

# ANNUAL **REPORT**

2024

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Supporting and empowering  
families affected by dementia



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## President's Message 2024

As Ontario's population continues to age, dementia remains one of the most pressing health concerns facing our communities. This year brought a significant milestone with the passing of Bill 121 in December 2024. This legislation directs Ontario's Ministry of Health to develop a framework ensuring every Ontarian can access quality dementia care.

At Memory Lane Home Living Inc. (MLHLI), we welcome this development with hope and excitement. We know first-hand how essential it is to provide care and dignity for seniors and those living with a dementia diagnosis, and we are encouraged that this commitment is now recognized at the provincial level.

Throughout 2024, MLHL continued to offer Music from the Heart, bringing joy and connection to the York Region community. In March, we also hosted a *Living Well with Dementia* Educational Conference, which explored practical tools to improve the quality of life for care partners and individuals with dementia. Building on the success of our music program, we integrated musical approaches into the conference, reinforcing the role that creativity and connection play in well-being.

We are especially proud to have launched Phase 2 of our "Living With Us" housing initiative. Dementia-friendly living

Options remain one of the greatest needs in York Region, and most inquiries we receive at Memory Lane relate to our innovative housing model of care. In 2024, we were awarded funding to begin research and development for Phase 2, an exciting step forward in addressing this critical gap.

Our Board of Directors also engaged in continued learning, attending seminars on governance and marketing to strengthen our leadership capacity.

Finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers who contribute to our day programs, music programs, and board activities. Their dedication supports our mission and ensures we remain current with Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) requirements.

2024 has truly been a year of growth, learning, and momentum. With the support of our community, we look forward to continuing our work toward a future where every person living with dementia in York Region has access to the care, dignity, and housing they deserve.

Sincerely,  
Mona Lancaster  
President, Board of Directors  
Memory Lane Home Living



## **WHO WE ARE**

Memory Lane Home Living Inc (MLHL) is a registered charity that offers an alternative, empowering way of life for women with a dementia diagnosis. We recognize that dementia is unique to each person. We offer programs and educational resources to enable families and their loved ones to thrive on their dementia journey and age well in a community setting.

It is our goal to launch Phase 2 of our “Living with Us” model of dementia community living in 2025. Our model is evidence-based and rooted in best practices for dementia care prevalent in Europe, including the “Friends of the Elderly.” The model emphasizes a holistic approach to dementia care in a home environment, where families and volunteers are active members of the community.

Memory Lane Home Living was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation in 2016 and registered as a charity under the Income Tax Act in 2018.

## **MISSION**

At Memory Lane Home Living, our mission is to connect and empower women and families affected by dementia.

## **VISION**

Our vision is to enhance dementia support by transforming how care is delivered while utilizing a cooperative model in which families are not just recipients but active partners in the journey.

## **CORE VALUES**

Our values shape every step we take:

**Accountability:** Remaining transparent and responsible in our actions

**Intentionality:** Ensuring every decision supports the well-being of those we serve

**Forward-Thinking:** Always striving to improve and innovate in dementia care

**Connection, Community, and Compassion:** Shapes how we build relationships, foster belonging, and provide care with empathy and dignity.

## HIGHLIGHTS - 2024

### Day Programs:

The **MLHL Day Program**, *Community Connections*, offers women living with dementia meaningful opportunities for social connection and shared experience. Activities are intentionally structured to emphasize friendship, conversation, and mutual support as much as stimulation and engagement in nature.





## **Music from the Heart Program and Choir**

Music connects to a person's identity, history, and emotions in ways words cannot. Our unique Music from the Heart: music therapy and choir program in York Region brings together both individuals living with memory loss and their care partners. Its success continues to resonate in the community, attracting new members and volunteers who want to be part of something truly meaningful.

January 16, 2024 – Music From the Heart Choir – at Mackenzie - Elvis Hits



August 13, 2024 - Music From the Heart Choir – Chartwell Park Place Retirement



October 10, 2024 – Music from the Heart Choir - at Maple Health Centre – Songs made famous by popular artists



December 2024 – Music From the Heart Choir – at The Residence on Yonge in Aurora: Everyone’s Favourite Christmas Carols



Music from the Heart after Concert Gatherings



Music from the Heart Bell Choir Practice



Ernesto the Pianist is our newest addition to our choir.



Miya from Miya Creative Care runs our Music Therapy Program.



## Education and Outreach

### Educational Event Hosted by Memory Lane Home Living Inc.

March 15, 2024 – Wellness Fair “Living Well with Dementia” (funded in part by New Horizons Grant)



Our workshop was inspired by the goal of exploring preventative measures for dementia. As part of this initiative, we hosted a **Living Well Fair** for care partners and their loved ones, offering an opportunity to learn, connect, and discover supportive resources.

The day featured an engaging schedule of speakers who encouraged participants to embrace services that foster well-being and community—including **ecotherapy, music therapy, drumming, and more.**

The event proved to be both **informative and inspiring**, benefiting not only attendees but also the exhibitors who shared their expertise and passion.

Living Well With Dementia , March 15, 2024, Richmond Hill



Community Events that MLHL attended in 2024

## Memory Lane Home Living's attendance at Community Events.

**June, 2024** - Participated in Open House at Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital



**August , 2024** - Dementia presentation to the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church Women's Group.

