

Lac du Bonnet

LIVING

A Four Seasons Playground

- *Historical Features*
- *Window On Our Past*
- *Places to go*
Activities to do
Things to see



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COVER PHOTOS: "Woman Hiking" Photo by Mark T. Buss | "Paddling the Pinawa Channel", "Female Belted Kingfisher" and "Otter Pups" Photos by Rick McGregor

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Photo by Rick McGregor
"Sunset with Smoke from Forest Fires"

Welcome all local and international readers to the eighth issue of **Lac du Bonnet Living**

Tourism is an important component of Lac du Bonnet's development and economic growth. To compliment that, we at Clipper Publishing Inc. – publishers of the Lac du Bonnet Clipper newspaper – annually take the opportunity to print a full-colour tourism guide focussing on the four-season playground that encompasses the Winnipeg River corridor.

With the coronavirus pandemic keeping the U.S. border closed, experts predict an increase in 'staycations' this year as Manitobans explore their own province and look for places to go closer to home.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has created uncertainties regarding scheduled events for 2021. The Lac du Bonnet Ice Fishing Derby was cancelled earlier this year. In recent days, the Boreal Shores Art Tour was also shelved.

As a result, this edition of Lac du Bonnet Living will take a detour to highlight places to go, activities to do and things to see primarily outdoors and following appropriate social distancing guidelines for those in their bubble or cohort.

The magazine will also feature several historic articles supplied by local organizations and writers – featuring the Lac du Bonnet dock's 100th anniversary, the Bellanca Aircruiser and it's connection to the region, local industry, triumphs, tragedy and much more.

We would like to give special thanks to all those individuals who volunteered their time, supplied photos and articles and shared their knowledge and professional experience to shape this publication. Enjoy and stay safe.

Mark T. Buss
Publisher



Welcome to the Town of Lac du Bonnet

On behalf of the council of the Town of Lac du Bonnet we want to welcome you to our community.

Lac du Bonnet is a wonderful community, located in the hub of activity in eastern Manitoba, along the beautiful Winnipeg River, a quick one-hour drive from Winnipeg, our provincial capital. In a year when travel abroad is not recommended, Lac du Bonnet is close by and the place to go for all your Tourism and Recreation Planning for 2021.

A great hub of Arts and Recreation. There are many artists and art events inspired by those living in the area (wood carvers, painters, musicians, Boreal Shores, Winnipeg River Arts Council, etc.).

This year we are focusing on tourism and recreation. Our "four seasons playground" is a wonderful place to live or vacation. If you love the water as I do, get your boat or pwc and get on the water to enjoy fishing, skiing, wakeboarding, tubing, swimming or just a lazy day floating down the river. The Trans Canada Trail System goes through our area and provides great walking and biking paths to see the beauty around us. Three golf courses in our immediate area provide a great opportunity to nail that "hole in one".

Our town provides an environment where we promote the foundation of the family. You will experience a balanced blend of town convenience and amenities, together with a peaceful, laid-back place to raise a family.

We are a town with a great mix of retail shops, businesses and residents. We are proud of the investment of people, business and the provision of leisure opportunities; that is what makes Lac du Bonnet a wonderful place to live, do business and then retire.

Lac du Bonnet is an age friendly community. It truly is a four season playground for the young and the young at heart. You really need to see it for yourself to appreciate all our community has to offer.

Come visit and then stay! That's what I did.

Mayor Gordon Peters
Town of Lac du Bonnet



Welcome to the Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet

On behalf of Council and staff, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet.

Lac du Bonnet is situated a short scenic drive northeast of Winnipeg and we take great pride in our region being a "Four Seasons Playground," with something for all to enjoy. Our municipality is a sparkling gem in the Interlake's crown of jewels, with beautiful lakes and rivers, stunning sunsets, and great people to meet.

The past year has been a very difficult time for all Manitobans. The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing public health restrictions have drastically changed the way we live our daily lives. We have all made sacrifices to ensure the health of our family, friends, and communities.

Despite the restrictions, our region offers a treasure chest of outdoor seasonal activities that are safe to enjoy.

In the summer, you can take to the Winnipeg River, Lake Lac du Bonnet, Lee River and Pinawa Channel to enjoy our countless kilometres of scenic waterways or tee up at our region's many first-class golf courses. If fishing is your passion, you can book a fly-in trip or try your luck in our local waters, which play host to professional tournaments.

If you enjoy nature, come walk a section of the Trans Canada Trail and view the abundant wildlife or take a hike in one of our nearby Provincial Parks. Or, come camp at one of our many campgrounds, for some quality family time.

If you enjoy history, you can get a glimpse by stopping at our regional Museum or the Old Pinawa Historical Provincial Park.

In the winter, you can snowmobile our vast network of the best-groomed trails, snowshoe and cross-country ski our region's wilderness trails, or enjoy a session of ice fishing at the Lac du Bonnet Wildlife Association's trout ponds.

Visit our website at www.rmoflacdubonnet.com to plan a day or weekend trip for you and your family or friends! Check out the RM of Lac du Bonnet's website's Recreation tab for activities that appeal directly to you!

We would be more than happy to welcome you to our community in the months ahead. After coming to visit us once, you may just find you want to stick around. Many folks have come for a visit but ended up staying for a lifetime.

On behalf of Council and our committed municipal staff, I extend everyone a warm Lac du Bonnet welcome. We look forward to seeing you in 2021!

Reeve Loren Schinkel
RM of Lac du Bonnet



Lac du Bonnet Dock Turns 100

by Terry & Marlene Tottle
Lac du Bonnet & District
Historical Society

The easiest mode of transportation in the first quarter of the 20th Century in Lac du Bonnet was by water as there were few roads and only trails.

There was a tremendous need for a dock at the Village of Lac du Bonnet where settlers from Bird River, Lee River, Lettonia, Riverland and Brookfield could pick up supplies from one of six general stores, connect with the CPR train and pick up the mail.

On October 2, 1917 a dock was on the newly formed Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet's agenda. Secretary Treasurer William Duncan Halliday was actioned "to write to the CPR to make arrangements for a crossing and dockage site at the foot of 3rd Street in Lac du Bonnet".

The CPR spur line ran along the Winnipeg River's bank south to what is today Minnewawa Street. In its time, this spur line stored and shunted empty and loaded railcars of cordwood, ties, lumber and brick to be sent to Winnipeg.

A positive answer from the CPR must have arrived about the same time as the J.D. McArthur Sawmill was going out of production. In 1920 tenders for dock construction were advertised. On March 1, 1920 RM of Lac du Bonnet Council selected the tender from John Ongman, a councillor for the Riverland District. According to the meeting minutes it was "for erection of



*Photo Courtesy R.E. Emmett
John Ongman crew working on the dock foundations
in winter of 1920-21.*



*Photo Courtesy R.E. Emmett
John Ongman crew working on the dock.*

a dock at the foot of 3rd Street for the sum of \$730."

It so happened the Royal Bank had recently opened a branch in the Allard Building across from the construction site. It was Bob Emmett, the first Lac du Bonnet Royal Bank manager, who owned a camera and recorded the pier construction of the "Municipal Dock" during the winter of 1920-21.

CPR Spur Line an Issue

The CPR spur line which ran along the riverbank in front of the dock was still an issue. The RM did a survey of the approach and on December 2, 1924 the RM Council asked the CPR to remove two lengths of track on their spur line along the Winnipeg River at 3rd Street

in order to build a 66-foot-wide approach to the dock.

The whole spur line must have been removed in 1925 and 1926 when the new Lac du Bonnet CPR station was built along 1st Street and the rails were relocated to a new siding at that location.



Aerial photo circa 1926 showing the low water and outline of where the CPR spur line ran along the river bank. A few railway ties remain.

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Municipal Dock Postcard mid-1920s



MUNICIPAL DOCK, LAC DU BONNET, MAN.

Photo Courtesy Halliday Family

In 1925 when the Winnipeg River water levels were down, the RM Council asked the Dominion Government for assistance in extending the present dock which was “too short.” The fluctuating Winnipeg

River water levels were due in large part to the hydroelectric generating stations at Pointe du Bois, Pinawa and in Kenora.

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Check out our website & facebook for 2021 museum hours & events

ldbhistorical.ca info@ldbhistorical.ca

Our Mission Statement is to establish the Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society as the primary agent for the assembly and preservation of the history of the Lac du Bonnet area.

Lac du Bonnet District Museum

Lac du Bonnet

MUNICIPAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

a committee of Town and RM

Check our website for Brochures and Projects in Lac du Bonnet
Brochures are available at Town and RM offices, and Gas Stations

Lac du Bonnet MHAC Mission Statement: to maintain this community's commitment to the preservation and presentation of Lac du Bonnet's heritage resources and to provide opportunities for public awareness, education and participation in heritage conservation.

FOR INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE
ldbheritage.ca

Lac du Bonnet Dock was Lifeblood of the Community

Fed up with the continual Municipal Dock issues, the RM of Lac du Bonnet assigned its right and interest as owners of the dock to the Dominion Government and requested they repair the dock and put it in usable condition in 1927.

On June 1, 1927 the very first airmail flown in Manitoba left the Lac du Bonnet dock for the mining areas north and east.

By the mid 1930s, the Lac du Bonnet Dock was the lifeblood of the community as Canadian Airways, Wings, Starratt and Manitoba Government Air Service anchored aircraft nearby. It was reported as many as 20 aircraft were anchored near the dock during its heyday. A 1935 topographic map shows the dock at 250 feet long and three feet wide at the shoreline extending to



1932 Topo Map Department of National Defence G.S.G.S.no 381.



Village of Lac du Bonnet Topo Map 1935.



Looking north, Aircraft anchored at the dock mid 1930s.

a maximum 35 feet wide at the centre. An ingenious ramp was located on the southeast corner so float plane maintenance could be done easily. At various times a large floating dock was attached along the south side of the dock.



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Dominion Day Celebration at the Dock 1931



Photo Courtesy Louis Bruneau

A favourite activity of all children in Lac du Bonnet was swimming off the main dock. This was also the perfect place for kids to fish and pick up some pocket money. Passengers going in and out of the float planes passed over water and would often drop cigarette lighters, pens and other things into the water. Aircraft engineers often dropped tools into the water while working on planks placed between the pontoons. Twenty-five cents an item was the going rate for kids to retrieve them.

Dominion Day celebrations at the dock began in

1931 with the Lac du Bonnet Social Club organizing motorboat, sailboat, canoe and swimming races.

In winter, the hill going down to the dock was and still is a prime sliding location in Lac du Bonnet.

