



Newsletter

Events, Activities and Developments
on the Road to Cupids 400
in 2010 and Beyond

November 2008

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Digs Site in Cupids

Developing the 'Cupids Experience'

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Big Discoveries for Baccaleiu Digs Site in Cupids

We've made a lot of exciting discoveries in Cupids since we began digging here back in 1995. We have uncovered the remains of a number of 17th century buildings, including the original dwelling house and storehouse built by John Guy in 1610, and one early 19th century building erected by the Spracklin family. We also have uncovered over 130,000 artifacts including the oldest English coin ever found in Canada: an Elizabethan silver fourpence minted in the Tower of London sometime between December 1560 and October 1561. During this past year we have concentrated our efforts on two areas: the cemetery at the southern end of the site and the north wall of the enclosure. **More on Page 2**



Join Us for our
Christmas Social

Cupids Church Hall
December 9, 2008
7:30pm - 9:30pm
All are Welcome



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Cupids 400 Inc. is the not for profit corporation formed in 2001 to plan and execute the Celebrations and the design and construction of an interpretation centre to mark the 400th Anniversary of the founding of the first permanent English settlement in Canada in Cupers Cove (now Cupids) by John Guy in 1610.



Developing the 'Cupids Experience'

For visitors coming to Cupids there are two essential elements at the core of the "Cupids Experience" – learn about our plans to showcase them and more! **Check out Page 3!**



Big Discoveries for Baccalieu Digs Site in Cupids

By: Bill Gilbert

The Cemetery

November 15, 2007 was a beautiful autumn day and we took advantage of the good weather to get some last minute work done. A few weeks earlier, some of the crew had raked up the leaves and laid them in a pile about fifty feet (15.24m) south of the dwelling house. We decided to move these leaves and shovel some earth over them. Some wood was piled where we wanted to stack them and, when we removed the wood, we uncovered the uppermost part of a headstone.

We spent several hours uncovering the stone and, when fully, exposed it turned out to be six feet (1.83m) long and 27 ½ inches (69.8cm) wide. Two lines of a well-weathered inscription could be seen although we have not yet deciphered it. According to Dr. Jerry Pocius at Memorial University's Centre for Material Culture Studies, the stone likely dates from the early 18th century. It is carved from Portland stone which was quarried just outside the town of Poole in Dorset, England.

It snowed a few days later and we couldn't do anymore with the stone at that time but in July of this year we returned to do some more digging. In all we opened up about 60 square metres of ground around the headstone and soon discovered that we were not dealing with a solitary grave. So far we have uncovered nine graves. Two of these are marked by headstones, five others have unmarked head and/or foot stones and two are unmarked. While two of the graves are clearly from the 18th century, some of the others may be earlier. Three of them are extremely narrow, measuring only 19 inches (48cm) or less across. Narrow graves such as these are often found in early 17th century cemeteries.

Although it's too early to say for sure, it seems likely that this is the cemetery established by John Guy's party in 1610. If so, it is the oldest English cemetery in Canada. The first colonist buried at Cupids was Thomas Percy who died, according to John Guy, "of thought having slaine a man in Rochester" before coming to Newfoundland. He died on December 11, 1610. We don't have a complete list but we know of eleven other colonists who were buried at Cupids between December 1610 and March 1613. It would only make sense that these people would have been buried near the original plantation and that, once established, the cemetery would have continued to be used.

Almost certainly there are more graves in this area that we have not yet uncovered. However, the cemetery is located beneath our back dirt pile - the mound of earth that we removed from the site during our excavations. At some point we will bring in a small backhoe to remove the pile so that we can look for more burials. Our plan is to raise up any stones that have fallen over, mark any unmarked graves with crosses, lay down a layer of topsoil and lawn seed and reestablish the cemetery.



The North Wall

In his second letter, written back to England on May 16, 1611, John Guy states that by December 1, 1610 he had enclosed an area measuring 120 ft by 90 ft (36.6m x 27.4m) and built a dwelling house and storehouse inside this enclosure. As mentioned above, we uncovered the original dwelling house and storehouse a number of years ago. Since September 15 of this year we have been digging in the northwest corner of the site and have uncovered a 36 ft (11 metres) long section of what's left of the north wall of the enclosure erected by John Guy. Fifteen feet (4.6 metres) of this wall had already been exposed in 2003 so the total section uncovered so far is 51 ft (15.6 metres) long.

This part of the wall was built of stone and is 2 ft 8 inch (81cm) wide at its base. It originally extended farther east but a section was destroyed when a large stone-walled cellar was constructed in this area by the Spracklin family sometime around 1800. An 8 inch (20cm) wide, seventeenth-century builders' runs from east to west just east of the Spracklin cellar pit indicating that at some point the stone construction ended and that the easternmost part of the wall was probably a wooden palisade.

