

The Toronto Estonian community has two options.

We can lament, and be negative about the passing of an era in the 'Grand Dame' of Broadview or, we can celebrate how much we accomplished in this phase of the Estonian community in Toronto (since this is the second Estonian House).

I for one, will celebrate what was.

I will celebrate that the early, well populated activities, and celebrations were powerful messages of a small community in a big sea of 'English' and 'Canadian' influences. People came together to make statements of survival, in a new land and against the powers that brought our parents here.

I will always have warm memories of a childhood and youth spent attending events, groups, clubs, etc., and then, as an adult, giving back to some of the very same groups, clubs, in which I participated.

I also see a community that no longer has the numbers that it once had. Events have a smaller turnout.

Clubs are smaller or in the case of guides and scouts, the groups have been amalgamated. Many of our most active youth of an era passed, have for a variety of real reasons, faded into the greater Canadian community. Some have returned, many have not. The many well outnumber the some.

My decision to support the new Eesti Keskus / Estonian Centre is because I am looking forward to the most proactive way to ensure there is a sustainable and useable building that will take our younger generations well into this century. So they can have a solid footing in which to create their memories.

I am not choosing for me anymore, I am choosing for the future, and what is right.

And I will always be indebted to what was.

*Katrin Kütti-Otsa*