



# The Delta Millers' Newsletter

The Gist of the Grist

Spring/Summer 2020

## ONWARD and UPWARD—Part 2

In the Spring 2019 newsletter, the rallying cry of director Anna Greenhorn, “Onward and Upward!”, was the lead article. This year it is more applicable than ever. The Delta Mill Society has always maintained a positive outlook, we never let reality get in the way of optimism. That goes back to 1963, when the first trustees, who formed the nucleus of the Delta Mill Society, were given an old building that was in very rough shape. Within a decade they’d managed to get a National Historic Site of Canada designation for the building (very difficult, a reason we’re the only stone gristmill in Canada with an NHS designation), officially incorporate the society, and launch a rescue restoration program that saved the building from collapse. That was followed by more milestones, including: opening the mill to the public in 1985; the very large, professionally done restoration program from 1999 to 2003; having a professional curator on staff to develop much of the interpretation you see inside the mill today and restoring operating millstones to the mill in 2010. When we lost grant funding in 2013, which was supporting our single staff position, we regrouped as a purely volunteer run organization, maintaining that “onward and upward” spirit.

So, this year, we weren’t about to let a global pandemic get in our way. While it did force us to make the very difficult decision not to open to the public this year, we continue to be very busy behind the scenes. When life gives you lemons, make lemonade – we’ve done that this year by re-purposing the two students we were able to hire from the one student grant program that we received this year. They are tackling a job long overdue, the full documentation and organizing of our archives and artifact collections. And, even though we’ve lost our most significant sources of revenue (events and the open mill), we’re moving ahead with replacing the roof on the turbine shed, to protect our most valuable asset, the mill itself.

**Onward and Upward!**



### Our 2020 Students

Adrianna Ouellet and Jared Hayes are hard at work in the Old Town Hall working to sort, organize and document our archives and artifact collections. We have COVID-19 safety protocols in place to protect them and our volunteers. With the Old Town Hall closed to the public this summer, it provides the perfect workspace for them—allowing the masses of material we have to be spread out in order to sort the wheat from the chaff.

### AGM Delayed

We originally had our AGM slated for June 15, but concluded that given COVID-19, it wouldn’t be possible to do it this spring, so we’re now looking to a date sometime in the fall, to be established once we know what we can legally do (at the moment we couldn’t legally have an in-person AGM). We considered the zoom (video conferencing) option, but felt it might disenfranchise some of our members who aren’t familiar with that technology. We may, in the end, have to do something like that, but for now we still hope to be able to hold an in-person meeting sometime this fall.

We have included our 2019 Year-in-Review with this newsletter. We are financially sound and your Board of Directors continue to be busy, working very hard to meet the mandate of the Delta Mill Society.

## President's Report

It seems like ages ago since we last gave our members an update on what is happening with the Delta Mill Society, even though it was just in November of 2019. A lot has happened since that time, including of course the COVID-19 pandemic that has thrown a monkey wrench into everyone's lives.

We held our regular board meetings in January and February but since that time have had our discussions mostly by email and phone. We looked closely at how we might open, when and if permitted (still not as of this writing), including the options of having self-guided tours, setting the mill up for one way traffic flow, having hand sanitizing stations and other COVID-19 protocols to keep our summer students, our volunteers and visitors (the few who might show up this year) safe. Trying to keep the washrooms in the Old Town Hall open to the public was an even more challenging safety issue. In the end, on May 19, 2020, the board made a decision that we could not safely open to the public this year and passed a motion that all of our buildings; the Old Stone Mill, the Old Town Hall and the Mill Drive Shed (which includes the Blacksmith's shop), would have to remain closed to the public this year.

Although closed to the public, we did decide that we should move ahead with two big projects. One is the needed replacement of the turbine shed roof which has been leaking for the last 3 years. We'd done lots of patching, we now need to do a full roof replacement. The board made a decision last fall to go ahead with a replacement in 2020, and we re-affirmed that decision this spring. In fact, it's a bit easier with the mill closed, as that work will not be disturbing visitors, since we won't have any. The other big project we had waiting in the wings is to organize and properly document our archives and artifacts collections. We've been puttering on that project with volunteers, but now, with our buildings closed to the

public, we saw this year as the perfect opportunity to move ahead with that project using summer student support.

