10 St. Mary's Anglican Church (396 Lifford Road)

St. Mary's Church opened in this location in 1852. The first Anglican services in this area of Manvers Township has been held as early as the late 1830s in the home of Isaac and Mary Preston. Isaac's brother Alexander would donate the land for the new church which was constructed by community members who volunteered their time and labour. In 1993, the original church burnt down and was rebuilt by the local community.

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11 Bethany

The hamlet of Bethany developed around the railway which arrived in the community in 1859. The Midland Railway stopped in the community and provided a vital transportation hub for the surrounding area. in 1911, a fire devastated the commercial area, destroying nearly all of the building on the south side of Main Street (now Highway 7A). Visit historic buildings such as the Bethany General Store, the library, and Williams Design Studio.

12 Pontypool

Although settlers were farming in the area of Pontypool as early as the 1830s, the settlement here was late to develop. By the mid-1860s, a mill was established at this site and the CPR arrived in the 1880s, which caused the village to grow. Pontypool is well known for its Jewish resorts which developed beginning around 1916. At a time when Jewish people were discriminated against at other summer recreation areas, resorts and cottages were built to cater to these Toronto families who took the train from the city to summer in Pontypool.

Driving Directions

Start your tour at the Lindsay Library. Proceed down Kent Street West through Queen's Square and downtown Lindsay. At the end of the street, turn left, then quickly right to proceed onto Kent Street East. Drive by the Old Mill to Huron Street. Turn right. Drive south to Russell Street East. Turn right and drive by St. Mary's Catholic Church. Proceed to Lindsay Street South. Turn left and drive south to Riverside Cemetery.

Proceed south to Highway 7. Turn left onto Highway 7. Turn left onto County Road 36 and drive north. Turn right on Pigeon Lake Road and take it to Sturgeon Road. Turn right and drive south through Downeyville to Omemee. Explore Omemee then head east on Highway 7 to the Emily Cemetery. Continue to Orange Corners Road. Turn right. The entrance to the Trans Canada Trail, on which you will have to walk to reach the Trestle Bridge is just up the road.

Continue south to Cottingham Road. Turn right. Turn left on Emily Park Road then right on Hayes Line. Turn left on Ski Hill Road, then right on Lifford Road to St. Mary's. Continue to Beers Road and turn left to head south to Highway 7A. Turn left on the highway and head into Bethany. From Bethany, return west on Highway 7A to Highway 35. Turn left on Highway 35 and proceed south. Turn left on Pontypool Road to enter into Pontypool.

Lindsay to Pontypool

Historic Driving Tour

Kawartha Lakes

1. Queen's Square (180 Kent Street West)

Start your tour at Queen's Square in Lindsay. Queen's Square was where markets were held in the late nineteenth century and is also part of Lindsay's civic centre. The are includes the Public Library (one of the oldest Carnegie libraries in Canada), the former Lindsay Town Hall, constructed in 1861 which is now the Lindsay Municipal Service Centre, and the Grand Hotel, once known as the Market Hotel for its location next to the market. Nearby you can observe the Lindsay Armoury and Victoria Park.

2. Downtown Lindsay

Explore historic downtown Lindsay on Kent Street, the widest main street in Ontario. Kent Street was first surveyed in the 1830s before growing up as Lindsay's commercial centre in the mid-nineteenth century. A fire in 1861 burned most of the commercial buildings in the town, but the next two decades saw them built back in their current form. There are many historic buildings to view in the downtown which help tell the story of the community.

3. Lindsay Old Mill (Kent Street East)

The first mill in Lindsay was built in 1829 at the foot of Georgian Street. This mill is the third mill constructed in town and is built on the same location as the second mill, completed in 1844. This mill, the Needler and Sadler Mill was constructed in 1869 by William Needler. The mill served the community for many years and was an important economic driver. A fire in 1978 reduced the mill to the current shell it is today, although it still remains an important local landmark.

4. St. Mary's Catholic Church (29 Russell Street East)

The Catholic Church was an important early institution in Lindsay. The first Catholic church was constructed in 1841 at the corner of Russell and Lindsay Streets. The current church was constructed in 1858 with the spire added in 1884 and is an important landmark in Lindsay. The church, in particular, served the large Irish population who lived in this area of Lindsay beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. A large convent also once stood next door.

5. Riverside Cemetery (347 Lindsay Street S)

Riverside Cemetery was founded in 1870 on a 10 acre plot on the outskirts of Lindsay. It has now grown to 60 acres and provides a tranquil, beautiful setting overlooking the Scugog River. There are many historic graves dating back to the nineteenth century, including war graves of those who served in the world wars and Ontario Premier Leslie Frost. It is an excellent example of a garden cemetery, a popular landscape design type in the nineteenth century which aimed to plan cemeteries in a park-like semi-rural setting. The cemetery celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2020.

6. Downeyville

The hamlet of Downeyville is one of the earliest settlements in Kawartha Lakes, with settlers arriving in the areas around 1825. The first settlers were from Ireland and arrived as part of the Robinson Immigration scheme, organized by the Honorable Peter Robinson to bring settlers into what was then known as the Newcastle District. Many of them settled in Emily Township and in "Downey's Cross", the original name of the hamlet. It has always been a strongly Catholic area from its days of early settlement. One of the major landmarks in Downeyville is St. Luke's Catholic Church, built in 1895.

7. Omemee

Omemee's history of settlement dates back to the early 1820s when the Cottingham family arrived at what is now the site of the village. Over the next decades, a community grew up around the site of the Cottingham mills on the Pigeon River. In 1857, the arrival of the Midland Railway began a period of rapid growth with new businesses, industry, and residents. At one time, Omemee competed with Lindsay as the largest town in the county. While the town is much quieter than in its early days, many of its historic homes and businesses remain and can be seen driving or walking through the village.

8. Emily Cemetery (4249 Highway 7)

Emily Cemetery was opened in 1872 to serve as a non-denominational burial ground for Emily Township. Many of the burials in the two denominational cemeteries in the village of Omemee were relocated to the cemetery after it opened and subsequent burials occurred here. In 1929, Flora McCrae, then Lady Eaton and a native of Omemee, donated the chapel, as a memorial to her family and, particularly, her father John McCrae, a prominent citizen of Omemee. The chapel is build in stone and is a beautiful example of a Gothic Revival cemetery chapel.

9. Doube's Trestle Bridge (Orange Corners Road)

The famous Doube's trestle bridge offers spectacular views across the Buttermilk Valley. The bridge was originally constructed to link the rail line running between Peterborough and Omemee. During the summer of 1885, five hundred Italian immigrants completed the construction of the 700 foot long and 40 foot high trestle, using only hand shovels, ropes and pulleys and muscle. The rail line was discontinued in 1989 and eventually was formally incorporated as part of the Trans Canada Trail in 2008.