

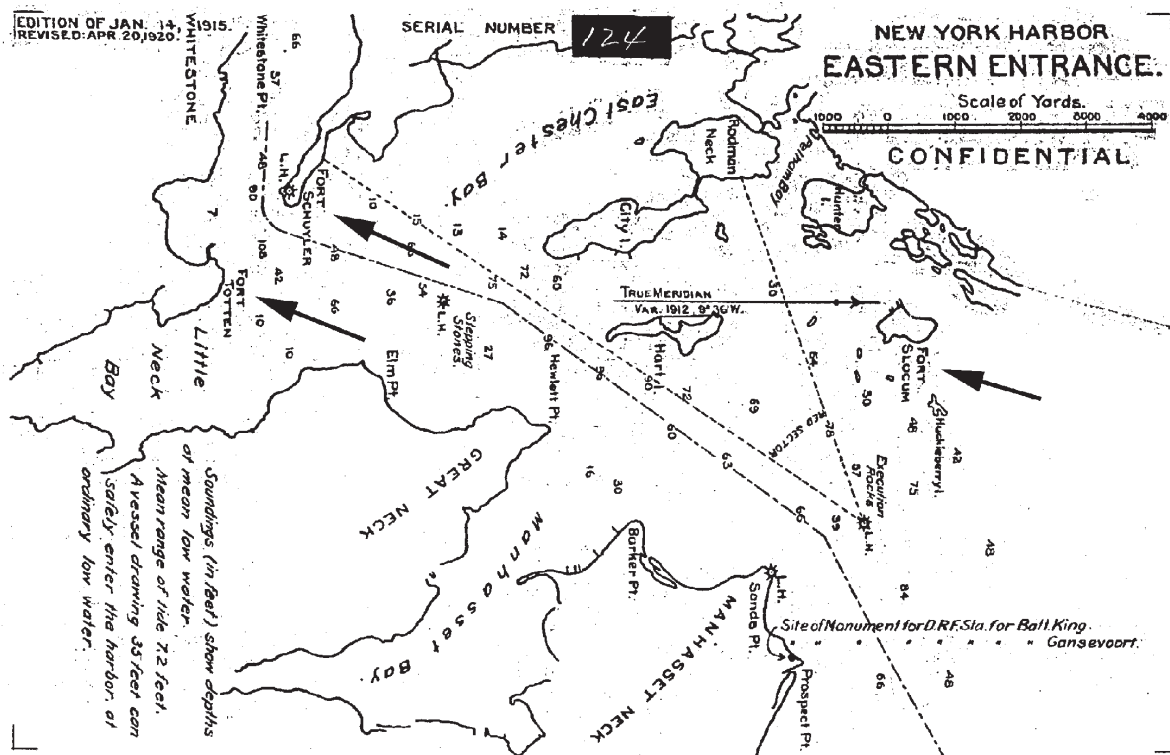
## CDSG Pre-Conference Tour Report, Eastern NY Defenses (March 26 - 28, 2017)

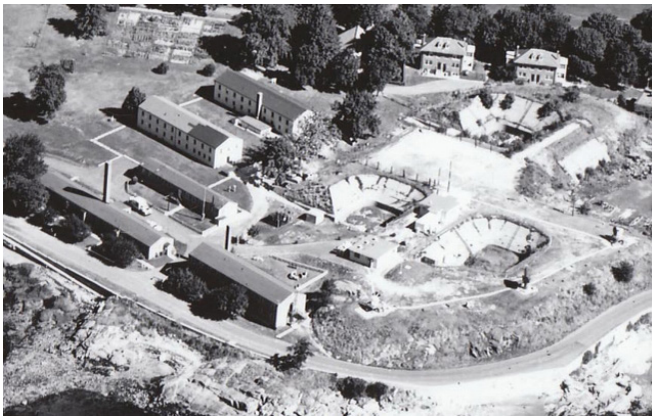
Terry McGovern

The CDSG held a pre-conference tour in the defenses of Eastern NY (Forts Slocum, Schuyler, and Totten) from March 26 to March 28, 2017, which was attended by 38 CDSG members. Given the many coast defenses of New York Harbor and the amount of time required to visit all these sites, the CDSG Board decided not to include all New York City (NYC) defenses in the 2017 CDSG Annual Conference. In response to CDSG members wanting to tour these sites, a pre-conference tour was organized. CDSG tour members gathered on Sunday night, March 26, at the Radisson Hotel in New Rochelle, NY, to discuss our tour plans, arrange carpooling, discuss safety rules, receive daily handouts, and sign documents.

On Monday, March 27, the group drove to the Neptune Park Fishing Dock in New Rochelle to meet the Miller's Launch Services workboat (M/S Antony Miller and Capt. Gary Baletti) at 8:30 am to shuttle across to Davids Island, the site of former Fort Slocum. The island was fortified with an early quad mortar battery (Battery Haskin-Overton, 16 x 12-inch BLM) and three other batteries, as well as numerous military buildings. The fort remained in use by the US Army through the 1970s until transferred as surplus to the City of New Rochelle. The fort's buildings increasingly fell into disrepair and were finally leveled in the 2008. The site is now heavily overgrown and little remains except the foundations, the mortar battery (three of four pits), a practice battery for two 8-inch rifles on Rodman carriages, and a 15-inch

Rodman cannon on display. The weather was miserable due to the steady rain and temperatures in the 40s. We were met by Peter O'Meara of the City of New Rochelle Dockmaster's Office to gain access to the New Rochelle docks and we were escorted by New Rochelle Police Officer Michael Dassler onto the island. The workboat landed bow first on Davids Island's primary beach (the island no longer has a dock), where we used a portable ladder to get our five groups of six tour members onto the island. Each of our five "teams" had an hour and one-half to visit the 15-inch Rodman, quad mortar battery, and the practice battery. We were able to visit all three sites including the interior of the mortar bat-





Batteries Haskin-Overton, Fort Slocum,  
Davids Island, NY, 1930s



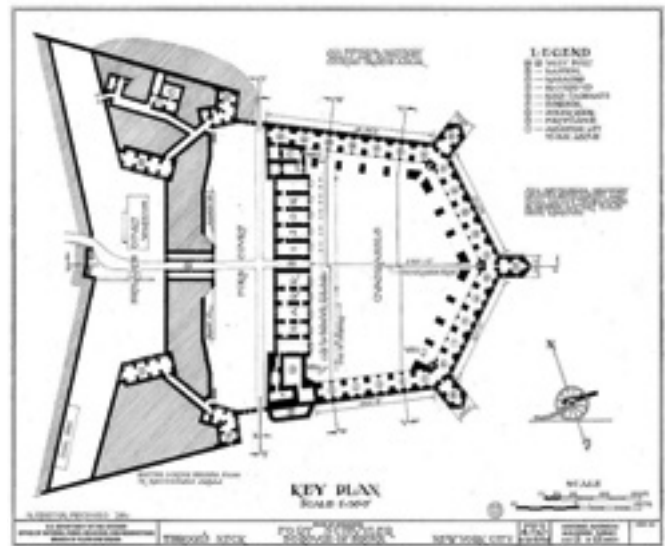
Fort Schuyler, Throgs Neck, NY



15-inch Rodman, Davids Island

tery. Being both wet and cold, all tour members were very happy to return to the mainland, the last group landing at 12:30 pm.

