

# WAR OF 1812-1814 BICENTENNIAL

A HANDBOOK FOR TOURISM PARTNERS



## PATHWAYS TO PEACE

**WESTERN CORRIDOR WAR OF 1812-1814**



Re-enactment of the Battle of Stoney Creek

**BUILDING THE TOURISM LEGACY**



THE  OF ONTARIO™

**HAMILTON • HALTON • BRANT**



## PATHWAYS TO PEACE

WESTERN CORRIDOR WAR OF 1812-1814

[westerncorridor1812.com](http://westerncorridor1812.com)

### THE MANDATE OF WESTERN CORRIDOR WAR OF 1812-1814

*WCA partners will ensure broad connectivity to commemorate initiatives that foster the legacy left by the people, history and communities and that align with the provincial commemorative priorities. To fulfill this mandate WCA will:*

- Establish overall guiding principles and goals that ensure broad connectivity of commemorative initiatives within the strategic framework of the Region.
- Be a catalyst in facilitating ideas, concepts, initiatives, events and community linkages in order to build a successful Bicentennial commemoration that connects the entire region.
- Stimulate the cultural tourism sector to enhance product development through the legacy of improved infrastructure and programs.
- Build market readiness capacity of cultural attractions and events.
- Ensure promotion to local and tourism audiences is achieved.
- Contribute to the economic prosperity and sustainability of the region.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Considerable effort has been put into the development of this Handbook. Part of WCA's legacy is this Handbook and it is important that we understand its reach. If you wish to reproduce any part of this Handbook, ***you must first receive permission*** from Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association and/or the Western Corridor 1812-1814 Bicentennial Alliance:

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### **Acknowledgments:**

*Content for this manual was based on a document prepared by Maria V. Fortunato for Tourism Hamilton, and expanded and revised by <sup>the</sup> Tourism Company with the assistance of Adrienne Horne, Regional Project Manager and members of the WCA 1812 Steering Committee.*

*Photographs used throughout this handbook are courtesy of each attraction and WCA member partners.*





Our brand uniquely reflects the attributes of the Western Corridor. There were no flashy battles in this Region, rather ours is a tale of rural folks defending their families and homes against the invading Americans. This Region had all the transport routes, on land and rivers, to move militia men, Native Warriors, civilians and supplies between York, Hamilton, London and Amherstburg.

It is the “Pathways to Peace”.

The First Nation symbolism of the Wampum Belt is represented in the logo within the black “Trail”. The Claus Wampum Belt was presented by Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs William Claus on behalf of Prince Regent George IV, to the Six Nations and their Allies, with the promise that no one would interfere in their customs and territories ever again, and they would never be called upon again in war. This Belt was sold to a collector in the mid-1800’s and disappeared in to a museum collection. It has recently been found and is now part of the Smithsonian Institute’s Native American Collection, the process of Repatriation of the Belt back to the Six Nations of the Grand River has begun, and will hopefully be back home for the Bicentennial of its creation in 2015.

## HAVE YOU STARTED PLANNING YET?

The years 2012-2014 mark the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, a war that played a major role in the establishment of Canada as a nation within the North American continent, and that was partly waged in southwestern Ontario. The legacy of the War of 1812 is recognized at a number of historical sites throughout the region and commemorated through special events, such as the Re-enactment of the Battle of Stoney Creek, held annually at Battlefield House Museum and Park and Battle of Longwoods, held annually in London.

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport identified the Bicentennial Commemoration as a major tourism event for Ontario. Its June 2009 report titled *War of 1812 Bicentennial Analysis: Initial Assessment of Marketing Opportunity* highlighted the opportunity. Approximately nine-million Americans and two-and-a-half-million Canadians indicated that they would ‘definitely’ or ‘probably’ consider attending Bicentennial events. Another 26 million people said that they ‘may consider attending’. This Bicentennial tourism market is expected to have a significant impact in the western corridor.

The Western Corridor 1812-1814 Bicentennial Alliance (WCA) links communities, including the First Nations, from the western tip of Lake Ontario in Burlington running south-west, along the north side of the Lake Erie coastline, ending at Middlesex County. The region is split by the Grand River as it travels south to Lake Erie. There are many stories to tell about the war and how the rural folks helped to defend this land.

This handbook is a tool for our tourism industry to use. It lists practical suggestions for how restaurants, shops, attractions, accommodation providers and others can welcome visitors during the Bicentennial timeframe. The ideas contained in this manual are by no means an exhaustive list, but are intended to spark additional suggestions as well.

