

Dec 14, 2006

Y22, 1548 Tunstall Blv, Bowen Island, BC. V0N 1G0

Hi all,

No fancy merging of names into letters this year I am afraid. Hopefully by next Christmas we will have been long settled down and this letter will be that bit more personal. However we are thinking of you despite our current pressures and all that has gone on this year.

In summary, we retired, bought and sold houses (down sizing to about half - very different), moved to an island (very different) in another province (very different), acquired our first dog (very different), sort of accidentally finished up owning two boats in two provinces (different), and upgraded house and garden simultaneously (very ... very!). There will be lots of pictures this year some pretty small - if you want a bigger one of anything let us know!

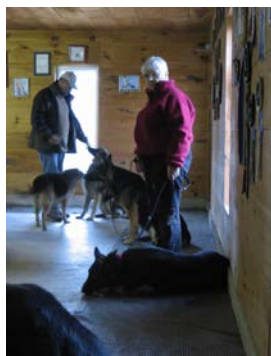
However whilst we were still in Ontario we attended the Canadian Taijiquan Federation AGM which featured a Dragon dance and a (staged) sword fight - much less boring than some AGM's!



And Wendy and JP managed a trip to see us before we left which was very nice. We managed to show JP some of Ontario - here we are at Niagra Falls.



For some long time before this, Sue had been house clearing as we new we would be down sizing, and about Feb - March we where seriously into the give away / throw away mode - here is just a fraction of our give away stuff. In all we estimate that about 3 tons of stuff were disposed of one way or another.



Around the same time we decided that as Sue had done considerable research into dog breeders around Ontario, it seemed silly to have to do all that research over again in BC. So we decided to look for a dog in Ontario and ship him / her out once we were established. Which is what happened. So here is Sue with Sheeba during a training session at the breeders.



I seem to have left out that Sue joined the choir at our church - here they all are, and also a picture of Sue's leaving presentation



So here we are in May / Jun and we are moving in to our new house on Bowen Island BC. Here is a view from then from across the road (the car is the Realtors). See the house down in the trees? And here is looking up the driveway -



Whilst today similar views look like these -



Here is one side of the house looking towards the road, then and now -



The wood shed had to be expanded to accommodate the trees felled in the front yard. In the picture, the mid section was only 20% full when we purchased the house, and the left hand section is new (check the roof colour)!



This leaves a whole lot of garden alterations undocumented, and only hints at the chaos -



but let's move inside now. In order to update this self contained kitchen -



and lounge (no picture), first we moved everything into the lounge area, and had hardwood floor laid in the 'bedroom half' of the house. Then we had to move everything out of the 'lounge half' into the 'bedroom half' adding quite a bit of chaos to the existing cramped style. This is living in 800 sq ft (down from 4,300) -



then some walls had to come down -



- and as there are new / enlarged windows the external siding had to come off and be re-cut to match the new window holes. Here is a view from inside. The right hand hole here is where the window in the old kitchen view above is.



Then the new kitchen cabinets got moved in (oh - after the floor got tiled over NuHeat pads) -



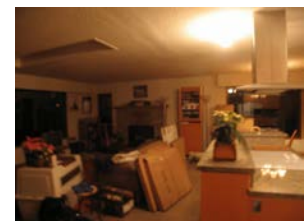
Round about this time the paths round the back and one side got concreted.



and shortly after that, it snowed!



We can't yet show you proper 'after' pictures. Knowing that we would be re-doing the floors, we did not get all the furniture we shipped from Oakville brought here to Bowen. Instead some was held back in store. We have had this delivered just a few days ago, and are still trying to find where to put it all. However these pictures should give you some idea of what it will look like, and what it does look like.



Over the last several weeks we have had several ferry stoppages - some for all day, several power outages, most over 10 hours, though thankfully none as much as 24 hours, and several wind and rainstorms. These last are not just Bowen events, the Vancouver area has lost power to nearly 200,000 people, and some had no power for several days.

However it has not been all bad!

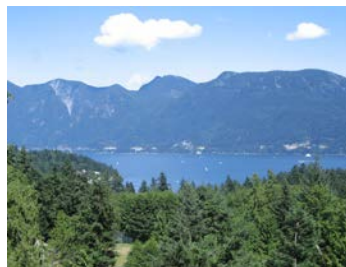
During a Summer boat trip round Bowen we took this general view of 'our' beach (10 mins walk away). The building you can see is the Tunstall Bay Community Association - which costs us \$300 a year to belong to. You cannot see the swimming pool in this view, but Sue, Shelley, John, Sharon, Winona and Peter have all been in the pool. The picture of Sheeba (and Sues legs) was taken in the boat during this trip -



and then Sue and Sheba on the same beach during a typical morning walk this Summer.



Having mentioned John's family above, here they and Sue all are - From the left Shelly, Winona, Peter (missing), Sue, Sharon and John. This is the patio of one of Bowen's restaurants. Below is the view in the other direction.



Sue has also joined both the Community and Church choirs. The Community choir had their first concert (since Sue joined!) last weekend which was much appreciated. Sue is in the picture - but unfortunately I was seated on the wrong side so she does not show up very well. Try looking at the back row, just to the right of the right hand edge of the window for a glowing flash of blonde hair!



We are looking forward to settling down over the rest of the Winter but very importantly Wendy is expecting a baby in February. So next years letter should be full of even better, and even brighter things (including our new sailboat), less stress for us - though more for Wendy and JP!

Best wishes to you all,

*Sue & Peter*