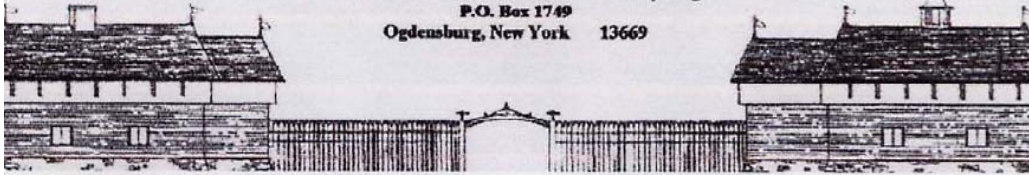


# Le Courier Frontier

The Fort La Présentation Company

P.O. Box 1749  
Ogdensburg, New York 13669



## JANUARY

2006

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## CLEAN UP IN PROGRESS!

Assemblyman Darrel Aubertine announced to the Annual Dinner gathering that Exxon Mobil agreed to reimburse Fort la Présentation Company for \$61,000 in legal fees already incurred and for future legal expenses that may be associated with the final clean up plan due this spring.

Just as welcome was the announcement made by Jennifer Raymond, Project Manager and Marijean Remington, President of Atlantic Testing Laboratories of a \$5,000 donation voted by their executive board to pay for ATL's monitoring of the clean up on Exxon Mobil's property adjacent to the fort property which commences October 24. The donation was made in memory of the late Mr. Lawrence Barlow, father of Marijean Remington and grandfather of Jennifer Raymond. They noted that Mr. Barlow loved history and would have been proud of this clean-up and of the historical project being undertaken.

**Barbara O'Keefe, President  
Fort La Présentation Company  
Annual Address - October 24, 2005**

As of 8:47 PM the DEC approved interim remediation work plan for Lighthouse Point is still scheduled to begin on Monday. The contamination resulted from the former Exxon/Mobil operation in which pipes crossed our current property and contamination from the terminal itself migrated onto Fort property. Since the discovery of the spill in 2001, we have attempted to work with Exxon and DEC to get the site re-mediated. We hope that the open communication promised at the public meeting earlier this month and granted to the stakeholders in the March 2004 Citizen Participation Plan will help to insure the success of the remediation of Lighthouse Point and the reconstruction of fort de la Présentation. We are understandably frustration over the fact that decisions were being made about our property without our input or knowledge.

Our job as property owners is to press for this project to be done right and in a timely manner, as we await the thousands of people who will visit the site upon completion of the construction of the fort. We will continue to look over the shoulders of both DEC and Exxon to be sure our interests and that of the visiting public are being protected. The final remediation plan to be submitted in the Spring will reflect the success or limitations of the interim excavation. Preservation of this historic site and any uncovered archival evidence will also impact the project. It is vital that the remediation conforms to the NY State Historic Preservation standards and that a plan is in place to retrieve and to preserve any artefacts found during the remediation. For these reasons the Board of Directors has authorized Atlantic Testing Laboratories to monitor the excavation on Exxon/Mobil and Fort La Présentation Company property.

We are presently developing plans with our architect Foit-Albert of Buffalo and need timelines to plan for construction and fundraising. Fort de la Présentation has the honor of being the final official site of the National and New York State celebration of the French and Indian War in 2010 to commemorate the final battle of that war. It is imperative that we have a reconstructed fort, interpretive center and museum, Native American Village, and re-enactment and encampment areas by July of 2010. National attention will be on the conclusion of the commemoration. The events of 1760 impacted not only our history but that of France, England, and Canada. History did happen in Ogdensburg, NY. Legislation cosponsored by Senator Wright and signed into law by Governor Pataki established a temporary commission to promote the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the F&I War. What a black eye it would be for New York State if it could not require an obviously contaminated site, with a known source be cleaned in time for the celebration.

Through the financial support and actions of Senator Wright, Congressman McHugh and Assemblyman Aubertine, as well as the hard work of the Fort Board and its hired technical and legal consultants, Atlantic Testing Laboratories and our environmental lawyer Judy Drabicki, we are optimistic that the Fort will be prepared for the 2010 Celebration.

