

Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bay Commemoration
Fort Mott State Park
18-19 July 2009

Fort Mott State Park (Pennsville, NJ), supported by Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA), conducted a commemoration of the Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bay in the Philippines. AGFA members participating were: Andy Grant (Ft. Mott State Park Historian), Bob Grant, Doug Houck, Paul Taylor, Vince Turner, Stephen Turner, Kieren Fletcher, Luis Ramos, and Shawn Welch. Victor Verano joined the event, portraying a soldier in the Philippine Scouts on Bataan. The educational focus of this event was to provide an overview of the Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bay and their role in supporting US efforts against Japan in the opening days of World War II.



The uniforms in the photograph above were typical of soldiers stationed in the Philippines from the late 1930's up to the outbreak of war in December 1941. Kieren Fletcher represented a civilian employee of the harbor defenses. Most of these employees were wives or family members of servicemen stationed in the defenses and were shipped to the States prior to the outbreak of war. However a few remained in the defenses, mostly in the medical field.

New to this event was a "Check Point" and obstacles that provided controlled access to the gun line. This was important for the defense as Japanese saboteurs were anticipated. Below PFC Turner mans the Check Point and Fort Mott's new .50 caliber machinegun.



There were several stations for the event. In the photograph below, Victor Verano's display on Philippine Scouts and units in the Philippines was of great interest to the public.



Victor provided outstanding information on Philippine Scout living history and the battle for Bataan.



Luis Ramos provided interpretation of Coast Artillery Fire Control in a plotting room. This was set up inside gun emplacement #1 of Battery Edwards.. Below are the plotting board with drawings of the defenses of Manila and Subic Bay. The telephones mounted on the backboard from left to right are EE-91, EE-31 and a MC-153 time interval bell.



Another view of the plotting room (below) shows from left to right EE-31 telephone with EE-70 head telephone, MC-153 TI bell, EE-91 telephone with HS-17 head/chest set, EE-31 with EE-69 handset and a EE-71 telephone.



Another interpretive site was the “battery commander’s station”. Below Paul Taylor portrays a civilian communications technician on Corregidor. The two maps on the wall to his left show the organization of the defenses on Corregidor Island. To the right is the telephone terminal box and a EE-91 telephone with TS-9 handset.



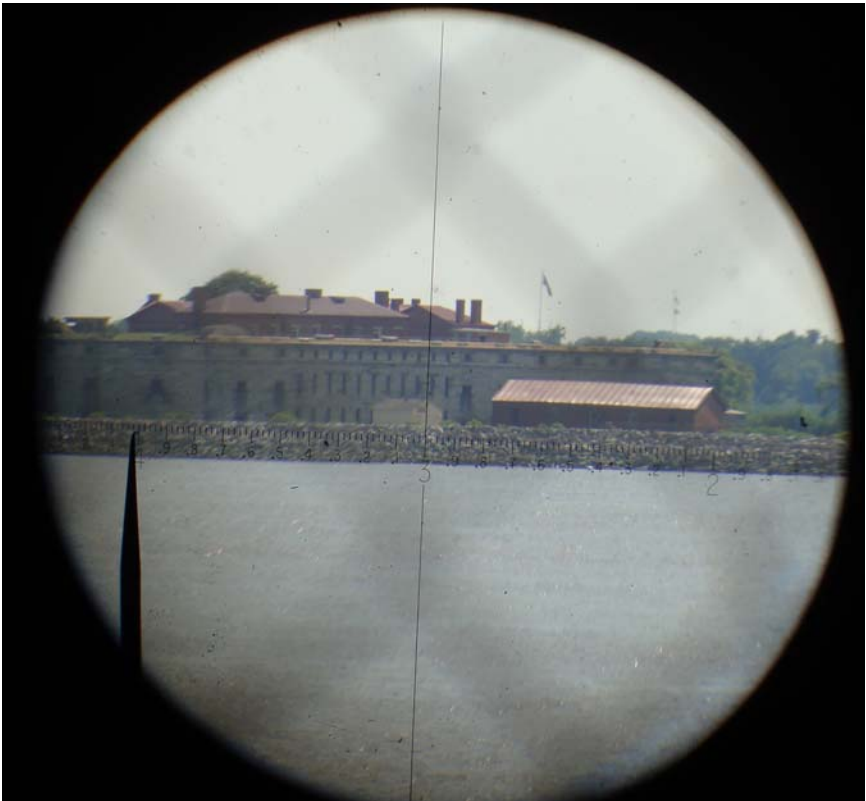
The view below from the Battery Commander's station looks towards the “South China Sea” (Delaware River).



A view through the M1910A1 azimuth instrument shows a large cargo ship headed towards “Manila” (Philadelphia).



The view below shows Fort Delaware across the Delaware River.



During the evening, the 60-inch Sperry searchlight was operated for the public.



The view below shows the 800,000 candle power light beam piercing the night.



An extensive display of civil war era artillery was provided during the event by the Salem Light Artillery.



Most stunning was their night firing on the Delaware River.



Below PFC Turner begins a sharp salute to members of the garrison in the Jeep before it clears the checkpoint. Notice there is an M1903 Springfield rifle in the scabbard on the hood of the Jeep.



1LT Grant ponders the next event at Ft. Mott.



For more information, visit the Army Ground Forces Association website at <http://www.armygroundforces.org>