

BENITO - SUMMARY

Benito sits in the Swan River Valley and, historically, had connections to communities all along this river valley. These connections still hold true despite the overlaid provincial boundaries. Its functional boundary extends into Saskatchewan and to this date residents from Saskatchewan come to Benito to take advantage of the bar (lower drinking age in Manitoba), farm service centre, public facilities (the library), and visit family. Benito residents also go to Saskatchewan for cottage recreation, job opportunities on the First Nation Reserves, or to visit larger service centres such as Yorkton.

While this connection exists with communities in Saskatchewan, Swan River is Benito's primary service centre. This is where the community sends its children to high school and obtains goods and services not found in Benito. Benito does provide the basic day to day goods and services required, but the reality is that many residents work outside of Benito in Swan River which reduces the multiplier effect within Benito itself as dollars are spent outside the community. As well, residents from Swan River work in Benito primarily in the school and hospital. If it were not for Duck Mountain Provincial Park, Benito would probably look to Dauphin, Manitoba as its primary service centre. Due to the park's existence, residents are just as likely to go to Yorkton or Regina as they would to Brandon or Winnipeg.

While Benito is a typical farming service centre, it has survived to date as a result of the medical services provided to the community. At one point Durban was larger than Benito but it was the medical doctor moving to Benito that gave this community the edge. Today, Benito has a small hospital which is currently more active due to the renovations taking place to the Swan River hospital. Once these renovations have taken place, its hospital will become a rehab centre and its future tenuous. As well, the community currently has K-9 but already people within the community are sending their children to Swan River for Grade 9. Members of the community acknowledge that, given the closing of the grain elevators (two down and the last to close within the next two years), should the hospital or its school close, then Benito would become another Durban - a dying small town.

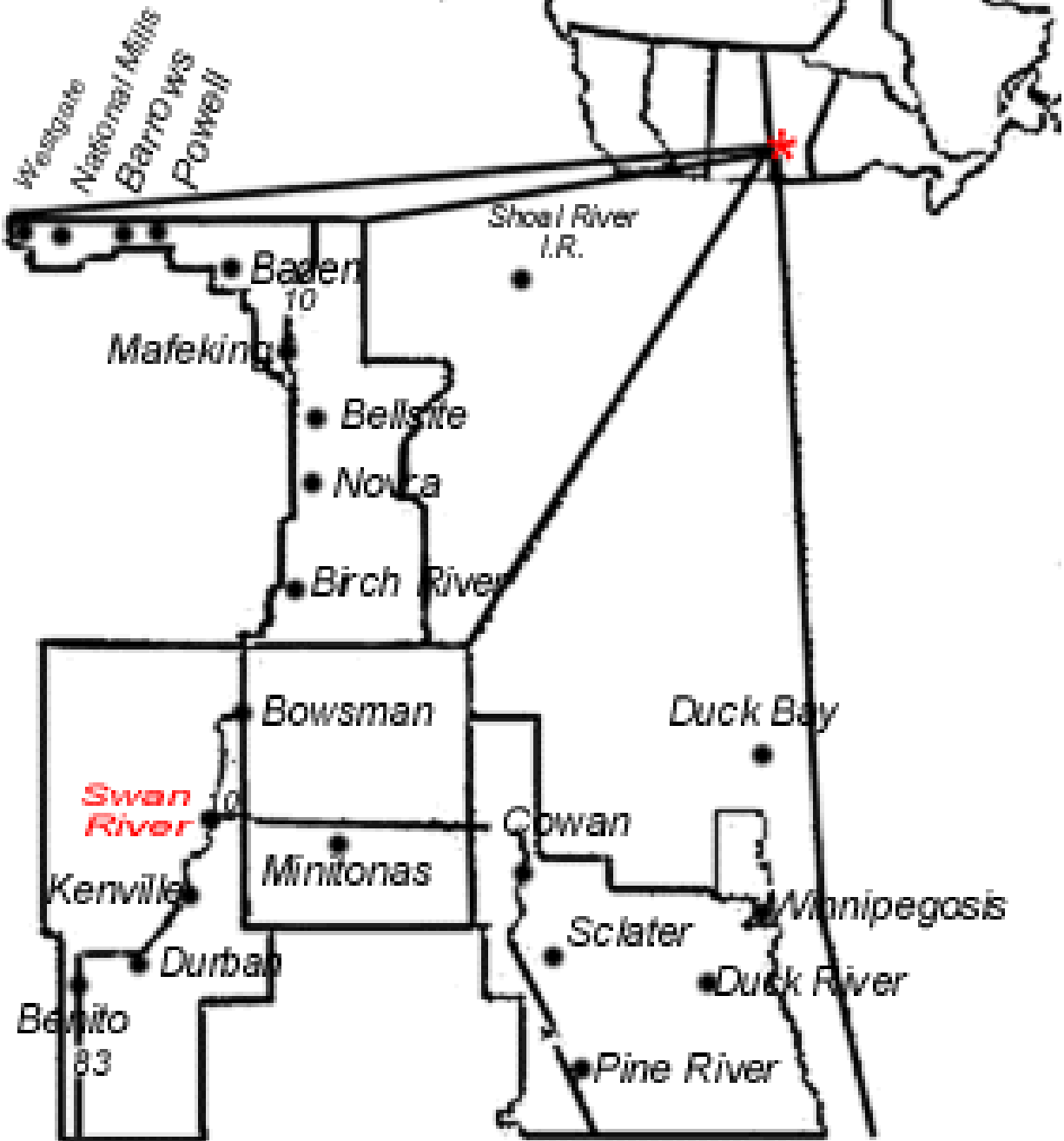
The town has one major agricultural employer, AgShield which employment fluctuates seasonally. The rest of businesses are small and do not employ any significant numbers of employees. There is some hope that cottage industries may be developed based on access to the internet. The remaining grain elevator will close in the next two years and it has been noted that there has been a distinct loss in community vitality with the closing of the other elevators.

