



# FMHA

FORT MILES HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
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## Spring/ Summer 2008 FMHA Newsletter

This past winter we have been busy at Fort Miles. We had a great Vets Remembrance Day on November 10, 2007 and a super Winter Meeting on December 8, 2007 at the Biden Center. Our board of Directors has been meeting regularly to plan the 2008 events discussed later in this newsletter. Your Board of Directors is a super group, very giving of their time to further the mission of FMHA. Each has been active in many efforts of the organization. Ted George has done a fine job as Secretary of FMHA and at our last meeting he reported that our group is 380 strong and growing all the time. Merlin Beil has done a super job as FMHA Treasurer, keeping our documents filed and on time and monitoring the financial status of our group. Joe Kosveach has done a great job with working on both our naval mines and the new Sperry Searchlight along with fellow board member Joe Johnson, Bev Dalecki and Bob Frederick (FMHA co-founder) have represented the Board well at meetings on the Tower 3 project. Bob Fellows is a great docent for the Battery 519 / Museum project, working with member Mike Rogers on tour and lectures. Ray Quillen has worked on several projects for FMHA, including working at many of the outreach programs during the year. FMHA co-founder David Main has been very supportive during the year working as liaison with groups in Dewey Beach supporting the Tower 3 project, Brian Lindsay has been "Mr. Dependable" showing up at all the FMHA events, working the table and doing all those big and small things to make a day successful. Finally, our Board welcomes back Steve Hyle who due to business responsibilities, had to drop off but has now found the time to rejoin. Again, I can't say enough about this group of active Board members. An organization is only as good as its membership and leadership, and this group is A+ in my view. Thanks, as always, for their efforts!

### 2008 Events for FMHA

Fort Miles has been profiled in the 2008 Lewes Chamber of Commerce Visitors Guide, with an attractive Fire Control Tower artwork on the cover by local artist Steve Rogers and an article by me on "The Great Fort at Lewes." This Visitors Guide is mailed throughout the world so it is great publicity for both Lewes and Fort Miles. Many thanks to the LCC for profiling Fort Miles! Our events this year are varied and many, so put the dates on your calendar. FMHA will be at each, with all of our materials (shirts, bags, books, tower night lights, new tower items including a raffle on a beautiful sterling silver tower by local artist Chris Hahs and many other items.) We will be at the upcoming Kite Festival at Cape Henlopen State Park on March 21, 10-3. Our WWII Weekend will be on Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27 10-4 PM. We will host the very popular WWII dance on Saturday evening 7-10 PM at the Officer's Club. We will also have our 1942 Sperry Searchlight there, throwing its beam 20 miles up in the sky! Call Mike Rogers for tickets at 644-5007. On August 2 we will recreate the May 14, 1945 Surrender of U-858 complete with surrendering German sailors guarded by US soldiers! FMHA will also be at two craft shows at the Lewes Historical Complex on July 12 and October 4, 10-3 PM. We will also be at the Antique Show on August 2 (the same day as the surrender of U-858, a very busy day for FMHA!) On November 8 we will "Remember Our Vets" at Fort Miles, 10-4 PM. Finally, we will, as always, be at Coast Day, October 5, 11-5 PM at the UofD College of Marine Studies. If you would like to help us work the FMHA table at these events, give me a call at 645-0753. We need all the help we can get!!

### **Tower 3 Campaign**

FMHA has been working for the last year with the Delaware Seashore Preservation Friends 501c3 group to raise the necessary funds for both opening to the public Fire Control Tower 3 (the southernmost tower at Dewey Beach at Tower Road) and also create and maintain a WWII database to honor our WWII veterans. The planning for this project has been going well and we invite everyone to join us underneath Tower 3 on Saturday May 17 (fittingly Armed Forces day) for a picnic 10-3 PM to kickoff the Tower 3 campaign. Please join us. Also, we would like to thank the South Coastal AARP Chapter #5226 for donating \$300 toward the Tower 3 project.

### **Battery 519 Museum Planning**

At the January meeting of the FMHA Board, the "Battery 519 Museum, Exhibition Goals and Concept Plan," written by Paul Rosenthal, was reviewed. This 31 page document lays out the broad plan for use of the site, the structure of the exhibitions, and the thematic floor plan of the museum. The plan was also discussed at our December Midwinter meeting. Five themes will be profiled in the museum including: WWII; Coastal Defense; Ft. Miles and Lewes: From World War to Cold War; and Civilian Jobs for Military Assets. Many activities are in the planning stage for each of the major themes. The plan is still in the discussion stage and once closer to finalization, will soon be posted on the FMHA website. Paul has done a fine job, working with inputs from FMHA and Lee Jennings.

### **Herring Point Completion**

The Herring Point project is now complete and I hope that everyone, sometime this spring or summer, visits the point to see the improvements. For those who are unfamiliar with the project, we were losing Battery Herring to the pounding surf. The two Navy groins underneath the Battery failed years ago and it was gradually falling into the ocean. Since the Battery was placed on the National Register of Historical Places in 2005, it was identified as an important state and national treasure to be preserved and not lost to the pounding of the ocean. Your FMHA, working with the surfers and mobile surf fisherman, was able to work with the state to renew the groins. Last year the northern groin was replaced with rock, and the beach almost immediately began to build. Last summer the word quickly went out that the beach at Herring Point had developed from nothing to the best beach in the park and thousands of adults and kids used the beach where none existed before. The surfers got their "break" restored, and the surf fisherman got another great beach to "work." Now that the southern groin has been completed, FMHA is happy because the ocean no longer threatens the bluff on which the battery sits, and the two Fire Control Towers at Gordon's Pond (#'s 5 and 6) are also no longer threatened at high tide. A win-win-win all around! Hope to see you at our events in 2008. Cheers!

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