STREET PILLARS

HAZEL DELL AVENUE AT HENDERSON HIGHWAY

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings Committee
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The area on the east side of the Red River north of its confluence with the Assiniboine River was originally used by small groups of First Nation people, utilizing the fuel, plants and animals near the banks and its fish as part of their seasonal migration throughout the territory. The occupation of the west banks by the Selkirk Settlers beginning in 1812 marked the start of the permanent, agrarian-based settlement of the region. Some of the offspring of the original settlers, looking for property of their own, crossed the river and settled on the east side, farming and living on the long, thin strips of land known as river lots, each with river frontage and stretching back beyond the Two-Mile Road (today’s Gateway Road & Raleigh Street). Added to the offspring of the Selkirk Settlers were retiring fur trade employees and Métis families.

The first major change to this arrangement was the creation of the Province of Manitoba in 1870 and the subsequent organization of Municipalities. This area became the Municipality of Kildonan in 1876, taking the name of a Scottish parish from which many of the Selkirk Settlers had originated. It encompassed land on both sides of the river (Plate 1).

By the early 1900s, Kildonan, similar to Winnipeg and the surrounding communities, experienced a sometimes frantic growth phase that would last until World War I. This growth included all facets of life – new industries and businesses organized (Plate 2), old residential districts expanded and new districts were created and services, such as streetcars, began pushing further and further from the downtown. On the east side of the Red River in Kildonan, this expansion translated into a number of significant changes. The southern part of the Municipality became part of the City of Winnipeg as Ward 7 (Elmwood) in 1906. In 1912, part of the municipality became the Town of Transcona and in 1914, the Municipality of Kildonan was divided into the municipalities of East and West Kildonan with the Red River as the dividing line (Plate 3).

East Kildonan evolved into two disparate regions- the south saw increased residential and commercial development, taking on a more urban character, while in the north, the large tracts of farmland and market gardens continued, with little new development. As a result, in 1925, the
northern portion separated to form the Municipality of North Kildonan (the boundary was Oakland Avenue), after agreeing to pay $80,000 as its share of the East Kildonan debt. The City of East Kildonan was incorporated in 1957 (Plates 4 & 5) with a population of approximately 20,000, making it the 6th largest city in Manitoba at the time. It was the only suburban government that voted in favour of the Unicity amalgamation in 1972.

An established development company, the Lowery Brothers, attempted to take advantage of the economic boom of the early 1910s and organized “Oakview Park” a small residential district located between the Red River and East Kildonan Road (Plate 6) that was originally River Lots 82 and 83 Kildonan. Advertisements heralding the new district appeared in the fall of 1912 (Plates 7 and 8) with claims such as:

You do not have to go miles and miles out from the centre of Winnipeg to get the advantages of living in the open, with an outlook that combines beauty and inspiration.2

Unfortunately, the grand scheme did not see immediate results. Prior to 1921, only five houses had been built on Hazel Dell Avenue, the subdivision’s main thoroughfare (Plate 9).3 In 1921, the north side of Hazel Dell Avenue was subdivided via Plan 2706 (Plate 10). But it would not be until late in the decade that major construction occurred on the street, 14 houses were built in 1929 and 1930.4 The Great Depression ended most of the speculative land ventures everywhere because of the loss in land values, although the Lowerys continued to have dealings in the Hazel Dell Avenue area into the 1940s.5

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1 Manitoba Historical Society website, April 2013.
2 Manitoba Free Press, October 26, 1912, p. 16.
3 Assessment Rolls, East Kildonan, 1914-1922, various pages. According to City of Winnipeg Assessment Department information, only three of these remain today, all built in 1914 - #86, #95 and #150 (which was occupied into the late 1930s by the subdivision’s developer, R.N. Lowery – Henderson’s Directory).
4 Ibid., 1929-1930, p. 231.
There is no photographic, civic or public record that has been discovered that give a date of construction for the pillars at Henderson Highway and Hazel Dell Avenue. A 1993 report for the Historical Buildings Committee has a best guess of 1936-1937.  

**STYLE**

These are modest, understated pillars with little architectural detailing.

**CONSTRUCTION**

The two pillars were built of red brick and were placed on a low concrete base. A flat concrete cap finished the pillars.

**DESIGN**

The Hazel Dell Avenue Pillar features brick diamonds on each pillar face, located approximately three-quarters of the way up the shaft (Plate 11). The concrete cap includes the words “HAZEL DELL” carved in the east side of the cap (Plate 12).

