



## BURNING OF KINGSTON 2017 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Friday October 13 through Sunday October 15

Location – Throughout Kingston New York

The Burning of Kingston is a weekend-long celebration that draws thousands of visitors to Kingston New York. It is a unique story in American history commemorating bravery, sacrifice, resilience and renewal.

On a Fall October day in 1777, British troops set fire to the newly established capital of the State of New York - Kingston. Since most of the local militia were fighting battles elsewhere (such as at the Battle of Saratoga), the vulnerable city burned down with over 300 buildings lost in just hours. Since many of the buildings were made of stone, we can still see examples of them standing today. The event was a dramatic moment in the American Revolutionary War that hardened the determination of colonists to gain their independence, and for local citizens to rebuild Kingston, stronger than ever.

The Burning of Kingston is a biennial event celebrating this year its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reenactments.

For more information about the 2017 Burning of Kingston including directions, historic maps, weekend discount information and how you can volunteer, visit the website at [www.BurningOfKingston.com](http://www.BurningOfKingston.com)

### SCHEDULE OF MAIN ACTIVITIES

#### FRIDAY OCT. 13th

5:30pm

##### The Story of the Burning of Kingston

At the Vanderlyn Gallery of the Senate House Museum

Presentation and lecture on the events leading up to the Burning of Kingston, life as a local Kingston colonist at the time, and the events that occurred that day and its aftermath. Presentation by Hank Yost of the First Ulster Militia, with introductions by Geoff Miller, Ulster County Historian.

6:30

##### Procession of Lights

Following the presentation at the Senate House, participants will walk with lights (provided) from the Senate House across the historic Stockade neighborhood to the Persen House for the first Burning of Kingston re-enactment – the Committee of Safety.

7:00pm

##### The GREAT DEBATE by Colonial Kingston Committee of Safety

Located at the historic Persen House Museum at the historic "four corners" in the Stockade District.

Highlights: town residents hear news of Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga, express fears of British invasion and then learn that a British fleet lies off the Hudson River at Kingston Point.

7:45pm

##### Old Dutch Church Cemetery Candlelight Tales

Come hear the true story of the Burning of Kingston as the long-dead rise up to provide first-hand accounts of that dreadful ordeal.

#### SATURDAY OCT. 14th

10am - 4pm

##### Old Dutch Church Sanctuary and Museum

Organ music throughout the day

10:30am

##### "Revolutionary Express" Trolley Ride

Take a ride back in time on the trolley from Kingston's historic Rondout district out to Kingston Point Park where you can watch at close-range and comfort the landing of the redcoats off the Hudson River and then battle with colonial militia. (\$5/pp – pick up at 10:30 sharp at end of Broadway, includes return trip by 12noon)

### BRITISH LANDING BEGINS

11:00am

British invasion reenactment begins with "landing" at Kingston Point Park along the Hudson River (NOTE: not Kingston Point Beach), greeted by small resistance force of Colonists.

(Parking available at park)

11 - 5

Hudson River Maritime Museum

Visit the Hudson River Maritime Museum to learn about the strategic naval importance of the Hudson River during the American Revolution, and learn to play "Nine Men's Morris", a game popular in the 18th century. From 11:30 am to 2 pm. Museum open Fri-Sat and Sun from 11am – 5pm [www.hrmm.org](http://www.hrmm.org)

STORMING OF KINGSTON STOCKADE DISTRICT

2:15pm

British Troops begin march from Forsyth Park up N. Front Street, head for Senate House.

2:45pm

At Senate House, American colonists flee Senate House with key possessions including ledgers, records of county and new state capital.

2:50pm

British Troops arrive at Senate House, take down colonists flag and replace it with British flag, 'dispatch' colonial resisters, and prepare march through Stockade District.

3:00pm

British troops will advance along Main Street in the Stockade District, opposed by remnants of the local militia, some street reenactments along the way. Red coats will march down Main Street to Green Street and then Crown Street and arrive at the historic 4 corners of Kingston for final street battle scene.

