

Executive Board of Directors

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Events

November 5th

Preview screening of Ken Burns' *American Revolution @250*
6:30 on at the Ogdensburg
Dobisky Visitors' Center,
100 Riverside Avenue.

January 16th, 2026

During the 250th
anniversary year of the
United States of America,
the Fort La Presentation
Association will celebrate
25 years of progress Jan.16
at the Ogdensburg Elks
Lodge with a social hour at
6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.
The association's annual
awards will also be
presented.

For further information,
contact President Barb
O'Keefe,
barbokeefe3@gmail.com.

It Wasn't The First Time France Surrendered Land To England

By Ted Como

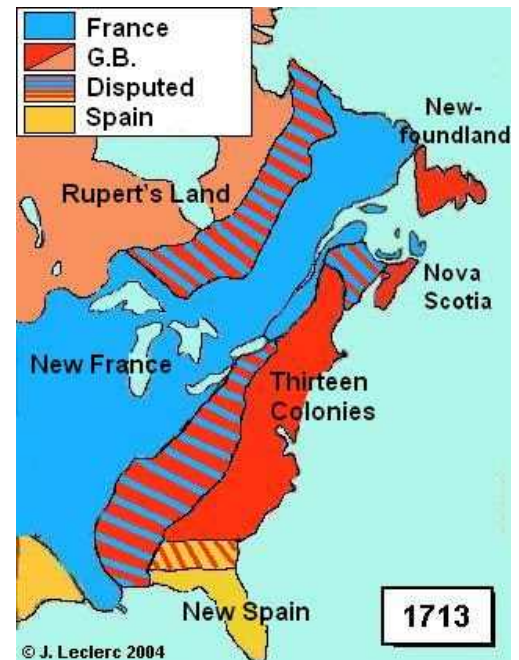
**Forts La Présentation and
Levis at Ogdensburg came to
prominence in the French and
Indian War of 1754-1763
between France and England
over territories in North
America.**

The conflict concluded with the
Treaty of Paris in 1763 where France
ceded vast territories in North America to
Great Britain including all of New France
and all French lands east of the
Mississippi River, along with the two
forts.

But it wasn't the first time France had
surrendered holdings on the continent to
England. As Rt. Rev. P.S. Garand writes in
the *The History of the City of
Ogdensburg*, 1927, the treaty of Utrecht in
1713-1714 which concluded Queen
Anne's War between the two nations (also
known as the War of the Spanish
Succession)

"was most disastrous to the French
colonies," ceding to England the Hudson
Bay, Newfoundland, Acadia, and all
outposts of Canada.

"It was, in reality, the first step towards
the final abandonment by France of her
colonies," Garand writes, a process which,
a half-century later, would see Fort La
Presentation under British control.
Noted Garand,

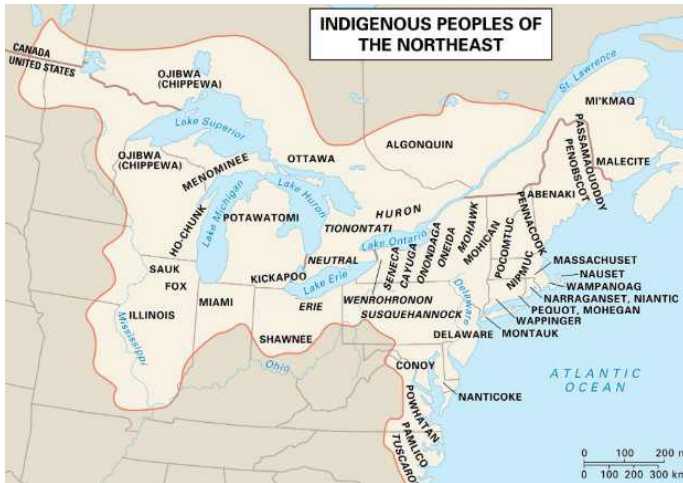


Under the Treaty of Utrecht France ceded to
Britain the Hudson Bay territories, Acadia
except for Cape Breton Island and Prince
Edward Island, and Newfoundland. France
retained control of the two islands as well as
present-day New Brunswick and a large area
along the Mississippi River.

*"The most lamentable feature of this
treaty was that France was made to
recognize the five Nations of the Iroquois
(the Senecas, Oneidas, Cayugas,
Onondagas and Mohawks) as the prote-
ges of England.*

Garand wrote that this recognition
was equivalent to acknowledging these
tribes as subjects of England and was
used by English colonists as an excuse to
hunt and fish on French territory and for
establishing trade sites later turned into

It Wasn't The First Time France Surrendered Land To England continued



Both France and England actively sought alliances with various Native American tribes throughout the development of North America.

forts, giving as a reason for this encroachment that the Iroquois - their proteges - were located there.

"This conflict between French and English colonists was bound to become constant and grow more acute day by day," Garand wrote.

Under the treaty, France ceded to Britain the Hudson Bay territories, Acadia except for Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. France retained control of the two islands as well as present-day New Brunswick and a large area along the Mississippi River. The treaty did not signify France's abandonment of Canada. It continued to administer and develop the remaining parts of New France including the key settlements of Quebec and Montreal, and continued to be involved in the fur trade and maintain alliances with Indigenous peoples.

