

FHBRO Number 97-92b

Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

**South Powder Magazine*****FINAL***

Fort Anne NHS

The South Powder Magazine was constructed in 1708 for Jacques-François de Monbeton de Brouillan, Governor of Acadia. The powder magazine, a vaulted bomb-proof structure recessed into the gorge of the south bastion, was built to store gunpowder in barrels. The design was prepared by the engineer Pierre-Paul Delabat. External modifications include: the construction of the areaway on a rectangular plan with a recess in the north revetment wall, the construction of brick lined surface drains at the perimeter of the areaway, the breaking of slotted ventilation openings with bent air passages either side of the front entrance in the south elevation, the breaking of a window in the south gable and the breaking of a slotted ventilation opening (also with a bent air passage) in the centre of the north elevation (c.1764), the straightening of the south revetment wall and the perimeter surface drain opposite, the construction of a roof with deep flared eaves on the east and west elevations extending over the areaway, the construction of an entrance cutting with flared revetment walls in the earthen parapet closing the gorge of the bastion, the construction of 6 stone steps in the cutting and the installation of a brick floor in the areaway draining to a dry well at the base of the steps (c. 1795), the construction of a temporary roof (1894-1895), the construction of a permanent wood shingled roof with deep bellcast eaves extending over the areaway on the east and west elevations (1897), the removal of the wood roof and the cement mortar parging of the dos d'âne (1924), and the period restoration of the powder magazine (1974-1975). Internal modifications include the removal of all fittings and the timber framed floor (n.d.). The structure is currently presented to the general public as a restored powder magazine. Fort Anne is owned and operated by Parks Canada. The Fort was designated a National Historic Site in 1917. See FHBRO Building Report 97-92.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The South Powder Magazine has been designated Classified because of its important historical associations, the qualities of its architectural design and the important role it plays in the heritage setting.

The themes identified for the structure are the Anglo-French rivalry in the struggle for Empire in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, its role in early European colonization and continuing settlement, and the protection of Port Royal, the capital of Acadia.

The building illustrates the final phase of reinforcement of Fort Royal during the French occupation. It also illustrates the importance of Fort Anne in bringing tourists to the area throughout the twentieth century.

The important functional qualities of the building, in the context of fortification engineering, are the protection it offered against external impact and internal explosion,

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and the dry and well ventilated storage it provided for gunpowder.

The skill of the masons responsible for the construction of the South Powder Magazine is demonstrated in the various cut stone elements: the Caen stone voussoirs of the semi-circular vault, the quoins at the angles of the building, the kneelers in the gable ends, the trim of the ventilation openings in the long walls and the entrance door.

The integrity of the historic relationship between the building and its associated landscape has been diminished by the raising of the parade level, the erosion of the earthworks and the removal of some buildings, but the site nevertheless retains its military character. As an integral component of the defensive work and a conspicuous period masonry structure, the South Powder Magazine has a strong, reinforcing influence on the military character of the Fort.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the South Powder Magazine resides in the features expressing its status as a specialized military structure designed for the bomb-proof storage and handling of gunpowder. Externally, the features characteristic of this building type include the simple massing (rectangular, squat, with a gable roof with deep flared eaves), the massive slightly battered rubble stone walls (low on the sides and high in the gable ends) and the pattern of openings (a single square headed door flanked by slotted ventilation openings centred in the south gable end, a window centred in the south gable, a ventilation opening in each side wall and a single slotted ventilation opening centred in the north gable end). These features deserve protection. It should be noted that a stucco rendering once covered the exterior, and the historic roof finish may have been a double boarded finish in the period to which the building has been restored. Any future treatment or change of material should be based on further research and understanding of these configurations.

Internally the features most characteristic of this building type include the specialized plan (two racks, one barrel deep, running the length of the magazine on either side of a central passage); the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the magazine roof (a semi-circular vault of cut stone voussoirs, a thick layer of rubble stone of gable profile, timber purlins anchored by iron straps on the gable ends and a light timber framed roof); the original ventilation system (openings in the long walls vented to the exterior by horizontal shafts diverted at the centre by a brick "island"); and the later ventilation system (slotted ventilation openings in the gable ends with brick lined bent air passages). These features are character-defining and merit protection. Monitoring the performance of the roof and stabilizing humidity levels on the interior are recommended.

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The mounted artillery, while historic in its own right, is not properly scaled to the size of the ramparts and bastions. A continued program of maintenance is the best protection for the resource.

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.

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