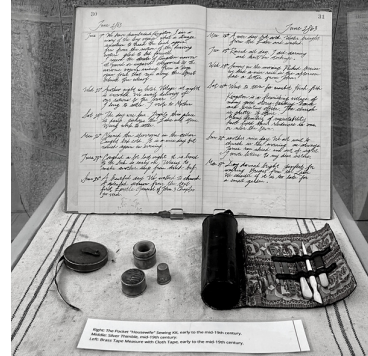


# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT





## OUR MISSION

The Murney Tower Museum NHSC is a public, non-profit museum which strives to connect visitors with Kingston's military and cultural history through collection, preservation, research, and interpretation.

## OUR VISION

At Murney Tower Museum, our vision is to create meaningful experiences and provide a sense of place for our community by representing Kingston's distinct cultural and military heritage through programs, research, and interpretation as a designated NHSC.

## OUR VALUES

As Kingston's oldest museum, our values are as time-honoured and deep-rooted as our institution.

ENHANCE PRESERVATION.

FOSTER EDUCATION.

FACILITATE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

PROMOTE COLLABORATION.

AUGMENT ACCESSIBILITY.



# YEAR AT A GLANCE

2022 was an incredibly memorable and successful year for the Murney Tower Museum National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC). This year witnessed the return of the museum to full operations for the first time since the outbreak of the global pandemic in March 2020. Between 23 May and 5 September 2022, we welcomed more than 9,000 locals, domestic visitors, and international tourists to the Murney Tower, delivered 16 outreach initiatives and engaged more than 300 special event participants. At the heart of our activities was our desire to reach more audiences and engage them with different aspects of the history of Kingston and Murney Tower.

The museum's steering committee is delighted to present its 2022 Annual Report. Providing a comprehensive overview of the Murney Tower Museum's activities throughout 2022, this report covers seven major areas of work, onsite operations, collaborative initiatives, public programming, special events, collections, publicity, and community outreach, which defined the museum's activities this year. Thanks to the generous operational funding provided by the City of Kingston Heritage Fund and Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries, and Historic Sites, and summer funding provided by Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs, the museum was able to deliver new online and onsite initiatives and contribute to cultural heritage and tourism sector in Kingston.

The return to onsite work in a post-COVID-19 world encouraged us to revisit the museum experience in order to stay relevant to the changing needs of our audiences. To diversify our storytelling, we updated the museum's exhibits, installed a new "Voices of Murney" exhibit that focuses on the lives of people who lived in the tower and created a site-specific art installation by Metis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers to acknowledge the colonial history of the tower. To enhance accessibility, we collaborated with an accessibility consultant agency entitled "Two Canes Consulting" and started developing a new audio tour. To foster cultural vitality in our city, we launched a new community engagement initiative, which consisted of off-season tours, special holiday-themed events, field trips, and onsite educational programs. These initiatives were translated into a 50% increase in visitation and a 100% growth in social media following compared to the 2019 operating season, which was the last "normal" season before the outbreak of COVID-19.

We will continue working towards meeting our strategic objectives and updating our offerings to deliver meaningful, vibrant, and relevant cultural experiences to our audiences. As Kingston's oldest operating museum, it is our honour to preserve Kingston's cultural heritage, represent different aspects of its history, and build bridges between the past and present by turning Murney Tower into a more living, breathing, and inclusive space.

# YEAR AT A GLANCE: IN NUMBERS

**9.311** Visitors

**385** Special Event Participants

**164** Digital Participants

**10.000** Website clicks

**2** New Exhibits

**5** Programs

**4** Special Events

**6** Collaborations

**20** Outreach Initiatives

**6** Grants

**6** Public Features

**50%**

More visitors

**100%**

*Growth in social  
media following  
\*Since 2019*



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Paul Charbonneau*



One of the many duties of the President is to be part of the Advisory Committee of the Murney Tower Museum National Historic Site of Canada, and it has been a steep learning curve about this gem of our history, which we have been operating for 97 years now. The museum pivoted last year to re-open, following two years online, for in-person visits - and WOW, did the public return BIG time. All the stats and programming events are discussed in this Annual Report.

