



# Marietta, Ohio Excursion

Thursday, August 21 – Sunday, August 24, 2025



Please join us in August for a fun-filled excursion to charming historic Ohio River towns of Marietta, Ohio and Parkersburg, West Virginia.

Even though the trip isn't until August, we need to prepay for our tours before June 15. **Please submit your RSVPs, book your hotel reservations and send a check to Bill Curtis to pay for the tours ASAP.**

Click this link to RSVP for the Marietta Outing:

<https://oveb.org/php/rsvp-form.php?eid=8>



## Lodging:

### **Holiday Inn Express**

970 Pike St., Marietta, OH

Phone: 740-760-1515

Rate: \$94.00 per night plus tax

*Please contact the hotel directly to book your reservation.*

<https://www.ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/us/en/marietta/mrtea/hoteldetail>

## Itinerary:

August 21 3:00 pm - Hotel check in

6:30 pm- Dinner @ Lafayette Hotel

August 22 Hotel Breakfast

8:00 - 8:30 am - Leave for ferry to Blennerhasset Island in Parkersburg, WV

9:00 - 9:45 am - Tour Blennerhassett Museum of Regional History, receive tickets

10:00 am - Board ferry for 25-minute trip to Blennerhasset Island

10:30 am - 1:30 pm - Guided tour of mansion, wagon tour of island with box lunch

2:00 pm - Board ferry for return trip to Parkersburg

3:30 - 5:00 pm - Tour Peoples Mortuary Museum

6:30 pm - Dinner (Location TBA)

August 23 Hotel Breakfast

8:30 am - Leave Hotel

9:00-11:00 am - Tour Campus Martius Museum

11:30 am -1:00 pm - Lunch (Location TBA)

2:00-3:30 pm - Tour Henderson Hall historical mansion

5:30-8:00 pm – Valley Gen Riverboat Dinner Murder/Mystery Cruise

August 24 Hotel Breakfast and check out.

## Costs for tours: (Note: All costs are PER PERSON)

Blennerhassett Island:	
Ferry to island, mansion tour & island wagon ride tour	\$28.00
Mortuary Museum:	8.00
Campus Martius Tour:	9.00
Riverboat dinner/mystery cruise	47.00
Henderson Hall tour:	10.00
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<b>Total per person</b>	<b>\$102.00</b>

Please send your checks (\$102/person, \$204/couple) to OVEB treasurer, Bill Curtis:

Bill Curtis  
5791 Summit View Court  
Cincinnati, OH 45247

Make checks payable to the Ohio Valley Early Birds. Checks must arrive by June 15.

## Dinner at the Historic Lafayette Hotel

<https://lafayettehotel.com/>



The Lafayette Hotel stands as an illustrious testament to the riverboat era's grandeur, nestled within the heart of downtown Marietta, Ohio. Constructed in 1918, this venerable establishment bears the moniker of Marquis de Lafayette, a revered French military officer who valiantly contributed to the Revolutionary War.

Dining at the Lafayette Hotel is a culinary journey through time and taste. The Riverfront Bar & Grill beckons with its relaxed ambiance and captivating vistas of the majestic Ohio River and the Williamstown Bridge.

The Lafayette Hotel is located at 101 Front Street, Marietta, Oh 45750.



## Blennerhassett Museum of Regional History

<https://www.greaterparkersburg.com/blennerhassett-museum-of-regional-history/>



The Blennerhassett Museum of Regional History is a three-story museum focused on the history of the Blennerhassett Family and the history of the Mid-Ohio Valley region. Peruse local artifacts and get a great background on Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett before visiting the Island. The museum also has a gift shop full of items by regional artisans.

The basement floor of the museum contains the Stahl collection, a vast assortment of artifacts found on Blennerhassett Island from Native American arrow heads to tools to cloth. The basement level also has an informative 15-minute video that works as a great introduction to the history of the Blennerhassett family. Bathrooms are also located on this floor. Elevator access between the three floors is also available.

The first floor of the museum has the gift shop and several exhibits on regional artifacts and items from Blennerhassett Island. There's a collection of old vehicles, Harman Blennerhassett's telescope and a wonderful assortment of paintings of regional historical figures.

The second floor of the museum contains rotating exhibits. Some of these exhibits have been on WWI and WWII, children's toys, trains and much more. This museum is a great jumping off start to a day including Blennerhassett Island. You may purchase tickets to the stern wheeler, carriage ride and mansion tour there, as well as admission to the museum. There is plenty of parking along the street and in a neighboring lot.

The Blennerhassett Museum of Regional History is located at 137 Juliana St, Parkersburg, WV 26101.

## Blennerhassett Island State Park

<https://www.greaterparkersburg.com/blennerhassett-island/#>



Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park is accessed through the Island Belle Sternwheeler, a 20-minute boat ride to the island. The Island Belle picks up and drops off passengers at Point Park, a short walk from the Visitors Welcome Center located at 113 Ann Street, Parkersburg, WV.

