

Historic statues in Lake George's Battlefield Park to be unveiled after restoration

Three monuments honoring Lake George's pre-Revolutionary War history have undergone restorations over the past year



Workshop Art Fabrication's Andrew Pharmer fits a new arrow to the Mohawk Warrior sculpture at the Lake George Battlefield Park as part of a restoration project on Monday in Lake George. Will Waldron/Times Union

After nearly a year of careful restoration, a collection of historic statues in Lake George's Battlefield Park will be unveiled to the public on Friday, June 27, marking a renewed chapter in the park's efforts to preserve its pre-Revolutionary War history.

The project is the brainchild of sculptor and Lake George native Dan George. After seeing three of the park's statues fall into varying states of disrepair, George reached out to the president of the Lake George Battlefield Alliance Board of Trustees, John DiNuzzo.

“I told (George) we had proposed to the state a couple of years earlier to do a beautification project of the monuments, but we weren’t getting a lot of positive response,” DiNuzzo said. “Dan George said, ‘Let me help you, let me find a way. I’ve got contacts, I’ve got people who do this.’”

George then reached out to Andrew Pharmer, another Lake George native. Pharmer owns a foundry in Kingston and has worked on projects including a rooftop garden sculpture for the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Being from Lake George, Pharmer had a connection to the area and the park itself.

“One day, (George) came in and asked me if I remembered the monuments in Battlefield Park. Of course I did because we had our senior picnic at the pavilion near the Mohawk Warrior,” Pharmer said. “It was in poor condition even in 1984. When Dan proposed that we team up and do this project together, I was happy to oblige because this was something I could give back to my hometown with my particular expertise as an art fabricator. We put together the most reasonable budget we could, even though Dan said not to worry about the price. He said, ‘We’ll figure out a way to get it done.’”

The three statues — the Mohawk Warrior, Saint Issac Jogues and one honoring the Battle of Lake George — will be revealed June 27 at the official unveiling. The event is open to the public. Organizers hope the restoration will encourage greater interest in the site’s historical significance and lead to continued preservation efforts in the future.

The Mohawk Warrior, a depiction of a Native American reaching into a pond, was first dedicated in 1921, and the monument was refurbished in 2005. Since then, the Mohawk Warrior has been damaged by vandalism and theft; the Native American’s arrows have gone missing, and the bronze has dulled. Pharmer and another member of his foundry, Vinny DiDonato, are working on restoring the warrior.

“These are all really high-quality sculptures,” Pharmer said. “For a small town to have this caliber of work is pretty amazing.”

The largest statue in the park is a monument honoring Saint Isaac Jogues. The statue honoring the French priest overlooks Lake George, a nod to Jogues, who is considered to be the first European to see the lake.

Since its dedication in 1939, the Jogues statue has been a victim of time and the elements. Part of the restoration plan is to power wash the blackened granite on which the statue rests and polish the bronze. A cross that was a part of the monument had gone missing over the years, but a new one is being molded and replaced by Pharmer’s team.

“There are more illustrations on (the granite) that are obscured by the filth,” DiNuzzo said. “Just imagine again, gleaming bronze, glistening granite” in comparison.

What DiNuzzo didn't know at the start of the restoration project was that George, the man who started the entire process, was battling terminal cancer.

