



# THE BATTERY

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SPRING 2011

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The Fort Miles Historical Association is a nonprofit group that has its mission to preserve, protect, and defend all aspects of Fort Miles working with community and state stakeholders and other interested parties. The FMHA also has its goal to work as an active partner with the State of Delaware to develop the historical potential of Fort Miles.



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Merlin Beil

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Bev Dalecki

Dan Lyons

Bob Frederick

Joe Kosaveach

Joe Johnson

Ray Quillen

Bob Fellows

Brian Lindsay

Jack Goins

John Roberts



put in countless hours inside both Battery 519 and Battery Smith to get both casemates correct and working right. Check John's article later in the Newsletter as to progress on their work.

Joe Johnson and his electrical crew have done yeoman work in getting the electricians right inside Battery 519. Thanks also should go to Bob Fellows as he has been excellent with his publicity duties, ably helped by Merlin Beil. They have been working hard on future exhibits on Fort Miles for the Lewes Library and South Coastal Library in Bethany Beach this summer. Keep your eyes open for our displays in both libraries in the near future.

Ted George continues to keep our membership list growing as well as Dan Lyons helping with the Tower 3 Clean Up campaign. Joe Kosaveach, tour guide master, has been able to find a 100lb aircraft bomb of the kind used by American planes flying out of Rehoboth looking for German U-boats in 1942. Other FMHA board members have been active in other parts of our mission too numerous to mention and to each of them a big "shout out" is given.

Now is the exciting time for the birth of our Museum Complex! We have saved the bunker and much of the Cantonment and gun park, and now we are near our next step, making the case to our public that we need a military museum and complex at Fort Miles.

We have been successful on several fronts. Perhaps the most important was the winning of a competitive grant from the US Department of Energy, piggybacking on the city of Lewes, for \$175k for a HVAC geothermal system for the bunker. Thanks to the city of Lewes, this major effort is now in the planning stages with completion set for late this fall or early 2012. Board member John Roberts has played a very important role in the design of the HVAC system. Thanks also to the state team of Britt Murray, Greg Kindig, and Wayne Rust for their leadership in the geothermal planning effort.

We are also working with Verner Johnson & Associates, Boston, to design our museum inside Battery 519. Thanks to Chazz Salkin, Ray Bivens and the Parks staff, FMHA is sharing the cost of the planning of the museum with the state. We have had one preliminary meeting with the Verner Johnson planning team and have another scheduled for March 29, 2011, out of which we will have beginning plans for what our museum will look like. Verner Johnson is one of the premier historical museum architects in the country and they have just completed the beautiful Infantry Museum at Fort Benning. We are very excited to be able to work with VJ on our vision of the Fort Miles Museum Complex.

We have also been successful in winning a grant from the Delaware Department of Tourism to develop a video on the History of Fort Miles. The

## From the Desk of the President

By Dr. Gary Wray

Welcome to the Spring 2011 edition of the Fort Miles Historical Association Newsletter. As I type this article it is almost to the day one year since the death of Lee Jennings, my friend and co-author, who pushed and pulled all of us to fulfill the vision of the Fort Miles Museum and completion of the Cantonment area. I think Lee would be happy and pleased with our progress over the last year. His memory is still alive in all of us and the prize that we all seek is getting closer and closer!

There is much to report since our last FMHA Newsletter. First, as always, I would like to thank our FMHA Board of Directors for their hard work and effort over the last six months as we move actively ahead with our Fort Miles Museum Complex plans. In particular, the efforts of John Roberts and his bunker crew continue to astound everyone and we are now near finished in cleaning out Battery 519 and getting it ready for the next step, the actual Museum inside the casemate. John and his "Bunker Busters" have

video was professionally produced by TELEducation in Wilmington DE and will be used to introduce Delaware schools to Fort Miles and will also be used in our new 50 seat theatre inside Battery 519.

We have also created our Wall of Honor inside Battery 519 for families to honor loved ones who have served our country. We now have over 70 names on the WHO and if you would like to purchase a paver there is more information later on in the Newsletter. We will have our next WHO induction at 3pm at our April 30, 2011 event (more on that later in the Newsletter). If you are interested in purchasing a WHO paver, please see the paver application in this Newsletter or visit our website ([www.fortmiles.org](http://www.fortmiles.org)) to download one.

So, we have come a long way in the last ten years that we have been working on this project. We have grown from a little group of four to a much larger group of 320. We have taken a building that was in sorry shape and saved it for posterity. Now we are at the point to take the next step and we need your help.

