

# Landmarks

## Baldur-Argyle Significant Heritage Buildings

**T**he Baldur-Argyle Special Places project was inaugurated in 2011-12, with the first major component being a comprehensive and detailed inventory of 96 buildings and sites. Through rigorous analysis and assessment processes suggested to us by the province's Historic Resources Branch, we have identified a handful of buildings that most effectively define and illustrate key aspects of our history and heritage. The following list of 17 buildings and sites constitutes the Baldur-Argyle Heritage Group's recommendations and reminders to the community about those places that have major claims for heritage significance.

### **Baldur Buildings/Sites**

- St. Mark's Anglican Church
- Baldur United Church
- Immanuel Lutheran Church
- Fowler Block
- Thomas Poole Building
- Fowler House

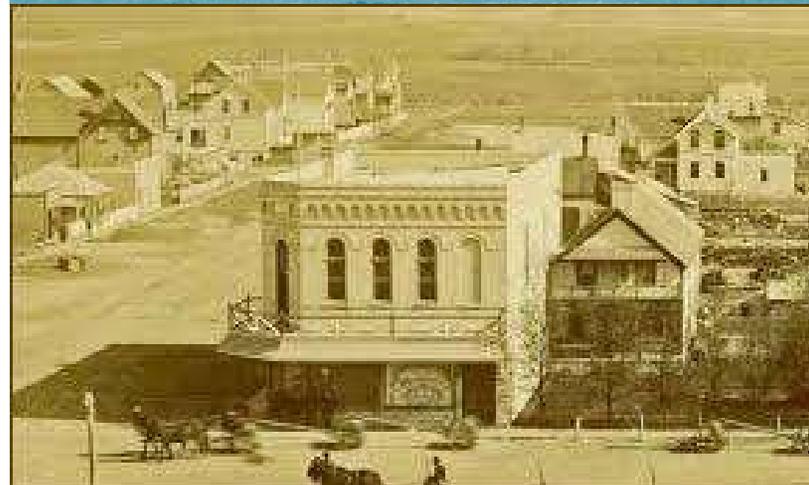
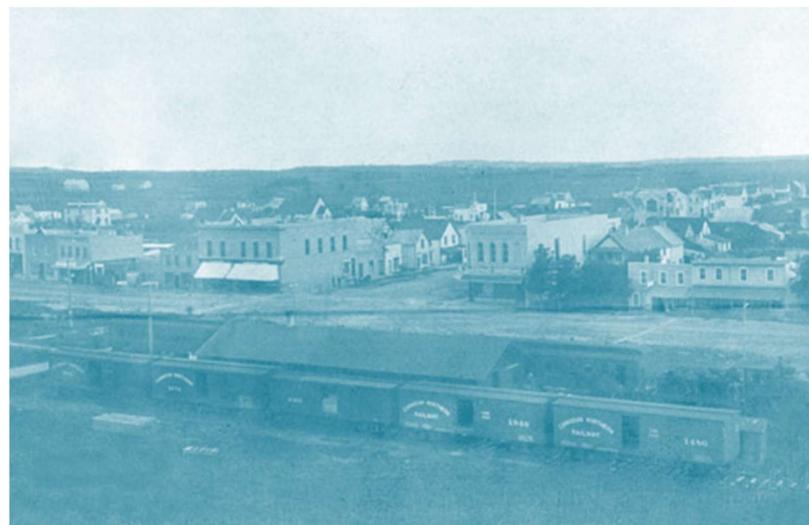
### **Argyle Buildings/Sites**

- Grund Lutheran Church
- St. George's Anglican Church
- Marringhurst School
- Avery's Resort Hotel
- Craik's Store
- Marringhurst Heritage House
- Helgason Farm House
- McWilliams House
- Jewsbury Barn
- Hamilton Farm Elevator
- McLaren Stone Outhouse

As a collection, these 17 buildings define many aspects and themes from Baldur-Argyle's past, and do so through places that are at once significant, but also interesting and attractive. These are places that the people of the municipalities can look to with pride. These places remind us of past glories, but also suggest an enduring sense of community, and are a beacon for its future.

As noted, the development of this short list of significant sites was the result of careful and studied deliberations using standard heritage evaluation criteria, processes and scoring regimes. This work was carried out by the Baldur-Argyle Heritage Group with assistance from staff of the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection. We are grateful to the branch for their generous support and patient attention in this particular endeavour.

These buildings are presented on following pages with an accompanying Heritage Value Statement that elucidates each building's key heritage attributes.



Archival views of Baldur,  
ca. 1900.

# St. Mark's Anglican Church, Baldur

Oak Creek Rd N



St. Mark's Anglican Church is the primary cultural touchstone for one of the Baldur's pioneer groups – Anglo-Ontario Protestants following the Church of England faith. Built in 1898, this simple, modest church building recalls the determination of so many of Manitoba's pioneer groups to put up a solid building in which to express their spirituality. St. Mark's is typical of this pioneer effort, with its simple box-like form, basic gable roof and modest Gothic Revival features like pointed door and windows. The use of brick—more expensive and durable than wood—and the addition of a complex chancel area at the back, suggest just how important this building was to its pioneer congregation.

