The CDSG Newsletter

☆✯☆ The Coast Defense Study Group, Inc. — Winter 2026 ☆✯☆

Chairman's Message

Paul Prentiss

Come October each year the CSDG Board of Directors votes to elect a new Chairman, welcomes the new Director and bids adieu to the retiring Chairman, Ned Libby. That all happened smoothly and I would like at announce that Paul Prentiss is the 2027 Director Chairman, Andy Grant continues as a director, and Nigel Cunningham begins his 3-year director term. The board also voted to reappoint all committee chairmen for the coming year, and annual dues remain the same. Taking this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chairman, I was born on the North Shore of Boston in Salem, spending lots of time in the mid 60's and early 70's exploring forts up and down the coast with my dad and brothers. My uncle was a reserve Army colonel, so he was able to gain access to some of the local Nike and coastal defense sites still under military control. Fast forward a few decades later the "Prentiss Boys" wanted to explore the forts of the New Bedford area and happened to trip upon the CDSG while researching Fort Taber. Finding an organization filled with "Fort Fanatics" and publishing materials we wanted to devour, was a perfect match. I look forward to providing leadership to CDSG and your support. Financially we are doing well but foresee that the CDSG Fund may be called upon for several important projects in the coming year. We can only give what we have, so any donations are welcome. After auditing our membership records, CDSG has 371 active members for 2026. Historically we carried approximately 400 members losing approximately 30 each year but gaining the same numbers of new members back. During the transition of the Membership Chairman from Quentin Schillare to the very able Glen Milam, some confusion arose with the past due lists that artificially increased the numbers. That has been resolved but we have an ageing membership and need to recruit. Thankfully some younger members have joined us in recent years, and we need to attract more. We have very exciting upcoming Conferences: 2027 in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island and are planning for one in 2028 in San Francico, California. Both venues should generate lots of enthusiasm for our members, the urban explorer, history buff or someone just wanting to get into "off limits" areas. I call upon everyone to attract the next generation of coast defenders and challenge you to talk and encourage one person to join CDSG and attend the conferences. The last items to mention are please get your Narragansett Bay, RI Conference Registration form and deposit in as soon as possible and please renew your membership by the end of year.



CDSG Meeting and Tour Calendar
Please advise Terry McGovern of any additions
or changes at tcmcgovern@att.net

2027 CDSG Conference
April 27 - May 2
Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island
Chris Zeeman, c_zeeman@hotmail.com

2028 CDSG Special Tour
March
Panama
Terry McGovern, tcmcgovern@att.net

2028 CDSG Conference
San Francico, California
Mark Berhow, berhowma@comcast.net

2029 CDSG Conference
To Be Determined

Other Meetings and Tours

February 2027
South India
ECCOFORT Study Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neumann. hrv.neumann@t-online.de

April 21 - 25, 2027
Colongne, Germany
INTERFEST Annual Meeting
Oliver Zauzig, praesident@interfest.de

April 26 - May 1, 2027
Josefov, Czech Republic
Efforts and Forte Cultura Annual Congress
Živý Josefov, office@forte-cultura.network

May 2 - 8, 2027
The Dardenelles, Turkey
The Fortress Study Group International Study Tour
David Clarke, chair@fortressstudygroup.org

June 2 -5, 2027
Association Vauban Annual Conference
Toulon, France
Alan Monferrand, contact@association-vauban.org

June 21 - 25, 2027
Atlantic Wall, Normandy, France
Ciassic Battlefield Tours
info@classicbattlefieldtours.com

September 2027
Annual Meeting Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Festungsforschung
Andreas Kupka, akupka@juelich.de

September 2027
Swiss-French Border
Association Saint-Maurice d' Estudes Militaries
Philippe Bossey, voyage@asmem.ch

September 2027
Association Vauban Study Tour
Alain Monferrand, contact@association-vauban.org

September/October 2027
Podelzig, Klessin, and Küstrin, Germany
ECCOFORT Study Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neumann. hrv.neumann@t-online.de

September 3 - 6, 2027
Portland, England
Fortress Study Group Study Tour
David Clarke, chair@fortressstudygroup.org

October 3 - 10, 2027
Northern Frontier USA Revolutionary War Forts
The History Experiment
Mark Gerges, info@stephenambrosetours.com

October 2027
Germany
International Fortress Council Annual Meeting
Jeroen van der Werf,
secretariat@internationalfortresscouncil.org

February 2028
ECCOFORT Study Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neumann. hrv.neumann@t-online.de

April 2028
INTERFEST Annual Meeting
Oliver Zauzig, praesident@interfest.de

May 2028
Gothici Line, Apennine, Italy
Stephan Ambrose Historical Tours
Christopher Anderson, info@classicbattlefieldtours.com

June 2028
Pula, Croatia
Association Vauban Annual Congress
Alain Monferrand, contact@association-vauban.org

September 2028
Annual Meeting Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Festungsforschung
Andreas Kupka, akupka@juelich.de

September 2028
Association Vauban Study Tour
Alain Monferrand, contact@association-vauban.org

September 2028
Ostwall & Pomeranian Wall. Poland
Military History Heritage Tours
Jakob Szulecki, registration@bandofbrotherstours.net

September/October 2028
Portugal
ECCOFORT Study Tour
Hans-Rudolf Neumann. hrv.neumann@t-online.de

October 2028
East Anglia, England
Fortress Study Group Study Tour
David Clarke, chair@fortressstudygroup.org

October 2028
Pula, Croatia
International Fortress Council Annual Meeting
Jeroen van der Werf,
secretariat@internationalfortresscouncil.org

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Preservation Committee Report

Gordon Bliss, Chair

This will be a short report this issue as I only have a couple of items to report on.

First, an update on Plum Island/Fort Terry. As of the end of October, all science work at the lab should have finished. There will still be a lengthy decommissioning process to go through, and the current schedule has it finishing no earlier than 2032 and possibly as late as 2035. Suffolk County, New York is still expressing intent to acquire the island and apparently has a grant to cover the initial application and other admin costs. Now that all science is done on the island, the federal government should be issuing a notice of surplus on the island, which has to occur before anyone can formally apply to acquire the island.

