

Fall, 2017



LI READ AT SEA TO SKY PREMIER PROPERTIES (SALT SPRING)

# Li's Real Estate News...

## Change, change...

Change, change...everywhere a change. You remember the tune...sing along as we ponder this & that, in this new season. (I wonder how many of us still think of September as the "real new year").

Change is created always by the technologies that make our society work. The internet continues to erase all those things we used to rely on, & it may be that Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands will be seen as yesteryear charm-ers...places for the 21st Century harried citizens to escape to. Or...will our talented islanders recognize that the internet landscape can be used to both further the preserve & protect mandate of the Trust, while

at the same time creating a dynamic island lifestyle for both visitors & residents? Hmmm....

So: what does Salt Spring need? Parking for tourists in the high season, so that Ganges Village on a summer Saturday does not belong to cars. A 4-way stop at the corner of Rainbow & Lower Ganges Roads, for some serious traffic calming. A 3-way stop at the corner of Lower Ganges & Upper Ganges Roads, for the same reason.

A laundromat. A completed Boardwalk. Signage so sandwich boards are not needed. Garbage pick-up in the seaside Ganges Village. Public washrooms in

Ganges Village. Water connected so affordable housing projects can go forward. Rezoning of upper level offices to allow rental housing, in the Village. Empty storefronts to allow work/rental options, perfect for artists. Support for the agricultural community. Trail network connections with the Canada Trail. Accommodations regulations. And? Your list of necessities? Share....



Fall evenings...star-watching?

## Referendum vote...

On September 9th, Salt Spring Island voted in a referendum about governance. The "no" side voted to keep things as they are. The "yes" side voted to elect a mayor & council, to manage Salt Spring. In both scenarios, the Trust

remained & two elected trustees would still have managed the trust documents from 1974. The appointed planners would have been replaced by an elected council. At the moment, the provincial government, the Trust, &

the CRD (Capital Regional District) are the three Victoria based jurisdictions that manage Salt Spring. The "no" vote won. Is it possible to keep 1974 alive & well in 2017? In 2025? Time will tell. 60% of Islanders chose to retain.

### Fall Pleasures to Enjoy

Tuesday Farmers Market	
Fall Fair	
Sip & Savour	
Apple Fest	
Thanksgiving	
WinterCraft	
Beaver Point/Fulford Hall Craft Fairs	

### Fall...a Harvest treasure

- The Canadian Thanksgiving is always in mid-October...a true harvest festival of thanks.
- Special menus at our great restaurants.
- Sip & Savour tastings.
- Re-discover hearty soups. From scratch.
- Plan a Spring garden.

## Market updates...

Real estate markets are not static items. They rise & fall...a wave pattern. Sometimes up on the crest, sometimes down in the trough, and whenever appearing at equilibrium, it usually meant was traveling up or down. The Islands Trust "preserve & protect" mandate did effectively cap growth, through strict zoning/density bylaws. As various areas that were approved for subdivision sold off/were developed, in the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and early 2000s, it meant less land for development. Salt Spring is close to what I call "the wall of no more"...as one drives around the Island, one is seeing it as it will effectively be. Between 2000 & 2002, sales volume rose around 50%. Between 2002 & 2005, prices rose around 60%. 2006 was a



Fall delivers views....

holding pattern. 2007 saw less sales & some very small softening of prices (10%). By the end of 2008, the global economic downturn was with us. Prices between early 2009 and early 2016 had reduced around 45%. Our secondary home market began to show signs of recovery in mid-March of 2016, starting

with entry level residential, with sellers having to meet buyers offered prices, and by the end of July, 2016 all residential property segments were finding buyers and buyers had to come closer to a sellers wish in any offer. Then the provincial government in power at that time brought in a 15% offshore purchase tax for metro-Vancouver, to cool that very hot market...it did.. It also slowed our secondary home market, as those sellers had become our buyers. Between August 2016 and May 2017, a combination of the implications of that tax & a once-every-20-years "real winter" caused a lack of activity in real estate. It did not begin it's upward ascent again until mid-July, 2017. So, thin inventory, stable prices, & potential for price increases in early Spring 2018.

