

'He'll be missed'

Theatre icon and Eskimo founder Joseph Shocor dead at age 78



Joseph Shocor 'Great loss.'

Stories by RACHEL EVANS

Staff Writer

The man who helped bring theatre and football to Edmonton died yesterday at the age of 78.

Friends and colleagues of Joseph Shocor took notice in the fact he will live on through the Citadel Theatre he founded and the Eskimo Football Club he helped organize.

"It's a legacy of inspiration for the city and especially for the Citadel Theatre," said Citadel artistic director Bob Baker. "His great loss leaves huge responsibility for the city to make him proud and to carry on his vision."

"There is a hole that will be hard to fill, and this city will miss him."

Theatre wasn't Shocor's only passion. He was also part of a group of city businessmen that brought the modern-day Eskimos to the CFL in 1983.

Shocor was assigned to run the halftime shows in those early days with dancing girls and men wrestling in mud.

Shona Ward, Eskimos' spokesman, was

saddened by Shocor's death following a heart attack last week.

"He'll be missed by this whole community," she said of the man who had season tickets throughout his life.

"He's not going to be forgotten. When his name comes up, everybody has their own memory of who he was."

It was the theatre that triggered Shocor's energies during high school and university, and childhood friend Ralph Hole said he often reminded Shocor of what a director at Victoria high school said after a play he had put on.

"After the show was over the director got up and paid tribute to the cast and ended up by saying, 'As far as Joe Shocor, he's every bit as good as he thinks he is.'"

"We're very sad to lose him. Joe and my whole family grew up on the other side of the tracks in Edmonton."

"I just know if anybody was looking for support and whatever was good for the city, Joe was the guy to talk to."

After graduation Shocor headed to Ital-

wood to act, but was soon back in Edmonton earning a law degree and became one of Canada's youngest Queen's counsel lawyers.

In 1965, 300 people showed up at an old Salvation Army chapel on a chilly November night for a production of *Yip's Auld of Yip*.

With Shocor as president and executive producer the theatre rapidly gained public support and operated in the until a new building went up in 1976. In 1994, a new wing with two more theatres was added on the site where his funerals in later once operated a junk stand.

"He was one of those uncommon Edmontonians who had a vision of creating a national theatre right here," said Sen. writer John Charles, who has been a theatre critic for 10 years.

"I probably seemed like pie in the sky to his friends, but he did it."

He was just in Toronto seeing new plays.

Shocor always got the job done - Colin Maclean, Page 8

With files from Canadian Press

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WALTER TROMBINOZ, Sun

Gillian Horvitz from the Jewish Federation helps Albo Goldstein light one of six candles during a Holocaust ceremony at the Jewish cemetery at 7622 101 Ave. yesterday.

Atrocities of Holocaust remembered

Message of hope delivered at moving city ceremony

About 150 people gathered under a grey sky at the Edmonton Jewish Cemetery yesterday to remember the atrocities of the Holocaust and pray that the world will learn its lesson.

The solemn ceremony has been held at the cemetery, 7622 101 Ave., for many years, but yesterday was the first time Yom Hashoah has been officially recognized by the Alberta government.

"It was a child taken to Auschwitz," said Ann Davis-Secker, 72, of her parents. "It's not easy. This is a special day for us. We must remember. We must never forget."

She and her daughter, Stephanie Hendin, 41, made a presentation at the service to remember the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust.

"The evidence that someone's awful pain failed in a sense because here we are, proof that there are children and grandchildren for those that survived," Hendin said.

"My mom is still a young, active, vibrant woman, but the number of survivors are dwindling and there are fewer survivors to tell their stories."

"The group lit candles, sang and recited the Kaddish - a traditional prayer for the dead - as a tribute to those who perished in the Second World War."

"We have to continue to hope," said Gillian Horvitz with the Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

"We have to continue to remember and we also have to recognize that these atrocities continue. They've continued in Rwanda, in Cambodia, in the former Yugoslavia. But we do continue to try to change the world."

Edmonton North MP Deborah Grey was one of several politicians who attended the memorial.

"It was a very moving service," she said. "It was a real message of hope and inspiration. I think what moved me was the whole idea of what a horror that was and it wasn't just once. It's very frustrating that we don't seem to learn."

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