

GOVERNING New France



EXHIBITION
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
STARTING FEBRUARY 20, 2013



EXHIBITION AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING



GOVERNING *New France*

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

The National Assembly of Québec is holding an exhibition entitled *Governing New France* to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the creation of the Sovereign Council. Follow the exhibition route through the hallways of the Parliament Building and you will discover a compelling portrait of the political institutions of the French Regime.



The rich artefacts on display evoke the saga of those who shaped the destiny of French North America. From Jacques Cartier to Samuel de Champlain and Jean Talon, a multitude of historical objects and documents tell the story of a time when Québec was the capital of a colony with ambitions as vast as the land it occupied.

Faithful to its motto *Je me souviens* (I remember), the National Assembly is proud to share this fascinating glimpse of the history of our origins.

Enjoy your visit!

J.C.-

Jacques Chagnon
President of the National Assembly of Québec



EXHIBITION AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING



GOVERNING *New France*

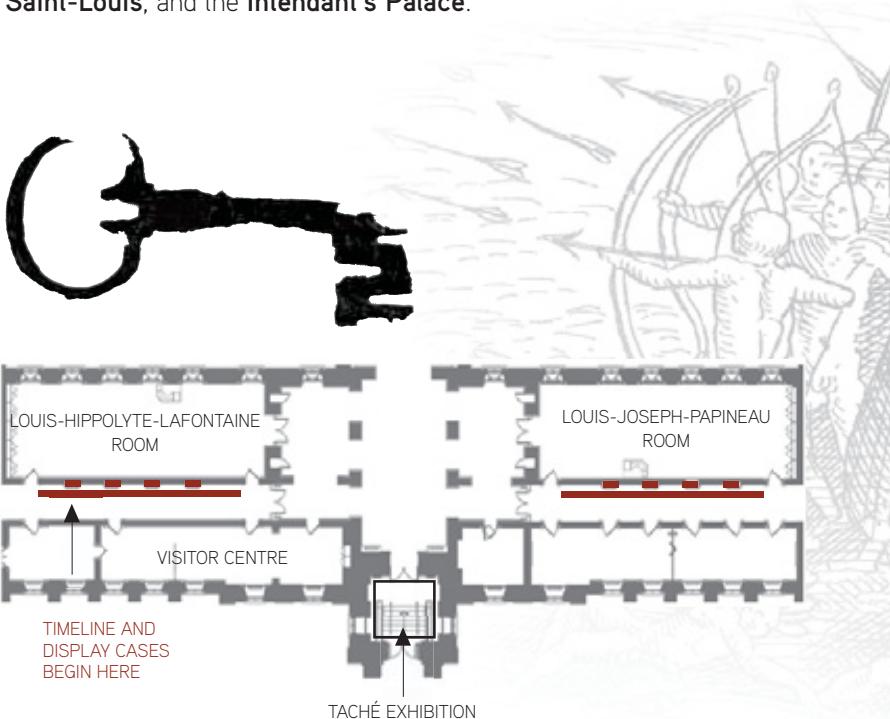
EXHIBITION FLOOR PLANS

PRESIDENTS' GALLERY



An illustrated timeline and numerous historical objects, exhibited in the display cases on the ground floor of the Parliament Building, bring to life the history of the political institutions of New France. The first section is devoted to the colonial government before the creation of the Sovereign Council in 1663, while the second covers the creation and development of the Council and the role of the Intendants of New France.

Via interactive terminals, the architect of the Parliament Building, Eugène-Étienne Taché, explains the historical significance of the buildings that reflected Québec's position as the capital of New France: **Champlain's House**, the **Québec Storehouse**, the **Fort and Château Saint-Louis**, and the **Intendant's Palace**.



