



Post-Rendezvous Tours & Shops

West Montrose Covered Bridge

0, Covered Bridge Drive

Township of Woolwich ON, N0B

<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8291&pid=0>

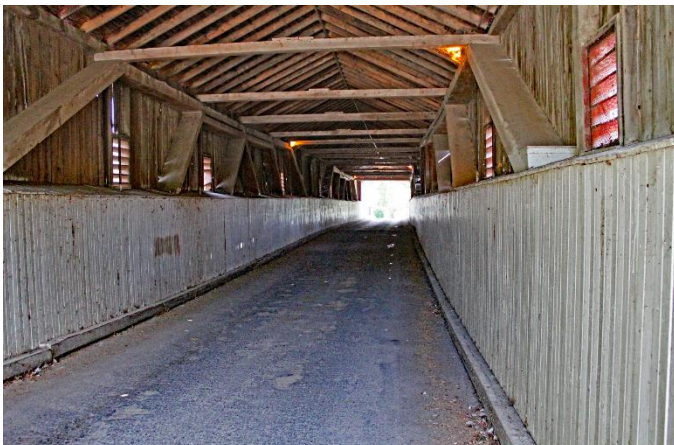
Open access.



Image: <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/west-montrose-covered-bridge.aspx>

The West Montrose Covered Bridge, also known as the Kissing Bridge, was built in 1881 to replace an earlier bridge going over the Grand River at this same location. It spans 208 feet and is 17 feet wide to connect both sides of the village. The bridge was originally built entirely of wood, including the piers and abutments. It has been altered over the years, but the original form has been maintained, thanks to the wood exterior planks and interior panelling that conceal later additions to the structure.

It was originally built as a hybrid Queen Post - Howe truss configuration out of mostly oak timbers topped with pine rafters. The wooden trusses were replaced in 1933, and in 1959 the internal structure was reinforced with a Bailey truss bridge recycled from the Second World War.



It is now the sole remaining 19th century covered bridge in Ontario and the second oldest surviving bridge in the Waterloo area.

More on the bridge on p. 17 of this document:

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/exploring-the-region/resources/Documents/BridgePhase21.pdf>

Image: <https://www.itsabouttravelling.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/west-montrose-covered-bridge-02.jpg>

University of Guelph Arboretum

200 Arboretum Road

Guelph ON, N1G 2W1

<https://arboretum.uoguelph.ca/>

Free access and parking, the grounds are open from dawn to dusk. Buildings are closed on the weekend.



Arboretum Visitor Map



Image: <https://arboretum.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Printable%20Map.pdf>

Located next to the University of Guelph campus, the arboretum features 1700 species of woody plants across its 400 acres grounds. It has an extensive collection of oaks, beeches, maples and conifers. It is also part of the ongoing effort to maintain elms in the landscape thanks to its Elm Recovery Project, which focuses on breeding Ontario specimens that are naturally resistant to the Dutch Elm Disease.

It has 12.5 km of walking trails taking the visitors through natural woodlands, gardens, meadows and wetlands. The main trail is Ivey and is identified with “IVEY” trailblazers.

Arboretum Recreational Side Trail: This trail (Hiker trailblazer) connects the arboretum with Guelph’s city trail system and can take you to the Speed River bridge via the Guelph Radial Trail (approx. 3.5 km one way). Interactive map of Guelph’s trail system: <https://guelph.ca/living/recreation/parks/trails/>

Victoria Woods: This area is an old-growth maple-beech woodland that has never been clear-cut. The Victoria Woods trail (Squirrel trailblazers) is about 2 km and takes the visitor through the area. It also connects to the Mtigwaaki trail (Medicine wheel trailblazers) which has interpretive signage to present visitors with an Anishinabek perspective on the forest.

Native Trees of Ontario: There are two areas presenting almost the entirety of Ontario's 85 native species of trees and shrubs. Each area has an approximately 0.5 km loop through it (Maple leaf trailblazers).

Beeches and Oaks: This collection is located on the north side of College Avenue E and can be visited following the Acorn trail loop (approx. 2 km).

The Donkey Sanctuary of Canada

6981 Concession Road 4

Puslinch ON, N0B 2J0

<https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.ca/>

Open on Sundays from May to October for half-day visits (10:00 AM to 12:00 PM or 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM). \$20 per adult or \$60 for a family (2 adults, 3 kids)

Buy tickets in advance at

https://www.tickettailor.com/events/thedonkeysanctuaryofcanada/1543177?from_listings=true.



Image: <https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.ca/about-us/>

The Donkey Sanctuary of Canada hosts over 100 donkeys, mules and hinnies who are unwanted, neglected or abused, or whose owners can no longer care for them. It is located on a 200 acre farm that is used for grazing, growing hay, training and caring for the animals.

Visitors can enjoy the presence of the donkeys, learn about them and their care at the Learning Center, have a picnic (bring your own food) or walk the trails going through the property (approx. 5 km total).

The property also features forest, marshes, ponds and grassland where conservation efforts aim to reduce the presence of invasive species, restore habitat for pollinators and other native species. The Sanctuary is home to or a migration stop-over for several species of birds, mammals, insects and reptiles, such as muskrats, sandpipers and the at risk snapping turtles.

Trails map: <https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/DSC-TrailsMap2025.pdf>

Guelph Speed River Covered Bridge

114 Gordon Street

Guelph ON, N1H 4H6

<https://www.tfguild.org/tfg-project-portfolios/guelph-bridge>

Open access

The bridge offers a pedestrian route over the Speed River between York Road and Gordon Street. Parking can be found on Gordon, north of the Boat House restaurant and at the west end of York Road (Highway 7). The bridge is 130 m northeast of the restaurant.



Image: <https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/covered-bridge-closed-for-repairs-9643423>

This bridge was built as a TFG Community Building Project in 1992 and, to this day, is still a contender for the title of most ambitious Guild project ever undertaken. It is made of two 137-foot long Town lattice trusses that span over the river, topped with 37 roof trusses whose collar beams are going through the lattice, catching the foot of the rafters outside of the longitudinal trusses.

The lattice trusses were built on site in the month leading up to the 1992 Guild Conference - save for a few hundred holes that were left open for conference attendees to drive signed pegs in - and the rest of the work was done during the weeklong conference.

The lattice trusses were assembled flat then raised in their vertical position with ropes and pike poles. The bridge was brought to the edge of the river by hand using block and tackle, rolling the bridge on a rail made of two rows of timbers supporting 4" diameter oak core rollers brought up by a participant from Vermont. In between the rounds of horizontal movement over the course of two days, the roof was built, sheathed and covered with cedar shakes, and the siding and approach ramps railing were installed.

The last round of horizontal movement was done with the front end of the bridge supported by a 450-ton crane while the hand pulling continued until the point where a second, 250-ton, crane took over to place the bridge in its final resting position on the two concrete piers. The lift was estimated at 147,000 pounds.

In total, about 350 Guild members participated in the project, providing over 18,000 person-hour of labour fuelled by 42 kegs and 285 cases of beer (!).

Zwart Joinery shop

920 Concession 8 West

Puslinch ON, N0B 2J0

Guild member Peter Zwart will open his shop to visitors from 12:00-2:00 pm for shop tours of a one man timber framing operation. Operating out of a shop modeled after local barns, we can talk about efficient operation on a small scale, heritage barns, or just enjoy a coffee. Plenty of space and chickens to keep children entertained.

