

# ~ FORT GEORGE ADVICE ~

The Newsletter of the Lake George Battlefield (Fort George) Alliance

PO Box 26, Lake George, New York 12845

SPRING 2003

## President's Message ~

WELCOME to spring and the third issue of the *Fort George Advice*. Even though the 2002-3 winter was long and hard, it did not hamper the Alliance fulfilling a number of tasks and recording several accomplishments.

In September, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Historic Preservation Officer and I met with various representatives of the State's Historic Preservation Office to review the requirements for and to receive their guidance in drafting a nomination for Fort George to the National Register of Historic Places. The preparation of that nomination has begun. Any one desiring to assist in drafting the nomination please contact me either at the above address, (802) 372-8743, or Chazmanbsr@aol.com.

Work on preparing the year 2000 archaeological collection (13,963 artifacts) for entry in the New York State Museum collections was completed by the end of October. Eighty six fragile or highly significant artifacts were identified as needing treat-

ment by an archaeological conservator. Those items were placed with the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum for appropriate treatment. As of this writing, the Alliance has provided \$4,805.00 towards this effort.

On January 22nd, the Department's Historic Preservation Office and I appeared before the Warren County Historical Society at its Annual Luncheon Meeting as guest speaker. All reports indicate that the program presented, "Fort George: a Perspective on its Past, Present and Future" was well received. The following week the second annual DEC Site Management Review was held at the Department's Region 5 Offices in Warrensburg. The Alliance Board of Trustees met on February 28th and adopted an operating budget of slightly more than \$10,000 for fiscal year 2003-2004. The Alliance's new fiscal and membership year began on April 1st. A copy of this budget and last year's financial report will be presented at this year's annual membership meeting. Advance copies are available by request from the Treasurer.

The Alliance's Charter Membership drive ended on March 31, 2003

with sixty memberships enrolled. A hearty WELL DONE and THANK YOU goes out to all that assisted in this effort and all those who have chosen to join. Please let me here give special recognition to the following Charter Memberships: *Sustaining Member* - Stelfer Steel & Pipe, LLC, Norwalk, CT; *Life Members* - Herman C. Brown, Grand Isle, VT; Robert F. Flacke, Sr., Lake George, NY; William M. Herrlich, Orleans, MA; and Christopher J. Verville, Lake George, NY; *Patron Members* - Adirondack Regional Chambers of Commerce, Glens Falls, NY; Days Inn of Lake George, NY; Michael R. Dickinson, Fort Edward, NY; Linda M. Fuerderer, Keene, NH; Dr. Lyn Karig Hohmann, Albany, NY; and Michael E. Stafford, Esq., Lake George, NY.

Our second annual membership meeting and picnic will be held on Saturday, August 23, 2003 at the pavilion at Lake George Battlefield Park, Lake George, NY. That day's program information is printed later in this newsletter. Please mark your calendar now. I hope to see you there.

Sincerely,  
Herman C. Brown

## Living history in the Park ~

WHERE will you be Oct 11 & 12<sup>th</sup> 2003? The reenactment committee is gearing up to take you back in time to Oct 11, 1780 to Carleton's Raid on Lake George. If you have never experienced living history, here is a chance to see how all those "artifacts" were used in the American Revolution.

Loyalists will join the British

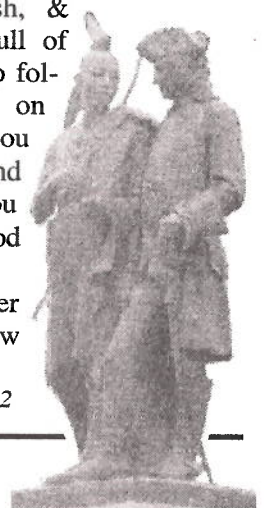
forces, including the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers and the 29th Regiment of Foot, as they attack the American Militia and Continental Line troops for battle in the afternoon. There will be the opportunity to see the 'lobsterbacks' up close as they attack the colonists. Perhaps you'll hear the war cries of the Native Americans before you see them. Perhaps they will creep up when you least expect them. Before and

after the battle, you can explore the American, British, & Native Camps full of those people who followed the army on campaign. If you look out at the end of the lake, you may see the period boats arriving.

