

## START

### 1 St. Jacobs Farmers' Market

Waterloo Region is famous for its bustling farmers' markets. Most local markets are open Saturday mornings plus one additional midweek morning. Along this drive you will find many farms with signs selling fresh local produce.

### 2 St. Jacobs (est. 1830)

Originally called Jakobstettel, the village was settled by John B. Bauman. Historic buildings include: Jacob C. Snider Mill (1852) that houses historical displays, blacksmith shop (1880), Benjamin's Inn originally the Farmer's Inn or Dominion Hotel (1852), the Evangelical Church, antique market and the old shoe factory. The Mennonite Story Visitor's Centre (1406 King St. N.) offers an informative depiction of Mennonite beginnings, lifestyle and culture. The village is also the site of the original Home Hardware, located at 1421 King St. N. The store's national warehouse is on Henry Street. Walk along the Mill Race Trail that follows the Conestogo River to discover the St. Jacobs Railway Viaduct built in 1890 for the Grand Trunk Railway.

### 3 Elmira (est. 1840)

Edward Bristow purchased land here in 1834 from David Musselman. At the time, it was known as Bristow's Corners, but was renamed Elmira in 1853. The settlement was incorporated as a town in 1923 and is now the largest settlement in Woolwich serving as a farmer's shopping centre and the Township's administrative centre. Elmira is famous for its Maple Syrup Festival held annually on the first Saturday in April. Note the historic Gore Park Bandstand (1912) and historic buildings shown on the map.

Watch for horse-drawn buggies as you drive through the patchwork countryside. Many Mennonite farmsteads have doddy houses for seniors and fertile gardens and fields. In late summer, you may see wheat stooks and haying with horses and wagons that remind us of simpler times. Watch for road side stands that offer fresh produce, quilts, and maple syrup. No Sunday sales.

### 4 Sand Hills and Trail

Site of some of the most mature coniferous plantations in the region (80 years). The Sand Hills area was established as a public works project in the Depression of the 1930s to control severe wind erosion. This is also the site of the Sand Hills Baptist Cemetery and a previous church. The congregation was organized in 1852, and by 1890 the church closed. The gravestones have been organized into two rows.

### 5 Grand River Valley

As you crisscross over the Grand River, a Canadian Heritage River (1994), take note of the historic bridges, spectacular views of the valley, and hiking trails.

### 6 West Montrose (est. 1850s)

Land was purchased in this area as early as 1807 by Augustus Jones together with John and Jacob Erb, agents of the German Company, and was mainly settled by English and Scottish settlers. The covered bridge, built in 1881, is the only surviving historic covered bridge in Ontario, and is locally known as the "Kissing

Bridge" as it provided privacy for kissing couples. Also note the historic homes and general store. Caution: Please observe posted load restrictions before crossing the bridge.

### 7 Winterbourne (Cox Creek) (est. c.1807)

In 1854, William Henry Lanphier built a dam on Cox Creek, leading to the establishment of Winterbourne's first sawmill and gristmill. Lanphier named the village Winterbourne, after his ancestral home in England. The fine stonework of Scottish stonemasons can be seen in many of the older buildings throughout the settlement. You will enter Winterbourne on Peel Street by crossing the Winterbourne Bridge, a double span through truss bridge built in 1913. The village has several older houses, the virtually unchanged former Chalmers Presbyterian Church (1870), the Pioneer Methodist Cemetery and stone blacksmith shop.

### 8 Maryhill (est. 1820s)

Maryhill, known as New Germany until 1941, was settled in the 1840s by Roman Catholic emigrants from the Alsatian region of France and is the heart of Catholicism in Woolwich Township. Historic buildings include St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church (1877-1878), St. Boniface Separate School (built in 1896, third school on site), Maryhill Inn (1852), Commercial Tavern (1853), and the Edward Halter House (c.1850), now the St. Boniface Maryhill Historical Society. There are interesting iron crosses in the St. Boniface R.C. Cemetery and a Wayside Cross is located on the south side of St. Charles Street East, just east of Maryhill.

### 9 Breslau (est. 1820s)

The Village of Breslau, established in the 1820s, is located where a ford crossed the Grand River. Joseph Erb laid out the village in 1857. In 1869, a flour mill, steam mill, and mechanics shop were built. Breslau Mennonite Church, founded in 1834, has an interesting adjoining pioneer cemetery.

