Variety Heritage Adventure Park | Parc des aventuriers du patrimoine Variety



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Parks Canada | Parcs Canada

Parks Canada Parcs Canada

variety
the children's charity

Parks Canada and **Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba** are partnering to develop an accessible park at **The Forks National Historic Site** — the ***Variety Heritage Adventure Park.***

Imagine being part of a vibrant meeting place among First Nations people; trading and exploring with the adventurers; helping build the first permanent European settlement in the Canadian West; and sharing the vision of the hardy men and women who foresaw Winnipeg as the transportation hub of the West.

The imaginations of children and "children at heart" will be sparked by one-of-a-kind play structures reflecting these historic stories of **The Forks National Historic Site.**

Scheduled for unveiling in 2010, the ***Variety Heritage Adventure Park*** will be a unique, world-class play park. It will feature a variety of interactive play structures and will include an outdoor performance area for interpretive programs and presentations. Key to the program design will be accessibility for children of all abilities.

Variety would like to give you the opportunity to join with us in making this project a success. By becoming a donor to the ***Variety Heritage Adventure Park***, you will be providing a safe, fun and unique play environment, in Winnipeg's foremost meeting place, that will engage and excite children about Manitoba's rich history. This project will benefit tremendously from your generosity.

We are inviting you to expand your community relations and reach a younger and very diverse demographic and their families by joining us to help children of all abilities and backgrounds. We are pleased to provide you with the following information outlining a brief history of our partnership, project description and donor opportunities.

On behalf of all of us at Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba and Parks Canada, thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this exciting initiative – *all for the love of children.* We look forward to discussing the project with you in person and will follow up in the near future.

Sincerely,

Wayne Rogers
Executive Director
Variety
The Children's Charity of Manitoba

Dawn Bronson
Superintendant
Manitoba Field Unit
Parks Canada

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Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba

Since 1978, Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba (Variety) has been dedicated to raising funds that enable us to meet the tangible needs of children of all abilities in Manitoba. To date, Variety Manitoba has raised in excess of $22 million dollars in support of this mission. All funds raised by Variety in Manitoba stay in our province and are used to support the many programs and services provided by our organization. We are very proud to be associated with Variety Canada under the auspices of Variety International – *the largest children's charity in the world*!

Variety's success has been built over time on the strength of strong relationships from within Winnipeg's corporate community and by the dedicated efforts and passion demonstrated by staff, board members and volunteers. These relationships have developed through awareness generated during Variety special events, through personal introductions and through philanthropically minded Manitobans who understand the importance of investing back into our community.

Variety is a non-disease specific children's charity and therefore has the opportunity to assist children who may be impacted by physical and/or emotional disabilities, health related challenges and/or socio-economic issues.

Variety funds a wide range of important programs and services reaching thousands of children on an annual basis. A brief description of two Variety funded programs is outlined below. A complete overview of Variety's work in Manitoba is enclosed in the accompanying folder for your reference.

- Founded in 1985 the **Variety Children's Heart Centre (VCHC)** services Manitoba, eastern areas of Saskatchewan, N.W. Ontario and Nunavut. The centre is composed of a highly skilled team of cardiologists, nurse clinicians, social workers, technologists and support staff, who provide 24-hour care for children with heart disease. The centre receives annual support for operating costs through an endowment fund established by Variety. The VCHC has received over $1,000,000 since 1985 from Variety. The centre treats over 4,000 children annually from newborn through to eighteen years. In addition, expectant mothers who have been identified as having a possible heart defect in their unborn child are directed to the VCHC for further diagnosis and treatment.

- The **Variety Children's Dental Outreach Program** located at the Faculty of Dentistry's Main Clinic on the University of Manitoba's Bannatyne Campus provides in-school dental screening to over 2,000 children from within Winnipeg's inner-city elementary schools. Variety began funding the program in 2005. Children identified as requiring dental treatment are brought to the main clinic during the school year to have their oral health care needs met without any charge to their families. In 2008 this program, which included 15 Winnipeg schools was expanded into the Norway House Cree Nation where hundreds of children were screened and treated in the Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre's dental clinic.

Parks Canada and The Forks National Historic Site (The Forks NHS)

Parks Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, protects and presents the special places that represent our nation's natural and cultural heritage. The Forks National Historic Site is one of these special places.

