



ALEXANDRA CENTRE SOCIETY

A Brief History of the Alexandra Centre

In 1973 the Inglewood and Ramsay districts were designated a Neighbourhood Improvement Program (N.I.P.) area. The funds made available allowed the communities of Inglewood and Ramsay to carry out various local improvement projects, industrial relocation and housing developments. The primary project undertaken was the restoration of the Alexandra School building, despite reports from City Administration of the day, condemning the building. Area residents in partnership with the late Jack Long, a local architect planner and community resident embarked upon the Alexandra restoration project. The intended purpose of this project was the creation of a facility to house badly needed community services and programs for the Inglewood & Ramsay communities.

Volunteer community residents spent three years planning and implementing the project. A shortage in funds was supplemented by more than one thousand hours of volunteer labour to complete decks, landscaping, interior finish etc.

The Alexandra School, constructed in 1902 replaced the East Ward School on the same site. The gymnasium was added in 1952. The school was closed in 1963 and transferred to the City of Calgary. Prior to its restoration, the main building, which was boarded up, created a blight in the neighbourhood. The gymnasium was rented out to various groups as a venue for bingos and rock band events.

The Alexandra Centre restoration was completed in December 1975, with an official opening held in June 1976. The Alexandra Centre Society was incorporated in December 1975, as a charitable organisation, to ensure that the objectives of the Inglewood Ramsay Redevelopment Committee were carried out on an on-going basis. In more recent years, the Alexandra Centre Society has extended its geographic service area to include Victoria Park. A Board of Directors' who are residents of the Tri-Area communities protects integrity of the Society's Tri-area community mandate.

The Alexandra building, under the direction of the Alexandra Centre Society, hosts a variety of community services including a day-care, a writers' group and the community health centre which evolved from the original grassroots partnership between the Society founders and a group of medical practitioners. In addition the Society runs a variety of services such as a "Community Christmas Hamper Program", a "Volunteer Income Tax Return Service", and a "Summer Camp Subsidy Program" for area children, and in 2003, the Society began to offer the Suzuki Preparatory Music program. The Society also supports other community groups. In November'2002, the Society initiated and sponsored "The Good Neighbours Conference" the first community resource initiative to encourage community planning based on building relationships, co-ordinating services, and the climate for co-operative, unified community initiatives. The Society has entered a new era in filling its role of service to the Tri-Area.

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A HERITAGE OF PEOPLE MEETING PEOPLE