

# THE OLD FORT PALISADE

FALL 2024



## Fort Reconstruction Project

The Old Fort, a recreation of the Fort that stood here in 1816, was built almost 50 years ago. Time and weather have taken their toll, and major repairs are needed. We are currently working toward raising 1.9 million dollars for repairs and renovations on all the Old Fort buildings. This project will proceed in phases. As enough funding is secured for each phase, work will begin.

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Phase 1 of our reconstruction project, the Spy Run Blockhouse, is done! Work on the second floor of the blockhouse began this spring after over \$300,000 was raised for the project through grants and donations. The construction was done by Hart Log Homes, LLC. Over the summer, volunteers finalized the project - installing gunports and shutters, treating the wood with a preservative, and completing the chinking. The almost immediate weathering of the wood from the preservative made a dramatic difference in the look of the building.

Now we are ready to move on to Phase 2, the Doctor's Quarters and Hospital building. Funding has been secured for work on this project, and the initial payment for ordering the timbers has been made. Work began with volunteers removing windows and door jams. It is our

*"We have started to cultivate flax plants at the Fort and demonstrate the process which turns the humble but mighty flax plant into hard wearing linen thread and fabric."*

In the Garden  
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intent to preserve and reuse windows, shutters, exterior doors, interior partitions and doors, and all hardware where possible as we proceed with the reconstruction. Tom Grant also notes that, "We have consulted and engaged with local masonry experts to assist in preserving the existing fireplaces and chimneys during the demolition and reconstruction."

The demolition of the existing structure will begin as soon as the scheduling of the timber delivery is established. The plan is to have the structure down to the foundation prior to delivery of the timber package to enable the construction work to begin immediately.

The Commander's building is next on the agenda and funding is required. The budget for this phase will be \$500,000. Historic Fort Wayne, Inc. does not receive any state or federal funding, but relies on generous donations from members of the community. If you would like to help support the Fort reconstruction, you can donate on our website or send a check to P.O. Box 12650, Fort Wayne, IN 46864. All donations are tax deductible.



**Donate Here:**  
<https://ldfortwayne.org/get-involveddonate/>



## Who's Who

**Board Members:** Norm Gable, President  
Bob Jones, Vice President  
Tom Grant, Treasurer  
Nancy Stansberry, Secretary  
**Members:** Josh Grubaugh, Andi Hahn, Brian Kilmer, Kip Lytle, Sean O'Brien

**Events Planning/School Demos:** Bob Jones

**Facilities Committee:** Sean O'Brien

**Maintenance:** Sean O'Brien

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Bob Jones

**PR/Marketing:** Jennifer Balkenbusch

**Social Media:** Kathleen O'Connell

Send your comments/questions to [info@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:info@oldfortwayne.org). Your message will be sent to the appropriate person.

Sign up to receive our quarterly e-newsletter

## THE OLD FORT PALISADE

Send your request to:  
[publications@oldfortwayne.org](mailto: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](mailto:publications@oldfortwayne.org)

Deadline for submissions to the Winter Palisade will be December 1, 2024

## From the Palisade's Editor

I began editing this quarterly newsletter in 2013. Time flies! I took a few years off due to work demands, so this is the 28th issue I have had the privilege to help produce. I'm already looking forward and planning for the future. My hope with these newsletters is always to provide information about what has happened and is happening at the Fort, as well as to provide a forum for people to share what they are discovering and love about history. My favorite parts of this job are finding people to write the articles and interviewing the volunteers. We've had over 50 different individuals share essays or their own story. Thank you! This newsletter could not happen without you, and whether it's writing about a skill that you want to share or a bit of history about which you are passionate, I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn and share the ways *you* make history come alive. You can find back issues on our website if you want to check out those past articles. There is an amazing wealth of information there.



What would you like to see in future articles? What is your passion, interest, or skill that you could share? What is a fun bit of history trivia that you would like to write up? I would love to hear from you! Find me at an event (I'll be behind a camera), message me through our Facebook page, or email me at publications@oldfortwayne.org.