Your FMHA Board has created a Development Committee, chaired by Bob Frederick, to begin the process of raising the necessary funds for the beginning efforts of the Fort Miles

Museum Complex (FMHC). Working actively with Horizon Philanthropic in Lewes, The Development Committee has divided the effort into two parts, Stages I and II.

Stage I of the fundraising campaign will be a two year process to raise the needed \$200K to continue our museum planning work with Verner Johnson and other museum startup planning expenses. We have had one meeting with the Verner Johnson team in June 2010 where we began preliminary discussions on the scope of our vision. Our second planning session was held on March 29 2011 when more detailed planning was done, including what the interiors and exterior of the Museum might look like. Another planning session will be held in the fall. From these sessions we will be able to move to Stage II of the fundraising campaign.

Stage II will be the actual main fundraising campaign to raise the necessary monies for the building of the Museum and improving the complex. So, in the mail soon you will be receiving a letter outlining our exciting way forward and how you can help us in this museum planning process. Our FMHA membership has been wonderful in supporting our efforts over the years and that support has put us in the position now to be close to our museum. And let us be clear, when we

are done, we will have the best military museum complex in the US! There will be none other like it anywhere!

Finally, I would ask that you put our three 2011 important FMHA/Park Events on your calendar. On Saturday, April 30, 10-4pm we will have our first big event of 2011 with our Wall of Honor celebration at 3pm inside the Bunker. As always, food and beverages will be available. On Saturday, August 27, 10-4pm we will have our Summer Event where we will reenact the surrender of U-858. Our annual Open House will be held on Saturday October 8, 2011, 10-4pm where we invite the public to come to the Bunker and spend some time with us to inspect how much has been done. Hopefully by that time we will have for display design work completed by Verner Johnson so the community can see what the future Fort Miles Museum Complex will look like when completed.

So, it is an exciting time for us all. We are on the cusp of something very important to our community, our state and our nation. When our vision is achieved in the near future we will have the best museum complex on a World War II military facility in the United States. On the one year anniversary of his death, I think Lee would be proud of where we are now. His vision is very much alive in us all.

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## News From the Publicity Committee

By Bob Fellows



Members of the FMHA Publicity Committee, Merlin Beil, Dan Lyons, Candace Rogers and I have been very busy planning displays at both the Lewes and Bethany Beach Libraries. The Lewes display will be for two weeks starting 4 July 2011. The South Coastal Library located in Bethany Beach, will be shown for the month of April 2011.

The centerpiece for both displays will be the M1901A1 Azimuth Instrument. Using wooden Fire Control Towers,

3-inch shells and a model of the U-858 German submarine will help show life at Fort Miles during WWII.

Also, photos taken from WWII Army files will be on display along with samples of engraved pavers from the "Wall of Honor." Books written on Fort Miles and Fire Control Towers will be incorporated in the display.

Fort Miles Battery Tours are scheduled for Saturday, March 12th, April 9th and May 14th at 2 PM. Lantern Tours are scheduled for Saturday, March 19th, April 16th and May 28th at 7 PM.

The War Years special event will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2011 from 10 AM until 4 PM.

I am appealing to all members to participate in the upcoming training session to become a Fort Miles docent. A training session for new tour guides is being developed by Cape Henlopen State Park personnel. Contact Richard Julian (302)645-6852 for more information.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for Battery 519 Open House to be held Saturday, October 8, 2011.

See our website for more information at:  
[www.fortmiles.org](http://www.fortmiles.org).

We always are looking for new thoughts on how to get the word out to more people. If you have new ideas, we would love to hear them.

# Photos from the November 2010 Open House



# Restoration Photos taken since November



Working in Battery Smith:  
a basketball court made in the  
north gunroom after the war



Cleaning the area around the flag pole

Working on the gates



Wooden replica of a 12" shell



The new A/V cabinet  
before it was painted  
white



# ORDER YOUR ENGRAVED PAVER

For the "Wall of Honor" at the Fort Miles Museum

LEWES, DELAWARE

Now you can support the new Fort Miles museum, receive a tax deduction and have your name or that of a loved one honored on a handsome brick paver. Each engraved paver will be prominently displayed in Battery 519, America's first WWII museum at an actual military site.

More than 10,000 visitors each year will see your paver, and we will send a tribute card to whoever you designate, telling them of this special honor.

The tax-deductible cost for each paver is just \$200, including delivery and installation in a well-lighted entrance area. This first phase of the "wall of Honor" will accommodate just 500 pavers and orders are being accepted on a first-come basis. Be sure to reserve your paver now by returning the form below.

