



State News/Lisa Sreeton

From left, Charles J. Rocco of Milford and James F. and Esther B. Saulsbury of Milford look at a photo taken at Fort Saulsbury, on Delaware Bay near Milford, in 1941 by James T. Carey, right. The Saulsburys are distant relatives of Willard Saulsbury, for whom the former fort was named.

Fort

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four, 12-inch "great guns," each 40 feet long, to protect the coast from enemy ships and submarines. The guns sat atop bunkers made of concrete reinforced with steel, which were open for tours following Saturday's dedication.

"I was hoping the sign would reflect the word 'memorial,'" said Mr. Miller, "because it stands for so many that aren't here with us today."

He said the bunkers were named for Sussex County Revolutionary War heroes David Hall and John Haslet, and housed war prisoners after World War II.

According to Mr. Miller, materials to build the fort were brought in by railroad from Milford because bay water was too shallow to allow shipment by boat.

Betty C. Homan of Milford, an honorary state regent with the DAR, expressed pride at getting

the marker in place.

"When we (DAR) go after something, we go all the way," she said smiling broadly in front of the crowd of approximately 100 people.

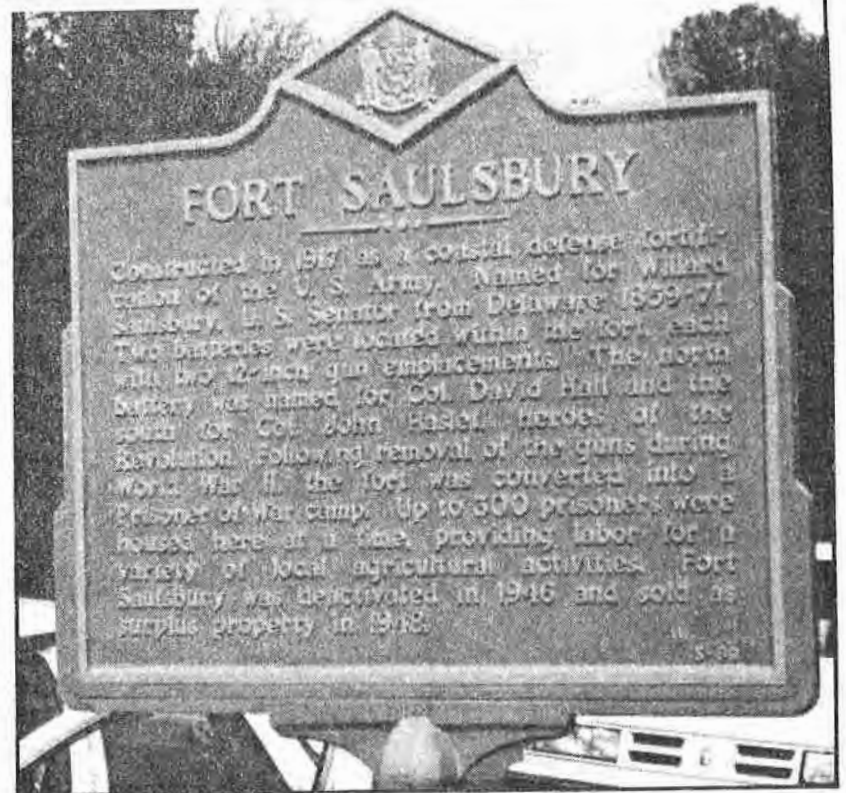
Mrs. Homan hopes the marker will let people know of the importance the fort played in area history.

Ramond H. Jacobs came all the way from Roslyn Heights, N.Y., for the dedication. He was part of a camera crew in 1941 that put together a training film on the use and care of the guns.

Mr. Jacobs said the large guns were fired only once during his five-month stay to insure they would work. He said the vibrations from the firings caused eggs to crack in nearby hen houses, dogs howled and windows shook and sometimes shattered.

But the worst thing he remembers has nothing to do with guns.

"The mosquitos were awful," he said. "You couldn't pull guard duty without mosquito netting."



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The historical marker erected for Fort Saulsbury reads: Constructed in 1917 as a coastal defense fortification of the U.S. Army. Named for Willard Saulsbury, U.S. Senator from Delaware 1859-71. Two batteries were located within the fort, each with two 12-inch gun emplacements. The north battery was named for Col. David Hall and the south for Col. John Haslet, heroes of the Revolution. Following removal of the guns during World War II, the fort was converted into a Prisoner of War camp. Up to 300 prisoners were housed here at a time, providing labor for a variety of local agricultural activities. Fort Saulsbury was deactivated in 1946 and sold as surplus property in 1948.

