

Remembering a Community Champion

Babs Asper was a consummate Winnipegger. A committed philanthropist, steadfast advocate and tireless volunteer. An inspiring leader behind an influential family and a visionary project.

Our community experienced a huge loss with her passing last year.

Her commitment to community began in her teens, as a volunteer with Age and Opportunity and the Winnipeg Jewish Community Council, and became a lifelong passion. In 1983, she and her husband, the late media entrepreneur Israel Asper, started the Asper Foundation, a private family foundation with a goal to create meaningful change in the areas of human rights, education, health and the arts. The Foundation, which Babs Asper chaired until her passing at age 78, supports initiatives in Canada and Israel, and has spearheaded the realization of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

An active board member for the Friends of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, as well as chair of its capital campaign cabinet, Babs Asper was a champion for human rights.

But there were many other causes close to her heart. A former member of the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education, she helped create education opportunities for students. Gifts from Asper and her family to the University of Manitoba, which have totalled more than \$13 million, have made it a leader in jazz studies. She also served on the board of Winnipeg Jewish Theatre and provided important support to the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Manitoba Opera.

From the extraordinary museum that will put Winnipeg on the map, to the arts groups that make our city vibrant, Babs Asper has shaped our community through her generosity.

The Asper Endowment: a remarkable gift

In 2000, the Asper family made a remarkable gift to our community: \$10 million to establish the Asper Endowment at The Winnipeg Foundation. Since then, the donor advised fund has granted \$4.4 million in support of a wide variety of local causes.

In addition to major investments in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the fund has supported the development of the Upper Fort Garry Gate, another project that will change the face of our downtown and offer an innovative heritage and learning experience.

The Asper Endowment has also made important contributions to the local arts community, supporting Plug In, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre and the Winnipeg Folk Festival. It has also contributed to the Nourishing Potential Fund, the Ladybug Foundation, the United Way of Winnipeg, and more.

