



The CDSG Newsletter



The Coast Defense Study Group, Inc. – November 2012



Chairman's Message

Chris Zeeman

This time of year is one when we typically give thanks. Here in the Northeast we are thankful that the recent storms have spared the majority of our fragile coast defense sites. I have not heard of any reports from remote locations such as how the dock at Fort Michie fared, or how Fort Mansfield withstood the storm surge. With the exception of the sites just mentioned, I have not heard of any sites being damaged in Long Island Sound or Narragansett Bay.

Unfortunately, the storm had a huge impact on the coastal areas of New York and New Jersey. Places such as the Rockaways (Fort Tilden) and Sandy Hook (Fort Hancock) bore the brunt of the damage. In addition I have seen pictures of extensive flooding at Fort Mott. It may be some time before we can get accurate damage reports from these hard hit areas.

Hopefully the CDSG can take a role in the cleanup and rebuilding. We can help in two ways – first by have members pitch in and volunteer, and second – with the CDSG Fund. Once again we are counting on local members to get involved, keep us updated, and help out the local sites! Finally I would like to announce my appointment as chairperson for the upcoming year.

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Preservation Committee Report

Gordon Bliss

There are two new items that I will focus on this time.

The Gateway National Recreation Area is preparing a new General Management Plan. Part of it is choosing different alternatives for the focus of development. Between the alternatives, the one favoring historical sites is the best for preserving the various batteries and other coast defense related structures. However, even this plan only looks at preserving a small number of these. The majority of the concrete batteries are relegated to what are labeled as "Ruins Zones". For example, at Sandy Hook (Fort Hancock), only Batteries Potter and Gunnison are indicated as historical resources, the rest, including the main gun line ("nine-gun battery") are in ruins zones. Though finding out about this late, the CDSG has sent a comment letter favoring the historical-oriented alternative but expressing concern about the fate of other coast defense resources; and has asked to be included in the further development of this plan. Given the effects of Hurricane Sandy, which heavily affected most parts of Gateway, further work on the plan may be on hold until the parks are cleaned up and effects of the storm fully assessed. For those interested, details of the plan alternatives can be found at: <http://www.nps.gov/gate/parkmgmt/gmp-2012.htm>. My thanks to Terry McGovern for helping to follow up on this.

CDSG Meeting and Tour Calendar

Please advise Terry McGovern of any additions or changes at tcmcgovern@att.net.

CDSG Annual Conference

April 24-28, 2013

Pensacola/Mobile

David Ogden, david_ogden@nps.gov

CDSG Special Tour

June 8 - 19, 2013

Norway

Terry McGovern, tcmcgovern@att.net

Proposed CDSG Special Tour

February 2014

Manila Bay, the Philippines

Andy Grant, wekagg@verizon.net

CDSG Annual Conference

October 2014

Tentatively Los Angeles - San Diego HDs

CDSG Annual Conference

April 2015

Tentatively Delaware River HD

Proposed CDSG Special Tour

June 2015

Panama Canal Zone

Terry McGovern, tcmcgovern@att.net

Other Meetings and Tours

February 8 - 22, 2013

Great Fortress Tour to India/Rajasthan

ICOFORT Germany Tour

Hans-Rudolf Neumann, hrv.neumann@t-online.de

March 6 - 7, 2013

Forts at Risk - London

Fortress Study Group Meeting

Bill Clements, bill_clements@btinternet.com

May 2013

Southern Ireland

Fortress Study Group Overseas Tour

Bill Clements, bill_clements@btinternet.com

May 2013
Council on America's Military Past Annual Conference
Dayton, OH
Martin Gordon, martinkgordon@gmail.com

May 8 - 12, 2013
Villach, Austria
Interfest e.V. Annual Conference
Florian Brouwers, brouwers@t-online.de

August 31 - September 3, 2013
Southwest Wales
Fortress Study Group Annual Conference
Jonathon Berry, psgeditor@hotmail.com

August 31 - September 8, 2013
Slovenia and Palmanova
ECCOFORT Reg. Association Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neuman, hrv.neumann@t-online.de

September 2013
Zitadelle Spandau, Germany
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Festungsforschung Annual Meeting
Andreas Kupka, anja.reichert@uni-trier.de

October 2013
Utrecht, the Netherlands
International Fortress Council Annual Meeting
Luc Fellay, lucfellay@bluewin.ch

February 2014
Sultanate of Oman
ICOFORT Germany Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neumann, hrv.neumann@t-online.de

May 2014
Eastern Pyrenees, Spain and France
Fortress Study Group Overseas Tour
Mike and Ann Brock, kjp22@supanet.com

August 30 - September 6, 2014
Pula & Croatia
ECCOFORT Reg. Association Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neuman, hrv.neumann@t-online.de

September 2014
East Anglia
Fortress Study Group Annual Conference

September 2014
Koln (Cologne)
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Festungsforschung Annual Meeting
Andreas Kupka, anja.reichert@uni-trier.de

October 2014
London
International Fortress Council Annual Meeting
Luc Fellay, lucfellay@bluewin.ch

May 2015
South Portugal
Fortress Study Group Overseas Tour
Charles Blackwood, casemate@fsgfort.com

August/September, 2015
Verona, Italy
ECCOFORT Reg. Association Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neuman, hrv.neumann@t-online.de

Also new are further developments in the process of selling Plum Island (Fort Terry), NY. The GSA has held public hearings in CT and NY about their plan to sell the island – the intent is to sell it as a single parcel. Most of the attendees were there to voice their interest in preserving it as a wildlife refuge, but the CDSG also had a presence at the meeting. Any sale is still a number of years off as the lab is still there and isn't moving very soon. But we need to keep alert for further developments. My thanks to Chris Zeeman for keeping up on this and attending the Connecticut meeting.

I finally got out to Fort Andrews in Boston Harbor to see the results of the demolition project there. All of the wooden buildings are completely gone, except for the chapel. One of the brick barracks has been removed as well as most of the post headquarters – all that is left of it is the perimeter foundation wall a few feet high. There are four brick quarters left, along with two of the barracks and most of the other brick buildings. The remaining brick buildings have all been cleaned up, the window openings sealed with boards, and the roofs repaired and/or patched to make them waterproof. The guardhouse was open as a visitor center with exhibits and information handouts available. Most of the area where the demolished quarters and hospital were has been

smoothed and grassed with the foundation outlines still visible. I was told by one person that they may use this area for camping. On the tactical side, none of the battery structures has been touched. The area behind the two rapid-fire batteries has been cleared and is being developed as a yurt camp. The brick fire control structure near that was in the process of being cleaned up, the windows and door had plywood in them – I assume they will thus seal it; and the outside steps had been removed. Overall, though the loss of the structures is regrettable, the wooden ones were effectively beyond saving, and the fort looks much less derelict than it used to. The one big step left is if the batteries can get cleaned up as well.

My congratulations to those that have saved 3 of the 16-inch gun barrels – Golden Gate NRA/Battery Townsley, Cape Henlopen State Park, and the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR. These have been covered by other articles in the newsletter, so I won't go into the details here.

On the other ongoing issues such as Fort Monroe, the Presidio Parkway project, and the Washington state parks; I don't have anything new to report at the current time but will continue to follow them. In Panama, the condition and situation of most of the coast defense structures continues to go downhill. The article in this newsletter talks to the batteries on the Atlantic side and

from the reports that I have heard, the situation on the Pacific side is much worse.

If you have a Preservation issue, or for further information on any of the items I've mentioned, contact the Preservation Committee Chair, Gordon Bliss, at preservation@cdsg.org.

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News from the Forts: CDSG Representatives Update

Karl Fritz and Steve Kobylk

Update from the Whidby Island, Washington In General

Washington State parks is out of state supported funds as of June 2013. The Discover Parking Pass sales are way below projected sales. State Parks will request between 15-17 million dollars in the last gasp effort to stay afloat in January when the next newly elected legislature finalizes the state's budget. All peak season Park Rangers and all Park Aids have been laid off. State Parks is developing a system whereby volunteers would carry out most state park duties except law enforcement and some administrative functions. So far no state legislature people (or Island County officials) up for election or reelection in the counties affected by coast artillery-related parks has given public support for the parks. Parks are now considered business units and have to come up with creative ways to generate revenue. Public statements from the State Parks Commission indicate no current plans to close any park. Fort Casey and Fort Ebey are no longer independent parks. They are part of the Central Whidbey State Park which consists of five of the six parks on Whidbey Island. Therefore funding is based upon one park not five.

Fort Ebey

Fort Ebey State Park remains partially open with zero permanent off-season staff. There is a volunteer park host – primarily to keep the hiking trails open. Law enforcement park rangers and emergency maintenance are covered by the Fort Casey office when available. The campground has been closed. No funds are available for any military aspects of the park including removing most graffiti. The battery lighting project has been halted until next summer since no regular security and maintenance staff is currently available to check on the battery. Good news is a Boy Scout troop project did a great job cleaning out the BC station in October.

Fort Casey

Fort Casey remains fully open with a permanent law enforcement park ranger, admin and maintenance staff. HQ for the Central Whidbey Park is also maintained in the ordnance building. No funds are available for military emplacements, guns, or structures. What little funds are available go fully to upgrading staff housing and office (full time and voluntary) and maintenance housing and support buildings. The crumbling Battery Moore concrete referenced in a previous CDSG Newsletter is being dealt with of by hammering and knocking down the loose concrete that could be considered a safety hazard and disposing of it. No repairs of any kind are currently planned. The 10-inch gun platform railings are almost rusted through. State Parks does not consider it a hazard yet so no repairs or upkeep is currently

planned. Volunteers are not allowed to perform repair on the guns beyond scraping and painting. Anything else could be considered a union and professional safety qualification violation.

The good news: Boy Scout Troop 18 of Mukilteo, WA, has adopted Fort Casey as its prime project location. So far this year they have cleared a couple acres equivalent of brush from around the fort emplacements. From the parados bridge to the 1918 switchboard-room entrance they have cleared and cleaned from the road-side gutter to the exterior slope of the parapet of Battery Valleau and Battery Trevor; cleaned and opened all the gutters and associated drains and the vertical battery drains; Opened drain, cleaned, scrubbed, and painted Battery Trevor BC as well as the Searchlight No. 10 & 11 Power House. Cleaned and repainted the outside of Battery Kingsbury and Battery Moore Fire Control stations.

The other good news relates to the Admiralty Head Lighthouse at Fort Casey. Through lighthouse volunteer coordination, grants, and the local high schools, a completely new lighthouse lantern room has been constructed and installed, based up original 1902 drawings. This gave me the idea to contact and work with the same high school shop classes on fort projects. They are not legally allowed to work at the fort for various reasons but can do projects in their respective schools. I have, with state park approval, approached and am working with the schools on several projects for the current class with more to follow. The high schools are converting our pallet of 155 mm powder cans to 6-inch powder cans and constructing two sets of staves, rammers, and swabs for 10-inch guns and two staves for the 3-inch guns. Metal shop is also making a hinge pin for the 3-inch breech as well as several shot tongs.

