

St. Matthew's Bracondale House

Annual Report 2023



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Charitable Registration Number:
10803 1295 RR 0001

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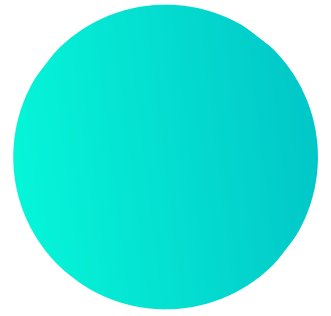
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@BracondaleHouse

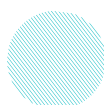
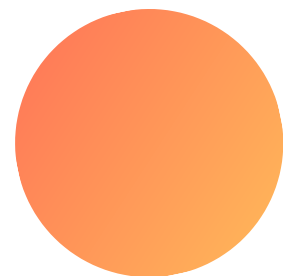
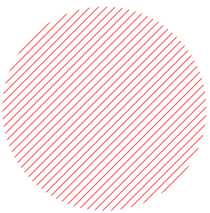


@BracondaleHouse



OUR MISSION

Our community accommodates seniors and families, providing a safe and caring environment, and assisting older residents to live with dignity and independence.



Board of Directors

Chair:

David Hughes

Treasurer:

Robbert McIntosh

Secretary:

Glenn Cumming

Members:

Howard Katz

Jane Kuchma

Irfan Lakha

Kathleen Mangan

Daniel Mekinda

Susan Noakes

Jane Schope

Melissa Shea

Carina Wong

Jeff Zelikovitz

OUR TEAM

Staff

Executive Director:

Susan DesLauriers

Program Director:

Todd Hazelton

Supportive Housing Manager:

Carrie Ann Cacho

Housing Services Manager:

Lisa Moshonas

Housing Manager:

Brenda Silveira

Supportive Housing Coordinator:

Arcelie Savedra

SAS Program Manager:

Betty Jerez

Program Coordinator:

Andrew Thomas

Bookkeeper:

Magdalene Gerwin

Superintendents:

Renwick Burnett

Tyler Foster

Mercia Pearson

Sandy Zhang

Cook:

Nayra Reis de Azevedo

Personal Support**Workers:**

Emelyn Llonillo

Hilda Marquez

Lisa Persad

Marian Ragucos-Basbas

Marisa Ramos

Ludina Santos

Maria Soccorro Tiamzon

Arceli Tabladillo

Looking Back on 2023

Report from the Board Chair

The fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, saw an easing of the Pandemic as a crisis and a return to “normal” life for St. Matthew’s Bracondale House residents and community members. This was made possible by investments in infection control measures and training, communications and safety precautions and compliance and common sense thinking by residents, program users and staff. Our in-person classes returned to pre-Pandemic participation levels. The year was also marked by inflation that affected the cost of just about everything. The lack of affordable housing became more pronounced than ever in 2023 and St. Matthew’s Bracondale House continued to offer a safe, vibrant, and affordable oasis for seniors.

On behalf of the board, I want to thank our Executive Director, Susan DesLauriers, and the staff for their continued perseverance and commitment to our residents and community members during 2023. We would like to welcome David Makuto as our new On Call Superintendent.

I would also like to thank my fellow board members for their time and commitment to the Bracondale model of housing and aging and their engaged participation during the Pandemic. We thank departing board members, Robb McIntosh and Carina Wong, for their service and welcome new board members Kathleen Mangan, Daniel Mekinda and Jeff Zelikovitz.

Additionally, the board devoted time and effort to the following in 2023:

- Finalized Bracondale’s transition and full compliance with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act
- Created a Human Resources Committee that undertook a project that included planning for the hiring of an HR consulting firm to review Bracondale’s organizational structure, HR policies, performance review structure, job descriptions and compensation.
- Struck a Working Group to study and research the feasibility of an employer matching group RRSP initiative for Bracondale staff.
- Engaged in planning and working with our engineering consultants on capital energy savings measures identified in our Reserve Fund Study and Energy Audit Report.

We thank our funders who enabled Bracondale to offer affordable housing (City of Toronto), social and recreational activities for seniors in the community and residents (Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and City of Toronto) and funding for supportive housing and congregate dining for our aging residents (Ontario Health). We are grateful to the Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation, D.H. Gordon Foundation and the Norman & Margaret Jewison Foundation for their very generous grants which support the Bracondale mission.

David Hughes
Chair of the Board
of Directors

“We thank departing board members, Robb McIntosh and Carina Wong, for their service and welcome new board members Kathleen Mangan, Daniel Mekinda and Jeff Zelikovitz.”

Looking Back on 2023

Report from the Executive Director

Bracondale ensures that all residents regardless of age, background, or ability to pay, live and thrive in safe and affordable housing that is diverse and welcoming, with access to support and services. It is a place where everyone is treated with kindness and respect and feels welcomed and valued.

Following our integration with SAS in 2019, we were looking forward to the introduction of a wide variety of social, recreational, fitness activities and educational and wellness programs for residents and community members to enjoy together while also planning to expand our community membership. Unfortunately, the pandemic interfered with our plans, but we are now happy that residents, SAS members and seniors living around Bracondale are attending programs in-person. We continue to offer virtual programs for those who are concerned about their health and like the convenience of exercising and learning in their homes.

