

# THE OLD FORT PALISADE

## SPRING 2022

### A Word from the President:

Greetings!

I hope you are all coping with this winter weather. Of the three Garrison weekends we've accommodated so far, it seems the wintry weather has synched with each one of them! But, from the stories I've heard, those attending have really enjoyed themselves. We have a full calendar planned for this year so be sure to check out the event schedule on our web page and on page 12.

If you're in need of re-enacting gear, you won't want to miss out on this fast - approaching event: Kalamazoo Living History Trade Show - March 19-20. I highly recommend it. Just bring lots of money! Check it out at: <http://www.kalamazooshow.com/>

*"Recycling, we think of it as a modern idea, but our ancestors did it all the time, from reusing rags to reusing metal. Metal recycling was especially important to the colonies as a very small bit of material was to be imported and it became extremely expensive ."*

*Pewter Casting,  
pg. 3*

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I'd also like to encourage you peruse a new website "Parson John Jarboe" is compiling. He's creating a schedule of reenacting events taking place around the country. Because it is in the beginning stages, there aren't too many listings yet, but I'm sure more will come. <https://reenactingschedule.org/>

Let me leave you with this parting thought...Indiana does not have just four seasons; we are blessed with 15. Winter 1.0, Mud 1.0, Winter 2.0, Mud 2.0, False Spring, Winter 3.0, Mud 3.0, Spring, Summer 1.0, Hell, Summer2.0, Fall, Early Winter, Indian Summer (maybe), Winter. Feel free to add any additional seasons as you see fit.

Stay warm, keep dry, and remember that when it's 100° this July you'll hate that too!

Norm Gable, President  
Historic Fort Wayne, Inc.





On April 21, you have the opportunity to be part of a community-wide initiative to make a lasting difference in Fort Wayne, and help support our Summer Internship program!

Give Greater Allen County is a one-day, 12-hour initiative that fosters philanthropy in Allen County, hosted by the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne. The organizers explain, "During this day of giving, we'll use the power of community to encourage individuals and businesses to support the nonprofits and causes they're passionate about and who make impact in our community each and every day. Together, our donations will address the needs of the community by providing financial resources that affect change."

Our goal at Historic Fort Wayne is to raise \$20,000. These funds will enable us to offer our Internship program for the third consecutive year. Each summer, we have been able to hire a student (college or graduate level) studying historical site management. With their leadership we have been able to open the Fort to the public for tours and demonstrations five days a week throughout the summer months, and bring in skilled craftspeople to demonstrate their trades. We hope you will help us to offering this amazing educational and outreach program again.

Give Greater Day kicks off at 7am. You can learn more about Give Greater day at [www.givegreaterallen.com](http://www.givegreaterallen.com). Links and additional information will be shared through our Facebook page. Please help make this a historic day for the Old Fort and Allen County!

## Who's Who

**Board Members:** Norm Gable, President  
Bob Jones, Vice President  
Tom Grant, Treasurer  
Nancy Stansberry, Secretary  
**Members:** Randy Elliott, Josh Grubaugh,  
Andi & Rick Hahn, Kip Lytle, Sean  
O'Brien, Gerret Swearingen

**Events Planning & School Demos:** Bob  
Jones

**Facilities Committee:** Sean O'Brien

**Maintenance:** Randy Elliott

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Bob Jones

**PR/Marketing:** Jennifer Balkenbusch

**Social Media:** Kathleen O'Connell

Send your comments/questions to  
[info@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:info@oldfortwayne.org).  
Your message will be sent to the  
appropriate contact person.

Sign up to receive our quarterly  
e-newsletter

## THE OLD FORT PALISADE

Send your request to:  
[info@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:info@oldfortwayne.org)

We are looking for articles  
for future issues.

If you have a historically pertinent  
subject you'd like to write about, let  
us know at [info@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:info@oldfortwayne.org)

Deadline for submissions to the  
Summer Palisade will be  
June 1, 2022

# Pewter Casting

By  
Josh Grubaugh

Recycling - we think of it as a modern idea, but our ancestors did it all the time, from reusing rags to reusing metal. Metal recycling was especially important to the colonies as a very small bit of material was able to be imported, and it became extremely expensive due to this fact. Considering the weight of metal, it really isn't very hard to see that you cannot import a lot of it without including a tremendous shipping cost. Pewter was no exception to this rule and there soon grew an industry in the colonies of pewter smithing that reused and repurposed the simple metal of pewter.



