

LOCAL HISTORY



Percy Moran's painting of "Perry's Transfer of his Flag to the Niagara" shows the blue banner bearing the phrase, "Don't Give Up the Ship." Penn State University

204 Years Ago: On Sept. 10, 1813, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry engaged the British fleet on Lake Erie off the coast of Ohio during the War of 1812 in what became known as the "Battle of Lake Erie." After three hours of fierce fighting, Perry's fleet gained the upper hand and the British were forced to surrender. This battle was significant because it gave the Americans complete control of Lake Erie and directly led to the recapture of Detroit from the British. It also relieved the threat of an attack on Ohio, Pennsylvania and Western New York. Some of the American boats used in the battle were built with parts scavenged from a merchant ship that operated on Lake Erie before the war, which was named the Salina after the settlement known for its salt production at the time near Onondaga Lake. In September of 1877, the community observed Commodore Perry's victory on Lake Erie with a mock military and naval engagement on Onondaga Lake with suitable fireworks, including the spectacular sinking of a condemned barge while thousands watched.

— Dan Connors for the Onondaga Historical Association