

Brazier Street Walking Tour

NORTH EAST WINNIPEG HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

We begin our walk here on Ottawa Avenue which was named after our nation's capital. Today many people would refer to this area as Elmwood but that is a misnomer as Ottawa Avenue was part of the City of East Kildonan until East Kildonan became part of the larger City of Winnipeg on New Year's Day in 1972. Elmwood, which was named after Elmwood Cemetery, does not begin until we reach the back lane between Larsen and Harbison Avenues, which is still a boundary between the River East-Transcona School Division and the Winnipeg School Division.

Other ways to tell the difference between East Kildonan and Elmwood streets is the numbering of the houses. On East Kildonan streets you can tell what block you are in by looking at the street number as each block has the same first number. In this area the block between Henderson Highway and Brazier Street always start with the number 2, the block between Brazier and Roch always starts with the number 3 and so on, while the street numbers in Elmwood don't follow this plan; for example on Harbison and the streets to the south of it, you will find street numbers beginning with 2 in the block between Henderson and Brazier but also in the block between Brazier and Roch. The old City of Winnipeg, of which Elmwood was a part until 1971, didn't start a new first number until all the previous first numbers were used up.

Another difference is the width of the boulevards. East Kildonan boulevards are wider generally than Elmwood boulevards on this side of Henderson Highway. Just compare the width of the boulevard on Larsen Avenue, the last street in East Kildonan and Harbison Avenue the first street in Elmwood.

Finally East Kildonan and Elmwood postal codes differ. East Kildonan postal codes begin with R2K and Elmwood postal codes begin with R2L.

Brazier Street was named after Albert Brazier, who lived from 1868 until 1933). He was born in England and arrived in Winnipeg with his family in 1872. He was educated at St. John's School and in 1882 he became a caretaker at St. John's College in the North End. His love of gardening led him to construct a modern garden and grounds at the college.

In 1891 he married his wife Bessie and they had four children, two sons and two daughters. In 1906, the same year Elmwood became part of the City of Winnipeg, Brazier moved his family to Elmwood and he became a gardener on his own property. Later he moved further north to East Kildonan where he bought a piece of property north of the Curtis Hotel and south of McLeod Avenue. He died in 1933 on his property at 1025 Henderson Highway.

245 Ottawa Avenue – George Nordland Suttie was born in 1901 and passed away in 1968. He was first elected to the East Kildonan Municipal Council in 1937 as a councillor and served in that role until 1956. In that year he was elected as Mayor of East Kildonan serving until 1965 when he was defeated. He was re-elected in 1966 and served until the end of 1967 when he was again defeated.

While serving as a councillor and mayor Suttie continued to work at Rapid Grip and Batten Limited a commercial engraving company located on Vaughan Street, where he was employed for over 50 years. Members of municipal councils in those days generally had other jobs as the salaries paid to them were not sufficient to live on unless they had another source of income.

During his municipal career Suttie served as President of the Manitoba Reeves and Mayors Association and was a member of the Manitoba Urban Association and the Kildonan-St Paul Health Unit Auxiliary Board. He also served as a commissioner on the Unemployment Insurance Appeal Board. Politically he began as a supporter of the CCF but he later became a member of the Liberal Party, running as their candidate for the area in the 1953 provincial election, winning in the East Kildonan polls but losing in the polls outside East Kildonan.

Suttie was married to his wife Ada and had two daughters, Lorraine and Audrey. He was one of the founders of the Aurora Snowshoe Club and the City Bowling Club. He was a member of the East Kildonan Kiwanis Club and a life member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Prince Edward Branch #81. He was a recipient of the Centennial Medal in 1967.

George Suttie Bay, in the southeast corner of East Kildonan off Keenleyside Street, was named in his honour.

On a hot Sunday in July 1970, a small twister touched down in the 300 block of Ottawa Avenue as reported by Bob Snowdon of **326 Ottawa Avenue**. Mr. Snowdon was in the basement of his home when he heard a swishing sound. Racing upstairs he found that his front door was twisted and the plate glass window of his door was shattered. Looking outside he noticed that his car that had been parked in front of his house had moved some 20 to 30 feet down the street and had been turned sideways.

