Fort Edward Historical Association

P.O. Box 106, 29 Broadway, Fort Edward, NY 12828-0106
Email: oldfort@albany.twcbc.com
Website: oldforthousemuseum.com Telephone: 518-747-9600
Serving the communities of Fort Edward, Hudson Falls, and Kingsbury
Incorporated 1927

Dear Members & Friends, Spring 2026

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IN MEMORIUM

Our Holiday Celebration and Christmas tours went off without a hitch. Henry Knox's Noble Train of Artillery passed through Fort Edward on December 13th. A wreath was laid at the Knox Trail monument in Hudson Falls at the library. We laid a wreath at Fort Edward High School with Mayor Traver in attendance. A second wreath was laid by the Willard Mountain Chapter of the N.S.D.A.R. The parade traveled down the Hill headed for the Old Fort House. Enroute the sledges joined the parade at about Eddy St. A musket shot near the Wing Northup House signaled the village church bells to ring. The Fort Edward Fire Department flew their giant flag from their ladder truck, which made for a beautiful sight as the reenactors marched by. They paused at the Old Fort House. We were able to give the reenactors a walkthrough of the 1772-1773 house museum.

From the Old Fort House (which was passed by the Knox Noble Train in 1775), the reenactors proceeded on to Fort Miller, where they were served lunch by the Washington County 250th committee and friends. While there I spoke to the reenactors in the sanctuary of the reformed church. I recounted several stories about Fort Miller from revolutionary war days. The group was then bused to the Governor Dix bridge, where the linstock (linstock – gunners – a staff used by gunners to safely ignite cannons from a distance) was exchanged and the train continued on to Saratoga County.

As we prepared for our Christmas Holiday Celebrations, we had an unusual vandalism of our museum grounds. Someone came in at dusk and trimmed up our screen of white pine trees, stripping our hedge of low hanging white pine boughs (most likely, to make white pine roping). We will have to cut off all of the stubs of the branches left behind. We are now looking into closing off the back of the property with chain link fencing and a couple of gates. Over the next few years, we hope to find shrubbery that will grow under the white pines to once again screen us from the sewar agency property. Every year we have water-color groups that enjoy visiting to paint on the property. Maintaining the idyllic natural beauty of the grounds provides many picturesque views for the artists and photographers among our visitors.

Our first fundraiser of the year will be our participation in the Washington County Antiques Fair at the Fair Grounds in Greenwich, NY on May 1-3, 2026. See our calendar of events for date/times/etc. We normally have a busy spring with school tours, but this may be affected by the increasingly rising prices of fuel (which we anticipate will be impacted by transportation costs). The Senior Graduation Art Scholarship is currently underway. Prizes will be announced in early May at the Sandy Hill Art Center (old Masonic Temple Building in Hudson Falls).

The Riverside school bell award is on schedule to be delivered to three recipients. This award, given annually to retired teachers who have proven to commit themselves to our communities through volunteerism into their retirement. This District #5 Northumberland School was actually called the Riverside School because of its location on West River Road, facing the Hudson River. It flooded in 1913 and the school was raised off its foundation (which was replaced with concrete to help it ride out the Spring floods.

On July 11th and 12th, we will celebrate the founding of our country by participating in the History Fair at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Since we were a larger county at that time (in 1776), we will host a joint celebration for Washington and Warren Counties. We are encouraging all kinds of historic displays on our shared local history. Also, we will again have our fundraising auction on July 25th. We have recently received several contributions for this event. Then, of course, we will be at the Washington County Fair in the Grange Building.

As we continue to celebrate the 100th Anniversary Year of our organization, we are grateful for all of your support over the years. We hope to see you at one or more of our events as we celebrate the birth of our nation.

Thank you to all of you for your wonderful support.

