

Kildonan Drive South Walking Tour

Starting 1:00PM at corner of Kildonan Drive and Mossdale Ave. - approx. 3KM

Tour Guide – Jim Smith – Vice President and Historian/Archivist

Welcome to the *North East Winnipeg Historical Society's* walk featuring Kildonan Drive walk.

The North East Winnipeg Historical Society's mandate includes the recording and preserving the histories of East and North Kildonan and Elmwood. We have discovered hosting neighbourhood walks is one of our more successful ways of realizing the club's mandate.

The walk will feature more than 20 homes along the south section of Kildonan Drive. Kildonan Drive was named in 1913. It was formerly known as East Kildonan River Drive.

The walk begins here at the southern end of **Fraser's Grove Park** which was named after William Fraser (1832-1909).

William Fraser was the son of James Fraser, one of the original Selkirk Settles. He was born in Kildonan living his early years on the farm on the west side of the Red River. He read extensively and his education was mostly self-acquired.

About 1880, he moved to the east side of the Red and built a home on the banks of the river where he lived with his wife and three adopted children.

Their new home soon became famous for its friendly atmosphere. The sweep of the land from the break of the first bank to the river was the ideal spot for summer picnics while in the winter the abruptness of this first bank gave an excellent start for the toboggan slide. (Second attachment)

Lot 69 was famous for its beauty and hospitality. The house was torn down in 1912 and his son-in-law, Robert Tait erected a large house which still stands at 116 Fraser Grove.

Fraser performed many important public duties. He was the treasurer for over 40 years of the trust committee formed to establish the Presbyterian congregation in Kildonan. He was also the chairman and treasurer of the committee to establish Manitoba College. Fraser served as a member of the council for 22 years. He was the Reeve of Kildonan 12 times, always elected by acclamation.

The year 1911 saw a land boom in western Canada when subdivisions were promoted. The earlier popularity of Fraser's Grove focused attention on this area and river lots 70-73 were subdivided into what was called *Ross-mere Grove* subdivision. This

project extended from the Highway (Henderson) to the river, with the river frontage divided into building lots fronting on Kildonan Drive. The two avenues were Rossmere and Layden. The promoters or owners were Helen Ross, Louise M. Ross, Rod G. Ross, A. Stanley Lay, and Rich Walsh.

The boom bust before very much of this property changed hands and eventually the subdivision was cancelled after the bulk of the area had reverted to the Municipality for tax arrears during the 1930's.

For the next 15 years or so while the *Rossmere Grove* area was held by the municipality it was erroneously known as Fraser's Grove and this impression has persisted through the years. It is understandable that the name of the popular picnic ground would extend beyond the property line.

Fraser's Grove is appropriately named, for it honours a man who generously shared what he had- a beauty spot in the great outdoors.

In January 1910 negotiations between the Kildonan community club and owners of the property locally known as Fraser's Grove were going on to secure five pieces of property for the Manitoba University. Fifty acres would be given to the University free and 150 to 300 acres would be available for purchase at \$600 to \$800 an acre.

As we all know, the University was located in Fort Gary but it is interesting exercise to wonder how this area would have developed if things had turned out just a little differently.

904 Kildonan Drive built 1959 1880 square feet

- Designed by Ernest Smith

900 Kildonan Drive built 1955

- Also designed by the same architect as 904, Ernest Smith
- Home of Ernest H. Price, founder of E.H. Price Industries
- Born in 1927 in Elmwood and died 2002.
- Attended Lord Selkirk School
- Worked for the city of Winnipeg Hydro.
- Left hydro to apprentice with his father in the plumbing trade
- Attended Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh to take engineering degree
- Enlisted in the Royal Canadian Engineers to serve in the Second WW
- Ended his service with the rank of Major.
- In 1946 he bought a small ad agency which lead to the formation of E. H. Price. The company is an industry leader in the sales of HVAC related products for highly specialized environments like laboratories, clean rooms and hospitals.

870 Kildonan Drive built 1937

- See ODD numbers

864, 862, 860

- House are no longer there but in the 1920 – 1940's the citizens of Winnipeg had their summer cottages here.
- **850 Kildonan Drive-** the Dale House/Linden House Built in late 1800's
- This is one of the oldest houses on Kildonan Drive
- Home of the river boat Richie family for years.
- Commodore Richie was born in 1924 and died last September.
- Before launching his river boat career, the Commodore operated several food operations including a chain of seven drive-in restaurants known as the Millionaire Drive Inns in the 1950's.
- The River Rouge cruise ship was commissioned by Captain Dan in the early 1960's. Shortly after he commissioned the building of the Lady Winnipeg cruise ship. The double-decker buses followed in 1979 as the Commodore vigorously promoted Winnipeg.