Jake Reimer of **312 Ottawa Avenue** also witnessed the tornado, thinking at first it was a flock of birds. He told his family to quickly get into the house. He noticed a large limb of a tree had torn off in the backyard of **330 Ottawa**. A canoe in the backyard of **300 Ottawa** was picked up and thrown into the backyard of the house next to it. The shingles of neighbouring houses were lifted up and thrown around the area. The weather office reported no other tornadoes in the Winnipeg area, but a number of funnel clouds were reported in and around the city on that day.

Northeast corner of Ottawa and Brazier - these small corner grocery stores were the main locations that local residents bought their groceries from prior to the large commercial grocery store era that began in the 1960s and the opening of convenience stores such as 7-11 and Mac's. They were often known as Mom and Pop stores as they were usually owned by a family. They offered personal service, home delivery and credit long before the age of credit cards. Prior to the 1950s most families did not have refrigerators so residents relied on ice and iceboxes to keep their perishable foods cool. As iceboxes did not really keep things cold for very long, grocery shopping was often done on a daily basis for perishable products like milk and meat.

This particular location changed names a number of times over the years and was known as Ottawa Grocery in 1929; P & G Grocery and Meats in 1929; Diamond Grocery in 1953; Eddie's Meat and Grocery in 1963; Eddie's Food Market in 1968; Deluca Grocery in 1976; Meat Master Grocery in 1988 and Ottawa Grocery in 1994.

Southeast corner of Jamison Avenue and Brazier was known as Community Drug Store in 1929; was vacant in 1943; became Dave's Meat Market in 1953; Kehler's Grocery in 1957 and Jamison Grocery in 1963.

Southwest corner of Jamison Avenue and Brazier was known as Larry's Barbershop in 1982 and Sub-Zero Ice Cream from 1988 to the present.

Northwest corner of Jamison Avenue and Brazier housed Smith's Grocery in 1953; Johnston's Neighbour Store in 1957; B & G Grocery in 1963 and listed as vacant in 1976.

Southeast Corner of Bowman Avenue and Brazier was the site of Kilpatrick's Grocery in 1929; United Store (Kilpatrick's) in 1943; Kilpatrick's Meats and Groceries in 1953; White's Superette in 1963; Bowman Discount Food in 1968 and became apartments in 1976.

Northwest corner of Brazier Street and Bowman was where Tony's Shoe Shop opened in 1953.

Northeast corner of Bowman Avenue and Brazier was the location for Henry's Bakery in 1929; Saunder's Bake Shop in 1953 and Kildonan Pets from 1976 to the present.

380 Brazier Street at Larsen housed George's Barbershop and Aimee's Beauty Shop in 1953; Larry's Barbershop and Aimee's Beauty Shop in 1963; Aimee's Beauty Shop in 1968 and Elegant Junk in 1988.

Larsen Avenue, the most southerly street in East Kildonan, was originally named Montrose Avenue with the name changing to Larsen in 1963 to honour Walter Peter Larsen, East Kildonan's longest serving Reeve and Mayor, who lived from 1897 to 1962. Dobbie Avenue in the Bowman Industrial Park was originally named Larsen Avenue, but was changed to Dobbie when Montrose Avenue was renamed Larsen Avenue in 1963.

Walter Larsen was first elected as Reeve of East Kildonan in 1934 with the support of the East Kildonan Labour Party and served until his defeat in 1947. He trained as a printer and worked in that trade for 52 years. After his defeat in 1947 and until his death in 1962, he served as a union representative for the Printing Pressmen of America.

He was married to Lillian C. Larsen for many years and had two daughters. He was a proud member of the Legion of Frontiersmen and is buried in Elmwood Cemetery.

Northwest corner of Harbison Avenue and Brazier – Elmwood Curling Club is the third oldest curling club in Winnipeg and the second oldest in Winnipeg to be at the same location. In the fall of 1910 three of the original members; Dr. James A. McTavish, Ed Spice and Alex Brown drove around the streets of Elmwood and East Kildonan in a horse and buggy selling \$25 memberships to build a curling Club. In early 1911 the curling club was opened as a natural ice club requiring freezing temperatures to construct and maintain the ice surface. Shutters were located on the outer walls to let in the cold air. The curling season started and ended according to the weather. During the milder times during the curling season, games sometimes had to be played late at night to take advantage of the colder night temperatures. Often the curling season didn't start until December and sometimes it was all over in February.

