

East Barons Auditorium

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When we try to offer our thanks

We love you, you're tops.
You're the gift beyond price
Stand still while we give you your due

That poem was printed on the back page of the program which was distributed at the official opening and dedication ceremony of the East End Cultural and Leisure Centre, 575 Larsen Avenue, held May 29.

It was an evening in which loyal community volunteers were recognized and their work acknowledged.

In fact that was how the former East End Barons Community Centre began in the 1940's.

A \$10 donation was received from the Bronx Park Community Centre for the purchase of stamps so that memberships could be sent out. When the money was gone, Doris Mitchell went home, looked about the house, donated a bowl to the cause, which was subsequently raffled off and more stamps were purchased with the proceeds so that the membership drive

could be completed.

And among the other early volunteers at the centre there were: Jim and Marg Kobeck, John and Ann Harris, Myrtle and Hans Christianson, Roger Goodchild, Florence Carter, Mary Turzak, Mike Arnie and Mary Sodloski — many of whom were present the night of the official opening.

It was councillor Alf Skowron, (Elmwood), who along with councillor Anne Jorowski (Miles Macdonell), unveiled a plaque dedicating the large activity area to honour the volunteers of the former East End Barons.

On August 14, 1978, the executive of the East End Barons officially dis-established their volunteer organization and turned the club facilities and assets over to the sub-committee on parks and recreation. This ended the operation of the facilities as a community centre which had served the community under volunteer citizen management since January 1, 1947.

Tom Orm, who served as president of the East End Barons for its last seven consecutive years, identified the declining need for sports programs and reduced community involvement as a sign of changing community demographics and thus initiated the centre's closure.

The East Kildonan-Transcona sub-committee on parks and recreation subsequently adopted a proposal submitted by the parks and recreation branch that the East End Barons facilities be re-designated as the East End Cultural and Leisure Centre to provide for non-athletic programs, particularly those requiring large or non-portable specialized equipment.

The new Cultural and Leisure Centre during 1980, its first year of operation, served 1698 persons through its indoor program and an additional 2113 children visited the wading pool. As the community became more aware of these leisure facilities and programs the participation increased. In 1982, participation in indoor programs increased to 4628 with the wading pool serving 2348 children.

The East End Cultural and Leisure Centre now accommodates a wide range of leisure activities for people of all ages. Specialized equipment for pottery, ceramics, and woodworking have proven popular for both formal instruction programs and for scheduled informal drop-in activity.

During 1983, the Community Improvement Program funded an addition and

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