During 1948 the fledgling United States Air Force established an early warning radar site at Highlands, New Jersey, one of the highest points on the east coast of the United States. The site had already been in use by the Army as a Coast Artillery battery that was inactivated shortly after the end of the Second World War.

The Army returned to the site during 1960, with a new air defense related mission. The blast and fallout resistant Missile Master facility which became operational at the Highlands base in that year contained a complex and costly, semi-automated system capable of tracking hostile aircraft and assigning Nike missile batteries in New York and New Jersey to engage them. Later, the Highlands site also assumed control of the Nike missile batteries located in the Philadelphia Defense Area.

The Highlands base also served as the headquarters for various Army air defense units in the region. Although the Air Force closed its Long Range Radar site during 1966, the Army's facility remained operational through 1974 when the last Nike missile batteries in the region were inactivated.
Location
Army Air Defense Base:
Highlands,
(Monmouth County), NJ

Dates of Operation

Radar Systems:
& Equipment
ABAR-69 with FPA-15
FSG-1 Missile Master
TSQ-51 Missile Mentor

Unit Information
Army -
HQ 19th Artillery Group
(1961-1968)
HHB/3/51st (1964-1968)
HQ 52nd Artillery Brigade
(1968-1971)
HQ 16th ADA Group (1971-
1974)
HHB/1/51st (1972-1973)

Present Status
 Virtually all traces of the
historic Highlands Air Force
Station and the Army's Air
Defense Command Post
have been obliterated. The
Army's Missile Master
building was demolished
along with all other Cold
War era buildings and
structures. Regrettably, it
appears that no attempt was
made to document this
highly significant Cold War
site prior to demolition.

The Monmouth County Park
System, which incorporated
the site into its Hartshorne
Woods Park, has plans to
restore the impressive World
War Two era Coast Artillery
gun batteries left untouched
by the wreckers and may
eventually open them to the
public.

ARSenal NOTES:
19 WEAPON CAPABLE SITES 1959-1961
270 AJAX
180 HERC

18 W/C BATTERY SITES 1961-1963
250 AJAX
180 HERC

NOTE: ALL AJAX MISSILES REMOVED
BY END OF 1963, CONVERSION TO
HERCULES SITES COMPLETED.

10 W/C BATTERY SITES 1963-1966
180 HERC

NOTE: NEW YORK RING GAINS OPERATIONAL
CONTROL OVER PHILADELPHIA RING. (1964?)
ADDS 5 SITES AND 114 HERCS.

15 W/C SITES 1966-1968
294 HERCS

12 W/C SITES 1968-1971
252 HERCS

9 W/C SITES 1971-1974
180 HERCS

NOTE: AJAX TO HERCULES CONVERSION
670 AJAX MISSILES BEFORE CONVERSION
270 AJAX MISSILES AFTER CONVERSION.