

ILE DE LA PASSE

2008 Ile de la Passe Map

Controlling the pass through the reef into Grand Port Bay, Ile de la Passe, like a ship, has to be supplied from the mainland.

In the second half of the 18th and the early 19th centuries Ile de la Passe is heavily fortified by the French. The importance given to this site is demonstrated by the effort and expenditure to construct and maintain state-of-the-art defences during the period of global conflict between Britain and France. Coisigny's plans, implemented in 1759, comprise the Batterie de Belle Ile, the North West Battery, a Powder House, a Cistern, barracks and a Cook House. A Store House is later added, improved Napoleonic designs, begun by Decaen in 1805, are unfinished at the British capture. They comprise replacing the Lower Battery with the elevated Upper Battery, construction of a Hot Shot Furnace for heating cannon balls and the cutting of a ditch on the North East side. Captured by a British force in August 1810, Ile de la Passe plays a pivotal role in the ensuing Battle of Grand Port. This great French naval victory over the British is celebrated on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

Half-heartedly garrisoned under British rule, the site is abandoned in 1838. As Mauritius became the world's leading exporter of sugar, her strategic importance wanes. Clippers and

ships can no longer stop over when completion of the Suez Canal creates alternative routes to India. Dutch remains include graffiti by soldiers stationed on the island, many cut between c. 1840-1888 by troops of the 'VF' Fifth Regiment of Foot or Fifth Auxiliaries. Three 20th-Century structures, the Observation Tower, Central Building and Searchlight Building are distinctly built of blocks with concrete blocks to strengthen the masonry.

In the Strand Hotel site, Ile de la Passe is part of an integrated defensive system. For centuries Mauritius, which also includes Ile aux Argues and Pointe du Diabre. Two naval guns, searchlight and a aiming system are installed by a garrison of 100 Mauritian troops. Earlier structures are modified, generator huts built in the Ditch and temporary buildings erected over concrete platforms. Obsolete naval guns from the Great War are the best that the Empire can provide for a portside island that no longer has strategic value.

Ile de la Passe is one of the most precious jewels of our National Heritage sites. It is our duty to ensure that it will be passed on to our children's children.

JEWEL OF MAURITIAN HERITAGE
JOYAU DU PATRIMOINE MAURIC

Ile de la Passe

Key to the Indian Ocean
Clé de l'Océan Indien

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Occupied sans grand enthousiasme par une garnison britannique, l'île est abandonnée en 1838. Alors que Maurice devient le principal exportateur de sucre au monde, son importance stratégique diminue. Les Clippers et les bateaux à vapeur ne s'y arrêtent plus et une fois le Canal de Suez achevé, d'autres routes vers l'Inde sont possibles. Parmi les vestiges britanniques on retrouve les graffiti par les soldats stationnés à l'Ile Maurice, gravés en grande partie entre c. 1840-1888 par des troupes du 'VF' Fifth Regiment of Foot or Fifth Auxiliaries. Trois structures datant du 20e siècle, la Tour d'Observation, le Bâtiment Central et le Bâtiment à Projecteur, sont d'une construction distincte, en brique avec des blocs de béton en travers du mur pour renforcer la maçonnerie.

Pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, l'île de la Passe fait partie intégrante d'un système de défense, conçu pour le sud de Maurice, qui comprend aussi l'île aux Argues et la Pointe du Diabre. Deux canons de marine, des projecteurs et un système de ciblage sont installés par une garnison de 100 soldats mauriciens. Les structures existantes sont modifiées, des salles de générateurs sont construites dans le Fosse Est et des bâtiments temporaires sont érigés sur des plates-formes en béton. Des canons de marine désuets provenant de la Grande Guerre sont le mieux que l'Empire peut fournir à une île portuaire, qui a perdu de sa valeur stratégique.

L'île de la Passe est l'un des plus précieux joyaux de notre patrimoine. Il est notre devoir de tout faire pour léguer ce site unique aux générations futures.

Collaborateurs / Collaborateurs
Ministry of Arts and Culture
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Mauritius Tourism Council
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THE ILE DE LA PASSE PROJECT

NATIONAL HERITAGE FUND MAURITIUS

Sponsors

Help in kind

Powder House Poudrière

Hot Shot Furnace Four à Boulets Rouge

Storehouse with Cistern in front and Cook House, left. Magasin, Cistern devant et Cuisine, à gauche.

Observation Tower Tour d'Observation

Central Building Bâtiment Central

Searchlight Building Salle de Projecteur

ILE DE LA PASSE MAURITIUS

STRUCTURES

- 1 Powder House
- 2 Storehouse
- 3 Hot Shot Furnace
- 4 Cistern
- 5 Barrack
- 6 Cook House
- 7 Generator Halls
- 8 North West Sentry Post
- 9 East Sentry Post
- 10 Observation Tower
- 11 Central Building
- 12 Searchlight Building
- 13 Central Platform
- 14 Building Platform
- 15 Kitchens
- 16 Building Platform
- 17 Building Platform
- 18 Building Platform
- 19 Building Platform
- 20 Building Platform
- 21 Building Platform
- 22 Building Platform
- 23 Building Platform
- 24 Building Platform
- 25 Shower Cubicles
- 26 Washing Facilities
- 27 Washing Facilities
- 28 Barrack Platform
- 29 Building Platform
- 30 Toilet WWT
- 31 Steps
- 32 Building Platform
- 33 Wall
- Lower Battery
- Upper Battery
- Ditch
- WWT Cannon Platform

Initial Construction Period

- Early French
- Later French
- British
- WWII

Defences

- Cistern
- Pitched Roof
- Concrete Flat Roof
- Building Platform
- Quarry
- Trench

1600 Dutch / Hollandais

1650 Colonisation

1700 Abandon

1710 Abandon

1715 Occupation

1750 Ile de la Passe First Defences

1759 Ile de la Passe Defences

1805 Ile de la Passe Napoleonic Defences

1810 Battle of Grand Port

1810 British takes over Mauritius

1838 Ile de la Passe British Garrison

1840s - 1860s Ile de la Passe Early Growth / Les plus anciens graffiti

1838 British Garrison

1840s - 1860s Ile de la Passe Early Growth / Les plus anciens graffiti

1939-45 Second World War

1968 Independence

1992 Republic

2010