

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JAN 25 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAR 26 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Fort Hunt

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Mount Vernon Memorial Highway

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

☒ VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8th (Herbert E. Harris, II)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Fairfax

CODE

059

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Capital Region, National Park Service

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20242

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC (same as above)

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (2) (see Continuation Sheet #3)**

TITLE

(1) National Park Service List of Classified Structures

DATE

1976

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS (same as above)

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD (quarters)	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

During the years of its service as a defensive fortification, from 1898 to the First World War, Fort Hunt incorporated four concrete Endicott system batteries and some 30 support structures, including officer and enlisted housing, a small hospital, a post exchange and gymnasium, a mess hall, and various shops and sheds. Located on the 90-acre Pelton tract at Sheridan Point, the batteries occupied high ground with an unobstructed field of fire across open land toward the river. The other structures were clustered on the same tract inland from the batteries. A long wharf extended into the river approximately 1000 feet upstream from the point.

The only military structures remaining at Fort Hunt today are the four batteries, a battery commander's station, a residence, and a stable. Individual descriptions follow:

Battery Mount Vernon. This, the largest and westernmost of the batteries, is located near the western edge of the Pelton tract. It was constructed at a cost of \$103,804 between January 1897 and August 1898. The massive concrete structure, approximately 420 feet long by 90 feet wide (front to rear), is banked with earth on the front and sides. Stairways lead to rooms and passages below the gun deck. The battery mounted three eight-inch rifled guns spaced 135 feet apart; this armament was removed during the First World War. The structure today is essentially intact but stripped of its fittings, deteriorated, and overgrown.

Battery Sater. The second largest battery, it is situated some 900 feet east or upriver from Battery Mount Vernon. It was built at a cost of \$16,978 between August 1900 and June 1904. Of similar construction to the foregoing, the concrete work measures approximately 110 feet long by 60 feet wide. Sater was armed with three three-inch 15-pounder rapid-fire guns, removed during the First World War. Its condition today is similar to that of Mount Vernon.

Batteries Porter and Robinson. These batteries, mirror images of each other, were built for a total of \$17,200 between November 1898 and July 1901. Porter is located directly east of Mount Vernon; Robinson bears the same relationship to Sater. The concrete work of each, banked with earth on the front and sides, measures approximately 60 by 60 feet. A five-inch rapid-fire gun was mounted in each battery in June 1902. The batteries were disarmed with the others and are in similar condition today.

Battery Commander's Station. This concrete tower of the "high site type" was built between October 1899 and July 1901 at a cost of \$4,259. It was sited 263 feet northwest of the westernmost gun of Battery Mount Vernon on the western edge of the Pelton tract. The tower mounted a Type A range finder and was used for observation and direction of the fire from the guns; Army maps also referred to its use as a meteorological station. It measures approximately 15 feet square and 30 feet high, with a deck extending out on all sides about 20 feet from the ground. The roof is steel. The original iron railings, stairs, and other fittings are gone, and the structure is today in deteriorated condition.

(continued)  
(sheet #1)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1897-1917

BUILDER/ARCHITECT U.S. Army

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Hunt is historically significant for its remnants of the last defensive complex constructed on the Potomac River to guard the Nation's Capital from naval attack.

Between 1889 and 1910 the United States spent more than \$52 million to build the comprehensive Endicott system of seacoast defenses to guard 26 of the Nation's major ports. (The system was named for William C. Endicott, Grover Cleveland's Secretary of War, who headed the board recommending its development.) As the Nation's Capital, Washington was among the five places given priority in the construction of this modern system of concrete and earthen gun and mortar emplacements, designed to replace the obsolete brick and masonry "Third System" forts erected between 1816 and 1860. The Army Corps of Engineers built eight Endicott batteries at Fort Washington, a defense post on the left bank of the Potomac River ~~established~~ in the 19th century, and four batteries across the river at Sheridan Point. The latter position, operationally a subpost of Fort Washington, was designated Fort Hunt in 1899 in honor of Maj. Gen. Henry Hunt, chief of Union artillery in the Civil War.

The Army acquired 90 acres of farmland (the Pelton tract) at Sheridan Point in 1893. Construction of the batteries began in 1897 and was completed in 1904. The first, Battery Mount Vernon, was named for Washington's nearby estate; Batteries Porter, Robinson, and Sater memorialized Army lieutenants killed in Indian combat and the Spanish-American War. With the addition of the various housing and other support facilities common to such posts and the acquisition of another 107.4 acres, Fort Hunt was essentially complete as a defense complex by 1906.

During its service as a coastal defense complementing the Fort Washington batteries, Fort Hunt was never garrisoned by more than one company of 109 men. Although Battery Mount Vernon was completed just before the Spanish-American War, the fort saw no action then or afterward, and garrison life was uneventful. During the First World War the post was declared superfluous for protection of the Capital, and the guns were removed and transferred elsewhere.

With its defensive role at an end, Fort Hunt briefly hosted an Army Finance School in 1921-23 and housed a Signal Corps company in the late 1920s. Surplus to War Department needs, the property was transferred in 1932 to the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, whose functions were assumed in 1933 by the National Park Service. In the following years the Civilian Conservation Corps developed the site as a recreational area and landscaped the Mount Vernon

(continued)  
(sheet #2)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

National Capital Region, National Park Service. Fort Hunt Files, Map File Room.