Sincerely,

R. Paul McCarty
Executive Director

2026 Officers, Trustees, and Staff

2026 Officers:

President
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Tina Ovitt

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Kathleen McCarty

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R. Paul McCarty

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Elizabeth O'Leary

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Joyce Clary

Media Specialist/Office Staff
Lauren Grogan

2026 FEHA BUDGET

INCOME	ACTUAL 2025	PROPOSED 2026	EXPENSES	ACTUAL 2025	PROPOSED 2026
Endowment	$47,600.00	$49,730.00	**Building & Grounds**	$5,604.50	$16,800.00
Fundraising	$34,841.99	$28,000.00	**Insurance & Taxes**	$20,808.55	$22,745.00
Municipal Funding	$16,000.00	$16,000.00	**Utilities**	$10,767.33	$11,390.00
Dues	$9,305.00	$12,600.00	**Education**	$349.00	$500.00
Museum	$14,869.04	$15,324.00	**Museum Collection**	$3,665.29	$3,530.00
Art Center Awards	$706.59	$1,000.00	**Art Center Awards**	$3,300.00	$3,200.00
Education	$2,000.00	$3,000.00	**Office**	$12,486.33	$14,165.00
Administrative	$20.72	$26.00	**Personnel**	$44,657.68	$53,350.00
Total	**$125,343.34**	**$125,680.00**	**Total**	**$101,638.68**	**$125,680.00**

BUDGET NOTES

Our Annual Appeal Fund Drive occurs at the end of each year. Funds generated from this appeal are held over until the next fiscal year for the various projects covered. Our budget has increased over the years; however, expenses have increased (especially with utilities). Since we are considered a business, we pay a commercial rate for our utilities. Over the past few years, we have been able to upgrade several furnaces. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Sandy Hill Foundation this past year to replace our aging furnace. Preventive maintenance is always on our list of things to do. This Spring, for instance, we will have our roofer come in and access the museum campus. This past winter, some of our slate roofs held snow for over 2 months, which has resulted in many cracked and broken slates which will have to be replaced.

2025 MEMBERSHIP

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Mrs. Elaine Altizio
Mr. Peter Amorosi
Jackie Andrejkovics
Neil Orsini Anvil Inn Restaurant
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David & Althea Cutler
Rick Davidson
Tina & Henk Dejong
Nancy B. DeVol
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Ms. Madison Taylor
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Elizabeth J. Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. David G. Turner
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Mr. Joseph Vernon
*Mr. Adam Wait
*Mr. Alexander Wait
*Ms. Alexandra Unjo Wait
*Mr. Charles V. Wait Jr.
*Mr. & *Mrs. Charles V. Wait
*Mr. Christopher Wait
*Mrs. Jane A. Wait
*Mr. Jarett F/*Younghee Kim Wait
*Ms. Joan D. Wait
*Mr. William Kevin Uno Wait
Ms. Linda White
Mr. Benjamin Williams
*Mrs. Mary Ellen Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Williams
*Mr. Ross J. Williams
Joyce Woodward
Mrs. Maureen Zajkowski

***Denotes Life Membership**

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Town of Fort Edward
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M.B. Kilmer Funeral Home
Ye Olde Fort Diner
Shamrock Wine & Liquor

FEHA MEMBERSHIP

is based on the calendar year, which means 2026 dues are now payable. Members receive free admission for tours of the museum campus, as well as all association mailings and invitations to all special programs and events. Additionally, members are given a 10% discount in our gift shop. Please bring your membership card to ensure you are eligible for your discounts.

If the name or address that appears on your mailing label needs to be changed, please contact the museum office.

2026 FEHA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 1-3, Antiques Fair
Come find our Booth in Building 21 (Antiques, collectibles, glass, china, small furniture (all sales to benefit FEHA) at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Early Buyer (May 1) $$, Weekend Admission $ each day. Friday 7am-4pm, Sat. 8am-5pm, Sun. 9am-4pm.

