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# Media Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **NIAGARA'S 1812 BICENTENNIAL WILL COMMENCE WITH LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S NEW YEAR'S DAY LEVEE AT FORT GEORGE**

**(NIAGARA REGION, DEC. 13)**– The Honourable David C. Onley, will be ringing in the New Year at Fort George National Historic Site in Niagara-on-the-Lake; the first event marking the bicentennial of the War of 1812 in the Niagara Region. Parks Canada will open the gates of Fort George to welcome regional residents and visitors to tour the buildings, watch the military and music demonstrations and learn more from site staff about its history and role in the War of 1812. Parks Canada staff will bring the fort to life and allow visitors to step back in time to experience Fort George as it was in 1812. His Honour will be joined by Niagara Regional Chairman Gary Burroughs, the Town's Lord Mayor David Eke, along with other dignitaries, local politicians from both sides of the border, 1812 committees and the general public. Snow-or-shine, everyone will join together inside the fort under a massive tent to toast the New Year.

**When:** Sunday, January 1, 2012

**Where:** Fort George National Historic Site, 51 Queens Parade, Niagara-on-the-Lake

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Cannon salute at 3:00 p.m. (With exchange between Old Fort Niagara)**

"This milestone event marks not only the beginning and celebration of a New Year, but also the start of Niagara's Bicentennial celebrations", says Regional Chair Gary Burroughs. "That His Honour has chosen to host his Levee in Niagara at Fort George has a very unique historical significance and we are delighted to welcome both the Lieutenant Governor and all Niagara residents to this most auspicious occasion," Burroughs noted.

"We are thrilled to have the Lieutenant Governor's Levee as one of our Signature 2012 events," says Brian Merrett, CEO of the Niagara 1812 Bicentennial Legacy Council. "It will be a toast to our continued prosperity and the start of celebrating 200 years of peace between nations, since the conflict of the War of 1812," proclaims Merrett.

"His Honour has graciously chosen Fort George to host his New Year's Day Levee," says Jim Alexander of the Friends of Fort George. "We are excited and proud to have our Town selected for this significant event initiating the 1812 commemorations."

The origins of a levee date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century during the reign of King Louis XIV. The tradition was brought to Canada by the Royal Governor of New France; who would sit on his doorstep at his Quebec residence on New Year's Day-morning to greet the citizens and usher in the New Year.

Dress accordingly, as it is a semi- outdoors event. Light refreshments will be served and after personally greeting everyone, the Lieutenant Governor will give the command for a cannon salute at 3:00 p.m. All guests are welcome to tour the buildings within the fort and there will be performances by the Fort George Fife & Drum corps.

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This event is a collaborative partnership between:



Friends of Fort George: 905-468-6621 [www.1812niagaraonthelake.ca](http://www.1812niagaraonthelake.ca)