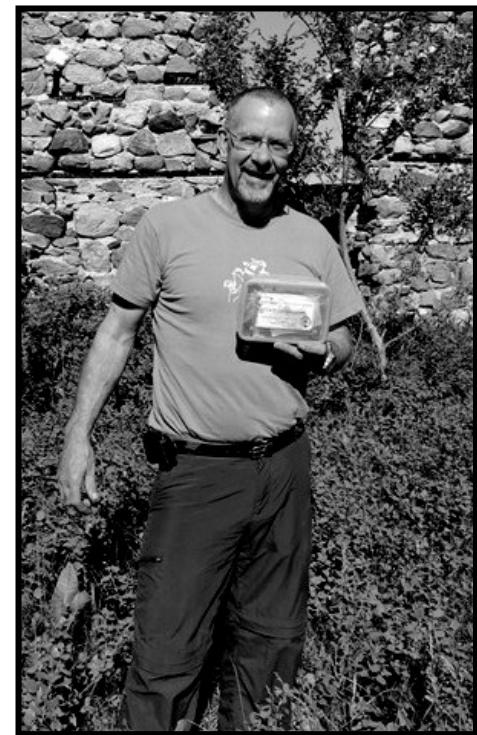


# A Heritage Geocaching Adventure!

A pair of geocachers take on 22 heritage caches in two days

During the summers of 2010 and 2011 the Turtle Mountain-Souris Plains Heritage Association (TM-SPHA) installed 24 geocaches throughout southwest Manitoba. All of our geocaches are placed at sites of historical significance which reflect the historical, cultural and ecological diversity of our region. In each of the caches we placed a Story Card which describes the history of the site with accompanying heritage photos and images. There is no better way to interact with history than to get out on the land, visit the sites and reimagine events that happened in years past. Geocaching provides the perfect opportunity for us to get visitors to do exactly that, while leaving the adventure and discovery of the site up to the visitors themselves.

Over Canada Day weekend, 2012, two geocachers from Calgary made it their mission to find all of the TM-SPHA geocaches (2 of the 24 were temporarily out of commission). The following excerpts from the cache logbooks describe the adventure they had travelling over the southwest Manitoban landscape and far back into the pages of history.



## Day One: June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012

### #1. Scraphappyj and cacher\_lou found Cacti Congregation

Scraphappyj: WOW, today was a long way coming and what a day! It was time for cacher\_lou's 7000th cache and we were talking a couple of weeks ago about what to do. Since he had never cached in Manitoba before this was looking like a great idea. We both really like to find old buildings and love the history so when we were researching where to go, this was a natural, and WOW, was it amazing.

It was awesome to come down the "Old Church Road" and see the old church. It was an awesome place to see from afar. Once we got there it was a great place to wander around. We spent more time looking around the church and visualizing what it was at its finest. We finally remembered that we were there to find a cache, and made the find. Of course cacher\_lou went in the long way to get it, but I stood back and let him find it. It was an awesome time.

Thank you to cacher\_lou for sharing this amazing experience

with me and for being such a great sport about coming out there for this cache. It was the first of the series for us and we will be concentrating on these ones while we are here. Thank you for the amazing cache and for the history lesson.

cacher\_lou: Just gotta thank Scraphappyj for the idea to grab this one for my 7000th find. We drove from Calgary and set up our tent in Carnduff Sask for a couple of nights. We grabbed a few to get the numbers up to 6999 and then made a run for this one. What an amazing place. We pulled up and I knew that this was the perfect spot for the milestone. Took a bunch of photos and then headed off to grab the rest of the series over two days. Great work and effort in this series. I love local history and each and every one of the places we went to was a real treat.

### #2. Pump it Up

Scraphappyj: We had decided after finding the first one in the series to concentrate on these and not worry about the other caches around the area since we only had 2 days. It was awesome to find the

cache and the cards. Looking forward to the next 20. Thanks for the adventure.

cacher\_lou: On a mission to do this great series: 22 caches in 2 days. A lot of driving but so worth it!

### #3. Bye Son Stow Own

Scraphappy: Loved the stone and the stories. It was fun to imagine what it was like when the bison roamed the area.

cacher\_lou: What a great back scratcher.

### #4. Ain't That Dandy

Scraphappyj: We got up to the site and cacher\_lou quickly had the cache in hand. We were just going to leave when a wild turkey came up and we had a photo op! Then we were off.