May 6, 1-3 pm Walking Tour
w/ Paul McCarty on Wed. (5/6) In the Path of Jane McCrea: Fact, Myth & Legend, at Rogers Island Visitor Ctr**.** (on The Island in Fort Edward). Please Contact the SUNY ADK Department of Continuing Education at ACC to Register.
Reservations Required $

May 7, 6:00 pm, Sr. Art Show/
Scholarship Competition on Thurs (5/7) at the Sandy Hill Arts Center Presentation of Scholarship Awards Reception opens at 5:30pm, awards begin at 6 pm

May 14, 7:00 pm FEHA/ WCHS Joint Program Meeting
Meet at the FEHA Law Office for The Solomon Northup Program presented by: R. Paul McCarty

May 20, 1-3 pm Walking Tour
w/ Paul McCarty on Wed. (5/20) Fort Edward's Formal Central Business District, meet across from St. Joseph's Church (164 Broadway) Please Contact the SUNY ADK Department of Continuing Education at ACC to Register
Reservations Required $

June 4, 4-6 pm Riverside School Bell Awards Ceremony & Recep
Recognizing Outstanding Retired Area Educators, 29 Broadway, Fort Edward. Reception at 4 pm, Awards at 5-6 pm Public Welcome! $10.00 Call: 518-747-9600 for Reservations

June 11, 6:30pm Solomon Northup Program: Presented by Paul McCarty
Sponsored by WCHS
E. Hebron U P Church
6559 NY (Rt 22) Salem, NY 12865

July 11-12, Washington & Warren 250th Anniversary History Festival at the Washington County Fairgrounds!
Saturday 10am-8pm
Sunday 10am-4pm: Featuring the History, Culture & Heritage of Washington & Warren Counties. Living History Demonstrations, Historical Displays, Programs, Food, Entertainment, Museum Booth Spaces with historical books & memorabilia for purchase. FREE!!

July 25, Annual Auction
29 Broadway, US Rte. 4
Arts & Crafts, Antiques & Collectibles, Food Booth, Books, Plants, Bake Sale & Garage Sale 9am – 3pm. The museum Gift Shop will be open, Refreshments available, as well as afternoon tours of the museum campus. **Auction begins at 10:00am (preview at 9:00am) with MARTIN SEELYE – Auctioneer!** The Auction will be around 2 hours in length. Bring your own chair or be prepared to buy one!
Call: 518-747-9600 or visit our website for more information.

August 24-30, Visit us at the Washington County Fair in the Community Living & Grange Building. Look for our display of local historical books and other items for sale.

September 12, Founders Day
Fort Edward Village Parade in the Morning, Followed by fun at the Old Fort House Museum in the afternoon. Including Free Admission to the Old Fort House for all Fort Edward Residents (id. required).

October 7, 1-3pm Walking Tour
w/ Paul McCarty on Wed. (10/7) In Union Cemetery focusing on the Central and South portion of the Cemetery. Starting at Jane McCrea Enclosure. Please Contact the SUNY ADK Department of Continuing Education at ACC to Register.
Reservations Required $

October 9-11, Antiques Fair & Flea Market. Join us at the Washington County Fairgrounds for the Antique Fair & Flea Market. Early Buyer Admission $10.00, Weekend Admission $5.00 (each day). Friday 7am-4pm, Sat. 8am-5pm, Sunday 9am-4pm.

October 21, 1-3pm Walking Tour
w/ Paul McCarty on Wed. (10/21) of the Hamlet of Fort Miller. Starting from the Fort Miller Reformed Church. Please Contact the SUNY ADK Department of Continuing Education at ACC to Register.
Reservations Required $

November 7, Annual Meeting Luncheon details TBD
Reservations Required:
Call: 518-747-9600

November 28, ACC Balsam Wreath Making Class
Join us at the Fort Edward Art Center for a lesson on making balsam wreaths! For reservations and more information, please contact the SUNY ADK Department of Continuing Education at ACC.
Reservations Required $

December 5, ACC Balsam Centerpiece Making Class
Join us at the Fort Edward Art Center for a lesson on making balsam centerpieces! For reservations and more information, please contact the Department of Continuing Education at ACC. **Reservations Required $**

December 6, Christmas at the Old Fort House Museum Begins
Historical Christmas decorations and displays in the Old Fort House. Visit our website for more information.

Please Check our Website for updates and additional events information!

The Death of Jane McCrea

The Jane McCrea story takes place within the context of a young American Republic struggling to overthrow the constraints of a British colonial government. While there are variations, the basic historical legend asserts that on July 27, 1777, Jane McCrea was travelling to meet her lover David Jones, a young British officer in Burgoyne's army. She was to be escorted to the British contingent by Native American allies. During this journey she was murdered and scalped by Native Americans. This story became grist for propaganda and outrage that spread throughout the American colonies and across the Atlantic to Europe.

