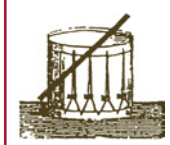


The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

v. 14 No. 2 July 2010

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The Thomsons: Early Builders at Fort York

by Stephen Otto

Few North American cities can boast, as can Toronto, the remarkable fact that seven of its eight oldest buildings dating to shortly after its founding stand today close to the downtown. These were constructed in 1814-16 within the ramparts of Fort York. Remarkable also is that descendants of the men who helped build them still live prominently among us.

In 1797, four years after the Town of York was founded, its population was enumerated at 241 persons. When nearby parts of York Township—up Yonge Street, in the Don Marsh, and Humber and Don valleys—were included, the total rose to 437 souls. Contributing heavily to the count were the Thomson brothers, Archibald, Andrew, and David who with their families numbered twenty-five; more children would be born later. The three brothers arrived in York in mid-1797 bringing sought-after skills as carpenters and masons.

Archibald (1749-1819), a carpenter, had spent the years of the American Revolution working at his trade along the frontier wherever the British military authorities needed him. For a time he served as master carpenter at Fort Vincennes in present-day Indiana. He preceded his brothers to Upper Canada, settling here in 1782 and residing in the Bay of Quinte area and in nearby Kingston. In the latter town he erected its first Anglican church and a house for the prominent loyalist Sir John Johnson. Before coming to York Archibald also lived in Newark (Niagara), where he kept an inn and built the first district jail.

Andrew (1751/2-1823) and David (1763-1834), after emigrating in 1796 to Canada from their ancestral home in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, lived briefly with Archibald in Newark. Within days of their moving to York both found work bricking up the walls of the first Parliament Buildings at Berkeley and Front streets. These were originally intended to be wings of the lieutenant-governor's residence, but were repurposed as quickly as they were completed. An account book kept by David Thomson,



The red-brick building seen above the ramparts is the Commandant's Quarters, for which David and Archibald Thomson had the building contracts. This detail is from Robert Irvine's *View of York*, c.1816. Red box on original painting indicates area shown in the detail. (Credit: Art Gallery of Ontario, ID 2946, Gift of the descendants of the late Mrs. Stephen Heward).



now found in the Scarborough Historical Society's archives, shows that John Thomson (likely Andrew's son by his first marriage) worked alongside his father and uncle.

Little is known about what jobs Andrew and David undertook after the Parliament Buildings. In 1798 Peter Russell, administrator of the Province in Simcoe's absence, asked "Mr. Thomson the mason" to help estimate the cost to complete his house, "Russell Abbey." There was also plenty of work to be had building foundations, hearths, chimneys, and wells. But no other large masonry structures were undertaken in York before 1808 when the stone lighthouse on Gibraltar Point was begun and Quetton St. George, a merchant, built a big brick house at King and Frederick streets.

Carpenters like Archibald, however, were kept busy building the wooden houses and shops that were the common stock in York during the first few decades of its existence. In 1798 Provincial Secretary William Jarvis retained Archibald to secure timber and erect the frame for his house at the southeast corner of Sherbourne and Adelaide streets. Four years later the merchant William Allan hired him to cost and construct a dwelling. William Chewett, a senior official in the surveyor-general's office, followed suit in 1803.

For whatever reason—a scarcity of work or perhaps a desire to provide better for their families—David and Andrew sought grants of land in Scarborough, where Archibald already owned 700 acres, and began farming. In 1802 David, who was already living there, was also given 400 acres; he and his wife Mary are widely regarded as the township's first settlers. Andrew received 400 acres too. All the Thomson brothers had big families: Archibald and Elizabeth had eleven children; David and Mary also had eleven; and Andrew who was twice-married had at least twelve.

During the War of 1812 no fewer than a dozen Thomsons served in the Third Regiment of York Militia. David was by far the most eminent of them. He was present at Detroit and Queenston in 1812. When the Americans attacked York in 1813 he ranked as the Captain of a company. His signature and those of Ensigns Andrew and Edward Thomson appeared on the Terms of Capitulation following the Battle of York. Together with their kinsmen they were then released on parole for the duration of hostilities.

The war ended effectively in December 1814 under a treaty negotiated at Ghent in Belgium. This news reached York in February 1815. By then rebuilding the fort was well under way on the present site, west of Garrison Creek. The work was undertaken by a detachment of the Royal Sappers and Miners to plans by Lt. Col. Ralph Bruyères. Members of the local building trades were involved also. They welcomed the work, not only because of the scale of the project but because they were paid in cash.

