



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association North Shore Branch

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September and December by CHHA – North Shore Branch,  
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Editor: Hugh Hetherington Issue 95 December 2016

## Mountain Ear



**The North Shore Branch Board  
of Directors wish all  
our members and friends  
a Happy Holiday Season  
and a Healthy and Prosperous  
New Year**



## Pres Mez

By Mike Hocevar

Pleasant greetings to everyone! I hope Thanksgiving and Halloween were fun occasions for you. We can now look forward to the Christmas holiday season. In thinking about this issue's column, maybe because of my general age bracket as I am now approaching 60, I realize that in conversations among friends, the subject of hearing issues and hearing aids seems to be popping up more and more.

Some have admitted to noticing a bit of decline in their hearing, and others when they see me wearing hearing aids want to ask me questions about hearing loss and hearing aids; just like at our Sound Advice sessions. They want to know how the process works. Here is some advice in demystifying the realm around purchasing hearing aids

- Hearing decline is a natural part of aging and at some point one may recognize that hearing aids and other hearing assistive devices would be helpful.

**February Meeting  
Monday, February 20, 2017  
7:00 pm at the Summerhill  
135 West 15th Street,  
North Vancouver  
A Special Sound Advice  
Session with  
Flo Spratt  
And  
Hugh Hetherington  
Everyone Welcome  
For Information  
Call 604-926-5222**

Hearing aids nowadays are all pretty good. If you can go online, you can readily investigate what kind of technology is available.

- Hearing aids don't always fully correct hearing in the way eyeglasses can correct vision. But today's hearing aids are no longer just amplifiers; they are small digital computers into which different programs (features) can be programmed to help make your hearing better. Everyone's hearing level and personal lifestyle needs are different and today's hearing aids can provide great flexibility to help most people in most hearing situations.

- If your hearing seems difficult lately, one option, although not mandatory, is to start with a visit to the family doctor. There could be acute physical issues creating a problem. Sometimes it is only a wax buildup, perfectly natural, which the doctor can remedy. In the case of sudden hearing loss there could be something more serious in play and perhaps a referral to an E.N.T. (Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist) might be in order.

- Did you know that a number of prescribed drugs, including antibiotics could affect your hearing? It is important that before going ahead with such a prescription, ask the dispensing pharmacist about possible hearing side effects or search it out online.

- Following your doctor visit, the next step is to select a local hearing aid provider. Your doctor may suggest someone or you can consult with a friend who wears hearing aids. Our branch also offers a listing of the clinics on the North Shore. As CHHA is independent of the hearing aid industry, we cannot officially endorse any one company.

- During your visit, a Registered Audiologist or Hearing Instrument Practitioner will conduct a series of tests. The results are plotted on a chart called an audiogram. This includes a graph showing the levels at which you hear a range of frequencies. Based on the result, the audiologist may propose an appropriate hearing aid.

- Additionally, it is important to discuss with the provider your personal lifestyle needs. This means thinking of various listening situations like attending meetings, listening to music or television, attending concerts, and also family concerns. This will help the audiologist to select programs in the hearing aid that can be very beneficial.

- A trial period of a minimum of 30 days by law is

allowed for trying out hearing aids. Some clinics may offer more time, up to 90 days. This gives you time to adjust to the new soundscape that the hearing aids provide. It is important to work through this period to give your brain time to adjust to the new way of hearing. Some sounds may seem unnatural to you at first, but they soon become normal as your brain adjusts to sounds you haven't heard in awhile. A way to think of it is, how is it that people can live next to a busy traffic thoroughfare like the highway or sky-train line? Well, after awhile the brain starts to sort it out and knows which sounds can be ignored and moved to the background. It is the same thing with a new hearing aid, after wearing it for a few weeks, the brain adjusts so that hearing improves over time with the hearing aid. And note, that is the key; a new hearing aid wearer must be patient—the hearing aids should be worn “all the time” during this trial period and not just when deemed necessary.

- During the trial period, return visits to the audiologist will be scheduled as often as required to tweak the hearing aids, as necessary, based on your various listening experiences. Make notes on any difficulties you may be having during this period to take with you on your return visits. It is amazing what can be done in this regard, but the new wearer must be proactive.

