

with a much more personal feeling for what it was like to participate in the war and with a much better understanding for what taking part in a commando raid could actually be like. For those who may be curious about the title, "Who Cares Who Wins" is a pun, prevalent in the S.A.S. during the war, on the official S.A.S. motto "Who dares, wins."

The book can be ordered from the Charico Press, The Coach House, 10A Fulwood Park, Liverpool L17 5AH, United Kingdom. The overseas prices are £27.00 for the hardback edition and £17.00 for the softback edition. For those paying in dollars, the prices are \$50.00 US (\$75.00 Canadian) for the hardback edition and \$30.00 US (\$40.00 Canadian) for the softback edition. All prices include shipping. The publisher is unable to accept credit card payment.

In addition to containing six color illustrations, the hardback edition is autographed. An order form and additional information is available at <http://www.quentinhugh.u-net.com/whocareswhowins>.

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Changes at the National Archives

Mark Berhow

I recently spent some time at the National Archives in downtown Washington DC. The Archives is getting ready to move all military records dated 1917-1940 from downtown to College Park, including a number of important harbor defense records. Particular record groups will be closed down and transferred to College Park within the next eight months, with the entire operation being completed by the end of 1999. These files include the bulk of the US Army Corps of Engineers records of completed works (RCWs) for the harbor defense fortification structures and the 1930s and 1940s annexes and supplements to harbor defense projects, which are of interest to many members of the CDSG.

Record Group (RG) 77 (Corps of Engineers records) Entry 1007 contains the Harbor Defense Files, Geographic Files (Classified). The entry has many, many boxes of files, which are arranged in alphabetical order by the harbor defense name and then by the old army decimal file number. The set contains the records once located at the individual harbor defense offices. Asking the Archives personnel to pull the boxes that contain the entries for Los Angeles, for example, will result in about 5 boxes with the decimal files from about 100 to 900. The folder(s) for decimal file 600.93 has copies of all the RCWs (Forms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) that were on file at the harbor defense office. The folders for decimal file 662 has a set of blueprint maps (often with revisions drawn on them) and a copy of the last supplement (or annex) prepared for that harbor defense. I was able to make good copies of the RCWs for the batteries at Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Columbia River, and get copies of text of the 1944-46 supplements to the har-

bor defense projects for these sites. Additional copies of the supplements and annexes, including ones from the 1930s and 1940s, are located in RG 407, Entry 366. This entry consists of 32 boxes filed in alphabetical order by harbor defense. These entries have a great deal of specific information on the structures built at a particular harbor defense. Currently located at the downtown Archives, they will be moved to College Park, MD by the end of 1999.

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Recent visits to the Long Island Sound Forts

Mark Berhow & B.W. Smith

A group of CDSG and CAMP members spent two pleasant weekends visiting three forts on islands in the Long Island Sound area. Alex Holder and Gary Paliwoda made the arrangements for the group to visit Fort Terry on Plum Island and Fort H.G. Wright on Fishers Island. Both of these forts will be visited during the CDSG Annual Conference in 2003. A visit to Fort Michie on Great Gull Island was arranged through the American Museum of Natural History.

A group gathered at the Old Saybrook ferry landing at 8 AM on Saturday, April 10, to visit Plum Island, ex-Fort Terry and now the home of the USDA National Animal Disease Research Center. As it is very difficult to arrange for a visit to this island, and this visit may prove to be one of the last CDSG tours until 2003. At Fort Terry, the USDA has built a new research facility on the island and most of the old military structures are deserted. We were able to visit all of the remaining gun batteries, mine structures, and fire control stations during our tour. Transportation was kindly provided by the USDA bus. Not much has changed since last year's visit. Except for the area around the old parade ground, most of the fortification structures are being overgrown. There has been some controlled burning in areas to control some of the vegetation.



