

Public Presentations:

Brodhead's 1779 Expedition up the Allegheny

Tuesday, September 8, 2015, 6:00 PM at Salamanca, NY

Or

Wednesday, September 9, 2015, 9:00 AM at Warren PA

The public is invited to two presentations on Colonel Brodhead's expedition up the Allegheny River in 1779.

On September 8, the presentation will be at the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum, 814 Broad Street, in Salamanca. The speaker will be military archaeologist Chris Espenshade of Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group.

On September 9, the presentation will be at the Supervisor's Office, Allegheny National Forest, in Warren, PA.

Brodhead's expedition in August and September 1779 was an adjunct to the larger Sullivan-Clinton campaign. The goal of the expeditions was to punish Iroquois for allying themselves with the British. Brodhead advanced from Fort Pitt up the Allegheny River into present-day New York. His troops burned a number of Delaware and Seneca towns, and pillaged hides, foodstuffs, and personal items.

The Seneca Nation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, and Allegheny National Forest are supporting partners for an American Battlefield Protection Program grant from the National Park Service. The twin goals of the grant are: 1) to provide a historical and geographic narrative of Brodhead's expedition; and 2) to verify the location of the Thompson's Island battle that occurred during the expedition.

Chris will provide a brief outline of the overall project, and then will discuss his reconstruction of the expedition. He will address the challenges in attempting the reconstruction; for example, the colonials did not understand the geography of Seneca towns, the archival record is biased by the motives of the Brodhead, and the importance of Brodhead's expedition has been overshadowed by the Sullivan-Clinton expedition.

Chris will answer questions after the presentation. He encourages anybody with knowledge of the campaign or the Thompson's Island battle to speak with him after the presentation. If you are aware of 1779 military artifacts recovered from the vicinity of Thompson's Island, please bring the artifacts or photos (your information can remain anonymous).