

Alexandria's War of 1812 Bicentennial

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War of 1812 Bicentennial

<http://alexandriava.gov/1812#Festival>



Johnny Bull and the Alexandrians. Political cartoon, William Charles, 1814. (Courtesy, The Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum.) Alexandrians are shown cowering and pleading with Johnny Bull, a symbol for England. The cartoon ridicules Alexandria's 1814 surrender to the British in the War of 1812. The Alexandrians plead: "Pray Mr. Bull don't be too hard with us -- You know we were always friendly, even in the time of our Embargo!" Their words suggest that British goods may have continued to reach the port of Alexandria during the embargo years.

The years 2012-2015 mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812. The war, and the five-day occupation of Alexandria by British forces in 1814, had a profound effect on the town and its economy.

While war was declared in 1812, it was not until 1814 that it reached Alexandria's shores. On August 29 Alexandrians awoke to find 138 guns of the British squadron "but a few hundred yards from the wharves, and the houses so situated at they might have been laid in ashes in a few minutes," as described by the residents. The British promised not to destroy the town if the citizens surrendered all naval stores, shipping, and merchandise being exported. Alexandria agreed, under much scrutiny by the nation. However, it was thanks to the actions on both sides that the "Old Town" of today is still preserved. The City of Alexandria and community partners are commemorating Alexandria's role in the war through lectures, concerts, and specialty tours, culminating in the Signature Weekend Event.

- **Signature Event Weekend - August 30 & 31**
- Other Activities and Events
- Self-Guided Tours
- Learn about the War and Occupation
- From the Collection
- Exhibits
- Other Ways to Commemorate the Bicentennial

Signature Event Weekend - **All Events are FREE!**

The Festival marks the conclusion of the War of 1812 Commemoration. Mark your calendars Labor Day weekend for cricket, a wreath-laying ceremony, tug of war, boat tours, and more! During the weekend, three special events will take place as part of the British Challenge -- members of the British Embassy taking on Alexandria in some friendly modern-day competition. Download the [flyer](#) for the full weekend schedule of events.

Saturday, August 30

- **10 a.m. - Commemorative Wreath Laying** at the grave of Robert Allison, Jr. Honor the veterans of the War of 1812 at this special ceremony. At the conclusion, guests will help mark War of 1812 veteran graves throughout the cemetery. *Presbyterial Meeting House Cemetery and Columbarium, 600 Hamilton Lane (Wilkes Street Cemetery complex).*
- **Noon - 6 p.m. - British Challenge #1: Cricket Match** - Team Alexandria v. Team Britain (British Defence Staff, UK Embassy.) Refreshments will be served at 3:15 pm. *Jefferson Cricket Field, Potomac Park, Washington DC (north of 14th Street Bridge).*
- **3-4 p.m. U.S. Navy Band Concert** - *Market Square, 301 King Street.*
- **4:30 p.m. Honors Ceremony** - Featuring the Continental Color Guard with Fife and Drum. *Alexandria National Cemetery, 1450 Wilkes Street.*

Sunday August 31

- **11 a.m. British Challenge #2: Yacht Race** - Team Alexandria (Old Dominion Boat Club) v. Team Britain (British Defence Staff, UK Embassy.) *Old Dominion Boat Club, 1 King Street.*
- **Noon - 5 p.m. - Signature Event** - Living history, hands-on educational activities, and boat rides courtesy of the Alexandria Seaport Foundation! Plus Food Truck, Beer Tent, local organizational tables, vendors, and museum shop. Performances on stage including the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters. *Waterfront Park, 1 Prince Street.*
- **3:30 p.m. - British Challenge #3: Tug of War** - Team Alexandria (City of Alexandria Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 2141) v. Team Britain (British Defence Staff, UK Embassy.)
- **4:15 p.m. - Presentations, Challenge Recognitions, and Concluding Remarks.**

Other Activities & Events

To purchase tickets, visit [The Alexandria Shop](#) and click on Events.

- **The War of 1812 Buccaneer - Hollywood Style | FREE**

See Hollywood's version of the War of 1812! Enjoy two fun nights of vintage war pictures at The Lyceum. Doors open at 6:30 pm.; movie starts at 7 p.m. Snacks available for purchase. *Donations to the War of 1812 Commemoration accepted.*

- - August 27: *The Buccaneer* (1938 Version) Filmed in black & white starring Fredric March and Akim Tamiroff.

Directed by Cecil B. DeMille. / 126 minutes

- August 28: *The Buccaneer* (1958 Version) Presented by Paramount Pictures in Technicolor and Vista Vision, starring Yul Brenner, Charles Boyer, Claire Bloom, Inger Stevens and Charlton Heston as Andrew Jackson.

