

SPRING 2019

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THE BATTERY

FMHA honored for volunteer services

Fort Miles Historical Association received the 2018 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service Award in the Arts/Culture category.

During 2017, FMHA volunteers consisting of board members, Bunker Busters, docents, gift shop personnel and others contributed more than 17,000 hours of volunteer service. The dedication of these volunteers has enabled our partnership with Delaware State Parks to flourish and grow. Our goal to establish the best World War II museum at an authentic World War II site has made great progress over the past 15 years, with the best still in front of us.

FMHA has formed a continuing partnership with the Delaware Governor's Office; the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control; and the Division of Parks and Recreation. We send our gratitude to:

- Delaware Governor John Carney
- Delaware Secretary of DNREC Shawn Garvin
- Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation Division Director Ray Bivens



Gov. John Carney presents the 2018 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service Award to Dr. Gary Wray, FMHA board members, Bunker Busters and dedicated volunteers.

3 WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

**1 BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER
AND VOLUNTEER**

**2 GIVE A DONATION
TO SUPPORT OUR
RESTORATION WORK**

**3 REMEMBER A HERO
ON THE WALL OF HONOR**



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 16th year of Fort Miles Historical Association.
We have been very busy.



We'll start with great news: Late last year, we were chosen by Delaware Gov. John Carney as the state's Volunteers of the Year. The governor presented our award at a wonderful ceremony at Dover Downs in November. That's quite an honor for our group and it shows the power of our Fort Miles teamwork. One key reason we were selected is the number of volunteer hours FMHA gives to the state each year, usually more than 17,000 hours.

Two new board members

I would like to express my gratitude to our hardworking FMHA board of directors. We have welcomed two new board members. The first is Merritt Cooch. She is the granddaughter of Lt. Ned Cooch, who was in charge of the mine detail at Fort Miles during the war.

Ned was a great supporter of our efforts at Fort Miles from our beginning. His family farm near Newark, Del., is the only place in the state where an actual battle was fought (in the Revolutionary War) and he was a wonderful resource for Delaware history and Fort Miles history. His granddaughter Merritt hit the ground running with FMHA and is working with FMHA secretary Jim Pierce to make our partnership with Cape Henlopen JROTC work seamlessly. Merritt has also worked hard to make the second year of the "Big Gun Run" on April 7 a great success. Welcome, Merritt.

A second new FMHA board member was elected March 23 to take the seat of retiring board member Will Short.

Jeff Dibella, a Bunker Buster, was chosen to serve on the board to replace the hardworking Will. Jeff will help us secure more guns for our artillery park (we are on the hunt for a 1917/1918 GPF 155mm, among others) and will continue to work with our Bunker Busters. Will has done yeoman work with our docent program in scheduling and training and will continue that important job. Welcome, Jeff.

Bunker Buster banquet

In December, we held our annual Bunker Buster awards banquet at Irish Eyes in Lewes. This event celebrates the work of our volunteers at Fort Miles and recognizes the contributions of the many folks who keep our well-oiled machine working. This year we recognized the contributions of Coast Defense Study Group to our success and gave it a well-deserved plaque for its support.

Terry McGovern of CDSG attended to accept the award (see Terry's wonderful article on the FMHA website). Our Delaware State Parks partners were presented a plaque for their constant and continuing partnership in the effort to restore Fort Miles and build Fort Miles Museum. Eric Dawson of DSP was recognized for his efforts in leading the Parks/FMHA Working Group.

Tom Anderson, a veteran Bunker Buster, was chosen for the Lee Jennings Award for his great work over the years as a super contributor to FMHA. Linda Jennings, Lee's widow, presented Tom with the award and it hangs in the Fort Miles Museum Art Gallery for all to view.