The first buildings, completed in late 1813, were Blockhouses Numbers 1 and 2, timber structures clad in protective weatherboards, still extant. The next season five splinter-proof timber barracks, demolished in the mid-19th century, were built along the south ramparts. Also a brick powder magazine. Then in 1815 construction proceeded on five masonry buildings: the Commandant's Quarters (which burned in 1869), an Officers' Brick Barracks and Mess Establishment (one building but originally having no internal connection

between the parts), a massive stone powder magazine, and a pair of brick soldiers' barracks. Four of the masonry buildings still stand at the west end of the site.

For the Commandant's house Archibald made the window frames, sashes, mouldings, architraves, and paneled doors. His brother David took the contract for the masonry and was paid for laying an impressive 106,500 bricks. John Thomson was employed

initially laying bricks for the Officers' Mess, then switched and laid 40,000 bricks for the adjoining Officers' Barracks. Throughout the summer of 1815, Andrew and David as well as David's sons Richard and James were among the crew that built the Stone Magazine. Andrew left that job in August, after he won the contract for the masonry and carpentry work for the brick North and South Soldiers' Barracks inside the west gate.

The Thomsons have lost none of their lustre with time. Archibald was the father of Hugh Thomson who founded the *Upper Canada Herald* in Kingston, which in the 1820s had the largest circulation of any newspaper in the province. Farley Mowat is descended from Hugh. The late Roy Thomson, first Lord Thomson of Fleet, and his family who have been among the City's leading citizens look to both Archibald and David as their forefathers, thanks to the marriage of two distant cousins in the 1860s.



The Thomson family was involved in the 1815 construction of the four brick and stone buildings at the west end of the fort, seen here from the south. The South and North Soldiers' Barracks are to the left, the Officers' Brick Barracks and Mess Establishment in the centre, and the Stone Magazine to the right. (Credit: ntvwebfolio.com)

Memorial Ceremony for Royal Newfoundland Regiment

By HCol Geordie Beal, CD



HCol Beal gives the Invocation as LCol J. McEwen, Major A. Best and members of the Drill Team and Fencibles listen. (Photo courtesy of Scott James)

On Sunday 25 April members of the 48th Highlanders of Canada gathered in Victoria Memorial Square to honour the soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who fell nearly 200 years ago at Fort York. In April 1813, 97 members of the Royal Newfoundland Fencibles bravely fought against the American invasion of York. Twelve Fencibles were killed, 7 wounded, and 17 taken prisoner. Those killed were buried in Victoria Square, the city's first cemetery established in 1794 by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, whose young daughter Katherine was the first burial. As the military cemetery for Toronto until 1863, Victoria Square saw some 400 burials. Today the park is the site of a monument to the War of 1812-1814 sculpted by Walter Seymour Allward.

The Royal Newfoundland Regiment traces its origins to 1795, when Major Thomas Skinner of the Royal Engineers, stationed in St. John's, was ordered to raise a regiment. In the War of 1812 soldiers of the regiment fought as marines in battles on the Great Lakes, as infantry in Michigan, and in the battle to defend York. During the First World War the battalion-sized regiment was the only North American unit to fight in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915. Later in the war the regiment was virtually wiped out at Beaumont Hamel on 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme. Since 1949 it has been a militia or reserve unit of the Canadian Forces.

Under an overcast sky and a light drizzle the padre of the 48th and of 1 RCR, Captain the Reverend Greg Bailey, conducted the ceremony. As luck would have it, people gathering in the park noted a squad of re-enactors at Fort York dressed in 1812 period uniforms, including the uniform of the Fencibles. HCol Geordie Beal asked if they would participate in the ceremonies, as their presence was most fitting, bringing history to life across the two centuries. Agreement was prompt and enthusiastic.

The ceremony began with HCol Beal giving an Invocation. Padre Bailey then read the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Prayer and the wreath was placed solemnly at the base of the Allward monument. Pipe Major Laing and the band's bugler played Last Post, Reveille, and the Lament as a small crowd watched silently in the rain.

As the ceremony closed it was not difficult to sense the bridging of time, and of the distance from Newfoundland to Toronto. Tradition, honour, and service have remained the constant.

