

A half century at 4065 Victoria Drive

A brief history of the Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House

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INTRODUCTION:

Cedar Cottage Kensington Neighbourhood, in East Vancouver, is located on the un-ceded territory of the Coast Salish Nation, the Musqueam and Tseil Waututh.

Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House (CCNH) is a hub of activity in Vancouver, BC Canada. If you walk through the doors you will find rooms packed with activity. The space holds the collective emotions of an entire community growing and changing; children, adults and elders learning. It is also where individuals find their voices and use them to share with one another across, cultural, lingual and generational barriers. The neighbourhood house is, in many ways, the heart of the neighbourhood.

Vancouver's neighbourhood houses are part of the Settlement House movement which started in 1884 with the opening of Toynbee Hall in London, England. This worldwide movement is renowned for fostering social change from the interests, needs and assets of those living in the neighbourhood. A neighbourhood house does not just provide to people struggling, it listens to and acts alongside them. CCNH's continues this tradition with it's mission to work with local residents and organizations to strengthen the community and make the neighbourhood a better place to live for all. As a neighbourhood house, CCNH achieves this mission through developing and offering multiple services, programs and events throughout the year, encouraging residents to engage and participate on multiple levels, from attending to volunteering to governing.

The history of CCNH spans seven decades, beginning in 1950 as a youth club, and transitioning into a neighbourhood house by 1960. Woven throughout the history are themes of grass roots organizing and social justice, long term care taking and celebrating diversity. Achievements of the neighbourhood house occur on a personal, collective, local, municipal and provincial scale. They are countless, innumerable and often, priceless.

This report comes during a great transition in CCNH history, a redevelopment. Since CCNH has been built the neighbourhood population has grown exponentially. Kensington Cedar Cottage is now the third largest neighbourhood in the city, home to approximately one quarter of the city's residents. The building at 4065 Victoria Drive has been an active community space for 50 years. In 1967, it was the first building in the city to be constructed specifically for neighbourhood house purposes. This paper focuses some of CCNH's earliest contributions in that space by first considering the origins of CCNH as a youth club. Then, how it operated as a neighbourhood house before the building was constructed. Finally, three examples are given of how CCNH evolved with the new building through:

- 1) Creating institutions of care in the community.
- 2) Becoming a HUB for Coordinating and Housing Resources.
- 3) Making Space for cultural expression and celebration.

Origins: The Cedar Cottage Youth Club

In the 1950's, the Cedar Cottage Kensington neighbourhood was a residential area with a small, yet busy, commercial and industrial center. Many residents earned their living working in skilled trades or manual labor at local businesses such as the Nanaimo Foundry, Honey Cream Donuts, Tait Pipes and Fletcher's Meats. The population increased as many young adults settled in to the area to start families. The children of these families received education at the largest elementary school in the city, Lord Selkirk and went on to attend the brand new Gladstone High. Outside of school, children and youth spent time at the local parks, but there were no organized activities. During this time, reports of juvenile delinquency began to increase:

"The Shipyards and other war efforts were closing off and there were a lot of young lads hanging around the parks and school yards, out of jobs. As well, newspapers were telling about delinquency outbreaks occurring almost everywhere in the city. These were the main reasons why we decided to start a club for the boys.

-Robert Frezell, a founding member of the CCYC



A meeting at the Cedar Cottage Boys Club

In the summer of 1950, five fathers raised \$60 with the hope of getting local youth engaged in sports instead of trouble. They placed an ad in the Highland Echo newspaper, purchased softball equipment and started a league. Thirty-nine boys joined. When Autumn arrived, the boys wanted to continue activities. The fathers were joined by other local parents, and with support from the local P.T.A. and principle of Lord Selkirk, they approached the Vancouver School Board to request renting school facilities. They were granted use of the manual training building on the Selkirk school grounds and became the first "non-school" group in the city to be given rental permission by the VSB.

At the first meeting in the training building, seventy-five boys appeared. They affectionately termed the building the "club house" and thus began the Cedar Cottage Boys Club (CCBC). The club began with copper craft and model aircraft lessons in the evenings. These crafts were put on display at the International Hobby Show at the Pacific National Exhibition, earning medals for the club in it's earliest years.

By 1952, mothers, active on the CCBC board, advocated for girls to join. The club's name was promptly changed to the Cedar Cottage Youth Club. That year, 544 youth had registered with the club and nearly half were girls. Club members took part in a variety of activities: woodwork, leather, radio, photography, lampshade making, sewing and shell and copper craft. The club also rented the Selkirk



Cedar Cottage Boys Club Showcase at the P.N.E.

gymnasium and offered basketball, boxing, soccer and other sports. Providing these activities was a voluntary, community effort; materials for the craft sessions were donated every Saturday by local businesses and activity groups were led by a parent or a neighbor with a skill set to share.

The club remained self-supporting and completely volunteer run until 1954 when board members and other volunteers canvassed the neighbourhood to raise funds for an Executive Director. This official leadership earned the club a provisional membership with the Community Chest & Council, now called the United Way. With this new support and structure the club extended its hours into the afternoons, developed a training program for volunteer instructors and began to partake more widely in community affairs. By 1956, the Community Chest & Council assessed the needs of the area and fully admitted the CCYC as participating members.

As the club continued to expand in program structure and membership, its facilities deteriorated. In 1958, the VSB repossessed the gymnasium to create more classroom spaces and condemned the manual training building as a fire hazard. The club remained intact because the Vancouver Parks Board provided enough funds to renovate the space. Immediately, the board began a campaign for a new building and consider what unique purpose they served in the community.

The club differed from other local activity groups such as the boy scouts, girl guides or church groups. These groups served a small number of children on a weekly basis and could be exclusionary due to fee requirements or denominational membership. In contrast, the CCYC offered activities daily and welcomed all youth regardless of "race or creed". For youth who could not afford the membership fee, CCYC leveraged 160-200 paid memberships a year to allow approximately 100 more youth to enjoy the use of the facilities and events free of cost. The club became a place where children who struggled in other spaces could connect with their peers and grow:

"Basically, the club is for children who cannot find help, companionship and guidance elsewhere, and who in most cases, do not attend any church, scout or guide group...The club tries to help them think clearly for themselves and tries to give them a feeling of security which many of them need and do not have. We attempt to increase their feelings of self-confidence by directing their activities toward constructive endeavor."

