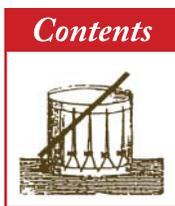


The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

v. 13 No. 1 Mar. 2009



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Brockton's Name Recalls Isaac Brock's Cousin James

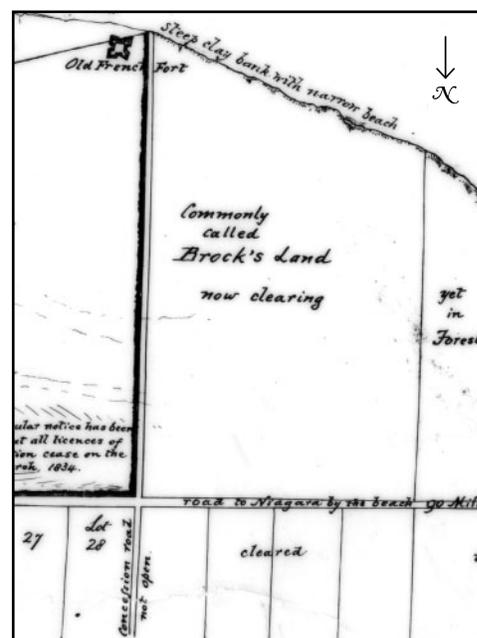
Dan Brock, John England, Gillian Lenfestey, Stephen Otto, Guy St-Denis and Stuart Sutherland contributed to this article.

Many ordinary people enjoy more than Andy Warhol's fifteen minutes of fame before resuming their modest lives. James Brock's time in the limelight of Upper Canada lasted about fifteen months from October 1811 until late 1812, but left a lasting mark on Toronto. Paradoxically, his imprint on the city in the name of 'Brockton' has proven more indelible than Brock Street, as lower Spadina was called until 1884 in honour of his famous kinsman, Sir Isaac Brock.

Frequently said to be Isaac's brother or nephew, James was actually a first cousin. Isaac's father John and James's father Henry were brothers. James was born at St. Peter Port, Guernsey, on April 3 1773, to Henry Brock and Suzanne de Sausmarez, both members of prominent families. He was raised in comfortable circumstances in "Belmont," a large house with extensive grounds, and likely began his education in one of the local clergy-run schools where he was taught in French, the working language on the island until the late 19th century. At about age ten he may have left Guernsey to go to school in England. If his father hoped James would follow him into commerce, he was disappointed; by the time the lad was eighteen he had decided to enter the army.

In early 1791 he was gazetted a Cornet, the lowest rank of officer, in the 2nd [Queens] Regiment of Dragoon Guards. Likely his father purchased his commission for £500 to £1000. James's rise is traced through the Army Lists: appointed Captain in April 1794, he became a Major in June 1799, following a transfer to the 16th Queen's Light Dragoons. In 1803 his cousin Isaac, who commanded the 49th (Hertfordshire) Regiment of Foot, recruited him to succeed John Savery Brock, Isaac's brother, as the regiment's Paymaster. This was a plum appointment. Regulations of 1797 pegged a Paymaster's pay at 15/- a day, the same as a Lieut. Colonel; only the Colonel got more. His duties included arranging the delivery of specie, paying the soldiers' wages, keeping and submitting regular financial records.

James set out for Canada on the Spring fleet of 1804, arriving in Quebec on July 20. Probably he went directly to Fort George in Upper Canada where the 49th was posted. Barely two years later in November 1806, however, he earnestly petitioned for leave to return to England to deal with 'peculiar Family circumstances,' and did not return to his post until 1809 or 1810. Even then, he and Isaac saw little of one another here. Said the latter, writing to his brother Irving in 1811, "I seldom hear from James Brock, who dislikes writing to such a degree, that he hazards the loss of a friend rather than submit to the trouble." However, that didn't stop Isaac from making James his private secretary for civil matters when he became Administrator of Upper Canada later that year during Lieutenant-Governor Sir Francis Gore's absence in England. James was given six months leave to take up his appointment and moved to the seat of government at York.