Building Roundup

The Pan Am Summer Games in 2015 are driving the schedule for **rebuilding the Strachan Avenue bridge** over the Georgetown rail corridor and for the lowering of tracks that is part of upgrading GO Transit's service between Union Station, Pearson Airport, and beyond. In Fall 2009, approval was given to an environmental assessment of these improvements. Enabling work—relocating utilities, rail signals, and tracks—will commence in November 2010. However, the main part of construction will begin in Summer 2011, and continue to completion in Fall 2014. Throughout almost this whole period detours will keep traffic moving on Strachan. Also, to help people deal with the dislocation, GO Transit has opened an office where they can ask questions and get more information (Carmen Nisbet, 416-869-3600, ext. 5165).

AECOM, a global engineering firm, has been hired by the City to manage the design and construction of the **Fort York Pedestrian and Cycling** bridge across the Hamilton and Georgetown rail corridors east of Strachan Avenue. A progressively-engineered S-shaped structure will link the Garrison Common west of Fort York with Stanley Park on the south side of Wellington Street. Currently the project is in the design phase, with Montgomery Sisam Architects of Toronto having been retained by AECOM for some of this work. Construction tenders will be called in October 2010, and a contract awarded before the end of the year. Building the bridge will begin early in 2011 and is expected to be completed in May 2012.

Rebuilding the Bathurst Street bridge is the third bridging project in Fort York's vicinity. In 2008 an environmental assessment was approved for the southern, viaduct section between Fort York Boulevard and Front Street, allowing preliminary plans to be put before the City's Design Review Panel. Unimpressed, the panel sent the design back for reworking. The TTC took that opportunity to ask for a change in the project scope to provide a dedicated transit right-of-way across the early 20th century steel-truss bridge spanning the rail corridor, avoiding the need for streetcars to share the road with cars, as at present. Options for widening or twinning the heritage truss have been studied, but nothing is approved yet. The City would need approval from the railways for any new structure. Although the heritage truss is grandfathered at its present height above the tracks, a new



bridge may have to be higher to give enough clearance for the future electrification of the rail lines. Having to raise the heritage bridge would add to the costs and complexity of the project. Optimistically, construction on this project could start in 2015, after the Strachan bridge is rebuilt and the Pan Am Games are over.

Currently the land reserved for *June Callwood Park* between Fleet Street and Fort York Boulevard is being cleared of interim uses so preparatory work on the park can occur this Fall. The flanking streets—Bastion on the east and Gzowski on the west—have been or are being built by the developers of the adjacent lands, Plazacorp and H&R, and will be turned over to the City shortly. However, it will be early 2011 before major work on the park begins. Welcome and generous help with the landscaping costs is coming from the Toronto Parks & Trees Foundation, the Francine & Robert Barrett Fund at the Toronto Community Foundation, and the Garden Club of Toronto. The park is scheduled to open in 2012.

Developments are under way on three of the four corners at Bathurst Street and Fort York Boulevard. At the northeast corner on City-owned *Blocks 32 and 36* (Railway Lands West neighbourhood), Toronto Community Housing Corp. (TCHC) has joined with Context Development to build 891 suites for the condo, rental, and social housing markets plus some commercial units. On Block 32 TCHC is planning a 41-storey tower joined to a lower podium on three sides. On Block 36 next door, Context's Library District has a 29-storey tower in the southeast corner flanked by two lower structures set at 90-degrees to one another. The building stretching along Fort York Boulevard will house at the Bathurst corner the 100th branch in Toronto's public library system, which will appear as a free-standing building. Many units in Block 36 will overlook a new park extending under the Bathurst bridge and linking Fort York to the so-called Northern Linear Park, a grassy strip running along the edge of the rail corridor between Bathurst and Spadina.

At the southeast corner of Bathurst and Fort York Boulevard in *Blocks 33 and 37* (Railway Lands West), Concord Adex will be bringing its experience gained from developing several condo towers near Spadina to create an as yet unnamed complex of residential and commercial buildings. In early June, as a first step to refining its plans, the developer held a design workshop involving architects, city planners, fort staff, representatives from Councillor Vaughan's office, and the Friends of Fort York.

At the southwest corner of Bathurst and Fort York Boulevard, overlooking the fort, Vancouver's Onni Group is marketing the first phase of its Garrison at the Yards development

on the north half of *Block 6* (Fort York neighbourhood). It will consist of 207 condominium units in an 11-storey tower. Eventually three more towers of a greater height will be built on Onni's lands south of the Gardiner Expressway.

Not to be forgotten in this roundup is *The Fort York Visitor Centre* reported elsewhere on pages 5 and 6 of this issue

Who Goes There? Is That a Joke?

