



The Delaware River and Bay Authority

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Delaware City – Salem Ferry Changes Name to Forts Ferry Crossing *2015 Schedule Route Announced; Only Charters Available from Salem*

(New Castle, DE) Today, Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) officials announced that the former Delaware City-Salem Ferry (DCSF) service, which provides the only access to historic Fort Delaware State Park on Pea Patch Island, has changed its name to the “Forts Ferry Crossing” (FFC).

The renamed ferry service will now operate its regular schedule only between Fort Mott State Park in Pennsville, New Jersey, and Delaware City, Delaware. Regularly scheduled ferry service will no longer be available from the City of Salem (via Barber’s Basin at the Port of Salem).

Since the Ferry no longer serves the City of Salem on a regular basis, DRBA officials consulted with representatives at both Fort Mott State Park and Fort Delaware State Park on a new name for the ferry system. “We all felt the ferry’s name needed to better reflect the new ferry service,” said Heath Gehrke, Director of Ferry Operations for the DRBA. “Collectively, we believe the new name accomplishes that goal and we will begin our rebranding efforts immediately.”

“We’re pleased to be able to work together with our friends at the Delaware State Park Service and the River and Bay Authority to highlight what this region has to offer,” said John Trontis, Assistant Director for the NJ Division of Parks and Forestry. “The history of Fort Mott State Park and Fort Delaware State Park are interconnected not only as coastal defense forts on the Delaware River, but also because Finns Point National Cemetery just north of Fort Mott served as the burial site for Confederate prisoners of war and Union guards who died while at Fort Delaware. Whether you’re a history buff or just out for family fun, it’s a history experience you don’t want to miss and the Forts Ferry Crossing makes it possible to see all in one day!”

“Last year, the number of visitors to Fort Delaware increased by more than 15% and we believe that the reconnection with Fort Mott played a meaningful role in that growth,” added Raymond E. Bivens, Delaware Director of Parks. “Fort Delaware and Fort Mott may be from different eras, but both provide a unique, authentic glimpse of America’s past and the Forts Ferry Crossing is your time machine. It’s an unforgettable family experience on the Delaware River and we’re looking forward to another banner year.”

Passenger numbers increased by 18% in 2014 compared to 2013 statistics – with most of the increase attributable to the resumption of service to Fort Mott in Pennsville, New Jersey. The ferry service, originally known as the Three Forts Ferry, docked at Fort Mott for fifteen years until 2012 when Superstorm Sandy

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severely damaged the pier facilities. Because the timetable to repair the pier was uncertain in 2013, the Ferry service could not include Fort Mott in the schedule for 2013 and relocated to the City of Salem.

“Operating out of Salem allowed us to continue service from New Jersey while Fort Mott was rebuilding from the effects of Superstorm Sandy, but the passenger numbers don’t justify continuing regular scheduled service there,” Gehrke added. “For most of our customers in New Jersey, Fort Mott proved to be a more convenient departure point.”

The Forts Ferry Crossing will begin public service on Saturdays only starting April 25; and then weekends and holidays from Memorial Weekend through June 7. Starting June 10 through the remainder of the summer, the ferry service will operate five days a week, Wednesday through Sunday (and holidays). Gehrke stressed that reserving the Forts Ferry Crossing for private pre-scheduled group tours or for private charters is one of the most popular services provided by the Ferry. These pre-scheduled, private tours and charters will still be available from all points of departure including the Port of Salem (via Barber’s Basin) and that the change only affects scheduled service at the City of Salem.

Planning a wedding, anniversary, or business mixer? Let the Forts Ferry Crossing be part of your party. More information can be obtained by calling Cape May-Lewes Ferry customer relations at 1-800-643-3779.

About Fort Mott State Park

Fort Mott was fully garrisoned until 1922 and was staffed by a detachment of caretakers until the post was abandoned in 1944. Today, the Ordnance Warehouse holds a small museum with displays on the fort as well as on the local area. Guided tours are available upon request of the Fire Control Tower that rises 53 feet into the air, keeping a watchful eye on the approaches of the Delaware River. Following your self-guided tour of the Fort, take a short walk to Finn’s Point National Cemetery, the final resting-place for 2,400 Confederate prisoners who died at Fort Delaware.

About Fort Delaware State Park

Located on Pea Patch Island, Fort Delaware has been restored and is alive with interpreters who put a human face on history. Visitors experience Civil War life through living history and museum theater programs at the fortress that was once home to nearly 33,000 prisoners, garrison, and civilians. Prepare to be awed by its 32-foot-tall, 30-foot-thick granite walls with gun emplacements and an authentic 8" cannon—the only cannon of its kind still fired in America. A jitney provides transport from the island dock to the granite and brick fortress.

About the Delaware River and Bay Authority

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers - two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (New Castle Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit www.drba.net.

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