Benito is a small community looking for ways to survive. It has become dependent upon government services (hospital and schools) for its survival as its agricultural sector has diminished. The community and its officials are struggling to find different avenues to maintain its viability. The economic dependence on agriculture and logging will not be sufficient to ensure its long term survival. Only 10 people were employed in primary industries in 1996 while 100 were employed in the service industry. Members within the community believe that it could survive as a bedroom community for Swan River except that no one is willing to invest in providing housing. There is talk of increasing tourism based on hunting and fishing. As well, a

campaign has been initiated based on rural quality of life – offering the benefits of small town living. Given the fact that the only large community close to it is Swan River, it may be a struggle to sell itself as a ‘bedroom community’.

On the whole, Benito is a typical small town whose agricultural base has diminished to the point that it is not sufficient to ensure its survival. It is a community cognizant of the fact that being able to provide medical services has helped maintained its viability and has purchased a home as an enticement to have medical doctors come to the community. It must find ways to survive and there is division among the community as to how to go about it.

The Swan River Valley



FIELD SITE WORKBOOK - Profiles, Phase I

1. INTRODUCTION

There are three main sources of data that will become the basis of your "Profile" for the site: (1) census data (1991) describing the main economic and demographic characteristics of the CSD (census subdivision), and provided to you by the Concordia researchers; (2) daily logs, a record kept by each researcher of their time in the field; and, (3) data collected and tabulated in this workbook. It describes the process for the compilation of the Logs and the Workbook Field Data, and how these are to be combined with the census data for a "final report" that will constitute the initial reconnaissance of each research site. The reliance upon 1991 census data at this time is only a preliminary step. Analysis in Phase II will incorporate both the 1996 data as they become available, as well as historical data from earlier censuses.

While these profiles are to be the basis for subsequent research, they also will include important information that will be extracted for a report contracted by the Rural Secretariat on the Accessibility to Social Services. Section 6 on the availability of social services requests, therefore, information concerning the degree of accessibility that is possible, through both physical and electronic means. If possible, it would be helpful to include both "objective" information (such as wheelchair ramps), and the "perceived" availability of these services. Please ensure that this information is complete, as you will be asked to extract it for the preparation of a separate report.

In the initial contracts with people who live and work in the research sites, it is extremely important that you are clear with them about your purpose for being there, and that you establish a firm foundation of trust. Note names, positions, both formal and informal functions, and the desirability of contacting these individuals again. Provide information regarding each significant contact. Full interviews are not necessary, or even advisable, at this time. Rather, specific information is being collected, and the possibility for future contacts is being established.