One of our Friends, Chris Raible of Creemore, has sent the following item from an issue of *The Colonial Advocate* [York, U.C.], 22 March 1827:

"Young Mr. Maitland, son to his excellency [Lt. Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland], disguised himself one night last week in ragged and uncouth apparel, for the purpose it is said of ascertaining whether the guard at the south side of the garrison was on duty. He climbed up the bank, the sentinel was on duty, and hearing some one approaching ran for his musket, presented his bayonet to the stranger, who cried for mercy, and told his name. The sentinel however did not permit him to enter the garrison by the ascent. He had to go round to the gate and give the regular countersign previous to his admission."

'Young Mr. Maitland' was Capt. Peregrine Maitland, the lieutenant governor's oldest son whose mother died when he was an infant. In 1815 Lady Sarah Lennox became his stepmother when his father remarried. Taking leave on half-pay in 1826-27 from the 74th (Highland) Regiment of Foot, Capt. Maitland joined his father's staff at Government House, York. Notwithstanding what the newspaper said, his probing of Fort York's security may have been inspired as much by boredom as by an interest in gathering military intelligence.

The Friends Advertise In SPACING

For the last two years the Friends have taken full-page advertisements in *Spacing* magazine asking “What is Fort York?” and providing some of the answers. *Spacing* is a Toronto-based, award-winning magazine published usually four times a year that has the public realm as its focus. We were attracted to the profile of its readers—younger, publicly-minded folks as well as movers in political and planning circles—as a group who probably had not connected much with Fort York since

grade school, but who were open to learn more now. The first six display ads appear in the thumbnails above. A seventh ad in the issue of Summer 2010, will conclude this series, after which we will assess its impact before going forward again. Matt Blackett, the publisher of *Spacing*, is an active director of the Friends of Fort York but took no part in our discussions leading up to the decision to advertise. Once it was taken, however, both he and Shawn Micallef, a senior editor at *Spacing* and member of the Fort York Management Board, pitched in enthusiastically to design layouts and write copy for the ads.



A Walk through the Visitor Centre

by Kevin Plummer

The new Visitor Centre is bound to give Fort York a higher profile within the city. Prominent signage and easier access from Fleet and Bathurst streets will boost visitation, while the new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the rail corridors east of Strachan Avenue will connect the fort with neighbourhoods to the north. In this second of a series of articles on the Visitor Centre and its setting, Kevin Plummer takes us on a walkabout of the building and explains its impressive features as visitors will experience them.

The main vehicular access to the site will be the same as now, off Fort York Boulevard, but parking will be moved from its present location on the Common to under the Gardiner Expressway, close to the Visitor Centre. Overflow and bus parking may be west of the Armoury.

Along the south side of the Visitor Centre where the Gardiner forms an arcade over the entrance plaza, the landscaping mimics the old wooden wharves and grassy shallows once found along Toronto's lakefront, recalling the original lakeshore. Guests will enter the Visitor Centre by passing under one of the massive rusting-steel slabs each weighing one ton—some of which are flipped up—that form an escarpment-like wall along the facade

The challenges of building on the edge of an important archaeological site have led to the creation of a linear building, stretching along a roughly east-west axis. Its main public entry—on the south near the approximate centre—acts as a de facto demarcation between the public areas and the administrative offices within.

