MILESTONES

Lansdowne’s Significant Historical Themes and Events
A Project of the Lansdowne Heritage Committee

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On the cover: Arden Train Station, ca. 1900.
Lansdowne Milestones

THE R.M. OF LANDOWNE has a fascinating and important history. Beginning in the late 1870s, when the first settlers began trickling in, leading to our incorporation as a Municipality in 1884, and up to the present, we have been an industrious, productive and vibrant community.

This booklet will help anyone, residents and visitors alike, to appreciate the basic contours of our past. Sections on various themes, noting key events, dates and personalities, will enrich an exploration of our past, and bring to life our proud heritage – the rich and busy life that has defined us for more than a century.

The following essential historical themes contain this story:

- Community Context
- Community Development
- Government Development
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Commercial Development
- Manufacturing and Industry
- Spiritual Life
- Education
- Health Care
- Culture and Recreation

We trust that this booklet will inform and inspire, suggesting the rich pageant that has been our community’s story. We leave readers with this thought, which has inspired us as we developed this project.

Life must be lived forward, but it can only be understood backward.

- Søren Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher.
Lansdowne Milestones

Community Context

The archival photograph of Arden from the early 20th century suggests the historic nature of that town. Photo from the Archives of Manitoba.
Lansdowne Milestones

Community Development

The R.M. of Lansdowne is located on the Carleton Trail and thus the area was well known to travellers using that route to get from Winnipeg to Fort Ellice or beyond to Fort Carlton and Fort Edmonton. In 1872, a small depot was built on the current site of Arden – first used as a base for supplies for survey parties and later occupied by the North West Mounted Police. As western Manitoba was gradually opened for settlement, this area had its first settlers in the mid 1870s, mostly from Ontario and Britain.

As settlers began claiming homesteads identifiable communities appeared, generally centred around a post office and perhaps a school, began to appear. These were not villages but may have had a store. The first notable example was the Salisbury region, where William Millar and his family, who arrived in 1877, established a stopping house, Post Office and store, which served the neighbourhood and travellers on the Carleton Trail. The Mekiwin District was also well populated by 1878.

As early as 1879, school classes were organized, with the first schools building erected in the Salisbury and Mekiwin (Ayr School) in 1883.

In 1884, the R.M. of Lansdowne was formed. The origin of the Village of Arden can also be traced to that year as the Arden Post Office was established and the railway arrived. Commercial enterprises soon followed.

By 1890, Arden was a thriving commercial centre with a full range of services. Throughout the municipality smaller service centres were established as branch lines were built and additional railway station locations were selected. The hamlet of Berton, later re-named Helston, was located on the new Hallboro-Muir C.N.R. branch completed in 1901. Keyes General Store and Post Office was established on the eastern edge of the Municipality in 1896 and a small village grew. Tenby was the other small commercial centre in the Municipality, established when the line from Gladstone to Dauphin came through in the late 1890s.

As the railway spurred the growth of these villages, communities also retained their identity with schools, churches and post offices as focal points. The Salisbury, Mekiwin, Glenholm, Jordan, Orange Ridge and Purple Ridge communities, in particular, retain some of that identity to this day.
Government Development

The public administration of the region was established with the incorporation in 1883 of the Rural Municipality of Lansdowne. The name was given by the Municipal Act. D. Bruce Sealey, a native of the municipality and later a faculty member of the U. of M., suggested that it was named after Lord Lansdowne, Governor-General of Canada.

The first Councillors were: D. J. Gerow, Robert Riddle, James Crawford, Samuel McGorman, Duncan McKellar and William Babcock.

The inaugural meeting of Lansdowne Municipality was held in Salisbury Church, a log building, on SW 31-15-14 Jan. 8, 1884. A by-law was passed stating that the Seal of the Municipality be a Yoke of Oxen, Man and Plow, with the words "Industry is Wealth" for the motto; the words "Municipality of Lansdowne 1884" around the edge; and that the Interim seal be the word "Industry" crossed by the word "wealth".

Council met again on two consecutive days, Jan. 25 and 26 at the Samuel McGorman residence (S 22-16-14) in Orange Ridge.

By-laws were passed to hire M. E. Boughton as returning officer and secretary-treasurer and John E. Hedderley as assessor.

It was nearly two decades the R.M. built its “permanent” quarters on Arden’s Main Street. It was the first building constructed by the Cement Block Co. The gravel excavated from the basement was used to make the blocks. It continues its service today.
Lansdowne Milestones

Public Services

Postal Services

Communities incorporate to provide a structure within which those public services, which are best provided by local governments can be tailored to suit the needs of the citizens.

One service already in place was the Postal Service, managed then, as it is now, by the Federal Government. Settlers in a new region, when population warranted, applied for a Post Office. These are often at first operated out of private residences or small rural general stores.

The first Post Office in what is now the R.M. of Lansdowne was granted to William Millar in 1879, who because of his location on the Carleton Trail, found it worthwhile to have his home serve as a stopping place. He later expanded that operation to include a general store.

Other Post Offices soon opened as settlers arrived; Mekiwin, to the south in 1880, and Orange Ridge to the north in 1883.

