

# KAPUSKASING

## Historic Self-Guided Tour





# TOURISM, EVENTS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Welcome Centre is Kapuskasing's tourist information hub, special event planning headquarters, and economic development office. It is the proud home of the Ron Morel Memorial Museum and Maurice Gaudreault Sculpture Gallery. We look forward to meeting new faces and learning their stories!



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## Photos and Information

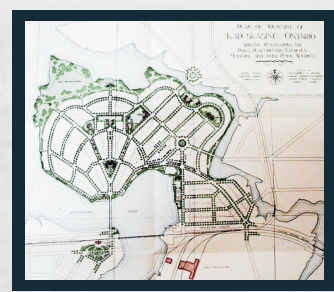
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# Introduction



Kapuskasing warrants special mention in the history of Canadian town planning as the first provincially planned resource community in Ontario. Its design incorporates elements of both the Garden City and City Beautiful urban planning movements.

Ernest Charles Drury, premier of Ontario from 1919 to 1923, wanted to ensure that Kapuskasing would not be a closed company town. Kapuskasing, as the "Model Town of the North" was to serve as the prototype for future, diversified single-resource communities in the province.

The Toronto architectural landscape and planning firm of Harries & Hall was appointed as Consultant Town Planners to the Provincial Bureau of Municipal Affairs to develop the plan for the town. Alfred V. Hall is credited with the general plan of Kapuskasing (registered August 8, 1922).

Ideas and concepts from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements are used in Kapuskasing's planning (i.e. central public spaces, concentric circles of land and streets, industrial areas on periphery, greenbelts within and around settlement, wide formal boulevards before common automobiles, etc.).



# Early Settlement History

In 1902, the construction of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway began. By 1907, the National Transcontinental Railway (now the Canadian National Railway) was linked to the Northern Ontario Railway. Macpherson Station (later to become Kapuskasing), was founded in 1910 when a Canadian National Railway surveyor identified the point where the railroad crossed the Kapuskasing River as an ideal location for a town.



The railroad allowed for the following to develop in Kapuskasing: the Internment Camp of the First World War, the Federal Dominion Experimental Station (farm), the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Settlement Program and finally, the Spruce Falls Power & Paper Company.



# Ron Morel Memorial Museum (25 Millview Road)



- Locomotive 5107 was built in 1919 by Montreal Locomotive Works.
- It ran from Cochrane to Nakina until 1931.
- The railroad cars date to 1913 and 1919.
- The caboose dates to 1912.
- It has been a museum since 1971.
- The founder is the late Ron Morel Sr. His vision was to showcase two of his passions: local history and trains.
- The museum boasts seasonal and permanent exhibits such as the Internment/Prisoner of War Camp exhibit, model train displays, the Maurice Gaudreault clay sculpture collection, and more.

## Welcome Centre (25 Millview Road)

- The blueprints for Kapuskasing's present railway station are dated 1929 and the construction was completed in 1930.
- It was built by the Canadian National Railway (CNR) and cost \$79,373.
- The telegraph office was added in 1938 and was jointly built by the CNR and National Transcontinental Railway.
- Original architectural details include dormers, Boston-hips roof style, brick window and door arches, copper gutters and cast-iron drain pipes.
- Restored and re-purposed in 2005 as a Welcome Centre.
- During renovations, they kept the original terrazzo floors, inside window casings, and signs for men's/ladies toilets.





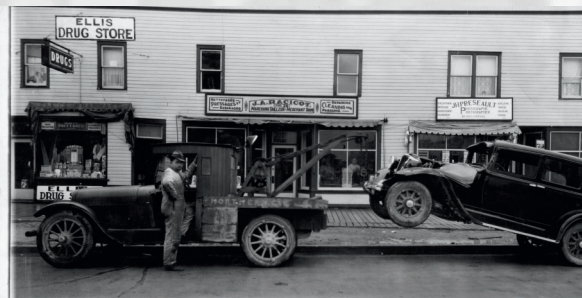
## O'Brien Avenue

- O'Brien Avenue was named for the J.B. O'Brien Company of Renfrew that did the initial construction of the railway in this area.
- It used to be a busy street/section of town with many businesses, including the Radio Hotel, where Stompin' Tom Connors wrote and performed "The Reesor Crossing Tragedy" about the 1963 mill/bush strike.