As the pandemic was easing, the Board and staff had the time to look beyond the present and start planning. We worked on improving operational plans for our supportive housing services, planning to modernize our HR policies, procedures, and compensation, and completing an energy audit report to identify projects for energy savings. We also recruited and welcomed new board members whose experience, and knowledge will help guide Bracondale into the future.

Bracondale's SAS program team were creative in designing meaningful activities to keep people connected and engaged in response to pandemic-related isolation among our residents and SAS members. They are planning more in-person meetings with older adults to identify ideas about new activities and ways to improve our delivery of programs from the lessons we learned during the pandemic.

Bracondale's dedicated Personal Support Workers (PSW's) care for their clients with kindness, compassion, and competence. They understand not only what our clients need, but more importantly, what they want. They support our clients to continue living independently in their homes by providing the assistance they require.

We know the importance of ensuring that residents have a safe, secure, and comfortable home. Housing administrative staff are committed to improving resident experience by listening and learning what residents want to make their lives easier. They ensure that their apartments and common spaces are kept in good condition and that Bracondale is a place where residents want to live and are proud to call home. The janitorial staff provide needed maintenance repairs in a timely and friendly manner, answer emergency calls after office hours and are available to help when residents are in a predicament. Housing staff have formed strong relationships with contractors who regularly service our buildings. We have learned from these valued professionals and benefitted from their expertise in maintaining our buildings in such good condition.



"We are so happy to hear the chatter and see the smiling faces of seniors in our hallways, lounges and recreation areas. We have a deeper appreciation for the moments we can now spend together."

Bracondale remains a financially strong organization, governed by a talented Board of Directors who provide oversight, direction, and support. The work of the Board of Directors requires considerable time and energy. I appreciate their commitment to Bracondale and their many contributions throughout the year.

Thanks again to our amazing Bracondale staff; our incredible PSW's who provide compassionate care; our Supportive Housing staff who ensure that no resident goes without care; the program staff who provide enriching social activities, fitness programs, and educational sessions in a caring and supportive environment; our janitorial staff who fix problems with a smile; and our administrative team who skillfully run the business of Bracondale.

Susan DesLauriers
Executive Director

FOUNDATIONS

The Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation

The D.H. Gordon Foundation

The Norman & Margaret Jewison Foundation

OUR FUNDERS

Government of Ontario

Ministry for Seniors
& Accessibility



Ontario Health
Toronto Region



Government of Canada
Canada Summer Jobs



City of Toronto

Shelter, Support &
Housing Administration



Community Service
Partnership Program



OUR PARTNERS

AdvantAge Ontario

Dr. Claudio Borgono (Family Doctor)

Canadian Broadcast Sales

Christie Pharmacy

CRA Income Tax Clinic

The Rotary Club of Toronto

Ontario Community Support Association

Ontario Health, Toronto Region

St. Matthew's United Church

Loblaws Pharmacy - Vaccines

Wychwood Presbyterian Church

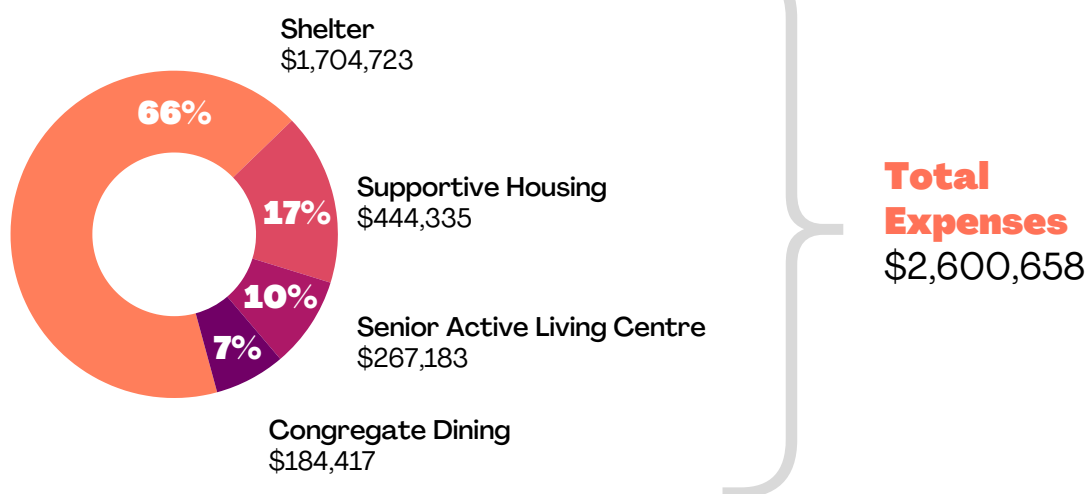
Financials

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS	2023	2022
Current Assets	2,052,433	1,758,723
Capital Reserve Assets	1,651,811	1,459,144
Property and Equipment	-	-
Total Assets	3,704,245	3,217,868
LIABILITIES	2023	2022
Current Liabilities	433,641	324,905
Capital Reserve Fund	1,651,811	1,459,144
Operating Fund	1,618,793	1,433,819
Total Liabilities & Fund Balances	3,704,245	3,217,868
Trust Fund	330,267	322,943

