

# Celebrating Fort Anne

100 years as a National Historic Site... more than 3000 years of history!



1883 Blockhouse watercolour, A.E. Munro



1914 First tour guide/final soldier - Andrew Gilmore



1917 Soldier



1955 Pageantry of Acadia



1934-35 Foundation Restoration, Officers' Quarters

In 2017, Fort Anne celebrates 100 years since it became the foundation of Canada's system of national historic commemoration. However, its story reaches back more than 3,000 years, weaving together a tapestry of history that includes the Mi'kmaq, French, Scots, British and Acadians. Over the centuries, it has been a camp site, farmland, seat of government and battlefield, and it remains an outstanding example of a *Vauban-style* fortification.

In Southwestern Nova Scotia, in the beautiful town of Annapolis Royal, looking over the rolling hills of Fort Anne towards the peaceful Annapolis Basin on a calm morning, you may sense the legacy of this place. Part of the traditional homeland of the Mi'kmaq, called Kespukwitk, for thousands of years, this land continues to hold great cultural significance. In recent centuries, this was one of the most hotly contested pieces of land on the entire continent as a succession of Scottish, French, and English settlers clashed over this place, often drawing the Mi'kmaq into their conflict. The Mi'kmaq fought to preserve their way of life amid the constant upheavals.

The fifth fort on the site was completed in 1713, and the British governed Nova Scotia from the fort until Halifax was founded in 1749. It was the site of thirteen attacks, seven changes of hands, and the ratification of the Treaty of Boston, between the British and the Mi'kmaq, in 1726 and 1728. The fort continued to play a military role until 1854. Its buildings gradually deteriorated until the

Officers' Quarters was the only remaining barracks.

In the 1880s, the fort's blockhouse was torn down without prior notice. Parks Canada site manager, Lillian Stewart explains, "This galvanized the citizens who successfully petitioned the Government of Canada so that on January 24, 1917, through an Order-in-Council, Fort Anne became the first operated national historic site in the country. Its designation was early in a protection and conservation movement that now counts almost 1,000 historic places being protected across the country." It is also of note that by 1825, "Fort Anne" became the generally accepted name; however, during the process to designate Fort Anne, a controversy over its name was the impetus for the formation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board which continues the work of recommending heritage designations.

Today, Fort Anne continues to be a community gathering place. Local residents and visitors alike have a strong connection to the site enjoying the grounds for exercise and relaxation. Thousands are inspired to gather together for special events including Canada Day and Natal Day celebrations.

In preparation for 2017 celebrations, Parks Canada staff worked on several projects, such as a major restoration on the walls of the Officers' Quarters, an innovative new exhibit and a revitalized visitor experience. Parks Canada project manager, Ted

Dolan, explained, "The new exhibit tells the history of what the site was, and what it is today. Through working with the communities that played major roles in the history of the site such as the Mi'kmaq, Acadians, and African Nova Scotians, the new exhibit reflects the social, cultural and military story of all of the peoples involved in shaping the site, the town, and ultimately the country. Innovative technology allows visitors to tailor their experience and delve deeper into the stories that interest them the most."

In addition to the new exhibit, favourite experiences continue like the Parks Canada *Xplorers* program for children and The Historical Association of Annapolis Royal's candlelight graveyard tour of the Garrison Graveyard, home to some of the oldest English gravestones in Canada.

2017 is a special year to celebrate not only Fort Anne but all national

historic sites. Parks Canada cares for 171 of Canada's nearly 1,000 designated sites where visitors can walk in the footsteps of history and savour the essence of Canada. As a special bonus, in honour of Canada turning 150, entry is free to all Parks Canada operated national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas. Visitors of all ages are invited to take advantage of this special opportunity to celebrate Canada and discover, or re-discover, the story of Fort Anne from centuries past to today.

[www.parkscanda.gc.ca/fortanne](http://www.parkscanda.gc.ca/fortanne)



1928 Unveiling of Samuel Vetch plaque



1930's Aerial view of grounds and Annapolis Royal



1950 Visitors enjoying Fort Anne



1895 Fort Anne Bridge