JROTC cadet unit

Every organization looks to get younger, and FMHA is no different. We have one large advantage and that is a local JROTC cadet unit at nearby Cape Henlopen High School. Last summer, Fort Miles hosted for a day nine Maryland and Delaware high school JROTC groups. That led FMHA to consider a formal partnership with the closest group at Cape Henlopen. We reached out to the commander, Colonel Earle, and his team to work out details. As I mentioned, board members Merritt Cooch and Jim Pierce took the lead and worked with Cape JROTC leadership. One day a month, up to 20 Cape Henlopen JROTC cadets travel to the Fort Miles Historical Area to work with our Bunker Buster team. The cadets eat lunch with our Bunker Busters, then resume their work in the afternoon. As a result of the partnership, FMHA will present two Cape Henlopen JROTC cadets each with \$1,000 scholarships at the May 2019 JROTC awards ceremony.

Film, lecture series

For the third year, FMHA presented a film/lecture series on World War II topics during the winter. Every presentation has been packed with interested audiences. Topics this year included the history of the battleship Missouri; George Patton and the Ardennes campaign; and Adm. Ray Spruance and victory in the Pacific. Over the years, topics have ranged from the German submarine attack on the East Coast to Delaware's George Welch, one of our Army Air heroes at Pearl Harbor.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Dr. Gary Wray, President

Bob Frederick, Vice President

Jim Pierce, Secretary

Larry Boyer, Treasurer

Joe Johnson, Assistant Treasurer

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Merlin Beil

Merritt Cooch

Bev Dalecki

Cliff Geisler

Joe Kosaveach

Mike Dunkes

John Roberts

Will Short

Executive Director

Mark Chura

MISSION

Fort Miles Historical Association is a nonprofit group that works to preserve, protect and defend all aspects of Fort Miles, working with community and state stakeholders and other interested parties.

FMHA also partners with the State of Delaware to develop the historical potential of Fort Miles.

To learn more, visit

www.fortmiles.org



Facebook: FortMiles1942

New budget process in the works

By Larry Boyer, FMHA Treasurer



As FMHA grows physically, so grows our obligation to perform additional fiduciary responsibilities. Areas requiring our attention are operating expenses and budgeting.

By the end of the fiscal year June 30, we will have instituted a new budget process that better assigns accountability for expenditures that support the daily operation of FMHA.

A budget issued for the fiscal year that begins July 1 will be reported and monitored quarterly. As new information is available, the budget will be modified to better reflect the latest revenue and expense projections.

Seeking future grants and funding

We are nearing the end of construction of new museum areas, including the venue, parking and roads. These improvements were funded by our Longwood and Crystal Trust grants and line-item funding from Delaware's budget for state parks. Total expenditures for these improvements will near \$1 million.

We are planning more improvements and will apply for more grants this year so we don't miss a beat completing Fort Miles Museum.

The basis of Fort Miles Museum

FMHA and Delaware State Parks have agreed upon mission and vision statements that, with our Value Proposition, will form the basis of the Fort Miles Museum strategic planning.

Mission: Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area shares personal stories of defending coastal Delaware by U.S. military forces and civilians, and how their actions shaped and influenced community life in Delaware.

Vision: Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area uses a unique WWII coastal battery complex and artillery park, representative artifacts and activities to interpret Delaware's role in coastal defense.

Value Proposition: People can physically experience Fort Miles. Programming is unique and varied. Veterans can transfer their experience to their families and loved ones.

We have formed a steering committee to guide the direction taken by FMHA and DSP to create Fort Miles Museum.

From the Desk of The President

(Continued from page 2)

Tour, gift shop hours

Beginning June 13, FMHA will have our Fort Miles Gift Shop open every day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. inside the museum. Our parks partners will give tours at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. daily Tuesday through Saturday. FMHA will conduct tours every Sunday during the summer. Many days we will have the Fort Miles kiosk open near the Orientation Building in the historical area. Fort Miles items will be for sale in the Brush Factory on Kings Highway in Lewes. Drop in and shop.

Three-tiered construction

Because of the diligence and effort of FMHA Executive Director Mark Chura, we have been working hard on our three-phased construction project funded in 2017 by the Longwood Foundation. A road is being completed to the new parking lot and the overlook venue is almost done. Because of the support of our Delaware State Parks partners, we will have a new glass entrance to the north side of the museum. All of these exciting additions to Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area are credited to the effort of our Fort Miles team, led by our own Bunker Busters and coordination/cooperation with our DSP partners. DSP leadership has worked closely with our FMHA leaders to ensure that construction is done on time and under budget.

