

## SAFETY WARNING

**Safety is essential.** Walking in the footprints of WWII German prisoners can be a lot of fun, but fun ends quickly if you or someone else gets hurt. As with any outdoor activity, there are potential dangers involved. These potential dangers can include, but are not limited to:

- difficult terrain that can result in falls or driving challenges ,
- 65 year old remains with obstacles that might cause tripping,
- animals (deer, feral hogs, coyotes, stray dogs),
- insects (chiggers, ticks, fire ants),
- reptiles (poisonous snakes)
- plants & trees (thorny Mesquite, poison ivy, poison sumac), and
- unpredictable weather.

### This requires that you

- be fully prepared for any contingency
- are in good enough physical condition
- pay attention to where you're going
- use care when walking along roads and yield to motor vehicles
- wear suitable footwear and clothing

## RULES

1. Do not remove, destroy, or injure any natural or man-made trails, features, or facilities.
2. No metal detectors.
3. No overnight camping without permission.
4. No use of firearms, fireworks or explosives is permitted.
5. Pets must be kept on a leash.
6. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
7. Illegal substances are prohibited
8. Please do not litter on the trail or grounds.
9. Please leave all motorized vehicles in marked parking areas
10. No Smoking—No fires
11. Do not leave marked trail.

## WELCOME!

Camp Hearne was a World War II Prisoner-of-War Camp located north of Hearne, Texas on Highway 485W.

After the 1942-43 US troop build up and successes in North Africa and Italy, the ships carrying our soldiers to the European theater returned to the US with a different cargo... an estimated 500,000 prisoners-of-war over the course of the War.

Due to its flat terrain, distance from the coastline, railroad access, sparse population and local need for farm laborers, Hearne was chosen to house 4800+ of these prisoners in its POW base camp.

Honoring the Geneva Conventions, the US Army treated POWs well, providing ample food, shelter and clothing. Since work for a fair wage was only required of the enlisted men, various recreation and education programs were offered to the NCO majority as a means to pass the time with minimal disorder.

Today's historic camp site has many building foundations that outline the camp's original "footprint" as well as remnants of various prisoner-built amenities such as garden fountains and a stadium-seating theater with orchestra pit. An exhibit depicting the daily life of the Camp's mostly German prisoners may be viewed in a reconstructed US Army barrack at the site – Fairground Road & FM 485. *Camp Hearne is a truly unique window into our more recent past.*

Thank you for coming!  
We hope your visit has been fun and informative.

Please help us continue this learning experience by donating to our cause.

Thanks again and come back soon!

**Camp Hearne Exhibit & Visitor Center is open**

**WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY  
11 AM - 4 PM**

Visit website for Holiday Schedule  
[www.camphearne.com](http://www.camphearne.com)

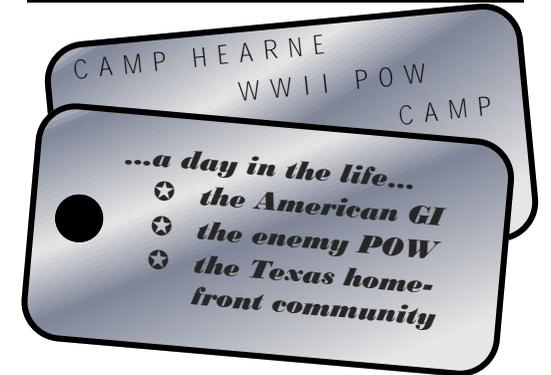
**ROLL CALL -  
Friends of Camp Hearne**

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Photo by Stuart Villanueva,  
The Eagle, Oct 24, 2010



Camp Hearne  
Exhibit & Visitor  
Center

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[www.camphearne.com](http://www.camphearne.com)

**979-314-7012**

**WWII Living History  
event in October**

## CAMP HEARNE'S "FOOTPRINT"

The buildings within the compounds were not designed to be permanent structures. They were designed to last only 20 years. Each barrack had wooden floors supported by beams that rested on piers. The other buildings—latrines, mess halls, offices and common buildings—had cement foundations. This pattern of cement foundations comprise the Camp's "footprint" repeated throughout the grounds.



Although not the original façade, the 1950s brick structure was built on the original foundation of Camp Hearne's "pump house." It housed two large pumps that provided water to the Camp. Completely hidden under a heavy blanket of briar and brush for years, its transformation into a shelter from the elements is nearing completion. It has become a perfect "bunker" for briefings and "movie theater" to tell Camp Hearne's story.



### KNEELING LADY FOUNTAIN

This elaborate fountain featured a kneeling woman on a pedestal holding a platter. Surrounding the fountain were three cement frogs spouting water onto the platter. Portions of these frogs are on display in the Camp Hearne Exhibit.



### BURG SCHWANSTEIN "THE CASTLE"

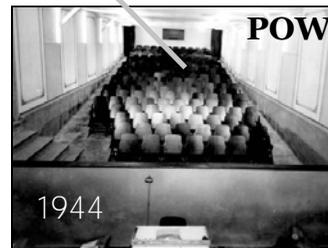
German prisoners constructed this castle complex from memory and imagination. The castle was complete with a moat. To optimize the effect, the bottom of the moat was painted blue then the moat was filled with water. The remains still have clear evidence of the castle structures and moat.



### BERT WHEELER BARRACK

This replica of a 1942 US Army barrack houses the

**Camp Hearne Exhibit and Visitor Center.** A portion of the interior was left as it would have been during WWII when the US Army troops were stationed at the Camp. The enemy POWs were housed in identical barracks as per the Geneva Conventions.



### POW THEATER

To occupy their time, prisoners were allowed to

participate in various activities. This was the most extravagant of many theaters and bandstands throughout the camp. POW's produced their own plays and entertained other prisoners and our own army personnel. The 20' x 100' structure was complete with stadium seating an orchestra pit, stage and trap door. The "PX" or post exchange was located behind the theater providing space for costuming and make-up.