- There are different price ranges for hearing aids from basic models, through mid range to top of the line. Your personal needs will determine the type and sophistication of the hearing aids you require. The price of the hearing aids should give you free service throughout the warranty period, insurance against loss, sometimes a supply of free batteries, and cleaning and replacing of earmold tubing for those models that have them. Annual hearing tests and adjusting the hearing aids to the results is generally included. Be sure to ask your provider about what is included in the price of your hearing aids and what if anything it will cost you if you decide to return them before the end of the trial period.

- One should also ask about assistive devices and compatibility with telephone, television and cell phone. A telecoil may be handy for the telephone and if your church or meetings you attend have what is called a loop system, the telecoil will permit you to hear well in these circumstances.

- Finally, if at all possible come to our monthly first Friday of the month “Sound Advice” sessions at West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre or the eve-

ning Sound Advice sessions at the Summerhill every February and November. And of course, we have this quarterly newsletter and a phone line to call with any questions. The National Canadian Hard of Hearing Association and Provincial chapter are also a resource, with great, frequently updated websites.

Before signing off, we are most saddened with the passing of long time branch and board member Henry Romain. His health really declined in just the past year. He found that day-to-day his status was unsure so he didn't run again at our AGM in September. In early October he died following a short stay in Palliative Care at Lions Gate Hospital.

We remember Henry's cheery pleasantness, his encouragement to others, as a conscientious and very helpful director for many, many years. He took his duties seriously, engaging in the discussion and with questions on the business at hand. Many of you will recall him as the voice at the other end of the phone calls that reminded you of the upcoming meetings at Summerhill. We will miss him. Our condolences are extended to wife Leola and family.

- Mike Hocevar on behalf of the board of directors: Bill Friend, Ruth Lapointe, Hugh Hetherington, Caroline Wickham, Susan Gelinas and Alan Dion.

## Annual General Meeting

By Hugh Hetherington

On September 19, 2016 the North Shore Branch's AGM was held at the Summerhill in North Vancouver. There were 13 members and 8 guests in attendance. A new Board of Directors was elected and a motion approved to waive the \$10.00 Branch fee for CHHA National members until further notice. Any paid up member of CHHA can now become a member of the North Shore Branch. Changes to the Board included Henry Romain stepping down due to ill health and new member Alan Dion of North Vancouver taking his place as Member-at-large. Mike Hocevar, Hugh Hetherington, Susan Gelinas, William Friend, Ruth Lapointe, and Caroline Wickham have all agreed to serve for another term.

Following the short AGM, we were entertained with a very interesting presentation by Claus Nielsen, a Research Operations Manager and Curator of the Oticon museum in Eriksholm, Denmark. I have known Claus for over 20 years having communicated many times with him by email through our

mutual interest in hearing aid history and our collections of antique hearing instruments. When Claus told me about his upcoming visit to Vancouver in 2016 to attend an audiology conference, he also offered to give us a presentation on hearing aid technology as seen through the history of Oticon from 1904 through 2016.

Oticon is the oldest hearing aid company in the world being started in 1904 by Hans Demant. His wife was hard of hearing and in order to help her, Hans travelled to the UK to buy her a hearing aid after hearing that the Danish born Queen Alexandra was wearing one at her Coronation with King George V in 1902. Hans was a manufacturer and a businessman and consequently Scandinavia's first hearing aid business subsequently became a reality.

*General Acoustic Co*  
 ENEFORHANDLER FOR SKANDINAVIEN, FINLAND OG RUSLAND.  
 H. DEMANT.  
 VESTERBROGADE... 22.

In 1908 Hans Demant became the sole distributor of Acousticon hearing aids for Scandinavia. In 1910, Hans Demant's son William Demant took over the company upon his father's death and in 1923, the company began selling hearing aids under the Acousticon trademark. During WW2, being unable to import parts, full license production began in Copenhagen.

The Acousticon model RD pictured here was a popular product in Denmark in 1910. It was a carbon hearing aid and a comment made by a Peder Kaergaard Jensen about it at the time was:



“The earpiece was the size of an ordinary alarm clock and black as tar. The sound of those hearing aids was comparable to the squawk of a stork or when a tin bucket on a leash is being dragged across cobblestones. When the ear piece got too close the instrument would whistle like a locomotive.”

