HEARING ACCESSIBILITY AND ACOUSTICAL DESIGN

On March 21, 1996, Dr. Charles Laszlo, Director of the Institute for Hearing Accessibility Research (IHEAR) at the University of British Columbia, came to speak to CHHA - North Shore members and invited guests from community and professional services on "Hearing Accessibility and Acoustical Design".

Dr. Laszlo's presentation was informative, interesting and enjoyable. In talking of Hearing Accessibility, he explained that one way to help hearing people to understand what it is like to be hard of hearing was to ask them to imagine the following:

"You are reading a book in a stationary car. Then the car moves as you continue to read while it goes over very bumpy ground. You find that you manage to read certain words, but you miss others and you must try to make sense of what you are reading".

The hard of hearing must constantly use different clues - acoustical, visual and contextual - while communicating with other people.

With the aid of an overhead projector, Dr. Laszlo outlined various aspects of hearing accessibility and acoustical design. Hearing aids help, but do not replace hearing loss. Speech reading can only help to a certain point. Assistive listening devices are an integral part of communication within a given environment or space.

Electromagnetic interference is a serious problem with all the new technology being used in offices, schools, hospitals etc. Acoustical design should be handled by an Acoustical Consultant, who could also give advice on how to minimize noise in various situations. Unfortunately, there are no standards in Canada. Every piece of equipment is different and there are many on the market.

In order to provide an environment in which one can communicate, it is essential to take all the factors into account and to ensure that staff and volunteers are trained to communicate with the hard of hearing.

"Good acoustics, noise control, assistive listening devices, 'clean' electromagnetic environment and appropriate illumination in a given building or space are all essential elements for the hard of hearing. Therefore, these elements should always be considered integral parts of design with aim of achieving accessibility to buildings."

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The North Shore Health Board presented the Ministry of Health's six B.C. Goals for Regional Health Boards at a Workshop in January for discussion. Nothing in these Goals related to hearing accessibility or noise pollution. Two CHHA - North Shore Branch members attended the workshop and stressed the need to include hearing accessibility and noise pollution. These have now been added to subsequent papers put forward by the North Shore Health Board.
19th April:
North Shore Keep Well Society's Spring Fair, where many community agencies will have stalls, so you can find out about these activities. The CHHA - North Shore Branch will have a stall too. It will be held at North Shore Neighbourhood House - 225 East 2nd Street, North Vancouver from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm. DROP IN. You will find it interesting and enjoyable.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES
MARK THEM DOWN ON YOUR CALENDER

APRIL 1996

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24th April:
International Noise Awareness Day. Look out for all the posters around the North Shore. The CHHA - North Shore Branch together with the Society for Soundscape Awareness and Protection are the local sponsors. The International Sponsor is the League for the Hard of Hearing, New York.

Get on a quiet diet with 60 seconds of no noise. Be quiet between 2:15 and 2:16 pm and get those around you to be quiet wherever you are on the North Shore. Other countries are doing the same.

MAY 1996 HEARING AWARENESS MONTH

THE CHHA - NORTH SHORE BRANCH:
Will ask the North Shore Municipalities to Proclaim May as Hearing Awareness Month.

30 May - 2 June: Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Conference and Annual General Meeting in Victoria, B.C. We do not have any further information yet, but when we do, we will let members know the details.
JUNE 1996

20 June:  Dr. S. Pijl, Director of Audiology at St. Paul's Hospital will speak about Cochlear Implants at the North Shore Disability Resource Centre, 3158 Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, B.C. at 7:30 pm.

JULY 1996

The CHHA - North Shore Branch would like to organize a social/outing in early July. However, we need your suggestions and cooperation to organize something! Call Evan at 987-3415.

SEPTEMBER 1996

26 September:  CHHA - North Shore Branch's Annual General Meeting at the North Shore Disability Resource Centre, 3158 Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, B.C. at 7:30 pm.

NOTE: Please arrive between 7:00 pm and 7:15 pm as AGM starts promptly at 7:30 pm. No one really likes business meetings, but it is important for your Branch that you attend the Annual General Meeting so that your Branch can move forward in the future.

NOVEMBER 1996

21 November:  General Meeting - Speaker to be announced later. Any suggestions, contact Evan at 987-3415.

REMEMBER: "Little drops of water, little grains of sand make a mighty ocean and a great land"

If you have not sent back your form asking you to help out the Branch carrying out some of it's activities, Please send it to:

Jean Taylor
# 115 - 145 West Keith Road
North Vancouver, B.C.  V7M 1L3

Thank You!

Every bit helps the development of your Branch

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO IS GOING DEAF
(William Barclay)

Oh God,

The trouble about being deaf is that most people find deaf people just a nuisance.

They sympathise with people who are blind and lame: but they just get irritated and annoyed with people who are deaf.

And the result of this is that deaf people are apt to avoid company; and so get more and more lonely, and more shut in.

Help me now that my hearing has begun to go.

Help me to face the situation and to realize that there is no good trying to hide it, for that will only make it worse and worse.

Help me to be grateful for all that can be done for deaf people like me.

If I have got to wear a hearing aid, help me to do it quite naturally, and not be shy or embarresses about it.

Give me the perseverance not to let this trouble get me down, and not let it cut me off from others.

And help me to remember that, whatever happens, there is nothing can that can stop me from hearing your voice.

TWO TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Friday, 3rd May 7 pm - 10 pm
About issues of concern to the Deaf Community

Friday, 10th May 7 pm - 10 pm
About issues of concern to the Hard of Hearing Community

Both Meetings To Be Held at:

Brodie Hall
Western Institute for The Deaf and Hard of Hearing
2125 West 7th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C.
Donations to the North Shore Branch are appreciated from any member, organization or business.

All donations can be sent to:
Alfred Kobbeltvedt
1127 Lillooet Road
North Vancouver, B.C.
V7J 3H7

Please make all contributions payable to:
CHHA - NORTH SHORE BRANCH

A tax receipt will be issued for all donations to the Branch.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can experiment with the effect of distance on speech understanding by standing three feet away from your listener as you speak at a normal volume.

Now, step back another three feet, and continue to double the distance, while maintaining your same voice level.

SOUND FAMILIAR?
"At a meeting you try to "sh" people and make more noise with your "sh" than the people are making"

From "Hazards of Deafness" by Roy K. Holcomb.

The publisher grants the rights to reproduce portions of this book without permission for the purpose of entertaining and educating deaf, hard of hearing and hearing persons.

READING MATERIAL IN YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

"Coping with Hearing Loss: A guide for adults and their families"
Rezen, Susan
1985
North Vancouver City Library & West Vancouver Memorial Library

"Hearing Loss Help: How you can help someone with a hearing loss - and how they can help themselves"
Coombs, Alex
1986
North Vancouver District Library, Capilano Branch
West Vancouver Memorial Library

"The Hearing Loss Handbook"
Vernick, D.M.
Consumer Reports, 1993
North Vancouver District Library, Lynn Valley Branch
North Vancouver City Library
West Vancouver Memorial Library

PLEASE SEND YOUR IDEAS FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO:
EVAN HAMILTON
Upper Suite - 240 West 5th Street
North Vancouver, B.C.
V7M 1K1