The people who may provide the most accurate information may not be the people you expect. While you should of course establish early contact with the mayor, for example, it is possible that the retired school principal may be more helpful. Consider both formal and informal functions, and be sensitive to community rivalries and even conflict that could hinder your work. Some possible contacts: mayor, presidents of service clubs (Rotary, Lions ...), town clerk, police chief, school principal, chair of hospital board, church committees, even the gas station attendant. If a particular name keeps being mentioned, be sure to see that person; or, at the very least, ensure the name is recorded for future reference. As well, you may find useful information in a regional development planning office.

2. FIELD LOGS

A field log for each research site should record the daily activities of each researcher, regarding procedures, contacts, meetings and issues or questions that were addressed. In particular, it is intended that these logs provide you or future researchers with an understanding of the characteristics of the site as they may affect the research process. Issues such as community leadership, informal structures, events that may spark hostility, or situations that may impact upon the reception researchers receive, should all be considered as important information that is to be recorded. You may use any format you choose, but it is suggested that you keep a separate ring or wire binder with waterproof features for durability and ease of photocopying. But it is also important that they be entered onto a diskette, a machine-readable form (using WordPerfect or Word) that can be easily accessed. These logs will become part of the data, compiled by the Data Curator into a computer accessible data base.

3. SITE BOUNDARIES

The initial boundaries of the research sites are the Census SubDivisions (CSD) that were the basis of the site selection by Bill Reimer and his research assistants. The results of the following research exercise, in which you collect data relating to the particular site and its contiguous areas, may suggest different boundaries for the detailed research phase. Therefore, in this preliminary "Profile" stage, the information you collect will be important as a basis for deciding upon the final sites to be studied within the NRE project. See pages 3 and 9, *FIELD MANUAL: Standard Operating Guidelines*, (Reimer & Apedaile) for further information.

You will have received a map of the CSD boundary for your site.

3.1 Check the map against the ground. Produce multiple copies of the map on 8½" x 11" that can be shown to residents. Include familiar points of reference, such as landforms, railroad tracks, churches, etc. to help them in identification.

3.2 These maps identify a specific "centroid", which will be used as a point of reference in answering some of the following questions. The latitude and longitude of the centroid is included with the map.

3.2.1 Identify the location of the centroid with respect to a familiar point of reference in the site. Maps including latitude and longitude will help do this.

3.3 In order to help determine whether or not this boundary reflects a "community", "place", or "space" reality, respond to the following:

3.3.1 What boundaries are meaningful for residents? (An OPEN question ... not easily coded). Suggest questions such as: a) On a map, can you draw the boundary for your usual daily paths?, weekly area/region you visit?; b) What places do you visit regularly?

Attach maps as sketch maps, or copies of road maps if they provide sufficient detail. Collect comments/responses on a separate sheet. Summarize them here, but retain the original sheet.

See attached maps in Table of Contents (B)

Functional boundaries are more meaningful especially when dealing with the CSD. This was probably the worst boundary to have chosen.

Benito is a small town that only meets the daily needs of the community. The Hospital provides only nominal medical services. The community looks to the Town of Swan River as the nearest economic hub. The Swan River Valley would be the natural boundary for residents of Benito as they also look towards Saskatchewan. They see themselves as a border town and a fair chunk of their trade comes from Saskatchewan.

If there is a need to go to a larger economic center then they are pulled between Yorkton and Dauphin, Regina and Winnipeg. They see a relationship with communities in Saskatchewan such as Arran and Pelly and their cottages are located at Madge Lake in Saskatchewan.

Swan Valley would be a natural boundary that would be acceptable to Benito because of their relationship with Sask. Communities.

If the Duck Mountain park was not located between them and Dauphin, then the movement would be to Dauphin rather than Swan River – however the Park exists.