- Cedar Cottage Youth Club: History, Problem and Needs Report (1958)

By 1959, the CCYC board and executive director began to negotiate with the Alexandra Community Activities (precursor to the Association of Neighbourhood Houses). After much deliberation, a decision was made to amalgamate with the A.C.A. and become a neighbourhood house operation.



Constructed before 1910, with worn exterior, poor ventilation, warped floors, and inadequate heating, the "club house," provided programming to some 3000 youth over 11 years.

A Neighbourhood House without a Home

In 1960, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House (CCNH) became the fourth neighbourhood house to be established in Vancouver and the greater surrounding area. Under the leadership of Pat Buckley, the club began offering recreational activities to all members of the family, with an emphasis on health, welfare and recreation needs for the individual and community. This transition took place as the board continued to search for a new home.

At first CCNH considered renovating and moving into the Robson Memorial Church on 20th and Fleming. The idea fell through and CCNH turned its attention to the first recreational survey of the area, conducted by the Community Chest & Council. The survey produced comprehensive information on the recreational services available in the area as well as the recreational needs of residents. CCNH staff followed the development of the survey alongside another group, the Grandview Community Association which was organizing and fund raising to build the first community center in the area. CCNH supported the association's efforts through door-to-door membership campaigns and endorsements in local newspapers.¹ Since, CCNH had over two hundred members, it could effectively reach many local families. As the Grandview Community Centre² was being built, CCNH board members requested an amalgamation to combine services and share the space. The request was denied.

We want and will have a broad recreation program in the centre, not the kind which Cedar Cottage wants; one for emotionally disturbed and family problems and so on. This kind of activity could not fit in with a recreational program and so duo-control could not be possible."

Annual meeting minutes of the Grandview Community Centre Association (Dec. 17, 1963)

When Grandview Community Center opened in 1963, CCNH complimented this big change in local recreational services by shifting its programming away from recreation and towards more specialized programs for individuals and small group work, the very work that was deemed "unfit" for the new center. The CCNH board and staff requested funds from the Alexandra Community Activities to construct a building of their own. Within a year, CCNH received \$80,000 to buy land and build facilities. However, it took two years to receive a mortgage from the city due to municipal funding issues. During that time, still limited to the confines of the club house, CCNH took on a pivotal role in one of the largest studies conducted in the city.

The Woodland Park Area Study, conducted by the Community Chest and Council, was a collaborative effort, among many public agencies,³ to investigate inadequate services for young boys in the Woodland Park area.⁴ CCNH was asked to provide programming for boys, ages 8-12, who were referred through the school system for

¹ "Active Program at Cedar Cottage" Operation Doorstep gets big help from members". Highland Echo, 4/2/1962.

² Now known as the Trout Lake Community Center.

³ The Woodland Park Study was a collaboration between Metropolitan health, Y.W.C.A., Gordon House, the Kiwassa girls club, CCNH, the parks board, city social service department, children's aid society

⁴ An area encompassing Commercial Drive and Strathcona neighbourhoods

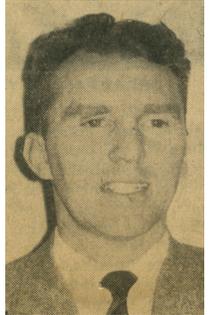
Executive Directors

1959-1962



Pat Buckley

1963-1966



Geoffrey A. Cue

1966-1994



Doug Slight

1994-Now



Donna Chang

“anti-social” tendencies. This programming would generate information about their recreational, social and physical needs.

A young social worker, Doug Slight, was hired to work part time on this study and part time for CCNH. For two years, he facilitated programming for approximately fifty boys at a time. Half way through the study, funds ran low.

The U.C.S. [The United Community Services] undertook to provide the monies necessary for the operation of this program, To this date, U.C.S. has been unable to meet that obligation. Circumstances, in the last two years, has made it possible for Cedar Cottage to provide and maintain the program. However... it has been at the expense and detriment to the Cedar Cottage operation.
-Cedar Cottage NH Program information (budget submission) - 1966

The financial strain endured by CCNH to continue the work was worthwhile. After two years of steady programming, the Woodland Park Study resulted in the formation of The Grandview Woodland Area Council; the first local area council in the city of Vancouver.⁵ This group went on to be one of the main organizing bodies to establish the Britannia Community Centre in 1975, resulting in a library, swimming pool and community information center for local youth and their families.

In 1966, shortly after the study was completed, Doug Slight, became the third Executive Director of the Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House, bringing with him an understanding of the power of small group work, participation in collaborative studies and the impact of local area councils. By the following year, 1967, construction of 4065 Victoria Drive was completed.



CCNH Grand Opening: September 15th, 1967

At the grand opening, CCNH staff and members entered the new building wondering “what will we do with all these offices?” “How can we fill up this space?” Despite these concerns, a foundation had been laid over the past seventeen years. The staff, board and members were already connected to community institutions, experienced in grass roots organizing and large scale collaborative community development work and were fully aware of the importance of innovating services and programs. Now they had a space of their own to gather and create significant changes among neighbours, the neighbourhood and the city.

⁵ A report of the Social Development Committee City of Vancouver.

<http://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/grandview-woodland-park-area-council>

Developing Institutions of Care in the Community

Four of the longest standing programs at CCNH are the Daycare (or Preschool), The Breakfast Program, Out of School Care and the Adult Day Program. For many families, children, and seniors in the neighbourhood, these programs have provided indispensable social, emotional and physical support. All four of these programs began shortly after the new building was opened.

The Beginning of Children's Services: Breakfast, Daycare and Out of School Care

Verna Mooney



Verna Mooney sitting with Harry, a graduate of the first daycare program at CCNH.

