



# The Delaware River and Bay Authority

## NEWS RELEASE

May 5, 2016  
For Immediate Release

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### **History Comes Alive aboard the Forts Ferry Crossing!** *Popular Delaware River Crossing Connects Fort Mott, Fort Delaware and Delaware City*

(Delaware City, DE) History lovers spend an exciting day in the 19th century when they take round-trip boat excursions to military sites on the Delaware River. When you step off the Forts Ferry Crossing onto Pea Patch Island, you'll be transported to a world where guards, officers and prisoners from the Civil War are living in 19th-century Fort Delaware. At Fort Mott, embark on a self-guided tour of this pre-Spanish American War garrison complete with fortifications and interpretive signage. The Delaware River and Bay Authority's Forts Ferry Crossing runs between Fort Mott in New Jersey, Fort Delaware State Park on Pea Patch Island and Delaware City in Delaware.

"The Forts Ferry Crossing is your time machine, transporting visitors back to a bygone era rich in history," said Heath Gehrke, Director of Ferry Operations. "Fort Delaware and Fort Mott have so much to offer – whether it's touring the gun batteries of Fort Mott, or hearing sound of cannon fire or the heat of the blacksmith's stove at Fort Delaware, you will be seeing, hearing and feeling experiences from 1864. It's a history lesson you'll never forget!"

**The Forts Ferry Crossing operates on Saturdays only in May. Beginning May 28, the service expands its operating schedule to include Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. As of June 15 and continuing through Labor Day, the Forts Ferry Crossing will begin operating Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$7 for children 2-12. Children under 2 are free. The cost includes admission to Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island. Visitors take a ½ - mile ferry ride from Delaware City to Pea Patch Island. A jitney provides transport from the island dock to the granite and brick fortress. Additional information on the Forts Ferry Crossing is available at [www.fortsferrycrossing.com](http://www.fortsferrycrossing.com) or check out its Facebook site @FortsFerryCrossing.**

At Fort Delaware, visitors experience authentic reenactments of Civil War episodes, both civilian and military as well as demonstrations of how people lived in the 1800s. Have a chat with Edmund Bryan, the only regular army soldier posted to Fort Delaware in the summer of 1864. Being the Ordnance Sergeant, he is in charge of all the ammunition in the fort. Visit the laundry and meet Julia Gunning, one of the fort's laundresses. Help her wash clothes the 19th-century way! Or ask Reverend Isaac Handy how he came to be a political prisoner at Fort Delaware.

Along with meeting the legends of Delaware history, you'll see the grandeur and glory of the fort as it was in its prime. Prepare to be awed by its 32-foot-tall, 30-foot-thick granite walls with gun emplacements

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and an authentic 8" cannon—the only cannon of its kind still fired in America. Originally an encampment that held a total of 33,000 troops, officers and political prisoners during the Civil War, Fort Delaware has been restored and is alive with interpreters who put a human face on history.

A short ferry ride across the Delaware River is Fort Mott, New Jersey. Original plans for Fort Mott specified eleven gun emplacements with twenty guns and a mortar battery with six emplacements. Construction was started in 1872; however, only two of the gun emplacements and two magazines in the mortar battery were completed by 1876 when work was stopped. In 1896, construction of the current fortifications resumed with the newest armament available, the disappearing guns. Two batteries of three gun emplacements each could fire a projectile up to 9 miles down-river while two 5-inch rapid fire batteries flank the main battery on each side to provide close in defense as well as protection against any fast moving enemy vessels.

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. Admission to Fort Mott is free.

Located within the Park, a Nature Interpretive Trail can be found that is excellent for beginners. Fort Mott State Park also provides educational and fun events that are family oriented. Currently, the Fort has two events, Coast Defense Day on August 18 and All Access Tour on September 1, scheduled this summer. Pre-registration is required for the All Access Tour. All events sponsored by the park are free to the public. For more information on programs currently available at the park, call (856) 935-3218.

For more information on Fort Delaware and Fort Mott, please visit [www.destateparks.com/park/fort-delaware](http://www.destateparks.com/park/fort-delaware) and [www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/fortmott.html](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/fortmott.html).

### **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, please visit [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net).