The Forks has been continuously occupied for millennia and continues to be a meeting place. Strategically located at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, this place has witnessed many of the key events of Western Canada. Today, The Forks encompasses an area of 25.3 ha in size, of which 3.6 ha is owned and administered by Parks Canada. The Forks NHS is Winnipeg's and Manitoba's number one tourist attraction and a popular gathering place for recreation, dining, shopping and celebration. The Parks Canada Property at The Forks consists mainly of green space and provides an oasis of calm in the centre of a busy unban environment.

The Shared Goal

Parks Canada is committed to providing exciting and engaging opportunities for young Canadians of all abilities and from diverse backgrounds. Variety, the Children's Charity, is a community based not-for-profit organization, dedicated to meeting the tangible needs of children of all abilities and helping them to realize their full potential. The collaboration between Parks Canada and Variety demonstrates the shared goal of the two organizations to provide enriching learning experiences for all children.

The Forks History

These are the stories of The Forks National Historic Site and will be the inspiration for the design of the ***Variety Heritage Adventure Park***. Your contribution will help bring these stories to life for visitors in an enjoyable, rewarding and memorable way.

The Forks, so named because of its position where the Assiniboine River flows into the Red, yields a rich history of early Aboriginal settlement, the fur trade, the advent of the railway, waves of immigration and the Industrial era.

The following timeline details the successful rebirth of the site as one of Winnipeg's most important landmarks and illustrates the changes at The Forks over the years.

The Forks 6,000 Years Ago

Extensive archaeological investigations provide evidence that First Nations people were active at The Forks site thousands of years ago. Between 1989 and 1994, a series of archaeological digs were carried out at The Forks that confirm Aboriginal bison hunters camped here. A 6,000 year-old hearth, yielding catfish bones and stone tool flakes, as well as numerous later campsites have also been unearthed. These recovered materials provided a rich record of Aboriginal occupations up to the time of the fur trade when Nakoda (Assiniboins), Cree and Anishinaabe (Ojibwa) and Dakota frequented The Forks.

The Forks during the Fur Trade 1738-1880

The first Europeans arrived via canoe, with one of the first being La Vérendrye who in 1738, erected Fort Rouge, This fort was the first of many forts and trading posts erected at The Forks. Known as the Red River Colony, the forts were at or within close proximity of The Forks because of its significance as an Aboriginal meeting place. The region provided rich food resources along an important transportation route, including fish, waterfowl, game and, most importantly, bison. The Forks was the hub for the fur trade until the 1880s, when grain production became western Canada's principal industry.

The Forks and the Railway 1886-1923

Beginning in 1886, The Forks emerged as one of the key sites of early railroad development on the Prairies. The rail yards saw a succession of companies, the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway Company, the Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad and the Canadian National Railway, dominating the site and managing the railways. Many of the buildings now seen at The Forks date from this time. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway stable and the Great Northern Railway stable were joined together to fashion The Forks Market and the National Cartage Building is now home to the Johnston Terminal. The Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway Company's - Boiler and Brakes Buildings (B & B) now houses The Manitoba Children's

Museum, while Union Station (built by Warren and Wetmore, the same architects who designed New York City's Grand Central Station) is still in operation.

The Forks and Immigration1870-1920

In the late 1800s, the Canadian government began actively promoting immigration, settlement and railway development across the Prairies with Winnipeg becoming known as the "Gateway to the Canadian West." Two immigration sheds, housing up to 500 people each, were erected at The Forks to accommodate the new arrivals. Legions of immigrants came through the site ultimately changing the physical and cultural landscape of the city and all of western Canada.

The Forks Today

Today, The Forks NHS is a vibrant downtown Winnipeg destination where people gather for celebrations, recreation, shopping, dining and to be immersed in the stories of the past, much like those who have come before us. It encompasses interpretive opportunities and programs, revitalized historic and contemporary buildings, and offers a host of year round outdoor and indoor attractions. With over four million visitors each year, The Forks is truly the city's premier, historical, tourist attraction.

