



ROBERT HIRTLE PHOTO

Multi-media specialist Tito Dupret photographs the interior of St. John's church.

Lunenburg to be featured on World Heritage web site

Virtual photo tour going on-line

by ROBERT HIRTLE

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LUNENBURG — A virtual photographic tour of the Town of Lunenburg will soon be posted on the internet for all the world to see.

Last week, Tito Dupret, multi-media director with WHTour, visited the South Shore to photograph the World Heritage Site, with particular attention being placed on the restoration of St. John's Anglican Church.

The mission of WHTour is to make a documentary image bank with panoramic pictures and interactive virtual reality movies for all sites registered as World Heritage by UNESCO.

They also hope to utilize multi-media techniques in what they call an "edutainment mode" to raise awareness of the preservation of World Heritage and to promote the notion of sustainable tourism with local administrators, tourists and travellers.

Mr. Dupret, a native of Brussels, Belgium, has spent the past three years circling the globe taking panoramic photos of World Heritage sites, and will be spending the next month doing so in Canada.

To create his panoramic images, he uses a digital camera mounted to a special stand called a monopod that enables him to rotate

the camera 360 degrees in any direction.

Mr. Dupret does not view what he is shooting through the eye aperture. Instead, he focuses on a level that is attached to the side of the camera to ensure that the vertical images of what he is shooting remain on a constant plane. For each panorama he shoots 24 frames which are then transposed electronically into a virtual photograph that is then posted on the WHTour web site. When put into motion, the image gives viewers the impression that they are standing in one place and turning in a complete circle.

Mr. Dupret said that at each site, he tries to capture "a sense of the monument itself," and he liked what he saw during his visit to Lunenburg.

"I'm so impressed with Lunenburg, the soul of its architecture," he said.

He called the restoration project at St. John's "incredibly important" and said he was amazed by the talents of the craftsmen working at the site.

"How did you find people to do that?" he asked.

With over 700 World Heritage sites around the globe, Mr. Dupret estimates it will take him at least another seven years to complete the project.

His work can be viewed by visiting www.world-heritage-tour.org