

THE OLD FORT PALISADE

WINTER 2022



Greetings from the Board President:

As I write, 2022 is coming to a close. This past year saw the return of Education Day (in May) with over 600 children, teachers, and chaperones attending. Hopefully, this next year it will be even larger. The bridge construction on Spy Run has posed a real challenge in accessing the Fort. Hopefully, the completion is nearing. Amidst these hurdles, a Napoleonic event was added and well attended. The original bake oven was demolished and debris removed. Unfortunately, the number of both reenactors and public were down (compared to prior to Covid) but we're anticipating attendance will increase in 2023.

Up and down the line fellow soldiers gathered around smoky fires. Soldiers began to sing traditional carols & toasted each other, the Army and the Commander-in-Chief... "Adeste Fideles... God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen... & Hark the Herald Angels" soon resounded throughout the camp.
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On Nov. 1st, someone set fire to the firewood stored behind the new bake oven inside the Fort, causing extensive damage (you can read more on page 6). If you are inclined to support the reconstruction of the oven cover, simply access our web page and click-on the "donate button."

What is the primary source that produces the most value to a site like ours? It's our volunteers. These volunteers run events, clean rooms, maintain the garden, split firewood, demonstrate period crafts, paint doors, give tours, answer phone calls, run the bake sale, do interviews, run the web site and Facebook page, and so much more! If you have an interest in volunteering, feel free to contact us. I hope that 2023 will be a far better year than the last few have been and that you have a great New Year!

Norm Gable
President, Historic Fort Wayne Inc.

From the Treasurer...

If you are considering a gift to support the Old Fort, December is a perfect time! One of our key sources of support is our Endowment Fund and this month all gifts to our Endowment Fund are eligible for a 20% match.

The Fort's Endowment Fund is managed by the Community Foundation which gives an organization our size the advantage of professional investing which has averaged close to 10% annually. This month, the Community Foundation has its annual gifting drive and provides a 20% match to additions to Endowment Fund balances.

Typically our Endowment contributions range from the "keep the change" at the bake sale, volunteers who send in a check, and random visitors who mail in checks, to bequests from estates and memorials. Additional contributions come from various sources. I have several clients who instead of taking a taxable IRA distribution, direct their custodian to pay the year's amount to their church or other charity.

We have managed to add almost \$10,000 a year (which translates to \$12,000 with the Match) for the last 5-6 years and, with accumulating investment returns, our Endowment is approaching \$150,000. Not bad for an organization our size.

During this season of giving, we hope you might consider a special gift to the Old Fort, and help "Keep the Fort in Fort Wayne." Donations can be made through our webpage, <https://oldfortwayne.org/get-involved/donate/> or by check made out to Historic Fort Wayne, Inc., and mailed to P.O. Box 12650, Fort Wayne, IN 46864.

In addition, mention the 20% match to people you talk to. It might be just the motivation to create an Endowment Contribution. As always, thank you for your continued support!

Tom Grant
Historic Fort Wayne, Inc. Treasurer

Who's Who

Board Members: Norm Gable, President
Bob Jones, Vice President
Tom Grant, Treasurer
Nancy Stansberry, Secretary
Members: Randy Elliott, Josh Grubaugh,
Andi Hahn, Kip Lytle, Sean O'Brien,
Gerret Swearingen

Events Planning/School Demos: Bob Jones

Facilities Committee: Sean O'Brien

Maintenance: Randy Elliott

Volunteer Coordinator: Bob Jones

PR/Marketing: Jennifer Balkenbusch

Social Media: Kathleen O'Connell,
Willow Ortiz

Send your comments/questions to
info@oldfortwayne.org. Your message
will be sent to the appropriate contact
person.

Sign up to receive our quarterly
e-newsletter

THE OLD FORT PALISADE

Send your request to:
publications@oldfortwayne.org

We are looking for articles
for future issues.

