

FORT MOTT  
STATE PARK



# Eye on the Delaware

The Newsletter of Fort Mott State Park



21st Coast Artillery  
HQ Battery

Volume 4, Issue 2

Spring/Summer 2005

## Special Days of Interest:

- **July 9th**  
11am—4pm  
Coast Defenses Living  
History Day
- **August 14th**  
10am— Fishing Derby
- **August 20th**  
1pm—Aiming the  
Guns
- **September 3rd**  
7pm—Fort Mott  
Presents

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## Mark Your Calendars!

On **Saturday, July 9th, from 11am until 4pm** Fort Mott will hold its third annual Coast Defenses Living History Day. The theme of this year's event will be the activation of the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery (detachment), 21<sup>st</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment, at Fort Mott in 1941. The activation of the 21<sup>st</sup> CA is significant because it depicts how the United States was preparing for the possibility of war.

At noon, a special ceremony behind Battery Arnold will mark the event. The day will provide a historic insights into homeland defense and what it meant to the country in the days prior to our entry into World War 2.

Special tours of the fort's electric power generating room, Battery Arnold and other sites usually closed to the public will be available, weather permitting. The Battery Commander's Station will be set up with operable period equipment and will provide a "hands-on" experience

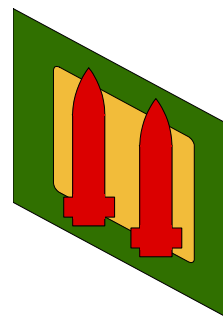
for visitors. Other programs will include historic newsreel footage and radio broadcasts from 1941 in the Welcome Center. Also in the Welcome Center will be our newly restored and functional BD-74 Fire Control Switchboard. Selected items from the park's historic collection, as well as private collections, will be on display. Members of the living history group Army Ground Forces Association will be portraying soldiers of the Coast Artillery Corps and staffing many of the locations throughout the fort.

Members of the Salem Light Artillery will participate in the event by setting up a display of Civil War artillery and firearms. They will demonstrate how to fire a 12-pound Napoleon cannon and even let the public join in on some of the stations.

On **Saturday, August 20th at 1pm**, Fort Mott will be conducting an event called "Aiming the Guns." We will

demonstrate how the massive guns of Battery Arnold and Battery Harker were aimed towards the targets. Weather permitting, the event will be held at the Battery Commander's Station in Battery Krayenbuhl as well as on top of the 1870's Magazine near the western Fire Control Tower by the river.

On **Saturday, September 3rd at 7pm**, Fort Mott will hold its second *Fort Mott Presents* event. During this engagement, we will feature a classic Abbott and Costello movie *In the Navy*. Popcorn and drink will be provided to all who attend.



## Welcome Aboard

The staff at Fort Mott State Park is delighted to welcome Ranger Dawn McDonough to its ranks. Ranger McDonough is a life long resident of Carney's Point and fondly recalls the days she spent as a child exploring Fort Mott and its fortifications as children still do today. In October 2004, Ranger

McDonough joined the staff at Fort Mott after 15 years at the Salem County Sheriff's Department. While at the park her aim is to ensure that all visitors to the park have a safe and enjoyable time. She looks forward to meeting the parks' guests as well as running Fort Mott's Annual Fishing Derby

which will be held in August. So next time you see her around the park be sure to give her a warm welcome and let her know how much you appreciate the concern she has for the safety of all who enter the park.



Eastern Fire Control Tower.

## Looking for Docents, Guides and Living History Personnel

**FORT MOTT WANTS YOU!** Fort Mott and the State Park Service are looking for volunteers to help with day to day activities as well as special events.

Currently, we are looking for anyone with an interest in history. We are also looking for those who enjoy providing living history.

Training for giving tours will be provided and if you are interested in living history, we will show you how to get involved during one of our work weekends or events.

If you are interested, please contact the staff of Fort Mott at: (856) 935-3218, email: [fortmott@snip.net](mailto:fortmott@snip.net) or just stop by and fill out an application.



### Quotable Quotation:

*"There are no extraordinary men... just extraordinary circumstances that ordinary men are forced to deal with."*

ADM William "Bull" Halsey

## New and Old Programs Offered at Fort Mott

Summer is here! Many favorite programs are returning this season as well as a couple new events. New this year is the Aiming the Guns event which provides visitors with the ability to learn how the massive guns of Fort Mott were aimed. During the event we will track ship traffic as it moves up and down on the Delaware River.

Another new program this season is *Fort Mott Presents*. We will feature different period movies that deal with issues from the Spanish Ameri-

can War to the Second World War. This summer's movie will be Abbott and Costello in the comedy classic, *In the Navy*.

The summer will see the very popular return on the Coast Defense Living History Day on July 9<sup>th</sup>. Another program that will be held during the summer is the Fort Mott All Access Tour which is an intensive guided tours though areas usually closed to the public.

If you have any ideas about possible programs you would like to see or a question

about a current program, please feel free to contact the staff at Fort Mott State Park.

### ATTENTION! Guided Tours Available!

If you would like a guided tour this summer of Fort Mott please stop in the Welcome Center and inquire when the next one will leave.