Have you ever wanted to know

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The Alliance supports the historic preservation, conservation, interpretation and associated maintenance, improvement and development of the Lake George Battlefield Park



# Lake George's "Submarine Railway" Remembered

By Joseph W. Zarzynski and Bob Benway

## Introduction

A unique marine track known as the "Submarine Railway," located on Lake George's bottomlands off Battlefield Park, is part of the historic legacy of the Delaware & Hudson Company. This article is excerpted and edited from the 44 page *Lake George, New York's D & H "Submarine Railway": A Report on Its History and Bateaux Below, Inc.'s Archaeological Survey* written by Joseph W. Zarzynski and Bob Benway. The report was published in September, 2000.

## The Delaware and Hudson

In 1823, the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company was chartered by the State of New York. The company was founded to transport coal by canal from the rich anthracite deposits around Carbondale, Pennsylvania, to the Northeastern region of the country. Six years later, in 1829, the D & H operated the first steam locomotive

in America. By 1899, the D & H closed its canals and all transport of coal and freight was by railroad. That year, to reflect its reliance upon rail transportation, the D & H changed its name from the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company to the Delaware & Hudson Company.

## The D & H Comes to Lake George

In 1882, the nine-mile stretch of railroad track from Glens Falls to the head of Lake George opened. Several years earlier, in 1874, the D & H constructed a track from Baldwin Landing at the north end of Lake George to Montcalm Landing at Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain. The railway from Glens Falls to Lake George thus opened Lakes George and Champlain to the modern era of tourism.

The Glens Falls to Lake George Branch operated from 1882 to 1958. The first passenger station at Lake George was erected over 1882-1883. It was demolished in 1911, and a new station was built the following year. The former train

station now contains novelty stores.

In 1903, the D & H purchased the

Fort William Henry Hotel, located on the grounds of Fort William Henry (1755-1757). Construction of the original luxury hotel began in 1854. In 1909, the hotel burned and was rebuilt in 1910-1911.

## The "Submarine Railway"

Nineteen ten was a benchmark year for the D & H at Lake George. As reconstruction of Fort William Henry Hotel began the D & H also built its "Submarine Railway." It was a marine rail at the south end of Lake George that was constructed to launch boats, but reportedly also was employed for ice harvesting.

On June 17, 1910, the *Lake George Mirror* provided details of the "New Submarine Railway":

The Delaware and Hudson have constructed at Lake George, N. Y., a marine railway to facilitate the unloading of launches from railroad car direct into the water. A submarine track extends from the shore into deep water, permitting a boat having six feet draught to be floated clear of the cars. This avoids all possibility of damage

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## Alliance Trustees

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- ◆ Joseph Zarzynski & Bob Benway, *Bateaux Below, Inc.*
- ◆ Andrew Farry
- ◆ Christopher R. Sabick, *Lake Champlain Maritime Museum*
- ◆ Lisa Simpson, *Ft. Ticonderoga*

## Reenactment

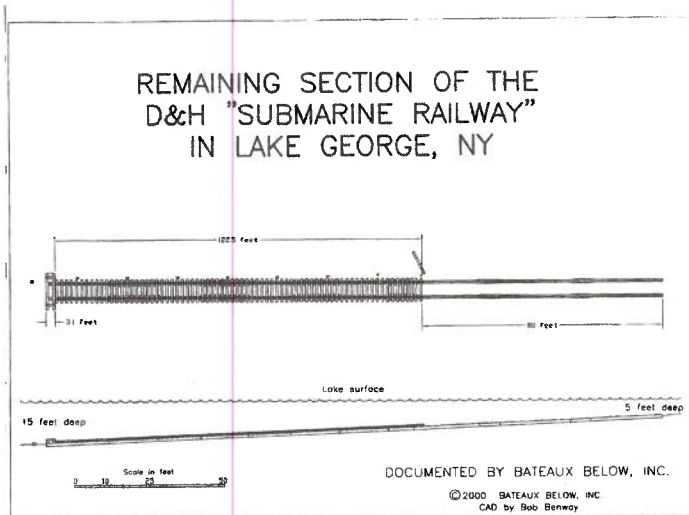
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just how that artifact might have been used? As reenactors, we strive to recreate the 18<sup>th</sup> century as it was to the best of our knowledge. Here is your chance to talk to people about what was found in the ground at the Battlefield and how it might have been used. Bring your questions about the 1770s and use the day to bring your history to life. Bring your family so they can smell the gunpowder, hear the cannons, see the rows of wedge tents, and watch the meals prepared over the fire. On Oct 11 & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003 we'll be bringing Carletons Raid to life 223 years after it happened. As a

fan of the American Revolution, you won't want to miss it.