Kathleen O'Connell

## Congratulations!

This year, the theme of the annual Three Rivers Festival parade was "Celebrating 200 Years of Allen County". Fort volunteers created a float highlighting our areas' history, emphasizing the relationship between soldiers, civilians, and Native Americans featuring a cannon, a Miami dwelling, and various trade goods. We were honored to receive the Admiral Andy Award for Most Educational Float! Congratulations and thank you to everyone who help with this fun project, building the float and marching in the parade.



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

[www.facebook.com/HistoricFortWayne](https://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.



# Colonial Medicine

Michael Engle



I have long been interested in American history and particularly the American Revolution. During a trip to Colonial Williamsburg years ago, I discovered the Apothecary Shop in the original building that housed Doctor Galt in the 1760s to 1808. The more I learned, the more I was interested in comparing medicine today with medicine then. I had been volunteering occasionally at Historic Fort Wayne and I thought this was an area to combine my interest with a chance to share what I learned. At the Fort, I discuss colonial medicine in Virginia in the 1770s. I have been at the French and Indian War events, too. The medicine is the same, my waistcoat is longer.

I use Dr. Galt from Williamsburg as the frame around which I present the information. Technically, the colonies did not have a medical school until one was started in 1765 in Philadelphia. In Virginia, the well trained would-be doctor was an apothecary/surgeon since that was the route to practice. He (women were in most occupations but not this one) would need a working knowledge of Latin since that was the language of medicine. Dr. Galt attended and graduated from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg where he mastered Latin. He then apprenticed to a local practitioner for seven years. He assisted in the shop where medications could be bought and sold without advice. If the person wanted, they could consult the practitioner for an additional fee.

At the end of their training period, an apprentice doctor would receive a certificate attesting to his training and usually some tools and books. If his family had money or he had a sponsor, then he would go to London to "walk the halls" of the different hospitals. This is somewhat similar to a residency now but he would have to pay for the privilege. Dr. Galt did that and studied anatomy, as well as surgery which was usually limited to the surface of the skin and fracture care including amputations. He also spent time studying that which they called male midwifery—what we call obstetrics and gynecology. He walked the wards of St. Thomas Hospital where he learned the medical management of illnesses. He returned to Williamsburg in 1769, and practiced there until his death in 1808.



Apothecary/surgeons were called 'doctor' by convention, not because they had an MD degree. Galt never actually had a degree. They did not do much of a physical exam unless there was trauma. Doctors listened to the list of symptoms and developed a working diagnosis. There were different competing theories of medicine at the time, but the Virginians tended to do what they thought worked, which was more empiric. A few of their treatments like Peruvian Bark worked on relapsing fever (now recognized

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as quinine for Malaria). They used leeches to bleed areas not able to be bled using a lancet. Leeches are still used in vascular medicine and US physicians can order the appropriate species from a company in London. Bleeding was done to remove about 16 ounces of blood if someone was felt to have “too much heat”. We call it therapeutic phlebotomy and it is used today in a few conditions.

During the America Revolution, the Continental Army Medical Department was modeled after the British Army. A prospective surgeon had their qualifications and attestations reviewed. Then they were set to an oral exam. If they passed, they could be assigned to a regimental hospital which roughly followed the units to which they were assigned. The next step up in care was the general hospital which was fixed in place. Patients could be sent on to the general hospital for what was thought to be more advanced care. There was often a political struggle between the two. The staff in the hospital did some things that would make sense to a doctor now. New patients had a sponge type bath and were given new clothes. They had to wash their hands & faces daily. The belief of fresh air being beneficial led them to having a form of air circulation in the tents and in the fixed buildings. They held helpful beliefs about hospital location—it needed to be away from swamps and the forests. Water should be taken from a fast moving stream and then from the middle. If anyone has walked down to the shores of the three rivers, you get the idea why.

As for specific treatments, if a person was shot in the leg or arm at home, the surgeon might try to save their limb unless the bone was damaged, and there was too great a risk of gangrene. At the hospital, the shear volume of patients prevented this, and amputation was more common.



Devoting too much time to one patient could cause another to die. The survival rate of a below the hip amputation was around 50%. They knew of “animacules” from the development of the microscope the previous century but they did not make the connection with disease. The surgeons would try to keep areas and the patient clean, and hope to avoid infection.

