



GERMAN-CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BC
DEUTSCH KANADISCHES HILFSWERK VON BC



Annual Report 2023 - 2024

Spirit of caring since 1965

GERMAN - CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

OUR VISION

Working in partnership with our community to:

- Develop, deliver and inspire a high level of care
- Create and nurture a vibrant community connected to our German/ European culture.

OUR MISSION

Providing quality care and support for the aging.

OUR VALUES

- We are committed to high standards, ongoing improvement and the well-being of those we serve.
- We foster open communication, progressive leadership, and team cohesiveness throughout the organization.
- We celebrate the commitment and dedication of our employees and volunteers.
- We provide an environment for people to learn and grow.
- We respect our organization's history and promote the traditions and cultural roots of the German-speaking community.
- We welcome and support a multicultural environment.
- We are fiscally responsible.
- We build effective relationships and partnerships with our wider community.

OUR IDENTITY

WHO WE ARE

We provide housing, health care, therapeutic and wellness services to seniors with complex care needs.

WHAT WE ARE KNOWN FOR

We deliver our services to our clients in ways that promote a positive view of self, build on a person's strengths, nurture human connection, create a sense of safety, offer the freedom to choose and promote meaning, growth and joy.

We create community through outreach, volunteering, cultural events, social gatherings, education, mentorship and sharing of talents.

We offer connection to those who want to reaffirm their German/European Culture and welcome the richness of the multi-cultural community we live in.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The strategic plan identifies five strategic priorities:

- Care and Services
- Staff and Volunteers
- Physical Environment and Resident Safety
- Financial Health
- Society and Community Engagement

The Board of Directors provides the governance and vision for the German - Canadian Benevolent Society of BC. The Board works with management to establish overall strategic direction, regularly reviews the organization's long-term plans, significant issues affecting the organization and evaluates results. The Board ensures appropriate membership and stakeholder consultation.

Board members are elected by the Society's membership and are appointed for three-year terms. Board members can serve a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms.

Learn more about the current board members on the Society's website: www.gcch.ca

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024/2025

Terms of Directors	1 st Term	2 nd Term	3 rd Term
Rudolf Kischer, President	2020 – 2023	2023 - 2026	
Richard Wittstock, Vice President	2019 – 2022	2022 - 2025	
Mark Sulzberger, Treasurer	2023 - 2026		
Alex Sayn-Wittgenstein, Director	2017 – 2020	2020 – 2023	2023 - 2026
Ulf von Dehn, Director	2017 – 2020	2020 – 2023	2023 - 2026
Carola von Hahn, Director	2016 – 2019	2019 – 2022	2022 - 2025
Petra Kuret, Director	2018 – 2021	2021 - 2024	2024 - 2027
Christine Weber, Director	2020 – 2023	2023 - 2026	
Robert Shaw, Director	2021 – 2024	2024—2027	

WHAT IS A HAUS?

The residents of the German - Canadian Care Home live in 5 neighborhoods (Haus), each named after a German city, chosen by the residents: Hamburg Haus, Frankfurt Haus, Dresden Haus, Berlin Haus and Bonn Haus.

PARTNERS IN CARE

The residents of the care home, as well as their family members, friends and caregivers are key partners in the successful operations of the care home.

There is a Resident Haus Council for each Haus that meets monthly and provides residents the opportunity to participate in affairs and decisions within the organization.

Family members, friends and caregivers are encouraged to participate in the regular Family Council meetings and the decision-making process on matters affecting the daily lives of the residents. It is also a forum for group support, education and counselling.



REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER JUTTA PURCHASE AT THE 59TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE GERMAN - CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BC HELD ON SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 IN VANCOUVER, BC

Jutta Purchase welcomed all attendees and thanked them for joining the 59th Annual General Meeting of the German-Canadian Benevolent Society of BC. She stated that her report will cover the German-Canadian Care Home operations of the past 15 months. She then introduced the leadership team members that were present and expressed her appreciation for their great dedication to maintain and improve the care and services provided to residents and families.