Was she really killed by Native Americans? Or was she accidental shot in a skirmish between American (colonial) troops and Native Americans and then scalped after her death? The answer is ambiguous. The contemporary accounts from the early to middle nineteenth century from people living in the Fort Edward area tend to be secondhand and vary in detail.

However, there are common themes: that Jane McCrea lived with her brother John McCrea in the Fort Miller area, that she came for a visit to the home of Mrs. McNeil (who lived just north of the fort in what is now the village of Fort Edward), and that Jane's plan was to leave on July 26 to return home but was persuaded to stay until the morning of July 27. Further, that an encounter between American troops and Native Americans took place the morning of July 27 on Fort Edward hill resulting in a retreat by Americans to the fort while being pursued by Native Americans.

The accounts continue that upon hearing musket shots and seeing Americans running toward the fort, Mrs. McNeil and Jane became alarmed and sought shelter in Mrs. McNeil house. A group of Native Americans followed them into the house and found their hiding place. Jane was put on a horse and led away, while Mrs. McNeil "who was large and corpulent" was accompanied on foot by two Native Americans. This group was now pursued by American troops who began firing. Mrs. McNeil lost sight of Jane and was taken to the camp of General Fraser, her cousin. General Burgoyne came to investigate Jane's whereabouts. The Native Americans were sent for and brought a scalp which was recognized as Jane's from its length, thickness, and color. They claimed that they took the scalp from the already deceased Jane. David Jones protested that he had no knowledge of Jane being in the area, that he had not sent for her, and that he had expected to find her at her brother's residence. Jane McCrea's body was recovered the following day (July 28). Those who found her corpse testified that there were bullet wounds on her body.

Since Mrs. McNeil was separated from Jane, she was not an eyewitness to Jane's death. Samuel Standish, a soldier at Fort Edward in the Continental Army, reported he saw the capture and death of Jane McCrea by Native Americans while on picket duty that morning on top of Fort Edward hill. He also stated he was wounded and captured while on picket duty. His account does not address how Jane was killed by the Native Americans. It has also been said that General Burgoyne believed Native Americans killed Jane, though contemporary accounts state that the Native Americans denied killing her.

While there are variations in details and perhaps embellishments in these accounts, they do not rule out an accidental shooting of Jane McCrea, and they also do not support the lurid, savage death as depicted in stories and paintings that have been passed down over the past two and a half centuries. A word of caution is in order. As it may not be possible to definitively conclude how Jane McCrea died, one must be judicious before making unsubstantiated pronouncements regarding who was responsible for her death.

Maureen (Culligan) Zajkowski

Sources:

In 1827, William Hay, 1793-1870 (lawyer, judge, New York State Assembly member, author of several books, researcher in local history), on behalf of the New York Historical Society, interviewed Fort Edward residents who remembered the events surrounding Jane McCrea's death. In 1856, he gave this information to Lura Boies (1835-1859), a noted poet during her brief life. His account was published in *Letters to Lura: 1850s Life, Death & Publishing and The Jane McCrea Story* by Doris Putnam Lasselle.

Dr. Asa Fitch (1809-1879) of Salem, N.Y. was a medical doctor and naturalist who also had a great interest in the history of his native Washington County. In 1847 Dr. Fitch began work on what was to become a life-long oral history project in the county. He visited elderly friends and neighbors and questioned them about early times, the Revolutionary War, and the thirty years or so following the war. The oral histories were compiled in a manuscript, *Notes for a History of Washington County*. Selected accounts from Dr. Fitch's work have been published in *Their Own Voices: Oral Accounts of Early Settlers in Washington County, New York, Collected by Dr. Asa Fitch 1847-1878*, edited by Winston Adler.

Samuel Standish account from *The Fort Edward Book* by Robert O. Bascom.