The Village of Arden was formed in 1884 and applied for a Post office in 1884 and the communities of Florenta, Glenholm, Keyes, Tenby, Purple Ridge, Berton, received service as they were settled.

Municipal Services

The first acts of Local Governments were generally to provide for an array additional services.

At an early meeting of the Lansdowne Council by-laws were passed to appoint roadmasters, fence-viewers, poundkeepers, and constables; establish statute labour; list the duties of poundkeepers and fence-viewers; set up laws regarding breaches animals, animals running at large and animals having diseases; regulate formation and readjustment of school districts; regulate the cutting of certain weeds harmful to agriculture; prevent and remove nuisances; prevent immorality.

They were busy indeed.

Telephone Services

Rural communities were eager to improve services in communication and transportation as technology supplied the means.

The telephone was one example. It was a service nearly everyone wanted but there was often dispute about how to provide it.

In 1903, by-law was drawn up respecting telephone lines, but in 1906, a Public vote to operate a Municipal owned Telephone System was not approved by ratepayers. Before long however services were established in Arden, and by 1912, lines were being installed in smaller centres such as installed in Berton.
Transportation

The Carleton Trail

Like many other parts of the great west, the area which was to become the Rural Municipality of Lansdowne, depended on the Old Trail for its communication. It was the main route by which settlers got from here to there, to bring in supplies and to transport produce.

From Fort Garry, the Trail followed a westward course to Portage la Prairie, and on to Westbourne (First Crossing). Veering to the west it passed close to Woodside (Second Crossing) and Gladstone (Palestine or Third Crossing). In doing so it crossed the White Mud River three times.

It reached the present boundary of Lansdowne just north of Keyes, on Sec. 1, Tp. 15, R. 13W. From here the course was west for four miles, then dipping southwest for a mile to the White Mud River; west again to Arden Ridge. From here it followed the course of the river northwest to a point just north of the village of Arden. From here it was again due west, leaving Lansdowne on 19-15-14. It crossed the present No. 5 Highway three miles north of Neepawa, west to Minnedosa (Tanner's Crossing), and on to Fort Ellice and the far west.

It was the era of the Red River cart, that two-wheeled conveyance made entirely of wood; not a nail, not a bit of iron in it. Propelled by ox or pony over rough trails, the screech from the grinding wheels of this contraption, like the wail of the banshee, could be heard for long distances. But it served the purpose, getting many people to their ultimate destinations, albeit somewhat slow.

Much has been written of the Old Trail. Even Lizzie McFadden, 14 years old, kept a diary on a trip which her family made from Fort Garry to Carleton in 1879, a trip lasting fifty-four days. Her observations on one day’s travel are of interest. "Saturday, July 12. Started at 5 o'clock in the morning and made 7 miles by 9 o'clock. Camped and fed the horses at High Bluff. Saw the Orangemen pass on their way to Portage la Prairie. Started again at 12 o'clock; had good roads, then we had to double over a mud hole; then had good roads all the way to Portage. Arrived there at 7 p.m. looks like rain. Mosquitoes nearly ate us up. As soon as we got there I went to buy some bread. It was four loaves for 25 cents."

With the completion of the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 and the building of branch lines in 1890, freighting over parts of the Old trail ceased, and general traffic degenerated into short distance hauling where the Trail happened to lead from new towns to the homes of ranchers and farmers. Municipal roads were built, fences erected, and traffic left the old trails for new roads. But even today, close to bluffs where cultivation has not destroyed the evidence, there are signs of ruts made by the wheels of those old carts as they rumbled westward.
The Railway

By 1900, Lansdowne well served by rail as two lines crossed the municipality east to west and one pushed northwards just outside the eastern boundary.

Roads

Horses were the major form of transportation for many years, and each side of Main Street was lined with hitching rails. The age of the horse was marked for extinction when the first automobile arrived in town, but in rural areas, especially in winter the dependable horse still had its role to play for some time.

While the car was fast, it took rural municipalities some time to develop and maintain a system of dependable roads. Until the World War II era, roads were often impassable in winter, and cars were often parked in favour of various horse-drawn vehicles for the coldest months. Even in summer the horse-drawn vehicle had the advantage of not requiring a graded road.

The horse-powered school van was common site well into the automobile era.
Lansdowne Milestones

Commercial Development

The HENDERSON'S DIRECTORY from 1894 provided this snapshot of the community of Arden, Lansdowne's major commercial centre:

Arden

Mails three times a week each way on every train; telegraph and express offices; has 2 grain warehouses; 135 bbl. roller flour mill. ... Pop. 150. Anderson, T. G., gen. store; Boughton, M. E., postmaster; Boughton, M. E. & Co., gen. store; Burlington, J. C., contractor; Clarke, W. T., grain buyer; Davidson, M.D.; Earngey, J., blacksmith; Jackson, Geo., butcher; Lamb, Robt, stone mason; McCamis, H. D., of M. E. Boughton & Co; McLean & Armstrong, blacksmiths; McRae, Duncan, livery; Manitoba & N. W. Ry. Co. of Can., J. W. Graham, Agent; Moore & McFarlane, millers; Renwick, Wm., hardware; Roe, J. W., cattle dealer; Snelgrove, Mrs. M., gen. store; Van Blaricom, B., implements; Wade, George, butcher.

