

An 11 km Loop Walk During Covid-19 Virus Restrictions (2020APR18 Saturday)

During such restrictions group hikes are forbidden. After checking various government websites, we attempt to follow the guidelines. For example, we avoid parking in designated trailhead parking lots, but we do a walk-through or loop which some websites say is permissible provided one maintains the physical distancing requirement. Most of the time we do our walks early in the day and avoid times when families may be out. The description of the walk that appears below is a *modification* of several hikes I have posted on my website.

- 1) [Homer Watson & Doon Loops ... a choice of 3.6 to 9.8 km walks \(Cressman Woods\)](#)
- 2) [Homer Watson Loop Hike ... an 8 km walk through Homer Watson Park \(Cressman Woods\)](#)

Here is a sequential list of the 11 km walk.

- 1) Drive & park car in the parking lot near MEC & Cob Bread & Bakery ([43.418556, -80.452194](#)) - close to Food Basics near the intersection of Manitou Drive/Fairway Dr/Courtland East. We went early with the plan of one of us picking up a few groceries at Food Basics after the walk & maybe a treat at Cob Bread & Bakery.
- 2) Walk out to Manitou Drive & head down the sidewalk past the Subaru dealership (Gemini Motors) & past Service Ontario to Schneider Creek. Before crossing Schneider Creek, turn left along a paved (asphalt) community trail. Note and read a display plaque that explains the history of this area (German Mills/Parkway). Follow the community trail (Schneider Creek on your right) to Wabanaki Drive.
- 3) Cross Wabanaki Drive (past a parking lot) and follow the community trail, southward. You are in part of Homer Watson Park. About 400 m from Wabanaki Drive the trail veers left (eastward). [**Note:** At about the 400 m spot (before veering left), you may notice an unpaved footpath that proceeds straight ahead to a closed pedestrian bridge. I suggest you walk to the bridge, look around and return to the paved path that veers left. If you look across the bridge, to the other side of the creek, you will see chain link fences. The fence to the left marks the back of the Doon Heritage Village and the fence on the right marks the back of the Grand Valley Institution for Women.]
- 4) Back on the paved trail and having veered left, you will witness numerous trees (e.g. hemlocks). You will cross a wet area on a wooden bridge. As you proceed, and on your right, you may notice an elevated area that appears to have a path into and out of it. People used to be allowed to drive into this area from Wilson Ave and have a BBQ. We used to do so with friends back in the mid 1960s.
- 5) About 40 m before reaching Wilson Ave there is a blazed footpath that crosses the path you are on. Turn right and follow the white blazes (part of the Grand Valley Trail). Eventually the blazed trail will veer left and up to Wilson Ave and a parking lot.
- 6) Cross Wilson Ave (blazed) and up to a fenced area that provides a great lookout ([43.405535, -80.436590](#)) of the Grand River. Erosion is a big problem in this area so please do not go around the fence. Across the river you may see the Walter Bean Grand River Trail & parts of Deer Ridge Golf Course.
- 7) As you leave the lookout follow the white blazes south for about 600 m. You will arrive at another parking lot. This location used to be the end of Wilson Ave and intersects with Huron Road and Mill Park Drive. Follow the blazes but note that there is an historic display close by at about [43.401385, -80.432711](#). It is the Bechtel's Ford plaque and worth reading.

8) As you proceed along the blazed trail (from the parking lot/historic display) note that you are walking downward. In about 400 m you have a choice of pathways (see maps associated with this writeup). For this walk we turned right (upward) and followed the white blazes. [If you go left and down towards the river, you eventually end up at the mill ruins in lower Doon where Schneider Creek forms a confluence with the Grand River.]

9) We followed the blazed trail through wooded areas (Homer Watson Park), crossed Mill Park Drive, walked along the edge of the cemetery (on your right), and turned left following the blazes and arrived at Homer Watson new structural changes to Homer Watson Blvd near the Walter Bean Grand River Trail parking lot across from Doon South Drive.

10) Instead of following other possible pathways at this point, we decided to try the new asphalt path along Homer Watson Drive. That would be A to B if you check the GPS tracks and/or maps provided on my website.

11) Arriving at B we accessed the community trail that takes you over to Huron Road across from the Doon Heritage Village property. Note the presence of another display, namely Huron Rd Bridge Plaque ([43.400876, -80.435637](#)).

12) At Huron Road we veered right following the paved community path back to the small parking lot at the end of the closed Wilson Ave. From that point we retraced our steps back to where we parked the car (about 11 km later).

Further information, maps and so on are available at www.hember.ca/hikes/HomerWatsonParkPlus.html