

# Landmarks

## Significant Heritage Buildings of the Town of Rivers and the Rural Municipality of Daly

**T**he **Rivers-Daly Special Places** project was inaugurated in 2010-11, with the first major component being a comprehensive and detailed inventory of 108 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 19 buildings and sites constitutes the Rivers-Daly Heritage Group's recommendations and reminders to the community about those places that have major claims for heritage significance. These buildings are more effectively grouped according to their urban or farmland/ rural/village character, a division that provides a more accurate reflection of the heritage character of the region.

### **Rivers (urban) Sites**

- CNR Station
- Rivers Post Office

- Cargill Elevator
- Bank of Commerce
- North American Lumber Building
- Former Ukrainian Hall
- War Memorial
- Dr. Lyon House
- Dr. Worteman House
- Kirkham Farm
- Madden Nursing Home

### **Rural Sites**

- Roseville Cemetery
- Chapman Museum
- Tarbolton United Church and Cemetery
- McGregor House
- Pool Elevator
- Chapman Farm Elevator
- Air Force Base
- Reeves Barn

Each building and site is presented on the following pages, with an accompanying Heritage Value Statement that elucidates their key heritage attributes. This kind of short, sharp list will enable the community to focus attention and resources when it undertakes future heritage endeavours, be they a walking tour, community website, school projects, plaquing programs and even designations.

As noted, the development of this list of significant sites was the result of careful and studied deliberations using standard heritage evaluation criteria, processes and scoring regimes. This work was carried out by the Rivers-Daly Heritage Group with assistance from staff of the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection. We are grateful to the branch for their generous support and patient attention in this endeavour.



Historic view of Rivers, ca. 1910.

## CNR Station

First Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The C.N.R. Station in Rivers (1917) stands prominently at the end of Main Street, making it a town landmark. Though no longer in operation, it reflects the crucial role of the Railway in establishing the town and driving its economic growth. The building is built of brick on a concrete foundation, with false half-timbering in the dormers placed on either side of a long hipped roof with slightly bell-cast eaves. The station retains its original interior layout and finishes on the second floor.

## Rivers Post Office

587 Second Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The Rivers Post Office (1936) is a modest-sized masonry structure that belongs to a family of standard post office designs common in smaller Manitoba towns. The stripped-down Art Deco style, with its sturdy, utilitarian materials and simple but effective geometric ornament, lent itself well to government-sponsored architecture of the Depression era. These sturdy little buildings still stand in many towns. Though not all still serve as post offices, they are a reminder of the firm federal presence established by such institutions in growing Prairie communities.

## Cargill Elevator

First Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The Cargill elevator in Rivers (probably dating originally from the 1920s) is significant as a cribbed wood elevator that underlines the essential connection between the railways and prairie grain farmers. It was originally a standard plan tall elevator, but various additions and alterations have been carried out in subsequent years. The only elevator remaining in Rivers, it is a landmark in the town and surrounding area.

## Bank of Commerce

Main Street at Second Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The former Bank of Commerce (begun 1910) is one of a series of three different designs developed by Toronto architectural firm Darling and Pearson for quick assembly in prairie towns near the beginning of the twentieth century. Manufactured by the British Columbia Mills, Timber and Trading Company, the prefabricated buildings all recall the classical revival style that was then nearly ubiquitous for banks, suggesting as it did longevity, stability and gravitas. Although the buildings ranged from fairly simple, like this one, to an ornate version with highly-ornamented pediments and classical pilasters, they clearly belonged to the same architectural family, thus helping to create a corporate image for the Bank of Commerce and an impressive early building on the streets of developing small towns.

## North American Lumber Building

565 Second Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

Rivers was chosen as the location of the very first branch of North American Lumber, which was opened on this site in 1907. With the Grand Trunk Pacific expanding across the prairies, this was a perfect time to open a lumberyard; the railway provided transportation for the company's goods, and the new towns popping up along its length needed buildings supplies. The business expanded rapidly, with nineteen yards in place by the spring of 1909. It is probable that the original building was replaced by this one around 1950, but the site retains its significance as a reminder of the link between the railways and business in the growth of prairie towns.

