

# Baker Fireman's Fountain Restoration



## Project Summary



## **Baker Fireman Fountain History** **Dedicated August 27, 1914** **Last Restored in 2000**

- Given to the Village and its firefighters in 1914 by Frank M. Baker as a memorial to his son, George Hobart Baker, who was killed in an automobile accident in 1913. Both men had been members and chief engineers of the Owego Fire Department.
- The fountain was originally purchased for \$2,000.
- Modeled by Caspar Buberl (1834-1899) and sold by J.W. Fiske. Called the “Fiske Fireman.”
- Fourteen zinc statues of fireman similar to the one in Owego are located across the United States.
- The first known statue of this design was erected in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1891.
- The theme of a fireman holding a child in the crook of his left arm reflects the format of the statue on the *New York Firemen’s Monument*, which harkens back to the iconic image of the Virgin Mary holding the baby Jesus.
- The fireman stands atop an ornate cast iron water fountain surrounded by large 18 foot pool with a decorative cast iron surround. The fountain and surround were originally cast in multiple pieces and assembled on site.



**“The fountain appropriately depicts the strength, devotion, and tenderness that is inherent in all men and women of the fire service.”** –Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey (2000)

## Assessment of Fountain's Condition in 2017

- Delta Engineers assessed the fountain in June 2017 and determined fountain to be “structurally sound” but recommended for restoration fountain be disassembled.
- Carol A. Grissom, Senior Objects Conservator at the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute, concurred stating a attention needs to be paid to each piece of the fountain.
- Three conservation firms visited and assessed the fountain with a fourth providing assessment via photos provided by Delta Engineers.
- The original brick/grout/concrete foundation and pool walls were deteriorated and required replacement.
- The water tank, piping, and pump were not in good working order and needed replacement. The pool leaked.
- Cast iron pieces were cracked, required welding, and separated at attachment points. Ornate decorative pieces were missing and/or were attached to the fountain via “zip ties.”
- The entire structure needed to be striped, sealed and repainted.
- The fountain water ring did not work and needed to be replaced.
- The electric system needed to be replaced and was unsafe.
- Sidewalks and landscaping needed updating.



# Fountain Repairs Required for Full Restoration

- Fountain disassembly/reassembly and transport to conservation treatment facility.
- Cement and concrete replacement of base/footer, pool, pool walls, stem pedestal.
- Cast iron fountain repair, welding, and missing item replacement.
- Zinc statue re-soldering.
- Paint removal: Statue via treatment chemicals. Fountain via sandblasting.
- Repainting with two part epoxy and color coating of the fountain's current colors.
- Plumbing, pipe, and pump work with tank replacement.
- Memorial walkway set with "Memorial Bricks" from "Buy a Brick" fundraising effort.
- New sidewalks with stamped concrete honoring Owego Fallen Firefighters who have died in the line of duty.
- Updated lighting with spotlights illuminating the fountain at night.



# Project Timeline

- October 17, 2016 – Village of Owego Board approval of project.
- 2017 Fundraisers/Grants generated \$40,000 for the restoration.
  - January 2017 – Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation Grant.
  - May 2017 – Hyde Estate Charitable Trust Grant.
  - June 2017 – Owego Hose Team Memorial Golf Tournament and “Fill the Fountain” at Strawberry Festival.
  - August 2017 – Elementary School Tee Shirt Contest & Fundraiser.
  - September 2017 – Chicken BBQ and Chris Franz Memorial Hose Race Fundraiser.
  - November 2017 – “Buy a Brick” Fundraising Campaign and Monte Carlo Night.
- 2018 Fundraisers/Grants to date - \$60,000 raised to date.
  - January 2018 – Present – “Buy a Brick” Campaign.
  - February 2018 – Chicken Wing Eating Contest @ Bill’s Restaurant.
  - March 2018 – Monte Carlo Night.
  - April/October 2018 – Chicken BBQ.
  - June 2018 - Owego Hose Team Memorial Golf Tournament.
- November 2017 (4) bids received in response to Request for Proposal (RFP) from qualified conservation firms.
- February 15, 2018 – Contract signed and payment made to McKay Lodge Conservation Laboratory in the amount of \$9,163.52 for formal condition assessment and treatment plan with specifications for work. Plan completed September 2019.
- June 2019 – Fountain returned by Robinson Iron.
- July 2019 – Concrete work complete.
- August 2019 – Brick work complete.
- Rededication – August 24, 2019.

## **Project Budget Estimate**

- Water work - \$5,500 estimate
- Fountain/Statute Restoration - \$51,063.52 firm
- Foundation/base Replacement - \$31,250 estimate
- New sidewalks, stamped concrete, brick walkway, updated landscaping - \$18,200 estimate
- New Lighting - \$4,000 estimate
- Contingency - \$5,587.50 estimate
- **TOTAL ESTIMATED COST - \$115,601.02 estimate**
- **\$108,338.62 spent as of 8/15/19. Does not include landscaping costs.**

\*Original budget estimate in January 2017 was \$56,000 but this did not include disassembly/reassembly of fountain and cast iron work.

## **Project Revenue Estimates**

- Fundraisers
  - 2017 - \$15,000
  - 2018 - \$53,900
  - 2019 - \$25,000 estimate
- Grants
  - 2017 Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation - \$20,000
  - 2017 Hyde Estate Charitable Trust - \$5,000
  - 2018 Grants - \$6,100 (Truman and Pomeroy)
  - 2019 Grants - \$5,000 Allstate Helping Hands Grant.
- **TOTAL REVENUE ESTIMATED: \$130,000.00**



**DONATE TODAY**

**[www.OwegoHoseTeams.com](http://www.OwegoHoseTeams.com)**

**BUY A BRICK**

**[www.OwegoHoseTeams.com/buy-a-brick](http://www.OwegoHoseTeams.com/buy-a-brick)**



**Play in the Owego Hose Team Golf Tourney**

**[www.OwegoHoseTeams/golf-tournament](http://www.OwegoHoseTeams/golf-tournament)**



**“The Owego Hose Teams are known for their firematic racing prowess throughout New York State, winning numerous trophies. Spearheading the effort to restore our historic fountain to its original glory will be the biggest trophy of them all.” –Patrick Gavin, Owego Hose Teams, Inc.**