Now some of you might ask, what is pewter? Well, that depends on the era that you live in and when you lived. The mix for most pewter in the past was 85-99% tin, 1-9% copper, 1-3% antimony and 0-10% lead. Why such a disparity of numbers? Well, pewter is an alloy that has different qualities and attributes when having different mixtures. For example, lead makes the mixture easier to pour, antimony makes it more brittle, and copper produces a stronger and more durable alloy. Early pewter had more lead and as it became more modern, lead became less and less common, producing pewter that more resembled silver in its finish. By the 1850s, pewter became known as Britannia and was made primarily from tin and copper with a high luster. Today modern pewter (anything made from 1930 to the present) that is made for food in the United States is considered lead free, or less than .1% lead. Trade pewter might be made with varying forms of alloy. Some foreign pewter still retains a high lead content for example pieces of pewter out of Hong Kong.

What do we call a person working with pewter? A pewtersmith? A white smith? A tinkerer? A brazier? All of these would be considered correct at various times and places. A white smith is someone who works with metals that are silver or white in color (can also be someone who works in brass or bronze as well). Since the pewtersmith had to work with brass or bronze they would often be called a brazier. A tinkerer is one who makes spoons and utensils from pewter, often traveling from house to house throughout a community, trading for materials and lodging. A pewtersmith is one who works with different forms of pewter, casting and turning their materials. All of these individuals would be able to make their own casting bronzes and would work on getting the most up to date designs for their wares.

Normally when casting anything in molds, you must coat the inside of the mold with a release agent, usually soot, talc, or sulfur. Each of these provides a distinctive character to the mold and molded item with some producing a more granular surface, others a smoother surface. The important thing is that you have a release agent to help the separation of the product and mold to readily occur.



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Once you have heated the metal, usually 99% tin, it will liquify and look like the finest silver. It is at this time you can pour it into the prepared mold which may be heated or could be cool depending on its casting preferences. When you fill the mold, the metal will turn frosty when it solidifies, telling you when you should open it. Gently open it, and tap it gently with a wooden mallet to release the pewter object.



I have made spoons from molds that date from the 1600s to the present, with many from the early colonial era. In addition to that I have cast bullets, buttons, toys, and even whistles with these molds. I am constantly looking for antique molds and have found some in various other countries to make other objects including tea pot handles, and even feet. Eventually I will make my own molds like braziers of old, out of bronze that I will pour myself. At least that is my goal in the next couple of years.

People have asked when I got interested in this hobby area and my answer surprises many of them. I just wanted to learn about how they did things in the past and the best way to do that is to try it myself. I had no formal training and when I visited Colonial Williamsburg, I saw their foundry and wanted to try it for myself. Experience history by living it and see what you might learn as well. If something is interesting to you, it will be to someone else. I encourage you to take up a craft and demonstrate it at the fort. Most importantly, be safe and have fun. Together we can bring the past into the present and make history live once again, even if only on the weekend!



*Joshua Grubaugh is a frequent demonstrator at Historic Fort Wayne. He grew up in the area and has bachelor degrees in education, history, and anthropology. He worked with department of natural resources in nature preserves in restoration management and then began to teach at New Haven High School in the science department. He loves to do demonstrations including cooking, pewter casting, chocolate making, paint making, and fabric block printing, and helps manage the grounds around the river at the Fort.*



You can find us on Facebook  
for up-to-date event news and happenings!  
[www.facebook.com/HistoricFortWayne](http://www.facebook.com/HistoricFortWayne)

And check out  
Old Fort Radio 1640AM  
for historic vignettes,  
invitations to events at the Old Fort,  
and announcements of coming events.





# WINTER AT THE OLD FORT



Revolutionary War  
Garrison



Preparing for Winter Events



Ukrainian Flag



Nouvelle Annee



1812 Winter Garrison



## Volunteer Profile: A Few Questions For Brian Kilmer

*"Find a dying or lost art and bring it back to life.  
The old ways will be lost if we don't."*

1. Do you have any nicknames?

Bowbreaker, Tinker, and Tinman.

Bowbreaker comes from many, many moons ago back before the Fort, I was doing medieval recreation. At that time I was a fairly accomplished archer. Luck would have it though in a three month time I broke three longbows. Hence the nickname Bowbreaker. Tinker and Tin man come from the hazard of being a Tinsmith.

