

Area-51 Comes to Las Vegas

By Corporal Willy, October 7th 2009

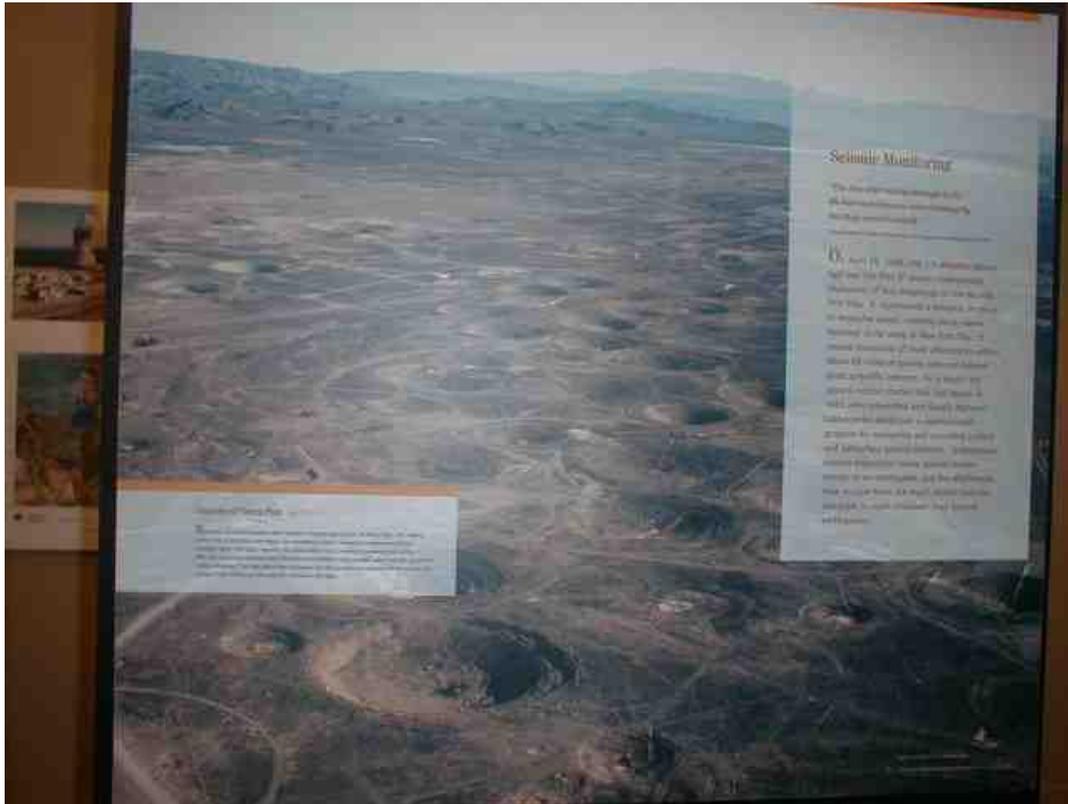
No wife was allowed to be told where their husbands were working or what they were working on. Even close friends were not allowed to be quizzed about what their buddies were working on even though they were stationed at the same base. Everything was on a need to know basis and if you were not directly involved in a particular project there, you simply did not need to know anything about it. Wives knew not to ask about things and their husbands knew they would have violated their top secret security clearances and possible jail time, because of National Security. Security people, agencies and departments that were in charge of watching the construction workers, military and civilian project workers, knew everything about everyone, because they were working on the "project" or stationed at Watertown, that would eventually be called, Area 51.

The CIA or Central Intelligence Agency in 2007 had de-classified most of what Area 51 was all about and the people that were there that accomplished the impossible can now talk about it. This Top Secret base was built in a remote part of the Mojave Desert (Mo-ha-vee) approximately 12 miles north east from the Atomic Testing Range. The markings on the survey maps of the area referred to this particular section as area 51 and that name was adopted after awhile. Originally this base was called Watertown because the CIA Director that was put in charge came from that area of Northern New York. Groom Lake was a large flat area that comprised a very large part of Area-51 and it was an ideal place. It was remote, desolate, with a very harsh environment and that was just what the doctor ordered for such a top secret undertaking that was being planned. Lands were quickly confiscated by various government agencies and the needed people were handpicked, tested, trained and sworn to secrecy for what the government was going to have them do there. The mission and reason for Area-51, was to gather high altitude surveillance data that was so badly needed during the Cold War days back then. They had to conceive, build and test aircraft that had never been thought of as yet to do this job. The Central Intelligence Agency was put in overall charge because an agency was needed that could get things done in a hurry without much fanfare. The "right stuff," with the "right people," "in the right place," all at the right time had to be assembled to launch one of the most secretive of all US undertakings.