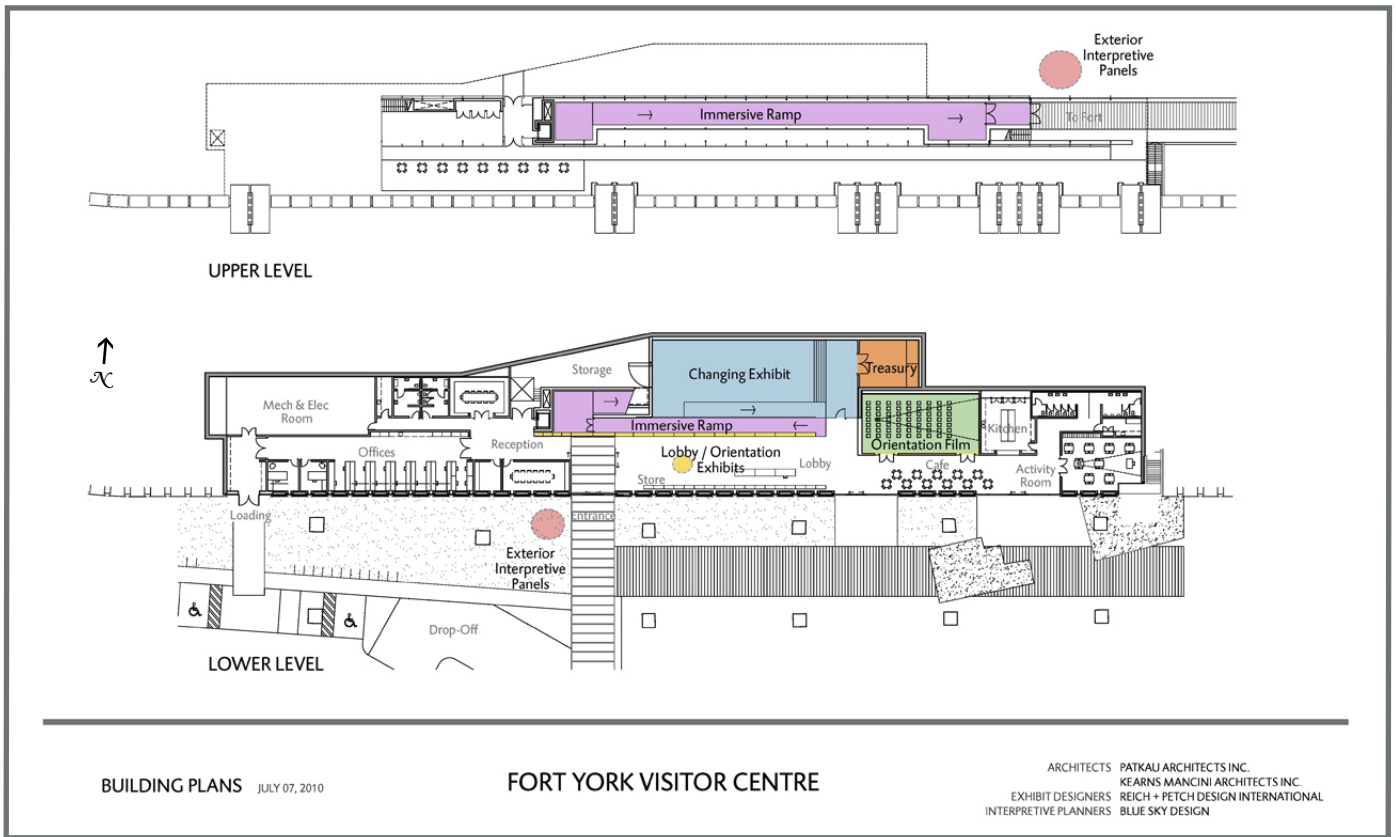
Inside on the left is the Volunteer Office, a space for the use of groups like the Evergreen gardeners, Friends of Fort York, and Fort York Management Board. Next, there is a Meeting Room which can be used by staff, site-based volunteers, and community groups. Across the way the Resource Centre will house the fort's substantial library. Behind closed doors at the west end of the entry hall will be site offices and work spaces for curatorial staff and special events coordinators.

Most visitors, however, will not be concerned with the fort's administration. They will turn right into the reception area to be greeted there by staff at the desk beside the retail store. The entire north wall of this lobby area will be used for interpretation or displays orienting visitors to the site in its greater context.

Almost every square foot of the main floor has been designed to function as both a museum and community centre. And so, while the lobby and common areas occupying roughly the southern half of the building may appear narrow on a plan, in reality they will be quite open to ensure the greatest ease of movement and flexibility for after-hours usage. The cafe, with seating indoors and out, promises to be a hub of activity both during the fort's regular operations as well as after hours, while the kitchen will allow on-site catering for special events.

Next to the cafe, at the building's extreme east end, is a room designed to accommodate a variety of activities. This Multifunction Space will be the first stop for school groups where teachers can orientate classes or lead activities. In the evenings, it can serve as a second meeting room for community groups. To the north of the Multifunction Space is one set of public washrooms. Another, nearer the front entrance, is located on the north side of the lobby.

Visitors will begin their tour of the fort in the sixty-person Orientation Theatre. After an audio-visual presentation they



will go into the nearby interpretive areas in the north half of the building, either descending a few stairs or a ramp with a very gentle slope.

In the changing-exhibits Gallery—an area 2,000 square feet in size with twelve-foot ceilings and precast concrete walls—the opening show will focus on the War of 1812 Bicentennial and life in Fort York during the war. Future exhibits will feature other stories from the Fort’s long history, such as the First World War. The entire interpretive area (including the behind-the-scenes exhibit prep area) is built to ‘Class A’ museum standards, meaning that the Visitor Centre will be able to borrow exhibits and host travelling shows.

