



## LI'S REAL ESTATE NEWS...

LI Read at Sea to Sky Premier Properties (Salt Spring)

Winter, 2016/2017

### Salt Spring Island...a seasonless experience....

Although it's true that the main season on the great Pacific Northwest Coast is considered to be May to October, the "off season" months can be full of delightful events...and superb weather days.

There is always something interesting happening on Salt Spring Island, year-round.

All of the Gulf Islands are beautiful, and all of them have been protected by the Islands Trust "preserve and protect" mandate.

Salt Spring is the year-round lifestyle Island...offering 3 elementary, a middle and a senior school, plus hospital/health services, plus indoor pool, plus arts/theatre centre (ArtSpring), plus 3 year-round regular scheduled ferries, servicing Vancouver, Victoria, and Vancouver Island, plus year-round regular sked seaplane service (3 compa-

nies)...whether it's July or January, there is a year round life on Salt Spring.

Some Winter thoughts? ArtSpring events (theatre,

dance, choral presentations), WinterCraft, Beaver Point and Fulford Halls craft fairs, Christmas on Salt Spring, pop up markets, live music at Moby's, special menus at the great restaurants, Trail and Nature Club hikes/walks, Sunday Sailing Races at Sailing Club...

You can be skiing at Mt Washington in about 2 1/2 hours from Salt Spring. Check the indoor pool schedule, get involved with the many volunteer opportunities, plan a Spring garden, attend Seedy Saturday Weekend, enjoy day trips to Vancouver, or Victoria, or Vancouver Island...easy to do. Winter is a softer season, and carries many weather varieties on the Pacific Northwest Coast: rain, sun, snow, cold, almost spring-like temperatures..you name it, it happens here. Dress in layers, and you're ready for anything. Lots to see & to do & to enjoy!



Snow is a rarity on Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands...residents snap a lot of photos when it does occur.

### Salt Spring to decide on whether to incorporate...or remain a Trust governance model.

After several months of discussion and public meetings, there will be a referendum for Salt Spring residents...the decision: to remain "as is" or to choose a Gulf Islands style of municipality. The vote may be as early as February. Be

informed! The Trust documents (in place since 1974) remain, and there will continue to be two trustees. The CRD (out of Victoria) remains. The governing of the Island, however, will be done by elected council (possibly six

members). The council will choose the two parties to act as trustees and will choose a mayor. Bowen Island, also part of the Islands Trust mandate, decided to incorporate some years ago. More info? Check the websites for this.

#### Winter fun on the Gulf Islands:

- Christmas on Salt Spring (Santa visits twice...once via seaplane and once via Carol Ship).
- Sunday afternoon sailing races (crew always needed).
- Skiing at Mt Washington.
- Golf, garden club, Seedy Saturday, evening classes, yoga, ArtSpring events...
- Walking/hiking adventures
- February Festival
- March Home & Garden Show

#### Winter ideas....

Take that yoga class

Read that fat novel

Learn how to cook vegetarian

Plan garden (Spring in Feb?)

Attend ArtSpring events

Do daytrips (B.C. Museum?)

Volunteer!



## Pacific Northwest Coastal charms....

Check out the garden ideas at Butchart's (afternoon tea is always a pleasure). Meander the charm of Cowichan Bay (sort of a "big Fulford"). Enjoy the wineries of Vancouver Island, & understand the coastal vineyards allure (Salt Spring is a part of this).. Walk the beach at Parksville. Storm Watch at Tofino. Visit Robert Bateman's Gallery in Victoria's Inner Harbour, and also the B.C. Museum when next in Victoria. Skiing at Mt Washington! Lots to do and to see on the "big Island" (Vancouver Island is really just another Gulf Island). Choose a different island each time, & get to know the neighbouring Southern Gulf Islands: Galiano, Mayne, Penders, Saturna. Figure out the

schedule, go one way & come back another. Catch the seaplane & enjoy a day in Vancouver...it's on our doorstep. Don't forget to really "know" your own Island...be a tourist in your own hometown idea. When did you last check out Ruckle Park's trails? Or drop into the artists home studios? Or attend an event at ArtSpring? Don't assume you



Salt Spring is so close to a number of things. Step out & discover your own backyard.

know it all! Winter season is a superb time to refresh your memory of what makes Salt Spring Island so unique. New residents, new businesses...do you know your Island? Check it out! Also pop into the Visitors Centre in Ganges Village, choose some of the spaces/places advertised in the racks there...make sure you discover them. Visitors Centre volunteers are always appreciated. Looking to be inspired by the best view on the Island? Take time to look at Lot 12 at Skywater...truly amazing!

