

Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan Update

Frequently Asked Questions

June 2025

When was the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area acquired?

Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA) purchased the original 33-acres from Major Leys in 1972. The purchase included the Mill, the Cloister on the Hill and all other out-buildings for \$110,000.

Who paid for the acquisition?

The Government of Canada through the National Capital Commission and Department of National Health and Welfare contributed \$50,000, the Department of the Environment of the Government of Ontario contributed \$50,000, and the Ontario Heritage Foundation contributed \$10,000. Other associated costs were borne by the Authority. As a result of or associated with this purchase, the boundary of the National Capital Region was expanded to include this property.

How is the Museum Administered?

Originally, the Museum was to have been administered by a special Board of MVCA, with representation from the agencies that contributed to the purchase. It is understood that one or more funders declined the invitation to participate and had limited involvement following the sale. Today, the museum is governed by the Board of Directors of MVCA with Authority staff managing day to day operations and maintenance. A Museum Advisory Committee and volunteers help the curator to plan and implement exhibits.

Isn't MVCA required to display the McKenzie collection?

Following changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2019, MVCA sought legal counsel regarding its obligations under the 1972 Options Agreement. A Superior Court decision issued in December 2020 states the following:

- The art and artefacts were gifted to MVCA;
- The art and artefacts are not subject to any trust agreement; and that
- MVCA is the absolute owner and may retain or dispose of these items.

When did MVCA obtain the Naismith collection?

In 2009, when the future of the James Naismith collection was in question, MVCA consulted with stakeholders and the decision was made that they be moved to the R. Tait McKenzie Memorial Museum. MVCA officially acquired the collection in 2017.

How is the mill linked to R. Tait McKenzie and James Naismith?

Built in 1830 by James Baird of Nepean Sandstone, the grist mill was abandoned in the late 1800's. In 1930, McKenzie purchased the mill and surrounding property that he and his friend James Naismith used to explore as young boys, and converted the mill to a summer home. Naismith was a visitor to the property until McKenzie's death in 1938, after which it was bought by Major Leys who converted the summer home into a private museum housing McKenzie's works.

What will happen to the collections if the current museum closes?

Pending Board approval, staff will create a 360° video of the current museum, and upload the video and collections of R. Tait McKenzie and James Naismith onto a dedicated Virtual Museum website. As well, staff will work with owners of individual pieces that are on loan, the community, and others with interest in the collections to develop a Transition Plan for the remaining art and artifacts.

What legislative changes were made in 2019?

In 2019, the province amended the *Conservation Authorities Act* to clarify the mandate and restrict Municipal Levy funding of conservation authorities (CAs.) A museum dedicated to art and sport is not part of the core mandate and was no longer eligible for Municipal Levy funding as of January 1, 2024.

How is the museum funded today?

MVCA's eleven municipalities signed a 5-year agreement during which the museum is to enhance cost recovery and become self-sufficient. Under this agreement, the Municipal Levy can help offset museum shortfalls up to a fixed limit that is applied not just to the museum but other non-mandatory programs.

The following is the Board-approved 2025 Budget. Note, MVCA recently learned that it would not receive a federal grant to pay for summer museum guides therefore the museum is expected to have a year-end loss.

2025 Budget	
Expenditures	
Salaries	75,000
Utilities	4,800
Insurance	10,000
Taxes	1,000
Supplies & General	1,270
Subtotal	92,070
Revenues	
Federal Grant ¹	11,544
Provincial Grant ²	13,445
Municipal Grant ³	13,081
Municipal Levies ⁴	30,500
Fees	17,500
MOKM Donations	\$6,000
Subtotal	92,070
Profit/Loss	\$0

¹ Canada Summer Jobs for hiring students.

² Community Museum of Ontario Grant (CMOG) to support curator costs.

³ Town of Mississippi Mills.

⁴ Total contribution from 11 municipalities within MVCA's jurisdiction of which ~90% is paid by the City of Ottawa.