



Foundation Document Overview

Fort Stanwix National Monument

New York



Contact Information

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Purpose



The purpose of FORT STANWIX NATIONAL MONUMENT is to preserve the location, resources, and stories associated with the military, political, and cultural events that occurred at and around the site of Fort Stanwix and to provide opportunities for visitor understanding, appreciation, and stewardship.



Significance

Significance statements express why Fort Stanwix National Monument resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- During the American Revolution, the successful defense of Fort Stanwix and the Battle of Oriskany in 1777 undermined British strategy and helped to win European allies for the United States. The outcome of the siege of Fort Stanwix and the Battle of Oriskany are of great importance in American history and contributed to the American victory at the pivotal Battle of Saratoga.
- Fort Stanwix was a key site in the global struggle for control of North America (including representing interests of Europeans, American colonies, and American Indians), most notably during the French and Indian War and the American Revolution.
- Fort Stanwix (renamed Fort Schuyler during the American Revolution) was the site where the British, Americans, and American Indians negotiated major treaties in the 18th century. These treaties provide evidence of tension between European American migration pressures and the sovereignty of Indian nations. The treaties helped shape the tone of US and American Indian relations and still serve as the basis for contemporary US government policy regarding sovereign Indian nations.
- The reconstructed fort and the site at and around the original Fort Stanwix reflect 18th-century military architecture and armaments and provide a place to understand the interaction of geography with military strategy and tactics.
- Fort Stanwix National Monument reflects changing concepts and societal values related to memorialization and resource stewardship, particularly during the period of urban renewal and the fort's reconstruction in the 1960s and 1970s.

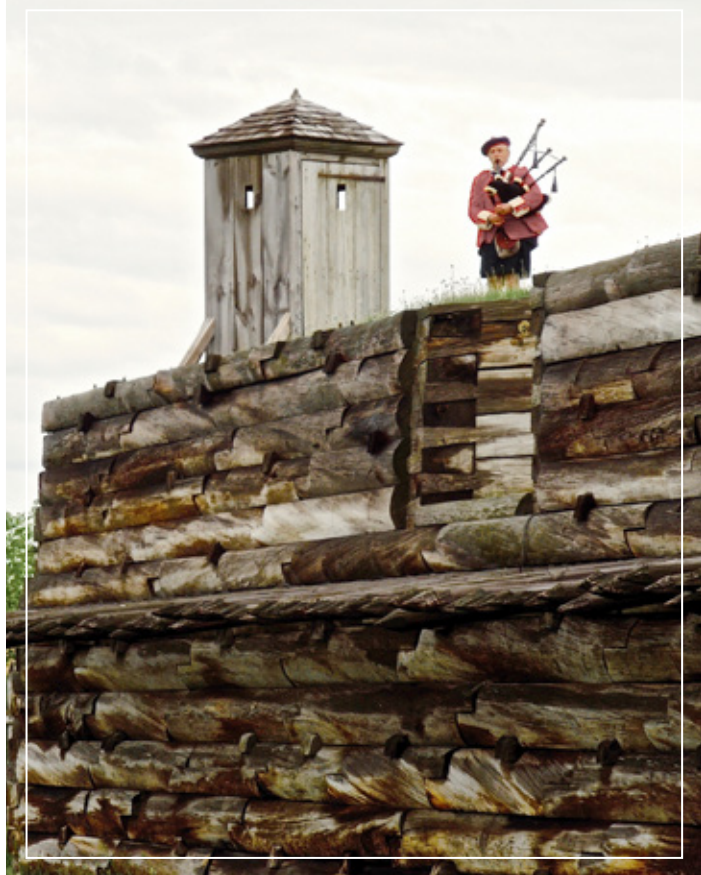
Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Fort Stanwix Archeological Sites**
- **Fort Stanwix National Monument Museum Collections**
- **The Reconstructed Fort, Parade Ground, and Landscape**

Fort Stanwix National Monument contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Marinus Willett Collections Management and Education Center**



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **The Struggle for North America**—Fort Stanwix, from first contact through the end of the fort's useful military life in 1781, represents the high stakes and lasting ramifications of the global contest of nations (European and American Indian) for economic and political control of the Oneida Carrying Place, the Mohawk Valley, and the rich resources of North America.
- **Fort Stanwix during the American Revolution**—During the American Revolution, the successful defense of Fort Stanwix in 1777 undermined British strategy and helped win European allies for the United States.
- **Cultures in Contact and Conflict**—A controversial pattern of alliance and betrayal among European, American, and Indian nations evolved at and around the site of Fort Stanwix with lasting ramifications for all.
- **The History of Commemoration at Fort Stanwix**—The history of commemoration of the events related to Fort Stanwix illustrates changing societal values and evolving norms of memorialization and resource stewardship.



Description

Fort Stanwix National Monument occupies approximately 16 acres in the heart of downtown Rome, New York. It includes the archeological remains of Fort Stanwix, which was constructed in 1758 and burned in 1781; a 1970s earth and timber-clad, reinforced concrete partial reconstruction of the fort built on its original site; the Marinus Willett Collections Management and Education Center (built in 2005); and one-half mile of trails with wayside exhibits.

The site was established as a national monument in 1935. The fort reconstruction commenced in 1974, when an archeological study by the National Park Service was completed. The reconstructed fort was opened to the public in 1976, exhibiting a portion of the extensive archeological collections found on-site. The site of the fort, but not the reconstructed structure, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a national historic landmark, significant for the events that transpired there during the American Revolution and for the information potential of the archeological resources.

Fort Stanwix tells the story of the Oneida Carrying Place, a six-mile portage connecting the Mohawk River and Wood Creek. This portage was a vital link in water transportation between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes. The American Indians referred to this area as the “Great Carrying Place” or “Two Rivers Together.”

The British built Fort Stanwix in 1758 during the French and Indian War (Seven Years’ War) to protect the Carry and to prevent the French from moving south from Canada into New York’s Mohawk Valley. It was abandoned by the British in 1766 and rebuilt by the Continental Army, renamed Fort Schuyler, in 1776. The following year, the Continental garrison refused to surrender during a 21-day siege by a contingent of British soldiers, Loyalists, foreign troops, and their Indian allies. Following the nearby Battle of Oriskany and the arrival of Continental Army reinforcements, the British withdrew. In 1781, fire destroyed part of the fort and it was decommissioned.

Significant treaties were signed at Fort Stanwix, including the 1768 Boundary Line Treaty and 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix. The State of New York also negotiated four land deals with the Oneida, Onondaga, and Cayuga Indians at the site in 1788 and 1790.

European-American settlement in the Rome area began after 1785 with the settlement of Lynchville, renamed Rome in 1819. The site of Fort Stanwix became the focus for Rome’s commercial and residential development, and gradually evidence of the fort disappeared under the city’s development.

The park hosts encampments that highlight the military in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, programs, and special events. Many programs and events are conducted in partnership with multiple community organizations.