This top secret project was initiated during the early Eisenhower years as president. We had both Russia and China to worry about back then and we could not get cooperation from either of those countries that could bring any hope of peace. The Cold War Days lay heavy over the land and before the re-elections of 1956; President Eisenhower wanted information in hand to act upon. It was essential that he knew what the Russians were capable of doing and delivering to their enemies with long range bombers and ICBM's. They had already demonstrated to the world that they were a nuclear power with a Nagasaki strength Atomic Bomb detonation. No peace accords could be agreed upon and making the right moves hinged upon the right intelligence.

The Cold War era was in full swing as children rehearsed in schools to shield themselves from an Atomic Bomb's blinding light, shock blast, flying glass and other debris, by instantly ducking under their desks without being told to do so, if a blinding light appeared. Something that this author remembers doing many times back then, as schools prepared us for the very real possibility of a nuclear war. Bomb shelters were being built everywhere and some of them would wind up being tombs for those that sought underground safety from Atomic Bombs by being built in a haphazard manner, quickly and without good engineering. The scare was real and we were

learning about Nuclear Explosions ourselves by conducting experiments. Over seven hundred Atomic tests were detonated out at the Atomic Testing Range with about 500 of them being performed underground eventually. We were only learning back then about the effects of an above ground Nuclear Explosion and it's after affects. Many premature deaths occurred from radiation exposures with workers and observers until we realized the full dangers of it.



Children around the world were drinking milk said to be contaminated by radioactive dust contamination that settled in the fields from the nuclear fallout, where cows ate the grass. Strontium 90 was being cited as the contaminant. Decisions had to be made to do testing more safely, so underground tests were conducted much more than the above ground ones in time. When I toured the Atomic Test Range site, I wrote the article entitled "The Scorched Earth" which was a long story about that tour I did from memory (because no recording devices were allowed not even cell phones or pencils and paper) but I never got permission to publish it and that was a few years ago. The earth still had the scars of the world's biggest explosions as signs everywhere. Huge, pockmarked ground depressions stretching for many hundreds of yards across in diameter gave the best clues as to what happened out there many hundreds of feet below the surface that eventually caved in later. Some didn't and some detonations didn't even go off. Intelligence abroad and nuclear data test results were needed to keep the free world safe from a Nuclear War. We simply did not know enough back then but we had to find out.

So here we are in the adjacent called Area-51 and it is a story of supreme sacrifice and secrecy. What was done, when it was done and by who, was discussed at day one here at the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, Nevada. It was a fully detailed two day event that was pure fascination to hear from those that actually did work on this "project."



This might not have been the very first such talk of its kind, but it was obvious that the “Long Silence” was finally given the okay by the US Government’s CIA Department in 2007, to let the world know and to release those involved from one of the very longest kept security secrets ever. Many of those that were part of this history, still live here in close by, Las Vegas which is only some 70 miles North. Stories told from those that were there that did the experimental, were as fascinating to hear as the so called Alien Repository for stranded beings from other worlds. So the men that were out there can discuss most things openly now and their work was truly amazing. Perhaps not everything can yet be talked about but seemingly most of what they were doing back then be. Many of those wives found out only in the last couple of years about what their husbands were involved in. Fascinating true.

Many test pilots died while scientists and engineers worked feverishly to optimize the U2, the A-12, the SR-71 and other very advanced secret spy planes that were being developed out there. Risks were always present but when you are flying at Mach 3.2 which is faster than a 30.06 (30 odd six) caliber bullet, everything had to be working at top levels and performances. At those speeds you had to wear special heat resistant clothes and gloves because the frictional forces on the outer skin heated things up so hot you could get severe burns coming into contact with them. Down below here are some “pictures of pictures” that I took from the magnificent displays that were put out.

