

Fort Huachuca

Of the many camps established in the 1800s to protect settlers in the Arizona Territory, only Fort Huachuca is still an active military fort. The post is situated at the base of the Huachuca Mountains and contains over 70,000 acres, 110 of which became a national Historic Landmark in March of 1977. The name Huachuca comes from a local Indian language word that roughly translates to a “place of thunder”

The historic area includes the Brown Parade Field, which was the center of post life during the days of the horse soldiers. Surrounding buildings which are maintained in the appearance of their historic time include the Post Commander’s quarters, the Old Post Barracks, a hospital in the Leonard Wood Hall, and General’s row, original officer housing which is still in use.

The historic area also includes two instructive and interesting museums: the Main Museum with a Museum Annex and the Intelligence Museum. Both are open daily and are free of charge to visitors.



Figure 1. Historical Landmark Sign



Figure 2. Main Historical Museum



Figure 3. Officer's Quarters



Figure 4. Enlisted Barracks

Fort Huachuca was the home of all the famous African American regiments who served in various wars: the 24th Infantry 9th Cavalry in 1890; the 10th Cavalry, the Buffalo Soldiers, in 1913-1931; and the 25th Infantry in World War II, who trained the 92nd and 93rd Division for Europe and Pacific fighting. Currently the fort's leadership in military intelligence and technology command makes Fort Huachuca a valuable link in military training.

The following time line shows the varied and important roles this Fort has taken in military history:

- 1877** - Captain Samuel M. Whitside, with two companies of the 6th Cavalry, established Camp Huachuca to protect settlers and travel routes in southwest Arizona and block Apache escape routes to Mexico.
- 1882** - Camp Huachuca was designated as a U. S. Army Fort.
- 1886** - General Nelson Miles designated Fort Huachuca as the forward supply base for the Geronimo campaign. The first Station of the Heliograph Communication System was established on 26 April and the subsequent training of all signalmen was accomplished there. Fort Huachuca was also the home of the 4th Cavalry, the primary unit that pursued Geronimo until his final surrender.
- 1913** - The 10th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers arrived. They participated in the 1916 expedition into Mexico. During World War I they guarded the United States-Mexican border.
- 1933** - The 25th Infantry Regiment, also a "Buffalo Soldier" unit replaced the 10th Cavalry as the main combat unit at the fort.
- 1940s** - The 25th Regiment was absorbed by the 93rd Infantry Division (Colored) and deployed to the Pacific Theater in 1943. The 92nd Infantry Division (Colored) was then assigned to Fort Huachuca for training and subsequent deployment to the European Theater. During the war years troop strength reached 30,000.
- 1947** - The Fort was transferred to the State of Arizona for governance.
- 1951** - The Fort was reactivated for the Korean War, first as Air Force Base, then as a post to train Aviation engineers, who built Libby Army Airfield.
- 1954** - The Fort became the U.S. Army Electronic Proving Ground.
- 1960** - The Fort Huachuca Museum opened in the former post headquarters.
- 1967** - The Fort became the headquarters of the U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command and in 1971, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School was activated.
- 1973** - The Strategic Communications Command became the U.S. Army Communications Command.
- 1984** - The combined command was changed to U.S. Army Information Systems Command.
- 1986** - The Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) operated by the U.S. Air force for the U.S. Customs Service (Department of Homeland Security) was activated at Fort Huachuca.
- 1990** - Fort Huachuca became the home of the Army Intelligence Center, the Army Information Systems Command, and the Joint Interoperability Test Command.
- 1995** - The U.S. Army Intelligence Museum was established and used for teaching within the U.S. Army Intelligence School.

2006 – Fort Huachuca is also the home of the 111th Military Intelligence Brigade which conducts Military Intelligence (MI) MOS-related training for the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. In addition it houses the Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM)/9th Army Signal Command and a major subordinate command, the 11th Signal Brigade.

Visitor access to the fort is via the East Gate (When heading south on AZ-90, turn right at the traffic light where AZ-90 turns left). Personnel without military identification must register at the Visitor Control Building. Visitor access requirements may vary due to special conditions. For example, during the virus pandemic of 2020/2021, access requirements were significantly changed. Before attempting to access the fort, visitors should check the requirements at the following website: [Home :: Fort Huachuca \(army.mil\)](https://home.army.mil/huachuca) When the home page appears, click on MENU in the upper left and then on Visitor Information.

In the southwest corner of the fort is a spectacular high observation point and picnic area. Garden Canyon, popular for hiking and bird watching, and the steeper Sheelite Canyon are located in the southeast sector of the post. Along Garden Canyon is a pictograph site where the ancient rock art is protected by a chain-link fence. Up the road from that site is the Rappel Cliffs Rockshelter Pictograph Sites. The soldiers use the cliffs nearby to practice rappelling.

Refer to the following website for additional information on the history of the fort:
<https://home.army.mil/huachuca/index.php/about/history>

Prepared by John and Bette Bosma in 2007. Updated by T. Johnson in 2015, 2016 and 2021. Figures 1 and 2 by J & B Bosma., Figures 3 and 4 by T. Johnson