Tour members made the 30-minute drive from New Rochelle to State University of New York (SUNY) Maritime College on Throgs Neck in the Bronx, NY, to visit the former Fort Schuyler. Tour members made their way to Vander Clute Hall on campus, where we ate at the "Mess Deck" (dining hall). After enjoying the all-you-can-eat lunch, we met Professor David Allen, several cadets, and maintenance staff for a guided tour. Most of the Endicott batteries have been removed from this site, but the granite fort and most of its outer works remains intact, though modified for use as offices, museum, and library. We toured most of the old fort, including the magazines for one emplacement of Battery Gansevoort (2 x 12-inch DC), and crawled into a mine casemate and a cableway, as well as visited the roof with its remaining fire command station. Part of the old fort is now a library and a museum. The land defenses were unique to this fort, the only one to feature a true hornwork, which remains intact. The glacis approach has been modified for the bridge and for parking, but the counterscarp remains intact. There is a lot to see here in regards to Third-System fortifications. Tour members left around 5 pm to return to the Radisson Hotel overnight and to have their own dinners.



Hornwork (left) and main fort walls (right) Fort Schuyler

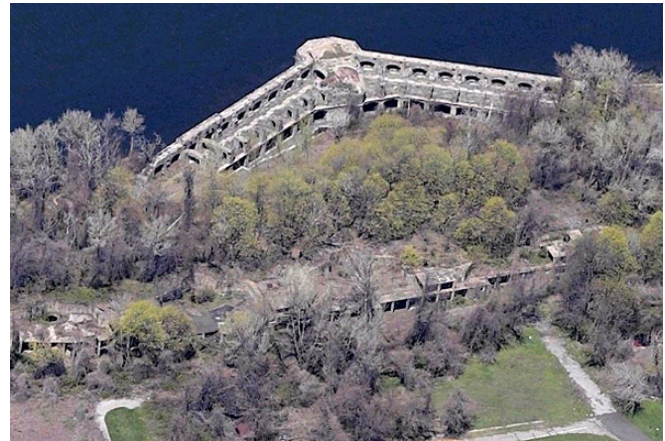


Parade Fort Schuyler





Library in casemates, Fort Schuyler

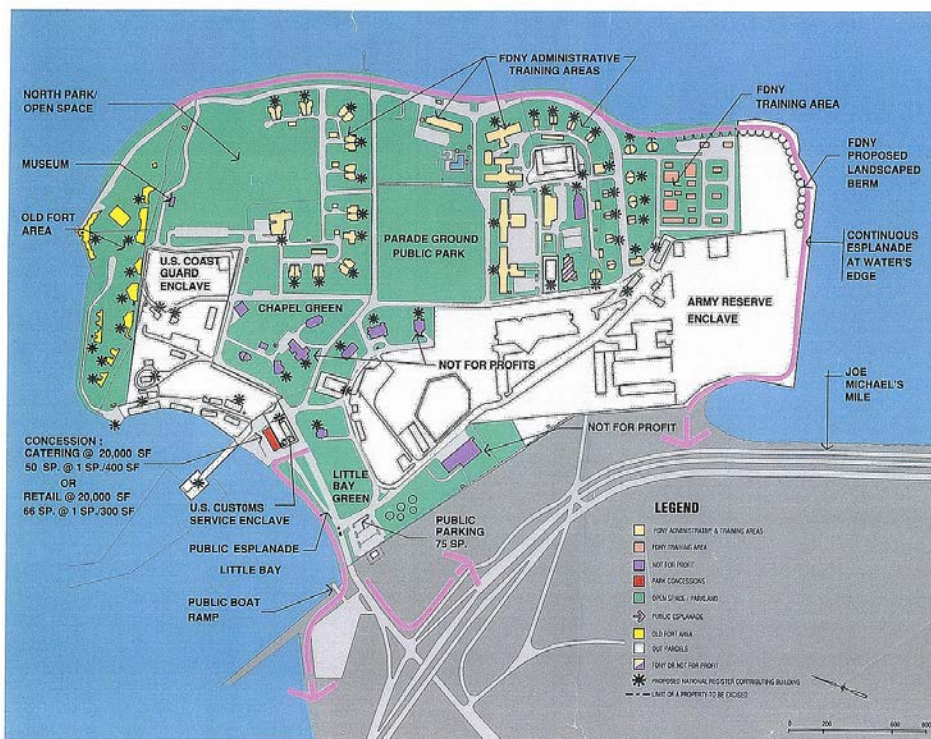


3rd System Fort and Endicott-Taft-Era gun line, Fort Totten, NY

On Tuesday, March 28, the tour group checked out of the Radisson and drove to former Fort Totten on Willet's Point in the Bayside area of Queens, NY. Our first stop for the day was at the NY City Park Visitors' Center, in the old ordnance storehouse on the Fort Totten grounds. Fort Totten is generally closed to public vehicular traffic, but is an open park for walking. It is currently occupied by the NYC Police Department, the NYC Fire Department, and the NYC Parks Department, as well as an Army Reserve Center. We started off with an overview of plans from Sgt. Martha Brodylo, of the Urban Park Rangers, for expanding the open access area of the fort-park. Currently the old concrete battery area is off limits to visitors and somewhat overgrown. It was another chilly and rainy day as the group headed up past a Corps of Engineers soil remediation project and fanned out to visit Batteries Mahan (2 x 12-inch DC), Graham (2 x 10-inch DC), Sumner (2 x 8-inch DC in separate emplacements at each end of Graham & Mahan), then Batteries Stuart (2 x 5-inch BP)



3rd-System Fort Totten, NY



## DRAFT REUSE PLAN FOR FORT TOTTON

QUEENS, NEW YORK

## FIRE TRAINING ACADEMY & MULTI - USE COMMUNITY

PIN 013070000056  
CONTRACT #9786764  
JANUARY 1998

CLIENT:  
**THE QUEENS BOROUGH  
PRESIDENT  
ON BEHALF OF  
THE FORT TOTTON  
REDEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY**

CONSULTANTS:

**THE  
HELLMUTH,  
OBATA +  
KASSABAUM, PC**

CONSULTANT TEAM

**HAMILTON RABINOVITZ &  
ALSCHULER, INC**

**EDWARDS & KELCEY  
ENGINEERS, INC**

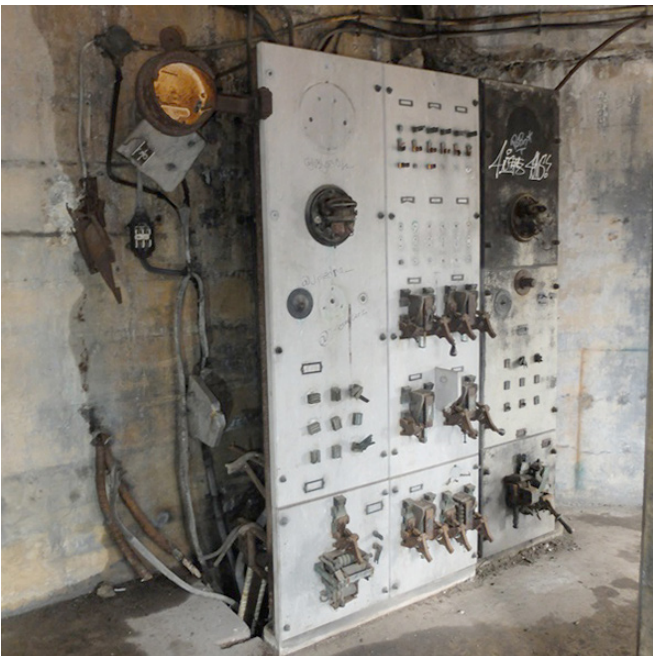
**JAN HIRD POKORNY  
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Endicott-Taft Era Gun line, Fort Totten