August 1943 was an extremely wet month and the dock was completely submerged. In 1946 the dock was raised by building on top of the original structure. In 1954 due to the Winnipeg River rising waters caused by the McArthur Falls generating station, the dock was raised once again though not to its previous length.



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Million-Dollar Refurbishment Expected 2021

On July 8, 1967, the Centennial Voyageur Canoe Pageant stopped at the Lac du Bonnet dock and put on a short race to the delight of spectators. Today the Town Dock is the site of spectacular Canada Day fireworks shown annually by the Lac du Bonnet Lions.

A million-dollar refurbishment of the Lac du Bonnet dock is expected to occur in 2021.

Fishermen be warned, don't cast off the east end of the dock as you are sure to snag your lure on to the submerged original foundations of the old Municipal Dock!



Mid 1950s with diving platform northeast corner of dock.



July 1967 Voyageurs at the Lac du Bonnet Dock during Centennial Celebrations.

Photo Courtesy Kost Family

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The Traders

by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

By the time spring came in 1808, Hudson Bay Company (HBC) clerk Thomas Miller and his 10 men were glad to leave. They had arrived at “Lake du Bonnet” eight months earlier with two boats and a winter’s worth of provisions and trade goods to establish a post.

Their journey began at Osnaburgh House (Lake St. Joseph, Ontario) on Aug. 5, 1807. For 22 days, they travelled inland, through Lac Seul, along the English River, to the Winnipeg River, and gave alcohol and tobacco to the Indigenous people they met to entice them to trade at Lac du Bonnet. Upon arrival at the lake on Aug. 27, three Indigenous men showed Miller where to build the winter post. No surviving historical records provide the location, but Indigenous knowledge of the local geography would have put the post at the top of the lake near Galet du Bonnet (McArthur Falls) at the confluence of the Winnipeg, Pinnawas and Oiseau (Bird) Rivers to

maximize trade opportunities. Construction started on a “small house to put the goods” the next day.

Four days after the Orkneymen arrived at Lac du Bonnet, Alexander McKay of the North West Company (NWC) and 22 men stopped at the fledgling post for an hour before continuing to their base, Pointe au Foudre, at the mouth of the Winnipeg River. The following morning, Miller discovered four NWC men stayed to build their own post nearby. Five days later, NWC clerk John Cribisas arrived with a large canoe loaded with goods and provisions for the winter.

Bas de la Riviere (or Pointe au Foudre as it was briefly known by the HBC) was established by the NWC in 1792 as their supply post in the Winnipeg River basin. This location near Lake Winnipeg was strategic for the NWC (and later the HBC) as they stopped here to rest and repair boats after their journey on the Winnipeg River.



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Attention Turned to Survival

Within two days, the HBC post at Lac du Bonnet was finished and goods moved inside. Doors, chimneys, floor and beds were completed over the next month. With the post operational, attention turned to survival. Throughout the fall, the men netted hundreds of fish and snared countless rabbits. As winter wore on, they relied on the Indigenous people to provide meat.

Proximity to the NWC meant conflict. First, the Canadians stole fishing nets and harassed the HBC men. In the midst of winter, the Canadians

robbed Indigenous people carrying furs to the HBC post. By mid-March 1808, the drunken threats of the Canadians escalated, causing Miller and his men to arm themselves in anticipation of an attack, which never came.

Thomas Miller summed up this winter with one line on April 30, 1808: "Thank God the lake is open."

The HBC men left Lac du Bonnet on May 28, 1808. This winter post did not operate again until 1856, 35 years after the two companies merged.



Drawing by Christina Ferjan

The Lac du Bonnet winter trading post.

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A Rich and Plenty Land

by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

Soft spring snow slid beneath sleigh runners. Bells jingled as horses brought an unnamed Manitoba Free Press correspondent to the site of early Lac du Bonnet development. For several weeks, brick-making machinery had been hauled in and temporary accommodations had been set up, the foundation of a vision for the area that started many years before this day in 1899.

D.A. Keizer, a Winnipeg civil engineer, claimed knowledge of the profitable resources of the Lac du Bonnet area from 1881, when he travelled through the region with a survey crew. Keizer led a “voyage of discovery” along the Whitemouth and Winnipeg Rivers in 1897. The land north of Whitemouth contained miles of spruce, stands of tamarack, poplar groves, and land flat and fertile. A country suitable for farming, filled with timber for conversion into lumber and railway ties.

The Lac du Bonnet Mining, Developing and Manufac-

turing Company formed in February 1898, with some of the most influential men in Winnipeg as executive officers. Early company assets included 40 mining claims around Lac du Bonnet and along the Bird River, two miles of clay, two townships worth of timber, and patent rights for potential waterpower development. By early 1899, an area was cleared at the site of the clay beds. Walter Wardrop of Whitemouth, the newly appointed manager, began hauling freight and machinery.

A mass of rumours about operations at Lac du Bonnet prompted Wardrop’s invitation to the newspaper. The party journeyed to Shelley before turning north and travelling along the old 1870 provincial boundary, following the present-day Hwy 11. At the end of the day-long trip, they arrived at the site of the brick works: four acres of cleared land with machinery, timber and lumber where 15 men worked. The manager’s house and a



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Photo courtesy Friends of Old Pinawa

A pair of six-horse teams ready to get to work.

two-storey boarding house were under construction. A stable was already up, housing 10 teams of horses. Plans were also in place for a store and brick building. Company superintendent, Mr. Hales, wanted to manufacture bricks by the beginning of May and expected an average of 65,000 quality bricks per day. Lumber, ties and cordwood began piling up, awaiting a rail line for shipment.

The company set up a committee to petition the necessary people for a rail line. Many believed the obvious choice would be to bring a line in from Whitemouth. Ultimately, the CPR constructed a spur line from Mol-

son, along the gravel ridges and high ground of Milner Ridge. With it came railway contractor and lumberman, J.D. McArthur, who eventually purchased the company and its assets.

Standing on the shoreline, the newspaper correspondent watched the sun set over the lake. He could feel the solitude, predicting a future for the area not only as a business enterprise, but also as a summer retreat. Some 125 years later, those words remain true.

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by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

The 1918 Spanish Influenza

Many believe history repeats itself. While in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic, startling similarities can be made to the Spanish flu outbreak from 100 years ago.

The Spanish flu pandemic began in January 1918, ravaging the war front of Europe. Now regarded as one of the deadliest in human history, this flu primarily affected the “young and hearty.” The second wave of the pandemic in late 1918 was deadlier than the first, with October 1918 having the highest death toll.

The virus arrived in Winnipeg on September 30, 1918. A total of 23 soldiers on a train headed west were symptomatic and evacuated to the Tuxedo military hospital. Precautions were taken by hospital and railway officials to prevent the spread and the men were quarantined. Newspaper reports in the days that followed assured people the “situation was well in hand.”

By mid-October, Manitoba was in the middle of an outbreak. In Winnipeg, hospitals were full, requiring other buildings to be converted into temporary hospitals. A call went out for volunteers to help the struggling health

care system with men driving makeshift ambulances and women attending nursing courses provided by St. John’s Ambulance.

All public gatherings were banned. Movie theatres and dance halls closed. All school, university and college classes, along with church services, were cancelled. Some teachers took up nursing. Even the telephone system was affected. With many operators out sick, authorities asked phones only be used in emergencies. Advice from health officials was to stay home.

The network of rail lines, roads and waterways carried the virus to rural and remote areas of the province. A mass grave marks the devastation on the Sagkeeng First Nation.

In the Lac du Bonnet area, Dr. G. S. Malcolm was the area physician at the time of the outbreak. He and Donald McCulloch, who operated the dispensary in the Allard Building, both served in the First World War. Midwife Alexandrine Fournier was considered “a great help” during the pandemic.

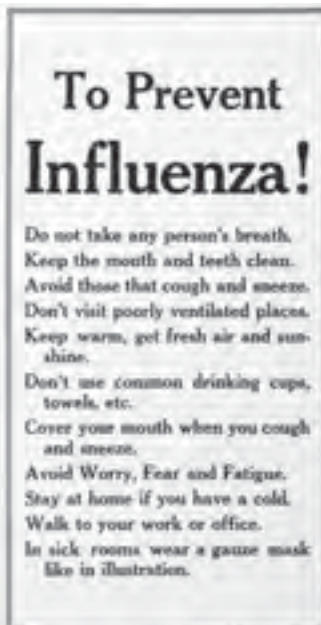
The Spanish flu’s second wave ended by the New Year. The third and final wave arrived in March 1919, its

impact significantly less than the others. Some restrictions had been lifted, while others remained.

After playing five games, the 1919 Stanley Cup was cancelled with no champion crowned as very few players were healthy enough to continue.

By summer 1919, by no miracle of medical science, the Spanish flu had run its course, leaving those who contracted the virus dead or immune.

Now, as it was then: *stay home, stay healthy, stay safe.*



Illustrated Current News, Oct. 18, 1918

The Spanish flu made its way to Manitoba with soldiers returning from the First World War.

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Ahead of the Times

by Jennifer Strassel
Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

In January 1953, five years after incorporation, Lac du Bonnet made headlines across Canada with the appointment of 39-year-old housewife and mother of two, Edythe Brown, as Manitoba's first female mayor.

The daughter of Frank and Anna Waters, Edythe grew up in Lac du Bonnet. She attended the University of Manitoba, graduating in 1936 with a Bachelor of Science in Home Ec., before returning to Lac du Bonnet. She met bush pilot, Frank Brown, who was recovering from a crash at his brother Roy's home. They were married in 1937. Frank's job took them to Northern Ontario, where Edythe flew regularly with him.

By December 1945, after serving with the RCAF in the Second World War, Frank joined his family in Lac du Bonnet and became a businessman. He served on the 1948 inaugural village council. Edythe led the 4-H Foods Club and worked as a substitute teacher.

In December 1952, following the retirement of Mayor Michael Danylchuk midway through his term, nominations were accepted to fill the vacancy. Edythe submitted her papers and faced no

opposition. She was officially declared mayor of Lac du Bonnet on December 29, 1952. Her hope was to "receive the wholehearted support of council and citizens" and her immediate objective was "to see what can be done."

By summer 1953, Edythe decided to seek re-election. Over a two-month period, she visited every home and office in the village. On election day, October 23, 95 per cent of eligible voters cast their ballots, setting a record voter turnout. Many others were reportedly turned away after the polls had closed. Edythe won in a landslide victory, and she was just beginning.