Firsthand look

Sometimes I am asked the relevance of Fort Miles in the 21st century. One might wonder what a 20th century casemate offers to this century. The easy answer is that we are educating the public about WWII and Delaware history, and Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area does that well. But there is another important reason. For the past several years, we have hosted (at their request) a team from the super-secret National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, "spies in the skies" who analyze our enemies from afar. NGA has chosen to visit us to teach its analysts what an underground casemate looks like on the ground rather than hundreds of miles away from space. We open all of our casemates in the historical area for them to see firsthand. Our nation's enemies are several generations behind us in casemate design and, interestingly, underground casemates are still used throughout the world. The NGA team doesn't tell us (of course) what they are really looking for and we don't ask (of course) but it is refreshing that our Fort Miles casemates continue to serve the national interest.

Saving the barrels

We have been working with Coast Defense Study Group and others since 2011 to save from the scrap yard the final eight Iowa class 16" 50cal Mk 7 barrels near Norfolk Naval Base at the St. Juliens Creek storage area. Working with our contacts at Dahlgren Surface Warfare Center, we started the process with the Navy to secure a Missouri barrel for Delaware in 2011. We wanted one of three barrels from the battleship Missouri (four were from the New Jersey and one barrel was the proof barrel of the series). We worked with the state of Arizona to help it find and ship a Missouri barrel, the National Park Service at Cape Charles, Va., (the final Missouri barrel) and Fort Monmouth, N.J., for each of them to secure a barrel, and with the battleship New Jersey Association for it to secure several New Jersey barrels. We have saved seven of the eight barrels and are actively working to save the remaining barrel from the Iowa (barrel #270-1) and find it a home, far from the scrappers. Join us at 11 a.m. Sept. 2 for our victory over Japan ceremony around our Missouri barrel when we honor the almost 800 Delawareans who gave the maximum sacrifice for our country in WWII.

Event rentals

Check out the wonderful photos of our new Fort Miles event venue and overlook outside the north gun block of Fort Miles Museum. It is the most beautiful spot on the Delaware seacoast and is available to rent for weddings, reunions and meetings. Contact me (302-645-0753 or at gdwray@hotmail.com) if you are interested in renting for your event. We have a new parking lot and entrance road so the total package is available for your special event.

Our DSP partners

Things have been moving along at Fort Miles Museum and Historical Area since our last newsletter. It's an exciting time to see so much activity. None of this would be possible without the support and assistance of our Delaware State Parks partners. I'm especially grateful to Ray Bivens, DSP director, for his hard work and support of our efforts. We also must thank his wonderful team: Eric Dawson, Cindy Todd, Matt Ritter, Grant Melville, Sean Carrow and many other DSP personnel for their support and assistance in the past 16 years. It is a total team effort between DSP and FMHA to make the magic happen. See you April 27, 2019, starting at 10 a.m. for the Delaware Goes To War program.

WHAT'S IN STORE AT THE GIFT SHOP AND KIOSK

By Frank Ali, FMHA Board Member

The Fort Miles gift shop is offering new merchandise at the new and improved kiosk this spring and summer.

We look forward to being open with more merchandise at the Orientation Building for Battery 519 tours.

The main store in Battery 519 will be open six days a week with our newly appointed Assistant Manager Abbey Christopher steering sales.

Our merchandise will include new hoodie colors in gray and navy. We have a recently arrived selection of golf shirts and T-shirts in all popular sizes. New hat colors and recently minted Fort Miles challenge coins will be sold in both locations.

We're selling handcrafted items: bird feeders, night-lights, pillows and tote bags.



Both store locations will sell cold water for \$1 a bottle this spring and summer. FMHA members and Bunker Busters receive a 10 percent discount on all store merchandise.

See other merchandise on page 11

FMHA MEMBERSHIP GROWING, NEARING 350

By Jim Pierce, FMHA Board Secretary

Fort Miles Historical Association membership is booming. Our membership is approaching 350, counting those who joined and those who re-enlisted in the past year. Membership is the lifeblood of any nonprofit organization and your support is greatly appreciated.