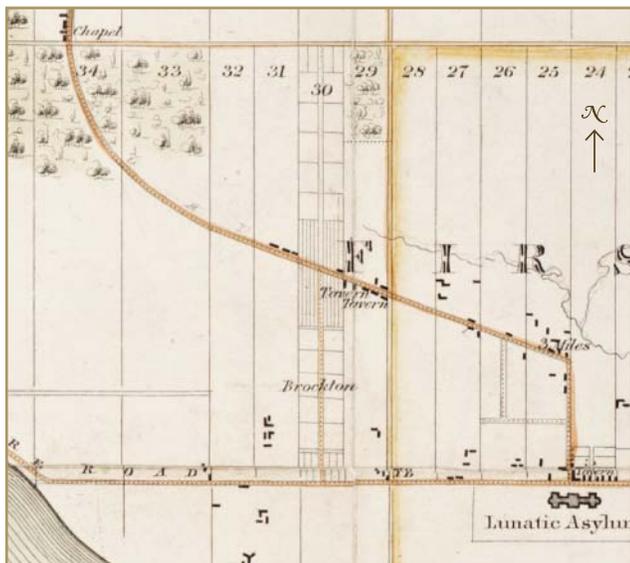


Detail illustrating the Brock land holdings north of the lakeshore south of Lot 30. (N^o1 Plan of the Town and Harbour of York Upper Canada and also the Military Reserve, 1833. Courtesy of Toronto Public Library)

It seems obvious that James disliked York. When at the end of July 1812 he married Susannah Lucy Quirke Short, a daughter of the Anglican minister at Three Rivers, they made their home in Kingston. That September Isaac said in a letter, "James Brock is likewise at Kingston. I believe he considers it more his interest to remain with the 49th than to act as my private secretary; indeed, the salary is a mere pittance." Knowing how poorly paid James was, Isaac saw additional compensation directed his way in the form of land. In March 1812, the wheels began turning to grant James up to 1200 acres. Four hundred acres were at the mouth of the Black River in [South] Marysburgh Township, near Picton; another 400 were in Binbrook Township, south of Hamilton. But the most valuable lands were at York: 100 acres in Park Lot 30 north of Lot [Queen] Street, a short distance west of present-day Dufferin Street, and 240 acres bounded by Lot Street, Lake Ontario, Dufferin Street and Jameson Avenue.

James had no time to improve or occupy these lands before war broke out. In October, 1812, Sir Isaac, the 'Hero of Upper Canada,' fell at Queenston, unaware that four days earlier he had been made a Knight Commander (K.B.) of the Order of the Bath. Unmarried, he left no will. Within three weeks James, as his closest relative in the province, and Capt. J. B. Glegg, his aide-de-camp, had petitioned for and been granted custody of his estate by the Court of Probate for Upper Canada.

Their petition for administration attached a list of effects such as furnishings, wines, linens, books, horses and harness. Unlike his cousin, Sir Isaac owned no real estate in Upper Canada, so most of his effects were located in Government House at Fort York. In early November some items were sold privately to six of his closest colleagues. By far the largest buyer was Major-Gen. Roger Hale Sheaffe who spent £602 on wines and household goods; James bought tableware and linens. Most of the books and assorted other effects were set aside to be auctioned later. (see 'The Library of Major General Sir Isaac Brock,' *Fife & Drum*, March 2008)



Detail illustrating the Village of Brockton, north of King Street on Lot 30. Map of the Township of York 1850. (Courtesy of Toronto Public Library)

James then took sail from York for Kingston aboard the sloop *Elizabeth*, which was captured as it neared its destination by the U.S. Schooner *Growler* and brought into Sacket's Harbor. There he became briefly a prisoner of war but was paroled by U.S. Commodore Isaac Chauncey at the request of Col. John Vincent, the British commander at Kingston. When safely back on British soil James reported to Sheaffe on the enemy's preparedness at Sacket's Harbor.

