

Camp Forrest and Camp Tyson

Essential Question: How were Camp Forrest and Camp Tyson important during World War II?

Camp Forrest at Tullahoma, Tennessee was originally named Camp Peay in honor of Governor Austin Peay and served as a National Guard Camp. In 1940, the United States began limited preparations for war and expanded Camp Peay, as a training facility. The decision to rename it Camp Forrest in honor of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest created controversy given his role in the Fort Pillow Massacre and leadership in the Ku Klux Klan.

The expanded camp cost \$36 million dollars and covered 78,000 acres. The camp served as an induction center where over 250,000 men received their physicals. The camp employed 12,000 civilians to repair equipment, run the laundry and perform numerous other jobs. The camp was also the site of numerous training maneuvers throughout the war. General Patton and his 2nd Armored “Hell on Wheel” Division performed maneuvers there. The Second Ranger Battalion also trained at the base and later played a key role on D-Day.

On May 12, 1942 Camp Forrest also began to house German and Italian POWs. Many of the POWs were alien civilians. They worked at the base hospitals or on local farms. The arrival of POWs was just one of many changes that residents of Tullahoma faced during the war. Roads were often blocked, stores were crowded and fences and crops were destroyed. By the end of the war, Tullahoma’s population had grown from 4,500 to 75,000 people.

Following D-Day, the camp was greatly reduced and in 1946 the buildings were sold for scrap. In 1951, the area was chosen for the Air Force’s new Air Engineering Development Center. It was later named Arnold Engineering Development Center and contains the largest and most complex test flight facilities in the world.

Camp Tyson, named for World War I hero Lawrence Tyson, was established in August, 1941 as the nation’s only barrage balloon training center. The Battle of Britain had convinced the U.S. military of the need to provide coastal cities with protection from aerial attack. The camp, near Paris, Tennessee, was eventually home to twenty-five thousand men. Like Camp Forrest, Camp Tyson was also used for as a prisoner of war camp for German and Italian prisoners of war. The prisoners worked on roads in the area. The advent of the atomic bomb and V-2 rocket rendered barrage balloons obsolete and led to the closure of Camp Tyson at the end of the war.

Source: *FactSheet: Camp Forrest*, Arnold Air Force Base. N.d. Web. 30 July, 2014.

“Camp Forrest.” *Tennessee Encyclopedia and History and Culture*. 1st edition. 1998. Print.

Parkinson, Robert, “Camp Tyson.” *Tennessee Encyclopedia and History and Culture*. Tennessee Historical Society. March 8, 2017. <https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/camp-tyson/> 14 June, 2019.

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Write a two stanza (eight lines) poem about the 'life' of Camp Forrest or Camp Tyson. The rhyme scheme is up to you. Use the text primarily, and supplement with prior knowledge to provide historical context.
