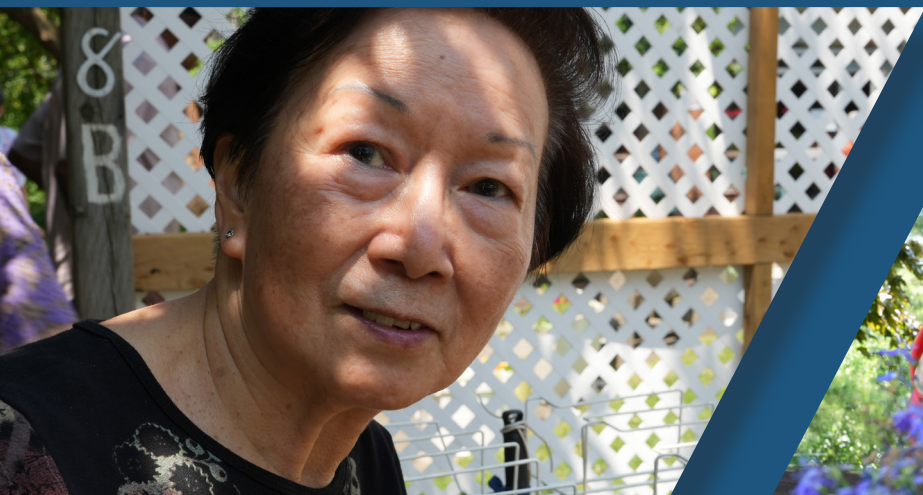


Toronto Seniors
Housing Corporation

Seniors Speak

Summer Issue



Welcome to the Summer Issue

Table of contents

- Land and African Ancestral Acknowledgements 3
- A Message from Interim CEO Jill Bada..... 4-5
- A film community for seniors in Toronto’s east end..... 6
- From centre stage to behind-the-scenes success..... 7
- R-PATH reports: committee celebrates 10th anniversary 8-9
- Building community through togetherness 10-11
- Fall Prevention Program supports aging at home 12-13
- Plant seeds and they will come 14-15
- Your community at a glance 16-17
- STAC update 18
- Seniors Speak is available in many languages 19
- Stay Connected! 20

Land Acknowledgement

Toronto Seniors Housing acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

African Ancestral Acknowledgement

Toronto Seniors Housing acknowledges all Treaty peoples – including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past – and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery.

We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.



A Message from CEO Jill Bada



Dear tenants,

I am thrilled to step into the temporary role of Chief Executive Officer of Toronto Seniors Housing, and to support the incredible work that staff and tenants have been doing.

Although I am new to this role, I am not new to the work that Toronto Seniors Housing has done to date. As the former General Manager of the Seniors Housing Unit at Toronto Community Housing, I am so glad to see the Integrated Service Model come to life in the roles and programming that TSHC has put in place over the last 14 months.

I'm happy to see all the effort that has gone into working with tenants so far toward developing a new tenant engagement model that meets the needs and diversity of seniors. We are also working with tenants to update our tenant-facing policies, such as the Tenant Action Funds and Use of Space policies. I look forward to sharing more updates on these projects with you in the fall.



Another major project that we have been working on is our company's goals: defining who we are, what we stand for, and what we want to accomplish as we look ahead. These Interim Strategic Directions (as we are calling them) will guide us as we work together to create safe, diverse and vibrant communities where tenants' voices are heard and tenants can happily age at home. You can learn more about those online at www.TorontoSeniorsHousing.ca/Interim-Strategic-Directions

As I settle into this role, I will humbly look to all of you to help me understand your community, your needs, and how I can help make a difference in your lives. Reading Seniors Speak has helped me get to know some of your stories. Our stories connect us to a greater purpose and to one another. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I have reading it.

Thank you for welcoming me to the organization.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Bada".

Jill Bada
Interim CEO



A film community for seniors in Toronto's east end

Every month, tenants at 717 Broadview Avenue gather in the community room for a special film screening thanks to Jesse Cohoon's Movie Nights. "I saw that there was a need to reconnect the community," explains Jesse, who started Movie Nights in December. Jesse is no stranger to films. Before retiring, Jesse spent over 50 years working in film and television in varying roles. The last film he helped produce, *The Second Time Around*, spent six weeks playing in Toronto.

"I saw that there was a need to reconnect the community."