The French presence expanded "despite that the English colonists paid no attention to the claims of France, despite frequent protests on the part of Versailles and the governors of Canada," Garand wrote.

"They traded furs with the Indians all over the country, they established trade posts in several places and erected Fort Oswego, or Chouaguen, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario right opposite Fort Frontenac, now Kingston, and Fort Lydius north of Fort Orange, now Albany.

It was partly because of the erection of Fort Oswego that Francois Picquet located Fort La Presentation where he did. Fort Oswego was of great strategic value and was a source of anxiety and uneasiness to the French colonists as well as a continual menace to New France. "Father Picquet knew that war was inevitable and the hostilities he foresaw started in the fall of 1743," wrote Garand.

While 1743 wasn't the start of a major war, it marked a period of increased tensions and skirmishes between British and French colonists and their respective Native American allies. From 1744 to 1748, what became known as King George's War was the North American phase of the European War of the Austrian Succession. The main point of contention was control over the Ohio River Valley and news of war declarations reached French forces first in May 1744, leading to attacks on British settlements and forts.

Both parties actively sought alliances with various Native American tribes says Wikipedia, further complicating the conflict. The escalating tensions eventually led to the French and Indian War which was the North American phase of the Seven Years' War. According to Garand, "The policy of both England and France before and during the intercolonial war was to secure the friendship and alliance of the Indians at any cost, and when this was not possible, at least to gain their neutrality. A bad trait of the Indians was that they could not be depended upon absolutely. They did not hesitate to break their word, nor a treaty, whenever this was to their advantage," Garand stated.

"It was during his long stay at Quebec, in the company of the 60 deputies from the Five Nations, in the summer of 1747, that Francois Picquet asked and obtained both from his ecclesiastical superiors and from the colonial authorities the approbation of his future establishment of La Presentation at what would become Ogdensburg."

Some Of The Best Views Of The St. Lawrence River.



Left: Bridge connecting Lookout Point to mainland & Fort property

Right: Catalog image of new Gazebo



In the Fall of 2023 the Fort La Presentation Association opened a pedestrian bridge at the end of Van Rensselaer Point reconnecting the former railroad ferry dock property to the mainland. The added trail space opened spectacular views of the St. Lawrence River.

Now, the association is engaged in a related project which will not only provide a viewing platform but an appropriate venue for events like small weddings and engagement and anniversary parties. Work is currently underway on a gazebo measuring 17 by 25 feet to be located near the end of the trail extension after crossing the bridge. It's a unique project that will cost about \$140,000, funded by donations from the public and other sources.

The pedestrian bridge utilized a basic design developed by the Mechanical and Civil Engineering Departments at Clarkson University in 2020 with the help of Instructors Ron Buckingham and Erik Backus. The peninsula was built in the early 1900s for a ferry dock to transfer railroad cars across the St. Lawrence River to Ontario.

A former property owner later cut into the peninsula forming an island at the end of Van Rensselaer Point. Association President Barb O'Keefe said the point "has the best views of the St. Lawrence River. Access to it had been an objective but was not immediately achievable since as a non-profit, funds were limited." With sufficient donations, the bridge was put into place and donations are also allowing construction of the gazebo, which will be completed this fall. As well, an interpretive panel will "enhance visitors' knowledge of Van Rensselaer Point's railroad history," O'Keefe said.

Project Chairman is Tim Cryderman, a member of the board of the association and long-time re-enactor who said the gazebo

"will be a beautiful place to sit and enjoy the river and the quiet setting of the Association's property,"

site of the fort established in 1749. "Initially, we won't have seating so folks will have to bring chairs. But it will be great for small ceremonies of perhaps 20 or so persons."

Cryderman said that accessibility will be easy, with no steps to climb to reach the gazebo's floor. "It will be built near the end of the property on the level area, and before the property drops off to the water." The gazebo will have a pitched roof and four-screen roof and will be stained to match the colors of the environment. Cryderman said ancillary work will include upgrades to the trail using stone dust and cleaning up of the brush on either side.

The work is being done by TJ Fiocco and Riley Construction of Potsdam, North Country Storage Barns of Philadelphia, NY and LaBella Associates of Watertown.

Donations continue to be accepted to support the cost of the gazebo. They may be made at the Association's website, www.Fort1749.org by clicking the "donate" button on the home page, just before the "Coming Up" section.

Fort la Présentation Association
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The Fort's annual "*Le Siège*", French & Indian war re-enactment, was held on July 19-20th. "*Skirmish on the Oswegatchie*", Revolutionary war event, was held August 9-10th. *Skirmish...* was the Fort's first Revolutionary War re-enactment event to be held on the Fort property.

As the country celebrates the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution there are many events and requests for re-enactors. This combined with the absence of our Canadian friends attendance, of both re-enactors and visitors, was down from previous years.

Re-enactments are important because they bring history to life through immersive, hands-on experiences that are more impactful than reading about past events. They also show community support for the Fort La Présentation Association and it's mission to rebuild a replica fort.



Camp Oswegatchie, Photo by David Austin