**September 7, 2024** - Booth at Aurora Seniors Wellness Fair

**October 1, 2024** – Booth at Chartwell Aging Well Symposium, Richmond Hill.



**November 3, 2024** – Booth at Aurora Seniors' Centre Holiday Fair – Christmas hot packs made by our women.



**November 6, 2024** – Booth at Living Well Seminar (Mackenzie Health Hospital)

**November 2024** – Attended Music Care Conference at Wilfred Laurier University

**May 2024**- Alzheimer's Society of York Region Walk



## **Governance activities for 2024**

Annual General Meeting and Elections - March 28, 2024.

Retained Accounting Firm to conduct a Review engagement for 2024.

Completed update of By-Law and articles to comply with Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act- November 2024.

Board Members completed training delivered by Management Advisory Services (MAS): “Best Board Forward” and “Achieving Organizational Sustainability”.

Launched project to update Policy and Procedures Binder.

The board's subcommittees met throughout the year to complete by-law revisions, the annual budget, and the Strategic Plan.

We have continued to search for new volunteers and Board members (we have contacted Indeed, Probus, Seneca College, MAS, and Beneventi). Note that these are challenging times for all Charities and NFPs.

Ongoing work to modernize/update the website.

## **Other Achievements**

Bingo World Charity Gaming: MLHLI now has seven people fully trained to volunteer (Mona, David, Liz, Jess, Mikhael, and Mina); the team volunteered for shifts and did Awareness activities in 2024.

President Mona Lancaster represented MLHLI on Richmond Hill's Age-Friendly Council.

Published Fall Newsletter to celebrate successes in 2024 and flag upcoming events in 2025.

In December, MLHLI was nominated for the Richmond Hill Volunteer Achievement Award for Community Organization of the Year.

## Treasurers Report:

This year Memory Lane retained Edward & Manning LLP: Chartered Professional Accountants to conduct a financial review (formally called a Review Engagement) of the 2024 books and records of the organization. A copy of their report (was presented at this year's annual general meeting). This report allowed MLHLI to demonstrate sound financial stewardship.

As part of the Treasurer's Report I would like to acknowledge the many funding agencies, families and donors who supported us in delivering quality programs and services to our clients.

A Canada Summer Jobs Grant supported us to hire a student program facilitator who worked with the recreation therapist to deliver the walking program, the music program and the Music From the Heart Choir.

The New Horizons for Seniors Program (part of 2024) supported project costs for our Music from the Heart program, including funding for a registered music therapist, space rental, refreshments and promotions.

Proceeds from the *OLG's Charitable Gaming* were central in supporting us to hire and pay a qualified recreational therapist and to support educational events.

Toronto Regional Real Estate Board Grant was awarded to MLHLI in 2024 to help us pursue research and development of our housing cooperative as we enter into phase 2 of our pilot project.

Program fees and the generous support of private donors support the operation of the house and the many activities and events that are hosted at Memory Lane.

Elizabeth King  
Treasurer and Board Chair  
Memory Lane Home Living Inc.

## OUR TEAM

Memory Lane Home Living is proud to offer a unique home setting for our clients. The warm, safe space is made possible by a dedicated team of board members, staff, students, community volunteers and family members who are committed to the ideal of “Living Well With Dementia”.

In 2024 our team included Elizabeth King (Treasurer) and Elizabeth Morin (Secretary). MLHLI appreciated all their dedication as we worked through many administrative initiatives and events in which MLHLI was part of.



The Board of Directors at MLHLI aspires to maintain a five-member board that oversees the management of Memory Lane Home Living. The Board consists of a Chairperson, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and one general member. Ideally, board members commit to serve three years, subject to yearly elections at our Annual General Meeting.

Staff and Students—MLHLI currently employs both a Recreational Therapist and a Recreational Aide to oversee our volunteers and our programming.

We were also grateful to hire a student through the Canada Summer Job Program for the summer months. In 2024 , we hosted a Social Service Workers Placement Student through Seneca College.

Community Volunteers—In 2024, volunteers continued to be the “backbone” of our organization, for which we are grateful. Most of our volunteers come with “lived experience” from looking after family members, which often allows for a greater connection with our program participants.

We consider all of the family members and their loved ones with a dementia diagnosis who participate in our choir and sing at concerts to be part of our volunteer team.



## **MLHLI PLANS FOR 2025**

### Support Living Well in Community

We will expand outreach to increase participation in the music program and schedule regular performances by the Music from the Heart Choir at Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Adult Day Programs.

We will promote the “Community Connections” programs and strive to maintain a low client-to-staff/volunteer ratio so that senior women and women with early-onset dementia can benefit from social connections, recreation, and activities that support living well with dementia in our small home environment.

### Expand Education and Outreach

We will share dementia care best practices with Board members, staff, students, and family members to support continuous learning.

We will host community wellness events to share knowledge and information on dementia and elder care.

### Phase 2 Development

We will advocate for new models of community living, including entering phase 2 of our “Living With Us” project and seeking provincial support for expanding the scope of the Family-Managed Care Program to include dementia.

## **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

### Volunteer

Memory Lane Home Living relies on a team of dedicated volunteers who support our programs and participate in daily life at our house. If you enjoy good conversation or have recreation, music, or crafting skills, we'd love to hear from you. Join our Board.

A volunteer Board of Directors oversees Memory Lane Home Living's operations. Individuals with experience in finance, fundraising, board governance, communications, and marketing are welcome to call for more information.

### Donate

Memory Lane Home Living Inc. is a registered charity (#759279490 RR 0001) and can issue official donation receipts for income tax purposes.

### Contact Us

If you have lived experience with dementia or a passion for improving the lives of people living with dementia and their families, please contact us. We are located in Richmond Hill, ON.

Email: [mlliving14@gmail.com](mailto:mlliving14@gmail.com)

Phone: 905-237-1419