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES



STATEMENT OF SHELTER INCOME & EXPENSES

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

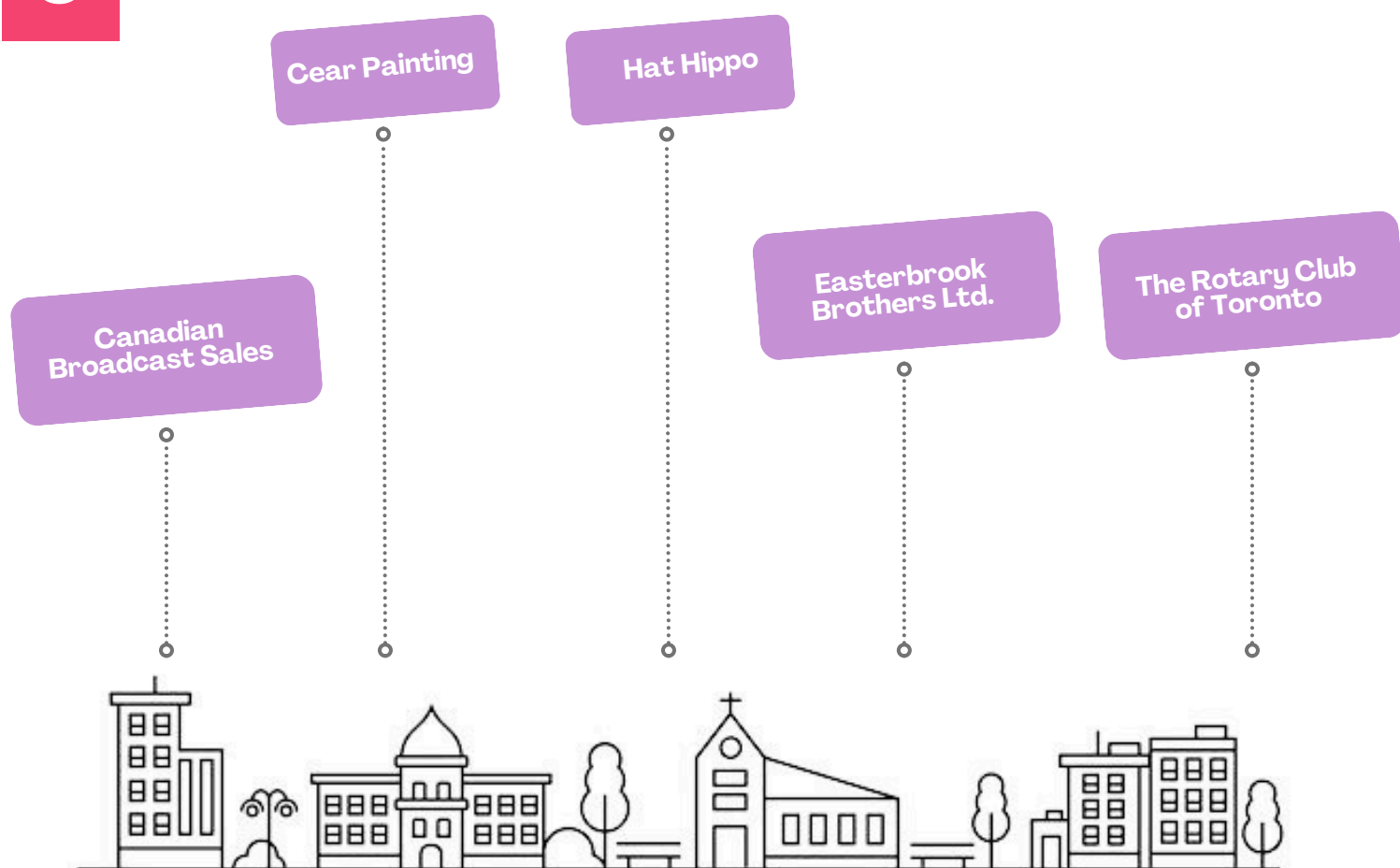
INCOME	2023	2022
Current Assets	1,898,616	1,859,251
EXPENSES	2023	2022
Property Taxes	132,293	128,251
Maintenance & Repairs	544,062	509,971
Utilities	252,970	274,199
Allocation to Capital Reserve Fund	361,351	361,351
Other Expenses	414,047	388,840
Total Expenses	1,704,723	1,662,612
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	193,893	196,639

STATEMENT OF NON-SHELTER INCOME & EXPENSES

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

SENIOR ACTIVE LIVING CENTRE	2023	2022
INCOME		
Grants	127,564	130,025
Amenity Fees & Memberships	80,482	62,173
Donations & Foundations (Bracondale Trust Fund)	49,679	40,207
Other Income	9,458	11,120
Total	267,183	243,525
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Employee Benefits	160,590	150,588
Program Costs	82,113	73,291
Other Expenses	24,480	19,646
Total	267,183	243,525
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	2023	2022
INCOME		
Ontario Health - Toronto Region	448,331	435,355
Total	448,331	435,355
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Employee Benefits	403,047	398,342
Other Expenses	41,288	49,934
Total	444,335	448,276
SURPLUS DEFICIT	3,996	(12,921)
CONGREGATE DINING	2023	2022
INCOME		
Ontario Health - Toronto Region	99,381	96,119
Meal Program	64,798	63,184
Total	164,179	159,303
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Employee Benefits	108,265	104,184
Other Expenses	76,152	69,462
Total	184,417	173,646
TRANSFER FROM SHELTER	20,238	14,343