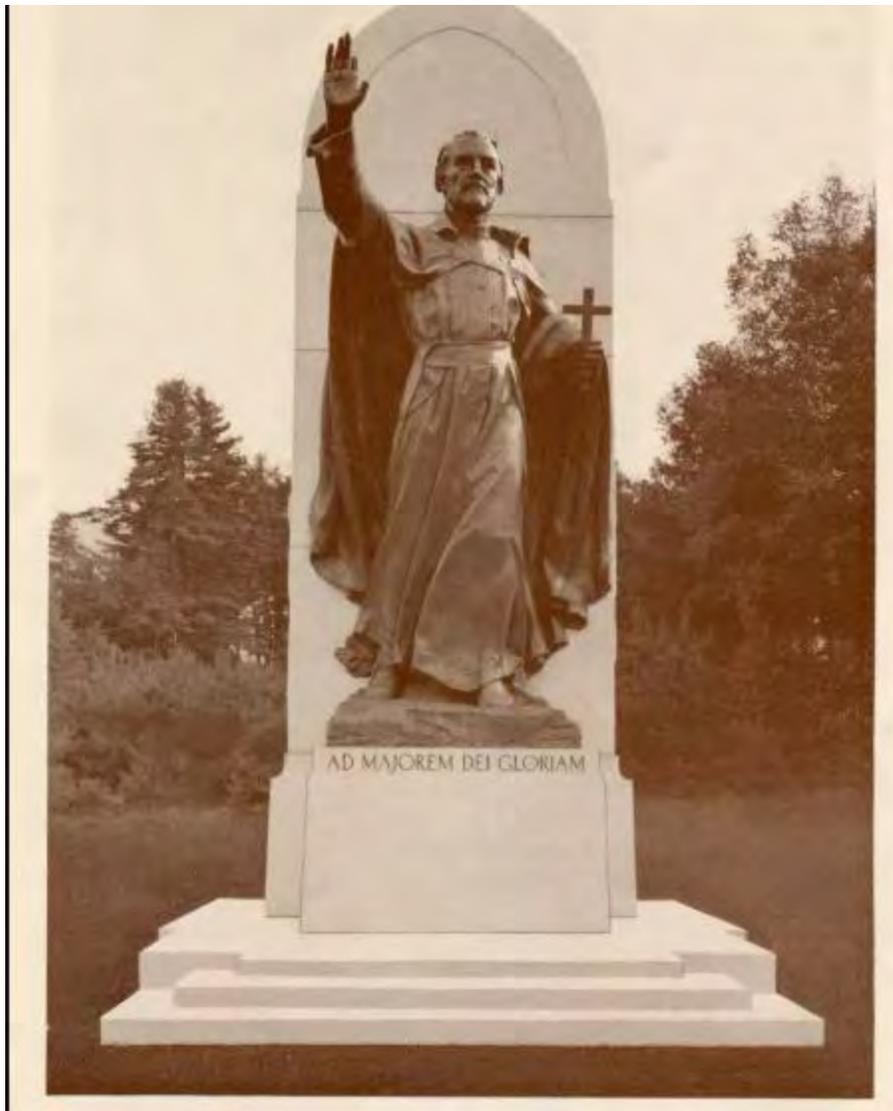
"In December, the Park Commission decided to give us \$9,500 towards the washing of the Isaac Jogues, which was the first commitment we had for funding," DiNuzzo said. "So I called Dan right after that, and he was thrilled. I said, 'I'm sure we can get the rest of the money we need.' He said back to me, 'This is good. Now let me get you my wife's phone number and email address because I'm going into hospice care tomorrow.'"

George died of neuroendocrine cancer on Jan. 4, five months before the project was set to be completed.

"We are so grateful that he swooped into our lives as he did," DiNuzzo said.



Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance President John DiNuzzo is interviewed next to the Saint Isaac Jogues sculpture at the Lake George Battlefield Park on Monday in Lake George. The alliance is undertaking a project to restore the park's historic sculptures.



A photo of the statue honoring Saint Isaac Jogues, date unknown.



“The Battle of Lake George” sculpture is undergoing restoration work on Monday at Lake George Battlefield Park in Lake George.



A photo of the statue of Sir William John and King Hendrick, as a memorial to the Battle of Lake George in 1755, part of the French and Indian War, date unknown. The statue was dedicated in 1903, the first monument in the park.



Aaron Valentin of Workshop Art Fabrication fits a new tomahawk to “The Battle of Lake George” sculpture gates during a restoration project to repair the historic sculptures at Lake George Battlefield Park on Monday, June 16, 2025, in Lake George, N.Y. The restoration project, led by the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, is being performed by Workshop Art Fabrication LLC, a Kingston, NY, art restoration specialty firm.



Workshop Art Fabrication principals Andrew Pharmer is interviewed at Lake George Battlefield Park during a restoration project for the park’s sculptures on Monday, June 16, 2025, in Lake George, N.Y.



The Mohawk Warrior sculpture at Lake George Battlefield Park is undergoing restoration work on Monday, June 16, 2025, in Lake George, N.Y. The restoration project to restore the park's historic sculptures is led by the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance. Work is being performed by Workshop Art Fabrication LLC, a Kingston, NY, art restoration specialty firm.