



public outcries, roughly 265 more sites

were constructed within the next ten years. The exact number of

sites constructed within a defense area varied depending on many factors. New York had 20 sites at one time, Chicago and San Francisco had 14 each, while many other areas such as Ohio had 8-12. Ajax missiles were two-stage supersonic bombs approximately 12" in diameter, 21 ft. in length and 34 ft. in height. Each weighed between 2400-3800 pounds with 3 mounted warheads (nose, center, aft). A 2.5 second propellant stage followed by a sustainer stage gave Ajax a 70,000 ft. ceiling and 25-mile range at first. Costing \$19,000 each, nearly 14,000 missiles were fabricated by early 1954. At the same time, a next generation of missile was in development in late 1953. This improved, potent weapon was named **Hercules** and cost \$55,000 apiece. By 1958 Hercules had replaced all Ajax-based systems and further improvements were made in 1961. In this short time, the new Hercules missiles reached a 150,000 ft. ceiling, Mach 2.3 speed and an 87-mile range. An atomic warhead and disabling capabilities



made Hercules the most effective in every way for homeland defense.



Painesville's CL-11 Nike Site launch bays.

ICBMs in the 1960s; and the escalation of the Vietnam War had diverted funding to more relevant needs. Despite the general termination of Nike missile sites nationwide, some sites in Florida and Alaska survived for several additional years.

In general, each Nike Missile site consisted of two separate parcels of land operating in unison. Situated on approximately 50 acres of land, one area was known as the **Integrated Fire Control** while the other area was the **Launcher Area**. IFC consisted of Nike's ground-based radar and computer systems designed to detect and track "hostiles." The Launcher Area had missiles stored within heavily constructed underground missile magazines. One 50-acre base was divided into the 40-acre control area and 7-acre radar control area. The launch area, also 50 acres in size, occupied 15 acres for the missile assembly building, generator building, fueling area, underground missile storage of 30 missiles, the launchers, and barracks. Twenty-eight acres then became the safety buffer zone and 500 feet of clearance was maintained on all sides of the launcher. A maximum of 12 launchers could be found in this area -- three sections of four each. Nine missiles could be fired at once.

Ohio had 12 active Nike Sites in the Cold War Era. Four were located in the Cincinnati and Dayton areas. Eight were located in Cleveland and **two additional sites were in Lake County**. Cleveland, due to its extensive manufacturing, was determined to be one of 14 critical defense areas in the country. **Willowick (CL-13)** and **Painesville (CL-11)** became the other two participants in protecting the nation. Seven Cleveland area sites were operational by 1956. By 1962 only six remained. Just two were left by 1964 and zero by 1972. Shifting military strategy had moved to

Site CL-11 - Painesville (Blackbrook Road / IFC area - Lubrizol Corporation; storage yard)

Unit: 2/57-9/58 Battery A, 508th USA
9/58-6/71 Battery A, #rd Battalion, 65th USA

Activation Date: June 1958

Hercules Conversion Date: September 1959

De-activation Date: June 1971

Radar(s): HIPAR, RRIS

Missiles: 30 Ajax / 18 Hercules

Magazine: 3 type B

Launchers: 12 Universal / 12 Hercules

Since deactivation in June 1971, none of the antenna towers remain and a local chemical plant across the road took possession of the IFC, removing most other structures except the generator building. The Lake County Engineer's Office acquired the CL-11 site at 550 Blackbrook Road in 1971. The Engineers office



This former guardhouse entrance was enclosed by a security fence. An armed patrolman often guarded the area with a canine unit.

across the road took possession of the IFC, removing most other structures except the generator building. The Lake County Engineer's Office acquired the CL-11 site at 550 Blackbrook Road in 1971. The Engineers office



and maintenance staff were housed on the property until 2021. In 2022, the office moved into the new Administration Building in downtown Painesville, while the county maintenance division still resides on-site. The Nike launcher area, elevators, pit, and storage areas still remain. Many of the former buildings still stand and are in use for county needs. These monuments in time from that bygone Cold War period are shadows of their former selves. Ohio Department of Education History standards (MWH 9-12.17 A,B,C) require school students to know about the Cold War Era, 1945-1991. Perhaps this and the current Russia-Ukraine War will spark a renewed interest for today's generation of Americans about this harrowing phase of American History.



