

# Prime Minister Trudeau Visits Beaubassin



Prime Minister Trudeau and Bill Casey gaze over the lands of Beaubassin. Trudeau's ancestor, Simon Savoie was baptised there in 1740. (Submitted)

By Maurice Rees

As part of his ongoing effort to get more recognition and create an iconic destination for the Beaubassin National Historic Site Bill Casey, MP Cumberland-Colchester invited Prime Minister Trudeau to tour the site to retrace his family's family ancestry on July 16th.

Trudeau's Acadian roots have been traced back to Beaubassin in the 1740's to ancestors of Pierre Elliott Trudeau's mother, Grace Elliott. Beaubassin was the commercial center of Acadia 270 years ago but was destroyed by fire, when the French burned their own village after moving across the river to establish Beausejour. The Fort Lawrence area where the Fort Beaubassin is located played a strategic role in the 1755 Expulsion of the Acadians.

Extensive research in Beaubassin and Fort Beausejour have revealed some important pieces of history. Acadian roots of the Trudeau family have been traced back to Beaubassin. Universite de Mocton researcher Stephen White traced, who specializes in Acadian genealogy traced the ancestry of Prime Minister Trudeau back to Simon Savoie who was baptized at the Beaubassin church on May 22, 1740. Eager to learn about his ancestry, Prime Minister Trudeau met with Mr. White at Beaubassin where Mr. White provided Prime Minister Trudeau with a copy of Simon's baptismal record from 1740 which he had obtained from archives in France.

The Savoie family lived in Chipoudy at the time but travelled to Beaubassin in order to have Simon baptized in the church. After Simon's father was sent to Georgia under the Expulsion of the Acadians by the English, Simon and his mother and three siblings left and went to Quebec. Simon was just 16 at the time.

Research indicates that they may have departed from Fort Gaspareaux near Port Elgin and sailed to Isle St Jean. From there they sailed to Quebec. Although Simon survived the ordeal, two of the other children did not. Simon married and had a daughter Louise. Louise later married Robert Elliott. Several generations later Grace Elliott gave birth to Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau who is the late father of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The original bell from the church at Beaubassin is presently on display in the museum at Fort Beausejour National Historic Site. The bell is engraved with the year 1734 and it is very possible that Simon Savoie was baptized under this bell on May 22, 1740.



In addition to meeting with Bill Casey and Mr. White, the prime minister spoke to Parks Canada interpretive staff who explained a bit of the history of the site. (Submitted)

Now back to modern times and why Beaubassin is being developed on what will be an iconic destination to history buffs and those wishing to trace their Acadian roots. A number of years ago a flight over the area testing infra-red photography produced a photo / map which showed an organized footprint of several items buried underground.

Several years after the flight the map was delivered unexpectedly to Bill Casey. After years of study and wondering Casey brought raised the matter with officials in Ottawa, who determined something was there.

After several approaches, which included the Prime Minister getting involved at Casey's insistence, Parks Canada started with some archeological digs, a lot has found. To date 7,000 artifacts have been



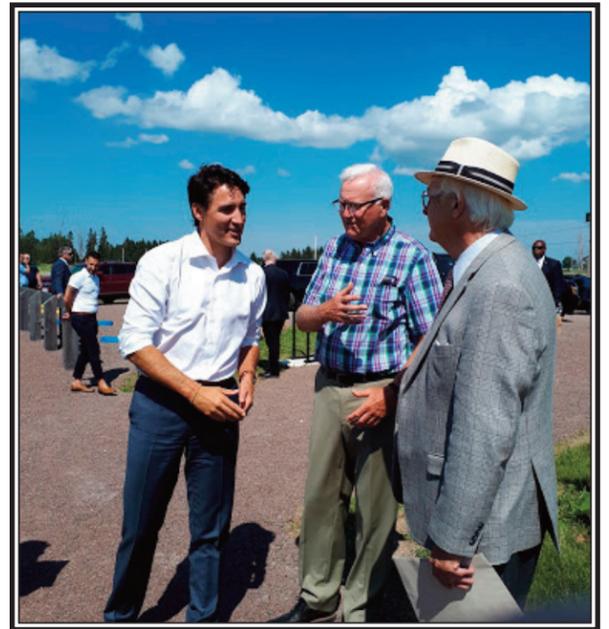
Prime Minister chats with Parks Canada staff and Bill Casey as he retraces steps on the lands walked on by his ancestors several generations ago in 1740. (Submitted)

found and 53 foundations of buildings identified by Parks Canada archaeologists.

Now 20 years after Casey persisted with Ottawa officials, the area has become National Historic Site, Fort Beaubassin and on September 14th, Casey and Lt Gen Leblanc officiated at the unveiling of a National Historic Site Plaque and opening of a viewing park.

Pleased with the progress to date and excited about what will evolve in the future, Casey says, "The view park will draw tourists to learn more about the Acadian history along the isthmus, as well as descendants of those early settlers tracing their Acadian roots in the area.

Maritech Construction, of Amherst, was awarded the contract last fall to build the park. The park includes an open-air structure, walkways and interpretive panels, and parking for cars and buses. Casey has been working to have the site of the former Acadian village, razed by French soldiers in 1750, recognized.



Prime Minister Trudeau and Bill Casey along with researcher Stephen White look at the Birth certificate of Simon Savoie, an ancestor of the prime minister's. Beaubassin was prominent in the 1740's and 1750's prior to the Expulsion of the Acadians. (Submitted)

## Cumberland South Office Opened

By Tory Rushton

Well a month has passed since the by-election in Cumberland South and things are starting to fall into place now. We can officially say we now have our office in Springhill open on 6 McFarlane and our contacts have been released. (1-833-597-8679). We have opted to go with a toll-free number right now. This will allow anyone in our area to contact us with ease.

Over the summer as I travel through the constituency, I will be seeking out locations that could be utilized for meetings when in the areas. I have had the opportunity to be in each area at least once



Tory Rushton

in the past month and over the course of the next few weeks I will be incorporating a weekly and bi weekly sched-

ule to allow me to be in each area on a regular basis to meet with residents and business owners to assist in helping our area in many aspects.

It has been a very rewarding few weeks. I was recently sworn in on July 18, 2018 with family, friends and colleagues present. Signing the scroll to become the elected official for Cumberland South in the Legislature is a huge undertaking for me. One that I will cherish and never take lightly.

I have been able to meet with many other government officials and stake holders in Cumberland South in the last month for introductions and voicing concerns. A regular meeting, I will be taking part in will be the Cumberland

Taskforce on Healthcare. This is a committee that has been struck by healthcare professionals and municipal and provincial officials. The healthcare system throughout Cumberland County is in a dangerous situation and we need action now. Over the course of the next few weeks I will keep you posted with the workings of this important committee.

I look forward to seeing you in your area over the next few months and please feel free to reach out. We need to work together to achieve what we all know Cumberland South can be.

**Tory Rushton is the newly elected MLA for Cumberland South and will author a monthly column.**

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