The last 15 months were very much influenced by the progressing negotiations around the redevelopment. Although there is no certainty around the timeline, operationally, we set two key priorities: one, to maintain the high-quality care and services to residents and families and two, to be good stewards of our financial resources and think short-term rather than long-term.

The care home provides for 132 residents, their average age is 83 years, ranging from 57 to 99 years old. During the past year, 57 new residents moved to GCCH. We have established and continue to improve opportunities for residents and families to actively give input into the care program through active resident and family councils, regular communications, service specific satisfaction surveys and more. We hired 21 new employees, and an active group of volunteers generously shared their time and contributed over 1,500 volunteer hours.

CARE AND SERVICES

There are always challenges and successes. The resident care team has been observing a steady increase of the complexity of care needs. In general, the complexity of care needs of clientele coming to long-term care has increased and the current funded staffing hours are inadequate to address the needs of the residents in our care home. Staff need training to be better equipped for providing care to the complex care needs of the residents. For example, they need training to be able to assist residents with mental health issues and addictions.



We meet these challenges as best as we can. For example, we continuously monitor and are in communication with care staff to problem-solve and to generate strategies specific to the situation.

While we have a robust staff education program some of the education needs do exceed the resources that we have available in-house. Money is not always the main obstacle to sending staff to external education but rather the lack of staff who need to backfill when someone is away.

As part of our quality improvement program, we added some money to our food budget with the goal of improving the quality of the food and increase choice. After conducting a detailed survey with residents and families, we had a wishlist which was the basis for implementing several changes to the menu such as more ice cream, variety of breads, teas, better coffee, a choice of toppings at breakfast, a daily fresh salad at lunch, and more. We will also implement a “room service” menu that includes a list of food items that residents can order outside the regular meal hours. The overall goal is to increase resident autonomy and choice.

Last year, Jutta spoke about the unique approach to care that we named Comfortzeit®. We recently received the trademark for the name making it officially ours. Comfortzeit can best be described as a practice or approach where all activities and decisions are viewed through the lens of the resident’s comfort.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Long-term care services are labour intensive and like many other health care providers we are experiencing staff shortages at times. We hire on an ongoing basis but have found it difficult to retain our new staff. Here are a few reasons:

- The market for healthcare providers including RCAs and nurses is competitive, so we lose many new hired casuals.
- Many casuals leave due to the pending redevelopment and the uncertainty around the transition during the construction.

To mitigate these challenges and ensure staff retention, we have expanded our staff wellness and staff appreciation program. In addition to the annual staff appreciation day and staff Christmas party we celebrate all professional recognition days such as Nurses’ Week, Care Aide Day, and most recently, Support Services Staff Day. A monthly newsletter keeps everyone informed about available resources such as online materials and other services in the community. Our staff have access to a free and confidential Employee Assistance Program where they can access experienced master’s level counselling professionals and get support with stress, mental health, conflict resolution, work-life balance and many other services. There is a comprehensive staff education program in place with in-services, workshops and drills scheduled almost every day.

ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY

Building maintenance and safety related issues remain a top concern. The buildings are old, and we often have trouble sourcing parts for the aging building infrastructure. Thankfully, our experienced and skilled maintenance staff finds creative ways to repair most of these. The Ministry of Health provided specific funding for heat mitigation, and this past July we installed air conditioning in the East side dining room, UV films on south-facing windows, as well as large canopies to create more shaded areas and other equipment.

KEY FINANCIAL DATA FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2024

as presented by Jessy Lally, Auditor, Meyers Norris Penny LLP, at the 59th AGM of the German - Canadian Benevolent Society of BC held on Sept. 23, 2024 in Vancouver, BC

GERMAN - CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BC

Revenue	\$275,846
Expenses	\$(103,952)
Net Operating Surplus	\$171,894

GERMAN - CANADIAN CARE HOME

Revenue	\$15,946,967
Expenses	\$(15,151,801)
Operating Surplus before Amortization	\$795,166
Amortization	\$(93,812)
Net Operating Surplus	\$701,354

Combined net assets for the Society and Care Home are \$12,062,466 and liabilities are \$5,178,694. Fund balances, beginning of year plus excess of revenue over expenses and employee future benefit re-measurement costs result in fund balances, end of year of \$6,883,772. The revenue of \$16,222,813 is offset by expenses including amortization totaling \$15,349,575 for a net surplus of \$873,248.