If you have an historically pertinent
subject you'd like to write about, let us
know at
publications@oldfortwayne.org

Deadline for submissions to the
Spring Palisade will be
March 1, 2023

2023 Schedule of Events

Jan. 28-29	Nouvelle Annee 1743
Feb. 18-19	1812 Winter Garrison
Feb. 25-26	Revolutionary War Garrison
Mar. 25-26	Civil War Winter Garrison
May 12	Education Day at the Old Fort
May 13-14	Muster on the St Mary's
June 10-11	Siege of Ft Wayne 1812
July 22-23	Trading Post on the Northwest Frontier
Aug. 26-27	Post Miamies 1755
Sept. 2-3	Napoleonic Days 1804-1814
Sept. 10	Be a Tourist in your Home Town
Oct. 21	Fright Night Lantern Tours
TBD	Christmas at the Fort

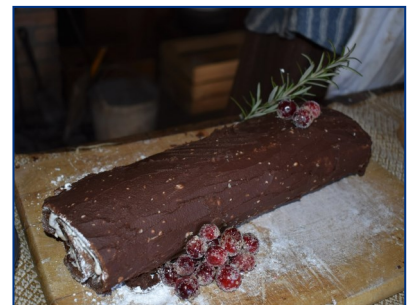
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oldfortwayne.org

2023 EVENT SCHEDULE UPDATE

When we set up our schedule for 2023, many of you noted that we had not included our usual holiday event on Thanksgiving weekend. "Christmas at the Fort" (some years called "Joyeux Noelle") had originally begun to coincide with the running of the downtown Fort Wayne "Holly Trolley" - a one day event encouraging people to visit and "Shop Local" on that weekend.

Fort Wayne has expanded its focus on shopping downtown into a full month, called "Days of Holly Shopping", and the Trolley is no longer running on that Saturday following Thanksgiving. With the original impetus for the event gone, several years of low attendance, and a struggle to find someone to coordinate an event on a major holiday weekend, the Board felt it made sense to discontinue the event in 2023. This year, however, we had great weather and an amazing turn out—and people expressing a willingness to organize the event next year! So, the Board is revisiting that decision, and it looks like we may be adding a holiday event back onto the schedule. Watch for more details and a firm date in future newsletters, on our website, and through our Facebook page. If you'd like to help make sure it happens, speak with a Board member and volunteer your time!



Volunteer Profile: Meet Andi Hahn

My name is Andrea Boyer-Hahn. I live in Ohio and am a native of Indiana. I have been associated with the Old Fort since the 1980's. I was one of the women playing Metis at various events, but not working directly for the Fort. I traveled quite a bit back then. I have been reenacting for 36-38 years, and raised my girls in the hobby. Now I am bringing out the next generation.

You will see me at some school tours and various events throughout the year. My favorite is the timeline, Muster on the St. Mary's. Though I am a 1744-1800 kind of person, it is not unheard of for me to do later times. I did make myself an 1812 dress and have worn it. As I get older, I am appreciating the style and ease of the dress.



My husband, Rick, joins me when possible. I love working with him. We can play off each other well. We love to do research together. It's not our favorite date night, but it's very close. My other favorite things are sitting by a campfire on a cool clear night and holding whichever grandkid needs my lap and my hugs. There is nothing better than to feel that closeness and know my own grandmothers, in the past, did the same. It is this that drives me to reenact.

My love of cooking drives me as well. There's no better way to see how your family lived than to cook family recipes like they did. I have great appreciation for the frugality of the times. Admittedly, my learning curve was not as steep as some. I learned very early to cook for a family. I have incredible cooks who taught me what I know, and I studied pastry under my cousin in Paris.

Cooking and grandkids are not my only loves. Reading, audiobooks, my garden, long drives and long walks seem to take up some of my time. Okay, since Covid, a lot more time. We are not always where we would like to be, but where we need to be. If you see me at the Fort, I may be in a harried state. Have patience, please. I usually have a lot going on—or I am supposed to be somewhere and doing something and can't remember, but I'd love to say hi.

