

# Self-Guided Historic Tour of Camp Gruber

Jennifer R. Kolise  
Camp Gruber Cultural Resources Manager  
918-549-6224  
[jennifer.r.boudreaux@us.army.mil](mailto:jennifer.r.boudreaux@us.army.mil)

# Background

- Approached by COL Fleishman in September 2010 to establish a self-guided tour of historic points of interest on Camp Gruber
- Points of interest needed to meet certain criteria:
  - Ease of access
  - Historic photographs available
  - Interesting story or bit of trivia
- 9 points of interest were chosen

# Points of Interest

- Establishment of Camp Gruber
  - Marker is located at Anzio Gate
  - One of several Army cantonments established during WWII
    - Total land mass ~67,000 acres in Muskogee and Cherokee counties
  - Construction began in February 1942
  - Opened in May 1942
  - Inactivated April 1946

# Points of Interest

- The German Prisoner of War (POW) Internment Camp
  - Three markers located at POW monuments near Anzio Gate
    - Background of German POW camp
      - Located on west side of SH-10 across from Sicily Gate
      - In operation from 1943 to 1946 and housed ~4,500 POWs
    - Through the Eyes of a German POW: The Diary Sketchbook of Karl-Heinz Lantow
      - Documents from his capture in France through his internment at Camp Gruber
    - Life as a German POW

# Points of Interest

- Division Headquarters
  - Marker located near flag pole at Post Headquarters (Bldg 154)
  - Three infantry divisions trained here during WWII
    - 88<sup>th</sup> 'Blue Devils' Division – July 1942 to August 1943
    - 42<sup>nd</sup> 'Rainbow' Division – July 1943 to December 1944
    - 86<sup>th</sup> 'Blackhawk' Division – July 1945 to August 1945
- Chapels
  - Special request by LTC Robison
  - Marker located at proposed site for chapel
  - 14 chapels that provided Protestant, Catholic and Jewish religious services

# Points of Interest

- The Parade Grounds
  - Marker located across from Range Control
  - Approximately 350 acres in center of cantonment
  - Presidential visit on 18 April 1943
- Station Hospital
  - Marker located at 13<sup>th</sup> and 'G' Streets
  - Large, very modern facility for its time
  - ~76 acre complex connected by walkways
  - 1628 bed capacity, able to expand up to 2117 beds

# Points of Interest

- 333<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Regiment
  - Marker located between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets on 'I' Streets
  - African-American 155 mm howitzer regiment
    - Includes 333<sup>rd</sup> FA BN and 969<sup>th</sup> FA BN
  - Activated at Camp Gruber in August 1942
  - Pivotal role in the Siege of Bastogne
  - First African-American combat unit to receive Presidential Unit Citation

# Points of Interest

- Pray Ranch Historic District
  - Marker located in front of Pray Ranch (Bldg 900), intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Europe Road
  - Constructed ca 1936 by Burt Pray
  - Unique construction for area
    - No expense spared
  - Commanding Officer's quarters during WWII
  - Eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

