

# The CDSG Newsletter



The Coast Defense Study Group, Inc. — Fall 2023



## Chairman's Message

Norm Scarpulla

On October 1st each year, we reconstitute the Board of Directors with one new director for a three-year term, while the director who has finished a three-year term drops off. Steve Waldron has completed his three-year term, and Ned Libby is the new director. Your Board of Directors until September 30, 2024 are Ned, Gordon Bliss, and me. CDSG has 414 active members as of October 29. We have 31 new members in 2023. Our finances are strong. This Newsletter includes the annual renewal notice; please renew by the end of year.

In September, our long-time active member and former director Alex Hall died. Alex was the supervising ranger for the Boston Harbor Islands State Park, which includes Fort Warren, a large 3rd system work. Please see the tribute to Alex in this Newsletter.

Our 2024 conference will be in May at Key West, Florida. Please see the conference information enclosed with this *Newsletter*. If you plan to attend, it is important to make your reservations now. Key West is a year-round tourist destination, so we are competing with everyone else for hotels, etc. The most important reservation is for the ferry to Fort Jefferson.

All CDSG members are invited to write articles for the *Journal* and *Newsletter*. Instructions about format and submission are on our website. Articles of lasting value will be published in the *Journal*, while items with temporary information will appear in the *Newsletter*. Please keep your audience in mind. We have many readers who have not been to all the forts and harbors, and we have 30 international members. Readers benefit from a brief review of the geography, what was once there, and what it is now. Site visit reports will be included in the *Newsletter*, and the site report list on the website will have a link to the digital *Newsletter*.

The CDSG promotes the study, accurate documentation, and preservation of seacoast defenses. All members can be advocates for these goals. When you visit a site, or attend a historical or veterans' event, wear a CDSG shirt or hat. At public sites, get to know the staff. On our website, we have brochures and posters which can be downloaded and printed. And point curious people to our website; it is very easy to remember: "cdsg.org".

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## Membership Minute

Quentin Schillare

It's renewal time. The Coast Defense Study Group enrolls its members on an annual basis. All memberships terminate on December 31st. Robust membership enables us to financially support our publications, the website, the annual conference, special tours, our collection of research materials, outreach to like-minded historical organizations, and other activities. We are an organization run by

## CDSG Meeting and Tour Calendar

Please advise Terry McGovern of any additions or changes at [tcmcgovern@att.net](mailto:tcmcgovern@att.net)

### 2024 CDSG Conference

May 8 - 9, 2024  
Key West, Florida

### 2024 CDSG Conference Add-On Tour

May 10 - 11, 2024  
Tampa, Florida

### 2025 CDSG Conference

April  
Boston, Massachusetts (tentative)

### 2026 CDSG Conference

Arrangements to be determined  
Oahu, Hawaii or San Francisco, California

### Other Meetings and Tours

April 6 - 12, 2024  
ECCOFORT Study Tour  
Cyprus  
Hans-Rudolf Neumann, [hrv.neumannqt@online.de](mailto:hrv.neumannqt@online.de)

April 17 - 21, 2024  
INTERFEST annual Meeting  
Torun, Poland  
Oliver Zauzig, [praesident@interfest.org](mailto:praesident@interfest.org)

May 12 - 23, 2024  
Fortress Study Group  
Western Greece  
Eric Cauchi, [eric@eternalgreece.com](mailto:eric@eternalgreece.com)

September 28 - October 6, 2024  
ECCOFORT Study Tour  
Amsterdam  
Hans-Rudolf Neumann, [hrv.neumannqt@online.de](mailto:hrv.neumannqt@online.de)

September 2024  
Fortress Study Group Study Tour  
Cartagena, Spain  
Allstair Graham Kerr, [psgeditor@hotmail.com](mailto:psgeditor@hotmail.com)

February 8 - 23, 2025  
ECCOFORT Study Tour  
Southern India

Hans-Rudolf Neumann, hrv.neumannqt@online.de

September/October 2025  
ECCOFORT Study Tour  
Portugal

Hans-Rudolf Neumann, hrv.neumannqt@online.de

volunteers and the more members we have the more we can spread the work to maintain the quality and quantity of our programs.

A good way to keep the CDSG healthy is to retain current members. As I write this in the first week of November renewals have started to slowly roll in. Please join them.

There are two ways to renew. Do so online at our website (<https://cdsg.org/>) by clicking the Join link in the upper left of the homepage, and fill out the membership form and hit SUBMIT. You can also send me a check for \$45 made out to the CDSG to CDSG Renewals, 24624 W 96th Street, Lenexa, KS 66227-7285. I look forward to processing your renewal and meeting you at the annual conference.

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## Preservation Committee Report

Gordon Bliss

The main open item currently is what is going to happen with Plum Island NY and Fort Terry. The coalition of groups looking to preserve Plum Island has been doing a lot, both in lobbying and compiling supporting documentation, towards this goal. The current focus is in trying to get Plum Island declared a National Monument, which would offer some level of protection for the site. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like it will get an executive declaration, at least not this year. There is a pending bipartisan bill in the House but with the current situation there, no action is likely to be taken on it this year. Hopefully, it will be reintroduced in the new session next year and may make some progress. For those that are interested it is H.R. 1584 and currently has 4 co-sponsors, 2 from each party. In terms of general status, the full moving of the lab keeps getting delayed and currently it looks like it will be 2028 or 2029 before it is fully gone from the island.