Historic Fort Wayne, Inc.

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Fort Wayne, IN



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Fort Wayne, IN 46864
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www.oldfortwayne.org

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Kathleen O'Connell
editor

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CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Norm Gable

Volunteers are the heart of every historical site. Ours is no different. When participating as a reenactor, you are greeted, registered, and directed where to set up your camp by a volunteer. Before an event begins, volunteers are there to clean the site, mow, and stock firewood. At some sites, preparation takes weeks in advance as multiple people work to clear brush and downed trees. Volunteers sell prepared food items (that they may have created) to both reenactors and public, and at some places, may sell tickets (not us!). It's a lot of hard work and I think, unless you have personally volunteered yourself, you may assume things just magically happen, but they don't. At any event, dealing with situations or challenges may in turn create conflict. Please remember we are all trying our best. Be a part of the solution, not the problem.

Sometime volunteers may also want to actively "look the part" during events. They may just show up dressed in outrageous-looking outfits thinking they will fit in! That is the time when we all need to take a step back and remember when we were just starting out and then graciously offer help to these 'newbies', trying not to criticize too much. At the Fort, we help guide beginners by offering loaner clothing, giving people a chance to experience the reenacting world without massive financial debt. As a matter of fact, I've seen some of the most appallingly-dressed individuals who then become the most flawlessly dressed with the proper encouragement.

What makes a volunteer valuable? Benefits of volunteers include their knowledge, skills, contacts, and physical abilities, just to name a few. But their most important quality is showing up. If you have a volunteer that will show up when asked and do whatever needs to be done, you found a gem! Treat them well and give them the guidance they need. If you're lucky, some day they may take over your position!

How to Get Started Volunteering

Bob Jones

Volunteer Advance normally meets the second Saturday of the month from 10:00am to 12:00pm for new volunteer orientation and topical discussions. In January, we will meet on Saturday, January 14, 9:00 am to noon, at the Allen County Public Library Main Branch (900 Library Plaza). Parking is free to holders of library cards. Parking on the street is also free on weekends. We will meet in the Genealogy Department on the east end of the second floor, and review original documents related to 1810 - 1819, locate documentary resources on the early history of Fort Wayne, and explore other topics as you see fit. If you are a new or recent volunteer and want the V.I.P. tour, we will reconvene on the grounds of Old Fort Wayne, weather permitting.

Mark Your Calendars

Future Volunteer Advance meetings

Location and Topics TBD

February 11

March 11

April 8

Bob Jones

Event Manager, Volunteer Manager



*A new-ish volunteer,
clearing out rotted,
unusable firewood.
Thank you!*

FIRE AT THE FORT

As most of you know, we experienced a fire at the Old Fort several weeks ago. It occurred behind the new bake oven in the northeast corner. You may be familiar with this area as it's the same spot of the most recent car collision. The fire department with their usual skill and professionalism got the fire under control almost as soon as it was reported. A huge thanks to Fire Station # 1. A very good thing is that both the oven itself and the woodshed appear to be undamaged.

The official cause of the fire was determined to be "accidental". Looking ahead, we've removed almost all of the burned palisade timbers. The oven roof is unfortunately a total loss so that still remains to be removed.

We're hoping to organize a workday in the near future to dispose of all the debris both from the fire and the old bake oven demo last year. Bob Jones has organized an effort to remove all the stray, easily combustible material on the property.

We will rebuild, and maybe make it even better.

Sean O'Brien, Grounds Committee



DAR Presentation

On Saturday, December 10, the members of the Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) presented a generous gift to the Old Fort. Benita Steyer had contacted Bob Jones regarding a donation for the Old Fort after they saw the story about the recent fire at the Old Fort. She said that they were familiar with the mission of Historic Fort Wayne and its events, and that part of the mission of the DAR is also educating the community on its history.