In 1946 the first Oticon Model TA was produced. This was a vacuum tube hearing aid. It used two batteries and developed enough heat to warm up stiff and cold fingers during wintertime. This model was



more successful and elicited the following comment from an Anton Jørgensen in 1947:

“I lack superlatives strong enough to express my joy and happiness with the new Oticon.

After having used it for almost one year I cannot find any complaint against it. It has fulfilled my most daring hopes, and I now feel that am functioning as well as my normal-hearing fellow human beings. I even think I have a small advantage compared to normal hearing people when I am in a party situation experiencing that the manners get too bad for words – I simply turn off the aid. Therefore be assured of my daily gratitude.”

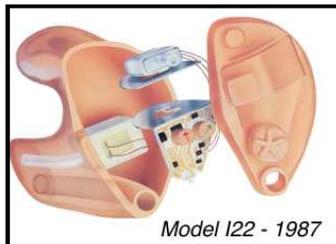
In 1944 the first sister company was established in Sweden by William Demant when he had to flee from the Gestapo. During the 1960s and 1970s further expansion took place world wide, including the Netherlands, USA, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Japan, Italy, New Zealand, France, Scotland and Spain.

The Erksholm Research Centre was established in 1977. Some of the landmark products developed by Oticon over the years were:

Model E24V in 1978



Model I22 in 1987



Commented on at the time by a 79 year old woman:

“I can now hear many soft sounds that I haven’t been noticing the last couple of years. Paper rustling, pencil scratching against paper, the sound of my own steps, the sounds when I chew and many more sounds. It is a delight. I do feel more awake. If you don’t experience the sounds of the world you easily become dull”

Oticon MultiFocus in 1991.



Still Analogue, the name referred to the fact that people reported that their hearing became multi-dimensional compared to their previous hearing aids.

Oticon DigiFocus in 1996.



The worlds first fully digital hearing aid at ear level. It featured two channels and was possibly the first BTE aid without a volume control,

Commented on by a Jens Ryhave: “If I had been Indian, I was surely baptized by the tribe . . . something like: ‘him with the loose ears with great hearing’.”

Oticon Syncro – 2004



The advanced digital hearing aid commented on by a 55 year old woman:

“Yesterday I was cooking, with 10 others during a course. Noise from ovens and exhaust – radio going, and much talk. I had no difficulty hearing

what I had to hear.”

Oticon Epoq – 2007

One of the first to feature a streamer and provide interconnection to TV, Computer, & MP3 players.

**Connectivity – the hearing aid with ‘good connections’ – Oticon Epoq 2007**



Oticon Opn – 2016

You can view this new technology at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VdIQhVwE0o>

**Oticon Opn**

- Worlds first internet connected hearing aid
- Make your own connections
- IFTTT technology, If This Then That
- More personalization



## 10 Tips for Working With Hearing Loss

Reprinted with permission from CHHA Newfoundland chapter newsletter.

If you are an employee with reduced hearing, you know that communication at work can sometimes be a challenge. Here are some tips for making your workplace more hearing accessible.

1. Understand your own hearing and communication needs. This includes your type and degree of hearing loss, how your hearing aid (or other hearing technology) works, and situations or environments where you do not hear well. This knowledge allows you to provide effective information and suggestions for improvement to your employer.
2. Wear your hearing device. If you have hearing aids, a cochlear implant or other hearing technology, wear it regularly and ensure you have extra batteries available.
3. Arrange your workstation so that you can see anyone who is approaching you.
4. During meetings or conversations try to position yourself close to the main speaker so that you can see and hear clearly.
5. Let co-workers and visitors know that you have reduced hearing and how they can best communicate with you, such as facing you and speaking clearly.
6. Ask for accommodations from your employer to make your work more hearing accessible. This may include: moving your workstation to a quieter area, using an amplified telephone or an assistive listening device, or requesting a different room set-up for meetings.
7. Sometimes job duties can be modified if they present particular challenges. For example, if you experience challenges communicating by telephone, this duty could possibly be exchanged for others.
8. Make sure the environment is quiet enough for you to hear and understand clearly. Move to a quieter location if there is too much background noise.
9. Be patient with yourself and others. Communicating when you have reduced hearing takes effort. Try to be well rested each day and give yourself time for listening breaks.
10. Educate Yourself. Ask questions. Be aware of the types of technology available to assist you. Take a speech (lip) reading class. The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association – North Shore Branch can support you with information.