## So, you've always wanted to...so, what's stopping you?

So many opportunities to get to do the things once put on hold...Salt Spring invites one to rediscover old dreams. Create a garden? Write a novel? Learn a musical instrument? Play in a band? Sing in a choir? Become fit through walks, runs, swimming? Pass it on volunteerism? It's ok to simply "be" for awhile, too, when you first arrive. I call it the "fallow field moment"...you know, the

**In change, lies opportunity.**

roots are busy there, but nothing shows yet on the surface. If coming from an overload lifestyle, then it needs a bit of decompression time, to allow your essential self to pop back up. While you are digesting change, check out the art galleries, the studios, attend some live music venues, dine out and remember the foodie opportunities here, with support for our local farmers. While observing (&

enjoying), your next venture may just appear...and possibly not whatever it was you were expecting. Ah...the adventure of Salt Spring...don't overlook that, either. Change is the mantra of our time. The post-tech revolution is with us. Just think about that robotic shift that is quickly replacing the need for a human. So, maybe you have the idea of how to live well in the evolving new world of equality between machine and human? Hmm...and your thoughts are?

## More incorporation pro & con....

The Islands Trust came into being in 1974. A provincial government body, with a mandate to "preserve and protect" the environmental beauties of the Gulf Islands, for the benefit of all B.C. residents, the Trust did save the Gulf Islands from unbridled development. Their park-like charms are in evidence today. Growth was controlled on all the Gulf Islands, by strict zoning/bylaws, put in place in 1974. The Trust was successful

in keeping the Islands as these special places, for the entire province to enjoy. This is now 2016/17, and affordable housing, work rental spaces, and an aging population needing further accommodation choices, are not being well served by existing by-laws. There are two trustees elected per Island...it's not based on population. The special Gulf



Don't just assume an old response...really check out what change means.

Islands municipal structure being considered would retain the 2 trustees & the overall Trust documents. The CRD (Capital Regional District) would still have some impact. The 2 trustees, however, would be chosen by six council members, elected at the civic election time (4 year terms). A Mayor would also be chosen.





## Great promotion on Salt Spring & the Southern Gulf Islands...but do we deliver?

Wow...lots of travel writers visited Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands, and many interesting write-ups ensued. In January, the New York Times chose the 52 best places to travel in 2016, and only two venues in Canada were on the list: Toronto and the Southern Gulf Islands. This was picked up by the L.A. Times. Coastal Living, a U.S. magazine, also had an article on this region. The Globe & Mail, the Vancouver Sun, the Vancouver Province, Boulevard magazine in Victoria, & the B.C. Ferries OnBoard magazine featured us. In November, Vogue magazine wrote up Salt Spring. Wow! Usually, the outcome of this kind of promotional material is seen in the following year...so

2017 promises to be a return to former days of tourist discoveries. Destination B.C. encouraged various regions to get together, for more impact, with tourism marketing. Salt Spring, Galiano, Mayne, Saturna, Pender Islands are all working together on what is currently known as Experience the Southern Gulf Islands. This kind of cooperation may have outcomes beyond marketing these gems...perhaps it will encourage economic flow between the Islands, and more impact with Ferries when



Snow is rare on the Southern Gulf Islands...people rush to take photos if it does happen.

discussing scheduling? Stay tuned! So important, though, for the Gulf Islands (including Salt Spring) to deliver on the marketing promises. Are there enough places to stay? Things to do? Parking to please? How about off season event planning? Summer in the amazing Pacific Northwest Coast looks after itself...what about November? Or February? Stay tuned! The Salt Spring Chamber is on it! Interested in this? Join the Chamber...get involved!

## Day Trip pleasures....

Vancouver: by ferry from Long Harbour to Tswasan, or by floatplane. Day trips are easy. Get your city fix!

Victoria: Robert Bateman Gallery, B.C., Museum, IMAX, Victoria Art Gallery, Tea at Butchart's, Tea at Empress, Abkhazi Garden, specialty shops on Government Street....

Cowichan Valley: 11 vineyards, Cowichan

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

Bay (True Grain Bread, Cow Café, Masthead Restaurant), Mill Bay (Bridgeman's), Duncan's main town (specialty shops galore).

Ladysmith: winner of best community light-up, every year...a WOW! Do a tour as soon as it's dark. Remember the Crow & Gate English style pub at Yellowpoint.

Parksville: amazing beach! Plus: the

route to Uclulet/Tofino starts here.

Courtenay/Comox: the intro to Mt Washington...amazing skiing at your door. Cumberland's history is also here.