OUR DONORS



BUSINESS DONORS



Individual DONORS

Evelyn Abraham

Adrienne Adie

Subbaraman Anantha

Lynette Assness

Christopher Bee

Yoseph Brehanu

Maria Buenafe

Pearl Buenafe

Gayle Burns

Mary Campbell

Lorne & Cathy Cotter

Jennifer Cowley

Glenn Cumming

Ranjani De Silva

Susan DesLauriers

Jacquie Doran

Carolyn Doyle

Moiria Duff

Stephanie Farnsworth

Marjorie Gibson

Alex Gourari

Carlita Gumbs-Hill

Joyce Gundy

Margaret Gunhouse

Susan Gunhouse

Mark Gurari

Todd Hazelton

Margaret Helliwell

Dianne Hendrie

Sherrill Hilton

Covel Hinkson

Deborah Hughes

Sumiko Jin

Mirjana Korenyi

Helen Joan Kreutzner

Lynne Lamb

Hazel Lawson

Jean Lehun

Naomi Levy

Simon Levy

Tammy Macdonald

Gordon MacLean

Tyrone Marks

Maria Medeiros

Aurora Milla

Wai Yin Mok

Gloria Montoya

Gerlinde Mueller

Larry Murphy

Susan Noakes

Gloria Nunez

Elisabeta Palatkai

Christine Pearce

Quang Pham

Mirta Pino

Mary Renz

Shirlee Robinson

Claudia Rogers

Jamie Rowland

Jean Sabina

Carole Sanford

Robert Seguin

Susan Sharpe

David Simpson

Seik Song

Maria Sousa

Monica Spragge

Cuong Ta

Jane Turritin

Marilynne Unger

Milagros Urbano

Ajit Vaidya

Doreen Vanini

Miriam Watkins

Pearline Wisdom

Valerie Wright

Jeff Zelikovitz

Tenant Snapshot

Our **Housing** offers seniors and families a safe and secure place to live.

Median Tenant Income Receiving Subsidies



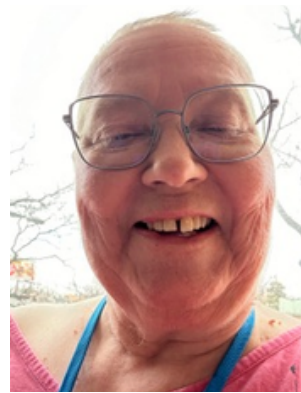
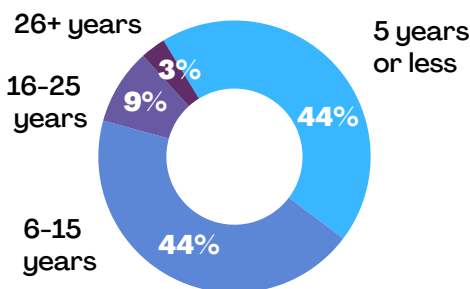
Seniors: \$21,178
Families: \$25,823

Congregate Dining



Total Meals Served: 5,524
Attendance Days: 21,530

Length of Time at Bracondale



Sherrill Hilton
Bracondale Resident

In July 2019, I received a call from Brenda Silveira offering me a 1-bedroom apartment at Bracondale. I'd looked at Bracondale's website and it sounded like the kind of place that would be right for me. Little did I know just how right! From the moment I opened the door of my apartment and saw the big front window and the trees right outside my living room and bedroom, and the old world feel of the design, I fell in love.

But that was just the beginning: I had retired from my job as a high school teacher at the end of the 2018 school year. I'd been so focused on work for so many years that I had very few friends or acquaintances and I vowed that I would work on making friends after so many years without a social life. For me, living at Bracondale was like a dream come true! I moved in on September 9th, 2019, and I no sooner got unpacked than there was an invitation to come to a barbecue in the Bracondale garden. I sat down at a table with some lovely people (none of whom I knew), and had an absolutely wonderful time!

In October, Betty and Brian took a busload of us to Mandarin for lunch and then on to the McMichael Art Gallery in Kleinburg. I was so excited to go on this excursion that I forgot I wouldn't be able to walk around the art gallery because I couldn't walk well enough, and didn't have enough stamina at that time for an all-day outing! Nonetheless, I had a wonderful time on the bus meeting many people (none of whose names I can remember, but I'm sure you understand how that is)! The setting of that Art Gallery is so beautiful, so I enjoyed that part of the trip, and, of course, eating at Mandarin was a real treat. I remember that day so clearly because the bus got us back by 5:30 or so and it was already dark out. Many of the people on the trip lived in our neighborhood or even further away up around Eglinton Avenue, and I remember saying, as I came through our door, "I'm so glad I live here!" And from that day to this, my love for my home has only grown stronger. I've met so many wonderful, caring, kind, funny, and yes, even bitchy people, but I love them all, all the different shapes and sizes in one united community.

I could also tell you about the kindness of many of our PSW's who go out of their way to make our lives easier and more comfortable. And, never to be forgotten, our intrepid and inventive chef, Nayra, who keeps thinking of new ways to engage us at mealtimes.

