

Coast Artillery Living History Ft. Mott, NJ

On 27-29 June 2008, the Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA), in conjunction with the New Jersey State Park Service, hosted "Coast Defenses Day". The event was focused on equipment activation, training and drill at Fort Mott in preparation for the September 1941 Army Maneuvers (war games). The members of AGFA participating were Andy Grant, Shawn Welch, Larry Winchell, Chad Philipps, Luis Ramos, Curtis Saunders, Doug Houck, Vince Turner, Vince Turner Jr., Stephen Turner, Larry Winchell and were joined by Matthew Mickletz. Preparations began on the 27th of June with PVT Turner and PVT Philipps are bringing telephone cable into the newly restored headquarters building.



The main new showcase for the event was the newly restored headquarters building. There were several displays inside the building. The newest addition to the fort was the plotting board.



The plotting room display included a fabricated M1904 plotting board and wind component indicator. Across the hall from the plotting room was the newly configured commanders office shown in the photo below.



The other main interpretive sites included the C1 (command) tower. In the photo below, PVT Philipps discusses the M1910A1 azimuth instrument with two visitors



In addition to the many adults who visited C1, there were also many children. In the photo below SSG Houck explains the communications system to visitors.



The next fire control station interpreted was Battery Arnold's Battery Commander's Station. In the photo below PFC Saunders and Recruit Matthew Mickletz review the operation of the two M1910A1 azimuth instruments.



The BC Arnold station proved to be one of the busiest of the two day operation. In the photo below the public decisively engaged both PFC Saundres and Recruit Mickletz.



A view from one of the M1910A1 azimuth instruments frames two ships in front of the local nuclear plant steam stack.



After the evening meal, the group posed for a photo prior to preparing for searchlight operations.



As dusk approached, the 1946 60-inch Sperry Searchlight and its generator were moved out to the Delaware River for Operation Night Light.



Preparation of the light included taking it out of traveling position as shown in the photo below.



And all were rewarded by the bright beam of the 800 million candle power searchlight!



In the photo below the generator SGT Turner monitors operations.



The photo below shows the group in the evening after the second day, joined by Victor Verano and a wayward Nurse.



In the photo below, at the close of the event, 1LT Grant stands on the porch of the newly restored Headquarters building next to his Battery Guidon.



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