

## 2026 AGM: Clubs and Activity Groups – 2025 Annual Reports

### **ART**

The number of participants in the Wednesday Morning Drop-In Art continues to decrease. Currently we have between 3 to 6 artists participating. Even with a small number we had an excellent May 2025 Art Show. This year, we hosted a successful artist reception on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

Again, we are hopeful that we may see a renewed interest in the Drop-In Art program. Our group has always been made up of people who enjoy art regardless of their skill level or the medium they use and whose primary focus is having a nice chat over a cup of coffee.

*(Currently, the Goward House Drop-In Art Group Show is open for viewing, M-F, 8:30-3:30)*

*(Respectfully submitted by **Carol Nuernberger** – Drop-In Painters' Group Contact)*

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### **BOOK CLUB**

Book Club continues to have an excellent turn out of participants with about 12 members attending meetings every month. The books we read are most often from Public Library Book Club Sets. Interesting and thought provoking discussions arise from what individuals have found to be important insights. Examples of books read and discussed since this time last year include: Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt; The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride; Playground by Richard Powers; The Phone Booth At The Edge Of The World by Laura Imai Messina.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Susan Gilberstad** – Book Club Facilitator)*

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### **BRIDGE – DUPLICATE**

We enjoyed another successful year of Duplicate Bridge at Goward House. Our total table count was 657 over forty-nine weeks. This is an increase of 11% per week over 2024. We averaged 13.5 tables per week through the year, compared to 12 in 2024 and 10 in 2023. Participants are making excellent use of our Bridgewebs website, with over 35,000 bridge page visits in 2025, averaging 721 per week. Thursday morning bridge lessons were popular, averaging over 25 students per class across 27 weeks of lessons. Courses on Bidding, Play and Defense were provided. We continue to be grateful for the incredible support we receive from the volunteers,

staff and Board of Goward House. And we appreciate our ongoing excellent working relationship with Bridge Victoria, the local unit of the ACBL.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Jim Brackenbury** – Duplicate Bridge Coordinator and Instructor)*

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### **BRIDGE – SOCIAL**

We have continued to play both Monday and Thursday afternoons, but could definitely accommodate more players. There are approximately 6 to 8 regular players each time. There is a bit of cross-pollination, with some more experienced Monday players joining Wednesday Duplicate Bridge, and some less experienced coming on Thursday afternoon after Thursday morning lessons.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Donna Grainger** – Social Bridge Group Contact)*

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### **CHINESE BRUSH PAINTERS (a.k.a. “Studio of Harmonious Endeavours”)**

We continued our more than twenty year tradition of hanging our work at Goward House during the months of December and January. As usual at the “Pop Up” shop, held during our opening reception, everyone made sales and thus contributed to the financial well-being of Goward House. We also took part in the opportunity of displaying at the office of BC’s Advocate for Seniors. In addition, Arlene Davey took part in several sales and shows in Oak Bay.

For the first time since Nenagh Molson retired from teaching, Goward House is once again offering lessons in the art of painting with brush and ink. Barbara Mekelburg is using her years of study and experience to offer insight into this challenging but rewarding form of expression. She is helped in this by generous gifts of both supplies and expertise from Barbara Downie and Nenagh Molson and encouragement from the staff at Goward House.

We suffered a great loss this year. Nenagh Molson our founder and mentor died on Dec 31, 2025. She moved her painting classes to Goward House more than twenty years ago when the Art Gallery of Victoria withdrew from adult education. When she retired from teaching, her students, at her encouragement and with the name “Studio of Harmonious Endeavours” became an “Activity” at Goward House. Nenagh maintained her ties with us to the end: gave workshops, exhibited in and hung our shows. She understood the art of passing on what she

knew while, at the same time, encouraging her pupils to use that knowledge to develop their own style.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Ann Gibbard** – Chinese Brush Painting Contact)*

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## **CHOIR**

In 2025 we had our regular practices in January to March and performances in April to June. Summer holidays and then back to practices in September and October and performances in November & December.

There were about 40 weeks worth of singing in total – half in practice and half in performance (18 seniors' residences and 2 concerts at Goward House).

The choir would like to thank the very friendly Goward House staff for everything they've done for us during the year. They make everything so easy.

The choir numbers are now up to 50 and even though that can be a difficulty with some of the seniors' residences we sing at, we're always open for some new members. A larger choir allows us to sing more interesting and more challenging music. Every week is a good workout and afterward we know we've had a good time.

If you're interested in singing with us or know someone who might be, we'd love to see them. We'll be accepting new singers in September and that's just around the corner. Have a look at our website – [GowardHouseSingers.ca](http://GowardHouseSingers.ca) — to see what and where we sing.

