



Military Corner

Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, Calif.

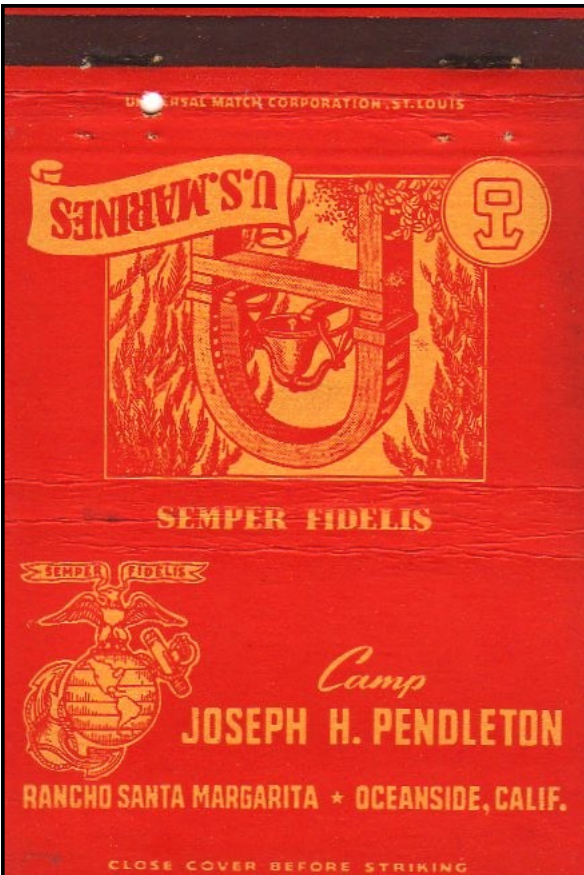
Of all the Marine Corps bases throughout the world, Camp Pendleton has one of the most intriguing pasts, filled with historical charm and vibrancy. Spanish explorers, colorful politicians, herds of thundering cattle, skillful vaqueros and tough Marines have all contributed to the history of this land.

In 1769, a Spaniard, Capt. Gaspar de Portola, led an expeditionary force northward from lower California, seeking to establish Franciscan missions throughout California. The expedition arrived at a location now known as Camp Pendleton and baptizing the land in the name of Santa

Margarita.

In the early '40s, both the Army and the Marine Corps were looking for land for a large training base. The Army lost interest in the project, but in April of 1942 it was announced that the rancho was about to be transformed into the largest Marine Corps base in the country. It was named for Major General Joseph H. Pendleton who had long advocated the establishment of a West Coast training base. After five months of furious building activity, the 9th Marine Regiment marched from Camp Elliot in San Diego to Camp Pendleton to be the first troops to occupy the new base. On Sept. 25, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt arrived for the official dedication. [<http://www.pendleton.usmc.mil/cpao/pages/history.asp>]

During the Korean War, \$20 million helped expand and upgrade existing facilities, including the construction of Camp Horn. When Camp Pendleton trained the country's fighting force for the Korean and Vietnam Wars, approximately 200,000 Marines passed through the base on their way to the Far East. Camp Pendleton has continued to grow through renovations, replacing its original tent camps with more than 2,600 buildings and 500 miles of roads.



The base's diverse geography, spanning over 125,000 acres, plays host to year round training for Marines in addition to all other branches of the U.S. military. Amphibious and sea-to-shore training takes place at several key points along the base's 17 miles of coastline. The main base is in the Mainside Complex, at the southeastern end of the base, and the remote northern interior is an impact area. Daytime population is around 100,000. Recruits from nearby Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego spend a month on Pendleton's Edson Range receiving field training, and after graduating from boot camp return to the base's School of Infantry for further training. Camp Pendleton remains the last major undeveloped portion of the Southern California coastline, save for a few small state parks. In this way, it acts as a kind of buffer between Orange County and San Diego County. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marine_Corps_Base_Camp_Pendleton]