It’s not too late! Start now to plan how you can benefit from War of 1812 Bicentennial celebrations.

[www.westerncorridor1812.com](http://www.westerncorridor1812.com)

Building the tourism legacy



## A PRIMER ON TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

WCA's mandate includes the following statements that the organization is committed to:

- Stimulating the cultural tourism sector to enhance product development through the legacy of improved infrastructure and programs.
- Building market readiness capacity of cultural attractions and events.

What makes an event, festival or attraction 'market ready'? What is 'tourism product development' anyway?

Tourism product development has many dimensions that include:

- ✓ Physical set up and features of your business or operation.
- ✓ Training of staff to deliver great customer service.
- ✓ Designing experiences that engage visitors.
- ✓ Competitive pricing.

Today's travellers are seeking authentic and unique "experiences" so keep that in mind as you evaluate what opportunities there are for you and your business to benefit from the War of 1812-1814 Bicentennial Celebrations.

Strategies for tourism product development include:

- Being part of a themed travel itinerary.
- Creating a hands-on program that showcases an artifact or particular story.
- Partnering with other businesses to develop a new offer.

Continue reading to be inspired as you embark on *your* tourism product development initiative.

### DEFINING EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL

*'Experiential travel engages visitors in a series of memorable travel activities that are inherently personal. It involves all senses, and makes connections on a physical, emotional, spiritual, social or intellectual level.'*

Source: Canadian Tourism Commission

### MARKET READINESS CHECKLIST

- ✓ Hours of operation and seasons to match demand from visitors.
- ✓ Interest and capacity to serve visitors from outside immediate area.
- ✓ Staff trained in hospitality and customer service.
- ✓ Web presence and able to respond to requests for information within 24 hours.
- ✓ Offer a 'buyable' package.
- ✓ Easily accessible.
- ✓ Infrastructure that includes washrooms and parking as well as value-added features such as food, beverage and retail.

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## A SUGGESTED APPROACH....

### 1. IDENTIFY THE OPPORTUNITY

- ✓ Be realistic about the opportunity that suits your business or community. Is it a one-time offer around major events or a standing offer? When do you need more business?

### 2. BUILD YOUR WAR OF 1812-RELATED EXPERIENCE OR OFFER

- ✓ Consider partners to work with.
- ✓ Build in as many experiential or hands-on activities that you can. Visitors want to be involved!

### 3. GET THE WORD OUT

- ✓ Develop a landing page on your website with your War of 1812 offer. Encourage sharing of links with related businesses.
- ✓ Let your WCA area representative know what you are doing.
- ✓ Get active on social media, using Facebook, Twitter and other tools to let visitors know what is going on.
- ✓ Post on your community website.
- ✓ Develop a cost-effective flyer or lure piece in partnership with other businesses.
- ✓ Issue media releases.
- ✓ Let your current customers know of your new offer.



## THINGS YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW

**It's a national, three year celebration!** And in fact 2013 offers considerable opportunity in the western corridor as a number of significant battles celebrate their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. If you aren't ready with your offer for 2012, look for opportunities in 2013 and 2014.

**The opportunity reaches beyond the bicentennial celebrations.** War of 1812 stories, exhibits, events and re-enactments are already a part of the tourism product in this region. Now is the chance to introduce these to new audiences or to enrich existing offers.

**Our U.S. neighbours are marking the occasion as well.** This offers the western corridor a number of opportunities to attract U.S. visitors due to its proximity to the border.

**There are resources to help you!** The WCA maintains a website [www.westerncorridor1812.com](http://www.westerncorridor1812.com) that provides resources, event listings and other up to date information. Sign up to receive their newsletter and visit the site often. Contact information for your WCA area representative is listed on page 10.

