



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PUBLIC INVITED TO CELEBRATE 250th ANNIVERSARY
OF FORT PITT BLOCK HOUSE
SATURDAY, AUGUST 9 AT POINT STATE PARK**

Point State Park, Pittsburgh, PA – July 23, 2014 - Pittsburgh Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) will celebrate the 250th anniversary of Pittsburgh's oldest architectural landmark, the Fort Pitt Block House. **The Block House 250 Summer Celebration** will be held on Saturday, August 9, 2014 with a day-long colonial celebration. "For many this event is once in a lifetime, as it is held by DAR only once every fifty years," explained Dru Simeone, Regent of Pittsburgh Chapter.

Activities for ALL ages will be from 11am - 4pm in Point State Park - by the Block House and Fort Pitt Museum, including:

- Historical re-enactors, such as George Washington (who was the first to recommend that the British build a fort at the Forks of the Ohio) and Colonel Henry Bouquet (who erected the Block House in 1764);
- Live demonstrations of the construction of the Block House;
- History lectures featuring Brady Crytzer, Kelly Linn, Alan Gutches, and others;
- Raising of the Red Ensign flag which flew when Pittsburgh belonged to Britain;
- Firings of an 18th century cannon;
- Performances by Yankee Drummer and Pittsburgh Police Emerald Society Pipes & Drums; and
- Reduced admission to the Fort Pitt Museum - \$2.50.

The official Block House 250 Commemoration Ceremony featuring Mayor Peduto, Rev. Dr. John Guest, River City Brass, Etta Cox and patriotic traditions will begin at 2pm. Following the ceremony, Roy Engelbrecht Photography will take a group shot of all present which will be placed into a 50-year time capsule. "The time capsule photo is an opportunity to be a part of Pittsburgh's history that the next generation will get to see" said Katie Imler, Vice-Regent. The capsule will be displayed at the Heinz History Center until it is opened in 2064 during DAR's Block House 300 anniversary celebration.

The **Block House 250 Summer Celebration** is **free to the public**, and is sponsored by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Senator John Heinz History Center and the Pittsburgh Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution who, through its Fort Pitt Society, has owned and preserved the Fort Pitt Block House for more than a century.

Fort Pitt Block House

The Fort Pitt Block House was built in 1764 as a small defensive redoubt and is the only surviving structure of Fort Pitt, a key British fortification during the French and Indian War, which also served as the western headquarters of the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

The Block House was originally constructed to help defend Fort Pitt from American Indian attacks during the mid-18th century. After the British abandoned the fort in 1772, the Block House was converted into a trading post for a number of years. By 1785, the building was converted into a single family dwelling. During the 19th century it became a multi-family tenement with a family living on the second floor.

In 1894, the Block House was gifted to the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution by the structure's owner, Mary Croghan Schenley. The Chapter embarked upon a 16-month restoration, which primarily involved the in-filling of window and door openings cut into the Block House during its century-long use as a residence.

The Block House is still owned and operated by the Pittsburgh Chapter through its Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. It has remained free and open to the public since 1895. The structure is the oldest architectural landmark in Pittsburgh, and it is also the nation's only authenticated pre-Revolutionary War structure west of the Allegheny Mountains. Much of its architectural fabric is intact, including the stone foundation, bricks, and timber elements that are largely original to its 1764 construction. For more information, please see our website at www.fortpittblockhouse.com.

###

Contact: Dru Simeone, Regent
Pittsburgh Chapter, NSDAR
Email: drusimeone@gmail.com
Phone: (412) 548-3585