836 Kildonan Drive built 1951

- Robert Newton Lowery a contractor lived here.
- Robert was a M.L.A. 1915-1920.
- Newton Avenue in West Kildonan is named after him.
- He started building houses in West Kildonan before he moved over to the east side of the river.
- Built many homes in East Kildonan especially on Hazel Dell.
- He is responsible for the pillars at Hazel Dell and Henderson Hwy.

750 Kildonan Drive (existing home built 1991)

- Home of Ralph Lilje-Gren who was a well-known local photographer.
- In the 1960's and 1970's his pictures of many local events were often published in the Herald.
- Present home constructed on foundation of original home which burnt down.

742 Kildonan Drive

- Senator Sutherland's house stood here.
- The actual date the house was built is unknown but John and Janet Sutherland married in 1847 and construction probably began sometime around then. The logs used to build the house were floated down the river from the old house of John's father who was the only Selkirk Settler to live on Point Douglas.
- The house was a large. 40 people could easily fit in the dining room.

Existing house built 1942

- Willms family lived there until recently
- Henry Willms built among other things the Public Safety Building, Royal Trust, original Polo Park, Nairn Avenue overpass, and the round hotel in Kenora.
- Henry was also on the Board of Concordia Hospital for 40 years and was the chair of the board for 20 years.
- His father was a co-founder of Concordia Hospital.

734 Kildonan Drive built 1954

- Later home of Robert Newton Lowery.

The East Kildonan Lions Senior Park

- Spot where Chief Peguis and his men observed survivors of the Seven Oaks massacre swimming across the river.
- Former site of the Kildonan Ski Club in 1940's and early 1950's.
- The ski hill that was built up to a height of 40 feet above the current riverbank with a combination of dirt and snow. It wasn't much of a hill by today's standard, which would make it similar to the two garbage hills behind Kildonan East Collegiate
- This is the site where Don and Dana Starkell started their canoe trip to the Amazon River in 1980.

678 Kildonan Drive built 1952

- Frank Simmons was a well known and long-time plumbing contractor, prominent in social and community affairs.
- His business was located on Washington Avenue. He constructed the building which had a raised plank sidewalk.
- His daughter was a long time Girl Guide leader, Madam Simons

670 Kildonan Drive built 1949

- William "Pat" Lindsay owner of W.P. Lindsay Insurance Agency
- Childhood home of Darlene Lindsay, long-time Miles MacDonell Collegiate teacher (1969-2002), award winning volunteer and fundraiser for orphanages, schools, and clinic in Vietnam

666 Kildonan Drive built 1950

- Cornelius Abraham DeFehr (1881-1979) founder of C. A. DeFehr & Sons
- Cornelius was born in South Russia in 1881.
- He was a partner in a farm implements manufacturing business until 1925, when he immigrated to Canada and laid the foundation for the furniture business of C. A. DeFehr & Sons.
- As his sons took increasing responsibility for the business, Cornelius spent much of his time and energy working for the church and various Mennonite agencies.
- Among the agencies and institutions which he helped found are Concordia Hospital, the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, and the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute.
- He was also a board member of the Mary Martha Home, the Mennonite Collegiate Institute, and Christian Press (all in Manitoba).
- He was a founding member of Mennonite Economic Development Association (MEDA) and long active with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).
- He actively served on numerous Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference boards, including a long term as treasurer (1944-1960) and gave liberally of his time to the North End/Elmwood congregation.

- In 1967, he wrote a memoir entitled *Memories of My Life Recalled for My Family*. In 1977, he received a [Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal](#).
- He died at Winnipeg on 11 February 1979 and was buried in [Elmwood Cemetery](#)

8 Neil Place built in 1889 over 3400 square feet with addition on south side of property

- Neil Campbell 1847-1916
- The home that Campbell built for his family was the first brick residence on the East Kildonan Road (Henderson Hwy).
- He served on the East Kildonan council and was a local school trustee.
- He died at his home on 14 May 1916 and was buried in Kildonan Cemetery.

