



STRONGER *Together*



CRAIGWIEL GARDENS

2023-24 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Jennifer Gillies
Board Chair

EMBRACING *Change*

**There is still a journey ahead of us,
but we are on the right path.**



Sarah Campbell
Executive Director

This past year has probably been one of Craigwiel Gardens’ best, as well as perhaps one of the most anxious.

In today’s financial environment, a stand alone home in a small community is not feasible. The Board had set its vision on a course to grow the campus by building a new Craigholme several years ago. This past year, we recommitted to that vision and took steps to move us forward.

Signing a full Shared Services Agreement with Fairview Mennonite Homes, Cambridge, last September was a positive move for Craigwiel as we look toward a healthy, sustainable future. Elaine Shantz, President and CEO, and the Resource Team have helped staff and our Board more than we could have anticipated. In less than a year, they have helped us make tremendous progress on the new build of Craigholme. In addition, Brent Martin, CFO, brought the finances into a stable and positive position.

The entire team from Fairview and its sister campus, Parkwood Mennonite Home Inc. in Waterloo, have been so welcoming. It is refreshing to have another not-for-profit willing to share.

I am very grateful for Elaine’s experience and guidance, Fairview Parkwood Communities’ Board of Directors’ support, the Resource Team’s knowledge, and the commitment of the Shared Services Committee. Our new direction is moving us forward and helping us to secure a sustainable future.

I also want to thank the community for their support and patience as we work toward getting a shovel in the ground. While Ailsa Craig is a small community of 900 people, it has a huge heart. With the help of our friends, neighbours and partners in North Middlesex and beyond, we have raised \$1.25 million through a capital campaign that was launched during COVID. Rest assured that these funds are held in a separate account exclusively for building a new Craigholme.

I am also tremendously grateful for Craigwiel’s managers, staff, residents, clients and tenants for their understanding through COVID and beyond. Your dedication to Craigholme and Craigwiel Gardens is deeply appreciated. There are residents who could

have gone elsewhere, but chose to stay here because we have a tightly knit community. Our volunteers are a huge part of what makes our campus so special. Thank you for your commitment.

Our Municipal government has also been a tremendous support since the beginning of our expansion planning and recognize Craigwiel’s contributions as the biggest employer in North Middlesex.

As I reflect on where we have been and where we are going, I am grateful for the incredible support of each and every one of you who have kept the dream of building a new Craigholme alive. We have so much to look forward to and I’m excited about our future. There is still a journey ahead of us, but we are on the right path.

Jennifer Gillies, Board Chair

This past year has been one of growth, learning and professional development.

Born and raised in Ailsa Craig, I have worked at Craigwiel for more than 20 years, primarily focusing on the Adult Day Centre. With Ernie Harris’ retirement in June 2023, I stepped into the role of Acting Executive Director. Soon after, our Shared Services Agreement with Fairview Mennonite Homes began, bringing a Resource Team with incredible expertise and welcome support as I transitioned into my new responsibilities.

This change has provided our staff with opportunities to learn new software like HUB, a staff communication program accessible from computers and cell phones, and ‘Policy Manager’, which allows us to easily curate, search and update policies. Our goal is to complete staff training in 2024.

Thank you to our staff for continuing to provide excellent care during this time of change, and to our residents, tenants, volunteers and community partners for your tremendous support. My passion is to make Craigwiel the best it can be and an employer of choice. I believe that dream is possible with the strength that comes from great people working together.

Sarah Campbell, Executive Director



Elaine Shantz
President and CEO

In the spring of 2023, we were privileged to be approached by Craigwiel Gardens to develop a Shared Services Agreement to support and strengthen Craigwiel toward ensuring a sustainable future, much like the partnership between Fairview Mennonite Homes and Parkwood Mennonite Home Inc.

This Agreement supports access to the expertise needed to ensure residents continue to receive safe, kind care, Craigholme meets the requirements of the new 'Fixing Long-Term Care Act', and preserves the unique faith-based cultures of all three campuses and Craigwiel's strong community ties.

The Resource Team and I have been deeply moved by the incredibly warm welcome of Craigwiel's team. Their enthusiasm for collaboration and new initiatives has been inspiring. Since September 2023, Craigwiel's team has:

- Participated in the Kindness Initiative training and established a Kindness Committee.
- Trained and adopted new software for care planning, communications and policy access.
- Updated policies.
- Enhanced nursing initiatives, including infection, prevention and control.
- Joined Fairview and Parkwood's management team in leadership days and monthly Director meetings.
- Made significant progress toward a positive financial position.