### 10 Bloomingdale (est. 1861)

The historic Grand River crossing (Snyder's Flats) at Bloomingdale, established in 1808, provided farmers with access to Abraham Erb's sawmill in Waterloo. The first European settlers, from Baden-Baden, Germany, arrived in 1826 and the village was incorporated in 1861. Snyder's Flats was a popular picnic and recreation site in the late 1800s. Note the cairn to Jacob Schneider and the Bloomingdale Mennonite Church and cemetery.

### 11 Conestogo (Musselman's Mills) (est. 1830)

Founded by David Musselman, early development in the 1840s was based on saw and flour mills. The first settlers were predominantly Mennonites who had emigrated from Pennsylvania. They were followed by people of German and British descent. The historic core area contains many Victorian-era homes, the Old Township Hall, former United Church (1878), Sittler's bakery, Black Forest Inn and many other shops along Sawmill Road. As you leave the village on Glasgow Street, you will cross over the Conestogo Bridge (1886), a two-span steel truss bridge.

12 As you finish the route, keep watch for the historic Elam Martin Farmstead, the springhouse and Martin Meeting House and Cemetery.

Mennonite and Germanic cultural, historical and architectural diversity awaits you on this tour. Beginning at the well-known St. Jacobs Farmers' Market, you will then head north to the Village of St. Jacobs where fashion, quilts, crafts and antiques can be found.

Follow the clip-clop of horse-drawn buggies into the rich countryside where Mennonite farmsteads with their fertile fields and gardens are easily recognizable. In summer, wheat stooks and haying with horse and wagon remind us of simpler times. Stroll through towns and villages, sample mouth-watering local food, meander on trails and enjoy views of the Canadian Heritage Grand River watershed. Take note of the West Montrose Covered Bridge and the spire of Maryhill's St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church that guides the way to where people from Alsace-Lorraine settled over 150 years ago.

Continue on the tour through the historic Village of Conestogo and cross over the Conestogo Bridge, a rare double-span steel truss bridge. You will end the journey by passing the Elam Martin Farmstead, a sixth-generation Mennonite family farm, a stone springhouse, as well as the Georgian style Martin Meeting House and Cemetery, the last remaining early Mennonite meeting house in Waterloo. Upon completing the tour and returning to the St. Jacobs Farmers' Market, you can either continue on Tour Four through Wellesley Township or return to Waterloo.

For more detailed historic information on this area, visit the Region's website or contact Woolwich Township at 519-669-1647.

**STARTS at the St. Jacobs Farmers' Market. Exit the market's parking lot by turning right onto Weber Street North. Continue straight on Weber Street North, which turns into King Street North at the stoplights. Follow King Street to the Village of St. Jacobs.**

**Note:** Some roads are gravel and several older bridges are single lane with weight restrictions. Please drive with caution as you share the roads with horse-drawn vehicles and cyclists. Please keep in mind that some points of interest on this tour are not publicly accessible; enjoy the view only from public property. Refreshments and/or public washrooms may not be available along rural sections of the route, but many towns, villages and hamlets offer wonderful establishments in historic buildings.



Region of Waterloo

HERITAGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

For more information, contact  
**PLANNING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

519-575-4400 • TTY 519-575-4608

or email [planninginfo@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:planninginfo@regionofwaterloo.ca)

*Alternate formats are available upon request.*

## TOUR TWO

### TOWNSHIP OF WOOLWICH

# Country Lanes



West Montrose Covered Bridge

**Distance: 95 km Time: 2 hours & 20 min.**

Waterloo Region

*Historic*  
**COUNTRYSIDE  
TOURS**

Mennonite farms,  
creeks, rivers  
and bridges

[www.regionofwaterloo.ca](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca)



- Legend**
- Tour Route
  - Starting Point
  - Heritage Building
  - Cemetery
  - Church
  - Plaque/Calm
  - Information
  - Wilderness Area
  - Picnic Area
  - Trail
  - Old School House/Parochial School
  - Old Farm
  - Meeting House
  - Historic Bridge
  - Railway
  - Lake/River/Pond
  - Town or Village
  - Municipal Boundary

**Elmira**

- Elmira Mennonite Cemetery (1855)
- Dunk House (1894)
- Church St W
- Arthur St N
- St. James' Episcopal Church (1856)
- Former House (1856)
- St. James' Episcopal Cemetery (1854)
- Wyle House (1880)
- Brallow's Inn (c. 1860)
- St. Teresa of Avila Cemetery

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- Albright House (c. 1850)
- Lost Acres (1881)
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- Commercial Hotel (1853)
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