Our membership program and structure have not changed since FMHA began in 2003. In March, after a study of several other nonprofit organizations, the FMHA board discussed a revised membership structure. Upon final board approval, effective with the start of our 2020 fiscal year (July 1, 2019), membership categories would be:

- Student: \$15 annually, receives 10 percent store discount and newsletters. This level is for ages 17 and younger.
- Captain: \$30 annually, receives 10 percent store discount and newsletters
- Major: \$100 annually, receives captain gifts and museum challenge coin
- Colonel: \$250 annually, receives captain gifts, museum challenge coin and \$25 gift certificate for museum gift shop
- General: \$1,000, one-time lifetime, receives captain gifts, two museum challenge coins and \$50 gift certificate.

A more detailed description of this program will be emailed to members in early May once the board gives final approval. The description will be included in all renewal correspondence.

Member comments on the revised levels can be sent to info@fortmiles.org.

FMHA will continue mailing our newsletters three times a year and continue our new, more robust communications program through the eBlasts members have been receiving. If you have not received emails and would like to, or need to update your email address, contact info@fortmiles.org. We prefer to reach members through email to save time and money.

FMHA's February eBlast calling for volunteers generated a healthy response. We received inquiries from potential volunteers for docents, Bunker Busters, event planning, culinary expertise, IT help and graphic design assistants. We appreciate all that enthusiasm. If you want to discuss FMHA's many volunteer opportunities, email us at info@fortmiles.org.

We look forward to seeing you at Fort Miles this spring and summer.

FESTIVE GET TOGETHER



The fifth annual FMHA Awards Banquet was held Dec. 7 at Irish Eyes Pub & Restaurant in Lewes. The event is held annually to solute dedicated volunteers and supporters.

JROTC STUDENTS VOLUNTEER

By Merritt Cooch FMHA Board Member

Over the past school year, FMHA and the Cape Henlopen High School JROTC have teamed up to create the first ever joint scholarship program between the two organizations. One day each month, students have been volunteering their time to assist the Bunker Busters with a variety of projects around the fort. Whether it's restoring the barracks, the AWS shed or learning the history of the Fort for the first time, the JROTC students have been a huge asset in continuing our efforts of restoring and furthering the story of Fort Miles.

The program allows FMHA to continue our mission of educating visitors, especially youths, on the historical importance of the Fort during WWII. Over 40 students have volunteered their time and efforts and two will be selected at the end of the year for the FMHA scholarship award. It's been an exciting first year of the program and FMHA looks forward to further partnership with CHHS JROTC!

CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES



By Mark Chura, FMHA Executive Director

Construction activities are close to wrapping up for both the museum's new outdoor venue and associated parking areas. The new overlook at Cape Henlopen will feature more than 7,000 square feet of outdoor lighted space, with another 2,000 feet of indoor space.

Indoor and outdoor events, including rentals for weddings, business functions, family gatherings and more, can be scheduled through FMHA. Stay tuned for information on summer events. To rent the overlook, please contact us at 302 542 3305.

Fort Miles has plenty of new parking for events. Lower-level parking, adjacent to the cantonment area and new museum visitor center, can hold more than 100 cars. The upper-level lot, featuring fully accessible spaces and accessible entrance to the museum, will hold 30-plus vehicles. Parking at the new lots will be on a paid basis, and will feature a voucher for a \$5 admission to the museum when using the parking areas. Plans are now being finalized that will detail how the voucher system will work.

FMHA wants to give special thanks to Graulich Builders and Clean Cut Pavers and Pools for their work on this project and their generous donations, which will support daily operations.

A grand opening of venue and parking areas is expected after Memorial Day.



VISIT 'DELAWARE GOES TO WAR'

By Sean Carrow, Interpretive Programs Manager, Fort Miles

We invite all Fort Miles Historical Association members and friends to the Fort Miles Museum and Historic Area's annual "Delaware Goes to War" beginning at 10 a.m. April 27.