A grove of towering black walnut trees, twittering songbirds, and an air of opulent serenity greet visitors as they step onto Blennerhassett Island – a patch of about 500 acres in the middle of the Ohio River with a history all its own. The island is the perfect way to travel back in time, transporting history buffs and weekend-getaway lovers alike to the early 19th century.





### **Who were the Blennerhassetts?**

Harman Blennerhassett and his wife, Margaret, settled on the island in 1798 and began constructing an enormous estate. The construction took over 2.5 years and at the time of its completion, the house was the largest and grandest in the American West. The house was filled with the most expensive furnishings, paintings, and possessions. The Irish aristocrats enjoyed hosting gatherings at their home and living a luxurious lifestyle. The plantation included magnificent gardens maintained by about ten slaves, who lived in adverse conditions.

About six years after their arrival on the island, misfortune struck the nobles. Aaron Burr, the former Vice President of the United States under Thomas Jefferson, sought refuge on the island after he shot and killed Alexander Hamilton during their infamous 1804 duel. Burr and Harman became close acquaintances, frequently writing to one another after the politician's departure. Eventually, their correspondence took a turn for the worse — a plot to commit treason and insurrection began to form.

Aaron Burr had a plan to conduct treason against the United States by annexing Louisiana and Mexico and establishing his own government. Influenced by his wife, Harman invested the remainder of his money to fund this expedition, including buying boats, weapons, and much more. His island was meant to be a main base of the expedition. Thomas Jefferson was notified of this and requested that Aaron Burr and his followers be punished. The Virginia militia was sent to the Ohio River to seize the Blennerhassetts and their island. Harman escaped and his wife was not on the island when the militia came. The house was heavily damaged.

The original Blennerhassett mansion burned to the ground in 1811. In 1973, archaeologists unearthed the house's foundation. West Virginia spent close to one million dollars and eighteen years re-creating the mansion. The reconstructed mansion was built in the same spot as the original foundation, but the ground underneath the new mansion was elevated to lift the home off of the flood plain. In 1991, the island was opened to the public for tours.

### **Putnam-Houser House**

Constructed in 1802, The Putnam-Houser House, nicknamed "Maple Shade," symbolizes the westward expansion era. It belonged to Aaron Waldo Putnam and his wife, Charlotte Loring Putnam, who were friends of the Blennerhassetts.



Most of the structure is as it was in 1802 with few updates or reconstructions. There is so much history encompassed in the building that even the names and initials of family members and guests are forever preserved in etchings on several panes of window glass. The house has survived five generations of the Putnam family and a big move, as it was relocated via barge to Blennerhassett Island in 1986.

### **Indigenous People & Chief Nemacolin**

Not much is known about the history of the indigenous people on Blennerhassett Island, but human artifacts dating back nearly 13,000 years ago have been found on the property. One notable figure featured in the island's story is Chief Nemacolin, the leader of the Delaware Nation, one of three federally recognized tribes of Delaware indigenous people in the United States.

## Peoples Mortuary Museum

<https://www.cawleyandpeoples.com/peoples-mortuary-museum>



The architecture of two Greek Revival homes that lie along Marietta's picturesque Front Street lend a stately ambience to the mortuary contained within their walls. But step into the alley beyond Cawley & Peoples Funeral Home, and you'll encounter a world where history meets the art of farewell. The Peoples Mortuary Museum is a labor of love that belongs to semiretired funeral home director William "Bill" Peoples, who is happy to provide free tours to tourists, local schools, and interested passersby.

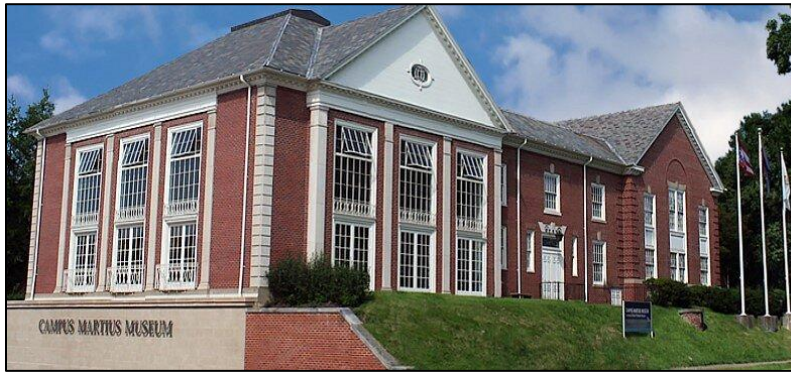
"I try to shed some light on my profession, to show how it's evolved from when they used to go into the family homes to how we do it today," Peoples says. The museum, inside an elongated garage bearing a colorful mural that honors the Packard automobile, contains a curated collection of funeral furniture, caskets, baskets, advertising signs, even mourning jewelry made of human hair. But the real attraction is Peoples' exquisitely preserved collection of antique hearses and other automobiles, including several Packards, a Studebaker, and two wonderfully preserved horse-drawn hearses. He loves to show off his antique cars, especially "Miss Henney." "Miss Henney" is almost 100 years old and has just 17,000 miles on it. It's a combination car, used both as a hearse and as an ambulance. Small funeral homes also did ambulance work, so the hearse has a removable rack and rollers so that seats could be placed inside for attendants.

