

# Three Rivers Trail Newsletter

## (Arm River – Qu'Appelle River – South Saskatchewan River)

Three Rivers Trail Association (TRTA), Box 367, Craik, SK, S0G 0V0.

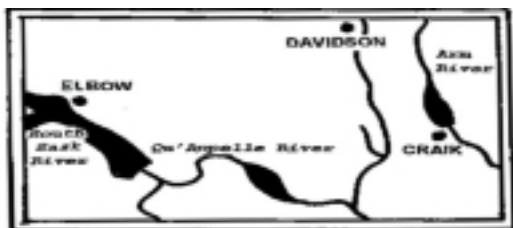
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### The TRTA Objectives:

- To promote the beauty of valley vistas, the prairie geography and the 'spirit' of the land
- To give an understanding and appreciation of grassland ecology by identifying points of interests and associated trails in glacial pothole country, sand hills, wetlands, and old glacial valleys
- To make maps showing birding trails and heritage sites
- To mark hiking and equestrian trails with metal posts showing the TRTA Logo (below):



### The TRTA Area:



### The TRTA Board of Directors:

Bob Doig, Chamberlain  
Lyle/Christine Benz, Aylesbury  
Sterling Schollar, Craik  
Doug McIvor, Girvin  
Don Wilkins, Girvin  
Gloria Kadlec, Bladworth  
Ed Spratt, Davidson (Chairman)  
Shirley Eade, Craik (Sec./Treasurer)

### TRTA Held Annual Meeting

On November 8, 2004, at the Craik Eco-Center, TRTA held its 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM (after its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of operation). We had an enjoyable supper with 22 people attending. We had 3 guests that addressed our meeting.

First, Barbara Hanbidge, Biologist, of Ducks Unlimited told us that DU would support the Birding Observation Site that has recently been constructed overlooking the Arm Lake. She will supply 6 informational signs at the site. Metal sign holders/posts are now being constructed by Don Wilkins.

Secondly, John Gries of Regina presented a business plan for a touring company using horses and caravans. These types of tours are popular in Germany and Ireland. He has a horse & caravan unit himself and he has plenty of contacts in Germany to provide the tourists. What he now needs are investors who will buy horse/caravan units. He has the building plans for a caravan that costs about \$8000 to build. He is looking for tour routes and stop-over places – each tour could last up to 10 days.

The third presenter, Russ McPherson of Community Futures, Outlook, told us about tourism development in the Lake Deifenbaker and Outlook

regions, including the extension of the Trans-Canada Trail.

The general meeting reviewed the past activities of TRTA and made a motion that we stay the course for more development, keeping our current slate of directors. A planning meeting will be held in the spring, likely at Trails End Ranch, so as to dovetail our programs with theirs.

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### TRTA Joins Lake Deifenbaker Tourist Association (LDTA)

The Lake Deifenbaker Tourist Association (LDTA) was formed by local governments and business enterprises to promote tourism in the region around Lake Deifenbaker. One driving force behind the organization was Muriel Peterson of Elbow, who retired as Chair of the Board last year. She edited the annual picturesque tourist pamphlet that promotes tourism from Saskatchewan Landing to Outlook, including such towns as Tugaskie, Beechy, Lucky Lake, Riverhurst, Elbow, Loreburn, and Macrorie.

The Board of Directors is made up from representatives of local governments and business based on sub-regions. TRTA was invited to the annual meeting and was represented by Ed Spratt and Don Wilkins. It was obvious that we were the only people there from their SE region (the piece of the pie which is encompassed by Chamberlain - Bladworth - Elbow). LDTA has an interest in liaison with Davidson and Craik to have them join golf tours that includes Riverhurst, Elbow and Outlook. Also, links should be strengthened between the Parks at Craik and Elbow. A lobby should be started to create a paved tourist road from the Louis Riel Trail (LRT) to Elbow. The LDTA board now has members from the Whitecap reserve. They are interested in encouraging the visitors that come to their casino, golf course and hotel-resort to stay several days and tour south to the Gardiner Dam, Outlook and Elbow. The main task of LDTA is to convince Saskatoon people to consider Lake Deifenbaker as their lake and not always to think they have to go north to a lake. Sask-Tourism reports that currently there is more interest in Lake Deifenbaker from Calgary than there is from Saskatoon.

The first step is to rebuild highway 219.



The LDTA has a good liaison with the Trans Canada Trail Assoc. (TCTA) because there are segments of the Trans-Canada Trail already existing in the region, from Douglas

Park to Danielson Park to Outlook. TRTA is interested in working with TCTA/LDTA to develop trails from the Arm River (Craik Regional Park) to the Qu'Appelle valley (past Eyebrow Lake) and/or to Douglas Provincial Park via the Elbow sandhills.

### New Tour Company in Craik

Pelican Eco-Tours will be operating a 15 passenger bus out of the Eco-Center at Craik starting in May, 2005. There will be short and long trips around the TRTA region, and links with tourist stops like Moose Jaw and Whitecap to facilitate 2 way exchange of visitors. For information phone (306) 734-2340.

# A Sentinel on the Louis Riel Trail

by Lorraine Gust

There is a big white farmhouse off the highway north of Davidson that has stood for 100 years. While some farms in Saskatchewan are celebrating a hundred years in the same family, there are other farms existing today that are not getting recognition as pioneer farms. Steve and Lorraine Gust of Davidson Saskatchewan operate one such farm.

This farm was started by the Wells family from Chicago when, in 1902, they first started to invest and farm in the Assiniboia region of the NWT. They built a prestigious farm home two years later north of the growing community of shacks, which in 1905, was incorporated as the town of Davidson.



The Wells Land & Cattle Co. was registered in Canada in 1904 and became “agents with farming experiences” involved in real estate. They were agents for certain sections of land in several townships around Davidson, from the Arm River to the Qu’Appelle. They brought in dozens of settlers from the USA. One of their brochures from 1912 promotes “a favorable climate, quality land, stable government, the best class of settlers, efficient up to date school system, low taxes, inexhaustible water supply, quantity of reasonable priced labor and favorable availability of capital loans” thus encouraging settlers to every quarter of land. The Wells Company later purchased banks, elevators, and cattle herds.

Managers of the Arm River Farms Ltd., the big farm north of Davidson, took ambitious leadership roles. Names like Rueben Lloyd, Fred Roets, Morley Coxworth, Vernon Bailey and John Sanderson come to mind. From the early days, demonstration plots for cereal, vegetable and fruit tree crops gave added insight into new varieties and farming practices. Root cellars were demonstrated. Custom plowing and threshing were done. Even a game preserve flourished north of the yard with deer, antelope, pheasants, partridge, wild turkey etc. Various tree rows were planted for yard and animal protection.

Starting in 1974, the large farming unit was split-up and most of the corporate land was sold. The NDP

government had made a new law forbidding foreign ownership of large tracts of land and most large American landowners gradually sold out. In 1980 Steve and Lorraine Gust purchased the homestead, and by that time, they found the big home and yard in bad disrepair.

The old home intrigued Lorraine. The summer kitchen, large pantry and Rams Pasture (a second floor sleeping quarters for hired men) were all novelties that she’d never witnessed in northern Saskatchewan. A ladies camisole and a pair of long-legged bloomers (circa 1890’s) found in the attic are still treasured today. Ignoring advice from her father to “light a match to this old thing” she with the help of Kae Rutherford stripped wood and wallpaper to restore the lovely old home.

Over the hundred years the home and yard have evolved. By 1981 the old barn was full of manure and mice; and also very close to the house, so it was burned. New out-buildings were constructed. The house is constantly being refurbished. Lorraine has decorated the interior with a large selection of antique furniture and artifacts. In the yard, over grown and gnarled tree rows were replaced. Some character structures still remain. The wind mill and pump house now serve as a garden house and shed. The old winter water trough with a new clear roof installed is now the greenhouse. The outside water trough provides habitat for pond life. The original circular sidewalk and long straight front walk has provided an excellent track for bikes and toy wagons for over one hundred years. Hopefully this game can continue under the newly planted maple allee.

This farm has exemplified modern progressive farming techniques through several generations for 100 years. Farming has evolved through horse-power to large tractors; from the first 12-foot plow to the current modern 60-foot cultivator and air-seeder. The new varieties and introduced crops of today would not be recognized by our pioneers!



## Black & White or Colour?

The hard copies of this Newsletter are going out as B&W because of the cost of printing. Those that have given us their email address will be getting this Newsletter by email. All Newsletters are available in colour by email from [d.m.d@sasktel.net](mailto:d.m.d@sasktel.net) or can be read and/or downloaded from [www.craik.ca](http://www.craik.ca) , where TRTA events are also listed. Hopefully TRTA information will soon be available on [www.townofdavidson.com](http://www.townofdavidson.com) and [www.elbowsask.com](http://www.elbowsask.com) .

TRTA is looking for volunteer subscription fees (donations) from those who receive this publication, and wish to keep it coming. Funding to cover the cost of production will enable further expansion of the TRTA Newsletter mailing list. We now have a track record – this is the sixth Newsletter. More volunteers have agreed to write ‘stories’, like Lorraine’s. Gradually we will collect all stories and publish a booklet including maps.