

A Sparkling Gem on the Winnipeg River

By Brian Choptain

The Lac du Bonnet beach is a tiny jewel hidden in the heart of Lac du Bonnet.

The beach located at Lake and 3rd Street is jam packed on hot summer days with children and their families, boaters and people fishing for Manitoba's favourite pickerel.

"It is a gem. Many communities wish they could have something like this," said Lac du Bonnet Mayor Greg Short.

Each summer the town employs life guards to provide swimming lessons in the morning and watch swimmers on the south side of the dock which stretches out into the Winnipeg River.

The Winnipeg River widens to over a mile wide in front of the town giving the illusion that it is a lake, where float planes from Conservation can be seen taking off and landing, while boaters and jetskis dash across the glassy surface.

"We are gifted to have a beach and I hope people take every opportunity to take advantage of it, be it fishing, boating, or swimming," said Short.

The beach has swings, slides, picnic tables and shade trees for visitors.

From the hillside you can see the famous 'skinny bridge' that

was originally built in 1933 to take people to Pointe du Bois.

On the dock, people can be seen fishing along side parked boats as cottagers visit the town.

An observation deck with railing has also been created. There is a short walkway with benches which runs along the bank and within a short walking distance to restaurants, an ice cream stand and bakery.

If you hang around in the evening, you can sometimes watch the full moon rise over the river, or catch the lightning flashes dancing in the clouds after the storm passes.

The beach also provides an ideal landing for canoeist or kayakers who stop by as they journey through the region on the historic Winnipeg River – not unlike Colonel Garnet Wolseley's 1870 expedition heading to the Red River Settlement.

The beach is also the location of Manitoba aviation history and the Vicker's Vedette and German Junker aircraft, which flew from this very location to communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. A memorial is at the top of the hill for visitors to read about this historic site.

Whatever your reason... to meet people, learn some history, enjoy fishing, sun tanning or swimming, the beach is a great place spend some quality time in the heart of the Town of Lac du Bonnet.