Every month, Jesse selects films that appeal to seniors and puts up a poster in the building to promote the event. On this particular summer evening, 12 tenants are gathered to watch two documentaries from Lyn Wright, a retired documentary

filmmaker and tenant in the building. The regular moviegoers are in attendance, as well as some new faces who are here to support Lyn. Throughout the screenings, curious tenants drop in to see what has drawn a crowd of spectators. Irma, a new tenant to the building, tells us that it's her first time attending. She's quick to make new friends as they discuss the first documentary during intermission.

That's the beauty of the movies. It brings everyone together, no matter their age. Jesse's hope is to keep bringing the big screen to his neighbours' doorsteps, one Movie Night at a time.



From centre stage to behind-the-scenes success

Lyn Wright is no stranger to the film industry. Trained as an actor at the same Australian drama school as Cate Blanchett and Mel Gibson, Lyn's first love was theatre. But it was an encounter in the 70's with a Toronto-based group called *Liberation Media* that inspired Lyn to pivot away from acting and enter film production. The progressive women in this group were learning video techniques for addressing concerns like equal pay, daycare, rape and patriarchy. As an independent freelancer, Lyn went on to make a series of films on the labour movement and, particularly, on issues concerning older people such as elder abuse, self-neglect and aging in place. "There was a real need for such films at the time and several are still in circulation today," she told us.

As a filmmaker, Lyn's approach is simple: "research your subject, then — with respect — encourage people to tell their story and let them take you wherever they want you to go."

"Encourage people to tell their story and let them take you wherever they want you to go."

Her career as a writer, director and producer has taken her around the world. During this Movie Night, Lyn answers questions from neighbours, sharing stories from her behind-the-scenes experience directing the two films: *Don't Take My Sunshine Away* (for the National Film Board) and *Sisters of Mersey* (for the BBC). Watching these films, it's clear the characters in Lyn's films embody her own indomitable spirit.

R-PATH reports: Committee celebrates 10th anniversary

On July 11, 2023, the R-PATH Committee celebrated the 10th anniversary of its first meeting. Throughout the past decade, the members of R-PATH have volunteered their time and energy to work with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) and Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC) to help create accessible and inclusive communities for disabled tenants and staff.

To celebrate 10 years of dedication and commitment, we asked Committee members what being part of R-PATH means to them.

“When I created R-PATH the goal was to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities in TCHC and TSHC and to live at home longer. It gives me great pleasure to see that we are accomplishing that and educating people about accessibility at the same time.”

- Cathy Birch, Founder and Chair of R-PATH

“I grew up wanting to change the world. Being a member of R-PATH allows me to do that, one accessible step at a time. Hundreds of tenants and their families function better in their apartments and their communities because of the work R-PATH does. I’m proud of that.”

- Lene Andersen



“I’ve always wanted to be part of a group that have the same passion for accessibility that I do. It’s such a fantastic thing to see what’s being done for tenants with disabilities. It makes me feel great to be part of this work.”

- Amanda Boudreau

“We make a difference. So much has been done and the progress has really surprised me. It’s been such a pleasure.”

- Jane Donohue

“R-PATH is a shining example of how tenants can provide leadership in areas where we have expertise. Because we’re tenant-led, we’ve been able to change TCHC and TSHC and removed barriers to accessibility in so many areas.”

- Joe Knapper



Building community through togetherness:



Montgomery Place's Social Committee

Chances are if you live at Montgomery Place or in any of the neighbouring buildings, then you have likely attended or heard about their social events. Started 40 years ago, the Social Committee at Montgomery Place hosts multiple events for seniors throughout the year.

We sat down with four members of the volunteer committee: Gary Brigden, Jack Chapelle, Teresa Szymanski and William Thomas to find out how they manage to pull off events that get tenants (and neighbouring seniors) coming back for more.

Montgomery Place is home to 206 bachelor and 55 one-bedroom units. Many tenants live alone in their units and feel isolated without any social connection. "Our events give them an opportunity to get out of their units, connect with others, and do something," says Jack.

Coming off a busy July 1 long weekend where they hosted a BBQ for 80 tenants, Gary, Jack, Teresa and William don't seem to show any sign of exhaustion as they share stories and photos from events past. They are a well-oiled machine that's committed to excellence.



