



Les Nouvelles du Fort

The Fort News

International Cooperation

Spring 2009

**Fort La Présentation
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We value your comments,
questions and contributions.

Please do not hesitate to
e-mail us. We want to hear
from you.

Write to us at

fortlapresentation@ymail.com

**Founder's Day Weekend
July 18-19, 2009
Re-enactment & Colonial
Trade Fair
Lighthouse Point
Ogdensburg
www.fortlapresentation.net**

The Fort La Présentation Association welcomes the co-operation of the Quebec Historical Corps to expand Founder's Day Weekend July 18-19, 2009 to help prepare for the final New York State 250th French and Indian War anniversary commemoration in Ogdensburg in 2010.

The collective resources and experience allow an opportunity to hold the Founder's Day Weekend re-enactment and colonial trade fair this year on a scale approaching that anticipated for the 250th commemorative event. As many as 2,000 re-enactors and 15,000 tourists may visit Ogdensburg. Nearly 500 re-enactors have already registered for this year's event.

Members of the Quebec Historical Corps have joined the Founder's Day Weekend planning committee to share the logistical challenge of organizing this super-sized event. The 2009 event is expected to cost about \$20,000, plus the 1,000s of volunteer hours associated with the Founder's Day Weekends. The Corps has donated \$3,000 in financial assistance.

"Together, the Fort La Présentation Association and the Quebec Historical Corps have nearly three decades experience organizing and hosting re-enactments," said Barbara O'Keefe, President of the Fort La Présentation Association. "When the Battle of the Plains of Abraham re-enactment in Quebec City was cancelled, the Corps offered assistance to us, and we accepted with the clear understanding our Founder's Day Weekend would not be a restaged Plains of Abraham."

Ogdensburg's Lighthouse Point, on which Fort La Présentation stood from 1749 to 1759, has sufficient history to justify re-enactments, as it has for the past 10 years, relative to the French and Indian War. As a mission to Native Americans, La Présentation was home to warriors who joined the French campaigns against the British in the Champlain and Mohawk Valleys.

"The Quebec Historical Corps offered support in the spirit of cooperation when our services in Quebec City were no longer required," said Horst Dresler, President of the Quebec Historical Corps. "We are very familiar with Ogdensburg's historic ground that is attractive to re-enactors, so we wanted to be as helpful as our capabilities allow in the lead up to the 250th anniversary re-enactment in 2010."

When the French and Indian War was firmly in favor of the British in 1760, Fort La Présentation was abandoned and parts were used by French forces in the construction of Fort Lévis on an island three miles down the St. Lawrence River.

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The commemoration of the August 1760 Battle of Fort Lévis will be hosted by the Fort La Présentation Association at the July 17-18, 2010 Founder's Day Weekend. The 2009 re-enactment is a prelude to the 250th anniversary commemoration.

In August 1760, Fort Lévis was the site of the last battle of the French and Indian War. When the defending force of about 350 French and Canadians surrendered with honors to the Anglo-American army of 11,000, the river was open to Montreal. Montreal surrendered in September 1760, and the French and Indian War ended.

The remains of Fort Lévis were largely destroyed during the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The plans are progressing to rebuild Fort La Présentation on Lighthouse as an historic site attracting tourist and a home-away-from-home for re-enactors. ◀

War of 1812 War College

Harry Needham

The War of 1812 War College on Saturday, May 2, 2009 was a very successful one-day event organized by the Fort La Présentation Association.

A surprising 110 participants from both sides of the US/Canada border attended, of whom 65 responded to the evaluation survey. More than half the respondents lived in Canada and most of these lived in eastern Ontario. US residents were chiefly from upstate New York

The one-day college appealed to a variety of interests in the War of 1812. There were five seminars and local tours (options were the Battle of Ogdensburg or the Remington Art Museum). History and archaeological displays were set up; as well there was a continental breakfast, buffet lunch and sit-down dinner with musical entertainment.

Participants were primarily history buffs, with re-enactors and professional historians comprising other significant components. They learned of the event through newspapers, word of mouth, a variety of associations, and certain Web sites, especially that of the Association. Most were male accompanied to the event, but few saw the need for alternative programming for their companions.

While responses to questions on war college logistics were generally positive, there were a number of suggestions for improvements to

pre-conference procedures and to the college venue, systems and exhibits.

Responses to individual speakers were generally very positive, and as were the overall ratings. Most respondents said they would return for a subsequent war college but, even when they were uncertain, they still felt they would recommend the event to others. There were a wide variety of suggestions for improving the event, some of which were obviously unfeasible, while others reinforced concerns raised previously in the questionnaire.

Overall, participant responses were highly favorable. With the participants suggestions in mind, planning has begun for the second annual War of 1812 War College to be held Saturday, May 1, 2010 as we move toward the bicentennial years of the War of 1812 starting in 2012. ◀



The Excelsior Cornet Band of Rochester played early 19th century music. Their uniforms accurately represent those of New York State militia bands of the early Civil War.