By November 4, Manitoba Telephone had installed an automatic dial system. In mid-November, talks had begun with the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board as the Winnipeg River was set to rise ten feet upon completion of the McArthur Falls generating station, flooding most of the village's waterfront property.

At the time of her resignation in 1957, after a five-year term as mayor, vapor streetlights had been installed, wooden sidewalks were replaced with concrete, and roads were black-topped. Her business negotiations with the Hydro Board resulted in favorable



Lac du Bonnet Historical Archives
Edythe Brown circa 1955.

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settlements for the village. Hydro agreed to reimburse affected landowners and to pay for the main sewer trunk line along Minnewawa St. The other sewer mains on all other streets were installed at the same time, making Lac du Bonnet the first village in Manitoba to have a complete sewer system.

In September 1959, following Frank's death, Edythe returned to university for an Education degree. She taught history and English at the Lac du Bonnet high school until 1964, when she married Walter Ehrlich and relocated to Ottawa for his job.

By 1972, they retired to Lac du Bonnet. Edythe resumed her role in the community acting as the guest of honour at many local events. She served on the History Book Committee that produced the book Logs and Lines.

On her 90th birthday, Edythe received the key to Lac du Bonnet. She passed away in 2008 after over 50 years of service to this community. As one resident said in 1954: "She's done more for this town than anyone else."

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Electricity Caused Travellers Hotel Demise

by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

The Travellers Hotel, located where the Sunova Credit Union is today, was built in 1927 by the Shapland family.

Les Shapland and his wife Lillian worked for the CPR. They also owned and operated the Holiday Beach resort and ran a houseboat up to McArthur Falls for sightseeing tours on weekends and holidays. Les purchased the land for the hotel from Alex McIntosh, choosing a location at the edge of the village, near the new CPR station.

With the arrival of the road along Milner Ridge in 1926, Lac du Bonnet was opened up to the new era of “motor tours,” and cars full of tourists arrived. The area’s first bus, operated by Stuarts Bus Line, ran daily into Winnipeg.

The Travellers Hotel held its grand opening on New Year’s Eve 1927, when the Shaplans hosted a “free-for-


all” party for the occasion. Eventually, Les took over the restaurant in the dining room and Lillian became the first woman to serve beer in the parlour.

In 1930, the Shaplans sold the Travellers Hotel to J.L. Gaudry. Newspaper advertisements from the early 1930s boasted of fully modern, large comfortable rooms with hot and cold running water, along with electric refrigeration for the hotel.

Then at 2:00 a.m. on August 10, 1935, tragedy struck. The porter discovered a large fire in the hotel’s basement. He ran upstairs through thick smoke to raise the alarm, awakening the Gaudry family and the hotel’s 15 guests. With no time to gather belongings, all were evacuated moments before the fire blocked the exit.

With the hotel past saving, residents created a bucket brigade to prevent the spread of fire to neighbour-

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Flames Visible Miles Away

ing businesses. Forestry personnel brought a hose to expedite water from the river. The flames were visible from miles away.

Pilots from the nearby Manitoba Government Air Service, Wings Ltd., and Canadian Airways bases moved their planes to a safe distance further down the river to protect them from the blaze.

Within two hours, the entire hotel, along with Jack Park's attached barber shop and pool room, was destroyed. Initial reports were that the fire was caused by the electrical connection of a mangle (a machine with a set of rollers used to wring water from laundry). The surrounding buildings were spared any damage.



Lac du Bonnet © District Historical Society Archives

The Travellers' Hotel, circa 1930.

The Travellers Hotel was never rebuilt. In 1947, Lac du Bonnet's first movie theatre, the Walbec, was built on the lot.

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Devastating Blaze Unites Community

by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

February 21, 1965 — In mid-afternoon, the furnace in the basement of the Lac du Bonnet Bakery, on the corner of Park Avenue and First Street, exploded, setting fire to the building. Three people died. Two were injured. Numerous people were rendered homeless. An entire block of landmark buildings destroyed.

Heavy snow, sub-zero temperatures and 40 mph winds hindered fire fighting efforts by local Fire Chief Dickie Campbell and his 20 firemen who arrived quickly on scene with their pumper and tanker trucks.

Nearby stores and houses were evacuated. Heat, smoke and flames, fanned by the wind, blocked all attempts at rescue. In a matter of minutes, the flames had jumped to McLeod's store, which had five housing suites on the second floor, and continued to burn through to Paquette's Lucky Dollar store.

A 350-gallon fuel oil tank behind Paquette's store was pulled away from the flames. While McLeod's burned, manager Charles Reis broke inside his store, with police officers, to remove 12 cartons of ammunition on shelves directed at the street.

The Beaver Lumber store across the street opened its doors so firemen could escape the elements. The Lakeview Hotel sent over a large quantity of sandwiches while Legion ladies and members of the Lions Club served coffee.

Mayor Alexander Campbell, feeling unwell, got out of bed to help fight the fire. An estimated 200 men, comprised of community members and volunteer firemen, were engaged in fire fighting efforts to battle the inferno. Crews were brought in from Pine Falls, AECL in Pinawa, the air force brigade at Milner Ridge, along

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Worst Blaze in History of Village

with Pointe du Bois Fire Chief R.A. Blondahl. Two fire trucks pumped water from a hole in the ice of the Winnipeg River 1,000 feet away, while others relayed water from the pumping station four blocks away.

The fire burned out of control for more than four hours, destroying the bakery, McLeod's and Paquette's store. The brick post office was saved by the tireless efforts of the firemen, who remained on scene through the night.

The next day, reporters from the *Winnipeg Free Press* and *Winnipeg Tribune* surveyed the ice-caked ruins of an entire block, where only brick chimneys stood intact among the charred wreckage. Their stories captured the resilience of a community in the midst of a tragedy and reported the blaze as the worst in the history of the village.

More than half a century later, this fire remains the worst disaster Lac du Bonnet has witnessed.



Photo courtesy Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society
Lac du Bonnet Bakery and Macleods Store fire on Park Avenue in 1965.

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Bernic Lake: Discovery & Legacy

by Jennifer Strassel
Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

Ask anyone in Lac du Bonnet and they either work for Tanco or know someone who does.

Located 48 kilometres from Lac du Bonnet on the shores of Bernic Lake, the Tanco Mine has become one of the area's main industries.

Township subdivision surveys of the Bird River region were completed through the winter of 1913-1914. On New Year's Day 1914, two members of the survey crew, Harry E. Beresford and James Nicol, came upon an unnamed lake. The final report sent

to Ottawa included the recommendation that this lake be named after the discoverers: BER-NIC. The name

wasn't approved until a new map of the area was issued in 1933.

A few years after the survey, an elderly prospector made a valuable discovery while on a cigarette break. The story goes that, while sitting on a survey mound, he picked up a rock and found it contained a rare mineral. While

the name of the prospector and the mineral he found is unknown, his claim energized the mining community.


By the 1920s, John Nutt (of Central Manitoba Mines) sent crews to relocate the Bernic Lake claims. The subsequent discovery of

tin led to the creation of Jack Nutt Mines, Ltd. A single shaft, framed with hand-hewn timbers, was dug in 1929



Early mine shaft construction.

Photo courtesy Arvid & Doreen Dancy

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to access a narrow strip of pegmatite (crystallized rock containing minerals). That summer, 100 tons of ore were processed in the small plant and drilling operations found another massive pegmatite deposit 250 feet deep. The mine was forced to close October 1, 1929 as the result of a market crash and uncontrollable flooding in the shaft. The property was abandoned and eventually reverted back to the government.

The Bernic Lake claim was reopened in 1955 when demand for lithium increased. In the late 1950s, Montgary Exploration Ltd., put a shaft down 300 feet to bedrock and branched out over a mile of tunnels. The company spent \$2.5 million and saw zero return. In 1962, the mine closed again.

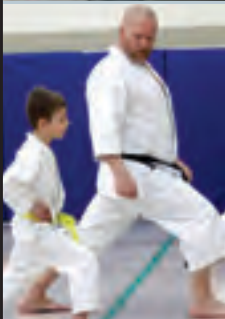
However, the 1960s space race placed greater value on rare minerals such as tantalum, caesium, gallium and others used in electronics and rocket construction, ones which could be found at Bernic Lake. In 1967, the mine reopened under the Tantalum Mining Corporation of Canada, Ltd. The Nutt shaft was repurposed for ven-

tilation and the majority of the mining was completed under the lake. By September 1969, the plant was fully operational, "mining and milling over 500 tons of ore per day," with more than 90 employees. Their red drums, inscribed with "Tanco, Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba," were shipped around the world for use in the electronics and aerospace industries.

In 1993, Tanco was sold to the Cabot Corporation. At the time, the mine boasted the largest tantalum reserve in North America, the greatest reserve of high-grade pollucite in the world and the distinction of being Canada's only spodumene producer. The mine was sold again in 2019 to Sinomine Resources Ltd., based in China. After 91 years of mining the Bernic Lake site, the minerals are in lower concentrations, though Tanco Mine remains operational and is one of Manitoba's longest-running mines, only behind the Thompson nickel mines.

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Wings Ltd.

by Jennifer Strassel

Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

In July 1934, Manitoba was in the midst of a gold mining boom. At the forefront was Wings Ltd., an airline established by Lac du Bonnet bush pilots Milt Ashton, Ted Stull, Jack Moar and their “flying president” Roy Brown. They had a fleet of five aircraft capable of heavy payloads on floats or skis, ensuring year-round service to remote mining communities and a reliable lifeline for trappers, hunters and fishermen throughout southeastern and northern Manitoba and into northwestern Ontario.

Lac du Bonnet, accessible by road from Winnipeg, became the airline’s main base. Smaller bases were located at Norway House and Kenora, with their head office in Winnipeg’s Marlborough Hotel at Smith Street and Ellice Avenue.

Throughout 1934, Wings Ltd. and its pilots, proved to be very ambitious. In October, they announced plans to

expand their operations to include a 48-hour flight from Winnipeg to London, England along a northern route. Then on November 19, Jack Moar flew emergency supplies into Island Lake in northern Manitoba, shattering the previous record of October 20 for the latest flight on floats. Mild weather contributed to their success, leaving sections of the large lake ice-free.

In April 1936, over two consecutive days, Wings Ltd. was plagued by mishaps. At 6:30 a.m. on April 9, while taxiing, the plane hit a hard snowbank, resulting in a damaged fuselage and right wing. There were no injuries.

