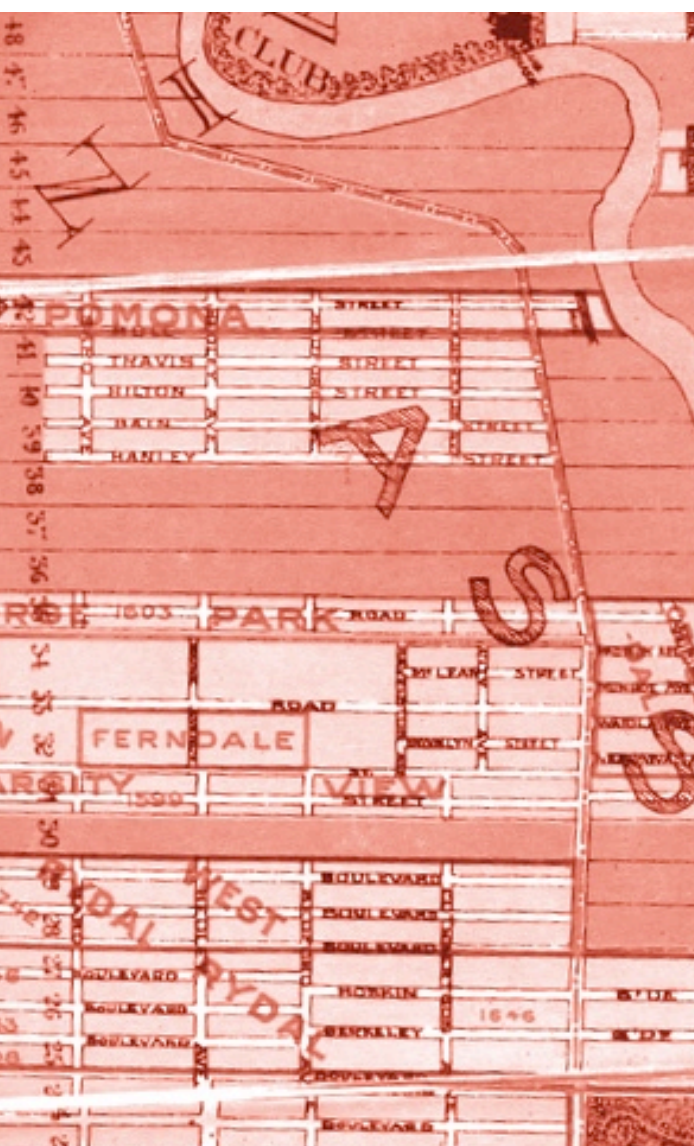


# CHARLESWOOD





Charleswood, a Winnipeg neighbourhood of approximately 26,000, is located in the city's southwest quadrant. The area is bounded to the north by the Assiniboine River, to the south by the Canadian National Railway Main Line, to the east by Assiniboine Park and Forest and to the west by Winnipeg's Perimeter Highway.

Since at least the 1930s Charleswood has been known as “The Suburb Beautiful,” a slogan which is proudly displayed on the sign that greets entrants to the community along the area's main street, Roblin Boulevard. The motto seems to have been derived from that of neighbouring Tuxedo area, which was marketed as such by its developer Frederick Huebach's Tuxedo Park Company Limited (later to become the South Winnipeg Company) in the 1910s. Tuxedo was one of Canada's first planned communities. Its catchphrase echoed the intent of its planners – including the notable Brookline, Massachusetts, Olmsted Brothers firm – to create a district both pleasant and well-organized. Charleswood, which was to develop in a less controlled fashion, nevertheless suits the name: a treed locale spread across the pleasant land south of the Assiniboine River.

