

PBOW  
MISC  
PUBLIC**Meadows, Richard L LRH**

**From:** Albert, Frank R JR LRH [Frank.R.Albert.JR@lrh01.usace.army.mil]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 03, 2005 8:27 AM  
**To:** 'Raymond Walley (rwalley@brazosport.cc.tx.us)'  
**Cc:** Humphreys, Lisa A LRH; Jackson, Greta B LRH; Rea, Kathy E LRH; Meadows, Richard L LRH; 'Helen Owens'  
**Subject:** FW: Requesting Information re Historic Plum Brook Ordnance Works, Photos' Descriptions

Dear Mr. Walley,

Thanks for your interest in the Plum Brook Ordnance Works website. That is very interesting your father worked at this site.

I checked the photos on our website for which you had questions; sorry, but I don't have answers for all the photos. I don't have the photographs readily at hand, but I do believe that each photo has a caption regarding what is shown on the reverse side of the photo. I've copied my technical coordinator for Plum Brook on this email, and when she returns to work from holiday leave, she may be able to add more to this reply.

For the site's history, I don't know of anything other than what we've put on our website; although, with a site like Plum Brook, I believe there has to be other history details "out there". We will provide you what we can find on that.

For the photos, here is what I believe is shown on the 28 photos; sorry that I do not have exact answers for all of them for I don't recognize many of them. This numbering is per the numbering shown on the website:

History 1 – the strange triangular shape you asked about is a blast shield to protect the building in the event a TNT reaction "got out of hand". You will also notice slide-type structures or an emergency "shoot", if you will, for workers to make a hasty get away from the building if a blast, fire, etc., broke out.

History 2 – This photo shows the West Area Red Water Ponds. These ponds were used to store TNT wastewater until it could be disposed. Acids Area #2 is shown in the top left of the photo. There were 3 acids areas; nitric and sulfuric acids were stored in these areas for use in TNT manufacture. You may notice aboveground storage tanks placed on reinforced concrete cradles.

Historic 4 – This photo shows nitric acid storage tanks in one of the acids areas.

Image 04 – too blurry for me to tell what it is; it appears to be one of the Acids Areas

Historic 5 – this photo shows a NASA employee holding a chunk of TNT that was discovered during work that NASA was performing. I believe that a water line or some sort of utility was being installed? Cannot recall for sure; but that is one large chunk of TNT!!

Image 6 – This photo likely shows storage tanks in one of the acids areas.

Images 7 – 15 – I do not know what these photos are; they may be from a NASA dedication ceremony; cannot tell from the people in the photos, etc., the approx. date when these were taken.

Image 16 – This photo shows one of the acids areas.

Image 19 – This photo shows TNT Area B; which is located in the mid-southern portion of the site. There were three TNT manufacturing areas, designated TNT Area A, TNT Area B, and TNT Area C.

Image 20 – photo looking due west, over the West Area Red Water Ponds; Acids Area 2 is also shown.

Image 21 – this photo shows the Maintenance Shops area as well as Acids Area #1.

Image 22 – this photo shows Acids Area #1 to the top left (with the Rail Car unloading area in uppermost left), and Acids Area #3 to the top right of the photo.

Image 23 – This photo shows the West Area Red Water Ponds and Acids Area #2.

Image 24 – photo shows West Area Red Water Ponds

Image 25 – photo shows one of the Acids Areas

Image 27 – sorry, cannot tell that this is.

Image 28 – unknown building with a blast shield to the right and personnel escape shoots/slides coming from the building.

Image 29 - unknown building with a blast shield.

Image 30 - unknown building

Image 31 – Locomotive (repair) House at the Maintenance Area.

As soon as we have other information, we will send it your way. Again, thanks for your interest and for contacting us.

Best regards,

frank

Frank R. Albert, Jr.  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
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Huntington, WV 25701  
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cell: (304) 544-7083

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jackson, Greta B LRH [mailto:Greta.B.Jackson@lrh01.usace.army.mil]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 29, 2004 12:51 PM  
**To:** Albert, Frank R JR LRH  
**Subject:** FW: Requesting Information re Historic Plum Brook Ordnance Works, Photos' Descriptions

Frank,

See Kathy's message below. Can you help?

Thanks,  
Greta

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rea, Kathy E LRH  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 29, 2004 10:37 AM  
**To:** Jackson, Greta B LRH  
**Subject:** FW: Requesting Information re Historic Plum Brook Ordnance Works, Photos' Descriptions

Greta

Since Rick is out until 10 Jan, can you help this gentleman?

***Kathy E. Rea***  
*Public Affairs Specialist*  
304-399-5771

1/5/2005

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rea, Kathy E LRH

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 29, 2004 10:00 AM

**To:** Meadows, Richard L LRH

**Subject:** FW: Requesting Information re Historic Plum Brook Ordnance Works, Photos' Descriptions

Rick

Can you help this gentleman?

***Kathy E. Rea***

*Public Affairs Specialist*

304-399-5771

-----Original Message-----

**From:** WALLEY [mailto:rwalley@brazosport.cc.tx.us]

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 28, 2004 5:13 PM

**To:** DLL-CELRH Public Affairs

**Subject:** Requesting Information re Historic Plum Brook Ordnance Works, Photos' Descriptions

Public Affairs Office

United States Army Corps of Engineers

Huntington District

502 Eighth Street

Huntington, WV 25701

(304) 399-5353

Dear PAO:

My father, F. Raymond Walley, worked at Plum Brook Ordnance for the Trojan Powder Company during World War II.

He was a chemist who specialized in explosives.

He told me that he could never talk about what went on there -- and never did.

For example, he said that if you came to work one day and noticed a building that had been there the day before was gone... you simply did not ask or talk about it. I have never seen pictures of the facility until today on your site.

Can you provide captions/descriptions of what the images are showing? (For instance, what were those strange, narrow, trapezoidal-shaped buildings? Images 28 & 29, etc.)

Do you have any information on Plum Brook during the war years? etc.

Has anyone written an overview (in addition to the great one on your site)?

Thank you very much for your time and help,

Raymond M. Walley

216 Redwood

Lake Jackson, TX 77566

Email: [rwalley@brazosport.cc.tx.us](mailto:rwalley@brazosport.cc.tx.us)

<http://www.lrh.usace.army.mil/PhotoBrowser/index.cfm?fdlist=1229&cats=>

<http://www.lrh.usace.army.mil/PhotoBrowser/index.cfm?fdlist=1229&cats=&Page=2>