

# FRIENDS OF FORT TOTTEN PARKS

## NEWSLETTER



P.O. Box 604984, Bayside, NY 11360 (718) 670—3684

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Fall/ Winter 2013

## HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL

It's time again to let out the goblins & ghouls as the Friends of Fort Totten Parks present one of our signature events, the Halloween Festival.

It's a two part celebration of the fall season and the Halloween holiday.



Saturday October 26, 2013 noon—3 pm This is a day time event designed for family enjoyment on the parade grounds filled with rides, crafts, pumpkins and hay rides. Enjoy a crisp fall day in the sun with family and friends at our free event. This event will be held in Crocheron Park this year due to the parking lot and comfort station construction at Fort Totten.

Friday & Saturday October 25th & 26, 2013 6.30—8.30 pm The Fort on Haunted Hill lantern tours have become a well known tradition by local residents and ghosts alike. Park Rangers take willing visitors on a lantern tour of the fort after dark. This free guided tour will expose the once a year visiting ghouls and ghosts to the unsuspecting guests of the fort. Group tours meet at the entrance to the battery, follow the signs or ask a passing ghoul.

*Ed note . The lantern tour might be a bit too scary for young children. Oh, bring a small flashlight as the walk to the fort at night is dark (and spooky).*

### Horseshoe Crab Poachers

New York waters have seen an influx of poaching as a result of Park Police cutbacks. Horseshoe crabs are docile creatures but worth money to poachers who sell them to restaurants, pharmaceutical laboratories and as bait to anglers.

Moratoriums on the crab has driven up the price making the rules designed to protect the crab put them at a greater risk to poachers as limited supply increases prices.



**Idea Corner:** Maybe put on a light sweater and a pair of walking shoes before its too late ! Winter is coming and fall is a wonderful time to enjoy the changing foliage with family and friends.



MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE PARKS DEPARTMENT BUILDING  
(PLEASE SEE WEBSITE FOR MAP)

PARKING WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE FORT GROUNDS ADJACENT  
TO THE PARKS BLDG FOR THIS EVENING ONLY )

### COMFORT STATION & PARKING LOT—UPDATE

Northeast Queens Parks Administrator for Fort Totten, Michael Agnello reports that construction work in the Little Bay area (just outside the main gate to the fort) is on schedule. Twenty nine retention tanks have been put in the ground and work will start on the building soon. Work is estimated to be completed by next fall.

### HURRICANE SANDY

A year later

Last year, hurricane Sandy passed through the New York City area. Many towns and coastal areas were hard hit by the storm which caused a multitude of problems across our city. Fort Totten fared well compared to other areas but did not escape some damage. Walkway paths next to the water were eroded and destroyed and a number of trees were blown down. The Parks Department is working closely with FEMA to address the damaged areas.

### Family fun day

Although held at Crocheron Park this year due to the construction at Fort Totten, family and friends turned out for another successful Family Fun Day outing. The change of location added new views and new friends to the already popular event. Don't miss next year's event !

*Fort Totten Is Not Just Another Park — It's "Our" Park !*

Without a Battle , Fort Proves Priceless  
Paul Coburn

Why did the US Government maintain a defensive facility for 100 years when it never saw any actual battle? The answer lies in the activities that were conducted at the fort were invaluable to our country's defenses.

- The first major contribution began in 1862 when Congress appropriated money to build as actual fortified battery, Using plans created by Gen. Robert E. Lee and thanks to the leadership of Gen. Joseph G Totten construction began on what would become the fort's legacy; the headquarters and training facility for the still very active Army Corps of Engineers. In 1870 the fort was the official and only engineer depot for the eastern United States. Graduates from West Point were sent to train at the fort as Army Engineers. Numerous weapons were developed at the fort in forthcoming years, especially in the field of underwater mining, torpedoes, bridges and seacoast protection.
- - In 1869 a hospital was built , later to become the Fort Totten Army Medical Center, responsible for the creation and development of a vast array of medical, dental and optical devices including x-ray equipment. One of the original Doctors was Maj. Walter Reed.
- In 1941 Fort Totten became the Anti Aircraft Command Center of the Eastern Defense Command, then headquarters of the entire Atlantic Division of the Air Transport Command. It was the site of the first radar installation on the east coast.
- As the final hurrah Fort Totten became the headquarters of the Air Defense Command and was responsible for all NIKE (missile) defenses of the northeast United States. Nearly half of all the Nike defenses were located

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**Events Calendar - Fall / Winter 2013**

- Event: **Crafty Totten Kids**  
Date: Saturday, Oct 12 , Nov 16, 2013 / Jan 18, 2014  
Time: 10 am - noon  
Location: The Chapel in the fort (see website for map)  
Description: Free arts and crafts for children hosted by the Friends of Fort Totten. A parent or guardian must be in attendance
- Event: **Back to School Festival**  
Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013  
Time: 12 pm – 3 pm  
Location: Alley Pond Park  
Description: Summer's not over. Beat the jitters of returning to school with an afternoon of fun activities including games, rides, craft projects, and free giveaways.
- Event: **Halloween Festival**  
Date: Saturday, October 26 2013  
**(rain date Sunday October 26, 2013)**  
Time: 12 noon – 3:00 pm  
Location: Crocheron Park  
Description: Join us for a free day of spooky family fun. Games, rides, craft projects, costume contest, hay rides, pumpkin patch and goodie bags.
- Event: **Haunted Lantern Tours**  
Date: October 25 & 26 , 2013  
Time: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
Location: The Haunted Fort Totten  
Description: Join the Urban Park Rangers and FOFTP Volunteers as they mix history with Halloween on a lantern tour of the historic Water Battery at Fort Totten. You must be on line by 8:15 pm to be guaranteed admittance.
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*Ed note. Fort Totten is currently the location of various NYPD , EMS & FDNY training facilities as well as the Ernie Pyle 77th US ARMY Reserve Command and the NYC Dept of Parks*

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**2013 FRIENDS OF FORT TOTTEN PARKS DONOR**

Please join us in shaping the future of Fort Totten Parks by making a donation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you interested in volunteering with the Friends of Fort Totten? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Please make checks payable to—Friends of Fort Totten Parks , PO Box 604984 , Bayside, NY 11360