I extend my thanks to Sarah Campbell, who set a collegial tone as acting Executive Director, and congratulate her on her confirmation as Executive Director, providing leadership on a day-to-day basis.

My focus has been to work with the Board on building a new Craigholme, aligning with new legislation and ensuring the new Home is affordable and sustainable. We have applied for approval to construct through a new Ministry of Long-Term Care initiative to rebuild the existing home and add new beds to expand to 96 beds, significantly impacting financial sustainability and allowing for three efficient 32-bed residential home areas. This realignment ensures we meet the needs of today's long-term care residents. We continue to work with the Ministry and have provided architectural drawings as we aim to secure construction approval by November 30, 2024.

We very much appreciate the community's fundraising efforts for the new Craigholme. Significant naming opportunities are still available.

Finally, I thank the Board of Directors, led by the Chair, Jennifer Gillies, for their unwavering support. Their commitment has maintained the vision to expand Craigholme and ensure the sustainability of Craigwiel Gardens.

In kindness,
Elaine Shantz, MA, President and CEO



Management Team, l-r:
Nathan Girodat, Maintenance Coordinator; Pam Twedde, Director of Community and Recreation Services; Sarah Campbell, Executive Director; Nicole Fleischauer, Director of Care, and Joju Tom, Temp. Nutrition Manager.

EMBRACING *Kindness*

Craigwiel’s team was introduced to the Culture of Kindness concept through our partnership with Fairview. We began with a survey focusing on kindness to self, to colleagues and in the community to establish benchmarks.

We are now building on these results with a Kindness Committee of 12 staff who are meeting regularly and leading the way to embedding the kindness initiatives in the culture. We have launched fun quarterly events focusing on kindness to self, including a scavenger hunt for a plush bunny, engaging each shift, with prizes awarded to those who found the bunny. Shane Duval, RN, (pictured top right) was one of the lucky winners.

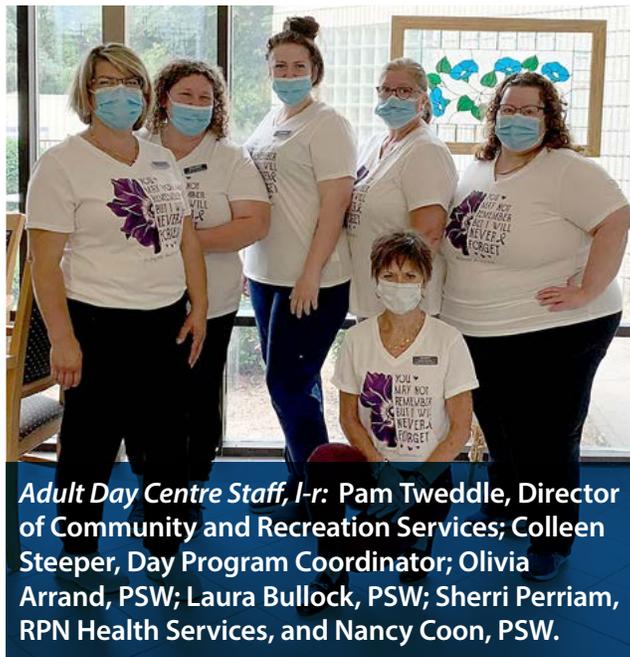


Gentle Persuasive Approach (GPA)

Gentle Persuasive Approaches (GPA) is a transformative way to address the unique needs of individuals with dementia. Rooted in empathy, dignity and respect, GPA encourages caregivers to view challenging behaviors as expressions of unmet needs and respond with compassion using effective communication techniques, person-centred care and gentle redirection.

Our Assistant Director of Care, Jessica Garay, RN, and our Quality Lead, Cindy Pedro, became certified coaches in GPA and have now trained over 60 staff. This initiative has enhanced resident interactions and helped to minimize responsive behaviours.

“GPA emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork in dementia care,” says Jessica. “This promotes a holistic and integrated approach, using the team’s collective expertise. It is more than a training program; it is a philosophy founded on kindness, empathy and respect. It helps us provide care, one compassionate interaction at a time.”



Adult Day Centre Staff, l-r: Pam Tweddle, Director of Community and Recreation Services; Colleen Steeper, Day Program Coordinator; Olivia Arrand, PSW; Laura Bullock, PSW; Sherri Perriam, RPN Health Services, and Nancy Coon, PSW.

Long Service Awards

Congratulations and thank you for your dedication.

