



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



Annual Report 2025-2026

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 residents 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 multicultural community we live in.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The strategic plan identifies five strategic priorities:

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



Spirit of caring since 1965

Board of Directors

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 care home's website: www.gcch.ca

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026/2027

<u>Directors</u>	<u>1st Term</u>	<u>2nd Term</u>	<u>3rd Term</u>
Rudolf Kischer, <i>President</i>	2020-2023	2023-2026	2026-2029
Richard Wittstock, <i>Vice President</i>	2019-2022	2022-2025	2025-2028
Mark Sulzberger, <i>Treasurer</i>	2023-2026	2026-2029	
Petra Kuret, <i>Director</i>	2018-2021	2021-2024	2024-2027
Robert Shaw, <i>Director</i>	2021-2024	2024-2027	
Carola von Hahn, <i>Director</i>	2026-2029		
Lillian Simon, <i>Director</i>	2026-2029		

Comfortzeit® Model of Care

Our concept of “Comfortzeit®” describes the state of being it aims to achieve for residents, an overall sense of comfort at this stage in their lives. It is a key concept in the overall delivery of the care home’s services.

“Zeit” is the German word for time, and Comfortzeit® is the name of our care model. The name describes the focus of all our activities. That includes care and services, staffing model, operational model and the environment.

This concept is essentially a shift in focus from the medical, which usually involves determining what is best for the resident, into a more social and humanistic view putting the emphasis on making the resident comfortable.

This model of care was developed in conjunction with our redevelopment plans for a new care home. We have not been able to fully implement it yet, because we are currently operating from two temporary sites while our new state-of-the-art building is being constructed.



REPORTS AT THE 61st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON JUNE 29, 2026

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – RUDOLF KISCHER, PRESIDENT

Rudolf Kischer acknowledged the Society members’ continued support and their donations.

This past year has been a time of major transformation and many firsts. Jutta Purchase, our previous CEO, gave notice towards the end of last year that she would like to go into retirement. The board engaged with Boydan, a top ranked National recruiting firm. The hiring committee considered options in Germany and across Canada. In the end, the committee was given a short list of about ten Candidates and Micheal Neumann was chosen as the new Chief Executive Officer of the German-Canadian Care Home.

Michael joined us in January 2026 and in March he had to move out of the Harrison Drive building, relocating the operations to Dogwood Lodge, as well as Central City Lodge.

The redevelopment of the new home has been the major focus after the move. It is on track, and on budget, the necessary permits for demolition have been achieved. We look forward to delivering a state of the art care home designed for our small house Comfortzeit® model of care in approximately three years.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - MICHAEL NEUMANN

Michael Neumann welcomed and thanked everyone for joining the 61st AGM of the German-Canadian Benevolent Society of BC. He introduced himself as Chief Executive Officer. He joined the organization in January of this year and has spent these past six months doing his best to understand everything that makes the German-Canadian Care Home what it is - its history, its people, and most of all, its residents.

Michael acknowledged the strong foundation that was left for him by his predecessor Jutta Purchase. Two priorities were established here long before he arrived, and they remain our guiding principles: to maintain high-quality care and services to residents and families that feels like home, and to be good stewards in the community to grow German culture and build relationships.

CARE AND SERVICES

The residents coming into long-term care today are more complex than they were a decade ago. Their average age is in the early eighties (82.97), and the range of care needs - physical, cognitive, and psychosocial - has grown considerably. Our funded staffing hours do not always reflect that reality, and we continue to advocate with Vancouver Coastal Health for resources that match the acuity of the people in our care.



We currently serve 104 residents across two temporary sites - Dogwood Lodge and Central City Lodge - as we move toward our new home at Harrison Drive. Operating across two locations is logistically demanding, and Michael acknowledged both the complexity of that arrangement and the professionalism with which our clinical and operational teams navigate it every day. Our residents have an average length of stay of 3.15 years, and we have a roughly 60% male 40% female split.

Our Comfortzeit® philosophy continues to be the lens through which we make decisions about care, environment, and how we support residents' autonomy and choice. It is a trademarked care model, and it is uniquely ours. Resident and family engagement remains a priority. We maintain active resident and family councils and look for every opportunity to ensure that the people we care for, and the people who love them have a genuine voice in how that care is delivered.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We have approximately 165 employees across the organization, supported by a community of volunteers who contribute thousands of hours each year. Rosemary Kustner and her team nurture that volunteer community with great care, and we are grateful for every person who gives their time to our residents.