And for those of us who would like to travel back farther in time – the reenactment committee will bring the French & Indian War to the Battlefield Park on Memorial Day weekend, 2004. If you would like to be part of these events, in or out of costume, please contact John Purdy at [Vt1stroyales@aol.com](mailto:Vt1stroyales@aol.com) or 802-244-0942 for more information. We could use your help, for an hour or for a day. Bring the history of Lake George Battlefield to Life! ☺

Rebecca Cornell  
Reenactment Committee  
Correspondent

Lake George's "Submarine Railway" continued from page 2



the submerged track.  
**Bill Henderson on the "Submarine Railway"**

Bill Henderson, now deceased, was the former operator of Scott M. Henderson, Inc., a marina at Cleverdale. On January 9, 1999, the authors of this article

by handling in the old way and the tariffs filed by the traffic department concerning the service indicate that in addition to the great improvement in service, boat owners will find it more economical.

S. R. Stoddard's book, *Lake George and Lake Champlain: A Book of To-Day*, 1913 edition, listed user fares for the marine railway that ranged from \$10 to \$35.

In 1937, the *D & H Bulletin* published the article "Sea-Going Railroad at Lake George." The story described the "Submarine Railway" as a "mysterious track which disappears beneath the sparkling blue waters in the midst of a sandy beach near the station." The track was reportedly constructed by being laid on the ice during the wintertime. It was weighted down and sank into place on the lake floor upon fill previously deposited to support the tracks. According to the article, about two or three boats per week were launched using the track.

The "Submarine Railway" was in use for four decades. D & H files record that on November 11, 1950, 674.5 ft. of "Marine Track" was "removed" and 135.5 ft. was "retired in place in Lake." The marine railway's demise corresponded with the 1949-1951 construction of Million Dollar Beach, located east of

the submerged track. He worked most of his life on the lake and said that about 20 boats a year were launched from the "Submarine Railway." Henderson launched a total of "20 to 25, maybe 30 boats" using the track. Henderson said the system was simple and effective. A locomotive with a cable attached to a boxcar was used to launch the boats; the locomotive would "not even get wet during the launching." A standard-sized boxcar, that held a boat, was employed for either a side or rear boxcar launch. Henderson stated that around 1940, his marina starting using trucks to launch and retrieve boats.

**Surveying the "Submarine Railway"**

Joseph W. Zarzynski, one of the two authors of this article, first dived the "Submarine Railway" in 1984. However, the archaeological recording of the track by BBI did not begin until 1993, with most of the mapping done in 1997, 1998, and 2000. The archaeology team consisted of D. K. Abbass, Ph. D., Bill Appling, Bob

Benway, Tim Cordell, Paul Cornell, Terry Crandall, John Farrell, Mark Peckham, and Joseph W. Zarzynski. BBI personnel made 22 team dives underwater mapping the "Submarine Railway" that totaled 24 hrs. 4 minutes. The fieldwork, post-data collection analysis and interpretation, and report writing were completed on a volunteer basis. However, printing the project report was paid for by the Fund for Lake George and BBI.

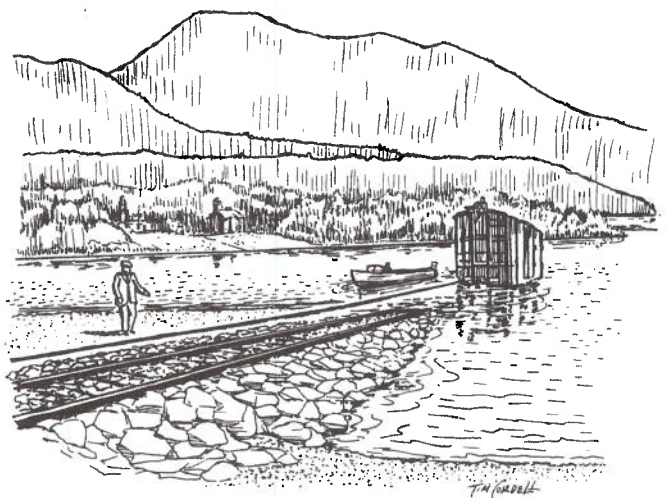
**Description of the "Submarine Railway"**

The surviving section of the "Submarine Railway" rests in 5 to 15 ft. of water on a slight slope. The angle of drop off is approximately 2°. The lake bottom at this site is soft, characterized by silt, clay, and sand; much of the latter imported from nearby Million Dollar Beach. Run off from West Brook also impacts the site. Various species of vegetation are found at the site including Eurasian milfoil.

