

Comments from David McMillen, a Seaman stationed at H-2 after the radar was removed, Mike Perkins, Richard Steele and an unnamed Airman .

I was stationed at H2 radar site, northeast Iceland, serving with the Navy in 1968-1969.

I was the only Navy storekeeper(Air Force Quartermaster), stationed at H-2, plus payroll clerk, and other duties associated with supply dept. I was first stationed in Keflavik @ the Naval Supply Center, then transferred to H-2. H-2 had several Air Force personnel, mainly communications. Navy personnel consisted mainly of Seabees, and a few communication personnel, which kept up the maintenance of the buildings, and the road leading to H-2, which sits on top of a hill. Don't remember the elevation, but we did get several inches of snow and cold. We had an airport which C47's flew in to bring supplies and personnel. I had a few pictures, but over the years they got misplaced. Our CO was a Navy Lieutenant. Summer time didn't see any temps over 67 degrees. Early spring, some of the personnel, fished for trout in nearby lakes, and summer activities included playing softball 20 hours a day.

Sure. I left H-2 in September of 1969. Air Force personnel were there then.

David McMillen

I was in the AF, part of a team of about 20 guys who manned a room full of electronic equipment that monitored above ground nuclear bomb testing world wide. We ran 24/7 and performed all maintenance and repair on the equipment. The picture shows our building which was just down the hill from the site to the right of the road. We had our own power generators because we needed good quality 60Hz power for our electronic equipment, and the site power generators were set to anywhere close to 60Hz, if they felt like it.

The site was operated by the USN with about 80 guys. They also had a secret electronics operation plus the Seabees and other support staff to run the place. We all got along for the most part.

The second picture is taken from the top of one of the old radar towers. No dome, no equipment, just an empty tower. We heard that the dome blew off in a storm. I don't know if that was true, but the wind sure blew hard enough sometimes.

You must have been there with Chuck Towner. I traded email with him last May. The reason I believe you were there with him is that he sent me some pictures, and one of them is label "William Chick".

Tell me a little about your tour there. What do you remember doing for fun? Did you ever get off the site and see any of Iceland? **I only did one weekend in Akureyri.**

Best regards,
Mike Perkins, H-2 1968

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FROM: **Richard H. Steele USN, H-2, 1968-69**

9 Sep 2004

I was in the **US Navy** from 1966 to 1972 and stationed in Iceland at H-2 from **May of 1968 to May 1969**. I was with the Special Communications group. Do you know of any other USN people that were stationed there? I believe the Navy was there only for a short length of time before all the equipment was moved to H-1. I think they pulled out sometime in '69-'70 time frame.

When I was stationed there the radar site had been removed. **There was a small group of Air Force people. Fifteen or twenty people, I think. As I remember they manned a seismic monitoring station for nuclear blasts in the Soviet Union.**

If you have any information on former Navy people stationed at H-2 I would appreciate it.

Love the website. Some of the pictures really brought back some strong memories.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Steele

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Source: An Email – did not receive the name of the sender.

Subject: C-47 CRASH

I was stationed at H-2 with a **small AF detachment from Nov 68 to Nov 69**. Anyone who was stationed there was familiar with the gravel strip used by both the local Icelandic airline and the USN C-47's that transported us in and out of the site.

It seemed that for some reason the strip was built so that the prevailing wind was across the landing strip, and the end of the strip was pointed right into the bay. Of course the prevailing wind was almost constant and very fast.

Many times the daily flight from Keflavik was aborted or canceled due to high wind, although it seemed that the Icelandic planes, which were also DC-3's often, landed in these high cross wind conditions.

One day the Navy pilot decided to land during marginal conditions and came in high and fast, trying to drive it down onto the runway while maintaining control in the high cross wind. He got it on the ground, but realized he was still going too fast, and heading for the bay. At the end of the runway he spun the plane out to keep from going over, causing the wing to hit the ground and one of his tires to blow out.

At this point the pilot attempted to taxi back up the runway but dug in the wheel midway, thereby blocking the runway completely.

So how do you get a plane with a buried wheel off a gravel strip in Iceland? The Seabees collected every piece of heavy equipment on the site, brought them down the hill, chained them together and winched the plane off to the side of the strip. I recall that this took at least 2 days to accomplish.

The plane was totaled due to the bent wing, so a crew was sent up to dismantle all equipment and engines from the plane. For all I know it is still there.

NO NAME, Nov 68 to Nov 69

Caption for the photo of the deserted Navy C-117: “Swung off the runway at Thórshöfn in July 1969, then was moved to this (present, near the runway) location on August 3, 1969. Used as shelter for sheep. The cn has not been confirmed from official records.” Photo and comments by Eggert Norðdahl.

**From our USRSI Historian,
Lt. Col. Ret. Jerry Tonnell**

The folks that remained at the H-2 location on the Langanes Peninsula were mostly Navy guys.

Their top secret mission was to monitor Soviet subs who often sailed into the greater Atlantic near Iceland. They arrived at H-2 in 1961, shortly after the majority of the USAF radar folks left for H-3. However, a small detachment of USAF radar folks were left behind at H-2 for a short period -- they were designated as a temporary detachment of H-3.

Other non-radar USAF folks also occupied H-2 about the same time the Navy did. Their classified job was to monitor possible Soviet underground atomic testing. Their designation was Detachment 310 (don't know anymore other than that.) They stayed until sometime in 1969, but left prior to the Navy folks (I don't know if any USAF folks were there in Dec 1969 when the USO troupe arrived.) Throughout that time, the Navy was the host service at H-2 and provided logistical support, motor pool, cooks, Seabees, etc. for that purpose. As of April 1962, there was an estimated combination of 115 Navy and Air Force personnel located at H-2.

In April 1970, the Naval Hq at Keflavik Naval Air Station sent a team of electronic technicians to remove Navy equipment from H-2.

Regarding Club 56. I have no idea where or what that club was. It might be safe to assume that it was the name of the club at H-2.

I have attached two patches made by the Navy guys -- one from a Navy maintenance unit that supported H-2 and the other a Navy patch showing H-2.

I suggest you place the article in the H-2 Documents file.

Jerry T.