

LAKE GEORGE MIRROR.

"THE QUEEN OF AMERICAN LAKES"

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NEW AT THE LAKE GEORGE BATTLEFIELD PARK VISITORS CENTER: **A FACE OF THE GENERATION OF 1776**



Left: Frank and Rosemary Pusateri, who commissioned the facial reconstruction of a Revolutionary War soldier whose remains are interred at the new war memorial, unveil the model with Lake George Battlefield Alliance board member Mark Silo. Right: What a young man who died from smallpox at the Fort George Hospital in 1776 actually looked like.

By Anthony F. Hall

A facial reconstruction of a Revolutionary War soldier whose remains were recovered from a disturbed burial ground and reinterred with those of 43 others in the "Repose of the Fallen," the new war memorial in Battlefield Park, was unveiled at the Visitor Center on July 20.

According to John DiNuzzo, president of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, which operates the Visitor Center, the model is the second to be created by Jenny Kenyon, a Virginia-based forensic artist.

Dinuzzo said the original was made earlier this year for the New York State Museum for the "Repose of the Fallen" project and is not scheduled for public display any time soon.

According to the New York State Museum, Kenyon's facial reconstruction, produced with 3D-printed scans of a skull, made with the assistance of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, depicted a teenage soldier.

The evidence indicated that disease rather than combat was the cause of his death.

Museum curator Lisa Anderson, the late DEC archaeologist Charles Vandrei and bio-archaeologists Julie Weatherwax and Alexandra

DeCarlo concluded that in all likelihood, almost all the soldiers who died at the Fort George Hospital had contracted smallpox or related diseases during the 1775-1776 invasion of Canada.

Apparently, many of the dead buried in what is today Lake George Village – and not just the adolescent soldier whose face was reconstructed – were teenagers, some as young as sixteen.

The VIC's model and display case were commissioned and funded by Lake George residents

Frank and Rosemary Pusateri. According to Mark Silo, who chairs the Visitors Centers's curatorial and collections committee, artifacts found at the disturbed burial site suggest the young man may have been a member of the First Pennsylvania Battalion.

"We don't know for certain, but it is very likely that he was part of that unit," said Silo. "It was authorized by Congress in December, 1775 and joined the American invasion force in Quebec. On June 2, 1776, the

sick from that unit were sent south to the new hospital here at Fort George. And this young man was probably among them."

Silo thanked the Pusateris for the donation that made it possible for the VIC to add the model of the soldier's head and face to its permanent exhibition.

"We can only imagine the hardships of this young man's last year," said Rosemary Pusateri. "Marching hundreds of miles, in all kinds of weather, across all kinds of terrain, with limited rations, finally facing a slow death

from disease. He left his home and his loved ones to fight and die for the guiding principles on which our country was founded."

Representing the Town of Lake George, Councilwoman Marisa Muratori said, "One of these faceless people now has a face. It brings us closer to (those who died at Fort George)."

Thanks to additions to the VIC's collections like the reconstructed face of the Revolutionary War soldier, the VIC is less a typical visitor center and more akin to a museum, one

dedicated to Lake George's 18th century military and maritime history, Alliance president John DiNuzzo said.

This particular piece "represents the merging of history and science," just as the restoration of Battlefield Park's statues last year "was a union of history and art," he said.

The Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center is located at 75 Fort George Road and is open Thursday through Monday from 10 am to 4 pm.