## Former Ukrainian Hall

580 Second Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The former Taras Shevchenko Hall opened on Labour Day, 1931, with speeches, music, dancing and, of course, delicious food. The building's significance lies in its history as a long-standing cultural centre for the thriving Ukrainian community in Rivers, which had come to the town predominantly to work on the railways. For nearly eight decades, the hall was home to the sharing of concerts, dancing, singing, and cooking. Here, many youngsters in the 1930s dedicated their summers to daily lessons in Ukrainian language, song and dance, as their elders sought to keep their old country culture alive and vibrant. The hall hosted weddings, socials, bingos, meetings and religious events into the twenty-first century, but as the Ukrainian community in Rivers declined, the remaining members decided in 2009 to sell the building, which is now a café.

## War Memorial

Second Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

Set in a lovely park, the Rivers War Memorial was dedicated in 1927. The dates of World War II and the Korean War were later added beneath the original inscription, which reads “In Memory of those who Fell in the Great War 1914-1918; They Gave Their All”, carved on the front of the black granite oblong stone that forms the body of the memorial. This supports a limestone base on which stands the white stone figure of an infantryman. Carved on the base of the plinth are the names Vimy, Mons, Ypres and the Somme—sites of infamous World War I battles where many Canadian soldiers died. The names of those who died are carved on back and sides of the granite shaft. Rivers War Memorial is one of a number in Manitoba and across Canada that feature a naturalistic statue of a soldier carved in stone (or, less commonly, cast in bronze). atop a stone shaft bearing the names those who served or fell.

## Dr. Lyon House

404 Main Street, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

Set prominently on a corner lot in the town of Rivers, the Dr. Lyon house (c. 1910) is a fine example of the kind of large, imposing residence often built around the turn of the century by well-to-do people such as doctors and prosperous businessmen in Manitoba towns. Built of buff brick with stone foundations, the house’s asymmetrical plan and lively massing, together with whimsical details such as the round window, decorative gables, and brackets, recall the Victorian era that was still very present in Manitoba architectural practice in the early 20th century. The architect made the most of the corner lot, with projecting bays on each street side creating two “fronts” for the house. Dr. G.R.D. Lyon, who served overseas in World War I, was the first of three Rivers doctors to live in this house.

## Dr. Worteman House

675 Fifth Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

Originally built for hotel manager Tom Wright, probably in the early 20th century, the Dr. Worteman House is a good example of the kind of mid-sized residence that populated the streets of many Manitoba towns of the time. In contrast to the nearby Dr. Lyon House, this house shows the influence of the American Arts and Crafts movement, promulgated heavily by Gustav Stickley in his magazine *The Craftsman* beginning in 1901. The broad front porch, six-over-one sash windows and unassuming but comfortable proportions all recall the Craftsman style, though the steeply-pitched roofline suggests a lingering Victorian influence. Although the house has undergone an addition and some alterations, it has been very well maintained, and still retains some original interior features.

## Kirkham Farm

SE-16-11-20



### Heritage Value Statement

Kirkham Farm (c. 1900), consisting of a main two-storey block with a one-and-a-half storey ell, is an excellent example of a large, Ontario-style farmhouse, built before the coming of the railway established the Town of Rivers. Such farms were major economic engines powering Manitoba in its early settlement history, and Kirkham Farm—with its generous size and broad porch running around two sides of the house—suggests the comfortable social standing of successful farmers in turn-of-the-century Manitoba. The farmstead is particularly interesting in that it retains two early outbuildings: a large barn with a shingled, vaulted roof and a smaller building, set into a bank, which was perhaps a milk shed or root cellar. Kirkham Farm stands today as a testament to the courage, enterprise, and hard work of the early settlers and their families who persevered on the land.

## Madden Nursing Home

4555 Fifth Avenue, Rivers



### Heritage Value Statement

The Madden Nursing Home (c. 1910) is an attractive, story-and-a-half frame house with a hipped roof and dormers on all four sides. One of a near-identical pair with the house next door, this is a fine example of the way that a few judiciously-applied details could render a fairly modest small house into a delightful ornamental cottage. The house has further significance as a nursing home, and a place where many local babies first saw the light of day.

## Roseville Cemetery

NE 28-11-20



### Heritage Value Statement

The beautiful Roseville Cemetery is the oldest in the region, with the first church in the R.M. of Daly (Roseville Church, now standing at the Chapman Museum site) having been built in 1884 on land donated by James Varcoe. Still in use today, the Roseville Cemetery was the final resting place of some of the region's earliest settlers. In pioneer cemeteries such as this one, visitors can see in the stones the hardship and tragedies of early settler life. Many prominent Daly names may be found among the names of those buried in Roseville.

