

Landmarks

R.M. of Morris's Significant Heritage Buildings

The R.M. of Morris Special Places project was inaugurated in 2011-12, with the first major component being a comprehensive and detailed inventory of 102 buildings and sites. Through rigorous analysis and assessment processes suggested to us by the province's Historic Resources Branch, we have identified a handful of buildings that most effectively define and illustrate key aspects of our history and heritage. The following list of buildings and sites constitutes the R.M. of Morris Heritage Group's recommendations and reminders to the community about those places that have major claims for heritage significance. Each building and site listed below is also presented on the following pages, with an accompanying Heritage Value Statement that elucidates that place's key heritage attributes.

Public Sites and Buildings

- Union Point United Church
- St. Antoine Roman Catholic Church
- Aubigny Ferry Crossing Site
- Shannon Creek Drain

Houses and Farmsites

- Chartier House
- Robert House
- Henry Groening House
- Charles E. Anderson House
- Bowles House
- Hooper House
- Wiebe House
- A.A. Thiessen House
- W.R. Clubb House and Farmsite
- Kastner Farmsite
- Lone Star Farm

As a collection, these 15 buildings and sites define many aspects and themes from the municipality's past, and do so through places that are at once significant, but also interesting and attractive. These are places that the people of the R.M. of Morris can look to with pride. These places remind us of past glories, but also suggest an enduring sense of community, and are a beacon for its future.

Union Point United Church

Highway 75, Union Point area



Heritage Value Statement

Union Point United Church (1940) and its cemetery are significant as the last built features that remain on the original site of the former Union Point settlement. The cemetery's earliest burial, from 1879, recalls the agricultural community's pioneer origins. The landmark building, an enduringly simple Gothic Revival-style structure that succeeded an 1887 Presbyterian facility, likewise serves as a prominent and poignant memorial to Union Point because of its dramatic location between the lanes of one of the busiest divided highways in southern Manitoba.

St. Antoine Roman Catholic Church

Aubigny



Heritage Value Statement

St. Antoine Roman Catholic Church is the primary ecclesiastical site associated with Franco-Manitoban pioneers in the municipality. Built in 1932 (to replace a church from 1903) and rehabilitated in 1978 after a tornado destroyed much of the building, the parish was named for a French nobleman, Count Antoine d'Aubigny. St. Antoine's is a good example of the traditions of French church architecture, with its large nave, classically-inspired round-arched windows and stout tower.

Aubigny Ferry Crossing Site

Aubigny



Heritage Value Statement

The Aubigny Ferry Crossing Site, originally called Mousseau's ferry (for its operator's name), is an important connection to the theme of river-crossing technology, before bridges were available for this important aspect of community growth. Set on land owned by the Chartier Family, the ferry crossing was for many years the only way to get from one side of the Red River to the other. It was used from about 1881 until 1965, when it was replaced by the nearby Aubigny bridge. The gently sloping access points to the old crossing are still apparent in the landscape.

Shannon Creek Drain

Kane area, Road 11W at 23N



Heritage Value Statement

The Shannon Creek Drain is the best remaining example of several such structures that were developed to drain the marshes that were inhibiting agricultural settlement in the municipality. The first drainways in the area were undertaken as early as the late 1890s, and sometime after the McColl Survey was completed in 1916 the Shannon Creek Drain was completed in the Kane-Lowe Farm area. It carries water from hills westerly, into the Shannon Creek, and consists of the channel drain, dam and a timber-frame bridge.

Chartier House

Aubigny, River Lot 447



Heritage Value Statement

The oldest remaining building in the municipality, the Chartier House was built in 1877 by Flavien Chartier. Chartier was one of the first settlers who came from Quebec to Manitoba in 1877. Logs for the house are thought to have come from land further east and were brought down the river as the Chartiers moved west into the municipality. While in a slightly deteriorated state, due to its age and log construction, the house still suggests the simple effective forms—box-like form and gable roof—that defined so many pioneer farm houses from that early period. The river lot is still owned by the Chartier family and has been the farm to five generations of family descendants.

Robert House

Aubigny, River Lot 477



Heritage Value Statement

The Robert House is one of the oldest buildings in the municipality, and a rare surviving example of the kind of distinctive French architectural traditions used on many Franco-Manitoban farm houses in the 1870s and 1880s. The house was built in 1880 by Sevoine (also spelled Celevenne) Robert, who came with his family from Quebec to Manitoba in 1880. Still on its original river lot, it is the house roof that bespeaks its cultural origins. Called a mansard, with its doubly-angled shape, the roof was *de rigueur* for French houses, and in fact was also employed on many Franco-Manitoba institutional buildings as well. It was even popular for Provincial Government buildings of the day. Set near the Red River north of Silver Plains, the house remains with Robert family descendants.

Henry Groening House

Kane area, NW 21-4-2-W or 21109 Road 10W



Heritage Value Statement

The Henry and Maria Groening House is an excellent example of the kind of vernacular farm-house architecture common throughout southern Manitoba in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Originally introduced by pioneers from southern Ontario, the type was quickly adopted by other settlement groups. This house, from 1912-13, is the best of its type still standing in the R.M. of Morris. Built by Henry Groening, the building is a text-book example of the type, with its two-storey form, T-shaped plan, cross-gabled roofs and dormers, tall rectangular openings, and in-set two-storey front porch. The house was built using balloon framing, a typical technique of the era, with material that came from British Columbia, and cut by Mr. Groening with a wood saw. The house has been home to four generations of the same family.

