

Coast Artillery Living History
"Three Forts Coast Defense"
Ft. Mott, NJ

On 20-21 August 2011, Fort Mott State Park hosted a Coast Artillery living history event supported by the Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA). The focus of the event was on the preparations for war in August 1941 at Fort Mott and the Harbor Defenses of the Delaware River.

The members of AGFA that participated in the event were Doug Houck, Andy Grant, Peter Morrell, Gerry Still, Kyle Schafer, Paul Taylor, Stephen Turner, Vincent Turner, Vincent Turner, Jr., Gary Weaver, Shawn Welch, and Larry Winchell. They represented members of the 21st Coast Artillery Regiment which manned the Harbor Defenses of the Delaware River.

The educational objective for AGFA was to provide interpretation of the Coast Artillery mission at Fort Mott at the outbreak of World War Two era with a focus on the fire control system emphasizing Battery Commander's station at Battery Gregg, new equipment such as a CCKW, munitions displays, the G1 tower, and the 60-inch 800,000,000 candle power Sperry Searchlight from 1942.

The focus shifted on Sunday to interpreting the defenses of Fort Delaware in a series of walking tours with visitors.

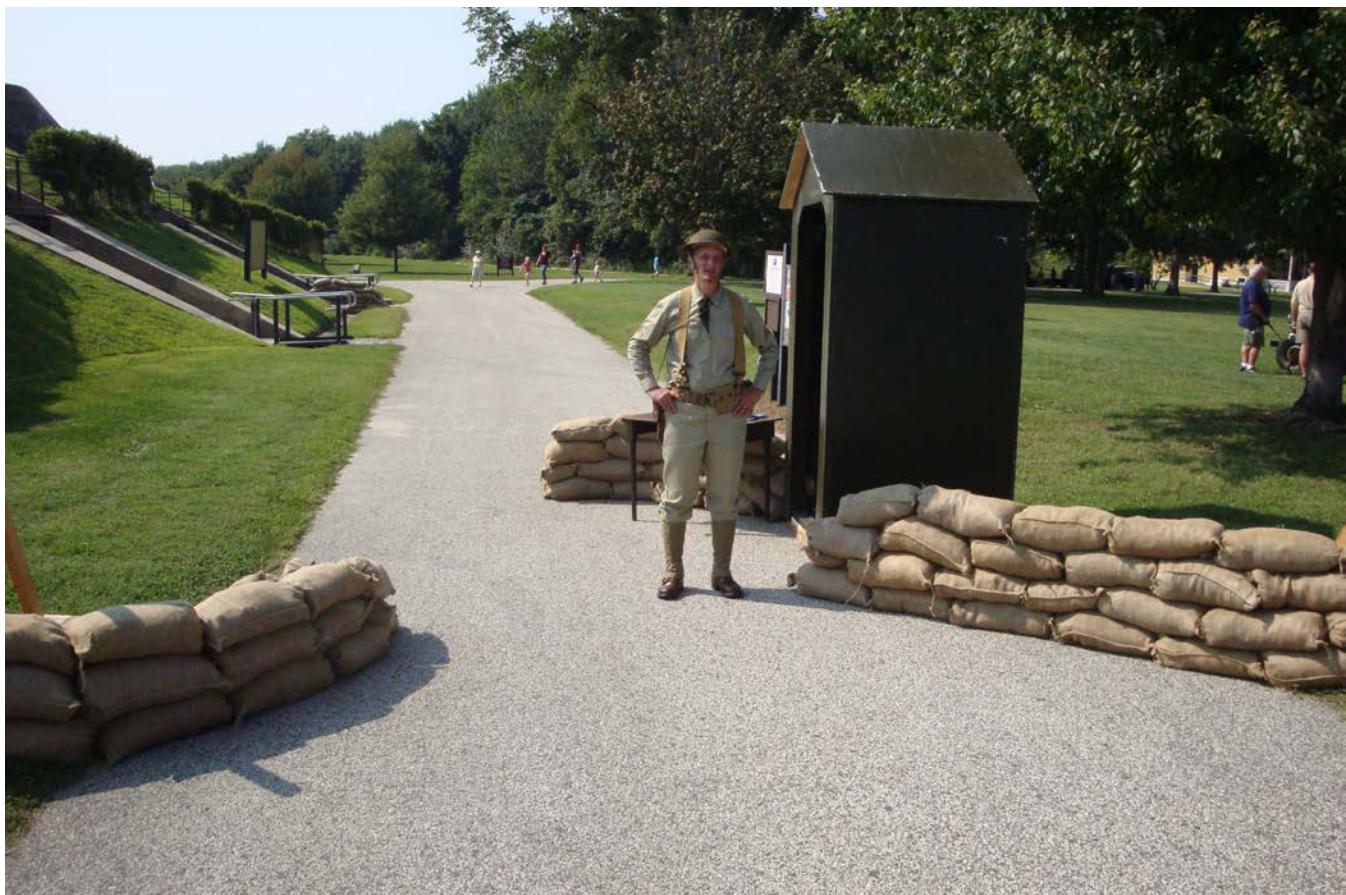
The photo below shows the participating membership from AGFA with the 2-1/2 ton CCKW truck – a new addition to the panoply of vintage and working military equipment.