The Project

The ***Variety Heritage Adventure Park*** (VHAP) will be built within an area measuring approximately 50 metres by 55 metres and will be located just northeast of the ***Manitoba Children's Museum*** and just south of the new ***Canadian Museum for Human Rights*** currently under construction. Strategically located within the hub of The Forks, the VHAP will be within metres of these key attractions, in a beautiful green space, and situated on land formerly occupied by **Fort Gibraltar I – a North West Company trading post.** The VHAP will provide enjoyable, rewarding and memorable recreational and educational opportunities for visitors. The VHAP will feature a variety of unique, interactive play structures, a water feature, a natural landscaping flow and will also include a small outdoor performance area for interpretive programs and presentations, giving priority to the historic stories that happened here. The heritage themes and other key Forks stories (e.g. floods, archaeology) will play an important educational role for families and school groups. As the young and the "young at heart" experience the park, they can imagine being part of a vibrant meeting place among First Nations people, picture themselves trading and exploring with the adventurers, helping build the first permanent European settlement in the Canadian West, and sharing the vision of the hardy men and women who foresaw Winnipeg as the transportation hub of the West. The park will accommodate up 70 children at one time and offer accessibility for children of all abilities. The playground will be designed in such a way as to be of interest and engaging to both the active participants and those who are passively attending such as caregivers. It will entice repeat use in all seasons and at varying times of the day and evening.

The idea of building a world-class accessible park at The FNHS was first introduced to Variety by Ida Albo, visionary and managing partner of the Fort Garry Hotel. Initial meetings with Jim Burns, Power Corporation; David and Maurene Cohen, Paul Jordan, Chief Operating Officer of The Forks, along with other interested parties helped to turn the idea into a tangible goal that eventually paved the way for Variety and Parks Canada to form a partnering agreement in support of the park.

Community involvement is key to the success of the park. Consultation with educators, heritage advisors, The FNHS business neighbours, interested community members and others provided and will continue to provide valuable comments that will be considered in the development of the park. Focus groups including participation from the Society of Manitobans with Disabilities, children and new Canadians will be consulted throughout the design process and provide feedback.

The VHAP site will include the land on which sat the former Parks Canada playground. However, the VHAP footprint will be approximately three times larger in size! Thousands of Winnipeg families with young children along with hundreds of elementary age school groups will benefit from the recreational and educations aspects offered by the VHAP. The VHAP will enhance the overall Forks experience and will create yet another world-class attraction for people to enjoy during their visit to The Forks and Winnipeg.

The success of the project will be measured in part by increased attendance to The FNHS, by the number of children, families and caregivers who visit the VHAP and by the heightened historical awareness visitors absorb during their time on the site. The completed VHAP will result in improved infrastructure and enhanced services offered at The FNHS. The park construction will create jobs and increase tourism that will benefit and strengthen our community as a whole.

The project goal is between $1 million - $1.5 million. **Parks Canada is investing $600,000 towards the project.** These funds have been made available through the *Government of Canada's Budget 2009 – Canada's Economic Action Plan.* **Variety has committed $250,000 towards the project goal, (and will assist in raising additional funds once our commitment has been realized).**

In early August 2009, the Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on MERX, the electronic tendering system used by the Government of Canada. Following the completion of the tendering process, three independent contract groups presented their respective proposals on September 28th 2009. Variety and Parks Canada are delighted to announce the **VHAP design/build contract** has been awarded to the contract group of **J & D Penner project managers, Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram landscape architects, and Crozier Agencies playground equipment suppliers.**

J & D Penner is a construction firm with over 30 years of experience in landscape contracting and project management. They will be primarily responsible for project coordination and scheduling, budget control, and construction permits and approvals.

Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram, founded in 1969, is a landscape architecture firm from Winnipeg, Manitoba and will act as the key designers for this project. They have been responsible for planning and designing local Winnipeg attractions such as the Leo Mol Sculpture Garden at Assiniboine Park, and the Oodena Celebration Circle at The Forks.

Crozier Agencies, a leading supplier in the Canadian playground equipment has been designing and installing safe, innovative, and challenging playgrounds for over 20 years.

The project has already received considerable positive feedback from several Variety corporate and individual supporters. Winnipeg area, McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd. franchise owners immediately embraced the vision resulting in Variety being selected as the local recipient charity to receive proceeds generated during the 2009 McHappy Day. On May 6th, 2009 McHappy Day raised over $50,000 towards the building of the VHAP. To date, additional private donations, including a $50,000 gift from Gerry & Barb Price have brought our total funds raised to $101,000.

Once construction is completed Parks Canada will assume ownership and responsibility for ongoing operating and maintenance costs associated with the VHAP.

