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News “Splash” - Record Number of Visitors “Duck” into the Fort Pitt Block House

Point State Park, Pittsburgh, PA – October 17, 2013 – Thanks to a giant rubber duck, the Fort Pitt Block House has welcomed over 10,000 visitors and sold over \$4,000 in souvenirs in just the first half of October. Compared to October 2012, that is a remarkable 9x increase in visitation (1,670 visitors) and 4x increase in souvenir sales (\$890 sales). The four-story-high rubber duck, which is docked at [Point State Park](#), has resulted in a record number of visitors to Pittsburgh’s oldest authenticated structure, the Fort Pitt Block House. “It’s like the Pittsburgh Three Rivers Regatta every day,” describes Emily Weaver, the Fort Pitt Block House site curator.

While summer is always a busy time at Point State Park, the summer of 2013 started off strong for the Block House as the [Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of Allegheny County](#), owners and operators of the site, began preparations for the building’s 250th anniversary in 2014. An ongoing preservation and restoration project along with a recent archeological survey brought more visitors than ever to the Block House. Add to that the reopening of the Point State Park fountain, extended Fourth of July events at the Park and, of course, the giant rubber duck. All of these forces working together set the stage for the Fort Pitt Block House to “quack” visitation records.

The duck, brought to Pittsburgh as part of the [Pittsburgh Cultural Trust’s International Festival of Firsts](#), has brought Pittsburghers out to enjoy their city like never before. According to Weaver, during the cooler months Block House visitors tend to be mostly non-residents, visiting from outside the state or country. The duck has changed all that. “Many visitors who stop in after visiting the duck say they haven’t been to the Block House since they were school children,” said Weaver. She continued, “When you hear that from an 80-year-old visitor, you know the impact of the duck has been very significant. It has been a great boost for the Block House and it is wonderful for our city.”

About The Fort Pitt Block House

The Block House was originally constructed in 1764 as a defensive redoubt for Fort Pitt, a key British fortification during the French and Indian War. As the oldest authenticated structure in Western Pennsylvania, the Block House holds much significance to the city of Pittsburgh and to early American history. The Fort Pitt Block House has been owned and operated by the Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of Allegheny County, a supporting organization of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, since 1894. The Fort Pitt Society and the Pittsburgh Chapter, NSDAR have worked tirelessly to preserve and protect the Block House for more than 120 years, keeping it free and open to the public as a historic site and museum. The Fort Pitt Block House is located in downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as part of Point State Park. For more information, visit www.fortpittblockhouse.com.

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