Recently I've been made aware of a coalition that has formed to oppose the proposed changes to the Section 106 rules regarding historic preservation. The CDSG has been involved in a number of Section 106 processes over the years in trying to preserve coast defense sites and structures. Without getting into the details, these are the regulations that provide for a process for public input and review when places on the National Register of Historic Places, or are eligible to be so, would be adversely affected. As I understand it so far, the proposed changes and the corresponding bill in Congress, would essentially remove almost all public input and

make it much easier to just demolish structures and redevelop sites. To date, over 1000 organizations (including the CDSG) have signed on to this coalition. For further information visit the website at www.106strong.com.

After the presentation at Fort Dearborn (see separate article), I went to nearby Fort Stark to see its current status. They now have a nice, paved parking area and the small museum is now staffed, at least on weekends in season. The museum now has some non-coast defense related exhibits in addition to the coast defense artifacts on display, but in general has been cleaned up and is better organized. No significant changes in the gun batteries except they have further sealed some of the lower levels.

In my last column, I mentioned about the plan to close the Air Force controlled recreation facility at Fourth Cliff – I have recently heard that it has apparently postponed as they seem to still be accepting reservations there.

Last time I put out a call for a person or two that would be interested in being my backup on the Preservation Committee and help in acquiring information as well as possibly filling in for me in cases or places when I can't make it. I've had one person inquiring about this so far but still welcome additional support on this front.

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, email preservation@cdsg.org.

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A Compilation of GPS site Coordinates for the Major US Harbor Defenses

Jeff Henningfield
jr.hennin@gmail.com

Although I am not a member of CDSG, my interest in coastal artillery merged with my hobby of GPS technology about a year ago. I began researching and compiling coastal artillery locations using information provided by FortWiki, the CDSG, North American Forts and a host of other sources. The next step was to see if I could pinpoint those locations using a few different satellite photography services. The end result is a fairly comprehensive spreadsheet of coastal and other artillery sites which also includes their six-digit GPS coordinates. This data eventually produced twelve Google maps roughly following the regional breakdown on the CDSG web site; Alaska, Atlantic Islands, Canada, Gulf Coast, Hawaii, Mid Atlantic, North Atlantic, Pacific Coast, Pacific Islands, Panama, Phillipines and the South Atlantic. A purist may scoff at my rookie maps, but I don't have the technical knowledge or resources to produce something more detailed. What I wanted to see are these locations represented on a regional map, which I think I accomplished. Of course there will be errors, and I'd like nothing more than for them to be corrected.

The spreadsheet and the 6 kml map coordinates have been uploaded to the CDSG download page (cdsg.org/cdsg-downloads/) in a zip file labeled HD_GPS_sites.zip. The "coast artillery" workbook contains an "explanations" worksheet that includes instructions to create the maps. I did test the maps and everything, including the custom icons, loaded perfectly. The kml files work best if opened up in the google earth app. Hopefully, it will work just as well for your members.

As I stated, I'm not an expert in this arena, I simply enjoy compiling and transforming data into a visual representation. I wouldn't call it a hobby, but something I like to work on as I have time. I've done similar work with CONUS missile systems (Atlas, Titan, Minuteman, Nike, etc.) and points of historical interest in my home county. I've learned a lot along the way. I guarantee some of the locations are off a bit and welcome corrections to the record. One thing I might suggest is to have one of your members maintain a "master sheet" on which to make corrections as they are found.

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https://thousandcastles.com

Jelle Drok

I am an amateur from the Netherlands, and I have something that may be of interest to the members of the Coast Defense Study Group.

As a hobby that got rather out of hand, I have built Thousand Castles (https://thousandcastles.com): a free, non-commercial, multilingual database of more than 57,000 castles, forts and fortified towns in 170 countries. Alongside the medieval castles there are themes that will be familiar to your members: the gunpowder revolution and star forts (https://thousandcastles.com/thema.html?slug=gunpowder-star-forts), the concrete age of forts and bunkers (https://thousandcastles.com/thema.html?slug=concrete-age) and the Martello towers (https://thousandcastles.com/thema.html?slug=martello-towers). Fort Sumter (https://thousandcastles.com/castle/fort-sumter) and El Morro in San Juan (https://thousandcastles.com/castle/castillo-san-felipe-del-morro) are two examples.

Visitors can rank and review sites, build collections for a trip and suggest corrections. The content comes from open sources, sorted with the help of AI, so it is not flawless, and the critical eye of your members would be very welcome. There is no business model behind it.

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A Visit to Fort Dearborn

Steven Waldron

Odiorne Point in Rye, NH is the south side cape of Portsmouth, NH harbor. During WW2, this area became Fort Dearborn, which included a battery of four 155mm GPFs on Panama mounts, Battery 204 (2x6" BC), and Battery Seaman (2x16" BC). Also, Battery 204 was used post-WW2 as the Rye Air Force Station, which provided ground control to interceptors and then as a gap filler radar site, finally closing in 1968. The fort is now Odiorne Point State Park. As part of ongoing events, the Rye Historical Society invited CDSG to give a presentation and guided walk about Fort Dearborn on August 22, 2026. Gordon Bliss gave the presentation at the Seacoast Science Center in the park, and Julian Malcolm led the walking tour. For those who attended the CDSG 2016 conference at the Harbor Defenses of Portsmouth, you may remember that the fort included four

155mm Panama mounts, three of which are uncovered with one in danger of washing away. Battery 204 (2x6" BC) is one of the few with the battery commander station accessed from inside the structure: currently the battery is closed to protect the bat habitat which is considered critical after a recent disease affliction. (Former nuclear bunkers at nearby Pease Air National Guard Base are one of the only places in the country that never had this problem.) At the north end of the park is Battery Seaman (2x16" BC). Only the gun positions are open at this time, but we were able to access the interconnecting shell and powder tunnels during the 2016 CDSG conference. Other structures are the Battery Seaman PSR and BC station, and the Gun Group Command Post. This event left a crowd of approximately 40 much better informed about historical structures and hopefully will lead to better preservation efforts. For those visiting the area, south of the park is the Pulpit Rock fire control tower and nearby seaside 90mm Battery 951 site. North of the park are Forts Stark, Constitution (currently closed), McClary, and Foster.



Battery Seaman firing platform 2 Photo by Andy Stecher

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WWII Machine Gun Pillbox Recovered from the Aleutian Islands Campaign

This turreted machine gun emplacement was part of a beach defensive line at a currently unknown location on the Aleutian Islands.