3:45pm

Following the afternoon's fighting, Kingston's Mayor will be put on trial for treason outside the Persen House. The trial will be held in the park. Witnesses will be called and a decision rendered. The outcome is in doubt.

6:30pm – 8:00pm

Militia and Redcoat Camps Open to Public

Tours of reenactors camps with impromptu lectures on the Revolution / Rebellion in Forsyth Park. [See below for additional description of camp life]

COLONIAL GRAND BALL

7:00pm

The Grand Ball will be held Saturday evening in the Common Council Chambers at Kingston City Hall. Instruction in 18th century dance, with live music, will commence at 7pm with the Ball itself beginning a little later in the evening. Both reenactors and the community are invited, and since instruction is provided, one does not have to be familiar with the dance styles to participate. 18th century dress is encouraged but not required, and there will be refreshments available. The entire event is free of charge. [Bus shuttle will begin running from Forsyth Park to City Hall starting at 6:15pm and run continuously for the evening. Last shuttle from City Hall leaves at 11:30pm]

**SUNDAY OCT. 15th**

9:00am

Militia and Redcoat Camps Open to Public

At Forsyth Park, reenactor camps open to the public with assembly, safety inspections, company drills, and demonstrations. [See below for additional description]

12:30pm

BATTLE OF UPPER FORSYTH PARK

The 'Battle of Upper Forsyth Park' - a tactical demonstration showing American and British troops battle [See below for additional details below]

## **Additional Kingston Event Information for October 13-15, 2017**

### **MATTHEWIS PERSEN HOUSE MUSEUM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER**

Ulster County Clerk Nina Postupack is proud to present a series of activities taking place at the historic Matthewis Persen House Museum and Cultural Heritage Center commemorating the 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Burning of Kingston. The Matthewis Persen House is one of Ulster County's oldest, most significant buildings. Named after its longest residing owner, Matthewis Persen (1739-1819), the house is located within Kingston's Stockade National Historic District. Its earliest portions date from c. 1661 and it is one of four landmark buildings on each corner of John and Crown Streets. This is the only known intersection in the United States with pre-revolutionary stone houses on all four corners. The Persen House has been the home of doctors, tailors, innkeepers, druggists, grocers, and Ulster County government. It was burned at least twice, saw war and revolution, and survived to tell its tale. To walk through this remarkable building is to walk through Ulster County's rich local history.

#### **Gysbert's Inventory: A Reflection of 1665 Dutch Life in Wiltwyck**

The legacy of the Dutch settlers of Wiltwyck lives on at the Matthewis Persen House. The house sits on Kingston's historic "four corners" and was originally owned by Gysbert Van Imbroch. An inventory listing Gysbert's possessions at the time of his death in 1665 is brought to life through illustrations of clothing, kitchen items, and other articles used in 17<sup>th</sup> century daily life. The inventory also depicts items Gysbert used in his profession as a barber-surgeon as well as his book collection, one of the largest book collections in the New World. Step back in time with *Gysbert's Inventory*.

#### **Underground Tales: Artifacts from the Persen House**

In 2001, Joseph E. Diamond Ph.D., Associate Professor of Anthropology at SUNY New Paltz, led an archaeological excavation at the Matthewis Persen House. Focusing on the first phase of the house built without a cellar, Dr. Diamond and his team uncovered many of the hidden treasures that slipped through the cracks of the Persen House floor and that were found beneath the bluestone sidewalks. Explore some of the over 20,000 artifacts discovered during the excavation in the new exhibit, *Underground Tales: Artifacts from the Persen House*.

#### **Colonial Game Day**

Throughout the weekend, visitors to the house are invited to try their hand at many entertaining and historic games including Game of Graces, Jacob's Ladder, Hoop Rolling and Whirligigs, just to name a few. Step behind our "Colonial Kids" portraits to see what you might have looked like in colonial dress. Bring your family and see how different or perhaps similar games and toys were in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as compared to those of today! Each game offers a unique history and skill set, whether it is pure entertainment, like Jacob's ladder or a test of dexterity like Game of Graces. Fun for children of all ages!