Battery Henry Cambell, Fort Terry

The next day, Sunday, April 11, a smaller group gathered at the Fisher's Island ferry landing in New London for the 8:30 AM ferry. The Fort H.G. Wright reservation is pretty much completely in private hands. Fisher's

Island is a private summer home/resort area. The group was able to visit most of the remaining structures on the island. Several buildings remain, including a number of the old Officer's Quarters. The fortifications have not fared as well. The batteries of the main gun line have been filled in with debris, and one 6 inch battery has also been buried. One pit of the mortar battery has been buried, but the other pit has recently been cleared. The other batteries are generally abandoned, some heavily overgrown. A few of the old fire control stations remain, some in poor shape. It looks like the fortifications on Fisher's Island will only be further degraded over the coming years, despite some interest on the island in the history of the site.



Officer's Quarters, Fort H.G. Wright

Two weeks later, five CDSG members, Alex Holder, Leo Polaski, Bolling Smith, Gordon Bliss, and Johathan Prostak, spent the night of April 29 on Great Gull Island, the former site of Fort Michie, in Long Island Sound. The island is controlled by the American Museum of Natural History, and serves as a nesting refuge for large numbers of terns every spring and summer. Because of the presence of the birds, it is necessary to visit the island during the short periods when the dock is in place before or after the nesting season.

The staff and volunteers from the museum have always been extremely gracious hosts to CDSG members, and the most recent group repaid the favor by putting a number of hours of heavy manual labor, including loading and unloading the boat and helping to position bird blinds around the island. Plenty of time was left to repeatedly visit the batteries, and everyone enjoyed the visit. Those interested in visiting next spring are encouraged to do so.

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**The Times They are A Changin'—
The Director's Cut
A Trip to the Panama Harbor Defenses 1999**
Mark Berhow

This trip reprises an earlier tour through the Panama Canal Zone harbor defense forts that occurred in 1993.

The trip report for that event, which appeared in the CDSG Journal Volume 7, Issue 2 (May 1993), amply describes the defenses, and this report will not go into such detail, except to note the changes since that time. More information can be found in the special tour notes for that trip, available from the CDSG Press.

Things are happening pretty quickly in Panama. The United States will be turning over all remaining property and holdings in the old Canal Zone by the end of 1999. A Panamanian agency, ARI, the Interoceanic Region Authority) was created by the government of Panama in 1993 to control and promote investment in the former Canal Zone in the areas formally administered by the US Department of Defense. ARI lands already include parts or all of the old Coast Artillery posts of Fort Grant and Amador. Fort Sherman will be turned over to ARI on June, 30, 1999, and Howard AFB, which includes Fort Kobbe, will be turned over on Nov. 1. ARI has plans to sell and develop these properties and others. Other ex-defense properties such as Fort Randolph, Fort Gulick, and the Coco Solo Naval Station, are already in Panamanian hands.

In light of these events and through a contact opportunity, CDSG member Terry McGovern was able to organize a trip down to Panama to revisit the old defenses one more time before the planned development gets up to speed. Terry obtained permission from ARI for a small group to visit and document the remaining defenses. In addition, he was able to obtain permission from the US Army for the group to visit Fort Sherman. Terry was only able to plan this some three weeks in advance of the visit, and short notice was given to a few interested individuals. As it turned out, seven current or past members of the CDSG Board of Directors—Terry McGovern,



The obligatory group photo at Battery Parke, Naos Island: Left to right from the top: An ARI representative, Alex Holder, Terry McGovern, Karl Schmidt. Bottom: B.W. Smith, Glen Williford, Mark Berhow, and Tom Vaughan.

Karl Schmidt, Bolling W. Smith, Alex Holder, Glen Williford, Tom Vaughan, and myself headed south on March 4 to gather at the Continental Riande Hotel in downtown Panama City.

