



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Joins Historians to Record Area's Civil War Legacy

PATTY RITCHIE May 9, 2012

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Seeks Monuments, Markers of Region's Contributions to 'War that Saved the Republic'

State Senator Patty Ritchie, with the help of three noted local historians, is drafting community members to help record the region's contributions to America's Civil War, part of a statewide effort to remember New York's role in the "War that Saved the Republic," which was fought 150 years ago.

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Senator Ritchie is inviting community members to submit photos and information about the ubiquitous Civil War monuments and markers that exist in communities throughout Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties. The information will be used in the creation of an appropriate commemorative guide of local monuments, and also submitted as part of a project to create a statewide listing of memorials that is being spearheaded by a Central New York history professor.

To ensure success, Senator Ritchie has recruited the help of three noted, local historians: **Shawn Doyle**, an Oswego County Legislator, published author and leading authority on the history of “Half-shire country;” **William Wood**, director of the Jefferson County Historical Society, and **Sue Longshore**, who is chair of the St. Lawrence County Civil War Sesquicentennial group.

“During the Civil War, regular citizens across the nation, and right here in Central and Northern New York responded to President Lincoln’s call to save the Union by organizing local companies and regiments, electing their own officers and marching off to war,” said Senator Ritchie.

“All of our communities suffered devastating losses, and the sacrifices of loved ones were memorialized with towering monuments and simple markers, the location and meaning of many having been lost to time and memory. This project seeks to record those monuments and the interesting stories about them, to help us all better reflect and remember the important role that this region played in one of the defining moments of our American story,” Senator Ritchie said.

Senator Ritchie’s effort is also timed to coincide with the planned unveiling of a monument to Oswego native **Mary Walker**, a Civil War surgeon who is the only woman ever to receive the Medal of Honor, the nation’s top military prize.

Senator Ritchie invited Civil War enthusiasts, school and community groups to join the project so that every community is represented in the final report.

She’s created a website where local residents can list the locations and any information they have about local monuments. [Click on this link to report the location of Civil War monuments and memorials in your community.](#)

Communities of Central and Northern New York played a central role in events that helped form our nation, from the French and Indian Wars, the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and the Civil War, which lasted from 1861 to 1865, and have continued to make contributions to our nation’s defense into the modern era. Senator Ritchie also has joined in efforts to mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812, in which the region played a key role.

Some key facts about the Civil War in New York:

- One in five New York men served in the Union Army;
- Over 500,000 wore the US uniform;
- 50,000 perished.

Information collected as part of the Civil War commemoration effort will be forwarded to Civil War historian Sue Greenhagen, of SUNY Morrisville college. Right now, Professor Greenhagen’s efforts have collected information about just seven monuments in Oswego County, two in Jefferson and three in St. Lawrence County.

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