The emplacements were probably constructed in 1943 or early 1944 after the islands were recovered from Japanese forces. The rotating cast turret housed twin M1919 .30 caliber machine guns. Traversing was achieved with a manually operated crank. The buried lower portion is heavy steel, with offset openings for steel pipe tunnel connections to adjacent turrets. The condition is as recovered approximately 25 years ago.

It is an interesting and historical artifact from a largely unknown WWII campaign.

For more info or to purchase

co@artillery_museum.com

Call or Text

940-395-9309

If no answer, please leave a message



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Update on Fort Burnside Jamestown, R.I.

Chris Zeeman

I would like to bring everyone up to date with a project I've been working on for some time now – preservation efforts at the former Fort Burnside located in Beavertail State Park, Jamestown, Rhode Island. Over the past couple of years, I've been participating in the master planning process for Beavertail State Park. I was pleased to see many of my suggestions included in the draft version of the master plan. Besides stressing the importance of the HECP structure, I argued that DEM should partner with a friends group to help with fund-raising, projects, and maintenance at the park - sort of a mini Fort Adams Trust.

Earlier this year, I accepted the position of President of The Fort Burnside Communications and Coastal Defense Museum. It is my hope that this organization will fill that role. Although the museum has been in existence since 2004, it has been largely dormant. In order to move the vision closer to reality, we've taken the following steps:

1. Enlarged and Reorganized the Board of Directors:
   President: Chris Zeeman (ex Fort Adams Board of Directors)
   Vice-Pres: Brown Beezer
   Secretary: David Prata (ex Fort Adams Board of Directors)
   Director: Neville Beford
   Director: Kurt Jackson
   Director: Jack McCormack (ex Fort Adams Volunteer Coordinator)

2. Applied for and received 501(3)(c) status from the IRS.

3. Negotiated a five-year agreement with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM). The agreement currently includes the Harbor Entrance Command Post (HECP) and Battery 213. This agreement replaces the earlier lease/tenant agreement that DEM has had in place for the last 40 years. Services provided by the museum will include:
   Preservation of historic buildings, fortifications, and artifacts
   Development of public interpretive historic programs at the park
   Mowing of grass and brush cutting etc.

4. We are currently in the process of obtaining the required insurance policies that will allow us to being operations

DEM Parks has committed to the following projects - at various stages of the procurement process:

1. Extensive brush clearing to open up sight lines and improve security.
2. Repair of the HECP gates and fence, including the restoration of barbed wire.
3. New 200 amp electric service at HECP. (DEM use only). The new electric service will support some of the other items listed below as well as potentially climate control in the future.
4. Security lighting
5. Remote Cameras
6. Fire and Security Alarms
7. Eastern and Southern exteriors to be secured temporarily until permanent repairs can be done. Secure broken windows, close openings, etc. for the Winter.
8. Towers - stabilization and maintenance of historic radio towers at the park.

Additionally, DEM has included funds to completely redo the exterior envelope of the building (roof, windows, siding) in their "Green Bond" which is being voted on by residents in the current election. At this time, it appears that voters approved that question on the ballot.

Please consider joining or donating to our efforts. We are starting out at zero and can really use your support!

You can view our new website at https://fortburnside.org.



Before and after brush clearing views of the HECP-HDCP



Clearing off the foliage on Battery 213

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Announcing the CDSG Special Tour to the Defenses of the Panama Canal

Dates: March 11–18, 2028
Tour Leaders: Alvaro Visuetti & Terry McGovern

It has been over a decade since the Coast Defense Study Group last conducted an official expedition to the Panama Canal Zone. In March 2028, the CDSG is returning to the isthmus for an intensive, highly optimized 8-day tactical tour designed to thoroughly document the seacoast fortifications, controlled submarine mine complexes, and legacy army infrastructure guarding both the Pacific and Atlantic approaches.

Led by in-country expert Alvaro Visuetti and Terry McGovern, this special tour is built for maximum field efficiency. Using an agile 25-passenger mini-bus, we will bypass major logistical bottlenecks and drive directly up to the gate lines of heavily overgrown coastal positions.

Itinerary Highlights

The Pacific Defenses: Fort Kobbe (Batteries Murray and Haan), a jungle trek to the 155mm GPF Panama Mounts at Bruja Point, the full island footprint of Fort Grant (Batteries Buell, Burnside, the 16-inch Battery Newton, and the subterranean tunnels of Battery Warren), and the Naos Island Controlled Submarine Mine Complex.

The Command Spine: The 1942 bombproof WWII joint Army/Navy underground command bunker at Quarry Heights, Fort Clayton, and the Miraflores Locks.

The Atlantic Defenses: The Cold War signals intelligence 'Elephant Cage' site on Galeta Island, an extensive sweep of Fort Randolph on Margarita Island (including the 14-inch disappearing gun at Battery Webb and the 12-inch mortars), and the dense Endicott-era gun lines of Fort Sherman (including the single-gun 14-inch rifles at Stanley and Mower, the heavy 12-inch barbette lines at Pratt and MacKenzie, and WWII HECP Station #15).

The Grand Finale: A historic transit on the final day to Taboga Island to document the rare, mountain-crest surviving 155mm GPF guns and emplacements.



Logistics & Estimated Costs

To maximize our time in the field and eliminate dead driving time, the tour will be anchored directly inside the historic fortification footprints:

Hotels: 3 nights at the Radisson Hotel Panama Canal (overlooking the Pacific entrance on the Amador Causeway) and 4 nights at the highly secure Marina Hotel at Shelter Bay (situated directly inside the Fort Sherman military reservation on the Caribbean side).

Flights: Members will coordinate their own group or individual flights departing from Miami (MIA) directly into Panama City (PTY), which offers a short, efficient flight window of under three hours. Round-trip flights from Miami currently average around $400–$600.

In-Country Package: The estimated in-country cost is projected at $1,400 to $1,600 per person. This package covers hotel accommodations (with daily breakfast included), all field lunches, land transportation via our private chartered mini-bus, specialized site access fees (including Smithsonian STRI and national park admissions), and dedicated local trail-clearing crews to hack back heavy jungle overgrowth prior to our arrival. Please note that dinners are not included in the tour package—members will pay for their own dinners at our recommended local restaurants each evening.

Express Your Interest Today

To make this special tour a 'go,' we require a minimum commitment of 20 members. Because our chartered mini-bus caps our total group size at 25 members, slots for this highly anticipated return to Panama are strictly limited.