CHAMBER LEVEL

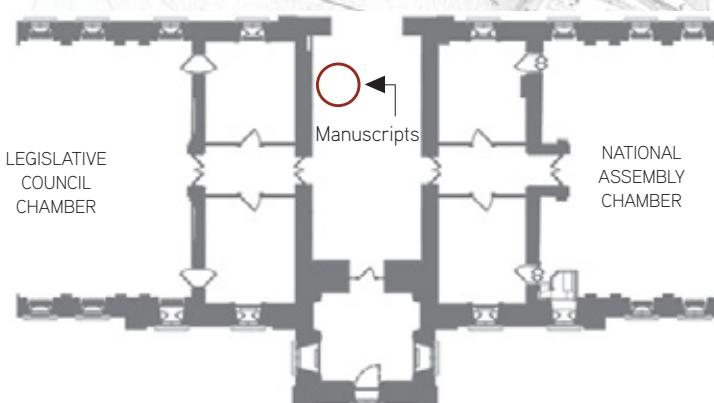
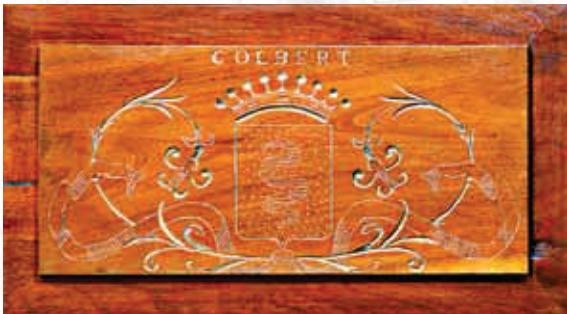
Two short films feature the intricate ornamentation of the Parliament Building, giving a history of New France as worked in stone, wood and bronze. An architectural monument to the great figures of the nation, Eugène-Étienne Taché's masterwork leaves no doubt about his passion for the French Regime.



GOVERNING *New France*

GALLERY LEVEL

Prizing history is a tradition at the National Assembly that goes back more than 100 years. In the 19th century, the “Legislature of Québec” was already sponsoring the publication of rare manuscripts from the time of New France. This tradition continues today with an exhibition of archival documents pertaining to the colonial government. In addition to minutes from a Sovereign Council meeting (1663), the exhibition includes the oldest written trace of an election in Québec (1647) and other priceless papers signed by Louis XIV, Minister Colbert, Governor Frontenac, etc.



EXHIBITION AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING



GOVERNING

New France

THE GOVERNOR

Though never officially a governor of New France, Samuel de Champlain was vested with like authority and led the colony as the Viceroy's or Cardinal Richelieu's lieutenant. His successor, Charles Huault de Montmagny, became the first official governor in 1636. In all, this high office was occupied by 17 men in the course of the French Regime.

As the King's representative, the Governor was the highest authority in New France and its primary administrator. It was his business to apply the policies of Versailles and, in his correspondence, to account for the affairs of the colonial government. Through his influence with the Minister of the Navy, the Governor often inspired the policies that were implemented in Canada.

The royal commission received by the Governor granted him vast powers. He was in charge of military affairs, and as commander-in-chief of the army, his word was law with the soldiery. Visiting New France in 1749, Swedish botanist Pehr Kalm relates that each time the Governor entered or left the Château Saint-Louis, the guards presented arms and the drums resounded.

As the person charged with the defence of New France, the Governor was also granted exclusive jurisdiction over Amerindian diplomacy. In Québec, talks focused on alliances and war; in Montréal, the fur trade dominated discussions.

Diplomacy with the leaders of New England also fell under the purview

**Under the French Regime,
only Louis de Buade,
Comte de Frontenac et de
Palluau, occupied the office
of governor for two terms:
from 1672 to 1682 and again
from 1689 to 1698.**

of the Governor. However, in matters of war and peace he was entirely subject to the decisions of the King.

The Governor monitored comings and goings in New France: foreigners had to apply to him to visit the colony, and he alone had the power to issue passports to inhabitants wishing to leave it.

In 1643–1644, Canada was divided into three administrative regions: Québec, Trois-Rivières and Montréal. The Governor of New France was also the Governor of Québec, and the Governors of Trois-Rivières and Montréal were subordinate to him. With the creation of the Sovereign Council in 1663, the three governments retained only their military role and ceased to be involved in the administration of justice.

When seigneurs took possession of their seigneuries, they were required to kneel, bare-headed, before the Governor in the Château Saint-Louis as an act of faith and homage, declaring themselves vassals of the King.

In light of his role and importance, whenever a new governor arrived in Québec, the inhabitants welcomed him with great pomp and the notables gave him the keys to the city. New France certainly pulled out all the stops when it came to bestowing honours on high-ranking officials!

Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil was the only Canadian-born governor in the history of New France, serving from 1755 to 1760. His father, Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnial, had been governor from 1705 to 1725.

GOVERNING *New France*

THE GOVERNOR OF NEW FRANCE

1636–1648	Charles Huault de Montmagny
1648–1651	Louis d'Ailleboust de Coulonge et d'Argenteinay
1651–1656	Jean de Lauson
1658–1661	Pierre de Voyer d'Argenson
1661–1663	Pierre Dubois Davaugour
1663–1665	Augustin de Saffray de Mésy
1665–1672	Daniel Rémy de Courcelles
1672–1682	Louis de Buade, comte de Frontenac et de Palluau
1682–1685	Antoine Le Febvre de La Barre
1685–1689	Jacques-René de Brisay de Denonville
1689–1698	Louis de Buade, comte de Frontenac et de Palluau
1699–1703	Louis-Hector de Callière
1705–1725	Philippe Rigaud de Vaudreuil-Cavagnial
1726–1747	Charles de Beauharnois de La Boische
1749–1752	Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de La Jonquière
1752–1755	Ange de Menneville de Duquesne
1755–1760	Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil

EXHIBITION AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING



GOVERNING *New France*

THE SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

The first meeting of the Sovereign Council was held in Québec on September 18, 1663. Governor Augustin de Saffray de Mésy was present, on an equal footing with Monsignor François de Laval. The five additional members chosen by the Governor and the Bishop were Louis Rouer de Villeray, Jean Juchereau de La Ferté, Denis-Joseph Ruette d'Auteuil, Charles Legardeur de Tilly and Mathieu Damours de Chauffours. Also present were the Attorney General, Jean Bourdon, and the Clerk, Jean-Baptiste Peuvret de Mesnu.

Initially, Royal Commissioner Louis Gaudais-Dupont also sat on the Sovereign Council. He exercised the functions of Intendant, but left the colony on October 26, 1663. Louis Robert de Fortel, appointed to succeed him as Intendant, never came to New France.

From 1663 to 1665, the Sovereign Council was a powerful political organ. In addition to judging civil and criminal cases, the councillors framed the police regulations that governed the civil life of the inhabitants. The Council managed public funds and administered the fur trade. It also registered the ordinances, edicts and declarations of the King, as well as acts such as letters patent of nobility, letters of naturalization, land grants, etc.

It has never been claimed that the Sovereign Council was actually a parliament; but rather that it contained, in essence if not in fact, all the power of one.

Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau, cited from the *Notice sur la publication des registres du Conseil souverain et du Conseil supérieur de Québec* published in 1885.

From 1665 to 1672, the presence of an Intendant in New France cast a shadow over the prerogatives of the Sovereign Council. Henceforth, Monsignor de Laval would no longer take part in the appointment of councillors: the Governor was the first in authority, followed by the Bishop, who was given the title of “perpetual councillor”, and then the Intendant. The councillors, for their part, could no longer draft police regulations without the assent of the Governor and the Intendant. In 1672, the Intendant obtained the power to make police regulations without the councillors. And beginning in 1667, the Council ceased to hear cases of the first instance and became an appeal court. After 1670, the councillors would never again be called upon to rule on questions of financial administration.

*In the Regulations that have been made, Québec is called
a town and New France a Province or Kingdom. [...]
One notices a great unity reigning among all, with the Bishop
and the Governor appointed heads of the [Sovereign] Council
[...] All of which sounds important and begins well,
but only God can tell the outcome, and experience shows
us that successes are often much different than
the ideas we conceive.*

Marie de l'Incarnation, on the creation of the Sovereign Council,
September-October 1663.

From 1672 to 1675, there was no Intendant in the colony. Governor Frontenac, judging himself to be vested with the powers of Talon, took the initiative of framing police regulations on his own. However, Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert requested that, in this area, Frontenac work together with the members of the Council. Hence the councillors regained some of their former power. In 1674, the number of councillors increased from five to seven, and the Council became once more a court of the first instance.

GOVERNING *New France*

From 1675 to 1724, the Sovereign Council, renamed the Superior Council of Quebec, underwent a number of changes. Henceforth, the Intendant presided over Council meetings and was empowered to judge civil cases on his own. In 1677, the Council again became an appeal court and the Intendant was again vested with the power to draft police regulations either on his own or with the councillors, as he saw fit. In 1703, the number of councillors increased from seven to twelve.