Former fort near Milford captures place in history

By **Lisa Scott Screeton**
Staff writer

FORT SAULSBURY — About 50 years ago, while James T. Carey of Lewes was a U.S. Army first sergeant assigned to Fort Saulsbury, he took snapshots of his buddies in front of the mess hall.

On Saturday, Mr. Carey got to show that photograph to several former soldiers who gathered to dedicate the historical marker commemorating Fort Saulsbury's contribution to coastal defense.

Located east of Milford on Del. 36, the marker is the product of months of work by the Capt. Jonathan Caldwell Chapter of

the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Patricia T. Marshall of Milford, chapter regent, said the idea for requesting a marker came following a presentation to the DAR by local historian Hugh M. Miller.

What remains of the fort can't be seen from the road. Built in 1917 by the Army, the fort was deactivated in 1946 and sold as surplus property in 1948.

According to Mr. Miller, the fort was named for Willard Saulsbury, a U.S. senator from Delaware who served during the Civil War.

Mr. Miller said the fort housed

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674-8160 Outside Local Area 1-800-282-8586

1500-1614/15

The Honor Of Your Presence is Requested

at a

Dedication Ceremony

for the

Fort Saulsbury Historical Marker

Route 36, East of Milford

April 6, 1991

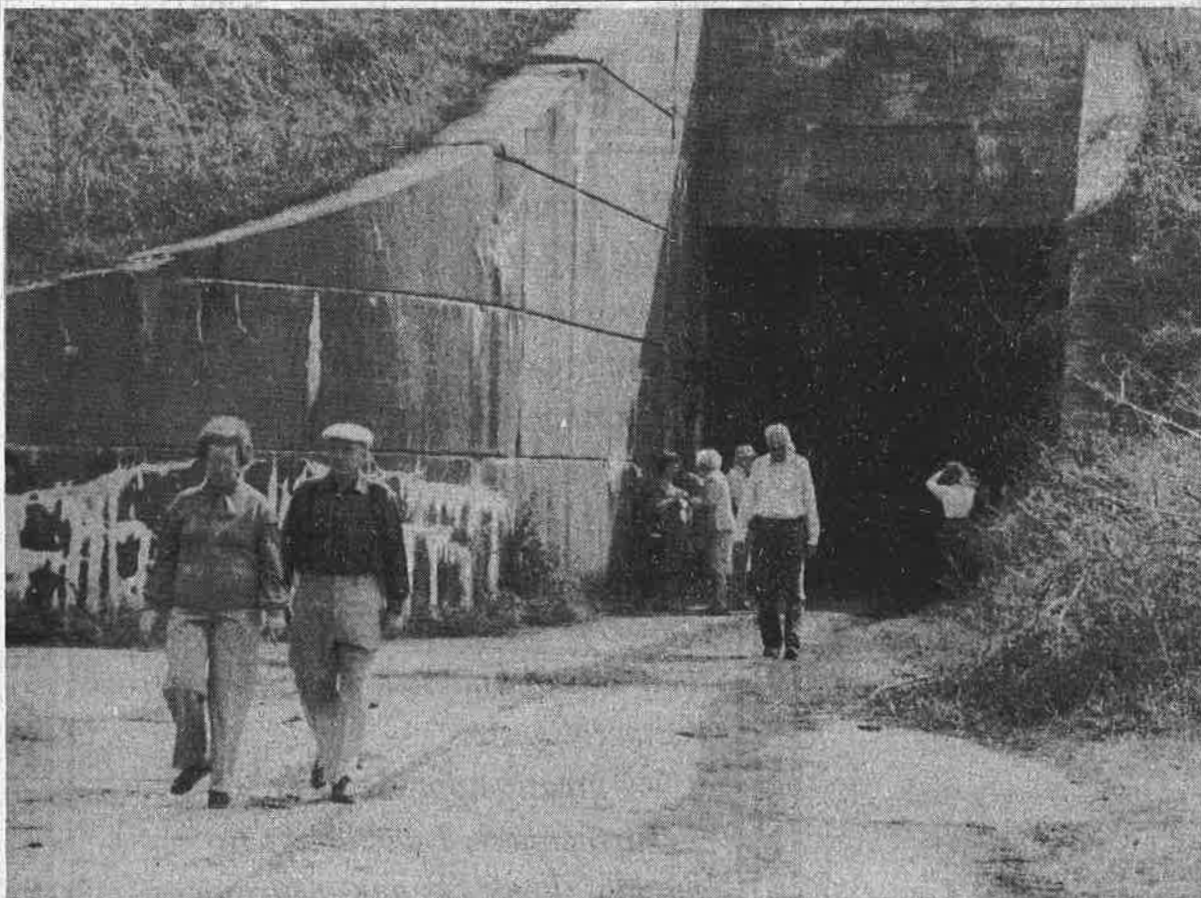
at one-thirty in the afternoon

by

*Captain Jonathan Caldwell Chapter
Daughters of the American Revolution*

A tour of the Fort will follow the ceremony.

