

SELKIRK AVE!

Hi! I'm the Ukrainian Canadian Veterans Legion 141! What two flags flap outside my front door?

McGREGOR ST.

I'm the Budnyk Building! What long-time meat shop is inside me?

ANDREWS ST.

I'm the old Palace Theatre! Look at my marquee. What kind of entertainment do I promise?

POWERS ST.

I'm the Indigenous Family Centre! What sport can you play in my courtyard?

SALTER ST.

I'm the Alekno Block! What year was I built?

UP

WINNIPEG ARCHITECTURE + FOUNDATION @Kaj Hasselriis!
winnipegarchitecture.ca/@wpgarch

215

NORTH END

I'm the Ukrainian Labour Temple! What message can you read above my front door?

McGREGOR ST.

I'm the newly restored Merchants Corner! What object is represented on my facade, to signify the Eagle's protection?

I'm Makoonsag Children's Centre! What shape is my front door?

I'm the William Norrie Centre! What bird is on my mural?

POWERS ST.

I'm the Selkirk Avenue Bell Tower! Meet me every Friday at 6 p.m. When you come, what green reptile can you play on?

SALTER ST.

I'm the Holy Ghost Parish! How many bell towers can you count next to me?

CHARLES ST.

For over 100 years, Selkirk Avenue has been one of Winnipeg's main streets to see and be seen...and do some shopping! At first, it was the neighbourhood for the city's early Jewish and Eastern European communities, even earning the nickname New Jerusalem. In recent decades, it's gradually become a focal point for Treaty 1's urban Indigenous community.

But everyone's welcome on Selkirk, especially on Friday evenings for the weekly, well-attended Meet Me at the Bell Tower events, or for nightly strolls with the Bear Clan Patrol. Grab a donut, bagel or some bannock, and discover the broad history and architecture of Selkirk Avenue!

Holy Ghost Parish, 341 Selkirk Avenue, 1987
 This place of prayer has a heavenly roof. The tiles were made in New Zealand and the big, boxy windows welcome lots of light inside. There, the sun shines on a pulpit used by Pope John Paul II during his visit to Winnipeg in 1984.

Weselake House, 355 Selkirk Avenue, 1941
 The first owners to enjoy this home — and admire the sidewalk from its cute rounded windows — were Lawrence and Anna Weselake. Look for their last name on another building just down the street, at Selkirk and Salter. Lawrence was a dentist there for many years.

Bell Tower, corner of Selkirk and Powers, 1985
 The Selkirk Ave. bell has tolled for Winnipeg since it came from New York City in 1877. First, it was installed behind City Hall and rung in case of fire. Then, it sat for years at the Manitoba Museum. Finally, it found a new home here on Selkirk Avenue. Be sure to visit on Fridays at 6 pm, when the community gathers for Meet Me at the Bell Tower. And if you're wondering why the top of the tower looks like the domes on nearby Ukrainian churches, that's because it was designed to look that way!

EXPLORE SELKIRK AVENUE!



an architecture tour for kids



The union movement has always been strong at this solid brick, Neoclassical hangout, built just in time for the 1919 General Strike. The police raided the Labour Temple on June 17, 1919, but that hasn't stopped sisters and brothers of labour from continuing to rally here for more than a century.

Ukrainian Labour Temple, 591 Pritchard Avenue, 1918
 Winnie the Pooh would feel right at home at Makoonsag, which means "tiny bear" in Cree. The exterior features the four colours of the medicine wheel, while the interior has a spirit room inspired by sweat lodges. Makoonsag was designed by Eladia Smoke, an Anishinaabekwe from Obishikokang, in collaboration with Elder Stella Blackbird and Prairie Architects.

Palace Theatre, 501 Selkirk Avenue, 1912
 In Hollywood's golden age, the Palace Theatre lit up with motion picture gems. Designed by architect Max Blankstein, it was originally used for live vaudeville performances and was later converted into a movie theatre. There used to be movie theatres in every Winnipeg neighbourhood. When the Palace screen went dark in 1964, the building took on new roles, as an auction house, department store and furniture depot. It's been vacant for almost 20 years but a community group is determined to bring it back to life.

Alekn Block, 376 Selkirk Avenue, 1914
 This century-old block began life as a place to celebrate death. It was originally a funeral home. In the 1930s it became Ideal Electric, which has been making and selling lamps here ever since. Be sure to admire the Tyn dall limestone detail. It's a building material that is 150 million years old and unique to Manitoba!

Merchants Corner, 541 Selkirk Avenue, 1913

"The Merch" was originally a hardware store. Two decades later it became a hotel, but gradually fell into decline. In 2018, it was reopened as a state-of-the-art school, with university classes, after-school programs and student housing. According to the University of Winnipeg, "to honour the strong Indigenous character of the neighbourhood, several design elements were incorporated into the building: the front façade on Selkirk Avenue features four feathers, signifying the protection of the Eagle for all who enter; the main floor is recessed incorporating the shell and feet of the Sacred Turtle; the Atrium is circular and filled with light, representing the Circle of Life; and along the feature wall, flying Peace Doves bring nature into the space."

Max Blankstein, 1876–1931

Max Blankstein was a pioneering architect who designed over 200 buildings in Winnipeg, including many on Selkirk Avenue that still stand today, like the Alekno Block, the Palace Theatre, the Budnyk building, the Weselake building and Merchants Corner. An immigrant from Russia, Blankstein was the first registered Jewish architect in Western Canada. He started a dynasty, too. Many of his children followed him into the family business, including son Cecil, who designed City Hall, Polo Park and the Shaarey Zedek synagogue.

Produced in 2021 by the
 Winnipeg Architecture Foundation.

🌐 winnipegarchitecture.ca

ARTIST: Kaj Hasselriis DESIGN: Burdocks Produced with the support of the City of Winnipeg, Councillor Ross Eadie.