The Northern Bank was the first financial institution to serve Arden. It is not certain how long this bank operated; but later, not long after the turn of the century, the old Union Bank, later to be absorbed by the Royal, also had a branch in Arden.

*From “The Lansdowne Story”*

It is quite evident that Arden was a prosperous trading centre with an enterprising group of business men. This was particularly the case for many years, in fact, until the coming of the motor car and the building of better roads. A hotel served the village for many years but was torn down.

Photos from the Archives of Manitoba
**Keyes General Store and Post Office**

The store was opened in 1896 by Galloway Bros, of Gladstone and later sold to Will Keyes. The Post Office was not incorporated with the store till after WWI. Many farmers and neighbours would gather around the big stove in the middle of the store for a friendly chit chat. Through the years many people owned or managed the store. Mr. Will Keyes died in 1905, and the store saw a succession of owners until it closed in the late 1960s.

**The Village of Tenby**

The General Store was one of the first business places in Tenby. Tenenbein and Donen were two of the first merchants. There were many more later on. The Blacksmith Shop was behind the store. It was owned and operated by Adam Ursel and sons and was a great asset to many farmers. The Post Office was a separate building, the first postmaster being James Griffiths. Later Karl Siegal was postmaster; he built caskets for many years.

John Hresavich operated "Star Printing". He had two or more printing presses and made posters and letter heads, etc. at their home.

The Joseph family had the livery barn and their home was also the rooming house for train passengers.

Jim Pratt was the radio repair man. He also sold radios (battery of course). He got his trade by a correspondence course taken at home.

The C.N.R. had a two room station — one baggage room and one passenger waiting room. There were also stockyards, a loading platform, a water tank, section foreman's home, a tool shed and a bunk house for men.

The U.G.G. was the first elevator, operating from 1915 to 1976. There was an agent's home. The school teacher usually boarded there. Cargill remodelled the elevator and opened for business in 1977.
Lansdowne Milestones

Manufacturing and Industry

Flour Mill

In the early 1890's, a flour mill was built in Arden which developed a large trade in flour, bran shorts and chopped feeds. It was run by Moore and McFarlane, Millers. People from all over the municipality brought their grain to be milled. The mill was completely destroyed by fire in July 1908.

Cheese Factory

Also in the 1890's, Lansdowne had a cheese factory located in the Orange Ridge district, equipped with modern machinery and capable of producing nine hundred pounds of cheese a day. The company went out of the cheese business and turned to butter making. Frank Harper was the cheese maker and Chester Walker turned out the butter. By 1905, the factory had ceased operations.

Lumber Mills

Two lumber mills operated in the Mekiwin district of the municipality at two different periods. William Bryce was the owner of the first one, which was built by James Milne on the river east of the J. R. Stewart place. Many difficulties were experienced in getting the machinery from Ontario where it had been purchased, only to have the mill carried away by a heavy run-off when the White Mud flooded within a year or so. Some time later, another mill was put into operation at Bjurlings and gave much-needed services to the settlers. It was operated for a time by Robert Hunter, one of the early pioneers of the Union district, east of Neepawa. There was still another mill on the Adam McKenzie land south of the Bjurlings in the hills. Duncan McLaren and his son John operated this one, having previously filed on homesteads in the area. In the north, residents made use of lumber mills in the Riding Mountains over the years.

Arden Gravel

The quality of the Arden Ridge gravel brought it into wide demand, both within and outside the province. It has been used for cement blocks in building, for highways and roads, for bridges, and for many other projects demanding first class gravel. The big bridge over the Saskatchewan River at Nipawin is an example of the widespread popularity of the Arden Ridge product. It is still being trucked away in large quantities to fill an ever-increasing demand.

In the early days the C.P.R. had pits along the west side of its right-of-way south of the village. This was serviced by a short spur. About 1910 another spur was built about two miles south of Arden. In about 1927, when the C.P.R. ran another spur north of Arden on the east side of the track. This spur crossed the Salisbury road and took gravel from a pit about a half mile long and handled by a drag line.

Adapted from “The Lansdowne Story”
Lansdowne Milestones

**Spiritual Life**

Like all pioneer communities in Western Canada, the settlers of the Lansdowne area, once they had provided food and shelter, set up places and worship.

First church service held in Arden, Methodist, was conducted in Mr. Boughton’s kitchen. Their first Arden church was built in 1889, and Churches were also built at Glenholm, Salisbury, Winchester and Orange Ridge.

In fact, the inaugural meeting of Lansdowne Municipality was held in Salisbury Church, a log building, on SW 31-15-14 Jan. 8, 1884.

The Arden Presbyterian Church was built in 1893. The Ladies Aid had been organized the year before and they bought the church pews, the pulpit and chairs, and the communion service. Members met at the various homes and raised money by Scotch socials and supper and tea meetings.

In 1901, the field in this charge was Arden, Oakdale and Ridgeview. Oakdale Church was to the southwest of Arden. Ridgeview services were held in the school. Another Presbyterian Church was built at Keyes in 1900, but the congregation had met at the school as early as 1883.

The first Anglican Services held in Arden took place in 1883.

Later they rented space in the Methodist church until their church was built in 1902. The Church of the Ascension opened with Rev. G.T. Spriggs as Rector and closed in 1976. The original bell has been placed in a monument commemorating the Church.