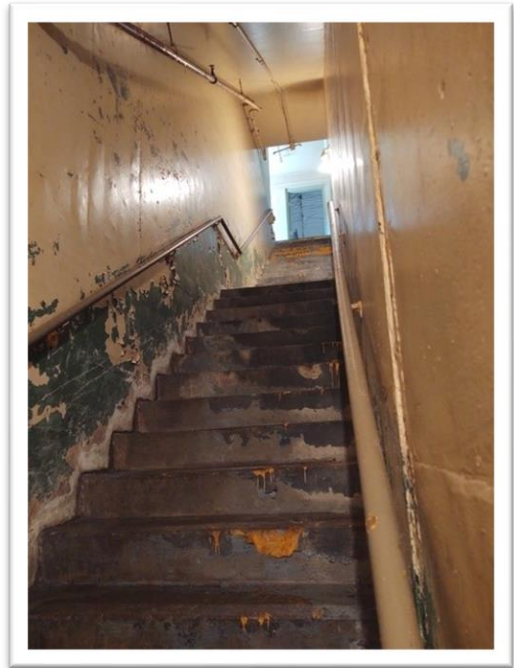
It is hoped that this former site can be preserved as a small Lake County historic location and shared with a bi-annual public open-house program moving forward in 2023. A display is in the early planning stages / discussions. In the meantime, anyone with memories, personal photos, documents or 1958-1991 specific photos to share/donate from Site CL-11- Painesville, please send them to my attention at Concord Community Center C/O Dan Maxson, 7671 Auburn Road, Concord Township, Ohio 44077.

Sources: Site visit with Traci Salkiewicz of the Lake County Engineer's Office, ARADCOM /Nike Hercules-tripod articles, Military Standard articles, William Stark Camp Periodical, September 1986.

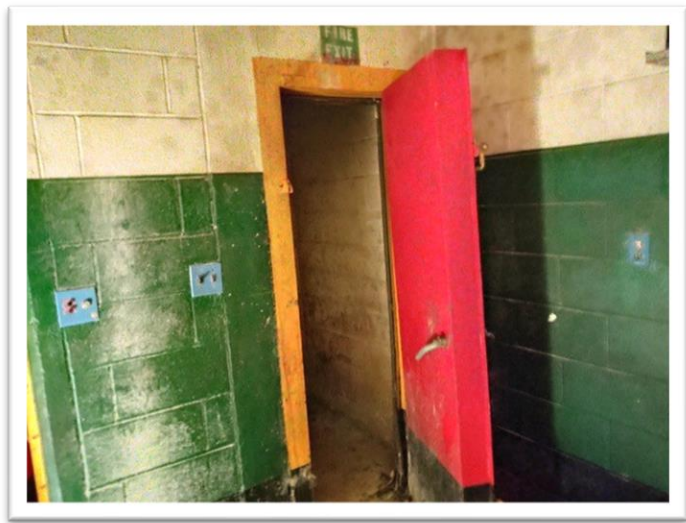
Submitted by Dan Maxson - *Local Lore by Max (2010-2016), News-Herald Community Media Lab - Trustee, Curator - FHHS / Fairport Harbor Lighthouse & Marine Museum, 1996- resent - Curator / Docent*



Control Area building consisted of a mess hall, admin. building, officers & enlisted barracks, van building and 3 20-foot towers.



To IFC firing control console & control systems.



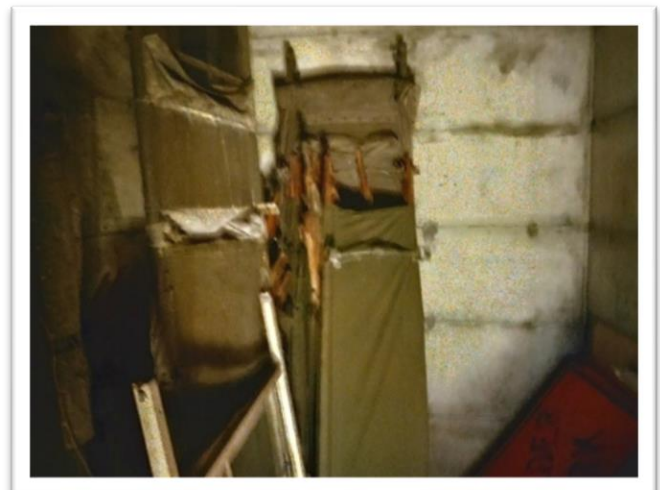
IFC basement control center entrance



Outdoor bomb blast shelter



12+ Ajax-Hercules Missiles were stored in a designated basement area



Extra sleeping cots

GLOSSARY

Sentry Guardhouse: Sentry guardhouses - small, square structures with cinder-block walls - were at the entrances to all portions of a Nike missile base. In addition, as part of base security, two lines of fencing and a firebreak marked the boundaries of the installation.

Administration Building: The administration building housed the administrative support services for the base. The one-story, cinder-block building included a day room, offices for the battery commander and officers, a supply room, a supply office, hobby room, communications room, barber shop, mail room, restroom, and arms storage room.

Barracks: Nike Missile Bases C-84 and SL-40 each contained two barracks buildings, which provided living quarters for base personnel. Typical of most Nike installations, one barracks was for launch personnel, the other was for the battery control crewman. The construction drawings indicate that each barracks contained an officers' lounge, non-commissioned officers' lounge, several storage rooms, heater room, restroom, shower room and large common sleeping room. The barracks, which had cinder-block walls and slanted roofs, were one-story buildings with L-shaped floor plans.

