

East Kildonan Cultural and Leisure Centre

by Vienna Badiuk
and Alex Hamilton

What is a Volunteer?

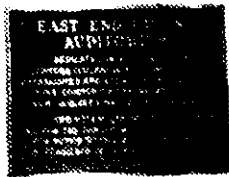
A Volunteer is a helping hand
to a child who needs a boost;
A Volunteer is the eyes to read
And the pen to drop a note;
A Volunteer is the hand on the wheel
With the meal that can't get cold
And the voice on the phone that says
"Hey, Mom, let's go and watch the kids
roll!!"

A Volunteer is a caring soul

With a heart as big as life;
A Volunteer is a loving word
When the world backs you up to the wall.
A Volunteer is a strong, young arm
And a laugh that loves to be heard
And the joy of hearing "I got a C"
From the D's and the F's and the O's.

A Volunteer does all of these things
And so many more besides,
And comes and says, "Hey that was fun,
Now what can I do that is Hard?"
Then runs like a deer to the nearest door

(continued on page 3)



Jorowski and Skowron.

— photo by Vienna Badiuk

East Barons Auditorium

(continued from page 1)

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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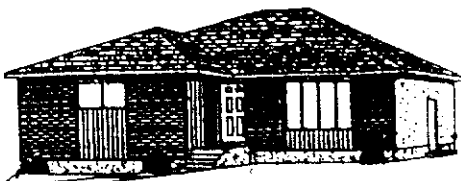
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During 1983, the Community Improvement Program funded an addition and renovation project for the East End Cultural and Leisure Centre building and grounds to increase its capacity to serve the community, and to add to the aesthetics of the surrounding community.

Funds in amount of \$115,000 were expended on the building and \$135,000 was utilized to beautify the grounds and add children's playground equipment.

An air of positive satisfaction permeated the conclusion of the opening ceremonies — rather like the time-favoured adage which reminds one that if you can't plant big trees, plant little ones and help them grow.

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