

# Herb Brudner and the Beginnings of our Endowment Fund.

The Jewish Community Endowment Fund of Windsor (“JCEF”) was founded in 1978, by a group of past presidents of the Windsor Jewish Federation (“WJF”). Starting with no money, the foundation has now grown to well over \$3 million in investments, and it’s still growing. It all started with an idea brought back to Windsor from a Jewish Federations conference attended by Herb Brudner, who was president of the WJF in the mid-1970s.

“The big topic was the fact that endowment funds were being established by the smaller Jewish Communities. Larger communities had them for some time,” said Herb. “I came back with this idea and discussed it with Joe Eisenberg,” the WJF’s long-serving founding Executive Director. The intention was that it would “be an umbrella for the rainy day when UJA could no longer support the community,” he added. Windsor’s endowment fund was modelled after the Ottawa Jewish community foundation, which was only four years old at that time, though it had substantial assets.

“Art Barat incorporated the endowment fund based on the model from Ottawa,” Herb explained. “All of the names on the charter application were past

presidents (of the WJF). We asked all of them to start a fund within the JCEF, and most of them did, or purchased insurance policies, or made bequests in their wills.” By the time the endowment fund began operations, Herb was no longer president of the WJF, though he was the first president of the JCEF. All of the Jewish professionals whose work helped launch the fund, offered their services for free.

The endowment fund “is an idea that was carried out,” Herb said. The monies have been “carefully guarded and invested. It has a separate board of directors to ensure it would be protected and preserved. You have to have a community view and a long-term view. The operation of the JCC is not a business – it doesn’t have to make money. It has to support the needs of the community. Even though the community is small, we want to have all the same services as always.”

Wise words, indeed, from a visionary in our community. We owe thanks to Herb and the rest of the now departed past presidents for their vision of the future. The JCEF is the product of their foresight, and it is here to ensure that all members of the Windsor Jewish community will be able to lead the Jewish life they desire now and into the future.