We were the guests of Dr. Nicolas Ardito Barletta, Director of ARI, on our tour of the old defenses. We had the assistance of Kathy De Guardia and Eduardo De La Ossa from ARI in setting up this visit. ARI provided the group with a bus and a driver to visit the sites. After a little translated discussion describing our destinations to the driver, we headed out for the Caribbean side on the other side of the isthmus. An interesting three-hour drive brought us out to Isla de Margarita, the site of Fort Randolph.

In 1993 the CDSG Special Tour, guests of the Isla de Margarita Development Group, was shown a detailed plan of development for the island including light industry, motels, condominiums, and recreational facilities. Upon our arrival at Isla de Margarita, it was apparent that the grand plans of 1993 had not been carried out. The entire island was pretty much abandoned. The shells of several buildings stood surrounded by the tall savannah grass. The area has recently been used for a dump, including thousands of pairs of slip on shoes, which were partially melted in one of the fires that had burned across the island. Batteries Tidball & Zalinski (4 x 12-inch M each) remain pretty much in the state they were in 1993. The structure is in good shape, but debris lines the interior rooms and galleries. Next, we headed out through the grass toward Battery Webb (2 x 14-inch DC). After a long and exhausting walk we finally made it to Webb, but could only spend a short while looking at this magnificent structure. The battery has a number of artifacts, including some 14-inch shell tongs, a DPF stand and three 25 kW generators. After a quick tour of the battery our party had to head back to the bus passing by Battery Weed (2 x 6-inch DC), which looked unchanged from the 1993 visit.

We boarded our bus and headed around the bay and across the canal to Fort Sherman. The Fort Sherman visit was arranged by Delores DeMena, command historian, U.S. Army South. We were met at the gate by Capt. Mark LeBeau, the engineering officer in charge for the post, who took time from his day off to escort our party around the post. Sherman is due to be

turned over to ARI on June 30, 1999. The last batch of trainees for the Jungle School was arriving the day of our visit. Our first stop was Battery Kilpatrick (2 x 6-inch DC). The battery is in excellent shape and has been cleaned up and repainted. The mine casemate has been somewhat modified and was not open for our inspection. All other mine facilities have been removed except the mine wharf.

Next we headed over to visit Batteries Mower and Stanley (1 x 14-inch DC each), unique independent single gun major caliber batteries. Stanley has been somewhat cleaned of vegetation and debris, Mower less so. The gun platforms of both batteries are overgrown. Both batteries have their shell tables and few other artifacts, but have been pretty much stripped. On the ridge behind Mower were some fire control stations which were not visited on the previous trip. This included two sets of double base-end stations and a tower which was probably a radar tower associated with the HECP. In the midst of these is a large three story HECP/HDCP/mining casemate complex built over an earlier observation station in the 1940s. This relatively large structure has a number of rooms and observation stations, one of the more complex fire control structures that I have seen.

Our next stop was one of the two WWI era batteries at Sherman, Battery MacKenzie (2 x 12-inch BCLR). This battery was not casemated in the 1940s as was its sister Battery Pratt, which we could not visit. We looked over the exterior of McKenzie but could not get inside because it was still in use to store ammunition.

Our final Fort Sherman stop was Batteries Baird and Howard (4 x 12-inch M each). This battery is still in fine shape, though the plotting room for Battery Howard



Alex Holder at the emplacement for a 105 mm AA gun in jungle north of Panama City.

was removed a number of years ago. We were able to walk around the outside of the battery, including the unique infantry defense wall behind the battery, but we were not allowed inside the battery.

Our second day was spent entirely on the fortified islands that comprised Fort Grant. Most of this land is now ARI property, except for the top of Perico Island which is still an active ATC radar installation, and parts of Naos Island which are being used by the Smithsonian Institution. The islands remain essentially the same as when the group visited in 1993, but efforts have begun to develop the islands, with work on widening the causeway and replacing utility lines. Flamenco Island, a training facility for the Panamanian Coast Guard in 1993 is now ARI property. These properties seem to be patrolled by guards, especially in the areas being worked on. We had permission from ARI to visit these sites, but it may be difficult to visit these sites on your own. ARI has already given leases to a private company which is planning to build a hotel on the top of Naos Island, time share condominiums on Perico and Flamenco Islands and a restaurant on the top of Flamenco Island. The islands are to be connected by an aerial tramway from Fort Amador.