Recently, Karl Fritz posted some pictures from a recent work day at Fort Washington, Maryland to the email group. A few are included elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. In the email discussion that followed, Chris Zeeman posted some advice based on his experience at Fort Adams in Newport RI. With his permission, it is posted verbatim below:

"Some info/advice from our efforts over the past 17 years at Fort Adams:

1. Our workdays are typically 6 - 8 people out of about 12 active volunteers. Sometimes we get less - but we work every weekend that weather permits. Sometimes we show up individually at other times. Our volunteer Ben Smith has adopted Battery Belton and maintains that on his own in addition to showing up at regular workdays.

2. Areas you clear will require constant and frequent maintenance. Grass will crowd out the weeds with regular mowing - but as soon as you stop, they come back with a vengeance. That being

said - there are areas that we can only mow once a year and our brush hogs can barely handle it. In addition, here we are experiencing warmer winters and more precipitation which is leading to more growth.

3. Power tools are your friend. If gas tool use is not permitted, perhaps try the electric version as an alternative or way to bypass that restriction. Some of our guys have started using battery powered trimmers, chain saw, leaf blowers, etc., and they have come a long way. Certainly, Fort Adams is as tough a proving ground as any that can be found.

4. Karl is on the right track. Take LOTS of before and after pictures so you can document your progress. As the years continue you will be able to show dramatic improvements which hopefully can lead to funding and more volunteers."

Hopefully, this advice will be useful and provide some incentive to volunteer support groups at other coast defense sites. As we head into the new year, the late fall and winter months, with leaves gone and vegetation growth reduced or stopped in large parts of the country, often provide good opportunities to do vegetation clearing. As sites are next to the coast, they usually get little or no snow compared to inland areas (though there are exceptions) even in the northern states.

These are the only two items I have for this month. As always, I look to hear more from people about what is happening on the preservation and interpretation front at their local sites. The next column will be the annual year in review, but I can always add in new items I hear about.

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

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## 2023 Year-end Donation Appeal for the CDSG Fund

The CDSG Fund Trustees

(Terry McGovern, Quentin Schillare and Mark Berhow)

The **CDSG Fund** supports the efforts of the Coast Defense Study Group by raising funds for preservation and interpretation of American seacoast defenses (both structures and artifacts). The CDSG Fund is seeking year-end 2023 donations from our members to fund projects that support our organization's goals. We have agreed to fund several projects in keeping with our goals and we have a list of potential projects which we may fund in the coming year, but only if we receive enough donations from our members to allow the **CDSG Fund** to provide these grants. Several of these projects call for large amount of funds to complete so we need larger donations from our membership to meet these needs. Projects that the CDSG Board of Directors has already

agreed to fund are:

**Fort Michie, Great Gull Island, NY** – Chris Zeeman – Stabilizations of WWII Fire Control Tower due to rusting steel supports and spalled concrete. We are working with Margaret Rubega through the AMNH to fund the hiring of structural engineer to design a stabilization plan for the tower. The structural assessment is now done, but raising funds to pay for the contractor to install supports still is required. We have only a small window of the time to do this work as gaining water access to Great Gull Island is not easy in the months outside the tern nesting season (April to September), so current fundraising is essential. Our membership has contributed \$5,000 so far towards this project.

**Big Stone Beach Fire Control Tower, Delaware** – Terry McGovern – Working with the owner, The Nature Conservancy, to stabilize one of the few remaining steel fire control towers from WW2. The CDSG Fund has raised \$2,500 so far to cover the cost of an engineering assessment of the tower. Now gathering cost proposals to find out the amount of fundraising will be needed to make key repairs to the tower.

**Fort Wool, Rip Raps, Hampton, VA** – Mike Cobb – Stabilization of 3<sup>rd</sup> System Casemates and WWII Battery Commander's Tower – The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Wildlife Resources controls the island fort and they have converted it to a seasonal nesting habitat for seabirds. They have determined the dock and the historic structures are unsafe and banned the public from visiting. The remaining 3<sup>rd</sup> System fort casemates continue to settle and the masonry is cracking with concerns about collapse. Mike is trying use wooden shoring to support the casemates. The WWII Battery Commanders Tower (the only standing tower of this type remaining in the USA) is in need of stabilization, especially on the "station" portion of the where only two steel support carry the weight of the cement roof. Mike has been using car jacks to try to add support of the roof but the whole roof is leaning due to its weight plus trapped water. It is a real possibility that the tower may topple if these roof supports give way. The Coalition for Historic Fort Wool has donated \$5,000 to the CDSG Fund to pay for engineering assessment of the historic structures that make up Fort Wool. A construction proposal to repair the BC Tower has been received with a current cost estimated to be \$300k, while the repair of the dock is \$500k. The Coalition will try to get the Commonwealth to fund these repairs, but may need to fundraise to pay for these repairs.