Verna touched many lives during her time at CCNH. Aside from running the daycare and after school care programs in the sixties and seventies, she regularly organizing dinners and parties to include those that were isolated on holidays, personally tutoring children, visiting seniors who were sick in the hospital. In 1979, her and George Simmons (one of the fathers that founded the CCYC) were selected by the Provincial Government to receive the "Year of the child and the Family in B.C. Achievement Award"

In the 1970s, the Women's Liberation movement erupted throughout North America. In Canada women were demanding federally funded daycare so children could receive proper care while their mothers went to work. The Cedar Cottage-Kensington neighbourhood had one of the highest concentrations in the city of young children and single parents. Working with these parents and children daily, CCNH became involved in the struggle to make daycare accessible and affordable on a local level.

The new building had designated places for daycare and services at CCNH began in 1968 as soon as the building was opened. Having a Daycare in the CCNH building led to consistent connections to new and young families spurring many innovations in childcare. One example is the CCNH breakfast program, started by Verna Mooney. Verna ran the daycare at CCNH and had an exceptionally large heart. She spoke often with the parents of the children, some of whom were on staff. One day Verna and another staff member, Margaret Scott⁶, watched the children play store:

... Frequently they would be given Fruit Loops to stock the shelves and sell in the store. Verna observed two brothers, after buying some Fruit Loops counting them out and sharing them carefully. She remarked to Margaret "how nice, the children learning to count and to share with the Fruit Loops." Margaret suggested it was more likely hunger as it was nearing the end of the month...on further investigation Margaret's suspicions were confirmed. The two kids were hungry and they were making sure each shared the food equally...

-CCNH Newsletter, 1993

From then on, Verna made certain that food was available to the children. She modelled the breakfast program from the Head Start program that had recently started in the United States. Offering breakfast at Cedar Cottage allowed parents to go to work early and their children to arrive at school with full bellies. This resulted in immediate improvements in their ability to focus and perform at school. Some can

⁶ Margaret Scott is Keith Scott's mother. Keith Scott is a Canadian guitarist who played with the Bryan Adams Band.

still recall Verna sitting at a table among several children with “the largest box of corn flakes you have ever seen,” dishing out cereal and metering out the sugar for each bowl. After a few years of operation, the CCNH Breakfast program was officially established in 1974.⁷

After a few years, children began to age out of the daycare program at CCNH and their parents voiced a need for continued support. Their requests echoed a larger issue: there was no systematic childcare for school aged children in the early seventies. All across North America, the term “Latch Key” kids referred to the thousands of children who remained unsupervised between the time school closed and their parents arrived home from work.

When CCNH proposed the Latch Key program in the early seventies, six local schools enthusiastically agreed to partake and offer space for the program. With incredible local support and ample space to operate, the primary barrier was funding. Since there had been no licensed childcare for older children in the city or province, there was no municipal or provincial funding mechanisms to support such programs. To work around this CCNH staff utilized grants created to combat high unemployment levels in Canada. They crafted a new type of job; the “School Aide/Day Care supervisor” who worked to address the gap in communication between school systems and outside care providers.



An OOSC kid having breakfast at CCNH



The Latch Key program was piloted in 1971 in five sites: Selkirk, Queen Alexandra, Laura Secord, Dickens and MacKenzie. The program immediately strengthened the bond between CCNH staff, local children and their families. Instead of seeing the children for only a couple hours a week in small-group programs, CCNH staff and volunteers began spending time with children for a couple hours every week day. This made the Latch Key program an incredible intervention for children that were struggling in school and at home. By 1973, CCNH had demonstrated to the city of Vancouver that a model of systematic school aged child care was feasible and a regular funding mechanism was provided. By that time, the name of the program was changed to Out of School Care.

As Out of School Care was becoming a regular program, CCNH board members, parents and staff made large changes to the Daycare program. In 1975, the initial daycare program that had been running for seven years was moved to another community facility. The empty daycare space allowed board members, many of whom

⁷ By contrast, the Canadian Education Association reported that school-based nutrition programs were being established throughout Canada only by 1989

were parents, to reimagine what daycare services should be. They shared concerns about the lack of childcare available to newcomers, many of whom were their friends and neighbours and began to plan a new daycare.

In 1977, a daycare services at CCNH was reopened with a mission to bring non-English and English speaking children together. Once the program started, board members and staff had to advocate with government bodies to make it accessible and affordable. Several trips to Victoria were made to argue with Ministry of BC for subsidies for newcomers, funding for special needs children and the extension of care hours for families with working parents.⁸



Daycare for Newcomers opens in 1977

The Breakfast Program, OOSC program and Daycare for Newcomers all began from having a space to care for children in the neighbourhood and having a willingness to hear and respond to the concerns of local parents and children. While listening, staff and board members worked hard to advocate politically leading to policy changes and developments in the field of childcare. To this day, the hard work continues as these programs seek to expand and evolve to continue providing a safe and supportive space for the growing number of children and families in the neighbourhood.

- **1971:** starts the first Out of School Care program in the city
- **1973:** Parent advisory board for Daycare forms
- **1974:** Establishment of the breakfast program
- **1976:** Opening of daycare for newcomers.
- **1977:** Brief presented to Provincial government for global funding for special needs children
- **1980:** Advocacy for extended care hours in licensed nursery schools.
- **1988:** Creation of Noon hour ESL programs in local schools.
- **1991:** The City Council approves the CCNH childcare program enhancement application to improve support for the ESL program and ESL staff training and "Introduction to Out of School Care" instructional training series to be used by Colleges in the Lower Mainland
- **1993:** OOSC serves the largest number of older boys and girls enrolled in afterschool programs than any other similar program in Vancouver.
- **1995:** CCNH participates in the Vancouver Childcare Regional Delivery Model Pilot Project to address the longstanding concerns about the lack of effective, consistent and coordinated administrative structures and practices in the childcare sector.
- **1999:** Opened new portable space at the Queen Alex school.
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- To date, CCNH has 285 licensed OOSC spaces in the neighbourhood.
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⁸ These meetings included the entire Association of Neighbourhood Houses (ANH) which was **the largest provider of Daycare services in Vancouver at the time.**

The First Adult Day Care in Vancouver

The first programs for elders at CCNH were offered in 1960; elderly residents were invited to gather casually on Wednesdays to play cards and socialize or take part in special events such as the “Miss 75-Year Old Queen Contest” CCNH hosted to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the city. However, by the early seventies, CCNH had the facilities to expand its programming for elders.

