

*The War on the Water:
A War of 1812 Heritage Tour*

The Ohio and the Lake Erie Region



www.1812heritagetrail.org

Region Significance & Historical Context

- **1813 Ohio-Region Battles:**
 - Represented key American victories after a series of disheartening defeats
 - Helped to turn the tide of the war in favor of the United States
 - Each offensive used major water-based initiatives
 - Maintaining or gaining control of the Lake Erie region waterways was crucial to victory
- **Birth of the Modern U.S. Navy:**
 - Great Britain possessed the greatest navy in the world at the time of the war
 - During the Battle of Lake Erie, the U.S. Navy battled for and gained supremacy on Lake Erie
 - Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's victory on Lake Erie was key to an American invasion into Upper Canada.

Lake Erie and the War of 1812

In addition to overland fighting, the War of 1812 in the northwest Ohio area was fought using waterways.

The British Army controlled Lake Erie during the War of 1812 and exploited it and its tributaries as a highway for offensive moves into, and ultimately retreats out of, American territory.

This War on the Water Heritage Tour looks to visit these sites the same way the British did: by water.



The War on the Water Ports of Fall



1. Fort Meigs
2. Fort Stephenson
3. Battle of Crystal Rock
4. Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial
- 5/6. *US Brig Niagara* and Presque Isle

The suggested route of the tour begins with Fort Meigs and moves east, ending in Erie, PA at the *US Brig Niagara*.

First Port: Fort Meigs

Sailing up the Maumee River

Fort Meigs, built in 1813 by U.S. forces under the command of General William Henry Harrison, was besieged twice by British forces their and Native Americans.

The first siege occurred from May 1-9, 1813 when over 2000 British and allied forces laid siege to the fort. May 5th saw the bloodiest day of fighting as U.S. troops were defeated on the north side of the Maumee River, but succeeded in capturing a British artillery battery on the south side of the river. Facing a re-enforced enemy who now outnumbered his own forces, General Proctor lifted the siege and the British retreated.

A second attack occurred in July of 1813. Native Americans staged a sham battle outside of the fort, hoping to draw American troops out to the waiting British forces. However, the American troops remained inside the fort and the British allied force left Fort Meigs, moving on to Fort Stephenson.



Fort Meigs Today

29100 W. River Rd. (S. R. 65) Perrysburg, OH 43551

This National Historic Landmark sits on its original location along the Maumee River. Today, the largest reconstructed, wooden-walled fort in the United States, its blockhouses, artillery batteries and earthworks appear much as they did during the summer of 1813.

The Visitor Center features a museum store and museum. Important artifact collections are featured in the museum exhibits, including War of 1812 weapons, accouterments, uniforms and personal items of soldiers.

Historical interpreters dressed in 1812 clothing present demonstrations of camp life, weapons, and other activities throughout the summer.



Disembarking at Fort Meigs

Attractions of Interest in the Area

Perrysburg is home to a wide variety of shopping and dining options. Its downtown is full of unique shops and locally owned eating establishments.

Levis Commons Town Center, located near I-475 and Hwy 25, features upscale shopping, movie theaters, restaurants, and more.

Just down the road, Toledo is home to the award winning Toledo Museum of Art and the Toledo Zoo.

Fort Meigs:

www.fortmeigs.org

Perrysburg Convention and Visitor's Bureau:

www.visitperrysburg.com/

City of Perrysburg:

www.ci.perrysburg.oh.us/

Toledo—Your Local Connection:

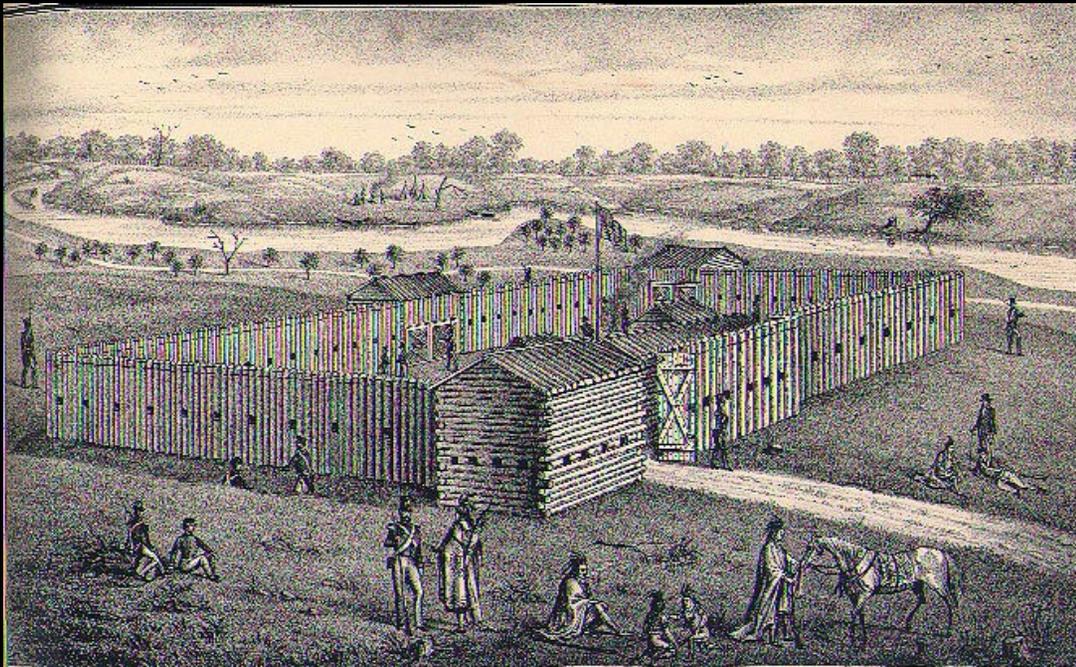
www.toledo.com/



Downtown Perrysburg, Ohio

Second port: Fort Stephenson

Sailing up the Sandusky River



Drawing of Fort Stephenson

Fort Stephenson, a U.S. post at Upper Sandusky, was attacked on August 2, 1813 by British and Indians forces.

The fort was successfully defended by a small American force led by Major George Croghan and a single six-pound cannon nicknamed "Old Betsy." British forces stormed the fort in a frontal assault but were severely repulsed by the U.S. forces, forcing them to retreat back across Lake Erie to Fort Malden in Ontario.

Fort Stephenson Today

423 Croghan Street Fremont, OH 43420

Though Fort Stephenson no longer stands, “Old Betsy,” and the remains of Major Croghan rest on the site along with a monument and a plaque commemorating the battle that occurred there.

In addition, the Birchard Library, which was built upon the grounds of the old fort, houses the Fort Stephenson Museum which displays artifacts from fort and battle.



Croghan Monument

Disembarking at Fort Stephenson

Attractions of Interest in the Area

The site of Fort Stephenson is located in Fremont, Ohio which boasts a historic downtown district, and is home to the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center.

Fremont is also home to the Sandusky County Fairgrounds, and the Fremont Speedway.

The Cedar Point Amusement Park and Lake Erie beaches are only a short drive away.

Fort Stephenson Information:

www.sandusky-county-scrapbook.net/FtStephenson.htm

Birchard Library:

www.birchard.lib.oh.us/index.htm

Fremont, Ohio Visitors Guide:

www.fremontohio.org

The Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center:

www.rbhayes.org/hayes/

Sandusky County Fair Grounds:

www.sanduskycountyfair.com

Fremont Speedway:

www.fremontohspeedway.com/

Cedar Point Amusement Park:

www.cedarpoint.com

Lake Erie Beaches:

www.lake-erie.com

Third Port: Battle of Crystal Rock

Entering the Sandusky Bay

N 41° 30.862 W 082° 44.635, (Marblehead Point) Crystal Rock, OH

This engagement is notable for its designation as the first battle of the War of 1812 to take place on Ohio soil. The battle took place on September 29, 1812, just three months after the start of the war. Although deemed a “battle,” the fighting was quite brief and might be more aptly titled as a “skirmish.”

Crystal Rock, Ohio is located on Marblehead Peninsula. An historical marker has been placed at the site to record its place in history and its connection with the War of 1812.

When you venture out to see some other local Sandusky attractions, you can locate this site on your own land adventure. It is located on the south side of E. Bayshore Road (south side of the Marblehead Peninsula)



Disembarking at Crystal Rock

Attractions of Interest in the Area

Crystal Rock is located near:

The Crystal Rock Campground

The African Safari Wild Life Park

Cedar Point Amusement Park

Lake Erie Beaches

Sandusky, Ohio Visitor Information:

www.10best.com/sanduskyoh

Cedar Point Amusement Park:

www.cedarpoint.com

Lake Erie Beaches:

www.lake-erie.com

Crystal Rock Campground:

www.crystalrock-campground.com

African Safari Wildlife Park:

www.africansafariwildlifepark.com

Ohio Historical Society:

www.ohiohistory.org

www.ohiokids.org

www.ohiohistoryteachers.org

Fourth Port: Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial

Entering Put-in-Bay

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, located on South Bass Island in the Village of Put-in-Bay, stands to quietly remember the collective lives lost and celebrate the peace that came in the aftermath of the War of 1812. The site is the only international peace memorial in the National Park Service

In addition, it commemorates the September 10, 1813 victory of American Commander Oliver Hazard Perry's U.S. Naval fleet over the British in the Battle of Lake Erie. Perry's victory brought American control of Lake Erie and allowed for an American invasion into Upper Canada.



Zerry's Victory and International Peace

Memorial Today

Village of Put-in-Bay, South Bass Island, OH

Visitors can enter the memorial and take an elevator to its open-air observation deck 317 feet above Lake Erie. The observation deck offers a panoramic view of the Erie Islands and Lake Erie. On a clear day you can view the states of Ohio and Michigan and the province of Ontario.

In addition to the monument, there is also a visitor's center. The visitor center features an exhibit highlighting the Battle of Lake Erie and the early fighting in the Western Theatre. Additional features are an orientation film on the battle and a gift shop.



Disembarking at Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial

Attractions of Interest in the Area

A popular vacation destination, Put-in-Bay features plenty of shopping, bars, and restaurants. Golf cart and bike rentals allow you to explore the rest of the island at a leisurely pace. Put-in-Bay is only accessible by boat, ferry, or plane.

The island is home to other attractions such as the Heineman Winery and Crystal Cave, Perry's Cave, Stone Hedge House Museum, and South Bass Island State Park.



Perry's Victory & International Peace Monument:

www.nps.gov/pevi/

Put-in Bay attractions:

www.putinbay.com

Jet Express (Water-Jet Catamaran) Ferry Service:

www.jet-express.com

Miller Ferry:

www.millerferry.com

Next Port: The US Brig Niagara

Entering Presque Isle Bay

The *US Brig Niagara* was the ship in which Commodore Perry and the American fleet overcame the British in the Battle of Lake Erie and helped to secure the Northwest Territory.

Perry's original flagship, the *US Lawrence*, was nearly destroyed at the beginning of the battle. Dressed like a common sailor, Perry took command of the *Niagara* from Lt. Elliot and returned into the fray.

With the *Niagara*, Perry was able to continue the fight and ultimately seize victory.



“We have met the enemy and they are ours.”
– O.H. Perry

The US Brig Niagara Today

150 East Front Street Erie, PA 16507

You have the opportunity to visit and sail upon the reconstructed *Niagara* and learn some of the adventure of sailing a tall ship and the history behind the War of 1812.

There are 1 day, 2 week and 6-8 week options.

The *Niagara's* main home is the Erie Maritime Museum in Erie, PA, where a variety of maritime information and exhibits about the War of 1812, the *Lawrence*, and the *Niagara* can be found.



An Extra Port. Presque Isle

Presque Isle Bay



Presque Isle

Presque Isle, located 4 miles west of Erie, Pennsylvania, served as a base for Commodore Oliver Perry's fleet during the War of 1812. Perry made great use of the area, where he constructed a pier and site to build 6 of the 9 boats within his fleet.

Today, Presque Isle State Park is home to Perry's Monument, the Tom Ridge Environmental Center, and Pennsylvania's only "seashore." It was recently given the distinction as being one of Pennsylvania's Top 20 "Must See Parks."

Disembarking at the U S Brig Niagara and Presque Isle Attractions of Interest in the Area

There are a variety of fun locations around Presque Isle such as:

The Erie Zoo

Presque Isle State Park

Splash Lagoon Water Park

Waldameer Water Park

Troyer Farms

The Brig Niagara & the Erie Maritime Museum:

www.brigniagara.org/

Muster Role for the American Fleet:

www.brigniagara.org/MusterRole.htm

Variety of programs for children and educators:

www.brigniagara.org/education.htm

Visit Erie, Pennsylvania:

<http://www.visiteriepa.com/>

Presque Isle State Park:

<http://www.presqueisle.org>

*The War on the Water:
A War of 1812 Heritage Tour*

Produced by

Abby Boggs, Amanda Litzinger, Ashley Ray,
Anne Stevenson, Ed Root, Jennifer Toburen,

For

The War in the Western Theatre Legacy Council

www.1812heritagetrail.org