I could go on and on, but there's not enough space. All I can say is: Bracondale is my home and I love it.

Supportive Housing:

- Medication reminders
- Light housekeeping and laundry services
- Assistance with personal care
- Security checks
- Light meal preparation
- Shopping Service

Meal Program:

- Daily communal meals (delivered)
- Evening meals four days a week

Housing Services:

- Work orders & repairs
- Cleaning

Health & Wellbeing

- Monthly support for hearing impaired
- Monthly podiatrist visits
- Weekly hair salon

Social Activities:

- Special social lunch events
- Youth led digital literacy workshops
- iPad borrowing program
- Ice cream socials and garden parties
- Free musical performances
- Memorial services
- Yearly income tax clinics
- Zoom Family video calls
- Computer support and referrals

Pastoral Care:

- Pastoral visits
- Non-denominational services

Programs & Services

Senior Adult Services - Active Living Centre

- A variety of social and recreational programs for residents and community members
- Quality fitness programs for all levels of ability
- Current events discussion group
- Friday Hispanic Seniors Club
- Virtual Lecture Series
- Telephone assurance
- Educational sessions

Annual Events:

- Summer courtyard barbecues
- Christmas party & seasonal activities
- Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day dinners



Beth Guthrie
(Resident)



I arrived at Bracondale in June 2023, after 5 years on the waiting list. When I applied, SAS (Senior Adult Services) was not a part of Bracondale life, so that was an added bonus. After so long in Covid lockdown and its lingering frightening aftermath, life here has been a welcome change. It has made a huge difference to live in a building where management cares more about the people who live here, rather than making a profit. I love my apartment on the sixth floor with a view over the city all the way to the lake. I crave light and sunshine, and I have plenty of it here.

Last summer, I volunteered in the garden. I'd only grown flowers before, as I lacked appropriate space, so watching the tomatoes and other vegetables grow as I watered them each day was fulfilling. I started to get to know other residents who spent time in the garden. Come fall, I signed up for several SAS programs. Having the exercise classes right here makes it much easier to attend regularly, and our instructors Julie and Marie encourage me in my struggles. I've already made some good friends at bridge and the book club. I've played bridge for many years, but my lessons were long ago and Marilyn's lessons have taught me some new tricks of the game. Midweek, I can enjoy helping other people practice the game. At the book club I get other people's perspectives of the books we read.

Recently, Chef Nayra started holding a "meal together" on Tuesday evenings. Watching her prepare the dishes is fun and I get to know other people who don't participate in the same programs that I do. My days are usually too full to share lunch in the dining room at a specific time, so I'm happy to have the chance to spend time with others over an evening meal.

I'm looking forward to sitting under the lilac trees when they bloom this spring, and to spending much of the summer in the garden again, this time with the many new friends I've made here.

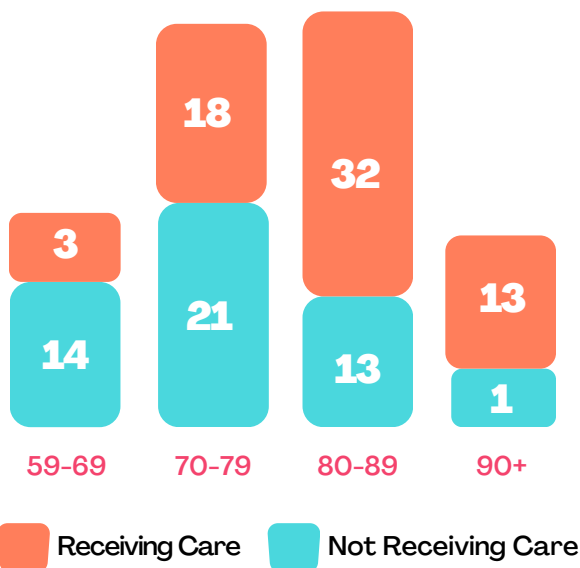
Supportive Housing

Our **Supporting Housing Services** help seniors feel safe and supported while still living independently in their own homes

24,326

Total # of Resident Days

*A **resident day** is when a client receives one or more supportive housing services in the same calendar day.



AGE OF TENANTS RECEIVING CARE



Gloria Montoya
Bracondale Resident

Years ago, when my life turned a bit more complicated, the support I have received from the Supportive Housing staff has played a very important role in my family. When I look back, I see myself going through difficult stages while facing a difficult divorce, and life with two kids. Then, God directed my steps to the family building where I not only started from scratch but also, my children grew up in a safe environment surrounded by kids the same age.

Throughout those years, neighbours became good friends and staff became someone you could always count on. From the executive director, manager, supervisor, front desk, superintendent, cleaning staff and everyone involved, I always have received a genuine answer, **“we are here to help you”** regardless of what I asked for.

Therefore, I am proud and fortunate of being part of the 14% of tenants that have been living at Bracondale between 16-25 years. Now, when my life is not as easy as before because I am not able bodied, once again Supportive Housing and Bracondale were there to help me; that's why there is only one word to express my gratitude, which is **THANKS!!!!!!**

Tribute to Barbara Bailey

Margaret Helliwell died at age 85 December 1, 2008

Betty Gibbs died on February 29, 2016, in her 94th year.