## MAJOR EVENTS AND RE-ENACTMENTS IN SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO AND BEYOND

### 2012

**May 5, 6:** Battle of Longwoods, London

**June 2, 3:** Battle of Stoney Creek

**August 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>:** Brocks' Walk

**September 8, 9:** War of 1812 Reenactment,  
Backus Mill

**October 12, 13** Battle of Queenston Heights,  
Niagara on the Lake *Anniversary Event*

### 2013

**May 24-26:** Battle of Fort George, Niagara on  
the Lake *Anniversary Event*

**May 31-June 1:** Battle of Stoney Creek  
*Anniversary Event*

**June 8:** Engagement at the Forty, Grimsby  
*Anniversary Event*

**Mid-June to September:** Tall Ships Challenge  
Great Lakes 2013; various ports

**July 12-14:** 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Crysler's Farm,  
Morrisburg

**June 22:** Laura Secord Bicentennial Event and  
Walk, Niagara on the Lake

**October 4-6:** Battle of the Thames,  
Thamesville *Anniversary Event*

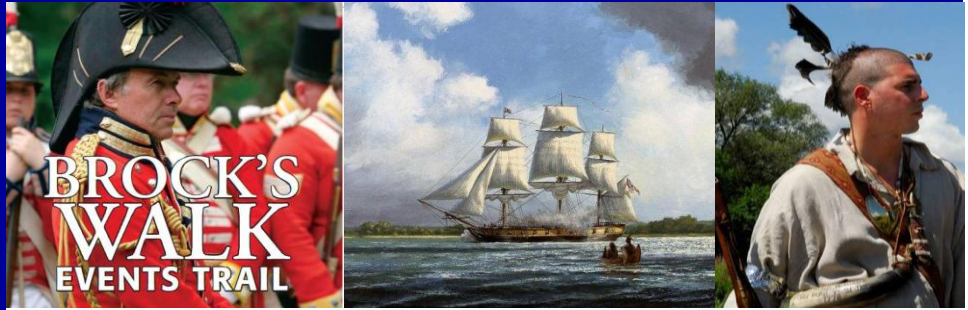
**November 11:** Crysler's Farm memorial,  
Morrisburg *Anniversary Event*

**November 9 – 13:** Battle of Nanticoke

### 2014

**March 8:** Longwoods Bicentennial, Strathburn  
*Anniversary Event*

**May 3, 4:** Battle of Longwoods *Anniversary  
Event*



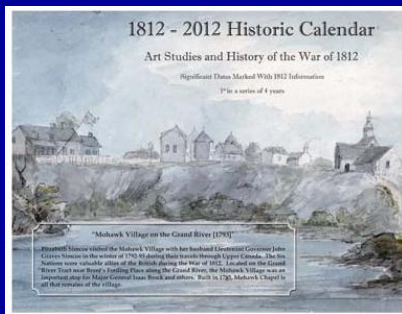
## LEVERAGING MAJOR EVENTS

Many one-time and annual major events, including re-enactments, are planned around southwestern Ontario to commemorate the War of 1812. These events are a great opportunity to raise your profile with both visitors and media. Consider appealing to visitors coming to your area as well as those in the broader region, as visitors travelling to other areas may consider stopping by on their journey. Marketing to this audience could be a business opportunity for you. Here is a checklist to help you prepare!

### A checklist to leverage large events:

- ✓ Gather detailed event information as early as possible, to help develop your strategy to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the large event. Major events and re-enactments in southwestern Ontario and adjacent regions are noted to the left.
- ✓ Visit this year's event to evaluate opportunities for subsequent years.
- ✓ Watch for more details on the *Tall Ships Challenge Great Lakes 2013*, a celebration of the major military events of the War of 1812. Over 20 ports in the Great Lakes will host the fleet of tall ships. There may be opportunities for your business.
- ✓ Consult with the Large Event organizer and/or your WCA representative to get assistance with planning.
- ✓ Ensure that efficient and effective customer service elements are in place to help you maximize your business.
- ✓ Increase your staffing levels to serve increased visitors.
- ✓ Create a welcoming environment for the visitor through War of 1812 'event pageantry' at your place of business.
- ✓ Check the WCA website for up to date information on major events.





## USE PAGEANTRY TO BRING THE SPIRIT OF THE BICENTENNIAL ALIVE

The spirit of an event can be brought to life through “pageantry”. What is “pageantry”? In a sense, pageantry is a form of “experiential” marketing. Pageantry inspires people to actively participate in the celebration that in turn makes the event more dynamic and memorable for everyone. Their excitement and energy contribute directly to the celebratory atmosphere. Pageantry engages all of the senses to give event attendees a heightened sense of event awareness, excitement, community spirit, civic pride, and the motivation to get involved.