We have another public ***Friends & Family Concert*** on Saturday, May 30, 2026 at Oak Bay United Church. Admission is free and we'd love to see you.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Philip Robbie** – Director, Goward House Singers)*

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### **CRAFTERS & PAPER QUILLERS**

Monday mornings: 10-12 (Paper Quilling)

Wednesday afternoons: 1:30-3:30 (Crafters)

The two groups are related as their purpose is the same: we enjoy working together to produce products that can be sold for revenue to support Goward House.

The Quillers are now five members who enjoy creating gift cards for all occasions. We share a display rack near the Front Desk, with some of our artists.

The Crafters use our own materials and lots of donated fabric and yarn to make clothing, toys, dolls, clothing, baby blankets etc. that are displayed in the Display Cabinet and can be purchased at the Front Desk.

Craft Fair 2025 was very successful. Crafters and Quillers displayed and sold their items in the Sequoia Room in November, to raise \$1600 for Goward House.

The “Repair Clinic” continues every first Wednesday of the month; we will do simple repairs for donations to Goward House – everything from trouser hems to silk wall hangers.

We welcome new members and new skills anytime! We are a happy bunch, crafting, chatting, sharing – generally “solving the problems of the world.”

*(Respectfully submitted by **Esther Pomeroy** -- Quillers’ & Crafters’ Group Leader)*

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### **FRENCH CONVERSATION (ADVANCED)**

The French conversation group continues to thrive. We are a group of 16 at the moment, and will always welcome new members Attendance each Tuesday is usually between 6 and 10, due to vacations, family circumstances or whatever may arise.

We take turns leading each week. The chef/fe plans an agenda according to personal preferences, giving us a varied menu including grammar, dictation, discussions on a variety of topics both extemporaneous and preplanned, games, debates, poetry - all of which encourages wide ranging conversations.

At Christmas and in summer we have a potluck lunch at someone's house - an enjoyable gathering always well attended.

We generally pause in the summer...actual date tbd each year depending everyone's schedule.

We enjoy the atmosphere at Goward House and wish to express our thanks to the staff for their always willing support.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Barbara Loan** on behalf of the French group)*

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### **IPAD CLUB**

The iPad Club has seen increased interest in recent months, with attendance ranging from two to six participants per meeting. While the club's primary focus is on iPads and iPhones, discussions often extend to related topics such as artificial intelligence, home automation, and smart cars. Our members appreciate having such a comfortable and welcoming place to meet.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Leah Freedman** -- iPad Club Instructor)*

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### **MAH JONG Anyone?**

Goward House is excited to offer drop in Mahjong every Tuesday from 1:00pm - 4:pm, you will find us in the Sun Room.

Beginners are welcome. We have a lot of fun and laughter, playing Hong Kong style of Mahjong.

Come and try us out - the first time is free - see if you like us.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Tricia Bowden** -- Mah Jong Coordinator)*

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### **MEDITATION GROUP**

The Goward House Meditation Group entered its sixth year in 2025. The group meets weekly on Monday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:00 pm. A core group of 4-6 meditators enjoy coming together regularly to explore spiritual subjects and engage in guided meditation. Participants enjoy the inner peace they experience by going within and expanding awareness. The program is non-denominational and seeks to find peace and stillness beyond the mind that can be maintained in a challenging, turbulent world. The program is open to anyone interested in meditation and does not require any prior experience or regular practice.

New members are welcome.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Eric Elbers** – Meditation Group Leader)*

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### **PORTRAIT PAINTERS**

The Goward House Portrait Painters continued this year with a few new and many returning members. We like to keep the group to a manageable size, so that each person has good sightlines to see the model. The House supplied us with a few new tables which were much appreciated. We continue to meet each week and to use volunteer models, some of whom come from the Goward House community. Each model can choose one or more portraits to take home, which we feel is a good incentive. Several people come and model every year for which we are grateful. We appreciate the ongoing support of Goward House for the group.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Vicki Postl** – Portrait Painters Group Leader)*

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### **SPANISH CONVERSATION (ADVANCED)**

The Spanish Conversation group meets in our regular quarters in the Sequoia Room. Each week we have from average- to full- attendance, with plenty of enthusiastic participation in our presentations and discussions. As several of our previous members are unable to continue, we are seeking to round out our numbers. We are always looking for new members who have a working knowledge of the Preterite and the Imperfect, and have some notion of the use of the Subjunctive.

*(Respectfully submitted by **Anton de Bakker** – Advanced Spanish Conversation Group Leader)*