**Other possible CDSG Fund projects** – Fort Varnum Signage (Chris Zeeman), Appledore Island FC Tower Signage (Norm Scarpulla), 90mm M3 Mount Relocation (Terry McGovern), Fort Monroe's Rare Coast Artillery Painting (Terry McGovern), M1895 Barrel Relocation from Corregidor (Terry McGovern).

The CDSG Fund can only fund these and other projects by receiving your donations, so without your donations we cannot approve these projects. Please consider donating when paying your membership dues for 2024. Please remember that your donations are tax-deductible for federal tax purposes as the CDSG is a 501(c)(3) organization, and 100% of your gift will go to the projects that are requesting grants. Your contributions are acknowledged annually. Make checks or money orders payable in US funds to: the CDSG Fund. Donations can also be made

by credit card or PayPal via the CDSG website at <https://cdsg.org/donations/> Send donations to: CDSG Fund c/o Quentin Schillare 24624 W. 96th Street, Lenexa, KS 66227-7285 USA or use your credit card on the [cdsg.org](https://cdsg.org) website.

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## Deluxe Editions of Pacific Ramparts and Pacific Fortress Now Available!

Working with Lulu Press, the Redoubt Press has prepared new deluxe print versions of Glen Williford's two books; *Pacific Fortress, A History of the Seacoast Defenses of Hawaii*, and *Pacific Rampart: A History of Corregidor and the Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bays*. The new enhanced editions are printed on 80 lb paper with Lulu's black and white premium print process. The resulting books have greatly enhanced photographic print quality with much better contrasts. If you are interested in quality editions of Glen's books, here is your opportunity.

The premium edition comes at a premium price of \$79.95. The books are only available directly from Lulu's website at [www.lulu.com/shop](http://www.lulu.com/shop).

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/glen-m-williford/pacific-fortress-bw-premium-version/hardcover/product-427e57.html? q = Glen+Williford&page = 1&pageSize = 4>

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/glen-m-williford/pacific-ramparts-deluxe-edition/hardcover/product-je5dp69.html? q = Glen+Williford&page = 1&pageSize = 4>

The regular print versions are also available from Amazon for prices below the list price of \$49.95.

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## Alexander Hall 1973-2023

Nigel Cunningham

As many of you know by now, Alex Hall passed away on September 17, 2023, from complications during recovery from stomach cancer treatment. Alex joined CDSG in 2000, and he would become a friendly face at many of our conferences, including two trips to the Philippines. Alex served on our board of directors and was more than happy to arrange tours of the Boston Harbor Islands where he was employed as a Lieutenant with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Alex graduated from Northeastern University in 1997 with a B.A. in History. During that time, he was involved in co-ops at the Old State House and Paul Revere house in Boston. After graduation, he began working for the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), which would be restructured in 2003 to create the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Alex was assigned to the Boston Harbor Islands, which are home to several forts, including Fort Warren. He wore many hats with DCR, including interviewing seasonal employees to participating as a member of the DCR Honor Guard.

Only after Alex's passing did I learn that he had many other passions and interests besides old forts. I was surprised to learn



that one of them was singing and folk dancing, in particular, Scottish Country dance, which he displayed quite the talent for. He had his first taste of folk dancing during a co-op he attended in Scotland during college. For over ten years, Alex was a member

of the Revels, which is a musical and theatrical group located in Cambridge, Mass. With the Revels, he was both a performer and a member of their board of directors. At his memorial service, a group member spoke of his enthusiasm and willingness to help in any way, at any time, without hesitation. These sentiments were echoed by all speakers at the memorial service.

As a testament to how well-liked and respected Alex was, his family held to separate celebrations of life. The first was on September 30th, in his parents' hometown of Harwich Port, on Cape Cod. The turnout was such that they opened the choir loft for additional seating. DCR provided full honors to their fallen coworker and friend. The service paused at 3:00pm to stand in silence while DCR dispatch called their Lieutenant one last time. A second, less formal service was held on October 28th, at the Old South Church in Boston, for those who could not make it to the Cape. After the service, Alex's friends and family joined together again to joyfully celebrate his life with oisterous singing of folk songs.

Alex's passing came as a shock to many; some didn't even know he was sick. As with many aspects of his life, he kept his illness private. He did not want any special treatment or attention. His concern was for others first, then himself. He did not want his illness to be a burden on his loved ones. His family told me that he did not want to miss the 2022 New Orleans conference, so he pushed back the start of his chemotherapy until after his return. Alex was a special person whose bright light was extinguished far too soon. He will be greatly missed by so many who were blessed to know him.



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## Work Day at Fort Washington

Karl Fritz via groups.io

I joined a few other people in clearing brush around the brick fire control positions. A lot of the smaller trees, weeds, and ivy was removed, drainage gutters cleaned out, and debris swept out. The upper position received most of the work...

A lot more can/should be done. But it was a good start.

As we saw with this weekend's event, even a small group working only a couple hours was able to accomplish a fair amount of work. Having multiple work days might allow more people an



opportunity to join in as part of smaller groups, rather than trying to get a large group of people to settle on one particular day.

From Terry McGovern:

Thanks to the volunteers at the Fort Washington Park work party, but we only had 5 folks taking part. We would have made much more progress if we had more CDSG members turning out.

