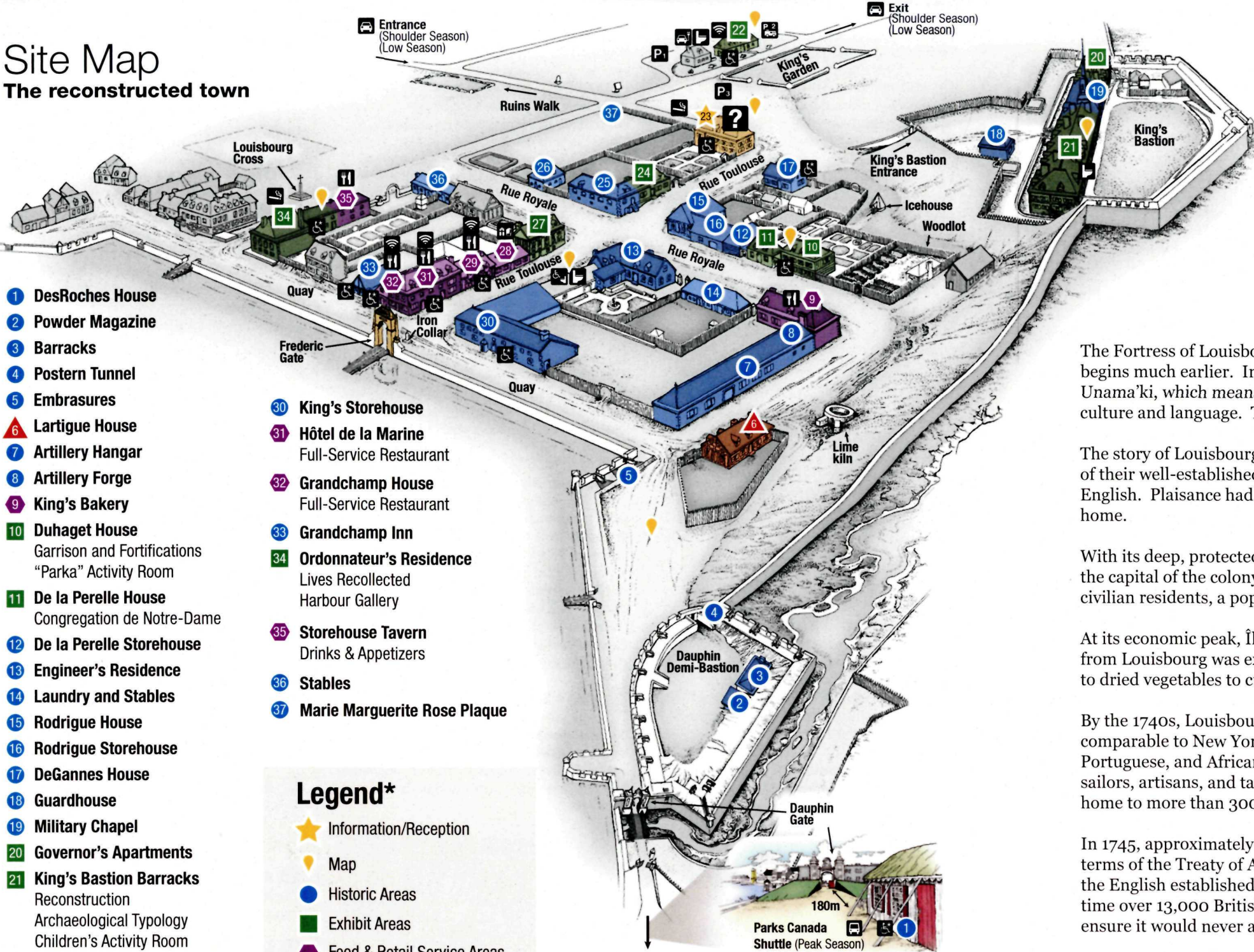


Site Map

The reconstructed town



- 1 DesRoches House
- 2 Powder Magazine
- 3 Barracks
- 4 Postern Tunnel
- 5 Embrasures
- 6 Lartigue House
- 7 Artillery Hangar
- 8 Artillery Forge
- 9 King's Bakery
- 10 Duhaget House
Garrison and Fortifications
"Parka" Activity Room
- 11 De la Perelle House
Congregation de Notre-Dame
- 12 De la Perelle Storehouse
- 13 Engineer's Residence
- 14 Laundry and Stables
- 15 Rodrigue House
- 16 Rodrigue Storehouse
- 17 DeGannes House
- 18 Guardhouse
- 19 Military Chapel
- 20 Governor's Apartments
- 21 King's Bastion Barracks
Reconstruction
Archaeological Typology
Children's Activity Room
- 22 McLennan Centre
"The Messenger" Virtual Reality
- 23 De la Plagne House
Information / Reception
- 24 De la Vallière House
Mi'kmaw Interpretive Centre
- 25 De la Vallière Storehouse
- 26 De la Vallière Storehouse
- 27 Carrerot House
Building Techniques
- 28 Benoist House
Gift Shop
- 29 L'Épée Royale Café
Coffee, light fare

Legend*

- ★ Information/Reception
- 📍 Map
- Historic Areas
- Exhibit Areas
- 🍷 Food & Retail Service Areas
- 🛏 Overnight Accommodation
- 🚻 Washroom
- ♿ Accessible Washroom
- ❓ Information
- 🍽 Food Services
- 🛍 Boutique / Gift Shop
- P Parking
- P RV Parking
- 🔌 EV Charging Station
- 🚬 Designated Smoking Area
- 📶 WiFi

*PLEASE NOTE: Services vary depending on the season. Please consult our staff or our website for more information.

- 🚫 Only service animals are permitted on the reconstructed site.
- 🚫 Please do not feed the animals.
- 🚫 Drone use is prohibited.
- ♿ Historic construction techniques create limited accessibility to some buildings. Most accessible entrances are located around the back of the building.

Fortress of Louisbourg

A Brief History

The Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site focuses primarily on French colonial history, but the story of this place begins much earlier. Indigenous Peoples have lived in this area since time immemorial, and this island was first known as Unama'ki, which means Land of Fog. There are six Mi'kmaw communities in Cape Breton today, alive with traditional culture and language. Their story is closely tied with that of the French through trade, alliances, and families.