Camp Casey:

Seattle Pacific University has decided to renovate/restore their fort buildings over time instead of constructing new ones. The interiors of the buildings will be required by state law to be brought up to current OSHA safety standards and be ADA compliant. However, SPU has decided to keep the exterior of the buildings, both 1904 and WWII, as original as possible except for ADA compliance. This is good news for our interests. I have been working with them as the CDSG and state resident expert to satisfy the Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve concerns about historic structures. The buildings currently being renovated are the recreation hall, one mess hall, and two barracks buildings. They will still be used for their original intended purposes when complete.

3rd Update - Special CDSG Tour to the Coast Defenses of Norway

June 9 to 19, 2013

Terrance McGovern

As announced in the *CDSG Newsletter* last year, our long-time CDSG member in Norway, Svein Wiiger Olsen, and Terry McGovern have been organizing a special CDSG tour to the Coast Defenses of Norway for June 9 to 19, 2013. This once-in-a-lifetime tour will visit the world's best collection of surviving coast artillery. We will focus on visiting the surviving large-caliber guns, as well as other wonderful coast defense forts located near these big guns

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Top Ten Reasons to Attend the CDSG Annual Conference in Pensacola-Mobile, April 24 – 28, 2013

David Ogden, Park Ranger
Gulf Islands National Seashore Area

Below are ten good reasons why all CDSG members should attend the 2013 CDSG Annual Conference in Pensacola-Mobile from April 24 to April 28. Please see registration flyer attached to this CDSG Newsletter to attend. See you in Pensacola-Mobile!!



Vara Battery's 38cm Gun No. 2 and bunker of No. 1 Emplacement at the Møvik Fortress near Kristiansand, Norway

(Oslofjord, Kristiansand, Trondheim, and Harstad). These big guns (all larger than 11-inch) are located throughout the country, so travel times are long and costs will be high (a gallon of gasoline is almost US\$10). The tour will be 10 days long plus flight time to and from Norway. Organizing this tour is the most difficult tour to date. It involves three airline flights within Norway, three separate rental cars, six hotel reservations, 12 ferry rides, 32 meals, and arrangements to visit over 50 defense sites. With the 27 CDSG members currently signed up for this tour, you have a logistic headache. While the tour will be demanding both in miles covered and sites visited, you will have a chance to see the best coast defense sites and fortifications of Norway (from the 17th to the 21st centuries), as well as great natural beauty.

We have a few remaining spaces for this tour, so if you want to go you need to let me know right away at tcmgovern@att.net. We will need a \$1,100 deposit from you right away. As we are traveling on small regional aircrafts, as well as locating hotels that have enough rooms for our group, we will need to arrange these items on a group basis. The estimated cost for these group arrangements is US\$2,500 based on two people in a room. Additionally, tour members will need to pay for shared rental cars during the tour. Those traveling together will share the cost of the rental car, gasoline, parking, ferries, and tolls. Beside rental cars and associated costs, you will also need to bring funds for all lunches and most dinners (the hotels provide breakfasts). You will also be asked to pay for site admissions, handouts, and guided tours. You should factor in other personal costs (books, maps, drinks, batteries, etc.). The total cost in-country (local flights, hotels, rental cars, ferries, tolls, guided tours, meals, gasoline, etc.) is estimated to be about \$3,800 (double rooms). Finally, you also need to arrange to get to Oslo and then back home. The current cost of a round trip flight from Washington, DC, to Oslo, Norway, is about US\$1,020 on Icelandair via Reykjavik. Therefore, the total cost of the tour will be about \$4,800. We are also arranging an add-on tour to Sweden to visit the defenses of Stockholm. Sweden built a series of defenses between 1700 and 2000 to protect the approaches to Stockholm. This add-on will last about 3 additional days at an extra cost.

Please contact us with your questions:

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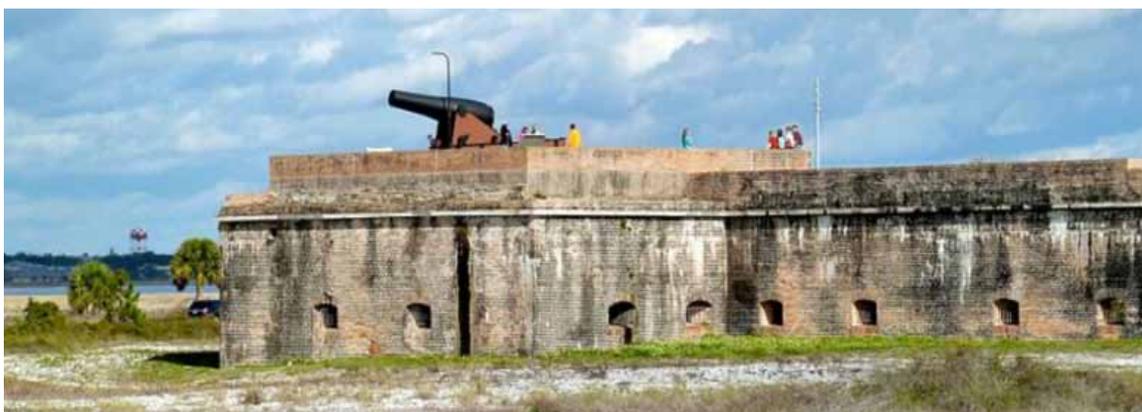




In reverse order:

- Four wonderful Third-System forts (Pickens, Barrancas, Morgan, Gaines).
- A rare 15-inch Rodman on a central-pintle carriage atop a bastion at Fort Pickens.

- The Advanced Redoubt (3rd System), which is really a substantial land fort rather than a redoubt.
- A unique Endicott-Taft emplacement at Fort Morgan built to test the effectiveness of emplacement design against battleship gunfire.
- A rare 155 mm M1918 GPF field gun once mounted on the Panama mount atop one of Fort Morgan's bastions.
- Rare opportunity to visit the interior of Batteries Cullum-Sevier at Fort Pickens (normally fenced off to visitors due to the deterioration of the concrete).
- Battery Langdon at Fort Pickens, built as a long-range 12-inch open barbette battery and casemated during World War II.
- Two rare 6-inch M1905 guns on shielded barbette carriages at Battery 234.
- One rare 6-inch M1903 gun on disappearing carriage at Battery Cooper.
- The opportunity to meet with and discuss coast artillery and fortifications with fellow CDSG members.



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CDSG Membership Committee's Advertising Campaign

Terrance McGovern



The CDSG Membership Committee and CDSG Board of Directors have undertaken a magazine advertisement campaign this fall to make the CDSG better known in the military history community and to gain new CDSG members. The membership committee designed a standard ad (see below) to appear in several commercial military journals (*Military History*, *World War II*, *Military Trader*, and *Military Vehicles*) in October, November, and December. This campaign is timed to gain new members for 2013.

CDSG membership has been falling over the past several years and we feel that it important to try to maintain and renew our membership. The CDSG can only achieve its goals (the study, preservation, and interpretation of fortifications) through the strength of its membership. We need to have an active membership to attending our conferences/tours, write articles, carry out work parties, represent the CDSG at local coast defense sites, etc. These objectives will only be achieved by replacing lost members and finding new members willing to volunteer their time to carry out our activities and help run our organization in the coming years.

We would like to see each member recruit one new member each year so we would have no need to advertise but this has not been the case. Please spread the word about the value of membership in the CDSG and try to bring in one new member each year. We also urge members to seek out these magazines to see these ads in action. If members have ideas on other good advertising channels for the CDSG, please advise Terry McGovern at tcmcgovern@att.net.

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CDSG Still Looking for Homes for Five 16-inch/50 Mark 7 Barrels

Barrels of the USS *Iowa* and USS *New Jersey* Need Good Homes Soon or Will Be Scrapped
Terrance McGovern

In June 2011 the CDSG was asked to help find safe homes for eight historic 16-inch/50 Mark 7 barrels located at St. Juliens Creek Naval Annex. Otherwise, the barrels would cut into 8-foot sections and scrapped. As discussed in the August 2011 *CDSG Newsletter*, the US Navy is purging all the USS *Iowa* class materi-

als in their inventory and as the navy felt they had allowed plenty of time for qualified organizations to claim these barrels, it was now time to liquidate them (as they did for 14 similar barrels in storage at Hawthorne, NV, in June 2011). The CDSG was able to convince the navy to give us more time to find organizations that would both be able to take care of a 16-inch/50 barrel and pay for the cost of moving a 70-foot object weighing about 120 tons. Not an easy task! As these barrels are similar to the ones once located in WWII 16-inch coast defense batteries, we approached the current owners of such sites to see if they would be interested in preserving and interpreting a barrel at their site. Also, since these barrels saw service during World War II and Korea, we reached out to those who would have interest in displaying a barrel from such famous ships as the USS *Missouri*, USS *Iowa*, and USS *New Jersey*.

We were able to inspire three groups to take up the challenge of raising funds and organizing transportation. The navy held the barrels on a month-to-month basis as long as these groups were making progress on the move. It was great accomplishment to have three barrels leave St. Juliens. Their new homes are Cape Henlopen State Park, DE (former Battery Smith at Fort Miles), the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge at Cape Charles, VA (former Battery Winslow at Fort John Custis), and Phoenix, AZ, as part of that state capital's World War II memorial (joining a 14-inch barrel off the USS *Arizona*).

The task of finding good homes for the remaining 5 barrels (four off the USS *New Jersey* and one off the USS *Iowa*) is even more difficult, as the most likely candidates have already declined to take on the financial and organizational effort to move a 16-inch/50 barrel to their site. There is a possibility that a US Air Force fuse testing project will require the use of three barrels, but that will still leave two barrels to save. One possibility we are trying to develop with the State of Virginia is First Landing State Park at Cape Henry, VA, (former Battery Ketchum at Fort Story). We need your help in finding a good home for these remaining barrels as the US Navy is only holding these barrels on a month-to-month basis. They could be auction off or scrapped with only 30 days notice. Please advise Terry McGovern at 703/934-3661 or tcmcgovern@att.net if you have a good home in mind for these 16-inch/50 barrels.

In the photograph below are the five remaining 16-inch/50 Mark 7 barrels at St. Juliens Creek Naval Annex waiting for a new home. In the foreground is where the three USS *Missouri* barrel once sat for 60 years.