## Lang Avenue

- Lang Avenue is named for one of the original subdivision surveyors.





## The Circle

- The Circle forms part of the reason why Kapuskasing is called the Model Town of the North.
- The influence of the City Beautiful movement on Kapuskasing is most apparent in the street layout.
- The best example of our formal street patterns is in the Circle where streets radiate outward like spokes from the hub of a wheel.
- Major streets are oriented toward public buildings like the hospital, school, and residential areas.



- In addition, diagonal streets extend from the town site to provide clear direction for coherent, future growth.
- Many of the buildings are the same ones as were built in the 1920s.
- In 1991, our post office was designated as a recognized heritage building.



## Centre de Loisirs (7 Aurora Avenue)

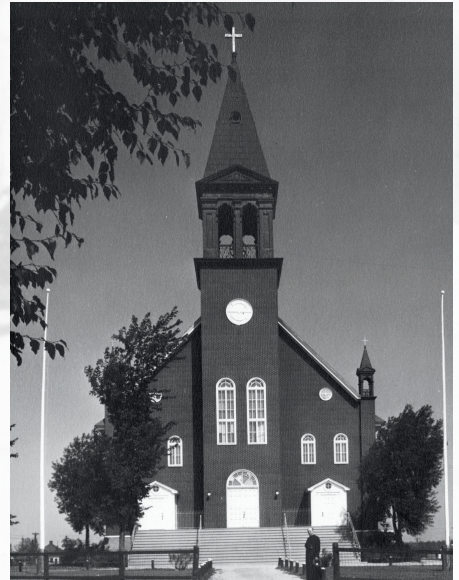
- Its mission is to develop, protect and disseminate the artistic, cultural, linguistic, community and sporting aspects of the local, regional, and provincial Francophone population.
- The Centre hosts plays, concerts, and art exhibits.



- The Centre features weaving and pottery rooms as well as the Cardio-Centre fitness gym and squash court.
- The various programs are run by volunteers (thousands of hours are logged each year).
- The site used to be home of the French Catholic private high school l'Académie d'Youville.

## Immaculate Conception Church (4 Summers Avenue)

- The congregation began in 1921.
- Construction started in 1923 and was completed in 1924.
- Blessed by Monsignor Hallé on December 8, 1924.
- Oblate Fathers' residence was built in 1926.
- The seating capacity was more than 700 people.
- The congregation grew to 1,500 by 1925.
- A copper roof and steeple were added in 1950.
- Spruce Falls donated the carillon (bell) in 1950.
- Other construction work was done in 1927, 1938, 1956 and 1974.
- It was a French and English parish until 1954, with services in Latin.





## Kapuskasing United Church (24 King Street)

- Kimberly-Clark Company donated \$15,000 for original building costs.
- Cornerstone laid in 1927 by Dr. Wright during the tenure of Reverend J. L. Moulton.
- Dedicated by Reverend W. R. Gunn in December 1928.
- A fire in the back-end in 1952 allowed for the reconstruction of a chancel choir arrangement.
- A manse was built in 1946.
- In 1959, a house was built at 131 Riverside Drive for the church's Music Director.
- Between 1954 and 1963, there was construction of a new wing, balcony, Sunday School room, church parlour, 10 more pews, and a 25-foot extension to the front.
- Stained glass window was bought and installed in 1971 for chancel.



## The Gore/Drury Place/Sensenbrenner Hospital (10 Drury Street)

- Built in 1929, Sensenbrenner Hospital was commissioned by Spruce Falls/Kimberly-Clark for their employees.
- Tudor style architecture was designed by G. Roper Gouinlock.
- Originally named for Frank J. Sensenbrenner, the President of Kimberly-Clark; he donated most of the hospital's furnishings.
- It became a public hospital in 1961.
- In 1988, it became Drury Place, a geared-to-income housing establishment. Renovations started in 1989 and it welcomed its first tenant in 1990.
- The original exterior remains intact, but with added renovations done in 1964, 1970, and 1975.
- The Gore is part of the Garden City/City Beautiful planning of central public spaces and greenbelts within communities (for healthy lifestyles).





