

Lorna Smith Nature Centre

Location: Southeast of Boissevain, SW Section 18-3-20
RM of Morton
Established 1983

The Lorna Smith Nature Centre just southeast of Boissevain was established in 1983 by the Turtle Mountain Conservation District as part of the reservoir project. The reserved land includes the uplands surrounding the reservoir – land that was owned by the Smith family who had their family farm a short distance to the north. The nature reserve was named in honour of Lorna Smith who grew up on the farm.

A wide variety of plants and wildlife indigenous to this part of the prairies can be observed in the nature reserve. During the spring, the reservoir provides a safe stop for waterfowl during their migrations. With the coming of summer wildflowers the uplands surrounding the reservoir become blanketed with spots of colour. Broods of ducklings mature until the fall when the area becomes alive with resting birds preparing for the autumn migration.

The Lorna Smith Nature Reserve provides a quiet and serene place for students and outdoor enthusiasts to observe and learn about prairie plants and wildlife.



The Lorna Smith Nature Centre is about 2 kms south-east of Boissevain, overlooking the reservoir.

Lorna Smith

October 20th, 1948 – July 3rd, 1978

The Lorna Smith Nature Centre was named after a young woman who became very well known in the hearts and minds of the Boissevain community. Lorna Smith was five years old when she became a diabetic, and when she was 18 the condition left her totally blind. Though she never learned how to read Braille, she did learn how to type and became a freelance writer.



Wildflowers blooming among native grasses at Lorna Smith

Born, raised and educated in Boissevain, Lorna's favourite subject to cover was sports, with stories featuring human interests coming in closely for second place. She would sit at hockey games with her parents who described every moment of play to her.

Lorna Smith's articulate, friendly and straightforward writing style was enjoyed by thousands, and her articles were often carried by publications near and far. She was reputed to take the problems she faced in stride and with a smile. Along with a charming personality, she exhibited great courage and fortitude amid the challenges she faced.

Lorna Smith died at the age of 29 due to complications with her diabetes.

References:
"2001-138-31." *Heritage Sign Fonds MG15 / D15. Boissevain Community Archives.*
Lorna Smith Collection MG16 / A2 File 1. Boissevain Community Archives
Photos: Teyana Neufeld, TM-SPHA.