Key to maintaining awareness of the visiting public is the Check Point below. Manned by CPL Turner, this station proved critical to tracking and guided the public as they visited Fort Mott.



Another view of the Check Point and a look down the line of gun batteries, with Battery Gregg being the first in view on the left.



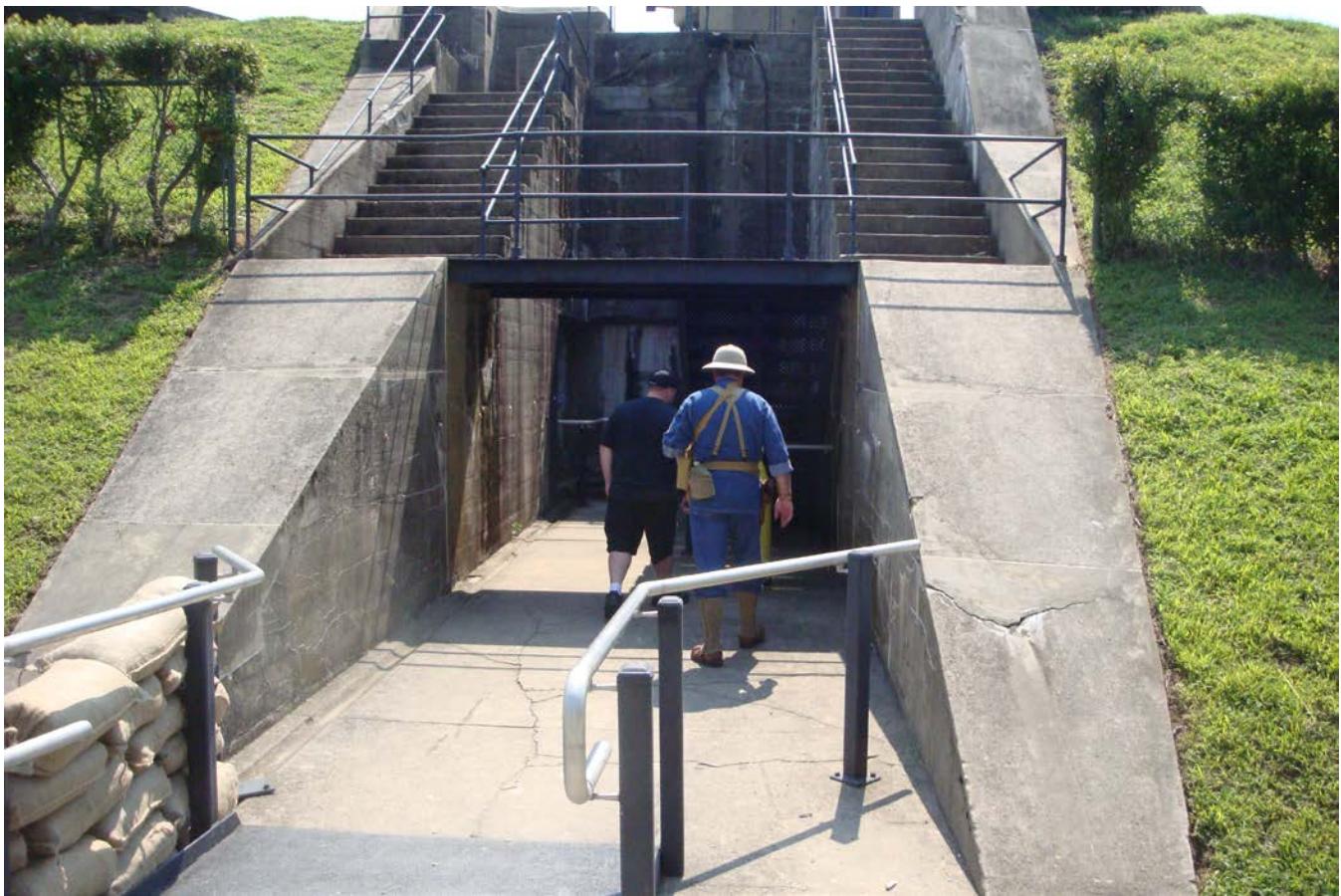
This event marked the first time Fort Mott State Park has interpreted the Battery Commander's station on top of Battery Gregg. This station was built in 1922 to serve Battery Harker (3x10-inch disappearing guns). When the battery was declared excess in 1933, this station became available to support other batteries. The lower level of this structure has two magazine rooms.



