



Working Together to Preserve History

Fort Miles Historical Association

Since 2003, Fort Miles Historical Association and Delaware State Parks have worked as partners to renovate, operate and expand the Fort Miles Museum and surrounding historical area.

The Bunker Blast **May 27, 2026**

A short and frequent communication to keep you, our loyal members, stay informed of what's happening with your association.

In today's Bunker Blast: Changing of the Guard at FMHA, Tour Season New Hours and Leadership, Upcoming D-Day Ceremony and a New Museum Exhibit.

Changing of the Guard

As many of you no doubt know, Tom Tantillo, FMHA President for the last two years, is leaving us to return to Pennsylvania and be closer to family and friends. Under his leadership the Fort Miles Historical Association has grown to 294 members and our partnership with Delaware Parks has never been stronger.

He was at the helm as we moved from running the Museum Sundays only, to Sunday and Monday during the season. He oversaw the expansion of our Autumn/Winter lecture series to six talks and the acquisition of the 155mm GPF artillery piece for the artillery park. His contributions to the improvement of the physical plant at Battery 519 are too numerous to mention.

We thank Tom for his leadership and wish him well. He will be missed!

Effective May 12th, Tom will be succeeded in the FMHA Presidency by Ed Paterline. Ed has been an FMHA Director for three years and a member since January of 2020. He has most recently led the Docents & Guide program and the Lecture series, served as a member of both the Interpretation Committee and the Collections Committee and been our most active speaker and lecturer. Will Short will remain FMHA's Vice President and leader of event planning.

Tour Season and New Docent/Guide Leader

The 2026 tour season runs from May 24th through September 28th. During that period, FMHA will run the Fort Miles Museum on Sunday and Monday while Parks will run the museum on Tuesday through Saturday. In order to reduce past customer confusion on hours, FMHA has adopted the same hours as Parks – 10 AM through 4 PM – with scheduled tours at 11 AM and 2 PM.

FMHA has a total of six Docent/Guide teams, with the Guides greeting visitors at the Orientation Building and the Museum and Docents delivering the tours. John DeSalvio has replaced Ed Paterline as the new leader for the Guide/Docent teams. John has been a Bunker Buster and Docent at Fort Miles for two years now and also serves as a Docent at the Air Mobility Museum in Dover, Delaware.

D-Day Commemoration Ceremony

At 10:00 A.M. on Saturday June 6th, FMHA will conduct its fifth annual D-Day commemoration ceremony outside on the Fort Miles Museum event venue overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. At this ceremony, FMHA honors the 40 Delawareans killed during the Battle of Normandy by tolling a ship's bell after each name is read.



Mason Dixon, VFW Post 7234's celebrated Honor Guard, will deliver a rifle salute and play taps after the last name is read. They also will post and retire the colors at the beginning and end of the ceremony.



Renowned bagpiper Lani Spahr will play several period tunes and Cape Henlopen High School student trumpeter Lucas Brianceau will play the National Anthem.



Lani Spahr

FMHA's Ed Paterline will deliver this year's keynote speech paying tribute to Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. During World War II, this son of President Teddy Roosevelt, participated in the North African campaign, the invasion of Sicily and the Italian campaign.

Saint Peter's Episcopal Church's Reverend Deacon Chris Miller-Marcin will deliver the ceremony's Invocation and Benediction.

A New Exhibit – The Dear Mollye Collection

Fort Miles Museum is hosting its first temporary exhibit from another museum. The “Dear Mollye” Collection comes to us from the Jewish Historical Society of Delaware in Wilmington and will be on loan to us from May 22nd through Thanksgiving and will be displayed in the North Shell Room.

The exhibit highlights the largely untold story of how Jewish civilians on the American home front sustained the morale, faith, and identity of service members around the world. The “Dear Mollye” letters reveal how one woman’s correspondence in Delaware provided a network of wartime support that connected local families to the shared experience of Jewish Americans in uniform during WWII. Links from the exhibit panels will allow visitors to hear war-time recorded greetings home and oral history recollections of veterans and Gold Star families.

We thank FMHA member Al Hoffman for spearheading the effort on behalf of FMHA!

Volunteers Wanted

Do you have experience in public relations or communications?

We are looking for a professional in this area to be our liaison with print, television, radio and podcast media, recruiting and coordinating our historians to present our story and promote events. This individual would also write press releases, prepare advertising and could also write newsletters.

If you are interested please contact our volunteer coordinator at volunteer@fortmiles.org

FMHA volunteers work almost 25,000 hours a year: as Bunker Busters restoring and maintaining the buildings, developing and building displays; as Docents giving tours and guiding visitors at special events; and as Associate Staff managing the gift shop, lecture series, special events, membership, website and electronic displays.

If you would like to volunteer in any of these areas, please send us an [email](#).



Learn More: fortmiles.org

Fort Miles is located in Cape Henlopen State Park.
15099 Cape Henlopen Drive, Lewes, DE 19958