Endowment Memorials

Joe Brablc
R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty
Judith Bronk
R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty
Marjorie Bronk
PWA, First Presbyterian Church HF
R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty
Helen Kelleher Smythe & Anne Gallup
Claire Suminski
Joan A. LaSarso
Nicholas LaSarso
Mary Ellen Russo
Mr. & Mrs. Arony
M.B. Kilmer Funeral Home
R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty
Elizabeth O'Leary
Thomas Van Bramer
JoAnn Taylor
Pat Alden
Jane Burns
Traci & William Cheeney
Richard & Rosemary Clifford
Linda Fitzsimmons
Cheryl Roods Hall
Lawrence Konopka
M.B. Kilmer Funeral Home
Elizabeth A. Lane
R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty
John & Terry Murphy
Elizabeth O'Leary
Mary R. Smith
Mary T. Smith
Ann Sullivan

In Fondest Memory of our members & friends who have passed away since our Spring 2025 Newsletter, and who have not been previously acknowledged.

Joe Brablc **Carol Mercier**
Sandra Buttino **Mary Ellen Russo**
Jess Eberhart **JoAnn Smatko Taylor**
Joan D. Wait

A Memo from our Media Specialist

Hello! My name is Lauren Grogan, and I am happy to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the members and friends of the Fort Edward Historical Association and the Old Fort House Museum. This past November I began working in our office as a media specialist, specifically to strengthen our presence on social media.

I moved to this area in 2010 when my husband was hired as the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Hudson Falls. In 2014, we welcomed our son Harvey and opened our business in Fort Edward, Underwood Park CrossFit. In 2017 I joined the board of the Canal Street Marketplace, where I met so many community members and dear friends. My work on that social media and web presence has connected me to the broader community in ways I really treasure. In 2019 we welcomed our daughter Diana, and most recently our family moved to Kingsbury where we get to pursue our interests including restoring an 1830's farmhouse, enjoying the outdoors in all seasons, and learning about gardening, forestry, and habitat restoration for wildlife.

In my few months here at the Museum, I have really enjoyed learning about our rich and meaningful history, preserved through the work of the Fort Edward Historical Association. I particularly enjoyed the process of researching Solomon Northup's life in Washington County for the social media series I published during Black History Month.

I hope you will engage with us on Facebook and Instagram if that's something you enjoy! I'm including web addresses and QR codes here to help you find those sites as well as our website. We are also going to be sending a few email newsletters this year to spread the word about our events and historic happenings. There is a QR code below for you to sign up for that as well.

Thank you for your warm welcome, I am looking forward to our summer season!

Lauren Grogan

www.oldforthousemuseum.com

www.facebook.com/oldforthouse/

www.instagram.com/oldforthouse/

www.oldforthousemuseum.com/join-our-mailing-list/

Website Facebook Instagram Email List

Notes from the President:

Greetings from "my happy place"! We have been very busy since the museum closed for its regular season this past October. We welcome our new employee, Lauren Grogan. She has fit in wonderfully and is doing a great job. I also did a couple of school presentations. It seemed like a blast from my past!

Also, we had a very busy Christmas season this year which was tremendously successful. We had the help of many people (listed elsewhere), and we couldn't have done it without them.

We are gearing up for a very busy season ahead, as you will see in our calendar of events. This Summer we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country. We need volunteer help with all of our activities. We will train you and guarantee that you will have a great time! Please contact us if you are interested. We'd love to hear from you.

Elizabeth O'Leary
President

Annual Appeal

Richard and Janet Aradine
Mary Ellen Barlow
Elizabeth A. Barrett
Sally Brillon
Edward & Anne Carpenter
Gary & Sharon Conrick
Kirsten L. DeTemple
James & Mary Doty
Joan L. Ells
Mary Enhorning
Griffin Engineering & Supply Co.
Cheryl Roods Hall
Angela Harris
Lynda Karig Hohmann, MD, PHD
Joyce and David LaPoint
Donna Lacque
Donna Leonard
R. Paul McCarty
& Kathleen A. McCarty
R. Bruce McGregor
Carol Mullen
Terrence and Elizabeth O'Leary
Clinton & Leslie Roods
Carolyn & Robert Rudolf
The Sandy Hill Foundation
Arlene Schiek
Gayle and Robert Smith
Mary R. Smith
Morgan & Diane Snyder
John & Chris Strough
Phillip R. Sullivan
Ann R. Sullivan
Dr. Riza Touba
Tina Ovitt and James Wheaton
Robert & Maureen Zajkowski

FEHA membership is based on the calendar year, which means 2026 dues are now payable. Members receive free admission for tours of the museum campus, as well as all association mailings and invitations to all special programs and events. Addition-ally, members are given a 10% discount in our gift shop. Please bring your membership card to ensure you are eligible for the discounts.