Below, the munitions display inside Battery Gregg which was interpreted by SSG Weaver. From left to right are: 16-inch MK-12 2,240 pound Armor Piercing shell; 3-inch projectile; 75mm drill round; 90mm AA (brass case); two 90mm drill rounds (OD color); 3-inch seacoast, and a 6-inch Navy shell and brass case.



Below SSG Weaver leads a visitor into the magazine.



Below was a display of vintage vehicles and equipment. From left to right is a Ford Model A; generator for the search light; 1942 60-inch 800,000,000 candle powered searchlight; 1941 dodge $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck; Dodge 2-1/2 ton CCKW truck.



Below, SSG Hock stands by to interpret and demonstrate the Battery Commander's station on top of Battery Gregg. This station is fully outfitted with four EE-91 telephones, an MC-153 time interval bell and an M1910A1 Azimuth Instrument. The telephone communications cable was brought up from manhole number 8 about 30 feet away from the battery. This was part of a long awaited for return of permanent underground cable to support the fire control communications system.



Below SSG Houck works with young visitors and teaches them how the phones work. Vintage headsets from left to right are EE-70 from 1927, and two HS-17s from 1941.



The Battery Commanders station afforded the public something they had not yet seen at Ft. Mott – a view up the Delaware River towards Philadelphia.



Below SSG Houck points to a ship in the channel as 2LT Taylor stands ready to assist another visitor in using the M1910A1 azimuth instrument.



The picture below shows the G1 tower with 2LT Still descending the stair case,



In the photo below 2LT Still informs a visitor about the telephone booths in the G1 station.



In the photo below, LTC Welch stands next to the M1910A1 Azimuth Instrument in the tower.