The credit for this mammoth success lies on the shoulders of Museum Director Dr. Tabitha Renaud, the Manager/Curator Simge Erdogan-O'Connor and the staff and many volunteers. Vision, innovation and actual physical work lead to this transition and elevated visitor experience. The Kingston Historical Society is grateful to the federal, provincial and local government agencies as well as community funding entities for the many and varied grants we received to operate and improve our visitor's encounter with the Tower's preservation of its heritage. The Advisory Committee of the Murney Tower Museum National Historic Site of Canada and Parks Canada continue the ongoing discussion to work cooperatively in the joint management of this important facility.

Please enjoy reading this Annual Report, and why not plan a visit this year to really understand the Murney Tower? It was a highlight of my 2022 summer.

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Tabitha Renaud*



Here at the tower, we are very proud of the work we have done in 2022 to continue building capacity while modernizing and professionalizing our operations. We continue to secure grants for revitalization projects and to increase our staffing. We doubled the number of visitors to the museum and saw ten thousand hits on our new website in 2022.

We did extensive collections management work in our off-site climate-controlled storage unit. Our team processed 700 artifacts to professional museum standards. We also established a Collections Committee, a joint initiative between the museum and the Kingston Historical Society that will help govern its shared artifacts and archives. We are also updating the museum's collections policy.

We've had many collaborations with community partners and offered new programming. We continue to expand our operations into the fall and winter. In September, the Tower presented as part of a prestigious historical lineup at the Kingston Fall Fair. We also saw 300 visitors tour the Tower for Doors Open 2022. In October, the Phantoms of Yore returned for another paranormal investigation. Tickets sold out quickly and the three-day event was a huge success that generated revenue for the museum.

This year we tried two brand new experiments that were successful. It is exciting to innovate and expand our offerings to be more active in our city year-round. In October we held a Halloween event called "Spooky Murney" and in December, the Tower was opened during the winter for a holiday gathering called "Merry Murney." It was wonderful to decorate Murney for two holidays and allow the public inside during the off-season. Overall, it has been another fantastic year at the Murney Tower, and we thank you for your support!

# MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

## *Simge Erdogan-O'Connor*



This year, we broke a lot of ground. For the first time since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, we opened our doors to the public for the full summer season between the 21st of May and the 5th of September. Over the course of four months, we welcomed more than 9,000 visitors to the museum. On display were our new exhibit entitled "The Voices of Murney," which explored the unique period of 1848-1888 during which the tower was used as a barracks for soldiers and their families, and our temporary art installation entitled #HopeAndHealingCanada Indigenous art installation by Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers, which acknowledged the colonial legacy of the tower and recognized the resilience of Indigenous peoples.

Our ongoing efforts were recognized locally, regionally and nationally. This year alone, the museum appeared in six national and regional programs including CTV Toronto Morning Show, CTV Ottawa and CKWS Kingston. We were honoured to be able to promote the history and cultural heritage of Kingston. In addition, our new initiatives were covered by the Kingston Life Magazine and Queen's University Faculty of Arts and Science. These public appearances and engagements allowed us to expand our reach far beyond the limestone walls of Murney Tower.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Kingston Historical Society, the City of Kingston, and the Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites for making these achievements possible with their ongoing support. We will continue working enthusiastically to build capacity and transform Kingston's Murney Tower Museum into a more vivid, inclusive and engaging space that connects diverse audiences with the heritage of Kingston.

# 2022 STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr. Tabitha Renaud,  
Staff Resource: Simge Erdogan-  
O'Connor  
Committee members: Paul  
Charbonneau, Vincent Durant, Peter  
Ginn, Don Richardson, Tanya Scott,  
Liz Watkins-McLean

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## MANAGEMENT TEAM

Dr. Tabitha Renaud  
*Director*

Simge Erdogan-O'Connor  
*Manager/Curator*

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## WINTER 2022/SPRING 2022

Allison Dringenberg  
*Museum Assistant*

Madison Hall  
*Collections Assistant*

Allison Mei  
*Intern*  
*Queen's University, History*

Cassandra Giarrusso  
*Intern*  
*Queen's University, History*

Joanna Dermenjian  
*Volunteer Assistant Curator*

## COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr. Tabitha Renaud,  
Staff Resource: Simge Erdogan-  
O'Connor  
Committee members: Peter Gower,  
Andrea Gunn, Warren Everett, Ed  
Grenda, Liana Shaw

