



Photo: L. Marway, 2005. Sirmik National Park of Canada, Nunavut

EXPERIENCES

Parks Canada's Newsletter – Winter 2008

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A WORD FROM THE CEO

As our partners and stakeholders, you contribute greatly to the achievement of our mandate. Your involvement spans all aspects – commercial, advisory, scientific, commemorative – the list is long indeed! In this new issue of *Experiences*, we want to celebrate these strong relationships, forged at all levels of our organization, by reporting to you some of our most recent successes, which wouldn't have been possible without you.

The last few months have been busy. The designation by UNESCO of the Rideau Canal as a World Heritage Site, the expansion of Nahanni National Park Reserve of Canada, the agreement to permanently protect and cooperatively manage Sahoyúé-Şehdacho National Historic Site, and more recently, the signature of an agreement to create, in the northern part of Lake Superior, the world's largest protected fresh water area, are among our proudest achievements. None could have occurred without your engagement.

Parks Canada continues to seek ways to create a strong sense of connection between visitors and our national treasures through meaningful experiences. I am extremely proud that our efforts were recently recognized by two awards of excellence: The Tourism Business of the Year Award from the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, and a prestigious award from World Travel Market Global to Jasper National Park. These awards illustrate once again the richness and quality of our partners and stakeholders, and we are delighted to share them with you.

Good reading, and I take this opportunity to wish you joy, peace and prosperity for 2008.

Alan Latourelle



PARKS CANADA WINS PRESTIGIOUS TOURISM AWARDS

In November, the Parks Canada Agency received the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's (TIAC) Business of the Year Award. This award is given to the multiple-unit business whose significant contribution to the tourism industry is reflected in the energy, commitment to service, and vision that is evident in its operations.

The Parks Canada team is hard at work in all regions of the country creating favourable conditions in which Canadians and international visitors can fully enjoy Canada's protected heritage places and create lasting memories. By keeping abreast of tourism industry developments Parks Canada continues to offer excellent services for which it earns a visitor satisfaction rating of almost 90%, year after year. Parks Canada's work is world-renowned, as reflected in another award received this fall, the 2007 World Travel Market Global Award, North America, awarded to Jasper National Park of Canada during a ceremony held in London, England.

These prestigious awards reflect the excellent work of Parks Canada employees and the invaluable Aboriginal, governmental, community and business partners with whom we work side-by-side to expand and enhance our network of national parks, historic sites, and marine conservation areas. Together we are offering opportunities for Canadians and international visitors to explore Canada's

nature and history through a wide variety of meaningful experiences. This collaboration ensures that the resources supporting these experiences are managed in a way to ensure their protection so that they remain available for others to experience, today and tomorrow.

Parks Canada is the starting point in a voyage of discovery, exploration and appreciation through Canada's natural and cultural heritage. In that spirit, Parks Canada has undertaken a major initiative to renew and enhance opportunities for visitor experience, to make visits more pleasant, more fulfilling and more personal for visitors.

With our dedicated team and enthusiastic partners, our work is generating results, and that is a good reason to carry on our quest for excellence. ♦



Parks
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Canada

Riding High at La Mauricie National Park



Photo: Vélo Mag, 2007

Over 700 cyclists descended on La Mauricie National Park in September to take part in the Défi Vélo Mag de Shawinigan, hosted by Parks Canada and CycloMauricie.

The event was the first of its kind for the park, located 200 km northeast of Montreal.

“The entire experience far exceeded all our expectations,” said Marie-Josée Gervais, director of CycloMauricie and the event’s head organizer. “La Mauricie National Park is one of the most beautiful sites in Quebec, and now cyclists will recognize it as such.”

The Défi Vélo Mag de Shawinigan was made possible by a partnership between Parks Canada, CycloMauricie and Vélo Mag, a popular Quebec cycling magazine.

Visitors were invited to cycle through one of three routes showcasing the natural beauty of the park. Each stretched along the panoramic route from Saint-Jean-des-Piles to Saint-Mathieu-du-Parc.

It is all up hill through the first stage of the Défi Vélo Mag de Shawinigan in La Mauricie National Park.

“To host this event with Parks Canada was truly a humbling experience,” she said. “The sense of community that was felt throughout the event was second to none. The natural beauty of the park is what truly made the day what it was.”

The event also brought an economic boost to the region, and the park, as over half of the participants came from outside the Mauricie region. Next year, Gervais would like to accommodate up to 1,000 riders. She hopes to make it a week-end affair, with additional events for runners, mountain bikers and canoeists.

Successful activities such as this one allow new audiences and groups of visitors to discover Canada’s national parks. ♦

Routes were 105 km, 53 km and 30 km, respectively.

Gervais, a former professional cyclist, is an important figure in the Quebec cycling scene.



“... to protect some of the most impressive ecological and cultural wonders in the North for generations to come.”

The Honourable John Baird
Canada’s Environment Minister

On November 21, Environment Minister John Baird announced the withdrawal of 26,350 square kilometers of land in the Northwest Territories, bringing Parks Canada a step closer to creating a new national park in the East Arm of Great Slave Lake.

