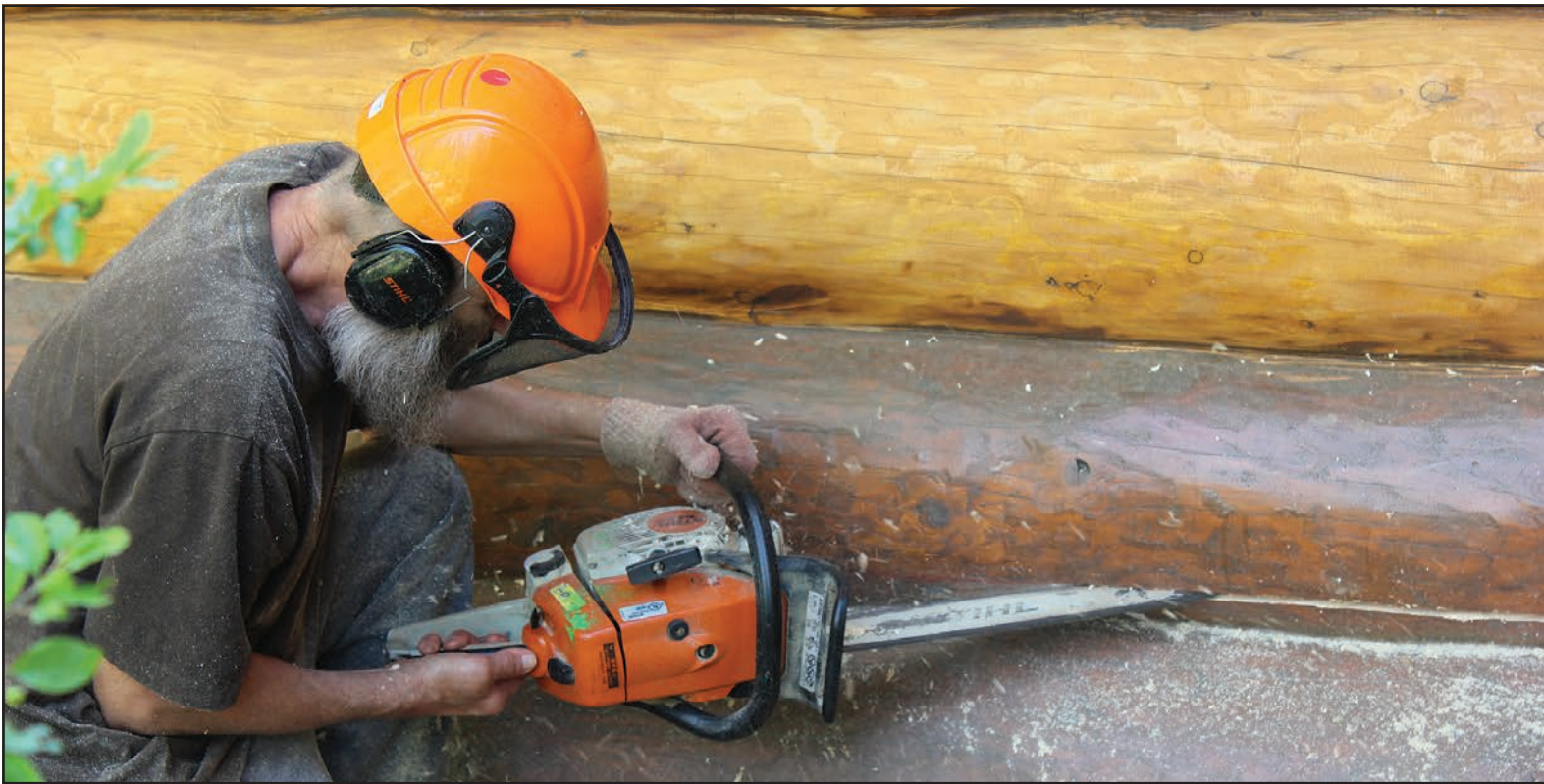


Museum in midst of facelift



Thompson Citizen photos by Molly Gibson Kirby

Carpenter Len Friesen cuts the rotten part of a log out of the Heritage North Museum so a new slab can be put into its place.

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Rotten logs are being replaced at the Heritage North Museum, and that means the museum may be looking a bit different to the residents of Thompson.

Len Friesen, a self-employed carpenter from Piney, Manitoba, was asked by provincial government workers who knew his work if he'd be interested in helping the Thompson museum. "I've never done anything like this before, but I've worked with log cabins, and worked inside of existing log places, so I have an idea what to do with logs. Me being me, I'm always ready to tackle something, so I said yes," explained Friesen.

There were two options when it came to replacing the rotten logs at the heritage site. The first one was to replace the full log, but the carpenter believed that would be too costly, so they went with option two. The carpenter and his two casual employees are carving out the rotten part of the logs, and replacing them with new spruce log slabs.

Friesen says the rot in the wood goes in about three or four inches, so the workers are using chainsaws and other tools to cut away the rot. "I'm making a slab with the logs that are out there, which is flat on one side, and a log profile

on the outside, and then we're fitting it into place."

The project is going well says Friesen, minus a few minor injuries. The carpenter has also been putting in flashing on the bottom of the building. "Another recommendation I made was that they put a flashing on the base, which is metal. The building is too low to the ground, that's rule number one they broke. A lot of moisture splashback and drainage is caused by that." The metal won't lift the building higher, but it will make it so the logs aren't right against the ground.

Friesen noted that there were two other problems that have caused this amount of rot. The museum does not have a big enough overhang on the roof, so the rain is hitting the logs too often, as well as the logs weren't getting the proper annual sealing spray.

To fix this problem the southern workers are grounding all the old finish off the current logs, and spraying on a wood preservative, which will seal the logs. After it's sprayed the logs are then refinished, and Friesen says the logs should now be sprayed annually to eliminate future rot.

In total the workers will have spent four weeks in Thompson on this project, and hope to be finished by Aug. 7 if the weather cooperates.



Friesen shows what slabs will look like for the log replacement project at the Heritage North Museum.