At the east end of the Gallery level is the Treasury, a specially-lit, secure room that will house the fort’s most precious artifacts on a permanent or semi-permanent basis, objects such as the York Militia Colours and wooden boxes made by prisoners jailed for their parts in the 1837 Rebellion.

From just outside the Gallery visitors will move up a very gentle ramp—six feet wide and one hundred feet long—that first heads west and then, widening slightly, scissors back east. This immersive ramp, known as the Time Tunnel, will use images projected on the walls, floor and ceiling, in conjunction with audio tracks, integrated lighting, and complex A/V media to immerse visitors in sights and sounds as they walk through six episodes of the Battle of York. The experience will culminate with the explosion of the Grand Magazine, which effectively ended the battle in April 1813.

At the end of the Time Tunnel visitors will exit the Centre. Some will then proceed over a boardwalk directly to the

fort’s main gates while others will choose to go up an exterior staircase to the Viewing Platform overlooking the Garrison Common. From the Platform they may observe an archaeological dig if one is underway. In any event, the battle will be explained as they look out over the very ground on which it took place. It is now buried beneath the asphalt of the parking lot.

The Viewing Platform will be contained within the Ghost Screen, a wall of perforated metal which will allow for images (possibly a battle reenactment or other historic scenes) to be projected on it from afar in the style of son-et-lumière. This lightweight steel structure will appear to float above the Common.

The platform will also be fully serviced to allow events there to be catered, as will the adjacent green roof that continues the Garrison Common overtop the ground floor of the Visitor Centre. There will be benches and tables on the green roof. The metal slabs forming the building’s south wall will project above the roofline to act as a guardrail. Repeat visitors and neighbours out for a stroll will not need to pass through the orientation rooms and Time Tunnel to reach the Common. Exterior stairs at the east end, and a path on the west, will provide them with a shortcut up to the twenty-acre grassed park.

With the new pedestrian bridge over the rail corridor to the north, the city’s growing network of bicycle trails, and the expanded scope of the Garrison Common as a venue for special events, the Visitor Centre promises to be a community hub that will welcome countless visitors.

News From

The Birthplace of Toronto

Contributions from the Staff at the Fort

Administrator's Report

by David O'Hara, Site Administrator

While the design of the Visitor Centre proceeds through the schematic phase (see Plummer page 5), several parallel projects are also being advanced. Among other things, staff continue to work with Reich + Petch International and Blue Sky Design on the exhibit components for the Visitor Center. The next stages of archaeology (Archaeological Services Inc.) will be initiated over the summer, food and retail components are being investigated further, and work on site servicing and access/circulation is being undertaken.

Within the walls of the fort, the floor of the Stone Magazine will be repaired this year prior to the installation of the exhibits, the exterior of the Officers' Blue Barracks has recently been painted, and three new windows, meticulously reconstructed by Chris Laverton of our Cultural Assets section, will be installed in the North Soldiers' Barracks likely by summer's end.

On the staffing side we can report that Richard Gerrard, who holds the position of Registrar with the City's Collection and Conservation Unit, will take on the role of our War of 1812 Bicentennial Historian; Freda Kemp, from the Sponsorship and Marketing Group, has been retained as Project Manager of Fundraising and Marketing for the Bicentennial; Cheryl Dilisi comes to the fort from Parks, Forestry and Recreation as our new Museum Store Attendant; and Alok Sharma joins us from Harbourfront Centre to take on the role of Supervisor of Special Events for the Bicentennial and Fort York.

On the programming side, working closely with Friends of Fort York Director Eva Macdonald, staff and volunteers have successfully planned, designed, and constructed the historic garden in the north-west bastion, and on April 27 under the leadership of Management Board Member Brian MacLean and working with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, Fort York once again hosted an enhanced citizenship ceremony with the swearing-in of 44 new Canadians from 30 different countries. The work of Bridget Wranich and dedicated volunteers Mya Sangster, John Hammond, Ellen Johnstone, Elizabeth Baird, Joan Derblich, Kathryn Tanaka, and Roland Wardle was profiled in Ian Brown's article on the Georgian Dinner in the *Globe & Mail* on July 3.

Curator's Choice: David Spittal on Wedgwood's Botanical Dinnerware

One of the artifacts most frequently found in archaeological excavations at Fort York is a broken piece of pottery. Almost 20% of the 250,000 items recovered so far, some 50,000 pieces, are fragments of ceramic plates, bowls, and serving dishes. These include rare tin and salt glazed earthenwares from the late 18th century, early 19th century creamwares and pearlware, and later, common white earthenwares.

