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Gowen gets its gate back

Story and recent photo by Maj. Chris Borders,
IDNG Public Affairs

If you have driven past Gowen Field's Memorial Park recently, you may have noticed a new addition of an old artifact – Gowen Field's historic main gate pillars.

Moving the pillars entered the planning state nearly two years ago when retired Command Sgt. Maj. Ken Downing and Lt. Col. retired Mervin McConnel, son of retired Idaho Adjutant General Mervin G. McConnel, decided to head up the project.

Sgt. 1st Class Erin Smith of the Idaho Army National Guard and Tech. Sgt. David Bareither of the Idaho Air National Guard were key individuals behind the coordination of some of the project's details. "I called around



Archived photo of Gowen Field's original main gate, which was located outside of Gowen Field's current boundaries.

to a few contractors, looking for help. Joe Perkins of Perkins Construction agreed to donate some time and resources to the project and charged us only for things that he couldn't provide like the crane rental," Smith said.

The pillars' journey from their

original location, about a quarter-mile from Gowen Field's current main gate, began in 2003 when then-Adjutant General Larry Lafrenz had them moved to the Idaho History Museum where they remained until last month.



Tech. Sgt. David Bareither (left); Sgt 1st Class Erin Smith and Joe Perkins of Perkins Construction discuss a job-well-done after getting Gowen Field's historic cinder gates placed back on Gowen Field soil March 19.

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