



HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES ON CAPE BRETON ISLAND
LIEUX HISTORIQUES NATIONAUX DU CAP-BRETON

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Countermine Tunnel

This tunnel was constructed in the late 1720s as part of the King's bastion defenses (under Verrier, I presume). It is located along the counterscarp wall, directly across the ditch from the capital line of the King's bastion. You may have noticed the small red door positioned between two sets of stairs leading to the covered way.

This tunnel is an original feature and in very good shape. It was not destroyed when the British demolished the fortifications in 1760 (it's possible that they didn't even know it was there because of siege-related rubble fall over the counterscarp wall), and was discovered by archaeologists in 1962. The interior of the tunnel is flooded to a depth of about 1.5 metres. For this reason, and because pumping didn't work, the tunnel has never been archaeologically studied beyond survey.

The tunnel is shaped like a cross, with a main shaft extending ~180 ft. outwards, beneath the glacis slope, and two side shafts extending perpendicularly off the main shaft at the ~120 ft. mark. The side shafts are about 40-50' in length. Small square chambers, slightly larger than the

tunnel profile, are located at the end of each shaft and would have been filled with explosives in time of war to blow up beneath an attacking force (thus, this tunnel was completely dry in the 18th century). This countermine was not used in either siege, but had been packed with explosives in case needed. The tunnel is about 6' high (shorter at entrance) and entirely made of stone and mortar, save for a brick arch at the narrow entranceway.

Our examination of the tunnel highlighted concerns about the flooding which will damage the structure and weaken its integrity in time -- leading to collapse. This water problem may be related to the construction of the ditch causeways in the 1930s. We're trying to address the problem in advance, so this tunnel, our most intact feature, stays with us for a long time.

****Note: We identified a cave-in at the toe of the glacis, in front of the King's bastion. This area has been barricaded at present but will soon have a wood cover and will be filled-in before site opening in the spring. This cave-in is 4' x 5' and 10' deep, and appears to be a shaft dug during 1960s excavation activity. It looks like it



was excavated to install a water pump through the side of the north countermine chamber. The shaft had been shored with rather massive planks and enclosed with a wood cap that has rotted away over time. Please stay away from this area until it had been filled in.

These images were taken (by me) on December 2, 2008 during a condition assessment of the King's Bastion countermine tunnel.



*In photos:
PWGSC - Lyne Fontaine, Sarah Green,
John Gregg (restoration architects and
heritage recorder from Ottawa) and Doug
Carter, Mason, Louisbourg.*

*NOTE***The tunnel is locked and not
accessible without CR permission and
safety equipment (+ chest waders are a
must! Even then I got soaked). Also, there
are many bats in there...*

B. Duggan

New information on Marie Marguerite Rose

We have new information about the life of Marie Marguerite Rose, recently recognized by the Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada as a person of National Historic Significance. Ken Donovan's extensive research has established her life history and the important facts that she was an emancipated slave and an innkeeper. The new document sheds light on how she conducted her business and how she was viewed by one of her clients.

In researching letters that were bound for Louisbourg during the Seven Years War but captured by British vessels, and now at the British Public Record Office, Anne Marie Lane Jonah found a letter addressed to "Madame La Batiste La Lorans negresse Demurant proche de la place de Luisbourg." (Marie Marguerite Rose's husband was Jean Baptiste Laurent.) The writer of the letter was a merchant from the Basque region. His letter showed respect and trust in Marie Marguerite Rose, Madame Laurent, outlining business transactions he requested she conduct on his behalf. This find will help us much better understand her status as a businesswoman in the town as we research all of the connections mentioned in the letter.

Louisbourg at Fort York

In an effort to broaden awareness of the Fortress of Louisbourg culinary programs the Fortress of Louisbourg and the Fortress of Louisbourg Association hosted more than 50 representatives from the Ontario Food and Wine industry for an 18th century Louisbourg food and wine

experience on November 29, 2008 at the Fort York National Historic Site, Toronto.

Three Parks Canada staff, three Fortress Louisbourg Association staff, and one contractor travelled to Toronto and worked in close cooperation with staff and associates of Fort York to recreate the Louisbourg experience in Toronto. The goal was to introduce culinary opinion makers to the experience Louisbourg has to offer and to gain their feedback on our presentation. The result was very positive.

Here is one response to our presentation from Gilberto Bojaca, founder and past president of the Canadian Association of Professional sommeliers:

“Dear Mark,

I wanted to drop you a short note to let you know not only how much we enjoyed our dinner last night, but also how much I appreciated your kind hospitality. Also would you please pass our sincere note of appreciation to Anne Marie, Susan, Ann Marie and everyone that was involved with the event; all of you should be very proud as it was very well thought through and professionally presented. History, delicious food, fine wines and friendship - what else could anyone ask for?”



2009 Parliamentary Guide Recruitment

Recruitment for the above program has begun. Information regarding the position and the online application form are available at the following address:

www.parl.gc.ca/guides

Interested students are asked to apply online and then send additional documents by mail or fax.

Those chosen as guides will be required to work from May 2 to September 7, 2009. Deadline for application this year is Friday, January 9, 2009.

Louisbourg & Area Christmas Parade

The annual Christmas Parade took place on Friday, November 28th in the Town of Louisbourg. Many townspeople came out to view the parade. Below is our submission to the parade. Thanks to the many people who helped create this float and who manned it during the parade.



Congratulations

Brian and Millie Harpell are the proud new grandparents of twins!!

Claudie Rose and Reese David were born on November 14th. Proud parents are Tracy and Ian Comeau.

Pictured with the newborns is their very proud mom!



*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year's
to Everyone!*

*Anyone wishing to contribute to the Hear Ye! Hear Ye!,
please contact Donna MacNeil at
donna.macneil@pc.gc.ca or telephone 733-3551.*

*All newsletters since 1999 are available at
<http://fortress.uccb.ns.ca/parksproject/nhscbnews.htm>*