Chris is going to try to organize a Part Two work party for the Fort Commander Station and other fire control stations. We want to return them to condition they were about 15 years ago.

We have offered to pay for signage by the main road and walkway to educate visitors about the stations and direct them to visit stations as they are hard to see from the main road.



We will send out a survey to our Mid-Atlantic CDSG membership to see which date works best for getting the majority of

members in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, DC, Virginia, and West Virginia to attend.



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## Recent Events at Former Fort Dearborn

Norm Scarpulla

Odiorne Point in the Town of Rye, New Hampshire is the south headland of Portsmouth, NH harbor. During World War 2, this area became Fort Dearborn (locations 143 & 144) and now is Odiorne Point State Park.

The first English settlers in what became Rye arrived in 1623. Throughout 2023, the town celebrated its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary with over 50 events ranging from art to nature to history. The Rye 400<sup>th</sup> Committee invited Coast Defense Study Group to give a presentation about the Portsmouth harbor defenses on August 17, 2023. With the Committee, we expanded the day's events to include tours of the Pulpit Rock fire control tower and a guided walk to Battery Seaman.

Odiorne Point did not have any coast defense structures prior to WW2. Initially, a four-gun battery of 155mm GPF cannons was installed on Panama mounts at the southeast tip of the point. This battery was transferred to the operating forces in July 1942. Three of the emplacements are visible; the fourth, easternmost one is covered by vegetation. Construction continued at the reservation with Battery Seaman (CN103, 2x16" BC) and Battery 204 (2x6" BC). Both batteries were armed and tested, and both transferred in September 1944. Battery Seaman is about ¼ mile northwest from the state park parking lot; the gun rooms are open, but the center tunnel, magazines, and power room are closed. A now-sealed two-room observation post is on top of the battery. One room was for the Battery Seaman battery commander; the other was a gun group observation post. The Battery Seaman PSR is about 600 feet west of the battery; however the entrances are blocked. Battery 204 is located beside the state park parking lot and is closed. Battery 204 is unusual in that the battery commander station is on top and was accessed by a ladder

from inside. A magazine for bulk storage of TNT for mines was built about 1000 feet inland. The mine support buildings and pier were at Fort Constitution about five miles away by road.

Rye includes four WW2 sites other than Odiorne Point. Three were fire control sites at which there are no remains. The fourth site, about a mile south of Odiorne Point, is Pulpit Rock (location 142) where there was Battery 951 (2x90mm fixed mount) with a magazine and generator for each gun, an iron frame FC tower, and a round concrete FC tower. The concrete tower was used by the state for fisheries law enforcement for many years. Currently the tower is owned by the state but has been maintained by the Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower, who periodically hold tours and fund-raising events. The eight-story round tower has two observation levels, which were base-end stations for Batteries Seaman and 204 at Fort Dearborn. The concrete mount for Battery 951 gun #1 still exists in the parking lot on the ocean side of Ocean Boulevard.



CDSG member Gordon Bliss explaining Battery Seaman  
Photo by Bill Ricker



The August 17 events included tours of the Pulpit Rock tower. The Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower opened the tower and provided docents, assisted by CDSG members. Later in the day, CDSG member Gordon Bliss guided a walk for about 25 people from the state park parking lot to Battery Seaman. The last event of the day was the presentation by Norm Scarpulla on Portsmouth fortifications to about 50 people inside the Seacoast Science Center. CDSG members Steve Waldron, Bill Ricker, Larry Olasky, and Doug Wood, and docents Alan Waterfield and Richie Harty from the Seacoast Science Center, assisted with the day's events.

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## A Visit To The Harbor Defenses of New Bedford, Massachusetts

David Larsen

In October 2023, I visited several of the harbor defense sites that were built to protect the port of New Bedford, Massachusetts (MA) and the Cape Cod Canal.

Fort Rodman (Fort Taber Park), New Bedford, MA (Location 53)

The City of New Bedford has instituted a pay-to-park program in force whenever the park is open. A visitor must scan/text/enter credit card payment to pay the fee. They do not accept cash. There are several stands for interpretive signs in the park, but the actual signs had either been vandalized or perhaps removed at the end of the summer season.

The Fort at Clarks Point (3<sup>rd</sup> system granite fort) remains locked.



Fort at Clark's Point, Fort Rodman Park, New Bedford  
David Larsen photo

The Endicott-Taft period concrete batteries are again overgrown. The city parks department had kept them relatively clear a few years back. The pair of Panama mounts (2x155mm) between Battery Cross (2x5" P) and Battery Craig (2x3" MP) are still easily located.



Btry Cross (2x5" P), Ft Rodman Park, New Bedford  
David Larsen photo



Btry Barton (1x8" DC), Ft Rodman Park, New Bedford  
David Larsen photo



Btry Milliken (2x12" LRBC) #1 gun, Ft Rodman Park,  
New Bedford David Larsen photo



Btry Milliken (2x12" LRBC) interior, Ft Rodman Park, New Bedford *David Larsen photo*

The museum of the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Historical Association ([forttaber.org](http://forttaber.org)) is in the former Post Exchange building. There are several parking spaces reserved for museum visitors that are exempt from the city's pay-to-park program. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

#### Barney's Joy Point (Location 50A) Dartmouth, MA

The AMTB 931 (2x90mm) site is private pastureland, and I did not have permission to visit. The most recent aerial image I could find suggests that the battery remains still exist there.