## Chapman Museum

NE 28-11-20



### Heritage Value Statement

Chapman Museum was founded in 1967 by Albert “Ab” Chapman and his wife Harriet as a centennial project. Born at the end of the first world war, Chapman had seen enormous change come to rural Manitoba, and sought to preserve some elements of its heritage for future generations. The collection includes schools, a church, shops, houses, and a collection of railway buildings from the vanished town of Pendennis. In addition to their inherent interest, the buildings also serve as museum spaces for the display of pioneer artifacts from the region.

## Tarbolton United Church and Cemetery

Near Tarbolton



### Heritage Value Statement

Beautifully set on a treed slope, Tarbolton Presbyterian Church was built in 1888 on land donated by Mr. James Sibbald. A modest building in the Gothic Revival Style, Tarbolton Church was an important focal point for its Scottish parishioners. Once they had determined to worship no more in the local school, they managed to erect this charming building between August 22nd—when a committee was appointed to oversee its building—and that same fall, when the first service was held (albeit in an incomplete interior). Notwithstanding the speed of its construction, the church served its congregation for over a century, until it was officially closed in 1990.

## McGregor House

NW 2-11-20, Carnegie Area



### Heritage Value Statement

The McGregor House (1914), also known as Gwenmar, is an excellent early example of an ambitious Bungalow-style dwelling in an attractive rural setting. Originally built as a summer home, the building features a generous verandah and an asymmetrical wing on one side with a sunroom and sleeping porch. The generous proportions, horizontal emphasis and rustic wood shingle and stucco exterior are matched by an interior that blends casual style and comfort, including large main-floor living spaces, extensive exposed woodwork and some built-in furniture. This site also recalls the contributions made to Manitoba by its original occupants, the pioneer family of James Duncan McGregor, a prominent cattle producer, co-founder of the Brandon Winter Fair and lieutenant-governor of Manitoba from 1929 to 1934.

## Pool Elevator

Bradwardine



### Heritage Value Statement

Bradwardine Pool Elevator (1927) is the last remaining elevator of the four that once served Bradwardine-area farmers. Tall elevators built on a standard plan such as this one could hold up to 40 thousand bushels of wheat. They were an essential part of any railway stop serving a grain-growing area, serving as an economic focal point for farmers visiting the town, and always a landmark on the skyline.

## Chapman Farm Elevator

NW 10-11-20, Carnegie Area



### Heritage Value Statement

The Chapman Farm Elevator (1911) is a -rare surviving example of a farmyard elevator used to handle large quantities of grain efficiently on progressive farms of the early-20th century. Designed to receive and store grain in separate bins, such an elevator would allow a prosperous farm to store different types of grain prior to taking it to market, while relieving the farmer of some of the backbreaking labour involved in earlier storage methods that required the grain to be moved by the shovelful. The elevator is said to have been built to plans resulting from a competition sponsored by Canada Cement Company, and follows the general profile common for elevators by that time.

## Air Force Base

Wheatland



### Heritage Value Statement

Central Navigation School, located a few kilometres outside Rivers in Wheatland, brought a massive shift to the region, beginning in November 1940 when No. 1 Air Navigation School was moved there from Trenton, Ontario. Over 11,000 navigators from across Canada and the Commonwealth were trained here in the war years, with the local population being boosted by as many as 3000 people—mostly young men in training—at any given time. Although some of the original buildings have disappeared, the main hangar, with its arched roof and impressive wide facade, is a dominant and surprising feature on the prairie. Other residential and institutional buildings from various eras also still stand on the site, along with the runways from which young pilots once took to the air in their Avro Ansons.

## Reeves Barn

SW 12-11-22, Wheatland Area



### **Heritage Value Statement**

A rare surviving example of a barn built in fieldstone to two storeys high, the Reeves barn is an interesting adaptation of the traditional gable-roofed Southern Ontario barn style once found on many prairie farms. Set as it is into a hillside to provide ground-level access to both the stable level and the loft, the design is both traditional and functional. The barn was built for a pioneer, Jack Reeves, and entered the Thomas Sibbald family around 1910. Once a part of a collection of farmyard buildings, the barn now stands alone – a beautiful memorial to the hard work and enterprise of area pioneers.