



Garth Homer
SOCIETY

Annual Review

2014–15

Message From the Chair

I'm delighted to be able to report that 2014-15 has been another very successful year for the Garth Homer Society. For the fourth year in a row, we have finished the budget year with a surplus. The organization is continuing to grow and strengthen as we build on our strong record of achievement.

We have maintained an enviable record of service delivery in recent years. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an international agency sanctioned by the government of British Columbia to conduct accreditations of contracted community living agencies every three years, made that clear in their report on our recent accreditation and issued a very positive assessment of Garth Homer. ["The organization has caring, compassionate and highly competent staff. Interactions observed reinforce respect and interest for each participant."]

The accomplishments reflected in our accreditation could not have been achieved without the commitment of our dedicated staff. We are indeed fortunate to have such tremendous service providers working with our clients and, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our staff for the work they all do every day throughout the year.

The ongoing leadership provided by our CEO, Mitchell Temkin, has been instrumental in our continuing success. Over the past year, Mitchell has made important changes to strengthen our management team. Phemie Guttin, RN, has assumed the role of Executive Director, Service Operations and is Mitchell's principal backup. Linda Duff, CPA, was recruited as Finance Director and is providing new strength in a key area of our organization.

One of the key Garth Homer initiatives you might have heard about over the past two years is us looking at redevelopment possibilities for the Garth Homer site as we work towards expanding service delivery into residential care. During this period, we have also been pressing for a review of possible revitalization of the broader "Nigel Valley" neighbourhood. We are very pleased that BC Housing, at our urging and with the support of all the agencies located on Nigel Avenue, has started a process to come up with development options. We are excited to know that this process is going ahead and we look forward to learning what recommendations they may have next year for our neighbourhood.

As Board Chair, I must acknowledge the vital support I have received from my colleagues on the Board throughout the year. Everyone has worked energetically and collaboratively – volunteering their time without hesitation – and this has resulted in a very productive year. We were fortunate to have Barbara Asser, CPA, join the Board during the year and immediately assume the role of Treasurer. Barbara brings considerable professional and board experience and we are delighted to have her working with us.

I believe that our solid financial footing and the recognized success of our programs and service delivery place the Garth Homer Society on a positive trajectory. We will continue to build on these successes as we prepare for a very bright future.

Alan Moyes

A life, a home, and a place in the world

Financial Report

I am pleased to report that the 2015 fiscal year was the fourth year in a row of steady, measured growth, concluding positively for the Garth Homer Society with a surplus (excess revenues over expenses) of \$69,755. Total revenue increased 4.9% to \$4,371,893. This growth is attributable to the expansion of contract revenue from Community Living British Columbia, which increased 11.2% in the year to \$3,414,123. Grant revenue from the Garth Homer Foundation and other community funders held steady at \$775,715. Together, these revenue sources constitute the bulk of our income, and provide the basis on which the society has been able to increase client services.

Expenses in the year grew by 11% to \$4,392,803 and exceeded revenue by \$20,910. The society was able to incur these excess expenses by accessing the operating surplus (unrestricted net assets) of \$240,628 accumulated in years prior to 2014. In addition to paying for increased operating expenses, a significant amount of this accumulated operating surplus was invested in capital assets, including facility renovations, fleet accessibility improvements, and much needed equipment purchases. In using a portion of this accumulated surplus, the society concluded the year with a small deficit from operations of \$20,910. However, the resolution of an outstanding legal/administrative issue resulted in the reduction of a previously recorded liability, so a gain of \$90,665 was

recorded in the current fiscal year. With this gain from a legal settlement, the society ended the 2015 fiscal year with a surplus (excess of revenues over expenses) of \$69,755.

Fiscal 2015 was also made difficult for Garth Homer by the sudden resignation last summer of our long-time Director of Finance and Administration. The position was unfilled for several months before Linda Duff moved from New Brunswick to take on the role as our new Director of Finance and Administration. Linda is a CPA, CMA, with a strong background in both public accounting and business, and has managed a difficult transition with aplomb. I would like to thank Linda, her colleagues in senior management, and all the Garth Homer staff for their evident commitment and hard work in concluding another successful fiscal year.

