

Grand-Pré Public Archaeology Experience

On this the 10th Anniversary of the Saint Mary's Archaeological Field School, Parks Canada joins with the Société Promotion Grand-Pré and Saint Mary's University to carry out an Archaeological Research Program with the public at Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada.

Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia. For the past decade, the Saint Mary's University Archaeological Field School has been carrying out research at Grand-Pré National Historic Site. Thanks to this project, which has provided a hands-on learning experience to over 100 students, many discoveries have been made. The project has unearthed thousands of artifacts, including a fragment of church silver, traced part of the Acadian cemetery, and discovered three early colonial buildings.

Over the past winter, Parks Canada conducted excavations at the site for the installation of an underground water line to the memorial church. This work unearthed significant archaeological features on the western side of the memorial church, close to the orchard, including a wall measuring over 19 meters in length. Could this be part of the original Acadian Church of Saint-Charles-des-Mines?

Exploring these features will shed more light on the historic heart of the village of Grand-Pré. To undertake this important work, and to mark ten seasons of archaeological excavations at the site, Parks Canada has joined with the Société Promotion Grand-Pré and Saint Mary's University to carry out a 12-day archaeological dig which will be open to the public.

The Grand-Pré Public Archaeology Experience will be held every day from July 12 to 23 inclusive. All those who wish to participate must make reservations by contacting the Société Promotion Grand-Pré by e-mail at fouilles-digs@grand-pre.com or by visiting their Website: www.grand-pre.com. There is a limit of 12 participants per day for the experience, therefore, those interested are encouraged to register early.

The cost for a one-day program is \$40.00. The full day includes an introductory overview on the history of the Minas Basin area as well as a crash course in archaeological field techniques. Participants will then have hands on experience in an authentic dig under the tutelage of Parks Canada and Saint Mary's University archaeologists. The program starts daily at 9:00 a.m. and concludes at approximately 3:00 p.m.

This program is designed to help visitors gain a better understanding of the importance of research in protecting national historic sites while providing opportunities for personal moments of inspiring discovery.

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