The ground is now protected from the allowance of mineral staking, sale or lease while Parks Canada conducts park establishment feasibility studies. Establishment of a national park or a national park reserve will likely be part of the lands, resources and governance agreements that the federal government negotiates with the Akaitcho Dene First Nations, which includes the Lutsel K’e Dene First Nation, and the Northwest Territory Métis Nation.

“It is with great happiness and honour for the Lutsel K’e Denesuline to have the area recognized as an area to be protected,” said Adeline Jonasson, Chief of the Lutsel K’e Dene First Nation. “The area is of importance to the Lutsel K’e Dene for their physical and spiritual well-being – the place where our ancestors chose for us to live centuries ago.”

The announcement was made during a celebration at the Canadian Museum of Nature with Chiefs of the Akaitcho Dene First Nations and representatives of the Northwest Territory Métis Nation. Also in attendance were representatives from national environmental groups, including the Canadian Boreal Initiative, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Ducks Unlimited and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

“Conservation is a top priority for our government,” said Minister Baird. “Our Government believes that our actions speak louder than words. In just the last 12 months, we have delivered real action on conservation.”

The federal government will be providing three million dollars for a study to assess the possibility of establishing a national park around the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. ♦

Digging into the past

The Fortress Louisbourg Association is offering a unique program for aspiring archaeologists once again in 2008. The Louisbourg Public Archaeology Program provides a distinctive hands-on experience for aspiring archaeologists and archaeology enthusiasts to unearth the past.



Photo: Chris Reardon, 2006

The program helps increase existing knowledge of archaeological resources at the national historic site and provides exceptional experiences and a meaningful learning opportunity to participants who actively participate in archaeological excavation.

“Program participants have more than the opportunity to participate in supervised digs,” said Fortress of Louisbourg Archaeologist Rebecca Duggan. “They are active participants in a variety of activities such as photography, mapping, and working with artifacts in a field lab, which provides them with a holistic perspective of what the archaeology field is like,” she said.

The program also provides visitors to the fortress site an opportunity to see an archaeological dig in process. Standing outside the roped off dig area they can watch as these budding archaeologists carefully dig, sift, dust and brush through the

Participants in the Fortress of Louisbourg Archaeology Program display an object found on the dig site.

layers of soil, carefully searching for the smallest artifacts that help them piece together the day to day lives of the residents of 18th century Louisbourg.

Away from the work on the dig site and the field and lab activities, participants have a great opportunity to socialize, experience a meal or two in the period-style restaurants, visit other fortress ruins and siege sites and partake in other programs and activities.

The Fortress Louisbourg Association will be offering this program again in 2008 in partnership with Parks Canada. For more information please visit www.fortressoflouisbourg.ca. ♦

Photo: W. Lynch, 2002 East Arm Great Slave Lake

Photo: Josh McCulloch, Parks Canada, 2007



WEST COAST TRAIL RE-OPENS

“The storms caused great impact on our village but we believe it was a case of Mother Nature taking her course. In the end, it created a great sense of community and brought everyone in the village closer together, with everyone looking out for each other and working together.”

(Stella Peters, Councilor, Huu-ay-aht First Nations)

Quu’as West Coast Trail Society personnel are making good progress in clearing the West Coast Trail.

“It was unlike any storm we’d ever seen in the region, and people are still talking about it” said Louanne Ralston, a manager at the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, of the severe windstorm that lashed British

Columbia’s Coast severely damaging the famous West Coast Trail in Pacific Rim National Park Reserve in December 2006. Now, thanks to a unique partnership to manage and maintain the trail between Parks Canada

and the Quu’as West Coast Trail Society, a group that represents the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht First Nations, the severe damage from the December windstorms has been repaired and the trail reopened last May.

The partnership worked together to clear more than 2000 trees that blew over the trail, rebuild the towers and restring the Logan Creek suspension bridge, and repair the Klanawa cable car to reopen the famed 75 kilometer hiking trail by mid-May.

In August a healing of the trail ceremony was held with local First Nations to officially reopen the trail. The event also kicked off a multi-year celebration of the trail’s 100th anniversary. The West Coast Trail, originally known as the Dominion Life Saver Trail, was established in 1907 to aid in the rescue of shipwrecked mariners.

Throughout the year, Parks Canada and its partners will host a number of community events to highlight the history of the trail, and its centennial birthday. 🍁

Living cities: sustainable and healthy urban environments and well-preserved built heritage

“Heritage preservation is recognized throughout the world as a fundamental component of a livable city; an essential element that provides people with a feeling of security and a sense of belonging in the place where they live”

(City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services)

The Green Living Show in Toronto last April provided a unique opportunity for Parks Canada to reach people in their own communities, demonstrating the important role our cultural and natural heritage plays in healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities and educating them on the built heritage in their own neighbourhoods.

The Parks Canada exhibit, specially designed for an urban audience, sought to promote the natural and cultural resources of Parks Canada, including its National Historic Sites, National Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas. At the same time it aimed to create a greater awareness of the 33 National Historic Sites in and around Toronto, challenging participants on their current perceptions of heritage places and encouraging them to rediscover these sites within their very neighbourhoods.