From 1724 to 1760, the duties of the Council were essentially those of an appeal court, since the councillors lost the right in 1724 to involve themselves in colonial government affairs, and therefore to participate in the drafting of police regulations. Nonetheless, royal ordinances and acts still had to be registered by the Council in order to take effect in New France.

In sum, the Council underwent a considerable number of transformations in the course of its long existence. Its members would see their political powers melt away like snow in the sun, essentially conserving only their judicial functions. After the surrender of Québec to the British, the councillors began meeting in Montréal on November 24, 1759. And it was in Montréal, on April 28, 1760, that the councillors held their last meeting.



In the 17th century, the joint functions of the Intendant and the Governor were not precisely regulated, with the result that these two leading figures were uncertain as to the limits of their powers. Governor Antoine Le Febvre de La Barre and Intendant Jacques de Meulles requested clarification of the matter, asking the Minister of the Navy to rule on the functions of Governor and Intendant of Canada. A new regulation drafted in 1684 was not registered with the Sovereign Council until May 4, 1699, so that the role of each was not defined until the beginning of the 18th century.

GOVERNING *New France*

THE INTENDANT OF JUSTICE, THE POLICE AND FINANCE

In the France of the 17th and 18th centuries, colonization was associated largely with maritime trade. For this reason, colonial affairs were the responsibility of the Secretary of State of the Navy. The Intendant of New France was a senior civil servant who answered to the Minister of the Navy.

In charge of executing the orders of the King, the Minister of the Navy and the Intendant of Justice, the Police and Finance were competent managers, the embodiment of royal absolutism. The Intendant was involved in nearly all aspects of government: he was responsible for civil regulations and for the administration of justice and finances. His powers were so broad that his functions often encroached on those of the Governor and the Sovereign Council.

As **Intendant of Justice**, he ensured that the justice system was efficient and well run. He judged civil and criminal cases jointly with the members of the Sovereign Council, but was empowered to judge civil cases on his own if he so chose.

As **Intendant of the Police**, he took a hand in everything involving public security and peace. He drafted and implemented the “police regulations” on trade, the price of merchandise, money, the militia and seigneurial rights, among other things. He was also responsible for roads, public places and fire protection.

As **Intendant of Finance**, he oversaw the budget of the colony and decided on the amounts to be requested from the Minister of the Navy for the

colonial government's needs. On his orders, the royal storehouse was supplied with merchandise, provisions and munitions for the defence of the colony.

The Intendant had many civil servants under his authority. The magistrates, procurators and judicial officers of the Sovereign Council and the Provost Court of Quebec (tribunal under royal jurisdiction), all answered to him. In Montréal, the Commissioner of the Navy (his closest collaborator) acted in his name in the administration of justice, and his subdelegates in other centres of population played a similar role. The Intendant also oversaw the work of other agents: the controller of the Navy, the inspector of public roads, the keeper of the storehouse, the royal engineer, the surveyors, the royal notaries, etc.

In spite of appearances, the Governor remained the Intendant's hierarchical superior. The two had to work together on many aspects of colonial government, but in the event of a difference of opinion the Governor's views took precedence.

Together, the Governor and the Intendant were responsible for granting seigneuries in such a way as to encourage settlement and promote agriculture. They fostered the fur trade and controlled the sale of spirits. And they were expected to preach by example where religious practice was concerned.

While never seriously compromising the two-pronged government of the colony, personality conflicts occasionally poisoned relations between the Governor and the Intendant. But their joint accomplishments were far more numerous than the few squabbles that became the talk of the town in their day.

