

BALMORAL GRIST MILL MUSEUM

MANDATE AND MISSION

- » To demonstrate the operation of a water-powered grist mill in the grinding of wheat, oats and buckwheat.
- » To provide understanding of how a local grist mill operated within a rural agricultural economy, and contributed to the wider provincial economy at the end of the 19th century.
- » To present the story of Alexander McKay, who opened the mill in 1874, as well as the stories of the people who worked at the mill and those who used it.

PROPOSED CONTENT

*Note: Topics are drawn from the NS Interpretive Master Plan Content Framework.

I. CONTENT TO MAINTAIN

C. EXPLOITING

C.1 Energy

- Water Power: The technology of harnessing water power.

C.2 Resource Development

- Agriculture: Size of mill's service area.

II. CONTENT TO ENHANCE

E. LIVING

E.1 Life at Home and Work

- Food on the Table: Slow food movement; importance of flour in cooking.

III. NEW CONTENT TO DEVELOP

A. FORMING

A.1 Geological Formation

- Geology & Landscape Diversity: Creation of local landscape; glaciation/erosion.

A.2 Making Landscapes

- Rivers and Lakes: History of the river; local drainage patterns.

A.5 Biodiversity

- Life Forms and Ecosystems: Ecosystems in the river valley.

B. EVOLVING

B.1 Vegetation

- Diversity of Plant Life: Local trees and plants.

B.2 Birds, Fish, and Animals

- Bird Environments and Habitats: Use local park/river valley to explore local fauna.
- Diversity of Birds and Fish: Inland, Coast, Sea
- Mammal Environments and Habitats
- Diversity of Mammals

B.4 Migration, Outmigration, Exodus

- Late 19th Century Immigration: Local settlement patterns.

B.6 Agents of Change

- Human Activity & the Environment: Using environmental opportunities.

- New Technology: Effects/Experience: Mill technology and expertise brought to Nova Scotia by immigrants from the United States and the United Kingdom.

C. EXPLOITING

C.4 Commerce

- Internal Nova Scotia Commerce: Patterns of local commerce in villages and towns.

C.6 Environmental Values

- Environmental Impact (Then and Now): How did local mills impact the environment?

D. RELATING

D.7 Social Equality

- Capital and Labour (incl. indentured)

E. LIVING

E.1 Life at Home and Work

- People in the Workplace: Mill employees, conditions, and wages.
- Places of Community Interaction: Mill as a place of social value for workers and users.

CONCLUSIONS

While the functioning mill should remain the primary focus, its wider commercial and social context merits further exploration. There are also opportunities to present natural history topics in the attractive setting of the adjacent river valley park.