This year we applied for 3 students through Young Canada Works (YCW), which pays 75% of their salary, and for 3 students through the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program that pays 100%. Those grant submissions were done to meet mid-January deadlines and at that time we were anticipating a normal year. By March we were becoming aware that this year would be anything but normal. We received funding approval for two students through YCW on April 15 and didn't hear anything from CSJ until June 1 when we received an email stating "I regret to inform you that Service Canada is unable to offer you Canada Summer Jobs funding for summer 2020 at this time" with no further explanation of that decision.

A goal of the YCW program is to provide students with practical experience in the culture and heritage sectors. Certainly working as interpreters in the Old Stone Mill National Historic Site, given the extensive training we provide our students, qualifies in that regard. Our archives and artifact collections project is also direct practical experience that the students will benefit from in their future careers. Students love working for us (who doesn't love working with Anna!) and so all 4 of last year's students applied to us for work this year. Jared Hayes, who is completing his Masters in History, with a thesis topic on the Old Stone Mill, was an obvious choice for the archives job. Adrianna Ouellet was our next choice and so Jared and Adrianna filled the YCW grant funded positions. At the time we were still hoping to be able to be open sometime this summer and anticipating a positive response from the CSJ program, which would



**Turbine Shed Roof**

This photo, taken in the late 1960s or early 1970s, shows the roof of both the turbine shed and mill at that time – galvanized steel sheets. In this photo, the sawmill has been removed (it used to sit over the bywash—removed c.1968). Also note the condition of the mill and compare that to the mill you see today. The appearance today is due to the hard work over many years by the Delta Mill Society.

have allowed us to hire the other two students. But that was not to be.

With the Old Town Hall closed to the public this summer, it became the ideal location for the archives and artifacts project. Our collections are located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the OTH. With the main hall empty, it was the perfect space to set up tables to provide a nice wide open workspace, where social distancing was easy to maintain. We created a list of COVID-19 protocols such as proper hand washing, use of separate washrooms, mask use and sanitizing any shared work areas in order to keep our students and our

volunteers safe. Sally Wanless and Ken Watson are their supervisors for this project. Of course the students are also doing work for Anna on various things related to the mill (Anna always has a long list of things that need to be done). In addition to helping Jared with the archives and artifacts project, Adrianna will be organizing our various interpretive displays, several of which are stored in the OTH. It's a wonderful opportunity to get all this done in 2020, we will be much better prepared when we hopefully re-open in 2021.

Maintenance work on the Old Stone Mill will continue, including repairing and then painting the rest of the windows sills and of course the Turbine Shed roof replacement. With that job, the board has decided to use steel roofing to replace the leaking cedar shingle covered roof. It's actually less expensive, is much more durable and, as it turns out, more heritage appropriate. We've been consulting heritage experts regarding the exact type of steel roof to use, our cultural integrity director, Katherine Killins, has taken the lead on that. Cedar shingles were first put on during the early 1970s rescue

restoration of the mill, replacing the previous galvanized steel roof. It's unclear if the original mill ever had a cedar roof. Ken has noted that the 1810 mill would likely have

used more durable white oak in preference to cedar. He also noted that the first roof on the c.1860 turbine shed may well have been steel. Millers by that time were using it in preference to less durable wood.

With our operations closed we will not be selling flour or bread or any other gift items. These items helped to raise approximately \$2,500 last year. We will not be receiving donations from visitors who come for tours and we have not been able to do any fund raising

events. Our single largest fundraiser, the Giant Used Book Sale at the Maple Syrup Festival, was a casualty of the Maple Syrup Festival cancellation. We are still hopeful that we might be able to host our Harvest Festival, and we have some concerts planned at the Old Town Hall, including two through the Festival of Small Halls, but only time will tell if we will even be able to hold these events. This obviously will have a large negative impact on our revenue stream this year.