Then on the morning of April 10, Roy Brown took off with four passengers bound for mining claims in southeastern Manitoba. Fifty feet off the ground, the propeller broke, resulting in a crash landing. Brown was trapped in the wreckage, freed moments before the plane burst

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into flames. Dr. W.J. Wood was quickly on scene, taking the injured passengers to Winnipeg in his own car. Brown sustained bruises and scratches on his face, but declined transport to hospital. Wings Ltd. was sued in 1937 and 1940 by three of these men for damages, citing poor aircraft maintenance and pilot negligence.

However, nothing could stop this airline. By the end of 1937, Wings Ltd. was a leading airline in Canada. Contracts with the largest mining companies in the province contributed to their ability to transport “6,339 passengers and 2,318,010 pounds of freight” that year using their fleet of nine planes, most of which were equipped with two-way radios for constant

communication, operating out of their 10 bases throughout Manitoba and northwestern Ontario.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, smaller airlines were finding themselves in trouble as their pilots joined the war effort and the mines’ labour force became scarce. In late 1941, the Canadian Pacific Railway purchased a number of these airlines, including Wings Ltd., eventually forming Canadian Pacific Air Lines.



Image Credit: Norm McCoy
Wings Ltd. airplane near town dock, circa 1937.

Wings Ltd. only operated for seven years, but they left their mark on Manitoba’s aviation industry.

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The RCAF in Lac du Bonnet

by Jennifer Strassel
Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

When the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) was officially established in 1924, their Winnipeg operations were located at Victoria Beach. Their fleet

were aging Vickers Vedette and Viking aircraft. These planes required regular maintenance and the aircrew always carried tool kits for emergency repairs which

comprised of, among other items, copper wire, bits of fabric and spark plugs. Chewing gum was also included for quick mid-air fixes of leaking hoses.

Primary duties throughout the 1920s and 1930s were aerial surveys and fire patrols. Also common were anti-smuggling operations, fisheries patrols, and the development of long-distance and northern flying routes. These RCAF pilots were nicknamed “bush pilots in uniform.”



Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society Archives

Fairchild XM at the Lac du Bonnet base circa 1931.

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Pilot Made RCAF History

In August 1926, the RCAF moved their main base to Lac du Bonnet, as the waters of Lake Winnipeg were often too rough to accommodate their “flying boats.” This new base provided a central location for pilots flying across Manitoba and throughout Canada, and consisted of two mess halls and quarters, one each for the officers and airmen, along with a storehouse. A slipway led from the Winnipeg River to a hangar with large maintenance area outside.

With radios becoming more reliable, the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals also established a ground station at Lac du Bonnet. Pigeons bred on base at Lac du Bonnet were carried in wicker baskets as a backup.

A pilot based out of Lac du Bonnet made RCAF history in late August 1929. Sgt. J.M. Ready took off in a de Havilland Moth bound for fire patrols at Gordon Lake (near Nopiming Provincial Park). Haze and heavy smoke forced him to turn back to Lac du Bonnet. On route, while flying blind, Sgt. Ready lost reference to the horizon. The plane dropped into a dive and couldn't be stabilized. Sgt. Ready bailed out at 500 feet, deploying his parachute, before he and his plane ended up in the

water. He swam to shore and started walking. After five miles, Sgt. Ready arrived at Davis Lodge (located on the Bird River) where he borrowed a boat to return to base. Sgt. Ready became the first RCAF pilot to be saved by a parachute.

With the formation of the Manitoba Government Air Service in 1932, and budget cuts caused by the Depression, the need for the RCAF in Lac du Bonnet dwindled. The military's fleet had also diversified, requiring a runway for wheeled aircraft. In 1933, Depression work crews carved out a section of the spruce bog behind the base. The airstrip was fully operational in 1934, though it was often difficult to navigate due to the soft ground. By 1937, the RCAF ended all local operations.

Ownership of the airport reverted to the Manitoba government in 1972. Numerous companies leased the land, including Wendigo Wings and Lac du Bonnet Airpark before Whiteshell Air Service established a float plane base on the site in 1984. Adventure Air started their operations in 2005.

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A Local Enterprise for 86 Years

by Jennifer Strassel
Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society

Bush planes are a fixture in Lac du Bonnet. It's officially summer and fire season, when CL-415 water bombers circle low over the town doing practice runs on the river. Up until two years ago, the Manitoba Conservation De Havilland Otter would often taxi out past the town dock and take off to the back country. Both were courtesy of the Manitoba Government Air Service (MGAS).

Fire detection patrols were conducted by the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) until 1932 when negotiations between the federal and provincial governments resulted in the establishment of the MGAS as a branch of the Forest Service. The RCAF provided five Vickers Vedette aircraft and released five pilots,

J.C. Uhlman, L.H. Phinney, C.H. Travers, M.H. Kennedy and M.B. Barclay, from service to operate them. They flew their first patrol flight on May 3, 1932.

Lac du Bonnet became the MGAS main base of operations due to its proximity to populated and remote areas of the province. The RCAF shared their facilities (located where the Adventure Air base is today) until late 1933 when a workshop was built on the edge of town, near Park Ave. and First St. An aircraft storage hanger was completed the next year.

The aging Vedettes faced slow retirement, as these wooden "flying boats" were uneconomical to repair. By 1938, the MGAS fleet included a Fairchild 51, two Fairchild 82s and a Stinson Reliant.

Bush flying into uncharted territories was challenging and dangerous. Pilots often relied on hand drawn maps

and dead reckoning. Before radios were reliable, homing pigeons were constant passengers in the event of an emergency landing.

Local pioneer aviator, H.P. Smith started with the MGAS in 1940 when, due to the Second World War, the flight staff was reduced to only Smith and Uhlman during one of the worst fire seasons they could remember. Fire detection and suppression were still the main duties of the MGAS, but search and rescue or medical evacuation flights were not uncommon. Smith

also recalled transporting survey crews, Forestry personnel and RCMP into remote areas.

By 1949, now part of the Department of Mines and Natural Resources, the MGAS demolished their former



*Lac du Bonnet & District Historical Society Archives
Manitoba Government Air Service Operations Base, circa 1950s.*

hangers upon completion of a new brick building at their base of operations (which remains as the current Conservation office). Their pilots continued to transport people and supplies to remote areas using the next generation of bush planes: De Havilland Beavers and Otters, and Noorduyn Norseman, and by the late 1970s, the MGAS acquired their first CL-215 water bombers for aerial fire fighting.

In November 2018, the Manitoba government privatized the air service. Water bombers were leased to private corporations and all other aircraft were sold. The MGAS left an 86 year legacy to Lac du Bonnet. In its wake, the skies are now quieter and a trip to the town dock is a lot less exciting.

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Bellanca Aircruiser

by Richard McC Calder

Giuseppe Mario Bellanca was an Italian-American airplane designer educated at Polytechnic University of Milan. He came to the United States in 1911 and built his first aircraft in 1913, with his designs setting a standard for general aviation.

Bellanca taught himself to fly and opened a flying school in 1914 where he taught many, including First World War ace F. H. LaGuardia. In the 1920s Bellanca went to work for the Wright Company designing and building an aircraft which outperformed Charles Lindbergh's Ryan, aka the Spirit of St. Louis, in a crossing of the Atlantic. His Bellanca had better times and performance in a crossing two weeks later to Germany and his Miss Veedol made the first trans-Pacific flight.

In the 1930s Bellanca went on his own to build aircraft. His designs set records for endurance and distance for both long-range and racing aircraft. During the 1930s several of his aircraft designs were to become legendary

in their weight, size and performance in moving freight and passengers.

In 1941 Bellanca was head of the aviation department at Higgins Industries, designing cargo aircraft for the war effort. After the war he formed Bellanca Development Company and went on to design and build many aircraft. Selling his company in 1954, Bellanca remained active designing and constructing with Bellanca Aircraft Engineering. He passed away in 1960 and was inducted into The National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1973.

Some of his most noted designs for Canadians were the Pacemaker and the Airbus/Aircruisers. Many Canadians remember the Aircruisers, the flying Ws. The Big Bellancas were described as a workhorse and ugly, but were considered the most efficient aircraft of the day and ranked high amongst all aircraft designs.

The Aircruisers were used in Northern Canada, the Yukon, and from British Columbia to Quebec hauling



Lac du Bonnet dock in 1942: one Bellanca Pacemaker CH-300 owned by Wings Ltd of Lac du Bonnet; three Bellanca's Aircruisers CF-BTW, CF-AWR, CF-BKV all owned by MacKenzie Air Service; fifth aircraft is a Fairchild 71 CF-BVU owned by Canadian Airways.

Aircruisers Could Carry up to 4,000 pounds



away from the crash, going five miles to a store at Long Lake. They organized a team with horses to retrieve the freight, with the only damage being three cracked eggs! BBJ became a source of parts for other Air-cruisers.

The Aircruisers CF-BTW, CF-AWR, CF-BLT and CF-BKV saw service in Western and Northern Canada, Northwest Ontario and the Yukon.



people, animals, freight, fuel, machinery and anything customers could think of. They could carry up to 4,000 pounds depending on fuel onboard.

A total of 23 Airbuses and Aircruisers were built. The Airbus was not a great seller with its water-cooled engine. It had all-wood wing construction whereas the Aircruiser had metal ribs in their wings and higher power engines.

The Aircruisers had 675 hp and up to 875 hp Wright and Pratt Whitney engines. Five Big Bellancas were exported to Canada. One Airbus, the CF-BBJ, was exported to Canada and was owned by several operators, including Hennessey Airlines, British North American Airways and Wings of Lac du Bonnet. In March 1938, eight people were on a flight from Lac du Bonnet to Berens River which was also loaded with mining supplies and 12 crates of eggs. Flying near Long Lake north of Lac du Bonnet, a bolt that holds tail fin failed, and pilot Ted Stull lost control while trying to land. Everyone walked

The CF-BLT was destined for a short Canadian life, suffering an engine failure and later breaking through the ice on Lake Labarge in April 1940. It was fully loaded, so a quick salvage was in order as the ice was melting. After a couple days of jacking it was saved, but when landing in Dawson days later a wheel broke off, causing minor damage. It was back in the air a few

weeks later, but while in a hangar that December a fire erupted, destroying the BLT, the hangar, and most of its contents.

The CF-BKV started out service with MacKenzie Air Service 1938, was sold to Canadian Pacific Airlines in 1942 and then to Central Northern Airways in 1944. It was operated out of Lac du Bonnet, supplying mines and others a needed service as roads were few and not up to heavy freight standards. While on a flight in 1949 northeast of Lac du Bonnet, it was destroyed when forced down due to bad weather on the shore of Smokey Lake. Over time, many flights were made into Smokey Lake to retrieve parts needed for other Aircruisers. Years later Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada in Winnipeg salvaged the remains.