## Fall-into-Winter...

Although the calendar says Summer lasts until September 20th, as soon as Labour Day Weekend is over & school is back in, we all think of Fall. Some of us still think of September as the real "new year". Although more people visit Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands between late June & early September, the Islands are really "seasonless". There is always something interesting to do & to en-

joy...including the restorative power of simply doing "nothing". Fall brings Harvest events, including Sip & Savour's successor, and Apple Fest. The Canadian Thanksgiving is in mid-October, & that also means a Harvest theme to the celebration. Spending Christmas/New Year on Salt Spring can be

very appealing...light-up in the Village, craft fairs, gallery openings...it's an effervescent time to visit the Island. Mt

Washington's famed ski hills are only a 2+ hour drive away. Sunday afternoon sailing races take place all winter. Walking/hiking trails beckon. Calm....

*"A poor life this, if full of care,  
We have no time to stand and  
stare."  
(W.H. Davies)*

## How does Salt Spring fare in the digital universe?

We have many techies living on this Island and they meet up at different events. The internet allows one to live anywhere, if operating in the digital universe. The ease of getting to major centres (Vancouver, Victoria Seattle) means that one can pop into the city experiences & then easily return to Salt Spring's energizing rhythms...as a day trip, if wished. The internet, which does bring with it the ability to search the world, also brings

with it an isolating factor. It's a one to one search...this quieter lifestyle isn't always immediately observable. At one of the digital meet-ups, there could be 30 people there...perhaps networking. On a daily basis, though, perhaps they are not so visible? Difficult to say just how large the tech side of



Shorter days...still soft pleasures.

Salt Spring really is. Most information on Salt Spring is anecdotal. There is no one repository of information or statistics on anything. Verification can be difficult. Is that something the digital universe could be working on? Lots of questions & still too few answers....

## Going forward.....

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With the “no” vote at the September 9 referendum on whether Salt Spring should remain “as is” or seek to become a Gulf Islands style of municipality... (the two trustees and the trust documents from 1974 would remain, along the lines of Bowen Island)...means there’s a “what’s next” focus.

A volunteer commissioner on the EDC (Economic Development Commission), which is under the CRD (Capital Regional District), one of the two government sides here (two elected trustees & one elected CRD representative, each civic election) resigned from the EDC...he had voted yes, out of concern for the many pending issues facing the island., His point was that the EDC could not

encourage economic growth on the Island, under the current form of governance. A “no” vote was a vote for maintaining what is in place. Certainly, all of the issues remain: a water moratorium put in place by the volunteer NSSWD (North



*Memories of summer-summer...still around in early Fall.*

Salt Spring Water District) means that the CRD & the Community Service affordable housing projects cannot go forward. The costs of the Fire Protection Service. The lack of garbage pick-up in Ganges Village. No laundromat, no water or sewer hook-ups to individual lots, even though owners had been paying parcel tax for several years. No signage. Boardwalk still not completed (after 25+ years). No public washrooms for tourism visitors. No rezoning to allow empty 2nd floor offices to be reconfigured as rental accommodation, or empty storefronts to become live/work options. Who’s in charge? Trust is only about land use/bylaw issues. CRD has limited impact here. All the problems are still there. Hmmm.....

## Day Trip adventures....

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Going to Sidney/Victoria: Tanner’s Books, Pier Hotel for dinner, Butchart’s Gardens. B.C. Museum, Empress for tea, Victoria Art Gallery. Duncan/Cowichan Valley? Vineyard tours, Cowichan Bay, Duncan “old town”, Lake Cowichan, Ladysmith “old town”, Yellow Point (Crow & Gate authentic English pub?). Parksville/Qualicum: beaches are great to walk on, no matter the time

of year. Dine with a view? Shady Rest has been in same location for 90+ years. Courtenay/Comox needs a side-trip to Cumberland...full of history. Close to Mt Washington ski hill. Other islands? Denman, Gabriola, Thetis, or, one of our sister islands: Galiano,

*In change, lies opportunity.*

Mayne, Penders, Saturna. Why not be a tourist in your own home island? Check out the studio tours, the farmgate stands, the hiking/walking trails (when did you last visit Ruckle Park?). Treat yourself to a harvest menu at Auntie Pesto’s, Piccolo’s, Salt Spring Inn.

