

Justice in New France: *Crime and Punishment*

Montreal, November 26, 2013 – Starting November 26, the Chateau Ramezay’s exhibition – **Crime and Punishment – Justice in New France** – will give visitors the opportunity to play judge and enforce laws used in the colony in the 17th and 18th centuries. Meet some notorious figures from Quebec’s legal past and learn how they met their fate.

This interactive exhibition will familiarize you with the French justice system of the time. In New France, criminal law complied with the ‘Customs of Paris’ instituted by Louis XIV in 1667. The accused were presumed guilty unless they could prove their innocence, quite the reverse of our system today.



As an ‘apprentice judge’, you’ll hear several criminal cases that shocked the colony – that of Marie-Joséphine-Angélique, for example, a Montreal slave accused of setting fire to 46 houses and the Hotel-Dieu Hospital in 1734. Consider whether the punishments fit the crimes. Compare the sentences of colonial criminals with those imposed nowadays under the Canadian Criminal Code.

On display will be various punishment devices such as a hanging cage, an iron collar, a branding iron and other torture instruments commonly used by the executioner.

A great success when it was first launched in 2006, this exhibition returns to the Chateau, guaranteed to please anyone interested in the early days of New France. It paves the way for a new permanent exhibition, opening in June 2014, on family life in the de Ramezay circle.

The Château Ramezay – Historic Site and Museum of Montréal, is a non-profit organization that preserves and makes accessible a collection focused primarily on the history of Montréal and Quebec. The Château was the first building in Quebec to be classified an historic monument; it is the oldest private historical museum in the province. Visit our website: www.chateauramezay.qc.ca

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