

The Lake George Examiner



Skidmore professor to discuss history and fiction in “Last of the Mohicans”

July 24, 2023 by Gillian Burdett

Thursday, Aug. 3, Dr. Nick Junkerman, an Associate Professor of Literature at Skidmore College, will present “James Fenimore Cooper: History & Fiction in ‘The Last of the Mohicans.’” The program will begin at 7 p.m. at the Fort William Henry Conference Center, 48 Canada Street, Lake George. The event is co-sponsored by the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance and the French & Indian War Society at Lake George.

James Fenimore Cooper’s “Last of the Mohicans” presents an exciting and romantic fictionalized account of the siege and surrender of Fort William Henry. For many Americans, knowledge of the French and Indian War is limited to Cooper’s work. “Every day, guests come to the Fort William Henry Museum who either read Cooper’s book or saw the movie,” says Kathy Flacke Muncil, CEO of Fort William Henry Corp. “Our guides separate fact from fiction so visitors leave with a better understanding of this era in history.”

According to Russell P. Bellico, a trustee of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, “The French and Indian War was a complex, lengthy power struggle for control of North America. Because Cooper’s depiction of the siege published nearly 70 years later was so popular, it became the most recognized event of the

French and Indian War." Bellico is the author of "Empires in the Mountains" and several other books on the region's vast history.

Dr. Junkerman will talk about the legendary events that took place in and around Fort William Henry in August 1757 and point out differences in the fictional account depicted in Cooper's novel. Admission to the program is free; however, space is limited, so organizers encourage those wishing to attend to register by email to info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org.

Also of note: At noon on Aug. 9, the French and Indian War Society at Lake George and Fort William Henry will host a commemoration of the 1757 Surrender on the lawn outside the fort. Reenactors will read aloud the terms of surrender and hold a wreath-laying ceremony at the military cemetery.