#### **Loyalty Papers**

Visit the Persen House to complete your Loyalty Papers and formally pledge your allegiance to the Patriots, the Loyalists, or both! During the re-enactment the British just might ask you "To whom is your allegiance?" Will you be ready to answer? Will you say the King? Will you support the Revolution?

Make sure you're at the Persen House at 3:00pm on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> during the re-enactment of the 1777 Burning of Kingston as there will be a MAJOR battle at and around the House between the British and the local militia. Also, make certain to have your Loyalty Papers to avoid capture!

#### **Scavenger Hunt**

Developed for children of all ages! Come to the house and see how many of the items in the Scavenger Hunt you can find. Do you think you can find the Sun Face? How about the late 19<sup>th</sup> century wallpaper

from France? Or the burn marks from the 1777 Burning of Kingston? Put on your detective hat and search the house for these interesting items.

**Where:** Matthewis Persen House Museum and Cultural Heritage Center  
74 John Street at the Intersection of John and Crown Streets  
Kingston, New York 12401

**When:** Saturday, October 14, 2017 10:00 to 4:00pm  
Sunday, October 15, 2017 10:00 to 2:00pm

Admission is free and all are welcome!

For more information, please contact Nina Postupack, Ulster County Clerk, at (845) 340-3040

### **18th Century Autumn Festival at the Senate House** Saturday Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> 11am - 3pm

Visit Senate House State Historic Site on Saturday October 17, 2015 from 11am-3pm to try your hand at performing 18th century autumn activities. Hands-on activities are fun for the whole family and include dipping candles, making cornhusk dolls and dried apple wreaths and pressing apples into cider. There will be demonstrations of hearthside cooking and meat smoking. The Palisades Park Conservancy is also sponsoring a demonstration of blacksmithing. The 3rd Ulster Militia will be on site, demonstrating 18th century camp life and fleeing in desperation as the British Army advances on Uptown Kingston as part of the citywide commemoration of the Burning of Kingston. Light-hearted entertainment will be provided by Stephen Gratto who engages audience members with stilt walking, balancing acts and juggling. The event is free and everyone is invited to attend. Guided tours of Senate House will be provided at the rate of \$4.00 for adults, \$3.00 for seniors, ages 12 and under are free.

Senate House is located in Historic Uptown Kingston at 296 Fair Street

### **DESCRIPTION OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN CAMPS IN FORSYTH PARK, UPTOWN KINGSTON**

Camps for both British and American troops will be established in Forsyth Park, with Redcoats at the northern end and Continentals to the south. A large military camp in the 18th century was a very organized affair, with "camp streets" between tents, and specific locations for artillery, cavalry, the camp kitchens, water and latrines. There were even military handbooks printed explaining how camp was to be set up. Individual regiments typically were encamped together, although for certain campaigns, light infantry companies were detached from their regiments and encamped together to facilitate their use as advanced and flanking troops as well as skirmishers.

The individual soldier was usually sheltered in a wedge tent, which resembled a triangle set on its base.

While these tents were not large, six soldiers were assigned to each along with all their equipment, making space tight. These six soldiers comprised a "mess" and rations were distributed to the group. Meals were prepared by each soldier in the "mess" on a rotating basis, or by a soldier's wife. One wife per six soldiers was allowed to accompany the army to serve as nurses and laundresses. Officers were housed in much larger and more spacious "marquee" tents, which allowed for more equipment including camp beds, tables and chairs. The camps in Forsythe Park are much smaller, but still show evidence of camp streets and the housing together of individual regiments.

### **Sunday October 18<sup>th</sup> Forsyth Park Skirmish (Battle) Description**

Sunday's military skirmish will occur in the wooded area on the hill above the camps. In re-enactor language, this will be an "open tactical" with no planned moves or outcome. This allows re-enactors a chance to apply their 18th century military skills in an effort to ambush, outflank, charge and repel their adversaries. The area is part of the Park's nature preserve and has plenty of trees, brush, rock outcroppings, fallen timber and rock walls to maneuver in.