

# NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

Issued Monthly By The Clinton County Historical Association

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## ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER \*

That's literally true of the panoramic view of Lake Champlain from the top of the Valcour Island Lighthouse. Now, for the very first time, it will be possible for the general public to visit one of our county's most spectacular vantage points. On Saturday, August 5, the Historical Association will offer guided tours of the interior of the lighthouse from 1 to 5 p.m. Donations of \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children will be applied to the Lighthouse Endowment Fund, established by the Association to maintain and preserve the structure.

The weekend of August 5-7 is not just any weekend. It marks the official observance of the Bicentennial of U.S. lighthouses which will be celebrated all over the nation. August 7 is National Lighthouse Day by decree of the U.S. Senate. Therefore, the Historical Association decided to join in the fun by giving local people and visitors to the area a chance to see the interior of the lighthouse and the wonderful view.

Despite the lack of furnishings in the building and its present rather rundown appearance, the lighthouse is a fascinating place to visit. One is reminded that for many years the keepers and their families kept the light (no longer in place) shining for maritime traffic on the lake. Work is about to commence to secure the lighthouse from vandalism and to improve its outward appearance, thanks to funds provided by the endowment fund. The Association will not attempt any interior restoration at the present time, beyond general cleaning and minor repairs.

Visitors to the lighthouse on August 5 must provide their own transportation. Boats can be moored in North Bay, the cove immediately to the north of the light, where a trail leads to the site. (Please do not tie mooring lines to trees.) It's wise to wear socks to avoid poison ivy on the trail. For those without access to a boat, transportation is available on the Juniper. Call Capt. Frank Pabst at 561-8970 for details of a departure from Plattsburgh Harbor Marina.

\* CBS Associated Special Products.

## THE BATTLE OF PLATTSBURGH, SEPT. 11, 1814

A large committee consisting of the CCHA director, interested community, business and military members, and chaired by Lola Johnson of the Council on the Arts, has planned the following events to take place during the weekend of September 9-11. These activities will mark the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the battle of Plattsburgh, a naval and military engagement which contributed in no small measure to the cessation of the War of 1812.

### Saturday, Sept. 9

- \* 9 a.m. to noon - Battle of Plattsburgh Walking tour, beginning at Halsey's Corners, passing the Kent-Delord House Museum, viewing a special exhibition at the County Museum in City Hall, and ending at Fort Brown. The committee hopes to arrange a horse-drawn carriage for those unable to walk.
- \* 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Kent-Delord House Museum exhibition of documents relating to Henry Delord and the War of 1812.
- \* 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Small encampment/re-enactment at the Kent-Delord House.
- \* 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Exhibition of paintings, maps, prints and more at the County Museum.

### Sunday, Sept. 10

- \* 10 a.m. - Leave Plattsburgh Harbor Marina on Juniper for Crab Island ceremony.
- \* 11 a.m. - Re-dedication of Crab Island monument, with dignitaries including Capt. Ralph Martin, commanding officer of the U.S.S. Lake Champlain CG 57.
- \* 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Exhibition at the County Museum.
- \* 1 p.m. - Fort Ticonderoga Band Concert and Drill at Lions' bandshell near City Hall.
- \* 3 p.m. - Riverside Cemetery, Black Watch Guard, to honor the British & American officers buried at cemetery.
- \* 7:30 p.m. - Lecture by Dr. William Dudley, president of the Society for History in the Federal Government, authority on naval documents of the War of 1812. Location to be announced. Co-sponsored by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Basin Harbor, Vermont.

### Monday, Sept. 11

- \* Traditional ceremonies organized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars
- \* 7:30 p.m. - CCHA presents Dennis Lewis speaking on the land action in the battle of Plattsburgh. Clinton Community College small auditorium.

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Visitors to the County Museum will be able to see recent acquisitions to the collections with particular relevance to the battle of Plattsburgh. Also on view will be materials lent for the occasion from private collections. The spectacular painting of the battle by J.O. Davidson is on loan from Key Bank N.A. during the celebrations.