GOVERNING *New France*

THE INTENDANTS OF NEW FRANCE

1663–1665	Louis Robert de Fortel (never set foot in New France)
1665–1668	Jean Talon
1668–1670	Claude de Boutroue d'Aubigny
1670–1672	Jean Talon
1675–1682	Jacques Duchesneau de La Doussinière et d'Ambault
1682–1686	Jacques de Meulles
1686–1702	Jean Bochart de Champigny
1702–1705	François de Beauharnois de la Chaussaye
1705–1711	Jacques Raudot (Sr.) et Antoine-Denis Raudot (Jr.)
1712–1726	Michel Bégon de La Picardière
1724	Edme-Nicolas Robert (died before reaching New France)
1725	Guillaume Chazel (died before reaching New France)
1726–1728	Claude-Thomas Dupuy
1729–1748	Gilles Hocquart
1748–1760	François Bigot

FOUR NEW NAMES SCULPTED INTO THE WOOD PANELLING OF THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING

To underline the 350th anniversary of the creation of the Sovereign Council, the names of four historical figures have been sculpted into the wood panelling of the Parliament Building. The architect of the Parliament Building, Eugène-Étienne Taché, revealed himself to be a man of vision in planning for spaces to be left empty so that future generations might celebrate the important figures of their choice.

The four new names, to be found near the grand staircase, have been added in such a way as to leave undisturbed the original pattern of coats of arms. All the people celebrated in the entrance hall were from the period of the French Regime, and the whole is symmetrically arranged, with the coats of arms on the opposite side belonging to illustrious figures who played similar roles in the past.

Bourdon, Lemire, Hertel and **Taché** all share the distinction of having been elected as syndics (members of the colonial council) by the inhabitants of the colony. Their historical commemoration in the Parliament Building is a reminder of the fact that elections and representation are practices that go all the way back to the time of New France.

Jean Bourdon was born around 1601 at Saint-André-le-Vieil in Rouen, France. He arrived in Québec on August 8, 1634 as a survey engineer. Sometimes called “M. de Saint-Jean” or “Sieur de Saint-François”, he was granted a number of seigneuries in return for services rendered. Right-hand man to Governor Montmagny, Bourdon became interim Governor of Trois-Rivières in 1645. On July 21, 1647, he was elected syndic of the Communauté des Habitants of Québec, thus becoming the first civilian elected official in the history of New France. He was then appointed head clerk of the Communauté des Habitants,

GOVERNING *New France*

to supervise the fur trade. On the creation of the Sovereign Council in 1663, he was appointed Attorney General, an office he occupied until his death on June 12, 1668. He married Jacqueline Potel in 1635 and the couple had eight children. After the death of his wife, he married Anne Gasnier in 1665.

Jean Lemire was born at Saint-Vivier in Rouen, France, in 1626. He married Louise Marsolet in Québec in 1653, and the couple had 16 children, of whom seven died in childhood. A master carpenter, Lemire worked on the construction of the Québec presbytery and on the enlargement of the Québec cathedral. On September 14, 1664, he was elected syndic by the inhabitants of Québec and sworn in five days later by Governor Saffray de Mésy. He acted as spokesman for the population, and worked assiduously for the common good. To the Sovereign Council, he presented “humble remonstrances” on a range of subjects: he requested that merchants observe the trade regulations, called attention to the overpricing of imported merchandise and implored the authorities to lower the tax on wine. He died in Québec in 1685.

Jacques Hertel de La Fresnière was born around 1600 in Fécamp, France. A soldier and interpreter, he arrived in New France in about 1626. From 1629 to 1632, when the Kirke brothers occupied

France has left upon Québec its indelible mark. [...]

French North America was not founded on sand. The political ties were severed, and we changed allegiances. Such was our destiny, as determined on the battlefield. [...] But our souls have remained unchanged, as have our ethnic character, our language and our faith. France continues to live in us, and we keep its spirit alive on the North American continent.

From the preface by Premier Louis-Alexandre Taschereau for a book by Pierre-Georges Roy, *La ville de Québec sous le régime français*, published in 1930.

Québec for England, Hertel went to live among the Algonquins. As compensation for forging good relations with the Amerindians, in 1633 the Compagnie des Cent-Associés granted him a seigneurie in Trois-Rivières, where he was one of the first settlers. In addition to cultivating his land, he acted as an interpreter for the Jesuits. He married Marie Marguerie in 1641 and they had three children. On August 10, 1647, he was elected syndic by the settlers of Trois-Rivières. He died on August 10, 1651, probably in an accident.