If you are interested in attending this definitive coast defense expedition, please let Terry McGovern know as soon as possible so we can gauge member interest and secure our room blocks at the reservation hotels.

Please contact Terry directly to express your intent to participate:

Email: tcmcgovern@att.net

Mailing Address: Terry McGovern
1700 Oak Lane, McLean, VA 22101



Radisson Hotel Panama Canal (Amador Causeway)



Marina Hotel at Shelter Bay (Fort Sherman)



Battery Haan during WW2

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Coast Defense Study Group 2026 Annual Conference to the Coast Defenses of the Oahu - Hawaii

May 5 to May 10, 2026: Part 2 Days 4 and 5

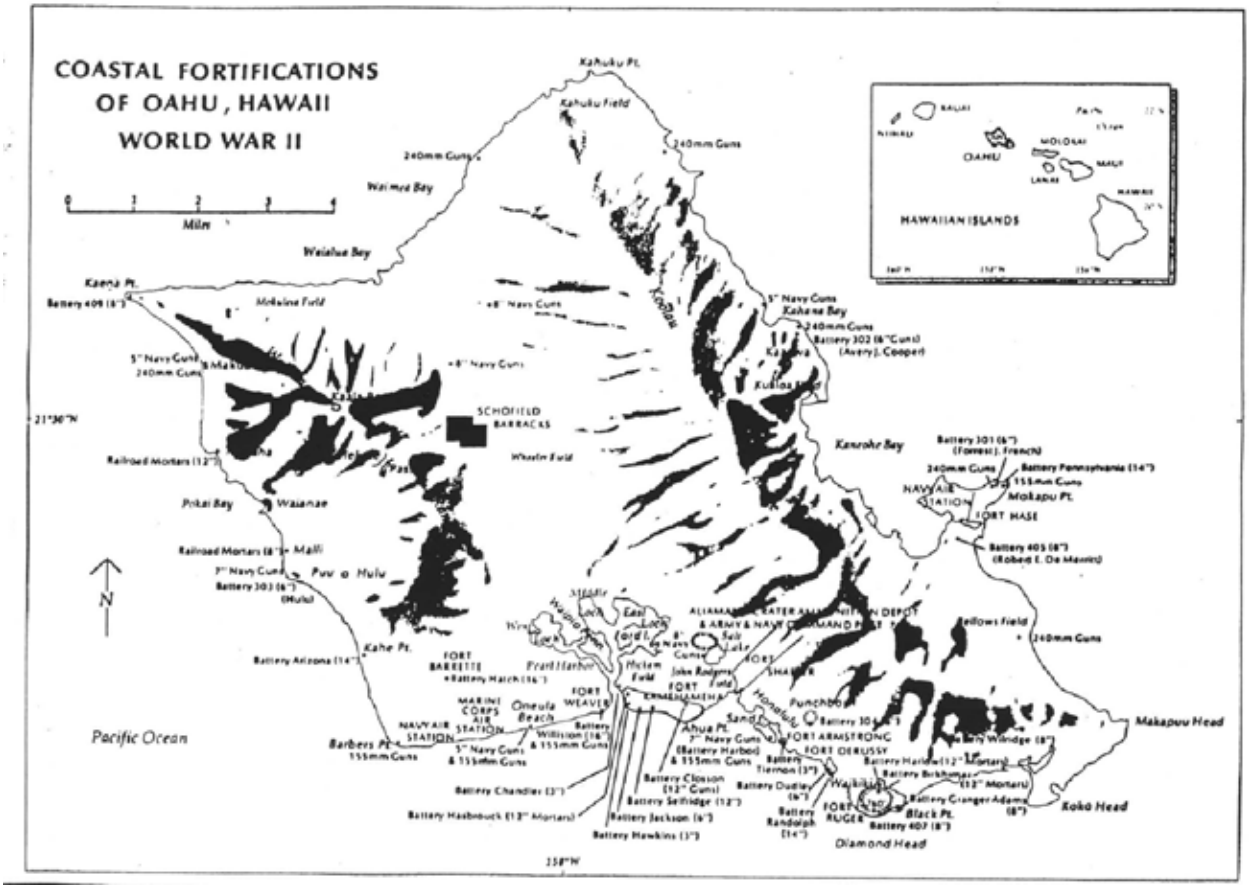
Conference Report by Terry McGovern and AI

The Coast Defense Study Group (CDSG) held a successful annual conference to the coast defense of Oahu from May 5 – 10, 2026. After two years of intense planning, our 62 members were able to visit almost every major site (both inside and out) that our original plan contained. All 15 different site owners came through for us and we owe them special thanks as almost all of these sites are not open to the public and lay behind locked gates and security systems or guards. While we have thanked them directly, I have listed them at the end of this report so they get credit for putting up with us wandering around and taking photographs of these former coast defense sites. One of key factors to the conference's success were the Royal Star drivers of our bus and supporting vans. They came through for us as there was no site we could not reach because of our ground transport. They also provided us with lunch and water every day. Our conference hotel provided good basic rooms and their breakfast service allowed our members to get to the bus on time. Our registration and banquet needs were provided by the three McGovern daughters (Rebecca, Rachel, and Alana) so we did not need to worry about these logistics. Our 62 members proved that they were able to follow instructions and not turn into wandering cats. That compliance greatly assisted relations with our hosts and got us into structures that were we were originally denied.

We visited over 50 historic structures during our 5 days of field trips and held 15 nightly presentations, I thought I would let AI (with my prompting) do the work of telling the rest of the CDSG membership who did not attend the conference what happened each day. So, the conference continues …….

Day Four: The Windward Coast and the Final Banquet

May 9 took the group to Oahu's eastern shore, a sector heavily fortified late in the war to protect the naval station at Kaneohe Bay and prevent a possible amphibious landing on the windward beaches. Our bus made its way over the rugged mountain range to take us down to the windward side of Oahu, navigating the lush hillsides of Kailua to make our way to Battery DeMerritt (#405). We were greeted by the battery's owner, Gary Weller, who was standing next to one of the concrete emplacements that once mounted two 8-inch Mark VI M3A2 naval guns on barbette carriages. Because the open guns lacked armored shields, the military had constructed unique metal lath frame-works over the emplacement to camouflage the artillery piece as a harmless farmhouse rooftop, but our members noted that this metal framework had been removed by the current owner. Our members moved past the outdoor emplacements to explore the subterranean infrastructure, where the powder magazines, shell rooms, power room, and tactical plotting spaces were tunneled directly into the defensive hillside. The owner explained that



after its 1950 decommissioning, the underground tunnel complex was repurposed as a commercial mushroom farm before being sandblasted decades later to serve as a secure digital data center. Currently the battery is occupied by a cat shelter and host site for countless unloved articles for monthly sale to the public to fund the upkeep of the old and tired cats.