- 3.3.2** Describe the distribution of population within the CSD boundary as:
- a. dispersed
 - b. concentrated in small rural communities except for Swan River**
 - c. linear
 - d. multi-centre
 - e. unable to determine
 - f. other _____

Sketch the population centre(s) on the map. **See Attached maps**

Comments:

- 3.3.3** (A) Do your contacts in this site suggest that the CSD boundary has meaning for them? YES or **NO – a Definite No**

(B) How do they express the relevance of the CSD boundary:

- a. for the community?
- b. daily activities?
- c. where people live?
- d. where people work?
- e. other? _____ **none** _____

4. SITE HISTORY - MAJOR EVENTS & STORIES

Communities may define themselves in terms of particular events or episodes in their history. Try to establish whether there are key defining moments in their history that may be part of the mythology and identity of the community. While it is impossible to imagine what they might be, some ideas that may help you in identifying these important events include:

- closing of a textile mill
- forest fire
- building of a hospital/college/senior's home
- burning of a church - its rebuilding
- birth of quintuplets
- changing the town name

4.1 Record your information (and comments) here:

History of Benito is attached.

Highlight was fire in the 1940s that had wooden houses burned down and brick buildings replacing them.

The major turning point for Benito as identified by two interviewees was the fact that the Doctor decided to live in Benito and not Durban. If not for that fact, Durban would probably be the larger community. The view was expressed that if not for the school and hospital, Benito would be dead already.

The grain elevators (two of them) have closed in the last few years. The final one is anticipated to close in a few years.

Swan River Hospital is being rebuilt and Benito would then be turned over into a rehab hospital once it is complete. Fears are that once that happens Benito will have hard time justifying it.

Already people are moving their Grade 9 students into Swan River – it is important for them to retain this school.

5. SPATIAL ARRANGEMENTS & INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 On a sheet 8½" x 11", produce a map to scale of: **SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION**

- a. the CSD boundaries
- b. the centroid
- c. major roads, highways, streets
- d. railway lines
- e. any airports
- f. schools
- g. hospitals
- h. churches & other religious institutions (name them)
- i. municipal (town) hall or office, or band council
- j. garbage dump(s)

5.2 Are the following available, yes or no?

SERVICES

	Availability		
	Yes	No	Other
Municipal Water - 5.2.1 to everyone		NO	
- 5.2.2 to some NW part of town dependent on private wells	yes		
5.2.3 Sewage collection and disposal lagoon SE of town	yes		
5.2.4 Garbage collection	yes		
Garbage dump - 5.2.5 open	yes		
- 5.2.6 sanitary landfill	no		
Sidewalks - 5.2.7 throughout the village/town	no		
- 5.2.8 centre of community only 75% of town	yes		
5.2.9 Cable TV			no
Internet access - 5.2.10 to everyone willing to pay	yes		
- 5.2.11 free through community centre	no		
- 5.2.12 specific institutions/individuals	no		
Local newspaper - 5.2.13 daily	no		
- 5.2.14 weekly - Swan Valley	yes		
- 5.2.15 monthly	no		

- yes
- **5.2.16** "newsletter"
- no regional or area news
- 5.2.17** National newspaper (e.g. can Globe & Mail be delivered?) Yes
- Fire department - **5.2.18** paid, full-time professionals
- **5.2.19** volunteers **with paid chief** Yes
- 5.2.20** Approximate estimated response time to centroid? 5 min
- Police - **5.2.21** RCMP - **Swan River Detachment** yes
- **5.2.22** Provincial no
- **5.2.23** Municipal no
- 5.2.24** Number of personnel? 5
- 5.2.25** Approximate estimated response time to centroid? 20 to 45 min
- 5.2.26** 911 emergency service - Swan River yes
- 5.2.27** Road ambulance service **Yes**
20 -
- 5.2.28** Approximate estimated response time to centroid? **4 5**
min
- 5.2.29** Air ambulance service Yes
- 5.2.30** Approximate estimated response time to centroid? 20-45 min
- 5.3** Roads: consider central, highest traffic roads only; as a generalization for the community, provide a ranking based on physical condition. Rank from low to high (1 to 5):
- Highest traffic roads _____ **3** _____
1. dirt, ungraded
 2. graded gravel/dirt; snow clearance; no salting/sanding
 3. paved, potholes, no shoulders; snow clearance; salting/sanding
 4. paved, few potholes, shoulders; snow clearance; salting/sanding
 5. paved; no potholes; shoulders; painted lines; snow clearance; salting/sanding

6. Social Services - Availability and Accessibility

The following questions are to determine the availability and accessibility of various social services in the site. The information will be used to write the report for the Rural Secretariat on availability of government services, to determine changes in the extent of isolation and integration for the marginalization theme.