During discussion at their regular meeting, it was decided that a donation would be made and members of the chapter personally donated money. They presented a \$1000 check to Tom Grant and Sean O'Brien at the beginning of their December meeting. The check is to help with the costs of fixing the palisade wall damaged in the fire.

We are thankful for the gracious support of the DAR and their shared focus on education and local history.



FALL AT THE OLD FORT

Veterans Day
Parade



Concordia High
School Work Day



Drying Broom
Corn



School Groups



River City
Rat Race



Work
Days



Fright Night
Lantern
Tours



Christmas
At the
Fort



CHRISTMAS 1777

Stephen R. Jahrsdoerfer

The winter encampment at Valley Forge has long been the stuff of legend. A wise man said, "All legends have a basis in fact...when the facts become legend...print the legend." I offer for your consideration the Legend of Christmas at Valley Forge.

The third year of the Revolution, 1777, was another difficult year for General Washington and his soldiers. Again, he had lost more battles than he had won. On 26 Sep, 1777, the British occupied the capitol city of Philadelphia unopposed. The Revolution was balanced on the edge of a knife.

On 11 Dec the Army began an 8-day, 13-mile journey to a place called Valley Forge. Valley Forge was a densely wooded, naturally defensible plateau. By Dec 19th 12,000 Soldiers & 400 women & children marched into Valley Forge, having little to eat for the last 8 days, particularly meat.

An army of skeletons arrived naked, starved and sick. Many unfortunate soldiers were in want of everything; they had neither coats nor hats, nor shirts, nor shoes. As before, bloody footprints in the snow were left by bootless men. Their feet and their legs froze until they were black. Soldiers wrapped in thin blankets tried to huddle around smoky fires of green wood. A plaintive chant from the starving: "We want meat! We want meat!" could be heard.

From before sunup till long after sundown one could hear the steady crash of the ax, held by hands benumbed with the cold, as blow by blow, trees were felled by men eager to erect crude huts, a better shelter than the tents in which they were shivering and choking. General Washington passed thru the area occasionally to check on the progress. It became known that he would stay in his own tent until all his soldiers were fixed in their housing.

The commissary system was broken. Rations were in increasingly short supply.... non-existent might be a better description. On the day of the 21st a general cry seemed to echo thru the camp that evening: "No meat--no meat" followed by "What have you for dinner, Boys?" "Nothing but fire-cake and water, Sir! At night: 'Gentlemen, supper is ready.' 'What is your supper, lads?' 'Fire-cake and water, Sir.'" Lack of food was so critical that a mutiny broke out among the troops of a Connecticut Brigade. They were on the verge of mass desertion chanting "No Bread, No Meat, No Soldier". Their officers had great difficulty in stopping it.

General Washington composed a letter to the Continental Congress about the dire situation and potentially disastrous outcome. "I am now convinced beyond a doubt, that unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place... this Army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things. Starve—dissolve—or disperse..."



The Revolutionary War Winter Garrison at the Old Fort explores the hardships soldiers faced during the cold months.

Continued next page



On Christmas Eve General Washington ordered all Regiments to draw rations to complete their provisions for Christmas dinner - a couple of bushels of root vegetables, some mutton and a barrel of grog. Christmas morning the sun rose on a grey, cold and snowy day. Soldiers filed from half-built huts and tattered tents like weakened animals emerging from their burrows.

They began preparing for their "Feast" by mid-morning. Water was drawn, firewood chopped and cook fires prepared. It continued to snow all afternoon but after drinking heated grog, it didn't seem to matter so much.

Many began to see the current bounty as a gift from God. The wind ceased, and the snow was softly falling as they stood around the cook fires. Up and down the line fellow soldiers gathered around smoky fires. Soldiers began to sing traditional carols & toasted each other, the Army and the Commander-in-Chief... "*Adeste Fideles...God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen...& Hark the Herald Angels*" soon resounded throughout the camp. From behind was heard a deep, a little tremulous, voice so low as to call for close attention.