CF-AWR, aka the Eldorado Radium Express, was the first of the five Bellancas used in Canada. Built in 1935, it was owned by MacKenzie Air Service in Edmonton,

BTW Flown by “Shorty” Holden

then the second largest aircraft operating in Canada. Its cargo was uranium concentrate. The plane was sold in 1939 to Eldorado Gold Mines and later to Canadian Airways of Winnipeg. The AWR also operated out of Lac du Bonnet. In 1947, after running out of fuel it crashed on the shore of Upturned Root Lake northeast of Sioux Lookout, Ont. It was badly damaged and abandoned. Over the years its parts were salvaged for use on the remaining Aircruiser BTW, and doors and windows became attachments for local trappers' cabins. In 1973 the Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada retrieved its remains by helicopter. It is currently restoring it, using what was salvaged along with other Aircruiser parts and some fabricated new ones. The plane should be ready to display in their new museum by 2022.

The CF-BTW and CF-AWR are the only surviving Big Bellancas. BTW is the only Aircruiser that came to Canada to survive intact. It also started its Canadian service with MacKenzie Air Service in 1941 and was sold to Canadian Pacific Air Lines in 1943, Central Northern Airways in 1947 and Transair in 1956. BTW also operated out of Lac du Bonnet and was flown by several locals, including Merrick “Shorty” Holden.

Shorty flew the AWR, BKV and BTW, a fine accomplishment as there were only five Big Bellancas in Canada. It was said Shorty was the smallest pilot flying the biggest aircraft. His son Pat said on a flight with his dad he had to stand on the seat to see over that big engine.



Many people living in and around Lac du Bonnet in the 1940s to the 1960s remember the Flying Ws, as three Aircruisers flew in and out of Lac du Bonnet for years. Lac du Bonnet residents worked on these Aircruisers, including Rollie Hammerstedt and George Fournier. Fournier was considered one of the most knowledgeable aircraft engineers who worked on the Big Bellancas. He did a lot of repairs and rebuilds out of his small shop and also toiled out in the bush and on the frozen lakes changing parts and engines. Word around was that you could send George into the bush with a crescent wrench and a frypan and he would get that aircraft home!

Ownership of BTW transferred to Hooker Air Service of Pickle Lake, Ontario in 1967 (my wife's relatives). Hooker Air used the BTW for several years hauling freight and tons of fish; it was their work-horse on the water. Their operation consisted of Otters, DC-3s, Twin



Aircraft and Ideas Live to Fly on

Beechcraft and others that were easier to obtain parts for.

The BTW's days were coming to an end as a hauler. It was the last of the Aircruisers flying, and parts had to be salvaged from only two others that were destroyed in crashes, but they could not supply what was needed to keep it operational. Aircruisers were high-maintenance machines; they were built in a time where everything was mechanical, controls were hand-operated and it took strength and a lot of effort to fly and maintain these work-horses of the sky.

The first time I saw the BTW was in Lac du Bonnet in the spring of 1974, just after I had moved to Lac du Bonnet to work at a mine as a welder. My daughter was two years old and I sat her on the pontoon for a picture. I was impressed by the size of this single-engine aircraft. Late that summer I started flying lessons at that site but it was sold to Barney Lamm. It was restored but not used again as a hauler and was later sold to a

museum in Oregon. I was sad to see that it didn't stay in Canada, where it worked so hard and left a lot of memories for those who flew, maintained, loaded, rode in and watched that old gal in her heyday.

The Bellanca Corporation was sold in 1954 when Giuseppe Bellanca retired. The corporation was a part of a succession of companies that maintained the Bellanca line. The Bellanca Citabria was the aircraft I learned to fly on. Airpark Ltd., a small charter company operating out of Lac du Bonnet airport, bought two new Bellanca Citabrias for their

flight school that started in August, 1974. I was one of six in its first class. The Citabria is a tailwheel tandem-seated aircraft. It is a gentle flying machine only reaching 115 MPH, but it is a pleasure to fly.

The Bellanca Corporation filed for bankruptcy in 1985 and their assets were acquired by Alexandria Aircraft of Minnesota. Even though the original company is gone, some of their aircraft and ideas live to fly on.



CF-BTW in Lac du Bonnet 1974.

Photo courtesy Rick McCaldar



CF-BTW at Lac du Bonnet dock before it went to Barney Lamm at Gimli.

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"Beaver Eating Wild Rice" Photo by Rick McGregor



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Lac du Bonnet Trails Net Maintenance Grant

The Lac du Bonnet Trails Association received some welcome news from the Trans Canada Trail Association when they approved a grant application for funds to maintain trails.

“The grant was for \$1,000, which is standard for the cleanup grants for a trail of our distance,” said Kathy Picard of the Lac du Bonnet Trail Association said in December 2020. “This money will allow us to pay someone to groom the skiing part of the trail, keep the parking area cleared, and install signage.”

The plans involved grooming a section of The Great Trail for skiing, and maintain another section for snowshoeing.

The Lac du Bonnet Trails Association works with Trails Manitoba and Trans Canada Trail to maintain 40 kilometres of trail between Pinawa and Great Falls Dams.

“We’re excited this grant will allow the trails association to groom a portion of the trail south of Tower Road for cross-country skiing, and designate the portion of trail north of Tower Road for snowshoeing,” said Picard. “This gives people opportunities for physically distanced outdoor activity at a time when organized indoor activities are cancelled due to COVID-19

concerns, and many people who usually go south are spending the winter here.”

Picard said Canadians are using trails across the country in greater numbers since the onset of COVID-19 with usage up nearly 50 per cent across all age groups according to a recent national Léger survey commissioned by Trans Canada Trail (TCT).

“The Montreal-based TCT is the steward of the 27,000-km Great Trail of Canada, the longest recreational trail in the world. The Great Trail is a national project that promotes trail use in the core activities of hiking, biking, horseback riding, skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling on designated routes,” explained Picard. “Trail use in the Lac du Bonnet area has noticeably increased, with more people than usual accessing hiking and biking trails, and looking for ways to



Leslie Wakeman and Joan Marion enjoy some time on the Agassiz Trails.

enjoy the outdoors safely this winter.”

Lac du Bonnet Trails Association volunteers worked on signage and trail maintenance, and cut and stacked firewood for the fire pits at the popular Blueberry Rock hiking trail. Those outdoor venues are more important than ever for engaging in physical activity, promoting

Built For Non-Motorized Activity

positive mental well-being, and experiencing the healing power of connecting with nature.

Picard said the Trails Association would like to remind trail users to practise 'no trace' principles while using trails, and to remember the Great Trail was funded and built for non-motorized activity. She asks for public cooperation in keeping snowmobiles and ATVs off the trail so that the designated activities can be done safely by participants of all ages.

Picard has been in contact with Carl Nilsson, who along with his wife Karen maintain and groom the cross country ski trails in the area. They reported some changes to the Lac du Bonnet Cross-Country Ski Trails, which are located 15 kilometres west of Lac du Bonnet just off PR 317 at Pit Road, and provide approximately 12 kilometres of trails winding through Agassiz Forest.

Sadly this past fall, the popular Blue and Red Trails were taken over by a logging operation. According to the Province's forest management plan, it was time to harvest the trees in that area.

Nilsson said the Lac du Bonnet Cross-Country Ski

Trails have been an important winter activity asset for around 40 years, so finding a suitable new trail to compensate for the loss of this part of the trail system was a priority.

"A new Yellow Trail (also named Manitoba 150 Trail) will connect from the south end of the Green Trail, and continue south with a small offshoot loop," said Nilsson.

Keep in mind some safety precautions before venturing out on the trails.

"Skiers will have to practice all provincial health orders for outdoor activities, the most important being keeping a safe distance from other skiers who are not part of your bubble," added Nilsson.

Nilsson said new trail maps are currently being finalized and will soon be posted on the RM and Town of Lac du Bonnet websites. They will also be available at the trailhead just off PR 317.

The trails are open to anyone to enjoy, no membership is required. Donations pay trail maintenance expenses, and work is conducted by volunteers.



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- ✓ Assisted in Lake Sturgeon "Catch and Release" Research with the University of Manitoba and Manitoba Conservation.
- ✓ Participated as a stakeholder in several Moose Management Committees.
- ✓ Funding bursaries for district students pursuing careers in Resource Management.
- ✓ Future development of the Outdoor Education Centre.



Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve and Trail

A \$1 million interpretive trail and boardwalk next to the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve makes the wetlands more accessible and highlight many of their unique and rare features without causing damage to the fragile native plants and their habitat.



Trail grass.



The Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve – a calcareous fen, a wetland type considered rare in North America – was established in 2004. The 563-hectare parcel of land is located along Hwy 59 northeast of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and features 23 species of provincially rare and uncommon plants, 28 of 36 native orchid species including the ram’s head lady’s slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*) and eight of Manitoba’s 10 species of carnivorous plants.

The Brokenhead Wetland Trail is a 2.7-kilometre heavily trafficked out and back trail located near Brokenhead

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Part of Lake Winnipeg's Watershed

Ojibway Nation that features beautiful wild flowers and is good for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for hiking, walking, running, and nature trips and is best used from May until October.



Ram's head lady's slipper.

The Brokenhead Wetland is part of Lake Winnipeg's vast watershed and it plays an important role in improving lake water quality by filtering water before it enters the lake. This function is accomplished through the soil's microorganisms and bacteria and the wetland plants.

Wetlands also help to replenish groundwater supply, mitigate climate change by removing carbon dioxide, control water levels, protect against flooding and provide fish and wildlife habitat.

Eugene Reimer, a long-time naturalist and board member of Native Orchid Conservation Inc., has donated \$600,000 to the Winnipeg Foundation to establish the Eugene Reimer Environment Fund. The fund will provide an annual grant to Debwendon to maintain the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail.

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Learning About Nature

“It brings me great joy and satisfaction to make a contribution towards protecting these wetlands where I spent so many happy hours enjoying and learning about nature,” said Reimer.

Debwendon Inc. is a nonprofit organization formed in 2007 to promote and preserve the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve, raise public awareness of the historic cultural connection between the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and the Brokenhead Wetland and, over the long term, construct and maintain a boardwalk and interpretive trail adjacent to the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve.

“The word debwendon means ‘trust’ in Ojibway,” said Carl Smith of Debwendon. “It has been more than 10 years since we started to work to protect the Brokenhead wetlands. We are overwhelmed by Eugene’s generous donation and excited to see work on the trail begin.”