The Battle of Crysler's Farm Re-enactment

The Friends of Crysler's Farm will stage three War of 1812 battle re-enactments at the Battlefield Memorial and inside Upper Canada Village July 11-12, 2009. Among these will be the 196th anniversary re-enactment of the Battle of Crysler's Farm Sun., July 12. Upper Canada Village is on County Road 2 (formerly Highway 2), 11 km (7 miles) east of Morrisburg and 29 km (18 miles) west of Cornwall, Ontario. For more information visit www.cryslersfarm.com. ◀

Research Resources

The **National Archives** of the United States has massive holdings. There are approximately 9-billion pages of textual records; 7.2 million maps, charts, and architectural drawings; more than 20 million still photographs; billions of machine-readable data sets; and more than 365,000 reels of film and 110,000 videotapes. (www.archives.gov)

The **Archives Division** of the Smithsonian Institution collects and maintains the official records of the Smithsonian, and the papers of associated individuals and organizations. Its holdings constitute the official memory of the Smithsonian and document the development of American science, art, and technology, and the growth of American museums. (<http://siarchives.si.edu>)

Library and Archives Canada collects and preserves Canada's documentary heritage, including publications, archival records, sound and audio-visual materials, photographs, artworks, and electronic documents such as websites. (www.collectionscanada.gc.ca)

ArchivesCanada.ca is a gateway to archival resources found in more than 800 repositories across Canada. Through this portal the researcher can locate documentary records, maps, photographs, sound recordings, videos and links to virtual exhibits and photo databases residing on the web. (www.archivescanada.ca)

Early Canadiana Online is a digital library providing access to more than three-million pages of Canada's printed heritage. There are more than 50,000 documents published from the time of the first European settlers up to the early 20th century. More than 250,000 pages of new content is added each year. CanadianaPlus subscribers have access to the full selection of digital content. (www.canadiana.org)

The National Archives is the UK government's official archive, containing almost 1,000 years of history, with records ranging from parchment and paper scrolls through to digital files and archived websites. The National Archives brings together the Public Record Office, the Historical Manuscripts Commission, the Office of Public Sector Information and Her Majesty's Stationery Office. (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Les Archives nationales de la France à Paris sont chargées de la collecte, de la conservation et de la communication au public, des documents produits par les administrations centrales de

l'Etat depuis le Moyen Age jusqu'à nos jours. D'autres centres des Archives nationales voient également le jour : les documents relatifs aux anciennes colonies au Centre des archives d'outre-mer, à Aix-en-Provence.

(www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr) ◀



“The Death of Wolfe”
Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada

A History of Fort Niagara

The siege of Fort Niagara by British Forces in July 1759 ended 90 years of episodic French occupation at the mouth of the Niagara River.

In 1669, the ill-fated explorer La Salle constructed defensible, but temporary quarters for his men who were to over winter. Over the next few years, relations with the Iroquois improved to where La Salle obtained their permission to use the Niagara Portage. He established a post on the bluff, now occupied by Fort Niagara, in early 1679. In less than a year the stockade, called Fort Conti after La Salle's lieutenant Henri Conti, was reduced to ashes. The tiny garrison arrived at Fort Catarqui claiming the post had been torched by Indian raiders.

Nearly a decade passed before the French built another fort. In 1687, the Marquis de Denonville, Governor of New France, raised a military expedition to eliminate the Iroquois “menace.” The campaign in the southern Genesee Valley was less than successful, but the force moved westward to establish a fort on the Niagara River.

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Fort Niagara History (cont'd)

A stockade named Fort Denonville in the governor's honor was erected in July 1687. Captain Pierre de Troyes and a 100-man garrison remained at the post while Denonville returned to Montreal.

Over the winter, Fort Denonville was ravaged by famine and illness. When the ice left Lake Ontario in spring 1688, the relief garrison found only 12 survivors. In the face of Iroquois threats and isolation, the fort was abandoned in September 1688, and the French waited almost 40 years to re-establish themselves at Niagara.

They returned in 1726 to erect a permanent fortification. The "French Castle," a two-storey, defensible stone building, was constructed by Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Lery. In July 1759, Fort Niagara was taken by British forces after a 19-day siege. The castle stands today as a reminder of the French Regime. ◀

July 3-5, 2009 Old Fort Niagara hosts 2,000 re-enactors recreating the July 1749 siege. For details visit www.oldfortniagra.com.

**Fort La Présentation Association
P.O. Box 1749
Ogdensburg, NY 13669**

Founder's Day Weekend July 18-19, 2009

**18th-Century Encampment
and Trade Fair**

**Honoring French, British & Native
Troops of the French & Indian War**

Battles re-enacted on land and water

**Heritage Demonstrations
Family Activities * Bateau Race**

**Linda Russell, 18th-century balladeer
Free Concert Library Park Ogdensburg
Friday, July 17, 7 pm**

**For more information:
www.fortlapresentation.net
or St. Lawrence Chamber of Commerce
1.877.228.7810**



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