

# MID-ATLANTIC CENTER *for the* ARTS



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## **World War II history comes alive with tours, events and the newly restored World War II Lookout tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23) Museum & Memorial**

**Cape May**—Honor America's "greatest generation" with a visit to the newly restored World War II Lookout tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23), and World War II history tours and events, sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts (MAC). Experience the impact World War II had on life in our region on the South Jersey World War II History Trail, explore both sides of the Harbor Defense System of the Delaware Bay on the new Guns of the Delaware, join area veterans during the World War II Lookout Tower's Grand Opening Ceremony and learn about Cape May's important role during the war years with a visit to the World War II Lookout Tower, trolley tours and Cape May's World War II Weekend.

The public is invited to join World War II veterans and public officials for the Grand Opening Ceremony of the newly restored World War II Lookout Tower on Armed Forces Day, May 16 at 10 a.m. Pay tribute to the men and women who bravely served in the armed forces and meet area veterans, World War II reenactors and representatives from Fort Miles at Cape Henlopen State Park, Lewes, DE. Admission to the ceremony is free. The tower will be open to climb until 6 p.m. that evening.

World War II comes to life at four historic sites on the South Jersey World War II History Trail. Minutes from Cape May, you can climb Fire Control Tower No. 23, the coastal artillery lookout tower on Sunset Boulevard and learn about massive efforts to protect the Delaware River and Bay. At the Cape May County Airport, you can visit Naval Air Station Wildwood in Hangar #1, an aircraft museum dedicated to the Navy dive-bomber pilots who trained there. Then it's on to Millville Army Air Field Museum, where Army Air Force pilots trained in the famous P47 Thunderbolt. Finally, you can walk the decks and learn what life was like for sailors aboard America's most decorated warship, the Battleship New Jersey, located on the Camden waterfront across the Delaware River from downtown Philadelphia. Each historic site will offer special discount coupons. A South Jersey World War II History Trail brochure is available.

The Guns of the Delaware features a tour of the newly restored World War II Lookout Tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23) near Cape May, NJ and a leisurely cruise on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry to see the giant batteries of Fort Miles at Cape Henlopen State Park in Lewes, DE. The World War II

Lookout Tower was part of the immense Harbor Defense of the Delaware system known as Fort Miles. There were eleven concrete fire control towers on the Delaware side and four here in New Jersey. Fire Control Tower No. 23 is the only New Jersey tower that has survived intact. The towers in North Wildwood and Wildwood Crest have been demolished and the one in Cape May City has been engulfed by the Grand Hotel on Beach Drive (you can still see its top sticking above the roofline). One of the towers in Cape Henlopen State Park in Delaware has been restored and opened to the public. Explore both sides of the Harbor Defense System of the Delaware Bay on this new tour.

On the weekend of the anniversary of D-Day, relive the war years and learn about how World War II affected Cape May and its residents during Cape May's World War II Weekend, Friday, June 5 through Sunday, June 7. Cape May went from resort town to a pivotal part of America's homeland defense efforts during the war years. The weekend includes a program of music from the war years, lectures, presentations, tours of Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum and the World War II Lookout Tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23), a World War II boat cruise, trolley tours, a Veterans Lunch at the Carriage House Tearoom and Café at the Emlen Physick Estate and a Veterans Memorial Ceremony at Sunset Beach. Price varies per activity. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 609-884-5404 or 800-275-4278 or visit [www.capemaymac.org](http://www.capemaymac.org).

The World War II Trolley Tour, offered spring through fall, is a two-hour narrated trolley tour that focuses on the impact the war had in the Cape May area. Tourgoers see the coastal fortifications at Cape May Point including Battery 223 and Fire Control Tower No. 23, the Cape May Canal and receive a 20-minute tour of Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum, Hangar #1 at the Cape May County Airport. Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for children (ages 3-12).

Beginning Friday, March 27, the World War II Lookout Tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23) Museum & Memorial will be open to the public daily (call for hours). With the tower fully restored, visitors can now climb to the 6th floor-spotting gallery while reliving the homeland defense efforts during World War II. The ground floor of the tower is fully accessible. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$2.50 for children (ages 3-12).

The World War II Lookout Tower is owned by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, and is leased to Cape May's Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts. The \$1.3 million restoration of the tower, completed in 2008-09, was funded by grants from the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, the New Jersey Historic Trust, the New Jersey Historical Commission and a Small Cities Block Grant administered by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

The Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts (MAC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Cape May's heritage. MAC also fosters the performing arts. MAC membership is open to all. For more information about MAC's year-round tours, festivals, special

events and many volunteer opportunities, call 609-884-5404 or 800-275-4278, or visit MAC's website at [www.capemaymac.org](http://www.capemaymac.org). For information about restaurants, accommodations and shopping, call the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May at 609-884-5508.

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