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Andrew Jackson's Hermitage: Home of the People's President

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**The Hermitage offers free admission on 204th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Dec. 13, 2018)** – On Tuesday, Jan. 8, Andrew Jackson's Hermitage will commemorate the 204th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans by offering complimentary admission to all ages, marking the only free day of the year at the presidential home. The keynote speaker at the 2019 ceremony will be [Lt. Gen. John Castellaw USMC \(Ret.\)](#). He is former chief of staff of the U.S. Central Command at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and current board member for the [American Security Project](#). Lt. Gen. Castellaw will speak at 11 a.m. wreath-laying ceremony at Jackson's tomb.

The event celebrates the last major battle of the War of 1812 and the stunning victory of the American forces, led by Major General Andrew Jackson. General Jackson's decisive triumph, leading 5,530 American troops against a seasoned British force of nearly 10,100, secured New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley from British control, allowed for westward settlement and economic development on the lands west of the Allegheny Mountains, revitalized American's faith in their country's future and made Jackson a national hero. The victory also raised the status of the fledgling United States in the eyes of European powers who had seen the country as not much more than a temporary experiment in self-government. The British defeat eventually led to Jackson's becoming the seventh president of the United States. To quote noted author and news journalist Steve Inskeep, "The Battle of New Orleans was one of the most decisive victories in American military history."

"Every year on January 8, we continue the time-honored tradition of commemorating Jackson's triumph at the Battle of New Orleans by opening our doors to the public," said Howard J. Kittell, president and CEO of The Hermitage. "The celebration creates an outstanding opportunity to learn and to feel inspired through experiencing the life and impact of Jackson."

At 11 a.m., the annual wreath-laying ceremony featuring the Tennessee National Guard and Castellaw will be conducted at Andrew Jackson's tomb.

In addition to the wreath-laying ceremony, guests will have access to the museum, historic buildings and grounds, as well as special programming throughout the day. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., guests can stop by the museum and hear stories from reenactors who portray militia and regular soldiers who served under General Jackson's command.

At 1:30 p.m. in the theater, Tony Turnbow of the [Natchez Trace Parkway Association](#) will present “Facing Down the Firing Squad and Becoming Old Hickory,” featuring research from his book *Hardened to Hickory: The Missing Chapter in Andrew Jackson’s Life*. The program will be followed by a book signing from 2:30–3:30 p.m. in the Museum Store.

### **Schedule of Events**

- 10 a.m.–4 p.m.: General Jackson’s militia at the Andrew Jackson Center, kids’ games and activities at the Education Center
- 11 a.m.: Wreath-Laying Ceremony at Andrew Jackson’s Tomb
- Noon: Complimentary hot cocoa outside the Education Center
- 1:30 p.m.: “Facing Down the Firing Squad and Becoming Old Hickory” in the theater
- 2:30–3:30 p.m.: Book signing with Tony Turnbow at the Museum Store

### **About the Battle of New Orleans**

On the foggy morning of Jan. 8, 1815, at a place that has come to be known as Chalmette Battlefield just downriver from New Orleans, General Andrew Jackson led a ragtag army of Americans to a stunning victory over the highly trained British forces at the Battle of New Orleans. It was the final major battle in the War of 1812. The battle lasted fewer than 30 minutes, and the result changed America while stunning the world. By the time the smoke had cleared, the British had sustained 2,000 killed, wounded, missing or captured. Jackson’s own losses were only 71. It was the most lopsided defeat ever suffered by a British army. The battle changed how both Americans and Europeans thought about the United States’ experiment in self-government, branded Andrew Jackson as an American military hero and served as the springboard for Jackson’s eventual election to the U.S. presidency in 1828. Each year on Jan. 8, The Hermitage commemorates the anniversary of this American victory with public programs for children and adults and offers free admission to the public.

### **About Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage**

Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage: Home of the People’s President is one of the largest, most well-preserved and most visited presidential homes in the United States. Opened to the public in 1889, The Hermitage is one of America’s first presidential museums. Today, The Hermitage is a 1,120-acre National Historic Landmark with 27 historic buildings, including Jackson’s mansion and tomb, restored slave cabins, a church and gardens. In recent years, new interpretive initiatives and educational programs such as the history of slavery have enhanced the experience of 228,157 annual visitors. For more information, visit [www.thehermitage.com](http://www.thehermitage.com).