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Camp Evans

Camp Evans, [New Jersey](#) is a former military base associated with [Fort Monmouth](#). It is located in [Wall Township](#), although it is often said to be located in [Belmar](#). The property overlooks the [Shark River](#).

Camp Evans is named after Lt. Col. Paul Wesley Evans of the [Signal Corps](#), who worked in the development of wireless transmission at the Belmar Station in the early 20th century. After [World War I](#), Evans was reassigned to the [Panama Canal Zone](#) as the presiding Signal Officer.

Marconi's Wall Township Station

The original Evans buildings ^[2] were built by the [American Marconi Company](#) under a contract to the J.G. White Engineering Corp. between 1912 and 1914 as part of [Guglielmo Marconi](#)'s "wireless girdle" ^[3] around the Earth. It was then known as the Belmar Station (40°11'09"N 74°03'34"W / 40.1859°N 74.0594°W40.1859; -74.0594). The Wall Station served as [Marconi](#)'s receiving station, "duplexed" with his [New Brunswick](#) (40°30'55"N 74°29'20"W / 40.5153°N 74.4889°W40.5153; -74.4889) high power transmitting station. An operator in Wall keyed the New Brunswick transmitter, 32 miles to the northwest, through a landline connection. Edwin Armstrong and [David Sarnoff](#) tested and perfected the [regenerative circuit](#) at the Wall site, on the night of January 31/February 1, 1914.

The US Navy

All of the Marconi stations were seized by the U.S. Navy when the [United States](#) entered [World War I](#) in April 1917. Early in the war, [Dr. A. Hoyt Taylor](#), later the father of Naval radar, was in charge of all transatlantic communications, including the Belmar and New Brunswick stations as well as the transmitter stations in [Tuckerton, NJ](#) and [Marion, MA](#); and the receiver stations in [Chatham, MA](#) ^[4] and [Otter Cliffs, ME](#). On January 8, 1918, President [Woodrow Wilson](#)'s [Fourteen Points](#) speech was transmitted by the New Brunswick Naval Radio Station to Germany's [Nauen Radio Station](#). In October Wilson's appeal ^[5] for the abdication or overthrow of Kaiser Wilhelm II was sent through the powerful New Brunswick station.

RCA

At the end of the war, the property was briefly returned to the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America ^[6], which was acquired by the Radio Corporation of America ([RCA](#)) in October 1919. RCA sold the Wall site in 1924, when they consolidated all of their transatlantic receivers at their new Riverhead Receiver Station ^[7] on Long Island, New York. The historic New Brunswick transmitter site served as an important communications link to the United Kingdom during both world wars.

Pleasure Seeker's Club

From 1925 to 1935, the property was owned by the Monmouth County Pleasure Seeker's Club. The Pleasure Seeker's Club had close ties to Arthur H. Bell and the [Ku Klux Klan](#). Disputes over development of the property ended in a court battle that was reported in [The New York Times](#).

The King's College

The Young People's Association for the Propagation of the Gospel purchased the Belmar station in 1936. [The King's College](#) opened in September, 1938 under the leadership of Percy B. Crawford. It aimed to combine the Arts and Sciences with a Christian education. They began with 67 students. When they were denied accreditation, they relocated. Presently, The King's College is located in the [Empire State Building](#) in New York City.

World War II

The U.S. Army purchased the land in November 1941 to create a top-secret research facility. [Radar](#) was partly developed and vastly improved for Army applications at Camp Evans. Other partners in radar development included [Fort Hancock](#), the [MIT Radiation Laboratory](#), [AT&T](#), [Western Electric](#), [General Electric](#), and [Chrysler](#). A unit designed by Camp Evans engineers detected enemy planes 50 minutes before the bombing of [Pearl Harbor](#). Camp Evans radar was a major factor in the U.S. victory during [World War II](#).

Army Research

During and after World War II, Camp Evans was an important Black history site. Black engineers made major contributions to electronic research, development, product distribution and training.

After World War II, the Army kept Camp Evans as a research facility. The base was part of Project Paperclip, under which German scientists and engineers were relocated and employed by the U.S. Army, including [Wernher von Braun](#). [Project Diana](#) opened the space age, showing that radio waves could pierce the [ionosphere](#). This proved that communication was possible between the Earth and space, opening the possibility of space exploration. Other contributions included work on [light-emitting diodes](#), night vision goggles, and many other important developments.

Senator [Joseph McCarthy](#), [Roy Cohn](#), and others came to Camp Evans on October 20, 1953. McCarthy claimed that the Army's "house of magic" was really a "house of spies." Julius Rosenberg was executed for supposedly stealing [radar](#) and [proximity fuze](#) information from [Fort Monmouth](#) while working there as an electrical engineer in the 1940s. (Documents released by Russia after the [Cold War](#) showed that Mr. Rosenberg was indeed, a Soviet Spy.) McCarthy's visit destroyed careers and led to the creation of the "leper colony" - where those who could no longer be trusted with top secret information worked. None of the Camp Evans employees whom McCarthy investigated in 1953 and 1954 were ever prosecuted.

The U.S. Army Signal Corps scientists at Camp Evans and [Deal Test Site](#) in [Ocean Township](#) tracked Sputnik. The Institute for Exploratory Research was created and based out of Camp Evans. The army base played an important role in [satellite](#) development and [space exploration](#). Dr. [Hans Ziegler](#) was responsible for the first application of [solar cells](#) as a power source for satellites.

Camp Evans played an important role in the development of the [silicon transistor](#). It featured a nuclear [dosimetry](#) laboratory and a photo-optics lab. It tracked [Pioneer 5](#). Camp Evans worked with projects Joint STARS, REMBASS, Firefinder, Pulsed Power (part of [Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative](#)), and others.

Infoage

The former Camp Evans base is now being turned into the [Infoage Science/History Learning Center](#). Quoting from their website: "Infoage is a group of cooperating non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and education of information age technologies, as we honor the pioneers of communications." Infoage volunteers have succeeded in having Camp Evans listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#), in the creation of a Camp Evans [historic district](#), and is a [Save America's Treasures](#) official project. Volunteers are also working to restore the buildings after years of Army neglect. The land and buildings have been given to the [National Park Service](#) for Infoage's use through the [United States Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure](#) process.

Recent developments

Currently, parts of what was the Camp Evans base have been given to the [Infoage Science/History Learning Center, Brookdale Community College](#) and the North Wall Little League Foundation through the BRAC. Presently, this land is the site of the Brookdale Community, Infoage, and a baseball complex run by the North Wall Little League.

References

1. ^ "National Register Information System". *National Register of Historic Places*. National Park Service. 2009-03-13.
<http://www.nr.nps.gov/>.
2. ^ http://books.google.com/books?id=r8BPAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA360&dq=clifden+marconi&lr=&as_brr=1#PPA360,M1
3. ^ Bucher - Practical Wireless Telegraphy - 1920 ed
4. ^ WCC's History
5. ^ The Wireless Age - July 1919
6. ^ Guglielmo Marconi
7. ^ The Book of Radio-Radio Central chapter (1922)

External links

Infoage Science/History Center Infoage is located at the former Camp Evans site. Their website has an extensive collection of information about Camp Evans.

The King's College