#### Suggested Readings:

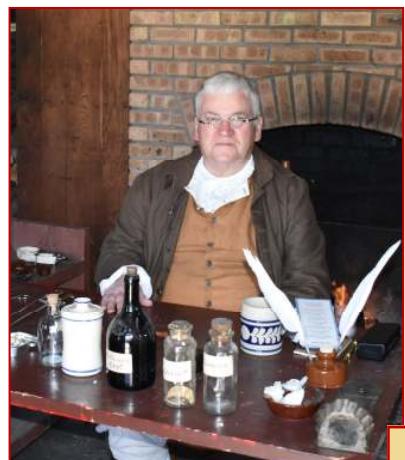
*An Army Doctor's American Revolution Journal 1775-1788*,

James Thacher

*Medicine in Colonial America*, Oscar Reiss, MD

*Medicine and The American Revolution*, Oscar Reiss, MD

*The Army Medical Department 1775-1818*, Mary C. Gillet  
*Physick: The Professional Practice of Medicine in Williamsburg, Virginia, 1740-1775*, Published by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.



**Michael Engle** is a family physician with Parkview Physicians Group in Albion. His medical knowledge and experience infuse his reenacting. He has a Facebook page, *Historic Colonial Medicine*,

# SUMMER AT THE OLD FORT



Taste of the Arts



Be a Tourist in Your Own Hometown



Radio Club



Napoleonic Days



Paint It Fresh: The Fort Wayne Plein Air Art Show



Three Rivers Festival Parade



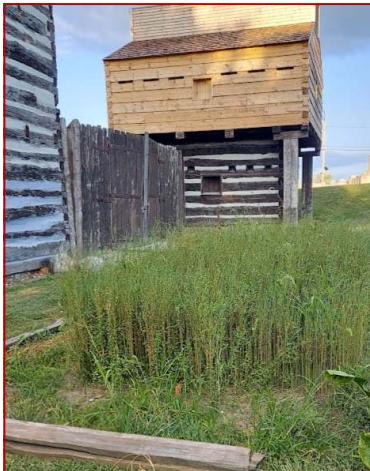
Post Miami



Day of Caring

## In the Fort Garden — Harvesting Flax

Lora Browning



Flax as a plant has been cultivated by humans since before written history and has played an important role in almost every civilization. Here in the Americas during the Early Colonial days it was one of the biggest cash crops for farmers, as linen was being worn by everyone. We have started to cultivate flax plants at the Fort and demonstrate the process which turns the humble but mighty flax plant into hard wearing linen thread and fabric. The process is very labor intensive but also very rewarding. Let's show you a breakdown of the process.

First the seeds are planted in early spring. A dense cluster of the plants ensures that they grow nice and tall. As the fibers we will eventually harvest for our string and fabric will grow in the stem of the plant, the taller the plant the better our finished product will be! The plant resembles meadow grass and has beautiful soft blue flowers. The flowers bloom over a wide period so you don't really notice a sea of blue flowers.

The plant is allowed to grow for 90 - 110 days and then harvested. When harvesting the plant for fiber production it is important to pull the plant up by the roots so that you get the longest fiber. Neat stacks are made of the pulled flax where it is allowed to dry. The next step is to remove the seeds - which can be done by hand or by a number of other methods and is called rippling. The seeds can be saved for next year's planting, processed for oil, or saved for eating. We are saving the seeds from this year's crop and will be planting them next year in the Fort Garden. Once the seeds are removed, the flax can be stored until ready to continue processing, or you can go directly to the retting process.

This process literally means to 'rot' the plant. The fibers desired for the production of cloth are inside of the stem of the plant. If you allow the natural process of decay to begin it makes accessing the fibers a good deal easier! There are several methods for retting. Dew Retting is the process of spreading your flax out on a large grassy area to allow the dew to wet the plants. The flax will need to be turned in order to allow the dew to evenly get on the flax. It can take between 2-6 weeks depending on the weather. Pond or vat retting is the process of submerging the flax in a pond or tank to allow the water to start the rotting process. This can take between 2 - 6 days depending on the temperature. Stream retting is a process of submerging the flax in crates in flowing water. Most people do not have access to a flowing stream, so this is not very common in modern times. In the top right picture you can see fresh flax newly harvested. The lower photo shows flax that has been retted and then dried and is ready for the next step in the process.



