

graphs the three- by six-foot model of the Fortress of Louisbourg, used balsa wood, Crescent board, dowels and "imagination". It has 150 hand-carved windows and 500 miniature logs, "painstakingly whittled", for its stockade.

James Robillard, a University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee graduate student, invited students to build the models, which cost from \$60 to \$100 each, for people who could not visit the historic sites. "If you can't go there, we'll entertain you here," he said.

Louisbourg beginnings

The Fortress of Louisbourg, 23 miles south of Sydney on Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, was once a French stronghold in the New World. It was captured by the British in 1758 and later destroyed. John Fortier, Superintendent of the Fortress, describes in the autumn issue of *Conservation Canada* some of the problems encountered and some of the benefits derived from the reconstruction:

"Louisbourg was designated a National Historic Site in 1928, and a Na-

tional Historic Park in 1940. During the 1930s some of its ruined buildings were outlined on the site, and a museum was built. There it all remained - a ruined fortress twice besieged and captured, a deserted town once the capital of a colony and home to over 5,000 fishermen, soldiers, merchants, artisans, shopkeepers, bureaucrats and their families; an archaeological town-site whose significance and potential for interpretation were unsurpassed in North America.

Reason for reconstruction

"The initial reason for the reconstruction at Louisbourg was economic - the lessening demand for Cape Breton coal and threatening unemployment. A Royal Commission headed by E.C. Rand investigated the matter and made some far-reaching recommendations, one of which was the development of tourism.

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"Tourism meant among other things doing something with the Fortress of Louisbourg. In 1960 the Federal Government authorized the beginning of a

\$25-program to reconstruct one-fifth of the fortress and town and re-create an historical cross-section of military, maritime, commercial, administrative and domestic pursuits as they originally existed in Louisbourg.

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"As an immediate and practical solution to an economic problem, approximately 225 men, mostly former coal miners were put to work on a project which had genuine cultural benefits. Many learned new trades and re-entered the labour market. Now a broader segment of the local population is employed and the number of specialties has increased as reconstruction has been followed by exhibits, animation, maintenance and administration.

"As a mainstay of the tourist business, in which historic and cultural attractions account for nearly 30 per cent of revenues, Louisbourg will repay its cost many times over. And it will do so in an area which still has few alternatives to heavy industry.

Conservation

"Those benefits are only the beginning. What about conservation?

"Louisbourg brings to the National Parks System a variety of natural and historic features which deserve presentation. Its 23 square miles include Atlantic coastline, salt marshes, and nesting places for numerous aquatic birds. Black Rock, a siege position which shows the remains of French attempts to demolish it, is also the most visible element of a geological sequence which extends back 500 million years, to the area's volcanic origin.

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"As reconstruction nears its conclusion at Louisbourg there is growing acknowledgement of the park role. The natural setting reduces modern intrusions and allows the maintenance of an historic environment. Visitors in the 1980s will enjoy many of the more usual park experiences as the interpretation grows to include natural as well as historic resources.

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Changed significance

"Since reconstruction began, our view of Louisbourg's significance has changed considerably. It is no longer important mainly as a place where

U.S. students Michael Chrusciel (left) and David Patterson admire their model of the Fortress of Louisbourg. Below is the real Fortress, 23 miles south of Sydney in the province of Nova Scotia.

