



Penetanguishene Citizen

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Establishments open for season

The historic Naval and Military Establishments (NME) in Penetanguishene opened its doors to the public on Saturday morning.

Those who toured the site were able to glimpse history first-hand. The site is a faithful reconstruction of a British naval and military base set-up in 1817 to protect Penetanguishene Bay from invasion by the Americans.

The land on which the Establishments were located was initially purchased from the Indians for 'cloth, blankets and kettles' in 1798.

According to John Bayfield and Carole Gerow in their book 'This was Yesterday', 'The Naval Establishment functioned to maintain naval vessels on the Upper Lakes.'

From 1817 to 1820 it grew to a considerable installation of more than 70 buildings stretching a quarter mile along the shore, with 47

Naval personnel and 27 officers and soldiers from the 68th Regiment.

Today the Establishments is the only site of its kind in Canada.

The combined British naval dockyard and military garrison is not only buildings reconstructed in the style of the time it is also populated by characters from the period.

A summer-student staff helps bring history to life.

Tom Vogt of Midland, and a commercial art student at the Ontario College of Art, provides a realistic portrayal of Captain Samuel Roberts, the Establishments' commanding officer.

An artificer, Russ Moore, who is studying robotics at Conestoga College, gives a demonstration of log squaring. This labor-intensive method was used by those living at the Establishments to build their early accommodation.

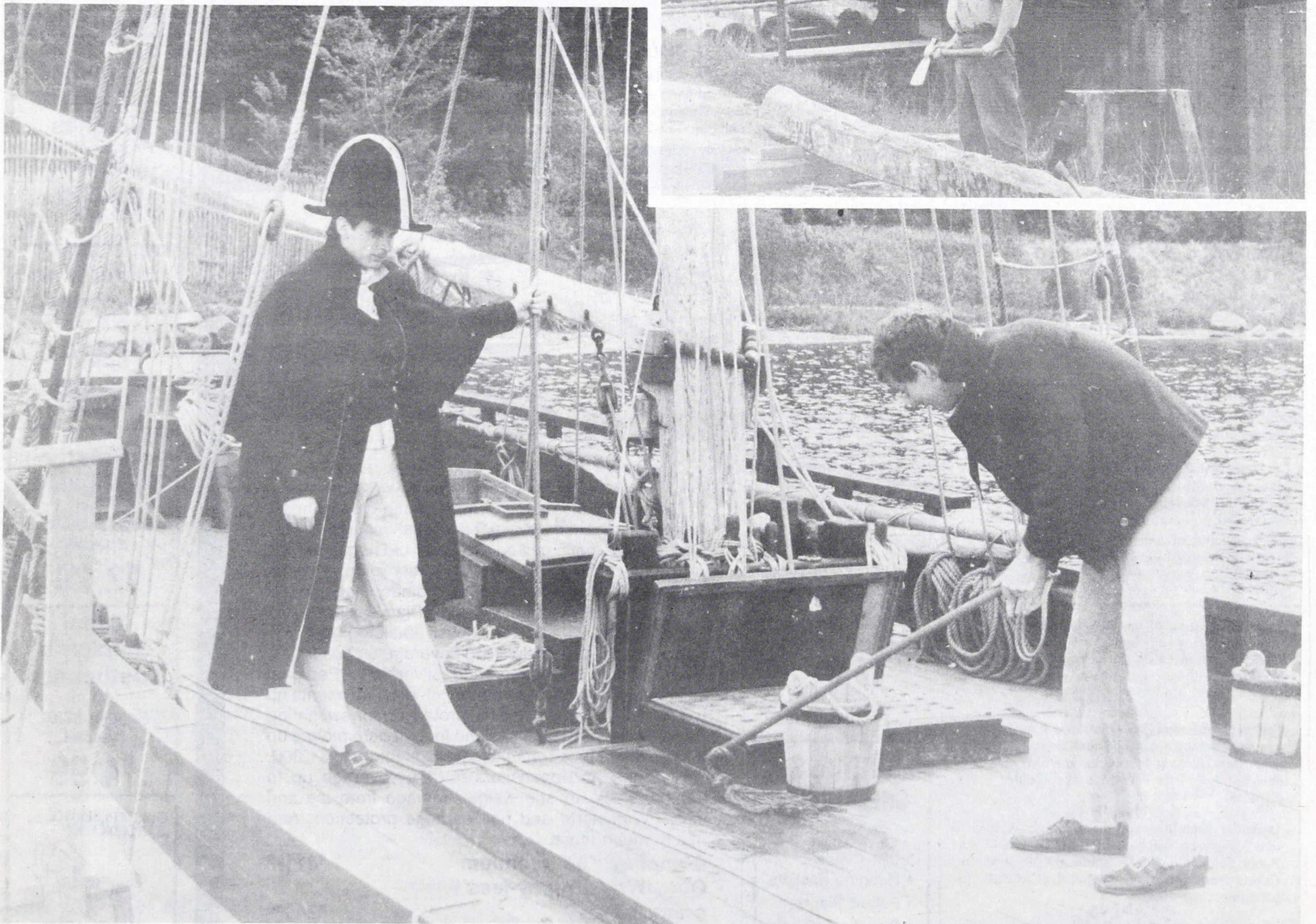
Completing the historic flavour of the NME is a replica of the schooner Bee. Built three years ago, the Bee is typical of the type of Naval vessel used at the Establishments during the 19th century.

The Victoria Day weekend opening gave staff an opportunity to perfect their historic character roles in preparation for next weekend's official opening.

Ontario's Minister of Tourism, John Eakins, will be part of the official opening party.

This year's opening will feature the inauguration of the new dock, built at the northern end of the Establishments.

The Bee is scheduled to tie alongside the dock with Eakins aboard at 12:30 p.m. on May 23.



All ship shape

Captain Samuel Roberts, alias Tom Vogt of Midland, inspects work aboard the schooner Bee at the historic Naval and Military Establishments. "All shipshape sir," reports

Steve Brown, a sailor stationed on the vessel. Vogt and Brown are summer students who play the roles of 19th century inhabitants at the Establishments. Russ Moore, inset,

demonstrates how men stationed at the Establishments squared a log. Chalk lines are struck on the log and some skillful work,

with scoring and broad-axes, brings it to shape. The logs were used to build housing for officers men and their families.

Fish hunt...see pg. 3