

## **Chief Justice of Ohio Supreme Court To Speak at Fort Laurens Annual Brigade Encampment**

**Date: June 12, 1998**

BOLIVAR, OH- The 220th anniversary of the building of Ohio's only American Revolutionary War fort, Fort Laurens, will be marked by a special wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Patriot of the American Revolution by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer on Saturday, June 27 at 6:00 p.m.

Chief Justice Moyer will be escorted to the Tomb by members of the Brigade of the American Revolution's (BAR) Eighth Pennsylvania Regiment which will be at Fort Laurens during the June 27-28 weekend for their Annual Encampment. Immediately following the wreath presentation, Moyer will speak briefly and then be inducted into the Eighth Pennsylvania as an honorary member of one of the original Continental regiments that built and served at Fort Laurens in 1778.

"Chief Justice Moyer has a very distinguished and unique relationship with Fort Laurens and the BAR is honored to have him return to this site," said Canton resident and commander of the Eighth Pennsylvania, Bob Cairns.

On June 26, 1976, while serving as former Governor James A. Rhodes' Executive Assistant, Chief Justice Moyer was asked to be the "Honorary Father" of the nation's unknown soldier of the American Revolution during the official entombment ceremonies at Fort Laurens. Mr. Moyer presented the state's highest medal for military bravery, the Ohio Cross, to the unknown soldier on behalf of the governor.

"We are extremely pleased the Chief Justice will once again pay homage to his 'adopted son' during the ceremonies on this 220th anniversary of Fort Laurens," said Scott Fisher, trustee with the Friends of Fort Laurens Foundation. "Justice Moyer has not forgotten the sacrifices made by this brave and honorable soldier and many others who gave their life for the glory of a new and free nation. As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, 'Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever.' Too much was lost at this site to allow Fort Laurens to remain in obscurity any longer. We appreciate the efforts of Justice Moyer to shine the light on the outpost of the American Revolution."

The Sandusky, Ohio native and Ohio State University law school graduate served as Executive Assistant to Governor Rhodes from 1975 to 1979. Moyer was appointed Judge to Ohio's Tenth District Court of Appeals in 1979 and won re-election to the position through 1986. On November 4, 1986, Moyer was elected to the first of two terms as the Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court. He will be seeking his third term to that position this November.

The BAR, from Ohio and other Midwestern states, is composed of military reenactors and their families. Portraying both British and American forces, they will drill, demonstrate weaponry, play fife and drums and have other activities throughout both days. Mock battles will take place at 12:45 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

The Friends of Fort Laurens Foundation will hold its 3rd Annual Moccasin Roast fundraising dinner at 6:30 on Saturday. Held in commemoration of the sacrifices made by the defenders of the fort who were reduced to boiling their moccasins for food, the Roast will feature beef and chicken barbeque. This year's Roast will be sponsored in part by The History Channel. Reservations are \$20 for adults and can be made by calling 330-874-2728. The Friends of

Fort Laurens will use the proceeds to help reconstruct the fort.

Fort Laurens was built in 1778 and abandoned in 1779. The site of the fort, which no longer stands, was excavated and is marked near the park's museum. The museum contains artifacts from the excavation as well as original and reproduction military artifacts.

The Fort Laurens admission fee is \$3 for adults and \$1.25 for children ages 6-12 and will be collected at the gate for this event. Hours are from 10:00-6:30 p.m. on Saturday and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Fort Laurens is located on County Road 102 (Fort Laurens Rd.), 1/2 mile from exit 93 (Bolivar-Zoar Exit) of Interstate 77, south of Canton. It is administered by the Ohio Historical Society. For more information, call Ft. Laurens at 330/874-2059 or 800/283-8914.