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Once the flax has been retted, you are ready to further break down the outside of the stem of the plant to reveal the fibers inside. This is performed on a machine known as a “break”. In the first photo below, a young visitor to the Fort is trying out the break.

Once through the break, the flax fibers are then combed through a series of combs that get finer as the process continues. This is known as combing or heckling and removes the ‘tow’ of the flax, the shorter courser fibers, from the higher quality longer fibers. See the photo below for our volunteer Connie demonstrating this process.

At the end of this labor intensive process you are left with the longest, finest fibers for the production of high-end thread and cloth.



## Volunteer Advance

Saturdays 10:00AM to 12:00PM

Sundays 2:00PM to 4:00PM

**Oct 12 - 13**

Sunday topics: Musket ball casting and musket ball dice,  
lead pencils, whizzers

**Nov 9 - 10**

Topics: To Be Announced



All sessions include new volunteer orientation, VIP tour of the Fort Complex, Q&A, FAQ

For information call the Fort Phone 10AM to 5PM Monday through Friday. (260) 437-2836

Interested in learning more about volunteering at the Fort?

Stop by the Welcome Table at events or message us at [events@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:events@oldfortwayne.org).

Thank you for helping us *Keep the Fort in Fort Wayne*. See you at the Old Fort.

## Summer Interns

*As a part of our educational mission, we were pleased to welcome three interns to work at the Old Fort this summer. They were on site Wednesday—Sunday, offering tours, helping with upkeep and maintenance projects, and learning about historic site management. They welcomed over 3600 visitors to the Fort. We asked all three to reflect on their summer experience.*



*Kyle Stark, Lily Hahn, Asa Jones*

**Asa:** The internship for me has been an overall good experience. I've gotten a great opportunity to learn more about history and the Fort. The time I've spent here over the summer will be a good preparation as I lean more into re-enacting. However it wasn't all easy. Many days were tough to fill, when guests were few, but we always kept ourselves busy with tasks. It was a little bit of a learning curve to take in so much information at the beginning of the internship. Fortunately for us, we had great people to lead us in the right direction during the internship. They offered us chances to improve our knowledge and skills. While I was here I had fun working with Brian, our wonderful tinsmith, to make a tin cup. I'm very glad I was able to spend my summer with great coworkers and doing something meaningful that will advance my knowledge and understanding of the Fort.

**Kyle:** This has been the most educational and interesting time I have ever spent at the Fort, making me a better reenactor for it. For example, I learned much of the history surrounding the native American population of the region and the surrounding context of the conflict

Wayne's legion was embroiled in when it began constructing the first Fort Wayne. Before, I had always summarized this major section of Fort Wayne history simply by stating that "Anthony Wayne built the first Fort Wayne in 1794" with no additional context as to why he built that fort, who he was fighting, and why he was fighting in this particular campaign.

Over the summer, I learned much of the background behind the campaign Anthony Wayne was conducting throughout the Northwest Indian War, which allowed me to tell a much clearer story to guests. I gained a deeper knowledge of the local tribes and their relations with the forts in the region. This internship also allowed me to research some areas of life during the War of 1812 such as common medical practices of the era. Additionally, with the presence of a supervisor, we were able to be more focused on projects that needed doing around the fort, such as cleaning rooms and laying gravel.



*Giving tours during the Siege of Fort Wayne*

This was not to say the internship was not without issues, of course. Outside of these issues, the internship was great. It helped me grow as a reenactor and a person, becoming better at public speaking and more knowledgeable in my history of the Fort. If the chance arose again, I would be honored to intern again next summer!