We are also now looking for a good home are four 8-inch Mark 14 guns. These barrels are located in Suffield, Alberta, Canada, where they were used in experimental testing. These last remaining 8" Mk 14 guns are going to be scrapped soon if no one takes an interest in them, as the Canadian Armed Forces has an active project to dispose of these items. These were the type of guns that armed two early aircraft carriers as well as many of the 1920s to 1930s treaty cruisers. On the cruisers, they saw extensive action during WWII and a number of these ships were sunk. The Canadian armed forces would be happy to provide these barrels to qualified organizations, but the receiving organization would need to pay for transportation (a barrel weighs about 30 tons so truck transport is possible). Below is the service history of these guns. They were used in key naval battles in the Pacific War.

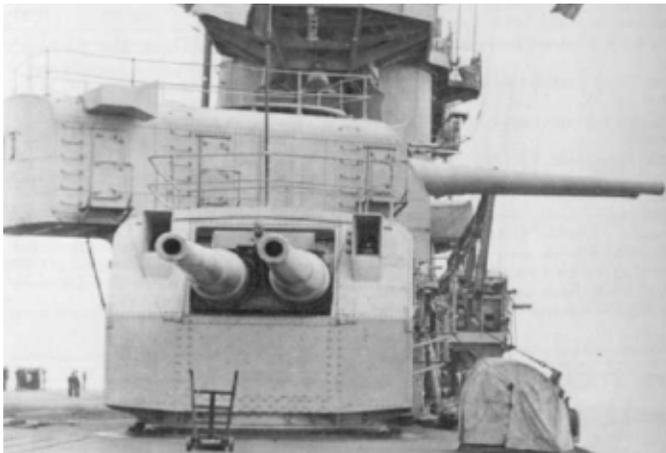
Barrel 481 was on USS *Portland* (CA-33) by November 1934, and was last recorded on the ship on September 25, 1942.

Barrel 481 (as 481L) was on USS *Louisville* (CA-28) on July 10, 1945. It was not on the ship in February 1945.

Barrel 492 was on USS *Portland* (CA-33) by November 1934, and was last recorded on the ship on September 25, 1942.

Barrel 502L was on USS *Minneapolis* (CA-36) in January 1942. It had been on the ship since at least September 1935.

Here is a view of these types of barrels on the after mounts on USS *Lexington* CV-2 in January 1927.



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Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge Seeks Funds to move 16-inch/50 Mark 7 Barrel to Battery Winslow

CDSG Fund Challenges Members to Match our Donation
Terrance McGovern

The CDSG Board of Directors recently approved at \$1,500 donation from the CDSG Fund to the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS) to help pay for the final steps in moving and mounting a historic 16-inch/50 Mark 7 barrel at Cape Charles, the former site of Fort John Custis. USFWS staff have worked quickly to put together a plan requesting one of the 16-inch/50 barrels – No. 393 – that was on the battleship, USS *Missouri*, the ship where the Japanese signed surrender docu-

ments Sept. 2, 1945, ending World War II. This barrel is one of eight once mounted on *Iowa*-class battleships and stored at St. Julien's Creek Naval Annex, part of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, since the 1950s.

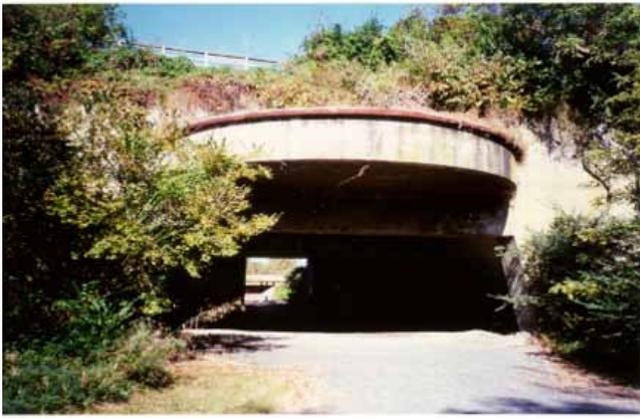
The USFWS submitted a transfer/ transportation plan to the U.S. Navy in late 2011 and this plan received approval by the navy in January 2012. Alan Stanz, head of visitor services at the refuge at that time, and Susan Rice, the refuge manager, were able to convince USFWS that acquiring this barrel would be an excellent addition to the visitor's experience at the refuge and they had funds from visitor's fees and sales to pay for the move (at least as far as Cape Charles). Working with the Fort Miles Historical Association (FMHA) and Delaware State Parks, the USFWS was able to arrange for both their 16-inch/50 barrels to be lifted on trucks to take them to railroad cars that would be then transported on a barge across the Chesapeake Bay to Cape Charles, VA (the barrels already have their own cradles). The FMHA raised enough funds for their railroad car to then be transported to Lewes by rail; there it would be removed by crane and loaded onto a truck to be taken to the state park. As reported in the May 2012 *CDSG Newsletter*, the FMHA's 16-inch/50 barrel reached its new home, but USFWS's barrel remained in the rail yard at Cape Charles awaiting more funding to move it the last ten miles to former Battery Winslow at the Refuge.



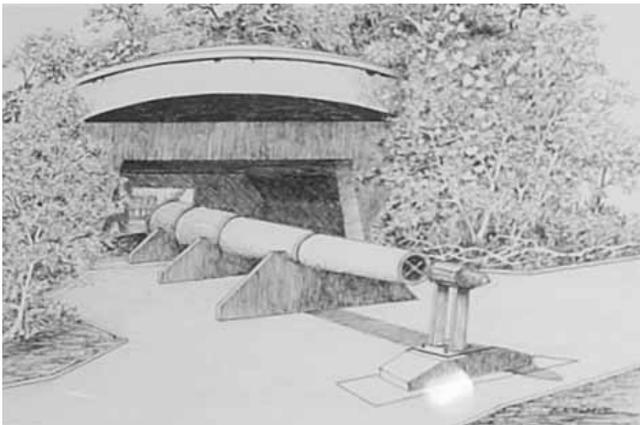
16-inch/50 Mark 7 gun (No. 393) at Cape Charles, VA, rail yard, awaiting more funding to make its way to the refuge – Photo from Norm Scarpulla.

Susan Rice, the refuge manager, has requested assistance from the CDSG Fund to complete its journey. She reports, "*We presently have several companies who are willing to donate materials and time to move the barrel these last ten miles. However, even with the donations of time and materials, it is estimated that the transportation, cleaning, painting, cradle development, production and installation of Plexiglas at the breach and muzzle ends of the barrel, cradle development and placement of a projectile at the muzzle end of the barrel, will cost an additional estimated \$30,000. It is quite a deal!! However, we don't have sufficient funds for this move and would greatly appreciate a grant from the CDSG Fund to help us defray the costs to move the gun barrel to the Refuge.*"

While the CDSG Fund has granted \$1,500 to the project, this is only a start toward their total need for \$30,000. We hope that CDSG as a whole can do more.



Battery Winslow today – Photo by Terry McGovern



Battery Winslow – Artist view of the future site of 16-inch/50 and projectile - USFWS

Therefore, the CDSG Fund challenges our members to match the fund's donation to the USFWS for this project.

We ask that each of you make a dedicated donation to the CDSG Fund for the USFWS 16-inch/50 project. If we can get 30 members to each donate \$50 we can than provide \$3,000, instead of \$1,500 to this worthy cause. Currently no 16-inch coast defense battery has a barrel on display to help visitors better understand the function of these massive structures. Your donation can make this happen. Remember your gift is the CDSG Fund is tax-deductible for federal tax purposes and 100% of your gift will go to the USFWS 16-inch/50 Project (please indicate this purpose on your check). Please send your check made payable to the CDSG Fund as soon as possible as USFWS has lined up donations in kind to move the barrel now but lack the cash to move the barrel. Your check should be mailed to Alan Hardey at 1577 Braeburn Road, Altadena, CA 91001-2603.

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Blunts Point WWII Cannon Rehabilitation Project

June 18, 2012 by American Samoa Ranger

<http://pacificislandparks.com/2012/06/18/blunts-point-wwii-cannon-rehabilitation-project/> 9/7/2012

The National Park of American Samoa, in partnership with the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office (ASHPO), the

American Samoa Visitor's Bureau (ASVB), and Samoana High School, completed a rehabilitation project on the upper gun of the World War II-era Blunts Point Guns above Pago Pago Harbor. The project, which took place on private lands with the blessing of the owners, started in March.



Samoana High School students and park staff after cleaning Blunts Point site. (<http://pacificislandparks.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/picture-520.jpg>)

The gun emplacement, in which the World War II-era gun sits, was flooded with water for decades and the gun was rusting. The team pumped water out of the concrete gun emplacement, shoveled out muck and scum, fixed the clogged drain, painted the gun with rust resistant paint, and repaired the trail to the gun.

The Pago Pago Harbor defenses, of which the Blunts Point guns are the best preserved, were constructed in 1941 by a civilian contractor who hired about 1,000 Samoans to help build the installations. The Fita Fita Guard, the all Samoan company of 100 men and officers, supported the manning of the guns by the US Marine Corps throughout WWII. The guns, and those at Breakers Point across the harbor, provided excellent views and defense of the harbor, Tutuila Island, and the South Pacific Ocean.



One of the park staff working on WWII cannon rehabilitation project. (<http://pacificislandparks.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/picture-426.jpg>)

In addition to the work of the three government agencies, the students of Samoana High School Senior History and Govern-

ment class helped paint the gun and clean the grounds around the guns. Historic Preservation Officer David Herdrich gave a tour of the guns to the students and explained the history of the WWII guns.

“It has been wonderful to see the villages, schools, and local and federal government agencies work together to help preserve this piece of American Samoan and US history and make it available for future generations,” said Mike Reynolds, Superintendent of the National Park of American Samoa.

This project is part of a series of projects that are related to the guns and developing a heritage tourism trail in the Utulei area. Prior to the rehabilitation work the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office conducted an archaeological survey documenting the guns and features associated with the guns. Approximately 76 features were identified besides the guns themselves, such as concrete foundations for housing where the gunners lived and evidence of a railed “skidway” that was used to haul up the guns, construction material, and ammunition for the guns.

The eventual goal is to have the Blunts Point Guns serve as the start of a trail that runs through the mountains above Gatavai and Utulei that will pass by other World War II sites, as well as prehistoric sites such as traditional *tia seu lupe* (“earthen mounds to catch pigeons”). The national park and the ASHPO are currently working with the Office of Samoan Affairs to ensure that landowners are aware of and approve of the larger trail project.

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HMCS *Thiepval*'s “Coast Defense Espionage Mission”

John Eckersley



On outdoor display near the dock in Ucluelet, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is the 12-pounder deck gun of the Battle-class naval trawler HMCS *Thiepval*. [Named for a location at the Battle of the Somme, 1916] The gun was recovered after the vessel hit an uncharted rock and sank in Barkley Sound near Ucluelet (in what is now named *Thiepval* Channel in the Broken Group Islands) in 1930. All of the crew survived the sinking.

