

Fort Recovery State Museum and Stockade

At one time the Wabash River ran through this area as evidenced by the big hill. This was the site of the two Indian battles in 1791 and 1794, along with much of the area now comprised by the town. Many families have sledded down the big hill into what was once the Wabash River.

The original fort was built next to the Wabash River in December, 1793, by Major Henry Burbeck and a detachment of General Anthony Wayne's army. They chose the site of the St. Clair Defeat (Battle of the Wabash) in 1791. Captain Alexander Gibson was the fort commandant.

It was on this lot along Fort Site Street that the base of the original flag staff of the fort was found in 1876 by James Hedrick while he was digging a well. Today the flag staff is displayed in the basement of Fort Recovery State Museum.



Flag staff from 1793 fort

Information obtained from: *Fort Recovery Businesses Then & Now: 225 years of Adventure!* By Helen LeFevre (2016)

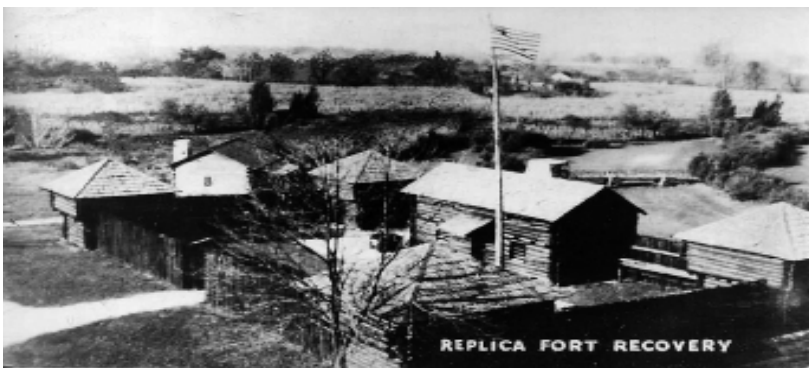
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With the urging of citizens in Fort Recovery for many years, the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society and the Works Progress Administration recreated the scene of the fort and battle sites in 1936. To do this the Fort Recovery Welfare Association, now the Chamber of Commerce, needed to purchase the ground that was privately held.

Rathweg Hardware, 1908-1914, was owned by Anthony and Mary Romer Rathweg, north of the Creamery. It was taken down in 1931. Also purchased and taken down were homes and garages, Equity land, and a brick vulcanizing plant for the library, fort, and the park, stretching to the Wabash River.

Notice in the picture of the 1936 fort how the Wabash River flows in its original site behind the fort.



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The 1936 reconstructed fort was 90 feet square and included four blockhouses and a connecting stockade. The oak-walled well used by the garrison was found and reconstructed. Also located was the walnut surveyor's stake marking the northwest corner of the Greenville Treaty Line. This stake is on display in the museum.



Fort Recovery State Museum

A library was built by the Works Progress Administration on a site adjacent to the fort by 1938. This was done through the combined efforts of the Fort Recovery Welfare Assoc. and the Fort Recovery Business and Professional Women's Club. With the library on the first floor, a museum opened in the balcony displaying artifacts from the battles. In 1968 the Ohio Historical Society used the library space, renovated the building, and established a state museum depicting Major General Anthony Wayne's army with many artifacts from the battle sites. The library moved to Wayne Street.

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Fort Recovery Public Library, state museum today.



Fort Recovery

In 1956 the Ohio Historical Society began a replacement of the reconstructed fort, using 2 larger blockhouses and a stockade between the two.

With financial problems in 1980-81, Ohio Historical Society decided to close the museum. Through efforts by the Fort Recovery Historical

Society and the community, the museum reopened in 1982 with volunteers. Today it is operated jointly by the Fort Recovery Historical

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Fort Recovery State Museum

Society and the Ohio History Connection (former Ohio Historical Society).

In 2010 displays were updated, telling the story of both battles and their importance in American history. Life-sized dioramas depict Wayne's army and a 1793 Indian. Wayne's soldiers operating a cannon and the use of the stockade are highlighted.

A dragoon and his horse stand in the basement, the only known dragoon on display anywhere. Numerous artifacts from the battles are on display and a children's area is also in the basement. In the upstairs balcony prehistoric artifacts, dating back 14,000 years, are showcased, along with an activity area for children. This renovation was possible because of the Jim and Charlene

Bubp family. Nancy Knapke is the current director of the museum.

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The museum is open weekends in May and September and daily in the summer. Tours can be arranged anytime.



Tool shop housing blacksmith and farming tools

Behind the museum is a log cabin that is used to display antique blacksmith and agricultural tools. The log cabin was built in 1987 from two log cabins donated by Bob and Mary Kirgan and Mrs. Louis Lennartz.