Another Anglican Church, St. Helen’s, was built near the Florence School.

The Mennonite church was built in 1942.

Although Church Union took place in Canada in 1925, it was in 1927 when the Methodists and Presbyterians united in Lansdowne.

*Adapted from “The Lansdowne Story”*
Lansdowne Milestones

Education

In 1879, the first school classes were held in the Rose Ridge area, east of present-day Arden, in the home of Thomas Dunning.

Schools in Lansdowne

Salisbury #127 (1882 – 1966)
Ayr #150 (1884 – 1962)
Arden #341 (1884 – 2001)
Florence # 203 (1884 – 1960)
Glenholm School #208 (1884 – 1968)
The Plains #340 (1889 – 1919)
Orange Ridge (Originally Brydges) #576 (1889 – 1968)
Twyford #663 (1892 – 1951)
Winchester #706 (1893 – 1967)
Oak Leaf 745 (1893 – 1968)
Ivanhoe # 764 (1893 – 1967)
Molesworth #765 (1895 – 1968)
Tenby #872 (1896 – 1968)
Ridgeview #883 (1896 – 1921)
Edington #933 (1898 – 1955)
Keyes #1068 (1900 – 1967)
Berton #1912 (1917 – 1967)
Sinclairville #2063 (1921 -1966)

In 1919 several school districts were dissolved or re-adjusted to suit the Consolidated School System.
Health Care

A Country Doctor

Dr. John Gahan was a native of Ireland, an honor graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and a graduate in medicine from the Manitoba Medical School. He came to Arden in 1894.

During his student days he taught school, spending one year in Glenholm. After graduation he settled in Arden where he practiced his profession for many years. His was the era of the "horse and buggy doctor" and the problem of getting around over a wide area was an arduous one, particularly in winter and when the creeks were in flood. Since antibiotics were not in general use, diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid presented difficult handicaps. In later years he often recalled his earlier problems, and spoke with satisfaction of the scientific advances which had been made in medicine.

He was a student of English literature and was well known for his translations of Latin, Greek and French. He often spoke fondly of his native Ireland, her lakes and dells, and her green hills.

A Pioneer Nurse

James McCreery, who married Margaret Hockin, lived in the Twyford district. During the disastrous influenza epidemic of 1918 and 1919, Mrs. McCreery and her daughter, Elizabeth, travelled for miles on snowshoes to nurse patients in dire need of help, regardless of danger or hardship to themselves. The doctors were overworked and couldn't begin to cope with the need for medical attention.

Many patients owed their lives to the McCreery mother and daughter. Mrs. McCreery was herself stricken with the flu but recovered.

As Lansdowne had no towns large enough to justify a hospital, the Municipality provided Health Care though the appointment of Health Officers and support of the nearby Neepawa Hospital, adapting a times changed.

Items from Minutes of the Lansdowne Council:

1902: Dr. Gahan appointed health officer of 1902. Each councillor was requested to hold one meeting in his ward to discuss the Neepawa Hospital.

1903: A grant of $1000 was to be paid over two years towards the construction of Neepawa Hospital.

1924: Council hired a permanent Health Officer with assistance from the Village of Arden and dispensed with the service of a nurse.

Adapted from “The Lansdowne Story”
Long before the advent of automobiles, radios, telephones, moving pictures, and television, those seeking entertainment had to depend on their own ingenuity. There was boating on the river in summer. Tennis was popular as well as baseball and soccer. Winter sports and entertainment included skating, hockey and curling on the river. The first skates were known as “spring” skates, which clamped over the edges of the soles of an ordinary pair of boots. Hockey sticks were fashioned out of saplings a couple of inches in diameter and with a convenient knob or curve at the root end.

In carrying on the roarin' game of curling the early settlers again had to resort to their imagination and ingenuity. They made their own, usually out of an oak block sawn to approximate the size of a curling rock. The handle would be a peg driven into the top of the rock, or a bent spike used in the same way.

The Arden Rinks

In 1919, Arden residences raised funds for a one-sheet curling rink, which was expanded to 2 sheets in 1927. In 1950, plans were made for a new 2-sheet curling rink with an outdoor skating facility. A more modern 3-sheet facility was completed in 1992.

Baseball

About 1903, the Shamrocks a baseball team based in the Salisbury area was dominant. Arden itself was reported to have a “high-class” ball club in 1908. Ladies baseball was popular, a good photo from the Lansdowne History show the Florence Ladies Ball Team from 1911. The Arden ladies had a successful team in the years around 1916.

The tradition of excellence in baseball continued through the decades with Arden’s High School team progressing through Division and Zone Championships to reach the Provincials in 1963.
Then, as now, dancing was a popular pastime, although the facilities were meager. Following a pre-arranged time and place, a group would gather at the home of one of their number. Come early and stay late, was the watchword. And here, to the music of a mouth-organ and a "fiddle," or, on rare occasions, to a small foot-and-hand-manipulated organ, they would dance the night away. Parents with young children brought them along too. They would be deposited in the bedroom where they would usually sleep the night away, oblivious to the hilarity being carried on close to them. Piles of good home-baked bread, cookies and pots of tea or coffee would be demolished. By daybreak, or close to it, the party would disperse, with much laughter and cries of "It's been a grand party! We'll see you all next month at Mary and John's." What a neighborly atmosphere.