The Fort La Présentation Company Board, in order to insure an ongoing presence for future generation to learn about our rich cultural heritage, has wisely established an endowment policy and fund with a goal of \$1,000,000. In just a few months we have close to \$50,000. Imagine the possibilities if our energies and resources were not diverted to ensuring our right to have a clean environment and if Exxon/Mobil had done the right thing four and half years ago. We are cautiously optimistic that next week will be a start with the cleanup of our property.

In the near future the Fort La Présentation Company will be concentrating its effort on broadening the membership base. I wish to remind everyone that we are part of the Ogdensburg Economic Development Zone and as such any contributions of \$500 or more toward the fort de la Présentation reconstruction project qualify for NYS Economic Development Zone Capital Credits.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated members of the Board of Directors of the Fort La Présentation Company who freely give of their time and talents and whose only reward is to know that they are contributing to the cultural and economic enrichment of the North Country. They have stood fast against one of the richest and most powerful companies in the world and will prevail. It has been a privilege and honor to serve as your President. In the past seven years I have met new people, made new friends, traveled, and have had many new experiences. However, I now know way too much about the technicalities of environment pollution. It may be a cliché, but my involvement as president has been a life altering experience.

Thank you all for coming and for your continuing support.

Barbara O'Keefe, President

Continued on back page:

### ANNUAL DINNER FESTIVITIES:

On Friday evening October 21<sup>ST</sup>, The Fort la Présentation Company had another spectacular annual dinner. It was sparked by well-deserved awards to Lowell McAllister and the Frederic Remington Art Museum who received the The Persis Yates Boyesen Award given in honor of Ms. Boyesen who was the historian for the City of Ogdensburg and the Town of Oswegatchie, researcher, librarian, teacher, mother, grandmother, and friend. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the historically accurate reconstruction and ongoing presence of fort La Présentation. The David Dickinson Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Sherry Cryderman for her work on the membership program and the fort's newsletter Le Courier Frontier. David Dickinson, a native of Lisbon and Rochester city historian, was a strong advocate of fort de la Presentation and had been working on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of the French and Indian War before his passing last year. The evening finished with the announcements of the winning bidders of the silent auction items which included a limited edition John Morrow print, a peignoir set, a food processor, a watch, cookie jars, hand made artisan boxes, craft items, and many other donations among which were gift certificates donated by area merchants.

A quilt made and donated by Mrs. Helen Scott was won by Nancy Szafranski and an afghan donated by Mrs. Judy Poirier was won by Ola King. Marty Murphy won the 50-50 draw. The Fort la Presentation Company wishes to express its appreciation to all who came to enjoy the dinner and festivities.

Special thanks to Reverend Nora Jerzak, Marijean Remington, Joe Basta, Glenda Woods, and Louie Williams.

### VOLUTEERS MOVING PROJECT FORWARD

As the Ogdensburg Journal reported, that visitors to Lighthouse Point can now see a Western view of the St. Lawrence River that has not been possible for over 50 years, thanks to the efforts of James Weiler. Weiler's project is separate from the Exxon Mobile clean up still going on.

James Weiler of Lisbon heard that the Fort la Présentation Company needed help carving out more space for their 2006 Founder's Day Weekend. He didn't waste time putting his energy and bulldozer to work clearing part of a forest on the fort site.

Weiler, with help from James Hough and Bruce Harland, have cleared out about five acres of scrub forest on the north-western shore of the property, opening up a spectacular view of the St. Lawrence River for next year's Founder's Day Event.

Tim Cryderman, Founder's Day Weekend Chair, said "this elevates my worry that the event would lose its charm if guests found themselves too crowded during the weekend." This provides much needed space for the ever growing historical re-enactors that come to the event from Quebec, Ontario, New York, Vermont and New England.

Fort President Barbara O'Keefe said, "We couldn't have done it without Jim Weiler's help. He saw there was a need and came through for us."

Thank you to Jim Weiler, Bruce Harland and Jim Hough for sharing our vision and volunteering your resources, time and energy to this project.

**WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER**

Fort la Presentation Company is pleased to welcome Vic Suthren as a board member. Vic is the former Director General of the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, Ontario. He is now a full-time writer and historian, and has written 12 historical books to date, both fiction and non-fiction. For a time he was a Staff Historian with the Fortress of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia, and is an Honorary Captain in the Canadian Navy. He is an experienced 'tall ship' sailor and has organized numerous water pageants involving sailing ships, longboats and naval re-enactors. He lives with his wife Lindsay, who is an artist and learning counsellor, in Merrickville, Ontario. They have three children, Scott, Caedi and Amy, and three grandchildren, with hopes for more!"

**YOU CAN BE  
A PART OF THIS  
EXCITING TIME IN HISTORY**

If you have a special skill or interest to assist us with some of our functions and activities please contact us to volunteer your services. We welcome your support and assistance in the following areas:

- Founder's Day 2006 Committee
- Founder's Day Weekend
  1. Registration Table
  2. Raffle Table
  3. Site Preparation
  4. Brushing/Mowing/Weed Eating
  5. Narrator for Boat Tour
  6. Signage
- Clerical
- Annual Dinner
- Public Relations
- Fund Raising

Any bit of time you feel you would like to contribute would benefit our endeavor.

**Contact people:**

Andrew Smith  
Barbara O'Keefe  
P.O. Box 1749, Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
Tim Cryderman – (315) 322-5519  
Marsha Hough – (315) 393-3201

**THANK YOU**

**BECOME PART OF  
LIVING HISTORY  
ANNUAL Membership Categories  
*"PER INDIVIDUAL"***

**Please check category desired**

1 <sup>st</sup> Sergeant	\$25.00
Master Sergeant	\$50.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	\$100.00
1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	\$150.00
Captain	\$300.00
Major	\$500.00
Colonel	\$1,000.00
General	\$1,500.00
Brigadier General	\$5,000.00
Major General	\$10,000.00

**SPECIAL STUDENT MEMBERSHIP  
Please check category desired**

Buck Private - \$1.00
Private First Class - \$5.00
Corporal - \$10.00

*Le Courier Frontier*

Our newsletter publication(s) will be sent to all donors of \$25.00 or more each year of donation.

**We hope you will join us**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOWN/CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
 STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send your 2005 tax deductible  
donations to:**

**Fort La Présentation Company, P.O.  
Box 1749, Ogdensburg, NY 13669.  
www.fortlapresentation.net Fort La  
Présentation has been ruled to be a  
501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization.  
Your donation may be deducted as a  
charitable contribution for income tax  
purposes. Please consult your tax  
advisor.**

BY JIM REAGEN

The Journal of Claude-Nicholas-Gillaume de Lorimier was written by deLorimier after the Revolutionary War. He wrote it in French. And the last time it was known to be published was in 1873, again in French, which may explain why no one in Ogdensburg has been aware of its existence. The manuscript was translated into English and published in 1981 by Press Forcepic in Victoria, British Columbia. Claude Nicholas Guillaume de Lorimier was actually the fourth son of Captain Claude Nicolas Guillaume de Lorimier, Chevalier de St. Louis, who was the commander of the French forces at Fort La Présentation during the French and Indian War. The elder de Lorimier had a distinguished record for his service during the war at the battle of Fort George and Fort Corlaer (Schenectady). His fourth son also served with the French during the war. He commanded the French fort at Shouagetti and received two officers' commissions during the war.

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE: The elder Claude had been a distinguished officer in the French Marines during the French and Indian War. Claude's father had even once served as the head of the French garrison stationed here at Fort Oswegatchie for four years from 1755 to 1759 when it was still called fort La Presentation during the Seven Years War. As the commander at La Présentation, he had learned how to work with his Indian allies, a crucial task at a fort that guarded close to 3,000 Indians. He had distinguished himself at the capture of Fort George and Fort Corlaer (Schenectady). His fourth son, Claude had followed his father and his brothers into the military during the war. He had even briefly been given command of the French fort at Shouagetti and been awarded an officer's commission by the age of 16, serving under General Montcalm at Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga). He had been present with his fellow officers at Ile Ste. Helene when the French had burned their colors in 1760 rather than let them fall into British hands. Under his father's tutelage, Lorimier had learned the Iroquois language, their customs, and the ways of the wilderness. More importantly, he had learned from his father the value of their Native allies and the best ways to use them to maximum advantage. After the British conquest, the family had come to accept British rule, pleased that the Crown had agreed to uphold their hereditary rights. Under regulations set up by the French government in France, the seigneurs were the French aristocracy who were given the right to collect rents from the tenants on their land. The farmers and laborers had to pay rent and taxes to the seigneur, though they co-owned the land with the seigneur, and even had to work entirely for the benefit of the seigneur a few days each year. Their family had purchased land at Lachine and set up a lumber mill after the war.

