

Three Rivers Trail Newsletter

(Arm River – Qu'Appelle River – South Saskatchewan River)

Three Rivers Trail Association, Box 367, Craik S0G 0V0

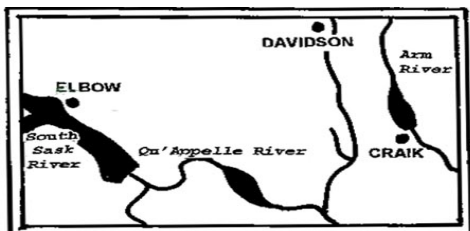
No.1, Fall 2003

The TRTA Objectives:

- To promote the beauty of valley vistas, the prairie geography and the 'spirit' of the land;
- To give an understanding and appreciation of grassland ecology by identifying points of interests and associated trails in glacial pothole country, sand hills, wetlands, and old glacial valleys;
- To make maps showing birding trails and heritage sites; and
- To mark hiking and equestrian trails with metal posts showing the **TRTA Logo:**



The TRTA Area:



The TRTA Board of Directors:

Bob Doig, Chamberlain
Lyle/Christine Benz, Aylesbury
Sterling Schollar, Craik
Doug McIvor, Girvin
Don Wilkins, Girvin
Ed Spratt, Davidson (Chairman)
Shirley Eade, Craik (Sec./Treasurer)

TRTA Receives SPRA Grant:

In October 2002 a sub-group of the Mid-Lakes Community Coalition (MLCC) met and decided to form a Trail Association. At a second meeting selected a Board of Directors, a name, an objective and a logo. It was also decided to apply to the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) which has a program to assist the formation of Trail Associations.

In October 2003, TRTA received the SPRA Grant. The Grant needed to be matched dollar for dollar by TRTA fund raising or contributions in kind. Over \$5000 was expended by TRTA members before the SPRA Grant of \$2500 was received. The money has been used to attain trail maps, make trail markers with steel logos, purchase steel gates for trail pasture entrances, print and distribute brochures, and to record historical interviews and photos. This was a one-time Grant so we are on our own now for fund-raising. Some ideas would be fees for organized trail rides, volunteers putting on Bar-B-

Q's with prices for meals, and sales of maps, photos, souvenirs and more.



Above: Trail ride in Arm River Valley, May 2003

Two Valley Trails:

1. Arm River Valley

Two equestrian rides were staged along the Arm River in 2003. We needed permission from six landlords to go through their pastures, and we thank them heartily. Without such open-minded people, it would be difficult for TRTA to meet its objectives.

The route covers about 12 km one-way, thus it can be ridden both ways starting at 10 AM, breaking for lunch, and returning by 4 PM. On May 18 about 27 horseback riders and 5 wagon teams started from the Craik Park after pancake breakfast and the flag raising of the TRTA logo on our No.1 Trail Marker. We went right along the river, which was flowing mightily with spring run-off. Truly beautiful!

On the 20th of September about 50 participants met at Lyle and Chris Benz's Guest Ranch for a ride to the Park and back. A glorious fall day, beautiful vistas along the valley, wild life, and a grand Bar-B-Q to wind down the day, thanks to the Benz's.

2. Iskwao (Squaw) Creek

On 21 September TRTA sponsored a trail ride from Schollar's Hill (Hudson's Bay Look-Out 5 km west of Craik) to Sterling & Ellen Schollar's Farm along the Iskwao Creek for 12 km. Ralph Schollar was the leader. A noon Bar-B-Q was set up by Bob Doig & friends, and burgers were sold to hungry equestrians as a fund raiser for TRTA. The 5 wagons and 23 riders returned by following the Papoose Creek part way and then proceeding to the start point.

Next Newsletter: Birding



Craik Park Dug-Out House:

Austin & Shirley Eade have donated some virgin prairie land on the edge of the Arm River valley to the Craik Regional Park. On that land there are still visible wagon trail-marks remaining from the Last Mountain to Craik trail used when Craik was at the end of the rail and a supply centre for prairies settlement.



One day Austin found a depression in the side of the hill that had a burnt wooden stub for a corner marker. On analysis it was found to be part of a pioneer dug-out house. Elderly residents in Craik could remember that there was a family that lived there. There was evidence that the home had been burned down more than once, thus the site probably dates back to early explorers.

As a tourist attraction, Austin and Shirley decided to reconstruct a dug-out house and barn in the same likeness that the early settlers used. They furnished them with antiques found around Craik, such as wood stove, home-made bed, old cooking pots and tools.

There has been a good story developed to go along with the description of the buildings, and one can take a tour of them by contacting the Park Office (summer) or Town Office (winter). The buildings are a short hike from the park gate, through virgin prairie grassland with name-plates on certain shrubs, flowers and trails.

Brochures, Newsletters & Maps:

Early in 2002 a TRTA Brochure was circulated and copies are still available. This first [TRTA Newsletter](#) was published for our first annual meeting, and maps of trails are available on request. To continue to receive mail from TRTA you must phone or email to request that your name stay on the mailing list. Also, phone in names of others you think would be interested. We now have over 100 TRTA fans on our list.



Newsletter Features:

In this [TRTA Newsletter](#) we feature the dug-out house and barn at the Craik Regional Park, which has turned out to be a prime tourist attraction in our region. This site and Austin Eade were also featured in a TRTA video that was produced during this last summer.

In each of the future editions of the [TRTA Newsletter](#) a heritage site or tourist attraction or geographic attraction or new trail or folk story or some such item of general interest will be written to save for posterity. We need your ideas and stories.

In the Newsletter pipeline are items such as: the CNR spring at Chamberlain; the Camp of Plenty at Farden's on the Arm River; the Indian folklore of Iskwaio (Squaw) valley; the stories of the Sprattsville, Hustler and Rensby and other School Districts (including 35 SD's marked around Aylesbury); the Hudson's Bay fur trading trail; the great stallion of west Buffalo Pound Lake; and many more.



Left: TRTA flag with the TRTA logo being raised at the Craik Regional Park – May 2003.

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