



Ramparts

Celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812

November 1, 2011

Vol. 1 No. 4

The War of 1812 – A New Documentary Film by Florentine Films and PBS.

**Celebrating the War of 1812
in Film by PBS.**

<http://video.pbs.org/video/2089393539>

On October 10, the Public Broadcasting Stations in America debuted the new film by Florentine Films, a division of Ken Burns documentaries. Several interviews are included by well known historians on the war in this two-hour introduction to America's forgotten war.

"The film shows how the glories of war become enshrined in history – how failures are quickly forgotten – how inconvenient truths are ignored forever. With stunning reenactments, evocative animation and incisive commentary of key experts, *The War of 1812* presents the conflict that forged the destiny of a continent."

There is commentary from our 1812 colleagues in Canada, Rene Chartrand and Donald Graves, with professor of history at Nebraska Wayne State College, Don Hickey. Other than a quick glimpse of the bombardment of Fort McHenry, little is given to the overall Chesapeake story – once again the Canadian frontiers take front line.

Proceeds from the premiere will benefit the 200th Star-Spangled Banner Commission in Maryland. The film debut in Baltimore on October 10th was well attended with Governor O'Malley, the staff of the 200th Star-Spangled Commission and NPS staff in the audience.



A British infantry line firing a volley in the PBS film "The War of 1812." You may view it also on line at PBS-Video. "A small but bitter war – that forged the destiny of a continent."

The Visitor Center Film - Fort McHenry's Visitor Center ten-minute film is now available on DVD at the park gift store. It was produced by Aperture Films in California. The film, contains additional footage on the park's interactive exhibits and informative documentary programs. It arrived in September in time for Defenders Day.

Former Fort McHenry ranger now Superintendent of Abraham Lincoln National Birthplace, Kentucky – Bill Justice started his NPS career at the C&O NHP in 1974; Fort McHenry, (1978-1989); Carlsbad Caverns NP (1990-1994); chief ranger at Natchez NHP (1995-2001); and Horseshoe Bend NMP (2001); he returned to the C&O Canal as chief of

interpretation in 2002, then to his present position.

"Remembrance of the Brave: The Last of the Old Defenders, 1880." The fall issue of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* has published another of Ranger Scott's articles on the lesser-known sidebars of the Baltimore campaign. Who were the last celebrated defenders who had their group portrait taken at Druid Hill Park Mansion in September 1880? They were celebrated throughout the country and made national news as each passed away. It is also a history of the early years of what became the Society of the War of 1812 in Maryland. And they had their beginnings here in 1834 at Swartzauer's Tavern!

A Letter from Superintendent Tina Orcutt

The excitement at Fort McHenry continues to grow as the Bicentennial nears and my first Defenders Day weekend as Superintendent exceeded my expectations.

Over 8,000 visitors attended the three-day event that included curriculum-based educational programs for 1,400 Baltimore City school students and teachers, a parade through the city, living history and interpretive programs, a U.S. Naval Academy concert, fireworks, and more. While the events were first-rate, what really impressed me was the tremendous effort of the staff and volunteers.

The staff at Fort McHenry and Hampton really pulled together as the remnants of tropical storm Lee subsided to make the events of Defenders Day weekend a success. Staff from maintenance, interpretation, law enforcement, administration, and resources management worked long hours over the course of the anniversary weekend to provide an enjoyable, educational, and safe experience for the thousands of people who visited Fort McHenry.

While the professionalism of the staff is tremendous at Fort McHenry, an event of this magnitude could not occur without the assistance of volunteers. The generosity and commitment of the volunteer program is unparalleled. Over the course of the event 118 volunteers from 12 states donated 2,738 hours of service. They gave formal interpretive programs and engaged in informal discussions such as historic weapons and music demonstrations and camp activities. Volunteers also assisted with visitor services working the busy front desk and doing parking and crowd control.

New programs and exhibits are being developed as we approach the bicentennial. The archeology exhibit that opened October 27th provides visitors with an opportunity to see some of the artifacts that have been unearthed here during numerous archeological excavations. It's just one of many of the good things we are working on that will be unveiled during the next year. Keep checking our webpage and following us on Facebook to see the next exciting things we're doing.

Winter-Spring Events – 2011-12

Veterans Day November 11-13, 2011

Armistice Day
On November 11, 1918, an armistice was signed at Comiegne, France ending World War I. It was signed on the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month." "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations." President Woodrow Wilson, 1918. Join us as we celebrate 200 years of America's contribution of her veterans.

"ARTIFACTS AND APPARITIONS AT FORT MCHENRY"

On Thursday evening, October 27, the first of the new Star Fort exhibits opened officially to the public outlining the various archeological discoveries and displaying cultural objects found. The first archeological project began in 1958, with at least 42 projects since contributing to a better insight into the daily life of the fort's soldiers during the War of 1812. The exhibit was designed by Mystic Scenic of Boston, Massachusetts. The evening also featured special Legends and Lore Walks, activities for kids and special night cannon firings. Seventy visitors attended.

SEAWALL PATH TO RE-OPEN

On Tuesday, November 15th, the 1.3 mile seawall pathway will reopen to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.



WWI veteran Joseph Ambrose in 1982 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in DC., holding the flag that covered the casket of his son killed during the Korean War.

BIRD WALKS IN THE WETLANDS

Join Ornithologist Jim Peters and others for one of the park's popular early morning bird walks through the park.

Park in the Visitor Center parking lot. Meet outside the Visitor Center. Walks are cancelled if weather is inclement (rain, snow, fog). Bring binoculars, dress for the weather, and be prepared for insects.