## Mark your calendars...

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SSNAP (a month of amazing events at Mahon Hall for Salt Spring National Art Prize). Sip & Savour’s successor...a harvest event. ArtSpring Fall/Winter schedule of theatre, music, choral, dance, gallery displays. Craft Fairs (Winter Craft, Beaver Point & Fulford Hall craft fairs). Gallery openings & receptions in Ganges Village. Such a lot to do & to enjoy in the supposedly “off season” on Salt Spring Island. It’s easy to attend the

Chemainus Theatre offerings...figure out the ferry schedule & away you go. Evening classes, clubs to introduce you to islanders & to off season delights. Trail & Nature Club will have you fit in no time! The softer season means easy parking in the Villages, time to enjoy coffees at Barb’s, TJ Beans, Café Talia, Treehouse Café, Auntie Pesto’s, Brigitte’s French Bakery, Fernwood Café. Remember to block in time for yourself.



*Always look forward...*

  
**Li Read at Sea to Sky  
Premier Properties**

**LI READ AT SEA TO SKY PREMIER  
PROPERTIES (SALT SPRING)**

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*Thinking of moving to Salt Spring Island? Call me! I look forward to helping you to discover and to buy your special Island property. Lots/Acreages, and build your dream? A residential opportunity? Something with a view, or a farm potential, or a townhome to downsize into? Maybe waterfront is in your possibilities? There is always something that will reach out to you, go "ping", and then you need to listen...and it might not be what you thought you were on your way to find. Having lived and worked on Salt Spring since 1989, I have built up valuable knowledge, of both inventory and of trends...I look forward to bringing my expertise to your benefit. A consistent top selling realtor, with strong negotiating skills, my experience will help you. A full-time and full-service realtor, I maintain websites, blogs, newsletters, as it's important to me to introduce the Island to you. Social media options are also offered. My weekly driveby lists show all listed properties. Your best interests truly are my motivation. How may I help you to buy your Gulf Island/Salt Spring Island property? Look forward to meeting you.*

## Seeking a forward path....

"So said Arjuna on the field of battle: Not farewell, but fare forward voyagers!"

I like that image of forging on, facing forward, & hopefully creatively answering the challenge of our post-internet world.

So many changes: people giving orders at fast food restaurants via ipad. 3-D printers meaning no need for large storage warehouses. Driverless cars to be the norm within 5 years. Online shopping replacing traditional retail...so what happens to those large stores & malls? Dinners arriving at your home, all pre-cut/measured, & you get to cook? Uber, Airb&b, & the rest of the sharing economy... Is it just the working out of the individualistic society of the 16th Century?

And what about the belief that because it's on the internet it must

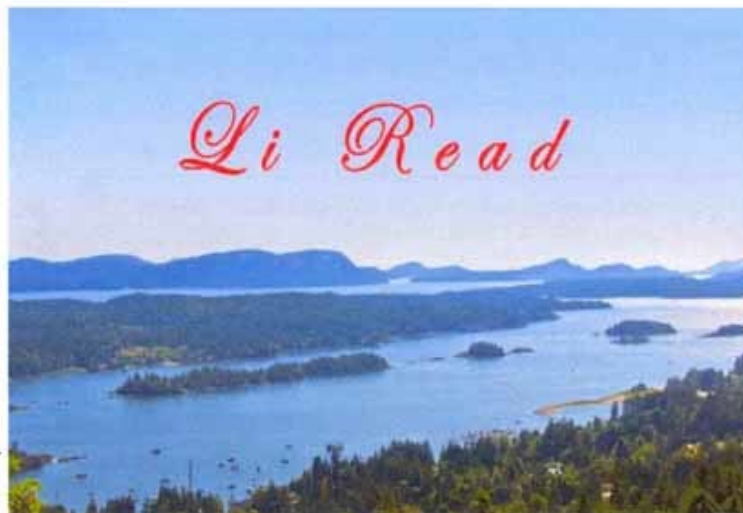
be so? Is the editing function in our brains now gone? All opinion is equally valid? Hmmm....

Perhaps that's the allure of Salt Spring & the Southern Gulf Islands...yesteryear

protected places, but also easy to access the quickly changing places beyond our shoreline. Apart...but not isolated. That's a very alluring description.

So: out there you see a little patch of earth, a couple of sheep, a veggie garden, an orchard, maybe a pond, a sweet cottage-home, with a rhythm that harks to the English idea of small town life...no big weekly shopping, just a daily voyage into town, coffee with friends, buy fresh what is needed, pick up the mail, read a real book while the soup is doing its thing...ah, yes. The thing is, it's do-able. You have a different dream? Not to worry. Call me, and let's go explore, discover, and choose. It always works!

Cell: 250-537-7647



*"Fare forward, voyagers!"*