In 1929 the *Thiepval* sailed to Hakodate, Japan, via Kodiak, the Aleutians, Kamchatka, and the Kuriles, to deposit supply and fuel caches along the route to be followed by Squadron Leader Archibald Stuart MacLaren and two other RAF officers on their

around-the-world flight attempt. That attempt ended when their Vickers Vulture amphibian aircraft crashed on Bering Island, with the crew being taken aboard the *Thiepval* and transported to the Esquimalt naval base near Victoria, B.C.

A coast defense connection to the *Thiepval* on that voyage to Hakodate and return was its secret mission to look for any evidence of the installation of fortifications, in contravention of the 1922 Washington Naval Treaty, in the U.S. and Japanese territories along the route. Orders for that mission included: gauging the tactical efficiency of American and Japanese garrisons and coastal batteries in Alaska and the Kuriles; pinpointing vulnerable bridges and railways; locating potential bases and seaplane anchorage sites; and determining if the USN was developing facilities at Dutch Harbor and Adak Island.

Reports of the voyage contain no evidence of contravention of the 1922 treaty, though apparently a semi-tame brown bear was taken back to Esquimalt where its spirits were enhanced by a daily ration of gin (see “Bear of Naden” at www.navalandmilitarymuseum.org/contents.html).

Following reports that divers had observed ammunition within the *Thiepval* over the years following the sinking, in 2012 a contractor retained by the Canadian Department of National Defence conducted an underwater survey that located unexploded 12-pounder ammunition within the rusting hulk. Episodes of the series *Bomb Hunters* on the Canadian cable channel History Television in 2012 included segments showing the survey and finding of the ammunition. DND is considering what the appropriate course of action for dealing with the ammunition is.

For further information on the *Thiepval* and its 1924 mission see: “Divers Seek Unexploded Munitions”, *Vancouver Sun*, October 2, 2011; and “Covert Canucks: Intelligence Gathering and the 1924 Voyage of HMCS *Thiepval* in the North Pacific Ocean”, *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Vol. 28, Issue 3 (June 2005), pp. 505-28. The latter article is available through public libraries as an electronic resource.

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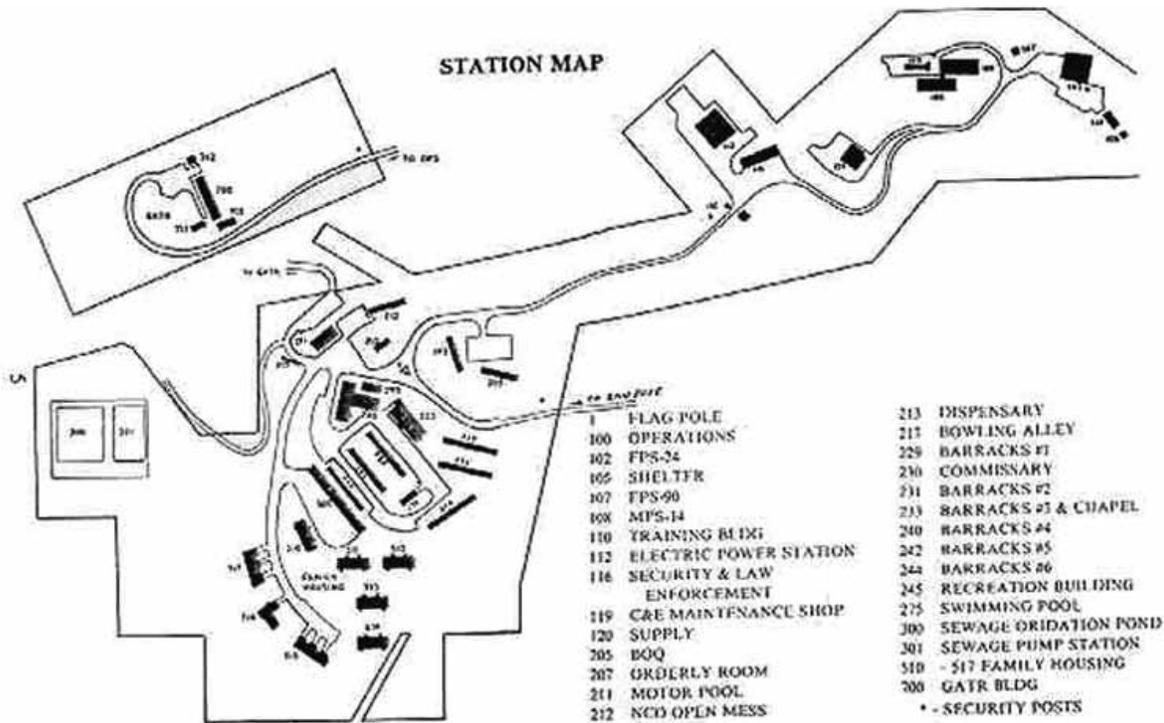
Mount Umunhum Radar Site Plans

Jon Meador

The fate of the radar tower atop of Mount Umunhum in South San Jose will not be decided until the next meeting on October 17. The board responsible for the future of the site approved most of the features of a public park set forth by its planners at a meeting held on September 19.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) owns the land and had meetings beginning in September 2010 to inform the public of their intentions and to receive feedback on the plans to restore the area back to its natural splendor. The agency acquired the land in 1986 that included the former Almaden Air Force Station.

MROSD, a government agency, gets most of their revenue from annual property taxes in a district that stretches from near San Francisco far south to the Sierra Azul Mountains near San Jose, an area that covers 550 square miles. The agency’s purpose is to purchase land, preserve and restore the land to its natural state, provide low-intensity recreation, and promote environmental education.

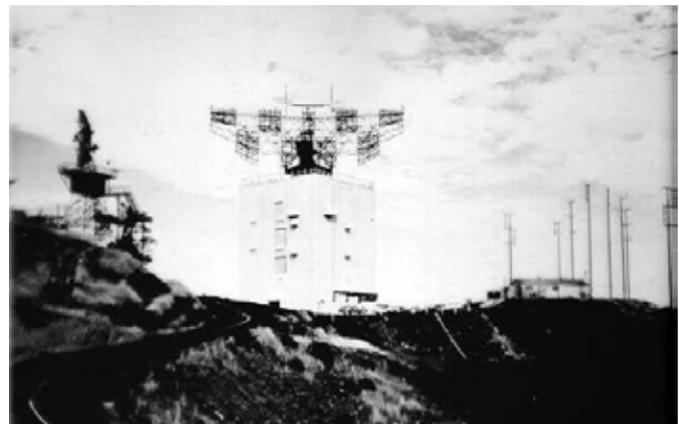


Courtesy of The Online Air-Defense Radar Museum, Radomes, Inc.; used with permission

Since its acquisition, the Almaden Air Force station has been off limits to the public because of environmental and safety concerns due to “asbestos, black mold and lead based paint.” The safety concerns surround buildings that suffered some structural damage during the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989. They are in the midst of clearing out the living and administrative quarters, a gymnasium, and other buildings at the site.

the tower rather than pay the additional costs associated with the other two options. However, cost is only one of the criteria the board of directors will be considering in their final decision.

For six years (1980-1986) the station was in caretaker status and its future was unclear. There was talk of turning the air force station into a correctional facility but the idea was soon scrubbed by the obvious negative reaction from the public. Since then Mount Umunhum and its radar tower has been part of MROSD’s Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve.



Courtesy of The Online Air-Defense Radar Museum, Radomes, Inc.; used with permission

The station operated between 1958 and 1980 and was part of the SAGE network during the Cold War.

There are three options being considered for the radar tower, which was part of the Almaden Air Force Station that kept watch on the horizon for any enemy aircraft that would fly into the sector.

One option was to demolish the structure completely; another was leaving a foundation and a wall to create an “open-air-plaza”. The last option, shoring up the damaged structure and preserving it as a historical site, seems to be the most popular one.



Mt. Umunhum Radar Station when it was active (above) and today (below).

To keep and sustain the 5-story tower would cost MROSD 1.1 million and an additional \$750,000 for preservation over the next four decades.

Due to the agency’s stance on conservation, the board has a difficult decision to make. According to MROSD, the board has not taken any position on the selection of a radar option, even though people have speculated that they were leaning towards demolishing the tower. Engineering estimates have shown that it would be more cost effective to pay \$640,000 to demolish

Actions speak louder than words.

The agency bought additional land recently below Mount Umunhum summit. The purchase adds another 176 acres of open space to the preserve. It cost them 1.4 million to purchase the private owned lands between Guadalupe Reservoir and Almaden Quicksilver Park in Santa Clara County.

The money paid for additional land could have easily gone towards the initial costs of the radar tower and what was leftover could have been placed into a fund to cover the cost of preserving an icon of Silicon Valley.

MROSD can say that the board has made no decision on the three options but one can only read their mission statement to see their true intentions.

Santa Clara County has a lot of areas where hikers, horseback riders, and nature observers can go and get away and be “one with nature.” For those, like me, who are interested in military history there are not many options out there. The closest area where there is a focus on military history is San Francisco, approximately 50 miles north of San Jose. Mount Umunhum’s radar tower would be the first historical landmark in this area that would have a military history.

Ansel Adams is well known for being a photographer/activist who helped make Yosemite a national park. According to a documentary on Ansel Adams by Rick Burns, near the end of his life, Adams came upon a bunker from World War II along the headlands in the San Francisco Bay area and noted that the bunker, in its deteriorated state, stood as something quite beautiful in itself. That bunker was the last photograph he ever took... and these thoughts of his were shared as that last photo was shown.

“It seems that almost anything man-made that endures in time acquires some qualities of the natural. Bleak shapes grow into a kind of magic that cannot easily be ignored.”