Since it faces the harbour, it makes sense that the north wall of John Guy's enclosure would have been of substantial construction. However, one obvious question that arises is, why wasn't the entire north wall built of stone? We may never know the answer but it could be that the original wall constructed in 1610 was built of wood and that the stonework was an improvement undertaken over the next few years. In 1612 the colony was under serious threat from pirates, especially Peter Easton. They had begun a second colony at Renew's that spring but were forced to abandon it and bring everyone back to Cupids in August. Over that summer Guy and his men worked to fortify the settlement and make it safe from the pirates. Perhaps part of this work included rebuilding much of the north wall of the enclosure in stone.

Cluing Up for the Season

We've had some really nice weather since early September and have managed to get quite a bit of work done. However, it won't be too long before it's too cold to dig. Excavations this year will end on November 7. After that we have a couple of weeks to backfill and secure the site for the winter. Work at the archaeology lab will continue until sometime in February and we will be back digging in June of 2009.

Developing the 'Cupids Experience'

By: Peter Laracy



For visitors coming to Cupids there are two essential elements at the core of the "Cupids Experience" – the archaeological site focusing on the colony established at Cupers Cove (now Cupids) in 1610, and the history of Cupids and its surrounding area during the 400 years since that initial settlement was founded here.

While the Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation administers the archaeological excavation, Cupids 400 Inc. has taken on, as part of its mandate, the creation of a new interpretation centre in Cupids that will serve as a lasting 400th anniversary legacy project. Many steps have already been taken toward reaching that goal.

The central stories covering the past 400 years of life in Cupids have been compiled in a "Cupids Storyline". This research conducted by Tract Consulting has served as the basis for the development by Myrdden Enterprises of an Initial Conceptual Interpretation Plan. This initial conceptual plan has identified many of the themes, artefacts, people, places, events and suggested interpretative approaches for sharing our heritage with visitors from near and far.

Cupids 400 Inc. is purchasing the United Church Hall and based on the Initial Conceptual Interpretation Plan, it will develop a new interpretation centre on the current site of the hall. An architectural firm, Ron Fougere and Associates, has been engaged to develop a conceptual design for the new centre. When this design phase is finalized it will be followed by the awarding of a contract for the creation of the centre during the 2009 construction season.

It is anticipated that the interpretation centre will house: exhibits on the John Guy colony as well as, the history of Cupids for the past 400 years and the connections between Cupids and other communities on the Northern Avalon region, a family history/genealogical resource centre, an archaeology lab and a multi-purpose hall. An Exhibit Design team (Myrdden Enterprises, BaAm Productions and Steve Shaw Productions) has initiated work on the development of detailed interpretive plans and exhibit designs.

Cupids 400 Inc. is continuing to work with its funding partners, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency with the goal of creating a first class facility that will serve as a fitting tribute to our ancestors. It will be an engaging facility where visitors can explore our culture and our past while reflecting on our current way of life here in this province.

Cupids 400 Inc., the Cupids Museum, and the Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation's Archaeology Lab, which currently operate at the Cupids United Church Hall, will be relocated to the Akerman's Property next to the Government wharf in Cupids. Cupids 400's office is expected to move during the first week in November followed shortly thereafter by the lab and museum. The offices of Cupids 400 Inc. are open daily from 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday to Friday. Three employees currently work out of this office, Capital Works Manager, Peter Laracy, Exhibit Coordinator, Jacquey Ryan, and Accounts Clerk/Office Assistant, Lorraine Benoit.

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Turning Cupids 400 into an event

By: Mike Buist

As Event Manager for Cupids 400 Inc. my responsibilities are twofold: create a Calendar of Events befitting the historical significance of the founding of the first permanent English settlement in Canada by John Guy and his colonists in 1610; and market the Celebrations to attract as many visitors to Cupids and the region as possible.

That sounds easy; however, in order to successfully execute the Celebrations in a manner that will make us all proud, we will need the cooperation and support of not only the residents and elected officials of the Town of Cupids, but also assistance from hundreds of volunteers throughout the Northern Avalon region.

As most of you know, we have received \$3 million from the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage. This money can only be used for the Operating Budget or non-capital costs (events, marketing, staff wages, office rent, administration, etc.) of the Celebrations. We cannot use any of this money for the new Centre or site development in the Town of Cupids.

Budget

Our budget is divided into two sections: Operating and Capital. We are still in negotiations with the Province re: our Capital Budget; therefore, we will give you those numbers in our next newsletter. Our Operating budget estimates for the period (January, 2008 – December, 2010) are as follows:

Expenses

Administration-Travel	450,000
Salaries-Consulting Fees	1,150,000
Marketing-Communications	800,000
Cultural Program	460,000
Education-History-Aboriginal Involvement	205,000
Symposiums-Conventions-Reunions	70,000
Ceremonies-Festivities	205,000

Total **\$3,340,000**

Revenue

Canadian Heritage	3,000,000
Service Canada	200,000
Cupids 400 Inc. (sponsors, etc.)	140,000

Total **\$3,340,000**

Planning

The announcement by Prime Minister Harper in August that Cupids 400 Inc. would receive \$3 million from the Department of Canadian Heritage to plan and execute the Celebrations in 2010 was the signal for the organization to swing into high gear. The Board of Directors, Executive Committee and staff are now fully engaged in developing our Calendar of Events for 2010. For individuals such as Roy Dawe, Lloyd and Linda Kane, Bill Gilbert, and many others who have been working diligently as volunteers for many years the funding announcement by the Prime Minister was a significant accomplishment.

