



THE BATTLEMENTS

Friends of Saratoga Battlefield

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Gen. Burgoyne October 17, 1777



Saratoga Surrender Site August 2020

To FOSB Members

Brian Mumford – Retiring as President, Friends of the Saratoga Battlefield

Brian Mumford has decided to step down as President of the Friends of the Saratoga Battlefield at this time. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Brian for his untiring work as President. He was voted in as President in August 2017. Brian’s work during his tenure included not only crafting the Board By-Laws, fund raising, and developing community ties, but also being intimately involved in the development of the Sword Saratoga Site. Brian worked diligently on many aspects of the Saratoga Surrender Site. He worked with Open Space Institute Land Trust, Inc. and the Historic Hudson-Hoosic Rivers Partnership to develop the Management Agreement for the Saratoga Surrender Site. He also worked with the contractors and developers to ensure everything was kept on track. Once the Site was completed and ready for donation to the Saratoga National Historical Park, Brian worked with the Park to produce the Donation Agreement.

The Board unanimously passed the following resolution at Brian’s last meeting:

Recommend to the Board to submit with alacrity the deepest gratitude, on behalf of the membership and communities served to President Brian Mumford for his inestimable service, without which the Friends’ greatest achievement, i.e., the Saratoga Surrender Site could not have been completed.

Brian will be greatly missed by all the members of the Board as well as the many individuals he has worked with in the past four years. We wish him all the best in his next endeavors.

Bob Stokes has agreed to complete Brian’s term as President, effective immediately.

Friends of the Saratoga Battlefield Board Members



Message from the Superintendent

As we wind down the busy season and watch the fall colors emerge, I can’t believe how fast the last six months have flown by and how much the Park has accomplished. I was honored to join the park team in April and have learned so much and enjoyed watching this beautiful landscape change through the seasons. Despite needing to adapt to the challenges we are all facing during these uncertain times, the park team could not have worked harder to ensure another successful year providing a safe and positive visitor experience. We could not have done as much as we did without the staff’s dedication to the park and the cadre of amazing volunteers. Some of the many projects completed this year, include restoration work at the Schuyler

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House, repointing the stone walls at the visitor center, and the completion of the archeological investigations at the Barber Wheatfield. The biggest accomplishment was completing the transition of the Sword Surrender Site officially as a part of Saratoga National Historical Park. This would not have been possible without the efforts of the Friends of Saratoga Battlefield, the Open Space Institute, and the generous support of the surrounding communities. Having this site as a part of Saratoga National Historical Park is key in preserving and interpreting this important cultural landscape for future generations. Planning for the upcoming 250th Anniversary is beginning in earnest and the park is looking forward to working with our surrounding communities and partners to celebrate and highlight this region and the important historical events that took place here. Thank you for making me feel so welcome.

Leslie Morlock

Superintendent, Saratoga National Historical Park

Knox's Noble Trail of Artillery

Brian Mumford, Friends Board Member

Historians often comment on the dearth of primary source material when writing about Henry Knox and his amazing feat in the winter of 1775 of transporting artillery from Fort Ticonderoga 300 miles to Boston to force the evacuation of the British. Knox did not keep a detailed daily journal and portions of what he did record were lost or destroyed. While leading the train of cannons on sleds through the wilderness in snow and freezing temperatures, his entries often were hurried and limited to recording his expenses or the distances he traveled between locations. The teamsters and boatmen hired to accompany him did not keep journals.

This lack of primary sources has resulted in historians having to make assumptions to fill in gaps where Knox left no particulars. Since some of their assumptions were varied, the written histories differ on many particulars. Some of the differences are whether Knox used oxen or horses, how and where he procured the sleds and oxen or horses, and the roles played in the procurement by various individuals such as General Phillip Schuyler or teamster George Palmer in Stillwater, and even the number of artillery pieces he brought to Washington.