The marine track is standard gauge, that is 56 1/2 in. measured from inside to inside of the railheads. It was determined that the metal rail is probably 60 lb. per yard and the rail sections are joined together by metal joint bars, bolts, and nuts. The track lies at a 40° to 45° angle from the shoreline.

The bedding timbers, ties, rails, and other track hardware are bal-

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## Archaeological Trivia From the Test Pit

By Andrew Farry

**C**ERAMICS represent one of the most ubiquitous material remains recovered in the excavations of historic-period sites. Such ubiquity is a direct result of the nature of ceramic materials: while whole ceramic vessels are quite fragile and readily discarded, the individual sherds from broken vessels are often very durable and tend to survive for subsequent recovery. As a result, ceramics have long been favored by historical archaeologists as a primary analytical tool and have been consistently employed in studying such issues as site chronology and function, ethnicity, and social status. Given the importance of ceramic data in archaeological interpretation the methods by which archaeologists quantify their ceramic assemblages is obviously of prime con-

cern, and the following briefly discusses some "pitfalls" of certain analytical techniques.

Undoubtedly the most common ceramic quantification method is to simply count the number of sherds within an assemblage, the values of which are distinguished among the different ceramic wares present. Assuming each individual ceramic sherd is correctly identified in terms of ware-type (a task not always easy given the small size of many sherds), this method provides a relatively quick summary of a ceramic assemblage. Sherd counts in fact serve as the basis for one of the most common dating methods in historical archaeology: the Mean Ceramic Date (MCD) formula. In this method, sherd counts for each ceramic ware are multiplied by that

ware's median manufacturing date, the products of which are summed and then divided by the number of sherds in the entire assemblage. Though not always an exact reflection of a site's mean date of occupation, the MCD serves as a useful tool for inferring site chronology, especially when used in conjunction with various other dating methods.

The value of simple sherd counts, however, is subject to certain limitations. As sherd counts do not deal with sherd *size*, it can be questioned just how reliable these values are as a relative measure of the various ceramic wares present within a given site. In other words, a high sherd count for a specific ceramic ware should not necessarily imply that larger quantities of this ware existed at a site when compared to lower sherd counts for a different ceramic type; the values may simply reflect differ-

*Continued on page 5*

## Lake George's "Submarine Railway" *continued from page 3*

lasted with cut marble, a white-colored metamorphic rock. The marble is present in various sizes and shapes and is interspersed throughout parts of the surviving track. Furthermore, just to the west of the track between ties # 2 and 7 is a scattered pile of marble, possibly created during the retirement of the track.

The track is composed of a set of two longitudinal bedding timbers, joined together with additional longitudinal timbers, with wooden ties placed over the bedding timbers. Wooden spacers are placed between the ties and on top of the bedding timbers. The ties measure an average of 96 in. (length) x 8 in. (width) x 6 in. (height). The kind of wood for the ties was not determined. On top of the ties, the iron rail was laid. Tie plates were not used, rather the rail was secured to the ties with track spikes. The bedding timbers, ties, and bumping post are all in an excellent state of preservation. The rail and

other metal hardware show signs of surface corrosion, but nonetheless have good integrity.

The remaining submerged track was measured at 205.6 ft. long and it lies along a 10°/190° magnetic bearing orientation. The marine track is comprised of three sections. At the shallow end is 80 ft. of bedding timbers without any ties or rail. It is possible that this section was partially dismantled when the submerged railway was retired. It is followed by 122.5 ft. of intact track. There are 74 intact wooden ties in this part and a single disarticulated tie lies a few feet east off the track, near the beginning of the intact section. At the deep end of the track is a 3.1 ft. (long) x 12.5 ft. (wide) wooden bumping post. At the east side of the bumping post is a wooden pole that has been sheared off less than a foot from the top of the bumping post. When intact, this pole probably served as a stopper

for the boxcar. A few feet north of the bumping post is a circular cement block. It has not been determined if this is associated with the track.