5 years	Betsy Horton, RN Jennifer Ede, PSW Brandon Coll, PSW
10 Years	Megan Hutchinson, Dietary
25 Years	Cheri Leyten, PSW
45 Years	John Henderson, PSW Donna Stokkermans, PSW

Kudos!

Pam Tweddle completed a Recreation Manager Leadership Certificate and is now Director of Community and Recreation Services.

Jessica Garay, Assistant Director of Care (ADOC), completed the DOC / ADOC Leadership Certificate Program through Silver Meridian.

Melissa Byelis, Nutrition Manager, received a Health and Safety Certificate.

Iby Sebastian, IPAC Lead, received Long-Term Care Infection Prevention Certification in Infection Control (CBIC).



John Henderson, PSW, and A Brief History of Craigwiel

In 1977, John Henderson could not have foreseen how one decision would lead to a fulfilling career and an enriched life. Here is his story.

During high school, I needed work experience and my father, who had a connection with Shirley Hudson, the Director of Nursing at Craigwiel Gardens at the time, suggested contacting Craigwiel. I lived in Lucan at the time and went to school in London.

I started as a kitchen volunteer. When I walked in, I noticed the orange floors with so much shine on them it was like a Fred Astaire dance stage. The décor included bright purple and orange with orange sofas. It supported a theory of care for people experiencing dementia. The place was immaculate. I thought, 'this is going to be interesting'.

I started by scrubbing pots and pans, attending the dishwasher and buttering toast. I must have done alright because they invited me to stay for a summer job. I returned the following summer to volunteer on the floor as a kind of nurse's aide. Back then, you were joined at the hip with a PSW and did everything. My eyes were opened. I didn't have the academics needed for nursing, but I could still hear, listen and learn while working as a nurse's aide.

I learned I could be hired to do evenings and night shifts at Craigwiel. At the time, there were very few men working in nursing homes and there were no lifts. I was hired to help with caring for the men and lifting. I also took a Fanshawe College course to become a healthcare aide. It was the first of its kind for long-term care. Until the 1980s, healthcare aides were doing everything an RPN was doing, including wound care and dressing. We weren't allowed to arrange medications. Things have continually changed. Today, we can put salve on with a glove. That's it.

In the 1980s, we began to expand, adding a wing, another bathing area, a big auditorium, office space, a hallway to the apartments, an activity room, expanded beauty shop and larger staff room. It was big stuff and we were all excited.

I remember there was a silo on the property with chimes playing half a hymn every half hour, stopping at midnight. We also built a rental space attached to the silo. When it had to be demolished to make space

for the Adult Day Centre, the Administrator at the time, Brent Martin, filmed it. The staff and residents were watching with anticipation, expecting something big. Instead, someone yelled and it basically collapsed and went 'poof' – no big bang. There is no nursing home ever to say that they had an activity like that!

Another health care aide, Beth Briemer, heard about Day Centres and was determined to bring one to Craigwiel. She took a Geriatric Sociology Course, got funding together and made it happen! I remember she carried a pink briefcase. She did crafts, meals, got speakers and entertainment. She got the word out and it grew. Craigwiel Nursing Home became Craigwiel Gardens and we started delivering dinners to the apartments, followed by meals to the community. Edith Hodgins, who oversaw activities and enrichment, knew a lot of people and activated them as volunteers to deliver the paid meals to local people.

The VON service and an office were added for residents who need extra help. When I first started, people couldn't get home care, so we had people in the nursing home who just needed a walker, a meal, a bed changed and bathing. Today, those people can stay in their own home, with care, and receive meals on wheels, while Long-Term Care residents are people who cannot leave the hospital to go home because they need more intense care.

As the Day Centre grew, we got people driving up like a high school dropping off kids. We developed programs for people with varying cognitive needs. Bathing is such an important part of this care. I've had people cry because they haven't had a chance to have a real bath. Plus, they can get their hair done. We also make referrals for things like foot care. These little things are so important. For the person receiving this care and attention, it can be incredible. They have a few minutes to forget their hospital experience, their life at home and enjoy some entertainment with a group of people. Just being able to watch a movie with others in the auditorium or attend a church service together is a very moving, social connection.

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John Henderson, PSW, and A Brief History of Craigwiel (continued)

“People ask me – how could you be at the same place for 46 years? I say, I have worked at the same address, but it is not the same place. It has changed, and changed, and changed again.”

