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Fleet Numerical Weather Facility (FNWF) Chronology 1959 1974

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Fleet Numerical Weather Facility (FNWF) Chronology 1959 – 1974

References to activities at NPS and Point Pinos sites prior to moving to the current Monterey location found online and in public printed documents from 1959 - 1974

1959: The Navy Numerical Weather Problems (NANWEP) group moved from Suitland, MD to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) campus in Monterey under Capt. Paul M. Wolff, USN. (4)

1960 CDC 1604 installed by Seymour Cray' (1, slide 3)1

“Electronic brain forecasts” Monterey Peninsula Herald (8.13.1960)

1961: Establishment of Fleet Numerical Weather Facility (1, slide 3)

1962: “Its weather operation under fire” Monterey Peninsula Herald (8.7.1962)

1963: Cmdr. Wolff, explains the operation of the 1604 computer (3, pg 6)

Data is automatically collected and placed on magnetic tapes by Control Data 160-A computers. The program in the larger Control Data 1604 computer then edits the data (3, pg 9)

1964: NPS owns and operates 4 computers-a CDC 1604, an IBM 1401, and 2 CDC 160s (2 pg 15)

Completion of dedicated FNWF Computer Building on NPS grounds. To carry out the increased computational load. a CDC 3200 medium computer was purchased in October for data backup (2 pg 16)

“Point Pinos, the former Naval Air Intercept Training Facility. was reactivated and now houses the offices and shops of the FNWF Communications Division.” Annual Report 1964 United States Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California (pg. 16)

“Development and fabrication of communications and interface devices performed in-house” at the electronic design laboratory and workshops at Point Pinos. (4) (5)

Date is unknown, but after 1964 a second CDC 1604 was moved to Point Pinos. (5)

1965: “The principal oceanographic forecast center in the world. Forecasts are provided to the fleet through a computer network for the first time,” Quoted in Monterey Peninsula Herald (1967)

1967: FNWC procurement of CDC 6500 dual-processor to replace two CDC 1604s. Lower cost version of CDC 6600 supercomputer (1 slide #4)

1968 “Man loses to computer” Monterey Peninsula Herald (1968)

1969 “Navy Weather Unit to Stay” Monterey Peninsula Herald (12.19.1969)

1969: Second 6500 acquired 1970: Northern Hemisphere Primitive Equation (NHPE) model operational on 4 processors. World’s first multi-processor production code. (1, slide #4)

1970: First numerical weather products (pictures of predicted conditions) transmitted via TACSATCOM-1 satellite to mobile platforms (USS Guadalcanal & USS Lexington). Herald clipping

1971: “Sea Weather Tracking” Monterey Peninsula Herald 8.12.1971)

1972: Weather Central to build at Airfield site” Monterey Peninsula Herald 4.5.72) Article includes a reference to computers located at the Point Pinos site.

1974: FNWF moved all operations to a building near Monterey airport, which continues today as the Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center.

Papers and thesis publications stored in the online *NPS Institutional Archive* of the Dudley Knox Library document the development of weather forecasting technology at the NPS and Point Pinos sites. After 1967, references to FNWF are changed to FNWC (Fleet Numerical Weather Center) A search for FNWF yields 79 reports. FNWC delivers another 78.

Sources

- (1) “30 Years of Navy Modeling and Supercomputers: An Anecdotal History”
- (2) Annual Report 1964 United States Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California
- (3) *Weather by Computer*, CDC brochure published August 1963.
- (4) “Environmental support for naval operations,” Philip G. Kesel, Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society (1968)
- (5) Conversation with Ed Whitworth 10.12.22

References collected by:

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