2. When did you start volunteering at the Fort?

Five years ago when we moved to Fort Wayne. I was born here in Fort Wayne, so I guess what they say may be true, a bad penny always returns. I became the Tinsmith here at the Fort almost four years ago. I love sharing history, meeting new people and not just from around here but from all over the world by doing what I love to do.

3. Is there a particular time period that you prefer to re-enact?

French and Indian war, besides the 12th century it was the first time period my wife and I were introduced to.

4. What is your family like (significant other, kids, siblings, etc.)?

Well, the one that I could not do this without is my wonderful spouse, Lisa. Between us we have three kids, all adults, and nine grandkids.

5. Do/did you work?

Yes, for Home Guard. I work in the entry door division building door frames.

6. Do you have other, non Fort related, hobbies/interests?

Camping, herbs, and I'm going to school to study Reiki

*Want to know more about what Brian does,  
or try your hand at tin smithing?*

*Check out page 8 for information about a  
class Brian will be offering in April!*





## Volunteer Now

Bob Jones

'Volunteer Advance' meets the second Saturday of the month from 10:00am to 12:00pm for the purpose of new volunteer orientation, V.I.P. backstage tour of the buildings of the Old Fort Complex, and an open time of Q&A. Weather permitting the meeting is at the Old Fort in the Orientation Building also known as the Modern Building. Occasionally the meeting will be held at a location away from the Old Fort Complex. All conditions are subject to change. Hot water will be available to make tea or coffee. Bring your own mug and snacks to share.



Saturday, March 12 we met as planned and revisited Texting 1812 Style with the making and using of a quill pen. The quill is not easy to master and presents a real challenge to those used to gel pens and magic markers. Steel nibs were available, thanks to board member Tom Grant, and made for excellent penmanship practice. It is not clear to me from the handwritten documents we have access to whether the writing was done with a quill or a steel nib. We examined a copy from the Orderly Book of Fort Wayne 1810 to 1813 with many examples of carefully written entries.

During the early years of Fort Wayne's Historic Old Fort, the director made presentations to dignitaries and V.I.P.s of a pair of lead dice made from musket balls by the soldiers. Gambling was forbidden by the army and the soldiers loved gaming, which was every bit as addictive as modern video games. A demonstration of casting musket balls was planned for the March gathering, but postponed until April due to weather. Finished musketball dice will be available for purchase in the Kekionga Merchantile. We will cast with lead-free pewter and work outside in the open air for safety sake.

**April 9**

**Theme: From the Garden to the Table**

Have you ever wondered what soldiers subsisted on? The rations provided by the army were ample - except when they weren't. Our visitors want to learn about the lives of the soldiers, including what was for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. After April's session you will be prepared to answer these questions. Meals for the garrison were supplemented with what was grown in the Fort gardens. An early document provides a detailed list of garden seeds sent to the Fort in 1803.

Those who attend may receive a copy. There will be a fire in the hearth of the Commander's Kitchen bringing a kettle of something tasty to a boil. Cookies will be roasting in a reflector oven. The Fort's wood-fired bake oven will provide a mouthwatering baguette or two to round out a delicious encounter Old Fort style. RSVP for this one so we can be prepared for your attendance at a soldier's lunch. PS - if you want arrive early and help with the preparations, call the Fort Phone (260) 437-2836.

*Continued next page*

**May 14**  
**Theme: To Arms!**

Volunteers get to help at many different stations and even though you may not be one of the soldiers, you can help the public understand the life of the soldier once you've experienced some of the tasks common during 1812. Rolling and preparing cartridges in an assembly line fashion will become second nature once you've learned how. Learning the manual of arms and mastering all the steps involved in the discharging of a musket may not be your cup of tea, but the smell of gunpowder in the morning is intoxicating. Seriously, you do not have to fire a musket if you don't want to. So for you there is . . . drum roll please . . . artillery! The procedures to load and fire, "faux-fire" the Fort's King Howitzers ensure you will be well informed. If cooking is your thing, you can trade in your Springfield for a spatula. See you at Fort Wayne's Historic Old Fort. There is a lot more to living history than meets the eye!

**June 11**  
**Theme: The Siege of Fort Wayne - 1812**

June's meeting will include an opportunity to review a copy of  
Lt. Daniel Curtis' letter from 1813.



