

# The Lake George Examiner



## Alliance to host Memorial Day Ceremony in Battlefield Park

May 19, 2025 by Gillian Burdett

The Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance will hold its annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony on Monday, May 26, at the burial site of the four unknown soldiers in Battlefield Park, Fort George Road, Lake George. The event is a tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom. The ceremony begins at 10:30 a.m.

The remains of the four unknown soldiers were uncovered in 1931 during a road construction project on State Route 9. Analysis of the remains determined that the men were provincial soldiers who fell in the Bloody Morning Scout, one of three engagements collectively known as the Sept. 8, 1755, Battle of Lake George. Their grave, on a hill overlooking Lake George, is the earliest recognized unknown soldiers' burial site in the United States.

Command Sergeant Major Robert W. Van Pelt, US Army (retired), will give the Keynote Address. Van Pelt's military career spans more than 42 years. He was drafted into the US Army in 1969 and served with the 1st Signal Brigade at Phu Lam, Vietnam.



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In 1974, Van Pelt enlisted in the New York National Guard and was selected as a Command Sergeant Major in 1991. He served as the CSM of 2 battalion and 2 brigade-sized units until 1998, when he was tapped as the CSM, 42nd Infantry Division (RAINBOW).

Van Pelt was offered the full-time position as the State Command Sergeant Major of the New York National Guard in June 2001 and served in that role until his retirement in June 2011. He continues his service doing volunteer work with military and veterans' organizations.

"Having Bob Van Pelt, a Command Sergeant Major — the highest noncommissioned rank in the US Army — provide our keynote address makes this year's program very special," says Alliance President John DiNuzzo. "It reminds us that, throughout America's history, the selflessness of our military personnel has cut across all ranks and all branches of service."

The ceremony will also include a presentation by Historian and Alliance Trustee Bruce Venter titled, "The Importance of the Battle of Lake George." The Reverend Laura Miller of St. James Church will give the invocation, and the Lake George Volunteer Fire Department and American Legion Post 374 will make ceremonial presentations at the unknown soldiers' burial site.

The commemoration will close with a 21-gun salute by Fort William Henry reenactors and the playing of taps by Amy Baker, Music Director at Lake George Junior/Senior High School.

Memorial Day Weekend also marks the 2025 season opening of the Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center. The Center will operate on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (and on the Memorial Day holiday) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through June 29, and then will be open Thursdays through Mondays beginning July 3.

The Visitor Center is located on Fort George Road. Admission is free. The Battlefield Park Alliance resumes its weekly free guided tours of the historic site each Saturday starting at 11 a.m. Tours begin at the Visitor Center.