The story of Louisbourg and its French inhabitants begins in 1713. By the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, France lost two of their well-established colonies, Plaisance (Newfoundland) and a portion of Acadia (mainland Nova Scotia), to the English. Plaisance had been an important fishing base for France, and now its inhabitants were on the search for a new home.

With its deep, protected harbour and easy access to the cod banks, Louisbourg was an attractive location and soon became the capital of the colony of Île Royale (now known as Cape Breton). At one point, there were more than 2,000 permanent civilian residents, a population that often doubled or tripled in the summer due to the influx of migrant fishermen.

At its economic peak, Île Royale exported more than 16 million pounds of fish in a single year. Dried and salted codfish from Louisbourg was exchanged for goods from France, Quebec, New England, and the West Indies. Everything from rum to dried vegetables to cut stone was imported to supply the growing population.

By the 1740s, Louisbourg had become one of the largest military bases in North America and a busy commercial port comparable to New York and Boston. It was home to French, Basque, Acadian, English, German, Scottish, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, and African people. Its civilian residents, both men and women, had occupations ranging from servants, sailors, artisans, and tavern-keepers to merchants, officials, translators, and more. During its history, Louisbourg was also home to more than 300 enslaved people, of both African and Indigenous descent.

In 1745, approximately 4,000 New England volunteers assisted by British naval support captured Louisbourg. By the terms of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Île Royale was returned to France in 1748. The French returned to Louisbourg and the English established Halifax in 1749. The truce lasted only a few years, and Louisbourg was captured again in 1758. This time over 13,000 British troops laid siege to the fortified town, supported by 14,000 crew aboard 150 naval ships. To ensure it would never again become a French military base, the British destroyed the fortifications in 1760.