Until he was exchanged for another prisoner in April 1813, James remained on parole but accompanied the 49th as it moved from Kingston to Fort George. In May, a withering American attack forced the British to abandon the fort, leaving their wives and children behind. In a show of chivalry Isaac Chauncey had Brock's wife Lucy and the spouse of another officer transported in a U.S. warship to Sacket's Harbor and then, under a flag of truce, to Kingston. James caught up with her there in October. After wintering in Montreal, the regiment spent 1814 in Lower Canada moving between St. John's [Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu], Odelltown [Lacolle] and Isle aux Noix. In 1815 it shipped back to England. A decade later James saw service, still as Paymaster for the 49th, at the Cape of Good Hope and in Bengal. He drew his last breath in the latter place, at Berhampore on 27 March 1830, a victim of cholera.

When James made his will at the Cape of Good Hope in September, 1828, he left his entire estate to his wife Lucy. They had no children. The only lands in Upper Canada he sold before his death were 100 acres on the lakeshore near York to James Fitzgibbon, his old comrade in the 49th. Soon after his demise, however, Lucy parted with the rest of the lakeshore lands at York to John Henry Dunn and William Gwynne, both of whom are now recalled by street names in the area. She also divested herself of the land in Binbrook, but delayed until 1850 finding buyers for either her South Marysburgh property or for Park Lot 30, by then on the edge of Toronto.

So far as we know, Lucy Brock never lived in Toronto. But it is a testimony to her shrewdness and the good advice she was given that she undertook the subdivision of Park Lot 30 herself when it was ripe for development, rather than to sell it as one or two large parcels. While the area had come to be known as Brockton by 1850, her approach ensured that James's name would attach itself even more firmly. In May 1850 surveyor John Tully was commissioned to prepare a plan of subdivision for Lot 30, with an axial road up the centre and twenty long and narrow lots facing Dundas Street where it intersected with Brock Avenue. Then she began offering building lots to smallholders; the first sale was made in July 1850. By the time she died in 1859 she had made more than three dozen such sales, a practice continued by her executors.

No incorporated village named Brockton existed until 1881, and it lasted only until 1884 when it was amalgamated with the City of Toronto.

Henry Bowyer Lane's Fort at Toronto, 1842

by Jim Burant and Stephen Otto

Henry Bowyer Lane (b. Corfu, 1817 - d. Victoria, Australia, 1878) was a trained architect related by marriage to the Boulton family of Toronto who came to the city in 1841. He lived here until 1847 designing such structures as the Churches of St. George the Martyr, Holy Trinity, Little Trinity, the west wing and new centre for Osgoode Hall and the new City Hall of 1845. In 1847 he returned to England and in 1852 emigrated to Australia.

The watercolour of the Fort at Toronto came to the auction rooms of Lawrence of Crewkerne, Somerset, in 1977, offered by a direct line of the Lane family. It was purchased by a London dealer. The photographer who had prepared the sale catalogue kindly provided a black and white print of the image for use by Canadian scholars who have published it occasionally over the last twenty years. The original watercolour seems to have been acquired from the dealer by Peter Winkworth shortly thereafter.



Fort at Toronto, 1842, by Henry Bowyer Lane.
(Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada)

In June 2008 Library and Archives Canada acquired the original watercolour as well as more than 700 other artworks and publications not acquired from the Winkworth Estate in the original major acquisition of 2002. The work is offered here in unconserved condition so the readers of *Fife & Drum* may take pleasure in the reappearance of one more of a small number of views of the fort before the widespread use of photography to record such important landmarks.

