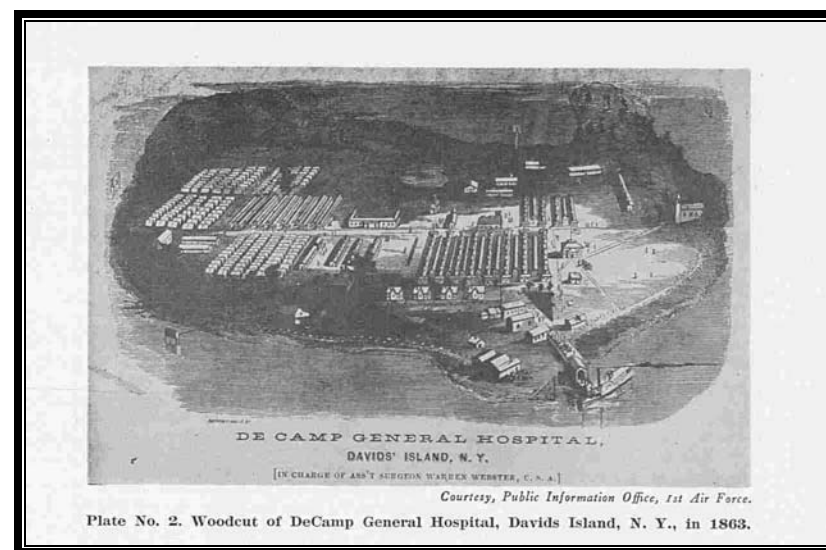


Aerial Photograph of Davids Island, ca. 1968.

Fort Slocum, Davids Island

June 18, 2008

The Federal Government's use of Davids Island began with its lease of the island for the construction of a hospital to treat injured Union soldiers at the beginning of the Civil War. In 1863, after the Battle of Gettysburg, the facilities on the island were expanded to accommodate a prison hospital for wounded Confederate soldiers.



Davids Island during its use as a hospital during the Civil War

After the war, the U.S. Government acquired the island outright for the construction of a permanent administrative and support facility for the New York Harbor Defense posts, Forts Totten and Schuyler, which served to protect the northern approach to New York City at the west end of Long Island Sound.



Over its nearly 100 year history the installation at Davids Island, formally named Fort Slocum in 1896, has been home



Parade Ground with Receiving Barracks, Post Exchange and YMCA/USO/Service Club in background

to a general medical facility, the U.S. Army Chaplain School, a recruitment and training facility, the Army Information School, the Officers' Training School, the Military Police, and the Public Information Detachment. It served as a training facility and embarkation point for many U.S. soldiers in both World Wars. In 1955, a NIKE Control Facility was built on the island to direct the launcher built on nearby Hart Island. By 1966, the U.S. Army deactivated and abandoned Fort Slocum.

Since its closure almost 40 years ago, all of the buildings have deteriorated significantly and many have been vandalized or damaged by fire. Attempts to develop the island in the 1980s and 1990s were never implemented.

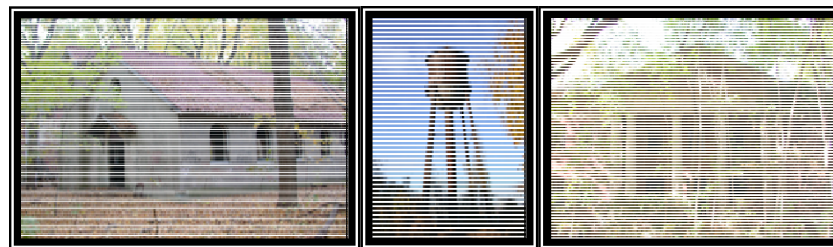
In 2004, at the request of Congresswoman Nita Lowey, Congress appropriated funds for the demolition of the buildings on Davids Island, now owned by the City of New Rochelle, to accommodate the use of the Island as open space. The Office of Economic Adjustment selected



From left to right: Building 57, Drill Hall/Gymnasium/Theater; Building 11, Officers Mess; Building 1, Commanding Officer's Quarters.

that will identify these objects, as well as other landscape features, such as ornamental plantings (trees, shrubs, etc.), lamp posts, fire hydrants, etc., related to the installation. This inventory along with the various other reports, may provide the basis for any future, on-site interpretation of the island. The Corps will ensure that these features will be protected as the remaining buildings are demolished.

The remaining demolition is anticipated to be completed by the beginning of 2009. It is anticipated that all of the documentary research, oral history and other activities will also be completed by this time. For additional information please contact Mr. Gregory J. Goepfert, Project Manager at 917-790-8235.