Jean Taché was born in Garganvilar (department of Tarn-et-Garonne), France, in 1698. He came to New France for the fur trade in 1727. A prosperous businessman, he diversified his activities, branching out into the salt and fishing industries. On August 27, 1742, he married Marie-Anne Jolliet de Mingan, granddaughter of the celebrated explorer Louis Jolliet, in Québec. From 1750 to 1753, he won the confidence of his fellow citizens in his capacity as militia captain in the government of Québec. He was elected syndic for the merchant traders of Québec in 1753. Until the fall of Québec in 1759, Taché represented the interests of his constituents to the colonial and French authorities. He died on April 18, 1768. He was the grandfather of the politician Étienne-Paschal Taché and the great-grandfather of the architect of the Parliament Building, Eugène-Étienne Taché.

*This nationality has remained standing, like a tree that,
struck by lightning, has lost some of its proud ornamental
branches but that, after being mutilated, draws its life
from the soil and is reborn as robust and tenacious as
it was before the passage of the storm.*

Louis-Joseph Papineau, from a speech given at the assembly held at Bonsecours Market on April 5, 1848.

GOVERNING *New France*

NEW FRANCE AND QUÉBEC'S ELECTORAL DIVISIONS

Of the 125 electoral divisions on the electoral map of Québec adopted in 2011, no fewer than 37 were named after historical figures from the French Regime. This tradition of commemorating the heroes of New France goes back to the time of Lower Canada, beginning in 1792. The same may be said for the names of certain historic places (Acadie, Hochelaga).

The boundaries of some electoral divisions run in a north-westerly direction, following the boundaries of the seigneuries of the French Regime. Also, a fair number of electoral divisions carry the name of former fiefs right up to the present day (Beauce, Charlesbourg, Montarville, Terrebonne, etc.).

Current electoral
divisions and year
they were named

Prominent figures
of New France

Argenteuil (1854)

Pierre d'Ailleboust d'Argenteuil (1659–1711), soldier.

Beauharnois (1829)

Claude de Beauharnois de Beaumont et de Villechauve (1674–1738) and Governor Charles de Beauharnois de La Boische, Marquis de Beauharnois and Seigneur de Villechauve (1671–1749).

Blainville (1994)

Louis-Jean-Baptiste Céloron de Blainville (1696–1756), captain.

Chambly (1829)

Jacques de Chambly (1640?–1687), Seigneur de Chambly.

Champlain (1829)

Samuel de Champlain (1574–1635), explorer and founder of Québec.

Charlevoix-Côte-de-Beaupré Charlevoix (1858)	Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix (1682–1761), Jesuit and author of <i>Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France</i> , published in 1744.
Châteauguay (1854)	Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay (1626–1685), soldier, interpreter, trader and seigneur.
Chomedey (1981)	Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve (1612–1676), gentleman, officer, member of the Société Notre-Dame de Montréal, founder of Ville-Marie and first governor of the island of Montréal.
Gatineau (1931)	Nicolas Ga(s)tineau, also known as Duplessis (1627–1689), fur trader with the Amerindians.
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve Maisonneuve (1912)	Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve (1612–1676), gentleman, officer, member of the Société Notre-Dame de Montréal, founder of Ville-Marie and first governor of the island of Montréal.
Iberville (1854)	Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville et d'Ardillières (1661–1706), soldier, ship captain, explorer, colonizer, adventurer, privateer and trader.
Jacques-Cartier (1854)	Jacques Cartier (1491–1557), navigator, explorer of the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1534, discoverer of the St. Lawrence River in 1535 and commandant of the Charlesbourg-Royal settlement in 1541–1542.
Jeanne-Mance-Viger Jeanne-Mance (1966)	Jeanne Mance (1606–1673), founder of the Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal.
Jean-Talon (1966)	Jean Talon (1626–1694), Intendant of New France from 1665 to 1668 and from 1670 to 1672.

