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2027 Events

Annual Social –
January TBA

Battle of
Ogdensburg
February 20-21

Maple Sugaring
March- TBA

Skirmish On the
Oswegatchie
July- TBD



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The Treaty of Oswegatchie

By Ted Como

Four months before British General Jeffrey Amherst marched against Forts de La Présentation and Lévis at Ogdensburg in August of 1760 he issued a proclamation designed to win over France's Native American allies.

Immediately after he won the Battle of the Thousand Islands at Fort Lévis, the proclamation became the Treaty of Oswegatchie, an historic peace and neutrality agreement negotiated Aug. 30, 1760 at Fort de La Présentation between British Commander and Colonial Superintendent of Indian affairs Sir William Johnson, and representatives of the Seven Nations of Canada.

The pact assured Indigenous neutrality as British forces advanced on Montreal, and remains a highly important agreement. The treaty was accompanied by a wampum belt in accordance with Iroquois tradition according to Darren Bonaparte, former chief of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, creator of "The Wampum Chronicles" and an historical advisor to film and television.

"Although the paper documentation has not yet been found, the terms of The Treaty of Oswegatchie were probably very similar to the



Wampum Belt
Wampum was used by Indigenous people to record treaties and settle disputes (courtesy Canadian Museum of History/575-620)



Sir William Johnson
Sir William Johnson, Library and Archives Canada

agreement made by the Hurons of Lorette with Great Britain's General Murray on Sept. 5, 1760," Chief Bonaparte wrote in his Chronicles.

"Murray had promised the Hurons that their rights would be honored and protected by the British in exchange for making peace. This agreement between the Hurons and the Crown was recognized as being a valid treaty by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Sioui decision of 1990."

The Treaty of Oswegatchie-continued

In "All Canada in the Hand of the British: General Jeffery Amherst and the 1760 Campaign to Conquer New France," Douglas R. Cubbison writes that in late April of 1760 Amherst traveled up the Hudson to Fort George to meet with Sir William and the Indian nations. He promised that in return for their support, Natives would be maintained in their "just rights," including their hunting territories.

Four months later on Aug. 16 Amherst attacked Fort Lévis which the French built on what's now Chimney Island at Ogdensburg and on Aug. 25, the fort's commander, Captain Pierre Pouchot, surrendered in what was to be the last land battle of the war. Four days later,

Johnson met with Natives at Fort de La Présentation including the Oswegatchie tribe and members of the Abenaki, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Ottawa, Nipissing, and Mississauga, to draw up the treaty of neutrality.

It was an important agreement, key to the British conquest of France in North America. It allowed British forces to advance on Montreal after the surrender of Fort Lévis without native interference. To spare the city, Montreal surrendered in September without a fight. And by neutralizing the formidable First Nations allies of the French, the British cleared the strategic St. Lawrence water routes. The treaty marked a profound shift in regional alliances, fundamentally altering the power dynamics between European empires and Indigenous nations in North America.

The agreement still informs modern Indigenous land claims and treaty rights. In *R. v. Sioui*, a case about Indigenous rights, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the status of the Treaty of Oswegatchie's understandings of treaty interpretations in Canada. Four Huron-Wendat brothers (the Huron-Wendat are an Iroquoian-speaking nation that have long occupied the St. Lawrence Valley and Great Lakes region) were charged and convicted of illegally camping, starting fires and cutting down trees in Jacques Cartier Park in Quebec.



Treaty Medals: Both sides of a commemorative coin, Chiefs Medal, presented to commemorate Treaties 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. (courtesy Library and Archives Canada, 1986-79-1638 / Wikimedia CC)

The brothers took their case to the Court of Sessions of the Peace in Quebec, arguing that they had Indigenous rights by treaty to the territory in question. The court found that the Huron-Wendat, originally from Ontario, had no ancestral rights in Quebec. The case was appealed to the Superior Court of Quebec which, too, upheld the convictions, and finally to the Quebec Court of Appeals which found for the brothers, saying treaties exempted the Huron-Wendat from certain provincial laws.

However, the Province of Quebec appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada but that court found unanimously that a treaty created mutually binding obligations between Natives and the Crown and that they remain in effect. The Treaty of Oswegatchie played a significant contextual role in the case. While the case itself centered on the validity of a specific document signed by General James Murray in 1760 guaranteeing the Huron-Wendat Nation the same rights, the Supreme Court of Canada heavily relied on the wider historical backdrop of the British conquest which included the parallel negotiations which led to the Treaty of Oswegatchie, and subsequent Treaty of Kahnawake.