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Some funny things were told to us about those times at Area-51. For instance, we were buying the Titanium sheets we needed from Russia which was being used to build the spy plane SR-71 to fly over their country and take pictures of their military installations. They had radar installations that troubled us because they were very advanced and we needed to know more, much more about them. We also needed to know where they had their missile launching sites and long range bombers. Bad intelligence leads to bad decisions and to know your enemies capabilities is as powerful as any weapon. Happily the Cold War Days stayed mostly “Cold” due to the sacrifices and bravery of many men and women involved in Area 51 activities and accomplishments. It is very interesting to note that many so called sightings of unknown space craft, or UFO’s, or flying saucers have been reported over the years and many of the pilots laughed because of those reports that so many believed were alien spacecraft. The Government of course denied everything and could not admit to the existence of Area-51 for any reason. Even when a lawsuit was initiated by some construction crews because of getting sick on fumes and chemicals out there; national security and that of the free world was at stake, so no such place ever existed and the story stuck. What was conceived, built and tested out there back then still has no equal today in speed or abilities. That is a real testimony to all those that took part because they were using crude tooling and no computers at the time.

As I watched the men and their wives for two nights, I could not help but notice the fierce pride about the job they did and it did not matter whether they were pilots, scientists, engineers, or mess hall workers, they all had every right to be proud. The work they did and the sacrifice they gave to the unknowing world helped to keep the peace as a direct result of that which was done to gather intelligence around the hostile world. Here are some more of the pictures I took tonight.

Sorry for the glare that messed up this shot but these are some models that were built and tested out there.



Prized photographs were taken over the years and were put together for some nice displays.



This unique shape of tapered sides along the fuselage called 'chimes' was said to produce a much more stable aircraft at supersonic speeds and it also helped to give a much lower Radar Signature. This picture of the SR-71 Blackbird shows it nicely. My next door neighbor worked with Pratt and

Whitney in Florida on the engines for the SR-71. It was a truly amazing engine with terrific specifications.

Static ground testing being done while secured to the testing frame and supports. Notice the glow of the engine exhaust chamber which is the glowing red orange part in the picture which was told to me to represent a heat of about 1400 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level. Of course this was shielded from the other parts of the spy plane.



Even special tools had to be created to work with such tough metals like Titanium. There were no CNC machines or computers used back then. Slide rules and pencils were the tools of the trade so I believe it was a real accomplishment. Fuel leaks were a big problem because of expansion and contraction of materials which mostly exhibited itself when on the ground. Most of that went away when the SR=71 was in the air. It was laughed at when one scientist stated that they had a Heath Kit 'put together' type of computer that took a long time to cross link wires into holes like old time telephone operators had to do just to get a simple $2 \times 2 = 4$ answer. What was accomplished with what they had available to them is really a miracle of dedication. Down below are parts of the compressor or turbine blades. Amazing state of the art metallurgy and science was used back then to make parts for something no one had ever made before.



There were some really advanced design concepts done on the Blackbird. It was made completely from all Titanium from Russia for the outer skin. It was said that at first when they started working with this material, that for every 100 lbs of the Titanium that they had, they were able to make only about ten pounds of actual parts with the machines back then. But remember that they worked with slide rules and not computers or modern machines like CNC, Plasma Cutters, etc... The A-12 is shown down below here.

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Over view of that isolated area called Area-51. The average age of the speakers at this historical event that were telling their stories was about 70 years of age, maybe a little more and they all are heroes to the free world.



Here are some stats on the SR-71 engine power plant.

Maximum Thrust: 34,000 lbs. Military Thrust: 23,900 lbs.

Weight: 6,250 lbs. Length: 215.940 inches.

