

McGillis House:

This is a typical Métis house built in 1890 by the Catchou McGillis family.

Angus Alexandre “Little Man” or Catchou McGillis was born in November 1863 and died on November 15, 1968 at Moose Jaw. He was the son of Angus McGillis (b. 1837) and Isabelle Fagnant, the daughter of Jean Baptiste Fagnant and Josephite Monet dit Belhumeur. His paternal grandparents were Alexandre McGillis (b.c. 1798 at Lake Dauphin) and Marguerite Bottineau (a Nakoda Michif).



The McGillis house, now a museum located at St Victor (18 km west from Willow Bunch), is typical of the Métis homes of that era. It was built by the family of Alexandre “Catchou” McGillis in 1890, several years after the arrival of the Métis from the Red River. It is built from poplar poles, willow stakes, clay plaster, and prairie grasses. In those days the windows were scraped antelope skins and the doors, the shaved hides of the buffalo.

The museum vividly recalls the past. Hanging on rusty pegs on the exterior are saddles and bridles of an earlier era, kerosene lanterns, traps, and a badger skin on a stretcher board. Above the door is a feathered buffalo skull, with horns intact.

Inside are many pioneer relics, hand-made furniture, an ancient spinning wheel, and old photos of pioneer times. Outside stands a wooden-tub, hand-operated washing machine, a grindstone, and a buckboard.



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