A popular pastime was the box social, as a means of pure enjoyment as well as a money making scheme for some particular charity. There was usually a program of some sort, a whist drive or a local talent show. The evening would end with a lunch, provided by the ladies, each of whom was expected to bring a box filled with goodies. But a spirit of good-natured intrigue entered into it as well. The unmarried girls would, blushingly, let the particular boy friend have a very broad hint as to the identity of her lunch basket. And, of course, he would be expected to buy it. But, via the old-fashioned grape-vine, two or three other boys would also learn or suspect its identity; whereupon the bidding would become very brisk and many of the boxes would be sold for exorbitant prices. Which was all to the good as far as the promoters of the social were concerned. And Heaven help the devoted swain who failed to buy his girl friend's contribution. They must have had "dog-houses" even in those days!

Glenholm Choir – early 1900s.

Adapted from “The Lansdowne Story”
Lansdowne Milestones

Timeline


A timeline is a useful way to establish a community’s development, and a good way to note its highlights. All of this information can be used to develop the kind of content that is helpful in describing a community’s history through short, effective and accurate texts that will be appropriate for educational support materials, plaques, website content, and myriad other follow-up projects.

The dates and activities have been presented in a decade-by-decade format, which allows us to relive the past through the lens of the flow of time; but it is important to note that pivotal events can also be broadly grouped by major chronological periods in our history attached to primary activities of a given era.

1600 - 1699

About 10000 BC, the Arden Ridge was the highest beach of Glacial Lake Agassiz. It is known as the Campbell Beach and runs from near Morden to Swan River with the portion near Arden one of the most defined portions.

When the first settlers arrived in this area it was obvious to them that they were not the first inhabitants of this land. Native people often passed through and evidence of past inhabitants was more visible in those days, be it in the form of burial mounds or prairie trails.

1700 - 1799

The closest fur trade post serving the Argyle region was in near present day Portage where LaVerendrye built a Fort as early as 1738.

1800 - 1849

The Carleton or Fort Ellice Trail, the main highway of the fur trade, traverses Lansdowne. The village of Arden was later located right alongside the trail. Fort Carleton was built in 1810. Fort Ellice in 1832.

The first Red River Cart was built in 1802 by the North West Co. at Pembina. They were to be the main conveyance used on the Carleton Trail.
1850 - 1869

1858
• H.Y. Hind surveys the “Upper Whitemud Trail.”

1867
• A total of 112 Red River Carts travel the Carleton Trail to Edmonton.

1870 - 1879

Anticipating the great settlement boom of the 1880s a trickle of adventurous souls lead the way into this land in the 1870s. Before the incorporation of the R.M. of Lansdowne, the area is part of the County of Beautiful Plains.

1870
• Red Fife wheat introduced.

1871
• First surveys begin in the region.

1872
• Depot built on the current site of Arden – first used as a base for supplies for survey parties and later occupied by the North West Mounted Police. The log building sat where the Post Office is now located.

1874
• An invasion of grasshoppers leaves “not even a green willow” in the Gladstone region.

1876
• First shipment of Red Fife wheat from Western Canada. (857 ½ bushels)

1877
• William Millar and wife homestead in the Snake Creek (Salisbury) district. He built a log house and soon was operating a Post Office and small store known as the Halfway House.

1878
• Western Canada produces 1,100,000 bushels of wheat.
• Large groups of settlers come to the Mekiwin and Salisbury districts.

1879
• School classes held in the Rose Ridge area, east of Arden, in the home of Thomas Dunning.
Prior to the Municipal Boundaries Act the western part of the region had been in the Northwest Territories. Keyes (then called Midway) had been the northwest corner of Manitoba.

1880
- The first birth recorded in the R.M. of Lansdowne is George Birnie who was born in 1880 but not registered until 1885 after the R.M. was incorporated.
- Wire binders are in use in the region.

1881
- First meeting held to plan for a school in the Salisbury district. The first trustees were Hugh Harley, Adam McKenzie and M.E. Boughton.

1882
- C.P.R. branch line reaches Gladstone.

1883
- By-Law #20 grants the C.P.R. “exemption from taxes on their Road Bed, station buildings and station grounds, and on their land grant from the Government for the space of twenty years.”
- First Anglican Services held in Arden.
- Twine tie binders become available.
- Legislation provides that The Rural Municipality of Lansdowne shall comprise townships 15 to 21, both inclusive, ranges 13 and 14, and townships 13 and 14, range west.
- Municipal Building (Courthouse) built in Neepawa jointly owned by the Municipalities of Langford, Lansdowne, Rosedale and the Town of Neepawa.
- Post Office established at Mekiwin (then called McGregor) – in home of Miss C.E. St. Clair.
- Post Office established at Orange Ridge – in home of Eliel Winter.
- Salisbury School built by O.E. Reilly.
- First Ayr School built of logs. Local pioneer Hugh Gray was from Ayrshire, Scotland. The building is now located at the museum in Austin.