The belief that Knox used oxen has been reenforced by the famous 1946 painting *The Noble Train of Artillery* by Tom Lovell. The painting portrays oxen pulling the 5,000-pound sleds. For the historical background of his painting, Lovell would have researched the same sparse primary source material that has confounded historians. In that material there is strong support for the position that the majority of Knox's draught animals were, in fact, horses, which were arranged for by Schuyler. Oxen were used, albeit not many.

However, what is universally accepted is that in the winter of 1775 a 25-year-old bookseller traveled 300 miles from Boston to Fort Ticonderoga and through the winter snow brought back a large number of pieces of artillery weighing 120,000 pounds which resulted in thousands of British military and loyalists boarding ships in the harbor and evacuating Boston. Knox's noble train of artillery presented the newly formed Colonial Army with its first victory of the War.

The question then becomes *who was Henry Knox and how did he do it?*

Henry Knox(1750-1806) was born in Boston, as a teenager worked as a clerk in a bookstore to support his family, and at age twenty-one opened his own bookshop. Henry was a voracious reader spending hours reading about military history.

In 1772, Knox became a member of the local militia who were resisting British authority. Following the battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, the militiamen surrounded Boston to effectively contain the garrisoned British troops within Boston. However, this siege became a stalemate because the British maintained control of Boston Harbor and were able to receive shipments from England of all necessary military and personal supplies. With the knowledge he had gained from books, Knox designed and oversaw construction of patriot siege fortifications. All the while, the British ships remained in the harbor safe in the fact that they were out of range of any colonial cannon fire.

General George Washington at the Siege of Boston

General George Washington arrived in Boston on July 3, 1775, to take command of a new Continental Army and, while inspecting the siege fortification work, he met with and was impressed by Knox. Soon after, Washington made Knox a colonel in the Continental Artillery.

The Need for Artillery

In developing a plan to bombard the fleet in the harbor, Knox focused on Dorchester Heights, a series of hills to the south of Boston. He concluded that with cannons positioned on the hills, the Continentals would be able to fire on the British fleet. The fleet, however, would not be able to return fire on the Patriots due to the high angle of the Heights.

Knox, aware that Fort Ticonderoga with its cache of artillery had recently been captured, approached Washington with the offer to travel to Fort Ticonderoga and bring back cannons. After weighing the chance of success of such a bold plan, Washington ordered Knox to the task.

Knox's Campaign

On November 17, 1775, Knox set out for Ticonderoga with 42 militiamen. He stopped in Albany hoping to meet General Philip Schuyler, Commander of the Northern Department, however, Washington had sent Schuyler to Ticonderoga to assess and inventory the artillery and prepare for Knox.

Although Knox's study of artillery had taught him the technical aspects of aiming and determining the range of cannons, he lacked Schuyler's years of experience of managing long transports of artillery. Planning the Ticonderoga endeavor required assuring a reliable source of strong carriages or sleds capable of carrying heavy artillery as well as a chain of experienced teamsters and draught animals. In addition to managing and controlling draught animals, at that time teamsters were trained as carpenters and riggers experienced in moving heavy cargo and hauling it over rough terrain by assembling temporary systems of ropes, pulleys, levers, and cranes.

It was clear that Schuyler would remain involved in planning and coordinating. Schuyler, as Commander of the Northern Department of the Continental Army, was the primary person instrumental in securing the sleds and draught animals for Knox. By virtue of his position, he commanded the wagonmasters assigned to the Northern Department by the Quartermaster General. At the direction of Schuyler, wagonmasters were authorized to pay citizens a fee for providing the use of draught animals and wagons that the Continental Army required.

Traveling from Albany to Ticonderoga, Knox stopped at Stillwater where he discussed with teamster George Palmer arrangements for his providing sleds strong enough to carry the artillery to Boston and sufficient teams of oxen to pull them. The sleds were to be delivered at Fort George (now Lake George Village) when the snow fell.

Trail

Knox did not have to research a route over which to bring the cannons south from Fort Ticonderoga. He would travel a route over Lake Champlain, Lake George, and along the Hudson River, which had been used for hundreds of years by natives, missionaries, traders, as well as military, during various conflicts. Portage over rugged wagon trails was required to move boats and their cargo between the bodies of water. The transport was a constant challenge to the teamsters to protect the cargo and the animals.