Unsure of where to start, CCNH staff conducted a door-to-door survey of seniors and discovered that seniors struggled greatly from social isolation. A meeting with other local elder-care professionals was held to discuss these results. Some professionals scoffed at the results, but one guest was well aware of the issue. She was the Meals on Wheels representative and wife of a local minister. She returned to CCNH with an article about a Hawaiian hospital that provided a daycare program for senior citizens. “You may want to try something like this” she said, placing the article into the hands of Doug Slight.



Contestants for the Miss 75-year old queen contest hosted by CCNH at Brewer's park.

ADC Elders



ADC staff and members contacted local chocolate firms who responded with enthusiasm. The Seniors ended up with enough chocolate to organize an Easter Egg Hunt for the 80 preschoolers and contribute eggs for the Family Night Easter Egg Hunt and for the 100 youngsters in the OOSC program.

CCNH staff sprang into action creating The first Adult Day Care (ADC) program in the city. The first group to attend the ADC were women who had recently lost their husband. Caring for a frail partner and then losing them left these women isolated for years at a time. Through the ADC program they connected with one another and began to explore their community once again. One rowdy group of elders that congregated on Thursdays was referred to as “The Happy Gang” for all the cheerfulness and energy they brought to the neighbourhood house.

ADC program participants enjoyed a hot meal daily. They crafted, sang, took small trips locally to swim at the Kensington pool or go bowling and made longer day trips to provincial parks. With a little support from ADC staff, the group began to organize themselves to fundraise for overnight trips to Hot Springs, on cruises or even across the border to Reno! Aside from these diversions, these elders also regularly fundraised to support CCNH; starting bazaars, bake sales, raffles and other forms of volunteerism that many CCNH elders maintain to this day.

For elders that did not want to leave their homes, CCNH started the Home Aides for Seniors program which generated employment opportunities to provide repairs, heavy cleaning, housekeeping, shopping and companionship to elders in the neighbourhood. While the ADC provided a space for people to come together, Home Aides ensured they

had proper support at home ⁹ by enhancing the appearance of their homes and removing hazards and unsanitary conditions. Eventually, the program was so successful it was adopted by the Association of Neighbourhood Houses and offered through multiple locations throughout the eighties.

Over the years, CCNH has expanded its seniors programming to include more roles for seniors in the community and more opportunities for intergenerational connection. At the core of every program is the same opportunity to connect meaningfully with others.



- 1960:** Senior Citizen Wednesdays start
- 1971:** CCNH conducts survey on seniors in the area.
- 1972:** L.I.P. project to provide “Individualized services to senior citizens”
- 1974:** Home aides for seniors starts
- 1977:** Friday Portuguese Seniors program starts
- 1983:** CCNH homemakers program is adopted by A.N.H. and offered through several locations
- 1983:** Music therapy for seniors begins at CCNH
- 1984:** Seniors Drop in Begins
- 1990:** Seniors vegetable garden started
- 1992:** Sunday Congregate meals started at CCNH
- 1993:** Seniors “Volunteer for Kids” project
- 2004:** Seniors supper club on Wednesdays
- 2010:** Intergenerational programming started (TICC)
- 2014:** ADC starts the Steady Feet program
- 2015:** Seniors HUB started at CCNH

Accessible Care: A brief word on CCNH transportation

Care for children and elders in the neighbourhood would not be possible without transportation services. Transportation service began at CCNH in the early sixties when a mother asked for assistance in transporting her immobile adult son to the seniors Wednesday program. To socialize and play cards weekly was healing for him and offered her an opportunity to get out of the house and connect with others. They lived just one block from CCNH, and with a short car trip the quality of their days was immensely improved.

Staff members began to personally drive program participants to and from CCNH using their



Grace MacInnis at CCNH Grand Opening (1967)

The very first CCNH Van was purchased with money privately donated by Grace MacInnis, the former M.L.A. of the Kingsway area and the first woman to be elected from B.C. to the House of Commons.

⁹ The program was so effective that it was adopted by ANH in 1988.



Larry and the CCNH Van

own cars until 1971 when a large van was finally purchased.¹⁰Over the years, the Van drivers have taken special care to attend to their passengers. From 2006 to 2017, van driver Larry posted the art work given to him by kindergarten and out of school care children on the walls and ceiling of the van. The moving gallery has been a source of pride for the young artists and joy for the elders who ride in the same bus.

The Daycare, OOSC, Breakfast program and ADC have all developed through grass roots organizing, starting with a suggestion by a resident be it a hungry child, a concerned parent or the local meals on wheels representative. Each was an innovation, something that CCNH staff and board members had to develop with no precursor. Finally, each has become an integral part of how people in the neighbourhood are cared and care for one another.

¹⁰ Grace's father, J.S. Woodsworth was the director of the All people's Mission in Winnipeg which operated as a neighbourhood house in the early 20th century. Grace had childhood and adolescent memories playing and working in that early neighbourhood house and continued her support through her connection with CCNH.- Research for NHiMV study by Dr. Eleanor Stebner. (2015)

A Hub for Coordinating and Housing Local Resources

The CCNH building is a space where community groups can gather, organize and act on large and complex social issues. Some of the earliest examples of this work were CCNH's efforts in local crime prevention from the late 60s through the early 80s. During the late sixties, youth delinquency was a major issue in Vancouver. There was a shortage of recreational centers and a lack of jobs or vocational training in the area¹¹. Youth were left to struggle against overly strict school systems and difficult home situations with little support. Frustrated, many youth dropped out of school, ran away from home and joined gangs in the local parks. The Cedar Cottage-Kensington neighbourhood had the highest concentration of youth¹² and the second highest rate of juvenile crime in the city. Police had estimated that 65-80% of offences committed in the neighbourhood were 'juvenile related.' To take on this large social issue, community members at CCNH became involved in crafting local resources and re-shaping larger institutions to better support youth and residents in general.