Conversation with Colin Upton

Illustrator, comic book artist and authenticity consultant for Douglas Coupland's Monument to the War of 1812, Upton is also an avid wargamer and metal soldier collector.

by Douglas Coupland and Colin Upton

- Q) How long have you known Douglas?
A) Since high school in 1974, at Sentinel Senior Secondary in West Vancouver. We were in the same art classes.
- Q) Was it a school that specialized in the arts?
A) No way. Sentinel had an award for metal shop but not for art. After Sentinel, Doug arrived in the Emily Carr College of Art & Design in 1980 [now called the Emily Carr University] when I was there in my second year until I dropped out. Even then you could tell Doug was destined for great things. We've always kept in touch.
- Q) How long have you been studying things military?
A) My father was an historian but also part of my fascination with things military stems from the fact that British Columbia has never had a big battle, major campaign or much of a military presence at all. Growing up I felt ripped off! Like many younger people of my era I thought Canadian history was boring—only later have I realized that peace was actually a good thing.
- Q) What was your pathway to where you are now?
A) Comics to start with—Joe Kubert and John Severin being favourites—but I was a late starter reading books as I'm dyslexic. The first real book I ever read was on the European campaigns of WW2.
- Q) What about figures?
A) I collected Airfix plastic soldiers (we called them "50 Men") and model kits—mostly aircraft as putting on model tank treads was so hard.
- Q) Dioramas?
A) Yes. They involved lots of Polyfilla.
- Q) What about metal figures?
A) Soon enough I discovered metal wargame figures, Hinchcliffe mostly. I painted and collected them. Then, in my early teens I discovered the Trumpeter Wargames Club in Vancouver's suburb of Burnaby.
- Q) What was your first army?
A) The Brunswick army at the battle of Waterloo; I liked the black uniforms. Since then I've painted many thousands of figures as I paint for hire. I've got figures for Colonials (Zulu, First Boer and Darkest Africa,) the French and Indian War, War of 1812, and the entire 4th Corps of the Prussian army in 1813-1814.
- Q) Do you have any theories about where the art world meets the military world?
A) It isn't easy being an artist who's into military history.

People automatically assume I'm pro-war. I don't try to hide my wargamer interests. It's become an important part of my identity and a badge of honour.

Q) Have you visited Fort York?

A) No, sadly, I've never been to Toronto. I've been to Fort Henry, Chrysler's Farm, old Quebec City, Louisbourg, Fort Beauséjour and the Halifax Citadel, but never Toronto.

Q) Was it weird when Douglas came to you for help on such a super-specific task?

A) At first I wasn't sure what the drawings were for, but when Doug explained what was needed, it all seemed perfectly natural. Doug knows about my interest in military history, but, I mean, how many people would anybody know who understood the difference between a "Stovepipe" and a "Barretina" shako? Doug's knowing me was a happy coincidence.



Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles, 1812, by Colin Upton. (Courtesy of Colin Upton)

Q) "Barretina shako?"

A) The "Barretina" is the original Portuguese false-fronted shako (itself I suspect influenced by the false-fronted but peakless Austro-Hungarian "Kaskett") that inspired the British "Waterloo" or "Belgic" shako (both inaccurate names as the "1812" shako was seen in limited numbers in the Peninsular War before the 100 Days Campaign) and the American "Tombstone," meanwhile, ironically, the Portuguese had adopted the "Stovepipe" shako and ...as you can see, I like details.

Q) Can you describe your collections to us?

A) I have a large collection of military history books covering all periods for reference, but I concentrate on the 18th to 20th centuries. As for wargaming painted pieces, I have 25mm French and Indian War, 15mm War of 1812, 25mm Zulu and 1st Boer War, an extensive collection of "Darkest Africa" figures and the 4th Corps of the Prussian Army, 1813-1815 in 15mm.



1st US Rifle Regiment, 1812, by Colin Upton. (Courtesy of Colin Upton)

Q) What's your most cherished figure?

A) Oh, gosh, I dunno, I've painted so many. The Coplestone

Darkest Africa figures are lovely sculpts (and have been a joy to paint 28mm after all those 15mm!) I have a couple 15mm conversions, Tecumseh and the Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles for example, that I'm quite proud of. I don't paint spectacular individual "show" figures, instead I am able to paint large numbers of figures to a reasonably high standard. I have a lot of affection for my Coplestone "not-Corto Maltese" figure.

