

## From culture to recreation, Balcarres has it all



**B**alcarres is a thriving community of 600 at the intersection of Highways 310 and

10.

Two American Civil War veterans, Thomas Cavanaugh and Thomas Kelly, moved from the Dakotas and "Squatted" on land in the district in the early 1880s. The new community was named for Balcarres Crawford, a postmaster in Indian Head.

While other settlers soon arrived, it wasn't until the CPR came through in 1903 that Balcarres grew into a town.

Balcarres is a very active community with a lot to offer visitors. The ball diamonds invite many friendly games, and kids can get some exercise on the playground equipment. Children can also take part in soccer. There is also a lot to offer the adults: activities such as badminton and volleyball are held in the school gym and a fastball league is back in operation after a short hiatus.

The town also boasts a modern Kindergarten to Grade 12 school and adult education center.

In April, area residents hosted a volunteer supper to celebrate the 11th anniversary of the Balcarres Integrated Care Centre, which includes acute care beds. Also the Balcarres Care Home opened in the spring of 2005 in the old, but newly renovated, hospital.

It's also close to the Qu'Appelle Valley, where you can fish, swim, or go canoeing in one of the four nearby lakes.

In May, the community plans to host a horticultural plant sale, however, the dates were not available at press time. Also in May the town's dance troupe hosts its annual showcase event. On May 29, the Balcarres Business Association will hold a garage sale day. The town's Community in Bloom Committee is also hosting a hot dog and hamburger sale in conjunction with the garage sale.

Near the end of June the Balcarres Broncs hosts the team's annual golf tournament.

The Canada Day sports day features ball games. It's a great way to spend the day dedicated to our nation. In August, organizers plan to hold a demolition derby.

Another major event -- the Mud Bog -- will be held again this year but dates weren't available at press time.

Four First Nations — Peepeekisis, Little Black Bear, Okanese, and Star Blanket — lie near the town. They also hold pow-wows and other celebrations during the summer where you can see a colorful and important part of the prairie's history and culture.

There's also a fall fair and fall supper in mid-October. Take in the craft show, kids fun games of skill and other activities.

In December the Balcarres Lions Club hosts a Santa Day at the community rink and Parks and Recreation will hold a rink fun day at the same time. The Lions also hold an auction supper in April. Also in April, the Art Club hosts an art show. The town's fire department also holds a sno-pitch tournament in February.

Town residents are also proud of their new reverse-osmosis water treatment plant, which was built recently.



## Duff Community Hall main gathering place



**T**his small village of 30 residents lies on Highway 10, just 23 km west of Melville.

The community was created in 1904 and named after Supreme Court Justice Duff. In 1909 the expanding Grand Trunk Pacific Railway put the hamlet on the map when it laid track through the area. Duff was designated a village May 28, 1920.

Over the years, Duff has had three churches, with St.

Margaret's the first when it opened in 1910. The United Church was the last to open in 1929 and to close in 2007.

The main gathering place for area residents is the village's community hall, which hosts many activities throughout the year. It was originally built in 1912 and enlarged and modernized in 1977.

The hall is available for rent by contacting Nancy at 728-4999.

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