The entrance to Battery DeMerritt



One of the gun emplacments for Battery DeMerritt



Some of the Thrift Shop tables

The coach moved directly downhill to arrive at Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) on the Mokapu Peninsula. Waiting for us at the gate was 1st Lt John O'Hara, our liaison and escort for our time at the base. Thanks to months of diplomatic coordination and chain of command interactions, our security cleared members were able swiftly move through the main gate and allowed to visit all three of our coast defense objectives at MCBH. Our first stop was MCBH golf course, not for golf but for van transport to ferry us to Battery French (#301) which is located in front of the commanding general's home. Battery French was constructed using the standard design of the 1940 Program 6-inch shielded barbette gun battery. The only difference was a staircase from inside the battery to the battery commander's station located on the roof. Today, the battery serves as the control center for the U.S. Navy's Wave Energy Test Site. Subsea cables run directly from the old ammunition rooms into the deep ocean, capturing the power of ocean waves from high-tech floating buoys and turning it into clean electricity for the military base. Our visit caused the general's staff to probe why 65 people were in front of his home, but luckily one of our CDSG members, who is a retired rear admiral, was able assure them that we were not a threat. The Marine Corps vans ferried us back to our bus so we could reach our next stop.



Battery French

Deep inside the secure MCBH Ammunition Storage Area lies the World War II Harbor Defense Command Post for Kaneohe Bay. Escorted by several Marine vehicles and guards, our bus made its way to the HDCP. We were required to leave our camaras and any device that could create a flame on the bus. Carved through multiple levels of solid volcanic rock to survive heavy bombing, the upper levels served as protected spaces for tracking targets

on plotting tables and telephone switchboards, while the lower levels safely isolated radios and backup generators. Today, with the equipment entirely cleared out, the multi-level tunnels are maintained by the military—standing as a silent blueprint of the tactical brain that once defended Oahu's shores.

Our bus then traveled into the Ulupa'u Crater, where our bus driver carefully crossed the modern Marine firing range under military escort, stopping at the rugged perimeter of Ulupa'u Crater where we could see the Pacific Ocean crashing to the cliffs about 400 feet directly below us. From there, our members climbed through a bustling, federally protected colony of nesting Red-footed Booby birds to reach Battery Pennsylvania's three concrete portals. The group then ascended to the very top of the



Battery Pennsylvania



Battery Pennsylvania Battery Commander's station



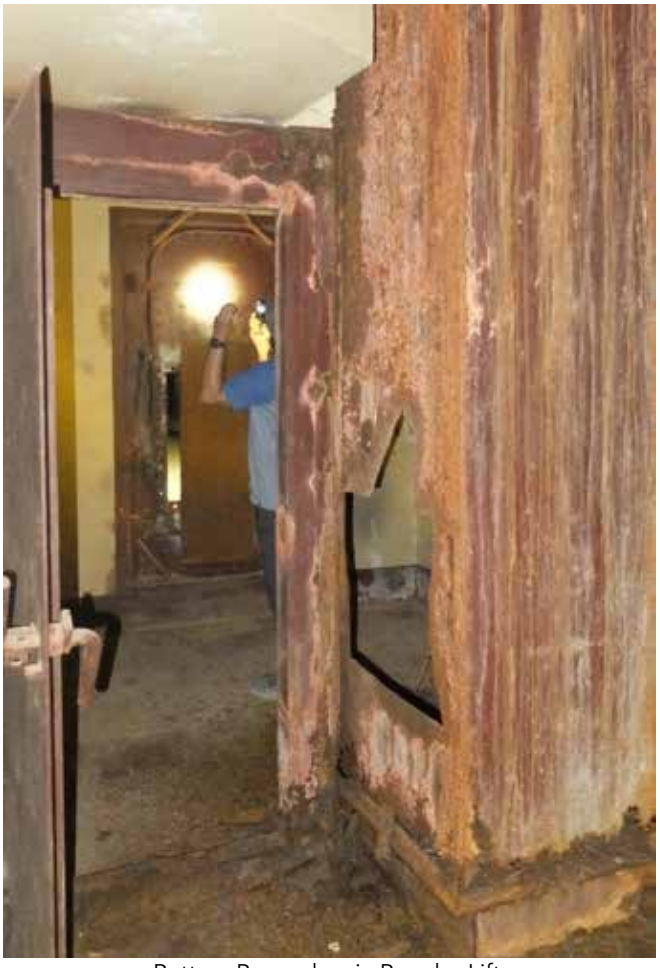
Battery Pennsylvania Turret well



One of Battery Pennsylvania Entrance Portals



Battery Pennsylvania Turret Well



Battery Pennsylvania Powder Lift



Battery Pennsylvania Power Room



Battery Cooper Emplacment



Battery Pennsylvania Plotting Room



One of Battery Cooper's Magazines



Battery Cooper's BC

crater rim to look straight down into the exposed, 70-foot-deep turret well. This massive concrete cylinder was bored vertically into the volcanic rock to replicate the 42.5-foot diameter tracking tolerances required to support the salvaged, three-gun armored turret of the USS *Arizona.* Afterward, we gained rare access to step inside the underground complex. Moving into the pitch-dark interior, we visited the powder and shell magazines, the turret well, a large power room, and other support area, including the battery's plotting room. Walking these flat, silent tunnels beneath the many feet of volcanic rock, we stood at the exact operational hub where the resurrected 14-inch guns fired their lone, historic salvo on August 10, 1945. Sadly, the battery was deactivated soon afterwards and the turret and machinery were scrapped. Returning to our bus we thanked our Marine escort and especially 1st Lt. John O'Hara for making our visit to MCBH so successful.

