

Installed Elements

recent: remote

15 people plus a dog:

- including 10 performers:
 - 1 flagging artifacts
 - 2 as military patrol unit, with German Shepherd (who only obeyed German commands)
 - 4 archeologists, searching for: Native American artifacts (1), evidence of coal mining activity (1), and Nike site remains (2)
 - 1 developer, overseeing his newly acquired site being prepared for future use as a resort.
 - 1 botanist/entomologist, doing site survey of plants and insects.
 - 1 naturalist, identifying trees and birds.

Each of the performers developed their roles (including secret identities), agenda and tasks, selecting appropriate clothing, tools and animals (German shepherd) and vehicles (developer's black Mercedes).

- plus 2 camera people:
 - documentors, using video and still cameras, posing as public television camera persons.
- and staff:
 - 1 parking attendant (with secret identity)
 - 1 ticket collector
 - myself as technician

Text:

- In the filing cabinet in the office were:
 - over 80 books and pamphlets from the 50s through the 90s on the Cold War
 - U.S. magazines from the 50s and 60s, with articles about Russia, China, etc.
 - copies of newspaper articles from the 50s and 60s on Seattle-area Nike history
 - recent newspaper articles concerning current related political events
 - maps and plans of the site from the late 1800s - 1990s, relating to Native American, coal mining and military uses.
 - court records on Native American land claims cases in the area
 - Park files on the demolition of the site
 - various reports on the coal mining in the area and its effect on the environment.
 - a drawer full of shredded documents
- Interspersed with the tile fragments of one of the cement foundations were broken pieces of a tile on which was printed the text of Henry Wallace's letter to President Roosevelt in 1946, concerning U.S. relations with Russia.
- On four sections of mosquito netting suspended in trees along the road leading to the south end of the site were U.S. military instructions on what to do in the event of a nuclear attack.
- The open gate at the south end of the site was barred with caution tape printed in Chinese.
- Voices emanated from six locations, in adjacent pairs. They were located in trees, along converging paths, and triggered by the movement of people passing. These were from a selection of 8 interviews which covered a full range of issues related to the site, including discussions of:
 - missile and other defense research in the 50s and early 60s.
 - history of the cold war from a liberal democratic perspective.

- stories of growing up in Communist Czechoslovakia in the 50s and 60s, amidst warnings of and preparations for nuclear attack by the US.
- history of the cold war from the perspective of a retired U.S. Army professional who had worked in both the US and Europe at the height of the Cold War period.
- stories of growing up in the Cougar Mountain area and working for the local coal mining company.
- stories of living near the Nike base as it was being built and while it was in operation.
- stories of labor, civil rights and anti-war activities of the 50s and 60s, as a child of former U.S. Communist party members.
- stories of becoming involved in civil rights and anti-war activities of the 50s and 60s, as a child of politically conservative parents.

- In the A-Frame in the woods were military manuals, as well as discarded packaging from military-issue meals.

- Mowed in the grass of the field of the former launch site were large cyrillic letters, with the question in Russian: "who knows?"

Other objects:

- 18 viewing boxes buried in the ground, which contained photographs. Half of the images were copies of photos from the turn of the century, related to the coal mining in the area. The other half were recent photos from the early 90s, taken by Steve Williams, District Manager of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildlife Park, of the site as the military installation was being demolished. The boxes were plastic, covered with camouflage tape, and contained a window through which you viewed the image through a vintage WW2 periscope mirror. The boxes were buried so that the window was exposed through which you could view the image. However, audience members regularly unburied and exposed the entire box, leaving it on the surface.

- 2 were in the field at the south end of the site.
- 2 were in the field on the south side of the tennis court.
- 1 was in the field on the west side of the tennis court.
- 2 were in the field on the north side of the tennis court, between it and the sand berm.
- 1 was in the field with the tree with the red buttons.
- 3 were in the field south of the woods with the A-frame.
- 5 were in the launch field
- 2 were in the woods at the northwest corner of the site.

- 4 wind-up clocks, completely buried, so that the ticking could be heard, but only if you leaned close to it, or if the moment was particularly quiet. This was rare due to the number of airplanes passing overhead, or simply the amount of wind. These were occasionally exposed by audience members, though more rarely. They were marked with a flag that had a radioactive sticker on it as well.