The museum's contents, which come from Peoples' own collection and several that were given to him by others in the industry, include portable beds and draperies, clothing, lamps, embalming equipment and supplies, and assorted doodads from the funeral industry. He also has several woven crates in the shape of small caskets.

The People Mortuary Museum is located at 408 Front Street, Marietta, OH 45750.

## Campus Martius Museum

<https://mariettamuseums.org/campus-martius/>



The historic river town of Marietta is home to the Campus Martius Museum, where the story of General Rufus Putnam and his intrepid group of pioneers is chronicled through fascinating exhibits and artifacts.

As you enter the grounds of the Campus Martius Museum, you're stepping back in time to 1788, when our country was still an infant and this land was contested among several American Indian Nations, the Americans and the British. When Putnam and other Revolutionary War officers of the Ohio Company arrived at the verdant lands along the riverbanks, they constructed a civilian stockade as protection during the Northwest Indian Wars, making Marietta the first permanent civilian settlement of the Northwest Territory.

After the 1795 Treaty of Greenville ended the war and limited Indian Territory to northwest Ohio, the stockade was dismantled. Marietta continued to grow and thrive as an important gateway to the north and west. Today, the museum remembers the legacy of the American pioneers and history of the land.

In the museum, tools and other objects made by American Indians over thousands of years paint a picture of the region's diverse and enduring Native peoples. History unfolds through exhibits about The Ordinance of 1781 and the Ohio Company.

Get an intimate look into pioneer life inside the Rufus Putnam House, still standing on its original location, now sheltered by the museum walls. The house's wooden sides still bear visible scars of the axe and tools used so long ago, when the lush forest provided ample lumber for the new settlement.

Inside the house, interpretive guides help you imagine daily life. Learn how Mrs. Putnam cooked wild game over an open fire. Take a peek in the nook where General Putnam kept his private papers and the bedchamber the family shared.

Although the pioneers' lifestyle may have been modest, it was also comfortable, and the vignettes include gracefully curved chairs and well-crafted fixtures.

The Campus Martius Museum is located at 601 2nd St, Marietta, OH 45750.



## Henderson Hall

<https://www.greaterparkersburg.com/henderson-hall/>



Henderson Hall is listed on the National Register of Historical Places as a historic district unto itself. It offers a view of the early American Victorian Era. The hall is 8,000 square feet with 21 rooms and was the centerpiece of the original 2,600 acres along the Ohio river. The 29-room perfectly preserved Victorian-era Italianate style River Road Henderson mansion stands on a terrace overlooking the Ohio River and was completed in 1859 using brick, stone and timber from the Henderson property.

The home contains priceless artifacts, antiques and furnishings right down to handmade linens, books dating back to the 1600s, documents signed by the likes of Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia; local ballots from the Lincoln-Douglas presidential election, diaries and a letter written by Robert E. Lee to Elizabeth Henderson.

Henderson brothers Alexander and John played a key role in thwarting the treasonous exploits of Aaron Burr. The brothers turned in Harman Blennerhassett and Burr when Blennerhassett tried to recruit the Henderson's to become part of Burr's scheme. The Henderson's reported the plot to family and friends of President Jefferson and Secretary of State Madison and alerted local militia. In the archives of Henderson Hall is a letter from Dumfries native John Graham, who was dispatched by Jefferson to investigate Burr's activities, thanking the Henderson's for the integral part they played in foiling Burr's plot.

Henderson Hall is located at 517 River Rd, Williamstown, WV 26187.

## Valley Gem and Major/Riviera Riverboats

<https://www.valleygemsternwheeler.com/>



In April of 1989, the current Valley Gem launched with a capacity of 290 passengers. The construction was done just outside of the city of Marietta and was completed by members of the Sands family, who continue to operate the business.

In 2015, the family acquired the historic 1928 towboat, Major. After restoration, Major was pressed into excursion service coupled to the Riviera, a 149-passenger barge. Together, the Major/Riviera work as one unit and like the Valley Gem, offer dinner cruises, dinner theatre cruises, sightseeing tours, and a variety of other excursions.

Our riverboat adventure will consist of a delicious dinner show while a murderous mystery surrounds us. We'll learn about the characters while we have dinner. Watch as clues unfold throughout the evening and see if you can correctly guess the murderer.

The Valley Gem and Major/Riviera are located at 601 Front St. The boats are docked on the Muskingum River, under the Washington Street Bridge. Parking is available under the bridge and on the street.