Among the most unusual ceramic pieces must be the delicate tablewares found behind the Officers' Brick Barracks and Mess Establishment in 1984. These distinctive dishes are each decorated with two different botanical drawings. The pattern name is *Botanical* or *Botanical Flowers* manufactured by the famous Wedgwood factory in the first quarter of the 19th century. Each dish is impressed with the name WEDGWOOD on the bottom. Made of bone china, a much finer ware than most of the other pottery found at the fort, these dishes, along with a small number of porcelain fragments, show that expensive tablewares were purchased and used by regimental officers during their stay at Fort York.

Our pattern is unusual because of its bright orange colour when almost all transfer-printed ceramics of the early 19th century were in blue, mimicking the hand painted oriental ceramics that were so popular throughout Europe in the Georgian and Victorian periods. The plant designs were printed over the glaze, making these vessels subject to wear from daily use and washing.



Ceramics with the design under the glaze are less susceptible to fading and wear. The interlacing ovals on the rim are also overglaze, as is the heavy, hand painted gold line.

In addition to their noteworthy colour and decorating technique, the *Botanical* dishes stand out because of the number of sherds found in one place. In fact, it is not the number of pieces found but the number of nearly complete vessels. A half-dozen dinner plates, several serving platters, and several broad soup plates were recovered, all of them nearly complete.

This is very unusual in the archaeological record where each broken dish is represented by only one small fragment. Complete or even nearly complete dishes are very rare. In this case, a large part of a dinner service was found in one spot. We can only surmise why these dishes were in the midden behind the Officers' Mess. It seems apparent that a whole set, or at least many dishes from one set, were thrown away at the same time and in the same place. The breaks on the dishes show that they were not broken before they were discarded.

The reason for discarding an expensive set of dishes is hard to imagine. One explanation is that they were thrown away by their officer owners when the regiment left Fort York and returned to England. Table services like this one, however, were normally owned by a regimental mess and would have accompanied that mess wherever it went.

The archaeological context of the collection suggests that the dishes and other artifacts found in the midden were deposited in the 1830s. They were probably not owned by the regiment currently interpreted in the Officers' Mess, the 15th Yorkshire (East Riding) Regiment who occupied the fort between 1834 and 1837, but by one of the regiments that served immediately before: the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment (1833-1834) or the 79th (Cameron Highland) Regiment (1831-1833).

It is important to note here that a devastating outbreak of cholera occurred in 1832 in the Town of York and that the garrison was not exempt from this disease. Indeed, many sick were housed in the buildings of the fort during this time. A regiment experiencing this dread disease might have abandoned some of its possessions as it left, throwing away entire sets of dishes. Or the next regiment arriving at the fort may have found dishes and other articles still in the mess and, fearing the spread of disease, discarded the contents. Additional artifacts in the midden include large fragments of blue printed ceramics, lead crystal glass, finely painted porcelain teacup sherds, a creamware tureen lid, bottles, and many other items.

Of the fifty or so identified patterns of decorated pottery found at the fort, Wedgwood's *Botanical* has actually been recorded in more places than any other pattern. Seen so far in at least fifteen different layers and places in the fort, *Botanical* has been found not only in the midden behind the Officers' Mess but as far away as Blockhouse Number 2. The presence of this distinctive pattern in so many places shows the complex ways in which artifacts and soils are deposited and re-deposited on an archaeological site.

The botanical prints on these dishes illustrate the widespread passion of Georgian and Victorian Britain to collect, classify, and illustrate new plant and animal species. A table in the Officers' Mess set with this service would have provided a virtual herbarium of plants from around the world at every meal. The genus on the 12-inch serving platter illustrated here is probably *Carissa* (Natal Plum).

Once again Fort York reveals to the curious a rare glimpse of early 19th century life .

Employed by the Provincial Government from 1973 until 1987 as a field archaeologist, David came to Fort York as part of the Fort York Restoration Project and was Director of Archaeology from 1995 until 2003. He is now a Senior Project Coordinator with the Cultural Assets unit, Toronto Culture.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride

On May 17 as part of their 2010 tour schedule the RCMP performed their exciting precision ride on the grounds of Fort York National Historic Site. Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone takes the salute in the larger image below.

(Photos courtesy of Kathy Mills)



2010 | Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Richard Haynes, Site Co-ordinator at Fort York

Ongoing Summer Programming

Daily throughout July and August, 10 am to 5 pm

Thrill to the booming of the cannon, the firing of muskets, the vibrant colours of the uniformed guard, and the lively music of fife and drum. These are the sights and sounds of Fort York this summer. Visitors will enjoy hourly demonstrations of military music, drill, musketry, and artillery performed by students representing the Canadian Fencible Regiment that was garrisoned at the fort at the end of the War of 1812. Highlights include the cannon firing at 12:30 pm and the music of the Fort York Drums (a fife & drum corps) in the afternoons.