## **LEARN TO TINSMITH!**

This is your chance to try a new craft!! Brian Kilmer (Three Rivers Tinsmith) and Eric Fletcher are offering an opportunity for you to try your hand at tinsmithing. Participants will work on three different projects: a cookie/biscuit cutter, a candle holder, and a cup.



What: Basic Tinsmithing 101

Where: The Old Fort in Fort Wayne, IN

When: April 2, 2022 from 10am until approximately 3pm

Cost: \$60 (part of the proceeds to be donated to the Fort)

Class size limited to first 8 registered participants.

Register Today: Please call 765-256-2315 or E-mail [threeriverstinsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:threeriverstinsmith@yahoo.com)





## A FOND FAREWELL TO THE BEEHIVE OVEN!

In March we had the sad chore of demolishing the old Beehive Oven. It had stood on the site since the Fort was originally opened in the 1970's. Unfortunately, time and weather had taken a toll on the unprotected brickwork. As seen in the pictures above, the structure had become unusable, unsound, and dangerous to Fort visitors.

Our incredible volunteers met on a cold March morning to begin the process of demolishing the oven. Several hours and a lot of sore muscles later, all that was left was a pile of rubble! That remaining heap of brickwork still needs to be collected in a dumpster so it can be disposed of safely. That will be a project for April. If you're interested in helping, we would love it. Give the Fort a call and let us know you want to be notified when the clean up is scheduled. Or, follow us on Facebook for updates.

We're fortunate that a new beehive oven was built inside the Fort compound a few years ago, so there will still be a steady supply of wonderful baked pies and bread at events. For now, we bid a fond farewell to the old oven, with thanks for the many meals it provided over the years.





# QUARTERMASTER'S CORNER

By Cory Balkenbusch

## Coatees, Caps, and Cockades: A Brief Look at the Uniforms Worn by the Fort Wayne Garrison - Part One 1813-1819

Uniforms have always been an integral part of military life. Uniforms are national symbolism condensed into garments that simultaneously must be practical (at least to some degree) for their wearer. The era of colonialism exemplified another important aspect of uniforms: intimidating potential foes with the grandeur and power of your country. The uniforms of the soldiers of Fort Wayne represented safety and protection to the area's white settlers and the ever-growing power of the United States to the local Native American population. Therefore, it is important to have at least a working understanding of the uniforms worn at Fort Wayne and how they were impacted by national trends and local conditions. This will be a multi-part series, beginning with the uniforms worn at the second and third American forts from 1813-1819 by the men of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> United States Infantry Regiments.

It is hardly surprising that the fledgling United States was facing crippling financial and supply difficulties from nearly the very beginning of the War of 1812. This meant that the days of extensive trim and rows of purely decorative buttons were over. Callender Irvine, Commissary General since 1812, first compromised in 1813 by maintaining the red collar and cuffs that had been an integral part of American martial appearance since the end of the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> However, the buttons "placed at the outer termination of the breast holes for mere decorative effect" and the "round-section worsted cord" trim were eliminated in favor of a functional row of buttons down the front of the coat for closure and a minimal amount of white trim around the collar and epaulets.<sup>2</sup> It seems that Fort Wayne never saw this uniform but would receive the next even more simplified version of the coat, when the "all-blue coatees trimmed with white... tape on the collar only, for infantry" were adopted by mid-1813.<sup>3</sup> This uniform proved both immensely popular amongst the officer corps and affordable enough for a young country, and the all-blue coatees "would continue in use by the US Army, with only minor stylistic changes, for the next two decades."<sup>4</sup>

The uniforms, as intended, make clear what the job was of the soldier wearing them. Fort Wayne was always garrisoned almost exclusively by infantrymen. Infantry were identifiable by the white trim on their coatees and shakos (compared to yellow for artillery and rifles) as well as the design of their buttons. The foliated infantry "I" buttons for the coatees were cast in pewter and were originally intended to have regimental numbers on them, but war time production constraints meant that many were simply decorated with just a star or simply left blank.<sup>5</sup>



*Here a sergeant(L) and private (R) can be seen dressed in the all blue coats adopted by the Army in late 1813 and worn through the beginning of the 1820s. The infantry distinctions can be seen with the white trim on the collars and shakos. The sergeant is distinguished from the private by his red sash and two white epaulets.*