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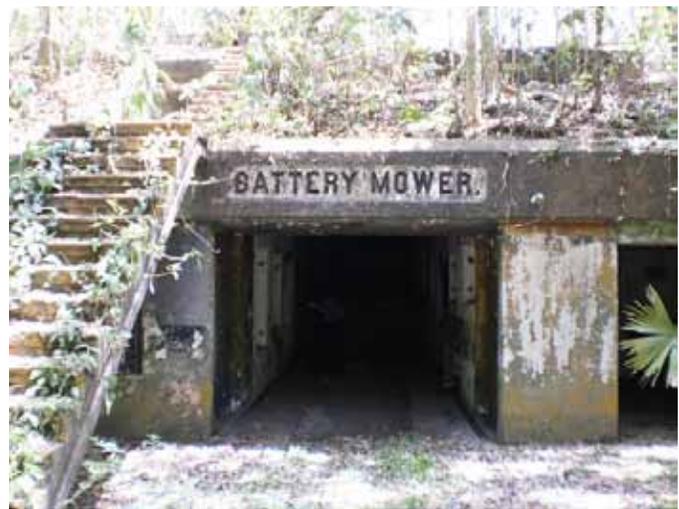
Panama Update

Paolo Sanfilippo

From *Casemate* No. 95 September 2012,
the Fortress Study Group

FORT 26, 1998 carried an article by **Terry McGovern** comprehensively describing the American Defences of the Panama Canal. His photographs were taken in 1993; the Americans left in 1999, since when the fortifications have not fared at all well, suffering neglect and active destruction. **Paolo Sanfilippo** lives in Panama, has a long time interest in the defences and has sent many pictures of which a selection follow, with his thoughts, some philosophical, concentrating on **Fort Sherman** at the Caribbean end of the Canal. Compare Paolo’s photos with Terry’s.

Fort Sherman was established 1911-16 on Point Toro to defend the approach to the Canal at Colon, and the coast to the SW to prevent battleships shelling the locks. Up to WW2 numerous batteries of coast defence guns, mortars and AA were constructed. It is not the place of this short article to go into details. Fort De Lesseps across Limon Bay with Fort Randolph on Margarita Island defended the entrance from approaches from the north and east.



Battery Stanley above, Mower below

A lonely Battery Stanley still keeps its greatness after the departure of the Americans from Fort Sherman. So many years of history have passed since its beginning. The many troops that worked so hard to make this land liveable.

The jungle seems to show the wear and tear of history in its leaves.

Battery Mower: 1912-1915, single 14-in rifle model M 1910 on disappearing carriage mount; range 24,000 yards; underground ammunition storage, plotting room and communication system.

Battery Stanley: 1912-1916, as Battery Mower.

These batteries are in my opinion the most impressive of all. Although their condition is not of the best and they are in total ruin and abandoned to their fate, to see them creates an impression of grandeur and power. While the local climate and vegetation are destroying the structures, they still refuse to die.

Batteries Baird and Howard; 1912-1915, each of four 12-inch mortars (M 191) on model 1896 M III mounts. While a bit better off than other batteries these two are in poor condition, leaving much to be desired.

Access to the batteries is less problematic than others. Some rail lines enter the facility, which makes me suppose they were part of the old railroad that ran the entire length of the base, carrying supplies and troops.



Battery Baird

Battery Kilpatrick, 1913-1916, two 6-in rifles on disappearing carriages.

This battery is the best kept though far from its original state. The zoo in Fort Sherman was previously located outside the main structure, later relocating outside Batteries Baird and Howard. Parallel to the batteries are the barracks of the National Maritime Service of Panama, previously of the US Army.



Battery Kilpatrick

Batteries MacKenzie and Sedgwick Pratt; 1916-1923, each with two 12-inch rifles on barbette mounts [Sedgwick Pratt casemated in 1942], concrete tunnels, magazines and plotting rooms, covered with about 30ft of soil, is well protected; designated in 1965 as alternate command post for Headquarters US Southern Command. Currently in total abandonment. The rainforest has done its job to perfection. The battery is completely covered in vegetation making it very difficult to access it. The access road is in very bad condition and during the rainy season it becomes muddy. The gun pits are covered with concrete, probably from the years 1946-1948, when the guns were dismantled. There was a railway line connecting Batteries Mackenzie and Pratt (Chagres Railroad). The battery is left to its fate and the whims of metal looters have made it a total disaster. The only guardians of it are the bats that inhabit it and who knows what other animal species that haunt the structures as silent witnesses of impending deterioration.

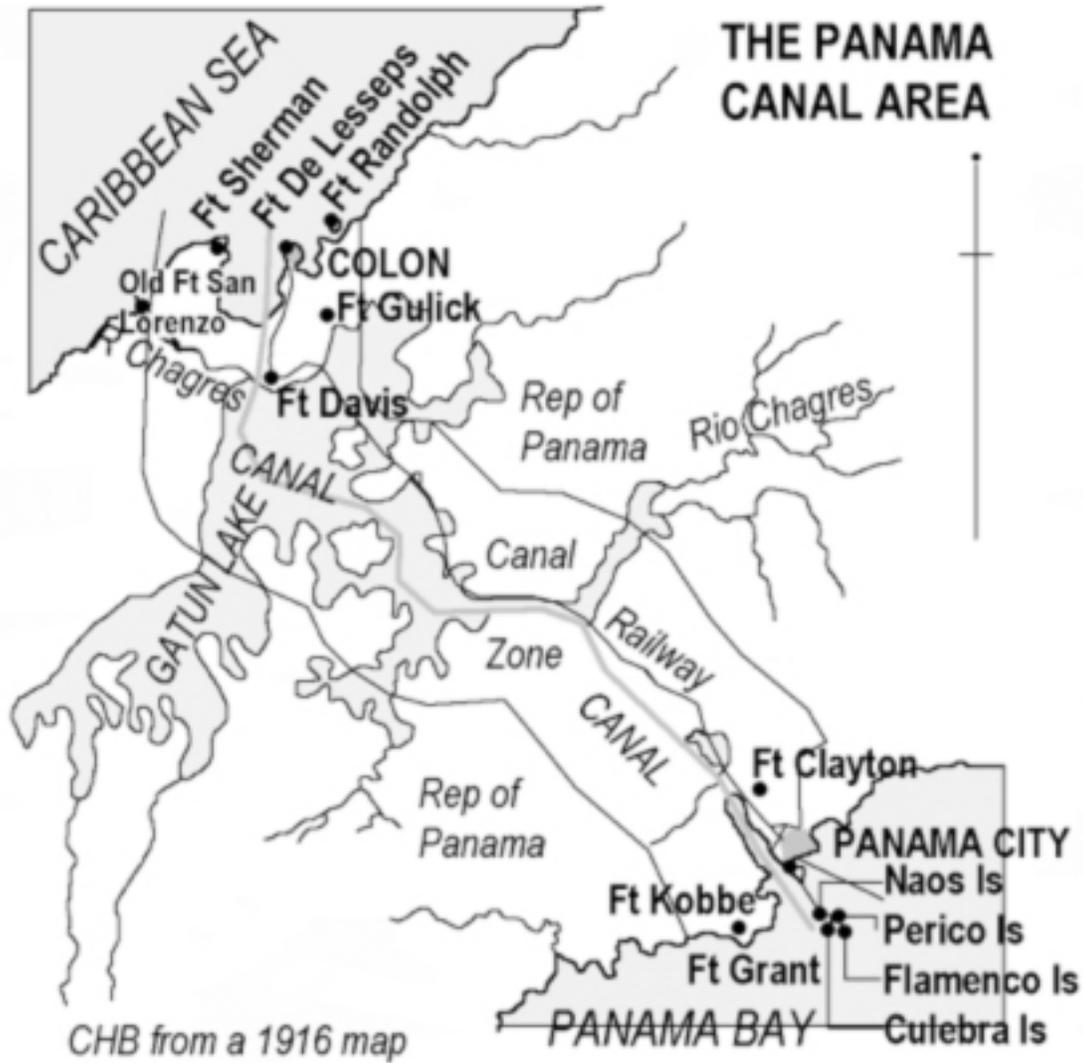


Battery Alexander Mackenzie. Neighbouring Battery Sedgwick Pratt also mounted two 12-in guns, casemated in WW2

The road west from Toro Point is out of action; in December 2010 heavy rains collapsed the road and the only way to travel is on foot. I understand there are small bunkers on top of Loma Pavón.

Below; the road





Shortly after WW1, supplemental beach defence batteries with four 75mm AA guns and four 155mm guns were also located at Fort Sherman. The 155mm guns were placed at Punta Naranjitos.

Many of the houses and barracks are completely abandoned and dilapidated.

Of **Fort Randolph** only Battery Tidball and Zalinski remains; Batteries Weed and Webb were partially demolished years ago (unconfirmed, current Google Earth photos show all the batteries still extant). The land is occupied by Isla Margarita Processing Zone (Chinese) and permission is needed to enter the site.

Unfortunately there are no plans to develop these military installations, now owned by the Ministry of Economy and Finance. All these facilities will be lost over time and I doubt that anyone is interested in saving them.

Anyone can come and see them. You just have to know they exist!! But most people are unaware of their existence and I think perhaps it is better that way. Of course, the ideal would be to develop a large scale plan but that would require many millions of dollars which I doubt anyone would want to invest.



Emplacement for a 14-in rail gun

Despite the great ocean that separates us, and the great distance between us, we share the same admiration for these structures. Thank Goodness there are people like you who share these experiences and fully understand the history behind these facilities.

Salutes from Panamá, *Paolo Sanfilippo'*
(Photographs by the Author)

* * * * *

16" Naval Rifle from U.S.S. Missouri Emplaced at Restored Battery Townsley in Golden Gate NRA.

John Martini

On October 1, a 16-inch naval rifle that once loomed over the surrender deck of the U.S.S. *Missouri* at the end of World War II was saved from the blowtorch and delivered to Fort Cronkhite for display at historic Battery Townsley—one of the park's outstanding collection of seacoast fortifications that line the scenic hills on both sides of the Golden Gate.

The giant weapon, 68 feet long and weighing 386,000 pounds, was removed from U.S.S. *Missouri* in 1953, refurbished, and stored at various naval weapons depots for nearly six decades. It had been in the Hawthorne, Nevada, depot since the Vietnam War. The US Navy Mark 7 barrel is nearly identical to the 16-inch USN Mark 2 guns mounted in Batteries Townsley and Davis to defend San Francisco Bay from 1940-1948. These were the largest guns ever used by the United States military and the last of a long line of defenses that protected San Francisco Bay from the bronze cannon of the Spanish colonial era to the Nike missiles of the Cold War.

The battery was active throughout World War II, manned by up to 150 soldiers who lived inside the cavernous halls and galleries, but never fired a shot in anger. When these defenses became obsolete, the former army posts were saved from development and became the heart of the park lands at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. As Superintendent Frank Dean remarked, "These park lands, once used for coastal defense, have been repurposed for environmental defense."

Since 2007, a group of dedicated Volunteers in Parks has joined with the park to restore the once-abandoned and vandalized battery and open it for public programs. In turn, the volunteers work with educators from other park partners, such as Naturebridge and the Point Bonita YMCA, to teach students about the broad range of stories in the park—Native American, ranching, military and natural history. These outstanding volunteer efforts have been recognized in 2008 with the Regional Judd Appleman Award and in 2011 with the National George Herzog Award.



The barrel arrives at Fort Cronkite (above) and moves up the hill to Battery Townsley (below) Photos by Greg Jennings.

