

Rocketry Experiments ^[1]

Rocketry Experiments

by Wynne Dough, 2006

Rocketry experiments were conducted in two locations along the North Carolina coast from the 1940s to the 1970s. After [World War II](#) ^[2], the U.S. Navy leased much of Topsail Island [Pender County](#) ^[3] as a test range for multistage rockets and ramjet engines. The Kellet Corporation operated the range under navy contract, with assistance from the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, until 1948, when the navy moved its testing activities to White Sands, N. Mex., and [Cape Canaveral](#) ^[4], Fla.

From 1962 to 1971 the Atlantic Research Corporation occasionally tested propellants for the Air Force Systems Command and other agencies by firing rocket engines attached to concrete pads at several sites along eight miles of the Currituck Banks. The road that the company desired was not built until after the tests were completed, and the expected flood of new jobs did not materialize. In addition, the task of determining how much of what substances entered the local groundwater from buried steel drums was still unfinished by the early 2000s. Concrete towers built north of Oregon Inlet ([Dare County](#) ^[5]) in 1962 were used not for launching rockets, as rumors insisted, but for monitoring launches by the National Aeronautics and Space Agency from Wallops Island, Va., and Cape Canaveral.

Reference:

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Additional Resources:

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Subjects:

[Governmental programs](#) ^[10]

[Military](#) ^[11]

[Post War 20th Century \(1946-2000\)](#) ^[12]

[Science, technology, and innovations](#) ^[13]

[World War II \(1941-1945\)](#) ^[14]

Authors:

[Dough, Wynne](#) ^[15]

Origin - location:

[Dare County](#) ^[16]

[Pender County](#) ^[17]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina. University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[18]

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[1] <https://ncpedia.org/rocketry-experiments> [2] <https://ncpedia.org/world-war-ii> [3] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/pender> [4] <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/home/index.html> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/dare> [6] <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=search&k=Markers&sv=D-104> [7] http://flash.uncvtv.org/ourstate/os408_topsailtowers.html [8] <http://missilesandmoremuseum.org/exhibits/operation-bumblebee/> [9] <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/historyfiction/fullview.aspx?id=jpb> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/governmental-prog> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/military> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/post-war-20th-cen> [13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/science> [14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/world-war-ii> [15] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/dough-wynne> [16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-25> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal--6> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->