

August 1951

E. Kildonan's Curtis Hotel Opens Doors

East Kildonan's first hotel, the Curtis, officially opened its doors Tuesday.

In a short ceremony, Mayor Les Bodie of East Kildonan was presented with the only key to the \$400,000 hotel's front door by E. J. Ryland, manager.

Only the hotel's basement, which will house a large modern banquet room, had not passed the plastering stage Tuesday evening.

The fireproof Curtis has 31 fully-carpeted rooms with bath, shower and toilet. Fifteen are single rooms, while the remainder can be converted into two-room suites.

The two-storey hotel has facilities for three dining rooms, in addition to the 350-seat banquet room and one of Greater Winnipeg's largest beverage rooms.

The brick and tile building, designed by Green, Blankstein and Russell, is set well back on a three-acre lot on Henderson highway near the boundary of North Kildonan. The parking lot will accommodate 500 vehicles.

An air-conditioned coffee shop seating about 40 is off the lobby.

Knife Wielding Bandits Rob Curtis Hotel of \$2,000

Whilst the East Kildonan police and R.C.M.P. are investigating, the two thugs who methodically wheeled the safe out of the office and took it away from the Curtis Hotel in East Kildonan early Tuesday morning are still at large. The loot consisted of between \$2,000 and \$2,500 in cash.

Brandishing ugly knives, they approached C. W. Clarkson, night clerk, who resides at 118 Leighton avenue, and Tymothy Ewashenko, night porter, informing the former "C'mon, this is a stick-up, gimme your keys," at the same time prodding him with a knife.

The men stood on either side of the startled clerk. With gloved left hands they closed their coat lapels over swarthy faces. Their right hands held the long knives.

They had entered by the front door and found Clarkson, a man over 65 years of age, sitting on the lobby chesterfield smoking a cigarette. He told them he had no keys. They replied by pulling him to his feet and, walking single file with Clarkson between them, went into the clerk's enclosure.

When ordered to unlock the cash drawer Clarkson still maintained he had no key. One of the thugs found it under the counter. He forced the clerk to unlock the drawer then reached in with a gloved hand and scooped out the money.

Inside the drawer he also found a key to a second cash drawer. He also emptied this of its contents.

Then: "Where's the safe?"

Clarkson said he didn't know.

The clerk was led down a 30-foot hall to a door entering the beer parlor where Ewashenko was cleaning up.

Both were then led to a beer storage cooler at the front of the hotel. "You're not going to put us in there—we'll freeze to death," Clarkson said. Although both were in their shirt sleeves, they were put inside. Temperature in the large room was 40 degrees and blacker than ink and really cold," both claimed.

They pounded on the six-inch wooden door with a metal bar for almost three hours, until 5 a.m., before being released.

In an upstairs bedroom, day clerk Pat McKen heard the muffled noise. He thought it was workmen. Then he decided it was too early, so phoned down for Clarkson. Getting no answer, he hurried

down to investigate and was horrified to find Clarkson and Ewashenko in the cooler. The East Kildonan police were immediately notified.

Clarkson claimed both men were between 25 and 30 years. They wore overcoats, one grey, the other dark brown. They had grey, snap-brim fedoras, were about six feet tall.

The Herald was informed that Clarkson, whose hours are from 12 o'clock midnight until 8 a.m., was back on duty Tuesday night. The two hotel employees were none the worse for their harrowing experience.

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Kelvin St. Centre To Stage Pirates Tea November 15

The Pirates return to the Kelvin Street Community Centre at 281 Kelvin st. on Thursday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m., when the Kelvin Men's Club (governing body of the Centre) hold their second annual tea and carnival.

All 40 members of the club will be dressed in pirates costume and the feature of the tea will be Treasure Island, complete with Long John Silver and his parrot and buried treasure.

One may have their fortune told by tea or by sand and with a gala carnival in the hold of the ship, fun will be had by young and old attending. Proceeds from this annual event will be used for recreation and maintenance at the centre.

The club wishes to take this opportunity of inviting the general public to this affair and see the return of the pirates. The tea and carnival are under the direction of chief pirate J. Goodrick.

Work Commenced On Site of 30-Room \$200,000 Hotel

Construction of a new \$200,000 hotel, the first in the history of East Kildonan, will commence in about three weeks' time.

To be known as the Eldorado, the new hotel will be built on a three-acre site north of the new drive-in theatre of the same name. A. M. Tallman and Sons are the owners and the architects are Green, Blankstein, Russell and Associates, 310 Time Building.

The location for the building is presently being cleared and ready for the ground work. The hotel will be ultra-modern in every detail and will operate a first-class dining room. The grounds around the hotel will be suitably landscaped in the nature of a park.

Materials used in the construction will be local products as far as possible. The building will be completely fireproof, will have 30 rooms, and will be two storeys. It will be built from reinforced concrete and masonry.

The new hotel is another "first" for East Kildonan which recently opened its first bank, Imperial Bank of Canada branch at Melrose ave. and Henderson Highway.

Imperial Oil Co. are also building a new service station north of the new bank.

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