Regular admission weekdays, free admission weekends and Simcoe Day

AUGUST

Simcoe Day

Mon. August 2, 10 am to 5 pm

Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe founded the town of York (Toronto) in 1793 and was the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada (Ontario). Come learn about the birthplace of Toronto and thrill to the sounds of musketry, cannons, and the fife and drum. The Fort George Guard joins us for this great day.

Free admission

Toronto: City of Words

Tues. August 3, 7:30 pm

This illustrated talk by Sarah Elton and photographer Kevin Robbins is a unique tour through Toronto's landscapes, streets, and souls. Their illustrated book, *City of Words: Toronto through Her Writers' Eyes*, opens up the city as our writers have discovered it. "There is no city that does not dream," writes poet and novelist Anne Michaels, and *City of Words* is a literary key to all we've been and all we're becoming.

Cost \$9 (including HST)

Fort York Festival

Great Voices, a theatrical production on the grounds of Fort York

August 4 to 13 and 16 to 20, 7:30 pm

Written by nationally known playwrights Rick Salutin and Dale Hamilton, *Great Voices* is a 90-minute site-specific theatrical collage of historical figures, including Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe, Tecumseh, Laura Second, and Susanna Moodie, combined with campfires, songs, fireworks, and food animating Toronto where the city began, at Fort York. Original music composed by songwriter James Gordon is sung by the composer and by members of the Fort York Guard. Produced by Sid Bruyn.

Cost \$25 (including HST). For more information go to www.festivalatthefort.ca

Conscious Food Festival

Sat. and Sun. August 14 and 15, 11 am to 7 pm

The Conscious Food Festival is Toronto's first and only outdoor collaborative festival that promotes the sustainable food movement while introducing thousands of people to food that is local, natural, healthy, and delicious. Experience a range of activities such as tastings, exhibits, seminars/debates, and an urban farm, that will connect local restaurants, local farms, and local food suppliers to your table.

COST: \$18 in advance and \$23 at the gate for Adults, \$12 in advance and \$15 at the gate for Youth (13-18 yrs), Children 12 and under are free.

Admission prices include 5 food/drink sample vouchers (\$5 value).

Go to www.consciousfoodfestival.ca for further details

SEPTEMBER

The Queen's York Rangers (1st American Regiment) present: The Battle of Brandywine Parade

Sat. September 11, 4 to 6:15 pm



Join us to commemorate the Battle of Brandywine and the Battle of Queenston Heights. The parade will feature the The Queen's York Rangers, Regimental Pipes, Flute and Drum Corps, the Old Guard who represent the unit's Revolutionary War period and two Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps affiliated with the Regiment. There will also be military displays and a show by the Queen's York Rangers re-enactors. In attendance will be

The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, The Honourable David C. Onley, Lt. General Leslie and Major General Fraser.

Free admission

When the Landlords Became Tenants

The 1828 Council at Fort York with the Mississauga

Mon. September 27, 7:30 pm

On 30 January 1828, three leading Mississauga chiefs – Ajetance from the Credit River to the west of York; Sunday from the Bay of Quinte to the east; and Paudash from Rice Lake to the northeast – met in Council at Fort York. The Indian Agent quickly came to the point. Bluntly, he informed the Mississauga that, contrary to the Mississaugas' own understanding, the British now owned the land on which their communities stood.

In his illustrated talk Donald Smith, recently retired from the University of Calgary and the author of *Sacred Feathers* (University of Toronto Press, 1987), a biography of Mississauga chief Peter Jones, will review the history of the Mississauga in the early and mid-19th century. Peter Jones's minutes of the 1828 Fort York Council provide the starting point for his illustrated talk.

Responding to Professor Smith's presentation will be a review of the 180 years of Mississauga history since 1828 by a historian and community leader from today's Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (www.newcreditfirstnation.com).

Cost \$9 (including HST)

Fife and Drum is a quarterly publication of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common



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www.toronto.ca/culture

 **HISTORIC FORT YORK**
THE BIRTHPLACE OF TORONTO

Regular admission to Fort York: Adult: \$8.61, Senior (65+) & Youth (13 – 18 yrs.): \$4.31, Children: \$3.23, Children (5 and under) FREE (all prices include HST, where applicable)