



60 ANS • YEARS
1955 - 2015

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PRESS RELEASE

Santas Are Taking Over the Stewart Museum

A HOLIDAY EXHIBITION YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

Come to St. Helen's Island for a magical moment!

Montreal, November 12, 2015 – A merry band of Santas will be back again on St. Helen's Island from November 25, 2015 to January 10, 2016. Families are invited to discover these adorable figurines and take part in exciting activities at our third edition of the exhibition ***Santas Are Taking Over the Stewart Museum***. This year's edition will feature a magnificent doll castle with characters that come to life to the sound of music. There will even be a gift: free entry to the museum throughout the exhibition! Of course, donations are welcome.

Several Santas in the exhibition were handmade by American artisans such as Beth Cameron, Lynn West and Lynn Haney, while others were created by Quebec artist Carole Landreville. They illustrate a fascinating aspect of doll making and show how the artistic representation of one of the best-known and loved figures in folklore has changed. Talking on the telephone, joking with the elves, cross-country skiing, proudly wearing the arrow sash (ceinture fléchée), each Santa is unique in terms of his personality and the material used to make him.



Doll castle, Rudolf Szálasi, Germany, 1975
© Musée Stewart

Along with these cheerful little guys with white beards, you'll see a fairy tale doll castle hosting an 18th century ball with guests in their finest clothes. All of these delightful objects come from the private collection of Montreal philanthropist Liliane Stewart (1928-2014), who was married to the Museum's founder David M. Stewart (1920-1984). Liliane Stewart was particularly fond of everything that surrounded preparations for Christmas.

"*Santas Are Taking Over the Stewart Museum* is a successful exhibition that has become a tradition attracting families to the Stewart Museum as a holiday destination. Year after year, young and old feel the magic of Christmas at the exhibition and leave with happy hearts," says Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Stewart Museum.

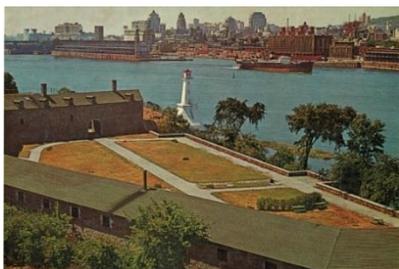
Visitors will also see old photographs illustrating the pleasures of winter and learn about holiday season traditions. Children will be able to take part in:

- a Christmas bell **workshop**
- a **scavenger hunt** for children 3 to 9 years old including a game of "I Spy" with the doll castle and an "observation game" called *Santa's vacations*. The little ones will discover how Santa is transported around the world.
- a **story time** (see the schedule online). The books are a courtesy of Gallimard.
- a screening of three **animated short films** : *Taratata* (1977) by Frédéric Back, courtesy of Radio-Canada, *Une vieille boîte* (1975) by Paul Driessen and *Hold-up au Far West* by Jeff Hale.

The Stewart Museum will be open from Wednesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and exceptionally on December 21, 22, 28 and 29. It will be closed on December 25 and January 1.

60 YEARS OF PASSION FOR HISTORY

The festivities will continue after January 10, this time to celebrate the Museum's 60th anniversary. To mark the occasion, the Museum will offer discounts on admission throughout the year. To thank our senior clientele, admission will be 60 cents for people 60 years of age and older every Wednesday until July 1, 2016!



Photographic print, 1959

On July 2, 1955, Montreal businessperson and history lover David M. Stewart founded a small museum in the Fenian Blockhaus on St. Helen's Island. The Museum later moved to its current location, the British Military Depot.

Over the years, David M. Stewart built a large collection of rare books, archival documents, old maps, iconography, scientific instruments and everyday objects representing the human activities that shaped the New World. There are almost 500 objects in the Museum's permanent collection exhibiting its richness and diversity.

From 1963 to 2013, the Museum offered a military re-enactment program with the reconstitution of the *Compagnie franche de la Marine* and the *Olde 78th Fraser Highlanders*. During the 1970s and 80s the Museum developed its educational programs and temporary exhibitions and established many partnerships with the United States and France. In 1999, the exhibition *Napoleon... at St. Helen's Island* was a resounding success and the won the Award of Excellence from the Société des musées Québécois for the Museum.

In 2008, the Museum temporarily closed its doors for a major overhaul of the historic buildings. The Museum reopened in 2011, relaunched its permanent exhibition and developed a more diversified program of temporary exhibitions. On July 1, 2013, the McCord Museum and the Stewart Museum signed a merger agreement to ensure the preservation of their collections. A passionate team continues to conserve and showcase the collections, and work towards transferring historical knowledge.

About the Stewart Museum

The Stewart Museum, a private, non-profit history museum, was founded in 1955 by philanthropist David M. Stewart. The institution holds a unique collection of nearly 27,000 artefacts, archival documents and rare books that show the European presence in New France and North America up to the present. The Museum's main mission: to conserve and exhibit these objects, which relate to the voyages, scientific advances, feats of arms, beliefs and daily life of our ancestors. This Montreal organization is located at Parc Jean-Drapeau, in the arsenal of the British fortified depot on Île Sainte-Hélène, a 19th century military construction registered in the *Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec*.

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Interview possibilities with Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Stewart Museum, and Sylvie Dauphin, Head, Collections.

Press kit with photographs available on Dropbox: <http://bit.ly/1KQfXwU>

Contact: Myriam Perron
Communication Advisor
514 861-6701, ext. 231
mperron@mccord-stewart.ca

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