

A Walk to Remember...

Block 3, Lot 29, 30 & 31

Avonmore Hotel



In 1891 Walter Stovin purchased the northern 2 lots of this parcel to set up a blacksmith shop. Gavin Middleton built his woodworking shop on the rear of the same location. By 1900, Mr.'s Stovin & Middleton relocated to the west side of Broadway and the lots were sold to A.H. Foulds and Co. owned by Andrew (A.H.) Foulds and partner William Andrew (W.A. Smith) for their new lumberyard. An implement department was soon added to be run by Mr. J. McConnell. The lumber business was relocated to the west side of Broadway and the implement dealership building was moved south about 100 feet in about 1908 to make room for a new hotel.

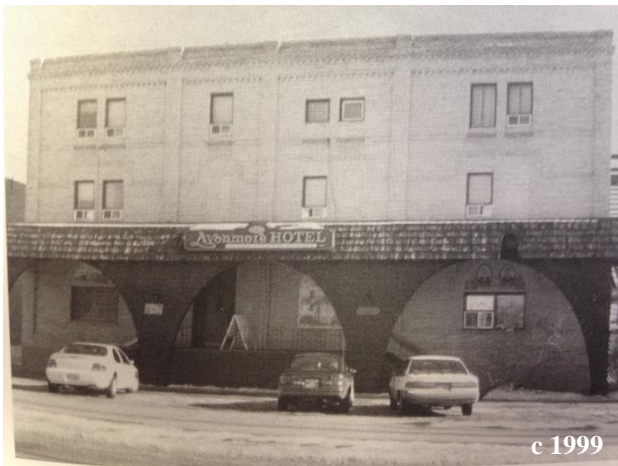
Arrangements were made with Brandon Brewing Co. to build a hotel in partnership with Andy Foulds on this land. In 1909, the Avonmore Hotel opened with Mr. Crozier and Mr. Boyle as the first proprietors. Crozier had worked for the brewing company and Boyle was an experienced hotel man. When Mr. Crozier's brother, Frank and his father sold their hotel interests in Ontario, Frank joined his brother in Carnduff buying out Mr. Boyle and Crozier Bros. became owners of the hotel.



The old barroom was very different from the modern beer parlour. Behind the counter which ran the full length of the room was a large mirror which also ran the full length. With no seats, patrons had to stand, resting weary legs on the iron railing six inches above the floor in front of the counter. The shelf behind the counter was filled with bottles. As beer parlours began to replace barrooms, there was discussion that standing was better because when you had too much to drink and could no longer stand you were evicted. With seating and later the advent of mixed drinking however, the parlours developed to a large degree into a calmer, quieter atmosphere than the early barroom.

In 1915, the Saskatchewan government passed legislation to close all bars throughout the province. Done primarily as a war measure, it resulted in hardship for hotel owners, who relied on the bar profits to subsidize the often money losing proposition of dining rooms and renting rooms. A Government grant program was offered which did somewhat lessen the impact. The Croziers opted to close the hotel briefly before leasing the hotel to George Krugel and Dave Kopp. After two years of the lease arrangement, Crozier Bros. once again took over management of the Avonmore.

The Croziers continued to operate the Avonmore through the tough times of prohibition, but following the challenges of running a hotel for weeks on end without guests during the depression years they were ready to sell. As times improved, they took the first opportunity and the hotel was sold to Mr. John Baldwin. After a string of ownership changes, a pair of brothers would again be in charge when the hotel was purchased in 1952 by Art and George Sichel.



The Sichel families lived in the hotel, Art and Mary on the top floor at the rear, and George and Anne in a front facing apartment on the north end of the building. After working together to turn the Avonmore back into a first class hotel, George took over Art's share in 1956 and continued to run the hotel with his wife Anne's assistance until his death in 1963. Anne carried on with the assistance of her two older children Georgina and Fred. In 1971 Fred bought the hotel from his mother and ran it until 1976 when he sold out.

The hotel changed hands frequently until the mid-1980s with the other biggest change being the addition of a ten unit motel addition affectionately known as 'The Igloos' to the hotel in 1984. Bill and Fay Richards took over ownership of the hotel in 1985 and continued to operate it for over 10 years. During their management additional improvements included an addition to the beverage room, substantial remodelling and a trio of murals painted on the front of the building depicting the Carnduff pioneer era. Shannon Kirby, an employee of Mr. and Mrs. Richards took over management of the hotel when they moved and eventually became owner of the hotel.

The hotel changed hands again in 2014 with Jason and Pam Miller taking over. They have begun substantial updates to the property while continuing operation and look forward to serving the community and visitors for years to come.