Our bus took us around Kane'ohe Bay to Battery Cooper (#302) at Kualoa Ranch. This battery consists of a 150-foot network of concrete-lined tunnels bored directly into the cliffside volcanic rock to protect the northern channels of Kāne'ohe Bay. Our members analyzed the physical layout where two 6-inch guns once sat on long-range M1 shielded barbette carriages, tracing the tunnels that were used to transport high-capacity ammunition from isolated rear magazines out to the open-front casemates. Today, the ranch operates these pristine tunnels as a walk-through museum, packing the rooms with memorabilia and props from blockbusters like Jurassic Park, Lost, Hawaii Five-0, and Godzilla. The group hoped to inspect the Battery Commander's Station perched higher up the cliff but due to time constraints and the steep, restricted ladder climb, the members did not get an opportunity to visit the observation post, thus focusing their study entirely on the main horizontal tunnel complex below. We thanked David Morgan and Robert Patturua for providing local transport and guiding us through the battery. Our bus made its way over the steep mountain range to the Best Western-The Plaza Hotel and dropped us off for the last time.

That evening, we held our traditional annual banquet in the hotel's "ballroom." Our meal of Hawaiian barbeque was provided by Rebecca, Rachel, and Alana McGovern who arranged and served the dinner to our hungry members. Ned Libby, Chairman of the CDSG, conducted the CDSG Annual Business Meeting, where he recapped last year's activities and the coming year's plans (see separate write up in the May's newsletter for details). He called upon the committee chairmen to give reports on their committee's activities (some in person and others by written form). The Board then held a Q&A session for members. The conference was then officially over and our members celebrated a flawless operation knowing they had just experienced an itinerary that would likely never be repeated.



The McGovern Girls serve the Banquet



The Chow Line for the Banquet

Day Five: The Rugged Reconnaissance

For a dedicated core of 42 CDSG members, May 10 was the ultimate endurance test. Bypassing the coach bus, members packed into shared, rented 4-wheel-drive vehicles to tackle the island's unmaintained backcountry, tracing the evolution of coastal defense into the missile age. Our first challenge was to match up our non-driving members with the dozen 4-wheel-drive vehicles rented by our driver members as we gathered in the roadway behind our hotel at 7:30am. Once formed up into a convoy, we headed west to the leeward side of Oahu. Climbing up the foothills of the Wai'anae Range, we meet Mr. McD Philpotts, our guide and the land manager for the Palehua Ranch, at the first of several gates along the winding dirt road that would lead us the Cold War-era OA-63-L/C Nike Site. Following him higher into rugged, volcanic hills our 4x4s grounded to a halt on a shelf of the Ewa district hills, their tires caked in slick, wet clay. The CDSG members stepped out directly into the dual-battery



Our convoy of 4-wheel drive vehicles

Launch Area of Site OA-63, positioned below the high tracking radars of Puu Manawahua. The expansive concrete pads glistened from recent downpours. The usually arid Makakilo hillside had turned a vibrant green, with fresh grass sprouting thick through the fissures in the tarmac as roaming cattle feasted on the green growth. Our members immediately fanned out across the open-air configuration—a layout unique to Hawaii that completely discarded the underground silos used on the mainland. They traced the faded metal blast shields where five-ton, nuclear-



The entrance Gate to the Nike Launch area



An Above Ground Nike Storage/Launch Pad



The Missile Warhead Building

capable Nike-Hercules missiles were once positioned to be launched. Around the launch pads were the earthen blast berms, which were originally engineered to deflect the 260,000-pound thrust of a booster rocket launch over the Pacific. Farther up the hillside stood the weathered remains of the garrison area. Damp air circulated through the hollowed-out barracks and skeletal mess hall where missile crews once lived on permanent 24-hour launch alerts. At the perimeter, rusted double-fence lines and concrete guard shacks stood out sharply against the newly green hillsides, marking where the final line of defense once stood to protect the nuclear-capable warheads. Our members explored these structures before returning to our vehicles so we could make our way down the rugged dirt road to make our way to our next target.

Our convoy of vehicles drove up the center valley of Oahu, passing by Scholfield Barracks to reach the North Shore. We gathered at the first of three locked gates that we needed to pass through to reach the Opaeula Ranch on private Bishop Estate lands. Traveling five miles over a rough dirt road we almost missed the faint outline of the access road as jungle has completely swallowed the abandoned World War II site of Battery Carroll G. Riggs. In early 1942, the military salvaged large 8-inch/55-caliber twin-gun naval turrets from the aircraft carriers USS *Lexington* and USS *Saratoga*, dragging the heavy 187-ton mounts up these ridges to defend against a Japanese invasion. Fighting through the thick canopy, our members cleared the paths to both Barbette No. 1 and Barbette No. 2—the two circular steel and concrete rings embedded in the damp earth. Though the turrets themselves were scrapped in 1948, the steel and concrete underground structures still marked where the carrier guns once mounted. Skirting the edge of the rings, the group located the entrances to their respective underground magazines. Descending a flight of concrete stairs into the ground, our members descended into the subterranean chambers that once safely stored the heavy 8-inch projectiles and powder bags. After searching out the other structures, such as the BC, plotting rooms, and the power room, that made up battery, our members, refreshed with cold water, loaded up to head for our next objective. At the last minute we realized that one of members was not accounted for so we returned to the battery site to locate our lost member. Luckly, we were able to locate him in the thick jungle where he got bogged down. Now with all accounted for we backtracked down the rough road to the North Shore so we could head the far southeast of the island. Our success in visit Battery Riggs was due to Mr. Keith Chang, land manager, for the Kamehameha School /Bishiop Estate, who arranged for us to visit the site and to get us through the locked gates.



Hunting for the Battery Emplacement



Battery Riggs Number 2 turret Emplacement



Battery Riggs Magazine

Our destination was Battery Lewis S. Kirkpatrick (Wiliwilinui Ridge) where two twin 8-inch naval turrets were positioned as the highest elevation location for any permanent Coast Artillery Corp battery, sitting at an elevation of 1,200 feet above sea level high in the Ko'olau Mountain Range. Our 4x4 vehicles wound up the affluent subdivision of Wiliwilinui Ridge for several miles, where drivers simply asked the gatehouse guard for a hiking pass before continuing the steep mile-and-a-half climb to the trailhead parking lot. Stepping out, our CDSG members did not realize that the ruins of Battery Kirkpatrick completely surrounded them. Modern development had altered the site, with a multi-million-dollar luxury home placing Barbette No. 1 and the Bat-



Battery Kirkpatrick Magazine Entrance

tery Commander's Station permanently off-limits. Fortunately, the rest of the battery remained accessible if you knew where to look for it. Pushing into the lush forest near the start of the trail, the group first explored the deeply buried power room bunker, a concrete structure built to protect the diesel generators. Moving deeper into the green canopy, they reached Barbette No. 2 and descended its concrete stairs into the subterranean ammunition magazines. Finally, we hiked back across to the opposite side of the parking area to locate the underground plotting room. Inside this underground reinforced concrete bunker, their flashlights cut through the darkness to spot the remains of the battery's plotting board where soldiers once calculated firing data.



