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OHIO'S LAKE ERIE SHORES & ISLANDS FILLED WITH HISTORICAL TREASURES

LAKE ERIE SHORES & ISLANDS, OHIO – Ohio's Lake Erie Shores & Islands is best known as a family fun destination. Did you know it also has an extensive and interesting history?

With origins dating back to the 1700s when it was a part of a huge tract of land called owned by the British colony of Connecticut, 500,000 acres of what was referred to as the Western Reserve was granted in 1792 to Connecticut landowners whose property had been burned during the Revolutionary War. The granted acreage became known as the "Firelands" and extended from northeast Ohio to the Marblehead Peninsula. Today, the term "Firelands" is reflected in many of the area businesses. After the War of 1812, the Firelands territory attracted several enterprising and industrious pioneers and also quickly became a popular recreation destination. Explore some of our history:

Unique – expect the unexpected!

- The Merry-Go-Round Museum celebrates the familiar music of band organs and the art of carousels. Located in Sandusky's 1927 post office, it houses a fully restored antique carousel and features wood carvers creating new carousel animals and restoring antique animals to their glory.
- Tiffin Glass Museum & Shoppe displays items created in the Tiffin Glass Factory from 1889 – 1990.
- Prehistoric sites abound including the world's largest example of glacial scouring and Native American pictographs on Kelleys Island; Bellevue's Seneca Caverns, a Registered National Landmark featuring seven levels 110-feet underground to a crystal clear underground stream; and geological wonders on Put-in-Bay include Perry's Cave and Crystal Cave, the world's largest geode.
- Sandusky's location as a port city made it a major terminal on the Underground Railroad, helping many slaves escape to Canada. A self-guided tour brochure of relevant sites is available and special guided tours are offered periodically.

Historic Homes and Villages – live the past!

- America's most prolific inventor, Thomas Edison was born in Milan, Ohio in 1847. Tour Edison's boyhood home and see displays of his many accomplishments.
- Just one block from Edison's birthplace, tour seven historic buildings on beautiful grounds and gardens. The Milan Historical Museum features the 1846 Galpin House and the 1843 Sayles House, along with a blacksmith shop and general store.
- Tour sixteen buildings in Bellevue's 19th century Historic Lyme Village. It includes an 1880s Victorian mansion, an 1836 farm home, log homes, barns, a one-room school, and general store. The village is home to the National Postmark Museum and the Schug Hardware Museum.
- The nation's first presidential center, the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, is marked by the White House's original gates. The home of the 19th President includes original family furnishings and Civil War and 19th century artifacts.

- Ohio's oldest museum, the Firelands Historical Society, is located in Norwalk in an 1836 home. Eclectic collections include an extensive gun collection from pre-Revolutionary War through WWII.
- Other historical homes of note include Sandusky's Eleutheros Cooke House, a Greek Revival built by Sandusky's first lawyer and father of Civil War financier Jay Cooke; the Follett House Museum, which houses exhibits on Johnson's Island and Cedar Point Amusement Park; Mattie Heckman Log House in Elmore, which depicts pioneer life in the Firelands; the Keeper's House, home to the first keepers of Marblehead Lighthouse; and the Doller House on Put-in-Bay, a new museum of island life.

Maritime Adventures – explore the Great Lakes!

- Investigate the oldest continuously operating lighthouse on the Great Lakes. The Marblehead Lighthouse is one of Lake Erie's best known and most-photographed landmarks. Climb the spiral staircase for breathtaking views of Lake Erie, the islands and Cedar Point.
- Vermilion's Inland Seas Maritime Museum celebrates the history of the Great Lakes through interactive exhibits, ship models, maritime art and an authentic 1910 steamship pilothouse. The Vermilion Lighthouse is also on site.
- The Maritime Museum of Sandusky depicts the history of Lake Erie and its importance to the Sandusky area. With exhibits on boat building, recreational boating, passenger boats, wetlands, shipwrecks, commercial shipping, fishing and Sandusky's role in the Underground Railroad.
- Other adventures include the Lake Erie Islands Historical Museum on South Bass Island, displaying more than 65 ship models and artifacts from the Battle of Lake Erie and the Ottawa County Historical Museum in Port Clinton, featuring area maritime legends and early fishing industries.

Military History – remember the battles and respect the fallen heroes!

- It's impossible to miss the 352-foot-tall Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial in Put-in-Bay. The monument commemorates Oliver Hazard Perry's victory during the War of 1812 and is a reminder of the long-lasting peace between the US and Canada. An observation platform offers spectacular views, and the visitor's center offers interactive displays and a video theater.
- During the Civil War nearly 9,000 Confederate soldiers were housed at a prison on Johnson's Island, in Sandusky Bay. The cemetery honors those who remain. In nearby Marblehead, visit the Johnson's Island Museum and Information Center, which features artifacts and a scale model of the prison.
- The Ohio Veteran's Home Museum in Sandusky features memorabilia from most of America's wars, from the Civil War through the War on Terrorism.

Ohio's Lake Erie Shores & Islands offers activities celebrating history and historical-themed events year round. The latest event information, including hours of operation as well as information on all of the area's historical attractions, is available at SHORESandISLANDS.com.

About Lake Erie Shores & Islands

Lake Erie Shores & Islands, located in north central Ohio, is a destination for family fun and entertainment. From seasonal events to year-round attractions, the area is rich with history and activities for the whole family, including the Lake Erie Islands, Cedar Point amusement park, seven water parks, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, a wildlife safari and much more. Lake Erie Shores & Islands has been ranked in the top twenty family vacation destinations by Disney's Family.com and is the only Ohio destination to receive this prestigious designation. More information is available at www.shoresandislands.com.

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