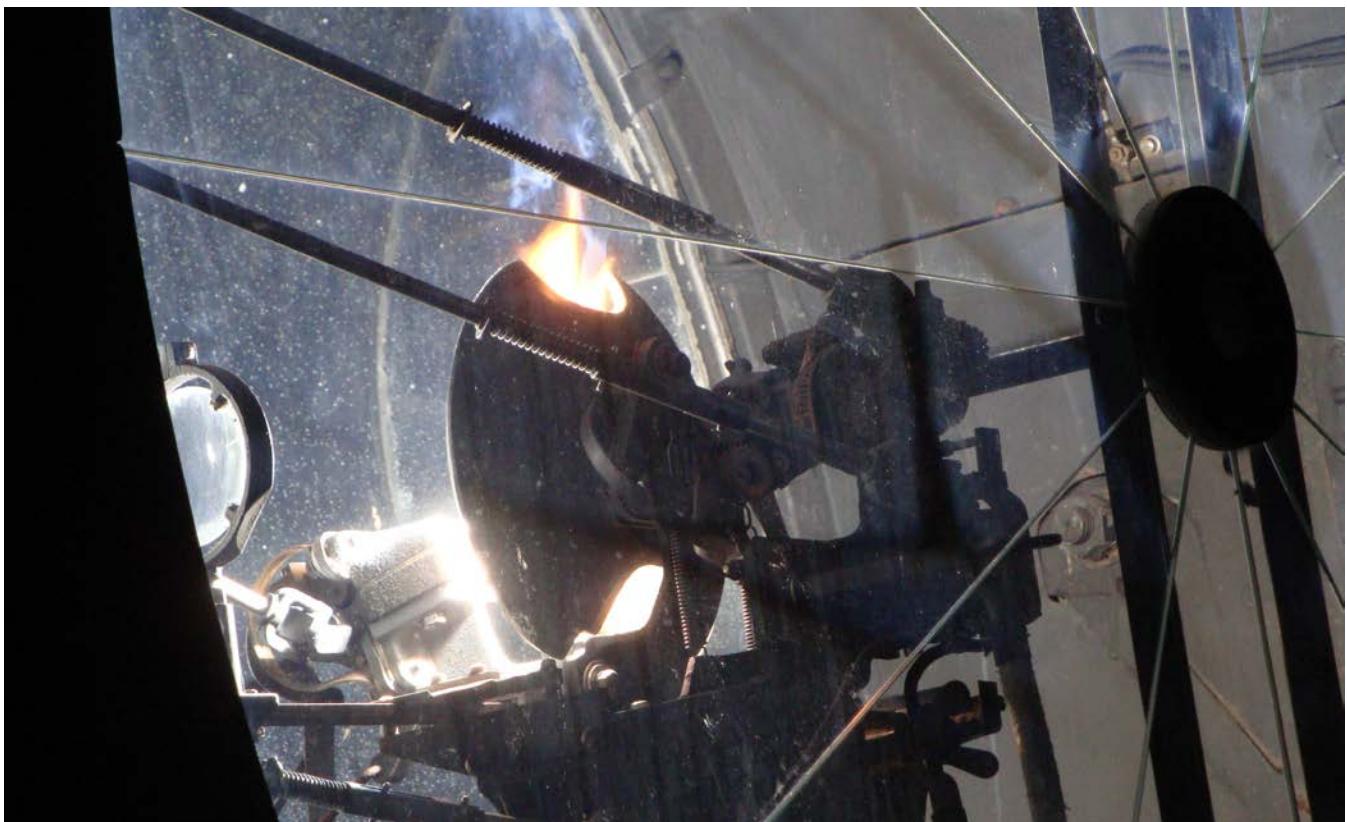
The CCKW truck turned out to be not only a welcome historic addition to the Garrison at Fort Mott, it also proved a workhorse to moving and installing displays for the event weekend. The new truck awaits its painting into historic Army Olive Drab.



Night time is always eagerly awaited by the public and the garrison of Fort Mott.



The searchlight works by burning carbon rods. Below, the white hot flame is clearly visible.



Below is a view of the searchlight pointing back towards the garrison area of Fort Mott. In the background are the lights of Delaware City and Fort DuPont.



Another view of the searchlight showing the heat generated on the surface of the glass.



On Sunday, members of AGFA and Fort Mott staff conducted tours at Fort DuPont just outside Delaware City across the Delaware River from Fort Mott. The building below is one of the barracks buildings – essentially abandoned.



As members arrived, AGFA member Peter Morrell came outside to greet the membership.



Member SGT Turner and his fiancé, Jessica, share a light hearted moment at the parking area.



Below, 2LT Still, LTC Welch and CPT Grant prepare to enter the officer's house behind them.



Below, the AGFA members stop to explain various features of the fort to visitors.



Fort DuPont has several gun batteries. Below CPL Turner and PVT Morrell approach an 8-inch battery.



Below other AGFA members, including CPL Turner and Jessica, examine the battery interior.



The photo below 2LT Still, CPL Turner and PVT Morrell as they examine the gun block for an 8-inch disappearing gun.