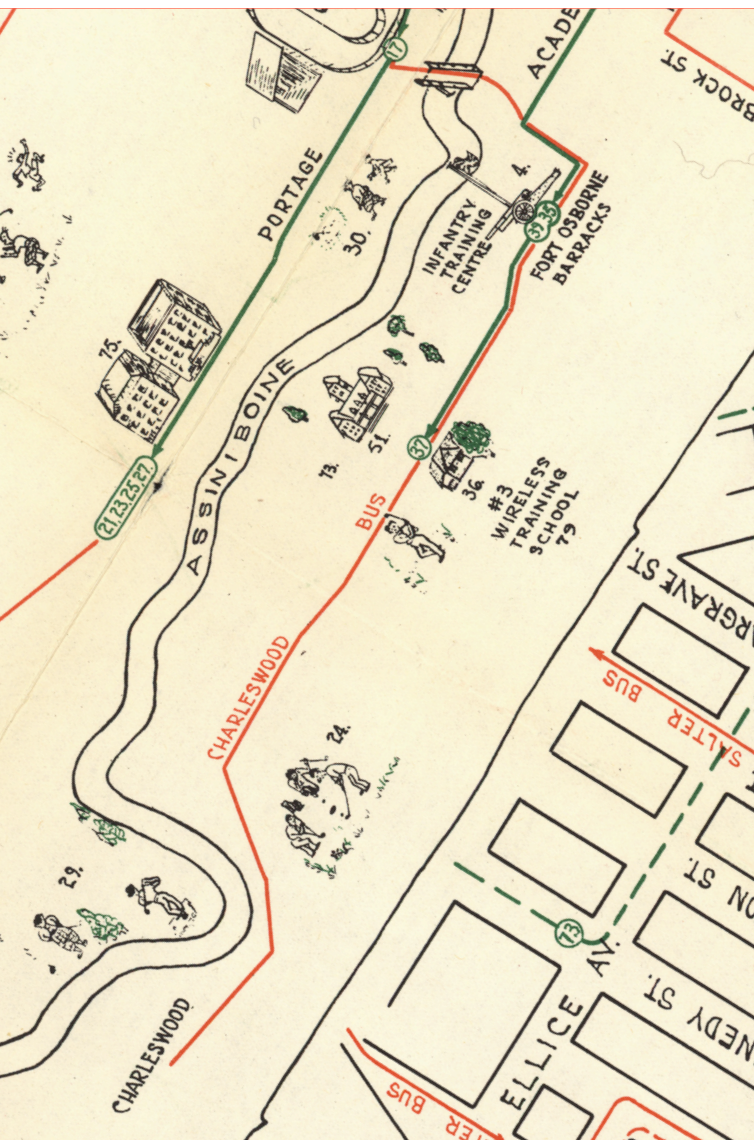
ABOVE LEFT:

“Welcome to Charleswood: The Suburb Beautiful” sign greeting visitors to the neighbourhood during the mid-twentieth century.

BOTTOM LEFT:

Charleswood areas (listed as Rydal, West Rydal, Varsity View, Crescent Dale and Pomona) in a 1912 map by Manitoba surveyor C.C. Chataway.





LEFT:  
Charleswood as depicted in a  
1941 City of Winnipeg Transit  
map.

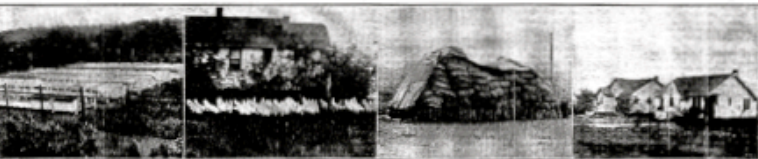


RIGHT:  
Charleswood-St. Charles Assiniboine  
River ferry photographed in 1938.

Charleswood celebrated its centenary as an officially recognized community in 2013, one hundred years after the Rural Municipality of Charleswood was incorporated on 15 February 1913. The municipality was formed from portions of the Rural Municipality of Assiniboia and Parishes of Headingley and St. Charles that lay south of the river, while excluding territories held by the Town of Tuxedo and City of Winnipeg. The origin of the area's moniker is uncertain. One likely source is the long-standing relationship the district had with its northern and more established neighbour across the Assiniboine River, St. Charles, to which it was connected by ferry crossings. The existence of convenient areas for Assiniboine River crossings was a key feature in the area's early history, particularly at a location known as "The Passage" near the foot of the present Berkley Street, which connected on the north side to Rouge Road. This link is today commemorated by Kelly Landing Park. Cross-Assiniboine ferry services continued operation in Charleswood as late as 1948.

# A Wonderful Opportunity To Obtain a Site in CHARLESWOOD

*The Suburb Beautiful; Just Half a Mile West of City Park  
On the South Side of the Assiniboine River.*



Typical small house located on 1/2-acre, average value \$100.

Pair of a field of about 700 acres, average value \$100.

22 Acres of fields, worth about \$475.00, average value \$21.60.

Three beautiful houses are located on 20-acre, average value \$100.

## Beautiful Home and Garden Plots Available Many As Low As \$20 An Acre

Sizes of plots for sale are as follows: 1½ acres, 3 acres, 5 acres and 6 acres. All of this land has a natural growth of large trees. Prices are as low as \$20 per acre, with the majority of plots for sale for under \$30 per acre. The many advantages of

a rural residence in Charleswood include: An all-weather highway; city deliveries; the suburb is wired for light and power; hourly bus service, with a special rush hour service. City water is available at a number of convenient locations throughout the district.

## TAXES ARE LOW!

Under \$35 for a Typical \$3,000 Home

Residents of Charleswood profit from both a low assessment and a low tax rate. For a typical home valued at around \$3,000 the annual taxes would amount to approximately \$35. On a lot costing \$100 and located close to the water district the taxes would be approximately \$4 per year.

