



News from the Lodge



Winter 2025 / '26

All the News that's fit to Point. . .

...by Richard Hill



What's The Latest on the.. Orchard House Project?

There has been quite a bit of progress since the 'before' photo taken above in July. However, the year and a half prior to that was spent obtaining the building permit, as regular readers of this newsletter will know, so overall, we haven't been rushing this project too much. Since Lance and Rob got a hold of it though, things moved rather quickly. The photo below is of the foundation walls that were done in early August. They were filled in, after being Radon vented for the five molecules of Radon that exist on the South Island and then the slab was poured after the plumbing was roughed in.



Then came the framing, which makes it look like you're almost finished but there is still plenty to do, especially if a few last minute changes necessitate the engagement of an engineer and the ordering of custom glue-lam beams to allow for the removal of the living room loft.



Installing the trusses and allowing for insulation and heat ducting presented more challenges, but nothing really major or anything that you'd call a big 'step backward' slowed things down too much.

Once the place was framed in September, the plumbing and wiring went into the walls and was inspected, the insulation went in after that, which was also inspected and the drywall went on top of that. That is a major milestone where you can really see and feel what the finished place will be like. The flooring installer's schedules have pushed things forward a bit, but we don't have a deadline, so it's okay. We're at the siding and painting stage now, so before long it'll be an actual home with a family in it, so we'll have to ask the construction tours to end when the happy family arrives.



It's Time for the Annual...

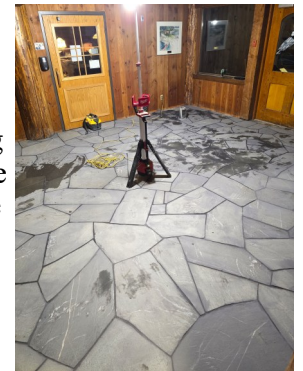
Shutdown Projects Report!



Most of you will know that every year around the second week of December, we close the lodge down for a week in order to do all the projects that are not possible to tackle when the lodge is open.

We don't have a huge list of daunting mega-projects this year, but still have to do all the routing cleaning and testing of all our systems and facilities, which adds up and makes the week go pretty fast.

The main events this season will be the finishing of the new stone floor in the lobby with a sealing coat that will enhance the look, colour and cleanability of this nice addition. We will also be installing a 'built in' vacuum system in the main lounge which should make for quieter, more relaxing mornings for our early rising guests and help our dear housekeepers by relieving the stress and strain of lugging heavy and unwieldy portable vacuums up and down the stairs, (see photo below for an example of their daily struggle).



There will also be some septic system repairs and upgrades, including a new tank for the rustic cabins communal washrooms, but that will hopefully not be too noticeable to most people. We will also be running fire and first aid drills and training for our new 'fire alarm' procedure.

We'll also be having a workshop with the office staff to prepare for our new, custom made front desk reservation system that you can read all about on page two.



The tree will go up and all the staff will gather on Friday for our annual Christmas party. On Sunday the doors will open and we'll welcome you all back again!



How About More on...

Upcoming Projects and Upgrades

The last piece was about what we were going to attempt during our annual maintenance shutdown, so this will focus on what will be going on during the rest of the year, when guests are here and you can see what's going on.

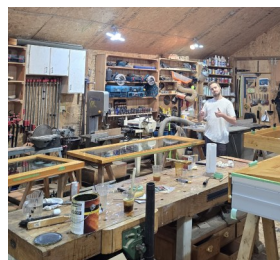
We've recently been working with Calvin from 'Big Yellow Truck' and Tre-for from 'Flo Septic' to make sure that our fairly high tech wastewater treatment system is up to date and working at it's best. The photo shows one of the many recently installed 'high level alarm' systems that were added along with new, vented lids and piping upgrades. If you're interested, when you brush your teeth (*or whatever*) the wastewater ends up cascading through five big tanks to settle out sediment, then goes into an 1,800 sq. ft. (*same size as the lounge!*) gravel bed filter where the 'water' comes out clear and odorless, but not drinkable. It then goes into a final tank and is pumped out through 4,000 ft. of drip irrigation line, three inches below the surface, into the dense 'root mat' through the middle of the forest.

Think of it this way; brush your teeth, water the trees. This effectively makes our water usage part of a 'closed system' and is nice to think about in August.

I went into some detail last issue about the new Cutter shed and re-build of the wood shop. Here you can see me starting in disbelief at Lance as he just backed the Cutter into the existing shop, up a hill and around a corner, all the way from the main driveway. We will be aiming to make putting the boat away easier and actually doable by mere mortals. I've done it once and it was difficult.



Here's Luke prepping some doors for the house project. What the photo doesn't show is the roller coaster nature of the floor which is built on Dad's original foundation from the early 1930's. After the new Cutter shed is built, the shop will be extensively re-furbished.



Other upcoming fun will include the re-finishing and caulking of the main lodge and the installation of new gutters with leaf guards. We will also be converting the big, long barbeque tables into a larger number of smaller tables and fixing the tile and stonework around the pool. We'll have an extra pair of handy-hands when our Son-in-law, Kory is here, so watch for lots of stuff!

