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# Step back in time... at the historic Fort Ebey State Park

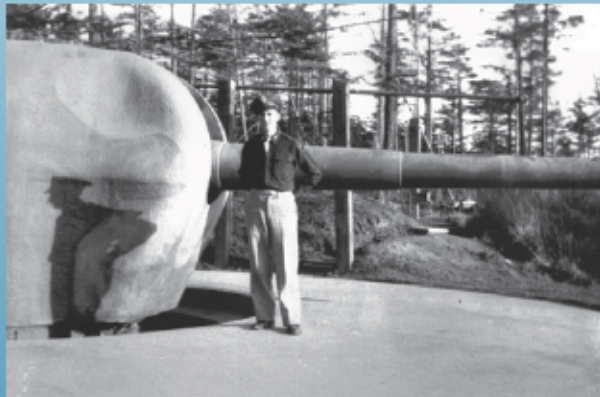
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Visitors can stand on the bluff at Fort Ebey State Park and let their imaginations take them back to the 1940s, when the country was in turmoil as the United States entered World War II.

Plans to modernize the Harbor Defenses of Puget Sound were already on the table when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. After that attack, the Army scrambled to put the plans into action. Fort Ebey was built from 1942 to 1944, joining nearby forts Worden, Flagler and Casey, among others, in the Harbor Defenses of Puget Sound.

This fort was manned from 1943 to 1946 by members of the Coast Artillery Corps of the Army. Between 1943 and late 1945, the guns were manned 24-hours-a-day.



*Above: An unidentified soldier stands by one of the two, six-inch guns located at Fort Ebey*



*Above: Cantonment area at Fort Ebey, circa the 1940s*

## The End

After the war, Fort Ebey's guns were cut up and melted down for scrap. Changing methods of warfare, including long-range bombing, missile technology and the lack of any foreseeable naval threat, made the coastal forts obsolete. The Coast Artillery Corps was disbanded in 1950. Fort Ebey was used by the Army Corps of Engineers from 1946 to 1948, and then by the Navy for a short period. The property was acquired by the state of Washington in 1968 and developed as a state park in 1981.

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# FORT EBEY STATE PARK



## YOUR GUIDE TO FORT EBEY'S WW II GUN BATTERY



*Coat of Arms of units at Fort Ebey:  
(Above) 14th Coast Artillery Corp.,  
(Right) 248th Coast Artillery Regiment  
of the Washington National Guard.*

## Battery Henry M. Merriam

Battery 248 was officially named after Colonel Henry M. Merriam, who was the Commander of Puget Sound Harbor Defense in the 1920s. However, the fort was decommissioned before the name was placed on the battery entrances.

## Features of the fort

Battery 248 was positioned with a view out the Strait of Juan de Fuca toward the open ocean. Observers stationed in small concrete structures along the bluff used telescopes to target the locations of enemy vessels, then relayed the information to plotters inside the battery. Two of these observation stations (called base end stations) are still in place and can be accessed from the Bluff Trail. Radar, a new technology at the time, also was used at Fort Ebey.

Fort Ebey's barracks were located near where the park office is today. Other facilities included a barber shop, library, bowling alley and fire station. The remains of an elevated 100,000 gallon wooden water tank can be seen along the Water Tower Trail.

## Tree wells

A unique feature of Battery 248 are its tree wells. When the battery was covered with dirt, brick enclosures were built around some trees to keep them alive so they could provide camouflage for the fort. Ivy and gorse also were planted for camouflage.

## Guns on the bluff

Fort Ebey's main armament was two, six-inch guns. The guns could fire a projectile weighing 108 pounds at moving targets up to 15 miles away every 12 seconds. Battery 248 was never fired against an enemy target, but the soldiers had plenty of practice. In fact, in 1944, Battery C, 14th Coast Artillery Corps won an international competition by scoring 22 hits in 18 rounds (certain hits counted twice) on a target towed at 14,000 yards, simulating a destroyer. As then Commanding Officer Major Samuel Kelley said, "These were fantastic guns."

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