



CHHA – NSB

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

North Shore Branch

Annual Report 2016-2017

As with all branches of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA), an independent consumer advocacy organization, CHHA-North Shore Branch since its establishment in 1997, autonomously develops its own member-driven programs of activity and education for the public in support of the organization's mission statement:

“CHHA works to eliminate the isolation, indignation, and frustration of hard of hearing and deafened persons by assisting in increasing personal self esteem and confidence which will lead to total integration in society.”

CHHA-North Shore Branch operates in accordance with the Societies Act of British Columbia and is a federally registered charity.

Mike Hocevar, Hugh Hetherington, Ruth Lapointe, Susan Gelinias, Caroline Wickham, William Friend served on the Board of Directors over the past year. Alan Dion was nominated to the Board following the death of past director Henry Romain who passed away last October. Henry had served many years as a director. He served at our welcoming table at the Summerhill meetings and did the phoning of members to let them know of the meetings. He is missed for his strong dedication to our society.

The directors develop a guideline budget for presentation at the Annual General Membership meeting. Note that CHHA-North Shore Branch did not have to apply to the North Shore municipalities this year for grants to assist our operation, due to a generous bequest received from the estate of the late Carrell Hearn, a long time member who passed away in 2014 at the age of 105. This covered our annual budget. Other personal donations were received, as well.

Branch membership in the past year was 54 members. This is a drop from previous years. The directors are presently engaged in a program to stimulate increased membership enrollment; see further in this report of some initiatives.

CHHA-North Shore branch is pleased to report another successful term of offering service to the citizens of the District of West Vancouver, City of North Vancouver and District of North Vancouver as part of promoting livable communities. Programs feature a combination of technological advice and various useful coping strategies and tips, and branch activities include:

1. Sound Advice: a free monthly hearing loss workshop held on the first Friday every month, except July and August, at West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre. The sessions are facilitated by Hugh Hetherington and Flo Spratt. Other special Sound Advice sessions are held at various locations on request and twice yearly at the Summerhill. One session was conducted in May at Silver Harbour during their seniors

fair. Attendance at Sound Advice has been consistent at about 15 to 20 attendees each month. This invariably includes at least two or three newcomers each month.

2. Public Speaker Series: Additionally five evening meetings are held at Summerhill Seniors Residence in North Vancouver featuring experts in various aspects of hard of hearing issues, and research & technology. Examples of some past speakers provided information on Balance & Dizziness, Tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and speechreading. As well as two Sound Advice sessions, one in November and February, the past year's lineup also included:
 - i. June 2016: A presentation by Christine Callaghan, M.Cl.Sc., RAUD, RHIP, an audiologist with Starkey Hearing Technologies. Christine spoke on "Starkey's New Hearing Aid Platform Hearing Aids."
 - ii. September 2016: A presentation by Claus Nielson, Research Operations Manager, Senior Research Audiologist, and Curator of the Oticon Museum in Eriksholm, Denmark. Claus spoke on the topic "Interactions Between Hearing Loss and Hearing Aids with an Historical Perspective as seen through the History of Oticon 1905 to 2016"
 - iii. April 2017: Kenneth Jones, Director of the Tinnitus Association of Canada, Acting President of the B.C. Tinnitus Association and Facilitator of the Greater Vancouver Tinnitus Self Help Group spoke on the topic " Tinnitus – Help! You Can Deal With It"
 - iv. June 2017: Lorraine Jenstad, PhD, Aud(C), RAUD, RHIP, Associate Professor UBC School of Audiology and Speech Sciences spoke of the topic "'What's That Test All About?' Understanding What the Audiologist is Doing When Setting Your Hearing Aid to be Right for You"
3. Personal information packages: Printed materials are offered at no charge at every meeting. These include a booklet entitled "Talking with Hard of Hearing People – Here's How to do it Right, Eh?" Further, the branch has available a very useful free Hospital Stay kit that assists in security of hearing aids and alerting care providers about the patient's hearing status. While the branch doesn't officially endorse any one hearing aid provider, a list of all known North Shore audiologists and Hearing Aid Practitioners is made available.
4. Information & Education: A phone line 604-926-5222 is maintained to answer both members' and the public's queries for hard of hearing related questions. The branch also has an online website www.chha-nsb.com which contains all copies of its very informative quarterly newsletter *The Mountain Ear*.

5. Occasional, free home visits are conducted by Hugh Hetherington to assist people with their hearing aids or assistive listening devices, and he has worked with local churches and organizations to advise and help with the installation of hearing loop systems to enable direct wireless delivery of sound to personal hearing aids for successful listening and participating in services and events.
6. Directors participated in local senior's and hearing health fairs, CHHA-BC's annual Walk2Hear event that raises money especially for the Young Adult Network members of CHHA, and are available as guest speakers for any organization desiring such. Alan Dion met with staff at Lions Gate Hospital as an outreach project, to advise and promote the hospital stay kits. In May, Directors Hugh Hetherington, Alan Dion, Mike Hocevar and Caroline Wickham attended CHHA-National's Annual Conference held in Sidney, BC and participated in the CHHA-National and CHHA-BC's annual general meetings and Town Hall Meeting while there. Mike also serves as secretary of CHHA-BC, the Provincial arm of CHHA.
7. The directors have been focusing on attracting new members. The \$10 branch membership fee has been eliminated but members must be a paid up (\$30 per year) member of CHHA-National to be eligible. Outreach for this will include a significant upgrading of the present website in the near future to promote our branch and activities, and a review of our free printed materials is another area. While branch membership is open to all ages, the majority of our members are over 50 so the directors have been liaising with the Young Adult Network (YAN) of CHHA to encourage younger membership and participation in our branch. To foster such, the branch has put out an open invitation to YAN members and will fund the printing of a Peer Support Network promotional brochure. We are also proud to create two annual \$500 scholarships in the names of Carrell Hearn and Henry Romain. Further initiatives will be reported through *The Mountain Ear* newsletter as they are developed.

The directors, who meet bi-monthly, receive no remuneration other than necessary out-of-pocket expenses. We thank our branch membership for their continued support and participation, and to Capilano Community Services Society, West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre, and the Summerhill Parc Retirement Residence for providing meeting spaces throughout the year.

Submitted on behalf of the Board,

Mike Hocevar