## Pictures from "Fort Mott Mobilizes" December 11th, 2004



The Officers and Enlisted men of Battery E, 7th Coast Artillery.



Under the guidance of Corporal Turner, Private First Class Winchell and Private Bonaccorsi prepare the tower for the event.



Corporal Turner was promoted to the rank of Sergeant by 1st Lieutenant Grant and Major Welch.

## Then and Now



**Then:**  
Looking west at the Main Gate of Fort Mott and Officer's Row



**Now:**  
How Cemetery Road looking west looks today. The houses of Officer's Row were moved to Delaware in 1934.

## Memorial Day 2005 Photos



Fort Mott staff raised the park's flag to full staff at noon.

## What's New in the Collection?

The newest gem to enter Fort Mott's interpretive collection is the BD-74 Fire Control Switchboard. Recovered from Fort H.G. Wright on Fishers Island, New York in November of 2004, the switchboard was in dire need of repair. After seven months of intensive restoration, the switchboard will once again function like it did over 60 years ago.

The BD-74 Fire Control Switchboard connected all of the gun emplacements with the observation stations as well as the other forts such as Fort DuPont and Fort Delaware. The BD-74 also provided the

30 volts of power that are needed to operate the phone system.

Now that we have a restored switchboard, it will be easier to use what telephones we have and will provide the ability to enlarge the current network.

This working switchboard is currently the only known working BD-74 in existence on the East Coast and may be the only one in the United States.

If you have any interest in the switchboard or would like to learn more about it, please contact the staff at Fort Mott State Park.



Leo Polaski and Andy Grant working on recovering one of the BD-74 Fire Control Switchboards from Fort H.G. Wright.



Civil War Re-enactors and Living History personnel marched from Fort Mott to Finns Point National Cemetery



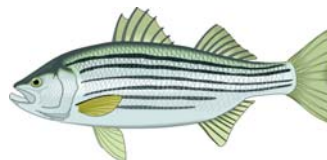
Small ceremonies were conducted to honor all the veterans resting in Finns Point National Cemetery.

## Get Hooked, on Fishing

On Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup> Fort Mott State Park will be holding it's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fishing Derby. Children 15 years of age and younger are invited to join in on the excitement of this free event. Registration begins at 11am and lasts until

noon, at which time the derby commences. Don't worry about going out the night before looking for night crawlers because our squirmy divers will be given out at time of registration.

So gather up all your friends, your fishing poles, and lucky lures and come on down to the pier. (Make sure you don't forget your lucky lures because prizes will be given out



for the biggest fish!)

The fishing derby will conclude at 2pm. If you have any questions, please feel free to give Fort Mott a call at (856) 935-3218.





## FORT MOTT STATE PARK

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**Fort Mott on the Web**  
<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/fortmott.html>

### Other Sites to Check Out:

[www.cdsg.com](http://www.cdsg.com)

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



### Guarding the Delaware River since 1896



Located in Pennsville, New Jersey, Fort Mott State Park is the site of a former U.S. Army coastal defense fort. Established in 1896, Fort Mott was built to strengthen the defenses of the Delaware River. Fort Mott consisted of five



gun batteries ranging in size from 3-inch rapid fire guns to the massive 12-inch rifles on disappearing carriages which could fire a thousand pound projectile 9 miles down river. An army base until 1944, Fort Mott now provides recreational activities as well as historic structures and fortifications. The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail's Delsea Region Welcome Center is located in the former Ordnance Building which provides local and site specific displays.

Keep up to date of what is going on at Fort Mott State Park by downloading the latest newsletter on the official state web site:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/fortmott.html>

## Army Ground Forces Association Leads the Way

In the past few years Fort Mott State Park has seen a rebirth in it's programming thanks to the use of Living History. The group which has made this possible is called Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA). AGFA is a non-profit educational and historical association dedicated to the study, interpretation, and preservation of the memory, experiences, tactics, doctrine, and equipment of the United States Army soldier of the Second World War.

AGFA has helped with many projects currently underway at Fort Mott, such as the total restoration of a BD-74 Fire Control Switchboard. To date, AGFA members have spent over 500 hours on the re-wiring and restoration of the switchboard. When recovered in 2004, the switchboard had sat in a wet room for over 60 years. The tedious work of cleaning the contacts and re-

establishing the wiring harness is being led by Shawn Welch. AGFA's hope is to have a working BD-74 switchboard by the July 9th event.

AGFA has participated in all of the Living History events since 2003. Their support has greatly improved the interpretive programming as well as restore needed period appropriate equipment. By participating in the events, they have helped to bring the fort back to life and show what an outstanding historic resource Fort Mott is for the public.



**Shawn Welch, Jonathan Prostak, Mike Murray and Stephen Turner working on the BD-74 Fire Control Switchboard.**



**Lieutenant Colonel Shawn Welch lights the way with his M1941 Coleman Lantern.**

Come out on Saturday July 9th to join AGFA as they man the fort for Coast Defenses Living History Day from 11am until 4pm. If you would like to learn more about AGFA, check out their webpage:  
[www.armygroundforces.org](http://www.armygroundforces.org)