Power Panel, Fort Totten



Taylor-Raymond hoist, Fort Totten

and Burnes (2 x 3-inch P) and the remains of the 1870s emplacements. Highlights included an intact 12-inch Taylor-Raymond hoist in Mahan, power room electrical switchboard in Mahan, telephone boxes in Burnes, and a stray 16-inch shell hoist collar. Walking back to the visitors' center we headed down past the reserve magazines through a long tunnel to the incomplete Third-System fort at Willet's Point, with its grand magazine in the hillside behind. On the left flank is Battery Baker (2 x 3-inch P and 2 x 3-inch MP) with its earlier BC behind and a later BC in one of the MP emplacements as this battery remained armed through 1945. This fort, designed by Joseph Totten, is partially complete and shows the penultimate designs of its creator. As we searched for the location of first mine casemate at Fort Totten, Terry McGovern, the tour organizer, slipped on the granite floor, fracturing his shoulder.

Returning to the visitor center, we thanked the Urban Park Rangers for the excellent tour and passed over the buried mortar battery and possible HDCP to our second stop at Fort Totten. At the former controlled submarine mine complex, we were greeted by Lt. Stacy McCann and Lt. Richard Williams of the NYC Police Department, who gave us a tour of the former mine buildings which their technical support unit currently occupies. Fort Totten was the center of mine development from the 1880s



Mine casemate and store house, Fort Totten



Former officers club, Fort Totten, NY





Double barracks, Fort Totten

through 1906, and a number of interesting buildings still remain, including three mine storehouses, a cable tank building, several torpedo labs/workshops, and a later-period mine casemate.

Our third stop at Fort Totten was the Bayside Historical Society's headquarters in the fort's old officers club. We were hosted by Laura James, executive director of the society, at a catered sandwich lunch. We were joined by Matt Symons, the Northeast Queens Park Administrator for the NYC Parks Department during the lunch, with several urban park rangers. After touring the building and their collection, we continued on to our last stop. Mac Harris, operations manager for the NYCFD, arranged for us to tour the remaining garrison buildings and quarters under the jurisdiction of the fire department. The buildings are used as quarters, offices, and a training center. The NYCFD is slowly going through and renovating a few buildings at a time. One of the old barracks, which lost part of its roof, is currently being stabilized with a plan to rebuild the interior and put a new roof on it. The NYCFD has a daunting task ahead to save these buildings, but seems to be on track to renovate and reuse rather than level and build new. Finishing up with this tour we faced the New York traffic to drive 2 hours across Brooklyn to Staten Island and the formal opening of the CDSG Annual Conference.

The following CDSG members attended the 2017 CDSG Pre-Conference Tour: Tom Batha, Mark Berhow, Gordon Bliss, Charles and Mary Ann Bogart, Jim Buccellato, Stephen Conrad, Buckner Creel, Peter DeRose, Mike Fiorini, Michael Fleming, Karl Fritz, Alan Fyson, Andy Grant, Robert Grimm, Jean Philippe Guichard, Alex Hall, Dave Hancock, Roy Hatanka, Daniel Lindley, Dan Malone, Michael Malone, Dale Manuel, Terry McGovern, Thomas Minton, Gary Paliwoda, Jonathan Prostack, Susan Rayon, Bill Ricker, Gene Scanlon, Richard Schilb, Quentin Schillare, John Scholes, Ian Stevenson, Anne and Shawn Welch, and Chris Zeeman. The tour reached all our targeted sites, both inside and out. The CDSG wishes to thank all the site owners for allowing us to visit; hopefully we were also able to educate them about their former coast defense structures.

## \* \* \* \* \*

### The CDSG 2017 Conference at the Harbor Defenses of New York

March 26 to April 2, 2017

Shawn Welch, Norm Scarpulla,  
and Terry McGovern, organizers

The 2017 conference of the Coast Defense Study Group was held in the New York City area and visited a very comprehensive set of remaining fortifications guarding the waterways and harbors of greater New York. Many months of planning and negotiations went into setting up this conference, which included the Eastern New York defenses and the defenses at the eastern end of Long Island. Conference organizers Shawn Welch, Norm Scarpulla, and Terry McGovern put together a schedule that included 11 locations spread over 8 days. It was difficult to get all the arrangements in place, but it was well appreciated by the over 60 attendees. The conference required signing four formal agreements. It also included a partner, the Army Ground Forces Association. Many attendees were members of both organizations.

New York's large natural harbor attracted early explorers and settlers. Originally established as New Amsterdam by Dutch colonists in the mid-1600s, the area came under British control in the late 1600s and developed into a major trading, business, and commercial center. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, British forces defeated the revolutionary forces in the Battle of Brooklyn in August 1776, securing New York as a staging area for the British throughout the remaining years of the war. As tensions with Britain rose again after the turn of the century, New York was fortified under the Second System by a combination of federal, state, and city-funded construction projects, which resulted in a ring of over 20 fortifications guarding New York from the inner harbor area, across Manhattan Island, and along the Brooklyn edge of Long Island. These forts secured New York from British invasion during the War of 1812. The Third System brought new fort construction at the East River entrance to Long Island Sound—Fort Schuyler and the incomplete fort at Willet's Point; new works at the Narrows—Fort Hamilton on the Brooklyn side (along with the transitional Fort Lafayette) and Forts Tompkins and a rebuilt Fort Richmond on Staten Island; and the incomplete fort at Sandy Hook, NJ.

All subsequent developments in American seacoast artillery were incorporated into these defenses, including the construction/renovation of smoothbore batteries in the 1870s; new concrete batteries with breechloading guns at Sandy Hook, the Narrows and the East River Entrance during 1895 to 1906; new long-range gun batteries and repositioned gun batteries during 1917-30, and the new weapons of the 1940 Modernization Program. Examples of all stages of the U.S. Army's seacoast defense programs and weapons used from the Second System to the end of the coast artillery in 1950 can be seen here.

Monday-Tuesday, March 27-28:  
Forts Slocum, Schuyler, & Totten

The conference started with a pre-conference tour of the three forts of the defenses of eastern New York at the entrance to the East River from Long Island Sound. Finishing this tour in mid-afternoon on Tuesday, we faced New York traffic to drive south across Brooklyn to Staten Island and the formal opening of the conference. Gathering in the meeting room after dinner, we began our program with the itinerary for the next day followed by presentations on relatives in the coast artillery by Bill Ricker, noisy neighbors (coast artillery practice fire and its impact on the locals as shown by newspaper articles) by Karl Fritz, and details on guard houses by Quentin Schillare.