Q) You've seen photos of the finished 1812 piece in Toronto. Your thoughts?

A) It's so damn cool every time I look at it I just start to giggle. They're so BIG! I love the gentle poke at those Americans who still delude themselves into thinking that the War of 1812 was some sort of victory for them. I love how it reminds me of the plastic toy soldiers of my youth (complete with mold lines and flash!) and that unlike so much modern art it is instantly understandable. I love the fact that I was small a part of this and that historical accuracy mattered enough to Doug to make sure somebody like me was there to get it right. Okay, some of the proportions were off but that's consistent with the "toy soldier" aesthetic. But mostly I'm relieved that so far the figures have passed muster (even with some hardcore historical recreationists) with no glaring mistakes on my part. I was holding my breath for a long time before they were unveiled.

Oh, right, well, the dark green guy is from the "Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles, 1812" And the guy in the light green fringed hunting shirt is "1st U.S. Rifle Regiment, 1812"

In Review: *Historical Atlas of Toronto*

by C. Grant Head

Derek Hayes. *Historical Atlas of Toronto*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008. 192pp. ill. (some col.), col. maps; ISBN 978-1-55365-290-8. \$49.95

In a neat and attractive package, Derek Hayes shows us Toronto through the power of maps. Maps use a specialized language that points up relationships in space--what is close to what, what aligns with what, and so forth--so they often present fresh concepts. And since these are reproductions of historical maps ("facsimiles") they are also cultural artifacts and are a product of the culture and intent of their authors. As Hayes puts it, they "record, promote, define, or illustrate". They are also just simply intriguing, and often beautiful.

Readers of *Fife and Drum* will no doubt find much of interest in the maps and accompanying text on the defences of the city. There is one chapter specifically devoted to the defences of the 1812-15 period and another to those of the 1860s, but a careful perusal of the whole work will uncover some seventy depictions of the defences, ranging in date from the mid-

eighteenth century to a 2002 view of Fort York in context. Some appear merely as stylized point symbols, but others—many others—are absolutely stunning in their detail and, indeed, their beauty. Trained British military officers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries received drawing as one of their four main courses—for several decades from one of England's top water colourists—and the maps in pen and ink and colour wash are works of art.

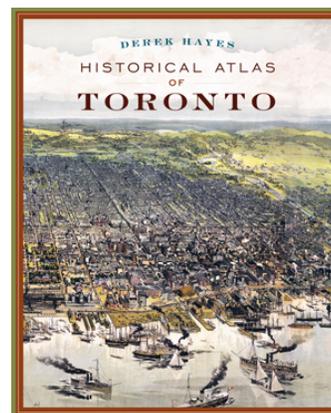
There are twenty-nine chapters in the book (and more than 300 maps), arranged in roughly chronological order, with themes as diverse as public transit, trends in residential planning, the railways, and the waterfront. Each chapter uses a wide variety of map types, map technologies, and commercial art—a rich feast of flavours, textures and colours.

Many will look at this Atlas solely as an attractive art book. But it also offers an extensive text. To provide an interpretive text—and it is such—puts enormous demands on a specialist not in the history of Toronto, but in maps, but Hayes has risen to the task, and has also provided us with a bibliography of the best sources for further reading. (By the way, the maps themselves are also identified carefully enough to trace them to their sources.)

Speaking as one who has co-authored a parallel work, I know the challenges of a realistic budget and time-frame. Hayes has selected the content well. Since he appears to have had personal control over design, he has been able to integrate the text and graphics in a flexible layout that brings map and word together and at the same time provide striking visual interest. He has made full use of the great advances in digital technology that now allows cost-effective solutions to the problems that facsimile maps pose in simultaneously

presenting an overall image (like a painting) and the minute details analogous to the characters in an alphabetic language that are the critical smallest characters in map language that make it possible to read, not just view, a map.