**Lily:** The internship was a fun way to learn as well as teach; from learning funny historical facts to coping with the most boring tour group I've ever had. The internship has been equal amounts fun and horror. Admittedly the day-to-day can get a little menial and boring but having fun tour groups, lots of daily activities, or dealing with the challenges of being so close to downtown can definitely bring a sense of liveliness to the weekday afternoons. Thankfully we had the help of Cory Balkenbusch, Terri Bartel and our supervisor Kip Lytle to prepare us and keep us sane. With their help, I feel a little more confident in my abilities as a reenactor and as a student of history. Asa and Kyle, the other two interns, really helped make the internship more fun, and honestly, I don't know if I would have made it through the three months without them, both mentally & physically. The three of us had a fantastic cookout and nerf gun fight for July 4th, which was a much needed break and will be a wonderful memory to look back on.



## Fright Night Lantern Tours Saturday, Oct. 19

6 pm – 10 pm

Tour the Old Fort at night! You will be guided by a historic interpreter who will present the Old Fort as it was in the early 1800s. Hear tales of encounters with the ill-fated Lieutenant Philip Ostrander, the Old Fort's resident ghost.

Purchase a sweet treat from the bake sale and enjoy stories by the fire while you wait. Ticket sales begin at 5:30, and close at 9:30. If you would like to volunteer to help with this event, please message [info@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:info@oldfortwayne.org).

Admission is \$5.00. Ages nine and under are free when accompanied by an adult.

## Christmas at the Fort Saturday, Dec. 7

10 am – 4 pm

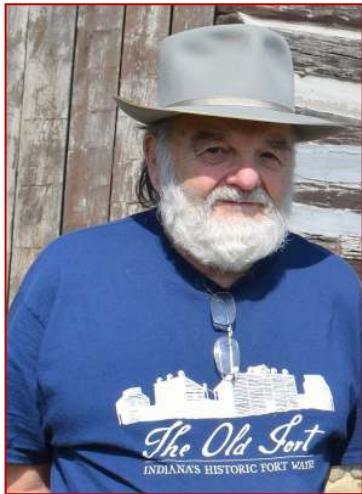
Christmas at the Fort is a timeline event and anyone is welcome from Romans to WW2. The theme is Christmas through time. In addition to our usual information for guests, we are hoping to explain Christmas customs during our specific eras. The Fort is registering interpreters/re-enactors as well as vendors for the event.

If anyone likes baking or selling to the public, we are looking for people to help with the bake sale. Karen Grant led the bake sale for many years but with her passing, we are recruiting new people.



Please call the Fort phone (260 437-2836) or contact event coordinator Michael Engle at [thehistoriccolonialmedicine@gmail.com](mailto:thehistoriccolonialmedicine@gmail.com) for more information and if you can help.

## Volunteer Profile: Meet Clark Derbyshire



Clark's family moved to Fort Wayne at the end of WWII, when his father came home from overseas and began work at General Electric as a Design Electrical Engineer. Growing up, Clark attended Forest Park Elementary School and North Side High School, followed by JATC Electrical Apprenticeship, and Electronics Engineering from ITT Tech. He worked a variety of jobs, mainly in the electrical and electronics fields and in the construction industry as a Journeyman Wireman, and also in the manufacturing industry as an Electronics Development Lab Technician. Additionally, Clark spent 18 years with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and qualified as an Instructor, certified in Weather, Navigation, Patrols, and Boating & Sailing Seamanship. He is married to Elizabeth (Liz), and they have two sons, a daughter, five grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.

Clark shared, "I began volunteering at the Fort in September 2023. I had been reenacting as a Fur Trader previously for about 18 years, but Covid shut everything down. As activities became more abundant, I decided to begin reenacting again. Many of the events were long drives and I wanted to remain closer to home. I had visited the Fort many times during their events, so I investigated becoming a volunteer and reenacting at the Fort. Most of the events are centered around military history but I dressed in my Fur Trader outfit and visited the Fort. After a few visits, there looked to be a need for help in the garden. I talked to Bob Jones and the garden became a good spot for me to be a volunteer. So, during the garden season, I will be a gardener and in the off season I will be a trader."

Remembering his early days, Clark recalls, "During summer vacations, I spent many summers on the farm of Grandma and Grandpa. I learned gardening from Grandma, starting at about the age of five. I learned about business from Grandpa, and learned about farm and animals from Great Grandpa. I think I was lucky learning and working on the farm. I tell people I grew up on the farm and learned two worlds, city and farm. On the lighter side, I was never enthused about history in school but I guess now I am one. I guess I have really experienced a lot of change, 82 years with 77 of it in Fort Wayne, along with southern Indiana on the farm. LOL, the city bus service way back stopped at 6:00 pm and Clinton and Spy Run were both 2 way streets."