Wednesday, March 29: Fort Wadsworth

We drove from the hotel to the National Park Service (NPS) Gateway National Recreation Area (GATE) visitors' center at Fort Wadsworth, where we gathered for the day's trek to visit the extensive fortification remains in the park, past the 12-inch training dummy mortar barrel on display in the courtyard. GATE consists of several key sites we would visit, including Fort Wadsworth, Fort Tilden, and Fort Hancock. Our first stop at Fort Wadsworth was the impressive Third-System Fort Tompkins. Built mostly as a land defense work with a dry moat and a three-sided counterscarp against a large glacis, this work had no seaward facing gun casemates, just a barbette tier — with guns facing seaward and landward. Normally open to the public only



Fort Tompkins



Fort Tompkins Parade

for special tours, we got to go up to the barbette tier and down in the extensive counterscarp galleries, as well as wander around the dry moat. The southern glacis and counterscarp had been removed for Endicott construction, but the west and north sides remain. This summer the park service is planning to clear the trees from the barbette and top of the glacis.

After a quick view of New York and a look at the remains of Battery Duane (5 x 8-inch DC), considered the first disappearing gun battery, we headed to the bottom of the hill to visit Fort Richmond (renamed Battery Weed), the impressive Third-System four-tier work at the water. In our short visit, we were able to climb up to the casemates and barbette tier of the large work. With its backside protected by Fort Tompkins, Richmond/Weed's guns all faced the water. Located behind Fort Tompkins were the mine facilities for Fort Wadsworth, the cable tanks (now foundations), the large torpedo storehouse, the mine wharf, and the new mine casemate. The old mine casemate was built into Battery Weed. Rounding out our morning tour was a walk along the overgrown emplacements of Battery Caitlin (6 x 3-inch P).

Returning to the visitors' center for lunch, we were greeted by Gateway Superintendent Jennifer Nersesian. After lunch, we headed down to Battery Hudson (2 x 12-inch DC, buried to the parapets) and walked down to Battery Bacon (2 x 3-inch



Battery Weed (Fort Richmond)



Battery Caitlin





Third System Emplacements

P), past the mostly buried Battery Turnbull (6 x 3-inch P) and past the one remaining intact emplacement for Battery Barbour (2 x 6-inch Armstrong guns and 2 x 4.7-inch Armstrong guns) and along the emplacements of the Third-System/1870s-system earthen faced battery that originally stretched south from Battery Weed. Walking by the fenced and buried Battery Hudson we saw the remains of the adjacent emplacement of Battery Mills (1 x 6-inch DC) and visited the magazine of the other emplacement of Battery Mills (1 x 6-inch DC) across the road in a forest of poison ivy.

Heading down the road to the beach and past a lone fire control station, we visited the newly exposed experimental casemated battery built in the 1870s, then visited Battery Dix (2 x 12-inch DC), one of the last batteries built at Fort Wadsworth. Dix is the large-caliber battery in the best shape for restoration at Wadsworth, but is currently heavily overgrown. Regrouping next to Battery Barry (2 x 10-inch DC), we donned hard hats to tour the interior of the battery, which has a significant amount of concrete failure. Highlights of this battery were two base rings for the carriages, one of which still has the azimuth ring intact, and relatively intact receiving chutes for Type A powder hoists, both rarely seen today. Rounding out the day were visits to the interior of BCN 218 (2 x 6-inch BC) and driving by Batteries



Battery Dix



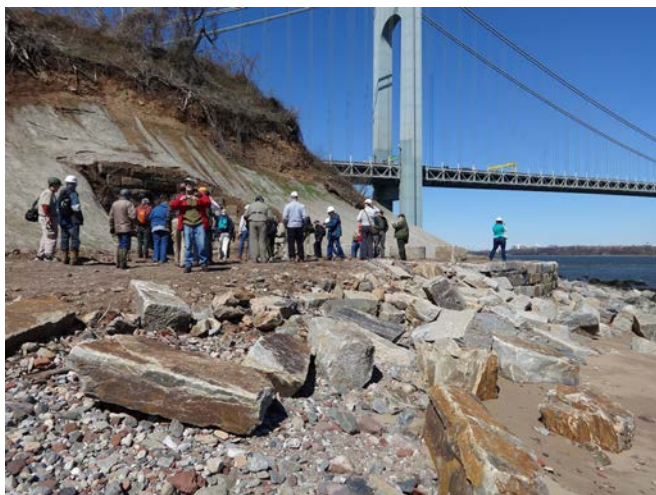
Battery Barry

Ayres, Richmond, and Upton, all buried up to their parapets, fenced off, and overgrown.

Back at the hotel, our evening presentations included an overview of the next day's itinerary followed by presentations on coast defense chemical warfare equipment by COL (ret) Robert Walk, an overview of New York's Second-System fortifications by Dale Manuel, and an overview of New York's Third-System fortifications by John Weaver.

#### Friday, March 31: Forts Hamilton & Tilden

We loaded on a tour bus for Brooklyn, across the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge to Fort Hamilton. Checking access to the active military post off our list, we arrived at Third-System Fort Hamilton. The original roughly rectangular work lost its front third to Endicott emplacements around the turn of the 19th century; the remaining part of the fort was eventually remodeled into an officers' club and is now a community center with a restaurant, event/meeting rooms, and pool facilities in the summer. The caponier at the rear of the work is home to the army's Harbor Defense Museum. Remaining artifacts included two fire control stations on top of the old fort, as well as the museum's storage and office space and the remains of the counterscarp on the landward side of the fort. The museum itself has several important coast artillery artifacts, including a 12-inch 975 lb. armor piercing shell and a



Experimental Casemate Battery





Fort Hamiton Community Center



Fort Hamiton Harbor Defense Museum



Flank Howitzer in Fort Hamiton HD Museum



20-inch Rodman



10-inch, 12-inch, & 16-inch shells

16-inch 2,340 lb. armor piercing shell – both extremely rare. All of the extensive set of Endicott batteries at Fort Hamiton were removed by the army in the 1950s. Heading out of the museum, the group walked by an extensive collection of armament on display including 10-inch and a 13-inch muzzle-loading mortars, a 12-inch/45-caliber naval gun, and one of two remaining 20-inch Rodman muzzleloading smoothbore guns.



Battery Harris Emplacement



Battery Kessler



Back on the bus for the long drive through the Bronx to Fort Tilden, after arriving we gathered for a walk around the reservation, visiting Battery Harris (2 x 16-inch BC in separate casemates), the PSRs for Batteries Harris and Kessler, Battery Kessler (2 x 6-inch P), and BCN 220 (2 x 6-inch BC). Not visited were the remains of Nike Site NY-49's launch area and radar site, both on the reservation but used as a maintenance facility by the park service and generally inaccessible. After a group photo at the flag pole base with its bronze 1920s CAC emblem, we stopped by the relocated fire control tower at Breezy Point, then headed over to Floyd Bennett Field and the NPS historic aircraft restoration facilities in Hanger B, and finally back across town to our hotel. The evening presentations included the defenses of Halifax Harbor by Gordon Bliss and an overview of the Third System by John Weaver.