From printing tickets to events, to promoting them on their building Facebook group, and arranging catering for events, their motto is simple: give tenants the best value for their dollar. For a small annual membership fee of \$7, tenants enjoy discounted access to one-to-two events every month. Not a member? Not a problem. Every senior is welcome. "About 25 per cent of our attendance is from seniors living in neighbouring buildings," says Gary. Bi-weekly rummage sales, live concerts featuring well-known local talents, \$1 secondhand clothing markets, and a Christmas concert with a full dinner are just some of the sold out events that the committee has hosted to date.

What keeps them doing this work?

"Well, it's just fun and it's an extension of what I used to do," explains Gary. As former musicians, Gary and Jack enjoy the opportunity to use their talents and give back to the community they live in. "I'm very grateful to live in a TSHC building, and I'm very happy to share that," says Jack.

"Our events give them an opportunity to get out of their units, **connect with others, and do something.**"

"You have a good reason to get up in the morning," chimes in Teresa. A cancer survivor, Teresa is grateful for another chance at life. "I want to do something with it," she explains. William, a man of few words, puts it even simpler: "togetherness," he says. Together, we can see that the tenants at Montgomery Place are definitely aging happily at home.

Fall Prevention Program supports aging at home

Einat Danieli, Clinical Manager of Ambulatory Services at the Baycrest Hospital, wants to bring the Community Falls Prevention Program to everyone's doorstep, starting with Toronto's seniors. Her team currently runs the program on the Baycrest campus and at several Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC) buildings.

Nicole Campbell, a registered kinesiologist, is the clinician who runs the program. For an hour and a half each week over 10 weeks, participants meet for a class that often takes place in the building they live in. Each week, Campbell teaches participants to build the skills and body awareness needed to prevent falls. Each session includes strength-building workouts to upbeat music, core exercises that show how the human body keeps us balanced, and education on what causes falls.

Extensive evidence shows that exercising with a program that targets strength and balance prevents falls, and improves reaction times. This research was key when choosing to hold the classes in TSHC buildings.

Despite having the program at home, Campbell still meets participants later than she would like. "The best time to join is before you've had a fall," she advises. "Preventing falls is one of the most important things in supporting aging at home," explains Danieli. Falls are currently the leading cause of injury-related hospital admissions for older adults.



Theresa MacDougall, a recent graduate of the program, says the course changed the way she navigates the world. "It just brings about a whole new awareness of your body," she says. She now puts on firm shoes in the morning instead of slippers, and turns on the light when navigating what she thinks is familiar territory.

Returning to a classroom not only allows older adults to learn fall prevention strategies, but it also creates a community. "It really helps to hear others' struggles," MacDougall says. Campbell has seen a positive response from tenants in the program. When peers can hold their own during a challenging demonstration of balance, the whole class cheers. "The program allows everyone to come together and learn that they are not alone in this."

"It just brings about a whole new awareness of your body."



We look forward to continuing to work with Baycrest Hospital through this partnership to help seniors age at home and improve their quality of life. Read more at bit.ly/3rJGIWi.

Plant seeds and they will come:

Tenants at Blair Court are growing more than plants

The Gardening Committee at Blair Court is in its first growing season, but the garden has been around for over a decade feeding tenants and giving them a lush community space to gather in.

Thanks to the Tenant Action Funds, which were re-introduced last year to fund tenant-led projects and initiatives that respond to tenant-identified priorities, Liz Ryan was able to get \$1,000 from Toronto Seniors Housing to expand the garden space. Other tenants pitched in to help spruce up the space. They put in a new lattice and additional planter beds to make gardening more accessible for wheelchair-bound tenants like Iona Timplaru. TSHC partner agency WoodGreen also supplied planter beds, fertilizer, and soil.

The Gardening Committee is made up of five tenants: Liz Ryan, Tsugi Iida, John Carrington, Sandra Hunt, and Branko Manasiev. This year, the committee worked with their Community Services Coordinator, Ornella Cavašin, to set up the committee, create garden rules, and establish a fair process for assigning plots. The outcome has been positively received, bringing together tenants from different backgrounds over a shared hobby. “The tenants are always out here enjoying the space,” says Jane Irving, the Seniors Services Coordinator for the building. “We have so many tenants who aren’t fluent English speakers and yet, they’re able to come out here and enjoy this space together.”