Crafting Local Resources:

CCNH had always provided wholesome alternatives for children. First as a Youth club, then through targeted efforts like the Woodland Park Boys programming. In 1968, with the new building space, CCNH started The Noon Hour program. The program was initiated because the principle of the local high school banned smoking on school grounds and surrounding streets, causing teens to leave the school area during lunch hours and potentially run into trouble with local gangs. Youth workers at CCNH understood the issue and told the school counsellors that "any wandering youth at risk could come to the neighbourhood house at lunchtime." Suddenly, the house was inundated daily with teenagers.

"At noon hour, five [minutes] to twelve, bang the front door would open and all these kids would come in. They took over, ...so we had little 'greet groups' in the different offices [and] the library and we put out table tennis, in the foyer and in the bigger room...they would be playing floor hockey and there would be upwards of 100 and at five to one, zoom, they would all rush out to go back to school."

-Doug Slight (Former Executive Director)

While many youth found an oasis in the noon hour program, some youth had left the school system entirely. This caught the attention of a young board member, Blaine Culling, who saw youth, not much younger than himself, adrift during all hours of the day. After finding two teenagers sleeping in his car he phoned CCNH and asked the board and staff to help "create a space for these kids." CCNH promptly opened the STAY HOUSE; a 24-hour crisis, counselling, and referral service for youth residing in the CC/K area. The "Short Term Assistance for Youth" House

¹¹ Teenagers 'tired of the system' The Vancouver Sun Jan 23, 1982

¹² C.C.N.S. L.I.P. proposal for Dec. 1, 1975- June 26, 1976

operated as a two-year project to identify gaps in social welfare services related to youth. Through STAY house youth workers connected with youth in the streets, offering them a chance to find shelter and share their experiences. Their words and experiences were then gathered and relayed back to community members on management boards, in church groups, community centres and school classrooms.

While STAY house was only a short-term project, CCNH offered space for local community groups, made up of residents, representatives and local professionals, to continue organizing and supporting local youth. The Kingsway management committee, the Cedar Cottage Kensington area council and the Local Area Services Team all found a home under the CCNH roof. These groups received administrative support from CCNH, having their notices and meeting minutes mimeographed and distributed as they worked on identifying issues, applying for grants and implementing projects or programs. Several of these programs involved finding employment for youth or getting them outdoors, building leadership skills.

Due to the type of funding available, these early attempts to provide housing and work for youth, had to be recreated every one or two years. Meanwhile, many youth continued to need support. Board members and staff began to look for more sustainable solutions. A survey was conducted with the three local high schools¹³ revealing that three hundred youths left school each year. A majority left without completing grade ten. In response to these findings Chris Walmsley, a CCNH youth worker, collaborated with Gladstone High School staff to start Last Chance High, an alternative school for drop out students. The school was successfully established in a Commercial Drive storefront in 1974 and served local youth for four decades under the name Eastside High.¹⁴

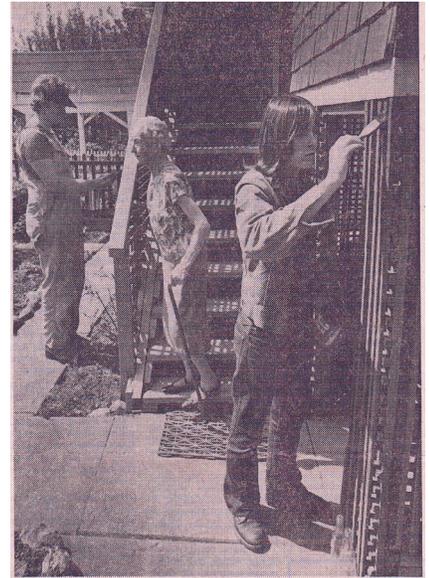
Re-shaping Institutions:

CCNH staff and volunteers collaborated with municipal institutions leading to two innovations in crime prevention: a community police storefront and a restorative justice program. Both were the first of their kind in the city. The community storefront was a pilot project, started by the Vancouver Police Department, to re-establish a connection with citizens. The VPD chose CCNH because it was a space where community members of all ages and

¹³ Gladstone High school, Vancouver Tech High school and John Oliver High School.

¹⁴ CCNH staff were involved in setting up the school through developing the proposal with Gladstone's vice principle, circulating it for the youth services and school board administration and attending meetings with the VSB committees and provincial representatives. CCNH youth workers also helped develop the school's policy guideline, routine structure, and program content. Once the program was firmly established and integrated into the community, CCNH withdrew its involvement and Gladstone took over administration of the school.

Employment for Youth!



Mrs. M. A. Herfington inspects work being done by Gus Michael, left, and Ken as they paint her house.

Thanks to the Detached Youth Worker at CCNH. This worker cooperated with the community police team, the probation department and the Parks board to reach youth at risk and provide work opportunities. This service was made possible through a proposal created by one of the many community groups meeting at CCNH: The Local Area Services Team.

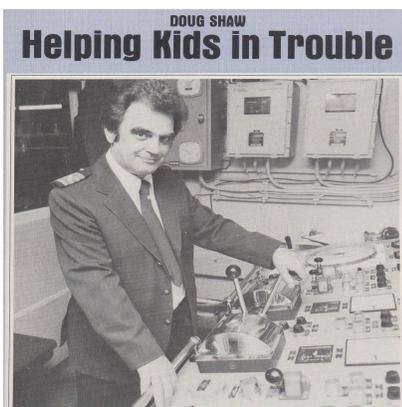
backgrounds gathered. CCNH provided an office space and the community police storefront opened in 1972.

I think the Neighbourhood house is closer to the community, in regards to social issues, as Community Centers try very hard to be all things to all people and not issue specific. -Robert Stewart (Former Chief Constable for the VPD, 1981-1991)

Overall, the police storefront was a success in making the police more approachable to members of the neighbourhood. The storefront officers became a fixture in community life. They accompanied youth on wilderness leadership outings, assisted in setting up neighbourhood block watches and were regularly consulted about criminal and legal problems. On one occasion, a CCNH regular came to the storefront because he had been scammed into selling his home for a low price. One of the officers made a direct call to city hall, to alderman Harry Rankin. Within one year the real estate contract was absolved and he had his home back.^{15 16}

Aside from accessibility to the police, community members also learned how to develop their own local justice system. The Community Accountability Panel (C.A.P.) was a restorative justice program for local youth that had committed minor offenses. Each youth had their case reviewed by a panel of community members. The panel would meet with the youth and parents to discuss the offence and offer restitution projects which often involved an official apology, community service work and/or a special project lasting 3 months. Once youth completed the program, they received a letter and were invited in to come into CCNH and destroy their own records and start fresh.