In 2011 the volunteers learned that a number of 16-inch barrels stored at the Hawthorne Depot were scheduled for scrapping. They alerted the park's general superintendent, Frank Dean, who interceded with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to set aside one of the guns for future display at Battery Townsley. The DLA responded positively, and gun No. 386 was selected because of its location in USS *Missouri's* turret No. 2 during the Japanese surrender ceremony in Tokyo Bay in September 2, 1945.



Bigge Crane & Rigging moved the giant weapon, the same firm that delivered the original guns to Battery Townsley in 1939. The move was made over a number of days using a ten-axle, 175-foot long “over the road transport” trailer, pulled and pushed simultaneously by two diesel tractors. When the gun arrived at Fort Cronkhite in the early morning hours of September 28, it was briefly parked alongside Bunker Road at Fort Cronkhite and then transferred onto special steerable mini-trailers for the final leg of the trip.



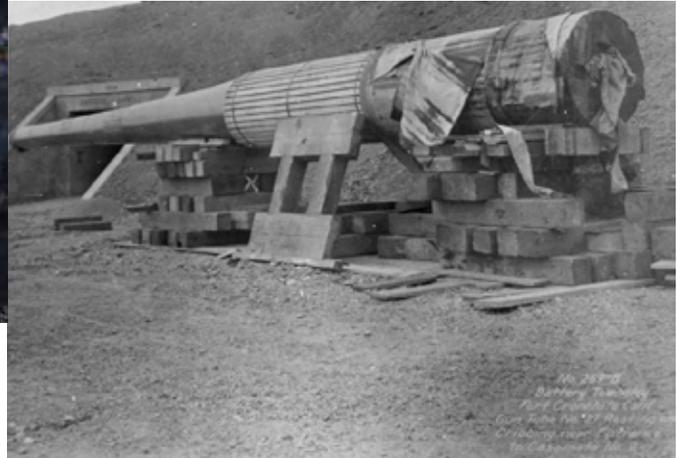
Preparing the barrel for display

The actual installation, scheduled for early morning on October 1, was delayed several hours when a faulty brake line was detected. It took several hours to install a replacement line, then the move resumed around 3 PM as the convoy of gun, trailers, dual-diesel

rigs, and massive forklift headed up the steep switchback road to the battery, some 400 feet above the Pacific. Once there, a pair of hydraulic lifting gantries lifted the barrel off the trailers and set it onto specially-designed concrete cradles behind casemate No. 2 - the gun’s probable future home.

Long-range plans call for designing and constructing a non-functioning carriage inside one of Townsley’s two gun casemates and remounting the barrel facing out over the Pacific Ocean.

Coincidentally, Superintendent Frank Dean lived at Hawthorne Naval Weapons Depot as a teenager in 1969, when his father was the ordnance officer supervising its last overhaul. “We are not celebrating war here,” Frank said as the gun moved uphill, “but acknowledging an important chapter of our nation’s history.”



Townsley’s gun arriving in 1938



The barrel on its new temporary display behind Battery Townsley in October 2012.

* * * * *

Fort Monroe Roll-Over Inches Forward

Observations by Craig Lentz after attending a Master Plan meeting between the Fort Monroe Authority and Section 106 Consulting Parties on behalf of the CDSG.

Following the closing of Ft. Monroe under BRAC in 2011, the Virginia legislature created an independent Fort Monroe Authority (FMA) to transition and manages the former army post for the benefit of the general public. Two parcels within the site will be transferred from the DoD to the National Park Service. These are the newly designated Ft. Monroe National Monument (essentially the original fort inside the moat and the

North Beach area, the long parcel of land extending along the sea northeastward.

While the military holdings have not yet been officially transferred to either the NPS or the FMA, the former has moved a ranger on site and is coordinating with the FMA to define the working relationship moving forward. FMA has proactively been moving to devise a land use master plan, retaining a Sasaki Associates, Watertown, MA. As part of the review and comment process, two public meetings were again held in September, preceded by a review meeting and discussion with interested organizations, designated as “stakeholders” or “Section 106 Consulting Parties.” CDSG has participated in this latter group since its inception.

Beyond the preservation of perhaps the most significant Third-System fort in the country, CDSG's interest includes the five Endicott-Era batteries. Three of them (DeRussey, Church, and Anderson-Ruggles) stand separated from each other along the North Beach waterfront, on property to be managed by NPS. They are fenced and not open to the public. The remaining two batteries (Parrott and Irwin) adjoin the original Fort, outside the moat facing the harbor entrance channel, and are likely under FMA control. None of the batteries has its original ordnance, yet both mount smaller relocated period weapons which are the only modern weapons remaining at the fort. The interior areas of Battery Parrott were somewhat built-out and occupied by the army, and offer a good opportunity to house some interpretation of what modern coast defenses were.



Battery Parrot, Fort Monroe (Terry McGovern)

FMA is faced with two near-term challenges: 1) devising a plan meets the desires of a wide range of interested parties, and 2) determining what to do the various facilities at the site (including both family housing and most of the buildings inside the old fort). Until the closing, most of the 1.5 million sq. ft. of floor area had been occupied and was in reasonable condition. The exceptions were some town-house-type dependent housing that had been storm damaged, and hence are being demolished.

FMA's guiding tenets are threefold: preserve the past, Tell the story, and Achieve financial stability. The presence of NPS plus the support of groups like ours among the stakeholders should assist FMA with meeting the first two tenets. The third tenet is the difficult one.

Many of the local residential and community groups are looking to find both open spaces available to the public (which are apparently in short supply around Hampton Roads), as well as areas dedicated for wildlife habitat. NPS has contributed to the open land and wildlife refuge desire by controlling the North Beach area. However, there is pressure by several parties to "connect" and extend the open space to the other NPS tract, namely the Monument, which would require some concessions by FMA.

FMA currently operates under an annual budget of \$13.2M (excluding any funding for needed capital improvements), \$6.8M of which comes directly from Richmond. When FMA was organized, the state did so under the assumption that FMA had the ability to be self-sustaining over the near term, thus backfilling the state subsidies.

Slightly over \$2M of the current income is from leasing existing facilities, overwhelmingly family housing units in the "historic village." About 110 of the existing 175 family units are currently being rented, both inside and outside the old fort. Until the land is officially turned over to FMA, neither the housing units nor the commercially-adaptable buildings can be resold to private parties, which is the logical solution to making FMA self-sustaining, as well as providing funding for capital improvements.

Unlike the free-fall and problems of some other BRAC posts known to CDSG, the FMA is well positioned to transfer the property into the non-military private sector, to open an historic site to the general public, and to do so using the value of both the location and appeal of the property under its control.

Another area of interest for CDSG members is the Casemate Museum. While the Army will relinquish the facility and withdraw its current staff, operation will be transferred to FMA, and all of the artifacts on display will remain on permanent loan.

Both the FMA master plan and the official transfer of the property are expected to be completed within 6 to 9 months. If any CDSG members would like to be part of the "rebirth" of Ft. Monroe, they might want to explore the option of leasing one of the residential quarters on the ex-post.

* * * * *

The CDSG Annual Meeting 2012

May 15 - 20, 2012

St. Babs XXX, the 30th meeting

The Great Lakes Forts

Mark Berhow and John Weaver

The 2012 meeting has completed the CDSG's official visitation of the complete full circuit of American continental seacoast defense sites. The group has now been to all the fortified harbors that were part of all the various American fortification programs in the contiguous 48 states, the last being the defenses along the Great Lakes. These defenses, built and rebuilt from colonial times through the middle of the 19th century, saw their most intense action during the War of 1812.

The French established posts along the Great Lakes water route ranging from the entrance to the St. Lawrence River, through Quebec, Montreal, Niagara, Detroit, and on into the Mississippi River tributaries. After the expulsion of the French, the British maintained a series of posts along the Great Lakes, which were (mostly) pulled back to the Canadian side of the lakes after the end of the Revolutionary War in the 1780s. Expansion of American settlement and political control into the Northwest Territories brought on a new series of wars with the native tribes in what would become Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, and triggered a slow expansion of the American Army as the government struggled for control of the area.

These Northwest Territory conflicts contributed in part to the American declaration of war on Great Britain in June of 1812. Most of the forts that remained in the area around Lake Ontario and Lake Erie were involved in the numerous campaigns of 1812 to 1814 as the US and Great Britain struggled to what was essentially a draw.

As a result of that conflict, the Third System of American seacoast fortifications were planned and built, which included a number of significant forts along the Great Lakes such as Fort Wayne, Fort Niagara, Fort Ontario, and the fort at Rouse's Point, built to control the Lake Champlain-Richelieu River waterway. Forts Ontario, Niagara, and Wayne were maintained by the US army as military posts through World War II and beyond. An impressive number of fortifications were also built on the British/Canadian side of the border from the same era. The Canadian government maintained several around Kingston well into the 20th century.

This trip was organized by John Weaver and Glen Williford, along with the help of Carol Sikler. John and his crew did a wonderful job of scouting and planning the route, making the contacts to get the group in the door and making accommodation arrangements. This trip was a bit different than our usual trips, in that the locations we were going to visit were spread from the northeast end of Lake Ontario to the western end of Lake Erie, resulting in stays at three different hotels in Kingston, Ontario; Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario; and Detroit, Michigan.

The meeting coincided with the preparations for the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 and we were able to see some of the restoration and enhanced interpretation efforts stemming from that anniversary celebration. This also afforded me the opportunity to reacquaint myself with the history of that conflict, by browsing through a number of well-stocked gift shops along our route. I was especially impressed with J.C.A. Stagg's concise history of the war (*The War of 1812: Conflict for a Continent*, Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org, ISBN 978-0-521-72686-3, 2012) and an updated version of Donald Hickey's history (*The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*, Bicentennial Edition, University of Illinois Press, www.press.illinois.edu, ISBN 978-0-252-07837-8, 2012). The meeting went well, the stops were magnificent, and the weather, for the most part, was superb.

We gathered our smaller-than-usual group at the Peachtree Inn in Kingston, Ontario on Tuesday May 15. After checking in, we had a nice meet-and-greet, and John Weaver gave an overview of what we were going to be visiting over the next few days. Charlie Bogart provided a short presentation on the War of 1812 events in the area.

Wednesday May 16: Kingston Defenses

We started off the day by gathering at Fort Henry, a large masonry fort with an impressive ravelin on a hill overlooking Kingston Harbour, built to protect the Royal Navy Dockyard. The fort was (and still is) used by the Royal Military Training Academy of Canada, and it is the home of the Fort Henry Guard, uniformed military interpreters who staff the fort and conduct extremely authentic demonstrations of British military life and drills. The fort, now a national historic site, plays host to a number of special ceremonies and events.