1884
- C.P.R. line extended to Arden area.
- R.M. of Lansdowne formed. Prior to this it was part of the County of Beautiful Plains.
- Motion from the first page of the R.M. of Lansdowne Minute Book:
  “1884 – That the seal of the Rural Municipality of Lansdowne be a yoke of oxen, man and plow, with the words, ‘Industry is Wealth.’”
- School District of Arden #341 formed. (First school not opened until 1887)
- Glenholm School District #208 formed. It operated until 1968.
- First church service held in Arden – Methodist. Conducted in Mr. Boughton’s kitchen.
- The wet fall prevented a good harvest.
- Post Office established at Florenta – in home of Alex McKenzie.
• Florence is the first school district formed by Lansdowne Council.
• Council passes a resolution to authorize the reeve and secretary-treasurer to sign a petition asking for a post office at Arden.
• Arden Post Office established that same year, on Dec. 1.
• In April the meeting, held at Ayr School House (S 15-14-13), authorizes the Reeve to communicate with the Government to ascertain the amount of a grant for construction of a bridge over the Whitemud River between Section 9 and 16-14-13 (First bridge by Lansdowne Council).

1885
• Dry years, 1885 through 1887.
• Western Canada produces 7.4 million bushels of wheat (See 1878).
• Renters or owners were ordered to cut down or destroy wild mustard, wild oats and Canada thistle that grew on their property.
• Rose Ridge School District #280 formed. It operated until 1919 when it was consolidated with Arden.

1886
• The location of the Arden School E ½ 13-15-14, is decided upon.

1887
• First school in Arden opens. The teacher, Hugh Donald McCamis, became a noted businessman in Arden; the McCamis name appeared on its storefront for generations.
• Arden Methodist circuit includes Salisbury, Glenholm and Winchester.
• M. E. Boughton and thirty-five others petition for a cemetery at Arden.
• Mekiwin Methodists begin services in the Ayr School – every second Sunday.

1888
• The Beautiful Plains Ridge Road is officially established on Oct. 13, 1888.
• Arden Cemetery is established as a public cemetery by a By-law of Council on March 14th, 1888.

1889
• Near complete crop failure.
• Lots are purchased for Arden Methodist Church. The building opens on June 12.
• Council deals with a petition led by Robert Riddle regarding the issue of debentures for $4000 and a twenty year tax exemption to aid in the erection of a flour mill.
• Council refers to the Carleton Trail, in a motion to: “keep the trail open from (across Lansdowne)”. Provincial Public Works recommends closing the trail but it did remain open for some time.
• The completion of the Grassy River Drain in Twp 18 is requested.
• Council requests that the dam on the Whitemud River at Westbourne be removed as it hindered the migration of fish to their spawning grounds and deprived settlers of valuable food supply.
• A Post Office is established at Glenholm at Marshall Scott’s.
• Plains School District #340 formed from part of Salisbury District. It operated until 1919.
• Brydges School District #576 was formed in part of the Orange Ridge region and re-named Orange Ridge in 1929. It closed in 1968.
1890-1899

A decade of building. Many schools, churches, businesses are established as settlers get established. The first substantial brick houses are built.

1890
- Flour Mill built.

1891
- Glenholm Church opens – served until 1960.
- Council requests the Railway Co. to put a crossing in at the foot of the Beautiful Plain Ridge Road immediately.
- George Jackson opens Arden’s first butcher shop.

1892
- Twyford District #662 formed. It operated until 1951.
- Winchester District #706 formed. It operated until 1967.

1893
- St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church built and opened on October 22.
- The reeve and three councillors are appointed to report on ridges in Twp 17 and 18 with the view to their expropriation for roads.
- Keyes Post Office (then called Midway) opens at Henry R. Keyes.
- Oakleaf District #745 formed. It operated until 1968.
- Ivanhoe District #764 formed from part of Florence and Glenholm.
- Winchester School built.

1894
- Population of Arden is about 150.

1895
- First Molesworth School built – a log building on NW 18-17-13. SD #765.

1896
- A report in The Colonist, dated 1896, gives a very glowing account of the “Beautiful Plains” country, referring to it as “One of the most productive regions in the whole of Western Canada,” and claiming fifteen successive years of good crops.
- The Colonist reports that “A cheese factory is now in operation at Orange Ridge. It is fully equipped with modern machinery and is capable of producing 900 pounds of cheese a day.” The site was NE 32-17-14 on the farm of David Wilson who homesteaded there in 1888. Members of the company included: David Wilson, Billie George, Billie Cottam, Thomas Bailey, Sam Alexander, Billie Gilroy and Frank Donaldson.
- Southwood Methodist congregation formed. Southwood Church later built on NE 14-14-14.
- Galloway Bros. of Gladstone opens a store in Keyes. The store served until the 1960s.
- Tenby Post Office opens at James Griffith’s residence.
- Post Office established at Purple Ridge in the James Scott home.
- Tenby School District formed on 7 April 1896, named for a town in Wales. The first school was located at SE13-18-13 west of the Principal Meridian, in the village of Tenby in the Rural Municipality of Lansdowne. It was known as a Union School because taxpayers from more than one municipality paid for it.
- Ridgeview School District #883 formed. It operated until about 1917.

