

December 13 – date of the fateful sinking of the Duke William off the coast of England – has been chosen as a day where all Acadians wherever they are, commemorate those who lost their lives in what we call the Great Upheaval.

The Acadians never forget. How could they? They were born of the deportation and of an overwhelming will to survive. Monuments such as this one are springing up in various places that saw the arrival of the Acadian deportees 250 years ago. You'll find one in Halifax, near the harbour front, on the French islands of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, in New-Brunswick and soon in Newfoundland and Labrador, in England and the United States.

Their objective is to remember but it is also to affirm! To affirm that Acadia is indeed alive and well in the heart of all of us. Ours is a nationhood of genealogy rather than passport, of shared historic grief rather than frontiers. We may be stateless but we know who we are, where we are going and why. That we stand here with all of you to inaugurate this monument today is also proof that we have all turned a painful page of our common history and have started to write a more pleasant one. Together.

La communauté acadienne et francophone de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard a honoré tout au long de cette année la mémoire de ses ancêtres. Que vous soyez ici, actifs, pleinement engagés dans la vie de l'île, forts de vos institutions et de votre jeunesse, honore ceux qui se sont embarqués ici pensant qu'ils n'y reviendraient jamais. Fort heureusement, ils s'étaient trompés puisque vous êtes là. Le 13 décembre 1758 le site de Port Lajoie était désert... À partir d'aujourd'hui, 13 décembre 2008, grâce à ce monument, l'Acadie y a élu domicile. Just think: on December 13, 1758 Port Lajoie was deserted. Everyone had left. Today, with this monument, Acadie has chosen to live here.

Merci. Thank you.

**Notes d'allocution de M. Brendan McDonald,**  
**directeur général de l'Est du Canada pour Parcs Canada**

Je désire vous offrir, à tous et à toutes, mes meilleurs voeux à l'occasion de la commémoration de ce moment déterminant, non seulement de l'histoire de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, mais aussi de celle du Canada, et des quatre cultures qui y ont pris part.

The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of the story of the Acadians as part of Canada's history, and as such, Parks Canada was pleased to sign a memorandum of understanding with la Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin this past summer. The agreement allowed the société to erect a monument marking the Deportation of Acadians on this day, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1758 event, here at the historically important location of Port-La-Joye-Fort Amherst National Historic Site. The Acadian Odyssey Monument has been placed at the end of "the old harbour path" to commemorate the over 3,000 Acadians who were deported from Prince Edward Island as well as those who remained to create the vibrant Acadian culture that exists here today.

Parks Canada strives to facilitate meaningful visitor experiences that connect Canadians and other visitors to the natural and cultural heritage of the region. Working together with la Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin to commemorate the Deportation of Acadians from this site is one of the key actions taken to achieve this goal. In addition, Parks Canada is currently working very closely with partners - la Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island and the British Commonwealth Society to finalize a plan for the future development of this beautiful and culturally significant site.