



## ***The French & Indian War Society Newsletter***

**June 2016**

President-Melodie Viele, Edited by Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA

### **The Fort William Henry Hotel & Conference Center to Host 2017 NYSAA Conference**

By Dr. David Starbuck

The Fort William Henry Hotel & Conference Center will be the setting for the exciting 2017 annual meeting of the New York State Archaeological Association (NYSAA). NYSAA just celebrated its 100th anniversary (at the Woodcliff Hotel & Spa in Victor, NY, on April 15-17, 2016), and we hope to make next year's conference even more memorable. After all, Fort William Henry, on scenic Lake George, is one of the most historic locations in the United States, and its modern Conference Center will provide meeting rooms for conference attendees.

The conference begins on the afternoon of Friday, April 21 (Friday's talks are sponsored by the New York Archaeological Council); paper sessions will run all day on Saturday, April 22, with lunch in the Conference Center. The Saturday late afternoon reception will be held in the newly refurbished Tankard Tavern; and our Saturday evening banquet and awards ceremony will be held in the White Lion Room, which commands the most spectacular view of Lake George. Papers will then

continue until noon on Sunday, April 23. This promises to be a wonderful conference, and we hope to have a symposium featuring those who dug at Fort William Henry in the 1950s (prior to the reconstruction of the fort). This should prove to be a great opportunity to bring some of those "early" diggers back to the fort to interview them and for us to learn first-hand what it was like to conduct some of the first archaeology in this region.



We also anticipate conducting optional tours to local historic and archaeological sites, especially to the Lake George Battlefield Park and to Rogers Island and the Rogers Island Visitors Center in Fort Edward. Please mark this conference on your calendar and prepare to join us in April of 2017.

### **New Documentary on Fort William Henry's Mystery Shipwreck Cannons**

By Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA

Pepe Productions, a Glens Falls, NY video production company, has

released their new documentary, "Iron Sentries--The Mystery Cannons of Fort William Henry" (Fig. 1). The video, edited by Peter Pepe, followed a team of volunteers--amateur archaeological technicians and professional archaeologists--as the group studied

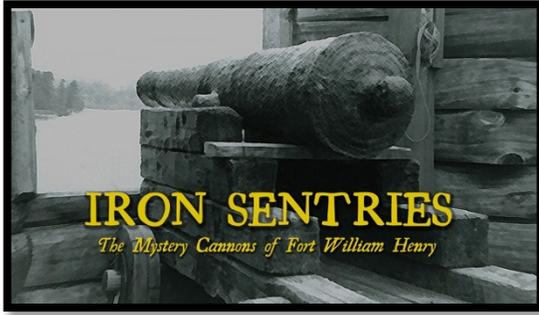


Fig. 1: Publicity photograph for the 2016 documentary, "Iron Sentries—The Mystery Cannons of Fort William Henry" (Photo credit: Peter Pepe/Pepe Productions).

nine shipwreck cannons that are located at Fort William Henry Museum.

Maritime archaeologist Joseph W. Zarzynski directed the 2014 archaeological investigation. The cannons have sat in the French & Indian War replica fort without signage to identify them since 1954.

The archaeological investigation was done without any funding. The French & Indian War Society and Fort William Henry Corporation granted permission to conduct the study.

The documentary delves into how the research team conducted the artillery study and reveals the outcome of the archaeological study. Incredibly, it appears that some if not all the nine iron cannons came from the British frigate HMS *Looe*. The fifth rate ship of the line was built in England in 1741, during the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-

1748), and was lost off the Florida Keys in 1744.

The *Looe* shipwreck was excavated in 1950-1951. Cleveland's Dr. Barney and Jane Crile, found the shipwreck in 1950 while vacationing with their children. Mendel Peterson (Smithsonian Institution) directed the 1951 (the second year) excavation that also introduced aviation pioneer, Edwin A. Link of Binghamton, NY, to the underwater world. Link made his fortune building Link trainers, flight simulators that taught student pilots how to fly. The second year of the *Looe* fieldwork is arguably one of the first underwater archaeological projects in American waters. Artifacts from the *Looe* shipwreck were later exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution.

After the *Looe* excavation, Edwin A. Link became a noted amateur marine archaeologist. He then used his engineering skills to become a world leader in building submersibles, sea labs, and underwater rescue vehicles.

Fort William Henry Corporation acquired the nine cannons in March 1954, just weeks before the replica fort first opened (Fig. 2). The guns were purchased from Florida treasure hunter,



Fig. 2: Nine iron cannons from an 18<sup>th</sup> century British shipwreck are being

unloaded at Fort William Henry in 1954. The cannons were the focus of a 2014 archaeological study and a documentary video released earlier this year (Photo credit: Fort William Henry Museum).

Art McKee, who worked on the 1950s *Looe* project.