#### Saturday, April 1: Governors Island

The group boarded buses for the Staten Island Ferry Terminal and caught the ferry over to Manhattan Island, then walked over to the Governors Island Ferry Terminal next door in a drizzly rain. Special arrangements had been made for us to visit the island, which was not yet open for the season. A trip over with school classes brought us to the landing and a nice walk over to Castle Williams, the impressive Second-System four-tier circular work on the northwest tip of the island. Used by the military as a prison for much of its post-seacoast defense life, Castle Williams is now part of the National Park System and has been cleaned up



Castle Williams



Castle Williams Parade



15-inch Rodman on Castle Williams Barbette

with an array of interpretive signs on the parade level. We were able to wander through the casemate levels mostly used as cells for the military prison, and up to the barbette level with its three remaining Rodman guns and carriages.

Heading over to Fort Jay, a square Second-System work with redoubts at each corner, we were able to tour one of the barracks being restored by the park service and photograph the four Rodman guns and carriages on the parapets. The front gate is being restored, so it was covered with tarps and scaffolding. A quick journey down to the site of Second-System South Battery, past the stately officers' quarters, then it was back on the ferry to Manhattan, still in a fairly heavy rain. The group fanned out for lunch or a quick visit to Castle Clinton, a Second-System work now used as a concert venue and the visitors' center for the ferry to the Statue of Liberty. Then it was back over to Staten Island and the hotel. Loading into our vehicles, the group headed to Middletown, NJ, our hotel for the next two nights. The evening



Fort Jay



8-inch Rodmans at Fort Jay



presentations included 6-inch guns and emplacements by Mark Berhow, coast artillery post cards by Charlie Bogart, and Japanese controlled mine systems by Danny Malone.

Saturday, April 2: Fort Hancock

Fort Hancock (and Sandy Hook Proving Ground) encompasses the entire Sandy Hook peninsula. It is a large sand spit reaching into New York's outer harbor, home to Fort Hancock, a sprawling coast artillery installation with many garrison and shop buildings and defenses from the Third System of the late 1850s through the modern-era defenses up to the missile defenses of the 1950s and 60s. Home to the original army ordnance proving ground of the modern era (1874 to 1919), Sandy Hook is indeed a key piece of American seacoast defense history. Gathering at one of the



Mine Storhouse with remaining Third System tower behind at Sandy Hook



Mine Casemate at Fort Hancock



Battery Urmston Emplacement

parking area in the main post area, we lined up for our ID checks to get into the Coast Guard station at Sandy Hook (transferred to USCG in 1950). After a short briefing we headed out to visit the remaining seacoast defense structures on USCG property.

First stop was the mine storage facilities and the most significant remnant of the large Third-System fort originally known as "The Fort at Sandy Hook." That fort was largely demolished over the years during construction of the early modern defenses in the late 1890s; only part of one bastion and a few pieces of walls remain. We were able to visit the concrete-lined pit that held the experimental dynamite gun battery, and the large mine casemate built at one end. We took a short hike out to one of the few remaining fire control stations and on the way back we were able to visit the overgrown emplacements of Battery Urmston (4 x 3-inch MP & 2 x 3-inch P) and Morris (4 x 3-inch P) and another fire control station (Morris CRF), which are on park property but difficult to get to except from the Coast Guard side.

After thanking our USCG escorts we gathered to visit the crumbling remains of Battery Peck (2 x 6-inch P, later 2 x 90 mm AMTB) and Engle (1 x 5-inch BP). We got an abbreviated visit to two emplacements of the 9-gun battery (four batteries), specifically the magazines of Battery Alexander (2 x 12-inch DC), but could only walk along the back of the rest of the line to view Batters Halleck (3 x 10-inch DC), Bloomfield (2 x 12-inch DC), and Richardson (2 x 12-inch DC). This is a truly impressive heavy artillery complex.



Nine-Gun Battery at Fort Hancock



Battery Peck

Our next stop was the site of the Sandy Hook Proving Ground (1874-1919), with its large array of concrete emplacements for the variety of weapons proofed and tested here. A highlight was the recently cleared platform for proofing the 14-inch army turrets and 14-inch M1909 guns that were sent to Fort Drum in Manila Bay. The vegetation clearing and metal preservation was done by AGFA and the wayside sign was purchased with a grant



from the CDSG Fund. The next stop was a visit to the lower interior level of Battery Potter (2 x 12-inch GLC) the earliest “disappearing” gun battery designed to lower entire gun carriages into the concrete structure for loading. All this before lunch!



14-inch Turret Test Emplacement at the Sandy Hook Proving Ground



Sandy Hook Proving Ground



Battery Potter

Lunch was hosted by the members of Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA), the volunteer crew responsible for much restoration and preservation at Battery Gunnison/New Peck. Battery Gunnison was a two-gun 6-inch disappearing carriage battery whose guns were removed in 1943. The battery was modified to emplace the 6-inch pedestal-mount guns moved from Battery Peck and renamed Battery New Peck. In 1964 the guns were removed and placed in storage by the Smithsonian Institution. They were returned when Fort Hancock was transferred by the army to the Department of the Interior in 1975. In 2002, AGFA began working to restore and maintain the battery—renovating the guns and Hodges ammunition hoists, and returning or recreating much of the equipment and materials in the magazines and plotting room including a complete 1920s lighting and electrical system, a significant amount of telephone equipment, and restoration of the Chemical Warfare Service decontamination room, complete with working blower and treadle. They

even have a period machine shop with 1940s-era lathe, milling machine, and drill press with which they have made an M1900 firing device, traverse indicator, and other impossible to obtain items. The National Park Service is restoring both the battery commander’s station stairs and the ammunition service bridges and evidence of that work was apparent. After a hearty lunch we were treated to gun loading drills and ship tracking (the guns traverse and are equipped with M1904 telescopic sights) to the cadence of the time-interval bells!



Battery Gunnison/New Peck



Hodges Hoist in Battery Gunnison/New Peck



Plotting Board, Battery Gunnison/New Peck





Time Interval Bell System, Battery Gunnison/New Peck

Next we stopped at Nike integrated fire control (IFC) radar site NY-56, a double IFC site with two sets of radar for the six magazines of NY-56 launch area down the road. The launch area is now used as a maintenance area by the NPS, but has a Nike-Ajax missile and Nike Hercules missile on display, both on complete launch elevators. A dedicated group of Nike veterans have worked to restore much of the IFC area, complete with radars and the two command trailers attached to the connector building. This is an outstanding complimentary site to Nike site SF-88 at the Marin headland, which has a restored launch area, but not the IFC area.



Nike Control Building and Trailer



Nike Hercules Missile &amp; Launcher

Back at the main garrison area, we went inside Battery McCook-Reynolds (16 x 12-inch M), which was later converted into a harbor defense command post for New York. Then back down the road to Battery Kingman (2 x 12-inch BCLR) and



Battery Kingman



Battery Kingman Interior

Battery Mills (2 x 12-inch BCLR). Originally the guns were on gun blocs with the protected magazines in between; the two batteries were casemated during WWII. We toured the interior of Battery Kingman, which still has its overhead ammunition trolley system, though it is in the process of falling down. The one-of-a-kind powder hoists were also present in the magazine – a very unique find.

