

*Small Historic Towns across America.*  
as presented by Mr. Stadt's on-line Freedom Project Education in the Fall and Winter of  
2014. You can learn more about our classes by visiting us at: [www.fpeusa.org](http://www.fpeusa.org)



## Brief History of the City of Mackinac Island, Michigan:

Mackinaw Island was originally called *Mi-shi-ne-macki-nong* or by the Ottawa and Ojibwe tribes to commemorate the *Mi-shi-ne-macki-naw-go*, a tribe of Indians native to the island, that, save two, were annihilated by the Seneca tribe. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century the island was also called *Michilimackinac*, which was shortened to just “Mackinac” by 1820, though always pronounced ‘Mackinaw’.

The community and a few buildings of Fort Michilimackinac, under British control—though originally built in Mackinaw City by the French in 1714-1715, was moved across the ice of Lake Huron in the winter of 1780-81 to the newly constructed Fort Mackinac on Mackinaw Island during the American Revolution. Fort Mackinac was officially relinquished to the newly founded United States of America in 1796. However, the fort was recaptured by the British during the War of 1812 and, despite an attempt during the Battle of Mackinaw Island in 1814, the American forces did not regain the fort and island until after the war.

Fort Mackinac was then used as a strategic troop reserve, though it was practically abandoned in between deployments, and a fur trading post.

During the Civil War the fort was used in the summer 1862 as a prison for three Confederate sympathizers, two of which swore loyalty to the Union rather than winter there.

Mackinac National Park became the second national park in 1875 and also became a popular place to vacation in the summer and many hotels, such as the Grand Hotel (opened in 1887) were established. The last of the US Army soldiers were removed from Fort Mackinac in 1945 and the fort and national park were transferred to the state, becoming the Mackinac Island State Park, the first state park in Michigan.

All motor vehicles—with the exception of emergency equipment and snowmobiles in the winter—are banned on the island. One may walk, ride a bicycle or horseback, or take a horse-drawn carriage as means of transportation.

## Location and Driving Directions from Closest Major U.S. Airport:

Mackinac Island is located in Lake Huron, between the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. From the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, I-75 can be taken north to Mackinaw City from where ferry boats go to Mackinaw Island and dock in Haldimand Bay. Ferry services are also offered from St. Ignace in the Upper Peninsula.

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### Who was President when this town was founded? And, what was the political environment in America at that time.

Several fort buildings and surrounding community moved from present-day Mackinaw City to Mackinac Island in the winter of 1780-81 when it was occupied by the British, during the reign of King George III. When Mackinac Island and Mackinac Fort were officially relinquished to the United States of America by June of 1796 in accordance with Jay's Treaty. John Adams was elected as President in the 1796 election, replacing George Washington. There were 16 states at the time, with Tennessee being admitted in June of that year also.

### Oldest Businesses/Largest Businesses Today:

The oldest surviving of Michigan, is the Mackinac.

The more than 300 year-Michilimackinac is one of in North America.

Michilimackinac, the buildings moved across However, that building current structure.



Playing at Fort Mackinac

building on the island, and the state Officer's Stone Quarters in Fort

old parish of Sainte Anne de the oldest Roman Catholic parishes Originally built in Fort original log church was one of the the ice to Mackinac Island.

was replaced in 1874, which is the

May's Candy and Murdick's Fudge, both still in operation, have been making fudge and candy on the island since the 1880s.

### City Government:

The City of Mackinac Island is governed by a Mayor and 6 member City Council, with annual mayoral elections and 3 year City Council terms. There are meetings every other Wednesday.

### Historic Attractions in the Area. Festivals and Events.

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Fort Mackinac opens in May and boasts all original buildings to accompany the historical village. Various events and reenactments of military life are scheduled, though one may always rely on the firing of the 1841 model 6-pounder cannon several times a day.

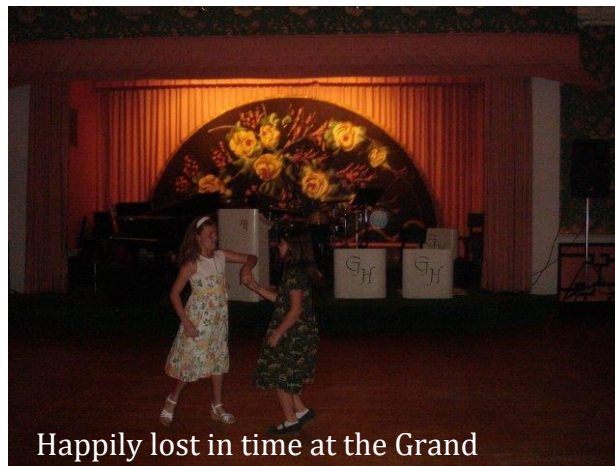
Arch Rock, one of the island's natural attractions, in 2006 and in 1918



The Grand Hotel also hosts many themed events, such as the *Somewhere in Time* event every autumn and the Titanic at the Grand in May.

## Where can Mackinac

There are many most famous and two of the 390 are beautiful. Five (or more) guests Most overnight course dinner



Happily lost in time at the Grand

served every day in the parlor and evening attire is required in the hotel after 6:30 p.m. One can play croquet and bocci ball on the lawn, swim in the outdoor pool, play golf or tennis, or tour the lovely gardens. Of course one could 'world's longest front porch' Straits of Mackinac.

## we stay if we visit Island?

hotels on the island, one of the oldest being the Grand Hotel. No available rooms are alike, but all presidents have joined the 130,000 that stay overnight each season. packages include breakfast and a 5 every day. Afternoon tea is also



The cannon

always sit and rock on the and view the gardens and

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### Why would I want to visit this historic small town:

I've been to Mackinac Island 3 times (approximate ages 7, 9, and 13) and each time I see something new, or understand history classes I've taken interim. When I was where no cars were my history book come cannon and rifles and the portions of the fort was and the fort every summer would always find understanding. I would love to go back again and see what I understand now.



something better because of the or the books I've read in the younger, the sheer idea of a place allowed was staggering, and to see alive with the explosion of the hands-on activities in the museum amazing. I could explore the island for the rest of my life, and I'm sure I something new, or have a clearer

### Links you may wish to visit:

<http://www.mightymac.org/island.htm>

<http://www.grandhotel.com/activities/activities-overview/>

<http://www.mightymac.org/fortmackinac.htm>

<http://www.mackinawcity.net/mackinawhistory.php>

<http://www.originalmurdicksfudge.com/about-us/>

<http://www.maysfudge.com/about/>

<http://www.cityofmi.org>

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