“We wanted to present the strong connection between conservation, preservation, restoration and the re-use of heritage structures such as Canada’s National Historic Sites, and the concept of a healthy and sustainable community,” said Marc Duhaime, a lead specialist in outreach and public education for Parks Canada.

At such a large venue it was important for Parks Canada to bring the display to life. Interpreters interacted with visitors, specialists presented demonstrations on heritage window restoration, heritage gardening, and spoke about the Parks Canada commitment to building green friendly structures, further demonstrating



Photo: Parks Canada, 2007

Parks Canada restoration specialist Kym Terry explains the ecological benefits of window restoration to colleague Ken Willis.

how preserving our heritage helps create a healthy and sustainable future.

“The exhibit’s approach focused on Parks Canada’s role in protecting and presenting

Canada’s national heritage and the response to the Parks Canada exhibit at the Green Living

Show was very positive,” said Duhaime. “We feel the concept worked well, demonstrating to show participants the link between heritage and sustainable living.” 🍁

Warships Share Storied Past

The international alliance of two historic ships from the Second World War was celebrated at HMCS *Haida* National Historic Site of Canada in September 2007.



Photo: Jerry Proc, 2007. Aboard HMCS Haida, Hamilton, Ontario.

The twinning ceremony of HMCS *Haida*, located in Hamilton, Ontario, and ORP *Blyskawica*, from Gdynia, Poland, was spearheaded by a group of community representatives working in partnership with Parks Canada, Polish and Canadian naval officials.

"I wanted to do something to celebrate the histories of Poland and Canada, and bring these two wonderful countries together," said Stan Brodzki, a Polish Second World War veteran who first came up with the idea. "This project will shed

The official party and bands of HMCS *Star*, the Royal Regiment of Canada, and the 48th Highlanders on board *Haida* after the twinning ceremony.

light on our past and help us work together for the future."

In 2005, HMCS *Haida* was invited by the Polish Navy to enter into the formal Memorandum of Understanding with ORP *Blyskawica*. The alliance aims to foster the sharing of information and goodwill, and raise awareness of their storied past.

The two ships served together as part of the British-led 10th destroyer flotilla in 1944. They

were charged with fending off German destroyers to secure control of the Western English Channel.

"This is a unique opportunity as these are the only two ships that are still standing from the flotilla," said Brodzki.

The Polish component of the twinning ceremony took place at the homeport of the Polish Navy in June 2006. A Canadian delegation, including Parks Canada representatives and members of the band of the Royal Regiment of Canada watched on as Brodzki signed the agreement with David Fairbarns, a Canadian Second World War veteran who served on HMCS *Haida*.

The Canadian component of the ceremony was held at HMCS *Haida* National Historic Site in September. A number of former Canadian and Polish naval officers were in attendance.

"This partnership will allow us to share the knowledge each country gained from the Second World War," said Carla Morse, a Parks Canada collections specialist at HMCS *Haida* National Historic Site and organizer of the ceremony. "This has brought tremendous excitement for visitors to our site and the people of Hamilton."

HMCS *Haida* is Canada's most famous warship. It saw service in the Second World War, the Korean War and the Cold War. The ship was designated a national historic site in 1984. 🍁

Volunteers Celebrated at Kejimikujik National Park

Volunteers are lending an important hand at Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada with over 10,000 volunteer hours logged so far this year! Since 2000, over 450 individuals have contributed almost 60,000 hours of their time.

Created in 2006, Kejimikujik's volunteer program aims to work with individuals to enhance species-at-risk recovery initiatives. Volunteers are actively involved in the hands-on recovery efforts for species at risk such as the Blanding's turtle, Eastern ribbonsnake and piping plover, and actively support and participate in other activities and programs in the park.

"I think any park can benefit from a significant volunteer component," said Norm Green, a dedicated volunteer and co-founder of the Friends of Keji Cooperating Association. "This park is a national treasure and it is extremely rewarding to see the contributions our volunteers are making."

"It means everything to the park to have so many volunteers, both park-based and community-based, who care about the park and the species that live here," said Duncan Smith, the Species at Risk Stewardship Biologist at Kejimikujik. "We could not have accomplished what we have without the help of our volunteers."

Many of the volunteers work with their educational institution to collect data for recovery teams and conduct research projects. The success of some programs, such as the Blanding Turtle's Nest Protection and Tracking Hatchling Turtles, can be attributed to these appreciated volunteer efforts.



Photo: Duncan Smith, Parks Canada, 2005. J-Line Road, Kejimikujik

Norm and Sue Green check a Blanding's turtle nest for hatchlings. Volunteers contribute over 800 hours to hatchling monitoring every fall in Kejimikujik.

Each year Parks Canada and the Friends of Keji Cooperating Association host a celebration to recognize all volunteers. Last year, twenty-four volunteers were honoured for their outstanding contributions as inductees into the Kejimikujik

"Walk of Honour" – the park's version of the Hollywood Walk of Fame. This December, nine new individuals were inducted and Kejimikujik's "Walk of Honour" continues to grow! 🍁

For more information :

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