

10 Things to Know About Fort Taber

One of New Bedford's historical treasures and largest parks is Fort Taber-Fort Rodman on Clark's Point. It's an amazing location and that shapes the tip of the south end of New Bedford. To me, it's important and fun to learn about your local history. Do you know why the fort has two names; Fort Taber and Fort Rodman? Most of the historical information used in this article was taken from the official Fort Taber- Fort Rodman Historical Association's website and the City of New Bedford's Fort Taber Park page.

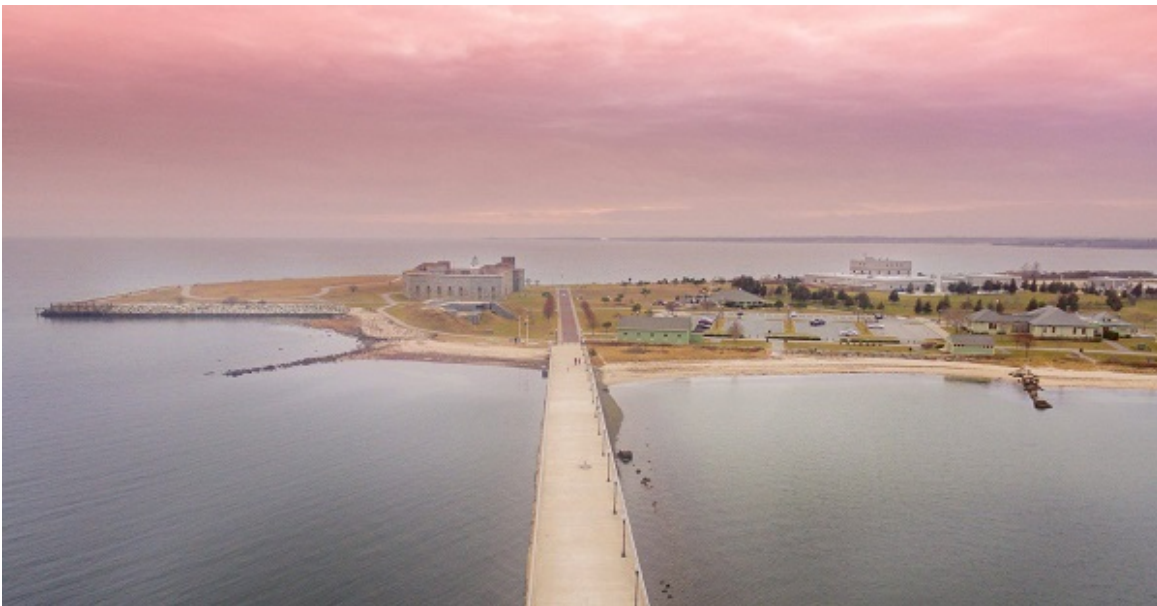
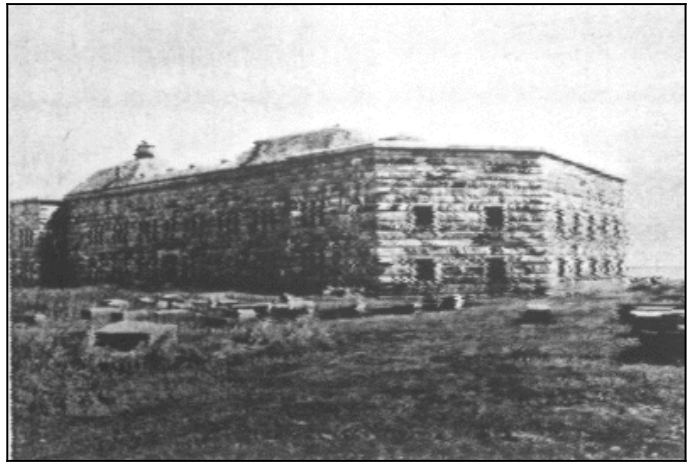


Photo by Felix Vieira.

1. There was never a military battle at Fort Taber-Fort Rodman, but the fort deterred enemy navies from attacking our shipping and city during the civil war, World War I and World War II.
2. The United States first saw Clark's Point as a strategic location during the American Revolution. A British raid in 1778 destroyed seventy vessels and twenty-six storehouses.

3. The first government structure built on Clark's Point was a 42-foot stone tower lighthouse erected in 1804 to help guide whalers and other vessels entering the harbor.



Fort Taber in 1871.

4. On September 24, 1857, the federal government purchased the Edward Wing Howland farm on Clark's Point for \$7,000 to establish a defensive military fort. The initial funding was \$50,000 for a 70 gun defensive fort.

5. On May 11, 1861, a temporary defensive position was completed and unofficially named Fort Taber after current New Bedford Mayor Issac C. Taber (1860-1862). It was built to help defend the area during the Confederate navy during the Civil War. The federal government called it "the fort at Clark's Point."



6. In 1898, the entire military property was officially named Fort Rodman in honor of Lt. Col. William Logan Rodman of New Bedford, killed in the Civil War battle at Port Hudson, Louisiana.

7. After World War II, Fort Rodman was declared surplus and in the 1970s part of the facility was sold to the City of New Bedford.



8. There is a military museum on the fort for visitors enjoy. It is open daily from 1-4 p.m. Call 508-994-3938 for more details.

9. There is an interactive timeline detailing the evolution of Fort Rodman-Fort Taber and an interactive map to learn specifics on each building.

10. Sometimes in the summer, the fine folks at the Military Museum will open the doors and give visitors a look inside. Here's a rare look inside Fort Taber: <https://www.newbedfordguide.com/video-a-look-inside-fort-taber-in-new-bedford/2016/05/07>

Know of an unique fact about Fort Taber-Fort Rodman? Post a comment!