This initiative supports the Province of Manitoba’s trail-based tourism strategy, which focuses on engaging tourism and service providers to capitalize on the potential of outdoor recreational tourism.



Brokenhead Trail in the winter.

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Kayaking For Exercise and Discovering Nature



Kayaking up Rice Creek.

by Rick McGregor

There has never been a better time to get out and discover the outdoors and all the flora and fauna Mother Nature has to offer. Over the past year, I have heard of so many people trying to offset the isolation of COVID-19 by taking up bird watching, hiking, or just taking casual strolls through the woods or their neighbourhoods.

I am going to suggest kayaking as another way to combine both getting out into nature and getting some exercise. The North Eastman region has innumerable, spectacular places to kayak from the beginner level to expert. Decent kayaks can be purchased for as little as \$300 and they are a lot more difficult to tip over than a canoe. For those looking for something a little higher end, Wilderness Supply in Winnipeg has an excellent supply of all types of kayaks including two-person units with or without a rudder.

My wife and I purchased one of the two-person types with a rudder five years ago and it has been one of the

best decisions we have ever made. We have gone two weeks at a time without even taking the cover off our boat, but we kayak at least once every day and many days we go out multiple times. We also purchased a carrier for the top of our vehicle so we can take it to explore other waterways aside from Pinawa Bay on which we have our cottage.

Kayaks are very easy to paddle but do provide good exercise and of course, you can go as hard or as easy as you like. And, if you are into nature or thinking now might be the time to get out and discover it, a kayak provides a very stealthy way to observe nature. We have seen great blue herons, loons, kingfishers, a variety of ducks, and many varieties of songbirds from our kayak. We have also observed beavers, otters, foxes and bears from the water with quiet paddling allowing us to get much closer than we would if we were walking on the shore, making noise as we trudged through bushes and reeds.

We have also discovered beautiful wildflowers, flowering bushes and water plants like lily pads that grow

Great Photos

right along the shores of the creeks, rivers, and bays we kayak.

As a wildlife photographer, this has provided me with many glorious opportunities for great photos that I would otherwise never have had the chance to take. I have been asked many times if it is not a risky gamble taking my camera in the kayak with me. Yes, it is a bit of a risk but as mentioned earlier, they are much more stable than a canoe, especially the two-person type.

Getting back to places to kayak, try the Lac du Bonnet Wildlife Ponds, Rice Creek, the Winnipeg River along Hwy 11 between PTH 313 and Powerview-Pine Falls, the Coca Cola Falls area or any of dozens of wonderful places in Whiteshell and Nopiming Provincial Parks. If you are new to kayaking, look for places that offer an easy launch area as getting into the kayak can often be the trickiest part to learn. The Lac du Bonnet Wildlife Ponds are a good place to start out.

Wherever you decide to go, enjoy the ride, enjoy the scenery, watch for many of the spectacular creatures our area has to offer and know you are getting exercise and fresh air!

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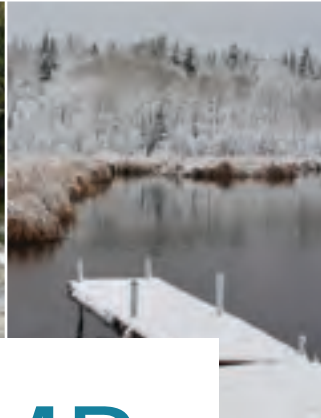
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This year, we invite you to visit Lac du Bonnet. To behold the place where the Manitoba Prairies give way to the vast boreal forest and the Canadian Shield. To explore the pristine trails, miles of prime waterways, and the rich history that helped shape our province. To unleash the adventures and reconnect with yourself and your loved ones. This year, we invite you to discover that your heart is home in Lac du Bonnet.

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Come for the Weekend, Stay for Life!

Go With the Flow on the Pinawa Channel



Old Pinawa rapids in the summer.

by Donna Besel

Do you love canoeing or kayaking, but don't like long drives, endless portages and windswept lakes? Would you like a short paddling trip the whole family can enjoy close to Lac du Bonnet's restaurants and accommodations?

Then the Pinawa Channel is for you. More to the point, this narrow waterway might be one of the most accessible and historically fascinating places to canoe in Manitoba.

For generations, First Nations people paddled the channel. They named it "pinnawok" which means "calm wa-

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View of Old Pinawa Dam from water.

ters.” In the 1800s, fur traders used it to avoid the Seven Sisters rapids.

In the early 1900s, Winnipeg Hydro created a dam to provide power to Manitoba’s major city. When power demands grew, they abandoned the town site and dam, and most of the additional flow was diverted back into the Winnipeg River. These two waterways run parallel, but the Pinawa Channel remains the skinny sibling,

with no whitecaps or strong currents. For decades, the site was used as an unsupervised campground and swimming hole.

In the 1980s, Old Pinawa became a Provincial Park, so if you chose to leave your vehicle there, it requires a permit.

Manitoba Conservation and The Friends of Old Pinawa have cooperated to create a



Old Pinawa dam and lower rapids in March.



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welcoming setting, with fire-pits, picnic tables, amphitheatre, hiking trails, bridges, and interpretive signage.

At the Provincial Heritage Park at Old Pinawa, massive arches loom in the distance, resembling Roman aqueducts. A self-guiding trail leads visitors around the “disappeared” village; cement foundations can be found throughout the meadow.

Above and below the dam, two sets of rapids tumble over the rocks. Neither is suitable for canoeing, but inflatables and kayaks are often used. From the parking lot, you can carry your canoe a few hundred metres to a launch above the upper rapids.

Unfortunately, there is no easy access below the dam so you’ll do a lot of carrying if you want to continue down the Lee River. About 20 huge arches support the lower walkway. Paddling underneath these structures provides a unique canoeing experience.

If you plan to head upstream toward Pinawa, about halfway there you’ll portage over a small earth dam and a set of rapids. The following marshy section, ringing with calls of waterfowl, is jam-packed with wildlife.

Eagles, ravens, and vultures are ‘frequent fliers’ in the area, which has been designated as a Great Gray Owl



Paddling near Old Pinawa Dam.

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Lise Boiteau paddling under Old Pinawa Dam structure.



Rafters on Pinawa Channel.

habitat. Deer, bears, wolves and foxes are often spotted. Muskrats, otters, and beavers can be approached on the water, if you use quiet strokes.

If you don't want to paddle up and back, you can leave one vehicle at Old Pinawa and park another upstream.

Much closer to Pinawa, the channel narrows. In the

An advertisement for the Municipality of Alexander. It features a black bear lying on a large, mossy log. The text "MUNICIPALITÉ" is above the word "Alexander" in a large, white, cursive font, with a yellow 'X'. Below "Alexander" is the word "MUNICIPALITY" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Below that is the slogan "A great place to relax and recharge" in a white, sans-serif font. Underneath is a paragraph of text: "Located on the southeast basin of Lake Winnipeg, approximately 100 kms north east of Winnipeg from the East Beaches, along the Winnipeg River corridor, east to the Bird River area." At the bottom, it says "VISIT US: @ RMALEXANDER.COM" in a yellow, sans-serif font.

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early 1900s, hydro crews blasted through the Canadian Shield to create more flow. The scenery along this stretch is spectacular, with the heaped-up boulders strewn about like a giant's toy blocks.

The Trans-Canada Trail, running along the north shore, crosses over the suspension bridge and continues all the way to Old Pinawa. If you prefer hiking or biking, you can easily travel on this popular and well-used trail.

For a bit of fun, you can stop and bounce across the suspension bridge or enjoy a picnic in a pagoda-like shelter.

At the end of PR 211, a turnaround provides access to a diversion dam. On the north side of the dam, a path leads down to a spot where you can put in your canoe. From there, it is about a three to four hour paddle down to Old Pinawa.

This upper part of the channel has a steady, rippling current. In drier years, your canoe could bang into a few rocks.

In the past few years, people have used inflatables to float from the diversion dam to the suspension bridge. On a hot summer day, dozens of happy folks perched on tubes and rafts can be spotted, leisurely drifting with the current.

Accessible, fun and easy to enjoy – that's the Pinawa Channel.

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Pioneering a New Path for Tourism in Eastern Manitoba and Beyond

by Jenny Dupas
Executive Director, Eastman Tourism

Tourism was tipped upside down this past year throughout Manitoba and the world. Tourism was one of the sectors most impacted by the shutdowns and regulations. Businesses adapted and altered their tourism offerings, the industry deserves much credit for their hard work, passion and flexibility.



As recovery efforts proceed, knowledge building, strategic collaborations and utilizing existing resources are tools that can help. Tourism was growing before the pandemic, and it will thrive again after. We need to be responsive to current conditions and prepare for future growth. Let's forge our own opportunities and pioneer our future together to enhance tourism growth throughout Eastern Manitoba and beyond.



FREE Partnership in 2021

An opportunity that Eastman Tourism is extending to the industry in Eastern Manitoba is free partnership for new tourism businesses, whether you have been in operation for years or just starting out. Our partnership will provide much needed benefits to help with recovery. Here are just a few of the benefits.

- Assist you with tourism experience development
- Participation in co-op marketing programs
- Business listing on the Eastman Tourism website
- Social Media Marketing (Engage us using #EasternMB)
- Monthly Industry E-Newsletter
- Networking and information sharing opportunities

We are here for you, the tourism industry. Reach out to us today to learn more about the benefits of partnering with Eastman Tourism. Contact Eastman Tourism for more information and inspiration to help grow tourism in Manitoba.

While a more positive recovery outlook is now felt throughout Manitoba, a lot of work remains ahead for the tourism sector. It is estimated that it will take Manitoba's tourism industry three to five years before it gets back to 2019 tourism revenues.

This past year has presented many challenges, but also many opportunities. Some areas experienced over-tourism with an influx of visitors. This drives a need to develop local plans to address increased visitation and environmental sustainability. Businesses have had to increase their online presence to reach customers in new innovative ways. Digital marketing and e-commerce have never been more important for sales.

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Your Boating Adventure

With multiple boat launches and plenty of water, Lac du Bonnet is a water sport hot spot.

Adventure the 60 kilometres worth of rivers and lakes as you discover a whole second world of Lac du Bonnet. Try your hand at finding the perfect fishing destination, riding the waves while tubing, water skiing, jet skiing, wakeboarding or any of your favourite water sports.