### Conclusion

Today, the railroad track from Glens Falls to Lake George is gone, but its path is used by bicyclists and joggers. The "Submarine Railway" is a significant submerged cultural resource associated with the D & H's former empire at Lake George. Unfortunately, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has determined that the "Submarine Railway" can not be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places because its physical integrity is "incomplete." Nevertheless, the "Submarine Railway" is protected by historic preservation laws. In 2002, BBI erected a blue-and-yellow historic marker on shore overlooking the submerged site. It informs people about a little known, but important piece of Lake George's past. ☺

## Conservation of Lake George Artifacts

By Christopher R. Sabick, Director of Conservation LCMM

THE Lake Champlain Maritime Museum has recently entered into an agreement with the Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance, New York State Museum, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to preserve a collection of artifacts that were re-



covered during excavations in 2000. This assemblage includes a wide variety of artifacts including regimental buttons, lead and iron shot, clothing fasteners, a shovel blade and a variety of other items. Conservation has begun on many of the iron and organic artifacts from the collection and additional details are already being revealed. The cleaning of the knife blade shown here has uncovered the makers mark "DIXON". Other items currently in process include musket hardware, a key, and a pair of tweezers. The continued preservation and analysis of this collection should shed additional light on understanding the complex history of Fort George.

## Notice

To stay up to date on the activities of the Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance, periodically check out the *America's Historic Lakes – The Lake Champlain and Lake George Historical Web Site* at <http://www.historiclakes.org>. Use the "Table of Contents" page under the listing for "Upcoming History Events in the Lake Champlain and Lake George Region Bulletin Board and Schedule of Upcoming Events". For direct access to the Bulletin Board page go to [http://www/historiclakes.org/living\\_history/history\\_events.htm](http://www/historiclakes.org/living_history/history_events.htm).

## Test Pit *continued from page 4*

ential breakage of ceramics into smaller or larger sherds. This fact must be remembered when one looks, for example, at the ceramic assemblage recovered during the 2000 excavations at Fort George: Sites 1 and 2 (two parallel barracks buildings located at the northern end of the site) display inverse sherd counts for a number of ceramic wares, and it is not yet clear if these values reflect significant differences between the two buildings or are simply the result of differential breakage.

Various methods are available that provide alternate means to quantify ceramic assemblages. One is to shift the relevant analytical unit from the ceramic *sherd* to the ceramic *vessel*: by grouping sherds according to such attributes as decoration, rim/foot-ring diameter, and shape, a minimum number of vessels (MNV) can be calculated within each ceramic type. Archaeologists have even measured the

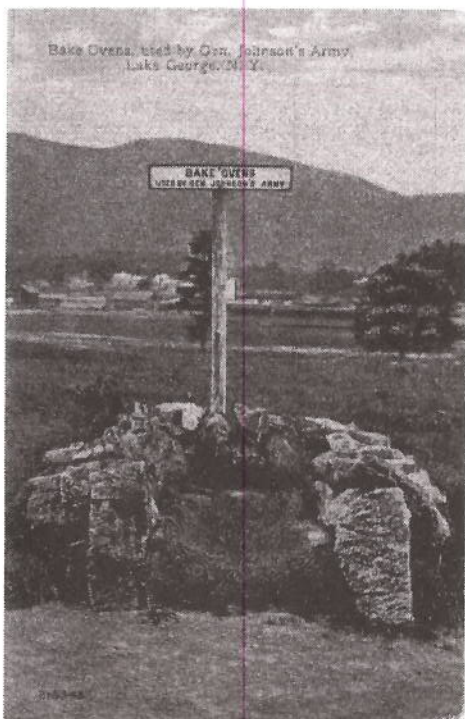
relative abundance of ceramic types according to sherd *weight*, though such a method depends on a host of possibly confounding factors.

One particularly promising approach is the *effective area* (EA) method advocated by John Byrd and Dalford Owens (*Journal of Field Archaeology* 1997, Vol. 24, pp. 315-320). This method incorporates sherd size and counts by sorting ceramic sherds through a graduated set of nested mesh screens (for example, screens ranging from .5 to 4 inches and graded every .5 inch). The number of sherds falling within each screen is multiplied by the square of the screen size and then summed, resulting in the EA value for each ceramic ware. In an experimental test of this new quantification method, Byrd and Owens designed artificial ceramic vessels representing three distinct ceramic types. Three vessels from each type were differentially smashed, and both sherd counts and EA values

were calculated to compare with the known equal distribution. While the EA method produced nearly identical values, sherd counts resulted in widely divergent numbers. Inferences drawn from sherd counts would thus have significantly misrepresented the equal distribution of ceramic wares at this hypothetical site. Byrd and Owens' EA method is especially useful to archaeological analysis as it is a relatively simple method employing materials (mesh screens) already commonly used by archaeologists.

