

2015 Senate Joint Resolution 91

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**ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION**

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**Relating to:** honoring the 200th anniversary of Fort Crawford in Prairie du Chien.

Whereas, Fort Crawford was constructed in 1816 within the Main Village of Prairie du Chien on an island north of the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers; and

Whereas, prior to the construction of Fort Crawford, Governor William Clark directed the construction of Fort Shelby in the spring of 1814; and

Whereas, British forces, including residents of Green Bay and Prairie du Chien, and their American Indian allies attacked and captured Fort Shelby, renaming it Fort McKay; and

Whereas, this was the only battle fought in the War of 1812 in the territory that would make up Wisconsin; and

Whereas, in 1816, American troops returned to Prairie du Chien and built Fort Crawford on the site, and during that time enforced fur trade regulations and tried to keep peace between the American Indians and the miners and settlers coming onto tribal lands; and

Whereas, the Treaty of Prairie du Chien was negotiated on the fort grounds in August 1825, establishing boundaries between the various tribes in the upper Mississippi region; and

Whereas, after several seasons of flooding, the fort was beyond repair, and the troops were removed in 1826; and

Whereas, in 1827, it became necessary to maintain a fort at Prairie du Chien, so troops returned, and in 1829 construction began on a new Fort Crawford, located on the mainland to avoid flooding; and

Whereas, the commanding officer who oversaw the building of the fort was Colonel Zachary Taylor, future President of the United States; and

Whereas, in 1828, Dr. William Beaumont was assigned to Fort Crawford to care for ill troops and while at the fort continued his experiments to study the way food is digested in the stomach, and the results of his experiments were published in 1833 as *Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion*; and

Whereas, the 56 experiments he performed at Fort Crawford were a founding component of modern knowledge of the digestive system; and

Whereas, Fort Crawford was the site of negotiations and the signing of treaties with various American Indian tribes in 1829 and 1830; and

Whereas, soldiers from Fort Crawford took part in the Black Hawk War, and Chief Black Hawk was surrendered to the United States at the fort in 1832; and

Whereas, the hospital was closed in September 1865, and in 1867 the War Department sold the structures and land that had comprised the Fort Crawford Military Reserve; and

Whereas, in 1921, the Fort Crawford Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution began raising moneys for the purchase of the Fort Crawford Hospital, acquiring the remains of the hospital and beginning a restoration project in 1933; and

Whereas, when the Wisconsin Medical Society became the owner of the restored Fort Crawford Hospital, it opened and operated the Museum of Medical Progress; and

Whereas, in 1996, the Wisconsin Medical Society transferred the Fort Crawford Hospital and its collections to the Prairie du Chien Historical Society, Inc., which updated the exhibits to interpret the rich history of Fort Crawford and Prairie du Chien; and

Whereas, the Fort Crawford Hospital, all that remains of Fort Crawford, is a Registered National Historic Landmark; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That** the Wisconsin legislature recognizes the 200th anniversary of the building of Fort Crawford and also recognizes the museum at Fort Crawford Hospital, as well as the many people who have worked to preserve its place in Wisconsin's history; and, be it further

**Resolved, That** the senate chief clerk shall provide copies of this joint resolution to the Prairie du Chien Historical Society, Inc.

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Representative Robin J. Vos  
Speaker of the Assembly

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Senator Mary Lazich  
President of the Senate

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Date

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Jeffrey Renk  
Senate Chief Clerk