**Edmonton's Keira Lintz** is about to become one of the few deaf lawyers in the last decade called to the Alberta bar. Article submitted by: Ann Janis

"I've always wanted to be a lawyer, pretty much ever since elementary school,"

Lintz said. "Without my cochlear implant, I can't hear a thing whatsoever, so it's a big part of how I got here today."

Twenty-six years ago, then two-year-old Lintz was one of the youngest children in Alberta to get the implant. Now, even children under a year old are considered candidates.

A cochlear implant is an electronic device that helps people who are deaf hear, bypassing the damaged part of the inner ear and stimulating the hearing nerve directly, the Canadian Academy of Audiology says on its website. Part of the device is implanted into the inner ear and part is worn on the outside.

For Lintz, the implant meant she didn't need any assistance during high school or university.

"I loved the independence of that, it was great and it's what's enabled me to succeed as a lawyer after school, not requiring any assistance whatsoever," she said.

While her parents faced some backlash when they made the decision to get Lintz the cochlear implant, her mother said they've never regretted it.

"There was definitely a huge controversy, a lot of people in the deaf community did not like it because they don't see being deaf as being a disability, they see it as them being part of a culture," Lintz said.

"People really strongly felt that they should have waited until I could decide whether this is something that I wanted for myself, but they went ahead and I am thankful every day that they did," she said.

One disappointment, Lintz said, is that she isn't able to get cochlear implants in both ears, as is common today. If a device was implanted in her other ear, the sounds wouldn't match. she said.

Lintz has benefitted from other advances in the technology, though. When she first received the implant, she had to wear the external part in a harness strapped to her chest with a big cord running to her head. Today, the entire thing sits behind her ear.

This week, Lintz joined her father's law firm, Purdon Lintz, as a junior associate working in family law.

"I am so excited about it. I've always wanted to

work with him," she said. "He's a great lawyer and I know I will learn a lot from him."

Her parents couldn't be more delighted to see their daughter called to the bar Friday. "The word that comes to mind is 'unbelievable'," said her father, Greg. "It means the world, she deserves every bit of it. She's worked her whole life very hard at everything she's done, so we're incredibly proud of her," said her mother, Moira.

Speechreading (lip reading)

Speechreading for deaf and hard of hearing adults www.vcc.ca

**Learn**

- Advantages and limitations of speechreading
- How to combine what you see with what you hear
- How to identify the factors that affect your ability to communicate
- How to use a variety of strategies to communicate more effectively
- How to behave assertively in difficult situations
- Tips for stress reduction and relaxation

VCC's Deaf and Hard of Hearing department (DHH) offers 12-week speechreading courses on Mondays and Tuesdays. Evening classes may be available. Sessions begin in January, April, and September.

Students must have good spoken English and be 18 years or older. Friends and family members are encouraged to register along with students who are hard of hearing or deafened. An interview with the instructor is required.

Financial services may be available.

Contact us—we're here to help!

For more information, please contact:

**Lisa Dillon Edgett**  
 Speechreading instructor  
 604.871.7348 (voice)  
 ldillonedgett@vcc.ca

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All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association or CHHA – North Shore Branch.

# Sound Advice

**Presented by:**

## The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

### North Shore Branch

**The group meets on the First Friday of each month from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon**

at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre's Social Rec Room, 695 21st Street in West Vancouver.

**No Meeting in July and August**

When we meet, we discuss topics and issues dealing with hearing loss.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Bring a friend, a family member, they are welcome too.

Subjects to be addressed include:

Technology; Speechreading; Effective Coping Strategies; Behavioural Issues; Improving Relationships; Improving Hearing Environments

**For Information call:**

## 604-926-5222

CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION

NORTH SHORE BRANCH

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail application to:

CHHA—North Shore Branch  
 Attention: Treasurer  
 600 West Queens Road  
 North Vancouver, B.C.  
 V7N 2L3

Cheque enclosed

Money Order Enclosed

Charitable Registration No.  
 BN 89672 3038 RR0001

I wish to support the aims of CHHA and the North Shore Branch and enclose my \$30.00 annual membership fee. Membership is paid annually from 1 October to 30 September.