CCNH supported C.A.P. through providing office space for the program's employees as well as program space for the panel to convene. CCNH staff and members knew the local youth and their families intimately and created many of the restitution projects. Many CCNH volunteers also spent time avidly volunteering for C.A.P. as justice committee or panel members.



Doug Shaw

In the seventies, Doug Shaw emigrated from Lancaster, England and began work as an Engineer for BC Ferries. By the mid-seventies he was volunteering for CCNH; fundraising for events, making much needed repairs to the building and serving on the board multiple times. Doug's involvement in C.A.P. began when he attended the first public meeting of the justice committee in 1978. He proposed to the CCNH board that space be rented out to the new program. For several years, he served on both the CCNH board and the C.A.P. committee, writing many letters to local representatives and members of parliament to keep C.A.P. running. In 2015, CCNH recognized Doug by creating a lifetime membership award in his name.

The program was a recognizable success, 86-89% of youth involved did not commit secondary offenses. The youth benefited from having an anchor back into the community. The program was also an opportunity for adult residents to be educated and take part in the justice system. Ian Waddell, M.P. for the Kingsway area, addressed the House of Commons suggesting

¹⁵ Newsletter 2, 1982

¹⁶ By 1982, the police storefront stopped operating out of CCNH. Less than a decade later, the VPD started working with several neighbourhoods throughout the city to start storefront crime prevention offices.

the program be implemented in other parts of Canada.¹⁷ Even the solicitor general of Canada recognized the program with an award in 1985. Astonishingly, the program ended the following year due to a lack of funding.

Since the 70s and 80s, CCNH has continued to work in crime prevention through the Crime Prevention project in the early 2000s and recent work starting the S.A.F.E. (Sex-work Awareness for Everyone) program.

C.A.P. CASES PROCESSED	
Youth processed	69
Youth Served	
Median age of youth	14.8
Offences Committed	
Breaking and Entering	25
Shoplifting	18
Theft under \$200	24
Theft over \$200	7
Possession of stolen property	13
Mischief arson	9
Other minor offenses	7

Related Programming and Events:

Over the decades there are many examples of how CCNH has collaborated with community groups and housed projects to tackle a range of large and complex issues.

Decade	Issues	CCNH community partners	Programs initiated
1960s	Lack of information on the CC/K neighbourhood	The Community Chest and Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in and circulation of area studies. • Support start of Area recreation council
1970s	Juvenile Crime/ Gangs	The Vancouver Police Department and community police store front, The Vancouver Community Accountability Panel, local schools and the VSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support start of CCK area council • The noon hour program • STAY House • Last Chance High • The Detached youth worker project • The youth leadership program
1980s	Little support for Indigenous community in the area...		
1990s	Lack of multicultural ...		
2000s	Low Literacy Rates		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts KCC neighbor • Participates in CCK Literacy project?
2010s	Food Sovereignty		

¹⁷ Waddell tells Ottawa to follow Vancouver example on juveniles Highland Echo/ May 28th, 1981

Making Space for Cultural Expression and Celebration

Today, Cedar Cottage-Kensington is the third largest neighbourhood in Vancouver and home to about one quarter of the city's residents with fewer native English speakers than the rest of Vancouver. To connect with this diverse community today, CCNH offers a variety of cultural programs. The two earliest programs at CCNH to focus on cultural connection began in the seventies with Portuguese community members and in the eighties with Indigenous community members.

Portuguese Cultural Programming:

During the 70s, the greatest number of Portuguese immigrants in British Columbia resided in the Cedar Cottage-Kensington area.¹⁸ Portuguese community members had been congregating at CCNH as early as 1974 when the very first ESL classes were offered. In 1976, CCNH obtained a grant to hire a Portuguese worker and a Friday program for Portuguese Seniors, the very first culture based program at CCNH. To best serve the Portuguese community, the CCNH van drove beyond neighbourhood boundaries to bring the elders together. The intention behind the program was initially to connect Portuguese members to resources such as counsellors, social workers, public health nurses, doctors, police and employment services.



The Portuguese community at CCNH in the 70s.

Maria Cardoso came to CCNH in 1974 and was instrumental in setting up the Portuguese Cultural program.



While these services were helpful, the Portuguese community began to create its own resources. Members took care of one another and shaped the program based on their interests. Tuesdays were days for Portuguese mothers to get out of the house with their babies and tots. Together they would sew, crochet, knit and chat in Portuguese while their children were in the Daycare for newcomers or participated in the Mom's and Tot's English class. On Thursdays, several of these women arrived early to voluntarily prepare a hot lunch for the Portuguese elders. As the elders felt cared for and comfortable, they requested their own ESL classes as well as a path to citizenship course. Soon after, a women's support group and a very popular citizenship class took form.

¹⁸ CCNS Integration of Portuguese into the Canadian Community, progress report October 1978.

The program also became a way to celebrate Portuguese heritage and reconnect with the homeland. On special occasions, the Portuguese community was invited to attend celebrations at CCNH. These celebrations hosted bureaucrats such as the Portuguese secretary of state from Lisbon and the Portuguese Ambassador to Canada. In 1978, the Portuguese Consul, Dr. Valadas, local M.P. Simma Holt, school counsellors, E.S.L. instructors and Cedar Cottage staff and volunteers were among the two hundred people who came to celebrate the Dia de Portugal.¹⁹



Dr. Valadas at CCNH's Dia de Portugal celebration.

By the late 1980s, funding for the Portuguese cultural program had been cut. Fortunately, new spaces were being established in Vancouver for the Portuguese community including the Portuguese cultural center (1987) and the Portuguese Seniors foundation (1988). Despite the cuts, CCNH staff arranged to continue serving Portuguese elders through the ADC program. To this day, Portuguese seniors, several of whom were the young women for all those years ago, maintain a fifty-year tradition of filling CCNH with songs and laughter.

