

The Strathearn Intercultural Centre

It's for you!

BY **LIZ WARWICK**

It is a place to savor a curry at lunchtime or to watch a new play in the evening. It is a place that welcomes long-time residents, newcomers to the neighborhood, people of every culture and language. It is a place run by and for its members, meaning anyone who is interested. It is a place that needs you.

From the outside, the *Strathearn Centre* on Jeanne Mance Street looks like an old school and that is what the building once held. But behind the renovated walls lies a history of community planning and organizing.

For many years, Lucia Kowaluk, now president of *Strathearn's* board of directors and a long-time Milton-Park resident, had stared at the empty *Strathearn* school building. In 1982, after conversations with other neighbors, Kowaluk came up with the idea of a community centre. So she began organizing. She surveyed residents to find out what they wanted. She talked with city officials and, in 1987, public hearings were held.

Finally, the new *Strathearn Intercultural Centre* was born.

"We wanted to develop good art by people who were not professionals," said Kowaluk, adding that *Strathearn's* mission is to encourage people from different cultures to share their heritage as well as to provide space for various community groups.

But Kowaluk emphasized that *Strathearn* needs and wants the support and help of everyone in the neighborhood. Membership in the Center can be as a community, ethnic or artistic organization (for an annual fee of \$25) or as an individual (fee of \$5). Members will receive notice of the centre's activities, be invited to special events and will contribute to the growth of the centre. Lovers of the arts, members of ethnic communities or those just curious about the centre can call 872-9808 to receive a membership form.

Strathearn is also beginning its winter courses: the arts, language skills, tai-chi and much more. Phone for a brochure.