

**A COMMUNITY
BUILDING
A COMMUNITY CENTRE**

INTRODUCTION

**Proposal
for the
Completion of the
North Peace Cultural Centre**

Michael Weberaki
John Herron
Harry Rudell
Larry Evans

PRESENTED TO:

**Council - City of Fort St. John
Council - District of Taylor**

Steve Thorlakson
Fred Jarvis
Ben Knutson
Karen Goodings
Tony Atkins (President)
Kevin Truswell
Bath Todrick
Ingrid Fischer (Treasurer)

PRESENTED BY:

**Building Committee for
North Peace Cultural Society**

"Community" - a social group whose members live in a specific locality, share government, and have a common heritage; similar or common character: community of interests; the public or society.

"Culture" - the quality in a person or society that arises from interest in arts, letters, scholarly pursuits etc.; intellectual development, improvement by mental or physical training. ₁

₁ Source: "The Random House Dictionary" Copyright 1978.

NORTH PEACE CULTURAL CENTRE BUILDING COMMITTEE

LARRY EVANS

Larry Evans has lived in Fort St. John for 39 years graduating from NPSS in 1978. Larry's extensive community involvement includes 5 years service with the Fishermen Club which involved various fundraising projects. Other projects include fundraising, 1984 B.C. Winter Games and Minor Hockey. From 1980 to 1983 and 1985 to Present, Larry has served as a director of the Child Development Centre, elected as president for the last 2 years. Larry has served on the Phase I and Phase II of the Child Development Centre Building Committee which is now reaching completion. Larry is a Captain with the Fort St. John Fire Department where he has been employed for the past 20 years. He has been the assistant to the Fire Commissioner since 1983 and is extensively involved with the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

INTRODUCTION

Building Committee:

Michael Waberski
John Herron
Harry Rudell
Larry Evans

JOHN HERRON

John has lived in Fort St. John "all his life". During his work as a manager of Chatham Steel, John was involved with the reconstruction of the warehouse. He has served on the North Peace Cultural Council and spent one year as a volunteer consultant to the City of Fort St. John. He has experience with planning, project management and construction for building construction projects from warehouses to offices. His most recent completed project is the new ICBC building in Fort St. John.

North Peace Cultural
Society Board of
Directors:

City of Fort St. John (Mayor)
District of Taylor (Mayor)
Regional Area B
Regional Area C
Theatre Users
Arts Council
Gallery Society
Library

Steve Thorlakson
Fred Jarvis
Ben Knutson
Karen Goodings
Tony Atkins (President)
Kevin Truscott
Beth Todrick
Ingrid Fischer (Treasurer)

HARVEY RUDSELL

Harvey has lived in Fort St. John since 1991. He has been a contractor since 1967. A contractor/consultant since 1987, he has been involved in the oil and natural gas industry since 1989. Through his work, he has been involved in the construction of various facilities including 4 Compressor Stations involving complex structural and mechanical requirements. Harvey's community involvement includes Northern Dance Theatre Society, 1984 B.C. Winter Games and the first Dry Grid festivities held in Fort St. John.

MICHAEL WABERSKI

Mike, a Professional Land Surveyor, was born and raised in Victoria. He moved to Fort St. John in 1979. In 1982 he formed Waberski Derron Surveyors with his partners which has grown to a firm employing 24 professional and technical personnel. Mike's background includes redevelopment of their office building and professional experience in design/engineering of many oil and natural gas construction projects. Community projects include the Rotary Park at Chatham Steel, assisting the Cultural Centre and organizing Minor Hockey tournaments.

**NORTH PEACE CULTURAL CENTRE
BUILDING COMMITTEE**

LARRY EVANS

Larry Evans has lived in Fort St. John for 39 years graduating from NPSS in 1970. Larry's extensive community involvement includes 5 years service with the Kinsmen Club which involved various fundraising projects. Other projects include Scouting, 1984 B.C. Winter Games and Minor Hockey. From 1980 to 1983 and 1985 to Present, Larry has served as a director of the Child Development Centre, elected as president for the last 2 years. Larry has served on the Phase I and Phase II of the Child Development Centre Building Committee which is now reaching completion. Larry is a Captain with the Fort St. John Fire Department where he has been employed for the past 20 years. He has been the assistant to the Fire Commissioner since 1983 and is extensively involved with the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

JOHN HERRON

John has lived in Fort St. John "all his life". During his work as a manager of Chatham Steel, John was involved with the reconstruction of the warehouse. He has served 4 years on City Council and spent one year as a volunteer consultant for City Public Works. He has experience with planning, project management, and budgeting for building construction projects from warehouses to offices. His most recent completed project is the new ICBC building in Fort St. John. As a member of the Phase I building committee for the North Peace Cultural Centre, John scrutinized the construction budget. John is presently the owner of Pre-Cam Rentals.

HARVEY RUDELL

Harvey has resided in Fort St. John since 1961 graduating from NPSS in 1967. A self-employed contractor/consultant since 1977, Harvey has been involved in the oil and natural gas industry since 1969. Through business Harvey has been involved in the construction of various facilities including 4 - 1000 HP Compressor Stations involving complex structural and mechanical engineering. Harvey's community involvement includes Northern Dance Theatre Society, the 1984 B.C. Winter Games and the first Dry Grad festivities held in Fort St. John.