- 1 was in the field at the south end of the site, near the lamp post.
- 1 was in the field between the tennis court and the sand berm.
- 1 was in the launch field.
- 1 was in the field south of the A frame in the woods.

- Three tennis rackets and balls.

- An ADA portable potty, affixed with the logo "HONEY BUCKET."

- 4 roped-off plots for archeological digs, with trowels, shovels, and 6 sifting screens.
 - 1 was at the foot of the berm, on the launch field, near the fueling location.

- 2 were at the north end of the launch field.
 - 1 was in the woods at the northwest end of the site.
- One toy metal airplane, dropped in the foundation of the mess hall at the south end of the site.
 - A 'field office', located on one of the remaining building foundations at the south end of the site. It consisted of a five drawer Boeing surplus filing cabinet (with original 'classified' sticker on one drawer, as well as later labels for a local Fisheries; two folding chairs and a four foot rectangular folding table.
 - Two video cameras, with live feeds attached to small LCD monitors encased in a camouflaged box, each operated by a battery.
 - 1 was located in the office, in the tree above the filing cabinet, so that someone opening the drawers or sitting at the table nearby could be seen. The monitor could be viewed from the other side of the bushes screening the site.
 - 1 was located in the A frame, above the entrance, so that someone walking by on the path could be seen. The monitor was viewed from inside the A frame.
 - Six audio mechanisms, housed in camouflage-covered plastic boxes, each with a small speaker. Each unit consisted of two flat boxes atop one another - one housing the circuit board with 2 ultrasonic 'eyes,' and the other with the audiocassette player. Two units operated off of a single battery. Pairs were set at converging paths, so that potentially only a single voice might be triggered.
 - 1 pair was sited at a tree on the southeast side of the site. One unit faced the paved path, and the other faced a grassy path that ran perpendicularly from the paved path, through trees into the adjacent field.
 - 1 pair was sited along the paved road running north, past the Honey Bucket, on the west side of the site, just beyond the second entrance from the road. They were separated by 20 feet, and only operated on Sunday.
 - 1 pair was sited at a tree in the woods in the northwest corner of the site. One faced the path going to the archeological plot, the other faced the path going to the A-frame.
 - A siren, which was controlled by two large red buttons on the oldest tree in the site, and possibly the only tree that predates the missile base. It was located near the center of the site, opposite the empty Nike Missile History booth. It had two signals - a fluctuating tone and a steady tone. Each remained on as long as the button remained pressed. When the fluctuating signal was on, the performers were instructed to take cover. The military patrol was instructed to clear the launch site, requiring people to get behind the sand berm. The steady tone was the 'all clear' signal.

What we found on the site originally:

The rest of the objects that were flagged are artifacts of previous activities on the site: by the military during the 50s and early 60s; by 4th and 5th graders from the Issaquah Schools in the mid-60s, and by recent park users, including teenagers holding weekend fireworks and drinking parties. Possible evidence exists of rocket and explosives testing that was done by a private research company in the mid-60s. Little above-ground evidence remains of the coal mining that was done in the area, at least in this particular location in the park. Least evident is the Native American use of the area for hunting.

The cement booth that sits in the center of the site was part of the military base. It was used to store paint and solvents. More recently, it has been used to provide a history of the site for park visitors, hence the stenciled letters, "Nike Missile History." However, prior to our arrival, the exhibit had been removed due to vandalism.

Contents of audience information packets:

Each audience member was assigned a number, and given a packet of information which they were instructed to read before entering the site. Each packet contained:

- authorization form to be on the site
- instructions for archeological survey of the site
- form for listing artifacts found
- a map of the site (i.e.: geological survey, old or new; map of Native American use, old coal mining map of underground seams; Nike site demolition plans; map of Nike bases circling Seattle, US aeronautical map of the area, vinyl 'area predictor of radiological fallout, to be used on maps, Chinese map of coast, Russian map of Russia,
- military flash card, for identifying aircraft (US or foreign)
- a sheet detailing special emergency and warning signals for air attack, nuclear warning, and nuclear, biological or chemical (NBC) hazard. (only in Sunday's packets)
- a page of Nigel Calder's Nuclear Nightmares
- secret instructions
- in some cases, scarves or pins to be used as secret identification