The younger Lorimier had been helping to run the family lumber business when rumors of a rebel invasion of Quebec had begun circulating, along with rebel sympathizers who were preaching equality and the end of the aristocracy. He had immediately offered his services to Britain and General Carleton who was already familiar with his father's exploits in the last war and the younger Lorimier's service and familiarity with the tribes along the St. Lawrence. Lorimier had arrived at Fort Oswegatchie in late February of 1776 after a daring escape from the Americans in Montreal and had agreed to help Forster's efforts to recruit the tribes to join in the upcoming expedition against the Americans. He had explained to Captain Forster that he had not been idle since the American invasion had begun. After receiving his commission from General Carleton, his first assignment had been to scout the Lake Champlain area for the rumored rebel invasion the previous fall. Lorimier had boasted to the General Carleton that his family's and his own close ties to the native tribes would guarantee that they would follow him anywhere. But when he had visited Caughnawaga, Lorimier recalled, "I had ended up looking foolish: no one wanted to follow me, at least of those who were in the village, except for Charles Kouke, a scoundrel who had been kicked out of the village in any case." After exploring the Lake Champlain area and finding no signs of rebel invaders, Lorimier had returned to Caughnawaga where he had found his friends Taaiaike and his brother Te'hosenarenion. Together, they had gone

to Fort St. Jean after learning that the rebel invasion force had been sighted nearby. Taaiiike went to the Lake of the Two Mountains where he recruited a group of Indians there.

Later, while on a scouting expedition with five Algonquins, Claude found a flat bottomed boat. When they took the boat, they were ambushed by the famous ranger Captain Baker. Two of his men were wounded. They fired back as they escaped. The next day, when they returned for a look, they found Captain Baker dead. One of the Algonquins cut off the ranger's head and took it back to Fort St. Jean where he displayed it on a pole. Claude found Baker's journal which contained a report of a message from a Mr. Walker, a prominent Montreal merchant, who claimed to have 1,500 Canadians ready to join the Americans when they arrived to capture the city. The letter also reported that Louis Le Negre (probably Louis Cook, a Caughnawaga who later was promoted to Lt. Colonel by the Continental Congress. Cook later settled at St. Regis.) had given him a message from Thomas Welman of the Caughnawaga band that the Caughnawagas supported the American cause and they would be ready to assist them in the coming campaign.

At Fort St. Jean, Sir Perthuis, a leader of the Indians was killed, demoralizing the warriors who had joined the fort's defenders. "All our Indians abandoned the fort and the English cause within the hour," Claude said. Fort Jean's commander Major Charles Preston dispatched Claude to try to convince them to return to help defend the fort. He caught up with them at Laprairie, but was unable to convince any of them to return to St. Jean. Claude followed them to Caughnawaga where the Council was assembled. A Huron and Thomas Welman reported that the American army heading for St. Jean numbered as many as the leaves in the forest. They told the council that the American commander, General Montgomery, had advised them to return to their villages and stay neutral. The Seven Nations of Canada had agreed to this advice. They also claimed that Fort St. Jean was completely surrounded by the rebel forces and no one would be able to enter the fort. "I pretended to leave for Montreal but when night had fallen I set out for Fort St. Jean," When Claude got near the fort, he smelled a fire nearby and skirted an ambush. "Despite all my precautions they must have heard something because I heard one of them exclaim to his companion "Who comes here?" "And fortunately for me, the other replied, "some wild beast." "I halted for a few moments and then began to bound along imitating the movements of a running deer and bleating like a frightened deer," he said. "I did this for a couple hundred yards and then went back onto the road and got into the fort without any further opposition." After reporting to Major Preston what had occurred at Caughnawaga, he suggested that Claude go back to prove to the Indians that they had been deceived by the American sympathizers. When Claude showed up at Caughnawaga, his friend Taaiiike urged the Indians to show their support for the British by going to Fort St. Jean. When he sang the war song, a large band of warriors joined him, led by Chief Sotsichouane, known as the "Grenadier." A few days after their arrival, General Montgomery arrived with more than 1,400 men in canoes and flatboats. Claude and Captain Tice, his brother and about 100 warriors were ordered to oppose the landing.