MICHAEL WABERSKI

Mike, a Professional Land Surveyor, was born and raised in Victoria and moved to Fort St. John in 1979. In 1982 he formed Waberski Darrow Surveys with his partners which has grown to a firm employing 24 professional and technical personnel. Mike's background includes redevelopment of their office building and professional experience in design/engineering of many oil and natural gas construction projects. Community projects include the Rotary Park at Charlie Lake, assisting the Cultural Centre and organizing Minor Hockey tournaments.

NORTH PEACE CULTURAL CENTRE - THE PROJECT

THE NORTH PEACE CULTURAL CENTRE will provide four facilities in one building for the residents of Fort St. John, Taylor and the surrounding Regional Areas. The 40,000 square foot Cultural Centre will have a 8,000 square foot Public Library with a 2,000 square foot Multi-purpose Room; a 400 seat theatre, an Artspace for arts-related activities, and an Art Gallery. The original structure of the vacant Hudson Bay Department Store with 29,000 square feet was purchased to provide the basic structure and site for the new Cultural Centre.

The Location in the downtown core of Fort St. John will provide convenient access for 30,000 people from the City of Fort St. John, the District of Taylor and Electoral Areas B and C of the Peace River Regional District.

The Benefits to the Region include increased activity in the downtown core of Fort St. John, economic growth in the cultural and tourism industries, and indirect spin-off effects to all businesses in the area. The cultural development of the Peace River Region is assured through services to residents and visitors.

The Need for the North Peace Cultural Centre is evident in the following facts:

The Public Library currently occupies a rented store-front premise with inadequate space to meet present demands or to plan for future expansion. The present space, 3,000 square feet, falls well below the recommended size for the population currently served.

Performing artists, theatre and conferences have no performance nor auditorium facility in Fort St. John since the Northern Lights College has expanded and the new secondary school gymnasium is unsuitable for presentations. All temporary spaces are no longer available. A theatre space could currently be used at least four of the seven evenings each week in the North Peace.

The Artspace which coordinates arts activities and classes for all ages and provides a ticket and information centre for the area, occupies temporary commercial space in a basement area of the downtown core. The Artspace serves over 150 preschool children, 75 students and 100 adults each week in classes and meetings.

The Art Gallery is in temporary commercial space too small for traveling exhibits. The Art Society is on thirty days notice to vacate if a commercial tenant wishes to lease the premises.

PROJECT MILESTONES

The North Peace lacks the permanent cultural facilities which can provide the amenities required for a stable population, a variety of career opportunities, and quality entertainment so often lacking in remote Northern communities. The increasing level of arts activities in the North Peace requires permanent suitable facilities to serve the residents and provide a venue for special cultural events which are tourist oriented.

The North Peace Cultural Society owns and will operate the North Peace Cultural Centre. The Board of Directors consists of elected officials of the District of Taylor, City of Fort St. John, and Electoral Areas B and C of the Peace River Regional District plus representatives of each of the major user groups: Public Library, Art Gallery Society, Friends of the Theatre, Fort St. John Arts Council. The Society was registered in June of 1987 in Victoria, B.C. and has charitable status with Revenue Canada.

The History of the North Peace Cultural Centre began in 1985 when the Peace River Regional District in cooperation with the City of Fort St. John and Taylor initiated the identification of an Expo Legacy Project in the North Peace. Input from the community supported the development of a Cultural Centre for the area. A joint application was submitted to the British Columbia Expo Legacy Fund and a \$1,000,000 grant was announced by North Peace MLA Tony Brummett in 1986. Following another joint application for funding to the federal government, Prince George - Peace River MP Frank Oberle announced in 1987 a \$500,000 grant from the Cultural Initiatives Program of the Department of Communication. An additional \$500,000 was realized through private donors, business contributions and corporate donations along with special events and fundraising by community organizations.

The Architects chosen, following careful research and interviewing, were the firm of Howard/Yano with David Brockington Architects. These architects determined the needs of the four facilities proposed for the Cultural Centre and completed the design stage. Howard/Yano/Brockington Architects were retained as architects for the building phase of the project. Hegge Construction were contracted in June of 1988 for Phase I construction. A Building Committee comprised of four people representing the community was formed to oversee the construction and liaise with the architects.

Phase I of the Cultural Centre included purchase of the land and building, structural changes to the building and exterior finishing of the structure. By July 1, 1989 Phase I of the Cultural Centre was complete.

The Annual Budget of the North Peace Cultural Centre will be operated by the generation of funds within the building and the cooperation of the City of Fort St. John, District of Taylor and Electoral Areas B and C of the Peace River Regional District. A joint agreement to pay any operational deficit has been signed for Fort St. John to pay 50%, Taylor 12.5%, Electoral Area C 12.5% and Area B 25% to a maximum of \$100,000.

September 1989

\$650,000 GO B.C. Funds received from B.C. Government.

