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New Program ‘Guns Across the Straits’ Allows Guests Unforgettable Experience at Colonial Michilimackinac

MACKINAW CITY, MICH. — What better way to wind down your day in the Straits of Mackinac than by firing off Colonial Michilimackinac's weapons?

Imagine it: you step out of the Colonial Michilimackinac Visitor's Center and, as you make your way to the artillery platforms, you find that Michilimackinac is emptying out and you have the place to yourself. Now it's time to fire all four of the black powder weapons used at Michilimackinac - the Short Land Musket, Wall Gun (a BIG musket), Coehorn Mortar, and, as the finale, the cannon.

This dream can become reality for the first time ever during the 2021 season. Every day, starting June 1 through October 7, guests can purchase the opportunity to fire all Michilimackinac's weapons over the Straits of Mackinac.

“Guns Across the Straits lets us provide a hands-on history experience for guests,” said Mackinac State Historic Parks Chief Curator Craig Wilson. “As historical interpreters, we get to fire these weapons every day, but hopefully this program will allow visitors to better understand what life was like for British soldiers at Michilimackinac in the 1770s.”

The cost of the experience is \$150, and up to 10 guests can be present. The program will take place after Colonial Michilimackinac closes for regular business – 7:00 p.m. in June, July and August, 5:00 p.m. in September and October. Guests will need to arrive to the Colonial Michilimackinac Visitor's

Center (under the Mackinac Bridge) a half hour prior to the experience start time (6:30 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. depending on season) to check in and be met by your interpretive guide, who will take you to the artillery platforms.

Reservations for ‘Guns Across the Straits’ can be made by calling the Mackinac State Historic Parks administrative office Monday-Friday, 8:00 – 5:00, at 231-436-4100. Reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance. Participants are required to sign a waiver prior to firing any weapons. This experience is limited to guests 13 years and older.

More information on this experience, as well as opportunities to fire the Fort Mackinac cannon, can be found online at mackinacparks.com. A downloadable version of this release can be found here.

Photos are available by request.

Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan’s Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, the Biddle House, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, Historic Downtown Mackinac, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks’ rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or online at www.mackinacparks.com.

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