There, stood General Washington himself.

He stated that he was in the process of moving from his tent to more permanent headquarters when he heard the singing and decided to investigate. He said, "I am astonished at the level of good cheer among you." He wished every man there a very Merry Christmas. On that Christmas.... Soldiers cheered, "Long live the United States! Hail to our Chief! May Liberty prevail!"

General Washington was at a loss for words. He wiped at his eyes. There the soldiers stood, having eaten meat for the first time in days, some wrapped in blankets with rags wrapped around their frostbitten feet and they cheered him that snowy day. As he watched them brave the elements, he asked, "Have you not suffered enough?"

A lieutenant, his head wrapped in a tattered scarf, quickly replied, "Having come this far, we can but go the rest of the distance." They all broke out into a deep throated rendition of "Joy to the World" with the General joining in. He turned to depart and said, "May God relieve your sufferings, if the Congress will not. And a good Christmas to you!" The General strode on to the next cookfire where he found nearly identical conditions...and at the next...and the next. He waved down a chorus of good cheer at each. Nowhere did he find the expected misery and mutiny. Instead, he found carols of Christmas and an air of celebration.

With dark descending, and the night's cold with it, the General finally made his way back to his command tent. He was amazed to see, that in his absence, some of his staff had gathered garlands of holly and cedar and decorated the outside of his tent.



Making sure our reenactors have better rations during their winter weekend at the Old Fort!

Continued next page

It was said that Washington and his aides spent the evening safely ensconced in his new headquarters picking over a “simple, frugal, and austere” meal of sinewy mutton and hickory nuts.

By morning there was an additional four inches of snow.

These soldiers tired, hungry, in short supply of seemingly everything and wanting nothing more than to be home with their loved ones, still celebrated the magic of the Christmas Season.

“May God bless us, every one!”

Stephen R. Jahrsdoerfer of Fort Wayne is a retired field artillery officer who served the United States Army for 38 years in uniform and as a civilian. He is a visitor to the Old Fort who offered to share this article which he had published in the Journal Gazette.



2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

Public hours as listed below. If you're interested in participating as a reenactor or vendor, please contact events@oldfortwayne.org for registration forms, or visit our website.

All events are free admission, unless specifically stated. Donations welcome.

JANUARY 28: NOUVELLE ANNEE 1743

Saturday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

FEBRUARY 18: 1812 WINTER GARRISON

Saturday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

FEBRUARY 25: REV. WAR GARRISON

Saturday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

MARCH 25: CIVIL WAR GARRISON

Saturday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

MAY 12: ANNUAL EDUCATION DAY

For Grades 4 & 5

Pre-Registration Required, Deadline is March 6.

MAY 13- 14: MUSTER ON THE ST. MARY'S – A TIMELINE EVENT

Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm

Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

JUNE 10-11: SIEGE OF FORT WAYNE 1812

Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm

Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm



You can find us on Facebook
for up-to-date event news and happenings!

www.facebook.com/HistoricFortWayne

And check out
Old Fort Radio 1640AM
for historic vignettes,
invitations to events at the Old Fort,
and announcements of coming events.



THE FORT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

WE ARE ALWAYS RECRUITING NEW
VOLUNTEERS TO BE PART OF THE FORT'S
GARRISON, BUT EQUIPMENT IS EXPENSIVE.
THIS POSTER COMPARES THE PRICES OF ALL
OUR EQUIPMENT IN 1816 COMPARED TO NOW.

EVERY DONATION COUNTS!

