GIBRALTAR ISLAND

TOUR 6
On "Perry's Lookout"
(0.3 miles)

1. The Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory
2. The Cooke Castle
3. Jay Cooke's Boat House

SCALE
2.25" = 1,000'

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TOUR SIX

On "Perry's Lookout"

(0.3 MILES)

Tiny Gibraltar Island, which stands in the western part of Put-in-Bay harbor, was named for the rocky Mediterranean headland which it resembles. It has also been called Perry's Lookout, because of the tradition that Commodore Perry stationed men here to watch over his fleet before the Battle of Lake Erie. The island was owned for four decades by Jay Cooke, a Philadelphia banker and Civil War financier, who bought it from José de Rivera for $3,001 in 1864. Cooke regularly visited the island until his death in 1905. In 1925, his heirs sold the island to Columbus industrialist Julius F. Stone, chairman of The Ohio State University's board of trustees. Stone gave the island to the University to use in its biological research around Lake Erie. Stone Lab is one of the oldest and most respected freshwater biology programs in the country, and it currently operates with the Center for Lake Erie Area Research (CLEAR) and the Ohio Sea Grant Program to form the University's Lake Erie program. Gibraltar is easily accessible by boat from Put-in-Bay harbor; prior arrangements to visit must be made with the University.

1. The Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory. The Ohio State University's Lake Erie research facilities were founded in 1896 at Sandusky and later operated at the old Federal Fish Hatchery building at Peach Point. After Julius Stone donated Gibraltar Island to the University for aquatic and biological research in 1925, construction was begun on the laboratory named in honor of Julius's father, Franz Theodore Stone. The building was completed in 1927 and opened for classes the following year; it still houses the main classrooms and laboratories. Standing on the southwestern tip of Gibraltar and overlooking Put-in-Bay harbor, the massive brick structure was designed by Joseph Bradford and
uses reinforced concrete extensively. Other structures, colonial in design, were built on the island in 1929 and 1930 to serve as student residences, dining halls, and recreation areas.

2. The Cooke Castle. At the eastern tip of the island is Jay Cooke’s enormous stone residence. Until 1985 the building was used as a men’s dorm for Stone Lab students; currently it is being converted to a conference center. This building was constructed shortly after the Civil War, and it was the site of lavish society soirées when Cooke was in residence. Guests included Salmon P. Chase, William T. Sherman, and Rutherford B. Hayes. The castle’s design is a variation on Italian Villa architecture; its massive, domed, seven-sided tower is four stories tall, and scrolled brackets line the cornices. Inside, the beautiful decorative features included ornate plasterwork and marble fireplaces. Cooke’s spectacular Gothic library in the base of the tower is also well worth seeing. In front of the castle stands the first monument ever erected to honor Commodore Perry’s naval victory. The base was laid by the local Battle of Lake Erie Monument Association in 1859; Cooke added the rest of the monument shortly after he bought the island from de Rivera.

3. Jay Cooke’s Boat House. Returning to the eastern end of the island, we see the former Cooke Boat House, which has served Ohio State as the Invertebrate Zoology, Ichthyology, and Ecology Lab. The simple board-and-batten structure was built about 1865, soon after Cooke purchased the island.