

## 254 Stephen St. – Arlington Hotel



The Arlington is a good example of a grand hotel in a smaller community. It is in the Romanesque Revival Style from the 1890's.

On July 21, 1898 the Morden Chronicle reported that, "Mr. John Kennedy, of the Manitoba Hotel is having the excavation made for his new hotel on the corner of Sixth and Stephen Streets. The building will have a frontage on Stephen Street of 70 feet and a depth on Sixth St. of 100 feet. It will consist of a basement and three stories and will be built of stone. The building, when finished, will be complete in every detail and will be furnished with all the modern improvements. As a structure, it will be an ornament to the town."

On August 18, 1898 it was reported that, "the foundation of Mr. Kennedy's big building on the corner of Stephen and Sixth Streets is progressing nicely. This is the most massive stone structure that Morden can yet boast of. The walls are 5' thick at the bottom and huge stones have been used in the construction. One foundation corner stone weighs 2.5 tons."

On October 31, 1901, the Morden Chronicle described the Arlington Hotel as "...the most up to date hotel west of Toronto".

In the hotel, a large sitting room on the second floor was open to organizations to use for meetings and social events. A horse-drawn lorry provided transportation for guests to and from the CPR Railway Station located on North Railway St.

Early hoteliers included Kilgour and Stillwell in 1914; W.F. Davie in 1919; H. Rich in 1921; J.M. Kingston and Dan Hughes in 1924; Mrs. Harriet White in 1927; Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Beaudry from 1929 until 1951 when it was bought by Stephen Kulba. Dick Schafer was the owner in 1962.

In the late 1920s and early 30s, the Arlington served as the Town's bus depot. In 1927, Elmer Clay of Morden joined Garry M. Lewis in a transport business and bus line, which they called the Grey Goose Bus Line. The name is said to have originated from "the wild goose hunters who decided to share their bag at a banquet at the Arlington Hotel. A total of 175 guests and some dignitaries enjoyed an evening of fun and wild goose and the unveiling of the name "Grey Goose" for the bus route."