

## First Peoples of the Valleylands

Welcome to the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands self-directed tours. These itineraries guide you through the history and geography of this beautiful and interesting landscape. Several different tours, featuring driving, cycling and walking, lead you on an exploration of four historical and cultural themes: Agriculture, Settlement, First Nations, Métis and the Fur Trade; and Arts and Nature.

*The purpose of this route description is to provide information on a self-guided drive and walk. The walking described includes public and private lands and trails. While enjoying yourself, please drive and walk carefully as you are responsible to ensure your own safety and that any activity is within your abilities. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate and up-to-date. However, we are unable to accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained as a result of anyone relying upon this information.*

Imagine a time before highways crisscrossed the prairies and towns appeared every 50 kilometres. Imagine a time when you could gaze out over a wide-open prairie to see thousands of bison grazing. Imagine a time when you could see canoe brigades of fur traders travelling up and down the rivers. Today you will journey back to that time as you travel to sites of former fur trading posts, a Métis settlement and several regional museums housing local Aboriginal treasures that date back long before Europeans arrived.

Today is a full day tour that starts from and returns to Russell, Manitoba. As this tour travels in a circle, you can pick it up at any point and come back to where you began. It is a great tour for anyone staying in or visiting the region and looking for a day activity.

### **Fort Ellice Site**

At the time of printing, access to the Fort Ellice site is not permitted. This may change in the future. You can check with the staff at the Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre in St. Lazare for more information. **Please do not visit the site without permission.**

### **Optional Ste. Madeleine Extension**

For an optional extension to this tour, visit the former Métis settlement of Ste. Madeleine, west of Binscarth. This requires calling in advance for permission to visit the site, as it is located in a community pasture. **Please call John and Jean Istash at (306) 534-4416.** If there is no answer, leave a message stating your name and phone number and when you will be visiting the site. This will suffice for permission. You should also be aware that the track through the pasture can be very rough and a vehicle with off-road features is recommended. Alternatively, you can leave your car at the gate and walk about 2 kilometres to the site.

There are restaurants, cafes and stores in Russell, Binscarth, Birtle and St. Lazare, Manitoba as well as Spy Hill, Saskatchewan. You will find many places along the way that are perfect for a picnic. Remember that there is a time difference between Saskatchewan and Manitoba from mid March until the beginning of November. Manitoba is one hour ahead of Saskatchewan during this time.

### On Today's Trip You Will Visit the Following

#### Travel Manitoba Information Booth

Located at the junction of Hwys 16 and 83 in Russell, MB

Open from mid May to Labour Day  
Daily from 9:00 – 7:00

#### Ste. Madeleine Métis Cultural Centre

Located at 24 Russell Street in Binscarth, MB

**Open by appointment only**

**Contact:** Kate or Deana

**Phone:** (204) 532-2389 (Kate) or  
(204) 532-2487 (Deana)

#### Birdtail Country Museum

Located at 783 Main Street, Birtle, MB

**Phone:** (204) 842-3363 (July & August)

Open July and August

Monday – Friday 1:00 – 5:00

Also open by appointment

Donations graciously accepted

**Call (204) 842-5350 or (204) 842-5342 for appointments during off-season.**

#### Carlton Trail Regional Park

Located off of Hwy 8 north of Spy Hill, SK

**Phone:** (306) 534-4724

**Email:** [carlpark@sasktel.net](mailto:carlpark@sasktel.net)

Open from May to Spetember

Park passes \$5 daily or \$30 seasonal

<http://www.saskregionalparks.ca/showPark.php?id=carltontrail>

#### The Boulton Manor – Bed and Breakfast

Located at 322 Memorial Avenue S in Russell, MB

**Contact:** Linda and Ward Tweet

**Phone:** (204) 773-3267

Open year round

#### Binscarth Museum

Located at 162 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Binscarth, MB

**Phone:** (204) 532-2217

Open from 9:00 – 5:00 in July and August

Donations graciously accepted

**Call ahead to book tours in off season or after regular hours – contact details on website**

[www.binscarthmb.com/museum](http://www.binscarthmb.com/museum)

#### Birtle Tourist Information Centre at Riverside Park

Located off of Hwy 83 on the west side of Birtle

**Phone:** (204) 842-3854

Open from May until September long weekend

daily from 11:00 – 3:00 & 4:00 – 8:00

#### Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre

Located at 234 Main Street in St. Lazare, MB

**Phone:** (204) 683-2246

**Email:** [pfcddc@mts.net](mailto:pfcddc@mts.net)

Open from Monday – Saturday 9:00 – 5:00

#### Spy Hill Museum

Located in Spy Hill, SK

**Phone:** (306) 534-2147 or (306) 534-4462

**Open by appointment only – call ahead**

Your excursion begins in Russell, Manitoba. To get to Russell from Winnipeg, take the Trans Canada Highway to the junction with Hwy 16 and follow Hwy 16 to Russell. To get here from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, head east on Hwy 16. From Regina, take Hwy 10 to Melville then head east on Hwy 15 until you reach Hwy 16 and follow Hwy 16 east into Russell. Before you begin your adventure, stop at the Travel Manitoba Information Booth for information on local sites and services. If you are coming from the west, you can stop at the Tourism Saskatchewan Visitor Reception Centre in Langenburg as well. Information brochures will also be available at many of the sites that you will be visiting

today. Outside Russell, stop to say “Hi” and get a picture with Arthur the bull, the town’s mascot.

km to next location	Directions	Total km
0.0	Start from the parking lot of the Travel Manitoba Info Booth in Russell, Manitoba, which is located near the junction of Hwys 16 and 83 and next to the large statue of a bull.	0.0
	Leave the parking by turning left onto the service road so that the bull is on your left.	
0.1	Turn right onto unmarked road that intersects with Hwy 16. Then turn right onto Hwy 16.	0.1
0.4	Turn left at the Petro-Canada station to enter the Town of Russell.	0.5
0.1	Turn right onto Service Road.	0.6
0.2	Turn left onto the first street you come to. This is Memorial Avenue.	0.8
0.2	On your left is The Boulton Manor.	1.0

Boulton Manor is one of the major historical houses in Russell. It was built in 1894 and was home to Major and Mrs. Charles A. Boulton. Major Boulton led a group of local volunteer men known as “Boulton’s Scouts” against the Métis in the Northwest Rebellion. Boulton’s Scouts saw action at several battles including at Batoche, which resulted in the capture and subsequent hanging of Louis Riel, now referred to as the “Father of Manitoba”.

Leave your car parked here and take a short walk down Memorial Avenue. This quiet street gets its name from the two memorials you’ll see along the way. You can’t miss the first one as it’s situated in the middle of the street. Located at the intersection of Memorial Avenue and Assiniboine Street, it is the town’s war memorial. The statue is of John McCrae who wrote “In Flanders Fields”.

As you continue down Memorial Avenue, you’ll encounter a very old stone cairn at the intersection with Westbourne Street. This cairn is dedicated to local men who were part of the Boulton Scouts.

0.5	Return to Hwy 16 where the Petro-Canada station was. Turn left and head east away from Russell – you’ll notice the Russell Inn on your left as you leave town.	1.5
16.5	Turn right at Esso gas station onto Russell Street as you enter the Town of Binscarth.	18.0
0.7	Turn left onto 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue and park your car.	18.7

At the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Russell Street is St. Madeleine’s Métis Cultural Centre. The Binscarth School recently finished a mural on the front of the building. With an appointment, you can head inside and learn more about this former Métis settlement. There is an optional excursion to the site towards the end of this tour. If you would like

to visit this site, please note the information at the beginning regarding access and permission.

Behind the cultural centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is the Binscarth Museum. Inside the museum you can see several examples of well-preserved local Aboriginal artifacts. There is also a replica model of the historic Fort Ellice whose site you will visit shortly.

<b>0.7</b>	Return to Hwy 16 and turn right so that the Esso station is on your right as you leave Binscarth.	<b>19.4</b>
<b>22.2</b>	Turn right following Hwy 83 South.	<b>41.6</b>
<b>10.8</b>	Turn right onto unmarked gravel road near large white building with the word "INFO" on the side in black letters.	<b>52.4</b>
<b>0.1</b>	Turn right at the stop sign then turn left and drive underneath the Park archway.	<b>52.5</b>
<b>0.1</b>	Reach Birtle Beach parking lot.	<b>52.6</b>

If you are interested in an enjoyable walking tour around the Birdtail River, check out the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands "Gardens, Parks and the Arts" self-guided tour, which visits the park as well as several local gardens and the arboretum.

<b>0.3</b>	Leave the parking lot the way you came. Turn right at the stop sign and continue to the intersection with Hwy 16. Turn right onto Hwy 16.	<b>52.9</b>
<b>0.7</b>	As you enter the Town of Birtle you are now on Main Street. Stop and park near the Birdtail County Museum, which is between 7 <sup>th</sup> Street and 8 <sup>th</sup> Street. The yellow painted curbs along Main Street mean no parking.	<b>53.6</b>

Head inside the Birdtail County Museum to learn about the history of the fur trade in the region and see a sampling of Aboriginal artifacts.

<b>0.1</b>	From the museum continue on Main Street and turn left onto 8 <sup>th</sup> Street.	<b>53.7</b>
<b>0.1</b>	Turn left at stop sign onto St. Clare Street.	<b>53.8</b>
<b>0.3</b>	Turn right at stop sign onto Centre Street.	<b>54.1</b>
<b>0.2</b>	Continue over bridge over the Birdtail River. Turn right onto the unmarked road at the bottom of the hill.	<b>54.3</b>
<b>0.3</b>	Follow the bend in the road to the left and continue on up the hill.	<b>54.6</b>
<b>0.8</b>	Reach the top of the hill. On your right is the abandoned Residential School. The school is on private property – please stay on the road.	<b>55.4</b>

The Residential School was built in 1931-32 and was home to around 140 Aboriginal students of Cree, Sioux and Ojibway descent. In 1945, a new principal named N. Martin Rusaw arrived in Birtle. He was progressive for his time and is quoted as saying, "Not

only must we educate the Indian children, but we must educate white people to accept them in their world.” He integrated Aboriginal students into Birtle High School when the children were of age. They still boarded at the Residential School but took regular classes at the local high school. In 1970, as laws and policies changed, the school was shut down and students moved back home or to other integrated schools.

<b>1.5</b>	Make your way back down the hill and over the Birdtail River and continue past St. Clare Street until you reach Main Street. This is also Hwy 83 and Hwy 42. Turn right at the stop sign onto the highway heading west out of Birtle. The Birtle Info Booth will be on your left.	<b>56.9</b>
<b>1.8</b>	Turn left onto Hwy 42 following green signs for St. Lazare.	<b>58.7</b>
<b>16.1</b>	Turn left onto Hwy 41.	<b>74.8</b>
<b>2.6</b>	Follow the bends in the road into the Town of St. Lazare. Turn left at the stop sign onto Main Street.	<b>77.4</b>

As you descend into the Town of St. Lazare, you may notice the two river valleys stretching off into the distance. The one running north to south is the Assiniboine River and the one coming in from the west is the Qu’Appelle River. The confluence of these two rivers is just southwest of town.

<b>0.1</b>	On your left is the Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre inside the library.	<b>77.5</b>
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Inside the Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre you can see a model of the fort and learn about what was once the economic centre of the entire Valleylands.

**Fort Ellice Site**

At the time of printing, access to the Fort Ellice site is not permitted. This may change in the future. Please check with the staff at the Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre in St. Lazare for more information (see contact information above). The staff at Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre will be happy to assist you with obtaining permission to access the site, if required. If access to the site is permitted, please continue with the following directions. Otherwise, enjoy instead the story of Fort Ellice provided below as you visit the Fort Ellice Interpretive Centre in St. Lazare.

<b>1.8</b>	Continue down Main Street and over the railroad tracks. Follow the bends in the highway and cross the bridge over the Assiniboine River. Turn left on the first gravel road, which is unmarked after crossing over the bridge. There will be a blue house on your left.	<b>79.3</b>
<b>4.5</b>	Continue along this gravel road and follow all the bends. At one point you will drive over a Texas Style gate. Turn right on the first gravel road after the Texas Style gate and climb up the hill.	<b>83.8</b>
<b>0.4</b>	At the top of the hill is the former site of Fort Ellice. Park off the path.	<b>84.2</b>

At the site of this former fur-trading fort, you will be treated to a spectacular view of the Assiniboine River Valley. After the merger of the Northwest Company with the Hudson's Bay Company, the first Fort Ellice was built in 1831, about a kilometre and a half west of here. The Hudson's Bay Company established the site at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers to protect the trade from local Aboriginals and Americans on the Missouri River. The first fort was very impressive and became the centre of economic activity in the region. There are numerous diary entries from staff at the Fort noting that Aboriginals, Métis and independent traders would set up camp in the surrounding area, with many working seasonally at Fort Ellice.

In 1862, the aging fort was replaced by a second Fort Ellice at the site where you are now standing. This second structure was the most impressive fur-trading fort ever constructed in the entire Valleylands. It consisted of a Big House, or Boss's House, which records indicate was built on the same plan as the officer's dwellings in Fort Garry, along with a district office, several warehouses, a trading store, the married officers house and stockade, as well as several other minor buildings. A diary entry from N.M.W.J. McKenzie from the late 1870s tells us that, "All the houses mudded and whitewashed with lime, altogether they presented a good appearance from a distance." Several sketches and even some photographs of the Fort from the late 1870s and early 1880s have survived showing how well developed it once was.

One interesting story tells how the first trading store was blown up in 1864. There are different versions of what happened. In one version, several Métis buffalo hunters were in the store stocking up for the summer hunt. A diary entry records that one of the Métis "got behind the counter where he had no business to be," and tried to light his pipe with a flint and steal. A spark fell into an open keg of gunpowder and caused the explosion, which killed two men and injured five.

In the 1880s, the Fort began experiencing a downturn. The fur trade was drying up and the bison herds were beginning to dwindle in number. There was one last flurry of activity when the rail line was surveyed through Fort Ellice and lots were sold for a town to be called "Coleville", but the railway never came. Instead it passed nearly 50 kilometres to the south. In 1890, the Fort was sold to the shopkeeper who continued to operate the store for a couple years. He later sold the store, which remained in operation until 1904. When the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was built thru St. Lazare on the north side of the Qu'Appelle River, any hope for a town site was lost and the site was sold. The structures were dismantled for salvage materials and today nothing remains but a commemorative cairn marking the former spot of this historic site.

4.9

Return the way you came to Highway 41 and turn left.

89.1

### **End of Fort Ellice Site Tour**

**If you do not visit the site of Fort Ellice**, continue from the Interpretive Centre down Main Street and over the railroad tracks. Follow the bends in the highway and cross the bridge over the Assiniboine River. This is now Hwy 41. Continue on Hwy 41 until you reach PR 545 West, turn right and continue with the directions below.

<b>4.6</b>	Turn right onto PR 545 West, which is a gravel road.	<b>93.7</b>
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As you drive this road, you will pass into Saskatchewan, but at the time of printing there are no signs to indicate this. Remember that from March to November, Saskatchewan is one hour behind Manitoba.

You will know that you are in Saskatchewan when you drive past the Rocanville potash mine. Potash is the provincial mineral of Saskatchewan and is used to create fertilizer. If you are interested in learning more about this important mineral and its uses in agriculture, check out the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands "Potash, Pioneers and the Prairie Giants" tour and visit the Potash Interpretive Centre in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan.

<b>18.5</b>	Turn right onto unmarked paved highway heading north. This is Hwy 600.	<b>112.2</b>
<b>4.4</b>	Turn left following Hwy 600 (unmarked) when it becomes gravel and travel over the railroad tracks. At the turn you will see a brown sign with a yellow beaver on it. If you miss this turn you will reach a dead end at the potash mine.	<b>116.6</b>
<b>1.5</b>	Turn left onto an unmarked gravel road when you see a yellow sign for Fort Esperance.	<b>118.1</b>
<b>1.5</b>	Turn right onto unmarked gravel road and follow the yellow signs.	<b>119.6</b>
<b>0.3</b>	Reach Fort Esperance National Historic Site. Park off of the path.	<b>119.9</b>

Fort Esperance was the first fur-trading fort constructed in the entire Valleylands region. The Northwest Company built the first fort at this site in 1787. It was a very important site for the Northwest Company, not for the amount of furs that they took in, but for the amount of pemmican that they procured from the local Aboriginals. The first fort at this site was very impressive with a blacksmith and copper workshops as well as a "library of books". In 1810, the Fort was moved upriver near Round Lake. Later, it was moved again to become Fort John, which you will visit shortly. In 1816, a second Fort Esperance was built less than 300 yards from the first fort. The second fort lasted only three years at this location before being moved to Beaver Creek.

<b>1.8</b>	Return to Hwy 600 and turn left. Continue down the valley and cross the Qu'Appelle River.	<b>121.7</b>
<b>1.6</b>	Turn left onto first gravel road after the bridge that does not have a fence across it.	<b>123.3</b>

Enjoy this gorgeous stretch of road where you drive along the Qu'Appelle River Valley, one of the most scenic routes in Saskatchewan. On either side are agricultural fields, providing you with a wide-open view of the whole river valley.

<b>8.6</b>	At the yield sign continue straight and cross over a small creek.	<b>131.9</b>
<b>1.1</b>	On your right is Harmona Provincial Recreation Site.	<b>133.0</b>

This Provincial Recreation Site is near the site of the former Harmony Co-operative Industrial Association colony. You can take a break here to stretch your legs and read the storyboards about this fascinating colony, which is covered in more detail in the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands "Potash, Pioneers and the Prairie Giants" self-guided tour.

<b>2.7</b>	Continue along this scenic road. Turn left into a small grassy field where you will see a plaque and some storyboards.	<b>135.7</b>
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This is the former site of Fort John. After the first Fort Esperance had been abandoned by the Northwest Company and moved upriver on the Qu'Appelle to Round Lake, they moved back downriver to this site and called it Fort John. It was a very substantial post for the Northwest Company with over 15 permanent structures. Nearby, the Hudson's Bay Company had established a competing post at Big Cut Arm Creek. During the Pemmican Wars from 1815-1819, the Nor'westers burned the Hudson's Bay fort to the ground before the staff had returned for the winter then tried to prevent it from being rebuilt.

The post could only be rebuilt when the local Cree population demanded that the Nor'westers allow the Hudson's Bay Company to rebuild. Despite this, the next spring, the men from the Northwest Company attacked the Hudson's Bay Company men as they headed back to the Red River settlement (Winnipeg) and stole their furs and supplies, and burned the post to the ground once again. The next year the Northwest Company would abandon this site and return to the site of the former Fort Esperance.

Read the various storyboards here to learn more about the history of the competitive fur trade as well as links from Fort John to the Battle of Seven Oaks. There is also information related to the Métis and buffalo hunts.

<b>2.5</b>	Continue along the road through the valley. Turn right onto the paved highway after the stop sign. This is Hwy 8.	<b>138.2</b>
<b>4.6</b>	Turn right at the green sign pointing for the Town of Spy Hill.	<b>142.8</b>
<b>0.7</b>	Turn left onto Main Street of Spy Hill.	<b>143.5</b>

As you drive into town, you are probably wondering where the hill is. If you continued straight instead of turning onto Main Street you would see it on your left, once you pass the buildings. Now that you know there is a hill, you are probably wondering how it came to be called "Spy Hill". There are actually three Aboriginal legends that tell how this area came to be known as such.

The first is very simple – the First Nations people in this area used the hill to “spy out” the countryside and watch for game to hunt or approaching enemies. Dr. F.O. Gilbert, a local doctor and missionary, recorded the second legend – that a band of Cree Aboriginals had made camp near the hill. A Sioux Aboriginal was sent to steal some of the Cree’s ponies, but was discovered by one of the Cree. The Cree picked up a stone and killed him saying “Kapakamaou” which means, “I have killed a spy.” From then on the hill was known as “Spy Hill”. The third legend is equally bloody. In this story, a revengeful wife sought out her husband on the hill and killed him there. The hill was called “Spy Hill”, as she had “spied” him there.

On your right is the Spy Hill Museum. Tours can be arranged by phoning ahead. Inside you can view some local artifacts related to the fur trade as well as Aboriginal history.

<b>0.7</b>	Return to Hwy 8 and turn right at the stop sign.	<b>144.2</b>
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As you leave Spy Hill, you will see the Lorch Snowplane on your right. If you are curious about this contraption, check out the Assiniboine-Qu’Appelle Valleylands “Potash, Pioneers and the Prairie Giants” self-guided tour.

<b>7.6</b>	Turn left into Carlton Trail Regional Park.	<b>151.8</b>
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This park requires a season or day pass for Saskatchewan Regional Parks. These are available on-site. Inside you will find a replica ox cart with some history of the Carlton Trail that gives this park its name. There is also a playground and beach, golf course, concession stand day and seasonal camping, as well as a seasonal cabin development.

<b>4.1</b>	Return to Hwy 8 and turn right heading back the way you came. Turn left onto Hwy 22 East following the signs for Binscarth. When you reach Manitoba the road you are on will become PR 478.	<b>155.9</b>
<b>14.7</b>	Turn left onto PR 579 if you are not going on the optional extension to Ste. Madeleine’s	<b>170.6</b>

<b>Optional Extension – Ste. Madeleine</b>		
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<b>2.3</b>	Continue on PR 478. Turn right onto RD 171 W.	<b>2.3</b>
<b>5.3</b>	Continue down this road until you reach a T-junction with Road 108 N. Turn left onto this road.	<b>7.6</b>
<b>0.2</b>	Turn right into a pasture field passing thru a gate. If gate is closed please close it behind you, if it is open you can leave it open.	<b>7.8</b>
<b>1.5</b>	Follow the path that travels next to the fence heading south thru the pasture until the tree line. Stay to the path on the left when the fence turns to the right. Turn left onto the path that travels along the edge of the tree line.	<b>9.3</b>

<b>0.2</b>	Travel along this path until you reach the fenced in graveyard, which marks the site of Ste. Madeleine.	<b>9.5</b>
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The story of St. Madeleine's is a sad tale. After the Northwest Rebellion of 1885, several Métis families settled here. The soil here is quite sandy and earlier settlers from Ontario had given up trying to farm the land, as crops did not grow well. The Métis survived by hunting, gathering, and working as labourers on nearby farms. They were quite poor but the settlement continued to grow and become known as a distinct Métis community.

In 1902, Father DeCorby from St. Lazare established a mission at Ste. Madeleine and a log church was built in 1919. The church became the centre of the settlement and soon after a store and post office was constructed. By the 1920s, the community had more than tripled in size to around 30 families and a school was also built.

But with the Great Depression in the 1930s, life became very difficult at Ste. Madeleine. The drought combined with the sandy soils left the Métis with little pastureland for their cattle or horses. Game for hunting and berries for gathering became scarce. The federal government introduced the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (PFRA) in 1935 in an effort to seed drought stricken prairie lands with grass and convert them to community pastures. The area around Ste. Madeleine was identified as one that should not have been settled and through the rest of the 1930s, was converted to community pasture.

Families that had their land expropriated under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act were given compensation of cash or Crown land only if their taxes were paid up. Since the Depression had been ongoing for several years, few families were able to pay and were technically squatters on their own land. By 1940, the majority of Métis families had moved away from the area, many settling near Boggy Creek or Winnipegosis, and the school, store and post office were closed. Many homes were burned and the church was dismantled.

The only remains of this former settlement is the cemetery and some building foundation ruins. A large cross containing a Red River Cart wheel marks the site of the former church. The Métis community holds an annual homecoming here each summer where the sound of fiddles helps bring the community of Ste. Madeleine back together and to life once more.

<b>9.5</b>	Return the way you came to the junction of Pr 478 and PR 579. Turn right onto PR 579.	<b>19.0</b>
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**End of Optional Extension – Ste. Madeleine**

<b>4.8</b>	Turn right at the stop sign staying on PR 579.	<b>175.4</b>
<b>6.2</b>	Follow all the bends in the road until you reach the bottom of the Assiniboine River Valley. Cross the Millwood bridge.	<b>181.6</b>

On your left is a storyboard that tells the history of this old bridge as well as Millwood. Millwood is one of several towns across the prairies that was started in anticipation of the coming of the railroad, but then was passed over and soon abandoned. If you are

interested in walking among the ruins of a similar ghost town, check out the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands "Follow the Path of the Settlers" self-guided tour.

<b>8.3</b>	Continue on PR 579 and follow all the bends and turns in the road. Follow PR 579 when it makes a turn shaped like a question mark as it navigates around a small duck pond.	<b>189.9</b>
<b>1.7</b>	Turn right following PR 579.	<b>191.6</b>
<b>4.9</b>	Turn left onto Hwys 16 and 83, heading towards Russell, MB.	<b>196.5</b>
<b>3.9</b>	Turn left at the junction with the A&W and a brown sign pointing for Information. Take the immediate right onto the service road that parallels Hwy 16.	<b>200.4</b>
<b>0.2</b>	Return to the Travel Manitoba Information Booth in Russell, MB where you started your adventure.	<b>200.6</b>

This is the end of today's tour. From Russell, Manitoba you can head east on Hwy 16 to Yorkton and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan or west to Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, Manitoba. Roblin, Manitoba is north on Hwy 83 and Birtle, Manitoba is south on Hwy 83. To reach Regina, Saskatchewan head west on Hwy 16 and then take Hwy 15, which is after Churchbridge. When you reach Melville, take Hwy 10 to Regina.

On this trip you had the opportunity to visit several historic sites. While little remains of the former forts and settlements, their stories and impact on future settlements linger. Hopefully you had a chance to see how competitive the fur trade was between the companies in the region and gained some knowledge about the sometimes tragic but inspiring history of the First Nations and Métis people of the Valleylands.

**For information on other attractions found in the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands as well as more self-guided tours please visit:**

[www.valleylands.ca](http://www.valleylands.ca)

Thank you for joining the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands self-directed excursion exploring the agricultural heritage of the many river valleys that cut through this prairie landscape. We hope that you had an enjoyable trip, and we would love to have you discover more of the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands on our other self-directed itineraries.

We greatly value your input and comments. If something was not clear, a road sign changed, or if you found a delightful picnic site or visit that you would like to share with future travellers, please let us know. The best way to communicate is to write the changes or new information directly onto the appropriate route description page, and mail it to the Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands office. Thank you in advance for your contributions!

**Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands Inc.**  
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## **The Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands – Bringing the Valleylands Experience to the World**

The Assiniboine-Qu'Appelle Valleylands Inc. is a partnership of 30+ municipalities and First Nation communities near the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle rivers.

The partnership, with support from regional economic development organizations spearheads a grassroots initiative involving business, tourism, conservation and community organizations to develop the scenic, tourism, recreation, historic and cultural resources of the area and to provide a premier travel destination for visitors to discover and explore.

### **Member Municipalities and First Nations**

#### **Manitoba**

RM of Shell River  
RM of Hillsburg  
Town of Roblin  
RM of Shellmouth-Boulton  
RM of Russell  
Town of Russell  
Village of Binscarth  
Gambler First Nation  
RM of Silver Creek  
Waywayseecappo First Nation  
RM of Ellice  
Village of St. Lazare  
RM of Birtle  
Town of Birtle  
Birdtail Sioux First Nation  
RM of Rossburn  
Town of Rossburn

#### **Saskatchewan**

RM of Langenburg  
Town of Langenburg  
RM of Churchbridge  
Town of Churchbridge  
RM of Spy Hill  
Village of Spy Hill  
RM of Saltcoats  
Town of Saltcoats  
Village of MacNutt  
Village of Gerald  
RM of Fertile Belt  
Resort Village of Birds Point  
Town of Bredenbury  
Town of Kamsack  
Town of Esterhazy