This year's event will feature artillery demonstrations, small-arms demonstrations, plotting demonstrations and historic vehicles. We are proud to announce that Rehoboth Concert Band will join us, performing a free concert of 1940s-era music at the new Fort Miles Museum event venue overlooking the ocean. The concert will run from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket and listen to great music.

We're also preparing our spring and summer programming. We are bringing back our popular summer tour "Truckin' Through History" on our 1945 deuce-and-a-half for spring programming starting this month. We will offer specialty programs that focus on the entire history of Fort Miles during its operation. Our spring hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Beginning in June, we will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Thank you, and see you all this season.

HARD HATS OFF TO OUR BUNKER BUSTERS

By John Roberts, FMHA Board Member

Our crew has been quite busy with all the projects we have tackled. Our numbers are growing. We have a crew of about 30 people every Thursday. Progress is amazing.

Battery Smith: Our shop in Battery Smith is a busy place. We moved out of Battery 519 because our work was clashing with tours and events. Also, the museum needed the space.

Battery Smith is the only other battery at Fort Miles with power and water. The larger gun rooms are better suited for shop space.

Thanks to cooperation from our Parks partners, the previous tenants in the south end have moved out. Parks removed asbestos floor tiles, and we now use those shell and powder rooms for artifact storage, material storage and additional shop space.

The entire building is climate controlled – no more rainstorms in the corridor.

In addition to spending the winter tuning up our wood and machine shop tools, we are bringing a new water main into the period latrines, and we'll soon have working bathrooms.

Golf carts: FMHA offers golf carts for our visitors. Until now, they looked as if they belonged on a golf course. Now they are painted in olive drab, with period-correct Army vehicle markings, and are a better fit for the World War II motif.

Searchlight repairs: Our searchlight is 76 years old. During that time, previous owners have made many “improvements.” We've spent years returning it to its original condition.

The last piece (I hope) is replacing the carbon rod burner assembly. It was worn out, partially melted and had other problems. We found a new/old stock unit in Michigan, installed it and it works flawlessly. Everything else appears to be mechanically solid. Our next step is cosmetic fixes.

Construction support: With venue construction under way, our crew has been installing most of the electrical. Having two licensed electricians in the crew has been very helpful. We had to shut Battery 519 to expand the electrical service and have Lewes BPW install a new transformer. That was accomplished in less than two hours. That's exemplary job performance.

Barracks: We are rehabbing and securing the barracks. We have shutters over most of the windows and doors are secure and lockable. We're working with our parks partners on redoing all roofs, flashing, eaves and gables. All barracks have power and lighting. We're ready for our events.

UXO issues: Watch where you dig: We've had to deal with unexploded ordnance lately. With the parking lot construction, we've unearthed several rocket propelled grenades. Decades ago, this area was used to test the rocket engines of that ordnance.

The warheads are presumed inert at the time, but they can never be treated that way. Because of the efforts of Bunker Buster Dan Brown, park enforcement and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, we located many more of these, and they have been disposed of. That's a huge relief for all of us. Such are the perils of former active military sites.

Shop support: Our shop is amazing, and the crew spent part of the winter adjusting, cleaning and repairing our lathe, milling machine, saws, grinders and other machines. This will allow us to continue our level of excellence in everything we do. That's a job well done.

And, of course, our crew spends endless hours cleaning, painting, picking up, identifying areas of concern and performing other duties. These fine people are why our museum stands tall and proud every day. Hard hats off to our excellent crew.

