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Castorland Ramble – Explore Historic Places October 12

WATERTOWN, NEW YORK – What do beavers, waterfalls, French explorers, and a map of the estate of Baron Steuben have in common? Find out more as Patrick Reynolds, Oneida County History Center director of public programs at, leads the Castorland Ramble on Saturday, October 12 beginning at 10:00 a.m. and concluding around 2:00 p.m. This historian-guided driving tour, brought to you by Oneida County History Center and Tug Hill Commission, will connect history lovers with today's places and their role in the settling of the North Country. This interpretation includes stories of hard work and suffering, villains, heroes, and heartbreak, not to mention Revolutionary War hero General Baron Steuben, and beavers. A spiderweb of connections from Whitesboro, Fort Schuyler, Rome, and Remsen to Boonville and Lyons Falls will be uncovered.

Inspired by the real-life events chronicled in *The Castorland Journal*, the tour will guide you through a story of the birth of our nation, which takes place soon after the American Revolution in northern Oneida County and Lewis County. Using your own transportation (carpooling highly encouraged) and a GPS-friendly tour map, attendees will gather at 10:00 a.m. to imagine the historic settlement on the Black River downstream of Lyons Falls. The tour then leads to Constable Hall where you will be introduced to one of America's first families and learn about their role in the settlement of upstate New York and the fledgling country. The next stop will be the Steuben Memorial State Historic Site, the final home and burying place of Revolutionary War hero General Baron Steuben. The final stop, between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., includes a behind-the-scenes viewing of relevant, rare artifacts at the Oneida County History Center, 1608 Genessee Street, Utica, NY 13502.

The event is free of charge, but RSVPs are requested for planning purposes. Please register at tinyurl.com/CastorlandRamble, email tughill@tughill.org, or call the Tug Hill Commission at (315) 785-2380.

In 1793, Frenchmen Pierre Pharoux and Simon Desjardins were sent to the United States to develop newly acquired French holdings in upstate New York. The lands were sold to the French, at least in part,

by William Constable. Pharoux and Desjardins documented their explorations in what were then largely unknown regions along New York State's northwestern frontier, and what today we know as Oneida, Lewis, and Jefferson Counties. The Compagnie de New York (New York Company) named its tract Castorland, from the French word for beaver, castor, found to be plentiful here. They were also closely acquainted with the retired revolutionary general Baron von Steuben. The plan for the estate of Baron von Steuben, in fact, was drawn by Pierre Pharoux in 1794. This drawing, now owned by the History Center, is a rare and important example of landscape planning in early American history. The plan of the estate and several related artifacts, including Steuben's sword, will be on exhibit for this one-day-only event. Don't miss your chance to see this important part of early Lewis and Oneida County history.

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The New York State Tug Hill Commission is a non-regulatory state agency charged with helping local governments, organizations, and citizens shape the future of the region, especially its environment and economy. The commission uses a grassroots approach to build local capacity and provide technical assistance in land use planning, community development, and natural resource management.

Helping local governments and citizens shape the future of the Tug Hill region.