Judy and Sandi are Excited about... The New Reservation System!



Why? Because we're designing an entirely new system, but **keeping the big boards!** (*The original spreadsheets!*)

Years ago, we had an 'off the shelf' database to hold all of your reservation information. The company died and the only person who knew how

to fix it retired. We set out to have a system designed, but it was taken on first by two companies in a row that decided they couldn't do it after a while. Another group took it on, made some progress but had to hand it off to a private developer who was probably handed a half finished basket of goods to try and make some sense out of.

At the end of the day, making it work here proved to be very complex and the system features multiple steps and routines that are difficult to learn and invite errors. The office people are frustrated by it's frequent 'mind of it's own' and 'just quitting' type of behavior as well.

So, in order to keep the peace and try to have as many things resolved around here in the Autumn of my career as possible, we've decided to commission an entire rebuild of the computerized (*not the boards, they never crash*) portion of our reservation system.

It will basically be 'browser based' but only 'browse' over to our data server in the building and not be connected to the internet, which will provide what they call 'air gap' protection for your personal information. It will be based on an 'open source' architecture that will be around for a long time and accessible by many technicians, not like our current database which is built on Microsoft Access and won't be supported once Windows 10 goes away, soon.

The processes will be vastly simplified and the motto of the project is 'Dumb it Down'.

As previously mentioned, we have (*had?*) organized a workshop with our senior office staff in order to go over every single step in the reservation and reporting process to ensure that we're going to have everything we need like daily reports, diet reporting, cash transactions, etc. etc. etc. but mainly so we *don't* have anything we *don't* need.

So, after going to all this trouble, expense, planning, communicating, working, testing and refinement it is our sincere hope that you, our gusts, will notice absolutely nothing.

You'll still get your little printed folios on the nice paper and all our reports and information will be in pretty much the exact same format. The only difference is that it'll be easier to teach new people how to navigate it and problems and mistakes will be a lot easier to track down because there won't be as many of them, as the system was designed from the ground up to make our office people happier.



A Necessary Evil... 2026 Rate Increase

I know, nobody likes to hear this and in fact it's my least favorite thing to put in the newsletter, but if anybody has been to a grocery store or watched the news lately, you'll realize that we have to do this every now and then.

Recent years have also seen employers given more responsibility for their staffs well being with things like paid sick days and B.C. med premiums now being their new costs. We like to be a little 'ahead of the curve' with our staff as well and include things like subsidized benefits, an R.R.S.P. matching program and meals. We think a happy staff translates into a better experience for our guests. It's just the right thing to do, anyway.

Therefore, in the interest of staying in business and continuing to provide the inclusive experience that our guests seem to enjoy, starting on **January 2nd, 2026** our room rates will be increasing, per person, per night, approximately **eight dollars (\$8.00)** for a single guest and **five dollars and fifty cents (\$5.50)** if you are part of a couple. These are in Canadian dollars and are 'approximate' because there will be minor rounding difference for the various types of accommodations.

According to a recent search, the average price for a hotel room in Vancouver, not including any meals, snacks, bikes or kayaks, where a glass of house wine is probably North of \$17.00 instead of \$4.50, is between \$306 and \$414 per night.

Mind you, you don't have to line up for food, eat with people you don't know and sleep in a tool shed, (*I know, that's our 'low end'*) but at the very least we hope you will still find what we offer to be good value for your hard earned vacation dollar.



Truly, the End of an Era...

Burt Brooks

7/30/29 - 10/21/25

Burt gets a mention here since he was known to many as our 'longest continuous guest'. He arrived from Seattle in the Summer of 1954 and (*not counting the covid ban, that doesn't count*) did not miss a single year! That's every year, for 71 of them. A sports enthusiast, chemical engineer, and all 'round great guy, he would entertain guests on his boat and generally keep the tone around here just the way we like it. He will be missed and we appreciate everything he did in his decades with us.

This Issues 'Old Timey' Photos celebrate...

Gerald B. Hill

1929 - 2025



Okay, this isn't going to turn into the 'obituary page' no matter how much material I could obtain from our guest list, but Burt had been coming here for over 71 years and my (*technically 'half'*) brother, Gerry, was here from before the beginning of the lodge as we know it.

This is a photo of him with his sister Lesley (*yes, the cabin namesake*) and his brother Dave (*both deceased*) down at the North end of the property. Before 1939, the seven little rustic beach cabins were down there and the cabin in the woods was the cookhouse and dining room, making it the original Yellow Point



Lodge. The Beach Cabins stayed there until the lodge that burned down in 1985 was completed, in 1939. The kids, and Dad's first wife, Charlotte were a giant part of the early days of the lodge we know today.

The next photo is Gerry, with our Dad and his brother Dave's wife, Beth, in the kitchen of the old lodge making the fabulous rum and eggnog punch for New Years Eve.