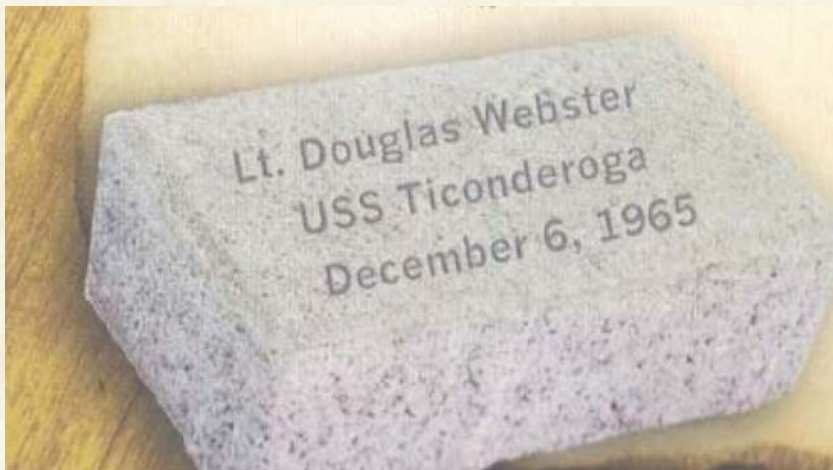


ORDER YOUR ENGRAVED PAVER

for the Wall of Honor at the Fort Miles museum

Now you can support the new Fort Miles museum, receive a tax deduction and see your name or that of a loved one honored on a handsome brick paver. Each engraved paver will be displayed in Battery 519, America's first WWII museum at an actual military site. More than 10,000 visitors annually will see your paver. We will send a tribute card to whom you designate, telling them of this special honor.

The tax-deductible cost for each paver is \$200, including delivery and installation in a well-lighted entrance area. This phase of the Wall of Honor will accommodate 500 pavers. Orders are accepted on a first-come basis. Please use the form below to reserve your paver.



Engraving Instructions

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

line 1 _____

line 2 _____

line 3 _____

line 1 _____

line 2 _____

line 3 _____

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.

Name

Phone

Street

City

State

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Email

Send orders to:

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

JOIN & RENEW ONLINE: IT'S EASY!



FMHA is developing a world-class World War II museum at Fort Miles, in conjunction with Delaware State Parks.

Our membership program and the related fees enable FMHA to make continuing progress toward the expansion and restoration of the Fort Miles Museum comprised of the cantonment buildings, Artillery Park and main museum building, Battery 519.

Please check one:

- General level, (life member) \$1,000
- Colonel level, \$500
- Major level, \$250
- Captain level, \$100
- Sustaining \$20
- Student \$15
- Please check the box to keep your donation private. It will not appear in any FMHA communication.

Make checks payable to:

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

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____, State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Are you a current member? Please renew your membership online. If you have any questions about membership, send an email to fmhamembers@gmail.com. We would like to handle as many membership renewals as possible via the website.

WWW.FORTMILESHA.ORG/MEMBERSHIP

FORT MILES MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

Featuring handcrafted items now available to order!

Our ever-popular Tower Bird Feeders and Tower Night Lights
are joined by new Logo Pillows and Logo Tote Bags.



Tower
Birdfeeder

\$25

2-Logo
Pillow

\$45

1-Logo
Pillow

\$40

2-Logo
Tote Bag

\$35

1-Logo
Tote Bag

\$25

Tower
Night Light

\$35

Order Form

Qty. _____, Tower Bird Feeder @ \$25 = \$ _____

Qty. _____, Tower Night Light @ \$35 = \$ _____

Add Shipping fee of \$15/item - OR - your order can be picked up in the Gift Shop

Qty. _____, Tote Bag (2 logos) @ \$35 = \$ _____

Qty. _____, Tote Bag (1 Logo) @ \$25 = \$ _____

Indicate which logo: ____ Tower or ____ Museum

Add Shipping fee of \$5/tote - OR - your order can be picked up in the Gift Shop

Qty. _____, Pillow (2 logos) @ \$45 = \$ _____

Qty. _____, Pillow (1 logos) @ \$40 = \$ _____

Indicate which logo: ____ Tower or ____ Museum

Add Shipping fee of \$15/pillow - OR - your order can be picked up in the Gift Shop

To arrange pick up or to ask questions, email nanrob87@aol.com or call Nancy at 302-604-4755.

Name: _____ Email: _____ Tel: _____

Delivery Address: _____

Mail this form and payment by check made out to **FMHA** to:

FMHA Gift Shop Items, 18490 Carters Grove Cir. #7, Lewes, DE 19958



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