#### Mishaum Point (Location 51), Dartmouth, MA

The estate called 'Seapoint' where the main house is built atop Battery 210 (2x6" BC) was sold to a new owner in 2017, and it was for sale again in 2020 with an asking price of \$25 million. I viewed it from a distance because there is no public access to Mishaum Point without prior arrangements. There was also a 155mm battery on Panama mounts in front of Battery 210; one mount is visible in satellite imagery.

#### Fort Phoenix (Location 53A), Fairhaven, MA

The Fort Phoenix State Reservation includes the fort itself and an adjacent beach. The reservation is well maintained, and the fort is unchanged from my prior visits.



Fort Phoenix State Reservation, Fairhaven *David Larsen photo*



Fort Phoenix State Reservation, Fairhaven *David Larsen photo*

#### West Island (Location 55), Fairhaven, MA

The fire control tower at West Island still stands in the parking area of the Town of Fairhaven beach. It appears to be unchanged from my prior visits.

#### Butler's Point, (Location 56C), Marion, MA

The remains of AMTB 934 (2x90mm fixed & 2x90mm mobile) and the 155mm battery exist on the point south of the parking lot at the Kittansett Club. The area is subject to periodic overwash and coastal erosion.

I did not visit the other New Bedford fire control and AMTB locations at Cuttyhunk, Nashawena, Naushon, Gay Head, Round Hill, and Gooseberry Neck.

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## **The U.S. Army's WW I Railroad Artillery Reserve (RAR) and its Insignia**

Charles H. Bogart

In April 1917, when the United States declared war on Germany, the U.S. Army was incapable of fighting a modern war. The Army had no division size infantry units, and no field artillery pieces larger than a 3-inch gun. The U.S. Army's Field Artillery manual still envisioned engaging the enemy in open combat, firing at targets using open sights, just like the field artillery was used in the Civil War. Before the first U.S. Army units sailed for France to form what would become the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), the War Department had determined that the U.S. Army had to be equipped with large caliber artillery guns for use in indirect fire, if its soldiers were to survive the trench warfare raging in France. Since within the U.S. Army only the Coast Artillery Corps (CAC) was familiar with firing large guns in indirect fire, the War Department assigned all AEF artillery units manning guns of 155 mm size and larger under the control of the CAC. The War Department also assigned the CAC the responsibility for manning AEF trench mortars and anti-artillery guns.



Lacking an arsenal of heavy guns for use in the field, the U.S. Army in 1917 initiated three programs to equip itself with modern heavy caliber guns— 1) orders were placed with U.S. weapon manufactures for the production of large caliber guns; 2) large caliber guns were ordered from French and British armament firms; and 3) “surplus” coast defense guns and mortars were dismounted from forts in the United States to be modified for use in the field.

Most of these dismounted coast artillery weapons were placed on railcars. Once these rail guns arrived in France they would be manned by the CAC. The CAC consolidated a number of its harbor defense companies into new regiments and shipped them to France for training. Most of these CAC regiments would go into battle using French and British artillery pieces as their American guns would not arrive in France until the winter of 1918-1919. The American rail guns were to have supported the planned AEF campaign of 1919. To act as overall AEF headquarters and coordinator of these railroad guns CAC created the Railroad Artillery Reserve (RAR).

The U. S. Army's divisions arrived in France during 1918 with no uniform insignias to indicate what unit a man belonged to. It appeared to the British and French public that there were just tens upon tens of thousands American soldiers milling around with no organizational structure. In December 1917, Major General Charles J. Bailey, commanding officer of the 81<sup>st</sup> Division, visited France in preparation for the shipping of his division overseas. In France he noted that British, Canadian, and Australian soldier all wore division patches on their uniforms. This struck him as an excellent idea and, on returning to stateside, he had created a Wildcat patch for his men to wear on the shoulders of their uniforms. These patches were sewn on the uniforms of the men of the 81<sup>st</sup> during their voyage to France.

Shortly after the 81<sup>st</sup> Division landed in France, AEF headquarters became aware that the soldiers of the division were wearing an unauthorized patch on their shoulder and ordered it removed. Major General Bailey thereupon requested a meeting with General John J. Pershing, the commanding officer AEF. Pershing was at first hostile to the idea of wearing patches or insignia not authorized by the War Department on their uniform. However, he soon realized that uniform unit insignias would solve a major problem he had with the British and French governments. Both governments considered the AEF soldiers to be individual soldiers under no one's command and wanted Pershing to assign American soldiers to be used as replacements for depleted French and British units. Pershing saw that by having all the American soldiers in France wear a unit patch, this would demonstrate to the British and French governments that the American soldiers in France were already organized into existing military units. The AEF HQ subsequently ordered all U.S. Army division size or larger units to develop a distinctive unit patch. The AEF considered the Railroad Artillery Reserve to be a division sized unit, as it would control several CAC regiments for the 1919 campaign, and the RAR was also instructed to create a unit patch for their uniforms.