The teamsters were not part of the military, but rather were hired among local civilians along with their equipment and draught animals. The teamsters walked along next to the carriages to provide assistance to the animals on rough wilderness terrain. When the crew had to move the cannon up or down a steep precipice, they used ropes and pulleys which they attached to trees to hoist a sled or carriage up a steep hill and also to control a sled or carriage descending a steep hill to prevent it from careening out of control.

Fort Ticonderoga

On December 5, Knox arrived at Fort Ticonderoga and began assessing the artillery. Prior to his arrival, General Schuyler had arranged for 29 pieces of artillery to be transported to Ticonderoga from the nearby fort at Crown Point, which also had been captured.

According to his various reports to Washington, Knox selected a total of either 55 or 59 brass and iron cannon. The selected artillery pieces included mortars, cannons, howitzers, and coehorns. All totaled, the selected artillery weighed 120,000 pounds.

Troops garrisoned at Ticonderoga assisted Knox in dismounting the 1,000-pound gun barrels from their wooden carriages using a tripod hoist (“gyn”). The artillery was loaded into carts and brought down the hill from the fort and loaded onto a large flat-bottom gondola at the shore of Lake Champlain. Once loaded, the gondola was sailed or rowed across the lake into the La Chute River, which connects the northern outlet of Lake George and the southern end of Lake Champlain .

La Chute Portage

The La Chute River is a non-navigable four-mile series of rapids and waterfalls descending a course from Lake George to Lake Champlain which drops an elevation (220 feet) which is greater than Niagara Falls (167 feet.) A half-mile up the river is the lower falls and head of navigation from Lake Champlain. There the cannons were off-loaded from the gondola onto oxen-drawn carts to begin the portage up the steep trail to Lake George. The gondola returned to the fort to carry the next cannons over.

The artillery was hauled by oxen up the steep rough grade that ran along the La Chute River up to the northern landing of Lake George. The teamsters, with their ropes and pulleys, accompanied the oxen and cart on the climb up and around the waterfalls. Knox made no detailed record of the two-day effort, but it can be assumed that the training and experience of the teamsters was essential to the success of moving the 120,000 pounds of artillery up the steep portage trail to the landing.



La Chute River

Published with permission Tony Hall Lake George Mirror

Lake George Landing

At the Lake George landing there were three flat-bottom boats with professional boatmen to transport the guns down the lake, included a scow, a pettyaugre, and a batteau. The scow, which carried the heaviest artillery, was at first overloaded and sank in the shallow water near the landing. The crew managed to bail the boat out and rearrange the balance of the cargo. The three vessels were then ready to sail southward to Fort George.

Lake George

Lake George is 32 miles long with over 170 islands dotting the lake’s narrow surface. There are 176 miles of shoreline, including about 40 miles of island shoreline. This configuration of islands and shorelines creates a constant navigation hazard among countless fields of submerged rocks.

Knox boarded the fully loaded **pettyaugre** and set sail to lead the way down Lake George. With a fair wind, he reached Sabbath Day Point and went ashore having traveled 13 miles in six hours.

The **batteau** also came ashore for a short while and then went back on the water with plans to reach Fort George that night. Knox decided to switch to that boat. Strong winds blowing against them slowed their progress and they pulled into Bolton Landing for the night.

The **scow**, shortly after departure from the landing and a mile behind Knox, ran aground on submerged rocks 100 yards off shore. Fortunately, the boat had been moving slowly and there was no damage to the hull.

While the crew attempted to pull the boat off the rocks using a block and tackle, the rope broke. Word was sent back to the fort for more rope and additional crew. The next morning, with great effort, the scow was pulled off the rocks and continued its sail south. That evening while the crew was ashore, a strong wind and high waves swamped the scow and it foundered. The crew spent the next day and a half devising rigging to remove the cannons from the boat so it could be hauled ashore and bailed out. The boat was then refloated and the artillery cargo hoisted aboard.