At the age of 97 years of age, Barbara Bailey, the youngest sister, moved from Bracondale in March 2024 to a Retirement Home across from her son, David.

In September 1982, three sisters moved into Bracondale where they lived below and above each other in the "07" units. Each one of the sisters contributed their time to Bracondale in many ways, helping in the office, gardening in the courtyard, and serving on Bracondale's Advisory Committee. But most importantly, they cared for their neighbours by shopping, making meals for the ill, taking them to medical appointments, visiting and providing emotional support. Barb, having an interest in fire safety became Bracondale's "Fire Captain". She educated the residents about fire safety and evacuation procedures.



This dynamic team of sisters proposed the many services and programs that all residents enjoy today, such as the safety board, meal programs and social activities for residents to get to know each other. When funding was proposed for Supportive Housing, all three sisters came together to get the residents and the Board to recognize the need for such services. This was a cultural change from housing independent seniors to adding a care component. Overcoming the resistance to change, approval from the Board was given to the Executive Director to pursue this funding.

Bracondale received Supportive Housing funding in 1997 and Barb was asked to serve on the Supportive Housing Board, taking the lead in planning and implementing the services with her expertise as a nurse. With Barb's leadership, we learned that building a trusting relationship between the client and Personal Support Worker and Supportive Housing Manager resulted in clients accepting care and feeling comfortable in letting us know when they needed more care. Barb later served a six-year term on the Board.

Everyone misses Barb as she was a good friend to many residents, ensuring that everyone moving into Bracondale was welcome and part of the community. She was also a mentor to the staff, with all of us realizing how rewarding our relationships with residents have been while working here.

Susan DesLauriers



Senior Adult Services

Active Living Centre

Our active living centre offers a variety of recreational and social programs. Membership extends beyond our residents and is open to Community Members for a fee. Community Members comprise over 90% of our membership and come from across the GTA and beyond.

SAS PROGRAMS

Tai Chi (Virtual)
 Watercolour Art (Hybrid)
 Gentle Yoga (Hybrid)
 Gentle Chair Yoga (Virtual)
 Stretch & Relax (Hybrid)
 Chair Fit (Hybrid)
 People & Current Events
 Functional Fitness (Hybrid)
 Dancercise (Hybrid)
 Gentle Fitness (Hybrid)
 Osteoporosis Fitness
 BeFit! (Virtual)
 Pilates (Hybrid)
 Singing for Joy (In-person)
 Bridge (In-person)
 Friday Hispanic Seniors Club
 Educational Lecture Series
 Telephone Assurance



25
PROGRAM HRS
PER WEEK



Elisabeth Gladstone
 SAS Member

I heard about SAS from a friend so in 2019 I decided to investigate what was on offer.

I began by joining an osteoporosis fitness class and then signed up for the lecture series, "Masterworks of the Mayan and Aztec Civilizations."

When all in-person activities came to an abrupt halt in March 2020, the very competent SAS staff was soon able to offer classes on Zoom.

For the past three plus years I have joined, via Zoom, lectures on Verdi, jazz, movies, women authors, and a travelogue of South American countries.

With the resumption of hybrid classes I have come back to Bracondale for fitness and watercolour painting classes. I really appreciate the in-person instruction and interacting with other participants.

The program staff work hard to provide excellent classes and other social activities, creating many opportunities for seniors to get together, have new experiences and make friends. My very sincere thanks to them.



+200
MEMBERS

77% Fitness

23% Recreation

ATTENDANCE DAYS PER MONTH

JANUARY - 1031

JULY - 1259

FEBRUARY - 1206

AUGUST - 959

MARCH - 1540

SEPTEMBER - 921

APRIL - 750

OCTOBER - 1484

MAY - 747

NOVEMBER - 1666

JUNE - 1475

DECEMBER - 515

2023: STILL GROWING

Our membership base continued to expand and diversify in 2023. New members are amazed at the vast array of programs on offer at such a reasonable price. We have noticed how pleased and happy **SAS** members seem when they come to **Bracondale**. The program staff with help from our instructors do our best to make the programs fun with music, dancing, a welcoming environment, etc. We are fulfilling the mandate of an **Active Living Centre**, our members leave feeling energized with a sense of accomplishment.

It was a very busy, challenging and rewarding year with only two full-time staff navigating this hybrid world. When the year began, we were offering 5 classes in a hybrid format. Due to demand, by the end of the year it had become 10 classes. **Gentle Yoga, Stretch & Relax, Gentle Fitness, Pilates** and Wednesday's **Osteo Fitness** class were all added. Our members love the flexibility this hybrid model provides them. If they go on vacation or the weather is bad, they are still able to participate from anywhere with a stable internet connection. Some members only participate virtually from the safety and convenience of their homes as they say they do not have to deal with construction delays, heavy traffic, crowded public transit, etc.

Our **Singing for Joy** program returned in the Spring & Summer session. The instructor, **Ramona Gilmour-Darling** and piano player **Kate Acone** have been a welcome addition to the SAS community. Their passion, energy, and ability to connect with our members has been a great help in reintroducing this class. One of the highlights of the year at **Bracondale** was their highly anticipated holiday performance followed by a reception. More than 50 people attended and you could feel the buzz and excitement in the room.