The location of the **Variety Heritage Adventure Park** is identified by the ***Variety logo*** as shown on the site map. ***Please see Page #8.***


Red River
Provencher Bridge
Esplanade Riel
The Plaza at the Forks
Scotia Bank Stage
Orientation Node
Amphitheatre
Union Station
City TV
Parkade
MTYP
Inn at The Forks
Manitoba Children's Museum
Boat Dock
Johnston Terminal
Forks Market
Historic Port
Historic Rail Bridge
Assiniboine River
South Point
Red River
THE FORKS
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA
Parks Canada Property
Variety, Heritage Adventure Park
MTYP Manitoba Theatre for Young People
Heritage Buildings
P Parking
0 50 100 metres
0 100 200 feet

VARIETY HERITAGE ADVENTURE PARK

AT THE FORKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

PARC DES AVENTURIERS DU PATRIMOINE VARIETY

AU LIEU HISTORIQUE NATIONAL DU CANADA DE LA FOURCHE



History - Histoire

THE RIVER
- Birchbark Canoes
- Rubber Play Surfacing
- Water Park Splash Pad
- Water Park Stream
- Wood Docks/Ramps
- Flood Markers
- Orientation Compass / Sundial
- Steam Boat
- York Boat
- Fish, Stepping Stone, Footprint, & Rail Track Built-in Graphics
- Moose Figure
- River Ambassador
- Cattail Reeds
- Beach Loungers

THE CITY EDGE
- Adventure Park Gateway & Donor Wall
- Forecourt & Bike Parking
- Limestone and Wood Benches
- Maintenance Building - Built Into Berm
- Heavy Timber Shade Arbour
- Secondary Park Directional Signage
- Crushed Limestone Surface
- Cobble/Paving Stone Surface
- Prairie Meadow Butterfly Garden
- Shade Trees
- Multicultural Park Ambassadors

THE VILLAGE
- Mini Performance Stage & Canopy
- Built-in Seat Wall
- Small Hill 3' High
- Shade Trees
- Kitchen Party Play Panels
- Musical Play
  Stand-up Fiddles, Spoons, Xylophone
- Feel The Beat Wind & Drum Sculpture
- Metis Cultural Ambassador
- Cobble/Paving Stone Surface
- Concrete Surface
  With Embedded Pavement Games
- Large Hill - 8' High
- Ring Bench Under Existing Cottonwood



THE SETTLERS
- Red River Cart Pulled By An Ox
- Sod House Frame & Water Pump
- Immigration & Land Titles Booth
- Quarter Section Rubber Surfacing
- River Lot Surfacing
- Crop Plantings/Sunflower, Wheat, Alfalfa
- Bison Herd Silhouettes
- Horse Spring Toys
- Ring Bench Under Existing Cottonwood

THE FORT
- Trading Post
- Weigh Scale Trading Table
- Rubber Play Surfacing Embedded With Artefacts/ Pottery Shards
- Fort Climbing Walls 4-6' Tall
- Fort Bastion 8' Tall
- Fort Archaeological Dig/Depression
- Trading Abacus/Games
- York Boat on Ramp
- Trade Crates & Barrels of Goods
- Wood Benches

SOUTH POINT
- Tipi Structure
- Aspen Bluff
- River Bottom Forest
- Shoreline Footprints & Fish Perimeters
- Traditional Skills Play Panels
- Wood Stump Seating
- Woodchip Mulch Surfacing
- First Nations Cultural Ambassador
- Deer Figures
- Raven Figure

THE RAIL LINE
- Balancing Beam Railway Ties
- Via Rail/Union Station Gateway
- Train Platforms & Ramps
- Moving Pumper Car
- Train Car Play Panels
- Rail Bridge & Leaning Rail
- Lookout Point
- Steps Up The Hill
- Multicultural Immigration Ambassador

Adventure - Aventure



PROJECT TEAM
EQUIPE DE PROJET:

Parks Canada | Parcs Canada

variety

DESIGN & BUILD TEAM
EQUIPE DE CONCEPTION ET CONSTRUCTION:

J&D Penner Yard Decor Store & More

crOzier

HILDERMAN THOMAS FRANK CRAM

Parks Canada Parcs Canada

variety the children's charity

Donor Opportunities and Recognition

Respectfully recognizing your generosity towards the **Variety Heritage Adventure Park** is very important to both Variety and Parks Canada. We will be delighted to celebrate your contribution in a meaningful and appropriate manner.