Two hundred years later, in 1961, the Government of Canada announced plans to rebuild approximately one quarter of the 18th century town, an initial investment of \$25 million, which took over two decades to complete. Thanks to a rich archaeological record and over 750,000 original documents, the buildings, streets, and gardens you will walk through are authentically recreated to what they were during the 1740s.

We welcome you to explore this diverse history and enjoy your visit.

We would like to acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

Fortress Louisbourg
ASSOCIATION

The Reconstructed Town

Building Descriptions

1 DesRoches House

This building is an example of a traditional piquet and sod-roofed house. It represents the home of Jeanne Galbarette, a fishing proprietor, and her third husband, Georges Desroches. It also served as an unlicensed tavern for Basque fishermen and sailors. The harbourside area outside the walls was known as the *Fauxbourg*, where fishermen cleaned and salted their catch of cod, then laid it out to dry on “flakes” and gravel beaches.



Dauphin Gate

Three land gates and several wharves gave entry to Louisbourg. This one, the principal land entrance, was manned around the clock by an officer and soldiers. Through the massive doors the path is flanked by guardrooms: soldiers’ on one side, officers’ on the other. Beyond the soldiers’ guardroom is a sea-drained latrine, neatly built into the wall.

Dauphin Demi-Bastion

This half bastion forms part of Louisbourg’s defence system. The cannons here are reproductions of French 24 *livres* guns – they fired a round iron ball weighing 24 *livres* (almost 12kg or 26 lb).

2 Powder Magazine

Designed to store black powder, the magazine was carefully constructed to minimize the risk of explosion and it has survived well. The original 18th century stone walls extend almost to the eaves of the building.

3 Barracks

These soldiers’ barracks were used to house discharged soldiers awaiting transport to France.

4 Postern Tunnel

A secret passage? Not quite. The troops fighting in battle needed swift access to the outworks and this winding passage, one of three in the fortress, was easy to use and defend.

5 Embrasures at Lartigue:

As part of the harbour defences, these small 8 *livres* cannons were loaded with canister shot to repel attacking forces trying to come ashore in small boats.

6 Lartigue House

This house was owned by Joseph Lartigue and Jeanne Dihars, a Basque woman. The two came to Louisbourg with the first settlers from Placentia, Newfoundland. Joseph had been a fisherman and trader, but became the Judge of the lower civil court, the *Bailliage*, whose sessions were held in this house. The two lived here with their twelve children, several servants and a slave name Pompée. Joseph died in 1743, but Jeanne survived both sieges, living in Louisbourg throughout its French occupation. She died in La Rochelle, France, at the age of 95.

Lime Kiln

The walls of Louisbourg were held together by lime mortar, a mixture of quicklime, sand and water. This kiln was used to calcify limestone by burning it at high temperatures until it turned into quicklime, or calcium oxide, a key ingredient in mortar.

7 Artillery Storehouse

The gunners stored and tended their cannons and carriages here. Buildings topped with a *fleur de lis* indicate that they are owned by the King and are to serve the needs of the garrison and the royal administration.

8 Artillery Forge

This forge was used strictly for military purposes. Although artillery was shipped to the colony from France, the blacksmith that worked here was kept busy with repairs.

9 King's Bakery

Several commercial bakeries competed to serve the townspeople but this royal one supplied the garrison only. The four bakers employed here lived upstairs. The bakery was destroyed by fire in the 18th century but its original floors survived intact and have been preserved in this reconstruction.

10 Duhaget House

Military officer Robert Duhaget (c 1702-1757) built one of the largest private homes in Louisbourg. Erected the same year that Duhaget married Marguerite Rousseau de Villejoui, this residence may have been made particularly commodious in the hopes of a large family. The marriage, however, proved to be childless.

