"Habitants on the Chapeau Rouge: Documentary, Cartographic, and Archaeological Explorations of French Residence on Newfoundland's Burin Peninsula"

This project is centred around the history and archaeology of French residence on the island of Newfoundland. More specifically, this project aims to systematically evaluate the documentary, cartographic and archaeological evidence for seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century French residence on the Burin Peninsula. The advent of French permanent settlement in Newfoundland began in earnest in 1662, when the French crown established a formal colony at Plaisance (now Placentia). However, some residents (known as habitants) chose not to live in the colony. Instead, they established small settlements on the stretch of coastline they called the Chapeau Rouge, which generally encompassed the islands in Placentia Bay and harbours along the Placentia Bay side of the Burin Peninsula. Their settlements were small, family-based establishments, economically based on the cod fishery. Though these settlements never grew very large, they continued to spread out along the harbours of the Chapeau Rouge throughout the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century. After the area was surrendered to the British under the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the majority of the settlers were forced to leave. Currently, we know little of the extent, dispersion, and location of French settlers in this part of Newfoundland. New data from under-studied documentary and cartographic series can provide insight into the depth and breadth of French settlement. Once this data has been assembled and analyzed, a program of archaeological site survey will be undertaken to locate and archaeologically excavate some of these French settlements. This research project will provide previously unknown information on the breadth and depth of the French permanent occupation along the Chapeau Rouge, and will add new data and a new dimension to our knowledge of the French presence in Newfoundland as a whole.