It’s hard to believe that this space was once a “garbage dump,” as many tenants told us. During the pandemic, Liz and Tsugi took matters into their own hands to beautify the space. They met daily to remove ivy, pull out weeds, and plant flowers. Slowly but surely, signs of life began to show in the once dead and dry soil. Today, it’s a backyard oasis for tenants full of lush green grass, colourful flowers, a large vegetable

garden, and trees providing shade on hot summer days.

For seniors living at Blair Court, the benefits of being together outside and gardening are as bountiful as their harvest. We visited a few weeks after tenants had planted their flowers, vegetables and herbs. There were at least 20 tenants gathered outside – some

seasoned gardeners and others first-time gardeners – all of them visibly content and eager to proudly show us their plot. “When you take pride in where you live, you want to keep it a beautiful place to live,” says John.

“It’s our garden,” says Liz. “We hope other tenants see our space and are inspired to create something like this in their communities.”

“When you take pride in where you live, you want to keep it a beautiful place to live.”





Your Community at a Glance



STAC update

It has been another busy time for members of the Senior Tenants Advisory Committee (STAC).

Their many activities included:

- providing input on the consultation and collaboration processes for developing a Tenant Engagement Model and giving further feedback on what tenants want and need;
- reviewing tenant input on the tenant-facing policy review process, including Tenant Action Funds, Use of Space and prioritizing other policies for updates;
- providing feedback on R-PATH's tenant engagement efforts when accessibility projects are coming to Toronto Seniors Housing buildings;
- meeting with Toronto Seniors Housing Business Operations staff who presented information on the internal transfer process; and
- receiving introductions to City of Toronto staff who work with Toronto Seniors Housing.

Members will also participate alongside other tenant leaders, staff and service providers in design workshops for a Tenant Engagement Model early this fall.

We were sorry to lose one of our STAC members recently, Maureen Clohessy, but for the best possible reason.

Maureen stepped down so she could take on the role of Tenant Director on the Toronto Seniors Housing Board of Directors. Congratulations Maureen!



Seniors Speak is available in many languages

Call **416-945-0800** to request this document in an alternate language or format.

இந்த ஆவணத்தை வேறு மொழி அல்லது வடிவத்தில் கோர **416-945-0800** ஐ அழைக்கவும்.

Llame al **416-945-0800** para solicitar este documento en otros idiomas o formatos.

Καλέστε το **416-945-0800** για να ζητήσετε αυτό το έγγραφο σε εναλλακτική γλώσσα ή μορφή.

Для запроса этого документа на другом языке или в альтернативном формате позвоните по телефону **416-945-0800**.

Для запиту цього документа іншою мовою або в альтернативному форматі зателефонуйте за номером **416-945-0800**.

다른 언어 또는 형식으로 된 버전은 **416-945-0800** 으로 요청하십시오.

请拨打 **416-945-0800**，以其他语言或格式索取此文档。

Xin gọi **416-945-0800** để yêu cầu có tài liệu này bằng một ngôn ngữ hay bằng một dạng thức thay thế khác.

برای درخواست این اطلاعات به زبان یا فرمت دیگر، با شماره **416-945-0800** تماس بگیرید.

Zadzwoń pod numer **416-945-0800**, aby poprosić o ten dokument w innym języku lub formacie.

Appelez le **416-945-0800** pour demander ce document dans une autre langue ou un autre format

વૈકલ્પિક ભાષા અથવા ફોર્મેટમાં આ દસ્તાવેજની વિનંતી કરવા માટે **416-945-0800** પર કોલ કરો

Ligue para **416-945-0800** para solicitar este documento em um idioma ou formato alternativo

Stay connected!



To stay connected and updated with the news and events of Toronto Seniors Housing, make sure to follow us on social media. You can find us on Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and LinkedIn. You can also learn more on our website at www.TorontoSeniorsHousing.ca.

Toronto Seniors
Housing Corporation

For Tenants ▾ Become a Tenant ▾ Health & Community ▾ News & Events ▾ Careers ▾ About



Welcome to

Toronto Seniors Housing



Get in touch

Want to be featured in an upcoming newsletter? Prefer to get Seniors Speak in your email inbox?

Contact us at SeniorsSpeak@torontoseniorshousing.ca.

.....
You can call these numbers 24 hours a day, seven days a week, or reach us via email at support@torontoseniorshousing.ca.

Tenant Support Centre: 416-945-0800

Community Safety Unit: 416-921-2323

Crime Stoppers: 416-222-8477