Fort George

On the day the scow was refloated, Knox and his crew arrived at Fort George. Although his journal does not note when the other two boats arrived, entries in his journal show that on December 15 and 16 he paid the boatmen, so it is to be assumed that the boats and artillery had finally arrived at Fort George.

Knox now turned his attention to preparing to move the guns over land. He sent a message to Palmer in Stillwater to confirm that the sleds and draught animals, that he had ordered during his trip north, would “be ready by the first snow”.

By December 24 there had been no delivery by Palmer, and Knox headed off for Albany to seek assistance from Schuyler in arranging for teamsters. He walked in bitter cold temperatures and snow to Fort Miller, near Fort Edward, where William Duer, a local judge, welcomed Knox in his magnificent mansion. Over the years, Duer had become wealthy by providing the British navy with timber for ship masts. After a meal, Duer furnished Knox with a horse drawn sleigh for the remainder of his trip.

It is interesting to note that at this same location of Fort Miller within a year and a half—in July 1777—General Burgoyne would take his army of 7,000 across the Hudson River on a bridge of boats, as he advanced to Saratoga. He made Duer’s mansion—which the General referred to as a castle—his headquarters for a month. During that time, Duer was in Philadelphia serving in the Continental Congress.

Knox continued his trip, crossing the Hudson by ferry to Saratoga (now Schuylerville). During this segment of travel, Knox passed by the location where on October 17, 1777, Burgoyne would surrender his British troops and artillery. Today the location is the Saratoga Surrender Site.

Albany

Knox’s journal shows that once in Albany he met with Schuyler who called for Palmer to come from Stillwater to discuss his price for providing his sleds and oxen. When the negotiations broke down, Schuyler ordered his wagon masters to go out into the community and hire teamsters having the necessary sleds, and he specified horses rather than oxen. By December 31 the wagon masters presented Schuyler with names of the people who were sending their horses and sleds to Fort George.

As the artillery was being brought south from Fort George, the temperature dropped, and as a safeguard Knox had crews cut holes in the ice on the Hudson to bring water to the surface in an effort to thicken the frozen surface.

By January 5, 1776, all the artillery had reached Albany, and the process of bringing the guns across the river was underway. After a number of cannons were successfully brought across the Hudson, the massive 18-pounder went through the ice and sank in the river. After a full-day effort, the cannon was retrieved from the river.

In anticipation of sleds going through the ice, the teamsters carried sharp axes to cut the harness ropes to free the animals from a sled which was breaking the ice. In addition, prior to starting across the ice, heavy ropes were fastened to the cannons to aid in retrieving them if they were to fall into the river.

By January 9 all the cannons had been brought across the Hudson—not one piece of artillery had been lost during transport from Fort Ticonderoga.

Massachusetts

As Knox crossed the border into Massachusetts, his journal entries become even more sparse during the remainder of the journey.

Heading to Springfield, where Knox had arranged for an exchange of teamsters, the team labored through the freezing weather and snow-covered peaks and valleys in the forests of the Berkshires. All of the artillery was successfully brought over the mountains and then hauled onto Framingham, twenty miles west of Boston, where it was unloaded from the sleds. Knox continued on to Cambridge to report to Washington on January 18.

Dorchester Heights

Washington's plan was to surprise the British by moving the cannons to the top of Dorchester Heights in one night. On May 4 more than 3,000 American troops using 400 oxen quietly maneuvered 24 pieces of artillery up Dorchester Heights with an elevation of 120 feet. They frantically constructed emplacements so that by morning they commanded an unimpeded field of fire over Boston and the British vessels in the harbor.

At morning, the British were amazed to find Dorchester Heights fully armed. Realizing their defenseless state, General William Howe ordered the army and fleet to prepare to depart. On March 17, 1776, 8,000 troops marched out of Boston and went aboard 120 ships with more than 20,000 British troops and their families, as well as 1,000 Loyalists. Knox's in-laws, who were Loyalists, boarded a ship in the harbor.

