

FORT ROSECRANS TOUR





Inspection, circa 1917. Location now covered by 1940 Hospital. Courtesy FGMF Collection

Fort Rosecrans Historic District

A Fort Rosecrans (1899-1959)

President Grover Cleveland directed William C. Endicott, Secretary of War, to form a board in 1885 to defend America's rivers and shores. The Endicott Board selected the Point Loma Military Reservation for two companies of Sea Coast Artillery (aka Coast Artillery Corps). General Order No. 134 named this post in honor General William Starke Rosecrans, a Civil War general and member of U.S. Congress who promoted railroads to San Diego in 1885. The Army departed in 1924, following the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 and returned in 1940 to serve until 1959. The last Army unit departed in 2007.



View to south on Sylvester Road (1) Quartermaster Storehouse (2) Enlisted Men's Barracks (3) Guard House. Courtesy FGMF Collection

A Colonial Revival Post Buildings (1902-1905)

Architectural elements which define the Colonial Revival style are symmetrically balanced windows and doors, porch columns in "Classical" form, fanlight windows, gabled dormers and roof ends, cornice returns, corbelled chimneys, ornamental pressed tin ceilings, inset buffets, and ornate staircases. Craftsmen installed quatrefoil window elements, interior door trim, and casement windows. The style rose in popularity after the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition and the Army Quartermaster Corps adapted the style to military construction.

Fort Rosecrans buildings were built with heart redwood to ensure survival against termites and wood rot. Charles Engebretson and Solon Bryan built the post structures, including Officer's Row. They painted the buildings in olive drab with dark green trim. The official color changed to khaki tan with white trim in World War I and then all khaki during World War II. The United States Navy changed the color to khaki with dark brown trim in 1984.



United States Army Fort Rosecrans National Register Historic District



TOUR ROUTE

- A - Fort Rosecrans Buildings (1902-1940)
Fort Guijarros Lab & Ballast Point Repository
- B - Officers Row (1903-present)
- C - Battery Calef Wilkeson (1897-1943)
- D - Battery White (1916-1943)



B Building 154, Officer's Row (1903-present)

Captain and Mrs. Mark Patton, Commanding Officer, Naval Base Point Loma welcome you to their quarters at Building 154, Officer's Row. The Army Quartermaster Corps used Standard Plan 142 to guide Engebretson and Bryan in construction of this northern-most married officers' quarters in 1903. This is the largest and most elaborate of the buildings on Officer's Row. It exhibits ornamental stamped "tin" ceilings, plaster and lath walls and ceilings, built-in sideboards, sliding pocket doors, Classical wood fireplace surrounds, an elaborate staircase with lathe-turned balustrade, and hardwood floors. Each duplex unit has three bedrooms, a den, bath, modernized kitchen, unimproved attic and basement. In 1999, the United States Navy invested \$2.5 million to restore Officer's Row and remedy structural damage from a slow-moving landslide.

View to south, Officer's Row. Courtesy FGMF Collection





10-inch Disappearing Rifle, Battery Wilkeson. Courtesy FGMF Collection

C Battery Wilkeson (1897-1943)

Battery Wilkeson is the oldest standing United States military battery in San Diego. Major Charles E.L.B. Davis, U.S.A., designed and submitted the plans for Battery Wilkeson to the Army Corps of Engineers on October 29, 1896. California Construction Company of San Francisco began construction on February 1, 1897 and completed work on March 9, 1898. While the 10-inch disappearing rifles were being installed, the United States declared the Spanish American War in April 1898 and fortified the harbor with underwater mines. Night illumination relied on kerosene lanterns and communication was by foot messenger and signal flags. Firing of the 10-inch guns shattered windows in downtown San Diego and projectiles traveled up to two miles out to sea. The guns defended San Diego from 1898 through the first few years of World War II.

D Battery John White (1916-1943)

The Coast Artillery Corps completed two 12-inch mortar batteries in Power House Canyon, southwest of the Post in 1916 to serve in World Wars I and II. The guns were scrapped in 1943, when two 16-inch guns were installed at the top of Point Loma.

Acknowledgements

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