The park design team will create a unique subtle donor recognition area that will compliment the park's heritage themes. In keeping with the spirit of our design concept, company names of our donors will be recognized within the park.

Donor opportunities and recognition are outlined on the following pages for your review and consideration. Those companies in the *Governor* and *Chief Factor* donor categories will be celebrated further with logo recognition both in print and on website materials related to the park.

Donations towards the **Variety Heritage Adventure Park** will be eligible to receive a charitable tax receipt.

Gift Range: $200,000+
Exclusive Donor Opportunity **Category: *Governor***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Exclusive Dinner for twelve in *The Big House* at Lower Fort Garry
- Logo recognition within an article promoting the launch of the VHAP on the Parks Canada/The Forks National Historic Site website www.pc.gc.ca
- Logo recognition in Parks Canada *lure cards* promoting the VHAP. These promotional tools will be displayed in tourism info centres, including local hotels and at the James Armstrong Richardson International Airport. A supply of *lure cards* will be available to the donor.
- Opportunities for donor recognition and involvement in media initiatives, programming and public relations activities associated with the grand opening of the VHAP. May include opportunity to organize and lead a public contest and/or public engagement opportunities in concert with Parks Canada and Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba.
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Framed Map and Photographic Reproduction of The Forks Site
- *The Crossroads of the Continent: A History of The Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.* Barbara Huck, editor, 2003
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $100,000 - $199,999 **Category: *Chief Factor***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Logo recognition within an article promoting the launch of the VHAP on the Parks Canada/The Forks National Historic Site website www.pc.gc.ca
- Logo recognition in Parks Canada *lure cards* promoting the VHAP. These promotional tools will be displayed in tourism info centres, including local hotels and at the James Armstrong Richardson International Airport. A supply of *lure cards* will be available to the donor.
- Opportunities for donor recognition and involvement in media initiatives, programming and public relations activities associated with the grand opening of the VHAP. May include opportunity to participate in a public contest and/or public engagement opportunities in concert with Parks Canada and Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba and other donors at the Governor and Chief Factor level.
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Framed Map and Photographic Reproduction of The Forks Site
- *The Crossroads of the Continent: A History of The Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.* Barbara Huck, editor, 2003
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $50,000 - $99,999 **Category: *Factor***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Opportunities for donor recognition in media initiatives, programming and public relations activities associated with the grand opening of the VHAP.
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Framed Map and Photographic Reproduction of The Forks Site
- *The Crossroads of the Continent: A History of The Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.* Barbara Huck, editor, 2003
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $25,000 - $49,999 **Category: *Chief Trader***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Opportunities for donor recognition in media initiatives, programming and public relations activities associated with the grand opening of the VHAP.
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- *The Crossroads of the Continent: A History of The Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.* Barbara Huck, editor, 2003
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $10,000 - $24,999 **Category: *Trader***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Opportunities for donor recognition in media initiatives, programming and public relations activities associated with the grand opening of the VHAP.
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $5,000 - $9,999 **Category: *Clerk***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $1,000 - $4,999 **Category: *Interpreter***

- Donor Recognition within the VHAP
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.
- Personalized Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Invitation to Private Donor Reception

Gift Range: $500 - $999 **Category: *Voyageurs***

- Framed Certificate of Appreciation
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.

Gift Range: $100 - $499 **Category: *Settler***

- Certificate of Appreciation / Scroll
- Recognition on Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba website (www.varietymanitoba.com) and in the *Spotlight on Variety* newsletter.

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September 4, 2009

Mr. Wayne Rogers
Executive Director
Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba
#2 - 1313 Border Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3H 0X4

Dear Wayne:

Re: Variety Heritage Adventure Playground

We are pleased to confirm our donation of $50,000 towards the construction of the proposed Variety Heritage Adventure Playground at the Forks, an incredibly worthy initiative that both Variety and Parks Canada should be commended for supporting and developing.

Our children of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and the physical, emotional and spiritual health of our children is our best investment for the future of our community. We must provide for the health and wellbeing of children of all levels of ability and from all walks of life, since all children deserve the opportunity to play and be "physical", to find joy and experience the pleasures of childhood.

To date, there are many children who have been limited or restricted in their ability to access a playground because of the requirement in most playgrounds that the children be fully mobile. For this reason it is important that we as a community back the development of playgrounds and facilities for children of all abilities. Children who have physical restrictions through no fault of their own are as deserving of the pleasures of a normal childhood as are their counterparts elsewhere who are blessed with full mobility.