## Civic Centre/Community Club (88 Riverside Drive)

- The Community Club was commissioned by Spruce Falls for their employees.
- Its Tudor style architecture was also designed by G. Roper Gouinlock.
- Accented with B.C. fir baseboards, doors and door trims, banisters, and stairs.
- A Starburst design is featured on the terrazzo floor of the main lobby.



- The Community Club featured a men's lounge, fireplaces in most rooms, telephone booths, gym instructor's office and equipment room, ladies' lounge, soda fountain, billiards room, 4-lane bowling alley, shower rooms, auditorium, library, and meeting rooms.
- Held "At Home" parties with card tournaments, billiards tournaments, and art exhibitions.
- The auditorium was used for movies, plays, fashion shows, concerts, sports and dances.
- The Club became the Civic Centre (municipal offices) on January 1, 1964.

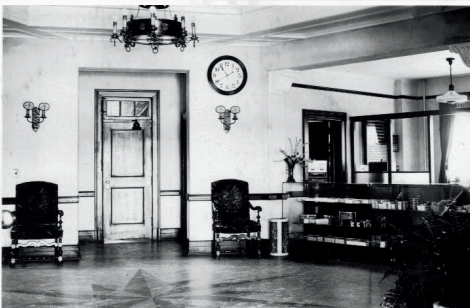


## Kap Inn (80 Riverside Drive)

- The Kap Inn was commissioned by Spruce Falls for their employees and Kimberly-Clark/New York Times partners, and other visitors to Kapuskasing.
- Its Tudor style architecture was designed by Allward & Gouinlock, Toronto.
- Built in 1927 & 1928 by contractor Hill-Clark-Francis of New Liskeard.
- The Kap Inn officially opened in 1928.
- It featured a formal dining room, bar, on-site barber, reception, and maid service.
- The Kap Inn featured rooms for single employees or shared rooms, and had communal washrooms.



- Accented with B.C. fir baseboards, doors and door trims, banisters, and stairs.
- A Starburst design was featured on the terrazzo floor of the main entrance.
- Then Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip stayed at the Kap Inn on October 16, 1951 during a cross-Canada tour.
- The suite they stayed in was renamed the "Princess Suite"; also renamed was the "Windsor Dining Room".
- Ownership was transferred from Spruce Falls to the Mateev Family in 1969.
- The Kap Inn was destroyed in a fire in May of 2007 and demolished in 2008.



# Riverside Park

- Premier Drury thought that the natural bend in the Kapuskasing River would be an ideal spot for a picturesque park and great place to build the town.
- Spruce Falls commissioned Wilson, Bunnell & Borgstrom, Town Planning Engineers, Surveyors & Landscape Architects of Toronto, to draw up plans for the park.
- Harry Straiton was hired as a landscape gardener.



- The park had tennis courts, a rockery, upper and lower paths with gray stone dust, bowling greens and a swimming area.
- Spruce Falls owned greenhouses where 57 varieties of flowers and shrubs were grown, to plant in the park, flowers like: petunias, marigolds, asters, phlox, dahlias, snapdragons, tulips, and Russian poppies.
- It was part of the Garden City/City Beautiful planning of central public spaces and greenbelts within communities to promote healthy lifestyles.



- The provincial government granted land to the Federal government for the development of a Dominion Experimental Station.
- The Department of Agriculture applied to the Department of Internment Operations for internees to help clear the land.
- By 1917, the farm had about 1,250 acres of land with 700 acres cleared by the internees.



## Experimental Farm (12 Ballantyne Road)

- First crops planted in 1915, crops like: apples, plums, various currants, gooseberries, raspberries and strawberries, beans, beets, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, endive, kohlrabi, kale, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsley, parsnips, garden peas, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, turnips and potatoes.
- In 1924, five bee colonies produced 530 pounds of honey for a value of \$95.40.
- The farm had swine (1918), poultry (1921), dairy cattle (1923), and beef cattle (1939).

