

Mixed Feelings Voiced Over Name Change

By Sentinel Service

CAPE KENNEDY — The huge white sign read simply "Cape Kenn . . ." The black paint was neither dry nor finished.

But workmen already were tugging laboriously against the blustering wind to haul the incomplete tribute to its permanent station atop a small pass gate.

So hasty was this task of rechristening America's No. 1 moonport.

THE TIME was 11:50 a.m. The ceremony had been scheduled at 11:30 a.m., but it was some minutes after that hour when a truck came roaring up with the partially completed sign.

It was hauled atop the gate guard station and Bernard Roberts, an illustrator for Pan Am, climbed up to complete his handiwork.

The tiny crowd stepped back to admire the results:

CAPE KENNEDY MISSILE TEST ANNEX

Officially, at least, Cape Canaveral was no more.

Caught up in a nationwide wave of honor to the memory of the martyred John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the moonport became—by decree of President Lyndon B. Johnson—Cape Kennedy.

Superficially, the change was made easily and willingly enough, but brushing aside four centuries of tradition will be a difficult, if not impossible, task.

Other changes to highway and mariners maps, stationery and the like, will take much longer.

THE NAME Canaveral probably will be retained by the many businesses, clubs, and even housing subdivisions found throughout the area.

Numerous signs along Florida 401 which winds to the Cape still carry innumerable Canaveral monickers such as Cape Canaveral Causeway, Canaveral Port Authority, Canaveral Pier and the City of Cape Canaveral.

The majority of the numerous reporters who covered the story are members of the Canaveral Press Club. Muttered one of them, "I now have about 4,000 pieces of stationery which are useless."

Roberts, who has been with Pan Am for some nine years, estimated he has written the name Cape Canaveral on more than 2,000 signs.

"I SUPPOSE they will all have to be changed now," he said.

Asked how he felt about the change, he replied simply, "I guess its a nice gesture."

Gen. Harry Sands, vice commander of the Air Force Missile Test Center, attended the little ceremony at the south gate to the Cape and said "our reaction is very favorable."

He said, "this substitution of one world famous name for another is a tribute both to our late President and to the spaceport which will bear his name. His frequent visits demonstrated his deep personal interest in the missile and space activities so vital to our national security and national goals."

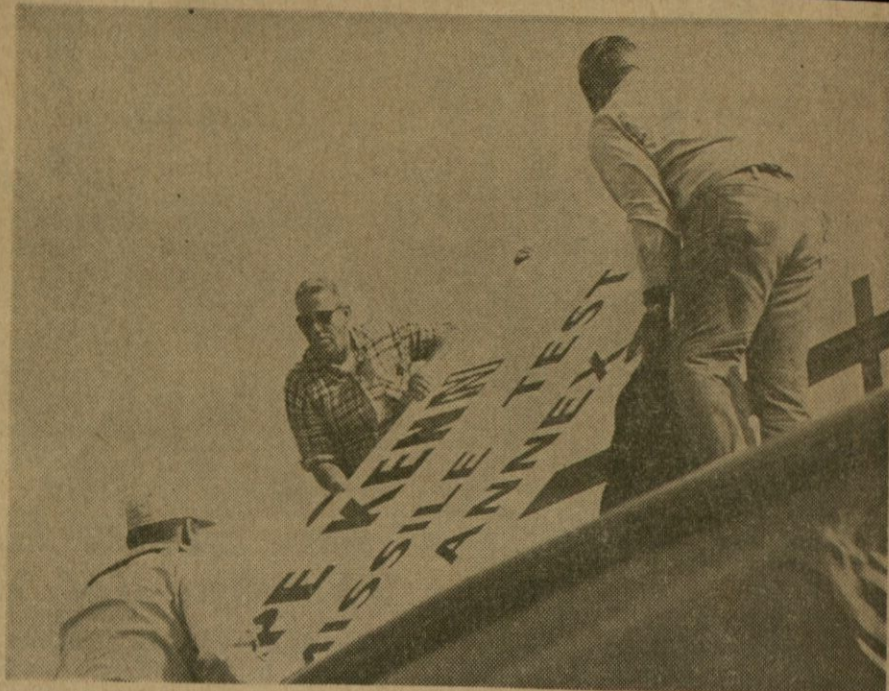
George Cherniak, Florida division manager of Space Technology Laboratories, said, "It is the most lasting tribute we could pay to a courageous man who had great insight into the future. As we conquer space, his name will be with us."

