

Manitoba Heritage SUCCESS STORIES

Reid
Dickie

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front cover: A young visitor enjoys one of Manitoba's heritage successes, the Prairie Dog Central Railway. Photo courtesy of Travel Manitoba.

opposite: A sunny day on the Prairie Dog Central. Photo courtesy of Travel Manitoba.

back cover: The Negrych bunkhouse with its rare long shingle Carpathian roof. Photo courtesy of the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch.



Manitoba Heritage Success Stories

Twenty Stories by Reid Dickie

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From the Publisher

This book of celebration is for you. Community Heritage Manitoba and our partners for this project - the Historic Places Initiative and the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch - are bearing witness, through this book, to the people and communities who hold heritage dear. We have seen ordinary people become heritage champions, many of whom are featured in this book. They show us not only the critical need to preserve their past, but also the benefits a culture of conservation and celebration can bring to the entire community in areas such as economic development and quality of life.

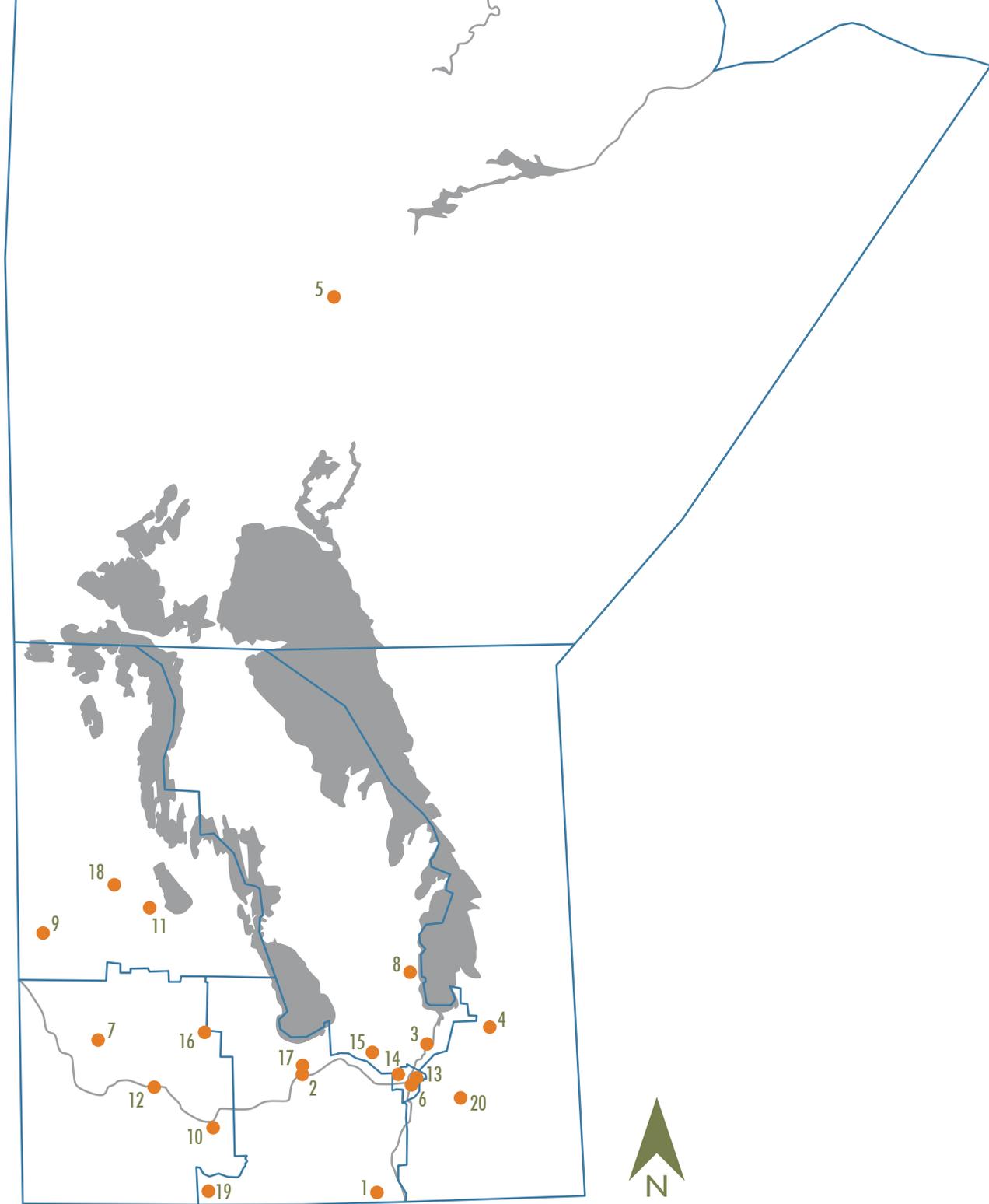
When we talk to heritage champions, we find that sometimes they feel they are alone in the wilderness. We have also talked to people who want to preserve their heritage but don't know where to start. It is our hope that this book offers something to address both of these conditions – insight into exciting things going on in other communities and practical advice on how to get started and how to succeed.

Read it. See it. Feel it. Walk it. If this book supports, motivates or empowers you in your community's contribution to Manitoba's heritage, then our goal of publication is accomplished.

The Editorial Board
Community Heritage Manitoba

www.communityheritagemanitoba.ca





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Note to the Reader

Community Heritage Manitoba wants to share some of the province's many heritage success stories. To that end, I have researched and written twenty stories covering a wide range of local heritage initiatives from every region of the province. The stories demonstrate the ingenuity and perseverance of passionate people as they solve problems and harness resources to complete their heritage projects.

The stories show the unifying effect that heritage projects have, bringing communities together, creating a sense of accomplishment and fellowship. This community pride inspires and motivates volunteers and organizers, giving hope to the discouraged, renewal to the burnt-out and proof to everyone that it's all worth it.

Heritage projects happen by forming partnerships. Every story names the organizations, community groups and government departments that provided funding and expertise.

Each story ends with three pieces of advice that my principal contact would give someone doing a heritage project. It is advice from those directly involved and based on all they learned. There are over sixty wise suggestions from people who have had recent, hands-on heritage experience. Even if their project is different from yours, the advice is still valuable.

The book joins diverse communities with different histories into a culture of heritage that share one characteristic: passion. It is the thread that binds these stories together. Passion is the seed. Without passion, there is no foundation, nothing to inspire you in the project's darkest moments. Passion will pull you through.

Everyone who contributed stories had the passion. It was obvious face-to-face, over the telephone and in their emails. Passion sparkled in their eyes, brought joy to their voices and infused their words. Equally evident was their willingness to share their passion, as you will see in every story. This combination of leadership, creativity and enthusiasm manifests in vastly differing ways but always has the same result: a unique heritage success.

So share in the challenges faced by other Manitobans as they pursue their proud heritage dreams, learn how they solved problems and enjoy with them the satisfactions gained from their successes.

Reid Dickie
February 2006

Balancing Tradition and Change

Neubergthal Housebarn and Russian Bake Heater Restoration Neubergthal, RM of Rhineland

Restoration of a 1901 Mennonite housebarn produces a new sense of pride and accomplishment among descendents of the original settlers.

Neubergthal is one of the best-preserved single street Mennonite villages in North America. Much



of its original flavour is still evident with narrow farmyards and eight intact housebarns meticulously aligned along one street. The housebarn demonstrates characteristic Mennonite architecture and layout with the house and barn connected. In 1989, Parks Canada's Historic Sites and Monuments Board declared Neubergthal a National Historic Site because of its "unique sense of place."

When Neubergthal hosted its homecoming in 2000, their Heritage Foundation, a group of residents interested in preservation, decided to restore an empty housebarn for use as an interpretive centre. Though uninhabited for a number of years, the building remained largely intact.

After securing a lease from the landowners and receiving a private donation of \$10,000, restoration began. In 2004, the housebarn's foundation was stabilized and the roof, interior and exterior restored.

The building contained the remnants of a rare Russian bake heater, once a feature of most Mennonite housebarns. Because of its uniqueness and the substantial impact it had on the way traditional Mennonite families lived, the Foundation decided a functional bake heater should be built, requiring extensive research on its construction and substantial expense. The bake heater was completed in late 2005. Future restoration will focus on the barn portion with completion anticipated in 2007.

This long-term project will require about \$150,000 to complete. So far, 65% has been raised through grants from Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism, RM of Rhineland, Thomas Sill Foundation



opposite community youth show off their cookies fresh from the Russian bake heater

left a young visitor samples a traditional oven-baked cookie

below a winter day at the housebarn interpretive centre

and Manitoba Prairie Icons Program, Kathleen Richardson Foundation, Altona Foundation, Friesens Corporation, Loewen Manufacturing, Delbert Plett Foundation, Red River Insurance and private donations.

Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism advised on grant proposal writing, Parks Canada conducted a Restoration Workshop and the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach provided background information. Various independent advisors were consulted about constructing the Russian bake heater.

Sustainability depends on donations and grants to complete the project. Summer staff funding helps. The objective is for tours and special events to sustain the site in the future.





left Neubergthal resident with an array of oven-baked goods
below the Russian bake heater is both an oven and a room heater

“Make sure you have a strong committee. We have nine active members. Delegate responsibility.

“Build relationships with the people of the community. Listen to them, know why you are doing the project and, at times, consider compromise.”

