

# Ahoy Mate! Pirates for a Day

This Wisconsin museum shows the grit and the glory of piracy's golden age.

Shiver me timbers! They were a larcenous bunch with names like Blackbeard, Black Caesar, Edward "Ned" Low and "Roaring" Dan Seavey. Centuries later these pirates and their gutsy feats remain the stuff of legends.

Thanks to an ongoing pirate-themed exhibit at the Door County Maritime Museum, seafarers as well as landlubbers can recall the exploits of these scalawags without endangering their own lives. Located in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin's Great Lakes region, this museum offers visitors a rich multimedia experience that simulates what sailors plying the North America's east coast and the Caribbean Seas encountered during their pirate face-offs.



## Pirates – Ship to Shore

“Pirates – Ship to Shore” invites visitors to don pirate attire (thanks to its costume room) and walk the streets of early 1700's Nassau, (now the thriving capital of the Bahamas) when it was the stomping grounds for such iconic pirates as Thomas Barrow and Benjamin Hornigold. They can also hang out at the Fortune, a lovingly-built to half-scale pirate ship, replete with cannons and other fire power, that takes its inspiration from the Royal Fortune, a pirate ship once captained in Caribbean waters by the infamous Bartholomew Roberts.

But it's not all fun and games. Sobering reminders of the grim determination of these pirates also inhabit this Nassau village. Whole body iron restraints displayed on mannequins, show how recalcitrant victims were induced to reveal the whereabouts of their treasures.

And for those pirates-for-the-day who want to try their luck at downing enemy ships, the exhibit offers a fun interactive game that pits these wanna-be pirates against their nemesis in raucous cannon warfare.



## Entering the Imagination of Don Maitz

Visitors who want to be just a hair's breadth away from some legendary pirates won't want to miss the art exhibit in the Horton Gallery. Here they will enter the imagination of award-winning illustrator Don Maitz. Maitz' vivid colored portraits capture the gritty bravura and defiance of these scalawags.

The museum also showcases how the Great Lakes maritime history has shaped the Door Peninsula's culture and community. It's a compelling story in itself. Still Door County Maritime Museum's Executive Director Bob Desh says that introducing the pirate tie-in has attracted many new visitors to the Museum.

"Pirates hold a special fascination for even the most ardent landlubber." Desh says: "We thought an exhibit about pirates was a great way to attract even visitors with little or no interest in maritime history. Once in the door, they would be exposed to not only a high-quality, fun, educational exhibit on the golden age of piracy but be enticed to take in all of our other exhibits focused on the maritime history of the Door Peninsula and the Great Lakes. It has worked like a charm!"



## Getting There

The nearest major airport is **Austin Straubel International Airport** (GRB / KGRB). It has domestic flights from Green Bay, Wisconsin and is approximately sixty-seven miles from Door County, WI.

**Outagamie County Regional Airport** (ATW / KATW), located ninety-five miles from Door County, has domestic flights from Appleton, Wisconsin.

## For More Information

Door County Maritime Museum & Lighthouse Preservation Society, Inc., 120 N. Madison Ave., Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235, 920-743-5958 Fax: 920-743-9483, [www.dcm.org](http://www.dcm.org)

## By Patricia Kutza

Patricia Kutza is a travel, business and technology journalist based in the San Francisco Bay region.

She crafts features for such outlets as Port O Call and San Joaquin Magazines and invites readers to explore her [Vallejo Community Issues Examiner blog](#) 's [90 Minutes of Separation](#) series where she features compelling travel destinations in an engaging multimedia format.

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