Working together with WCA the tourism industry across this region has the ability to maximize business opportunities during the Bicentennial through their creative and active involvement. WCA has a number of cost-effective tools and resources for your use such as calendars, posters, art cards and books that you can use as giveaways or souvenirs or to add value to events. Look under ‘Resources’ on [www.westerncorridor1812.com](http://www.westerncorridor1812.com).

### Some pageantry tools and activities to consider:

- ✓ Train community volunteers to be ‘War of 1812 Ambassadors’.
- ✓ Hold a parade that includes hands-on activities and music themed to the era of 1812-1814. What about the ‘1812 Overture’?
- ✓ Display decorative and street banners. Do you have an inventory of where this can happen in your community?
- ✓ Encourage residents and municipal partners to use festive motifs in landscaping and gardening. Use red geraniums, the official flower for the War of 1812
- ✓ Use a ‘mobile festival team’ that roams during major events.

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### Limited time offers such as.....

*2013 Tall Ship Weekend Special* – stay two nights; get third night for \$18.12 (!)

### Off-peak offers such as.....

*War of 1812 Value Special* available Sunday to Thursday only

### Standing Bicentennial offers subject to availability such as.....

*War of 1812 Package* that includes accommodation, entrance to War of 1812 exhibit at local museum (or similar offer) and themed dinner at hotel restaurant or area partner.

Camping – 1812 style!



## FOR ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS

Hotels, motels, inns, campgrounds and B&Bs all have the opportunity to embrace the bicentennial in a number of ways. You can develop offers available that target major event weekends or have an ‘1812 offer’ available during the entire Bicentennial celebrations. Each business must first determine how best to leverage these celebrations and at what time of year and days of week that best suit their business and market area.

### Ideas to inspire you!

- ✓ Work with your WCA representative to identify key visitor events, exhibits, blockbuster Bicentennial programs or re-enactments to build accommodation packages around.
- ✓ Train your front-line staff on major Bicentennial events so that they in turn can respond to queries from guests on what there is to see and do. Keep a binder at the front desk or check in area with event listings and other information as a resource.
- ✓ Designate one staff member to be responsible for checking the WCA website on a regular basis to update others on upcoming events.
- ✓ Display Welcome Signs and other War of 1812 theme ideas at your property.
- ✓ Develop offers that target re-enactors and their families.
- ✓ Have front-line staff in period costumes during major events.

*Remember to let WCA know about your plans so that we can help to promote them!*

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### Limited time offers such as.....

'Two for one admission' for attendees and re-enactors to a specific re-enactment.

Partner with event organizers to target re-enactors and their families.

### Standing Bicentennial offers subject to availability such as....

Build a full, hands-on experience around one 1812-related artifact, story or event.

Tell the same story from three perspectives – Canadian, US and First Nations.

Host a War of 1812 Family Picnic at your attraction.

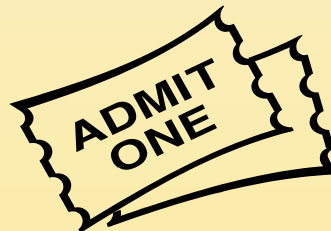
## FOR ATTRACTIONS

Museums, water parks, zoos, agri-tourism operations, art galleries and indeed any attraction each have an opportunity to benefit from the War of 1812 Bicentennial celebrations. In addition to developing and staging 1812-themed offers, attractions can partner with others during high traffic periods to generate incremental visits.

### Ideas to inspire you!

- ✓ Create promotions and special offers such as:
  - coupons
  - vouchers
  - 2 for 1 admission
  - souvenir/gifts/give-aways
- ✓ Create programs, special events/exhibits incorporating event theme.
- ✓ Develop a package that includes a dining component to offer convenience for the visitor and/or distribute special offers from dining businesses in the area to help visitors maximize their visit in the region.
- ✓ Display 1812 Bicentennial themed Welcome Signs at your attraction.

*Remember to let WCA know about your plans so that we can help to promote them!*



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### Limited time offers such as.....

Offer a *Bicentennial Lunch Special* for \$18.12!

Host a '*War of 1812 Tasting Event*' at farmers markets, restaurants or producers during major event weekends.

### Standing Bicentennial offers subject to availability such as.....

Offer a packed picnic lunch in the '*War of 1812*' style.

Feature *War of 1812 menu item* that might be a dessert, salad, entrée or entire meal.