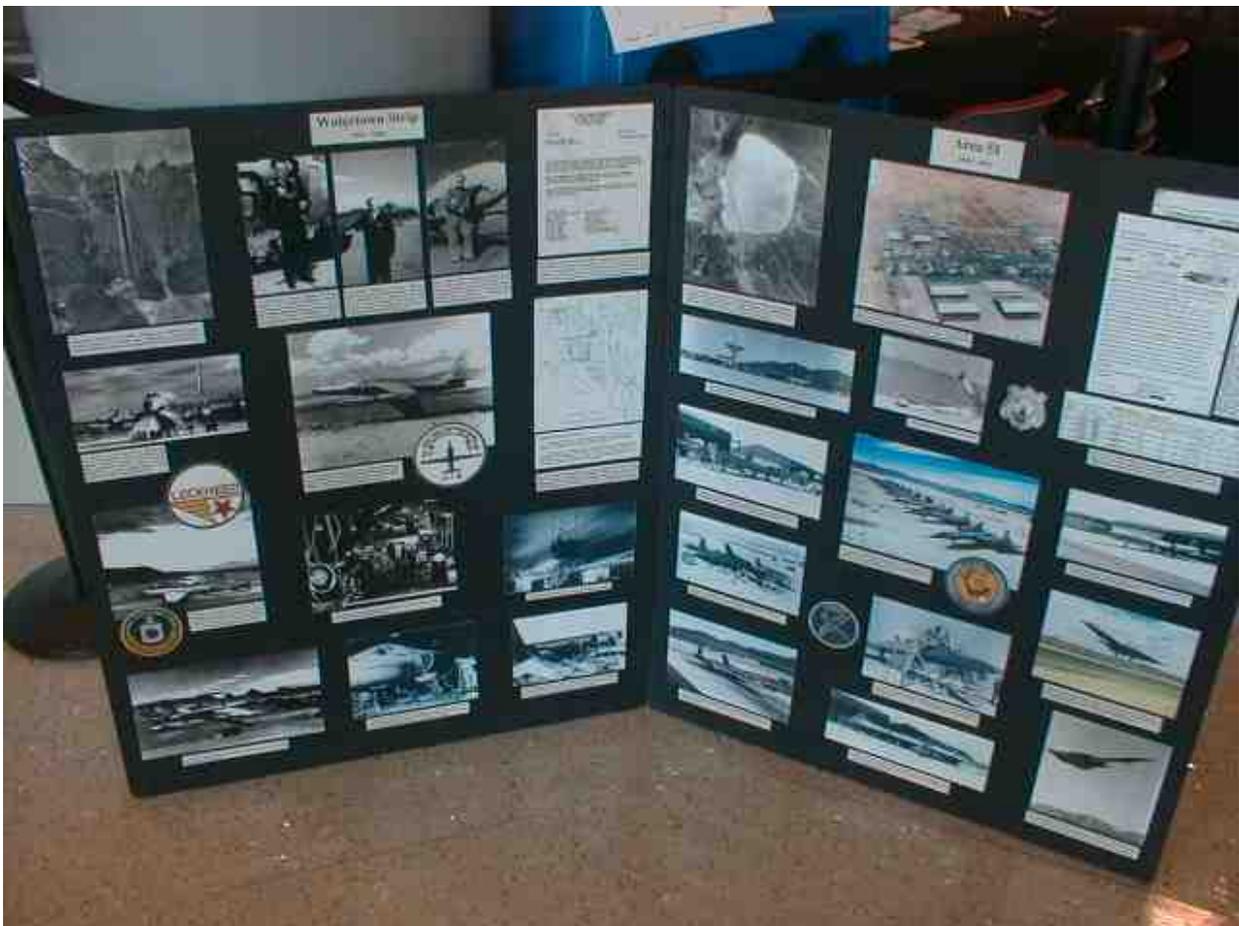
Maximum Diameter: 55.43 inches. Sea Level Air Flow: 326 lbs/sec

Compressor Ratio: 8.5:1 Total Pressure Ratio: 2.93:1

Bleed Bypass Ratio: 20-40% (Above Mn. 2.0 only)



