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New Brunswick celebrates bicentennial

This summer, the province of New Brunswick is balancing its Loyalist and Acadian heritages in a busy round of activities designed to celebrate its bicentennial.



1784-1984

Nineteen-hundred and eighty four marks the two-hundredth anniversary of its founding as a separate province with its own government. On June 18, 1784, King George III signed an Order-in-Council recognizing that the flourishing colony was expanding rapidly enough to acquire provincial status.

Eighty-three years later, it became one of the original four provinces that joined together in 1867 to form the Confederation of Canada.

Festivities abound

The province is marking its anniversary with an array of festivities. In addition to the scores of family reunions planned for the summer months, there will be a two-week celebration, Loyalist Days, which will take place in Saint John from July 15 to 31.

Also in Saint John, Tattoo 200, the largest show ever staged in New Brunswick, will feature over 1 000 performers in an extravaganza of military music, pageantry, comedy and ceremony.

For the Acadians, who represent about one-third of New Brunswickers, the year has a special significance. In 1784, the 34 French-speaking Acadian families who founded the town of Caraquet received the first title grant in the area.

An Acadian Festival will take place in Caraquet from August 10 to 15, and on August 15, national Acadian Day, Acadians will celebrate the centennial of the Acadian flag, which was adopted at the Acadian convention of 1884.

Another important occasion is the blessing of the fleet, an annual event that takes place on the Acadian peninsula.

The Labatt-Canada Challenge, a sailboat race covering a distance of more than 1 600 kilometres, will pass by Shediac, New Brunswick, described as the lobster capital of the world, on July 20.

Descendants gather

One of the many smaller groups touched by the celebrations will be descendants of



Loyalist Days, a two-week celebration to be held in Saint John in mid-July, will honour New Brunswick's loyalist heritage.

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