Set off for your day on the water at one of our six boat launches:

- The Laverendrye Boat Launch access onto the Winnipeg River – north end of PR 502
- Winnipeg River Boat Launch access onto the Winnipeg River – PR 313 on the east side of the bridge
- Osprey Boat Launch access onto the Lee River near Lake Lac du Bonnet – Granite Park Road
- Fernwood Boat Launch access onto the Lee River – Fernwood Lane
- Wood Duck Bend Boat Launch access onto the Lee River – Wood Duck Bend

- Riverland School Point Boat Launch access onto the Winnipeg River – located at the end of Anderson Way

Your Experience will Include:

- Access to the Winnipeg River, Lee River, Pinawa Channel and Lake Lac du Bonnet
- Beautiful scenery, no matter which body of water you choose
- Spectacular view of the decommissioned Pinawa Dam at the end of the Pinawa Channel
- Fishing for walleye, northern pike, goldeye, perch, bass, sturgeon, channel cat, crappie and more
- Calm waters to enjoy canoeing, kayaking and pedal boating along the shores of the Lee River and Pinawa Channel
- Large open waters to enjoy tubing, jet skiing, wakeboarding and wake surfing along the Winnipeg River and Lake Lac du Bonnet

– Lac du Bonnet CDC



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Water Safety

Virtually every recreational activity has some element of risk, including boating.

Fortunately in boating there are some simple ways that you and your family can mitigate those risks.

Life Jackets

Your chances of survival in the event of an unexpected fall overboard or swamping increases exponentially if you are wearing a life jacket. \$300 for operating pleasure craft without a life jacket for each person on board.

Alcohol

Historically boating and having a few cold ones have gone hand in hand. But like driving, we are all becoming aware of the risks of drinking and boating. Not only is it socially unacceptable, the criminal consequences are becoming just as severe.

Preparation

Boating is a great family activity and can be even more fun with a little bit of advanced preparation. It's important to make sure that we have the water toys, fishing gear and snacks aboard, but even more important to take a little extra time to make sure you and your boat are prepared. That includes having the right safety gear, checking the weather, filing a float plan and having a contingency plan in place in case something goes wrong.

It's the Law

Who Needs the Pleasure Craft Operator Card? In Canada, all persons who operate a pleasure craft must carry proof of competency on board if the pleasure craft has any type of motor, including an electric trolling motor, and is used for recreational purposes. (The only exception is persons operating a pleasure craft in the



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Northwest Territories or Nunavut). The RCMP will be stopping boats to check for proper licensing. (\$150 fine)

Licensing

Operators must be 12 years of age or older if not supervised by a person 16 years old or older, for all vessels over 10 horsepower. Unsupervised operators age 12 to 15 are restricted to boats with 40-horsepower motors. Proof of age document must accompany the operator on the water.

As of September 15, 2009, proof of competency is required for all individuals operating a motorized pleasure craft in Manitoba. This restriction applies to all residents and to non-residents after 45 consecutive days. There are three ways to obtain proof of competency:

- Proof of completion of a boating safety course
- A pleasure craft operator card from a Canadian Coast Guard accredited course
- A completed rental-boat safety checklist

The operator card is good for life and requires passing a test. It is possible to take the test without completing the course.

Required Equipment

The following safety equipment is required for all pleasure craft up to eight metres:

- Personal flotation device/life jacket that fits each occupant heaving line
- Manual propelling device or anchor
- Bailer or manual water pump
- Class 5BC fire extinguisher if vessel is equipped with an inboard engine, fixed fuel tank or fuel-burning appliance
- Watertight flashlight or three flares
- Re-boarding device
- Sound signalling equipment
- Navigation lights

There are additional requirements for larger recreational water vessels, including items such as axes, additional flares and power pumps.

Careless Operation

Boat operators considering to be operating in a careless manner may be charged under Criminal Code or ticketed for operating craft in a way that could adversely affect the safety of others, considering the weather, vis-

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ibility, amount of traffic, or number of other boats or people nearby, maneuverability, navigation conditions and hazard.

When towing or skiing, spare seating must be provided on-board the vessel for every individual under tow and you must have a spotter who is not the operator of the watercraft. Towing is not permitted from one hour after sunset to sunrise. Boats may not be operated within five miles of shore without a noise abatement mechanism in use.



There are several restrictions pertaining to engine starting, fuelling, and fuel-burning systems, and regarding operation of a boat while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

For more information on these or any other regulations, contact the Lac du Bonnet RCMP at 204-345-6311.

– RCMP “D” Division

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Follow the Trails

Lac du Bonnet is truly a unique destination for hiking. We have plenty of wildlife, an abundance of plant life, and a breath-taking mix of boreal forest, lakeside paradise, prairie wonders, and magnificent Canadian Shield.

Try out Blueberry Rock trail for hours of peaceful nature, gorgeous scenery, and, of course, blueberries when in season.

Stop by Pinawa Dam Provincial Heritage Park for a stunning walk through this historic site of Manitoba's first hydro-electric generating station.

Enjoy the tall grass, wildlife, and openness of the trail around the Lac du Bonnet Wildlife Ponds or explore a portion of the Trans Canada Trail with Blue Water South Trail. It begins at Pinawa Dam and travels for approximately 37 kilometres until Great Falls.



Horses on the trail.

Your experience will include:

- Breathtaking views and unique photographic challenges
- Lush boreal forests and pristine prairie landscapes
- Canadian Shield outcroppings, rapids and waterfalls
- Historic self-guided walking tour of the Pinawa Dam site which contains what remains of the first year round operating hydroelectric generating station in Manitoba.
- Captivating waterfront views along the banks of the Winnipeg River and Pinawa Channel
- Abundant wildlife including bald eagles, great horned owls, black bears, deer, and many more – especially as you wind through the Lee River Wildlife Management Area
- Fantastic wild flowers, foliage, deciduous and coniferous trees
- Picnic tables, benches, boat launches, port-a-potties, fire pits and designated parking areas

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Go For the Green

One of the best things about golf is the opportunity to spend time outdoors alone, with friends or total strangers – all while getting a bit of exercise at the same time.

Whether a golfer has been playing all their lives or is just new to the game, they can find a course to challenge their skill level in the Lac du Bonnet area. On the edge of Canadian Shield, the courses come with everything one would expect from links carved out of the wilderness – an abundance of tall trees, blue water, plenty of rock obstacles and a host of wildlife.

From sunrise to sunset, you never know quite what you are going to see when you are golfing along the Winnipeg River corridor.

Black Bear Golf Club

Black Bear Golf is a short drive east of Lac du Bonnet on PR 313 and north on Lee River Road.

A prime nine-hole golf experience with two sets of tees, the locally owned and operated Black Bear course and

licensed restaurant has become known as a fun course for adults and youths of all ages. There are three par three holes, five par four holes and a par five hole.

The course is a par 34 and 2,662 yards long. There is no driving range, but practice greens are available. Power carts are also available for rent.

The bordering Lee River acts as a water hazard on holes three, five and eight.

Pine Falls Golf Club

Built in 1927, the Pine Falls Golf Club is a nine-hole public course located in the Town of Powerview-Pine Falls

The course provides womens and mens tees with the white (mens) tees layout a par 35 course at a distance of 2,807 yard.

Generally flat with some elevated areas, most of the holes feature a sand trap with water hazards on the first and ninth holes. Other features include a driving range and putting green.



Manitoba's most scenic Golf Course on beautiful Lake Lac du Bonnet

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Granite Hills Golf Club

Just 20 minutes past Lac du Bonnet on Cape Coppermine Road, Granite Hills Golf Club is a par 72 semi-private championship course boasts four sets of tees ranging in yardage from the back, black tees at 7,082 yards to the forward, silver tees at 5,428 yards.

Winding along Lake Lac du Bonnet, Granite Hills' plush fairways lined with mature trees, well-manicured greens and elevated tee boxes among the towering granite outcroppings are impressive. It also maintains 35 sand bunkers, five lake side fairways and numerous elevation changes.

Granite Hills Golf Club also offers a public dock for those arriving by boat. A pro shop is on hand and carts and clubs are available for rent. There is a dress code.



Granite Hills along Lake Lac du Bonnet



Pinawa deer.

Pinawa Golf and Country Club

The Pinawa Golf Club is one of the more scenic and challenging 18-hole public courses in Manitoba with lush fairways and greens with well-groomed tee-boxes.

Stretching out over 6,580 yards with three sets of tees, golfers must hit the ball straight and accurate on this course to avoid sand traps, rocky outcrops and water hazards along the edge of the Pinawa Channel.

This full service, championship golf course has it all including a pro-shop and teaching pro, driving range and practice greens, rental carts and clubs.

The club hosts several tournaments during the year and can accommodate tournament packages.

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Whether you're looking to hook up your RV or pitching up a tent, you can do it all here. There are a range of full, partial, non-service and tenting sites with daily, weekly, monthly or seasonal rates. Unwind however you want.

Camp Cedarwood (Lac du Bonnet)

Come stay in fully furnished cabins, roast marshmallows or hotdogs at the fire pit. Take your kids on an easy hike through our forest trails or kayak to Coca-Cola falls. Enjoy a relaxing staycation or an activity filled adventure. Cabins are fully furnished with basic kitchen supplies included. Each cabin comfortably houses a family of five complete with a kitchen, laundry and living/dining room.

Amenities:

- Fir Pits • Kayak launch • Swimming area • Nature trails and picnic areas • Beach volleyball

Hidden Hills RV Park (Lac du Bonnet)

Get away from the hustle and bustle of the city and spend some quality time relaxing at Hidden Hills RV Park. Established in 2008, Hidden Hills is a family-owned and operated seasonal RV park located approximately 20 minutes northeast of Lac du Bonnet. Enjoy large cottage style lots close to fishing, beaches, boat launches, and a recreational area for the entire family.

Amenities:

- 50-foot x 100-foot lots with 30/50 amp service • Fire pits, septic tank and electrical box on each lot • Recreational area • Play structures, sandbox and green space • Laundry room • Close to a public boat launch, beach and swimming docks

Champagne's RV Park and Campgrounds (Lac du Bonnet)

If you are looking for a place that offers a breathtaking site, friendly staff and nearby incredible adventures, then Champagne's RV Park and Campground is the

place for you. Bring the boat and take full advantage of the two boat launches on-site that connects to the Winnipeg River. Children will love the play area or hitting the nature trails just waiting to be explored.