Accordingly we enthusiastically support and endorse this initiative of Variety and Parks Canada in building the new Variety Heritage Adventure Playground at the Forks, and would encourage others to donate significantly towards this very worthy initiative.

Sincerely,

Barb and Gerry Price

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10 August 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Variety Heritage Adventure Playground

On June 24, 2009 I had the pleasure of announcing our Government's investment of $600,000 in the Variety Heritage Adventure Playground at the Forks National Historic Site as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan.

Variety, the Children's Charity, will contribute $250,000 and will work with their partners to raise additional funds.

This one-of-a-kind project and innovative partnership with Variety will provide our community with a new playground that will breakdown barriers by allowing children of all abilities to play and learn about our common history together.

While I suffered my injury as a young adult, I often reflect on the challenges children with disabilities face with many tasks, including something as fundamental as play.

I hope all Canadians will join me in supporting this important project.

Kind regards,

Steven Fletcher

The Honourable Steven Fletcher, P.C.
Member of Parliament for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia

STRONG LEADERSHIP. A BETTER CANADA

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND VARIETY, THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY OF MANITOBA, TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND AT THE FORKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



Canada's Economic Action Plan At Work

WINNIPEG, June 24, 2009 – The Honourable Steven Fletcher, Member of Parliament for Charleswood – St. James – Assiniboia, on behalf of the Honourable Jim Prentice, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, along with Mr. Wayne Rogers, Executive Director, Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba, today announced a joint partnering agreement to develop a fully accessible Variety Heritage Adventure Playground at The Forks National Historic Site (NHS) in Winnipeg.

"By partnering with Variety to build this new playground, we will be providing children of all abilities additional opportunities for fun and learning at The Forks National Historic Site," said Mr. Fletcher. "As a component of Canada's Economic Action Plan, today's announcement demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to quick implementation of Budget '09 economic stimulus initiatives."

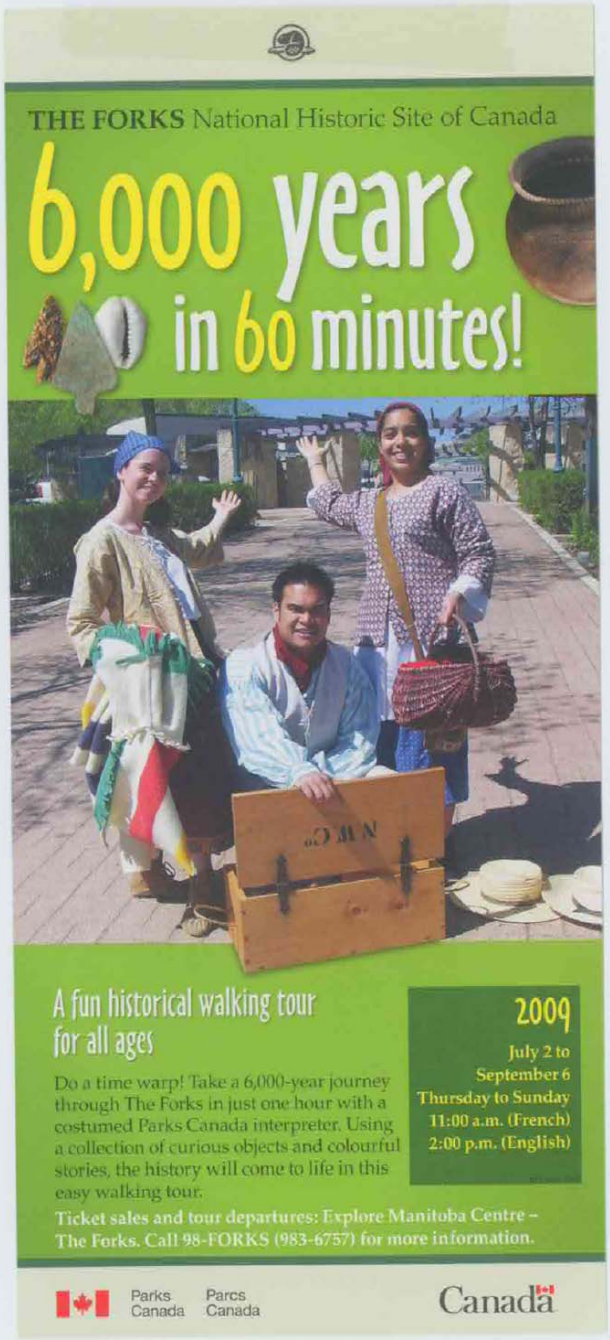
An investment of $600,000 in the innovative playground has been announced by the Government of Canada under Budget 2009 – Canada's Economic Action Plan. In addition, Variety, the Children's Charity, will contribute $250,000 and will work with partners to raise additional funds. This collaboration will lead to the construction of a one-of-a-kind playground reflecting the historic themes of The Forks NHS. It will feature a variety of unique, interactive play structures and include an outdoor performance area for interpretive programs and presentations. Key to the overall playground design will be full accessibility for children of all abilities.