They were built smaller and less ornate than the pillars at Helmsdale Avenue three blocks south on Henderson Highway (Plate 13).

**INTERIOR**

N/A

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INTEGRITY

Only one of the pillars still stands (north corner), the other was removed sometime after 2009 (Plate 14). The remaining structure stands on its original location, is in good structural condition and has not suffered major alteration.

STREETSCEAPE

The pillar marks the intersection of Henderson Highway and Hazel Dell Avenue and mark the beginning of the modest subdivision west of the highway.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

It is unknown at this time who designed and built these pillars.

PERSON/INSTITUTION

The developers of Oakview Park was the Lowery Brothers, a local firm that concentrated on land in the North End of the city. The Company’s principals were Robert Newton Lowery, 1882-1962 (Plate 15) and younger brothers Edward Wesley (1886-1953) and Hugh Arthur (1887-1984).7

Robert N. Lowery was born in Detroit, Michigan, coming to Winnipeg with Irish-born contractor father Edward (1844-1893),8 his mother Christiana Elizabeth and older brother and sister in 1882.9 Robert was educated in Winnipeg and took up his father’s trade. He was a long-time resident of

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7 Henderson’s Directory, 1900-1920.
8 Manitoba Free Press, 1880-1900, various dates. There are several newspaper references to E. Lowery and E. Lowery and Son, architects, as well as contractors Lowery and McNeil. E. Lowery and Son was responsible for the design of the Portage la Prairie, MB Methodist Church, built in 1891 by Lowery and McNeil and for the design of a church in Boissevain, MB in 1893.
9 Lowery family biographical information from Canada Census; Winnipeg Free Press, various dates; Manitoba Historical Society; and F.H. Schofield, Story of Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913). Tragedy struck the family in 1893 when eldest son Edward died on September 19th at the age of 19 in Winnipeg and his father died the next day in Boissevain, Manitoba (Manitoba Free Press, September 21, 1893, p. 7).
East Kildonan and served for five years as the M.L.A. for the riding of Winnipeg North “A”, 1916-1920.10

E.W. Lowery was born in Winnipeg in 1886 and worked for Lowery Brothers to earn money to go to Wesley College (University of Winnipeg). He served in the First World War and upon his return he obtained his law degree. In 1926, he joined the Federal Department of Revenue as the local Income Tax Director, a position he held until 1950 when he moved to Vancouver, B.C. as director general of the Dominion Revenue Department. He died in Toronto in 1953.11

H. Arthur Lowery was born in Winnipeg in 1887 and was a founding member of Lowery Brothers. He also served in World War I and when he returned to Winnipeg, he worked for Tooke Brothers, a Montreal-based men’s shirt manufacturer, for 50 years. He died in Selkirk, MB in 1984.12

The development of the Hazel Dell Avenue area continued slowly after 1930, with much of the east end built up by 1945 and the west end by 1970 (Plate 16).

**EVENT**

There is no known event connected with these pillars.

**CONTEXT**

Although it is unclear as to the exact date of construction of the pillars at Hazel Dell Avenue, they one of several examples of this type of ornamental construction meant to add visibility and prestige to subdivisions in East Kildonan and elsewhere in the city.

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10 Winnipeg Free Press, April 28, 1962, p. 49; and Manitoba Historical Society, “Memorable Manitobans”.
The City has recognized their importance as a building type by designating three gates:

- **Armstrong’s Point Gates**, East Gate, Middle Gate and West Gate @ Cornish Avenue: built in 1911 and designed by H.N. Ruttan, these stone and iron gates mark the entrance to Armstrong’s Point, one of the City’s most exclusive residential districts of the pre-1915 era (Plate 17);

- **Nanton Estate Gates**, 229 Roslyn Road: these stone and wrought iron gates were built in 1900, designed by J.H.G. Russell for Sir Augustus M. Nanton, influential businessman as the entrance to his two-hectare estate and mansion (Plate 18); and

- **Silver Heights Gates**, Mount Royal Road at Traill Avenue: designed by William D. Lount in 1950-1951 to mark the southern entrance to his father’s new residential sub-division, Silver Heights, these modern gates are built of brick with wrought iron accenting and a concrete canopy (Plate 19).

