

Fighting for Battle of Lundy's Lane Public Space



Donald E. Graves, author of *Where Right and Glory Lead! The Battle of Lundy's Lane 1814*, the definitive account of the iconic War of 1812 battle, will be speaking at Niagara Falls City Hall on Monday, May 5th.

Graves is a writer and historian specializing in Canadian military history. Educated at the University of Saskatchewan, he has worked as a historian for the National Historic Sites Service, the National Archives of Canada and the Canadian Forces. He is currently the Managing Director of the Ensign Heritage Group. He served briefly in the Canadian Militia.

Graves' work has been widely praised. A review by Jon Latimer in Times Literary Supplement declared: "Donald E. Graves is probably Canada's foremost military historian."

Graves is appearing as an expert witness at the Ontario Municipal Board hearing to decide the fate of the last publicly accessible portion of the US position at the battle.

The southern portion of the property in question, the former Battlefield School, is the last remaining part of the “killing ground” in public hands.

The City of Niagara Falls is attempting to rezone and sell that portion for parking and subsidized housing. The Friends of the Lundy’s Lane Battlefield, an established public charity mandated to promote the preservation of the central battlefield lands, is fighting to conserve the land, bringing balance to the battlefield, and restoring the currently impaired viewshed and viewscape.

The Friends have the opportunity to secure up to \$500,000 in federal funding to demolish the redundant 44-year old school building and create a commemorative park in the restored open space. The park will commemorate the Aboriginal, Black and Women’s History associated with the site, as well as the outcomes of the War of 1812 and the US position.

According to an aerial photo that came out of the Master Plan Study conducted for the City, the building lies directly atop the avenue of approach of the US Twenty-First Infantry in the pivotal minutes of the climactic battle of the War of 1812. The Friends project, in restoring the open space so visitors can follow the path of that unit to the hilltop, promises to hold the key to building as complete a destination as can be achieved at this time.

Instead of embracing the opportunity to achieve this goal, the City is spending tens of thousands of dollars on legal, planning and other experts in its fight to throw this unique opportunity away. The hearing begins at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Further information is available at www.thebattleoflundyslane.ca