

FINAL

Fort Anne NHS

The Black Hole Powder Magazine was constructed in the late 1790s for the Master General, Board of Ordnance. The powder magazine/prison, a subterranean vaulted bomb-proof structure recessed into the gorge of the west bastion, was built to store gunpowder in barrels and/or to hold prisoners. It was the work of the Corps of Royal Engineers. External modifications include the replacement of the depressed three-centred brick arch and parapet over the entrance portal (similar to that of the original sallyport) by a three-centred arch of stone voussoirs, and the removal of the timber gun platforms on the ramparts of the bastion (1959-1960). Internal modifications include the replacement of the depressed three-centred brick vault over the entrance passage by a three-centred concrete vault faced with re-used brick, and the restoration/partial reconstruction of the rubble stone walls and semi-circular vaulting of the magazine (1959-1960); and the construction of a new slate-covered timber roof over the magazine and the replacement of the overburden (1962). The structure is currently presented to the general public as a restored powder magazine. Fort Anne is owned and operated by Parks Canada, and was declared a National Historic Site in 1917. See FHBRO Building Report 97-92.

Reasons for Designation

The Black Hole Powder Magazine has been designated “Recognized” because of the significant phase it illustrates in the development of the community and the important role it plays in its environment.

The themes identified for the structure are the Anglo-French rivalry in the struggle for Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the re-discovery of Fort Anne by Prince Edward as a strategic military site. The major expansion of Fort Anne under the direction of Prince Edward in the 1790s represents the last burst of British military activity in the area. The Black Hole Powder Magazine is the only built resource to survive from this major period of reconstruction.

The integrity of the historic relationship between the structure and its associated landscape has been diminished by the raising of the parade level, the erosion of the earthworks, and the construction of the three-centred concrete vault over the entrance passage, however the site retains its military character. As an integral component of the defensive work, the Black Hole Powder Magazine has a strong, reinforcing influence on the military character of the Fort.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Black Hole Powder Magazine resides in the features characteristic of its status as a specialized military structure designed for the bomb-

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proof storage and handling of gunpowder or the imprisonment of soldiers. Externally, the features characteristic of this building type include the mounded earth cover, the secure placement of the entrance in the gorge face, the architectural treatment of the entrance (originally a depressed three-centred brick arch of three rings over a squat cut stone trimmed opening), and the curved revetment walls of rubble stone. These features merit protection. Consideration could be given to carefully reinstating the depressed three-centred brick arch of three rings over the entrance portal and its superimposed brick parapet.

Internally the features most characteristic of this building type are the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the passageway roof (originally a depressed three-centred brick vault of three rings), the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the magazine roof (a rubble stone vault with a slate-covered timber roof and thick earth cover), and the magazine's ventilation system (a slotted opening in the rear wall connected to an unlined masonry flue which terminates in a chimney stack extending above the parapet). These features should be protected. Consideration could be given to carefully reinstating the depressed three-centred brick vault of three rings over the entrance passage, restoring the historic profile of the earth cover, and reinstating the chimney stack required for ventilation of the magazine.

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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