ACCREDITED WITH
EXEMPLARY STANDING



ACCREDITATION
AGRÉMENT
CANADA



FINANCIAL HEALTH

During the past year, the tedious process of reconciling Covid expenses from previous years continued. GCCH applied for and received approximately \$1 million to offset the ongoing excessive expenses related to overtime. As mentioned earlier, the Ministry provided two so-called Equipcare funding, one designated for equipment and the other for heat mitigation strategies. As you heard from our auditor, the care home finished the operating year with a healthy surplus.

SOCIETY

The Society expanded its activities with a second outreach program, called "kultur.WIR". You will hear more about this program in the Outreach Committee report. We maintain several social media accounts to connect and inform our community.

SUMMARY

As the Society approaches its 60th anniversary in 2025, the organization is on the way to transition to the future, with a new, state of the art building, the implementation of a modern care model and with strategies to engage a new community of supporters. The last ten years were about laying the groundwork for the future of the Society, a Society that will play a part in meeting the challenges of an aging population and will continue its mission of providing quality care for the aging.

In closing, Jutta recognized the dedication and loyalty of the care home staff, the staff of our partners Sodexo and Community Therapists. She thanked them for their dedication to the residents, their support of each other and their commitment to the organization. Jutta also thanked the management team for their support of new initiatives, their role modeling of our values and consistent approach. Furthermore, Jutta thanked the board for providing governance and guidance to this organization and stated that their caring sets the tone and inspires us to do our very best. Lastly, she thanked Divya and her staff for the BBQ, and Vanessa for coordinating this AGM and preparing the handouts.

Spirit of caring since 1965

UPDATES FROM STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE 59TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE chaired by **Richard Wittstock**

The Committee Chair started his report by thanking Jutta Purchase for her dedication to the care home. The committee is confident that they can make an announcement before the end of this year. The rezoning is almost complete. The funding needed to build is likely going to be forthcoming. Richard assured the audience that the project is closer to being approved than it has been in the past five years.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE chaired by **Rudolf Kischer**

The Committee Chair reported that the board members attended events as part of public relations, like the annual Christmas Dinner organized by the German-Canadian Business Association (GCBA) in December 2023 and the GCBA roof top social. In the spring of 2024.

The website of the German-Canadian Care Home and the Hauspost newsletter were updated and maintained over the past year.

On fundraising, the Society received over \$60,591 in donations in 2023, an increase of \$36,345 over last year. \$17,450 was raised at the 2023 Christmas Fest between donations and proceeds, which is up slightly from 2022.

The Committee is in the process of hiring a part-time fundraising coordinator and obtaining professional advice to launch the capital campaign for the rebuild. Advertisements have been posted. Some interviews have been conducted but the committee is still awaiting the final agreement from the Ministry of Health which is expected to be finalized shortly. Rudolf thanked the attendees and recognized all members who invested their money into the Society.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE chaired by **Carola Von Hahn**

The Committee Chair greeted the audience and emphasized how optimistic the board members are that the redevelopment project will soon progress. If everything goes according to the plan the outreach committee will look for temporary venues to rent that will be used to host the outreach programs until the new building is ready. The challenge they will face is to keep society members and friends engaged during the construction period which will take several years. While the new building will certainly help to generate interest, the committee will need to raise the society's name recognition and promote their activities. The board recognizes that attracting new members and reigniting interest in our society is essential for its survival. The outreach committee will focus on reaching children and grandchildren of current members, as well as those who are already familiar with the society. However, getting in touch with a younger generation unfamiliar with the GCCH presents itself to be a greater challenge.