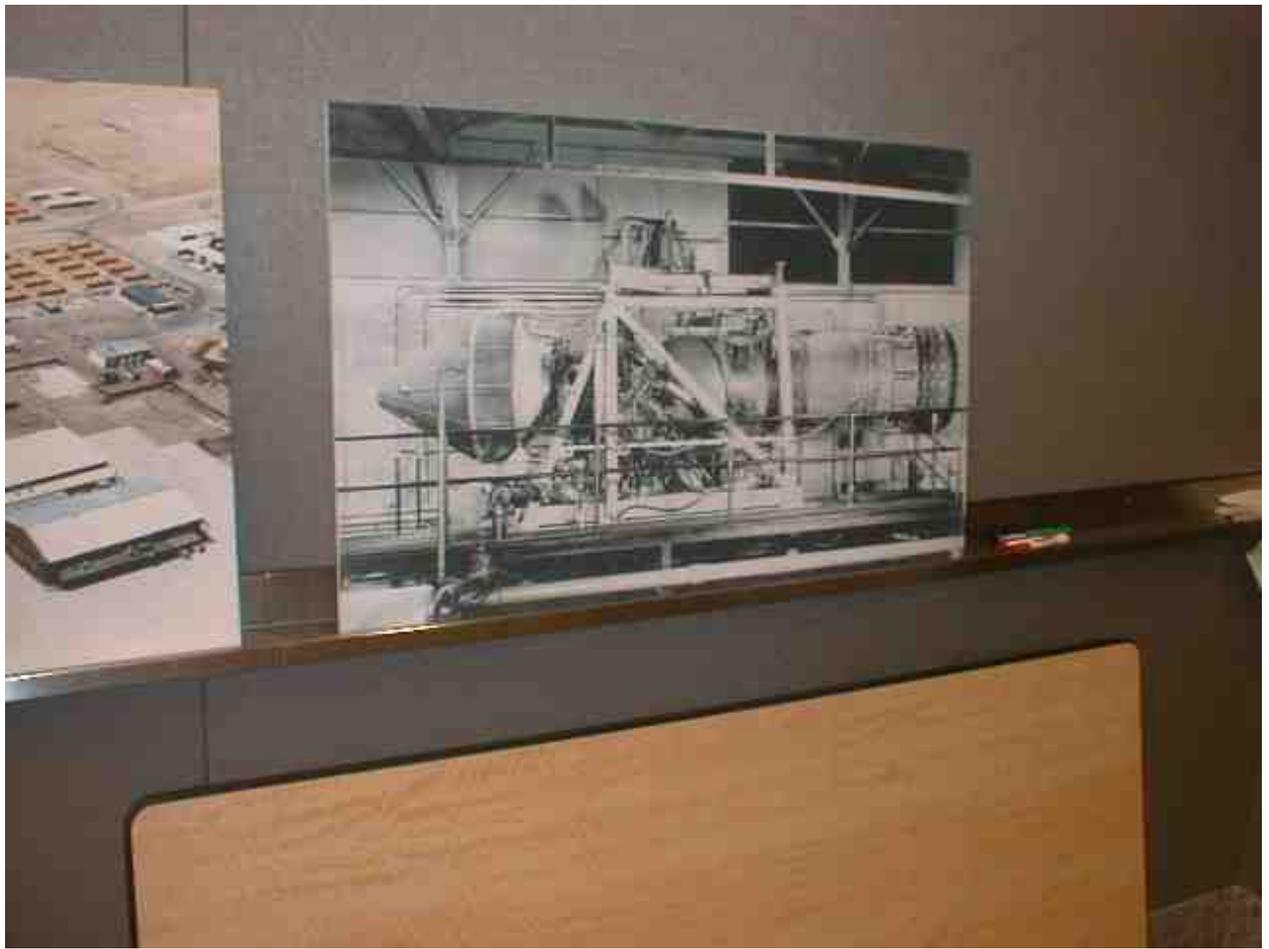
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A very special shirt made by Elsa, the wife of my friend Ralph Jacobs who worked on the engines for the SR-71. It is unique and it was a hit out there today at the presentations.

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To have been invited to be there to hear and witness these revelations to the world when only a short time ago it was so top secret, was a real pleasure. Now the world knows for sure what was happening out there. The mind can always wonder and fantasize about the unknown when the truth is not made available and Area-51 is no exception. As a final note here, a question was asked and I am paraphrasing it here, “have you all been de-briefed on those things that you are still not allowed to tell the world and are there any more real top secret things being done out there now?” Simultaneously all five presentation speakers looked at each other and they all shrugged their shoulders so that tells us..... Hope you enjoyed this article.

Ps. All blog article writers are now subject to the very recent and stringent Federal Trade Commission rules when doing any promotional reviews of products and or programs. This does not fall under any of those categories now known to be referenced, but I will state for the record that no-one paid me to do this article and nothing was given to me either. Just the pleasure of being there to hear firsthand and see this presentation and to report it to you was it's own reward.

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