Amenities:

- Modern washrooms • Coin-operated showers and washing machines • Play area for children • Nature trails • Two boat launches onto the Winnipeg River • Full, partial, non-service and tenting sites • Wifi • Volleyball court, basketball net, and horseshoe pit

Riverdale Tourist Camp (Lac du Bonnet)

Located 15 minutes northeast of Lac du Bonnet on the Lee River, Riverdale Tourist Camp is an all ages seasonal campground with a year-round store – Riverdale Grocery – at the site. The campground is a combination of 80 waterfront and backlot sites operating from May to October with electric and water hookups, tables and grills. There is an on-site private boat launch and swimming area with several docks available.

Amenities:

- 30 and 50 Amp service • Boat launch and docks • Water • Partial hookups • Picnic table • Dump station • Restrooms onsite



Champagne's RV Park.



Riverdale Tourist Camp fire pit.

Poplar Bay Resort (Alexander)

Only 20 minutes from Lac du Bonnet, Poplar Bay Resort provides seasonal camping from May to October with all the benefits of cabin ownership without the high cost. Access the boat launch, beach and fish cleaning shack with groceries close by. Hunters are welcome in season.

Amenities:

- Air conditioning • Beach • Boat launch • Gas • Dock
- Tackle and live bait • Picnic area



Fishing at Tall Timber Lodge.

Tall Timber (Lac du Bonnet)

Located in the heart of cottage country overlooking Lake Lac du Bonnet, Tall Timber Lodge is a family owned and operated business that thrives on providing a modern wilderness escape for over 50 years. Whether you enjoy fishing, boating, camping

or just being outdoors, Tall Timber offers over 150 full service seasonal RV sites, deluxe lakefront rental cabins. Whether you're coming by land, air, water or ice our facility is fully equipped to service quests with all modes of transportation.

Amenities:

- Convenience store with liquor/cold beer vendor
- Marina (w/gas) • Public boat launch • Indoor storage
- Outdoor heated swimming pool • Children's playground • Coin operated laundry facilities

White Spruce on the Lake (Lac du Bonnet)

White Spruce on the Lake is a semi-gated, family-focused camping resort in the RM of Lac du Bonnet that specializes exclusively in seasonal travel trailer/fifth wheel camping, meaning you lease a camping site for your exclusive use for the full camping season in a beautiful natural setting and great fishing area. As a courtesy, free winter storage is included in your lease.

Amenities:

- Boat launch • Swimming area • Nature trails and picnic areas • Beach volleyball • Sandbox and children's play structure • Off-leash dog park • Granite walking trails and sidewalks • 90 acres of mature forest, natural grasslands and granite outcroppings



Tall Timber Lodge sunset

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Snowmobiling Adventure in North Eastman

The region surrounding Lac du Bonnet offers wilderness adventure at any time of the year. That opportunity is amplified in the winter as snowmobile clubs in the area work together to develop an extensive maze of hundreds of kilometres of trails offering dense forest, abundant wildlife and breathtaking scenery.

Snowmobiling is one of those sports where you can stay safe, maintain social distancing and still have an absolute blast. With each club owning and operating their own groomer units, the cleared and signed trails all belong to the provincial network known as Snoman (Snowmobilers of Manitoba).

Snowmobile clubs are also social networks encouraging information sharing through web sites, and organizing fund raising activities to help promote safe riding and generate operating funds for the clubs. Members spend countless volunteer hours promoting safe, high-quality recreational snowmobiling by maintaining trails and taking collective action like clearing debris and fallen trees to placing signage on trails and monitoring conditions carefully.

The **Eastman SnoPALS** was established in 1996 with the amalgamation of several smaller clubs in the region, with the acronym PALS representing clubs from Pinawa, Agassiz (Seddon's Corner) and Lac du Bonnet. Clubs from Seven Sister Falls, Whitemouth and Elma have also since been incorporated.

The safety-oriented club maintains approximately 300 kilometres of trail spanning from the Great Falls area in the north, Elma to the south, Seddon's Corner to the west and Pinawa to the east. The trails offer a variety of flowing rides through a pine forest, straight trail over old rail beds to swamp and sandy pastureland. The club offers the convenience of five warm up shelters along the trail network.

The **Mooswa Lake Snowriders** maintain approximately 140 kilometres of trail in the region, running just north of Beausejour, through Milner Ridge up towards

Pine Falls and east to Lac du Bonnet. The club members are very proud of the fact that they receive frequent feedback about how amazing their trails are.

One aspect that sets this club apart from the others is their creatively designed warm up shacks. The shacks each have a unique theme attached such as the Ski-Doo shack built and designed to look like a huge yellow machine, and the Big Foot Shack where visitors are welcomed by representations of Big Foot and Little Foot.

The **Nopiming Snomads** was incorporated in 1992 in the area of Bird Lake, Booster Lake, Flanders Lake and Davidson Lake in the southern region of Nopiming Park.

The Nopiming Snomads maintain and groom approximately 180 kilometres of trail that wind through some very picturesque terrain.

Nopiming is a Saulteaux word meaning 'entrance to the wilderness, and these portals can be accessed through four major trails and two connector trails. They offer many rocky outcrops and different types of treed areas, winding trails, lakes and swamps.

The club provides two warm up shelters. The Rumble Inn is located just off Rumble Lake on the North side of Bear Trail, and Shane's Shelter located on the South side of the Bear Trail. The Cougar Trail takes riders to

the Winnipeg River and connects at the border with the Sunset Trail Riders out of Kenora.

The **Lee River Snow Riders** are responsible for maintaining and grooming approximately 200 kilometres of trail, which provides a smorgasbord of snowmobile enjoyment. The trail is a combination of flat straightaways and challenging technical trails.

The club offers five newer warm up shelters each equipped with wood stove for both heating and cooking. Shelters are also stocked with split firewood.

The Lee River Snow Riders trails are located north of Lac du Bonnet and cross through bush and the waterways of Lake Lac du Bonnet, Lee River, Bird River and various creeks.





With around 50 members, the **Maskwa Snowmobile Club** covers Powerview-Pine Falls, Great Falls, St-Georges and all points north and south of the Winnipeg River. The club maintains more than 150 kilometres of trails of forest riding which serves as a gateway to at least six other club trail systems. Riders can head west along Route 17 passing a warming shelter and connecting with the Northstar Hillclimbers trails or take Route 17 east across the Winnipeg River and along the Maskwa River.

It is also possible to head south along Route 62, connecting with the Mooswa Snow Riders trails. Along the way you can take a detour along Route 221 east to St-Georges, along with another eastward detour along Route 223 to the banks of the Winnipeg River.

A non-profit organization and club for all seasons, the **North Star Hill Climbers** are based out of Grand Marias and works hard to provide safe snowmobiling trails in the Eastern Beaches area. The club grooms 120 kilometres of trails depending upon the season and snowfall. The trails are closely monitored as the safety of the groomer and of the snowmobile traffic is a prime concern for club members. Two warm up huts are offered – the Jack Fish Hut Ruebens Ridge. Not only are they on the trails to have a meeting place for the sledgers in the area but they are fully stocked with wood and stoves to keep you warm on those chilly days and to make those eats in the sheds.

The **Brokenhead Trail Blazers Power Toboggan Club** was formed in March of 1970 at Brokenhead, just north of Beausejour. The club maintains and grooms 230 kilometres of trails located in and around the RM of Brokenhead including Mars Sand Hills, Gull Lake, Beausejour, Tyndall, Stead, Beaconia and Scanterbury. The distance provides access to many local services and unique scenery. Their recently renovated warm up shack, Jim Longbottom's Shelter, is located on PT50, just south of the junction with CT280 connecting to Scanterbury.

The **Victoria Beach Snow Drifters** encourage everyone to experience their more than 200 kilometres of groomed trails and lots of great amenities including fuel stops, restaurants and overnight accommodations. In addition to their regularly groomed trails, there are a couple of hundred kilometres of non-groomed trails that bisect the region so riders can explore the back country. Woodland trails wind through beautiful snow covered pines, spruce, and mixed wood forests. There are many warm up shacks along the way and excellent connectivity to neighbouring snowmobile club trails.

For more information on snowmobile clubs in Manitoba visit www.snoman.mb.ca



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Strap On Your Skis

Winter provides an excellent opportunity to enjoy cross-country skiing.

Getting outside to ski on a brisk winter day on groomed trails is an excellent way to get exercise and improve your sense of well-being. Ski trails are groomed specifically for skiing in one direction. Classic skiing promotes good balance, coordination and cardiovascular training.

The Whiteshell Cross-Country Ski Club (WCCSC) has members from preschool age to 80 plus seniors demonstrating that skiing can be a lifetime sport.

Skate skiing is faster and requires more skill, excellent balance and offers a good workout. It looks so effortless when done well. The wide flat track is groomed for the skating technique and you can spot the wide diagonal stride marks in the snow. Unfortunately, sometimes walkers mistakenly think the wide packed trails are for them to use which does serious damage to the tracked trail. We ask that walkers stay off ski trails. The Ironwood Trail and The Alice Chambers Trail are both scenic and excellent for walking.

The WCCSC in Pinawa is run by volunteers. The name implies we are with the provincial parks but the club is actually organized by a volunteer executive and ski club

volunteer members.

The club's trails are on the Pinawa Golf Course and across the diversion dam at the end of PR 211. Trails range from easy to difficult. You can choose trails that suit your skill level. The golf course trail is our easiest trail and we ask skiers to stay off the tees, greens and sand traps to respect our privilege of using the golf course.

The WCCSC, offers several programs, including lessons for beginners and advanced skiers in both classic and skate skiing techniques with qualified instructors. For younger children there is a Bunnyrabbit program and parents join in to learn at the same time. The Jackrabbit program is for school-aged children and the ten sessions for both programs are held on Sunday afternoons. The Racers and Pacers program involves evening skiing with headlights on a short (one kilometre) trail near the Pinawa Club Restaurant.

Cross-country skiing is an activity specifically allowed under Public Health Act Orders. Both the provincial ski governing body (CCSAM) and the WCCSC have protocols in place to be compliant with these orders regarding the COVID-19 virus.



Parallel tracks (left) are for gliding along at your own pace in the classic style which is easy to learn, while skate skiing is faster and requires more skill.



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WICKED WATERFRONT SUNSET VIEW!!

Pinned to the Granite Hills. Gorgeous Penthouse view. Includes gazebo to inspire. Over 400' Waterfront includes its own Jumping Rock with 17' Depth, Year Round Dock. Call for Details. Under \$800K

SOLD



WRAP AROUND WATERFRONT!!

Water on three sides and sunset view for this 1200+ sqft. four season home. The eye has full BR suite above with the same gorgeous views. Over 600 ft. of waterfront. Under \$750K. Call NOW!

SOLD