We do hope that you will consider renewing your membership, and if you are able, we would gratefully accept any additional donations, so that we can continue our work to preserve our past and move to the future. Our members are our most reliable funding base, we're anticipating that this will continue this year, given our needs.

In 2019 we had a good year financially through our various fundraising efforts. The Township of Rideau Lakes granted us \$8,000 through their Grants to Others program which helps to support some of our fixed yearly costs which are in the range of \$15,000 per year (whether



#### **Sorting our Archives**

We have a lot more chaff than wheat in our collections, many things collected over the years not related to the Old Stone Mill NHS and the mandate of the Delta Mill Society. The big open space of the Old Town Hall, closed to the public this summer, is a perfect work environment for our students.

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## Of Grants, Funding and Catch-22

The Delta Mill Society works very hard to self-fund itself but the reality is that for some things, grants are needed. For instance, we have no staff, since there is no way we can afford to fund staff on our own. Funding for such a position is the luck of the draw depending on where your heritage site happens to be located, since it is generally a municipal responsibility to support local cultural heritage buildings that are open to the public. In most cases, grant funding, at a level that can support a staff position, is provided under a formal cultural heritage budget. Watson's Mill in Manotick for instance, since it's in rich Ottawa, gets about \$225,000 in municipal and regional funding support each year. We received \$8,000 in 2019 under the Township's Grants to Others program which we have to re-apply for every year and which is subject to council selection. While we don't consider ourselves to be an "Other" in the township, that's just the reality of the situation.

As we work to get the Old Town Hall placed on par with community halls in other township villages, the township is becoming more helpful, sharing some of the community hall grants they've received with us, including a large \$20,000 grant last year (a portion of the \$100,000 small halls grant they received). But it comes with strings attached, we can only use it for improvements to the Old Town Hall, not for the Old Stone Mill or the Blacksmith's shop in the Mill Drive Shed.

Our summer students, who are needed to keep the mill open to the public in the summer (during a normal year) are partially funded by grants. But those are also subject to the whims of the selection system. In 2017, the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program turned us down since they had changed the selection criteria (behind the scenes). It took an intense lobby effort on our part, pointing out the injustice of turning down support for a National Historic Site of Canada during a year when Canada was supposed to be celebrating its heritage, to get that funding partially restored. CSJ turned us down again this year for reasons unknown and that has us worried for 2021 when we hope to be open and absolutely need that grant.

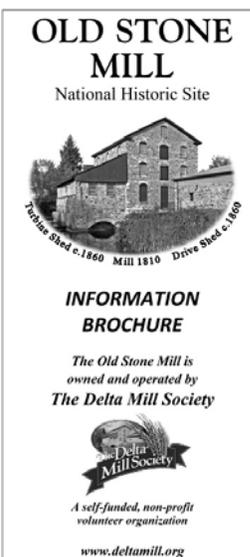
For large capital projects, grants are also needed. While we are self-funding the Turbine Shed roof replacement, we have another large capital project waiting in the wings, the restoration of the Mill Drive Shed (foundation and wall issues) and the rebuilding of the forge so that we can have a proper, tourist friendly Blacksmith's shop. We need about \$75,000 for that project.

It can only be done if we can secure a grant — we've been trying for 3 years with no success.

Now here's the Catch-22. With most heritage sites, a significant part of the job of staff is to secure grants to do these types of projects. Searching for and applying for grants is a time consuming job which requires specific skills. From 2004 to 2012 that's how we were able to maintain staff (a Curator and an Associate Curator); part of their job was to secure grants to keep themselves employed. The primary grant used was Ontario's Trillium grant program. So, if you have grants to maintain staff, then you get more grants because staff are getting them for you. Heritage sites with staff have a huge advantage over sites that don't. That's the Catch-22: you need grants to get staff and you need staff to get grants. The exception is if you have a volunteer skilled at finding grants and making applications, unfortunately we don't.

