

Navesink Military Reservation

at Hartshorne Woods Park
Highlands, NJ



www.MonmouthCountyParks.com

Welcome to Navesink Military Reservation (NMR)

Beginning in 1942, the 224-acre NMR hosted a military installation for the US Army and Air Force for more than thirty years; from WWII through the Cold War era. A “natural fortress,” the high elevation and proximity to New York Harbor made it an ideal site for coastal defense. After the site was decommissioned in 1974, the Monmouth County Park System acquired 161 acres as military surplus to establish the Rocky Point section of Hartshorne Woods Park. In 1984, an additional 63 acres was added when the former Highlands Army Air Defense Site (HAADS) closed. The NMR was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015 and is a significant landmark for regional military history.



A Military Site Throughout History

The US War Department first acquired this defensive location in 1942 from the descendants of Richard Hartshorne (1641-1722), an English Quaker who came into possession of Sandy Hook, the Bayshore, and most of the Navesink Highlands in the late 17th century.

Between 1942 and 1944, the Army constructed a series of heavy artillery batteries and support structures as an extension of Fort Hancock on Sandy Hook, the headquarters for Harbor Defenses of New York. Its objective was to deny enemy ships access to New York Bay and to furnish heavy artillery support for defense against large battleships and German submarines. The Army deactivated the batteries in 1948 as the development of long-range missiles made coastal artillery obsolete.

In 1950, the Air Force assumed control of the site and began adaptations for Cold War-era missile defense and radar surveillance, opening as the Highlands Air Force Station. By 1958, the Army returned to the site and established the Highlands Army Air Defense Site (HAADS) to control the Nike Missiles protecting New York City. The site was decommissioned in 1974, and the Army Corp of Engineers demolished the Cold War Era military buildings and structures to a depth of three feet.



Restoring Battery Lewis

Historic preservation at the Navesink Military Reservation began in 2013. In 2015, the Park System acquired and installed a WWII-era gun barrel from the USS New Jersey to help the public better understand how the Battery operated. Through funding from the Friends of the Monmouth County Park System, interpretive exhibits were installed in the former ammunition storage rooms highlighting the site’s development and the stories of the individuals that lived and worked there. The site opened to the public in the spring of 2018 providing an immersive learning experience focusing on Hartshorne Woods’ military past.



Park Hours

Navesink Military Reservation outdoor historic site is open every day of the year from 7 a.m. to dusk, free of charge. Tours of Battery Lewis are offered Saturday and Sunday from the end of May to October. Please visit our website for more information at www.MonmouthCountyParks.com.

Visitors/School Groups

Join a Park System Historian to explore the fortifications that once protected the Jersey Shore and New York Harbor during the dire days of World War II and the Cold War. A history hidden in our own backyards, the Navesink Military Reservation was once home to the largest guns ever used by the United States for coastal defense.

Contact: 732-842-4000, ext. 4268. *Group fee applies.*



Avoiding Tick Bites

Ticks can be active year-round (highest risk April-July). Take precautions: use insect repellent, wear light-colored clothes, tuck in all applicable clothing and check yourself for ticks during and after park visits. To minimize contact, keep to formal trails; stay away from tall, bushy and shrubby grasses, leaf litter, tree branches and woodland edges next to lawns, athletic fields and along trails. Protect your pets. Read more at www.cdc.gov/ticks.

The Navesink Military Reservation is located in Highlands, NJ, convenient to New Jersey Route 36. Nearby is Historic Portland Place, Twin Lights State Historic Site, and Sandy Hook National Recreation Area.



Monmouth County
Board of County Commissioners
Board of Recreation Commissioners





Trail Standards

- **EASY:** short, maintained or paved trails intended for casual walking; may have some grades/obstructions (e.g. tree roots)
- **MODERATE:** longer trails or trails with grades/obstructions; intended for hiking (may be suitable for some walkers and runners)
- ◆ **CHALLENGING:** long, more primitive trails with steep grades/obstructions; intended for hardy, experienced hikers

For more details, please reference the Hartshorne Woods Park map.



Navesink Military Reservation Historic District at Hartshorne Woods Park (Rocky Point Section)

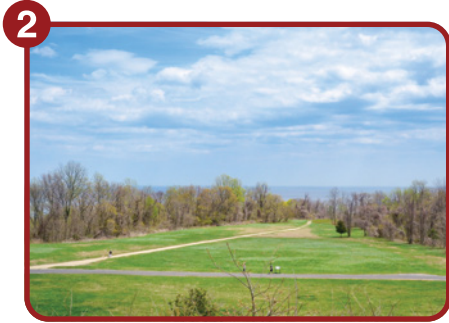
Park Information: 732-842-4000, ext. 4312 • Ranger Station: 732-872-0336 or 2670 • www.MonmouthCountyParks.com

GPS/Maps Use: 1402 Portland Rd., Highlands, NJ 07732



Battery Lewis, 16" Gun Battery

Constructed during WWII (1942-44), this 600-foot-long, earth-covered tunnel with two casemate-fortified gun emplacements was built with steel reinforced concrete. It could withstand 2,000-pound aerial bombs. These massive weapons were designed to fire missiles at targets over 25 miles away.



Lewis Overlook

During the war, the field the Battery overlooked was kept mown and free of trees, to ensure the view to the water was unimpeded.



Battery 219, 6" Gun Battery

Constructed between 1942 and 1944, this 170-foot-long, 120-foot-wide, earth-covered structure housed two 25-foot-long guns that could fire six-inch shells nearly 15 miles. While it had less firing power, these guns were more agile than those at Battery Lewis.



Former Fire Control Stations (South)

The Fire Control Stations were part of the Army's Fire Control and Position Finding System for Battery Lewis and Battery 219. These base end stations plotted the direction of targets and their range by spotting and triangulation.



Plotting Switchboard Room (PSR)

This earth-covered bunker is where soldiers calculated the data needed to aim and fire the NMR's major weapons. The information would be phoned to soldiers responsible for loading missiles at Battery Lewis.