In 1956 the decision was made to install an artificial ice plant to lengthen the curling season and the clubrooms were moved from an entrance on Harbison Avenue to a new entrance on Brazier Street. In 1965 further improvements were made and a new steel and cinder block structure was built. This structure is the same one that exists today. In 2008 a new ice plant was installed along with a heat recovery system. In 2011 the club celebrated its 100th anniversary.

228 Harbison Avenue – Ernie O'Dowda lived here for many years. A close friend and relative of Bill Lumsden, Ernie's sister Marie was married to Bill Lumsdens' brother Stuart.

Ernie was born in 1915 and passed away in 1985. He was educated at Lord Selkirk School and St John's High School. He was married to Grace Isabel Maddin (1907-1993) and they had no children. In his professional life he worked at the Canadian Wheat Board for many years but it was for his community work that he is best known. He was very prominent in the game of lacrosse. He served as an official in the sport becoming the President of the Manitoba Lacrosse Association in 1948 to 1949. He later wrote a book "Lacrosse in the Winnipeg School Division 1901-1928".

Ernie served as a citizen member of the Winnipeg Parks Board, was a founding member of the Kelvin Community Club, a member of the "Little Canadian Minor Baseball League" and was involved with the Elmwood Pats and the Elmwood Terriers. He was one of the original members of the "Every Second Tuesday Club" along with Bill Lumsden. He was an active and long-time member of the Elmwood Curling Club and was also a boxing promoter

One of Ernie's other achievements was compiling a sports history of Elmwood, East Kildonan, North Kildonan and Transcona called the Kildonan Place Sports Historical Society that was originally located in Kildonan Place Shopping Centre, but is now displayed in a room in the Terry Sawchuk Memorial Arena.

Ernie received a Centennial Medal from the Manitoba Historical Society in 1970 and was inducted in the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame as a builder. Ernie O'Dowda Memorial Park was named in his honour on September 8, 1987.

240 Harbison Avenue – William E. (Bill) Lumsden (1907-1982) lived here for 22 years before moving to 440 Hazel Dell Avenue. He was an insurance broker for many years and a partner in Barber-Lumsden until his retirement.

Bill was married to Eve Lumsden (1911-1995) in 1932 and they had two daughters, one son and five grandchildren. One son-in-law- James G. Smith (1932-2001), who later became a judge, was also very involved in community affairs.

In his younger years, Bill was an avid baseball player with the Columbus and Nighthawks Baseball Clubs. He organized the Elmwood Giants Pee Wee Baseball League and coached for many years in the Elmwood area. He was one of the original organizers of the Kelvin Community Centre, serving as president for two years and was also a member of the Winnipeg Parks Board for 7 years.

Bill was a member of the Elmwood Curling Club for 53 years, serving as president in 1938 and 1939 and secretary for 15 years. He was also a director of the holding company of the Elmwood Curling Club from 1943 to his death in 1982. He was made a life member of the club in 1953.

He helped found and solicit funds for "Aunt Sally's Farm for Children" at Assiniboine Park. Some of his achievements and awards include: he received the Order of the Buffalo Hunt by the Government of Manitoba for his many years of contributions for sports. He received the Manitoba Sports Federation, Certificate of Merit as a builder of sports. He was the Secretary of the Manitoba Curling Association in 1946 and 1947 and served as President in 1947-1948. He organized the Manitoba Curling Association's Red Cross's prisoner of war parcel fund which raised \$130,000 from 1940-1944 serving as Vice Chairman. He chaired the 1970 Canadian Curling Championship held in Winnipeg. He won the Hudson Bay Trophy in 1964 and the Ganong Trophy in the Manitoba Curling Association Bonspiel. He was honoured with life memberships in the Civic-Caledonian, Charleswood, Deer Lodge, Maple Leaf and West Kildonan Curling Clubs. He was honoured with life memberships in the Winnipeg Curling Clubs Secretary's Association and Past Presidents Association and the Canadian Curling Association. He was appointed a life member of the Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia Curling Associations.