Gerry was one of the nicest guys you could ever hope to meet and I have never met a person in my life with a bad thing to say about him. He leaves his wife, Kathy and two daughters, Sabina and Marnie. The next photo is of him with a 'mystery woman' and while I'm not sure of her identity, Gerry certainly seems to be happy in her company and the expression on his face of cheeky joy and mischievous fun is so representative of him that I felt it bore inclusion.



The photo on the bottom is what the lodge looked like when he was here, probably not long after the invention of the aeroplane. The picture at the very top is Gerry and I having lots of fun and sharing hearty laughs, which we did every time we were together. According to the Beatles, in the end the love you take is equal to the love you make. My brother Gerry must have taken tons and tons with him because he sure spread a lot of joy when he was here. I'll miss you until my last day.



New Guest Information:

...on reserving and re-booking.

Re-Booking Your Room: In order to support as many of you, who wish to be regular guests, as possible, our reservation system only works for a period of **one year** in advance of today's date. So if you want to come at the same time, year to year (*for whatever reason, and we hope you do*) you can, because nobody can book **your** room 14 months ahead, and take **your** spot.

Getting Your Own Reservation: We have tried, and it is nearly impossible to maintain a regular 'Waiting List' because there are too many different dates, accommodation types and combinations of the two.

If you're in someone else's spot (ie: *holding a friend's reservation for them*) we will be re-booking the spot for them, but you can ask them to put a '**would like another reservation**' request on their reservation, so if we get a cancellation we call *them* and can get *you* in.

If you call the office and we don't have the room you'd like, it's suggested that you book whatever we have and ask that a '**would like upgrade**' be noted. If a better room comes available, you'll have a chance at it, depending on who requested an upgrade first.

Try calling us two weeks ahead of your preferred date, that is when lots of people cancel because they can still get their deposits refunded if they give us that much notice.

Don't forget to check the website for our 'post it note' vacancy page, at yellowpointlodge.com and keep your eye on our Facebook posts, as well.

...and on more general policies.

Cellphones and Laptops: are fine anywhere *except*, at the request of a lot of guests, in **the main lounge and dining room**. The lobby is fine, and the downstairs lounge is encouraged. However 'E-readers' and 'tablets' are okay in the big, main room (*they're more discrete*). We also don't have wi-fi, (*by request*) and probably never will.

Drinking in the Hot Tub: is a big health and safety risk, and, I'm afraid has to be on our 'strictly prohibited' list. This is for everyone's well being. Please enjoy beverages before or after, but not *during* your visit to the hot tub.

Really general policies: are probably defined as 'The Golden Rule'. We don't have a ton of specific rules around here, (*exception: above*) and since we seem to attract a fairly well behaved, top quality group of guests, rules and regulations are seldom an issue. We like people to have all the fun they want (*hence the sprung dance floor*) but not at the expense of the other guests ability to relax and enjoy themselves.

F.A.Q.

...frequently avoided questions

How come I can't bring my own wine into the lounge or dining room?

Basically, it's because we have a liquor licence. We are permitted to sell alcoholic beverages to our guests for their enjoyment in our public areas, but if you wish to furnish your own drinks, they'll have to be enjoyed in the comfort, or Spartan surroundings, of your room or cabin. We are not participating in the 'corkage' program, due to the difficulty of monitoring and the fact that our liquor pricing 'mark-up' policy is very modest.

Why are you so particular about what my special diet is?

Firstly, if you have a serious allergy or medical condition, we want to make absolutely certain that we get it right. Secondly, one way that we maintain our fairly reasonable rates is by serving our meals 'banquet' or 'boy scout camp' style. If you have a serious dietary condition or are a committed vegetarian, for example, our staff will do everything possible to accommodate you. On the other hand, if your diet is optional, or a preference it makes it a lot harder on the kitchen. The bottom line is: if you've told us you don't eat pork, then order bacon, we will gently ask you to reconsider your dietary request.

What's the deal with live music here?

Things are a bit up in the air and 'on hold' at the moment as one of our band members is struggling with a serious health issue and her partner needs to be there to support her. Our hearts are with them. Sometimes we are able to feature our 'Rumpus Jam' downstairs on Friday night, but the Saturday dances have unfortunately been mostly postponed for the time being. We'll let our guests know what, if anything is going on musically for the 'upcoming weekend' over the season.

When the band isn't available, we are usually able to present 'Jazz Monkey' featuring Jo Deslippe. A duo, trio or quartet, we feature swing, standards and latin.

However, as in the past, we often have talented guests who entertain the other folks. That is still very welcome and will still earn you a free drink.

Do you mind if I feed the dogs?

Since two out of the three dogs are not large, and the big one is a muffin hound, we kindly request that, no matter how 'persuasive' (*ie: mooch-happy little bums*) they are, please don't ever feed the dogs even the tiniest little bite. They really add up (*one little bite X 95 guests = puppy cardiac*) and most of the snacks that they would mooch off of you are not healthy for them, at all. They get fed plenty at home, no matter what they tell you.