Charles E. Anderson House

Low Farm, 22 First Avenue



Heritage Value Statement

The Charles E. Anderson House is valued because it recalls the more modest type of farm house that many settlers in the Morris area resided in over the years. Originally used as a school house, from 1899 to 1913, the building was purchased by Charles Anderson in 1914, moved further back on its lot, and set on a foundation with a second storey added. Known as The Grand Old Lady of Lowe Farm, the house has been home to a number of families.

Bowles House

Union Point area



Heritage Value Statement

The Bowles House is valued because of its connection to The Honorable Richard Spink Bowles, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba from 1965 to 1970, and because of its distinct architectural character. Lieutenant Governor Bowles had the building moved from Winnipeg in the early 1960s, where it originally stood on Kingston Row, and placed it on a picturesque curve on the Red River. Used as a summer getaway, the house was designed with a Tudor Revival character, distinguished by the half-timbering which is a hallmark of that style.

Hooper House

Sperling area, 35161 Road 10 W



Heritage Value Statement

The Hooper House (1900) and its setting are important links to the pioneer experience in the Sperling area and one of its longstanding farm families. For more than a century the site was home to John Henry Hooper, who came to Manitoba from Ontario in the 1890s, and his descendants. Hooper's high-gabled house, an informal, picturesque Anglo-Ontario-style structure, one of the few of its type in the Sperling area, recalls the Gothic cottages that were popular in southern Ontario in the nineteenth century. The dwelling's two-stage development also illustrates how modest early farmhouses could be transformed as needed into larger, more elaborate versions of their original designs. In addition to the well-maintained home, this site is valued for its large expanse of groomed grounds and outbuildings, notably a granary and workshop.

Wiebe House

Low Farm area, 10 Main Street



Heritage Value Statement

The Wiebe House is one of the best remaining examples in the municipality recalling a popular and impressive type of farm house that was built across Manitoba in the early decades of the 20th century. Known as the Four-square, this type of house was distinguished by its squarish form, large hipped or pyramidal roof and commodious interior. The Wiebe House is all of that. Built around 1920 for John Schroeder, the house is a near-perfect example of the type, and even still boasts its original tin roof. The house was the first in Lowe Farm to have electricity before hydro was introduced in 1947, and with its number of rooms was sometimes let out. In about 1944 it became the home of the George J. Wiebe family, until 1990.

A.A. Thiessen House

Low Farm area, 21106 Road 8W or NE 22-4-2W



Heritage Value Statement

The A.A. Thiessen House is the best example in the municipality recalling what was a new and novel building technology in the early 1900s. Built in 1918 for Aron and Aganetha Thiessen, and thought to have been built by Mr. Thiessen, the house is a treatise in concrete – with a poured concrete basement, and most importantly a superstructure made of concrete blocks. Concrete-block building technology was a sort of rage in Manitoba from about 1890 to 1920, especially popular in rural areas, where itinerant block-making operations were set up here and there. For this house, Mr. Thiessen actually purchased four carloads of concrete blocks that were shipped from Steinbach and hauled from Lowe Farm with horse-drawn wagon. The original cost of the house, which is a very good example of the popular Four-square type, was \$6,000.

W.R. Clubb House and Farmsite

Sewell area, 20048 Road 3E or 16-4-1E



Heritage Value Statement

The W.R. Clubb House is valued because of its connections to W.R. Clubb, Member of the Manitoba Legislature from 1920 to 1940, and also to his wife Gertrude (Kastner). This bungalow-style cottage sits on the site of a farm established by pioneer George Clubb in 1878. Other buildings from that original site are still also standing here, including the farmhouse and notably a large vault-roofed barn (below). The W.R. Clubb House is presently used as a summer retreat.



Kastner Farmsite

Morris area, 35117 Road 25N



Heritage Value Statement

The Kastner Farmsite is a good remaining example recalling the range of buildings on an early Morris-area farmsite. The farm was established in 1893 by Peter Kastner and his wife, who came from Ontario, and who raised 13 children on the farm. The house on the farmsite was built in 1907 and the barn in 1916. Both are good examples of their type, and while the barn is in a deteriorated state it is still a marvel to examine (below), with its dramatic gambrel roof, hay sling and wooden vent cupolas. Set with picturesque views to the Red River, the site is now used as a retreat.



Lone Star Farm

Rosenort area, 31155 PR 332 or NW 7-6-1 W



Heritage Value Statement

Lone Star Farm is valued because of its impressive architectural qualities, and its ongoing connection to a pioneer family. The house was built in 1918 for Harry and Fannie Brown, who moved with their family from Rockford, Illinois to the Sperling area in 1907. The house is thought to be to designs from an Eaton's Department Store design book (modified Plan #674), and it is certainly a major building in the R.M. of Morris. The handsome house features a large L-shaped plan with hipped roof dormers, a widow's walk, tall rectangular openings, a bay window, and inset front porch. The yard includes a 1939 vault-roofed barn and a century-plus gable-roofed barn that was dismantled and moved from Illinois to the farm at the time (both pictured to the right). Lone Star has been home to four generations of the Brown family.