Battery Kirkpatrick Barbette #2

As the sun dipped low in the Oahu horizon, signaling the true end of our campaign, the exhaustion was entirely eclipsed by a collective sense of triumph. We had breached the sealed defenses of America's strongest historic harbor, turning a lifetime of archival research into an unforgettable, firsthand reality, documenting the fragile, fading state of these concrete sentinels before time can erase them completely.

The CDSG thanks for following site owners and their representatives:

Battery Hatch – Christine Ching, Administrator, Park Maintenance & Recreations Services, Jack Torres, Leeward Oahu District Manager, Dept of Parks and Recreation

Battery Arizona – Tina Alder, District Manager, Waste Management of Hawaii

Batteries Hulu and #303 – Jeff Spencer, Emergency Management Specialist, DEM, Honolulu

Fort Kamehameha and Ford Island/JBPHH – Captain Kurtis Krug, Chief Staff Officer, JB-PH-H, Captain Samuel White, Commander, JB-PH-H

Battery Harbor – Martha Yent, Archeologist, Hawaiian State Parks

Punchbowl – Jim Horton, Director, Natonal Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Dept of VA

Fort DeRussy/US Army Museum – Jenna Scholz, Museum Curator, Hawaii Army Museums

Fort Ruger/Diamond Head – Major Randall Duldulao, Land Manager, State of Hawaii, DOD

Battery DeMerritt – Gary Weller, Owner, Battery #405

Fort Hase/MCBH – 1st Lt John O'Hara, S-5, Engagement, Communication, & Government Affairs, Kristi Kaluhiwa, S-5, Engagement, Communication, & Government Affairs

Battery Cooper – David Morgan, Owner, Kualoa Ranch, Robert Pascua, Sales Manager, Kualoa Ranch

OA-63-Nike Launch Site – McD Phipotts, Property Manager, Palehua Ranch, Paul Alston, Trustee, Palehua Ranch

Battery Riggs – Keith K.A Chang, Land Asset Manager, Kamehameha Schools

Battery Kirkpatrick - Waialae Iki 5 Community Association, Trail access to Wiliwilinui Ridge Trail

Joint Army-Navy Command Center – No access because the site is in use for a modern C2F facility

The following CDSG members attended the 2026 CDSG Annual Conference to Oahu:

James Anderson III, Doug Asbjornsen, Matthew Bell, Mark Berhow, Aaron Buda, Carl Chappell, Steven Combs, Nigel Cunningham, Marvin Dryden, Craig Dyson, Julie Ann Dyson, William Evensen, Nancy Farrell, Mike Fiorini, Morgan Ford, Karl Fritz, Alan Fyson, Maurice Gehlen, Carl Gray, Michael Gries-

mer, Robert Grimm, Alan Hardey, Bridget Hart, Roy Hatanaka, Marvin Heinze, Christopher Herrmann, Maniusz Jachimowicz, Thomas Kavanagh, Brandon Kovaly, Michael Kovaly, Francisco Lacy, Edmund Libby, Daniel Lindley, Scott Loomer, William Lyles, Ben Mackey, Danny Malone, Michael Malone, Terrance McGovern, J. Bryce McWalter, Glen Milam, Bruce Nordmark, Scott Nordmark, Peter Nowicki, Jason Ockrassa, Phil Payette, Paul Prentiss, Richard Sanchez, Richard Schilb, John Scholes, Jenna Scholz, James Smith, Peter Smith, Roger Stevens, Rolf Thoendel, James Touza, Robert Walk, Mark Warren, Glen Williford, Ian Wolfe, Richard Wong, Charles Woodman.



* * * * *

Call for Papers

Council on America's Military Past

Bridget Hart

The Council on America's Military Past seeks authors for the Journal of America's Military Past (JAMP), a peer-reviewed journal published three times a year since 1966. We welcome articles on biographies, unit and facility histories, battles, equipment, and other topics related to America's military past. For submission guidelines, questions, or to submit an article, visit campjamp.org/publications or email editorjamp@gmail.com.

* * * * *

2026 Year-End Donation Appeal for the CDSG Fund

Trustees: Terry McGovern, Glen Milam, 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 2026 donations from our members to fund projects that support our organization's goals. We have agreed to fund several urgent projects, but we can only unlock these grants if we receive sufficient contributions. These initiatives are challenging and time-sensitive; we need our members to consider making a tax-deductible year-end donation to meet these vital preservation needs. Projects that the CDSG Board of Directors has already agreed to fund are:

1. Restoration & Transport of Rare 90mm Coast Artillery — Fort MacArthur, CA

The Challenge: The CDSG is leading the effort to transport and restore a rare 90mm M3 fixed-mount gun at Battery Osgood-Farley in San Pedro, CA. The Museum Association is under an aggressive, mandatory deadline to clear their coast defense material from the site immediately.

Financials: Total transport and restoration costs are estimated at $25,000. The CDSG Fund has raised $3,500 so far. We must close the remaining gap within the next 6 months.

2. Fort Wool Structural Stabilization (Rip Raps) — Hampton, VA

The Challenge: The WWII Battery Commander's Tower—the last remaining standing tower of this type in the USA—is in danger of collapsing. Only two rusting steel supports carry the concrete roof, which is actively leaning due to trapped water and weight. If these supports fail, the tower may topple. Immediate stabilization is a preservation emergency.

Financials: Repairs are estimated at $300,000. The Coalition for Historic Fort Wool is in discussion with the Commonwealth of Virginia for state funding through the annual budget, but the Coalition must raise at least 10% to kickstart the work. The CDSG Fund has raised $12,000 to date for the Coalition.