## CELEBRATION OF A SOLDIER

A highlight of the battle of Plattsburgh celebrations during September 9-11 is the anticipated publication of a new book by Dr. Allan S. Everest. On Sept. 1 the Historical Association will publish The Military Career of Alexander Macomb & Alexander Macomb at Plattsburgh.

The new book is a welcome addition to local history writings and U.S. military history for scarcely anything has been written about Alexander Macomb since the late 19th century. Although his name has been almost a household word in connection with the 1814 battle, it seems much less well known that Macomb, 32 at the time of the engagement, went on to have a long and illustrious military career, culminating in his appointment as commanding general of the U.S. army.

Dr. Everest has rectified this situation with his fine manuscript. Part I deals in depth with Macomb's life as a career soldier after graduating from West Point Military Academy; Part II is a re-written version of an article that appeared in New York History 25 years ago, much augmented with research carried out in the interim, and covering Macomb's role in the battle of Plattsburgh as commander of the American land forces.

To be published in softcover, the book is well illustrated with maps and prints relating to Macomb's career and the battle between U.S. and British armies and fleets. Among the illustrations is a reproduction of a stunning full-length portrait of General Macomb, recently donated to the Clinton County Historical Museum.

Regularly costing \$7.95, the book is offered through Sept. 11 at a pre-publication price of \$6.95, plus 7% New York State tax and \$1.75 postage. Checks should be made payable to the Clinton County Historical Ass'n. At a later date CCHA will offer a small number of hardcover presentation copies priced at \$25.00. The softcover edition is a limited edition of 1,000. It will also be available in the Museum Shop after Sept. 1.

The book was set by Rene Dufort of Wiki Publications. Julie Davies designed the cover. The Historical Association is grateful to the U.S.S. Lake Champlain CG 57 Fund for its contribution towards publication of The Military Career of Alexander Macomb & Alexander Macomb at Plattsburgh.

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"The land battle at Plattsburgh has often been considered trivial compared with the explosion on the lake, and Macdonough has overshadowed Macomb in all of the subsequent commemorations. It is, however, easy to underestimate the deterrent effect of thirty-two year-old Macomb's sturdy defense."

The War of 1812 In The Champlain Valley, A. S. Everest

## CCHA'S FLEA MARKET

The sun shone, a cool breeze kept heat and humidity at bay, and those conditions gave us a perfect day for our 1989 summer fundraiser. The crowds who filled Trinity Square at the adjacent City Hall lawn were obviously enjoying themselves as they inspected the wares displayed by 39 vendors.

Many thanks to CCHA members and friends who responded enthusiastically to a drawing held that afternoon. Prize winners were as follows:

Ruth Hecht	Carolee Smith	Janet Alexander
Russ & Ann Bordeau	Robert Matott	Katherine Murnane
Donald Maloney	Joseph Swinyer	Linda Mussen
Terrance Gilroy	Dr. & Mrs. Roger Boule	Lee McKee
Dr. & Mrs. Leland Berger	William Levy, Sr.	Robert Fitzgerald
Doris McKee	Dr. Earl Johnson	Heritage Copy Center
Sailly Warren	Dick Baumgartner	Florence Calkins
Robin Brown	Cecelia Smith	Cora Grenier
Marion Coryer	Bruce Butterfield	Anne Bailey
Richard Ward	Heather Allan	Rodney Ralston

Appreciative thanks also to the members of the team who gave their time and energy on July 8 to organize and staff the Museum, the Macdonough Monument, the Coke wagon, the popcorn and cotton candy stall and the drawing table.

Ruth Patterson	Jack Myers	Jim Bailey	Laura Allen
Allan Everest	Joann Perry	Mark Bennett	Ruth Hecht
Edwidge Brunet	Connie Wheeler	Dick Ward	Patrick Perry
Randy, Lois, Randall & John Beach		Martha Lockwood	Patty Bentley

And thanks to all who participated in a highly successful summer fundraiser!

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