Indigenous cultural programming

In the early 1980's, both South Vancouver and the Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood Houses started Indigenous cultural programming and outreach. At CCNH this effort began with Indigenous Family Night on February 4th, 1980. Akin to the regular family night program²⁰, childcare was provided to give the parents a much-needed break. On these nights families socialized over a bannock, jam, tea and coffee. Also, cultural activities facilitated by indigenous craft artists such as wood carving, beading, Native drawing, silver, drum making, silk screening and making carving knives were offered. During this time, the CCNH garage became a designated carving workshop.



Henry McKay started teaching drum making, deer and moose hide can be seen being stretched and dried in the sun. For the youth it is a rare and fascinating opportunity to share in the experience of scraping the fur and fat of the skin, preparing the hide to cover the drums... Newsletter 14 (1982)

A couple years later, CCNH brought these cultural arts into local schools by establishing a program at the nearby Queen Alexandra school. For two days a week Indigenous students received help with their schooling through using arts, crafts and play to increase reading, writing

¹⁹ CCNS Integration of Portuguese into the Canadian Community, progress report October 1978.

²⁰ CCNH began offering a Family Night program in 1974

and math skills. A year later a new Outreach worker, Lavern Williams, was hired to work in the Queen Alexandra program. She quickly began to expand the Indigenous cultural program drastically, starting a women's craft group as well as a dance group. These groups sold crafts and performed outside of CCNH with great success. Quickly and intentionally, Lavern wove together connections with indigenous families, youth and organizations in Vancouver and welcomed them all under CCNH's roof:

On Saturday, August 17th [Lavern] took the [Cedar Cottage dance] group to Matsqui correctional institute. There, they danced for the handicapped Olympics organized by the inmates... Lavern arranged for the Native Indian Handicapped Society to hold their meeting at Cedar Cottage. In September, the group will be meeting Mondays at CCNH the same time as the Native Indian Family night. –Newsletter 1985

The significance of these programs must be held within a historical context. Indigenous cultural programming was initiated to serve the large numbers of Indigenous individuals and families moving to Vancouver in the seventies. Many came after leaving the residential school system; a system which caused tremendous trauma to individuals, families, entire communities and their shared cultural traditions. Being violently cut off from learning their mother tongue and customs, many young indigenous people, after being forced through this school system, found it difficult to return to life on their home reserves. While there were difficulties to be faced in moving to the city, there was also Native Family Night at CCNH. Unlike anything for miles and miles, Families crossed the border from the United States to join in weekly, just to “hear the drum”²¹.



Wally Awasis and drum group Arrows to Freedom, playing at Native Family Night in the mid-eighties.



Lavern Williams and Ajia Kills-Enemy at one of the first Pow Wow's.

On these nights, dancers in regalia stood just outside the front doors of CCNH awaiting a grand entry into CCNH's multi-purpose room where six drum groups would be singing around large circular drums, surrounded a lively crowd of family, friends and neighbours. Attendance was often in the hundreds. With family nights reaching full capacity, Lavern gathered with CCNH staff members Ajia Kills-Enemy and Andrew Morrison and together they began to plan a much larger event, a traditional inter-tribal Pow Wow.²² For the first year of the Intertribal Pow Wow, drums and dancers representing tribes from all over BC, Washington and Oregon State and even Alberta

²¹ Wally Awasis interview – September, 2017

²² Prior to her move to Vancouver, Lavern had been involved in a Pow Wow starting on her home reserve in Mount Currie.

attended. The number of spectators was over two thousand. For the first few years, the Pow Wow was coordinated by the Native Outreach worker at CCNH. A committee of local volunteers formed in the second year and gradually took more and more responsibility. By 1990, the Pow Wow was completely run by a volunteer committee. For some, serving on the committee became a path towards becoming an Arena Director, Whipman or Master of Ceremonies.

The CCNH Mother's Day Pow Wow ran until 2009, for a total of twenty-four years. It was the first Pow Wow located in the city. To make it even more accessible, entry was by donation. By the second year of the Pow Wow, the city had designated it as an official Centennial event. Five years later, it was reputed to be the largest inter-tribal pow wow on the pacific coast. The Pow Wow quickly earned an international reputation as "a thing to do" when visiting Vancouver. Tourists from all over the world attended to learn and celebrate indigenous culture. Aside from the tremendous popularity of the event, it shined first and foremost as a cultural touchstone for the Indigenous community, making waves in the city by...

1) Sharing Traditional Ways

...we kept all the traditions, as many of the traditions as we could, alive ... We were really strict on what our vendors were allowed to sell...We wanted it to be a place where our people could market their goods... We were trying to do as much education as we could. And I think people fed on that because you have to remember that residential schools had taken a lot of that away.

-Barbara Dawson, past Pow Wow committee member and president

A traditional Pow Wow is one that is dedicated to keeping cultural teachings alive by sharing traditions. Committee members worked hard to make sure the Pow Wow was done in traditional Plains style. Dancers, volunteers and guests all learned through participating in these teachings throughout the weekend.

3) Creating more spaces for indigenous culture:

...it was community based where the schools were willing to offer their gymnasium in exchange it exposed their school to the community; the first nations community that were attending there. It gave them a place for those first nations kids to congregate and be proud of who they are. Up to that point they didn't really have any ownership of their schools. They just went to school there. They didn't really have anything else to do with them. But then when we had Pow Wow's it became "Oh, this is where I go to school. This is my school."

-Wally Awasis (former CCNH outreach worker, pow wow committee president and member

Mini pow wows were staged in the months leading up to the big event. This was a way to fund raise, spread the word and train volunteers for the big event weekend. Holding mini pow wows at schools, community centers, neighbourhood houses created spaces around the city for drumming, singing, dancing and traditions.

4) Creating a gathering space for families to reunite

We had people who would come to the Pow Wow who weren't allowed to see their kids or who were limited action to their kids through the Ministry and the Ministry would bring the kids to the Pow Wow to see their parents... Because at that point they were just starting to say that our kids needed their own cultures and we had a no drugs no alcohol kind of things so the kids could come in and the parents had to be sober to be therefore they could spend the day with their kids...