Fort Henry was the key fort protecting the Royal Navy Dockyard, the harbor of Kingston, and the entrance to Rideau Canal. This magnificent fort, placed high on a hill overlooking the surrounding area, has two major sections. The Lower Fort is the main defensive structure, covering land defenses as well as



Fort Henry

some seacoast guns. The Upper Fort is a ravelin with defensive barracks connecting to the ditch of the main fort.

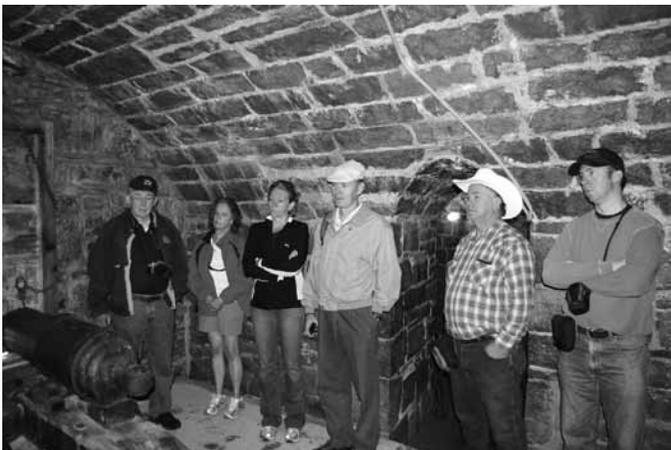
The lower fort is an irregular hexagon, with demibastions protecting the gorge. Protecting the other faces are counterscarp galleries and a caponier. It occupies the southern end of a peninsula, so the land defenses are oriented northward - the only route of approach. Sealing the flanks of the fort are two ditch extensions, anchored at the water by towers and at the fort end by rifle galleries. The ditch towers are taller and smaller in diameter than Martello towers, but similar in design. The rifle galleries are alcoves in the counterscarp wall commanding the ditch.

The counterscarp galleries have a combination of carronade embrasures and loopholes. Unique features are a "pit" in front of the gallery - a deep area of the ditch with masonry revetment, and beveled stone panels designed to deflect musket balls fired from the counterscarp loopholes. The caponier is of conventional design, with loopholes down each flank.

The main fort is casemated on all fronts, with a large central parade. The casemates were designed for barracks, officer quarters, and support functions, with loopholes that open onto the ditch. All the heavy guns were mounted en barbette on the masonry-paved terreplein, along with a paved banquette for small arms.

The primary seacoast armament is emplaced on the flanks of the lower fort and along the southern fronts of the upper fort. Connecting these fronts to the ditch of the lower fort are two long, narrow support buildings. These buildings were bombproofed through a complicated roof design involving a thick layer of loose rubble to absorb the impact of shot and shell.

Entry to the fort is obtained by passing one flank of the fort, crossing the ditch extensions on a bridge, entering one of two



Fort Henry

sally ports to the upper fort, then passing through the sally port of the lower fort. This long path covers several layers of defense, a very effective and intricate system.

Next stop was at Murney Tower, one of the four Martello towers around Kingston, now meticulously restored by Parks Canada. Murney Tower is a classic Martello tower with a second-floor entrance and the provision for two heavy guns mounted en barbette on the upper level. Currently, only one gun is mounted. Embrasures on the second level provide openings for carronades, two of which are in place. Three small caponiers around the base provided defense against a land assault, as did the very steep masonry counterscarp wall. The glacis extending from this counterscarp wall allowed direct fire from the second-level carronades. A wooden roof, held in place by iron rods and turnbuckles, protected the barbette guns from the weather. This roof could be readily released - revealing the guns - if an attack was imminent.

Murney Tower

At Murney Tower, and the other Kingston Martello towers, the landward wall is substantially thinner than the seaward wall. We were told that this feature allowed the tower to be readily destroyed should it fall into enemy hands, yet provided a strong defense against shipboard cannon. Because of the thicker wall to seaward, the angle from the parapet to the scarp was much steeper, causing the tower to look lower on the seaward front when viewed from the exterior. In actuality, the parapet was of constant height - only the angle of the superior slope was different.

Next stop was Fort Fredrick, on the grounds of the Royal Military College of Canada. This fort is part of the Canadian military and is open to the public, but has not received the extensive renovation or support that the Parks Canada sites have received.

This fort stands at the mouth of the Rideau Canal and is adjacent to what was the naval yard for Kingston. It was designed for three purposes: 1) defense of the naval yard through crossfire with Fort Henry; 2) close-in defense of the Rideau Canal; and 3) a link in the chain of fortifications guarding Kingston Harbor.

Fort Frederick consists of a classic Martello tower similar to Murney Tower, surrounded by small fort. The tower itself has four levels - one more than Murney Tower. Two of these levels were barracks, with howitzer embrasures for land defense. The lower level comprised magazines, storage rooms, and three caponiers



Fort Fredrick

identical to the caponiers at Murney Tower. The top level had three barbettes, and three guns are mounted under the removable wooden roof.

The surrounding fort is square, but with an asymmetrical design. It has three bastions on the seaward fronts, and a pan coupe at the salient of the landward curtains. This pan coupe is protected by a masonry demilune, which also served as a guardhouse.

The seacoast fronts of the surrounding fort are earthen, while a loopholed masonry wall closes the landward fronts. The fort stands at the tip of a peninsula, and the guns of Fort Henry command the length of that peninsula. It would not be plausible to mount a siege of the fort from the peninsula, so the only landward threat would be a coup de main. A masonry wall with loopholes provides an adequate defense for that type of attack.

The only artillery threat to the fort, therefore, was from the lake. The seacoast fronts are masonry-revetted earth, approximately 20 feet thick. This provided protection from the most powerful shipboard guns of the day. These earthen walls mounted seacoast cannon, smoothbore and later RMLs.

Two additional Martello towers were not available for entry, but could be viewed from the exterior. Shoal Tower (aka Victoria Tower) stands just off the downtown area, while a fourth tower stands on a nearby island. Ruins of Fort Frontenac and Market Battery were also visible, though little remains of those two fortifications.

The last stop of the day was Fort Wellington about 75 km down the St. Lawrence River in Prescott, Ontario. The fort was

built during the War of 1812, used during the rebellions of late 1830s, and maintained through the American Civil War and the Fenian raids that followed. The location has a brand new interpretive center and an enthusiastic staff. The grounds are in excellent shape and we had a great guided-tour of the site.

This earth-and-wood fort, with masonry elements, was built opposite the American defenses in Ogdensburg, NY. A wooden palisade stands in the ditch, with a wooden fraise about halfway up the rampart. Barbette gun positions and a banquette stand behind the parapet, and an earthen parade slope marks the rear of the covered way.

A masonry sally port supports a carronade/howitzer position, and a very nice caponier - reached by a tunnel through the rampart - guards the ditch facing the St. Lawrence River. A blockhouse with a masonry first and second floor and wooden third floor stands in the middle of the parade. The third floor has machicoulis overlooking the masonry walls, with restored barracks making up the mass of the blockhouse on both upper floors. Two additional support buildings stand on the parade as well.

A unique feature of the fort is the palisade protecting the gorge. This palisade stands proud on the glacis, with every-other post breast height with the remaining posts at full height. This provides continuous musketry positions along the entire palisade.



Fort Wellington

Fort Wellington has a very nice masonry caponier at the mid-point of the riverfront of the fort. Loopholes provide a defense of the ditch; there are no carronade or howitzer positions. Access to the caponier is from the parade; a long, masonry-revetted tunnel passes under the ramparts.

The evening found us back in Kingston for the CDSG workers dinner and an evening of presentations by Dale Manuel and Karl Fritz.

Thursday May 17: Around Lake Ontario

Thursday morning we checked out of the hotel in Kingston and headed south, back into the United States. The first stop was Fort Ontario in Oswego, NY. Built initially by the British to defend Oswego Harbor, it was manned through 1794 when it was turned over to the Americans, where the post saw action during the War of 1812. Various engineers built the masonry fort existing today during the Third System period, each making his own contribution to the final design. The fort was used by the



Fort Ontario



Fort Ontario

US army up through 1946, and a few of the post-1900 building remain. The fort is now a New York State Historic Site and home to a crew of volunteers and re-enactors.

Fort Ontario is a masonry pentagon with bastions at each salient. An interesting feature of the fort is that each bastion differs from the others. This is attributed to the changes in engineers during the construction process, as well as the variation in the vulnerability of different fronts to land attack. The landward bastions had provisions for howitzer embrasures, while the bastions fronting the lake had only loopholes. The loopholes, however, varied in design. The oldest loopholes were very tall, allowing more depression of the rifle or musket at the expense of a larger, more vulnerable opening. The loopholes constructed later were the smaller, more common loopholes.

In addition to the very nice restorations of the interior buildings of the fort, a gun on the barbette facing the lake had a very nice reproduction weather shield. This is the only one of its kind that I have seen.

Next stop was Fort Niagara State Park in Youngstown, NY. Situated on a critical bluff overlooking the mouth of the Niagara River where it empties into Lake Ontario, the location has been fortified pretty much continuously from the early 1700s by the French, British, and Americans. The fort was the site of significant actions during all three periods of warfare. The current fort has been variously rebuilt and renovated by various owners, and today has been restored to represent the various periods of its use. The Americans rebuilt the land defenses during the late Third System period and used the fort as a military base through WWII.

The old fort has elements from most of these periods, with the original French Castle dominating the lakefront. The landward



Fort Niagara



Fort Niagara

front, built during the Third System, carries the hallmarks of land defenses of that period. The entire fort is very well maintained, and the outworks have been very nicely reconstructed. Of additional interest are the siege lines that have been simulated outside the landward front of the fort.

Today the area is a large day-use park with a myriad of soccer fields, a few post-1900 army buildings and the historic fort, which has a large visitor center. We were led on a guided tour and at the end let into the research center, housed in an army quartermaster building. This is really a great site to see the various stages of frontier military post development from the French, British, and American perspectives.

After Fort Niagara, we headed across the border to Niagara-on-the-Lake for our stay at the Niagara Residence and Conference Centre, part of the vocational arts programs of the Province of Ontario. Gordon Bliss and James Conway gave evening presentations.

Friday May 18: The British Defenses of Niagara

Friday morning began with a drive south along the Niagara River to Fort Erie, a masonry fort guarding the Niagara River where it opens into Lake Erie. The site features a new visitor center and an extensive living history and reenactment programs.

The fort was designed by the British as a square fort with bastions. It was not completed, however, before the Americans captured it early in the War of 1812. The trace was modified to make the work defensible, with two bastions not connected to the finished portion of the work closed in as detached works. A wooden palisade was used in conjunction with earthworks to close in unfinished portions of the fort, leaving it relatively strong as a defensive structure.