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## SUMMER 2022

Jimmy Powell  
*Chief Museum Assistant*

Kendra Klages  
*Museum Assistant*

Andrea Douglas  
*Museum Assistant*

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## FALL 2022

Allison Telfer  
*Intern*  
*Queen's University, History*

Rebecca Marquez  
*Volunteer Museum Coordinator*



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The 2022 season saw the return of the Murney Tower Museum to full operations for the first time since the outbreak of COVID-19 in May 2020. This year, we created new onsite experiences, educational activities, and special events to foster cultural vitality and audience engagement in the city of Kingston. Our efforts were recognized on local, regional, and national levels.

## Overview

### ONSITE OPERATIONS

VOICES OF MURNEY  
#HOPEANDHEALINGCANADA  
GUIDED TOURS  
WEEKEND CRAFTS  
TREASURE HUNT

### COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

MARCH OF THE MUSEUMS  
KINGSTON REGIONAL  
HERITAGE FAIR  
MOVIES AT THE SQUARE  
DOORS OPEN  
KINGSTON FALL FAIR  
PHANTOMS OF YORE

### PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

FIELD TRIPS  
C&C: CURATOR AND  
COLLECTIONS  
ONLINE TUTORIALS  
OFF-SEASON TOURS  
KIDS TAKEOVER THE  
MUSEUM

### SPECIAL EVENTS

OPENING EVENT  
RADIO NIGHT  
SPOOKY MURNEY  
MERRY MURNEY

### COLLECTIONS

MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE

### PUBLICITY

CTV MORNING SHOW  
CTV OTTAWA  
GLOBAL NEWS  
KINGSTON LIFE  
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY  
FORT HENRY PODCAST

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

E-NEWSLETTER  
ACCESSIBILITY AND AUDIO TOUR

# ONSITE OPERATIONS



## VOICES OF MURNEY

Reflecting the Kingston community's desire to learn more about the people who lived in the tower, this year we developed a new exhibition titled "The Voices of Murney," which explored the unique period of 1848-1888 during which the tower was used as a barracks for soldiers and their families. The exhibit provided a lens into the past that revealed the unknown stories of the people of Murney Tower who called our 19th-century fortification home.

## #HOPEANDHEALINGCANADA

This year the museum collaborated with Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers and hosted an Indigenous site-specific art installation created as part of her #HopeAndHealingCanada project. The artwork acknowledges the colonial legacy of the tower and recognized the resilience of Indigenous peoples. The art installation provided an opportunity for visitors to reflect upon Canada's complex history and was part of our team's enduring efforts toward reconciliation with those upon whose land Murney Tower is located.

# ONSITE OPERATIONS

## GUIDED TOURS

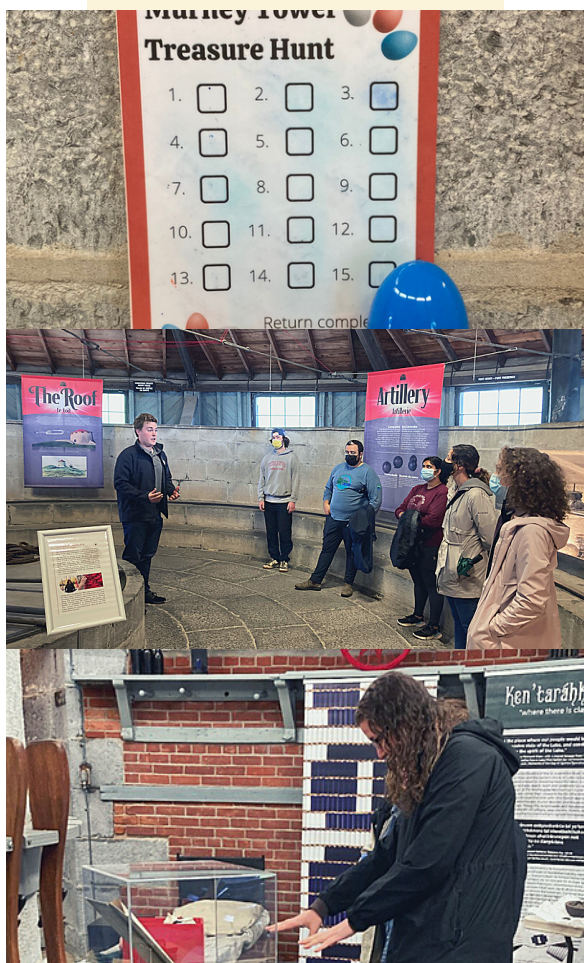
During the operation season between May-September, we offered free guided tours to individuals and groups. These tours provided the public with an opportunity to explore the tower with the staff and engage in a deep conversation about the tower's history.