Directed by Anthony Quinn. / 121 minutes

- **Presidential Salon with James Madison | \$15 adult, \$10 student**

Sunday [September 14](#) and [November 16](#): Join President Madison as he discusses and engages guests about political and personal issues of 1814. Reservations required. Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 3 - 4:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at [The Alexandria Shop](#).

- **Lectures | \$10 per person**

Thursday, September 4. [War Of 1812 Lecture: Andrew Lambert](#) "When John Bull came to town: Alexandria in the War of 1812." George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 7:30 pm. Tickets can be purchased online at [The Alexandria Shop](#).

- **Treaty of Ghent Banquet**

April 18, 2015: Mark the end of the War of 1812, at Gadsby's Tavern Museum. *Details to follow.*

Self-Guided Tours

- **Scavenger Hunt Smartphone App**

Experience the British occupation of 1814 through the eyes of the people who witnessed it as you discover new sites and facts in this 9-block scavenger hunt.

- **Star-Spangled Bike Tour**

Enjoy a 6.6 mile tour of the places associated with the five-day British occupation of Alexandria in late August 1814, including Jones Point and the site of the Virginia militia encampment. Tour information includes Cue Sheet and printable or interactive maps.

- **War of 1812 Burials in the Presbyterian Cemetery**

Brochure on the Presbyterian Cemetery & Columbarium, 600 Hamilton Lane, Alexandria, adjacent to the Alexandria National Cemetery. Published by the Old Presbyterian Meeting House.

- **Old Town Walking Tour**

Print a [PDF map](#) or download the app to guide you as you explore 10 blocks of 1812-related sites. *Special Eagle Scout project.*

- **See the new Star-Spangled Banner signage in the City parks**

"Raise the White Flag" is installed in Waterfront Park. "Plundered" is being installed in the Torpedo Factory arcade, near the Timeline. "Fighting Back" is being placed at the base of Shuter's Hill, across from the Callahan Drive crosswalk.

Exhibits

- **"On Monday Last..."** Exhibit of Commemorative Ceramics at the [Alexandria Archaeology Museum](#). Most of the ceramic vessels on display were recovered from excavations at or near Gadsby's Tavern by city archaeologists. Each commemorates American prosperity or her heroes of the Revolution and War of 1812.

- **Traveling Exhibit: War of 1812: A Nation Forged by War.** At [The Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum](#). The panel-display, courtesy of the [U.S. Navy Museum](#) commemorates the 200-year anniversary of the War of 1812. For visitors with smart phones, additional content is available by scanning the QR code on each panel.
 - **"War of 1812 and the Old Presbyterian Meeting House: A Bicentennial Retrospective"** At the [Old Presbyterian Meeting House](#) in the Nancy Sennewald Library at Elliot House.
 - **Alexandria and Baltimore in 1814** At [Gadsby's Tavern Museum](#). Learn about the City Tavern and its tavernkeeper of the day Mr. Triplett, plus discover John Gadsby's connections to the war, his Baltimore hotel, and the Star-Spangled Banner.
 - **Commerce Perspective** At the [Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum](#). This small exhibit showcases the challenges that Edward Stabler faced with getting merchandise from his British suppliers.
 - **The Lees of Alexandria during the War of 1812** At the [Lee-Fendall House](#). This exhibit examines the contributions of Alexandria's citizens during the conflict that led to the writing of our national anthem through the lives of this iconic Virginia family.
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Other Ways to Commemorate the Bicentennial

- **Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail**

The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail is a 560-mile land and water route that tells the story of the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake Bay region. It connects historic sites in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia and commemorates the events leading up to the Battle for Baltimore, the aftermath of which inspired Francis Scott Key to write our National Anthem. The trail traces American and British troop movements, introduces visitors to communities affected by the war, and highlights the Chesapeake region's distinctive landscapes and waterways. Congress established the Star-Spangled Banner Trail in 2008. The trail is one of 19 national historic trails administered by the National Park Service and one of 30 trails in the National Trails System.

- Find the Alexandria Geocache on the [Star-Spangled Banner Geotrail](#)
- **Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission**
- Alan Taylor's lecture, **The Internal Enemy, Slavery and War in Virginia from 1772 to 1832**. In this [video filmed by C-SPAN](#), Alan Taylor speaks in 2013 about working on his 2014 Pulitzer-prize-winning book *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832*. Taylor spoke at The Lyceum in May 2014, connecting his research for this book with Alexandrians' own experiences during the War of 1812. *The Internal Enemy* is also available in [The Historic Alexandria Museum Store](#) in The Lyceum.