So in the end, this is a call for volunteers. We need a volunteer who has the skills required to locate applicable grants and make those applications (which, such as the Trillium grant, can be long and involved). We need grant funding for either a staff position (we badly need a manager) or for our large (\$75,000) capital project (ideally both). Even this year, we've been unable to find a COVID-19 grant program that would be applicable to us. In the end we will survive, we always do — but it's a heavy burden at times on a small group of volunteers, no matter how keen.

- Ken Watson



New for 2020 is an information brochure that tries to compress the very large story of the mill into a small 3 panel brochure. Director Ken Watson applied his skills as a heritage researcher, wordsmith, graphics designer and home printer to create the brochure. It also benefitted from the many rounds of proofreading by his wife Pat (as does this newsletter).

The idea is to provide a visitor to the mill during off-hours or off-season (in this case at least this entire year) with some information about the mill. Paper copies are available in a brochure holder outside the mill. It's also available in digital form on the homepage of our website.

We hope that this will give a visitor some interesting information about the mill and encourage them to come back when we are open.

## PROUD TO BE A BASTARD

In memory of Doug Bond, 1941-2020

by Cathy Livingston

We were saddened by the news that Doug Bond had passed away on May 14th while at Kingston General Hospital waiting for heart surgery. Doug leaves behind his 2 daughters and granddaughter and an enormous number of people who called him a friend.

His legacy will be in the dedication and work that he has done over the years promoting the heritage of the Township of Rideau Lakes. For many years he was the Chair of the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC), a committee that I have been assigned to over the past 5 years as part of my Councillor duties.

Prior to amalgamation, Doug was also a member of LACAC (the precursor to MHAC) for the Township of Bastard and South Burgess. And of course Doug was also a long time director of the Delta Mill Society and also of the Bastard and South Burgess Heritage Society.

In his work with MHAC, Doug was instrumental in updating the Heritage Map of the township, which was reviewed and reprinted in 2019 with a new look. He did quite a bit of work making sure that everything was correct before going to print. He was also instrumental in creating numerous local walking and cycling tours and had an inventory of hundreds of old photos that his daughter Jillian helped to index for him on memory sticks. As part of his MHAC duties he had taken the lead on making sure that almost 1,000 "heritage properties of interest" were documented and entered into a database where the information is available to the property owners.

Doug's greatest love was geology. As a geography teacher at Rideau District High School for many years, he loved to take the time to tell the story of how the earth was formed and so he created a very long scroll that he would spread down the halls to teach his students or anyone who wanted to listen and learn. I had the pleasure of going through this at the Old Stone Mill a couple of years ago as he spread the scroll throughout the first floor of the Mill for exchange students who were there for a tour.

Doug also loved to do research and had recently written "Perspective on a Wedge of Cheddar" documenting all the local cheese factories that had popped up in this area. He was also great at telling stories on supposedly 'real things that had happened' so one of the books he had been working on was "Ghoulish Tales" about grave robbing for medical research. I will fondly remember his smiles and chuckles as he told one his many anecdotes.

Anna Greenhorn recalls that she never heard Doug say the word "NO". When she first asked him about a directorship in the Delta Mill Society, he said he always wanted to be part of that important group and the work we did. He had also said "Yes" when someone was needed to help with the Bastard and South Burgess Heritage Society. So he ended up doing both!

Doug became Chair of the Bastard and South Burgess Heritage Society. He was always "Proud to be a Bastard" and loved to tell everyone he met. This slogan was part of a response when some people were trying to change the name of Bastard Township in 1994 during the 200th Anniversary of the township. A couple of years ago I worked with Doug on having a new version of the buttons printed so we could distribute them to a new generation. There are still quite a few buttons left for sale if you are interested. Doug said \$4 per button; however only \$2 if you were a legitimate 'Bastard'. It is a fund raising effort for the Bastard and South Burgess Heritage Society.