Overall, the *Historical Atlas of Toronto* is an amazing value. As readers of *Fife and Drum*, you will want to own it, but the price and compact size have made it practical for public libraries to move this atlas from the usual reference area to the lending section. It is a major contribution to our knowledge and appreciation of Toronto.



Dr. Head is a retired faculty member in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University. He is the author, with the late R. Louis Gentilcore, of Ontario's History in Maps (1984).

New Committee Chair

Michael Moir is the new chair of the History and Archaeology Committee succeeding Andrew Stewart who has taken on additional responsibilities with the Foundation and Bicentennial planning. A member of the board since October 2008, Michael is serving his sixth year as president of the Champlain Society.



FRIENDS OF FORT YORK ANNUAL GEORGIAN MESS DINNER

The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common cordially invite you to attend our ELEVENTH Annual Georgian Mess Dinner at Historic Fort York in the Blue Barracks on Thursday, 11 June 2009.

An authentic Georgian Dinner has been created, based on research by our team of Bridget Wranych, the Volunteer Historic Cooks of Fort York, and our caterer, Berkley Hospitality, to ensure that you will enjoy a formal Officers' Mess dinner as it would have been in 1813. The Dinner is a fundraising event of the Friends in support of the Fort York Drums, a volunteer student group wearing the uniform of the Company of Canadian Fencibles that served at the fort during the War of 1812.

A formal notice of the Dinner will be mailed in April. The cost remains the same as previous years, \$175 per person. A tax receipt for the maximum allowable amount will be issued. To be sure that your name is on our mailing list for this popular event please e-mail us at <fofy@sympatico.ca> and include your postal address.

Dress for the occasion is:

Period costumes Military uniforms Masquerade costume (as worn in 1813!) Black Tie (miniatures and decorations may be worn)

News From

The Birthplace of Toronto

Contributions from the Staff at the Fort

Administrator's Report

by David O'Hara, Site Administrator

Since the September 2008 Council approval of the proposed two-stage competition for the design of the Fort York Visitor Centre, we have been working quickly to advance the project. Before the end of the year, a project steering committee, chaired by Deputy Mayor Pantalone, had been assembled and David Oleson of Oleson Worland Architects had been retained as Professional Advisor for the competition.

On February 16th the call for Expressions of Interest was issued and on March 17 it closed with 31 submissions received. Once evaluated, up-to five of these teams will be short-listed to proceed to Stage II of the competition, which involves the submission of preliminary conceptual designs for the project. It is expected that Stage II submissions will be received for deliberation and decision in late May or early June. As a result of this process, the winning team will be retained to proceed through design development and other preconstruction steps this year and in early 2010, in order to tender for construction in 2010 for a public opening in 2012. Parallel processes, including exhibit design and other components, are or will be underway shortly.

Site work continues, including among other things, the restoration work on the south portion of the South Soldier's Barracks and replacing the cannons and carriages on the traversing platforms in the north-west and south-west bastions. The final components of the Soldier's Trade exhibit are being installed, the well head was just placed on-site, and positive reviews continue to be received in response to the new audio tour (www.city-surf.ca).

City Council Approves Design Team for June Callwood Park

Commenting on Council's endorsement of Toronto's gh3 design team Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone (Ward 19 Trinity-Spadina) said "The June Callwood Park Design Competition resulted in submissions from the best of the international design community for this distinctive area of Toronto that will be an integral part of the City's waterfront renewal. This

has been an opportunity to achieve exceptional design, and reflect the aspirations of the park's namesake and the community. June Callwood Park will serve to create a central focus for neighbourhood activities, community interaction and enhance Toronto's liveability."



(Courtesy of gh3)

gh3's proposal is based on a voice sampling of June Callwood's words "I believe in kindness," which will be physically mapped onto the site. The main concept of the design is centred on the sound undulations that create an abstract geometric pattern of openings and clearings within the dense groves of the forest. The wave pattern will create a sinewy path that runs north to south through clearings in the forest, which aesthetically connects Fleet Street to Fort York with black granite planks that mark east-west community access into the park.