11 De La Perelle House

Jean-François Eurry de La Perelle (c. 1691-1747) held the important post of Town Major. De La Perelle married Françoise-Charlotte Aubert de La Chesnaye, the daughter of a Québec financier, and the two had eight children. A stable and garden are in the backyard.

12 De la Perelle Storehouse

In 1744, this storehouse was rented to house British prisoners captured at Canso Islands.

13 Engineer's Residence

The military engineers were responsible for the overall design and construction of the fortress. Étienne Verrier (1683-1747) was chief engineer from 1725 to 1745. He oversaw the completion of the design of the town and its fortifications. His house, which he designed, was regarded as one of the most desirable residences in Louisbourg, the envy of all including the Governor.

14 Laundry and Stables

The shed is divided into two sections. One side was used as a laundry and the other side was used to house livestock.

15 Rodrigue House

The Rodrigue family were successful merchants, frequently sailing ships to Québec with French and West Indian goods to trade for the Canadian grain, flour and dried vegetables that Louisbourg needed. Anne Rodrigue was described in an official document as a *marchande*, something unusual for a married woman. For a time this was also the home of Anne’s niece, Marie-Josephe le Borgne de Belisle. Of French-Abenaki descent, Marie-Josephe went on to marry the Treasurer of the Colony and become a business woman in her own right. Marguerite, a young Mi’kmaw girl, lived with the Rodrigues as an indentured servant.

16 Rodrigue Storehouse

This vertical log storehouse is where the Rodrigues’ merchandise was stored. This storehouse wall and that of De La Perelle were joined as a way of making the most of one space.

17 De Gannes House

Michel de Gannes de Falaise (1702-1752) and Elisabeth de Catalogne lived here with their six children. Michel was born in Port-Royal, Acadia, to a high-ranking French officer in the *Compagnies Franches*. By age 28, he was captain of his own company and before his death at the age of fifty he attained the position of King’s Lieutenant. He is buried in the military chapel.

Icehouse

This small pyramid-like building provided an 18th-century form of refrigeration. Inside is a pit that, during the winter, was filled with ice cut from local lakes and subsequently covered with straw for insulation. Once the warm weather came, the door located at the northern side could be opened only after dark, to keep the ice from melting. This year-round supply of ice was for the Governor.

18 Guardhouse

This guardhouse is located in the open *place d’armes*. This was an area where soldiers mustered for drill and guard changes. From the squad of soldiers stationed at the guardhouse, the officer-of-the-guard posted the sentries you now meet around

the Bastion. The wooden horse was a punishment devised to inflict both pain and humiliation to enforce military discipline.

19 Military Chapel

The Récollet missionaries were sent to the colonies to minister to the military as chaplains, and to the civilian population as parish priests. This military chapel served as a parish church since a community church was never built. The patron above the altar is the saint-king of France, Louis IX.



20 Governor's Apartments

The Governor represented the king’s majesty in person and often lived lavishly. The Superior Council met in the chambers downstairs and served principally as the colony’s court of appeal. Unmarried officers lived in this section of the building, while married officers lived in their own homes within the town.

21 King's Bastion Barracks

Over 500 men were housed in rooms like this, twelve to sixteen men per room, two per bunk. There were no mess halls and no workrooms in the barracks—throughout their service the men cooked, ate, drank, smoked, gambled... and lived in these rooms.

22 McLennan Centre

This building is the museum that was built soon after Louisbourg was designated a National Historic Site in 1928. A popular feature in this Centre is the model of the town built in the 1940s by the museum’s first curator, Katharine McLennan (1892-1975).

23 De La Plagne House

Military captain Pierre-Paul d’Espiet de La Plagne and his wife, Marie-Charlotte Delort, were part of the colonial elite. De La Plagne lived in this house with his wife, their four children, and probably de La Plagne’s younger brother, also an officer.

