



News from the Lodge



Autumn 2020

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

...by Richard Hill



Special *stupid* 'Covid 19' *blasted* Edition



Everyone has seen a lot of changes in the last few months and it's no exception here. Due to the nature of our business, which is essentially getting people from an 'at risk' group to undertake non-essential travel in order to gather in groups indoors, we have been significantly affected

by this whole thing, which anyone who has been following our website or social media posts already knows. I won't go into detail about all the changes here, because they are all spelt out in our check-in handout, and in the 'Covid Plan' on our webpage.

It has been noted that we appear to be a bit 'over the top' when it comes to taking precautions to slow the spread of the virus. This is very deliberate and stems from the fact that we fully realize that many of our guests are 'more mature' and therefore fall squarely into the 'higher risk' category.

From one point of view, it would simply be bad for business to have our guests going home and feeling that the precautions taken here were not up to standard.

However, we need to have everybody here feeling as safe as possible, *not* just because of what they will say to others when they get home that might affect our reputation, *not* just so they feel as relaxed as possible during their stay here so they want to come back, but mainly because we simply don't want *anybody* to get sick, period. Most of our guests are in the riskier category, and these are the people that have a harder time with the disease and more frequently require hospitalization, or caskets.

If we are as careful as possible, your risk of getting sick goes down. That is the bottom line.

You may see some gradual relaxation of our protocols as more information is released. The emphasis seems to be moving away from contact with surfaces and more onto personal interactions and transmission between people via breathing...hence the masks.

So, we've all seen changes, this is not news. However, change is not necessarily good or bad in itself, but how we handle the change is the important factor.



To this end, I have to take a moment to let you know just how tremendous it has been to see how our wonderful staff people have risen to the occasion. The following is a line that I put in one of our 'Covid-19' updates on our website regarding how the team came together to meet this daunting challenge: *"What could have been a semi-chaotic, nightmarish carnival of mayhem was instead transformed into a wonderfully choreographed dance of cooperative teamwork and rich camaraderie."*

Okay, so that's also something else that's a bit over the top, but great results require hyperbolic descriptions. The daily meetings and the way everybody in all departments reached out across their respective duty lines to help out was truly heartwarming. They kept your well-being on the top of the list and it has been a privilege to be part of such a great group.

It also must be mentioned how patient and understanding nearly every single one of *you*, our guests, have been. People usually get a bit cranky when faced with a 'pay more and get less' situation, but virtually everyone has acknowledged our effort to keep them safe and have been very cooperative and compliant with our new regimen. Dr. Henry would be proud, and you would not be disappointing her at all. That's the last thing we want!

Believe me, there is nobody, and I mean nobody, that wants to get back to welcoming more people, in more cabins, with more music and more choices (*like a buffet, so you don't have to eat peas if you don't want to*) than me. However, if we have to face a huge challenge, like we are right now, I am very happy to find myself surrounded by people like yourselves, and our staff, who make a bad situation absolutely the best it can be.

*It's Time For a...*

Business Update!



Okay, it's not that bad, but I have had some guests approach me with questions about our ability to handle the three month shutdown and half-capacity operation, from a business perspective. In a nutshell; we're fine. As long as we can stay open (*remember Dr. Henry and don't go to parties!*) and keep the number of guests in the mid-forties range, we should be able to continue on like this for a long time, even way past the point where I was once thinking of retiring.

Our Whiz-Bang accountant, Tom, did some very valuable modeling on our break-even point, and considering guest load, staffing and expenses, it seems to be working out as predicted. He did these calculations without factoring any government assistance into the equation, and in reality the federal wage subsidy program has turned out to be a *very great* blessing, indeed.

However, that is going to wrap up in December and is on a sliding scale downward, as we speak. This will make things tighter, but still manageable. So we came up with a plan! (*see related article 'New Cabins', page 3*)

Since we have meal seating available for 50 people, which is the maximum number allowed to gather at once, even with proper distancing, it would make sense to have as many of those people in our 'higher end' accommodation, which is the sad but true business reality.

So, with the new cabins in place, and judging by the interest people seem to be expressing in these lovely, one of a kind, simulated luxury, stunningly vista'd, conveniently located and yet still reasonably priced accommodation, they should go a long way towards making up for the loss of the wage subsidy and allow us to stay above our break even point, without the margin being too, too thin.

Some people have approached me with the idea of leaving a larger deposit for next year, in order to help out this year. However, at the moment, we are operating healthily and in all honesty don't really want to have a huge number of deposits on the books for next year, when we'd have to honour them and not have the cash flow to pay the bills, at *that* time.

If things get really serious, we'd probably reach out to our regulars and ask if they could 'spare a dime' and make a modest donation to keep us going for another season, but please rest assured that we are a long way from that, especially now that we're back open.

If you're here, or coming to stay, you're already doing everything you can to help us out in the best way possible. Operating as normally as we're able, with as many of you as we can welcome is the best way to continue the successful operation that you have all been a part of helping us build over the years; with our thanks!

Hey, What's Up With The... Memorial Chair Program?



Well, in a word, nothing. The capable young fella that builds the chairs, Lance, is up to his neck in projects right at the moment (*see related article 'New Cabins', page 3*). He will be able to get them back on his list soon, but not too soon. We have a number of plaques in the shop that people have ordered, waiting for chairs, but when he hasn't been doing projects on the West coast of the Island, we've been keeping him hopping around here.