Howe had made a successful agreement with Washington that the British would not set fire to Boston as they evacuated on the condition that the Americans would not bombard the fleet as it sailed from the harbor. The ships sailed from Boston Harbor to Nova Scotia, the British colony in Canada. Henry Knox's supreme planning and efforts had given the newly created Colonial Army its first victory of the War.

After the Trail

Through the remainder of the War, Knox was in charge of all artillery of the Continental Army, and he was a constant advisor traveling with Washington. He was promoted to be the Army's youngest major general and played a key role in all of Washington's battles including Washington's crossing of the Delaware River, as well as the siege at Yorktown, which forced the British surrender.

After the War, Knox served as Secretary of War from 1785 to 1795, when he moved with his family to an estate in Maine which he called "Montpelier" in recognition of the support given by France during the War.

On October 25, 1806, at the age of 56, Knox died at his home after a short illness. He was buried at Montpelier with full military honors.

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A Friends Member's Family Connection to Neilson House

Gwen Somogie, Friends Member

There are some well-known facts of the Neilson House which most people are familiar with. It is the only house remaining at the Saratoga National Battlefield. It is a restoration of the original building. In 1777 its occupants, John and Lydia Neilson, left the house as the British approached. John went to serve as sergeant in the American local militia regiment, and Lydia went to stay safely with her family in Stillwater. The house was then taken over and used as American headquarters. Not many people, however, are aware of what happened with the house after the war.

The descendants of the Neilson's farmed that parcel of land, added additional acreages and rented the original parcel of land to Thomas and Mary Farnan in 1891. By that time a two-story house had been built and the original house was incorporated into a carriage house and used as a "summer kitchen". The Farnans had three children when they moved to "Neilson Farm". Eight more children were born to them while they lived there. They had two hired hands who lived on the property. According to the 1900 census there were thirteen Farnans living in the house. They were Thomas, his wife Mary, and their children, Katherine, Julia, Elizabeth, John, Mary, Thomas(Tim), Helen, Sarah, George, Joseph, and Robert. The Farnan's lived on the Neilson Farm until 1910

The middle Farnan child, Thomas(Tim) Farnan, lived in Saratoga County as an adult. He was married to Bertha Farrell. They had four children who currently live in the area. They are Tom Farnan, Joan Farnan Campbell (a member of the Friends of the Saratoga Battlefield), Carol Farnan Reynolds, and Mary Lou Farnan Gilgallon. .



Courtesy Saratoga National Historical Park Archives c 1920

They feel honored and privileged to have been born of parents who lived in this very historic area. They proudly state that their grandparents, after renting the Neilson Farm for nineteen years, were able to purchase their own farm in the area "for cash". They have photos, newspaper clippings, maps, and many memories and stories of their family, Stillwater, and the surrounding area. They are a lovely family who genuinely respect one another. Their memories and clear healthy minds are impressive.

One such story is about their father, Tim, who fought in Belgium and France during World War I and earned a Silver Star. He and his platoon were behind a hedgerow in France while being shot at by the enemy. The person in front of Tim was killed, the person behind him was wounded, but Tim was only hit in the helmet by a bullet. They believe this was because he was short and being so saved his life.

A memory of Carol's is about her grandparents, Thomas and Mary Farnan, hosting large reunions at their home in Stillwater in the 1930s. There would be a large breakfast served. All the dishes were then washed in the kitchen with just a pump for water where there was no electricity. The table would then be set for the next meal. Mosquito netting would be put over everything on the table until noontime. They were busy people, raising children, farming, cooking, and cleaning, and to relax they smoked corn cob pipes. Carol remembers her grandmother going into the corn crib to look for a small corn cob. She would turn that into a pipe.

Joan recalls her grandmother sitting by the stove in a rocking chair knitting. She said her grandmother never complained about an ache or a pain, and she was very quiet. The family would stop at their grandparents' home after church on Sundays. Grandma Farnan would open the cupboard door and give them all what she called "fried cakes" as a treat.

They all remember October 4, 1940 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt visited the Saratoga Battlefield driving his open convertible while campaigning for his third term. They lined up along the road to wave to him as he passed by and they were more than rewarded as he stopped to greet them.