SAS returned to the **Madison Pub** after a lengthy absence on June 5th, 2023. This long standing tradition is a favourite of many members who along with their guests are encouraged to join us once a month for food, fun, laughter, and live music. It is always a thrill for us to see our members, singing, dancing, and having fun with their friends and meeting new people. We often hear comments along the lines of, "Thank you for making us feel happy and younger".

Our **Beginner Bridge** and **Social Bridge** classes were reinstated in October. The class instructor **Marilynne Unger** is a SAS member, Bracondale resident and a volunteer at the Bracondale office front desk. Her passion for Bridge has been instrumental in the success of these classes.

On a beautiful day in October, we went on a memorable bus trip to the **Bala Cranberry Festival**. **Dianne Hendrie** suggested at our **SAS Program Advisory** committee meeting to offer a packed lunch. A big thank you goes out to Bracondale's Program Director, **Todd Hazelton** for taking the lead on preparing the lunches. It was a great day to sit outside and have a picnic. **Emmanuel Ayala**, Bracondale's summer student came with us as well and was extremely helpful with one of our members. Numerous people were touched by his actions that day.

Our educational virtual lecture series continued to expose our membership to a variety of interesting arts and culture topics. We began the year with Art Historian and avid traveller, **Elizabeth Iturbe's** virtual tour entitled, Voyage of Discovery – **South American Highlights and Hidden Gems!**. Our Summer Lecture Series, **Crime Writing in a Cold Climate**, was led by a long-time SAS member and published author **Lynne Murphy**. Lynne spoke with a different well known author each week; week 1 – **M. H. Callway**, week 2 – **Rosemary McCracken**, week 3 – **Melodie Campbell**, and week 4 – **Lorna Poplak**. We wrapped up the year with **Love & Cinema** hosted by **Dr. Jessica Whitehead**, an Assistant professor in the Department of Communication & Languages and Teaching Chair in Flexible Digital Delivery at Cape Breton University.

Moving into 2024 we will add an additional specialty program, **Weight Bearing**. Furthermore, we hope to add an additional **Water Colour Art** class for **beginners** in the Spring and Summer session and for the Summer Lecture Series, **Music History – 40s Famous Singers** it will be **in-person**. This will be a unique format as it will feature a presentation and live performance by **Igor Laze**.

The future is bright for SAS!

Andrew Thomas
Program Coordinator

Betty Jerez
Program Manager



Fall Day Trip

A beautiful fall day at the
Bala Cranberry Festival.



Our Volunteers

We couldn't have done it without you

Whether serving on the board, providing clerical relief, facilitating programs, gardening, assisting with fundraising, or by serving on our committees, our volunteers were an invaluable support to our staff and seniors.

We have always prided ourselves in the unique community we've nurtured over the years here at Bracondale and we owe a great part of that to our volunteers. Our volunteers strengthen the bonds between residents and staff, and between Bracondale and its neighbourhood community.

Many of our volunteers are residents who want to give back to Bracondale. These individuals demonstrate a deep care for the community and a genuine compassion for their fellow tenants. Their efforts and the spirit of their work does not go unnoticed.



Galina Laguina
Bracondale Resident



Now is my third season on the Bracondale Garden Volunteer Group. I've already gained some experience in our front green area. Lots of work must be done: choosing plants and flowers suitable for each area, considering growth at blooming time, the kind of ground, hours of sunshine and shade, as well as an estimation of the total cost to be realistic with our dreams.

The office staff do a great job in planning and organizing the process, covering expenses, helping volunteers to do the hardest physical work, helping with ideas and offering advice, friendly discussion and support. They also encourage us and appreciate our efforts.

Spring is the hardest time. Plants must be bought and delivered, ground prepared, fresh soil and fertilizers spread, holes dug, plants properly put in the soil, seeds sown. When the hard spring job is done, we move into hot and an often dry summer. We need to water our flowers every day, 7 days a week, and some of them - twice a day on the hottest days. Last year, new hoses were bought, it is easy and fun to work with them.

In Wild Nature, green life is balanced according to area. But we want to embellish our life with beautiful flowers and plants not native to a big city environment. They are tender guests and give us joy, they cannot survive without our care.

So, it is obvious, that we need more responsible volunteers to help us. We do not expect anybody to work hard every day. A little help is still help! Please, come and tell us what you can do.

I like to do my job when the sky darkens and the street lights up in our nice, green and safe neighbourhood. At that time I do not disturb people enjoying fresh air at the entrance looking on with smiles at the blooming beauty. I laugh, I do not have a dog to walk around, so it is my nightly promenade. It is nice and quiet with a warm scent in the air from the blooming beautiful garden that we treat with love for everybody to enjoy.

When my friends ask me, why I am volunteering, I say, because I live here.

