

History of the OHVA

Introduction

The Oakville Volunteer Auxiliary (OHVA) was founded in 1949 after a group of Oakville residents raised over \$125,000 for the construction of a new hospital after WWII. It all began with 100 members. Since then, our association has gained a rich history of over 64 years and has grown to be more than 1000 volunteers.

The OHVA is a self-managed organization which supports the delivery of quality patient care through volunteer engagement and fundraising at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

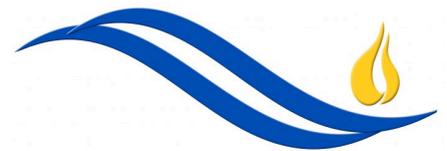
The Beginning – The Auxiliary

The 10,000 inhabitants of Oakville were jubilant. There would be a 50 bed hospital. (Too big, the old times said!). But the project finally got off the ground and the building quickly took shape. It opened with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 14, 1950, with 13 staff doctors, 13 nurses and yearly operating expenses of just over \$110,000.

During this time, the women of the town were asked to form an Auxiliary. A small group of women, under the guiding hand of Lady Baillie, went in to action with loads of enthusiasm making up for lack of experience. On May 26, 1950, the first official meeting of The Auxiliary was called and 121 women signed up.

The Subsequent Years

By the mid-1970s, the Auxiliary had reached an active membership of over 500. The primary activities of the Auxiliary were operating the Gift Shop & Snack Bar and the Tuck & Library, escorting patients to and from therapy, wrapping bundles for the Central Supply Room, sewing and mending thousands of items of hospital clothing and linens, caring for patients' flowers, and entertaining young patients.



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Auxiliary members would decorate patients' food trays with favours and flowers and also photographed each new baby born. The Auxiliary's fundraising activities continued, and significant financial contributions were made to the Hospital.

Today – The OHVA

The OHVA was incorporated in 2012, and is governed by a Board of Directors, which supports the delivery of exemplary patient care and family experiences through volunteer engagement and fundraising.

The OHVA continues to provide important volunteer services, working in many areas across the hospital, including: Diagnostic Imaging, Fracture Clinic, Emergency, Gift Shop, Dialysis, ICU, Information Desk, Outpatient, Rehab, Palliative Care, Cancer Clinic, Surgical Services and Transport.

OHVA volunteers were a key contributor to the successful move to the new hospital in 2015, providing tours, helping with the actual move, and working with staff and patients to support the significant transition. As a result of the move, a new volunteer group was formed: The Welcome Team welcomes and directs visitors and patients and assists them in any way they can.

In 2010, the OHVA pledged \$3,000,000 towards the Hospital, which was achieved over the 10 year commitment period. Primary sources of funds raised include the Gift Shop and INS store, the WorkFit Total Therapy Program, Bingo, HELPP Lottery, The Art Easel Program and the 50/50 Draw. Additionally, the OHVA holds special fundraising events, including an annual golf tournament.

OHVA volunteers are described as engaged, enthusiastic and passionate, and the legacy of a strong participative and caring culture continues 70 years later!

OHVA – What are we proud of?

- Over 1,000 volunteers, supporting 15 areas of the hospital.
- A large number of volunteers reaching 30, 40 and 50 years of service.
- Yearly bursaries of \$1,500 to selected, dedicated OTMH student volunteers who are pursuing their post-secondary education.
- Our volunteer pianists play beautiful music on the donated grand piano in the main lobby.
- The OHVA is recognized for its dedicated volunteers, entrepreneurship and contributions to the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