Schedule

Saturday – 8 a.m. – 12 Noon
November 19 – Wendy Alexander
December 17 – Erin Lineberry

Wednesday – 8 a.m. – 12 Noon
November 2 – Mary Chatelat
December 7 – Mary Chatelat

History Notes, Books & Old Defenders.

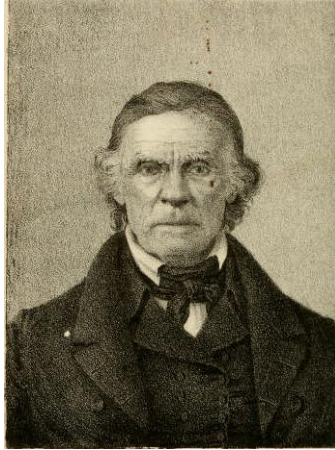
NEW 1812 BOOK – *The Rockets' Red Glare: An Illustrated History of the War of 1812*

By Donald R. Hickey and Connie D. Clark.

Our friend and history professor from Wayne State College in Nebraska has published his fifth popular book on the War of 1812. Don is considered one of America's foremost authorities on the War of 1812. Connie D. Clark is a consultant with Educational Service Unit 2 where she provides guidance and assistance for federally funded Teaching American History Grants.

"It recaptures in vivid detail not only the military history of the war but also its domestic and diplomatic history of this fragile young republic." (Johns Hopkins University Press, September 2011). Priced at \$39.95.

The book is available in the park gift store.



Fife Major Samuel Dewees (1760-1845)

BIOGRAPHIES OF OLD DEFENDERS

Samuel DeWees (1760-1845) a native of Pennsylvania and veteran of the Revolution and the War of 1812 served at the age of fifty-four as fife major on Hampstead Hill (Rodgers Bastion) during the Battle for Baltimore. A veteran of the Battle of Bladensburg he served in Captain Adam Shower's Maryland

"Manchester Volunteer Riflemen" attached to the 15th Maryland Regiment.

Source: A History of the Life and Services of Captain Samuel Dewees: A Native of Pennsylvania and Soldier of the Revolutionary and Last Wars... (Baltimore, 1845). Google Books.

The Last of the Old Defenders of 1814, September 1880 by Scott S. Sheads (*Maryland Historical Magazine*, Fall 2011). In 1880 the last twelve surviving veterans of the Battle for Baltimore assembled at the Druid Hill Park Mansion (now Maryland Zoo) and had their group portrait taken. The article is a biographical history of the Old Defenders Association and the story of these last defenders.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort McHenry is the birthplace of the U.S. national anthem "The Star-Spangled Banner" written during the War of 1812 in Baltimore harbor. Here, literally, "by the dawn's early light" on September 14, 1814, following a 25 hour naval bombardment by the British navy, Maryland attorney Francis Scott Key, while on the deck of an American flag-of-truce vessel, witnessed the raising of the fort's great garrison flag over the ramparts of the Star Fort.

Fort McHenry was established as a national park in 1925, then in 1939 re-designated as a national monument and historic shrine commemorating the defense and inspiration for a new national song "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Address

Fort McHenry National Monument
& Historic Shrine,
National Park Service
2400 East Fort Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21230

Phone

(410) 962-4290

Front Line: 200 Years Ago & 1812 Quotes Newspaper Editor – Hezekiah Niles & the *Niles' Weekly Register* – Baltimore's Own!

Hezekiah Niles (1777-1839) a native of East Bradford, Chester County, Pennsylvania, rose to become the most influential newspaper editor in the United States in the early 19th century. His weekly paper, the *Niles' Weekly Register* was published in Baltimore and was widely read not only in America but Europe as well. At its peak circulation it reached 40,000 patrons. The first edition was released on September 7, 1811 and continued until the last issue was published by his son in 1848. It remains today the most informative news chronicle of its day publishing the news of the war, politics, agriculture, shipping, biographies and correspondence. The volumes have been digitized by the Maryland State Archives for our library website.

London Evening Star – September 1812. "The American Navy must be annihilated – her arsenals and dock-yards must be consumed; and the turbulent inhabitants of Baltimore must be tamed with the weapons which shook the wooden turrets of Copenhagen... All the prating about maritime rights, with which the Americans have recently nauseated the ears of every cabinet minister in Europe, must be silenced by the strong and manly voice of reason – the *ultima ratio regum*, paradoxical as it seems, is here the only remedy – and America must be BEATEN INTO SUBMISSION!"



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine
2400 East Fort Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

First Class Mail
Postage and Fees
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City, State
Permit Number

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

This late 18th century star-shaped masonry fort is world famous as the birthplace of the U.S. national anthem. As the guardian of Baltimore harbor during the War of 1812, the valiant defense by American forces led Francis Scott Key to write the words of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

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Editor’s Desk...Reflections of PBS *The War of 1812*

The recent two-hour PBS broadcast of *The War of 1812* by Florentine Films and WNED Buffalo-Toronto released on November 10th accomplished the goal to increase awareness of the approaching bicentennial of the War of 1812. It also left out a substantial inclusion of the middle ground of the war – the Chesapeake campaigns of 1813-14. No other region in the country received more battles, raids, skirmishes and political debate than that of the Chesapeake. The film however did devote 15 minutes to the Chesapeake theatre out of the 2 hour feature. New Orleans received 7 minutes, the rest given to Canada.

It is understandable, as it was in the 1812-14 coverage of the war that Canada became the focus – while the Chesapeake remained for the British, a diversion and political arm of that campaign to end the war with the Americans via a Treaty of Amity and Peace on Christmas Eve of 1814. It is hoped that a regional documentary will fill in the gaps and give those of us on the Chesapeake a deserving piece of the war from the fields of Queenstown, St. Michaels, Bladensburg, Craney Island, and Caulk’s Field to name but a few.

Scott S. Sheads