- ONE LEATHER CAP WITH
PLATE, POMPON, CAP BAND,
AND TASSEL

1816:

\$2.50

TODAY:

\$250.00

- STAND OF ARMS
(MUSKET AND BAYONET)

1816:

\$13.00

TODAY:

\$1800.00

- CARTRIDGE BOX, BAYONET
SCABBARD, AND BELTS

1816:

\$2.50

TODAY:

\$340.00

- ONE SUIT OF CLOTHES
(COAT, LINEN OVERALLS,
COTTON SHIRT, SHOES,
AND NECK STOCK)

1816:

\$9.61

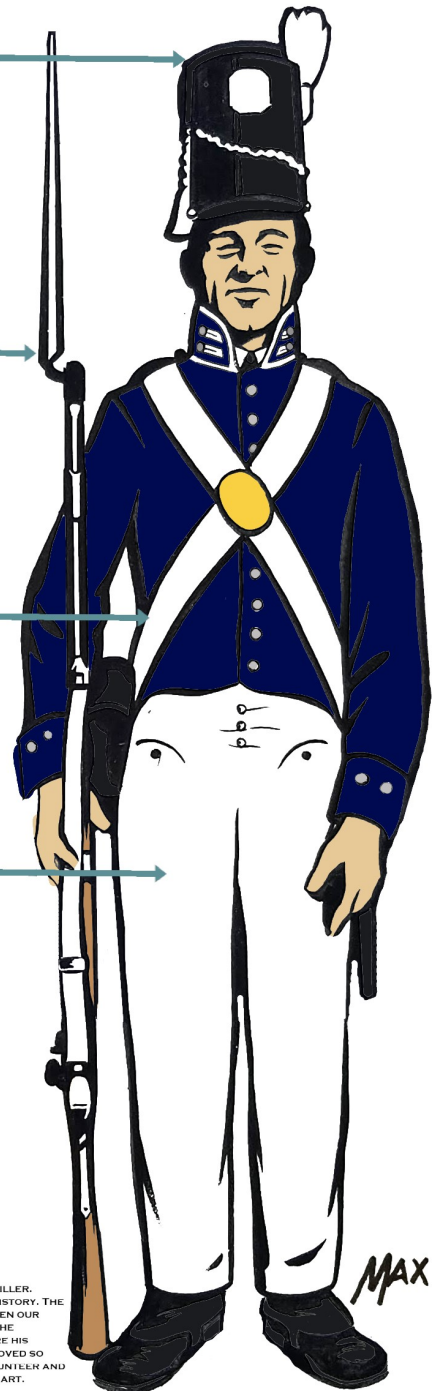
TODAY:

\$675.00

1816 TOTAL: \$27.61

TODAY'S TOTAL:

\$3,065.00



THE ARTWORK FOR THE SOLDIER WAS DONE BY MAXWELL MILLER. MILLER WAS A COMMERCIAL ARTIST WITH A DEEP LOVE OF HISTORY. THE 1812 ERA WAS ONE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST FOR HIM. WHEN OUR FORT WAS BUILT AND OPENED IN 1976 TO COMMEMORATE THE NATION'S BICENTENNIAL, HE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE HIS PASSION AND BRING OTHERS INTO THAT WORLD WHICH HE LOVED SO MUCH. THANK YOU TO PVT. PHIL ADELMAN, A CURRENT VOLUNTEER AND DESCENDANT OF MILLER THAT HAS ALLOWED US TO USE HIS ART.

[OLDFORTWAYNE.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/DONATE](http://oldfortwayne.org/get-involved/donate)

Education Day

Education Day is one of our favorite and most popular events. Each year, we welcome students in grades 4-5 for a day of interactive learning as Indiana history (and more) comes alive. If you know students or teachers in those grades, please let them know about this wonderful opportunity. Homeschool groups are also welcome.

This year, Education Day will be Friday, May 12, followed on Saturday and Sunday by our Muster on the St. Mary's timeline event.

Pre-registration is required for classes, and space is limited. Forms and more information can be found on our website at:

<https://oldfortwayne.org/event/annual-education-day-2-2/>

The deadline for registration is March 6, so be sure to start planning now to enjoy this event.

Questions: Contact educationday@oldfortwayne.org

Ken Sorg
Historic Fort Wayne



Merry Christmas
And Happy Holidays
From the Old Fort!