### #5. Where the Bison Tumbled

Scraphappyj: It was fun to find the



caches down all of those back roads, and find the stories.  
cacher\_lou: I could so live here! a favorite for sure.

#### **#6. Yesteryear's Highway**

Scraphappyj: I loved the old highway and the images that it brought to mind as you thought about the people that had traveled that road.

cacher\_lou: I could envision riders and carts slowly making their way down the hill to cross the river here. Loving this series!

#### **#7. Something Made of "Gould"**

Scraphappyj: We are really enjoying each stop in the series. It is fun to find the cache, read the history and head onto the next one. Thank you for all of the work that you put into these caches.

cacher\_lou: The swallows have made condos here.

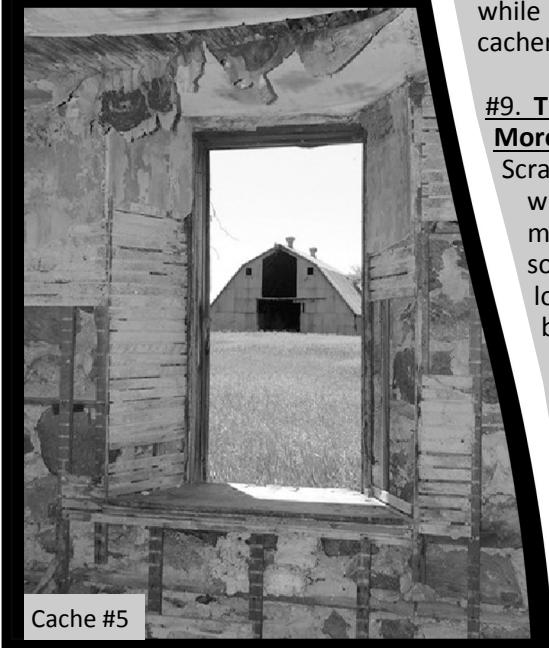
#### **#8. Think LARGE**

Scraphappyj: Another great find while out in the area with cacher\_lou.

#### **#9. This Whistle Don't Blow No More**

Scraphappyj: It was strange when the GPS took us into the middle of the field, but we soon had the cache in hand. I loved standing on the old rail bed and imagining the trains coming down the track. It was an amazing feeling to stand there and feel the rumble of the trains of days gone by.

cacher\_lou: Didn't realize that the "road" was the old tracks till reading the card.



#### **#10. Black Diamonds**

Scraphappyj: This was a great place to stop and brew up some coffee on the road and eat lunch.

#### **#11. A Physical Vantage Point**

Scraphappyj: What a great way to spend the extra long weekend. Exploring the area, learning some history and having lots of fun and laughs.

#### **#12. One Stone at a Time**

Scraphappyj: We loved the old church here and it was an amazing building. It was sad to learn that they were going to tear this down at one point. Was glad that it is still standing.

cacher\_lou: Last one of the day due to the long drive and heat. Will take a break and start fresh first thing in the morning. So enjoyed our first day caching in Manitoba.

### **Day Two, July 1<sup>st</sup> 2012**

#### **#13. Here They Rest in Peace**

Scraphappyj: After a great day yesterday of caching this series we couldn't wait to head back and get on the road again. This was our first cache of the day and loved the old cemetery and the history there.

#### **#14. A Hall of Learning**

Scraphappyj: Once we had the cache in hand we headed back into the caching truck and headed on to the next cache. I would read the story cards to Dale while he would navigate to the next cache.

cacher\_lou: Day 2 of the series with Scraphappyj. Warm day and glad for the AC in the truck.

#### **#15. Something's Fishy**

Scraphappyj: This one almost did us in. We got to the little creek and went around to the south end and didn't see a way to get to the cache without swimming. As we were driving back along the creek, we saw the little "land bridge" that would take us over the creek. We stopped, put on our river shoes and crossed the creek. We did get a little muddy, but nothing more.

cacher\_lou: After finding the least wet

### **Not Familiar with Geocaching?**

Geocaching is a worldwide game of hiding and seeking treasure. Exact points on the landscape are pinpointed using GPS technology and published online at [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com). At these sites, hidden containers holding "treasure" (in our case Story Cards) are located. After punching in the coordinates of any chosen geocache location into a GPS, visitors are led to its location where they search for the hidden treasure. Part of the geocaching experience is sharing your adventure online.

way across we made our way through the tall grass and wild mint to the cache site. The neighbours were giving us the funny look as we came back to the truck probably wondering what the two idiots from Alberta were doing.