Carola was happy to share that they welcomed a new addition to the outreach team last October. Her name is Antje Mahintorabi. Antje stood up and greeted the audience. Carola explained that Antje has been working alongside Waltraud and is responsible for organizing one of the bi-monthly events. She is focused on attracting a younger audience by promoting the program through various social media platforms and websites, such as the German Consulate, local German Schools and the German-Canadian Business Association. The program offers a wide range of events, including movies, music and presentations on interesting topics like history, health and education. Carola stated that they also offer some programs geared towards children and their parents and grandparents. Many of those events are now conducted in English and German.

Carola thanked Waltraud Custer for her continued commitment to the program. Her Saturday afternoon events have become a regular highlight for society members and non-members. The outreach events can be found on the GCCH website, in the Hauspost newsletters and are included on posters in local community centers. Lastly, Carola encouraged the attendees to join upcoming outreach events, especially if they have not attended before.

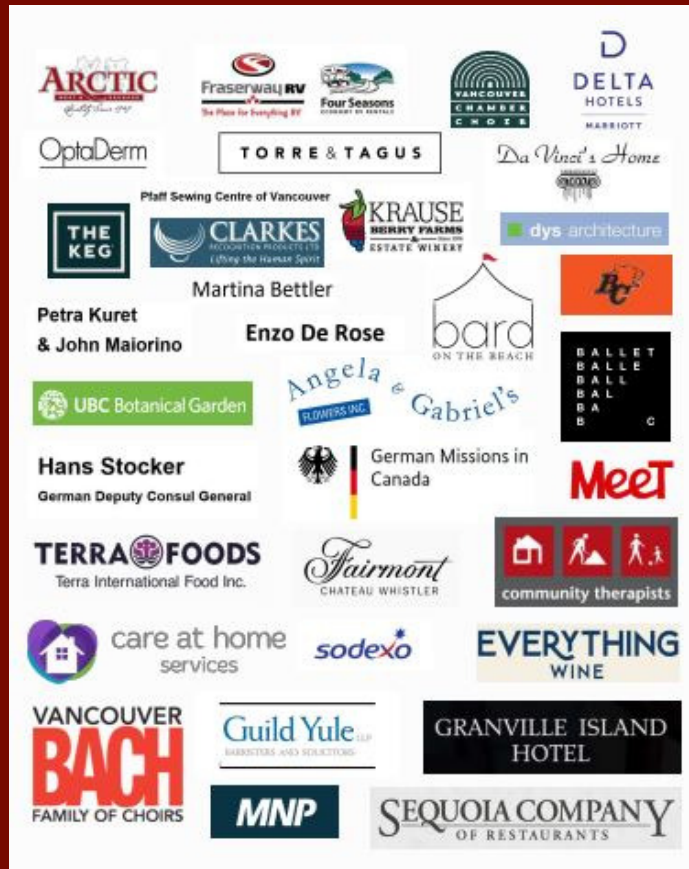
'OAK LEAF' DONORS

Oak leaves are placed on a special donor wall in the care home in recognition of donations of \$500 and more.

We thank the following donors for their generosity:

- ♦ Silvia Wendland
- ♦ Leo Franzen
- ♦ Irma Lamoureux
- ♦ Elke Swantje
- ♦ Kurt and Dora Sander
- ♦ Betty Mack
- ♦ Susan Wood - in memory of Dorothy Stella Watson
- ♦ Maria and George Wygand
- ♦ Cheryl Frain - in memory of Hugh Campbell
- ♦ Yi-Te Hsu - in memory of Ren Jong Hsu
- ♦ Peter and Gillian Fograscher
- ♦ Barbara Seidel-Schuster
- ♦ Walter Mechler
- ♦ Heidi Zube
- ♦ Dr. Arnold Dey
- ♦ Frithjof Grohne
- ♦ Ingrid Kuret
- ♦ Ron Hung
- ♦ Fritz Ziegler Fund
- ♦ Annie Tsay
- ♦ Wenda Yenson
- ♦ dys architecture

We would like to thank the sponsors of our
2023 Christmas Fest for their support!



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