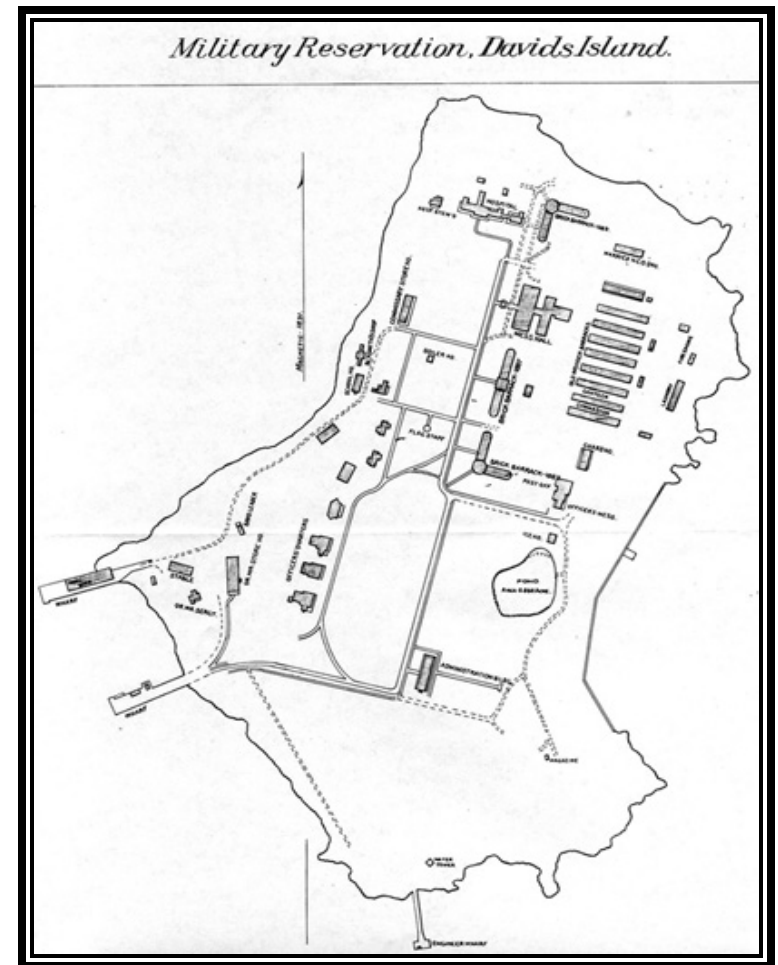
From left to right: Building 108, Post Chapel; Building 45, Water Tower; Building 13, Administration Building/Post Headquarters.



The Corps, working with the City of New Rochelle and Westchester County, identified several preservation alternatives for approximately 18 buildings, including the Post Headquarters, the Commanding Officer's Quarters, and the Post Chapel. In addition, a catalog of salvageable items from all of the buildings was assembled and provided to a number of regional and national military museums. Unfortunately, the City of New Rochelle was unable to commit resources to any preservation alternative and as a result all of the buildings will be demolished. None of the museums were interested in acquiring any of the salvageable items, however, copies of the reports documenting the island will be provided to them.

Prior to its demolition, each building has been documented with photographs and additional historical research on its construction, alteration and use. The Corps is also documenting the island through oral history. Over two dozen interviews of the fort's former military and civilian employees and residents have been conducted and will be used, together with the historical research, in a virtual exhibit that is currently being developed. The transcripts and tapes of the interviews will be provided to the New Rochelle Public Library, which has an existing collection of local oral histories.

As currently planned, the Batteries located on the southeast side of the island, the Parade Ground, the existing road and path system, the flagpole, the seawall and the Rodman Gun monument will not be demolished or removed from the island as part of this project. To aid the City of New Rochelle, the Corps is also preparing a landscape inventory



Map of Military Installation on Davids Island, 1891.

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to execute the removal of the buildings on the Island.



In accordance with its responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act (1966), as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act (1969), the Corps evaluated Fort Slocum for its eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places and determined that most of the buildings, structures, and landscape features, such as the Parade Ground, were eligible as a historic district. Previous investigations on the island identified archaeological sites that could provide information about the prehistoric and historic use of the island. These sites were also included in the historic district.

To mitigate for the adverse effect of demolishing the deteriorated historic buildings, the Corps initiated an effort to document the history of the island and to preserve those features that will remain. The Corps conducted archaeological investigations in the areas around the buildings prior to demolition to ensure that no sites would be affected by demolition activities. The archaeological investigations were designed to determine if artifacts or buried features pertaining to the operation of Fort Slocum, the Island's Civil War and post-Civil War occupation, as well as evidence of the early farms and Native American use of the island were still present. These investigations identified sites associated with Native Americans and recovered evidence of the 19th and 20th century use of the island as a military installation and residence in the recovery of such items as coins, buttons, bullets and toy soldiers. The collection, including all reports and research materials, belong to the City of New Rochelle and will be provided to the City for curation.