The Farnan family members are proud of their heritage, and it certainly shows as they recall the stories of Stillwater with laughter, clarity, and fondness.



(From Left to right) Carol Farnan Reynolds, Mary Lou Farnan Gilgallon Joan Farnan Campbell, and Thomas Farnan

Published with their permission June 2021

~In Memory of Mary Lou Farnan Gilgallon July 21, 1933 - August 6, 2021~

Birds of the Saratoga Battlefield

Susan Beaudoin

Saratoga National Historical Park is one of the top birding spots in the Capital District. According to eBird, an online reporting system developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and used world-wide, 184 species have been seen there. Winter is the quietest time, but there is still plenty to see. The year round birds such as black-capped chickadees, tufted titmice, white-breasted nuthatches, cardinals, and several woodpecker species, are present. These are the birds you are likely to have at your feeders, especially if you have a wooded area nearby. Winter only visitors, such as dark-eyed juncos and American tree sparrows, can be found quite easily. Juncos are very dapper looking small birds dressed in suits of gray and a cream. Look for flocks of them along the road edges. Tree sparrows have a rusty cap and a small dark spot on their breast. If you are really lucky, you may see a short-eared owl flying over the fields near the Neilson Farm at Stop 2, but they aren't there every year. A year round barred owl would be more likely. Things start to pick up in April, and increase in May, when the migrants who enjoy their balmy winters in South and Central America return. The stars of these returnees are the warblers with their bright colors and distinctive songs. Not many of them stay in our area. Most head further north to the boreal forests of Canada to breed. Of those who do stay for the summer, the blue-winged warbler is the one I associate most with the Historical Park. Listen for their distinctive "bee-buzz-buzz" song along the tour road or on the trail near the Rockefeller monument. These are beautiful little birds with bright yellow breasts, a distinctive black eye line, and bluish gray wings with two white wing bars. Yellow seems to be the theme for the Battlefield warblers as yellow warblers, prairie warblers, and common yellow throats also make Saratoga their summer place. The first are totally yellow and the second are yellow with some dark facial markings. Look and listen for both these beautiful birds in the fields below the Visitor Center. The common yellow-throat can be heard singing its "witchitee, witchitee" song anywhere along the edges of the tour road. They are both common and yellow, but the yellow is only on their throat and upper breast. They are olive above and are most easily identified by their wide, black, Zorro-like mask which contrasts with the bright yellow.



Yellow Warbler

If you are walking in the fields east of the Visitor Center you may hear a sound reminiscent of a ping-pong ball bouncing to a stop. Look for a small sparrow with a pinkish bill. This is a field sparrow. The more melodic song you may hear in this area, which is often represented as "Maids, maids put on your tea kettle, ettle, ettle," is a song sparrow. Almost all sparrows are basically brown with lots of stripes, although many have unmarked, lighter breasts. Both of these sparrows can be heard in any of the fields throughout the park.

Such beauties as the scarlet tanager, Baltimore oriole, and indigo bunting can be found singing at the tops of trees. Stop 1, and the service road just past it, are good places to find them, but they might be seen anywhere. They are all larger and easier to see than the diminutive warblers. The male scarlet tanager is a brilliant orange-red, brighter than a cardinal, but lacking the cardinal's distinctive crest. It has black wings which stand out against the scarlet body. Females are yellow. The male buntings are a gorgeous, solid blue on a sunny day, but on a cloudy day, or from a distance, may appear black. The much less noticeable females are a soft brown.

If you get out of your car at the Neilson Farm, you will almost certainly hear the distinctive and delightful sounds of the eastern meadowlark and the R2D2-like song of the bobolink. The meadowlarks are among the first to arrive in spring, coming as early as late March, and the bobolinks are one of the first to leave, heading south in mid-to-late August. "Spring of the year" is the mnemonic for the call of the meadowlarks. These are robin sized birds with a yellow breast and

a black breast band that reminds me of the collar of a V neck sweater. Their top parts are brown with black speckles. A black eye line topped by a white streak completes their outfit. Bobolinks, slightly smaller than the meadowlarks, are the other distinctive field bird in this area. Look for a basically black bird with a large, pale yellow patch at the back of their heads. They also have some white on their backs, but it's the yellow on the back of their head that you will notice, as well as their crazy sounding call. It really does sound like a robot. This is also a good spot to see tree swallows fluttering around, chasing insects, and to see eastern bluebirds, the New York State bird.