Choose a neighbouring Gulf Island, and do the tour...discover the differences from Island to Island (p.s. great bookstore on Galiano, super bakery on Mayne, another super bakery on Pender, plus pub with a difference on Saturna). Wow...Islanders clearly eat out!

## Chamber chat...

The Salt Spring Chamber is a non-profit, & it has a possible total of 15 directors on its board. All are volunteer. The office has three staff (one full-time & 2 part-time). The Chamber is there on behalf of successful outcomes for local businesses. My definition of being in business: if you are supplying an item or a service for sale, then you are in business...even if a home occupation. In a governance model such as currently exists on the Gulf

Islands, where the Trust is about land use/bylaw issues, & the CRD (out of Victoria) has several other small (mainly volunteer) programs under it (Economic Development, Water, Parks & Rec, etc), things can fall between cracks. Perhaps one could say that the Island seems



Mt Washington is approx. 2 1/2 hour drive from Salt Spring. Ski!

to run itself? The Chamber has a responsibility to act for the benefit of the community, & can hold an advocacy role. More info? Pop by the Chamber office (below the Visitors Centre), talk to the Chamber Manager (Executive Director), & ask for a copy of the Chamber's evolving strategic plan. Be involved! Join!



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**Li Read at Sea to Sky Premier  
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**"See Li for Successful Solutions!"**

*Successfully connecting sellers and buyers, on Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands, since 1989, I look forward to bringing my expertise and my knowledge to your benefit. Call me! A full time and full service real estate agent, I love these Islands and enjoy sharing my knowledge of both inventory and of trends with you. My office is in the yellow character building at the corner of Lower Ganges and Rainbow Roads, in Ganges seaside village. Across from Ganges Marina. Parking behind, off Rainbow. A law office is on the Rainbow side, and I'm on the lawn side...I look out at the Harbour. Come and find me, pick up all the latest information on listings and on "solds". Free maps. I make sure that you get all the listings, regardless of which Board another local realtor or company is affiliated with. The Gulf Islands are in a "grey area"...Galiano, Mayne, Saturna are mainly on the Vancouver Board. Pender and Salt Spring are partly on Victoria Board and partly on Vancouver Board. Thetis and Gabriola are on the Vancouver Island Board. It means that a private client service offered by a realtor will only show the listings on that realtor's Board. To see all listings, just go on realtor.ca (the mls is geographic). A board is simply the portal onto the mls for a realtor. My driveby lists show all listed properties, and not just the board related ones. Pop by my office, say hello. I look forward to working for your best interests! How may I help you to buy your special Salt Spring Island or Gulf Island property? Look forward to meeting you. 250-537-7647*

## **Ah...the future the future...so, what's next?**

2016 has been full of unexpected changes, and globally so. Salt Spring and the Gulf Islands offer that serenity window, but nowhere is unaffected in this global village world that we all now inhabit. The butterfly concept is alive and well...what happens across the world does immediately have an effect here. Along with chaotic and dangerous events, there is also the continuing changes post-tech. Are you keeping up with robotics? It's calling into question how we think about humanity. An iPad screen takes your order in a fast food restaurant...what happened to those people who were let go as the screen took over their job? Personal robots that react to you, self-driving cars, interaction in all phases with "the machine", instead of the previous human in that space...hmm...does this mean that the age of jobs is over? Will there have to be a base monthly amount paid to everyone, as jobs will not be plentiful? What about cash...is there a move to a cashless society? Big picture thoughts, and we are all affected by these outcomes of significant change. For those hybrid peo-

ple, who remember the past and are in the midst of the future, it can be disturbing. For those born into the change, it's just wallpaper...the surround sound of their world view. Important to be paying attention, but also to be aware of what it is that is truly im-



Janus, the Roman god of the month of January, has two faces...one looking back & one forward.

portant to us, as humans. Family, friends, a feeding of the mind and the soul (there's that need for the artistic vision, again)...important to be positive about change. Heraclitus and Thales were right, back in Ancient Greece...we never step into the same river water each time we wade. Real Estate is a market driven item, a relative of the stock market side of investment. It's a wave model: sometimes on the crest and sometimes in the trough, and somewhere on the continuum of up and down. After an almost 8 year downturn in the secondary home/discretionary markets, early 2016 did see an uptick of authentic proportions. Thin inventory, price stability, all price points catching interest...it augurs well for a continuing uptick in 2017. Early January and half of February seem to be reflective of November/December of the previous year...the key start to the recreational market appears to be mid-March. Pay attention, attend conferences about markets, keep your eyes/ears open for opportunity...it's always there. More info? Call me (250-537-7647).