659 Kildonan Drive – built 1948 (Home of William Tallman founder of Tallman Construction Company.

- The Tallman family started Princess Auto and created Tallman Foundation.

665 Kildonan Drive built 1926

Arthur Dunbar – Department Manager Hudson Bay Company

667 Kildonan Drive – built 1926

Ernest C Gooden Sales Manager

Bronx Park

- Bronx - named after one of New York's boroughs
- Club was originally called the East Kildonan Club.
- Intensive drive for funds for a new community club was set up in 1948 with the goal to raise \$5000.
- The plans included a new clubhouse, a baseball and football field complete with bleachers, a hockey rink which would be used for box lacrosse in the summer, a skating circle to be used as a running track in the summer, a fancy skating sheet, volleyball and basketball courts, tennis court and a wading pool.

719 Kildonan Drive built 1950

- Home of Neil K. Brown.
- Brown was an active community leader in the 1940s.
- He was the first president of the East Kildonan Club.

821 Kildonan Drive

- Original house no longer stands here.
- The E.B. Reynolds family built a large three story brick house sometime around 1912.
- A tennis court was located in the grounds.
- Mr. Reynolds served on the school board.

Present home built in 1926

- Was mail ordered from Eaton's catalogue
- 1935 Henderson Directory shows Gerald Roxburgh residing at this address
- Mr Roxburgh was a registered patent attorney and registered engineer.

849 Kildonan Drive built 1949

- Home of Douglas O. Brewer who was city of East Kildonan Alderman 1965-1967, long-time secretary and president of the Kiwanis Club.
- Has a street, Brewer Crescent, which runs off Panet Road named after him.

857 Kildonan Drive built 1932

- Howard Wilson emigrated from Scotland.
- He purchased the lot in 1932.
- Construction began that summer with help from friends as it was the beginning of the Depression and many were out of work.
- The Wilsons lived in the basement for the first year or so.
- The field stone used on the house came from the Beausejour district.
- The Wilsons worked on the house as time and money permitted, working inside in the winter and on the outside in the summer.
- A room at the front of the house was lined with logs to look like a pioneer cabin.
- There was coloured glass in some of the windows and wrought iron inside the house as well.
- Their daughter Shirley was born in 1940.
- The house was flooded in 1950.
- The family considered the house finished in 1954.
- In a side-note, the Wilsons were allowed to have an outdoor 'biffy' on the property that is now 861 Kildonan Drive.

870 Kildonan Drive built 1937

- Home of Kasimer Bileski, internationally known stamp collector and dealer known for buying the King Farouk's stamp collection.
- Kasimer became quite famous and wealthy when in around 1950 he discovered he had a St. Lawrence Seaway stamp that had a flaw which made it rare and coveted.
- His office was located behind the house.
- The office boasted a winding staircase.
- He employed up to 15 people.

909 Kildonan Drive built 1953 (corner Mossdale)

- Home of James Cartlidge, former president of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.

Street names

Canterbury – named after Canterbury Cathedral in London England.

Chelsea – named for the Chelsea suburb in London.

Kimberly – originally Melrose Avenue - renamed in 1963. Kimberly is a family name from the area,

Helmsdale – named after the Helmsdale River in Sutherlandshire Scotland.

Dunrobin – named after Dunrobin in Sutherlandshire in Scotland an area where many of the original Selkirk settlers came from.

Anyone familiar with the song –‘*Dunrobin's Gone*’ and wondered where the inspiration for the name came from?

‘*Dunrobin's Gone*’ is arguably Chad Allan's finest recording, a stirring lament for a lost love. It was a minor hit, but Allan had already left the band by the time it was released.

It was co-written with Barry Erickson, another ex-Winnipegger living in Vancouver. The last time Allan saw Erickson, he was a window washer.

The song was recorded by Brave Belt in 1972.

Oakview- originally a location in East Kildonan

Hazel Dell – a descriptive name.

Linden – named after the Linden tree

Greene – named in 1912 for area known as Greenwood Park in the early 1900's

Leighton – was a pioneer resident of East Kildonan

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- **Third Wednesday** of the month
- Bronx Park Community Centre, 720 Henderson Highway
- 7:00PM
- For more information:

Jim Smith – President and Historian/Archivist

Email: info@newpghs.com

Website: www.newpghs.com

'To Record and Preserve the Histories of East Kildonan, North Kildonan and Elmwood for Present and Future Generations.' We respect the history of All.



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