

Grant Cottage

FRIENDS OF GRANT COTTAGE NEWSLETTER

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The Friends of the
Ulysses S. Grant
Cottage

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PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

More than 300 people supported us last month to help U.S. Grant Cottage launch its Capital Campaign for a new educational pavilion. The Gala event in Saratoga's Gideon Putnam Hotel in mid-October featured actor Treat Williams and live video interviews with Grant biographer Ron Chernow and 4-star General David Petraeus. The Grant scholars were interviewed by our hero's great, great grandson Ulysses Grant Dietz.

Not only was the event a financial success, but perhaps more importantly, virtually all our state and local elected representatives and many community leaders attended. The money raised will become part of a dedicated fund to design and build a structure on Mt. McGregor in which we will stage historical presentations and educational programs. Press coverage of the Gala was noted in the *Albany Times Union* and the *Saratogian* newspapers.

Special recognition should be cited for the staff efforts of Steve and Pat Porto, Colette Broestler, Ben Kemp, and many Cottage volunteers for how they planned and executed this marvelous event.



Tim Welch
President, Board of Trustees



Actor Treat Williams



4-star General David Petraeus interviewed by Ulysses Grant Dietz

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 2022 our organization centered many of our activities around the celebration of General Grant's 200th birthday; there was great interest in the many programs we presented. We added two members to our Board of Trustees, John Roessner and Jonah Cohen, and several new volunteers this season.

With the help of NY State, installation of the long-anticipated fire suppression system is underway, and we are making plans to build our education/events pavilion on our newly acquired land. The culmination of the year was our Bicentennial gala, featuring Grant's great-great-grandson, Ulysses Grant Dietz, author Ron Chernow, US Army General David Petraeus (ret.) and actor Treat Williams. I received an email from a gala attendee which encapsulates the significance and heart of Grant and our site:

Dear Steve,

I cannot tell you how moved and how heartened I felt after attending the gala and experiencing the community of volunteers and professionals who are dedicated to preserving Grant Cottage and preserving Grant's legacy. I learned so much from your superb and brilliant tour guide (whose name I cannot think of at the moment), and from all the celebrity speakers, and even the people at my table. The heart and love in the room was clear, and it really made me feel better about America and American democracy at this moment.

Also, I had no idea what a wonderful town Saratoga Springs was. I never would have visited there if it wasn't for you and your invitation to the Gala.

On the way home, Bill said that attending the Gala was one of the most memorable experiences of his life. It was very special for both of us. Thank you so much!

Warmly,
Sarita Valentine

This letter is a validation of the efforts of many people, going all the way back to our first live-in caretakers in 1890, who strive to promote and preserve Grant's place in history.

We appreciate the support we receive from you and hope that you will help us continue our mission to honor this great American and introduce his legacy to future generations.

Sincerely,

Steve Porta
Executive Director

TIDINGS FROM THE FRONTLINE

The Friends of Grant Cottage had a wonderful time meeting new faces and reconnecting with familiar ones over this past year. We kicked Grant's 200th Birthday season off with Family Fun Day and continued to celebrate throughout the season by featuring programs and events like *Let us have Peace: Global Peacemaking & Ulysses S. Grant* during International Peace Week, **Literary Landmark Author Series Program *The Myth of Grant's Silence* with Dr. Chris Mackowski**, and 19th-century music and magic. With help from our friends (that's you), The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage was able to share the legacy of General and President Grant with over 8,000 visitors. Countless more enjoyed the Historic Landmark grounds through the free, at your convenience, audio app tour through *izi.travel* which carries you through the site's beautiful natural landscape as Grant's contemporaries explain each stop's significance. *We hope you choose to support Grant Cottage this Giving Season with a donation, membership with reciprocal benefits across the country, shopping our online gift store, or using AmazonSmile when shopping to support The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage.*

Stay tuned as we look forward to announcing our 2023 opening dates and all our exciting news for next season. Happy Holidays!

With thanks,

Colette Broester
Marketing & Development



A Visit with General and Mrs. Grant program with Melissa Trombley-Prosch & Steve Trimm

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK

We had a great year at the Cottage. Despite the lingering effect of the pandemic, we had record attendance and admissions revenue. School groups are starting to return. We had a hugely successful Gala in October, celebrating the 200th anniversary of General Grant's birth (with over 300 attendees, it was the largest birthday event in the wider Grant community!). The funds raised, along with generous grants from the County of Saratoga, have given us a jump start toward the planning and construction of an Education and Events Pavilion and a new accessible overlook on the site of the old Balmoral Hotel, now part of the Grant Cottage Historic Site grounds.

