



CHHA – NSB
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
North Shore Branch

Annual Report 2017-2018

Your board of directors Mike Hocevar, Hugh Hetherington, Ruth Lapointe, William Friend, Susan Gelinas, Alan Dion and new member, Douglas Muir (appointed to replace Caroline Wickham who resigned during the term) are pleased to present this review of the branch's activities during the past year.

The CHHA - North Shore Branch operates in accordance with the Societies Act of British Columbia. Note that the branch is also affiliated with the CHHA National organization and the British Columbia chapter of CHHA both, which play a role in legislative advocacy.

The directors develop a guideline budget for presentation at the Annual General Membership meeting. Funding for the budget is derived from donations and interest from a generous bequest from a late member, Carrell Hearn who passed away in 2014. Through this all members of the CHHA National organization are eligible as members of the North Shore Branch for free. In recognition of Carrell Hearn, the branch established an annual \$1000 scholarship in her memory, administered and awarded through CHHA - National. This year, the recipient chosen is Marco Chiamonte of Vancouver who is attending the University of Victoria. Note that the branch is presently working on a \$1000 bursary intended for awarding to a North Shore resident hard of hearing student; it will be named in honour of late long time branch board member, Henry Romain.

As with all branches of the independent consumer advocacy society Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, our CHHA-North Shore Branch since its establishment in 1997, autonomously develops its own member-driven program 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 of society.”

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

1. Sound Advice: a free monthly public workshop held on the first Friday every month except July & August, at West Vancouver Seniors Activity Centre. Occasionally extra sessions are held at various locations.
2. Public Speaker Series: bi-monthly evening public meetings held at Summerhill Seniors Residence in North Vancouver featuring experts in various aspects of hard of hearing issues, research & technology. Examples of some past speakers provided information on Balance & Dizziness, Tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and speech reading. The past year's lineup included:
 - April 24th, 2017 Kenneth Jones, Director of the Tinnitus Association of Canada and facilitator of the monthly Greater Vancouver Tinnitus Self-help Group, spoke on the topic "Tinnitus-Help! You can deal with it"
 - June 19th, 2017 Lorraine Jenstad, PhD., Aud(C) RAUD, RHIP from UBC School of Audiology & Speech Services "What is that test all about? Understanding what your audiologist is doing when setting your hearing aids to be right for you".
 - September 19th, 2017 Annual General Meeting Gael Hannan, author of the book "The Way I Hear It - Life with Hearing Loss", presentation entitled "I'm Hearing as Hard as I Can".
 - November 20th, 2017 and February 19th, 2018 special Sound Advice Hearing Loss Workshops, co-presented by branch members Flo Spratt and Hugh Hetherington. These two evening Sound Advice sessions will take place every November & February to give those who can't make the regular monthly daytime Sound Advice a chance to participate.
 - April 16th, 2018 Sgt. Peri Mainwaring, RCMP North Vancouver detachment "Recognizing and Protecting Yourself from Frauds & Scams".
 - June 18th, 2018 Glenn Grigg, Ph.D., R.C.C. a practising Psychotherapist and professor of Psychology at City University of Seattle's Vancouver campus "Feeling Safe - Connecting Hearing to Your Inner Watch Dog".
3. Personal information packages: Our quarterly newsletter, "Mountain Ear" is published and printed materials are offered at no charge at every meeting including our booklet by Neil Bauman, Ph.D. 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 with the security of your hearing aids and alerting care providers about the patients' hearing needs. While the branch doesn't officially endorse any one hearing aid provider, a list of all known North Shore audiologists is also 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, and the branch has an online website <https://chha-nsb.com> that also contains its very informative quarterly newsletter, "Mountain Ear". Note that under the guidance of director Susan Gelinias, that the branch's website is being upgraded to be more dynamic and full of useful links on all matters of hard of hearing issues.
5. Occasional, free home visits are conducted by Hugh Hetherington to assist people with their hearing aids or assistive listening devices, and he has liaised with local churches to advise on the installation and maintenance of hearing loop systems to enable direct wireless delivery of sound to personal hearing aids for successful listening and participating in services.
6. Directors participate in local seniors 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 & promote the hospital stay kits that will be available at North Shore hospitals. Director Mike Hocevar also serves on the board of the CHHA - BC chapter.

For quite some time now the directors have been focussed on increasing the branch membership, which now numbers in the 50s range, down significantly from just a few years ago. One initiative was eliminating the \$10 branch membership fee (\$30 per year) for all members of the CHHA National organization. The directors have been in contact with principals of CHHA's Young Adult Network (YAN) in the 19 to 40 year age range to recruit more branch members, and to effectively consider support and/or sponsorship of YAN activities.

Another new initiative was in co-sponsoring along with a local hearing clinic and Vancouver Community College a Speech Reading course that took place over three months at West Vancouver Seniors Activity Centre. Instructor, Lisa Dillon Edgett with special permission from the College to hold this outreach course, presented the course.

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