Continued next page





*The foliated "I" buttons were another way to distinguish an infantryman from*

Headgear had also changed in 1813 with a focus on saving government cash while achieving an intimidating appearance. Felt shakos were replaced with leather tombstone shakos, described as such from the fact the front of the cap looks somewhat like a tombstone. The new design of shako was "distinctive and durable, although heavier than the felt cap" that preceded it.<sup>6</sup> The shakos themselves featured a white chord and set of tassels, along with a white plume, to distinguish infantrymen from other troops.<sup>7</sup> The front of the caps were decorated with a tin plate featuring an American eagle, with furled flags and other accoutrements of war underneath.<sup>8</sup>

The soldier's daily appearance would be completed with a set of white linen or duck trousers in summer or gray wool in winter. White linen shirts went with the infamous leather neck stocks. Since 1814, soldiers not on duty would likely be found working in gray roundabout jackets. These very plain garments were practical and used heavily for daily soldiering activities where a blue uniform was not necessary and could also be used under a soldier's blue coatee to provide extra warmth in winter.<sup>9</sup>

As the United States Army responded to supply shortages and practical demands in the field, soldiers at Fort Wayne would have been "dressed with impressive sobriety" by the end of the War of 1812 and through when the army left our area in 1819.<sup>10</sup> Gray clad soldiers would have been working the fields while others dressed in their blues greeted Native American diplomats and traders to whom the pageantry was not misinterpreted.

The next article in this series will address what the men of Fort Wayne's garrison would have been wearing leading up to and at the outbreak of the War of 1812, as well as examining some key pieces of the equipment they carried.



*Here the basic gray fatigue uniform (R) can be seen next to the blue dress coat (L). Also on the right are the gray trousers that were issued for extra warmth in winter.*

<sup>1</sup> James Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2000), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815*, 9, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815*, 14.

<sup>5</sup> René Chartrand, *Uniforms and Equipment of the United States Forces in the War of 1812* (Youngstown: Old Fort Niagara Association, 1992), 148.

<sup>6</sup> Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815*, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Kochan, *The United States Army 1812-1815*, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Chartrand, *Uniforms and Equipment of the United States Forces in the War of 1812*, 147.

<sup>9</sup> Chartrand, *Uniforms and Equipment of the United States Forces in the War of 1812*, 43.

<sup>10</sup> Chartrand, *Uniforms and Equipment of the United States Forces in the War of 1812*, 56.

**Cory Balkenbusch** has been a volunteer for the Fort since 2013, and has served as our Summer Intern in 2020 and 2021. He recently finished his Bachelor's in History with a concentration in Public History at Ball State, and has begun work on his Masters Degree in History at Ball State as well, with concentrations in Digital and Public History. When not giving tours, Cory serves as the Fort's Quartermaster Sergeant, maintaining the site's collection of uniforms and equipment. He also trains any new volunteers on how to be soldiers and helps our Event Coordinator run events.

## 2022 UPCOMING EVENTS

Public hours as listed below. If you're interested in participating as a reenactor or vendor, please contact [events@oldfortwayne.org](mailto:events@oldfortwayne.org) for registration forms, or visit our website. All events are free admission, unless specifically stated. Donations welcome.

**March 26: Union Civil War  
Garrison**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm

**May 6: Education Day at the Fort**  
For Grades 4 & 5  
Pre-Registration Required,

**May 7-8: Muster on the St. Mary's**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

**June 11-12: Siege of Fort Wayne 1812**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

**July 16-17: Colonial America**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

**August 27-28: Post Miami 1755**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

**September 3-4: Napoleonic Days  
1804-1815**  
Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

**September 11: Be a Tourist  
in Your Own Hometown**  
Sunday, 12 pm – 5 pm

**October 22: Fright Night Lantern Tours**  
Saturday, 6 pm – 10 pm  
Tickets Required.

**November 26: Christmas at the Fort**  
Saturday, 11 am – 5 pm

**Volunteer Advance** meets the second Saturday of the month from 10:00am to 12:00pm for new volunteer orientation and topical discussions.

Always check our website, Facebook, or Fort radio for event times and schedule updates.

### Historic Fort Wayne, Inc.

1201 Spy Run Ave.  
Fort Wayne, IN



Mailing address:  
P.O. Box 12650  
Fort Wayne, IN 46864  
Phone: (260) 437-2836

[www.oldfortwayne.org](http://www.oldfortwayne.org)  
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Kathleen O'Connell  
editor

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