GOVERNING *New France*

Jonquière (1856)	Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de La Jonquière, Marquis de la Jonquière (1685–1752), naval officer and Governor from 1746 to 1752.
La Peltrie (1981)	Marie-Madeleine de Chauvigny Gruel de La Peltrie (1603–1671), founder of the Ursulines convent of Québec. Took her name from her husband, Chevalier de Gruel and Seigneur de La Peltrie.
Laval-des-Rapides Laval (1854)	Monsignor François de Laval (1623–1708), vicar apostolic in New France from 1658 to 1674 and first bishop of Québec from 1674 to 1688.
Laviolette (1931)	Sieur de La Violette, founder and first commandant of Trois-Rivières, from 1634 to 1636.
Lévis (1854)	François-Gaston de Lévis, Duc de Lévis (1719–1787), officer.
Lotbinière-Frontenac Lotbinière (1854) Frontenac (1912)	René-Louis Chartier de Lotbinière (1641–1709), esquire, seigneur, deputy attorney general, councillor, lieutenant general on the bench of the Provost and Admiralty Courts of Quebec, subdelegate of the Intendant, militia officer, and agent general of the Compagnie de la Colonie. and Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac et de Palluau (1622–1688), Governor from 1672 to 1682 and from 1689 to 1698.
Louis-Hébert (1966)	Louis Hébert (1575–1627), apothecary, first officer of justice and first farmer in New France.

Marguerite-Bourgeoys (1966)	Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620–1700), founder, in 1659 in Montréal, of the Congregation of Notre-Dame, dedicated to the education of girls.
Marquette (1981)	Jacques Marquette (1637–1675), Jesuit and missionary.
Montmorency (1829)	Charles de Montmorency (1537–1612), admiral of France and dedicatee of Champlain's first voyage report in 1603.
Nicolet-Bécancour Nicolet (1829)	Jean Nicolet (Nicollot de Belleborne) (1598?–1642), discoverer, interpreter, clerk of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés.
Pontiac (1854)	Pontiac (1712 [or 1725]–1769), Chief of the Ottawas and ally of the French in the Seven Years War (1756–1763).
Portneuf (1829)	Jacques Leneuf de La Poterie (1606–after 1685), Seigneur de Portneuf. Thought to have added the last syllable of his name, Leneuf, to form Portneuf.
Repentigny (2012)	Pierre Legardeur de Repentigny (1608?–1647) Seigneur de Repentigny.
Richelieu (1792)	Armand Jean du Plessis, Cardinal de Richelieu, (1585–1642), minister under King Louis XIII and founder of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés in 1627.
Roberval (1931)	Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval (1500?–1560), Lieutenant General of Canada.
Saint-Hyacinthe (1829)	Jacques-Hyacinthe-Simon Delorme, called Lapointe (1718?–1778); gave his name to his seigneury (Seigneurie de Saint-Hyacinthe).

GOVERNING *New France*

Saint-Maurice (1792) Maurice Poulin de la Fontaine (1620?–1670 [or 1676]). Seigneurial attorney, judge, and King's attorney at Trois-Rivières.

Sanguinet (2012) Simon Sanguinet (1733–1790), Seigneur de La Salle; his brother Christophe Sanguinet (1736–1809) was Seigneur de Varennes.

Soulanges (1854) Pierre-Jacques Joybert de Soulages (1641 [or 1642]–1678), Seigneur de Soulanges, thus named in 1702 after the Seigneurie de Soulanges he owned in Champagne, France.

Vaudreuil (1829) Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnial (1643–1725), Governor from 1705 to 1725.

Verchères (1829) Marie-Madeleine Jarret de Verchères (1678–1747), legendary heroine who defended the family fort against a detachment of Iroquois in 1692.

Vimont (1981) Barthélemy Vimont (1594–1667), Jesuit superior from 1639 to 1645.



EXHIBITION AT THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING



GOVERNING *New France*

CREDITS

A production of the National Assembly of Québec,
the exhibition *Governing New France* enlisted the participation
of numerous collaborators.

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and the reference team at the National Assembly Library

TRANSLATION

Translation Service of the National Assembly

GOVERNING *New France*

The National Assembly would also like to thank all the other members of its staff and everyone else who participated, directly or indirectly, in this project.

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The National Assembly would like to thank the following persons and organizations for their special contributions to this exhibition:

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
Centre de conservation du Québec
Commission de la capitale nationale du Québec
Museum complex of the Musée de la civilisation
Archeology laboratory of Université Laval
Laboratoire et Réserve d'archéologie du Québec
Ministère de la Culture et des Communications
Musée des Augustines de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec
Parks Canada
Ville de Québec
Yves Beauregard

Photocopying Division
National Assembly of Quebec
February 2013





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