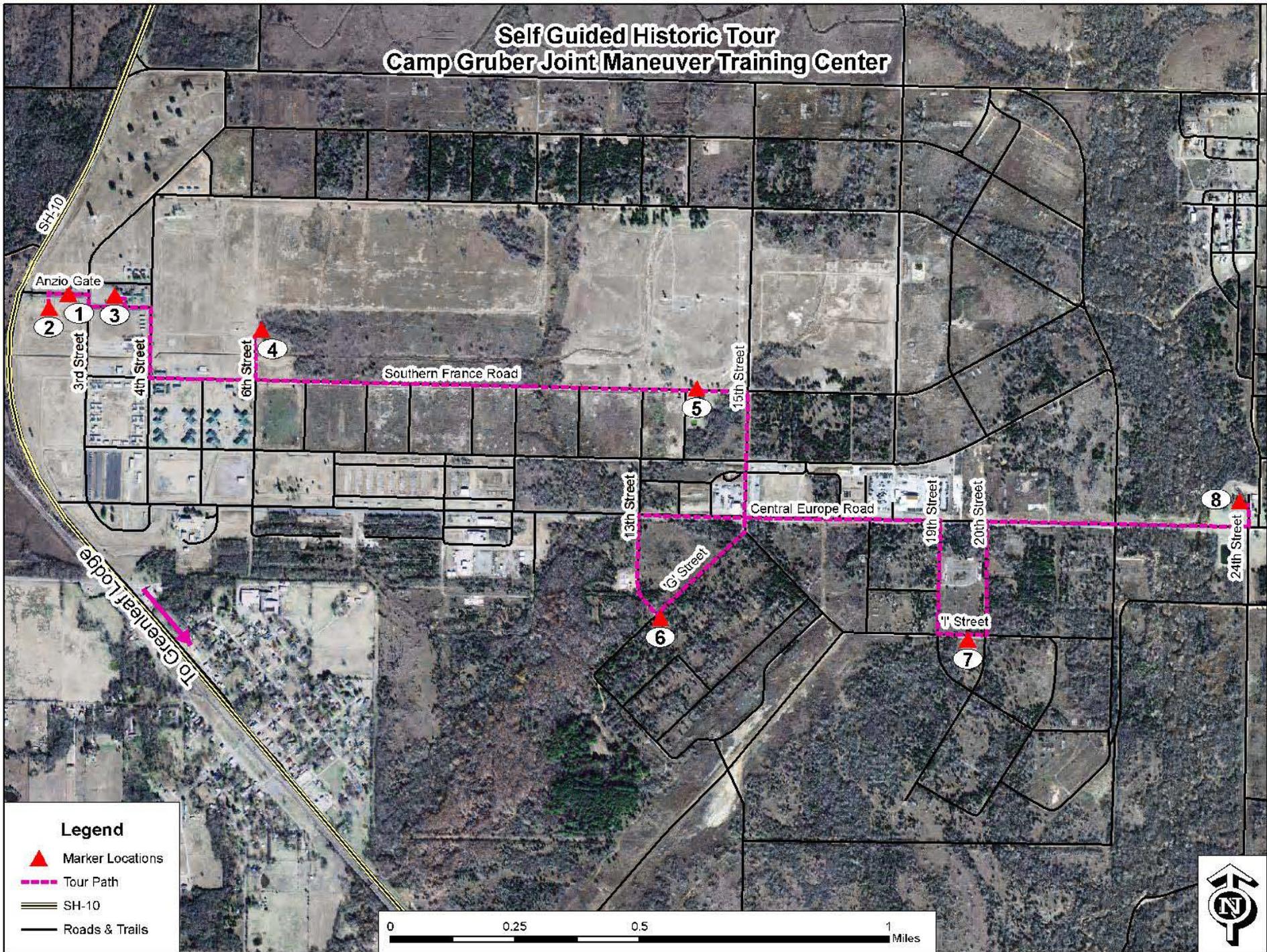
# Points of Interest

- Greenleaf Lodge
  - Constructed by WPA in 1937 as part of Greenleaf Lake Recreation Area
  - Project part of larger Cookson Hills Redevelopment Project by Resettlement Administration, USDA
  - Typical Rustic park architecture
    - Blends in with natural setting
  - Eligible for inclusion on NRHP

# Future Plans

- Provide suitable area to exhibit donated items
- Acquire copies of historic photographs from National Archives
- Expand tour by adding more pre-WWII points of interest
- Potential future points of interest:
  - Mount Zion School
  - Oak Grove School
  - Manard Baptist Church/School/Cemetery
  - Boudinot Homestead

# Self Guided Historic Tour Camp Gruber Joint Maneuver Training Center



## Legend

- ▲ Marker Locations
- Tour Path
- == SH-10
- Roads & Trails

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



# Questions