

Weekender

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Death sentence on arena

Contract \$27,649

The Stouffville Arena was built in 1949 for \$80,000.

Thirty-nine years later it will be demolished for a tendered price of \$27,649.

Town Council, Tuesday, awarded the demolition contract to JPC Wrecking Limited. The firm has agreed to complete the work by Dec. 20, 1987.

The decision comes as no surprise. Still, there's sadness in many circles related to the death knell proclamation, especially among those responsible for its construction.

Charter directors are — Gar Lehman, George Allison, Morley Symes, Charles Nolan, Reg. Button, Bert Bell and Dr. S.T. Bodendistel.

The first manager was Ken Laushway. He was followed by Telf Rennie and Don Lewis. Ken Kirby was a long-time employee.

The arena was constructed by T.A. Wilson Lumber Co. of Canington.

Sixty-three thousand dollars was raised through sales of shares. The Stouffville Lions Club invested \$2,000. The Stouffville Athletic Club put up \$1,500.

The amount outstanding, (\$20,000), was acquired through citizens' loans. Due to the popularity of the facility, the indebtedness was quickly paid off.

"Hockey was the big thing back then," recalls Gar Lehman, a Board past-president and former Village reeve. He remembers as many as 1,900 people standing shoulder-to-shoulder for a playoff game between the Stouffville 'Clippers' and the Markham 'Millionaires'. Seating capacity was 1,200.

The first hockey game was Oct. 31, 1949. The official opening was one month later, (Nov. 30), with Premier Leslie Frost in attendance. Admission, (reserve seats), was one dollar.

"We had good luck with our managers," says Mr. Lehman, "there were only three and all did a great job."

The arena was 'home' to several O.H.A. and O.M.H.A. championship clubs including the memorable 'Clipper' team of 1951-52 that captured the Senior 'B' Title of Ontario.



Another delay

Initially it was Oct. 30. Then Nov. 15. Now Jan. 15. A mid-January target date has been set for completion of the cluster homes adjacent to Parkview Village, Ninth Line South, Stouffville.

The area's current building boom has made it difficult to obtain sub-contractors, Sheila Jones, manager of Parkview Village told The Weekender. Holiday time during the Christmas period will delay work still further, she said.

The 20 apartment units, contained in five buildings, will accommodate 35 people.

Mrs. Jones admits some would-be residents are being inconvenienced by the delay but says none have backed out of their agreements.

"They've been able to find temporary accommodation elsewhere," Mrs. Jones said.

Many memories

For Gar Lehman, a Stouffville Arena Company charter director and past-president, the 38-year-old structure holds many memories. The building was erected in 1949 for \$80,000. It will be demolished for a contract price of \$27,649. Mr. Lehman holds one of the original record books that lists the names of all shareholders. Demolition work is expected to begin this month and be completed by Dec. 20.

—Jim Thomas

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