Brigadier General William Chamberlaine, commanding officer of the RAR, sent a copy of the proposed RAR patch to Major General F. W. Coe, Chief of the Coast Artillery, asking his approval for issuing of the patch. He explained in his letter

to General Coe that centered in the patch was the image of the Oozlefinch—the mythological bird from the CAC School at Fort Monroe. General Chamberlaine noted that the Oozlefinch on the patch:

“wears a trench helmet, perhaps uselessly but with effect ... on his foot you will notice a wrist watch which indicates 7:30 ... the hour for all Railway Artillery Reserve to begin work. You will further notice that he is perched on a section of rail in which is emblazed RAR for Railroad Artillery Reserve ... the rail being surrounded by an epis (a curved section of track) which permits our guns to fire in any direction.”



The proposed RAR shoulder patch design



The RAR shoulder patch as issued.

(It must be noted that I have seen six genuine WWI made RAR patches and all differ somewhat in design from the description General Chamberlaine supplied to General Coe.)

General Coe approved the patch and sent along with his approval the following poem to General Chamberlaine:



## ODE TO THE OOZLEFINCH

O ffensive are his dotage, advancing foot by foot  
 O riented, so to shoot "Dand tous les azimuths:"  
 Z ealous and Resourceful, and just twixt me and you  
 L eave it to our bird, is the word at G. H. Q.  
 E very time he flaps his wings, the big guns go into action  
 F iring from a railway track to get the proper traction.  
 I n this war so young, Ah, yes it was so bad,  
 N ever once could he flag his wings when one feather's all he had  
 C ome what may. However, this one fact is a cinch.  
 H ere's to the R.A. R. by gosh and its little OOZLEFINCH.

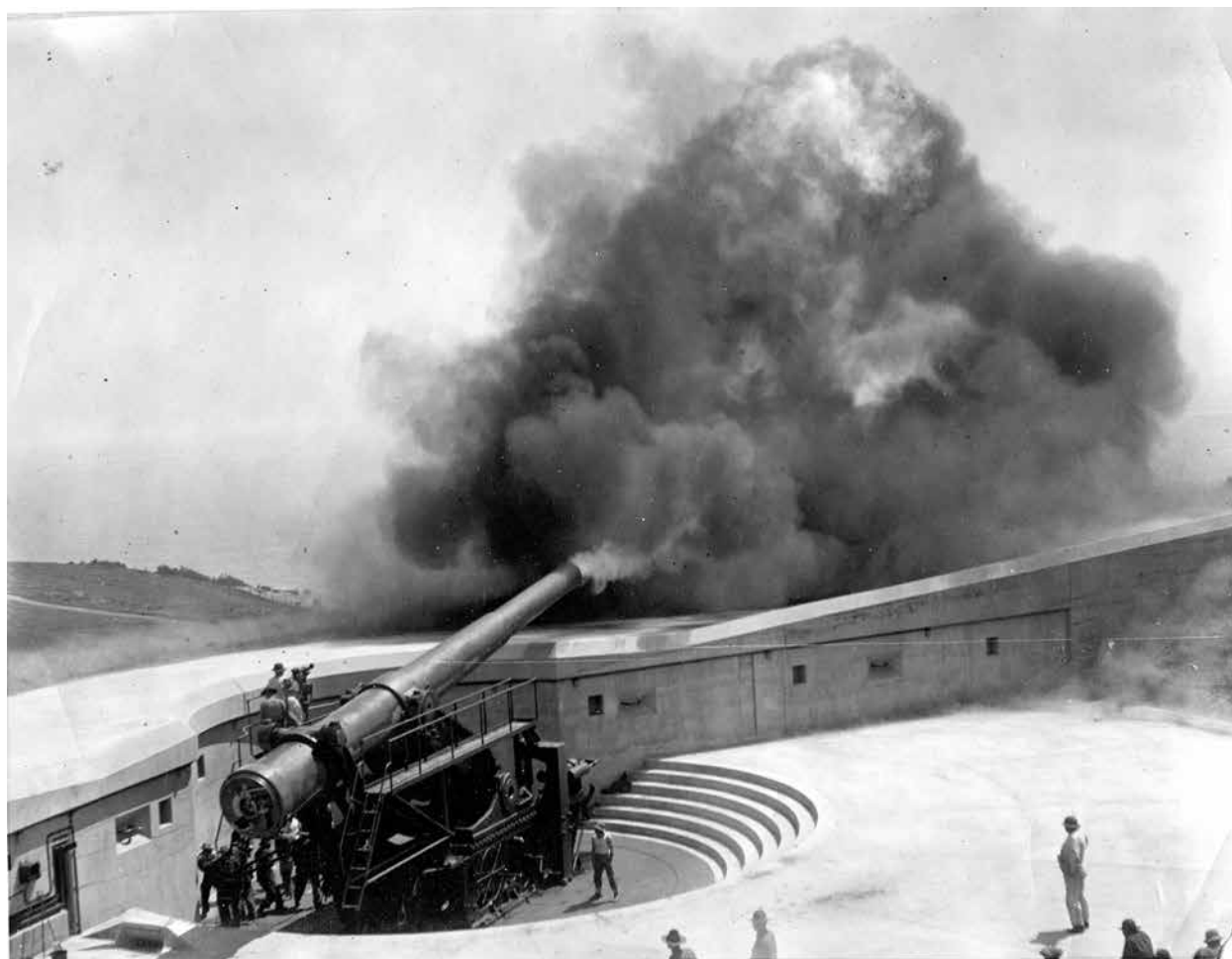
Of course, the war ended in November 1918 and the RAR was disbanded. The regiments sent to France were returned home. Most of these regiments were demobilized and disbanded upon their return. However, ten regiments of the mobile CAC artillery were retained either as active or inactive units. Of the railway artillery there were four regiments in the Regular Army which formed the 30th Artillery Brigade: 42nd (12-inch mortar), 52nd (8-inch guns), 43rd (armament unknown), and the 53rd (inactive). Of these units only the 52nd had active elements before 1938. Beginning in 1920 the unit insignia were mandated for regiments as well. The 42nd, 43rd and 52nd regiments received distinctive unit insignias that were approved in the 1930s.