For those of you that have no idea what I'm talking about, our guests have the opportunity to basically donate a lovely oversized Adirondack chair or loveseat to the lodge with a high quality, cast, bronze plaque bearing a memorial message on behalf of one of their loved ones, on the back.

Rest assured that we will be back in the business of producing chairs as soon as we can achieve some semblance of normalcy around here, and maybe even before the new cabins are done, if the drywall or flooring guys are busy in there or something and Lance has some free time.

Our apologies to anyone who as ordered a chair or loveseat and was looking forward to seeing it here when they arrived and double apologies to people who were planning to arrive, but their cabin wasn't open.

I think there is only one chair that is fully pre-paid and not installed, and this is one more reason that we don't take payment for them until the chair is actually in place.

I'm afraid that we won't be able to entertain any new orders for the time being, until our backlog of seven chairs is filled. However, when we're back in business, we'll let everybody know. Thanks for your patience.



How Crazy is this idea? Possible Victoria Cabin Renovation

Now this idea is in it's very preliminary, pre-pre-tentative opening *discussion* phase, so please don't call the office and try a book a new room, but I'd like to get some feedback from people on what they think of it, first.

Victoria is always the place with the most vacancies and largest cancellations. The issue seems to be that, unless they're on the beach or really taking things rustically, people are not too fussy about shared washrooms anymore.

If we were able to put little, tiny, almost boat style private washrooms with showers in each room (*maybe not upstairs*) would you be willing to pay a *little bit* more for the privacy and convenience? It might not be possible, but I'd like to know what you think. Thanks!



Finally, Some Good News! New Cabin Project Back On Track!



If you're reading this newsletter front to back, I'm sure that this is no surprise. After our pre-mentioned 'Whiz Bang' accountant and I tossed around a few numbers, saw that this 'half full' thing looked like it might actually work and figured out that we had the seating

capacity *now*, it quickly became clear that completing the two cabins was the only financially sound thing to do, even it meant diving deep into the credit line or even going to the piggy bank to do it.

Lance had agreed to build them up to the point of getting the roofs on and windows in, in order to protect the work that had already been done, and he was *running a tab for us*, being the awesome guy that he is. However, investing in their completion made the most sense and we now have an initial date of November 1st to welcome our first guests.

Now, if you've read previous newsletters, you know that we have a big list of guests who have already put their names in for an 'upgrade' and we have to go through all of those before we can offer these new spaces up to everyone else, so stay tuned and watch our website, we can't take reservations for them at the moment.



At the stage they're at now, I think the flat roofs, covered with native plants, will look really good, especially as you approach them from the driveway, where they appear to sink down into the ground like little Hobbit houses. The work Lance has done to date is really gorgeous and the exposed full 2" x 10" ceiling joists are all from trees that were blown down during the great gale of 2018. Lemonade, anyone?



Now We're Talking About a Seriously...

Old Timey Photograph



On countless Cutter trips I've told my passengers about how the lodge started pre-1939 with the existing Beach Cabins at the North end of the property and how the 'old, old lodge' was the cookhouse and dining room. However until I dropped into my (technically *half*) brother Gerry's

cabin the other day (*pictured at bottom*) I'd never seen a photo of the Beach Cabins in their original locations! There it was on the wall, with his sister Lesley (*new cabin namesake*) and older brother Dave, who lives in Prince Rupert, and the little 'Fruit Stands' behind them. Today, you'd see the Inn of the Sea in the background. This was taken in the 1930's, sometime before our Dad floated the cabins up to their present locations. They cost \$35.... not per night, but to build in the first place!



Short and Snappy
News Tidbit
Turbo Thrillride!™



Back Page Different!

For those of you that skip the back page of this newsletter because it's always the same, there are a couple of small changes you may wish to catch up on, in order to stay current.

Woodland Cleanup

The removal of firewood, branches and debris that is littering the various trails and paths will be back on, in full force soon. We have a good compliment of staff on now and with fewer guests we should be caught up and right back at it.

Reduce, Re-use and...

...hopefully recycle. We are talking to our supplier about possible 'waste stream diversion' that will allow you to separate your empties, plastic and paper waste and put it in separate compartments of our soon to arrive new re-cycling boxes. Stay tuned, I'll keep you posted.

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 possible combinations of dates and accommodation types. (50⁴ x 365)

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, but the downstairs lounge is closed at the moment, so it isn't available. 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: would maybe be okay now, since there's no water in it, however, that is not a 'licensed' area, so it's still out of bounds.

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 whole Covid thing has thrown a big wrench into anything to do with people gathering in groups, indoors. At the moment, singing inside is outlawed as well as dancing. So, jamming the lobby full of people or stuffing the dance floor to overflowing are not activities that can be pursued right at the moment. As Autumn progresses, we'll look into the possibility of having the fabulous Jo Deslippe come in for some cool jazz or see if John, Charlene and the gang would be interested in playing outside, or maybe in the lounge. Music tends to make people forget the safety rules however, so we'd have to be careful about clumping together and might have to have a 'no singing' rule, which would be kind of a drag, but better than nothing?

Do you mind if I feed the dogs?

Since the little dog is so tiny, 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.