## WEEKEND CRAFTS

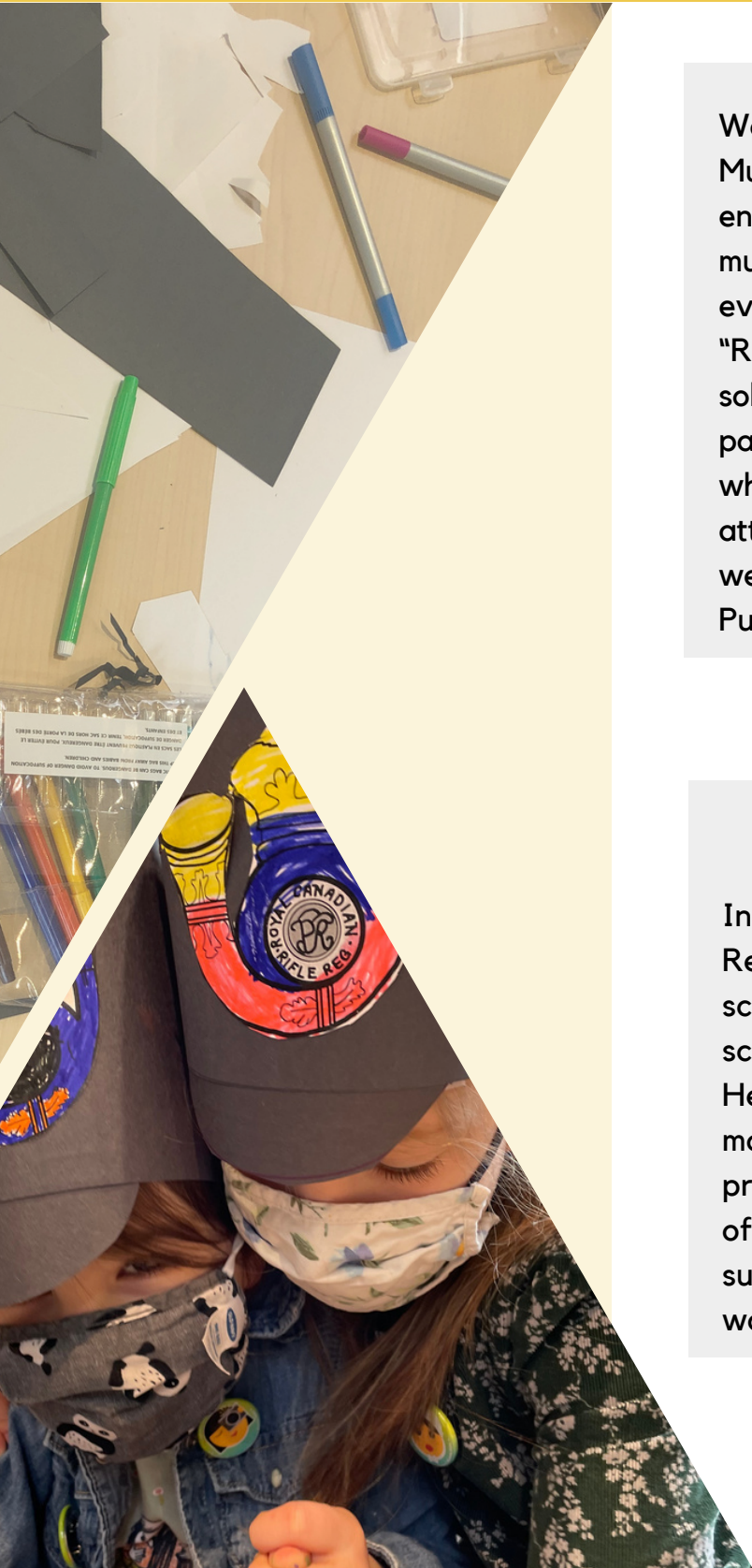
Between June-September 2022, we organized an outside "Arts and Crafts Station." Located outside Murney Tower in the park on weekends, this station offered free drop-in arts and crafts activities to kids and families who visited the tower.