Additional Pending CDSG Fund Initiatives:

Fort Monroe Battery Parriott Display (Terry McGovern)

Appledore Island Fire Control Tower Historical Signage (Norm Scarpulla)

Fort Michie WWII Fire Control Tower Stabilization (Chris Zeeman)

Fort Burnside WWII HECP Preservation (Chris Zeeman)

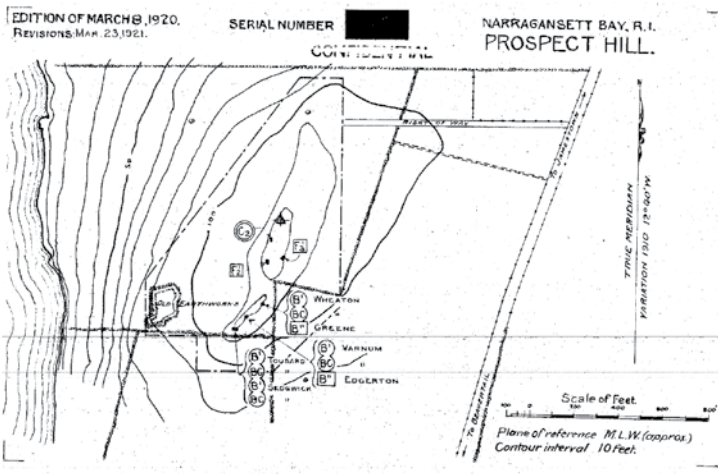
How to Make Your Tax-Deductible Contribution

Without your support, these historic defenses or artifacts will be at severe risk. Please consider adding a substantial donation when submitting your 2027 membership dues. Donations are 100% tax-deductible as a 501(c)(3) organization as all of your funds will go to these projects.

By Mail: Send checks/money orders (US funds, payable to "The CDSG Fund" or "Coast Defense Study Group Fund") to:

CDSG Fund, 12250 Pondsville Road, Smithsburg, MD 21783 USA, Attn: Glen Milam

Online: Contribute via credit card or PayPal at cdsg.org/donate



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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.

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.

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 $1,500 to $5,000 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, Mark Berhow and Glen Milam.

Send donations to (and made out to):
CDSG Fund c/o Glen Milam
22150 Pondsville Road, Smithsburg, MD 21783
Or use your credit card via PayPal on the 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 joining the CDSG.

The CDSG patches have been available for several years. Designed especially for the CDSG, these quality patches combine the Coast Artillery Corps, the Ordnance 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-sirt with white ink:
Size & # ___L ___XL ___2XL ___3XL
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Size & # ___L ___XL ___2XL ___3XL
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Navy T-shirt with yellow ink:
Size & # ___L ___XL ___2XL ___3XL
Total Number: ____ times $_____ = Total $_____
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(domestic $2) each
Hats: _____ times $ _____ = Total $ _____
(domestic $20) each
Be sure to include your name and shipping address.
You can also order online at cdsg.org/shopping/

* * *

Support the CDSG.org and FortWiki.com Websites

The CDSG supports its websites ONLY through donations. If you use these websites, please help the CDSG continue to maintain them by donating a shareware fee. We suggest a minimum donation of at least $5.00. You can donate online at cdsg.org/donatations or by check or money order. Thank you for supporting the CDSG and FortWiki websites!



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

* * * * *

The Artilleryman Magazine

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The Fortress Study Group

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.

The benefits of Fortress Study Group membership include:

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International digital memberships are £20.

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

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 $50 domestic printed and foreign electronic, $60 for Canada printed, and $100 for international printed. Join/renew online at cdsg.org.

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

Glen Milam, Membership Chairman
22150 Pondsville Road, Smithsburg, MD 21783
membership@cdsg.org, glenmilam@myactv.net

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The Coast Defense Study Group Press

This is an all-volunteer operation provided as a member service. Credit card orders are accepted at cdsg.org/shop. For mail orders send check or money order in U.S currency. All prices include domestic shipping costs (US Postal Service). Allow at least 8-10 weeks for delivery.

CDSG Publications 1985-2025. $50—PDF files of the entire set of *CDSG News/Journal/Newsletters* on a data USB drive by mail, or by download. Yearly updates can be obtained from info@cdsg.org.

CDSG eDocuments. $50—available by download or by mail on a USB drive. Scanned historical documents related to seacoast defenses, most are copied from the National Archives. Includes annual reports of the chief of coast artillery and chief of engineers; various board proceedings and reports; army directories; text books; tables of organization and equipment; WWII command histories; drill, field, training manuals and regulations; ordnance department documents; ordnance tables and compilations; and ordnance gun and carriage cards.

CDSG Harbor Defense eDocuments. $250—available by download or by mail on a USB drive. The collection includes reports of completed batteries/works; maps; annexes to defense projects; CD engineer notebooks; quartermaster building records; and aerial photos taken by the signal corps 1920-40, and other items. Specific items can be requested from info@cdsg.org.

CSDG Press Books

Prices below include domestic shipping
(Contact the CDSG for international order prices)

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: $45
Seacoast Artillery Weapons (Army Technical Manual 4-210, 13 Oct. 1944) paper back reprint. $25
The Service of Coast Artillery, by F. Hines and F.W. Ward (1910), hardcover reprint $40
Permanent Fortifications and Sea-Coast Defenses, Congressional Report No. 62, U.S. House of Rep. (1862), hardcover reprint $30
Handbook of American Coast Artillery Matériel, Ordnance Doc. #2042, (1922), Hardcover reprint $45
The Endicott and Taft Reports, reprint of original reports of 1886, 1905, 1915, hardcover, with plates included in a separate paperback $45
Artillerists and Engineers, the Beginnings of American Seacoast Fortifications, 1794-1815, by Arthur P. Wade, paperback, (2010) $25
American Seacoast Defenses: A Reference Guide, Third Edition, revised edited by Mark Berhow (2023), hardcover $45
Historic Fortifications Preservation Handbook, 2003 guide to preservation methods spiral bound softcover $15
WWII Harbor Defenses of San Diego, 2021 by H.R. Everett also available from Amazon $50
American Seacoast Forts, a Directory Vol 1, North Atlantic Coast $40
American Seacoast Forts, a Directory Vol 2, S. Atlantic & Gulf Coasts $40
American Seacoast Forts, a Directory Vol 3, Pacific Coast $40
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by McGovern, Berhow, Williford, Hardcover (Amazon $49.95)
Sentinels of the South Atlantic Gulf Coasts, 2026, by Dale Manuel $20

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