The bad news is that, like almost all non-profit museums and historic sites, admission revenues only cover a small percentage of our operating costs. In our case just over 25%. We will always be dependent upon memberships, donations, and grants for the remainder. Larger donations were down in 2022 and we will end the year with a small operating deficit.



How can you help?

Donations and Memberships• Have you renewed your membership? Would you consider increasing the level of your membership or the size of your donation to the Cottage?

Sponsorships• We are always in need of Sponsors, both for operating support of the Cottage and to fund specific programs or projects. Do you know of any businesses that might be persuaded to participate? Appropriate recognition for such support will always be given.

Grants• Do you know of any businesses or foundations that might be willing to provide grant funds, either for our general support or for a specific program or project (or matching funds)? If so, please let us know.

Bequests• Have you considered a bequest to the Friends of US Grant Cottage in your will? As always, we cannot exist without your continued support, so thank you for being a part of our Grant Cottage community.

Mike Lesser

Mike Lesser, Treasurer of the Board

VISITOR CENTER DISPATCH

By Pat Porto, Visitor Center Manager

We had another great year in the gift shop; thanks to the many visitors who made a purchase! All net proceeds go to fund operations for the site. If you didn't get a chance to stop in, or you didn't buy it when you saw it, you can still find great items on our website - just go to **Support->Shop to Support** and find great bargains and several exclusive items! We'll ship right to you!

Thanks for your support - look for new merchandise in the shop for 2023!

Happy Winter!



Reflecting on General US Grant, Captain Noah Grant, and the Overlook View from Mt. McGregor

By Melissa Trombley-Prosch, Friends of Grant Cottage Site Historian

2023 will mark the **260th anniversary of the French & Indian War.**

As I reflected on this milestone, I couldn't help but recall the compelling story of General Grant's great grandfather Captain Noah Grant and his death near Fort William Henry in 1756. The site of the fort is visible from Grant Cottage's eastern Overlook on Mt. McGregor – a fact which did not escape the General in 1885.



View from Eastern Overlook

Grant's publisher, Mark Twain, noted to a reporter at that time during his visit to Mt. McGregor:

I came near to going away without knowing about the view from that lookout. I would not have missed it for anything; for, in connection with its historical associations, I consider that it presents the grandest scenery that I know of in America.

Grant was known to appreciate a scenic view, but the Overlook more importantly connected the General to his ancestor's military past and his service as one of Rogers' Rangers. Many years ago, when visiting Fort William Henry, I noticed a yellowed newspaper article mounted on a wall outside the fort's gift shop. It referred to a visit by US Grant in 1869, a fact which I found intriguing at the time. Why would then President Grant be interested in the Fort William Henry site? My eureka moment would come when I was researching Grant's trips to the Saratoga area (1865, 1869, 1873, 1874, 1882 and his final trip in 1885). Not only had Grant visited **Lake George** in 1869 but returned to the area again with his youngest son Jesse and his daughter Nellie in 1873. What prompted the visits? I believe the answer lies



March 1763 newspaper containing the February 10 treaty terms ending the French & Indian War



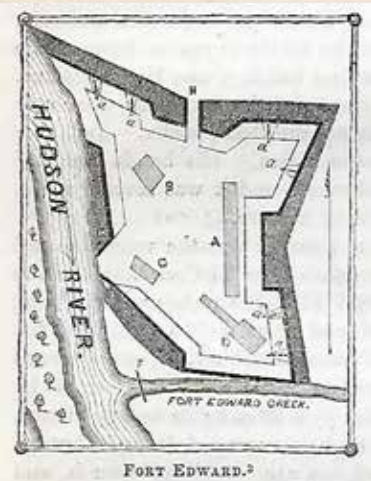
Israel Putnam

in Edward Marshall's book, *Ancestry of General Grant*, which was published in 1869. Grant's father, Jesse Root Grant, was interviewed for the book for his personal knowledge of Grant family history.

Noah Grant was born in Tolland, Connecticut in 1718. He was thirty-six years old when the **French & Indian War** began. A call was made for colonial troops. Five thousand men were to be raised in New England, Connecticut to furnish one-fifth of them for an attack on the formidable French fort at Crown Point, NY. **Israel Putnam** (uncle of Saratoga Springs founding father Gideon Putnam) was appointed a captain in 1755 in General Lyman's Regiment. The troops (numbering 6000), Lieutenant Noah Grant among them, advanced to the area called the first carrying place (the junction of Fort Edward Creek and the Hudson River). **Fort Edward** (initially called Fort Lyman) was built in 1755. From the creek, around the fort to the river, was a deep fosse (ditch) which remains visible to this day.