24 De La Vallière House

Michel Leneuf de La Vallière, a military officer, developed a relationship with members of the Mi’kmaw community while acting as commandant at Port Toulouse, an established trade centre. The relationship between members of the de La Vallière family and the Mi’kmaw community would continue after Michel’s return to Louisbourg. He sent two of his sons, Louis and Philippe, to winter at Malagawatch and learn the Mi’kmaw language in preparation for their military careers.

25 26 De La Vallière Storehouse

A range of goods were contained in these warehouses, reflecting this military family’s extensive involvement in maritime trade.

27 Carrerot House

André Carrerot was the *garde-magasin*, or Chief Clerk of the King’s Storehouse. He lived here with his wife, Marie-Josephe Cheron, who gave birth to at least 15 children, although sadly several died before reaching adulthood. A young black slave, given the name Rosalie, was purchased by the Carrerots when she was 14. We do not know much about her, except that she would have been responsible for helping to care for the many children in the family and the large household.

28 Benoist House

This was another house full of children, for Lieutenant Pierre Benoist (c. 1695-1763) had seven children from his two marriages. One died young, killed along with her mother by smallpox.

29 L'Épée Royale Café

Jean Seigneur operated this inn. The family lived in the building and provided lodging, food and drink to guests. For a short time Louise, a Panis* slave who arrived who arrived in Louisbourg by Québec, lived with the Seigneur family. However, not long after her arrival it was found she was pregnant by the man she had previously been enslaved to. She and her baby were sold four months after she gave birth.

30 King's Storehouse

This was the central receiving depot for merchandise needed by a fortress and its garrison. Supplies kept here included flour, butter and lard, molasses, biscuits, vegetables and salt. Uniforms, ropes and tools were also kept here.



31 Hôtel de la Marine

Pierre Lorient, a 35-year-old fisherman, lived here with his wife and three children. He operated a cabaret frequented by fishermen, merchants, and soldiers. In 1744, British prisoners were housed here during the summer months.

*The designation “Panis” can be misleading. In its strictest sense it referred to the Pawnees, a nation which inhabited the basin of the Missouri River and which was heavily targeted by the allies of the French. Amongst colonists, however, their name rapidly became a generic way of referring to any Aboriginal slave.

Arnaud BESSIERE, Ph.D., “Population: Slavery” *The Virtual Museum of New France*
www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/population/slavery/



Frédéric Gate

This ornate arch was the main entry for most of the people, news and merchandise who came to the colony. The gate’s name honours the Minister of the Marine, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, comte de Maurepas, who managed France’s colonies and navy.

32 33 Grandchamp House & Inn

Julien Auger dit Grandchamp (1666-1741) owned two adjacent properties. He brought his family to Louisbourg when he came as a soldier, and the inn was his retirement plan. With its busy waterfront location, Grandchamp’s home grew into a lucrative business. Following his death, his widow, Marie Thérèse Petit, continued owning and operating this inn. Two black slaves had to help run the busy tavern. Asar, a black slave, was a young boy when he was purchased, and Louis, a Panis*, was 14 years old.

34 Ordonnateur's Residence

This large property was the official residence of the commissaire-ordonnateur. The administrator was responsible for pay, supply and justice, and reported to the Ministry of the Marine. François Bigot arrived as commissaire in Louisbourg in 1739. From 1749 to 1758 he was the Intendant of all New France and lived in Québec.

35 Bigot Storehouse

This space was built as a storehouse for the use of the commissaire-ordonnateurs who lived here.

36 Stables

The stables form part of the property used by the commissaire-ordonnateur.

37 Marie Marguerite Rose

Enslaved as a young girl in Guinea, Marie Marguerite Rose lived as a slave in Louisbourg for 19 years, until she was released from slavery by the Loppinot family in 1755. As a fee woman she married a Mi’kmaw man named Jean Baptiste Laurent. The two ran a successful inn and tavern, making her the first free black business woman on record in Canada’s history. She is recognized as a person of national historic significance.