Our team successfully relocated 104 residents across two temporary sites. It was an undertaking that requires extraordinary care, planning, and sensitivity. Our team did it while maintaining the quality of care those residents depend on every day, and they did it in a way that kept residents and families informed, supported, and as comfortable as possible throughout. This was an exceptional achievement.

As a result of the move and the downsizing of our operations, we parted ways with over 30 employees in total, including care aides, nurses, management staff, and our long-standing support services partner Sodexo, whose team had been part of our community for multiple decades. Michael expressed his sincere gratitude to everyone who gave their time and skills to the German-Canadian Care Home.

We also know that the uncertainty of the redevelopment and the transition period ahead creates hesitation for some staff considering whether to stay for the long term. Therefore, we continue to invest in staff wellness and recognition - nurses' week, care aide day, staff recognition lunches, our annual staff appreciation event, and the Employee Assistance Program that gives staff and their families access to confidential professional support. Judy Rowbotham leads a comprehensive education program, with in-services, workshops, and drills. When staff feel supported and equipped, residents experience better care.

ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY

With our residents now settled into Dogwood Lodge and Central City Lodge, the former care home building is in the process of being demolished to make way for the new facility at 2010 Harrison Drive. This is a significant milestone - the physical manifestation of a future we have been working toward for many years. Our focus now is on ensuring that our two temporary sites remain safe, comfortable, and well-maintained for residents and families for the duration of the construction period.

THE NEW BUILDING

Our new care home will have 178 suites, purpose-built for the Comfortzeit® model of care. It is under active construction and targeted for completion in October 2029. The project is currently on schedule.



KEY FINANCIAL DATA FROM THE AUDITED
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FISCAL
YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2026
as presented by Jessl Lally, Auditor, Meyers
Norris Penny LLP, at the 601st AGM of the
German-Canadian Benevolent Society of BC
held on June 29, 2026 in Vancouver, BC

GERMAN-CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BC

Revenue	\$379,984
Expenses	\$(213,615)
Net Operating Surplus	\$166,369

GERMAN-CANADIAN CARE HOME

Revenue	\$16,078,036
Expenses	\$(16,300,535)
Operating Deficit	
before Amortization	\$(222,499)
Amortization	\$(244,387)
Net Operating Deficit	\$(466,886)

Combined net assets for the Society and
Care Home are \$14,763,365 and liabilities
are \$8,083,226. 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 \$6,680,139. The
revenue of \$16,458,020 is offset by
expenses including amortization totaling
\$16,758,537 for a net surplus of \$300,517.



SOCIETY

After 61 years, one of the Society's most important long-term priorities is attracting younger members. In addition, the opening of the new Harrison Drive care home in 2029 represents a genuine opportunity to introduce ourselves to a new generation. This has been a year of transition - a new CEO, two new operating sites, a new construction project, and all of the day-to-day complexity of running a long-term care home with 165 dedicated staff.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT – MICHAEL NEUMANN

2026 — Permits and Approvals

The Development Permit, Demolition Permit, and Excavation and Shoring Permit have all been issued. The full Building Permit was submitted in May, and we are targeting its issuance by September 2026. Concurrently, our consultants are preparing the issue for Tender drawings, which will allow us to tender the remaining major construction packages. The Ministerial approval and BC Housing loan finalization remain active priorities. One item worth noting: during abatement work, additional concealed asbestos was discovered in Buildings 2 and 3. The additional cost is estimated at approximately \$66,000 beyond the approved demolition budget, and the project team expects this to be offset within the existing construction contingency.

2027–2028 — Demolition and Construction

Abatement and demolition are already underway on site as of this spring. Demolition is slated to be complete by mid-August. Existing foundation will be crushed and pulverized to create the base for the new build. Construction of the new care home will then commence and is expected to run for approximately 36 to 38 months. Sub-trade awards are 42 percent complete. Key trades including mechanical, electrical, and elevators have already been awarded to Ocean Park Mechanical, Colwin Electrical, and Otis Canada respectively.

2029 — Coming Home

Our target completion date is October 2029. Following construction, the building will go through commissioning and air quality testing before residents move in.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE - PETRA KURET, CHAIR



The committee aims to bring the Comfortzeit® model of care to life by building household-style neighborhoods that promote independence and safety, equip rehabilitation and wellness spaces that restore strength and mobility, support relationship-based staffing models that give caregivers time to truly care and to create culturally rich programs that celebrate heritage and foster inclusion.

