1611 MAIN STREET
GREEN BRIAR INN

Date of Construction: 1929
Building Permit: N/A
Architect: Fraser, James A.¹
Contractor: Fraser, James A.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Designed to look like an old English inn from centuries past, the Green Briar Inn has been an important social facility in West Kildonan for 70 years.

The front (west) façade features two front-facing gables with half-timbering detail. The elevation, like all others, is clad in stucco. The main entrance is centrally placed on the façade, which originally included two other entrances and large windows with transoms. Windows on the second floor of the elevation were square headed and plain. The north and south façade also featured a half-timbered gable end and an open second storey balcony supported by large columns originally finished the south end.

The building was originally designed with a large banquet room and well appointed beer parlour with a seating capacity of 200 on the ground floor and 22 bedrooms on the second
floor, each with their own uniquely designed carpet and green accenting on furniture, linen and other amenities.²

Tudor style structures, like this one, were constructed throughout Winnipeg and North American from the 1890s until World War II, although the decades of the 1920s and 1930s saw an explosion in Tudor style construction, especially residential, on this continent. The style is loosely based on a number of late Medieval English examples ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand mansions. In North America, the style developed several distinctive elements - ornamental half-timbering, steeply pitched roofs, front-facing gables and walls clad in stucco, masonry or masonry-veneer.³

The most common feature of Tudor homes is a steeply pitched central roof with cross gables. Tall, narrow windows in multiple groups, and massive chimneys crowned by chimney pots, are other common elements. About half of all examples of the style contain decorative (non-structural) half-timbering with stucco or brick infill.⁴ The owners of the hotel were recalling old English inns with their use of the Tudor style in the design of this building.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. Much of the exterior has been renovated, a retail store has been added to the southwest corner of the building and an addition built on the south side.

Nothing is known at this time about the James A. Fraser, he appears in City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books beginning in 1922. For the next four years he mostly designed and built single-family homes, many in the Fort Rouge/Crescentwood neighbourhoods.⁵
Fred Hammer and his company, Parkview Hotel Company, and Sam Diner (formerly of the Nugget Hotel), are listed as the original owners and operators of the Green Briar Inn. Hammer also owned and operated the La Salle Hotel, 346 Nairn Avenue, in 1930.6
RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance - one of the older neighbourhood hotels built in the communities surrounding the City of Winnipeg;
- its associations - N/A;
- its design - a reduced example of the Tudor style;
- its architect - J.A. Fraser was a known practitioner;
- its location - contributes greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity - its main façades continue to display some of their original elements and design.
ENDNOTES:

1 The Hotel News, Vol. 3, No. 7 (June 1930), p. 29, and Vol. 3, No. 8 (July 1930), pp. 22-29. Brown and Rutherford supplied the millwork and lumber, Kaner and Maynard were the painters, the Hudson’s Bay Company supplied the mattresses, Partridge and Halliday the plumbing, heating and ventilation, Lars Mattson completed the plastering and stucco, Thomas Sly was the electrician, Bell Refrigerator Co. the refrigeration system and D.J. Ladd and Company supplied the roofing materials.

2 Ibid., p. 24.


4 Ibid., pp. 355-356.

5 City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926.


Front (west) and south façades, 1978