



## Committee Report

**To:** Warden Janice Jackson  
Members of the Museum Committee

**From:** Cathy McGirr  
Director, Museum & Cultural Services

**Date:** April 1, 2021

**Re:** Collections Report - April 2021

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### Staff Recommendation:

The Collections Report - April 2021 is for information.

### Background:

#### Conservation Projects

During the third quarter of 2020, Collections staff began working with the Exhibit Designer and Kuhl Machine Shop Ltd. to begin a conservation effort on a millstone. Done in the French Buhr style, the millstone is comprised of several smaller fitted stones, held together with a steel band. The original steel band had become corroded and was causing structural instability.



Different views of millstone with original ring. Note the stones had begun to shift.

The millstone came to the Museum in the late 1950s and was originally from Shantz's mill located on Mill Creek in Port Elgin. The mill began operations in 1854/55 and was the third grist mill to open in the County. When originally constructed, the stones were laid on their grinding surface, and the outer band was fitted and rivetted by a blacksmith. In this way, the grinding surface was level, and the stones were friction fit together.

Taking into consideration the weight and the extremely close-fitting nature of the millstone, a new steel housing consisting of a tray with an outer band was designed. This design allows

each stone to be supported from the bottom, have a level grinding surface and fit as closely together, like the original, as possible.

Using a skid steer the stone was brought from off-site storage. The original ring was removed, and the stones were numbered to keep them in original order. The stones were then cleaned using a non-ionic surfactant. As the backsides of the stones were not level, a mount for each stone was created.



Cleaning a stone and the stones on their mounts.

Once the housing arrived, the stones and their mounts were placed within it. Once the millstone was secured in the new housing, the stone was catalogued and is now included in the online collection.



Top View of stone near completion and view of stone completed.

Finally, the millstone was moved to its place in the Last Frontier gallery. This large undertaking would not have been possible without the support of Port Elgin & District Lions Club and the expertise of the staff at Kuhl Machine Shop Ltd.



Millstone in Last Frontier gallery

**Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

**Interdepartmental Consultation:**

There was no interdepartmental consultation.

**Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:**

Strategic Goal 3: Find creative ways to engage our public.

**Report Author:**

Laura Leonard  
Curatorial Assistant

**Departmental Approval:**

Cathy McGirr  
Director, Museum & Cultural Services

**Approved for Submission:**

Sandra Datars Bere  
Chief Administrative Officer