

LAKE GEORGE MIRROR.

"THE QUEEN OF AMERICAN LAKES"

LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK, May 22, 2026



"Construction of 'The Repose of the Fallen' was completed in time for the May 22 dedication. Photo provided."

Dedication of Revolutionary War Memorial Set for May 22

By Anthony F. Hall

On May 22, the transformation of a nondescript hillside above Lake George into a memorial to those who perished during what, arguably, was the new nation's first foreign adventure – the disastrous 1775-1776 invasion of Quebec – will be complete.

The remains of forty-four of the hundreds who died from illness contracted during the invasion will be reinterred in a columbarium. The memorial ultimately will honor all those who served at Lake George during the wars of the 18th century.

According to Russell Bellico, the historian and co-founder of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, the addition of the *Repose of the Fallen* is a milestone in the park's own history, equal to the dedication of the statue of Sir William Johnson and King Hendrick, formally known as "The Battle of Lake George – Sept. 8, 1755," in 1903.

The memorial plaza will be situated within walking distance of the Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center and within sight of a monument to unknown soldiers – American provincials who were fighting on behalf of the British king at the 1755 Battle of Lake George, whose remains were found during the construction of a road near Lake George in the 1930s and were reburied in the park at that time.

"When the remains of these

forty-four other individuals were discovered in Lake George Village in 2019, the creation of this memorial plaza was not something many people could have anticipated," said Dan Barusch, Lake George's Director of Planning and Zoning. "But the boards of the Village and the Town immediately grasped the significance of these people's sacrifices to our nation and to the heritage of this community."

The *Repose of the Fallen* was constructed at a cost of \$700,000, derived from the \$9.7 New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative awarded Lake George in December, 2024 and from private donations.

"As Senator Chuck Schumer said when he visited this site in 2023, the forty-four continental soldiers and their supporters whose remains were found in Lake George in 2019 drew their last breaths here," said John DiNuzzo, president of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, the non-profit group that works with the Department of Environmental Conservation to maintain the park and which also manages the Visitors Center.

According to DiNuzzo, the memorial plaza is within a few hundred yards of the Revolutionary War's largest military hospital in the thirteen colonies. Founded in the summer of 1776 by General Horatio Gates, the hospital was used to

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house colonial troops who had contracted smallpox during the invasion of Canada.

Gates wrote George Washington that the Northern Army was "infected with pestilence...To put this evil from us, a General Hospital is established at Fort George... where every infected person is immediately sent."

By August of that year, roughly 2,000 patients were being treated at the new hospital, with twenty to thirty dying every day. The graves discovered in Lake George Village in 2019 are among the hundreds dug to bury those who died from smallpox and other diseases at the hospital, said DiNuzzo.

Lisa Anderson, the New York State Museum curator and

archaeologist who supervised the recovery of the remains in 2019, said many were not only young men but teenaged boys. The remains of two children between the ages of six and ten were also discovered.

According to Anderson, the sick were cared for by women from Fort Ticonderoga, dispatched to Fort George to serve as nurses.

"There may have been women among those whose graves were destroyed," she said. "As our work continues, we hope to be able to tell their story: who they were, how they lived, how they died. We hope to give recognition to their place in the American Revolution, right here in Lake George."

The remains of others who died from smallpox at the hospital are, in all likelihood, lying underneath

the ground throughout Battlefield Park, "where they will never be disturbed," said DiNuzzo.

The plan to construct the memorial plaza in Battlefield Park required the support of New York State, which has owned the grounds since 1898 and whose Department of Environmental Conservation manages it as a historic site and public park. In April, 2024, the project was approved by the Adirondack Park Agency, which must approve any alterations to state-owned lands within the Adirondack Park, as prescribed by the State Land Master Plan, which the New York State legislature approved in 1972.

Lake George's representatives in the state legislature, Senator Dan Stec and Assemblyman Matt Simpson, sponsored resolutions supporting the reinterment of

the remains. The Boards of both the Village and the Town of Lake George have approved resolutions supporting "respectful reburials" of the remains found at the construction site inside Lake George Battlefield Park.

Writing to state officials, Senator Schumer contrasted Lake George's appearance today with what it must have looked like in 1775-1776.

"There would have been no Minne-Ha-Ha, no 'Round the World' miniature golf, no soft ice cream stands. Yet none of these undeniable expressions of modern American life would be possible without the audacious sacrifices of these brave individuals. There's a poignant symmetry in how this project coincides with the approaching 250th anniversary of America. These soldiers will be properly laid to

rest and memorialized in that important milestone anniversary year," stated Schumer.

"Repose of the Fallen" will be dedicated on Friday, May 22, following the return of the remains from the New York State Museum in Albany, where they were scrutinized by the state's bioarchaeologists. scientists

"We have spent the past seven years painstakingly working to piece together the story of the individuals whose unmarked graves were destroyed," said the museum's Lisa Anderson. "As we close this chapter, it's hard to put into words the gratitude my team and I have for being part of this project. It has been a privilege to help uncover the story of these veterans and to see the dignified burial they deserve."