Mosaic celebrates local, natural history

Public art component added to Edison Park

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NORTH KILDONAN

A corner park in North Kildonan is now home to some colourful public art.

This summer, Edison Park, which is located at 1257 Henderson Hwy. next to Donwood South, a seniors' apartment block, received a major upgrade. A pair of mosaics were included in the renovation of Edison Park, which celebrate the natural history of

Artist Ursula Neufeld worked with Little Bluestem Landscape Architecture + Design to revitalize the passive park on the corner of Edison Avenue and Henderson Highway. Work on the project was completed in August and early September.

"The mirror swirls indicates how the millstones used to go around," Neufeld explained. "So there are crocuses around

the cap, and underneath are my versions of Manitoba wildflowers. At the bottom, because it was a millstone and wheat was really important, you'll see swirls of water and the wheat."

Neufeld, an artist who often does community art projects, said she was drawn to the subject when considering the area's history.

"The rocks, obviously, are thousands of years old and prairie wildflowers would have grown around those rocks," she said.

The millstones featured at the centre of the park and the mosaic were originally used in the nearby Matheson Grist Mill, which was located on McLeod Creek, and used to grind grain into flour. The mill was located just south of McLeod Avenue, east of Henderson.

"Art is critical in public spaces to add visual interest, whimsy and in this case to draw attention to the long forgotten pieces of history that have been in this park for some time," said Darcy Granove, landscape architect and owner of Little Bluestem. "We commissioned Ursula to encase the existing concrete pedestal and new base in tile mosaics in order to highlight the pattern of

the millstone and its function to grind wheat. Her artwork, using the cooper mirror to indicate the movement of these once powerful tools, gives reflective glimpses of the pattern on the underside of the stones."

"It's a great improvement over the old park," said Peggy Carson, a resident of Donwood South, a seniors' apartment complex located next to Edison Park at 1245 Henderson Hwy. "I'm so pleased with the mosaic. It's a nice addition."

Grant Knight, the building manager at Donwood South, agreed.

"It looks good, really brightens up the corner," Knight said. "I like how they kept the old, and made it new."

Knight said that many of the residents of Donwood South were eager to watch the progress on the park over the summer, and that he was pleased that Neufeld made a point of connecting with the residents as her work progressed.

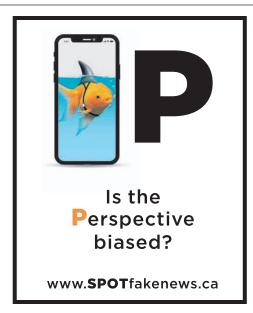
"Being that this greenspace is well used by the many seniors and general population we wanted to ensure we address all these elements of importance," Granove said.



The millstone mosaic at the centre of Edison Park, located at 1247 Henderson Hwy., is an homage to the history of the area, and the natural history of the prairies that was crafted by artist Ursula Neufeld.

A second boulder, with a plaque providing information on the history of the millstones, will be added to the park in the coming











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