



News from the Lodge



Winter 2017 / 2018

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

...by Richard Hill

Who Can Say What...

The Future Will Bring?

I don't mean like, flying cars, jet packs and hotels in space or stuff like that, because that was already supposed to be here by the time I got this old, but whatever. I mean what does the future hold for the lodge? A huge expansion? A giant development? A sale to a billionaire so they can use it for their house?

In all likelihood, probably none of the above. We are looking at business as usual, with a few changes and additions that will keep the place with the same vibe and spirit as it has now. While none of this is cast in stone, or really underway yet, I thought I'd outline what we can probably expect in the next several years.

Now that we have our occupancy updated with the C.V.R.D. and I've asked the dining room if they could handle four more people in the Summer, the first big project we'll undertake will be the replacement of Millie's cabin (*up from the Boathouse*) with two 'White Beach' type places. The car shed will go, and the empties will be handled at an expanded shed, (*between Field #25 and the tennis courts*). This will not be right away.

Once we have two more rooms, we'll take a serious *look* at converting the bottom floor of Victoria cabin into rooms with private bathrooms, by taking the walls out and moving the existing room space into where the current communal washrooms are. Victoria is always the cabin with the openings and private washrooms would probably help. This isn't decided for sure; because we haven't figured out if we can fit it all in or not, yet.

I'd eventually like to have the workshop with the Cutter shed, (*now at the far end of the property*), up in the wood yard area. It is difficult to back the Cutter into the shed at the moment. It's up a hill, backwards and on a curve. A shed with doors at both ends would make it 'drive through' easy. The shop would have a flat, concrete floor as well and everything would be closer to the lodge. We'll have to consider the noise factor.

The distant future will probably see something done with the 68 acres that are right across the road from the main gate. We've considered some sort of fun family place, with unique cabins and food, that can handle all the groups that we can't accommodate. However, *who* can say what the future will bring?

Tell Us About...

THE WINTER MAINTENANCE SHUTDOWN WEEK PROJECTS



Well, this was written *before* our annual winter shutdown, but most of you will be reading it *after* the week is over. So, if you note any inconsistencies in the reporting, then something didn't go quite as planned.

There is a picture of the dismantled dining room above, because the biggest project this season is the full refinishing of the dining room floor. Our long time friend, Guy Dubois (*who's Dad did the lounge floor in 1986, and for many years after*) will be replacing the existing finish with a wax based formula that can have it's high traffic and major wear areas refinished or repaired at anytime without looking like a patch of new coating has been placed on an otherwise worn floor. The new stuff will blend into the old stuff, and away we go. If the dining room floor looks great, please convert the previous paragraph into the past tense.

We are also planning to replace all the carpeting in the White Beach Cabins, refinish their bathroom counters and shelves, paint the lodge kitchen, make some storage improvements, doll up the trim in the Penthouse and Attic a bit, sand and paint the doors and frames by the office and in the dining room, and do a sauna safety upgrade.

This is all in addition to the usual list of annual tasks like power washing the range hood, servicing the fire extinguishers, getting the boiler and water heaters serviced, cleaning the carpets, and shampooing the upholstery in the lounge, all this among a bunch of other things. These include putting up the tree, decorating the main floor having the staff party, and another big project that is outlined on page 2 of this newsletter.

So, as mentioned above, this is all *planned* for our shutdown week in early December, and as the previous article asks, 'who can say what the future will bring', because as of press time, it all was in the future.

However, we start planning for this right after Labour Day, our staff have been here for a long time and everyone works pretty well together. So if you don't see something mentioned above, *just ask me why*.



A Brief Update on the... Liquor License Situation

At the moment, I am cautiously optimistic. After going through several possible scenarios that could resolve our situation from a licensing perspective, I contacted our license analyst and had a conversation about how unique our situation was and the huge difficulty I was having finding a way around it.

He was quite a reasonable sounding person, live on the phone, seems to have a better understanding of our situation now (ie: *our lobby isn't really a 'Lobby' where you check-in*) and is consulting with his superiors to come up with a workable solution.

He actually contacted me to let me know that things were moving along after I hadn't heard back from him for awhile.

However, we have no answers yet and please read the title of the first column on page one of this newsletter, but we are feeling a more reasonable tone at this time and will keep you posted.

Either get ready for, or thanks for Understanding our 2018...

ROOM RATE INCREASE

Like the article about the shutdown projects, you are reading this article either before or after the fact, since the increase went into effect on Jan. 2nd, 2018.

As mentioned in previous articles, I am often chided by guests for the moderate nature of the increases and the generous timeline given for advance notice. (ie: *'Oh my, Richard, the rates are going up by a mocha-latte and you only gave me a years notice?!'*).

However, that's the way we like it. In this business, the only *welcome* surprise is a *good* surprise, in my mind, and that's *not* what a rate increase is. So, we'll put them up a little bit, every two or three years, as needed, and give as much notice as possible, usually a full year.

I mentioned in our last newsletter (*Autumn 2017*) that you may have heard news about a possible increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. While just under a quarter of our staff (*newly hired students, usually*) are paid the minimum, (\$11.85 / hour) not everyone is getting \$15 an hour, so the amount of incremental wages that we'd be subject to would be considerable. This is due to the size of the staff and the fact that valued people should be paid above the '*minimum*', (which sends the unconscious signal that "*we'd pay you less if we were allowed to*".)

So if you face another rate increase, sooner rather than later, this situation will probably be the main factor. We will always strive to provide good value. The lodge probably won't be the only business in this boat.