**LANDMARK**

These markers are placed on a busy corner of Henderson Highway and would be familiar in the neighbourhood.
Plate 1 – The municipalities around the City of Winnipeg as they appeared in 1880. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 2 – The J.Y. Griffin & Company Meat Packing Plant, Red River at the Louise Bridge, ca.1900. The plant, located on 1.6 hectares of land, was built in 1892 and expanded several times. It provided permanent work for many people on the east side of the Red River. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 3 – The municipalities around the City of Winnipeg as they changed between 1910 and 1915. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 4 – East Kildonan Civic Offices, Henderson Highway at Kimberly Avenue, shortly after opening in 1957, demolished 2010. (City of Winnipeg.)

Plate 5 – Former East Kildonan Civic Offices (East Kildonan-Transcona Community Office), 755 Henderson Highway, shortly before demolition, 2009. (M. Peterson, 2009.)
Plate 6 – Plan 1955, “Oakview Park,” registered September 6, 1912. (Courtesy of the City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Department.)
Similarly styled ads appeared in the paper throughout the fall and winter of 1912 and again in the spring of 1913 and 1914. This ad included pillars and an invitation to “Be a Bungaloafer at Oakview”.

Plate 7 – This advertisement appeared in the Manitoba Free Press, October 26, 1912 (p. 16).
Follow the Exhibition into Beautiful Kildonan

For six years we have consistently demonstrated to home-makers the many desirable features which North Winnipeg and Kildonan offer. A man and his family. Thousands have listened to what we had to say, and come into North Winnipeg and are pleased with their homes in this district. Today the great current of public opinion, as shown in the people’s endorsement of the proposed Kildonan Exhibition site, vindicates our judgment and our claims.

OAKVIEW PARK
Announcing a New High-Class Residential Property De Luxe

RESTRICTED AND PROTECTED

Oakview Park is the most excellent section of land that has ever yet been presented to after the towns along North Winnipeg. Over 100 acres. It is covered with a beautiful park-like setting of many trees, and sloping to the Wainwright, 2.5 acres of the finest positions in the whole Winnipeg district. It is reached by a splendid new access, and the location of the Exhibition just beyond it on the other side of the same large open space, better for traffic, the view being, with only few, Oakview Park is simply perfect, and you may buy a house and building lot at the same time for $850.

Prices: $20 to $30 Per Foot
River Frontage $60 Per Foot

And Remember—just across the road from the entrance gate to the Exhibition Park we have.

CASSLETON PLACE

Follow the Exhibition into Beautiful Kildonan

Plate 8 – Another of the large newspaper ads printed in the fall of 1912 heralding a “High-Class”, “Restricted” and “Protected” new Kildonan neighbourhood of Oakview Park. Unfortunately for the developers, the Lowery Brothers, only a handful homes were built in the subdivision prior to the outbreak of World War I. (Reproduced from Manitoba Free Press, September 14, 1912, p. 16.)
Plate 9 – 150 Hazel Dell Avenue, Robert N. Lowery House, built in 1914, front (north) and east façades. (M. Peterson, 2013.)
Plate 10 – Plan 2706, subdivision of part of River Lot 83 Kildonan, registered May 19, 1921. (Courtesy of the City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Department.)
Plate 11 – North pillar, Hazel Dell Avenue at Henderson Highway, south and east sides, 2013.
(M. Peterson, 2013.)
Plate 12 – North pillar, Hazel Dell Avenue at Henderson Highway east face of concrete cap, 2013. (M. Peterson, 2013.)

Plate 13 – Pillars at Helmsdale Avenue and Henderson Highway, 2013. (M. Peterson, 2013.)
Plate 14 – Hazel Dell Avenue pillars, May 2009. Note that the south (left side) pillar has been affected by the reconstruction of the sidewalk. (M. Peterson, 2009.)
Plate 15 – Robert Newton Lowery (1882-1962), official Legislative Assembly photograph, ca.1915. (Courtesy of the Archives of Manitoba.)
Plate 16 – Dates of construction for buildings in the Hazel Dell neighbourhood. Note that the majority of houses built on both sides of Hazel Dell Avenue were constructed in the era between the World Wars, with only three pre-dating World War I. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 17 – Armstrong’s Point Gates, West Gate and Cornish Avenue, 2013. (M. Peterson, 2013.)

Plate 18 – Nanton Estate Gates, 229 Roslyn Road, 2013. (M. Peterson, 2013.)
Plate 19 – Silver Heights Gates, Mount Royal Road and Traill Avenue, 2013. (M. Peterson, 2013.)