In addition to guns in the main work, a ravelin facing the lake provided additional gun positions. The lakefront of the

fort contains the sally port, which is protected by the ravelin. A second wooden sally port, with a fully restored functional drawbridge crossing the outer ditch, allows access to the area between the ravelin and the main sally port, providing an extra measure of protection.

On the landward side of the fort, siege works have been constructed to show how an attacker would approach the fort. These are complete with a siege cannon firing through a wooden embrasure in the earthworks, a Coehorn mortar position, and a position for Hargreave rockets. A new visitor center with an introductory video and museum complement a very enthusiastic and well-trained living-history staff.



Fort Erie

Heading back down the Niagara River and past a number of War of 1812 battle sites, we gathered at Fort George, the large earthwork post that was the base of military operations for Upper Canada after the withdraw from Fort Niagara in 1794. This was a large infantry post, and it has been restored to its appearance just after the end of the war. The site also features a nice visitor's center and an extensive interpretation and reenactment program.



Fort George

Fort George was constructed opposite Fort Niagara to act as a counterpoint to Niagara's control of the mouth of the Niagara River. It is a long rectangle, with numerous gun positions along the river face of the fort. There are bastions at each corner of the fort, as well as near the midpoint of each long wall. The palisades, ditches, and buildings have been meticulously restored, and an excellent living-history program adds to the impact of the fort.

Of particular interest is a wooden ravelin at the short, landward face of the fort. It contains a small blockhouse protected by a palisade and accessed by a tunnel from the main fort. In addition, the original powder magazine still stands on the parade of the fort, restored to its appearance during the fort's occupation.

The final stop of the day was Fort Mississauga, the masonry replacement for Fort George. The fort is currently protected by a golf course – we dodged golfers as we crossed the fairways to reach the structure. A descriptive sign at the sally port provides a layout of the fort and provides a small amount of historical information. The fort is open to the public during daylight hours, but is not manned or interpreted.

While originally designed to be much larger than the current fort, the design was cut back when tensions across the border eased. It was placed on higher ground than Fort George, as a significantly stronger counterpoint to Fort Niagara, a short distance away across the mouth of the Niagara River.



Mississauga Tower

As constructed, Fort Mississauga was an earthwork fort with a masonry sally port and masonry magazines cut into the earthen rampart. On the center of the parade stands the dominant feature of the fort, a three-tier square tower. Unfortunately, the tower is closed to the public due to structural issues, but the magazines are accessible. A masonry postern tunnels under the ramparts of the fort, with a path leading to the river's edge some distance below.

Opposite the main sally port is an earthen ravelin, the least preserved portion of the fort. While its outline is clear and the terrain makes it easy to see the remains of the surrounding ditch, it does not have the restored profile of the remainder of the fort.

That evening found us at an excellent banquet put on at the "training" university restaurant, a quick and short business meeting and back for an evening presentation by Terry McGovern.

Saturday May 19: Detroit Defenses

Up and on the road, we drove across "Upper" Canada to the other end of Lake Erie. Our first stop was the remains of Fort Malden, an earthwork built on the Canadian side of the Detroit River after the British withdrawal from Detroit in 1794. It was the base of operations for the early British campaigns in 1812 and 1813, before being abandoned during Harrison's 1813 campaign. Only a part of original fort remains, but it has been restored nicely.

The fort had a square trace with bastions, with several buildings located on the parade. A portion of the earthworks has been carefully restored, with cannon mounted in two bastions. The



Fort Malden

museum was temporarily closed due to a structural issue resulting from a recent storm, but the restored enlisted barracks was open and well furnished with the uniforms and accoutrements of the day. The “defensible kitchen” was also restored – an interesting masonry structure that served as a kitchen during normal situations and a loopholed citadel during a battle.

The strategic location of the fort, near Bob-Lo (originally Bois Blanc) Island in the Detroit River, was born out by the size and number of large ships that passed the fort during our visit. With Fort Wayne on the American side of the river controlling downriver traffic, Fort Malden was designed to create a stalemate by controlling upriver traffic. Thus neither American nor British/Canadian shipping could freely use the waterway.

Across the river and back again in the United States, the last stop of the day was Fort Wayne, the masonry fort built during the Third System, overseen by Montgomery Meigs. The fortification features a unique bastion-flank sally port, a riverside masonry ravelin, and a beautiful stone barracks in the parade. The military base around the old fort was in use through the 1960s and a large number of post-1800s and post-1900s buildings remain. We gathered in the Fort Wayne Preservation Association’s base of operations at the old post PX for our tour through the Third-System fort and the remaining fort grounds.

The square fort has a masonry scarp and four casemated bastions, containing embrasures for flank howitzers and loopholes for rifle fire to defend the ditch. The casemates are accessed from the bastions, with recently restored wooden covers over the stone staircases.



Fort Wayne

All seacoast guns were mounted en barbette. The ditch and counterscarp retain their original shape quite well, and a portion of the glacis is intact. The ravelin overlooking the Detroit River has further gun positions, and there are remains of a hot-shot furnace on the terreplein of the ravelin.

Dominating the parade of the fort is a beautiful four-company barracks. While the interior of the barracks has been modified over the years, the exterior is unchanged – other than some deterioration of the wood of the windows and balconies.

The location was in active use; a number of soccer games were ongoing during our visit, and cub scouts were occupying the barracks. It was sadly evident that the City of Detroit is losing the battle over the preservation of both the fort and the buildings. The lack of budget dollars has left the location in the hands of volunteers who are struggling to just keep things from deteriorating further. This is a very nice example of Third System architecture, and I hope it will remain open to the public.



Fort Wayne HQ

Heading to the Marriot Courtyard near the Detroit Airport, a smaller group of attendees watched a nice video by Dale Floyd on the Civil War defenses of Washington, D.C.

Sunday May 20: Fort Meigs

The last stop on the conference was Fort Meigs, the American supply base on the Maumee River during the War of 1812, just south of downtown Toledo, OH. The fort was a very large earthwork with a large parapets, several artillery positions, and a number of blockhouses. The fort has been extensively restored



Fort Meigs

and is now a large state memorial park, featuring a large visitor center and an extensive program of interpretation and reenactments. We had a very nice guided tour of the site.

Guarding a critical portage around rapids in the Maumee River, during the War of 1812 Fort Meigs successfully withstood two sieges – remaining in American hands and blocking the British advance along the Maumee. Of particular note is the Grand Traverse, the parapets that runs the length of the fort. It was constructed during a siege to prevent cannon balls from rolling across the parade, and was bordered by trenches on each side to catch the cannon balls.

A series of well-restored blockhouses guard both the corners and the long fronts of the fort, and provide a venue for a nice set of interpretive displays. Additionally, the cannon positions on the river front have been reconstructed and in some cases armed.

This concluded the official conference. I headed back to Illinois via several other War of 1812 and Indian Wars sites, which made this all in all very nice and timely conference.

The CDSG should thank John Weaver, Glen Williford, and Carol Sikler for all their efforts in setting up and organizing this meeting. I know that John work especially hard at making the contacts need to arrange to get us into the various sites, especially since several were not open for their regular hours when we wanted to visit.

The site hosts at Fort Henry, Mississauga Tower, Fort Fredrick, Fort Wellington, Fort Ontario, Fort Niagara, Fort Erie, Fort George, Fort Malden, Fort Wayne, and Fort Meigs were especially helpful and deserve the thanks of the membership. They were especially helpful, and contributed tremendously to the success of the St. Babs. Multiple people at each fort worked with our group, and put on special guides and interpreters to assist us. Fort Wellington went so far as to bring in the director of interpretation for the province of Ontario and a retired site director to assist in our question-and-answer sessions! It was very clear throughout the trip that the site managers and interpreters were very dedicated, enthusiastic historians who took our visit very seriously. From the most senior professional staff to the recently hired summer helpers, the staffs of the various forts did their best to provide us with solid historical data and to show us every nook and cranny of each of the forts.



St. Babs 30th attendees group photos in front of Fort Ontario (Alex Holder)



Fort Ontario 1930s (NARA)

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Great Gull Island (Fort Michie) Damaged by Hurricane Sandy

Helen Hays



On October 29, Hurricane Sandy wrenched off three sections of the dock platform on Great Gull Island, leaving the loading platform at the north end of the dock isolated from the shore. The initial estimate for repairing the dock is \$200,000 to \$250,000. I hope to visit the island after Thanksgiving; if there is anything new to report I will let you know and will keep you informed of further inspections and estimates.

Our Captain, Matt Poitras, took Matthew Male and Bob Kane to the island on November 11, the first day weather and schedules permitted them to make the trip. Sandy caused a good deal of erosion. In areas where the sea broke through at both ends of the island there are large areas of sand and gravel deposited, which may increase areas where terns can nest. In some areas such as the eastern end of the island, large chunks of the shore have been sheared off and gravel and sand deposited below them.

I am hoping we can have the dock repaired by the middle of April. I had planned to bring out lumber in April to repair blinds and expand the terraces on the sides of the gun emplacements, providing additional nesting areas for Roseate and Common Terns. In addition, of course, I would like the dock to be ready for the volunteers and gear, which will begin to arrive in May.

I am working on raising funds for the dock and for the field season. The field season costs amount to about \$60,000. We are looking forward to going to Great Gull Island in 2013 and with your support it will happen. We welcome contributions of any amount.

CDSG Fund Appeal

The CDSG Fund is asking for donations for the Great Gull Island Dock Repair Project. The CDSG fund will match your donation to help towards the repair of the dock, which allows the CDSG to schedule visits to the remains of Fort Michie. Remember your gift through the CDSG Fund is tax-deductible for federal tax purposes and 100% of your gift will go to the Great Gull Island Dock Repair Project (please indicate this purpose on your check). Please send your check made payable to the CDSG Fund as soon as possible. Your check should be mailed to Alan Hardey at 1577 Braeburn Road, Altadena, CA 91001-2603.

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Seacoast Artillery Weapons (Army Technical Manual 4-210, 13 Oct. 1944),

hard cover reprint. \$25 / \$35

The Service of Coast Artillery, by F. Hines and F.W. Ward (1910),

hardcover reprint \$40 / \$60

Permanent Fortifications and Sea-Coast Defenses, Congressional Report No. 62,

U.S. House of Rep. (1862), hardcover reprint \$30 / \$45

American Seacoast Matériel, Ordnance Dept. Doc. #2042, (1922),

Hardcover reprint \$45 / \$65

American Seacoast Defenses: A Reference Guide, Second Edition,

edited by Mark Berhow (2004), softcover \$45 / \$80

The Endicott and Taft Reports, reprint of original reports of 1886, 1905, 1915,

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