-Barbara Dawson, past Pow Wow committee member and president

As it was a sobriety Pow Wow, no drugs or alcohol were allowed on the premise and people attending had to be sober to enter. This meant it was a safe place to reunite families who had been kept apart by the Ministry. The Pow Wow became a positive place to not only celebrate culture but also to reunite with family.

5) Honouring women



Every Sunday we used to give a flower to every woman in that pow wow ...We gave a carnation to every woman at that pow wow to honor them. And that happened every year for as long as I can remember.

-Barbara Dawson, past Pow Wow committee member and president

Most years the Pow Wow followed a theme to raise community awareness on an issue. One year there was a theme to honour the murdered and missing women of the Down Town East Side. However, the Pow Wow happened on Mother's Day weekend every year and great effort was made to honour women annually at the event.

CCNH supported the Pow Wow by being the primary sponsor of the three-day event. The building at 4065 Victoria Drive was used to prepare food and host large community meals that fed thousands, including two pancake breakfasts and a large dinner on the last evening of the Pow Wow Weekend. Visiting drum and dance groups were also welcome to sleep at CCNH overnight, if no other accommodations could be found. A staff member remained on the committee to ensure that all this ran smoothly and to offer additional support with grant writing or navigating city ordinances.

As the Pow Wow took off, CCNH continued to support new groups moving into the neighbourhood. In the mid-eighties, weekend family programming for Chinese and Vietnamese families began as well as the annual Lunar New Year celebration (1984). Four years later CCNH began its Noon Hour ESL youth program in surrounding schools to support newcomer youth in learning English. **(Could be another bullet list timeline of cultural events and programming here!)**



FRESH START: Hue Huynh spent 3½ years in an Indonesian refugee camp, where her son Sukarto Nguyen, now 3, was born. She recalls: "Canadians were 'too helpful.'"

MOSAIC Refugee moms back each other

CCNH partnered with MOSAIC in the 90s to create programs for mothers recently arrived from Indonesian refugee camps.

Today, alongside singing Portuguese women on Fridays and weekly indigenous family nights, CCNH continues to create space for newcomers, inviting all neighbours to participate in an atmosphere of excitement and acceptance over the diversity in the neighbourhood.

A potential but missing section!

Most of the programs mentioned in this report had strong volunteer leadership sustaining and growing them...

Leadership piece

Developing a space for leadership...camp → Box

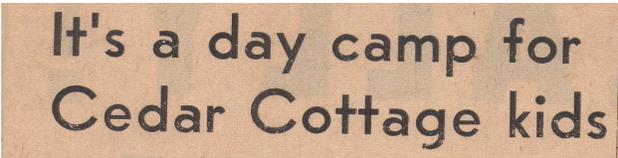
Leadership Camp/ Sunny hill

-From 1977 to 1985 Cedar Cottage opened its doors one evening a week to children who had been spending most of their days at the Sunny Hill Children's Hospital. The program served 6 to 8 young children who were transported by van to CCNH and paired up with Gladstone students who had been trained through the leadership program. The children enjoyed crafts, parties, games and musical instruments as well as summer time activities that took them to other areas of the city.

Pre-teen girls club

The board...OBVS!

...KCC neighbor and neighbourhood small grants



It's a day camp for
Cedar Cottage kids

One of the first tasks assigned to CCNH by the N.S.A. was to develop some newly acquired campgrounds. This was the beginning of Camp Wallace (1963) later known as the Sassamat Outdoors Center (1987).

TIME LINE OF KEY DATES:

- 1950- Cedar Cottage Boy's Club Begins
- 1952- Incorporated as Cedar Cottage Youth Club (including girls)
- 1954- CCYC gets first Executive Director and becomes a member of the United Way
- 1960- Becomes Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
- 1964: CCNH takes part in the Woodland Park Study
- 1965- Women's Auxiliary group which then becomes Coffee Time program
- 1967- Building at 4065 Victoria Dr. is officially opened Sep. 15th 1967
- 1968- Daycare Programming starts**
- 1971- OOSC starts
- 1971- STAY House opens
- 1971- CCNH conducts a survey of seniors in the area
- 1972- CCNH opens the first Adult Day Care Centre in Vancouver.
- 1972- Community police storefront starts
- 1974- Family Nights Started.
- 1974- Breakfast program established
- 1974- Last Chance High starts
- 1974- ESL classes started on Monday and Wednesday evenings
- 1976- Outdoors Based Leadership training starts**
- 1976- Portuguese cultural programming starts**
- 1977- Nursery school starts up again after a year of no programming. This time it becomes focused on providing more family-focused services.
- 1977- Sunny Hill Children's Hospital program begins
- 1978- Community Accountability Panel starts and runs until about 1988**
- 1980- Summer OOSC
- 1980- Indigenous Family Night Starts
- 1984- First Lunar New Year Celebration**
- 1985- First CCNH Mother's Day Pow Wow runs till 2009**
- 1986- Sunday program for Vietnamese Families (CCNH provides the space, but did not start the program)
- 1988- Noon Hour ESL youth program
- 1989- Hispanic programs on Monday Evenings (short lived program)
- 1990- Seniors Vegetable Garden
- 1991- Nobody's perfect parenting group
- 1991- Recycling program
- 1991- Collective Kitchen
- 1992- First CCNH Carnival**
- 1993- Wednesday morning Family and Tots.
- 1993- After school adventure program
- 1995- Cedar Cottage Youth Council and Thursday evening youth drop in
- 1995- Nobody's perfect parenting program
- 1995 - Saturday Family Drop in
- 1997- First Diwali Festival**
- 1997- Cedar Cottage Youth Advisory group
- 1997- Cantonese parent support group

2001- Neighbourhood Small Grants Start
2004- Chinese Painting Group starts coming
2004- Supper Club
2005- KCC Neighbour Newspaper Starts
2010- CCNH creates a community living room for the Olympics (youth involved in planning)
2011- French Camp Starts
2013- Youth led summer projects begin
2015- Seniors HUB

A short note from the writer:

This paper represents some research from archival documents and interviews. However, a richer history may continue to unfold through the shared stories of veteran staff, volunteers and participants as well as the experiences of new neighbours who will walk through the doors today and tomorrow.