There was some anxiety in the community about how all this recognition would influence the essence and identity of the charming, peaceful village. However, a growing sense of pride among current and past villagers has been the main result, especially evident when descendants rediscover the value of their forbearers’ stories and their achievements in a hard, new land.

“As the community saw the project was going forward on faith, people and organizations became less skeptical and more enthusiastic. We had to prove ourselves,” states Margruite Krahn, chairperson of the Neubergthal Heritage Foundation.

Margruite offers this helpful advice, “Focus on your supporters and also on the people who are indifferent. When a project becomes successful, the indifferent people become your supporters and the skeptics become indifferent.



From a Hurting Place to a Healing Place

Indian Residential School Museum of Canada Long Plain First Nation 6B

A grim chapter in Canadian history, almost 100 Indian Residential Schools operated in Canada from 1879 until 1996. Fittingly, the former Portage La Prairie Indian School will house a national museum that traces the creation and history of the schools and their impact on aboriginal culture.

Located on Long Plain First Nation land adjacent to the City of Portage la Prairie and now known as the Rufus Prince Building, the three-storey sandstone school, built in 1911, was operated by the Methodist and United Churches until 1971.

The concept for the museum started in 1999, championed by Long Plain Chief Dennis Meeches. Support followed from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Assembly of First Nations, Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, the Museums Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage, the City and RM of Portage



la Prairie, the Anglican Church Indigenous Fund, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism and the Asper Foundation, to mention a few. These important partners, along with survivors and their families, contributed financial and informational resources.

A Project Coordinator was hired to carry out a Strategic Development Study and, in 2003, a Steering

Committee struck to work on funding, site designation and research. In 2005, the school was designated a Provincial Heritage Site. National Heritage designation is in the application stage.

The museum will archive stories, photos and artifacts and offer outreach programs, travelling exhibits and personal resources for those wounded by the experience of the schools. The museum will develop opportunities for residential school survivors to heal through contact with elders, trained staff and special programs.



previous page built in 1911, the brick and sandstone Indian Residential School as it originally looked

Though the museum proper is not yet operational, outreach programs and travelling exhibits to build awareness and attract people's histories begin in 2006. These national programs are a significant part of the museum's mandate. The grand opening will take place on National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2008.

Maintaining, developing and administering the site will require ongoing fundraising and partnerships. Other challenges include overcoming some

opposite top a aerial view of the school and area as it looks today
opposite bottom an architectural model of the school building
right left to right: Chief Dennis Meeches, Long Plain First nation; Councillor Harold Brown (standing in for Reeve Knight), RM of Portage La Prairie; The Honourable Eric Robinson, Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism; Mayor Ian Mackenzie, City of Portage La Prairie and David Fauschou, Portage MLA at the Provincial Heritage Site Designation ceremony on June 21, 2005



reluctance to embrace a museum telling such a troubling story and building programs that will remain relevant for future generations. Ongoing cooperation between Long Plain First Nation, the City and RM of Portage la Prairie will help meet these challenges and ensure the museum benefits all the communities involved.

A success story for many reasons, Project Coordinator Shanyn French Silinski says, “The most significant reason is that the residential school system didn’t work; it didn’t eliminate or assimilate the culture. If it had, we wouldn’t have this museum being developed. The first success story is of the resilience and strength of the people themselves.

“Another success is the work being done ensuring

artifacts and stories are not lost and that connections are made across Canada and around the world so our history, the good and the bad, can be shared and understood. This is a Canadian story.”

Shanyn has this advice, “Have the support of those whose stories you are telling. Ensure they understand why their story needs telling and encourage their active participation.

“Recognize things change. Any project is a living thing. It will grow and change.

“Know the critical elements of the project, the things that cannot be abandoned or changed and hold tight to them. They are the foundation. Keep the vision clear and strong.”

What's in a Name?

Selkirk Street Naming Policy Selkirk

The type of projects Municipal Heritage Advisory Committees (MHAC) can undertake is limited solely by the imagination. In Selkirk, the Committee produces a list of suitable street names for new residential and business developments in the city. This simple but valuable project ensures that Selkirk's rich heritage lives on.



In 2000, the Selkirk Mayor and Council decided it would be useful to have a list of appropriate, pre-approved names for newly developed streets. In 2001, a Council resolution created *The Assignment of Street Names Policy* outlining the process and procedures to be used for naming new streets. Citizens, interest groups, Council and Selkirk MHAC were encouraged to submit names for consideration. The job of nominating and researching each name and presenting a list to Council became part of the MHAC's mandate.

The Committee discovered most existing streets were named for former Selkirk citizens who made a significant contribution to the community. This tradition was continued. Proposed names were researched, checked for duplication in the area and a written rationale for each sent to Council for approval. Council has about 20 names at any one time from which to choose. Having a clear policy and names at the ready makes Council's job easier.

The Committee researches the names by interviewing family members and citizens who knew the nominee, reviewing newspaper back issues and history books, scouring old maps and seeking documentation in libraries and archives.

opposite Captain William Robinson, one Selkirk's earliest and most imaginative entrepreneurs, is honoured by Robinson Avenue
right possibly Selkirk's earliest street, Eveline is named for Eveline Irving who married John Greig, the local hotel owner

Financially this costs the City of Selkirk virtually nothing since the research and recommendations are done by their volunteer MHAC. Though it is an ongoing project, no future costs are foreseen.

The benefits reverberate throughout the community. Families are pleased and proud to have their ancestor's achievements recognized and preserved for posterity. For a time the *Selkirk Journal* carried a *Street Names* column which increased public awareness and interest. As people learned the history of their street name through the column, they often contributed fresh information.

There is also a safety aspect to the project. It ensures there will be no duplication of names to cause confusion for drivers, especially emergency vehicles.

The project's success has grown quietly but steadily in Selkirk and area, building a new sense of community pride. A quiz has been developed around street names, and a cemetery study for Grade 6 students matches up street names with headstones.

Doreen Oliver, Chairperson of Selkirk MHAC recommends, "Take a look at your project and figure out the best way to manage it. Break it down



into parts and list them in the sequence in which you will do them.

"Always aim for the highest standard in the work you are doing and seek help from the appropriate sources. Help is out there, whether from the staff at Historic Resources Branch or a person with recognized expertise in the subject. People in the heritage world are willing to share!

"Check all of your facts for accuracy; we are attempting to tell a story, not create a new one! Credit your sources so that interested people can do further research on the subject. Our final goal is to interest and help those who will eventually become our replacements."

www.cityofselkirk.com

I Am a Sparkplug

Gord Emberley
Presiding Member, Lac du Bonnet MHAC

"I am a sparkplug. That's my talent. But you must have people to spark." Those are Gord Emberley's self-descriptive words.

A long-time prime mover with Lac du Bonnet Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC), Gord was born and raised in Winnipeg. As a lad after WWII, he worked for Hudson's Bay Company, fought forest fires in Manitoba and patrolled the Duck Mountains on horseback.

While working as a Forest Ranger, Gord qualified for his Private Pilot's license, purchased a surplus WWII Tiger Moth bi-plane and flew the hours necessary for a commercial license. He flew for numerous private companies and government agencies and still holds a valid license today. Gord spent 24 years with the Manitoba Department of Mines and Natural Resources acquiring firsthand knowledge of vast areas of Manitoba. After retirement, he contracted with the Provincial and Federal governments as a toponymist, gathering 8,000 place names of northern Manitoba's geographical features.



His vocation became his avocation when he, along with four others, started the Western Canada Aviation Museum (WCAM) in 1974, a result of their common interest in preserving and restoring vintage aircraft. WCAM, located in a hangar at Winnipeg International Airport, houses 23 vintage aircraft and the largest aviation archives in Canada. Gord was its first President and Executive Director until 1984.

In 1996, he was appointed a Member of the Order

opposite Gord Emberley and his 1947 Stinson Voyager at the dock in front of his house

of Canada because of his “enthusiasm and energy in his role as the driving force behind the Western Canada Aviation Museum.”

Spanning five decades, Gord’s experience includes nearly every aspect of heritage development. He has helped Lac Du Bonnet understand and value its heritage through youth projects, place commemorations and local events. He generously shares his wisdom.

On starting a new project, “Put your own money into a project to get it started. This demonstrates passion and commitment. Limit yourself to specific subjects. Talk to community people to find out what they think is important. This makes it easier to raise funds later.”

On doing a project, “Don’t take on anything you can’t finish within a given timeframe. Be willing to listen to others and capitalize on people’s talents without compromising the basics. Don’t expect others to do what you would not do. Give credit where it’s due. Use all the expertise available from government agencies, especially the Historic Resources Branch.”

On acquiring funding, “Demonstrate tangible

results and community support before asking government agencies and foundations for money. Be brief with proposals and budgets, one page for each plus back-up material if they ask for it. Keep support agencies well informed about your goals and progress.”

On the relationship with Council, “Be sure your Council gets accurate minutes of your MHAC meetings, invite a Councillor to MHAC meetings and make presentations to Council.”

On communication, “Provide your local newspaper with interesting material for stories and encourage them to cover your MHAC meetings. Pay a professional to design a website or, if your community has a website, add your own web page.”

On tourism, “Tourism and heritage are linked. Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism will promote what you give them so package your history in a way they can use. The website is a great low-cost tourism tool.”