Mess Hall: The mess hall was the common eating facility for personnel stationed at the base. The building included a kitchen, dining area, storage area, and boiler room. The building had cinder-block walls, a slanted roof, and two entry vestibules.

Paint and Oil Shed: The paint & oil shed was very similar in design to the sentry guardhouse, a small square structure with cinder-block walls.

PX (Supply Store): Nike bases often included a PX (Supply Store). The store at Nike Missile Base C-84 is a gable-roofed rectangular building, with sheet metal walls and roofing.

Water Treatment/Sewage Facilities: Typical of all Nike missile installations, Nike Missile Base C-84 and SL-40 both had their own water treatment and sewage facilities. Depending on location, these base facilities might include wells, pumphouses, sewage lagoons, holding tanks, and/or septic tanks.

Basketball Court: When not on alert, Nike crewmen reported that life at a Nike missile installation could be tedious. To provide some recreational opportunities, the Army equipped each base with a basketball court. In addition, crewmen often played team sports, such as softball, with servicemen from other nearby bases or with teams in the surrounding communities.

The Battery Control Area: Often referred to as the Integrated Fire Control (IFC) Area - included all the necessary radar, computer, and control equipment needed to detect and identify a target, and to launch and guide a missile to intercept that target. In general, the Battery Control Area was located on higher terrain that was relatively level and well drained. Since this area contained all of the Nike system's radar equipment, the location also had to be free of any visual obstructions such as trees, radio towers, power and telephone lines, and smokestacks. The Battery Control Area required a minimum of ten servicemen to operate and was the focal information and communications point for the battery. Communication cables connected the various elements within the Battery Control Area, as well as with the Launch Area.

Nike Missile Locations in Ohio

State	Site Name	Missile Type	Defense Area	Site Loc	Service Dates	Control site condition/owner	Launch Site condition/owner
OH	CD-63	Nike 3D/18H/12L-U	Cincinnati - Dayton	Dillsboro	Mar 1960 - Mar 1970	unknown	Private ownership, home
	CD-46	Nike 3D/18H/12L-U	Cincinnati - Dayton	Felicity	Apr 1960 - Mar 1970	OHA rNG, C Company, 216th Engineers	Industrial
	CD-78	Nike 3D/18H/12L-U	Cincinnati - Dayton	Oxford	Mar 1960 - Mar 1970	Private ownership	Private ownership
	CD-27	Nike 3D/18H/12L-U	Cincinnati - Dayton	Wilmington	1960 - Mar 1971	Intact, Nike Town Center and Country School, also industrial	Intact, Private ownership
	CL-02	Nike 3B/18H, 30A/12L-U	Cleveland	Bratenahl	1956 - Jun 1971	FDS	FDS
	CL-48	Nike 1B, 2C/30A/12L-A	Cleveland	Garfield Heights	1956 - Aug 1961	Garfield Heights Board of Education	Independence Board of Education, "Land Lab"
	CL-67	Nike 3B/30A/12L-A	Cleveland	Lakefront Airport	1956 - 1963	FDS	FDS
	CL-69	Nike 3B/18H, 30A/12L-U	Cleveland	Lordstown	1956 - Jun 1971	Park and Housing	Tri-City Park
	CL-11	Nike 3B/18H, 30A/12L-U	Cleveland	Painesville	1958 - Jun 1971	Private ownership, industrial	County Engineers Office
	CL-59	Nike 1B, 2C/30A/12L-A	Cleveland	Parma/ Midpark Station	1956 - Aug 1961	Nathan Hale Park	Cuyahoga Community College
	CL-34	Nike 3B/30A/12L-A	Cleveland	Warrensville	1956 - 1963	USAR Center	Ohio DOT
	CL-13	Nike 3B/30A/12L-A	Cleveland	Willowick	1956 - 1963	Robert Manry Park	Wiloughby - Eastlake School District

Note: There are additional sites covering the Cincinnati - Dayton area located in Indiana.

Nike Missile Type Key

Missile Storage: C=Ajax only, original design for the elevator to handle the Hercules launcher. D= Either, increased access room in the magazine.

Personnel Stationed at CL-11

Rank	Name	Assignment	Dates
	Donald L Bennett		10/61 - 04/62
SP/5	Wayne G. Brassell	TAMMS & PLL clerk.	11/68 - 06/71
	Don Funk	Battery Commander	12/66 - 12/68
	Chuck Jeffery	Missile Crewman	1962 - 1965
PFC	Jim Luke	Missile Mechanic	04/67 - 06/68
SP4	Peter Schiavone	Missile Crewman	01/70 - 04/71
	Ronnie E. Turner	Asst. Section Chief - Launch Area	1962 - 1964
PFC	Larry L. Walker	Missile Mechanic	04/64 - 09/65