

Executive Board of Directors

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2026 Events

Annual Dinner & Awards
January 16, 5:00 PM Social
6:00 Dinner

Battle of Ogdensburg
February 21-22

**Primitive Snowshoe
Biathlon** March 7-8

Maple Sugaring
March 14th

**American Revolution
Skirmish**
July 18-19



www.fort1749.org

Welcome And Interpretive Center/Museum

By Ted Como



Front Entry-By LaBella Associates

The Fort La Présentation Association (FLPA) is announcing plans for an estimated \$3 million museum to offer a year-round attraction for residents and visitors to the community.

It will be roughly 6,000 square feet and contain interactive museum exhibits, archeological artifacts from the historic fort, flexible space for gatherings and community events, a catering kitchen, working 18th century inspired fireplace and gift shop.

In 2018 in partnership with the city, FLPA commissioned a feasibility study to explore the path forward. That study opined that FLPA should continue to improve the fort site incrementally in coming years rather than focus on a visitor center as its next big goal. In part, it said, the city was not ready for a center, that it was not well positioned to accommodate an influx of visitors because it lacked "the accommodations and

downtown shopping, dining and entertainment destinations that will bring visitors in and keep them there for multi-day visits."

The FLPA believes that accommodating the status quo does nothing to grow a community in distress. Board President Barbara O'Keefe said that the FLPA "has incrementally improved the site since that study including shoreline stabilization, expansion of the trail and deck, establishing the Newell Family Archeological site and providing access to outlook point and a pavilion to enjoy the view. We also plan for a blacksmith shop and a digital presentation showcasing the fort.

As well, Ogdensburg has also moved forward including an expansion of the city's marina district and development of a downtown improvement strategy to seek New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding. The city just completed a \$25 million airport expansion and is



Exterior View-By LaBella Associates

now designated a regional hub, and, was just awarded \$9.8 million which will allow United Helpers to transform the city's former Pythian Beach into a community and recreation center.

"We believe that to initiate change, to inspire growth, to create demand for services such as motels and restaurants, Ogdensburg needs an attractor, something that will incentivize tourism as does the Ogdensburg History Museum and Frederic Remington Art Museum.

To that end, the board has been developing plans for a welcome center to motivate historic tourism at a time when tourism is showing new growth in the region."

The same organization which did the 2018 study, LaBella Associates, now agrees it's time to move forward. "The development of the historic Fort La Présentation property in Ogdensburg has provided significant benefit to the community. This new phase of work promises to provide a level of outreach and engagement that will increase visitation to the site and provide additional programming to encourage year-round occupation of the site," LaBella said in a recent proposal to design the welcome center.

. "The development of the historic Fort La Présentation property in Ogdensburg has provided significant benefit to the community."

O'Keefe said the center will set the stage for development of the fort site including displaying artifacts taken in several excavations and now held by the state. "With a place to put them, those important artifacts, including cannons, will return home and we will have a permanent visitors interpretive center as a first step in

developing the audience and support needed for the actual recreation of the fort and associated Native American village. That long-term vision could be a turning point in the future of Ogdensburg, offering a history-driven economic boost," she said.

The building itself will support cooking demonstrations, traditional crafting events, display of artifacts, and provide a home base for sponsored events such as reenactments, fishing derbies and other events for community engagement. Focal elements will include a great room with a grand fireplace, hearth and bake oven and will take on 18th century stylings and provide a feel of the historic significance of the site.

As the project progresses, the FLPA will continue to add to the site with the next project a blacksmith shop featuring a period colonial forge donated by Marty Snye of Morristown. Snye has worked in the clinical laboratory field and taught ornamental horticulture. He set up a complete blacksmith shop and spent 30 plus years learning the forging techniques of traditional blacksmiths. That project is scheduled for the Spring.



Historical Displays area- By LaBella Associates-



Demonstration area- By LaBella Associates-

Fort La Presentation's 25 Years Of Progress

By Ted Como

As we enter the nation's 250th anniversary year, the Fort La Presentation Association (FLPA) is focusing on 25 years of progress, a celebration of achievement to be held Jan. 16, 2026 at the Ogdensburg Elks Club. The event will begin with a social at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., and include presentation of awards for outstanding service to the association.

Today, city residents know well of the beautiful Picquet Walking Trail at the site of the fort but may not know of the incredible effort it took to get to that point.

In 2000 the first Founder's Day weekend was held, the association was given 26 acres at the site and started a newsletter, the city obtained a \$50,000 grant for a feasibility study and the first annual meeting was held. The FLPA reported petroleum contamination to the state and while Exxon Mobil initially refused to sign an agreement with the state to investigate contamination, it later agreed to a consent order to clean up the site.

By 2007 a \$10 million site remediation was completed by the state with 63,465 tons of contaminated soil removed. The FLPA received a \$50,000 Sweetgrass Foundation Grant for relocation of the Abbe Picquet Monument to the site and further site investigation takes place and the first strategic, business and interpretation plans were drafted.



Van Rensselaer Point prior to clean up and site remediation



Detail of a model of the proposed fort reconstruction

The association placed interpretive plaques telling the story of Fort La Presentation and Fort Levis erected and saw Lighthouse Point is placed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2012 conceptual plans were received for the Abbe Picquet Trail and the FLPA allowed the Ogdensburg Community Garden to establish a public community garden on the fort property. The Abbe Picquet Trail and War of 1812 Peace Garden Dedication were dedicated and a REDI Grant for \$1,230,250 was approved to install shoreline stabilization. The Association hired TJ Fiacco to stabilize the St. Lawrence and Oswegatchie River shorelines and raise portions of the Abbe Picquet Trail.

Next the association took delivery for the bridge to lookout point and extended the trail to an incredible view of the St. Lawrence River. The Newell Family Archaeological Park was dedicated and dog stations and benches added to the trail and most recently, a pergola was added to the end of the trail across the bridge.



New observation pergola on Van Rensselaer/ Look out Point

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It's More Than History



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