Ultimately there is no single "perfect" method for quantifying ceramics, and methods will inevitably (and necessarily) result from the specific questions under study. Used in conjunction, the various analytical approaches can help provide a broader understanding of the underlying cultural processes responsible for ceramic patterning observed in the archaeological record.





**“Surrender of Fort William Henry.” Jean Leon Gerome Ferris. Gouache on paper.**

In 1757, the French Army under the command of the Marquis de Montcalm, arrived with 5,500 men and 1,600 Native American allies to take over Fort William Henry at the southern end of Lake George. The fort and nearby fortified camp were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Monro of the British 35th Foot. With Monro were some Colonial troops and Iroquois whose numbers totaled half of the French forces.

After several days and nights of continuous shelling by French artillery, Monro was forced to surrender the fort and the garrison after his commander at Fort Edward, General Webb, failed to send reinforcements. While the defeated British soldiers, women and children were being marched to Fort Edward for release, Montcalm’s Indians, angry over not being allowed to plunder the fort and keep prisoners, attacked and massacred a number of the British. James Fenimore Cooper’s novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*, is based on the battle and massacre at Fort William Henry. Use of this painting courtesy of the Chapman Historical Museum, Glens Falls, NY.

*Bake Oven* continued from page 6  
 me at Chazmanbsr@aol.com or at  
 (802) 372-8743.  
 Thank you. ☺



# 3 Valleys to Freedom Marketing Coalition wins award

New York State Council on the Arts.

By Lisa A. Simpson, Fort Ticonderoga, 3 Valleys to Freedom Marketing Chair

3 Valleys to Freedom, a group of historic sites, museums, reenactors, chambers of commerce, and tourism-related entities, recently received the 2003 Upstate History Alliance Award of Merit. The Upstate History Alliance is a non-profit organization which provides support, advice and training to historical societies, museums, historians and others interested in history in a 35-county area of upstate New York.

The 3 Valleys to Freedom formed in late 2001 to market the reenactments and educational events that were planned to commemorate the 225th anniversary of the Burgoyne Campaign of 1777. The group consists of more than 30 historical,

community, and tourism organizations who joined together to promote educational reenactments and programs in the Champlain, Hudson, and Mohawk Valleys of New York, as well as the Champlain Valley of Vermont. The marketing project included a poster, a 3-panel brochure, a press mailing to over 200, and a website at [www.3valleystofreedom.org](http://www.3valleystofreedom.org) that was visited by over 29,000 from May – December, 2002. Funding for the project came from voluntary donations or in-kind donations from the participating sites and a \$15,000 grant from the Cultural Tourism Initiative, a project of the Arts & Business Council Inc. and the

who made the award called the 3 Valleys to Freedom Marketing "A benchmark in inter-organizational cooperation." The marketing campaign was a huge success. Over 128,000 individuals attended 30 events in the three valleys. Using economic data from the State of New York, these 128,000 individuals provided an estimated \$31,166,892 million in economic benefit for the region. The success of the marketing campaign has resulted in the coalition continuing to meet to promote the region in 2003. Your Alliance is now a member as well.

For more information on the 3 Valleys and a list of sites and events in 2003, visit [www.3valleystofreedom.org](http://www.3valleystofreedom.org)

LAKE GEORGE BATTLEFIELD PARK  
(FORT GEORGE)

ALLIANCE

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 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, I want to protect Historic Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) at Lake George, New York. I'm joining the Alliance as indicated below:

- Sustaining Member, \$2,500
- Associate Member, \$1,000
- Sponsor Member, \$500
- Paid Up for Life Member, \$500  
For an individual person making a one-time dues payment of \$500
- Patron Member, \$100
- Family Member, \$50  
For a husband, wife and their children under 18 years of age.
- Individual Member, \$35
- Student Member, \$15  
For a person 25 years or younger enrolled in a full time education program
- Institution Member, \$35  
For newsletter subscribers only

All memberships, except those Paid Up for Life, expire on March 31st annually unless renewed

*We make every effort possible to avoid duplicate mailings, but if you receive an extra application from us, please accept our apology and pass the extra application on to a friend. For additional information please contact our Membership Committee Chair at (518) 668-5093. Membership is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*

Lake George Battlefield (Fort George) Alliance  
PO Box 26, Lake George, NY 12845