When they attacked the Americans, Captain Tice was shot in the thigh while Chief Sotsichouane bounded into the water, armed only with a spear and knife. He drove the spear into one American and killed another with the knife. As he charged a third, he was shot twice in the groin, taking him out of action. "We pressed the attack so vigorously that we sent the 1,400 Americans scampering back to their boats," he said. "our victory was so surprising that (the authorities) honored us and thanked the Deity by having a Te Deum sung in all the churches of the province."

A few days later the Americans returned with an even larger force and most of the Indians left for home "without bothering to say goodbye to anyone." "I still had four Mohawks, a chief from St. Regis named Hotgouentagehle and another Indian from the Sault so I was sent to reconnoiter the enemy's position," Claude said. A few days later, the fort's 500 defenders were surrounded by 3,000 Americans. Major Preston asked Claude to slip out of the fort and inform General Carleton of their situation. After arriving at Montreal, Claude reported that the defenders at Fort St. Jean were surrounded and running low on supplies.



General Carleton asked him to scout out Laprairie to see how many Americans had occupied the town. Together with his brother and their trusted friend Thomas Tahannonsiagon, they entered the village dressed as Indians. They discovered 400 Americans were in Laprairie and reported their findings to Gen. Carleton. A few days later, General Carleton asked him to go back to Fort St. Jean to see if an escape could be arranged if he led his own men from Montreal to provide a diversion to allow the defenders to escape. Together with Thomas Tahannonsiagon, they attempted to make their way to Fort St. Jean, but found several ambushes had been set up to capture them. They returned to Caughnawaga only to discover that the Americans were hunting them and offering a \$200 reward for their capture.

After returning to Montreal, Gen. Carleton gave him the opportunity to command a Canadian militia brigade of 200 men. The Canadian militia brigades voted to put him in overall command of the militia and together with General Carleton's regular troops, they set off to relieve Fort St. Jean. Colonel Allan McLean of the Royal Highland Emigrants had been expected to join the attack from Quebec City. But on the day of the attack, both General Carleton and Col. McLean held their forces back after the Americans repelled an attack by the lead Indian units. Chief Hotgouentagehle of St. Regis died in the attack. Fort St. Jean surrendered a few days later on Nov. 3, 1775. General Carleton informed Lorimier that he intended to leave Montreal with his troops to go to Quebec City. "I took the liberty of suggesting to His Excellency that if I were to go to Quebec with him I could be of service only as an individual, whereas if I were able to pass undetected through the American patrols (around Montreal) I thought I would be able to reach Upper Canada and there I could visit the hunting grounds of the Indians. During the course of the winter I would have time to gather a war party and return to harry the Americans around Montreal. His Excellency approved the idea, but looking coldly at me, said that he thought I had too high an opinion of my courage. I didn't let that bother me, and I stayed by him until he boarded ship."

"After this sad farewell, I went back to my home in Lachine to await developments. Within a few days I received from Mr. Jordan (a Montreal merchant) the unfortunate news that the general's entire flotilla had been captured by the Americans, but that it seemed that his Excellency had escaped," he said. While the Americans captured most of General Carleton's men, the general escaped, arriving in Quebec City on Nov. 19th, 1775. The Americans shipped most of their British and Canadian prisoners to New York to be held captive and occupied Montreal. But General David Wooster, the American commander at Montreal, soon sent word to Lorimier that since he had not been captured at Fort St. Jean or with General Carleton's flotilla, he saw no reason to send him away with the rest of the prisoners.