### About Fort Miles

America's first on-site WWII museum is located on the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the Delaware Bay, where massive armament was secretly installed during WWII to turn back possible invasions by German naval forces and protect the key port of Philadelphia.

Prominently displayed at the museum is one of Battery 519's two 12 inch cannons, large enough to propel a shell 17 miles, as well as searchlights powerful enough to light the beach of Cape May, NJ. Visitors can also climb a coastal tower and tour an actual "cantonment" where soldiers lived and worked - an active city of 2,500 men and women. The coastal towers along the Delaware shoreline were the "eyes" of Fort Miles - strategically placed to triangulate readings if enemy ships were located. Your donation to the "Wall of Honor" helps support the Fort Miles museum.



YES, I want to purchase a paver at the Fort Miles Museum. All donations are tax deductible. Enclosed is my check made payable to: the Fort Miles Historical Association.

\$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ paver(s)

### Engraving Instructions

LIMIT 3 LINES OF 16 CHARACTERS PER LINE- spaces, punctuation & symbols count as characters

1

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

name \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

street \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Send orders to: FMHA Wall of Honor  
c/o Horizon Philanthropic Services  
P.O. Box 802  
Lewes, DE 19958  
Questions? Call 302.644.0107

## New Beginnings

By Ray Bivens, Chief of Programming, DE State Parks

It is no secret that times are tough; state park systems across the country are closing parks, reducing services, abandoning capital projects and laying off staff. Your state park system, the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation is feeling the pinch, as well. Over the past two years, the Division of Parks and Recreation has received no funding for capital projects. Hiring freezes, retirements and the elimination of vacant positions has reduced our full-time staff by about 20% compared to 2008 staffing levels. Our staff certainly notices the difference, but hopefully our park visitors do not. What separates Delaware State Parks from our sister agencies across the country?

The primary reason parks like Cape Henlopen are still the same safe, peaceful, educational and inspiring places they have always been is the commitment of our volunteers and staff. No park in our system can match Cape Henlopen's community support and volunteer commitment. Last year alone, volunteers donated more than 3,900 days of service;

this is the equivalent of fifteen staff working year-round (that statistic is so astounding I underlined it and bolded it)! Volunteers help with just about every aspect of park operations; tasks include maintenance, interpretation, special events and resource management. Without the support of our volunteers, Cape Henlopen and Fort Miles would be a much different park.

The Fort Miles Historical Association is a big part of that success. Members of your group are invaluable to the park, assisting with marketing, maintenance, event planning, fundraising, interpretation, master planning, research and historic restoration. While park systems across the country are closing, we are still making improvements to our park. For example, in 2010 more than 5,875 park visitors participated in Fort Miles programming; that's a 24% increase over 2008 attendance. How did that happen? Volunteers willing to lead school groups and public programs make a big difference. Another proud achievement from last year was the development of an outstanding professional DVD introducing school teachers to Fort Miles, created courtesy of a grant

awarded to your group. Your group also was awarded a \$175,000 grant that will help install a geothermal heating and air conditioning system in Battery 519.

Even with all the success stories, there is still much to do and we have all heard the expression, "many hands make light work." Well, without many hands, this project will never reach its full potential. There are so many ways that volunteers can support the cause, and everyone can help in some way. If you are handy with a tool, come out on a Thursday or Friday and help with a project. If you can only give a few hours, consider helping with an event. We can always use support selling merchandise or preparing for special events. If you like talking to people, think about becoming a tour guide. Many folks don't realize that volunteers who give more than 100 hours receive a free Annual Pass the following year. If time is tight, consider buying a paver, making a donation or offering to work on a project from home. Whatever you can share will certainly be greatly appreciated; in these tough times, we will continue to get by with a little help from our Friends.

## A Season Anew

By Mike Rogers  
Fort Miles, DE State Parks

Once again I have returned from being away for several months while on Active Duty. And... once again I am pleasantly surprised! Normally I am on the ground every day, so I see the progress on a daily basis. While this is very rewarding, it is an impressive treat to see so much done when I walk in the door after being gone for some time. There has been some amazing work done in Battery 519, and I encourage all of our supporters to make a trip out to the park this year to see first hand what our volunteers have been up to. Take a look at John's article to learn more about the amazing effort of our volunteers. Without their hard work and dedication this simply would not be possible.

