



PROCLAMATION

The Village of Clayton is approaching a historic milestone year - the 150th anniversary of incorporation - and we look forward to an all-inclusive celebration with active participation by our entire community, from young school students likely to be here to celebrate our next milestone, to seniors who can look back with pride at our glorious past.

The first 150 years have made Clayton the destination of choice for vacationers from throughout the world, while still serving as an inviting family-friendly community for year-rounders and seasonal residents. While abundant in social, educational, athletic, fraternal, civic, public service, agricultural, and religious organizations, Clayton also boasts a prosperous business and professional community dedicated to serving both those who call Clayton home and the many visitors we welcome each year.

Clayton, where the tradition of hospitality continues, is the centerpiece of one of our nation's most beautiful settings, the incomparable Thousand Islands. The village takes pride in its role as the home of many "firsts," from boats to snowplows, and even a salad dressing that has broadcast the Thousand Islands name worldwide. A storied list of our friends and neighbors have made their mark in their professions and careers, both public and private, while proudly calling Clayton "home." With that, it is fitting that a resolution celebrating our past, while looking forward to a joyous and exciting future, is introduced in honor of this prestigious occasion.

- WHEREAS,** the first known name given to the area around the present day village was Weteringhera-Guentere, an Native American term for "Fallen Fort," referring to an ancient fort on the banks of French Creek that was captured from the Algonquin tribe by the Iroquois and would later be known as Cornelia following the arrival of French settlers in the 1820s; and
- WHEREAS,** the site of the Battle of French Creek during the War of 1812, which saw General James Wilkinson stage his army of thousands on the community's shore while the U.S. and British naval fleets faced off at Bartlett Point in November 1813 before the U.S. troops would proceed downriver to encroach on Montreal. As history progressed, the border between the U.S. and Canada became open and welcoming, resulting in the formation of numerous binational friendships and beneficial partnerships; and
- WHEREAS,** the introduction of the railroad which guided visitors directly to the river's edge led to a visit by President Ulysses S. Grant, a personal guest of regional icon and railroad magnate George M. Pullman, generating extensive national and worldwide media coverage of the small picturesque community; and
- WHEREAS,** history was made on a Wednesday in April, when on the 17th day of the month, in the year 1872, a vote was held resulting in a 140 to 51 outcome in favor of Clayton, as it was renamed in 1831 in honor of United States Senator John M. Clayton of Delaware, officially becoming incorporated as a village; and
- WHEREAS,** known as the birthplace of Thousand Island dressing, the first-ever vehicle-mounted steel snowplow produced by Frink Sno-Plows, the St. Lawrence Skiff, and the original and longest running antique boat show in North America; and
- WHEREAS,** arts and culture have long thrived embedded in the community's roots with institutions in village limits such as The Antique Boat Museum, Thousand Islands Performing Arts (Clayton Opera House), Thousand Islands Arts Center, & Thousand Islands Museum. The fabric of the community is uniquely represented through the creation of the St. Lawrence Tartan®, a beautiful plaid material designed by Helene Cobb of Clayton and sold for many years in her shop, Clan Woolens. The tartan, woven in Scotland, has since become the registered trademark of the Thousand Islands Museum. The green represents the cedars along the region's shorelines, the blues represent the majestic St. Lawrence River, and the red is the glowing sunsets over the islands; and
- WHEREAS,** advocacy is fostered here and instilled through the work of Save The River and Thousand Islands Land Trust in an effort to conserve the distinctive ecosystem and natural environment of the region; and
- WHEREAS,** the livelihood of this community has withstood the test of time, dating back to the Great Depression when the Clayton Manufacturing Plant kept locals from financial disaster by maintaining a workforce, the coal docks and farmland provided demanding physical labor that allowed residents to make ends meet, and today's economy flourishes with revenue generated through tourism, the boom in the wine & spirits industry, and exquisite dining; and
- WHEREAS,** our community commemorated the first 100 years in 1972 with village-wide jubilation. The Centennial anniversary was a show case by locals during an era with no cellphones or iPads, but rather prolific community pride and spirit that led to the purchase and dedication of what is now known as Centennial Park, located on the water's edge where visitors can gaze at the beautiful sunsets while reflecting on life; and
- WHEREAS,** the creation of a committee will commence the planning and execution of a historic celebration of the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Clayton and all of the community's attributes, and said committee is to consist of village board members and local leaders, at-large citizens, the village historian, and the Clayton Chamber of Commerce; and
- WHEREAS,** Watertown Savings Bank will establish a fund to accept donations and fundraising dollars in support of the celebration and will contribute the initial pledge of \$1,000 from the Cary & Janet Brick Riverside Foundation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Norma J. Zimmer, Mayor of the Village of Clayton, along with the Village of Clayton Board of Trustees, do hereby proclaim the year of 2022, as the **150th Anniversary Celebration** of the Village of Clayton, and encourage residents, both fulltime and seasonal, past and present, to recognize the contributions our community has made throughout the region, as well as in our personal lives; to express gratitude to all who have contributed to our rich history and culture; and to thank those who continue to find ways to give back to our community to ensure it will prosper for another 150 years.