After a quick tour of the garrison area, where several abandoned quarters, barracks, and structures are being stabilized for further renovation and reuse via a unique NPS public leasing opportunity, we gathered in Building 77, a mess hall again being used by the Maritime Academy of Science and Technology as a mess hall. One of the large barracks (Bldg. No. 23) suffered a partial roof collapse. The county is now negotiating with the NPS to lease and restore the building for use by a high school. After an excellent catered banquet and a briefing from Fort Hancock Ranger Tyrone Nulls, we proceeded to our annual meeting and presentations on the preservation and interpretation effort at Navesink Highlands by Gail Hunton, and pictures and movies from the National Archives by Terry McGovern.

Sunday, April 3: Navesink Highlands

On the last day of the official conference, we headed down to the highest point closest to the sea south of the Maine coast, Twin





Twin Lights

Lights on the Navesink Highlands. This magnificent lighthouse is now a park and interpretive center, open most days of the week. Fire control instrument pillars, for Fort Hancock's two long-range 12-inch batteries, are on the walks below each of the two lights. What a great view of Sandy Hook and New York City!

Moving on to Hartshorne Woods Park, we followed the well-marked roadway to park in front of Battery Issac N. Lewis (BCN 116, 2 x 16-inch BC). Newly shorn of its vegetation cover and awaiting re-seeding with grass, the battery looked more like when it was built, rather than over 60 years old with newly restored concrete work and restored or replaced doors and metal work. We wandered through the main corridor and the rooms and galleries, well-lit and clean, an absolute rarity among American 16-inch batteries! We were shown the plans and text for the display area that is going into the battery this summer. Then walking out to Emplacement No. 2 with its 16-inch navy Mk VII gun barrel mounted in firing position and gleaming with a fresh coat of olive drab paint, for a true Kodak moment. Thanks

in part to the CDSG, the Monmouth Park System was able to rescue this barrel from St. Julian Creek Naval Annex and make it a centerpiece of their restoration effort. Our commendations to Monmouth County Park System on this effort. Boarding busses,



Battery Lewis casemate



Battery Lewis Main Corridor



The 2017 CDSG attendees gather for a group photo under the Battery Lewis 16-inch gun barrel display



we were driven around the park to visit Lewis' PSR, BCN 219 (2 x 6-inch BC), and two interesting fire control stations near the high school. After that we were free to visit the remaining fire control station in the park as the conference officially came to an end. Some headed off and a few intrepid souls continued to Montauk Point at the eastern end of Long Island.



Base End Stations, Navesink Highlands



BCN 219

Monday, April 4: Camp Hero and Montauk Point

The final post-conference tour was at Montauk Point State Park, visiting the remains of Camp Hero, as detailed in the May 2017 newsletter, bringing to a close the long 8-day program to the defenses of New York.

As should be noted, this was an incredibly difficult conference to plan and coordinate. A great vote of thanks must go to Shawn Welch, Norm Scarpulla, Peter Williamson, Gordon Bliss, and Terry McGovern for making the contacts and arranging for permission to visit so many of these sites. Even with this extended schedule it still seemed that we did not have the time to visit and see all the sites. Fort Hancock alone is a two day adventure – justice cannot be done to it in one day. For our visits to Gateway NRA we would like to thank Superintendent Nersesian, Curator Felice Cicone, and Rangers Lincoln Hallowell, Pete McCarthy, and Tom Hoffman. Thanks to Juan Caez (DPTMS) and Curator Justin Batt of the Harbor Defense Museum for arranging our visit

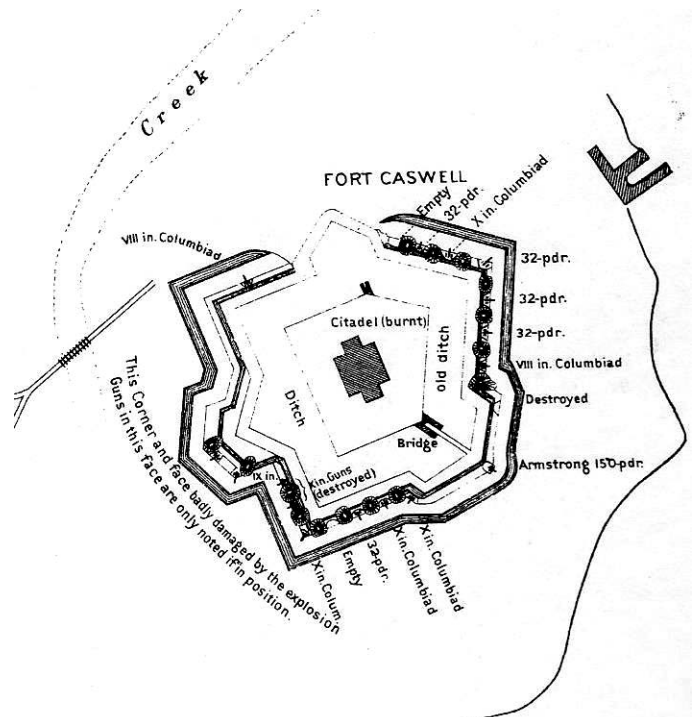
to Fort Hamilton. For Governors Island we would like to thank Superintendent Shirley McKinney and Ranger Mike Shaver. We would like to thank all the members of AGFA for all their help with the meeting and the visit to Battery Gunnison/New Peck. We want to thank Bill Jackson of the Nike Veterans group who support the restoration efforts at Nike NY-56 IFC site. And thanks to Gail Huntoon and Ryan Rochelle of the Monmouth County Park System, Mark Stewart of Twin Lights Historical Society, and Peggi Carlsen of the Twin Light State Historic Site.

\* \* \* \* \*

## A Visit to Fort Caswell

Charles H. Bogart

After visiting Forts Fisher and Anderson, south of Wilmington, NC, Mary Ann and I drove to Oak Island, the site of Fort Caswell. Fort Caswell was part of the coast defenses of the United States from 1835 to 1945. Originally constructed as a Third-System fort, it was later rearmed at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with Endicott batteries within and around the Third-System fort. Fort Caswell was eventually sold in 1928 at public auction and the buyers set out, unsuccessfully, to convert the fort into a beach campground. In September 1941, the U.S. Navy purchased 250-acres around Fort Caswell for use as a Naval Inshore Patrol Base. Following World War II, Fort Caswell was declared surplus by the U.S. Navy and resold in 1949 to the North Carolina Baptist Convention, who use the site for religious retreats and have done a remarkable job preserving the fabric of Fort Caswell. In 2013, Fort Caswell was designated a National Historic District and placed on the National Register of Historical Places. The Fort Caswell National Historic District includes 43 buildings, 2 sites, and 23 structures.



February 1865 map of Fort Caswell showing the gun powder explosion damage.





The exterior of Fort Anderson's landside wall.

Both Fort Fisher and Fort Anderson require a visitor to pay a small fee to visit these forts. However, both have very nice Visitor Centers with great historical displays and nice book stores. Both provide free trail guides to the visitor that allow one to visit all the sites open to the general public.

