August 6, 2014
Request for recognition of event of municipal significance
From: Fort York National Historic Site

Statement of Significance:
Fort York National Historic Site requests that the Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball be listed as an Event of Municipal Significance.

Historical Significance:
The Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball is a annual recreation of an historic Ball offered by the Garrison at York (Fort York) held in Toronto in 1817.

From Edith Firth's, The Town of York, 1815-1834; excerpt from the Upper Canada Gazette dated January 23, 1817.

Celebration of Queen Charlotte's Birthday

On Saturday last, the Anniversary of Her Majesty's Birth Day, the Principal Officers of Government, the Officers of the Garrison and His Majesty's Ship Charwell, lying in the Harbour, and the Gentlemen in the vicinity, partook of an elegant entertainment, given by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, in Honor of the day: At six o'Clock, between fifty and sixty guests, sat down to a splendid repast, which detained them, 'till a late hour.

The Ice having made in the Bay, has added greatly to the gaiety of the place, by affording an easy access to His Majesty's Ship Charwell...On Monday evening the Deck of His Majesty's Ship presented a novel, and interesting appearance; the gallant Captain, as zealous in the service of the Fair, as of his Country, had converted it into an elegant Ball room, by extending sails from the foremost, to the mizzen, so well disposed, that the inclemency of the weather, was completely excluded and by means of a judicious arrangement of Stoves an agreeable temperature was maintained...The awning being lined with Colours of various nations, had a lively appearance suited to the character of the entertainment. The company assembled about 8 o'Clock, His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and Mrs. Gore honored the company with their presence. The Party consisted of Colonel and Mrs. Wells, the younger branches of
most of the principal families of the place, with the officers of the Garrison. The Starboard side of the Deck, was appropriated for dancing, - at 8 o’Clock Mrs. Gore led off “The Tars of the Victory” and was followed by twenty couples who kept up the dance with great spirit, till one o’Clock, when they were summoned to the Supper Tables, laid out on the Larboard side, which were covered with a profusion of every delicacy, displaying at once the taste and hospitality of the gallant entertainer. After Supper the dancing recommenced, and at four the Company separated, highly gratified with the evenings’ Amusement.

Name of the Event
Queen Charlotte’s Birthday Ball

Exact address or location of the Event
The Blue Barracks Hall
Fort York National Historic Site
250 Fort York Blvd
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 3K9

The purpose of the Event

The Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball is a recreation of a significant moment in Toronto's history, specifically a Ball offered by Officers' of the Garrison at York (Fort York) held in Toronto on January 23, 1817. The event program includes an English Country Dance workshop, a guest lecturer, a Georgian buffet dinner and Ball.

The event is a costumed ball which recreates an early 19th century social gathering and includes instruction in period dance, an extensively researched and authentically prepared Georgian dinner representing the culinary history of early 19th century Toronto and concludes with an evening of English country dancing, during which the Tars of the Victory is performed as in the original Ball of 1817.

The Ball serves as an opportunity to explore the influences of other cultures such as Spain, India, Portugal, France, and Germany on the early inhabitants of York. A guest expert provides a lecture which discusses the cultural influence on early Canadian/British society, while the dances taught during the workshop and the dinner menu are carefully selected to reflect the culture being recognized.
The date and time of the Event
Saturday, January 17, 2015
Start time: 12pm
End time: 10:30pm

Contact
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