Our funding opportunities for donors and individuals are divided into three categories: \$3 million are allocated to enhanced programming and rehabilitation, \$1.5 million are allocated to house improvements and another \$1.5 million are reserved for heritage and premium services, including private-pay options to provide respite care and/ or an option for our Society members.

Funding opportunities for companies and foundations include Community Partners (\$10,000-\$49,999), Household Champions (\$50,000-\$99,999), Legacy Builders (\$100,000-\$249,999), as well as Founding Community Builders (\$250,000 and above). In total, the fundraising committee's target is \$6 million. To date, we have raised approximately \$1.9 million.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE - CAROLA VON HAHN, CHAIR



Leaving the well-established care home on Harrison Drive and adjusting to new surroundings and routines has been a challenge. However, many of our residents have been able to stay with co-residents and staff they know and trust. The goal of the outreach program is to give back to our Society members and friends who live in and around Vancouver and can attend our Saturday afternoon gathering. We offer opportunities for our visitors to connect with each other through cultural events, educational presentations, musical performances, entertainment, and coffee and cake. All residents are welcome to attend.

Carola summarized the ten outreach events that were held since the last AGM in June 2025. Highlights include an operetta performance, the Oktoberfest-themed 60th anniversary celebration, the annual Christmas Fest in November, as well as education presentations about health and history. Carola formally acknowledged Waltraud Custer's role in organizing those events for many years and leading the programs. In addition, she thanked all volunteers for their dedication and support, as well as Maj-Britt Rosier, the Society's Coordinator of Community Engagement for assisting Waltraud.

Carola concluded that the Society's support and commitment is now needed more than ever before. She invited everyone to visit Dogwood Lodge or Central City Lodge to visit residents and to volunteer. Each visit makes a difference in resident's lives and it helps them feel less isolated and more connected to their communities. Visitors and volunteers can help them feel comforted, acknowledged and valued. If anyone is interested in getting involved, they are welcome to contact Waltraud Custer, Maj-Britt Rosier or Rosemary Kustner.

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE - ALEX SAYN-WITTGENSTEIN, CHAIR



Alex Sayn-Wittgenstein reported that two of the current directors are standing for re-election this year: Rudolf Kischer who has already served 6 years on the board and has been representing the Society at many events in Vancouver, as well as Mark Sulzberger who has been the Society's Treasurer and has served several terms as a board member. They both agreed to stand for re-election this year.

Our new nominees are Carola von Hahn, who has served a total of 18 years on the board of directors, and Lillian Simon, who asked to join the board last year. She is currently acting as the Clinical Operations Manager at Home Health.

Since there are more vacancies than board nominees, all nominees are deemed to be elected by acclamation, and no vote will be required.

Alex continued by explaining that he and Ulf von Dehn will both step down from the board after serving a total of three consecutive terms each. Christine Weber has served two consecutive terms on the board and decided to not stand for re-election.



'OAK LEAF' DONORS

Oak leaves are displayed on a special donor wall in the care home to honor contributions of \$1,000 or more. The following oak leaves were added during the 2025/2026 fiscal year:

In memory of Eberhard and Traute
Häusler
in Memory of Dieter Fahrmann
In Memory of Marlies L.
Elke Swantje 2025
The Eibschutz Family Foundation 2025
Ingeborg von der Meden 2025
Heinz and Margery Wilke 2025
Yuk-Lin Koo & Family 2025
In memory of Griseldis Caritas Schwarz
Werner & Ingrid Kuret 2025
Gunther F. Schrack 2025
Silvia Wendland 2025
Po Yeh 2025
Pamela Haric 2025

In memory of Pauline Tom
Leo Franzen 2025
In memory of Sandra Chua
Karen Levis 2025
Ingeborg Girke 2025
Barbara Seidel-Schuster 2025
In memory of Ruth Dorothy Janson
Tae Helgeth 2026
Susan Brown 2025
Dey Family 2025
Michael Whitehurst 2026
In Memory of Ingeborg Marczinke
Artur Luebkekmann 2026
In Memory of Regina Lukat
In Memory of Christina Fodor
In Memory of Christel Frankenberger



GERMAN-CANADIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
500 West 57th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
V6P 6E8

604.713.6500
info@gcch.ca

www.gcch.ca



Spirit of caring since 1965