#### **#16. Little Homestead in the Woods**

Scraphappyj: We drove the caching truck in quite a ways before we thought it was going to be too hard to get back out if the road turned worse, so we parked and walked the last little ways in. Once we got to the cache location it was an easy find. If the bugs hadn't been too bad we would have gone through the woods to the old cache, but instead we signed the log and headed on our way.

cacher\_lou: Fascinating places you have taken us to.

#### **#17. Run for the Rum!**

Scraphappyj: It was great to come up into the forest and trees while looking for this cache. It was a nice drive up and then we parked and went to find the cache. WOW, you can just imagine the rum runners coming down the road. We stood on the road and could feel the thunder as the old trucks make their way across the border. Thanks for another fascinating history lesson.

cacher\_lou: Took a little walk ready to dive into the bush if a fast moving rum loaded truck came roaring down the trail. Not likely this day, but I can only imagine 80-90 years ago...

#### **#18. Skirmish on the Hilltop**

Scraphappyj: We stood on the hill and listened to the sound of the skirmishes as they happened so far into the past.

cacher\_lou: Finishing up the last few of the series as we make our way back to the camp. AC on full, tunes on and great company.

#### **#19. A Trading Route Between Here and There**

cacher\_lou: A few more in the series and enjoying every one of them.

#### **#20. A "Chain" of Events**

Scraphappyj: It was a nice surprise to come around the corner and see the lakes! There were people on the lake boating and tubing, but we made the

quick find and were on our way.  
cacher\_lou: Quite a few folks camping here today on Canada Day, but managed to grab the cache and then on our way.

#### **#21. Hills That Used to be Lakebottom**

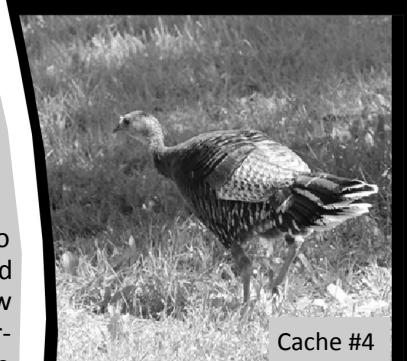
Scraphappyj: It was a bit of a surprise to come around the corner on the road and into the forest and then follow the road and into the heart of the forest. We had a nice walk to the cache area, found the cache and then headed back onto the road and down to the next cache.

cacher\_lou: What a unique area. Enjoyed the walk along the trails and fields even though the air was quite warm. Another place I would probably never have seen if not for geocaching. Good stuff.

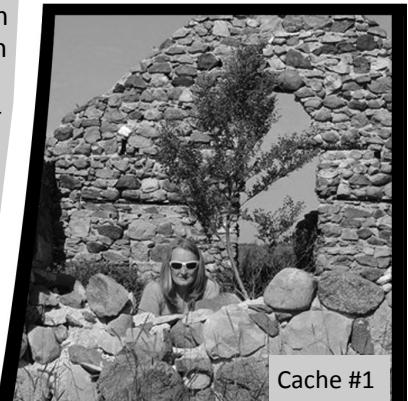
#### **#22. Where the Church Bell Still Tolls**

Scraphappyj: This was the last in the series for us. It gave us a bit of a laugh to find this one where it was, and then we were back into the caching truck and heading on our way back to Sask and our campsite. Thank you for the last one in the series. This was well worth the long drive out here. (By the time we got back to Calgary it was a 3,200 km drive).

cacher\_lou: What a way to finish off the series. All that was missing was the paperwork. Really enjoyed the series and was so worth the long trip to get here. Thanks for all your hard work in placing these geocaches. Cheers!



Cache #4



Cache #1



Cache #2



Cache #17

*Scraphappyj and cacher\_lou are Janice Walters and Dale Loubert respectively. They both live in Calgary and enjoy geocaching as a pastime. Dale has been geocaching since 2007 and Janice since 2009. Thanks to both of them for granting us permission to print their experience and photos!*

Want to get involved? Geocaching is fun and free. Visit [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) for more details. The TM-SPHA caches are also listed on our website, [vantagepoints.ca](http://vantagepoints.ca).

Photos: Courtesy of Dale Loubert and Janice Walters.