Great Stress Reducer Coming in 2018!

NEW BRUSH FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM

One of the projects that we had looked at for our Winter shutdown was the installation of 1" (one inch) fire-hoses, tied into the 1¼" distribution lines that feed off of our 3" water main, from the 12,000 gal. storage tanks. The thinking was that if there were more, bigger hoses available at various place around the property, we could get more water, faster, to any fire as soon as it started, while someone else went and got the tank trailer and pump.

So my friend Lance did a little research. He has a friend who is an expert in the field who said, "Forget it, unless a one inch line has 200 pounds of pressure, it won't do anything for you." However, he did suggest an alternative that is already in practice in the forest industry. (*I'll write the rest of this like it's already happened, because, I'm committed*).

So, this is what we *did*. We still tapped into our 12,000 gal (3,000 l) tanks, via the 3" line, and fed that into a high pressure, electric pump at the shop, by the parking lot.

In the event of a fire, the responder dons a backpack with 500 feet of hose and a fog nozzle on board and runs like mad toward the fire, deploying the hose. They can add another hose up to 1,000 feet, which will reach the Cliff Cabins. When they're there, another person turns the pump on, which will deliver the 12,000 galls, at 200 psi through an 1¼" line, via the fog nozzle. The nozzle spreads the water out to cover a large area, provides a huge surface area of water to cool the fire and brings air in behind the operator.

At 500 gals per minute, this will last for over half an hour, we should have the fire trailer there by then (*mind you, that's only 500 gals. total*) and the local fire department should be well on their way as well. If 12,000 gals didn't knock it back, they'll be calling in the helicopter, anyway.

On a hot day, in the middle of a parched Summer, with a high wind, the cards are stacked against you from the beginning. That is why one of our main foci (*focuses?*) this season will be the 'tidying up' of the forest floor in the populated areas and along the trails. While it may appear to be mere 'beautification' it actually serves to remove the dry wood that acts as the best (*ie: worst*) fuel for a brush fire. Less fuel = less fire. We're also adding a 'quick fill' for our trailer and another hook up for the local fire department to fill their trucks from our 12,000 gal. system.

This does not mean that we will be any less watchful or 'hyper vigilant' this coming season regarding fire safety and precautions. We all got a good lesson, again this past year on how devastating an uncontrolled fire in a populated area can be and, believe me, that is the last thing that we want here.

So, I was looking forward to, but now I'm happy to have, this state of the art, simple yet effective system in place to protect our beloved forest.



NEIGHBOURHOOD EXPLORER'S MAP

...Coming This Spring!

I can anticipate the questions and let me say right now that, yes, it will be bigger than this.

Deborah LeFrank, the woman who put together the astronomy brochure and has been improving the signage around the place has taken some of the artwork from the Solar System brochure and adapted it into a handy guide to the property and neighbourhood for all you hikers, runners, cyclist's and shoppers.

One side features the property, emblazoned with features and showing several different routes around the place, with their distances. The other side is a map of the entire Yellow Point area, from Cedar to Ladysmith and features the same 'route loop distances' as well as a few destinations you may wish to visit as you familiarize yourself with our neighbourhood, or want a break from your bike ride.

We don't have an official release date, because I want to make sure the local business are up, running and willing before we print the brochures, but they'll be available sometime this spring, in the office.

Guests Want to Know..

Where is the 60 Acre Parcel *...mentioned on the petition?*

Regular readers know, but people are asking, and I always answer frequent questions here.

The parcel in question is in the very centre of the neighbourhood, bordering the eco-reserve next to Yellow Point Park about 5 kms. from the lodge. The residents are concerned because they feel it is a valuable watershed in an ecologically sensitive area that deserves protection.

That was a lot of Reading! Let's look at... Some Old Photographs!



Here's a really old one That is the original lodge under construction in 1937 - '38. We're looking through the front office window from the main walkway. That is the same old Oak tree out front that survived the fire. The main door is not visible, to the right.

Here's Dad and his second youngest son, Gerry (my 1/2 brother, technically, but really my brother) with an unidentified woman in the kitchen of the old lodge, cooking up something festive. on the old marble slab table from the original Hotel Vancouver.



This is a photo of the fireplace in the main lounge during the 1940's. I had to tell you exactly where it was because it looks so different today! That's the fireplace on the left.

Here is the old lodge from in front of Rustic Beach #2 in the late 1950's. Note the Arbutus trees that used to grow through the room of the lounge in full bloom and the newly added, flat roofed Penthouse tucked in behind them. The stone wall below the windows is still there. Please let me know if you liked this photo feature.



New Guest Information:

...on reserving and re-booking.

Re-Booking Your Room: In order to support as many of our guests 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 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 and accommodation types.

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 page, 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 don't have wi-fi, 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?

The owner of the lodge, Richard Hill (*me*) played a lot of music earlier in life and has some talented neighbourhood friends. On most Friday nights there is an informal 'acoustic jam' in the lobby and, on Saturdays at 9:00 a swinging, vintage styled, rock 'n' roll dance party (*complete with trophy*) in the main lounge (*always done by 11:00*). However, sometimes my friends have an 'off site' gig with their Beatles tribute band, the Deafaid, so I can't guarantee music every weekend.

On any day of the week, any guest who entertains the other guests with any form of musical talent, will receive at least one complimentary beverage. I always said "*If I ever get to be the boss, I'm going to give the band free drinks!*"

Do you mind if I feed the dogs?

Since three out of the four dogs are so tiny, and the fourth one is a junior, 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.