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## 2017 CDSG Post-Conference Tour

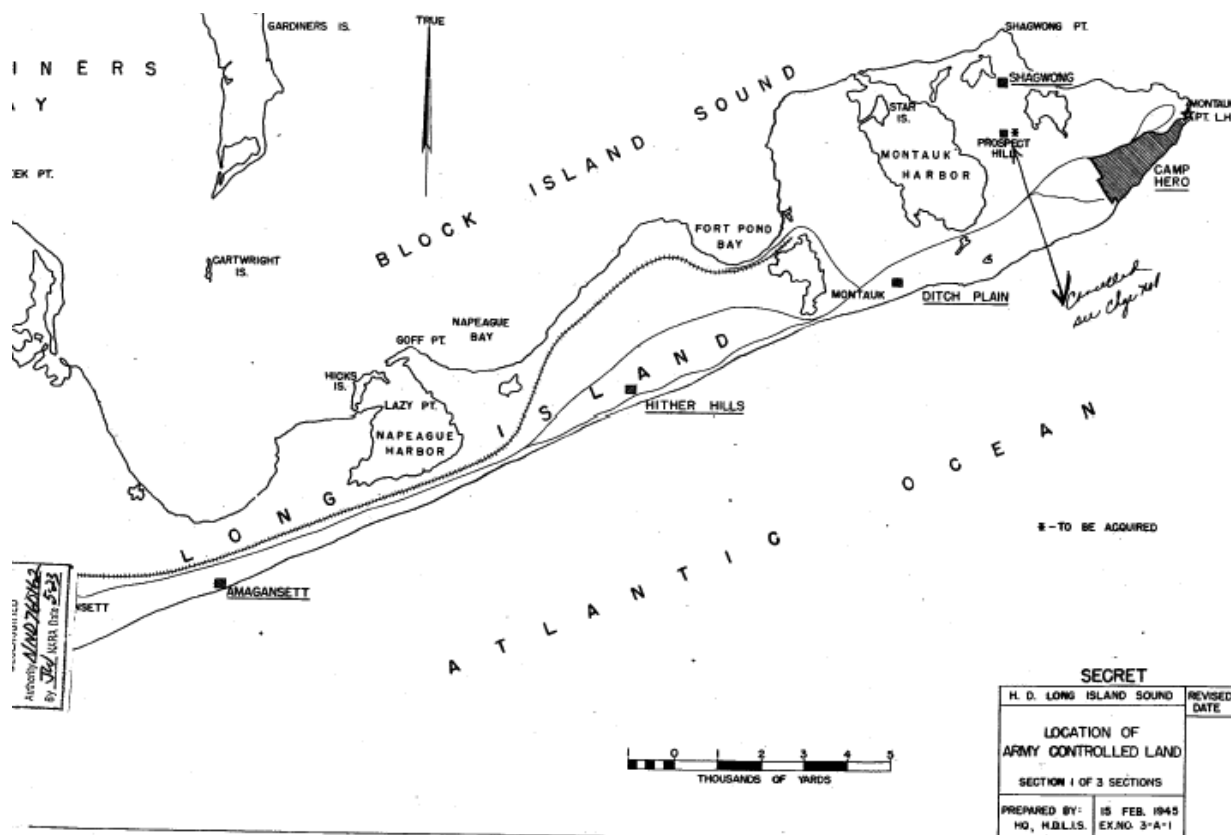
Camp Hero/Montauk Point (April 2-3)

Terry McGovern

The April 2 to April 3, 2017, CDSG post-conference tour to Camp Hero Military Reservation and the Montauk fire control stations was attended by 24 CDSG members. Given the isolated location of Camp Hero from the rest of the Long Island Sound coast defenses, the CDSG had not visited the Montauk defenses

in many years. The 2017 Annual CDSG Conference to the New York City defenses provided an opportunity for CDSG members to tour these sites, so a post-conference tour was organized by Terry McGovern. The CDSG annual conference ended around 1 pm on Sunday, April 2, at Hartshorne Woods Park, Highlands, NJ. Those CDSG members attending the post-conference tour embarked on their four-hour drive to Montauk, NY, as soon as the annual conference ended. The drive through New York City turned out to be a challenge due to heavy traffic, so most arrived late for a group dinner at Sammy's restaurant in Montauk. During dinner, we discussed tour plans and safety rules, arranged carpooling, received a tour handout, and signed documents. After a fine meal, we checked-in at the Royal Atlantic Hotel on the beach in the center of Montauk.

The next morning (April 3) we departed the Royal Atlantic Hotel and grabbed breakfast in town before driving to the Bluff Parking Lot at Camp Hero State Park. Gathering at 8 am, we were met by our host, Tom Dess, manager of the Montauk State Park Complex (8 different state properties in the Montauk area). After discussing the history of Camp Hero Military Reservation, we walked to Battery 216 (two 6-inch 1903A2 on SB M1), which had its battery commanders (BC) station on the roof. The battery has been sealed with concrete to protect it from further vandalism. We attempted to locate a nearby dug-in fire control station but were unable to do so. We convoyed to our next stop, Battery Dunn's plotting-switchboard room (PSR) some distance from the battery itself. This PSR was also sealed with concrete slabs. We continued to the center of the reservation, where we visited Battery Dunn, BCN 113, (two 16-inch/50 MkII on BC M4). Tom Dess had arranged to install a steel door into the gun





room about a month before our visit, so we were able to enter the long-sealed battery. We were only able to visit the one gun casemate due to safety concerns. We did spot a rare, original air compressor set in the tool room as well as other hardware in the distance. There were pleas to allow us to visit the entire battery, but it was not to be. We were joined for the tour by two local reporters, Michael Wright of the *East Hampton Press* and Oliver Peterson of *Danspapers*. They had many questions about the form and function of Battery Dunn and the other coast artillery struc-

tures we visited. You can read their accounts of the tour online.

We walked into the nearby fenced off area where a very large high-power AN/FPS-35 radar building and separate operations center sit abandoned. Constructed by the US Air Force during the Cold War, this radar installation was part of SAGE system. These structures are off-limits due to their poor condition, so our focus was on Battery Dunn and its BC and group command station, which was a cottage building near the radar tower. We went inside the "cottage" and visit the stations before we drove to



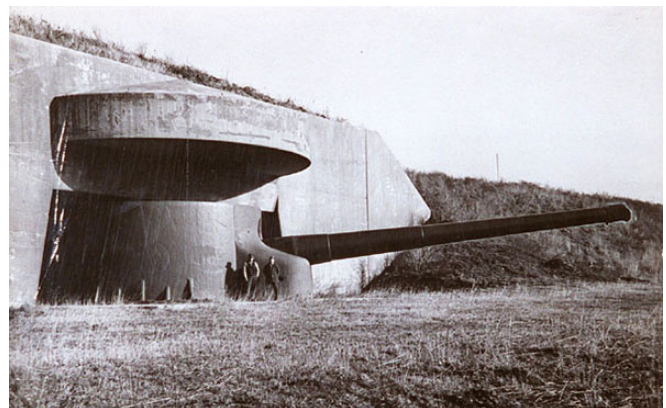
Montauk Point FC tower and lighthouse



Battery Dunn (113) & Battery 112 battery commander's station, Camp Hero, Montauk, New York



