

Chronology for Coast Artillery Defense Forts

- 1862 guns installed at the future site of Fort Canby on the mouth of the Columbia River
- 1867 land for Fort Columbia obtained
- 1875 Fort Canby completed and named in honor of General Edward Canby
- 1897 construction begins at Fort Casey
- 1897 construction begins at Fort Flagler
- 1898 first battery completed at Fort Columbia
- 1898 construction begins on Fort Worden
- 1898 North Head lighthouse built at Fort Canby
- 1899 Fort Casey named in honor of Brigadier General Thomas Lincoln Casey
- 1899 Fort Flagler named in honor of Brigadier General Daniel Webster Flagler
- 1900 initial installation of armaments at Fort Flagler completed
- 1900 guns mounted at Fort Casey
- 1900 Fort Worden named in honor of Admiral John L. Worden, commander of the iron-clad Monitor in its Civil War battle against the Merrimac
- 1901 first test fire of guns at Fort Casey
- 1902 post established at Fort Worden when 87 men of the 126th Company, U.S. Artillery, arrive at Point Wilson
- 1904 first troops arrive at Fort Columbia
- 1904 Fort Worden designated as headquarters for the Puget Sound Harbor Defense
- 1935 Fort Ward used as a children's camp by the state
- 1940 24 new buildings constructed at Fort Flagler and men from the Harbor Defense move in
- 1945 Fort Flagler used for training engineers and amphibious military units until 1954
- 1953 Fort Flagler closed as a military base
- 1953 Fort Worden decommissioned
- 1955 Fort Flagler purchased as a state park
- 1956 Fort Casey acquired by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- 1957 Fort Canby dedicated as a state park
- 1958 Fort Ward deactivated by the Army
- 1960 Fort Ward acquired by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- 1964 first portion of Fort Worden acquired by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- 1965 State Parks acquires beach and artillery hill areas of Fort Worden
- 1968 two 10-inch disappearing guns and two 3-inch rapid-fire guns acquired from the Philippines and mounted at Fort Casey
- 1971 Governor Evans transfers Fort Worden garrison from Dept. of Institution to State Parks
- 1973 Fort Worden dedicated as State Park Conference Center
- 1980 Fort Casey and other properties in the Central Whidbey Island Historical District incorporated into Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve by the National Park Service
- 1994 two 6-inch shielded coast defense guns acquired from Newfoundland and mounted at Fort Columbia



For more information about these forts or other Washington State Parks historic places, please contact the Information Center at 1-800-233-0321 (Telephone Device for the Deaf 360-664-3133).

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Coast Artillery Forts A Century of Service



Washington State
Parks and Recreation
Commission





100 Years in Washington History

Over the next several years, three historic Washington State forts will celebrate their 100th anniversaries. These coast artillery forts — Flagler, Casey and Worden — were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to provide a first-line of defense for the Puget Sound area and the important Bremerton Naval Shipyard.

Anniversary events and activities will begin in September 1999 at Fort Flagler, followed by Fort Casey in February 2000 and Fort Worden in May 2002.

These forts, built between 1897 and 1917, were named for famous military leaders of the era. In 1899, Fort Casey was named in honor of Brigadier General Thomas Casey, then Chief of Engineers for the U.S. Army, and Fort Flagler was named in honor of Brigadier General Daniel Webster Flagler, chief of ordinance for the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War. Fort Worden was named the following year for Admiral John L. Worden, the commander of the iron-clad Monitor in its Civil War battle against the Merrimac.

At the time they were built, forts Casey, Flagler and Worden were equipped with the most modern weapons and fortifications ever designed. Each fort also was a self-contained community, with its own store, bakery, stables, hospital, and housing for artillery soldiers and their families.

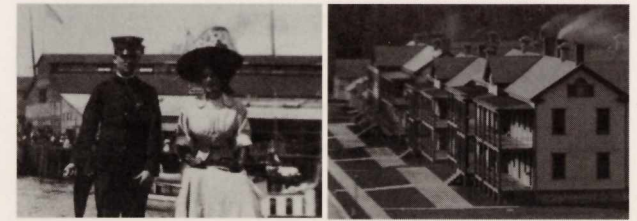
While none of these forts ever fired a shot at an enemy, they nonetheless served important military roles. In Puget

Sound, and other U.S. coastal regions, such fortifications were the nation's first line of defense against naval assault. In addition to protecting the important harbor cities, the forts made it possible for U.S. Navy vessels to operate freely, rather than expend ships and manpower to defend its own bases.

Improvements in ship-borne artillery, and the eventual use of military aircraft, diminished the defensive effectiveness of the forts and some of their guns were removed during World War I and placed on mobile carriages for use in the European war. By the end of World War II, most of the remaining armaments of the coastal forts had been sold for scrap.

In the 1950s, when the forts no longer had a military value, Washington State Parks acquired portions of Fort Casey and all of Fort Flagler to be developed as historical properties. The state also acquired the Fort Worden barracks area for use as a youth treatment facility. State Parks began acquiring portions of Fort Worden in the 1960s, completing its acquisition of the former post in the early 1980s.

Three additional coastal forts — Fort Canby and Fort Columbia, at the mouth of the Columbia River, and Fort Ward on Bainbridge Island — also were built in the latter half of the 19th Century. Today, these six former forts, now state parks, serve a variety of purposes — places to camp and picnic, stretches of saltwater beaches to comb, historical homes for group activities, military structures to explore, and stages for art and cultural activities.



The Coastal Connection

A total of seven forts comprised Washington's coastal artillery defense at the turn of the century. While forts Worden, Flagler and Casey are perhaps best known to park visitors, four other forts also have stood ready to protect the Puget Sound and the entrance to the Columbia River:

- **Fort Canby:** Situated on the mouth of the Columbia River at the base of the Long Beach Peninsula, Fort Canby was named in honor of General Edward Canby, who was killed in the Indian Wars. The fort, whose first guns were installed in 1862, was completed in 1875. The fort was then expanded and improved until the end of World War II, when it was deactivated. The property was acquired in 13 parcels by State Parks between 1938 and 1983.
- **Fort Columbia:** Although the land for this fort was purchased in 1867, the post remained unoccupied until 1904 when the 33rd Company, Coast Artillery, made Fort Columbia its home. The fort, which served as part of the coastal defense system through both World Wars, was purchased in parcels by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission between 1950 and 1954.
- **Fort Ward:** Originally known as Bean Point, Fort Ward was constructed in the 1890s to help protect the entrance to the Bremerton Naval Shipyard. The fort was named in 1903 after Colonel George H. Ward of the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, who was killed at the battle of Gettysburg in 1863. Abandoned after World War I, the fort was briefly revived in 1935 as a state-operated children's camp, then was transferred to the U.S. Navy and used as a radio station and communications training school during World War II. The fort was deactivated in 1958 and purchased by State Parks in 1960.
- **Fort Whitman:** Located on Goat Island near the town of LaConner, Fort Whitman was named for Marcus Whitman, a noted missionary in the early settlement of the northwest. Fort Whitman was the smallest of the coastal forts, and the last to be built before World War II. The fort is now owned by the state of Washington and operated as a game preserve.