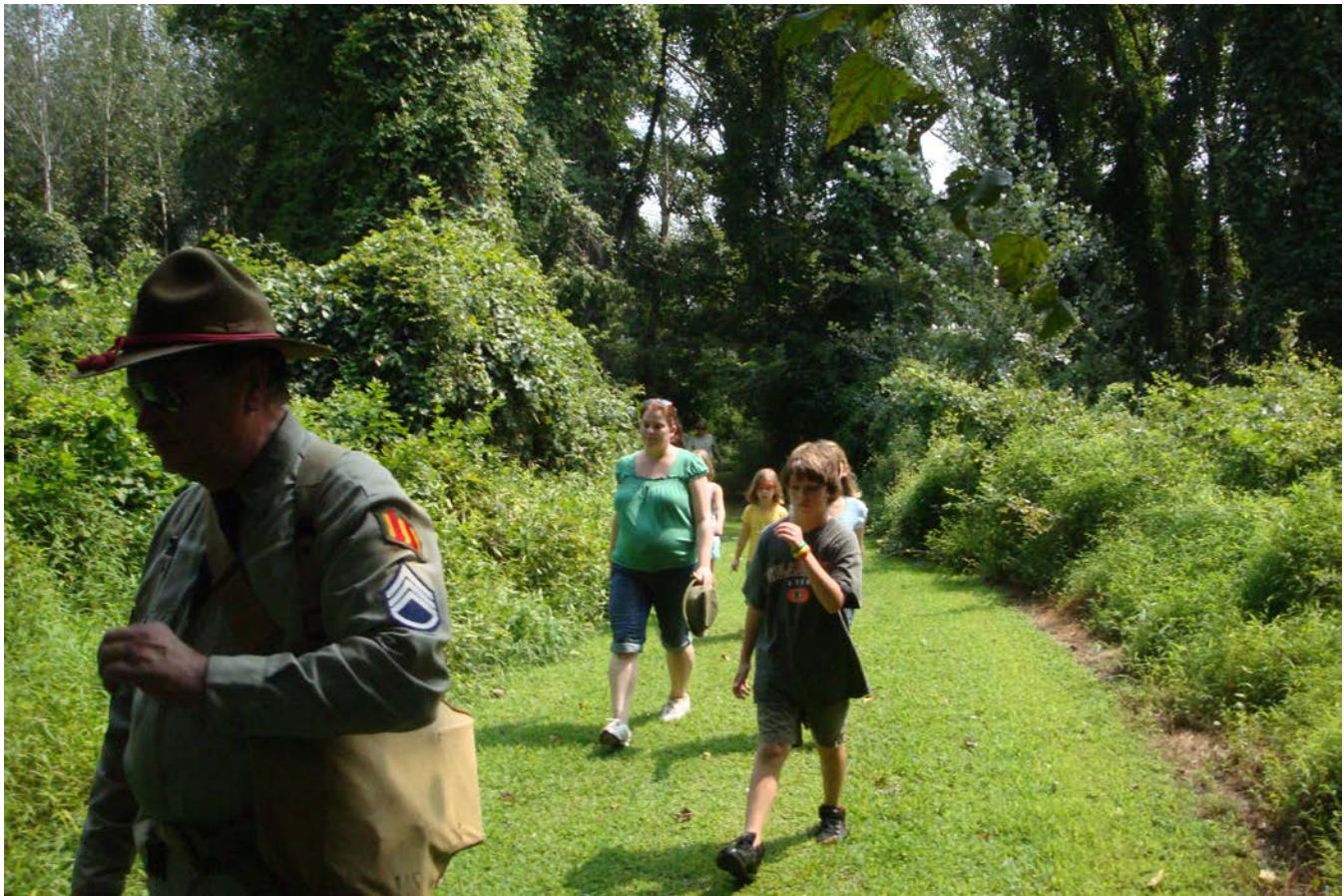
In the photo below, LTC Welch, PVT Morrell, CPL Turner and SSG Weaver pose next to the mounting area of a 3-inch gun at Battery Elder.



The same personnel are featured in the photo below on the newly cleared Battery Elder. The Fort DuPont State Park personnel have recently taken extensive time and cleared all the invasive vegetation from around the gun battery, allowing people to see the battery for the first time in many years.



After spending time at Battery Elder, SSG Weaver and several visitors walked back to the main garrison area.



Coming up the final road approach, members prepare for the end of the weekend.



After a great day of interpretation and sightseeing, CPT Grant bids farewell until next time to PVT Morrell.



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