

Historical Tid-Bits

Tome-School/USNTC-Bainbridge/NAPS

Before visiting the old NAPS site, it may be helpful to review some of the history and significant events that explain how NAPS came to occupy the original grounds of the Tome School for Boys after the establishment of the U.S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge. Doing so will greatly enhance everybody's "Return to NAPS" experience. This information is presented in three groupings starting with the history of the Tome School, then the U.S. Naval Training Center Bainbridge and finally with NAPS.

Tome School for Boys

- The Tome School for Boys was founded by Jacob Tome in 1894 as a nonsectarian college preparatory school and was originally located on Main Street in Port Deposit
 - Jacob Tome who was Cecil County's first multi-millionaire and upon his death in 1898 bequeathed a \$2 million endowment fund to support and expand the school
 - The school's board of directors elected to expand the school and build a complex of 13 buildings on the bluff above Port Deposit
 - The NYC architectural firm of Boring and Tilton was contracted to design and build the complex
 - The firm also designed and built the U.S. Immigration Station, Ellis Island, N.Y. for which they won a Gold Medal at the Paris Exposition of 1900
 - Construction was completed by 1904 using local Port Deposit granite
 - Over time, the school enjoyed a prestigious reputation and at its peak had an enrollment of 225 boarding students and 100 day students in the 1920's
 - Students included R.J Reynolds (son of R.J. Reynolds) as well as the sons of the Carnegie and Mellon families
 - Significant visitors include Franklin Delano Roosevelt who, as Under-Secretary of the Navy, stayed in Tome Inn after giving a speech to the students assembled in Memorial Hall
 - The school came to hard times in the 1930's due to the Great Depression but continued to operate until 1941 when it downsized and moved back down to Main Street, Port Deposit
 - The school continued to operate on that site until the early 1970's when it was moved to its current location in North East, MD where it continues to operate as of this date
 - In early 1942, the U.S. Government purchased the Tome School buildings and surrounding land (330 acres) for use as the cornerstone for a new navy recruit training center needed to support the WW-II effort

- The base came to be named U. S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge
 - In early 1943, the Tome School complex was occupied by the Naval Academy Preparatory School which was relocated from Newport, RI
- The property and buildings was designated a National Historic District in 1984
 - The bell from the bell tower of Memorial Hall was removed and transferred to the school's North East, MD campus in the 1990's

U.S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge

- With the outbreak of WW-II, the Navy needed another training center (boot camp) to train sailors for the war effort
 - The vacant Tome School complex (330 acres) was an attractive asset to serve as the cornerstone for the new base and was purchased in May of 1942 from the Tome School Institute for \$941,820
 - The Navy purchased an additional 50 small farms (~1,000 acres) adjacent to the Tome complex for another \$218,226
- The new base was named U. S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge
 - Named for Commodore William Bainbridge who served under 6 presidents, commanded the U.S.S Constitution and served in the Barbary Wars as well as the War of 1812
- Construction of the base commenced immediately with ground-breaking taking place on 19 May 1942
 - 15,000 construction workers were involved in the construction of 506 buildings, mostly made out of wood since the expected lifespan of the base was only to be 10 years
 - Incredibly, construction was completed on August 14, 1942 taking a mere 88 days for constructing the 506 temporary buildings
- USNTC-Bainbridge was officially activated on 1 October 1942 and 10 days later, the initial group of naval recruits reported aboard for training
- The Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) was relocated from Newport, RI and occupied the Tome School campus in early 1943
- During WW-II, a total of 244,000 recruits were trained at USNTC-Bainbridge
- With the end of WW-II, the base had concluded its recruit training role and was relegated to a caretaker status in 1947
 - NAPS was transferred back to Newport, RI in the fall of 1949
- The base was once again reactivated as a Naval Training Center at the outbreak of the Korean War
 - NAPS once again was relocated back to Bainbridge from Newport, RI in early 1951
 - The WAVES (Women Activated for Voluntary Emergency Service) recruit training center was also established in October 1951
 - It was during the Korean War that Bainbridge reached its peak on-base population of 55,000

- The base saw reduced use following the Korean War but by 1960 numerous Navy Schools and Administrative Commands were relocated to Bainbridge, the base's future looked rosy
 - The Navy Nuclear Power School was activated in 1962
- However, it's aging infrastructure and a Navy base reconsolidation effort finally doomed Bainbridge's fate.
- The Navy announced in 1973 that the base would be closed and schools and commands started to relocate
 - The WAVE school was transferred to Orlando, FL in 1972
 - NAPS once again was transferred back to Newport, RI in Aug 1974
 - The Navy Nuclear Power School was transferred to Orlando, FL in 1976
- USNTC-Bainbridge was officially de-activated on 31 March 1976
- During the following decade, all of the original wooden buildings on base were razed
 - The cement and brick WAVE barrack built in 1967 and a few other brick buildings are the only buildings left standing on the once sprawling base
- The property was officially transferred to the State of Maryland on 14 Feb 2000 and is now managed by the Bainbridge Development Corporation which is actively trying to redevelop it (including the old Tome School complex)

Naval Academy Preparatory School NAPS

- In 1918, Franklin D. Roosevelt as Under-Secretary of the Navy allowed for a school to be founded to assist motivated sailors and marines to qualify for entrance to the U.S. Naval Academy
 - Informal preparatory classes were available as early as 1915
 - The first official classes (under the name of Naval Academy Preparatory School, NAPS) were established in 1920---one at the Naval Station Norfolk and the other, first at the Naval Station San Francisco and then at Naval Station San Diego
 - The classes in San Diego were soon eliminated and the Norfolk classes continued until 1942 when NAPS opened in Newport, RI
 - Thus the Naval Academy Preparatory School is the 4th oldest school in the Navy after USNA, the Naval War College and the Naval Postgraduate School
- NAPS was relocated to USNTC-Bainbridge in early 1943
- Following WW-II, Bainbridge was mothballed and NAPS was sent back up to Newport, RI in 1949 but 15 months later (early 1951) it once again was relocated to USNTC-Bainbridge
- **The great NAPS Class of 1967 graduates in May 1967**
 - The football practice field (Tome Field) was re-named Prichard Field in 1968

- In 1973, the Navy made a decision to close USNTC-Bainbridge permanently
- NAPS was once again relocated in August 1974 to Newport, RI where it remains to this day
 - Women were first admitted to NAPS in 1975
 - The multi-use sports complex/field is also named Prichard Field
 - In 1979, NAPS began to train prospective Coast Guard Academy students and continued to do so until 2008
 - In 2006, NAPS named the new dormitory building Ripley Hall after Colonel John Ripley, USMC who was awarded the Navy Cross for valor/heroism in Vietnam
 - Colonel Ripley was a NAPS-58 and USNA-62 alumnus
- NAPS is currently commanded by Captain Jim Cunha, our guest speaker at the VFW dinner

For the Committee

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