## TREASURE HUNT

We created a new treasure hunt to provide a more engaging museum experience. As kids moved around the three floors of the tower, they curiously searched for the hidden eggs and completed their treasure charts. Treasure hunt was a major hit among the family groups.



# COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES



## MARCH OF THE MUSEUMS

We participated in the Kingston-wide March of the Museums event which provides an opportunity to engage with the community at a time when the museum itself is typically closed. Specifically for this event, we created a new online craft activity entitled "RCRR Military Hat" which explored the lives of soldiers who lived in the Murney Tower. We also participated in the in-person version of this event which took place on the week of March 13th. We attended two sessions on March 15th and 16th which were held at the Central Branch of the Kingston Public Library and the Tett Centre respectively.

## KINGSTON REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

In spring 2022, we participated in the virtual Kingston Regional Heritage Fair. Over 500 students from local schools participated in virtual workshops and a scavenger hunt. On June 11th, the 12 winners of the Heritage Fair visited Murney Tower as one of the many stops of their celebratory field trip. We prepared a special "Historian-In-Training" kit for each of them, containing all the relevant materials and supplies that a historian may need to conduct their work.

# COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

## MOVIES IN THE SQUARE

On August 11th, we participated in the Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites' (KAM) "Museums in the Square" event, organized in partnership with Downtown Kingston. At our activity booth, the participants had an opportunity to play Murney-themed games, word puzzles, and create their own military hats. We had a very successful and engaging event that saw more than 40 kids and 20 adults.



## DOORS OPEN

On September 24th and 25th, the museum opened its doors for the Kingston-wide Doors Open event, a free drop-in community event organized by the Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries, and Historic Sites (KAM) in partnership with Doors Open Ontario. Throughout the weekend, we offered guided tours to more than 300 visitors, who got one last chance to explore the magnificent history of the Murney Tower, view this season's hit "Voices of Murney" exhibit, and see our site-specific art installation.

# COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

## KINGSTON FALL FAIR

In September, we participated in the 190th edition of the annual Kingston Fall Fair. The event brought together local organizations including the Murney Tower Museum, the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte and the Frontenac Heritage Foundation with local communities around games, activities, competitions, community presentations, and of course, food. Our director, Dr. Tabitha Renaud got together with the fair visitors on Sunday, September 18th. In her presentation, she talked about a broad range of topics including the Kingston Historical Society, Murney Tower, and Martello Towers of Kingston.



## PHANTOMS OF YORE

We welcomed courageous groups of ghost hunters on October 7th-8th and 9th who completed a Paranormal Investigation Challenge at our historic site using all the latest ghost-hunting technology. The event began with a briefing on the haunted history of the site, the equipment to be used, and the best ghost-hunting practices to follow when collecting and analyzing evidence. The brave groups then ventured inside our little tower (in the dark!) to see if they could discover any traces of the paranormal and communicate with the spirits of Kingston's past.



# PUBLIC PROGRAMMING



## FIELD TRIPS

In the past, it was challenging for Murney Tower Museum to book school groups, but we have been working hard this year to build connections with schools and put the museum on the radar of educators. This year we welcomed four local schools including grade 6 students from the R.G. Sinclair, grade 3-4 students from the Glenburnie Public School, and grade 3-4- 5 students from Ecole Polson Park Public School. All trips included a guided tour of the museum led by the museum's Manager/Curator.