KURT DEBUS, director of the Cape's launch operations center for the federal space agency, said he considered it "fitting" in memory of the young leader who, 2½ years ago, gave this rocket base its most important mission — that of sending men to the moon this decade.

And Sands turned to Roberts for a compliment on the black-lettered memorial now anchored by three-inch nails to the top of the pass shack:

"You paint a beautiful sign."

But not a unanimously popular one. For as a growing number of observers here asked, "Isn't this beginning to get just a little out of hand?"



(Sentinel Photos by Jeanne Snyder)

**INCOMPLETE NEW SIGN (TOP) RUSHED INTO POSITION
... Bernard Roberts completes lettering (bottom) afterwards**



Many loved it. Many others were flatly opposed. But mostly, the reaction was one of mixed emotions. The renaming of the base to read "John F. Kennedy Space Center" was warmly welcomed.

The elimination of "Canaveral" was something else again. That is a piece of history, and people traditionally are reluctant to sacrifice anything so firmly anchored in antiquity.

Moonporters seemed no different.

THE CHANGE found immediate favor with newcomers to the area and with military and civilian workers on the vast space age complex.

Opposition was voiced by area pioneers.

One of these, Gus Edwards, said of the change, "I don't favor it. I think it would be unwise in view of the fact that all of the mariners of the world know the name of Cape Canaveral."

Edwards suggested the late President be honored by renaming the Cape's Nova area — the thousands of acres now being groomed as this country's launch site for lunar exploration.

The City of Cape Canaveral apparently will not change its name. It is a community of about 4,200, just south of Cape Kennedy.

Councilman Eugene Jandreau said retention of the name City of Cape Canaveral would help eliminate confusion between the city and the Cape.

WHETHER THE postmark Cape Canaveral, Fla., affixed at the second class post office in the City of Cape Canaveral, would be changed was uncertain.

Lyle Meadows, the officer in charge, said he had not received information from Washington.

A post office employee, who asked that her name not be used, said, "I would rather not say how I feel about the change." But she said the post office had received many requests yesterday for letters to receive the first postmark "Cape Kennedy."

The Cape itself receives mail service through Patrick Air Force, which has a branch office from the Cocoa Post Office.

Legal sources at Tallahassee said no state legal action was necessary to switch the Cape's name to Kennedy, since it is a geographical location and not a political entity.

Only the state legislature would have authority to re-name Port Canaveral and other entities which had been set up by state action, however.

Cape Canaveral Had That Name For 400 Years

ST. AUGUSTINE (AP) — The piece of Florida real estate which was just rechristened Cape Kennedy received its former name of Cape Canaveral in the 16th Century, a historian said yesterday.

Rev. Michael V. Gannon, director of the St. Augustine Mission of Nombre de Dios and a Catholic historian, said maps as early as 1564 show the name Cape Canaveral.

In Spanish it means sugar cane field or bamboo reed field.

Father Gannon said canaveral is used to designate a sugar cane field in Latin America today.

THE HISTORIAN said Pedro Menendez de Aviles, who founded the city of St. Augustine on Sept. 8, 1565, used the name Cape Canaveral in a letter written a few days after the founding.

The letter informed the king of Spain that the Menendez expedition first sighted the Florida peninsula at Cape Canaveral.

Final Name Change Action In Progress

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall said yesterday legal procedure changing the name of Cape Canaveral to Cape Kennedy will be completed when the Board on Geographic Names publishes the change.

Acting White House Press Secretary Andrew T. Hatcher said President Johnson will follow up by issuing an executive order renaming the Cape and the space flight installation there.

Hatcher added that the Interior Department would be in charge of further procedures involved in the change.