We drove through the Fort Amador area on our way to the causeway. This area will be developed by ARI. Some of the military buildings will be used by the government and private interests, whereas others will be destroyed by new construction.

We started our fortification visit on Flamenco Island looking at all of the rooms and fire control structures in and around Battery Warren (2 x 14-inch DC) on top of the island. The structure is now deserted, and the once pristine generators have been partially dismantled for copper wire. We looked for the Panama mounts once around the front of Battery Warren, but could find no evidence of them. The top of the battery pretty much remains as it was when the Hawk missile battery was removed in the early 1980s. At the "back" of the island were Batteries Prince, Merritt, and Carr (4 x 12-inch M each). Debris lines much of the rooms and corridors, and all copper has been scavaged out of these structures, so several cables were lying around the area. Otherwise, it remains much in the same condition it was in 1993.

Perico Island is still being used by the Panamanian FAA, which has a active radar station on the top of Battery Newton (1 x 16-inch DC). The battery looked pretty much the same as it did in 1993, but we were not able to get inside.

We had lunch at one of two new restaurants now on Perico Island since 1993. After lunch, we headed over to Culebra Island. The island has been turned into a park/open space, with a museum in one of the magazines for the railway gun (2 x 14-inch RY). The defensive structures can be found on the island, but some have been covered or buried. We are not sure who has jurisdiction over this island.

Finally, our group headed to Naos Island. This island had three batteries: Burnside & Buell (2 x 14-inch DC each connected by a long gallery) and Battery Parke (2 x 6-inch DC). The mine facilities were also located on this island. ARI has already begun work on this island. A road has been built across the top of the island to the construction site for a large water tank located on the right flank of Battery Burnside. The construction has destroyed a fire control complex and the 3-inch AA battery, and debris has been pushed into the No. 1 gun pit of Battery Burnside. Battery Buell was unchanged, but there were reports of plans to build housing on the top of the island, which could mean the destruction of much of the Burnside-Buell complex. Otherwise, the island is similar to the condition it was in 1993. The 6-inch battery is abandoned and somewhat overgrown. The mine casemate, the cable tank, and the torpedo storehouse are being used by the Smithsonian Institution. The torpedo storehouse was recently remodeled for office space and lab space with the addition of floors.

Although most of the group had to fly home on Sunday, Alex, Bolling, and Tom remained another day. Sunday morning, with a rented car and driver, they drove to Howard AFB, the site of the former Fort Kobbe. Passing through the base, they emerged on the shore road, where they parked and followed directions from Dan Malone, who had located a 90 mm AMTB battery on Batele Point. Using Dan's directions, and a GPS, the four concrete gun emplacements were located.

The small group next drove to the Sobriano National Forest, the site of a rare surviving 105 mm AA battery. The access road was chained, requiring a climb up the road to the top of the mountain, where the emplacements were found just off the road.

After photographing the AA site, they drove on across the isthmus, returning to Fort Randolph. Despite some concerns about safety, they revisited Battery Webb, finally getting enough time to really examine that site. Battery Weed (2 x 6 in DC) was briefly examined before returning to the car and the final drive back to the hotel.

The trip was very interesting. As noted above, changes are coming to Panama. The fortification structures pretty much remain the way they were in 1993, with the exception of the construction next to Battery Burnside. With the complete turn over of all the American assets of the Canal Zone, Panama is looking to develop there areas for tourism and industry. The fortifications may be destroyed or made inaccessible in the near future, if the Panamanian plans are realized. If anyone is interested in visiting the Panamanian defenses, contact Terry McGovern for information.

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