Bill was awarded honorary citizenship by the City of St Boniface and was honoured by the City of East Kildonan for his many achievements. He has been elected to the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame, Manitoba Curling Hall of Fame and the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame.

He served as President of the Canadian Curling Association in 1967 and 1968. He served as Chairman of the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame selection committee for four years and was the first chairman of the Canadian Curling Schoolboys Championship Committee. He negotiated with Seagrams Distillers to sponsor the Canadian Senior Men's Curling Championship and served as Vice President of the Royal Caledonian Curling Association in 1967. He was selected by Air Canada as Curling Executive of the Year for 1968. He was a member of the Air Canada executive selection board for 3 years. He was a director of the 1978 Silver Broom Curling Championship held in Winnipeg and chaired its ethnic night gala.

In 1967 Bill was honoured with a Centennial Medal and after his death in 1982, the Elmwood Curling Club created an award in his name to recognize builders of curling in Manitoba.

South Side Harbison Avenue at Brazier was the former location of James Graham Grocery in 1929; Shop Easy #13 in 1943; Harbison Groceteria in 1957 and Harbison Food Store from 1968 to the present.

Northwest corner of Martin Avenue and Brazier – Originally the Elmwood Labour Hall in 1929 and later the Elmwood YMCA building from 1953 to 1963 when the new Elmwood-East Kildonan YMCA Building was built on Kimberly Avenue. It became Kelvin Electric in 1963 and Consumer Care Maids in 1994.

Southwest corner of Martin Avenue and Brazier – former site of the Manitoba Telephone Exchange Building, built in 1928 at a cost \$35,000, designed by the architect Alexander D. Melville and built by contractor H. W. Walin as a satellite branch of the St John's Exchange. At the time of this building opening, telephone numbers consisted of just 5 digits. Closed in 1994, the building now contains private apartments.

215 Johnson Avenue, just west of Brazier was the location of Porter's Grocery in 1929; McBeth's Grocery in 1968 and Denis Food Mart in 1976.

219 Johnson Avenue just east of Brazier was the site of Flashberger and Palz Plaster Contractors that opened in 1957.

Northwest corner of Brazier Street and Poplar Avenue was where Gordon United Church was located. The congregation later joined King Memorial United Church to become Gordon King Memorial United Church in the 1960s. The church was originally called Louise Bridge Methodist Church, then Gordon Methodist Church, named after Andrew Gordon a prominent Methodist minister who died in 1922. The Minister's Manse was located at 201 Poplar Avenue and built in 1912.

Southwest corner of Brazier Street and Poplar was the site of the original Lord Selkirk School #1 which was torn down in 1973. In 1976 it became the New Horizons Senior Centre and was renamed the Elmwood-East Kildonan Seniors Centre in 1982. At the present time it is known as the Elmwood-East Kildonan Active Living Centre.

Just East of the Southeast corner of McIntosh Avenue and Brazier was the location on A.A. Cromwell Grocery in 1929; Windsor Grocery in 1943; Katrensky Grocery in 1953; McIntosh Grocery and Confectionery in 1963; McIntosh Food Mart in 1976 and Seaforth Investigation and Security in 1988.

South side of McIntosh Avenue, west of Brazier – St Cuthbert’s Anglican Church used to be located here, but the building closed in the 1960s.

144 Brazier Street at Gordon was Diners Grocery in 1953; Harder’s Grocery in 1963 and Harry’s Cash and Carry Grocery in 1968.

75 Brazier Street at Riverton was the home of the Elmwood Winter Club. It was formed in 1944 and started with a railway boxcar. In 1988 the Elmwood Day Nursery Inc. took over the building.

249 Midwinter Avenue north side at Brazier – Elmwood Key Service opened here in 1957.

Interested in learning more history of these areas? Do you have stories/pictures to share? How about attending one of the ***NORTH EAST WINNIPEG HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. (2011)*** monthly meetings? Optional \$10.00/year membership ***ALL WELCOME!***

NORTH EAST WINNIPEG HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. (2011)

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

Jim Smith – President and Historian/Archivist

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