"I am indebted to all the volunteers on this project, especially Peter Pepe at Pepe Productions, for making this quality documentary available to the public at no cost," said Zarzynski.

"Iron Sentries--The Mystery Cannons of Fort William Henry," is 20 minutes long and can be viewed on YouTube: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVCU9VSBShQ>).

### **Fort Ticonderoga's New Exhibit on 18<sup>th</sup> Century Artillery**

Fort Ticonderoga has opened its new 2016 exhibit, "The Last Argument of Kings: The Art and Science of 18<sup>th</sup> - Century Artillery." Beth Hill, Fort Ticonderoga's President and CEO, provides context about the exhibition: "Fort Ticonderoga's artillery collection is internationally recognized as the largest and most significant of its kind in North America." The spectacular exhibit seizes upon the fort's fine collection of ordnance and showcases not only conserved colonial artillery, but also those pieces on the fort's walls, a new mobile application, an artillery symposium, and an exhibit catalogue publication. Plan your visit to Fort Ticonderoga this 2016 season and see this new artillery display.

### **New Mural for Fort William Henry Museum Is Nearing Completion**

By Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA

One of the new additions to this year's Fort William Henry Museum will be a large mural (Fig. 3) depicting the 1755-1757 fort and the head of Lake George. Steve Collyer, one of the museum's living history interpreters, designed the mural and is the primary artist. Collyer portrays a Ranger at the museum and he is also an artist. The piece of art runs the full length of the corridor that is located off the west entrance to the museum that leads to the Sutler Shop.

Assisting Collyer with the mural painting is Rebecca Barrett. Melodie Viele, President of the French & Indian War Society and also a pilot, shot aerial photography of the lake. Steve Collyer used Viele's photographs in the design layout of the colorful mural. The mural will be completed by early summer and will be a great addition to the museum exhibits.



Fig. 3: Steve Collyer, a living history interpreter at Fort William Henry Museum, stands in front of a small section of a long mural that is being painted at Fort William Henry Museum.

When finished, the painting will depict the fort and the lake's south end in the early years of the French & Indian War (Photo credit: Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA).

### **Fort William Henry Museum & Restoration's 2016 Dates & Hours**

**\*\*\*May 5 – Oct 30, 2016:** Open Daily: 9:30 am – 5:30 pm (Last Admission is at 4:30 pm).

**\*\*\*Sutler Shop Open Daily:** 9:30 am – 6:00 pm (open until 7:00 pm on Ghost Tour evenings).

**\*\*\*Museum Entrance Fees:** \$16.75 adults, \$13.75 senior, \$7.75 child (5-15 years old) plus NYS tax, Military/Veterans are free with ID.

**\*\*\*Ghost Tours: shoulder season:** Thurs. – Sun. 7:30 pm & 9:00 pm by reservation; **July 4 – Sept 5:** Weds – Sun. at 7:30 pm, 8:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 9:30 pm (reservations required).

**\*\*\*Watch the fireworks** from the fort, Thurs. evenings. Free parking. Entrance Fees: \$16.95 adult; \$13.95 senior; \$7.95 child (5-15 years old).

**\*\*\*For more info,** (518-668-5471).

### **The Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance Places Wreath at Lake George's Grave of Unknown Soldiers**

On May 30, members of the Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance placed a wreath at the monument for the remains of four French & Indian War-era unknown soldiers. The skeletal remains were discovered in 1931 during roadwork near the Colonel Ephraim Williams Monument on Rte. 9, south of Lake George (Fig. 4). The soldiers, all of European-descent, probably were

casualties of the September 8, 1755 Battle of Lake George. Lyn Karig Hohmann, President of the Alliance, organized the event. Among the attendees were five French & Indian War re-enactors from Fort William Henry, the Lake George American Legion's color guard, and members of the Lake George Volunteer Fire Dep't.

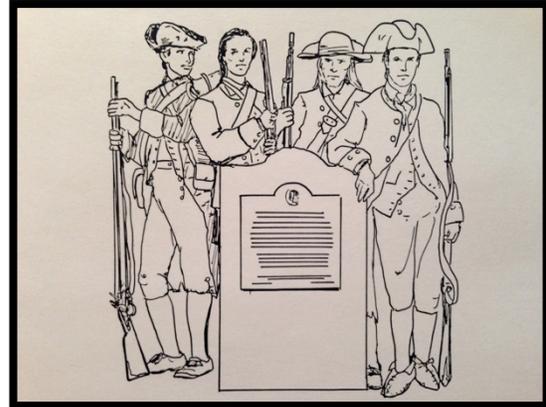


Fig. 4: Queensbury, NY artist Tim Cordell's interpretive drawing showing likenesses of the four French & Indian War unknown soldiers at the 1935-installed monument at Lake George Battlefield Park (Credit: Tim Cordell).

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For membership details, see:

<http://www.frenchandindianwarsociety.org/membership/>

***The French & Indian War Society***

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