

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE KERRISDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Developing the Facilities

The Kerrisdale Community Centre Society began as the Point Grey Community Centre Society in December 1942. The Cyclone Taylor Arena was built in 1949 as the result of public fundraising drive, and was operated by the Society for many years. The then outdoor pool opened in 1954. One year later, the construction of the first section of the Kerrisdale Community Centre, officially opened in April 1955, started after an area referendum had approved its funding. The gymnasium and the library-health unit wing were built later. For many years, ending in the mid-1980s, Kerrisdale area residents paid a special levy on their taxes to pay the cost of building.

Beginning in 1983, a dedicated group of Kerrisdale citizens began campaigning for funding, much of it from the federal government, to build a Seniors' Centre, and six years later, December 1986, it opened.

Major renovations, completed in 1999 (2nd Floor and South Wing) and 2002 (the Lobby and Staff Offices), were paid for in large part by contributions from the community, funds raised by the Society and by federal-provincial infrastructure grants obtained after much community lobbying. Planning for the 3rd phase of renovations (Basement Area), funded largely by a portion of the community amenities contributions generated by the re-development of Quilchena Gardens, is currently underway and construction is expected to start mid-July 2005.

Programs and Services

With almost 15,000 active members with a wide range of programs and services, the Kerrisdale Community Centre is one of the busiest community centres in Vancouver. In our August 2003 to August 2004 Fiscal Year we offered 680 classes per session for a total of 2,770 classes during the year. The number of recorded visits for the year was 497,690. This number does not include the children and parents and/or care givers who use the lobby play area on a casual basis or as a meeting point. Kerrisdale Community Centre also runs programs out of the Kerrisdale Arena and manages the operations at Maple Grove pool during the summer.

Our exercise room, built and equipped by the Society as part of the 1999 renovations, is extremely popular, and the wide variety of health and wellness programs offered, as well as the addition of new fitness equipment, appears to be keeping the pace with our clients' needs.

The Kerrisdale Community Centre, through its Seniors' Centre, serves lunches to 1200 people a month, Monday through Saturday, and offers a coffee and tea service to its senior members daily. The Centre has programs in cooperation with two area elementary schools to provide after-school care for children. Our Youth program involves hundreds of youth between 13 and 18 at its Friday night programs. An additional 200 youth are involved in volunteer training and volunteer experiences at the Centre. Recognizing the significant demographic change in our community over the past decade, the Centre offers programs to improve English language facility for many recent immigrants who live in our community.

In June 2003 the Kerrisdale Play Palace, a joint venture of the KCC Society and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation opened in the Arena during non-ice time. A scaled down version continues in the community centre on weekends during the fall and winter. The Play Palace provides a recreation opportunity not available anywhere else in Vancouver and is enjoyed by thousands of happy children.

Special events and holiday programming initiatives continue to be particularly well received over the past few seasons – from the Family concert series, Breakfast with Santa to the myriad of programs offered during Halloween, Easter and statutory holidays.

Our members can now get added value from their membership. The Member Benefits Program, implemented by the Society, provides discounts for Kerrisdale merchants and special “Kerrisdale Nights” at events like the Stanley Park Ghost Train. Our Research and Development Consultant has also secured sponsorship for several initiatives, including the Play Palace and the Health & Wellness Expo (scheduled for Saturday April 30, 2005).

The Society has recently hired consultants to conduct a needs assessment of our community in order to provide data that will inform a review of our program and service offerings to ensure that we are meeting, and continue to meet, the needs of our community. The community needs assessment report is expected by late May in time for discussion at the Society's bi-annual Strategic Planning exercise involving the Board and staff of the Centre.

Kerrisdale Community Centre
April 2005