# Baldur United Church, Baldur

202 Second Street



Baldur United Church is a reserved yet elegant example of a substantial Protestant facility erected in the early 1900s in a growing agricultural service centre in southwestern Manitoba. The structure's graceful Gothic Revival exterior incorporates a corner tower and a creative mix of window shapes and sizes. Within is a spacious and finely appointed nave with an adjacent Sunday School wing characteristic of the Akron plan, an American Methodist form of church layout that was occasionally used in Manitoba. The building replaced Bethel Methodist, a small rural church established in 1884 and moved to Baldur in ca. 1890. It became part of the United Church upon the 1925 union of three Protestant denominations in Canada.

# Immanuel Lutheran Church, Baldur

Oak Creek Rd. N



Immanuel Lutheran Church is the main cultural touchstone for one of the Baldur's pioneer groups – Icelandic Lutherans. Built in 1907, under the direction of head carpenter Arni Sveinson, the church is an excellent example of its type. With its basic form, tall overall proportions and lovely pointed Gothic Revival windows, the building is one of the community's finest buildings. But it is the tower that transforms the church into a major landmark and a building worth paying close attention to. That tall, dignified form, gleaming white and with especially fine detailed woodwork at the bell stage, is a reminder of the skills of early builders in this area, and of how beautiful a building can be.

# Fowler Block, Baldur

225 Elizabeth Avenue



The Fowler Block (1899) is a substantial two-part commercial building with long-standing connections to a pioneer Baldur family. Alex Fowler, businessman and postmaster, chose to express his early confidence in Baldur's future as an agricultural service centre by building this moderately large-scale business/residential block, a fine example of the kind of commercial properties that sprang up in newly created communities across the Prairies at the turn of the twentieth century. The facility, which remained in the Fowler family until 1978, continues to be a prominent presence in Baldur's business district because of its size, attractive brick facade, role in maintaining the historical integrity of the intersection it is on, and association over the years with occupants such as Fowler's saddlery business, the post office and a continuous succession of grocery retailers.

# Thomas Poole Building, Baldur

Elizabeth Avenue



The Thomas Poole Building is a good example of a well-crafted small-town business block that retains much of its exterior main-street character. Built in 1910 to house the well-established hardware business of pioneer merchant Thomas E. Poole, in a community that was also well-established, the structure demonstrates both functionality and permanence. The hardware business continued through three owners and 70 years before giving way to other ventures reflecting Baldur's needs. The building itself, with its fine brick detail at the roofline, continues to be a distinctive part of its rural village streetscape.

# Fowler House, Baldur

111 Elizabeth Avenue



The stately Fowler House (1897), with its eclectic Victorian architecture, is one of the oldest and most distinctive structures recalling Baldur's early history. Built for William Oliver Fowler, influential business leader, property owner and postmaster, the house has remained in Fowler family hands for more than a century. From its position on the village's main thoroughfare, the substantial brick-clad residence anchors the western end of a commercial avenue containing two other designated heritage buildings, one of which, the Fowler Block, was owned by William's son Alex.

## Grund Lutheran Church, Grund area

NW 12-6-14



Frelsis (Liberty) Lutheran Church, built in 1889, only eight years after the pioneer settlement of Grund community, is the oldest Icelandic Lutheran Church in Canada standing in its original form. Designed in the Gothic Revival style, one of the prevailing architectural expressions of the period, the building with its graceful entrance, slender belfry and pointed arches, also is representative of late nineteenth-century church architecture in rural Manitoba. The sturdy wood-frame structure, built in a spirit of optimism and thanksgiving by volunteers directed by skilled carpenters Byring Hallgrimsson and Arni Sveinsson, served the Frelsis congregation for 75 years. The church and its quiet site remain a focal point of the community and major heritage landmark in Manitoba.

# St. George's Anglican Church, Glenora

Main Street, Glenora



St. George's Anglican Church (1889), modest in materials and form but enhanced by artfully designed multi-paned windows and prominent labels, is a fine example of an early Anglican church in a rural setting. From its roadside location in a quiet village, the unassuming Gothic Revival-style structure, built by George Stewart, recalls the evolution of prairie communities. Erected in the Marringhurst district, one of the earliest settlements in southwestern Manitoba, the building was moved in 1926 to nearby Glenora when population patterns shifted under the influence of railway routes. Closed as a church in 1968, the structure stands ready for occasional community use.

# Marringhurst School, Marringhurst area

NW 30-3-12W



Marringhurst School is the best remaining example in the Baldur-Argyle area recalling the scores of one-room schools that dotted the local landscape through the late 19th and early 20th centuries; not to say of the approximately 1,000 such buildings that once provided educational opportunity for so many children in rural situations, but which now number less than 50 remaining buildings. Built in 1892, and thus one of the oldest remaining one-room schools in the province, the school is a modest, simple and near-perfect example of its type. Especially striking is the tell-tale row of large windows on the east side of the school. Now used as a museum, the school still has fine, well-maintained features and details within.