AN/FPS-35 fixed-surveillance radar – BC stations on right



16-inch BC at Battery Dunn, Camp Hero, NY

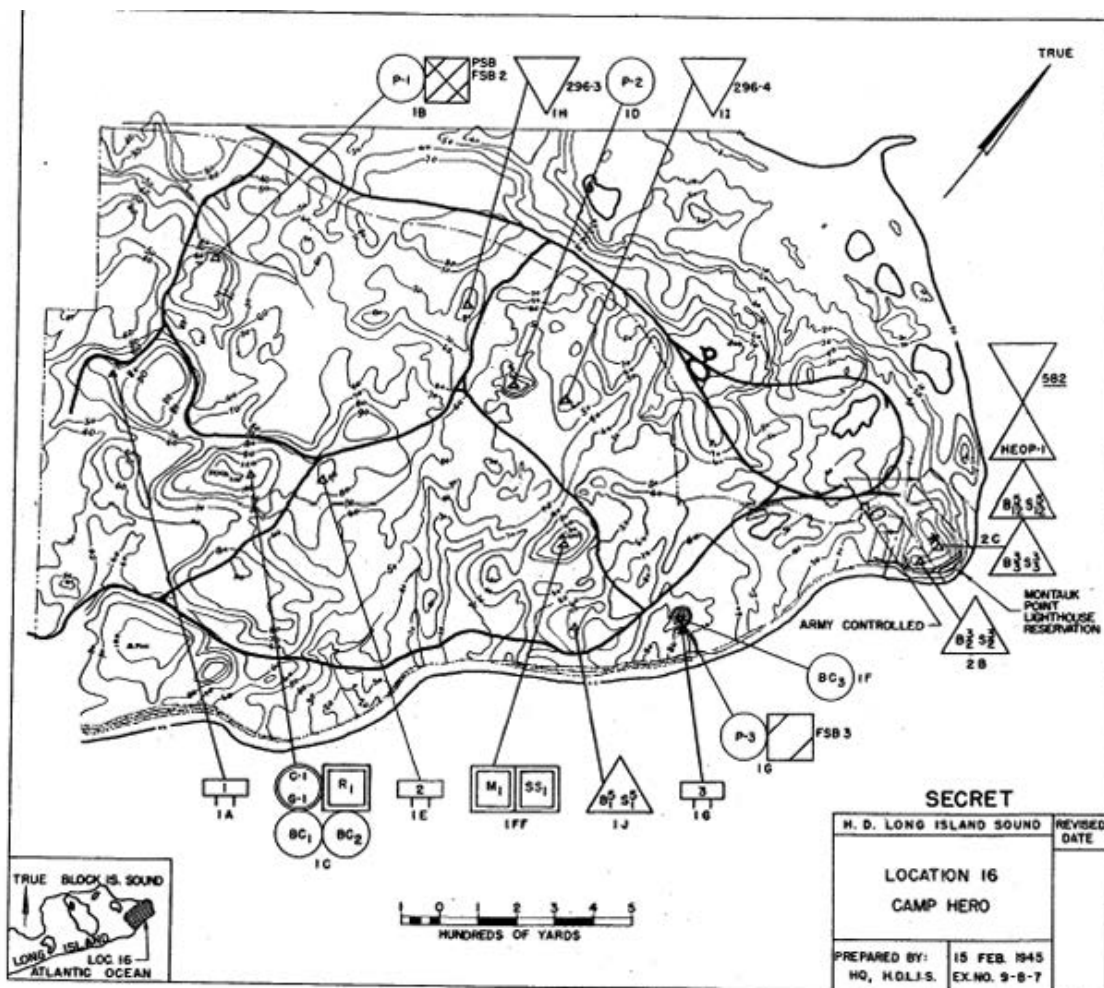


Ditch Plain FC station – now Shadmoor State Park



CDSG tour at Battery Dunn





CDSG tour at Battery Dunn – hole in wall to service corridor

our next stop, Battery 112 (two 16-inch/50 MkII on BC M4), which was sealed, so we could only walk around the battery. We then drove to our last stop at Camp Hero, Battery 112's PSR, which was also sealed, viewable only from the outside.

The group then drove to the nearby former "GATR" radar site at Prospect Hill (which also had a WWII SCR 296 radar nearby). Mike LaBarbara, manager of the Montauk County Park, took us to the cottage-style Shagwong Point FC station.



CDSG at Battery 112

Known locally as the Lindley Cottage, this FC station is about a mile from the GATR site down a series of dirt roads. By SUV and on foot, we reached the now abandoned Lindley Cottage where we able to visit the interior. Joining us was Representative Bridget Fleming of the Suffolk County legislature whose district included the Montauk Point area. She was interested in learning about these defenses and what new uses could be found for the Lindley Cottage. We advised on several possible uses, for example how the Halibut Point FC station had been turned into a visitor





CDSG at Battery Dunn & 112 BC stations

center and museum by the State of Massachusetts. One of our members on the tour, Daniel Lindley, had grown up in the FC station, and he was able to tell us about his experiences living in the cottage. We made our way back to our cars and then drove to our next stop at Montauk Point.

We visited the Montauk Point fire control tower and the dug-in FC station (now on the beach) at Montauk Point State Park and climbed to the top of the well-preserved FC tower in front of the Montauk Point Lighthouse. Henry Osmer and Johnson Nordlinger of the Montauk Historical Society gave us a tour of the lighthouse museum and provided an excellent lunch. Recharged with food, Tom Dess led us to Shadmoor State Park (just west of Camp Hero) to visit the Ditch Plain FC stations (two cottages). We parked by the Montauk Highway and hiked toward the ocean until we located the “denuded” FC stations. The wooden camouflage of the FC stations have been stripped away and the doors have been cemented up. After visiting the stations, the guided tour part of the post-conference tour ended



Montauk Point dug-in FC station tumbled onto the beach



Hither Hills FC station – now a private home.



The Lindley Cottage – Swagwong Point FC



Amagansett FC station – now a luxury beach house



around 3 pm. We thanked Tom Dess (as well as Dick White, who could not attend) for being our hosts to the WWII defenses of the Montauk area. Tour members were given directions to the privately-owned FC stations so they could see the outside of these stations as they drove back towards New York City.

The first stop was the two cottages of the Hither Hills FC stations at 251 Old Montauk Hwy, Montauk, NY. The FC stations are next to each other but have been modified into private residences. We photographed them from the highway. We then drove several miles down the highway to visit the cottage-style Amagansett FC station at 45 Whaler Lane, Amagansett, NY. We parked on the road and took the public access trail (to the right of the house) to the beach so we could photograph the FC station. The FC cottage is currently for sale for only \$8.5 million!!! The final FC station was the dug-in East Hampton FC station, but we could not locate the structure and locals told us it no longer exists.

The following CDSG members attended the 2017 CDSG Post-Conference Tour: Tom Batha, Charles and Mary Ann Borgart, Stephen Conrad, Peter DeRose, Mike Fiorini, Karl Fritz, Andy Grant, Robert Grimm, Jean Phillippe Guichard, Alex Hall, David Larsen, Daniel Lindley, Danny Malone, Terry McGovern, Thomas Minton, Gene Scanlon, Quentin Schillare, John Scholles, Steven Turner, and Chris Zeeman. The tour reached all our targeted sites, both inside and out. The CDSG thanks all the site owners for allowing us to visit and hopefully we educated them about their former coast defense structures.



### 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).

CDSG hats, T-shirts and patches ordering information

Black T-shirt with white ink:

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

Red T-Shirt with white ink:

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

Kacki 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)

Patch: \_\_\_ times \$ \_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_

(domestic \$4/overseas \$6) each

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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### 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.

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 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.