The insignia elements of the 42nd and 43rd Coast Artillery regiments also contain the RAR Oozlefinch.



Unit Insignia for the 42nd C.A. Regiment (RY) (left) and the 43rd C.A. Regiment (RY) (right)

For more information on the Oozlefinch and insignias see articles on the CDSG website at <https://cdsg.org/coast-artillery-corps/> or sections in *American Seacoast Defenses a Reference Guide* (<https://cdsg.org/product/american-seacoast-defenses-3rd-edition/>).



Firing a 14-inch gun on a disappearing carriage at Fort MacArthur, San Pedro, California, 1924. Mark Berhow Collection



### CDSG Fund

The CDSG Fund supports the efforts of the Coast Defense Study Group by raising funds for preservation and interpretation of American seacoast defenses. The CDSG Fund is seeking donations for projects supporting its goals.

Visit the CDSG.ORG website for more details.

The goals of the CDSG and CDSG Fund are the following:

- \* Educational study of coast defenses
- \* Technical research and documentation of coast defenses
- \* Preservation of coast defense sites, equipment, and records for current and future generations
- \* Accurate coast defense site interpretations
- \* Assistance to groups interested in preservation and interpretation of coast defense sites

Donations are tax-deductible for federal tax purposes as the CDSG is a 501(c)(3) organization, and 100% of your gift will go to project grants. Major contributions are acknowledged annually. Make checks or money orders payable in US funds to: Coast Defense Study Group Fund or the CDSG Fund. Donations can also be made by credit card through the CDSG website at [www.cdsg.org](http://www.cdsg.org).

The Fund is always seeking proposals for the monetary support of preservation and interpretation projects at former coast defense sites and museums. A one-page proposal briefly describing the site, the organization doing the work, and the proposed work or outcome should be sent to the address below. Successful proposals are usually distinct projects rather than general requests for donations. Ideally, we desire to fund several \$500 to \$1,500 grants per year. Upon conclusion of a project a short report suitable for publication in the CDSG *Newsletter* is requested. The trustees shall review such requests and pass their recommendation onto the CDSG Board of Directors for approval. The trustees for the CDSG Fund are Terry McGovern, Quentin Schillare and Mark Berhow.

Send donations to (and made out to):

CDSG Fund c/o Quentin Schillare

24624 W. 96th Street, Lenexa, KS 66227-7285 USA

Or use your credit card via PayPal on the [www.cdsg.org](http://www.cdsg.org) website.

Send Fund Project requests to:

CDSG Fund c/o Terry McGovern

1700 Oak Lane, McLean, VA 22101-3326 USA

Please prepare a written request of your need and how your request relates to the goals of the CDSG.



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### CDSG Logo Hats, Shirts & Patches

The CDSG is pleased to offer custom-made hats, T-shirts and patches to our membership. Wearing these hats, T-shirts and patches are a great way to make others aware of the CDSG and its goals. It is also an excellent way to promote new memberships in the CDSG.

The CDSG patches have been available for several years. Designed especially for the CDSG, these quality patches combine the Coast Artillery Corps and the Corps of Engineers symbols to reflect their involvement in U.S. coastal defenses. This logo is now on hats and a set of T-shirts which are great for showing the CDSG "flag."

To order your hat, T-shirt or patch, please complete the order form below and send it along with your check (made out to CDSG, Inc.) to Terry McGovern at 1700 Oak Lane, McLean, VA 22101-3326 USA (e-mail: [tcmcgovern@att.net](mailto:tcmcgovern@att.net)).

CDSG hats, T-shirts and patches ordering information

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Red T-Shirt with white ink:

Size & # \_\_\_L \_\_\_XL \_\_\_2XL \_\_\_3XL

Khaki T-Shirt with black ink:

Size & # \_\_\_L \_\_\_XL \_\_\_2XL \_\_\_3XL

Navy T-shirt with yellow ink:

Size & # \_\_\_L \_\_\_XL \_\_\_2XL \_\_\_3XL

Total Number: \_\_\_ times \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(domestic \$18/overseas \$26 each)

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CDSG Color Decal: \_\_\_ times \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Hats: \_\_\_ times \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(domestic \$20/overseas \$25) each

Be sure to include your name and shipping address.