(Courtesy of gh3)

The plan for the urban forest in the park includes plantings of native Canadian trees and a sampling of the specimens that would have inhabited the Lake Ontario shoreline at the time the city was settled. The park is loosely zoned into six clearings: the Puddle Plaza, the Puzzle Garden, the Maze, the Pink Field, Time Strip Gardens, and Ephemeral Pools, each with its own unique spatial character and aspects of free spirited play.

In the context of the Fort York Public Realm Plan, June Callwood Park, a 0.4 hectare space situated northwest of the Fleet Street and Bathurst Street intersections, will be key in consolidating and integrating historically significant open spaces. The park will be designed to respond to its historically rich setting; to serve as an important corridor to and from Fort York; to provide improved access for communities to the north towards the waterfront; and to contribute to the creation of a larger system of linked public open spaces.

Park construction is scheduled to begin in 2010 and be complete in 2011. For more information, visit: www.toronto.ca/parks/June_Callwood_Park.

First Steps to Renewing the Fort

by Kevin Hebib

One of Fort York's original interior spaces, the southernmost barrack room of the 1815 brick South Soldiers' Barracks, is slated for major work this year. The room will undergo archaeological investigation as part of a major restoration and refit that, when completed, will return it to the visitor's itinerary. Initially, the south barrack room will offer exhibit space; in the longer term it will be fitted out as a recreated garrison school room to add a new dimension to the Fort's education program by offering opportunities to explore themes of literacy and education in both the historical and contemporary contexts.



(Courtesy of Jose San Juan, City of Toronto)

The South Soldiers' Barracks is one of two identical brick structures constructed in 1815 as part of the peacetime garrison after the War of 1812. Like its twin, the North Soldiers' Barracks, it remains an important architectural survivor as well as a tangible record of the key army reforms

of the early 19th century that led to purpose-built soldier housing in the Georgian era. Built originally as a 100-man or company-sized barrack, the building was divided into three equal-sized rooms laid out to accommodate 32 men, a number that was reduced in the 1820s when the army replaced double-high wooden berths and bedsteads with individual iron cots. Over time the barrack rooms underwent many changes, from multi-occupant accommodation, to sergeants' messes and school rooms, to married couples' apartments.

Reconfiguration of the room as a garrison school is particularly exciting for museum programmers since it will broaden the Fort's story to include the historical role of education and the British Army's renowned regimental school system. This remains a fascinating study since many are unaware of the army's attempt to educate the lower ranks and their dependents as part of its bid to maintain a professional, literate and self-sufficient army. In fact, the British Army had a long tradition of offering education to its troops and their families—in early times through the courtesy of the colonel's pocket book and later as a matter of army policy. There was great concern on the part of army commanders that children of Britain's land forces in particular needed to prepare for livelihoods both on and off the army establishment. Eventually, the rank of "Serjeant Schoolmaster" became part of the army organisation.

In its public museum life, the south barrack room has played many roles. From the 1960s until the mid-1980s the room was partitioned into administrative offices. Along with the office space was an "arsenal" for storage of the Fort York Guard's uniforms, equipment and muskets, as well as a utility space for equipment repair and the preparation of musket and artillery cartridges. Following that configuration, the room became a costume shop managed by tailoring staff tasked with keeping the Fort's large interpretive/animation staff clothed. The most recent conversion occurred in the late 1980s to early 90s when the room was renovated with the addition of a purpose-built black powder laboratory/clean room, musket lock-up, staff laundry facility and retail storage area.

Current work on the south barrack room requires relocation of the site's black powder laboratory and musket storage. Plans are underway to re-establish an approved "clean room" for the manufacture of blank musket and artillery demonstration rounds used on site during the summer months. At the same time plans for a new, permanent, laboratory are being undertaken by the City's Cultural Affairs section and museum staff, in consultation with Natural Resources Canada (NRC), Explosives Regulatory Branch. This will be combined with improved onsite musket storage being developed in consultation with city staff, the RCMP and the Chief Firearms Officer.

