

Residents' Stories

Seniors' Month 2020

Meet Arno Sr., a resident at Fairview Lodge since 2015.



He was born in a small town called Delmenhorst in Germany. In 1957, he moved to Canada without knowing any English, and got a job at General Motors. He was an auto inspector for 22 years and later moved to the stamping plant. Arno worked at GM for a total of 35 years. Arno met his wife in Canada and has been married for 40 years. They have one son and one daughter, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

While in Germany, Arno enjoyed training dogs for the police and continued it as a hobby when he lived in Oshawa. Arno was part of a German Choir in Oshawa for 10 years and enjoyed playing the trumpet. At Fairview Lodge, Arno enjoys singing in the choir group, or participating in any of the musical programs.

Meet Betty, a resident at Hillsdale Terraces.



Born on February 9, 1927 in Hungary, Betty grew up on a farm with four sisters. She remembers fondly how supportive her parents were of her endeavors to get a higher education and she went to university in Hungary to become a midwife. She worked in the OR unit in Budapest in 1951. She loved being a midwife and felt this was the best work she had ever done.

Betty was married in 1953 to Lasow, and a few years later they left Hungary because the Hungarian Revolution started in 1956. After coming to Canada as refugees, Betty started working in Oshawa Hospital. She enjoyed socials and cooking. Her favourite dish to make was cabbage rolls, stew and chicken paprika. At Hillsdale Terraces, she continues to enjoy going for walks, attending bingo and knitting.

Meet Connie, a resident at Lakeview Manor.



Connie was born in Italy, moved to South America in 1954, then moved to Canada in 1960. She met her husband Antonino a short time after she moved to Canada, going on to have two sons and three beautiful grandchildren. Connie always lived around the Greater Toronto area where she became a Nurses Aid at the Scarborough General Hospital.

Connie and her husband were very well known for their amazing gardens. Wherever they lived, she always spent well over \$200 easily just on flowers. She loved looking out into her yard and seeing all the different colours. They had a secret way of growing vegetables from their Markham home where they lived for 20 years. In Markham, they grew huge zucchinis, with the biggest one being 10 feet long. They also enjoyed growing tomatoes, parsley, basil, beans and hot peppers. They could always be found out back in the garden or in the kitchen making tomato sauce. One year, they made 16 bushels of sauce to share with family and friends. To this day, spaghetti is still one of Connie's favorite foods.

When Connie and Antonino weren't in the garden or travelling to some of their favorite places like Italy, Cuba or Margarita Island in Mexico, they would be found fishing or boating in Trenton.

Connie misses being in her own garden, but at Lakeview Manor she enjoys going for walks, soaking up the sun on the patio, and playing bingo and trivia games.

Meet Doris, a resident at Hillside Estates.



Born in Windsor, Ontario, Doris was sick as a child and the nurses who cared for her inspired her to want to be a nurse when she grew up. As an adult, she fulfilled her dream to be a nurse, and was even voted best nurse in her class. For most of her nursing career, she worked at Whitby Psychiatric Hospital. She married at the age of 18 to a farmer in Oshawa; and had six children—one daughter and five sons. Each summer, her husband's band would play at Musselman Lake, and she would dance the night away.

At Hillside Estates, she loves helping staff and being useful, as "a nurse is always a nurse." She still enjoys dancing on pub nights and also likes to socialize and exercise, as well as playing trivia games and bingo. She is very happy at Hillside, finding it to be "a beautiful place" to live.

Meet Gail, a resident at Fairview Lodge.

She was a Recreation Programmer in Toronto with seniors, and even took them to meet the Queen during the Year of the Senior. She really enjoys being social; she has many friends and loves shopping. Gail has two sons and three grandchildren.



Meet Gerald, a resident at Hillsdale Estates.



Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on May 5, 1919, Gerald joined the Airforce at the age of 19 and fought in World War II. He then became a civil servant for the National Defense. Gerald and his wife, Bernice, have four children, eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He went to community college for one year to become a bookkeeper. In his spare time, he enjoyed playing tennis, curling and rifle shooting. After his wife died, Gerald travelled the world. His favourite place was Indonesia where he was able to feed and hold tiger cubs. He also loved Hong Kong, where he climbed the mountains, looking down on the harbour. Gerald attributes his long life to always looking at the bright side of things.

Meet Herbert, a resident at Fairview Lodge.



Herbert was born on March 8, 1931 in Graz, Austria. War broke out in 1939, and, fearing the daily bombardment in the city, Herbert and his mom moved to his Aunt's farm. Returning home to Graz in 1945, he became a barber. Working at a hair salon for ladies and men, he met his future wife, Johanna, who he married in 1953. In 1956, they arrived in Toronto with their baby, where they quickly made life-long friends. In 1959, they opened their own barber and beauty salon in Downsview, which they owned until they retired in 2016. In 1962, a son named Peter joined the family of three.

In 2011, Herbert was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. He was admitted to Fairview Lodge at the end of 2017. Herbert is attached to many wonderful Personal Support Workers who are caring and loving to him. At Fairview Lodge, he enjoys singing, playing games and playing his harmonica. His wife Johanna's continues to visit him, telling him how not just love, but being in love never ends. Herbert was and always will be the Love of her life...as she knows she is his.

Meet Sella, a resident at Fairview Lodge.



Sella left Aleppo, Syria at the age of 18 in 1950 to attend nursing school at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon. Upon graduating, she worked at that hospital caring for newborns, after which she became the supervisor of that same unit. She married Hagop in 1960. After working at the hospital for 27 years, Sella, along with Hagop, their three children and her mother-in-law, migrated to Toronto in 1977 due to the civil war in Beirut.

Sella and Hagop attempted to start a restaurant business for two years, when she took her Registered Nurse refresher course, and began nursing at Branson Hospital on many different units including ICU and Emergency departments. Sella retired from nursing 1999.

Sella always loved hosting parties and spending time with friends and family. She also enjoyed gardening, reading, and going for long walks. At Fairview Lodge, Sella loves all things involving music, especially her music therapy visits. She now has six grandchildren.

Meet Verna, a resident at Hillsdale Terraces since 2016.



Verna was born on March 1, 1928 in Shortdale, Manitoba. Prior to residing at the home, Verna worked at a grocery store as a cashier, before moving on to working at Toronto Dominion Bank as a teller for many years. After she left the bank, she began to work as an accountant for over 10 years until her retirement.

Verna has been married to her Veteran husband, Edward since 1946. Edward also resides at Hillsdale Terraces. Shortly after her marriage, she moved to Ontario and had three children and three grandchildren.

At Hillsdale Terraces, Verna enjoys playing bingo, attending church services/hymn sings, playing bridge, knitting, baking, doing crafts, watching TV and reading. Verna is also a HUGE Blue Jays fan, saying, "They'll always be my favourite, even if they don't play so well." She loves to be outdoors and enjoys nature, believing "That is how the kids stayed out of trouble."