And, finally, “Without my wife Verna’s help, I could never have done my heritage work.”

www.lacdubonnet.com/mhac/; www.wcam.mb.ca

The Wisdom of the Elders

Heritage North Museum Thompson

Combining traditional hands-on methods, modern technology and the Internet, the Heritage North Museum (HNM) offers opportunities to learn about the time-honoured ways of the Northern Cree and the short but remarkable history of a northern mining town.

In 1989, Allan Mackie designed and hand built the museum out of massive 17-metre logs. He describes its style as “horizontal Canadian round log construction with scarfed, saddle notch cornering.” A northern landmark, the building caters to 5,000 visitors annually.

In 1998, the HNM launched a project to build a traditional caribou hide and birch bark tipi to have as a permanent display on the museum grounds. The museum hired Wellington and Madeline Spence, two Cree elders from Nelson House, to construct the tipi “from scratch.” The museum hired five students to assist the elders. Audio-visual equipment documented the construction and oral history interviews.

HNM set a precedent in 1999 when it became the first museum in Manitoba to produce an in-house high-end interactive CD-ROM. Detailing the tipi construction and related local topics,

the CD-ROM, titled *N’Okkum O’Mikiwap: My Grandmother’s Tipi*, is partly bilingual in English and Cree. Five hundred copies were produced and 425 have been sold or donated to schools and libraries.

Recognizing the public’s interest in traditional skills and interactive learning opportunities, the museum offered public participation in the creation of a birch bark canoe, ten pair of snowshoes and two



“Be persistent ... The squeaky wheel does get the grease.”

fur presses, all using natural materials and traditional methods. Each year the museum has hired local youths to participate in these skill-developing projects.

Traditional stone carving, skinning and defleshing black bear hides, smoking meat and manufacturing bone tools have also been demonstrated. In 2003, HNM constructed an operational 18th century style blacksmith shop.

Funding for these projects came from the Federal Museum Assistance Program, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism and Department of Northern Affairs, City of Thompson, Inco, Manitoba Hydro, Thompson Lion’s Club, EJLB Foundation and Thompsonites.

Essential aboriginal contacts for museum projects include Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research Council, Ma Mow We Tak Friendship Centre and the Manitoba Métis Federation.

HNM’s 2005 budget was \$118,000. The City of Thompson pays some of the operating costs but



opposite Ralph Linklater bending snowshoes at the museum
above Mike Camp and Betty Landego twisting steel to make a decorative knife handle at the museum blacksmith shop
next page the first snowfall blankets the Heritage North Museum



most of the money comes from business ventures. To name a few, the museum publishes, prints and sells advertisements in the free *Welcome to Thompson* guidebook. Inco makes a donation every year in exchange for the museum organizing and providing tour guides for a surface tour of the nickel plant. The gift shop sells crafts made by local artisans and staff members.

The museum and its programs benefit Thompson by creating a renewed sense of history, community spirit, youth employment opportunities and a tourist destination.

“The museum helps dispel the notion that young mining communities don’t have a history worth saving,” says Paul Legault, Executive Director of

the HNM. “When securing financial, material or human resources, we rely on northern ingenuity and perseverance.”

Paul suggests, “Obtain letters of support from all sectors of your community.

“Research your project thoroughly. Make sure you have the right people directing and working on the project.

“Be persistent. Many organizations are competing for limited funds. If your application is rejected, fix it and appeal their decision. The squeaky wheel does get the grease.”

www.thompson.heritage.north.museum

The Little Girl from Saint-Boniface

Gabrielle Roy House Winnipeg

As a tribute to one of Canada's greatest authors, Gabrielle Roy's childhood home has been meticulously restored into a popular museum.

Born in 1909 in Saint-Boniface, Gabrielle Roy, a pensive child who preferred solitude, went on to write groundbreaking novels about her life and times in Manitoba. The first Canadian to win the prestigious French Prix Femina for *The Tin Flute* and three-time Governor General's Award winner, Gabrielle's books have been translated into 14 languages and are taught extensively in schools. The museum honours her achievements and promotes her work internationally.

In 1995, the Gabrielle Roy House Corporation was formed to purchase, restore and develop the house Gabrielle's uncle, Zenon Landry, built in 1904. The group purchased the residence for \$155,000 in 1997 by borrowing \$121,000 from Caisse Populaire de Saint-Boniface, \$24,000 from Entreprises Saint-Boniface and the balance from Saint-Boniface College. During the planning stages for the restoration, rent from the house's tenants maintained the site and mortgage.

To pay off the mortgage, the Corporation holds annual \$100-a-plate dinners at the Fort Garry

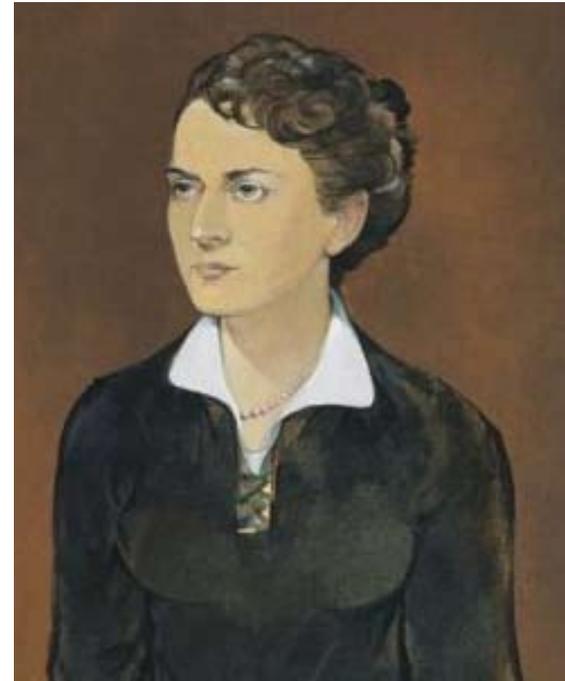
below portrait of Gabrielle Roy by painter Marco Montess

Hotel and asks for donations of \$1,000 with 145 received. A \$40,000 honorarium came from the Montreal Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society.

After consulting with numerous specialists, the restoration began in 1999. Eventually costing \$650,000 to restore, the house now authentically reflects its 1918

condition, complete with original hardwood floors, layout and wall colours. The impeccable renovation resulted from a detailed architectural plan developed early and using all available government resources.

Grants for restoration costs came from Heritage Canada, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism,





and the City of Winnipeg. Matching funds were raised through special events including banquets, fashion shows and raffles. Once the debt has been extinguished, the Corporation will set up a trust fund to ensure future sustainability of the museum with the intent of hiring a full-time director.

Deemed a City of Winnipeg Historical House in 1982 and commemorated with a Saint-Boniface Historical Society plaque in 1989, the Gabrielle Roy House became a Provincial Heritage Site in 2002.

Opened in June 2003, the museum attracts 2,500 people a year, many from Quebec, who become its best ambassadors. The Corporation hopes to raise the museum's profile with ads in travel magazines and in English and French newspapers, radio and TV.

opposite the lovingly restored and immaculately maintained Gabrielle Roy House
right the Roy House interior restored to its 1918 condition
below interior view of study



An on-site gift shop sells new and used Roy books, souvenirs and related memorabilia. Grants assist a group of young employees during the tourist season and a core group of volunteers lovingly maintains the building.

Dr. Annette Saint-Pierre, long-time museum supporter, author and Gabrielle Roy biographer, passionately worked full-time for four years as Corporation president, requesting grants, seeking publicity and directing the Board.

She says, "Gabrielle Roy helps define our identity. People are proud of 'the little girl from Saint-Boniface' who wrote so well and so much about Manitoba to make it known across Canada, the US and Europe."

Annette recommends, "Create a strong board and a good collaboration with Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism at the restoration stage.

"Seek the support of your community and local organizations.

"Develop a reputation as a clean corporation dedicated to safeguarding Manitoba heritage for the pride of the community."

www.maisongabrielleroy.mb.ca



Old Bank, New Purpose

Hamiota Heritage Arts Centre

Hamiota, RMs of Hamiota, Woodsworth, Blanshard and Miniota

A modest idea for office and exhibition space evolved into a living arts centre gaining a national reputation.

About 1903, Union Bank built an optimistic three-storey buff brick building in Hamiota. The Royal Bank absorbed Union Bank in 1925 and ran this location until 1977. Thereafter it sat empty. In 1996, the community, under the auspices of the Mid-West Arts Council, rallied to save the old bank from the wrecking ball and turn it into a community resource and attraction.

This wasn't the first time the building was threatened. In 1928, the Cecil Hotel next door burned down taking with it the roof and third floor of the bank. The bank repaired the space so the manager could still live on the second floor.

Volunteers from Hamiota and the surrounding RMs of Hamiota, Woodsworth, Blanshard and Miniota renovated the building into the Hamiota Heritage Arts Centre, designated a Municipal Heritage Site in 1995. The old bank now houses gallery and studio space, workshop facilities, an intimate performance venue and an artistic resource centre. Monthly exhibitions of local artists' work, children's programs, workshops and art classes for

all ages, music education and a school of dance are among the Centre's activities. The Centre is building a national reputation as a cultural oasis on the prairies.