Kevin Hebib, Program Development Officer, Fort York National Historic Site, is military material culture specialist. He served as a member of the Fort York Guard Interpretive/Animation Staff from 1980-85.

2009 Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Ewan Wardle

APRIL

Garrison Clean Up

Sat. April 25, 10 am to noon

Join fort staff, board members, and other volunteers in our annual "spring cleaning".

Free admission for participants

Battle of York Commemoration

Sun. April 26, 10 am to 4 pm

Join us for the 196th anniversary of Toronto's most traumatic day. Regular tours, kids' drill, Battlefield walking tour, and artillery and drill demonstrations by the Fort York Guard, the Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada, and the 22nd United States Infantry.

Regular Admission

Ron Baker's "Zebulon Montgomery Pike - from Pike's Peak to the Battle of York"

Sun. April 26, 2 to 3 pm

Storyteller Ron Baker will bring the many adventurous tales of the famous American explorer and army officer, Zebulon Montgomery Pike, to life. Fun and informative for the whole family!

Free with admission to the fort

Enhanced Citizenship Ceremony at Fort York

Mon. April 27, 10 am to 2 pm

Hosted by Fort York in cooperation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC). Regular tours, an artillery demonstration by the Fort York Guard, and military drill demonstrations by the Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada.

Free admission

MAY

Fort York Historic District Walking Tours in association with Jane's Walks "200 years of Lakefront Development"

Sun. May 3, 1 to 2:30 pm

Explore the history and evolution of Fort York, the Garrison Common and the nearby Lake Ontario shoreline from the early British colonial era to the present day. Hear about the origins of the Fort, the fortification of the harbour, and the subsequent transportation, industrial and recreational development of this vital area.

Free admission to Fort York following tour.

History Fair

Wed. May 6, 10 am to 2:30 pm

Displays from Toronto District School Board (TDSB) schools.

Regular admission

Victoria Day

Mon. May 18, 10 am to 4 pm

What better way to celebrate Victoria Day than to visit the birthplace of Toronto. There will be regular tours, kids' drill, musket demonstrations, and baking in the historic kitchen. This is Toronto's 175th anniversary and marks Fort York's 75th year as an historic site museum.

Regular admission

Doors Open

Sat. and Sun. May 23 and 24, 10 am to 5 pm daily

Special tours of some of Toronto's oldest architecture and home to Canada's largest collection of original War of 1812 buildings. In addition, there will be kids' drill, musket demonstrations, and period cooking in the historic kitchen.

FREE admission all weekend

*May 23 only: A special Doors Open - Fort York Historic District Walking Tour, 1-2:30 pm

"Fort York and the Garrison Commons: Battlefields, Graves and Urban Development"

Starting at the canteen at Fort York National Historic Site, this special walking tour explores the evolution of Fort York's Garrison Common area. This almost forgotten corner of the city has witnessed some of the most dramatic events and substantial change in the evolution of modern urban Toronto. Rain or shine.

Free admission to Fort York following tour

JUNE

Toronto Police Services 14 Division, Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Community Event

Sun. June 7, 10 am to 5 pm

Starting at the canteen at Fort York National Historic Site, this

Friends of Fort York

Thurs. June 11

Annual Fundraising Georgian Mess Dinner held by the Friends of Fort York, in support of the Fort York Guard and Drums.

Ontario Model Soldiers' Society Show

Sat. June 13, 10 am to 5 pm

All ages will enjoy Fort York as it hosts the Ontario Model Soldier Society's 47th annual show and competition. Demonstrations of casting and painting. Displays of connoisseur figures, dioramas, and tableaux of more than a thousand pieces. Many vendors offering toy soldiers for sale.

Regular admission

Regular admission to Fort York (effective 1 June 2008) is Adult: \$8 (\$7.62 + GST); Senior (65+): \$4 (\$3.81 + GST); Youth (13 - 18 yrs.): \$4 (\$3.81 + GST); Children: \$3 (\$2.85 + GST)

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