**Doug Bond**

Doug by the sign he had made in 2018 for our millstone display.



Every summer Doug would lead boat tours of Big Rideau Lake to tell the history of its people and cottages. He would also do local bus tours, telling stories about the heritage of our area. I have learned so much about the heritage of our township by being in meetings with Doug and all the members of MHAC. Historians are a very interesting group of people and it doesn't take much to get off topic when someone mentions a historical point of interest. There is so much to learn and Doug sometimes had trouble keeping the group on topic; however he would always join in on the conversation with a big smile.

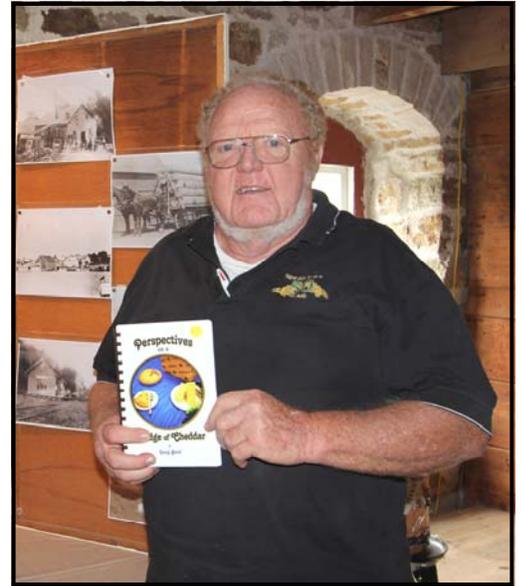
Doug will be missed as a Director for the Delta Mill Society. Over the years his wisdom and knowledge of heritage has helped us make many decisions. He was our Vice President for several years, he volunteered to lead tours, he restored and donated 3 wooden benches and donated the wooden Old Stone Mill National Historic Site sign that sits out front by our millstone display. He donated the revenue from the sale of any of his books that we sold in our gift shop to the Delta Mill Society. And of course his sense of humour always livened up a Delta Mill Society meeting.

Doug Bond was a kind, gentle man, loving his family, his church and the community that he grew up in and loved. He and Peggy made the best apple cider and then gave most of it away.

Doug Bond was well respected by his community, his students and his colleagues both at Rideau District High School and those involved in heritage and local history. He leaves an empty hole that will be very hard to fill.

May you rest in peace, my friend!

*Cathy Livingston*



**Perspectives on a Wedge of Cheddar**

Doug's choice of title for his book reflects his wonderful sense of humour.

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### **President's Report—continued from page 3**

we are open or not). Presently it looks like the Turbine Shed Roof replacement will also be in the range of \$15,000.

Normally we have our Annual General Meeting in June, but as of this writing we aren't even legally allowed to hold such a meeting, even with social distancing. We're now looking to the fall and hoping for the best. We've included our 2019 Year in Review with this newsletter. We would normally be handing it out at the AGM, so that our members can see how much we accomplished in the past year.

This year marks the 210<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the Old Stone Mill National Historic Site and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary since we started grinding flour at our Mill once again. We had planned to have a special celebration in June; however that has been cancelled and we are hopeful that we can celebrate our special anniversary in 2021.

You can still purchase organic red fife flour by contacting Miller Chris at [grow@ironwoodorganics.ca](mailto:grow@ironwoodorganics.ca) and he will make arrangements for either delivery or pick up at his farm just outside of Delta.

You can also purchase bread, especially the Miller's Loaf, at Nana B's Bakery, just a short drive to Merrickville at 318 Main Street West. Phone 613-454-1380 or visit her website at [www.nanbbakery.ca](http://www.nanbbakery.ca).

So we hope that we will come through this pandemic stronger and more prepared than ever. It is giving all of us a chance to take a good look at what we are doing and an opportunity to make changes and/or additions as we move *Onward and Upward*, quoting our very own Anna Greenhorn.

Thanks for your continued support!

*Cathy Livingston*, President, Delta Mill Society