

St. Paul's dedicates renovated Watt Hall recreation facility

On Sunday, November 22 members of St. Paul's United Church celebrated the completion of a massive re-furbishing and updating of the church's Gymnasium / Auditorium.

Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn and Oakville town councillor Cathy Duddeck were featured guests at the launch along with Lindsay Williams, chair of Ontario Trillium Foundation's Halton-Peel Grant Review Team. About 200 church members and interested citizens were on hand for the event, which was held in the rejuvenated auditorium.

Completed at an overall cost of \$100,000 plus, the project was made possible by a grant of \$85,900 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario. The facility serves not only the membership of the congregation, but also many groups in the community.

Among the groups taking part in the dedication ceremonies were coaches and athletes from Special Olympics, the Oakville SkyWalkers basketball team and the Butterflies, a rhythmic gymnastics team. Coach Stu Thomas spoke on behalf of both Special Olympics groups, saying that the new facility will be a great benefit to their programs. Special Olympics in fact, contributed to the updating by supplying new basketball backboards, rims, nets and safety strap for the gym.

The project was completed early in November after about 6 months of contractor work. The main thrust of the project was the installation of a new sports floor in the Gym plus the addition of acoustical panels on the walls to improve the acoustics in the auditorium. The face-lift included painting of the walls and ceiling in a bright beige tone and new, more efficient fluorescent lighting fixtures and air circulation fans. A new floor was also installed on the stage. To finish it all off, members of the congregation donated \$14,000 to replace the old inefficient high-level windows with energy efficient double glazed units which allow daylight to shine in while conserving energy.



Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn and Lindsay Williams of OTF, look on from the left as Roy McEwen presents a symbolic key to Watt Hall to Unified Board Chair, Janet Bollinger. On the right are Wenda Watt and Oakville Town Councillor, Cathy Duddeck.

Wenda Watt, the eldest of Rev. Dr. George and Margaret Watt's family of six children joined with members of the congregation and special visitors on Sunday, November 22, 2009 to help celebrate the re-dedication of the gymnasium that is named in her father's honour. Wenda was only two years old when her father became the first full time minister of St. Paul's and she has many happy memories of growing up with her family and friends at St. Paul's. Wenda is pictured here, standing in Watt Hall beside the prominently displayed plaque which honours her father.



Stu Thomas, left rear, is proud to back up members of the Oakville Butterflies Special Olympics Rhythmic Gymnastics team with their coaches.

Stu spoke on behalf of both the Basketball Club and the Rhythmic Gymnastics Club, telling the gathering about the bond between St. Paul's and Special Olympics.

Both groups use Watt Hall for practice and preparation for their competitions.