OUR 2023 VOLUNTEERS

Emperatriz Oré Arroyo	Colin Hirons
Lyn Assness	David Hughes
Enriquetta Ayalin	Deborah Hughes
Joan Clemo	Porjai Jansresattana
Concetta Cosco	Howard Katz
Gabriele Craig	Jane Kuchma
Glenn Cumming	Galina Laguina
Diane da Costa	Irfan Lakha
Marjorie Gibson	Rebecca Lewis
Beth Guthrie	Robbert McIntosh
Dianne Hendrie	Maria Medeiros

Aurora Mila
Jorge Moraga
Susan Noakes
Elisabeta Palatkai
Santiago Pardilla
Christine Pearce
Kathryn Posthumus
Mabel Poyser
Jean Sabina
Jane Schope

Melissa Shea
Kathleen Stark
Marina Taverner
Hailu Teferi
Baba Torres
Jane Turritin
Marilynne Unger
Syed Valiullah
Doreen Vanini
Carina Wong



MADISON PUB



COVID interrupted our Madison Pub Mondays. When they started again, months ago (thanks Betty), it was like coming home. I have been joining these special days since they started more than 20 years ago. We have good meals and drinks everybody can afford.

We meet old friends, make new ones and dance (or watch), we sing along with the entertainers and share what we need of our griefs and joys. Can't wait for the next date! **(Kathryn Posthumus)**

Love this place!! The people that come here are very friendly and fun. Where else can you get a drink for \$2?? Plus the food is very good and lots of it. Look forward to coming here once a month, I wish it were more.

(Catherine Archer)

"I love the food, the service, the music and spending some time enjoying a few relaxing hours, but most of all, I love getting together with other seniors that enjoy the same things as I do." **(Josephine Fenoglio)**

I love the Maddie. The food is a good bargain for \$6. The staff is great and very accomodating. To add to the experience we have a variety of entertainment which adds to the fun at the Maddie." **(Iris Horton)**

Usually the music is good. The food is good and the price is right. Sorry, I am not able to write a smart line, but I would not come if I did not enjoy it. **(Martha Mile)**

The Madison Pub is a comfortable venue, has a cheerful atmosphere and is very welcoming for seniors. We look forward to the lunches with SAS groups. 🎵 Thank you for the music. **(Anonymous)**

It is well worth the trip. The food is excellent as is the service and entertainment. As usual Betty & Andrew are excellent applying themselves. Many thanks! **(Betty Scala)**

Such a great place to meet people who come from all over. The food and service are good with great music. Andrew & Betty are such good hosts. **(Cathy Bustamante)**

Family Brunch



A shared meal in a group setting can provide a sense of acceptance, great pleasure, and laughter which can make it the highlight of the day.

I look forward to these dates on the meal calendar, so I can round up the gang (my relatives) who also look forward to this wonderful event. Not only is it well organized and pleasantly displayed, but the “brunch” is always consistent and well prepared (Thanks Chef Nayra). A chance to sit down with my neighbours once a month for a pleasant meal. Many thanks to Todd / Chef Nayra and the little helpers. Job well done!! **(Tyrone Marks)**

As a family we have enjoyed the tasty brunches you host every month. It's a great opportunity for my Mom to get her family together without having to go through the stress of hosting herself.

We have to give Chef Nayra big compliments for the delicious french toast!

Thanks Todd to you and your staff for coordinating the brunches every month. We are looking forward to the next one! **(Robin Shepherd)**

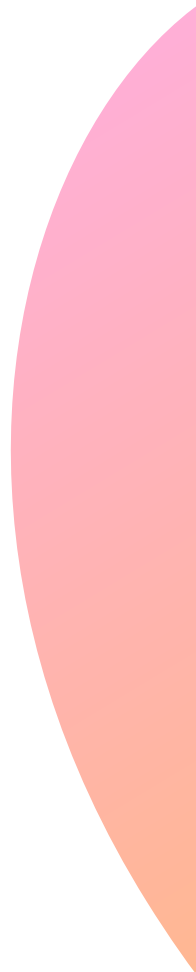
This gathering must be the most popular on the Bracondale social calendar, not only for the obvious reason of providing an opportunity for residents and their families and friends to get together but also to meet others in the same situation, so there's a certain amount of anticipation involved, due in large part to the organizational abilities of Todd in his (seemingly) random placing of the guests as they arrive and of course to the outstanding meal provided by Nayra and her team, which is always the first subject of conversation at the table.

So it could well be that you find yourself next to another resident who has lived at Bracondale for as long as you have so there are the usual exclamations of amazement as to how it could be that you've never met before, after which the conversation is likely to follow predictable lines - Where did you live before? What floor are you on? Which way do you face? And so on. Grandchildren are always a safe bet (but a corresponding problem if you don't have any) so sometimes my quirky sense of humour gets the better of me and an unscripted remark can raise a puzzled smile or, more likely, go down like the proverbial lead balloon. I've also found that my unfamiliar accent can be a talking point as it's not quite English, in fact, it's not quite anything recognizable, only most definitely not Canadian, so questions about my origins will inevitably follow.

But overall, these gatherings are voyages of discovery and when the time comes to leave, there are jolly calls of “See you next time.” Meanwhile, however, you've passed a pleasant couple of hours enjoying a meal that would be the envy of any restaurant, while perhaps making a new friend in the process, so what could be more enjoyable or rewarding than that?

(Jennifer Cowley)





In loving memory

Andrea Valentini - May, 2023

Darina McFadyen - August, 2023

Benvenuto Massaro - November, 2023

Elizabeth Corcoran - December, 2023

Always in our hearts



Thank you

We are thankful to our donors, volunteers, staff and community partners who have made these past 40 plus years a tremendous success despite the many challenges we have faced. We look forward to the next 40 years being filled with even more stories, cheers and laughter!

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