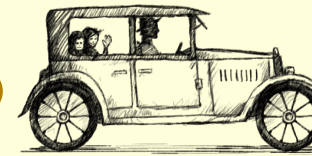




# Drive the Peace Trail ●●●●



## Peace Trail Stopping Points

### 1. Mennonite Landing Site

**Where?** Just off St. Mary's Road at the junction of the Red and Rat rivers. Parking available on site.

**Why?** This is where the river paddle-boats docked for the immigrants to disembark. After a 13,000 Km trip across Europe, the Atlantic, and half of Canada by wagon, riverboat, various trains and ships, then again, railway and finally paddle-boat, the immigrants, young and old, set foot on Manitoba soil. Their goods were loaded on Red River carts

and then taken by Métis teams to the immigration sheds, nine kilometers to the east. This is a way-point on the Peace Trail because of its historic importance.

### 2. River Lot Panels

**Where?** From the junction of Hwy 305 and Crystal Springs Road turn north on the dirt road and follow the turns for about one-half

mile. The site is on your right under a cluster of trees.

**Why?** The panels on this site were placed by the Crow Wing Trail Association to draw attention to the change in land survey type just before the Mennonites arrived: diagonal river lots to the west and the sectional grid to the east. The river lots were inhabited by

Métis and were similar to the village lots established in Mennonite villages. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the Mennonites shifted to the grid system, although their homesteading was based on the grid system.

### 3. Hespeler Park Niverville

**Where?** In the southern area of the town, with an entrance off 5th Ave. Parking lot with map is off Crown Valley Road. Parking and washrooms available.

**Why?** Before it was called ‘Niverville’ by the CPR, this place was called ‘Hespeler’ in honour of the man who facilitated the immigration of Mennonites to Manitoba. There are many historical points of interest in the town as well as restaurants (see the map in the south parking lot).

### 4. Shantz Immigration Sheds Cairn

**Where?** In the NE corner of the intersection of Rds 39N & 19E.

**Why?** It was the first stage of the immigrants’ settling in the ‘East Reserve’ – eight townships set aside on Treaty One land by the Federal government for occupation by Mennonites. The panel on the cairn gives the details.

### 5. Tourond Creek Discovery Centre

**Where?** South off Hwy #52, 16 Km W of Steinbach, 4.9 Km E of Hwy #59.

**What?** This former municipal waste site was developed by the RM of Hanover into the Discovery Centre with the cooperation of the Seine Rat Roseau Watershed District and Hanover School Division. It has nature trails, information panels, a wildlife observation station and a picnic shelter. Parking and toilets are on site.

**Why?** One emphasis of the Trail is peace with nature. Here we can enjoy a Manitoba prairie ecosystem with its grasses, flowers,

birds and other wildlife.

### 6. Gruenfeld Cemetery & Cairn

**Where?** West off Hwy #216, 1¼ miles N of Kleefeld. Park on the shoulder of Hwy #216 and walk ¼ mile west over the farm field to the cemetery. There is a caveat which allows the public to walk over the field to the cemetery.

**Why?** This is almost all that is left of the village of Gruenfeld, the first *Kleinegemeinde* village established on the East Reserve in 1874. The *Kleinegemeinde* (“Little Church”) were the second largest group of Mennonites to immigrate. The largest group were from the Bergthal Colony in Imperial Russia. Their first village on the East Reserve was probably Chortitz (now Randolph).

### 7. Chortitz Church & Cemetery

**Where?** Half a mile W of the the intersection of Hwy #206 and Rd 37N, one mile north of Hwy #52. Parking and toilets on site.

**Why?** This is the oldest church on the East Reserve and the cemetery across the road holds many of the original immigrants. The village was the home of the first administrators of the East Reserve. There is more information in the gazebo east of the church and in the church itself. The church building is used for occasional musical and historical events.

### 8. Rosenthal Nature Park

**Where?** Just west of the junction of Rds 37N & 30E, one mile north of Hwy #52 at Mitchell.

**What?** It is a park-like site created by the RM of Hanover with the cooperation of the Seine Rat Roseau Water District near the site of an early short-lived Mennonite village (Rosenthal). It has a man-made lake, walking trails and benches. The RM has built an asphalt trail from Mitchell to the park called the *Henervic Farms Trail*.

**Why?** This was a seasonal camping location for indigenous families who harvested berries, nuts, and small animals here. The forest is native growth, typical of natural flora of the region. The Mennonites learned from indigenous people how to live more in tune with nature.

### 9. Blind Creek Trailhead & Keating Cairn

**Where?** Just south of the junction of Rds 38N & 33E (Keating Rd). Peace Trail Post on east side of Keating Rd. Keating Cairn farther south across the bridge on east side.

**Why?** The Blind Creek Trail on the north bank of the creek is typical of native Manitoba flora and landscape. It is not drive-able. The Keating Cairn is a tribute to the Clear Springs settlement which preceded Mennonite settlement in the area by five years. Mennonites cooperated fully with their neighbours in agriculture, business and education.

### 10. Dirk Willems Peace Garden at Mennonite Heritage Village

**Where?** Just north of downtown Steinbach on the #12 Hwy.

**Why?** This is the terminus of the trail and also the main reason for the name of the trail. The monument is a tribute to 16th century Anabaptism, one of the Protestant wings of the Reformation. Their emphasis on nonviolence and pacifism inspired this recreation of an illustration in the *Martyrs’ Mirror*, a compilation of stories throughout history about people who have suffered for their faith.

**Visit Peace Trail way-points at your own risk.**

December 1, 2023



peacetrail.ca

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