The summer season is gearing up to be another great one! Our

programming schedule is taking shape with Battery Tours, Lantern Tours and Firepower Tours! We will be giving sneak peak tours of the battery nearly every day for those who are anxious just to get a look at the progress being done while longer and more detailed programs will be available for those who seek more information on the site. Firepower tours will be returning this year which will offer visitors an in depth look at how the weapons worked and their tactical employments, complete with a firing demonstration on our 3 inch guns! Make sure to check the program schedule on the Delaware State Parks website at [www.destateparks.com](http://www.destateparks.com) or by calling 302-644-5007 or 302-645-6852. We look forward to seeing you at Fort Miles this year!

Finally I would like to mention the volunteer opportunities available at Fort Miles. If you would like to be a part of the amazing work being done

here, if you would like to educate the public on the rich history of the site, or if you would like to put on a uniform and teach the history first hand then we want to hear from you. If you want to get involved, get in touch with us at the information below! As you can see - volunteers are the life of the project. Without them we simply could not make this a reality!

Get involved!

[michael.rogers@state.de.us](mailto:michael.rogers@state.de.us)  
302-644-5007

Program Information

<http://www.destateparks.com>  
302-644-5007  
or  
302-645-6852

## "Bits" From the Bunker Busters

By John Roberts and Joe Kosaveach

Folks, it been a very busy time as we continue to upgrade, repair, and restore Battery 519.

Thanks to our intrepid group of volunteers as well as incredible support from the park staff, we managed to improve both the appearance and the functionality of this building.

Art and Jason worked very hard to remove the old leaky WWII piping that's been a problem in the latrines, and it's been replaced with period correct galvanized piping above the floor, and corrosion resistant plastic out of sight of the public. Having these problems solved eliminates some of the concerns when this building is vacant for a week at a time.

We've also been involved in restoring the gates that were the primary mode of security for the south gun room. Originally, there were no doors, just a pair of mesh gates. What was learned from Battery

Smith is closing the bunker traps the percussion, damaging everything and everyone inside the building. Battery 519 simply let the blast travel out the back of the bunker through these gates, making life far more tolerable for the equipment and soldiers inside. 68 years of corrosion had taken it's toll, and these gates were truly in sad shape. They had sections missing, parts were bent, the hinges were completely frozen. Thanks to the work of our crew, the gates have been removed, repaired, and are presently waiting for reassembly and painting. A big thanks to Fred Noll for taking the lead on this project.

We had 3 days in March with the Americorps NCCC folks. We had 22 people doing several projects, the biggest one is the removal of the concrete steps in the south corridor and the construction of a code compliant wooden ramp, making this facility ADA compliant for the first time in its history! Along with all of this fine work, lots of cleanup of the exterior of the building helped make the place look far less abandoned. They also helped do some significant painting projects.

The park was also gracious enough to repair the road to the south service entrance to Battery 519. This now allows us to back large trucks and equipment into the bunker, and makes parking our searchlight far less troublesome, as the bunker is its garage at the moment.

We also upgraded the main power feed to the building, solving a few problems allowing us to keep more of the building period correct in its appearance.

And now, we have a theatre in Battery 519. It's in the original power room. We have installed a surround sound system, a digital projector, and a laptop! We now have the ability to play movies and various period training films of the operation of the 12" gun, including an impressive amount of bass when the gun in the film is fired!

Overall, we've accomplished a lot, even if a lot of it is hidden from view. However, this gives us a more solid infrastructure for our up and coming museum.



NCCC group



Gate restoration



The new projector





Help us preserve, restore and protect this remarkable site--become a member of the Fort Miles Historical Association simply by filling out the form below and mailing it with your check to the address listed below.

.....

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

- General 261st Coast Artillery (life member) \$1,000.
- Colonel , 261st Coast Artillery \$500.
- Major, 261st Coast Artillery \$250.
- Captain, 261st Coast Artillery \$100.
- Small Business \$75.
- Dual/Family \$20.
- Individual \$15.
- Student \$10.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to:

Fort Miles Historical Association  
Dr. Gary Wray, President  
120 E. Wild Rabbit Run  
Lewes, DE 19958

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Cut along this line if only mailing one application

**NEW!!**

We are also seeking volunteers to learn how to give battery tours, and/or run our Sperry searchlight. Our goal is to have a substantial group of members that can assist the Fort Miles staff with tours and other related programs. Volunteers will receive all the training and informative materials needed. So, if you've taken a battery tour and feel it might be something you would like to help with, fill out this bottom form, and mail it to Dr. Gary Wray at the address just above. If you would like further information, please call Dr. Wray at 302-645-0753.

Yes, I would like to become a volunteer!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



Fort Miles Historical Association  
120 East Wild Rabbit Run  
Lewes, DE 19958