Many original interior features remain including the pressed tin ceiling in the foyer, oak woodwork, high ceilings, fireplace, skylights and both vaults. The exterior retains its limestone foundation, sills and belt courses. Choosing to celebrate the building's heritage character resulted in a



high quality, unique space while maintaining the building's eligibility for heritage grants.

Project cost has been about \$270,000 with grants from Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism Designated Heritage Building Grants, Millennium Bureau of Canada, Cultural Spaces Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage, Thomas Sill Foundation, Brandon and Area Foundation, Manitoba Community Services Council, Town of Hamiota, surrounding municipalities, community groups and individuals. Currently 24 volunteers handle renovations, fundraising and programming.

The economic impact on Hamiota and district has been positive, adding vibrancy to a growing community. Local trades people and material suppliers were used during renovation, programs and special events attract tourists from the area and beyond, and regional organizations such as Hamiota Economic Development and Assiniboine Regional Health Authority rent space for meetings and workshops. Hamiota Historical Society has its office and archives in the building. Fundraising and space rental are sources of revenue toward sustainability.

Brian Todd of the Arts Council advises, "Have

opposite originally a bank, this lovely tan brick and limestone building now serves the district as an arts centre

right Tracy Pederson and Harry Andrew of the Mid-West Arts Council in the restored bank vault

a plan and a definite purpose for the building. Hire professionals to put renovation and construction plans in place. Establish budget costs, fundraising targets and a timeline.

"Be patient and persevere. Volunteer burnout is a real issue when a project takes a long time and a lot of fundraising. A group with a shared vision can encourage each other and enable the project to carry on.

"Sell your project. Meetings with municipal councils, articles in the local paper and publicized fundraisers help promote the project. Even with construction work still going on, hold small events in the building to encourage people to see your progress."

www.hamiota.com/hc_heritage_arts_centre.html



Our Old School

Gimli Public School Gimli

Gimli Public School is an example of how an under-appreciated building became a fresh source of pride and achievement for the community.

Built in 1915, Gimli Public School held classes for 59 years. The six-classroom, two-storey brick and limestone building, which covers 8,000 sq feet, sat empty until 1990 when talk of demolition started. An eight-person Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC), half of them former students, was formed to preserve it. Evergreen School Division owned the school, sold it to the MHAC for \$1 and saved \$80,000 in demolition costs.

The MHAC met with Town Council who eventually gave their blessing for the five-year project, which required over 30,000 hours of volunteer labour.

Gimli MHAC, the Town of Gimli and Community Places were original supporters. Total project cost was \$440,000 with a current mortgage of \$180,000. The Province provided grants of approximately \$100,000 over a 5-year period. The rest was matching funds raised in the community, mostly from individuals. Sale of the old town hall raised \$30,000. No federal money was requested.



above Gimli Public School: restored, renewed and making a relevant contribution to Gimli once again
opposite a row of original desks in the fully-restored classroom, part of the New Iceland Heritage Museum



Most of the money went toward a new furnace, new windows, new shingles, elevator lift and refurbishing the original maple floors. One classroom was restored to its original condition as an adjunct of the New Iceland Heritage Museum.

Local author Kathleen Arnason wrote a children's story about the Huldufolk - Icelandic little people - and a home for them was built in the attic accessible by winding stairs. A public art space houses exhibitions.

The school was designated a Municipal Heritage Site in 1991. Larry Kristjanson of the Gimli MHAC said, "To a small degree it helped us get money. Funders are more likely to support a designated heritage site."

Once the improvements started, people began to visit and discovered a new appreciation of their old school. Now it attracts hundreds of visitors every year.

Tenants include the RM of Gimli, Eastern Interlake Planning District, regional offices for Manitoba Education and Training, and Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Lake Winnipeg Consortium and local non-profit groups. The municipal and provincial

offices benefit financially because they pay relatively low rent. The building is sustaining itself.

"It's the heart of the town now, part of old Gimli. Gimli has a limited number of older heritage buildings. Had we not done it, the heritage of Gimli would have been lost. We would be a conventional town with conventional houses, nothing distinctive. But by saving these structures we saved some of the area's history," Larry Kristjanson says.

His advice: "Your best source of volunteers is recently retired people who are still active and looking for things to do. This is an important resource.

"Work hard to raise money. The only effective way is to go to a person eye to eye. Most of the cash came from individuals. It's more productive to go to individuals than businesses.

"Have a thick hide; don't let the nay-sayers get to you. Be patient with government when raising funds because they have their planning cycles. It's sometimes frustrating when you don't get an answer as quickly as you would like."

www.nihm.ca

Prairie Giants

Inglis Elevator Row Inglis, RM of Shellmouth-Boulton

Once a dominant feature of every prairie town's skyline, standard plan elevators are now an uncommon sight, making Inglis' five original buildings especially precious. The last remaining row of five elevators in North America, used until 1995, attracts about 4000 visitors annually.

Receiving National Historic Site status in 1996 encouraged the community to begin restoring the elevators. Inglis Area Heritage Committee (IAHC), which spearheaded the designation, created a non-profit corporation to pursue ownership and

restoration. The seven-member Committee, all from the Inglis area, hired a full-time project manager to oversee development of the site.

Parks Canada signed a four-year National Cost Share Agreement with the IAHC in 1998. This provided a federal contribution of \$1 million towards a total budget of \$3 million, of which \$2 million is to be shared equally between Canada and IAHC. In 2002, at IAHC's request, Parks Canada terminated the cost-shared agreement, replacing it with a contribution agreement for the remaining \$455,000. Other federal money came from Parks Canada, Human Resources, Summer Career Placement and Western Diversification.

The Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism Department provided a Heritage Building grant and other funds totalling almost \$500,000. Manitoba Historic Resources Branch and Parks Canada offered technical advice.



United Grain Growers and N. M. Paterson & Sons Ltd donated the five elevators, as gifts-in-kind, and cash. Canadian Pacific Railways donated the 29 acres on which the elevators stand. Other non-governmental assistance came from the Canadian Wheat Board, Murphy Foundation, Thomas Sill Foundation and Carolyn Sifton Foundation, among others.

Most of the restoration and construction expenditures were made at the local level, providing employment for area residents and supporting businesses in the district.

Besides enriching the Parkland region with a significant agricultural attraction, Inglis Elevator Row creates educational opportunities about settlement, railway transportation and the grain trade. School tours benefit from its educational and interpretive programs, the interpretive centre and gift shop provide information and souvenirs and, in the summer, a full-time tour guide is hired.

IAHC is working on an Endowment Fund to ensure future maintenance and development of the site. A feasibility study explored the possibility of constructing an organic milling operation. This will depend on market conditions and capital cash flow.



opposite Inglis Elevator Row after restoration
above three area farmers discuss grain prices in restored elevator office

“Promote yourself everywhere and every way you can.”



above old grain wagon sits next to one of the Paterson elevators

National media exposure includes features in *Canadian Geographic* and on CBC's *Country Canada* and *Prairie Farm Report*.

Because the site is almost complete and looking great and visitor expenditures have a visible positive economic impact on Inglis, early negative attitudes in the community have dissolved. “The energy has really changed,” says Project Manager Allan Sawchuk.

His advice: “Make an accurate business and conservation plan with as much detail as possible. Working on limited funds requires accuracy; surprise expenses can quickly kill a project.

“One of the most difficult things is keeping the cash flowing with ongoing funding. You might receive some money and think it was easy but the granting process is hard to stay on top of. Have a plan.

“Marketing and sustainability are interrelated. You need a sound marketing plan. Tourism gets you some money but you need fundraisers and special events. Promote yourself everywhere and every way you can.”

www.ingliselevators.com

Prairie Aristocrats

Criddle-Vane Homestead RM of South Cypress

A remarkable pioneer family gives Manitoba and the world an enduring, inspirational legacy in science, sports, horticulture and meteorology.

When well-educated Percy Criddle brought his wife Alice and friend Elise Vane and the women's nine children (all of them fathered by Percy) from England to Manitoba in 1882, he chose a quarter section of virgin prairie just south of what became CFB Shilo, naming it St. Albans. Although farming provided income, Percy's diverse interests included astronomy, music, medicine and sports, especially golf and tennis.

The family owes much of their success to their thirteen adept, creative and hard-working children (four were born in Canada) some of whom lived on the homestead until 1960 when it was sold.

Abandoned for a number of years, the homestead became provincial crown land in 1975. The Province decided in 2000 that, if no viable re-use

below one of Norman Criddle's paintings of caterpillars, butterflies and local flora

was found, the buildings would be razed and the site cleared. Imminent demolition is a powerful motivator to preserve cultural heritage.



Under the umbrella of Friends of Spruce Woods (FOSW), the Criddle-Vane Homestead Heritage Committee was formed. Composed of FOSW board members, scientists, Criddle and Vane descendents and local history buffs, the Committee's mandate was to implement a preservation plan and develop the site for tourist and educational purposes.

Significant aspects of the property were identified and signs erected. The homestead features a 1906 Georgian-style two-storey house, the first entomology laboratory on the Canadian prairies, Criddle's second lab, a family cemetery and remnants of tennis courts and a golf course.

The original laboratory has been restored, walking trails laid out and an award-winning trail guidebook produced. The 130-hectare property

“The community took action. You can’t wait for someone else to do it.”

became a Provincial Heritage Park in 2004, providing some protection and ensuring a future for the site. Subsequently the province provides maintenance of the grounds. Restoration and

grant of \$2,500 from the Office of the Minister of Conservation along with generous donations from the entomology community, Wawanesa Insurance and many individuals facilitated restoration of the entomology lab. Donations from businesses and individuals support specific projects.



The Committee sells Alma Criddle’s book about the pioneer experience, *Criddle-De-Diddle-Ensis*, and hasty notes featuring entomologist Norman Criddle’s beautiful wildflower paintings.

In 2004, a Bio-Blitz organized through Brandon University brought entomologists, students and the public to the site for a flora and fauna survey. Besides scientists and historians, hundreds of tourists from Canada and abroad are attracted to the homestead every year.

upkeep of the buildings are the next physical and financial challenges facing the Committee.

A Manitoba Heritage Grants Program grant of \$10,000 helped repair the house and lab, paid for interpretive signage and trail guides. A special

Interpretive Planner and Criddle-Vane Homestead Heritage Committee member Sherry Dangerfield explains why this is a success story. “The homestead is not a potato field. The community took action. You can’t wait for someone else to do it.”

opposite Norman Criddle at Entomology Lab, 1919
right Criddle-Vane family 1895
l to r: Cecil, Elise, Evelyn, Edwy, Norman, Julia, Talbot, Alice, Alma, Percy, Maida, Harry, Beatrice, Stuart
below Percy Criddle and some family members in front of their 1906 home



Sherry recommends, "Recruit a diversity of volunteers. We all have different expertise and areas of interest, which makes for a well-rounded group with mutual respect.

"Include a couple of group members that have worked for the provincial or federal government. It is a world unto itself and you need to know how to work with that system.

"Have fun!"

www.brandonu.ca/zoology/Aweme

Connecting with the Past

Valley River Archaeological Survey Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation

It began as an accidental unearthing of ancient human remains while excavating a gravel pit and evolved into an important archaeological study connecting aboriginal youth to their history.



The region south of the Duck Mountains is the traditional land use area for the Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation (TFN). When the discovery was made, Boyd Mancheese, a research associate born and raised on TFN, was contacted. After conferring with the elders, Boyd contacted the Historic Resources Branch (HRB) for advice. Once proper care was

given and ceremonies performed, the remains were reburied.

Forestry giant Louisiana-Pacific (L-P) has cutting rights for the area based on a land management agreement that includes stipulations about archaeological finds. Shortly before the occurrence, L-P staff received workshop training from the Historic Resources Branch on dealing with found human remains.

The discovery of the burial site sparked interest in the community leading to a collaborative project uniting TFN, L-P and the archaeological community with the aim of locating previously unrecorded ancient heritage sites in the area. An archaeological consulting firm, White Spruce Archaeology, was hired to design and conduct a survey.

Over the 20 days of the survey, an astonishing 33 ancient sites were located! Artifacts associated with past human activity such as hunting (mainly stone tools and projectile points, some 2000 years old), were found. In 2006, excavation is planned at certain sites along with more surveying.

An important element was the involvement of youth from the community who were hired to assist the archaeologists and spent three weeks surveying,

“We’ve always wanted to get the elders, the youth and the community on the same page. This finally did it.”

camping and hiking the area. Four youths were involved in 2005. Planning is underway for as many as ten Grade 10 to 12 students to participate in 2006.

Funding came from two sources in 2005. Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism gave a grant of \$10,500 and Louisiana-Pacific made a major donation. The University of Winnipeg provided gifts-in-kind.

TFN is considering a heritage museum and resource centre for the community. An old Catholic Church, long unused, is a possible location. Negotiations are underway to acquire the building.

The benefits of the project to TFN include a new awareness and understanding of their ancestors’ use of the Duck Mountains, and a stronger identity and a deeper connection to the land among the community’s youth. L-P benefits by having solid research on where sites are located so they can avoid disturbing them.

Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation did it right. They honoured their ancestors, contacted professionals to conduct the survey, involved local youth and shared the benefits with their entire community. “We’ve always wanted to get the elders, the youth

opposite Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation youths assist with archaeological survey
right future archaeologists?



and the community on the same page. This finally did it,” reports Boyd Mancheese. “By protecting the sites, we leave them as a legacy for future generations.”

Boyd’s advice comes in three areas, “Environment: try to connect youth to the land. Hiking and camping help them regain something they’ve lost.

“Economics: when dealing with a large corporation, seek common areas for cooperation that benefit everyone.

“Education: integrate the experience of the archaeology camp into formal education to get students thinking about their life pursuits and what their heritage means.”

www.whitesprucearchaeology.com

Come On In

Doors Open Brandon Brandon

Surprisingly simple yet enormously effective at raising the heritage profile in communities, the Doors Open concept offers the public free access to architecturally and/or historically significant buildings over one weekend each year. Originating in Glasgow, Scotland in 1990, the idea quickly spread around the globe with Brandon the first Manitoba community to open their doors.

When Heather Ewasiuk, Heritage Resources Officer for the City of Brandon, was asked by the local Communities in Bloom Committee (CIB) to come up with a heritage component for their

event, she went online and discovered Doors Open. The CIB already hosted an open garden tour. Doors Open was a perfect fit.

One Saturday afternoon in July 2002, the owners of eight of Brandon's most elegant old homes opened their doors to the public. 3,400 people showed up! Two of the houses attracted 800 visitors each!

The next year 16 sites including residences, commercial properties, churches and Brandon University participated over two days. In 2004, a wider range of buildings participated, 24 in all. Responding to visitor comments that it wasn't possible to get to all the places, in 2005 the number of sites was reduced to 17 buildings. Attendance has climbed steadily, surpassing 6,500 visitors in 2005.

Doors Open is the pet project of the Brandon Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) in partnership with CIB. The City contributes \$2,500 to run the event. Radio, TV and print advertising costs about \$1,250. Printing of the free passport guide to the sites is \$750. The Wheat City Journal prints a colour tour pullout on a discount and Home Life Realty provided \$500 for signage.



In return, their logo is used on all printed material. Signs are reused each year, thus a one-time expense.

Doors Open Brandon has spawned new interest in heritage walking tours and increased awareness of local historic buildings. The MHAC now receives more applications for heritage designation from property owners, a Town Hall Meeting on Heritage was well attended and it is easier to attract volunteers to help at Doors Open and other related activities. Brandon's event draws people from all over Manitoba and Saskatchewan giving the city an economic boost.

Heritage Canada Foundation offers kits with planning information and appropriate forms that cover all aspects of running a Doors Open event.

Doors Open creates and satisfies public curiosity. "People have a natural curiosity and especially love to see the inside of homes. The private residences are certainly our most popular tour spots," says Heather Ewasiuk.

Her advice is, "Approach potential participants at least three months in advance. Start working on



opposite Heather Ewasiuk at Moreland Manor, 1340 Louise Avenue, one of the most visited sites during Brandon Doors Open
above Display Building Number Two at Brandon Exhibition Grounds, another stop on the tour, has been used continuously since 1913

signage and property information early as you will need some lead-time to print passports.

"Advertise as much as possible. Even though we have an extensive advertising program, people still comment that they didn't know it was on.

"Be prepared for crowd control. It's okay to limit the number of people in a building at one time. People will wait 15 minutes for their turn if they don't have to fight through a crowd. Let property owners know they can limit access to certain parts of the building. It's their property!"

www.brandon.ca; www.doorsopencanada.ca

Excite, Engage and Entertain

Transcona Historical Museum
Winnipeg



Prominently located in a striking 1925 former Bank of Toronto building, the Transcona Historical Museum (THM) has created successful community connections since 1967.

Supported by the City of Winnipeg, this civic museum features high quality exhibits, storage for artifacts and archival materials, and resources for researchers. Governed by a twelve-member Board of Directors, it has a full time staff of two - a curator employed by the City and an assistant curator paid by the THM Board - and about thirty volunteers.

Key aspects of THM's success are its numerous outreach programs, which partner with local organizations and businesses including schools, churches, Royal Canadian Legion, Transcona Garden Club, Transcona BIZ and Kildonan Place Shopping Centre. An excellent relationship with a broad cross-section of Transconians, its professional staff and use of new technologies attest to further successes.



The THM connects with children through special events linked to Manitoba Day, Remembrance Day and an annual summer scavenger hunt. Manitoba Day is celebrated at schools with activities related

to local heritage. Visual presentations, wartime artifact displays and researching local history honour veterans during Remembrance Week. Several hundred families participate in the scavenger hunt, where children have fun and learn about their community history at the same time.



A huge profile raiser for the THM in 2004-2005 was the Greatest Transconian Contest, an idea that can be adapted to almost any community or museum. The public nominated 112 Transconians, a nomination review committee narrowed the list down to ten people who made significant contributions to Transcona. The museum set up a display about each of the top ten and asked the public to vote for whom they thought was the greatest.

“This is the biggest thing we’ve ever done,” exclaims museum curator Sheryl Kolt. “During the three-month contest, our website received over 12,000 hits from all over the world! The media coverage of the contest was invaluable.”

The contest garnered requests for presentations at the 2005 Association of Manitoba Museums conference and 2006 Canadian Museums

opposite top excited Transcona school children take part in a costume parade

opposite bottom formerly a Bank of Toronto, this solid 1925 building houses the Transcona Historical Museum

above Transconians celebrate with a parade

Association (CMA) conference. The project was nominated for a CMA Award of Outstanding Achievement in Marketing.

By the way, the Greatest Transconian is former Transcona mayor, councillor, war veteran, sports enthusiast and spiritual leader Paul Martin. THM recently produced a DVD called *Transcona Memories* narrated by Paul Martin with photographs from the museum archives.

In 2004, the museum contributed community



left Cathie Gibson-Robbins, Paul Martin, Bernie Wolfe, and Mitchell Blostein at ribbon cutting ceremony
below museum curator Sheryl Kolt and veteran Ken A. Stein at Remembrance Day ceremony

“Running a contest like “The Greatest Transconian” empowers members of the community to get involved through nominating, voting and viewing. It promotes outstanding individuals in a very positive way, one that promotes the spirit of the community. It is controversial and competitive. Be prepared to handle the challenges that are brought on by the ‘surprise success’ of the idea.”

memories to an online exhibit titled *Serving King and Country: Transcona’s Hometown Heroes* at the Virtual Museum of Canada, which attracted thousands of visitors.

Sheryl Kolt offers this advice, “Seek out people with a passion for their community history then engage them in the museum with full understanding of their roles and responsibilities as boards members, staff and volunteers.

“As a museum, be in touch with your community. Reflect your community’s issues so they feel the museum is a window to their world. Become an unbiased and accurate authority.



www.transconamuseum.mb.ca

A Living Museum on Steel Wheels

Prairie Dog Central Railway Winnipeg

For the first time in years, the sweet, nostalgic sounds of a steam train whistle and clanging bell echoed across Winnipeg in July 1970. The Prairie Dog Central (PDC) was pulling out of the station.

Though many changes and improvements have occurred since then, the PDC remains one of the oldest regularly scheduled vintage trains in North America and a major Winnipeg tourist attraction. About 15,000 passengers hear the rail song and smell the train smoke every year.

Operated by The Vintage Locomotive Society Inc. (VLS), the Prairie Dog Central is an 1882 steam locomotive with five passenger cars and a caboose dating from 1901 to 1913, all fully restored and operational. A 1958 diesel locomotive, a 1911 bunk car, a 1905 boxcar, a hopper car, three flatcars and a jigger round out the PDC rolling stock.



Every railway needs a station. The PDC operates from Inkster Junction Station in northwest Winnipeg, which was declared a National Historic Railway Station in 1991 when it was located just west of Polo Park and known as St. James Station.



previous page the Prairie Dog Central steams across the open prairie
left the Prairie Dog Central sitting at Inkster Junction Station
below Prairie Dog Central passengers and locals enjoy activities in Warren
opposite Prairie Dog Central powered by its diesel locomotive

The VLS purchased the building from Canadian National Railways in 1999 and moved it to its present location.

During the summer and for special events throughout the year, the PDC offers excursions from Winnipeg with stops at Grosse Isle and Warren, a round trip of 55 km.

The VLS markets the train in diverse and creative ways. Besides regular summer Saturday and Sunday runs, the PDC offers charters, special dinner and holiday excursions at Halloween and Christmas. You can even rent





the caboose for private functions. The train has been used in several movies, attesting to the high quality of its restoration.

VLS membership is 278 with about 50 active members maintaining and operating the train and tracks. Trained and certified volunteer crews consist of Locomotive Engineer, Fireman, Brakeman, Conductor and Porters. A Station Agent oversees station activities.

Supporting partners along the train's route include Rosser, Rockwood and Woodlands Rural Municipalities through which the tracks run, Grosse Isle Recreation Club, Hitch 'N Post Country Barbeque and the West Interlake Trading Company in Warren (see next story).

Memberships, fares and donations from passengers and gift shop sales supply the annual operating budget of about \$380,000.

The PDC launched a major fundraising campaign in 1998 to raise \$1.3 million to purchase 27 km of track from CN, construct a turning "wye" at Warren and trackage at Inkster Junction Station, erect a storage and maintenance building, move the station from St. James and prepare its new site.

Financial support for this successful project came from a Federal and Provincial Economic Development Partnership Agreement for \$600,000. Winnipeg Hydro donated \$100,000 and individual and corporate donations accounted for another \$500,000.

"We emptied out our savings to complete the project," says Paul Newsome, PDC General Manager and VLS Secretary.

Paul offers this advice, "Make sure you have a good, workable and sound plan.

"Be sure your group is in sync about your objectives, avoiding the perception of multiple or conflicting goals.

"Be passionate about what you are doing and the world will support your worthwhile goals. This also generates internal energy to keep things moving in the face of setbacks which always happen."

www.pdcrailway.com

A Bustling Weekend Destination

West Interlake Trading Company Warren, RM of Woodlands

How would your community meet the challenge of a vintage steam train delivering 600 excited tourists to your town every Saturday and Sunday from May to September? When the announcement came in 1999 that one of Winnipeg's major tourist attractions would do just that in Warren, the community saw their opportunity and jumped at it.

Departing from Inkster Junction Station in northwest Winnipeg, the Prairie Dog Central (see previous story) stops in Grosse Isle. Passengers re-board and the PDC chugs on to Warren, the end of the line for this stretch of track. To develop the tourist and business potential of the regular influx, a group of volunteers formed the non-profit West Interlake Trading Company Inc. (WITC).

Seed money totalling \$7,000 was raised through donations from the Warren Lions Club and the Warren and District Chamber of Commerce, and by selling debentures, which accounted for about \$4,000.

In an area along the railway tracks in Warren, the WITC opened a Country Market offering fresh produce, homemade baking and crafts. Performances by

local entertainers, clowns, a petting zoo and other amusements create a festival atmosphere for PDC passengers. Holiday themed excursions at Halloween and Christmas and school tours provide new marketing opportunities.

In 2005, the Market moved further up the line finding a permanent home near the former Agri-Core grain elevator, one of the few standard plan elevators remaining in Manitoba. The elevator closed in January 2001 and was slated for demolition but the WITC saw its potential as



opposite Prairie Dog Central passengers enjoy the casual ambience in Warren
right the Country Market is popular with passengers and residents alike
far right The Prairie Dog Central passenger cars



a tourist attraction. Once a hub of activity for farmers, the elevator now provides an attractive venue for tours and special events. Passengers detrain onto a newly built platform at the elevator. A Quonset houses the Country Market.

Important supporters include the Warren and District Lions Club, Super Six Community Futures Development Corporation, Interlake Tourism Association, Warren and District Chamber of Commerce, Woodlands Community Development Corporation, RM of Woodlands, Village of Warren, Vintage Locomotive Society, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism and the Manitoba Tourism Education Council.

Ripples from this project extend well beyond PDC ridership to involve many local people who've become regulars at the Country Market, enjoying the activities. The WITC develops tour packages tailored to specific interests, which can include the Woodlands Pioneer Museum, V. Gross Doll Museum and Gift Shop near Warren, Oak Hammock Marsh, Stonewall Quarry Park, Pioneer Quest Cabin tour, a day at the beach, or Lower Fort Garry. Other nearby attractions are the Prime Meridian Trail and the South Interlake Golf and Country Club.



"The development of the WITC has been a win-win situation for Warren," says Claire Guenther, founder, past president and current secretary of the WITC. "In addition to saving a community landmark, other non-profit organizations have been inspired, established businesses have benefited, new businesses opened and new residents have moved into the community."

Claire recommends, "Be aware of the past, honour it, and be prepared to bring your project into the future in a way that will be sustainable.

"Know who your partners are and seek the knowledge they can impart.

"Keep the passion, be clear about the task and get it done!"

www.rmwoodlands.info/tourist_witc.html

Your Own Backyard

Annual Heritage Tours

RMs of Langford, Lansdowne, Rosedale and Minto



A high level of co-operation between three municipalities and their creative Municipal Heritage Advisory Committees (MHAC) has successfully raised the region's heritage profile.

In 2000, the Neepawa Lily Festival Committee asked the Langford and Lansdowne Heritage Advisory Committees

to create a special event for RV club members attending the festival. An afternoon tour of a heritage house, ancient and pioneer sites along Arden Ridge and other points of interest was planned and well attended.

The following year local residents suggested a public one-day tour highlighting other historical places. In 2002, it was offered for two days, expanding to include the RM of Rosedale the next year. Since 2004, the tour has run for three days. In 2006, a fourth partner, the RM of Minto, joins the tour.

Incredibly, the tours have never visited the same place twice in five years, a testament to the MHACs' research skills. Tours have included heritage homes (the most popular stops), historical sites, farms, sawmills, a 100-year-old school, an old church and Hutterite colonies. Participants have seen remnants of ancient trails, discovered the art of sheep shearing and spinning wool, examined former transportation modes and heard area residents tell stories from pioneer days.

Travelling in a 22-passenger bus, the one-day tour consists of morning coffee at a heritage home, lunch at a community or church hall or Hutterite colony and afternoon coffee at a home, hall or



opposite top A young tourist poses on the Meeting Stone
opposite bottom An ancient gathering place and a stop on one of the tours, the Meeting Stone has attracted visitors for centuries
right top Visitors marvel at Arden's giant crocuses
right bottom Heritage Tour Committee members (l to r): Ray Minkus, Orval Tanner, Carol Ranson, Marjorie Goodwin, Jim Baker, Judy Pegoski, Kathy Jasiencyk, Bill Fraser. Missing are Gerald Barber and Janice Sumner



colony. The lunches and coffee breaks support local community groups. People familiar with the area act as guides on the bus. Site owners are encouraged to give talks.



The charge for the 9:00 am to 4:30 pm tour - sold out with a waiting list the last three years - is \$50, all-inclusive. The three MHACs split the profits, about \$900 each, to use for local projects.

RM offices provide cash sponsorships and photocopying. A mini-bus or Handy Transit bus is hired or donated (Riverside Hutterite Colony donated a bus for two years) and a school bus driver volunteers each year.

The tours satisfy a growing hunger for authentic heritage experience among tourists and local people. Successful because of its broad appeal and rich cultural diversity, the tour has produced a blossoming of community pride.

"All of a sudden people go from thinking 'there is nothing here to see' to thinking 'there must be something of interest, maybe we should find out what the tour is going to be looking at'," says Kathy Jasiencyk, Chairperson of the joint Committees for the municipalities. She hopes the tours raise

awareness, resulting in preservation of more sites.

To help plan a tour of your area, these are Kathy's suggestions, "Plan your trip to include a diverse selection of sites. Appeal to a wide selection of ages and both genders.

"Give full value for what you are charging. Door prizes help create a positive outlook. Lunches and coffee breaks should be sufficient for all and strategically placed through the day.

"Most importantly, get your councils, committees and media onside. We've had wonderful co-operation from the press printing our tour write-ups. We spend nothing on advertising other than a thank-you to our sponsors. This type of project will literally sell itself once people know what it is about."

www.ransonridge.com

Tradition is a Non-Renewable Resource

Portage Collegiate Institute Archives Portage la Prairie

What began as an archive for Portage Collegiate Institute (PCI) has evolved into a living and significant history of the city and district.

The PCI Millennium Committee was looking for a project when history teacher James Kostuchuk suggested a school archive. Much of PCI's history (the oldest operating collegiate in Manitoba dating back to 1882) was lost in a 1954 fire. An archive could fill that void, preserve discovered and donated materials and collect oral history.

In 2001, a credit course in archives, designed by James Kostuchuk for Grades 11 and 12, created intense student interest. Collecting and conservation began in 2002.

In the archival course, 25 students work on one or two projects per year. One facet of the course is oral history gathered by interviewing seniors who attended PCI. Over 250 interviews have been conducted. Material items, a video library and a web site provide access for the public.

One student discovered a collection

of 25,000 fully captioned negatives taken by photographer Yosh Tashiro between 1952 and 1974 for the local newspaper, *The Daily Graphic*. This discovery received local and national media coverage, resulting in great interest in the community.

The PCI archive adopted the collection in 2003. Fifteen students are scanning and indexing the negatives. Once the world sees the Tashiro images - some expected online in 2006 - the archive will expand as a school initiative.

In 2004, archive student Lisa Pao published a 200-page PCI history book researched solely from the archive.



Portage School Division governs the archive and provides a teacher, office and classroom space. Total cost for computers, scanners and basic conservation supplies was \$15,000, all fundraised using a 15-minute student-centred presentation. Financial support came from many groups including the City and RM of Portage, Manitoba Historical Society, Thomas Sill Foundation, Lion's Club, Kinsmen, ANAF Legion, Portage Genealogy Group and private donations.

Provincial government resources flowed through the Association for Manitoba Archives who provided professional support.

Frequent coverage in *The Daily Graphic*, *Winnipeg Free Press* and CBC, and exposure through the Manitoba Historical Society helped promote the project.

A benchmark of success, the archive is seeking provincial accreditation, creating a how-to presentation so other schools can start archival programs, and hoping for a public room to present historical materials.

below Five Yosh Tashiro photographs represent local events and people



“Tradition cannot be begged or borrowed.”

The archive brought together the school division, principal, student body and community, renewing old connections and creating new ones spanning generations.

“Tradition cannot be begged or borrowed. Tradition is a non-renewable resource and needs to be conserved.”

Wise words from James Kostuchuk who offers this advice for your project, “Promote it like mad. We presented to every service group and community organization that would have us. Use an audio-visual component – very important! You need to show people what you do, not just talk about it. We made a professional brochure.

“Ask for money but for specific projects. People will come on board if they can make a real connection with a person or event.

“Once you have money, show them some results. Go back to them and thank them.”



right Yosh Tashiro cradles his camera, late 1940s or early 1950s

www.plpsd.mb.ca/pci/archive

An Impressive Folk Site

Negrych Pioneer Homestead RM of Gilbert Plains

Superlatives swirl around the Negrych homestead: the most complete, best-preserved Ukrainian farmstead in Canada, the only Canadian example of a long shingle Carpathian roof, a rare working log and clay cook stove or *peeche*, the oldest known Ukrainian dwelling on its original site. Little wonder it is a Provincial and National Heritage Site.

Wasył and Anna Negrych and their seven children, aged 9 months to 19 years, immigrated to Canada from the highlands of western Ukraine in 1897. After a harrowing journey at sea, they passed through Quebec City, Winnipeg and Dauphin to reach their homestead on the Drifting River. As advertised, a quarter section of land cost \$10. Extra quarters cost \$3 an acre. Four Negrych families homesteaded on the inside corners of a section, creating a tiny Ukrainian community.

The family built all the houses, barns, bunkhouse, fences and granaries solely from materials found on their own land. Well-constructed vernacular buildings, comfortable and practical with finished plaster interiors, were constructed using hewn logs. The continued existence of ten traditional build-

ings, many over a hundred years old, on one site is a testament to the ingenuity, craftsmanship and tenacity of the Negrych pioneers. Since the buildings remain among the original family orchards of apple and plum trees, gardens and fields, they are also a tribute to astute conservation practices.

When the last of the twelve Negrych children moved off the homestead in 1990, it was much



as it had been in 1897 – no running water, electricity or telephone. Approached by the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch in 1991, the local Lion's Club operated the homestead for two years during which time it was designated a Provincial Heritage Site. Gilbert Plains and District Historical



Society took over preservation, maintenance and promotion of the site in 1993, setting up a local ten-person board. Parks Canada recognized it as a National Heritage Site in 2000.

The RM of Gilbert Plains owns the 23-acre site and leases it to the Society. Since the homestead went from being a lived-in farm to a historic site, little restoration was needed. The major restoration was re-shingling the roofs, supported by a Historic Resources Branch Designated Heritage Building grant. The Society held raffles and sought local donations to provide matching funds.

An increasingly popular tourist destination, the

site is operated on an annual Provincial Museum Grant and federal and provincial student summer employment grants. Although the Society is struggling with declining membership, it is actively working to bring more young people on board.

The emergence of the site as an important regional tourist attraction is due in large measure to community support and the hard work of the Gilbert Plains and District Historical Society.

Eugene Dedio, Vice-President of the Historical Society suggests, "Have broad community support. The more people aware and involved the more successful you will likely be.



“Develop a long term plan. Things might look easy in the short term but you need to have a clear vision and a solid plan to carry through.

“Find key volunteers, good organizers who are enthusiastic about the project and have energy to devote to it over the long term.”

opposite left Annie and Stephen Negrych at the front door of their house

opposite right interior of Negrych house

above the bunkhouse with its rare long shingle Carpathian roof

www.gilbertplains.com

A View at History

Clay Banks Buffalo Jump Cartwright, Mather, RM of Roblin

People of the Besant and Sonata cultures chose this site 2,500 years ago for its access to water (Badger Creek), shelter (the valley) and topography suitable for large-scale buffalo kills (the sheer drop at the clay banks). Today a viewing site, interpretive signage and a student workbook evoke and preserve its history.

In 2003, the Roblin-Cartwright Community Development Corporation (CDC) undertook researching the clay banks area with professional assistance from the Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Brandon University and the University of Manitoba. These experts confirmed the site's use as an ancient buffalo jump and settlement.

Developing a vantage point across the valley from the site ensures its archaeological resources will not be disturbed. To create public access an existing road allowance was linked with a newly built summer road across private property.

Based on Historic Resources Branch research, a large interpretive sign clearly explaining the significance of the site was erected. Directional signs to guide visitors have been installed and an informational brochure printed. Promotion involves a

rack card display at major tourist information stops around the province, a website and brochures.

Along with valuable advice about signage, fencing and advertising, Culture, Heritage and Tourism provided a grant for \$720, half the cost of the interpretive sign and workbooks. Matching funds came from the local CDC, which is funded by the Village and RM Councils.

Future improvements include a sheltering roof over the interpretive sign, visitor comment box, picnic area and viewing glasses. A supportive local conservation group may provide landscaping.

Due to its self-guiding nature, the project is sustainable, requiring no volunteer time. The RM and Village Councils ensure the road and site are maintained.

The buffalo jump complements Cartwright's Heritage Village, a collection of five museums including an 1884 school, 1929 Manitoba Telephone System building, post office and shoe shop. The village boasts an operational blacksmith shop dating from 1888.

To aid and encourage young people to expand



top a winter mist shrouds the clay banks

bottom colourful interpretive sign explains the significance of the scene across the valley



their local knowledge, CDC Economic Development Officer Penny Burton and her daughter Jenny created a student workbook for Grades 2 to 6. The workbook, which traces local history from pre-contact to the present and stimulates students to develop a sense of their own heritage, is used on field trips to the buffalo jump, area museums and

other significant educational sites. The practical format of the workbook allows easy mailing and photocopying.

The Clay Banks Buffalo Jump site has become a new source of pride for the district, raising awareness about its history and creating a greater appreciation of modern conveniences and facilities. The site encourages tourism to the area and raises the profile of the Community Development Corporation and the Heritage Village.

Penny Burton gladly shares her advice, “Do not expect ‘overnight development’ as community emergencies such as flooded roads and mending bridges take precedence.

“Be extremely careful when developing signs and brochures ensuring as many people’s suggestions are taken on board as possible.

“Seek advice from as many agencies as possible regarding wording on interpretive signs. The advice they can give is invaluable.”

www.cartwrightmb.ca

Preserving Parish Heritage

Monseigneur Tache Historic Site Sainte-Genevieve, RM of Taché

A rural municipality's anniversary sparks awareness of Métis culture embodied by a Municipal Heritage Site church and rectory.



To preserve buildings constructed by early parishioners the community of Sainte-Genevieve and the surrounding RM of Taché created the Monseigneur Taché Historic Site. Sainte-Genevieve Roman Catholic Church, designated a Municipal Heritage Site in 1989, is the centerpiece of the site, which includes a cemetery and the Old Rectory,

now converted into a museum. Built in 1918, both buildings are made entirely of wood, no plaster.

The Old Rectory Museum houses pioneer and religious artifacts, many donated by the Saint-Boniface Historical Society and the Archdiocese of

Saint-Boniface. The church contains several larger artifacts and paintings.

The Monseigneur Taché Historic Site Corporation administers the pooled resources of the RM of Taché Council and the Historic Site Board of Directors. In 2005, the Corporation acquired ownership of the parish site from the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface.

One of the oldest municipalities in Manitoba, the RM of Taché celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2005. It fell to the village of Sainte-Genevieve to host the festivities and celebrate area heritage, especially as it relates to their Roman Catholic Church. They used the event to officially open the Municipal Heritage Site, raising awareness about its significance in Métis history.

The RM paid the Corporation \$2856 to organize and host the anniversary event. A Celebrate Canada grant of \$999 and \$200 from Caisse Populaire de La Verendrye accounted for the rest of its funding. Gifts-in-kind came from a local greenhouse and other businesses donated to a silent auction.

For the anniversary, the RM prepared and delivered the invitations and created their first newsletter to

promote the event. Green Teams from Lorette and Landmark prepared the site and local firefighters directed traffic. The June 2005 celebration was a resounding success.

Coincidentally, 50 years before, the only Ward 6 Reeve of the RM, Henri Legal, died while in office. In his honour, 125 spruce saplings, donated by the RM, were planted at the site and named The Henri Legal Grove.

The community benefited from the anniversary event by making connections with newer residents and cementing old familiar ties in the municipality. A new level of networking was achieved among diverse organizations and businesses. Volunteers discovered two family-owned museums in the district, which they promoted along with the heritage site.

“Many first-time visitors to the Monseigneur Taché Historic Site came away with a new awareness of their Métis heritage,” explained Diane Dornez-Laxdal, president of the Corporation.

Diane recommends three things, “Plan ahead at least one year. Location and timing are both crucial. Always have a Plan B.



opposite Sainte-Genevieve Roman Catholic Church, built in 1918, was declared a Municipal Heritage Site in 1989
top La Compagnie de la Verendrye fire muskets, adding historic ambience to the Taché anniversary
bottom on shovel duty planting the Henri Legal Grove are area resident Donald Morin and RM Councillor Bob Koop

“Networking. Know your limitations and do not be afraid to delegate. There is strength in numbers. There is more talent out there than anyone can imagine.

“Communication and promotion. More is better than less. Sooner is better than later. Be aware of misperceptions. They need to be undone.”

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8 youth with baking, Olivier Beck; **9** little girl, Esther Engbrecht; housebarn interpretive centre, Margruite Krahn; **10** Neuberghthal resident with baking, Ian Hall; Russian bake heater, Olivier Beck; **11** Indian Residential School, courtesy of Long Plain First Nation (LPFN); **12** aerial view of Residential School Museum, courtesy of LPFN; model of Museum, courtesy of LPFN; **13** Provincial Heritage Site Designation ceremony, David Firman; **14** Captain William Robinson, courtesy of Manitoba Archives; **15** Selkirk street signs, Bud Oliver; **16** Gord Emberley with his Stinson Voyager, Verna Emberley; **18** Ralph Linklater bending snowshoes, Paul Legault; **19** blacksmith shop opening with Mike Camp and Betty Landego, Paul Legault; **20** first snowfall at the museum, Paul Legault; **21** portrait of Gabrielle Roy, Marco Montess, courtesy of La Maison Gabrielle Roy; **22** Roy house exterior, courtesy of La Maison Gabrielle Roy; **23** Roy House kitchen, courtesy of the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch (HRB); Roy house study, courtesy of the HRB; **24** Hamiota Arts Centre, Reid Dickie; **25** Hamiota bank vault with Tracy Pederson & Harry Andrew, Ian Hall; **26** Gimli public school, courtesy of the HRB; **27** old desks at Gimli school, courtesy of the HRB; **28** Inglis grain elevator row after restoration, David Firman; **29** three workers at Inglis, Cindi Berg; **30** wagon and grain elevator, David Firman; **31** painting by Norman Criddle, courtesy of the Sipiweske Museum, Wawanasa; **32** Norman Criddle at entomology lab, courtesy of the Sipiweske Museum; **33** Criddle-Vane family photo, courtesy of the Sipiweske Museum; Criddle-Vane home, courtesy of the Sipiweske Museum; **34** three students at archaeological dig, courtesy of White Spruce Archaeology; **35** two students

at archaeological dig, courtesy of White Spruce Archaeology; **36** Heather Ewasiuk at Moreland Manor, Ian Hall; **37** Agricultural Display Building II, courtesy of the HRB; **38** excited school children at Transcona Historical Museum (THM), courtesy of THM; exterior of the Transcona Historical Museum, courtesy of THM; **39** THM parade, courtesy of THM; **40** Cathie Gibson-Robbins, Paul Martin, Bernie Wolfe, Mitchell Blostein in front of the THM, courtesy of THM; Ken A. Stein and Sheryl Kolt at the Remembrance Day ceremony, courtesy of THM; **41** Prairie Dog Central steaming across the prairie, courtesy of Prairie Dog Central (PDC); **42** Prairie Dog Central at Inkster Junction Station, courtesy of PDC; children playing at Warren station, courtesy of PDC; **43** Prairie Dog Central diesel locomotive, courtesy of PDC; **44** train stop in Warren, courtesy of PDC; **45** the market in Warren, courtesy of PDC; Prairie Dog Central passenger cars, courtesy of PDC; **46** little boy on meeting stone, Orval Tanner; meeting stone, Orval Tanner; **47** giant crocuses in Arden, Orval Tanner; Heritage Tours committee, Carol Ranson; **48-49** five photos by Yosh Tashiro, courtesy of the PCI Archive; **50** Yosh Tashiro with his camera, photographer unknown, courtesy of Bernice Tashiro; **51** Negrych farmyard, courtesy of the Historic Resources Branch; **52** Steven & Annie Negrych, courtesy of the HRB; interior of Negrych house, courtesy of the HRB; **53** Negrych bunkhouse, courtesy of the HRB; **55** view of Clay Banks, Penny Burton; interpretive sign, Penny Burton; **56** exterior of Sainte-Genevieve Roman Catholic Church, courtesy of the HRB; **57** La Compagnie de la Verendrye firing muskets, Cameron Laxdal; tree-planters, Cameron Laxdal; **61** photo of Reid Dickie, Linda Tooley

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The Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism supports communities and individuals in their efforts to identify, protect, and celebrate their heritage. For more information, please contact:

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CHM

Community Heritage Manitoba is a province-wide association of Municipal Heritage Advisory Committees or MHACs. These committees are established by municipal councils to advise them on community heritage matters.

The goal of Community Heritage Manitoba is to support member MHACs in their efforts to identify, protect and interpret the heritage of their communities.

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About the Author

Born and raised in rural Manitoba, Reid Dickie is a freelance writer and researcher with a deep and varied background. He writes about architecture, history and heritage issues, ecology, travel, spirituality, shamanism, aboriginal cultures, music and art for numerous businesses, provincial and civic government departments, publications and cultural organizations. He also pens hopeful fiction.



He has been published in the Winnipeg Free Press, Canadian Writer's Journal Choice Works, Shoal Lake Star, Insolent Rudder and The Manitoban Literary Supplement, among others.

Reid has expanded his series of Winnipeg Free Press articles about Winnipeg's grand old schools into a book. *This Old School* traces the history and architecture of 41 local schools. It will be completed in 2006.

In 2004, he began a Rural Manitoba Architectural Inventory, a personal project that involves photographing and describing old and interesting buildings all over the province. An ambitious, long-term endeavour, so far, he has visited 80 towns and villages and recorded almost 300 sites.

Well traveled on the Canadian prairies, Reid is an avid hiker and camper. He lives in Winnipeg with his wife, Linda Tooley.

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between these covers

discover a heritage sparkplug, 1880s steam locomotive, buffalo jump, British, Mennonite and Ukrainian pioneer homesteads, unique variations on heritage tours, street naming, museums and a world famous writer - all part of Manitoba's living history.