

## *Small Historic Towns across America.*

as presented by Mr. Stadt's on-line Freedom Project Education U.S.  
History classes 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 Mackinac Island, Michigan.



Mackinac Island was established in the year 1670 when a Catholic Jesuit priest founded a mission for the Native American tribes in the area. Soon after the mission was founded it rapidly became a fur trading center for the French trappers in the area. However, during the French and Indian War the British took control over the island. The commanding officer of the British chose the bluffs of the island for the location of the fort, and as you can see in the picture above, still stands to this day. Throughout the entire

American Revolutionary War the island was never attacked and the United States did not acquire the island until the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The first battle between the Americans and the British during the War of 1812 was fought on Mackinac Island. Following the Civil War the Island became a popular place for tourists and residents of the Great Lakes area. In 1875 much of the island was designated as the second national park, only three years after Yellowstone was designated as the first national park. The island was however Michigan's first state park. Due to a concern about the health of carriage horses on the Island, vehicles were restricted and are to this day, with the exception of construction and emergency vehicles.

## Location and Driving Directions from closest major U.S. Airport.

Mackinaw City is located 21 minutes from Pellston Regional Airport. From there drive north on U.S.-31 N. Then take exit 338 from I-75 N, that will take you right into the heart of Mackinaw City. From Mackinaw City take one of the many ferries available for transport to and from Mackinac Island.

Who was President when this town was founded? And, what was the political environment in America at that time. At the time Mackinac Island was founded the area was so remote that none of the major powers of the world had claimed it. The first European to establish anything on Mackinac Island was when a Catholic Jesuit Priest by the name of Claude Dablon founded a mission, in 1670, for the Native Americans in the area.

## Oldest business/largest business today.

Although it may be hard to believe, the oldest and one of the largest businesses today on Mackinac Island is a fudge store. Murdicks Fudge established in 1887 is one of the most popular and oldest stores today.

## City Government.

Mackinac Island's current mayor is Margaret Doud. The mayor has a council to assist him/her in a Mayor-Council form of government. There is a Governors Assistant, Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, Supervisor, Fire Chief, and Building Inspector. Council meetings are every other Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall.

## Historic attractions in the area. Festivals and events.

Mackinac Island hosts hundreds of exciting events all throughout the summer. One of the most popular of those events is the annual Lilac Festival. This event, which has been held since 1949, takes place during June 6-15 of each year when lilac bushes are in full bloom. There are many parades held during the festival in which all the floats are horse-drawn since no private motorized vehicles are allowed on the island. To learn more about this event please visit: [www.mackinacislandlilacfestival.org](http://www.mackinacislandlilacfestival.org)

## Where can we stay if we visit Mackinac Island.

Although there are many inns, and bed and breakfasts', one of the more historical and well known places to stay is the Grand Hotel. The Grand Hotel was constructed in the late 19th century. It has been visited by many including, five U.S. Presidents, Thomas Edison, Mark Twain, the Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin as well as the Russian president. The Grand Hotel also boasts as having the worlds largest porch. In 1989 the Grand Hotel was made a National Historic Landmark. For more information please visit: [www.grandhotel.com](http://www.grandhotel.com)

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

One of the reasons I would want visit Mackinac Island is that ever since I was a child my family and I would always make an annual trip to the island as a way to unwind and have fun as a family. Another reason is that Mackinac Island is home to my favorite fudge shops that my family and I always go to when we're there. Overall Mackinac Island is a place where history is around every corner, where you can go and have fun while at the same time be learning much of why Mackinac Island is one of the most unique places in the country.

## Links you may wish to visit

Upcoming event: [www.mackinacislandlilacfestival.com](http://www.mackinacislandlilacfestival.com)

[www.grandhotel.com](http://www.grandhotel.com)

[www.mackinacisland.or](http://www.mackinacisland.or)

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