Service 6.1 EDUCATION	Current Distance from Centroid (km)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km)	Special transportation needs? e.g. boat? disabled students?	Wheelchair Access	Comments
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
6.1.1 Elementary School	0	0	YES	YES	
6.1.2 High School	46 kms	yes	unknown	yes	
6.1.3 Technical School	46 km	46 km	unknown		yes – comments they did not give Swan Valley Regional Secondary School as answer which is what I put – they saw it being in Winnipeg 518 Kms or in Pas at Keewatin College 277 kms
6.1.4 University	318km	318 km	unknown	yes	
6.1.5 Extension courses	interactive TV 0 km	-unknown	unknown	unknown	
6.1.6 Other Educational Institutions					

Please note when asking questions they gave time answers not mileages

Service 6.2 HEALTH	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
6.2.1 Hospital	0	lost hospital in early 1980s - 46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.2.2 Blood/urine testing facility	0	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.2.3 X-Ray facility	0	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.2.4 Baby delivery facility	46 kms	0	unknown	yes	
6.2.5 CT scan facility	318 kms	318 kms	unknown	yes	
6.2.6 Nursing home	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.2.7 Doctor(s)	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.2.8 Nurse(s)	0	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.2.9 Dentist(s)	46 km	46 km	unknown	yes	
6.2.10 Dental Surgeon(s)	45 km	unknown	unknown	unknown	
6 . 2 . 1	146 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	

Optometrist(s)

Service 6.2	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
HEALTH					
6.2.12 Home care/visits	0	0	unknown	unknown	
6.2.13 VON	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	
6.2.14 Social worker	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
6.2.15 Other:					

Service 6.3	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
LEGAL					
6.3.1 Lawyer	0	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
2 times a month					
6.3.2 Notary - Town Mayor	0		unknown	unknown	
6.3.3 Citizenship Court	Brandon - 318 Dauphin 175	orsame as (a)	unknown	yes	

Service 6.4	Current Distance from Centroid (km)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km)	Special transportation needs?	Wheelchair Access	Comments
FINANCIAL	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
6.4.1 Bank or 6.4.2 Credit Union	0 46 kms	same as (a)	unknown	unknown	
6.4.3 ATM	46 kms				
6.4.4 Micro-Financing Group	0	unknown	unknown	unknown	
6.4.5 Insurance Office	0	0	0	0	

Service 6.5	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
6.5.1 Daycare	0	0	unknown	unknown	
unlicensed 6.5.2 Senior Citizens' Retirement Home	0	0	unknown	yes	

Service 6.6	Current Distance from Centroid (km)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km)	Special transportation needs?	Wheelchair Access	Comments
GOVERNMENT	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
6.6.1 Employment Insurance Office	46 kms - Swan River	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.6.2 Revenue Canada Office	46 kms - Swan River	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.6.3 Provincial Automobile Licence Office	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.6.4 Welfare Office	Town - 0 Rural - 46	same as (a)	unknown	yes	
6.6.5 Town Hall	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.6.6 Band Council	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Service 6.7	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
6.7.1 Food Bank	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
6.7.2 Clothing Exchange or Depot	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	
6.7.3 Second-hand Stores (include both for profit & charitable)	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	
6.7.4 Drop-in Centre	0	0	yes	yes	
6.7.5 Half-way Home	0	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
6.7.6 Counselling Services	46 kms - to all	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.7.7 Family Distress					
6.7.8 Women's Shelter					

6.7.9 Alcohol/Drug Abuse

Service 6.8	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments
Public Transport					
(e)					
6.8.1 Bus -0 Saskatchewan Bus Route	0	0	unknown	unknown	
Train			unknown	yes	
6.8.2 freight	0	0			
6.8.3 passenger Air	46	46	unknown	unknown	
6.8.4 Scheduled Service	46 kms	unknown			
6.8.5 Small plane	46 kms	unknown			
6.8.6 Connecting flights	318 kms	318 kms			
6.8.7 Helicopter	518 kms	518 kms			
6.8.8 Boat	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
6.8.9					