We are adding full time staff and we are moving into our new office space in early November. The Cupids 400 office will be located in the newly renovated Akerman warehouse. The Cupids Museum and Archaeology lab will also be moving to this location before Christmas while the new Centre is being built.

As you can appreciate, until we knew exactly how much money we would have, our planning had to be very conceptual in nature. Our job now is to determine if those concepts can become actual events in the Celebrations.

Calendar of Events

We intend to create a Calendar of Events (CoE) to mark the 400th Anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in Canada founded in Cupids by John Guy and his colonists. The CoE will be comprised of events and activities that occur throughout the year and throughout the region and that fit with the two themes of the Celebrations:

To celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in Canada by John Guy and:

To celebrate the evolution and development of communities throughout the Northern Avalon.

For planning purposes we will have three sections in our CoE:

Special dates (2010)

We are planning to hold events on some special dates in 2010 to help us promote the Celebrations i.e. January 1 (New Year's Eve) and Day, February 14 (Valentine's Day), May 24 (Victoria Day weekend) and July 1 (Canada Day).

Tourism season (June 1 – August 16, 2010)

The majority of our events/activities will occur in the tourism season in 2010. Over the next 4-5 months we will be encouraging communities, organizations and individual artists and artisans to participate in the Celebrations. Next spring we will finalize our Calendar of Events. Projects, activities and events will include: musical performances, historical enactments, theatre arts, dance performances, choral performances, visual art displays, storytelling, 17th century music, family reunions, academic symposiums, and much, much more.

'John Guy Days' (August 17-2010)

Building on the existing Cupers Cove Soiree, John Guy Days (working title only) will focus exclusively on the Town of Cupids. The Official Ceremony will take place on Tuesday, August 17 with a re-enactment of John Guy's landing in Cupids. The province has asked the Prime Minister to extend an invitation to a member of the Royal Family for that day and of course, we will invite other dignitaries. The remainder of that week will see Cupids take on a festival atmosphere featuring a multitude of family and adult activities including concerts, historical characters throughout the town, buskers, children's shows, face painting, nightly fireworks, culinary displays, craft displays, etc.

Education-History-Aboriginal Contact

We will invite the aboriginal groups in our province to participate in the Celebrations in a manner of their choosing. The friendly meeting between John Guy and the Beothuks in 1612 is well documented and perhaps a re-enactment of that historical occasion might be an avenue for involvement.

Cupids 400 Inc. has also made a proposal to the Department of Education to partner with them to augment the attention given to John Guy and Cupids in the NL curriculum.

Marketing & Communications

Through a public Request for Proposals (RFP) we have selected two agencies that we will work with for the Celebrations: Dray Media and Waterwerks Communications. Our first task is to create some local awareness re: the significance of the Celebrations and secondly, to solicit regional participation in our project. We have just completed a series of ten (10) Town Hall Information Sessions throughout the Northern Avalon region and we will launch a print advertising campaign for the month of November.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of Cupids 400 Inc. is responsible for all aspects of the planning and execution of the 400th Anniversary Celebrations as well as the construction of a new Cupids Interpretation Centre.

Some of our directors do hold voting privileges (in bold) while others represent our various partners and funding agencies.

Name (Organization)

Roy Dawe – Chair (Cupids Historical Society)
Lloyd Kane – Vice-Chair (Northern Avalon Tourism Association)
Kathi Stacey – Secretary-Treasurer (Destination St. John's)
Ron Laracy – Councillor (Town of Cupids)
Pearl Keith – Homeowner (Director at Large)
Clyde Wells (Mariner Resources Opportunity Network)
George Parsons (Mariner Resources Opportunity Network)
Charlie Adams (Baccalieu Trail Heritage Foundation)
William Gilbert (Baccalieu Trail Heritage Foundation)
Jim Payne – Musician (Director at Large)
Dr. Allan Perry – England (Director at Large)
Ron Delaney – Bay Roberts (Northern Avalon Tourism Association)
Shauna Akerman – Cupids Haven (Director at Large)

Peter Noel (Tourism, Culture and Recreation)
Jerry Dick (Tourism, Culture and Recreation)
Ernie Pynn (Innovation, Trade and Rural Development)
Paul Antle (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
Jim Prowse (Canadian Heritage)
Dave Lough (Canadian Heritage)
Linda Kane (Curator-Cupids Museum)

John Crosbie – Lt-Governor (Honourary Patron)
Dr. Alton Smith (Honourary Chair)

Stay Informed

This is the first of many newsletters we will publish in the next couple of years. We will post this newsletter and any other pertinent information on our web site www.Cupids400.com. We urge all residents of Cupids to stay informed about your celebrations. We need you to help us to spread the word.