In summary, 2015 was a year of continued growth, plus reinvestment in the mission that growth enables. This was my first year as a Director at Garth Homer and my first as Treasurer. I would like to thank my fellow board members and senior staff for their warm welcome to this wonderful organization.

Barbara Asser

Message from the CEO

The Garth Homer Society was one of the first agencies in British Columbia to receive accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) after it was required by our funders. This past year we completed our fifth successful CARF survey. The survey is always an interesting and revealing process for staff and management, because we get to see the organization and our services through outside eyes.

This year's CARF report was detailed, thoughtful, and extremely helpful overall. However, one comment has stuck in my mind above all others. The surveyors noted

that as you walk through the Garth Homer Centre, moving from program to program, it is clear that each and every one of our programs has a distinct, individual culture. Though this hadn't occurred to me before, I think they are right, and I see it as a tremendously positive thing. The individual character of our programs is the bedrock on which we are creating increasingly individualized services.

More than anything else, it has been progress in service design and innovation, and especially the individualization of supports that characterized the last

year. This is as it should be. Of course, we spend a lot of time worrying about facilities and fleet and staffing, but if improved infrastructure and organizational design do not lead to better lives for those we support, then they matter little. Five advancements really stand out in this regard.

Employment: In 2015, with funding from the Vancouver Foundation, we launched an exciting new pilot program in supported self-employment. Our employment service overall was largely reworked, with an increased emphasis on approaches from vocational rehabilitation and rapid expansion of our participating employers network, often to companies that had not previously employed people with disabilities. As a result, we are better able to match well-prepared candidates to good job opportunities, have seen our placement rate skyrocket, and now graduate program participants who are independently and securely employed.

Geriatrics: In 2015, we eliminated the previous separation in our geriatric services between programs for those with dementia and those without dementia, and replaced it with a spectrum of services spread over three large program areas, from highest levels of activity to lowest. Participants can now choose how they would like to engage in the program and how busy they would like to be, depending on their always changing functional abilities and cognitive state. In effect, we have redesigned our geriatric services to better match the progressive changes individuals experience as they age.

High-Needs Community Inclusion: In 2015, with great success, we expanded our ability and capacity to support individuals with high needs — those with complex, multiple disabilities, including autism and FASD, serious behavioural problems, and chronic health issues. This reflects not only the changing demographics of funded community living services, but also the increasing sophistication and depth of our community inclusion staff. The support requirements of those with higher needs are often more uniquely individual than those of people whose support needs are more moderate. Our progress in high-needs community inclusion provides examples of how we can increasingly individualize services across the whole organization.

LifeStreams Learning: In 2015, with funding from the Victoria Foundation, the Telus Victoria Community

Board, Coast Capital, the Garth Homer Foundation, and a generous private family donor, we launched LifeStreams Learning. The LifeStreams Learning Pilot provides a comprehensive, highly individualized post-secondary learning path to young adults with autism and other developmental disabilities, in order to maximize their potential for both employment and inclusion. The program integrates existing GHS learning and inclusion programs in employment, volunteer engagement, and digital and arts learning, with literacy, numeracy, financial and other practical skills. The early results from LifeStreams have been stellar, and we are already starting to understand some of the ways in which its tools and principles can be used to foster personal growth through all of our services.

Residential: And finally, in 2015, we finalized the preparations for our first residential services in the BC townhomes down Nigel Avenue from the Garth Homer Centre. As of this writing, we now support three very high-needs individuals residentially, and we expect continued growth in residential supports throughout 2016. This is important because we believe that in order to provide the best possible services to both older individuals and those with high needs, it is better to have close integration of day and residential supports. We are now on the road to providing these integrated services.

None of this great progress could have happened, of course, without the committed engagement of our remarkable staff and management. I would like to thank everyone for all the hard work over the past year. It was more than worth it. Thank you.

Mitchell Temkin

Our Funders

The success of GHS programs and services relies on the continuing support of our funders and donors. Thanks you to all those who have made so much possible this year.

Community Living British Columbia

The Garth Homer Foundation

All of our Individual and Corporate Donors

With special appreciation for the exceptional generosity of

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