Stop 6 is the place to find a Battlefield specialty, the orchard oriole. These birds are more commonly found south of us, and the Battlefield is one of the few places in the Capital District to see them. Not as bright as the more familiar, brilliant orange Baltimore oriole, the orchard's breast is very similar to the rusty red of the American robin. It's head and back are black and it has white wing bars. Look for them in the tall, stand-alone trees along the pathway at this stop. As with almost all birds, it's easiest to find them in spring and early summer when they're singing away to mark their territory or to find a mate, and before the leaves are fully formed. Stop 6 is also another good place to find bluebirds.

Along with the previously mentioned common yellowthroat, the eastern towhee, gray catbird, and ovenbird are heard all along the tour road. The distinctive rust, black and white towhees are especially numerous between Stop 1 and the Neilson Farm. Their song is "Drink your tea," with the tea part drawn out. You may see this handsome bird on the edges of small to mid-sized trees. Gray catbirds, who reveal the origins of their name every time they call, are found in thickly shrubbed areas. While you almost certainly will hear the loud, insistent "Teacher, teacher" or "Teach her, teach her" song of the ovenbird, it's uncommon to see them, which is unfortunate as they are an interesting looking bird with black spotted stripes on a white breast and a bold orange stripe on the crown of their head. The head is brown, as is the rest of the tops of their bodies.



Black and White Towhee

Fall signals the last hurrah of the migrating bird season when the warblers who passed through in spring, move through again on their return trips back to the tropics. However, most of them will look nothing like the distinctive beauties who stopped by in the spring. Their brilliant colors will mostly have changed to dull browns and olives with lots of streaks. It's quite a transformation. The English call them LBJs, standing for "little brown jobs". Roger Tory Peterson's famous field guide has pages of pictures of what he calls, "Confusing Fall Warblers". "Confusing" is apt. Autumn is not the time to start learning warbler identification.

If you are interested in learning more about the birds at the Battlefield or in your own backyard, get yourself a good pair of binoculars and a good field guide. The best guides have drawings of birds showing males, females, and juveniles, as well as breeding and non-breeding plumage. Another tip is to get a guide that only covers eastern birds. Joining a local bird club's field trips is an excellent way to learn..

Whatever time of the year you visit the Saratoga Battlefield, keep your ears and eyes open in order to discover the birds, large and small, who call the Battlefield home. Some are there for the whole year, some just for the spring and summer to raise their families, and some for only a few days or weeks on their way to someplace else. So, get out there and enjoy the Battlefield and the birds!

(Photos courtesy of Ron Harrower and published with his permission 2021)

Reminder:

The Friends membership process changed In January 2021, from a rolling month annual membership to a calendar year term.

Membership renewal notices will be sent each December.

Become a Friend of Saratoga Battlefield

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Choose your membership level:

- \$15 Enlisted Personnel
- \$30 Noncommissioned Officer (Noncom)
- \$50 Commissioned Officer
- \$100: Field Grade Officer "Battlefield Club"
- Other (>\$100 also Battlefield Club)

Make checks payable to: **FRIENDS OF SARATOGA BATTLEFIELD** and mail this form to:

Friends of Saratoga Battlefield

648 Route 32

Stillwater, NY 12170

FRIENDS OF SARATOGA BATTLEFIELD IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION INCORPORATED UNDER THE N.Y.S EDUCATION LAW.



**Membership renewal and donations may be completed on-line at
www:friendsofsb.org**





Indigo Bunting



Song Sparrow



Blue Winged Warbler



Bobolink



Scarlet Tanager



Meadow Lark



Orchard Oriole

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Friends of the Saratoga
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648 Route 32
Stillwater NY 12170