# Avery's Resort Hotel, Greenway area

Rock Lake



Avery's Resort Hotel is a very rare surviving Manitoba example of a resort facility, very few of which were ever built, and fewer still which survive. Constructed in 1929 by Joe Avery, the building resembles a large house, with typical architectural features of the period, like a low hipped roof and basic rectangular windows. The picturesque setting of the building, facing onto Rock Lake, and also set well above the lakeshore, make the site a notable and attractive one. The building originally had its own generator and a gravity-controlled water system. A lovely stepped path still leads down to docks on the lake's edge. The site was taken over in 1980 by the Christian Enrichment Family Camp, which has maintained the building and site.

# Craik's Store, Greenway

Greenway



Craik's Store is a rare surviving example of the kind of commercial establishment that provided many small Manitoba communities with basic goods. Built in 1909 by William Craik, and operated until 1975 by Mr. Craik's son Ira, the building has a distinct form. It is clearly a house, with a familiar gable-fronted façade, but the large main floor windows, and centrally-located door, suggest additional functions on the main floor – as a retail outlet. The novel second-floor verandah, which opens into the residence, gives the building a memorable architectural character.

## Marringhurst Heritage House, Marringhurst area

NW 20-3-12W



The stately Marringhurst Heritage House (1910), an elaborately appointed, four-square, red brick dwelling, was built by one of the founders of the Marringhurst community, Richard Wilson, who arrived from Ontario in 1879. In addition to establishing a thriving farm, Wilson was an active local politician and a force behind the creation of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association. As was the pattern throughout the Prairies, success meant that the modest first home gave way to the more impressive and permanent second home. Wilson's highly visible farmhouse, a well-preserved landmark that once served as the social centre of the community, stands today as a testament to his accomplishments.

# Helgason Farm House, Baldur area

SW 14-6-14W



The Helgason Farm House is a very good local example of a common Manitoba farm house type – the four-square, in this case boasting an uncommon attribute: walls of fieldstone. The typical four-square house was distinguished by a basic box-like two-storey form and often a pyramidal roof, just as seen on the Helgason Farm House. Constructed in 1906 for Jonas Helgason, and built by Baering Hallgrimson and Bob Thyne, the house is a landmark in the area. The massive stone walls are in fact double walled, and the house also features numerous other fine features and details, like stained glass, original window surrounds and a front dormer with fine scrolled woodwork.

## McWilliams House, Dry River area

SW 19-3-12W



The McWilliams House is a very good surviving example of the type of large, handsome dwelling that many southern Ontario immigrants eventually were able to build on their mature Manitoba farmsteads. This kind of house was the apex of their ambitions, and with its typical L-shaped plan, steep gable roofs and little dormer gable over one of the second-storey windows, this is nearly a textbook example of the type. The house is also a fine testament to the masonry skills of its builder, with fine work in the courses and the segmental arches over all openings. Four generations of Alex McWilliams family have lived in the brick house since he had it built in 1902.

# Jewsbury Barn, Baldur area

SW 21-6-14W



The Jewsbury Barn, built from 1904 to 1906 by Frank Endors Jewsbury, is a near-perfect local example of the traditions of southern Ontario barn building that were transferred to the Manitoba landscape in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The thick fieldstone walls and vertical board-and-batten siding are hallmarks of that tradition. And within, the massive post and beam wooden construction of the loft is a marvel of the builders' skills, which in this case, as in so many others of its type, would have involved many neighbours in a barn-raising bee.

# Hamilton Farm Elevator, Baldur area

SE 17-6-14W



The impressive farm elevator on the Hamilton Farm, was built in 1904 in the Grund area, and is thought to have been the work of Alex Card. Once fairly common on well-to-do Manitoba farmsites, farm elevators are now uncommon, and certainly one of cut stone, and in good condition, is a rarity indeed. The building still clearly expresses its simple and elemental function – massive stone walls, without windows, contain the grain within, a small wooden section atop the main elevator roof holds the elevator's leg mechanisms, and the sturdy double doors (with a segmental arch) provide access into the central aisle dividing the building into its two main sections.

## McLaren Stone Outhouse, Baldur area

NE 2-4-14W



There's not much left of the old Archie McLaren farmsite, which was established in the Neelin area in 1882. But there is one truly remarkable surviving building that not only recalls that site, but also recalls an essential aspect of Manitoba farm life in the late 1800s and early decades of the 1900s: the old outhouse. Also commonly called a privy, or biffy, or the necessary, the McLaren outhouse is not just an extremely rare surviving example of its type, it is also perhaps unique for what was usually a modest and hastily-built structure – for Archie McLaren built his outhouse of stone! Still structurally sound (and useable), the little building is a near-perfect example of the type, with its small upright form, narrow door and simple gable roof. The fact that the walls are made of local fieldstone, and that the little building still stands straight, is a testament to Mr. McLaren's skill, pride, and perhaps a keen sense of humour.