INTO THE DEPTHS OF AREA HISTORY



The underground bunkers at Fort Saulsbury were open for tours following the dedication of a historical marker Saturday.

Photos by Doris Beard

DAR helps recall World War II history with marker dedication at Ft. Saulsbury

By Doris Beard

the enemy, but it came near it."

DAR helps recall World War II history with marker dedication at Ft. Saulsbury



Emory and Edith Short of Georgetown have a prisoner's eye view of the cells inside Fort Saulsbury. Mr. Short is a World War II veteran; his wife a "G. I. Bride."

By Doris Beard

SLAUGHTER BEACH - The Capt. Jonathan Caldwell Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) dedicated a Delaware Historical Marker to Fort Saulsbury Saturday, April 6.

Slaughter Beach historian Dr. Hugh M. Miller said the dedication drew nearly 200.

Fort Saulsbury was built in 1917 as a coastal defense fortification of the U. S. Army.

It was named for Willard Saulsbury, U. S. Senator from Delaware between 1859-71.

Descendants of Sen. Saulsbury, Milford residents James F. and Esther B. Saulsbury were present for the dedication.

"This was built during World War I," Miller said. "Four 'great guns' were put here to defend the bay."

The "great guns" were 40 feet long and 12 inches across.

During World War II, the fort was used as a training site. "On Pearl Harbor Day, Dec. 7, 1941, 200 men were stationed here," Miller said.

"This bay was never entered by

the enemy, but it came near it," Miller said.

The historian said the marker should contain the word "memorial" since so many who served there were not present.

Veterans who were stationed at Fort Saulsbury and were present for the dedication were: Raymond H. Jacobs, James F. Saulsbury, Gordon Ellis, Carlton "Skinny" Carmean, James T. Carey (first sergeant), Robert H. Fields, Roscoe Fisher, Jack Strickland and Charles Rocco.

Jacobs came from New York for the dedication. He was part of a team in 1941 who made a training film on the use and care of the great guns.

The north battery was named for Col. David Hall and the south for Col. John Haslet, heroes of the Revolution.

Following removal of the great guns during World War II, the fort was used to house prisoners of war. As many as 300 prisoners were interned there at one time.

"The national archives say more than 1,000 European prisoners

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Saulsbury —

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were here during the war," said Betty Homan, honorary past regent of the DAR.

"Most people today don't know Fort Saulsbury is here and what an important part it played in our history," Homan said. "With the marker here now, hopefully they will."

Miller said one of the veterans present for the dedication later called him and said he'd spoken with a man present who said he'd been a prisoner there.

"It's really unfortunate he didn't make himself known to us on Saturday," Miller said.

Miller said he'd been looking for

former prisoners of the fort, through the German Society, advertising and research.

"Evidently, he told the veteran he'd been treated well while he was there," Miller said of the former prisoner.

Miller requested that anyone with information about the former prisoner who was present call him at 422-0765.

The prisoners supplied labor for local agriculture during their stay.

Miller has written a booklet about Fort Saulsbury, which will be published in its entirety in the next edition of the Milford Historical Society's newsletter.

An unknown benefactor is paying to have the booklet published as well. "I don't know who he is or even who the publishing company

is," Miller said.

The fort was deactivated in 1946 and sold as surplus property in 1948, reportedly for \$10,000. Because of the dampness, much of the hardware at the fort was made from brass.

The buyers of the property reportedly collected and sold the brass remnants, recovering the price they paid for the land.

Following the dedication, the bunkers were open for tours.

The vast concrete bunkers are now barren, damp and cool.

The echoing chambers, many of which have fireplaces, cannot be identified by their present appearance.

Several open bay areas on the west side of the Hall bunker can be identified as POW bays by the bars

on the windows along its length.

The Battery Haslet bunker today has begun to show its age, with cracking concrete allowing water to seep in and heavy rainfalls washing mud inside.

"This place isn't nearly as big as I thought it was," said Emory Short, a World War II Army veteran from Georgetown.

"I used to drive by here as a teenager and think it must be a huge place," Short said. He added that the fort was deactivated before he returned to the states from Europe.

The property, east of Milford on Rt. 36, is currently occupied by the Gerald Kendzierski family. The Kendzierski's allow public tours of Fort Saulsbury by calling them in advance at 422-6184.