Staying busy, Clark's hobbies include loom weaving, ridged heddle weaving, loom knitting and cording, especially the Japanese style of braiding (Kumihimo), gardening both veggies and flowers (African Violets, Orchids), amateur radio, boating, camping, cooking, building radio controlled model airplanes, and electric trains (G to HO).

Stop by the garden to say hi, and when you do, Clark says "Enjoy. Just call me Clark. No relation to Mr. Kent or Mr. Griswold."



## 2024 UPCOMING EVENTS

Public hours as listed below. If you are interested in participating as a reenactor or vendor, please contact [events@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:events@oldfortwayne.org) for registration forms, or visit our website.



### OCTOBER 12-13: INDIANA TERRITORIAL RANGERS' GARRISON

Saturday: 10 am–5 pm  
Sunday: 10 am–4 pm

### OCTOBER 19: FRIGHT NIGHT LANTERN TOURS

Saturday: 6 pm–10 pm  
Admission is \$5.00. Nine and under free when accompanied by an adult.

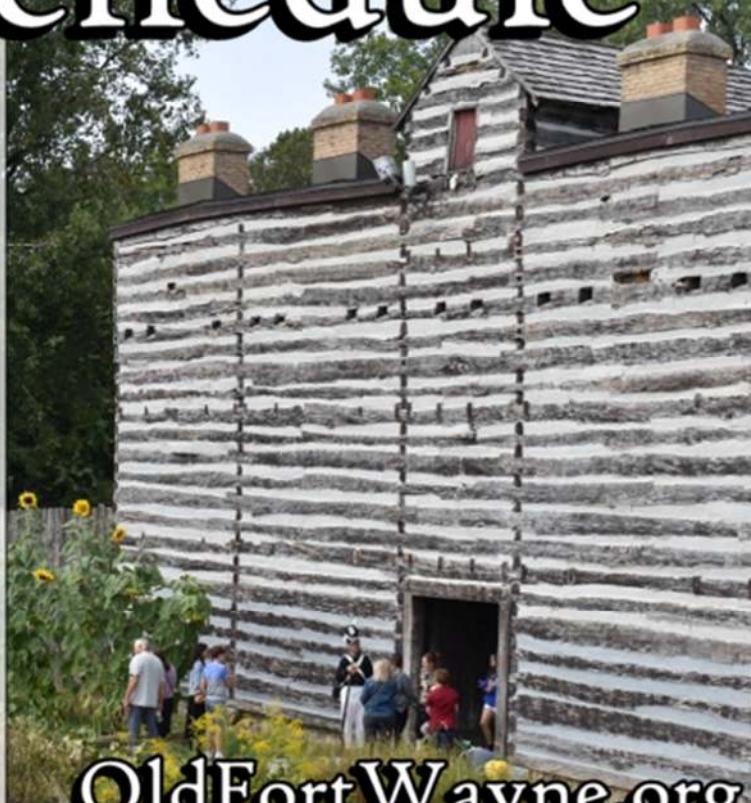
### DECEMBER 7: CHRISTMAS AT THE FORT: A TIMELINE EVENT

Saturday: 10 am–4 pm

If available, we post a schedule of activities prior to each event.  
Always check our Facebook page and webpage for any updates or schedule changes.

# 2025 Schedule

- Jan. 25: Nouvelle Annee
- Feb. 15: 1812 Training Weekend
- March 1: Revolutionary War Garrison
- March 29: Civil War Winter Garrison
- May 9: Education Day (grades 4 & 5)
- May 10-11: Muster on the St Mary's
- June 7-8: Siege of Ft Wayne 1812
- Aug. 9-10: Napoleonic Days 1804-1814
- Sept. 7: Be a Tourist in Your Hometown
- Oct. 18: Lantern Tours
- Oct. 25: Wayne's Legion Garrison
- Dec. 6: Christmas at the Fort



[OldFortWayne.org](http://OldFortWayne.org)