"It will be some time before the full ramifications of the Mitchell case sink in with aboriginal peoples across Canada and even in the United States, since the rulings on aboriginal rights and sovereignty will affect them as much as the Mohawks," Chief Bonaparte wrote.

"What I have pointed out about this case is just one aspect of it. This case will be talked about and scrutinized for years to come."

A Dedicated Group Of Fort Members

A busy year means a successful year and thanks to a dedicated group of Fort de La Présentation Association (FLPA) members, 2026 was as active and engaged as any other in the recent past with its usual events, and a new one which promises to help spread the organization's recognition.



The year kicked off with the **Association's annual dinner and award ceremony** at the Ogdensburg Elks Club Jan. 16 where FLPA Board Member Dallas Robinson presented the Joseph Consentino Award for commitment to the association's efforts to Matthew Curatolo, editor of the Advance News, Northern NY Newspapers. FLPA President Barbara O'Keefe presented the Persis Yates Boyesen Award for outstanding contributions to the Association to the Ogdensburg Volunteer Rescue Squad and Board Member Tim Cryderman presented the David L. Dickinson Annual Volunteer Award to Lisa Hanss.



Next up was the annual reenactment of **the Battle of Ogdensburg** staged Feb. 21 and 22. The event featured a live reenactment of the historic attack on Ogdensburg during the War of 1812. That year, Major Benjamin Forsyth and the 1st U.S. Rifle Regiment were dispatched to the Village of Ogdensburg to protect the northern border from British advances. Rather than remaining on the defensive, Forsyth and his men launched raids into British territory and fired upon British supply boats traveling the St. Lawrence River. These actions provoked a stronger response

from the British, ultimately leading to their invasion of Ogdensburg on George Washington's birthday.

As part of the ceremony, Dr. Tim Abel gave a presentation at the Ogdensburg History Museum. Dr. Abel, a University of Albany SUNY graduate with a PhD in anthropology, has over 40 years of archaeological experience across Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York, including expertise in military and historical sites.



For the second year, weather forced improvisation for the **2026 St. Lawrence Valley Primitive Snowshoe Biathlon**. Starting with over two feet of snow on the trail the day before the event, by Sunday there was 6-8 inches of meltwater under an equal amount of snow cover making the trail impassable.

An off-hand shooting event was quickly organized. This year's event attracted runners from across New York State, Vermont, New Jersey, Virginia and the Canadian Province of Ontario. Our generous sponsors included La Bella Associates, P.C., T.J. Fiacco Construction, Gray's Gun Shop, Atlantic Testing Laboratories, the St. Lawrence Sportsman's Club and Forsyth's Regiment of Rifles. Funds raised will be used to support the development of the Fort La Presentation Visitor and Cultural Center.



In early April, reenactors of early settlers held a **maple sugaring event** at the fort site to share local history, including maple syrup production used by Indigenous peoples and French colonists. And the association was proud to be part of the Open Doors to History Program on May 2. The program was a countywide initiative offering free and donation-based access to regional historic and cultural sites for America's 250th anniversary.

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A Dedicated Group Of Fort Members



The Forsyth Honor Guard participated in the dedication of a Pomeroy Foundation plaque May 31 at East Road Cemetery, DePeyster. The plaque honors five area veterans of the American Revolution who were interred there between 1837 and 1860. They were Z. Barber, J. Fellows, J. Morris, J. Rounds and J. Shaw. Forsyth's members from left, are John Miller, Tim Cryderman, Hunter Crary, Dallas Robinson and Josh Bennett.

To note the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country, the association presented **"Skirmish on the Oswegatchie,"** a Revolutionary War reenactment July 18 and 19 at the fort property. During the American revolution the British had possession of what was formerly Fort La Présentation, naming it Fort Oswegatchie and remaining there from 1760 to



1796. During that period, two American scouting parties were sent from the Mohawk Valley to gather information about the strength of Fort Oswegatchie. That event was the theme of the Skirmish weekend event.



The new event is participation in planned passenger ship stops at Ogdensburg, the first of which was May 26. The tourists visit the Remington Art Museum, Ogdensburg History Museum and watched a living history event at the fort site. The nine-day Great Lakes & Thousand Islands Cruise encourages participants to learn about the region's role in shaping America's growth. Helping originate and organize the event was Board Member Dallas Robinson.