Regular ferry/taxi

6.8.10 On demand

6.8.11 Car Taxi 46 kms 46 kms n/a n/a

6.8.12 Other

RECREATION

Service 6.9	Current	Distance from	Special	Wheelchair	Comments
Facilities	Distance from	Centroid in	transportation	Access	
	Centroid (km)	1981 (km)	needs?	(d)	(e)
	(a)	(b)	(c)		
6.9.1 Curling	0	0	unknown	yes	
Municipal Swimming Pool	46 kms to all	46 kms to all	unknown	yes	
6.9.2 Indoor					
6.9.3 Outdoor					
Municipal Skating Rink	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.9.4 Indoor	unknown	unknown			
6.9.5 Outdoor					
6.9.6 Community	0	0	unknown	yes	

Playing Field				
6.9.7	0	0	unknown	yes
Community Gym				
6.9.8	0	0	unknown	yes
Community Centre				

Service 6.9	Current	Distance from	Special	Wheelchair	Comments
Facilities	Distance from	Centroid in	transportation	Access	
	Centroid (km)	1981 (km)	needs?		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
6.9.9 YM/YWCA	318 kms	318 kms	unknown	yes	
Athletic Club	46 kms to all	unknown	unknown	yes	
6.9.10 Municipal					
6.9.11 Private					
6.9.12 Commercial					
6.9.13 Theatre	46 kms	unknown	unknown	yes	
6.9.14 Cinema	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	yes	
6.9.15 Museum	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
6.9.16 Library	0	0	unknown	yes	

6.9.17 Parks 50 kms 50 kms unknown yes

6.9.18 Other

Service 6.9 Programmes	Current Distance from Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments (e)
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Community
Organized Teams

unknown yes

6.9.19 Juniors/children 0 0

6.9.20 Adults 0 0

Art Programmes (art classes) 46 kms 46 kms unknown unknown

6.9.21 Municipal

6.9.22 Private

Service 6.10 Volunteer Service Organizations	Current Distance from & Centroid (km) (a)	Distance from Centroid in 1981 (km) (b)	Special transportation needs? (c)	Wheelchair Access (d)	Comments Approx. number of people involved. Locally/regionally/nationally networked (e)
6.10.1 Religious Groups	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.10.2 Rotary Club	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
6.10.3 Historical Society	46 kms	46 kms	unknown	unknown	
Others: 6.10.4 Knights of Columbus	0	0	unknown	YES	
6.10.5 Legion	0	0	unknown	yes	
6.10.6					
6.10.7					
6.10.8					

6.2.4

Specific services named by citizens as being unavailable:

Nothing is unavailable – it is all a matter of time and distance. Community recognizes need for doctor and supports a house for the use of the doctor. Without that they know they would not have access. A Lawyer comes twice a month. There is no dentist or eye care available. TD Bank provides access to financial information and the like. Other than basic services re food and groceries, it is accepted that they travel to their jobs and for increased services.

6.2.5

Are there publicly funded programmes that are specific to this community? For example:
 HRDC training programme for 18-24 year olds.
 Matching grants for community recreation centre.
 CAPS (Community Access Program)

CAPS

Swan River/Benito Recreation Program

6.3

Accessibility: For each public service/facility that exists in the community (e.g. hospital, school), place beside the categories above a letter designating the objective degree of accessibility. Use codes as follows:

Wheelchair access, yes: A1
 Wheelchair access, no: A0
 Electronic/Internet access, yes: B1
 Electronic/Internet access, no: B0

N.B. In your interviews, ask whether the people perceive any problems with accessibility, regardless of the apparent reality. Note the perception of accessibility, including by public transport, taxi, or private car, including reference to time, distance and cost. Write your conclusions below

Accessibility to services requires travelling on their part. The citizens accept that and as noted previously have been working on trying to retain what they have now – doctor, school K-9, lawyer, drugstore, basic groceries and lumberyard.

7. ECONOMIC FORTUNES

See page 12 in *FIELD MANUAL: Standard Operating Guidelines*

- 7.1 List the businesses with number of employees in brackets, as follows:
 e.g. Brown's - retail store (8)
 Madison Paper - paper mill (60)

Ag Shield (40 to 50 when in to production)

Hospital/Personal Care Home/Nursing Homes – majority of people who work here come from Swan River.

Schools k-9 - majority of people come from Swan River

Scouten Services (3)

Lucky Dollar (4-5)

Benito Hotel (3)

Pharmasave (2-3)

Lumberyard - (2)

- 7.2 In a separate list, name all home-based businesses, and their main activity. Include all those that would have a telephone listing, but exclude individual farmers or fishers.

