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The Friends of Fort McHenry

The Friends of Fort McHenry is the primary private, non-profit group that supports Fort McHenry. By working with Baltimore-area businesses, the Living Classrooms Foundation and the National Park Service, the Friends are instrumental in sponsoring summer ceremonies, educational programs and the Star-Spangled Banner Weekend. Last year alone, The Friends were responsible for bringing over 1,000 Baltimore City school students to Fort McHenry for special curriculum-based educational programs.

The Friends need your help! Consider joining. Volunteers, membership and tax deductible donations are welcome. Please call Kathleen Kreul, Director, Friends of Fort McHenry, at 410-962-4290 Ext. 850 or email: Kathleen@friendsoffortmchenry.org



Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



STAR-SPANGLED BANNER WEEKEND
September 11-13, 2009

195th Anniversary of "The Star-Spangled Banner"



What is Defenders' Day?

Defenders' Day commemorates the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," the National Anthem, and the successful defense of Baltimore City during the War of 1812. The holiday honors all individuals who contributed to the victory in 1814 - soldiers, sailors and citizens.

Citizens from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds rallied to defend the city from British invasion. They dug entrenchments, made ammunition, and improved forts such as Fort McHenry. One eyewitness remarked "white and black are all at work together... There is no distinction whatsoever." Over 15,000 citizen soldiers, or "militia" from Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania reinforced the city's defenses.

On September 12, 1814, American militia fought professional British soldiers at the Battle of North Point eight miles from Baltimore. They inflicted over 300 casualties and mortally wounded the British land commander, Major General Robert Ross. The tenacity of Baltimore's militia and the entrenchments outside the city convinced the British to cancel their land attack.

The British naval assault on Fort McHenry began the following day. Francis Scott Key immortalized the bombardment with the words "the rockets red glare and bombs bursting in air. . ." In spite of 25 hours of continuous shelling, the defenders of the fort held firm. As the British sailed away the defenders hoisted a large 30 x 42-foot American flag over the fort, inspiring Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Defenders' Day has been celebrated every year since 1814 and was proclaimed a Maryland State Holiday in 1908.

Friday, September 11

10:00 am - 1:00 pm "Young Defenders"
Young Defenders is the largest curriculum-based educational program at Fort McHenry. Sponsored by The Friends of Fort McHenry, Living Classrooms Foundation and National Park Service, Young Defenders brings over 1,000 Baltimore City school students to Fort McHenry to learn about the defense of 1814 and the writing of the National Anthem. Held on the second Friday in September, students actively participate in flag talks, serve on a cannon crew, "drill" as U.S. soldiers, tour the fort, experience civilian life, learn about African-American defenders in 1814, and even meet Francis Scott Key and Mayor of Baltimore Shelia Dixon!



5:30 pm "Flags to the Fort" – Soldiers take the 30' x 42' Star-Spangled Banner from the Flag House in Little Italy and march to the Inner Harbor.

6:00 pm Special flag ceremony at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater. Fifes & drums and a procession of sailing boats kick off the start to the Star-Spangled Banner Weekend!

Saturday, September 12

10:00 am Dress parade & flag raising
11:00 am "Defend the Battery" - cannon & musket firing demonstration
12:00 pm "Lest We Forget" wreath-laying
12:20 pm "The Burning of Washington & Birth of the Anthem" – author Anthony Pitch
2:00 pm "The Sounds of Battle" – musket firing tactical demonstration
3:30 pm "Defend the Battery" - cannon & musket firing demonstration
4:00 pm Fife & drum concert in Fort
4:15 pm Flag Change
5:00 pm *Star-Spangled Spectacular*
(This is a ticketed fundraiser - **for more information, visit www.friendsoffortmchenry.org**)

6:00 pm *FREE* Evening program begins

Sunday, September 13

10:00 am Dress parade & flag raising
11:00 am "Defend the Battery" - cannon & musket firing demonstration
1:00 pm "Defend the Battery" - cannon & musket firing demonstration
2:00 pm Dress parade & military review

EVENING PROGRAM Saturday, September 12

195th Defenders' Day Ceremony!

★ **FREE** ★

6:00 pm

Welcome by Alan Walden
Master of Ceremonies
Greetings by Gay Vietzke
Superintendent of Fort McHenry NM&HS
Nelson Bolton
President, Society of the War of 1812 in Maryland
John Olszewski Jr.
Delegate, District 6, Baltimore County
The Honorable James T. Smith, Jr.
County Executive, Baltimore County
The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland

Invocation
Reverend Mr. Moser, Chaplain Fort McHenry Guard
Pledge of Allegiance
Douglas Jimerson
Songs from Early America
Tactical Demonstration
Troops will demonstrate battle tactics from 1814
Society of African-American Arts & Culture
Spirituals from Early America
Fifes & Drums of the Fort McHenry Guard
War of 1812 Fife & Drum music
Concert by the Chesapeake Concert Band
Ship to shore "bombardment" of the Fort
Hoisting of the Star-Spangled Banner
National Anthem
Sung by: The Boise Police Honor Guard Quartet
GRAND FIREWORKS DISPLAY at dusk
by Zambelli's Inc.

Defenders' Day 1914