You can also order online at [cdsg.org/shopping/](http://cdsg.org/shopping/)

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### Support the [cdsg.org](http://cdsg.org) website

The CDSG supports its web site ONLY through donations. If you download PDF files from the website, please help the CDSG continue to maintain it by donating a shareware fee. The suggested fees will be noted next to each PDF document. We suggest a minimum donation of \$5.00. Thank you for supporting the CDSG web site!



\* \* \* \* \*

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### Company of Military Historians

This organization is dedicated to the study and preservation of military history in the Americas. Its objectives are to promote and advance the research of military history and traditions through publications, exhibits, and meetings. Members include anyone interested in military history, such as historians, collectors, writers, artists, and those involved in living history.

The company publishes the quarterly journal, *Military Collectors and Historian*, and an ongoing series of color plates— "Military Uniforms in America." Memberships start at \$60

For membership information contact:

Company of Military Historians

P.O. Box 910, Rutland, MA 01543-0910

Phone: 508-845-9229

E-mail: [cmhhq@aol.com](mailto:cmhhq@aol.com)

<http://www.military-historians.org>.

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### The Artilleryman Magazine

The *Artilleryman* is the only magazine exclusively for artillery shooters and collectors. History, unit profiles, events, places to visit, book reviews, advertising. It is published quarterly; subscriptions are \$34.95 a year. Free sample copies are available.

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### The Fortress Study Group

[www.fortressstudygroup.org](http://www.fortressstudygroup.org)

The Fortress Study Group is a charity registered in the UK with an international membership. Its purpose is advancing the study of post-medieval artillery fortifications throughout the World.

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## The Coast Defense Study Group <https://cdsg.org>

The *CDSG Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Coast Defense Study Group, Inc. along with the *Coast Defense Journal*. Submissions for the newsletter should be sent to the editor or publisher below.

Submission deadlines are the first of the month in February, May, August, and November of each calendar year. All rights are reserved. Comments on business matters should be addressed directly to the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

CDSG Publications  
Mark Berhow, Publisher  
PO Box 6124, Peoria, IL 61601  
[berhowma@cdsg.org](mailto:berhowma@cdsg.org)

The CDSG is a non-profit corporation formed to promote the study of coast defenses and fortifications, their history, architecture, technology, and strategic and tactical employment. The purposes of the group include educational research and documentation, preservation of historic sites, site interpretation, and assistance to other organizations interested in the preservation and interpretation of coast defense sites. Membership in the CDSG is open to any person interested in the study of the coast defenses and fortifications of the United States.

Annual dues are \$45 domestic printed, \$55 for Canada printed, and \$90 for international printed. Join/renew online at [cdsg.org](https://cdsg.org).

Checks payable to: The Coast Defense Study Group, Inc. (CDSG)  
Send to:

Quentin Schillare, Membership Chairman  
24624 W. 96th Street, Lenexa, KS 66227-7285  
[membership@cdsg.org](mailto:membership@cdsg.org)

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This is an all-volunteer operation provided as a service to our members and to other interested historians. Credit card orders are accepted on the [cdsg.org](https://cdsg.org) website. For mail orders please send check or money order in U.S. currency. Please note clearly in your order which items you are ordering. All prices include domestic / international shipping costs (US Postal Service). Allow at least 8-10 weeks for delivery.

**CDSG 1985-2023 Publications.** Text-searchable PDF files of the entire set of *CDSG News/Journal/Newsletters* \$50 domestic and foreign on a data USB drive, or by download. Once purchased, yearly download updates can be obtained from Mark Berhow ([berhowma@cdsg.org](mailto:berhowma@cdsg.org)).

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These collections are available as PDFs on a USB drive or by a download link, the size of the collection varies from harbor to harbor. Contact Mark Berhow at [berhowma@cdsg.org](mailto:berhowma@cdsg.org) for more details.

### CDSG Press Books (\$ domestic/\$ international)

*Notes on Seacoast Fortification Construction*, by Col. Eben E. Winslow (GPO, 1920), hard cover reprint, with 29 plates included in a separate paperback. Both items: \$35 / \$45

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

*The Endicott and Taft Reports*, reprint of original reports of 1886, 1905, 1915, hardcover, with plates included in a separate paperback \$45/ \$95

*Artillerists and Engineers, the Beginnings of American Seacoast Fortifications, 1794-1815*, by Arthur P. Wade, paperback, (2010) \$25/ \$40

*American Seacoast Defenses: A Reference Guide*, Third Edition edited by Mark Berhow (2015), hardcover \$45 / \$95

*Historic Fortifications Preservation Handbook*, 2003 guide to preservation methods for concrete fortifications spiral bound softcover \$15 / \$70

*WWII Harbor Defenses of San Diego*, 2021 by H.R. Everett, available from Amazon, \$40 list price, (\$50 if ordered from CDSG, domestic shipping only).

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