- A $2.00 per head was levied for the destruction of wolves.
- The first Vestry Meeting of the Church of England, District of Arden, was held on May in the Presbyterian Church.
1897
- The Reeve and Secretary-Treasurer are appointed to prepare an address of congratulations to Her Majesty on completion of sixty years on the Throne of the Empire and it was to be forwarded through the Lieutenant-Governor.
- The Independent Order of Foresters Arden View No. 3732 instituted at Arden in December.

1898
- Construction of the Canadian Northern line from Gladstone to Dauphin creates the villages of Plumas, Tenby and Glenella.
- A resolution is passed supporting producer grain cars so elevator companies would not hold a monopoly.
- Orange Ridge Methodist Church built. (Moved to Birnie about 1909)

1899
- Council grants Tom J. Lokier a compensation of $167.50 for four horses shot for glanders.
- The Reeve and Secretary-Treasurer are appointed to report on the diphtheria outbreak. Since it was practically impossible to disinfect a house the Reeve was to make arrangements with the resident to have the house burnt down.
1900 – 1909

The communities in Lansdowne reached what is termed the consolidation era (following the pioneer and establishment eras). Services are established, village layouts are established, and transportation lines are in place. The initial spurts of growth have settled. Hastily erected frame buildings are replaced with more substantial houses and stores. Recreational and cultural options are explored.

1900
- New two-room school built in Arden.
- A store and stopping place on the trail to Dauphin, operated by Edwin Ramsey on SE 19-17-14, closed in the early 1900s.
- Keyes Union School District #1068 (Midway) formed. It operated until 1967.
- Mekiwin Church built.

1901
- The C.N.R. completes the Hallboro-Muir line giving service to Berton, a small village on NE 25-13-13. (Later renamed Helston)
- A cyclone destroys the home of John Muirhead in the Berton region. Con Bennett is killed in the storm.

1902
- Council establishes the Arden Nuisance Ground. A surveyor is hired to survey the Arden-Edrans Ridge Road.
- Dr. Gahan appointed health officer of 1902.
- Peter Broadfoot of Gladstone builds an elevator in Berton.
- The Church of the Ascension built. It closed in 1976.

1903
- A by-law is drawn up respecting telephone lines.

1904
- Methodist parsonage built. Later home of the United Church minister.
- Council approves the erection of a Warren Steel Truss Bridge on the boundary line, east of Sec 13-18-13, provided a government grant of $1000 is received and Mr. Ferguson gives the necessary land.
- Arden Cement Block and Building Co. established and Harmon S. Palmer cement block machine ordered. (The cement block machine was last used in 1959 by local carpenter Frank Stangmaier.)
- The Lansdowne Municipal Building is first building constructed by the Cement Block Co. The gravel excavated from the basement is used to make the blocks.
- On May 19 a petition is submitted for re-adjustments of Tenby and Goodlands School Districts and forming of one new district.
- A new Tenby School is built of concrete blocks. The school closed in 1967 and the district was dissolved in 1968. The building is a municipally designated historic site.
- The Plumas – Lansdowne Agricultural Society formed.

1905
- Orange Ridge cheese factory ceases operations.
- Council is to undertake and erect a five ton weigh scales at a suitable place in the Village of Arden.
- On Aug. 31, the total eclipse of the sun is witnessed about 5:30 a.m. by area residents.
- A grant of $1000 is to be paid over two years towards the construction of Neepawa Hospital.
- Second Elevator (the Western Canada) built in Berton.
- Mr. Christalaw builds Berton’s first store.
- The Salisbury Shamrock Ball Team has a very successful season.
1906
- A grant is given to Edrans Cemetery of $25.
- Public vote to operate a Municipal owned Telephone System is not approved by ratepayers.
- W. L. McNair, Reeve of Lansdowne, appointed to the Royal Commission on the Grain Trade, to represent Manitoba.

1907
- Presbyterian Women’s Missionary Society formed.
- Post Office established in Keyes, at the J.A. Christlaw residence.

1908
- Fire destroys the Arden Flour Mill
- J. Foster Sr. receives a patent on a machine for tightening and stretching wire fences.
- Second Ayr School built.
- A bylaw stipulates that: “No persons shall bathe or wash in any public waters within the village of Arden unless clad in a suitable costume.”

1909
- An Act to amend the Municipal Boundaries Act. (assented to March 10th, 1909, provides that Lansdowne shall be: townships numbered thirteen and fourteen in range numbered thirteen west and townships numbered fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen and the south halves of townships numbered nineteen, in ranges numbered thirteen and fourteen west.”
- Additional school building built in Arden.
- Berton Hall (later Halston) built for community use by Charles Dobson using his own funds.
- Messrs Shackleford and Richardson open up a General Store in Berton Village on March 1st.

- A public meeting held in Keyes School March 20th to discuss the advisability of having a telephone central at Keyes.
- Pembroke School, which closed at Christmas for the winter, had its promotion at the end of the year.
The R.M. of Lansdowne, like all Manitoba communities, was profoundly affected by World War I, and like all Manitoba communities is proud of its efforts on behalf of “King & Country.”