I am still passionate about caring for seniors after 46 years. The way I see it, my colleagues and I are part of somebody’s experience. We are part of what is developing in their life and in their children’s and grandchildren’s lives. When we offer palliative care, we are part of a major life moment. That changes you. You learn how to help others with grief.

What keeps me going is how much I love the people. In 1978, we had a lot of residents who served in the first world war, including people who lost their families due to war. We had people from England who shared some of their war experiences. Now people come from everywhere and we have more diversity in the staff. They come from cities and different countries and thank goodness for that. It greatly improves our understanding of others.

We have very close ties with this community. We used to have big harvest Sunday dinners where families from town would bring food, find a place to sit and eat, then take their dirty dishes home. Our ‘Life Enrichments’

group would make a call and word of mouth would take over that everyone was coming for dinner. It was that simple. We still have special Christmas dinners where families can come, have a meal prepared by our staff and served by department heads.

We are always changing. It can make me nervous but I know I’ll have help. A lot of things have improved in resident care. For example, we have mechanical lifts that let people stand up at their own will. We have more dignified ways of doing things and there is more safety for staff. With the new Shared Services Agreement with Fairview and the Resource Team, we are learning new things, like learning how to use HUB. It’s like Facebook, but just for staff. The kindness initiative is great. It emphasizes that this is a place of understanding and no judgement.

Craigwiel Gardens is more than buildings. It is a community. It is a family. This isn’t an old folk’s home. It isn’t a job. We make a difference in people’s lives and their families’ lives. We are strong when we work together. This is a place of life. It breathes. It is a part of you. The work is like an extension of my faith-based beliefs and I feel wonderful about it.

Campus of Care Keeps Couple Together

Jacoba and Martin Geudens emigrated to Canada from the Netherlands and Belgium, respectively, in 1953, and met and married in Canada in 1957.

They raised their children on their family farm in McGillivray Township (now part of North Middlesex) and retired to Parkhill where they lived for more than 20 years.

Martin eventually grew into the role of caregiver for Jacoba until a combination of health challenges led to a family decision to make the move to Craigwiel Gardens. Jacoba’s care needs are now being met in Craigholme and Martin lives next door in the apartments.

“This arrangement has worked out well for them and the family,” says Jo-An Verhoeven, one of their four children. “We were already familiar with Craigholme because my sister has worked there in housekeeping for many years. It’s reassuring that Craigholme and the apartments are well-managed by the same people. Now that my dad isn’t mom’s full-time caregiver, he is getting some rest. He spends every morning with her and it has been a convenience



for him to be able to enjoy meals and activities with her as well.

“For our family, this has been a huge load lifted. While they would have preferred to stay in their home, we know they are well cared for at Craigwiel Gardens. We are all grateful to have Craigwiel so close to most of us, and that, after 67 years of marriage, our parents can continue to be close to each other. That gives us tremendous peace of mind. For couples where one partner needs a lot of care, having living options on one campus is optimum. It works out best for the entire family.”



On the Road Again

The cold weather didn't cool the enthusiasm that greeted Craigwiel's new bus! An official ribbon-cutting ceremony (pictured above) renewed travel adventures and restored a sense of independence.

Residents love trips to view Christmas lights, enjoy ice cream in Grand Bend, visit Shale Ridge Winery and Tim Hortons, lunch in Strathroy or simply go for a nice

scenic drive. The bus also provides transportation to and from the Day Program.

Pictured on cover: A recent outing to Oxbow Public School allowed residents to meet a grade three class in person for the first time, after getting to know them through a Zoom reading program during COVID.



Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Thank you to the Twynstra family whose gift of \$100,000 toward the 'Building a New Craigholme' capital campaign is the largest received to date.

These funds are carefully stewarded and all donations designated for 'Building a New Craigholme' are held in a separate account.

Pictured l-r: Linda Doerr, Peter Twynstra, Steve Twynstra, Dini Twynstra and Sharon Twynstra.



Jennifer Gillies



Irene Howarth



David Dryburgh



Rebecca Bender



Samantha Cornelissen



Marilyn Gingerich



Bev Shipley



Jane Zoeger



Elaine Shantz, President & CEO



Brent Martin, CFO

Thank you to the committed members of Craigwiel Gardens' Board of Directors whose guidance, expertise and commitment are charting a sustainable course for the future.

2023-24 Board of Directors

Chair	Jennifer Gillies
Vice-Chair	Irene Howarth
Treasurer	David Dryburgh
Secretary	Rebecca Bender
Directors	Samantha Cornelissen Marilyn Gingerich Bev Shipley Jane Zoeger



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