## Ideal Soil—The Soil Is Unusually

Fertile—Ideal for Home or Market Garden

Charleswood district enjoys exceptionally good soil. This is shown by the many small market gardens that there are in this municipality, and by the many splendid home gardens and rich green lawns. By living in Charleswood you can grow vegetables, raise chickens and help make your home self-sustaining.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION THE OFFICE OF  
THE SECRETARY,

R.M. of Charleswood

Phone 61 788

Or Write Charleswood Post Office

Another possible derivation for the neighbourhood's name is in honour of one of the sons of early Charleswood settler Patrick H. Kelly. Kelly emigrated to the region from Ontario in 1906 and was a crucial figure in the municipality's growth. It was he who organized area residents to obtain civic status and hosted early council meetings in his store. In addition, Kelly – who once held over 200 hectares in the district – built a general store and played a central role in establishing a post office and area school. He was likewise instrumental in convincing the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company to extend streetcar service to the neighbourhood, which stretched as far west as his store (near Beaverdam Creek and “The Passage.”) The area was also served by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, which operated Pacific Junction station near the present site of Pacific Junction School (715 Cathcart Street) during the early twentieth century.

The early years of Charleswood's existence were dominated not by suburban housing but by farming. The district had been surveyed into slender and long riverfront farm lots by the Hudson Bay Company in the 1850s. Local agriculture included a particular focus on mink ranching, with over 80 such facilities in the district, as well as dairy, poultry, market gardening and tobacco growing. During the 1910s the area was marketed as “Rydal,” a potential residential locale by Huebach's Company (developers of Tuxedo). Nevertheless, the full flush of such growth did not come until later. Advertisements from the 1930s demonstrate a hybrid community, publicizing the potential purchase of plots for either market garden or home development purposes.

ABOVE:

Advertisement for Charleswood area land. Winnipeg Free Press. 1936.





It was after the Second World War that the suburban growth of Charleswood truly got underway. The post-war years saw the development of a number of areas, including the Marlton and Varsity View districts and the Roblin Park subdivision. The latter of these was funded by the Veteran's Land Act of 1942, which provided loans of up to \$6,000 to veterans who wished to construct their own homes. By 1948, veterans occupied 250 of Charleswood's 800 homes.

Development during the post-war years was rapid. The ten years before 1951 saw a 90 per cent increase in population, reaching 3,680. By 1966 the municipality's population had reached 7,334; in the five years after that the area's population again nearly doubled, with 14,000 residents by 1971. Land-use statistics tell a similar story: in 1948, 90 per cent of Charleswood's territory was engaged in agriculture; by 1971, only 65 per cent was so used, a number that would decline quite a bit further in the proceeding decade. Indeed, the area experienced strong 1970s growth and saw over 7,500 homes built during that ten-year span.

ABOVE LEFT:

Charleswood Collegiate; Northwood, Chivers, Chivers and Casey Architects; 1959.

RIGHT:

Modernist home in Charleswood.



#### ABOVE:

Charleswood Motor Hotel, 3425 Roblin Boulevard, Chris Kaufman (architect) and Jim Willer (artist), 1962.

#### BELOW:

Charleswood Civic Centre, 5006 Roblin Boulevard, 1965.



By and large the homes built during the early post-war period were fairly standard examples of North American residential design. By the 1960s more daring architecture appeared, including some modernist homes, concentrated on river-adjacent sites near or on Roblin Boulevard. Another daring design was that of the Charleswood Motor Hotel, completed in 1962, located near the intersection of Roblin and Varsity View Drive. Conceived by architect Chris Kaufmann, this building was nearly fully wrapped by an energetic and abstract relief mural by British-Canadian artist Jim Willer. Willer, who had a long-standing relationship with local concrete manufacturer Supercrete, built the relief mural using stressed and precast concrete elements. The building was altered over its life and was demolished in 2008.

It was during the booming 1960s that Charleswood received a new civic centre, located at 5006 Roblin Boulevard: a modernist complex featuring a heavier two-storey block and a protruding, glazed, entry wing. This project was located adjacent to the former civic offices which were soon converted into a library, continuing to serve as such today. (A replacement facility at another site is presently under construction.) The municipal council had previously met in Kelly's store and then in Charleswood School, the present site of Beauchemin Park Place, a site named for the local Beauchemin family. Only seven years after constructing the new municipal hall and offices, Charleswood would be incorporated into the Unicity-era City of Winnipeg, 58 years after first incorporating as a municipality.



By the 1970s a strain of rustic late modern design was well represented in the area, with examples found along the riverfront, on area streets and throughout the Westboine Co-operative housing development. The latter project, by noted local firm IKOY, was begun in 1973; it consists of over twenty clusters of town homes scattered in a semi-organic, semi-urban fashion across a large site.

Residential and other development continued apace over proceeding decades. Among large scale projects are Charleswood Centre Shopping Plaza (3900 Grant Avenue, 1990, LM Architectural Group; since remodelled) and the construction of the Charleswood Bridge in 1995. The bridge connected the area with the suburb of St. James-Assiniboia. Today Charleswood remains a unique Winnipeg suburb in retaining a semi-rural atmosphere, with many streets unpaved, lined with ditches, and heavily forested.



LEFT:  
Westboine Housing Co-operative, 32  
Shelmderdine Drive, IKOY Architects, 1973.

ABOVE:  
Late modern homes in Charleswood.