## FOR RESTAURANTS, FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROVIDERS

Visitors to your community need to eat and drink! Restaurants, catering companies and food producers all have an opportunity to benefit from War of 1812-1814 Bi-Centennial celebrations across the western corridor. But you must be prepared and identify the opportunity that suits your business. Work closely with area attractions and event organizers to find the right fit for your restaurant, food or beverage operation.

### Ideas to inspire you!

- ✓ Create a "special" entrée or menu to commemorate War of 1812 or "Canadiana" experience.
- ✓ Offer incentives such as '*10% off*' with War of 1812 event ticket stubs/passes/program.
- ✓ Provide your DMO\* and area partners with coupons to distribute and promote on your behalf.
- ✓ Provide your area DMO with copies of your menus to have available at all Visitor Information Centres and other promotional outlets.
- ✓ Establish a partnership with event organizers and attractions to stretch your marketing budget.
- ✓ Be active on social media during major events to generate interest and buzz about your great food and drink.

*Remember to let WCA know about your plans so that we can help to promote them!*

\* DMO: Destination Marketing Organization

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### Limited time offers such as....

'Shop like it is 1812' experience available only during major reenactments or related events.

### Standing Bicentennial offers subject to availability such as....

Retail stores with War of 1812 and related merchandise display.

Welcome War of 1812 visitors' special decal in store windows/doors.

Extended hours in retail districts to meet demand after major events finish.

## FOR RETAIL OUTLETS & SHOPPING DISTRICTS

In addition to eating, shopping is one of the highest activities that visitors engage in while they travel. Individual retail outlets of all types as well as shopping districts have the opportunity to generate increased sales during the War of 1812 Bicentennial celebrations.

### Ideas to inspire you!

- ✓ Develop a package in partnership with an attraction or event to generate a visit to your retail outlet after/during their tour.
- ✓ Display War of 1812 Welcome Signs and other event theme ideas at your business.
- ✓ Theme a Shopping District with event banners and signs.
- ✓ Develop a special shopping flyer/brochure listing unique War of 1812 related merchandise and other Canadian souvenirs
- ✓ Offer shopping incentives such as:
  - 10% off with event ticket stub/pass/program.
  - promotional coupon that highlights a savings (i.e. 20% off for spending \$40 or more)
  - promotional offer of a souvenir gift for every \$50 spent
- ✓ Link your on-line War of 1812 retail offer to the 'Shop' page on [www.westerncorridor1812.com](http://www.westerncorridor1812.com)

*Remember to let WCA know about your plans so that we can help to promote them!*

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### Limited time offers such as.....

Walking tours of related War of 1812 features led by local historian during weekend of major event.

Declare one day, week or weekend as your community's Salute to the War of 1812.

### Standing Bicentennial offer such as....

Host a community garden competition themed around 1812.

Use red geraniums in municipal gardens, the colour of the War of 1812.

Plant a community Peace Garden.

## FOR COMMUNITIES

Communities can play an active role in promoting War of 1812 Bicentennial celebrations to generate increased visitation and spending in the community. Communities can also create their own celebrations or events to attract new visitors.

### Ideas to inspire you!

- ✓ Incorporate War of 1812 themes or elements into annual community events such as Canada Day, Fall Fair or holiday events.
- ✓ Host a War of 1812-related event that might provide the foundation for an annual event.
- ✓ Engage new volunteers to assist with community-based initiatives.
- ✓ Celebrate volunteers that support the many events and offers that bring visitors to your community.
- ✓ Dedicate a page on your municipal visitor website to War of 1812 Bicentennial celebrations. Provide a direct link from your home page to this landing or internal page so that visitors can access the information quickly and easily.
- ✓ Engage residents by adopting War of 1812 pageantry elements as outlined earlier in this Handbook.
- ✓ Host a community challenge with a War of 1812 theme.
- ✓ Host fireworks displays.

*Remember to let WCA know about your plans so that we can help to promote them!*

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## DO YOU WANT TO BE INVOLVED BUT DON'T KNOW HOW? WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Do you have an annual event or activity that could have a program element themed around the War of 1812 Bicentennial?

Are you increasing the size of your current War of 1812 themed activities during the Bicentennial period?

Are you planning an event, conference or activity in 2012, 2013 or 2014 that coincides with the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of 1812? Could you add War of 1812 as a theme or element?

Are you, as an individual or as part of an arts or culture organization, creating new work, programming or exhibits based on the themes related to the War of 1812 or the subsequent 200 years of peace?

### We want to hear from you!

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