"The Government of Canada is committed to improving infrastructure and providing outstanding and enhanced visitor services in Canada's national historic sites and national parks," added Mr. Fletcher. "The agreement we are announcing today between Parks Canada and Variety, the Children's Charity, demonstrates that Canada's Economic Action Plan is making a difference by providing funds for projects that will create jobs, increase tourism and benefit Canadians of all abilities."

"Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba, is extremely proud to be partnering with Parks Canada," said Mr. Wayne Rogers. "The development of this unique world-class playground will certainly enrich the lives of thousands of children and children at heart visiting and enjoying The Forks NHS for many years to come."

The Forks NHS, opened by Parks Canada in 1989 at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, bore witness to many key events in Western Canadian history. A traditional native meeting place, a centre for trade and exploration, a hub of rail and road transport and the gateway for settlement of the prairies, The Forks continues to be Winnipeg's most vibrant gathering place.

The Forks National Historic Site is part of Canada's system of national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas, which is recognized as one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected areas in the world. Visitors to these special places can take advantage of a two-year fee freeze currently in effect in all national parks and national historic sites managed by Parks Canada.



Example of a *Lure Card*
Includes both official languages

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Winnipeg Free Press
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2009

CITY & BUSINESS



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Play park for all kids expanded

Fully accessible site to be built at Forks bigger than planned

By Kevin Rollason

CHILDREN of all ages and abilities are one step closer to being able to play at a park designed for them.

And it's a park they'll be able to enjoy year-round.

Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba, and the federal government announced on Friday that contracts have been awarded to build and design the new Variety Heritage Adventure Park at The Forks National Historic Site.

J&D Penner has been chosen as the project management firm, Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram as the landscape architects, and Crozier Agencies as the playground equipment supplier.

Wayne Rogers, Variety's executive director, said the playground has grown in size and expense since it was first announced last April and then again in June as part of the federal government's economic stimulus plan.

Rogers said it was originally planned to be about 40 metres by 40 metres and cost about $1 million, but now it will be about 55 metres by 55 metres and cost up to $1.5 million.

"The huge thing will be inclusion and the ability of all children to be able to use it," Rogers said.

"And the whole intention is to make it fun."

Besides interactive play structures, the playground will also include an outdoor performance area and a simulated York Boat and Red River Cart children can play on. The design will allow for full accessibility for children of all abilities.

Construction will start in the spring with completion set for the fall.

The federal government is putting in $600,000 for the project with Variety chipping in $250,000 and looking for other partners to pick up the balance.

Both Rogers and Steven Fletcher, MP for Charleswood-St. James-Assiniboia, said the beauty of the facility is it will be open all year no matter what the weather because the special rubber matting on the ground will be flooded for skating in winter.

"It is a facility that will be a model for a playground for other cities throughout Canada and the world," Fletcher said after a news conference at The Forks.

"It is inclusive, fun, multi-seasonal and multi-age use."

Fletcher, a quadriplegic who uses a wheelchair, said he knows first-hand how children of all abilities will be able to use the structure.

"I had my accident when I was 23 so I had a childhood and ability to live like anyone else. This play structure will allow children regardless of their physical abilities to reach their full potential as human beings. It is a testament to Canada.

"And I think this will be something that will bring many smiles for many generations."

Jim Prentice, the federal minister responsible for Parks Canada, said in a statement that the park "will not be a conventional playground."

"It will captivate children with custom-designed play equipment that goes beyond swing sets and teeter-totters. It will be a one-of-a-kind play park that engages children of all abilities in new ways with every visit."

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Variety's Wayne Rogers: 'inclusion'