High River’s rich history and stories of its intriguing residents are told on this walking tour of historic murals.

Creativity comes alive in downtown High River! Since a group of dedicated citizens in the 1990s started this tour, there have been several new mural additions, as well as sculptures and other works from local artists. Continue your art experience by visiting the many local artisans and galleries located in venues across town.

**Community Piano**

Downtown comes alive with the gift of music throughout the summer as residents and visitors alike play the community piano, bringing joy to the people walking by and listening. This project has been made possible entirely by volunteer and community donations.

**High River Art Walk**

High River is home to many amazing local artists, and some of their work is displayed on lightpost banners located throughout town. This project is funded and organized by the community with new artist’s work being added to the collection each year.

**Historic Mural & Sculpture Walking Tour**

**The Medicine Tree**

*By Brent Laycock, 1990*

The Medicine tree was two cottonwood trees joined together by a branch about 15 feet from the ground. It was located by the Highwood River about six miles west of town. The tree was believed to have spiritual and healing powers and was a favourite First Nations camping place. It fell over during a windstorm in 1958, but part of it has been preserved.

**Chuckwagon Races**

*By Paul Van Ginkel, 1993*

Chuckwagon racing is a western tradition that had its beginnings during the days of “open range” ranching, when chuckwagons were used as mobile camp kitchens. At the 1923 Calgary Stampede, Gup Waddick introduced the “Cowboy’s Chuckwagon Race,” and it became one of the most popular events. Each year in June, High River hosts the North American Chuckwagon Championships. The drivers in this mural have won a combined total of 14 Calgary Stampede championships and 11 World Professional Chuckwagon Association Championships.

**Old Woman’s Buffalo Jump**

*By Steve Jones, 1990*

The Old Woman’s buffalo jump (“Old” refers to the age of the jump) is located 13 km south of High River. It was discovered during a flash flood in 1952. Excavations in 1958/59 revealed bones and artifacts more than 2000 years old. Before the Plains tribes had horses and guns, they would run herds of buffalo off steep cliffs. Warriors would wait below with arrows, knives and clubs to kill any animals that survived the fall.

**Cattle Drive at the ‘D’ Ranch on Pekisko Creek**

*By Jack Riguax, 1990*

High River’s first mural was inspired by a photograph taken by Mary Cartwright on the D Ranch near Longview. Moving large herds of cattle through open country was a huge undertaking and required special skills and patience.

**The Opening of the High River Club**

*By Zhong Ru Huang, 2007*

In 1905, the club rooms of the newly-formed High River Club (so named in its official charter) were opened with a formal ball. The ladies were dressed “to the nines” in the latest formal fashions. Local First Nations wore their own finery for the proceedings. After one more formal reception, and a later visit by the fundraising committee of the Lacombe Home, women never again graced the premises of what became known as the High River Men’s Club.

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**Share your High River experience!**

#ExperienceHighRiver

choosehighriver.ca

**Tour Duration: 30-60 minutes**

**START WALKING TOUR**

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Aviation History in High River
DOUG DREIDIGER, 1992-94
The first mural (facing east) highlights the role of the military in High River. It was unveiled during the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Air Force. The mural depicts an aerial fire patrol carried out by members of the Canadian Air Force who were based at the High River Air Station. The mural was painted by artist Gail Trenor, who used her own experience as a member of the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. The mural also features a drawing of a World War II fighter plane, a symbol of the importance of aviation in High River.

High River Jubilation
ALEX PALENCOW, 2010
The mural celebrates the spirit of community and the joy of celebration. It features a group of people gathered together in a riverbed, surrounded by trees. The colors used in the mural are bright and cheerful, with shades of blue, green, and yellow. The mural was painted by artist Alex Palencow, who is known for his realistic style and his love of nature.

Spitzee Crossing
STEVEN JONES, 1994
Spitzee Crossing was the first bridge built in High River, and it still stands today as a symbol of the community's spirit. The mural features a group of people crossing the river, with a bridge in the background. The mural was painted by artist Steven Jones, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

Rt. Hon. Joe Clark
J. M. COMPTON, 1994
Rt. Hon. Joe Clark was Canada's 16th Prime Minister, and his legacy is celebrated in this mural. The mural features a portrait of Joe Clark, along with quotes from his speeches and writings. The mural was painted by artist J. M. Compton, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

High River’s First Nurse
Marie Meyer Davis was a nurse who worked in High River from 1903 to 1939. She was an invaluable asset to the community, and her contributions were recognized with this mural. The mural features a portrait of Marie Meyer Davis, along with a quote from her writings. The mural was painted by artist Alex Palencow, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

Macleod Trail
J. M. COMPTON, 1994
The Macleod Trail was the main route between Calgary and High River, and it played an important role in the community’s history. The mural features a portrait of the trail, along with a map of the route. The mural was painted by artist J. M. Compton, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

W.O. Mitchell
The author of The Who Has Seen the Wind and The Big Heart, W.O. Mitchell, is celebrated in this mural. The mural features a portrait of W.O. Mitchell, along with quotes from his writings. The mural was painted by artist Alex Palencow, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

Drama at High River High School
Bill, his wife Merna, and their family lived in High River from 1905 to 1968. Bill was a teacher and writer, and he is fondly remembered by many locals. In his later years, he and Merna lived in Vancouver, where they were active in the arts. The mural features a portrait of Bill, along with a map of the High River High School. The mural was painted by artist Alex Palencow, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

High River Times
High River native Joe Clark was Canada’s 16th Prime Minister, taking office in 1968. He was a skilled politician and a dedicated public servant. The mural features a portrait of Joe Clark, along with quotes from his speeches and writings. The mural was painted by artist Alex Palencow, who is known for his realistic style and his use of bright colors.

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New Roots
MICHELLE LOUGHERY, 2016
The mural reflects the diversity of the community, with images of people from different backgrounds and cultures. The mural features a portrait of a woman holding a heart, entwined with the horses’ legs to reflect the strength of the herd, young life and growth for the future. The mural was painted by artist Michelle Loughery, who is known for her realistic style and her use of bright colors.