1910

- Application to be made to the C.N.R. for a plan of the Village of Tenby and to ask that immediate provision be made for roads to the east and north leading to the village.
- Municipal bank accounts were transferred to the Northern Crown Bank at Arden.
- The Independent Order of Odd fellows was instituted at Arden.
- Methodist Church (frame) built near Salisbury School.
- Central Church built.

1911

- Council approved a petition to the C.N.R. for a daylight service from Neepawa to McCreary and the Reeve attends on the approved deputation.

1912

- Economic downturn in Manitoba – affects much local industry in smaller communities.
- Telephone lines installed in Berton.
- Mr. John Duff of Mekiwin publishes his latest song success, "Little Laughing Girlie, Meg".

1914

- Secretary-Treasurer reports on the prosecution of a resident for neglecting to properly register the birth of a child. Since the owner of 35-17-13 was on active service in defence of our country his taxes were accounted as paid, and was to be continued until the end of such service. $50 a month was to be paid to the Patriotic Fund and $100 to the Belgian Fund.

1915

- Average yield of 25 bushels per acre on the prairies. 300 million bushels produced.

1917

- A “Herd Law” stipulates that cattle can no longer roam unrestricted.
- A by-law was passed to close up part of the Fort Ellice Trail between Portage la Prairie and Fort Ellice at Keyes (1-15-13) and transfer it to the C.P.R. and provide a road.
- Second Molesworth School built.

1918

- On Oct. 17, an ad the the Gladstone Age Press advised that: “Order of Provincial Health Officer. SPANISH INFLUENZA declared to be EPIDEMIC. All schools, theatres, churches, pool rooms and other places where the public gather, shall be closed and remain closed until further notice. That all stores close at 6 PM on Saturday. That all gatherings at stores, on street corners and other places be prohibited. Effective from midnight, the 16th day of Oct. 1918”

1919

- General depression following the war. Low grain prices.
- Miss A. Dick granted a licence to operate the Lansdowne Hotel in Arden.
- Council authorizes the leasing of part of Block "Y" Plan 285 to John Foreman and others to build a skating rink.
• During 1919 several school districts are dissolved or re-adjusted to suit the Consolidated School System. Arden Consolidated School - includes pupils from Ayr, Twyford, Union, Salisbury and Winchester as part of the plan.
• On Sept. 18, Keyes experiences was a short visit from HRH the Prince of Wales, whose train had to make a ten minute stop there, which was utilized by the Prince to get down and mingle with the crowd briefly.
Throughout the prairies communities erected various memorials commemorating the sacrifice and service of those who participated in the “Great War.” On farms and in businesses trucks were replacing horses for everyday tasks. Commercial travelers now use cars making them more flexibly mobile. This trend eventually led to the decline in demand for hotel rooms and of course a decline in rail passenger traffic. Many communities reached the peak of business expansion in the pre-war years. We see stores changing hands, closing - the same decline is seen in housing, again communities had expanded to the natural capacity. The adoption of a car-based transportation economy saw the expansion of car-based service – gas stations, auto repair shops. In recreation, tennis and cricket declined. Hockey continued to grow, as did curling. Radio helps connect remote households to the rest of the world.

1920
- Lansdowne boundaries amended – to their present form.
- New primary school building erected – to accommodate additional students resulting from the school consolidation.

1921
- A by-law is passed to establish a fire hall.
- Robert Milne of Mekiwin is nominated to the candidature for the National Progressives. He is elected by a 4,800 vote majority in the federal election.

1922
- Tenders are called by D. Paterson, Sec., Berton, for the erection of a one-roomed school on SE 4-14-12.
- The General Store of the Berton Trading Co. burned to the ground in November. Owners Mr. and Mrs. Green, who lived in the rear end of the store, lost complete contents of store and house.

1923
- Council is to apply to the Good Roads Board for assistance in repairing bridges due to serious spring flooding and run-off. Seven major bridges were seriously affected.
- New Railway Station built in Arden.
- The village of Berton is re-named Helston as the name Berton was also in use in Alberta.

1924
- Council hired a permanent Health Officer with assistance from the Village of Arden and dispensed with the service of a nurse.
- The Council took over title to the Arden skating and curling rink.
- Council along with Langford & Rosedale expressed their disapproval of the opening of beer depots in Neepawa.
- Letter postage rates were reduced to 2 cents.
- E.G. Hipwell, Arden storekeeper, founded an industry that produced fruit flavored syrups. Taken over by his son, Justin, it later became Hip’s Fruit Flavored Syrups and its products are marketed across Canada.

1925
- Dominion Rust laboratory set up in an effort to isolate rust-resistant varieties of wheat.
- The Patriotic Society was granted $700.00 towards the war memorial.
1926
- Council took title to the sports grounds, east of Arden and put it under management of the Arden Village district.
- George Stockdale was entrusted with the building of the office vault for $500.00 to $600.00.
- The War Memorial was unveiled on August 22.

1927
- Congregations of St Andrew’s Presbyterian and Methodist unite. Services held in St. Andrews. The minister lived in the Methodist parsonage.
- Mekiwin Cemetery established.
- A crow’s eggs bounty is set at one cent per egg and one cent for each leg. Any teacher could issue certificates for the same.
- The official opening of the new hall at Keyes held in November.

1928
- The stained glass War Memorial window is unveiled and dedicated at Keyes Anglican Church in June.