

Historic Preservation at Vandenberg Air Force Base

Holly Dunbar

The National Park Service has awarded a contract to the Chambers Group, Inc., Irvine, CA, for archeological survey, data recovery, National Register evaluation of prehistoric and historic properties, and preparation of an historic preservation plan for Vandenberg Air Force Base, a 98,400-acre coastal installation located in south-central California, 60 miles northwest of Santa Barbara. Nearly two million dollars in funding for the current cultural resources investigations are being provided by the U.S. Air Force, with some assist through the Department of Defense Legacy Program. Principal investigator for the research is Dr. Phillip de Barros. Co-principal investigators are Carmen Weber, also of the Chambers Group, and Craig Woodman of Chambers' primary subcontract affiliate, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), Goleta, CA.

Historic preservation at Vandenberg is now in its 24th year. (The Vandenberg-NPS partnership is in its 21st year.) With only 7% of the Base surveyed, over 700 archeological sites spanning nearly 9,000 years of prehistory have been recorded. These include several large and highly significant Chumash village sites known from early Spanish Mission records. However, Vandenberg also contains a challenging array of potentially significant historic properties in need of evaluation and treatment.

These include remains dating from the Mexican Period, Chinese fishing camps probably associated with building of the Southern Pacific Railroad, World War II, and Cold War Period structures, and unique and highly specialized engineering properties associated with Vandenberg's commitment to Space Age programs.

The current phase of cultural resources investigations is being conducted under an Advisory Council programmatic agreement (in preparation), an interagency agreement between Vandenberg Air Force Base and the National Park Service-Western Region, and a long standing but recently revised and updated Native American memorandum of agreement with the local Santa Ynez Reservation. The University of California at Santa Barbara will maintain collections and research data emanating from the Vandenberg projects pursuant to yet another memorandum of agreement. Contract delivery orders will include research and data assessment for the development of the Base Historic Preservation Plan, survey, rock art, public reports, and in-depth site evaluations. The latter will require limited data recovery and prestabilization assessments of several National Register eligible prehistoric sites that are threatened by coastal and riverine erosion. The prestabilization assessments will be conducted by Dr. John Ehrenhard, NPS-Atlanta, and Dr. Robert Thorne, University of Mississippi, under a special cooperative agreement for interagency site stabilization studies.

Holly Dunbar is an archeologist in the National Park Service, Interagency Archeological Services Branch, San Francisco, CA. For further information, contact Holly (telephone: 415-744-3916) or Laurence Spanne, base archeologist, Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA (telephone: 805-734-8232, ext. 5-0748).

Interdisciplinary Manager Course Develops

James Corless

For five years the "Facility Manager Development" course has been instrumental in meeting the NPS call for highly trained managers in the maintenance field. In 1993, for the first time, that course was expanded to include park professionals in maintenance, interpretation, law enforcement, and administration. Thirty-six individuals, mostly supervisors—some line, some division chiefs—from these four disciplines came together for the "Leadership and Management Skills" course at Albright Employee Development Center in January. The course was made possible through the efforts of the NPS Employee Development Division, the Washington divisions of Interpretation, Engineering and Safety Service, and Park Planning and Protection, and the regional administrative offices.

During the five weeks of the course, this group came together not only in locality, but intellectually as well. The course provided countless opportunities to approach problems from a multi-disciplinary perspective, using the collective diversity of knowledge and skills of the varied group. The result was dramatic.

Participants, who themselves pointed out that they often were at odds with other divisions in their parks, found that they were able to meet management objectives far better when they worked with these other disciplines from the very start of planning or problem-solving activities. And in most instances, their own objectives were met in the process. This is being confirmed when participants go on their individual four-week details to new units—and often to new divisions—to broaden their experience and put their new learning to the test.

However, the one shortfall of the course was the scarcity of natural and cultural resource management expertise. While the course agenda included resource management topics, the exercises would have been even more powerful if resource management specialists had been included to add their perspective and respond to the objectives of the other disciplines.

(Interdisciplinary—continued on page 26)