Impossible task to do given time limits – attached is 1999 telephone directory

- 7.3 In a third list, name those businesses that ship goods out of the area. List NAME, PRODUCT, TYPE OF TRANSPORT, and DESTINATIONS; e.g. Madison Paper: newsprint; truck; Boston, Montreal

Ag Shield only one with that type of operation - ships out machinery - via trucks - regional focus but also outside sales as well

- 7.4 For each of these businesses, list the MAJOR SUPPLIERS, and their LOCATIONS.

Unknown – was not willing to do interview

- 7.5 If there is a Chamber of Commerce, or an organization representing business interests, try to get data that provides background information about: **No Chamber of Commerce –**

- history of business growth
- sales figures
- expectations for the future

Attach any relevant reports to this document. Record your data here, including relevant comments that may help future researchers.

7.6 In your conversations with various town officials and community activists, try to get a general sense of their degree of optimism with respect to the prospects for the community, and for the area. Although formal and more intensive interviews will be required in the future, try to record any relevant comments verbatim, keeping in mind the ethical guidelines for use of quotations with attribution.

(Ethical guidelines will be discussed in a Protocol for the long term field research. If you have any questions, refer to the published guidelines of SSHRC or your own university, or call the Research Manager.)

There is not a high degree of optimism – see my Log Notes. If the Benito loses its Doctor, the Hospital and the School it is a dying community. It is too far away to be a bedroom community for Swan River – in fact many people from Swan River drive here to work in the hospital and schools.

People talked about quality of life – but others stated that unless town willing to invest and support building of homes, no one will come. They all felt that if homes were available, people would come to live but no one wants to invest in that type of operation.

Movement into the town is the elderly population as they retire and those who want to live near family.

Benito is a typical rural agricultural community struggling to survive with poor agricultural lands and little diversification.

8. RESOURCE BASE & AMENITIES

8.1 Are there special environmental and/or resources features that would describe and define this area? A problem with this question is obviously that "beauty is in the eyes of the beholder". But try to enumerate features such as "healthy, mixed forest"; "lakes described by locals as for good fishing or boating"; "good agricultural soils".

This is an area where agricultural is not great – sandy soil more suited to grazing cattle than agriculture – it sits just on the edge of the good agricultural lands towards Swan River. It has forestry industry around it but is small scale compared to other regions in area. Hunting and Fishing is a tourist attraction and there are several outfitters in the area. Quality of life was mentioned and increased tourism because of the Provincial and National parks in close proximity. How to take advantage is the issue.

8.2 Are there particular features that might detract from the desirability of the area? e.g. noise pollution because of being near a freight railway line; (that would become a "positive" for transportation); or saline or poorly drained soils; or downwind of a smelter.

poor agricultural soils, relatively poor transportation into the area to advantage of hunting and fishing

8.3 Are there local strategies or projects that are being a) engaged, or b) being planned, that will affect any of these resources, amenities, or unattractive attributes?

None formalized – lots of talking but lack of leadership appears to be an issue in this area

9. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES

You will have received the census information for 1991. It is hoped that within six months the 1996 data will be available. But in the meantime, please update the key demographic variables as much as possible by referring to the data available in the community through the town hall, municipal, or band records.

9.1 Verify current: **SEE ATTACHED INFORMATION SHEETS IN TABLE OF CONTENTS (B)**

- population
- net migration: in/out/net
- number of households
- average size family
- age structure (?) possibly from the electoral list?
- language; mother tongue, spoken at home
- religion
- literacy categories: grade 9; high school; some post secondary; university degree(s)

Note: It is possible the town hall will have some of these data, although unless there has been a specific need it is unlikely that all will be available. If you can obtain the 1996 census data prior to submitting your report, so much the better!

9.2 During your conversations with local people, ask whether or not there have been particular social changes: in the NUMBERS of people, in the CHARACTERISTICS of the population, in the kinds of PROBLEMS that are being met in the community. Without using leading questions, try to establish whether or not there is any consensus about particular issues that may be explored in subsequent research.

No change in characteristics of the people – see the numbers dropping. This is a town that takes pride in how it looks but there is a definite lack of leadership, vision. Aware of aging problem, nothing available for youth, no facilities for drug and violence issues which no one really talks about but it exists.