## C&C: CURATOR AND COLLECTIONS

Following the success of the previous season, we brought last year's hit "C&C: Curator and Collections" program back in person for the 2022 operating season. This year's programs were held onsite and consisted of an exclusive tour of the museum with the museum's manager/curator, followed by an in-depth presentation of an artifact on display. These sessions are held on Thursdays throughout the summer from 7:00 PM- 8:30 PM, with the first having taken place on July 14th.

# PUBLIC PROGRAMMING



## ONLINE TUTORIALS

To extend our reach beyond the walls of the tower, we continued offering online educational videos for kids and families. This year, we created three new online art and craft activities, "Popsicle Soldiers," "Military Medals" and "Crown Jewels" and a new cooking channel feature "Murney Cupcakes."

## OFF-SEASON TOURS

To extend our community engagement beyond the summer months and utilize new strategies to make the museum available to visitors during the winter months, we started organizing special off-season guided tours and visits. The first tour took place on March 12th when teams of students from Queen's University's Engineering program visited the tower to analyze the building and better understand its intricate architecture and design. This successful visit was followed on March 26th by a special event organized in partnership with the Queen's History Student Council, where ten visitors got the chance to get an exclusive look at the tower's interior and explore its architecture.

# PUBLIC PROGRAMMING



## KIDS TAKEOVER THE MUSEUM

One of the biggest hits this year was the new onsite educational program entitled "Kids Take Over the Museum." Specifically designed for kids aged 4-12, this free family event consisted of four-time slots, each including a guided tour and a unique art and craft activity that focused on a different aspect of the history of the tower and Kingston. For this event, the tower opened doors exclusively for kids and chaperones. The event took place on August 2nd and had great attendance.



# SPECIAL EVENTS



## OPENING EVENT

On Thursday, May 19th, we hosted a private soft opening event for our partners, collaborators, and community members. We welcomed colleagues and partners from Tourism Kingston, Queen's University, the Kingston Historical Society, Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites. We were able to give a sneak peek of our new artifacts and exhibits which the staff worked very hard at over the fall and winter.

## RADIO NIGHT

On May 31st we hosted special guided tours for the participants of an International Radio Conference as part of its opening day. We had participants from all over Canada, the United States, Brazil, Chile, and other countries. In total, 44 radio professionals ended up touring the tower. Tourism Kingston and CRFC 101.9 FM Radio both attended the private event with booths set up outside the tower. Live music was also arranged in the park.

# SPECIAL EVENTS



## SPOOKY MURNEY

On the evening of October 29th, we opened our doors to ghosts and ghouls to visit a decorated Murney Tower. Spiderwebs, skeletons, and ghosts could be found all over the tower, and eerie music filled the air. Kids and adults alike took part in our challenging Halloween-themed treasure hunt that took them all over the tower. There was a great turnout—the tower was filled with 100 guests dressed up in costume, searching high and low for their treasures. There was laughter and frights all around, and this event will hopefully become an annual tradition.

## MERRY MURNEY

On December 17th, we invited our community to come and celebrate the holiday season at Murney Tower with holiday games, music, snacks and crafts. Our special holiday-themed event "Merry Murney" took place on the 17th of December and included two craft stations and a tree decorating activity. The tower was decorated for this special event and holiday songs filled the air. MOVE 98.3 Kingston radio station joined us onsite to play holiday songs and help us spread the holiday cheer. Our event also included a special holiday-themed treasure hunt that was a hit among the little participants.

# COLLECTIONS



## COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

This year, we strengthened our collection maintenance by undertaking extensive collection management work to ensure that our artifacts are stored, preserved and cared for according to international museum standards. Our manager/curator cleaned, wrapped, and packed all museum exhibits. Thereafter began the organization of the storage unit in the winter and summer of 2022, which continues to this day. 700 artifacts are unpacked, assessed for their condition, inventoried, photographed, wrapped carefully in acid-free tissue paper and organized into new boxes that coincide with the digital inventory being created.

## COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

In the winter of 2022, we recruited members of the community to form our first Collections Committee to help update our collections management policy and to help deliberate the accession and deaccession of artifacts. Experts specializing in areas such as historic weaponry have been included in this committee to provide their insight. This committee also works in partnership with the council of the Kingston Historical Society to assist with their important archival collection.