## Kapuskasing Airport (Highway 11)

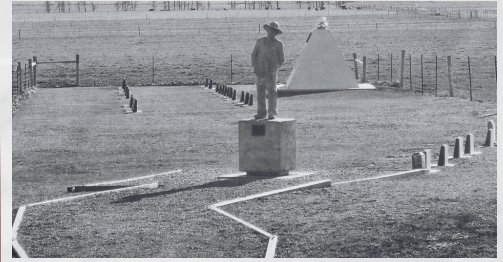
- 1931: The Department of Transport selects Kapuskasing for airport as a mid-way point between Eastern and Western Canada.
- 1933: Airport construction.
- 1935: Hangar construction.
- 1937: Two runways were paved.
- 1938: December 1, Trans-Canada Airlines (TCA) moves the base of their operations to Kapuskasing.
- 1957: TCA removes their operations and Austin Airways begins service with DC3.
- 1978: Beacon tower removed; Kimberly Air and Spruce Falls build their own hangars.
- 1980: Runway #17-35 was rebuilt with an additional 860-feet.
- 1982: An extra 1,000-feet was added to runway #17-35.
- 1984: New air terminal was built.





## Internment Cemetery (Highway 11)

- Cemetery of the World War 1 internment camp.
- The internment camp held Austrians, Croatians, Germans, Hungarians, Turks, Serbs, Slovaks, and Ukrainians.
- Germans buried here were disinterred and reburied in Kitchener.
- 23 internees and 5 civilian children were buried here.
- The original cemetery monument was built by internees in 1918 and rebuilt in 2010 thanks to a grant from the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund.
- The original monument was a base of layered rocks covered with 3 inches of cement.



## La Forge de Brunetville (158 Brunetville Road)

In the old days, people would meet their neighbours after church or at the village forge for fellowship. La Forge's mission statement is to provide recreational activities for the retirees and persons with handicaps. The establishment also boasts a permanent display of antique tools.

- In 1979, La Forge operated out of the basement of Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix church.
- 1983: Construction of the first building/workshop for metal and wood-working.
- 1984: Construction of extension where members could play cards and cribbage.
- 1990: Construction of an office.
- 1994: Construction of a reception room with kitchen for meetings, card tournaments, breakfasts, dances, garage sales, and other events.
- 2004: Construction of cloak room, storage and bar.





# A DARK CHAPTER IN KAPUSKASING HISTORY...

One of the darkest moments in Kapuskasing's history occurred in February of 1963, when three men died during an infamous confrontation between striking unionists and independent woodcutters at Reesor Siding.

For some time, Local 2995, Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union had been negotiating a new contract with Spruce Falls Power & Paper Company. On January 14, 1963, unionists walked off the job to pressure the company. The union asked the independents for their support, but were refused.

Since the independents were not involved with the negotiations, they continued to cut and stockpile logs to send to the mill once the strike was over. They continued to do this because they earned a modest living from forestry in winter.

During the strike period, unionists often overturned piles of pulpwood cut by the independents. After weeks of hostilities, the strike came to a deadly end at Reesor Siding, 53 km west of Kapuskasing.

At 12:30 a.m. on February 11, 1963, over 400 strikers drove to Reesor, intent on demolishing the pulpwood stockpiled there. Having heard rumours about this, 20 independents stood guard over their work. As the strikers advanced, the independents fired. Three strikers were killed: Joseph Fortier, Fernand Drouin and Irénée Fortier. Eight strikers were wounded: Joseph Boily; Alexandre Hackey; Léo Ouimette; Daniel Tremblay; Harry Bernard; Ovila Bernard; Albert Martel; and Joseph Mercier. According to many historians, this is the bloodiest strike in Canadian history.

The provincial government promptly intervened and settled the strike by arbitration; legal proceedings now remained. Charged with unlawful assembly, 254 strikers received fines of \$200 each which the International Union paid. Since it was impossible to determine which firearms delivered the fatal shots, the 20 woodcutters were acquitted of non-capital murder. However, three of them were found guilty of possessing dangerous firearms and were fined \$150 each.

A monument was erected at the site in 1966 as a tribute to the labour movement. On June 16, 1987, the wooden figures were replaced by ones made of tubular steel, foam and fibreglass.