In the fall of 1755, the French Commander Baron Dieskau advanced into the area intending a surprise attack on Fort Edward. The attack was repulsed on September 8, and Dieskau was mortally wounded. A joint report, dated November 3, 1755, noted:

Captain Rogers states that after reconnoitering on the 29th of October and discovering a "Small fort and several small log camps within ye fort, "afterwards two canoes appearing and finding there was a party coming by land "I ordered Two Battoes into ye water Lieutenant Grant with



Plan of Ft. Edward (Explanation: a,a,a,a,a,a - locations of the fort's 6 cannons; A, the barracks; B, the storehouse; C, the hospital)

and but one wounded, and made "ye Best of their way to Headquarters."

(Signed) "Robert Rogers, Israel Putnam, Noah Grant"

Records show Lieutenant Grant re-enlisted on November 23, 1755, and was appointed to oversee the masons employed at Fort Edward to rebuild and strengthen the fort. He was promoted to captain in the spring of 1756. Captain Grant was later garrisoned with his company of rangers for several months at both Fort William Henry and Fort Edward where they were frequently deployed in small scouting parties.

I have in my French & Indian War era newspaper collection (*The Gentleman's Magazine*, a monthly newspaper printed in London in September 1755) an interesting note from an article on the method of fighting by Indians:

"...admits of ambuscade [ambush], is to lie down on their faces behind a bush and cover themselves with moss as that it would be difficult to discover them at a distance of a few paces; that having fired in this posture they turn themselves on their sides, load again, and repeat the fire, without showing themselves..."

Captain Grant would have learned this fighting method as part of his ranger training. Rangers were personally selected by Robert Rogers and after intense training in a blend of Native American tactics and Rogers' own innovative combat techniques became experts in guerrilla warfare. Rangers

6 men, and I went into ye other with 6 men and Put on Board Each a wall piece and Went out towards ye canoes." After a two hours engagement, both on land and water, Captain Putnam being in charge of the party on shore, they were victorious, with none killed

cut their coats so they barely reached their waists (likely to allow for freer movement in rough terrain). No officer or private was allowed to carry more than one blanket and bearskin. Officers only were additionally allowed to carry a small portmanteau. Women were not allowed (as they were elsewhere) to follow the camp as laundresses. Rangers were a well-trained, mobile force and capable of living off the land in order to sustain themselves for long periods of time.

On September 20, 1756, Captain Grant was killed in action near Fort William Henry. A report by Lieutenant Kennedy (of the British regulars), who had been on a scouting party for about 40 days with Grant, noted all returned but three; "Captain Grant, of Connecticut, and a cadet of the regulars, and one of the Highlanders – a poor drunken fellow, not able to travel, they left behind to surrender himself to the enemy."

A number of Rogers' Rangers who served with Noah Grant later became famous during the American Revolution, amongst them Israel Putnam, John Stark, and Robert Rogers. I have no doubt had Noah Grant survived the French & Indian War, he would have become a military figure of note. I would like to think that his great grandson pondered that as well as he gazed from the Overlook 129 years later.