# PUBLICITY



## CTV MORNING SHOW

On May 19th, our manager/curator was featured on CTV's Morning Show, a special segment on Kingston that aired across the City Hall. In this live interview on national television, organized by Tourism Kingston, Simge promoted Kingston and Murney Tower and talked about the rich and unique heritage of the city.



## CTV OTTAWA

In August 2022, the museum was featured on CTV Ottawa's 6 o'clock news. In the interview, the museum's manager, Simge talked about the history of the Murney Tower alongside the broader history of the Kingston Fortification Network and Martello Towers of Kingston.

## Local museums on display at Kingston, Ont., event

By Ryan Peddigrew · Global News  
Posted August 11, 2022 9:15 pm



## GLOBAL NEWS

Later in August 2022, the museum's manager appeared on Global News Kingston. Topics covered in these interviews and features included our new "Voices of Murney" Exhibit, the Métis Art installation by Tracey-Mae Chambers, and the Kingston Museum Association's "Museums at the Square" event.

# PUBLICITY

HISTORICAL CITY

## The Voices of Murney

*A new exhibit shares the stories of those who served in Murney Tower*

BY ASHLEY CLARK



## CURATOR BRINGS MURNEY TOWER TO LIFE

June 16, 2022 / Cultural Studies

A decade working in museums, art galleries, and heritage sites across the United Kingdom, Canada, and Turkey has led Simge Erdogan-O'Connor to Kingston where she is now working as the manager and curator of the Murney Tower Museum.



## KINGSTON LIFE

The July-August issue of Kingston Life featured a special story about the new "Voices of Murney" exhibit of the museum with special insights from the exhibition's curator, Simge Erdogan-O'Connor.

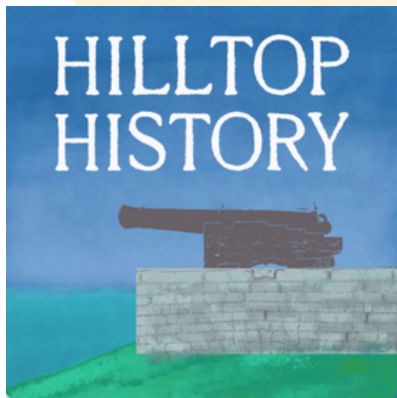
## QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Our manager/curator was also interviewed by the Queen's University Faculty of Arts and Science about her ongoing work and projects at the Murney Tower. The story was posted online and shared with Queen's University's central communications.

## FORT HENRY PODCAST

Murney Tower was featured on Fort Henry's "Hilltop History" Podcast Series. The museum's manager/curator Simge talked about the fascinating story of Martello Towers and offered special insights into her work at the tower.

## HILLTOP HISTORY



# PUBLICITY



## E-NEWSLETTER

Since September 2020, we have been promoting the museum's ongoing activities through our monthly e-newsletter entitled "Murney News." This year alone, we produced twelve issues for 310 recipients that receive these emails at the end of each month.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND AUDIO TOUR

In 2022, we started developing an audio tour for the museum to increase the tower's accessibility. We applied for a project grant offered by the Community Foundation for Kingston and Area to implement the project and were granted \$9680. Thanks to this generous contribution, we hired an accessibility consultant agency entitled "Two Canes Consulting," and had a full accessibility study done of the Murney Tower site. We also created an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy which reflects our commitment to embed and mainstream EDI in the museum in all its forms and champion the diversity of our employees, visitors, guests, and the wider community.



# ACKNOWLEDGING OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

**Murney Tower Museum acknowledges with thanks the continued support of our contributors:**

The City of Kingston

Parks Canada

Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries, and Heritage Sites

Tourism Kingston

Community Foundation for Kingston and Area

Regional Tourism Organization 9 (RTO-9)

Government of Canada, Young Canada Works Program for Heritage Organizations

Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs Program

Queen's University Department of Art History and Art Conservation

Queen's University Law Clinics

Queen's University Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science

Queen's University Department of History

**Special thanks to our recent contributors:**

Paul van Nest, Peter Gower, Betty Andrews, Warren Everett, Jonathan David O'Connor,  
Joanna Dermenjian, Rebecca Marquez





Murney Tower Museum acknowledges with thanks the continued support of the City of Kingston and the Kingston and Area Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites.