

LET YOUR HEART LAND HERE

Whitemouth

RIVER VALLEY

VISITOR &
COMMUNITY
GUIDE

2020-2021

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Special thanks to everyone who assisted in making this magazine possible. Please submit any materials for future editions to the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth.

Our Little Piece of Heaven!

by Brent Shabbits and Barbara Read

As we sit on our deck on a sunny warm day, we are mesmerized by the flow of the river. The current, a gentle breeze, the sounds of birds and the rapids allow us to let go of our stress. We naturally unwind and recharge. Sometimes while gazing at the river, raucous tubers or serene kayakers and canoers float by – waving and exchanging pleasantries. Unlike many of Manitoba’s waters, there are no annoying motorized watercraft here. That alone is a relief.

We have always been attracted to the lakes in the Canadian Shield and camped there for many years, always dreaming of a way we could establish a family legacy with a cottage on a lake. We wanted a place to unwind, find peace and tranquility, one that inspired us to slow down and have fun. A place we could share with our family and friends so they too could find peace; a place to reconnect with nature and to each other; relaxing into a different way of being.

Owning a cottage in the Whiteshell on a lake is now beyond many people’s budgets, certainly ours. We re-examined what we really wanted and broadened our search to include nearby recreational properties. The revelation we had was to consider riverfront properties, not only lakefront locations. That is when we discovered the RM of Whitemouth and the village of Elma in particular.

We found a beautiful property on the Whitemouth River with a cute little house. That was a couple of years ago now, and we have never looked back. Elma and the Whitemouth River is a sweet spot, a gem, a joy not many people know about.

Along the Whitemouth River are both class II and III rapids which, depending on the time of the season, are gentle or challenging but always fascinating. The water is refreshing and fun to frolic in. We don’t have loons in our backyard, instead we have white water,



snapping turtles, river otters, bald eagles, and much more.

The peace in our quaint little village is occasionally punctuated by the ritual pattern of horn, rattle and

rumble of a train passing through – flashbacks to train trips in Europe, Egypt, India and elsewhere in Canada. Our neighbours are welcoming with genuine friendliness, including at the excellent village store. There is a positive energy in the community to vitalize our town into a thriving place to be, with activities such as the Farmer’s Market, events at Moon Gate and the Elma Community Centre. Elma has been engaging for us in many ways.



GREEN SPACES

Seven Sisters Falls Ski and Walking Trail

The trailhead for the Seven Sisters Falls trails is north from PR 307, between the road to the Whitemouth Falls Provincial Park Entrance and the road to the Seven Sisters dam.

The trail has three loops: a short (3km), a medium, and a long (7km) option and can be enjoyed throughout any season. For skiing, it is a fairly easy trail, but it has a variety of terrain and some really fun hills that allow for a long fast glide.

The trail is mostly in the bush, but it passes the Seven Sisters Generating Station where the Whitemouth River meets the Winnipeg River, so there is lovely open water to look at. Also, be on the lookout for all the beautiful wildlife that is found in the area, including white tailed deer, rabbits, and bald eagles. Ski trails are always very clean and quickly re-groomed after a snowfall.

Seven Sisters Falls Generating Station

Seven Sisters is the largest producer of electricity on the Winnipeg River – it is fondly and respectfully described by engineers who designed and built it as the river’s mightiest generating station.

The Seven Sisters Generating Station was built in two stages. The first stage began in July 1929 and with the building of the powerhouse. In August 1931, it was completed and its 3 turbine generators produced a total of 75 MW. The second stage began after the Second World War in 1948. In 1952, the sixth and final unit went into service. It has an average annual generation of 990 million kWh.

Visit the area, and enjoy the views from on top of the dam, as well as the various trails open for walking, skiing or snowmobiling.



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A ROAD TRIP WITH A DIFFERENCE

Whitemouth Falls Provincial Park

Located in Seven Sisters Falls, Whitemouth Falls is a great place to spend the day picnicking, fishing and observing wildlife, such as the American White Pelican which frequent the falls. This site is also a known and provincially significant staging and migration area for the Great Gray Owl.

There are three known archaeological sites of significance adjacent to Whitemouth Falls. Research into these sites indicates that they were used as campsites and were frequented as much as 4,800 years ago.

Whitemouth River

The Whitemouth River is located in southeastern Manitoba. The mouth of the river empties into the Winnipeg River system at the Whitemouth Falls Provincial Park. There are plenty of opportunities for fun, and lots to do along the Whitemouth River – tubing, walking, skiing, snowmobiling, canoeing, kayaking and fishing!

River Hills Dock

River Hills is a small town on the Whitemouth River in the RM of Whitemouth, located in southeastern Manitoba. This town is located on the eastern boundary of the prairies very close to the Canadian Shield.

Visit the dock for a great swimming area and dock entry into the water. To keep the area clean and safe for swimming, there is no fishing allowed in this area.

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Paddle Day in Seven Sisters

The Seven Sisters Falls Community Club hosts an annual Paddle Day every summer at Whitemouth River Falls Park in recognition of National Canoe Day.

Generally held on the last week in July, the gathering provides a perfect family outing filled with activities on land and on water - including an outdoor market, information booths, a food canteen and a Kidz Fun Zone. Visitors to the event can also catch some live entertainment provided by local musicians on an outdoor stage.

In addition to the fun, those with a competitive spirit can enter races on canoe, kayak and raft from the River Hills Beach

to Whitemouth Falls in Seven Sisters down the Whitemouth River. Cash prizes are awarded for first, second and third place in each event.

When available, a recognized paddling association will be on site to offer free paddle clinics for people who want to test their balance skills with canoes,

kayaks and paddle boards.

Event attendees can enter a variety of draws and raffles, and tickets are always available for a popular duck race down the falls.

Visitors to the RM of Whitemouth will certainly agree that Paddle Day in Seven Sisters Falls is a great event that offers the best in outdoor recreation and family fun.



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Nickel Ventures Inc. – A Growing Family Business in the RM of Whitemouth

by Ben Nickel, Owner

March 2020 will mark one year since we started Nickel Ventures Inc. Over this past year, I have been asked many times whether we've made a mistake by taking over part of the business that used to be E.J. Wiebe Transport. My response is always "absolutely not." We've had some really good jobs so far. We're dealing with a great community here in the RM of Whitemouth that has welcomed us and embraced what we do, and the array of services we have to offer. It may not always be a walk in the park but it has certainly given us the opportunity to do something for others. We're doing our best to provide quality work and have enjoyed building relationships within the community.



Ben Nickel and family

Community has always been incredibly important to me. We've made many connections with people from the public sector as well as local contractors. All have been very supportive and that means a lot to us. We are looking forward to meeting many more people in the years to come – we have only just begun.

I feel very proud to be a family run business and am so blessed to be able to work with my sons Dave and Steve, and my daughter-in-law Holly-Jaide. We are a tight knit family both on and off the clock. Our business offers aggregates, soil, and services like excavation, trucking and carpentry. Each member of the family business brings something different to the table here at Nickel Ventures, giving us the opportunity to meet a lot of different client needs.

We have had a very busy first year. We don't always know where the work is coming from, but it seems to come from any direction in a timely fashion. Some larger contractors in the area have given us a fair amount of work and we're thankful for that, and we are also thankful for every client that has trusted us with their projects. Whether it be excavating, trucking, carpentry or snow clearing, it has been truly enjoyable to help you in any way we can.

We look forward to the years ahead, continuing to serve the people in our community and surrounding areas. It has been a pleasure so far, and we are excited to meet many more people and continue to grow our business. We offer a variety of services and aggregate products to fulfill your

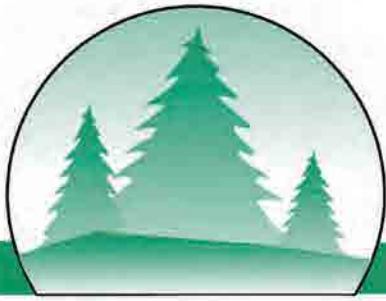
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Seven Sisters Falls: The Mightiest Generating Station

The power of the mighty Winnipeg River has been harnessed to generate approximately 13 percent of the total hydroelectric energy produced by Manitoba Hydro.

And no station produces more electricity on the waterway than the Seven Sisters Generating Station.

The Winnipeg River descends 83 meters from the Manitoba-Ontario boundary to Lake Winnipeg as it passes through the six generating stations with approximately 90 percent of the water coming from Ontario.

Bruce Owen,
Media Relations

Officer for Manitoba Hydro, said that each station is generally a “run of the river” operation, meaning that water flowing to them from upstream is used immediately to produce electricity over the course of the day, rather than being stored in a reservoir for later use.

Six generating stations located on the Winnipeg River produce approximately 3,900 gigawatt hours of dependable energy every year.

The Seven Sisters Generating Station (1929) is the lone station of the six located in the RM of Whitemouth. The others are located in Pointe du Bois (1911), Slave Falls (1931), McArthur Falls (1955), Great Falls (1923) and Pine Falls (1952).

The Seven Sisters Generating Station was named after the seven falls or rapids, that were located on the Winnipeg River before construction. From the 1700s until 1910, the falls were also referred to as Seven

Portages.

“As the station was built on the fifth fall, the sixth and seventh falls can be seen when it spills water. The fifth can only be partially seen,” Owen said. “Seven Sisters is the largest producer of electricity on the Winnipeg River – it is fondly and respectfully

described by engineers who designed and built it as the river’s mightiest generating station.”

The powerhouse was completed in 1931, and its three turbine generators produced a total of 75 MW.

“The second stage

Second World War in 1948. In 1952, the sixth and final unit went into service. It has an average annual generation of 990 million kWh,” said Owen.

The Seven Sisters Generating Station has two spillway gates, a waterfall drop of 18.6 metres and transmission lines to Winnipeg, the Whiteshell area and to Kenora, Ontario.



Leaving Home, the First Time

by Hermann Saxler

This was our family in Germany: Mom and Dad; my oldest brother Reinhold (Roy, age 16); my brother Werner (10); myself (Hermann) going on 9; and my little sister Elisabeth, almost three. Of course, my Oma was always included in our family circle!

Oma's house was attached to ours. Both houses were more than 100 years old and made of cut limestone rocks. They weren't huge houses by today's standards in Germany, but plenty big for our family. The house had three stories and an arched cellar. The top story was under the roof and ran the length of both houses. At one end Oma had her brush making equipment, and that's where she made brooms and brushes out of horse and pig hair.

The rest of the area was taken up by my and Werner's train track. All our locomotives were wind-up and some barely made it around the track on one winding. This kept us busy in foul weather. Most days school went from 8 a.m.-noon and we had the whole afternoon off. That's when Werner and I would explore the countryside, or I would follow the local shepherd and his sheep.

We lived in the foothills to the Alps and on a clear day we could see them. Everything was up and down, streams consisted of fast-flowing narrow brooks. The only big river was the Danube in the larger city 15 kilometres away. That was my childhood so far. There

are lots of other stories for some other time.

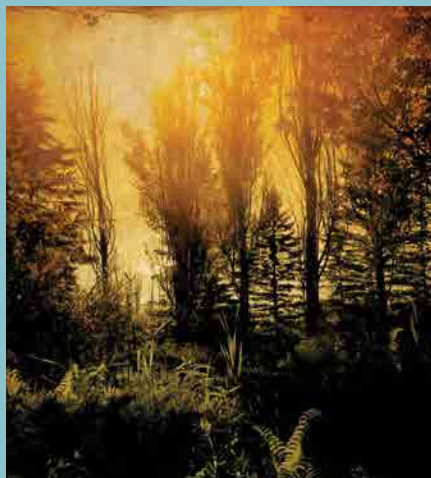
Imagine the surprise and wonder when our dad gathered us all together and said we are moving to Canada. We knew something about Canada, because we had an uncle in River Hills, Manitoba and Oma had been there. She told us stories of huge fields and a large river flowing right past his farm, and now we were going to see it firsthand!

Now for the big move. Werner and I had to decide what toys we wanted to take along. Of course, we had expected to take all our toys, but this would have taken at least two large suitcases. Mom informed us we were allowed one toy each; oh boy, now to make decisions. Obviously the four locomotives and about 70 feet of track were not going to come with us. We both decided to take the toys we got the last Christmas. My brother had a small dump truck and I had a dragline which we packed into a big trunk holding mom's comforters and linens. I can't remember exactly how many trunks we had, but there were at least four of them. On the day we started our journey, everything was taken to the train station and placed on a freight train headed to Bremerhaven, the port our ship would be leaving from.

We rode the train from our neighbouring town to Bremerhaven. I remember the train drove through the night. The next day we boarded a ship called Arcadia

Photo Contest

First, Second and Third Place Winner: Annie Bergen



and it was big. I had never seen anything that big. When the ship was ready to leave the harbour, a brass band played songs for at least half an hour while the ship slowly moved away from the dock and headed out to sea. Apparently, it stopped in England, but by that time it was the middle of the night and we were fast asleep. The next day they had evacuation drills. We all lined up on deck, wore lifejackets and listened to where we should go in case the ship was in trouble. Of course, I was too young to really pay attention, and was busy thinking about things we could do on the ship.

The fun part on the ship was mealtime, which was rather formal. We sat at a large table with some other people. There were seven of us, and if I remember right another couple was also at our table. We could order from a menu with about three main dishes and all kinds of desserts. I was adventurous and decided to try something different so I ordered Peking duck! That was a mistake. I should have stayed with the regular pork, or beef and potatoes.

We had all kinds of time on the ship. Werner and I toured the whole ship, after all we had another eight days to go! Seeing that we couldn't read English, the whole ship got a good exploring. I can't remember exactly how many levels there were on the ship, it wasn't anywhere close to the size of today's ocean liners. The swimming pool was in the middle of the ship and about three or four floors down. Neither one of us knew how to swim, and we decided that the pool was not the place to hang out. There were so many doors with English words on them, if they weren't locked, we would open them and explore. While exploring the ship we opened the door to the engine room, we did realize that we shouldn't be in there and we were told to leave.

About halfway across the ocean we ran into some foul weather, the ocean was rough and our stomachs did not feel good at all. We spent a lot of time on the deck with our heads hung over the rail. The amazing part was that our mother, who couldn't ride the bus to the next town without getting motion sickness, was doing fine on the ship. Another highlight of our ocean crossing was when we started to enter the Saint Lawrence Seaway, we passed a number of sizeable icebergs.

Then came Customs and we had to find our trunks, that is another story for another time. After a long train ride from Montreal to Whitemouth, we were in our new country! What a difference! The expanse of flat land was unbelievable, and the large rivers and lakes! Yes, this was our new country, full of adventures for us all.

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From Germany to Seven Sisters

by Shelley Marion and Heiner Groneweg

Heiner Groneweg first came to Canada as part of a group touring Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba over two weeks.

On Feb. 11, 2003, Heiner, wife Maria, and three children left the Province of Lower Saxonia, RM of Westoverledingen, Germany, arriving in Winnipeg at 11:45 p.m. that same day. It was -48 degrees Celsius upon arrival in Canada, and was +18 degrees in Germany when they left.

Heiner had a job offer in the RM of Whitemouth, the family came with a two-year permit, and upon arrival applied for permanent residency which took two years. He worked on dairy farms for seven years, living in farm-provided housing.

In 2010, the family purchased a house, with an old garage and restaurant on the property. The following year, after extensive renovations, they opened Greenway Ice Cream. In 2013, they opened the grocery store; the following year, they got the post office; and just last year, the car wash and laundromat

were opened. Fresh vegetables are grown by Heiner and his wife to sell at the store, and when necessary, Whiteshell Hutterite Colony provides them with additional produce. Watch for future projects, one of which is the plan to substantially expand their garden.

Heiner continued to work on the dairy farm until 2014, when the post office was moved to their location. He runs the store with Maria and the help of three part-time employees. The store's operating hours are 9 a.m. – 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Sunday through the winter. In summer, longer operating hours are 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. daily.

In Germany, their home was a 15-minute drive from the ocean, so they fell in love with the water in our area. Heiner, Maria, their children and grandchild all still reside in Manitoba.

Heiner and Maria, along with their employees, look forward to serving you at their Greenway Store, Ice Cream Store, Laundromat and Car Wash, on PR 307 in Seven Sisters.



Photo by Stu Iverson

Learning to Shoot in Seven Sisters

The Seven Sisters Falls Wildlife Association hosts an annual Learn to Shoot Day on the Saturday of Mothers Day weekend in May.

This popular event attracts adults and families from across the region who are interested in learning about the sport of shooting and the importance of gun safety and responsible operation of sport weapons. The Association receives assistance for this event from members of other wildlife associations in the province, the Manitoba Wildlife Federation and Sustainable Development.

The Seven Sisters Falls Wildlife Association range is located on Homestead Road, approximately six kilometres east of Seven Sisters Falls where visitors try their skill with rifles, shotguns, bow and vintage firearms in a safe and supervised environment.

During the event, visitors will enjoy the occasional blast of a mini vintage canon



that catches everyone's attention.

The ever popular clay pigeon target shoot draws long line ups at four shooting stations set up for this event. Participants can also engage themselves in historical activities by learning how to load and shoot with a black powder musket.

An established archery range is

located in a separate area to ensure safety and the three dimensional targets give shooters a unique and authentic feel for the sport. A canteen is on site to provide hot meals as visitors take a break from the shooting range.

Learn to Shoot Day provides a perfect outing for individuals and families interested in outdoor activity with a passion to try something new. With the Seven Sisters Falls Wildlife Association providing everything from fire arms and ammunition to ear plugs and computers for online certification, all a visitor has to bring is an interest in sport and outdoor adventure.



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Something's Brewing in Elma

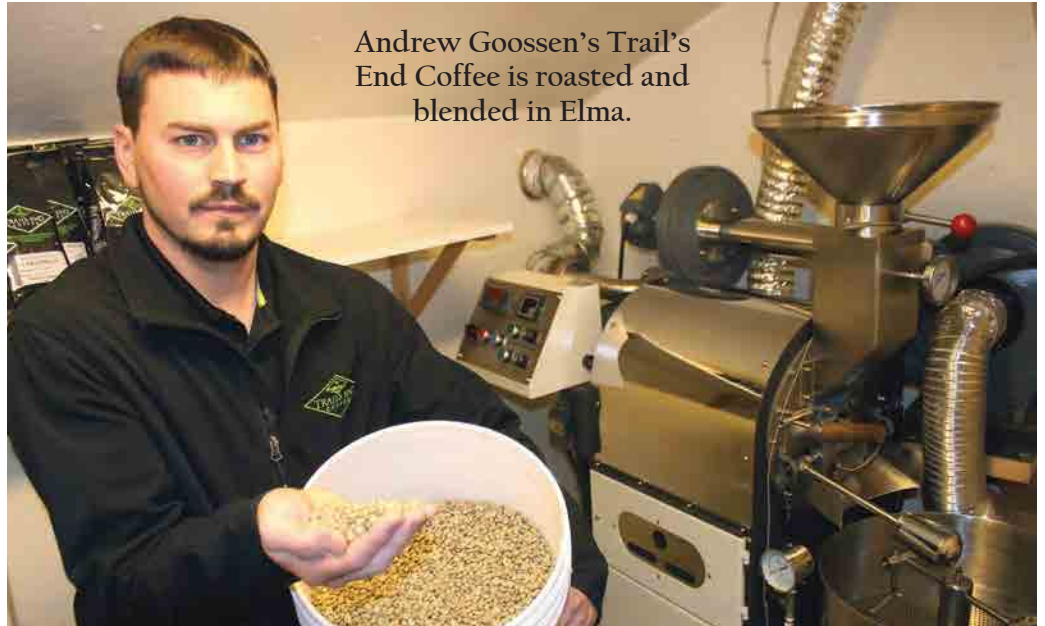
Coffee connoisseurs in the region will be delighted to learn that a RM of Whitemouth resident is roasting and blending fresh coffee from his home in Elma.

Trail's End Coffee proprietor Andrew Goossen has grown his business from a hobby of roasting his own coffee beans to the point where he is now a retail coffee merchant.

"I have always had a liking for coffee as long as I can remember, but my real coffee experience did not begin until I started roasting green coffee beans in my kitchen, in a Whirly Pop popcorn popper," said Goossen.

Goossen said that he started to perfect his roast in 2010. After doing some online study and lots of trial and error he began purchasing green beans from two suppliers. Initially, the coffee roaster worked his craft as a hobby, giving his blends to friends and relatives. The popularity of his product quickly converted him to search out if he could turn it into a business.

"My coffee roasting kind of went by the wayside



Andrew Goossen's Trail's End Coffee is roasted and blended in Elma.

till about fall of 2012 when I pulled my old Whirly Pop out and started roasting again. At this point my interest was again aroused and I started looking for a small commercial coffee roaster," explained Goossen, who is originally from Missouri.

Goossen purchased a state of the art roaster in June 2013 and officially opened his business in Elma. He and his wife Loretta – who is originally from the area – and two children settled there one year earlier.

The roaster he purchased is hooked to a computer and Goossen runs a program that allows him to precisely monitor time and temperature, ensuring consistent

quality of his roasts and blends.

The process of creating coffee starts in the fields of Columbia, Costa Rica, Kenya, Guatemala and Peru where plants are grown. Goossen purchases and uses beans from each of these countries through importers in Toronto and Minneapolis, to roast and blend his coffee varieties.

"The coffee bean is actually inside the fruit



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Trail's End Coffee goes from roasting hobby to retail sales

which is called the cherry, which grows on a five-foot tall shrub. After the pulp is removed, the bean found in the centre is similar to a pit in a cherry," he said.

He noted each cherry holds two beans, but some plants only produce one, adding that the single beans are rare and coveted, and are sorted out for the most exclusive ground coffee.

"The single bean is called a pea berry, and is sweeter than the traditional bean," explained Goossen.

Today he produces 11 different single-origin roasts and blends. Trail's End Coffee also provides a Mexican decaffeinated product that is produced using chemical free mountain water techniques and seasonal offerings that are well received.

"At Thanksgiving and in the fall we had a pumpkin spice this year and it was a big hit," Goossen said. "Our Christmas spice comes out at the end of the year and it is always very popular."

Goossen said his seasonal coffees are flavoured with actual spices and not flavouring oils.

He has developed a working relationship with local businesses and provides coffee to the Spicy Radish restaurant in Whitemouth. Trail's End Coffee products can be purchased at craft sales and trade fairs across the region. Retail sales are available at Whitemouth and Beausejour Home Hardware, Greenway Groceries in Seven Sisters Falls, Gran's Bake Shop in Lac du Bonnet and the Pinawa Art Gallery. Goossen said his coffee is also available seasonally at West Hawk Lake's Mason Jar and Pennyweight Market in Beausejour carries his specialty coffees during the holidays.



Goossen said his online sales also continue to grow trailsendcoffee.com

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Whitemouth Home Hardware Centre

by Rudie Friesen

Rudie and Esther Friesen of Whitemouth Home Hardware Building Centre are celebrating 10 years in business! On Nov. 1, 2009 we acquired the store from Brian McDougald. We also hired two former employees, one of which has stayed with us to this day.

As we started our journey in this business, we soon realized that Home Hardware Stores Ltd. is a strong well-recognized national brand, with many very helpful people to work with.

Rudie, an experienced salesman back in his native country of Paraguay, soon noticed that improvements could be made. We went to the Home Hardware head office in St. Jacobs, Ont. for their Solid Base training. With this we were able to understand our business model and formulate a five-year business plan. At the time, however, we were only on the Home Hardware banner, which doesn't include building materials, so we didn't include that in our plan.

As we looked into the future for opportunity to grow the business, and better serve the community and surrounding area, we asked our customers what was



needed in this area. It soon became clear that there was a real demand for building materials. So we reviewed our 5 year plan, and in 2010, amended it to include lumber and building materials.

In 2012 we officially changed our banner to Whitemouth Home Hardware Building Centre.

In July of 2013 we were able to purchase our second location, which is in Beausejour, Manitoba.

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We are thankful to Home Hardware's head office, and to all the staff that have been with us over this past decade. We look forward to continuing to serve this community and the surrounding area, including the Whiteshell, to the best of our ability.

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History of Whitemouth Happy Hours Club

In 1978, Ethel Kirby gathered a group together with the aim of providing a place where seniors of the area could gather for a cup of coffee, a game of cards or checkers and to socialize and reminisce with friends and neighbours. The group determined that the basement of the Ross United Church would be a good place to gather.

Kirby applied for a grant from the Department of Health and Welfare to make alterations to the church basement, and Minister Monique Begin granted the request. Permission was sought from the United Church board who agreed to these alterations.

A group of 12 seniors gathered for the first meeting on May 11, 1978. It was agreed Kirby and Ada Huett would meet with a Mrs. Reese from New Horizons, who advised them the program should be run by seniors for seniors as a way to encourage them to stay involved and active. A total of 46 interested people attended a meeting, agreed the club would be a good idea, and called the group the Happy Hours Club as it is known to this day.

When the quarters were ready the first official meeting was held on March 6, 1979.

In May of 1979 a representative of the Eastman Council of Seniors attended a meeting. The Happy Hours Club joined the council and remained a member until it was dissolved.

On June 21, 1980 the official opening of Happy Hours Club took place with a large gathering of community members, representatives from different clubs in the area, and government dignitaries.

When it became evident the basement stairs were becoming a difficulty for members it was decided to seek different quarters. The community club was building a new hall after the old one was destroyed by fire. Once more the Happy Hours Club applied for a grant that would enable them to build a wing to the new

centre to use as a clubroom. They would be required to pay a monthly fee for upkeep and maintenance. The grant was received and the Happy Hours Club moved into new quarters in 1990.

Over the years membership has remained between 40 to 50 members, with a present total of 62. The club is open to anyone over the age of 50 and new members are always welcome.

Members participate in various activities, games, excursions, craft workshops, and music programs to name a few. In the past three years there has been a soup and sandwich lunch every Thursday, made by member volunteers.

An executive of seven meets monthly to discuss plans for the following months. To name some of the excursions in the past year, club members have attended Celebrations Dinner Theatre in Winnipeg, the Cooks Creek Heritage Day and taken a Mystery Tour of the southeast region.

Recently with the aid of a grant, the Happy Hours Club purchased a sound system and piano to enhance their monthly Jam Session, which draws musicians and audience members from a wide area. Anyone is welcome to attend any of these activities for a small fee.

More information on membership and activities of the Happy Hours Club can be had by phoning Carol Ans (president) at 204-348-2627, Elaine Cormier (vice president) at 204-348-3499 or Darlene Pluchinski (treasurer) at 204-348-2852.

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The Iron Rose

Dr. Charlotte Whitehead Ross (July 15, 1843 - Feb. 21, 1916), a physician who was well-known for practicing in Whitemouth, holds the illustrious distinction of being Manitoba's first woman doctor, and one of Canada's pioneers in the field.

Throughout her career she would assist pioneer families who were living in isolation with often severely limited resources. Her commitment, compassion and indomitable spirit would ensure that rural Manitoba would develop along a safer and healthier route.

Born in Darlington, England, Charlotte's father, Joseph Whitehead, was an engineer who became a railroad contractor in Upper Canada when the family moved there in 1848, settling in Clinton, Huron County. She was educated in Montreal before marrying David Ross, a man in the employ of her father, in 1861.



Following her husband as he travelled to remote parts of Ontario on construction work meant that she would frequently have to live in isolation with severely limited medicinal resources, the prospect of which was largely responsible for inspiring her to study medicine. It was also in part fuelled

out of her experiences caring for her invalid older sister, Mary Anne.

At the time there were no medical schools in Canada that would accept women, and, according to the customs of the time, women were not expected

to enter into such a profession. With support and encouragement from her husband, Charlotte travelled to Philadelphia in order to undergo medical training, enrolling in the Women's Medical College in 1870. It took 10 years of hard work and homesickness to complete her training and earn a medical degree.



Upon returning to Montreal, Dr. Ross became the first woman to practice medicine there, specializing in treating diseases in women and children and delivering babies.

In 1881, her husband moved to Whitemouth in order to work on constructing Canadian Pacific Railway lines between Kenora and Winnipeg, eventually establishing the Ross Lumber Company. Dr. Ross moved the family to be with him, ingraining herself in the community of Whitemouth and soon becoming an essential piece of it.

The surroundings of Whitemouth are, today, a delightful, rolling, partly wooded country, well settled

with prosperous farms.

When Dr. Ross came to Whitemouth, it was a wild, untamed country, sparsely settled with a few railway and logging camps, peopled with wild, rough and often dangerous men.

As the only doctor within a 100 mile radius, she would be called upon for service at rural farms and backwoods homesteads, treating any accidents suffered by her husband's workers and also making trips to sick community members, travelling great distances through wilderness by any means of transportation she could, even in the dead of winter.

As a physician, Dr. Ross placed a particular emphasis on cleanliness and hygiene. She meticulously sterilized her patients and instruments and even insisted that any currency coming into her household and those of her patients be sterilized, as she believed

Dr. Charlotte Whitehead Ross: Manitoba's first woman doctor

that they were transmitters of disease.

She was also known to clean the house of women for whom she had just delivered a baby and cook enough food for a few weeks so that the mother may have time to rest. Despite her dedication to her community members, she never ceased in her dedication to her family. She bore 10 children throughout her life, two of which unfortunately died at childbirth.

Dr. Ross was never licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba. Although a private member's bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly in 1888 to authorize her to practise medicine, it was opposed as some in the Assembly felt it was inappropriate for a woman to treat patients other than women and children. The bill was withdrawn before second reading.

She did not let this stop her from helping her patients, feeling a duty towards them as there was a serious lack of necessary institutions, demonstrating her tenacity and humanitarianism.

While her work was considered masculine by the measure of the day, Charlotte Ross remained feminine in mind. Her clothes were sent from the east and were of a fashion and quality unknown in the district. Many a time when driving a sleigh in the winter the horses would get stuck in enormous snowdrifts. Dr. Ross would get out, seize one of the shovels taken in all sleighs and help dig out the road. She would then wipe her hands on her elaborately embroidered lace petticoat and continue her journey. Her long white hair was one of her chief charms.

In early days it was not generally thought that roses would grow in Manitoba. Dr. Ross disproved that theory for she had in her garden rose bushes which developed beautiful blooms. These she delighted to send to her female patients, which brought them great joy.

The story of Dr. Charlotte Ross would not be complete without mention of the part that religion played in her life. Both she and her husband were staunch Presbyterians. Soon after settling in

Whitemouth, Mr. Ross put up a building on his property near the mill. The Sunday school was Dr. Ross' own special care.

When the populated area became larger, there were too many people to be accommodated in the small building. Another larger building was built, largely from funds donated by the Rosses. This was a combination school, church and Sunday school building.



Grandchildren were born, and one especially, little Edith Ross, was dear to her grandmother's heart. From her earliest years, Edith always wanted to be a doctor, and her greatest joy was to help her grandmother with her work. Dr. Ross called Edith her "little partner."

When David died in 1911, Dr. Ross – suffering from rheumatism – moved to Winnipeg. She died there in 1916 and was buried from Knox Presbyterian Church, with floral tributes from across Canada covering her casket.

Her legacy is honoured by the annual handing out of the Charlotte W. Ross Gold Medal for highest honours in obstetrics in the Manitoba Medical College, which was first awarded in 1917 by her granddaughter, Dr. Edith Ross.

When the British Medical Association met in Winnipeg in August 1930, the Executive of the Federation of the Medical Women of Canada arranged for a memorial service to be given at the grave of Dr. Ross. Many of the women physicians who attended the meeting availed themselves of this chance to honour her memory.

A pioneer woman of truly legendary status, Dr. Charlotte Ross was ahead of her times. Undeniably, Manitoba owes a debt of gratitude to her tireless dedication – without it, rural Manitoba would have lost some of its valuable citizens whose descendants still exist today.

References:
farms.com

Trails to Rails to Highways

Co-op Community Trail in Whitemouth



china, pottery, tempered glass, mirror, tile and stained glass. Other items sought were metal and plastic jewellery, silverware, buttons, sprockets, game pieces, beads and marbles.

Solar powered light fixtures were purchased and installed as path markers and lamp posts to allow for night time walks in the park. One of the final installations was a large bench Bergen and her crew worked on. The seating structure was funded by Sunova Credit Union and aptly named the Sunova Spot.

The Whitemouth River Recreation Commission hosted a Grand Opening of the Co-op Community Trail in June 2019. Students from Whitemouth School, residents and visiting dignitaries were given a brief summary of activities involved in creating the space and walkway. Following the ribbon cutting, visitors were invited to take a walk on the trail and enjoy its many features. Volunteers from the Recreation Commission supervised activities at kids zones set up along the path.

Whitemouth Councillor Manny Sikkenga thanked everyone for joining them in the opening and advised development of the Co-op Community Trail was the result of many volunteers working alongside Bergen who facilitated mosaic art projects, which gave life to her vision.

“You will find the mosaics everywhere along the trail. On the benches, the shelter and also keep your eyes out for the little mosaics along the path done by the school children,” said Sikkenga.

The Co-op Community Trail is a spectacular community green space designed to engage students and residents in the RM of Whitemouth.

The Whitemouth River Recreation Commission took the lead on creating a path behind the Whitemouth Community Centre to connect the personal care home, school, community grounds, Lion’s Club Park and museum when former rec director Annie Bergen applied for and received a \$35,000 grant from Co-op Community Spaces program in 2016. The initiative was one of 21 projects that received funding from the Co-op program that year to protect, improve and beautify spaces that bring communities together.

“When you support organizations and environment that fosters community, everyone benefits,” said Kevin Van Den Bussche, general manager of the Beausejour Co-op.

Over time, Bergen organized a variety of projects at the site where residents from around the region joined work groups to paint existing structures, embellish benches and accessories in mosaic tiles, plant trees and lay the path in the new green space.

To do the mosaics, Bergen encouraged donations of recyclable material including ceramic, porcelain,



SnoPals Raising Funds to Replace Shelter

Eastman SnoPALS snowmobile club is taking on the project of replacing their Kings Kookout trail shelter located on the trail between Lac du Bonnet and Pinawa. The existing shelter was built 30+ years ago and it has surpassed its life span as it was built on the ground, and the years of weather and rot have taken their toll.


The project is a multi year project with fund raising being the first big task. The replacement 24' x 24' fully insulated building with disabled access is estimated to cost in the \$35,000 range. The new shelter will be built on a beautiful granite outcropping which will provide for a solid foundation for the new building.

This trail sees over 1000 snowmobiles per week during the season and the shelter is a popular spot to stop to warm up and have lunch. The SnoPALS have applied for various provincial and municipal grants but support from the public is needed if this project is to be completed.

Snowmobiling in the region brings in tens of thousands of dollars in economic activity to the service providers in Elma, Whitemouth, Seven Sisters, Pinawa and Lac du Bonnet. Through an agreement with the Lac du Bonnet Charitable Foundation, all donations to this Kings Kookout Shelter will generate a tax deduction for the donor.

If you would like to support this project that enhances the recreational snowmobiling in the region please

contact the SnoPALS at info@eastmansnopals.ca. All donors will be permanently recognized on a plaque in the new shelter and on the club website.



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Photo by Stu Iverson

New Fire Hall for Whitemouth

The RM of Whitemouth's new fire hall is meeting the needs of firefighters in their ongoing efforts to protect the community.

The \$1.1 million facility is equipped with four bay doors and a classroom that will allow for more efficient training of larger groups of emergency responders. It will also serve as an Emergency Operation Centre in the event of a local disaster.

"This station is a real example of Whitemouth's commitment to community service and public safety. This facility will truly meet the needs of our firefighters in their ongoing efforts to protect our community," said Dowbyhuz.

At the grand opening in May 2018, then Reeve Bill Dowbyhuz thanked everyone for coming out to the event and extended his gratitude to fellow council and committee members for a job well done.

"This is definitely a day of celebration, our firefighters have been requesting a new fire hall for decades and now here we are in this wonderful building," said Dowbyhuz.

"This new station will help ensure that the municipality's residents receive the highest quality of emergency response."

Fire Chief Paul Thomson joined Dowbyhuz at the podium where he was thanked for his recommendations on the new facility and honoured for his 45 years of service to the Whitemouth Fire Department.

Several firefighters who served with Thomson when the department was established in 1972 were also in attendance. Alfred Gesell was one of these men, and he presented Thompson with two beautifully carved wooden gifts of a pencil holder for the chief's desk and



Alfred Gesell (left) made a presentation to Fire Chief Paul Thomson for 45 years of service at the grand opening ceremony of the new Whitemouth Fire Hall in May 2018, hosted by then Reeve Bill Dowbyhuz (right).

a clock for the fire hall.

Thomson thanked council for the nice, new fire hall, explaining that the department started out in a simple shop that served a dual purpose.

"We had to move the grader out when we got a call," explained Thomson.

He added when they outgrew the initial location, the fire department then moved to the old John Deere

shop located next door.

"We've come a long way!"

Dave Schafer from the Office of the Fire Commissioner acknowledged fellow firefighters from Pinawa, Beausejour and Lac du Bonnet that joined the RM for the celebration.

"An investment like this is an investment in the community as well as the fire department. You should be very proud" Schafer said, adding that the many young members of the volunteer fire department indicated that Whitemouth is a flourishing community.

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Photo by MS Photography

Local Governments Partner for Water

The residents of Brookfield Road celebrated August 13 when a water booster station officially opened, bringing them potable water, thanks to a partnership between the rural municipalities of Lac du Bonnet and Whitemouth and the LGD of Pinawa.

Whitemouth was contracted as the water supplier, with water rates established and monitored through the Provincial Public Utilities Board.

Whitemouth Reeve Walter Armerongen and Pinawa



Whitemouth Reeve Walter Armerongen (left), Lac du Bonnet Reeve Loren Schinkel and Pinawa Mayor Blair Skinner celebrate the opening of a water booster station to service residents of Brookfield Road.

Mayor Blair Skinner said they were delighted to be a part of this project where all three local governments worked in partnership to share infrastructure and services.

Lac du Bonnet Reeve Loren Schinkel said the project has been in the planning stage for several years. With its completion, 40 homes in Lac du Bonnet and 36 in Pinawa will receive service.

The booster station was scheduled to be in full operation once the lines were flushed and operations running smoothly.

Amerongen added the timing was right as they were awaiting licensing approval from the Office of Drinking Water.

The federal government provided 50 per cent funding for the project. Without this, it would not have commenced.

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Whitemouth Cellular Service Improvements on Call

Whitemouth cell phone users are reaping the benefits of improved service in the Whitemouth area.

The RM of Whitemouth and BellMTS announced LTE-Advanced wireless site equipment was added to the Fleet Net public safety tower located at Hwy 44 at Tower Road to provide more consistent wireless service to the RM.

“The RM of Whitemouth has identified access to wireless communications services as a key path to economic growth for our community,” Whitemouth Reeve Walter Amerongen said. “This welcomed investment will create new opportunities for our residents to connect with each other, will enhance collaborative communication during public safety incidents and gives local businesses the tools they need to compete and prosper in the global economy.”

LTE, which stands for long term evolution, is a type of wireless technology that has taken hold as the industry standard throughout North America.

LTE-Advanced has an emerging and, as the name suggests, more advanced set of standards and technologies. Delivering 4G speeds, LTE-Advanced is anticipated to deliver bigger and faster wireless-data payloads two to three times faster than today’s LTE with fewer dropped connections.

BellMTS communications manager Morgan Shipley stated a new wireless site was turned on in the Falcon Lake area this summer and an existing site in West

Hawk Lake is getting an LTE-Advanced overlay to improve coverage and speeds in those communities as well.

Shipley noted the Whitemouth project drastically improved service in the community in providing a faster and more stable connection.

While cell phone service may be taken for granted in

some parts of Manitoba, the battle for service has been anything but, in Whitemouth. Many Whitemouth and Elma residents have cell phones, but the area has long been known as a dead zone as the signal comes from outside the immediate region. Texting could be accomplished without a steady signal, but if a call needed to be made, land lines were the more reliable option.

Gaps in cell phone service pose real risks, especially when life-threatening events strike. In 2011 and 2012, wildfires in southeastern Manitoba knocked out land line telephone services, leaving residents with virtually no communications options. Poor cell service hindered emergency services efforts

at that time due to an inability to communicate with people on the ground.

Shipley said the LTE-Advanced wireless service will impact positively in connection with emergency efforts.

“We really need to thank past councils for all their efforts, and present council for being able to have discussions with BellMTS to get this done,” Amerongen added.



MLA Wayne Ewasko (left), Reeve Walter Amerongen and Coun. Tim Honke anticipate faster and more stable cell service.



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Photo by Stu Iverson

Co-op Cardlock in Whitemouth

Beausejour Consumers Cooperative Ltd. has developed a cardlock service in Whitemouth.

Beausejour Co-op general manager Kevin Van Den Bussche acknowledged that with the closure of the Tempo in Whitemouth, the community was without fuel supply for residents.

“Beausejour Co-op reviewed the opportunity to set up a cardlock service to offer the local residents some means of acquiring gas and diesel,” Van Den Bussche said.

He added the service provides clear gas, premium gas, plus clear and dyed diesel.

“Anyone can access the pumps if they have completed and submitted a cardlock application,” Van Den Bussche said. “A credit application and approval is also required if they do not already have a charge account with us.”

A Beausejour Co-op membership is required when applying to use the cardlock service.

Dueck’s Mechanical and Beausejour Co-op have signed a simple land lease agreement for the property on which the cardlock is located.

“(Dueck’s) have also been supportive and helpful to assist in supplying fuel to the community by working with Co-op through this project and offering for customers to pick up the required applications

at their site,” explained Van Den Bussche.

Customers are encouraged to call the bulk petroleum office in Beausejour at 204-268-1824 or the administration office at 204-268-1805 for further information.



Elma Community Club Overcomes Challenges

Rural community clubs have been facing increasing financial challenges over the years, and with aging volunteers and dwindling interest from residents, closure of these facilities that once served as social hubs and community meeting places has now become an all too common reality.

The volunteer board of the Elma Community Club faced those obstacles in June of 2017 after the announcement that the River Hills Community Club officially closed its doors the previous December and turned the keys over to the RM of Whitemouth.

The Elma Community Centre was built in 1953 as a three-room school to replace the original Elma School built in 1904. After the school officially closed in the late 1960s, it was turned over to the RM in 1973 and has been used as a community hall since that time.

Elma Community Club president Gladys Proceviat had been helping run the hall for years and explained that during that time, much of the operation was handled by her son Vince Proceviat and daughter-in-law Karen Antler, fellow executive board members.

“Three people can’t do it all themselves and it got to a point where we

just weren’t getting much help, even when we’d ask,” Proceviat said during an interview with The Clipper when she announced they too had decided to close their doors.

On July 5, 2017 the RM of Whitemouth hosted a public meeting in the Elma Community Hall to discuss the future of the facility. A decision to form a new board and resume operations was made. At that time, 16 new volunteers put their names forward, a new executive was elected and the Elma Community Club was back in business.

The current Elma Community Club executive was elected on April 30, 2019 and continues to host popular annual events including the Elma Fall Supper and ladies nights. Residents of Elma report the board is working well, and fundraising events hosted in partnership with the Rennie Hotel bring in additional revenue for the community centre through their weekly 50/50 draws and Goose the Deuce events. A new pre-Halloween event called Spirits on 406 is hosted at the Elma Community Centre.

Reeve Walter Amerongen said he was pleased to see the interest from residents of Elma to keep their community centre open and running.

“As long as the volunteer base is there and it’s self sufficient and profitable the RM doesn’t encourage any closing of buildings,” said Amerongen.

Whitemouth CAO Colleen Johnson added the RM covers the cost of insurance and she communicates regularly with the board to monitor their status.

“If the board has any requests for funding they can be submitted to council by October, so warranted expenses can be considered,” said Johnson.

Despite the close call in 2017, the residents of Elma have spoken and their community club lives on.



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COMMUNITY CENTRES AND ORGANIZATIONS

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Seven Sisters Community Centre & Skating Rink

Hall Rentals (Marilyn) 204-348-7693
Hall 204-348-2535

Whitemouth Recreation Association

Hall Rentals (Arleen) 204-348-2196
Hall 204-348-2501

Elma Community Club

Hall Rentals (Nicole) 204-348-2614
Hall 204-348-2614

Whitemouth River Recreation Commission Inc.

49 Railway Avenue
Whitemouth 204-348-2221, ext 106

Whitemouth School 204-348-2595

PLACES TO WORSHIP:

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Corner of PR 408 & Homestead Road
River Hills 204-348-2855

Whiteshell Baptist Church

Corner of PR 307 & PR 408
Seven Sisters Falls 204-348-2536

Redeemer Lutheran Church

135 Henderson Avenue, Whitemouth 204-348-2855

Ross United Church

39 First Street, Whitemouth 204-348-2313

Whitemouth Fellowship

28 First Street, Whitemouth 204-348-7784

Whitemouth Church of God and Christ Mennonite

3 Miles South on PR 406 off Hwy 44
Between Whitemouth & Elma 204-348-2555

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDE:

Awana Youth Club
Playtime Nursery School
Church Youth Groups
Seven Sisters Falls Wildlife Association
Whitemouth Happy Hours Seniors' Club
Whitemouth 4-H Club
Whitemouth Library
Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society
Whitemouth River Valley Community Development Corp.
Whitemouth and District Lions Club

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Fire, Ambulance, Police 911

RCMP – Whitemouth 204-348-2935
– Lac du Bonnet 204-345-6311
– Pinawa 204-753-2217

Whitemouth District Health Centre 204-348-2291

Lac du Bonnet Health Centre 204-345-8647

Pinawa Hospital 204-753-2334

Pine Falls Health Complex 204-367-4441

For availability of open ER & doctors 1-866-267-5818
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ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE VALLEY

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Dunlop's Tourist Hotel

63060 Hwy 307, Seven Sisters 204-348-2646

Whitemouth Lions Park (including campground)

President Shannon Malkoske
Whitemouth 204-348-7777

Moon Gate Guest House

Michel & Jenny Dupas
#61105 Highway 406, Whitemouth
www.moongateguesthouse.ca 204-348-2473

Rivers Edge Resort

Scott & Joy Sutyla
99 Regan Avenue, Elma
www.riversedgeresort.ca 204-348-7368

Seven Sisters Motel & Restaurant

63004 Hwy 307, Seven Sisters 204-348-3106

Staff House Bed & Breakfast

45 Elizabeth Crescent, Seven Sisters 204-223-6578
or 204-254-6889

Whitemouth Hotel

167 Railway Avenue, Whitemouth 204-348-7774

E V E N T S C A L E N D A R

Stay tuned to the RM of Whitemouth website
for a more complete listing of event dates in the Whitemouth River Valley

www.rmwhitemouth.com

April

Annual Soup, Sandwich & Cookie Fundraiser for Whitemouth Health Auxiliary

Easter Egg Hunt, Elma Community Club

May

Annual Ladies Salad Supper, Whiteshell Baptist Church, Seven Sisters, public is invited

Annual Shooting Skills Day, Seven Sisters Wildlife Association

Mother's Day Event, Elma Community Club

International Museum Day, Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society

Whitemouth Lions Annual Picnic In the Lions Park, everyone is welcome

June

Whitemouth Customer Appreciation (also pancake breakfast, library fundraiser, intergenerational art show), town wide garage sales

Elma Farmers Market, between old pool hall and old general store, 3:30 – 7:00 pm, every Friday from mid-June to mid-September

July

Canada Day Celebration, Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society

Paddle Day, held at Whitemouth Falls, Seven Sisters Community Club

August

Whitemouth Sports Days, Whitemouth Rec. Assoc.

Steak Night, Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society

Boreal Shores Art Tour

September

Annual Harvest Party, Seven Sisters Community Club

Heritage Days, Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society

October

Haunted House, Elma Community Club

November

Remembrance Day, Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society

Annual Craft Sale, Whitemouth Recreation Assoc.

Annual Craft Sale, Seven Sisters Community Club

Ladies' Night, Elma Community Club

Kids' Christmas Event, Elma Community Club

December

Nursery School Santa Breakfast, Santa Claus Parade, Christmas Dinner, Whitemouth Recreation Association

Whitemouth Lions Carol Festival, held first Sunday in December at the Whitemouth Community Hall, proceeds to Whitemouth Lions Christmas Hamper Program

Canadian Pacific Holiday Train, date T.B.A., hosted by Whitemouth & District Lions Club, all donations received go to the two local food banks



Photo by Stu Iverson



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