1780 Robert Rogers engraving courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution



Fort William Henry view

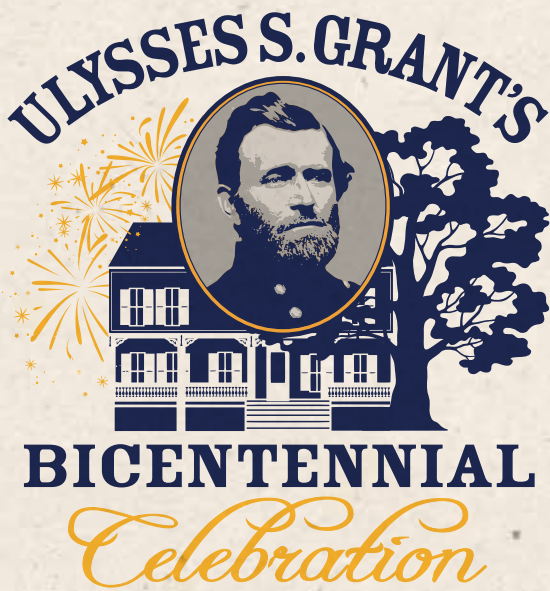


British forces on Lake George



Engraving of French & Indian War battle scene

OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT



FAMILY FUN DAY JUNE 18TH, 2022

2022 was an amazing year of anniversaries and advances for the historic site. We kicked off the season by recognizing the bicentennial of Grant's birthday in April with a flag ceremony at our new National Landmark Plaque boulder in front of the cottage. In June we hosted a bicentennial celebration which proved to be the most successful single day event for the historic site with some 900 visitors. Our volunteers, including 12 new ones, and staff did a great job providing our thousands of visitors with a meaningful experience. We expanded our specialty tours to include more Living History and Hidden History Hike tours and we were proud to inaugurate the Grant Cottage Literary Landmark Authors series. Our new scavenger hunt on the grounds was a big hit with families. It was great to see more foreign visitors, groups and schoolchildren visiting the site again and visitor feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

In addition to the bicentennial, this year marked the 150th anniversary of the opening of Mt. McGregor to the public in 1872. This anniversary is extra meaningful this year as five acres of the former 19th century resort area was transferred to the historic site. This "field of dreams" that once hosted the 100 room Hotel Balmoral is key to the expansion of much needed infrastructure for the site. Just like the scores of individuals that came up Mr. McGregor's carriage road in 1872 for a picnic in an undeveloped field with beautiful views, we are once again, looking at the "field of dreams" with anticipation of what it will become. Projects that we are continuing to pursue include an improved accessible path to the

Eastern Overlook, restoration and public access to the second floor of the cottage, parking expansion and the construction of an education/events pavilion. The Strategic Plan created for the site will help guide it into the future to become a more accessible and engaging experience for all visitors.

One of the most vital preservation goals is set to be realized this winter with the installation of a fire protection system for the cottage and I want to personally thank all the supporters that help us preserve and share Grant Cottage with the world. In my nine seasons at the historic site, I have been privileged to watch the site grow extensively and many dreams become reality. None of this would've been possible without our supporters. I was so heartened to see a packed room for our Bicentennial Gala in October, truly showcasing how far we have come as an organization and how much support there is for the future of the site. We're confident that "if we build it, they will come" and look forward to the steadfast support of our members, donors and volunteers in achieving the big dreams still yet to be realized for the site in the coming years. I encourage everyone to be a part of the legacy that is Grant Cottage through memberships, donations, volunteering and supporting our programs. Looking forward to an exciting and productive 2023!

Sincerely,

Ben Kemp
Operations Manager

ULYSSES S. GRANT'S BICENTENNIAL

Birthday Gala

Sponsored by:

Adirondack Sign Company, Adirondack Trust Company & Amsure, Alpin Haus, Anonymous Memoir Club Sponsor, Author Edwina Campbell, Bill of Rights Institute, D.A. Collins Construction, Co., Dandelion Design, History Salvaged, Saratoga Arms Hotel, Saratoga National Bank & Trust Co., Scotty's, Sharyn & George Neble in memory of Robert Hiter, Stewart's Shops, The Gideon Putnam Resort & Spa, Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library & Ulysses S. Grant Association

We are so GRATEFUL this holiday season for all the support we received for **Grant's Bicentennial Birthday Gala Fundraiser**.

We had so much fun making some wonderful new friends, while reconnecting with long-time comrades.



Thank you to everyone who supported this year's **Bicentennial Birthday Gala Fundraiser**.

Together with 325 friends we helped raise funds to support the building of a much-needed Program & Events Pavilion on the newly acquired land parcel that was formerly a softball field while celebrating Grant's 200th birth year. This boost will help us complete an ambitious **Strategic Development Plan** for the site to allow increased accessibility to a growing number of Grant fans. We are delighted in the

renewed interest in our favorite president and enjoyed creating additional new tour types, availabilities, and visitation opportunities to create a broader array of options for visitors wanting to learn more. **But we still need your help to gain the necessary funds to bring this project for increased visitation demands to fruition. We hope you will consider making a tax-deductible donation today using the form on the back of this newsletter to help us continue growing and ensuring Grant's story is available to the largest audience possible.**

Happy Holidays!





The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage

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HELP US KEEP HISTORY ALIVE

U.S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site is the final home of Ulysses S. Grant, Civil War Commanding General of the U.S. Army, 18th U.S. President and beloved American public figure. Grant Cottage is owned by the State of New York and operated by The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



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