Honorarium

David and Helene 'Pat' Turner's 70th Wedding Anniversary

R. Paul & Kathleen A. McCarty

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to the many volunteers that made our Christmas Exhibits Possible!

Sharon Amorosi
Ed Brooks
Kathy Brown
Kathy Chance
Peggy Currie
Bob Dickinson
Theresa Faul
Theresa Girard
Lynn Gorham
Kim Gray
Kat Grimes
Cheryl Roods Hall
Celinda Holleran
James Hyatt
Liz Hyatt
Piper Hyatt
Patsy Ives
Kathy Johnson
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Colleen LaPan
Donna Lacque
Kate McCann
Hayley McCarty
Kathy McCarty
R. Paul McCarty
Robert McCarty
Sydney McCarty
Mary Joy Mosher
Faye Nolan
Elizabeth O'Leary
Clint Roods
Patti O'Rourke
John Potter
Elaine Saltsman
Bea Sanders
Bill Sanders
Holly Shishik
Jessica Smatko
Kathy Smatko
Gayle Smith
Mary R. Smith

In Memorium: JoAnn Smatko Taylor

JoAnn was a long-time member of the Fort Edward Historical Society. She was very proud of her heritage! Especially her grandmother, who was a descendant of the Early Dutch family by the name of Knickerbocker. She, along with a group of other members, encouraged our museum expansion by saving buildings from our village. During the period of time when our museum was being stabilized, Jo Ann coordinated the temporary relocation of our museum collections when it was moved temporarily to the Wing-Northup House. She also coordinated the moving of the Cronkhite collection from Hudson Falls to the museum campus.

JoAnn was proud to call herself a 'Pointer', meaning that she grew up and lived near the end of McCrea St. The Hudson River made the point just behind the Fort Edward Dam, that had originally been constructed c. 1829 to provide water power to many little mills nearby.

Her involvement in the museum was for nearly half a century. In the museum, she paid particular attention to our 1940's kitchen. Finding items to tell its story. Making displays was her specialty! She was proud to maintain our gift shop, where she would price and mark items during our open season, volunteering to help at our fair booth year after year.

JoAnn was also a fixture of our Annual Auction and yard sale. She generally would muster up her extended family to sell hot dogs and drinks. She was a most committed volunteer, who also served as a trustee and the recording secretary of our organization. Her involvement and talents will be sorely missed.

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Fort Edward Historical Association Membership Application

Name(s)_____ circle if applicable
Title First Name(s) Last Name(s) Suffix
GIFT: Y / N
Address_____ Anonymous: Y / N

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Telephone_____ Email_____

Would you like to receive notifications or the newsletter electronically? Y / N

Individual	Corporate
___$1,000.00 Life Membership (Single)	___$5,000.00 Platinum Sponsor
___$ 500.00 Sustaining Member	___$1,000.00 Gold Pacesetter
___$ 250.00 Supporting Member	___$ 750.00 Benefactor
___$ 100.00 Contributing Member	___$ 500.00 Sustaining
___$ 50.00 Patron	___$ 300.00 Supporting
___$ 35.00 Family: 2 Adults + Children (#__)	___$ 200.00 Contributing
___$ 25.00 Individual Membership	___$ 100.00 Corporate Patron
___$ 20.00 Student/Senior Membership	___$ 1-99.00 Friend

$_____ ANNUAL CENTENNIAL APPEAL CONTRIBUTION

___New Member ___Renewal _____Date

P.O. Box 106 ~ 29 Broadway, Fort Edward, NY 12828

As a publicly sponsored institution under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code, the Fort Edward Historical Association is classified as a non-profit organization, to which contributions are deductible for Federal estate, gift, and income Tax purposes. **Please make checks payable to: FORT EDWARD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**