Robert T. Nelson. "Fort Hunt, Virginia; An Historical Sketch." National Park Service, 1970 (reprint typescript).

Charles W. Snell. "The Defenses of Washington, D.C., 1890-1906; Historic Structures Report for Fort Washington, Md., and Fort Hunt, Va." National Park Service, 1976 (typescript).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 13

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A 1 8	3 2 1 7 9 0	4 2 8 7 2 2 0
C 1 8	3 2 1 3 9 0	4 2 8 6 8 7 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION *see map drawn to scale for dimensions*

Beginning at the north or rear of the stable, the boundary runs southeasterly past and to the east of the NCO quarters to a point just east of Battery Robinson; thence west-southwesterly past and to the south of Batteries Robinson, Sater, Porter, and Mount Vernon; thence north-northwesterly past and to the west of Battery Mount Vernon and the battery commander's station; thence easterly to a point due south of the stable; thence northerly to the point of beginning, enclosing the stable.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Barry Mackintosh, Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Region, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20242

DATE

October 29, 1979

TELEPHONE

(202)426-6660

STATE

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

Tucker Hill, Executive Director,

Va. Historic Landmarks Comm. & STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Acting Asst. Director Cultural Resources

DATE

1/18/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3-26-80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: Emma Jane Saxe

DATE

3-14-80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Regional Coordinator

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FORT HUNT, Fairfax County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Noncommissioned Officer's Quarters. This single-family residence was built sometime between 1901 and 1906 approximately 400 feet north-northwest of Battery Sater. It was constructed from standard plan 87-E of the Office of the Quartermaster General, dated March 1901. The two-story frame structure with basement measures 20 by 28 feet in plan with the shorter gabled ends facing front and rear. A door on the left of the facade opens on a side stairway rising to two bedrooms and a bath. The first floor has a front parlor with a kitchen and pantry to the rear. Covered porches ran nearly the width of the house front and rear; the rear porch was enclosed c. 1950. The house overall is plain, with the stamped metal ceilings and woodwork characteristic of its period. Originally it was the easternmost in a row of three NCO quarters, the others being duplexes built from standard OQMG plan 82-C; today it stands alone. It is occupied and in good condition.

Quartermaster Stable. This structure, on the northern edge of the Pelton tract some 350 feet northwest of the surviving residence, was built in 1900 from standard plan 37-B of the Office of the Quartermaster General. The timber-framed, clapboarded barn sits atop brick piers and measures 33 by 60 feet. The original slate roof remains. The first floor, originally divided into four rooms, has undergone modification; the open loft is essentially as built. A second double door has been cut in the south side of the building since the time of construction, while a similar access on the north side has been closed. Doors at either end of the loft with protruding beams overhead enable the hoisting and admission of material from outside. Scrolled rafter ends at the eaves are a decorative element. The stable is presently in deteriorated condition.

The quarters and the stable, as the only support structures remaining in what was historically a built-up military post complex, have lost most of their integrity of setting. The land between them and the batteries and tower has been altered in character by the development of access roads, a parking area, and a picnic pavilion and grounds, all provided to serve Fort Hunt's current primary function as a public recreational park. The batteries are so overgrown as to obscure their relationship to each other and to the river. Although the National Register boundary has been drawn as a single figure enclosing the seven structures named, the altered character of the site precludes a sense of unity or coherence among its historic elements, which appear and have significance today primarily as individual remnants rather than components of a "historic scene."

(continued)  
(sheet #2)

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2

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PAGE 3

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Outside the National Register boundary, although virtually all the land now included in Fort Hunt Park and the adjoining George Washington Memorial Parkway was included in the Fort Hunt military reservation at its greatest extent (after 1906), nothing exists today illustrative of the military presence here. The land between the batteries and the river, historically important to the guns' field of fire, is now occupied by the George Washington Memorial Parkway, an internal visitor circulation road, a modern maintenance facility, and dense vegetation. The western portion of the park (the former Grau tract) was used by military intelligence during World War II but retains no visible evidence of that use. None of the other structures in the park, including the maintenance area, pavilion building, park police substation, oil storage building (1937), rest rooms, roads, and parking areas, meet National Register criteria. The Register boundary thus encompasses all qualifying features.

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**FORT HUNT, Fairfax County, Virginia**

CONTINUATION SHEET 3

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**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

Memorial Highway (George Washington Memorial Parkway) that was constructed along the riverfront of the property in the early 1930s.

Fort Hunt was reoccupied by the military during World War II, when its western portion (the Grau tract) served as a prison camp and interrogation area for captured German and Japanese officers. During this period the concrete batteries were used by the National Archives for storing flammable nitrate film. The area was returned to the National Park Service in 1948, after which the majority of the military structures were removed and the site acquired its present character. The structures described in the preceding section, all dating from Fort Hunt's early years as a coastal (or river) defense fortification, are all that remain to illustrate its military role and significance.

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

- (2) County of Fairfax Historic Landmarks Survey  
1969 County  
County of Fairfax Division of Planning  
4100 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030